
THE GUTNICK EDITION

חמשה חומשי תורה
Chumash

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

ספר במדבר

*With Rashi's commentary, Targum Onkelos,
Haftaros and commentary anthologized from
Classic Rabbinic Texts and the works of the
Lubavitcher Rebbe*

Compiled and Adapted by
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CHUMASH - THE BOOK OF NUMBERS
with commentary from Classic Rabbinic Texts and the Lubavitcher Rebbe
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Preface

We are delighted that *Sefer Bamidbar* of the *Kol Menachem* Chumash is now entering its second edition, which includes numerous amendments to both the Hebrew and English texts and commentary to the Haftaros.

We once again extend our thanks to **Rabbi Meyer Gutnick**, who has graciously accepted upon himself the labor and expense of publishing and distributing this work. May this merit be a source of eternal blessing for him and his family.

May we soon merit the true and complete redemption, with *Mashiach Tzidkeinu*, speedily in our days.

Kol Menachem

25th of Elul 5768

🌀 CANTILLATION MARKS / טעמי המקרא 🌀

פִּשְׁטָא מִנַּח זֶרְקָא מִנַּח סְגוּלָּה מִנַּח | מִנַּח רְבִיעִי
מִהַפֵּךְ פִּשְׁטָא זֶרְקָא קִטְוֹן זֶרְקָא-גְדוּל מִרְכָּא טַפְחָא
מִנַּח אֶתְנַחְתָּא פִּזְרֵי תְּלִישָׁא-קִטְוֹנָה
תְּלִישָׁא-גְדוּלָּה קְדָמָא וְאַזְלָא אֶזְלָא-גְרֵשׁ גְּרֵשִׁים
דְּרֵנָא תְּבִיר יְתִיב פְּסִיק | סוּף-פְּסוּק: שְׁלֵשֶׁת
קִרְנֵי-פֶרֶה מִרְכָּא-כְּפוּלָה יְרַח-בֶּן-יוֹמוֹ:

🌀 BLESSINGS ON READING THE TORAH 🌀

The person who is called to the Torah takes hold of the handles of the *Sefer Torah* with his *tallis*¹, unrolls the *Sefer Torah* and, with his *tallis* (or the belt of the Torah) touches the beginning and end² of the reading. The scroll is then closed, he turns slightly to the right and says:

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְּבַרֵּךְ.

The congregation responds:

בְּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבַרֵּךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

The person called to the Torah continues:

בְּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבַרֵּךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בְּנוֹ
מִכָּל הָעַמִּים, וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת תּוֹרָתוֹ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ
נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה:

The person called to the Torah now reads along with the reader in an undertone.

After the reading is complete, the person called to the Torah touches the end and the beginning³ of the reading with his *tallis* (or belt of the *Sefer Torah*) and kisses it. He then closes the scroll, turns slightly to the right and says:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָנוּ
תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת, וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נִשְׁע בְּתוֹכָנוּ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה
יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה:

After the reading is complete, the person called to the Torah stays at the *bimah* until the next reading is concluded (or, if it is the last reading, until the Torah is raised).

1. *Sefer Haminhagim*. According to the Rebbe's personal custom, the handles are held directly, without the *tallis* in between.

2. *Sefer Haminhagim*. According to the Rebbe's personal custom, the *tallis* is used to touch the beginning, the end and then the beginning of the reading again.

3. *Sefer Haminhagim*. According to the Rebbe's personal custom, the *tallis* is used to touch the end, the beginning and then the end of the reading again.

In the early years of his leadership, the Alter Rebbe declared publicly:

"We have to live with the times!"

Through his brother, the Maharil, the senior chasidim discovered that the Rebbe meant that one should live with the Parsha of the week, and the particular Parsha of the day. One should not only study the weekly Parsha, but live with it.

(HAYOM YOM, CHESHVAN 2)

parshas Bamidbar

פרשת במדבר

🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

Bamidbar, which is the name of our *Parsha*—and the name of this entire book—means “in the desert.” However, the name *Bamidbar* itself does not seem to bring to light any unique qualities of our *Parsha* at all. At this point, the Jewish people has been situated in the desert for a considerable period of time: Throughout the whole Book of *Vayikra* and part of the Book of *Shemos*. So what is added *now* by stressing that the Jewish people were “in the desert”?

The answer to this question lies in the fact that “we always read *Parshas Bamidbar* before *Shavu’os*” (*Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 428:4). Before we experience the giving of the Torah once again—for spiritually, the Torah is given anew every *Shavu’os*—it is necessary to recall and take to heart the fact that the Torah was not given in a civilized environment, but in a *desert*.

The lesson here is twofold:

1.) A desert is a place of utter desolation where “*no man can live*” (Jer. 2:6). Thus, the Torah was given there to

indicate that it should be embraced without any preconceptions or ulterior motives. When a person lives in a civilized place and he encounters a new idea or suggestion, he will first evaluate it to determine whether it is acceptable according to societal norms. With Torah, however, this would be a mistake; the correct approach to accepting the Torah is: “*We will do, and (later) we will understand*” (*Shemos* 24:7). Therefore, the Torah was given in a desert, where nobody lives, to indicate that one needs to be truly “open-minded”—*i.e.* not influenced by one’s environment—to appreciate its values.

2.) The Torah was given in a desert to teach that *sharing* the Torah with those who currently find themselves in a spiritual desert is *fundamental* to Torah Judaism. It is not the case that the Torah can “also” reach those who are found in a spiritual wasteland; on the contrary, this is a *central* theme of the giving of the Torah: to transform every spiritual desert into a “civilized environment.”

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar* 5732 & 5734)

א ומליל יי עם משה במדבר סיני באחד מועד באחד להודש השני בשנה השנית לצאתם מארץ מצרים לאמר: ב שאו את ראש כל עדת בני ישראל למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות כל זכר לגוללתם: ג מן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא בישראל תפקדו אתם לעבאתם אתה ואהרן: ד ואתכם יהיו איש איש למטה איש ראש לבית אבתיו הוא: ה ואלה שמות האנשים אשר יעמדו אתכם לראובן אליצור בן שדיאור: ו לשמעון שלמיאל בן צורישידי: ז ליהודה נחשון בן עמינדב: ח ליששכר נתנאל בר צוער:

א ומליל יי עם משה במדבר סיני באחד מועד באחד להודש השני בשנה השנית לצאתם מארץ מצרים לאמר: ב שאו את ראש כל עדת בני ישראל למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות כל זכר לגוללתם: ג מן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא בישראל תפקדו אתם לעבאתם אתה ואהרן: ד ואתכם יהיו איש איש למטה איש ראש לבית אבתיו הוא: ה ואלה שמות האנשים אשר יעמדו אתכם לראובן אליצור בן שדיאור: ו לשמעון שלמיאל בן צורישידי: ז ליהודה נחשון בן עמינדב: ח ליששכר נתנאל בר צוער:

כ"ט

שצט ושצט: לבית אבתם. מי שאציו משצט אחד ואמו משצט אחר יקום על שצט אציו: לגוללתם. על ידי שקלים צקע לגוללת: (ג) כל יצא צבא. מגיד שאין יולא צצא פחות מכן עשרים: (ד) ואתכם יהיו. כשחפקדו אותם יהיו עמכם נשיא כל שצט ושצט:

(ח) וידבר. במדבר סיני באחד לחדש. מתוך חיבתן לפניו מוכה אותם כל שעה, כשילאו ממלרים מנאן, וכשנפלו צעגל מנאן לידע מנין הנותרים. כשצא להשרות שכינתו עליהן מנאן. צאחד צניסן הוקם המשכן, וצאחד צאירי מנאס: (צ) למשפחתם. דע מנין כל

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● We already know that the Jewish people were “in the Sinai Desert.” Why does verse 1 stress this point?

IBN EZRA: To inform us that once God’s Presence rested on the Tent of Meeting, Moshe no longer ascended Mount Sinai to speak to God.

● Why did God instruct Moshe to take a census of the Jewish people? (v. 1)

RASHI: Because they are precious to Him, He counts them all the time: [1] When they left Egypt, He counted them (*Shemos* 12:37); [2] when they sinned with the Calf, He counted them to know the number of the survivors (*Shemos* 32:28); [3] and when He rested His

Presence among them, He counted them—on the first of Nisan, the Tabernacle was erected, and on the first of Iyar [when this verse was said], He counted them.

MIDRASH: The Jewish people were counted on ten occasions: [1] Once when they went down to Egypt (*Devarim* 10:22); [2] once when they departed from Egypt (*Shemos* 12:37); [3] once in [the beginning of the] Book of Numbers; [4] once in connection with the Spies; [5] once in the days of Yehoshua, when the Land was divided; [6–7] Twice in the days of Sha’ul (*Sam.* 1 15:4; *ibid.* 11:8); [8] once in the days of David (*ibid.* 11 24:9); [9] once in the days of Ezra (*Ezra* 2:64); and [10] once in the future to come (see *Jer.* 33:13; *Tanchuma, Ki Sisa* 9).

TORAS MENACHEM

🕯 THE SINAI DESERT (v. 1)

When reading the opening verse of our *Parsha*, the reader will immediately be troubled as to why the Torah stresses that, “God spoke to Moshe in the Sinai Desert” [as *Ibn Ezra* asks]. For, at the literal level, there is no indication that the Jewish people had relocated after, “they arrived in the Sinai Desert” (*Shemos* 19:2). So why does one need to be informed that, “God spoke to Moshe in the Sinai Desert,” when one would not have thought otherwise?

It may appear that *Rashi*’s comments to verse 1 were written to answer a different question, namely, why the Jewish people were counted at this point. However, on closer examination we will see that *Rashi*’s comment answers the above question too, but *Rashi* did not deem it necessary to address the matter directly, as he presumed that the reader would understand it by himself, in light of one of *Rashi*’s earlier comments.

In *Parshas Bo* (*Shemos* 12:39), *Rashi* explains the significance of the fact that the Jewish people, “had not made provisions for themselves,” when departing Egypt: “This tells the praise of the Jewish people. They did not say, ‘How can we go into the desert without provisions?’ Rather, they had

faith and they went. This is what is explicitly stated in the Prophets: ‘I remember the love of your youth, the love of your betrothal, when you followed Me into the desert, into a land that was not sown.’ (*Jer.* 2:2)”

With this in mind, the reader will instantly appreciate the connection with *Rashi*’s comment to our verse. *Rashi* says here that God counts the Jewish people “because they are precious to Him.” It therefore follows why the verse stresses that this occurred “in the Sinai Desert,” for it was running into the desert without provisions that initially aroused God’s love for the Jewish people which, in turn, caused them to be counted.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar* 5746)

🕯 “HE COUNTS THEM ALL THE TIME” (*RASHI*, v. 1)

Rashi’s comments to verse 1 appear to be self-contradictory. First he writes that since the Jewish people are precious to God, “He counts them all the time.” But then *Rashi* continues that God only counted the Jewish people on special occasions (“when they left Egypt... when they sinned with the calf... when He rested His Presence among them”), and not “all the time.”

🕎 THE CENSUS 🕎

I God spoke to Moshe in the Sinai Desert, in the Tent of Meeting, on the first (day) of the second month, in the second year after their exodus from the land of Egypt, saying:

² Take the sum of the entire congregation of the children of Israel (to ascertain the size of each of the tribal) families. (Those born to parents of two different tribes are considered to be part of) their father's house. (Take) a head-count (by counting each person's half-shekel donation and by) keeping a count of the names. ³ (Include in the census all those) from twenty years old and upwards, (i.e.) all who are fit to go out to the army in Israel. You and Aharon should count them, by their regiments.

⁴ (When you count,) there should be with you a (senior) person from each tribe, one who is head of (his tribe), his father's house. ⁵ These are the names of the men who should stand with you:

For Re'uvain, Elitzur the son of Shedai'ur.

⁶ For Shimon, Shelumiel the son of Tzurishadai.

⁷ For Yehudah, Nachshon the son of Aminadav.

TORAS MENACHEM

Furthermore, *Rashi* was surely familiar with the teaching of the **Midrash** that the Jewish people will only be counted ten times throughout history. So how could *Rashi* state that God "counts them *all the time*"?

THE EXPLANATION

God's affection is extended towards the Jewish people at all times. And since counting is a direct result of this affection, *Rashi* wrote, "Because they are precious to Him (which is all the time), He counts them all the time." In order to prove this point *Rashi* continued, "When they left Egypt, He counted them." This refers to the verse in *Parshas Bo*, which states: "The children of Israel journeyed from Ramses to Sukos, about six hundred thousand men" (*Shemos* 12:37). Since the Torah does not mention that any census took place, we can only presume that this number ("about six hundred thousand men") was counted by God Himself. This supports *Rashi's* assertion that "He counts them all the time," i.e. even when no actual census is taking place, God counts the Jewish people.

But how do we know that God's affection is extended to the Jewish people *all the time*, even when they do not act favorably in God's eyes? *Rashi* explains, "When they sinned with the Calf, He counted them." Clearly, if "they are [still] precious to Him," at such a difficult time, then God's affection evidently extends to the Jewish people "all the time."

However, this leaves us with a question: If God counts the Jewish people "all the time" in any case, why was an actual census required here in our *Parsha*? *Rashi* explains, "When He rested His Presence among them, He counted them." I.e. our *Parsha* speaks of a time when God openly and visibly expressed His affection for the Jewish people by causing His Presence to rest among them. Therefore, it was appropriate that, likewise, the Jewish people should be counted openly and visibly.

And similarly, all the ten countings enumerated in the *Midrash* were associated with special events, which necessitated a special counting.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar* 5745)

🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

The "Book of Numbers" acquired its name from the census which takes place here at the opening of the book (see *Yoma* 68b). While at first glance, head-counting may appear to be a rather simple, almost trivial pursuit, Chasidic thought explains that the census recorded here in our *Parsha* was a profound event which touched on the very core of the Jewish spirit.

When a group of people are counted, everybody is equal. No person is counted twice, however important he may be, and even the most insignificant person is counted once. What, then, are we actually counting? It is not our personalities, our talents, our wealth, our knowledge or our esteem; rather, we are counting our very *identities*. Thus when Jewish people are counted—says Chasidic thought—the "nucleus" of our Jewish identities (possessed by all Jews equally) is stimulated and brought to the surface.

This "nucleus" of Jewishness is responsible for the remarkable display of courage among countless Jewish people who, throughout

history, were threatened with death if they refused to renounce their Judaism. For a person who had dedicated his life to the practice of Judaism, one can understand that he might sacrifice his life because Judaism is his *raison d'être*. But logic would dictate that another person, less committed to Jewish practice, would surely be willing to "tolerate" a momentary lapse in observance to save his life. Even a very pious person could argue that he would later mend this temporary lapse with *teshuvah* (repentance)...

In fact, however, history has shown that countless Jews, from a broad cross-spectrum of backgrounds (including the non-observant) gave up their lives rather than transgress. Why? Because their Jewish "nucleus" is *always* alive; as *Rashi* writes, "He counts them *all the time*" (see *Classic Questions* to v. 1). And when this Godly spark comes to the surface, any Jew will naturally feel that his Jewish identity is so important that he is not willing to compromise it, even for a moment.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, p. 1ff)

ט לזבולן אליאב בן-חלון: י לבני יוסף
 לאפרים אלישמע בן-עמיהוד למנשה
 גמליאל בר פדהצור: יא לבנימן אבירן בר
 גדעוני: יב לרן אחיעזר בן-עמישדי: יג לאשר
 פנעיאל בן-עכרן: יד לרן אליוסף בן-דעואל: טו לנפתלי
 אחירע בן-עינן: טז אלה קריאי נק קרואי העדה נשיאי מטות
 אבותם ראשי אלפי ישראל הם: יז ויקח משה ואהרן את
 האנשים האלה אשר נקבו בשמות: יח ואת כל-העדה
 הקהילו באחד לחדש השני ויתילדו על-משפחתם לבית
 אבתם במספר שמות מן עשרים שנה ומעלה לגלגלתם:
 יט כאשר צוה יהוה את-משה ויפקדם במדבר סיני: ס ושני
 כ ויהיו בני-ראובן בכר ישראל תולדתם למשפחתם לבית
 אבתם במספר שמות לגלגלתם כל-זכר מן עשרים שנה
 ומעלה כל יצא צבא: כאפקדיהם למטה ראובן ששה
 וארבעים אלף וחמש מאות: פ כב לבני שמעון תולדתם
 למשפחתם לבית אבתם פקדיו במספר שמות לגלגלתם
 כל-זכר מן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: כג פקדיהם

ט לזבולן אליאב בן-חלון: י לבני יוסף
 לאפרים אלישמע בן-עמיהוד למנשה
 גמליאל בר פדהצור: יא לבנימן אבירן בר
 גדעוני: יב לרן אחיעזר בן-עמישדי: יג לאשר
 פנעיאל בן-עכרן: יד לרן אליוסף בן-דעואל: טו לנפתלי
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 למשפחתם לבית אבתם פקדיו במספר שמות לגלגלתם
 כל-זכר מן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: כג פקדיהם

כ"ט

(טז) אלה קרואי העדה. הכקראים לכל דבר חשיבות שצדקה: לו כאן צשמות: (יח) ויתילדו על משפחתם. הכזאו ספרי
 (יז) האנשים האלה. את שנים עשר נשיאים הללו: אשר נקבו. יחוסיהם ועידי חזקת לידתם כל אחד ואחד, להתייחס על השצט:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What is the rationale behind the first tribal sequence? (v. 5-15)

IBN EZRA: The children of Leah come first (Re'uvain, Shimon, Yehudah, Yissachar and Zevulun), followed by Rochel's descendants (Efrayim and Menasheh—Yosef's sons—and Binyamin. Efrayim is mentioned before Menasheh, even though the latter was the firstborn, because Ya'akov blessed Efrayim first [Bereishit 48:20]). Dan follows, for he was the firstborn of Rochel's handmaid. Then Asher, because in Dan's "division," Asher was adjacent to Dan (see below 2:27). Gad follows, since he was the firstborn of Leah's handmaid; and finally, Naftali.

THREE TRIBAL SEQUENCES												
<i>In Parshas Bamidbar, the names of the twelve Tribes are listed on three occasions, each time in a different sequence.</i>												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1:5-15	RE'UVAIN	SHIMON	YEHUDAH	YISSACHAR	ZEVULUN	EFRAYIM	MENASHEH	BINYAMIN	DAN	ASHER	GAD	NAFTALI
1:20-43	RE'UVAIN	SHIMON	GAD	YEHUDAH	YISSACHAR	ZEVULUN	EFRAYIM	MENASHEH	BINYAMIN	DAN	ASHER	NAFTALI
2:3-31	YEHUDAH	YISSACHAR	ZEVULUN	RE'UVAIN	SHIMON	GAD	EFRAYIM	MENASHEH	BINYAMIN	DAN	ASHER	NAFTALI

⁸ For Yissachar, Nesanel the son of Tzu'ar.

⁹ For Zevulun, Eliav the son of Chailon.

¹⁰ For the children of Yosef: for Efrayim, Elishama the son of Amihud; for Menasheh, Gamliail the son of Pedatzur.

¹¹ For Binyamin, Avidan the son of Gidoni.

¹² For Dan, Achi'ezer the son of Amishadai.

¹³ For Asher, Pagiail the son of Ochron.

¹⁴ For Gad, Elyasaf the son of Du'ail.

¹⁵ For Naftali, Achira the son of Ainan.

¹⁶ These are the ones (to be) summoned by the congregation (for every important matter), the leaders of their fathers' tribes. They are the heads of Israel's thousands.

¹⁷ Moshe and Aharon took these men, who had been indicated (by God to Moshe) by (their) names.

¹⁸ They assembled the entire congregation on the first day of the second month and verified their family (tribal) lineage, according to their paternal houses, keeping a count of the names—a head-count of every male from twenty years old and upward.

¹⁹ Moshe counted them in the Sinai desert, just as God had commanded him.

🌀 THE CENSUS RESULTS 🌀

1:20
SECOND
READING

The (census of) Re'uvain's descendants, Yisra'el's firstborn, (included) those whose family lineage had been verified according to their paternal houses, keeping a count of the names (who gave half a shekel) per head. (This constituted) every male from twenty years and upwards, all those eligible for the army. ²¹ Those counted from the tribe of Re'uvain were forty-six thousand, five hundred.

²² For (the census of) Shimon's descendants, those whose family lineage had been verified according to their paternal houses (were included), keeping a count of the names (who gave half a shekel) per head. (This constituted) every male from twenty years and upwards, all those eligible for the army.

²³ Those counted from the tribe of Shimon were fifty-nine thousand, three hundred.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What is the rationale behind the second tribal sequence? (v. 20-43)

IBN EZRA: Re'uvain comes first, because he is the firstborn, followed by Shimon, who was born straight after him. Then follows Gad, who was the firstborn of Leah's handmaid. These three tribes together constitute an entire "division of regiments," the "Camp of Re'uvain" (see below 2:10-17). This was then followed by the other "divisions" of Yehudah (Yehudah, Yissachar, Zevulun), Efrayim (Efrayim, Menasheh, Binyamin), and Dan (Dan, Asher, Naftali).

MALBIM: Since the tribes are listed here according to the sequence of their respective "divisions," one would have expected Yehudah to come first (see below 2:3ff). Therefore, the Torah deemed it necessary to explain why Re'uvain was chosen to be listed first on this occasion, because he was "Yisra'el's firstborn" (v. 20).

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🌀 THE SEQUENCE OF THE TRIBES (1:5-2:31)

In *Parshas Bamidbar*, the Torah sets out a detailed list of all twelve tribes on no less than three occasions. At the opening of the *Parsha*, the tribes are mentioned in connection with the leaders of each tribe who were authorized to participate in the census with Moshe and Aharon (1:5-15). Then, as the census results are recorded, the tribes are listed again (1:20-43). And finally, when the details of the encampment are given, the tribes are listed once more.

On each of these three occasions the tribes are listed in a different sequence (see table on adjacent page), and commentators such as **Ibn Ezra**

[and **Malbim**] seek to fathom the Torah's logic in choosing these different sequences.

Rashi, however, does not appear to explain this matter, even though it is problematic at the literal level. Presumably, *Rashi* felt that the reader would comprehend the matter for himself, with simple logic and a knowledge of *Rashi's* prior comments. What, then, is the explanation at the literal level?

THE FIRST TRIBAL SEQUENCE

The first sequence, in verses 5-15, is not actually a list of tribes, but rather, of tribal *leaders*. Thus, it cannot be compared to the other two

אלפין ותלת מאה: כד לבני גד תולדתהון לזרעיתהון לבית אבהתהון במנין שמהן מבר עשרין שנין ולעלא כל נפק חילא: כה מניניהון לשבטא דגד ארבעין וחמשא אלפין ושית מאה וחמשי: כו לבני יהודה תולדתהון לזרעיתהון לבית אבהתהון במנין שמהן מבר עשרין שנין ולעלא כל נפק חילא: כז מניניהון לשבטא דיהודה שבעין וארבעא אלפין ושית מאה: כח לבני יששכר תולדתהון לזרעיתהון לבית אבהתהון במנין שמהן מבר עשרין שנין ולעלא כל נפק חילא: כט מניניהון לשבטא דיששכר חמשיין וארבעא אלפין וארבע מאה: ל לבני זבולן תולדתהון לזרעיתהון לבית אבהתהון במנין שמהן מבר עשרין שנין ולעלא כל נפק חילא: לא מניניהון לשבטא דזבולן חמשיין ושבע אלפין וארבע מאה: לב לבני יוסף אפרים תולדתהון לזרעיתהון לבית אבהתהון במנין שמהן מבר עשרין שנין ולעלא כל נפק חילא: לג מניניהון לשבטא דאפרים ארבעין אלפין וחמש מאה: לד לבני מנשה תולדתהון לזרעיתהון לבית אבהתהון במנין שמהן מבר עשרין שנין ולעלא כל נפק חילא: לה מניניהון לשבטא דמנשה תלתין ותריין אלפין ומאתין: לו לבני בנימן תולדתהון לזרעיתהון לבית אבהתהון במנין שמהן מבר עשרין שנין ולעלא כל נפק חילא: לז מניניהון לשבטא דבנימן תלתין וחמשא אלפין וארבע מאה: לח לבני דן תולדתהון לזרעיתהון לבית אבהתהון במנין שמהן מבר עשרין שנין ולעלא כל נפק חילא:

למטה שמעון תשעה וחמשים אלה ושלוש מאות: פ כד לבני גד תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות מן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: כה פקדיהם למטה גד חמשה וארבעים אלה ושש מאות וחמשים: פ כו לבני יהודה תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות מן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: כז פקדיהם למטה יהודה ארבעה ושבעים אלה ושש מאות: פ כח לבני יששכר תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות מן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: כט פקדיהם למטה יששכר ארבעה וחמשים אלה וארבע מאות: פ ל לבני זבולן תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות מן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: לא פקדיהם למטה זבולן שבעה וחמשים אלה וארבע מאות: פ לב לבני יוסף אפרים תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות מן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: לג פקדיהם למטה אפרים ארבעים אלה וחמש מאות: פ לד לבני מנשה תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות מן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: לה פקדיהם למטה מנשה שנים ושלושים אלה ומאתים: פ לו לבני בנימן תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות מן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא: לז פקדיהם למטה בנימן חמשה ושלושים אלה וארבע מאות: פ לח לבני דן תולדתם למשפחתם לבית אבתם במספר שמות מן עשרים שנה ומעלה כל יצא צבא:

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sequences, for the precise order here may reflect qualities of the leaders themselves, rather than the tribes.

THE SECOND TRIBAL SEQUENCE

The second sequence begins with Re'uvain, since (as verse 20 testifies) he was "Yisra'el's firstborn." The fact that Shimon follows appears to be logical, since Shimon was born directly after Re'uvain. The difficulty

concerns the next tribe, Gad (v. 24-25), which appears to be out of order with the birth of Ya'akov's sons, on which basis Yehudah should follow next.*

However, if we bear in mind that the current census was aimed at counting only "those eligible for the army" (v. 20), then we can appreciate why Gad's name appears so high on the list. For Gad exhibited great military prowess, as Rashi informed the reader in *Parshas Vayechi*: "All his

* Since Levi was not included in this census. Even though we are not informed that "the Levites...were not counted with them," until verse 47 below, the reader is already familiar with Levi's exclusion from Rashi's comment to *Bereishis* 50:13.

²⁴ For (the census of) Gad's descendants, those whose family lineage had been verified according to their paternal houses (were included), keeping a count of the names. (This constituted) every male from twenty years and upwards, all those eligible for the army. ²⁵ Those counted from the tribe of Gad were forty-five thousand, six hundred and fifty.

²⁶ For (the census of) Yehudah's descendants, those whose family lineage had been verified according to their paternal houses (were included), keeping a count of the names. (This constituted) every male from twenty years and upwards, all those eligible for the army. ²⁷ Those counted from the tribe of Yehudah were seventy-four thousand, six hundred.

²⁸ For (the census of) Yissachar's descendants, those whose family lineage had been verified according to their paternal houses (were included), keeping a count of the names. (This constituted) every male from twenty years and upwards, all those eligible for the army. ²⁹ Those counted from the tribe of Yissachar were fifty-four thousand, four hundred.

³⁰ For (the census of) Zevulun's descendants, those whose family lineage had been verified according to their paternal houses (were included), keeping a count of the names. (This constituted) every male from twenty years and upwards, all those eligible for the army. ³¹ Those counted from the tribe of Zevulun were fifty-seven thousand, four hundred.

³² For (the census of) Yosef's descendants:

For (the census of) Efrayim's descendants, those whose family lineage had been verified according to their paternal houses (were included), keeping a count of the names. (This constituted) every male from twenty years and upwards, all those eligible for the army. ³³ Those counted from the tribe of Efrayim were forty thousand, five hundred.

³⁴ For (the census of) Menasheh's descendants, those whose family lineage had been verified according to their paternal houses (were included), keeping a count of the names. (This constituted) every male from twenty years and upwards, all those eligible for the army. ³⁵ Those counted from the tribe of Menasheh were thirty-two thousand, two hundred.

³⁶ For (the census of) Binyamin's descendants, those whose family lineage had been verified according to their paternal houses (were included), keeping a count of the names. (This constituted) every male from twenty years and upwards, all those eligible for the army. ³⁷ Those counted from the tribe of Binyamin were thirty-five thousand, four hundred.

³⁸ For (the census of) Dan's descendants, those whose family lineage had been verified according to their paternal houses (were included), keeping a count of the names. (This constituted) every male from

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troops will return in their tracks... and not one man will be missing from them" (Bereishis 49:19).

But if military prowess is to be emphasized, why was the tribe of Gad not placed second in the list (immediately after "Yisra'el's firstborn") rather than the tribe of Shimon?

Again, *Rashi* did not deem this to require further commentary. The reader will already be familiar with the fact that Shimon (and Levi) demonstrated awesome powers in battle when they decimated the entire male population of Shechem (Bereishis 34:25).

Presumably, Shimon's descendants would have inherited some of these qualities and would also be exceptionally strong militarily. Therefore, it was appropriate to list Shimon before Gad, since Shimon had *both*

qualities of exceptional military prowess, and being the second most senior member of Ya'akov's family.

Yehudah then follows since his military power is also stated explicitly in scripture: "Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies" (ibid. 49:8).

Having exhausted the list of those known for their military prowess, the Torah then continues with the remaining children of Leah—Yissachar and Zevulun; then the tribes stemming from Rochel's children: Efrayim, Menasheh**, and Binyamin; and finally the children of the handmaids: Dan, Asher and Naftali.***

THE THIRD TRIBAL SEQUENCE

The key difference between the second list of tribes in our *Parsha* and the third list is that the former is a census made in preparation for war, to

**Efrayim before Menasheh, even though Menasheh was the firstborn of Yosef, since Ya'akov blessed Efrayim first (Bereishis 48:20).

***Although Naftali was born before Asher, Naftali is placed last here to reflect the sequence of tribes in the "divisions" (see below 2:29), a concept that the reader is already familiar with from *Rashi's* comment to Bereishis 50:13.

לט מְנַיִיחֵהוּן לְשִׁבְטָא דְדָן שְׁתִּין וּתְרִין אֲלָפִין וּשְׁבַע מֵאָה: מ לְבְנֵי אֲשֶׁר תּוֹלְדֵתְהוּן לְזִרְעֵיתְהוּן לְבֵית אֲבֹהֵתְהוּן בְּמִנְיַן שְׁמֵהּן מִבְּר עֶשְׂרִין שָׁנִין וְלַעֲלֹא כָל נֶפֶק חִילָא: מא מְנַיִיחֵהוּן לְשִׁבְטָא דְאֶשֶׁר אַרְבַּעִין וְחָד אֲלָפִין וְחֲמֵשׁ מֵאָה: מב בְּנֵי נִפְתָּלִי תּוֹלְדֵתְהוּן לְזִרְעֵיתְהוּן לְבֵית אֲבֹהֵתְהוּן בְּמִנְיַן שְׁמֵהּן מִבְּר עֶשְׂרִין שָׁנִין וְלַעֲלֹא כָל נֶפֶק חִילָא: מג מְנַיִיחֵהוּן לְשִׁבְטָא דְנִפְתָּלִי חֲמִשִּׁין וְתֵלַת אֲלָפִין וְאַרְבַּע מֵאָה: מד אֲלֵין מְנַיִיחֵהוּן דֵּי מְנַיִ מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן וְכֹהֲנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל תְּרֵי עֶשְׂרִין גּוֹבְרִין נִבְרָא חָד לְבֵית אֲבֹהֵתְהוּן הוּוּ: מה וְהוּוּ כָּל מְנַיִי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְבֵית אֲבֹהֵתְהוּן מִבְּר עֶשְׂרִין שָׁנִין וְלַעֲלֹא כָל נֶפֶק חִילָא בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל: מו וְהוּוּ כָּל מְנַיִיחֵהוּן שִׁית מֵאָה וְתֵלַת אֲלָפִין וְחֲמֵשׁ מֵאָה וְחֲמִשִּׁין: מז וְלֹאֵי לְשִׁבְטָא דְאֲבֹהֵתְהוּן לֹא אֲתִמְנִיאוּ בִּינֵיהוּן: מח וּמְלִיל יֵי עִם מֹשֶׁה לְמִימְרָ: מט בְּרַם יַת שְׁבָטָא דְלוֹי לֹא תִמְנִי וְיַת חֲשׁוּבְנֵהוּן לֹא תִקְבֵּל בְּגוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: נ וְאַתְּ מְנִי יַת לֹאֵי עַל מִשְׁבָּנָא דְסַהֲדוּתָא וְעַל כָּל מְנוּהֵי וְעַל כָּל דֵּי לֹה אֲנִינֵי וְיִטְלוּן יַת מִשְׁבָּנָא וְיַת כָּל מְנוּהֵי

לט פְּקֻדֵיהֶם לְמִטָּה הֵן שְׁנַיִם וְשָׁשִׁים אֲלֶף וּשְׁבַע מֵאוֹת: פ מ לְבְנֵי אֲשֶׁר תּוֹלְדֵתְם לְמִשְׁפַּחְתֶּם לְבֵית אֲבֹתְכֶם בְּמִסְפַּר שְׁמֹת מִבְּר עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וְלַעֲלֹא כָּל יֵצֵא צָבָא: מא פְּקֻדֵיהֶם לְמִטָּה אֲשֶׁר אַחַד וְאַרְבַּעִים אֲלֶף וְחֲמֵשׁ מֵאוֹת: פ מב בְּנֵי נִפְתָּלִי תּוֹלְדֵתְם לְמִשְׁפַּחְתֶּם לְבֵית אֲבֹתְכֶם בְּמִסְפַּר שְׁמֹת מִבְּר עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וְלַעֲלֹא כָּל יֵצֵא צָבָא: מג פְּקֻדֵיהֶם לְמִטָּה נִפְתָּלִי שְׁלֹשָׁה וְחֲמִשִּׁים אֲלֶף וְאַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת: פ מד אֵלֶּה הַפְּקֻדִים אֲשֶׁר פָּקַד מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁנַיִם עֶשְׂרִים אִישׁ אִישׁ-אֶחָד לְבֵית-אֲבֹתָיו הָיוּ: מה וַיְהִי כֹל-פְּקוּדֵי בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל לְבֵית אֲבֹתָם מִבְּר עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וְלַעֲלֹא כָּל-יֵצֵא צָבָא בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל: מז וַיְהִי כֹל-הַפְּקֻדִים שְׁשֵׁי-מֵאוֹת אֲלֶף וּשְׁלֹשָׁת אֲלָפִים וְחֲמִשׁ מֵאוֹת וְחֲמִשִּׁים: מו וְהַלְוִיִּם לְמִטָּה אֲבֹתָם לֹא הִתְפַּקְדוּ בְּתוֹכָם: פ מה וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: מט אַךְ אֶת-מִטָּה לְוִי לֹא תִפְקַד וְאֶת-רֹאשָׁם לֹא תִשָּׂא בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: נ וְאַתָּה הַפְּקַד אֶת-הַלְוִיִּם עַל-מִשְׁכַּן הָעֵדוּת וְעַל כָּל-כְּלָיו וְעַל

כ"ט

עשרים שנה ומעלה שימותו צמדבר, אמר אל יהיו לנו צכלל, לפי שחס שלי, שלא טעו צעגל²: (ג) ואתה הפקד את הלויים. כחרגומו מני, לשון מנוי

(מט) אך את מטה לוי לא תפקד. כדאי הוא לגיון של מלך להיות נמנה לצדו¹. דבר אחר, לפי הקצ"ח שעתידה לעמוד גזרה על כל הנמנין מבין

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the Torah use the phrase, “Naftali’s descendants” (v. 42), in contrast to the above: “For Shimon’s descendants... For Gad’s descendants etc.”? (v. 22, 24)

ARIZAL: Those taking the census visited the entire camp and wrote down the names in a ledger together with a note of the tribe from which each person came. After all six-hundred thousand names had been collected in one ledger, the names were transferred into separate individual ledgers for each tribe. This was done by reading through the original ledger and when a name from the tribe of

Re’uvain was reached they would declare, “Include so-and-so in the ledger for Re’uvain’s descendants.” Then that name would be crossed off the original ledger and placed on a separate ledger. The process was then repeated for each subsequent tribe.

When the final tribe, Naftali, was reached, a new ledger did not have to be made, as the census for this tribe could simply be counted from the names that remained on the original ledger. Thus, since they did not have to declare, “Include so-and-so in the ledger for Naftali’s descendants,” the Torah omits this term (*Likutei Torah of Arizal*).

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evaluate the sizes of the respective armies etc., whereas the latter is the precise formation of armies that the Jewish people adopted when actually going to war, i.e. according to their divisions.

When going to war, a nation is led by its king (c.f. Bereishis 14:9). Thus, in the third tribal sequence, Yehudah is placed first, as the rights of sovereignty were taken from Re’uvain and given to Yehudah (*Rashi to Bereishis 49:3-4*).

The remainder of this sequence does not need to be explained by *Rashi*, since we are already familiar with it from Ya’akov’s communication to his sons concerning the carrying of his coffin: “He designated a position for

The Last Word

It would be a good idea to publicize the interpretation of the *Arizal* to verse 42 (see *Classic Questions*), which enlightens us as to how the census took place; particularly as in doing so one is furthering the goal of spreading the teachings of the *Arizal*, which hastens the Redemption.

(Sichas Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar 5747)

twenty years and upwards, all those eligible for the army.³⁹ Those counted from the tribe of Dan were sixty-two thousand, seven hundred.

⁴⁰ For (the census of) Asher's descendants, those whose family lineage had been verified according to their paternal houses (were included), keeping a count of the names. (This constituted) every male from twenty years and upwards, all those eligible for the army.⁴¹ Those counted from the tribe of Asher were forty-one thousand, five hundred.

⁴² (The census of) Naftali's descendants (included) those whose family lineage had been verified according to their paternal houses, keeping a count of the names. (This constituted) every male from twenty years and upwards, all those eligible for the army.⁴³ Those counted from the tribe of Naftali were fifty-three thousand, four hundred.

⁴⁴ These were the numbers counted by Moshe, Aharon and the twelve men who were leaders of Israel, one from each paternal house.⁴⁵ Those included in the census were all the children of Israel from twenty years and upwards, all those eligible for the army of Israel, (separated) according to their paternal houses.⁴⁶ The sum of all those who were counted was six hundred and three thousand, five hundred and fifty.

⁴⁷ But the Levites, (identified) according to their father's tribe, were not counted with them.

🕎 THE ROLE OF THE LEVITES 🕎

1:48 **G**od spoke to Moshe saying:⁴⁹ "Only, do not count the tribe of Levi; do not calculate their number together with the children of Israel."

- ⁵⁰ "You should appoint the Levites (to be in charge) of the Tabernacle of the Testimony, over all its vessels and everything pertaining to it. They will carry the Tabernacle, they will be its ministers, and they will camp around the Tabernacle.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why was the tribe of Levi not counted along with the other tribes? (v. 49)

RASHI: The King's legion deserves to be counted on its own. Another explanation: God foresaw that a decree would be passed in the future against all those counted from twenty years and upward, condemning them to die in the desert. He said, "Let these [Levites] not be included! They are Mine, for they did not err with the [Golden] Calf."

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them: three at the east, and likewise in all four directions. Their places were fixed here in the same order as their arrangement as the camp of divisions traveled" (Rashi to Bereishis 50:13).

Thus, once again the high level of precision in Rashi's commentary is evident, how Rashi refrains from "spoon-feeding" the reader with any explanation which can be understood with simple logic and a knowledge of Rashi's prior comments.

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar 5732*)

🕎 THE TRIBE OF LEVI (v. 49)

In his commentary to verse 49, Rashi offers two explanations why the tribe of Levi was excluded from the main census of the Jewish people:

1.) Because they are an elite group ("the King's legion") and therefore deserve to be counted separately.

2.) Those included in the main census would later be subject to a decree preventing them from entering the Land of Israel. Therefore, God spared the Levites from being counted.

How do these two interpretations clarify our verse, at the literal level?

🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

The primary role of the Levites was Torah study: "They were singled out...to teach the public about His morally upright ways and fair laws" (Rambam, end of Laws of the Sabbatical and Jubilee Years). By contrast, the spiritual path of most Jewish people is dominated by the practical observance of mitzvos.

Mitzvos were given in a fixed number (613), and have strict rules concerning their observance. Torah on the other hand is unlimited, in the sense that it transcends the confines of this world, so that "if a person studies the laws of a burnt-offering it is as if he sacrificed a burnt-offering" (end of Tractate Menachos).

Thus the Levites, whose spiritual path was Torah, were not counted (v. 49 & Rashi), since counting is an expression of finitude and limitation, more suited to the rest of the Jewish people.

(Based on Likutei Sichos, vol. 33, p. 6ff.)

* See also Sichas Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar 5744.

ואננו ישמשניה וסחור סחור למשכנא ישראל: נא ובמטל משכנא ישראל יתיה לנאי ובמשרי משכנא יקימו יתיה לנאי וחילוני דיקרב יתקטל: נב וישראל בני ישראל גבר על משרהי וגבר על טקסה לחיליהון: נג ולנאי ישראל סחור סחור למשכנא דסהדותא ולא יהי רוגזא על פנשתא דבני ישראל וישראל לנאי ית מטרת משכנא דסהדותא: נד ועברו בני ישראל ככל די פקיד יי ית משה בן עברו: א ומליל יי עם משה ועם אהרן למימר: ב גבר על טקסיה באתין לבית אבהתהון ישראל בני ישראל מלקבל סחור סחור למשכנא זמנא ישראל: ג ודי שרן קדומא מדינתא טקס משרית יהודה לחיליהון ורבא לבני יהודה נחשון בר עמינדב: ד וחילה ומניניהון שבעין וארבעה אלפין ושית מאה: ה ודי שרן סמיכין עלוהי שבטא דיששכר ורבא לבני יששכר נתנאל בר צוער: ו וחילה ומניניהון חמשין וארבעה אלפין וארבע מאה: ז שבטא דזבולן ורבא לבני זבולן אליאב בר

כל-אשר-לו המה ישאו את-המשכן ואת-כל-כליו והם ישרתהו וסביב למשכן יחנו: נא ובנסע המשכן יורידו אתו הלויים ובהנת' המשכן יקימו אתו הלויים והזר הקרב יומת: נב וחנו בני ישראל איש על-מחנהו ואיש על-דגלו לעבאתם: נג והלויים יחנו סביב למשכן העדת ולא יהיה קצף על-עדת בני ישראל ושמרו הלויים את-משמרת משכן העדות: נד ויעשו בני ישראל ככל אשר צוה יהוה את-משה בן עשו: פ [שלישין] ב א וידבר יהוה אל-משה ואל-אהרן לאמר: ב איש על-דגלו באתת לבית אבתם יחנו בני ישראל מנגד סביב לאהל-מועד יחנו: ג והתנים קדמה מזרחה דגל מחנה יהודה לעבאתם ונשיא לבני יהודה נחשון בן-עמינדב: ד ועבאו ופקדיהם ארבעה ושבעים אלף וישש מאות: ה והתנים עליו מטה יששכר ונשיא לבני יששכר נתנאל בן-צוער: ו ועבאו ופקדו ארבעה וחמשים אלף וארבע מאות: ז מטה זבולן

*ס"א והלויים

רש"י

מפס כצועס תלויה צו. כצעו של זה לא כצעו של זה, כצע כל אחד כגון אצנו הקצועס צחשן, ומתוך כך יכיר כל אחד את דגלו. דבר אחר צאותות לצית אצותס, צאות שמסר להס יעקב אציהס כשנשאוכו ממלריס, שנאמר ויעשו בניו לו כן כאשר צוה⁶, יהודה ויששכר וזבולן ישאוכו מן המזרח, וראובן ושמעון וגד מן הדרום וכו', כדאיתא בתנחומא צפרשע ז'⁷: מנגד. מרחוק מיל, כמו שנאמר ציושע⁸ אך רחוק יהיה ציניכס וציניו כאלפיהס אמה, שיוכלו לצא צצצת, משה ואהרן וצניו וכלויהס חוניהס צסמוך לו⁹: (ג) קדמה. לפניהס הקרויה קדס, ואיזו זו, רוח

שררה על דבר שהוא ממונה עליו, כמו¹ ויפקד המלך פקידים²: (נא) יורידו אתו. כתרגומו יפרקון, כשצאין לנסע צמדבר ממסע למסע היו מפרקון אותו מהקמתו, ונושאים אותו עד מקום אשר ישכון שס הענן ויחנו שס ומקימין אותו: והזר הקרב. לעצדתס זו: יומת. צידי שמיס³: (צ) ואיש על דגלו. כמו שהדגליס סדוריס צספר זה, שלשה צצטים לכל דגל: (ג) ולא יהיה קצף. אס תעשה כמלכות לא יהיה קלף, ואס לאו שיוכנסו זריס צצצדותס זו יהיה קלף, כמו שצמניו צמעשה קרח⁴ כי ילח הקלף וגוי⁵: (צ) באתת. כל דגל יהיה לו אות

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THE EXPLANATION

The phrase, "Do not count the tribe of Levi" in verse 49, is difficult to understand, since the Levites were counted in a census of their own (below 3:14ff). To overcome this problem, the verse could be understood in either of two ways: a.) By reading the end of the verse as a clarification of the beginning: "Do not count the tribe of Levi...with the children of Israel," i.e., You should count the Levites, but not together with the other children of Israel. They are to have a private census; or b.) The phrase "Do not count the Levites" could be read literally and independently, that the Levites were not physically counted at all. Their counting was unlike any other, as Rashi explains below: "Moshe went and stood at the entrance to the tent, and the Divine Presence preceded him. A heavenly voice came out of the tent, saying, 'There are so-and-so many babies in this tent.'" (Rashi to 3:16 below). Since the counting was actually carried out by a "heavenly voice," it could be argued that the Levites were not actually counted by Moshe (though Moshe did mathematically

process the results that he received from the heavenly voice, as the verse continues, "Do not calculate their number together with the children of Israel"). These two ways of understanding the verse correspond to Rashi's two interpretations: i.) "The King's legion deserves to be counted on its own," i.e. the Levites were counted, but due to their importance, they were not counted with the rest of the Jewish people. According to this interpretation, the verse is read, "Do not count the tribe of Levi... (together) with the children of Israel." ii.) The Levites were not counted at all, and therefore they were not subject to the decree against entering the Land. According to this interpretation, the verse is read, "Do not count the tribe of Levi [at all; and even when you are told the number in each tent from the heavenly voice] do not calculate their [total] number together with the children of Israel." (Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar 5726; Likutei Sichos vol. 33, p. 1ff.)

- ⁵¹ “When the Tabernacle is set to travel, the Levites should dismantle it, and when the Tabernacle makes a (new) encampment, the Levites should erect it. Any unauthorized person who approaches (to participate in this task) must be put to death.
- ⁵² “When the children of Israel encamp, each man should be regimented in his own (specific) camp (for his tribe), and (likewise) each man should be in his own (general) division (consisting of three tribes). ⁵³ But the Levites (alone) should encamp around the Tabernacle of the Testimony, so that there will be no (Divine) anger upon the congregation of the children of Israel. The Levites (alone) will guard the Tabernacle of the Testimony.”

⁵⁴ The children of Israel acted in accordance with everything that God had commanded Moshe. They did so (precisely).

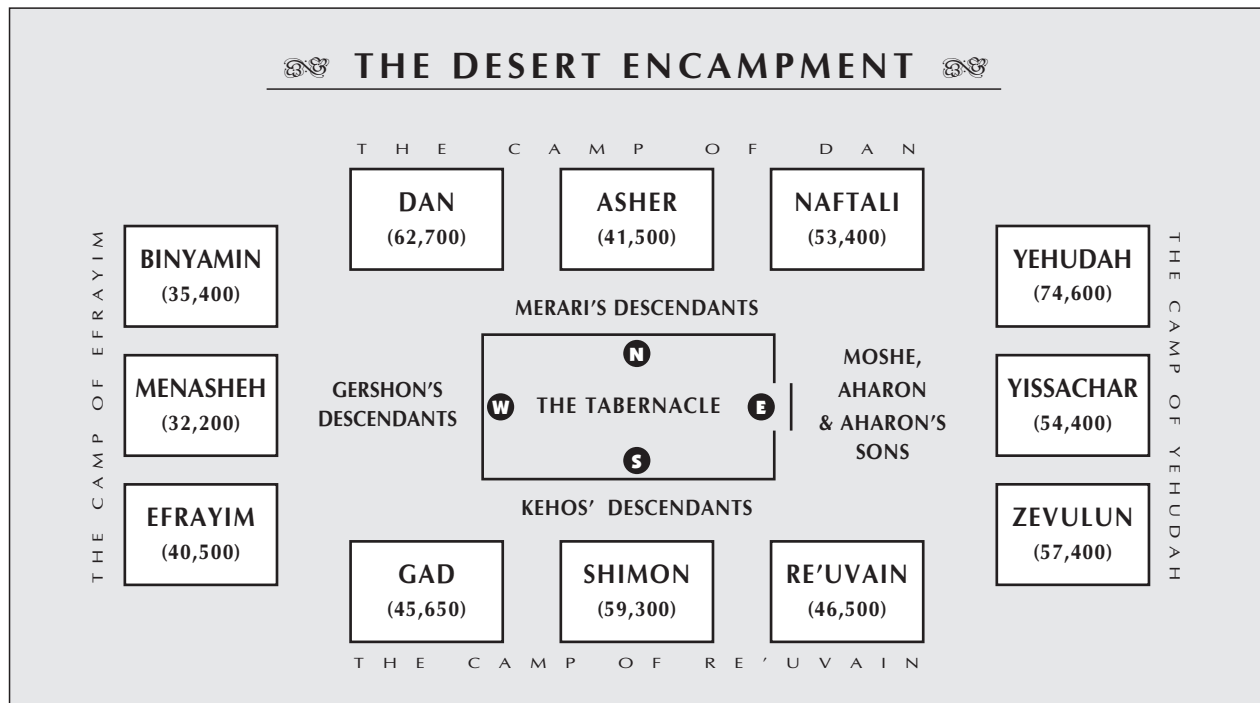
🕍 DETAILS OF THE ENCAMPMENT 🕍

2
THIRD
READING

God spoke to Moshe and Aharon, saying: ² The children of Israel should encamp (in such a way that) each man is in his own division (of three tribes) signposted (by a flag which contains the same color as the gemstone in the High Priest’s breastplate that is identified with) his father’s house. They should encamp around the Tent of Meeting, at a distance (of one mil).

³ Those camping to the east, (which is considered to be) the front, were the division of regiments (of three tribes, known as) “the Camp of Yehudah”:

- The leader of Yehudah’s descendants was Nachshon, the son of Aminadav. ⁴ The head-count of his regiment was seventy-four thousand, six hundred.
- ⁵ Camping alongside was the tribe of Yissachar. The leader of Yissachar’s descendants was Nesanel, the son of Tzu’ar. ⁶ The head-count of his regiment was fifty-four thousand, four hundred.



חילון: ה וחילה ומנינהו חמשין ושבעא אלפין וארבע מאה: ט כל מניניא למשרית יהודה מאה ותמנן ושתא אלפין וארבע מאה לחיליהון בקדמיתא נטליו: י טקס משרית ראובן דרומא לחיליהון ורבא לבני ראובן אליצור בר שדיאור: יא וחילה ומנינהו ארבעין ושתא אלפין וחמש מאה: יב ודי שרן סמיכין עלוהי שבטא דשמעון ורבא לבני שמעון שלמיאל בר צורישידי: יג וחילה ומנינהון חמשין ותשע אלפין ותלת מאה: יד ושבטא דגד ורבא לבני גד אליסף בר רעואל: טו וחילה ומנינהון ארבעין וחמשא אלפין ושית מאה וחמשין: טז כל מניניא למשרית ראובן מאה וחמשין וחד אלפין וארבע מאה וחמשין לחיליהון בתנינתא נטליו: יז ונטל משפן זמנא משרית לואי בנו משריתא קמא דשרן בן נטליו גבר על אחרה למקסיהון: יח טקס משרית אפרים לחיליהון מערבא ורבא לבני אפרים אלישמע בר עמיהוד: יט וחילה ומנינהון ארבעין אלפין וחמש מאה: כ ודי סמיכין עלוהי שבטא דמנשה ורבא לבני מנשה גמליאל בר פדהצור: כא וחילה ומנינהון תלתין ותריין אלפין ומאתן: כב ושבטא דבנימין ורבא לבני בנימין אבידן בר גדעוני: כג וחילה ומנינהון תלתין וחמשא אלפין וארבע מאה: כד כל מניניא למשרית אפרים מאה ותמנן אלפין ומאה לחיליהון בתליתא נטליו: כה טקס משרית דן צפונא לחיליהון ורבא לבני דן אחיעזר בר עמישדי: כו וחילה ומנינהון שתין ותריין אלפין ושבע מאה: כז ודי שרן סמיכין עלוהי שבטא דאשר ורבא לבני אשר פגעיאל בר עכרון: כח וחילה ומנינהון ארבעין וחד אלפין וחמש מאה: כט ושבטא דנפתלי ורבא לבני

ונשיא לבני זבולן אליאב בן-חלץ: ה וצבאו ופקדיו שבעה וחמשים אלף וארבע מאות: ט כל-הפקדים למחנה יהודה מאת אלף ושמונים אלף וששת-אלפים וארבע-מאות לצבאתם ראשנה יסעו: ס דגל מחנה ראובן תימנה לצבאתם ונשיא לבני ראובן אליצור בן-שדיאור: יא וצבאו ופקדיו ששה וארבעים אלף וחמש מאות: יב והחונם עליו מטה שמעון ונשיא לבני שמעון שלמיאל בן-צורישידי: יג וצבאו ופקדיהם תשעה וחמשים אלף ושלוש מאות: יד ומטה גד ונשיא לבני גד אליסף בן-רעואל: טו וצבאו ופקדיהם חמשה וארבעים אלף ושש מאות וחמשים: טז כל-הפקדים למחנה ראובן מאת אלף ואחד וחמשים אלף וארבע-מאות וחמשים לצבאתם ושנים יסעו: ס יז ונסע אהל-מועד מחנה הלויים בתוך המחנת כאשר יחנו בן יסעו איש על-ידו לדגליהם: ס יח דגל מחנה אפרים לצבאתם ימה ונשיא לבני אפרים אלישמע בן-עמיהוד: יט וצבאו ופקדיהם ארבעים אלף וחמש מאות: כ ועליו מטה מנשה ונשיא לבני מנשה גמליאל בן-פדהצור: כא וצבאו ופקדיהם שנים ושלושים אלף ומאתים: כב ומטה בנימין ונשיא לבני בנימין אבידן בן-גדעוני: כג וצבאו ופקדיהם חמשה ושלושים אלף וארבע מאות: כד כל-הפקדים למחנה אפרים מאת אלף ושמונת-אלפים ומאה לצבאתם ושלושים יסעו: ס כה דגל מחנה דן צפנה לצבאתם ונשיא לבני דן אחיעזר בן-עמישדי: כו וצבאו ופקדיהם שנים וששים אלף ושבע מאות: כז והחונם עליו מטה אשר ונשיא לבני אשר פגעיאל בן-עכרון: כח וצבאו ופקדיהם אחד וארבעים אלף וחמש מאות: כט ומטה נפתלי ונשיא לבני נפתלי אחירע בן-עינן:

כ"ט

אהל מועד. לאחר שני דגלים הללו: כאשר יחנו בן יסעו. כמו שפירשתי, הליכתן כחנייתן, כל דגל מהלך לרוח הקצועה לו: על ידו. על מקומו, ואין לשון יד זו ממשמעו, רוח של אלו קרוי על ידו, הסמוכה לו לכל הושתת ידו. אינשו"ן איש"א צלע"ז: (כ) ועליו. כתרנמו ודסמיכין

מזרחית. והמערב קרוי אחור: (ט) ראשנה יסעו. כשרואין הענן מסתלק, תוקעין הכהנים בחלוצרות ונוסע מחנה יהודה תחלה, וכשהולכין הולכין כדרך חנייתן, הלויים והעגלות צלמנע, דגל יהודה במזרח, ושל ראובן בצדום, ושל אפרים במערב, ושל דן בצפון: (יז) ונסע

- ⁷ (The division was completed by) the tribe of Zevulun. The leader of Zevulun’s descendants was Eliav the son of Chailon. ⁸ The head-count of his regiment was fifty-seven thousand, four hundred.
- ⁹ The total head-count of regiments for the Camp of Yehudah was one hundred and eighty-six thousand, four hundred.
- (When all the camps travel) they should move first.
- ¹⁰ To the south was the division of regiments (of three tribes, known as) “the Camp of Re’uvain:”
 - The leader of Re’uvain’s descendants was Elitzur the son of Shedai’ur. ¹¹ The head-count of his regiment was forty-six thousand, five hundred.
 - ¹² Camping alongside was the tribe of Shimon. The leader of Shimon’s descendants was Shelumiel the son of Tzurishadai. ¹³ The head-count of his regiment was fifty-nine thousand, three hundred.
 - ¹⁴ (The division was completed by) the tribe of Gad. The leader of Gad’s descendants was Elyasaf the son of Reu’ail. ¹⁵ The head-count of his regiment was forty-five thousand, six hundred and fifty.
 - ¹⁶ The total head-count of regiments for the Camp of Re’uvain was one hundred and fifty-one thousand, four hundred and fifty;
 - (When all the camps travel) they should move second.
 - ¹⁷ (After the Camp of Re’uvain moves) then the Tent of Meeting should move, (together with) the Levite camp, in the center of the other camps. They should travel (in the same arrangement) as they camp, with each man in his place, arranged in divisions.
- ¹⁸ To the west was the division of regiments (of three tribes, known as) “the Camp of Efrayim:”
 - The leader of Efrayim’s descendants was Elishama the son of Amihud. ¹⁹ The head-count of his regiment was forty thousand, five hundred.
 - ²⁰ Alongside was the tribe of Menasheh. The leader of Menasheh’s descendants was Gamliail the son of Pedatzur. ²¹ The head-count of his regiment was thirty-two thousand, two hundred.
 - ²² (The division was completed by) the tribe of Binyamin. The leader of Binyamin’s descendants was Avidan the son of Gidoni. ²³ The head-count of his regiment was thirty-five thousand, four hundred.
 - ²⁴ The total head-count of regiments for the Camp of Efrayim was one hundred and eight thousand, one hundred;
 - (When all the camps travel) they should move third.
- ²⁵ To the north was the division of regiments (of three tribes, known as) “the Camp of Dan:”
 - The leader of Dan’s descendants was Achi’ezer the son of Amishadai. ²⁶ The head-count of his regiment was sixty-two thousand, seven hundred.
 - ²⁷ Camping alongside was the tribe of Asher. The leader of Asher’s descendants was Pagiaail the son of Achran. ²⁸ The head-count of his regiment was forty-one thousand, five hundred.
 - ²⁹ (The division was completed by) the tribe of Naftali. The leader of Naftali’s descendants was Achira the son of Ainan. ³⁰ The head-count of his regiment was fifty-three thousand, four hundred.

נפתלי אחירע בר עינן: ל וחילה ומנניהון
 חמשין ותלתא אלפין וארבע מאה: לא כל
 מנניא למשרית דן מאה וחמשין ושבעא
 אלפין ושית מאה בבתיא נטלין
 למקסיהון: לב אלין מנני בני ישראל לבית
 אבהתהון כל מנני משריתא לחיליהון שית
 מאה ותלתא אלפין וחמש מאה וחמשין:
 ג ולואי לא אתמניאו בגו בני ישראל במא
 די פקיד יי ית משה: ד ועבדו בני ישראל
 ככל די פקיד יי ית משה כן שרון למקסיהון
 וכן נטלין גבר לזרעיתיה על בית אבהתוהי:
 א ואלין תולדת אהרן ומשה ביומא דמליל יי
 עם משה בסורא דסיני: ב ואלין שמחת בני
 אהרן בוכרא נדב ואביהוא אלעזר ואיתמר:
 ג אלין שמחת בני אהרן כהניא דאתרביאו
 די אתקרב קרבנהון לשמשא: ד ומית נדב
 ואביהוא קדם יי בקרוביהון אשתא נוכריתא
 קדם יי במדברא דסיני ובנין לא הוו להון
 ושמש אלעזר ואיתמר על אפי אהרן אבוהון:
 ה ומליל יי עם משה למימר: ו קריב ית
 שבטא דלוי ותקם יתיה קדם אהרן כהנא
 וישמשון יתיה: ז ויטרון ית משרתיה וית
 משרת כל בנשתא קדם משכן ומנא למפלח
 ית פלחן משכנא: ח ויטרון ית כל מני משכן
 ומנא וית משרת בני ישראל למפלח ית פלחן
 משכנא: ט ותמן ית לואי לאהרן ולבגוהי

ל ויצבאו ופקדיהם שלשה וחמשים אלף וארבע מאות: לא כל-
 הפקדים למחנה דן מאת אלף ושבעה וחמשים אלף ושש
 מאות לאחרנה יסעו לדגליהם: פ לב אלה פקודי בני ישראל
 לבית אבתם כל-פקודי המחנות לצבאתם שש-מאות אלף
 ושלשת אלפים וחמש מאות וחמשים: ג והלויים לא התפקדו
 בתוך בני ישראל באשר צוה יהוה את-משה: ד ויעשו בני
 ישראל ככל אשר-צוה יהוה את-משה כן-חננו לדגליהם וכן
 נסעו איש למשפחתיו על-בית אבתיו: פ רביעיין ג א ואלה
 תולדת אהרן ומשה ביום דבר יהוה את-משה בחר סיני:
 ב ואלה שמות בני-אהרן הבכור | נדב ואביהוא אלעזר
 ואיתמר: ג אלה שמות בני אהרן הכהנים המשחים אשר-
 מלא ידם לכהן: ד וימת נדב ואביהוא לפני יהוה בתקרבתם
 אש זרה לפני יהוה במדבר סיני ובנים לא-היו להם ויכהן
 אלעזר ואיתמר על-פני אהרן אביהם: פ ה וידבר יהוה
 אל-משה לאמר: ו הקרב את-מטה לוי והעמדת אתו לפני
 אהרן הכהן ושרתו אתו: ז ושמרו את-משמרתו ואת-
 משמרת כל-העדה לפני אהל מועד לעבד את-עבדת
 המשכן: ח ושמרו את-כל-פלי אהל מועד ואת-משמרת בני
 ישראל לעבד את-עבדת המשכן: ט ונתתה את-הלויים

כשׁי

המקדש³, והלויים הללו מסייעין אותם, זו היא השירות⁴: (f) ושמרו את
 משמרתו. כל מני שהאדם ממונה עליו ומוטל עליו לעשותו, קרוי משמרת
 ככל המקרא וזלשון משנה, כמו שאמרנו בצנתן ותרש וכלא אין משמרת
 ומשמרתך שוב⁵, וכן משמרות כהונה ולוי⁶: (ח) ואת משמרת בני
 ישראל. שכוון היו זקוקין ללרכי המקדש, אלא שהלויים צאים תחתיהם
 בשליחותם, לפיכך לוקחים מהם המעשרות ששכרן, שנאמר⁶ כי שר הוא

עלוי: (א) ואלה תולדת אהרן ומשה. ואינו מזכיר אלא בני אהרן,
 ונקראו תולדות משה, לפי שלמדן תורה. מלמד שכל המלמד את בן חבירו
 תורה, מעלה עליו הכתוב כאלו ילדו: ביום דבר ה' את משה. נעשו אלו
 התולדות שלו, שלמדן מה שלמד מפי הגבורה: (ד) על פני אהרן. בחייו?
 (ו) ושרתו אתו. ומכו השירות, ושמרו את משמרתו, לפי ששמירת המקדש
 עליו של יקרב זר, כמו שנאמר אהה ובניך ובית אביך אתך תשאו את עון

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why are Aharon's descendants mentioned here? (3:1-4)

RAMBAN: After discussing the main census of the Jewish people (Ch. 1-2), the subject now turns to the tribe of Levi. Before discussing the details pertaining to the Levites themselves, the Torah mentions the heads of this tribe, the priests.

ABARBANEL: After the Torah has stressed how the children of Israel multiplied greatly to form a large population, and had appointed

leaders, the Torah now contrasts this with the fact that Moshe and Aharon's children were few, and even though Aharon's children had been appointed to positions of importance, two of them died for bringing "an extraneous fire before God" (v. 4).

Furthermore, stating that the priests were few in number also serves as an introduction as to why it was necessary to appoint the Levites as assistants to the priests, as is set out in the subsequent section.

- ³¹ The total head-count of regiments for the Camp of Dan was one hundred and fifty-seven thousand, six hundred;
- (When all the camps travel) arranged in divisions, they should move last.

³² (The above) are the head-counts of the children of Israel, according to their fathers' houses. The total head-count of regiments in the camps was six hundred and three thousand, five hundred and fifty.

³³ The Levites were not counted with the rest of the children of Israel, as God commanded Moshe.

³⁴ The children of Israel did everything that God had commanded Moshe. They encamped accordingly by their divisions, and they traveled accordingly, so that each was with his family, and his father's house.

🕎 AHARON'S DESCENDANTS 🕎

3
FOURTH
READING

The following are the descendants of Aharon, (who were disciples of) Moshe, on the day that God spoke to Moshe at Mount Sinai:

² These are the names of Aharon's sons: Nadav, the firstborn, Avihu, Elazar, and Isamar. ³ These are the names of Aharon's sons, the anointed priests, whom he inaugurated to serve as priests.

⁴ Nadav and Avihu died before God when they brought an extraneous fire before God in the Sinai desert. They had no children.

But Elazar and Isamar served as priests in the lifetime of Aharon, their father.

🕎 APPOINTMENT OF THE LEVITES 🕎

3:5 God spoke to Moshe, saying: ⁶ "Draw the tribe of Levi close and stand them before Aharon the priest. They will serve him (by) ⁷ taking charge of (some of) his duties, and the duties of the entire community, (standing) before the Tent of Meeting to carry out the task of (guarding) the Tabernacle (against unauthorized entry). ⁸ They should guard all the vessels of the Tent of Meeting, which is the duty of the children of Israel, to carry out the service of the Tabernacle. ⁹ You should give over the

TORAS MENACHEM

🕎 AHARON'S DESCENDANTS (3:1-4)

Verses 1-4, which chronicle Aharon's descendants, are problematic, since:

- a.) They appear to teach us nothing that we do not already know.
- b.) Above, we read of the census of the Jewish people, and below we read of the census of the Levites. These verses thus interrupt a thematic flow with seemingly unrelated details.

Since this is a problem which arises at the literal level [discussed by **Ramban** and **Abarbane**], why was it not addressed by *Rashi*?

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi made no comment here, as the matter is already understood from one of his earlier comments. When the Torah states above (1:49) that the tribe of Levi was not included in the main census, but was to be given a census of its own, *Rashi* explains: "The King's legion deserves to be counted on its own." From this we can understand logically in our case: If the Levites were counted separately due to their importance ("the King's legion"), then all the more so should the "anointed priests"* have been counted separately. According to *Rashi* therefore, verses 3:1-4 are actually a form of "census" of the priests.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 13, p. 9, note 1)

🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

"DRAW THE TRIBE OF LEVI CLOSE" (v. 6)

The *Midrash* connects verse 6 with the statement in *Psalms*: "The righteous man flourishes like a palm tree" (*Psalms* 92:13; *Bamidbar Rabah* 3:1). Why are the Levites compared to a palm tree?

The answer is emphasized in the second half of the verse: "he grows tall like a cedar in Lebanon." A person could be righteous in one of two ways: a.) A cedar is strong, tall and beautiful, but it bears no fruit. This corresponds to a person who studies Torah and observes *mitzvos* primarily for his own personal spiritual growth. b.) The Levites, however, are praised as being like a palm tree which, while not as tall and strong as the cedar, bears sweet, delicious fruit—analogue to a person who is willing to sacrifice some of the time which he could have used for his own personal spiritual growth for the sake of helping others. And this is the path which has been encouraged by Chasidic thought for all Jews.

(*Tzava'as Harivash* ch. 125; *Likutei Sichos* vol. 2, pp. 557-8)

* But not Moshe's sons, who did not constitute an elite group unto themselves, separate from the other Levites.

מסירין יְהִיבִין אֲנֹנִי לֵה מִן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: וְנִתְּ אֶהְרֹן וְנִתְּ בְּנֹהֵי תַמְנִי וְיִטְרוּן יִתְּ כְהוֹנֵתְהוֹן וְחִלּוּנֵי דִיקְרָב יִתְּקַמְל: יֵא וּמְלִיל יֵי עִם מֹשֶׁה לְמִימְרָ: יֵב וְאֵנָּה הָא קְרִיבִית יִת לְאִי מִגּוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲלַף כָּל בּוֹכְרָא פִתַּח וְלָדָא מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהוּן מְשַׁמְשִׁין קְדָמִי לְאִי: יֵי אֲרִי דִילִי כָּל בּוֹכְרָא בְיוֹמָא דְקַטְלִית כָּל בּוֹכְרָא בְּאַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם אֶקְדָּשִׁית קְדָמִי כָּל בּוֹכְרָא בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאַנְשָׁא עַד בְּעִירָא דִילִי יִהוּן אֲנָא יֵי: יֵי וּמְלִיל יֵי עִם מֹשֶׁה בְּמִדְבָּרָא דְסִינֵי לְמִימְרָ: יֵי מְנֵי יִתְּ בְּנֵי לְוִי לְבֵית אֶבְהֵתְהוֹן לְזַרְעֵיתְהוֹן כָּל דְּבוֹרָא מִבְּרַ יִרְחָא וְלַעֲלָא תַמְנִינֹן: יֵי וּמִנָּא יִתְּהוֹן מֹשֶׁה עַל מִימְרָא דִי

לְאֶהְרֹן וּלְבָנָיו נְתוּנִים נְתוּנִים הָמָּה לֹו מֵאֵת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: וְאֶת־אֶהְרֹן וְאֶת־בָּנָיו תִּפְקֹד וְשָׁמְרוּ אֶת־כְּהֻנַּתְכֶם וְהִזְרֹתְכֶם יוֹמָת: פ יֵי וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: יֵי וְאֲנִי הִנֵּה לִקְחֹתִי אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם מֵתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל תַּחַת כָּל־בְּכוֹר פֶּטֶר רֶחֶם מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהָיוּ לִי הַלְוִיִּם: יֵי כִּי לִי כָּל־בְּכוֹר בְּיוֹם הַכֹּתִי כָּל־בְּכוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם הִקְדַּשְׁתִּי לִי כָּל־בְּכוֹר בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֲדָם עַד־בְּהֵמָה לִי יִהְיוּ אֲנִי יְהוָה: פ [והמִּשְׁיָוִי יֵי וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בְּמִדְבָּר סִינֵי לֵאמֹר: יֵי פִקֹּד אֶת־בְּנֵי לְוִי לְבֵית אֲבֹתָם לְמַשְׁפַּחְתָּם כָּל־זָכָר מִבֶּן־חֹדֶשׁ וּמַעְלָה תִּפְקְדֶם: יֵי וַיִּפְקֹד

רש"י

שלי. על ידי הזכרות זכותי צהם ולקחתים תמורתם, לפי שהיתה העבודה צבכורות, וכשחטאו בעגל נפסלו, והלויים שלא עזבו עבודת אלילים נצחרו תחתיכם²: (טו) מבן חדש ומועלה. משילא מכלל נפלים הוא נמנה ליקרא שומר משמרת הקדש. אמר ר' יהודה צרבי שלום למוד הוא אותו השצט לכוות נמנה מן הצטן, שנאמר אשר ילדה אותה ללוי צמארים, עם כניסתה צפתח מצרים ילדה אותה, ונמנית צצצעים נפש, שכשאתה מונה חשצונם לא

לכם חלף עזודחכס: (ט) נתונים המה לו. לעזרה: מאת בני ישראל. כמו מתוך בני ישראל, כלומר משאר כל העדה נצדלו לכך צגזרת המקום, והוא נתנם לו, שנאמר ואתה את הלויים נתונים וגו': (י) ואת אהרן ואת בניו תפקד. לשון פקידות ואינו לשון מנין: ושמרו את כהנתם. קצלת דמים וזריקה והקטרה ועבודות המסורות לכהנים: (יב) ואני הנה לקחתי. ואני מהיכן זכותי צהן: מתוך בני ישראל. שיהיו ישראל שוכרין אותן לשירות

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How are the priests to safeguard their priesthood? (v. 10)

RASHI: [By preventing others from performing the acts of]: [1] Receiving the blood [from sacrifices]; [2] throwing the blood [on the Altar]; [3] burning [the sacrificial fats]; and [4] tasks that are entrusted exclusively to priests.

IBN EZRA: They must prevent themselves from becoming disqualified to perform the priestly service [due to ritual impurity].

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 SAFEGUARDING THE PRIESTHOOD (v. 10)

Verse 10 contains an instruction to Aharon and his sons, the priests, to “safeguard their priesthood.” At the literal level, this appears to refer to the *status* of priesthood itself, i.e. that a priest should not permit *himself* to become disqualified for priestly service (through ritual impurity etc.), as **Ibn Ezra** writes.

Why did *Rashi* reject this straightforward interpretation and argue instead that “safeguarding their priesthood” means preventing *non-priests* from carrying out “tasks that are entrusted exclusively to priests”?*

A further problem with *Rashi*’s comment concerns the examples of the acts that he cites:

The statement, “receiving the blood, throwing the blood, burning **and** tasks that are entrusted exclusively to priests,” appears to suggest that “receiving the blood,” “throwing the blood” and “burning” are *not* “tasks that are entrusted exclusively to priests.”** This is difficult to understand, since receiving and throwing the blood *etc.* are tasks that are entrusted

exclusively to priests (as *Rashi* writes in his commentary to *Vayikra* 1:5). What, then, does *Rashi* mean here?

THE EXPLANATION

Our verse refers to the *appointment to a new task*, and not the repetition of a previously learned principle: “*You should appoint Aharon and his sons to safeguard their priesthood.*” Thus *Rashi* rejected *Ibn Ezra*’s interpretation, that the verse prohibits a priest from becoming disqualified from Temple service through ritual impurity, since that law was taught *already*, in *Parshas Emor* (*Vayikra* ch. 21).

Rashi was also troubled by a further question, concerning the *context* of verse 10:

Both the preceding and following verses speak of the Levites—their role, their census *etc.*—so why does our verse interrupt the thematic flow with a discussion of the *priests*?

Rashi maintained that after reading the preceding passage, we might be under the impression that a Levite *would* be permitted to perform some

* Even according to *Ibn Ezra*, this prohibition is mentioned in the latter half of the verse, “*Any unauthorized person who approaches (to participate in priestly-service) must be put to death.*” The dispute between *Rashi* and *Ibn Ezra* concerns only the earlier phrase.

**Note that *Rashi* does not write: “receiving the blood, throwing the blood, burning, and other tasks that are entrusted exclusively to priests.”

Levites to Aharon and his sons (to help them). They are to be (separated) from the children of Israel (and) totally given over to him.”

¹⁰ *You should appoint Aharon and his sons to safeguard their priesthood. Any unauthorized person who approaches (to participate in the priestly-service) must be put to death.*

¹¹ *God spoke to Moshe, saying: ¹² “(If you want to know why) indeed I have taken the Levites from among the (other) children of Israel? (It is because I took them) instead of all firstborn from every womb among the children of Israel (since the firstborn worshiped the Golden Calf, so I decided instead that) the Levites would be Mine. ¹³ (If you want to know why I chose the firstborn to start with, it is) because all the firstborn are Mine since the day I struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt. (Back then) I took every firstborn of Israel, both man and beast, to be holy to Me. They will (always) be Mine, I am God.”*

🌀 CENSUS OF THE LEVITES 🌀

3:14
FIFTH
READING

God spoke to Moshe in the Sinai desert, saying: ¹⁵ *“Take a head-count of the descendants of Levi, (including) those whose family (lineage had been verified) according to their paternal houses. Count all males from the age of one month and upward.”*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why were the Levites counted from “one month and upward”? (v. 15)

RASHI: As soon as [a child’s] viability is proven, he is counted among those called, “guardians of the sacred duty.”

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Temple services, and therefore our verse was required to correct that possible misunderstanding immediately.

The source of this potential confusion is the Torah’s statement in verse 8 that: *“They should guard all the vessels of the Tent of Meeting, which is the duty of the children of Israel.”* Rashi explains: *“All of them (the children of Israel) were responsible for the needs of the Sanctuary, but the Levites acted as their agents, in their place.”*

Now, we do find one instance where the children of Israel themselves (i.e. non-priests) were permitted to receive and throw the blood of a sacrifice, and that is the case of the Paschal lamb (*Shemos* 12:7). So after reading that the Levites acted as agents for the rest of the Jewish people, taking over their responsibilities in the Temple, we might be under the impression that the Levites would now be required to receive and throw the blood of the Paschal lamb. Therefore, the priests were immediately instructed, “to safeguard their priesthood,” and Rashi clarifies that this means, “receiving the blood, throwing the blood, etc.” referring to the *Paschal lamb*.

And, after covering the subject of tasks that were once permitted, but are now forbidden to a non-priest, Rashi adds (parenthetically) that this surely includes other “tasks that are entrusted exclusively to priests.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 1ff.)

🌀 “ONE MONTH AND UPWARD” (v. 15)

Rashi writes that Levites from the age of one month and upward are called “guardians of the sacred duty” (v. 10). But how are we to understand, at the literal level, how a tiny baby could already be given the title of a “guardian,” at an age when he is clearly not capable of carrying out any work?

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi did not deem it necessary to clarify the above question, since he considered the explanation to be self-evident. Above, the Torah states: *“The Levites should encamp around the Tabernacle of the Testimony,”*

and, in this way, *“The Levites will guard the Tabernacle of the Testimony”* (1:53). From this we see that the guarding of the Levites was achieved merely by their *physical presence* around the Tabernacle, rather like a “human wall.” And clearly, in this regard, children would be as effective as adults (if not more so, for some of the adults would leave the camp to work in the Tabernacle, whereas the children would always be encamped “around the Tabernacle”). Thus, even at the tender age of one month, a child is considered to be a “guardian of the sacred duty.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 23, p. 256, note 6)

🌀 The Last Word 🌀

While Rashi’s comment that even tiny babies are “guardians of the sacred duty” (see *Classic Questions* and *Toras Menachem*) refers specifically to Levite children, it could be argued that in the current era, when Temple service has a purely spiritual connotation, Rashi’s statement applies to *all* Jewish children.

And since the key feature of the Tabernacle that required guarding was the Ark, which contained the Ten Commandments, it follows that all Jewish children are guardians of the Torah from birth.

Therefore, at the moment when God entrusts us with this mission, on *Shavu’os* (the festival of the giving of the Torah), *one should make the effort to bring all children, even tiny babies, to the synagogue to hear the reading of the Ten Commandments.*

And just as R’ Yehoshua ben Chananiah became great because his mother placed his cradle in the study hall for him to hear words of Torah (*Jerusalem Talmud, Yevamos* 1:6), so too, our children will reap the utmost benefit from hearing the Torah being read.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 23, p. 256ff.)

כָּמָא דְאִתְפַּקְדָּ: יי וְהוּוּ אֵלֶיךָ בְּנֵי לְוִי
 בְּשִׁמְהֵיהוֹן גְּרִשׁוֹן וְקָהָת וּמִרְרֵי: יב וְאֵלֶיךָ
 שְׁמֵהָת בְּנֵי גְרִשׁוֹן לְזַרְעֵיהֶון לְבְנֵי וְשִׁמְעִי:
 יג וּבְנֵי קָהָת לְזַרְעֵיהֶון עֲמֶרָם וַיִּצְהָר חֲבֵרוֹן
 וְעִזִּיאֵל: כ וּבְנֵי מִרְרֵי לְזַרְעֵיהֶון מַחֲלִי וּמוֹשִׁי
 אֵלֶיךָ אֲנֹן זִרְעֵית לְוָאֵי לְבֵית אֲבֹתֵיהֶון:
 כא לְגְרִשׁוֹן זִרְעֵית לְבְנֵי וְזִרְעֵית שְׁמֵעִי אֵלֶיךָ
 אֲנֹן זִרְעֵית גְּרִשׁוֹן: כב מִנְּיַיְהוֹן בְּמִנְיַן כָּל
 דְּבוּרָא מִבֵּר יִרְחָא וְלַעֲלָא מִנְּיַיְהוֹן שְׂבָעָא
 אֲלִפִּין וְחֲמִשׁ מְאֹה: כג זִרְעֵית גְּרִשׁוֹן אַחֲרֵי
 מִשְׁכַּנָּא יִשְׁרוֹן מִעֲרָבָא: כד וְרַב בֵּית אָבָא
 לְבֵית גְּרִשׁוֹן אֲלִיָּסָף בֶּר לָאֵל: כה וּמִסְרַת בְּנֵי
 גְרִשׁוֹן בְּמִשְׁכַּן זִמְנָא מִשְׁכַּנָּא וּפְרָסָא חוֹפְאָה
 וּפְרָסָא דְתִרְעָה מִשְׁכַּן זִמְנָא: כו וּסְרָדֵי דְדִרְתָּא
 וְיֵת פְּרָסָא דְתִרְעָה דְרִתָּא דִּי עַל מִשְׁכַּנָּא וְעַל
 מִדְּבַחָא סְחוּר סְחוּר וְיֵת אֲטוּנוּהֵי לְכָל
 פְּלִחְנָה: כז וְלִקְהָת זִרְעֵית עֲמֶרָם וְזִרְעֵית
 יִצְהָר וְזִרְעֵית חֲבֵרוֹן וְזִרְעֵית עִזִּיאֵל אֵלֶיךָ אֲנֹן
 זִרְעֵית קָהָת: כח בְּמִנְיַן כָּל דְּבוּרָא מִבֵּר יִרְחָא
 וְלַעֲלָא תִּמְנִיָּא אֲלִפִּין וְשִׁית מְאֹה נְטָרֵי
 מִסְרַתָּא דְקוּדְשָׁא: כט זִרְעֵית בְּנֵי קָהָת יִשְׁרוֹן
 עַל צִדָּא דְמִשְׁכַּנָּא דְרוּמָא: ל וְרַב בֵּית אָבָא
 לְזִרְעֵית קָהָת אֲלִיָּסָף בֶּר עִזִּיאֵל:
 לא וּמִסְרַתֵּיהֶון אַרְוָא וּפְתוּרָא וּמִנְרַתָּא

אתם משה על פי יהוה כאשר צוה: יי ויהיו אליך בני לוי
 בשמותם גרשון וקהת ומררי: יב ואליך שמות בני גרשון
 למשפחתם לבני ושמעי: יג ובני קהת למשפחתם עמרם
 ויצהר חברון ועזיאל: כ ובני מררי למשפחתם מחלי ומושי
 אליה הם משפחת הלוי לבית אבותם: כא לגרשון משפחת
 הלבני ומשפחת השמעי אליה הם משפחת הגרשני:
 כב פקדיהם במספר כל זכר מבן חדש ומעלה פקדיהם
 שבעת אלפים וחמש מאות: כג משפחת הגרשני אחרי
 המשכן יחנו ימה: כד ונשיא בית אב לגרשני אליסף בן לאל:
 כה ומשמרת בני גרשון באהל מועד המשכן והאהל מכסהו
 ומסך פתח אהל מועד: כו וקלעי החצר ואת מסך פתח
 החצר אשר על המשכן ועל המזבח סביב ואת מיתריו לכל
 עבדתו: ס כז ולקהת משפחת העמרמי ומשפחת היצהרי
 ומשפחת החברני ומשפחת העזיאל אליה הם משפחת
 הקהתי: כח במספר כל זכר מבן חדש ומעלה שמנת אלפים
 ושיש מאות שמרי משמרת הקדש: כט משפחת בני קהת יחנו
 על ירך המשכן תימנה: ל ונשיא בית אב למשפחת הקהתי
 אליסף בן עזיאל: לא ומשמרתם הארון והשלחן והמזבחה

כ"ט

כלומר לגרשון היו הפקודים משפחת הלזני ומשפחת השמעי פקודים כך
 וכך: (כה) המשכן. יריעות הסחחנות: והאהל. יריעות עזים העשויות
 לגג: מבסוהו. עורות חילים ותחשים: ומסך פתח. הוא כוילון: (כו) ואת
 מיתריו. של משכן והאהל ולא של חצר: (כט) משפחת בני קהת יחנו וגו'
 תימנה. וסמוכין להם דגל רחובן החונים תימנה, אוי לרשע ואוי לשכנו, לכך

תמצאם חלל שבעים חסר אחת, והיא השלימה את המנין: (טז) על פי ה'.
 אמר משה לפני הקב"ה היאך אני נכנס לחוך חלביהם לדעת מנין יונקיהם.
 אמר לו הקב"ה עשה אתה שלך ואני אעשה שלי. הלך משה ועמד על פתח
 האהל והשכינה מקדמת לפניו, וזה קול יולאת מן האהל ואומרת כך וכך
 תינוקות יש באהל זה, לכך נאמר על פי ה':² (כא) לגרשון משפחת הלבני.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Which camp was close to Kehos' descendants? (v. 29)

RASHI: Adjacent to Kehos' descendants was Re'uvain's division which camped to the south. Woe to the wicked man and woe to his neighbor! Due to this, Dasan, Aviram and 250 men [from the tribe of Re'uvain] were punished with Korach [a descendant of Kehos] and his congregation, as they were drawn into their dispute along with them.

MIDRASH TANCHUMA: To the south were the descendants of Kehos, and adjacent to them were [the tribes of] Re'uvain, Shimon and Gad. Due to this, the saying arose, "Woe to the wicked man and woe to

his neighbor!" For these three tribes, who were neighbors of Korach and his congregation, were destroyed with him as a result of his dispute (*Parshas Bamidbar* ch. 12).

MIDRASH RABAH: The three [tribes] to the south who were adjacent to quarrelsome people, were destroyed with them. About them it is said, "Woe to the wicked man and woe to his neighbor." Who were the quarrelsome people? Korach the son of Yitzhar, the son of Kehos. Being that Re'uvain, Shimon and Gad were adjacent to them, they were all quarrelsome.

¹⁶ Moshe counted them, just as he was commanded, by God's word.

¹⁷ These were the names of Levi's sons: Gershon, Kehos, and Merari.

¹⁸ The names of Gershon's sons, heading their families, were Livni and Shimi.

¹⁹ Kehos' sons, heading their families, were Amram, Yitzhar, Chevron and Uzi'eil.

²⁰ Merari's sons, heading their families, were Machli and Mushi.

The (above) are the families of Levi according to their paternal houses.

²¹ (The head-count) for Gershon (included) the Livni family and the Shimi family, (for) these are the Gershonite families:

- ²² Their total head-count included every male from the age of one month and upward. Their head-count was seven thousand, five hundred.
- ²³ The Gershonite families should camp behind the Tabernacle, to the west.
- ²⁴ The leader of the paternal house of the Gershonites is Elyasaf, the son of La'el.
- ²⁵ The duties of Gershon's descendants in the Tent of Meeting (were to care for: the tapestries of the Tabernacle, the (goat's hair which rested above it like a) tent, (the tachash skins which acted as) its cover, and the curtain at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, ²⁶ the curtains of the courtyard and the curtain for the entrance to the courtyard which surrounds the Tabernacle and the Altar, the ropes (of the Tabernacle itself), and all associated tasks.

²⁷ (The head-count) for Kehos (included) the Amrami family, the Yitzhari family, the Chevronei family, and the Uziali family, (for) these are the families of Kehos:

- ²⁸ The number of all males from the age of one month and upward was eight thousand six hundred.
- (They were) guardians, with the sacred duty (of guarding the Tabernacle vessels).
- ²⁹ The families of Kehos' descendants camped to the south side of the Tabernacle.
- ³⁰ The leader of the paternal house of the Kehos families was Elitzafan, the son of Uzi'eil.

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🕯 KEHOS AND HIS NEIGHBORS (v. 29)

Rashi, **Midrash Tanchuma** and **Midrash Rabah** all explain how the placement of Re'uvain's division next to the descendants of Kehos forged a connection between them which later surfaced with the rebellion of Korach (a descendent of Kehos) against Moshe. Thus, the phrase was coined: "Woe to the wicked man and woe to his neighbor."

At first glance, Rashi, **Midrash Tanchuma** and **Midrash Rabah** appear to be making identical statements. However, on closer examination there are a number of subtle textual differences which undoubtedly reflect differences of understanding, since Torah texts are written with the utmost precision. Among the differences are the following:

1.) The parties involved.

Rashi writes that only a relatively small group from the tribe of Re'uvain were influenced by Korach ("Dasan, Aviram and two hundred and fifty men"). On the other hand, both **Midrash Tanchuma** and **Midrash Rabah** maintain that Korach's influence as a "bad neighbor" extended to the *entire* tribe of Re'uvain, as well as the *other* tribes in that division, Shimon and Gad.

2.) The description of Korach's influence.

Midrash Tanchuma stresses only that Korach caused his neighbors to be punished with him: "These three tribes, who were neighbors to Korach and his congregation, were destroyed with him as a result of his dispute." Rashi, on the other hand, stresses how Korach caused his neighbors to actually sin (the cause of their later punishment): "They were drawn into their dispute along with them." And **Midrash Rabah** stresses Korach's influence upon them to an even greater degree: "Being that Re'uvain, Shimon and Gad were adjacent to them, they were all quarrelsome." I.e. they were quarrelsome *in general*, in addition to that particular dispute.

What are the underlying differences of opinion between these three views which led them to their respective conclusions?

THE EXPLANATION

A person's effect on his neighbor could be viewed in a number of different ways:

a.) A *circumstantial* association. According to this understanding, a person has no real, lasting impact on his neighbor's character and it is only that the neighbor may benefit or suffer by being in close proximity.

ומדבתיא ומני קודשא דישמשון בהון ופרסא וכל פלחניה: לב ואמרכלא דממנא על רברבי לואי אלעזר בר אהרן כהנא דמתחות ידוהי ממנן נטרי מטרת קודשא: לג למררי זרעית מחלי וזרעית מושי אלין אנון זרעית מררי: לד ומניניהון במנין כל דכורא מפר ירחא ולעלא שתא אלפין ומאתן: לה ורב בית אבא לזרעית מררי צוריאל בר אביהיל על צדא דמשכנא ישרון צפונא: לו ודי מסיר למטרת בני מררי דפי משכנא ועברוהי ועמודוהי וסמכוהי וכל מנוהי וכל פלחניה: לי ועמודי דדרתא סחור סחור וסמכיהון וספיהון ואמוניהון: לה ודי שרון גדם משכנא קדימא גדם משכנא ומנא מדינתא משה ואהרן ובנוהי נטרין מטרת מקדשא למטרת

והמזבחת וכלי הקדש אשר ישרתו בהם והמסך וכל עבדתו: לב ונשיא נשיאי הלוי אלעזר בן-אהרן הכהן פקדת שמרי משמרת הקדש: לג למררי משפחת המחלי ומשפחת המושי אלה הם משפחת מררי: לד ופקדיהם במספר כל-זכר מן-חדש ומעלה ששת אלפים ומאתים: לה ונשיא בית-אב למשפחת מררי צוריאל בן-אביהיל על ירך המשכן יחנו צפנה: לו ופקדת משמרת בני מררי קרשי המשכן ובריחיו ועמדיו ואדניו וכל-כליו וכל עבדתו: לי ועמדי החצר סביב ואדניהם ויתדתם ומיתריהם: לה והתנים לפני המשכן קדמה לפני אהל-מועד | מזרחה משה | ואהרן ובניו שמרים משמרת המקדש למשמרת בני ישראל והזר הקרב יומת:

כ"ט

ואהרן ובניו. וסמוכין להם דגל מחנה יהודה, והחונים עליו ישכרו וזבול, טוב ללדיק טוב לשכנו, לפי שהיו שכניו של משה שהיה עוסק בתורה, נעשו גדולים בתורה, שנאמר יהודה מחוקק³, ומזני ישכר יודעי צינה וגו'⁴ מאתים ראשי סנהדראות, ומזבול⁵ מושכים צבט סופר⁶:

לקו מהם דתן ואזירס ומאתים וחמשים איש עם קרח ועדתו, שנמשכו עמכם צמחלוקתם¹: (לא) והמסר. היא הפרכת, שאף היא קרויה (פרכת) המסר²: (לב) ונשיא נשיאי הלוי. ממנוה על כלם. ועל מה היא נשיאותו, פקודת שומרי משמרת הקודש, על ידו היה פקודת כולם: (לח) משה

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For example, if a person is punished, his neighbor may be punished along with him, due to the fact that he is in close proximity, or because he was momentarily swayed to perform an act that was totally out of character.

b.) *Transformation of personality*. Alternatively, a person may genuinely affect his neighbor, gradually influencing his neighbor's behavior to transform his personality.

c.) *A catalyst for latent qualities*. A third scenario resembles case 'b' in that there is a significant influence of one neighbor on another. However, this approach differs in the respect that one neighbor does not *impart* good or bad qualities into his neighbor's behavioral patterns, but rather, he *reveals* character traits *already* within his neighbor, causing them to rise to the surface. Here, an element of Divine Providence comes into play: The fact that it was orchestrated on High that these two neighbors should live in close proximity to each other is a sign that they "deserve" each other, so to speak, and they share similar dispositions. Thus, when one neighbor influences the other, he is not *imparting* good or bad qualities, but rather, bringing pre-existing qualities to the surface.

Midrash Tanchuma took the first approach above ('a'), that the tribe of Re'uvain's association with the descendants of Kehos was circumstantial. According to this view, the tribe of Re'uvain was not genuinely changed

by Korach's rebellion and it is only that they were incriminated—and consequently punished—by temporary association. So *Midrash Tanchuma* does not mention that Korach actually corrupted his neighbors in any way, but only how they were *punished* along with him: "These three tribes, who were neighbors of Korach and his congregation, were destroyed with him as a result of his dispute."

Rashi adopted approach 'b' above, that the tribe of Re'uvain were originally good people, but they became corrupted by their unsavory neighbors—"they were drawn into their* dispute along with them."

Midrash Rabah took approach 'c,' that Kehos' descendants were merely a catalyst for existing negative traits within the tribe of Re'uvain. Therefore, *Midrash Rabah* does not state, like *Rashi*, that "they were drawn into their dispute," but rather, that "they were all quarrelsome," by nature.

RASHI'S UNIQUE STANCE

In the final analysis we see that it was *Rashi* alone who maintained that a bad neighbor can actually *transform* another person's personality for the worse. For *Midrash Tanchuma* saw that a neighbor has no real effect at all, and *Midrash Rabah* perceived the neighbor as the mere trigger of existing bad qualities, and not as the cause of a real transformation.

* Note that *Midrash Tanchuma* states that the three tribes were "destroyed with him as a result of his dispute" (in the singular), suggesting that in the final analysis it was *Korach's* dispute in which the tribes had become involved *circumstantially*. *Rashi*, however, writes, "They were drawn into their dispute along with them" (in the plural), consistent with his stance that Korach transformed his neighbors to be genuinely involved in the dispute, and it was thus "their (collective) dispute."

- ³¹ Their duties (were to care for): The Ark, the Table, the Menorah, the Altars, the sacred utensils used with them when ministering, the Partition, and all associated tasks.
- ³² The chief over all the leaders of the Levites was Elazar, the son of Aharon the priest. He appointed (all) the guardians who had sacred duties.

³³ (The head-count) for Merari (included) the Machli family and the Mushi family, (for) these are the families of Merari:

- ³⁴ Their total head-count of every male from the age of one month and upward was six thousand two hundred.
- ³⁵ The leader of the paternal house of Merari's families was Tzuriel, the son of Avichayil.
- They camped on the north side of the Tabernacle.
- ³⁶ The appointed duty of Merari's descendants (was to care for): The beams of the Tabernacle, its bars, its pillars, and its sockets, all its vessels and all its associated tasks, ³⁷ the pillars of the surrounding courtyard, their sockets, their pegs, and their ropes.

³⁸ Camping in front of the Tabernacle, in front of the Tent of Meeting to the east, were Moshe, Aharon and his sons, (who were) the guardians of the Sanctuary's duties, duties (which they were appointed to perform on behalf) of the children of Israel. Any unauthorized person who approaches (to participate in this task) must be put to death.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Who camped near Moshe, Aharon and his sons? (v. 38)

RASHI: Adjacent to them was the division of the camp of Yehudah, with whom Yissachar and Zevulun camped. The righteous man prospers and his neighbor prospers! Since they were neighbors of Moshe, who was engaged in Torah study, they became great Torah scholars.

TORAS MENACHEM

Thus, while *Rashi's* view sees the bad neighbor as a greater potential menace, it is nevertheless much less likely that *Rashi's* bad neighbor would actually succeed in his task, since *transforming* another's personality is clearly a much more difficult task than merely triggering a predisposition toward negative behavior (and certainly much harder than causing a momentary, circumstantial influence).

So both texts of *Midrash*, which referred to a comparatively easier form of influence, maintained that Kehos' descendants affected all three tribes who camped in the adjacent division.

Rashi, however, who maintained that the effect of a bad neighbor was much more profound, could not presume that Korach's negative influence had proliferated any further than that which is explicitly documented in scripture. Thus, *Rashi* concluded that only a small part of only one tribe (Re'uvain) was affected: "Dasan, Aviram and two hundred and fifty men."

A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOOD AND BAD NEIGHBORS

The above explanation of *Rashi's* opinion appears to become problematic when reading his comments to verse 38 (see *Classic Questions*). For above we argued that *Rashi* perceived a neighbor's effect as being potentially very profound, totally transforming another's personality, but limited in its ability to influence large numbers of people. Yet, in his commentary to verse 38, *Rashi* states that Moshe, Aharon and his sons managed to affect *three entire tribes*, who were their neighbors, to become great Torah scholars!

In truth however, this does not contradict the above explanation, for since God's "measure of good exceeds His measure of punishment" (*Sotah* 11a), it follows that a genuine effort to affect somebody else for the good will always be incomparably more effective and far-reaching than the opposite.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 33, p. 10ff.)

🌀 The Last Word 🌀

A person could influence his neighbor with any good or bad quality. Nevertheless, the fact that *Rashi* mentions just one good quality, Torah study, and one negative quality, quarrelsomeness (see *Classic Questions* to v. 29 & 38), is certainly no coincidence; it indicates that these two qualities are connected with each other.

Rashi is teaching us that the study of Torah and involvement in disputes are diametric opposites. If a person studies Torah with the proper intentions and sufficient dedication he simply will not become involved in disputes, because Torah is the common thread which unites all Jews.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 33, pp. 16-17)

בני ישראל וחלוני דיקרב ותקמל: לט כל מניני לואי די מנא משה ואהרן על מימרא דיי לזרעיתיהון כל דכורא מבר ירחא ולעלא עשרין ותריין אלפין: מ ואמר יי למשה בני כל בוכריא דכריא לבני ישראל מבר ירחא ולעלא וקבל ית מנין שמהתהון: מא ותקריב ית לואי קדמי אנא יי חלף כל בוכרא בבני ישראל וית בעירא דלואי חלף כל בוכרא בבכעירא דבני ישראל: מב ומנא משה כמא די פקיד יי יתה ית כל בוכרא בבני ישראל: מג והו כל בוכריא דכריא במנין שמהון מבר ירחא ולעלא למניניהון עשרין ותריין אלפין מאתן ושבעין ותלתא: מד ומליל יי עם משה למימר: מה קרב ית לואי חלף כל בוכרא בבני ישראל וית בעירא דלואי חלף בעיריהון ויהון משמשין קדמי לואי אנא יי: מה וית פקדון מאתן ושבעין ותלתא דיתירין על לואי מבוכריא דבני ישראל: מז ותסב חמש חמש סלעין לגלגלתא בסלעי קודשא תסב עשרין מעין סלעא: מח ותתן בספא לאהרן ולבגוהי פקדון דיתירין בהון:

לט כל פקודי הלויים אשר פקד משה ואהרן על פי יהוה למשפחתם כל זכר מבן חדש ומעלה שנים ועשרים אלף: ס ושנין מ ויאמר יהוה אל משה פקד כל בכר זכר לבני ישראל מבן חדש ומעלה ושא את מספר שמתם: מא ולקחת את הלויים לי אני יהוה תחת כל בכר בבני ישראל ואת בהמת הלויים תחת כל בכור בבני ישראל: מב ויפקד משה כאשר צוה יהוה אתו את כל בכור בבני ישראל: מג ויהי כל בכור זכר במספר שמת מבן חדש ומעלה לפקדיהם שנים ועשרים אלף שלשה ושבעים ומאתים: פ מד וידבר יהוה אל משה לאמר: מה קח את הלויים תחת כל בכור בבני ישראל ואת בהמת הלויים תחת בהמתם והיו לי הלויים אני יהוה: מו ואת פדויי השלשה והשבעים והמאתים העדפים על הלויים מבכור בני ישראל: מז ולקחת חמשת חמשת שקלים לגלגלת בקדש תקה עשרים גרה השקל: מח ונתתה הכסף לאהרן ולבגו פדויי העדפים

*נקוד על ואהרן

כש"י

ומעלה. משילא מכלל ספק נפלים³: (מה) ואת בהמת הלויים וגו'. לא פדו זהמות הלויים את זכורי זהמה טבורה של ישראל, אלא את פטרי חמוריהם, ושה אחד של צן לוי פטר כמה פטרי חמורים של ישראל, תדע שהרי מנה העודפים צאדם ולא מנה העודפים צבמה⁴: (מו) ואת פדויי השלשה וגו'. ואת הצבורות הריכין להפדות צבם, אלו השלשה ושבעים ומאתים העודפים צבם, ויתרים על הלויים, מהם תקח חמשת שקלים לגלגלת, כך היתה מכירתו של יוסף עשרים כסף, שהיה צבורה של רחל⁵:

(לט) אשר פקד משה ואהרן. נקוד על ואהרן, לומר שלא היה צמנין הלויים¹: שנים ועשרים אלף. וזפרטן אתה מולא שלש מאות יתרים, בני גרשון שצעת אלפים וחמש מאות, בני קהת שמונת אלפים ושש מאות, בני מררי ששת אלפים ומאתים. ולמה לא כללן עם השאר ויפדו את הצבורות, ולא יהיו זקוקים השלשה ושבעים ומאתים צבורות העודפים על המנין לפדיון, אמרו רבותינו צמסכת צבורות² אותן שלש מאות לויים צבורים היו ודים שפיקעו עלמם מן הפדיון: (מ) פקד כל בכור זכר וגו' מבן חדש

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Were there exactly 22,000 Levites? (v. 39)

RASHI: [When you add the totals of the constituent families] separately, you will find another 300! The descendants of Gershon were 7,500 (v. 22), the descendants of Kehos were 8,600 (v. 28), and the descendants of Merari were 6,200 (v. 34), [making a total of 22,300].

Why were [these 300] not included with the rest [in the final census figure]? Then [the Levites] would have redeemed [all] the firstborn [since there were 22,273 firstborn that needed to be redeemed by Levites (see v. 46-48)], and the 273 firstborn who were in excess [of the 22,000 Levites included in the Levite census] would not have needed redemption [for there were, in fact, sufficient Levites to redeem them, being that the true total was 22,300]!

Our Sages taught in Tractate *Bechoros* that those 300 Levites were themselves firstborn [who required redemption], and [their Levite status was only] sufficient to exempt themselves from [their own] redemption, [and not to redeem other firstborn too].

NACHALAS YA'AKOV: The main reason why the Levites replaced the role of the firstborn is because the firstborn's involvement with the sin of the Golden Calf disqualified them. Thus, they were replaced by the Levites who did not worship the Calf (see *Rashi* to v. 12 above). Since the 300 firstborn Levites did *not* worship the Calf, they themselves were not disqualified and did not need to be redeemed. Why then could they not act in the same capacity as the other 22,000 Levites, and redeem the firstborn?

1 בכורות ד. 2 ה. 3 במדבר רבה ד. ג. 4 בכורות ד. 5 במדבר רבה ד. י. ירושלמי שקלים ב. ג.

³⁹ *The total head-count of male Levites whose family (lineage had been verified), from the age of one month and upward, counted by Moshe and Aharon by God's word was twenty-two thousand.*

🕎 CENSUS OF THE FIRSTBORN 🕎

3:40 **SIXTH READING** **G**od said to Moshe: "Count every firstborn male of the children of Israel aged one month and upward, and include their names in the census. ⁴¹ But take the Levites for Me—I am God—in place of all firstborn among the children of Israel. (Take) the Levites' animals in place of all the firstborn animals of the children of Israel."

⁴² *Moshe counted every firstborn of Israel, as God had commanded him.*

⁴³ *The firstborn males aged one month and upward, (including) a count of the names, was twenty-two thousand, two hundred and seventy-three.*

🕎 REDEMPTION OF ADDITIONAL FIRSTBORN 🕎

3:44 **G**od spoke to Moshe, saying: ⁴⁵ "Take the Levites in place of all the firstborn among the children of Israel, and the Levites' animals instead of their animals. The Levites will be Mine, I am God." ⁴⁶ "(Since the number of) firstborn of the children of Israel exceeds the (number of) Levites by two hundred and seventy-three, (the extra firstborn will require) redemption. ⁴⁷ (From each firstborn) take five shekels per head, according to the shekel (measurement system which is used for) sanctified (items), in which the shekel is twenty gerahs. ⁴⁸ Give the money to Aharon and his sons, in redemption for the firstborn who are in excess of the (Levites)."

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why was the redemption price five shekels? (v. 46-47)

RASHI: This was the sale price of Yosef, twenty silver pieces [where four silver pieces equal one shekel], and he was the firstborn of Rochel.

TORAS MENACHEM

🕎 REDEMPTION OF THE FIRSTBORN (v. 39-51)

In his commentary to verse 39, *Rashi* explains: "Those 300 Levites were themselves firstborn [who required redemption], and [their Levite status was only] sufficient to exempt themselves from [their own] redemption [and not to redeem other firstborn too]."

[*Nachalas Ya'akov*] questions this logic, arguing that the firstborn only needed to be redeemed in the first place due to their participation in the sin of the Golden Calf and since the Levite firstborn did not participate in the sin why would they themselves require redemption?

In fact however, it is difficult to accept that the requirement for redeeming the firstborn here arose due to the sin of the Golden Calf because "when they sinned by worshiping the Golden Calf, [the firstborn] became disqualified," (*Rashi* to v. 12 above), and clearly after being disqualified, no further redemption is required.

Rather, at the literal level, the reason for the redemption of the firstborn is because "God slew every firstborn in the land of Egypt...therefore... I will redeem every one of my firstborn sons" (*Shemos* 13:15). And since this is a reason which is applicable to firstborn Levites, they too required redemption. Thus, "[their Levite status was only] sufficient to exempt

themselves from [their own] redemption, [and not to redeem other firstborn too]."

RASHI'S ADDITIONAL REASON

To explain why the redemption price here was five shekels, *Rashi* writes that this corresponds to the sale price of Yosef, who was Rochel's firstborn (see *Classic Questions*).

Thus, in addition to the above reason for redeeming the firstborn (which is explicit in scripture), it appears that *Rashi* also perceived the redemption as a form of *tikun* (spiritual correction) for the sin of Yosef's sale.

And this explains further why the firstborn Levites would also require redemption, since Levi *did* participate in the sale of Yosef.*

But why, then, were the Levites able to *redeem* the firstborn, if Levi was guilty of selling Yosef?

The answer, simply, is that the Levites were elevated by their service in the Tabernacle to an exalted state which enabled them to redeem the firstborn.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar* 5738)

* As for the fact that Binyamin and Re'uvin (and Yosef himself) did not participate in the sale, and yet we find that the firstborn of these tribes do require redemption—it could be argued that since they did not inform Ya'akov that Yosef was alive, nor redeem Yosef and revert the sale, *all* of the brothers were at least partially guilty for the sale.

מט ונסיב משה ית כסף פרקנהון מן דיתירין על פריקי לואי: נ מן בכריא דבני ישראל נסיב ית כסףא אלף ותלת מאה ושתין וחמש סלעין בסלעי קודשא: נא ויהב משה ית כסף פריקנא לאהרן ולבגוהי על מימרא דיי כמא די פקיד יי ית משה: א ומליל יי עם משה ועם אהרן למימר: ב קבילו ית חשבון בני קהת מגו בני לוי לזרעיתהון לבית אבהתהון: ג מבר תלתין שנין ולעלא ועד בר חמשין שנין כל דאתי לחילא למעבד עבדתא במשכון זמנא: ד דין פלחן בני קהת במשכון זמנא קדש קודשא: ה וניעול אהרן ובגוהי במטל משריתא ויפרקון ית פרקתא דפרסא ויכסון בה ית ארונא דסהדותא: ו ויתגון עלוהי חופאה דמשך סגונא ופרסון לבוש נמיר תכלא מלעלא וישוון אריחיה: ז ועל פתורא דלחם אפיא ופרסון לבוש תכלא ויתגון עלוהי ית מגיסיא וית בויכיא וית מכילתא וית קסוות נסוכא ולחם תדירא עלוהי יהי: ח ופרסון עליהון לבוש צבע זהורי ויכסון יתיה בחופאה דמשך סגונא וישוון ית אריחיה: ט ויכסון לבוש תכלא ויכסון ית מנרתא דאנהורי וית בוצינהא וית צבתהא וית מחתיתהא וית כל מני משחא די ישמשון לה בהון: י ויתגון יתה וית כל מנהא לחופאה דמשך סגונא ויתגון על אריחא: יא ועל מדבחה דדבחה ופרסון לבוש תכלא ויכסון יתה בחופאה דמשך

בהם: מט ויקח משה את כסף הפדיום מאת העדפים על פדויי הלויים: נ מאת בכור בני ישראל לקח את הכסף חמשה ושלש מאות ואלף בשקל הקדש: נא ויתן משה את כסף הפדיום לאהרן ולבגיו על פי יהוה כאשר צוה יהוה את משה: פ (שביעי) ד א וידבר יהוה אל משה ואל אהרן לאמר: ב נשא את ראש בני קהת מתוך בני לוי למשפחתם לבית אבתם: ג מבן שלשים שנה ומעלה ועד בין חמשים שנה כל בא לצבא לעשות מלאכה באהל מועד: ד זאת עבדת בני קהת באהל מועד קדש הקדשים: ה ובא אהרן ובגיו בנסע המחנה והורדו את פרכת הסוד וכסו בה את ארן העדת: ו ונתנו עליו כסוי עור תחש ופרשו בגד כלי תכלת מלמעלה ושמו בדיו: ז ועל שלתן הפנים יפרשו בגד תכלת ונתנו עליו את הקערת ואת הכפת ואת המנקית ואת קשות הנסך ולחם התמיד עליו יהיה: ח ופרשו עליהם בגד תולעת שני וכסו אתו במכסה עור תחש ושמו את בדיו: ט ולקחו א בגד תכלת וכסו את מנרת המאור ואת נרתיה ואת מלקחיה ואת מחתתיה ואת כל כלי שמנה אשר ישרתו לה בהם: י ונתנו אתה ואת כל כליה אל מכסה עור תחש ונתנו על המוט: יא ועל מזבח הזהב

רש"י

על צן חמשים כמו מכחיש מעטה: (ד) קדש הקדשים. המקודש שכולן הארון והשלחן והמנורה והמצחות והפרוכת וכלי שרת: (ה) ובא אהרן ובגיו וגו'. יכניסו כל כלי וכלי לנרתקו המפורש לו צפרשה זו, ולא יערכו הלויים בני קהת אלא לשאת: בנסוע המחנה. כשהענן מסתלק הם יודעין שיסעו: (ז) קערות וכפות קשות ומנקיות. כבר פירשתי במלאכת המשכן: הנסך. הכסוי לשון מסך, אשר יוסך בכהס: (ט) מלקחיה. כמין לצת שמושך זה את הפתילה לכל לז שירצה: מחתתיה. כמין קף קטנה ושוליה פשוטין ולא סגלגלים, ואין לה מחילה לפניו אלא מזדיה, וחמה זה את דשן הנרות כשמיטין: נרתיה. לז"ש זלעז"ש שנותנים צנן השמן והפתילות: (י) אל מכסה עור תחש. כמין מרנף:

(מט) העדפים על פדויי הלויים. על אותן שפדו הלויים צגופן: (נ) חמשה ושלשים ושלש מאות ואלף. כך סכום החשבון חמשת שקלים לגלגלת. למחטים צכורות אלף שקל, לשצעים צכורות שלש מאות וחמשים שקל, לשלש צכורות חמשה עשר שקל. אמר כיצד אעשה, צכור שאומר לו תן חמשת שקלים, יאמר לי אני מפדויי הלויים. מה עשה, הביא שנים ועשרים אלף פתקין וכתב עליהן צן לוי, ומחטים ושצעים ושלש פתקין כתב עליהן חמשה שקלים, צללן ונתן צקלפו, אמר להם צואו וטלו פתקיכם לפי הגורל: (ז) נשא את ראש וגו'. מנה מהם את הראויין לעבודת משא, וכן מצן שלשים ועד צן חמשים שנה, והפחות משלשים לא נתמלא כחו, מכאן אמרו צן שלשים לכח², והיותר

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What is the role of Aharon and his sons? (v. 5)
 RASHI: They should put each vessel into its own specific sheath, as detailed in this section. The Levite descendants of Kehos need only carry them.

● What was the form of the tachash skin covering? (v. 10)
 RASHI: It was a type of large bag.

⁴⁹ Moshe took the redemption money from the (two hundred and seventy-three firstborn) who were in excess of the (twenty-two thousand firstborn) redeemed by the Levites. ⁵⁰ He took the money from the firstborn of the children of Israel: one thousand, three hundred and sixty-five shekels (according to the measurement system which is used for) sanctified (items). ⁵¹ Moshe gave the money of those who were redeemed to Aharon and his sons, in accordance with the word of God, as God had commanded Moshe.

DUTIES OF KEHOS' DESCENDANTS

4 SEVENTH READING **G**od spoke to Moshe and Aharon, saying: ² “Single out* those from Kehos’ descendants (who are fit to do the work of carrying) from among the (other) children of Levi, verifying their family lineage, according to their paternal houses. ³ (Pick only those) from the age of thirty years until the age of fifty years, all those who (are fit to) participate in the service (of carrying), to work in the Tent of Meeting.”

⁴ The following is the service of Kehos’ descendants in the Tent of Meeting, the Holy of Holies:

- ⁵ When the camp is about to travel, Aharon and his sons should come and take down the Partition, and they should cover the Ark of the Testimony with it. ⁶ They should place a covering of tachash* skin on it and then they should spread a garment of pure turquoise wool on top of that. Then they should put its poles into place.
- ⁷ They should spread a garment of turquoise wool on the Show Table and they should place on it the bread-molds, spoons, its supporting bars and separating bars. The multi-surface bread may then be placed on it. ⁸ They should spread upon them a garment of crimson wool and cover that with a covering of tachash skin. Then they should put its poles into place.
- ⁹ They should take a turquoise garment and cover the brilliant Menorah and its lamps, its tongs, and its scoops, and all its oil vessels with which its service is carried out. ¹⁰ They should put it along with its vessels into a tachash skin covering (bag), and attach it to a (carrying) pole.

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

The three coverings of the Ark (v. 5-6) represent three coverings which envelop the soul during its journey through this world:

- The *Partition*, which formed the entrance to the Holy of Holies, represents the body, for a Jew’s body is holy (see *Tanya* ch. 49). The body’s need to be involved with physical matters compromises but is not antithetical to a person’s spirituality.
- The body is infused with an *animal soul* which desires to oppose the Godly soul. But ultimately, it is a *Jewish animal soul* which is “tailor-made” to compete with the Godly soul. This is represented by the wool “garment” which was “tailor made” for each vessel.
- The *tachash* skin bag, however, was not specifically dedicated to the Ark (see *Toras Menachem*), representing one’s *alien* desires that result from living in a secular culture.

A person should not despair that he has so many causes of distraction from his spiritual path, for just as these coverings were applied to the Ark while it was in transit towards a loftier destination, so too, the body, *animal soul* and alien influences challenge the Godly soul to reveal its very highest powers.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, p. 17ff.)

THE COVERING OF THE TABERNACLE’S VESSELS (v. 5ff)

In his commentary to verse 5, *Rashi* writes that the priests were given the role of putting “each vessel into its own specific sheath, as detailed in this section.”

At first glance, this is somewhat confusing, since “in this section” we read how each vessel of the Tabernacle was actually wrapped in (at least) two layers: a “garment” of wool and a *tachash* skin covering. *Rashi*’s reference here to a “sheath” apparently refers to the more tight-fitting “garment of wool,” rather than the *tachash* skin covering which was a “large bag” (see *Classic Questions* to v. 10), and must have been loose-fitting.

However, this begs the question: Since the priests covered the Tabernacle vessels with two coverings, why does *Rashi* only mention the woolen covering here, and omit the *tachash* skin covering?

And why does he choose the term “sheath,” rather than the name which scripture uses, a woolen “garment?”

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi was troubled by the sudden change of subject between verses 4 and 5. First we read, in verse 4, that “the following is the service of *Kehos’ descendants* in the Tent of Meeting, the Holy of Holies.” And then, instead of continuing with a discussion of the service of *Kehos’ descendants*, verse 5 begins a *new* subject: “When the camp is about to travel, *Aharon and his sons* should come and take down the partition etc.,” without any mention of the service of *Kehos’ descendants*!

סָגְנוּא וישׁוּן ית אַרְיִחוּהִי יב ויִסְפוּן ית כָּל מְנֵי שְׁמוֹשָׁא דִּי יִשְׁמִשׁוּן בְּהוֹן בְּקוּדְשָׁא וַיִּתְּנוּן לְלְבוּשׁ תְּכֵלֵא ויִכְסוּן יתְּהוֹן בְּהוֹפָאָה דְּמִשְׁדָּ סָגְנוּא וַיִּתְּנוּן עַל אַרְיִחָא: יג ויִסְפוּן ית קִטְמָא דְּמִדְּבָחָא ויִפְרְסוּן עֲלוּהִי לְבוּשׁ אַרְגָּוִן: יד וַיִּתְּנוּן עֲלוּהִי ית כָּל מְנוּהִי דִּי יִשְׁמִשׁוּן עֲלוּהִי בְּהוֹן ית מַחְתֵּיתָא וַיִּתְּנוּן עֲנוּרֵיתָא וַיִּתְּנוּן מְגֻרְפֵיתָא וַיִּתְּנוּן מְזֻרְקֵיתָא כָּל מְנֵי מִדְּבָחָא ויִפְרְסוּן עֲלוּהִי חוֹפָאָה דְּמִשְׁדָּ סָגְנוּא וישׁוּן אַרְיִחוּהִי: טו וישׁיִצִּי אַהֲרֹן וּבְנֵיהִי לְכַסְּתָא ית קוּדְשָׁא וַיִּתְּנוּן כָּל מְנֵי קוּדְשָׁא בְּמִטְל מִשְׁרֵיתָא וּבִתְרֵי כֹן יַעֲלוּן בְּנֵי קָהָת לְמִטְל וְלֹא יִקְרְבוּן לְקוּדְשָׁא וְלֹא יָמוּתוּן אֲלֵיָן מִטְּוֹל בְּנֵי קָהָת בְּמִשְׁכַּן זְמָנָא: טז וְדִי מָסִיר לְאַלְעֹזֵר בֶּר אַהֲרֹן כִּהְנָא מִשְׁחָא דְּאֶנְהָרוּתָא וּקְטֹרֶת בּוֹסְמֵיָא וּמִנְחָתָא תְּדִירָא וּמִשְׁחָא דְּרִבּוּתָא מִשְׁרֵת כָּל מִשְׁבָּנָא וְכָל דִּי בֵּה בְּקוּדְשָׁא וּבְמִנְחָהִי: יז וּמְלִיל יְיָ עִם מֹשֶׁה וְעִם אַהֲרֹן לְמִימְרָ:

יִפְרְשׁוּ בְּגָד תְּכֵלֵת וְכִסּוּ אֹתוֹ בְּמַכְסָה עוֹר תַּחֲשׁ וְשָׂמוּ אֹתָהּ בְּדָיו: יב וְלָקְחוּ אֶת־כָּל־כְּלֵי הַשֵּׁרֶת אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁרְתוּ־בָם בְּקֹדֶשׁ וְנָתְנוּ אֶל־בְּגַד תְּכֵלֵת וְכִסּוּ אוֹתָם בְּמַכְסָה עוֹר תַּחֲשׁ וְנָתְנוּ עַל־הַמוֹט: יג וְדִשְׁנוּ אֶת־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וּפְרִשׁוּ עָלָיו בְּגַד אַרְגָּמָן: יד וְנָתְנוּ עָלָיו אֶת־כָּל־כְּלֵי אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁרְתוּ עָלָיו בָּהֶם אֶת־הַמַּחְתֹּת אֶת־הַמִּזְלָגֹת וְאֶת־הַיַּעֲוִים וְאֶת־הַמְּזֻרְקֹת כָּל כְּלֵי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וּפְרִשׁוּ עָלָיו כְּסוּי עוֹר תַּחֲשׁ וְשָׂמוּ בְּדָיו: טו וְכִלְהָ אַהֲרֹן וּבָנָיו לְכַסֹּת אֶת־הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְאֶת־כָּל־כְּלֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּנִסְעֵי הַמִּיחָנֶה וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן יָבֹאוּ בְנֵי־קָהָת לְשִׂאת וְלֹא־יִגְעוּ אֶל־הַקֹּדֶשׁ וּמָתוּ אֱלֹהֵי מִשְׁחָא בְּנֵי־קָהָת בְּאֵהָל מוֹעֵד: טז וּפְקַדְתָּ אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן שֹׁמֵן הַמָּאֹר וּקְטֹרֶת הַסַּמִּים וּמִנְחַת הַתָּמִיד וְשֹׁמֵן הַמִּשְׁחָה פְּקַדְתָּ כָּל־הַמִּשְׁכָּן וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ בְּקֹדֶשׁ וּבְכֵלָיו: פ [מפסטר] יז וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל־אַהֲרֹן

כ"ט

מגרפות ובלע"ז וידיד"ל וכן של נחושת וכן מכבדין את הדשן מעל המזבח: (טו) לבסת את הקדש. הארון והמזבח: ואת כל כלי הקדש. המנורה וכלי שרת: ומתו. שאס יגעו חייבין מיתח זידי שמים: (טז) ופקדת אלעזר. שהוא ממונה עליהם לשאת אותם, שמו וקטרת ושמן המשחה ומנחת התמיד, עליו מוטל ללוות ולזרז ולהקריב צעת חנייתו: פקדת כל המשכן. ועוד היה ממונה על משח בני קהת ללוות איש איש על עבודתו ועל משאו, וכוף המשכן וכל אשר בו, כל הסדורים למעלה צפרשה זו, אזל משח בני גרשון ומררי שאינן מקדש הקדשים, על פי איתמר היה, כמו שכחצו צפרשת

(יב) את כל כלי השרת אשר ישרתו בהם בקדש. צחון המשכן שהוא קדש, וכן כלי הקטרת שמשרתין בהם צמזמה הפנימי: (יג) ודשנו את המזבח. מזבח הנחשת: ודשנו. יטלו את הדשן מעליו: ופרשו עליו בגד ארגמן. ואש שירדה מן השמים רבוצה תחת הצגד כארי צשעה המסעות, ואינה שורפתו, שהיו כופין עליה פסכתה של נחשת: (יד) מחתת. שזבן חותים גחלים לתרומת הדשן, שעשויה כמין מחצת שאין לה אלא שלש מחילות, ומלפניה שואבת את הגחלים: מזולגות. לנוריות של נחשת שזבן מכן צאצאים שעל המזבח להפכן כדי שיתעכלו יפה ומר: יעים. הם

TORAS MENACHEM

Rashi concluded that there must be a direct connection here between the work of Aharon (v. 5ff.) and his sons wrapping up the vessels of the Tabernacle and the service of Kehos' descendants (v. 4). Rashi's solution was "they should put each vessel into its own specific sheath." I.e. that by appreciating how the woolen "garment" was (not merely a cloth spread over each vessel, but) a sheath which encapsulated each specific vessel totally, we will come to understand the connection between the service of Kehos' descendants (v. 4) and the priestly wrapping of the Tabernacle vessels (v. 5ff.).

Rashi's solution becomes apparent upon reaching verse 15, the end of the section which discusses how the priests wrapped the Tabernacle vessels for transit: "When the camp is set to travel, Aharon and his sons should finish covering the Holy (Ark and Altar) and all the other Holy (vessels), and afterwards, Kehos' descendants should come to carry (the items); but they should not touch the sacred objects (when they are uncovered), for then they will die." Here we see how covering the Tabernacle vessels completely with a woolen sheath was so crucial for Kehos' descendants, since they would be punished by death for touching any part of the vessels. Thus by explaining how the woolen covering was

a perfectly fitting "sheath" which prevented any part of the vessels from being touched, Rashi clarified how the current passage was relevant to the descendants of Kehos.

AN ADDITIONAL COVERING

We are now, however, left with another problem: How was the covering of tachash skin significant to Kehos' descendants? Being that the woolen garment covered the vessels completely, protecting Kehos' descendants from accidentally touching the vessels, there appears to be no further benefit to Kehos' descendants in adding a second covering of tachash skin. So why is the service of wrapping in tachash skin included in this section which describes "the service of Kehos' descendants in the Tent of Meeting" (v. 4)?

In answer to this question, Rashi continues: "The Levite descendants of Kehos need only carry them," i.e. the priests were required to render the vessels fit for transportation by Kehos' descendants, which is why a further layer of tachash skin was necessary. So both layers were important for Kehos' descendants: One to protect them while at work, and the other to enable them to do their job.

- ¹¹ Over the golden Altar they should spread a garment of turquoise wool, cover it with a tachash skin covering, and insert its poles.
- ¹² They should then take all the vessels used in the Sanctuary, put them into a garment of turquoise wool, cover them with a tachash skin covering, and attach them to a (carrying) pole.
- ¹³ They should remove the ashes from the (copper) Altar and spread a garment of purple wool over it. ¹⁴ They should place on top of it all the vessels which they use when carrying out its service: the scoops, the forks, the shovels, and the basins—all the implements of the Altar. Then they should spread over it a covering of tachash skin and insert its poles.
- ¹⁵ When the camp is set to travel, Aharon and his sons should finish covering the Holy (Ark and Altar) and all the other Holy (vessels), and afterwards, Kehos' descendants should come to carry (the items); but they should not touch the sacred (vessels when they are uncovered), for then they will die. The above is what Kehos' descendants must carry from the Tent of Meeting.
- ¹⁶ Elazar the son of Aharon the priest is appointed (to carry the following): Oil for lighting, the incense of spices, the continual (daily) meal-offering, and the anointing oil. (He is also) in charge of the entire Tabernacle and all its contents, the Sanctuary and its vessels.

🔗 COVERINGS OF THE TABERNACLE VESSELS [4:4-14] 🔗

Summary of the coverings placed by the priests upon the Tabernacle Vessels in preparation for transit—according to Rashi, as explained in Likutei Sichos vol. 8, p. 8ff. All woolen garments and tachash skin bags covered their items entirely.

ITEM	METHOD OF COVERING	NOTES
ARK [4:5-6]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❶ PARTITION COVERING ARK ❷ PLACED IN LOOSE-FITTING TACHASH SKIN BAG ❸ PLACED IN TURQUOISE WOOL GARMENT 	Partition was placed together with the Ark as its “vessel,” draped on the Ark, not covering it completely. Wool garment was placed over the loose tachash skin bag and was thus not tight-fitting, as with other vessels.
SHOW TABLE [4:7-8]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❶ PLACED IN TIGHT-FITTING GARMENT OF TURQUOISE WOOL ❷ ACCESSORIES AND BREADS PLACED ON TOP ❸ COVERED WITH CRIMSON WOOL GARMENT ❹ PLACED IN LOOSE-FITTING TACHASH SKIN BAG 	Vessels and bread were of a lower level of holiness than the Table itself, and were thus compartmentalized separately. Nevertheless, the bread was of sufficient holiness to require two coverings—crimson wool and tachash (cf. accessories of Copper Altar).
MENORAH [4:9-10]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❶ ACCESSORIES PLACED WITH MENORAH ❷ PLACED IN TIGHT-FITTING GARMENT OF TURQUOISE WOOL ❸ PLACED IN LOOSE-FITTING TACHASH SKIN BAG 	Accessories were of the same level of holiness as the Menorah itself (cf. <i>Shemos</i> 25:31), and were therefore placed together with it in the same compartment.
GOLD ALTAR [4:11]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❶ PLACED IN TIGHT-FITTING GARMENT OF TURQUOISE WOOL ❷ PLACED IN LOOSE-FITTING TACHASH SKIN BAG 	Tight-fitting wool garment was specific to the Altar. Tachash bags were interchangeable between all vessels.
INCENSE VESSELS [4:12]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❶ PLACED IN TIGHT-FITTING GARMENT OF TURQUOISE WOOL ❷ PLACED IN LOOSE-FITTING TACHASH SKIN BAG 	Tight-fitting wool garment was specific to each vessel. Tachash bags were interchangeable.
COPPER ALTAR [4:13-14]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❶ PLACED IN TIGHT-FITTING PURPLE WOOL GARMENT ❷ ACCESSORIES PLACED ON TOP ❸ PLACED IN LOOSE-FITTING TACHASH SKIN BAG 	Accessories were of a lower level of holiness than the Altar itself, and were thus compartmentalized separately. Purple wool was indicative of the lesser holiness of the Copper Altar.

יִהְיֶה לָא תְּשִׁיעוּן ית שְׂבָטָא זְרָעִית קְהַת מְנוּ
 לְוָאֵי: יֵט וְדָא עֲבִידוּ לְהוֹן וְיַחוּן וְלָא יְמוּתוּן
 בְּמִקְרָבָהוֹן לְקֹדֶשׁ קוֹדֶשֶׁיִּא אֲהָרֹן וּבְנוֹהֵי
 יַעֲלוּן וַיִּמְנוּן יְתַהוֹן גְּבַר גְּבַר עַל פְּלִתְנָה
 וְלִמְטוּלָה: כ וְלָא יַעֲלוּן לְמַחְזֵי כַד מְכַסֵּן ית
 מְנֵי קוֹדֶשֶׁיִּא וְלָא יְמוּתוּן: פ פ פ

לְאָמַר: יִהְיֶה אֶל־תִּכְרִיתוֹ אֶת־שֵׁבֶט מִשְׁפַּחַת הַקְּהָתִי מִתּוֹךְ
 הַלְוִיִּם: יֵט וְזֹאת | עֲשׂוּ לָהֶם וְחִיו וְלָא יָמָתוּ בְּגִשְׁתֶּם אֶת־קֹדֶשׁ
 הַקְּדוֹשִׁים אֲהָרֹן וּבְנָיו יָבֹאוּ וְשָׂמוּ אוֹתָם אִישׁ אִישׁ עַל־עֲבֹדָתוֹ
 וְאֶל־מִשְׁאוֹ: כ וְלֹא־יָבֹאוּ לְרֵאוֹת כַּבֵּלַע אֶת־הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְיָמָתוּ:

פ פ פ

קנ"ט פסוקים, חלקיה"ו סימן.

רש"י

ופרשו עליו בגד פלוני וכסו אותו צמכס פלוני, וזלוע שלו הוא כסווי:
 חסלת פרשת במדבר

נשא: (יח) אל תכריתו. אל תגרמו להם שימותו: (כ) ולא יבאו לראות
 כבלע את הקדש. לתוך נחתק שלו, כמו שפירשתי למעלה צפרשה ז',

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What, precisely, may not be seen? (v. 20)

RASHI: “They must not come in to see the holy (vessels) being encapsulated” in their sheath, as I explained above in this passage [v. 5]

that they should spread the appropriate garment over it, and cover it with the appropriate [outer] cover. The meaning of its “encapsulation” is its [outer] covering.

TORAS MENACHEM

However, this is not the end of *Rashi’s* discussion of the additional covering, as the matter re-emerges once again at the very end of the *Parsha*. There the Torah warns, that in addition to not touching the Tabernacle vessels, “They must not come in to see the holy (vessels) being encapsulated, so that they will not die” (v. 20).

Rashi explains: “They must not come in to see the holy (vessels) being encapsulated, in its sheath, as I explained above in this passage [v. 5] that they should spread the appropriate garment over it, and cover it with the appropriate [outer] cover. The meaning of its ‘encapsulation’ is its [outer] covering.”

Here we see that, in addition to the prohibition of touching the Holy Tabernacle vessels (v. 15), there is a further prohibition against even seeing the vessels being placed into their coverings. And *Rashi* states clearly that

this latter prohibition (of not seeing) is in force both while the vessels are being wrapped “in its sheath,” (i.e. the woolen “garment”), and also while it is being “encapsulated” in its outer *tachash* skin covering.*

RASHI’S SOURCE

From where did *Rashi* derive that it is prohibited to see even the outer *tachash* skin bag being placed on the vessels, after the vessels had been fully covered by the woolen sheath?

Rashi’s conclusion was based on the Torah’s unusual choice of phrase here, that one must not see the holy (vessels) being encapsulated, or to be precise, “swallowed” (כַּבֵּלַע) by its cover. At first glance this term is difficult to understand, because “swallowing” has the connotation of “engulfing” an item, thereby destroying its identity. A wrapping or covering on the other hand does not destroy the identity of its contents:

*The prohibition against touching the Tabernacle vessels does not apply once the first covering (the woolen “sheath”) is in place. Thus, according to *Rashi*, it would be technically permissible to approach the vessels at this point and touch them with one’s face turned backwards, so as not to see them.

MAFTIR ¹⁷ God spoke to Moshe and Aharon, saying:

- ¹⁸ Do not cause the tribe of the families of Kehos to be eliminated from among the Levites.
- ¹⁹ Do this for them, so they should live and not die: When they approach the Holy of Holies. Aharon and his sons should first come and appoint each man individually to his task and his load.
- ²⁰ They must not come in to see the holy (vessels) being encapsulated, so that they will not die.

HAFTARAH: BAMIDBAR - P. 294. EREV ROSH CHODESH - P. 317.

TORAS MENACHEM

on the contrary, the wrapping itself becomes insignificant in comparison to the item it wraps. So it does not appear to be the case that a cover ordinarily “swallows” its contents: if anything, the contents “swallow” any significance that the *wrapping* may have.

Thus, *Rashi* was troubled: Why does the Torah suggest that the Tabernacle vessels are “swallowed” by its covering?

To solve this problem, *Rashi* explained: “They should spread the appropriate garment over it, and cover it with the appropriate [outer] cover. The meaning of its ‘encapsulation’ is its [outer] covering.” I.e. while it is true that one covering does not engulf or “swallow” the identity of its contents, two coverings however do achieve this feat. (E.g. we find in Jewish law that holy items such as *tefilin* which normally may not be kept in a place exposed to any immodesty, may be brought there if they are enclosed in two wrappings—*Brachos* 25b; *Orach Chaim* ch. 40).

Thus, the Torah described the Tabernacle vessels being “swallowed”, because they were being placed inside two coverings, both the woolen “garment” and the *tachash* skin bag. So *Rashi* wrote that it is forbidden to see the vessels while either of these two coverings are being put in place, for together they achieve the effect of “swallowing” their contents—“They must not come in to see the holy (vessels) being encapsulated (swallowed).”

DEDICATED COVERINGS

At first glance the above explanation, that the Tabernacle vessels could only be viewed once they were “swallowed” in two coverings, appears to

contradict a further ruling of Jewish law in this area. The principle that an item becomes swallowed when encapsulated by two coverings only applies if at least one of the coverings is not specially dedicated to cover that particular object. For example, if *tefilin* are usually kept inside two particular cases, the cases become associated with the *tefilin* and thus express the *tefilin*'s identity, rather than “swallowing” it. In fact, even ten dedicated cases will not protect the *tefilin* from being in an inappropriate environment (*Brachos* *ibid*).

In our case, both the woolen sheath and the *tachash* skin bag were coverings dedicated to the Tabernacle vessels and were not used for any other purpose. So how could they have achieved the effect of “swallowing” their contents?

In order to answer this question, *Rashi* stresses: “They should spread the appropriate garment over it, and cover it with the appropriate [outer] cover.” I.e. in contrast to the woolen sheath, which was a dedicated, *made-to-measure* “garment,” the outer layer was merely a *standard* “cover” which was not unique to any particular vessel—as *Rashi* explained above, that the *tachash* skin covering was a type of “large bag” (*Classic Questions* to v. 10). Presumably therefore, the *tachash* bags could be used interchangeably between the different vessels of the Tabernacle. Thus, they were not considered to be dedicated coverings, and could indeed cause their contents to become “swallowed” when used in conjunction with an additional covering.**

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, p. 8ff.)

**In another detail, we see how *Rashi*'s stance here reflects a further ruling of the *Talmud* (*ibid.*). The law states that as long as one of the two coverings is a non-dedicated covering, “swallowing” will be achieved even if the non-dedicated covering is underneath the dedicated covering. Here we see this principle demonstrated through the Ark, whose non-dedicated covering, the *tachash* skin bag, was placed underneath its dedicated covering, the woolen garment (see v. 6).

parshas Naso

פָּרָשַׁת נֹשֶׁא

🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

Parshas Naso is always read on the *Shabbos* adjacent to *Shavu'os* (either after or before), indicating that the predominating theme of *Naso* is strongly connected with the giving of the Torah, celebrated on *Shavu'os*.

The Torah was, in fact, studied long before it was actually “given” in the year 2448. Our Sages revealed that the Patriarchs were fluent in Torah, and even prior to that, Sheim, Noach’s son, headed a Torah academy (*yeshivah*).

Nevertheless, the giving of the Torah was not merely a formality whereby the Torah was “officially” presented to the Jewish people. Rather, at Sinai, a significant change took place in the compatibility of spirituality with this physical world. As the *Midrash* relates, until the giving of the Torah, God had decreed that spirituality (the “upper worlds”) and physicality (the “lower worlds”) could have no lasting union, and when the Torah was given, “the decree was annulled” (*Tanchuma, Naso 16*).

Consequently, when we study the Torah now, after the giving of the Torah, we do not merely become educated and knowledgeable, but more importantly, our *physical being* becomes infused, strengthened and uplifted by the spirituality of the Torah.

To stress this point, the *Parsha* which we read around the time of *Shavu'os* is called *Naso*, which literally means “lift,” indicating how Torah actually elevates our physical existence to a higher plane.

From this, we can learn that the Torah was not intended to be limited to the realm of the academic or even the spiritual. Torah should affect us deeply, to the extent that even our ordinary, everyday activities become uplifted as a result of our exposure to Torah, fulfilling the Divine intent that the “upper worlds” and “lower worlds” should be in harmony with one another.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Naso 5747*)

כא ומליל יי עם משה למימר: כב קבל ית חשבון בני גרשון אף אננו לבית אבֹהֵתְהוֹן לזרְעֵיתְהוֹן: כג מִבֶּר תִּלְתִּין שָׁנִין וּלְעֹלָא עַד בֶּר חֲמִשִּׁין שָׁנִין תִּמְנִי יתְהוֹן כָּל דְּאֵתִי לְחֵילָא חֵילָא לְמַפְלַח פְּלִחְנָא בְּמִשְׁכַּן זְמָנָא: כד דִּין פְּלַחַן זְרַעֲתָ גְרִשׁוֹן לְמַפְלַח וּלְמַטּוּל: כה וַיִּטְלוּן ית ירֵיעַת מִשְׁכַּנָּא וַיִּת מִשְׁכַּן זְמָנָא חוּפָאָה וְחוּפָאָה דְּסַסְגֻּנָא דִּי עֲלוּהִי מְלַעְלָא וַיִּת פְּרָסָא דְּתַרְעֵ מִשְׁכַּן זְמָנָא: כו וַיִּת סְרְדֵי דְרִתָּא וַיִּת פְּרָסָא דְּמַעְלָנָא דְּתַרְעֵ דְרִתָּא דִּי עַל מִשְׁכַּנָּא וְעַל מִדְּבַחָא סְחוּר סְחוּר וַיִּת אֲטוּנִיָּהוֹן וַיִּת כָּל מְנִי פְּלַחְנְהוֹן וַיִּת כָּל דִּי יתְמַסֵּר לְהוֹן וַיִּפְלְחוּן: כז עַל מִימַר אֲהָרֹן וּבְנוּהִי יְהִי כָּל פְּלַחַן בְּנֵי גְרִשׁוֹן לְכָל מַטּוּלְהוֹן וּלְכָל פְּלַחְנְהוֹן וְתִמְנִין עֲלֵיהוֹן בְּמִטְרָא ית כָּל מַטּוּלְהוֹן: כח דִּין פְּלַחַן זְרַעֲתָ בְּנֵי גְרִשׁוֹן בְּמִשְׁכַּן זְמָנָא וּמִטְרָתְהוֹן בִּידָא דְּאִיתְמַר בֶּר אֲהָרֹן כְּהֵנָּא: כט בְּנֵי מְרָרִי לְזַרְעֵיתְהוֹן

כא וַיִּדְבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר: כב נִשְׂא אֶת־רֹאשׁ בְּנֵי גְרִשׁוֹן גַּם־הֵם לְבֵית אֲבוֹתָם לְמִשְׁפַּחָתָם: כג מִבֶּן שְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה וְמֵעַלָּה עַד בֶּן־חַמִּשִּׁים שָׁנָה תִּפְקֹד אוֹתָם כָּל־הַבָּא לְצַבָּא צָבָא לְעִבְדַּי עִבְדְּהָ בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד: כד זֹאת עֲבַדְתָּ מִשְׁפַּחַת הַגְּרִשִּׁי לְעִבְדֵי וּלְמִשְׁאָא: כה וְנִשְׂאוּ אֶת־יְרֵיעַת הַמִּשְׁכָּן וְאֶת־אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד מִכִּסֵּהוּ וּמִכִּסֵּה הַתִּתִּישׁ אֲשֶׁר־עָלָיו מִלְּמַעְלָה וְאֶת־מִסְךְ פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד: כו וְאֵת קַלְעֵי הַחֲצֵר וְאֶת־מִסְךְ פֶּתַח | שַׁעַר הַחֲצֵר אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַמִּשְׁכָּן וְעַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ סָבִיב וְאֵת מִיתְרֵיהֶם וְאֶת־כָּל־כְּלֵי עֲבַדְתָּם וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה לָהֶם וְעִבְדוּ: כז עַל־פִּי אֲהָרֹן וּבְנָיו תִּהְיֶה כָּל־עֲבַדְתָּ בְּנֵי הַגְּרִשִּׁי לְכָל־מִשְׁאָם וּלְכָל עֲבַדְתָּם וּפְקֻדָּתָם עֲלֵיהֶם בְּמִשְׁמֶרֶת אֵת כָּל־מִשְׁאָם: כח זֹאת עֲבַדְתָּ מִשְׁפַּחַת בְּנֵי הַגְּרִשִּׁי בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וּמִשְׁמֶרֶתָם בְּיַד אִיתְמַר בֶּן־אֲהָרֹן הַכֹּהֵן: ס וּשְׁנֵי כֹס בְּנֵי מְרָרִי

כש"י

על המשכן. כלומר הקלעים והמסך של חצר הסוככים ומגינים על המשכן ועל מזבח הנחשת סביבו: ואת כל אשר יעשה להם. כתרגומו וית כל דיתמסר להון, לבני גרשון: (כז) על פי אהרן ובניו. ואיזה מהבנים ממונה עליהם, ציד איתמר צן אהרן הכהן?

(כז) נשא את ראש בני גרשון גם הם. כמו שנויחך על בני קהת לראות כמה יש שהגיעו לכלל עבודה! (כח) את יריעות המשכן. עשר התחמוטות: ואת אהל מועד. יריעות עזים העשויות לאהל עליו: מכסהו. עורות חילים מאדמים: מסך פתח. וילון המזרחי: (כו) אשר

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How were Gershon's descendants "singled out"? (v. 22)

RASHI: [God said]: "Single out those from Gershon's descendants too, as I commanded you with Kehos' descendants (above 4:1ff), to see how many have reached the age to serve [in the Tabernacle]."

BIURAY MAHARAY: The Torah uses the term "single out" (literally "lift up the head") to indicate that the Levites were counted here in a totally different and much more honorable fashion than the other tribes.

For with the other tribes, all the various families were counted together in one mixed bunch. Here, however, Kehos' descendants

were first singled out and counted separately from the other Levites as an elite group. Then, Gershon's descendants were separated out from Merari's descendants and counted, leaving only Merari's descendants at the end.

● Since Gershon was the firstborn, why were his descendants not singled out before Kehos' descendants (4:1ff)?

MIDRASH: Even though Gershon was the firstborn, and we find that scripture always gives precedence to the firstborn, nevertheless the Torah mentions Kehos first in this case, because Kehos' descendants carried the Ark, in which the Torah was placed (*Bamidbar Rabah* 6:1).

TORAS MENACHEM

☞ THE SELECTION OF GERSHON'S DESCENDANTS (v. 22)

Our *Parsha* opens with God's words to Moshe, "Single out those from Gershon's descendants too." *Rashi* was troubled why the Torah stresses that Gershon's descendants are to be singled out "too," suggesting that we are speaking here of the continuation of a process that began previously. *Rashi* answered that God's words here are a continuation of His instructions near the end of the previous *Parsha*, to count Kehos' descendants. Thus, here God stresses that Gershon's descendants should be counted *too*, "as I commanded you with Kehos' descendants."

However, while *Rashi* has indeed clarified *what* the Torah's intention was in stressing that Gershon's descendants were to be counted "too," we appear to be left without an explanation as to *why* the Torah draws a parallel between the two cases of Kehos and Gershon.

Furthermore, in the case of the third group of Levites, Merari's descendants, we do not find any stress that they were counted "too," like the descendants of Gershon. In fact, not only does the Torah draw no parallel between Merari's descendants and the previous cases, we find that the Torah uses a completely different expression altogether. Instead

🕍 DUTIES OF GERSHON'S DESCENDANTS 🕍

4:21 **G**od spoke to Moshe, saying: ²² Single out those from Gershon's descendants (who are fit for service in the Tabernacle) too, (just as you were commanded with Kehos' descendants*), verifying their family lineage, according to their paternal houses. ²³ Count those from the age of thirty years and upward, until the age of fifty years, (namely) all those who are fit to join the group that performs the service in the Tent of Meeting.

²⁴ The following is the service of the Gershonite families. (Their task is to) perform service and carry (parts of the Tabernacle):

- ²⁵ They should carry the tapestries of the Tabernacle and the (goat's hair covering of) the Tent of Meeting, its (ram skin) covering and the tachash skin covering placed upon it, the partition for the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, ²⁶ the curtains of the courtyard, the curtain for the entrance gate of the courtyard which is around the Tabernacle and the Altar, all its ropes and sacred utensils.
- (In addition), they must perform all tasks allotted to them.
- ²⁷ All the work of Gershon's descendants will be directed by Aharon and (one of) his sons, (including) all their tasks of carrying and all their (other) work. You should allot to them as their duty all the things they must carry.

²⁸ This was the service of the families of Gershon's descendants in the Tent of Meeting, and their duties, which were under the supervision of Isamar, the son of Aharon the priest.

TORAS MENACHEM

🕍 Sparks of Chasidus 🕍

KEHOS & GERSHON (4:1-28)

To serve God, one must both “turn away from evil” and “do good.” But which of these steps is the most important? And which must be prioritized?

The sequence of Kehos' and Gershon's descendants in the Torah provides the key to answer these questions.

Gershon is related to the Hebrew word *Gerushin*, meaning “divorce,” alluding to the process of turning away from and “divorcing” oneself from evil. *Kehos* means “gathering” (as in “*He will gather [yikhas] the people,*” *Bereishis* 49:10), alluding to the accumulation of good deeds—“doing good.”

Gershon was the firstborn, indicating that at the outset, when one is just beginning to serve God, a person should stress the path of turning away from evil. This is in order to thoroughly cleanse oneself from negative traits before one can begin to sanctify oneself properly with good deeds.

However, in the Torah, *Kehos'* descendants are placed before Gershon's descendants (see *Midrash*), to indicate that, ultimately, “doing good” is the ultimate goal which actively brings a person close to God and makes this world a “home” for Him.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 13, p. 19)

of being told to “single out” those suitable for Tabernacle service (as in the case of Kehos and Gershon's descendants), Merari's descendants were simply to be “counted” (v. 29).

Why does *Rashi* not explain these difficulties, which require explanation at the literal level?

THREE LEVELS OF SANCTITY

At first glance, it would appear that the Torah describes the selection of the three Levite families with different expressions to reflect the varying degrees of sanctity possessed by the objects that they carried:

1.) Kehos' descendants carried the Ark of the Covenant, together with the holy equipment of the Sanctuary (see 4:1ff). Therefore, the Torah mentions their selection first, to stress its primary importance (as the *Midrash* explains).

2.) Gershon's descendants carried the tapestries and hangings of the Tabernacle and its courtyard (v. 25-26) which were of a lesser sanctity. Thus, the Torah indicates the secondary nature of their role by stressing that they are to be “singled out *too*.”

3.) Merari's descendants carried only the supporting structure of the Tabernacle, its beams, pillars and sockets etc. (v. 31-32), which were of an even lesser sanctity. To reflect this lesser role, the Torah does not write that they were “singled out,” like their more important cousins, but rather, that they were merely “counted.”

RASHI'S VIEW

In the final analysis, however, this solution does not appear to be consistent with *Rashi's* understanding of these verses, since: a.) *Rashi* makes no mention here of differing degrees of sanctity between the tasks

* See above 4:1.

לבית אֶבְרָהֶהוֹן תִּמְנִי יְתָהוּן: ל מִבַּר תִּלְתִּין שָׁנָיו וְלֹעֲלָא וְעַד בַּר חֲמִשִּׁין שָׁנָיו תִּמְנָנוּן כָּל דְּאֵתִי לְחִילָא לְמַפְלַח יַת פְּלָחַן מִשָּׁבֶן וּמְנָא: לא וְדָא מִטְרַת מִטּוּלְהוֹן לְכָל פְּלַתְנְהוֹן בְּמִשָּׁבֶן וּמְנָא דְפִי מִשָּׁבְנָא וְעִבְרוּהִי וְעִמּוּדוּהִי וּסְמִכּוּהִי: לב וְעִמּוּדֵי דְדִרְתָּא סְחֹר סְחֹר וּסְמִכִּיהוֹן וּסְפִיחֹן וְאִטּוּנִיהוֹן לְכָל מְנִיהוֹן וּלְכָל פְּלַתְנְהוֹן וּבִשְׁמֹהוֹן תִּמְנָנוּן יַת מְנִי מִטְרַת מִטּוּלְהוֹן: לג דִּין פְּלָחַן זְרַעִית בְּנֵי מְרָרִי לְכָל פְּלַתְנְהוֹן בְּמִשָּׁבֶן וּמְנָא בִּידָא דְאֵיתָמַר בַּר אֶהֱרֹן כְּהֵנָּה: לד וּמְנָא מִשָּׁה וְאֶהֱרֹן וּבְרָבִי כְּנִשְׁתָּא יַת בְּנֵי קֹהֵת לְזִרְעֵיתְהוֹן וּלְבֵית אֶבְרָהֶהוֹן: לה מִבַּר תִּלְתִּין שָׁנָיו וְלֹעֲלָא וְעַד בַּר חֲמִשִּׁין שָׁנָיו כָּל דְּאֵתִי לְחִילָא לְפִלְחָנָא

לְמִשְׁפַּחְתֶּם לְבֵית־אֲבֹתְכֶם תִּפְקְדוּ אֹתָם: ל מִבְּן שְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה וְזַמְעָלָה וְעַד בֶּן־חֲמִשִּׁים שָׁנָה תִּפְקְדוּם כָּל־הַבָּא לְצִבָּא לְעֵבֶד אֶת־עֲבֹדַת אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד: לא וְזֹאת מִשְׁמֶרֶת מִשָּׂאֵם לְכָל־עֲבֹדְתָם בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד קִרְשֵׁי הַמִּשְׁכָּן וּבְרִיחָיו וְעִמּוּדָיו וְאֲדָנָיו: לב וְעִמּוּדֵי הַחֹצֵר סָבִיב וְאֲדָנֵיהֶם וַיִּתְּדוּם וַיִּמִּיתְרֵיהֶם לְכָל־כְּלֵיהֶם וּלְכָל עֲבֹדְתָם וּבִשְׁמַת תִּפְקְדוּ אֶת־כָּלִי מִשְׁמֶרֶת מִשָּׂאֵם: לג זֹאת עֲבֹדַת מִשְׁפַּחַת בְּנֵי מְרָרִי לְכָל־עֲבֹדְתָם בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד בְּיַד אֵיתָמָר בֶּן־אֶהֱרֹן הַכֹּהֵן: לד וַיִּפְקְדוּ מִשָּׁה וְאֶהֱרֹן וּנְשֵׂיאֵי הָעֵדָה אֶת־בְּנֵי הַקֹּהֵת לְמִשְׁפַּחְתָּם וּלְבֵית אֲבֹתָם: לה מִבְּן שְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה וְזַמְעָלָה וְעַד בֶּן־חֲמִשִּׁים שָׁנָה

כ"ט

תגזיבם הרוח, ויחזות ומיתריס היו לעמודים סביב לתלות זהם הקלעים
בשפתם העליונה, ככלונסאות וקונדסין, כמו שמויה במלאכת המשכן!

(לג) ויתדתם ומיתריהם. של עמודים, שהרי יחזות ומיתרי הקלעים
במשח צני גרשון היו, ויחזות ומיתריס היו ליריעות ולקלעים מלמעלה, שלא

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of the three Levite families.* b.) Instead, Rashi stresses that the selection of these families was based on their ability to carry, which depends on physical strength: “Count those of them who are fit for the service of carrying, which are those between thirty years and fifty years. One under thirty has not reached his full strength—from this our Sages said, ‘At thirty, one has strength’ (Avos 5:22)—and past fifty, one’s strength begins to wane” (Rashi to 4:2).

Thus, it would appear that according to Rashi, the three different ways in which scripture expresses the selection of the Levite families corresponds to the varying degrees of strength required for their respective tasks:

1.) Kehos’ descendants were devoted *exclusively* to carrying (above 4:15). It follows, therefore, that they were singled out “for the service of carrying,” first and foremost, since they must have been the strongest group.

2.) Gershon’s descendants were devoted partially to carrying, and partially to other tasks, as the verse states: “(Their task is to) perform service and carry (parts of the Tabernacle)” (v. 24). The Torah thus indicates their *secondary* role as “carriers” by stressing that they are to be “singled out too” (v. 22).

3.) Merari’s descendants did not actually have to carry anything themselves; they merely had what the Torah describes as “transportation responsibilities” (v. 31), i.e. to ensure that the beams and pillars etc. of the Tabernacle were correctly transported—as we read later (7:8), that wagons were used for this purpose. Therefore, Merari’s descendants were not “singled out” for carrying at all. Nevertheless, we still find that the

stronger members of this group (between 30 and 50 years) were “counted” (v. 30), since their work would inevitably have involved some heavy carrying (such as loading the wagons), even if not for long distances.

WHAT DID GERSHON’S DESCENDANTS HAVE TO CARRY?

One problem with the above explanation is that Gershon’s descendants were given the use of wagons (7:7 below), just like Merari’s descendants. So why does the Torah “single out” Kehos’ and Gershon’s descendants as requiring particular strength (the former being “singled out” and the latter “singled out too”), in contrast to the lesser strength demanded of Merari’s descendants? Surely Kehos’ descendants were in a class of their own, since they had to carry *everything* on their shoulders, and Gershon and Merari’s descendants did not have to be so strong, since they all used wagons?

In truth, however, Gershon’s descendants would have been required to do a significant amount of carrying *without* wagons, since the wagons were 5 amos wide (Shabbos 99a) and would thus not have fit through the gaps between the pillars of the outer Tabernacle courtyard, since the pillars were only 5 amos apart, including the width of the pillar (see Rashi Shemos 27:14). Thus, if we are to presume that Gershon’s descendants removed the tapestries and coverings of the Tabernacle *before* Merari’s descendants removed the pillars of the outer courtyard (according to the sequence of scripture here**), then it follows that Gershon’s descendants must have carried their load by hand from the Tabernacle to outside the Tabernacle courtyard, where their wagons were parked.***

* Later, in his commentary to Parshas Beha’aloscha (8:11), Rashi does refer to these three levels of sanctity, but it is difficult to accept that Rashi expected the reader to fathom the meaning of scripture here based on one of his later comments. ** From Shemos 40:18ff and Bamidbar 10:17-21, however, it appears that this was not the sequence. But in any case, the work of Gershon’s descendants would have been significantly greater than that of Merari’s descendants, considering that they had to climb above the walls to arrange and remove the tapestries, coverings and curtains while the Tabernacle walls and pillars were still standing; unfasten the hooks; untie the ropes, etc.

DUTIES OF MERARI'S DESCENDANTS

4:29
SECOND
READING

You should count Merari's descendants, verifying their family lineage, according to their paternal houses. ³⁰ Count (only) those from the age of thirty years and upwards, until the age of fifty years, (which includes) all those who (are fit to) participate in the service of working in the Tent of Meeting. ³¹ The following are their transportation responsibilities for all their work in the Tent of Meeting:

- The beams of the Tabernacle, its bars, its pillars, and its sockets; ³² the pillars of the surrounding courtyard, their sockets, pegs, and ropes, (and) all the utensils for all associated tasks.
- You should appoint them by name to the utensils which they are responsible to transport.

³³ These were the tasks of the families of Merari's descendants concerning all their service in the Tent of Meeting, which was under the supervision of Isamar the son of Aharon the priest.

TALLY OF LEVITES FIT TO SERVE IN THE TABERNACLE

4:34 **M**oshe, Aharon, and the leaders of the congregation counted Kehos' descendants—verifying their family lineage, according to their paternal houses—³⁵ from those thirty years old and upwards, until fifty years old, (including) all those who (were fit to) participate in the service

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Why were Merari's descendants not "singled out" but merely "counted"?** (v. 29)

MIDRASH: In the cases of Kehos' descendants (4:1) and Gershon's descendants (ibid. v. 21) the Torah states that they were "singled out" (literally "their heads were lifted up"). God honored them in this way because Kehos carried the Ark, and Gershon was the firstborn. But in the case of Merari's descendants (v. 29), who were only simple people, and whose task was merely to carry the beams, supporting rods, pillars and sockets, scripture does not refer to them as being "singled out" (*Bamidbar Rabah* 6:4).

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Thus, in the final analysis we see that the role of Gershon's descendants involved a substantial amount of carrying, which is why the Torah considers their task to be comparable—albeit secondary—to that of Kehos' descendants.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 46ff.)

The Last Word

THE "IMPORTANCE" OF MERARI'S DESCENDANTS

Does Judaism require us to be proud, ambitious Jews, filled with self-respect and a thirst for knowledge and growth? Or are we supposed to be humble and submissive, in the full awareness that we are utterly worthless in the presence of our Creator?

The answer is that *both* these qualities are required. Any relationship with God must, of course, be based on submissiveness, whereby a person nullifies his own will and chooses to live in accordance with the Divine Will. But once this foundation of submissiveness is established, it is necessary to also build up one's knowledge, skills and determination. For God put us in this world to transform it, and this will simply not occur unless we nurture qualities of ambition and a desire for achievement. Nevertheless, with a firm foundation of submissiveness, a person's achievements will not "go to his head" and lead him to believe that his successes are to his own

credit. Rather, his ambitions will always be permeated with the awareness that *God desires* him to be ambitious and successful in carrying out the Divine plan for this world, and it is *God* Who is continually enabling him to do so.

This healthy equilibrium of greatness and submissiveness required for Divine service was reflected by the role of the Levites in the Tabernacle, God's house. The descendants of Kehos and Gershon were honored with the important tasks of carrying the most holy items, whereas Merari's descendants were "simple people" who were given the more menial tasks (see *Midrash*). Nevertheless, the over-seeing of the Tabernacle necessitated the combination of *both* these roles, teaching us that both qualities, pride and simple submissiveness, need to be found in every Jewish heart.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Naso* 5748)

במשכן ומנא: לו והיו מנגיחון לזרעיתהון תרין אלפין שבע מאה וחמשים: לו אליו מנגי זרעית קהת כל דפלה במשכן ומנא די מנא משה ואהרן על מימרא דיי בידא דמשה: לה ומנגי בני גרשון לזרעיתהון ולבית אבהתהון: לה מבר תלתין שנין ולעלא ועד בר חמשים שנין כל דאתי לחילא לפלחנא במשכן ומנא: מ והיו מנגיחון לזרעיתהון לבית אבהתהון תרין אלפין ושית מאה ותלתין: מא אליו מנגי זרעית בני גרשון כל דפלה במשכן ומנא די מנא משה ואהרן על מימרא דיי: מב ומנגי זרעית בני מררי לזרעיתהון לבית אבהתהון: מג מבר תלתין שנין ולעלא ועד בר חמשים שנין כל דאתי לחילא לפלחנא במשכן ומנא: מד והיו מנגיחון לזרעיתהון תלתא אלפין ומאתן: מה אליו מנגי זרעית בני מררי די מנא משה ואהרן על מימרא דיי בידא דמשה: מו כל מנגי די מנא משה ואהרן וברכי ישראל ית לואי לזרעיתהון ולבית אבהתהון: מו מבר תלתין שנין ולעלא ועד בר חמשים שנין כל דאתי למפלח פלחן פלחנא ופלחן מטול במשכן ומנא: מה והיו מנגיחון תמניא אלפין וחמש מאה ותמנין: מט על מימרא דיי מנא יתהון בידא דמשה גבר גבר על פלחנה ועל מטולה ומנגי די פקיד יי ית משה: א ומליל יי עם משה למימרא: ב פקד ית בני ישראל וישלחו מן משריתא כל דסגיר וכל דדאב וכל דמסאב למי נפשא דאנשא: ג מדבר עד נוקבא תשלחו למברא למשריתא תשלחנן ולא יסאבון ית משריתאון די שכנתי שקרא ביניהון: ד ועברו בן בני ישראל ושלחו יתהון למברא למשריתא כמא די מליל יי עם משה

כל־הבא לצבא לעבדה באהל מועד: לו ויהיו פקדיהם למשפחתם אלפים שבע מאות וחמשים: לו אלה פקודי משפחת הקהתי כל־העבד באהל מועד אשר פקד משה ואהרן על־פי יהוה ביד־משה: ס לה ופקודי בני גרשון למשפחותם ולבית אבתם: לה מן שלשים שנה ומעלה ועד בן־חמשים שנה כל־הבא לצבא לעבדה באהל מועד: מ ויהיו פקדיהם למשפחתם לבית אבתם אלפים ושש מאות ושלשים: מא אלה פקודי משפחת בני גרשון כל־העבד באהל מועד אשר פקד משה ואהרן על־פי יהוה: מב ופקודי משפחת בני מררי למשפחתם לבית אבתם: מג מן שלשים שנה ומעלה ועד בן־חמשים שנה כל־הבא לצבא לעבדה באהל מועד: מד ויהיו פקדיהם למשפחתם שלשים ומאתים: מה אלה פקודי משפחת בני מררי אשר פקד משה ואהרן על־פי יהוה ביד־משה: מו כל־הפקדים אשר פקד משה ואהרן ונשיאי ישראל את־הלוים למשפחתם ולבית אבתם: מז מן שלשים שנה ומעלה ועד בן־חמשים שנה כל־הבא לעבד עבדת עבדה ועבדת משא באהל מועד: מח ויהיו פקדיהם שמונת אלפים וחמש מאות ושמונים: מט על־פי יהוה פקד אותם ביד־משה איש איש על־עבדתו ועל־משאו ופקדיו אשר־צוה יהוה את־משה: פ ושלישין ה א וידבר יהוה אל־משה לאמר: ב צו את־בני ישראל וישלחו מן המחנה כל־צרוע וכל־זב וכל טמא לנפש: ג מזכר עד־נקבה תשלחו אל־מחויץ למחנה תשלחום ולא יטמאו את־מחניהם אשר אני שכן בתוכם: ד ויעשו־כן בני ישראל וישלחו אותם אל־מחויץ למחנה באשר דבר יהוה אל־משה כן עשו בני

כש"י

חניית הלוים סביב כמו שמפורש בפרשת צמדצר סיני היא מחנה לוי, ומשם ועד סוף מחנה הדגלים לכל ארבע הרוחות היא מחנה ישראל. הכרוע נשתלח חוץ לכולן, הכז מותר במחנה ישראל ומשולח מן השטים, ועמא לנפש מותר אף בשל לוי ואינו משולח אלא משל שכניה, וכל זה דרשו רבותיו מן המקראות במסכת פסחים³: עמא לנפש. דמסאז למי נפשא דאנשא⁴. אומר אני שהוא לשון עלמות אדם בלשון ארמי, והרבה יש צ"ר⁵ אריונוס שחיק

(מז) עבדת עבדה. הוא השיר במללטים וכנורות, שהיא עבודה לעבודה אחרת¹ ועבודת משא. כמשמעו²: (מט) ופקדיו אשר צוה ה' את משה. ואותן הפקודים היו במזבח מן שלשים שנה ועד בן חמשים שנה: (צ) צו את בני ישראל וגו'. פרשה זו נאמרה ביום שבוקס המשכן, ושמונה פרשיות נאמרו בו ביום, כדאיחא במסכת גיטין בפרק הניזקין². וישלחו מן המחנה. שלש מחנות היו שם בשעת חנייתן, תוך הקלעים היא מחנה שכניה,

of working in the Tent of Meeting. ³⁶ Their total, verified according to family lineage: two thousand, seven hundred and fifty. ³⁷ This was the total of the Kehos families, all who served in the Tent of Meeting, who were counted by Moshe and Aharon, as directed by God to Moshe.

³⁸ The total of Gershon's descendants was verified according to family lineage, according to their paternal houses, ³⁹ (and included) those thirty years old and upwards, until fifty years old, all those who (were fit to) participate in the service of working in the Tent of Meeting. ⁴⁰ Their total, verified according to family lineage, according to their paternal houses: two thousand, six hundred and thirty. ⁴¹ This was the total of the families of Gershon's descendants, all those who served in the Tent of Meeting, whom Moshe and Aharon counted, as directed by God.

⁴² The total of the families of Merari's descendants was verified according to family lineage, according to their paternal houses, ⁴³ (and included) those thirty years old and upwards, until fifty years old, all those who (were fit to) participate in the service of working in the Tent of Meeting. ⁴⁴ Their total, verified according to family lineage: three thousand, two hundred. ⁴⁵ This was the total of the families of Merari's descendants, whom Moshe and Aharon counted, as directed by God to Moshe.

⁴⁶ The grand total of Levites counted by Moshe, Aharon, and the leaders of Israel was verified according to family lineage, according to their paternal houses, ⁴⁷ (and included) those thirty years old and upwards, until fifty years old, all those who (were fit to) participate in the service of (playing cymbals and harps during) the service and the service of carrying in the Tent of Meeting. ⁴⁸ Their total: eight thousand, five hundred and eighty. ⁴⁹ They were counted as directed by God. Each man was appointed by Moshe to his service and his carrying duties. They were counted as God had commanded Moshe.

🕎 SANCTITY OF THE CAMP 🕎

5
THIRD
READING

God spoke to Moshe (on the day the Tabernacle was erected), saying: ² Command the children of Israel to send out from the camp:

- All those afflicted with Tzara'as, all those who have had an (unhealthy, watery venereal) discharge and all those ritually impure through (contact with) the dead.
- ³ You should send out both male and female.

Send them outside the camp so that they do not defile their camps, where I dwell among them.

⁴ The children of Israel did so and sent them outside the camp. The children of Israel did exactly what God told Moshe.

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🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

THE CENSUS OF THE LEVITES (v. 34-49)

What is the inner reason why the Torah required those Levites who were fit to work in the Tabernacle to be counted?

The answer can be understood by first addressing why the Jewish people were required to wander in the desert for forty years. We know, of course, that they had to live *somewhere* for those forty years as a result of the sin of the spies, when God decreed that the entire generation would not enter the Land of Israel. But surely, they could have spent this time in a civilized country, rather than in the desert?

Chasidic thought explains that the Jewish people spent those forty years in the desert so that the immense holiness of the Tabernacle would be present to undermine the forces of evil which are rooted in the desert (which is why the desert is uninhabitable).

Therefore, the Levites, who were responsible for the Tabernacle, were counted; for counting a person is a means of conferring importance on him, and in a spiritual sense, this was a way of strengthening the Levites for their "war" against the forces of evil.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 13, pp. 16-17)

בן עֲבָדוֹ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ה' ומליל יי עם משה למימר: ו מלל עם בני ישראל גבר או אתתא ארי ועבדון מכל חובי אנשא לשקרא שקר קדם יי ויחוב אנשא ההוא: ז וינדון נת חוביהון די עבדו ויתב נת חובתה ברישה וחמשה יוסף עלוהי ויתן לדחב לה: ה ואם לית לגבר פריק לאתקא חובתא לה חובתא דמתיב קדם יי לכהנא בר מדבר כפוריא די יכפר בה עלוהי: ט וכל אפרשותא לכל קודשיא דבני ישראל די יקרבו לכהנא דלה יחא: י וגבר ית מעשר קודשיה דלה יהון

יִשְׂרָאֵל: פ ה ויִדְבַר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: ו דַּבַּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אִישׁ אֶן-אִשָּׁה כִּי יַעֲשׂוּ מִכָּל-חַטָּאת הָאֵדָם לְמַעַל מֵעַל בְּיהוָה וְאִשְׁמָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהוּא: ז וְהִתְנִדּוּ אֶת-חַטָּאתֵם אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ וְהִשִּׁיב אֶת-אֲשָׁמוֹ בְּרֹאשׁוֹ וְחִמִּישְׁתּוּ יֶסֶף עָלָיו וְנָתַן לְאֲשֶׁר אָשַׁם לוֹ: ה וְאִם-אֵין לָאִישׁ גֹּאֵל לְהִשִּׁיב הָאֲשָׁם אֵלָיו הָאֲשָׁם הַמוֹשֵׁב לְיהוָה לִכְהֵן מִלְבָּד אֵיל הַכִּפְּרִים אֲשֶׁר יִכַּפְּרֶנּוּ עָלָיו: ט וְכָל-תְּרוּמָה לְכָל-קֹדְשֵׁי בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר-יִקְרִיבוּ לִכְהֵן לוֹ יִהְיֶה: י וְאִישׁ אֶת-קֹדְשָׁיו לוֹ יִהְיוּ אִישׁ

כש"י

לכהן. קנאו השם ונתנו לכהן שזאתו משמרי: מלבד איל הכפורים. האמור בזיקרא⁶ שהוא לריך להצוא: (ט) וכל תרומה וגו'. אמר רבי ישמעאל וכי תרומה מקריבין לכהן, וכלא הוא המחזר אחריה לצית הגרנות, ומה תלמוד לומר אשר יקריבו לכהן, אלו הצכורים, שנאמר בהם תצית צית ה' אלהיך⁷, ואינו יודע מה יעשה בהם, תלמוד לומר לכהן לו יהיה, צא הכתוב ולימד על הצכורים שיהיו ניתנין לכהן⁸: (י) ואיש את קדשיו לו יהיו. לפי שנאמרו מתנות כהונה וליה יכול יוצאו ויטלוס צרוע, תלמוד לומר ואיש את קדשיו לו יהיו, מגיד שטובת הנאתן לצעלים, ועוד מדרשים הרבה דרשו צו בספרי. ומדרש אגדה⁹ ואיש את קדשיו לו יהיו, מי שמעכב מעשרותיו ואינו נותן, לו יהיו המעשרות, סוף שאין שדכו עושב אלא אחד

טמיא, שחוק עלמות: (ו) למעל מעל בה'. הרי חזר וכתב כאן פרשת גזול וגשבע על שקר, היא האמורה צפרשת ויקרא ומעלה מעל צב' וכחש בעמיתו וגו'¹, וגשנית כאן צשזיל שני דברים שנתחדשו צב, האחד שכתוב והתודו², לימד שאינו חייב חומש ואשם על פי עדים עד שיודה צדצר. והשני על גזל הגר שהוא ניתן לכהנים³: (ז) את אשמו בראשו. הוא הקרן שגשבע עליו⁴: לאשר אשם לו. למי שנתחייב לו⁵: (ח) ואם אין לאיש גואל. שמת התוצע ששבעיו, ואין לו יורשים: להשיב האשם אליו. כשנמלך זה להתודות על עונו. ואמרו רבותינו⁶ וכי יש לך אדם בישראל שאין לו גואלים או צן או צת או אח או שר צצר הקרוב ממשפחת אציו למעלה עד יעקב, אלא זה הגר שמת ואין לו יורשים: האשם המושב. זה הקרן והחומש: לה'

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What is confession? When must it be done? (v. 6-7)

RAMBAM: If a person transgresses any of the *mitzvos* of the Torah, be it a positive command or a prohibition, either intentionally or unintentionally, he is required to confess before God when he repents and returns from his sin, as the verse states, "If a man or woman commits any sins against (another) man...they should confess the sin they committed" (v. 6-7), which refers to a verbal confession. This confession is a positive command from the Torah....

One is required to confess with one's lips and state verbally those things which one has resolved in one's heart. If a person confesses

verbally, but has not resolved in his heart to repent, it is comparable to one who immerses in a *mikvah* while holding a *sheretz* [creature that causes ritual impurity], for the immersion will not be effective until he casts the *sheretz* away (*Laws of Teshuvah* 1:1, 2:2-3).

SEFER HACHINUCH: Through verbal confession of sin, the sinner reveals his thoughts and feelings, that he truly believes that all his deeds are revealed and known before God, and that he will not act as if the "Eye that sees" does not see. Furthermore, through mentioning the sin specifically, he will feel remorseful about it, and he will be more careful on another occasion not to stumble in the same way again (*Mitzvah* 364).

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 THE MITZVAH OF CONFESSION (v. 7)

Rambam writes that the act of confession, which is derived from v. 7, is, "to say verbally those things which one has resolved in one's heart."

From this it would appear: a.) The confession does not actually further the *teshuvah* (repentance) process, it is merely a verbal expression of the *teshuvah* that has already occurred internally.

b.) Confession is meaningless without a prior internal resolution not to sin again—as **Rambam** writes that it is "comparable to one who immerses in a *mikvah* while holding a *sheretz*."

However, on further analysis it could be argued that both these conclusions are, in fact, unfounded, and the confession does: a.) advance the *teshuvah* process even after a person has fully repented; and, b.) become meaningful even without proper repentance first.

ADVANCEMENT OF THE TESHUVAH PROCESS

Even if a person has done "complete *teshuvah*" in his heart and resolved firmly never to sin again, verbal confession will bring him to further remorse. This can be discerned from the words of **Sefer Hachinuch**: "Through mentioning the sin specifically, he will feel

1 ויקרא ה, כא 2 פסוק 1 3 ספרי 4 ב"ק קי. 5 ראה שיחת ש"פ נשא תשד"מ 6 ה, כה 7 שמות כג, יט 8 ספרי. ראה לקו"ש ז"ח ע' 29 ואילך, ושיחת ש"פ נשא תשמ"ג. 9 תנחומא ראה י

🌀 ADDITIONAL LAWS OF THE GUILT OFFERING FOR DISHONESTY* 🌀

5:5

God spoke to Moshe, saying: ⁶ Tell the children of Israel: If a man or woman commits any sins (of dishonesty) against (another) man, (thereby) acting treacherously against God, and that person is (found) guilty:

- ⁷ They should confess the sin they committed.
- (The person) should pay back the amount he is guilty of, and add a fifth to it, giving it to the one against whom he was guilty.
- ⁸ But if the man (dies and) has no relative to whom (the offender) can pay back the debt, then the debt is to be returned “to God”, (i.e.) to the priest.
- (This is, of course,) besides the atonement ram (which is brought to the priest in any case), through which he is atoned.

🌀 ADDITIONAL LAWS OF GIFTS TO THE PRIESTS 🌀

- ⁹ Every offering from all the children of Israel’s holy (Firstfruits) brought to the priest will belong to (the priest).
- ¹⁰ (The prerogative of precisely which priest or Levite) a person (chooses to give) his holy (gifts), is his own. (But) whatever a man gives to the priest is then (the priest’s).

TORAS MENACHEM

remorseful about it, and he will be more careful on another occasion not to stumble in the same way again.”

While *Rambam* does not refer to this quality of confession here in his *Laws of Teshuvah*, he does hint to it in his *Laws of Fasts* (5:1):

“There are days when all of Israel fast because of the tragedies that occurred then, in order to arouse the hearts, opening the way to the paths of teshuvah. This reminds us of our bad deeds and the deeds of our ancestors that were like our deeds now, which caused them, and us, these tragedies. Through remembering these things we will return to be good, as the verse states, ‘They will confess their sins and their fathers’ sins’ (Vayikra 26:40).”

Here we see that bringing to mind one’s sins actually helps a person “return to be good.” In other words, confession actually *inspires further teshuvah*.

INSINCERE CONFESSION

At first glance, *Rambam* appears to maintain that insincere confession is totally worthless, “comparable to one who immerses in a mikvah while holding a *sheretz*.”

However, on closer examination, *Rambam*’s analogy brings to light that even an insincere confession has something positive to it. To understand why this is the case, let us compare *Rambam*’s choice of expression with that of the *Talmud*: “What is this comparable to? To a person who holds a *sheretz* in his hand, for then even if he were to immerse in all the waters of the world, he would not undergo a valid immersion” (Ta’anis 16a).

A key difference between *Rambam*’s choice of phrase and that of the *Talmud* is that the *Talmud* discusses immersion in a mikvah as a

theoretical possibility, whereas *Rambam* describes it as something which actually happened: The *Talmud* writes, “Even if he were to immerse in all the waters of the world,” but *Rambam* stresses that we are speaking of one who actually “immerses in a mikvah.”

With this turn of phrase, *Rambam* indicates that an insincere confession is still essentially positive, comparable to *actually* immersing in a mikvah. The only problem is that since the person is still reluctant to give up his sinful ways, the confession is ineffective. And this persistent attachment of a person’s heart to the sin is therefore compared to the holding of a *sheretz*, which invalidates the immersion.

How is this *positive* quality of an *insincere* confession expressed?

This is simply by virtue of the fact that it is human nature to become uncomfortable and embarrassed when one verbalizes one’s wrongdoing, even if one does not plan to change one’s ways. And this uncomfortable feeling brought on by the confession is itself part of *teshuvah*.

In summary, confession is effective before, during and after the *teshuvah* process:

a.) Before a person has resolved to stop sinning, an insincere confession helps him to feel uncomfortable and embarrassed, *initiating* the *teshuvah* process.

b.) When a person has sincerely resolved in his heart not to sin again, confession brings his *resolutions* to be expressed outwardly.

c.) The confession is then effective in inspiring the person to *further* remorse, and, “he will be more careful on another occasion not to stumble.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 27, pp. 211-3)

* See Vayikra 5:21-26.

גבר היתן לכהנא דלה יהא: יא ומליל יי עם מושה למימר: יב מלל עם בני ישראל ותימר להון גבר גבר ארי תסטי אתתה ותשקר בה שקר: יג וישבב גבר יתה שכבת זרעא ויהי מכסא מעיני בעלה ומטמרא והיא מסאבא וסחיד לית בה והיא לא אתאחדת: יד ויעבר עלוהי רוח קנאה ויקגי ית אתתה והיא מסאבא או עבר עלוהי רוח קנאה ויקגי ית אתתה והיא לא מסאבא: טו וייתי נברא ית אתתה לות כהנא וייתי ית קרבנה עלה חד מן עסרא בתלת סאין קמחא שערין לא זריק עלוהי משחא ולא יתן עלוהי לבנתא ארי מנחת קנאתא הוא מנחת דוכנא מדברת חובא: טז ויקרב יתה כהנא ויקמנה קדם יי: יז ויסב כהנא מי כיור במן דחסר ומן עפרא די יהי ביסודי משבנא יסב כהנא ויתן למיא:

אשר יתן לכהן לו יהיה: פ [רביעי] יא וידבר יהוה אל משה לאמר: יב דבר אל בני ישראל ואמרת אליהם איש איש כיתשמה אשתו ומעלה בו מעל: יג ושכב איש אתה שכבת זרע ונעלם מעיני אישה ונסתרה והיא נטמאה ועד אין בה והוא לא נתפשה: יד ועבר עליו רוח קנאה וקנא את אשתו והוא נטמאה או עבר עליו רוח קנאה וקנא את אשתו והיא לא נטמאה: טו והביא האיש את אשתו אל הכהן והביא את קרבנה עליה עשירת האיפה קמח שערים לא יצק עליו שמן ולא יתן עליו לבנה כיתמנת קנאת הוא מנחת זכרון מזכרת עון: טז והקריב אתה הכהן והעמדה לפני יהוה: יז ולקח הכהן מים קדשים בכלי חרש ומן העפר אשר יהיה בקרקע המשכן יקח הכהן ונתן

כ"ט

עד אחד שאמר נטמאת לא היטה שותף¹⁰: ועד אין בה. לטומאה אצל יש עדים לסתירה: נתפשה. נאנסה⁹, כמו ותפשה ושכב עמה¹¹: (יד) ועבר עליו. קודם לסתירה: רוח קנאה וקנא. פירשו רבותינו¹² לשון התראה, שמתרה זה אל הסתרי עם איש פלוני: והיא נטמאה או עבר עליו וגו'. כלומר הוא התרה זה ועברה על התראה, ואין ידוע אם נטמאה אם לאו: (טו) קמח. שלא יהא מסלת¹³? שערים. ולא חטים, היא עשתי מעשה זהמה וקרננה מאלל זהמה: לא יצק עליו שמן. שלא יהא קרננה מהודר¹³, שהשמן קרוי אור והיא עשתי בששף¹⁴: ולא יתן עליו לבונה. שהמכות נקראות לבונה, שנאמר אל גבעת הלבונה¹⁵, והיא פרשה מדרכיכו¹⁴: כי מנחת קנאת הוא. הקמח הזה. קמח לשון זכר: מנחת קנאת. מעוררת עליה שתי קנאות, קנאת המקום וקנאת הצעל⁹: (יז) מים קדשים. שקדשו ככור¹⁶, לפי שנעשה הכיור מנחשת מראות הלוזאות, וזו פרשה מדרכיכו, שהיו נעולות לצעליכו במזגרים תחת התפוח¹⁷ וזו קלקלה לאחר, תדקו: בכלי חרש. היא השקחה

מעשרה שכיחה למודע לעשות: איש אשר יתן לכהן. מתנות הראויות לו: לו יהיה. ממון הרבה¹: (יז) איש איש כי תשטה אשתו. מה כתיב למעלה מן הענין ואיש את קדשו לו יהיו², אם אתה מעכב מתנות הכהן, חייך שתטרח לזכר אללו להביא לו את הכוסטה: איש איש. ללמדך שמועלת בשטים, צחיש מלחמה של מעלה ואישה מלמטה³: כי תשטה אשתו. שנו רבותינו⁴ אין המנאפין גואפין עד שתכנס בהן רוח שטות, דכתיב כי תשטה, וכתיב זו גואף אשה חסר לז⁵. ופשוטו של מקרא כי תשטה, תט מדרכי לניעות ותחשד צעיוניו, כמו שטח מעליו ועבור⁶, אל ישט אל דרכיה לזך⁷: ובעלה בו מעל. ומכו המעל: (יג) ושכב איש אתה. איש פרט לקטן ומי שאינו איש⁸: אתה שכבת זרע. שכינתה פוסלת אותה, ואין שכינת אחותה פוסלת אותה כמעשה צפתי אחיות שהיו דומות זו לזו: ונעלם מעיני אישה. פרט לסומא⁹ הא אם היה רחוק ומעמעם (ס"א ומעלים) אין המים צודקין אותה: ונסתרה. שיעור התראה לטומאת ציאה: עד אין בה. הא אם יש בה אפילו

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

“HE WARNED HIS WIFE...” (v. 14)

God warned His “wife,” the Jewish people, not to be secluded with another “man,” when He said the words: “You shall not have any other deities (so long as I exist)” (Shemos 20:3).

But how could one possibly become “secluded” from God, Whose glory fills the entire earth? The answer is: by being arrogant. About the arrogant person, our Sages taught: “God says, ‘He and I cannot

dwell in the same place” (Sotah 5a)—in other words, arrogance conceals a person from God.

The solution to this problem is to “bring an offering of barley flour” (v. 15), which is referred to by our Sages as “animal fodder” (ibid. 14a). In other words, the person needs to humble himself with the awareness that compared to God he is poor in knowledge, like an animal.

(Based on Likutei Sichos, vol. 4, p. 1032ff.)

🕎 THE SUSPECTED ADULTERESS [SOTAH] 🕎

5:11
FOURTH
READING

God spoke to Moshe, saying: ¹² Speak to the children of Israel and say to them: If any man's wife goes astray (from the ways of modesty, arousing her husband's suspicion that) she had acted treacherously towards him ¹³ (and had allowed) a man to lie with her and have a seminal emission, but (the alleged act) was not seen by her husband—(Then if):

- She was secluded (with the suspected adulterer for a sufficient time to actually commit adultery)
- And there was no witness against her (to confirm that she had actually committed adultery)
- And she was not forced (by the alleged adulterer against her will).
- ¹⁴ (And this is a case where before the seclusion took place) a desire to warn (her) had come upon (her husband) and he warned his wife (not to be secluded with the man), and she (may have indeed) been defiled. But (it may be the case that) a desire to warn (her) had come upon him and he warned his wife (not to be secluded with the man), but she was (in fact) not defiled.

(In order to resolve this doubt the following should be carried out:)

- ¹⁵ The man should bring his wife to the priest and bring an offering for her, one tenth of an eifah* of barley flour.
- He should not pour oil over it or put frankincense on it, for it is a meal-offering of (Divine and human) anger, a meal-offering (not of atonement but) of remembrance, a reminder of sin.
- ¹⁶ The priest should bring her near and present her before God.
- ¹⁷ The priest should take holy water (from the Urn) in an earthenware vessel, and the priest should take some earth from the Tabernacle floor and put it into the water.

TORAS MENACHEM

🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

“IF ANY MAN’S WIFE GOES ASTRAY...” (v. 12)

On the verse, “[If any man’s] wife goes astray” (v. 12), our Sages taught: “A person does not commit a sin [unless he becomes overcome by a spirit of foolishness]” (Sotah 3a). For even an adulterous woman, who lacks self-control, would have disciplined her temptations if not for her foolish spirit. [For this mood] obscures, conceals and covers the hidden love of her Godly soul that adheres to faith in God, to His unity and oneness.

[Consider that] even if faced with the threat of taking her life away [for failure] to worship an idol, God-forbid, [her soul] would not be willing to tolerate any disconnection from the Divine unity, God forbid. [Thus, she would be willing to give her life even to avoid] the mere act of bowing down, even though it would be totally devoid of any belief at all in her heart [in the idol]. All the more so then could she discipline her [evil] inclination and temptation for adultery, which is [a sacrifice] far less than death—may God protect us!

[In addition to the fact that her foolishness causes her to forget God], the distinction she rationalizes between the prohibitions of

adultery and idol worship is also a “spirit of foolishness”...for in truth, even if a person commits a minor transgression, he transgresses God’s Will, thereby separating himself completely from God’s unity and oneness [with all creation]....

Thus, at any time whatsoever a person has the ability and power to cast away his mood of foolishness and forgetfulness; to remember and arouse his love for the one God which is most definitely hidden in his heart, without any doubt....

And included in this [love] is also fear, namely, not to tolerate any [act of] disconnection from God’s unity and oneness [with the world], even if this demands the actual sacrifice of one’s life. [In fact, he will do so], without logical imperative at all, simply from the Godly nature [of his soul]. All the more so then, is it far easier for one to discipline one’s [evil] inclination not to act upon one’s desires [for lesser sins whose punishment] involves less suffering than death—whether this involves “departing from evil”...or “doing good.”

(Excerpts from Tanya ch. 24-25)

*Equivalent to 2.48 liters or 5.26 U.S. pints.

יה ויקים כהנא ית אלתא קדם יי ופרע ית רישא דאלתא ויהב על ידהא ית מנתת דוכרנא מנתת קנאתא היא ובידא דכהנא יהון מניא מרינא מלטיא: יט ויומי יתה כהנא וימר לאלתא אם לא שכיב גבר יתיך ואם לא סמית לאסתאבא בר מבעליך הוי זכאה ממניא מרינא מלטיא האלין: כ ואתא ארי סמית בר מבעליך וארי אסתאבת ויהב גבר ביד ית שכבתה בר מבעליך: כא ויומי כהנא ית אלתא במופתא דלונא וימר כהנא לאלתא יהב יי יתיך ללונא ולמומי בגו עמיד בדינתן יי ית ורביך מפיא וית מעיכי נפיהון: כב ויעלון מניא מלטיא האלין במעיכי לאפחא מעין ולאמסאה ירכא ותימר אלתא אמן אמן: כג ויכתוב ית לטיא האלין כהנא בספרא וימחוק למניא מרינא: כד וישקי ית אלתא ית מניא מרינא מלטיא ויעלון בה מניא מלטיא למרינו: כה ויסב כהנא מינדא דאלתא ית מנתת קנאתא ויריס ית מנתתא קדם יי ויקרב יתה

אלהים: יח והעמיד הכהן את האשה לפני יהוה ופרע את ראש האשה ונתן על כפיה את מנתת הזכרון מנתת קנאת הוא וביד הכהן יהיו מי המרים המאזנים: יט והשביע אתה הכהן ואמר אל האשה אם לא שכב איש אתך ואם לא שטית ממאה תחת אישך הנקי ממי המרים המאזנים האלה: כ ואת כי שטית תחת אישך וכי נטמאת ויתן איש בך את שכבתו מבלי עדי אישך: כא והשביע הכהן את האשה בשבעת האלה ואמר הכהן לאשה יתן יהוה אותך לאלה ולשבעה בתוך עמך בתת יהוה את ירכך נפלת ואת בטנג צבה: כב ובאו המים המאזנים האלה במעיך לעבות בטן ולנפל ירך ואמרה האשה אמן אמן: כג וכתב את האלת האלה הכהן בספר ומחה אל מי המרים: כד והשקה את האשה את מי המרים המאזנים ובאו בה המים המאזנים למרים: כה ולקח הכהן מיד האשה את מנתת הקנאת והניף את המנחה לפני יהוה והקריב

כש"י

שהלדיקים נשבעים צפורענותן של רשעים, וכן לענין הצרכה וזכרכו וגו',⁷ כך יזכר ישראל לאמר:⁸ את ירכך. צקללה הקדים ירך לזען לפי שזה התחילה צעזירה תחלה: צבה. כתרגומו נפוחה: (כז) לצבות בטן. כמו להצות בטן, זהו שמוש פתח שהלמ"ד נקודה זו, וכן לנחותם הדרך,⁹ לראותם דרך אשר תלכו צבה,¹⁰ וכן לנפיל ירך להנפיל ירך, שהמים מנצים את הצטן ומפילים את הירך: לצבות בטן ולנפיל ירך. צטנו וירכו של צועל, או אינו אלא של נצעלת, כשהוא אומר את ירכך ונפלת ואת צטן צבה,¹¹ הרי של נצעלת אמור:¹² אמן אמן. קצלת שצוטה, אמן על האלה אמן על השצוטה, אמן אם מאיש זה אמן אם מאיש אחר, אמן שלא סמית ארוסה וגושה שומרת יצס וכנוסה:¹³ (כד) והשקה את האשה. אין זה סדר המעשה, שכרי בתחלה הקריב מנחתה, אלא הכתוב מצטרף שכשישקנה יצואו זה למרים. לפי שנאמר צטן וירך, מניין לשאר כל הגוף, תלמוד לומר וצאו זה ככולה, אם כן מה תלמוד לומר צטן וירך, לפי שהן התחילו צעזירה תחילה, לפיכך התחיל מהם הפורענות:¹⁴ למרים. להיות לה רעים ומרים: (כה) והניף. מוליך ומביא מעלה ומוריד, ואף היא מניפה עמו שידה למעלה מידו של כהן:¹⁵ והקריב אתה. זו היא הגשתה צקן דרומית מערבית של מזבח

את הנוסף יין משוחזכ כזכוסות משוחזכים, לפיכך תשחה מים המרים צמקודה צזויה של חרס: (יח) והעמיד הכהן וגו'. והלא כבר נאמר והעמידה לפני ה',¹ אלא מסייעין היו אותה ממקום למקום כדי ליגעה ותטרף דעתה ותודו:² ופרע. סותר את קליעת שערך כדי לצוטה, מכאן לצנות ישראל שגלוי הראש גנאי לה:³ לפני ה'. בשער נקור, הוא שער העזרה המזרחי,⁴ דרך כל הנכנסים: ונתן על כפיה. ליגעה חולי תטרף דעתה ותודו, ולא ימחה שם המיוחד על המים:⁵ המרים. על שם סופן שהם מרים לה: המאזנים. המחסרים אותה מן העולם, לשון סלון ממאיר. ולא יתכן לפרש מים ארוכים, שהרי קדושים הן, ולא ארוכים כתב הכתוב, אלא מאזנים את אחרים. ואף אונקלוס לא תרגם לטיא, אלא מלטיא, שמראות קללה בגופה של זו: (יט) והשביע וגו'. ומה היא השצוטה אם לא שכב הנקי, הא אם שכב הנקי (ס"א לא תקני), שמכלל לאו אתה שומע הן, אלא שמלכו לפתוח דיני נפשות תחלה לזכות: (כ) ואת בי שטית. כי משמש צלשון אס: (כא) בשבעת האלה. שצוטה של קללה: יתן ה' אותך לאלה. שיהיו הכל מקללין בך יצואך כדרך שצא לפלונית: ולשבעה. שיהיו הכל נשבעין בך לא יארע לי כדרך שאירע לפלונית, וכן הוא אומר והנחתם שמכס לשצוטה לצחירי,⁶

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why is the woman's hair uncovered? (v. 18)

RASHI: To humiliate her. From here we learn that an uncovered head of hair is considered a disgrace for the daughters of Israel.

ZOHAR: If a woman covers her hair... her children will be superior... her husband will be blessed with spiritual and material blessings, with wealth, children and grandchildren (III 126a).

- ¹⁸ Then the priest should (move the woman from place to place, to tire her out, and) stand the woman up before God (at the gate of Nikanor).
 - He should uncover (the hair on) the head of the woman.
 - He should place the remembrance meal-offering, which is a meal-offering of anger, into her hands while the afflictive waters, (which will bring her) bitter (end), are in the priest's hand.
 - ¹⁹ The priest should then place her under oath, saying to the woman: "If a man has not slept with you and you have not gone astray to become defiled (to another) in place of your husband, then (you will) be absolved through these "bitter," afflictive waters. ²⁰ But if you have indeed gone astray (to another) instead of your husband and have become defiled, and you have allowed another man besides your husband to sleep with you (then you will choke!)"
 - ²¹ The priest should then make the woman swear an oath (that contains) a curse. The priest should say to the woman: "May God make you (an example of) a curse (uttered within) an oath among your people, when God causes your thigh to rupture and your belly to swell. ²² For these 'bitter,' afflictive waters will enter your innards, causing (also) the belly (of your adulterous partner) to swell and the thigh (of your partner) to rupture!"
 - The woman should say, "Amen! Amen!" (to accept the oath).
 - ²³ Then the priest should write these curses on a scroll and erase it in the "bitter" waters.
- ²⁴ (When the priest will later) give the "bitter," afflictive waters to the woman to drink, the afflictive waters will enter (all of) her (body) to (bring a) bitter (end upon every part of her).—
- ²⁵ The priest should take the meal-offering of anger (with) the woman's hand, wave the meal-offering before God (together with her), and bring it to (the southwestern corner of) the Altar.

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 The Last Word 🌀

"HE SHOULD UNCOVER (THE HAIR)..." (v. 18)

Considering the great reward which is promised to the woman and mother who wears a *sheitel* [wig], it should surely be worthwhile to do so even if the wearing of a *sheitel* would entail serious difficulties and conflicts. How much more so where the objection to it, as you write, is only because it is 'old-fashioned.' This is not a real objection, not a valid one, and it is rather based on the 'opinion' of others. Let me also add that even considering the general attitude towards this and other *mitzvos*, there has been a radical change in recent years, one of respect and admiration for people who are consistent and live up to their convictions and ideals, and are not influenced by the mob. There may always be some individual who might make a joke about the person's convictions, but where a person is sincerely dedicated to his faith; such a person can only call forth respect and admiration. Furthermore, if you will eventually settle in a Jewish Orthodox neighborhood, you will find that other young women will wish to emulate your good example, and thus you will have the additional *zechus* of being instrumental in influencing others in the right way. The reverse is also true, for a Jew must always consider how his or her conduct affects others. This should be an additional consideration why you should overcome your superficial objection to wearing a *sheitel*.

"It is no less important to bear in mind that marriage is called 'an everlasting edifice,' meaning that it is an everlasting institution which

is of vital importance not only for the husband and wife, but also for future generations. Every parent desires to ensure the happiness of their children and will do everything possible to take out the utmost measure of such insurance.

"Of course you might point to this one or that one who does not wear a *sheitel*. However, it is surely unnecessary to point out that every person may have a particular weakness, and if one is to follow the principle 'He is wise who learns from every person' [Avos 4:1], he will be wise to learn from only the person's strong and positive qualities and not from his weak ones."

(From a letter written by the Rebbe in the Days of Chanukah, 5721)

"The necessity of wearing a *sheitel* and not making do with a hat or kerchief is explained in many places. It is a readily observable fact that wearing a hat or even a kerchief leaves part of the hair uncovered (at least for a short while), leading a person to transgress a serious prohibition, as ruled in *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim*, Chapter 75."

(Likutei Sichos, vol. 13, p. 187)

When the hair is covered with a kerchief and one meets a non-religious friend or acquaintance, then frequently the kerchief slides up or disappears completely into the pocket, something which cannot be done with a *sheitel*. Therefore, eventually, habit [i.e. wearing a *sheitel*] will become second nature. (Igros Kodesh vol. 10, p. 186)

למדבחה: כי ויקמוץ כהנא מן מנחתא ית
 אדברתה ויסק למדבחה ובתר בן ישקי ית
 אתתא ית מיא: כי וישקנה ית מיא ותהי אם
 אסתאבת ושקרת שקר בבבלה ויעלון בה
 מיא מלשמיא למרירו ויפחון מעהא ותתמסי
 ירבה ותהי אתתא ללוט בגו עמה: כה ואם
 לא אסתאבת אתתא ודכיאה היא ותפוק
 זכאה ותעדי עדוי: כט דא אורייתא דקנאתא
 די תסטי אתתא בר מבעלה ותסתאב: ל או
 גבר די תעבר עלוהי רוח קנאה ויקני ית
 אתתה ויקם ית אתתא קדם יי ויעבד לה
 כהנא ית כל אורייתא דרא: לא ויהי זכאה
 גברא מחובא ואתתא ההיא תקבל ית חובה:

אתה אל-המוזבת: כי וקמוץ הפהן מן-המנחה את-אזברתה
 והקטיר המזבחה ואתר ישקה את-האשה את-המים:
 כי והשקה את-המים והיתה אם-נטמאה ותמעל מעל
 באישה ובאו בה הפים המאררים למרים ועבתה בטנה
 ונפלה ירבה והיתה האשה לאלה בקרב עמה: כה ואם-לא
 נטמאה האשה וטהרה הוא ונקתה ונזרעה זרע: כט זאת
 תורת הקנאות אשר תשטה אשה תחת אישה ונטמאה: ל או
 איש אשר תעבר עליו רוח קנאה וקנא את-אשתו והעמיד
 את-האשה לפני יהוה ועשה לה הפהן את פל-התורה
 הזאת: לא ונקח האיש מעון והאשה ההוא תשא את-עונה: פ

כ"ט

הפרש יש צין אדם המתנוול צמקוס שניכר לאדם המתנוול צמקוס שאינו
 ניכר: (כח) ואם לא נטמאה האשה. צסתירכ זו: וטהרה היא. ממקוס
 אחר: ונקתה. ממים המאררים, ולא עוד אלא ונזרעה זרע, אם היתה יולדת
 צנער תלד בריות, אם היתה יולדת שחורים יולדת צנעים: (ל) או איש. כמו
 או נודע, כלומר אם איש קנאי הוא, לכך והעמיד את האשה: (לא) ונקח
 האיש מעון. אם צדקו המים אל ידאג לומר חצתי צמיתתה, נקי הוא מן

קודם קמיילכ כשאר מנחות! (כו) אזכרתה. הוא הקומץ, שעל ידי הקטרות
 המנחה צאה לזכרון לגבוה: (כז) והשקה את המים. לרבות שאם אמרה
 איני שותה לאחר שנמחקה ממגלה, מערערין אותה ומשקין אותה בעל
 כרחי, אלא אם כן אמרה עמאח אני: וצבתה בטנה וגו'. אף על פי
 שצקללה³ הזכיר ירך תחילה, המים אינן צודקין אלא כדרך כניסתן צה:
 והיתה האשה לאלה. כמו שפירשתי שכיו הכל אליו צה: בקרב עמה.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What happens if the woman is proven innocent? (v. 28)

RASHI: If she used to have painful births, she will now have easy births. If she used to give birth to dull-faced children, she will now give birth to bright-faced ones.

RASHBAM: She will be blessed with children.

TALMUD: “*She will be proven innocent and she will bear children,*” means that if she was barren she will become pregnant—these are the words of Rabbi Akiva.

Rabbi Yishma’el said to him: “If so, then all the barren women in the world will seclude themselves [with other men, but not commit adultery] and then become pregnant [from drinking the bitter waters], and any woman who did not seclude herself [with another man] will

be the loser! [Rather the verse teaches us that] if she used to have painful births, she will now have easy births. If she used to give birth to girls, she will now give birth to boys. If she used to give birth to short children, she will now give birth to tall ones. And if she used to give birth to dull-faced children, she will now give birth to bright-faced ones” (Sotah 26a).

SEFER HAZIKARON: Rashi rejected Rabbi Akiva’s interpretation because of Rabbi Yishma’el’s question.

TOSFOS: It appears that one could turn Rabbi Yishma’el’s question back on his own solution. Surely all those with painful births will seclude themselves with other men, but not commit adultery, and then have easy births from drinking the bitter waters!

TORAS MENACHEM

📖 THE INNOCENT SOTAH (v. 28)

Rashi’s comments to verse 28 prompt the following questions:

1.) Why did Rashi reject the simple explanation of **Rashbam** that the innocent *sotah* is rewarded for her ordeal by being blessed with children?

Sefer Hazikaron argues that Rashi considered this explanation to be unacceptable at the literal level due to Rabbi Yishma’el’s question in the **Talmud:** “*If so, then all the barren women in the world will seclude themselves [with other men, but not commit adultery] and then become*

pregnant [from drinking the bitter waters], and any woman who did not seclude herself [with another man] will be the loser!”

However, at the literal level, it is difficult to accept that this was Rashi’s objection, since: i.) In addition to being secluded, a woman must also have been warned by her husband in order to be eligible to drink the *sotah* waters. Since the decision whether or not to issue this warning is totally up to the husband, drinking the *sotah* waters is clearly not an option for many women (who did not receive a warning).

- ²⁶ *The priest should take a three-finger fistful out from the meal-offering, as a “reminder” (to God), and burn it upon the Altar.*
- *Then he should give the woman the water to drink.*
- ²⁷ *(If she refuses to drink) he should make her drink the water (by force, unless she confesses guilt).*

What will happen is, if she had been defiled and was unfaithful to her husband, the afflictive waters will enter (all of) her (body to bring a) bitter (end upon her. First,) her belly will swell, and (eventually) her thigh will rupture. The woman will be (an example used in) curse(s) among her people.

²⁸ *But if the woman had not become defiled (with the alleged adulterer) and she is clean (from any other adulterous acts which she had not been accused of), she will be proven innocent (by the waters) and she will bear children (easily).*

²⁹ *This (concludes) the law of warnings when a woman goes astray to someone other than her husband and is defiled. ³⁰ If a desire to warn (her) comes over a man, and he warns his wife, and he presents the woman before God, then the priest should carry out all these laws with her. ³¹ (If she dies) the man will be absolved of guilt (on his part, for causing her death), since the woman will be responsible for her own sin.*

TORAS MENACHEM

ii.) In any case, would it really be so terrible if a morally decent woman wanted to drink the *sotah* waters so she could be blessed with children? The *Talmud* (*Brachos* 31b) relates that this was indeed the intention of Chanah!

iii.) Rabbi Yishma'el's question is just as much a refutation of his own solution as it is of Rabbi Akiva's, as **Tosfos** explains.

iv.) Rabbi Yishma'el refuted Rabbi Akiva's interpretation that “if she was barren she will become pregnant.” Our question, however, is why *Rashi* rejected the simple interpretation (of *Rashbam*) that our verse is not speaking about a blessing for barren women, but the priceless blessing of an extra child for all women.

2.) A further problem with *Rashi* is why he only cites two examples of Rabbi Yishma'el and omits the other two: “*If she used to give birth to girls, she will now give birth to boys. If she used to give birth to short children, she will now give birth to tall ones?*” Presumably, *Rashi* deemed these two interpretations to be unacceptable at the literal level, but why is this the case?

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi was troubled by the following question: When the priest warns the *sotah* about the effect of the “bitter” waters, he makes a *detailed* statement of the possible results, both positive and negative: “*If a man has not slept with you... then (you will) be absolved through these ‘bitter,’ afflictive waters. But if you have indeed gone astray...(then you will choke!)*” (v. 19-20). Why then, on reaching verse 28 do we discover a *new* detail which was omitted by the priest, that the *sotah* is given a totally unexpected reward, “she will bear children”?

Due to this problem, *Rashi* rejected the straightforward explanation of the verse (argued by *Rashbam*) that “she will bear children” *literally*, because it is difficult to accept that the priest would omit from his lengthy discourse any mention of this reward for the innocent *sotah*. Rather, *Rashi* concluded that this is not an unprecedented *reward* for the innocent *sotah*, but a *direct consequence* of drinking the bitter waters; and therefore, while the priest did not mention this detail in particular (since it was not immediately relevant at the time), he *did* mention the general concept that the waters have an effect on the woman's body. So it turns

out that we are reading here, not of a new concept (that the *sotah* is given a splendid reward), but the clarification of an existing concept (that the bitter waters have an effect on the woman's body).

Being that this is the case, *Rashi* reasoned that the positive effect of the waters on the innocent *sotah* must somehow mirror and reflect the negative effects on a guilty *sotah*. So *Rashi* wrote that our verse (“she will bear children”) means that “if she used to have painful births, she will now have easy births,” for this parallels the *painful* death which the waters bring upon the guilty *sotah*.

Likewise, *Rashi* wrote, “If she used to give birth to dull-faced children, she will now give birth to bright-faced ones,” because this is comparable to the effect of the waters on the guilty *sotah*—“*her belly will swell, and (eventually) her thigh will rupture*”—which will obviously bring upon her a very dull and distressed face.

However, Rabbi Yishma'el's other two examples (“*If she used to give birth to girls, she will now give birth to boys. If she used to give birth to short children, she will now give birth to tall ones?*”) were rejected by *Rashi*, as they do not mirror the negative effects of the bitter waters, and thus would not represent a *direct consequence* of drinking them.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, p. 33ff)

🔥 Sparks of Chasidus 🔥

Through the ordeal of drinking the bitter waters, the innocent *sotah* actually gains—“*she will bear children (easily)*” (v. 28). Nevertheless, the priest does not inform the woman of this potential benefit before she drinks (v. 19-21). This mirrors the process of *teshuvah* (repentance): When a person repents he is not only spiritually cleansed from his prior sin, but furthermore, he reaches an even higher spiritual status than before his sinful act. Nevertheless, this benefit is not offered to prospective sinners; rather, “*If a person says I will sin and then I will repent, he will not be granted the opportunity to do teshuvah*” (*Yoma* 85b).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, pp. 37-8)

א ומליל יי עם משה למימר: ב מלל עם בני ישראל ומימר להון גבר או אתתא ארי יפרש למדר נדר נזיר למיזר קדם יי: ג מחמר חדת ועתיק זר חל דחמר חדת וחל דחמר עתיק לא ישתי וכל מתרות ענבין לא ישתי וענבין רמיבין ויבשין לא ייכול: ד כל יומי נזרה מכל דיתעבד מנפנא דחמרא מפורצנין ועד עצורין לא ייכול: ה כל יומי נדר נזרה מספר לא יעבר על רישה עד משלם יומיא דנזר קדם יי קדיש יהי מרבי פרוע שער רישה: ו כל יומין דנזר קדם יי על נפשא דמתא לא יעול: ז לאבוהי ולאמה לאחוהי ולאחתה לא יסתאב להון במותהון ארי כלילא דאלהה על רישה: ח כל יומי נזרה קדיש הוא קדם יי: ט וארי ימות מתא

ו א וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: ב דבר אל-בני ישראל ואמרת אליהם איש או-אשה כי יפלא לנדר נזיר להזיר ליהוה: ג מיין ושכר יזיר תמיין יין ותמיין שכר לא ישתה וכל-משרת ענבים לא ישתה וענבים לחים ויבשים לא יאכל: ד כל ימי נזרו מכל אשר יעשה מגפן היין מחרצנים ועד-זג לא יאכל: ה כל-ימי נדר נזרו תער לא-יעבר על-ראשו עד-מלאת הימם אשר-יזיר ליהוה קדש יהיה גדל פרע שער ראשו: ו כל-ימי הזירו ליהוה על-נפש מת לא יבא: ז לאביו ולאמו ולאחיו ולאחתו לא יטמא להם במתם כי נזר אלהיו על-ראשו: ח כל ימי נזרו קדש הוא ליהוה: ט וכי-

כ"ט

או כלל משקה, ובלשון משנה יש הרבה, אין שורין דיו וסמנים¹, נזיר ששרה פחו זיין²: (ד) חרצנים. הם הגרעינין: זג. הם קליפות שמחזון, שהחלונים בתוכן כענבל בזוג³: (ה) קדוש יהיה. השער שלו, לגדל הפרע של שער ראשו: פרע. נקוד פתח קטן לפי שהוא דבוק לשער ראשו, פרע של שער. ופירוש של פרע, גדול של שער, וכן את ראשו לא יפרע⁴, ואין קרוי פרע פחות משלושים יום: (ח) כל ימי נזרו קדוש הוא. זו קדושת הגוף⁷ מלכעמא למתים:

העונש¹. דבר אחר משישקנה תהיה אללו בהיתר ונקה מעון, שהסוטה אסורה לבעלה: (ג) בי יפלא. יפריש. למה נסמכה פרשת נזיר לפרשת סוטה, לומר לך שכל הרואה סוטה בקלקולה זיר עלמו מן היין², שהוא מביא לידי ניאוף: נדר נזיר. אין נזירה בכל מקום אלא פרישה, אף כאן שפירש מן היין: להזיר לה. להצדיל עלמו מן היין לשם שמים³: (ג) מיין ושכר. כתרנומו מחמר חדת ועתיק, שהיין משכר כשהוא ישן: וכל משרת. לשון לביעה צמים

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why are the laws of the nazirite recorded here (v. 2)?

RASHI: Why is the section dealing with the nazirite placed next to the section of the *sotah*? To teach you that whoever sees a *sotah* in her disgrace will make a nazirite vow to abstain from wine, for [drinking wine] leads a person to adultery.

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 THE SEQUENCE OF PARSHAS NASO

In his commentary to verse 2, *Rashi* poses the question, “Why is the section dealing with the nazirite placed next to the section of the *sotah*?” and proceeds to offer a solution.

This however begs the question: *Parshas Naso* contains numerous seemingly unrelated passages, many of which are recorded out of chronological sequence (see table). Why then does *Rashi* only explain why “the section dealing with the nazirite was placed next to the section of the *sotah*,” and offer no explanation for the juxtaposition of the other passages in the *Parsha*?

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi considered that the juxtaposition of all the passages in our *Parsha* (besides the topics of the *sotah* and the nazirite) could be understood by the reader unaided, with simple logic and a knowledge of *Rashi*'s other comments:

1.) The appointment and census of the Levites at the beginning of the *Parsha*—a direct continuation from *Parshas Bamidbar*—was for the purpose of assisting the priests: “You should give over the Levites to

🔗 The Last Word 🔗

THE NAZIRITE VOW (6:1ff)

What can we learn from the concept of the nazirite vow? A vow demonstrates the power given to a Jew by God, that he is able to take something ordinary and infuse it with sanctity, binding it to God. Even a simple thing such as not cutting the hair for thirty days endows a person with special sanctity, since his intention was for the sake of heaven.

This teaches us that a person need not worry that he will not be given the ability or financial resources to learn Torah and perform *mitzvos*, for we see the immense spiritual power of a Jew, in that he can sanctify even an ordinary object so easily, simply by speaking.

(Based on *Sicha* of 23rd Menachem-Av 5744)

THE NAZIRITE

6 **G**od spoke to Moshe, saying: ² Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: If a man or woman sets himself apart by making a nazirite vow to abstain for the sake of God:

- ³ He must abstain from new wine and intoxicating (aged) wine.
- He may not drink (even) vinegar made from new wine or intoxicating (aged) wine.
- He may not drink anything in which grapes have been soaked.
- He may not eat fresh grapes or dried ones.
- ⁴ All the days of his nazirite (vow) he may not eat any product of the grape vine, from its seeds to its skins.
- ⁵ All the days of his nazirite vow, no razor may pass over his head, until the completion of the period that he abstains for the sake of God. (His hair) will be sacred, and he should allow the hair on his head to grow wild.
- ⁶ All the days of his nazirite vow for God, he may not come into contact with the dead. ⁷ (Even if) his father, his mother, his brother, or his sister dies he may not allow himself to become ritually impure (through contact with them), for the “crown of his God” is upon his head. ⁸ All the days of his nazirite vow, he (may not become ritually impure because his body) is holy to God.

“THE TORAH IS NOT IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER”

The sequence of events in Parshas Naso as they are recorded in the Torah, compared with the dates on which they occurred, according to Rashi (See Toras Menachem).

VERSES	CONTENT	DATE	SEQUENCE
4:21-49	APPOINTMENT & CENSUS OF LEVITES	ROSH CHODESH IYAR ¹	4
5:1-4	SANCTITY OF THE CAMP	ROSH CHODESH NISAN ²	2
5:5-10	ADDITIONAL LAWS OF GUILT-OFFERING FOR DISHONESTY & GIFTS TO PRIESTS	BEFORE ROSH CHODESH NISAN ³	1
5:11-31	LAWS OF THE SOTAH	ON OR AFTER ROSH CHODESH IYAR ⁴	5
6:1-21	LAWS OF THE NAZIRITE	ON OR AFTER ROSH CHODESH IYAR ⁴	6
6:22-27	THE PRIESTLY BLESSING	ON OR AFTER ROSH CHODESH IYAR ⁴	7
CH. 7	DEDICATION OF THE ALTAR	1 - 12TH OF NISAN ⁵	3

1. Bamidbar 1:1. 2. Rashi to Bamidbar 5:2. 3. I.e. when Parshas Vayikra was said. (Rashi ibid. 5:6. See *Sichos Kodesh* 5732, vol. 2, p. 312). 4. The sections concerning the sanctity of the camp and the guilt-offering were recorded out of chronological sequence (see notes 2 & 3). We can thus presume that the sections concerning the *sotah*, nazirite and Priestly Blessing *do* revert back to chronological sequence, as a break in chronological sequence is the exception rather than the rule at the literal level, (see *Likutei Sichos* vol. 22, p. 39. However, see *Sefer Hasichos* 5749, p. 508, note 5, for an alternative interpretation). 5. Rashi ibid., 7:1.

עלוהי בתכף שלו ויסאב ריש גזרה ויגלח רישה ביומא דדכותה ביומא שביעאה ויגלחנה: וביומא תמינאה ייתי תרין שפנינין או תרין בני יונה לזת פהנא לתרע משכן זמנא: יא ויעבד פהנא חד לחטאתא וחד לעלתא ויכפר עלוהי מדתב על מתא ויקדש ית רישה ביומא ההוא: יב ויזר קדם יי ית יומי גזרה וייתי אמר בר שתה לאשמא ויומא קדמאי ובטלון ארי אסתאב גזרה: יג ודא אורייתא דגזירא ביום משלם יומי גזירה ייתי יתה לתרע משכן זמנא: יד ויקרב ית קרבנה קדם יי אמר בר שתה שלים חד לעלתא ואמרתא חדא בת שתה שלמתא לחטאתא ודכר חד שלים לנכסת קודשאי: טו וסל פטיר סלתא גריצין דפילן במשח ואספוגין פטירין דמשיחין במשח ומנחתהון ונספיהון: טז ויקרב פהנא קדם יי ויעבד ית חטאתה וית עלתה: יז וית דכרא יעבד נכסת קודשאי קדם יי על סלא דפטיריא ויעבד פהנא ית מנחתה וית נסכה: יח ויגלח גזירא בתרע משכן זמנא ית ריש גזרה ויסב ית שער ריש גזרה ויתן על אשתא די תחות

ימות מת עליו בפתע פתאם וטמא ראש גזרו ויגלח ראשו ביום טהרתו ביום השביעי יגלחנו: וביום השמיני יבא שתי תרים או שני בני יונה אל-הכהן אל-פתח אהל מועד: יא ועשה הכהן אחד לחטאת ואחד לעלה וכפר עליו מאשר חטא על-הנפש וקדש את-ראשו ביום ההוא: יב והזיר ליהזה את-ימי גזרו והביא כבש בן-שנתו לאשם והימים הראשנים יפלו כי טמא גזרו: יג וזאת תורת הגזיר ביום מלאת ימי גזרו יביא אתו אל-פתח אהל מועד: יד והקריב את-קרבנו ליהזה כבש בן-שנתו תמים אחד לעלה וכבשה אחת בת-שנתה תמימה לחטאת ואיל-אחד תמים לשלמים: טו וסל מצות סלת חלת בלולת בשמן ורקיקי מצות משחים בשמן ומנחתם ונספיהם: טז והקריב הכהן לפני יהוה ועשה את-חטאתו ואת-עלתו: יז ואת-האיל יעשה זבח שלמים ליהזה על סל המצות ועשה הכהן את-מנחתו ואת-נסכו: יח ויגלח הגזיר פתח אהל מועד את-ראש גזרו ולקח את-שער ראש גזרו ונתן על-האש אשר-תחת זבח

כש"י

לא יעלו מן המנין: (יג) יביא אתו. יציא את עלמו, וזו אחד משלש אחים שהיה ר' ישמעאל דורש כן. כיוולא צו והשילו אותם עון אשמה³, את עלמם, כיוולא צו ויקדור אותם בגי⁴, הוא קצר את עלמו¹: (טו) ומנחתם ונספיהם. של עולה ושלמים, לפי שהיו בכלל וילאו לידון דצדק חדש שיטעו לחם, החזיקו לכללן שיטעו נסכים כדון עולה ושלמים¹: חלות מצות ורקיקי מצות. עשר מכל מין²: (יז) זבח שלמים לה' על סל המצות. ישחט את השלמים על מנת לקדש את הלחם⁶: את מנחתו ואת נסכו. של איל: (יח) ויגלח הגזיר פתח אהל מועד. יכול יגלח צעורה, כרי זה דרך ציון. אלא ויגלח הכזיר לאחר שחיטת השלמים שכתוב צכן ושחטו פתח אהל מועד⁷: אשר תחת זבח השלמים. תחת הכדור שהוא מצשגן צו, לפי שלמי נזיר

(ט) בפתע. זה אונס: פתאם. זה שוגג¹. ויש אומרים פתע פתאום דכר אחד הוא, מקרה של פתאום: ובי ימות מת עליו. זכאל שכוא צו: ביום טהרתו. ציום הזייתו, או אינו אלא בשמיני שהוא טהור לגמרי, תלמוד לומר ציום השביעי, אי שביעי יכול אפילו לא הזה, תלמוד לומר ציום טהור¹: (י) וביום השמיני יבא שתי תרים. לכוילא את השביעי. או אינו אלא לכוילא את השביעי, קצט זמן לקרבין וקצט זמן למקריבין, מה קרבין הכשיר שמיני ומשמיני וכלא², אף מקריבין שמיני ומשמיני וכלא¹: (יא) מאשר חטא על הנפש. שלא נזכר מטומאת המת, רבי אלעזר הקפר אומר שזיער עלמו מן היין: וקדש את ראשו. לחזור ולכחיל מנין נזירותו¹: (יז) והזיר לה' את ימי גזרו. יחזור וימנע נזירותו כזחילה: והימים הראשונים יפלו.

TORAS MENACHEM

Aharon and his sons (to help them)" (3:9). One of the main tasks in which the Levites were to assist the priests was "to safeguard their priesthood. Any unauthorized person who approaches (to perform the priestly service) must be put to death" (v. 10), i.e., to prevent unauthorized people from entering the Tabernacle.

The appointment of the Levites took place "on the first (day) of the second month" (1:1), i.e. the first of Iyar, a full month after the Tabernacle began functioning, on the first of Nisan (*Rashi* to *Vayikra* 9:1). So on

completing the passage concerning the appointment of the Levites at the opening of our *Parsha*, the reader is left with a question: How did the priests manage to "safeguard their priesthood" and prevent unauthorized people from entering the Tabernacle for an entire month without the assistance of the Levites?

To answer this question *Rashi* writes that the following passage, where all ritually impure individuals are required to be sent out of the camp (5:1-4), "was said on the day the Tabernacle was erected." (*Rashi* to 5:2).

⁹ *If someone in his presence (in the same building) dies unexpectedly (due to circumstances beyond his control) or suddenly (due to negligence), causing the (holy hair of his) nazirite head to become ritually impure:*

- *On the day when he (is sprinkled with the water of) ritual purification, he should shave off (the hair from) his head. (I.e.) he should shave it off on the seventh day.*
- ¹⁰ *(Some time from) the eighth day (onwards), he should bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest, at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. ¹¹ The priest should offer one as a sin-offering and one as a burnt-offering and atone on his behalf for sinning by (becoming ritually impure from a person whose) soul (had departed).*
- *On that day, he should (begin to) sanctify (the hair of) his head (by abstaining for the term of his vow, once again). ¹² When he has completed all the days of his nazirite vow to God, he should bring a lamb in its first year as a guilt-offering. The first days (before he became ritually impure) are excluded because his status as a nazir was defiled through ritual impurity.*

¹³ *This is the law of the nazirite on the day the period of his nazirite vow is completed:*

- *He should present himself at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.*
- ¹⁴ *He should bring his offering to God:*
 - *One perfect (unblemished) male lamb in its first year as a burnt-offering.*
 - *One perfect (unblemished) female lamb in its first year, as a sin-offering.*
 - *One perfect (unblemished) ram, as a peace-offering.*
 - ¹⁵ *A basket of unleavened bread.*
 - *(Ten) loaves of fine flour mixed with oil.*
 - *(Ten) unleavened wafers anointed with oil.*
 - *The meal-offerings and libations (associated with the burnt- and peace-offerings).*
- ¹⁶ *The priest should present (them) before God, and perform the service of the sin-offering and burnt-offering. ¹⁷ He should bring the ram as a peace-offering to God, along with the basket of unleavened bread, and the priest should perform the service of its meal-offering with its libation.*
- ¹⁸ *(After the peace-offering has been slaughtered) at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, the nazirite should shave the (hair from) his “head of naziriteship.” He should take the hair of his “head of his naziriteship” and place it on the fire, under the peace-offering.*

TORAS MENACHEM

From this the reader will understand that even before the Levites were appointed, *the Jewish people* were responsible to ensure that no unauthorized person should enter the Tabernacle (as the verse states, “*Command the children of Israel to send out from the camp...*”—5:1), from the very day on which the Tabernacle was erected. And this explains why the passage about the sanctity of the camp was recorded immediately after the passage of the appointment of the Levites: to clarify that the Jewish people were responsible for preventing unauthorized entry to the Tabernacle before the Levites were appointed.

2.) The Torah’s instructions concerning the sanctity of the camp conclude with the words, “Send them outside the camp so that they do not defile their camps, *where I dwell among them*” (5:3). This suggests that

the command is to prevent a “personal” offense against God, so to speak. Consequently, the Torah continues with a discussion of the guilt-offering for dishonesty, for this too is described as “*acting treacherously against God*” (5:6; see *Rashi to Vayikra* 5:25).

3.) This is then followed by the laws of the *sotah*, who also “acted treacherously” (5:12) against God.

4.) We are then left with the question: “Why is the section dealing with the nazirite placed next to the section of the *sotah*?” which does not appear to have a simple explanation at the literal level that the reader can fathom for himself. So *Rashi* was forced to comment that this is “*to teach you that whoever sees a sotah in her disgrace will make a nazirite vow to abstain from wine, for [drinking wine] leads a person to adultery.*”

הַשְּׁלֵמִים: יט וְלָקַח הַכֹּהֵן אֶת־הַזֹּרֵעַ בְּשֵׁלֶּה מִן־הָאֵיל וְחָלַת מִצֵּה אַחַת מִן־הַפֶּל וּרְקִיק מִצֵּה אֶחָד וְנָתַן עַל־כַּפֵּי הַנְּזִיר אַחַר הַתְּנַגְּלוֹתָיו אֶת־נְזָרוֹ: כ וְהִנִּיף אוֹתָם הַכֹּהֵן | תְּנוּפֶה לְפָנָי יְהוָה קֹדֶשׁ הוּא לִכְהֵן עַל חֻזָּה הַתְּנוּפֶה וְעַל שׁוֹק הַתְּרוּמָה וְאַחַר יִשְׁתַּה נְזִיר יָיִן: כא זֹאת תּוֹרַת הַנְּזִיר אֲשֶׁר יֵדֵר קָרְבָּנוֹ לַיהוָה עַל־נְזָרוֹ מִלֶּבֶד אֲשֶׁר־תִּשְׁיֵג יָדוֹ כַּפֵּי נְדָרוֹ אֲשֶׁר יֵדֵר בֵּן יַעֲשֶׂה עַל תּוֹרַת נְזָרוֹ: פ כב וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: כג דַּבֵּר אֶל־אַהֲרֹן וְאֶל־בָּנָיו לֵאמֹר כֹּה תִּבְרְכוּ אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אָמֹר לָהֶם: ס כד יִבְרַכְךָ יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ: ס כה יָאֵר יְהוָה | פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיַּחַנְךָ: ס כו יִשָּׂא יְהוָה | פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ

הַשְּׁלֵמִים: יט וְלָקַח הַכֹּהֵן אֶת־הַזֹּרֵעַ בְּשֵׁלֶּה מִן־הָאֵיל וְחָלַת מִצֵּה אַחַת מִן־הַפֶּל וּרְקִיק מִצֵּה אֶחָד וְנָתַן עַל־כַּפֵּי הַנְּזִיר אַחַר הַתְּנַגְּלוֹתָיו אֶת־נְזָרוֹ: כ וְהִנִּיף אוֹתָם הַכֹּהֵן | תְּנוּפֶה לְפָנָי יְהוָה קֹדֶשׁ הוּא לִכְהֵן עַל חֻזָּה הַתְּנוּפֶה וְעַל שׁוֹק הַתְּרוּמָה וְאַחַר יִשְׁתַּה נְזִיר יָיִן: כא זֹאת תּוֹרַת הַנְּזִיר אֲשֶׁר יֵדֵר קָרְבָּנוֹ לַיהוָה עַל־נְזָרוֹ מִלֶּבֶד אֲשֶׁר־תִּשְׁיֵג יָדוֹ כַּפֵּי נְדָרוֹ אֲשֶׁר יֵדֵר בֵּן יַעֲשֶׂה עַל תּוֹרַת נְזָרוֹ: פ כב וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: כג דַּבֵּר אֶל־אַהֲרֹן וְאֶל־בָּנָיו לֵאמֹר כֹּה תִּבְרְכוּ אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אָמֹר לָהֶם: ס כד יִבְרַכְךָ יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ: ס כה יָאֵר יְהוָה | פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיַּחַנְךָ: ס כו יִשָּׂא יְהוָה | פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ

רש"י

מנת לגלח על שלש צהמות הללו, אין אני קורא בו כאשר ידור כן יעשה: (כג) אמור להם. כמו זכור שמור, בלע"ז דישנ"ט: אמור להם. שיהיו כולם שומעים! אמור. מלא, לא תצרכם בחפזן וצבילות, אלא צבונות ובלב שלם? (כד) יברכך. שיתצרכו נכסיה: וישמרך. שלא יצואו עליך שודדים לטול ממנו, שהנותן מתנה לעצמו אינו יכול לשמרו מכל אדם, וכיון שצאים לסטים עליו ונוטלין אותה ממנו, מה הנאה יש לו צמתנה זו, אלא הקצ"ה הוא הנותן הוא השומר! והרבה מדרשים דרשו בו צמתי: (כה) יאר ה' פניו אליך. יראה לך פנים שוחקות, פנים להבות! ויחנך. יתן לך חן! (כו) ישא ה' פניו

היו מתצטלין בעזרה, שצריך ליטול הכהן הזרוע אחר שנתצטל ולהניף לפני ה': (יט) הזרוע בשלה. לאחר שנתצטלה! (כ) קדש הוא לכהן. החלה והרקיק והזרוע תרומה הן לכהן: על חוזה התנופה. מלבד חוזה ושוק הראויים לו מכל שלמים מוסף על שלמי נזיר הזרוע הזה, לפי שהיו שלמי נזיר בכלל ונלאו לידון צדק החדש להפרשת זרוע הולך להחזירן לכללן לידון אף צחזה ושוק! (כא) מלבד אשר תשיג ידו. שאם אמר הריני נזיר על מנת לגלח על מאה טולות ועל מאה שלמים: כפי נדרו אשר ידר כן יעשה. מוסף על תורת נזרו. על תורת הנזיר מוסף ולא יחסר, שאם אמר הריני נזיר חמש נזירות על

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What is the meaning of the blessing in verse 24?

RASHI: "May He bless you"—that your possessions will be blessed.

"And guard you"—that a gang of robbers will not attack you and steal your money. For a person who gives his servant a gift cannot guard it from all other people, so if bandits come and take it from him, what benefit does he have from the gift? But God is the giver and the guardian. There are also many Midrashic interpretations of this in the *Sifri*.

TORAS MENACHEM

5.) The reason why the Priestly Blessing follows the laws of the nazirite was not addressed directly by Rashi as it can be understood from one of his earlier comments, to 5:12. There, Rashi explains why the laws of the *sotah* are immediately preceded by a discussion of gifts to the priests:

"What is written before this subject? (But) whatever a man gives to the priest is then (the priest's) (5:10). [This juxtaposition teaches us that] if you withhold the priests' gifts then—by your life!—you will have to come to him to bring an unfaithful wife."

So the reader already knows that by failing to give gifts to the priests, a person will eventually be caused pain by a priest. What, though, is the reward for fulfilling this precept of priestly gifts? To answer this question, the Torah follows with the passage about the Priestly Blessing, to

demonstrate that the priests are not only a source of potential suffering for the Jewish people, they are also a source of blessing.*

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Naso* 5732)

🔗 THE PRIESTLY BLESSING (v. 24-26)

Rashi's interpretation of v. 24 prompts the following questions:

- a.) Why does Rashi limit the Priestly Blessing to the specific detail that "your possessions should be blessed," rather than suggesting that this is a general blessing to a person in *all* his affairs (as *Sifri* explains)?
- b.) Similarly, at the end of the verse, why does Rashi interpret the blessing as protection only for one's possessions, and not for one's life in general?

*Only, the Torah first interrupts to record the passage about the nazirite, for the reason explained by Rashi.

- ¹⁹ The priest should then take the cooked foreleg of the ram, one unleavened loaf from the basket and one unleavened wafer, and place them on the hands of the nazirite—after he has shaven (the hair) off his nazirite (head). ²⁰ The priest should wave them as a wave-offering before God (and then they remain) set aside for the priest, along with (the usual parts given to the priest from any offering), the breast that is waved and the thigh that is lifted up.
- After this, the (former) nazirite may drink wine.

²¹ This is the law of a nazirite who vows (additional burnt- or peace-) offering(s) to God for his nazirite vow in addition to that which he is required:

- He must do in accordance with the vow that he vows, in addition to the basic requirement of his nazirite vow.

🌀 THE PRIESTLY BLESSING 🌀

6:22 God spoke to Moshe, saying: ²³ Speak to Aharon and his sons, saying:

G • This is how you should bless the children of Israel, by saying (the following) to them (in a way that they can all hear):

²⁴ “May God bless you (that your possessions should be blessed) and guard you (against robbers).

²⁵ “May God cause His face to shine to you and favor you.

²⁶ “May God raise His face towards you (suppressing His anger) and grant you peace.”

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

SIFRI: “May He bless you”—with the blessing stated explicitly in the Torah: “You will be blessed in the city, and blessed in the field...Your fruits and your dough will be blessed....All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you, if you listen to the voice of God, your God” (Devarim 28:2-6).

TORAS MENACHEM

c.) From where did Rashi derive that this blessing refers to the case that “a gang of robbers will not attack you and steal your money”?

d.) What is the need for Rashi’s lengthy analogy about “a person who gives his servant a gift”?

e.) Why does Rashi add: “There are also many Midrashic interpretations of this in the Sifri”?

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi was troubled: Since the Torah has already promised a person virtually every possible blessing in *Parshas Bechukosai* (and later in *Parshas Ki Savo*), what additional blessings could possibly be added here?

Rashi concluded that “May God bless you,” means, “that your possessions will be blessed.” I.e. that the possessions that a person already has (as a result of the earlier blessings recorded in the Torah) will enjoy supernatural growth.

In other words, the blessings in *Parshas Bechukosai* promise a person that he will acquire an abundance of possessions. Here, with the Priestly Blessing, one is promised that having acquired those possessions, they will flourish in a supernatural manner.

But having interpreted the first half of the verse in this manner, Rashi was left with a problem with the second half of the verse. For if the blessing that God will “guard” a person refers, as it would seem at first, to a guarding of his life and health, then why would the Torah record such

an important blessing at the end of this verse, after the much lesser blessing of prosperity for one’s possessions?

This problem forced Rashi to conclude that the end of the verse is a thematic continuation of the beginning: That after “your possessions,” have grown so much, and one has become so wealthy, a person will then become a potential target for thieves, and will thus require a further blessing that, “a gang of robbers will not attack you and steal your money.”

And just as the first half of the verse contained a blessing which was unprecedented in the Torah, Rashi concluded that the second half of the verse must likewise be a blessing for some unprecedented form of protection. Thus Rashi continued: “A person who gives his servant a gift cannot guard it from all other people, so if bandits come and take it from him, what benefit does he have from the gift? But God is the giver and the guardian.” I.e. we are speaking here of a special form of protection which no human being can give.

While we have now fully explained the verse at the literal level, Rashi was concerned that the reader may be left with a question: Is the Priestly Blessing that God will guard a person limited merely to the rather unusual scenario that “a gang of robbers will not attack you”?

In response to this concern, Rashi wrote that, while at the literal level this is indeed the interpretation of the verse, the reader should know that “There are also many Midrashic interpretations of this in the Sifri.”

לְדֹשָׁן: כו וישוון ית ברפת שמי על בני ישראל ואנא אברכנו: א ויהוה ביומא דשיעי משה לאקמא ית משכנא ורבי יתה וקדיש יתה וית כל מנהוי וית מדבחה וית כל מנהוי ורבניו וקדיש יתהו: ב וקריבו רב רבי ישראל רישי בית אבהתהוון אנון רב רבי שבטיא אנון דקמין על מנניא: ג ואיתי וית קרבניהוון קדם יי שית עגלון פד מחפון ותרבי עשר תורין עגלתא על תרין רב רביא ותור לתד וקריבו יתהוון לקדם משכנא: ד ואמר יי למשה למימר: ה קבל מנהוון ויהוון למפלח ית פלחון משכנא ומנא ותתן יתהוון ללואי גבר כמסת פלחנהו: ו ונסיב משה ית עגלתא וית תורי ויהב יתהוון ללואי: ז ית תרתין עגלון וית ארבעא תורי יהב לבני גרשון כמסת פלחנהו: ח וית ארבע עגלון וית תמניא תורי יהב לבני מררי כמסת פלחנהו בידא דאיתמר בר אהרן פהנא: ט ולבני קהת לא יהב ארי פלחון קודשא עליהוון ככתפא נטלין:

שָׁלוֹם: ס כו וְשָׂמוּ אֶת־שְׁמֵי עַל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֲנִי אֲבָרְכֶם: ס (חמישי) ז א וְיִהְיֶה בְּיוֹם בְּלוֹת מֹשֶׁה לְהַקִּים אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן וַיִּמְשַׁח אֹתוֹ וַיְקַדֵּשׁ אֹתוֹ וְאֶת־כָּל־כֵּלָיו וְאֶת־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְאֶת־כָּל־כֵּלָיו וַיִּמְשָׁחֵם וַיְקַדֵּשׁ אֹתָם: ב וַיִּקְרִיבוּ נְשִׂאֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל רֵאשֵׁי בֵּית אֲבֹתָם הֵם נְשִׂאֵי הַמִּטָּת הֵם הָעֹמְדִים עַל־הַפְּקָדִים: ג וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶת־קַרְבָּנָם לְפָנָי יְהוָה שְׁש־עֶגְלוֹת צֹב וּשְׁנַיִ עֶשֶׂר בָּקָר עֲגֻלָּה עַל־שְׁנַיִ הַנְּשִׂאִים וְשׁוֹר לְאֶחָד וַיִּקְרִיבוּ אוֹתָם לְפָנָי הַמִּשְׁכָּן: ד וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר: ה קַח מֵאֹתָם וְהָיוּ לְעֵבֶד אֶת־עֲבֹדַת אֱהָל מוֹעֵד וְנָתַתָּה אוֹתָם אֶל־הַלְוִיִּם אִישׁ כְּפִי עֲבֹדָתוֹ: ו וַיִּקַּח מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הָעֲגֻלָּת וְאֶת־הַבָּקָר וַיִּתֵּן אוֹתָם אֶל־הַלְוִיִּם: ז אֶת־ אֶת־ שְׁתֵּי הָעֲגֻלוֹת וְאֶת־ אַרְבַּעַת הַבָּקָר נָתַן לְבְנֵי גֵרְשׁוֹן כְּפִי עֲבֹדָתָם: ח וְאֶת־ אֶת־ אַרְבַּע הָעֲגֻלָּת וְאֶת־ שְׁמֹנֶת הַבָּקָר נָתַן לְבְנֵי מַרְרִי כְּפִי עֲבֹדָתָם בְּיַד אִיתָמָר בֶּן־אֶהֱרֹן הַכֹּהֵן: ט וְלְבְנֵי קַהַת

דש"י

היה, צעני נשרפה הפרה, צעלישי הזו הזיה ראשונה, וצעזעי גלחו: (3) הם נשיאי המטת. שהיו שוטרים עליהם צמלרים והיו מוכים עליהם, שנאמר ויכו שוטרי בני ישראל וגו':⁷ הם העומדים על הפקודים. שעמדו עם משה ואהרן כשמנו את ישראל, שנאמר ואתכם יהיו וגו':⁸ (ג) שש עגלת צב. אין צב אלא מחופים וכן צבצים וצפרדים,⁹ עגלות מכוסים קרויים צבים: ויקריבו אותם לפני המשכן. שלא קבל משה מידם עד שנאמר לו מפי המקום.² אמר רבי נתן מה ראו הנשיאים להתנדב כאן בתחלה, וצמלאת המשכן לא התנדבו תחלה, אלא כך אמרו הנשיאים יתנדבו לצור מה שיתנדבו, ומה שמחסרין אנו משלימין, כיון שראו שהשלימו לצור את הכל, שנאמר והמלאכה היתה דיס¹⁰, אמרו מעתה מה לנו לעשות, הביאו את אצני השוהם והמולאים לפוד ולחשן, לכך התנדבו כאן תחלה?² (ז) כפי עבדתם. שהיה

אליך. יכזש כעסו: (כז) ושמו את שמי. יצרכוס צעס המפורש? ואני אברכם. לישראל ואסכים עם הכהנים. דבר אחר ואני אצרכם לכהנים:³ (ח) ויהי ביום בלות משה. בלות כתיב, יום הקמת המשכן היו ישראל ככלה הנכנסת לחופה:⁴ בלות משה. צלאל והאליאז וכל חכם לב עשו את המשכן, ותלחו הכתוב צמשה, לפי שמכר נפשו עליו לראות תצנית כל דבר ודבר כמו שבראשו דבר להורות לעושי המלאכה ולא עשה בתצנית אחת, וכן מלינו דודו לפי שמכר נפשו על צנין בית המקדש, שנאמר זכור ה' לדוד את כל ענותו אשר נשבע לה' וגו':⁵ לפיכך נקרא על שמו, שנאמר ראה ביתך דוד:⁶ ביום בלות משה להקים. ולא נאמר ציום הקים מלמד שכל שבעת ימי המולאים היה משה מעמידו ומפרקו וצאותו היום העמידו ולא פרקו,² לכך נאמר ציום בלות משה להקים, אותו היום כלו הקמותיו. וראש חדש ניסן

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did the 12 leaders only donate 6 wagons? (v. 3)

MIDRASH: Six, corresponding to the six days in which the world was created. Six, corresponding to the six orders of the *Mishnah*. Six, corresponding to the Matriarchs: Sarah, Rivkah, Rochel, Leah, Bilhah and Zilpah (*Bamidbar Rabah* 12:17).

SFORNO: They brought one wagon between two leaders to show the brotherly love between them, in which merit the Divine Presence would dwell among them.

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 THE DONATION OF SIX WAGONS (v. 3)

At the literal level, it is difficult to understand why the leaders brought only "one wagon for two leaders" (v. 3), and did not offer a more generous donation. In fact, we find that the rest of the Jewish people made extremely generous donations to the construction of the Tabernacle, to the extent that there was "a surplus" (*Shemos* 36:7). Why then, were the leaders of the Jewish people so "economical" with their donations?

Sforno writes that two leaders "chipped in together" to bring one wagon as an expression of unity. However, according to this logic, it would have been more appropriate for all twelve leaders to bring a single wagon together, as an expression of the total harmony between all the leaders. Furthermore, *Sforno's* explanation also begs the question why the leaders chose to express their unity through this donation in particular, and not through one of their other donations to the Tabernacle?

- ²⁷ (The priests) should use My (explicit) Name (when blessing) the children of Israel, and I will fulfill (their) blessings.

DONATION OF THE TRIBAL LEADERS TO THE TABERNACLE

7 FIFTH READING **I**t was (the first of Nisan), the day that Moshe finished erecting the Tabernacle, when he anointed it, sanctified it, along with all its utensils, together with the Altar and all its utensils. ² The leaders of Israel, the heads of their paternal houses, brought their offerings. They were the leaders of the tribes (back in Egypt and) they were the ones who were present during the census. ³ They brought their offering before God: Six covered wagons and twelve oxen—one wagon for two leaders, and an ox for each one. They presented them in front of the Tabernacle (but Moshe did not accept their offerings, since he had not received an instruction from God to do so).

⁴ God spoke to Moshe, saying: ⁵ “Take (the gifts) from them, and let them be used in the service of the Tent of Meeting. You should give them to the Levites, (dividing them) according to each man’s work.”

⁶ Moshe took the wagons and the cattle and gave them to the Levites:

- ⁷ He gave two wagons and four oxen to Gershon’s descendants, commensurate with their work.
- ⁸ He gave four wagons and eight oxen to Merari’s descendants, commensurate with their (heavier) work(load of carrying the beams, pillars and sockets)—under the direction of Isamar, the son of Aharon the priest.
- ⁹ He gave nothing to Kehos’ descendants, because their work involved the holy (equipment), which they had to carry on their shoulders.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why were the wagons presented *in front of the Tabernacle*? (v. 3)

RASHI: Because Moshe did not accept [the wagons] from their hands until he was instructed by God to do so.

OHR HACHAYIM: Moshe felt that since God had not requested the use of wagons, it was inappropriate to use them. On the other hand, the leaders felt that since the beams and sockets of the Tabernacle were very heavy, wagons were required—and God agreed.

TORAS MENACHEM

THE EXPLANATION

Carrying the Tabernacle was a Divinely allotted task given to the Levites, as we read at the beginning of the *Parsha* that the Levites were appointed, “(to) perform service and carry (parts of the Tabernacle)” (4:24). Thus, the leaders were concerned that if they would donate too many wagons, making loading and transporting very easy, they would thereby deny the Levites the privilege of carrying the Tabernacle parts. So they donated just six wagons, sufficient to transport the Tabernacle parts *with difficulty*, (as the *Talmud* explains how the wagons were loaded to capacity, and were of the absolute minimum size—*Shabbos* 99a). In this way, the leaders intended to relieve *some* of the immense burden of transporting the Tabernacle parts, but without denying their Divinely granted privilege of carrying them.

And, as *Rashi* writes in his commentary to verse 3 (see *Classic Questions* above), while Moshe was uncertain whether this met with Divine approval, God nevertheless told Moshe that the leaders’ offering was appropriate and that he should “take (the gifts) from them.” For while the wagons would relieve some of the burden of carrying the Tabernacle parts, much exertion would still have been required from the Levites, enabling them to retain their title as “carriers of the Tabernacle.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, p. 40ff; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Naso* 5733)

The Last Word

Our Sages taught, “Of everything that God created in His world, He did not create anything unnecessarily” (*Shabbos* 87b). We see this principle expressed in the Tabernacle, in that the six wagons donated by the leaders were the absolute minimum necessary to transport the Tabernacle parts, ensuring that no part of any wagon remained unused (See *Toras Menachem*).

This teaches us the importance of using everything in the world, including all our talents and abilities, to the very utmost, to fulfill the intention for which God created them. I.e. to observe *mitzvos* in the most exemplary manner, to carry out even the most ordinary activities amid an awareness of God, and to spread the light of Judaism to others. Likewise, with the effective utilization of time, a person should always be aware that “I was created to serve my Maker” (end of tractate *Kidushin*), and be careful not to waste even a second of time which can be put to good use.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 28, pp. 47-8)

י ויקריבו רב־רביא ית חֲנֻכַּת מִדְבַּחַּא בְּיוֹמָא דְרַבִּי יִתְה וְקָרִיבו רַב־רביא ית קַרְבְּנֵהוּן קֳדָם מִדְבַּחַּא: יא וְאָמַר יי לְמִשְׁחָה רַבָּא חַד לְיוֹמָא רַבָּא חַד לְיוֹמָא וְקָרִיבו ית קַרְבְּנֵהוּן לְחֲנֻכַּת מִדְבַּחַּא: יב וְהוּהוּ דְמִקְרִיב בְּיוֹמָא קֳדָמָהּ ית קַרְבְּנֵהּ נְחֻשׁוֹן פִּר עֲמִינְדָב לְשִׁבְטָא דִּיהוּדָה: יג וְקָרְבָנָהּ מִנְסָתָא דְכֶסֶף חֲדָא מֵאַה וּתְלָתִין סְלָעִין הוּהּ מִתְקַלָּה מְזֻרְקָא חַד דְכֶסֶף מִתְקַלָּה שְׁבַעִין סְלָעִין בְּסָלְעֵי קוּדְשָׁא תְרוּוִּיחוּן מְלֵן סְלָתָא דְפִילָא בְּמִשְׁחָ לְמִנְחָתָא: יד בְּזִיכָא חֲדָא מִתְקַל עֶשֶׂר סְלָעִין הִיא דְדָהֵב מְלִיא קְמַרְתָּ בּוֹסְמִינָא: טו תוֹר חַד פִּר תוֹרֵי דְכַר חַד אָמַר חַד פִּר שְׁתֵּה לְעֵלְתָא: טז צִפּוּר פִּר עֵזִין חַד לְחֻטָּאתָא: יז וּלְנִכְסֵת קוּדְשָׁא תוֹרִין תְּרִין דְכָרֵי חֲמִשָּׁא נְדָבֵי חֲמִשָּׁא אֲמָרִין בְּנֵי שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁא דִּין קַרְבָּנָא דְנְחֻשׁוֹן פִּר

לֹא נָתַן כִּי־עֲבַדְתָּ הַקֹּדֶשׁ עֲלֵהֶם בְּכַתְּףִי יִשְׂאוּ: וַיִּקְרִיבו הַנְּשִׂאִים אֶת חֲנֻכַּת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ בַּיּוֹם הַמָּשֶׁחַ אֹתוֹ וַיִּקְרִיבו הַנְּשִׂאִים אֶת־קָרְבָּנָם לְפָנַי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ: יא וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה נְשִׂיא אֶחָד לַיּוֹם נְשִׂיא אֶחָד לַיּוֹם יִקְרִיבוּ אֶת־קָרְבָּנָם לְחֲנֻכַּת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ: ס יב וַיְהִי הַמִּקְרִיב בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן אֶת־קָרְבָּנוֹ נְחֻשׁוֹן בֶּן־עַמִּינָדָב לְמִטֵּה יְהוּדָה: יג וְקָרְבָּנוֹ קְעֶרֶת־כֶּסֶף אֶחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מְזֻרְקָא אֶחָד כֶּסֶף שִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְׁנֵיהֶם | מְלֵאִים סֶלֶת בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: יד פִּר אֶחַת עֶשְׂרֵה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קְמַרְתָּ: טו פִּר אֶחָד בֶּן־בְּקָר אֵיל אֶחָד כֶּבֶשׂ־אֶחָד בֶּן־שָׁנָתוֹ לְעֵלָה: טז שְׁעִיר־עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחֻטָּאתָא: יז וּלְזִבַּח הַשְּׁלָמִים בְּקָר שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עֶתוּדִים חֲמִשָּׁה כֶּבֶשִׁים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קָרְבַּן נְחֻשׁוֹן בֶּן־עַמִּינָדָב: פ

כ"ט

(יב) ביום הראשון. אותו היום נעל עשר עטרות, ראשון למעשה זרשית, ראשון לנשיאים וכו', כדאיחא צסדר עולס? למטה יהודה. יחסו הכתוב על שצטו, ולא שגצב משצטו והקריבו. או אינו אומר למטה יהודה אלא שגצב משצטו והציא, תלמוד לומר זה קרבן נחשון, משלו הציא? (יג) שניהם מלאים סלת. למנחת נדצה? (יד) עשרה זהב. כתרנומו, משקל עשר שקלי הקדש היה זה: מלאה קטרת. לא מלינו קטרת ליחיד ולא על מזבח החינוך אלא זו צלצד, וכוראת שעה היתה? (טו) פיר אחד. מיוחד שצטדרו: (טז) שעיר עזים אחד לחטאת. לכפר על קצר הכהוס² ועומאת ספק:

משא בני גרשון קל משל מררי, שחיו נושאים הקרשים והעמודים והאלונים: (ט) כי עבדת הקדש עליהם. משא דבר הקדושה הארון והשלחן וגוי, לפיכך צתקף ישאו: (י) ויקריבו הנשיאים את חנכת המזבח. לאחר שהתנדבו העגלות והצקר לשאת המשכן, נשאם לצס להתנדב קרבנות המזבח לחנוכו ויקריבו הנשיאים את קרבנם לפני המזבח. כי לא קבל משה מידם עד שנאמר לו מפי הגבורה? (יא) יקריבו את קרבנם לחנכת המזבח. ועדיין לא היה יודע משה האך יקריבו, אס כסדר תולדותס, אס כסדר המסעות, עד שנאמר לו מפי הקצ"ה יקריבו למסעות, איש יומו?

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did the leaders now make these offerings? (v. 10)

RASHI: After they had contributed the wagons and the oxen for carrying the Tabernacle (above 7:1-9), their hearts inspired them to contribute offerings for the Altar, to dedicate it.

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 THE LEADERS' SECOND DONATION (v. 10)

Rashi writes, in his commentary to verse 10, that the leaders' donations for the dedication of the Altar resulted from a feeling of generosity which arose after their donation of the wagons: "After they had contributed the wagons and the oxen for carrying the Tabernacle, their hearts inspired them to contribute offerings for the Altar, to dedicate it."

This, however, begs the question: On what basis did *Rashi* conclude that there were *two separate* phases of generosity—first to dedicate just the wagons, and then a further generosity of spirit to dedicate the offerings for the Altar? Would it not be more reasonable to presume, at the literal level, that the leaders had a *single* generous mood which led them to donate both offerings; and that the reason why the Torah mentions one before the other is because that is how they were actually offered?

THE EXPLANATION

When introducing the passage about the leaders' offerings, the Torah states: "The leaders of Israel, the heads of their paternal houses, brought their offerings. They were the leaders of the tribes; they were the ones who were present during the census" (v. 2, above).

Rashi was troubled that the words, "They were the leaders of the tribes; they were the ones who were present during the census," appear to be superfluous, so he explains:

"They were the leaders of the tribes"—They were the officers appointed over them in Egypt, who were beaten on their account...

"They were the ones who were present during the counting"—They stood with Moshe and Aharon when they counted the Jewish people.

However, this begs the question: Why did the Torah choose to stress the

🌀 DEDICATION OF THE ALTAR 🌀

7:10 **T**he leaders' (charitable mood led them) to bring (offerings for) the dedication of the Altar on the day it was anointed. The leaders presented their offerings in front of the Altar (but Moshe did not accept their offerings, since he had not received an instruction from God to do so).

¹¹ God said to Moshe: "One leader each day! One leader each day should present his offering for the dedication of the Altar."

¹² The one who brought his offering on the first day was Nachshon the son of Aminadav of the tribe of Yehudah. ¹³ His offering was:

- One silver bowl weighing one hundred and thirty (shekels),
- One silver sprinkling basin (weighing) seventy shekels, according to the shekel (measurement used for) holy (items),
- Both (bowls were) filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for a meal-offering,
- ¹⁴ One spoon (weighing) ten gold (shekels) filled with incense,
- ¹⁵ One (outstanding) young bull, one ram and one lamb in its first year for a burnt-offering,
- ¹⁶ One young male goat for a sin-offering.
- ¹⁷ For a peace-offering: two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five lambs in their first year.

This was the offering of Nachshon the son of Aminadav.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why is Nachshon's tribe mentioned? (v. 12)

RASHI: Scripture connects him to his tribe ("of the tribe of Yehudah"), but he did not raise funds from his tribe for the offering. Or perhaps the words "of the tribe of Yehudah" mean that he did raise funds from his tribe for the offering? To resolve this matter verse [17] states, "This was the offering of Nachshon," indicating that he paid for it himself.

TORAS MENACHEM

role of the leaders in Egypt and during the census *here*, when introducing the description of their gifts to the Tabernacle?

The answer is that these two points bring to light two different roles of the leaders which need to be appreciated in order to understand this passage. In Egypt, the entire Jewish nation was enslaved, and the self-sacrifice of the leaders was accordingly for the entire community. But with the census, the leaders' primary responsibility was for their own specific tribe. So with the stress here that "*they were the leaders of the tribes (back in Egypt and) they were the ones who were present during the census,*" the Torah wishes to alert us to the two roles of the leaders (tribal and cross-communal), in order that we appreciate that their two sets of gifts were brought in two different capacities.

The first gift of the wagons (v. 1-9), was a donation of equipment to be used in the Tabernacle, which was given over to be *public* property. Thus, when the leaders brought this gift, they were acting in their overall communal capacity as joint leaders of the entire community, which is underscored by the fact that they brought the offering *together*.

In contrast, the second series of gifts for the dedication of the Altar, was brought by the leaders *separately* (on different days), and they were *private* gifts from the leaders themselves as representatives of their tribes (see *Rashi* to v. 12, cited in *Classic Questions* above). Hence, the gifts given to dedicate the Altar were given by the leaders in their capacity as tribal leaders, and not leaders of the entire community.

And this explains why *Rashi* writes here, "*After they had contributed the wagons and the oxen for carrying the Tabernacle, their hearts inspired them to contribute offerings for the Altar, to dedicate it.*" For the two series of gifts were of an entirely different nature, given by the leaders in different capacities. First, they acted on behalf of the entire community; and only then was it appropriate for them to address the concerns of their own individual tribes.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Naso* 5726; *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, pp. 46-7)

🌀 The Last Word 🌀

The leaders first gave gifts to the Tabernacle on behalf of the entire Jewish community (7:1-9), before offering gifts on behalf of their individual tribes (7:10ff.—see *Toras Menachem*). This teaches us that if a person wishes God to answer his own prayers, he should first petition God for the needs of all his Jewish brethren before turning his attention to his own needs. Thus, the *Alter Rebbe* writes that before prayer one should say, "*I hereby accept upon myself the mitzvah, 'Love your fellow as yourself,'*" for one's personal petitions are more likely to be granted if they are prefaced with sensitivity for the needs of others.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, pp. 47-8)

עמינדב: יח ג'יזמא תנינא קריב נתנאל בר צוער רבא דיששכר: יט קריב ית קרבנה מנסתא דכספא חדא מאה ותלתין סלעין הנה מתקלה מורקא חד דכספא מתקלה שבועין סלעין בסלעי קודשא תרניהון מלן סלתא דפילא במשח למנחתא: כ ג'זיכא חדא מתקל עשר סלעין היא דדהב מליא קמרת בוסמאי: כא תור חד בר תורי דכר חד אמר חד בר שתה לעלתא: כב צפיר בר עזין חד לחטאתא: כג ולנסתא קודשא תורין תרין דברי חמשא גדיי חמשא אמרין בני שנה חמשא דין קרבן נתנאל בר צוער: כד ג'יזמא תליתאה רבא לבני זבולן אליאב בר חילון: כה קרבנה מנסתא דכספא חדא מאה ותלתין סלעין הנה מתקלה מורקא חד דכספא מתקלה שבועין סלעין בסלעי קודשא תרניהון מלן סלתא דפילא במשח למנחתא: כו ג'זיכא חדא מתקל עשר סלעין היא דדהב מליא קמרת בוסמאי: כז תור חד בר תורי דכר חד אמר חד בר שתה לעלתא:

יח ביום השני הקריב נתנאל בן צוער נשיא יששכר: יט הקרב את קרבנו קערת כסף אחת שלשים ומאה משקלה מורק אחד כסף שבועים שקל בשקל הקדש שניהם | מלאים סלת בלולה בשמן למנחה: כ בף אחת עשרה זהב מלאה קמרת: כא פר אחד בן בקר איל אחד כבש אחד בן שנתו לעלה: כב שעיר עזים אחד לחטאת: כג ולזבח השלמים בקר שנים אילים חמשה עתדים חמשה כבשים בני שנה חמשה זה קרבן נתנאל בן צוער: פ כד ביום השלישי נשיא לבני זבולן אליאב בן חילון: כה קרבנו קערת כסף אחת שלשים ומאה משקלה מורק אחד כסף שבועים שקל בשקל הקדש שניהם | מלאים סלת בלולה בשמן למנחה: כו בף אחת עשרה זהב מלאה קמרת: כז פר אחד בן בקר איל אחד כבש אחד

רש"י

לומר שאף אותיות של אחד מטרפות למנין: **שבעים שקל**. כנגד שבעים אומות שילאו מצניו: (כ) בף אחת. כנגד התורה שנחנה מידו של הקצ"ח: עשרה זהב. כנגד עשרת הדברות: **מלאה קמרת**. גימטריא של קמרת תרי"ג מלות, וזלכד שתחליף קו"ף צל"ת על ידי א"ת צ"ש ג"ר ד"ק: (כא) פר אחד. כנגד אברהם, שנאמר צו ויקח בן צקר? איל אחד. כנגד יצחק ויקח את האיל וגו':⁸ **בבש אחד**. כנגד יעקב והכשבים הפריד יעקב?⁹ (כב) **שעיר עזים**. לכפר על מכירת יוסף, שנאמר צו וישחטו שעיר עזים¹⁰: (כג) **ולזבח השלמים בקר שנים**. כנגד משה ואהרן, שנחנו שלוש זין ישראל לאביהם ששמיים: **אילים עתדים בבשים**. שלש מינים כנגד כהנים ולוים וישראלים, וכנגד תורה נביאים וכתובים. שלש חמשות כנגד חמשה חומשים, וחמש הדברות הכתובין על לוח אחד, וחמש הכתובין על השני. עד כאן מייסודו של ר' משה הדרשן: (כד) **ביום השלישי נשיא וגו'**. ציוס השלישי היה נשיא המקריב לבני זבולון, וכן כולם, אבל צנתנאל שנאמר צו הקריב נתנאל¹¹, ונפל אחריו הלשון לומר נשיא יששכר¹², לפי שכבר הזכיר שמו והקרבנות, וצשאר שלא נאמר צכן הקריב, ונפל עליהן לשון זה נשיא לבני פלוני, אותו היום היה הנשיא המקריב לשצט פלוני:

(יח) הקריב נתנאל בן צוער. (יט) הקרב את קרבנו. מה תלמוד לומר הקריב צשצטו של יששכר, מה שלא נאמר ככל השצטים, לפי שצא ראובן וערער ואמר די שקדמני יהודה אחי, אקריב אחי אחריו. אמר לו משה מפי הגבורה נאמר לי שיקריבו כסדר מסען לדגליהם. לכך אמר הקרב את קרבנו¹, והוא חסר וי"ד, שהוא משמע הקרב, לשון זוי, שמפי הגבורה נלעווה הקרב. ומהו הקריב הקריב שני פעמים, שצשצול שני דברים זכר להקריב שני לשצטים, אחת שכיו יודעים צתורה, שנאמר ומצני יששכר יודעי צינה לעתים², ואחת שהם נתנו ענה לנשיאים להתנדב קרבנות הללו³. וצייסודו של ר' משה הדרשן מלאתי אמר רבי פנחס בן יאיר, נתנאל בן צוער השיאן ענה זו: קערת כסף. מנין אותיותיו צגימטריא תקל"ל כנגד שנותיו של אדם הראשון? **שלשים ומאה משקלה**. על שם שכשבעמדי תולדות לקיוס העולם בן מאה ושלשים שנה היה, שנאמר ויחי אדם שלשים ומאת שנה ויוולד צדמותו וגו':⁴ **מורק אחד כסף**. צגימטריא תק"כ, על שם נח שהעמיד תולדות בן ת"ק שנה, ועל שם עשרים שנה שנגזרה גזירת המצול קודם תולדותיו, כמו שפירשתי אלל והיו ימיו מאה ועשרים שנה⁵, לפיכך נאמר מורק אחד כסף ולא נאמר מורק כסף אחד, כמו שנאמר צקערה,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why is it written twice that Nesanel "brought his offering" in verses 18 and 19?

RASHI: Because Yissachar merited to be the second tribe to offer their sacrifices for two reasons: One, they were knowledgeable in the Torah....Second, they were the ones who suggested to the leaders to bring these particular offerings.

In Rabbi Moshe Hadarshan's composition I found the following:

Rabbi Pinchas the son of Yair says: Nesanel the son of Tzu'ar was the one who gave the suggestion.

"One silver bowl" (קערת כסף)—The numerical value of the letters of these words is 930*, corresponding to the years of Adam, the first man (Bereishis 5:5). "Weighing one hundred and thirty (shekels)"—when [Adam] began to establish a family to perpetuate the world, he was 130, as the verse states, "Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and he fathered..." (Bereishis 5:3).

"One silver sprinkling basin" (מורק אחד כסף)—Its numerical value is 520** representing Noach, who began to establish a family when he was 500 years old, and representing the 20 years that the flood

*ק = 100, ע = 70, ר = 200, ת = 400, כ = 20, ס = 60, פ = 80, a total of 930.

1 ספרי 2 דבי הימים א יב, לג 3 ראה שיחת ש"פ נשא תשל"ה 4 בראשית ה, ה 5 ס 6 שם ו, ג 7 שם יז, יז 8 שם כב, ג 9 שם ל, מ 10 שם לו, לא 11 פסוק יח

¹⁸ On the second day, Nesanel the son of Tzu'ar, the leader of Yissachar brought his offering. ¹⁹ He brought his offering of one silver bowl weighing one hundred and thirty (shekels), one silver sprinkling basin (weighing) seventy shekels, according to the shekel (measurement used for) holy (items), both filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for a meal-offering, ²⁰ one spoon (weighing) ten gold (shekels) filled with incense, ²¹ one (outstanding) young bull, one ram and one lamb in its first year for a burnt-offering, ²² one young male goat for a sin-offering. ²³ For a peace-offering: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Nesanel the son of Tzu'ar.

²⁴ On the third day, was the leader of Zevulun's descendants, Eliav the son of Chailon. ²⁵ His offering was one silver bowl weighing one hundred and thirty (shekels), one silver sprinkling basin (weighing) seventy shekels, according to the shekel (measurement used for) holy (items), both filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for a meal-offering, ²⁶ one spoon (weighing) ten gold (shekels) filled with incense, ²⁷ one (outstanding) young bull, one ram and one lamb in its first year for a burnt-offering, ²⁸ one young

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

had been decreed before his children were born... (see *Bereishis*. 6:3). "Seventy shekels"—Corresponding to the seventy nations which emerged from [Noach's] sons.

"One spoon"—Corresponding to the Torah, which was given by the hand*** of God. "(Weighing) ten gold (shekels)"—Corresponding to the Ten Commandments. "Filled with incense" (קְטֹרֶת)—Its numerical value corresponds to the 613 commandments***.

"One young bull"—Corresponding to Avraham, about whom the verse states, "He took a young bull" (*Bereishis* 18:7). "One ram"—Corresponding to Yitzchak, [of whom the verse states], "[Avraham] took the ram [and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son]" (*Bereishis* 22:13). "One lamb"—Corresponding to Ya'akov, [of whom the verse states], "Ya'akov separated the lambs" (*Bereishis* 30:40).

"One male goat"—To atone for the sale of Yosef, of which the verse states, "they slaughtered a young goat" (*Bereishis* 37:31).

"For a peace-offering: two oxen"—Corresponding to Moshe and Aharon, who made peace between Israel and their Father in heaven.

"Rams...male goats...lambs"—Three types, corresponding to Priests, Levites, and Israelites; and corresponding to the Torah, the Prophets, and the Holy Writings. Five [were brought] of each of the three [types], corresponding to the five books of the *Chumash*, to the five commandments inscribed on the first tablet, and the five commandments inscribed on the second one.

MIDRASH: Why did the leaders see fit to bring these particular offerings? The Rabbis said: Even though they all made the same offerings, each had a different intention.

The leader of Yehudah brought his offerings to commemorate royalty, since Yehudah was a king over his brothers....

The leader of Yissachar brought his offerings to commemorate Torah, because they loved Torah more than any of the other tribes....

The leader of Zevulun brought his offerings on the third day because his tribe loved Torah and they extended their hands to provide ample funds for Yissachar, so Yissachar would not need to earn a living and would be free to study the Torah. Therefore Zevulun merited to be their partner in Torah, and so they offered after him...

The leader of Re'uvain brought his offerings to commemorate Re'uvain's attempts to save Yosef from being sold....

The leader of Shimon brought his offerings to commemorate the construction of the Tabernacle, because Shimon avenged the abduction of Dinah, and likewise, the Tabernacle brought the demise of adulterers and sotahs.... (see above 5:11ff).

The leader of Gad brought his offerings to commemorate the Exodus from Egypt, since Gad was destined to lead the Jewish people across the Jordan, into the Land of Israel....

The leader of Efrayim brought his offerings to commemorate Ya'akov, because Ya'akov blessed Efrayim before Menasheh, even though Efrayim was the younger brother....

The leader of Menasheh brought his offerings to commemorate Ya'akov and Menasheh....

The leader of Binyamin brought his offerings to commemorate Rochel, the mother of Binyamin and Yosef....

The leader of Dan brought his offerings to commemorate Shimshon the Nazirite, who was to emerge from the tribe of Dan....

The leader of Asher brought his offerings to commemorate the fact that God had happily chosen the Jewish people as His own....

The leader of Naftali brought his offerings to commemorate the Patriarchs and Matriarchs (*Bamidbar Rabah* 13:14ff.).

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 THE OFFERINGS OF EACH LEADER (v. 12-83)

Rashi's comments to verses 18-19 prompt the following questions:

a.) Why did Rashi cite numerous *allusions* and *non-literal* explanations for the offerings brought to dedicate the Altar, when Rashi himself

declared, "I am coming *only* to explain the literal meaning of scripture" (*Rashi to Bereishis* 3:8)?

b.) Why did Rashi explain the meaning of the offerings amid the account of the second day, and not on the first day?

*** = 40, ז = 7, ר = 200, ק = 100, א = 1, ה = 8, ד = 4, כ = 20, ט = 60, פ = 80, a total of 520. ***In Hebrew, the word כַּף means both "spoon" and "palm," alluding here to the "hand" or "palm" of God. ****As Rashi explains: Provided that you convert the ק into a ד with the system known as *At Bash* אָת ב'שׁ [in which the first and last letters of the alphabet are interchangeable, etc. Thus קְטֹרֶת is: ד = 4 (exchanged), ט = 9, ר = 200, ת = 400, a total of 613].

כח צפיר בר עזין חד לחטאתא: כט ולנכסת קודשיא תורין תרין דכרי חמשא גדיי חמשא אמרין בני שנה חמשא דין קרבן אליאב בר חילון: ל ביומא רביעאה רבא לבני ראובן אליצור בר שדיאור: לא קרבנה מנסתא דכסף חדא מאה ותלתין סלעין הוה מתקלה מורקא חד דכסף מתקלה שבועין סלעין בסלעי קודשא תרויהון מלן סלתא דפילא במשח למנחתא: לב בויכא חדא מתקל עשר סלעין היא דדהב מליא קמרת בוסמיא: לד תור חד בר תורי דכר חד אמר חד בר שתה לעלתא: לה צפיר בר עזין חד לחטאתא: לה ולנכסת קודשיא תורין תרין דכרי חמשא גדיי חמשא אמרין בני שנה חמשא דין קרבן אליצור בר שדיאור: לו ביומא חמישאה רבא לבני שמעון שלמיאל בר צורישדי: לו קרבנה מנסתא דכסף חדא מאה ותלתין סלעין הוה מתקלה מורקא חד דכסף מתקלה שבועין סלעין בסלעי קודשא תרויהון מלן סלתא דפילא במשח למנחתא: לה בויכא חדא מתקל עשר סלעין היא דדהב מליא קמרת בוסמיא: למ תור חד בר תורי דכר חד אמר חד בר שתה לעלתא: מ צפיר בר עזין חד לחטאתא: מא ולנכסת קודשיא תורין תרין דכרי חמשא גדיי חמשא אמרין בני שנה חמשא דין קרבן שלמיאל בר צורישדי: מב ביומא שתיתאה רבא לבני גד אליסף בר דעואל: מג קרבנה מנסתא דכסף חדא מאה ותלתין סלעין הוה מתקלה מורקא חד דכסף מתקלה שבועין סלעין בסלעי קודשא תרויהון מלן סלתא דפילא במשח למנחתא: מד בויכא חדא מתקל עשר סלעין היא דדהב מליא קמרת בוסמיא: מה תור חד בר תורי דכר חד אמר חד בר שתה לעלתא: מו צפיר בר עזין חד לחטאתא: מז ולנכסת קודשיא תורין תרין דכרי חמשא גדיי חמשא אמרין בני שנה חמשא דין קרבן אליסף בר דעואל: מח ביומא שביעאה רבא לבני

בן־שנתו לעלה: כח שעיר־עזים אחד לחטאת: כט ולזבח השלמים בקר שנים אילם חמשה עתדים חמשה כבשים בני־שנה חמשה זה קרבן אליאב בן־חלן: פ ל ביום הרביעי נשיא לבני ראובן אליצור בן־שדיאור: לא קרבנו קערת־כסף אחת שלשים ומאה משקלה מורק אחד כסף שבועים שקל בשקל הקדש שניהם | מלאים סלת בלולה בשמן למנחה: לב כף אחת עשרה זהב מלאה קמרת: לד פך אחד בן־בקר איל אחד כבש־אחד בן־שנתו לעלה: לה שעיר־עזים אחד לחטאת: לה ולזבח השלמים בקר שנים אילם חמשה עתדים חמשה כבשים בני־שנה חמשה זה קרבן אליצור בן־שדיאור: פ לו ביום החמישי נשיא לבני שמעון שלמיאל בן־צורישדי: לו קרבנו קערת־כסף אחת שלשים ומאה משקלה מורק אחד כסף שבועים שקל בשקל הקדש שניהם | מלאים סלת בלולה בשמן למנחה: לה כף אחת עשרה זהב מלאה קמרת: לה פך אחד בן־בקר איל אחד כבש־אחד בן־שנתו לעלה: מ שעיר־עזים אחד לחטאת: מא ולזבח השלמים בקר שנים אילם חמשה עתדים חמשה כבשים בני־שנה חמשה זה קרבן שלמיאל בן־צורישדי: פ [ששין] מב ביום הששי נשיא לבני גד אליסף בן־דעואל: מג קרבנו קערת־כסף אחת שלשים ומאה משקלה מורק אחד כסף שבועים שקל בשקל הקדש שניהם | מלאים סלת בלולה בשמן למנחה: מד כף אחת עשרה זהב מלאה קמרת: מה פך אחד בן־בקר איל אחד כבש־אחד בן־שנתו לעלה: מו שעיר־עזים אחד לחטאת: מז ולזבח השלמים בקר שנים אילם חמשה עתדים חמשה כבשים בני־שנה חמשה זה קרבן אליסף בן־דעואל: פ מח ביום השביעי נשיא לבני אפרים אלישמע בן־עמיהוד:

TORAS MENACHEM

THE EXPLANATION

On reaching the account of “the second day,” when “Nesanel the son of Tzu’ar, the leader of Yissachar brought his offering” (v. 18-19), *Rashi* was

troubled by an obvious question: Why does the Torah repeat word for word the list of offerings which were brought by “Nesanel the son of Tzu’ar, the leader of Yissachar,” on the second day, being that they are

male goat for a sin-offering. ²⁹ For a peace-offering: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Eliav the son of Chailon.

³⁰ On the fourth day, was the leader of Re'uvain's descendants, Elitzur the son of Shedai'ur. ³¹ His offering was one silver bowl weighing one hundred and thirty (shekels), one silver sprinkling basin (weighing) seventy shekels, according to the shekel (measurement used for) holy (items), both filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for a meal-offering, ³² one spoon (weighing) ten gold (shekels) filled with incense, ³³ one (outstanding) young bull, one ram and one lamb in its first year for a burnt-offering, ³⁴ one young male goat for a sin-offering. ³⁵ For a peace-offering: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Elitzur the son of Shedai'ur.

³⁶ On the fifth day, was the leader of Shimon's descendants, Shelumiel the son of Tzurishadai. ³⁷ His offering was one silver bowl weighing one hundred and thirty (shekels), one silver sprinkling basin (weighing) seventy shekels, according to the shekel (measurement used for) holy (items), both filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for a meal-offering, ³⁸ one spoon (weighing) ten gold (shekels) filled with incense, ³⁹ one (outstanding) young bull, one ram and one lamb in its first year for a burnt-offering, ⁴⁰ one young male goat for a sin-offering. ⁴¹ For a peace-offering: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Shelumiel the son of Tzurishadai.

SIXTH
READING

⁴² On the sixth day, was the leader of Gad's descendants, Elyasaf the son of Du'ail. ⁴³ His offering was one silver bowl weighing one hundred and thirty (shekels), one silver sprinkling basin (weighing) seventy shekels, according to the shekel (measurement used for) holy (items), both filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for a meal-offering, ⁴⁴ one spoon (weighing) ten gold (shekels) filled with incense, ⁴⁵ one (outstanding) young bull, one ram and one lamb in its first year for a burnt-offering, ⁴⁶ one young male goat for a sin-offering. ⁴⁷ For a peace-offering: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Elyasaf the son of Du'ail.

⁴⁸ On the seventh day, was the leader of Efrayim's descendants, Elishama the son of Amihud.

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identical in every detail to the offerings brought by Nachshon the son of Aminadav on the first day? Why did the Torah not state simply that the same offerings were repeated on the second day? In fact, the reader will soon discover that the Torah states this identical list of offerings no fewer than twelve times!

To address this problem *Rashi* cited “the composition of Rabbi Moshe Hadarshan” here, at the account of the *second* offering, since one is not troubled about repetition until one reads something for the *second* time.

And *Rashi* deemed it necessary, on this occasion, to offer a non-literal interpretation, since this was the only way he found to explain the repetition of the leader's offerings.

In other words: *Rashi's* goal is to explain every problem that arises at the literal level as simply and as literally as possible. Sometimes, however, when no literal solution is available, *Rashi* is forced to cite a non-literal *Midrashic* solution, since the question demands an answer. In such a case however, *Rashi* will cite the most simple and appropriate “non-literal” solution, that deviates the least from a literal interpretation.

In our case, this presents us with a difficulty, because the solution of the **Midrash** (see *Classic Questions* above) appears to solve our question at the literal level much better than the “composition of Rabbi Moshe Hadarshan” which *Rashi* cites. For since the reader is troubled why the Torah repeats the identical offerings of the leaders twelve times, the explanation of the *Midrash*, that each leader brought his offerings to commemorate a totally *different* concept or event, would appear to solve the problem perfectly. For with this, the reader would understand that the

Torah repeated these offerings because, despite first appearances, they are not the same offerings at all, but each have an entirely different theme.

On the other hand, the solution from “the composition of Rabbi Moshe Hadarshan,” which *Rashi* cites, does not appear to solve our problem. For R' Moshe Hadarshan only offered *one single* interpretation of the same offerings brought by all the leaders, which does not appear to explain why the Torah repeated the offerings twelve times.

RASHI'S DIFFICULTY WITH THE MIDRASH

Even a young child who is studying the *Chumash* for the first time appreciates that the Tabernacle's offerings were filled with significance and meaning. The child also understands that the significance of these offerings is reflected by their physical components.

So, at the literal level, the *Midrash's* interpretation (that each leader brought his offering in commemoration of a different idea) is difficult to accept, because if the theme of each offering was totally different, then the leaders would have brought different offerings (physically) to reflect these different themes.

On the other hand, if the leaders all brought their offerings with the same intention, then we are left with our original question: Why did the Torah repeat the same offerings twelve times?

So *Rashi* concluded that the offerings must have possessed both common, central themes, as well as individual variations specific to each tribe. Thus, the leaders brought the same (physical) offerings, since the general theme was the same; but *within* the general theme *different*

אֶפְרַיִם אֲלִישָׁמֶע בֶּר עֲמִיהוּד: מט קרְבַּנָּה מְגֻסָּתָא דְכֶסֶף חֲדָא מָאָה וּתְלָתִין סְלַעִין הוּוּהּ מִתְקַלָּה מְזֻרְקָא חַד דְכֶסֶף מִתְקַלָּה שְׁבַעִין סְלַעִין בְּסַלְעֵי קוּדְשָׁא תְרוּוּהוּן מְלֻן סְלַתָּא דְפִילָא בְּמִשַׁח לְמִנְחָתָא: נ בְּזִיבָא חֲדָא מִתְקַל עֶשֶׂר סְלַעִין הוּוּהּ דְדָהֵב מְלִיא קְטֹרֶת בּוֹסְמִיא: נא תוֹר חַד בְּר תוֹרֵי דְכֶר חַד אֲמַר חַד בְּר שְׁתֵּה לְעֵלְתָא: נב צְפִיר בְּר עֲזִין חַד לְחַטָּאתָא: נג וּלְנֹכְסֵת קוּדְשָׁא תוֹרִין תְּרִין דְכֶרִי חֲמִשָּׁא גְדִי חֲמִשָּׁא אֲמִרִין בְּנֵי שְׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁא דִין קְרָבֵן אֲלִישָׁמֶע בֶּר עֲמִיהוּד: נד בְּיוֹמָא תְּמִינָאָה רְבָא לְבָנֵי מְנַשֶּׁה גְּמִלְיָאֵל בְּר פְּדָהֲצוֹר: נה קְרָבַנָּה מְגֻסָּתָא דְכֶסֶף חֲדָא מָאָה וּתְלָתִין סְלַעִין הוּוּהּ מִתְקַלָּה מְזֻרְקָא חַד דְכֶסֶף מִתְקַלָּה שְׁבַעִין סְלַעִין בְּסַלְעֵי קוּדְשָׁא תְרוּוּהוּן מְלֻן סְלַתָּא דְפִילָא בְּמִשַׁח לְמִנְחָתָא: נו בְּזִיבָא חֲדָא מִתְקַל עֶשֶׂר סְלַעִין הוּוּהּ דְדָהֵב מְלִיא קְטֹרֶת בּוֹסְמִיא: נז תוֹר חַד בְּר תוֹרֵי דְכֶר חַד אֲמַר חַד בְּר שְׁתֵּה לְעֵלְתָא: נח צְפִיר בְּר עֲזִין חַד לְחַטָּאתָא: נט וּלְנֹכְסֵת קוּדְשָׁא תוֹרִין תְּרִין דְכֶרִי חֲמִשָּׁא גְדִי חֲמִשָּׁא אֲמִרִין בְּנֵי שְׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁא דִין קְרָבֵן גְּמִלְיָאֵל בְּר פְּדָהֲצוֹר: ס בְּיוֹמָא תְּשִׁיעָאָה רְבָא לְבָנֵי בְּנִמֹן אֲבִידֹן בְּר גְּדֵעֲנִי: סא קְרָבַנָּה מְגֻסָּתָא דְכֶסֶף חֲדָא מָאָה וּתְלָתִין סְלַעִין הוּוּהּ מִתְקַלָּה מְזֻרְקָא חַד דְכֶסֶף מִתְקַלָּה שְׁבַעִין סְלַעִין בְּסַלְעֵי קוּדְשָׁא תְרוּוּהוּן מְלֻן סְלַתָּא דְפִילָא בְּמִשַׁח לְמִנְחָתָא: סב בְּזִיבָא חֲדָא מִתְקַל עֶשֶׂר סְלַעִין הוּוּהּ דְדָהֵב מְלִיא קְטֹרֶת בּוֹסְמִיא: סג תוֹר חַד בְּר תוֹרֵי דְכֶר חַד אֲמַר חַד בְּר שְׁתֵּה לְעֵלְתָא: סד צְפִיר בְּר עֲזִין חַד לְחַטָּאתָא: סה וּלְנֹכְסֵת קוּדְשָׁא תוֹרִין תְּרִין דְכֶרִי חֲמִשָּׁא גְדִי חֲמִשָּׁא אֲמִרִין בְּנֵי שְׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁא דִין קְרָבֵן אֲבִידֹן בְּר גְּדֵעֲנִי: סו בְּיוֹמָא עֲשִׂירָאָה רְבָא לְבָנֵי דֹן אַחִיעֹזֶר בְּר עֲמִישִׁדִי: סז קְרָבַנָּה מְגֻסָּתָא דְכֶסֶף חֲדָא מָאָה וּתְלָתִין

מט קְרָבַנָּו קְעֶרֶת-כֶּסֶף אַחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מְזֻרְקָא אַחַד כֶּסֶף שְׁבַעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְׁנֵיהֶם | מְלֵאִים סֵלֶת בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: נ כֶּסֶף אַחַת עֶשְׂרֵה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קְטֹרֶת: נא פֶּר אֶחָד בֶּן-בָּקָר אֵיל אֶחָד כֶּבֶשׂ-אֶחָד בֶּן-שָׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה: נב שְׁעִיר-עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת: נג וּלְזִבַּח הַשְּׁלָמִים בָּקָר שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עֶתְדִים חֲמִשָּׁה כֶּבֶשִׁים בְּנֵי-שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קְרָבֵן אֲלִישָׁמֶע בֶּן-עֲמִיהוּד: פ נד בְּיוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי נָשִׂיא לְבָנֵי מְנַשֶּׁה גְּמִלְיָאֵל בֶּן-פְּדָהֲצוֹר: נה קְרָבַנָּו קְעֶרֶת-כֶּסֶף אַחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מְזֻרְקָא אַחַד כֶּסֶף שְׁבַעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְׁנֵיהֶם | מְלֵאִים סֵלֶת בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: נו כֶּסֶף אַחַת עֶשְׂרֵה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קְטֹרֶת: נז פֶּר אֶחָד בֶּן-בָּקָר אֵיל אֶחָד כֶּבֶשׂ-אֶחָד בֶּן-שָׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה: נח שְׁעִיר-עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת: נט וּלְזִבַּח הַשְּׁלָמִים בָּקָר שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עֶתְדִים חֲמִשָּׁה כֶּבֶשִׁים בְּנֵי-שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קְרָבֵן גְּמִלְיָאֵל בֶּן-פְּדָהֲצוֹר: פ ס בְּיוֹם הַתְּשִׁיעִי נָשִׂיא לְבָנֵי בְנִימֹן אֲבִידֹן בֶּן-גְּדֵעֲנִי: סא קְרָבַנָּו קְעֶרֶת-כֶּסֶף אַחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מְזֻרְקָא אַחַד כֶּסֶף שְׁבַעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְׁנֵיהֶם | מְלֵאִים סֵלֶת בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: סב כֶּסֶף אַחַת עֶשְׂרֵה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קְטֹרֶת: סג פֶּר אֶחָד בֶּן-בָּקָר אֵיל אֶחָד כֶּבֶשׂ-אֶחָד בֶּן-שָׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה: סד שְׁעִיר-עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת: סה וּלְזִבַּח הַשְּׁלָמִים בָּקָר שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עֶתְדִים חֲמִשָּׁה כֶּבֶשִׁים בְּנֵי-שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קְרָבֵן אֲבִידֹן בֶּן-גְּדֵעֲנִי: פ סו בְּיוֹם הָעֲשִׂירִי נָשִׂיא לְבָנֵי דֹן אַחִיעֹזֶר בֶּן-עֲמִישִׁדִי: סז קְרָבַנָּו קְעֶרֶת-כֶּסֶף אַחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים

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aspects could be highlighted by each tribal leader. And this variation was indicated by the Torah's repetition of each sequence of offerings.

Based on the above, we can now appreciate why Rashi deemed R' Moshe Hadarshan's composition to be the most suitable explanation at

the literal level. For each of R' Moshe Hadarshan's allusions refer to unified central themes that apply to *all* the tribes, but at the same time they also include a spectrum of aspects for *each tribe* to select and represent (see table opposite).*

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, p. 41ff)**

* [Editor's note: Rashi does not explain what the varying intentions of each individual leader were, since it is *not crucial* at the literal level to understand the specific, unique intention inherent in each repetition. Rather, Rashi deemed it necessary only to inform the reader of the general interpretation which lends itself to multifaceted interpretation, to explain how it is possible for twelve identical sets of offerings to carry different messages, while retaining a core theme]. **See also *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 83ff.

⁴⁹ His offering was one silver bowl weighing one hundred and thirty (shekels), one silver sprinkling basin (weighing) seventy shekels, according to the shekel (measurement used for) holy (items), both filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for a meal-offering, ⁵⁰ one spoon (weighing) ten gold (shekels) filled with incense, ⁵¹ one (outstanding) young bull, one ram and one lamb in its first year for a burnt-offering, ⁵² one young male goat for a sin-offering. ⁵³ For a peace-offering: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Elishama the son of Amihud.

⁵⁴ On the eighth day, was the leader of Menasheh's descendants, Gamliail the son of Pedatzur. ⁵⁵ His offering was one silver bowl weighing one hundred and thirty (shekels), one silver sprinkling basin (weighing) seventy shekels, according to the shekel (measurement used for) holy (items), both filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for a meal-offering, ⁵⁶ one spoon (weighing) ten gold (shekels) filled with incense, ⁵⁷ one (outstanding) young bull, one ram and one lamb in its first year for a burnt-offering, ⁵⁸ one young male goat for a sin-offering. ⁵⁹ For a peace-offering: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Gamliail the son of Pedatzur.

⁶⁰ On the ninth day, was the leader of Binyamin's descendants, Avidan the son of Gidoni. ⁶¹ His offering was one silver bowl weighing one hundred and thirty (shekels), one silver sprinkling basin (weighing) seventy shekels, according to the shekel (measurement used for) holy (items), both filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for a meal-offering, ⁶² one spoon (weighing) ten gold (shekels) filled with incense, ⁶³ one (outstanding) young bull, one ram and one lamb in its first year for a burnt-offering, ⁶⁴ one young male goat for a sin-offering. ⁶⁵ For a peace-offering: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Avidan the son of Gidoni.

⁶⁶ On the tenth day, was the leader of Dan's descendants, Achi'ezer the son of Amishadai. ⁶⁷ His offering was one silver bowl weighing one hundred and thirty (shekels), one silver sprinkling basin

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🌀 THE LEADERS' OFFERINGS 🌀

The general significance of each of the leaders' offerings, together with the range of details which could be individually stressed, enabling each offering to have a personalized significance—based on Rashi (v. 18-19) & Likutei Sichos (vol. 8, p. 45-6).

OFFERING	CORE SIGNIFICANCE	RANGE OF DETAILS
SILVER BOWL 130 SHEKELS	LIFE OF ADAM, ESTABLISHED FIRST FAMILY	LIFE OF ADAM SPANNED 930 YEARS, INCLUDING MANY DIFFERENT ERAS. OFFSPRING HAD DIFFERENT PERSONALITIES.
SILVER SPRINKLING BASIN 70 SHEKELS	LIFE OF NOACH	NOACH'S LIFE WITNESSED BOTH THE NEAR DESTRUCTION OF THE WORLD AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW WORLD, CONTAINING 70 DIFFERENT NATIONS.
SPOON, 10 SHEKELS, FILLED WITH INCENSE	TORAH	TORAH IS A SINGLE UNIT, YET IT IS DIVIDED INTO TEN COMMANDMENTS AND 613 MITZVOS
ONE YOUNG BULL, ONE RAM AND ONE LAMB	AVRAHAM, YITZCHAK & YA'AKOV	THREE INDIVIDUAL PATRIARCHS WHO FATHERED ALL THE JEWISH PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE GENERATIONS, UNTIL TODAY.
SIN-OFFERING	ATONEMENT FOR SALE OF YOSEF	EACH OF YOSEF'S BROTHERS PARTICIPATED IN HIS SALE IN DIFFERENT WAYS***, SO EACH REQUIRES A DIFFERENT FORM OF ATONEMENT
PEACE-OFFERINGS	MOSHE & AHARON; PRIESTS, LEVITES & ISRAELITES	MOSHE & AHARON BOTH ACHIEVED PEACE THROUGH DIFFERENT APPROACHES (TRUTH & COMPROMISE); THREE TYPES OF JEWS, BUT ALL ARE NEEDED FOR PEACE-OFFERING

***Even Yosef incited his brothers by relating his dreams, and Binyamin failed to search for Yosef while he was in Egypt.

סלעין הנה מתקלה מזרקא חד דכסף מתקלה שבועין סלעין בסלעי קודשא תרויהון מלן סלתא דפילא במשח למנחתא: סח בזיבא חדא מתקל עשר סלעין היא דדהב מליא קמרת בוסמיא: טט תור חד בר תורי דבר חד אמר חד בר שתה לעלתא: ע צפיר בר עזין חד לחטאתא: עא ולנכסת קודשא תורין תרין דברי המשא גדיי המשא אמרין בני שנה המשא דין קרבן אחיעזר בר עמישדי: עב ביזמא חד עשר יומין רבא לבני אשר פנעיאל בר עכרון: עג קרבנה מנסתא דכסף חדא מאה ותלתין סלעין הנה מתקלה מזרקא חד דכסף מתקלה שבועין סלעין בסלעי קודשא תרויהון מלן סלתא דפילא במשח למנחתא: עד בזיבא חדא מתקל עשר סלעין היא דדהב מליא קמרת בוסמיא: עה תור חד בר תורי דבר חד אמר חד בר שתה לעלתא: עו צפיר בר עזין חד לחטאתא: עו ולנכסת קודשא תורין תרין דברי המשא גדיי המשא אמרין בני שנה המשא דין קרבן פנעיאל בר עכרון: עה ביזמא תרי עשר יומין רבא לבני נפתלי אחירע בר עינן: עט קרבנה מנסתא דכסף חדא מאה ותלתין סלעין הנה מתקלה מזרקא חד דכסף מתקלה שבועין סלעין בסלעי קודשא תרויהון מלן סלתא דפילא במשח למנחתא: פ בזיבא חדא מתקל עשר סלעין היא דדהב מליא קמרת בוסמיא: פא תור חד בר תורי דבר חד אמר חד בר שתה לעלתא: פב צפיר בר עזין חד לחטאתא: פג ולנכסת קודשא תורין תרין דברי המשא גדיי המשא אמרין בני שנה המשא דין קרבן אחירע בר עינן: פד דא הנפת מדבחה ביזמא דרבין יתה מן רבבין ישראל מגיסי כספא תרתא עשרי מזרקי כספא תרין עשר בזיבוי דדהבא תרתא עשרי: פה מאה ותלתין סלעין הנה מתקלא דמנסתא חדא דכספא ושבעין דמזרקא חד כל כסף מגיאי תרין אלפין וארבע מאה בסלעי קודשא: פו בזיבוי דדהבא תרתא עשרי

ומאה משקלה מזרק אחד כסף שבועים שקל בשקל הקדש שניהם | מלאים סלת בלולה בשמן למנחה: סח בף אחת עשרה זהב מלאה קמרת: סט פר אחד בן בקר איל אחד כבש אחד בן שנתו לעלה: ע שעיר עזים אחד לחטאת: עא ולזבח השלמים בקר שנים אילם חמשה עתדים חמשה כבשים בני שנה חמשה זה קרבן אחיעזר בן עמישדי: פ עב ביום עשתי עשר יום נשיא לבני אשר פנעיאל בן עכרון: עג קרבנו קערת כסף אחת שלשים ומאה משקלה מזרק אחד כסף שבועים שקל בשקל הקדש שניהם | מלאים סלת בלולה בשמן למנחה: עד בף אחת עשרה זהב מלאה קמרת: עה פר אחד בן בקר איל אחד כבש אחד בן שנתו לעלה: עו שעיר עזים אחד לחטאת: עו ולזבח השלמים בקר שנים אילם חמשה עתדים חמשה בני שנה חמשה זה קרבן פנעיאל בן עכרון: פ עה ביום שנים עשר יום נשיא לבני נפתלי אחירע בן עינן: עט קרבנו קערת כסף אחת שלשים ומאה משקלה מזרק אחד כסף שבועים שקל בשקל הקדש שניהם | מלאים סלת בלולה בשמן למנחה: פ בף אחת עשרה זהב מלאה קמרת: פא פר אחד בן בקר איל אחד כבש אחד בן שנתו לעלה: פב שעיר עזים אחד לחטאת: פג ולזבח השלמים בקר שנים אילם חמשה עתדים חמשה בני שנה חמשה זה קרבן אחירע בן עינן: עט קרבנו קערת כסף אחת שלשים ומאה משקלה מזרק אחד כסף שבועים שקל בשקל הקדש שניהם | מלאים סלת בלולה בשמן למנחה: פ בף אחת עשרה זהב מלאה קמרת: פא פר אחד בן בקר איל אחד כבש אחד בן שנתו לעלה: פב שעיר עזים אחד לחטאת: פג ולזבח השלמים בקר שנים אילם חמשה עתדים חמשה בני שנה חמשה זה קרבן אחירע בן עינן: פ ושבועין פד זאת | הנפת המזבח ביום המשח אתו מאת נשיאי ישראל קערת כסף שתים עשרה מזרקי כסף שנים עשר כפות זהב שתים עשרה: פה שלשים ומאה הקערה האחת כסף ושבעים המזרק האחד כל כסף הפלים אלפים וארבע מאות בשקל הקדש: פו כפות זהב שתים עשרה מלאה קמרת עשרה

כש"י

פסול: (פה) שלשים ומאה הקערה האחת וגו'. מכ תלמוד לומר, לפי שנאמר שלשים ומאה משקלה⁴, ולא פירש באיזו שקל, לכך חזר ושנאח כאן, וכלל בזכרון כל כסף הכלים בשקל הקדש: כל כסף הכלים וגו'. למדך שבו כלי המקדש מכוונים במשקלן, שוקלן אחד אחד ושוקלן כולן כאחד, לא ריבב ולא מיעט: (פו) כפות זהב שתים עשרה. למע נאמר, לפי שנאמר קפ

(פד) ביום המשח אותו. זו ציוס שנמשח הקריב, ומכ אני מקיים אחרי המשח¹, שנמשח תחלה ואחר כך הקריב. או אחרי המשח לאחר זמן, ולא בא ללמד ציוס המשח חלה לומר שנמשח ציוס, כשכח אומר ציוס משחו אותם², למדנו שנמשח ציוס, ומכ תלמוד לומר ציוס המשח אותו, ציוס שנמשח הקריב: קערת כסף שתים עשרה. הכס שסתנדזו ולא אירע צדס

(weighing) seventy shekels, according to the shekel (measurement used for) holy (items), both filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for a meal-offering, ⁶⁸ one spoon (weighing) ten gold (shekels) filled with incense, ⁶⁹ one (outstanding) young bull, one ram and one lamb in its first year for a burnt-offering, ⁷⁰ one young male goat for a sin-offering. ⁷¹ For a peace-offering: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Achi'ezer the son of Amishadai.

⁷² On the eleventh day, was the leader of Asher's descendants, Pagiail the son of Ochrán. ⁷³ His offering was one silver bowl weighing one hundred and thirty (shekels), one silver sprinkling basin (weighing) seventy shekels, according to the shekel (measurement used for) holy (items), both filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for a meal-offering, ⁷⁴ one spoon (weighing) ten gold (shekels) filled with incense, ⁷⁵ one (outstanding) young bull, one ram and one lamb in its first year for a burnt-offering, ⁷⁶ one young male goat for a sin-offering. ⁷⁷ For a peace-offering: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Pagiail the son of Ochrán.

⁷⁸ On the twelfth day, was the leader of Naftali's descendants, Achira the son of Ainán. ⁷⁹ His offering was one silver bowl weighing one hundred and thirty (shekels), one silver sprinkling basin (weighing) seventy shekels, according to the shekel (measurement used for) holy (items), both filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for a meal-offering, ⁸⁰ one spoon (weighing) ten gold (shekels) filled with incense, ⁸¹ one (outstanding) young bull, one ram and one lamb in its first year for a burnt-offering, ⁸² one young male goat for a sin-offering. ⁸³ For a peace-offering: two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Achira the son of Ainán.

SEVENTH
READING

⁸⁴ This was the (total) dedication offering of the Altar from the leaders, on the day it was anointed:

- (There were) twelve silver bowls, twelve silver basins and twelve gold spoons. ⁸⁵ The weight of each silver bowl was one hundred and thirty (shekels), and that of each basin was seventy (shekels). All the silver of the items weighed in total: two thousand, four hundred (shekels), according to the shekel (measurement used for) holy (items).
- ⁸⁶ (There were) twelve gold spoons filled with incense, each spoon weighing ten (shekels), according to the shekel (measurement used for) holy (items). All the gold spoons totaled one hundred and twenty shekels.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Surely *all* the offerings were not brought “on the day it [the Altar] was anointed,” the first of Nisan? (v. 84)

MIDRASH: Rabbi Yudan said, “Surely only one bowl, one basin and one spoon were offered ‘on the day it was anointed’ [the first of Nisan (see *Rashi* to 7:1)]? Why does the Torah state that there were “twelve silver bowls, twelve silver basins and twelve gold spoons” [offered on the last day]? Because scripture considers it as if they had all offered on the first day, and they had all offered on the last day (*Bamidbar Rabah* 14:13).

TORAS MENACHEM

🔥 Sparks of Chasidus 🔥

The **Midrash** states, “scripture considers it as if they had all offered on the first day, and they had all offered on the last day” (see *Classic Questions*). The privilege of offering on the first day is obvious, but what is the advantage of offering on the last day?

The superior quality of the last day over those that preceded it, including the first day, is that on the last day the Altar became dedicated *in actual fact* and not merely in the realm of the potential or the possible. So a person might think that since only one of the

tribes merited to bring their offerings on the last day, only one of the twelve spiritual paths which the tribes represent is truly relevant in the actual service of God.

To counteract this notion, the *Midrash* states, “It was as if they had all offered on the first day, and they had all offered on the last day,” i.e., we cannot relegate any of the tribes’ motifs to the theoretical or purely spiritual. All of them are considered to have offered on the last day, when the Altar became dedicated *in actual fact*.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 23, pp. 53-5)

מלין קמרת בוסמיא מתקל עשר סלעין הנה מתקלא דבזיכא בסלעי קודשא כל דהב בזיכא מאה ועשרין: פו כל תורי לעלתא תרי עשר תורין דכרין תרי עשר אמרין בני שנה תרי עשר ומנחתהון וצפירי בר עזין תרי עשר לחטאתא: פח וכל תורי לנכסת קודשא עשרין וארבעה תורין דכרין שתין גדנן שתין אמרין בני שנה שתין דא חנכת מדבחה בתר דרבין יתה: פט וכד עליל משה למשכן זמנא למללא עמה ושמע ית קלא דמתמלל עמה מעלוי כפרתא די על ארונא דסהדותא מבין שני הכרבים וידבר אליו: פ פ פ

עשרה חפה בשקל הקדש כל-זהב הכפות עשרים ומאה: [מפמיר] פז כל-הבקר לעלה שנים עשר פרים אילם שנים-עשר כבשים בני-שנה שנים עשר ומנחתם ושעירי עזים שנים עשר לחטאת: פח וכל בקר | ובה השלמים עשרים וארבעה פרים אילם ששים עתדים ששים כבשים בני-שנה ששים זאת חנכת המזבח אחרי המשח אתו: פט ובבא משה אל-אהל מועד לדבר אתו וישמע את-הקול מדבר אליו מעל הכפרת אשר על-ארץ העדת מבין שני הכרבים וידבר אליו: פ פ פ

קע"ו פסוקים, עמו"ס סימן. עמינד"ב סימן.

כ"ט

המכחישים זה את זה, זה שלישי והכריע צנייחס. כתוב אחד אומר וידבר ה' אליו מאלו מועד³, והוא חוץ לפרכת, וכתוב אחד אומר ודברתי אתך מעל הכפרת⁴, זה זה והכריע צנייחס, משה זה אל אהל מועד ושם שומע את

אחת עשרה זכ¹, היא של זכ², ומשקלה עשרה שקלים של כסף, או אינו אלא כף אחת של כסף ומשקלה עשרה שקלי זכ², ושקלי זכ² אין משקלם שוב לשל כסף, תלמוד לומר כפות זכ², של זכ² היו? (פט) ובבא משה. שני כתובים

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Don't we already know where God spoke to Moshe? (v. 89)

RASHI: There are two contradictory verses [stated previously in the Torah], and a third one, [our verse], comes and reconciles them:

One verse states, "God spoke to him *from the Tent of Meeting*" (*Vayikra* 1:1), suggesting that [God spoke from] *outside* the partition [which separates the Holy of Holies from the Tent of Meeting].

Another verse states, "I will speak with you *from above the lid* [between the two cherubs]" (*Shemos* 25:22), i.e. from the lid of the Ark *inside* the Holy of Holies].

Our verse comes and reconciles them: Moshe came into the Tent of Meeting, and there he would hear the voice [of God] coming from [between the cherubs,] above the lid [of the Ark].

TORAS MENACHEM

🔥 Sparks of Chasidus 🔥

Why does the Torah write "two contradictory verses," requiring a third verse to "reconcile them" (see *Classic Questions*)? Because each verse is written in a different contextual setting, and in each case the Torah stresses different aspects of the same idea, appropriate to that particular setting.

In the case of the three verses which *Rashi* cites:

a.) The verse, "I will speak with you *from above the lid*" (*Shemos* 25:22), was said amid *God's command* to construct the Tabernacle, i.e. in a context of Divine revelation from above. Therefore the verse stresses the *source* of the voice which Moshe heard, which came from *inside* the Holy of Holies

b.) The verse, "God spoke to him *from the Tent of Meeting*" (*Vayikra* 1:1), was said on *Rosh Chodesh Nisan*, the day on which the Tabernacle had been constructed and erected, i.e. in a context of man's worship of God *from below*. Therefore, the verse stresses how God's voice emanated throughout the entire Tent of Meeting, to its very lowest part, the entrance (see *Rashi* to v. 89).

c.) Our verse (v. 89) was said twelve days later, after the Tabernacle had been fully inaugurated, dedicated and sanctified. Thus our verse is able to "reconcile" and harmonize both of the above concepts: Divine revelation from above, revealed within man's efforts below.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Naso* 5749; *ibid.* note 56)

- MAFTIR – ⁸⁷ *The total of the cattle for the burnt-offerings was twelve bulls, twelve rams, and twelve lambs in their first year with their meal-offerings.*
- *(There were) twelve young male goats for sin-offerings.*
- ⁸⁸ *The total of cattle for the peace-offerings was twenty four-oxen, sixty rams, sixty male goats, and sixty lambs in their first year.*

This was the (total) dedication offering for the Altar, (brought) after it was anointed.

🌀 DIVINE COMMUNICATION WITH MOSHE 🌀

7:89 **W**hen Moshe would come into the Tent of Meeting to speak with (God), he would hear the (same) voice (he heard at Sinai) speaking to him from between the two cherubs, above the covering which was over the Ark of Testimony. (In this fashion) He spoke to him.

THE HAFTARAH FOR NASO IS ON PAGE 296.

— דשׁוׁי —

הקול הבא מעל הכפרת: מבין שני הכרובים. הקול יולא מן השמים לבין שני הכרובים ומשם ילח לאהל מועד: מדבר. כמו מתדבר, כבודו של מעלה לומר כן מדבר זינו לבין עמו, ומשם שומע מאליו: וידבר אליו. למעט את אהרן מן הדברות: וישמע את הקול. יכול קול נמוך, תלמוד לומר את הקול, הוא הקול שדבר עמו צפוני⁵, וכשמגיע לפתח היה נפסק, ולא היה יולא חוץ לאהל: חסלת פרשת נשא

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● After stating, “he would hear the voice speaking to him,” why does the verse repeat, “He spoke to him”? (v. 89)

RASHI: The words “He spoke to him” [i.e. to Moshe] indicate that Aharon was excluded from [hearing] the Divine voice.

[From the words,] “He would hear the voice,” one might think it was a soft voice. Therefore, scripture stresses that it was “the voice,” the same voice which spoke with him at Sinai. But when it reached the entrance, it stopped and did not go outside the Tent [of Meeting].

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 THE DIVINE COMMUNICATION (v. 89)

Rashi’s comments to verse 89 prompt the following questions:

a.) Why does *Rashi* explain the words, “He spoke to Him,” before explaining the words, “He would hear the voice”—the reverse order of how they appear in the verse itself?

b.) Why might we think that when God spoke “it was a soft voice”? Surely we would expect God to speak in, at the very least, a regular voice?

c.) Why does *Rashi* need to inform us that “when it reached the entrance, it stopped and did not go outside the tent”?

THE EXPLANATION

After *Rashi* has explained that the apparently superfluous words, “He spoke to him,” indicate that “Aharon was excluded from [hearing] the Divine voice,” the reader might be left with the impression that Aharon did not hear God’s voice because it was simply too soft. In fact, the reader may already suspect that Moshe’s sense of hearing was superior to that of Aharon, having read in *Parshas Shemos* that Moshe possessed

exceptional strength (for he rescued Yisro’s daughters from many shepherds—*Shemos* 2:17), so perhaps all of Moshe’s faculties were of a superior nature too. Thus, it is feasible that God managed to speak to Moshe and not Aharon, even though both were in the Tent of Meeting, because Moshe’s hearing was better and God spoke in a soft voice.

To counteract this notion *Rashi* writes, “One might think it was a soft voice. Therefore, scripture stresses that it was ‘the voice,’ the same voice which spoke with him at Sinai.” From this it follows that Aharon failed to hear the voice for miraculous, rather than natural reasons.

However, this begs the question: If God made the voice both, a.) loud and, b.) incapable of being heard by any person other than Moshe, then why was it necessary for Moshe to enter the Tent of Meeting in order to hear the voice? Surely “the voice which spoke with him at Sinai” would have been loud enough to be heard outside the Tent too?

To answer this question *Rashi* informs the reader that a further miracle occurred: “But when it reached the entrance, it stopped and did not go outside the Tent [of Meeting].”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 13, pp. 20-2)



Parshas Naso contains 7 positive *mitzvos* & 11 prohibitions

1. To send a ritually impure person outside the camp of the Divine Presence [5:2].
2. A ritually impure person should not enter the Temple [5:3].
3. To confess over a sin [5:6].
4. To observe the laws of a *sotah* (woman suspected of infidelity) [5:12].
5. Not to put oil in the offering of a *sotah* [5:15].
6. Not to put frankincense in the offering of a *sotah* [5:15].
7. A nazirite should not partake of wine or any strong drink derived from grapes [6:3].
8. A nazirite should not eat fresh grapes [6:3].
9. A nazirite should not eat raisins [6:3].
10. A nazirite should not eat grape-seeds [6:4].
11. A nazirite should not eat grape-skins [6:4].
12. A nazirite should not shave his hair [6:5].
13. To allow a nazirite's hair to grow long [6:5].
14. A nazirite should not enter the tent of a dead person [6:6].
15. A nazirite should not become ritually impure through a corpse or through any other source of ritual impurity [6:7].
16. To shave a nazirite's hair and to bring his offerings (when he completes his nazirite vow, or if he becomes ritually impure) [6:13].
17. To make the Priestly Blessing [6:23].
18. To carry the Holy Ark on the shoulders [7:9].



parshas Beha'aloscha

פרשת בהעלותך

🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

We are taught in *Proverbs*, “Man’s soul is a lamp of God” (*Proverbs* 20:27), that the soul is a part of and is connected with God. However, in order to enjoy the great benefits of it, the correct “switch” must be found or the proper “button” pushed.

It was the *Ba'al Shem Tov's* mission to explain and proclaim that every Jew without exception is connected with God, and that every one of them has a switch inside, which, if searched for, will be found.

And this message is conveyed by the opening of our *Parshah*, where God instructs Aharon to “fire up (*beha'aloscha*) the lamps.” Firing up the lamps represents finding the “switch” or “button” within every Jew, igniting the fiery love of God which lies dormant in the soul. And Aharon the priest represents the Jewish leaders of every generation who are empowered by God with special talents to find the “switch” in every Jew and help him become connected with his own internal spiritual “powerhouse.”

While it was the High Priest who would traditionally light the Menorah, the *mitzvah* would nevertheless be valid if done by a non-priest (*Yoma* 24b). From this we learn that the task of igniting the “lamp” within others cannot be left to Jewish leaders alone. *Every person* (even a “non-priest”) has a responsibility to try to find the “switch” in the soul of his fellow Jew. We can never know what will make the connection; perhaps just one word will open up the well or inner fountain of his soul.

How long must we continue to “ignite” another’s soul, once the person appears already to be inspired?

This we can also learn from Aharon’s kindling of the lamps, which had to be “until the flame rises by itself” (*Rashi* to v. 2). In other words, we should continue to inspire every Jew, until each individual becomes a *self-sufficient* “power house” of enthusiasm for all matters of Jewish life and observance.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 2, p. 316ff.)

א ומליל יי עם משה למימר: ב מלל עם אהרן ותימר לה בארלקותך ית בוציניא לקבל אפי מנתא יהון מנתרין שבעה בוציניא: ג ועבר בן אהרן לקבל אפי מנתא אדלק בוציניא במא די פקיד יי ית משה: ד ודין עובר מנתא נגידא דהב עד שידה עד שושנה נגידא היא פחוא די אחוי יי ית משה בן עבר ית מנתא: ה ומליל יי עם

ח א וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: ב דבר אל-אהרן ואמרת אליו בהעלותך את-הנרות אל-מול פני המנורה ואירו שבעת הנרות: ג ויעש בן אהרן אל-מול פני המנורה העלה נרותיה באשר צנה יהוה את-משה: ד וזה מעשה המנרה מקשה זהב עדי-ירכה עד-פרחה מקשה הוא כמראה אשר הראה יהוה את-משה בן עשה את-המנרה: פ ה וידבר יהוה אל-משה

דש"י

לכבוד שזמו של אהרן שלא שינה: (ד) וזה מעשה המנורה. שהראה הקב"ה באלצבע לפי שנתקשה זה, לכך נאמר וזה? מקשה. צדי"ן צלע"ז לשון דא לדא נקש". עשת של ככר זהב היתה, ומקיש צקורנס וחוקך ככשיל לפשט אצריה כחוקון, ולא נעשית אצרים אצרים ע"י חצור: עד ירכה עד פרחא. ירכה היא השידה שעל הרגלים, חלול כדרך מנורות כסף שלפני השרים: עד ירכה עד פרחא. כלומר גופה של מנורה כולה וכל התלוי זה: עד ירכה. שהוא אצר גדול: עד פרחא. שהוא מעשה דק שזה הכל מקשה. ודרך עד לשמש בלשון זה, כמו מגדיש ועד קמה ועד כרס זית: במראה אשר הראה וגו'. כתבנית אשר הראה זה, כמו שנאמר וראה ועשה כתבניתם וגו': בן עשה את המנורה. מי שעשה. ומדעש אגדה ע"י

(3) בהעלתך. למה נסמכה פרשת המנורה לפרשת הנשיאים, לפי שכשראה אהרן חנוכת הנשיאים חלשה אז דעתו כשלא היה עמהם בחנוכה, לא הוא ולא שצטו, אמר לו הקב"ה חייך, שגך גדולה משלכם, שאתה מדליק ומטיב את הנרות: בהעלתך. על שם שהלצה עולה, כחוב כהדלקתן לשון עליה, שצריך להדליק עד שחבא שלהבת עולה מאליה! ועוד דרשו רבותינו, מכאן שמעלה היתה לפני המנורה שעליה הכהן עומד ומטיב: אל מול פני המנורה. אל מול נר אמלטי שאינו צקנים אלא צגוף של מנורה: יאירו שבעת הנרות. ששה שעל ששת הקנים, שלשה המזרחיים פונים למול האמלטי, הפתילות שבהן, וכן שלשה המערביים ראשי הפתילות למול האמלטי. ולמה, כדי שלא יאמרו לאורה הוא צריך? (ג) ויעש בן אהרן.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why is the Menorah mentioned here? (v. 2ff.)

RASHI: Why is the section dealing with the Menorah placed next to the section dealing with [the dedication offerings of] the leaders?

Because when Aharon saw the dedication [offerings] of the leaders (above, ch. 7), he was dismayed that he was not included with them in the dedication, neither he nor his tribe. God said to him, "By your life! Your [act of dedication*] is greater than theirs, for you will light and prepare the lamps [thereby dedicating them*]."

RAMBAN: Rashi's solution is difficult for me to fathom. For why should Aharon be consoled through the lighting of the Menorah, which was *not* the exclusive right of the High Priest? Surely, Aharon should have been consoled by a service which he alone was entitled to perform, such as the daily offering of incense, the High-Priest's meal-offering or the service of *Yom Kippur*?

Rather, it appears to me that the section regarding the Menorah follows the section concerning the dedication of the Altar, as a hint to the rededication of the Menorah that occurred in the times of the second Temple, which we commemorate on *Chanukah*.

● The construction of the Menorah was already detailed in *Parshas Terumah*. Why is it repeated here (v. 4)?

RAMBAN: The Torah does not repeat all the details of the Menorah's construction here. Rather, only one requirement is repeated, that it must be "hammered work" from a single piece of metal (v. 4). The purpose of the repetition is to teach us that this law, that the Menorah must be made from a single piece of metal, is eternally binding and was not limited to the first Menorah that was made.

● Why does verse 4 stress: "This is the construction method of the Menorah"?

RASHI: He had difficulty with [constructing] it, so God showed [an image of it to] him, with His finger. That is why it says, "This is...."

● "He constructed the Menorah..." (v. 4). Whom does this refer to?

RASHI: To the person who constructed it.

The *Midrash* teaches that God caused it to construct itself.

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 THE KINDLING OF THE MENORAH (v. 1-4)

Rashi's comments to verses 1-4 prompt the following questions:

- How would Rashi respond to the criticisms of **Ramban**, in verse 1?
- Ramban explains why the Torah repeats details of the construction of the Menorah in verse 4, being that this information was already given in *Parshas Terumah* (25:31-40). However, his solution is not hinted to at all

by Rashi. What is Rashi's own understanding of this matter and why does he not offer an explanation?

- In his commentary to verse 4, Rashi cites the *Midrashic* teaching that God caused the Menorah to construct itself. Why did Rashi deem it necessary to alert the reader to this *Midrash*, and how is this consistent with Rashi's stated goal, to explain scripture *at the literal level*?

🕯️ KINDLING OF THE MENORAH 🕯️

8 **G**od spoke to Moshe, saying: ² Speak to Aharon and say to him: “When you fire up the lamps (of the Menorah, the wicks should be angled so that) the seven lamps cast their light towards the center (lamp) of the Menorah.” ³ Aharon did so (precisely). He fired up the lamps (so their wicks were) towards the center (lamp) of the menorah, as God had commanded Moshe.

⁴ This is the construction method of the Menorah: (It is) a hammered work of gold (from a single piece of metal). It is a (single) hammered piece from its (large) base to its (delicate) flowers.

He constructed the Menorah resembling the vision that God had shown Moshe (on Mount Sinai).

TORAS MENACHEM

THE EXPLANATION

In his commentary to verse 2, *Rashi* explains that the section dealing with the Menorah was recorded here after the dedication offerings (above, ch. 7) as an allusion to God’s consolation to Aharon, who was “dismayed that he did not join them in the dedication.” God consoled Aharon that through lighting the Menorah he would dedicate it for its holy use, and in this way he too would participate in the dedication activities.*

In addition to consoling Aharon that he would *participate* in dedicating part of the Tabernacle, God also stressed that Aharon’s dedication was *greater* than that of the other tribes, “By your life! Your [act of dedication] is greater than theirs, for you will light and prepare the lamps.”

But why was it *greater* to dedicate the Menorah than the Altar?

To answer this question, the Torah continues, in verse 4, to stress the *unique quality* of the Menorah, explaining why its dedication would be a greater honor. The verse states, “This is the construction method of the Menorah,” on which *Rashi* explains, “He had difficulty with [constructing] it, so God showed [an image of it to] him, with His finger. That is why it says, ‘This is...’” In other words, we see here the unique quality of the Menorah, that of all the vessels of the Tabernacle, the Menorah *alone* was shown to Moshe as a direct vision from God.**

In order to stress further the uniqueness of the Menorah (thus explaining why its dedication would have fully consoled Aharon), *Rashi* adds that the words, “He constructed the Menorah,” refer to the *Midrashic* teaching that “God caused it to construct itself.” For this brings to light how privileged Aharon would have felt to dedicate the only item in the Tabernacle that was actually made by God.

However, since this appears to be a non-literal interpretation, *Rashi* first explains that the Menorah did not simply appear out of nowhere, without any human involvement, and that there was “a person who constructed it.” Nevertheless, the *Midrash* clarifies that this person’s involvement was partial, since following only a small human effort, “God caused it to construct itself.” The reader will, of course, recall that this refers to *Rashi*’s earlier statement that the Menorah was made by casting a piece of gold into the fire, upon which God caused it to construct itself (*Rashi* to *Shemos* 25:31).

Why, though, does *Rashi* not inform us here precisely who it was who threw the gold into the fire—Moshe, or perhaps, Betzalel—being that that

person is referred to by the verse, “He constructed the Menorah”? Why does *Rashi* avoid this issue and write, rather enigmatically, that this refers to “the person” who constructed it?

The answer, simply, is that the current passage is coming to stress the honor that Aharon received in dedicating the Menorah, as explained above. Therefore, it would be inappropriate here for the Torah to stress the privilege that Moshe, or perhaps Betzalel, had in “constructing” the Menorah “together” with God, for this would detract from the Torah’s intention here, to honor Aharon. *Rashi* thus alerts us to this fact by writing that the Menorah was made by “the person who constructed it,” indicating that the Torah *intentionally* omitted any reference to the identity of this person, so as to accord the greatest honor to Aharon in the current passage.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 38, p. 33ff.)

🕯️ Sparks of Chasidus 🕯️

“AHARON DID SO” (v. 3)

On these words, *Rashi* writes, “This tells the praise of Aharon, that he did not deviate [from God’s command].”

But why might one think that Aharon would “deviate” from God’s commands about the lighting of the Menorah?

The answer lies in *Rashi*’s comment to verse 4, that God caused the Menorah to “construct itself,” after a piece of gold was cast into the fire (see *Rashi* to *Shemos* 25:31). Being that the Menorah was manufactured by Heaven with minimal human effort, one might come to the conclusion that the details of how it was lit by a human being were also of minimal importance, for this was merely to cause the Menorah to elicit its *Heavenly* light.

Nevertheless, Aharon “did not deviate from God’s command” even when, logically speaking, the details appeared to be irrelevant, and therefore the Torah “tells the praise of Aharon.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 38, pp. 38-9)

*Aharon was not aware that his lighting of the Menorah was considered to be its dedication, because Moshe had *already* lit the Menorah prior to Aharon on the first of Nisan (*Shemos* 40:4 and *Rashi* to v. 29 *ibid.*). God informed Aharon here that despite the fact that Aharon was not lighting the Menorah for the first time, his lighting would nevertheless achieve its dedication—no different to the dedication offerings of the twelve tribes, *all* of whom were considered to have dedicated the Altar, even though they were not the first sacrifices offered on the Altar (see *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, pp. 95-6).

**Although this vision was in response to a problem (“He had a difficulty with [constructing] it”), this too points to the greatness of the Menorah, that it was the only piece of apparatus which was too complicated for a person to fathom how it could be constructed. As the verse continues to explain, this was because of the requirement for it to be “a hammered work,” i.e. hammered from a single piece of metal. This also explains why the Torah only repeats this one law here, that the Menorah must be from one piece of hammered metal (v. 4), since it was due to this requirement that the difficulty in constructing the Menorah arose, necessitating God to perform the construction.

מֹשֶׁה לְמִימְרֵי: וְקָרַב יָת לְאֹי מִגּוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְתַדְבִּי יִתְהוּן: וְיִדְבְּרִין תַּעֲבֹד לְהוֹן לְדַבּוּאֵיהוֹן
אֲדִי עֲלִיהוֹן מִיָּא דְחַטָּאתָא וְיַעֲבְרוּן מִסְפֵּר עַל
כָּל בְּשָׂרְהוֹן וְיִתְרוֹן לְבִנְשִׂיהוֹן וְיִדְבְּוּן:
ה וְיִסְבּוּן תוֹר בַּר תוֹרִי וּמִנְחַתָּה סְלֵתָא
דְּפִילָא בְּמִשְׁחָ וְתוֹר תִּגְנִן בַּר תוֹרִי תִסַּב
לְחַטָּאתָא: ט וְתִקְרַב יָת לְאֹי קָדָם מִשְׁבֹּן
זְמָנָא וְתִכְנַשׁ יָת כָּל כְּנִשְׁתָּא דְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
י וְתִקְרַב יָת לְאֹי קָדָם יְיָ וְיִסְמְכוּן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
יָת יְדִיהוֹן עַל לְאֹי: יא וְיִרִים אֲהֲרֹן יָת לְאֹי

לְאָמַר: וְקָח אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם מִתּוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְטַהַרְתָּ אֹתָם:
וְזָכַרְתָּ עֲשֵׂה לָהֶם לְמִתְהַרְם הַזֶּה עֲלֵיהֶם מִי חַטָּאת וְהַעֲבִירוּ
תְעַר עַל־כָּל־בְּשָׂרָם וּכְבָסוּ בַגְדֵיהֶם וְהִטְהָרוּ: ח וְלָקְחוּ פָּר
בֶּן־בָּקָר וּמִנְחָתוֹ סֵלֶת בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן וּפְר־שֶׁנִּי בֶּן־בָּקָר תִּקַּח
לְחַטָּאת: ט וְהִקְרַבְתָּ אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם לְפָנַי אֲהֵל מוֹעֵד וְהִקְהַלְתָּ
אֶת־כָּל־עֵדֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: י וְהִקְרַבְתָּ אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם לְפָנַי יְהוָה
וּסְמְכוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־יְדֵיהֶם עַל־הַלְוִיִּם: יא וְהִנִּיף אֲהֲרֹן

כ"ש"י

שעב היתה, ששעיר היה להם להציא לחטאת עצודת אלילים עם פר העולה:
(ט) והקהלת את כל עדת. לפי שהלויים נתנים קרבן כפרה תחתיהם,
יצאו ויעמדו על קרבנם ויסמכו את ידיהם עליהם: (יא) והניף אהרן
את הלויים תנופה. כדרך שאשם מלורע טעון תנופה חוץ. שלש תנופות
נאמרו צפרשה זו, הראשונה לבני קהת, לכך נאמר צם והיו לעצוד את
עצודת ה', לפי שעצודת קדש הקדשים עליהם הארון והשלחן וגו'. השנייה
לבני גרשון, לכך נאמר צם תנופה לה', שאף עליהם היתה עצודת הקודש
יריעות וקרשים¹⁰ הנראות צבית קדש הקדשים, והשלישית לבני מררי¹¹:

הקצ"ה נעשית מאליה: (ו) קח את הלויים. קחם צדצרים, אשריכם שתזכו
להיות שמים למקום: (ז) הזה עליהם מי חטאת. של אפר הפרה מפני
טמאי מתים שבהם: והעבירו תער. מלאתי צדצרי רבי משה הדרשן, לפי
שנתנו כפרה על הצבורות שעזדו עצודת אלילים והיא קרויה זכחי מתים,²
והמלורע קרוי מת³, הזקיקס תגלחת כמלורעים: (ח) ולקחו פר בן בקר.
והוא עולה, כמו שנאמר ועשה את האחד עולה⁴, והוא קרבן לצוד צעודת
אלילים: ופר שני. מה תלמוד לומר שני, לומר לך, מה עולה לא נאכלת, אף
חטאת לא נאכלת. ובזו יש סמך לדבריו צתורת כהנים⁶. ואומר אני שהוראת

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the inauguration of the Levites (v. 5ff.) follow the kindling of the Menorah (v. 1-4)?

MIDRASH: We find that twelve tribes offered sacrifices to dedicate the Altar (7:10ff), but that the tribe of Levi offered nothing at all. So they were pained, and they said, "Why have we been excluded from bringing offerings to dedicate the Altar?"

We can understand this by way of the following analogy. There was once a King who made a banquet, and he invited different groups of people. There was one person that he loved much more than the others, but the King did not invite him with the others. The person was pained, and he said, "Perhaps I have no place in the King's heart at all, for he did not invite me to even one of these feasts."

After the days of feasting were over, the King called his beloved one and said to him, "I made a feast for all the people of my country. Now I am making a feast for you alone. Why? Because you are my beloved!"

Likewise with God, the King of Kings, we find that the twelve tribes offered sacrifices to dedicate the Altar, and God accepted them all—as the verse states, "Take (the gifts) from them!" (7:5)—but the tribe of Levi did not offer. After the dedication of the Altar was over, God said to Aharon and his sons, "All the tribes made a dedication, but your tribe did not!" Therefore, the Torah continues, "Speak to Aharon and say to him: 'When you fire up the lamps...'" (v. 1-2), and afterwards, "Persuade the Levites..." (v. 6), [i.e. this was the exclusive "feast" for the tribe of Levi] (Bamidbar Rabah 15:3).

TORAS MENACHEM

🕯️ INAUGURATION OF THE LEVITES (v. 5ff)

The **Midrash** explains that the passage describing the inauguration of the Levites was recorded here as a form of consolation to the tribe of Levi for not being included in the dedication of the Tabernacle. For just as we find that the previous passage, about kindling the Menorah, was a consolation to Aharon for not being included in the dedication (see *Rashi* to v. 1, cited in *Classic Questions* above), likewise, this passage was included immediately afterwards to console the Levites.

Rashi, however, makes no mention of this interpretation. We can therefore presume that, at the literal level, *Rashi* understood that the Levites were *not* upset at being excluded from the dedication, in contrast to the *Midrash* which states explicitly, "they were pained."

On the other hand, *Rashi* maintained that Aharon *himself* was "dismayed," both for himself and for his tribe: "When Aharon saw the dedication [offerings] of the leaders, he was dismayed that he was not included with them in the dedication, *neither he nor his tribe*" (*Rashi*, v. 2).

So what is the explanation according to *Rashi* why the tribe of Levi in general was *not* upset at being excluded from the dedication of the Tabernacle, and yet Aharon *was* upset that "neither he nor his tribe" were included?

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi deemed it to be understood, even to a small child, why the tribe of Levi was excluded from the dedication of the Tabernacle and the Altar,

1 מדרש אגדה 2 תהלים קו, כז 3 במדבר יב, יב 4 פסוק יב 5 במדבר טו, כד 6 תו"כ ויקרא חובה ג, ד 7 מדרש אגדה 8 ויקרא יד, יב. מדרש אגדה 9 פסוק יג 10 לכאורה צ"ל וקדשים, דאלו קדשים ביד משא בני מררי. וראה "שם אפרים" לפרש"י כאן שקו"ט ע"ד הגירסא הנכונה בפרש"י. 11 מדרש אגדה

🕎 INAUGURATION OF THE LEVITES 🕎

8:5 **G**od spoke to Moshe, saying: ⁶ “Persuade the Levites (by saying to them how fortunate they are to have been chosen as God’s attendants) from among (all) the children of Israel.”
 Then you should purify them (from the ritual impurity which comes through contact with the dead). ⁷ This is what you should do to them to purify them:

- Sprinkle them with the purifying water (of the ashes of the red heifer), pass a razor over their entire body and they should wash their clothes. Then they will be purified.

(They should then be inaugurated as follows):

- ⁸ They should take a young bull (as a burnt-offering, to atone for the communal idol-worship of the Golden Calf in which the Levites did not participate), with its (accompanying) meal offering of fine flour mixed with oil.
- Take a second (offering to atone for the same sin), a young bull as a sin-offering.
- ⁹ Bring the Levites in front of the Tent of Meeting and gather the entire congregation of the children of Israel.
- ¹⁰ You should bring the Levites before God, and the children of Israel should lay their hands upon the Levites (because the Levites are like an “offering” of atonement for the entire community).

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which is why he did not clarify the matter. For being that the tribe of Levi is itself “the King’s legion” (*Rashi* to *Bamidbar* 1:49), bringing presents (of wagons and sacrifices) to the Tabernacle in order to dedicate it would make no sense, for this would be as if the King were bringing presents to himself.

In other words, the tribe of Levi was appointed to the duties of guarding and working in the Tabernacle, so the presents that were brought by the other tribes for the sake of the Tabernacle were, in fact, donations to be used by the tribe of Levi itself.

Rashi presumed that even a five-year old child who is beginning to study the *Chumash* for the first time would understand this matter himself, for just two years earlier the child would have celebrated his hair-cutting ceremony (*upshemish*), where he sat in his place surrounded by many guests. From this experience the child will have gathered that the one who is celebrating an event does not himself participate, by giving presents, etc. Likewise he will understand that since the dedication of the Tabernacle was a celebration for the tribe of Levi, it is obvious that they themselves need not bring presents.

🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

“THEN THEY SHOULD BE PURIFIED...” (v. 7)

While a priest may not become ritually impure through contact with the dead at any time, a Levite is only required to be ritually pure in order to perform Tabernacle service, as we read in the current passage (v. 6-7). At other times, however, he may become ritually impure.

According to Chasidic thought, each person has both a “priest” and a “Levite” within him. The “priest” is that part of the soul that always remains attached to God and can never become impure; the “Levite” within a person is that part of him that can become impure, and this impurity must be eliminated in order to serve God properly.

In other words, the “priest” represents the approach of *is’hapcha* (transformation), where a person’s undesirable traits have been totally transformed to good, and are no longer susceptible to “impurity.” The “Levite,” on the other hand, represents *iskafya* (subordination), where undesirable traits are still present in a person’s character, but they are constantly being suppressed.

Aharon's becoming “dismayed” (see *Rashi* to v. 1 and *Toras Menachem* here) at his exclusion from the dedication, and his yearning to participate, resembles the process of *teshuvah*. Thus, while Aharon himself was a priest, this process arose from the “Levite” within him, for it is the aspect of “Levite” within every Jew that enables him to suppress and correct any imperfection.

And this is the inner reason why God’s response (“Your [act of dedication] is greater than theirs, for you will light and prepare the lamps”) was a consolation to both the priests and the Levites. For even though it was Aharon (the priest) alone who would prepare and light the Menorah, God was nevertheless consoling the “Levite” within Aharon which had yearned to perfect that which was missing. So, in effect, God was consoling the spiritual paths of both the priests and the Levites.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, pp. 319-20)

אֲרָמָא קָדָם יי מן בני ישראל ויהוון למפלח
 ית פֿלחנא דיי יב ולואי יסמכו ית ידהוון על
 ריש תוריא ועבד ית חד תטאתא וית חד
 עלתא קדם יי לכפרא על לואי יי ותקם ית
 לואי קדם אהרן וקדם בננהי ותקם יתהוון
 אֲרָמָא קָדָם יי יד ותפרש ית לואי מגו בני
 ישראל ויהוון משמשין קדמי לואי יי ובתר
 כן יעלו לואי למפלח ית משפן זמנא ותדכי
 יתהוון ותקם יתהוון אֲרָמָא: יי ארי אפרשא
 מפרשין אנני לי מגו בני ישראל חלף פתח
 כל ולדא בוקרא כלא מבני ישראל קרבית
 יתהוון קדמי: יי ארי דילי כל בוקרא בבני
 ישראל באנשא ובבעירא ביומא דקמלית כל
 בוקרא בארעא דמצרים אקדשית יתהוון
 קדמי יי וקרבית ית לואי חלף כל בוקרא
 בבני ישראל: יי ויהבית ית לואי מסירין
 לאהרן ולבננהי מגו בני ישראל למפלח ית
 פלחן בני ישראל במשפן זמנא ולכפרא על
 בני ישראל ולא יהי בבני ישראל מותא
 במקרב בני ישראל לקודשא: כ ועבד משה
 ואהרן וכל פנשתא דבני ישראל ללואי ככל
 די פקיד יי ית משה ללואי כן עבדו להוון בני
 ישראל: כא ואדכיו לואי ותורו לבושיהוון
 וארם אהרן יתהוון אֲרָמָא קָדָם יי וכפר
 עליהוון אהרן לדכואיהוון: כב ובתר כן עלו
 לואי למפלח ית פלחנהוון במשפן זמנא קדם
 אהרן וקדם בננהי פמא די פקיד יי ית משה
 על לואי כן עבדו להוון: כג ומליל יי עם
 משה למימר: כד דא די ללואי מבר קמש

אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם תִּנּוּפֶה לְפָנַי יְהוָה מֵאֵת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהָיוּ לְעֹבְדֵי
 אֶת־עֲבֹדַת יְהוָה: יב וְהַלְוִיִּם יִסְמְכוּ אֶת־יְדֵיהֶם עַל רֹאשׁ
 הַפָּרִים וְעָשָׂה אֶת־הָאֶחָד חֹטֵאת וְאֶת־הָאֶחָד עֹלָה לַיהוָה
 לְכַפֵּר עַל־הַלְוִיִּם: יג וְהַעֲמַדְתָּ אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם לְפָנַי אַהֲרֹן וּלְפָנַי
 בָּנָיו וְהִנַּפְתָּ אֹתָם תִּנּוּפֶה לַיהוָה: יד וְהִבְדַּלְתָּ אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם מִתּוֹךְ
 בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהָיוּ לִי הַלְוִיִּם: וּשְׁנַיִן טו וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן יָבֹאוּ הַלְוִיִּם
 לְעֹבֵד אֶת־אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְטַהַרְתָּ אֹתָם וְהִנַּפְתָּ אֹתָם תִּנּוּפֶה:
 טז כִּי נִתְּנִים נִתְּנִים הִמָּה לִי מִתּוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל תַּחַת פְּטֻרַת
 כָּל־רֶחֶם בְּכוֹר כָּל מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְקַחְתִּי אֹתָם לִי: יז כִּי לִי
 כָּל־בְּכוֹר בְּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאֲדָם וּבַבְּהֵמָה בְּיוֹם הַפִּתִּי כָל־בְּכוֹר
 בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם הִקְדַּשְׁתִּי אֹתָם לִי: יח וְאָקַח אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם תַּחַת
 כָּל־בְּכוֹר בְּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: יט וְאִתְּנָה אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם נִתְּנִים | לְאַהֲרֹן
 וּלְבָנָיו מִתּוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעֹבֵד אֶת־עֲבֹדַת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל
 בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וּלְכַפֵּר עַל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא יִהְיֶה בְּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 נֶגֶף בְּגִשְׁת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־הַקֹּדֶשׁ: כ וַיַּעַשׂ מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן וְכָל־
 עֲדַת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל לְלוִיִּם כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה
 לְלוִיִּם כִּן־עָשׂוּ לָהֶם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: כא וַיִּתְחַטְּאוּ הַלְוִיִּם וַיִּכְבְּסוּ
 בְּגִדֵיהֶם וַיִּנָּף אַהֲרֹן אֹתָם תִּנּוּפֶה לְפָנַי יְהוָה וַיְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיהֶם
 אַהֲרֹן לְטַהֲרָם: כב וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן בָּאוּ הַלְוִיִּם לְעֹבֵד אֶת־עֲבֹדַתָּם
 בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לְפָנַי אַהֲרֹן וּלְפָנַי בָּנָיו בְּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה
 אֶת־מֹשֶׁה עַל־הַלְוִיִּם כִּן עָשׂוּ לָהֶם: ס כג וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה
 אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: כד זֹאת אֲשֶׁר לְלוִיִּם מִבֶּן חָמֵשׁ וְעֶשְׂרִים

כש"י

ראיתי צבראשית רבא: ולא יהיה בבני ישראל נגף. שלא יטרכו לגשת
 אל הקדש, שאם יגשו יהיה נגף: (כ) ויעש משה ואהרן וכל עדת וגו'.
 משה העמידן ואהרן הניפס וישראל סמכו את ידיהם: (כג) כאשר צוה
 ה' וגו' כן עשו. להגיד שצח העושין והנעשה צח, שאחד מהן לא טכז:
 (כד) זאת אשר ללוויים. שנים פוסלים צח, ואין המומים פוסלים צח:

(טז) נתנים נתנים. נתונים למשא נתונים לשיר! פטרת. פתיחת: (יז) כי
 לי כל בכור. שלי היו בצכורות צקו דקין, שכגתי עליהם צין צכורי
 מלרים ולקחתי אותם לי עד שטעו צעגל, ועכשיו ולקחתי את הלויים?
 (יט) ואתנה וגו'. חמשה פעמים נאמר בני ישראל צמקרא זה, להודיע
 חזתן שנקפלו אזכרותיהם צמקרא אחד כמנין חמשה חומשי תורה, וכך

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AHARON'S DISMAY

Nevertheless, Aharon was upset not to have been included in the dedication, as Rashi writes in his commentary to verse 2. In order to understand why this was the case, let us first pose another question:

Rashi relays the account of Aharon's dismay, and how he was consoled with the lighting of the Menorah, to explain why "the section dealing with the Menorah was placed next to the section dealing with [the dedication offerings of] the leaders." In fact, however, these two subjects do not

- ¹¹ Aharon should wave the Levites (from the family of Kehos) as a wave-offering before God on behalf of the children of Israel, so that they may perform God's service (of carrying the holy items).
- ¹² The Levites should lay their hands on the bulls' heads. Then one should be offered as a sin-offering and one as a burnt-offering to God, to atone for the Levites.
- ¹³ You should present the Levites (from the family of Gershon) before Aharon and his sons, and wave them as a wave-offering before God (since they will carry parts of the Tabernacle).

¹⁴ (In this way) you will set apart the Levites from among the children of Israel, and the Levites will become Mine. ¹⁵ Following this, the Levites will come to serve in the Tent of Meeting.

- You should (also) purify (the family of Merari) and wave them as a wave-offering.

¹⁶ For they are dedicated to Me from among the children of Israel (to carry the Tabernacle, and dedicated (to sing in the Tabernacle). I have taken them for Myself instead of the firstborn of Israel, those who emerge first from the womb. ¹⁷ For all the firstborn among the children of Israel, (both) people and animals, (were originally chosen as) Mine on the day I killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt. (At that time) I sanctified them for Myself. ¹⁸ But (now) I took the Levites instead of all the firstborn of the children of Israel (because the firstborn worshiped the Golden Calf).

¹⁹ I have given the Levites, from among the children of Israel, as a gift to Aharon and his sons, to carry out the service in the Tent of Meeting for the children of Israel, and to atone on behalf of the children of Israel. The children of Israel will (thus not need to) approach the Sanctuary (and consequently) they will not be afflicted by a plague.”

²⁰ Moshe, Aharon, and the entire congregation of Israel did this to the Levites. The children of Israel did all that God had instructed Moshe regarding the Levites:

²¹ The Levites cleansed themselves and washed their clothes. Aharon waved them as a wave-offering before God. Aharon atoned for them (with the sin-offering) which purified them. ²² After that, the Levites came to perform their service in the Tent of Meeting, in the presence of Aharon and his sons. Whatever God had commanded Moshe regarding the Levites they (willingly) did to them.

🌀 DISQUALIFICATION OF THE LEVITES 🌀

²³ God spoke to Moshe, saying: ²⁴ This is (the rule of disqualification) for the Levites:

- He is qualified to serve in the Tent of Meeting from the age of twenty-five years and upwards.

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follow immediately from one another, as between them we find the account of how Moshe entered the Tent of Meeting to communicate with God (7:89). Why, then, did *Rashi* not address Aharon's dismay as soon as it occurred, *immediately* after the description of the dedication offerings?

It would seem therefore that Aharon's dismay was not a result of his exclusion from the dedication offerings *alone*—for, as explained above, it was quite natural for “the King's legion” to be excluded. Rather, Aharon became dismayed at being excluded from the dedication, only *after* Moshe went “into the Tent of Meeting to speak with God” (7:89), which is why *Rashi* only addresses the matter at this point.

The reason why Aharon became dismayed by Moshe's entry into the Tent of Meeting is because it then dawned on him that the Tabernacle had a further function that was *not* serviced by the Levites and priests, namely that it was the site where God taught Torah to Moshe *privately*.

Thus, while the tribe of Levi did not need to bring gifts to dedicate the Tabernacle and Altar (for they were the ones who cared for the Tabernacle and offered the sacrifices) they were not involved in this further role of the Tabernacle as a point of Divine communication, since this role was filled exclusively by Moshe.

So Aharon became dismayed,* for when the other tribes had made their offerings, they dedicated the Tabernacle for *all* its functions, including its role as a point of Divine communication; and in this latter respect, the tribe of Levi had missed out through not making their own dedications.

To dispel *this* concern of Aharon, God replied, “By your life! Your [act of dedication] is greater than theirs, for you will light and prepare the lamps [thereby dedicating them].”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 317, note 22; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Naso* 5747)

* However, Aharon was only “dismayed” personally by this matter. It was not significant enough to seriously distress or pain the entire tribe of Levi.

ועשרין שנין ולעלא ייתי לתילא תילא
 בפלתן משפן זמנא: כה ומבר חמשין שנין
 יתוב מחיל פלחנא ולא יפלח עוד: כו וישמש
 עם אהוהי במשפן זמנא למטר מטרא
 ופלחנא לא יפלח כדון תעבד ללואי
 במטרתהון: א ומליל יי עם משה במדברא
 דסיני בשתא תניתא למפקהון מארעא
 דמצרים בירחא קדמא למימר: ב ויעבדון
 בני ישראל ית פסחא בזמנה: ג בארבעת
 עשרא יומא בירחא הדון בין שמשאי
 תעבדון יתה בזמנה ככל גזרתיה וככל דחזי

שנה ומעלה יבוא לעבא צבא בעבדת אהל מועד: כה ומבן
 חמשים שנה ישוב מצבא העבדה ולא יעבד עוד: כו ושרת
 את אחיו באהל מועד לשמר משמרת ועבדה לא יעבד
 ככה תעשה ללויים במשמרתם: פ ושלישין ט א וידבר יהוה
 אל משה במדבר סיני בשנה השנית לצאתם מארץ מצרים
 בתוך הראשון לאמר: ב ויעשו בני ישראל את הפסח
 במועדו: ג בארבעה עשר יום בתוך הזה בין הערבים
 תעשו אתו במערו ככל חקתיו וככל משפטיו תעשו אתו:

כ"ה

הראשון. פרשה שזראש הספר לא נאמרה עד אייר⁵, למדת שאין סדר מוקדם ומאוחר צתורה. ולמה לא פתח בזו, מפני שהוא גנותן של ישראל⁶, שכל ארבעים שנה שהיו ישראל צמדצר לא הקריבו אלא פסח זה בצלד: (3) במועדו. אף בשצת. צמועדו אף צטומאח: (ג) ככל חקתיו. אלו מצות שצגופו⁷, שה תמים זכר צן שנה: וככל משפטיו. אלו מצות שעל גופו ממקום אחר, כגון שצעת ימים למזה ולציעור חמן. (ס"א מצות שצגופו, שה תמים

מבן חמש ועשרים. וצמקוס אחר אומר מבן שלשים שנה¹, הא כילד, מבן כ"ה צל ללמוד הלכות עבודה ולומד חמש שנים, וצן שלשים עובד, מכאן לתלמיד שלא ראה סימן יפה צמשנתו צחמש שנים, שצוז אינו רואה? (כה) ולא יעבוד עוד. עבודה משא ככתף, אצל חוזר הוא לנעילת שערים³ ולשיר ולטעון עגלות, וצוה ושרת את אחיו⁴ עם אחוהי, כתרגומו: (כו) לשמר משמרת. לחנות סביב לאהל, ולהקים ולהוריד שצעת המסעות: (ח) בחדש

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why was this passage, which was said “in the first month” (9:1) recorded after Parshas Bamidbar, which was said “on the first day of the second month” (1:1)?

RASHI: The passage at the beginning of this book was not said until Iyar [the second month]. From this you learn that the Torah does not follow a sequence of chronological order.*

Why did [the book of Bamidbar] not open with this [passage]? Because it is a disgrace to Israel that throughout the forty years the children of Israel were in the desert, they only brought this one Pesach sacrifice.

TOSFOS: The Jewish people were not obligated to bring the Pesach offering in the desert, for it is a mitzvah which only applied after entering the Land of Israel, as the verse states, “You will (only) have to keep this ritual service...when you enter the Land that God is going to give you” (Shemos 12:25; see Rashi ibid.). The fact that they did so

here was only because God made an exception to the above rule, and instructed them to bring the Pesach sacrifice that year. But what, then, was the “disgrace” for Israel in not offering the Pesach sacrifice, when they were not obligated in any case? Their disgrace was the fact that they were unable to offer the Pesach sacrifice until forty years later, due to the sin of the spies which caused them to be delayed in the desert rather than entering the Land of Israel immediately (Tosfos, Kidushin 37b, s.v. ho’il).

BARTENURA: The disgrace for the Jewish people was that they were unable to offer the Pesach sacrifice in the desert because they were uncircumcised, and the law states that an uncircumcised person may not bring the Pesach offering (Shemos 12:48). The reason why they were uncircumcised was, as the Talmud states, due to difficult climatic conditions in the desert which prevailed as a punishment for their sins. Thus, the Jewish people were unable to circumcise their children, due to the risk to life involved (Yevamos 72a).

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🕒 THE PESACH OFFERING IN THE DESERT (9:1-5)

Verse 1, which introduces the account of the Pesach offering in the desert, states that this event occurred “in the second year of their exodus from the land of Egypt, in the first month.”

Rashi clarifies that the book of Bamidbar did not open with this passage (even though it occurred chronologically before the events of Parshas Bamidbar): “Because it is a disgrace to Israel that throughout the forty

years that the children of Israel were in the desert, they only brought this one Pesach sacrifice.”

Tosfos asks: Why was it considered a disgrace that the Jewish people did not bring the Pesach offering in the desert for 40 years, when they were in fact not obligated to do so? Tosfos answers that the “disgrace” was the Jewish people’s delay in entering the Land for 40 years, due to the sin of the spies, which prevented them from offering the Pesach sacrifice.

*While Rashi has mentioned that the Torah is not in chronological order on a number of occasions in the past (Bereishis 6:3, 35:29; Shemos 4:20, 19:11, 31:18; Vayikra 8:2), this is the first instance where the Torah indicates the point explicitly, by recording dates in a non-chronological sequence. Thus, at the literal level, our verse is the source for this principle.

- ²⁵ *He is withdrawn from those qualified to work from the age of fifty, and he may serve no longer.*
- ²⁶ *(At this age) he may (position himself around) the Tent of Meeting to help his brothers guard the duty (of erecting and dismantling the Tent), but he may not perform service.*

This is (the law of how) the Levites should carry out their duties.

🕎 THE PESACH OFFERING IN THE DESERT 🕎

9
THIRD
READING

God spoke to Moshe in the Sinai Desert, in the second year of their exodus from the land of Egypt, in the first month, saying:

- ² *“The children of Israel should make the Pesach (lamb) in its appointed time, ³ on the afternoon of the fourteenth of this month.”*
- *“You should make it in its appointed time (even if this coincides with Shabbos, and even if the majority of people or the priests themselves are in a state of ritual impurity).”*
- *“Make it in accordance with all its laws (of preparation) and all its (accompanying) laws.”*

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However, it is difficult to accept that this was *Rashi's* understanding of the matter, because:

- a.) It turns out that the “disgrace” was primarily *not* the failure to offer the Pesach sacrifice, but rather, the sin of the spies itself.
- b.) In being delayed in the desert, the Jewish people were unable to perform *numerous* precepts and laws which could only be performed in the Land of Israel. So why would *Rashi* stress the “disgrace” in reference to the Pesach sacrifice *alone*?
- c.) In any case, at this time, the sin of the spies had not yet occurred and *Rashi* makes no reference to the matter here.

Bartenura argues, based on the *Talmud*, that the “disgrace” of the Jewish people was that they did not perform circumcision in the desert, and were thus unable to offer the Pesach sacrifice.

However, this does not appear to be *Rashi's* logic, since:

- a.) *Rashi* makes no reference to the issue of circumcision.
- b.) *Rashi* states explicitly that the Jewish people were not obligated to bring the Pesach sacrifice until they reached the Land of Israel (*Shemos* 12:25).
- c.) Even according to *Bartenura's* logic, it is difficult to accept that just *one year later* there was a majority of uncircumcised males which would prevent the Pesach sacrifice from being offered. For even if many male children had been born since the last Pesach sacrifice (and we accept that an uncircumcised son bars his father from eating the Pesach sacrifice—see *Mechilta, Shemos* 12:48), nevertheless:

🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

Teshuvah has the power to wipe away a person's past deeds, and transform him into a new person. This is the inner reason why the account of the Second Pesach offering (below v. 6ff.)—which represents the concept of correcting and compensating for the mistakes of the past—was recorded out of chronological order, because *teshuvah* has the power to rearrange a person's life “out of chronological order,” wiping away his past mistakes.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 23, p. 70-71)

i.) Perhaps the prohibition would not apply in this case, since the failure to circumcise was due to climatic conditions beyond the people's control.

ii.) In any case, it is extremely unlikely that the majority of men would have fathered a son in that period, especially when one considers that many were too old to have children, and many were too young (such as those who had just reached the age of *Bar Mitzvah*).

A final question: The Torah is not a history book which records *every* event that occurred to the Jewish people. So, if the Torah does not wish to stress something that is “a disgrace for Israel,” why even *allude* to the disgrace (by a change in chronological order)?

THE EXPLANATION

The previous books of *Shemos* and *Vayikra*, which discuss the Jewish people after they assumed a national identity, both begin by stressing how God cherishes the Jewish people. At the opening of the book of *Shemos*, *Rashi* explains: “Although God counted them by their names in their lifetime, He counted them again after they died, *to teach us how precious they were to Him.*” Likewise, at the beginning of the book of *Vayikra*, *Rashi* writes that the Torah uses the term “*vayikra*” because it is “*an expression of affection.*” And the book of *Bamidbar* also begins with the same emphasis, as *Rashi* writes: “*Because they are precious to Him, He counts them all the time.*”

Our passage, about the Pesach offering in the desert, also brings to light the affectionate relationship between the Jewish people and God, for we read how “*They made the Pesach offering... in accordance with everything that God had commanded Moshe. The children of Israel did so (precisely)*” (v. 5). Then, in an unprecedented display of dedication to God's commands, those that missed the opportunity to perform this *mitzvah* became upset, and complained, “*Why should we be the losers*” (v. 7), upon which the *mitzvah* of the Second Pesach offering was given.

In fact, our passage appears to bring to light the affectionate relationship between the Jewish people and God in a *superior* manner to the passage at the opening of the book of *Bamidbar*, for here we see the utter dedication of the Jewish people to God's commands beyond the requirements which God Himself set. Furthermore, in contrast to the book of *Vayikra*, which contains mainly commands *from God* to the Jewish people, the book of *Bamidbar* is predominantly a description of the Jewish people's attempts to *serve* God. So our passage, which expresses

לֹא תַעֲבֹדוּן יְתֵהּ: ד ומליל משה עם בני ישראל למעבד פסחא: ה ועבדו ית פסחא בניסן בארבעת עשרא יומא לירחא בין שמישיא במדברא דסיני ככל די פקיד יי ית משה בן עבדו בני ישראל: ו והוון גבריא די הוו מסאבין לטמי נפשא דאנשא ולא יכילו למעבד פסחא ביומא ההוא וקריבו קדם משה וקדם אהרן ביומא ההוא: ז ואמרו גבריא האנון לה אנחנא מסאבין לטמי נפשא דאנשא למא נתמנע בדיל דלא לקרבא ית קרבנא דיי בזמנה בגו בני ישראל: ח ואמר להון משה אוריכו עד דאשמע מא דאתפקד מן קדם יי על דילכון: ט ומליל יי עם משה למימר: י מלל עם בני ישראל למימר גבר גבר ארי יהי מסאב לטמי נפשא דאנשא או

ו וידבר משה אל בני ישראל לעשת הפסח: ה ויעשו את הפסח בראשון בארבעה עשר יום לחודש בין הערבים במדבר סיני ככל אשר צוה יהוה את משה בן עשו בני ישראל: ו ויהי אנשים אשר היו טמאים לנפש אדם ולא יכלו לעשת הפסח ביום ההוא ויקרבו לפני משה ולפני אהרן ביום ההוא: ז ויאמרו האנשים ההמה אליו אנחנו טמאים לנפש אדם למה נגזרע לבלתהי הקריב את קרבן יהוה במעדו בתוך בני ישראל: ח ויאמר אליהם משה עמדו ואשמעו מה יצוה יהוה לכם: פ וידבר יהוה אל משה לאמר: י דבר אל בני ישראל לאמר איש איש כי יהיה טמא לנפש או

דש"י

היה יודע, אהרן מנין לר? (ז) למה נגרע. אמר להם אין קדשים קרבים בטומאה. אמרו לו יזרק הדם עלינו צבאים טהורים ויאכל הצפר לטמאים (ס"א לטהורים). אמר להם עמדו ואשמע³, כתלמיד המובטח לשמוע מפי רבו. אשרי ילוד אשה שכך מובטח, שכל זמן שהיה רואה היה מדבר עם השכינה². וראויה היתה פרשה זו להאמר ע"י משה כשאר כל התורה כולה,

זכר בן שנה. שעל גופו, לני אש ראשו על כרעיו ועל קרצו. שחון לגופו, מלא וביעור חמץ: (ד) וידבר משה וגו'. מה תלמוד לומר, והלא כבר נאמר וידבר משה את מועדי ה', אלא כששמע פרשת מועדים מסיני, אמר להם, וחזר והזכירם שעת מעשה? (ו) לפני משה ולפני אהרן. כששייכה יושבין צבית המדרש צאו ושאלום. ולא יתכן לומר זה אחר זה, שאם משה לא

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the affection of the Jewish people in observing God's *mitzvos* would seem to be a more fitting start to the book.*

So Rashi was troubled: "Why did [the book of Bamidbar] not open with this [passage]?"

Rashi answers: "Because it is a disgrace to Israel that throughout the forty years that the children of Israel were in the desert, they only brought this one Pesach sacrifice."

In other words, while it is true that this passage highlights how the Jewish people cherished God's *mitzvos*, it also highlights a disgrace on their part. For if the complaint of just a handful of Jews, that they did not wish to "lose out" from performing God's *mitzvah* due to a technicality (that they were ritually impure), prompted God to offer them another way of observing the *mitzvah* (the Second Pesach)—then all the more so could the entire Jewish people have successfully pleaded to God throughout the forty years in the desert that they wished to observe the *mitzvah* of offering the Pesach sacrifice, and they did not wish to "lose out" due to the "technicality" that they had not yet entered the Land of Israel. (For, after all, offering the Pesach sacrifice was not *physically* dependent on being in the Land, and this stipulation could have been waived by God, if the Jewish people would only have requested it). Thus the impressive dedication to God exhibited in our passage *simultaneously* highlights the disgrace of the Jewish people in later years, when they did not show the

same degree of commitment. Therefore, this was not chosen as the opening passage of the book of *Bamidbar*.

WHERE WAS THE LEADERSHIP?

Having clarified Rashi's intention here, we appear to be left with a further question: If it is indeed a disgrace to the Jewish people that they did not beg God to allow them to offer the Pesach sacrifice in the desert every year, why did Moshe not beseech God on their behalf?

The answer is that by remaining silent, Moshe felt he was minimizing the "disgrace." For, in the final analysis, requesting the Second Pesach did not put the Jewish people in such a bad light for failing to ask for the (First) Pesach sacrifice in subsequent years, because the two cases are not entirely comparable. With the Second Pesach, the Jewish people were not asking God for a *mitzvah* in which they had no obligation *at all*, like the (First) Pesach offerings of future years. Rather, it was a lesser request of *compensating* for the missed opportunity to observe a *mitzvah* in which they were obligated.

On the other hand, if Moshe *had* requested God to give them the *mitzvah* in future years, then his efforts to minimize the disgrace to the Jewish people would have been counterproductive. For, by demonstrating that God would indeed have given the *mitzvah* if only He had been asked, Moshe would have highlighted the shortcoming of the Jewish people in failing to ask.

* And this is especially the case when one considers that we are speaking here of an *unprecedented* type of affection, which was not mentioned at the opening of any of the previous books—unlike the concept that "because they were precious to Him, He counted them often" (at the opening of the book of *Bamidbar*) which expresses the *same* type of affection as at the beginning of the book of *Shemos*, "He counted them again... to teach us how precious they were to Him."

⁴ Moshe spoke to the children of Israel (instructing them) to make the Pesach (lamb). ⁵ They made the Pesach (lamb) in the first month, on the afternoon of the fourteenth day of the month, in the Sinai Desert, in accordance with everything that God had commanded Moshe. The children of Israel did so (precisely).

🌀 THE SECOND PESACH OFFERING 🌀

9:6 **T**here were men who were ritually impure (due to contact with) a dead person, and could not make the Pesach (lamb) on that day, so they came before Moshe and before Aharon on that day. ⁷ Those men said to him, “We are ritually impure (due to contact with) a dead person. Why should we be the losers? We’ve been prevented from offering God’s sacrifice in its appointed time, with all the children of Israel!

⁸ Moshe said to them, “Wait, and I will hear what God instructs concerning you.”

⁹ God spoke to Moshe saying: ¹⁰ Speak to the children of Israel, saying:

- Any person who becomes unclean from (contact with) the dead, or is far away, either among you or in future generations, should make a Pesach (offering) for God (at a later date).

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What was Moshe’s response to the complaint, “Why should we lose out”? (v. 7)

RASHI: [Moshe] said to them, “Holy sacrifices cannot be offered in a state of ritual impurity!”

They replied, “Let priests that are ritually pure sprinkle the blood on our behalf, and then ritually impure people may eat the meat.”

He said to them, “Wait, and I will hear...” (v. 8)

SEFER HAZIKARON: The people that complained were completing their process of ritual purification on the 14th of Nisan (when the Pesach sacrifice is offered) and were to become ritually pure on the evening of the 15th (when it is eaten). So they asked Moshe if the sacrifice could be offered by the priests on their behalf during the day, and they would then be able to eat the sacrifice in the evening after becoming ritually pure. The text of *Rashi* thus contains a mistake and should read: then ritually pure people may eat the meat.”

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So, being that the “disgrace” for the Jewish people in not asking God to bring the Pesach offering was not so serious in the first place, Moshe chose to remain silent since, under the circumstances, this protected the integrity of the Jewish people to the greatest extent.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 23, p. 62ff)

🌀 THE PEOPLE’S COMPLAINT (v. 7)

Rashi’s comments to verse 7 prompt the following questions:

a.) The people who complained to Moshe clearly understood that they were prohibited from bringing the Pesach offering due to their state of ritual impurity, as they themselves declared, “We are ritually impure (due to contact with) a dead person. Why should we be the losers?” (v. 7). So why does *Rashi* write that Moshe replied to them, “Holy sacrifices cannot be offered in a state of ritual impurity!” a fact which the people themselves made clear in their question?

b.) What was the logic of the people’s suggestion, “Let priests that are ritually pure sprinkle the blood on our behalf, and then ritually impure people may eat the meat”? (The explanation of **Sefer Hazikaron**, that the people were due to become ritually pure in the evening etc., is not hinted to at all in the words of *Rashi*, or in the verse itself).

c.) Why did they stress, “Let priests that are ritually pure sprinkle the blood on our behalf”? Is it not obvious that all priests must be ritually pure in order to perform sacrificial service?

THE EXPLANATION

The Pesach lamb slaughtered in Egypt by the Jewish people is never referred to by the Torah as a קָרְבָּן (“sacrifice” or “offering”), but always

as a זֶבַח (“slaughter”). This suggests that, at the literal level of Torah interpretation, the Pesach lamb slaughtered in Egypt was not actually a sacrifice to God, comparable in any way to the *mitzvah* of offering animal sacrifices upon the Altar, but rather, a unique act of commemoration commanded by God at that time.

Later, of course, after the Jewish people entered the Land of Israel, the Pesach lamb was indeed offered as a genuine sacrifice, upon the Altar, with all the laws associated with sacrificial worship in the Temple.

What is not clear, however, is the status of the Pesach lamb slaughtered in the desert in the second year, after the exodus from Egypt (9:1-5). Was this merely a commemorative act, like the Pesach lamb which had

🌀 The Last Word 🌀

“One of the significant lessons of Pesach *Sheni* [the Second Pesach] is never to despair, even when one has not attained the spiritual heights of others. Thus, while all the people are celebrating the Passover at its proper time, and one finds himself “far away” [v. 9], or otherwise unfit to enter the Sanctuary, he is told: Do not despair; begin your way towards the Sanctuary; come closer and closer; for you have a special chance and opportunity to celebrate the Second Passover, if you try hard enough.”

(From a letter written by the Rebbe on 16 Iyar 5711)

בְּאֶרְחָא רְחִיקָא לְכוּן אוּ לְדְרִיכוּן וְיַעֲבֹד פְּסָחָא קֳדָם יְיָ יֵא בִּירְחָא תְּנִינָא בְּאַרְבַּעַת עֶשְׂרָא יוֹמָא בֵּין שְׁמִשְׁיָא וְעֵבְרוֹן יְתֵה עַל פְּסִיר וּמְרִין יִבְלָנָה: יב לֹא יִשְׁאַרוּן מִנֶּה עַד צִפְרָא וְנִרְמָא לֹא יִתְבְּרוּן בֵּה כִּכְל גְּזֵרַת פְּסָחָא וְעֵבְרוֹן יְתֵה: יג וְנִבְרָא דְהוּא דְכִי וּבְאַרְחָ לֹא הָוֵה וְיִתְמַנַּע לְמַעֲבַד פְּסָחָא וְיִשְׁתַּצִּי אֲנִשָּׂא הֵוֵהוּ מַעֲמָה אֲרִי קוֹרְבָנָא דִּי לֹא קָרִיב בְּזִמְנָה חוּבָה יִקְבַּל וְנִבְרָא הֵוֵה: יד וְאֲרִי יִתְנַיֵר עִמְכוּן גְּיוֹרָא וְיַעֲבֹד פְּסָחָא קֳדָם יְיָ כְּגֵזֵרַת פְּסָחָא וּבְדִחוּי לֵה בֵּן יַעֲבֹד קִימָא חַד יְהֵא לְכוּן וּלְגִיּוֹרָא וּלְיִצְיָבָא דְאַרְעָא: טו וּבִיּוֹמָא דְאַתְקִים ית מִשְׁבְּנָא חַפָּא עֲנָנָא ית מִשְׁבְּנָא לְמִשְׁבְּנָא דְסִדְהוּתָא וּבְרִמְשָׂא הָוֵה עַל מִשְׁבְּנָא כְּחוּז אֲשֵׁתָא עַד צִפְרָא: טז בֵּן הָוֵה תְּדִירָא עֲנָנָא חָפִי לֵה וְחוּי

בְּדֶרֶךְ רְחִיקָה לָכֵם אוּ לְדֶרֶתֵיכֶם וְעָשִׂה פֶסַח לַיהוָה: יא בְּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁנִי בְּאַרְבַּעַת עֶשְׂרֵי יוֹם בֵּין הָעֲרֵבִים יַעֲשׂוּ אֹתוֹ עַל־מִצּוֹת וּמְרִים וְאִכְלָהוּ: יב לֹא־יִשְׁאַרוּ מִמֶּנּוּ עַד־בֹּקֶר וְעַצֶּם לֹא יִשְׁבְּרוּ־בּוּ כְּכֹל־חֻקַּת הַפֶּסַח יַעֲשׂוּ אֹתוֹ: יג וְהָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־הוּא מָהוּר וּבְדֶרֶךְ לֹא־הָיָה וְחָדַל לַעֲשׂוֹת הַפֶּסַח וּנְכַרְתָּה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהִוא מֵעַמּוּיָהּ כִּי אֶקְרַב יְהוָה לֹא הִקְרִיב בְּמַעֲדוֹ חֲטָאוֹ יִשְׂאָהָ אִישׁ הַהוּא: יד וְכִי־יִגֹּר אֶתְכֶם גֹּר וְעָשִׂה פֶסַח לַיהוָה בְּחֻקַּת הַפֶּסַח וּכְמִשְׁפָּטוֹ כֵּן יַעֲשֶׂה חֻקָּה אֶחָת יְהִיָּה לָכֶם וּלְגֹר וּלְאֶזְרָח הָאֶרֶץ: טו וּבַיּוֹם הַקִּים אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן כִּסֶּה הָעֲנָן אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן לְאֶהֱל הָעֵדוּת וּבְעָרֵב יְהִיָּה עַל־הַמִּשְׁכָּן כְּמִרְאֵה־אִשׁ עַד־בֹּקֶר: טז בֵּן יְהִיָּה תָמִיד הָעֲנָן יִכְסֶּנּוּ וּמִרְאֵה־

*נקוד על ה'

כש"י

יכול כל המתגייר יעשה פסח מיד, תלמוד לומר חקב אחת וגוי¹, אלא כך משמעו, וכי יגור אחסר גר וצא עת לעשות פסח עם חזיריו כחקה וכמשפט יעשה: (טו) המשכן לאהל העדת. המשכן העשוי להיות אהל ללווחות העדות: יהיה על המשכן. כמו הווי על המשכן, וכן כל לשון הפרשה:

אלא שזכו אלו שהאמר על ידיהם, שמגלגלין זכות ע"י זכאי: (י) או בדרך רחקה. נקוד עליו, לומר לא שרחוקה ודאי, אלא שכיב חוץ לאסקופת העזרה² כל זמן שחיתה. פסח שני מלא וחמץ עמו צצית ואין שם יום טוב, ואין איסור חמץ אלא עמו זאכילתו³: (יד) וכי יגור אתכם גר ועשה פסח.

TORAS MENACHEM

preceded it the previous year, and thus not bound by the rigorous laws pertaining to sacrifices? Or was this the first instance where the Pesach lamb was being offered as a full-fledged *sacrifice*, as in future generations?

A major practical ramification between these two scenarios is whether a person who is ritually impure may slaughter and eat from the Pesach lamb. For if the Pesach lamb in the desert was a commemorative act and not a sacrificial act, then clearly it could be slaughtered and eaten by the ritually impure, as was the case in Egypt. But if this Pesach lamb was a sacrifice bound by the laws applicable in future generations, then those who were ritually impure would not be permitted to participate.

The group of ritually impure individuals who approached Moshe were of the former opinion, that this was a commemorative act and not a sacrifice, for two reasons:

a.) God had instructed that the Pesach lamb in the desert should be made in *exactly the same manner* as the Pesach lamb in Egypt had been prepared (“in accordance with all its laws (of preparation) and all its (accompanying) laws”—v. 3).

b.) The *mitzvah* of offering the Pesach lamb was only incumbent upon the Jewish people upon entering the Land of Israel (*Shemos* 12:25). Therefore, it would be logical to assume that the Pesach lamb in the desert did not share the quality of the Pesach lamb of future generations of being an actual sacrifice.

So when the ritually impure were prevented from offering the Pesach lamb in the desert, they came and complained to Moshe: “Why should we

be the losers?” (v. 7)—since this is a commemorative and not a sacrificial lamb, we should surely be allowed to offer it in a state of ritual impurity!

Thus, Moshe replied: “*Holy sacrifices* cannot be offered in a state of ritual impurity!” In other words, Moshe was saying, “You are mistaken in thinking that this is merely a commemorative act, like last year’s Pesach lamb. Now that the Tabernacle has been constructed this is indeed a holy Pesach *sacrifice*, similar to that which is to be offered in years to come.”

THE PEOPLE’S SECOND APPEAL

But the people persisted with a further argument. They reasoned that perhaps this Pesach lamb in the desert has *both* qualities: What had been added this year is that the *offering* had now become a sacrificial act, bound by the strict laws of sacrificial procedure, as Moshe had just informed them; but perhaps the commemorative nature of *eating* the sacrifice remained from the previous year. In other words, they argued that the offering and consumption of the Pesach lamb in the desert were two *independent* acts: The offering was sacrificial and thus ritually impure individuals were excluded, but the eating of the lamb was commemorative, and could be done by everybody (like eating *matzah* and *maror*).

Thus they argued, “We’ve been prevented from *offering* God’s sacrifice in its appointed time, with all the children of Israel,” but why should we not be allowed to *eat* the offering with everybody else? As *Rashi* continues to clarify: “*They replied, ‘Let priests that are ritually pure sprinkle the blood on our behalf, and then ritually impure people may eat the meat.’*”

- ¹¹ They should make it in the second month, on the fourteenth day, in the afternoon.
- They should eat it with matzah and bitter herbs.
- ¹² They should not leave over any (meat) from it until the next morning.
- They should not break any of its bones.
- They should offer it in accordance with all the laws connected with the (regular) Pesach (lamb).
- ¹³ But if a man was ritually pure and was not on a journey, yet refrained from making the Pesach (lamb), his soul will be cut off from his people, because he did not bring God's offering in its appointed time. That person will bear (the consequence of) his sin.
- ¹⁴ If a convert lives with you, and he makes a Pesach (lamb) for God, he should make it in accordance with the laws (of preparation) of the Pesach (lamb) and its (accompanying) laws.
- (When a person converts, he does not make a Pesach lamb immediately. Rather) you (both) have the same law (concerning when a Pesach lamb may be brought, both) the convert and the native-born citizen.

🕍 THE DIVINE SIGNALS TO JOURNEY AND ENCAMP 🕍

9:15
FOURTH
READING

On the day the Tabernacle was erected, the cloud covered the Tabernacle—which was a tent for (the Tablets of) Testimony—and at night, there was something that looked like fire over the Tabernacle, until morning. ¹⁶ This was always the case: The cloud covered it (by day) and there was something that looked like fire at night.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● May one possess *chametz* (leaven) during the Second Pesach?

RASHI: On the Second Pesach one may keep both *chametz* and *matzah* in the home (*Rashi* to v. 10).

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In order to clarify this matter, Moshe found it necessary to consult God. And the reply that came was that this Pesach offering was indeed a sacrifice in every respect, both in its slaughter and its eating. Nevertheless,

God granted these individuals their wish, and gave them—and all future generations—the opportunity to bring a Second Pesach offering.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, p. 68ff.)

🕍 Sparks of Chasidus 🕍

THE SECOND PESACH

The Second Pesach, which is a compensation or correction for a prior shortcoming, represents the path of *teshuvah* (repentance). *Teshuvah* is unique in two respects:

a.) Through observing the *mitzvos*, a person spiritually elevates and refines the physical world which he comes into contact with, but he is only able to elevate the *permissible* and not the *forbidden*. Through *teshuvah*, however, even a person's "intentional transgressions are transformed to merits" (*Yoma* 86b).

b.) The spiritual effect of *mitzvah* observance on a person is cumulative. It thus takes many years of persistent effort and loyal adherence for a person to elevate himself to great spiritual heights. On the other hand, *teshuvah* is an instantaneous spiritual "leap" of quantum proportions, whereby a person can undergo a complete

transformation in just one moment. As the *Talmud* states, "There are those that acquire their [portion in the next] world in many years, and there are those that acquire it in one moment" (*Avodah Zarah* 17a).

The above two qualities of *teshuvah* are seen in the differences between the Second Pesach and the First:

a.) *Chametz* represents the evil and the forbidden. Nevertheless, during the second Pesach, "one may keep both *chametz* and *matzah* in the home" (*Rashi* to v. 10), alluding to the fact that *teshuvah* can spiritually elevate a person's past forbidden acts.

b.) The first Pesach spans an entire week, suggesting a gradual spiritual ascent through the course of time. The Second Pesach however lasts just *one* day, alluding to the power of *teshuvah* to transform a person in a single instant.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 121)

אֶשָׂא בְלִילָיָא: י' וּלְפֹנִים אֶסְתַּלְקוּת עֲנָנָא
 מֵעֲלוּי מִשְׁכְּנָא וּבִתְרָן כִּן נְטֻלִין בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 וּבִאֲתָרָא דְשָׂרֵי תַמָּן עֲנָנָא תַמָּן שָׂרֵן בְּנֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל: י"ה עַל מִימְרָא דִּי נְטֻלִין בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 וְעַל מִימְרָא דִּי שָׂרֵן כִּל יוֹמֵי דִי שָׂרֵי עֲנָנָא
 עַל מִשְׁכְּנָא שָׂרֵן: י"ט וּבְאֹרְכוֹת עֲנָנָא עַל
 מִשְׁכְּנָא יוֹמִין סְגִיאוּן וַיִּטְרוּן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל ית
 מִטְרַת מִימְרָא דִּי וְלֹא נְטֻלִין: כ' וְאִית דִּי הוּהוּ
 עֲנָנָא יוֹמֵי דַמְנָן עַל מִשְׁכְּנָא עַל מִימְרָא דִּי
 שָׂרֵן וְעַל מִימְרָא דִּי נְטֻלִין: כא וְאִית דִּי הוּהוּ
 עֲנָנָא מִרְמָשָׂא עַד צִפְרָא וּמִסְתַּלַּק עֲנָנָא
 בְּצִפְרָא וְנְטֻלִין אוּ יָמָּס וְלִילֵי וּמִסְתַּלַּק עֲנָנָא
 וְנְטֻלִין: כב או תְּרִין יוֹמִין אוּ יִרְחֵא אוּ עֲרֵן
 בְּעֵדֵן בְּאֹרְכוֹת עֲנָנָא עַל מִשְׁכְּנָא לְמִשְׂרֵי
 עֲלוּהֵי שָׂרֵן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא נְטֻלִין
 וּבִאֲסַתְּלָקוּתָהּ נְטֻלִין: כג עַל מִימְרָא דִּי שָׂרֵן
 וְעַל מִימְרָא דִּי נְטֻלִין ית מִטְרַת מִימְרָא דִּי
 נְטֻרִין עַל מִימְרָא דִּי בִידָא דְמִשָּׂה: א' וּמְלִיל
 י"י עִם מִשָּׂה לְמִימְרָא: ב' עֲבַד לָךְ תַּרְתִּין
 חֲצִירֵן דְּכִסֵּף נְגִיד תַּעֲבַד יתְהוּן וַיְהוּן לָךְ
 לְעֲרֵעָא בְּנִשְׂתָּא וְלֹאֲטֻלָּא ית מִשְׂרֵיתָא:
 ג' וַיִּתְקַעוּן בְּהוּן וַיִּזְדַּמְּנוּ לְוִתְךָ כִּל בְּנִשְׂתָּא
 לְתַרַע מִשְׁכָּן וּמִנָּא: ד' וְאִם בְּחָדָא יִתְקַעוּן
 וַיִּזְדַּמְּנוּ לְוִתְךָ רַבְרַבִּיא רִישֵׁי אֲלַפִּיא
 דִּישְׂרָאֵל: ה' וַתִּתְקַעוּן יִבְבְּתָא וַיִּטְלוּן מִשְׂרֵיתָא
 דְּשָׂרֵן קְדוּמָא: ו' וַתִּתְקַעוּן יִבְבְּתָא תַנְיָנוּת
 וַיִּטְלוּן מִשְׂרֵיתָא דְּשָׂרֵן דְּרֹמָא יִבְבְּתָא יִתְקַעוּן
 לְמִטְלִיָּהוּן: ז' וּבְמִכְנֵשׁ ית קְהֵלָא תִתְקַעוּן וְלֹא
 תִיבְבוּן: ח' וּבְנֵי אֲהֵרֵן כְּהֵנִיא יִתְקַעוּן

אֶשׁ לִילָה: י' וּלְפִי הַעֲלוֹת הָעֲנָן מֵעַל הָאֹהֶל וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן יִסְעוּ
 בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבִמְקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכְּן שָׁם הָעֲנָן שָׁם יִחַנו בְּנֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל: י"ה עַל־פִּי יְהוָה יִסְעוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל־פִּי יְהוָה יִחַנו
 כָּל־יְמֵי אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכֹּן הָעֲנָן עַל־הַמִּשְׁכָּן יִחַנו: י"ט וּבְהֵאָרִיךְ הָעֲנָן
 עַל־הַמִּשְׁכָּן יָמִים רַבִּים וְשָׁמְרוּ בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־מִשְׁמֶרֶת
 יְהוָה וְלֹא יִסְעוּ: כ' וַיֵּשׁ אֲשֶׁר יְהִיֶה הָעֲנָן יָמִים מִסְפָּר עַל־
 הַמִּשְׁכָּן עַל־פִּי יְהוָה יִחַנו וְעַל־פִּי יְהוָה יִסְעוּ: כא וַיֵּשׁ אֲשֶׁר
 יְהִיֶה הָעֲנָן מֵעַרְב עַד־בֹּקֶר וְנִעְלָה הָעֲנָן בַּבֹּקֶר וַיִּסְעוּ אוּ יוֹמָם
 וְלִילָה וְנִעְלָה הָעֲנָן וַיִּסְעוּ: כב או־יָמִים או־חֲדָשׁ או־יָמִים
 בְּהֵאָרִיךְ הָעֲנָן עַל־הַמִּשְׁכָּן לְשָׁכֵן עֲלָיו יִחַנו בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא
 יִסְעוּ וּבְהֵעֲלֵתוֹ יִסְעוּ: כג עַל־פִּי יְהוָה יִחַנו וְעַל־פִּי יְהוָה יִסְעוּ
 אֶת־מִשְׁמֶרֶת יְהוָה שָׁמְרוּ עַל־פִּי יְהוָה בְּיַד־מִשָּׂה: פ'
 י' « וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר: ב' עֲשֵׂה לָךְ שְׁתֵּי חֲצוּצֹת
 כֹּסֶף מְקֻשָּׁה תַעֲשֶׂה אֹתָם וְהָיוּ לָךְ לְמִקְרָא הָעֵדָה וּלְמִסַּע
 אֶת־הַמַּחֲנֹת: ג' וְתִקְעוּן בָּהֶן וַיִּזְעַדוּ אֵלֶיךָ כָּל־הָעֵדָה אֶל־פֶּתַח
 אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד: ד' וְאִם־בְּאַחַת יִתְקַעוּ וַיִּזְעַדוּ אֵלֶיךָ הַנְּשִׂאִים
 רֵאשֵׁי אֲלֵפֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ה' וְתִקְעֶתֶם תְּרוּעָה וַיִּסְעוּ הַמַּחֲנֹת
 הַחֲנִיָּם קִדְמָה: ו' וְתִקְעֶתֶם תְּרוּעָה שֵׁנִית וַיִּסְעוּ הַמַּחֲנֹת
 הַחֲנִיָּם תִּימָנָה תְּרוּעָה יִתְקַעוּ לְמַסְעֵיהֶם: ז' וּבְהִקְהִיל אֶת־
 הַקְּהָל תִּתְקַעוּ וְלֹא תִרְעִעוּ: ח' וּבְנֵי אֲהֵרֵן הַכֹּהֲנִים יִתְקַעוּ

כ"ט

נוסעים, על פי הקצ"ה וע"פ משה ועל פי חלוצרות: מקשה. מהעשת תעשה
 צהקשת הקורנס¹⁰: (ג) ותקעו בהן. צשתיכן וכוא סימן למקרא העדה,
 שנאמר ונועדו אליך כל העדה אל פתח אהל מועד: (ד) ואם באחת יתקעו.
 הוא סימן למקרא הנשיאים, שנאמר ונועדו אליך הנשיאים. ואף הן יעידתן
 אל פתח אהל מועד. ומגזרה שוב הוא צא צספרי: (ה) ותקעתם תרועה.
 סימן מסע המחנות תקיעה תרועה ותקיעה, כך הוא נדרש צספרי מן
 המקראות היתרים: (ז) ובהקהיל את הקהל וגו'. לפי שהוא אומר והיו לך
 למקרא העדה ולמסע את המחנות¹¹, מה מקרא העדה תוקע צשני כהנים
 וצשתיכן, שנאמר ותקעו בהן וגו'¹², אף מסע המחנות צשתיכן, יכול מה מסע
 המחנות תוקע ומריע ותוקע אף מקרא העדה תוקע ומריע ותוקע, ומעשה
 אין חילוק בין מקרא העדה למסע את המחנות, תלמוד לומר וצכהקיל את
 הקהל וגו', לימד שאין תרועה למקרא העדה והוא הדין לנשיאים. הרי סימן
 לשלשם, מקרא העדה צשתיכן, ושל נשיאים צלחת, וזו וזו אין צהס תרועה,
 ומסע המחנות צשתיכן ע"י תרועה ותקיעה¹⁰: (ח) ובני אהרן יתקעו

(יז) העלות הענן. כהרגומו אסתלקות, וכן ועלה הענן! ולא יתכן לכתוב
 ולפי עלות הענן ועלה הענן, שאין זה לשון סלוק אלא צמוח ועלייה, כמו והנה
 עב קטנה ככף איש עולה מיס²: (יח) על פי ה' יסעו. שנינו צמלכת המשכן³,
 כיון שהיו ישראל נוסעים הנה עמוד הענן מתקפל ונמשך על גבי בני יהודה
 כמין קורה, תקעו והריעו ותקעו ולא היה מהלך עד שמשח אומר קומה ה'⁴,
 ונסע דגל מחנה יהודה, וז צספרי: ועל פי ה' יחנו. כיון שהיו ישראל חונים,
 עמוד הענן מתמר ועולה ונמשך על גבי בני יהודה כמין סוכה, ולא היה
 נפרש עד שמשח אומר שוצה ה' רצבות אלפי ישראל⁵, הוי אומר על פי ה'
 וציד משה⁶: (כ) ויש. כלומר ופעמים: ימים מספר. ימים מועטים: (כז) או
 ימים. שנה, כמו ימים תהיה גאולתו⁷: (צ) עשה לך. (שיכויו תוקעין לפניך
 כמלך, ויכי צישורון מלך⁸): עשה לך. משלך (עשה לך, אהה עושה ומשחמש
 צהס ולא אחר): למקרא העדה. כשתרצה לדבר עם הסנהדרין ושאר העם
 ותקראם לאסוף אליך, תקראם ע"י חלוצרות⁹ ולמסע את המחנות. צשעת
 סלוק מסעות תתקעו צהס לסימן, נמלאת אהה אומר על פי שלשה היו

1 יטווק כא 2 מלכים-א יח, מד 3 פ"ג 4 במדבר י, לה 5 שם לו 6 יטווק כג 7 יקרא כה, כט 8 דברים לג, ה 9 מלאכת המשכן פ"ג 10 ספרי 11 יטווק ב 12 יטווק ג

¹⁷ When the cloud rose up from over the Tent, the children of Israel would then travel. Wherever the cloud settled, that is where the children of Israel would encamp. ¹⁸ (Thus) the children of Israel traveled by the word of God, and they encamped by the word of God. They remained encamped so long as the cloud rested over the Tabernacle.

¹⁹ If the cloud lingered over the Tabernacle for many days, the children of Israel were careful to observe their duty to God and they did not travel. ²⁰ Sometimes, the cloud remained for (just) a few days above the Tabernacle, and they (continued) to encamp by the word of God and travel by the word of God. ²¹ And sometimes the cloud remained from night until morning, and when the cloud rose in the morning, they traveled. Or (sometimes) the cloud remained for a day and a night, and (still) when the cloud rose, they traveled. ²² Whether it was for two days, a month or a year that the cloud lingered to hover over the Tabernacle, the children of Israel would encamp and not travel. (Only) when it rose, did they travel.

²³ They encamped by the word of God, and they traveled by the word of God. They were careful to observe their duty to God, according to the word of God (transmitted) through Moshe.

🌀 THE TRUMPETS 🌀

IO God spoke to Moshe saying: ² Make two silver trumpets for yourself. Make them hammered (from one piece of metal). They should be used by you to summon the congregation and (to announce) the departure of the camps:

- ³ When a long blast is blown on both of them, the entire congregation should gather to you, at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.
- ⁴ When a long blast is blown on one of them, the leaders, the heads of Israel's thousands, should gather to you.
- ⁵ When short blasts are blown, the camps encamped to the east should travel.
- ⁶ When short blasts are blown for a second time, the camps encamped to the south should travel.
- The short blasts are blown (only) for traveling, ⁷ but when gathering the congregation, you should blow a long blast and not short blasts.
- ⁸ Aharon's descendants, the priests, are to blow the trumpets. This is an eternal law for all time.

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

"WHETHER IT WAS FOR TWO DAYS, A MONTH OR A YEAR..." (v. 22)

A person might ask: Since we are expecting Mashiach at every moment, how can we possibly immerse ourselves in the drudgery of everyday life and even make plans for the future? If we are truly excited about the coming of Mashiach, how can we be excited about serving God in the world as it is *before* Mashiach comes?

The answer to these questions can be found in the way that the Tabernacle was dismantled and erected in the desert. Often, the Jewish people would stay encamped in one place for a considerable period of time—as much as 19 years (*Rashi to Devarim 1:46*)—so the need for fully erecting the Tabernacle, with all the labor involved, was understood. But "*sometimes, the cloud remained for (just) a few days... and sometimes the cloud remained from night until morning, and when the cloud rose in the morning, they traveled*" (v. 20-21).

So what was the point of the hundreds of man-hours involved in erecting the Tabernacle, if it was to be dismantled soon afterwards, sometimes the following day?

The *Talmud* explains that since "*they encamped by the word of God, and they traveled by the word of God*" (v. 23), each encampment was not considered to be transitory in nature, because the direct Divine command to camp at that point, "*conferred it with the importance of a permanent settlement*" (*Eruvin 55b*).

Likewise, while it is true that our current work is transitory in nature, for Mashiach is about to arrive at any moment, nevertheless, since in our daily work we are following "*the word of God,*" we should view what we are doing as having the utmost importance and be enthusiastic in carrying out the tiniest detail.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayigash 5747*)

בַּחֲצוֹצְרֹתָא וַיְהוּנוּ לְכוֹן לְקוֹם עֲלֵם לְדָרִיכוֹן;
 ט וארי תעלו לְאַנְחָא קַרְבָּא פֶּאֶרְעֹכוֹן עַל
 מַעֲיָקֵי דַמַּעֲיָקֵין לְכוֹן וַתִּנְבְּוֹן בַּחֲצוֹצְרֹתָא
 וַיִּיעוֹל דּוּכְרָנִיכוֹן לְטַבָּא קָדָם יי אֱלֹהִיכוֹן
 וַתִּתְפַּרְקוּן מִסַּנְאִיכוֹן; י וביום חַדְוֹתְכוֹן
 וּבְמוֹעֲדֵיכוֹן וּבְרִישֵׁי יְרַחֲכוֹן וַתִּתְקַעוּן
 בַּחֲצוֹצְרֹתָא עַל עֲלוֹתְכוֹן וְעַל נִכְסַת קוֹדֵשִׁיכוֹן
 וַיְהוּנוּ לְכוֹן לְדוּכְרָנָא קָדָם אֱלֹהִיכוֹן אָנָּא יי
 אֱלֹהִיכוֹן; יא וְהוּהוּ בְשֵׁתָא תְּנִיתָא בִּירְחָא
 תְּנִינָא בְּעֶשְׂרֵין לִירְחָא אִסְתַּלַּק עֲנָנָא מֵעֲלוֹי
 מִשְׁבָּנָא דְסַחְדוֹתָא; יב וַנְּטַלוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 לְמַטְלֵגִיהוֹן מִמְדַּבְּרָא דְסִינֵי וּשְׂרָא עֲנָנָא
 בְּמִדְבַּרָא דְפֶאֶרְן; יג וַנְּטַלוּ בְּקַדְמִיתָא עַל
 מִימְרָא דִּי בִידָא דְמִשָּׁה; יד וַנְּטַל טַקְס
 מִשְׁרֵית בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה בְּקַדְמִיתָא לְחִילִיהוֹן וְעַל
 חִילָה נַחְשׁוֹן בַּר עַמִּינָדָב; טו וְעַל חִילָא
 דְּשִׁבְטָא דְבְנֵי יִשְׁשַׁכָּר נְתַנְאֵל בַּר צוּעֵר;
 טז וְעַל חִילָא דְשִׁבְטָא דְבְנֵי זְבוּלֹן אֱלִיאָב בַּר
 חִילוֹן; יז וּמִתְפַּרַק מִשְׁבָּנָא וַנְּטַלוּ בְּנֵי גֵרְשׁוֹן
 וּבְנֵי מֵרָרִי נְטַלֵי מִשְׁבָּנָא; יח וַנְּטַל טַקְס
 מִשְׁרֵית רְאוּבֵן לְחִילִיהוֹן וְעַל חִילָה אֱלִיצוֹר
 בַּר שְׂדִיאוֹר; יט וְעַל חִילָא דְשִׁבְטָא דְבְנֵי
 שִׁמְעוֹן שְׁלֹמִיאֵל בַּר צוּרִישְׁדֵי; כ וְעַל חִילָא
 דְּשִׁבְטָא דְבְנֵי גַד אֱלִיסָר בַּר דְּעוּאֵל;
 כא וַנְּטַלוּ בְּנֵי קָהַת נְטַלֵי מִקְדָּשָׁא וּמִקִּימִין ית
 מִשְׁבָּנָא עַד מִיתִיהוֹן; כב וַנְּטַל טַקְס מִשְׁרֵית
 בְּנֵי אֶפְרַיִם לְחִילִיהוֹן וְעַל חִילָה אֱלִישַׁמֶּע
 עַמִּיהוּד; כג וְעַל חִילָא דְשִׁבְטָא דְבְנֵי מְנַשֶּׁה
 גַּמְלִיאֵל בַּר פְּדָהצוֹר; כד וְעַל חִילָא דְשִׁבְטָא
 דְבְנֵי בְנִימִין אֲבִירֹן בַּר גְּדֵעוֹנִי; כה וַנְּטַל טַקְס
 מִשְׁרֵית בְּנֵי דָן מְכַנִּישׁ לְבָל מִשְׁרֵיתָא
 לְחִילִיהוֹן וְעַל חִילָה אַחִיעֶזֶר בַּר עַמִּישְׁדֵי;
 כו וְעַל חִילָא דְשִׁבְטָא דְבְנֵי אֲשֶׁר פְּנֵיעִיאֵל בַּר

בַּחֲצוֹצְרֹת וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לְחֻקַּת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם: ט וְכִי־תָבֹאוּ
 מִלְחָמָה בְּאַרְצְכֶם עַל־הַצַּר הַצָּר אֲתָכֶם וְהִרְעַתְם בַּחֲצוֹצְרֹת
 וְנִזְכַּרְתֶּם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְנוֹשַׁעְתֶּם מֵאִיְבֵיכֶם: י וּבַיּוֹם
 שִׁמַּחְתֶּכֶם וּבְמוֹעֲדֵיכֶם וּבְרֵאשֵׁי חֲדָשְׁכֶם וּתְקַעְתֶּם בַּחֲצוֹצְרֹת
 עַל עֲלֹתֵיכֶם וְעַל זִבְחֵי שְׁלָמֵיכֶם וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לְזִכְרוֹן לִפְנֵי
 אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: פ [חמישי] יא וַיְהִי בַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁנִיית
 בַּחֲדָשׁ הַשְּׁנִי בְּעֶשְׂרִים בַּחֲדָשׁ נִעְלָה הָעֲנָן מֵעַל מִשְׁכַּן הָעֵדוּת:
 יב וַיִּסְעוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִסְעֵיהֶם מִמִּדְבַּר סִינַי וַיִּשְׁכַּן הָעֲנָן
 בְּמִדְבַּר פֶּאֶרָן: יג וַיִּסְעוּ בְּרֵאשִׁית שָׁנָה עַל־פִּי יְהוָה בֵּיד־מֹשֶׁה:
 יד וַיִּסְעוּ דָּגֹל מַחֲנֵה בְנֵי־יְהוּדָה בְּרֵאשִׁית שָׁנָה לְצַבְאוֹתָם וְעַל־צִבְאוֹ
 נַחְשׁוֹן בֶּן־עַמִּינָדָב: טו וְעַל־צִבְאוֹ מִטֶּה בְנֵי יִשְׁשַׁכָּר נְתַנְאֵל
 בֶּן־צוּעֵר: טז וְעַל־צִבְאוֹ מִטֶּה בְנֵי זְבוּלֹן אֱלִיאָב בֶּן־חִילוֹן:
 יז וְהוֹרֵד הַמַּשְׁכָּן וַנְּסִיעוּ בְנֵי־גֵרְשׁוֹן וּבְנֵי מֵרָרִי נְשֵׂאֵי הַמַּשְׁכָּן:
 יח וַנְּסִיעוּ דָּגֹל מַחֲנֵה רְאוּבֵן לְצַבְאוֹתָם וְעַל־צִבְאוֹ אֱלִיצוֹר בֶּן־
 שְׂדִיאוֹר: יט וְעַל־צִבְאוֹ מִטֶּה בְנֵי שִׁמְעוֹן שְׁלֹמִיאֵל בֶּן־צוּרִישְׁדֵי:
 כ וְעַל־צִבְאוֹ מִטֶּה בְנֵי־גַד אֱלִיסָר בֶּן־דְּעוּאֵל: כא וַנְּסִיעוּ
 הַקְּהָתִים נְשֵׂאֵי הַמִּקְדָּשׁ וְהִקִּימוּ אֶת־הַמַּשְׁכָּן עַד־בָּאִם:
 כב וַנְּסִיעוּ דָּגֹל מַחֲנֵה בְנֵי־אֶפְרַיִם לְצַבְאוֹתָם וְעַל־צִבְאוֹ אֱלִישַׁמֶּע
 בֶּן־עַמִּיהוּד: כג וְעַל־צִבְאוֹ מִטֶּה בְנֵי מְנַשֶּׁה גַּמְלִיאֵל בֶּן־
 פְּדָהצוֹר: כד וְעַל־צִבְאוֹ מִטֶּה בְנֵי בְנִימִין אֲבִירֹן בֶּן־גְּדֵעוֹנִי:
 כה וַנְּסִיעוּ דָּגֹל מַחֲנֵה בְנֵי־דָן מֵאִסָּר לְכָל־הַמַּחֲנֵת לְצַבְאוֹתָם
 וְעַל־צִבְאוֹ אַחִיעֶזֶר בֶּן־עַמִּישְׁדֵי: כו וְעַל־צִבְאוֹ מִטֶּה בְנֵי אֲשֶׁר

דש"י

מחנה ראובן, ואחר כך ונסעו הקהתים: (כא) נשאי המקדש. נושאי דברים
 המקודשים: והקימו את המשכן. בני גרשון ובני מררי, שהיו קודמים להם
 מסע שני דגלים, היו מקימין את המשכן, כשהיה הענן שוכן, וסימן החנייה
 נראה בדגל מחנה יהודה וחס חונים, ועדיין בני קהת צאים מאחריהם עם
 שני דגלים האחרונים, היו בני גרשון ובני מררי מקימין את המשכן,
 וכשצאים בני קהת מולאים אותו על מכונו, ומכניסין זו הארון והשלחן
 והמנורה והמצחות, וזו משמעות המקרא והקימו מקימי המשכן אותו עד
 טרם צאם של בני קהת: (כה) מאסף לכל המחנות. תלמוד ירושלמי¹ לפי
 שהיה שבעו של דן מרובה באוכלוסין היה נוסע באחרונה וכל מי שהיה
 מאבד דבר היה מחזירו לו. אחיאל כמאל דאמר כתיבה היו מהלכין, ומפיק
 לה מן כאשר יחנו² כן יסעו. ואית דאמרי כקורה היו מהלכין ומפיק לה מן

במקראות ובמסעות הללו: (י) על עלתיכם. בקרבן לצור הכתוב מדבר!¹
 אני ה' אלהיכם. מכאן למדנו מלכיות עם זכרונות ושופרות, שנאמר
 ותקעתם הרי שופרות, לזכרון הרי זכרונות, אני ה' אלהיכם זו מלכיות וכו':
 (יא) בחדש השני. מנאלת אומר שנים עשר חודש חסר עשרה ימים עשו
 בחורב, שהרי בראש חודש סיון² חנו שם ולא נסעו עד עשרים באייר לשנה
 הבאה³: (יב) למסעיהם. כמשפט המפורש למסע דגליהם מי ראשון ומי
 אחרון: במדבר פארן. קצרות התארו במדבר פארן היה ושם חנו ממסע
 זה: (יז) והורד המשכן. כיון שנסע דגל יהודה נכנסו אהרן ובניו ופרקו
 את הפרכת וכסו זה את הארון, שנאמר וזה אהרן ובניו נכנסו המחנה⁴,
 ובני גרשון ובני מררי פורקין המשכן ועוטינין אותו בעגלות, והארון וכלי
 הקדש של משא בני קהת עומדים מכוסין ונתונין על המוטות עד שנסע דגל

- ⁹ While in your Land, if you go to war against an enemy that oppresses you, you should blow a long blast with the trumpets so as to be remembered before God your God, and you will be saved from your enemies.
- ¹⁰ And on the days of your rejoicing, on your festivals and on your new-moon celebrations, you should blow on the trumpets (when bringing) your (communal) burnt-offerings and your peace-sacrifices. This will be a remembrance before your God—I am God your God.

🕎 THE FIRST JOURNEY 🕎

10:11
FIFTH
READING

On the twentieth of the second month in the second year, the cloud rose up from over the Tabernacle of the Testimony. ¹² The children of Israel traveled from the Sinai Desert (in accordance with all the laws concerning) their journeys, and the cloud settled (in Kivros Hata'avah) in the desert of Paran. ¹³ This was the first journey by God's word, through Moshe.

¹⁴ The division of regiments (of three tribes, known as) "the Camp of Yehudah's descendants" traveled first: Heading the regiment was Nachshon the son of Aminadav. ¹⁵ Heading the regiment of the tribe of Yissachar's descendants was Nesanel the son of Tzu'ar. ¹⁶ Heading the regiment of the tribe of Zevulun's descendants was Eliav the son of Chailon.

¹⁷ The Tabernacle was then dismantled. Then Gershon's descendants and Merari's descendants, who carried the Tabernacle, traveled.

¹⁸ Then the division of regiments (of three tribes, known as) "the Camp of Reu'vain" set out according to their regiments: Heading its regiment was Elitzur the son of Shedai'ur. ¹⁹ Heading the regiment of the tribe of Shimon's descendants was Shelumiel the son of Tzurishadai. ²⁰ Heading the regiment of the tribe of Gad's descendants was Elyasaf the son of Du'ail.

²¹ The descendants of Kehos, who carried the holy (vessels) then traveled. (In this way, when they came to encamp, they would find) the Tabernacle already erected before they arrived (by the descendants of Gershon and Merari who traveled ahead).

²² Then the division of regiments (of three tribes, known as) "the Camp of Efrayim" set out, according to its regiments: Heading its regiment was Elishama the son of Amihud. ²³ Heading the regiment of the tribe of Menasheh's descendants was Gamliail the son of Pedatzur. ²⁴ Heading the regiment of the tribe of Binyamin's descendants was Avidan the son of Gidoni.

²⁵ Then the division of regiments (of three tribes, known as) "the Camp of Dan"—the collector (of lost property) for all the other camps—set out, according to its regiments: Heading its regiment was Achi'ezer

TORAS MENACHEM

🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

"IF YOU GO TO WAR... AND ON THE DAYS OF YOUR REJOICING... BLOW ON THE TRUMPETS" (v. 9-10)

"If you go to war against the enemy that oppresses you"—This alludes to the war against the *evil inclination*, which is the person's greatest enemy. It constantly "goes to war" against a person, especially at times of prayer, to disturb his concentration.

"You should blow a long blast with the trumpets..."—This is a metaphor for breaking one's haughty spirit with feelings of submissiveness to God, petitioning God to help the person fight his evil inclination.

"On your days of rejoicing...blow on the trumpets"—A person might think that when he has enjoyed some degree of success in the war against his evil inclination, and it is no longer succeeding in its "attacks," he can relax and enjoy serving God without the need to constantly arouse feelings of fear and subordination. To counteract this notion, the Torah states that even *after* the war is over, when a person wishes to rejoice and relax—he must still, "blow on the trumpets"!

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 13, p. 28)

עֲכָרְוּ: כו ועל חילא דְשִׁבְטָא דְבְנֵי נַפְתָּלִי
 אַחִירֵעַ בַּר עֵינָן: כח אֵלֶּיךָ מִטְּלֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 לְחִילֵיהוֹן וְנִטְלוּ: כט וְאָמַר מֹשֶׁה לְחַבֵּב בַּר
 רְעוּאֵל מִדִּינְאָה חֲמוּדֵי דְמֹשֶׁה נְטָלִין אֲנִתְנָא
 לְאַתְרָא דִּי אָמַר יי וְתָה אֲתָן לְכוּן אִיתָא
 עֲמָנָא וְנוֹטִיב לָךְ אָרִי יי מְלִיל לְאִיתְתָּא טָבָא
 עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל: ל וְאָמַר לָהּ לָא אִזֵּל אֶלְהֵן
 לְאַרְעֵי וְלִילְדוּתֵי אִזֵּל: לא וְאָמַר לָא כְּעַן
 תִּשְׁבּוּק וְתִנָּא אָרִי עַל כֵּן יִדְעַת כִּד הוּוּנָא
 שְׂרֹן בְּמִדְבָּרָא וְגִבּוֹרֵן דְאַתְעֵבִידִן לְנָא חוּיָתָא
 בְּעֵינֵךְ: לב וְיִהִי אָרִי תוֹל עֲמָנָא וְיִהִי טָבָא
 הַהוּא דִּי יוֹטִיב יי עֲמָנָא וְנוֹטִיב לָךְ: לד וְנִטְלוּ
 מִטּוֹרָא דְאַתְגְּלִי עֲלוּהִי יִקְרָא דִּי מִהֲלַךְ
 תִּלְתָּא יוֹמִין וְאַרְוֵן קָנָמָא דִּי נָטַל קְדָמֵיהוֹן
 מִהֲלַךְ תִּלְתָּא יוֹמִין לְאַתְקָנָא לְהוֹן אַתְרַי בֵּית
 מִישְׁרָי: לה וְעַנֵּן יִקְרָא דִּי מִטַּל עֲלֵיהוֹן
 בִּימָמָא בְּמִטְלֵהוֹן מִן מִשְׁרֵיתָא: לה וְהָוָה
 בְּמִטַּל אֲרֻנָא וְאָמַר מֹשֶׁה אֲתְגְלִי יי וְיִתְבַּדְרוּן
 סְנַאֲיָךְ וְיַעֲרֻקוּן בְּעֵלֵי דְבִבְךָ מִן קְדָמְךָ:
 לו וּבְמִשְׁרׁוּתֵי אָמַר תּוֹב יי שְׂרֵי בִיקְרָךְ בְּגו
 רְבוֹת אֶלְפִיָא דְיִשְׂרָאֵל: ׀ וְהָוָה עָמָא כִּד
 מִסְתַּקְפִּין בִּישׁ קְדָם יי וְשָׁמִיעַ קְדָם יי וְתַקַּף

פְּנֵי־אֵל בְּן־עֲכָרְוּ: כו וְעַל־צִבְאָ מִטָּה בְּנֵי נַפְתָּלִי אַחִירֵעַ
 בְּן־עֵינָן: כח אֵלֶּה מִסְעֵי בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל לְצִבְאָתָם וַיִּסְעוּ: ס
 כט וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה לְחַבֵּב בְּן־רְעוּאֵל הַמְדִינִי חֲתָן מֹשֶׁה נֹסְעִים |
 אֲנִחְנוּ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אָמַר יְהוָה אֲתָן לָכֶם לְכָה אֲתָנוּ
 וְהִטְבְּנוּ לָךְ כִּי־יְהוָה דִּבְרַטְוֹב עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל: ל וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו לָא
 אֵלְךָ כִּי אִם־אֶל־אַרְצֵי וְאֶל־מוֹלְדֹתַי אֵלְךָ: לא וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־נָא
 תַעֲזֹב אֲתָנוּ כִּי | עַל־כֵּן יִדְעַת חֲנֻתְנוּ בְּמִדְבָּר וְהֵייתָ לָנוּ
 לְעֵינָיִם: לב וְהָיָה כִּי־תֵלֶךְ עִמָּנוּ וְהָיָה | הַטּוֹב הַהוּא אֲשֶׁר
 יִיטִיב יְהוָה עִמָּנוּ וְהִטְבְּנוּ לָךְ: לד וַיִּסְעוּ מֵהַר יְהוָה דְרָךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת
 יָמִים וְאַרְוֵן בְּרִית־יְהוָה נִסַּע לְפָנֵיהֶם דְרָךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים לְתוֹר
 לָהֶם מְנוּחָה: לה וְעַנֵּן יְהוָה עֲלֵיהֶם יוֹמָם בְּנִסְעָם מִן־הַמַּחֲנֶה: ס
 וּשְׁשִׁין ז לה וְיִהִי בְּנִסַּע הָאָרֶץ וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה קוּמָה | יְהוָה וּפְעֹזוּ
 אֲיָבִיךָ וַיִּנְסוּ מִשְׁנַאֲיָךְ מִפְּנֵיךָ: לו וּבִנְחָה יֹאמֶר שׁוּבָה יְהוָה
 רַבְבוֹת אֶלְפֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ז פ יא ׀ *וְיִהִי הָעַם בְּמַתְאֲנָיִם רַע
 בְּאֲזֵנֵי יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה וַיַּחַר אַפּוֹ וַתִּבְעַר־בָּם אֵשׁ יְהוָה

*מְנוּחָה: מַעַט אֶת הַקּוֹל מִיְהוָה הֵעֵם כְּמַתְאֲנָיִם" עַד "וְהָיָה כִּד הוּוּנָא" וְלֹא עַד בְּכָלל (יא,א"ז)

רש"י

חֲפַץ לַכְּנִיסָה לְאַרְץ מִיִּד: וְאַרְוֵן בְּרִית ה' נִסַּע לְפָנֵיהֶם דְרָךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת
 יָמִים. זכ הארון היואל עמכם למלחמה וכו שצרי לוחות מונחים ומקדים
 לפניהם דרך שלשת ימים לחקן להם מקום חנייה: (לד) וענן ה' עליהם
 יומם. שצעה עניים כתוצים צמסיעהם. ארצע מארצע רוחות, ואחד
 למעלה, ואחד למטה, ואחד לפניהם ממניך את הצבוע ומגזיה את הנמוך
 והורג נחשים ועקרצים: מן המחנה. ממקום חנייתן: (לה) ויהי בנסע
 הארון. עשה לו סמניות מלפניו ומלאחריו, לומר שאין זה מקומו. ולמה
 נכתב כאן, כדי להפסיק בין פורעניות לפורעניות וכו' כדאיתא בכל כחזי
 הקדש: קוומה ה'. לפי שהיה מקדים לפניהם מהלך שלשת ימים, היה משה
 אומר עמוד והמתן לנו ואל תחרחק יותר. צמדדש תחומא צויקבל: ויפוצו
 אויביך. המכונסין: וינסו משנאיך. אלו הרודפים: משנאיך. אלו שוגאי
 ישראל, שכל השונא את ישראל שונא את מי שאמר והיה העולם, שנאמר
 ומשנאיך נשאו ראש¹¹, ומי הם, על עמך יערימו סוד¹²: (לו) שובה ה'. מנחם
 תרגמו לשון מרגוע וכן צבועה ונחת תושעון¹³. רבבות אלפי ישראל. מגיד
 שאין השכינה שורה בישראל פחותים משני אלפים ושתי רצבות¹⁴: (א) ויהי
 העם במתאננים. אין העם אלא רשעים. וכן הוא אומר מה אעשה לעם
 הזה¹⁵, ואומר העם הרע הזה¹⁶. וכשם כשרים קרואים עמי, שנאמר שלח
 עמי¹⁷, עמי מה עשיתי לך¹⁸: במתאננים. אין מתאננים אלא לשון עלילה
 מצדקים עלילה האיק לפרוש מאחרי המקום וכן הוא אומר צשמשון כי
 חואנה הוא מצקש¹⁹: רע באזני ה'. חואנה שהיא רעה צאזני ה' שמתכוונים
 שתצא צאזניו ויקניט. אמרו אוי לנו כמה לצטנו צדרך הזה שלשה ימים שלא
 נחנו מעונו צדרך: ויחר אפּו. אני הייתי מתכוין לטובתכם שתכנסו לארץ

מאסף לכל המחנות: (כח) אלה מסעי. זה סדר מסעיהם: ויסעו. ציוס
 ההוא נסעו: (כט) חובב. הוא יתרו, שנאמר מצני חוצב חותן משה¹, ומה
 תלמוד לומר ותצאנה אל רעואל אביבך², מלמד שכתיווקות קורין לאזני
 אביבך אצא³. ושמות הרצה היו לו, יתר על שם שיתר פרשה אחת צתורה.
 חוצב על שחצב את הצורה וכו': נסעים אבחנו אל המקום. מיד עד שלשה
 ימים אנו נכנסין לארץ, צצמסע זה הראשון נסעו על מנת להכנס לארץ
 ישראל, אלא שחטאו צמתאוננים. ומפני מה שחף משה עלמו עמכם, שעדיין
 לא נגזרה גזרה עליו וכצור שהוא נכנס: (ב) אל ארציו ואל מולדתו.
 אם צשציל נכסו, אם צשציל משפחתו: (ג) אל נא תעזב. אין נא אלא
 לשון צקשה, שלא יאמרו לא נתגייר יתרו מחצה, סצור היה שיש לגרים חלק
 צארץ, עכשיו שראו שאין להם חלק הניחם והלך לו: בי על כן ידעת
 חנתנו במדבר. כי נאה לך לעשות זאת על אשר ידעת חנותו צמדבר
 ורואית נסים וגצורות שנעשו לנו: בי על כן ידעת. כמו על אשר ידעת,
 כמו כי על כן לא נחתיב לשלח צני⁴, כי על כן עצרתס⁵, כי על כן צאו⁶, כי
 על כן רואית פניך: והיית לנו לעינינו. לשון עצר כתרגומו. דצר אחר לשון
 עתיד, כל דצר ודצר שיתעלם מעיניו חתיב מאיר עיניו. דצר אחר שתאה
 חציב עלינו כגלגל עיניו, שנאמר ורחבתם את הגר: (ג) והיה הטוב
 ההוא וגו'. מה טובה הטיבו לו, אמרו כשהיו ישראל מחלקין את הארץ
 היה דושנה של יריחו חמש מאות אמה על ת"ק אמה והניחוהו מלחלוק,
 אמרו מי שיצנה בית המקדש צחלקו הוא יטלנו, בין כך ובין כך נתוהו צצני
 יתרו ליונדצ צן רכצ³, שנאמר וצני קני חותן משה עלו מעיר התמרים וגו':
 (ג) דרך שלשת ימים. מהלך שלשת ימים הלכו ציוס אחד, שהיה הקצ"ב

1 שופטים ד, יא 2 שמות ב, יח 3 שפרי 4 בראשית לח, כו 5 שם יח, ה 6 שם יט, ח 7 שם לג, י 8 דברים י, יט 9 שופטים א, טז 10 שבת קטז. 11 תהלים צג, ג 12 שם ד 13 ישעיה ל, טו 14 יבמות טד. 15 שמות יז, ד 16 ירמיה ג, י 17 שמות ז, טז 18 מיכה ג, ג 19 שופטים יד, ד. שפרי.

the son of Amishadai. ²⁶ Heading the regiment of the tribe of Asher's descendants was Pagiael the son of Achran. ²⁷ Heading the regiment of the tribe of Naftali's descendants was Achira the son of Ainan.

²⁸ These were the journey arrangements of the children of Israel, according to their regiments. They traveled (on that day).

—²⁹ Moshe said to Chovav the son of Re'uel the Midianite, Moshe's father-in-law (Yisro), "We are traveling (very soon) to the place about which God said, 'I will give it to you.' Come with us and we will treat you well, for God has spoken of good (things) for Israel." ³⁰ He said to him, "I'm not going. Rather, I shall go to my land and my birthplace." ³¹ (Moshe) said, "Please don't leave us! For you know (all the miracles associated with) our encampments in the desert to which you have been an eyewitness. ³² If you go with us, then we will grant you (use of part of) the good (Land) which God is granting us."—

³³ They traveled from the mountain of God a distance of three days (in just one day, because God wanted to bring them to the Land immediately). The Ark of God's covenant traveled three days ahead of them to seek a resting place for them. ³⁴ The cloud of God was above them by day, when they traveled from their (original place of) encampment.

³⁵ What happened was, whenever the Ark set out, Moshe would say, "Arise, O God, may Your enemies be scattered and may those who hate You flee from You." ³⁶ When it came to rest he would say, "Rest (here) O God, among the myriads of thousands of Israel."

SIXTH
READING

🌀 THE FIRST COMPLAINT & REBUKE 🌀

II **T**he people were acting like complainers (who seek to say something) that is evil in God's ears (so as to express their dissatisfaction with the difficulties of the journey). God heard and became angry (because He was hurrying the journey for their benefit, to enter the Land quickly).

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 The Last Word 🌀

"WHENEVER THE ARK SET OUT, MOSHE WOULD SAY..." (v. 35)

According to Jewish custom, the above verse is recited by the congregation whenever the Torah scroll is removed from the Ark. Chasidic thought explains that taking out the Torah scroll is not merely a ceremony, it is a moment when God actually instills His people with the spirit of resilience and dedication required to "take out" the values of the Torah and apply them to one's everyday life.

And this is the message expressed by reciting the above verse:

"Moshe would say..."—Within every Jew there is a "spark" of Moshe, which is capable of sustaining one's enthusiasm for the observance of Torah even under the most adverse conditions. The removal of the Torah from the Ark thus awakens this kernel of Jewish identity, to the extent that it starts to speak to us ("Moshe would say").

"Arise, O God, may your enemies be scattered"—And once the "spark" is awake, it begins to strengthen a person's observance of

Judaism in all areas, both in the growth of positive deeds for God ("Arise, O God"), and the withdrawal from things that are counter-productive to a Torah lifestyle ("may your enemies be scattered").*

A further blessing granted by God when the Torah scroll is taken out is that a person should be able to earn a living comfortably. For we are taught that the Ark of the Covenant, represented by the Torah scroll, was buried along with a container of *manna* (Shemos 16:32-33), and the *manna* represents how God provides sustenance for the Jewish people without their having to make much effort. So, when we take out the Torah scroll, God not only empowers us to serve Him better, He also blesses us that we should earn a living comfortably, enabling the *mitzvos* to be performed free from worry and concern.

(Based on Sefer Hasichos 5751, vol. 1, p. 381; and note 24 *ibid.*)

*Normally, we are told to approach these two areas in the reverse sequence: first to "depart from evil," and only then to "do good" (Psalms 34:15), because a person must first rid himself of negative qualities so that his good deeds that follow are not built on a rotten foundation. In this case, however, the emphasis is on *taking out* the Torah, i.e. on *transforming* evil to good, and this can only be done by a person who has previously achieved a significant degree of personal perfection through the observance of numerous good deeds. So our verse stresses that after a person has busied himself with "doing good" ("Arise, O God"), he is then able to *transform* evil to good, "Your enemies are scattered" (Based on Sefer Hasichos 5751, vol. 1, p. 381, note 23).

הגוה ודלקת בהון אשתא מן קדם יי ושציאת
 בספי משריתא: ב וצוח עמא על משה וצלי
 משה קדם יי ואשתקעת אשתא: ג וקרא
 שמא דאתרא ההוא דלקתא ארי דלקת בהון
 אשתא מן קדם יי: ד וערבבין די ביניהון
 שאילו שאלתא ותבו ובכו אף בני ישראל
 ואמרו מן יכלנא בקרא: ה דכירן אנהא ות
 נוניא דהוינא אכלין במצרים מן ות בוציניא
 וית אבטיחא וברתי ובוצלי ותומי: ו וכען
 נפשנא תאיבא לית כל מדעם אלהן למנא
 עיננא: ז ומנא כבר זרע נדא הוא ותוהו כחו
 בדלקתא: ח שיטין עמא ולקטין דצבי טחין
 בריחא או דצבי דאיך במדקתא ומבשלין
 לה בקדרא ועבדין יתה גריצן ותוהו מעמה
 כטעם דליש במשחא: ט וכד נחת טלא על

ותאכל בקצה המחנה: ב ויצעק העם אל משה ויתפלל משה
 אל יהוה ותשקע האש: ג ויקרא שם המקום ההוא תבערה
 כי בערה גם אש יהוה: ד והאספסוף אשר בקרבן התאו
 תאוה וישבו ויבכו גם בני ישראל ויאמרו מי יאכלנו בשר:
 ה זכרנו את הדנה אשר נאכל במצרים הגם את הקשאים
 ואת האבטיחים ואת החציר ואת הבצלים ואת השומים:
 ועתה נפשנו יבשה אין כל בלתי אל המן עינינו: ז והמן
 בורע נד הוא ועינו כעין הבדלח: ח שטו העם ולקטו ומחנו
 בריחים או דכו במדכה ובשלו בפרור ועשו אתו עגות והיה
 טעמו כטעם לשד השמן: ט ובדרת הפל על המחנה לילה

*א' נחא **מלרע ע"ד הודות, יש גורסים שטו מלעיל

רש"י

ותרגמו ית בזוינא וכו': (ו) אל המן עינינו. מן צשחר מן צערב: (ז) והמן
 בזרע גד. מי שאמר זו לא אמר זו, ישראל אומרים בלתי אל המן עינינו,⁵
 והקצ"ב הכתיב צתורה והמן כזרע גד וגו', כלומר ראו צבי עולם על מה
 מתלוננים צני, והמן כך וכך הוא חשוב: בזרע גד. עגול כגידא זרע
 קוליניד"ר: הבדלח. שם אצן טוצה קריסט"ל: (ח) שטו. אין שייט אלא לשון
 טיוול אישצני"ר בלא עמל: וטחנו בריחים וגו'. לא ירד בריחים ולא צקדירה
 ולא צמדוכה אלא משתנה היה טעמו לנטחין ולנדוכין ולמצושלין: בפרור.
 קדריה: לשד השמן. לחלוה של שמן, כך פירשו דוגש. ודומה לו נהפך לשדי
 צחרצוני קיף.⁶ והלמ"ד יסוד, נהפך לחלוהי צחרצוני קין. ורצותינו פרושו
 לשון שדים, אך אין ענין שדים אלא שמן. ואי אפשר לומר לשד השמן לשון
 וישמן ישורין,⁷ שאם כן היה המ"ם נקוד קמ"ץ קטן וטעמו למטה תחת
 המ"ם, עכשיו שהמ"ם נקוד פת"ח קטן והטעם תחת השי"ן, לשון שמן הוא,
 והשי"ן הנקודה בקמן גדול ואינה נקודה צפתה קטן מפני שהוא סוף פסוק.
 דבר אחר לשד לשון נוטריקון ליש שמן דבש, כעיסה הנלושה בשמן וקטופה
 דבש. ותרגום של אונקלוס דמתרגם דליש צמשחא, נוטה לפתרונו של דוגש,

מיד: בקצה המחנה. צמוקלין שבהם לשפלות, אלו ערצ רב. רבי שמעון צן
 מנסיח אומר צקליניס שבהם וצגדוליס: (ב) ויצעק העם אל משה. משל
 למלך צשר ודס שכטס על צנו והלך הצן אלל אוהצו של אציו ואמר לו לא
 וצקש עלי מצבא: ותשקע האש. שקעה צמוקמה צארץ שאילו חזרה לאחת
 הרוחות היתה מקפלת והולכת כל אוחו הרוח: (ד) והאספסוף. אלו ערצ
 רב שנאספו אליהם צלאתס ממצרים: וישבו. גם צני ישראל ויצכו עמהם:
 מי יאכלנו בשר. וכי לא היה להם צשר, והלא כבר נאמר וגם ערצ רב עלה
 אתס ולאן וצקר וגו'.² ואס תאמר אכלוס, והלא צכניסתס לארץ נאמר ומקנה
 רב היה לצני ראצון וגו'.³ אלא שצמקשים עליה: (ה) אשר נאכל במצרים
 חנם. אס תאמר שמצרייס נותניס להם דגיס חנס, והלא כבר נאמר ותצן לא
 ינתן להם,⁴ אס תצן לא היו נותנין להם חנס, דגיס היו נותנין להם חנס, ומהו
 אומר חנס, חנס מן המלות: את הקשאים. אמר ר' שמעון מפני מה המן
 משתנה לכל דבר חוץ מאלו, מפני שהן קשים למניקות, אומרים לאשה אל
 תאכלי שום וצלל מפני התינוק. משל למלך וכו', כדאיתא צספרי: הקשאים.
 הס קוקומצרי"ש צלע"ז: אבטחאים. צורק"ש: החציר. כרישין פוריל"ש

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Was the fish literally free of charge? (v. 5)
RASHI: If you want to say that the Egyptians gave them fish for free, has scripture not already stated, "You will not be given straw" (Shemos 5:18)? Now, if straw was not given for free, would they have given them fish for free?
 So what does "for free" mean? Free from *mitzvos*.
MIZRACHI: In other words, now that the Jewish people were obligated to observe the *mitzvos*, their sustenance was dependent upon observance, as the Torah states, "If you always listen to My commandments that I am commanding you... Then I will grant the early and late rains of your land at their proper time" (Devarim 11:13-14). In Egypt, however, they were fed regardless of whether they were righteous or not.

● Why did the people desire these foods in particular? (v. 5)
RASHI: Rabbi Shimon says, "Why did the *manna* taste of everything except these things? Because they are harmful for nursing mothers. We tell a [nursing] woman, 'Do not eat any garlic or onion, because of the baby,'" as in the analogy of a King found in *Sifri*.
SIFRI: This can be compared to a King of flesh and blood who put a tutor in charge of his son. He sat him down and instructed him, saying, "See that he does not eat any harmful food and does not drink any harmful drink."
 Because of this, the son complained about his father, saying, "It is not because he loves me, but because he does not want me to eat!"
TALMUD: Why are cucumbers called **קשאים**? Because they are as harmful (קשין) as swords to a person's whole body (Avodah Zarah 29a).

A fire from God burned among them, consuming (those at) the edge of the camp. ² The people cried out to Moshe. Moshe prayed to God, and the fire died down.

³ He named that place Tavairah (“blaze”), because the fire of God had blazed against them.

🌀 THE SECOND COMPLAINT & REBUKE 🌀

11:4 **T**he mob (of Egyptian converts) among them (who had left Egypt with the Jewish people) had strong cravings. The children of Israel were also influenced, and began to cry (with them). They said, “Who will give us meat to eat? ⁵ We remember the fish that we ate in Egypt for free, the cucumbers, the watermelons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic! ⁶ But now, our souls are parched, for there is nothing, except the manna before our eyes (morning and evening).”

⁷ (In truth, however,) the manna (was a delicacy). It was (round) like coriander seed, and it looked like crystal. ⁸ The people would (merely have to) stroll around (without any exertion) and gather it. (It would taste of anything one desired, like something) ground in a mill, crushed in a mortar, cooked in a pot or made into cakes. It tasted as moist as oil. ⁹ When the dew came down on the camp at night, the manna came down upon it.

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🌀 “WE ATE IN EGYPT FOR FREE” (v. 5)

One of the complaints of the Jewish people to Moshe was that, “we ate in Egypt for free” (v. 5). At first glance, this would appear to mean that food was provided for the Jewish people in Egypt, without their having to pay, since they were slaves to the Egyptians.

Rashi, however, challenges this interpretation: “If you want to say that the Egyptians gave them fish for free, has scripture not already stated, ‘You will not be given straw’ (Shemos 5:18)? Now if straw was not given for free, would they have given them fish for free?”

Rashi answers: “So what does ‘for free’ mean? Free from mitzvos.”

Mizrachi explains that when the Jewish people were in Egypt, the Torah had not yet been given and a person’s sustenance from God was not dependent on his observance of mitzvos. So now they complained that they were required to be God-fearing merely in order to eat.

🌀 The Last Word 🌀

Ordinary bread (“bread from the earth”), which is the product of hard physical labor, is a metaphor for the “revealed” interpretations of the Torah (*nigleh*), found in the *Talmud*, which require arduous analysis, questioning, etc. On the other hand, *manna* (“bread from heaven”) represents the mystical teachings of the Torah, which are of such a “heavenly” nature that there is no disagreement, argument, etc.

Logically speaking, a person might think that it is necessary to have a firm grounding in classic texts, and achieve a certain degree of spiritual greatness before one can progress to the study of mysticism. However, the Torah teaches here that even the wicked individuals who complained to Moshe ate *manna* (v. 4ff.). From this we can learn that it is appropriate for people from all walks of life to study the mystical teachings of the Torah—particularly as they are formulated clearly and methodically in the teachings of *Chabad*.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 4, p. 1038-9)

However, the concept to which *Mizrachi* refers, that God will only “grant the early and late rains of your land at their proper time,” if “you always listen to My commandments,” does not appear to be applicable in this case. For: a.) The complaint was about *manna*, and *manna* coming from heaven was not dependent on rain. b.) At this point *manna* was being given to all the Jewish people regardless of whether they were good or not—as we find that even Dasan and Aviram received *manna* (see *Rashi* to *Shemos* 16:20).

What, then, was the Jewish people’s argument, that in Egypt they were free from mitzvos?

A further complaint of the Jewish people was that, while the *manna* tasted of virtually any food that the person wished, it could not adopt certain flavors: cucumbers, watermelons, leeks, onions, and garlic (v. 5).

Rashi explains: *Rabbi Shimon* says, “Why did the manna taste of everything except these things? Because they are harmful for nursing mothers. We tell a [nursing] woman, ‘Do not eat any garlic or onion, because of the baby,’” as in the analogy of a King found in *Sifri*.

This prompts the following questions:

a.) The analogy which *Rashi* refers to in *Sifri* (as well as the *Talmud*), states explicitly that these types of food were harmful in general to all people. Why did *Rashi* conclude that they were only harmful to nursing mothers?

b.) In most instances, *Rashi* does not indicate the author’s name when he cites a teaching of the Sages, which suggests that when *Rashi* does mention the name of a Sage it is for a specific reason—to solve a more subtle question which the reader might ask. So why, in our case, does *Rashi* stress that this explanation was authored by *Rabbi Shimon*?

THE EXPLANATION

When *Rashi* writes that the Jewish people complained that they were “free from mitzvos” in Egypt, this was not a complaint about the observance of mitzvos in general. For, as explained above, the *manna* was bestowed upon even those who did not keep mitzvos. Rather, *Rashi*’s intention here is that the people complained that there are many mitzvos involved with the collection of the manna, e.g. that one could not collect *manna* from one day for the next, and it could not be collected on

משריתא ליליא נחת מנא עלוהי: י ושמע
 משה ית עמא בְּכֹן לזרעיתוהון גבר בתרע
 משכנה ותקף רגוא דין לחדא ובעיני משה
 ביש: יא ואמר משה קדם יי למא אבאשתא
 לעבדך ולמא לא אשכחית רחמין קדמך
 לשואה ית מטול כל עמא הדין עלי: יב האב
 אנא לכל עמא הדין אם בני אנון דאמרת לי
 סובריה בתקפך כמא דמסובר תרבינא ית
 ינקא על ארעא די קומתא לאבחתוהי: יג מנן
 לי בסרא למיהב לכל עמא הדין ארי בְּכֹן
 עלי למימר הב לנא בסרא וניכול: יד לית
 אנא יכיל בלחודי לסוברא ית כל עמא הדין
 ארי יקיר מני: טו ואם בדין את עבד לי
 קמלני בען קטול אם אשכחית רחמין קדמך
 ולא אחזי בבישתי: טז ואמר יי למשה פגוש
 קדמי שבועין גברא מסבי ישראל די ידעת
 ארי אנון סבי עמא וסרכוהי ותדבר יתוהן
 למשכון ומנא ויתעתדון תמן עמך: יז ואתגלי
 ואמלל עמך תמן וארבי מן רוחא דעלך
 ואשוי עליהון ויסוברון עמך במטול עמא

יִרְד הַפֶּן עָלָיו: י וישמע משה את־העם בכה למשפחתיו
 איש לפתח אהלו ויחר־אף יהוה מאד ובעיני משה רע:
 יא ויאמר משה אל־יהוה למה הרעת לעבדך ולמה לא־
 מצאתי* חן בעיניך לשום את־משא כל־העם הזה עלי:
 יב האנכי הרייתי את כל־העם הזה אם־אנכי ילדתיהו כי־
 תאמר אלי שאתו בחיךך כאשר ישא האמן את־הינך על
 האדמה אשר נשבעת לאבתיו: יג מאין לי בשר לתת לכל־
 העם הזה כי־יבפו עלי לאמר תנה לנו בשר ונאכלה:
 יד לא־אוכל אנכי לבדי לשאת את־כל־העם הזה כי כבד
 ממני: טו ואם־ככה | את־עשה לי הרגני נא הרג אם־מצאתי
 חן בעיניך ואל־אראה ברעתך: פ טז ויאמר יהוה אל־משה
 אספה־לי שבועים איש מזקני ישראל אשר ידעת בי־הם זקני
 העם ושטרו ולקחת אתם אל־אהל מועד והתיצבו שם
 עמך: יז וירדתי ודברתי עמך שם ואצלתי מן־הרוח אשר
 עליך ושמתי עליהם ונשאו אתך במשא העם ולא־תשא

* חסר א'

רש"י

האלהים⁹, שנכגו קלות ראש, כנושך פתו ומדצר צפני המלך⁸, וזכו ויאכלו
 וישתו¹⁰, ולא רצה הקב"ה ליתן צללות צמתן תורה ופרע להם כאן⁸: אשר
 ידעת כי הם וגו'. אותם שאתה מכיר שנתמנו עליהם שוטרים צמלרים
 צעזודת פרך וכויו מרחמים עליהם ומוכים על ידם, שנאמר ויכו שוטרי בני
 ישראל¹⁰, עתה יתמנו בגדולתן כדרך שנלעטרו צלרתי¹¹: ולקחת אותם. קחם
 צדצרים, אשריכם שנתמניתם פרנסים על בניו של מקום: והתיצבו שם
 עמך. כדי שיראו ישראל וינהגו בהם גדולה וכבוד ויאמרו חזינן אלה
 שנכנסו עם משה לשמוע דבור מפי הקב"ה¹²: (יז) וירדת. זו אחת מעשר
 ירידות הכתובות צתורה¹³: ודברתי עמך. ולא עממם¹⁴: ואצלת. כתרנומו
 וארבי, כמו ואל אילי בני ישראל¹⁵: ושמתי עליהם. למה משה דומה צאותה
 שעה, לנר שמוגה על גבי מנורה והכל מדליקין הימנו, ואין אורו חסר כלום¹⁶:
 ונשאו אתך. התנה עממם על מנת שיקבלו עליהם טורח בני, שהם טרחנים
 וסרצנים¹⁷: ולא תשא אתה לבדך. הרי תשובה למה שאמרת לא אוכל אנכי

שהעיסה הללושה צשמן לחלוחית שמן יש צה: (י) בכה למשפחותיו.
 משפחות משפחות נאספים וצוכים לפרסם תרעומתן צגלו¹⁸. ורצותיו
 אמרו² למשפחותיו על עסקי משפחות, על עריות הנאסרות להם: (יב) כי
 תאמר אלי. שאתה אומר אלי שאתו בחיךך. ויכן אמר לו כן, לך נחה את
 העם³, ואומר וילום אל בני ישראל⁴, על מנת שיהיו סוקלים אתכם ומחרפים
 אתכם: על האדמה אשר נשבעת לאבותיו. אתה אומר לי לשאתם
 בחיקי: (טו) ואם ככה את עשה לי. תשש כחו של משה כנקצה כשהראבו
 הקב"ה הפורענות שהוא עתיד להציא עליהם על זאת. אמר לפניו, אם כן
 הרגני תחלה¹: ואל אראה ברעתך. צרעתם היה לו לכתוב, אלא שכינה
 הכתוב⁵. וזה אחד מתקויו סופרים צתורה לכינוי ולתקון לשון: (טז) אספה
 לי. הרי תשובה לתלונתך שאמרת לא אוכל אנכי לצדי⁶. והצקנים הראשונים
 היכן היו, והלא אף צמלרים ישצו עממם, שנאמר לך ואספת את זקני
 ישראל⁷, אלא צאש תצורה מתו⁸. וראוים היו מסיני לכך, דכתוב ויחזו את

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Shabbos etc. (see Rashi to Shemos 16:4). The people were thus complaining that in Egypt they could eat food free of restrictions, whereas now they could not.

A further complaint was that the manna did not taste of cucumbers, watermelons, leeks, onions, or garlic—as Rashi explains, that this would have been harmful to nursing mothers.

Rashi did not cite the interpretation of Sifri (and the Talmud), that these foods were harmful to people in general, because at the literal level the people would not have begged for something that caused themselves harm. (Nevertheless, Rashi refers the reader to the analogy of Sifri, because the general principle of the analogy is applicable here). What does appear to be a valid complaint is why all the Jewish people should

¹⁰ Moshe heard the people weeping with their families (making as much noise as possible). Each person was at the entrance of his tent. God became very angry, and Moshe was disgusted.

¹¹ Moshe said to God, “Why have You mistreated Your servant? Why have I not found favor in Your eyes, in that You place the burden of this entire people upon me? ¹² Did I conceive this entire people? Did I give birth to them? (So why did you) tell me, ‘Embrace them like a nurse carries a baby,’ (and lead them) to the Land You promised their forefathers? ¹³ Where do I have meat to give all these people? For they are crying to me, saying, ‘Give us meat to eat.’ ¹⁴ I cannot bear this entire people alone, as it’s too hard for me.”

(When Moshe saw a vision of the punishments due to the Jewish people for their complaints, he said), ¹⁵ “If this is the way You treat me, please kill me—if I have found favor in Your eyes— so that I do not see my misfortune.”

¹⁶ God said to Moshe, “(As for your complaint that you cannot bear the people alone,) assemble for Me seventy men of the elders of Israel, the ones that you know were the people’s elders and officers (back in Egypt). Persuade them to (come to) the Tent of Meeting, and have them stand there with You. ¹⁷ I will come down and speak with you there. I will magnify the spirit which is upon you and place (some of) it upon them (without reducing what you have). Then they will bear the burden of the people with you, so that you do not have to bear it alone.”

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be deprived of these five foods merely because they are harmful to a tiny minority, nursing mothers.

However, having offered this interpretation, *Rashi* was concerned that the complaint of the Jewish people was so valid that it deserves an answer. Why, indeed, did God deprive the Jewish people from tasting these foods, out of concern for a tiny minority? Surely God could have just withheld these flavors from the *manna* of the nursing women, and allowed everybody else to taste them?

To hint to a solution to this question, *Rashi* wrote, “*Rabbi Shimon* says...,” as if to say that if we bear in mind that it was *Rabbi Shimon* who authored this explanation, then we will appreciate why the general public might be denied something for the sake of a minority.

Rabbi Shimon is famous for saying, “I can release the entire world from judgment” (*Succah* 45b). Obviously, he understood the tremendous importance of just one individual, since he felt that he, personally, could save the world.

Thus, writes *Rashi*, it is understood why *Rabbi Shimon* was concerned for the tiny minority of nursing women, that they should not see the rest of the Jewish people enjoying the flavors of cucumbers, watermelons, leeks, onions, and garlic, while they remained deprived. For if a small group had to be deprived, argued *Rabbi Shimon*, then everybody should be deprived in order to avoid even an extremely remote danger to the minority.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Beha'aloscha* 5728; *Likutei Sichos* vol. 33, p. 71ff.)

🔥 Sparks of Chasidus 🔥

“I WILL MAGNIFY THE SPIRIT WHICH IS UPON YOU AND PLACE IT UPON THEM” (v. 17)

Moshe’s spiritual standing was so great that his awareness of God’s presence never lapsed even for a moment. Thus, for Moshe, no experience, even that of eating or sleeping, could be entirely physical, devoid of Divine awareness and inspiration.

So when the people complained to Moshe that they were craving meat, Moshe turned to God in exasperation and cried, “Where do I have meat” (v. 13)? Craving physical pleasure as an end in itself is something I am simply unable to do, so how can I represent the people as their leader in this respect?

In response, God offered Moshe the assistance of the elders, for they were not as removed as Moshe from the notion of enjoying a physical experience, so they would be able to lead the people with regard to their physical needs.

However, this begs the question: If providing people with tasty food was something beyond the scope of Moshe’s leadership, then why did God say: “I will magnify the spirit which is upon you and place it upon them” (v. 17)? Why was the “spirit of Moshe” required by the elders to supply the people with meat, a task that had eluded Moshe?

This brings to light a basic principle of Judaism: *Every aspect of our lives, even the most basic physical desires and needs, are guided, assisted and sustained by the Torah.* So, since Moshe was the one who received the entire Torah and gave it to the people, it was crucial that *all* the Torah’s guidance and support should come directly, or indirectly, through him.

(Based on *Sichah* of 3rd day *Chol Hamo’ed Succos* 5713)

ולא תסובר את בלחודך: יה ולעמא תימר אנדמנו למחר ותיכלון בסרא ארי בכיתון קדם יי למימר מן ייכלגנה בסרא ארי טב לנא במצרים ויתן יי לבון בסרא ותיכלון: יט לא יומא חד תיכלון ולא תרין יומין ולא חמשא יומין ולא עשרא יומין ולא עשרין יומין: כ עד ירח יומין עד די תקוצון בה ויהי לבון לתקלא חלף דקצותון במימרא דיי דשכנתה שרית בניכונ ובכיתון קדמוהי למימר למא דגן נפקנא ממצרים: כא ואמר משה שית מאה אלפין נברא רגלאה עמא די אנא בנייהון ואת אמרת בשרא אתן להון וייכלון ירח יומין: כב הען ותורין יתנפסון להון היספקון להון אם ית כל נגני ומא יתבנשון להון היספקון להון: כג ואמר יי למשה המימרא דיי יתעקב פען תחזי היערענד פתנמי אם לא: כד ונפק משה ומליל לעמא ית פתנמיא דיי וכנש שבועין נברא מסבי עמא ואקם יתהון סחור סחור למשכנא: כה ואתגלי יי בעננא ומליל עמה ורבי מן רוחא די עלוהי ויהב על שבועין נברא סביא והוה כד שרת עליהון רוחא דנבואה ומתנבאין ולא פסקין: כו ואשתארו תרין נברין במשריתא שום חד אלדד ושום תנניא מידד ושרת עליהון רוחא דנבואה ואנון בכתיביא ולא נפקו למשכנא ואתנביאו

אתה לבדך: יה ואלהעם תאמר התקדשו ואכלתם בשר כי בכיתם באזני יהוה לאמר מי יאכלנו בשר כי טוב לנו במצרים ונתן יהוה לכם בשר ואכלתם: יט לא יום אחד תאכלון ולא יומים ולא חמשה ימים ולא עשרה ימים ולא עשרים יום: כ עד חדש ימים עד אשר יצא מאפכם והיה לכם לזרא יען כי מאסתם את יהוה אשר בקרבכם ותבכו לפניו לאמר למה זה יצאנו ממצרים: כא ויאמר משה שש מאות אלף רגלי העם אשר אנכי בקרב ואתה אמרת בשר אתן להם ואכלו חדש ימים: כב העאן ובקר ישחט להם ומצא להם אם את כל דיגי הים יאסף להם ומצא להם: כג ויאמר יהוה אל משה הירד יהוה תקצר עתה תראה היקר דברי אם לא: כד ויצא משה וידבר אל העם את דברי יהוה ויאסף שבועים איש מזקני העם ויעמד אתם סביבת האהל: כה וירד יהוה ובענן וידבר אליו ויאצל מן הרוח אשר עליו ויתן על שבועים איש הזקנים ויהי כנוח עליהם הרוח ויתנבאו ולא יספו: כו וישארו שני אנשים במחנה שם האחד אלדד ושם השני מידד ותנה עליהם הרוח והמה בפתלים ולא יצאו האהלה ויתנבאו במחנה:

כ"ז

ככל ציתי נאמן הוא¹², יאמר אין המקום מספיק לנו, אלא כך אמר שש מאות אלף רגלי וגוי' ואתה אמרת זשר אתן¹³ לחדש ימים, ואחר כך תהרוג אותם גדולה כזו, הלאן ובקר ישחט להם כדי שיהרגו, ואתה אכילה זו מספקת עד עולם, וכי שצחק הוא זה, אומרים לו לחמור טול כור שעורים ונחתוך ראשך. השיבו הקצ"ב ואם לא אתן יאמרו שקלרה ידי, הטוב צעיגן שיד' ה' תקלר¹³ צעיניהם, יאצדו הם ומאח כיולא צבס ואל תכי ידי קלרה לפניכם אפילו שעה אחת: (כג) עתה תראה היקרך דברי. רצן גמליאל צנו של רבי יהודה הגשיא אומר חי אפשר לעמוד על הטפל, מאחר שאינן מצקשים אלא עלילה לא תספיק להם, סופן לדון אחריו, אם אתה נותן להם זשר צבמה גסה, יאמרו דקה צקשנו, ואם אתה נותן להם דקה, יאמרו גסה צקשנו, חיה ועוף צקשנו, דגים ומגזים צקשנו, אמר לו אם כן יאמרו שקלרה ידי. אמר לפניו רייני הולך ומפייסן. אמר לו עתה תראה היקרך דברי, שלא ישמעו לך. הלך משה לפייסן אמר להם ביד' ה' תקלר, הן הכה לור ויזצו מים וגוי' הגם להם יוכל תת¹⁴, אמרו פשרה היא זו, אין צו כח למלאות שאלתנו. וזהו שנאמר וילא משה וידבר אל העם¹⁵, כיון שלא שמעו לו ויאסף שבועים איש וגוי¹⁵: (כה) ולא יספו. לא נתנבאו אלא אותו היום לצדו, כך מפורש בספרי, ואונקלוס תרגם ולא פסקין, שלא פסקה נבואה מהם: (כו) וישארו שני אנשים. מאותן שנבחרו. אמרו אין אנו כדאין לגדולה זו¹⁶: והמה בכתבים.

לצדי: (יח) התקדשו. הזמינו עלמכס לפורענות², וכן הוא אומר והקדישם ליום הריגה³: (כ) עד חדש ימים. זו כששרים שמתמלין על מותיכון ואחר כך נשמתן יולאה, וזרשעים הוא אומר הצשר עודנו צין שניכס⁴, כך היא שנויה בספרי, אבל צמכילתא⁵ שנויה חילוף הרשעים אוכלין ומנטערין שלושים יום והכשרים הצשר עודנו צין שניכס⁴: עד אשר יצא מאפכם. כתרומו די תקולון ציב, יכא דומה לכס כאילו אכלתם ממנו יותר מדאי עד שיולא ונגעל לחון דרך האף: והיה לכם לזרא. שתכיו מרחקין אותו יותר ממה שקרצתם². וצדברי רבי משה הדרשן ראיחי שיש לשון שקורין לחרצ זרא: את ה' אשר בקרבכם. אם לא שנטעתי שכינתי ציניכס, לא גצה לצצכס ליכנס לכל הדצרים הללו²: (כא) שש מאות אלף רגלי. לא חש למנות את הפרט שלשת אלפים היתרים⁶. ור' משה הדרשן פירש שלא צכו אלא אותו שילאו ממלרים: (כב) הצאן ובקר ישחט. זה אחד מארצבה דצרים⁷ שהיה רבי עקיבא דורש ואין רבי שמעון דורש כמותו. רבי עקיבא אומר שש מאות אלף רגלי, ואתה אמרת זשר אתן להם ואכלו חדש ימים⁸, הלאן ובקר וגוי⁹, הכל כמשמעו, מי יספיק להם, כענין שנאמר ומלא כדי גאולתו¹⁰. ואיזו קשה, זו או שמעו נא המורים¹¹, אלא לפי שלא אמר צרצים חיסך לו הכתוב ולא נפרע ממנו, וזו של מריבה היתה צגלווי, לפיכך לא חיסך לו הכתוב. רבי שמעון אומר חס ושלוס לא עלתה על דעתו של אותו לדיק כך, מי שכתוב צו

1 פסוק יד 2 ספרי 3 ירמיה יב, ג 4 פסוק לג 5 יוסע פ"ג 6 במדבר א, נו 7 ר"ה יח: 8 פסוק כא 9 פסוק כב 10 ויקרא כה, כו 11 במדבר כ, י 12 שם יב, ז 13 פסוק כג 14 תהלים עח, כ 15 פסוק כד 16 תנחומא בהעלותך יב

¹⁸ “You should say to the people, ‘Prepare yourselves for (punishment) tomorrow when you will eat meat, because you have cried into God’s ears, saying, “Who will give us meat to eat? We had it better in Egypt!” God will give you meat, and you will eat. ¹⁹ You will eat it not one day, not two days, not five days, not ten days, and not twenty days, ²⁰ but for a whole month, until it comes out of your nose and makes you sick. For you have despised God, Who is among you, and you cried before Him, saying, “Why did we leave Egypt?””

²¹ Moshe said, “It is a people of six hundred thousand on foot whom I am among and You’re saying, ‘I’ll give them meat to eat for a whole month!’ ²² Could enough sheep and cattle possibly be slaughtered for them? If all the fish of the sea were gathered for them, would it be enough for them?”

²³ God said to Moshe, “Is God’s hand too short? You’ll see if My word will be fulfilled for you, or not!”

²⁴ Moshe went out and told the people what God had said (but they did not listen to him).

(To carry out God’s first instruction), he assembled seventy men of the people’s elders, and stood them around the Tent. ²⁵ God came down in a cloud and spoke to him. He magnified the spirit that was upon him and placed (some of) it upon the seventy elders. When the spirit rested upon them, they became prophets, but it did not last (more than a day).

²⁶ (Meanwhile,) two men (of the nominated elders) had remained in the camp (because they felt that they were unworthy of greatness). One was called Eldad and the other Medad. The spirit (of prophecy nevertheless) rested upon them. They were among those written (in the nomination lottery), but they did not go out to the tent (with the others). Thus, they became prophets while in the camp.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How were candidates written in the lottery? (v. 26)

RASHI: All of them were written down, mentioned specifically by name, and [chosen] by lot. This is because the number [of 70 candidates split into] 12 tribes came to 6 per tribe, with the exception of 2 tribes who would receive only 5 each. Moshe said, “No tribe will listen to me to deduct an elder from its tribe.”

What did he do? He took 72 lots and wrote on 70 [of them] “elder” and 2 of them he left blank. He chose 6 men from each tribe, a total of 72, and he said to them, “Draw your lots from the box.”

Whoever picked [a lot saying] “elder” was sanctified. To the ones who picked a blank lot, he said, “God does not want you.”

● Why did Eldad and Medad “remain in the camp”? (v. 26)

TALMUD: According to one view, they feared failure and did not want to pick a blank lot, so they did not participate in the lottery.

Rabbi Shimon said that they felt they were not worthy of greatness, so even after winning the lottery they did not go to the tent to be appointed by Moshe (*Sanhedrin* 17a, according to Rashi).

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Sparks of Chasidus

“IT IS A PEOPLE...WHOM I AM AMONG” (v. 21)

Moshe and the Jewish people are like ‘head’ and ‘foot,’ as the verse states, ‘It is a people of six hundred thousand on foot whom I am among’ (v. 21). For all the Jewish people are like the ‘feet’ of Moshe, and Moshe is like their ‘head.’ And just like a person’s feet take his head to a place that the head would not be able to reach on its own, likewise, Moshe achieves additional spiritual greatness through the Jewish people (his ‘feet’).

“This is the implication of the verse, ‘It is a people of six hundred thousand on foot whom I am among,’ (literally, “Anochi is within him”), that through the people ‘on foot,’ the level of “Anochi” (God’s Essence, as revealed in the Ten Commandments) becomes revealed within him, i.e. within Moshe.”

(*Sefer Hama’amarim Melukat* vol. 6, p. 129—Free translation)

ELDAD AND MEDAD (v. 26)

The **Talmud** cites two dissenting views of our Sages why Eldad and Medad declined to participate in the lottery by which the 70 elders were picked—either because they feared rejection, or because they did not see themselves worthy of a position of leadership (Rabbi Shimon’s view).

What is the rationale behind their dispute?

THE EXPLANATION

When God revealed Himself to Moshe in the burning bush, the Torah relates that “Moshe hid his face because he was afraid to look at God” (*Shemos* 3:6). Our Sages debated whether Moshe’s attempt to shield himself from this prophetic revelation was praiseworthy or not:

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Korcha maintained that Moshe acted incorrectly. Thus, we find later that when Moshe asked God, “Show me, please, Your glory!” (*Shemos* 33:18), God punished Moshe by withholding Divine revelation from him, saying, “You will not be able to see My face” (*ibid.* 20). Rabbi Yehoshua ben Korcha explained that it was as if God were saying, “When I wanted, you didn’t want. Now that you want, I don’t want” (*Brachos* 7a).

בְּמִשְׁרֵיתָא: כו וְרַחֵם עוֹלָמָא וְחַי לְמִשְׁחָה
 וְאָמַר אֱלֹדֵד וּמִידֵד מִתְנַבְּאִין בְּמִשְׁרֵיתָא:
 כה וְאֵתְבּ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בַּר נֹון מְשֻׁמְשָׁנָה דְּמִשְׁחָה
 מְעוֹלְמוֹתֵיהּ וְאָמַר רַבּוּנֵי מִשְׁחָה אֶסְרִנּוּן:
 כט וְאָמַר לֵה מִשְׁחָה הִקְנַאתִי אֶת מִקְנֵי לִי
 רַעֲיָנָא פֻּון וִיהוּן כֹּל עֲמָא דִּינִי נְבִיאָן אֲרִי יִתָּן וְיִ
 יֵת רִוּחָא דְּנְבוּאָתָהּ עֲלֵיהוּן: ל וְאֵתְכַנְּשׁ מִשְׁחָה
 לְמִשְׁרֵיתָא הוּא וְסָבִי יִשְׂרָאֵל: לא וְרוּחָא נָטַל
 מִן קֳדָם וְיִ אֶפְרָח שְׁלוֹ מִן יִמָּא וְרַמָּא עַל
 מִשְׁרֵיתָא כְּמַחְלָד יוֹמָא לְכָא וְכְמַחְלָד יוֹמָא
 לְכָא סְחוּר סְחוּר לְמִשְׁרֵיתָא וּכְרוּם תְּרִתִּין
 אֲמִין עַל אֲפִי אֲרַעָא: לב וְקָם עֲמָא כֹּל יוֹמָא
 הַהוּא וְכָל לִילֵיא וְכָל יוֹמָא דְּבִתְרוּחֵי וְכַנְּשׁוּ
 יֵת שְׁלוֹ דְּאֲזַעֵר כְּנֶשׁ עֲשָׂרָא דְּגוֹרִין וּשְׁטַחוּ
 לְהוּן מְשֻׁטִּיחִין סְחוּר סְחוּר לְמִשְׁרֵיתָא:
 לג בְּסָרְא עַד כַּעַן בֵּין שְׁנֵיהוּן עַד לֹא פִסַּק
 וְרַגְוָא דִּי תִקְוֵי בְּעֲמָא וְקִטְל וְיִ בְּעֲמָא קִטְלוּ
 סָבִי לְחֻדָּא: לד וְקָרָא יֵת שְׁמָא דְּאֵתְרָא הַהוּא
 קִבְרֵי דְּמִשְׁאֲלֵי אֲרִי תִמָּן קִבְרוּ יֵת עֲמָא
 דְּשִׂאֲלוּ: לה מִקְבְּרֵי דְּמִשְׁאֲלֵי נָטְלוּ עֲמָא
 לְחֻצְרוֹת וְהוּן בְּחֻצְרוֹת: א וּמְלֵלַת מְרִים
 וְאֶהְרֹן בְּמִשְׁחָה עַל עֶסֶק אֶתְתָּא שְׁפָרְתָּא דִּי
 נָסִיב אֲרִי אֶתְתָּא שְׁפָרְתָּא דְּנָסִיב רַחִיק:
 ב וְאָמְרוּ הִלְחוּד בְּרַם בְּמִשְׁחָה מְלִיל וְיִ הִלָּא
 אֶף עֲמָנָא מְלִיל וּשְׁמִיעַ קֳדָם וְיִ: ג וְנִבְרָא
 מִשְׁחָה עֲנָתָן לְחֻדָּא מִכָּל אֲנָשָׂא דִּי עַל אֲפִי

כו וַיִּרְץ הַנָּעַר וַיִּגֵּד לְמֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹדֵד וּמִידֵד מִתְנַבְּאִים
 בְּמַחְנֶה: כה וַיַּעַן יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן־נֹון מִשְׁרַת מִשְׁחָה מִבְּחַרְיוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר
 אֲדֹנָי מִשְׁחָה כְּלָאִים: כט וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מֹשֶׁה הַמְּקַנָּא אֶתְהּ לִי וּמִי
 יִתָּן כָּל־עַם יְהוָה נְבִיאִים כִּי־יִתָּן יְהוָה אֶת־רוּחוֹ עֲלֵיהֶם:
 [ושביעי] ל וַיֹּאסֶף מֹשֶׁה אֶל־הַמַּחְנֶה הוּא וְזִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: לא וְרוּחַ
 נָטַע | מֵאֵת יְהוָה וַיִּגְזוּ שְׁלוּיִם מִן־הַיָּם וַיִּטְשׂ עַל־הַמַּחְנֶה כְּדַרְךְ
 יוֹם כֹּה וּכְדַרְךְ יוֹם כֹּה סְבִיבוֹת הַמַּחְנֶה וּכְאֻמָּתִים עַל־פְּנֵי
 הָאָרֶץ: לב וַיִּקָּם הָעָם כָּל־הַיּוֹם הַהוּא וְכָל־הַלַּיְלָה וְכָל | יוֹם
 הַמַּחְרָת וַיֹּאסְפוּ אֶת־הַשְּׁלוֹ הַמְּמַעִיט אֶסֶף עֲשָׂרָה חֲמֵרִים
 וַיִּשְׁטַחוּ לָהֶם שְׁטוֹחַ סְבִיבוֹת הַמַּחְנֶה: לג הַבָּשָׂר עוֹדְנָה בֵּין
 שְׁנֵיהֶם טָרִם יִכְרַת וְאֶף יְהוָה חָרָה בָּעַם וַיִּךְ יְהוָה בָּעָם מִכָּה
 רַבָּה מְאֹד: לד וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שֵׁם־הַמְּקוֹם הַהוּא קְבֻרוֹת הַתַּאֲוָה
 כִּי־שֵׁם קָבְרוּ אֶת־הָעָם הַמִּתְאֲוִים: לה מִקְבְּרוֹת הַתַּאֲוָה נָסְעוּ
 הָעָם חֻצְרוֹת וַיְהִיו בְּחֻצְרוֹת: פ יב א וַתְּדַבֵּר מְרִים וְאֶהְרֹן
 בְּמִשְׁחָה עַל־אֲדוֹת הָאִשָּׁה הַכַּשִּׁית אֲשֶׁר לָקַח כִּי־אִשָּׁה כַּשִּׁית
 לָקַח: ג וַיֹּאמְרוּ הֲרַק אֲדֹ־בְמִשְׁחָה דְּבַר יְהוָה הִלָּא גַם־בָּנוּ דְּבַר
 וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה: ג וְהָאִישׁ מִשְׁחָה עֵנוּ [ועניו] מְאֹד מִכָּל הָאָדָם

דש"י

חמריים! וישטחו. עשו אותן משטיחין משטיחין! (ג) טרם יכרת.
 כתרגומו עד לא פסק. דבר אחר אינו מספיק לפוסקו בשניו עד שנשמתו
 יולאח! (ה) ותדבר. אין דבור בכל מקום אלא לשון קשה, וכן הוא אומר
 דבר האיש אדוני הארץ אתנו קשות⁹, ואין אמירה בכל מקום אלא לשון
 תחנונים, וכן הוא אומר ויאמר אל נא אחי תרעו¹⁰, ויאמר שמעו נא דברי¹¹,
 כל נא לשון צקשה: ותדבר מרים ואהרן. היא פתחה בדבור תחילה,
 לפיכך הקדימה הכתוב תחלה, ומנין היתה יודעת מרים שפרש משה מן
 האשה, רצי נתן אומר, מרים היתה צלד לפורה בשעה שאמר למשה אלדד
 ומידד מתנבאים במחנה¹², כיון ששמעה לפורה, אמרה אוי לגשותיכן של אלו
 אם הם נזקקים לנצואה שיהיו פורשין מנשותיכן כדרך שפרש צעלי ממני,
 ומשם ידעה מרים והגידה לאהרן. ומה מרים שלא נתכוונה לגנותו, כך
 נענשה, קל וחומר למספר בגנותו של חזירו! האשה הכשית. מגיד שהכל
 מודים ציפיה! כשם שהכל מודים בשחרותו של כושי: כושית. בגימטריא
 יפת מראה: על אדות האשה. על אודות גירושיה: כי אשה כשית
 לקח. מה תלמוד לומר, אלא יש לך אשה נאה ציפיה ואינה נאה צמעשיה,
 צמעשיה ולא ציפיה, אצל זאת נאה בכל: האשה הכשית. על שם נוייה
 נקראת כושית כאדם הקורא את בנו נאה כושי, כדי שלא תשלוט בו עין
 רעה¹³: כי אשה כשית לקח. ופתה גרשה¹³: (ג) הרק אך. עמו לצדו
 דבר ה': הלא גם בנו דבר. ולא פירשנו מדרך ארץ! (ג) ענו. שפל וסבן:

במזכררים שצבם לסנהדרין, ונכתבו כולם נקוצים בשמות, וע"י גורל, לפי
 שהחשבון עולה ל"ג שבטים, ששה ששה לכל שבט ושבט חוץ משני שבטים
 שאין מגיע אליהם אלא חמשה חמשה. אמר משה, אין שבט שומע לי לפחות
 משבטו זקן אחד. מה עשה, נטל שבטים ושנים פתקין וכתב על שבטים זקן,
 ועל שנים חלק, וצרך מכל שבט ושבט ששה, והיו שבטים ושנים. אמר להם
 טלו פתקיכם מתוך קלפי, מי שעלה צידו זקן, נתקדש, ומי שעלה צידו חלק
 אמר לו המקום לא חפץ בך: (כז) וירץ הער. יש אומרים גרשום בן משה
 היה: (כח) בלאם. הטל עליהם לרכי לצור וחס כלים מאליהם². דבר אחר
 תנס אל בית הכלא, לפי שהיו מתנבאים משה מת ויהושע מכניס את
 ישראל לארץ! (כט) המקנא אתה לו. הקנאוי אתה לי, הקנאתי אתה
 מקנא: לו. כמו שבבבלי. כל לשון קנאה אדם הנותן לב על הדבר או לנקום
 או לעזור אנפרמני"ט בלע"ז, אוחז בעובי המשא: (ל) ויאסף משה. מפתח
 אהל מועד: אל המחנה. נכנסו איש לאלהו: ויאסף. לשון כניסה אל הבית,
 כמו ואספתו אל תוך ביתך³, ואז לכולם יצור ולא ידע מי אוספם⁴, למלך
 שלא הביא עליהם פורענות עד שנכנסו הדיקים איש לאלהו: (לא) ויגזו.
 ויפריח, וכן גז חיש⁵, וכן גזו ועצר⁶. ויטש. ויפשוט, כמו והגס נטושים
 על פני כל הארץ⁷, ונטשתין המדברה⁸. ובאמתים. פורחות בגובה עד שהן
 כנגד לבו של אדם, כדי שלא יהא עורח באסיפתן לא להגביה ולא לשחות!⁹:
 (לב) הממעיע. מי שאוסף פחות מכולם, העללים והחגרים, אסף עשרה

1 ספרי 2 סנהדרין יו. 3 דברים כב, ב. 4 תהלים טז, ז. 5 שם צ, י. 6 נחום א, יב. 7 שמואל א, לז, טז. 8 יחזקאל כט, ה. 9 בראשית מב, ל. 10 שם יז, ט. 11 פסוק ו. ספרי.
 12 במדבר יא, כז. 13 תנחומא צו, יג.

²⁷ The lad (Gershom, Moshe's son) ran to inform Moshe and said, "Eldad and Medad are saying prophecy in the camp!"

²⁸ Yehoshua the son of Nun, Moshe's servant from his youth, spoke up and said, "Moshe, my master, stop them!"

²⁹ Moshe said to him, "Are you being jealous on my behalf? If only all God's people were prophets, and God would place His spirit upon them!"

SEVENTH
READING

³⁰ Moshe (left the Tent of Meeting), entered the camp (and went to his private tent). He and the elders of Israel (did the same). ³¹ God made a wind blow which made quails fly from the sea and (soon) they were spread all over the camp, (the distance of) a day's journey this way and a day's journey that way, around the camp. (They were flying at a height of) around two cubits* above the ground (to make catching them easy). ³² The people were busy all that day, all night, and the next day, gathering the quails. (Even) the one who gathered the fewest collected ten chomers**. They spread them around the camp in numerous layers.

³³ The meat was still between their teeth and had not yet disappeared, when God's anger raged against the people, and God struck the people with a very severe plague.

³⁴ He named that place Kivros-Hata'avah ("Graves of Craving"), for there they buried the people who craved.

³⁵ From Kivros Hata'avah the people traveled to Chatzairos, and they stayed in Chatzairos.

❧ MIRIAM'S CRITICISM OF MOSHE ❧

I2 **M**iriam and Aharon spoke critically about Moshe regarding (his divorce***) from the woman of renowned beauty that he had married, for he had married a woman of renowned beauty. ² They said, "Has God only spoken to Moshe? Hasn't He spoken to us too (yet we continue our marriages normally)?" And God heard.

³ The man, Moshe, was extremely humble, more so than any person on the face of the earth.

TORAS MENACHEM

Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmani in the name of Rabbi Yonasan dissented, and argued that Moshe acted correctly at the burning bush by hiding his face. He was thus rewarded with a radiant face, when coming down from Mount Sinai (*Shemos* 34:29).

It could be argued that this was the basis of the *Talmud's* dispute here, concerning Eldad and Medad:

The first view in the *Talmud* held in accordance with the view of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Korcha, that it is inappropriate to refuse a prophetic experience, because the very fact that such an opportunity is granted is a sign that God deems the person fit for prophecy. Therefore, this opinion maintained that Eldad and Medad must have "remained in the camp" due to a fear of drawing a lot.

However, Rabbi Shimon held in accordance with the view of Rabbi Yonasan, that rejecting an opportunity for Divine revelation is a genuine act of humility. Therefore he maintained that Eldad and Medad intentionally missed the opportunity to share some of the "spirit of Moshe" (v. 25), because they felt that they were not worthy.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, p. 324)

❧ Sparks of Chasidus ❧

"MOSHE WAS EXTREMELY HUMBLE" (12:3)

Even though Moshe was fully aware of his own greatness, which surpassed that of every other human being, nevertheless, he was the most humble of all men. This is because he knew that the qualities he possessed with which he surpassed everybody else were given to him by God (and not through his own personal accomplishment)...and he thought that if another person had been given such abilities, they too would have reached the same degree of greatness. If fact, Moshe thought, if another person had been give these talents, he would have put them to better use. Therefore, Moshe was "extremely humble, more so than any person on the face of the earth."

(Sefer Hama'amarim 5710, p. 236—Free translation)

*Equivalent to 0.96 meters or 3 feet and 2 inches. **Equivalent to 249 liters or 66 gallons. ***Here *Rashi* writes that Moshe divorced his wife, whereas in previous instances *Rashi* stated that he merely "separated" from her (above 12:1; *ibid* 2, 4 & 8). This indicates that, according to *Rashi*, there were two phases: First he separated from her and later on, he divorced her—as *Rashi* stresses here, "now he divorced her" (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 145, note at foot of page).

אָרְעָא: ד וַאֲמַר יי בְּתַבְּרָא לְמֹשֶׁה וּלְאַהֲרֹן
וּלְמִרְיָם פּוֹקוּ תְּלַת־יָבוֹן לְמִשְׁכַּן זְמַנָּא וּנְפַקוּ
תְּלַת־יְהוּדָיִם: ה וְאַתְּגַלִּי יי בְּעִמּוּדָא דְעֵינָא וְקָם
בְּתַרְע מִשְׁכַּנָּא וְקָרָא אֶהְרֹן וּמִרְיָם וּנְפַקוּ
תְּרִיִּיהוּן: ו וַאֲמַר שְׁמַעוּ כְּעַן פְּתִיחֵי אַם יְהוֹן
לְכוּן נְבִיאִין אֲנָא יי בְּחֻזִּין אֲנָא מִתְּגַלִּי לְהוֹן
בְּחַלְמִין אֲנָא מְמַלְל עִמָּהוּן: ז לֹא כֵן
עֲבַדִּי מֹשֶׁה בְּכָל־בֵּיתִי נֶאֱמַן הוּא: ח מְמַלְל
עִם מְמַלְל מְלַלְנָא עִמָּה וּבְחִיּוּ וְלֹא בְּחֻדָּן
וּדְמוּת יְקָרָא דִּי מְסַתְּפַל וּפָא דִּין לֹא
דְחַלְתָּן לְמַלְלָא בְּעַבְדֵי בְּמֹשֶׁה: ט וּתְקִיף
רְגֵזָא דִּי בְּהוֹן וְאַסְתַּלְק: י וְעֵינָא אֲסַתְּלַק
מִעֻלּוֹי מִשְׁכַּנָּא וְהָא מִרְיָם חִנְרָא כְּתִלְנָא
וְאַתְּפִנִי אֶהְרֹן לֹת מִרְיָם וְהָא סְגִירַת: יא
וַאֲמַר אֶהְרֹן לְמֹשֶׁה בְּכַעַן רַבּוּנִי לֹא כְּעַן
תְּשׁוּי עֲלֵנָא חוּבָה דְאַמְפִּשְׁנָא וְדִי סְרָחְנָא:

אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה: ס ד וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה פְּתָאֵם אֶל־מֹשֶׁה
וְאֶל־אַהֲרֹן וְאֶל־מִרְיָם צֵאוּ שְׁלֹשְׁתֵּכֶם אֶל־אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וַיֵּצְאוּ
שְׁלֹשְׁתָּם: ה וַיֵּרֶד יְהוָה בְּעִמּוּד עָנָן וַיַּעֲמֵד פֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל וַיִּקְרָא
אֶהְרֹן וּמִרְיָם וַיֵּצְאוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם: ו וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמַעוּנָא דְבַרִּי אִם־
יְהִיֶה נְבִיאֵיכֶם יְהוָה בְּמִרְאָה אֱלֹוֹ אֶתְוַדַּע בְּחֵלּוֹם אֲדַבֵּר־בּוֹ:
ז לֹא־כֵן עֲבַדִּי מֹשֶׁה בְּכָל־בֵּיתִי נֶאֱמַן הוּא: ח פֶּה אֶל־פֶּה
אֲדַבֵּר־בּוֹ וּמִרְאָה וְלֹא בְּחִידָת וּתְמִנַת יְהוָה יִבְיֹט וּמִדּוּעַ לֹא
יֵרְאֶתֶם לְדַבֵּר בְּעַבְדֵי בְּמֹשֶׁה: ט וַיַּחֲרֵאֲף יְהוָה בָּם וַיִּלְדָּ:
י וְהָעֵנָן סָר מֵעַל הָאֹהֶל וְהִנֵּה מִרְיָם מְצַרְעַת כְּשֶׁלֶג וַיַּפֵּן אֶהְרֹן
אֶל־מִרְיָם וְהִנֵּה מְצַרְעַת: יא וַיֹּאמֶר אֶהְרֹן אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בִּי אֲדֹנָי
אֶל־נָא תִשֶׁת עֲלֵינוּ חַטָּאת אֲשֶׁר נִוְאלָנוּ וְאֲשֶׁר חָטָאנוּ:

דש"י

וחזיון: (ח) פה אל פה. אמרתי לו לפרוש מן האשה? והיכן אמרתי לו, צסיני לך אמור להם שצבו לכם לאהליכם,⁸ ואתה פה עמוד עמדי? ומראה ולא בחידות. ומראה זה מראה דבור, שאני מפרש לו דבורי צמרצמית פניס שצבו ואינו סותמו לו בחידות, כענין שנאמר ליחזקאל חוד חידה וגו'¹⁰, יכול מראה שכינה, תלמוד לומר לא תוכל לראות את פני¹¹: ותמנת ה' יביט. זה מראה אחרים, כענין שנאמר וראית את אחורי¹²: בעבדי במשה. אינו אומר צעדי משה, אלא צעדי צמשה, צעדי אף על פי שאינו משה, צמשה אפילו אינו עבדי, כדאי הייתם לירא מפניו, וכל שכן שכוהן עבדי ועבד מלך מלך, היה לכם לומר אין המלך אובצו חנס. ואם תאמרו אינו מכיר צמעשו, זו קשה מן הראשונה: (ט) ויחר אף ה' בם וילך. מאחר שכודיעם סרחונם גזר עליהם נדוי, קל וחומר לצער ודם שלא יכעוס על חזירו עד שיודיעו סרחונו: (י) והענן סר. ואחר כך וכנה מרים מלורעת כשלג, משל למלך שאמר לפדגוג, רדח את בני, אזל לא תרדנו עד שאלך מאלכך, שרמתי עליו: (יא) נואלנו. כתרנומו לשון אויל:

(ד) פתאום. נגלה עליהם פתאום, והם עמאים צדך ארץ, והיו צועקים מים מים, להודיעם שיפה עשה משה שפירש מן האשה, מאחר שנגלית עליו שכינה תדיר ואין עת קצועה לדבור: צאו שלשתכם. מגיד ששלשתן נקראו צדבור אחד, מה שאי אפשר לפה לומר ולאזן לשמוע: (ה) בעמוד ענן. ילא יחיד, שלא כמדת צער ודם. מלך צער ודם כשיולא למלחמה יולא צאוכלוסין, וכשיולא לשלום יולא צמועטים, ומדת הקצ"ה יולא למלחמה יחיד, שנאמר ה' איש מלחמה³, ויולא לשלום צאוכלוסין, שנאמר רכב אלהים רבותים אלפי שנא⁴: ויקרא אהרן ומרים. שיהיו נמשכין ויולאין מן החצר לקראת הדבור: ויצאו שניהם. ומפני מה משכן והפרידן ממה, לפי שאומרים מקלת שצחו של אדם צפניו וכולו שלא צפניו, וכן מלינו צנת, שלא צפניו נאמר איש לדיק תמים⁵, וצפניו נאמר כי אוחך ראיתי לדיק לפני⁶. דבר אחר שלא ישמע צנויפתו של אהרן: (ו) שמעו נא דברי. אין נא אלא לשון צקשה: אם יהיה נביאכם. אם יהיו לכם נביאים: ה' במראה אליו אתודע. שכינת שמי אין נגלית עליו צאספקלריא המאירא אלא צחלוס

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How did Moshe differ from the other prophets? (v. 6-8)

RAMBAM: The other prophets received their prophecies in a dream or [supernatural] vision, whereas Moshe received his prophecy while awake and standing, as the verse states, "When Moshe would come into the Tent of Meeting to speak with (God), he would hear the voice speaking to him" (Bamidbar 7:89).

The other prophets received their prophecies by means of an angel, and therefore what they saw was a parable and riddle. But Moshe did not receive his prophecies through an angel, as the verse states, "It was I who told him, mouth to mouth" (v. 8); "God would speak to Moshe face to face" (Shemos 33:11); "He gazes at the image

of God" (v. 8). In other words, there was no parable; he saw the prophecy clearly without any parables or riddles. Thus the Torah testifies that he saw "in a vision, and not in riddles" (v. 8), that his prophecies were not riddles, but visions, which he perceived with utter clarity.

The other prophets were gripped by fear and terror when they received their prophecies, but Moshe was not. This is the meaning of the verse, "[God would speak to Moshe...] as a man would speak to his friend" (Shemos 33:11), i.e. just like a person is not scared to listen to the words of his friend, likewise, Moshe had the ability to receive his prophecies while remaining completely composed.

1 תנחומא צו, יג. 2 ספרי. 3 שמות טו, ג. 4 תהלים סז, יח. 5 בראשית ו, ט. 6 שם ז, א. 7 ספרי. 8 דברים ה, כו. 9 שם כז. 10 יחזקאל יז, ב. 11 שמות לג, כ. ספרי. 12 שמות לג, כג. ספרי.

⁴ God (appeared) suddenly to Moshe, Aharon and Miriam, and said “Go out, all three of you, to the Tent of Meeting!” and the three of them went out.

⁵ God came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the Tent. He called out, “Aharon! Miriam!” and they both went away (from Moshe, towards the entrance). ⁶ He said (to them privately, so that Moshe should not hear words of praise about himself), “Please listen to My words. When someone among you experiences prophecy, (I), God, will make Myself known to him (only) in a vision, or I will speak to him (merely) in a dream. ⁷ But this is not the case with My servant Moshe! Among my entire household, he is (the most) trusted. ⁸ It was I who told him, mouth to mouth (to separate from his wife), in a vision (of clarity, where every word was made known) and not in riddles. (When I speak to him) he gazes at the image of God (from behind). So why were you not afraid to speak about My servant, about Moshe?” ⁹ Then God became angry with them, and He left.

¹⁰ The cloud rose from above the Tent, and—look!—Miriam was afflicted with tzara’as, (as white) as snow. Then Aharon turned to Miriam and—look!—she was afflicted with tzara’as.

¹¹ Aharon said to Moshe, “Please, master, do not count it as a sin against us, for we sinned out of

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

None of the other prophets were able to receive prophecy whenever they wanted to, which was not the case with Moshe. Any time that he wished, the Divine spirit would envelop him and he would receive prophecy. He did not have to attune his thoughts to prepare himself, because he was always attuned and prepared, standing like a ministering angel. Therefore, he was able to receive prophecies at any time, as the verse states, “[Moshe said to them,] ‘Wait, and I will hear what God instructs concerning you’” (Bamidbar 9:8). Thus God promised him, “Go and say to them, ‘Return to your tents.’ You, however, must remain here with Me” (Devarim

5:27–28), which teaches you that whenever any of the other prophets had finished receiving prophecy they would return “to their tents,” meaning their physical lives, like everybody else, and therefore they did not separate from their wives. But Moshe, our teacher, did not return to his “first tent,” and separated himself from his wife, and all women, forever. His mind was always connected with [God], the Eternal Rock, and God’s glory never left him at all. His face emanated light, and he was as holy as the angels.

(Laws of Foundations of the Torah 7:6)

🌀 The Last Word 🌀

THE UNIQUE PROPHETIC ABILITIES OF MOSHE (v. 6-8)

In his Legal Code, **Rambam** goes to great lengths to describe the unique method by which Moshe received prophecy. However, at first glance, this seems to be of no practical relevance. Moshe’s prophecy is now history, so why should it be included in a practical Legal Code for all time? Even if one would claim that these laws are of significance for the Messianic era, when we will witness the resurrection of Moshe, nevertheless, it will then be possible to see him, and for that, one does not have to codify a law now.

However from this we can learn that in every generation—even before Moshe is resurrected—it is relevant to know that God communicates with people through prophecy in a way that can approach the perfection achieved by Moshe. Consequently, it is possible, at any time, that “I will establish for them a prophet like you” (Devarim 18:18), as **Rambam** clarifies, “We do not believe in the prophets who arise after Moshe merely because of supernatural signs...but because it is the directive of Moshe in the Torah” (Laws of Foundations of the Torah 8:2). Hence, every prophet is an extension of Moshe. (Only, in the expression of prophecy are there different levels, as **Rambam** explains)....

This is of particular relevance in the time we find ourselves, immediately prior to the coming of Mashiach, as **Rambam** writes that “prophecy will return to the Jewish people...and there is no doubt that the return of prophecy is a prelude to Mashiach” (Epistle to Yemen, ch.3). This ‘prelude’ is the prophetic powers of Mashiach himself (who is “a tremendous prophet, approaching the level of Moshe”—Laws of Teshuvah 9:2), as our Sages drew the comparison, “The first redeemer (Moshe) is like the last redeemer.” In every generation there is one individual who is capable of this task. Consequently, it is imperative to be aware of the ruling, (even now before the actual Redemption), that there exists the phenomenon of open prophecy by Mashiach himself, before the Redemption takes place, which is a foretaste and a beginning of the full expression of prophecy that will take place after the Redemption.

Prophecy is not an innovation that will take place after the Redemption, but it begins prior to that. For this reason, **Rambam** included the laws of prophecy, and that of Moshe’s prophecy, in his Legal Code, which is binding at all times.

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shoftim 5751)

יב לא כען תתרחק דא מביננא ארי אסתנא
 היא צלי כען על בסרא מיתא הדין די בה
 ויתסי: יג וצלי משה קדם יי למימר אלהא
 בבעו אפי כען יתה: יד ואמר יי למשה ואלו
 אבוהא מנוף נזוף בה הלא תתפלם שבקא
 יומין תסתגר שבקא יומין מברא למשריתא
 ובתר בן תתפגשו: טו ואסתגרת מרים מברא
 למשריתא שבקא יומין ועמא לא נטל עד
 דאתכנשת מרים: טז ובתר בן נטלו עמא
 מחצרות ושרו במדברא דפארן: פ פ פ

יב אֶל־נָא תְּהִי כַּמֶּת אֲשֶׁר בְּצִאתוֹ מִרְחֵם אָמוֹ וַיֵּאכַל חֲצִי
 בְּשָׂרוֹ: יג וַיִּצְעַק מֹשֶׁה אֶל־יְהוָה לֵאמֹר אֵל נָא רַפָּא נָא לָהּ: פ
 [מפמיר] יד וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאַבְיָה יָרֵךְ יָרֵךְ בְּפִנְיָהּ הֲלֵא
 תִּפְלֵם שְׁבַעַת יָמִים תִּסְגַּר שְׁבַעַת יָמִים מְחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה וְאַחַר
 תֵּאָסֶף: טו וְתִסְגַּר מְרִים מְחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה שְׁבַעַת יָמִים וְהָעַם לֹא
 נִסַּע עַד־הָאָסֶף מְרִים: טז וְאַחַר נָסְעוּ הָעָם מִחֲצֵרוֹת וַיַּחֲנוּ

בְּמִדְבַר פָּאֲרָן: פ פ פ

קל"ו פסוקים, מהללא"ל סימן.

רש"י

משה לפני ה' לאמר וגו'⁵, מה תלמוד לומר לאמר, השיבני אם גואלם אתה
 אם לאו, עד שהשיבו עתה תראה וגו'⁶. כיוצא בו וידבר משה אל ה' לאמר
 יפקד ה' אלהי הרוחות לכל בשר⁷. כיוצא בו ואתחנן אל ה' צעת הדין לאמר,
 השיבו רב לך⁸: רפא נא לה. מפני מה לא האריך משה בתפלה, שלא יהיו
 ישראל אומרים אחותו עומדת בלרה והוא עומד ומרבה בתפלה². (דבר אחר
 שלא יאמרו ישראל שבזיל אחותו הוא מאריך בתפלה, אבל שבזילנו אינו
 מאריך בתפלה): (יד) ואביה ירק ירק בפניה. ואם אביה הראה לה פנים
 זועפות הלא תכלם שבעת ימים, קל וחומר לשיכיה י"ד יום, הלא דיו לבא
 מן הדין להיות כנדון, לפיכך אף בזיפתי תסגר שבעת ימים⁹: ואחר
 תאסף. אומר אני כל האסיפות האמורות בזמורעים על שם שהוא משולח
 מחוץ למחנה, וכשהוא נרפא נאסף אל המחנה לכך כתוב בו אסיפה לשון
 הכנסה: (טו) והעם לא נסע. זה הכבוד חלק לה המקום שבזיל שעה אחת
 שנתעבד למשה כשהושלך ליאור, שנאמר ותחנן אחותו מרחוק וגו'¹⁰:

חסלת פרשת בהעלותך

(יב) אל נא תהי. אחותנו זו: במת. שהמלורע חשוב כמת¹, מה מת מטמא
 צביאה, אף מלורע מטמא צביאה²: אשר בצאתו מרחם אמו. אמנו היה
 לו לומר, הלא שכינה הכתוב. וכן חצי בשרו, חצי בשרנו היה לו לומר, הלא
 שכינה הכתוב. אשר מאחר שילאה מרחם אמנו היא לנו כאילו נאכל חצי
 בשרנו, כענין שנאמר כי אחינו בשרנו הוא³. ולפי משמעו אף הוא נראה כן,
 אין ראוי ללח להניח את אחותו להיות כמת: אשר בצאתו. מאחר שילא זה
 מרחם אמו של זה שיש כח צידו לעזור ואינו עוזרו, הרי נאכל חצי בשרו,
 שאחיו בשרו הוא. דבר אחר אל נא תכי כמת, אם אינך רופאה בתפלה, מי
 מסגירה ומי מטהרה, אני אי אפשר לראותה, שאני קרוב ואין קרוב רואה
 את הנגעים, וכהן אחר אין בעולם, וזהו אשר בלאתו מרחם אמו: (יג) אל
 נא רפא נא לה. בא הכתוב ללמדך דרך ארץ, שהשואל דבר מחזירו לריך
 לומר שנים או שלשה דברי תחנונים ואחר כן יבקש שאלותיו: לאמר. מה
 תלמוד לומר, אמר לו השיבני אם אתה מרפא אותה אם לאו, עד שהשיבו
 ואביה ירק ירק וגו'⁴. רבי אלעזר בן עזריה אומר בארבעה מקומות² בקש
 משה מלפני הקב"ה להשיבו אם יעשה שאלותיו אם לאו, כיוצא בו וידבר

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did the people not travel until Miriam was brought back? (v. 15)

RASHI: This honor was accorded her by God because of the time she remained with Moshe when he was cast into the river, as the verse states, "His sister stood by from afar, etc." (Shemos 2:4).

foolishness. ¹² Don't let her (remain a tzara'as sufferer, who is a source of ritual impurity) like the dead! (When a person's sister, who) comes out of his mother's womb, (is afflicted) half his (own) flesh is consumed!"

¹³ Moshe cried out to God, saying, "Please, God! Please heal her!"

MAFTIR ¹⁴ God said to Moshe, "If her father were to spit in her face (angrily), wouldn't she be humiliated (and not show herself) for seven days? (All the more so now that God has become angry with her) let her be quarantined outside the camp for seven days. Afterwards, she may be brought back."

¹⁵ Miriam was quarantined outside the camp for seven days.

The people did not travel until Miriam was brought back. ¹⁶ Then the people departed from Chatzairos, and they camped in the desert of Paran.

THE HAFTARAH FOR BEHA'ALOSCHA IS ON PAGE 298.

TORAS MENACHEM

🕯️ MIRIAM'S HONOR (v. 15)

In his commentary to verse 15, *Rashi* explains that it was an honor for Miriam that the camp did not travel for seven days, until she recovered from *tzara'as*.

However, the notion that Miriam was "honored" by not being left alone in the desert is difficult to understand. For surely it would have *endangered Miriam's life* to remain alone in the desert for a week? How, then, could this be described as a mere "honor"?

THE EXPLANATION

Miriam's cure from *tzara'as* was dependent on her being "outside the camp for seven days" (v. 14). While journeying, this would have simply been impossible, since "the camp" only exists while the Jewish people are stationary.

Thus, if they would have traveled within Miriam's seven-day quarantine period, she would have to join them, and during that time she would not have been able to spend any days "outside the camp," and her cure from *tzara'as* would have been delayed. Therefore, an "honor was accorded her by God," that the camp was not commanded to travel during these seven days, to keep Miriam's period of contamination to the minimum.

Why was this an appropriate reward for "the time she remained with Moshe when he was cast into the river"?

By remaining with Moshe, Miriam succeeded in securing a Jewish wetnurse for her brother (*Shemos* 2:7). While eventually Pharaoh's daughter would have herself concluded that a Jewish wetnurse was

necessary (since "they passed him to several Egyptian women to nurse and he would not nurse"—*Rashi* *ibid.*), Miriam nevertheless succeeded in finding an appropriate wetnurse for Moshe *without delay*. Therefore, Miriam was rewarded that her recovery from *tzara'as* was not delayed by the camp's journeying.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 132ff.)

🕯️ The Last Word 🕯️

"At the conclusion of this week's portion, the Torah tells us that the whole people waited for Miriam and did not move without her. Thus, when the Jewish people are on the move, it is not sufficient that Moshe and Aharon should accompany them; Miriam must also be there. Without Miriam, the people are stalled!

"We are living at a time when our people cannot move forward towards the Divinely promised 'rest and inheritance' without active participation of our Jewish women in the work of spreading Torah and *mitzvos* in the daily life. In every branch of Jewish life, especially in the field of offering an uncompromising Jewish education, Jewish women and girls must fulfill the task which Divine Providence has bestowed upon them."

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe to the Annual Convention of *Neshei uBnos Chabad* 5724—Free Translation)



Parshas Beha'aloscha contains 3 positive *mitzvos* & 2 prohibitions

1. To offer the Second Pesach sacrifice on the fourteenth of Iyar [9:11].
2. To eat the Second Pesach sacrifice with matzah and bitter herbs [9:11].
3. Not to leave anything over until the next day of the Second Pesach offering [9:12].
4. Not to break any of the bones of the Second Pesach offering [9:12].
5. To sound trumpets in the Temple, and at battle [10:9-10].



parshas Shelach

פָּרַשְׁתֵּי שְׁלַח

🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

Parshas Shelach is divided, generally speaking, into two sections. The first, which spans chapters 13 and 14, is a detailed narrative of the sin of the spies. In the following section, chapter 15, the subject matter changes completely, as the Torah turns to discuss a number of different *mitzvos*: meal-offerings and libations, *challah*, atonement sacrifices, *Shabbos* and *tzitzis*. Nevertheless, the **entire** Parsha is known simply as “Shelach,” which means “send,” referring to the sending of the spies.

This begs the question: The sending of the spies is, at first glance, history, whereas the *mitzvos* at the end of the Parsha are *eternally* relevant. So why was the Parsha named after the sin of the spies, which happened in the past, rather than its *mitzvos*, which are relevant eternally?

Of course, the simple answer to this question is that the Parsha acquired its name from its opening passage. But since an entity’s name is a reflection of its essence, there must be a more meaningful explanation why the entire Parsha, including its important laws, was named *Shelach*.

The sin of the spies was not, as it may first seem, their report that the Land of Israel harbored a formidable enemy—“*the people who live in the Land are (extraordinarily) powerful. The cities are huge and well fortified*” (13:28). For they were sent by Moshe to collect information, and what they reported was true. Rather, their sin was the *conclusion* that they added, that God’s command to conquer the Land was, in their opinion, not possible:

“We are unable to go up against the people, for they are stronger than us” (v. 31).

Clearly, God’s promise to enter the Land was going to come true, regardless of whether the Jewish people were going to enjoy a natural or supernatural victory. The command “not to *rely* on a miracle” (*Pesachim* 64b) means that the Jewish people were required to make logistical and tactical plans for their war, *in case* God wished to send them a victory garbed in nature. And this necessitated the sending of spies, to gather information.

The spies’ mistake was that the fulfillment of God’s command is not *dependent* on finding a practical solution. We must “not rely on a miracle” to *exempt* us from making the effort to find a natural means through which God might send salvation. But if no such means can be found then we must indeed rely on a miracle, because the alternative is that God’s command will not be carried out, and that is unacceptable.

This is a fundamental premise upon which our approach to observing all the *mitzvos* should be based: *That God’s command to a person logically includes a promise that it will be possible for the person to carry out that command.* Thus, the whole Parsha (including its eternal *mitzvos*) is named after the incident of the spies, to remind us that God gives us the ability to fulfill all His *mitzvos*—something we should bear in mind constantly.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 13, p. 39ff.)

א ומליל יי עם משה למימר: ב שלח לך גבריו ויאללון ית ארעא דכנען די אנא יהב לבני ישראל גברא חד גברא חד לשבטא דאכהתוהי תשלחון כל רבא דבהון: ג ושלח יתהון משה ממדברא דפארן על מימרא דיי בלהון גבריו רישי בני ישראל אנון: ד ואלין שמהתהון לשבטא דראובן שמוע בר זבור: ה לשבטא דשמעון שפט בר חורי: ו לשבטא דיהודה כלב בר יפנה: ז לשבטא דיששכר יגאל בר יוסף: ח לשבטא דאפרים הושע בן-נון: ט לשבטא דבנימין פלטי בר רפוא: י לשבטא דובולן נדיאל בר סודי: יא לשבטא דיוסף דמנשה נדי בר סוסי: יב לשבטא

יג א וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: ב שלח-לך אנשים ויתרו את-ארץ כנען אשר-אני נתן לבני ישראל איש אחד איש אחד למטה אבותיו תשלחו כל נשיא בהם: ג ושלח אתם משה ממדבר פארן על-פי יהוה כלם אנשים ראשי בני ישראל המה: ד ואלה שמותם למטה ראובן שמוע בן-זבור: ה למטה שמעון שפט בן-חורי: ו למטה יהודה כלב בן-יפנה: ז למטה יששכר יגאל בן-יוסף: ח למטה אפרים הושע בן-נון: ט למטה בנימין פלטי בן-רפוא: י למטה זבולן נדיאל בן-סודי: יא למטה יוסף למטה מנשה נדי בן-סוסי: יב למטה דן עמיאל

רש"י

נמך בשכינה. אמר אני אמרתי להם שהיא טובה, שנאמר עלה אתכם מעני מצרים וגו', חייבם שאני נותן להם מקום לטעות דצדרי המרגלים למען לא יירשבו! (ג) על פי ה'. זרשותו, שלא עכז על ידו: בלם אנשים. כל אנשים צמקרא לשון חשיבות⁴, ואותה שעה כשרים היו:

(3) שלח לך אנשים. למה נסמכה פרשת מרגלים לפרשת מרים, לפי שלקחה על עסקי דבה שדברה בחייה, ורשעים הללו ראו ולא לקחו מוסר¹: שלח לך. לדעתך, אני איני מנזה לך, אם תראה שלח, לפי שצאו ישראל ואמרו נשלחה אנשים לפנינו, כמה שנאמר ותקרבון אלי כלכם וגו'², ומשה

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the story of the spies appear here? (v. 1ff)

RASHI: Why does the section dealing with the spies follow the section dealing with Miriam? Because she was punished for being preoccupied with speech, for speaking about her brother, and these wicked people saw [what happened to her], but did not learn a lesson.

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 MIRIAM AND THE SPIES (RASHI v. 1)

In his comment to verse 1, *Rashi* explains why the Torah placed the section dealing with the sin of the spies immediately after the account of Miriam's sin. This prompts the following questions:

- a.) The spies were sent out on the 29th of Sivan (*Rashi* to *Devarim* 1:2) immediately after Miriam's period of quarantine was complete, on the 28th of Sivan.* So why does *Rashi* ask, "Why does the section dealing with the spies follow the section dealing with Miriam"? Surely, the reason is obvious, because one event occurred straight after the other.
- b.) Why does *Rashi* write that Miriam was "punished over matters of speech," and not simply, "punished for *loshon hara* (slander)"?

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi was not troubled here by a specific problem with our verse, but rather, with a general question regarding the sin of the spies, at the literal level. And this question can be answered, explained *Rashi*, through

understanding why the sin of the spies is recorded immediately after the sin of Miriam.

(Of course, the reader will only have this question *after* reading the entire section dealing with the spies, and not here at the beginning of the *Parsha*. Nevertheless, *Rashi* chose to address the matter here, because it is here that the solution is to be found.)

Rashi was troubled by the general question: What sin did the spies commit? They were commissioned to explore the Land and report what they saw, and that is precisely what they did. Even when they reported that the inhabitants of the Land of Israel were extremely powerful, and they could not imagine how the battle could be won, *they were telling the truth*, as we see from the fact that they were not accused by Calev of lying.** Why, then, were they punished?

Rashi answers that this matter can be clarified by addressing another question: "Why does the section dealing with the spies follow the section dealing with Miriam?"

*The departure from Mount Sinai took place on the 20th of Iyar (*Bamidbar* 10:11 and *Rashi* *ibid.*). The journey to *Kivros Hata'avah* took one day (*Rashi* *ibid.* v. 33), so they would have arrived that night, the eve of the 21st of Iyar. They remained there for 30 days (*Rashi* to *Devarim* 1:2). They would thus have departed *Kivros Hata'avah* on the 21st of Sivan, and arrived in *Chatzairo*s (*Bamidbar* 11:35) that evening, the eve of the 22nd of Sivan. Miriam then slandered Moshe, and she was quarantined for seven days (including the 22nd), taking them to the morning of the 28th. They departed immediately, and would have arrived in the desert of Paran that evening, the 29th of Sivan. Thus, since *Rashi* writes that the spies were sent on the 29th of Sivan (*Devarim* 1:2), it follows that they were sent straight after Miriam's quarantine, probably on the morning of the 29th (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 1, note 6). **At first glance, their sin appears to have been their conclusion that the conquest of the Land was not possible: "We are unable to go up against the people, for

🌀 MOSHE SENDS SPIES TO INSPECT THE LAND 🌀

13 **G**od spoke to Moshe, saying, ² “Send out men for yourself to explore the Land of Cana’an, which I am giving to the children of Israel. Send one man for each paternal tribe. Each one should be a leader among them.”

³ Moshe sent them, by the word of God, from the desert of Paran. All of them were men of distinction. They were the heads of the children of Israel. ⁴ These were their names:

For the tribe of Re’uvain, Shamu’a the son of Zakur.

⁵ For the tribe of Shimon, Shafat the son of Chori.

⁶ For the tribe of Yehudah, Calev the son of Yefuneh.

⁷ For the tribe of Yissachar, Yigal the son of Yosef.

⁸ For the tribe of Efrayim, Hoshe’a the son of Nun.

⁹ For the tribe of Binyamin, Palti the son of Rafu.

¹⁰ For the tribe of Zevulun, Gadiail the son of Sodi.

¹¹ For the tribe of Yosef, the tribe of Menasheh, Gadi the son of Susi.

¹² For the tribe of Dan, Amiail the son of Gemali.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did God say “send out men *for yourself*” (v. 2-3)

RASHI: [God was saying, “Send them] according to your own understanding. I am not commanding you, but if you wish, you may send... [Nevertheless they were sent], “by the word of God” (v. 3), with His consent. He did not stop it.

TORAS MENACHEM

Although the sin of the spies followed immediately after Miriam’s sin—which is a good reason for one to follow the other in Torah—in this case, however, it would have been more appropriate to record some other event between them. For by describing two sins of a similar nature one after the other, the reader may be left with the impression that Miriam’s sin was similar *in severity* to the sin of the spies (and she only received a lesser punishment because she did not cause others to sin too). So *Rashi* asks: “Why does the section dealing with the spies follow the section dealing with Miriam,” when there is *no comparison* between the severity of these two sins?

Rashi answers: “Because she was punished for being preoccupied with speech, for speaking about her brother, and these wicked people saw [what happened to her], but did not learn a lesson.” In other words, while it is true that “these wicked people” committed a sin of immense proportions, whereas Miriam’s oversight was relatively minor, nevertheless, the Torah records both of them together to explain why the spies’ sin was indeed so severe—because they should have learned a lesson from Miriam. While the two sins differ greatly in *gravity*, they did represent a similar mistake of judgment; so having witnessed Miriam’s sin, and her subsequent punishment, the spies were tremendously irresponsible in allowing themselves to repeat a similar mistake.

they are stronger than us” (v. 31), for the spies were commissioned to *gather* information, and not to *decide* whether the conquest was possible or not. However, while this is an acceptable explanation at the homiletic level (see “Name of the Parsha”), at the literal level it could be argued that even the conclusion of the spies was not a sin. For the purpose of their mission was, ultimately, to assess the feasibility (without miracles) of conquering the Land, and in all likelihood it was indeed true that the conquest was impossible in the natural order.

🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

“SEND OUT MEN FOR YOURSELF” (v. 2)

A life of Jewish observance incorporates two elements: a.) Following direct commands, specified in the Code of Jewish Law. b.) In those areas which are not dictated by Jewish Law, we must use our own discretion to determine what is the most appropriate action—as God told Moshe here (see *Classic Questions*). Each approach has its own unique advantage: By issuing Divine commands, God chooses us as His partner, despite the fact that we are so infinitely inferior to Him. The command thus makes a bridge that connects us with God in a way that would not otherwise be possible.

However, with a relationship consisting of commands alone, we would remain a passive “inferior partner,” who is always told by the “Senior Partner” what to do. Therefore, part of our mission in this world is left to our own discretion, so that we can become an active “equal partner” with God, so to speak, making some of the decisions for ourselves, while at the same time succeeding in pleasing our “Senior Partner.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 13, pp. 42-3; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shelach* 5749)

דָּדוֹ עִמְיָאֵל בַּר גַּמְלִי יֵי לְשִׁבְטָא דְאִשְׁרֵי סְתוּר בַּר מִיכָאֵל: יֵי לְשִׁבְטָא דְנִפְתָּלִי נַחֲבִי בַר וּפְסִי: טו לְשִׁבְטָא דְגַד גְּאוּאֵל בַּר מִכִּי: טז אֲלֵינ שְׁמַהֲת גְּבַרְיָא דִּי שְׁלַח מִשָּׁה לְאֶלְלָא יַת אַרְעָא וּקְרָא מִשָּׁה לְהוֹשִׁיעַ בַּר נֹון יְהוֹשֻׁעַ: יז וְשְׁלַח יַתְהוֹן מִשָּׁה לְאֶלְלָא יַת אַרְעָא דְכְנַעַן וְאָמַר לְהוֹן סְקוּ דָא בְּדְרוּמָא וְתִסְקוּן לְטוּרָא: יח וְתַחֲוּוּן יַת אַרְעָא מָה הִיא וְיַת עֲמָא דִּיתַב עֲלָהּ הַתְקִיפוּ הוּא אִם חֲלָשׁ הַזְעַר הוּא אִם סַנִּי: יט וּמָא אַרְעָא דִּי הוּא יַתֵּב בַּהּ הִטְבָּא הִיא אִם בִּישָׂא וּמָא קְרוּיָא דִּי הוּא יַתֵּב בְּהוֹן הַכְּפֻצְחִין אִם בְּכַרְבִּין: כ וּמָה אַרְעָא הַעֲתִירָא הִיא אִם מְסַכְנָא הָאִית בַּהּ אֵילָנִין אִם לֹא וְתַתְקַפּוּן וְתִסְבּוּן מֵאַבָּא דְאַרְעָא יוֹמִיָא יוֹמִי בְּפוּרֵי עֲנָבִין: כא וְסִלְקוּ וְאֵלִילוּ יַת אַרְעָא מִפְּדֻבְרָא דְצִין עַד רְחוֹב לְמִטֵּי חֲמָת: כב וְסִלְקוּ בְּדְרוּמָא וְאָתָא עַד

בְּן־גַּמְלִי: יג לְמִטָּה אֲשֶׁר סְתוּר בֶּן־מִיכָאֵל: יד לְמִטָּה נִפְתָּלִי נַחֲבִי בֶן־וּפְסִי: טו לְמִטָּה גַּד גְּאוּאֵל בֶּן־מִכִּי: טז אֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־שָׁלַח מֹשֶׁה לְתוֹר אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּקְרָא מֹשֶׁה לְהוֹשִׁיעַ בֶּן־נֹון יְהוֹשֻׁעַ: יז וַיִּשְׁלַח אֹתָם מֹשֶׁה לְתוֹר אֶת־אָרֶץ כְּנַעַן וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם עֲלוּ זֶה בְּנֶגֶב וְעַלִּיתֶם אֶת־הַהָר: יח וּרְאִיתֶם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ מַה־הִיא וְאֶת־הָעָם הַיֹּשֵׁב עִלֶּיהָ הַחֲזֹק הוּא הַרְפָּה הַמְעַט הוּא אִם־רַב: יט וּמָה הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־הוּא יֹשֵׁב בָּהּ הַטּוֹבָה הוּא אִם־רָעָה וּמָה הָעֵלִים אֲשֶׁר־הוּא יֹשֵׁב בָּהֶנָּה הַבְּמַחְנִים אִם בְּמִבְצָרִים: כ וּמָה הָאָרֶץ הַשְּׂמֵנָה הוּא אִם־רְזָה הִישִׁיבָהּ עַיִן אִם־אֵין וְהִתְחַזְקוּתָם וּלְקַחְתָּם מִפְּרֵי הָאָרֶץ וְהַיְמִים יְמֵי בְּפוּרֵי עֲנָבִים: [שני] כא וַיַּעֲלוּ וַיִּתְּרוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ מִפְּדֻבְרַצֵּן עַד־רְחוֹב לְבֵא חֲמָת: כב וַיַּעֲלוּ בְנֶגֶב

כ"ש"י

חומה: הטובה היא. צמעינות וסכנות טובים וזריאים³: (כ) היש בה עץ. אם יש זהם אדם כשר שיגין עליהם זכותו⁴: בכורי ענבים. ימים שהענבים מתבשלים וצבור⁵: (כא) ממדבר צן עד רחב לבא חמת. הלכו בצבוליה בצורך וצרוח כמין גאס, הלכו רוח גבול דרומית ממקצוע מזרח עד מקצוע מערב, כמו שזכר משה עלו זה צנג, דרך גבול דרומית מזרחית עד הים, שהים הוא גבול מערבי. ומשם חזרו והלכו כל גבול מערבי על שפת הים עד לצא חמת, שהוא אלל הר הכר צמקצוע מערבית לפונית, כמו

(טז) ויקרא משה להושע וגו'. התפלל עליו יח ושיעך מעלת מרגלים: (יז) עלו זה בנגב. הוא היה הפסולת של ארץ ישראל, שכן דרך החגרים מראין את הפסולת תחלה ואחר כך מראין את השבח²: (יח) את הארץ מה היא. יש ארץ מגדלת גבורים ויש ארץ מגדלת חלשים, יש מגדלת אוכלוסין ויש ממעט אוכלוסין³. החזק הוא הרפה. סימן מסר להם, אם צפרזים וישצין, חזקים הם שסומכין על גבורתם, ואם צפרזים צלורות הם וישצין, חלשים הם⁴: (יט) הבמחנים. תרגומו בצפחין כרכין פלוחין ופתוחין מאין

TORAS MENACHEM

What was Miriam's sin? It was not speaking *badly* of Moshe, for Rashi writes explicitly, "She did not intend to speak negatively about him" (Rashi to Bamidbar 12:1). Rather, her mistake was, as Rashi writes here, "she was punished for being *preoccupied with speech*." If Miriam could not understand why Moshe had separated from his wife, she should have asked him, and not discussed the matter openly with others. Thus, her "sin" was not an intentional slander of Moshe, but something much more subtle: Her willingness to speak openly about sensitive issues that are prone to be misunderstood.

And this too, was the sin of the spies. They did not intend to disparage the Land of Israel, and they had a valid concern how the Land was to be conquered. Their mistake was that they did not express their concerns *privately* to Moshe, but rather, aired them in public, thus providing the "fuel" for a major rebellion. And this was a particularly grave error, being that they had seen Miriam commit an *identical* mistake immediately before their mission began. Thus their punishment, explains Rashi, was severe because they "saw [what happened to her], but did not learn a lesson."

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 18, p. 141ff.)

Sparks of Chasidus

"...WHEN THE FIRST GRAPES RIPEN" (v. 20)

Moshe did not command the spies to bring back grapes in particular, but just "fruit" (v. 20), and we find that they brought back various fruits: grapes, pomegranates and figs (v. 23). So why does the Torah stress, "It was the season when the first grapes ripen," and not simply, the time when *fruit* was ripening?

The process of spying out the Land to conquer it (verses 17-20) represents our daily mission of evaluating how to advance the "conquering" of this physical world for God, through the most effective use of time and resources for Torah. Verse 20 concludes that the goal of this process is represented by grapes: Grapes are unique in that their seeds are visible through their skins; and this teaches us that the goal of our observance is to make the physical "skin" of this world transparent to its higher, spiritual purpose.

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shelach 5750, par. 2)

¹³ For the tribe of Asher, Sesur the son of Micha'el.

¹⁴ For the tribe of Naftali, Nachbi the son of Vafsi.

¹⁵ For the tribe of Gad, Ge'uail the son of Machi.

¹⁶ These were the names of the men Moshe sent to explore the Land.

Moshe called Hoshe'a the son of Nun, "Yehoshua."^{*}

¹⁷ Moshe sent them to explore the Land of Cana'an. He said to them, "Go up this way along the south (border until you reach the sea), and then go up (the west coast until you reach Chamas, which is by the (Hor) mountain. ¹⁸ See what kind of land it is. Are the people who inhabit it strong or weak? Are there a few of them, or many? ¹⁹ How is the land which they inhabit? Does it have good (springs and wells) or bad (ones)? How are the cities in which they live? Are they in unenclosed cities, or in fortresses? ²⁰ What is the soil like? Is it fertile or barren? Are there any (righteous people) there (who are like) trees (that protect the people), or not? Be courageous and take some of the Land's fruit."

It was the season when the first grapes ripen.

²¹ They went up and explored the land, from the desert of Tzin (at the southeast corner of the land) until Rechov, at the approach to Chamas.

SECOND
READING

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Moshe add the letter *yud* (י) to the name Hoshe'a הוֹשֵׁעַ, so that it became Yehoshua יְהוֹשֻׁעַ? (v. 16)

RASHI: [Yehoshua's name thus began with the letters *yud* and *hei*, spelling one of the names of God, hinting to the fact that] Moshe prayed for him: "May God save you from the advice of the spies."

TARGUM YONASON: Moshe saw that Yehoshua was very humble [and likely to be influenced by the spies], so he changed his name.

GUR ARYEH: Why did Moshe pray more for Yehoshua than the other spies? Because Yehoshua was Moshe's personal disciple, so if Yehoshua failed people would think he was basing himself on what he learned from Moshe.

BE'ER BASADEH: When Eldad and Medad had stated prophetically that "Moshe will die and Yehoshua will bring [the people] to the Land" (Rashi to Bamidbar 11:28), Yehoshua was horrified and begged Moshe to put them in prison, to silence them (ibid.). Thus Moshe feared that Yehoshua might be biased against entering the Land, since this would mean the death of Moshe, and Yehoshua would be the first to reject the idea of an immediate conquest. Thus, Moshe prayed especially for Yehoshua.

KLI YAKAR: Yehoshua was a descendant of Yosef, so Moshe feared that he might stumble and speak badly about the Land, just as Yosef had spoken badly of his brothers.

TORAS MENACHEM

🕯️ MOSHE'S PRAYER (RASHI V. 16)

In his commentary to verse 16, Rashi writes that Moshe prayed for Yehoshua to be saved from the advice of the spies. Many commentators, [such as **Gur Aryeh**, **Be'er Basadeh** and **Kli Yakar**] ask why Moshe only prayed for Yehoshua, and not the other spies. The question is especially strong when one considers how powerful Moshe's prayers had been in the past, to the extent of annulling God's decree after the sin of the Golden Calf. So certainly, one would expect that Moshe's prayers would have been effective here, before the sin of the spies.

At the literal level, the following explanation could be argued:

The Torah does not record many details of Moshe's private activities, even though it is obvious that they must have taken place. For example, we do not find any reference to the fact that Moshe studied Torah by himself, or that he observed the *mitzvos*, though clearly this was the case.

Likewise here, the Torah does not mention that Moshe prayed for all the spies because it is obvious that he would have done so. By sending the spies on their mission, which was Moshe's own idea (see Rashi to v. 2), he was putting their lives at risk, so he would certainly have prayed for their safety, just as Ya'akov prayed for the safety of his children when they went down to Egypt (Bereishis 43:14 and Rashi ibid.).

Nevertheless, Moshe offered additional prayers for Yehoshua, because Yehoshua was Moshe's own disciple, who was very close to him (see

Shemos 33:11), and thus his actions represented Moshe to a greater degree (cf. **Gur Aryeh**).

WAS MOSHE SUSPICIOUS?

A further difficulty with Moshe's prayer is that it implies that Moshe was suspicious of the spies before they left, since he prayed for Yehoshua to be saved "from the advice of the spies." This begs the question: If Moshe suspected that the spies were going to sin, why did he send them on their mission?

Furthermore, Rashi writes in his commentary to verse 3 that "at this time they were legitimate," and then immediately (after their names are listed in verses 4-15), we read in verse 16 that Moshe was already praying that Yehoshua should not be affected by the spies' advice. How is it possible, at the literal level, that the spies would have suffered such a speedy regression, without any indication in the Torah how this occurred?

In order to answer the above problems, we need first to pose another question: When the Torah lists the appointments of the spies, we read in verse 8, "For the tribe of Efrayim, Hoshe'a the son of Nun." Then in verse 16, as soon as the list is complete, the Torah states, "Moshe called Hoshe'a the son of Nun, 'Yehoshua.'" This begs the question: Why did Moshe not change Yehoshua's name (from Hoshe'a to Yehoshua) before he was appointed as a spy, and then he would have been referred to with his new name at the time of his appointment (in verse 8)?

* Beforehand he was referred to as both Hoshe'a and Yehoshua. Now his name was fixed as Yehoshua permanently, and not Hoshe'a (Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shelach 5746).

חֲבֵרוֹן וַתִּמְן אַחִימֵן שֵׁשִׁי וַתְּלָמִי בְּנֵי גִבְרָא וְחֲבֵרוֹן שִׁבְעַ שְׁנַיִם אֶתְבְּנִיאוֹת קָדָם טָנִים דְּמִצְרַיִם: כג וַאֲתוּ עַד נַחֲלָא דְאַתְבְּלָא וּקְצוּ מִתְּמֵן עוֹבְרֵתָא וְאַתְבֵּל עֲנָבִין חַד וַיִּטְלוּהִי בְּאַרְיָתָא בְּתֵרִין וּמִן רִמּוֹנָא וּמִן תְּאֲנִיָּא: כד לְאַתְרָא הַהוּא קָרָא נַחֲלָא דְאַתְבְּלָא עַל עֵסֶק אֶתְבְּלָא דְקְצוּ מִתְּמֵן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: כה וַתְּבוּ מִלְּאֲלָא יַת אֲרַעָא מִסּוּף אֲרֻבְעִין יוֹמִין: כו וַאֲזָלוּ וַאֲתוּ לֹת מִשָּׁה וּלֹת אֶהָרָן וּלֹת כָּל כְּנַשְׁתָּא דְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמַדְבְּרָא דְפָאָרָן לְרַקֵּם וַאֲתִיבוּ יַתְהוֹן פְּתֻנְמָא וַיַּת כָּל כְּנַשְׁתָּא וַאֲחֻזְיָאֲנוּן יַת אֲבָא דְאַרְעָא: כז וַאֲשְׁתַּעֲיָאוּ לָהּ וַאֲמָרוּ אֲתִינָא לְאַרְעָא דִּי שְׁלַחְתְּנָא וְאַף עֲבָדָא חֲלָב וּדְבַשׁ הִיא וְדִין אֲבָה: כח לְחוּד אַרְבֵּי תַקִּיף עָמָא דִּיִּתְב

וַיָּבֵא עַד-חֲבֵרוֹן וְשֵׁם אַחִימֵן שֵׁשִׁי וַתְּלָמִי יְלִידֵי הָעֲנָק וְחֲבֵרוֹן שִׁבְעַ שְׁנַיִם נִבְנְתָה לִפְנֵי צֶעַן מִצְרַיִם: כג וַיָּבֵאוּ עַד-נַחֲלָא אֲשַׁבֵּל וַיִּכְרְתוּ מִשָּׁם זְמוּרָה וְאֲשַׁבּוּל עֲנָבִים אֶחָד וַיִּשְׂאֶהוּ בַמּוֹט בְּשָׁנִים וּמִן-הָרְמָנִים וּמִן-הַתְּאֲנִיִּים: כד לַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא קָרָא נַחֲלָא אֲשַׁבּוּל עַל אֲדוֹת הָאֲשַׁבּוּל אֲשֶׁר-כָּרְתוּ מִשָּׁם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: כה וַיָּשִׁבוּ מִתּוֹר הָאָרֶץ מִקֵּץ אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם: כו וַיֵּלְכוּ וַיָּבֵאוּ אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-אַהֲרֹן וְאֶל-כָּל-עֲדַת בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-מַדְבַּר פָּאָרָן קְדֻשָּׁה וַיָּשִׁיבוּ אֹתָם דְּבַר וְאַתְּ-כָּל-הָעֵדָה וַיִּרְאוּם אֶת-פְּרֵי הָאָרֶץ: כז וַיִּסְפְּרוּ-לוֹ וַיֹּאמְרוּ בָּאֲנוּ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר שְׁלַחְתָּנוּ וְגַם זָבַת חֲלָב וּדְבַשׁ הִיא וְזֶה-פְּרִיהָ: כח אִפֹּס

דש"י

אחד נטל תאנה ואחד רמון, יהושע וכלב לא נטלו כלום, לפי שכל עמלם להזיח דבה נחשונו, כשם שפריה משונה כך עמה משונה. ואם חפץ אהם לידע כמה משאוי אחד מהם לא ולמד מאכזבים שהקימו בגלגל, הרימו לם איש אהן אחת מן הירדן על שכמו, והקימורה בגלגל. ושקלום רצותינו משקל כל אחת ארבעים סאה. וגמירי, טונא דמדלי אינש על כתפיה, אינו אלא שליש משאוי ממשאוי שמסייעין אותו להרים? (כב) וישבו מתור הארץ מקץ ארבעים יום. והלא ארבע מאות פרסה על ארבע מאות פרסה היח⁸, ומכלך אדם צינוני עשרה פרסאות ליום⁹, הרי מהלך ארבעים יום מן המזרח למערב וחס הלכו ארכה ורחבה, אלא שגלוי לפני הקב"ה שיגזור עליהם יום לשנה, קצר לפניהם את הדרך¹⁰: (כו) וילכו ויבאו. מהו וילכו, להקיש הליכתן לציאתן, מה ציאתן צענה רעה, אף הליכתן צענה רעה¹¹: וישבו אתם דבר. את משה ואת אהרן: (כז) זבת חלב ודבש היא. כל דבר שקר שאין אומרים בו קלת אמת

שמפורש בגזלות הארץ צפרשת אלה מסעי¹: (כג) ויבא עד חברון. כלב לצדו הלך שם ונשתטח על קברי אבות, שלא יחא ניסת לחצריו להיות צעלסת, וכן הוא אומר ולו אתן את הארץ אשר דרך כה², וכתיב³ ויתנו לכלב את חברון: שבע שנים נבנתה. אפשר שצנה חס את חברון לכנען צנו הקטן קודם שיצנה את לעון למלרים צנו הגדול, אלא שהיתה מצויה צכל טוב על אחד משצנה צלוען. וצא להודיעך שצנה של ארץ ישראל, שאין לך טרשין צארץ ישראל יותר מחצרון, לפיכך הקצוה לקצרות מתיס, ואין לך מעולה צכל ארצות כמלרים, שנאמר כגן ה' כארץ מלרים⁵, ולוען היא המעולה שצארץ מלרים ששם מושצ המלכים, שנאמר כי היו צלוען שריו⁶, והיתה חברון טובה ממנה שצנה חלקיס: (כג) זמורה. שוכת גפן ואשכול של ענבים חלוי צה: וישאהו במוט בשנים. ממשמע שנאמר וישאורו במוט איני יודע שהוא שנים, מה תלמוד לומר צשנים, צשני מוטות. הו כילד, שמונה נטלו אשכול,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How was the fruit carried? (v. 23)

RASHI: Eight of them took the bunch of grapes, one took a fig and one took a pomegranate. Yehoshua and Calev did not take anything, for the whole intention of the others was to speak about the Land, that just as its fruit is extraordinary, so too its people are extraordinary.

TALMUD: Yehoshua and Calev were men of importance, so it was not appropriate for them to carry a load (Sotah 34a).

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From this we see that at the time of his appointment, it was not necessary to “call Hoshe’a, the son of Nun, ‘Yehoshua.’” At the literal level, something must have occurred between the appointment of the spies (in verses 1-15) and Yehoshua’s change of name, in verse 16.

Rashi did not find it necessary to explain what happened, as the reader could understand the matter for himself, with simple logic:

Before the spies were appointed, they did not work with each other at all, since they were each members of different tribes. Thus, at the moment they were appointed, “they were legitimate” and honorable.

As soon as they were appointed, they would have clearly met with each other to discuss their upcoming mission, and it was at this point that Moshe detected “the advice of the spies,” i.e. when they came together as

a group, signs of their possible future sin began to emerge. Of course, it was only a fear in Moshe’s mind, and not a certainty—Moshe did not see any evidence of the sin of the spies, only their “advice” which was a possible precursor to a future sin. Thus, there was not sufficient reason to abort the mission. But as he was somewhat concerned, Moshe did deem it an appropriate time to offer an additional prayer to God.

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shelach 5747)

🔗 THE FRUIT OF THE LAND (v. 23)

In his commentary to verse 23, Rashi writes that Yehoshua and Calev did not join the spies in bringing fruits back from the Land of Israel because “the whole intention of the others was to speak about the Land,

²² *When they went up along the south border, (Calev) came to Chevron (to pray at the graves of the Patriarchs not to be enticed by the advice of the spies). The giants Achiman, Sheshai and Talmi were there. Chevron (was the rockiest part of the Land of Israel, and yet it was) seven times more cultivated than Tzo'an (which was the best part of) Egypt.*

²³ *They came to the Valley of Eshkol and they cut a branch with a cluster of grapes and they carried it on (two) double poles. (They also took) pomegranates and figs. ²⁴ They called that place the Valley of Eshkol because of the cluster (eshkol) the children of Israel cut from there.*

🌀 THE SPIES' REPORT 🌀

13:25 **A**t the end of forty days, they returned from scouting the Land.

²⁶ *They went (with bad intentions, and their intentions were still bad when) they came to Moshe and Aharon and the entire congregation of the children of Israel in Kadaish, in the desert of Paran.*

They brought them back a report (to Moshe and Aharon), as well as to the entire congregation, and they showed them the Land's fruit. ²⁷ They reported to (Moshe) and said: "We came to the Land to which you sent us. It is flowing with milk and honey, and this is its fruit!"

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did the spies praise the Land? (v. 27)

RASHI: Any lie which does not begin by saying a bit of truth cannot be sustained in the end.

MAHARSHA: Their lie was the statement at the end of verse 27, that "*this is its fruit!*" For one of the main purposes of their mission was to evaluate whether the Land was fertile and capable of sustaining a

nation, as Moshe said in his briefing, "*What is the soil like? Is it fertile or barren?*" (v. 20). Thus by claiming, "*This is its fruit,*" while producing a mere offering of grapes, pomegranates and figs, the spies were indicating that the main produce of wheat, barley and oil, which give a person sustenance, was lacking from the Land. And this was their lie (*Chidushei Agados, Sotah 35a*).

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that just as its fruit is extraordinary, so too its people are extraordinary." However, this begs the question: The spies were *commanded* explicitly by Moshe to, "*be courageous and take some of the Land's fruit*" (v. 20). So how could Yehoshua and Calev exempt themselves from Moshe's instructions, just because they suspected their colleagues of foul play?

WAS THE MISSION ABORTED?

At first glance we might argue that Yehoshua and Calev understood that the mission which Moshe had charged them with had been aborted. For Moshe had commanded them as a *single group* to spy the Land and bring back fruit, so as soon as part of the group became corrupt in their intentions, Yehoshua and Calev maintained that the mission had ceased.

However, at the literal level this explanation is clearly unacceptable, for the Torah states explicitly that Yehoshua and Calev did not abandon their mission at all: "*They spoke to the entire congregation of the children of Israel, saying, 'The Land we passed through to explore is an extremely good land'*" (14:7). Likewise, we find other statements of encouragement that they made to the Jewish people in an attempt to fulfill their mission (see 13:30; 14:8-9).

Another possible explanation is that when Moshe requested fruit to be brought back from the Land, he was not concerned about the *method* (how and by whom the fruits would be brought), but rather, he was interested in the *result*—that fruits should be brought to inspire the people about the greatness of the Land. So being that the other spies were already taking a sample of grapes, a pomegranate and a fig, Moshe's request that fruit should be brought back to the people was already being

fulfilled, and there was no *personal* obligation on Yehoshua and Calev to actually carry fruit themselves. And since they suspected the other spies of bad intentions they decided to distance themselves.

However this too is difficult to accept at the literal level, since Moshe's words to the spies seem to stress a *personal* obligation resting on all of the spies to *take* fruit: "*Be courageous and take some of the Land's fruit*" (v. 20). (And it is for this reason that *Rashi* rejected the interpretation of the **Talmud**, that Yehoshua and Calev were too important to be burdened with carrying, since Moshe's words suggest a personal obligation resting on all the spies that they must all take fruit.)

THE EXPLANATION

In order to solve this problem, we first need to address *Rashi's* comment to verse 27, that the spies reported a mixture of true and false statements, because, "*any lie which does not begin by saying a bit of truth cannot be sustained in the end.*" *Rashi*, however, does not clarify what exactly was the "truth" which the spies uttered, and what was their "lie."

Maharsha explains that their "lie" was misrepresenting the Land by claiming that "this is its fruit," i.e. that the Land only produced delicacies such as grapes, pomegranates and figs, but lacked the vital, sustaining produce of wheat, barley and oil.

However, at the literal level it appears that the "truth" was the positive statement of verse 27 ("*It is flowing with milk and honey, and this is its fruit*"), and that the "lie" was the negative report from verse 28 ("*However...*").*

* The reason why the spies only brought back three types of produce, at the literal level, was because the fruits were brought to impress the people about the greatness of the Land, and this goal was only achieved with grapes, pomegranates and figs, which were a novelty to the Jewish people. On the other hand: wheat and barley had already been eaten by the Jewish people extensively in Egypt (see *Bereishis* 41:54-7); olives were clearly available to them, since olive oil was used to light the *Menorah* (*Shemos* 27:20-21; *Vayikra* 24:2), and

בְּאֶרְעָא וְקִרְוִיָא כְּרִיבֵן רְבִרְבֵן לְחֻדָּא וְאִף בְּנֵי
נְבִרָא חֻוִיָא תַמְן: כֵּס עֲמֻלְקָאָה יִתְב בְּאֶרֶע
דְּרוּמָא וְחֻתָאָה וַיְבוּסָאָה וַאֲמוֹרָאָה יִתְב
בְּטוּרָא וְכַנְעַנְיָאָה יִתְב עַל יַמָּא וְעַל בִּיף
יִרְדְנָא: ל וְאֲצִיַת כְּלָב יִת עִמָּא לְמֹשֶׁה וַאֲמַר
מִיִּסַּק נִיִּסַּק וְנִירַת יִתְה אֲרִי מִיִּכַל נִיִּכּוּל לָהּ:
לא וְנִבְרָיָא דִּי סְלִיקוּ עִמָּה אֲמַרוּ לָא נִיִּכּוּל

בִּי־עֵז הָעָם הַיֹּשֵׁב בְּאֶרֶץ וְהָעָרִים בְּצֻרוֹת גְּדֹלֹת מְאֹד
וְגַם־יְלָדֵי הָעֵנֶק רָאִינוּ שָׁם: כֵּס עֲמֻלֶק יוֹשֵׁב בְּאֶרֶץ הַנֶּגֶב
וְהַחֲתִי וְהַיְבוּסִי וְהָאֱמֹרִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּהָר וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי יוֹשֵׁב עַל־הַיָּם
וְעַל יַד הַיַּרְדֵּן: ל וַיִּהְיֶה כָּלֵב אֶת־הָעָם אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר עָלֶה
נַעֲלֶה וְיִרְשָׁנוּ אֹתָהּ בְּיָיִכּוּל נּוֹכַל לָהּ: לא וְהָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר עָלוּ

*יש גורסים סי רבתי

רש"י

עמרו. השומע היה סבור שזא לספר בגנותו, (ומתוך) שכיח בלזכר על משה
ששזיל דברי המרגלים. שתקו כולם לשמוע גנותו, אמר והלא קרע לנו את
הים והוריד לנו את המן והגיו לנו את השליו: עלה נעלה. אפילו צשמים
וכוא אומר עשו סולמות ועלו שם נלית צכל דצרי: ויהם. לשון שתיקה, וכן
הם כל צשר³, הם כי לא להציקי⁴. כן דרך בני אדם הרואה לשתק אגודת אנשים

צתלחתו, אין מתקיים צסופו: (כח) בצרות. לשון חזק, ותרגומו כרכין,
לשון ציריות עגולות, ובלשון ארמי כריך עגול: (כט) עמלק יושב וגו'. לפי
שנכו צעמלק כצר, הזכירוהו מרגלים כדי לייראס: על יד הירדן. יד
כמשמעו, אלל הירדן, ולא חוכלו לעצור: (ל) ויהם כלב. השתיק את כולם:
אל משה. לשמוע מה שידבר צמשה. כוון ואמר וכי זו בלצד עשה לנו צן

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did the spies mention Amalek? (v. 29)

RASHI: Since [the Jewish people] had already been “burnt” by Amalek, the spies mentioned [Amalek] in order to frighten them.

● What did Calev say about Moshe? (v. 30)

TALMUD: Calev said to them, “He took us out of Egypt! And he split the sea for us! And he fed us the *manna*! If he said to us, ‘Make ladders and go up to the heavens,’ would we not listen to him?” (Sotah 35a).

RASHI: “Didn’t he split the sea for us? And he brought down the *manna* for us! And he made the quails fly to us!”

[Then he said] “We will definitely go up,” even to heaven. If [Moshe] tells us, “Make ladders and go up there,” we will succeed in whatever he says.

BE’ER MAYIM CHAYIM: Even though Moshe performed many other miracles for the Jewish people, Calev mentioned these three in particular, as they encompass the entire universe: Splitting the sea was a feat on earth, *manna* came down from heaven, and the quails were in the earth’s atmosphere. Calev suggested that Moshe could empower the Jewish people to place ladders on the ground and climb through the atmosphere to the heavens, since he had already demonstrated his powers over the earth, skies and heavens.

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This explains why Yehoshua and Calev felt that they could not be party to the presenting of fruits to the Jewish people. For while this was indeed part of the “truth” that the spies reported, it was nevertheless a “truth” which was only presented for the sake of validating their later “lie.” As *Rashi* writes: “Yehoshua and Calev did not take anything, for the whole intention of the others was to speak about the Land.”**

Thus, in the final analysis, we see that to help the spies carry fruit would have been assisting a sin, and for this reason Yehoshua and Calev were exempt from Moshe’s personal command.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 38, p. 48ff)

☞ CALEV’S DEFENSE (v. 30)

In his commentary to verse 30, *Rashi* writes that Calev mentioned three miracles to the Jewish people that Moshe had performed for them: a.) The splitting of the Reed Sea; b.) producing *manna* in the desert; and c.) producing quails.

What question at the literal level led *Rashi* to conclude that Calev mentioned these three events? And why did *Rashi* reject the *Talmud’s*

assertion that Calev mentioned the exodus from Egypt, writing instead that he mentioned the quails?

Rashi continues to explain Calev’s following words: “We will definitely go up”—“even to heaven. If [Moshe] tells us, ‘Make ladders and go up there,’ we will succeed in whatever he says.”

This begs the question: Why did *Rashi* not interpret Calev’s words literally, that he was promising the people that “we will definitely go up” and conquer the Land of Israel?

THE EXPLANATION

In verses 28-9, where the spies begin to criticize the likelihood of a successful military conquest, three proofs are offered:

a.) The military might of the enemy within the Land of Israel—“the people who live in the Land are (extraordinarily) powerful. The cities are huge and well fortified, and we even saw giants there” (v. 28).

b.) The military might of the surrounding nations, that would prevent them from even reaching the Land—“the Chittites, Jebusites, and Amorites live in the mountains, and the Canaanites live (both) on the coast and alongside the Jordan” (v. 29).

in any case olives would not have excited the Jewish people about entering the Land, because olives are a bitter food; and dates had already been enjoyed by the Jewish people when “they came to Eilim, where there were...seventy date-palms” (*Shemos* 15:27). Thus, there was no reason to bring these types of produce back (*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Chukas* 5745).

**Thus *Rashi’s* statement, “Just as its fruit is extraordinary, so too its people are extraordinary,” is not something that the spies actually said, for then their presentation of fruit would not be “truth”, but part of the “lie.” Rather, it was their intention that the Jewish people would come to this conclusion on their own after hearing their negative report.

²⁸ “However... the people who live in the Land are (extraordinarily) powerful. The cities are huge and well fortified, and we even saw the children of a giant there! ²⁹ Amalek lives in the south of the Land, the Chitites, Jebusites, and Amorites live in the mountains, and the Cana’anites live (both) on the coast and alongside the Jordan.”

³⁰ Calev silenced the people to (listen to what he would say about) Moshe. Then he said, “We will definitely go up! We will take possession of (the Land), for we are certainly capable (of conquering) it!”

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c.) The presence of Amalek who had previously fought against the Jewish people, incurring heavy losses (v. 29 and *Rashi* *ibid.*).

Yet on reading Calev’s response to the spies in the next verse, we do not find that he addressed any of these issues, and he merely “silenced the people to (listen to what he would say about) Moshe.” *Rashi* therefore concluded that Calev’s words about Moshe must have been a direct response to the three above-mentioned arguments:

a.) In response to the spies’ argument that the enemy within the Land was too strong to be defeated, Calev replied: “Didn’t he split the sea for us?” Calev was thus saying: “Remember when we were faced by the Egyptian army, which was much stronger than ours, and we had no way of defeating them. Nevertheless, Moshe made a miracle for us, the sea split, and God destroyed the enemy for us!”

(Thus *Rashi* could not cite the *Talmud*’s view, that Calev mentioned the exodus from Egypt, for at that time the Egyptians were not threatening to fight the Jewish people; to the contrary, they helped the Jewish people to leave Egypt.)

b.) In response to the spies’ argument that there were strong nations that would attack the Jewish people, even before they reached the Land of Israel, Calev responded, “He brought down the manna for us!” Calev thus proved that Moshe secured miraculous assistance for the Jewish people even while they were in the desert, before entering the Land.

c.) The third argument of the spies was that Amalek, an arch-enemy of the Jewish people, stood in the way. The Jewish people had suffered

heavy losses in their earlier war against Amalek due to the fact that they had doubted God, “saying, ‘Is God among us, or not?’” (*Shemos* 17:7). This was a particularly powerful argument in this instance, for it appeared that the Jewish people had also demonstrated a lack of faith in wanting to send spies to investigate the Land, when God had already promised them a miraculous victory. So the spies were effectively saying: “Remember how you suffered in the war with Amalek because you lacked faith! You lack faith now too, and Amalek is poised to attack you if you attempt to conquer the Land!”

To this Calev replied, “He made the quails fly to us!” This refuted the spies’ argument, for when the Jewish people complained to Moshe that they wanted meat, “they were seeking a pretext to turn away from God” (*Rashi* to *Bamidbar* 11:1), and yet Moshe performed a miracle to help them. This proved that, with Moshe’s leadership, God’s miraculous help was at hand even when the Jewish people doubted Him.

CALEV’S FINAL ARGUMENT

Having explained how Calev responded to all of the spies’ arguments, *Rashi* was now left with a question: What did Calev add by saying, “We will definitely go up”?

Calev was concerned because he detected dishonesty in the words of the spies (see *Rashi* to v. 23), so he could not be sure what kind of argument they might fabricate next. Thus—explains *Rashi*—Calev concluded with an argument which refuted anything that the spies might say: “‘We will definitely go up,’ even to heaven. If [Moshe] tells us, ‘Make ladders and

🔥 Sparks of Chasidus 🔥

“CALEV SILENCED THE PEOPLE...” (v. 30).

Why did Calev silence the people? Moshe had asked the spies to collect information about the Land and the people that inhabited it (v. 17-20), which is exactly what they reported in verses 27-29. They did not offer any personal bias in their report as to whether the mission was possible, so why did Calev silence them?

While they had not yet denied God’s promise that the Jewish people would enter the Land (by saying, “We are unable to go up against the people, for they are stronger than us”—v. 31), Calev nevertheless detected a seed of rebellion within the spies’ apparently unbiased report (in verses 27-29). For in Moshe’s briefing to the spies, he had instructed them *first of all* to evaluate the power of the enemy (“Are the people who inhabit it strong or weak? Are there a few of them, or a lot?”—v. 18), since conquering the Land was their immediate concern. *Secondly*, Moshe told them to collect information about the agricultural quality of the Land (“What is the soil like? Is it fertile or barren?”—v. 20), so the people would know what their reward would be after the conquest was complete.

But when the spies gave their report they switched the order: First they mentioned the quality of the Land (“It’s flowing with milk

and honey”—v. 27), and only then did they progress to discuss the enemy (“the people who live in the Land are (extraordinarily) powerful”—v. 28).

From this, Calev immediately sensed that the spies had corrupted their priorities. Moshe had prefaced the effort (conquest) before the reward (the Land’s fruit), but the spies were primarily interested in the rewards, so they stressed the rewards first.

On noticing this, Calev immediately “silenced the people,” for Calev understood that focusing on the reward would lead them to calculate whether it was worth the effort, which would soon develop into a full-blown rebellion.

How was Calev protected from the spies’ influence? Because “he prostrated himself at the graves of the Patriarchs” (*Rashi* to v. 22). Prostrating oneself means lying flat, with one’s head on the same level as one’s feet, representing the willingness to serve God regardless of whether one understands His commands or not. It was thus due to this unquestioning dedication that Calev was able to prioritize effort over reward and resist the plot of the spies.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shelach* 5710; *Likutei Sichos* vol. 4, p. 1313)

למיסק לנות עמא ארי תקיף הוא מננא: לב ואפיקו שום ביש על ארעא די אלילו יתה לות בני ישראל למימר ארעא די עברנא בה לאללא יתה ארעא מקטלת יתבהא היא וכל עמא די תוינא כגנה אנשין דמשחקו: לג ותמן תוינא ית גבריא בני ענק מן גבריא ותוינא בעיני נפשנא כקמציין וכן תוינא בעיניהון: א וארימת כל כנשתא ויהבו ית קלהון וכבו עמא בליליא ההוא: ב ואתרעמו על משה ועל אהרן כל בני ישראל ואמרו להון כל כנשתא לוי דמיתנא בארעא דמצרים או במדברא הדין לוי דמיתנא: ג ולמא יי מעל יתנא לארעא הדא למנפל כחרבא נשנא וטפלנא יהון לבזא הלוא טב לנא די נתוב למצרים: ד ואמרו גבר לאהוהי נמני רישא ונתוב

עמו אמרו לא נוכל לעלות אל-העם ביי-חזק הוא ממנו: לב ויצאו דבת הארץ אשר תרו אתה אל-בני ישראל לאמר הארץ אשר עברנו בה לתור אתה ארץ אכלת יושביה הוא וכל-העם אשר-ראינו בתוכה אנשי מדות: לג ושם ראינו את-הנפילים בני ענק מן-הנפלים ונחי בעינינו כחגבים וכן היינו בעיניהם: יד א ותשא כל-העדה ויתנו את-קולם ויבכו העם בלילה ההוא: ב וילנו על-משה ועל-אהרן כל בני ישראל ויאמרו אלהם כל-העדה לוי-מתנו בארץ מצרים או במדבר הנה לוי-מתנו: ג ולמה יהיה לנו לבז הלוא טוב לנו שוב הזאת לנפל בחרב נשינו וטפנו יהיו לבז הלוא טוב לנו שוב מצרימה: ד ויאמרו איש אל-אחיו נתנה ראש ונשובה

כש"י

מדון³, איש מדה: (ג) הנפילים. ענקים מצני שמחזאי ועזאל שנפלו מן השמים צימי דור אנוש: וכן היינו בעיניהם. שמענו אומרים זה לזה נמלים יש צכרמים כאנשים⁴: ענק. שמעניקים חמה צקומת⁵: (ה) כל העדה. סנהדראות: (ז) לו מתנו. כולאי ומתנו: (ד) נתנה ראש. כתרנומו ממני

אומר ש"ט (ס"א חס): (לא) חזק הוא ממנו. כזיכול כלפי מעלה אמרו: (לג) אוכלת יושביה. ככל מקום שערנו מלאנוס קוצרי מחים, והקצ"כ עשה לטובה כדי לטרדס צאצאס ולא יתנו לב לאלו: אנשו מדות. גדולים וגזוכים ולריך לתת להם מדה, כגון גלית גצכו שס אמות וזרס², וכן איש

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What did the spies mean when they said, "They are stronger than us (ממנו)?" (v. 31)**

RASHI: [This could also be rendered "they are stronger than Him"] They said this in reference to Heaven, so to speak.

MATNOS KEHUNAH: The spies could not just have meant that the enemy was "stronger than us," for this is no proof that they could not be defeated, considering the victories against the mighty armies of Pharaoh and Amalek, in the past.

● **Who were the "giants, descended from giants" (v. 33)**

RASHI: Giants descended from Shamchazai and Aza'el, who fell from the heavens in the generation of Enosh.

YALKUT SHIMONI: When the generation that was later destroyed by the Flood first started to worship idols, God was pained.

Immediately, two angels, Shamchazai and Aza'el, came before God and said, "Master of the universe! When You made Your world, didn't we tell You, 'What is man that You should remember him' (Psalms 8:5)?"

God said, "What is going to be of the world?"

They said, "Master of the Universe! It would be suitable for us."

God said, "It is revealed and known to Me that if you lived on the earth the evil inclination would rule over you, and you would be worse than man."

They said, "Give us permission, and we will live with the creatures, and You will see how we sanctify Your Name!"

God said, "Go down then, and live with them."

Immediately, they became corrupted.... (Yalkut Shimoni, Bereishis 44)

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go up there,' we will succeed in whatever he says." With these words, Calev was saying, "Whatever rational argument the spies might now offer, you should know that Moshe's powers are not limited to the realm of the rational!"

THE SPIES' COUNTERARGUMENT (v. 31-33)

How could the spies possibly counteract such a powerful argument?

The Torah records that they replied, "We are unable to go up against the people, for they are stronger than us" (v. 31). This troubled

Rashi, since there does not seem to be any significant response here to Calev's arguments.

Therefore Rashi explained that the spies did not say "they are stronger than us," but rather, "they are stronger than Him," meaning to say, stronger than God's power in the heavens. This was the only way they had of counteracting Calev's argument that God would perform miracles for the Jewish people as He had done in the past.

But how, the people would wonder, is it possible that the inhabitants of the Land would be stronger than heaven? At first glance, such an

³¹ *But the men who went up with him said, “We are unable to go up against the people, for they are stronger than us (and our God).”*

³² *They produced a report about the Land which they had explored, telling the children of Israel: “The Land we passed through and explored is a land that consumes its inhabitants. All the people we saw in it are enormous men. ³³ We saw nefilim-giants there, supersized giants (that blocked the sun, descended) from the nefilim-giants (Shamchazai and Aza’el). We appeared like grasshoppers in our eyes, and that’s how we were in their eyes.”*

🌀 THE PEOPLE REBEL 🌀

14 **T**he whole assembly (of the seventy elders) was stirred up and they raised their voices, and the people cried on that night. ² All the children of Israel complained about Moshe and Aharon. The whole assembly (of elders) said, “If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this desert! ³ Why is God bringing us to this Land to fall by the sword? Our wives and small children will be captives! Wouldn’t it be better for us to return to Egypt?”

⁴ They said to each other, “Let’s appoint a leader and return to Egypt!”

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assertion appears to be utterly ludicrous, especially to a nation that had witnessed God’s miracles with their own eyes.

Clearly, the spies needed to substantiate their claim, so they continued: “We saw nefilim-giants there” (v. 33). These were not the giants which the spies referred to previously, in verse 28, as merely repeating what they said earlier would not bring any support to their argument. Rather, these were a unique type of giant, as Rashi explains, “Giants, descended from Shamchazai and Aza’el, who fell from the heavens.”

“So if you are wondering,” the spies were intimating, “how the inhabitants are a force even against the heavens, you should know that

these giants themselves fell from heaven, so they are an equal match for God’s angels!”

Still, the notion that these giants had any power against God was difficult to believe, so the spies added that they were giants, “*who fell in the generation of Enosh,*” which was before the great Flood in the times of Noah. Thus, the spies were saying: “*You don’t believe that heaven is powerless over the the inhabitants of the Land? You should know that when heaven punished all mankind with annihilation during the Flood, these giants survived. And now they are living in the Land of Cana’an!*”

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 8, p. 82ff; vol. 28, p. 85ff.)

🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

“A LAND THAT CONSUMES ITS INHABITANTS” (v. 32).

How is it possible that a generation which witnessed countless open miracles from God—the exodus from Egypt, the splitting of the Reed Sea, *manna* in the desert, to name but a few—were deceived by the spies that “*We are unable to go up against the people, for they are stronger than us*” (v. 31)? How did their faith crumble so quickly?

Chasidic thought explains that the spies suffered from binary logic. They believed in God, and in the power of Divine intervention, with perfect faith. But they perceived that life is guided *either* by the laws of nature, *or*, if God so desires, by Divine intervention. They could not conceive of the scenario where God’s supernatural providence extends *through* the veil of nature.

From the time when Moshe first announced the exodus from Egypt until this point, when the Jewish people were poised to enter the Land of Israel, God had guided them with a series of *open* miracles. But, the spies argued, when the Jewish people would settle in the Land, these miracles were going to cease. The *manna* would no longer fall, and Miriam’s well would no longer produce water—as was indeed the case—meaning that the Jewish people would be forced to seek their sustenance through natural means. Then, the spies argued,

they would be helpless. For God’s miracles had only proven that He could provide assistance by *breaking* nature; they had no evidence that God’s providence would extend *within* nature.

Thus, they concluded, it is “*a land that consumes its inhabitants*” (v. 32), as if to say: “*When we will be preoccupied with earning a living through natural means, our ability to live a life of Divine worship will be totally consumed!*” To prove their point, they cited the case of the *nefilim*-giants (v. 33), who were angels while in the spiritually conducive environment of the heavens, but became immediately corrupted as soon as they began to live a physical life on earth (see *Yalkut Shimoni* cited in *Classic Questions*).

Yehoshua and Calev responded: “*If God desires us, He will bring us to this Land*” (14:8). God is not bound by any limitation whatsoever. Since He desires us to make a home for Him in this physical world through the observance of Torah and *mitzvos*, His providence will extend to us *within* the confines of nature. God will help us every single day, not with earth-shattering miracles, but with “small miracles,” that do not overtly break the natural order.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 4, p. 1041ff.; vol. 28, pp. 91-2)

למצרים: ה ויפל משה ואהרן על אפיהון
 קדם כל קהל פנשתא דבני ישראל: ו יהושע
 בר נון וכלב בר יפנה מן מאללי ית ארעא
 בזעו לבושיהון: ו ואמרו לכל פנשתא דבני
 ישראל למימר ארעא די עברנא בה לאללא
 יתה טבא ארעא לחדא לחדא: ה אם רעוא
 בנא קדם יי ויעל יתנא לארעא הדא ויתנה
 לנא ארעא די היא עבדא חלב ודבש:
 ט ברם במימרא די לא תמרדון ואתון לא
 תדחלון מן עמא דארעא ארי בינא מסירין
 אנון עדא תקפחון מנהון ומימרא די
 בסעדנא לא תדחלון מנהון: ו ואמרו כל
 פנשתא למרנם יתהון באבנא ויקרא די
 אתגלי במשפן ומנא לכל בני ישראל:
 יא ואמר יי למשה עד אימתי יהון מרגזין
 קדמי עמא הדין ועד אימתי לא יהימנו
 במימרי בכל אתיא די עבדית ביניהון:
 יב אמחנן במותא ואשצנן ואעבד יתך לעם
 רב ותקוף מנהון: יג ואמר משה קדם יי
 וישמעון מצראי ארי אסקתא בחילך ית עמא
 הדין מביניהון: יד וימרון ליתב ארעא הדא
 דשמעו ארי את יי דשכנתך שרית בגו עמא
 הדין די בעיניהון חיו שכנינת יקרא די ועננד
 מפל עלוהון ובעמודא דעננא את מדבר
 קדמיהון ביממא ובעמודא דאשתא בליליא:
 טו ותקפול ית עמא הדין פגברא חד וימרון
 עממא די שמעו ית שמע נברתך למימר:
 טז מדלית יוקלא קדם יי לאעלא ית עמא
 הדין לארעא די קים להון וקמלנון במדברא:
 יז וכען סגי בען חילא (מן) קדם יי פמא די
 מללתא למימר: יח יי מרחק רגו ומסגי למעבד

מצרים: ה ויפל משה ואהרן על פניהם לפני כל קהל עדת
 בני ישראל: ו יהושע בן נון וכלב בן יפנה מן התרים
 את הארץ קרעו בגדיהם: ו ויאמרו אל כל עדת בני ישראל
 לאמר הארץ אשר עברנו בה לתור אתה טובה הארץ מאד
 מאד: [שלישין] ה אם חפץ בנו יהוה והביא אתנו אל הארץ
 הזאת ונתנה לנו ארץ אשר היא זבת חלב ודבש: ט אך
 ביהוה אל תמרדו ואתם אל תיראו את עיני הארץ כי
 לחמנו הם סר עלם מעליהם ויהוה אתנו אל תיראם:
 י ויאמרו כל העדה לרגום אתם באבנים וכבוד יהוה נראה
 באהל מועד אל כל בני ישראל: פ יא ויאמר יהוה אל משה
 עד אנה ינאצני העם הזה ועד אנה לא יאמינו בי בכל
 האתות אשר עשיתי בקרבן: יב אפנו בדבר ואורשנו ואעשה
 אתך לגוי גדול ועצום מפנו: יג ויאמר משה אל יהוה ושמעו
 מצרים פי העלית בכחך את העם הזה מקרבן: יד ואמרו
 אל יושב הארץ הזאת שמעו פי אתה יהוה בקרב העם הזה
 אשר עין בעין נראה | אתה יהוה ועננד עמד עליהם ובעמד
 ענן אתה הלך לפניהם יומם ובעמוד אש לילה: טו והמתה
 את העם הזה כאיש אחד ואמרו הגוים אשר שמעו
 את שמעך לאמר: טז מבילתי יכלת יהוה להביא את העם
 הזה אל הארץ אשר נשבע להם וישחטם במדבר: יז ועתה
 *יגדל נא כח אדני כאשר דברת לאמר: יח יהוה אךך אפים

*רבתי

כש"י

יאמרו עליהם, מה שאמרו צדוק הענין, מזלתי יכולת ה', כשציל ששמעו כי
 אחת ה' שוכן בקרבם, ועין צעין אחת ה' נראה להם, והכל דרך חבה, ולא
 הכירו כך שנתקב אהבתך מהם עד הנה: (טו) והמתה את העם הזה
 כאיש אחד. פתאום, ומתוך כך יאמרו הגוים אשר שמעו את שמעך וגוי:
 (טז) מבלתי יכלת וגו'. לפי שיושבי הארץ חזקים וגבורים, ואינו דומה
 פרעה לשלשים ואחד מלכים⁴, זאת יאמרו על יושב הארץ הזאת: מבלתי
 יכלת. מתוך שלא היה יכולת זידו להביאם שחטם: יכלת. שם דבר הוא:
 (יז) יגדל נא כח ה'. לעשות דבור: כאשר דברת לאמר. ומהו הדבור:
 (יח) ה' ארך אפים. ללדיקים ולרשעים. כשעלה משה למרום מלאו משה
 להקצ"ה שכיב יושב וכותב ה' ארך אפים. אמר לו ללדיקים. אמר לו הקצ"ה
 אף לרשעים. אמר לו רשעים יאבדו. אמר לו הקצ"ה חייך שאתה לריך לדבר.
 כשחטאו ישראל צעגל וצמרגלים התפלל משה לפניו בצרף אפים, אמר לו

רישא, נשים עלינו מלך, ורבותינו פירשו לשון עזודת חלילים: (ט) אל
 תמרדו. ושוב ואתם אל תיראו! כי לחמנו הם. נאכלם כלחם! סר עלם.
 מגינס וחזקס. כשרים שזכס מתו, איז שכיב מגין עליהם? דבר אחר לנו של
 המקום סר מעליהם! (י) לרגום אותם. את יהושע וכלב: וכבוד ה'. הענין
 ירד שס³: (יא) עד אנה. עד היכן: ונאצני. ירגזוני: בכל האתות. כשציל
 כל הנסים שעשיתי להם היה להם להאמין שהיכולת זידי לקיים הצעותי:
 (יב) ואורשנו. כתרוממו לשון תרוכין. ואם תאמר מה אעשה לשזועת אבות:
 ואעשה אתך לגוי גדול. שאתה מורעם⁴: (יג) ושמעו מצרים. ושמעו את
 אשר תהרגם: כי העלית. כי משמש בלשון אשר, וחס ראו אשר העלית בכחך
 הגדול אותם מקרבם וכשישמעו שאתה הורגם לא יאמרו שחטאו לך, אלא
 יאמרו שכנגדם יכולת להלחם אבל כנגד יושבי הארץ לא יכולת להלחם. וזו
 היא: (יד) ואמרו אל יושב הארץ הזאת. כמו על יושב הארץ הזאת. ומה

⁵ Moshe and Aharon fell on their faces before the entire congregation of the children of Israel.

⁶ Yehoshua the son of Nun and Calev the son of Yefuneh, who were among those who had explored the Land, tore their clothes. ⁷ They spoke to the entire congregation of the children of Israel, saying, “The Land we passed through to explore is a very, very good land. ⁸ If God desires us, He will bring us to this Land and give it to us—a Land flowing with milk and honey. ⁹ Do not rebel against God, and then you will not fear the people of that Land, for (we will eat them up as if) they are our bread. Their (righteous ones, who were their) protection have passed away, and God is with us. Don’t be afraid of them!”

¹⁰ The entire congregation threatened to pelt (Yehoshua and Calev) with stones, but the glory of God which (usually) appeared in the Tent of Meeting (came down there, for) all the children of Israel (to see).

🌀 MOSHE PRAYS TO GOD 🌀

THIRD
READING

14:11 **G**od said to Moshe, “How long will this people provoke Me? How much longer will they refuse to believe in Me after all the miraculous signs I have performed in their midst? ¹² I’m going to strike them with a plague and eliminate them, and then I’ll make from you a greater and stronger nation than them.”

¹³ Moshe said to God, “And (what will) the Egyptians (think when they) hear that (You killed the Jewish people? They’ll say, ‘While) You did bring this nation out from among them with great power, ¹⁴ but,’ they will say, ‘(You weren’t able to defeat) the inhabitants of this Land.’ (They will never believe that the people were punished for their sins) because they heard that You, God, are with this people, and that You, God, appeared to them eye to eye, and that Your cloud rests over them (and that) You go before them with a pillar of cloud by day, and with a pillar of fire by night. ¹⁵ So, if You kill this nation (suddenly), like (killing just) one man, the nations who have heard of Your reputation will say: ¹⁶ ‘It is because God lacked the ability to bring this nation to the Land which He swore to them, that He slaughtered them in the desert.’

¹⁷ “Now, please, let God’s power (to forgive the wicked) be amplified, as You (yourself) spoke, when You said*, ¹⁸ ‘God is slow to anger, abundant in loving kindness, forgiving intentional sin and rebellion,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Moshe not pray that the Jewish people be forgiven, as he did after the sin of the Golden Calf? (v. 13-16)

RAMBAN: Perhaps Moshe knew that the Jewish people would not be forgiven in this case. Thus he only begged God that their punishment should be delayed and not waived altogether (*Ramban to v. 17*).

SHACH AL HATORAH: It must be that God only wished to destroy the mixed multitude of converts who had sinned in this case, and not the Jewish people themselves. For otherwise, why would Moshe not

pray for them to be saved? Proof for this point is that Moshe did not mention the merit of the Patriarchs, as he did after the sin of the Golden Calf, because the mixed multitude were not descended from the Patriarchs (*Shach al Hatorah to v. 12*).

OHR HACHAYIM: Moshe began with the word “And” (“And (what will) the Egyptians (think)...” v. 13), as if to say, “In addition to the arguments I presented in defense of the Jewish people by the sin of the Golden Calf, I wish to add the following...”

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 MOSHE’S PRAYER (v. 13ff)

After the Jewish people lost faith in God’s promise to bring them to the Land of Israel (14:1-4), God told Moshe that He planned to destroy them: “I’m going to strike them with a plague and eliminate them” (v. 12).

Remarkably, we do not find that Moshe prayed for the Jewish people to be saved *in their own right*, as he did after the sin of the Golden Calf. Rather, Moshe’s only argument was what the nations of the world might say: “(What will) the Egyptians (think when they) will hear that (You killed the Jewish people? They’ll say, ‘While) You did bring this nation out from

among them with great power, but,’ they will say, ‘(You weren’t able to defeat) the inhabitants of this Land’ etc.” (v. 13-4).

Why did Moshe appear to care only what the nations would think, and not about the actual elimination of the Jewish people?***

THE EXPLANATION

It is a common perception that punishment for sin is a form of Divine retribution, whereby God enacts justice against those who disobey His words. In truth, however, a Torah “punishment” is not a *reaction* on the part of God, but an *inevitable consequence* that is caused by the sinner.

*Shemos 34:6-7 ** (שׁיחַת שׁוֹפֵי שְׁלַח תּוֹשֵׁב) דְּרַוּשׁ וְסוּדָר, רַמְזוֹ, דְּרַוּשׁ וְסוּדָר, רַמְזוֹ, דְּרַוּשׁ וְסוּדָר, רַמְזוֹ

מבון (וקשומ) שבק לעון ולמרוד ולהובין סלח לדתיבין לאוריתה ודלא תיבין לא מזכי מסער חובי אבהון על בנין מרדין על דר תליתי ועל דר רביעי יט שבוק פען לחובי עמא הדין בסגיאיות טבנותך וכמא די שבקתא לעמא הדין ממצרים ועד פען: כ ואמר יי שבקית כפתנמך: כא וברם קים אנא ומליא יקרא די ית כל ארעא: כב ארי כל גבריא דחוו ית יקרי ונת אתותי די עבדית במצרים ובמדברא ונסיאו קדמי דנן עשר זמנין וְלֹא קבילוּ בְּמִמְרֵי: כג אם יחוו ית ארעא די קימית לאבדתהון וכל דארגיו

וְרַב־חֶסֶד נִשָּׂא עֵוֹן וּפָשַׁע וְנִקְהָ לֹא יִנְקָה פֶּקֶד עֵוֹן אָבוֹת עַל־בָּנִים עַל־שִׁלְשִׁים וְעַל־רִבְעִים: יט סֶלַח־נָא לְעֵוֹן הָעָם הַזֶּה כַּגְּדֹל חַסְדְּךָ וּכְאֲשֶׁר נִשְׂאָתָה לָעָם הַזֶּה מִמִּצְרַיִם וְעַד־הַנְּהָ: כ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה סֶלַחְתִּי כַּדְּבַרְךָ: כא וְאוֹלָם חִי־אֲנִי וַיִּמְלֵא כְבוֹד־יְהוָה אֶת־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ: כב כִּי כָל־הָאֲנָשִׁים הָרְאוּ אֶת־כְּבֹדִי וְאֶת־אֲתֹתַי אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתִי בְּמִצְרַיִם וּבַמִּדְבָּר וַיִּנְסוּ אֹתִי זֶה עֵשֶׂר פְּעָמִים וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ בְּקוֹלִי: כג אִם־יִרְאוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאֲבוֹתָם וְכָל־מְנַאֲצֵי לֹא יִרְאוּהָ:

כ"ג

כי כל האנשים הם יראו את הארץ וכזודי ימלא את כל הארץ, שלא יתחלל שמי צמגפה הזאת לאמר מזלתי יכולת ה' להביאם, שלא אמיתם פתאום כאיש אחד אלא באיחור ארבעים שנה מעט מעט: (כג) וינסו: כמשמעו: זה עשר פעמים. שנים צים שנים צמן ושנים צשלי וכו', כדאיחא צמס' ערכין³: (כג) אם יראו. לא יראו: לא יראו את הארץ:

הקצ"ה והלא אמרת לי לנדיקים. אמר לו והלא אמרת לי אף לרשעים¹: ונקח. לשצים: לא ינקה. לשחין שצים²: (כ) בדברך. צשזל מה שאמרת פן יאמרו מזלתי יכולת ה': (כא) ואולם. כמו אזל זאת חעשה להם: חי אני. לשון שזועה. כשם שאני חי וכזודי ימלא את כל הארץ, כך אקיים להם, כי כל האנשים הרואים וגוי הם יראו את הארץ. הרי זה מקרא מפורסם, חי אני

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What does וַיִּנְסוּ mean? (v. 22)

RASHI: It has its usual meaning ["they have tested God"].

CHIZKUNI: It means they angered God.

● What were the “ten times” that God was tested? (v. 22)

RASHI: Twice at the sea, twice with the *manna*, twice with the quails etc., as is stated in [the *Talmud*,] Tractate *Arachin* (15a).

TORAS MENACHEM

The Torah makes this point clear in *Parshas Bechukosai*: “If you treat Me offhandedly... then I too will be offhand with you.” The use of the same term (“offhandedly...offhand”) in reference to man and God indicates that we are speaking here of a *cause and effect* relationship. It is not the case that when man offends God, God then “gets even” by striking man; rather, it is a *matter of fact* that when a person shuns the observance of God’s commands he inevitably shuns the blessings that would have come as a consequence of that observance.

The same could be argued in our case, with the sin of the spies. Without miracles, it was impossible for the Jewish people to defeat the mighty inhabitants of the Land of Israel, as the spies had themselves verified. Thus, when God promised the Jewish people that they would enter the Land, He had implicitly promised them a supernatural victory. But in order to merit God’s miracles, the Jewish people needed to have faith, for by putting their trust in God they would then make themselves into *suitable receptacles* for God’s supernatural blessings.

So, God was not *revoking* His earlier decision to bring the Jewish people into the Land due to their lack of faith and bad behavior. Rather, being that the miraculous victory was going to be a *consequence* of their faith, when the faith proved to be lacking, there was nothing left to bring the victory.

Therefore, Moshe had no grounds on which to complain to God, for God had not made any decision here at all. Rather the Jewish people had

made the decision to shun God’s offer to break the laws of nature for them by denying His ability to do so. God merely informed Moshe of the *consequences* of the Jewish people’s actions, that they will die and be replaced with another nation. To this Moshe replied that God would be losing rather than gaining, for destroying the Jewish people due to lack of faith would only lead to a much greater loss of faith among the nations, who would then say, “It is because God lacked the ability to bring this nation to the Land which He swore to them, that He slaughtered them in the desert” (v. 16).

And God replied, “I have forgiven them because of your words” (v. 20).

THE FORTY YEAR DECREE (v. 20ff)

While God chose not to eliminate them instantly, He nevertheless decreed that they would die out in the desert over a period of forty years. This begs the question: Why did God not forgive them *completely*?

It could be argued that God Himself explained why this was the case, through His oath in verse 22: “(I swear) that all the people who, while seeing My glory and the miraculous signs that I performed in Egypt and in the desert, have tested (וַיִּנְסוּ) Me these ten times and not listened to My voice.”

Rashi comments (*ibid.*) that the term וַיִּנְסוּ has its usual connotation of “testing” in this verse, and does not refer to “angering” [as *Chizkuni* argues].

Who absolves (those who repent) and does not absolve (those who do not). He visits the sins of parents upon the children, and the grandchildren, to the third and fourth generations.’¹⁹ Please forgive this nation’s sin with your abounding kindness, just as You have carried this people from Egypt until now.”

🌀 GOD FORGIVES / DECREE OF FORTY YEARS OF WANDERING 🌀

14:20 **G**od said, “I have forgiven them because of your words (and I will not eliminate them).”²¹ “However (what I will do is), as surely as I live, and the glory of God fills the earth,²² (I swear) that all the people who, while seeing My glory and the miraculous signs that I performed in Egypt and in the desert, have tested Me these ten times and not listened to My voice—²³ they will not see the Land that I swore to their fathers. All those who provoked Me will not see it.”

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

TALMUD, TRACTATE ARACHIN: Our fathers tested God with ten tests: Twice at the sea, twice with water, twice with the manna, twice with the quails, once with the Golden Calf, and once in the wilderness of Paran:

Twice at the sea—once on the way down, and again on the way up. On the way down—as the verse states, “*Is it because there was a shortage of graves in Egypt [that you took us to die in the desert?]*” (*Shemos* 14:11). On the way up—Rabah bar Mari said: The Jewish people were rebellious at that very hour, saying: “Just as we go up from this side, so will the Egyptians go up from the other side.”

Twice with water—at Marah and at Refidim. At Marah—as the verse states: “*They came to Marah, but they could not drink water [because it was bitter]*” (ibid. 15:23), and the verse states: “*The people complained to Moshe*” (ibid. 17:3). At Refidim—as the verse states:

“*They camped in Refidim and there was no water for the people to drink*” (ibid. v. 1), and it is also written: “*The people quarreled with Moshe*” (ibid. v. 2).

Twice because of the manna—they were told, “*do not go out [to collect it on Shabbos],*” but they went out (ibid. 16:25ff). They were told, “*Do not leave over [until morning],*” but they left over (ibid. v. 19–20).

Twice because of the quails—the first and second quails. The first: “*When we sat by the pots of meat*” (ibid. v. 3). With the second quails: “*The mob [among them had strong cravings]*” (*Bamidbar* 11:4).

With the Golden Calf—as it happened (*Shemos* ch. 32).

In the wilderness of Paran—[the sin of the spies] as it happened (*Arachin* 15a-b).

TORAS MENACHEM

But why would we think that **וַיִּצְרַח** means “and they angered,” such that *Rashi* has to warn us otherwise, when the usual translation of the word is “and they tested,” as *Rashi* himself writes?

The difference between “testing” God and “angering” God, at the literal level, is that God becomes “angry” when His commands are disobeyed, whereas “testing” God refers to a crisis of faith.

Since verse 22 concludes that they “*have not listened to My voice,*” i.e. a failure to obey God’s commands, we would think that the verse refers to angering, and not testing God.

However, *Rashi* was dissatisfied with this interpretation, as it appears to be inconsistent with the broader context of the story. For in this passage God is explaining why He had not forgiven the Jewish people completely for the sin of the spies, which was due to a crisis of faith and was not a direct rebellion against the observance of God’s commands. So *Rashi* wrote that despite the immediate context of the verse, which appears to speak of disobeying and angering God [as *Chizkuni* argues], in the broader context of the narrative, “**וַיִּצְרַח**” has its usual meaning, “of testing God.”

“LACKING BELIEF IN GOD” AND “TESTING GOD”

Why were the Jewish people left to wander in the desert for forty years as a result of testing God?

The reader will remember that earlier, in verse 12, when God had intended to eliminate the Jewish people completely, His complaint was, “How much longer will they refuse to believe in Me after all the miraculous signs I have performed in their midst.” God, however, did

forgive the Jewish people for not believing in Him after hearing Moshe’s prayers. But here in verse 22 God explained that He could not forgive the Jewish people completely, because they “*have tested Me these ten times.*” The reader will thus wonder: Why is it that God can forgive a lack of belief, but He will not forgive the Jewish people for testing Him?

The fact that the Jewish people “*refuse to believe in Me after all the miraculous signs I have performed in their midst*” is because on reflection, they found the miracles unconvincing, after they had occurred. This problem could potentially be solved if God would perform a miracle of unprecedented proportions—as the verse states, “*If they do not believe you, and they do not heed the voice of the first sign, they will believe the voice of the latter sign*” (*Shemos* 4:8).

“Testing” God, however, is not merely a “cooling” of faith after witnessing a miracle, but rather, a lack of faith at the very moment God is performing the miracle—as verse 22 states, “all the people who, while seeing My glory and the miraculous signs that I performed in Egypt and in the desert, they have tested Me.”

To clarify this unique quality of a test over a lack of belief, *Rashi* cites a number of examples of a test: “*Twice at the sea, twice with the manna, twice with the quails*”:

- At the sea the people declared, “*Just as we go up from this side, so will the Egyptians go up from the other side,*” i.e. they lacked faith as they were witnessing the miracle of the splitting of the sea.
- The people complained about the manna as they were receiving this unique, miraculous type of food.

קדמי לא יחזנה: כד ועבדי כלב חלף דתנה רוח אוחרי עמה ואשלם בחר דחלתי ואעלנה לארעא די על לתמן ובנהוי יתרכנה: כה ועמלקאה וכנענאה יתב במישרא מחר אתפנו וטולו לכוון למדברא ארה ימא דסוף: כו ומליל יי עם משה ועם אהרן למימר: כז עד אימתי לכנשתא בישתא הדא די אננו מתרעמין עלי ות תרעמת בני ישראל די אננו מתרעמין עלי שמיע קדמי: כח אמר להון קים אנא אמר יי אם לא במא די מללתון קדמי בן אעבד לכוון: כט במדברא הדין יפלו פגריכון וכל מנגיכון לכל השבכון מבר עשרין שני ולעלא די אתרעמתון עלי: ל אם אתון תעלו לארעא די קומית במימרי לאשראה יתכון בה אלהן כלב בר יפנה ויהושע בר נון: לא וטפלוון די אמרתון לבוא יהי ואעל יתהון וידעון ית ארעא די קצתון בה: לב ופגריכון דילכוון יפלו במדברא הדין: לג ובגיכון יהון מאחרין במדברא ארבעין שני ויקבלון ית חוביכון עד דיסופון פגריכון במדברא: לד במנן יומיא די אלתון ית ארעא ארבעין יומין יומא לשתא יומא לשתא תקבלון ית חוביכון ארבעין שני

כד ועבדי כלב עקב היתה רוח אחרת עמו וימלא אחרי ויהביאתיו אל הארץ אשר בא שמה וזרעו יורשנה: כה והעמלקי והכנעני יושב בעמק מחר פנו וסעו לכם המדבר דרך ים-סוף: פ ורביעין כו וידבר יהוה אל-משה ואל-אהרן לאמר: כז עד-מתי לעדה הרעה הזאת אשר המה מלינים עלי את-תלנות בני ישראל אשר המה מלינים עלי שמעתי: כח אמר אלהם חי-אני נאם-יהוה אם-לא באשר דברתם באזני בן אעשה לכם: כט במדבר הזה יפלו פגריכם וכל-פקדיכם לכל-מספרכם מן עשרים שנה ומעלה אשר הלינתם עלי: ל אם-אתם תבאו אל-הארץ אשר נשאתי את-ידי לשבן אתכם בה כי אם-כלב בן-יפנה ויהושע בן-נון: לא וטפכם אשר אמרתם לבו יהיה ויהביאתי אתם וידעו את-הארץ אשר מאסתם בה: לב ופגריכם אתם יפלו במדבר הזה: לג ובניכם יהיו רעים במדבר ארבעים שנה ונשאו את-זנותיכם עד-תם פגריכם במדבר: לד במספר הימים אשר-תרתם את-הארץ ארבעים יום לשנה יום לשנה תשאו את-עונתיכם ארבעים שנה וידעתם את-

כש"י

(כז) לעדה הרעה וגו'. אלו המרגלים, מכאן לעדה שהיא עשרה: אשר המה מלינים. את ישראל עלי: את תלנות בני ישראל אשר המה מלינים. המרגלים מלינים אותם עלי שמעתי: (כח) חי אני. לשון שבועה: אם לא וגו' בן אעשה. כזיכול איני חי: כאשר דברתם. שבועתם ממני או צמדזר הזה לו מתנוי: (כט) וכל פקדיכם לכל מספרכם. כל הנמנה לכל מספר שאתם נמנין בו, כגון ללאת ולבא ללאת שקלים, כל המנויים לכל אותן מספרות ימותו, ואלו הן מזן כ' שנה וגו', להוליא שבטו של לוי שאין פקודיכם מזן עשרים: (לג) ופגריכם אתם. כתרומו (דילכוון), לפי שבזר

(כז) רוח אחרת. שתי רוחות אחת צפה ואחת כלב, למרגלים אמר, אני עמכם צנה, וכלבו היה לומר האמת, ועל ידי כן היה צו כח להשתיקם, כמו שנאמר ויהם כלב¹, שהיו סבורים שיאמר כמותם, וזו שנאמר בספר יהושע ואשיב אותם דבר כאשר עס לבני², ולא כאשר עס פי³: וימלא אחרי. וימלא את לבו אחרי וזה מקרא קלר: אשר בא שמה. חזרון נתחן לו: יורשנה. כתרומו יתרכינה, יורישו את הענקים ואת העם אשר בה, ואין לתרגמו יירתינה, אלא במקום יירשנה: (כח) והעמלקי וגו'. אם תלכו עס יברגו אתכם, מאחר שאיני עמכם: מחר פנו. לאחרים וסעו לכם וגו':

TORAS MENACHEM

- When the people complained, "Who will give us meat to eat" (Bamidbar 11:4), they already had quails, which were being supplied to them miraculously in the desert, but nevertheless they questioned whether God could give them more meat (Rashi to Arachin ibid.).
Based on the above we can also understand why Rashi mentions only six of the ten tests, and directs the reader to Tractate Arachin to find the other four. At first glance, he should either have informed us of all ten, or just directed us to the Talmud in the first place.

However, Rashi cites the above examples specifically (and refers the reader to Tractate Arachin for the remainder), as these clearly reflect the concept of a "test" which is being described here, at the literal level. In this way, the reader will understand why God could forgive the Jewish people for a lack of belief, but that after they tested Him repeatedly, God saw no hope.
The lesson of course, is an obvious one: to be grateful for all the wonders which God shows the Jewish people.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 23, p. 104ff.)

²⁴ “But as for My servant Calev, since (despite his outward appearance of being with the spies) he had a different intention, and he followed Me, so I will bring him to the Land to which he came, and his descendants will drive it(s inhabitants) out.”

²⁵ “(If the people will go to the Land now), the Amalekites and the Cana’anites (that) inhabit the valley (will kill you all). Tomorrow, turn, journey back into the desert toward the Reed Sea.”

FOURTH
READING

²⁶ God spoke to Moshe and Aharon, saying, ²⁷ “How much longer (must I bear) this evil congregation (of spies) who are provoking (the Jewish people) against Me? I have heard the complaints of the children of Israel whom they provoked against Me (too many times)!”

²⁸ “Say to them, ‘As I live,’ says God, ‘(I swear that) I will do to you none other than what you said to My ears (when you said, “If only we had died in this desert”*)’ ²⁹ Your corpses will fall in this desert, (including) all of you who were counted—all those from the age of twenty and up, who were counted—because you complained against Me. ³⁰ You will not come to the Land concerning which I raised My Hand that you would settle in it, except Calev the son of Yefuneh and Yehoshua the son of Nun. ³¹ As for your small children, of whom you said that they will be captives, I will bring them (there), and they will come to know the Land which You despised. ³² But as for you, your corpses will fall in this desert.”

³³ “Your children will wander in the desert for forty years and bear your guilt, until the last of your corpses has fallen in the desert. ³⁴ You will bear your sins for forty years, corresponding to the number of days which you explored the Land—forty days, a day for each year. You will then know what it means to be estranged from Me.”

רש"י

שנאמר וציוס פקדי, צמרגלים, ופקדתי עליהם טחאתם, ואף כאן נא' תשאור את עונותיכם, ולא עונתכם, שתי עונות של עגל ושל תלונה. וחשב להם צמנין חייבהם מקצת שנה ככולה, וכשנכנסו לשנת ששים מחו אותם של בני עשרים:⁷ ונשארו את זנותיכם. כתרנומו ויקבלון ית חזיכונו: (לד) את תנואתי. שהביאותם את לצבכם מאחרי. תנואה לשון הסרה, כמו כי הביא אציה

על הצנים להכניסם לארץ ובקש לומר ואחס תמותו, ופול לשון זה כאן לומר אחס: (לג) ארבעים שנה. לא מת אחד מהם פחות מכן ששים,⁶ לכך נגזר ארבעים, כדי שיהיו אותם של בני עשרים מגיעין לכלל ששים. ושנה ראשונה הייתה בכלל, ואף על פי שקדמה לשלוח המרגלים, לפי שמשעשו את העגל עלתה גזירה זו במחשבה אלא שהמתין להם עד שתמלא סאתם, וזהו

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

“YOU WILL NOT COME TO THE LAND...” (v. 30)

God does not issue a punishment to bring revenge on the sinner. Rather, the “punishment” is a form of spiritual “medicine” aimed at correcting the spiritual deficiency caused by a sin.

With this in mind, the “punishment” given to the Jewish people here is difficult to understand. Their *sin* was that they did not wish to enter the Land, because they desired to remain in the desert where they could serve God without distraction; and yet, their *punishment* was to receive what they wanted: to remain in the desert (for forty years)! How would this “correct” their sin of not wanting to enter the Land?

In truth however, the sin of the spies was not that they were too spiritual, but rather, they were not spiritual enough. To be involved with the physical world and remain spiritually attuned demands the *highest degree* of attachment to God. So when the generation showed that they were lacking this level of dedication, they were given 40 more years of unrestricted Divine worship, enabling them to reach the level where they would be ready to engage in the world.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 33, p. 85ff.)

“AS FOR YOUR SMALL CHILDREN...” (v. 31)

Why did the spies refer to *small* children, and not children in general, when they said, “Our wives and small children will be captives” (14:3)?

When a small child eats bread, more ends up on the floor than in his mouth. Being that the Torah is our spiritual “bread” and sustenance, the inner meaning of the spies’ argument was: “If we go into the Land, and are forced to earn a living within the natural order, most of the energy which we could have used to study Torah will be ‘wasted on the floor.’ Very little will ‘enter our mouths!’”

To this God replied, “As for your small children... I will bring them (there)” (v. 31). God’s desire, the purpose of creation, is that a Jew should not insulate himself from the world, but engage himself with it, while at the same time remaining aloof from its negative influences. So God replied: “Even if only a little Torah enters your mouths, so be it. A Jew cannot be insular. He must make a home for God below, in this physical world!”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 2, p. 581ff.)

וַתִּדְעוּן יַת דְּאִתְרַעְמְתוּן עֲלֵי: לַה אָנָּה יִי גְזֵרִית בְּמִימְרֵי אִם לֹא דָא אַעְבַּד לְכָל בְּנֵי שְׂתָא בִישְׁתָּא דְדָא דְאִזְדַּמְנוּן עֲלֵי בְּמִדְבָּרָא דְרִין יְסוּפּוּן וְתַמְן יְמוּתוּן: לֹא וְגַבְרֵיָא דִּי שְׁלַח מֹשֶׁה לְאַלְלָא יַת אַרְעָא וְתָבּוּ וְאַרְעִימוּ עֲלוּהֵי יַת כָּל בְּנֵי שְׂתָא לְאַפְקָא שׁוּם בִּישׁ עַל אַרְעָא: לֹא וּמִיתוּ גְבַרְיָא דְאַפִּיקוּ שׁוּם בִּישׁ עַל אַרְעָא בְּמוֹתָנָא קְדָם יִי: לַה וִיהוּשֻׁעַ בַּר נֹון וְכָלֵב בַּר יִפְנֵה אֲתַקְיָמוּ מִן גְּבַרְיָא הָאֵנוּן דְּאִזְלוּ לְאַלְלָא יַת אַרְעָא: לֹא וּמְלִיל מֹשֶׁה יַת פְּתִיגְמֵיָא הָאֵלִין לְכָל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאִתְאַבְלוּ עִמָּא לְחַדָּא: מ וְאַקְדִּימוּ בְּצַפְרָא וּסְלִיקוּ לְרִישׁ מוֹרָא לְמִימְרָא הָא אֲנַחְנָא סְלִקִין לְאַתְרָא דִּי אָמַר יִי אַרְי חֲבָנָא: מֵא וְאָמַר מֹשֶׁה לְמָא דְנִן אֲתוּן עֲבַרִין עַל גְּזֵרַת מִימְרָא דִּי וְהִיא לֹא תִצְלַח: מֵב לֹא תִסְקוּן אַרְי לִית שְׂכַנְתָּא דִּי בִינֵיכוּן וְלֹא תִתְפְּרוּן קְדָם בְּעֲלֵי דְבְּכִיכוּן: מֵג אַרְי עֲמַלְקָתָא וְכַנְעֲנָתָא תַמְן קְדַמִּיכוּן

תִּנּוּאָתֵי: לַה אָנִי יְהוָה דְּבִרְתֵי אִם-לֹא | וְאֵת אַעֲשֶׂה לְכָל-הָעֵדָה הָרַעָה הַזֹּאת הַנּוֹעֲדִים עָלַי בְּמִדְבָּר הַזֶּה יִתְמוּ וְשָׂם יָמָתוּ: לֹא וְהַאֲנִשִּׁים אֲשֶׁר-שָׁלַח מֹשֶׁה לְתוֹר אֶת-הָאָרֶץ וַיָּשׁוּבוּ וַיְלוּנוּ [קַן וַיְלִינּוּ] עָלָיו אֶת-כָּל-הָעֵדָה לְהוֹצִיא דָבָה עַל-הָאָרֶץ: לֹא וַיָּמָתוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים מוֹצְאֵי דְבֵת-הָאָרֶץ רַעָה בְּמִגְפָּה לְפָנַי יְהוָה: לַה וַיְהוּשֻׁעַ בֶּן-נֹון וְכָלֵב בֶּן-יִפְנֵה חָיו מִן-הָאֲנָשִׁים הָהֵם הַהֹלְכִים לְתוֹר אֶת-הָאָרֶץ: לֹא וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה אֶת-הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֶל-כָּל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּתְאַבְלוּ הָעָם מְאֹד: מ וַיִּשְׁכַּמוּ בַבֶּקֶר וַיַּעֲלוּ אֶל-רֹאשׁ-הַהָר לֵאמֹר הֲנִנּוּ וְעֲלִינוּ אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-אָמַר יְהוָה כִּי חָטְאנוּ: מֵא וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה לְמַה זֶה אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים אֶת-פִּי יְהוָה וְהוּא לֹא תִצְלַח: מֵב אֶל-תַּעֲלוּ כִּי אֵין יְהוָה בְּקַרְבְּכֶם וְלֹא תִנְגַּפוּ לְפָנַי אִיְבִיכֶם: מֵג כִּי הָעַמְלִקִי

כ"ט

בְּמִגְפָּה, וְזָכוּ לַפְנֵי ה', בְּזֹחַת הַרְאוּיָה לָהֶם עַל פִּי מְדוּתוֹי שֶׁל הַקַּב"ה, שְׂהוּא מוֹדֵד מִדֵּה כְּנֵגֵד מִדֵּה: (לח) וַיְהוּשֻׁעַ וְכָלֵב חָיו. מֵה תְלִמּוּד לומר חָיו מִן הַחַגְשִׁים הַכֹּס, אֲלֵא מִלְמַד שֶׁנִּטְלוּ חֵלֶקֶס שֶׁל מַרְגְּלִים בְּאֶרֶץ וְקָמוּ תַחְתִּיבָה לְחַיִּים: (מ) אֵל רֹאשׁ הַהָר. וְהוּא דֹרֵךְ הַעוֹלָה לְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל: הֲנִנּוּ וְעֲלִינוּ אֶל הַמָּקוֹם. לְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל: אֲשֶׁר אָמַר ה'. לְתַחַת לָנוּ שֶׁס נַעֲלָה: כִּי חָטְאנוּ. עַל אֲשֶׁר אֲמַרְנוּ הֲלָא טוֹב לָנוּ שׁוֹב מִנְרִימָה: (מא) הוּא לֹא תִצְלַח. זֹ שְׂחַס עוֹשִׂין לֹא תִלְחַח:

אוֹתָהּ: (לו) וַיִּשְׁבוּ וַיְלִינּוּ עָלָיו. וְכַשֶּׁשְׂבוּ מִתּוֹר הַאֶרֶץ כִּרְעִימוּ עָלָיו אֵת כָּל הָעֵדָה בְּזוֹלָתָה דְּבַה הוֹלָתָה דְּבַה לְשׁוֹן חִינוּךְ דְּבָרִים, שְׂמַלְקִיחִים לְשׁוֹנֵס לְאִדָּם לְדַבַּר זָו, כְּמוֹ דּוֹבֵב שְׂפַחֵי יִשְׁנִים? וַיִּשְׁנֵה לְטוֹבָה וַיִּשְׁנֵה לְרַעָה, לְכַךְ נֹאמַר כֹּאן מוֹלִיאֵי דְבַת הַאֶרֶץ רַעָה, שִׁישׁ דְּבַה שְׂחִיָּה טוֹבָה: דְּבַה. פְּרָלִיר"שׁ בְּלַע"ז: (לז) בְּמִגְפָּה לְפָנַי ה'. בְּזֹחַת מִיחָה הַכְּגוּנָה לָהֶם כְּנֵגֵד מִדֵּה. כֵּס חָטְאוּ בְּזִשׁוֹן, וְנִשְׁתַּרְבַּז לְשׁוֹנֵס עַד טְבוֹרִס וְחוֹלְעִים יוֹלְחִים מִלְשׁוֹנֵס וְזֹאִין לְחוּךְ טְבוֹרִס, לְכַךְ נֹאמַר בְּמִגְפָּה וְלֹא

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Will the Spies enjoy life in the World to Come? (v. 37)
MISHNAH: The spies have no portion in the World to Come, as the verse states, *"The men who produced a bad report about the Land died in the plague, before God"* (v. 37): *"They died"*—in this world; *"in the plague"*—in the World to Come.
 The generation of the wilderness has no share in the World to Come and will not stand for judgment, as the verse states, *"They will meet their end in this desert, and there they will die"* (v. 35).

These are the words of Rabbi Akiva.
 Rabbi Eliezer says:
 About them it is said, *"Gather my pious ones together unto Me, those that have made a covenant with Me with a sacrifice"* (Psalms 50:5; Sanhedrin 108a).
ZOHAR: The spies who defamed the Land of Israel...were struck physically and died (v. 37), but whoever defames the *Shechinah* (the Divine presence), his soul is stricken (Zohar III 276a).

TORAS MENACHEM

☞ THE SPIES IN THE WORLD TO COME (v. 37)
 In the **Mishnah**, Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Eliezer argued whether the generation of the wilderness will merit the World to Come. Rabbi Akiva argued that they will not, based on an apparent repetition in verse 35, whereas Rabbi Eliezer maintained that the generation was pious and will merit the World to Come by virtue of the fact that it entered into a covenant with God (see *Shemos* 24:1-8; *Rashi* to *Sanhedrin* *ibid.*).
 But regarding the spies *themselves*, the **Mishnah** appears to state unequivocally that "the spies have no portion in the World to Come." The **Zohar**, however, states that the spies suffered only a physical death

but that their souls would not be punished, from which it follows that they *will* be resurrected in the World to Come.
 So it appears, at first glance, that the **Mishnah** and **Zohar** argue as to whether the spies will merit the World to Come.
A NOVEL APPROACH TO THE MISHNAH
 However, in truth, the views of the **Zohar** and **Mishnah** are not totally incompatible. For it could be argued that when Rabbi Eliezer said, *"About them it is said, 'Gather my pious ones, etc.'"* he was referring to *both* the generation of the wilderness *and* the spies. For when the covenant that

³⁵ “I, God, have spoken! (I swear) I will do this to the entire evil congregation who have assembled against me. They will meet their end in this desert, and they will die there.”

DEATH OF THE SPIES

14:36 **B**ut the men whom Moshe had sent to explore the Land (could not be saved by his prayers because*) they returned and caused the entire congregation to complain against him, by producing a report about the Land (that constituted a rebellion against Moshe*). ³⁷ So the men who produced a bad report about the Land died (straightaway*) in the plague, before God.

³⁸ From the men who went to explore the Land, (only) Yehoshua the son of Nun and Calev the son of Yefuneh remained alive.

THE SECOND REBELLION

14:39 **M**oshe related all these words to the children of Israel, and the people mourned greatly. ⁴⁰ They got up early in the morning and went up (along the route to the Land, in the direction of the) mountaintop, saying, “We’re ready to go up to the place which God spoke about, for we have sinned!”

⁴¹ Moshe said, “Why are you transgressing the word of God? (What you are doing) will not succeed.

⁴² Do not go up, because God is not among you, to prevent you from being beaten by your enemies.

TORAS MENACHEM

Rabbi Eliezer referred to was made, shortly before the giving of the Torah, the spies participated and were included in the covenant. And even though the spies sinned to a greater degree than the rest of the generation, as we find that they alone were punished with death immediately (v. 37),

nevertheless, the effect of a covenant was to bind *all* of the generation eternally to God in a way that could never be dissolved.

According to this logic, it follows that Rabbi Eliezer dissented not only with R’ Akiva’s view recorded immediately beforehand in the *Mishnah* (that the generation of the wilderness will not merit the World to Come), but also with the *Mishnah*’s prior statement, “The spies have no portion in the World to Come.”

So, in the final analysis we see that the *Zohar*’s view that the spies will merit the World to Come is not completely incompatible with the *Mishnah*, as it is consistent with the view of Rabbi Eliezer.

The Last Word

THE SECOND REBELLION (v. 39-45)

Being that nothing stands in the way of *teshuvah* (repentance), why were the Jewish people denied a second chance to enter the Land? Surely, they had repented for their sin, so why did Moshe say that their plan “will not succeed” (v. 41)?

From here we see that, while *teshuvah* does wipe away sin, both at the personal and the communal level, it does not guarantee a conquest of the Land of Israel. This can only happen in the manner which the Torah has promised: In Moshe’s days, the conquest could only succeed with the help of the Ark of the Covenant (see v. 44). And in our days, the Land of Israel can only be fully conquered through the leadership of Mashiach—a person, “from the House of David, dedicated to the study of the Torah and observance of the mitzvos like his father David, according to the written law and the oral law, who will compel all the Jewish people to walk in it and strengthen its fences, and he will fight the wars of God.” (Rambam, Laws of Kings 11:4). Only through this path will the Temple be built and the exiles be gathered in. (See also *The Last Word to Devarim* 30:3).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, p. 327)

Sparks of Chasidus

Even though the spies knew that they would be depicted in the Torah as wicked men—until *Chasidic* thought would eventually reveal their inner, holy intentions—they nevertheless persisted with their plan, because their desire to have a purely spiritual life in the desert was so great.

In fact, the spies’ wish will ultimately be granted to the Jewish people, for we are promised that in the Messianic Era, “*Strangers will arise and tend your flocks*” (Isaiah 61:5), that the other nations will tend to the physical needs of the Jewish people. The spies’ only mistake was that *until we reach that time* it is necessary for Jewish people to engage with the mundane, physical world. For in this way we bring to light the soul’s resilience, proving beyond doubt that it can remain loyal to God despite the adversities of this world.

(Based on *Sichah* and *Ma’amar* of *Shabbos Parshas Shelach* 5747)

*See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 13, p. 46ff.

וּתְפַלְּוּן בְּחֶרֶב אֲרִי עַל כֵּן תִּבְתּוּן מִבְּתֵר פִּלְחָנָא דִּי וְלֹא יְהִי מִימְרָא דִּי בְּסַעֲדֵכוֹן: מִדּוּ וְאַרְשֻׁעוּ לְמַסַּק לְרִישׁ מוֹרָא וְאַרְוֹן קָנְמָא דִּי וּמִשָּׁה לֹא עָדוּ מִנּוּ מִשְׁרִיתָא: מַה וּנְחַת עִמְלֻקָּאָה וּבְנֵעֲנָאָה הִיתֵב בְּמוֹרָא הֵהוּא וּמְחַנּוֹן וּמְרַדְנּוֹן עַד חֶרְמָה: א וּמִלִּיל יִי עִם מִשָּׁה לְמִימְרָ: ב מִלִּל עִם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְתִימַר לְהוֹן אֲרִי תַעֲלוֹן לְאַרְע מוֹתְבָנִיכוֹן דִּי אֲנָא יֵהֵב לְכוּ: ג וְתַעֲבְדוּן קֶרְבְּנָא קָדָם יִי עֲלֵתָא אוּ נִכְסַת קוֹדֶשִׁיא לְאַפְרָשָׁא נְדָרָא אוּ בְנִדְבָתָא אוּ בְמוֹעֲדִיכוֹן לְמַעֲבֵד לְאַתְקַבְּלָא בְרַעְוָא קָדָם יִי מִן תּוֹרֵי אוּ מִן עֲנָא: ד וְיִקְרַב דְּמִקְרַב קֶרְבְּנָה קָדָם יִי מִנְחָתָא סֵלְתָא עֲשׂוֹרְנָא דְפִילָא בְרַבְעוֹת הֵינָא מִשָּׁחָא: ה וְחִמְרָא לְנִסְכָּא רַבְעוֹת הֵינָא תַעֲבֵד עַל עֲלֵתָא אוּ לְנִכְסַת קוֹדֶשִׁיא לְאַמְרָא חַד: ו אוּ לְדִבְרָא תַעֲבֵד מִנְחָתָא סֵלְתָא תְרֵי עֲשָׂרוֹנִין דְפִילָא בְּמִשַּׁח תְּלָתוֹת הֵינָא: ז וְחִמְרָא לְנִסְכָּא תְּלָתוֹת הֵינָא תִקְרַב לְאַתְקַבְּלָא בְרַעְוָא קָדָם יִי: ח וְאַרִי תַעֲבֵד בְּר תּוֹרֵי עֲלֵתָא אוּ נִכְסַת קוֹדֶשִׁיא לְפֶרֶשָׁא נְדָרָא אוּ נִכְסַת קוֹדֶשִׁיא קָדָם יִי: ט וְיִקְרַב עַל בְּר תּוֹרֵי מִנְחָתָא סֵלְתָא תְּלָתָא עֲשָׂרוֹנִין דְפִילָא בְּמִשַּׁח פְּלָגוֹת הֵינָא: י וְחִמְרָא תִקְרַב לְנִסְכָּא פְּלָגוֹת הֵינָא קֶרְבֵּן

וְהַכְנַעְנִי שָׁם לְפָנֵיכֶם וּנְפַלְתֶּם בְּחֶרֶב כִּי־עַל־כֵּן שַׁבְתֶּם מֵאַחֲרֵי יְהוָה וְלֹא־יְהִיֶּה יְהוָה עִמָּכֶם: מִדּוּ וַיַּעֲפְלוּ לַעֲלוֹת אֶל־רֹאשׁ הָהָר וְאַרְוֹן בְּרִית־יְהוָה וּמִשָּׁה לֹא־מָשׁוּ מִקְרַב הַמַּחֲנֶה: מַה וַיֵּרֶד הָעַמְלָקִי וְהַכְנַעְנִי הַיֹּשֵׁב בְּהָר הַהוּא וַיָּכּוּם וַיַּבְתּוּם עַד־הַחֲרָמָה: פ טו « וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: ב דִּבֶּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם כִּי תָבֹאוּ אֶל־אֶרֶץ מוֹשְׁבֵיתֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר אָנִי נֹתֵן לָכֶם: ג וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אִשָּׁה לַיהוָה עֲלֶה אוֹ־זִבַּח לְפִלְא־נְדָר אוּ בְנִדְבָה אוּ בְמוֹעֲדֵיכֶם לַעֲשׂוֹת רִיחַ נִיחַח לַיהוָה מִן־הַבֶּקָר אוּ מִן־הַצֹּאן: ד וְהִקְרִיב הַמִּקְרִיב קֶרְבְּנּוֹ לַיהוָה מִנְחָה סֵלֶת עֲשָׂרוֹן בָּלוּל בְּרַבְעִית הֵהִיֵּן שֶׁמֶן: ה וַיִּיֵן לְנִסְכֹּד רְבִיעִית הֵהִיֵּן תַעֲשֶׂה עַל־הָעֵלָה אוּ לְזִבַּח לְכַבֵּשׁ הָאֶחָד: ו אוּ לְאֵיל תַעֲשֶׂה מִנְחָה סֵלֶת שְׁנֵי עֲשָׂרִים בָּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן שְׁלִשִׁית הֵהִיֵּן: ז וַיִּיֵן לְנִסְכֹּד שְׁלִשִׁית הֵהִיֵּן תִקְרִיב רִיח־נִיחַח לַיהוָה: ח וְחִמְשִׁין ה וְכִי־תַעֲשֶׂה בֶן־בֶּקָר עֲלֶה אוֹ־זִבַּח לְפִלְא־נְדָר אוֹ־שְׁלָמִים לַיהוָה: ט וְהִקְרִיב עַל־בֶּן־הַבֶּקָר מִנְחָה סֵלֶת שְׁלֹשָׁה עֲשָׂרִים בָּלוּל בְּשֶׁמֶן חֲצִי הֵהִיֵּן: י וַיִּיֵן

דש"י

לצצכס לעשות אשה להי': ריח ניחח. שיהיה נחת רוח לפני': לפלא נדר או בנדבה וגו'. או שתעשו האשה צצזל חוצה מועדיכם שחיובתי אחת לעשות צמועד': (ד) והקריב המקריב. תקריבו נסכים ומנחה לכל צהמה, המנחה כליל, והשמן צלל צתוכה, והיין לספלים, כמו ששינו צמסכת סוכה': (ה) לכבש האחד. על כל האמור למעלה הוא מוסב, על המנחה ועל השמן ועל היין: (ו) או לאיל. ואם איל הוא. ורצחיתו דרשו' או לרצות

(מג) כי על כן שבתם. כלומר כי זאת תצא לכם על אשר שבתם וגו': (מד) ויעפלו. לשון חזק וכן הכה עפלה'. אינגרי"ש צלע"ז לשון עזות, וכן עופל צת ציון, עופל וצחן. ומדרש תנחומא⁴ מפרשו לשון עופל, הלכו חשכים שלא צרשות: (מה) ויכתובם. כמו ואכות אותו עחון,⁵ מכה אחר מכה: עד החרמה. שם המקום נקרא על שם המאורע: (צ) כי תבאו. צטר להם שיכנסו לארץ: (ג) ועשיתם אשה. אין זה צווי אלא כשתצאו שם ותעלה על

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why do the laws of meal-offerings and wine-libations appear here, after the narrative of the spies? (15:2ff.)
RASHI: [The passage begins] "When you arrive in the Land." [Thus] God was informing them that they would [eventually] enter the Land.
DA'AS ZEKEINIM: Why is this passage recorded after the account of the spies?

Because when the Jewish people heard God's decree [that they must remain in the desert for forty years (14:28-35)], they said, "Woe to us! We will never enter the Land, for at the end of forty years, if we sin again, God will issue another decree! So there is no end to the matter." God said: "After forty years you will most definitely, 'arrive in the Land' (v. 2)" (see *Sparks of Chasidus*).

TORAS MENACHEM

THE FINAL RULING
 There is a principle in Jewish Law that, while we do not rule in favor of the *Zohar* against the *Talmud*, the view of the *Zohar* may indeed be applied to settle an *unresolved* Talmudic dispute (*Chacham Tzvi, Responsa* 36; see *Sdei Chemed, Klalei Haposkim* 2:13).

In our case, the issue of whether the spies will merit the World to Come is an unresolved dispute of the *Mishnah* between Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Akiva, as explained above. So it follows that the final ruling on this matter is determined by the *Zohar*—that the spies will indeed merit a portion in the World to Come.

(Based on *Sichas Motzo'ei Shabbos Parshas Chukas-Balak* 5739)

⁴³ *The Amalekites and the Cana'anites are ahead of you, and you will fall by the sword. For you have turned away from God, and God will not be with you.*"

⁴⁴ *They were adamant and went up (towards the Land, in the direction of) the mountaintop, but God's Ark of the Covenant and Moshe did not move from the camp.* ⁴⁵ *The Amalekites and the Cana'anites who lived on the mountain came down, thrashed them and thwarted them as far as (a place which was later named) Charmah ("Destruction," due to what happened there).*

MEAL-OFFERINGS & WINE LIBATIONS TO ACCOMPANY SACRIFICES

I5 **G**od spoke to Moshe, saying: ² *Speak to the children of Israel and say to them: When you arrive in the Land of your residence, which I am giving you, ³ and you make a (voluntary) fire-offering to God to make a pleasant aroma for God—(be it) a burnt-offering or a (peace-offering) slaughter, (be it) a vow or a voluntary offering or (an offering) on your festivals, (be it) from cattle or from sheep:*

- ⁴ *If a person brings his offering (of a lamb) to God:*
 - *He should present a meal-offering of one tenth (of an eifah* of) fine flour, mixed with a quarter of a hin* of oil.*
 - ⁵ *With the burnt-offering or the (peace-offering) slaughter you should offer a quarter of a hin* of wine as a libation. (All this is) for each lamb.*
- ⁶ *Or for a ram:*
 - *You should present a meal-offering of two tenths (of an eifah* of) fine flour mixed with a third of a hin* of oil.*
 - ⁷ *You should offer a third of a hin* of wine as a libation, a pleasant aroma to God.*
- ⁸ *If you sacrifice a young bull as a burnt-offering or a (peace-offering) slaughter, to fulfill a vow, or for a peace-offering for God:*
 - ⁹ *With the young bull you should offer up a meal-offering of three tenths (of an eifah* of) fine flour, mixed with half a hin* of oil.*
 - ¹⁰ *You should offer half a hin* of wine as a libation.*

FIFTH
READING

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

What is the *inner* connection between the laws of libations and the sin of the spies (see *Classic Questions*)?

Chasidic thought teaches that there are two general methods by which a person might come closer to God, *expiration* and *inspiration*. If a person meditates upon the greatness of God, and the utter bliss that is to be found in the spiritual worlds, he may eventually reach a state where he simply wishes to expire from the world. "Expiration" is thus a self-motivated desire to elevate oneself from material existence and merge with a higher reality.

On the other hand, sometimes a person experiences the opposite emotion, that instead of feeling the *internal* desire to soar upwards to higher planes, he is granted *external inspiration from Above*, driving

him "down to earth," to engage with the physical world with greater enthusiasm, with the goal of sanctifying mundane existence.

Asacrisce, which is burnt on the Altar until its blood and fats have risen in smoke, represents the mode of expiration. On the other hand, wine libations, which are poured *downwards*, represent the path of inspiration. Thus, after the sin of the spies, who excelled in their desire to "expire" from mundane activities and withdraw from physical life, the *mitzvah* of wine libations was immediately given, representing the need to be inspired back down to action. Of course, both these paths to God are valid, and both are necessary; our daily challenge is to balance and maximize the advantages of both approaches.

(Based on Ma'amar of Shabbos Parshas Shelach 5747)

דַּמְתִּקְבַּל בְּרַעְוֵא קָדָם יְיָ: יֵא כְּדִין יִתְעַבֵּד
 לְתוֹרַת מִד אוֹ לְדַכְרָא מִד אוֹ לְאִמְרָא בְּאִמְרֵי
 אוֹ בְּעִזָּי: יב כְּמִנְיַן דִּי תַעֲבֹדוּן כְּדִין תַּעֲבֹדוּן
 לְחַד כְּמִנְיַנְהוּן: יג כָּל יִצְיָא יַעֲבֵד כְּדִין יִת
 אֲלִיו לְקַרְבָּא קַרְבָּן דְּמִתְקַבַּל בְּרַעְוֵא קָדָם יְיָ:
 יד וְאֲרִי יִתְגַּיֵּר עִמְכוּן גִּיּוֹרָא אוֹ דִּי בִּינְיֹכוּן
 לְדַרְיֹכוּן וְיַעֲבֵד קַרְבָּן דְּמִתְקַבַּל בְּרַעְוֵא קָדָם יְיָ:
 כִּמְא דִּי תַעֲבֹדוּן כִּן יַעֲבֵד: טו קְהֵלָא קְוֵמָא
 מִד לְכוּן וְלִגְיוֹרָא דִּיתְגַּיֵּר קָם עֲלָם לְדַרְיֹכוּן
 כְּוִתְכוּן כְּגִיּוֹרָא יִהֵא קָדָם יְיָ: טז אוֹרִיָּתָא מִדָּא
 וְדִינָא מִד יִהִי לְכוּן וְלִגְיוֹרָא דִּיתְגַּיֵּר עִמְכוּן:
 יז וּמְלִיל יְיָ עִם מִשָּׁה לְמִימְרָ: יח מְלִל עִם בְּנֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל וְתִימֵר לְהוּן כְּמַעֲלָכוּן לְאַרְעָא דִּי
 אֲנָא מַעַל יִתְכוּן לְתַמְוִן: יט וְיִהִי בְּמִיכְלָכוּן
 מִלְחָמָא דְאַרְעָא תַּפְרִשׁוּן אַפְרִשׁוּתָא קָדָם יְיָ:

תִּקְרִיב לְנֶסֶךְ חֲצִי הַהֵיזֵן אִשָּׁה רֵיחַ-נִיחֹחַ לַיהוָה: יא כָּכָה
 יַעֲשֶׂה לְשׂוֹר הָאֶחָד אוֹ לְאֵיל הָאֶחָד אוֹ-לְשָׁה בְּכַבְשִׁים אוֹ
 בְּעִזִּים: יב כַּמִּסְפָּר אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשׂוּ כָכָה תַעֲשׂוּ לְאֶחָד כַּמִּסְפָּרָם:
 יג כָּל-הָאֲזִרְחָ יַעֲשֶׂה-כָכָה אֶת-אֵלֶּה לְהִקְרִיב אִשָּׁה רֵיחַ-נִיחֹחַ
 לַיהוָה: יד וְכִי-יִגֹּר אֶתְכֶם גֹּר אוֹ אֲשֶׁר-בְּתוֹכְכֶם לְדַרְתֵּיכֶם
 וַעֲשֶׂה אִשָּׁה רֵיחַ-נִיחֹחַ לַיהוָה כַּאֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשׂוּ בֵּן יַעֲשֶׂה:
 טו הַקְהֵל חֻקָּה אַחַת לָכֶם וְלִגֵּר הִגֵּר חֻקַּת עוֹלָם לְדַרְתֵּיכֶם
 כָּכֶם כִּגֵּר יִהְיֶה לְפָנַי יְהוָה: טז תּוֹרָה אַחַת וּמִשְׁפָּט אֶחָד יִהְיֶה
 לָכֶם וְלִגֵּר הִגֵּר אֶתְכֶם: פ [ששׁו] יז וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:
 יח דַּבֵּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם בְּבִאֲכֶם אֶל-הָאָרֶץ
 אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְבִיא אֶתְכֶם שָׂמָּה: יט וְהָיָה בְּאֲכָלְכֶם מִלֶּחֶם הָאָרֶץ

— כשׁ —

(טו) בכם בגר. כמותכם כן גר וכן דרך לשון עברית, כגן ה' כדרך מלרס',
 כן ארץ מלרס, כמוני כמוך כעמי כעמך? (יח) בבאכם אל הארץ. משונה
 ביאה זו מכל ביאות שבתורה, שכולן נאמר כי תצא, כי תצאו, לפיכך כולן
 למדות זו מזו וכיון שפרט לך הכתוב צאחת מהן שאינה אלא לאחר ירושה
 וישיבה, אף כולן כן, אצל זו נאמר זה בצואכם, משנכנסו זה ואכלו מלחמה

את הפלגם לנסכי איל: (י) אשה ריח. אינו מוכרז אלא על המנחה והשמן,
 אצל היין אינו אשה, שאינו ניתן על האש: (יא) או לשה. זין שהוא זכזשים
 זין שהוא בעזים, כזש ושה קרוים צחור שנתס: איל. זין י"ג חדש ויום אחד:
 (יז) כמספר אשר תעשו. כמספר הבהמות אשר תקריבו לקרבן, ככה
 תעשו נסכים לכל אחד מהם: כמספרם. של בהמות מספרם של נסכים:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What does verse 15 teach us about conversion?

RAMBAM: The Jewish people entered into the covenant [with God] through three things: Circumcision, ritual immersion, and offering a sacrifice... So too, at any later point when a non-Jew wishes to enter into the covenant... as the verse states, “just as it is for you, so shall it be for the convert” (v. 15)— just as you [entered the covenant] with circumcision, immersion and offering a sacrifice, likewise he is required to carry out circumcision, to immerse in a *mikvah* and to bring a sacrifice....

In the current era, when a sacrifice is not possible, only circumcision and immersion are required of the convert. When the

Temple will be rebuilt, he will bring the sacrifice (*Laws of Forbidden Relations* 13:1-5).

If a convert underwent circumcision and immersion, but did not yet bring his sacrifice... the absence of the sacrifice holds him back from becoming a complete convert... like other authentic Jews... He is not permitted to eat from sacrifices, as he has not yet become like other authentic Jews (*Laws of Individuals Requiring Atonement* 1:2).

TZAFNAS PANE'ACH: Only with respect to sacrifices we say he is not yet a complete convert, but in other matters he is considered a Jew in every respect. Therefore, in the current era, he loses nothing by failing to bring a sacrifice (*Tzafnas Pane'ach al HaRambam* 69a).

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 CONVERSION IN THE CURRENT ERA (v. 15)

Rambam writes that since it is not possible for a convert to bring the necessary sacrifice in the current era, “the absence of the sacrifice holds him back from becoming a complete convert.” **Tzafnas Pane'ach** clarifies that this is, “only with respect to sacrifices...but in other matters he is considered a Jew in every respect.”

However, this statement of *Tzafnas Pane'ach* is difficult to accept, as it seems to slight the status of the convert in the current era. How can we accept that every convert to Judaism since the Temple was destroyed has a certain deficiency, that he is not considered a Jew in every respect?

One solution would be to argue that the failure to bring a sacrifice in the current era does not affect the validity of the convert in any way whatsoever. Rather than being a *personal deficiency* it is a mere technicality that, in order to eat from sacrifices, the convert's own initial sacrifice must be brought first.

However, this answer is untenable, since *Rambam* writes explicitly that “the absence of the sacrifice holds him back from becoming a *complete convert*, therefore he is not permitted to eat from sacrifices,” i.e. that the absence of a sacrifice actually holds back the completion of the conversion process. Thus, it seems that the deficiency is indeed personal.

(The meal offering and the oil will be) a fire-offering, a pleasant aroma to God.

¹¹ This is what should be done for each ox or ram, or for each young sheep or young goat.
¹² Corresponding to the number of sacrifices, you should offer the appropriate number of (meal-offerings and wine libations) for each one. ¹³ Every native-born should present (these offerings) in this way, so as to offer up a fire-offering of pleasant aroma to God.

- ¹⁴ When a convert comes to live with you, or (likewise for the converts already) among you (at any time) throughout the generations, and he offers up a fire-offering of pleasant aroma to God, he should sacrifice it just as you do. ¹⁵ One statute applies for the (entire) assembly, (both) for yourselves and for the convert who lives (with you). One statute applies throughout your generations—just as it is for you, so shall it be for the convert, before God. ¹⁶ There will be one Torah and one law for you and for the convert who lives (with you).

🕎 CHALAH—THE DOUGH-OFFERING 🕎

15:17
SIXTH
READING

God spoke to Moshe, saying: ¹⁸ Speak to the children of Israel and say to them:
 • (Immediately) upon your coming to the Land to which I am bringing you, ¹⁹ when you eat from the bread of the Land, you should set aside a portion for God.

TORAS MENACHEM

THE EXPLANATION

The key to solving our problem lies in *Rambam's* phrase, “the absence of the sacrifice *holds him back* from becoming a complete convert.”

It is not the case that the convert's offering of a sacrifice *actively completes* the process of become Jewish. Rather, the emphasis is entirely negative, that the *failure* to bring a sacrifice *prevents* him from becoming Jewish.

Rambam maintained that in order to become Jewish a person must: a.) Carry out those procedures which *actively bring* a person into the Jewish covenant, and confer Jewishness upon him; and b.) Carry out a procedure which *removes* an obstacle to becoming Jewish.

The *active* entry into the covenant is achieved by circumcision and immersion. However, if the convert would fail to bring a sacrifice it would *prevent* him from becoming Jewish.

🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

THE MITZVAH OF SEPARATING CHALAH (v. 17-21)

When performed correctly, the *mitzvah* of *chalah* is carried out by separating a portion from one's dough *before* it is baked, and giving it to the priest (see v. 20 below). Why, then, does verse 19 state, “When you eat from the bread of the Land, you should set aside a portion for God,” if the *mitzvah* is carried out with the dough *before* eating?

What is superior, man or his bread?
 At first glance, man—who is blessed with intelligence, speech, agility and compassion—is vastly superior to his humble, quiet loaf. But why then does he need to eat? Why is such a sophisticated being dependent for his very life on flour baked with a little water and salt?

Because—explains Chasidic thought—the bread that a person eats has sparks of immense spiritual intensity trapped within it, sparks that transcend the spiritual source of man himself. So, by eating the bread, a person becomes uplifted by its sparks, receiving a *spiritual* boost—in addition to the *physical* energy which the bread brings. Thus, our physical dependency on bread belies a much deeper spiritual dependency.

However, unlike the physical nourishment of bread, which is an *inevitable* consequence of eating the food, the bread's potential for

spiritual nourishment depends on one's intentions while eating. The person must eat his bread with the intent of elevating the energy within it to a higher purpose, by using it to serve God.

When the person has thus elevated the bread, the tables then turn *and the bread begins to elevate the person*. For now that the person has brought the purpose of the bread's existence to light, by eating it with lofty intentions and reciting the appropriate blessings before and after, he has “activated” the sparks of holiness within the bread. And this, in turn, elevates the person, because the spiritual source of those sparks is higher than that of man, as explained above.

However this begs the question: From where does a person derive the inspiration, and indeed the ability, to carry out the initial phase of elevating the bread?

The answer is—from the *mitzvah* of *chalah*. By separating “*the first of your dough*” for God (v. 20), a person is already aware *when his bread is still dough* why he will *later* eat the bread; and the dough as a whole has already begun its process of spiritual elevation.

We can now appreciate that verse 19 describes, not the method, but the *goal* of separating *chalah*: That *later* “when you eat from the bread of the Land,” it should be elevated (תְּרַיְמוּ תְּרִימָה) to God.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shelach* 5718)

כ ריש אצותכון חלֵתא תפֵרשון אפֵרשׁותא כְּמָא דִּי מִפְרָשׁוֹן מִן אֲדָרְא בְּן תִּפְרָשׁוֹן יְתָה: כא מְרִישׁ אֲצוֹתְכוֹן תִּתְנֹן קָדָם יִי אֲפֵרשׁוֹתָא לְדְרִיכוֹן: כב וְאֲרִי תִשְׁתְּלוֹן וְלֹא תַעֲבֹדוֹן יִת כָּל פְּקוּדָא הָאֲלוֹן דִּי מְלִיל יִי עִם מוֹשֶׁה: כג יִת כָּל דִּי פְקִיד יִי יִתְכוֹן בִּידָא דְמוֹשֶׁה מִן יוֹמָא דִּי פְקִיד יִי וְלֵהֲלֵא לְדְרִיכוֹן: כד וְיִהִי אִם מְעִינִי בְּנִשְׁתָּא אֲתַעֲבַדְתָּ לְשִׁלּוֹ וְיַעֲבֹדוֹן כָּל בְּנִשְׁתָּא תוֹר בֵּר תוֹרֵי חַד לְעֵלְתָא לְאֲתַקְבְּלָא בְרַעֲוֵא קָדָם יִי וּמִנְחָתָה וְנִסְכָּה בְדַחְזֵי וְצִפּוּר בֵּר עֲזֵי חַד לְחִטָּאתָא: כה וּכְפַר כְּהָנָא עַל כָּל בְּנִשְׁתָּא דְבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִשְׁתַּבֵּק לְהוֹן אֲרִי שְׁלוֹתָא הִיא וְאֲנֹן אִיתִיאוּ יִת קְרַבְנָהוֹן קְרַבְנָא קָדָם יִי וְחוֹבְתָהוֹן קָדָם יִי עַל שְׁלוֹתָהוֹן: כו וְיִשְׁתַּבֵּק לְכָל בְּנִשְׁתָּא דְבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלִגְזִירָא דִּיתִגְזֵר בִּינֵיהוֹן אֲרִי לְכָל

תְּרִימוּ תְרוּמָה לַיהוָה: כ ראשית עֲרֹסְתְכֶם חֶלֶה תְּרִימוּ תְרוּמָה בְּתְרוּמַת גֹּרֵן בֶּן תְּרִימוּ אֹתָהּ: כא מְרִישׁוֹת עֲרֹסְתֵיכֶם תִּתְּנוּ לַיהוָה תְרוּמָה לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם: ס כב וְכִי תִשְׁגּוּ וְלֹא תַעֲשׂוּ אֵת כָּל־הַמִּצְוֹת הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה: כג אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֵלֵיכֶם בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה מִן־הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה וְהִלָּאָה לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם: כד וְהָיָה אִם מְעִינֵי הָעֵדָה נִעֲשִׂיתָה לְשִׁגְגָה וְעֲשׂוּ כָל־הָעֵדָה פֶּר בֶּן־בֶּקָר אֶחָד לְעֵלָה לְרִיחַ נִיחֹחַ לַיהוָה וּמִנְחָתוֹ וְנִסְכּוֹ כַּמִּשְׁפָּט וּשְׂעִיר־עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחִטָּת: כה וְכִפֹּר הַכֹּהֵן עַל־כָּל־עֲדַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְנִסְלַח לָהֶם כִּי־שִׁגְגָה הוּא וְהֵם הֵבִיאוּ אֶת־קֶרְבָּנָם אִשָּׁה לַיהוָה וְחִטָּאתָם לְפָנָי יְהוָה עַל־שִׁגְגָתָם: כו וְנִסְלַח לְכָל־עֲדַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלִגְזֵר

* חסר א'

רש"י

תלמוד לומר אח כל המצות האלה, מלוא אחת שהיא ככל המצות, מה העובר על כל המצות פורק עול ומפר ברית ומגלה פנים, אף מלוא זו פורק זה עול ומפר ברית ומגלה פנים, ואיזו, זו עבודת אלילים: אשר דבר ה' אל משה. אכני ולא יהיה לך מפי הגבורה שמענוס⁵, אחת דבר אלהים שמים זו שמעתי: (כג) את כל אשר צוה וגו'. מגיד שכל המודה בעבודת אלילים ככופר בכל התורה כולה ובכל מה שנתנצחו הנביאים, שנאמר למן היום אשר נזר ה' וכלא⁶: (כד) אם מעיני העדה נעשתה לשגגה. אם מעיני העדה נעשתה עבירה זו ע"י שוגג, כגון ששגגו וזכרו על אחת מן העבודות שהיא מותרת לעבוד עבודת אלילים ככך: לחטא. חסר א' שאינו כשאר חטאות, שכל חטאות שבתורה הצרות עם עולה החטאת קודמת לעולה, שנאמר ואת השני יעשה עולה⁷, וזו עולה קודמת לחטאת⁸: (כה) הביאו את קרבנם אשה לה'. זה האומר צפרשה הוא פר העולה שנאמר אשה לה': וחטאתם. זה השעיר:

נחייצו צחלה': (כ) ראשית ערסתכם. כשתלושו כדי עריסותיכם שחם רגילין ללוש צמדצר. וכמה היא, וימודו צעומר עומר לגלגלת², תרימו מראשיתה, כלומר קודם שתאכלו ממנה, ראשית תלקח חלה אחת תרומה לשם ה': חלה. טורטי"ל צלע": בתרומת גורן. שלא נאמר זה שיעור ולא בתרומת מעשר שנאמר זה שיעור, אבל חכמים נתנו שיעור, לזעל הבית אחד מעשרים וארבעה, ולנחתום אחד מארבעים ושמונה³: (כא) מראשית ערסתיכם. למה נאמר, לפי שנאמר ראשית עריסותיכם, שומע אני ראשונה שבטיסות, תלמוד לומר מראשית, מקצתה ולא כולה': תתנו לה' תרומה. לפי שלא שמענו שיעור לחלה, נאמר תתנו, שיהא זה כדי נתינה': (כב) וכי תשגו ולא תעשו. עבודת אלילים היתה בכלל כל המצות שהצבור מביאין עליהן פר, והכי הכתוב מוסיף כאן מכללן לידון צפר לעולה ושעיר לחטאת': וכי תשגו וגו'. בעבודת אלילים הכתוב מדבר, או אינו אלא צחח מצות, מכל המצות,

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Thus, in the current era, when it is not possible to bring a sacrifice, clause "b" is suspended, and a sacrifice is no longer required to remove an obstacle preventing a prospective convert from becoming Jewish. Since there is nothing holding him back in the current era (i.e. the "obstacle" does not exist), circumcision and immersion alone are sufficient for him to become *completely* Jewish.

Even when the Temple is rebuilt he will not have to bring a sacrifice in order to become fully Jewish, since when he underwent conversion, the failure to bring a sacrifice did not hold him back from becoming completely Jewish. Furthermore, he will be permitted to eat from sacrifices *even before* bringing a conversion sacrifice of his own, since he entered into the covenant of Judaism (and completely so) during exile times. He certainly will not *lose* his Jewish status as a result of the construction of the Temple!

The above points are implicit in the precise wording of *Rambam*. First he writes about the three requirements for conversion in Temple times.

Then, he continues, "In the current era, when a sacrifice is not possible, only circumcision and immersion are required of the convert." This suggests that the same level of complete conversion is accomplished in the current era with circumcision and immersion, as that of the Temple Era with all three features.

The fact that *Rambam* then continues, "When the Temple will be rebuilt, he will bring the sacrifice," is a *completely independent point*. *Rambam* is not suggesting any deficiency in the convert of exile times, as the place for that would have been when he was describing the process of conversion during exile times, earlier on. Rather, *Rambam* is stating an additional point, that even though the conversion took place without a sacrifice, and one could think that it would *never* be necessary to bring one—nevertheless, when the Temple is built the convert should still bring a sacrifice. But that does not mean to say that he has to do so in order to eat from sacrifices, as he is already totally Jewish, in every respect.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 26, p. 160ff.)

- ²⁰ (Whenever you knead an omer of dough, or more, before you eat it) you should set aside the first of your dough, a loaf-size portion (for God).
- Just as the *terumah* of the threshing floor* (has no fixed minimum), likewise (there is no fixed minimum in this case that) you must separate.
- ²¹ (Nevertheless) you should give to God (enough to be considered) a “gift.”
- (You need not give the entire dough, but only a portion) from the first of your dough.
- (Do this) in all your generations.

OFFERING FOR INADVERTENT COMMUNAL IDOLATRY

15:22 **I**f you will inadvertently (commit the sin of idolatry—which is equivalent to) not observing all these commandments which God spoke to Moshe, ²³ (and denying) everything that God commanded you through Moshe, from the day when God (first) commanded and onwards, (including the prophets) of all generations—²⁴ then, if the inadvertent sin was because of (a mistaken ruling of the judges), the “eyes” of the congregation:

- The entire congregation should offer a young bull as a burnt-offering for a pleasant aroma for God, with its prescribed meal-offering and libation, and one young male goat for a sin-offering.

²⁵ The priest will atone on behalf of the entire congregation of the children of Israel, and they will be forgiven, for it was an inadvertent sin, and they have brought their offering as a fire-offering to God, and their sin-offering before God, because of their inadvertent sin. ²⁶ The entire congregation of the children of Israel and the convert who lives with them will be forgiven, for it happened to all the people inadvertently.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why do the laws about inadvertent idol worship appear here? (v. 22ff)

MIDRASH: Why is the passage concerning *chalah* recorded next to the passage about idol worship? To teach you that whoever fulfills the *mitzvah* of *chalah* is considered to have done away with idol

worship; and whoever does away with the *mitzvah* of *chalah* is considered to have perpetuated idol worship (*Vayikra Rabah* 15:6).

RAMBAN: The people had rebelled against God, saying, “Let’s appoint a leader and return to Egypt!” (14:4), therefore the laws of idol worship were completed here.

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🔗 THE CONNECTION BETWEEN CHALAH AND IDOL WORSHIP

At first glance, the laws of inadvertent idol worship (v. 22-31) appear to have no direct connection with the laws of *chalah* that precede them (v. 17-21). Why did *Rashi* not explain this matter, in the same manner that he explained the juxtaposition of the sin of the spies to the laws of *chalah* (*Rashi* to v. 2), and the juxtaposition of the laws of inadvertent idol worship to the account of the *Shabbos* desecration (*Rashi* to v. 41)?

Apparently, *Rashi* deemed the answer to this question to be simple enough that the reader could understand the matter for himself.

At first glance, it appears that the laws of idol worship are recorded here because the spies caused the people to rebel against God, saying, “Let’s appoint a leader and return to Egypt!” (14:4), [as **Ramban** writes].

However, if this were the case, then why did the current passage not follow on *immediately* from the account of the sin of the spies, rather than here, after the laws of *chalah*?

Furthermore, *Rashi* explained above that the laws of *chalah* were recorded here, because “God was informing them that they would [eventually] enter the Land” (*Rashi* to v. 2), i.e. as a consolation to the Jewish people who in the aftermath of the sin had to stay forty years in

the desert. Why then would the Torah first console them by speaking about *chalah*, and then proceed to *remind* the Jewish people of their sin by discussing the laws of idol worship?

The Last Word

What is the connection between the *mitzvah* of *chalah* and doing away with idol worship (see **Midrash**)?

When a person earns his daily bread, it is natural for him to think that market forces control his income, and not God. He may thus “worship” business acumen as a “foreign god,” which appears to reap bountiful rewards, the more it is worshiped.

The solution to this problem is: “You should set aside the first of your dough” (v. 20) for God. A person should meditate on the fact that his income, his “dough,” is given *directly* by God. Going to work merely makes a suitable “receptacle” into which God will pour His bountiful blessings.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, pp. 183-4)

*See *Devarim* 18:4.

עָמָא בְּשִׁלוּתָא: כו וְאִם אָנֹכִי חָדָשׁ יָחֹב בְּשִׁלּוֹ וַיִּקְרַב עֲזָא בֵּת שֵׁתָה לְחַטָּאתָ: כח וַיִּכְפַּר כַּהֲנָא עַל אָנֹכִי דְאִשְׁתְּלִי בְּמַחְבֵּה בְּשִׁלּוֹ קָדָם יי לְכַפֵּרָא עֲלוּהִי וַיִּשְׁתַּבַּח לָהּ: כט וַיִּצְיָא בְּכַנֵּי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּלְגִזְרָא דִּיתְגַּיֵר בִּינֵיהוֹן אֹרִיתָא חֲדָא יְהִי לְכוּן לְדִיעְבַּד בְּשִׁלּוֹ: ל וְאָנֹכִי דִיעְבַּד בְּרִישׁ גְּלִי מִן יִצְיָבָא וּמִן גִּזְרָא קָדָם יי הוּא מְרַגֵּז וַיִּשְׁתַּצֵּי אָנֹכִי הָהוּא מְגוּ עֲמָה: לא אָרִי עַל מִימְרָא דִּי בְּסַר וַיִּת פְּקוּדוּהִי אֲשַׁנֵּי אֲשַׁתְּצָאָה וַיִּשְׁתַּצֵּי אָנֹכִי הָהוּא חוּבָה בַּהּ: לב וְהוּוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִדְבָּרָא וְאֲשַׁכְּחוּ גְבֻרָא כַּד מְנַבֵּב אֲעִין בְּיוֹמָא דִּשְׁבָתָא: לד וַיִּקְרִיבוּ יְתָה דְאֲשַׁכְּחוּ יְתָה כַּד מְנַבֵּב אֲעִין לֹת מֹשֶׁה וּלְוֹת אַהֲרֹן וּלְוֹת כָּל בְּנֵי־שֵׁתָא: לו וַאֲסֵרוּ יְתָה בְּבֵית מִטְרָא אָרִי לָא אֲתַפְרֵשׁ לְהוֹן מָה דִיעְבְּדוֹן לָהּ: לה וַאֲמַר יי לְמֹשֶׁה אֲתַקְטַלָּא יִתְקַטַּל גְּבֻרָא מְרַגֵּם יְתָה בְּאֲבָנֵיָא כָּל בְּנֵי־שֵׁתָא מִבְּרָא לְמִשְׁרִיתָא: לו וַאֲפִיקוּ יְתָה כָּל בְּנֵי־שֵׁתָא לְמִבְרָא לְמִשְׁרִיתָא וְהִנְמוּ יְתָה בְּאֲבָנֵיָא וּמִית

הַגֵּר בְּתוֹכְכֶם כִּי לְכָל־הָעָם בְּשִׁנְגָה: ס [שביעין] כו וְאִם־נִפְּשׁ אַחַת תִּחַטָּא בְּשִׁנְגָה וְהִקְרִיבָה עֵז בֵּת־שֵׁנְתָה לְחַטָּאת: כח וְכִפֶּר הַכֹּהֵן עַל־הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַשֹּׁנֵגֶת בְּחַטָּאתָ* בְּשִׁנְגָה לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לְכַפֵּר עָלָיו וְנִסְלַח לוֹ: כט הָאֲזֹרַח בְּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלִגֵּר הַגֵּר בְּתוֹכְכֶם תֹּרָה אַחַת יִהְיֶה לָכֶם לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּשִׁנְגָה: ל וְהַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר־תַּעֲשֶׂה | בְּיַד רָמָה מִן־הָאֲזֹרַח וּמִן־הַגֵּר אֶת־יְהוָה הוּא מְגַדֵּף וְנִכְרַתָּה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהִוא מִקֶּרֶב עַמּוֹה: לא כִּי דְבַר־יְהוָה בָּזָה וְאֶת־מִצְוֹתוֹ הִפְרָה הִפְרַת | תִּפְרַת הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהִוא עֹנֶה* בָּהּ: לב וַיְהִי בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִדְבָּר וַיִּמְצְאוּ אִישׁ מִקְשָׁשׁ עֵצִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיט: לד וַיִּקְרִיבוּ אֹתוֹ הַמְּצָאִים אֹתוֹ מִקְשָׁשׁ עֵצִים אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל־אַהֲרֹן וְאֶל כָּל־הָעֵדָה: לו וַיִּגִּיחוּ אֹתוֹ בַּמִּשְׁמֶר כִּי לֹא פָרַשׁ מִהַיַּעֲשֶׂה לוֹ: ס לה וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה מוֹת יוּמַת הָאִישׁ רָגוּם אֹתוֹ בְּאֲבָנִים כָּל־הָעֵדָה מַחֻוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה: לו וַיִּצְיָאוּ אֹתוֹ כָּל־הָעֵדָה אֶל־מַחֻוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה וַיִּרְגְּמוּ אֹתוֹ בְּאֲבָנִים וַיּוּמַת

*לא מפי'ק ה'

רש"י

במדבר וימצאו. נגזרות של ישראל דבר הכתוב, שלא שמרו אלא שבת ראשונה, ושניה זה זה וחללה! (לג) המצאים אתו מקושש. שבתו זו ולא הניח מלקושש אף משמאלאוכו וכתרו זו: (לד) כי לא פרש מה יעשה לו. לא היו יודעים באיזו מיתה ימות, אלא יודעים היו שהחלל שבת צמיחה! (לה) רגום. פשטי' צלע"ז וכן הלוק' אלני"ט וכן זכור⁸ ושמור⁹: (לו) ויוציאו אותו. מכאן שבת הסקילה חוץ ורחוק מצית דין!

(כז) תחטא בשוגג. צעזודת אלילים! עז בת שנתה. שאר עזירות יחיד מצוא כשזה או שעירי וצו קצע לה שעירי: (ל) ביד רמה. צמזיד: מגדף. מחרף, כמו וכויתח חרפה וגדופה², אשר גדפו נערי מלך אשור³. עוד דרשו רבותינו מכאן למצרך את השם שהוא צכרת⁴: (לא) דבר ה'. אזכרת עזודת אלילים מפי הגבורה, והשאר מפי משה: עונה בה. צמן שעונה זה שלא עשה תשובה⁵: (לז) ויהיו בני ישראל

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the passage about the wood-gatherer appear here? (v. 32-36)

RASHI: Why is the passage of the wood-gatherer recorded next to the passage about idol worship? To teach you that one who desecrates *Shabbos* is like an idol worshipper, for [*Shabbos*] too is as important as all the *mitzvos* (*Rashi* to v. 41).

● Why did he sin? (v. 33)

TOSFOS: The wood-gatherer's intentions were for the sake of heaven. For when it was decreed that the people would not enter the Land, due to the sin of the spies (14:21*ff*), they thought that they were no longer obligated in *mitzvos*. So this person took a stance by transgressing *Shabbos*, in order that people should see him be

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A further problem here is why the Torah waited so long to relate such important laws about sacrificial procedure. For the sin of the spies occurred on the 9th of Av (*Ta'anis* 29a), and the Tabernacle had already been inaugurated on the 1st of Nisan, over four months previously. Why, then, were these laws not included with the other laws of sacrificial procedure in *Parshas Vayikra* and *Parshas Tzav*, which were given before the Tabernacle was functional?

THE EXPLANATION

The Torah has already warned, in *Parshas Acharai*, "Do not follow the practices of the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you." (*Vayikra* 18:3).

Likewise, in *Parshas Kedoshim*, after discussing the prohibition of offering one's child to the pagan deity of Molech, the Torah concludes, "You should not follow the practices of the nation that I am driving out before you" (*ibid.* 20:23). From this the reader will have already gleaned that upon entering the Land, the Jewish people would be under the influence of the local, idol-worshipping people.

Thus, since "God was informing them that they would [eventually] enter the Land" (*Rashi* to v. 2), through recording the *mitzvah* of *chalah*, He then recorded the laws of inadvertent idol worship, for this would be relevant immediately upon entering the Land.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shelach* 5733)

OFFERING FOR INADVERTENT PERSONAL IDOLATRY

15:27 **I**f one person sins (with idol worship) inadvertently:

SEVENTH
READING

- He should offer a female goat in its first year as a sin-offering.

²⁸ The priest will atone for the erring person who sinned inadvertently before God, atoning on his behalf, and (his act) will be forgiven.

²⁹ A single law will apply to one who sins inadvertently (whether he is) from the native-born of the children of Israel (or he is one of) the converts who lives among them.

³⁰ But if a person sins (with idol worship) intentionally, whether he is a native-born or a convert, he is expressing contempt for God, and that soul will be cut off from among its people. ³¹ For he has disdained God's word and violated His commandment. That soul will be utterly cut off (if he does not repent) and his sin is (still) with him.

THE FIRST SHABBOS DESECRATION

15:32 **W**hen the children of Israel were in the desert (on the second Shabbos that they observed), they found a man gathering sticks on the day of Shabbos. ³³ Those who found him gathering sticks (warned him not to do so, and when he persisted they) presented him before Moshe and Aharon and before the entire congregation. ³⁴ They placed him in custody, since it had not been specified what (type of death penalty) should be meted out to him.

³⁵ God said to Moshe, "The man should be put to death (as follows): The entire congregation should pelt him with stones outside the camp."

³⁶ So the entire congregation took him outside the camp, and they pelted him to death with stones, as God had commanded Moshe.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

punished by death for his transgression, from which they would learn that *mitzvos* were still obligatory (*Bava Basra* 119b).

MAHARSHA: From the words of *Tosfos* it follows that, in truth, the person did not really desecrate *Shabbos* at all. For according to Jewish law, if a person does a forbidden act on *Shabbos*, not because he desires the act itself, but because of the *outcome* that the act leads to (*melacha she'aino tz'richa l'gufa*), then he is not considered to

have transgressed any Biblical injunction. The wood-gatherer only desired the outcome, that people should realize that the *mitzvos* were still in force, so he did not in fact desecrate *Shabbos* (Biblically).

Why then was he punished with the death penalty? Because punishments prescribed by the earthly court are based on people's actions, which are concrete, and not upon their intentions, which cannot be ascertained objectively (*Chidushei Agados* *ibid.*, 119a).

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Sparks of Chasidus

What is the underlying connection between a.) idol worship; b.) the wood-gatherer who desecrated *Shabbos*; and c.) the sin of the spies? (see *Classic Questions*)

All three cases stress the *primacy of deed* over thought and speech:

a.) Idol worship: A Jew's faith is so strong that it enables him "to refrain from any sort of act which is contrary to the faith in the one God, such as bowing down to an idol, even though he does not believe in it at all" (*Tanya* ch. 19). While idol worship is a sin of internal belief, the Torah nevertheless forbids even a *fake act* of idolatry (devoid of any internal belief) even to save one's life under duress.

b.) The wood-gatherer's act of *Shabbos* desecration was devoid of the necessary intention to render it a Biblically forbidden act (see **Maharsha**). Nevertheless, Torah law emphasizes the importance of *perceived reality*, and deemed his act punishable by death. The wood-gatherer's act of self sacrifice (see **Tosfos**) thus demonstrated, in a graphic manner, the primacy of deed in Divine worship.

c.) The sin of the spies was motivated by a desire to stay in the desert where the service of God was largely intellectual, rather than entering the Land where the stress would be on *practical* observance.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, p. 93ff.)

בָּאֵשֶׁר צָנָה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: פ [מפסיר] לו וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה
 לֵאמֹר: לֹא דִבֶּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם וַעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם
 צִיצִית עַל־פְּנֵי בְגָדֵיהֶם לְדֹרֹתָם וְנָתַנּוּ עַל־צִיצִית הַכֶּנֶף פְּתִיל
 תְּכֵלֶת: לט וְהָיָה לָכֶם לְצִיצִית וּרְאִיתֶם אֹתוֹ וּזְכַרְתֶּם אֶת־כָּל־
 מִצְוֹת יְהוָה וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם וְלֹא־תָתוּרוּ אַחֲרַי לְבַנְכֶם וְאַחֲרַי
 עֵינֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־אַתֶּם זֹנִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם: מ לְמַעַן תִּזְכְּרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם
 אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹתַי וְהֵייתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם: מא אֲנִי יְהוָה
 אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְהֵיוֹת לָכֶם
 לֵאלֹהִים אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: פ פ פ

בָּאֵשֶׁר צָנָה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: פ [מפסיר] לו וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה
 לֵאמֹר: לֹא דִבֶּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם וַעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם
 צִיצִית עַל־פְּנֵי בְגָדֵיהֶם לְדֹרֹתָם וְנָתַנּוּ עַל־צִיצִית הַכֶּנֶף פְּתִיל
 תְּכֵלֶת: לט וְהָיָה לָכֶם לְצִיצִית וּרְאִיתֶם אֹתוֹ וּזְכַרְתֶּם אֶת־כָּל־
 מִצְוֹת יְהוָה וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם וְלֹא־תָתוּרוּ אַחֲרַי לְבַנְכֶם וְאַחֲרַי
 עֵינֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־אַתֶּם זֹנִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם: מ לְמַעַן תִּזְכְּרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם
 אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹתַי וְהֵייתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם: מא אֲנִי יְהוָה
 אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְהֵיוֹת לָכֶם
 לֵאלֹהִים אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: פ פ פ

ק"ט פסוקים, פל"ט סימן.

רש"י

הוא עתיד להבחין ולהפרע מן החולה קלא חילן בצגדו ואומר תכלת הוא⁸.
 ומיסודו של רבי משה הדרשן העתקתי למה נסמכה פרשת מקושש לפרשת
 עבודת אלילים, לומר שהמחלל את השבת כעובד עבודת אלילים, שאף היא
 שקולה ככל המצות, וכן הוא אומר בעזרא⁹ ועל כר סיני ירדת ותתן לעמך
 תורה ומצוות ואת שבת קדשך הודעת להם, ואף פרשת ציצית לכך נסמכה לאלו
 לפי שאף היא שקולה כנגד כל המצוות, שנאמר ועשיתם את כל מצוותי: על
 בנפי בגדיהם. כנגד ואשא אתכם על כנפי נשרים¹⁰. על חרבע כנפות ולא
 בעלת שלש ולא בעלת חמש¹¹, כנגד חרבע לשונות של גאולה שנאמר צמרים
 והולאתי והלאתי וגאלתי ולקחתי: פתיל תכלת. על שם שכול צבורות.
 חרומות של שכול תכלת. ומכתם היתה צלילה וכן צבע התכלת דומה לצבע
 רקיע המשחיר לעת ערב. ושמונה חוטים שבה, כנגד שמונה ימים ששבו
 ישראל משילחו ממזרים עד שאמרו שירח על היס: חסלת פרשת שלח

(לח) ועשו להם ציצית. על שם הפחילים החלום צה, כמו ויקחני צלילית
 ראשי¹. דבר אחר צלילית על שם וראיתם אותו, כמו מליץ מן החרכים: תכלת.
 צבע ירוק של חלזון: (לט) וזכרתם את כל מצות ה'. שמנין גימטריא של
 צלילית שש מאות, ושמונה חוטים וחמשה קשרים הרי תרי"ג³: ולא תתורו
 אחרי לבבכם. כמו מתור הארץ⁴. הלז והעיונים הם מרגלים לגוף ומסרסרים
 לו את העצירות⁵, העין רואה והלז חומד והגוף עושה את העצירות:
 (מא) אני ה'. נאמן שלש שנה: אלהיכם. נאמן ליפרע: אשר הוצאתי
 אתכם. על מנת כן פדיתי אתכם שתקבלו עליכם גזרותי: אני ה' אלהיכם.
 עוד למה נאמר, כדי שלא יאמרו ישראל מפני מה אמר המקום, לא שנעשה
 ונטול שנה, אנו לא עושים ולא נוטלים שנה, על כרחם אנו מלכסם, וכן הוא
 אומר אם לא ציד חזקה וגו' חמולך עליכם⁷. דבר אחר למה נאמר יליאת
 מזרים, אני הוא שהבחנתי צמרים בין טפה של צבור לשאינה של צבור, אני

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why is the name *tzitzis* (צִיצִית) used? (v. 38)

RASHI: Because of the threads suspended from it, as in “he took me by the hair of (בְּצִיצִית) my head” (Ezekiel 8:3).

Another interpretation: It is called *צִיצִית* in connection with [the requirement to see the *tzitzis*], “when you see it” (v. 39), [since the word *tzitzis*] is similar to “peering (בְּצִיצִית) from the lattices” (Song 2:9).

● How does *tzitzis* lead a person to “remember all the commandments? (v. 39)

RASHI: Because the numerical value of the word *צִיצִית* is 600. Add [to this the] 8 threads and 5 knots, and we have 613 [the number of commandments in the Torah].

● Why is the *mitzvah* of *tzitzis* so important? (v. 39)

RAMBAM: No pious person would allow himself to become exempt from this *mitzvah*. Rather, a person should always endeavor to wear clothes that need to have *tzitzis* attached so as to observe this *mitzvah* (Laws of *Tzitzis* 3:11).

A person should always be meticulous with the *mitzvah* of *tzitzis*, since scripture equates it to all the other *mitzvos* of the Torah and

makes them dependent on it, as the verse states, “When you see it you will remember all the commandments of God” (ibid. 12).

TUR: Every person should be meticulous, and hurry to observe the *mitzvah* of *tzitzis*, having a garment adorned with *tzitzis* that he wears all day, since this *mitzvah* is primarily to remind the person of the other *mitzvos*, and a person needs to do this at every occasion and every moment (Orach Chaim ch. 24).

● Where is the *tzitzis* (*tallis katan*) worn? (v. 39)

SHULCHAN ARUCH: The *tallis katan* should ideally be worn on top of his clothes, so that the person will see it continually and remember all the *mitzvos* (Orach Chaim 8:11).

ARIZAL: The *tallis katan* should be worn under one’s clothes (Magen Avraham ibid; Pri Etz Chaim).

● When are *tzitzis* worn? (v. 39)

SHULCHAN ARUCH: There is no obligation to wear *tzitzis* at night. The words “when you see it” (v. 38) exclude the nighttime [when it is dark] (Orach Chaim 18:1).

ARIZAL: One should sleep in *tzitzis* (a *tallis katan*) all night (Pri Etz Chaim).

THE MITZVAH OF TZITZIS

15:37
MAFTIR

God spoke to Moshe, saying: ³⁸ Speak to the children of Israel and say to them:

- They should make tzitzis (tassels) for themselves on the corners of their garments, throughout their generations.

- They should place a thread of turquoise (wool) in the tzitzis at each corner.

³⁹ These will be your tzitzis. When you see it, you will remember all the commandments of God to perform them, and you will not follow after the “spies” (of the evil inclination), your hearts and your eyes, which lead you astray, ⁴⁰ so that you will remember and perform all My commandments and you will be holy to your God.

⁴¹ I am God, your God, Who took you out of the land of Egypt to be your God. I am God, your God.

THE HAFTARAH FOR SHELACH IS ON PAGE 300.

TORAS MENACHEM

“WHEN YOU SEE IT” (v. 39)

Verse 39 states, “These will be your tzitzis. When you see it, you will remember all the commandments of God to perform them.”

Is the Torah making a *legal* statement, that in order to fulfill the *mitzvah* of *tzitzis* properly it is necessary to see the *tzitzis*, so as to remind oneself of the other *mitzvos*?

Or is the Torah merely describing a *positive outcome*, which is one of the goals of wearing *tzitzis*, but not something that is intrinsic to the *mitzvah* itself?

It appears that *Rashi* entertained both of these possibilities. In his second interpretation, *Rashi* writes that the word *tzitzis* means “looking” or “peering,” suggesting that seeing the *tzitzis* (“when you see it”) is intrinsic to the *mitzvah*. But *Rashi*’s first interpretation, that *tzitzis* just means tassels, suggests that seeing the *tzitzis*, and thus remembering the other *mitzvos*, is not part of the *mitzvah* of *tzitzis* itself, but merely a positive outcome.

THE HALACHIC RULING

Tur appears to have followed in the path of *Rashi*’s second interpretation that seeing the *tzitzis* is intrinsic to the *mitzvah*, since he stresses, “This *mitzvah* is primarily to remind the person of the other *mitzvos*.” And we find that this reasoning was reflected in the final *halachic* rulings of the **Shulchan Aruch** that: a.) *tzitzis* should be worn on top of one’s garments, so that they can be seen; and, b.) *tzitzis* need not be worn at night, because one cannot see them in the dark.

A careful reading of the words of **Rambam**, however, indicates that he accepted *Rashi*’s first interpretation, that seeing the *tzitzis* is merely a positive outcome of the *mitzvah*. For **Rambam** makes a clear distinction between the actual precept of *tzitzis* and its implication: In law 11 he stresses the importance of wearing *tzitzis*, and, in an entirely *separate* law (12), he discusses the seeing of *tzitzis* which leads to remembering the other commandments. With this division into two separate laws, **Rambam** makes it known that he did not consider “seeing” *tzitzis* to be integral to the *mitzvah* of wearing the *tzitzis*.

And this would appear to be the legal basis for **Arizal**’s opinion that the *tzitzis* (of the *tallis katan*) should be worn underneath the clothes. **Arizal** understood that seeing the *tzitzis* is merely a positive outcome (and not part of) the *mitzvah*. Thus wearing the *tallis katan* (“small *tallis*,” the *tzitzis* garment worn at all times) under the clothes would not represent any deficiency in the observance of the *mitzvah* itself.

As for the fact that the “positive outcome” of remembering the other *mitzvos* would be lost, **Arizal** would argue:

a.) This goal is already achieved by wearing the large *tallis* on top of one’s clothes during the morning prayer.

b.) According to the *kabbalah*, there is much to be gained from wearing the *tallis katan* underneath the clothes.

A final ramification of **Arizal**’s stance, is that since the *tallis katan* is not worn solely in order to see the *tzitzis*, it is thus not limited to the daytime, and should be worn at night too.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 33, p. 95ff.)

The Last Word

“A THREAD OF TURQUOISE” (v. 38)

The turquoise strands of the *tzitzis* allude to “abandoning evil” (negative) and serving God out of fear; the white strands allude to “doing good” (positive) and serving God out of love. In the current era, the turquoise dye (*techeles*) is not available to us, leaving all eight strands white. This teaches us that nowadays our emphasis in serving God should be on love and positivity.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, p. 101)

Sparks of Chasidus

“ALL MY COMMANDMENTS” (v. 40)

The motif of the *mitzvah* of *tzitzis* is—utter dedication to God which is rooted in the very essence of the soul. Therefore, the Torah mentions, not only that you will “remember all the commandments of God” (v. 39), but furthermore, you will remember and perform all “**My** commandments” (v. 40), indicating a bond with the very essence of God.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 36, p. 160)



Parshas Shelach contains 2 positive *mitzvos* & 1 prohibition.

1. To separate chalah from every dough, and to give it to a priest [15:20].
2. To hang tzitzis (tassels) on a four-cornered garment that is worn [15:38].
3. Not to stray after the thoughts of the heart and the sight of the eyes [15:39].



parshas Korach

פֶּרֶשַׁת קֹרַח

🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

It is written in *Proverbs*, “The name of the wicked will rot” (10:7), on which the *Talmud* comments, “Let mold grow upon their names, for we do not use their names” (*Yoma* 38a).

This begs the question: How could the Torah eternalize the name of Korach, a wicked man who did not repent in his lifetime, by calling an entire *parsha* by his name?

While Korach was indeed wicked in his deeds, he nevertheless harbored a *desire* which is appropriate for every Jewish person to emulate: He wanted to be the High Priest. As *Rambam* writes: “**Any type of person...whose spirit inspires him, and he resolves in his mind to set himself apart [from worldly pursuits], to stand before God and serve as His minister, to work for Him, and to know God; who [then acts upon his resolution and he] goes in a morally upright manner—following his inherent, God-given disposition, and he discards all the numerous concerns that people are normally preoccupied with—then he will attain the holiness of the Holy of Holies**” (end of *Laws of the Sabbatical and Jubilee Years*), i.e. the spiritual level of the High Priest.

Thus Korach was not corrupt in his *ideology*, but only in his *method* of implementation. His desire to be High Priest was well founded, as Moshe confirmed, “I too want

this” (*Rashi* to 16:6); his only mistake was attempting to achieve this goal by *usurping* Moshe, rather than following him.

So it is appropriate that our *Parsha* is named after Korach, for his desire for spirituality is something we should all learn from.

Nevertheless, we see that most of the *Parsha* speaks of Korach’s actual mistakes, rather than his good intentions, to the extent that we are warned “*not to be like Korach and his company*” (17:5). Where then, is the positive message in Korach’s *sin* and *punishment*?

In truth, however, even Korach’s downfall tells an uplifting message to those who ponder its significance deeply. For by placing us in this world with free choice to act wisely or foolishly, God has ultimately granted us the greatest possible gift to strive for holiness (to be a “High Priest”) by utilizing our own talents and skills for the good *on our own*, with our own free choice.

Thus, from Korach’s well-meaning failure, we can learn: a.) To emulate his good intentions; and b.) The possibility of *real* failure (which Korach suffered) means that freedom of choice is totally in our hands, and that consequently *real* success is an option available for us all.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Korach* 5750)

א וַיִּקַּח קֹרַח בֶּן-יִצְחָר בֶּן-קָהָת בֶּן-לֵוִי וַיִּקַּח אֵלֵיָּב וְאוֹן בְּנֵי מִשֶׁה וַיִּקְמוּ לְפָנָיו מִשֶׁה וְנִבְרִיא מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֵתָן וְחֲמִשִּׁין רִבְרָבִי כְּנִשְׁתָּא מְעָרְעֵי זְמַן אֲנָשִׁין דְּשָׂמָא: ג וַתִּקְבְּלוּ עַל מִשֶׁה וְעַל אֶהְרֹן וַאֲמַרוּ לְהוֹן סָנֵי לְכוּן אֲרֵי כָל כְּנִשְׁתָּא בְּלִהוֹן קְדִישִׁין וּבִינֵיהוֹן שְׂרָיָא שְׂכִינְתָּא דִּי וּמָא דִּין אַתּוֹן מִתְרַבְּרִין עַל קָהָלָא דִּי: ד וַיִּשְׁמַע מִשֶׁה וַיִּפֹּל עַל אַפּוֹהֵי:

טז א וַיִּקַּח קֹרַח בֶּן-יִצְחָר בֶּן-קָהָת בֶּן-לֵוִי וְדָתָן וְאֶבְיָרָם בְּנֵי אֵלֵיָּב וְאוֹן בְּנֵי מִשֶׁה וַאֲנָשִׁים מִבְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲמִשִּׁים וּמֵאֵתָן עֵדָה קְרָאֵי מוֹעֵד אֲנָשֵׁי-שָׂם: ג וַיִּקְהָלוּ עַל-מִשֶׁה וְעַל-אֶהְרֹן וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֲלֵהֶם רַב-לָכֶם כִּי כָל-הָעֵדָה בָּלֵם קְדֹשִׁים וּבְתוֹכָם יְהוָה וּמִדּוֹעַ תִּתְנַשְּׂאוּ עַל-קָהָל יְהוָה: ד וַיִּשְׁמַע מִשֶׁה וַיִּפֹּל עַל-פָּנָיו:

רש"י

הקטן מכולם, הריני חולק עליו ומצטל את דבריו.⁸ מה עשה, עמד וכנס מאתים וחמשים ראשי סנהדרות, רובן משצט ראובן שכניו, והם אליזר בן שדיאור וחזיריו וכיוצא בו, שנאמר נשיאי עדה קריאי מועד, ולהלן הוא אומר אלה קרואי העדה,⁹ והלבישן טליתות שכולן תכלת. זאת ועמדו לפני משה. אמרו לו טלית שכולה של תכלת חייבת צלילית או פטורה. אמר להם חייבת. התחילו לשחק עליו, אפשר טלית של מין אחר חוט אחד של תכלת פטורה, זו שכולה תכלת לא תפטור את עממה: בני ראובן. דתן ואזירס ואון בן פלח:¹⁰ (ג) רב לכם. הרבה יותר מדאי לקחתם לעמכם גדולה: בלם קדושים. כולם שמעו דברים צסיני מפי הגבורה: ומדוע תתנשאו. אם לקחת אתה מלכות לא היה לך לזרר לאחיק כהונה, לא אתם לזדכם שמעתם צסיני אנכי ה' אלהיך, כל העדה שמעו:⁷ (ד) ויפול על פניו. מפני המחלוקת, שכבר זה צידם סרחון רביעי, חטאו בעגל ויחל משה¹¹, במחלוקתם של יתפלל משה¹², במרגלים ויאמר משה אל ה' ושמעו מלרסי¹³, במחלוקתו של קרח נתרשלו ידיו. משל לבן מלך ססרה על אציו ופייס עליו אוהבו פעם ושתים ושלוש, כשסרה רביעית נתרשלו ידי האוהב הווא. אמר עד מתי

(ח) ויקח קרח. פרעה זו יפה נדרשת במדרש רבי תנחומא: ויקח קרח. לקח את עממו לזר אחד להיות נחלק מחוק העדה לעורר על הכהונה, וזהו שתרסם אונקלוס ואתפלג נחלק משאר העדה להחזיק במחלוקת, וכן מה יקח לבד², לוקח אותך להפליג משאר בני אדם.³ דבר אחר ויקח קרח משך ראשי סנהדרות שבהם דברים, כמו שנאמר קח את אהרן, קחו עמכם דברים: בן יצהר בן קהת בן לוי. ולא הזכיר בן יעקב, שבקש רחמים על עממו שלא יזכר שמו על מחלוקתם, שנאמר וזקבלם אל תחד כבודי.⁵ והיכן נזכר שמו על קרח, בהתיחסם על הדוכן בדברי הימים, שנאמר⁶ בן אביאסף בן קרח בן יצהר בן קהת בן לוי בן ישראל: ודתן ואבירם. שבציל שהיה שבט ראובן שרוי בחנייתם תימנה, שכן לקחה וצניו החונים תימנה, נשתתפו עם קרח במחלוקתו, אוי לרשע אוי לשכנו.⁷ ומה ראה קרח לחלוק עם משה, נתקנה על נשיאותו של אליזר בן עוזיאל שמינכו משה נשיא על בני קהת על פי הדבור. אמר קרח, אחי אצא ארבעה היו, שנאמר וצני קהת וגוי'. עמרם הצבור נטלו שני צניו גדולה, אחד מלך ואחד כהן גדול, מי ראוי ליטול את השניה, לא אני שאני בן יצהר שהוא שני לעמרם, והוא מנה נשיא את בן אחיו

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Korach take issue with Moshe ? (v. 1)

RASHI: This passage is beautifully expounded in the *Midrash of Rabbi Tanchuma* [as follows]:

What made Korach come to dispute with Moshe?

He became jealous over the leadership of Elitzafan the son of Uzi'eil, whom Moshe appointed as leader over Kehos' descendants by God's word (*Bamidbar* 3:30).

Korach said, "My father [Yitzhar] and his brothers numbered four," as the verse states, "The sons of Kehos were [Amram, Yitzhar, Chevron and Uzi'eil]" (*Shemos* 6:18). Amram was the firstborn, and his two sons [Moshe and Aharon] took positions of greatness—one a King [Moshe] and one a High Priest [Aharon]. Who is entitled to receive the second [position]? Is it not I, for I am the son of Yitzhar,

who was the next brother after Amram? And yet, [Moshe] appointed [Uzi'eil] as leader, the youngest brother of them all! I am going to oppose him and cancel his words!"

What did he do? He went and assembled 250 men, heads of courts....He dressed them with cloaks made entirely of turquoise wool. They came and stood before Moshe and asked him, "Is a cloak made entirely of turquoise wool obligated to have tzitzis, or is it exempt?"

He replied, "It is obligated."

They began laughing at him [saying], "How is it possible that with a cloak of another color, one string of turquoise wool exempts it, and yet this one, which is made entirely of turquoise wool, does not exempt itself?"

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 "THIS PASSAGE IS BEAUTIFULLY EXPOUNDED" (RASHI TO v. 1)

Rashi's comment to verse 1, "This passage is well expounded in the *Midrash of Rabbi Tanchuma*," prompts the following questions:

a.) Rashi's self-declared goal in writing his commentary is to explain the literal meaning of scripture (*Rashi to Bereishis* 3:8).

Why then does he refer the reader to the *Midrash*, which is a non-literal text?

b.) It is prohibited to compare Torah teachings, saying that one is beautiful and the other not (*Erubin* 64a). So how can Rashi write, "This passage is beautifully expounded in the *Midrash of Rabbi Tanchuma*"?

1 "כלומר כל ענין קרח לפי שכל מה שכתב בה הרב ז"ל רובו מתנחומא" (ספר הזכרון). וראה שיחת ש"פ קרח תשכ"ה. 2 איוב טו, יב 3 תנחומא ב 4 הושע יד, ג. תנחומא א 5 בראשית מט, ו 6 דברי הימים א, ו, כג 7 תנחומא ד 8 תנחומא א 9 במדבר א, טו 10 תנחומא ב. ראה שיחת ש"פ קרח תשל"ג 11 שמות לב, יא 12 במדבר יא, ב 13 שם יד, יג

🕍 KORACH'S REBELLION 🕍

16 **K**orach, the son of Yitzhar—the son of Kehos, (who was) the son of Levi—took (issue with Moshe. He was joined by) Dasan and Aviram, the sons of Eliav, and On the son of Peles, Re'uvain's descendants. ² They confronted Moshe together with two hundred and fifty men from the children of Israel—leaders of the congregation, representatives of the assembly, men of repute. ³ They ganged up on Moshe and Aharon and said to them, “You’ve made yourselves too important! For the entire congregation are all holy (witnesses to the revelation at Sinai), and God is with them. So why have you made yourselves elite over God’s assembly (by appointing Aharon as the priest)?”

⁴ When Moshe heard (this), he fell on his face.

TORAS MENACHEM

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi was troubled by a basic problem at the literal level: If Korach was troubled that Moshe appointed his own brother Aharon as High Priest, then why did Korach make his voice heard only now, and not earlier when the appointment was made? Aharon was clearly in office before the Tabernacle was dedicated on the first of Nisan (*Rashi* to *Vayikra* 9:1), and the spies did not return until after the 9th of Av, over four months later. So why did Korach suddenly decide to rebel at this point?

Furthermore, at the literal level, Korach’s argument appears to be self-contradictory. For how could he complain about the system of hierarchy (“why have you made yourselves elite over God’s assembly”—v. 3), when Korach himself was a member of the aristocracy, being not only a member of the Levite tribe, but furthermore, from the family of Kehos, the most elite of all Levites? His claim, if accepted, would lead to his demotion!

In response to these significant problems *Rashi* writes: “This passage is beautifully expounded in the *Midrash* of Rabbi Tanchuma,” as if to say: “There is no simple explanation here, but the *Midrash* of Rabbi Tanchuma is compatible here with the literal meaning of scripture.” In other words, when *Rashi* writes that “this passage is beautifully expounded etc.” he is not making a subjective comment that he found this particular *Midrash* appealing. Rather, *Rashi* is suggesting that the *Midrash* Tanchuma’s interpretation is perfectly compatible* here at the literal level.

Rashi then proceeds to cite the *Midrash* Tanchuma’s interpretation, that Korach was upset by Moshe’s appointment of Uzi’eil as the head of Kehos’ descendants, as this explains why: a.) Korach’s complaint arose well after the Tabernacle was erected, after Uzi’eil was appointed; and b.) Why Korach felt that he deserved an even higher position, because his father was Uzi’eil’s older brother.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Korach* 5725)

🕍 Sparks of Chasidus 🕍

According to *Chasidic* thought, Korach’s rebellion occurred at this point in time (cf. *Toras Menachem*), since it was prompted by the sin of the spies. The inner reason why the spies did not want to enter the Land of Israel was because they preferred the exclusively spiritual life of the desert to a life of serving God amid physical concerns, such as the need to earn a living. (See *Sparks of Chasidus* to 13:32 above.) The downfall of the spies thus sent a powerful message that Judaism prioritizes physical action over spiritual and intellectual pursuits.

Upon hearing this, Korach protested to Moshe: “Why have you made yourselves elite over God’s assembly?” (v. 3). “I can appreciate,” argued Korach, “that you are a more spiritual and holy person than us; but since we now see that Judaism makes physical action the priority, how are you better than anybody else? Aren’t your actions the same as ours?”

Korach’s mistake was that the Torah does not demand *lifeless* action, but rather, deeds that shine with inspiration and spiritual enlightenment. Thus, the two mistakes of the spies and Korach teach us that a healthy equilibrium is required: One must not shy away from physical life, like the spies. But on the other hand, Judaism’s emphasis on action must never lead to a life of meaningless ritual and spiritual bankruptcy. Every *mitzvah* should be carried out with the highest levels of spiritual consciousness.

Our struggle to harmonize physical action with spiritual contemplation is fought on three fronts: a.) The need to ensure that our intentions do not remain in the realm of wishful thinking and that concrete action takes place. b.) That our actions should always be dictated by the Torah’s value system. c.) That action should never be overglorified, and that we should always *aspire* to be more spiritual.

Our Sages taught that the world was made with the letter **ה** (*Menachos* 29b). This is because its shape represents the equilibrium between the more spiritual dimensions of thought and speech, versus physical deed (see inset). Korach’s name (קרח) is spelled by letters that are all distortions of the (left side of the) letter *hei*, indicating how he wished to upset this equilibrium (in the area of deed):



In the *ches* **ח**, the gap between deed and thought/speech is closed, suggesting that the physical no longer looks up to or aspires to the spiritual—which is why Korach rebelled against the spiritual leadership of Moshe and Aharon. In the *kuf* **ק**, deed has extended below and is no longer dictated by the thought and speech of Torah. And in the *raish* **ר**, deed is missing altogether.

In short: It is relatively easy to be *entirely* spiritual and aloof or *entirely* physical and mundane. Our challenge is to harmonize *both* these qualities in our daily life, thus making a home for God below.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 4, p. 1048ff; vol. 8, p. 108ff.)

* Unlike *Mizrachi*, who argues here that *Rashi*’s citation of the *Midrash* is (merely) close to the literal level.

ה וַיִּדְבֹר אֶל-קָרַח וְאֶל-כָּל-עֲדָתוֹ לֵאמֹר בֹּקֶר וַיָּדַע יְהוָה אֶת-
 אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ וְאֶת-הַקְּדוֹשׁ וְהַקְּרִיב אֵלָיו וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר-בּוֹ
 יִקְרִיב אֵלָיו: וְזֹאת עֲשׂוּ קְהוּלְכֶם מִחֲתוֹת קָרַח וְכָל-עֲדָתוֹ:
 וּתְנִנוּ בָהֶן | אֵשׁ וְשִׁימוּ עֲלֵיהֶן | קִטְרֶת לִפְנֵי יְהוָה מִחֵר וְהָיָה
 הָאֵישׁ אֲשֶׁר-יִבְחַר יְהוָה הוּא הַקְּדוֹשׁ רַב-לְכֶם בְּנֵי לֵוִי:
 ה וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-קָרַח שְׁמַעוּ-נָא בְנֵי לֵוִי: הַמַּעַט מִכֶּם כִּי-
 הִבְדִּיל אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶתְכֶם מֵעֲדַת יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַקְרִיב אֶתְכֶם
 אֵלָיו לְעֹבֵד אֶת-עַבְדָּת מִשְׁכַּן יְהוָה וְלַעֲמֹד לִפְנֵי הָעֵדָה
 לְשִׁרְתָּם: וַיִּקְרַב אֹתָךְ וְאֶת-כָּל-אֶחָיִךְ בְּנֵי-לֵוִי אֹתָךְ וּבִקְשִׁיתֶם
 גַּם-כִּהְנֶה: יֵא לָכֵן אֹתָהּ וְכָל-עֲדָתְךָ הַנֹּעְדִים עֲלֵי-יְהוָה וְאַהֲרֹן
 מֵה-הוּא כִּי תִלוּנוּ וְכִי תִלְיִנוּ עֲלָיו: יב וַיִּשְׁלַח מֹשֶׁה לְקַרְא לְדָתָן
 וְלֵאבִירָם בְּנֵי אֶלְיָאָב וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא נַעֲלֶה: יג הַמַּעַט כִּי הֵעֲלִיתָנוּ
 מֵאֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וּדְבָשׁ לְהִמִּיתָנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר כִּי-תִשְׁתַּרְרַר עָלֵינוּ
 גַּם-הַשְּׁתַרְרָר: [שני] יד אָף לֹא אֶל-אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וּדְבָשׁ
 הִבִּיאָתָנוּ וְתִתֵּן-לָנוּ נַחֲלַת שָׂדֵה וּכְרֶם הָעֵינִי הָאֲנָשִׁים הָהֵם
 תִּנְקַר לֹא נַעֲלֶה: טו וַיַּחַר לְמֹשֶׁה מְאֹד וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-יְהוָה אֶל-

ה ומליל עם קרח ועם כל כנשתה למימר
 בצפרא ויהודע יי ית דכשר לה וית דקדיש
 ויקרב לקדמוהי וית די יתרעי בה יקרב
 לשמושה: ו דא עבדו סבו לכון מהתין קרח
 וכל כנשתה: ז וקבו בהון אשתא ושוי
 עליהון קטרת בוסמין קדם יי מחר ויהי גברא
 דיתרעי יי הוא קדיש סגי לכון בני לוי:
 ח ואמר משה לקרח שמעו כען בני לוי:
 ט הוער לכון ארי אפרש אלהא דישראל
 ותכון מכנשתא דישראל לקרבא ותכון
 קדמוהי למפלח ית פלחן משפנא דיי ולמקם
 קדם כנשתא לשמשותהון: י וקרב יתך וית
 כל אחיך בני לוי עמך וכען אתון כען אף
 כהנתא רבתא: יא ככן את וכל כנשתך
 דאודמנתון על יי ואהרן מה הוא ארי
 אתרעמתון עלוהי: יב ושלח משה למקרי
 לדתן ולאבירם בני אליאב ואמרו לא נסקי:
 יג הוער ארי אפקנתא מארעא עבדא חלב
 ודבש לקשלותנא במדברא ארי אתרברבת
 עלנא אף אתרברבא: יד ברם לא לארעא
 עבדא חלב ודבש אעלהנא ויהבתא לנא
 אחסנת חקלון וכרמין העיני גבריא האנון
 תשלח לעורא לא נסקי: טו ותקף למשה
 לחדא ואמר קדם יי לא תקבל ברעוא

כש"י

צרוח הקודש, שנאמר כל אלה צנים להימן⁶, אמר אפשר כל הגדולה הזאת
 עתידה לעמוד ממני ואני אדום, לכך נשתתף לצוא לאותה חזקה, ששמע מפי
 משה שכולם אוזדים ואחד נמלט. אשר יבחר ה' הוא הקדוש, טעם ותלה
 בעלמו, ולא ראה יפה, לפי שצניו עשו תשובה, ומשה היה רואה. תנחומא⁴:
 רב לבם. דבר גדול נעלתם בעלמכם לחלוק על הקב"ה: (ח) ויאמר משה
 אל קרח שמעו נא בני לוי. התחיל לדבר עמו דברים רכים, כיון שראו
 קשה עורף, אמר עד שלא ישתתפו שאר הכצנים ויאבדו עמו, אדבר גם אל
 כולם, התחיל לזרז צהם שמעו נא בני לוי: (ט) ולעמוד לפני העדה. לשיר
 על הדוכן: (י) ויקרב אתך. לאותו שירות שהרחיק ממנו שאר עדת ישראל:
 (יא) לבן. בשביל כך אתה וכל עדתך הנועדים אתך על ה' כי בשליחותו
 עשיתי לתת כהונה לאהרן ולא לנו היא המחלוקת הזכ': (יב) וישלח משה
 וגו'. מכאן שאין מחזיקין במחלוקת, שהיה משה מחזר אחריהם להשלימם
 בדברי שלום⁸: לא נעלה. פיהם הכשילם, שאין להם אלא ירידה: (יד) ותתן
 לנו. הדבר מוסב על לא האמור למעלה, כלומר לא הביאותנו ולא נתת לנו
 נחלת שדה וכרם, אמרת לנו אעלה אתכם מעני מזרים אל ארץ וגו'⁹, משם
 הולאתנו ולא אל ארץ זבת חלב ודבש הביאותנו, אלא גזרת עלינו להמיתנו
 במדבר, שאמרת לנו במדבר הזה יפלו פגריכם¹⁰: העיני האנשים ההם
 תנקר וגו'. אפילו אתה שולח לנקר את עינינו אם לא נעלה אליך, לא נעלה:
 האנשים ההם. כאדם התולה קללתו בחציריו: (טו) ויחר למשה מאד.
 נטעור עד למאוד: אל תפן אל מנחתם. לפי פשוטו הקטרת שהם מקריבים
 לפניך מחר אל תפן אליהם. והמדרש אומר יודע אני שיש להם חלק בתמידי

אטריח על המלך, שמא לא יקבל עוד ממני¹: (ה) בקר ויודע וגו'. עתה עת
 שכרות הוא לנו ולא נכון להכרות לפניו והוא היה מתכוין לדחותם שמא
 יחזרו צהם: בקר ויודע ה' את אשר לו. לעבודת לוי: ואת הקדוש.
 לכהונה: והקריב. אותם אליו. והתרגום מוכיח כן ויקרב לקדמוהי יקרב
 לשמושה. ומדרשו זקן, אמר לו משה, בצלות חלק הקב"ה בעולמו, יכולים
 אתם להפוך זקן לערב, כן תוכלו לזבל את זו, שנאמר ויהי ערב ויהי זוקר
 ויבדל², כך ויבדל אהרן להקדישו וגו'³: (ו) זאת עשו קחו לבם מחתות.
 מה ראה לומר להם כך, אמר להם דרכי העכו"ס יש נימוסים הרבה
 וכומרים הרבה וכולם (ס"א ואין כולם) מתקבלים צבית אחד, אנו אין לנו
 אלא ה' אחד, ארון אחד ותורה אחת ומזבח אחד וכהן גדול אחד ואחס
 מאתים וחמשים איש מצקשים כהונה גדולה, אף אני רואה זקן, הא לכם
 תשמיש חביב מכל, היא הקטרת החביבה מכל הקרבנות וסם המות נתון
 בתוכו שזו נשרפו נדב ואזיבוא, לפיכך התרה צהם והיה האיש אשר יבחר
 ה' הוא הקדוש, כבר הוא בקדושתו. וכי אין אנו יודעים שמי שיבחר הוא
 הקדוש, אלא אמר להם משה כריני אומר לכם שלא תחייבו, מי שיבחר צו
 ילא חי, וכולכם אוזדים⁴: מחתות. כלים שחותרין צהם גחלים ויש להם צית
 יד: (ז) רב לבם בני לוי. דבר גדול אמרתי לכם. ולא עפשים היו שכן התרה
 צהם וקבלו עליהם לקרב, אלא הם חטאו על נפשותם⁵, שנאמר את מחתות
 החטאים האלה צנפשותם. וקרח שפקח היה מה ראה לשטות זכ, עינו
 הטעתו, ראה שלשלת גדולה ויולא ממנו, שמואל ששקול כנגד משה ואהרן.
 אמר בשבילו אני נמלט, וכ"ד משמרות עומדות לצני צניו כולם מתנצאים

1 תנחומא ה 2 בראשית א, ה 3 דברי הימים-א כג, יג. תנחומא ה 4 תנחומא ה 5 במדבר יג, ג 6 דברי הימים-ב, ה 7 תנחומא ו 8 שם י 9 שמות ג, יג 10 במדבר יד, כש

⁵ He spoke to Korach and to all his company, saying, “In the morning, God will make known who is His (for Levite service), and who is holy (for priesthood), and He will draw them near to Him. He will draw the ones whom He chooses near to Him.”

⁶ “Korach and your group! (In order for God’s choice to be known) do the following: Take for yourselves fire-pans, ⁷ place fiery (coals) in them and offer incense on them tomorrow, before God. What will happen is, the man whom God chooses (will live, for) he is the holy one (and the others will die). You’re taking a very big liability, sons of Levi!”

🌀 MOSHE’S ATTEMPTS AT RECONCILIATION 🌀

16:8 **M**oshe (saw that they were still obstinate) so he said to Korach (in a gentler tone), “Please listen, sons of Levi! ⁹ Isn’t it enough that the God of Israel has distinguished you from the congregation of Israel, drawing you near to Him, to perform the service of God’s Tabernacle and to stand before the congregation, to be their ministers? ¹⁰ He drew you near, and all your brothers, the sons of Levi with you, and now you seek the priesthood as well? ¹¹ (When I appointed Aharon as priest, it was upon God’s explicit instruction,) therefore you and your entire group are (now) ganging up against God (and not against me). And what (valid reason do you have) to complain about Aharon?”

¹² Moshe sent (messengers) to call Dasan and Aviram, the sons of Eliav (in a further attempt to make peace), but they said, “We will not go up (and speak to Moshe). ¹³ Isn’t it enough that you have brought us out of a land flowing with milk and honey to kill us in the desert, that you also seek to be a ruler over us? ¹⁴ Furthermore, you have not brought us to a land flowing with milk and honey, nor have you given us an inheritance of fields and vineyards. Even if you poke out the eyes of those men (who are against Moshe), we will not go up (to speak to Moshe).”

¹⁵ Moshe was extremely upset. He said to God, “Don’t turn to their gift-offering. I have not taken a donkey from a single one of them, and I have not wronged a single one of them.”

SECOND
READING

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why were Korach’s group told to offer incense? (v. 6-7)

RASHI: Moshe said, “Take for yourselves the service most dear, the incense, which is more cherished than any other offering, but it contains deadly poison, by which Nadav and Avihu were burnt...The one whom God will choose will survive, and the rest of you will perish.”

● Why did Moshe say, “Don’t turn to their gift-offering”? (v. 15)

RASHI: According to the literal interpretation [Moshe said]: “When they offer incense before You tomorrow, do not turn to them.”

The *Midrash* says: [Moshe meant], “I know that they have a portion in the daily communal offerings. Let their portions not be accepted favorably before You. Let the [Altar’s] fire leave it over and not consume it.

GUR ARYEH: *Rashi* was dissatisfied with the first, literal interpretation, as it leaves us with the question: Why would one think that God *might* accept the offering of these sinners, to the extent that Moshe had to pray to God not to accept it? Therefore he cited the *Midrashic* explanation too.

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🌀 MOSHE’S REQUEST (v. 15)

In his commentary to verse 15, *Rashi* offers two explanations why Moshe begged God not to turn to Korach’s group: a.) The “literal interpretation” that God should not accept their incense offering; and, b.) The *Midrashic* interpretation that Moshe prayed for their share in the communal daily offerings to be rejected.

Gur Aryeh explains why *Rashi* was dissatisfied with the literal interpretation alone, for it leaves us with the question how Moshe could have entertained the possibility that Korach’s offerings might be accepted by God in the first place.

However, *Gur Aryeh*’s objection appears to be, not merely a *shortcoming* of *Rashi*’s first interpretation, but a complete *refutation* of it.

For if indeed it is ludicrous to imagine that Moshe suspected Korach’s offering might be accepted, then Moshe would clearly *not* have needed to pray to God, “When they offer incense before You tomorrow, do not turn to them.”

What, then, is the meaning of *Rashi*’s first interpretation? And what shortcoming did it have that led *Rashi* to cite the *Midrash* too?

THE EXPLANATION

We can understand *Rashi*’s words by appreciating the *context* of Moshe’s prayer in verse 15. In verses 6-7, Moshe had presented to Korach’s group the test of the incense—as *Rashi* explains that Moshe warned them how the incense would prove deadly to any unauthorized person, as it did to Nadav and Avihu (see *Classic Questions*). Then we find

קרבנהו לא חמרא דמד מנהון שחרית ולא אבאשית ית חד מנהון: טו ואמר משה לקרח את וכל כנשתד הוו זמנין לקדם יי את ואנון ואהרן מחר: יז וסבו גבר מחתיתה ותשוון עליהון קמרת בוסמין ותקרבין קדם יי גבר מחתיתה מאתן ותמשיין מחתין ואת ואהרן גבר מחתיתה: יח ונסיבו גבר מחתיתה ויהבו עליהון אשתא ושויוו עליהון קמרת בוסמין וקמו בתרע משפן זמנא ומשה ואהרן: יט ואכנש עליהון קרח ית כל כנשתא לתרע משפן זמנא ואתגלי יקרא די ל כל כנשתא: כ ומליל יי עם משה ועם אהרן למימר: כא אתפרשו מנו כנשתא הדא ואשעי יתהון כשעה: כב ונפלו על אפיהון ואמרו אל אלה ריחיא ל כל בשרא גברא חד ייחוב ועל כל כנשתא יהי רגזא: כג ומליל יי עם משה למימר: כד מלל עם כנשתא למימר אסתלקו מסחור סחור למשכנא קרח דתן ואבירם:

תפן אל-מנחתם לא חמור אחד מהם נשאתי ולא הרעתי את-אחד מהם: טו ויאמר משה אל-קרח אתה וכל-עדתך היו לפני יהוה אתה והם ואהרן מחר: יז וקחו איש מחתתו ונתתם עליהם קטרת והקרבתם לפני יהוה איש מחתתו חמשים ומאתים מחתת ואתה ואהרן איש מחתתו: יח ויקחו איש מחתתו ויתנו עליהם אש וישומו עליהם קטרת ויעמדו פתח אהל מועד ומשה ואהרן: יט ויקהל עליהם קרח את-כל-העדה אל-פתח אהל מועד וירא כבוד-יהוה אל-כל-העדה: ס (שלישין) כ וידבר יהוה אל-משה ואל-אהרן לאמר: כא הברלו מתוך העדה הזאת ואכלה אתם פרגע: כב ויפלו על-פניהם ויאמרו אל אלהי הרוחת לכל-בשר האיש אחד יחטא ועל כל-העדה תקצף: ס כג וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: כד דבר אל-העדה לאמר העלו מסביב למשכן קרח

כ"ט

לכדי חגי מקפיד, חגי מקפיד חלל כשציל כלכם. חלו צחין ונוטלין כל בגדולות, לו המלכות ולאחיו הככונה, עד שנתפתו כלם! וירא כבוד ה'. צא צעמוד עני: (כז) אל אלהי הרוחות. יודע מחשבות. חין מדתך כמדת צשר ודס, מלך צשר ודס שסרחה עליו מקצת מדינה חינו יודע מי החוטא, לפיכך כשכוא כועס נפרע מכולס, אצל חתה לפניך גלויות כל המחשבות ויודע חתה מי החוטא: האישי אחד.² הוא החוטא וחתה על כל העדה תקצוף. אמר הקצ"ה יפה אמרת, חגי יודע ומודיע מי חטא ומי לא חטא! (כד) העלו וגו'. כתרנמו

לכור, חף חלקס לא יקובל לפניך לרנון, תניחנו האש ולא תאכלנו! לא חמור אחד מהם נשאתי. לא חמורו של אחד מהם נטלתי. אפילו כשכלכתי ממדין למאריס והרכבתי חת אשתי ואת בני על החמור, והיך לי לטול אותו החמור משלכם, לא נטלתי חלל משלי. ותרגום אונקלוס, שחרית, לשון ארמי, כך נקראת אנגריא של מלך שחור: (טז) והם. עדתך: (יז) והקרבתם וגו' איש מחתתו. החמשים ומאתים איש שזכס: (יט) ויקהל עליהם קרח. כדברי ליננות. כל הלילה הוא הלך חלל השצטים ופתח אותם כסבורין חתש שעלי

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that in verses 8-14 Moshe made numerous attempts at reconciling Korach's dispute and appeasing his opponents. Thus, in verse 15, when all these attempts failed, "Moshe was extremely upset," and he cried in exasperation to God, "Don't turn to their gift-offering."

Rashi explains, "When they offer incense before You tomorrow, do not turn to them." Note that Rashi does not write, "Do not turn to their offering," but rather, do not turn to them," i.e. to them personally.

Clearly, it was inconceivable that God would accept the offering of these sinners (as discussed above). But after they had completely opposed any notion of reconciliation, Moshe was concerned that just rejecting their offering was not sufficient, since they had not merely made a mistake about Moshe's appointment of Aharon, but they were wicked people in

general. Thus, if God punished them only for their offering, it would send the message that Korach's group were good people in general, but that they merely made an unauthorized offering, like Nadav and Avihu.

So when Moshe realized that these people were so profoundly wicked, and not merely misled about the priesthood, he begged God, "When they offer incense before You tomorrow, do not turn to them" i.e. shun them completely for their sinful rebellion, and not just for their offering."

And we find that this is precisely what happened. After Korach's men offered the incense, they were not immediately struck by fire, like Nadav and Avihu. Rather, first Korach's family was swallowed up by the earth (v. 31-34), and afterwards the incense offerings were consumed by fire (v. 35).*

*After reading Moshe's prayer (v. 15) and seeing how it was accepted (in v. 35), the reader may be under the impression that the incense of Korach's group did not have the status of an offering at all, i.e. it was not considered by God as a real offering (authorized or not). To counteract this notion, the Torah stresses in verses 17 that "each person... should offer a fire-pan before God," indicating that the incense would nevertheless be a real offering. Furthermore, Moshe added here that Aharon would participate in the offering (a point omitted in verses 6-7), which was an obvious proof of its validity. And we find later that the offering was indeed sanctified: "Tell Elazar, the son of Aharon the priest, to pick up the fire-pans from the burned area because they have become holy" (17:2).

🕍 KORACH'S DEMISE 🕍

16:16 **M**oshe said to Korach, “Tomorrow, you and your entire congregation should present yourselves before God—you, them and Aharon. ¹⁷ Each person should take his fire-pan and place incense upon it, and each person should offer a fire-pan before God, (a total of) two hundred and fifty fire-pans. Both you and Aharon should each take a fire-pan.”

¹⁸ Each person took a fire-pan, put fiery (coals) on it and placed incense on it. They stood at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting with Moshe and Aharon. ¹⁹ Korach ganged (his) entire congregation against them (by inciting them all night, and they came) to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. The glory of God appeared before the entire congregation (in a pillar of cloud).

THIRD READING ²⁰ God spoke to Moshe and Aharon, saying, ²¹ “Dissociate yourselves from this congregation, and I will destroy them in an instant!”

²² They fell on their faces and said, “O merciful God! God (Who knows) everybody’s thoughts! (Just because) one man sins, should You be angry with the whole congregation?”

²³ God spoke to Moshe, saying, ²⁴ “(You are right. I will only punish the sinners). Speak to the congregation, saying, ‘Get away from Korach, Dasan and Aviram’s home!’”

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What did Moshe plead to God? (v. 22)

RASHI: He Who knows man’s thoughts! Your attributes are not like those of men of flesh and blood. If part of a country becomes corrupt, a king of flesh and blood does not know who the sinner is, and therefore, when he is angry, he punishes them all. But as for You, all

thoughts are revealed before You, and You know who the sinner is. If one man is the sinner, why should You be angry with the whole congregation?

God said, “You have spoken well. I know, and I will make known, who sinned and who did not sin.”

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RASHI’S SECOND INTERPRETATION

Nevertheless, in the final analysis, *Rashi* was dissatisfied with the above explanation because, at the literal level, it appears to be a little far-fetched that Moshe’s request only concerned *the manner* in which Korach’s men should be punished. After all, surely God could be relied upon to eliminate these rebels in the most appropriate fashion?

Therefore, *Rashi* cited the *Midrashic* explanation, that Moshe begged that their portion in the communal sacrifice should be rejected, since:

- This demonstrates how Moshe made a special request of significance.
- Being that Korach’s group had shown themselves to be wicked in general (by refusing to make any effort at reconciliation), they did not deserve to be part of the community at large, i.e. the communal sacrifices.

Nevertheless, *Rashi* concludes that this is a *Midrashic* interpretation, since the topic of communal sacrifices is not hinted to here by scripture.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 33, p. 105ff.)

🕍 "GOD, WHO KNOWS EVERYBODY’S THOUGHTS" (v. 22)

In his commentary to verse 22, *Rashi* brings the illustration of a king of flesh and blood: “If part of a country becomes corrupt, a king of flesh and blood does not know who the sinner is, and therefore, when he is angry, he punishes them all. But as for You, all thoughts are revealed before You, and You know who the sinner is.” Thus, Moshe argued, “If one man is the sinner, why should You be angry with the whole congregation?”

However, this prompts the following questions:

a.) What is the need for *Rashi* to bring a lengthy analogy? Surely the verse itself makes Moshe’s complaint clear: “God (*who knows*) every-

body’s thoughts! (Just because) one man sins, should You be angry with the whole congregation?”

b.) If, for whatever reason, *Rashi* deemed the illustration of this analogy as crucial, why did he not cite it the first time that this situation arose, when Avraham pleaded with God to save the people of Sodom: “Will You also destroy the righteous with the wicked” (*Bereishis* 18:23)?

c.) Why at the outset, does *Rashi* speak of “part of a country” which becomes corrupt, but later refer to just one “sinner”?

d.) What is the distinction between “becoming corrupt” and “sinning”?

e.) If God consented that “one man is the sinner,” saying, “You have spoken well,” then why does the next verse immediately mention *three* sinners: “Speak to the congregation, saying, ‘Get away from Korach, Dasan and Aviram’s home’”?

And surely, there was a *large group* of sinners that sided with Korach?

THE EXPLANATION

In his commentary to verse 19, *Rashi* explains the method by which Korach gathered support: “The entire night, he went to the tribes and tricked them [saying], ‘Do you think I care only for myself? I care only for all of you! These men have come and taken all the high positions. [Moshe took] the kingship for himself and the priesthood for his brother.’ Eventually they were all lured [into Korach’s rebellion].”

Thus, at the literal level, all of Korach’s group were not *equally* guilty. Korach himself was an *inciter* of rebellion, who used divisive tactics in an *active* attempt to undermine Moshe and Aharon’s leadership. The men whom Korach convinced, however, were not *essentially* rebellious, they were merely lured by the arguments of Korach.

כה ויקם משה ואזל לות דתן ואבירם ואזלו בתרוהי סבי ישראל: כו ומליל עם בנשטא למימר זורו בען מעלוי משכני גבריא חיביא האלין ולא תקרבון בכל די להון דלמא תלקון בכל חוביהון: כז ואסתלקו מעלוי משכנא דקרח דתן ואבירם מסחור סחור ודתן ואבירם נפקו קנימין בטרע משכניהון ונשיהון ובניהון וספלהון: כח ואמר משה בדא תדעון ארי יי שלחני למעבד ית כל עובדיא האלין ארי לא מרעותי: כט אם כמותא דכל אנשא ימותון אלין וסערא דכל אנשא יסתער עליהון לא יי שלחני: ל ואם בריאה יברי יי ותפתח ארעא ית פומה ותבלע יתהון וית כל די להון ויחתון בד חיון לשאול ותדעון ארי ארגיוו גבריא האלין קדם יי: לא ויהוה פד שצי למללא ית כל פתגמיא האלין ואתבועת ארעא די תחותיהון: לב ופתחת ארעא ית פומה ובלעת יתהון וית אנש פתיהון וית כל אנשא די לקרח וית כל קנינא: לד ונתתו אנון וכל די להון פד חיון לשאול וחפת עליהון ארעא ואבדו מגו קהלא: לה וכל ישראל די בסחרניהון ערקו לקלהון ארי אמרו דלמא תבלעננא ארעא: לה ואשתא נפקת מן קדם יי ואכלת ית מאתן וחמשינ גברא מקרבי קמרת בוסמיא: א ומליל יי עם משה למימר: ב אמר לאלעזר בר אהרן פהנא ויפריש ית מחתותא מבין יקידיא וית אשתא ירחק להלא ארי אתקדשו: ג ית מחתות חיביא האלין דאתחיבו בנפשתיהון ויעבדון

דתן ואבירם: כה ויקם משה וילך אל-דתן ואבירם וילכו אחריו זקני ישראל: כו וידבר אל-העדה לאמר סורו נא מעל אהלי האנשים הרשעים האלה ואל-תגעו בכל-אשר להם פן-תספּו בכל-חטאתם: כז ויעלו מעל משכן-קרח דתן ואבירם מסביב ודתן ואבירם יצאו נצבים פתח אהליהם ונשיהם ובניהם וטפם: כח ויאמר משה בזאת תדעון כי-יהוה שלחני לעשות את כל-המעשים האלה כי-לא מלבי: כט אם-כמות כל-האדם ימתון אלה ופקדת כל-האדם יפקד עליהם לא יהוה שלחני: ל ואם-בריאה יברא יהוה ופצתה האדמה את-פיה ובלעה אתם ואת-כל-אשר להם וירדו חיים שאלה וידעתם כי נאצו האנשים האלה את-יהוה: לא ויהי ככלתו לדבר את כל-הדברים האלה ותבקע האדמה אשר תחתיהם: לב ותפתח הארץ את-פיה ותבלע אתם ואת-בתיהם ואת כל-האדם אשר לקרח ואת כל-הרכוש: לד וירדו הם וכל-אשר להם חיים שאלה ותכם עליהם הארץ ויאבדו מתוך הקהל: לה וכל-ישראל אשר סביבתיהם נסו לקלם כי אמרו פן-תבלענו הארץ: לה ואש יצאה מאת יהוה ותאכל את החמשים ומאתים איש מקרבי הקהלת: ס יז « וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: ג אמר אל-אלעזר בן אהרן הפהן וירם את-המחתות מבין השרפה ואת-האש זרה-הלאה פי קדשו: ג את מחתות החטאים האלה

כש"י

וצדן הוא חולק עלי: (ל) ואם בריאה. חדשה: יברא ה'. להמית אותם צמיחה שלא מת צה אדם עד הנה, ומה היא הצריחה, ופלתה האדמה את פיה ותצלעס, אז וידעתס כי נאלו הס את ה', ואני מפי הצורה אמרתי. ורבותינו פירשו את צריחה פה לארץ משעת ימי צראשית מוטב, ואס לאו יברא ה': (לד) נסו לקולם. בשביל הקול היואל על צליעתן: (ז) ואת האש. שצחך המחנות: זרה הלאה. לארץ מעל המחנות: כי קדשו. המחנות ואסורין צהנאה, שכרי עשאוס כלי שרת: (ג) החטאים האלה בנפשותם.

אסתלקו מסביבות משכן קרח: (כה) ויקם משה. כסצור שישאו לו פניס ולא עשו¹: (כז) יצאו נצבים. צקומה זקופה לחרף ולגדף, כמו ויחיזב ארצעים ויס² דגלית: ונשיהם ובניהם וטפם. צא וראה כמה קשה המחלוקת, שכרי צית דין של מטח חין עונשין אלא עד שיצוא שתי שערות, וצ"ד של מעלה עד עשרים שנה, וכאן אצדו אף ויוקי שדיס³: (כח) לעשות את כל המעשים האלה. שעשיתי על פי הדצור לתת לאהרן כהונס גדולה וצניו סגני כהונס ואלינפן נשיא הכהתי: (כט) לא ה' שלחני. אלא אני עשיתי הכל מדעתי

TORAS MENACHEM

Of course they were not innocent, as we find that they were punished with their lives; but their level of guilt was much less than that of Korach himself.

In order to clarify this distinction between Korach and his group, Rashi cites the analogy of "part of a country that becomes corrupt," but the "king of flesh and blood does not know who the sinner is." Here Rashi

²⁵ Moshe set out and went to Dasan and Aviram(*'s tents**). The elders of Israel followed him. ²⁶ He spoke to the congregation saying, "Please get away from the tents of these wicked men and do not touch anything of theirs, so that you don't die because of all their sins."

²⁷ They cleared away from the area of Korach, Dasan, and Aviram's home; but Dasan and Aviram came out and stood (proudly) upright at the entrance of their tents, together with their wives, their children, and their infants.

²⁸ Moshe said, "Through this you will know that God authorized me to carry out all these acts (of appointing the priests), for it was not my idea: ²⁹ If these men die as all men die and the fate of all men occurs to them, then (Korach is right and) God has not sent me. ³⁰ But if God creates a new form (of death that you have never seen before), and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them along with everything that belongs to them, and they descend alive into the grave—then you will know that these men have provoked God."

³¹ As soon as he finished speaking all these words, the earth beneath them split open. ³² The earth opened its mouth, swallowing them and their houses, all of Korach's people and all of their property. ³³ They descended alive into the grave with everything they possessed. The earth covered them up, and they were lost to the congregation. ³⁴ All the Jewish people who were around them fled from the sound (of the earth swallowing Korach's men), for they said, "Perhaps the earth will swallow us up (too)!"

³⁵ Then a fire came from God and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who had offered up the incense.

🕯️ A REMINDER OF KORACH 🕯️

I7 **G**od spoke to Moshe, saying: ² "Tell Elazar the son of Aharon the priest to pick up the fire-pans from the burned area because they have become holy, but he should throw the fire (coals) away. ³ Make the fire-pans of those who sinned against their souls into flattened sheets, as a coating for the Altar, since they have become sanctified because they were brought before God. They will be a reminder for the children of Israel."

TORAS MENACHEM

🕯️ Sparks of Chasidus 🕯️

Why were some of Korach's group swallowed up by the earth (v. 31-33), whereas others were consumed by fire (v. 35)?

Korach's rebellion was an attempt to upset the healthy equilibrium between the desire for spirituality and the need to be active in the physical world (see *Sparks of Chasidus* at beginning of this *Parsha*). Thus, those members of the group who overemphasized the spiritual were consumed by fire *from above*, whereas those who had distorted the importance of physical deeds were swallowed up by the earth *from below*.

In this vein, the *Mishnah* describes Korach's dispute as "not for the sake of heaven" (*Avos* 5:17). The Hebrew word for "heaven," **שָׁמַיִם**, is a composite of the words **אֵשׁ וּמַיִם** "fire and water" (*Rashi* to *Bereishis* 1:8). This alludes to the fact that Korach's group wished to challenge "heaven," namely, the ability to harmonize the dynamic tension of soul and body; of fire and water.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Behar-Bechukosai* 5734**)

makes clear the different levels of guilt: There is only one "sinner," who has actively incited part of the country; and the latter have merely allowed themselves to "become corrupt" through his influence.

So, argued Moshe, a mortal king could be excused for punishing the masses, since he cannot identify the leader of the rebellion (the "sinner"), but, "You know who the sinner is. If one man is the sinner, should You be angry with the whole congregation?" God replied, "You have spoken well."

(In the case of Sodom, however, this analogy was inappropriate, since the vast majority of the city's inhabitants were sinners in their own right, and not merely people who were lured into rebellion by a charismatic leader).

In defense of the Jewish people, Moshe had reduced the number of sinners to the minimum amount possible ("*one sinner*"). However, God replied, "I know, and I will make known, who sinned and who did not sin," as the verse continues that there were in fact *three* of them, "Get away from Korach, Dasan and Aviram's home."

Nevertheless, Moshe's attempt to minimize the number of sinners sets an example to us all to always judge others favorably.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 13, p. 51ff.)

* See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, p. 98ff. **See also *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 202ff.

בַּנְּפֹשֹׁתָם וַעֲשׂוּ אֹתָם רִקְעֵי פָחִים צַפּוּי לְמוֹזַבַּח כִּי־הִקְרִיבֶם
 לִפְנֵי־יְהוָה וַיִּקְדָּשׁוּ וַיְהִיו לְאוֹת לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ה וַיִּקַּח אֶלְעָזָר
 הַכֹּהֵן אֶת מַחְתָּת הַנְּחֹשֶׁת אֲשֶׁר הִקְרִיבו הַשָּׂרְפִים וַיִּרְקְעוּם
 צַפּוּי לְמוֹזַבַּח: ה זָכְרוֹן לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִקְרַב אִישׁ
 זָר אֲשֶׁר לֹא מִזֶּרַע אַהֲרֹן הוּא לְהִקְטִיר קִטְרֹת לִפְנֵי יְהוָה
 וְלֹא־יְהִיָּה כִּקְרַח וְכַעֲדָתוֹ כֹּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר: פ
 וַיִּלְנוּ כָּל־עַדַּת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמַּחְתָּת עַל־מֹשֶׁה וְעַל־אַהֲרֹן
 לֵאמֹר אַתֶּם הַמֵּתִים אֶת־עַם יְהוָה: ז וַיְהִי בְּהִקְהֵל הָעֵדָה עַל־
 מֹשֶׁה וְעַל־אַהֲרֹן וַיִּפְּנוּ אֶל־אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וַהֲנִיחַ כִּסְאוֹ הָעֵנָן וַיֵּרָא
 כְּבוֹד יְהוָה: ח וַיָּבֹא מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן אֶל־פְּנֵי אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד: ט וַרְבִּיעִין
 ט וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: י הֲרַמּוּ מִתּוֹךְ הָעֵדָה הַזֹּאת
 וְאִכְלָה אֹתָם כָּרְגַע וַיִּפְּלוּ עַל־פְּנֵיהֶם: יא וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה
 אֶל־אַהֲרֹן קַח אֶת־הַמַּחְתָּת וְתֵן עָלֶיהָ אֵשׁ מֵעַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְשִׂים
 קִטְרֹת וְהוֹלֵךְ מִהֲרָה אֶל־הָעֵדָה וְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיהֶם כִּי־יָצָא הַקֶּצֶף
 מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה הַחַל הַנֶּגֶף: יב וַיִּקַּח אַהֲרֹן כֹּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר דִּבַּר מֹשֶׁה
 וַיֵּרֶץ אֶל־תּוֹךְ הַקְּהָל וַהֲנִיחַ הַחַל הַנֶּגֶף בָּעָם וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־הַקִּטְרֹת
 וַיְכַפֵּר עַל־הָעָם: יג וַיַּעֲמֹד בֵּין־הַמֵּתִים וּבֵין הַחַיִּים וַתַּעֲצֹר
 הַמִּגֶּפֶה: יד וַיְהִיו הַמֵּתִים בַּמִּגֶּפֶה אַרְבַּעַת עָשָׂר אֶלֶף וּשְׁבַע
 מֵאוֹת מִלֶּבֶד הַמֵּתִים עַל־דְּבַר־קִרְחָה: טו וַיָּשָׁב אַהֲרֹן אֶל־מֹשֶׁה
 אֶל־פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְהַמִּגֶּפֶה נִעְצְרָה: טז וְחַמִּישִׁין טז וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה
 אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: יז דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְקַח מֵאֹתָם מִטָּה
 מִטָּה לְבַיִת אָב מֵאֵת כָּל־נְשֵׂיאָהֶם לְבַיִת אֲבֹתָם שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר
 מֵאוֹת אִישׁ אֶת־שְׁמוֹ תִּכְתֹּב עַל־מִטָּהוּ: יח וְאֵת שֵׁם אַהֲרֹן

יִתְהַן טַסִּין רִדִּידִין חוֹפָאָה לְמִדְבַּחָא אַרִי
 קִרְבָּנִין קָדָם יי וְאַחֲקִדְשׁוּ וַיְהִיוֹן לְאֹת לְבְנֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל: ד וְנָסִיב אֶלְעָזָר כְּהֵנָּא יֵת מַחְתִּיתָא
 דְּנִחְשָׂא דְקִרְיָבו וַיִּקְדָּשׁוּ וְרִדִּידִנֹן חוֹפָאָה
 לְמִדְבַּחָא: ה דְּכִרְנָא לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּדִיל
 דִּי לֹא יִקְרַב גְּבַר חִלּוּנִי דִּי לֹא מִזֶּרַע דְּאַהֲרֹן
 הוּא לְאַסְקָא קִטְרֹת בּוֹסְמִין קָדָם יי וְלֹא יְהִי
 כְּקִרְחָ וְכַעֲדָתָהּ כְּמָא דִּי מְלִיל יי בִּידָא
 דְּמֹשֶׁה לֵה: ו וְאַתְרַעְמוּ כָּל כְּנִשְׂתָא דְבְנֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיִּזְמָא דְבִתְרוּהִי עַל מֹשֶׁה וְעַל אַהֲרֹן
 לְמִימְרָא אֲתוֹן גְּרַמְתּוֹן דְּמִית עִמָּא דִּי: ז וְהוּא
 בְּאַתְכְּנִשׁוֹת כְּנִשְׂתָא עַל מֹשֶׁה וְעַל אַהֲרֹן
 וְאַתְפְּנִיאוּ לְמִשְׁכַּן זְמָנָא וְהָא חֲפָהי עֵנָנָא
 וְאַתְגְּלִי יִקְרָא דִּי: ח וְעַל מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן
 לְקָדָם מִשְׁכַּן זְמָנָא: ט וּמְלִיל יי עִם מֹשֶׁה
 לְמִימְרָא: י אַתְפְּרִשׁוּ מִנּוּ כְּנִשְׂתָא דְהָא וְאַשְׁצִי
 יִתְהוֹן כְּשַׁעָה וְנִפְּלוּ עַל אִפְהִיוֹן: יא וְאָמַר
 מֹשֶׁה לְאַהֲרֹן סַב יֵת מַחְתִּיתָא וְהַב עֲלֵה
 אֲשֶׁתָא מֵעֲלוּי מִדְבַּחָא וְשׁוּ קִטְרֹת בּוֹסְמִיָא
 וְאוֹבִיל בְּפָרִיעַ לְכְנִשְׂתָא וְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיהוֹן אַרִי
 נִפְקִי הֵנָּא מִן קָדָם יי שְׂרִי מוֹתָנָא: יב וְנָסִיב
 אַהֲרֹן כְּמָא דִּי מְלִיל מֹשֶׁה וְרַחֵט לְגוּ קְהָלָא
 וְהָא שְׂרִי מוֹתָנָא בְּעִמָּא וְיַהֲב יֵת קִטְרֹת
 בּוֹסְמִיָא וְכַפֵּר עַל עִמָּא: יג וְקָם בֵּין מֵתִיָא וּבֵין
 חַיִּיָא וְאַתְכְּלִי מוֹתָנָא: יד וְהוּוּ דְמִיתוּ בְּמוֹתָנָא
 אַרְבַּעַת עָשָׂר אֶלְפִין וּשְׁבַע מֵאָה בַר מִדְּמִיתוּ
 עַל פְּלָגְתָא דְקִרְחָה: טו וְתָב אַהֲרֹן לְמֹשֶׁה
 לְתַרַע מִשְׁכַּן זְמָנָא וּמוֹתָנָא אַתְכְּלִי: טז וּמְלִיל
 יי עִם מֹשֶׁה לְמִימְרָא: יז מְלִיל עִם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 וְסַב מִנְהוֹן חֲטָרָא חֲטָרָא לְבַיִת אָבָא מִן כָּל
 רְבָרְבָנֵיהוֹן לְבַיִת אֲבֹתָהוֹן תְּרִי עָשָׂר חֲטָרִין
 גְּבַר יֵת שְׁמָה תִּכְתּוֹב עַל חֲטָרָה: יח וְיֵת
 שְׁמָא דְאַהֲרֹן תִּכְתּוֹב עַל חֲטָרָא דְלוּי אַרִי

כ"ש"י

הסמוכים אלל דבור פתרון כמו על. ומדרשו על קרח. ומכו זיד משה ולא כחז אל משה, רמז לחולקים על הכהונה שלוקין בצרעת, כמו שלקה משה זידו שנאמר ויוליאח וכנה ידו מזרעת כשנג, ועל כן לקח עוזיח בצרעת! (יא) וכפר עליהם. רז זה מסר לו מלאך המות כשעלה לרקיע, שהקטרת עולר המגפה כדאיתא צמס' שצח' (יג) ויעמוד בין המתים וגו'. אחז את המלאך והעמידו על כרחו. ח"ל המלאך הכח לי לעשות שליחותי. ח"ל משה

שנעשו פושעים בצפושחם, שנחלקו על הקצ"ח: רקעי. רדידין: פחים. טסין מרודדין טיניצ"ש צלע"ז: צפוי למזבח. למזבח הנחשת: ויהיו לאות. לזכרון, שיאמרו אלו היו מאותן שנחלקו על הכהונה ונשרפו: (ד) וירקעום. אינטינדר"ש צלע"ז: (ה) ולא יהיה בקרח. כדי שלא יהיה קרחת: כאשר דבר ה' ביד משה לו. כמו עליו, על אהרן דבר אל משה, שיהיה הוא וצניו ככהים, לפיכך לא יקרצ איש זר אשר לא מזרע אהרן וגו', וכן כל לי ולו ולהם

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why was Aharon's name inscribed on Levi's staff? (v. 18)
 RASHI: Although I have divided them into two families, the priestly family being separate from the Levite family, it remains one tribe.

⁴ Elazar the priest took the copper fire-pans which the fire victims had brought, and they flattened them out into a coating for the Altar. ⁵ It was a reminder for the children of Israel that no outsider, who is not a descendant of Aharon, should approach (the Altar) to burn incense before God, so as not to be like Korach and his company. For it was God Who spoke, through Moshe, about (Aharon's appointment).

AHARON SAVES THE PEOPLE

17:6 **T**he following day, the entire congregation of Israel complained against Moshe and Aharon, saying, "You have killed God's people!"

⁷ Then, as the congregation was ganging up against Moshe and Aharon, they turned to the Tent of Meeting, and—look!—the cloud had covered it, and the glory of God appeared. ⁸ Moshe and Aharon came to the front of the Tent of Meeting.

FOURTH READING ⁹ God spoke to Moshe saying, ¹⁰ Get away from this congregation! I'm going to destroy them in an instant!"

They fell on their faces. ¹¹ Moshe said to Aharon, "Take the fire-pan and place fiery (coals) from the top of the Altar onto it. Then take it quickly to the congregation and atone for them, for God is very angry, and the plague has begun (but I know that incense stops a plague)."

¹² Aharon took it, just as Moshe had said. He ran into the assembly, and—look!—the plague had begun among the people. He placed the incense on (the fire-pan) and atoned for the people. ¹³ He stood between the dead and the living, and the plague ceased.

¹⁴ The number of dead in the plague was fourteen thousand, seven hundred, besides those who died because of the incident with Korach.

¹⁵ Aharon returned to Moshe at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and the plague had ended.

CONFIRMATION OF AHARON'S APPOINTMENT

17:16 **G**od spoke to Moshe, saying: ¹⁷ "Speak to the children of Israel and take from them a staff for each paternal house from all the leaders according to their paternal houses—twelve staffs. Inscribe each man's name on his staff. ¹⁸ Inscribe Aharon's name on Levi's staff, for there is

FIFTH READING

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

"THE PLAGUE HAD BEGUN..." (v. 12)

While the plague followed after the complaints of the Jewish people (v. 6), this cannot have been its sole cause, since we find that the Jewish people complained on *numerous* occasions and were not punished with a plague. Rather, the plague was clearly a punishment for *Korach's* rebellion that was catalyzed by the complaints of the Jewish people later on.

Even though Korach incited an entire congregation against Moshe, nevertheless the people were not punished by the plague until they *actually* rebelled. From this we can learn a powerful lesson concerning our attitude to others: Even if a person is lacking much in his personal level of observance, so long as he has not actively rebelled against God, we can be sure that he still finds grace in the eyes of the Almighty.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, p. 2, note 14; *ibid.* p. 6)

"INSCRIBE AHARON'S NAME" (v. 18)

In the current passage we read the account of how staffs were taken from each of the tribal leaders and placed in the Tent of Meeting, upon which the staff of the tribe of Levi (inscribed with Aharon's name) miraculously blossomed almonds (v. 16-24). God's purpose in performing this miracle was to "*rid Myself of the complaints of the children of Israel, which they are directing at you*" (v. 20). The staff was then preserved: "*as a remembrance that I have chosen Aharon to be priest, so they will no longer complain about the priesthood*" (*Rashi* to v. 25).

However, this begs the question: Korach was a member of the tribe of Levi, and thus his rebellion against Moshe and Aharon was largely an internal matter within the tribe of Levi itself. So how would Aharon's right to the priesthood be established by taking only *one* staff from the tribe of Levi with his name written on it (see *Rashi* to v. 18)? Surely, to disprove the validity of Korach's claim, *two* staffs should have been taken: one for the priesthood, with Aharon's name on it, and one staff for the leader of the other Levites? Thus, when Aharon's staff would flower, it would prove decisively that he had been chosen by God as priest from the whole tribe of Levi.

הַטָּרָא חַד לְרִישׁ בֵּית אֲבֹתָהוּן: יט וְתִצְנַעְנֻנוּן
 בְּמִשְׁכַּן זִמְנָא קָדָם סְהַדוּתָא דִּי אֲזֻמְן מִימְרֵי
 לְכוּן תַּמְזָן: כ וַיְהִי גִבְרָא דְאֲתָרְעֵי בַּה הַטָּרָה
 יַנְעִי וַאֲנִיחֵי מִן קַדְמֵי יַת תְּרַעַמַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 דִּי אַנְזִין מְתַרְעָמִין עֲלֵיכוּן: כא וּמְלִיל מִשָּׁה
 עִם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְהִיבוּ לָהּ כָּל רִבְרִבְנֵיהוֹן
 הַטָּרָא לְרִבָּא חַד הַטָּרָא לְרִבָּא חַד לְבֵית
 אֲבֹתָהוּן תְּרֵי עֶשֶׂר הַטָּרִין וְהַטָּרָא דְאֲהֲרֹן
 בְּגוּ הַטָּרִיהוּן: כב וַאֲצַנַע מִשָּׁה יַת הַטָּרִיא
 קָדָם יִי בְּמִשְׁפָּנָא דְסַהְדוּתָא: כג וְהוּהּ בְּיוֹמָא
 דְּבִתְרוּהֵי וְעַל מִשָּׁה לְמִשְׁפָּנָא דְסַהְדוּתָא וְהָא
 נִעָא הַטָּרָא דְאֲהֲרֹן לְבֵית לֹוי וְאַפְק לְבַלְבִּין
 וְאַנְזִין גִּין וְכַפִּית שְׁגָדִין: כד וְאַפְק מִשָּׁה יַת כָּל
 הַטָּרִיא מִן קָדָם יִי לֹות כָּל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 וְאַשְׁתַּמּוּדְעוּ וְנִסִּיבוּ גִבְר הַטָּרָה: כה וַאֲמַר יִי
 לְמִשָּׁה אֲתַב יַת הַטָּרָא דְאֲהֲרֹן לְקָדָם
 סַהְדוּתָא לְמִשְׁרָא לְאֵת לְעֻמָּא סַרְבְּנָא וְיִסּוּפִן
 תְּרַעַמַתְהוֹן מִן קַדְמֵי וְלֹא יָמוּתוּן: כו וְעַבְד
 מִשָּׁה כְּמָא דִּי פִקִּיד יִי יַתָּה כֵּן עֲבַד:

תִּכְתֹּב עַל־מַטֵּה לְוִי כִּי מַטֵּה אֶחָד לְרֹאשׁ בֵּית אֲבוֹתָם:
 יט וְהִנְחִתֶם בְּאֶהֱל מוֹעֵד לְפָנַי הָעֵדוֹת אֲשֶׁר אוֹעֵד לָכֶם שָׁמָּה: *
 כ וְהָיָה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר אֶבְחַר בּוֹ מִטֵּהוּ יִפְרֹחַ וְהִשְׁכַּתִּי מִעָלַי
 אֶת־תְּלֹנוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הֵם מְלִינִם עֲלֵיכֶם: כא וַיִּדְבֹּר
 מֹשֶׁה אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּתְּנוּ אֵלָיו | כָּל־נְשֵׁיאֵיהֶם מַטֵּה לְנִשְׂיָא
 אֶחָד מַטֵּה לְנִשְׂיָא אֶחָד לְבֵית אֲבוֹתָם שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר מַטֹּת וּמַטֵּה
 אֲהֲרֹן בְּתוֹךְ מַטֹּתֵם: כב וַיִּנַּח מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הַמַּטֹּת לְפָנָי יְהוָה
 בְּאֶהֱל הָעֵדוּת: כג וַיְהִי מִמַּחֲרַת וַיָּבֵא מֹשֶׁה אֶל־אֶהֱל הָעֵדוּת
 וְהִנֵּה פָּרַח מִטֵּה־אֲהֲרֹן לְבֵית לְוִי *וַיֵּצֵא פָּרַח *וַיֵּצֵן צִיֵּץ וַיִּגְמַל
 שְׁקָדִים: כד וַיֵּצֵא מֹשֶׁה אֶת־כָּל־הַמַּטֹּת מִלְּפָנָי יְהוָה אֶל־כָּל־
 בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּרְאוּ וַיִּקְחוּ אִישׁ מִטֵּהוּ: כה וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה
 אֶל־מֹשֶׁה הֲשִׁב אֶת־מַטֵּה אֲהֲרֹן לְפָנָי הָעֵדוּת לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת
 לְאוֹת לְבְנֵי־מִרְי וְתִכַּל תְּלוּנָתָם מִעָלַי וְלֹא יָמָתוּ: כו וַיַּעַשׂ

* חצי הספר בפסוקים ** בחזמת תורת מסומן על אלה המלים 'ב' טעמים', ולדעת המנחת שי קריאת מלים אלו אינה מלעיל גמור ולא מלרע גמור אלא בהעמדה מועטת בשיני הטעמים.

כ"ט

שכינה פרח²: (כג) ויצא פרח. כמשמעו: ציץ. הוא חננת הפרי כשהפרח
 נופל: ויגמל שקדים. כשהוכר הפרי הוכר שהן שקדים, לשון ויגדל הילד
 ויגמל³, ולשון זה מצוי צפרי האילן, כמו וזוסר גומל יהיה נלה. ולמה
 שקדים, הוא הפרי הממכה להפריח מכל הפירות, אף המעורר על הכהונה
 פורענותו ממכרת לבא, כמו שמצינו בעוזיה והלרעח זרחו במלכו⁴. ותרגומו
 וכפית שגדיו, כמין אשכול שקדים יחד כפותים זה על זה: (כה) ותכל
 תלונתם. כמו ותכלה תלונתם, לשון זה שם מפעל יחיד לשון נקבה כמו
 תלונתם מרמוריי"ש שלע"ז, ויש חילוק בין תלונתם לתלונתם, תלונתם תלונה
 אחת, תלונתם שם דבר שלשון יחיד, ואפילו הם תלונת הרבה: למשמרת

לוי לעכב על ידך. ח"ל אני שלוחו של מקום ואתה שלוחו של משה. ח"ל אין
 משה אומר כלום מלצו ח"ל מפי הגבורה, ח"ל אין אתה מאמין הרי הקצ"ב
 ומשה ח"ל פתח ח"ל מועד צח עמי ושאל. וזה שנאמר וישב אהרן אל משה.
 דבר אחר למה צקטת, לפי שהיו ישראל מליצין ומרננים אחר הקטרת לומר
 סם המות הוא, על ידו מתו נדב ואזיכוא, על ידו נשרפו חמשים ומאתים
 איש, אמר הקצ"ב תראו שעולר מגפכ הוא, והחטא הוא הממית: (יח) כי
 מטה אחד. אף על פי שחלקתים לשתי משפחות משפחת כהונה לצד ולוי
 לצד מכל מקום שבט אחד הוא: (כ) והשכתי. כמו וישכו המים, וחמת המלך
 שככה¹: (כא) בתוך מטותם. הניחו באמצע, שלא יאמרו מפני שהניחו צד

TORAS MENACHEM

THE EXPLANATION

The "sign of the staffs" was intended to prove two points: a.) That the priesthood belonged exclusively to the tribe of Levi. b.) That within the tribe of Levi, the priesthood belonged exclusively to Aharon.

To prove point "a" it was necessary to take staffs from all the other tribes, and not merely to take one staff from Aharon and another from the rest of the Levites.

And to prove point "b," it would not help to take two staffs, one for Aharon and one for the rest of the Levites, for this would not add any additional clarification:

If both staffs blossomed, it would not indicate the choice of Aharon over the rest of the Levites. And if Aharon's staff alone blossomed, one would

be missing a sign that the priesthood belonged to the tribe of Levi. Perhaps it would be a sign of Aharon's personal qualities, independent of his tribal affiliation?

Thus, the only option was to take one staff for the entire tribe of Levi, and to write Aharon's name on it, which would indicate God's choice of the tribe of Levi in general, and Aharon in particular.*

As for the fact that the blossoming of the stick did not prove conclusively that there could not be a second High Priest from the tribe of Levi—this was unnecessary, for it had already been proven by the miracle of the firepans (16:16ff.), which demonstrated graphically that "we only have one High Priest" (Rashi to 16:6).

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Korach 5744)

*This also explains why the Torah does not record the names of all the tribal leaders that were inscribed on the staffs, in contrast to many other instances where the tribal leaders are mentioned along with their names (cf. Bamidbar 1:5ff.; 2:3ff.; 34:18ff.)—for here, the Torah's intention is to prove the superiority of the tribe of Levi, and hence by default, the relative deficiency of the other tribes. Thus, to mention the other tribal leaders by name would be derogatory, since it would stress what they are lacking. cf. Rashi to Bereishis 3:7. (Sichas Shabbos Parshas Korach 5744)

(only) one staff for the head of each paternal house (and the priests are from the tribe of Levi).¹⁹ Place the staffs in the Tent of Meeting before the (Ark of) the Testimony where I arrange meetings with you.”

²⁰ “What will happen is, the staff of the man whom I will choose will blossom. I will (thus) rid Myself of the complaints of the children of Israel, which they are directing at you.”

²¹ Moshe spoke to the children of Israel. All their leaders gave him a staff, one staff per leader according to their paternal houses, (a total of) twelve staffs. Aharon’s staff was in the middle of their staffs.

²² Moshe placed the staffs before God in the Tent of the Testimony.

²³ On the following day Moshe came to the Tent of Testimony, and—look!—Aharon’s staff, of the house of Levi, had blossomed! It had blossomed, started to produce fruit, and developed ripe almonds.

²⁴ Moshe took out all the staffs from before God, to the children of Israel. They saw (what had happened) and each man took his staff (back).

SIXTH READING ²⁵ God said to Moshe, “Put Aharon’s staff back in front of (the Ark of) the Testimony, guarding it as a sign for rebellious people. Then their complaints against Me will end and they will not die.”

²⁶ Moshe did what God had commanded him. He did it (precisely).

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● When did the fruit begin to develop? (v. 23)

RASHI: After the flowers fell off.

RASHBAM: If Moshe found the staff after it had already sprouted almonds, then nobody would have witnessed the flowering and early growth stages. Thus it appears that Moshe found the staff when it was in the flowering stage, and he took it out to the Jewish people who witnessed it produce and develop fruit.

DA’AS ZEKEINIM: Apparently, there were two types of flowers. Some which fell off and developed into almonds, and other flowers which remained attached to the staff.

ABARBANEL: Normally, when almonds grow, the flowers fall off first. But here a miracle occurred and the flowers, unripened fruit and almonds all were present at the same time. And they remained there throughout summer and winter.

TORAS MENACHEM

🌸 FLOWERS AND ALMONDS (v. 23)

In verse 23 we read how Moshe discovered the miraculous blossoming of Aharon’s staff, “Moshe came to the Tent of Testimony, and—look!—Aharon’s staff...had blossomed! It had blossomed, started to produce fruit, and developed ripe almonds.”

In the following verse, we read, “Moshe took out all the staffs from before God, to the children of Israel. They saw (what had happened).”

This begs the question: Moshe appears only to have discovered the staff after it had blossomed, shed its flowers, and developed ripe almonds—

and it was at *this* point that he showed the staff to the Jewish people. What, then, was achieved by the staff’s first blossoming and producing unripened fruit, if these miracles were not witnessed?

The commentators offer various solutions to this problem:

Rashbam explains that Moshe actually found the staff in its flowering stage and took it out to the people before the fruit started to grow. **Da’as Zekeinim** writes that the flowers that Moshe saw remained, and the Jewish people saw others form and develop into almonds before their eyes. And **Abarbanel** explains that all the flowers, unripened fruit and almonds miraculously remained on the staff at the same time.

Why then does *Rashi* not offer an explanation how the Jewish people witnessed the miracle of Aharon’s staff flowering and producing fruit, writing only that the flowers fell before Moshe found the staff?

THE EXPLANATION

When *Rashi* states that the flowers fell off, he does not mean to say that Moshe left them on the floor of the Tent of Meeting. Rather, Moshe would have taken the staff (to which ripe almonds were attached) *together with* the detached flowers, and shown them to the Jewish people. In this way, the people would have themselves understood that the almonds did not appear suddenly on the staff, but that they underwent a natural growth process, first blossoming, then shedding flowers, producing unripe fruit and finally ripening.

Thus, at the literal level, *Rashi* understood that the sprouting of almonds on Aharon’s staff was partially miraculous and partially natural. Initially, for almonds to grow from a dry stick, a miracle was clearly required; but once this had occurred, the growth of the almonds proceeded in a natural (albeit accelerated) manner.

Why did *Rashi* reject the interpretation of the other commentators who argue that more miracles occurred? Surely, at the literal level, the

🌸 The Last Word 🌸

“AHARON’S STAFF... HAD BLOSSOMED” (v. 23)

Even though Aharon’s staff was a plain, physical one, the fact that it was placed in the Tent of Meeting infused it with sanctity, transforming it into a “staff of God.” And since its spiritual influence is eternal, this staff gives every Jew assistance to walk in God’s ways. Even when we become weary from the difficulties of life, these special blessings enable us to infuse everything—even inanimate objects like a “staff”—with the vitality associated with Jewish life.

Thus, the lesson from Aharon’s staff is that everything in the world should be made to “blossom” and become beautiful with the light of Judaism, to the extent that it actually produces fruit. And all this should be done without delay, like almonds, which “blossom more quickly than all other fruits” (*Rashi* to v. 23).

(Based on *Sicha* of 28th of Sivan 5743)

כו וַיֹּאמְרוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמֹשֶׁה לְמִימַר הֲאֵל מִנְּנָא קָמְלַת חֲרָבָא הָא מִנְּנָא בְּלַעַת אַרְעָא וְהָא מִנְּנָא דְמִיתוּ בְּמוֹתָנָא: כה כָּל דְקָרַב מִקְרַב לְמִשְׁכְּנָא דִּי מָאִית הָא אֲנַחְנָא סִיפִין לְמָמַת: « וַיֹּאמֶר יי לְאַהֲרֹן אֵת וּבְנֵיךָ וּבֵית אַבֹּוֹךָ עִמָּךְ תִּסְלַחֲוּן עַל חֻבֵי מִקְדָּשָׁא וְאֵת וּבְנֵיךָ עִמָּךְ תִּסְלַחֲוּן עַל חֻבֵי כְהֻנָּתְהוּן: ג וְאַף ית אַהֲרֹן שְׁבֻטָא דְלוֹי שְׁבֻטָא דְאַבֹּוֹךָ קָרַב לְוֵתְךָ וְיִתְוַסְפוּן עִלְךָ וְיִשְׁמְשְׁנֵךְ וְאֵת וּבְנֵיךָ עִמָּךְ קָרַב מִשְׁכְּנָא דְסַהֲדוּתָא: ג וְיִטְרוּן

מֹשֶׁה בְּאִשְׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֹתוֹ בֵּן עֲשֵׂה: פ כו וַיֹּאמְרוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר הֵן גְּוַעְנֵנו אַבְדָּנוּ בְּלָנוּ אַבְדָּנוּ: כה כָּל הַקָּרַב | הַקָּרַב אֶל־מִשְׁכַּן יְהוָה יָמוּת הָאֵם תִּמְנוּ לְגֹוע: ס יח « וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־אַהֲרֹן אַתָּה וּבְנֵיךָ וּבֵית־אַבְיֶיךָ אֲתָךְ תִּשְׂאוּ אֶת־עֲוֹן הַמִּקְדָּשׁ וְאֵתְּךָ וּבְנֵיךָ אֲתָךְ תִּשְׂאוּ אֶת־עֲוֹן כֹּהֲנֵיכֶם: ג וְגַם אֶת־אַחֶיךָ מִטָּה לֵאמֹר שִׁבְט אַבְיֶיךָ הַקָּרַב אֲתָךְ וַיָּלוּ עֲלֶיךָ וַיִּשְׂרְתוּךָ וְאֵתְּךָ וּבְנֵיךָ אֲתָךְ לִפְנֵי אֱהֻל הָעֵדוּת: ג וְשָׁמְרוּ

— דש"י —

עליכם אני מטיל עונש הזרים שיחטאו צעסקי הדברים המקודשים המסורים לכם הוא האהל והארון והשלחן וכלי הקדש אחס תשצו ותזכירו על כל זר הצא ליגע! ואתה ובניך. ככהניס! תשאו את עון כהונתכם. שאינה מסורה ללוים ותזכירו כלוים השוגגים שלא יגעו אליכם צעודתכם! (ג) וגם את אחיך. בני גרשון ובני מררי: וילוו. ויתחצרו אליכם להזכיר גם את הזרים מלכתקצו אליהם: וישרתוך. צשמירת השערים ולמנות מהם גזצרין

לאות. לזכרון שצחרתי צאכרן ככהן ולא ילונו עוד על הכהונה: (כה) כל הקרב הקרב וגו'. אין לנו יכולין להיות זכירין צכך, כולנו רשאין להכנס לחצר אהל מועד ואחד שיקריב עלמנו יותר מחצרו ויכנס לתוך אהל מועד ימות: האם תמנו לגוע. שמא הופקרנו למיתה: (ח) ויאמר ה' אל אהרן. למשה אמר שיאמר לאהרן להזכירו על תקנת ישראל שלא יכנסו למקדש: אתה ובניך ובית אביך. הם בני קהת אזי עמרס! תשאו את עון המקדש.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How are the priests and Levites to take responsibility for the Sanctuary? (v. 1)

RASHI: [God says]: “I impose upon you the punishment for outsiders who sin by using the sacred objects entrusted to you: the tent, the ark, the table, and the sacred apparatus. You must sit and warn any outsider who attempts to touch them.

RAMBAM: It is a *mitzvah* from the Torah to guard the Temple. This is so even if there is no fear of enemies or thieves, for the guarding

of the Temple is done purely as an act of respect, for a palace with guards is incomparably superior to a palace without guards (*Laws of God's Chosen House* 8:1).

The *mitzvah* of guarding the Temple is carried out the entire night.

The guardians are the priests and Levites, as the verse states, “*You along with your sons will be before the Tent of Testimony*” (v. 2), i.e. you should keep watch over it for Me. Also, it is said (v. 4), “*they must safeguard the duties of the Tent of Meeting*” (*Rambam* *ibid.* law 2).

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more supernatural behavior the staff exhibited, the more impressive would be the sign of Aharon's authenticity, which was the very purpose of this exercise?

Rashi understood from the context of this passage that the staff would be a more powerful sign if it exhibited both supernatural and natural qualities. For up to this point, Aharon's Divinely appointed role had been confirmed by a series of miracles, including the earth's swallowing Korach's men alive (16:31-33), and a fire from heaven that consumed the remaining rebels (*ibid.* 35). Nevertheless, the very next day, “*the entire congregation of Israel complained against Moshe and Aharon, saying, ‘You have killed God's people!’*” (17:6).

Why had Korach's demise through Divine intervention not convinced the people of Aharon's validity as High Priest? Because the miracles had only proven Divine consent to Aharon's position as High Priest. But perhaps, the people wondered, there might be a more worthy candidate than Aharon who might also meet with Divine approval. Perhaps, God had only consented to Aharon's appointment due to Moshe's prayers, but in fact a better High Priest could be found—especially as Aharon had been instrumental in the sin of the Golden Calf.

Therefore, *Rashi* concluded that the miracle of the staff must have been intended to prove, not only Divine consent to Aharon's appointment, but furthermore, some indication of his *genuine suitability* for the position.

This led *Rashi* to formulate his stance, that at the literal level the staff blossomed miraculously, but developed naturally: The miraculous beginnings of the almond flower represented the Divine approval of Aharon's priesthood from above. But then, the almonds developed naturally, as a sign to the Jewish people that Aharon was *naturally* suited to be the High Priest.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 23, pp. 118-120)

🔗 THE MITZVAH OF GUARDING (v. 1-2)

In law 1, when **Rambam** introduces the *mitzvah* from the Torah to guard the Temple, he cites no scriptural source whatsoever, and writes simply, “It is a *mitzvah* from the Torah to guard the Temple.” Only in law 2, when he begins to describe whom the *mitzvah* is incumbent upon, does he cite the scriptural verses which speak of the guarding.

Apparently, *Rambam* maintained that verses 1-2 do not teach us the actual *mitzvah* of guarding the Temple itself, but rather, they merely provide supplementary information about who is to carry out the guarding. Therefore, *Rambam* did not cite the verses in law 1, when describing the definition and nature of the *mitzvah* itself.

However, the verses *do* appear to be describing the *mitzvah* of guarding the Temple itself, and not merely providing supplementary information. What led *Rambam* to conclude otherwise?

🔱 GUARDING THE TABERNACLE 🔱

17:27 **T**he children of Israel spoke to Moshe, saying, “(We can’t be so careful about not entering the Tent of Meeting). We’re going to die! We will be destroyed! We are all lost!”²⁸ Whoever comes close to the Sanctuary of God dies! Are we doomed to death?

I8 ¹ God said to (Moshe: Say to) Aharon:

- You, your sons and (the rest of) your paternal house (of Kehos) will (protect the Jewish people by) taking responsibility for sins concerning (touching unauthorized parts of) the Sanctuary, (warning them at all times).
- You, along with your sons (the priests), will take responsibility for sins (of the Levites) concerning (unauthorized participation in the duties of) your priesthood.

² You should also draw close your brothers (the descendants of Gershon and Merari) from the tribe of Levi, your father’s tribe:

- They should join you (in the above work).
- They should serve as ministers to you (helping you with duties of guarding and administration, so that) you along with your sons will be before the Tent of Testimony.

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THE EXPLANATION

From *Rashi’s* commentary, it is quite clear that the priests and Levites are being commanded to guard the Temple for a practical reason—in order to ensure that those people who are prohibited from entering the Temple do not enter.

However, *Rambam* writes, “*The guarding of the Temple is done purely as an act of respect, for a palace with guards is incomparably superior to a palace without guards,*” i.e. the purpose of guarding the Temple was not to prevent unwanted visitors, but rather, to honor the *building itself*. Therefore, *Rambam* did not cite the verses from the Torah when describing the actual *mitzvah* to guard the Temple, as in his opinion preventing the entry of unauthorized individuals is not the purpose of guarding the Temple.

In other words: *Rashi* maintained that guarding was a *personal responsibility*, incumbent on the priests and Levites (*gavra*), but *Rambam* understood that the obligation was one of the Torah’s requirements for the *building itself* (*cheftza*).

GUARDING AT NIGHT

A second innovation of *Rambam* is the statement, “The *mitzvah* of guarding the Temple is carried out only at night.” Many other primary authorities disagreed with this stance of *Rambam*, arguing that the *mitzvah* is binding day and night (see *Rosh* and *Ra’avad* to *Tamid* 1:1). In fact, *Minchas Chinuch* (*mitzvah* 448) goes so far as to assert that there is no extant source for *Rambam’s* position, and that there seems to be no other solution than to conclude that *Rambam* had primary texts which have since been lost!

Furthermore, the ruling that the Temple need not be guarded during the day seems to contradict *Rambam’s* basic understanding of the *mitzvah*. For, since *Rambam* maintained that the Temple is guarded purely for the sake of honor, then why would we not want to honor the Temple during the day, as well as at night?

At first glance, we might argue that guarding is unnecessary during the day, as the very fact that the priests are carrying out the daily services is

sufficient honor for the Temple. Only at night when the services cease does it become necessary to guard the Temple, for the purposes of honor and respect.

However, this solution appears to be difficult to accept, for while it may be the case that the services in the Temple were a sign of respect, it was nevertheless a very different kind of respect to that offered by guarding. So on what basis could *Rambam* equate the two?

Rambam’s understanding was that the Temple is guarded to ensure that it was *always the focus of attention*. And this is the greatest respect and honor that a building can be given, that our minds are on it constantly, day and night.

Thus, we can now understand why the offering of sacrifices during the day was an activity which precluded the need for guarding. For, as long as this was taking place, the building was certainly the subject of human consciousness and attention. Only when this activity ceased (at night), was there a need to continue the focus on the Temple brought about by guarding it.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 13, p. 56ff.)

🔱 The Last Word 🔱

While guarding the Sanctuary was extremely important, it was just *one* of the many tasks performed by the priests and Levites, and not all the priests were required to guard.

From this we can learn that while an observant Jew must be careful to guard himself from influences that are antithetical to Judaism, this is not the *entire* “service” of a Jew in this world. The need to “guard oneself” must not be used as an excuse to refrain from the important task of spreading the light of Judaism to others.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 14, p. 240)

משמרתך ומשמרת כל־האהל אך אל־כלי הקדש ואל־
 המזבח לא יקרבו ולא ימיתו גם־הם גם־אתם: ה ונלנו עליך
 ושמרו את־משמרת אהל מועד לכל עבדת האהל וזר
 לא יקרב אליכם: ה ושמרתם את משמרת הקדש ואת
 משמרת המזבח ולא־יהיה עוד קצף על־בני ישראל: ו ואני
 הנה לקחתי את־אחיכם הלולים מתוך בני ישראל לכם
 מתנה נתנים ליהוה לעבד את־עבדת אהל מועד: ז ואתה
 ובניך אתך תשמרו את־כהנתכם לכל־דבר המזבח ולמבית
 לפרכת ועבדתם עבדת מתנה אתן את־כהנתכם והזר
 הקרב יומת: פ ה וידבר יהוה אל־אהרן ואני הנה נתתי לך
 את־משמרת תרומתי לכל־קדשי בני־ישראל לך נתתים
 למשחה ולבניך לחק־עולם: ט וזה יהיה לך מקדש הקדשים
 מן־האש כל־קרבתם לכל־מנחתם ולכל־חטאתם ולכל־
 אשם אשר ישיבו לי קדש קדשים לך הוא ולבניך: י בקדש
 הקדשים תאכלנו כל־זכר יאכל אתו קדש יהיה־לך: יא וזה־
 לך תרומת מתנם לכל־תנופת בני ישראל לך נתתים ולבניך
 ולבנותיך אתך לחק־עולם כל־טהור בביתך יאכל אתו: יב כל
 חלב יצהר וכל־חלב תירוש ודגן ראשיתם אשר־יתנו ליהוה
 לך נתתים: יג בפורי כל־אשר בארצם אשר־יביאו ליהוה לך

מטרתך ומטרת כל משכנא ברם למני
 קודשא ולמדבחה לא יקרבו ולא ימותו אף
 אננו אף אתו: ה ויתוספון עלך ויטרו ית
 מטרת משכן זמנא לכל פלחן משכנא וחלוני
 לא יקרב לותכו: ה ויטרו ית מטרת קודשא
 וית מטרת מדבחה ולא יהי עוד רגוא על בני
 ישראל: ו ואנא הא קרבית ית אחיכו לואי
 מוגו בני ישראל לכון מתנא וחיבין קדם יי
 למפלח ית פלחן משכן זמנא: ז ואת ובניך
 עמך תטרו ית כהנתכו לכל פתגם מדבחה
 ולמנו לפרכתא ותפלחון פלחן מתנא איחב
 ית כהנתהון וחלוני דיקרב יתקטל: ה ומליל
 יי עם אהרן ואנא הא יתבית לך ית
 מטרת אפרשותי לכל קודשא בני ישראל
 לך יתבתנון לרבו ולבניך לקים עלם: ט דין
 יהי לך מקדש קודשא מותר מן אשמתא כל
 קרבניהון לכל מנחתהון ולכל חטאתהון ולכל
 אשמהון די יתיבוו קדמי קדש קודשין די לך
 הוא ולבניך: י בקדש קודשין תכלגה כל
 דבורא ייכול יתה קודשא יהי לך: יא ודין לך
 אפרשות מתנתהון לכל ארמות בני ישראל
 לך יתבתנון ולבניך עמך לקים עלם כל דרכי
 בביתך ייכול יתה: יב כל טוב משח וכל טוב
 חמר ועבור ראשיתהון די יתנון קדם יי לך
 יתבתנון: יג בפורי כל די בארעהון די ייתונו
 קדם יי די לך יהי כל דרכי בביתך ייכלגה:

כ"ט

וערער כנגד אהרן על הכהונה, צא הכתוב ונתן לו כ"ד מתנות כהונה צביות
 מלח עולם, ולכן נסמכה פרשה זו לכאן: משמרת תרומתי. שאתה לריק
 לשמרן צטכרה: למשחה. לגדולה: (ט) מן האש. לאחר הקטרת האשים: כל
 קרבנם. כגון זחי שלמי לצור: מנחתם חטאתם ואשמים. כמשמעו: אשר
 ישיבו לי. זה גזל הגר: (י) בקדש הקדשים תאכלנו וגו'. למד על קדשי
 קדשים שאין נאכלין אלא צערה ולזכרי כהונה: (יא) תרומת מתנם. המורס
 מן החודה ומשלמים ואיל נזיר: לכל תנופות. שהרי חלו טעונו תנופה: כל
 טהור. ולא עמאים. דבר אחר כל טהור לרבות אשמו: (יג) ראשיתם. היא

ואמרכליו: (ד) זר לא יקרב אליכם. אתכם אני מזכיר על כך: (ה) ולא
 יהיה עוד קצף. כמו שהיה כבר, שנאמר כי ילא הקצף: (ו) לכם מתנה
 נתנים. יכול לעבודתכם של הדיוט, תלמוד לומר לה', כמו שמפורש למעלה,
 לשמור משמרת גזריו ואמרכליו: (ז) עבדת מתנה. צמטת נחתי לכס:
 (ח) ואני הנה נתתי לך. צשמחה. לשון שמחה הוא זה, כמו הנח הוא יולא
 לקראתך וראך ושמח בצבו, משל למלך שנתן שדה לאוהבו ולא כחז ולא חסם
 ולא העלה צערכיו. צא אחד וערער על השדה. ח"ל המלך כל מי שירצה יצא
 ויערער נגדך, כריני כותב וחותם לך ומעלה צערכיו, אף כאן לפי שצא קרח

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why do the laws of gifts to the priests appear here? (v. 8ff)
 RASHI: This could be compared to a King who gave a field to his
 friend but did not write a deed or sign anything, and did not record
 it in court. A person came and disputed the ownership of the field.
 The King said to him: "Anyone can come and contest your rights. So
 I will write a deed, sign it for you, and record it in court."

Likewise here, since Korach came and disputed Aharon's rights to
 the priesthood, the Torah gave him twenty-four priestly gifts as an
 everlasting covenant [as if preserved in] salt (v. 19). Therefore, this
 passage is placed here, next to [the incident with Korach].
 SFORNO: The gifts to the priests are a reward for their duties of
 guarding the Sanctuary, mentioned above (v.1-6).

- ³ They should safeguard your duties and the duties of the Tent, but they may not approach the holy vessels or the Altar, so that neither they nor you will die. ⁴ They should join you, and they should safeguard the duties of the Tent of Meeting for all the services of the Tent, and (you should make sure that) no outsider should come near you. ⁵ You should safeguard the duties of the Sanctuary and the duties of the Altar, so that there be no more (Divine) anger against the children of Israel (as there has been in the past).

⁶ Look! I have taken your brothers, the Levites, from among the children of Israel, and have given them to you as a gift to help (you with the work of) God, to perform the service in the Tent of Meeting.

⁷ You along with your sons should guard your priesthood in all matters concerning the Altar, and that which is behind the partition screen, and you should serve. I have given you the service of your priesthood as a gift. Any non-priest who approaches (to participate) will die.

🌀 GIFTS TO THE PRIESTS 🌀

18:8 **G**od said to Aharon: Look! I have given you My gift (offerings, which you must) guard (from ritual impurity). I have given you all the children of Israel's holy things as a sign of greatness, and to your sons as an eternal portion.

⁹ The following will be yours from the holiest of holies, (after) the fire(-offerings are put on the Altar):

- (A portion of) all the offerings (of the community)—their meal-offerings, their sin-offerings, their guilt-offerings, (and) what they return to Me (from the property of a deceased convert.* These gifts) will be holy of holies to you and to your sons.
- ¹⁰ You must eat (these gifts) in the holiest of places, (the Tabernacle courtyard).
- All male (priests) may eat (these offerings, which) will be holy to you.

¹¹ The following will be yours:

- The parts which are set aside as gifts from all the children of Israel's wave-offerings. I have given these to you, along with your sons and your daughters, as an eternal portion. Any ritually pure member of your household may eat it.
- ¹² I have given (terumah) to you, (which is) the first portion of the best oil and the best wine which (the Jewish people) give to God.
- ¹³ The first fruit of everything that grows in their Land, which they will bring to God, will be yours. Any ritually pure member of your household may eat of it.

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🌀 KORACH AND THE PRIESTLY GIFTS (v. 8)

In his commentary to verse 8, *Rashi* explains why the passage concerning priestly gifts appears here, after the account of Korach's rebellion: "Since Korach came and contested Aharon's rights to the priesthood, the Torah gave him twenty-four priestly gifts as an everlasting covenant (as if preserved in) salt." This in itself appears to be a sufficient explanation of the matter. What was the need for *Rashi* to cite the parable of "a king who gave his field to a friend"?

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi's parable comes to answer two questions: a.) Why, in addition to the priestly gifts, was it necessary for God to make a covenant with the priests; and furthermore, an "everlasting covenant (as if preserved in)

salt" (v. 19)? b.) Why was the miracle of Aharon's staff blossoming almonds not a sufficient rebuttal of Korach's dispute against Aharon?

These problems are resolved by the three details of *Rashi's* parable:

"I will write a deed"—A dispute of ownership is most likely to occur when a person is not found in his field, but at a distance away from it. A deed is thus particularly effective in proving ownership when a person is away from his field. This is analogous to the gifts, which are given to the priests when they are away from the Temple, i.e. the priestly gifts prove that the priesthood is relevant in all geographic locations.

"Sign it for you"—If a deed is not signed, it is conceivable that the original owner of the field will revoke his decision to give it away. The signature is thus analogous to the covenant which God made with the

*See 5:8 above, and *Rashi* *ibid*.

יד כל חרמא בישראל די לך יהי: טו כל פתח ולדא לכל בשרא די יקרבונו קדם יי באנשא ובבעירא יהי לך ברם מפרק תפרוק ית בוכרא דאנשא וית בוכרא דבעירא מסאבא תפרוק: טז ופרקנה מבר ירחא תפרוק בפרסנה בסף חמש סלעין בסלעי קודשא עשרין מעין הוא: יז ברם בוכרא דתורא או בוכרא דאמרא או בוכרא דעזא לא תפרוק קודשא אנון ית דמהון תורוק על מדקחא וית תרביהון תסק ררבו לאתקבלא ברענא קדם יי: יח ובשרהון יהי לך פחתיא דארמותא וכשוקא דימינא לך יהי: יט כל אפרשות קודשא די ופרשונו בני ישראל קדם יי יקבית לך ולבניך ולבנותך עמוך לקים עלם קים מלח עלם הוא קדם יי לך ולבניך עמוך: כ ואמר יי לאהרון בארעהון לא תחסן וחלק לא יהי לך ביניהון מתנן די יקבית לך אנון חלקך ואחסנתך בנו בני ישראל: כא ולבני לוי קא יקבית כל מעשרא בישראל לאחסנא חלק פלחנהון די אנון פלחין ית פלחן משפן זמנא: כב ולא יקרבונו עוד בני ישראל למשפן זמנא לקבלא חובא לממת: כג ופלחון לואי אנון ית פלחן משפן זמנא ואנון יקבלון חוביהון קים עלם לדרביכון ובנו בני ישראל לא יחסנון אחסנא: כד ארי ית מעשרא דבני ישראל די ופרשונו קדם יי אפרשותא יקבית ללואי לאחסנא על בן אמרית להון בנו בני

יהיה כל־טהור בביתך ואכלנו: יד כל־חרם בישראל לך יהיה: טו כל־פטר רחם לכל־בשר אשר־יקריבו ליהוה באדם ובבהמה יהיה־לך אך | פדה תפדה את בכור האדם ואת בכור־הבהמה הטמאה תפדה: טז ופרונו מבין־חדש תפדה בערךך בסף חמשת שקלים בשקל הקדש עשרים גרה הוא: יז אך בכור־שור או־בכור פֶּשֶׁב או־בכור עז לא תפדה קדש הם את־דמם תזרק על־המזבח ואת־חלבם תקטיר אשה לרית ניתח ליהוה: יח ובשרם יהיה־לך פתחה התנופה וכשוק תימין לך יהיה: יט כל | תרומת הקדשים אשר ירימו בני־ישראל ליהוה נתתי לך ולבניך ולבנותיך אתה לחק־עולם ברית מלח עולם הוא לפני יהוה לך ולזרעך אתה: כ ויאמר יהוה אל־אהרן בארצם לא תנחל וחלק לא־יהיה לך בתוכם אני חלקך ונחלתך בתוך בני ישראל: ס [שביעין] כא ולבני לוי הנה נתתי כל־מעשר בישראל לנחלה חלף עבדתם אשר־הם עבדים את־עבדת אהל מועד: כב ולא־יקרבו עוד בני ישראל אל־אהל מועד לשאת חטא למות: כג ועבד הלוי הוא את־עבדת אהל מועד והם ישאו עונם חקת עולם לדרתיכם ובתוך בני ישראל לא ינחלו נחלה: כד כי את־מעשר בני־ישראל אשר ירימו ליהוה תרומה נתתי ללויים לנחלה על־כן אמרתי להם בתוך בני ישראל לא

— כש״י —

צסוף ופרט צאמלע²: ברית מלח עולם. כרת זרית עם אהרן דזכר הצריא ומתקיים ומצריא את אחרים²: ברית מלח. כזרית הכרותה למלח שאינו מסריח לעולם: (כ) וחלק לא יהיה לך בתוכם. אף צצוה²: (כג) והם. הלויים ישאו עונם של ישראל, שעליהם להזכיר הזרים מגשת אליהם: (כד) אשר ירימו לה' תרומה. הכתוב קראו תרומה עד שיפריש ממנו

תרומה גדולה: (יח) כחזה התנופה וכשוק הימין. של שלמים שנאכלים לכהנים לנשיהם ולצניהם ולעזדיהם לשני ימים וליילה אחד, אף הכור נאכל לשני ימים וליילה אחד: לך יהיה. צא רבי עקיבא ולמד הוסיף לך הכתוב הויה אחרת, שלא תאמר כחזק ושוק של תודה, שאינו נאכל אלא ליום וליילה¹: (יט) כל תרומת הקדשים. מחיצתה של פרשה זו כללה צתחלה וכללה

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priests, never to revoke the priesthood from them, (as God had done in the past, with the firstborn—*Rashi to Bamidbar 3:12*).

“And record it in court”—Even if the person who gave the field to his friend does not revoke his decision, an outsider may come and dispute the field’s ownership, unless the transaction is recorded in court. This is

analogous to a situation where the service of priesthood is interrupted due to external factors, such as the destruction of the Temple. One might think that the end of Temple service would represent an end to the priesthood, so God says, “I have recorded it in court,” and it can never be annulled by the events of this world—“an eternal covenant (as if preserved in) salt.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 23, pp. 129-131)

- ¹⁴ Any segregated (field)* in Israel should be yours.
 - ¹⁵ Every firstborn of the womb of any creature, which they present to God, either a man or an animal, will be yours. But you must redeem the firstborn of a person (and return him to his father. Likewise,) you must redeem the firstborn of a ritually impure animal. ¹⁶ (A person) should be redeemed from the age of one month, at the (prescribed) value of five silver shekels, according to the shekel (system used for) holy (matters), which is twenty gerahs (per shekel).
 - ¹⁷ However, a firstborn ox, a firstborn sheep or a firstborn goat should not be redeemed, for they are holy. Their blood should be sprinkled on the Altar, and their fats should be burned as a fire-offering, as a pleasant aroma to God. ¹⁸ Their meat will be yours. It will be yours (and may be eaten by you and your family) like the breast of the wave-offering and the right thigh.
- ¹⁹ I have given to you, and to your sons and daughters along with you, all the gifts of the holy (offerings) which are set aside by the children of Israel for God as an eternal portion. It is an everlasting covenant (as if preserved in) salt before God, for you and your descendants along with you.

²⁰ God said to Aharon:

- You will not come to possess their Land, nor will you have a portion (of their spoils of war) along with them. I am your inheritance and portion among the children of Israel.

🕎 GIFTS TO THE LEVITES 🕎

SEVENTH
READING

- ²¹ And I have given all tithes of Israel to the descendants of Levi as an inheritance, in exchange for their service which they perform—the service of the Tent of Meeting.
- ²² The children of Israel must no longer approach the Tent of Meeting, so that they do not sin and die. ²³ The Levites should perform the service of the Tent of Meeting, and they will take responsibility for (anybody who approaches it). This is an eternal statute for your generations.
- (The Levites) will not come to possess (land) together with the children of Israel. ²⁴ For I have given the children of Israel's tithes, which they must set aside for God as a gift, to the Levites as an inheritance. Therefore, I told them that they will not inherit (land) together with the children of Israel.

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🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

How are the "Gifts to the Levites" (v. 21-24) connected with the rebellion of Korach, the theme of our Parsha?*

At first glance, Korach's rebellion appears to be hypocritical, for while he complained to Moshe and Aharon, "Why have you made yourselves elite over God's assembly" (16:3), Korach nevertheless sought to become the High Priest himself.

Chasidic thought reconciles this contradiction, by explaining that Korach sought a *different kind* of priesthood, one in which the priests remain aloof and removed from the people. "There is nothing wrong with there being a spiritual elite," Korach would argue, "but they should not be 'over God's assembly,' as leaders of the people."

Therefore, as a direct response to Korach's complaint, the *mitzvah* of gifts to the priests was given. For these gifts emphasize how the

priests and the people are *closely connected* with each other, to the extent that the people *support* the priests with gifts.

However, this still does not represent a total rebuttal of Korach's position. For, ultimately, the priestly gifts are God's property (or the priests's property) which is found in the hands of the people, and must be *returned* to the priest (see v. 12-13). So, on a deeper level, the idea that the people's *own* property is connected with the priests is still lacking.

Therefore the Torah now records the gifts to the Levites, in which the people's *own* property is given away in support of the Levites, demonstrating a much more fundamental connection between the people and their spiritual leaders.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 218ff.)

*See Vayikra 27:21. **The gifts to the priests (v. 8ff) are recorded, because "Korach came and disputed Aharon's rights to the priesthood" (Rashi to v. 8), but this reasoning would not apply here, since Korach himself was a Levite. At the literal level, the Levites' gifts appear here as a reward for their duties in guarding the sanctuary (cf. *Sforno* to v. 8).

יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יִחַסְנוּן אַחֲסָנָא: כה ומליל יי עם משה למימר: כו ועם לואי תמלל ותימר להון ארי תסבון מן בני ישראל ית מעשרא די יתבית לכוון מנהון באחסנתכון ותפרשון מנה אפרשותא קדם יי מעשרא מן מעשרא: כו ותתחשב לכוון אפרשותכון בעבורא מן אדרא וכפלאתא מן מעצרתא: כה כן תפרשון אף אתון אפרשותא קדם יי מכל מעשרתיכון די תסבון מן בני ישראל ותתנון מנה אפרשותא קדם יי לאהרן כהנא: כט מכל מתנתכון תפרשון ית כל אפרשותא דיי מכל שופרה ית מקדשה מנה: ל ותימר להון באפרשותכון ית שופרה מנה ויתחשב ללואי בעללת אדרא וכעללת מעצרתא: לא ותיכלון יתה בכל אתר אתון ואנש בתיכון ארי אנרא הוא לכוון חלף פלחנכון במשכן זמנא: לב ולא תקבלון עלוהי חובא באפרשותכון ית שופרה מנה וית קודשא דבני ישראל לא תחלוני ולא תמותון: פ פ פ

יִנְחִלוּ נִחְלָה: פ כה ויִדְבַר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: כו וְאֶל־הַלְוִיִּם תְּדַבֵּר וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם כִּי־תִקְחוּ מֵאֵת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַמַּעֲשֵׂר אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לָכֶם מֵאֵתְכֶם וְהִרְמַתֶּם מִמֶּנּוּ תְרוּמַת יְהוָה מֵעֵשֶׂר מִן־הַמַּעֲשֵׂר: כז וְנִחְשַׁב לָכֶם תְּרוּמַתְכֶם כַּדָּגוּן מִן־הַגֶּרֶן וּכְמֵלֵאָה מִן־תֵּיִקֵּב: כח כֵּן תִּרְיִמוּ גַם־אַתֶּם תְּרוּמַת יְהוָה מִכֹּל מַעֲשֵׂרְתֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר תִּקְחוּ מֵאֵת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְנָתַתֶּם מִמֶּנּוּ אֶת־תְּרוּמַת יְהוָה לְאַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן: כט מִכֹּל מַתְּנֵיכֶם תִּרְיִמוּ אֵת כָּל־תְּרוּמַת יְהוָה מִכֹּל־חֶלְבֹו אֶת־מִקְדָּשׁוֹ מִמֶּנּוּ: [מפסיר] ל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם בְּהִרְיַמְכֶם אֶת־חֶלְבֹו מִמֶּנּוּ וְנִחְשַׁב לְלוֹיִם כַּתְּבוּאֹת גֶּרֶן וְכַתְּבוּאֹת יִקֵּב: לא וְאִכְלֵתֶם אֹתוֹ בְּכָל־מְקוֹם אַתֶּם וּבֵיתְכֶם כִּי־שָׂכַר הוּא לָכֶם חֶלֶף עֲבַדְתֶּם בְּאַהֲל מוֹעֵד: לב וְלֹא־תִשְׂאוּ עָלֵיו חֶטָּא בְּהִרְיַמְכֶם אֶת־חֶלְבֹו מִמֶּנּוּ וְאֶת־קֹדְשֵׁי בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא תַחֲלִלוּ וְלֹא תָמוּתוּ: פ פ פ

צ"ה פסוקים, דניא"ל סימן.

רש"י

וקבל מעשרותיו קודם שיטול כהן תרומה גדולה מן הכרי, לריך להפריש הלוי מן המעשר תחלה אחד מחמשים לתרומה גדולה, ויחזור ויפריש תרומת מעשר²: (ב) בהרימכם את חלבו ממנו. לאחר שתרימו תרומת מעשר ממנו: ונחשב. המותר ללוים חולין גמורין: כתבואת גרן. לישראל, שלא תאמר הואיל וקראו הכתוב תרומה שנאמר כי את מעשר בני ישראל אשר ירימו לה' תרומה³, יכול יהא כולו אסור, תלמוד לומר ונחשב ללוים כתבואת גרן, מה של ישראל חולין, אף של לוי חולין⁴: (ג) בכל מקום. אפילו צבית הקצרות⁴: (ד) ולא תשארו עליו חטא וגו'. הא אם לא תרימו תשארו חטא: ולא תמותו. הא אם תחללו תמותו: חסלת פרשת קרח

תרומת מעשר: (כז) ונחשב לכם תרומתכם כדגון מן הגרן. תרומת מעשר שלכם אסורה לזרים ולתמאים וחייצין עליה מיתח וחומש כתרומה גדולה שנקראת ראשית דגן מן הגרון: וכמלאה מן היקב. כתרומת תירוש ויזכר הניעלת מן היקצים: מלאה. לשון זישול תבואה שנתמלאת: יקב. הוא הצור שלפני הגת שהיין יורד לתוכו. וכל לשון יקב חפירת קרקע הוא, וכן יקצי המלך¹, הוא יס אוקיינוס חפירה שחפר מלכו של עולם: (כח) כן תרימו גם אתם. כמו שישאל מרימים מגרנס ומיקציהם תרימו גם אתם ממעשר שלכם, כי הוא נחלתכם: (כט) מכל מתנתים תרימו את כל תרומת ה'. כתרומה גדולה הכתוב מדבר, שאם הקדים לוי את הכהן צרכי

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How does the *terumah* which the Levites set aside from their tithes resemble the *terumah* which the Israelites set aside from their crops? (v. 27)

RASHI: The *terumah* [offered to the priests by the Levites] which is separated from their tithes is forbidden to all non-priests and to ritually impure [priests]; a transgression renders a person liable for death [by the agency of heaven]; and compensation of an additional

fifth [payable to the priest], just as with *terumah gedolah* [the *terumah* set aside by Israelites].

● What does verse 32 teach us?

RASHI: "You will not bear a sin on account of it, etc."—but if you do not set aside *terumah* from it, you will bear a sin.

"[Do not violate the sanctity of that which has been made holy...] and you will not die"—but if you do violate its sanctity, you will die.

🕎 LEVITES' GIFTS TO THE PRIESTS 🕎

18:25 **G**od spoke to Moshe, saying: ²⁶ Speak to the Levites and tell them:

- When you take the tithes from the children of Israel—which I have given to you from them as your inheritance—you should set *terumah* aside from it for God, a tithe of the tithe. ²⁷ The *terumah* you set aside (will have the same laws as the *terumah* of the children of Israel set aside from) the grain of the threshing-floor and (the first ripe grapes), the produce of the vat. ²⁸ Likewise, you too must set aside *terumah* for God from all the tithes you take from the children of Israel, and you should give God's *terumah* to Aharon the priest.

- ²⁹ (The above applies to tithes that you receive which have already had *terumah* separated from them by the owner. But) from all your gifts (that you receive that have not had *terumah* separated) you should (first) set aside (the original owner's obligation of) *terumah* for God, from its choicest portion, that part of it which is to be consecrated (to the priest; and then you must separate your own obligation of *terumah* from the tithe afterwards).

MAFTIR

- ³⁰ Say to them: When you (do this and) separate its choicest part (as *terumah*), it will be considered for the Levites as (totally permissible) produce from the threshing-floor and as (totally permissible) produce from the vat. ³¹ You and your household may eat it anywhere, for it is your wage in exchange for your service in the Tent of Meeting.

- ³² You will not bear a sin on account of it, if you separate its choicest part from it.

- Do not violate the sanctity of that which has been made holy by the children of Israel, and you will not die.

HAFTARAH: KORACH - P.303. EREV ROSH CHODESH - P. 317. ROSH CHODESH - P. 319.

Maftir: Rosh Chodesh—p. 322.

TORAS MENACHEM

🕎 THE LEVITES' GIFTS TO THE PRIESTS (v. 32)

When an Israelite harvests his crops, he is obligated to separate an initial portion (*terumah gedolah*) for the priests, and a further portion, known as tithes (*ma'aser*), for the Levites. When the Levite receives his tithes, he is then required to make a further separation of *terumah* from his tithes (*terumas ma'aser*) for the priest, as we read in the current passage (v. 25-32).

Terumah gedolah may be eaten only by priests, and only when they are in a state of ritual purity.

In his commentary to verse 27, Rashi explains that *terumas ma'aser* shares exactly the same laws, “a transgression renders a person liable for death [by the agency of heaven] etc.”

The Torah then concludes: “You will not bear a sin on account of it, if you separate its choicest part from it. Do not violate the sanctity of that which has been made holy by the children of Israel, and you will not die” (v. 32).

This begs the question: What does verse 32 teach us that we do not already know from verse 27? And why does verse 32 mention two prohibitions: “a sin” and a “violation of sanctity”? (see Rashi)

THE EXPLANATION

While Rashi seems to suggest in his commentary to verse 27 that the laws of *terumah gedolah* and *terumas ma'aser* are the same, nevertheless, at the literal level, there is a very fundamental difference between them—and it is this difference which verse 32 comes to clarify.

The distinction between the two revolves around the following question:

Before *terumah* is separated, are the crops: a.) A mixture of holy *terumah* and ordinary crops, which are then separated apart by the act of taking *terumah*; or do we say that b.) The *terumah* only comes into existence as a holy entity after it is separated from the crops.

In the case of *terumah gedolah* taken from regular food, Rashi accepted the latter argument (“b”), since it is simpler to say, at the literal level, that *terumah* only comes into existence after there has been an act of separation, and not beforehand (see *Toras Menachem* to *Vayikra* 22:15).

However, in the case of *terumas ma'aser*, Rashi took the opposite stance, that *terumas ma'aser* actually exists and is mixed with the tithes before it is separated. This is because when an Israelite separates tithes, his act of separation is sufficient to bring two entities into existence: tithes and *terumas ma'aser* (later to be separated from the tithes by the Levite). Thus, after the Israelite's separation of tithes, the *terumas ma'aser* already exists and is mixed with the tithes. So if a Levite would fail to separate *terumas ma'aser* from his tithes he would commit two sins: i.) Since the *terumas ma'aser* actually exists, and it is the priests' property, he would be stealing from the priest. ii.) If he eats the tithe, he would violate the sanctity of the *terumas ma'aser* contained within it, for *terumah* may only be eaten by a priest.

It is these two points which are stressed by verse 32: “You will not bear a sin—of theft—on account of it, if you separate its choicest part from it. Do not violate the sanctity of that which has been made holy by the children of Israel—by eating it—and you will not die.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 38, p. 65ff.)



Parshas Korach contains 6 positive *mitzvos* & 3 prohibitions.

1. To guard the Temple [18:4].
2. Priests may not carry out the sacred tasks of Levites and vice versa [18:3].
3. A non-priest may not work at the Temple [18:4, 22].
4. Never to stop guarding the Temple [18:5].
5. To redeem a firstborn child [18:15].
6. Not to redeem a firstborn domesticated animal [18:17].
7. The Levite's service in the Temple [18:23].
8. To separate the First Tithe for the Levites [18:24].
9. Levites must give a tithe from their own tithe to the priests [18:26, 28].



parshas Chukas

פרשת חקת

🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

Parshas Chukas spans a period of nearly forty years. First, the *Parsha* discusses the laws of the red heifer, which were said on the first of Nisan (*Gitin* 60b), before the sin of the spies and Korach's rebellion. But then we jump almost forty years to discuss the passing of Miriam and Aharon, and the conquest of Sichon and Og.

This begs the question: What is the inner reason why the Torah chose to backtrack to a time before the sin of the spies, and then jump suddenly forward to the end of the Jewish people's journey in the desert?

To answer this problem, let us first turn to another issue that appears to be perplexing here. Near the end of this *Parsha*, Moshe sent spies to Ya'azer (21:32), echoing the sending of spies nearly forty years before. One would presume that after being sentenced to wander in the desert for almost forty years the Jewish people would have learned their lesson, and taken extreme precaution not to repeat the sin of the first spies. Yet we find that in our *Parsha* the first spies' key errors appear to have been repeated:

a.) The first spies deviated from the mission they were assigned. Similarly, in this *Parsha*, "Moshe sent men to spy out Ya'azer" (21:32), but instead of merely collecting information as Moshe had told them, they deviated from their mission, and "they captured its villages."

b.) In this *Parsha*, after conquering the land of Sichon, "the Jewish people settled in all the cities of the Amorites, in Cheshbon and all its villages" (21:25). Surely, settling

these lands rather than entering the Land of Israel resembled the sin of the first spies?

In truth, however, the very opposite was the case. The Jewish people of this second generation did not repeat the sin of the spies, but rather, they sought to correct it by showing *additional* enthusiasm about conquering the Land of Israel. Thus, when Moshe sent spies, they did not merely *survey* the land, but "they captured its villages." And while God had told them that they were going to conquer the Land of the seven nations (the Land of Canaan), they nevertheless desired to settle in the lands of Sichon and Og, for these were part of the *extended* borders of the Land of Israel promised to Avraham (*Bereishis* 15:18ff).

And this is the inner reason why our *Parsha* begins with a passage which was said *before* the sin of the spies. For through their enthusiasm to enter the Land recorded here, the Jewish people succeeded in *correcting* the sin of the spies, reaching their prior spiritual level that they had attained *before* the sin.

And this message is reflected too in the name of the *Parsha*. "Chukas" is a derivation of the Hebrew word *chakikah*, meaning "engraving." For here we read of the Jewish people's desire to inhabit the *entire* Land of Israel promised to Avraham, to the extent that a love of the land had totally permeated their hearts and minds, like letters engraved in stone.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Chukas* 5750)

א ומליל יי עם משה ועם אהרן למימר: ב דא גזרת אוריתא די פקיד יי למימר מלל עם בני ישראל ויסבון לך תורתא סמקתא שלמתא די לית בה מומא די לא סליק עלה נירא: ג ותתנון יתה לאלעזר כהנא ויפק יתה למברא למשריתא ויכוס יתה קדמוהי: ד ויסב אלעזר כהנא מדמה באצבעה ודי לקבל אפי משכן זמנא מדמה שבע זמנין: ה ויזקד ית תורתא לעינוהי ית משפח וית בשרה וית דמה על אוכלה יזקד: ו ויסב כהנא אעא דארזא ואזובא וצבע זהורי וירמי

יט א וידבר יהוה אל-משה ואל-אהרן לאמר: ב זאת חקת התורה אשר-צוה יהוה לאמר דבר א אל-בני ישראל ויקחו אליהם פרה אדמה תמימה אשר אין בה מום אשר לא-עלה עליה על: ג ונתתם אתה אל-אלעזר הכהן והוציא אתה אל-מתוין למחנה ושחט אתה לפניו: ד ולקח אלעזר הכהן מדמה באצבעו והזה אל-נבח פני אהל-מועד מדמה שבע פעמים: ה ושחף את-הפרה לעינוי את-ערה ואת-בשרה ואת-דמה על-פרשה ישראל: ו ולקח הכהן עין ארו ואזוב

כ"ט

בדמיונות³, שאם היו זה שתי שערות שחורות פסולה: (ג) אלעזר. מלכות בסגן: א אל מחוץ למחנה. חוץ לשלש מחנות: ושחט אותה לפניו. ז שוחט ואלעזר רואה: (ד) אל נובח פני אהל מועד. עומד במזרחו של ירושלים ומתכוין ורואה פתחו של היכל צעפת האת הדס:³

(3) זאת חקת התורה. לפי שהטעם ואומות העולם מונין את ישראל לומר מה המצוה הזאת ומח טעם יש בה¹, לפיכך כתב זה חזק, גזירה היא מלפני חין לך רשות להכריח² ויקחו אליך. לעולם היא נקראת על שמך, פרה שעשה משה במדבר: אדמה תמימה. שחפה תמימה

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why is the red heifer referred to as “the suprarational command of the Torah” ? (v. 2)

RASHI: Because the Satan and the nations of the world cause grief to the Jewish people, saying, “What is this commandment? What purpose does it have?” Therefore, the Torah uses the term *chukah* (suprarational command). [God says], “It is My personal decree. You do not have permission to ponder over it.”*

RAMBAN: The nations taunt the Jewish people about this *mitzvah*, for a similar reason to their derision about the scapegoat of Yom Kippur—because it is slaughtered outside the Holy Temple.

BE’ER MAYIM CHAYIM: The source of derision is the law that the pure person who performs the process becomes impure, and yet the impure person on whom the procedure is performed becomes pure. Of course, we do find such a phenomenon in nature too (for example, heat softens tin and yet will harden an egg), but one cannot bring proofs from nature to explain the *mitzvos* of God.

OHR HAChAYIM: Why does the verse use the expression, “This is the suprarational command of the Torah,” as if to say that this *mitzvah* is representative of the entire Torah?

Because the laws of ritual purity and impurity discussed here bring to light the effect of the Torah on the Jewish people. By receiving the Torah, the Jewish people became a holy people, and therefore they became an attraction for spiritual impurity. Thus, ironically, a Jewish body becomes ritually impure after the departure of the soul due to the body’s immense holiness which attracts impurity, rather like an empty jar of honey that attracts flies and insects.

An additional explanation: By writing, “This is the suprarational command of the Torah,” the verse is hinting that if a person observes this *mitzvah*, he is credited with observing the entire Torah. For observing a *mitzvah* which makes no sense at all demonstrates a person’s strong faith and commitment to observe all the other *mitzvos* too.

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 THE “SUPRARATIONAL COMMAND OF THE TORAH” (v. 2)

In his commentary to *Parshas Toldos*, Rashi defines *chukim* (suprarational commands): “Things which the evil inclination and the nations of the world argue against—such as eating pig and wearing *shatnez*—because they have no reason. Rather, they are decrees of the King; His statutes to His servants” (*Rashi to Bereishis 26:5*).

Likewise, in *Parshas Acharei* Rashi writes: “They are decrees of the King, against which the evil inclination argues, ‘Why should we keep them?’ And the nations of the world argue against them. Examples are eating pig, wearing *shatnez* and ritual purification through the sprinkling-water. Therefore the verse says, ‘I am God’—I have decreed upon you, and you have no right to exempt yourselves” (*Rashi to Vayikra 18:4*).

But here Rashi writes: “Satan and the nations of the world cause grief to the Jewish people, saying, ‘What is this commandment? What purpose does it have?’...[God says,] ‘It is My personal decree. You do not have permission to question it.’”

A number of differences are evident among Rashi’s comments:

a.) In the previous instances, the *evil inclination* was the source of opposition to observing the suprarational commands; whereas here the *evil inclination* is not mentioned at all, but rather, the opponents are the Satan and the nations of the world.

b.) On previous occasions the opponents to the suprarational commands had been “arguing against” them; but here Rashi writes that the Jewish people are “caused grief” by their opponent.

* Concerning the distinction between rational and suprarational commands, see *Classic Questions* and *Toras Menachem* to *Vayikra 20:22*.

🌀 THE RED HEIFER 🌀

19 **G**od spoke to Moshe and Aharon, saying: ² This is the suprarational command of the Torah which God commanded, saying: Tell the children of Israel:

- They should bring you a perfectly red heifer, which is devoid of blemish and has never had a yoke placed on it.
- ³ You should give it to Elazar the priest. He should take it outside (all three) camp(s) and (a non-priest may) slaughter it in his presence.
- ⁴ Elazar the priest should take some of its blood with his finger, (turn so that he faces) towards the front of the Tent of Meeting, and sprinkle it seven times.
- ⁵ The cow should then be burned in his presence. Its hide, its flesh, its blood, and its dung should be burned.

TORAS MENACHEM

c.) In our Parsha, Rashi writes, “You do not have permission to ponder over it,” whereas earlier he wrote, “you have no right to exempt yourselves.”

What is the reason for these changes, at the literal level?

WHY IS THIS MITZVAH SUPRARATIONAL?

A further question here is why the *mitzvah* of the red heifer is considered to be suprarational, a matter which Rashi apparently deemed to be self-understood.

Be’er Mayim Chayim writes that this *mitzvah* is irrational because it causes pure individuals to become impure and the impure to become pure. However, Rashi writes explicitly that there is a logic behind this point, since the red heifer is “an atonement for the Golden Calf...and just as the [Golden] Calf rendered everybody who dealt with it impure, likewise the [red] heifer renders all who deal with it impure” (Rashi, end of ch. 19, in the name of Moshe Hadarshan).

Why, then, is this *mitzvah* considered to be suprarational?

🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

“THIS IS THE SUPRARATIONAL COMMAND OF THE TORAH” (v. 2)

According to Chasidic thought, the *mitzvah* of the red heifer is referred to as “the suprarational command of the Torah,” because it conveys a message which is fundamental to Torah life.

The spiritual root of all existence—Chasidus explains—is rhythmic, and not static. Just as man’s heart must continually contract and then relax, and his lungs must always inhale then exhale, so too, the universe’s spiritual life-force also fluctuates in a constant cycle of “emanation” and “withdrawal.” For, metaphysically speaking, everything is “alive,” being brought into existence *constantly* by God, and thus its inner core is pulsating energy.

The kabbalists describe this cycle as “*ratsu* followed by *shuv*,” which literally means “running” towards spirituality, and subsequently “returning” to the lower reality. In our own lives, *ratsu* is the desire for transcendence and, in its most extreme form, the yearning to escape from corporeal existence and merge with Divinity. But generally speaking, it is the drive to elevate the world by stretching it beyond its material trappings, in an attempt to raise it closer to God. During study, *ratsu* expresses itself as the drive to explore and innovate new ideas, never remaining content with one’s present knowledge. In practical observance, it ensures that a person does not stagnate at his present level, always seeking growth in *mitzvah* observance.

But, ultimately, *ratsu* has a certain egotistical quality. For all forms of love, even the love of God, express a *personal* desire. So if it is left to its own devices, *ratsu* may indeed fulfill the *person’s* desire to

leave the world and come closer to God; but God desires that man should find his destiny here, in the lowly, physical world where he was created. So while *ratsu* has a positive effect, in that it lifts a person’s perception and aspirations above the mundane, it must be coupled with *shuv*: A sense of responsibility and discipline that causes a person to redirect his ambitions back down into this world.

Shuv leads a person to draw Godliness downwards into the world, through an emphasis on the practical. It is a spiritual “pause,” before the next ascendancy will begin, during which one *internalizes* the mystical heights that were reached, making sure that they become part of one’s nature and character. In study, *shuv* represents bringing one’s initial questions to a final resolution, making the knowledge real and concrete. Overall, it is a disciplined commitment to a Torah life motivated by an acceptance of the yoke of the commandments.

The red heifer is the suprarational command “of the Torah,” a central theme of Torah life, because it exhibits a combination of both *ratsu* and *shuv*. First the cow is completely burned, representing the passionate ascendancy of *ratsu*; but then its ash is used to make sprinkling-water, resembling *shuv*, since water flows downwards until it settles in a flat place.

The lesson: Just as both fire and water are crucial in preparing a red heifer, the dynamic tension between *ratsu* and *shuv* is the very essence of our relationship with God, a principle of the Torah.

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Ki Sisa, Parshas Parah, 5750)

לגו יקידת תורתא: ז ויצבע לבושוהי כהנא ויסחי בשרה במינא ובתר כן ייעול למשריתא ויהי מסאב כהנא עד רמשא: ח ודמוקד יתה יצבע לבושוהי במינא ויסחי בשרה במינא ויהי מסאב עד רמשא: ט ויכנוש גבר דכי ית קטמא דתורתא ויצנע למברא למשריתא באתר דכי ותחי לכנשתא דבני ישראל למטרא למי אדיותא חטאתא היא: י ויצבע דכניש ית קטמא דתורתא ית לבושוהי ויהי מסאב עד רמשא ותחי לבני ישראל ולגיוזיא דיתגרוון ביניהון לקים עלום: יא דיקרב במיתא לכל נפשא דאנשא ויהי מסאב שבעא יומין: יב הוא ידו עלוהי ביומא תליתאה וביומא שביעאה ידכי ואם לא ידו עלוהי ביומא תליתאה וביומא שביעאה לא ידכי: יג כל דיקרב במיתא בנפשא דאנשא די ימות ולא ידו עלוהי ית משכנא דיי סאב וישתצי אנשא ההוא מישראל ארי מי אדיותא לא אודריקו עלוהי מסאב יהי עוד סאובתה בה: יד דא אורייתא אנש ארי ימות במשכנא כל דעלל למשכנא וכל די

ושני תולעת והשליך אל תוך שרפת הפרה: ז וכבם בגדיו הכהן ורחץ בשרו במים ואחר יבא אל המחנה וטמא הכהן עד הערב: ח והשרף אתה יכבם בגדיו במים ורחץ בשרו במים וטמא עד הערב: ט ואסף א איש טהור את אפר הפרה והניח מחוץ למחנה במקום טהור והיתה לעדת בני ישראל למשמרת למי נדה חטאת הוא: י וכבם האסף את אפר הפרה את בגדיו וטמא עד הערב והיתה לבני ישראל ולגור הגור בתוכם לחקת עולם: יא הנגע במת לכל נפש אדם וטמא שבעת ימים: יב הוא יתחטא בו ביום השלישי וביום השביעי יטהר ואם לא יתחטא ביום השלישי וביום השביעי לא יטהר: יג כל הנגע במת בנפש האדם אשר ימות ולא יתחטא את משכן יהוה טמא ונכרתה הנפש ההוא מישראל כי מי נדה לא זרק עליו טמא יהיה עוד טמאתו בו: יד זאת התורה אדם פי ימות באהל כל הבא אל האהל וכל אשר

כ"ט

למשמרת³: למי נדה. למי הזייה, כמו וידו אבן צד⁴, לידות את קרנות הגוים⁵, לשון זריקה: חטאת הוא. לשון חטוי כפשוטו, ולפי הלכותיו קראה הכתוב חטאת, לומר שהיא כקדשים להאסר בהנאה⁶: (יב) הוא יתחטא בו. באפר הפרה (ס"ח הזה): (יג) במת בנפש. ואי זה מת, של נפש האדם, להוליך נפש צהובה, שאין עומאחה לריכב הזאה (ולא עומאחה שזעה). דבר אחר בנפש זו רביעית דס'⁷: את משכן ה' טמא. אם נכנס לעזרה אפילו בצבילה בלא הזאה שלישי ושביעי: עוד טמאתו בו. אף על פי שצביל (יד) כל הבא

(ז) אל המחנה. למחנה שכנינו, שאין טמא משולח חוץ לשתי מחנות אלא ז' ובעל קרי ומלועז¹: וטמא הכהן עד הערב. סרסכו ודרשכו וטמא עד הערב ואחר יבוא אל המחנה: (ט) והניח מחוץ למחנה. לשלשה חלקים מתחלקת, אחד נתן צבר המשחה, ואחד מתחלק לכל המשמרות, ואחד נתן צחיל². זה של משמרות היה חוץ לעזרה לטול ממנו צני העיירות וכל הצריכין להטבר, וזה שצבר המשחה כהנים גדולים לפרות אחרות מקדשין הימנה, וזה שצחיל נתון למשמרת מגזרת הכתוב, שנאמר והיתה לעדת בני ישראל

TORAS MENACHEM

And finally, what problem was troubling *Rashi* here that prompted him to make his comments? Surely it was not the definition of the term *chok* (suprational command), for this was clarified by *Rashi* on numerous other occasions, as cited above.

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi was troubled by the expression, "This is *the* suprational command of the Torah," which suggests that the red heifer is the *only* suprational command in the entire Torah, and this is clearly not the case.

What the Torah must be saying, concluded *Rashi*, is that there are two categories of *chukim*, and the red heifer is unique *even among the other suprational commands*. While the other *chukim* (such as the prohibitions against eating pig or wearing *shatnez*) defy comprehension, they are nevertheless not *completely* incomprehensible. In fact, even sprinkling the water containing the ashes of the red heifer (which *Rashi* refers to in *Parshas Acharei*) is somewhat understood, for we know from

the case of the *mikvah* (ritual bath) that impurity is removed by water, and *this* is not referred to by *Rashi* in any place as suprational.

Rather, it is the *ritual slaughter and offering* of the red heifer which appears to be totally irrational. The red heifer could not be considered as an animal sacrifice, as it was not offered on the Altar but was prepared entirely outside the camp, in contrast to all other sacrifices which must be offered *inside* the Holy Temple. But, on the other hand, it does seem to be a holy offering (and not merely a means of preparing ashes for the sprinkling-water), since: a.) It must be offered by the deputy High Priest (*Rashi* to v. 3); b.) who must face "towards the front of the Tent of Meeting" (v. 4); and c.) *Rashi* himself affirms, "It is like other holy offerings" (v. 9). So the red heifer is a paradox: It has many signs of being a genuine animal sacrifice to God, and yet it may *not* be offered in the Holy Temple!

(At first glance, the red heifer does not appear to be unique in this respect, as we find that the scapegoat of Yom Kippur is also killed outside the Temple (as *Ramban* notes—see *Classic Questions* to v. 2).

- ⁶ *The priest should take a piece of cedar wood, hyssop, and crimson wool, and cast them into the burning cow.*
- ⁷ *The priest should immerse his garments and wash his body in (mikvah) water. The priest will remain impure until the evening, and then he may enter the (inner) camp(s).*
- ⁸ *The one who burns (the cow) should immerse his clothes in (mikvah) water and ritually purify his body in (mikvah) water, and then he will remain ritually impure until the evening.*
- ⁹ *A ritually pure person should gather the cow's ashes and (divide them into three portions. He should leave one portion in the Temple for the priests working there), place (another on the Mount of Olives) outside the camp in a ritually pure place (for priests preparing the red cow), and (the third portion) should be (placed just outside the wall of the Temple courtyard) as a secure reminder for the congregation of the children of Israel.*
- *(The ashes are to be added to the) sprinkling-water, (which is used) for ritual purification.*
- ¹⁰ *The one who gathers the cow's ashes should immerse his clothes (in a mikvah), and he will remain ritually impure until the evening.*
- *This is an everlasting law (both) for the children of Israel and for the convert who lives with them.*

🌀 RITUAL IMPURITY FROM A CORPSE 🌀

- ¹¹ *Anyone touching the corpse of a human being will become ritually impure for seven days.*
- ¹² *On the third and seventh days, he should ritually purify himself with (the ashes of the red cow), in order to become ritually pure. But if he does not sprinkle himself with it on the third and seventh days, he will not become ritually pure.*
- ¹³ *Anyone who touches the corpse of a human being that died and does not ritually purify himself (and then enters the Temple courtyard) has made God's Tabernacle ritually impure, so his soul will be cut off from Israel.*
- *Being that the sprinkling-water was not sprinkled on him, he remained ritually impure, and (even if he immersed in the mikvah) his ritual impurity remains with him.*

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However, the two cases are not entirely similar, since: a.) Some of the procedures concerning the scapegoat are performed inside the Temple,

[such as its selection via lottery (*Vayikra* 16:7-10), and the confession of the High Priest that is made upon it (*ibid.* v. 21)]. All the procedures of the red heifer, however, are done *entirely* outside the Temple. b.) The reason why the scapegoat is taken outside the Temple is documented clearly in scripture—to “carry upon itself all their sins to an uninhabited land” (*ibid.* v. 22). No explanation is offered, however, for why the red heifer should be offered specifically *outside* the Temple, which is *totally irrational* for a holy offering.)

🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

“A SECURE REMINDER...” (v. 9)

The third portion of ashes from the red heifer offered by Moshe were kept as “a secure reminder for the congregation” (v. 9).

One of the lessons here is that when a person dedicates himself to reaching out and helping others (the “purification” of others), he may come to neglect his own spiritual standing. To prevent such a mistake, the Torah teaches us to keep a portion of the ashes of the red heifer as a “secure reminder”—that it is crucial to dedicate some time to oneself as well as to others.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 4, pp. 1060-1)

THE RED HEIFER AND THE EVIL INCLINATION

Based on the above, we can now explain why *Rashi* did *not* write that the *mitzvah* of the red heifer is criticized by the “evil inclination,” as he states in the case of other suprarational commands:

It is quite understandable that God, Who cannot be grasped by the human mind, may issue commands that likewise cannot be grasped. What is difficult to understand is a *mitzvah* that has *both* rational and irrational elements. In such a case, the evil inclination (or the nations) may argue: “Why would God give you a command that appears to make

במשכנא יהי מסאב שבועא יומין: טו וכל מן דחספ פתיח דלית מגופת שניע מקף עלוהי מסאב הוא: טז וכל די יקרב על אפי תקלא בקמל חרבא או במיתא או בנרמא דאנשא או בקברא יהי מסאב שבועא יומין: יז ויסבון לדמסאב מעפר יקרת הפאתא ויתנון עלוהי מי מבוע למן: יח ויסב אובא ויטבול במיא גבר דכי ויהי על משכנא ועל כל מניא ועל נפשאתא די הוו תמן ועל דיקרב בנרמא או בקמלא או במיתא או בקברא: יט ויהי דכיא על מסאבא ביומא תליתאה וביומא שביעאה וידכנה ביומא שביעאה ויצבע לבושוהי ויסחי במיא וידכי ברמשא: כ ויגבר די יסתאב ולא יהי עלוהי וישתצי אנשא ההוא מנו קהלא ארי ית מקדשא דין סאב מי אדיוותא לא אנדריקו עלוהי מסאב הוא: כא ותהי להון לקים עלם ודידי מי אדיוותא יצבע לבושוהי ודיקרב במי אדיוותא יהי מסאב עד רמשא: כב וכל די יקרב בה מסאבא יהי מסאב ואנש דיקרב בה יהי מסאב עד רמשא: כ ואתו בני ישראל כל פנשאתא

באהל יטמא שבועת ימים: טו וכל כלי פתוח אשר אין צמיד פתיל עליו טמא הוא: טז וכל אשר יגע על-פני השדה בחלל-חרב או במת או-בעצם אדם או בקבר יטמא שבועת ימים: יז ולקחו לטמא מעפר שרפת החטאת ונתן עליו מים חיים אל-כלי: [שני] יח ולקח אזוב וטבל במים איש טהור והזה על-האהל ועל-כל-הכלים ועל-הנפשות אשר היו-שם ועל-הנגע בעצם או בחלל או במת או בקבר: יט והזה הטהר על-הטמא ביום השלישי וביום השביעי וחתאו ביום השביעי וכבס בגדיו ורחץ במים וטהר בערב: כ ואיש אשר יטמא ולא יתחטא ונכרתה הנפש ההוא מתוך הקהל כי את-מקדש יהוה טמא מי נדה לא-זרק עליו טמא הוא: כא והיתה להם לחקת עולם ומזה מי-הנדה יכבס בגדיו והנגע במי הנדה יטמא עד-הערב: כב וכל אשר יגע בו הטמא יטמא והנפש הנגעת תטמא עד-הערב: פ כ א ויבאו

כ"ט

משמע והלכותיה. ומדרש אגדה העסקתי מיסודו של ר' משה דרשן וזכו: (3) ויקחו אליך. משלכם כשם שהם פרקו זמני הזבח לעגל משלכם כך יביאו זו לכפרה משלכם: פרה אדמה. משל לזן שפחה שטיף פלטין של מלך. אמרו חזק חמו ותקנה הלאה, כך חזק חמו ותכפר על העגל: אדמה. על שם אס יאדימו כחולע,⁸ שהחטא קרוי אדום:⁹ תמימה. על שם ישראל שבו תמימים ונעשו צו צעלי מומין, חזק זו ותכפר עליכם ויחזרו לתמותם:¹⁰ לא עלה עליה עול. כשם שפרקו מעליהם עול שמים:¹¹ (ג) אל אלעזר הכהן. כשם שנקבלו על אהרן, שהוא כהן, לעשות העגל. ולפי שאהרן עשה את העגל לא נעשית עבודה זו על ידו, שאין קטיגור נעשה סיגור:¹² (ד) ושרף את הפרה. כשם ששרף העגל:¹³ (ו) עץ ארז ואזוב ושני תולעת. שלשה מינין הללו כנגד שלשת אלפי איש שנפלו צעגל. וארז הוא הגזר מכל האילנות ואזוב נמוך מכולם, סימן שהגזר שנתגאה וחסא, ישפיל את עצמו כאזוב ותולעת ויתכפר לו:¹⁴ (ט) למשמרת. כמו שפשע העגל שמור לדורות לפורענות, שאין לך פקודה שאין צה מפקודת העגל, שנאמר וזיוס פקדי

אל האהל. צעוד שהמת צחוכו: (טו) וכל בלי פתוח. צכלי חרס הכחוצ מדבר, שאין מקבל טומאה מגזו אלא מחוכו, לפיכך אס אין מגופת למידתו פחולה עליו יפה צחצור, טמא הוא, הא אס יש למיד פתיל עליו טהור:¹⁵ פתיל. לשון מחוצר צלשון עברי, וכן נפחולי אלהים נפתלתי,¹⁶ נתחצרתי עם אחרתי: (טז) על פני השדה. רבותינו דרשו לרבות גולל ודופק.¹⁷ ופשוטו על פני השדה, שאין שם אהל, מטמא המת שם צנגיעה: (יט) וחתאו ביום השביעי. הוא גמר טהרתו: (כ) ואיש אשר יטמא וגו'. אס נאמר מקדש למכ נאמר משכן וכי¹⁸ כדאיתא צצצועות:¹⁹ (כא) ומזה מי הנדה. רבותינו אמרו²⁰ שהמזה טהור, וזה צה ללמד שהנושא מי חטאת טמא טומאה חמורה לטמא צגדים שעליו, משא"כ צונגע. וזה שהולאו צלשון מזה, לומר לך, שאין מטמאין עד שיכא צהן שיעור הזה: והנגע וגו' יטמא. ואין טעון כזום צגדים: (כב) וכל אשר יגע בו. הטמא הזה שנטמא צמת יטמא: והנפש הנגעת. צו צטמא מת: טטמא עד הערב. מכאן למדנו שהמת אצי אצות הטומאה והנוגע צו אצ הטומאה ומטמא אדם, זהו פירושה לפי

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sense, and yet it also does not make sense? Does God want you to relate to this command or not? Why has He made it so confusing?" And this argument is so strong that a person might want to reject the *mitzvah* entirely, so Rashi stresses (in *Parshas Acharei*), "you have no right to exempt yourselves."

However, the slaughter and offering of the red heifer outside the Temple makes no sense at all. Hence, the evil inclination is lacking a solid argument, because everyone understands that God's command is likely not to make any sense. The only difficulty that might arise is ridicule from

others, as Rashi writes: "Satan and the nations of the world cause grief to the Jewish people, saying, 'What is this commandment? What purpose does it have?'" But since there is no real challenge against the observance of this *mitzvah*, Rashi was not concerned that a person might "exempt himself" totally from it. Rather, Rashi writes that to overcome the taunting of others, one merely needs to bear in mind that it is "My personal decree," and therefore it is unnecessary to ponder the meaning of this *mitzvah* ("You do not have permission to ponder over it"). It should be carried out simply because it is the will of God.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, p. 123ff.)

- ¹⁴ This is the law regarding a man that dies in a tent:
 - Anyone entering the tent and anything in the tent will be ritually impure for seven days.
 - ¹⁵ Any open vessel which has no seal fastened around it(s cover) becomes ritually impure.
- ¹⁶ Anyone who is in an open field and touches a person who was killed by the sword, or a corpse, or a human bone or a grave will be ritually impure for seven days.
- ¹⁷ For the ritually impure person:
 - They should take some of the ashes of the burnt purification offering (of the red cow), and place them in a vessel (filled) with spring water.
 - ¹⁸ A ritually pure person should take hyssop, dip it into the water and sprinkle it on the tent, on all the vessels, and on the people who were in it, and on anyone who touched the bone, the killed person, the corpse, or the grave.
 - ¹⁹ The ritually pure person should sprinkle (the ash-water) on the ritually impure person on the third day and on the seventh day.
 - On the seventh day he will become ritually pure. (But first) he should immerse his clothes and wash (himself) in (mikvah) water, and he will become ritually pure in the evening.
- ²⁰ If a person becomes ritually impure and does not purify himself (and enters the Sanctuary), his soul will be cut off from the congregation, because he has made God's Sanctuary ritually impure. For he remained ritually impure since the sprinkling-waters were not sprinkled upon him.
- ²¹ This will be an eternal suprarational law: One who (carries) the sprinkling-waters should immerse his clothes (in a mikvah), and one who comes into contact with the sprinkling-waters will (only) be ritually impure until the evening.
- ²² Whatever a ritually impure person touches will become ritually impure. Anyone touching him will be ritually impure until the evening.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How many red heifers were prepared throughout history?

RAMBAM: Nine red heifers were prepared from the time this *mitzvah* was given until the destruction of the Second Temple. The first was prepared by Moshe, the second by Ezra, and there were seven from Ezra until the destruction of the Temple. The tenth will be made by King Mashiach—May he be speedily revealed! Amen, may this be Your Will! (*Mishneh Torah, Laws of the Red Heifer* 3:4)—See *The Last Word*.

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🕎 The Last Word 🕎

The fact that **Rambam** mentions the tenth red heifer that “will be made by King Mashiach” in his legal Code (the *Mishneh Torah*) is understood, since *Rambam* included in his Code many laws that will only be applicable in the future era. What is difficult to comprehend is why he concluded this law with a prayer: “May he be speedily revealed! Amen, may this be Your Will!” Surely a legal Code is not the place for the author to record his personal emotions and feelings, or to lapse into prayerful wishes?

It could be argued, however, that with his “prayer,” *Rambam* did teach us a point of Jewish Law—or, to be precise, *three* points.

Judaism requires a person: 1) Not merely to *believe* (intellectually) in Mashiach, but also to *actively await* and *yearn* (emotionally) for his coming (*Laws of Kings* 11:1). 2) Inevitably, feeling this void will lead a

person to *pray* for Mashiach's coming, just as he prays for any other thing that is lacking in his life. 3) And being that the requirement to believe in Mashiach is in force at all times, it follows that likewise, a person must yearn and pray for Mashiach *constantly*.

Therefore: 1) *Rambam* included *prayerful wishes* here in his *legal* Code to indicate that awaiting Mashiach must not be only expressed intellectually, but emotionally too. 2) He stresses that Mashiach should come “speedily,” to indicate Mashiach's coming should be a *personal, heartfelt* desire. 3) He recorded the above principles, not in his codification of the laws concerning Mashiach, but here *out of context*, to indicate that one must express a yearning for Mashiach *constantly*, whatever the context of one's discussion happens to be.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, p. 131ff.)

למדברא דצן בְּרַחַם קְדָמָה וַיִּתֵּב עִמָּא
 בְּרַחֵם וּמִיתַת תַּמֶּן מְרִים וְאַתְקַבְּרַת תַּמֶּן:
 ב וְלֹא הָיָה מַיָּא לְכַנְשֵׁתָא וְאַתְקַבְּשׁוּ עַל מִשָּׁה
 וְעַל אַהֲרֹן: ג וַיִּנְצַץ עִמָּא עִם מִשָּׁה וְאַמְרוּ
 לְמִימְר וְלִנְי דְּמִתְנָא בְּמוֹתָא דְּאַחְנָא קְדָם יי:
 ד וְלִמָּא אַעֲלִיתוּן יַת קְהֵלָא דִּי לְמַדְבְּרָא הַדִּין
 לְמִמַּת תַּמֶּן אֲנַחְנָא וּבְעִירְנָא: ה וְלִמָּא
 אִסְקִיתוּנָא מִמְצָרִים לְאַיְתָאָה יִתְנָא לְאַתְרָא
 בִּישָׂא הַדִּין לֹא אַתְר בְּשַׁר לְבֵית זְרַע וְאַף לֹא
 תֵּאֲנִין וְנוֹפְגִין וְרַמְזִין וּמַיָּא לֵית לְמִשְׁתֵּי:
 ו וְעַל מִשָּׁה וְאַהֲרֹן מִן קְדָם קְהֵלָא לְתַרְע
 מִשְׁכֹּן וּמְנָא וּנְפְלוּ עַל אִפְסִיהוּן וְאַתְגְּלִי יִקְרָא
 דִּי לְהוּן: ז וּמְלִיל יי עִם מִשָּׁה לְמִימְר: ח סָב
 יַת חֲטָרָא וְאַכְנַשׁ יַת כְּנִשְׁתָּא אֶת וְאַהֲרֹן
 אַחֲוֵד וְתַמְלְלוּן עִם כִּיפָא לְעִינֵיהוּן וַיִּתֵּן מוֹהֵי
 וְתַפֵּק לְהוּן מַיָּא מִן כִּיפָא וְתַשְׁקִי יַת כְּנִשְׁתָּא
 וַיִּת בְּעִירְהוּן: ט וְנִסְיַב מִשָּׁה יַת חֲטָרָא
 מִן קְדָם יי כְּמָא דִּי פְקַדְהּ: י וְאַכְנִישׁוּ מִשָּׁה
 וְאַהֲרֹן יַת קְהֵלָא לְקְדָם כִּיפָא וְאַמְר לְהוּן
 שְׁמַעוּ כְּעַן סַרְבְּנִיא הַמֶּן כִּיפָא הַדִּין נַפֵּק לְכוּן
 מַיָּא: יא וְאַרְם מִשָּׁה יַת יְדָה וּמַחָא יַת כִּיפָא
 בְּחֲטָרָה תִּרְתִּין וּמְנִין וּנְפְקוּ מַיָּא סְגִיָּא
 וּשְׁתִּיאַת כְּנִשְׁתָּא וּבְעִירְהוּן: יב וְאַמְר יי
 לְמִשָּׁה וְלְאַהֲרֹן חֲלַף דִּי לֹא הִמְנַתוּן בְּמִימְרֵי

בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל כָּל־הָעֵדָה מְדַבְּרֵ־צֶן בְּחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן וַיֵּשֶׁב הָעָם
 בְּקִדְשׁ וַתָּמַת שָׁם מְרִים וַתִּקְבַּר שָׁם: ב וְלֹא־הָיָה מַיִם לָעֵדָה
 וַיִּקְהָלוּ עַל־מִשָּׁה וְעַל־אַהֲרֹן: ג וַיִּרְבַּ הָעָם עִם־מִשָּׁה וַיֹּאמְרוּ
 לְאֹמֶר וְלוֹ גֹּועֵנוּ בְּגֹועַ אַחֲינוּ לְפָנֶי יְהוָה: ד וְלִמָּה הֵבֵאתֶם
 אֶת־קְהֵל יְהוָה אֶל־הַמְּדַבֵּר הַזֶּה לָמוֹת שָׁם אֲנַחְנוּ וּבְעִירְנוּ:
 ה וְלִמָּה הֵעֲלִיתֵנוּ מִמְצָרִים לְהֵבִיא אֹתָנוּ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם הַרְע
 הַזֶּה לֹא א מְקוֹם זְרַע וַתֵּאֲנָה וְנָפְן וְרַמְזִין וּמַיִם אֵין לְשִׁתּוֹת:
 ו וַיִּבֹּא מִשָּׁה וְאַהֲרֹן מִפְּנֵי הַקְּהָל אֶל־פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וַיִּפְּלוּ
 עַל־פְּנֵיהֶם וַיִּרְא כְבוֹד־יְהוָה אֲלֵיהֶם: פ [שלישין] וּשְׁנֵי כִשְׁהֵן מְחוּבְרִין
 וַיִּדְבַּר יְהוָה אֶל־מִשָּׁה לְאֹמֶר: ח קַח אֶת־הַמַּטֵּה וְהַקְּהָל אֶת־
 הָעֵדָה אֹתָהּ וְאַהֲרֹן אַחֲוֵד וּדְבַרְתֶּם אֶל־הַסֵּלַע לְעִינֵיהֶם וְנָתַן
 מִימּוֹ וְהוֹצֵאתָ לָהֶם מַיִם מִן־הַסֵּלַע וְהִשְׁקִיתָ אֶת־הָעֵדָה
 וְאַתְּ־בְעִירָם: ט וַיִּקַּח מִשָּׁה אֶת־הַמַּטֵּה מִלְּפָנֶי יְהוָה כַּאֲשֶׁר
 צִוָּהוּ: י וַיִּקְהָלוּ מִשָּׁה וְאַהֲרֹן אֶת־הַקְּהָל אֶל־פְּנֵי הַסֵּלַע וַיֹּאמְרוּ
 לָהֶם שְׁמַעוּ־נָא הַמְּרִים הַמֶּן־הַסֵּלַע הַזֶּה נוֹצֵיא לָכֶם מַיִם:
 יא וַיָּרֶם מִשָּׁה אֶת־יָדוֹ וַיַּךְ אֶת־הַסֵּלַע בְּמַטְּהוּ פַּעַמִּים וַיִּצְאוּ
 מַיִם רַבִּים וַתִּשְׁתַּ הָעֵדָה וּבְעִירָם: ס יב וַיֹּאמְר יְהוָה אֶל־מִשָּׁה

כש"י

שם דצר הוא, כמו צמיתת אחינו, ולא יתכן לפרשו כשמתו אחינו, שאם כן
 היה לו להנקד בְּגֹועַ: (ח) ואת בעירם. מכאן שחם הקצ"ב על ממונס של
 ישראל³: (י) ויקהלו וגו'. זה אחד מן המקומות שהחזיק מועט את המרובצ⁴:
 המן הסלע הזה נוציא. לפי שלא היו מכירין אותו, לפי שהלך הסלע וישב
 לו צין הסלעים, כשנסחלק הצאר, והיו ישראל אומרים להם מה לכם מאיזה
 סלע חוליו לנו מים, לכך אמר להם המורים סרצנים, לשון יוני שוטים,
 מורים את מוריהם, המן הסלע הזה שלא נטווינו עליו נוציא לכם מים⁵:
 (יא) פעמים. לפי שצראשונה לא הוציא אלא טיפין, לפי שלא זוכ המקום
 לזכותו אלא וזרתם אל הסלע, והמה דצרו אל סלע אחר ולא הוציא, אמרו
 שמה לריך לזכות כצראשונה, שנאמר והכית צור⁷, וזדמן להם אותו סלע

ופקדתי וגו'. וכשם שהעגל טימא כל העוסקין בו, כך פרה ממטאה כל
 העוסקין בה, וכשם שנטהרו צאפרו, שנאמר ויזר על פני המים וגו', כך
 ולקחו לטמא מעפר שריפת החטאת וגו': (ב) כל העדה. עדה השלמה, שכבר
 מתו מהי מדצר ואלו פרשו לחיים¹: ותמת שם מרים. למה נסמכה מיתת
 מרים לפרשת פרה אדומה, לומר לך מה קרצנות מכפרין (ס"א כמו שפרה
 אדומה מכפרת) אף מיתת לדיקים מכפרת²: ותמת שם מרים. אף היא
 צנשיקה מתה ומפני מה לא נאמר צה על פי ה', שאינו דרך כבוד של מעלה².
 וצארכן נאמר על פי ה', בצלה מסעי³: (ג) ולא היה מים לעדה. מכאן שכל
 ארצעים שנה היה להם הצאר צכות מרים⁴: (ג) ולו גוענו. הלוואי שגוענו:
 בגוע אחינו. צמיתת אחינו דצצר, למד שמיתת למא מגונה ממנה: בגוע.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why was there a shortage of water after Miriam's passing? (v. 2)

RASHI: From here we learn that throughout the forty years they had the well in Miriam's merit.

● Does Miriam's Well still exist today?

ALTER REBBE'S SHULCHAN ARUCH: A few have the custom to draw water every *Motzo'ei Shabbos* [Saturday night] from wells or springs, because the well of Miriam passes through all the wells every *Motzo'ei Shabbos*. Whoever finds it and drinks from it will be healed from all his illnesses (Orach Chaim 299:20).

❧ MIRIAM'S PASSING AND THE WATER CRISIS ❧

(The following occurred close to forty years later, when those who were to die in the desert had passed on:)

20 **T**he entire (next generation of) the congregation of the children of Israel arrived at the desert of Tzin in the first month, and the people settled in Kadaish.
Miriam died there and was buried there.

² The congregation had no water, so they ganged up against Moshe and Aharon, ³ and the people quarreled with Moshe. They spoke up, saying, “If only we had died (in the plague) before God with the (same) death as our brothers (rather than through thirst)! ⁴ Why have you brought God’s congregation to this desert so that we should die here, both us and our animals? ⁵ Why have you taken us out of Egypt to bring us to this terrible place? It’s not a place fit for agriculture, for fig trees, grapevines, or pomegranate trees. And there’s no water to drink!”

⁶ Moshe and Aharon went away from the assembly to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and they fell on their faces.

Then the glory of God appeared to them. ⁷ God spoke to Moshe, saying: ⁸ “Take the staff and, together with your brother Aharon, you should assemble the congregation. In their presence, speak to the rock (that was within Miriam’s well, the one that always produced water), and it will produce water. You will produce water for them from the rock, and allow the congregation and their animals to drink.”

⁹ Moshe took the staff from before God, as He had commanded him. ¹⁰ Moshe and Aharon assembled the congregation in front of the rock (but they could not figure out which rock to speak to. The people began to mock) so he said to them, “Listen, you rebels! (How) could we draw water for you from this rock (if it is not the right one)?”

¹¹ (Moshe and Aharon spoke to the rock, but it did not produce any water, since it was the wrong rock. Remembering that he had produced water from a rock in Refidim by hitting it*) Moshe raised his hand and hit the rock with his staff (and this time he hit the correct rock, but only a small amount of water

THIRD
READING
(2ND WHEN
JOINED)

TORAS MENACHEM

❧ The Last Word ❧

MIRIAM'S WELL (RASHI, v. 2)

- Water assists the digestive system to break down food, and the water within the bloodstream carries those nutrients to all parts of the body. This represents the mission of all Jewish women: To bring the well of living water—Torah—to nourish all segments of the Jewish people, even those who totally lack knowledge of it. Thus we find that, while still in Egypt, Miriam devoted herself to small children, and her heroic efforts led to the annulment of Pharaoh’s decree against children. Consequently, it was in her merit that the well water came, since water represents the universal dissemination of Torah.
- Thus, when a mother, sister, or teacher educates a child, we witness the modern-day “living waters of Miriam” sustaining the Jewish people in exile, making it possible to go peacefully throughout our current “sojourn” in the “desert” of exile.
- In addition to providing water to drink, Miriam’s well also made it possible for the *mitzvah* of *taharas hamishpachah* (family purity) to be fulfilled. There was no other source of water in the desert, so Miriam’s well served as a *mikvah*, enabling children to be born throughout the forty years.
- The custom of drawing water on *Motzo’ei Shabbos* (to draw from the well of Miriam) is cited in the **Alter Rebbe’s Shulchan Aruch**. This appears to suggest that it is applicable today; however, this was not a custom practiced in the House of the Chabad Rebbeim. In any case, it certainly applies to all of us spiritually: Studying this law about Miriam’s well influences the whole week, that it may be a healthy week in both spiritual and physical terms.

(Based on *Sichos* of 5th Tammuz 5740, 17th Sivan 5740 & *Motzo’ei Shabbos Parshas Chukas-Balak* 5739)

* See *Shemos* 17:6.

לְקַדְּשׁוּתִי לְעֵינֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּינָה לֹא תִעָלוּן ית קהלא קדין לארעא די יהבית להון: יג אנון מי מצותא די נצו בני ישראל קדם יי ואתקדש בהון: יד ושלח משה אנדין מרקם לות מלכא דאדום כדנן אמר אחיד ישראל את ידעת ית כל עקתא די אשבתתנא: טו ונחתו אבהתנא למצרים ויתבנא במצרים יומין סניאין ואבאישו לנא מצראי ולאבהתנא: טז וצלינא קדם יי וקביל צלותנא ושלח מלכא ואפקנא ממצרים והא אנתנא ברקם קרתא דבסטר תחומך: יז נעבר פֿען בארעד לא נעבר בחקל ובכרם ולא נשתי מי גוב בארע מלכא גול לא נספי לימינא ולשמאלא עד דנעבר תחומך: יח ואמר לה אדומא לא תעבר בתחומי דילמא בךקטלין בחרבא אפוק לקדמותך: יט ואמרו לה בני ישראל בארע כבישא נסק ואם מייד נשתי אנה ובעירי ואיהב דמיהון לחוד לית פתגם דביש ברנלי אעבר: כ ואמר לא תעבר ונפק אדומא לקדמותה בחיל רב ובידא תקיפא: כא וסריב אדומא למשבק ית ישראל

וְאֶל־אֶהְרֹן יַעֲן לֹא־הֶאֱמַנְתֶּם בִּי לְהַקְדִּישֵׁנִי לְעֵינֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לָכֵן לֹא תָבִיאוּ אֶת־הַקֶּהֱל הַזֶּה אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־נָתַתִּי לָהֶם: יג הֲמָה מִי מְרִיבָה אֲשֶׁר־רָבוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־יְהוָה וַיִּקְדַּשׁ בָּם: ס ורביעין יד וישלח משה מלכא מלך אדום כה אמר אחיד ישראל אתה ידעת את כל־התלאה אשר מצאתנו: טו וירדו אבותינו מצרימה ונשב במצרים ימים רבים וירעו לנו מצרים ולאבתינו: טז ונצעק אל־יהוה וישמע קלנו וישלח מלאך ויצאנו ממצרים והנה אנחנו בקדש עיר קצה גבולך: יז נעברה־נא בארץך לא נעבר בשדה ובכרם ולא נשתי מי באר דרך המלך נלך לא נסה ימין ושמאל* עד אשר־נעבר גבולך: יח ויאמר אליו אדום לא תעבר בי פן־בחרב אצא לקראתך: יט ויאמרו אליו בני־ישראל במסלה נעלה ואם־מימך נשתי אני ומקני ונתתי מכרם רק אין־דבר ברנלי אעברה: כ ויאמר לא תעבר ויצא אדום לקראתו פֿעם כָּבֵד וביד חזקה: כא וימאן אדום נתן את־

*ויתיר ו:

כ"ב

בל התלאה. לפיכך פירש אביבס מעל אבינו וילך אל ארץ מפני יעקב אחיו¹, מפני השטר חוב המוטל עליהם והטילו על יעקב²: (טו) וירעו לנו. סבלנו לרות רבות: ולאבותינו. מלאן שהצות מלעטרים צקבר כשפורענות זאה על ישראל³: (טז) וישמע קלנו. צצרכה שצרכנו אבינו הקול קול יעקב⁴, שאנו זועקים ונענים⁵: מלאך. זה משה מלאן שהנציאים קרואים מלאכים, ואומר ויהיו מלעצבים צמלאכי האלהים⁶: (יז) נעברה נא בארצך. אין לך לעורר על הירושה של ארץ ישראל, כשם שלא פרעת החוב. עשה לנו עזר מעט לעבור דרך ארץך: ולא נשתי מי באר. מי צורות היה רריך לומר אלא כך אמר משה אף על פי שיש צידיו מן לאכול וצאר לשחות, לא נשתי ממנו אלא נקנה מכס אוכל ומים להנאחכס, מלאן לאכנסאי שאף על פי שיש צידו לאכול, יקנה מן החנוני כדי להנות את אושפיו⁷: דרך המלך נלך וגו'. אנו חוסמים את צהמתנו ולא יטו לכאן ולכאן לאכול⁸: (יח) פן בחרב אצא לקראתך. אחס מתגאים צקול שהורישכס אביבס, ואמרתם ונלעק אל ה' וישמע קולנו, ואני אלא עליכס צמה שהורישני אצי ועל חרצך תחיה⁹: (יט) רק אין דבר. אין שום דבר מזיקך: (כ) וביד חזקה. צצטחת זקנו

והכחו¹: (יז) יען לא האמנתם בי. גלה הכחוצ שאלולי חטא זה צלצד היו נכנסין לארץ, כדי שלא יאמרו עליהם כעון שאר דור המדבר שגזר עליהם שלא יכנסו לארץ, כך היה עון משה ואהרן. והלא האן וצקר ישחט² קשה מוז, אלא לפי שצטחר חסך עליו הכחוצ, וכאן שצמעמד כל ישראל, לא חסך עליו הכחוצ מפני קדוש השם³: להקדישני. שאלו דצרתם אל הסלע והוליא הייתי מקודש לעיני העדה ואומרים מה סלע זה שאינו מדבר ואינו שומע ואינו רריך לפרנסה מקיים דצורו של מקום, קל וחומר אנו: לכן לא תביאו. צצטובה, כמו לכן נשצטחי לצית עלי⁴, נשצע צקפיכה כדי שלא ירצו צתפלה על כך: (יג) המה מי מריבה. הס הנזכרים צמקום אחר את אלו ראו אנטגניני פרעה שמושיען של ישראל לוקה צמים, לכן גצרו כל הצן הילוד היאורה תשליכוהו⁵: ויקדש בם. שמתו משה ואהרן על ידס. ששסבקצ"ה עושה דין צמקודשיו הוא יראוי ומתקדש על הצריות, וכן הוא אומר נורא אלהים ממקדשיך⁶, וכן הוא אומר⁷ צקרובי אקדש: (יד) אחיד ישראל. מה ראה להצכיר כאן אחוב, אלא אמר לו אחיס אנתו צני אצרכס, שנאמר לו כי גר יהיה זרעך⁸, ועל שנינו היה אותו החוב לפורעו⁹: אתה ידעת את

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why was the error of hitting the rock so severe? (v. 12)
RASHI: The Torah indicates here that if it were not for this sin alone, they would have entered the Land—so that it should not be said about them, “Moshe and Aharon’s sin was similar to the sin of the generation of the desert who were prevented from entering the Land.”

But wasn't [Moshe's question], “Could enough sheep and cattle possibly be slaughtered for them?” (11:22) a more serious sin than this?
 However, there [he spoke] in private, so the Torah spared him [from punishment]. But here, on the other hand, [he spoke] in the presence of all Israel, thus the Torah did not spare him so that God’s Name would be sanctified.

1 תנזומא 2 במדבר יא, כב 3 שמואל א ג, יד 4 טנהדרין קא: 5 תהלים טז, לו 6 ויקרא י ג, 7 זבחים קטו: 8 בראשית טו, יג 9 שם לו, י 10 ב"ד פב, יג 11 בראשית כו, כב 12 דה"ב לו, טו 13 בראשית כו, מ

came out, since God had not told him to hit it, but to speak to it. But when he hit it) a second time a lot of water came out, and the congregation drank, along with their animals.

¹² God said to Moshe and Aharon, “Since you did not believe in Me to sanctify Me in the presence of the children of Israel (for you hit the rock and did not speak to it), therefore you will not bring this congregation into the Land which I have given them.”

¹³ These are the waters (which the Egyptian astrologers had seen would cause) strife (to Moshe, and they are the waters) over which the children of Israel contended with God. But (God) was sanctified through them (via the death of Moshe and Aharon).

🕎 AN ATTEMPT TO PASS THROUGH THE LAND OF EDOM 🕎

20:14
FOURTH
READING

Moshe sent messengers from Kadaish to the King of Edom: “This is what your brother Israel said: You know of all the hardship that has befallen us. ¹⁵ Our fathers went down to Egypt. We stayed in Egypt for a long time, and the Egyptians mistreated us, and our Patriarchs (were pained in the grave). ¹⁶ We cried out to God and He heard our voice. He sent an angel (Moshe), and he took us out of Egypt.

“Now we are in Kadaish, a city on the edge of your border. ¹⁷ Please let us pass through your land (so we can reach the Land of Israel). We will not pass through fields or vineyards. (Even though we have our own supply of water) we will not drink water (from our) well (but we will purchase it from you). We will go along the King’s Highway, and we will (muzzle our animals so that they) do not turn to the right or to the left (to eat from your fields) until we have passed your border.”

¹⁸ Edom replied to him, “You will not pass through My (territory), or I’ll go out towards you with the sword!”

¹⁹ The children of Israel said to him, “We will keep to the highway. If either we or our cattle drink your water, we will pay whatever it costs. Nothing will (harm you). We will pass through on foot.”

²⁰ But he said, “You will not pass through!” and Edom came out toward them with many men and with the strong hand (of Eisav).

²¹ Since Edom refused to allow Israel to cross his border, Israel headed away from him.

TORAS MENACHEM

🕎 The Last Word 🕎

“IN THE PRESENCE OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL” (v. 12)

At first glance, hitting the rock rather than speaking to it appears to have been an innocent mistake. First, Moshe erred by speaking to the wrong rock, and since no water came out, he presumed that he would have to hit the rock, as he had done in the past (see v. 11 and *Rashi*). After all, why would God have told him to “take the staff” (v. 8) if Moshe was merely required to speak to the rock, and not hit it? So we need to understand why the “sin” of hitting the rock was so severe, being the sole reason why Moshe was barred from entering the Land? (see *Classic Questions*).

Rashi explains that Moshe’s actions had more serious repercussions in this case because he failed to sanctify God’s Name *in public*. From here we see that when it comes to sanctifying God’s Name a person’s intentions are irrelevant; it is the *perceived reality*, how people will interpret one’s actions, that counts.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, pp.127-8; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Chukas* 5743)

🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

“MOSHE SENT MESSENGERS...” (v. 14, 17)

The lesson we can learn from Moshe’s sending messengers is:

“Moshe sent messengers”—The spark of Moshe found within every Jew sends holy messengers.

“From Kadaish”—From the most holy (*kodesh*) part of the Godly soul within every Jew.

“To the King of Edom”—To the nations who rule over the Jewish people during the time of exile.

“This is what your brother Israel said”—Even though, physically, Jews and non-Jews appear to be identical (“brothers”).

“We will go along the King’s Highway and we will not turn to the right or to the left”—We will follow the way of the King, God’s way. We will never veer to the right or to the left!

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 468)

למעבר בתחומה וקטא ישראל מלֹותה: כב ונָטְלוּ מִרְקָם וְאָתוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כָּל כְּנִשְׁתָּא לְהַר מוֹרָא: כג וַאֲמַר יְיָ לְמֹשֶׁה וּלְאַהֲרֹן בְּהַר מוֹרָא עַל תְּחוּם אֲרֻעָא דְאֲדוּם לְמִימְרָ: כד יִתְכַנַּשׁ אַהֲרֹן לְעַמִּיחָ אֲרִי לֹא יַעֲוֹל לְאַרְעָא דֵי יְהוּדִית לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל דֵי סְרַבְתּוֹן עַל מִימְרֵי לְמִי מְצוּתָא: כה דְבַר יְיָ אֶהְרֹן וְיֵת אֲלֵעֶזֶר בְּרַח וְתַסַּק יִתְהוֹן לְהַר מוֹרָא: כו וַאֲשַׁלַּח יְיָ אַהֲרֹן יְיָ לְבוּשׁוֹהֵי וְתַלְבַּשְׁנוֹן יְיָ אֲלֵעֶזֶר בְּרַח וְאַהֲרֹן יִתְכַנַּשׁ וַיְמוֹת תַּמָּן: כז וַעֲבַד מֹשֶׁה כְּמָא דֵי פְקִיד יְיָ וְסָלְקוּ לְהַר מוֹרָא לְעֵינֵי כָּל כְּנִשְׁתָּא: כח וַאֲשַׁלַּח מֹשֶׁה יְיָ אַהֲרֹן יְיָ לְבוּשׁוֹהֵי וְאַלְבֵּשׁ יְיָ אֲלֵעֶזֶר בְּרַח וַיְמוֹת אַהֲרֹן תַּמָּן בְּרִישׁ מוֹרָא וַנְחַת מֹשֶׁה וְאַלֵעֶזֶר מִן מוֹרָא: כט וַחֲזוּ כָּל כְּנִשְׁתָּא אֲרִי מִיַּת אַהֲרֹן וַכְּבוּ יְיָ אַהֲרֹן תְּלַתִּין יוֹמִין כָּל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל:

יִשְׂרָאֵל עֵבֶר בְּנִבְלוּ וַיֵּט יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵעֲלָיו: פ (חמישי) [שלישי כשהן מחוברין] כב וַיִּסְעוּ מִקִּדְשׁ וַיָּבֹאוּ בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל כָּל-הָעֵדָה הַר הַהָר: כג וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-אַהֲרֹן בְּהַר הַהָר עַל-גְּבוּל אֲרֶץ-אֲדוּם לֵאמֹר: כד יֶאֱסֹף אַהֲרֹן אֶל-עַמּוּי כִּי לֹא יבֹא אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל אֲשֶׁר-מְרִיתֶם אֶת-פִּי לְמִי מְרִיבָה: כה קַח אֶת-אַהֲרֹן וְאֶת-אֲלֵעֶזֶר בְּנֹו וְהַעֵל אֹתָם הַר הַהָר: כו וְהַפְּשֵׁט אֶת-אַהֲרֹן אֶת-בְּגָדָיו וְהַלְבַּשְׁתֶּם אֶת-אֲלֵעֶזֶר בְּנֹו וְאַהֲרֹן יֶאֱסֹף וַיְמוֹת שָׁם: כז וַיַּעַשׂ מֹשֶׁה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה וַיַּעֲלוּ אֶל-הַר הַהָר לְעֵינֵי כָּל-הָעֵדָה: כח וַיַּפְּשֵׁט מֹשֶׁה אֶת-אַהֲרֹן אֶת-בְּגָדָיו וַיַּלְבַּשׁ אֹתָם אֶת-אֲלֵעֶזֶר בְּנֹו וַיְמוֹת אַהֲרֹן שָׁם בְּרִאשׁ הַהָר וַיֵּרַד מֹשֶׁה וְאַלֵעֶזֶר מִן-הָהָר: כט וַיִּרְאוּ כָּל-הָעֵדָה כִּי גָּע אַהֲרֹן וַיִּכְּבוּ אֶת-אַהֲרֹן שְׁלֹשִׁים יוֹם כָּל

— כ"ט —

ועלם. מיד חמד משה לאותה מיתה, וזכו שנאמר לו כאשר מת אהרן אחיק, מיתה שנתחית לה⁷: (כז) ויעש משה. אף על פי שהדבר קשה לו לא עבד⁸: (כט) ויראו כל העדה וגו'. כשראו משה ואלעזר יורדים ואהרן לא ירד, אמרו היכן הוא אהרן. אמר להם מת. אמרו לו אפשר מי שעמד כנגד המלאך ועזר את המגפה ישלוח צו מלאך המות. מיד צקש משה רחמים והראוהו מלאכי השרת להם מוטל צמטה, ראו וכאמרו⁹: כל בית ישראל. האנשים והנשים, לפי שהיה אהרן רודף שלום ומטיל אהבה בין צעלי מריבה ובין איש לאשתו¹⁰: בי גוע. אומר אני שהמתרגם דהא מית טועה הוא, אלא אם כן מתרגם ויראו ואתחזירו, שלא אמרו רבותינו ז"ל כי זה משמש בלשון דהא אלא על מדרש שנסתלקו ענני כבוד, וכדאמר ר' אבהו, דא"ר אבהו אל תקרי ויראו¹¹ אלא ויראו ועל לשון זה נופל לשון דהא, לפי שהוא נתינת טעם למה שלמעלה הימנו. למה ויראו, לפי שהרי מת אהרן. אבל על תרגום וחזו כל

והידים ידי עשו¹: (כז) כל העדה. כולם שלמים ועומדים להכנס לארץ שלא היה צדק אחד מאותם שנגזרה גזירה עליהם שכזו כלו מתי מדבר, ואלו מאותן שכתוב בהן² חיים כלכם ביום³: הר ההר. הר על גזי הר כתפוח קטן על גזי תפוח גדול, ואף על פי שהענן הולך לפניו ומשוח את הכרים, שלשה נשארו צדק הר סיני לתורה ור נצו לקצורת משה ור הכר לקצורת אהרן⁴: (כג) על גבול ארץ אדום. מגיד שמפני שנתחברו כאן להתקרב לעשו הרשע, נפרטו מעשיהם וחסרו הדיק הזה, וכן הנציח אומר ליהושפט בהתחברך עם אחזיהו פרץ ה' את מעשיך⁵: (כה) קח את אהרן. בדברי נחומים. אמור לו אשריך שתרצה כדרך נתון לנצח מה שאין אני זכאי לכך⁶: (כו) את בגדיו. את בגדי כהונה גדולה הלבושהו והפשיעם מעליו לתתם על צנו צפניו. אמר לו הכנס למערה, ונכנס. ראה מטה מוצעת ונר דלוק. אמר לו עלה למטה, ועלה. פשוט ידך, ופשט. קמוץ פיך, וקמץ. עולם עיניך,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What was the “double mountain”? (v. 22)

RASHI: A mountain on top of a mountain, like a small apple on top of a big apple.

Although the cloud went in front of them and leveled out mountains, three of them remained: Mount Sinai for [the giving of] the Torah, Mount Nevo for the burial of Moshe, and the double mountain for the burial of Aharon (see *The Last Word*).

● Why were the Jewish people at Edom’s border? (v. 23)

RASHI: This teaches us that because they attempted to forge a relationship with [Edom, descendants of] the wicked Eisav, their accomplishments were ruined and they lost this righteous man [Aharon]. Similarly, the prophet said to Yehoshafat, “Since you joined with Achaziah, God has ruined your accomplishments” (Chron. II 20:37).

TORAS MENACHEM

📌 THE BORDER OF THE LAND OF EDMOM (v. 23)

In Rashi’s comments to verse 23, he explains the connection between Aharon’s passing and the location of the Jewish camp at the border of Edom: “Because they attempted to forge a relationship with [Edom,

descendants of] the wicked Eisav, their accomplishments were ruined and they lost this righteous man.”

This prompts the following questions: a.) In the desert, the travels and encampments of the Jewish people were always guided by the cloud (see

AHARON'S PASSING AND ELAZAR'S APPOINTMENT

20:22
FIFTH
READING
(3RD WHEN
JOINED)

They traveled from Kadaish, and the entire (next generation of the) congregation of the children of Israel arrived at the double mountain.

²³ God spoke to Moshe and Aharon, at the double mountain, at the border of the land of Edom, saying, ²⁴ “Aharon will (now) be gathered to his people. He will not come to the Land which I have given to the children of Israel, because you defied My word at the waters of strife.”

²⁵ “Persuade Aharon, along with Elazar his son, to go up the double mountain. ²⁶ Divest Aharon of his (priestly) garments and dress Elazar his son with them. Then Aharon will be gathered in (to his people) and die there.”

²⁷ Moshe did what God commanded him. They went up the double mountain in the presence of the entire congregation. ²⁸ Moshe divested Aharon of his (priestly) garments and dressed Elazar his son in them, and Aharon died there on top of the mountain.

(Then) Moshe and Elazar descended from the mountain. ²⁹ The whole congregation saw that Aharon had died, and the entire house of Israel wept for Aharon for thirty days.

TORAS MENACHEM

Shemos 13:21). So how could the Jewish people be criticized for being “at the border of the land of Edom,” when this was something that had been orchestrated by God Himself?

b.) The Torah states the cause of Aharon’s passing explicitly in verse 24: “He will not come to the Land which I have given to the children of Israel, because you defied My word at the waters of strife.” How, then, can Rashi attribute Aharon’s passing to a different reason, “Because they attempted to forge a relationship with [Edom, descendants of] the wicked Eisav”?

THE EXPLANATION

On reading verse 23 Rashi was troubled that the words “at the border of the land of Edom,” appear to be superfluous. For the verse has already informed us that “God spoke to Moshe and Aharon at the double mountain,” making clear where this communication took place. So what is added by stating that this was “at the border of the land of Edom”?

And if the Torah merely wished to teach us the fact that the double mountain is located on the Edomite border, surely this detail should have been conveyed in verse 22, where the current geographical location of the Jewish people was discussed: “They traveled from Kadaish, and...arrived at the double mountain”?

Apparently, concluded Rashi, the Torah includes a reference to the Edomite border here in verse 23, which begins to speak of Aharon’s passing, because this sad event had a significant connection with its specific location. Rashi explains that this was because “they attempted to forge a relationship with [Edom, descendants of] the wicked Eisav.”

But surely their close proximity was Divinely ordained by the cloud, and not of their own choice?

In truth, however, verse 22 makes clear that the cloud only guided them to the double mountain and not to the Edomite border in particular. Clearly, the large area surrounding the mountain must have included parts that were more at a distance from Edom, and parts to the other side of the mountain which were closer to Edom. Rashi thus informs us that many of the Jewish people made the wrong choice to camp on the side of the mountain close to the Edomite border, thus forging relationships with the local people.

A further indication, at the literal level, that the Jewish people wished to become close with the Edomites can be gleaned from the previous passage, verses 14-21. There we read how Moshe made a request to the King of Edom to pass through his land, which was refused. But then, rather than graciously turning away from the land and heading elsewhere, we find that the people persisted and asked once again, “We will keep to the highway...” (v. 19), only to be denied a second time: “You will not pass through!” (v. 20). And, eventually, they had to be chased away by force, “Edom came out toward them with many men” (ibid.).

The Last Word

“THE DOUBLE MOUNTAIN” (v. 22)

While the Torah was given on a “single” mountain, and Moshe was buried on a “single” mountain, Aharon was given the special honor of being buried on a double mountain (see *Classic Questions*). This is because “he promoted love between people that argued and between man and wife” (Rashi to v. 29), a quality he excelled in to a greater extent than Moshe (see Rashi to *Devarim* 34:8). Thus, Aharon was mourned by “the entire house of Israel,” “men and women” (v. 29 and Rashi *ibid.*), whereas Moshe was only mourned by some of the men (*Devarim* 34:8 and Rashi *ibid.*).

One of the lessons that we can learn from the fact that the Torah was given on a mountain is that while, generally speaking, a person is supposed to be meek and humble, this should nevertheless not lead him to be easily “walked over.” Rather, when it comes to defending matters of Torah, a person must be proud and confident, like a mountain.

That is the case for Torah in general, which was given through Moshe. But when it comes to matters of *ahavas yisra’el*—the love and concern for one’s fellow Jew’s physical and spiritual needs—which was the trait of Aharon, a person should have a double measure of determination, a “double mountain.”

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Chukas* 5737)

« וישמע כנענא מלכא דערד יתב דרומא ארי אתא ישראל ארח מאלליא ואנה קרבא בישראל ושכא מנה שבאי: ב וקים ישראל קים קדם יי ואמר אם ממסר תמסר ית עמא הדיו בידי ואנמר ית קרויהון: ג וקביל יי צלותה דישראל ומסר ית כנענא ונמר יתהון וית קרויהון וקרא שקא דאתרא

בית ישראל: ס כא « וישמע הכנעני מלך-ערד ישב הנגב כי בא ישראל דרך האתרים וילחם בישראל וישב ממנו שבי: ב וידר ישראל נדר ליהנה ויאמר אם-נתן תתן את-העם הזה בידי והחרמתי את-עריהם: ג וישמע יהוה בקול ישראל ויתן את-הכנעני ויחרם אתהם ואת-עריהם ויקרא

כ"ט

כנענים צידם והם אינו כנענים, ראו ישראל לזושיהם כלזושי עמלקים ולשונו לשון כנען, אמרו נתפלל סתם, שנאמר אם נתן את העם הזה צדי: דרך האתרים. דרך כנגד שכלכו צב המרגלים שנאמר ויעלו צננצ. דבר אחר דרך האתרים דרך התייר הגדול הנוסע לפניהם, שנאמר דרך שלשת ימים לתור להם מנוחה: וישב ממנו שבי. אינה אלא שפחה אחת: (3) והחרמתו. אקדיש שללם לגבוה: (ג) ויחרם אתהם. כצריגה: ואת

כנישתא, אין לשון דהא נופל אלא לשון אשר, שהוא מגזרת שמוש חי, שמלינו אם משמש בלשון אשר, כמו ואם מדוע לא תקלר רוחי¹, והרבה מפורשים כזה בלשון אם חרוזים ימיו²: (ה) וישמע הכנעני. שמע שמת אהרן ונסתלקו עניו כבוד כו', כדאיתא ב"ה³. ועמלק מעולם רועה מרדות לישראל, מזומן בכל עת לפורענות⁴: יושב הנגב, זה עמלק, שנאמר עמלק יושב צרן כנגד⁵. ושנה את לשונו לדבר בלשון כנען, כדי שיכיו ישראל מתפללים להקב"ה לתת

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What did the King of Arad hear? (v. 1)

RASHI: He heard that Aharon had died and that the clouds of glory had departed.

TALMUD: Three good leaders arose for the Jewish people, namely, Moshe, Aharon, and Miriam, and three special gifts were given to the Jewish people through them: the well, the cloud and the *manna*. The well was in Miriam's merit, the cloud in Aharon's merit and the *manna* in Moshe's merit.

When Miriam died the well ceased...When Aharon died the clouds of glory disappeared...but these two returned in Moshe's merit.

But when Moshe died all of them disappeared, as the verse states: "I cut off the three shepherds in one month" (Zech. 11:8). Did they all die in one month? Miriam died in Nisan, Aharon in Av and Moshe in Adar! Rather, this teaches you that the three good gifts which were given in their merit all disappeared in one month (*Ta'anis* 9a).

TORAS MENACHEM

Why were the people so persistent in their desire to enter the land of Edom, more so than in the case of other lands which blocked their entry into the Land of Israel (such as Sichon)?

Here, concluded *Rashi*, we see a further indication at the literal level that "they attempted to forge a relationship with [Edom, descendants of] the wicked Eisav."

As for the question why *Rashi* attributes Aharon's passing to mixing with the Edomites, rather than the sin of hitting the rock, it appears that *Rashi* was troubled by the following problems:

a.) Due to hitting the rock Aharon was told that he would not "come to the Land which I have given to the children of Israel." But the Jewish people did not in fact enter the Land until around seven months after Aharon's passing, at which time Moshe also passed away. So if both Moshe and Aharon were given the same punishment for hitting the rock, why did Aharon pass away seven months earlier?

b.) In his commentary to 21:1 below, *Rashi* writes that when Aharon died, "The clouds of glory departed." Now, if Aharon passed away due to his own sin (hitting the rock), why should the Jewish people be made to suffer, with the loss of the clouds of glory?

Due to these questions *Rashi* concluded that, while Aharon's passing was ultimately caused by his own sin of hitting the rock, his premature passing seven months before entering the Land was caused by a further sin of the Jewish people, that of associating with the Edomites.

However, this begs the question: Why should Aharon have passed away before his time due to the sins of others?

The answer would appear to be that when the Jewish people were beginning to sin with the Edomites, this caused Aharon, as a leader of the Jewish people, much pain. Therefore, God took him away seven months before his time to spare him this additional distress—as we find that *Rashi* writes earlier how Avraham passed away before his time so as not to see Eisav become corrupt (*Rashi* to *Bereishis* 25:30).

Nevertheless, Aharon did merit to leave this world in a very honorable fashion. *Rashi* writes that his passing was so spiritual and peaceful that "Moshe yearned for such a death" (*Rashi* to v. 26). Furthermore, Aharon knew before his passing that his role as High Priest was to be replaced by his son, Elazar, who was inaugurated with Aharon's garments in his presence by Moshe (v. 25-28). And certainly, the passing of any *tzadik* (saintly individual) is not to be understood in the conventional sense, since the *tzadik's* life is spiritual and not physical, even in this world.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Chukas* 5740)

☞ DEPARTURE OF THE CLOUDS OF GLORY (RASHI v. 1)

In his comments to verse 1, *Rashi* cites the teaching of the *Talmud* that when Aharon passed away the clouds of glory departed (just as the well had departed when Miriam passed away).

There appears, however, to be an inconsistency between these cases, at the literal level. When the well ceased upon Miriam's passing, we find that the people reacted immediately: "The congregation had no water, so they ganged up against Moshe and Aharon, and the people quarreled with Moshe" (20:2-3). Why then do we not find that the people complained to

🌀 THE SECOND ATTACK OF AMALEK 🌀

21 **T**he Cana'anite King of Arad, who lived in the south, heard that Israel had come by (the south, following) the route of the spies. (Presuming that they were weak) he waged war against Israel, but he took (only) one captive from them.

² Israel made a vow to God and said, "If You deliver this people into my hand, I will consecrate (the plunder of) their cities."

³ God heard Israel's voice and delivered the Cana'anite. He destroyed them and (consecrated) their cities. The place was called Charmah.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● King of Arad was the monarch of which people? (v. 1)

RASHI: Amalek, as the verse states, "Amalek lives in the south of the land" (13:29). [But the Torah calls them Cana'anites because] they changed their language and spoke Cana'anite so that the Jewish people would [mistakenly] pray to God to deliver the Cana'anites

into their hands, and [thus their prayers would be ineffective because] they were not Cana'anites. But the Jewish people saw that they were dressed like Amalekites, although they spoke Cana'anite, so they said, "We will pray generally," as the verse states, "If You deliver *this people* into my hand" (v. 2).

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Moshe, after Aharon's passing, that the clouds of glory had departed? After all, the clouds protected them from the sun, cleaned their clothes, guided them on all their journeys, flattened hills, raised valleys, and destroyed snakes and scorpions. Surely, then, the people would have complained to Moshe that these forms of assistance were now lacking?

WAS THE CLOUD STILL REQUIRED?

At first glance, we might argue that the people did not complain because, at this point in time, all the above-mentioned forms of assistance were no longer crucial. Perhaps, having reached the edge of the desert, the sun was no longer so hot, especially considering that the hottest part

of the summer was ending (for Aharon passed away on the first of Av—below 33:38); being at the border of a civilized country, facilities would have been available to purchase and clean their clothing, and the Jewish people were now traveling along clear paths, rather than through barren wasteland, so the cloud's navigation and protective qualities were, perhaps, no longer crucial; and since the cloud "went ahead of them by a distance of three days' travel" (Rashi to 10:35), perhaps it had flattened out all the remaining routes in advance.

So, at the literal level, we might argue that no complaint was issued about the departure of the clouds, since the Jewish people could now manage without them.

🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

THE SECOND ATTACK OF AMALEK (v. 1-3)

Why, in their second attack, did Amalek come disguised as Cana'anites (see *Classic Questions*), whereas in their first attack (*Shemos* 17:18) they did not attempt to conceal their identity?

Chasidic thought explains that Amalek is a particularly dangerous enemy of the Jewish people, because the opposition to the Torah which Amalek represents is subtle and indirect, and thus does not appear to be contrary to Torah. Sympathy with the ideology of Amalek can thus set a person on a "slippery slope," eventually leading him away from the Torah altogether, God forbid (see commentaries to *Shemos* 17:8-16 and *Devarim* 25:17-19).

On each of the two occasions mentioned in the *Chumash* that Amalek attacked the Jewish people their goal was different, and this was reflected in their mode of attack:

When Amalek attacked in *Parshas Beshalach*, the Jewish people were living a desert life of isolation and spirituality, representing our acts of Torah study and prayer that occur *inside* the study hall and synagogue. But in our *Parsha*, when Amalek attacked for the second time, the Jewish people had completed forty years of isolation in the

desert and were about to begin their conquest of the Land of Canaan—representing the challenge of maintaining our Judaism in the workplace and the marketplace.

Thus, during their first attack Amalek came undisguised, for since they came to oppose Torah observance *within* a Jewish setting (the synagogue or study hall), their identity as Amalekites, cousins of the Jewish people (see *Bereishis* 36:12), lent their challenge a stamp of authority. But here, in our *Parsha*, their aim was to undermine the observance of Torah in a non-Jewish setting (the workplace), so they came disguised as Cana'anites. Their message was: "We won't bother you about what you do in the synagogue. But if you wish to be successful in the business world, forget about avoiding gossip, unfair competition, collecting interest, etc. You must act like a Cana'anite!"

In truth, however, such a notion is nothing but the evil enticements of Amalek. Judaism is not merely to be practiced at home and in the synagogue; it is equally as important, if not more so, to be a proud and ethical Jew at work too. For in this way we make the *entire* world—and not just the synagogue—"a home for God below."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 1, p. 208ff.)

חַרְמָה: ד וַנִּסְעוּ מִהַר הַהָרָה יַם־סוּף לְסִבְבֵי אֶת־אֶרֶץ אֲדוּם וַתִּקְצַר נַפְשֵׁי־הָעָם בַּדֶּרֶךְ: ה וַיִּדְבַר הָעָם בְּאֱלֹהִים* וּבַמֶּשֶׁה לָמָּה הֵעֲלִיתָנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם לָמוֹת בַּמִּדְבָּר כִּי אֵין לָחֶם וְאֵין מַיִם וְנַפְשֵׁנוּ קָצָה בַלָּחֶם הַקָּלָקֵל: ו וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוָה בָּעָם אֵת הַנְּחָשִׁים הַשֶּׂרָפִים וַיִּנְשָׁכוּ אֶת־הָעָם וַיָּמָת עִם־רֹב מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל: ז וַיִּבֹא הָעָם אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמְרוּ חָטָאנוּ כִּי־דִבַּרְנוּ בַיהוָה וּבְךָ הַתְּפִלֵּל אֶל־יְהוָה וַיָּסַר מֵעֲלֵינוּ אֶת־הַנְּחָשׁ וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל מֹשֶׁה בְּעַד הָעָם: ח וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה עֲשֵׂה לְךָ

*הַקְרִיאה בְּלֵהִים

דש"י

צבס³, וכגון ותקלר נפשו צעמל ישראל⁴, וכל דבר הקשה על אדם נופל בו לשון קלור נפש, כאדם שהטורח צא עליו ואין דעתו רחבה לקבל אותו הדבר, ואין לו מקום צתוך לבו לגור שם אותו הנער, וצדבר המטריח נופל לשון גודל, שגדול הוא וכבד על האדם, כגון וגם נפסם צחלה צי⁵, גדלה עלי, ויגאה כשחל תלודני⁶, כללו של פירוש, כל לשון קלור נפש צדבר, לשון שאין יכול לסובלו הוא, שאין הדעת סובלתו: (כ) באלהים ובמשה. השוו עזד לקונו? למה העליתנו. שניהם שויס: ונפשו קצה. אף זה לשון קלור נפש ומאוס: בלחם הקלוקל. לפי שהמן נבלע צאיצרים קראוהו קלוקל. אמרו עתיד המן הזה שיתפח צמעונו, כלום יש ילוד אשה שמכניס ואינו מוליא⁷: (ו) את הנחשים השרפים. ששורפים את האדם צארם שנייהם: וינשכו את העם. יצא נחש שלקה על הולאת דבה ויפרע ממוליאוי דבה. יצא נחש שכל המינין נטעמים לו טעם אחד ויפרע מכפויי טובה, שדבר אחד משתנה להם לכמה טעמים: (ז) ויתפלל משה. מכאן

עריהם. חרמי גצוכ: (ד) דרך ים סוף. כיון שמת אהרן וצאה עליהם מלחמה זו חזרו לאחוריהם דרך ים סוף, הוא הדרך שחזרו להם כשנגזר עליהם גזירת מרגלים, שנאמר ויסעו המדברה דרך ים סוף. וכאן חזרו לאחוריהם שבע מסעות, שנאמר¹ וצני ישראל נסעו מצרות צני יעקן מוסרה שם מת אהרן. וכי צמוסרה מת, ובלא צהר בהר מת, אלא שם חזרו והתאבלו עליו והספידוהו כאילו הוא צפניהם. ולא וצדוק צמסעות ותמלא שבע מסעות מן מוסרה עד הר הבר²: לסבב את ארץ אדום. שלא נתנס לעצור צארנו: ותקצר נפש העם בדרך. צטורה הדרך שהוקשה להם. אמרו עכשיו היינו קרובים לכנס לארץ ואנו חוזרים לאחורינו כך חזרו אצותינו ונשתחו שלשים ושמונה שנה עד היום, לפיכך קלרה נפסם צעינוי הדרך. ובלשון לע"ז אנקרודלו"ו. ולא יתכן לומר ותקלר נפש העם בדרך צהיותו בדרך, ולא פירש צו צמה קלרה, שכל מקום שתמלא קלור נפש צמקרה מפורש שם צמה קלרה, כגון ותקלר נפשי

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In truth, however, the clouds were still required, because:

- a.) They were not merely a navigation aide, but a system of Divine guidance to ensure that the Jewish people were led in the right path. And, in addition to showing the people *where* to go, the clouds also informed them *when* to travel. Thus, at this point, when they still had numerous journeys to undertake, the clouds were crucial.
- b.) Though they were currently at the edge of the desert near a civilized country, they subsequently traveled seven journeys *back into the desert* (Rashi, v. 5), requiring protection from heat and other benefits of the clouds.
- c.) They still had many wars to fight, and the clouds offered them protection from "arrows and catapults" (Rashi to Shemos 19:4).
- d.) In any case, later in *Parshas Balak*, Rashi indicates that the clouds did return after Aharon's passing: "The clouds folded back from the area above him and the sun shone on him" (Rashi to 25:4).

So the question stands: Why do we not find that the return of the clouds was requested after Aharon's passing, nor any mention of their return in scripture?

THE EXPLANATION

In order to resolve the above problem let us first pose another question. Why, when referring to the clouds, does Rashi sometimes use the term "clouds of glory" (Vayikra 23:43; Bamidbar 20:29, 21:1, 26:13, 33:40; Devarim 8:4, 10:6), but on other occasions he simply refers to "the clouds"? (See Shemos 17:9, 19:4; Bamidbar 20:22, 25:4; Devarim 25:18).

Apparently there were *two types* of clouds, i.e. being that there were in fact "seven clouds" (Rashi to 10:34), we can presume that some clouds would have performed the various functions of flattening hills, killing scorpions and cleaning clothes etc., and that other clouds simply accompanied the Jewish people as a sign of honor and glory. When Rashi mentions just "clouds," he is referring to the necessary clouds, and when he speaks of "clouds of glory," he means the extra clouds that were present solely to honor the Jewish people.

So when Rashi writes that the "clouds of glory had departed," after Aharon's death, he is referring only to *some* of the clouds, the ones which acted as a sign of honor, and not the clouds which actually helped the Jewish people in the desert. Therefore, the people did not complain to Moshe that they were lacking the assistance that the clouds provided after the "clouds of glory" had departed, since they were still left with the same number of necessary clouds as before, which catered to all their needs.

RASHI AND THE TALMUD

In the final analysis we see that Rashi's view, based on scripture at the literal level, differed from that of the **Talmud** (cited in *Classic Questions* above). The *Talmud* maintained that the clouds of glory "returned in Moshe's merit," whereas Rashi maintained that the clouds of glory departed and never returned.

Nevertheless, we find that Rashi *did* appear to accept the *Talmud's* statement that Miriam's well returned after her passing in Moshe's merit,

🌀 THE PEOPLE COMPLAIN AND ARE ATTACKED BY SNAKES 🌀

21:4 **T**hey journeyed from the double mountain (retracing their steps) in the direction of the Reed Sea, to circumvent the land of Edom (which had not let them pass through).

The people became demoralized because (changing) direction (brought back bad memories of how their parents had been sent back into the desert for thirty-eight years). ⁵ The people criticized God and Moshe, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert? There’s no bread and no water, and we’re sick of this unwholesome (manna) bread.”

⁶ God sent venomous snakes upon the people, and they bit the people. Many people of Israel died.

⁷ The people came to Moshe and said, “We have sinned! For we have spoken against God and against you! Pray to God that He should remove the snakes from us!”

Moshe prayed on behalf of the people.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What can we learn from Moshe’s prayers? (v. 7)

RASHI: From here we learn that if a person asks you for forgiveness you should not be cruel and refrain from forgiving.

RAMBAM: When one person sins against another, he should not hide the matter and remain silent...rather, it is a *mitzvah* for him to bring the matter into the open and say, “Why did you do such and such to me?”...And if the person [who sinned] returns and asks him for forgiveness, then he should forgive, for the forgiver should not be cruel...(Laws of Moral Conduct 6:6).

Teshuvah and *Yom Kippur* only achieve atonement for sins between man and God...However, sins between man and his fellow man...are not forgiven until compensation is paid...and the person has been asked for forgiveness....It is forbidden for a person to be

cruel and difficult to appease. Rather, a person should be easily placated and difficult to anger, and when the sinner asks him for forgiveness, he should forgive him with a full heart and a willing spirit (Laws of Teshuvah 2:9-10).

If a person injures another, even if he paid full compensation... he does not achieve atonement for the sin that he committed until he seeks out the injured party and is granted forgiveness from him. And it is forbidden for the injured party to be cruel and refuse to forgive him, for this is not the way of Jewish people. Rather, when the attacker has asked forgiveness once, and then a second time, and we know that he has repented for his sin and he has abandoned the evil that he has done, then one must forgive him. Any person who forgives quickly is considered praiseworthy, and his actions are pleasing to the Sages (Laws of Personal Injury 5:9-10).

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as he writes below that when Moshe passed away, “the well ceased” (Rashi to 21:20).

This begs the question: If Rashi accepted that Miriam’s well returned after her passing in Moshe’s merit, then why did he reject the notion that Aharon’s clouds of glory returned in Moshe’s merit?

In truth, however, it appears that at the literal level Rashi also rejected the idea that Miriam’s well returned in Moshe’s merit. Rather, after the well had ceased, due to Miriam’s passing, Moshe took the responsibility as leader and provider of the Jewish people to ensure that they had a supply of water. Therefore, when the clouds of glory departed, there was no need for Moshe to ensure their return, as the remaining clouds still provided the necessary support for the Jewish people.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 253ff.)

🌀 THREE TYPES OF FORGIVING (v. 7)

Even after the people criticized Moshe heavily, in verse 5, resulting in a punishment of venomous snakes (v. 6), we nevertheless find that Moshe did not bear a grudge and prayed for the people to be saved. “From here we learn,” writes Rashi, “that if a person asks you for forgiveness you should not be cruel and refrain from forgiving.”

This principle is recorded by **Rambam** in his legal Code, the *Mishneh Torah*, in three places (see *Classic Questions*), and there are a number of variations which need to be explained:

a.) In *Laws of Personal Injury*, Rambam describes the method and process of forgiveness: “Once the attacker has asked forgiveness once, and then a second time, and we know that he has repented for his sin and he has abandoned the evil that he has done, then one must forgive him.” However, in *Laws of Teshuvah* these details are omitted. Instead, we are told, that “When the sinner asks him for forgiveness, he should forgive him with a full heart and a willing spirit.” Similarly, in *Laws of Moral Conduct*: “If the person returns and asks him for forgiveness, then he should forgive.”

b.) The person who forgives is given a different name in each of the three laws. In *Laws of Moral Conduct* he is called the “forgiver,” in *Laws of Teshuvah* a “person,” and in *Laws of Personal Injury* he is called the “injured party.”

c.) One further detail is that in *Laws of Teshuvah* a person is told not to be “difficult to appease.” Why does Rambam use this phrase, and why only in *Laws of Teshuvah*?

THE EXPLANATION

Forgiveness can be carried out on three levels:

1.) When one person sins against another, he becomes liable to be punished for the sin that he committed. In order to be relieved of this punishment he needs to appease both God and the person that he sinned against. Therefore, through forgiving a person for his sin one alleviates him from a Heavenly punishment.

וְשׂוּי יָתֵהּ עַל אֶת וַיְהִי כָּל דֵּיתִנְבִית וְנִחְזִי יָתֵהּ
וַיִּתְקַיֵּם: ט וַעֲבַד מִשֶּׁה חֲוִיָּא דְנִחְשָׂא וְשׂוּיָה
עַל אֶת וַהֲוָה כִּד נְכִית חֲוִיָּא יֵת נְבָרָא
וּמִסְתַּבֵּל בְּחֲוִיָּא דְנִחְשָׂא וּמִתְקַיֵּם: י וַנִּסְעוּ בְּנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּאֶבֶת: יא וַיִּסְעוּ מֵאֶבֶת וַיִּשְׂרוּ
בְּמִנְיֹת עֲבָרָי בְּמִדְבָּרָא דִּי עַל אִפִּי מוֹאֵב
בְּמִדְבָּרָא שְׂמִשָּׂא: יב מִתַּמָּן נָטְלוּ וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּנִחְלָא
דְּזָרָד: יג מִתַּמָּן נָטְלוּ וַיִּשְׂרוּ מִעֲבָרָא דְאַרְנוֹן דִּי
בְּמִדְבָּרָא דְנִפְק מִתְּחִים אֲמֹדָאָה אֲרִי אַרְנוֹן

שָׂרָף וְשִׂים אֶתְוּ עַל־נֶם וְהָיָה כָּל־הַנְּשׂוּךְ וְרָאָה אֶתְוּ וְחִי:
ט וַיַּעַשׂ מֹשֶׁה נֶחֱשׁ נְחֹשֶׁת וַיִּשְׂמְהוּ עַל־הַנֶּם וְהָיָה אִם־נִשְׂךְ
הַנְּחֹשׁ אֶת־אִישׁ וְהִבִּיט אֶל־נֶחֱשׁ הַנְּחֹשֶׁת וְחִי: [ששׁי] י וַיִּסְעוּ בְּנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּאֶבֶת: יא וַיִּסְעוּ מֵאֶבֶת וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּעֵיֵי הָעֲבָרִים
בְּמִדְבָּרָא אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי מוֹאֵב מִמְזַרְחָה הַשָּׁמֶשׁ: יב מִשָּׁם נָסְעוּ
וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּנִחְלָא זָרָד: יג מִשָּׁם נָסְעוּ וַיַּחֲנוּ מִעֲבָרָא אַרְנוֹן אֲשֶׁר
בְּמִדְבָּרָא הַיַּצְא מִגְּבֹל הָאֲמֹרִי כִּי אַרְנוֹן גְּבֹל מוֹאֵב בֵּין מוֹאֵב

רש"י

זו יסוד לזדה וכו' מלשון יעיס⁹, ויעה צד¹⁰: העברים. דרך מעבר
העוזרים שם את הר נבו אל ארץ כנען, שהוא מפסיק בין ארץ מואב לארץ
אמורי: על פני מואב ממזרח השמש. צמרח של ארץ מואב:
(יג) מגבול האמורי. תחום סוף מלך שלהם, וכן גבול מואב, לשון קלה
וסוף: מעבר ארנון. הקיפו ארץ מואב כל דרומה ומזרחה עד שצאו מעבר
השני לארנון בתוך ארץ האמורי בצפונה של ארץ מואב: היוצא מגבול
האמורי. רצועה יולאה מגבול האמורי והיא של אמוריים ונכנסת לגבול
מואב עד ארנון, שהוא גבול מואב ושם חנו ישראל, ולא צאו לגבול מואב,
(כי ארנון גבול מואב, והם לא נתנו להם רשות לעבור בצרנס, ואף על פי
שלא פירשה משה, פירשה יפתח) כמו שאמר יפתח וגם אל מלך מואב שלא
ולא אצה¹¹. ומשה רמזה כאשר עשו לי בני עשו היושבים צעיר והמואבים
היושבים צער¹², מה אלו לא נתנום לעבור בתוך ארץ אלה הקיפוס סביב, אף

למי שמצקשים ממנו מחילה שלא יהא אכזרי מלמחול¹: (ח) על נס. על
כלום שקורים פירק"א צלע"ז וכן וכנס על הגבעה², ארים נסי³, שאו נס⁴,
ולפי שהוא גבור לאות ולראיה קוראו נס: כל הנשור. אפילו כלב או חמור
נושכו היה נזק ומתנונה והולך, אלא שגשיכת הנחש ממרת להמית, לכך
נאמר כאן וראה אותה ראה צלמא, וצנשיכת הנחש נאמר והצבי. וביה אם
נשך הנחש את איש והצבי וגו'⁵, שלא היה ממחר נשור הנחש להתרפאות
אלא אם כן מצית צו צכוונה⁶. ואמרו רבותינו וכי נחש ממת או מחיה, אלא
צזמן שהיו ישראל מסתכלין כלפי מעלה ומשעבדין את לבם לאציהם
שצממים היו מתרפאים, ואם לאו היו נמוקים (נ"א ניזוקים)⁷: (ט) נחש
נחשת. לא נאמר לו לעשותו של נחשת, אלא אמר משה הקצ"ה קוראו נחש,
ואני אעשנו של נחשת, לשון נופל על לשון⁸: (יא) בעיני העברים. לא ידעתי
למה נקרא שם עיים. ועי לשון חורבה הוא דבר הטוט צמטטא, והעיינין

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2.) A higher level of forgiveness is to forgive not just the act of sin, but the sinner himself, i.e. even though one person may forgive another for a particular bad act (thus relieving him from being punished), there still may remain a trace of dislike for the person in general. Thus, a higher level of forgiveness is to forgive the entire person completely for his wrong, so that there remains no trace of bad feeling between them.

3.) The highest level of forgiveness is an emotion that is so strong and positive that it actually uproots the sins of the past, making it as if they never occurred at all (cf. *Yoma* 86a). After such a forgiveness, the sinner will be loved by the offended party to the very same degree that he was loved before the sin.

It is these three types of forgiveness which *Rambam* refers to in his three different laws:

1.) In *Laws of Personal Injury*, *Rambam* discusses the laws of compensation for specific damages that one person causes another. Thus, when he speaks there of forgiveness for a sin, he is speaking of the forgiveness that is required to relieve the sinner from the punishment of that specific sin. Therefore, *Rambam* spells out the precise method of forgiveness that is required to achieve atonement ("when the attacker has asked forgiveness once, and then a second time, and we know that he has repented for his sin, etc., then one must forgive him"), because only by following

this precise method can we be sure that the sinner will be acquitted of his punishment.

To stress the point further, *Rambam* speaks in terms of an "injured party" and the "forgiving" of the injury, as we are speaking here of a specific sin and its atonement.

2.) In *Laws of Moral Conduct*, the focus is not on actual sin and its atonement, but rather, the character of the forgiver. And, if a person is to be of fine character, it is insufficient to forgive a person just so that he will be freed from punishment. Rather, one should forgive another person completely [i.e. the second level above]. Therefore, in *Laws of Moral Conduct* *Rambam* stresses, "When one person sins against another, he should not hide the matter and remain silent," for it would be a bad character trait to harbor resentment, keeping one's ill feelings to oneself. Therefore, "It is a *mitzvah* for him to bring the matter into the open."

Thus, we can understand why *Rambam* omits here details of the process of forgiveness, for the main emphasis here is not the atonement of the sinner, but the required character traits of the victim.

To stress the point further, the person is termed here not as the "injured party," but as the "forgiver."

3.) In *Laws of Teshuvah*, *Rambam* is speaking of the highest level of forgiveness which is required for a person to achieve a total "return to

1 תנחומא 2 ישעי' 7, יז 3 שם מט, כב 4 שם יג, ב 5 בדפוס ראשון משמע שזהו ד"ה חדש. וכן נראה, דאל"כ אינו מובן: א) כפל הלשון "ובנשיכת הנחש נאמר והביט והי' אם נשך הנחש וגו' והביט, ב) מה שמביא אריכות לשון הפסוק (הבא מיד לאחיו): "והי' אם (נחש הנחש) את איש (והביט) וגו'" — שאי"ז נוגע לענינו של אותו ד"ה (לקו"ש ח"י"ג, ע' 72, הערה 5). 6 וירושלמי ר"ה פ"ג ה"ט 7 ר"ה ט. ראה שיחת שי"פ חז"ר, מסוי"מ תשכ"ט. 8 ב"ר ל"א, ח. ראה לקו"ש ח"י"ג ע' 71 ואל"ך. 9 שמו"ת לז, ג 10 ישעי' כח, ז. ראה שיחת שי"פ חזקת תש"ה. 11 שופטים יא, יז 12 דברים כ, ט

⁸ God said to Moshe, “Make yourself a venomous (snake) and place it on a pole. What will happen is, whoever has been bitten will look at it and live.”

⁹ Moshe made a copper snake and place it on a pole. Whenever a snake bit a man, he would stare at the copper snake and he would live.

🌀 FURTHER JOURNEYS / THE MIRACULOUS ENCAMPMENT AT ARNON 🌀

21:10
SIXTH
READING

The children of Israel traveled, and they camped in Ovos.

¹¹ They traveled from Ovos and camped in Iyay Ha’avarim, in the wilderness between Mo’av (and the land of the Amorites, to the east, where) the sun rises.

¹² From there they traveled, and they encamped along the Zered Brook.

¹³ From there they traveled, and they encamped on the other side of the Arnon (Brook), which is in the desert, extending from the Amorite border—for Arnon was the Mo’avite border between Mo’av and the Amorites.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did looking at the snake cure the people? (v. 8)

RASHI: Our Rabbis said: Does [looking up at] a snake cause death or life? Rather, when the Jewish people looked heavenward and subjugated their hearts to their Father in heaven they would be healed. But if not, they would waste away.

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God.” For this to occur, the forgiveness must be done in a manner that is so deep that one uproots the sin totally, as if it had never occurred at all. This is because total forgiveness is a crucial factor in the sinner’s overall return to God, as *Rambam* writes “Sins between man and his fellow man ... are not forgiven until...the person has been asked for forgiveness...”

Thus, *Rambam* stresses here, “A person should be easily placated and difficult to anger, and when the sinner asks him for forgiveness, he should forgive him with a full heart and a willing spirit” (despite the fact that these details are more appropriate to *Laws of Moral Conduct*), because the good will of the victim is a crucial part of the sinner’s *teshuvah*. Only when the victim is completely forgiving—to the extent that the sin is uprooted,

as if it never existed—can we be sure that the sinner has returned to be as close to God as he was prior to the sin.

To stress this point further, *Rambam* writes, “It is forbidden for a person (not an “injured party” or “forgiver”) to be cruel and difficult to *appease*,” i.e. here we are not talking merely of the minimum forgiveness that is required to relieve the sinner from his punishment. Rather, here we are talking of the victim as a “person.” And one can hope that he will not merely “forgive” his fellow who hurt him, freeing him from punishment, but that he will allow himself to be “appeased” completely, thereby helping his fellow Jew to come to a complete *teshuvah*.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28. p. 138ff.)

🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

“HE WOULD STARE AT THE COPPER SNAKE AND HE WOULD LIVE” (v. 9)

Rashi explains that the copper snake which Moshe made was not a miraculous cure in itself, but rather, a reminder to the people to rededicate themselves to God: “When the Jewish people looked heavenward and subjugated their hearts to their Father in heaven, they would be healed” (see *Classic Questions*).

However, this begs the question: If remembering God brought about the cure for the Jewish people, then why was the copper snake necessary at all? Why did Moshe not simply tell them to think about God?

Chasidic thought teaches that even the most negative or tragic occurrence in this world, God forbid, has a spiritual source which is entirely good. “From heaven, no evil is issued forth,” we are

taught, and it is only that sometimes the physical world is not a fitting receptacle to absorb the good which comes from heaven. Thus, the resulting incompatibility presents itself as something negative.

The solution, therefore, is not to eliminate the negative thing, but to reveal its true inner essence as something good.

And this was the purpose of the copper snake erected on a pole which Moshe made. By encouraging the Jewish people to look upwards at the snake, Moshe was reminding them that, in their spiritual source above, the snakes which had bitten the Jewish people were rooted in Divine goodness. In this way, the people “re-connected” the snakes with their true source above, revealing their inner good—and thus that good was also revealed below.

(Based on *Likutei Torah*, Chukas 61d-62b)

תָּחֹם מוֹאָב בֵּין מוֹאָב וּבֵין אֲמֹרֵתָהּ: יד על כֵּן יִתְאָמֵר בְּסִפְרָא קְרִבִין דְּעֵבֵר יי על ימא דְּסוּף וּגְבוּרִין דְּעַל נְחָלֵי אַרְנוֹן: טו וְשָׂפוּד נְחָלֵיָא דְּמַדְבְּרִין לְקַבֵּל לְחַיִּית וּמִסְתַּמִּיד לְתָחוּם מוֹאָב: טז וּמִתְמָן אֲתִיְהִיבַת לְהוֹן בִּירָא הִיא בִּירָא דִּי אָמַר יי לְמִשָּׁה כְּנוֹשׁ ית עֲמָא וְאִיְהִיב לְהוֹן מֵיָא: יז כֵּכֵן שִׁבַּח יִשְׂרָאֵל ית תְּשַׁבְּחָתָא הָדָא סְקִי בִּירָא שְׁבָחוּ לָהּ:

וּבֵין הָאֲמֹרִי: יד עַל-כֵּן יִאָמֵר בְּסִפְרָא מְלַחֲמַת יְהוָה אֶת-וְהַבּ בְּסוּפָהּ וְאֶת-הַנְּחָלִים אַרְנוֹן: טו וְאֲשֶׁר הַנְּחָלִים אֲשֶׁר נָטָה לְשֵׁבֶת עַר וְנִשְׁעַן לְגִבּוֹל מוֹאָב: טז וּמִשָּׁם בְּאֵרָה הוּא הַבְּאֵר אֲשֶׁר אָמַר יְהוָה לְמִשָּׁה אֶסֶף אֶת-הָעָם וְאֶתְנָה לָּהֶם מַיִם: טז יי אִזּוּ יִשִּׁיר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת עָלַי בְּאֵר עֵנּוּ-לָהּ:

דש"י

מואב וזכר של לז אמוריים היו כנגד אותן נקעים כמין קרנות ושדים זולטין לחוץ, כיון שזאו ישראל לעבור זעזוע הבר של ארץ ישראל, כשפחה היואלת להקביל פני גזירתה, ונתקרב לזד הר של מואב ונכנסו אותן השדים לתוך אותן נקעים והרגום. וזכו אשר נטע לשבת ער, שהבר נטע ממקומו ונתקרב לזד גבול מואב ונדבק זו, וזכו ונשען לגבול מואב (בס"א חינו) (ועזרו ישראל על ההרים ולא ידעו הנסים האלו אלא על ידי הצאר שנכנס לשם): (טז) ומשם בארה. משם צא האשד אל הצאר. כילד, אמר הקב"ה מי מודיע לבני הנסים הללו. המשל אומר נתת פת לתינוק הודיע לאמו. לאחר שעברו חזרו ההרים למקומם והצאר ירדה לתוך הנחל והעלתה משם דם ההרגים וזרועות ואיברים ומליכתן סביב המחנה, וישראל ראו ואמרו שירב: (יז) עלי באר³. מתוך הנחל והעלי מה שאת מעלה. ומיין שהצאר הודיעה

מואב כן: (יד) על כן. על חניו זו ונסים שנעשו זה יאמר בספר מלחמות ה', כשמספרים נסים שנעשו לאבותינו יספרו את וזכ וגו': את והב. כמו את יבז, כמו שיאמר מן יעד ועד, כן יאמר מן יבז וזכ. והוי"ו יסוד הוא, כלומר את אשר יבז להם והרבה נסים זים סוף: ואת הנחלים ארנון. כשם שמספרים זכאי ים סוף, כך יש לספר זכאי נחלי ארנון, שאף כאן נעשו נסים גדולים. ומה הם הנסים: (טו) ואשד הנחלים. תרגום של שפך אשד. שפך הנחלים שנשפך שם דם אמוריים שהיו נחצאים שם, לפי שהיו ההרים גבוהים והנחל עמוק וקלר וההרים סמוכים זה לזה, אדם עומד על ההר מזה ומדבר עם חצירו זה מזה, והדרך עובר בתוך הנחל. אמרו אמוריים כשיכנסו ישראל [לארץ] לתוך הנחל לעבור, נלא מן המערות זכרים שלמעלה מהם והרגם זכאים ואזני זכאים טרלות. והיו אותן הנקעים זה של לז

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What miracle occurred at Arnon? (v. 14-16)

RASHI: The mountains were high and the valley [between them] was deep and narrow. The mountains were so close to each other, that a person standing on the mountain on one side [of the valley] could speak to his friend standing on the mountain on the other side.

The route [of the Jewish people] passed along the valley. The Amorites said, "When the Jewish people enter the valley to pass through, we'll come out of the caves in the mountains above them and kill them with arrows and catapult stones."

There were caves in the rock on the Mo'avite side [of the valley], and directly opposite the caves there were protrusions on the mountain on the Amorite side...When the Jewish people were about to pass through, the mountain...moved toward the mountain of Mo'av. The protrusions entered the caves, killing [the Amorites].

This is the meaning of the words, "it turned to settle at Ar" (v. 15): The mountain veered from its place and moved toward the side of the Mo'avite border, and attached itself to it. It was thus "leaning against the border of Mo'av" (ibid.).

The Jewish people passed on top of the mountains, and they only became aware of the miracles through the well [water] that entered the [valley. As the Torah continues]: "From there to the well" (v. 16)...

How did this occur? God said, "Who will inform My children of these miracles?"—as the proverb goes, "If you give a small child bread, inform his mother." So, after they passed through, the mountains returned to their places and the well water went down into the valley. It brought the blood of the people who were killed, their arms, and their limbs, and carried them around the camp. When the Jewish people saw this, they burst into song (v. 17-20).

MIDRASH: The Amorites, knowing that the Jewish people would have to pass through the valley, assembled in innumerable multitudes. Some of them hid in the many caves on the slopes of the mountain, while another group of them awaited the Jewish people in the valley below, hoping to attack and destroy them unexpectedly from above and from below when they passed through the valley.

God, however, arranged that the Jewish people did not go down into the valley at all, but stayed above. He sent an instruction to the mountains, and the protrusions of one mountain entered the caves of the other, and all the people hiding there died.

Then, the well water went down through the valley and, becoming stronger in force, destroyed all the people that were there, like the Egyptians who were destroyed by the sea. That is why the Torah compares the two events (v. 14).

Since the Jewish people had passed over the mountains, they were not aware of all these miracles, so God said, "I'm going to make it known how many people I destroyed for them!" Thus, the well water went into the caves, washing so many skulls, arms and feet that they could not be counted. And when the Jewish people returned to find the well, they saw it shining like the moon within the valley that was full of limbs (Tanchuma 20; Bamidbar Rabah 19:25).

SFORNO: God made a fierce storm (סופה) which caused water to flood the entire area, preventing the Jewish people from being attacked. Nevertheless, when the waters reached Ar, close to where the Jewish people were located, they did not flood the area, but rather, they "turned to settle at Ar, leaning against the border of Mo'av" (v. 15), i.e. the waters did not spread out to inundate the Israelite camp.

¹⁴ *About this (miraculous encampment) it will be told when God's wars are recounted:*

"He gave a gift (of miracles) at the (Sea of) Reeds and (they were matched by the miracles) at the valleys of Arnon! ¹⁵ The (blood of the Amorites was) spilling into the valleys when (the mountain actually moved, crushing the Amorites, and) it turned to settle at Ar, leaning against the border of Mo'av. ¹⁶ From there (the blood flowed) to the well (so the Jewish people could see the victory). That is the well about which God said to Moshe, 'Gather the people, and I will give them water.'"

¹⁷ *Then (when) Israel (saw the remains of the enemy in the well water) they sang this song:*

"O well, arise (from the valley)!

Raise your voices (in song) to it!

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🔗 THE MIRACLES AT ARNON (v. 14ff.)

Rashi cites the **Midrash** at length to describe the miraculous occurrences at the valley of Arnon. His comments prompt the following questions:

- a.) Rashi's commentary was written to explain the literal meaning of scripture. Why, then, does Rashi offer here the apparently non-literal interpretation of the *Midrash*, that a mountain actually moved to crush the Amorites, rather than a more simple explanation, such as that of **Sforno**?
- b.) According to the *Midrash* two miracles occurred: 1.) The Amorites that hid in the caves at the top of the mountains were crushed when the mountains came together. 2.) Other Amorites who were in the valley were killed by the flooding well water.

Why does Rashi only mention the first miracle?

In fact, being that the Torah compares the miracles at Arnon to the drowning of the Egyptians at the Reed Sea (v. 14), it would appear that the second miracle of the *Midrash*, where the Amorites were drowned, is indicated here by scripture *at the literal level*.

c.) The *Midrash* states that, in order to inform the Jewish people of the miracle, the well water went *into the caves* within the mountains and washed out the remains of the slain Amorites. Why does Rashi write that the well water did not flood into the mountains, but only into the valley?

d.) The *Midrash* states that the water washed out "so many skulls, arms and feet that they could not be counted," whereas Rashi writes, that it "brought the blood of the people who were killed, their arms, and their limbs." Why does Rashi add a reference to blood, and omit the specific reference to skulls and feet?

e.) The *Midrash* states that the Jewish people discovered what had happened when "they returned to find the well... full of limbs." But Rashi writes that a *further miracle* occurred—the well actually transported the remains of the Amorites *all the way to the Jewish camp*: "The well water went down into the valley. It brought up the blood of the people who were killed, their arms, and their limbs, and carried them around the camp." What led Rashi to conclude that, at the literal level, this additional miracle occurred? And why would God have made this seemingly unnecessary miracle, which could have been avoided by the Jewish people returning to the valley, as the *Midrash* writes?

f.) Why does Rashi add the proverb, "If you give a small child bread, inform his mother," which is not cited here by the *Midrash* at all? And what, exactly, does the proverb add that we do not already know?

THE EXPLANATION

a.) Previously in the Torah, we find that the Jewish people merited numerous miracles, many of which saved their lives, and yet it is only at the splitting of the Reed Sea that the people actually burst into song. So Rashi was troubled: What was unique about the miracles at the Arnon valley in comparison with so many other miracles of the past, that these miracles inspired the Jewish people to sing together (in verses 17-20)?

The unique quality of the miracle at the Sea of Reeds was that the Jewish people did not merely receive Divine assistance in the war that they had to fight, but rather that God destroyed the Egyptians without the Jewish people having to do *anything* at all—"God will fight for you" (*Shemos* 14:14). Therefore, Rashi cited the *Midrashic* account of the miracle at Arnon, for this *Midrash* also describes how God eliminated the enemy without the Jewish people having to fight at all; thus explaining why, at the literal level, this led them to sing together.

b.) Whenever Rashi offers a *Midrashic* solution, he is careful to cite only, "Midrash which clarifies the text of scripture" (Rashi to *Bereishis* 3:8), i.e. those parts of the *Midrash* which have some basis in the verse itself.

🔗 Sparks of Chasidus 🔗

"O WELL, ARISE!" (v. 17)

When the soul comes down from its heavenly setting and is invested into a body it suffers an immense spiritual regression, because the body constitutes a formidable obstacle between the soul and God. Nevertheless, it is a worthwhile journey for the soul, since the physical world contains, trapped within it, "sparks" of holiness which have an even greater spiritual potency than the soul itself, and the soul profits from these "sparks" when the body performs *mitzvos* with physical objects.

And this is how Chasidic thought explains the Song at the Well: "O well, arise!"—the pure soul is compared to a well, which is a source of ritual purity. While the soul's journey to the physical world is superficially a spiritual regression, a "descent," nevertheless the soul is told, "arise"—as a result, it will enjoy an "ascent," a spiritual profit. And that is: "Raise your voices to it"—the use of the plural, "your voices," alludes to the many sparks trapped in physical matter that are elevated in the course of the soul's mission on earth.

And with this we can understand the inner reason why the song was only chanted at this point in time, even though the well had already accompanied the Jewish people for forty years (see Rashi to v. 17). For at this point, they were poised to enter the Land of Israel where, in contrast to their desert life of spiritual isolation, the Jewish people would be heavily involved with *mitzvos* connected with *physical* objects. So it was now that their souls (their "wells") would begin to profit spiritually ("arise") from the descent into this world, by extracting its hidden sparks.

(Based on *Ma'amar* s.v. *Az Yashir Yisra'el* and *Ach Begoral* 5735)

יה בִּירָא דְחַפְרוּהָ רַבְרַבְיָא בְרוּהָ רִישֵׁי עַמָּא
 סְפָרְיָא בְּחַטְרֵיהוֹן וּמַדְבְּרָא אַתְיָהִיבַת לְהוֹן:
 יט וּמַדְאֲתִיָּהִיבַת לְהוֹן נְחֵתָא עִמְהוֹן לְנַחֲלֵיָא
 וּמַנְחֵלֵיָא סְלָקָא עִמְהוֹן לְרַמְתָּא: כ וּמַרְמָתָא
 לְחִילֵיָא דִּי בְּחַקְלֵי מוֹאָב רִישׁ רַמְתָּא
 וּמִסְתַּבְיָא עַל אַפֵּי בֵּית יִשְׁמׁוֹן: כא וּשְׁלַח
 יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲזַנְדִּין לְוַת סִיחׁוֹן מִלְּפָא דְאַמּוֹרֵיָא
 לְמִימְרָא: כב אַעֲבַר בְּאַרְעֵךְ לֹא נִסְטִי בְּחַקְל
 וּבְכֶרֶם לֹא נִשְׁתִּי מִי גֹב בְּאַרְחַ מִלְּפָא גִּזְלַת עַד

יה בִּיאַר חַפְרוּהָ שְׁרִים כְּרוּהָ נְדִיבֵי הָעָם בְּמַחֲקָא בְּמִשְׁעֵנְתָם
 וּבְמַדְבְּרָא מִתְנַה: יט וּמִמִּתְנַה נַחֲלֵיָאֵל וּמַנְחֵלֵיָאֵל בְּמֹת:
 כ וּבְמִבְמֹת הַנִּיאָ אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁדָּה מוֹאָב רֹאשׁ הַפְּסָגָה וְנִשְׁקַפָּה
 עַל-פְּנֵי הַיְשִׁימוֹן: פ [שביעי] [רביעי כשהן מחוברין] כא וַיִּשְׁלַח יִשְׂרָאֵל
 מִלְּאֲזִים אֶל-סִיחׁוֹן מֶלֶךְ-הָאֲמֹרִי לֵאמֹר: כב אַעֲבֹרָה בְּאַרְעֵךְ
 לֹא נִשָּׂה בְּשַׁדָּה וּבְכֶרֶם לֹא נִשְׁתָּה מִי בְּאֵר בְּדַרְךְ הַמְּלֶךְ גִּזְלַת

— כשׁ —

מזמנין אותה לסעודה, אמר חס ארובי שם אני שם, ואם לאו איני הולך:
 ראש הפסגה. כתרגמו ריש רמחא: פסגה. לשון גובה, וכן פסגו
 ארמנותי³, הגזיבו ארמנותיה: ונשקפה. אותה הפסגה על פני המקום
 ששמו ישימון, והוא לשון מדבר שהוא שם. דבר אחר ונשקפה הצאר על
 פני הישימון שנגזז צימה של טבריה והעומד על הישימון מביט ורואה
 כמין צברה צים והיא הצאר, כך דרש רבי תנחומא⁴: (כא) וישלח ישראל
 מלאכים. ובמקום אחר תולה השליחות צמשה, שנאמר ואשלה מלאכים
 ממדבר קדמות⁵, וכן וישלח משה מלאכים מקדש אל מלך אדום⁶, וזיפתח
 הוא אומר וישלח ישראל מלאכים אל מלך אדום וגו'⁷, הכתובים הללו
 לריכוס זה לזה, זה נועל זה פתח, שמשם הוא ישראל וישראל הם משה,
 לומר לך שנישאל הדור הוא ככל הדור, כי הנשיא הוא הכלל¹: (כב) אעברה
 בארצך. אף על פי שלא נטעו לפתוח להם בשלום צקשו מהם שלום¹:

לכס, שנאמר ומשם צארה. וכי משם היתה, והלא מתחלת ארבעים שנה
 היתה עמכם, אלא שירדה לפרסם את הנסים, וכן אז ישיר ישראל, השייה
 הזאת נאמרה בסוף ארבעים, והצאר נתנה להם מתחלת ארבעים, ומה
 ראה ליכתב כאן, אלא הענין הזה נדרש למעלה הימנו¹: (יח) באר
 חפרוה. זאת היא הצאר אשר חפרוה שרים משה ואהרן²: במשענותם.
 צמשה: וממדבר. נתנה להם: (יט) וממתנה נחליאֵל. כתרגמו:
 (כ) ומבמות הגיא אשר בשדה מואב. כי שם מת משה ושם צמלה
 הצאר. דבר אחר כרוה נדיבי העם כל נשיא ונשיא כשהיו חונים נוטל מקלו
 ומושך אלל דגלו ומחנכו ומי הצאר נמשכין דרך אותו סימן וזאין לפני
 חניית כל שבט ושבט¹: במחקק. על פי משה שנקרא מחוקק, שנאמר כי שם
 חלקת מחוקק ספון. ולמה לא נזכר משה צשירה זו, לפי שלקח ע"י הצאר.
 וכיון שלא נזכר שמו של משה לא נזכר שמו של הקצ"ב. משל למלך שהיו

TORAS MENACHEM

Thus, in our case, *Rashi* cited the account of the mountain moving to crush the Amorites, as this is hinted to by the words of the verse, "it turned to settle at Ar, leaning against the border of Mo'av." However, the second miracle which the *Midrash* describes (that the Amorites who were located in the valley were killed by a flood of well water) is not referred to by scripture here. Therefore, even though it indeed resembles the miracle that occurred at the splitting of the Reed Sea, *Rashi* did not cite it, as it does not "clarify the text of scripture."

c.) Likewise, scripture gives no indication here that the well water went up from the valley to enter the caves within the mountains. Rather, the Torah indicates the reverse, that the blood was "spilling into the valleys" (v. 15), and "from there to the well" (v. 16). Therefore, *Rashi* omitted this detail.

d.) Since the Torah itself states that Amorite blood was, "spilling into the valleys" (v. 15), *Rashi* writes that the well "brought the blood of the people who were killed," (even though this detail is not mentioned by the *Midrash*). Furthermore, *Rashi* stresses that "their arms" were also carried by the well, since seeing the very muscular arms of the warriors would have added to the miracle, as it would have made the Jewish people realize that a powerful army had been defeated. But since it would be a most unnecessary miracle if *only* arms had been carried by the well, *Rashi* adds that other "limbs" were carried too.

e.) *Rashi* maintained that a second miracle occurred, where the well water brought the remains of the Amorites, "all around the camp," in order to explain how the song arose here in the same circumstances as it did at the Sea of Reeds. At the Sea of Reeds, Moshe led the Jewish people

in song, "when they saw the miracle" (*Rashi* to *Shemos* 15:1), so *Rashi* concluded that likewise in our case, the Song of the Well must have arisen upon actually seeing a miraculous occurrence.

According to the account of the *Midrash*, this was not the case, since the Jewish people only saw at the well the aftermath of the miracle: "They returned to find the well...full of limbs." So, *Rashi* concluded that a further miracle must have occurred, "the well water...brought...their limbs, and carried them around the camp," and it was upon seeing this miracle that the Jewish people burst into song. And this also explains, at the literal level, why the song focuses on the well in particular.

f.) *Rashi* cites the proverb, "If you give a small child bread, inform his mother," as this brings to light a remarkable quality of the miracle at Arnon in which it surpassed the splitting of the Reed Sea. For while both miracles were unique in that God eliminated an enemy without the Jewish people having to fight at all, the incident at Arnon was even more remarkable in that the people were not even aware that the miracle had taken place. Thus God performed a further miracle, bringing the blood and limbs of the Amorites via the well water, so that the Jewish people should know what had occurred. And this is comparable, writes *Rashi*, to informing a mother that one has given her child bread, i.e. the well, which supported the Jewish people in the desert (like a mother who supports her child) was "informed" of the life-saving miracle (comparable to the staple food of bread) when the remains of the defeated enemy passed through the well water and all around the Jewish camp.

And then, realizing that God had saved their lives miraculously without them even knowing, "Israel sang this song: 'O well, arise...'"

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 23, p. 148ff.)

- ¹⁸ *A well dug by ministers,
Carved out by (Moshe and Aharon), nobles of the people,
Through the lawgiver, with their staffs,
From the desert, (they received the well as) a gift.*
- ¹⁹ *From the (time they received this) gift,
(It went down with them) to the streams,
And from the streams (it went up with them) to the heights.*
- ²⁰ *From the heights to the valley in the field of Mo'au,
At the top of the summit that overlooks the wastelands.*

🌀 THE WAR WITH SICHON 🌀

21:21 **I**srael sent messengers to Sichon the King of the Amorites, saying: ²² "Let me pass through your land. We will not turn to any fields or vineyards, nor drink water from the well. We will walk along the King's Highway, until we have passed through your border."

SEVENTH
READING
(4TH WHEN
JOINED)

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Who sent the messengers? (v. 21)

RASHI: Elsewhere scripture attributes the sending of [the very same] messengers to Moshe, as the verse states, "I sent messengers from the Desert of Kedaimos" (Devarim 2:26).

Likewise, "Moshe sent messengers ... to the King of Edom" (above, 20:14). And regarding Yiftach it says [about the same incident], "Israel sent messengers to the King of Edom etc." (Judges 11:17).

These verses complement each other; one "locks" and the other "opens," for Moshe is Israel, and Israel is Moshe, i.e. the leader of the generation is like the entire generation, for the leader is everything.

MIDRASH: The King of Edom was important, so Moshe sent messengers to him personally; but Sichon was less important, so the

messengers were sent by Israel and not Moshe. Nevertheless, in *Parshas Devarim* Moshe states "I sent messengers etc.," in reference to Sichon, to indicate that the messengers were sent with Moshe's permission, even though they were actually sent by Israel (*Midrash Lekach Tov*).

SHACH AL HATORAH: Israel knew that if they fought with Sichon in Cheshbon, the city would be destroyed. Since Israel wished to take possession of intact cities after defeating Sichon (see below v. 24-26), they first sent messengers as a pretense, to lure the Amorites out of the city, so that the battle would not destroy the city.

● Why did they approach Sichon peacefully? (v. 22)

RASHI: Even though they were not commanded to approach [Sichon] peacefully, they nevertheless sought peace.*

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 THE MESSENGERS TO SICHON (v. 21)

Rashi seems to be commenting on a contradiction between the account of sending messengers to Sichon here in our *Parsha*, and the way the same event is recounted later in *Parshas Devarim*. Here we are told that the messengers were sent by the Jewish people, whereas in *Parshas Devarim* it says that they were sent by Moshe.

Rashi, however, wrote his commentary for the beginner who is studying the *Chumash* for the first time. So, if *Rashi* was troubled by a contradiction between our *Parsha* and *Parshas Devarim*, why did he address the matter here, if the contradiction first becomes apparent in *Parshas Devarim*, after reading the *later* verse?

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi was not troubled by a contradiction between our verse and the verse in *Parshas Devarim*, but rather, an inconsistency between our verse and a *previous* verse. When seeking peace with the King of Edom, the Torah states, "Moshe sent messengers" (20:14), whereas here we read, "Israel sent messengers."

At first glance, the Torah appears to be informing us that the messengers were authorized by different parties: Moshe sent the messengers to the

King of Edom, whereas here the messengers were sent by Israel, albeit with Moshe's permission (as the **Midrash** states). In fact, *Rashi* himself indicates a clear distinction between the two cases, as he writes: "They were not commanded to approach [Sichon] peacefully" (v. 22), unlike with Edom, where we can presume that there was a specific command from God to send messengers (as was the case with everything else Moshe did). So perhaps in the case of Edom when acting upon a direct command from God, Moshe sent messengers; whereas in this case where there was no command, the messengers were not sent by Moshe, but by the Jewish people themselves.

At the literal level, however, *Rashi* considered it more straightforward to argue that in *both* instances the messengers were sent by Moshe on behalf of the Jewish people, and it is only that sometimes "scripture attributes" the matter to Moshe and sometimes to Israel, i.e. we are speaking here about a nuance of scripture, and not an actual difference in the way that the messengers were appointed.

What does this nuance come to teach us? *Rashi* explains that the interchangeable use of Moshe and Israel teaches us that "Moshe is Israel, and Israel is Moshe, i.e. the leader of the generation is like the entire generation, for the leader is everything."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 33, p. 131ff.)

*See *Rashi* to *Devarim* 2:26 and commentaries, *ibid*.

די נעבר תחומך: כג ולא שבק סיוחן ית ישראל למעבר בתחומה וכנש סיוחן ית כל עמה ונפק לקרמות ישראל למדברא ואתא ליחין ואגית קרבא בישראל: כד ומתהי ישראל לפתגם דחרב וירית ית ארעה מארנונא עד יבקא עד בני עמון ארי תקיף תחומא דבני עמון: כה וכבש ישראל ית כל קרנא האלין ויטיב ישראל בכל קרני אמוראא בחשבון ובכל פפרנהא: כו ארי חשבון קרתא דסיוחן מלכא דאמוראא היא והוא אנה קרבא במלכא דמואב קדמאא ונסיב ית כל ארעה מידה עד ארנון: כז על בן ימרון מתליא עולו לחשבון תתבני ותשתכלל קרתא דסיוחן: כח ארי קידום תקיף באשא נפק מחשבון עבדי קרבא בשלהוביתא מקרתא דסיוחן קטילו עמא דשרו בלחית מואב במריא דפלהין בית דחלא רמתא דארנון: כט וי לכו מואבאי אבדתון עמא דפלהין לכמוש מסר בנהוי צירין ובנתיה בשביא למלכא דאמוראא סיוחן: ל ומלכו פסקת מחשבון עדא שלטן

עד אשר נעבר גבלך: כג ולא נתן סיוחן את ישראל עבר בגבלו ויאסף סיוחן את כל עמו ויצא לקראת ישראל המדברה ויבא יהצה וילחם בישראל: כד ויבהו ישראל לפי חרב ויירש את ארצו מארנון עד יבק עד בני עמון כי עז גבול בני עמון: כה ויקח ישראל את פל הערים האלה וישב ישראל בכל ערי האמרי בחשבון ובכל בנתיה: כו כי חשבון עיר סיוחן מלך האמרי הוא והוא נלחם במלך מואב הראשון ויקח את כל ארצו מידו עד ארנון: כז על בן יאמרו המשלים באו חשבון תבנה ותכונן עיר סיוחן: כח כי אש יצאה מחשבון להבה מקרית סיוחן אכלה ער מואב בעלי במות ארנון: כט אוילך מואב אבדת עם כמוש נתן בניו פליטם ובנתיו בשבית למלך אמרי סיוחן: ל ונירם אבד חשבון עד דיבן ונשים עד נפח אשר* עד מידבא:

*קוד על ר'

כש"י

סיוחן צמואב: יאמרו המשלים. בלעס, שאמר צו וישא משלו: המשלים. בלעס וצטור. וחס אמרו: באו חשבון. שלח היה סיוחן יכול לכבשה והלך ושכר את בלעס לקללו, וזכו שאמר לו בלך כי ידעתי את אשר תצרך מצורך וגו': תבנה ותכונן. חשבון צמס סיוחן להיות עירו: (כח) כי אש יצאה מחשבון. משכבשה סיוחן: אכלה ער מואב. שם אותה המדינה קרוי ער בלשון עברי, ולחית בלשון ארמי: ער מואב. ער של מואב: (כט) אוי לך מואב. שקללו את מואב שימסרו זידו: כמוש. שם אלהי מואב: נתן. הנותן את בניו של מואב: פליטם. נסים ופליטים מחרב ואת צנותיו צבצית וגו': (ל) ונירם. מלכות שלהם: אבד חשבון עד דיבון. מלכות ועול שביה למואב צמשבון אבד משם, וכן עד דיבון, חרגום של סר עד, כלומר סר ניר מדיבון. ניר לשון מלכות ועול וממשלת איש, כמו למען היות ניר לדוד צבדי: ונשים. שייך דגושה לשון שממה, כך יאמר המושלים ונשים אותם: עד נפח. השימונוס עד נפח:

(כג) ולא נתן סיוחן וגו'. לפי שכל מלכי כנען היו מעלין לו מס שהיה שומרם שלא יעצרו עליהם גייסות, כיון שאמרו לו ישראל אעברה צהרנך אמר להם כל עממי איני יושב כאן אלא לשמרם מפניכם ואתם אומרים כך: ויצא לקראת ישראל'. אילו היתה חשבון מלאה יתושין, אין כל צריה יכולה לכבשה, ואם היה סיוחן צכפר חלש אין כל אדם יכול לכבשו, וכל שכן אלו שהיה צחשבון. אמר הקב"ה מה אני מטריח על בני כל זאת לצור על כל עיר ועיר, נתן בלב כל אנשי המלחמה ללאת מן העיירות ונתקצו כולם למקום אחד ושם נפלו, ומשם הלכו ישראל אל הערים ואין עומד לנגדם כי אין שם איש אלא נשים וטף: (כד) בי עז. ומזה חזקו, התרחשו של הקב"ה, שאמר להם אל תאורסו וגו': (כה) בנתיה. כפרים הסמוכים לה: (כו) והוא נלחם. למע הוורך להכחצ, לפי שאמר אל תאר את מואב, וחשבון משל מואב היתה, כחצ לנו שסיוחן לקחה מהם ועל ידו טברה לישראל: מידו. מרשותו: (כז) על בן. על אותה מלחמה שלחם

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Sichon not permit the Jewish people to pass through his borders? (v. 23)

RASHI: Because all the Canaanite kings paid him a levy for protecting them against invading armies. Thus, when Israel said to him, "Let me pass through your land" (v. 22), he said to them, "My entire aim is only to protect them from you, so how can you say such a thing?" [Thus, "he went out...toward Israel" (v. 23). Even if Cheshbon were full of mosquitoes [and not men], nobody would have been able to conquer it [since it was so well fortified]. And if Sichon had been in an unfortified village [on his own], no man could have defeated him [because he was so strong]. How much more so

[were they invincible] when [Sichon] was in Cheshbon. God said, "Why should I trouble My children to besiege every city?" He put the idea into all the warriors' minds to leave the cities. They all gathered in one place, where they fell in battle. From there Israel proceeded to the cities, where they met with no opposition, since only women and children were left there.

MIZRACHI: Rashi was troubled why Sichon went out to attack the Jewish people, for being that Cheshbon was so well fortified, and Sichon was such a great warrior, he had little to fear from the Jewish people. Therefore, Rashi explained that God "put the idea into all the warriors' minds to leave the cities."

1 התיבות "ויצא לקראת ישראל" אינם ד"ה חדש, כי אם המשך דברי רש"י: "אמר להם כל עממי איני יושב כאן אלא לשמרם מפניכם ואתם אומרים כך (לפיכך) ויצא לקראת ישראל" (שיחת ש"פ חקת תשמ"ג) 2 תנחומא 3 דברים ב, ט 4 חזקין ט: 5 ב"מ נו: 6 במדבר כג, ז 7 שם כב, ו 8 שופטים יא, ג 9 מ"א יא, לו

²³ But Sichon did not permit Israel to pass through his borders. Sichon gathered all his people and went out to the desert toward Israel. He came to Yahtzah and fought against Israel. ²⁴ Israel struck him with the sword, and took possession of his land—from Arnon to Yabok, as far as Amon’s descendants, because the border of Amon’s descendants was strong. ²⁵ Israel took all these cities, and the Jewish people settled in all the cities of the Amorites, in Cheshbon and all its villages. ²⁶ For Cheshbon was the city of Sichon, King of the Amorites, and he had fought against the first King of Mo’av, seizing all his land from his possession, as far as Arnon.

²⁷ Concerning this (victory) the poets (Bilam and his father) would say:

Come to (conquer) Cheshbon!

May it be built and established as the city of Sichon!

²⁸ For fire went forth from Cheshbon,

A flame from the city of Sichon,

It consumed Ar of Mo’av,

The masters of the high places of Arnon.

²⁹ Woe is to you, Mo’av!

You are lost, people of Kemosh!

He has given his sons over as refugees,

And his daughters into captivity to Sichon, king of the Amorites.

³⁰ Their kingdom is destroyed from Cheshbon,

It has been removed from Divon.

We laid them waste as far as Nofach,

Which is near Medeva.

TORAS MENACHEM

🕒 SICHON’S CONCERN (v. 23)

What led *Rashi* to conclude, “Sichon gathered all his people and went out to the desert toward Israel,” (v. 23) because God “put the idea into all the warriors’ minds to leave the cities”? This is a *Midrashic* interpretation which surely has no basis at the literal level. It thus does not appear to belong in *Rashi*’s commentary which is aimed at explaining solely the literal meaning of scripture.

According to *Mizrachi*, *Rashi* wrote that God “put the idea into all the warriors’ minds to leave the cities,” so as to be consistent with his prior statement, “Even if Cheshbon were full of mosquitoes, nobody would have been able to conquer it. And if Sichon had been in an unfortified village, no man could have defeated him.” I.e. after reading that Sichon was such a formidable enemy, one might wonder why he felt threatened by the Jewish people. It must be, therefore, that he was not at all threatened, but that God miraculously “put the idea into all the warriors’ minds to leave the cities.”

However, this appears to be incompatible with *Rashi*’s view. *Rashi* commented earlier, “All the Canaanite kings paid him a levy for protecting them against invading armies.” If Sichon had remained in his capital city of Cheshbon, and had not gone out to attack the Jewish people, they would have passed through his land and he would have lost his international acclaim as protector of the borders of Canaan. Consequently, Sichon was forced to leave the fortified city of Cheshbon to protect his reputation.

Thus, the question stands: What led *Rashi* to conclude that God “put the idea into all the warriors’ minds to leave the cities”?

THE EXPLANATION

As explained above, Sichon was forced to leave the city of Cheshbon to prevent the Jewish people from entering the land of Canaan, to protect his reputation. What is problematic is why he “gathered all his people” (v. 23), to assist him. For being that *Rashi* has just explained that “if Sichon had been in an unfortified village [on his own], no man could have conquered it,” Sichon clearly did not need the assistance of “all his people” to fight the Jewish people.

Thus, we can imagine that when Sichon began to rouse his entire nation, encouraging them to go out to confront Israel, they would have wondered: “Why does Sichon, the mighty warrior, need any of our help, never mind all of our help? He should be able to defeat the Jewish people singlehandedly! Apparently, he is scared of being defeated by them....”

The fact that the presence of the Jewish people appeared to have cast doubts in the mind of the mighty Sichon about the likelihood of victory would certainly have caused the people to harbor doubts too. So *Rashi* was troubled: How did Sichon succeed in mobilizing all his people, when Sichon’s own hesitation had made them fear doom? Sichon himself would have been motivated to fight to protect his international reputation as “guardian of the border of Canaan”; but what interest would his people have in risking their lives to fight an enemy against which even their King lacked confidence?

Rashi was thus forced to conclude that something supernatural must have occurred here, namely that God “put the idea into all the warriors’ minds to leave the cities.”

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Chukas* 5743)

מדיבון וצדיאו עד נפת הסמיד עד מידבא: לא ויתבי ישראל בארע אמוראה: לב ושלח משה לאללא ית יעור וכבשו כפרנהא ותריד ית אמוראה די תמן: ג ואתפניאו וסליקו לארע מתנן ונפק עוג מלכא דמתנן לקדמותהון הוא וכל עמה לאנחא קרבא לאדרעי לז ואמר יי למשה לא תדחל מנה ארי בידך מסרית יתה וית כל עמה וית ארעה ותעבד לה כמא די עבדת לסיחון מלכא דאמוראה די יתב בחשבון: לה ומחו יתה וית בנזחי וית כל עמה עד דלא אשתאר לה משויב ויריתו ית ארעה: א ונטלו בני ישראל ושרו במישריא דמואב מעברא לירדנא דירחו: פ פ פ

לא וישב ישראל בארץ האמרי: לב וישלח משה לרגל את יעזר וילכדו בנתיה וירש וקו וירש] את האמרי אשר שם: לג ויפנו ויעלו דרך הבשן ויצא עוג מלך הבשן לקראתם הוא וכל עמו למלחמה אדרעי: [מפסיר] לז ויאמר יהוה אל משה אל תירא אתו כי בידך נתתי אתו ואת כל עמו ואת ארצו ועשית לו כאשר עשית לסיחון מלך האמרי אשר יושב בחשבון: לה ויכו אתו ואת בניו ואת כל עמו עד בלתי השאיר לו שריד וירשו את ארצו: כב א ויסעו בני ישראל ויחנו בערבות מואב מעבר לירדן ירחו: ס ס ס

פ"ז פסוקים, למידב"א סימן, ימוא"ל סימן, עז"י סימן.

רש"י

בצטטרות קניס, שנאמר³ כי רק עוג מלך הבשן נשאר מיתר הרפאים: (לה) ויכו אותו. משה רגו, כדאיתא בצרכות צהרואה עקר טורח צת תלתא פרסי וכו':⁴ חסלת פרשת חקת

(לג) וישלח משה לרגל את יעזר. המרגלים לכדוה. אמרו לא נעשה כראשונים, צטוחים אנו צכח תפלתו של משה להלחם! (לד) אל תירא אותו. שהיה משה ירא להלחם, שמא תעמוד לו זכותו של אצרהס, שנאמר ויצא הפליט², הוא עוג, שפלט מן הרפאים שהכו כדלעומר וחזיריו

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What did the spies do at Ya'azer? (v. 32)

RASHI: The spies captured it. They said, "We won't be like the first spies! We trust in the power of Moshe's prayers to help us fight!"

● Why did God tell Moshe not to fear Og? (v. 34)

RASHI: Moshe was afraid to fight, for perhaps the merit of Avraham would protect [Og]—as the verse states, "A runaway came" (Bereishit 14:13), this was Og who had escaped from the Refa'im, who were killed by Kedarla'omer and his allies at Ashteros-Karnayim, as the verse states, "Only Og, King of Bashan, remained from the rest of the Refa'im" (Devarim 3:11).

● Who killed Og? (v. 35)

RASHI: Moshe killed him, as it is recorded in Tractate Brachos, in chapter Haro'eh how [Og] uprooted a mountain of three parsos etc.

TALMUD: Og said, "How big is the Israelite camp? Three parsos. I will go and uproot a mountain three parsos long, throw it on them and kill them!"

He went and uprooted a mountain three parsos in size and carried it on his head.

God sent ants which bored a hole in it, causing it to sink around his neck. He tried to pull it off, but his teeth stuck out on each side, and he was unable to pull it off...

Moshe was ten cubits tall. He took an ax ten cubits long, leapt ten cubits into the air, and struck [Og] on his ankle, killing him (Brachos 54b).

GUR ARYEH: God had told Moshe personally, "Do not fear him... I have given him into your hand" (v. 34). Therefore, Rashi concluded that, at the literal level, Moshe must have killed Og.

TORAS MENACHEM

☞ OG'S DEMISE (v. 35)

What led Rashi to conclude that, at the literal level, Moshe killed Og singlehandedly? The Torah indicates that, on the contrary, the Jewish people killed Og collectively, as verse 35 states, "They struck him down," in the plural.

Gur Aryeh writes that Rashi's comment here is based on the Torah's use of the singular in verse 34: "God said to Moshe, 'Do not fear him, for

I have given him into your hand," which suggests that Moshe's hand alone was going to eliminate Og.

However, where is Gur Aryeh's proof that "I have given him into your hand" refers to Moshe in person, and not Moshe as a representative of the Jewish people? In fact, the rest of the verse clearly applies to the Jewish people in general, and even Rashi does not claim that Moshe personally annihilated "all his people and his land" (v. 34).

THE WAR WITH OG, KING OF BASHAN

21:31 **I**srael settled in the land of the Amorites. ³² Moshe sent men to spy out Ya'azer and they captured its villages, driving out the Amorites who lived there.

³³ Then they turned and headed north toward the Bashan. Og, the King of Bashan, came out toward them with all his people, to wage war at Edre'iy.

MAFTIR ³⁴ God said to Moshe, "Do not fear him, for I have given him into your hand—as well as all his people and his land. You will do the same to him as you did to Sichon, King of the Amorites, who lived in Cheshbon."

³⁵ They struck him down, as well as his sons and all his people—no survivors remained—and they took possession of his land.

22 ¹ The children of Israel traveled and camped in the plains of Mo'au, across the Jordan, near Jericho.

HAFTARAHs: CHUKAS - P. 305. CHUKAS-BALAK - P. 308. EREV ROSH CHODESH - P. 317. ROSH CHODESH - P. 319.

Maftir: Rosh Chodesh—p. 322.

TORAS MENACHEM

THE EXPLANATION

In his commentary to verse 32, *Rashi* writes that the spies that Moshe sent were confident that they would conquer Ya'azer, saying, "We trust in the power of Moshe's prayers to help us fight!"

Presumably, the spies' attitude was representative of the Jewish people in general at the time, who were faced with the prospect of fighting many wars to conquer the Land. Thus, when it came to the war against Og, the people would also have been totally confident, saying, "We trust in the power of Moshe's prayers to help us fight!"

Consequently, when *Rashi* writes in his commentary to verse 34, "Moshe was afraid to fight," it appears that *Rashi* is referring to Moshe *in particular* and not the rest of the Jewish people, i.e. the Jewish people were not afraid due to their trust in Moshe, but Moshe *himself* feared, "perhaps the merit of Avraham would protect [Og]."

Therefore, when God said to Moshe, "Do not fear him, for I have given him into your hand," God must have been speaking *specifically* to Moshe, as it was Moshe *alone* who was scared of Og. And since God placed Og in "his" (Moshe's) *personal* hand, it follows at the literal level that Moshe must have killed Og singlehandedly.

Nevertheless, the remainder of the verse, where God promised victory over "all his people and his land," was clearly *not* addressed to Moshe in particular. For Moshe's personal concern was only about Og himself (due to his merit of helping Avraham), but with regard to "his people and his land," Moshe had no special concern, and was equally confident as the rest of the Jewish people about their defeat. Thus, when God promised a victory over Og's "people and his land," God was addressing Moshe and the rest of the people *equally*, so it follows that Moshe must have killed Og's people together with Israel.

RASHI AND THE TALMUD

One problem with the above explanation is that it does not fully explain the use of the plural in verse 35: "They struck him down, as well as his sons and all his people." Surely, it was not "they" who struck Og down, but Moshe alone?

At first glance we might argue that the Torah merely employed an abbreviated phrase: Rather than writing, "Moshe and the Jewish people struck him, his sons and all his people," the Torah simply stated, "They struck him down, as well as his sons and all his people," without getting into the details of who exactly killed whom.

However this interpretation is difficult to accept, for while the victory over Og's sons and his nation was in the Jewish people's merit, God had stressed that the elimination of Og himself was to be specifically in Moshe's special merit: "I have given him into *your hand*." Therefore, it is very unlikely that the Torah would have blurred the victories of Moshe and the Jewish people together in one single statement, "They struck him down, as well as his sons and all his people," when there were two entities here (Moshe and Israel), each with their own *distinct* merits.

Rather, it would seem that while *initially* God had promised that Og would fall in Moshe's merit, something happened in between that caused him to be eliminated in the merit of *all* the Jewish people (and thus the verse states, "They struck him down"). And to explain how this is the case, *Rashi* cited the Talmudic teaching that Og "uprooted a mountain of three parsos."

If Og had only desired to kill *some* of the Jewish people, it is conceivable that the merit of having helped Avraham might still have saved his life. But when Og took a large mountain, indicating that he wished to kill *all* of Avraham's Jewish descendants, God forbid (see *Talmud*), the merit of helping Avraham no longer protected him. Thus, while originally it was thought to have been necessary to draw on the unique merit of Moshe to counteract the merit of Og (as God stressed to Moshe, "I have given him into *your hand*"), when Og forfeited his merit by attempting to kill all the Jews, the merit of the Jewish people *in general* proved sufficient to eliminate him. Therefore, the Torah stresses that "they struck him," because it was no longer necessary to draw on the unique merit of Moshe to bring Og's demise, as the merit of all the Jewish people was sufficient—even though it was Moshe who actually struck him down on their behalf.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, p. 134ff.)



Parshas Chukas contains 3 positive *mitzvos*

1. The laws of the red heifer [19:2].
2. The laws of ritual impurity caused by a corpse [19:14].
3. The laws of the sprinkling-water, which renders a ritually impure person pure from the ritual impurity caused by a corpse [19:19,21].



parshas Balak

פַּרְשַׁת בַּלַּק

🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

Why should a *Parsha* of the Torah be named after Balak, a wicked anti-Semite, who sought to eliminate the Jewish people (*God forbid*)?

A number of positive insights can be learned from the name of our *Parsha*:

- “He looked into the Torah and created the world” (*Zohar* II 161b). Being that the Torah is the blueprint of creation it follows that even the lowest and most debased aspects of the world are included in the Torah. Thus, a whole *Parsha* of the Torah is named “Balak,” indicating that the existence of even the most wicked inhabitants of the world are included in the Torah’s overall plan for this world.
- Furthermore, the Torah brings to light that, ultimately, evil only exists in order to be transformed into good—as it is written in *Proverbs*, “God has made all things for Himself, even the wicked on the day of evil” (16:4), on which the *Alter Rebbe* explains, “The wicked man will repent from his evil and turn his evil into ‘day’” (*Tanya*, ch. 27). Thus Balak, as he is written in the Torah, represents the good that will eventually arise from people such as Balak, when they are transformed to goodness.
- This is also the inner meaning why the promise of Mashiach’s coming appears in the Torah here in *Parshas Balak* (24:17ff.), because with the Redemption we will witness the complete *transformation* of the non-Jewish nations to actually assist the Jewish people.
- Often, the two *Parshiyos* of *Chukas* and *Balak* are read together on one *Shabbos*. At first glance, the themes of these two *Parshiyos* appear to be diametrically opposed: “*Chukas*,” meaning “supra-rational law,” represents the highest level of Torah observance, where a person loyally follows God’s commands even when they make no sense to him; whereas *Balak* represents the wicked motives of a debased anti-semite, contrary to God’s wishes.

However, based on the above explanation that Balak represents the transformation of evil to good, it follows that the two *Parshiyos* of *Chukas* and *Balak* actually correspond to the two paths of serving God: that of the righteous (*Chukas*) and that of the *ba’al teshuvah* (*Balak*).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 23, pp. 170-1; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Balak* 5740 and *Chukas-Balak* 5742)

ב וַיֵּרָא בָלָק בֶּן-צִפּוֹר אֶת כָּל דֵּי עֲבַד יִשְׂרָאֵל
 לְאִמּוֹרִי: ג וַיִּחַל מוֹאָבָה מִן קִדְמָה עִמָּא
 לְחַדָּא אַרְבֵּי סִנֵּי הוּא וְעַקְתָּ לְמוֹאָבָה מִן קִדְמָה
 בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ד וַיֹּאמֶר מוֹאָב לְסִבֵּי מִדְּיָן כְּעַן
 יִשְׁצִוּ קְהֵלָא ית כָּל סַחְרֵינָא כְּמָא דְמַלְחִיד
 תוֹרָא ית יְרוֹקָא דְחַקְלָא וּבָלָק בֶּן צִפּוֹר
 מִלְפָּא לְמוֹאָב בְּעֵדְנָא הֵהוּא: ה וַיִּשְׁלַח אֲנֻנְדִין
 לְוֵת בָּלָעַם בֶּר בְּעוֹר לְפִתּוֹר אֲרָם דְעַל פֶּרֶת
 אֲרַע בְּנֵי עַמָּה לְמַקְרֵי לָהּ לְמִימֵר הָא עִמָּא
 נִפְק מִמְצָרִים הָא חָפָא ית עֵין
 שְׁמִשָּׂא דְאֲרַעָא וְהוּא שְׂרִי מְלַקְבְּלִי: ו וּכְעַן
 אִיתָא כְּעַן לֹאֵט לִי ית עִמָּא דְדִין אַרְבֵּי תַקְיֹף

ב וַיֵּרָא בָלָק בֶּן-צִפּוֹר אֶת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאִמּוֹרֵי:
 ג וַיִּגַּר מוֹאָב מִפְּנֵי הָעָם מֵאֵד בִּי רַב-הוּא וַיִּקַּץ מוֹאָב מִפְּנֵי בְנֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל: ד וַיֹּאמֶר מוֹאָב אֶל-זִקְנֵי מִדְיָן עֲתָה יִלְחָכוּ הַקְּהָלִי
 אֶת-כָּל-סִבֵּיבְתֵינוּ בְּלַחַד הַשּׁוֹר אֶת יֶרֶק הַשָּׂדֶה וּבָלָק בֶּן-
 צִפּוֹר מֶלֶךְ לְמוֹאָב בָּעֵת הַהוּא: ה וַיִּשְׁלַח מְלָאכִים אֶל-בָּלָעַם
 בֶּן-בְּעוֹר פְּתוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר עַל-הַנֶּחֱרָר אֶרֶץ בְּנֵי-עַמּוֹ לְקִרְאֵ-לוֹ
 לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה עִם יַעֲזָא מִמְצָרִים הִנֵּה כִסֶּה אֶת-עֵין הָאָרֶץ וְהוּא
 יוֹשֵׁב מִמְלֵי: ו וְעַתָּה לְכֹהֲנָא אֲרַהֲ-לִי אֶת-הָעָם הַזֶּה כִּי-
 עֲצוּם הוּא מִפְּנֵי אוֹלֵי אוֹכְלֵי נֶבֶל-בּוֹ וְאֲנִרְשָׁנוּ מִן-הָאָרֶץ כִּי

רש"י

היה, וכיון שמת סיחון מנוכו עליהם לנזרך שעה: (ב) פתורה. כשולחמי הזה שהכל מריזין לו מעות, כך כל המלכים מריזין לו ואגרתיבהם. ולפי פשוטו של מקרא כך שם המקום: ארץ בני עמו. של בלק. משם היה, וזה היה מתנבא ואומר לו עתיד אתה למלוך. ואם תאמר מפני מה השרה הקצ"ה שכינתו על גוי רשע, כדי שלא יהא פתחון פה לאומות לומר אלו היו לנו נביאים חזרנו למוטב, העמיד להם נביאים והם פרוזו גדר העולם, שצתחלה היו גדורים צעירות וזה נתן להם עצה להפקיר עצמן לזנות: לקרא לו. הקריאה שלו היתה ולהנחתו, שהיה פוסק לו ממון הרבה: עם יצא ממצרים. ואם תאמר מה מזיקך: הנה כסה את עין הארץ. סיחון ועוג שהיו שומרים אותנו עמדו עליהם והרגום: והוא יושב ממלי. חסר כתוב, קרובים הם להכריתני,

(3) וירא בלק בן צפור את כל אשר עשה ישראל לאמורי. אמר אלו שני מלכים שהיינו בטוחים עליהם לא עמדו בפניהם, אלו על אחת כמה וכמה. לפיכך ויגר מואב: (ג) ויגר. לשון מורא, כמו גורו לכס: ויקץ מואב. קאו צחייהם (כמו קנתי צחיי³, והוא מקרא קצר): (ד) אל זקני מדין. והלא מעולם היו שונאים זה את זה, שנאמר המכה את מדין צדקה מואב, שצאו מדין על מואב למלחמה. אלא מיראתן של ישראל עשו שלום ציניהם. ומה ראה מואב ליטול עצה ממדין, כיון שראו את ישראל נוזחים שלא כמנהג העולם, אמרו מנהיגם של אלו צמדין נהגדל, נשאל מהם מה מדתו. אמרו לו אין כחו אלא צפיו. אמרו אף אנו נצא עליהם בצדע שכחו צפיו: בלחורך השור. כל מה שהשור מלחך אין צו צרכה: בעת ההוא. לא היה ראוי למלכות. מנסיכי מדין

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What did Balak “see”?** (v. 2)
RASHI: He said: “If these two kings [Sichon and Og] in whom we placed our trust could not stand up to [the Jewish people], then we certainly cannot.” Therefore, “*Mo’av became terrified*” (v. 3).
SIFSEI CHACHAMIM: *Rashi* was troubled why the verse states that *only “Balak saw everything that Israel had done to the Amorites.”* Surely others also saw?

Rashi thus explains that it was Balak in particular who meditated upon the significance of what had happened, and therefore the Torah describes him as the one who truly “saw” what had happened.
GUR ARYEH: *Rashi* is teaching us that verses 2 and 3 are connected: “Balak...saw everything that Israel had done to the Amorites—and therefore—*Mo’av became terrified of Israel.*” For if one does not interpret scripture in this way, what is verse 2 teaching us?

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 **THE FEAR OF BALAK & MO’AV** (v. 2-3)
 In his comments to verse 2, *Rashi* explains the connection between verses 2 and 3: It is precisely because “*Balak... saw everything that Israel had done to the Amorites,*” that “*Mo’av became terrified of Israel,*” (as **Gur Aryeh** writes).
 However, this fact appears to be obvious even without *Rashi*, as *Gur Aryeh* himself notes: “*If one does not interpret scripture in this way, what is verse 2 teaching us?*” Verse 2 does not appear to stand on its own; it merely records Balak’s observation without his subsequent conclusion or reaction. Therefore, the only reasonable explanation for the sequence of verses 2 and 3 would appear to be that Mo’av’s terror in verse 3 was the result of Balak’s “observation” in verse 2.
 What, then, is *Rashi* adding here that the reader could not have understood for himself?

According to **Sifsei Chachamim**, verse 2 teaches us that Balak alone meditated on the significance of what had happened (“Balak... saw”) and he thus alerted the people to the apparent danger at hand (in verse 3).
 However, it is difficult to accept at the literal level that the Jewish people’s defeat of Sichon and Og was appreciated as a military threat only by Balak and not by his people. Why would this require special “meditation” or deep thought?
THE EXPLANATION
 Verse 3 states the reason for the Mo’avite people’s fear: “Mo’av became terrified of Israel, because they were numerous.” Clearly, the large population size of the Jewish people was known to Mo’av well before the war against Sichon, especially as the Jewish people “had passed round the southern and eastern sides of the land of Mo’av” (*Rashi* to Bamidbar 21:13), before the war.

🌀 BALAK SEEKS THE ASSISTANCE OF BILAM 🌀

22:2 **B**alak, the son of Tzipor, saw everything that Israel had done to the Amorites. ³ Mo'av became terrified of Israel, because they were numerous. (In fact), because of the children of Israel, Mo'av became sick (of their own lives).

⁴ Mo'av said to the elders of Midian, "This community (of Jews) is now going to gnaw away everything around us, just as an ox in the field eats up vegetation!"

Balak the son of Tzipor (was not fit for sovereignty, but he had just been appointed) King of Mo'av at that time (as an emergency measure after Sichon's death). ⁵ He sent messengers to Bilam the son of Be'or—to Pesor, which is by the river of (Balak's own) native land—calling him, saying:

"Look! A nation has come out of Egypt! Look, it has covered the 'eye' of the land (by killing Sichon and Og, who used to protect us)! They are sitting right by me (and are poised to attack). ⁶ So now, please come and curse this people for me, for they are more powerful than me. Perhaps I will (then) be able to strike them and drive them out of the land. For I know that whoever you bless is blessed and whoever you curse is cursed."

TORAS MENACHEM

So, verse 3 appears to be speaking of an occurrence before verse 2: Verse 3 describes the general fear that Mo'av had for the Jewish people even before they defeated Sichon and Og, whereas verse 2 describes Balak's fear that arose after the Jewish people's victory, "Balak...saw everything that Israel had done to the Amorites."

Since "the Torah is not in chronological order" (*Rashi to Bereishis 6:3*), it is conceivable that verse 3 could predate verse 2. On the other hand, at the literal level it is preferable to presume that Torah is in chronological order unless there is a good reason that indicates otherwise.

Thus, in our case, *Rashi* understood that it would be more appropriate to accept that verses 2 and 3 are, in fact, in chronological order, and so he explains that Mo'av's terror (verse 3) was indeed a result of the Jewish military victories which Balak saw (verse 2).

WHAT ONLY BALAK SAW

However this begs the question: Why does verse 2 stress that only Balak "saw" the Jewish people's victories? Surely this would have been public knowledge to all the people of Mo'av?

To answer this question, *Rashi* writes, "He said, 'If these two kings [Sichon and Og] in whom we placed our trust could not stand up to [the Jewish people], then we certainly cannot.'"

Here, *Rashi* is referring to a prior statement he made in *Parshas Chukas*, to explain why "Sichon did not permit Israel to pass through his borders" (21:23). *Rashi* writes that this was "Because all the Cana'anite kings paid him a levy for protecting them against invading armies. Thus, when Israel said to him, 'Let me pass through your land' (ibid. v. 22), he said to them, 'My entire purpose is only to protect them from you, so how can you say such a thing?' [Thus] 'he went out...toward Israel' (ibid. v. 23)."

Now, if it had been public knowledge that the Cana'anite kings paid Sichon a levy to protect their borders, then the Jewish people would never have made a futile request to "let me pass through your land." Evidently, the non-Jewish kings kept Sichon's protection a secret among themselves.

Thus, when Balak saw Sichon and Og defeated by the Jewish people, he realized that the national security of Mo'av was threatened, since Sichon and Og were the "two kings in whom we placed our trust." However, since the levy to Sichon and Og was not public knowledge, the

people of Mo'av would not have been aware of the significance of what had occurred.

And since the Jewish people circumvented the entire land of Mo'av, it appeared that they were not planning to attack Mo'av at all. Consequently, the size of the Jewish people and their victory over Sichon and Og were not likely to have been the cause of significant concern to the people of Mo'av. So verse 2 stresses that Balak alone "saw everything that Israel had done to the Amorites," for he alone realized its implications for the security of Mo'av.

Thus when *Rashi* innovated that verses 2 and 3 have a cause and effect relationship (as explained above), he was informing the reader that Mo'av's terror in verse 3 was caused by Balak's making his own personal knowledge and fears public, i.e. that Sichon and Og had actually been paid to protect Mo'av. And then, "Mo'av became terrified of Israel, because they were numerous." Beforehand, the size and military might of the Jewish people had not been perceived as a threat to the Mo'avites, because they did not see Israel as an enemy; but when Balak suggested to them that Israel was indeed an enemy, and the only reason they had not attacked before was because of Sichon and Og's protection, "Mo'av became terrified of Israel."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, p. 141ff.)

🌀 The Last Word 🌀

When the wicked Balak "saw everything that Israel had done to the Amorites" (v. 2), he could not restrain himself from telling his people (see *Toras Menachem*), and they "became terrified of Israel" (v. 3).

On the other hand, when Moshe feared for the safety of the Jewish people in the battle against Og, because Og had the merit of having helped Avraham (see *Rashi to 21:34*), he did not tell the Jewish people, so as not to unduly alarm them (cf. *Toras Menachem* ibid.). For Moshe was a true leader who prioritized the needs of his people before his own concerns.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, pp. 148-9)

הוא מני מאים אכל לאַנְחָא ביה קרב ואתרכנה מן ארעא ארי ידענא ית די תברך מברך ודי תלוט ליט: ו ואולו סבי מואב וסבי מדין וקסמא בידיהון ואתו לות בלעם ומלילו עמה פתנמי בלק: ה ואמר להון ביתו הכא בליליא ואתיב יתכון פתנמא כמא די ימלל יי עמי ואוריכו רברבי מואב עם בלעם: ו ואתא מימר מן קדם יי לות בלעם ואמר מן גבריא האליו דעמדי: י ואמר בלעם קדם יי בלק בר צפור מלקא דמואב שלח לותי: יא הא עמא די נפק ממצרים וחפא ית עין שמשא דארעא כען איתא לוט לי יתה מאים אכל לאַנְחָא בה קרב ואתרכנה: יב ואמר יי לבלעם לא תול עמהון לא תלוט ית עמא ארי בריך הוא: יג וקם בלעם בצפרא ואמר לרברבי בלק אזילו לארעכון ארי לית רעוא קדם יי למשבקי למזל עמכו: יד וקמו רברבי מואב ואתו לות בלק ואמרו סרב בלעם למיתי עמנא: טו ואוסף עוד בלק למשלח רברבין סניאין וקירין מאלין: טז ואתו לות בלעם ואמרו לה בדנן אמר בלק בר צפור לא כען תתנעע מלמתי לותי: יז ארי יקרא איקרא לחדא וכל די תימר לי אעבד ואיתא כען לוט לי ית עמא דדין: יח ואתיב בלעם ואמר לעבדי בלק אם יתן לי בלק מלי ביתה כסף

ידעתי את אשר-תברך מברך ואשר תאר יואר: ו וילכו זקני מואב וזקני מדין וקסמים בידם ויבאו אל-בלעם וידברו אליו דברי בלק: ה ויאמר אליהם לינו פה הלילה והשבתי אתכם דבר כאשר ידבר יהוה אלי וישבו שרי-מואב עם-בלעם: ט ויבא אלהים אל-בלעם ויאמר מי האנשים האלה עמדי: י ויאמר בלעם אל-האלהים בלק בן-צפור מלך מואב שלח אלי: יא הנה העם היצא ממצרים ויבס את-עין הארץ עתה לכה קבה-לי אתו אולי אוכל להלחם בו וגרשתיו: יב ויאמר אלהים אל-בלעם לא תלך עמהם לא תאר את-העם כי ברוך הוא: [שני] [חמישי כשהן מחוברין] יג ויקם בלעם בפקר ויאמר אל-שרי בלק לכו אל-ארעכם כי מאן יהוה לתתי להלך עמכם: יד ויקומו שרי מואב ויבאו אל-בלק ויאמרו מאן בלעם הלך עמנו: טו ויסף עוד בלק שלח שרים רבים ונכבדים מאלה: טז ויבאו אל-בלעם ויאמרו לו כה אמר בלק בן-צפור אל-נא תפנע מהלך אלי: יז כי-כבד אכבדך מאד וכל אשר-תאמר אלי אעשה ולכה-נא קבה-לי את העם הזה: יח ויען בלעם ויאמר אל-עבדי בלק אם-יתן-לי בלק

כש"י

גדולים מכס: וישבו. לשון עכבה: (ט) מי האנשים האלה עמך. להטעותו צא. אמר פעמים שאין הכל גלוי לפניו, אין דעתו שוב עליו, אף אני אראה עת שאוכל לקלל ולא יצין:³ (י) בלק בן צפור וגו'. אף על פי שאיני חשוד בעיניך, חשוד אני צעיני המלכים:³ (יא) קבה לי. זו קשה מארה לי, שהוא נוקב ומפרש: וגרשתיו. מן העולם. ובלק לא אמר אלא ואגרשנו מן הארץ, איני מצקש אלא להסיעם מעלי, ובלעם היה שונאם יותר מצלק:³ (יב) לא תלך עמהם. אמר לו אם כן אקללם במקומי. אמר לו לא תאור את העם. אמר לו אם כן אצרכם. אמר לו אינס ריכין לצרכך, כי צרוך הוא. משל חומרים ללרעה לא מדובשיך ולא מעוקליך:³ (יג) להלך עמכם. אלא עם שרים גדולים מכס. למדנו שרווח גבוהה ולא רצה לגלות שהוא צרשותו של מקום אלא בלשון גסות, לפיכך ויוסף עוד צלק: (יד) כי כבד אכבדך מאד.

כמו כי אמילס:¹ (ו) נבה בו. אני ועמי נכה צהס. דבר אחר לשון משנה הוא, מנכה לו מן הדמים,² לחסר מהם מעט:³ כי ידעתי וגו'. ע"י מלחמת סיוחון שעזרתו להכות את מואב:³ (ז) וקסמים בידם. כל מיני קסמים, שלא יאמר אין כלי תשישי עמי. דבר אחר קסם זה נעלו צידם זקני מדין, אמרו אם יבא עמנו צפעס הזאת יש צו ממש, ואם ידחנו אין צו תועלת, לפיכך כשאמר להם לינו פה הלילה, אמרו אין צו תקוה, הניחוהו והלכו להם, שנאמר וישבו שרי מואב עם בלעם, אבל זקני מדין הלכו להם:³ (ח) לינו פה הלילה. אין רוח הקודש שורה עליו אלא בלילה, וכן לכל נביאי אומות העולם, וכן לצן בחלוס הלילה, שנאמר ויבא אלהים אל לצן הארמי בחלוס הלילה.⁴ כאדם ההולך אלא פלגשו צהצחצח:³ כאשר ידבר ה' אלי. אם ימליכני ללכת עם צני אדם כמותכם אלך עמכם, שמה אין כבודו לחתי להלך אלא עם שרים

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How did Bilam's words to God in verse 11 differ from Balak's words to God in verse 6? (v. 11)

RASHI: The term קבה לי "condemn for me," [used by Bilam here] is stronger than לי ארה "curse for me" [used by Balak in verse 6], for "condemning" suggests a specific and detailed [curse].

[Bilam wanted to] "drive them away" [i.e. to rid them] from the world. But Balak said only to "drive them out of the land" (v. 6), [as if to say], "I only want to get them away from me." But Bilam hated them more than Balak did.

⁷ The elders of Mo'av and the elders of Midian went, with tools of black-magic in their hands (so that Bilam would not complain he did not have the right tools available). They came to Bilam and told him Balak's message.

⁸ He said to them, "Stay here overnight, and I will give you an answer when God speaks to me." So the Mo'avite dignitaries stayed with Bilam.

⁹ God came to Bilam and said, "Who are these men with you?"

¹⁰ Bilam said to God, "Balak the son of Tzipor the King of Mo'av has sent them to me (with this message): ¹¹ 'Look! The nation coming out of Egypt has covered the 'eye' of the land. Now come and condemn them for me. Perhaps I will (then) be able to fight with them and drive them away.'"

¹² God said to Bilam, "Don't go with them! (And) don't curse the nation (even without going with them. They don't need your blessing either) because they are blessed."

¹³ When Bilam got up in the morning, he said to Balak's dignitaries, "Go back to your country, for God has refused to let me go with you (because you are not sufficiently high-ranking officers)."

¹⁴ So Mo'av's dignitaries set off.

They returned to Balak and said, "Bilam refuses to come with us (because we're not high-ranking enough)."

¹⁵ Balak sent many more dignitaries, higher in rank than these (previous ones).

¹⁶ They came to Bilam and said to him, "This is what Balak the son of Tzipor said, 'Please do not refrain from coming to me. ¹⁷ For I will give you tremendous honor (even more than in the past), and whatever you tell me to do I will do. So please come and condemn this people for me.'"

¹⁸ Bilam replied, saying to Balak's servants, "Even if Balak would give me his house full of silver and

SECOND
READING
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JOINED)

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

KLI YAKAR: According to Rashi's explanation, Bilam used harsher language about the Jewish people than Balak, because Bilam hated them more. However, this is difficult to accept because Bilam was speaking to God and knowing how much God loves the Jewish people he would not have used expressions that denote an additional measure of hatred for Israel, which might have caused God to refuse him permission to take up Balak's calling.

Rather, we are forced to conclude that, to the contrary, אָרָה (v. 6) is actually a stronger term than קָנָה (v. 11). And likewise, Bilam's statement to God that he had been asked to "drive away," the Jewish people (v. 11), was weaker than Balak's actual request to "drive them out of the land" (v. 6), because Balak's words suggested removing any trace of the Jewish people from the world.

TORAS MENACHEM

🕯️ BALAK'S HATRED OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE (v. 11)

While **Kli Yakar's** criticisms of Rashi appear, at first glance, to be valid at the literal level, the following could be argued in defense of Rashi:

Rashi was troubled by a general problem here which led him to conclude that "Bilam hated them more than Balak did." Since the Jewish people had been commanded, "Do not besiege Mo'av" (*Devarim* 2:9, cited by Rashi above 21:26), there was no real basis for Balak to fear an attack from the Jewish people. The fact that Balak and his entire nation did fear the Jewish people indicates that they were simply unaware of this command, but Bilam was a prophet who clearly would have been aware of God's words.

So on reading the current account of how Balak attempted to enlist the help of Bilam to curse the Jewish people in an act of self-defense by Mo'av, the reader will wonder: Why did Bilam not simply tell Balak that the Jewish people were not going to attack them because God had instructed them not to?

This question forced Rashi to conclude that "Bilam hated them more than Balak did," i.e. Balak's hatred for the Jewish people could at least be "veiled" in arguments of self-defense and national security. Bilam, on the other hand, hated the Jewish people to the extent that he wished them to be eliminated, *even though he knew that they posed no threat.**

Therefore, concluded Rashi, such a hostile, irrational hatred expressed itself in Bilam's choice of words when speaking of the Jewish people. Whereas Balak had requested Bilam to curse the Jewish people, Bilam desired to condemn them; and whereas Balak only wished to remove them from his land, Bilam wanted to remove them completely from the world.

Nevertheless, the Jewish people ultimately profited from Bilam's hatred, "for when God reversed his mouth, he blessed them with a similar intensity with which he had intended to curse them," (Rashi to 24:6).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 38, p. 85ff.)

*This explains why when speaking to God (in v. 11), Bilam completely omitted Balak's statement, "They are sitting right by me (and are poised to attack)" (v. 5), for Bilam knew that this was simply not true, as the Jewish people had been commanded not to attack Mo'av.

וְדַבֵּר לֵית לִי רְשׁוֹ לְמַעַבְדְּךָ עַל גְּזֵרַת מִימְרָא דִּי אֱלֹהֵי לְמַעַבְדְּךָ זַעֲרִיתָ אוֹ רַבְתָּא: יט וְכַעַן אוֹרִיכוּ כְעַן הֵבָא אֶף אַתּוּן בְּלִילָא וְאַדְעָ מָא יוֹסֵף יֵי לְמַלְלָא עֲמִי: כ וְאַתָּא מִימַר מִן קֳדָם יֵי לְבַלְעָם בְּלִילָא וְאָמַר לֵה אִם לְמַקְרִי לְךָ אַתּוּ גְבַרְיָא קוּם אוֹל עֲמַהוּן וְבָרַם ית פִּתְגָמָא דִּי אַמְלִל עֲמָךְ יתָה תַּעֲבֹד: כא וְקָם בְּלַעַם בְּעֶפְרָא וְנָרוּ ית אֶתְנָה וְאוֹל עִם רַבְרַבֵי מוֹאָב: כב וְתַקַּף רִגְזָא דִּי אַרִי אוֹל הוּא וְאַתְעַתֵּד מְלֻאָכָא דִּי בְּאַרְחָא לְשַׁטְן לֵה וְהוּא רַכֵּב עַל אֶתְנָה וְתַרְיִן עוֹלְמוֹהֵי עִמָּה: כג וְחֹזֵת אֶתְנָא ית מְלֻאָכָא דִּי מַעַתֵּד בְּאַרְחָא וְחַרְבָּה שְׁלִיפָא בִּידָה וְסַטְת אֶתְנָא מִן אֶרְחָא וְאוֹלַת בְּתַקְלָא וּמְחָא בְּלַעַם ית אֶתְנָא לְאַסְטִיּוּתָהּ לְאַרְחָא: כד וְקָם מְלֻאָכָא דִּי בְּשִׁבִיל פְּרַמְיָא אַתְרָא הַגְּדֵרָא מִכָּא וְהַגְּדֵרָא מִכָּא: כה וְחֹזֵת אֶתְנָא ית מְלֻאָכָא דִּי וְאַדְחַקַת לְבַתְלָא וְדַחַקַת ית רִגְלָא דְבַלְעָם לְבַתְלָא וְאוֹסֵף לְמַמְחָה: כו וְאוֹסֵף מְלֻאָכָא דִּי לְמַעַבְדְּךָ וְקָם בְּאַתֵּר עֵק דִּי לֵית אֶרֶח לְמַסְטִי לִימְיָנָא וְלִשְׁמַאֲלָא: כז וְחֹזֵת אֶתְנָא ית מְלֻאָכָא דִּי וּרְבַעַת תַּחֲזוּת בְּלַעַם וְתַקַּף רִגְזָא דְבַלְעָם וּמְחָא ית אֶתְנָא בְּחַטְרָא: כח וּפְתַח יֵי ית פּוּמָא דְאַתְנָא וְאַמְרַת לְבַלְעָם מַה עֲבַדִּית לְךָ

מִלָּא בֵיתוּ כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב לֹא אוֹכַל לְעֵבֵר אֶת־פִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי לַעֲשׂוֹת קְטַנָּה אוֹ גְּדוֹלָה: יט וְעַתָּה שָׁבוּ נָא בְּזֶה נִס־אַתֶּם הַלֵּילָה וְאַדְעָה מַה־יִּסַּף יְהוָה דְבַר עַמִּי: כ וַיָּבֹא אֱלֹהִים אֶל־בְּלַעַם לֵילָה וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִם־לִקְרֹא לְךָ בָּאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים קוּם לְךָ אַתָּם וְאִךְ אֶת־הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר־אָדַבֵּר אֵלֶיךָ אַתּוּ תַעֲשֶׂה: [שלישין] כא וַיָּקָם בְּלַעַם בַּבֶּקֶר וַיַּחֲבֹשׂ אֶת־אַתְנָו וַיִּלְךָ עִם־שָׂרֵי מוֹאָב: כב וַיַּחֲרֶ־אֶף אֱלֹהִים בִּי־הוֹלֵךְ הוּא וַיִּתְיַצֵּב מִלְּאַךְ יְהוָה בַּדֶּרֶךְ לְשַׁטְן לוֹ וְהוּא רַכֵּב עַל־אַתְנָו וּשְׁנֵי נַעֲרָיו עִמּוֹ: כג וַתֵּרָא הָאֵתוֹן אֶת־מְלֻאָךְ יְהוָה נֹצֵב בַּדֶּרֶךְ וַחֲרָבוּ שְׁלוּפָה בִּידוֹ וַתִּטְ הָאֵתוֹן מִן־הַדֶּרֶךְ וַתִּלְךָ בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיֵּךְ בְּלַעַם אֶת־הָאֵתוֹן לְהַפְתָּה הַדֶּרֶךְ: כד וַיַּעֲמֵד מְלֻאָךְ יְהוָה בְּמַשְׁעוֹל הַבְּרָמִים גִּדְרַ מוֹזֵה וְגִדְרַ מוֹזֵה: כה וַתֵּרָא הָאֵתוֹן אֶת־מְלֻאָךְ יְהוָה וַתִּלְחֹץ אֶל־הַקִּיר וַתִּלְחֹץ אֶת־רִגְלָא בְּלַעַם אֶל־הַקִּיר וַיִּסַּף לְהַפְתָּה: כו וַיִּוָּסֵף מְלֻאָךְ־יְהוָה עֹבֹר וַיַּעֲמֵד בְּמָקוֹם צָר אֲשֶׁר אֵין־דֶּרֶךְ לְנַטוֹת יָמִין וּשְׂמֹאל* : כז וַתֵּרָא הָאֵתוֹן אֶת־מְלֻאָךְ יְהוָה וַתַּרְבֵּץ תַּחַת בְּלַעַם וַיַּחֲרֶ־אֶף בְּלַעַם וַיֵּךְ אֶת־הָאֵתוֹן בְּמַקְלָא: כח וַיִּפְתַּח יְהוָה אֶת־פִּי הָאֵתוֹן וַתֹּאמֶר לְבַלְעָם מַה־עֲשִׂיתִי לְךָ כִּי

*יתיר ד'

רש"י

הולך הוא. ראה שהדבר רע צעירי המקום ונתחורב לילך: לשטן לו. מלאך של רחמים היה וכיה רוצה למנעו מלחטוא, שלא יחטא ויאבד: ושני נעיריו עמו. מכאן לאדם חשוב היואל לדרך וילך עמו שני אנשים לשמשו וחוזרים ומשמישים זה את זה: (כג) ותרא האתון. וכוף לא ראה, שנתן הקצ"ה רשות לזכמה לראות יותר מן האדם, שמתוך שיש צו דעת טערה דעתו כשיראה מזיקין: וחרבו שלופה בידו. אמר רשע זה הניח כלי אומנותו, שכלי זיינן של אומות העולם בחרב, וכוף צא עליהם צפוי, שהוא אומנות שלהם, אף אני אחפוש את שלו ואצוה עליו באומנותו. וכן היה סופו ואת זלעם בן בעור הרגו בחרב: (כד) במשעול. כתרנומו בשביל. וכן אם ישפוק עפר שומרון לשעלים⁵, עפר הנדבק בכפות הרגלים בהלוון, וכן מי מדד בשעלו מים⁶, צרגליו ובהלוכו: גדר מזה וגדר מזה. סתם גדר של אבנים הוא: (כה) ותלחץ. היא עלמה: ותלחץ. את אחרים את רגל זלעם: (כו) ויוסף מלאך ה' עבור. לעצור עוד לפניו להלוך להיות לפניו במקום

יותר ממה שהיית נוטל לשעצר אני נותן לך: (יח) מלא ביתו כסף וזהב. למדנו שנפשו רחבה ומחמד ממון אחרים. אמר, ראוי לו ליתן לי כל כסף וזהב שלו, שהרי לריך לשכור חיילות רבות, ספק נולח ספק אינו נולח, ואני ודאי נולח: לא אוכל לעבור. על כרחו גלה שהוא ברשות אחרים, ונתנבא כחן שאינו יכול לזטל הצרכות שנצרכו האצות מפי השכינה: (יט) גם אתם. פיו הכשילו, גם אחס סופכם לילך בפחי נפש כראשוני: מה יסף. לא ישנה דבריו מצרכה לקללה הלוחי שלא יוסף לצרך, כאן נתנבא שעתיד להוסיף להם צרכות על ידו: (כ) אם לקרא לך. אם הקריאה שלך וסבור אהה ליטול עליה שכר, קום לך אחס: ואך. על כרחך את הדבר אשר אדבר אליך אותו תעשה, ואעפ"כ וילך זלעם, אמר שמא אפתנו ויתרנבא: (כא) ויחבש את אתנו. מכאן שהשנאה מקלקלת את השורה, שהצב הוא בעלמו. אמר הקצ"ה רשע כבר קדמך הצרכים אצרכם, שנאמר⁷ וישכס הצרכים בצקר ויחזוש את חמורו: עם שרי מואב. לכו כלכם שוכ: (כב) כי

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

- Why did God send an angel to obstruct Bilam? (v. 22)
 - Why did God make Bilam's donkey speak? (v. 28)
- RASHI: It was an angel of mercy, for [God] wanted to prevent him from sinning, so that he would not die because of his sins.
- KLI YAKAR: God was telling Bilam that just as it is not a donkey's nature to speak, and it only was able to do so for the sake of the

gold, I cannot transgress the word of God, my God, be it a small or large (transgression).¹⁹ Now, you should also please remain here overnight, and I will know what God will add when He speaks to me.”

²⁰ God came to Bilam at night and said to him, “If (you feel) that the offer of these men (will be profitable) for you, get moving and go with them. But you must (only) do whatever I tell you.”

🌀 BILAM'S JOURNEY 🌀

22:21
THIRD
READING

Bilam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey and went with the Mo'avite dignitaries.²² God was angry that he was going, and so God's angel was placed on the road to obstruct him.

He was riding on his donkey, and his two lads were with him.²³ The donkey saw God's angel standing on the road, with a sword drawn in its hand, so the donkey turned aside from the road and went into a field. Bilam beat the donkey to get it back onto the road.

²⁴ God's angel stood in a path through the vineyards, with a wall on one side and a wall on the other side.²⁵ The donkey saw God's angel, and it pushed itself against the wall. It pressed Bilam's leg against the wall, and he beat it again.

²⁶ God's angel went further ahead, and stood in a narrow place where there was no room to turn right or left.²⁷ The donkey saw God's angel, and it crouched down under Bilam. Bilam became angry, and he beat the donkey with a stick.

²⁸ God opened the donkey's mouth, and it said to Bilam, “What have I done to you that made you hit me these three times?”

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

Jewish people, likewise, Bilam's prophetic powers had only been granted for the sake of the Jewish people.

SFORNO: This miracle was intended to make Bilam repent, when he would be reminded that “the utterances of the tongue come from God” (*Proverbs* 16:1).

RAMBAN: Bilam was a sorcerer, so God made a startling miracle to warn him not to use sorcery to curse the Jewish people.

RALBAG: The entire story of Bilam's donkey was merely a prophetic vision of Bilam. For otherwise how would one explain: 1.) Why Bilam, who was a prophet, did not see God's angel at first, whereas his donkey did (v. 23). 2.) The point of God sending the angel to deter Bilam from his journey if he was not able to see it. 3.) The astonishing miracle of a speaking donkey, which does not appear to have been for any purpose, yet we are told that God does not make a miracle in vain.

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 BILAM'S TALKING DONKEY (v. 28)

Ralbag writes that the account of Bilam's donkey was a prophetic vision and did not actually occur, due to a number of serious questions he poses at the literal level.

Rashi, however, maintained that Bilam's donkey was real, as he writes below that the donkey was not allowed to live, “so that people should not say, ‘This is the one that silenced Bilam with her rebuke, and he could not respond’” (*Rashi* to v. 33).

Why does *Rashi* not address the issues raised by *Ralbag*, which clearly require clarification at the literal level?

THE EXPLANATION

In his commentary to verse 22, *Rashi* explains why God's angel was placed on the road to obstruct Bilam: “It was an angel of mercy. [God] wanted to prevent him from sinning, so that he would not die because of his sins.” With these words, *Rashi* indicates that the miracles which were about to occur were not in vain, but rather, an act of God's mercy to help Bilam repent.

However, this begs the question: Since God knew that the miracle of a speaking donkey would fail to inspire Bilam to repentance, and it would prove necessary for God to “open Bilam's eyes” so that he could see the

“angel standing in the road with a sword drawn in its hand” (v. 31), what was gained by making the donkey speak? Surely God could have just opened Bilam's eyes to see the angel in the first place?

In truth, however, God's way is to send successive messages of increasing intensity to a person in order to inspire him to repent. This concept is already familiar to the reader from one of *Rashi's* earlier comments, where he explains the message behind the sequence of laws in chapter 25 of the book of *Vayikra*:

“These passages were said in sequential order: First we are warned about the Sabbatical year (25:1ff.). If a person desired money and was suspected of trading in the Sabbatical year, he will ultimately have to sell his belongings. And that is why the next passage states, ‘When you make a sale to your fellow,’ (v. 14). If he still does not repent, he will ultimately have to sell his hereditary land (v. 25). If he still does not repent, he will ultimately have to sell his house (v. 29). If he still does not repent, he will end up borrowing at interest (v. 36-37)—each of these cases getting progressively worse. If he still does not repent, he will end up selling himself as a slave (v. 39-43). If he still does not repent, he will not only sell himself to a Jew, but even to a non-Jew (v. 47)” (*Rashi* to *Vayikra* 26:1).

We could ask a similar question here: If God knows that the person will not repent with a smaller sign, then why does He not just send the bigger

ארי מחיתני דגן תלת זמנין: כט ואמר בלעם לאתנא ארי חיקת בי אלו פון אית חרבא בידי ארי כען קטלתיך: ל ואמרת אתנא לבלעם הלא אנא אתנדך די רכבת עלי מדאיתך עד יומא הדין המילף אליפנא למעבד לך כדון ואמר לא: לא וגלא יי ית עיני בלעם ותזא ית מלאכא די מעמד בארחה וחרבה שליפא בידה וכרע וסגיד לאפוהי: לב ואמר לה מלאכא די על מא מחתא ית אתנדך דגן תלת זמנין הא אנא נפקית למססן ארי גלי קדמי דאת רעי למול בארחה לקבלי: לג ותזמני אתנא וסמת מן קדמי דגן תלת זמנין אלו פון לא סמת מן קדמי ארי כען אף יתך קטלית ויתה קימית: לד ואמר בלעם למלאכא די חבית ארי לא ידעית די את מעמד לקדמותי בארחה וכען אם ביש בעיניך אתוב לי: לה ואמר מלאכא די לבלעם אול עם גבריא ולחוד ית פתגמא די אמלל עמך ויתה תמלל ואול בלעם עם רברבי בלק: לו ושמע בלק ארי אתא בלעם ונפק לקדמותה לקרתיא דמואב די על תחום ארנון די בסטר תחומא: לז ואמר בלק לבלעם הלא משלח שלחית לותך למקרי לך למא לא אתתא לותי הבקושטא הויתא אמר לית אנא יכיל ליקרותך: לח ואמר בלעם לבלק הא אתיתי לותך כען המיכל יכלנא למלא מודעם פתגמא דישוי יי בפומי ויתה אמלל: לט ואול בלעם עם בלק ואתו לקרית מחוזיהי: מ ונבס בלק תורין וען ושלח

הכיתני זה שלש רגלים: כט ואמר בלעם לאתון כי התעללת בי לו יש חרב בידי כי עתה הרגתיך: ל ותאמר האתון אל בלעם הלא אנכי אתנדך אשר רכבת עלי מעודך עד היום הזה ההסבן הסבנתי לעשות לך כה ואמר לא: לא ויגל יהוה את עיני בלעם וירא את מלאך יהוה נצב בדרך וחרבו שלפה בידו ויקד וישתחו לאפיו: לב ואמר אליו מלאך יהוה על מה הכית את אתנדך זה שלוש רגלים הנה אנכי יצאתי לשטן כי ירט הדרך לנגדי: לג ותראני האתון ותט לפני זה שלש רגלים אולי נטתה מפני כי עתה גם אתכה הרגתי ואותה החייתי: לד ואמר בלעם אל מלאך יהוה חטאתי בי לא ידעתי כי אתה נצב לקראתי בדרך ועתה אסרע בעיניך אשובה לי: לה ואמר מלאך יהוה אל בלעם לך עם האנשים ואפס את הדבר אשר אדבר אליך אתו תדבר וילך בלעם עם שרי בלק: לו ושמע בלק כי בא בלעם ויצא לקראתו אל עיר מואב אשר על גבול ארנון אשר בקצה הגבול: לז ואמר בלק אל בלעם הלא שלח שלחתי אליך לקרא לך למה לא הלכת אלי האמנם לא אוכל פבדך: לח ואמר בלעם אל בלק הנה באתי אליך עתה היכל אוכל דבר מאומה הדבר אשר ישים אלהים בפני אתו אדבר: ורביעיין [ששי כשהן מחוברין] לט וילך בלעם עם בלק ויבאו קרית חצות: מ ויזבח בלק בקור וצאן וישלח לבלעם ולשרים אשר אתו:

כש"י

(ל) ההסבן הסבנתי. כתרנומו, וכן הלל יסכן גבר. ורבותינו דרשו מקרא זה בגמרא אמרו ליה, מאי טעמא לא רכבת אסוסיא. אמר להון כרטיבא שדאי ליה וכוי, כדאיתא במסכת עבודה זרה: (לג) כי ירט הדרך לנגדי. רבותינו חכמי המשנה דרשוכו נוטריקון יראה ראתה נטתה³, כשציל שהדרך לנגדי, כלומר לקנאתי ולהקניטני. ולפי משמעו כי חרד הדרך לנגדי לשון

אחר, כמו וכוה עבר לפניכם. ומדע אגדה יש בתנחומא מה ראה לעמוד בשלשה מקומות, סימני אבות הראבו: (כח) זה שלש רגלים. רמז לו אחר מבקש לעקור אומה כחוגגת שלש רגלים בשנה: (כט) התעללת. כתרנומו לשון גנאי וכזיון: לו יש חרב בידי. גנות גדולה היה לו דבר זה צעירי כשרים, זה הולך להרוג אומה שלמה צפוי, ולאתון זו נריך לכלי זיוין!

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sign first? Clearly, we see that God's approach to inspire a person to repentance consists of a series of progressively stronger signs.

Likewise, God first sent Bilam the miracle of a speaking donkey in order to inspire him to repentance, and when this failed, God sent him an even greater miracle, that he was able to see "God's angel standing in the road with a sword drawn in its hand" (v. 31).

Why was seeing the angel considered to be a greater miracle than the speaking donkey? Again, the matter can be gleaned from an earlier statement of *Rashi*. When Bilam told Balak's messengers to "stay here overnight, and I will give you an answer when God speaks to me" (v. 8), *Rashi* explains, "The Divine Spirit rested on him only at night, and the same applied to all gentile prophets."

²⁹ Bilam said to the donkey, “It’s because you’ve embarrassed me. If I had a sword in my hand, I’d kill you right now!”

³⁰ The donkey said to Bilam, “Aren’t I your donkey on which you have ridden since you first started, until today? Do I normally do this to you?”

“No,” he said.

³¹ God opened Bilam’s eyes, and he saw God’s angel standing in the road with a sword drawn in its hand. He bowed and prostrated himself on his face. ³² God’s angel said to him, “Why have you beaten your donkey these three times? Look, I have come out to obstruct you because you are hurrying on a journey against my (God). ³³ When the donkey saw me, it turned away these three times. Had it not turned away from me, I would have killed you now and spared (the donkey).”

³⁴ Bilam said to God’s angel, “I have sinned, for I didn’t know that you were standing opposite me on the road. Now, if it displeases you, I’ll go back.”

³⁵ God’s angel said to Bilam, “Go with these men, but you may only speak the words which I will tell you to say.” So Bilam went with Balak’s dignitaries.

³⁶ Balak heard that Bilam was coming, so he went out towards him to the (largest) city of Mo’av, which is on the border of Arnon, at the extreme edge of the border (to show Bilam what important cities he needed to protect).

³⁷ Balak said to Bilam, “Didn’t I send (messengers) to you to call for you, many times? Why didn’t you come to me (straightaway)? Aren’t I able to honor you properly?”

³⁸ Bilam said to Balak, “Look, (at least) I’ve come to you. Do (you think) I have any power to say anything (I want)? I will (only) speak whatever words God puts into my mouth.”

³⁹ Bilam went with Balak, and they came to Kiryas-Chutzos. ⁴⁰ Balak slaughtered an animal and a sheep and sent them to Bilam and to his dignitaries.

FOURTH
READING
(6TH WHEN
JOINED)

רש"י

אשובה לי. להתרים נגד המקום היא תשובה זו. אמר לו הוא צעמנו לוי ללכת, ואתה מלאך מצטל את דבריו, למוד הוא צכך, שאומר דבר ומלאך מחזירו, אמר לאברהם קח נא את צנך וגוי, וע"י מלאך צטל את דברו, אף אני אם רע צעניך ריך אני לשוב: (לה) לך עם האנשים. דרך שאדם רואה לילך צב, מוליכין אותו: ואפס. על כרחך את הדבר אשר אדבר וגוי: לך עם האנשים. כי חלקך עמהם וסופך להאבד מן העולם: עם שרי בלק. שמה לקללם כמותם: (לו) וישמע בלק. שלח שלוחים לצשרו: אל עיר מואב. אל מטרפולין שלו, עיר החשובה שלו, לומר ראה מה אלו מצקשים לעקור: (לז) האמנם לא אוכל כבודך. נתנצח סופו לאלה מעמו צקלון: (לט) קרית חצות. עיר מלאה שוקים אנשים וגוים וטף בחוצותיה, לומר ראה ורחם שלא יעקרו אלו: (מ) בקר וצאן. דבר מועט, בקר אחד ולאן אחד

רעט, כי ראיתי צעל הדרך שחרד ומהר הדרך שהוא לבעסי ולהמרותי. ומקרא קלר הוא, כמו ותכל דוד: לישנא אחרינא ירט לשון רלון, וכן ועל ידי רשעים ירטני, מפיים ומנחם אותי על ידי רשעים, שאינן אלא מקניטים: (לג) אולי נטתה. כמו לולא, פעמים שאולי משמש צלשון לולא: גם אתבה הרגתי. הרי זה מקרא מסורס, והוא כמו גם הרגתי אותך, כלומר לא העכזה צלצד קראתך על ידי, כי גם בהריגה: ואותה החייתי. ועתה מפני שדברה והוכיחתך ולא יכולת לעמוד צתוכחתה, כמו שכתוב ויאמר לא, הרגתי, שלא יאמרו זו היא שסלקה את צלעם צתוכחתה ולא יכול להשיב, שחם המקום על כבוד הצריות, וכן ואת הצבחה תהרוג, וכן והרגת את האשה ואת הצבחה: (לד) כי לא ידעתי. גם זה גנותו, ועל כרחו כודה, שהוא היה משתבח שיועד דעת עליון, ופיו העיד לא ידעתי: אם רע בעיניך

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Thus, in order for Bilam to see an angel of God during the day, when his journey took place, God had to change the nature of prophecy itself. And since this was a much greater miracle than changing the nature of an animal, God first performed the lesser feat in an attempt to inspire Bilam to repentance. Only when this failed did He perform the bigger miracle of changing the nature of prophecy itself—all in a merciful effort, “to prevent him from sinning, so that he would not die because of his sins.”

We might still ask: Being that the donkey was able to speak, why did it not simply tell Bilam that it had seen an angel of God, rather than complaining, “Do I normally do this to you” (v. 30)?

This, too, is clarified by another comment of Rashi, who explains that the donkey was not allowed to live after its conversation with Bilam, “so that people should not say, ‘This is the one that silenced Bilam with its rebuke, and he could not respond,’ for God cares about people’s dignity” (Rashi to v. 33). From this it follows that if Bilam had known that the donkey had seen God’s angel, while he had not, it would have been an insult to his dignity. So being that “God cares about people’s dignity,” He spared Bilam this humiliation.

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Balak 5733; for an alternative explanation see Likutei Sichos vol. 28, pp. 341-2)

לבלעם ולרברבניא די עמיה: מא וְהוּהוּ כַצְפָּרָא
 וּדְבַר בָּלָק ית בַּלְעָם וְאִסְקָה לְרַמַּת דְּחַלְתָּהּ
 וְהוּא מִתַּמֵּן קֶצֶת מִן עַמָּא: « וְאָמַר בַּלְעָם
 לְבָלָק בְּנֵי לִי הֲכֵא שִׁבְעָא מִדְּבַחִין וְאַתְּחֵן לִי
 הֲכֵא שִׁבְעָא תּוֹרִין וְשִׁבְעָא דְכָרְוִין: ב וְעַבְד
 בָּלָק כְּמָא דִּי מְלִיל בַּלְעָם וְאִסְקָה בָּלָק וּבַלְעָם
 תּוֹר וּדְכַר עַל כָּל מִדְּבָחָא: ג וְאָמַר בַּלְעָם
 לְבָלָק אֲתַעְתַּד עַל עֲלִתְךָ וְאִיהִד מְאִים יַעֲרַע
 מִימַר מִן קַדְם יִי לְקַדְמוֹתֵי וּפְתַנְמָא דִּיחֻזְנִי
 וְאַחֲוֵי לְךָ וְאוּל יְחִידֵי: ד וְעַרְעַר מִימַר מִן קַדְם
 יִי לֹות בַּלְעָם וְאָמַר לֵה ית שִׁבְעָא מִדְּבַחִין
 סְדָרִית וְאִסְקִית תּוֹר וּדְכַר עַל כָּל מִדְּבָחָא:
 ה וְשׂוּי יִי פְתַנְמָא כְּפּוּמָא דְבַלְעָם וְאָמַר תּוֹב
 לֹות בָּלָק וּבְדִין תְּמַלֵּל: ו וְתַב לֹותָהּ וְהָא
 מְעַתַּד עַל עֲלִתָהּ הוּא וְכָל רַבְרָבֵי מוֹאָב:
 ז וְנִטַּל מִתְּלָהּ וְאָמַר מִן אַרְם דְּבַרְנֵי בָּלָק
 מְלָכָא דְמוֹאָב מְטוֹרֵי מִדִּינְחָא אִיתָא לוֹט לִי
 יַעֲקֹב וְאִיתָא תְּרַךְ לִי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ח מָא אֱלוֹטִיָּהּ
 דְלָא לְמִיָּה אַל וּמָא אֲתַרְכָּה דְלָא תְּרַכָּה יִי:
 ט אַרִי מְרִישׁ טוֹרִיא חֲזִיתָהּ וּמְרַמָּתָא סְכִיתָהּ
 הָא עַמָּא בְּלַחְדֵּיהוֹן עֲתִידִין דִּיחֻסְנִין עֲלָמָא

מא וְיִהְיֶה בַבְּכֹר וַיִּקַּח בָּלָק אֶת־בַּלְעָם וַיַּעֲלֵהוּ בְּמֹות בַּעַל וַיִּרְא
 מַשֶּׁם קִצֵּה הָעָם: כג « וַיֹּאמֶר בַּלְעָם אֶל־בָּלָק בְּנֵה־לִי בָּזָה
 שִׁבְעָה מִזְבְּחֹת וְהִנֵּן לִי בָּזָה שִׁבְעָה פָּרִים וְשִׁבְעָה אֵילִים:
 ב וַיַּעַשׂ בָּלָק כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בַּלְעָם וַיַּעַל בָּלָק וּבַלְעָם פֶּר וְאֵיל
 בַּמִּזְבֵּחַ: ג וַיֹּאמֶר בַּלְעָם לְבָלָק הֲתִיצֵב עַל־עֲלִתְךָ וְאַתְלָכָה אוֹלֵי
 יִקְרָה יְהוָה לְקַרְאֹתֵי וּדְבַר מַה־יִּרְאֵנִי וְהִגַּדְתִּי לְךָ וַיִּלְךְ שָׁפִי:
 ד וַיִּקַּר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־בַּלְעָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֶת־שִׁבְעַת הַמִּזְבְּחֹת
 עֲרַכְתִּי וְאָעַל פֶּר וְאֵיל בַּמִּזְבֵּחַ: ה וַיִּשֶׂם יְהוָה דְּבַר בְּפִי בַלְעָם
 וַיֹּאמֶר שׁוּב אֶל־בָּלָק וְכֹה תִדְבֹר: ו וַיָּשָׁב אֵלָיו וְהִנֵּה נָצַב
 עַל־עֲלֹתוֹ הוּא וְכָל־שָׂרֵי מוֹאָב: ז וַיִּשָּׂא מִשְׁלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר מִן־אֲרָם
 יִנְחֲנֵי בָּלָק מֶלֶךְ־מוֹאָב מִהַרְרֵי־קָדְם לְכֹה אֲרַהֲלֵי יַעֲקֹב
 וּלְכֹה זַעֲמָה יִשְׂרָאֵל: ח מַה אֶקְבֹּל לֹא קָבָה אֵל וּמַה אֶזְעַם לֹא
 זַעֵם יְהוָה: ט כִּי־מֵרֹאשׁ צָרִים אֲרָאֲנִי וּמִגְּבָעוֹת אֲשׁוּרְנִי

כש"י

ישראל. צנני שמותיהם אמר לו לקללם, שמא אחד מהם אינו מוצהק:
 (ח) מה אקב לא קבה אל. כשהיו ראוים להתקלל לא נתקללו, כשהזכיר
 אזיכוס את עונם, כי בצאפס הרגו איש⁸, לא קלל אלא אפס, שנאמר ארוך
 אפס. כשנכנס אזיכוס צמרמה אלל אזיכוס היה ראוי להתקלל, מה נאמר שם
 גם צרוך יכיה⁹. צמצרכים נאמר אלה יעמדו לצרך את העם¹⁰. צמקללים לא
 נאמר ואלה יעמדו לקלל את העם, אלא על הקללה, לא ראה להזכיר עליהם
 שם קללה: לא זעם ה'. אני אין כחי אלא שאני יודע לכיין השעה שהקצ"ה
 כועס צה, והוא לא כעס כל הימים הללו שצאחי חליך, וזהו שנאמר עמי
 זכר נא מה יען וגו'¹¹ ומה ענה אותה צלעם וגו' למען דעת נדקות ה':
 (ט) כי מראש צרים אראנו. אני מסתכל צראשיתם וצחלתם שרשיכם,
 ואני רואה אותם מיוסדים וחזקים כלורים וגזעיות הללו ע"י אבות

צלצד: (מא) במות בעל. כתרנומו לרמת דחלתייה, שם עזודת אלילים:
 (ג) אולי יקרה ה' לקראתי. אינו רגיל לדבר עמי ציוס: וילך שפי.
 כתרנומו יחידי, לשון שופי ושקט, שאין עמו אלא שתיקה: (ד) ויקר. לשון
 עראי, לשון גנאי, לשון עומאת קרי, כלומר צקושי וצציון, ולא היה נגלה
 עליו ציוס אלא צצציל להראות חצתן של ישראל: את שבעת המזבחות.
 שצעה מזבחות ערכתי אין כתיב כאן, אלא את שצעה המזבחות, אמר לפניו
 אצותיהם של אלו צנו לפניך שצעה מזבחות, ואני ערכתי כנגד כולן. אצרהם
 צנה ארצעה, ויצן שם מזבח לבי הנראה אליו, ויעתק משם ההרה וגו'²,
 ויאהל אצרם וגו'³, ואחד צבר המוריה⁴. ויאחק צנה אחד, ויצן שם מזבח
 וגו'⁵. ויעקצ צנה שתיס⁶, אחד צשכס ואחד צצית אל: ואעל פר ואיל
 במזבח. ואצרהם לא העלה אלא חיל אחד: (ז) ארה לי יעקב ולכה זעמה

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What does “I see them from the head of rocks” mean? (v. 9)
RASHI: I look at the “head” and beginning of their roots, and I see that they are well-founded and powerful, like these mountains and hills, because of their Patriarchs and Matriarchs.
RAMBAN: Bilam was simply declaring that he was looking down upon the Jewish people from a high place, as the Torah states

explicitly that Balak took Bilam to a high place, “he took him up to Bamos-Ba’al, and from there he saw part of the people” (22:41).
MAHARZU: At the literal level, Bilam was standing at the peak of mountains and hills. However, since it seems irrelevant to relate where he was standing, the *Midrash* taught that the rocks and hills refer to the Patriarchs and Matriarchs (*Maharzu to Bamidbar Rabah* 20:19).

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🔗 “ROCKS” AND “HILLS” (v. 9)
 At the beginning of the current passage we read how Balak took Bilam to a high place where he could look down upon the Jewish people and curse them: “Balak took Bilam and brought him up to Bamos-Ba’al, and from there he saw part of the people” (22:41). Thus, when Bilam later said,

“I see them from the head of rocks, I look at them from hills” (v. 9), he simply appears to have been describing how he was standing upon a high point from where he could see the Jewish people, as **Ramban** writes. Why did **Rashi** reject this interpretation and offer instead an explanation based on the *Midrash*, that the “rocks” and “hills” allude to the founda-

🕎 BILAM'S FIRST PARABLE 🕎

22:41 **T**hen, in the morning Balak took Bilam and brought him up to Bamos-Ba'al, and from there he saw part of the people.

23 ¹ Bilam said to Balak, "Build me seven altars here and prepare seven bulls and seven rams for me." ² Balak did as Bilam had requested. Balak and Bilam offered up a bull and a ram on each altar.

³ Bilam said to Balak, "Stand with your burnt-offering, and I'll go for a walk. Perhaps God will happen to appear to me and show me something that I can tell you." He then went off alone.

⁴ God happened to appear to Bilam. (Bilam) said to Him, "I have set up (seven altars corresponding to) the seven altars (which the Patriarchs built for you), and I have offered up a bull and a ram on each altar."

⁵ God then placed words in Bilam's mouth. He said, "Return to Balak and say as follows...."

⁶ When he returned, Balak was standing next to his burnt offering. He was with all the Mo'avite dignitaries. ⁷ (Bilam) launched into his parable and said:

From Aram, Balak has brought me,
The king of Mo'av (has brought me) from the east mountains,
(He says), "Come, curse Ya'akov for me,
Come and bring anger against Israel."

⁸ But how can I condemn,
One whom God has not condemned?
How can I bring anger,

If God has not been angered?

⁹ I see them from the head of rocks,
I look at them from hills.

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tions of the Jewish people, the Patriarchs and Matriarchs? *Rashi* appears to have disregarded his own declared intention to explain scripture exclusively at the literal level.

Maharzu argues that the issue of where Bilam was standing is an irrelevant, redundant detail, which demands *Midrashic* interpretation.

However, it could be argued that Bilam's position on a high mountain where he could see *all* the Jewish people is relevant at the literal level, as it reconciles a contradiction between two other verses. Before Bilam's first parable, the Torah states that he was situated in Bamos-Ba'al, where "he saw *part* of the people" (22:41). Yet, after Bilam proceeded to bless, rather than curse the Jewish people, Balak suggested, "Come with me to

another place from where you will see them. *You will only see a part of them, but not all of them*" (23:13), indicating that on the first occasion Bilam had indeed seen *all* of the Jewish people. Thus, there appears to be a need to take this verse ("I see them from the head of rocks, I look at them from hills") literally, for with these words the reader discovers that Bilam had reached a summit where he did actually see all of the Jewish people.

So the question stands: Why did *Rashi* cite a *Midrashic* explanation, rather than the *literal* interpretation suggested by *Ramban*?

THE EXPLANATION

The Torah describes Bilam's first discourse as a "parable" (v. 7), indicating that it is metaphoric in nature. However, on reading Bilam's first parable, *Rashi* was troubled that it seems to be totally devoid of metaphor or imagery. Verses 7-8 are a straightforward introduction to explain why Bilam blessed the Jewish people; the latter part of verse 9 is a blessing for the Jewish people to "rest alone," and verse 10 describes the large size of the Jewish people, without the use of allegory or metaphor. Thus, the only section of Bilam's words which could actually constitute a "parable" are the words, "I see them from the head of rocks, I look at them from hills." Therefore *Rashi* explains that this was a metaphor for the strength of the Jewish people: "They are well-founded and powerful, like these mountains and hills."

🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

Bilam spoke in parables, because plain language cannot capture the true greatness of the Jewish people. For example, Bilam used the metaphor of a rock to describe the strength of a Jew (v. 9), but in truth, the Jewish soul is even stronger than stone. For nothing in this world can erode the soul's attachment to God that keeps a Jew loyal to his Creator to the point of self-sacrifice.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, pp. 171-2)

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, p. 165ff.)

*It is a nation that will dwell alone,
And will not be reckoned with the nations.
10 Who has counted the infants of Ya'akov?
Or the number of (one of) the divisions of Israel?
May my soul die the death of the upright,
And let my end be like his.*

¹¹ Balak said to Bilam, "What have you done to me? I took you to curse my enemies, and you've just blessed them!"

¹² "Am I not careful to say only that which God puts into my mouth?" he replied.

🌀 BILAM'S SECOND PARABLE 🌀

23:13
FIFTH
READING

Balak said to him, "Come with me to another place from where you will see them. (Since you are not able to curse them all, I'll place you where*) you will only see a part of them, but not all of them. Curse (at least part of*) them for me from there."

¹⁴ He took him to the lookouts' field, to the top of the summit. He built seven altars and offered up a bull and a ram on each altar. ¹⁵ (Bilam) said to Balak, "Stand here next to your burnt-offering, and (God) might happen to appear to me here."

¹⁶ God happened to appear to Bilam. He placed something into his mouth (to coerce it to speak positively about Israel to Balak). He said, "Return to Balak, and say the following..."

¹⁷ When (Bilam) came to (Balak), he was standing next to his burnt-offering. The Mo'avite dignitaries were with him.

"What did God say?" Balak said to him.

¹⁸ (Bilam) launched into his parable and said:

Get up Balak (onto your feet), and hear (God's words)!
Listen closely to me, son of Tzipor!

¹⁹ *God is not a man that He should lie,
Nor is He a mortal that will change His mind.*

*Would He say and not do?
Speak and not fulfill?*

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🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

There is an inner connection between Rashi's two interpretations of verse 10: that the verse refers to "infants" or "soil" (see *Classic Questions*):

The highest possible manner of observing the *mitzvos* is with utter humility and complete dedication, regardless of understanding. This is alluded to by soil which is: a.) lowly, representing humility; and, b.) plain, alluding to a pure and simple service of God.

By observing *mitzvos* in the manner of "soil," Rashi's second interpretation, one elicits Rashi's first interpretation, that God will look upon the person with the inherent love that a father has for his "infant."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 38, pp. 96-8)

🌀 BILAM'S FURTHER PRAISE (v. 10)

In verse 10, as Bilam comes to the conclusion of his first parable, he asks rhetorically: "Who has counted the עֵפָר of Ya'akov?"

Rashi and **Onkelos** cite various interpretations of the term עֵפָר in the context of this verse:

- a.) עֵפָר means infants (first interpretation of Rashi; first part of Onkelos).
- b.) It means "soil," alluding to the numerous *mitzvos* that the Jewish people perform with soil (second interpretation of Rashi).
- c.) That it means "soil," alluding to God's promise to Avraham that his descendants would be as abundant as soil (second part of Onkelos).

What is the reason, at the literal level, for Rashi's two interpretations, and why did he not refer to the second part of Onkelos?

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi was troubled by the following problem: In his first parable, Bilam was offering an explanation to Balak why it was futile to curse the Jewish

כ הנה ברך לקחתי וברך ולא אשיבנה: כא לא הביט און
 ביעקב ולא ראה עמל בישראל יהוה אלהיו עמו ותרועת
 מלך בו: כב אל מוציאם ממצרים פתועפת ראם לו: כג כי
 לא נחש ביעקב ולא קסם בישראל פעת יאמר ליעקב
 ולישראל מה פעל אל: כד הן עם כלביא יקום וכארי יתנשא
 לא ישכב עדי יאכל טרף ודם חללים ישתה: כה ויאמר בלק
 אל בלעם גם קב לא תקבנו גם ברך לא תברכנו: כו ויען
 בלעם ויאמר אל בלק הלא דברתי אליך לאמר כל אשר-

ועבד וכל מימרה מתקנים: כ הא ברכו
 קבלית ואברכנה לישראל ולא אתב ברכתי
 מנהון: כא אסתכלית לית פלחי גולגולין
 בדיבית יעקב ואף לא עבדי לאות שקר
 בישראל מימרא דין אלההון בסעדהון
 ושכינת מלכהון ביניהון: כב אלה דאפקנון
 ממצרים תקפא ורומא דילה: כג ארי לא
 נחשיא צבן דייטב לדבית יעקב ואף לא
 קסמא רען ברבות בית ישראל כעבן
 יתאמר ליעקב ולישראל מא עבד אלהא:
 כד הא עמא כליתא שרי וכאריא יתנשל לא
 ישרי בארעה עד דיקטול קטול ונכסי עממא
 יירת: כה ויאמר בלק לבלעם אף מילט לא
 תלוטנון אף ברקא לא תברכנו: כו ואתיב

כ"ג

השדים¹⁰: (כג) כי לא נחש ביעקב. כי ראויים הם לזכרה שאין זהם
 מנחשים וקוסמים: בעת יאמר ליעקב וגו'. עוד עתיד להיות עת כעת
 הזאת אשר תגלה חזתן לעין כל שהן יושצין לפניו ולומדים תורה מפיו
 ומחיתן לפניו ממלאכי השרת, וזה ישאלו להם מה פעל אל, וזה שנאמר
 והיו עיניך רואות את מוריך¹¹. דבר אחר יאמר ליעקב אינו לשון עתיד, אלא
 לשון הוכח, אינן יריבין למנחש וקוסם כי בכל עת שזריך להאמר ליעקב
 ולישראל מה פעל הקצ"ה ומה גזרותיו צמרום, אינן מנחשים וקוסמים אלא
 נמסר להם על פי נביאים מה היא גזרת המקום, או אוריים ותומים
 מגידים להם, ואונקלוס לא תרגם כן: (כד) הן עם כלביא יקום וגו'.
 כשהן עומדים משנתם שחרית, הן מתגברין כלביא וכארי לחטוף את המלות,
 ללבוש טלית לקרוא את שמע ולהניח תפילין¹²: לא ישוב. כלילה על מטתו
 עד שהוא אוכל ומחבל כל מזיק הבא לטרפו. כיצד, קורא את שמע על מטתו
 ומפקיד רוחו ציד המקום, בא מחנה וגיים להזיקם, הקצ"ה שומרם ונלחם
 מלחמותם ומפילם חללים. דבר אחר הן עם כלביא יקום וגו'. כתרנומו: ודם
 חללים ישתה. נתנצח שאין משה מת עד שיפיל מלכי מדין חללים ויהרג
 הוא עממם, שנאמר ואת בלעם בן בעור הקוסם הרגו בני ישראל צחרז אל
 חלליהם¹³: (כה) גם קב לא תקבנו. גם ראשון מוסיף על גם השני, וגם
 השני על גם ראשון, וכן גם לי גם לך לא יהיה¹⁴, וכן גם צחור גם צחולה¹⁵:

(כ) הנה ברך לקחתי. אהה שואלני מה דבר ה', קבלתי ממנו לזכר אותם
 (ס"א צרך כמו לזכר): וברך ולא אשיבנה. הוא צרך אותם ואני לא אשיב
 את זרכתו: וברך. כמו וצרך וכן הוא גזרת רי"ש, כמו אויב צרך¹, כמו חרף,
 וכן וזנע צרך², המכלל ומצרך את הגזול ואומר, אל תירא כי לא תענש,
 שלום יהיה לך, מרגיז הוא להקצ"ה. ואין לומר צרך שם דבר, שאם כן היה
 נקוד צפתח קטן וטעמו למעלה, אכל לפי שהוא לשון פעל הוא נקוד קמץ
 קטן, וטעמו למטה: (כח) לא הביט און ביעקב וגו'. כתרנומו. דבר אחר
 אחרי פשוטו הוא נדרש מדרש נאה: לא הביט. הקצ"ה און שציעקב, כשהן
 עוצרין על דצריו אינו מדקדק אחריהם להצונן צאונות שלהם וצעמלן שהן
 עוצרין על דתו: עמל. לשון עזירה, כמו הרה עמל³, כי אהה עמל וכעס
 תצית⁴, לפי שהעזירה היא עמל לפני המקום: ה' אלהיו עמו. אפילו
 מכעיסין וממרים לפניו אינו זז מתוכן: ותרועת מלך בו. לשון חבה ורעות
 כמו רעה דוד⁵, אוהב דוד, ויתנה למרעהו⁶, וכן תרגם אונקלוס ושכינת
 מלכהון ציניהון: (כצ) אל מוציאם ממצרים. אהה חמרת הכה עם יאל
 ממלרים, לא יאל מעלמו אלא האלהים הוליאם: בתועפת ראם לו. כחוקף
 רוס וגובה שלו, וכן וכסף תועפות⁸, לשון מעוז המה, ואומר אני שהוא לשון
 ועוף יעופף⁹, המעופף צרום וגובה וחוקף רצ הוא זה: תועפת ראם.
 עפית גובה. דבר אחר תועפות ראם תוקף ראמים, ואמרו רבותינו אלו

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people. Therefore, the most obvious interpretation of verse 10, at first
 glance would be that due to their numbers, there was no point in
 attempting to eliminate them (as in the second part of *Onkelos*).

However, according to *Rashi*, Bilam had already praised the Jewish
 people in verse 9 as being "well-founded and powerful, like these
 mountains and hills, because of their Patriarchs and Matriarchs,"
 indicating that they were an invincible enemy. So *Rashi* was troubled:
 What would Bilam be adding here in verse 10, by merely stating that the
 Jewish people were numerous? Had he not already established, in
 verse 9, that there was no chance of defeating the Jews due to their rock-
 like strength, which would protect them regardless of their number?

Due to this question, *Rashi* came to the conclusion that verse 10 must
 be indicating some quality possessed by the Jewish people (and not just
 an indication of their large quantity)—a quality which would provide
 further proof to Balak that his plans were futile.

But what could be a greater threat to Balak than the Jewish people
 being "well-founded and powerful, like these mountains and hills"?

Rashi concluded that in addition to being "well-founded and powerful
 because of their Patriarchs and Matriarchs," the Jewish people also have
 qualities and merits of their own which made them a formidable enemy.
 And these qualities, concluded *Rashi*, are twofold: a.) The fact that God
 inherently loves the Jewish people; and, b.) The fact that they secure
 God's protection through their own merits.

Therefore *Rashi* explained that עפר refers to: a.) "infants," because a
 parent's love for an infant is inherent, and not earned; and b.) "soil"
 suggesting that "the number of mitzvos they fulfill with soil are
 innumerable," so they secure God's protection also by their own merits.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 38, p. 90ff.)

1 תהלים עז, יח 2 שם י, ג 3 תהלים ז, טו 4 שם י, יד 5 שמואל-ב טו, לו 6 שופטים טו, ו 7 ראה שיחת ש"פ בלק תשמ"ה 8 איוב כב, כה 9 בראשית א, כ 10 גיטין סז: 11 ישע"י ז, כ 12 תנחומא 13 יהושע יג, כג 14 מלכים-א ג, כו 15 דברים לב, כה

- ²⁰ *I have received (instructions) to bless,
He has blessed, and I will not retract it.*
- ²¹ *He observed no evil (idolaters) among Ya'akov,
And has seen no transgression in Israel.
(Even when Ya'akov rebels), God, his God, is with him,
He has the King's affection.*
- ²² *God takes them out of Egypt,
With His towering strength,*
- ²³ *For there is no divination in Ya'akov,
And no sorcery in Israel.
In that (future) time (the angels) will say to Ya'akov and Israel,
'What has God done? (for Israel will be closer to God than the angels).*
- ²⁴ *Look! A people that rises like an awesome lion,
And raises itself like a lion.
It does not lie down until it eats its prey,
And drinks the blood of the slain.*
- ²⁵ *Balak said to Bilam, "If you're not going to curse them, (at least) don't bless them!"*
- ²⁶ *"Didn't I tell you," Bilam replied to Balak, "I will only do whatever God says."*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **How do the Jewish people rise like an awesome lion? (v. 24)**

RASHI: When they arise from their sleep in the morning they show the vigor of an awesome lion and a [regular] lion in grasping *mitzvos* —to put on a *tallis* (prayer shawl), recite the *shema* and put on *tefilin*. And he “*does not lie down,*” on his bed at night until he consumes and destroys any harmful thing that comes to cause him damage. How is this done? He recites the *shema* on his bed and entrusts his

soul to God. If an army or a troop were then to come and attempt to harm them, God protects them, fights their battles and slays [the enemy].

Alternatively, the words, “*Look! A people that rises like an awesome lion etc.*” are to be interpreted according to *Onkelos*.

ONKELOS: Look! A people that rises like an awesome lion, and raises itself like a lion. It will not settle in its land until it destroys [the enemy] and takes possession of the land of the nations.

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🦁 **RIISING LIKE AN AWESOME LION (V. 24)**

In his commentary to verse 24, *Rashi* cites two interpretations:

The *Midrashic* interpretation that the “rising lion” alludes to the Jewish people rising with vigor to observe the *mitzvos*; and the interpretation of *Onkelos*, that the Jewish people were about to conquer the Land of Israel like a lion that devours its prey. Being that the interpretation of *Onkelos* is much closer to a literal understanding of the verse, why did *Rashi* cite it only as his secondary interpretation, *after* the words of the *Midrash*, which appear to be totally non-literal?

THE EXPLANATION

At the literal level, the context of Bilam’s second parable that we read here is different from that of his first parable. When introducing his first parable, Bilam said, “*But how can I condemn one whom God has not condemned? How can I bring anger, if God has not been angered?*” (23:8), i.e. the purpose of this first parable was primarily to explain why Bilam could not curse the Jewish people (because “*they are well-founded and powerful, like these mountains and hills*”—*Rashi* to v. 9).

When embarking on his second parable, however, Bilam set a different tone: “*I have received (instructions) to bless, He has blessed, and I will not retract it*” (23:20), i.e. here Bilam indicated that he was not only *refraining*

🦁 The Last Word 🦁

According to *Rambam*, the words “*In that time...*” (v. 23) are a hint that when the world will be twice as old as it was when Bilam said his parable (2488 years from creation), “*prophecy will return to the Jewish people...and there is no doubt that this is a prelude to Mashiach*” (Epistle to Yemen, written in 4932 (1172), end of ch. 3).

Indeed, around the year 4976 (1216) we find a number of sages among the Jewish people who achieved prophecy: R’ Shmuel the prophet and his son R’ Yehudah Hachasid (1150-1217); R’ Elazar of Worms, author of *Roke’ach* (1160-1238); *Ramban* (1194-1270); *Ra’avad* (c.1120-c.1200); and the Tosafist Ezra of Moncontour, known as “Ezra the Prophet” (c. 1230).

Unfortunately, this era of prophecy did not immediately lead to the redemption. Nevertheless, years later the *Ba’al Shem Tov* and his successors openly demonstrated the prophetic spirit once again, “*and there is no doubt that this is a prelude to Mashiach.*”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 2, pp. 588-9)

בלעם ואמר לבלק הלא מללית עמך למימר כל דימלל יי יתה אעבד: כו ואמר בלק לבלעם איתא כען אדברנך לאתר אחרן מאים יהי רעוא מן קדם יי ותלוטפה לי מתמן: כז ודבר בלק ית בלעם ריש רמתא דמסתפיא על אפי בית ישימון: כח ואמר בלעם לבלק בני לי הלא שבועא מדבחין ואתקן לי הלא שבועא תורין ושבועא דכרין: ל ועבד בלק כמא די אמר בלעם ואסק תור ודבר על כל מדבחא: א ותוא בלעם ארי תקין קדם יי לברכא ית ישראל ולא הלך בזמן בזמן אלהן לקדמות נחשיא ושוני למדברא (לקבל עגלא דעבדו ישראל במדברא) אפוחי: ב ויקף בלעם ית עינוהי ותוא ית ישראל שרן לשבטוהי ושרת עלוהי רוח נבואה מן קדם יי: ג ונמל מתלה ואמר אמר בלעם בר בעור ואמר נברא דשפיר חזי: ד אמר דשמע מימר מן קדם אל וחזו מן קדם שדי חזי שכיב ומתגלי לה: ה מא טבא משכנך ועקב בית מישרדך ישראל: ו בנחלין דמדברין כגנת שקניא דעל פרת כבוסמאי

ידבר יהוה אתו אעשה: [ששין] ושביעי כשהן מחוברין] כו ויאמר בלק אל-בלעם לכהנא אקחך אל-מקום אחר אולי יישר בעיני האלהים וקבתו לי משם: כז ויקח בלק את-בלעם ראש הפעור הנשקף על-פני הישימון: כח ויאמר בלעם אל-בלק בנה-לי בזה שבועה מובהת והכן לי בזה שבועה פרים ושבועה אילים: ל ויעש בלק כאשר אמר בלעם ויעל פר ואיל במובה: כד א וירא בלעם פי טוב בעיני יהוה לברך את-ישראל ולא-הלך בפעם-בפעם לקראת נחשים וישת אל-המדבר פניו: ב וישא בלעם את-עיניו וירא את-ישראל שכן לשבטיו ותהי עליו רוח אלהים: ג וישא משלו ויאמר נאם בלעם בנו בער ונאם הנבר שתם העין: ד נאם שמע אמרי-אל אשר מחזה שדי יחזה נפל וגלוי עינים: ה מה-טבו אהליך יעקב משכנתיך ישראל: ו בנחלים נפיו כגנת עלי

*בראש עמוד. סימן ב"ה שמי"ז.

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היה: שתם העין. עינו נקורה ומואלת לחוץ וחור שלה נראה פתוח, ולשון משנה הוא כדי שישתם ויסתום ויגוב³. ורבותיו אמרו⁴ לפי שאמר ומספר את רובע ישראל, שהקצ"ה יושב ומונה רבועיותיהן של ישראל מתי תבא טפה שגולד הדיק ממנה, אמר בלבו מי שחא קדוש ומשרתיו קדושים יסתכל בדברים הללו, ועל דבר זה נסמית עינו של בלעם. ויש מפרשים שתום העין פתוח העין, כמו שחרגס אונקלוס, ועל שאמר שתום העין ולא אמר שתום העינים, למדנו שסומא באת מעיניו היה⁵: (ד) נפל וגלוי עינים. פשוטו כתרגומו, שאין נראה עליו אלא צלילה כשהוא שוכב. ומדרשו כשהיה נגלה עליו לא היה צו כח לעמוד על רגליו ונופל על פניו, לפי שהיה ערל ומאוס להיות נגלה עליו כקומה זקופה לפניו: (ה) מה טבו אהליך. על שראה פתחים שאינן מכוונים זה מול זה⁶: משכנותיך. חינותיך, כתרגומו. דבר אחר מה טובו אהליך, מה טובו אהל שילה וזית עולמים זישובן שמקריבין זבן קרצנות לכפר עליהם: משכנותיך. אף כשהן חרצין, לפי שהן משכון עליכם, וחרצן כפרה על הנפשות, שנאמר⁷ כלב ה' את חמתו, וזמה כלב, וית אש צליון: (ו) בנחלים נטיו. שנארכו ונמשכו לנטות למרחוק,

(כז) וקבותו לי. אין זה לשון זוויו כמו וקבנ¹, אלא לשון עתיד, אולי יישר צעיניו ותקבנו לי משם, מלדיכ"ש בלע"ז: (כח) ראש הפעור. קוסס היה בלק וראה שהן עתידין ללקות על ידי פעור ולא היה יודע צמה, אמר שמה הקללה תחול עליהם משם, וכן כל החושים צוכבדים רואים ואינם יודעים מה רואים: (ח) וירא בלעם כי טוב וגו'. אמר איני לריך לצדוק בהקצ"ה כי לא יחפז לקללם: ולא הלך בפעם בפעם. כאשר עשה שתי פעמים: לקראת נחשים. לנחש אולי יקרה ה' לקראתו כרצונו, אמר רואה ולא רואה לקללם, אזכיר עונותיהם והקללה על הזכרת עונותיהם תחול: וישת אל המדבר פניו. כתרגומו: (ג) וישא בלעם את עיניו. צקס להכניס זהם עין רעה, והכי יש לך שלש מדותיו² עין רעה ורוח גבוהה ונפש רחבה האמורים למעלה: שוכן לשבטיו. ראה כל שצט ושצט שוכן לעצמו ואינו מעורבין, ראה שאין פתחים מכוונים זה כנגד זה, שלא יזין לתוך אהל חצירו³. ותהי עליו רוח אלהים. עלה בלבו שלא יקללם⁴: (ג) בנו בעור. כמו למענו מיס⁵. ומדרש אגדה שניהם היו גדולים מאצותיהם, בלק צנו פפור, אציו צנו הוא צמלכות, ובלעם גדול מאציו צנציות, מנה צן פרס

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from cursing the Jewish people, but now (the predominant theme was that) he was actively blessing them, as Rashi stresses in his commentary to verse 23, "they are worthy of blessing."

Consequently, in his commentary to Bilam's second parable, Rashi prioritized interpretations that bring to light the positive qualities of the Jewish people within Bilam's words, which explains to the reader why "they are worthy of blessing."

Thus, in our verse, Rashi considered the interpretation of Onkelos to be secondary, as according to Onkelos the verse does not speak of the positive traits of the Jewish people, but a gift which God planned to give them (the conquest of the Land). Only the Midrashic interpretation brings to light how Bilam proved that the Jewish people "are worthy of blessing," since they serve God with the utmost vigor, like an awesome lion.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 33, pp. 149-151)

1 1091 יג 2 אבות ה, יט 3 בבא בתרא ט. 4 91' תיבות "רוח אלקים" - שנתהפכה רוחו ומחשבתו להיות מתאים לרצונו ורוחו של אלקים (כמ"ש המפרשים). ומעמו דרש"י לפרש כן - ולא כפשוטו (כבתרגום וכר"כ מפרשים) שנחה עליו רוח נבואה, כי מהי השייכות והביאור שיירא את ישראל שוכן לשבטיו? תגרום להשראת השכינה עליו. וגם: כבר פרש"י (כג, ד) שגילוי הנבואה אל בלעם היתה באופן של "ויקר - לשון ערוא, ל' גנאי, ל' סומאת קרי כלומר בקושי ובבדין וכיו"ו וכאן הרי כתוב בל' כבוד, ומה מוכח שאי"ז כוונת הכתוב (ע"פ לקו"ש חיי"ג ע"י 79, הערה 14). 5 תהלים קיד, ח ע"ז טט. 7 נדה לא. 8 טנהדרין קה. 9 איכה ד, יא

🌀 **BILAM'S THIRD PARABLE** 🌀

23:27
SIXTH
READING
(7TH WHEN
JOINED)

Balak said to Bilam, "Come now, I'll take you to a different place. Perhaps it will be right in God's eyes, and you will condemn them for me from there." ²⁸ Balak took Bilam to the peak of Pe'or, overlooking the wastelands.

²⁹ Bilam said to Balak, "Build me seven altars here and prepare seven bulls and seven rams for me."

³⁰ Balak did what Bilam told him, and offered up a bull and a ram on each altar.

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¹ Bilam saw that blessing Israel was good in God's eyes, so he did not go to seek methods of divination (to communicate with God) as he had done the (previous) two times, (as God would surely tell him to bless Israel. Rather,) he focused on (the sins of the Jewish people, such as the Golden Calf in) the desert (hoping that this would discredit the Jews). ² Bilam raised his eyes (hoping to cast the evil eye on them), but when he saw Israel settled (modestly) according to its tribes, he changed his mind to be like God (desired, and did not curse them).

³ He launched into his parable and said:

The word of Bilam the son of Be'or,

The word of a man with an open eye.

⁴ The word of the one who hears God's sayings,

Who sees God's vision lying down,

Yet with open eyes.

⁵ Your tents are so good, O Ya'akov!

Your dwellings, O Israel!

⁶ They spread out like streams,

Like gardens by the river,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Why did Bilam exclaim "Your tents are so good"? (v. 5)**

RASHI: Because he saw that the entrances were not opposite each other. "Your dwellings" thus refers to "your encampments," as Onkelos states.

Another explanation: "Your tents are so good"—The Tabernacle at Shiloh and the eternal Temple are so good when they are inhabited,

for sacrifices are offered in them to atone for you. "Your dwellings" (משכנותיך)—Even when they are desolate, for they are held as collateral security (משכון) for you, and their destruction atones for your souls, as the verse states, "God has exhausted His fury" (Lamentations 4:11). And how did He exhaust it? "He has kindled a fire in Tziyon" (ibid.).

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🌀 **"YOUR TENTS ARE SO GOOD!" (v. 5)**

Rashi brings two explanations to a verse when each has a certain inconsistency at the literal level, such that the two interpretations complement each other. Furthermore, Rashi always places the interpretation which has the less serious inconsistency first as his primary explanation, and leaves the interpretation which has the greater problem at the literal level as his second explanation.

What are the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two explanations that Rashi offers for verse 5?

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi explains two qualities that impressed Bilam "when he saw Israel settled according to its tribes" (v. 2), causing him to change his mind and not curse the Jewish people: "He saw each tribe living by itself and not marrying with each other. He saw that their doorways did not face each other, so that one would not peer into each other's tents."

🌀 *Sparks of Chasidus* 🌀

Rashi writes that Bilam was inspired by the Jewish tents, "Because he saw that the entrances were not opposite each other" (v.2, 5). The "arrangement of tents" alludes to scholars convening together to discuss matters of Torah, each one offering his own interpretations. Then, if their "entrances," meaning their mouths, are "opposite each other," i.e. their intention is to show that their own ideas are superior than those of the others, then woe to them and their souls! But if their intentions are for the sake of Heaven, then they are certainly deserving that the Divine presence should rest with them.

(Based on *Ohr Torah* of the *Mezritcher Magid*, p. 49a)

הנציב יי פארזין הנציבין על מיא: ז יסני מלכא דיתרבא מבגוהי וישלוט בעממין סגיאין ויתקוף מאנג מלכה ותתנטל מלכותה: ח אלקא דאפקנון ממצרים תקפא ורומא דילה ייכלון בני ישראל נכסי עממיא סנאיהון ובבות מלביהון יתפנקון וארעתהון יחסנו: ט ינוח ישרי בתקוף באריא וכליתא לית דיקימנה בריכיד יהון בריבין ולישיד יהון לישיין: י ויתקף רגזא דבלק בבלעם וישקפנין לירוהי ואמר בלק לבלעם למילט סנאי קריד וקא ברבא מברכת להון דנון חלת זמנין: יא וכען זיל לד לאתרד אמרית יקרא אקרינד וקא מנעד יי מן יקר: יב ואמר בלעם לבלק הלא אף לאונדיד די שלחת לותי מללית למימר: יג אם יתן לי בלק מלי ביתה כסף וזהב לית לי רשו למעבר על גורת מימרא דיי למעבר טבתא או בישתא מרעותי דימלל יי יתה אמלל: יד וכען קא אנא אזול לעמי איתא אמלכנד מא דתעבר

נהר פאהלים נטע יהוה פארזים עלי-מים: ז יזל-מים מדליו וזרעו במים רבים וירם מאנג מלכו ותנשא מלכתו: ח אל מוציאו ממצרים פתועפת ראם לו יאכל גוים צריו ועצמותיהם יגרם ותציו ימחיץ: ט פרע שכת בארי וכלביא מי יקימנו מברכיד ברוד וארריד ארור: י ויתראף בלק אל-בלעם ויספק את-כפיו ויאמר בלק אל-בלעם קראתיך והנה ברכת ברך זה שלש פעמים: יא ועתה ברח-לך אל-מקומך אמרתי כבוד אכבודך והנה מנעך יהוה מכבוד: יב ויאמר בלעם אל-בלק הלא גם אל-מלאכיד אשר-שלחת אלי דברתי לאמר: יג אם יתן לי בלק מלא ביתו כסף וזהב לא אוכל לעבר את-פי יהוה לעשות טובה או רעה מלבי אשר-ידבר יהוה אתו אדבר: [שביעין] יד ועתה

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הגויס שחס לריו: ועצמותיהם. של לריס: יגרם. מנחס פתר צו לשון שצירה, וכן לא גרמו לצקר⁵, וכן ואת חרשיה גרמיי⁶, ואני אומר לשון עלם הוא, שמגרר הבשר בשניו מסביב והמוח שצפנים, ומעמיד העלם על ערמימותה: וחציו ימחץ. אונקלוס תרגם חציו של לריס, חלוקה שלכם כמו בעלי חיים⁷, מרי פלוגתא, וכן ימחץ, לשון ומחלה וחלפה רקחו⁸, שיחלו את ארלם. ויש לפתור לשון חיים ממש, חציו של הקצ"ה ימחץ דמם של לריס, יטבול וינטבע דמם, כמו למען תמחץ רגלך דם⁹ וחיוו זז מלשון מכה, כמו מחלתי¹⁰, שהצבע דם נראה כאילו מחוץ ונגוע: (ט) כרע שכת בארי. כתרגומו, יתישבו בצרלם ככה וגזורה: (י) ויספוק. הכה זז על זז: (יג) לעבור את פי ה'. כאן לא נאמר חלחי כמו שאמר בראשונה¹¹, לפי שידע שנצאש בצקצ"ה

אמר רבותינו מצרכותיו של אותו רשע אנו למדים מה היה צלצו לקללם כשאמר וישת אל המדבר פניו, וכשהפך המקום את פיו צרכם מעין אותו קללות שצקש לומר כו', כדאיתא בחלק: באהלים. כתרגומו, לשון מר ואלהות? נטע ה'. בגן עדן. לשון אחר כהלים נטע ה', כשמים המתוחין כאהל, שנאמר וימתחם כאהל לשצת? נטע ה'. לשון נטיעה מנינו בצוהלים, שנאמר ויטע אהלי אפדנו⁴: (ז) מדליו. מצארותיו. ופירושו כתרגומו: וזרעו במים רבים. לשון הלחה הוא זה, כזרע הזרוע על פני המים: וירם מאנג מלכו. מלך ראשון שלהם יכבוש את אגג מלך עמלק: ותנשא מלכתו. של יעקב יותר ויותר, שיצא אחריו דוד ושלמה: (ח) אל מוציאו ממצרים. מי גורם להם הגדולה הזאת, אל המוציאם ממצרים צתוקף ורום שלו יאכל את

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Thus later, when Bilam praised the "tents" and "dwellings" of the Jewish people in his parable (v. 5), it follows that he was referring to these same two qualities which had led him to bless and not curse the Jews. So Rashi writes here that he praised the tents, "because he saw that the entrances were not opposite each other," and adds that the "dwellings" refers to "the encampments" into distinct tribes.

However, Rashi was not satisfied with this interpretation alone, since:
a.) Why would Bilam mention a detail about the doorways ("your tents"), before the overall description of the camp being divided into tribes ("your dwellings")? Surely the general should come before the particular (as in Rashi's sequence to verse 2: "He saw each tribe... He saw that their doorways etc.")?

Furthermore, the non-mixing of tribes is surely a much more general issue, for it affected the future lineage of the Jewish people, so why did Bilam mention it last?

b.) Another problem is that according to Rashi's first interpretation, Bilam's remark about the Jewish encampments and tents did not

constitute a prophecy, but a mere observation, so it should have been said before he launched into his prophecy ("God's sayings...God's vision etc.") in verse 4.

Therefore Rashi offered a second interpretation, that Bilam actually said words of prophecy about the future, that "your tents" refers to the future Tabernacle at Shiloh and the Holy Temple. The Tabernacle is referred to here as a tent because it was a temporary structure, and the use of the plural ("your tents") is meant to include the eternal Temple too. Likewise, "your dwellings" also refers to the future Tabernacle at Shiloh and Holy Temple, but this part of the verse is speaking of a time when they are in a state of desolation. Therefore, the Torah uses the term משכנתיך (your dwellings) which is etymologically related to the term משכון (collateral security), alluding to the fact that the Temple will ultimately be rebuilt.

Nevertheless, this interpretation is problematic, since:
a.) It is very difficult to accept at the literal level that the term "tent" (a temporary structure) refers to the eternal Temple.

Like spices which God planted (in Eden),
 Like cedars by the water.
⁷ Water will flow from his wells,
 And his seed will have much water.
 His king will prevail over Agag,
 His sovereignty will be uplifted.
⁸ God who brought them out of Egypt,
 With His towering strength.
 Will consume the nations, his enemies,
 Break their bones and dip His arrows (in their blood).
⁹ He will crouch and lie down (in his land) like a lion, an awesome lion;
 Who will dare rouse him?
 Those who bless you will be blessed,
 And those who curse you will be cursed.”

¹⁰ Balak became furious at Bilam, and clapped his hands (together). Balak said to Bilam, “I called you to curse my enemies, and you’ve just now blessed them three times! ¹¹ Run off home right now! I said I was going to give you tremendous honor, but God has just deprived you of honor.”

¹² Bilam said to Balak, “Didn’t I even speak to the messengers you sent me, saying, ¹³ ‘If Balak gives me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot transgress the word of God to do either good or evil on my own (and) I will (only) say what God says?’”

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b.) Being that the Tabernacle at Shiloh was a *temporary* structure, after it was destroyed its existence ceased forever. How then could it act as “collateral security” after its destruction?

Due to these problems *Rashi* could not suffice with this explanation and was forced to bring the first interpretation too.

And in the final analysis, the first interpretation is superior, since it is not flawed in the *actual explanation* but only in the *sequence*—either the

order in which the terms are written in the verse, or the placement of the verse itself; whereas the second interpretation has a more serious problem, that the *explanation* of the terms “tents” and “dwellings” are partially inappropriate. Therefore *Rashi* placed the latter as his secondary interpretation because an inappropriate explanation is more problematic than an inappropriate sequence, at the literal level.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 13, p. 78ff.)

🔥 Sparks of Chasidus 🔥

“HE WILL CROUCH...LIKE A LION” (v. 9)

The “crouching lion” is a metaphor for the might of the Jewish people lying dormant during the time of exile (*Bereishis Rabah* 98:7). But a lion can never be fully tamed, for it is “one of the five types of wild animals which are predisposed to cause damage by their very nature, even if they have been tamed. Therefore if one of them causes damage...the owner is liable to pay full compensation” (*Shulchan Aruch, Choshen Mishpat* 389:8).

Likewise, while the might of the Jewish people may appear to be dormant during the exile, they nevertheless remain strong like a crouched lion. This takes expression in the power of a Jew to remain loyal to the Torah and its *mitzvos* despite all obstacles, for the soul is impervious to the exile, and grants a Jew the strength to rise above it.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 2, pp. 337-8)

“I CANNOT TRANSGRESS THE WORD OF GOD” (v. 13)

The forces of evil themselves...are not invested in a body [which conceals God] so they are aware of their Master and do not rebel against Him by performing any [rebellious] act...which is not ordered by the Almighty, God forbid. Thus [representing the forces of evil] Bilam said, “I cannot transgress the word of God etc.” (v. 13) ...for they are unable to transgress the Divine will at all, since they are aware that He is their life-force and sustenance...It is only because their nourishment and life-force is found within them in a state of “exile” that they see themselves as having independent power and thus deny God’s Oneness. But they do not deny God completely... recognizing that their life-force and sustenance is passed down to them from God’s will....Thus, a person who *transgresses* God’s will is very much worse and inferior to the forces of evil...”

(Excerpted from *Tanya* ch. 24)

וַאֲחֵנִי לָךְ מֵאֵי עֲבַד עִמָּא הֲדִינוּ לְעַמְּךָ בְּסוּף יוֹמָא: מו וְנִטַּל מִתְּלָה וְאָמַר אָמַר בְּלָעַם בַּר בְּעוֹר וְאָמַר נִבְרָא דְשַׁפְּרִי תָּוִי: מו אָמַר דְּשָׁמַע מִיַּמֵּר מִן קָדָם אֵל וַיִּדַע מַדַּע מִן קָדָם עֲלָאָה חֲזוּ מִן קָדָם שְׂדֵי תָּוִי שְׂכִיב וּמִתְּגַלִּי לָהּ: ז' חֲזוּתָהּ וְלֹא כַּעַן סְכִימָה וְלֹא אִיתְּוָהּ קָרִיב בַּד יָקוּם מִלְכָּא מִיַּעֲקֹב וַיִּתְּרַבָּא מִשִּׁיחָא מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּקְמוּל רַבְרָבֵי מוֹאָב וַיִּשְׁלֹט בְּכָל

הֲנִנִּי הוֹלֵךְ לְעַמִּי לְכַה אִיעֲצֶךָ אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה הָעַם הַזֶּה לְעַמְּךָ בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים: מו וַיִּשָּׂא מִשְׁלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר נָאִם בְּלָעַם בְּנֹו בְּעַר וּנְאָם הַגִּבֹּר שִׁתָּם הָעֵינִי: מו נְאָם שָׁמַע אִמְרֵי-אֵל וַיִּדַּע דַּעַת עֲלִיּוֹן מִחֲזוּה שְׂדֵי יַחֲזֶה נִפְלַ וּגְלוּי עֵינָיִם: ז' אַרְאֲנוּ וְלֹא עֲתָה אֲשׁוּרְנוּ וְלֹא קָרוֹב דְּרָךְ כּוֹכָב מִיַּעֲקֹב וְקָם שִׁבְט מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל

רש"י

שכן עתידין להרע למואב באחרית הימים ומתן פאתי מואב³. התרגום מפרש קוטר העברי ויקטול וכו': (טז) ויודע דעת עליון. לכוין השעה שכועס זה⁴: (יז) אראנו⁵. רואה אני שצחו של יעקב וגדולתו, אך לא עתה הוא, חלף לאחר זמן: דרך כוכב. כתרגומו, לשון דרך קשתו⁶, שכוכב עובר כחץ, ובלע"ז דישטינ"ט כלומר יקום מזל: וקם שבט. רודה ומושל:

ונטרד: (יד) הולך לעמו. מעתה הריני כשאר עמי, שנסתלק הקצ"ח מעליו: לכה איעצך. מה לך לעשות. ומה היא הענה, אלהיכם של אלו שונא זמם הוא כו', כדאיתא בחלק'. תדע שבלעם השיא ענה זו להכשילם בזמנה, שהרי נאמר² הן הכה היו לבני ישראל בדבר בלעם: אשר יעשה העם הזה לעמך. מקרא קצר הוא זה, איענך להכשילם, ואומר לך מה

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Why did Bilam stress, "I am going back to my people now"? (v. 14). He could have simply said, "I am going home."**

RASHI: [He was hinting]: "From now on, I am like the rest of my people," for God had departed from him.

● **Verses 17 and 18 are speaking about whom?**

RAMBAM: In the Torah passage concerning Bilam, he prophesies about two Mashiachs: The first Mashiach, David, who saved Israel from her oppressors; and the final Mashiach who will arise from his descendants and ultimately save Israel. There it is written: "I see him, but not now"—this refers to David; "I perceive him, but he is not near" (v. 17-18)—this refers to King Mashiach.

"A star will shoot forth from Ya'akov"—this refers to David; "And a staff will arise from Israel"—this refers to King Mashiach.

"He will crush the princes of Mo'av"—this refers to David, as the verse states, "He smote Mo'av and measured them with a line" (Sam. II 8:2); "He will devastate all of the descendants of Sheis"—this refers to King Mashiach, about whom it is written, "He will rule from sea to sea" (Zech. 9:10).

"Edom will be possessed"—this refers to David, as the verse states, "Edom became the servants of David etc." (Sam II 8:6; *ibid.* 14); "[Se'ir...] will be destroyed"—this refers to Mashiach, as the verse states, "Saviors will ascend Mount Zion [to judge Mount Eisav]" (Ovad. 1:21).

(Rambam, *Laws of Kings* 11:1)

TORAS MENACHEM

🔮 **BILAM'S FOURTH PARABLE (v. 14ff)**

Why do we find that in the case of Bilam's prior three prophecies he first built an altar and offered sacrifices to God (23:1,14,29), and yet here, before Bilam's final prophecy, no sacrifices were made? The reason why he offered the sacrifices was presumably in the hope that the pleasure of the sacrifices on High would lead God to bestow a prophecy upon him, so it appears quite surprising that Bilam's longest and most profound parable about the End of Days was bestowed upon him without offering sacrifices first!

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi's commentary to verse 14 answers this question by stating, "God had departed from him." From this the reader will understand that Bilam's fourth parable was not being transmitted to him at this point as a prophetic vision, for he had now lost the power of prophecy. Rather, he was now repeating a prophecy that he had heard earlier.

In fact, the reader will remember that Moshe was praised with "not turning to his own affairs" after coming down from Mount Sinai and informing the Jewish people of the prophecy that he had heard straight away (Rashi to *Shemos* 19:14). If this was said in Moshe's praise, it was clearly not a practice followed by all prophets, so it is not surprising that Bilam now said a prophecy which he had heard at some point earlier and had not yet revealed.

(Based on *Sichas Motzo'ei Shabbos Parshas Balak* 5738)

🔮 *Sparks of Chasidus* 🔮

Rambam understood the verse, "A star will shoot forth etc." (v. 17) as referring to King David and Mashiach. The *Jerusalem Talmud*, however, uses the metaphor of a "star" in this verse to refer to even the ordinary Jew (*Ma'aser Shenii* 4:6).

At first glance, this appears to be a contradiction, for Mashiach represents the highest perfection possible in a human being, whereas the "ordinary" Jew includes every Jewish person, even the most simple. However, the matter can be reconciled based on the *Ba'al Shem Tov's* teaching that every Jew contains within him a "spark" of the soul of Mashiach (*Me'or Einayim* of R' Nachum of Chernobyl, *Bamidbar* 25:12). The verse therefore refers to both Mashiach himself and the "Mashiach" within us.

The presence of this "spark" of Mashiach has a twofold implication: a.) The verse states the star will "shoot forth," suggesting that one's personal spark of Mashiach should be revealed and "shoot out" into the world. b.) Every Jew is able to speed up and bring about the actual manifestation of Mashiach through revealing his own spark and adding in Torah and *mitzvos*.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 2, p. 599)

🌀 **BILAM FORETELLS THE END OF DAYS** 🌀

24:14 **I**'m going back to my people now," (said Bilam). "Come, I will advise you (how to bring about Israel's downfall: Just tempt them to immorality with Mo'avite women....)
SEVENTH READING
“(Now I will tell you) what this people will do to your people at the end of days.”¹⁵ He launched into his parable and said:

The word of Bilam, the son of Be'or,

The word of a man with an open eye.

¹⁶ The word of the one who hears God's sayings,

And knows the thoughts of the Supernal One,

Who sees God's vision lying down,

Yet with open eyes.

¹⁷ I see him, but not now.

I perceive him, but he is not near.

A star will shoot forth from Ya'akov,

And a staff will arise from Israel.

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 **TWO MASHIACHS (v. 17-18)**

In his *Laws of Kings*, **Rambam** clarifies in detail how each stanza of Bilam's metaphor about "the end of days" contains a reference to King David and to Mashiach. **Rambam** chose to cite Bilam's parable, as it is the only place in the Five Books of Moshe which indicates clearly that the final redemption will be brought about by Mashiach, and not by God alone. However, what is not clear is why **Rambam** cites Bilam's parable in such detail, quoting all four stanzas which refer to Mashiach, when just one of them would appear to have sufficed?

Another question is why **Rambam** quotes all the parts of Bilam's parable that speak of King David, which do not appear to be directly relevant to the subject at hand, the scriptural proof for the Messianic redemption.

A further problem is why **Rambam** refers to King David as "the first Mashiach." Why was David, and David alone, considered to be a precursor of Mashiach? While he was clearly a great Jewish leader, King David did not in fact redeem the Jewish people from exile. Why is Moshe not considered to be the first Mashiach, being that he successfully redeemed the Jewish people from Egypt? And if Mashiach simply refers to an anointed king, then why is Saul not the first Mashiach, since he was anointed as King of the Jewish people before David?

THE EXPLANATION

While classical Jewish sources associate the coming of Mashiach with a host of startling occurrences, in his *Laws of Kings*, **Rambam** sought to explain the concept from a strictly *halachic* (legal) point of view. Thus,

Rambam describes Mashiach as having essentially one single goal: "In his days, observance of the Torah's laws will return as in former times" (*Laws of Kings* 11:1), i.e. the Messianic era is determined by a complete return to Torah observance.

Thus, according to **Rambam**, the Messianic Redemption is not a new phenomenon but a *return* to that time in Jewish history when the Torah was observed fully. Consequently, **Rambam** describes Mashiach as "renewing the Davidic dynasty, restoring it to its initial sovereignty," for Mashiach has to repeat the work of King David, which led to a time of total Torah observance.*

So King David was, in effect, the "first Mashiach," since the "final Mashiach," merely has to *repeat* the precedent that was set by King David.

PHASES IN MASHIACH'S PROGRESS

Bringing the Jewish people to a status of complete observance could be divided briefly into two areas: a.) Encouraging the Jewish people to observe *mitzvos* which they are able to observe but, for whatever reason, choose not to. b.) Making possible the observance of those commandments which are currently impossible to observe, through the construction of the Temple (for the reinstatement of sacrificial procedure) and return to the Land of Israel (to facilitate the observance of all the agricultural laws).

A closer analysis of **Rambam's** words (*ibid.*) reveals *four* distinct aspects of the coming of Mashiach:

1.) The development of his own personality and leadership skills: "When a king** of the House of David will arrive, dedicated to the study

*This does not mean that Mashiach as a leader cannot—or will not—make further remarkable innovations. It is simply that any additional innovations that he may bring fall outside his legally defined capacity as the Mashiach. For example, **Rambam** writes, "One should not entertain the notion that the King Mashiach must work miracles and wonders, bring about new phenomena within the world, resurrect the dead, or perform other similar deeds" (*Laws of Kings*, 11:1). But this does not mean to say that Mashiach will not perform such acts. Rather, **Rambam's** stress is that this is not the *purpose of* (and thus not the method of *identifying*) Mashiach's coming (See *Toras Menachem* to *Vayikra* 26:4). In other words, **Rambam's** "legal" treatment of Mashiach's coming emphasizes only that which is crucial and definitive to the Torah's conceptualization of Mashiach and omits that which is incidental and/or tentative. It follows, therefore, that **Rambam's** omission of a concept here is not to be mistaken as a *denial* of its authenticity or its occurrence; it is merely an indication that the concept is not intrinsic to the definitive purpose of Mashiach's coming (See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 27, p.204ff.). **At this stage, Mashiach could not have reached the status of being a king as usually described by Jewish Law, for a full-fledged Jewish king can only be appointed by the *Sanhedrin* in conjunction with a prophet, and clearly, we

בְּנֵי אֲנָשָׁא: יֵה וְיֵהי אָדוּם יִרְתָּא וְיֵהי יִרְתָּא
שְׁעִיר לְבַעְלֵי דְבֹהֵי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִצְלַח בְּנִבְסִין:
יֵה וְיֵהוּת תַּד מִדְּבִית יַעֲקֹב וְיִזְבַּד מִשְׁזַב
מִקְרִית עַמְמִיָּא: כ וְתֹזֵא יֵה עַמְלִקָּה וְנִטְל
מִתְלָה וְאָמַר רִישׁ קְרִבְיָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל הָוָה
עַמְלִקָּה וְסוּפָה לְעִלְמָא יָבֵד: כא וְתֹזֵא יֵה
שְׁלִמָּה וְנִטְל מִתְלָה וְאָמַר תַּקִּיף בֵּית
מוֹתְבֵדָה וְשׁוּי בְּכַרְדַּ תַּקִּיף מְדוּרְדָה: כב אַרְי אַם
יֵהי לְשַׁצָּאָה שְׁלִמָּה עַד מָא אֶתְוֹרָאָה
יִשְׁבְּנָדָה: כג וְנִטְל מִתְלָה וְאָמַר וַיִּלְחִיבְיָא
דִּיחֹן כַּד יַעֲבֵד אֶלְהָא יֵה אֶלְיִן: כד וְסִיעֵן
יִצְטְרַחֵן מְרוּמָאֵי וְיַעֲבֹן לְאַתּוּר וְיִשְׁעֲבֹדוּן
לְעֵבֵר פְּרַת וְאָף אַנְוִן לְעִלְמָא יָבֵדוּן: כה וְקַם

וּמַחֲזִין פְּאֵתֵי מוֹאָב וְקִרְקַר כָּל־בְּנֵי־שֵׁת: יֵה וְהָיָה אָדוּם יִרְשָׁה
וְהָיָה יִרְשָׁה שְׁעִיר אֲיִבּוֹ וְיִשְׂרָאֵל עֲשֶׂה חֵיל: יט וְיִרְדֵּי מִיַּעֲקֹב
וְהֶאֱבִיד שָׂרִיד מַעִיר: כ וְיִרְא אֶת־עַמְלִק וְיִשָּׂא מְשָׁלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר
רֵאשִׁית גּוֹיִם עַמְלִק וְאַחֲרֵיתוֹ עַדִּי אֲבִיד: כא וְיִרְא אֶת־הַקִּינִי
וְיִשָּׂא מְשָׁלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֵיתָן מוֹשְׁבֵדָה וְשִׁים בְּסַלְעַ קַנְנָדָה: כב כִּי אִם־
יֵהיָה לְבַעַר קִינ עַד־מָה אֲשׁוּר תִּשְׁבְּנָדָה: כג וְיִשָּׂא מְשָׁלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר
אֹוִי מִי יִחִיָּה מְשֻׁמוֹ אֵל: כד וְצִים מִיַּד בְּתִים וְעֵנּוֹ אֲשׁוּר
וְעֵנּוֹ־עֵבֵר וְגַם־הוּא עַדִּי אֲבִיד: כה וַיִּקַּם בְּלָעָם וַיִּלְדֵּי וַיִּשָּׁב

—כשׁ

איתן מושבך. תמה אני מביכן זכות לכך הלא אתה עמי היית בעתה הבה
נחכמה לו¹⁰, ועתה נחישבת צליתן ומעוז של ישראל¹¹: (כז) כי אם יהיה
לבער קין וגו'. אשריך שנתקעת לחוקך זה שאינך נטרד עוד מן העולם, כי
אף אם אתה עתיד לגלות עם עשרת השבטים ותהיה לזכור ממקום שנתישבת
שם, מה צריך: עד מה אשור תשבך. עד היכן הוא מגלה אותך, שמא לחלח
וחזור, אין זה טרוד מן העולם, אלא טלטול ממקום למקום ותשוב עם שאר
הגלויות: (כג) וישא משלו וגו'. כיון שהזכיר את שביית אשור אמר: אוי
מי יחיה משומו אל. מי יכול להחיות את עלמו משומו את אלה שלא ישים
עליו הוגזר את אלה, שיעמוד סחריב ויבלבל את כל האומות, ועוד יבואו
ליום מיד כתיס ויעזרו כתיס שהן ארמיים צבירניות גדולות על אשור:
(כד) וענו אשור וענו עבר. וענו אותם שבעבר הכה: וגם הוא עדי
אובד. וכן פירש דניאל עד דקטילת חיותא והוצד גשמה¹²: וצים. ספניות

ומחזין פאתי מואב. זה דוד, שנאמר זו השכז אותם ארלכ וימדד שני
חבלים להמית וגו'¹: וקרקר. לשון קורח כמו אני קרתי², מקצת צור
נקרתי³, יקרוח עורכי נחל⁴, פורוייר צלע⁵: כל בני שות. כל האומות,
שכלם ילאו מן שם צנו של אדם הראשון: (יח) והיה ירשה שעיר איביו.
לאויביו ישראל: (יט) וירד מיעקב. ועוד יהיה מושל אחר מיעקב: והאביד
שריד מעיר. מעיר ההשוצה של אדום והיא רומי, ועל מלך המשיח אומר
כן, שנאמר צו וירד מים עד ים⁶, ולא יהיה שריד לצית עשו⁷: (כ) וירא את
עמלק. נסתכל בפורענותו של עמלק: ראשית גוים עמלק. הוא קדם את
כלם להכלים בישראל, וכך תרגם אוגולוס, ואחרייתו ליאצד צידס, שנאמר
תמחה את זכר עמלק⁸: (כה) וירא את הקיני. לפי שהיה קיני תקוע אלל
עמלק, כענין שנאמר ויאמר שאל אל הקיני וגו'⁹, הזכירו אחר עמלק,
נסתכל בגדולתן של בני יתרו שנאמר זהם תרעתים שמעתים שוכתים⁹:

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of the Torah and observance of the mitzvos like his father David, according to the Written law and the Oral law.”

2.) His influence upon the Jewish people: “He will compel all the Jewish people to walk in it [the Torah] and strengthen its fences...he has...built the Beis Hamikdash in its place, and he gathers in the dispersed ones of Israel.”

3.) Eliminating the power of those nations that interfere with Torah observance: “He will fight the wars of God...he is victorious over all the nations around him.”

4.) Guiding the nations of the world to serve God: “He will then perfect the entire world, to serve God in unison, as the verse states, ‘I will make the peoples pure of speech so that they will all call upon the Name of God and serve Him with one purpose’ (Zeph. 3:9).”

In order to prove that these four qualities are both: i.) part of Mashiach’s role, and, ii.) preceded in the leadership of King David, Rambam cited

four full stanzas of Bilam’s parable which refer to the four above-mentioned areas. And, in each case, Bilam’s parable brings to light the superiority of Mashiach over David.

“‘I see him, but not now’—refers to David; ‘I perceive him, but he is not near’—refers to King Mashiach,” i.e. each part of the verse speaks of an individual (“him”), namely, the personalities of David and Mashiach. And Mashiach is clearly the greater of the two, since his coming takes more time (he is “not near”) and thus is the product of more human effort on the part of mankind.

“‘A star will shoot forth from Ya’akov’—refers to David; ‘And a staff will arise from Israel’—refers to King Mashiach.” Here the Torah refers to Mashiach’s role as a leader over the Jewish people (“Israel”). His direct, powerful leadership is represented by a “staff,” in contrast to David, who is represented by a somewhat aloof “star,” symbolizing a weaker form of influence.

are speaking here of a period prior to the reconvening of the Sanhedrin. A further proof to this point is that Rambam refers to how Rabbi Akiva proclaimed “King Ben Koziba” (Bar Kochba) as Mashiach, although he was not in fact a full-fledged king according to Jewish law (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, p. 361).

*He will crush the princes of Mo'av,
He will devastate all the descendants of Sheis.*

¹⁸ *Edom will be possessed,
Se'ir, his enemy, will be possessed,
And Israel will grow strong.*

¹⁹ *A ruler will come from Ya'akov,
And destroy the remnant of a city.*

²⁰ *When he saw (the future retribution of) Amalek, he launched into his parable and said:
Amalek was the first of the nations (to fight Israel),
His end is eternal destruction.*

²¹ *When he saw (what would happen to) the Kenites, he launched into his parable and said:
How firm is your dwelling place!
Your nest is set in stone.*

²² *For even if the Kenite is laid waste (and exiled),
How far will Assyria take you captive?*

²³ *(Pondering the Assyrian exile), he launched into his parable and said:*

Oh! Who can survive (God) placing these (things on him)?

²⁴ *Ships will come from the Kitites*

They will afflict Assyria and afflict the other side (of the river),

But he too will perish forever.

²⁵ *Bilam got moving. He went off and returned to his home, and Balak also went on his way.*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Why did Bilam return home? (v. 25)**

TZROR HAMOR: The verse could have simply stated that Bilam “went off home.” Why was it necessary to write that he “went off and returned home”? Here the Torah hints that, despite the visions of greatness he had perceived for the Jewish people, he returned to his prior ways of sorcery.

● **Why does the verse state “Balak went on his way”? (v.25)**

OHR HAChAYIM: Balak did not escort Bilam home. Perhaps the Torah is also suggesting here that Balak ceased to be the King of Mo'av and “went on his way.” For Balak was only appointed due to the threat of the Jewish people, and being that Bilam had shown that the Jewish people were peace-loving, Balak's leadership proved itself unnecessary.

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Concerning the elimination of enemy nations (aspect “3” above), the Torah states that David will merely “crush” the princes of Mo'av (v. 17), whereas Mashiach will “devastate all of the descendants of Sheis.”

And the fourth quality, that of positively influencing the nations, is described in Bilam's fourth stanza (v. 18): “Edom will be possessed”—refers to David, as the verse states, ‘Edom became the servants of David etc.’ (Sam. II 8:6; ibid.14); ‘[Se'ir] will be possessed’—refers to Mashiach, as the verse states, ‘Saviors will ascend Mount Zion [to judge Mount Eisav]’ (Ovad. 1:21).”

Again here we see the superiority of Mashiach over David, for David merely subdued the nations as his “servants,” whereas Mashiach will inspire them to the service of God, “Saviors will ascend Mount Zion to judge Mount Eisav; and the kingdom will be God's” (ibid.).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 271ff.)

🔗 **THE DEPARTURE OF BILAM AND BALAK (v. 25)**

Verse 25 appears, at first glance, to be redundant. We have completed a lengthy description of how Balak attempted to lure Bilam into cursing the Jewish people, and here, after Bilam's fourth parable of praise for the Jewish people, the plot had clearly ended. So why do we need to be told, “Bilam got moving. He went off and returned to his home, and Balak also went on his way”?

Furthermore, why did Bilam “return home,” whereas Balak “went on his way”?

Surely Rashi should have answered these questions which require explanation at the literal level? [cf. *Tzror Hamor* and *Ohr haChayim*]

THE EXPLANATION

Before beginning his fourth parable, Bilam declared, “I'm going back to my people now” (24:14), so we would expect that immediately after

בלעם ואזל ותב לאתרה ואף בלק אזל לארחה: א ויתב ישראל בשטין ושרי עמא למטעי בתר בנת מואב: ב וקרעה לעמא לדבחי טעותהון ואכל עמא וסגידו לטעותהון: ג ואתחבר ישראל לבעלא פעור ותקף רגזא דיי בישראל: ד ואמר יי למשה דבר ית כל רישי עמא ודון וקטול דתיב קטול קדם יי לקבל שמשא ויתוב תקוף רגזא דיי מישראל: ה ואמר משה לדבחי ישראל קטולו גבר גברוהי דאתחברו לבעלא פעור: ו והא גברא מבני ישראל אתא וקרב לות אחוהי ית מדנתא לעיני משה ולעיני כל בנישאתא דבני ישראל ואנון בכן בתרע משפן זמנא: ז ותוא פינתא בר אלעזר בר אהרן כהנא וקם מגו כנשתא ונסיב רמחא בידה:

למקמו וגם בלק הלך לדרךכו: פ כה א וישב ישראל בשטים ויחל העם לזנות אל-בנות מואב: ג ותקראן לעם לזבחי אלהיהן ויאכל העם וישתחוו לאלהיהן: ג ויצמד ישראל לבעל פעור ויחר-אף יהוה בישראל: ד ויאמר יהוה אל-משה קח את-כל-ראשי העם והקע אותם ליהוה גגד השמש וישב תרון אף-יהוה מישראל: ה ויאמר משה אל-שפטי ישראל הרגו איש אנשיו הנצמדים לבעל פעור: ו והנה איש מבני ישראל בא ויקרב אל-אחיו את-המדנית לעיני משה ולעיני כל-עדת בני-ישראל והמה בכים פתח אהל מועד: ז וירא פינתא בר-אלעזר בר-אהרן הכהן ויקם

כ"ז

ישראל היה הורג שנים, ודייני ישראל שמונה רצוא ושמונת אלפים, כדאיתא בסנהדרין⁸: (ו) והנה איש מבני ישראל בא. נתקבלו שצטו של שמעון אלל זמרי שהיה נשיא שלהם, אמרו לו אנו נדונין צמיתא ואתה יושב וכו', כדאיתא באלו הן הנשרפין⁹: את המדינית. כזי צת לור: לעיני משה. אמרו לו משה, זו אסורה או מותרת, אם תאמר אסורה, צת יתרו מי התיירא לך וכו', כדאיתא התם¹⁰: והמה בוכים. נתעלמה ממנו הלכה (כל הצועל ארמית קנאים פוגעים צו), געו כלס צצכיה. צעגל עמד משה כנגד ששים רצוא, שנאמר ויטחן עד אשר דק וגו'¹¹ וכאן רפו ידיו, אלא כדי שיצא פינתא ויטול את הראוי לו⁷: (ז) וירא פינתא. ראה מעשה וזכר הלכה, אמר לו למשה מקובלני ממך הצועל ארמית קנאין פוגעין צו, אמר לו קריינא

גדולות, כדכתיב ולי אדיר¹, וצורני רצתא: (ח) בשטים. כך שמה²: לזנות אל בנות מואב. על ידי עלת צלעס כדאיתא צחלק³: (צ) וישתחוו לאלהיהן. כשתקף יצרו עליו ואומר לה השמעני לי, והיא מוליאה לו דמות פעור מחיקא ואומרת לו השתחוב לזה⁴: (ג) פעור. על סס שפוערין לפני פי הטבעת ומוליאין רעי, וזו היא עבודתו⁵: ויחר אף ה' בישראל. שלח צבס מגפה: (ד) קח את כל ראשי העם. לשפוט את העובדים לפעור⁶: והוקע אותם. את העובדים: והוקע. היא תליה⁶, כמו שמלינו צצני שאלו והוקענוס לה' ושס תליה מפורשת. עוצד עבודת אלילים צסקילה, וכל הנסקלין נתלין⁶: נגד השמש. לעין כל. ומדרש אגדה השמש מודיע את החוטאים, הענן נקפל מכנגדו והחמה זורחת עליו⁷: (ה) הרגו איש אנשיו. כל אחד ואחד מדייני

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finishing his parable Bilam would have carried out his declared intention and returned home.

On the other hand, there is good reason to believe that Bilam in fact changed his mind and remained. For immediately after stating his intention to go home, Bilam offered Balak some advice: "Come, I will advise you..." (ibid.). Rashi explains: "What was the advice? The God of this people hates immorality," i.e. Bilam advised Balak to tempt the Jewish men to be immoral with Moa'vite girls, as we find this plan carried out in the following passage (25:1ff.).

Now human nature is such that when one gives advice, one has a vested interest in seeing whether the advice bears fruit or not. And if we also bear in mind that Bilam had not yet received a "house full of silver and gold" (22:18), in payment for his services (since he had failed to curse the Jewish people), he had an extra reason to stay, in order to see if his advice would be correct. This might bring him substantial financial reward (especially as we know (Rashi ibid) that Bilam was a very greedy person). So, at the literal level, even though Bilam had declared, "I'm going back to my people now," it is nevertheless logical to presume that he changed his mind and did not in fact leave.

In order to teach us otherwise, the Torah states that Bilam "went off and returned to his home." Again, Rashi did not have to clarify why Bilam

Sparks of Chasidus

The idol "Ba'al Pe'or" was worshiped in an extremely crude fashion, by depositing the body's waste matter before it (Rashi to v. 3). In other words, they made the unimportant important.

Chasidic thought teaches that the angels too have "waste matter." Just like the digestive system gradually sifts out the nutritious elements of the food, eventually leaving nothing but waste, likewise, the angels "sift out" the most lofty and pleasurable Divine emanations, which they pass to Gan Eden (Heaven), and allow the "wastage" to fall to earth. The "spiritual" wastage is the source of all physical pleasures found in this world.

The pursuit of physical pleasures (spiritual "wastage") is thus a subtle form of "Ba'al Pe'or." For it is fitting for man, who is made in God's image, to focus primarily on filling his life with more lofty spiritual pleasures.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 4, p. 1327)

1 ישע"י לג, כא 2 ראה שיחת ש"פ בלק תשמ"א 3 סנהדרין קו. 4 ספרי 5 סנהדרין לה. 6 שם מה: 7 תנחומא 8 דף יח. 9 סנהדרין פב. 10 ראה לקו"ש ח"י"ח ע' 285 ואילך. 11 שמות לה, י

🕍 ZEALOTRY OF PINCHAS STOPS THE PLAGUE 🕍

25 **T**he Jewish people settled in Shitim, and (as a result of Bilam's plot) the people began to be immoral with Mo'avite girls. ² (The Mo'avites) invited the (Jewish) people to feasts (that they made) to their gods, and the (Jewish) people ate and prostrated themselves to (the Mo'avite) gods. ³ Israel (thus) became attached to (the deity) Ba'al Pe'or.

God became furious with Israel (and sent a plague upon them).

⁴ God said to Moshe, "Take all the leaders of the people (to judge those who worshiped idols) and hang them before God, in view of the sun (so everyone can see). Then God's fury will withdraw from Israel.

⁵ Moshe said to the (eighty-eight thousand six hundred) judges of Israel, "Each of you should kill (two) men who became attached to Ba'al Pe'or."

⁶ Then, an Israelite man came and brought (an important) Midianite woman to his brothers (and took her into a tent) in full view of Moshe and in full view of the entire congregation of the children of Israel.

(Moshe was indecisive because he could not recall what the law was in this case) and they were weeping at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.

MAFTIR ⁷ But Pinchas, the son of Elazar the son of Aharon the priest, saw (what had happened, and remembered the law). He stood up from among the congregation and, taking a spear in his hand, ⁸ he went into

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● On what basis did Pinchas kill the offenders? (v. 7-8)

RAMBAM: If a man is seen cohabiting with a non-Jewish woman...in public, i.e. in the presence of ten or more Jews, then if zealots strike him and kill him they are considered to be praiseworthy and eager [to serve God.] This law is a [non-scriptural] tradition that has been passed down from Moshe at Mount Sinai. However, a [scriptural] proof can be found from the incident with Pinchas and Zimri.

The zealot is only allowed to strike them at the actual time when they are sinning, as in the case of Zimri where the verse states, "[He pierced both of them—the Israelite man] and the woman—right through her abdomen" (v. 8). However, once they have separated, he is no longer permitted to kill them, and if he did kill one of them at this point he would be [guilty of murder and hence] liable for the death penalty. If the zealot asks the Jewish Court for a ruling

[permitting him to kill the sinner] he should not be given any response, even if the act of the sin is still taking place. Furthermore, if the zealot comes to kill the sinning cohabitor, and the cohabitor kills the zealot first in self-defense, then the cohabitor is not [guilty of murder and is thus not] subject to the death penalty.

Despite the fact that this sin does not incur the death penalty from the *Beis Din* [court], it should not be taken lightly, for there is a greater loss [to the Jewish people] through this sin than through all the other forbidden relations. For a son who is born as a result of forbidden relations [between two Jews] is his father's son in every respect and he is a Jew, even though he is a *mamzer* (illegitimate). However, the boy that is a child from a non-Jewish woman is not considered to be his child at all....

(Laws of Forbidden Relations 12:4-5,7)

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decided not to stay and see if his plan would succeed and bring him great reward, because the matter is understood from *Rashi's* earlier comment that "God had departed from him" (*Rashi* to v. 14), i.e. that Bilam lost his power of prophecy. Therefore Bilam's whole value and stature had disappeared, so he decided to leave.

As for the money, this could always be demanded later if his plan succeeded (which is what actually happened—*Rashi* to 31:8).

Based on the above we can now understand why the Torah stresses that "Balak went on his way," whereas, "Bilam returned to his home." Balak clearly did not return home at this point to his royal palace, for he would have sought means to implement Bilam's plan, and this would have inevitably involved some campaigning with the people of Mo'av to convince them to release their daughters.

Rashi nevertheless deemed it unnecessary to clarify this distinction, between "going on one's way" and "returning home," as the reader will already be familiar with the idea from *Parshas Vayeitzei*, where we read

that "*Lavan went off and returned to his home*" (*Bereishis* 32:1), whereas, "*Ya'akov went on his way*" (*ibid.* 2).

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Balak 5741)

🕍 THE ZEALOTRY OF PINCHAS (v. 7-8)

The following points of **Rambam's** ruling require some clarification:

a.) If the "sinning cohabitor" may be killed by the zealot, then we can presume that he must *deserve* this penalty. Why then, is it the case that "*once they have separated, he is no longer permitted to kill them*"? Surely, this is a sin for which the person is liable with his life, even *after* the sin is done?

b.) In praise of Pinchas' actions, the Torah uses the expression, "*because he was zealous for his God*" (*Bamidbar* 25:13), suggesting that this sin is a rebellion against God more than any other, as its vengeance is described as a "personal" act on behalf of God Himself. But in what respect, exactly, is this sin more an affront to God than any other?

ח ועל בְּתֵר גִּבְרָא בֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל לְקַבְּלָא וּבִזְע
 ית תְּרוּיָהוּן ית גִּבְרָא בֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיַת אֶתְתָא
 לְמַעְקָא וְאֶתְכְּלִי מוֹתָנָא מֵעַל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
 ט וְהוּוּ דְמִיתוּ בְּמוֹתָנָא עֲשָׂרִין וְאַרְבַּעַא
 אֲלָפִין: פ פ פ

מִתּוֹךְ הָעֵדָה וַיִּקַּח רַמַּח בְּיָדוֹ: ח וַיָּבֵא אַחֵר אִישׁ-יִשְׂרָאֵל
 אֶל-הַקָּהָל וַיְדַקֵּר אֶת-שְׁנֵיהֶם אֶת אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת-הָאִשָּׁה
 אֶל-קַבְּלָתָהּ וַתַּעֲצֹר הַמִּגְפָּה מֵעַל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ט וַיְהִי הַמַּתִּים
 בַּמִּגְפָּה אַרְבַּעַא וְעֶשְׂרִים אֲלָפִ: פ פ פ

ק"ד פסוקים, מגו"ח סימן.

רש"י

זכרות של זמרי ונקבות שלה, וראו כלם שלא לחנם הרגם, והרצה נסים נעשו
 לו כו', כדאיתא התם': חסלת פרשת בלק

דאגרתא איבו ליבווי פרוונקא, מיד ויקח רומח זידו וגו': (ח) אל הקבה.
 אל האכל: אל קבתה. (ס"א אל הקיבה) כמו הלחיים והקיבה, כוון צחוק

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c.) In reward for his zealotry, Pinchas was given the honor of priesthood (ibid.). But surely a person is a priest by virtue of the fact that he is *born* with the intrinsic qualities required to be a priest. How is it possible that a person could be *rewarded* for a particular good deed, by becoming a priest?

THE EXPLANATION

Rambam hints to the answer to all of these questions with the statement, "There is a greater loss [to the Jewish people] through this sin than through all the other forbidden relations":

In the case of other sins, including other forbidden relations, even if the child is illegitimate, he still remains Jewish. However, with the sin of cohabiting together with a non-Jewish woman, the result is that a *non-Jew* is born. Thus:

- 1.) The "result" of this sin is external to the person, and external to the Jewish people. The non-Jew has now been born, and this is an irreversible act.
- 2.) This sin breaches a boundary that no other sin is capable of, namely the boundary between Jew and non-Jew. As Rambam continues, "a son

the tent after the Israelite man and pierced (the spear through) both of them—the Israelite man, and the woman—right through her (lower) abdomen. The plague then ceased from the children of Israel.

⁹ *A total of twenty-four thousand died in the plague.*

THE HAFTARAH FOR BALAK (AND CHUKAS-BALAK) IS ON PAGE 308.

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who is born as a result of forbidden relations is his father's son in every respect and he is a Jew...However, the boy that is born from the non-Jewish woman is not considered to be his son at all..."

3.) Concerning the act of conceiving a child, the *Talmud* states, that "There are three partners in forming the child: the father, the mother...and God, who provides him with the soul" (*Kidushin* 30b). In other words, when a child is conceived, God is "personally" involved (so to speak).

Consequently, when the act of conception is a sin, it turns out that not only did the person sin on his own, but he even "dragged" God with him (so to speak) into the act of sin, for God is an intrinsic partner in any act of conception.

With this, we can answer all of the above questions:

a.) With other sins, there is still some connection with the realm of holiness, since even an illegitimate child can perform *mitzvos*, etc. However, the effects of cohabiting with a non-Jewish woman are

irreversible, for a non-Jew is born. Therefore, a zealot is only permitted to kill the sinner at the time of the act, for afterwards, it is too late.

b.) According to the *Talmud*, God is (so to speak) personally involved in the act of conception. Therefore, by killing a person who is cohabiting with a non-Jew one is "avenging" God, as it were, personally. This cannot be said with respect for other *mitzvos* (or their transgression) where God is not described as a "partner."

c.) The sin of cohabiting with a non-Jewish woman violates the intrinsic boundaries between Jew and non-Jew, as it causes a Jew to father a non-Jew. This is in defiance of the natural order which God arranged, where a Jew should only give birth to a Jew.

Therefore, when Pinchas avenged this sin, God rewarded him measure-for-measure with a privilege which also defied the natural order, i.e. that a person who was not born a priest should be granted the priesthood.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, p. 150ff.)

parshas Pinchas

פֶּרֶשַׁת פִּינְחָס

🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

What is the connection between Pinchas—who zealously avenged his God, bringing relief from a plague of Divine anger—and the other concepts which arise in *Parshas Pinchas*: The census (ch. 26), inheritance of the Land of Israel (ch. 27), and the festive sacrifices (ch. 28-29)? Surely, the name of the *Parsha* should reflect the *entire* content of a *parsha*, and not just its beginning?

Furthermore, what is the connection between *Parshas Pinchas* and the time of year when it is read—during, or immediately preceding the Three Weeks of mourning for the destruction of the Temple?

Our Sages taught that Pinchas possessed the soul of Eliyahu, the prophet who announces the true and complete Redemption (*Yalkut Shimoni, Pinchas* par. 771; *Zohar* II 190b). It is thus not surprising that, with his righteous indignation and passionate vengeance, Pinchas achieved a somewhat messianic transformation for the Jewish people of his time, from a situation of spiritual deprivation (the worship of Ba'al Pe'or) and national emergency (the plague), to one of Divine satisfaction.

This Divine satisfaction manifested itself in a number of ways: The census, which was an expression of God's affection for the Jewish people—"Because they are precious to Him, He counts them all the time" (*Rashi* to *Bamidbar* 1:1); the permanent inheritance of the Land of

Israel via a divinely inspired lottery; and finally, the daily, *Shabbos* and festival sacrifices which are associated with joyfulness and celebration.

The theme of our *Parsha* is thus: The *transformation* of the Jewish people from spiritual deprivation to virtuousness.

It is no coincidence therefore that *Parshas Pinchas* is always read at the outset of the Three Weeks, for reading this *Parsha* empowers us to *transform* these three bleak weeks of Jewish history into "days of feasting and rejoicing," with the true and complete redemption (*Rambam, end of Laws of Fast Days*).

Practically speaking, Pinchas has set an example for all of us, showing how to bring about this transformation. Namely, that whenever it is possible to further the moral or spiritual standing of others, one should not stand back and ponder, "Surely there are greater people than myself for this task!" Rather, like Pinchas, one must rise to the moment without hesitation.

And just as God granted Pinchas the soul of Eliyahu to carry out his mission, likewise, God will infuse every one of us with the necessary spirit to transform our current exile to a state of redemption. It is our job, however, to galvanize that spirit into action.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Pinchas* 5749; *Likutei Sichos* vol. 2, pp. 342-4)

י ומליל יי עם משה למימר: יא פינחס בר אלעזר בר אהרן כהנא אתב ית חמתי מעל בני ישראל בדקני ית קנאתי ביניהון ולא שצית ית בני ישראל בקנאתי: יב כבן אמר הא אנא גזר לה ית קימי שלם: יג ותהי לה ולבנותיה בתרוהי קים כהנת עלם חלף די קני

י וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: יא *פינחס בן-אלעזר בן-אהרן הכהן השׁיב את-חמתי מעל בני-ישראל בקנאו את-קנאתי בתוכם ולא-כליתי את-בני-ישראל בקנאתי: יב לכן אמר הנני נתן לו את-בריתי שלום*: יג והיתה לו ולזרעו אחריו ברית כהנת עולם תחת אשר קנא לאלהיו וכפר על-בני

*1 זעירא *2 קטיעא

רש"י

שעושה עמו טובה, אף כאן פירש לו הקצ"ה שלומותיו: (יג) והיתה לו. זריתי זאת: ברית כהנת עולם. שאע"פ שכבר נתנה כהונה לזרעו של אהרן, לא נתנה אלא לאהרן ולזניו שנמשחו עמו ולתולדותיהם שיולידו אחר המשחתן, אבל פינחס שגולד קודם לכן ולא נמשח, לא זא לכלל כהונה עד כאן. וכן שניו זצחיס² לא נתכבן פינחס עד שברגו לזמרי: לאלהיו. צצביל אלהיו, כמו המקנא אהה ל³, וקנאתי לזיון⁴, צצביל לזיון:

(יא) פינחס בן אלעזר בן אהרן הבהן. לפי שהיו השצטים מזזיס אוחו, הרחיסם צן פוטי זח שפיטס אזי אמו עגלים לעצודת אלילים וחרג נשיא שצט מישראל, לפיכך זח הכחוצ ויחסו אחר אהרן: בקנאו את קנאתי. צנקמו את נקמתי, צקלפו את הקסף שהיח לי לקנוף. כל לשון קנאה הוא המתחרה לנקום נקמת דבר, אנפרטמני"ט צלע"ז: (יב) את בריתי שלום. שחאה לו לצרית שלום, כאדם המחזיק טובה וחנות למי

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does verse 11 stress the lineage of Pinchas?

RASHI: Because the tribes ridiculed him, saying, "Have you seen the descendant of Puti [i.e. Yisro*], whose mother's father fattened calves for idol worship, and yet he killed a leader of one of the tribes of Israel?" Therefore, scripture traces his lineage to Aharon.

SIFSEI CHACHAMIM: At the end of *Parshas Balak*, the Torah already stated that Pinchas was "the son of Elazar the son of Aharon the priest" (25:7), so why does this point need to be stressed again here? *Rashi* concluded that the Torah stressed Pinchas' lineage again in response to the ridicule he suffered.

KLI YAKAR: The tribes ridiculed him because it was difficult to believe that a person whose own father married somebody who was not born Jewish should feel genuine indignation against Zimri for cohabiting with a non-Jewish woman.

Likewise, Pinchas' grandfather was an idolater, so it is difficult to believe that he was genuinely disgusted by the worship of Ba'al Pe'or.

BE'ER BASADEH: The tribes felt that the Torah only sanctions a true zealot to execute a person such as Zimri. They found it difficult to believe that his intentions were pure.

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 THE LINEAGE OF PINCHAS (v. 11)

On reading the opening of our *Parsha*, *Rashi* was troubled: Why does the Torah stress again that Pinchas was "the son of Elazar the son of Aharon the priest," when this was already stated above (25:7) [as *Sifsei Chachamim* writes]?

Rashi answers that "Scripture traces his lineage to Aharon," here (for a second time), "because the tribes ridiculed him, saying, 'Have you seen the descendant of Puti, whose mother's father fattened calves for idol worship, and yet he killed a leader of one of the tribes of Israel?'"

This prompts the following questions:

a.) Surely, "fattening cows" for the purposes of idol worship is a much less serious crime than the actual worship of idols, which is heresy. So, why did the tribes merely taunt Pinchas that his grandfather "fattened cows," when they could have stressed that Yisro had actually worshipped every idol in existence (*Rashi* to *Shemos* 18:11)?

b.) Why does *Rashi* stress that Yisro was Pinchas' "mother's father," and not simply his "grandfather"?

c.) Surely, Pinchas' act of vengeance was a personal affront only to the tribe of Shimon, whose leader Pinchas killed. We would presume, however, that the other tribes would be thankful for Pinchas' speedy action which stopped a brazen act of public indecency and halted the plague, saving many of their lives. On what basis did *Rashi* conclude that all the tribes ridiculed Pinchas?

d.) Did the tribes feel that Pinchas acted within the bounds of Jewish law or not? If they felt that Pinchas was legally justified in his actions, because, "If someone cohabits with a non-Jewish woman [in public], zealots have a right to strike him dead" (*Rashi* to 25:7), then what was their complaint? And if they felt that the above law only applies to a true zealot who feels righteous indignation, and Pinchas did not fall into this category [as *Be'er Basadeh* writes], then it follows that, in their opinion, Pinchas had no right to kill Zimri. Why then did they not criticize Pinchas for spilling innocent blood, rather than stressing the fact that his grandfather fattened cows for idol worship?

THE EXPLANATION

In his commentary to verse 6, at the end of *Parshas Balak*, *Rashi* explains why everybody was weeping, rather than taking action, at Zimri's brazenness: "The law was concealed from him [i.e. from Moshe]. So they all burst out weeping. At the incident of the Golden Calf Moshe stood up against six hundred thousand people... yet here he seemed helpless! However, [this was orchestrated] so that Pinchas could come and take [the reward] that he deserved." Now, the tribes could not possibly have known, or even imagined, that God had concealed the law from Moshe in order to reward Pinchas. So when they saw that Moshe chose not to act and then Pinchas took action in Moshe's presence, they were outraged. How could Pinchas have been so disrespectful to Moshe and the other sages, who were surely aware of the law and yet had not taken

*See *Shemos* 6:25 and *Rashi* *ibid*.

🌀 PINCHAS IS AWARDED THE PRIESTHOOD 🌀

25:10 **G**od spoke to Moshe, saying: ¹¹ “Pinchas, the son of Elazar the son of Aharon the priest, has turned My anger away from the children of Israel by zealously avenging Me in their presence, and I did not destroy the children of Israel because of My zealous anger. ¹² Therefore, say (to him): I am hereby giving him My covenant of peace. ¹³ It will be an eternal covenant of priesthood for him, and for his descendants after him, because he was zealous for his God and atoned for the children of Israel.”

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 The Last Word 🌀

THE MOTIVES OF A CRITIC

The tribes appeared to have convincing proof that Pinchas' motives were not pure (see *Rashi*), but they were mistaken. This teaches us a powerful lesson whenever we are tempted to find fault with another person's good deeds and question their motives: *One can never know another's true intentions.* So long as a person is doing good, he should not be put down or mocked, even if one has a “solid” proof that the person is insincere. And in any case, even if it were true, and the person indeed had ulterior motives, we are taught always to study Torah and perform *mitzvos* even for the wrong reason, since in this way one will eventually come to have pure motives (*Pesachim* 50b).

A deeper question here is: Where does the desire come from to find fault in people who are doing something good? In our case, the tribes appeared to have holy intentions: They were concerned that Pinchas had slighted the honor of Moshe by taking the law into his own hands (see *Toras Menachem*). Similarly, a person may imagine that he has a low tolerance for other people's bad intentions because he himself is humble, and thus he finds the pride of others distasteful.

In truth, however, the reverse is likely to be the case. The fact that a person criticizes the good deeds of another is probably because *the critic himself is proud* and does not like the idea that somebody else accomplished something that he did not. Of course, he will not admit this, even to himself, because his pride makes him lazy, and recognizing that somebody else has accomplished something makes it more uncomfortable to remain lazy. Therefore, his arrogance leads him to put down the other person's good deeds, so they do not wound his pride or inspire him to be a better person, which would require effort.

Furthermore, even if somebody's *mitzvah* observance does have overtones of haughtiness, the critic's pride is nevertheless *more* distasteful. For, ultimately, the person who “showed off” with his *mitzvah* was at least *honest* about his pride and did not attempt to conceal it. The critic, however, cannot tolerate the truth that he too is proud, and he thus stoops to dishonesty, veiling his pride in a “cloak” of humility and righteous indignation.

The lesson is obvious: It is much wiser to be an activist than a critic. For a little pride can make criticism destructive, rather than constructive, but a good deed always remains good, regardless of the intention.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, pp. 167-9)

action? Pinchas had disgraced Moshe and the other sages by acting as if he alone was willing to take vengeance for God!

The fact that Moshe did not have Pinchas sentenced by the court for murder ultimately proved that Pinchas had been legally justified in his actions. Nevertheless, the tribes felt that Pinchas had acted disrespectfully to Moshe, since they were unaware that the law had been concealed from him by God. This led them to feel contempt for Pinchas, as they desired to defend Moshe's honor—and clearly, Moshe's honor was something that concerned *all* of the tribes, and not just the tribe of Shimon.

To the tribes, the “disrespectful” nature of Pinchas' actions indicated that he had not acted entirely out of moral necessity, but that he had allowed undesirable aspects of his personality to become unleashed. Pinchas, they concluded, was not a pure moralist but somewhat of an opportunist. Jumping to kill Zimri before Moshe had decided on the appropriate course of action, suggested that Pinchas had a sadistic disposition and simply reveled in the opportunity to spill blood as soon as the law permitted him to do so.

Where was the tribes' proof? *Rashi* explains their line of thinking: “*Have you seen the descendant of Puti whose mother's father fattened calves for idol worship?*” The tribes could not bring proof from the fact that Yisro (Puti) was an idol-worshiper in general, because idol-worship is an ideological mistake which is not inherited by one's children. Rather, they stressed that Yisro had a cruel, sadistic nature in that he fattened cows only in order to slaughter them (to idols), i.e. he was cruel to animals. And since a cruel *disposition* can be inherited, it follows—argued the tribes—that Pinchas' opportunist killing must be an expression of a tendency to cruelty that he inherited from his grandfather.

On the other hand, they argued, the person that Pinchas killed was an inherently kind person, a tribal leader, who cared for the needs of his people. In fact, Zimri did what he did, in an (albeit misguided) attempt to prove that it *was* permissible to cohabit with a non-Jewish woman, so as to save his tribe from being punished for doing likewise (see *Rashi* to 25:6). This point served to further the tribes' argument—for who, but a cruel, sadistic person would kill a leader who cared so much for his people? In fact, they argued, don't nice people just bring out the worst in nasty people, who cannot bear the fact that somebody could be genuinely good-natured?

PINCHAS' CONNECTION TO AHARON

A serious flaw in the tribes' argument was that, in addition to being the grandson of Yisro, Pinchas was also Aharon's grandson. So how can we be sure that he inherited the negative qualities of Yisro and not the good traits of Aharon?

In answer to this point, the tribes stressed that Yisro was Pinchas' “*mother's father*.” By nature, a boy's disposition is most similar to that of his mother, and a girl to that of her father—a fact which the reader will have gleaned from *Rashi's* comment to *Bereishis* 46:15: “*The males are*

קָדַם אֱלֹהִים וּכְפַר עַל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: יד וְשׁוֹם זָמְרֵי בֶן־סְלֹוֹא נְשִׂיא בֵּית־אָב לְשִׁמְעוֹנִי: טו וְשׁוֹם הָאִשָּׁה הַמְּכַבֶּה הַמְדִינִית כְּזָבִי בַת־צֹר רֹאשׁ אֲמוֹת בֵּית־אָב בְּמִדְיָן הוּא: פ טז וַיִּדְבֹּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: יז צָרֹר אֶת־הַמְדִינִים וְהַכִּיתֶם אוֹתָם: יח כִּי עָרְרִים הֵם לָכֶם בְּנִכְלִיָּהֶם אֲשֶׁר־נָכְלוּ לָכֶם עַל־דְּבַר פְּעֹר וְעַל־דְּבַר בְּזָבִי בַת־נְשִׂיא מִדְיָן אֲחֵתָם הַמְּכַבֶּה בְּיוֹם־הַמַּגֵּפָה* עַל־דְּבַר פְּעֹר: כו א וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַמַּגֵּפָה* פ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאֵל אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן לֵאמֹר: ב שְׂאוּ אֶת־רֹאשׁ כָּל־עֵדֶת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִבֶּן עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וּמַעְלָה לְבֵית אֲבֹתָם כָּל־יָצֵא עִבָּא בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל: ג וַיִּדְבֹּר מֹשֶׁה

קָדַם אֱלֹהִים וּכְפַר עַל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: יד וְשׁוֹם זָמְרֵי בֶן־סְלֹוֹא נְשִׂיא בֵּית־אָב לְשִׁמְעוֹנִי: טו וְשׁוֹם הָאִשָּׁה הַמְּכַבֶּה הַמְדִינִית כְּזָבִי בַת־צֹר רֹאשׁ אֲמוֹת בֵּית־אָב בְּמִדְיָן הוּא: פ טז וַיִּדְבֹּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: יז צָרֹר אֶת־הַמְדִינִים וְהַכִּיתֶם אוֹתָם: יח כִּי עָרְרִים הֵם לָכֶם בְּנִכְלִיָּהֶם אֲשֶׁר־נָכְלוּ לָכֶם עַל־דְּבַר פְּעֹר וְעַל־דְּבַר בְּזָבִי בַת־נְשִׂיא מִדְיָן אֲחֵתָם הַמְּכַבֶּה בְּיוֹם־הַמַּגֵּפָה* עַל־דְּבַר פְּעֹר: כו א וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַמַּגֵּפָה* פ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאֵל אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן לֵאמֹר: ב שְׂאוּ אֶת־רֹאשׁ כָּל־עֵדֶת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִבֶּן עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וּמַעְלָה לְבֵית אֲבֹתָם כָּל־יָצֵא עִבָּא בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל: ג וַיִּדְבֹּר מֹשֶׁה

*הַמְּכַבֶּה בְּיוֹם־הַמַּגֵּפָה **פסוקא באמצע פסוק

לש"י

צתי אבות היו למדין עיפס ועפר וחנוך ואזידע ולאדעכ⁶, וזה היה מלך לאחד מהם: (יז) צרור. כמו זכור⁷, שמור⁸, לשון כוה. עליכס לאייז אותס: (יח) כי צוררים הם לכם וגו' על דבר פעור. שהפקירו צנותיכם לזנות, כדי להטעותכם אחר פעור. ואת מואב לא לזכ להשמיד, מפני רות שהיכה עתידה ללאת מהס, כדאמרין בצבא קמ"א: (ט) ויהי אחרי המגפה וגו'. משל לרועה שנכנסו זאבים¹⁰ לתוך עדרו וכרגו זכנ וכוא מונה אותן לידע מנין הנותרות. דבר אחר כשיאלו ממזרים ונמסרו למשה, נמסרו לו צמנין, עכשיו שקרצ למות ולהחזיר לאנו, מחזירם צמנין: (3) לבית אבתם.

(יד) ושם איש ישראל וגו'. כשס' שייחס את הלדיק לשצח ייחס את הרשע לגנאי: נשיא בית אב לשמעוני. לאחד מחמשת צתי אבות שהיו לשצט שמעון. דבר אחר להודיע שצחו של פינחס, שאע"פ שזה היה נשיא, לא מנע את עלמו מלקנא לחילול השם, לכך הודיעך הכתוב מי הוא המוכה: (טו) ושם האשה המכה וגו'. להודיעך שנאחס של מדינים שהפקירו צת מלך לזנות כדי להחטיא את ישראל: ראש אומות. אחד מחמשת מלכי מדין את אוי ואת רקס ואת לור וגו'⁵, וכוא היה חשוב מכולם, שנאמר ראש אמות, ולפי שנהג ציון בעלמו להפקיר צחו מנאו שלישי: בית אב. חמשת

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did God command a census at this time? (v. 1ff.)

RASHI: This could be compared to a shepherd whose flock was attacked by wolves and some sheep were killed, so he counted them to know how many were left.

Another interpretation: When they left Egypt and were placed in Moshe's hands, they were handed over to him with an account of their number. Now that he was close to death and would soon have to return his flock, he gave them back with an account of their number.

SIFSEI CHACHAMIM: *Rashi* was troubled: What is the connection between the end of the plague and the census? He thus brought the analogy of a shepherd counting his remaining sheep after some of them were killed by wolves, which explains the connection.

However, this solution is problematic, for if the purpose of the census was merely to quantify how many people survived the

plague, then why did they not simply count the number that had passed away, rather than counting the *entire* population?

Due to this problem, *Rashi* brought a second interpretation, that the census occurred at this point because Moshe was soon to die and pass on his "flock." The reason why the census appears here is thus not directly connected with the plague, but rather, with God's command to destroy the Midianites, in verse 17 above. Later we will read how God told Moshe that he would pass away after the battle with Midian (below 31:2), so verse 17 above was, in effect, the first signal of Moshe's imminent passing. Therefore the census was carried out here: "Now that he was close to death and would soon have to return his flock."

However, this interpretation is flawed, as Moshe's death was still several months ahead, so it is difficult to understand why the census occurred now. Therefore, *Rashi* brought the first interpretation too.

TORAS MENACHEM

attributed to Leah whereas the females are attributed to Ya'akov, to teach you that if the woman emits seed first then she will give birth to a male and if the man emits seed first then she will give birth to a female." Thus, the tribes wished to argue that Pinchas would have inherited the disposition of his maternal, and not paternal grandfather.

Rashi thus explains, "Scripture traces his lineage to Aharon," indicating that Pinchas actually inherited the nature of Aharon, who "pursued peace and brought people who were fighting with each other to love each other" (*Rashi* to 20:29 above). And this was proof that Pinchas' intentions had indeed been pure.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, p. 160ff.; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Pinchas* 5725)

1 בדפוס ראשון (ועוד): "במקום". ראה לקו"ש ח"י"ע ע' 169. 2 ראה שיחת שי"פ פינחס תשמ"ז. 3 מדרש אגדה 4 נתחומא 5 במדבר לא, חז 6 בראשית כה, ד 7 שמות כ, ח 8 דברים ה, יב 9 ח: 10 הטעם שכ' רש"י "זאבים" (ל' רבים) ולא "זאב" כבתחומא ובמדבר"י, י"ל כי המגפה באה בסיבת חטא בני", והיו ב' חטאים: לזנות אל בנות מואב, ויצמד לבעל פעור (לקו"ש ח"י"ע ע' 327)

¹⁴ *The name of the Israelite man that was killed, who was killed along with the Midianite woman, was Zimri the son of Salu, the leader of Shimon's paternal house.*

¹⁵ *The name of the Midianite woman who was killed was Kazby the daughter of Tzur, a national leader of a paternal house in Midian.*

¹⁶ *God spoke to Moshe, saying: ¹⁷ Be hostile to the Midianites and strike them down!** ¹⁸ *For they were hostile to you with their schemes which they plotted against you with the Pe'or affair and the affair of Kazby their sister, daughter of the Midianite leader, who was killed on the day of the plague (which came) because of the Pe'or affair.*

🌀 MOSHE'S FINAL CENSUS 🌀

26 **I**t was after the plague. God spoke to Moshe and to Elazar the son of Aharon the priest, saying:
² *“Take the sum of the entire congregation of the children of Israel. (Include in this census all those) from twenty years old and upwards, according to their paternal houses, (i.e.) all who are fit to go out to the army in Israel.”*

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🌀 MOSHE'S FINAL CENSUS (v. 1ff.)

In his first interpretation, *Rashi* explains that the current census, “could be compared to a shepherd whose flock was attacked by wolves and some sheep were killed, so he counted them to know how many were left.”

Sifsei Chachamim explains that *Rashi*'s comment was intended to clarify why the census came after the plague that killed many thousands of people, as verse 1 states, “It was after the plague....”

However, it is difficult to accept that this was *Rashi*'s only intention, for the need to count a population after many lives has been lost is self-explanatory. Why would an *analogy* be needed to clarify this point?

Rashi's analogy here becomes even more confusing when we compare it with a similar analogy that he cited (in *Parshas Ki Sisa*) to explain why a census was carried out after the sin of the Golden Calf:

“This could be compared to a flock of sheep that was dear to its owner which was struck by a plague. When it ended, he said to the shepherd, ‘I have a request for you: Count my sheep so that you know how many of them are left.’ This was in order to make it known that they were dear to him” (*Rashi* to *Shemos* 30:16).

A number of key distinctions emerge here:

a.) In *Parshas Ki Sisa* the census was initiated by the “owner” of the sheep. Here, however, *Rashi* makes no reference to the owner, and writes that the census was carried out through the initiative of the “shepherd.”

b.) In *Parshas Ki Sisa*, the sheep are killed by “a plague,” and in our *Parsha*, by “wolves.”

c.) In *Parshas Ki Sisa*, *Rashi* writes that the sheep were counted, “to make it known that they were dear to him” (i.e. the owner), whereas in our *Parsha* no reference is made to this point.

What is the reason for all these changes?

RASHI'S SECOND INTERPRETATION

Rashi was not satisfied with the above, and he continued:

“Another interpretation: When they left Egypt and were placed in Moshe's hands, they were handed over to him in a precise number. Now that he was close to death and would soon have to return his flock, he gave them back in a precise number.”

What difficulty with *Rashi*'s first interpretation prompted him to bring a second one?

Sifsei Chachamim argues that *Rashi* was troubled why a census of the entire population was necessary to ascertain how many people died in the plague. Surely, it would have been easier to count the casualties?

However, this is difficult to accept in light of *Rashi*'s comment at the beginning of *Parshas Bamidbar*: “Because they are precious to Him, He counts them all the time.” Clearly, a census is an expression of Divine affection for the Jewish people which God is eager to carry out at every opportunity, even if it is not necessary.

A further problem with *Rashi*'s second interpretation is that it does not seem to explain the connection between the plague and the census, as *Sifsei Chachamim* asks. (*Sifsei Chachamim*'s solution, requires familiarity with a later verse in *Parshas Matos* (See *Classic Questions*), and it is difficult to accept that *Rashi*, who wrote his commentary for the beginner, relied on the reader to be familiar with *later* material in order to understand the current discussion).

THE EXPLANATION

Earlier, at the end of *Parshas Balak*, we read how the Jewish people were punished for the sin of Ba'al Pe'or in two ways: i.) There was a plague which killed 24,000 people (25:9). ii.) “Moshe said to the judges of Israel, ‘Each of you should kill men who became attached to Ba'al Pe'or” (v. 5 *ibid.*). *Rashi* explains: “Each one of the Jewish judges executed two men, and there were 88,000 Jewish judges.” From this it follows that 166,000 people were executed by the judges, a much greater loss than that which occurred through the plague.

So on reaching our verse, *Rashi* was troubled: Why does the Torah stress that the census was made “after the plague,” omitting any mention of the losses that occurred through the judges which were *several times* greater?

To answer *this* question *Rashi* writes: “This could be compared to a shepherd whose flock was attacked by wolves.” I.e. we are not speaking here of a case like that of *Parshas Ki Sisa*, where the *owner* of the sheep asks for his flock to be counted, “in order to make it known that they were dear to him,” after an incident which was *beyond the shepherd's control*, “a plague.” Rather, this census was the responsibility of the *shepherd himself*, due to, “an attack of wolves,” something the shepherd should have averted, since it is his job to protect the sheep from wolves. Thus, by modifying the analogy here, *Rashi* has brought to light a distinction between Moshe's role in the sin of the Golden Calf (*Parshas Ki Sisa*) and

* See below, ch. 31.

חילא בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל: ג ומליל מֹשֶׁה וְאַלְעֹזֵר כְּהֵנָּה אָמְרוּ לְמַמְנֵי יִתְהוֹן בְּמִישְׁרָיָא דְּמוֹאֵב עַל יִרְדְנָא דִּירְחוּ לְמִימְרֵי: ד מִפְּר עֶשְׂרִין שָׁנִין וְלַעֲלֵא כְּמָא דִּי פְקִיד יְיָ יִת מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל דִּי נִפְקוּ מֵאַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם: ה רְאוּבֵן בּוֹכְרָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל בְּנֵי רְאוּבֵן חֲנוּךְ זְרַעִית חֲנוּךְ לְפִלּוּא זְרַעִית פִּלּוּא: ו לְחֶצְרוֹן זְרַעִית חֶצְרוֹן לְכַרְמֵי זְרַעִית פְּרָמִי: ז אֵלִין זְרַעִית רְאוּבֵן וְהוּוּ מְנִיגְיָהוֹן אַרְבַּעִין וּתְלָתָא אֶלְפִין וּשְׁבַע מֵאָה וּתְלָתִין: ח וּבְנֵי פִלּוּא אֵלִיאֵב: ט וּבְנֵי אֵלִיאֵב נְמוּאֵל וְדָתָן וְאַבִּירָם הוּא דָתָן וְאַבִּירָם מְעַרְעֵי כְּנַשְׁתָּא דְּאַתְכַּנְשׁוּ עַל מֹשֶׁה וְעַל אֶהְרֹן בְּכַנְשְׁתָּא דְּקִרְחָא בְּאַתְכַּנְשׁוּיָהוֹן עַל יְיָ: י וּפְתַחַת אַרְעָא יִת פּוּמָה וּבְלַעַת יִתְהוֹן וְיִת קִרְחָא בְּמוֹתָא דְּכַנְשְׁתָּא פִּד אֶכְלַת אֲשַׁתָּא יִת מָאתָן וְחֻמְשִׁין גְּבֵרָא וְהוּוּ לְאַתָּ: יא וּבְנֵי

וְאַלְעֹזֵר הִכְהֵן אֶתְם בְּעַרְבַת מוֹאֵב עַל־יִרְדֵּן יִרְחוּ לְאָמְרוּ: ד מִבְּן עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וּמַעְלָה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַיְצֵאִים מֵאַרְצֵי מִצְרַיִם: וּשְׁנֵי הָ רְאוּבֵן בְּכוֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּנֵי רְאוּבֵן חֲנוּךְ מִשְׁפַּחַת הַחֲנֹכִי לְפִלּוּא מִשְׁפַּחַת הַפִּלְאִי: ו לְחֶצְרוֹן מִשְׁפַּחַת הַחֶצְרוֹנִי לְכַרְמֵי מִשְׁפַּחַת הַכַּרְמִי: ז אֵלֶּה מִשְׁפַּחַת הָרְאוּבֵנִי וַיְהִיו פְּקֻדֵיהֶם שְׁלֹשָׁה וְאַרְבַּעִים אֶלֶף וּשְׁבַע מֵאוֹת וּשְׁלֹשִׁים: ח וּבְנֵי פִלּוּא אֵלִיאֵב: ט וּבְנֵי אֵלִיאֵב נְמוּאֵל וְדָתָן וְאַבִּירָם הוּא־דָתָן וְאַבִּירָם קְרוּאִי [קַי קְרִיאִין] הַעֲדָה אֲשֶׁר הָצִוָּה עַל־מֹשֶׁה וְעַל־אֶהְרֹן בְּעֵדַת־קִרְחָא בְּהַצַּתְם עַל־יְהוָה: י וּתְפַתַּח הָאָרֶץ אֶת־פִּיהָ וּתְבַלַּע אֶתְם וְאֶת־קִרְחָא בְּמוֹת הַעֲדָה בְּאֶכְל הָאִישׁ אֶת חַמְשֵׁים וּמֵאוֹתַיִם אִישׁ וַיְהִיו לְגֵם: יא וּבְנֵי־

כ"ט

ה"א מלד זה ויו"ד מלד זה, לומר, מעיד אני עליהם שהם בני אבותיהם. וזכו הוא שמפורש ע"י דוד שבטי יח עדות לישראל², השם הזה מעיד עליהם לשבטכם, לפיכך זכולם כתיב החנכי הפלואי, אבל זימנה לא הולך לומר משפחת הימני, לפי שהשם קצוע צו ויו"ד זראש וכו"א צסוק³: (ט) אשר הצו. את ישראל על משה: בהצתם. את העם על ה': הצו. השיאו את ישראל לריב על משה, לשון הפעילו: (י) ויהיו לגם. לאות ולזכרון למען אשר לא יקרצ איש זר לחלוק עוד על הכהונה: (יא) ובני קרח לא מתו. הם היו בעל

על שצט כאז יתיחסו, ולא אחר האס: (ג) וידבר משה ואלעזר הכהן אתם. דצרו עמם על זאת שזכ המקום למנוחם: לאמר. אמרו להם לריכוס אחס להמנות: (ד) מבן עשרים שנה ומעלה כאשר צוה וגו'. שיח מנינס מנן עשרים שנה ומעלה, שנאמר כל העובר על הפקודים וגו': (ה) משפחת החנכי. לפי שהיו האומות מצוין אותם ואומרים מה אלו מתיחסין על שבטכם, סצורין הם שלא שלטו המלריים בצמותיהם, הם צגופס היו מושלים קל וחומר צנשותיהם, לפיכך הטיל הקצ"ה שמו עליהם,

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his role in the sin of Ba'al Pe'or. During the sin of the Golden Calf, Moshe was on Mount Sinai, and was thus not responsible for what happened. Therefore, the losses which the Jewish people incurred are compared to a "plague," which was beyond the control of the shepherd, and the census which followed the disaster was purely an expression of God's ("the owner's") love for the Jewish people, and not Moshe's ("the shepherd's") negligence.

However, during the sin of Ba'al Pe'or Moshe was present, so he might have felt responsible for some of the deaths. As Rashi writes, that when Zimri took Kazby into a tent in Moshe's presence, "The law was concealed from him. So they all burst out weeping" (25:6), and it was Pinchas—not Moshe—who remembered the law and took immediate action, causing the plague to stop. So, Moshe might have felt that he was culpable for some of the losses at least, since he had not remembered the law at a crucial moment.

Of course, we know that it was not Moshe's fault, since God had concealed the law from Moshe, "so that Pinchas could come and take [the reward] that he deserved" (Rashi *ibid.*). But Moshe did not know that, so he would have felt somewhat responsible for his "failure" amid this crisis of the plague. But he would not have felt the same way about the 166,000 people that were executed by the Jewish judges, since this was a clear ruling of the court.

Rashi's analogy thus explains why the Torah stresses that this census was "after the plague," omitting the fact that it was also after the execution

of a further 166,000 people by the judges—because Moshe carried out this census with a sense of *personal responsibility* for the lives lost during the plague that were connected with his (apparent) negligence, which was not the case for the other losses. And, by counting the people after his "negligence," Moshe was affirming his intention to be a more responsible shepherd in the future.

RASHI'S SECOND INTERPRETATION

Rashi was not satisfied with his first interpretation, as it appears to be out of context here. For, if Moshe was now counting the Jewish people not merely to discharge an obligation from God, but as an important act of leadership, to re-commit himself to the people he was to lead in the future, he would have surely involved Yehoshua, who was soon to take over the leadership from Moshe just a few months later.

Therefore, Rashi cited a second interpretation which explains this matter more satisfactorily: "When they left Egypt and were placed in Moshe's hands, they were handed over to him with an account of their number. Now that he was close to death and would soon have to return his flock, he gave them back with an account of their number."

However, while this interpretation does explain why Yehoshua was not involved in the counting, it does not clarify why the census occurred here "after the plague," and not immediately before Moshe's passing. Therefore, Rashi cited it only as a secondary interpretation.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 326ff.)

³ Moshe and Elazar the priest spoke with (the people) in the plains of Mo'av, by the Jordan near Jericho, saying: ⁴ “(You must be counted) from the age of twenty years and upward, as God commanded Moshe and the children of Israel when coming out of Egypt.”

🌀 THE CENSUS RESULTS 🌀

SECOND
READING

⁵ Re'uvain (was) Yisra'el's firstborn. Re'uvain's descendants were:

- The Chanochi family, descended from Chanoch.
- The Palu'i family, descended from Palu.
- ⁶ The Chetzroni family, descended from Chetzron.
- The Karmi family, descended from Karmi.

⁷ These were the Re'uvainite families. They totalled forty-three thousand, seven hundred and thirty.

- ⁸ The sons of Palu were: Eli'av.
- ⁹ The sons of Eli'av were: Nemu'ail, Dasan and Aviram

— (These were) the same Dasan and Aviram who were the communal delegates from Korach's group that incited (the people) against Moshe and Aharon, (thereby) inciting them against God. ¹⁰ But the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them with Korach, when that group died, (and) when fire destroyed (the other) two hundred and fifty men. Thus they became a sign (of the right of Aharon's descendants to the priesthood). ¹¹ Korach's sons, however, did not die. —

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What happened to Korach's sons? (v. 11)

RASHI: They were the first to get involved in the conspiracy, but during the dispute they had thoughts of *teshuvah* (repentance) in their hearts. Therefore, a secure, elevated area was set apart for them in *Gehinom* (underground purgatory), and they settled there.

SIFSEI CHACHAMIM: Rashi was troubled by an open contradiction. Above it is written, “The earth opened its mouth, swallowing them and their houses, all Korach's people and all their property” (16:32), and yet here we read that Korach's own sons did not die? Therefore, Rashi explains how both statements are true: The earth did indeed swallow up Korach's sons, but they did not die, because “a secure, elevated area was set apart for them in *Gehinom*,” since they did *teshuvah*.

GUR ARYEH: Since they only contemplated *teshuvah* in their hearts, and did not do complete *teshuvah*, which requires verbal confession,

they were still punished by being swallowed up. But due to their partial *teshuvah* they did not lose their lives.

SEFER HAZIKARON: They are still in *Gehinom* to this day.

NACHALAS YA'AKOV: How could Korach's sons still be in the underground *Gehinom*? Rashi writes explicitly that Korach saw prophetically “a chain of great people descended from him: Shmuel... the twenty-four watches [of Levites in the Temple]” (Rashi to 16:7). Clearly then, Korach's sons did eventually come out of *Gehinom* and father children.

● Why is the fact that Korach's sons survived not mentioned in Parshas Korach? (v. 11)

SHACH AL HATORAH: Because this would have been an affront to Moshe, who said that if “the earth opens its mouth and swallows them... then you will know that these men have provoked God” (*Shach al Hatorah* to 16:32).

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🌀 THE FATE OF KORACH'S SONS (v. 11)

Sifsei Chachamim and **Gur Aryeh** explain why Rashi concluded that, when the earth swallowed up Korach's sons, “a protected, elevated area was set apart for them in *Gehinom*.”

However, they do not explain what led Rashi to conclude that, “They were the first to get involved in the conspiracy.” What is the proof for this point, at the literal level?

A further, more general problem is why the fate of Korach's sons is mentioned here, amid the census of Re'uvain's descendants, and not in *Parshas Korach* itself? **Shach al Hatorah** argues that it would have been an affront to Moshe if we would have discovered in *Parshas Korach* that some of those who stood against him had survived.

But ultimately, all Korach's men were swallowed up exactly as Moshe had predicted, so why would it weaken Moshe's position if Korach's sons then survived because they had thoughts of *teshuvah*? And was it not Moshe's wish that Korach's assembly should do *teshuvah*?

A final question here concerns the offspring of Korach's sons. As **Nachalas Ya'akov** proves, Korach's sons must have been released from *Gehinom* at some point, since they produced descendants that included Shmuel the prophet and the twenty-four watches of the Temple. But when, at the literal level, did Korach's sons escape?

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi did not clarify when Korach's sons were released from *Gehinom*, or why their fate was recorded here in the account of Re'uvain's

¹² *Shimon's descendants, according to their families:*

- *The Nemu'eli family, descended from Nemu'el.*
- *The Yamini family, descended from Yamin.*
- *The Yachini family, descended from Yachin.*
- ¹³ *The Zarchi family, descended from Zerach.*
- *The Sha'uli family, descended from Sha'ul.*

¹⁴ *(The total of) the Shimonite families (was) twenty-two thousand, two hundred.*

¹⁵ *Gad's descendants, according to their families:*

- *The Tzefoni family, descended from Tzefon.*
- *The Chagi family, descended from Chagi.*
- *The Shuni family, descended from Shuni.*
- ¹⁶ *The Ozni family, descended from Ozni.*
- *The Airi family, descended from Airi.*
- ¹⁷ *The Arodi family, descended from Arod.*
- *The Araili family, descended from Araili.*

¹⁸ *These were families of Gad's descendants. Their total number was forty thousand, five hundred.*

¹⁹ *Yehudah's (first two) sons were Air and Onan, but Air and Onan died in the land of Cana'an.*

²⁰ *Yehudah's descendants, according to their families:*

- *The Shailani family, descended from Shailah.*
- *The Partzi family, descended from Peretz.*
- *The Zarchi family, descended from Zerach.*

²¹ *The descendants of Peretz were:*

- *The Chetzroni family, descended from Chetzron.*
- *The Chamuli family, descended from Chamul.*

²² *These were Yehudah's families. Their total number was seventy-six thousand, five hundred.*

²³ *Yissachar's descendants, according to their families:*

- *The Tolai family, descended from Tola.*

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🔥 Sparks of Chasidus 🔥

The *Zohar* teaches that the letter *yud* was added to Pinchas' name and the letter *hei* was added to Yosef's name (see Psalms 81:6) because they were both zealous about the prohibition of cohabiting with a non-Jewish woman: Pinchas killed Zimri and Yosef resisted the persistent attempts of Potifar's wife (*Zohar* III 213b).

This sheds light on *Rashi's* explanation why each of the family names included in the census consisted of their paternal father's name with a *hei* added at the front and a *yud* at the end: "The nations would taunt [Israel], saying, 'Why do they trace their lineage by tribe? Do they really think that the Egyptians did not have their way with their mothers?'... So God placed His Name upon them, *hei* at one

side and yud at the other, as if to say, 'I testify that these people are indeed the sons of their fathers'" (*Rashi* to v. 5). Thus, we see here that the same letters, *yud* and *hei*, were added to show that the Jewish people had been moral, like Pinchas and Yosef.

Why is this vigilance attested to by these two particular letters? Our Sages noted that the Hebrew words for "man" (אִישׁ) and "woman" (אִשָּׁה) only differ in the letters *yud* and *hei*, which spell God's Name. On this, they remarked, "If a couple is found worthy, the Divine Presence will be with them" (*Sotah* 17a). Here we see the Talmudic source that the letters *yud* and *hei* testify that God's people are pure and holy.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 483)

תולע לפנה זרעית פונני: כד לישוב זרעית
 ישוב לשמרון זרעית שמרון: כה אליו זרעית
 יששכר למנניהון שתין וארבעא אלפין
 ותלת מאה: כו בני זבולן לזרעיתהון לסרד
 זרעית סרד לאלון זרעית אלון ליחלאל
 זרעית יחלאל: כז אליו זרעית זבולן
 למנניהון שתין אלפין וחמש מאה: כח בני
 יוסף לזרעיתהון מנשה ואפרים: כט בני
 מנשה למכיר זרעית מכיר ומכיר אוליד ית
 גלעד לגלעד זרעית גלעד: ל אליו בני גלעד
 אישור זרעית אישור לחלק זרעית חלק:
 לא ואשריאל זרעית אשריאל ושכם זרעית
 שכם: לב ושמידע זרעית שמידע וחפר
 זרעית חפר: לג וצלפחד בר חפר לא הוון לה
 בנין אלהון בנן ושום בנת צלפחד מחלה
 ונעה חגלה מלכה ותרצה: לד אליו זרעית
 מנשה ומנניהון חמשין ותריין אלפין ושבע
 מאה: לה אליו בני אפרים לזרעיתהון
 לשותלח זרעית שותלח לבכר זרעית בכר
 לתמן זרעית תמן: לו ואליו בני שותלח לערן
 זרעית ערן: לי אליו זרעית בני אפרים
 למנניהון תלתיין ותריין אלפין וחמש מאה
 אליו בני יוסף לזרעיתהון: לה בני בנימין
 לזרעיתהון לבלע זרעית בלע לאשבבל זרעית
 אשבבל לאחירם זרעית אחירם: מט לשפופם
 זרעית שפופם לחופם זרעית חופם: מ והוון
 בני בלע ארד ונעמן זרעית הארדי לנעמן
 זרעית נעמן: מא אליו בני בנימין לזרעיתהון
 ומנניהון ארבעין וחמשא אלפין ושית מאה:

לפנה משפחת הפונני: כד לישוב משפחת הישבי לשמרון
 משפחת השמרני: כה אלה משפחת יששכר לפקדיהם
 ארבעה וששים אלה ושלש מאות: ס כו בני זבולן למשפחתם
 לסרד משפחת הסרדי לאלון משפחת האלני ליחלאל
 משפחת היחלאל: כז אלה משפחת הזבולני לפקדיהם
 ששים אלה וחמש מאות: ס כח בני יוסף למשפחתם מנשה
 ואפרים: כט בני מנשה למכיר משפחת המכירי ומכיר הוליד
 את-גלעד לגלעד משפחת הגלעדי: ל אלה בני גלעד אישור
 משפחת האיזורי לחלק משפחת החלקי: לא ואשריאל
 משפחת האשראלי ושכם משפחת השכמי: לב ושמידע
 משפחת השמידעי וחפר משפחת החפרי: לג וצלפחד בן-
 חפר לא-היו לו בנים כי אם-בנות ושם בנות צלפחד מחלה
 ונעה חגלה מלכה ותרצה: לד אלה משפחת מנשה ופקדיהם
 שנים וחמשים אלה ושבע מאות: ס לה אלה בני-אפרים
 למשפחתם לשותלח משפחת השתלחי לבכר משפחת
 הבכרי לתמן משפחת התמני: לו ואלה בני שותלח לערן
 משפחת הערני: לי אלה משפחת בני-אפרים לפקדיהם שנים
 ושלשים אלה וחמש מאות אלה בני-יוסף למשפחתם: ס
 לה בני בנימן למשפחתם לבלע משפחת הבלעי לאשבבל
 משפחת האשבלי לאחירם משפחת האחירמי: מט לשפופם
 משפחת השופמי לחופם משפחת החופמי: מ ויהיו בני-בלע
 ארד ונעמן משפחת הארדי לנעמן משפחת הנעמי: מא אלה
 בני-בנימן למשפחתם ופקדיהם חמשה וארבעים אלה

כ"ט

חמש משפחות חסרו מצניו של בנימין, כאן נחקיימה מקלח נבואת אמו
 שקראתו בן אוני, בן אחינתי, ובפלגש בגבעה? נחקיימה כולה. זו מלאכת
 ביסודו של ר' משה דרשן: (לו) ואלה בני שותלח וגו'. שאר בני שותלח
 נקראו תולדותיהם על שם שותלח, ומערן יאלה משפחה רבה ונקראת על
 שמו, ונחשבו בני שותלח לשתי משפחות. לא וחשוב ותמלא צפרשה זו חמשים
 ושבע משפחות, ומצני לוי שמונה, הכי ששים וחמש, וזהו שנאמר כי אחס
 המעט וגו', ה"א מעט, חמשה אחס חסרים ממשפחות כל העמים, שכן
 שבעים, אף זה הצנתי מיסודו של ר' משה דרשן, אך הולכתי לפחות
 ולהוסיף בדבריו: (לח) לאחירם. היא אחי שירד למצרים, ולפי שנקרא על
 שם יוסף שהיה אחיו ורם ממנו נקרא אחירם: (לט) לשפופם. הוא מופים,

משפחתו על שמו: (כד) לישוב. הוא יוצ האמור ציורדי מצרים, כי כל
 המשפחות נקראו על שם יורדי מצרים. והבולדיון משם והלאה לא נקראו
 המשפחות על שם, חוץ ממשפחות אפרים ומנשה שנולדו כולם במצרים,
 וארד ונעמן בני בלע בן בנימין. ומלאכת ביסודו של רבי משה דרשן שירדה
 אמן למצרים כשהיתה מעוברת מהם, לכך נחלקו למשפחות, כחלרון וחמול
 שהיו בני צנים ליבודה, וחצר ומלכיאל שהיו בני צנים של אשר. ואם אגדה
 היא הכי טוב, ואם לאו, אומר אני, שהיו לבלע בני צנים הרבה, ומשנים
 הללו ארד ונעמן יאלה מכל אחד משפחה רבה ונקראו תולדות שאר הצנים
 על שם בלע, ותולדות השנים הללו נקראו על שם. וכן אני אומר בצני מכיר,
 שנחלקו לשתי משפחות, אחת נקראת על שמו ואחת נקראת על שם גלעד בנו.

- The Puni family, descended from Puvah.
 - ²⁴ The Yashuvi family, descended from Yashuv.
 - The Shimroni family, descended from Shimron.
- ²⁵ These were Yissachar's families. Their total number was sixty-four thousand, three hundred.
- ²⁶ Zevulun's descendants, according to their families:
- The Sardi family, descended from Sered.
 - The Ailoni family, descended from Ailon.
 - The Yachle'aili family, descended from Yachle'ail.
- ²⁷ These were the Zevulunite families. Their total number was sixty thousand, five hundred.
- ²⁸ The descendants of Yosef according to their families (included) Menasheh and Efrayim.
- ²⁹ The descendants of Menasheh:
- The Machiri family, descended from Machir. Machir fathered Gilad.
 - The Giladi family, descended from Gilad.
- ³⁰ These were the families of Gilad's descendants:
- The Iyezri family, descended from Iyezer.
 - The Chelki family, descended from Chailek.
 - ³¹ The Asriaili family, descended from Asriail.
 - The Shichmi family, descended from Shechem.
 - ³² The Shmida'iy family, descended from Shmida.
 - The Chefri family, descended from Chaifer.
 - ³³ Tzelafchad the son of Chaifer did not have sons, but daughters. The names of Tzelafchad's daughters were Machlah, No'ah, Choglah, Milcah and Tirtzah.
- ³⁴ These were Menasheh's families. Their total number was fifty-two thousand, seven hundred.
- ³⁵ These were Efrayim's descendants, according to their families:
- The Shusalchi family, descended from Shuselach.
 - The Bachri family, descended from Becher.
 - The Tachani family, descended from Tachan.
- ³⁶ These were the descendants of Shuselach: The Airani family, descended from Airan.
- ³⁷ These were the families of Efrayim's descendants. Their total number was thirty-two thousand, five hundred. (All) these were Yosef's descendants, according to their families.
- ³⁸ Binyamin's descendants, according to their families:
- The Bali family, descended from Bela.
 - The Ashbaili family, descended from Ashbail.
 - The Achirami family, descended from Achiram (also known as Achi).
 - ³⁹ The Shufami family, descended from Shefufam (also known as Mupim).
 - The Chufami family, descended from Chufam.
- ⁴⁰ The sons of Bela were Ard and Na'aman:
- The Ardi family.
 - The Na'ami family, descended from Na'aman.
- ⁴¹ These were Binyamin's descendants, according to their families. Their total number was forty-five thousand, six hundred.

מב אליו בני דן לזרעיתיהו לשיחם זרעית שוחם אליו זרעית דן לזרעיתיהו: מנ כל זרעית שוחם למניניהו שתי וארבע אלפין וארבע מאה: מד בני אשר לזרעיתיהו לימנה זרעית ימנה לישי זרעית ישי לבריעה זרעית בריעה: מה לבני חבר לזרעית חבר למלכיאל זרעית מלכיאל: מו ושום בת אשר סרה: מז אליו זרעית בני אשר למניניהו חמשי ותלתא אלפין וארבע מאה: מח בני נפתלי לזרעיתיהו ליחצאל זרעית יחצאל לגוני זרעית גוני: מט ליצור זרעית יצור לשלם זרעית שלם: נ אליו זרעית נפתלי לזרעיתיהו ומניניהו ארבעין וחמשי אלפין וארבע מאה: נא אליו מנני בני ישראל שית מאה וחד אלפין שבע מאה ותלתין: נב ומליל יי עם משה למימר: נג לאליו תתפלג ארעא באחסנא במנין שמהן: נד לסניאי תסגון אחסנתיהו ולעירי תזערון אחסנתיהו גבר לפום מניניהו תתייב אחסנתיה: נה ברם בעדבא תתפלג ית ארעא לשמהן שבטי אכנתיהו יחסגון: נו על פום עדבא תתפלג אחסנתיהו בין סניאי לעירי: נז ואליו מנני לואי לזרעיתיהו לגרשון

ושש מאות: ס מב אלה בני דן למשפחתם לשיחם משפחת השוחמי אלה משפחת דן למשפחתם: מנ כל משפחת השוחמי לפקדיהם ארבעה וששים אלף וארבע מאות: ס מד בני אשר למשפחתם לימנה משפחת הימנה לישי משפחת הישי לבריעה משפחת הבריעה: מה לבני חבר לבריעה להבר משפחת החברי למלכיאל משפחת המלכיאלי: מו ושום בת אשר שרה: מז אלה משפחת בני אשר לפקדיהם שלשה וחמשים אלף וארבע מאות: ס מח בני נפתלי למשפחתם ליחצאל משפחת היחצאלי לגוני משפחת הגוני: מט ליצור משפחת היצרי לשלם משפחת השלמי: נ אלה משפחת נפתלי למשפחתם ופקדיהם חמשה וארבעים אלף וארבע מאות: נא אלה פקודי בני ישראל שש מאות אלף ואלף שבע מאות ושלושים: פ [שלישי] נב וידבר יהוה אל משה לאמר: נג לאלה תחלק הארץ בנחלה במספר שמות: נד לרב תרבה נחלתו ולמעט תמעט נחלתו איש לפי פקדיו יתן נחלתו: נה אך בגורל יחלק את הארץ לשמות משותפותם ינחלו: נו על פי הגורל תחלק נחלתו בין רב למעט: ס נז ואלה פקודי

כ"ט

הארץ, שהרי שבע שנים כצטו ושבע חלקו, לא נטלו חלק בארץ אלא אלו שש מאות חלק ואלף, ואם היה לאחד מהם ששה צנים, לא נטלו חלק אציהם לזכו: (נד) לרב תרבה נחלתו. לשבע שהיה מרובה באוכלוסין נתנו חלק רב,

על שם שהיה יוסף שפוף צין האומות: (מז) לשוחם. הוא חושים: (מו) ושם בת אשר שרה. לפי שהיה קיימת צהייס מנחה כאן: (נג) לאלה תחלק הארץ. ולא לפחותים מנן עשרים, אף על פי שצאו לכלל עשרים צטרם חלקו

TORAS MENACHEM

🔥 Sparks of Chasidus 🔥

While Jewish law obligates each person to observe *all* the *mitzvos*, there is always at least one particular *mitzvah* to which one's soul is drawn more strongly (cf. *Shabbos* 118b). According to *Chasidic* thought, this concept is hinted to by the fact that the Land was apportioned "by means of a lottery" (v. 55), suggesting that one's primary mission in life, one's spiritual "inheritance," has been pre-allocated to him on High, and that one has no choice in the matter.

The reason why a person's soul has a particular affinity to its "special *mitzvah*" is because each soul is a "spark" of the general soul which Adam possessed; and corresponding to its original "location" within Adam's soul, it will have a distinct spiritual path of its own. Consequently, through observing his "special *mitzvah*" the person will become spiritually fulfilled, which will give him additional enthusiasm in the observance of all the other *mitzvos* too.

How can a person discover what his "special *mitzvah*" is? There is no simple solution. However, being that a person's mission in life is centered around his "special *mitzvah*," it follows that his "evil inclination" will oppose this *mitzvah* strongly, which may give a person a clue as to what it is. Furthermore, Divine Providence will inevitably lead a person to circumstances which are conducive to the observance of his "special *mitzvah*." [So if one is wealthy, for example, his special *mitzvah* is quite possibly to give charity].

In addition to all the above, every person in a given generation will have a "special *mitzvah*," by virtue of the times in which he lives. And in our times, this is the obligation to promote knowledge, belief and yearning for the coming of Mashiach, since our souls have, by Divine Providence, been placed here in the last generation of Exile.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 2, p. 346ff.; *Sefer Hama'amorim* 5708, p. 240, note 6; *Sefer Hasichos* 5752, vol. 1, p. 97)

⁴² Dan's descendants, according to their families:

- The Shuchami family, descended from Shucham (Chushim). These were Dan's families.

⁴³ The total number of all the Shuchamite families was sixty-four thousand, four hundred.

⁴⁴ Asher's descendants, according to their families:

- The Yimnah family, descended from Yimnah.
- The Yishvi family, descended from Yishvi.
- The Briyi family, descended from Briyah.

⁴⁵ The descendants of Briyah:

- The Chevri family, descended from Chaiver.
- The Malkiaili family, descended from Malkiail.

⁴⁶ The name of Asher's daughter was Sarach.

⁴⁷ These were the families of Asher's descendants. Their total was fifty-three thousand, four hundred.

⁴⁸ Naftali's descendants, according to their families:

- The Yachtzaili family, descended from Yachtzail.
- The Guni family, descended from Guni.
- ⁴⁹ The Yitzri family, descended from Yaitzer.
- The Shilaimi family, descended from Shilaim.

⁵⁰ These were Naftali's families according to their families. Their total was forty-five thousand, four hundred.

⁵¹ This was the total number of the children of Israel (counted): Six hundred and one thousand, seven hundred and thirty.

🌀 DIVISION OF THE LAND 🌀

26:52
THIRD
READING

God spoke to Moshe, saying: ⁵³ "You should apportion the Land as an inheritance (only) among these names (who were included) in the (above) census. ⁵⁴ To a large (tribe) you should give a larger inheritance and to a small (tribe) you should give a smaller inheritance. Each one should be given an inheritance according to its size. ⁵⁵ You must only apportion the Land by means of a lottery. They will inherit it (in portions that are divided) according to the names of their tribal ancestors (that came out of Egypt). ⁵⁶ Whether (a group) is numerous or small, their inheritance of land should be apportioned through the mouth of the (miraculous, talking) lottery.

רש"י

הנחלות החיים יורשים את המתים וכאן מתים יורשים את החיים. כיצד, שני אחים מיוצאי מצרים, שהיו להם צנים בצאי הארץ, לזה אחד ולזה שלשה, האחד נטל חלק אחד, והשלשה נטלו שלשה, שנאמר לחלק הארץ, חזרה נחלקו חלל חצי אציהן וחלקו הכל צבוע. וזה שנאמר לשמות מטות אבותם ינחלו. שאחר שנטלו הצנים חלקיה לפי האבות שיצאו ממצרים, ואלו מתחלה חלקיה למנין יוצאי מצרים לא היו נוטלין אלו הארבעה, אלא שני חלקים, עכשיו נטלו ארבעה חלקים: אך בגורל. יצאו יהושע וכלב, וכן הוא אומר ויתנו לכלב את חצרון כאשר דבר משה⁵, ואומר על פי ה' נתנו לו את העיר אשר שאל⁶: מטות אבתם. יצאו גרים ועבדים¹: (נו) על פי הגורל. הגורל היה מדבר, כמו שפירשתי, מגיד שנתחלקה צבוע הקודש, לכך נאמר על פי ה':

ואף על פי שלא היו החלקים שוים, שהרי הכל לפי רצון השבט חלקו החלקים, לא עשו אלא ע"י גורל, והגורל היה על פי רוח הקודש, כמו שמפורש בצבא צתרא¹ אלעזר הכהן היה מלוכצ צאורים ותומים, ואומר צבוע הקודש אם שבט פלוני עולה, תחום פלוני עולה עמו. והשבטים היו כתוצים צ"צ פתקין, וי"צ גבולים צ"צ פתקין, וצבלום צקלפי והגשיא מכנים ידו לתוכה ונטל שני פתקין, עולה צידו פתק של שם שבטו, ופתק של גבול המפורש לו, והגורל עלמו היה צווח ואומר אני הגורל עליתי לגבול פלוני, לשבט פלוני, שנאמר על פי הגורל², ולא נתחלקה הארץ צמדה, לפי שיש גבול משוצח מחצרו, אלא צשומא, צית כור רע כנגד צית סאה טוב, הכל לפי הדמים³: (נה) לשמות מטות אבותם. אלו יוצאי מצרים. שנה הכתוב נחלה זו מכל הנחלות שבחורה, שכל

זרעית גרשון לקחת זרעית קהת למררי זרעית מררי: נח אליו זרעית לוי זרעית לבני זרעית חברון זרעית מחלי זרעית מושי זרעית קרח וקהת אולד ית עמרם: נט ושום אתת עמרם יוכבד בת לוי דילדת יתה ללוי במצרים וילדת לעמרם ית אהרן וית משה וית מרים אהתהו: ס ואתיליד לאהרן ית נדב וית אביהוא ית אלעזר וית איתמר: סא ומית נדב ואביהוא בקרוביהו אשתא נויברתא קדם יי: סב והו מניניהו עשרין ותלתא אלפין כל דכורא מפר ירחא ולעלא ארי לא אתמניאו בגו בני ישראל ארי לא אתיהיבת להו אהסנא בגו בני ישראל:

הלוי למשפחתם לגרשון משפחת הגרשני לקחת משפחת הקהתי למררי משפחת המררי: נח אלה | משפחת לוי משפחת הלבי משפחת החברני משפחת המחלי משפחת המושי משפחת הקרחי וקהת הולד את-עמרם: נט ושם | אשת עמרם יוכבד בת-לוי אשר ילדה אתה ללוי במצרים ותלד לעמרם את-אהרן ואת-משה ואת מרים אחתם: ס וילד לאהרן את-נדב ואת-אביהוא את-אלעזר ואת-איתמר: סא וימת נדב ואביהוא בהקריבם אש-זרה לפני יהוה: סב ויהיו פקדיהם שלשה ועשרים אלף כל-זכר מבין-חדש ומעלה פי | לא התפקדו בתוך בני ישראל פי כי

כ"ט

שכרי צרפון אי אהה מולא חלא שעים ותשע? (סב) כי לא התפקדו בתוך בני ישראל. להיות נמנין בני עשרים שנה, ומח טעם: כי לא נתן להם נחלה. והנמנין מן עשרים שנה היו בני נחלה, שנאמר איש לפי פקודיו יותן (נח) אלה משפחת לוי. חסר כאן משפחת השמעני והעזראלי וקלח מן הכהנים (נט) אשר ילדה אתה ללוי. אשתו ילדה צמלרים, [לידתה צמלרים] ואין הורתה צמלרים. כשנכנסו לתוך החומה ילדה, והיא שלומיה מנין שבעים,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did the tribe of Levi not receive an allotment of land? Are they allowed to possess any land at all? (v. 62)

RAMBAM: The entire tribe of Levi is prohibited from taking a share in the apportionment of the Land of Canaan, and is also prohibited from sharing the spoils when they conquer cities, as the verse states, “The priests, the Levites, all the tribe of Levi, shall have no portion nor inheritance” (*Devarim* 18:1), i.e. they will have no portion of the spoils, or an inheritance of land. Likewise it is written, “You will not come to possess their Land, nor will you have a portion along with them” (*Bamidbar* 18:20)...

It appears to me that this rule only applies to the lands that were sworn by covenant to Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya’akov, that were then bequeathed to their children and distributed among them. However, other lands that are conquered by a Jewish king may be owned by priests and Levites, and their spoils may be shared, as is the case with any other Jew.

Why did the tribe of Levi not merit a portion in the Land of Israel and its spoils, as their brothers did? Because they have been separated out to serve God as His ministers...Therefore they were also separated from worldly matters. They are not required to fight in a war, like other Jewish people, and they do not inherit the Land (*Laws of the Sabbatical and Jubilee Years* 13:10-12).

SMAG: In the future era, the Levites will be given a portion in the Land, as the *Talmud* suggests (see *Bava Basra* 122a, and *Rashbam* *ibid.*).

MINCHAS CHINUCH: I cannot understand the *Talmud’s* assertion that the Levites will receive a portion in the Land in the future. For the prohibition against the Levites owning a portion of the Land is one of the 613 commandments, all of which are in force *eternally*. So how could this prohibition be waived in the future?

In any case, *Rambam* clearly did not accept that the Levites would be apportioned land in the future, as he omits this point from his Code (*Mitzvah* 408).

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 THE LEVITES’ INHERITANCE (v. 62)

Minchas Chinuch writes that *Rambam* did not rule in favor of the view that the Levites will be apportioned land in the future era, arguing that if *Rambam* did accept this point he would have said so explicitly.

However, there is a principle that **Smag** adhered to *Rambam’s* rulings steadfastly (see *Yad Malachi, klalei haSmag* 46), and in our case, *Smag* concludes that in the future time the tribe of Levi will have a portion in the Land of Israel. We may therefore presume with confidence that *Smag* maintained that this was the view of *Rambam*. So we need to find a clear

indication of this in *Rambam’s* ruling. We also need to answer the objection of *Minchas Chinuch*: Since the prohibition against a Levite owning a portion of the Land is one of the 613 commandments which are in force *eternally*, how could *Rambam* rule that this prohibition will be waived in the future?

THE EXPLANATION

It would seem that *Rambam* himself answered these questions with his choice of phrase, “The entire tribe of Levi is prohibited from taking a share in the apportionment of the Land of Canaan,” rather than his usual

CENSUS OF THE LEVITES

26:57 **T**hese were the Levite families included in the census:

- The Gershoni family, descended from Gershon. The Kehosi family, descended from Kehos. The Merari family, descended from Merari.

⁵⁸ These were the Levite families:

- The Livni family, the Chevroni family, the Machli family, the Mushi family, the Korchi family.
- Kehos fathered Amram. ⁵⁹ The name of Amram's wife was Yocheved, the daughter of Levi, whom (Levi's wife) bore to Levi in Egypt.
- For Amram, (Yocheved) bore Aharon and Moshe, and their sister Miriam. ⁶⁰ Nadav, Avihu, Elazar and Isamar were born to Aharon. ⁶¹ Nadav and Avihu died when they offered up an extraneous fire before God.

⁶² The total number counted was twenty-three thousand. (This included) every male aged one month and upward. (The Levites) were not counted with the (other) children of Israel (from the age of twenty), since they did not receive any inheritance (of land) together with the children of Israel.

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expression the "Land of Israel."* In the future era, the "Land of Israel" will be expanded to include the lands of the Kenites, Kenizites and Kadmonites, but the term "Land of Cana'an" can only refer to the land of the seven nations at the time of Yehoshua's conquest. Thus, while "the entire tribe of Levi is prohibited from taking a share... of the Land of Cana'an," they may be granted ownership of part of the three additional lands, when they are acquired in the future era.**

However, this answer seems to contradict the explicit statement of Rambam that "the tribe of Levi did not merit a portion in the Land of Israel and its spoils, as their brethren did, because they have been separated out to serve God as His ministers.... Therefore they were also separated from worldly matters." If the reason why the Levites were not allowed a portion in the Land of Cana'an is in order to be separated from "worldly matters," then how could they be apportioned any land in the future?

It could be argued, however, that there are two different categories of land given by God to the Jewish people: One is an "inheritance," and the second is a "gift." God gave the lands of the seven nations as an "inheritance," in order to give the Jewish people a homeland, similar to that possessed by other nations. And since the concept of a homeland is not exclusive to the Jewish people, it comes under the category of "worldly matters," forbidden to the Levites, who may "not receive any inheritance" (v. 62).

But the additional three lands to be granted in the future—the lands of the Kenites, Kenizites and Kadmonites—will not be given out of the necessity for the Jewish people to have their own homeland, but rather as a gift from God. This is evident from the verse, "When God, your God, will expand your borders" (*Devarim* 19:8), which suggests that God will give the Jewish people land beyond that which is necessary. Consequently, ownership in these extra portions is not a "worldly matter," (an "inheritance"), and is therefore not a problem for the Levites.

LEVITES IN THE FUTURE ERA

Rambam writes at the end of his *Mishneh Torah*, that in the Messianic Era, "the entire world will only be occupied with the knowledge of God" (*Laws of Kings* 12:4). From this it appears that the distinction between Levites and other Jews will then fade away, because all Jews ("the entire world") will be devoted to "the knowledge of God" and they will thus be free from "worldly matters." Nevertheless, in the future era the Jewish people will possess the Land of Cana'an (i.e. the seven lands) as an inheritance.

Apparently then, owning a portion of the Land of Cana'an is not a contradiction to being "separated from worldly matters"!

The answer to this problem can be found in Rambam's words, earlier in the very same law: "In that Era there will be neither famine nor war, neither envy nor competition, for good things will flow in abundance and all the delights will be as freely available as dust. The entire world will only be occupied with the knowledge of God."

Here Rambam makes clear that the Jewish people will be removed from worldly matters for a different reason than the Levites: The Levites were actively "separated out to serve God as His ministers," whereas the rest of the Jewish people will become "occupied with the knowledge of God," by default (for circumstantial reasons), because "there will be neither famine nor war, etc."

In other words, the Levites are intrinsically ministers of God who were "hand-picked" for the task, and are thus aloof from worldly matters. The rest of the Jewish people by comparison are not intrinsically aloof from worldly affairs, and it is only because worldly distractions will be eliminated in the Messianic Era that it will eventually become possible for them to be devoted to the knowledge and worship of God on a full-time basis. Thus, even in that time the distinction will remain between Levites and other Jews.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 38, p. 103ff.)

* Later in the same law Rambam does refer to the "Land of Israel." The question here is why he used the term "Land of Canaan" in this one instance. **Nevertheless, these details were not written by Rambam explicitly in the *Mishneh Torah*, (and were merely hinted to by the use of the term "the Land of Cana'an"), since Rambam chose only to include those laws which are specifically mentioned in the *Talmud* as clear legal conclusions, but not concepts that are cited parenthetically amid another discussion (see *Yad Malachi, klalei haRambam*, par. 2, 5).

סג אליו מנגני משה ואלעזר כהנא די מנו ית בני ישראל במישריא דמואב על ירהנא דיריחו: סד ובאליו לא הוה גבר ממנגני משה ואהרן כהנא די מנו ית בני ישראל במדברא דסיני: סה ארי אמר יי להון כמת זמותון במדברא ולא אשתאר מנהון אנש אלהן פלב בר יפנה ויהושע בר נון: א וקריבא פנת צלפחד בר חפר בר גלעד בר מכיר בר מנשה לזרעית מנשה בר יוסף ואליו שמחת בנתיה מחלה נעה וחגלה ומלכה ותרצה: ב וקמא קדם משה וקדם אלעזר כהנא וקדם רברביא וכל בנשתא בתרע משפן זמנא למימר: ג אבונא מית במדברא והוא לא הוה בגו בנשתא דאזדמנו על יי בכנשתא דקרח ארי בחוביה מית ובגין לא הוו לה: ד למא יתמנע שמא דאבונא מנו זרעיתה ארי לית

לאנתן להם נחלה בתוך בני ישראל: סג אלה פקודי משה ואלעזר הכהן אשר פקדו את בני ישראל בערבית מואב על ירדן ירחו: סד ובאלה לא היה איש מפקודי משה ואהרן הכהן אשר פקדו את בני ישראל במדבר סיני: סה כפי אמר יהוה להם מות ימתו במדבר ולא נותר מהם איש כי אם פלב בן יפנה ויהושע בן נון: ס כז א ותקרבנה בנות צלפחד בן חפר בן גלעד בן מכיר בן מנשה למשפחת מנשה בן יוסף ואלה שמות בנתיו מחלה נעה וחגלה ומלכה ותרצה: ב ותעמדנה לפני משה ולפני אלעזר הכהן ולפני הנשיאם וכל העדה פתח אהל מועד לאמר: ג אבינו מת במדבר והוא לא היה בתוך העדה הנזעדים עליהוה בעדת קרח כפי בחטאו מת ובנים לא היו לו: ד למה יגרע

לש"י

נעה וגו'. ולהלן הוא אומר ותהיינא מחלה תרצה⁷, מגיד שכולן שקולות זו כזו, לפיכך שנה את סדרן: (3) לפני משה ולפני אלעזר. מגיד שלא עמדו לפניכם אלא בשנת הארבעים, אחר שמת אהרן: לפני משה. ואחר כך לפני אלעזר, אפשר אם משה לא ידע אלעזר יודע, אלא סרס המקרא ודרשבו, דברי רבי יאשיהו. אלא חנן משום רבי אלעזר אומר צבית המדרש היו יושבים, ועמדו לפני כולם: (ג) והוא לא היה וגו'. לפי שהיו צבות לומר בחטאו מת, נזקקו לומר לא בחטא מתלוונים ולא צבית קרה שהיו על הקצה, אלא בחטאו לבדו מת, ולא חטאו את אחרים עמו⁴. ר' עקיבא אומר מקושש עושים היה. ור' שמעון אומר מן המעפילים היה⁵: (ד) למה יגרע שם

נחלתו: (סד) ובאלה לא היה איש וגו'. אצל על הנשים לא נגזרה גזרת המרגלים, לפי שהן היו מחצבות את הארץ. האנשים אומרים נתנה ראש ונשוצה מזרימה², והנשים אומרות תנה לנו אחוזה³. לכך נסמכה פרשת צבות ללפחד לכאן: (ה) למשפחת מנשה בן יוסף. למה נאמר, והלא כבר נאמר בן מנשה, אלא לומר לך יוסף חצב את הארץ, שנאמר והעליתם את עלמותי וגו'¹, וצבותיו חצבו את הארץ, שנאמר תנה לנו אחוזה. ולמדך שהיו כולם לדיקים, שכל מי שמעשו ומעשה אצותיו סתומים ופרט לך הכחוצ צאחד מהם ליחסו לשבח, הרי זה לדיק בן לדיק. ואם יחסו לגנאי כגון צא ישמעאל בן נתניה בן אלישמע⁶, צידוע שכל הזכרים עמו רשעים היו: מחלה

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Tzelafchad's daughters stress that their father “was not part of Korach’s assembly”? (v. 3)

RASHI: Since they were coming to say that “he died due to his own sin” (v. 3), they had to state that it was not the sin of the complainers, nor was he in Korach’s assembly who incited [the people] against God (16:1ff.). Rather, he died only because of his own sin, and he did not cause others to sin along with him. R’ Akiva says: “He was the wood-gatherer” (15:32-36). R’ Shimon says: “He was among those who were defiant [attempting to enter the Land, after the sin of the spies] (14:40-45).

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 TZELAFCHAD'S SIN (RASHI TO V.3)

In the current passage (27:1-7), we read the story how Tzelafchad’s daughters were granted a portion of the Land in response to a plea to Moshe: “Why should our father’s name be missed out from his family because he had no son? Give us a portion along with our father’s brothers!” (v. 4). Before launching into their plea, Tzelafchad’s daughters said the following words of introduction: “Our father died in the desert. He was not part of the group that rebelled against God in Korach’s assembly, but rather, he died due to his own sin” (v. 3).

Rashi clarifies that this introduction contains four succinct points:

- That Tzelafchad was not one of “the complainers.” Presumably, this refers to those who “complained against Moshe and Aharon,”* after Korach met his end, saying, “You have killed God’s people!” (17:6).
- Tzelafchad was not party to Korach’s rebellion.
- He died as a result of a private sin.
- Thus, he was not responsible for corrupting anybody else.

However, why is any of this relevant, at the literal level? Where do we find in scripture, or in Rashi’s commentary, that the members of Korach’s

*The “sin of the complainers” could also refer to the incident where “the children of Israel complained about Moshe and Aharon” (14:2), after hearing the report of the spies. However, at first glance, this appears difficult to accept, since Rashi writes (in the name of R’ Shimon) that Tzelafchad was one of those who regretted losing faith after the sin of the spies and was defiant to enter the Land, which indicates that he had originally been one of the complainers. (However, see “The Explanation” below).

⁶³ This (concludes) the census of Moshe and Elazar the priest, who counted the children of Israel in the Plains of Mo'av, by the Jordan, near Jericho. ⁶⁴ Among these (who were counted here, there) was not one man who had been included in the census of Moshe and Aharon when they counted the children of Israel in the Sinai desert. ⁶⁵ For God had said to them that they would definitely die in the desert. Not one man remained from them, except for Calev the son of Yefuneh and Yehoshua the son of Nun.

🌀 COMPLAINT OF TZELAFCHAD'S DAUGHTERS 🌀

27 **T**he daughters of Tzelafchad—the son of Chaifer, who was the son of Gilad, who was the son of Machir, who was the son of Menasheh, from the families of Yosef's son Menasheh—came forward. His daughters' names were Machlah, No'ah, Choglah, Milcah and Tirtzah. ² They stood before Moshe, Elazar the priest, the (tribal) leaders and the entire congregation, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, saying, ³ “Our father died in the desert. He was not part of the group that rebelled against God (nor was he) in Korach's assembly, but rather, he died due to his own sin. He had no sons.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the passage about Tzelafchad's daughters follow after the census?

RASHI: “Among these there was not one man [who had been included in the census of Moshe and Aharon when they counted the children of Israel in the Sinai desert]” (v. 64)—but the women were not included in the decree [which followed the sin of] the spies, for they cherished the Land. The men said, “Let's appoint a leader and return to Egypt!” (14:4), but the women said, “Give us a portion” [in the Land] (27:4). That is why the passage of Tzelafchad's daughters follows here (*Rashi* to v. 64).

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rebellion or the subsequent “complainers” forfeited their rights to the Land, or that such a penalty was administered to individuals that caused others to sin? Likewise, the “private” nature of the sin which led to Tzelafchad's death does not appear to have any relevance here. So how did this “introduction” of Tzelafchad's daughters support their claim that they should be given their father's portion of the Land?

Rashi then proceeds to cite a difference of opinion as to what Tzelafchad's sin was: “R' Akiva says: ‘He was the wood-gatherer.’ R' Shimon says: ‘He was among those who were defiant [attempting to enter the Land, after the sin of the spies].’”

Being that *Rashi's* self-declared intention is to explain “only the literal meaning of scripture” (*Rashi* to *Bereishis* 3:8), his comments here demand

🌀 The Last Word 🌀

According to *Rashi* (cited in *Classic Questions*), the story of Tzelafchad's daughters stresses how women have many impressive qualities in which they are simply superior to men: “The men said, ‘Let's appoint a leader and return to Egypt!’ (14:4), but the women said, ‘Give us a portion’ [in the Land] (27:4).”

In our times too, the superior qualities with which women have been endowed are crucial to the survival of the Jewish people. This fact comes to light when one considers the long-reaching effects of the *mitzvos* whose observance is almost exclusively in the hands of women, as we will soon explain.

If the Jewish people are essentially virtuous, then why is our actual situation so lamentable, with the tides of assimilation growing as the years pass by? Or, to phrase it differently: If the Jewish people are by nature resilient to the morally and spiritually destructive influences of society—because every Jew possesses a “part of God” in his soul, which can never be silenced—how is it that society has succeeded in leading the Jewish people away from the Torah?

Of course, there are many answers to this question. However, the primary corrupting influence is not merely being *nurtured* in a world of debased values, but rather, the effect that our surroundings have on the nature of a Jew.

If a child is born from a union which was not sanctified by the laws of family purity (*taharas hamishpachah*), the inherently refined nature of the Jewish mind and heart is compromised in that child (besides the possible negative effects on the physical health of the child). Thus, a wide-scale breach in the observance of these laws has a far-reaching effect, as it predisposes the Jewish people to a susceptibility for embracing morally corrupt ideologies and lifestyles, which has led to the situation in which we find ourselves today.

Of course, the Jewish soul always shines, and it has the capability of withstanding even this setback. But then it is subjected to a further onslaught—non-kosher food. According to Jewish sources, eating non-kosher food not only dulls the mind from finding inspiration in spiritual matters, it even has a corrupting effect on the personality (see *Bachaye & Abaranel* to *Vayikra* 11:13; *Rema* to *Shulchan Aruch*, *Yoreh De'ah* 81:7).

It follows therefore that the woman, who is practically responsible for the observance of laws of family purity and *kashrus* in the home, has a major influence on the destiny of the Jewish people. For by molding refined characteristics into her children's nature, she paints a brighter future for the next generation—and this is a unique privilege which is entrusted into the hands of the Jewish woman.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 13, p. 256ff.)

ליה בר הב לנא אַחְסָנָא בְּגוֹ אַחֵי אַבּוּנָא:
 ה וְקָרַב מֹשֶׁה יֵת דִּינִיקָן קָדָם יְיָ וַיֹּאמֶר יְיָ
 לְמֹשֶׁה לְמִימְרֵי: וַיֹּאמֶר בְּנֵת צֶלְפַחַד מִמְּלֶלֶן
 מִתַּן תִּתֵּן לָהּ אֶחָד מֵאֲחֵי אַבּוּנָא בְּגוֹ אַחֵי
 אַבּוּנָא וְתִעָבֵר יֵת אַחְסָנָא אַבּוּנָא לָהּ: ה וְעַם
 בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּמְלֹל לְמִימְרֵי גִבּוֹר אַרְי יָמוֹת וְבַר
 לֵית לָהּ וְתִעָבְרוּ יֵת אַחְסָנָתָהּ לְבָרְתָהּ:
 ט וְאִם לֵית לָהּ בְּרִיתָא וְתִתְּנוּ יֵת אַחְסָנָתָהּ
 לְאַחֵיהּ: י וְאִם לֵית לָהּ אַחִין וְתִתְּנוּ יֵת

שָׁם-אֲבִינוּ מִתּוֹךְ מִשְׁפַּחְתּוֹ כִּי אֵין לוֹ בֶן תִּנְהַלְנוּ אִתְּוּהָ
 בְּתוֹךְ אַחֵי אֲבִינוּ: ה וַיִּקְרַב מֹשֶׁה אֶת-מִשְׁפָּטָן* לְפָנֵי יְהוָה: פ
 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: ז כֵּן בְּנֹת צֶלְפַחַד דְּבָרְתָן
 נָתַן תִּתֵּן לָהֶם אֲחֹזֶת נַחֲלָה בְּתוֹךְ אַחֵי אֲבִיהֶם וְהֵעֲבַרְתָּ אֶת-
 נַחֲלַת אֲבִיהֶן לָהֶן: ח וְאֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל תְּדַבֵּר לֵאמֹר אִישׁ
 כִּי-יָמוֹת וּבֶן אֵין לוֹ וְהֵעֲבַרְתֶּם אֶת-נַחֲלָתוֹ לְבָתּוֹ: ט וְאִם-אֵין

*ו' רבתי

רש"י

לפני צמרוס², מגיד שראתה עיני מה שלא ראתה עינו של משה: כן בנות צלפחד דברת. יפה תצטע. אשרי אדם שהקצ"ח מודה לדבריו: נתן תתן. שני חלקים, חלק אביהן, שכיח מיוצאי מצרים, וחלקו עם אחיו זכנסי חפר²: והעברת. לשון העברה (ס"א עברה) הוא צמי שאינו מניח צן לירוש³. דבר אחר על שם שבצת מעברת נחלה משצט לשצט שבצנה ובעלה יורשין אותה, שלא תסוב נחלה לא נצטוב חלה לאותו הדור בלבד, וכן והעברתם את נחלתו

אבינו. אנו צמקוס בן עומדות, ואם אין הנקצות חשובות זרע, תתיבס אמנו ליבס¹: כי אין לו בן. הא אם היה לו בן לא היו תוצעות כלום. מגיד שחכמניות היו²: (ה) ויקרב משה את משפטן. נתעלמה הלכה ממנו וכאן נפרע על שנטע עטרה לומר וכדבר אשר יקשה מכס תקריבון חלי³. דבר אחר ראויי היתה פרשה זו להכחז על ידי משה, אלא שזכו בנות צלפחד ונכתבה על ידן⁴: (ז) כן בנות צלפחד דברת. כתרוממו יאות, כך כתובה פרשה זו

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some justification. A literal interpretation must be indicated by the *text of scripture itself* (in contrast to a *Midrashic* interpretation which may have only a loose connection with the text). So why does the text of scripture force us to conclude that Tzelafchad was either the "wood-gatherer" or one of the "defiant ones"? There appears to be no direct reference to these associations in the verse at all.

And why does *Rashi* cite two opinions of Tzelafchad's sin? We need to identify the advantage of each opinion, at the literal level.

Another facet of a literal study is that the original source of an idea is irrelevant, since simplicity and contextual consistency alone validate a literal interpretation. Thus, when *Rashi* does cite the source or author of a given interpretation (which is the exception rather than the rule), it is an indication to the reader that, on this occasion, the source or author is relevant at the literal level, i.e. the interpretation needs to be perceived in light of the character and thought-system of the one who authored it.

So we need to explain: Why did *R' Akiva* understand that Tzelafchad was the wood-gatherer, and *R' Shimon* perceive him to be one of the "defiant ones"?

WHAT WAS THE COMPLAINT OF TZELAFCHAD'S DAUGHTERS?

In order to answer the above questions, we first need to address a fundamental problem concerning the plea of Tzelafchad's daughters, at the literal level. At the time when the current narrative occurred, some forty years after the Exodus, the entire generation that had left Egypt had already passed away (see 26:64 above). And yet, it is only here in our *Parsha* that the Land of Israel was *actually* allotted to the Jewish people for the first time, "You should apportion the Land as an inheritance (only) among these names (who were included) in the (above) census" (ibid. v. 53. See *Rashi* ibid.).* Thus it follows that, until this point, nobody had been granted any rights to the Land. So how could Tzelafchad's daughters have argued that they wished to inherit their father's allotment of land when he never had the rights to any land, since he was not alive when land was allotted for the first time in our *Parsha*?

THE EXPLANATION

While they were still in Egypt, God told the Jewish people, "I will take you out from under the burdens of Egypt... I will bring you to the Land... and I will give it to you as a heritage" (*Shemos* 6:6-8), i.e. God promised to give the Land to the generation that left Egypt ("to you"). However, when they later complained after the report of the spies and said, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this desert!" (*Bamidbar* 14:2), God responded, "I will do to you none other than what you said to My ears... You will not come to the Land" (ibid. 28-30).

Nevertheless, God did not revoke His promise *completely*, but rather, passed the merit of entering the Land to their children, "As for your children... I will bring them (there)" (ibid. v. 31).

From this it follows that when we read, in our *Parsha*, how the Land was allotted to this second generation (the children of those who left Egypt), they actually received their portion *due to the connection with their parents* (which is why the allotment of Land was partially readjusted in light of the census of their parents' generation—See *Rashi* to 26:55. I.e. even according to *Rashi's* stance, at the literal level, that the Land was apportioned to the second generation [see note*], it was nevertheless a merit which they were granted on behalf of their parents, and thus their parents' rights to the Land were reflected in the apportionment.)

The daughters of Tzelafchad argued that, on this basis, they had a right to land too, since both their father and grandfather were among those that left Egypt. If Tzelafchad would have had a son, his rights to a portion of land (as well as his father's right) would have been passed to his son, who would now have been awarded this land after the census. So, being that there was no son, the daughters argued, "Why should our father's name be missed out from his family because he had no son? Give us a portion along with our father's brothers!" (v. 4).

THE DAUGHTERS' INTRODUCTION

With the above in mind, we can now explain the daughters' introductory words, in verse 3.

*There is a view that the Land was already allotted to the generation that left Egypt (*Bava Basra* 118), which would explain the claim of Tzelafchad's daughters; but *Rashi* rejects this view in his commentary to 26:55.

1 בבא בתרא קט"ז: 2 ספרי 3 דברים א, יז 4 סנהדרין ח. 5 ספרי. ראה לקו"ח ח"ג ע' 256, הערה 1. 6 בבא בתרא קכ.

⁴ *Why should our father's name be missed out from his family because he had no son? Give us a portion along with our father's brothers!"*

⁵ *Moshe (didn't know what to, do so he) brought their case before God.*

FOURTH READING ⁶ *God spoke to Moshe, saying: ⁷ "Tzelafchad's daughters speak well. Give them a double portion of inheritance along with their father's brothers. Transfer their father's inheritance to them."*

🌀 LAWS OF INHERITANCE 🌀

⁸ *Speak to the children of Israel, saying:*

- *If a man dies and has no son, you should transfer his inheritance to his daughter.*

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Before they could argue that their father's merits to the Land should pass to them, the daughters had to first establish that their father had indeed been one of those who had left Egypt. So they began by stressing, "Our father died in the desert."

However, the fact that Tzelafchad died in the desert presented the possibility that his death was due to a sin associated with the Land, through which he forfeited his rights to possess any land. Therefore, his daughters wanted to make clear precisely what sin had caused his death, so that Moshe would know that Tzelafchad had not forfeited his rights to land.

But the daughters were faced with a problem: To disclose their fathers' sin "before Moshe, Elazar the priest, the (tribal) leaders and the entire congregation" (v. 2), would be disrespectful to their father. On the other hand, if they did not make known the cause of their father's death, their claim to land could not be substantiated.

So the daughters decided that the only way to preserve their father's honor, while at the same time making known the sin for which he died, was by a process of elimination: They would say which sins he was not party to, thus leading Moshe to the correct conclusion.

This is the meaning of Rashi's words, "They were coming to say that 'he died due to his own sin,'" i.e. to prove that the sin had not affected his connection with the Land. But they could not say which sin it was out of respect, so "they had to state that it was not the sin of the complainers, nor was he in Korach's assembly who incited [the people] against God," thus ruling out sins that were connected with the Land, by a process of elimination.**

"Rather," concluded the daughters, "he died only because of his own sin," which was nothing to do with the Land—but they could not openly state what that sin was, out of honor for their father.

R' AKIVA AND R' SHIMON

The reader will thus be left with the question: Which sin were the daughters referring to? This is not a matter of plain curiosity for the reader, but rather, a fact that needs to be understood to fully appreciate why this sin had no connection with the Land.

Therefore, Rashi continues, "R' Akiva says: 'He was the wood-gatherer,'" for this explains how Tzelafchad's sin was a purely personal matter which was in no way expressive of a dislike for the Land; and it meant that Tzelafchad would have passed away before the sin of the spies

and would thus not have been party to any public complaints about the Land. It also occurred before the giving of the Torah (see Rashi to 15:32), when a transgression was less grave in nature.

R' Shimon, however, argued that he was among those who were defiant, attempting to enter the Land after the sin of the spies, as this would have strengthened the daughters' claim to a greater extent. For it showed how their father had repented for the sin of not wanting to enter the Land and had expressed a strong *desire* to enter, ultimately sacrificing his very life for this goal (14:45).

R' Shimon preferred this interpretation, for he placed great importance on the *rationale* of scripture, to the extent that he maintained that (in certain cases) new laws can be extrapolated from a scriptural precept through extending its rationale to different scenarios (see *Gittin* 49b). Thus, in our case R' Shimon favored the interpretation that supported the daughters' argument for a portion in the Land with the *strongest*

🌀 The Last Word 🌀

When Tzelafchad's daughters told Moshe that their father was not part of Korach's rebellion (v. 3), which was a *personal* attack against Moshe, how could Moshe possibly judge their case impartially, knowing that Tzelafchad had been one of his own supporters? For this reason, Moshe was forced to bring their case directly "before God" (v. 5), to obtain an unbiased verdict.

This teaches us a powerful lesson about the human susceptibility to bias. Moshe was God's faithful servant whom He deemed worthy to transmit the Torah to all future generations. The only "vested interest" Moshe could have here was that the person involved did not participate in a rebellion that occurred 39 years previously. Nevertheless, this was considered sufficient grounds for Moshe not to desire to judge the case himself due to a person's natural tendency to bias!

Here we see, once again, the importance of always involving a third party when making personal decisions, so as to negate the influence of personal bias.

(Based on *Sicha* of 3rd Night Of Succos 5747)

**According to this understanding the "sin of the complainers" must have been the people's complaint after the sin of the spies—and not the "sin of the complainers" which followed Korach's demise (17:6), [see note on p. 222]—because this was a rebellion against entering the Land: "The children of Israel complained... 'If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this desert!' etc." (14:2). And Korach's congregation sinned against the Land, by complaining, "You have not brought us to a land flowing with milk and honey" (16:14).

אֲחֻסְנָתָהּ לְאִחֵי אָבוֹהָיָא יֵא וְאִם לִית אַחִין לְאָבוֹהָיָא וְתִתְנִין ית אֲחֻסְנָתָהּ לְקָרִיבָה דְקָרִיב לָהּ מִזְרָעֵיתָהּ וְיִרְתָּ יתָהּ וְתִהִי לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְגִזְרַת דִּין כְּמָא דִּי פְקִיד יִי ית מִשָּׁה: יב וְאָמַר יִי לְמִשָּׁה סָק לְמוֹרָא דְעֵבְרָאֵי הַדִּין וְחֲזִי ית אֲרַעָא דִּי יְהִבִית לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: יג וְתִחְזִי יתָהּ וְתִתְכַנְּשׁ לְעַמּוּד אַף אַתְּ כְּמָא דִּי אֲתַכְנִישׁ אַהֲרֹן אַחֻדָּ: יד כְּמָא דִּי סְרַבְתוּן עַל מִימְרֵי בְּמִדְבָרָא דְעָזַן בְּמִצּוֹת בְּנִשְׁתָּא לְקַדְשׁוֹתֵי בְּמִיָּא לְעִינְיָהוֹן אַנּוּן מִי מִצּוֹת רָקַם מִדְבָרָא דְעָזַן: טו וּמְלִיל מִשָּׁה קָדָם יִי לְמִימְרָ: טז יִמְנִי יִי אֱלֹהָא רוּחָא לְכָל בְּשָׂרָא גְבַר עַל בְּנִשְׁתָּא: יז דִּי יִפּוֹק קְדָמִיהוֹן וְדִי יַעֲלוּ קְדָמִיהוֹן וְדִי יִפְקִיחוּן וְדִי יַעֲלִיחוּן וְלֹא תִהִי בְּנִשְׁתָּא דִּין פְּעֻנָא דִּי לִית לְהוֹן רַעֲיָי יֵא וְאָמַר יִי לְמִשָּׁה דְבַר לְךָ ית יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בַּר נּוּן גְּבַר דִּי רוּחַ נְבוּאָה בַּהּ וְתִסְמוּךְ ית יְדָךְ עֲלוּהִי: יח וְתִקִּים יתָהּ לְקָדָם אֱלֵעֲזָר פְּהִנָּא

לוּ בֵּת וּנְתַתֶּם אֶת־נַחֲלָתוֹ לְאֶחָיו: י וְאִם־אֵין לוֹ אֶחָיִם וּנְתַתֶּם אֶת־נַחֲלָתוֹ לְאִחֵי אָבִיו: יא וְאִם־אֵין אֶחָיִם לְאָבִיו וּנְתַתֶּם אֶת־נַחֲלָתוֹ לְשָׂארוֹ הַקָּרֵב אֵלָיו מִמִּשְׁפַּחְתּוֹ וַיִּרֶשׁ אֹתָהּ וְהִיְתָה לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְחֶקֶת מִשְׁפָּט כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: פ יב וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה עֲלֶה אֶל־הָר הָעֵבְרָיִם הַזֶּה וּרְאֵה אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: יג וּרְאִיתָה אֹתָהּ וּנְאֻסַּפְתָּ אֶל־עַמּוּד גַּם־אֹתָהּ כַּאֲשֶׁר נְאֻסַּף אַהֲרֹן אַחֻדָּ: יד כַּאֲשֶׁר מְרִיתֶם פִּי בְּמִדְבַר־עָזַן בְּמִרִיבַת הָעֵדָה לְהַקְדִּישְׁנִי בַּמַּיִם לְעִינֵיהֶם הֵם מִי־מִרִיבַת קֹדֶשׁ מִדְבַר־עָזַן: טו וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־יְהוָה לֵאמֹר: טז יִפְקֹד יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הָרוּחַת לְכָל־בָּשָׂר אִישׁ עַל־הָעֵדָה: יז אֲשֶׁר־יֵצֵא לְפָנֵיהֶם וְאֲשֶׁר יָבֹא לְפָנֵיהֶם וְאֲשֶׁר יוֹצִיאֵם וְאֲשֶׁר יָבִיאֵם וְלֹא תִהְיֶה עֵדוּת יְהוָה כַּעֲזָן אֲשֶׁר אֵין־לָהֶם רַעְיָה: יח וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה קַח־לְךָ אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן־נּוּן אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־רוּחַ בּוֹ וְסַמַּכְתָּ אֶת־יָדְךָ עָלָיו:

רש"י

(טו) וידבר משה אל ה' וגו'. להודיע שזמן של לדיקים שכשנפטרו מן העולם מניחין לרכן ועוסקין בצרכי זכור²: לאמר. אמר לו השיבני אם אתה ממנה להם פרנס אם לאו³: (טז) יפקד ה'. כיון שמע משה שאמר לו המקום תן נחלת ללפחד לצנותיו אמר הגיע שעה שאתצע לרבי שיירשו בני את גדולתי. אמר לו הקצ"ה לא כך עלתה צמחשצב לפני, כדאי הוא יהושע ליטול שכר שמושו שלא מש מתוך האהל. וזכו שאמר⁴ שלמה נוטר תאנה ויכל פריה⁵: אלהי הרוחות. למען נאמר, אמר לפניו רש"ע גלוי וידוע לפניך דעתו של כל אחד ואחד ואינן דומין זה לזה, מנה עליכם מנהיג שיבא סובל כל אחד ואחד לפי דעתו⁶: (יז) אשר יצא לפנייהם. לא כדרך מלכי האומות שיושבים בצתיבה ומשלחין את חיילותיהם למלחמה, אלא כמו שעשיתי אני שנלחמתי בסיוחון ועוג, שנאמר אל תירא אותו⁷. וכדרך שעשה יהושע, שנאמר וילך יהושע אליו ויאמר לו הלנו אתה וגו'⁸. וכן צדוק הוא אומר כי הוא יולא וצא לפנייהם⁹, יולא בראש ונכנס בראש¹⁰: ואשר יוציאם. בזכותיו: ואשר יביאם. בזכותיו. דבר אחר ואשר יביאם שלא תעשה לו כדרך שאתה עושה לי, שאיני מכניסין לארץ: (יח) קח לך. קחנו דצדקים אשריך שזכית להכניג בניו של מקום: לך. את שצדוק לך את זה אתה מכיר¹¹: אשר רוח בו. כאשר שאלת שיוכל להלוך כנגד רוחו של כל אחד ואחד¹²: וסמכת את ירך עליו. תן לו

לצתו¹³, כזולן הוא אומר ונתתם, וצבת הוא אומר והעצרתם: (יח) לשארו הקרב אליו ממשפחתו. ואין משפחה קרויה אלא משפחה האצ"ב: (יז) עלה אל הר העברים. למען נסמכה לכאן, כיון שאמר הקצ"ה נתן תתן להם, אמר אותי טוב המקום להכניג, שמא הותרה הגזירה ואכנס לארץ. אמר לו הקצ"ה גזרתי במקומה עומדת¹⁴. דבר אחר כיון שנכנס משה לנחלת בני גד ובני ראובן שמח ואמר כמדומה שותר לי נדרי, משל למלך שגזר על בנו שלא יכנס לפתח פלטיין שלו נכנס לשער והוא אחריו, לחזר והוא אחריו, לטרקלין והוא אחריו, כיון שצא ליכנס לקיטון, א"ל בני מכאן ואלך אתה אסור ליכנס¹⁵: (יג) באשר נאסף אהרן אחיך. מכאן שנתארח משה למיתתו של אהרן¹⁶. דבר אחר אין אתה טוב ממנו¹⁷, על אשר לא קדשתם, ה' את קדשתם אותי עדיון לא הגיע זמנכם להפטר. ככל מקום שכתב מיתתם כתב סרחונם, לפי שנגזרה גזרה על דור המדבר למות במדבר בעון שלא האמינו, לכך בקש משה שיכתב סרחונו, שלא יאמרו אף הוא מן הממרים היה. משל לשתי נשים שלוקות צבית דין אחת קלקלה ואחת אכלה פגי שביעית וכו', אף כאן ככל מקום שהזכיר מיתתו הזכיר סרחונם, להודיע שלא היתה צדק אלא זו בלבד: (יד) הם מי מריבת קדש. הם לצדס אין צדקם עון אחר. דבר אחר הם שהמרו צמרה, הם היו שהמרו צים סוף, הם עלמם שהמרו במדבר לן:

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rationale, namely, that their father had been one of the "defiant ones" who lost his life out of love for the Land. R' Akiva, on the other hand, was famous for championing the inherent, virtuous nature of the Jewish

people, so he preferred the interpretation that Tzelafchad was the wood-gatherer, for this minimized the extent of the sin as much as possible, both in terms of its significance and its influence on others.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 8, p. 171ff.)

- ⁹ If he has no daughter, you should give his inheritance to his brothers.
- ¹⁰ If he has no brothers, you should give his inheritance to his father's brothers.
- ¹¹ If his father has no brothers, you should give his inheritance to the relative who is closest to him in his (father's) family, who will inherit it.

This will be a statutory law for the Jewish people, as God commanded Moshe.

🌀 YEHOSHUA IS APPOINTED AS MOSHE'S SUCCESSOR 🌀

27:12 **G**od said to Moshe, "Ascend here, up the Avarite mountains, and look at the Land which I have given to the children of Israel. ¹³ When you have seen it, you too will be gathered to your people, just as Aharon your brother was gathered, ¹⁴ because you disobeyed My command in the desert of Tzin during the communal dispute (when you were supposed) to sanctify Me with the water in their presence. They were the "waters of strife" at Kadaish, in the desert of Tzin."

¹⁵ Moshe spoke to God, saying: ¹⁶ "O God (Who knows) everybody's thoughts! God must appoint somebody (capable) over the congregation, ¹⁷ (somebody) who will (courageously) go out (to war) ahead of them and return in front of them; (somebody whose merit is sufficient) to lead them out (to war) and bring them back (safely), so that God's congregation will not be like sheep that have no shepherd."

¹⁸ God said to Moshe, "Persuade your (own loyal servant) Yehoshua the son of Nun (to accept the leadership, for) he is a strong-willed person. Lay your hand upon him, ¹⁹ and present him to Elazar the

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Moshe ask for a successor to be appointed at this point in time? (v. 16)

RASHI: When Moshe heard God tell him to give Tzelaftchad's inheritance to his daughters, he said, "It is time to ask for my own needs, that my son should inherit my high position."

God said to him, "That thought did not arise in My mind! Yehoshua deserves to be rewarded for his service, because he "would not depart from the tent" (*Shemos* 33:11). This is the meaning of what Shlomo said, "The one who guards the fig tree eats its fruit" (*Prov.* 27:18).

MIDRASH: God said to Moshe, "The one who guards the fig tree eats its fruit." Your sons sat around and did not busy themselves with Torah study. But Yehoshua served you with devotion and showed you much respect. Morning and evening he was the one who put up

the benches in your academy and spread the carpets over them. He served you to the best of his ability, so it is appropriate that he should serve the Jewish people and not lose his reward (*Bamidbar Rabah* 21:14).

MEGALEH AMUKOS: Moshe was surely aware that his sons were not as learned as Yehoshua, so why did he ask that his son should be his successor?

Moshe was actually requesting that the job of leadership should be divided into two. Moshe's son would inherit the position of king and be the military leader. But since Yehoshua excelled in the area of Torah study, he would be appointed as the leader in Torah matters.

But God replied that there can only be one leader, in the spirit of the saying that "two kings cannot wear the same crown" (*Chullin* 60b; *Megaleh Amukos* par. 1, cited in *Yalkut Re'uvaini*).

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🌀 MOSHE'S REQUEST (v. 16)

In his commentary to verse 16, *Rashi* explains, based on the **Midrash**, that when Moshe requested from God to "appoint somebody (capable) over the congregation," he had his own son in mind. God, however, rejected Moshe's suggestion on the basis that Moshe's sons "sat around and did not busy themselves with Torah study."

Megaleh Amukos explains that Moshe was clearly aware of this fact, and was not requesting that God appoint his son *instead* of Yehoshua, but rather, that his son would inherit the position of military leader and Yehoshua would be appointed as the leader in Torah matters.

However, this leaves us with a further question: Why did God reject the suggestion of Moshe? Certainly, "two kings cannot use the same crown"—but two crowns could be given, allotting each leader with his own authority. And, this is precisely what *did* occur in later generations, as *Rambam* writes:

"The wisest of all of them [the Sanhedrin] is appointed as the head... this position was termed by the Sages as 'nasi'... and this person has the equivalent position of Moshe Rabeinu..." (*Laws of Sanhedrin*, end of chap. 18). Here we see that the *nasi* acted as leader in all matters of Torah (*Sanhedrin*) and he was considered to be the successor of Moshe. Yet, at the very same time, there was also a Jewish king who dealt with military matters, and their roles did not overlap, as the law states: "A Jewish king is not permitted to sit on the Sanhedrin" (*ibid.* 2:4).

So, what would be problematic with Moshe's son becoming king, and Yehoshua becoming *nasi*?

THE EXPLANATION

The key distinction between a king and a *nasi* is that a king is a ruler, whereas a *nasi* is largely a *representative*. The king is the absolute monarch, as the *Midrash* states, "the only one above him is Hashem his God" (*Sifra, Vayikra* 4:22); whereas the *nasi* represents the *Sanhedrin* but

וְלִקְדָם כָּל כְּנִשְׁתָּא וּתְפַקֵּד יְתֵהּ לְעִינֵיהוֹן:
 כ וְתִתֵּן מִזִּינָה עֲלוּהֵי בְּדִיל דִּי יִקְבְּלוּן מִנֵּה כָּל
 כְּנִשְׁתָּא דְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: כא וְלִקְדָם אֶלְעִזֵּר
 כַּהֲנָא יְקוּם וַיִּשְׁאַל לֵה בְּדִין אֹרִיָא קָדָם יִי עַל
 מִימְרֵהּ יְהוֹן נְפִקוּן וְעַל מִימְרֵהּ יְהוֹן עֲלִין הוּא
 וְכָל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמָּה וְכָל כְּנִשְׁתָּא: כב וְעַבְד
 מֹשֶׁה כְּמָא דִּי פְקִיד יִי יְתֵה וְדַבֵּר יֵת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ
 וְאַקְוִימָה קָדָם אֶלְעִזֵּר כַּהֲנָא וְקָדָם כָּל כְּנִשְׁתָּא:
 כג וּסְמָךְ יֵת יְדוּהֵי עֲלוּהֵי וּפְקִידָה כְּמָא דִּי
 מְלִיל יִי בִּידָא דְמִשְׁה: א וּמְלִיל יִי עִם מֹשֶׁה
 לְמִימְרֵהּ: כד פְּקִיד יֵת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְתִימַר לְהוֹן
 יֵת קָרְבָנֵי לְחַם סְדוּר לְקָרְבָנֵי לְאַתְקַבְּלָא
 בְּרַעְוָא תִּתְרוּן לְקָרְבָא קָדָמֵי בְּזִמְנָה: ו וְתִימַר

יֵת וְהַעֲמִדְתָּ אֹתוֹ לְפָנָי אֶלְעִזֵּר הַכֹּהֵן וְלִפְנֵי כָּל־הָעֵדָה וְצִוִּיתָהּ
 אֹתוֹ לְעִינֵיהֶם: כ וְנָתַתָּה מִהוֹדֶךָ עָלָיו לְמַעַן יִשְׁמְעוּ כָּל־עַדְת
 בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: כא וְלִפְנֵי אֶלְעִזֵּר הַכֹּהֵן יַעֲמֹד וְשָׁאֵל לוֹ בְּמִשְׁפַּט
 הָאוּרִים לְפָנָי יִהְיֶה עַל־פְּיוֹ וְעַל־פְּיוֹ יִבְאוּ הוּא וְכָל־
 בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אִתּוֹ וְכָל־הָעֵדָה: כב וַיַּעַשׂ מֹשֶׁה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה
 אֹתוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וַיַּעֲמִדְהוּ לְפָנָי אֶלְעִזֵּר הַכֹּהֵן וְלִפְנֵי
 כָּל־הָעֵדָה: כג וַיִּסְמְךְ אֶת־יָדָיו עָלָיו וַיְצַוְהוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה
 בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה: פ [המישי] כח א וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר: כצ וְצוּ
 אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם אֶת־קָרְבָנֵי לְחֻמֵי לְאִשֵּׁי רִיחַ

דש"י

לקחו צדכרים והודיעו מתן שכר פרנסי ישראל לעולם הבא¹: (כג) ויסמך את ידיו. צעין יפה יותר ויותר ממה שנלטובה. שהקצ"ה אמר לו וסמכת את ידך, והוא עשה בשתי ידיו, ועשאו ככלי מלא וגדוש ומלאו חכמתו צעין יפה²: כאשר דבר ה'. אף לענין הכווד נתן מהוודו עליו: (כד) צו את בני ישראל. מה אמור למעלה ופקוד ה'. אמר לו הקצ"ה עד שאתה מלוי על בני, לזכור את בני עלי. משל לזכור מלך שהיתה נפטרת מן העולם והיתה מפקדת לזכור על זכיה וכו', כדאיתא בספרי³: קרבני. זה הדס⁴: לחמי. אלו אימורין, וכן הוא אומר והקטירם ככהן המזבח לחם אשכ⁵: לאשי. הנתנין לאשי מזבחי:

מתורגמן שידרוש בחיך, שלא יאמרו עליו, לא היה לו להרים ראש צימי משה¹: (יט) וצויתה אתו. על ישראל, דע שטרחנין הם סרצנים הם, על מנת שתקבל עליך: (כ) ונתתה מהודך עליו. זה קירון עור פניס: מהודך. ולא כל הודך נמלנו למדין פני משה כחמה פני יחושע כלבנה²: למען ישמעו כל עדת בני ישראל. שיכיו וכוונתו צו כבוד ויראה כדרך שנוהגין בך: (כח) ולפני אלעזר הכהן יעמוד. הרי שאלתך שאלת שאין הכבוד הזה אז ("א נוטל) מזית אצבך, שאף יחושע יבא לרזך לאלעזר²: ושאל לו. כשיטרכך ללאת למלחמה: על פיו. של אלעזר: וכל העדה. סנהדרין³: (כצ) ויקח את יהושע.

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does not rule it, as the laws are issued via majority vote. Consequently, the leadership of the nasi poses no threat to the king.

However, in the case of Yehoshua there was an exception to this rule. For in his generation, Yehoshua took full, *personal* responsibility for all matters of Torah. This fact is evident from the "chain of Torah transmission" that Rambam lists in the introduction to his *Mishneh Torah* which indicates how Moshe had transmitted the entire Torah to Yehoshua personally.*

Thus Yehoshua was the *absolute* authority on all matters of Torah**, unlike subsequent leaders who merely headed the supreme court (as Rambam describes how in each generation the Torah was transmitted by the primary sage "and his court."). Consequently, it was impossible for Yehoshua's role as sole Torah authority and the role of king to be fulfilled by two people, as both would be in a position of absolute power. Therefore, God replied to Moshe that it is impossible to have two absolute leaders for Torah and military matters.

Two Distinct Roles

We might argue, however, that the Torah leadership and military leadership are ultimately two, totally separate tasks. One leads in purely

spiritual matters and the other is an entirely physical type of leadership, so it is conceivable that each could have its own absolute authority, as there is no overlap.

However, in truth, the two forms of leadership are inseparable as they are two expressions of the same goal. Rambam writes about the role of a Jewish king: "His purpose and objective should be to promote the true faith, to fill the world with righteousness, to crush the might of the wicked and to fight the wars of God. For a king is only appointed in the very first instance for the sake of law and war" (*Laws of Kings*, end of chap. 4).

Here, we see that the physical leadership is not separate from spiritual matters, but that rather, the *entire purpose* of establishing a monarchy is to establish a force capable of leading the world to follow the ways of the Torah. Thus, the king and nasi actually fulfill two halves of the same process: The Sanhedrin issues the laws and the king aims to enforce them. So, clearly, it would be impossible for both leaders to be in a position of *absolute* power, since their purpose is a unified one. Consequently, in a case where the nasi was given absolute power over matters of Torah and not merely the representative leadership of the Sanhedrin—as it was with Yehoshua—the role of king and nasi *must* be fulfilled by just one person.

*Even though "Moshe taught the entire Oral Law in his court of 70 elders, and Elazar, Pinchas and Yehoshua received it from Moshe" (Rambam *ibid.*), the fact that Yehoshua alone transmitted the Torah to the generation that followed him (*ibid.*) indicates that Moshe had transmitted the Torah to Yehoshua in a way that he was personally responsible for it.

**And this explains why Yehoshua was never anointed. For, a Torah leadership is not established by anointing, but rather, by *smicha*, where the previous leader places his hands on his successor. Since Yehoshua was primarily a leader in matters of Torah, it was therefore more appropriate that he should take his new position through *smicha* (see v. 23). This also explains why the *mitzvah* of anointing a king is not mentioned explicitly in the Torah. For, the ideal situation is that one person should be both king and nasi. Thus, the need to anoint a king only arose later, out of necessity.

priest and the entire congregation. Instruct him in their presence.²⁰ Grant him some of the glow (that is on your face), so that the entire congregation of the children of Israel will listen (to him, just as they listen to you).²¹ When Yehoshua needs to go to war, he should stand in front of Elazar the priest and ask him to clarify the law through the Urim*, before God. They will go (out to war only by) the word (of Elazar) and they will come back (from war) by his word—both he together with all Israel, and the entire congregation (of the Sanhedrin).”

²² Moshe did what God had commanded him. He took Yehoshua and presented him to Elazar the priest and the entire congregation.²³ He laid his hands upon him and instructed him, in accordance with what God had said to Moshe.

🌀 THE COMMUNAL OFFERINGS 🌀

28 **FIFTH READING** **G**od spoke to: Moshe, saying:² Command the children of Israel. Say to them:

- You should be careful to offer to Me (each communal offering) in its appointed time, including: (The blood of) My offering (and the parts of the animal burnt on the Altar as) My food on My fires—a pleasant aroma for Me.

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Moshe, however, thought that Yehoshua would be incapable of bearing the burden of Torah leadership singlehandedly, because Yehoshua's intensity was only “like the moon,” unlike that of Moshe which was, “like the sun” (Rashi to v. 20). Therefore, his suggestion was that Yehoshua should be a *nasi* that represents the other sages, whereas Moshe's son would take on the physical leadership.

A ROLE MODEL FOR MASHIACH'S LEADERSHIP

Based on the above, we can gain some insight into the dual role of Mashiach's leadership over the Jewish people.

On the one hand Rambam stresses that Mashiach, “will compel all the Jewish people to walk in [the way of Torah] strengthen its fences, and he will fight the wars of God... he builds the Beis Hamikdash [Holy Temple] in its place and he gathers in the dispersed ones of Israel... He will then perfect the entire world...” (Laws of Kings 11:4). All of these activities are clearly the work of a king whose job is, “to promote the true religion, to

fill the world with righteousness, to crush the might of the wicked and to fight the wars of God” (ibid, end of ch. 4).

However, Rambam also mentions qualities of Mashiach that characterize a *nasi*: “That King who will arise from the seed of David will be a greater genius than Shlomo, and a great prophet... therefore he will teach all the people and show them the way of God, and all the nations will come to hear him.” (Laws of Teshuvah 9:2). As a result of this, in the Messianic Era: “The occupation of the entire world will be solely to know God. The Jews will therefore be great sages and know the hidden matters, and will attain an understanding of their Creator to the full extent of human potential...” (end of Laws of Kings).

Thus, Rambam rules that Mashiach will be the combination of both king and *nasi* in one person, just like Moshe and Yehoshua.**

TWO PHASES IN THE LEADERSHIP OF MASHIACH

Of Mashiach's two roles, the most revolutionary is that of king. For, “to promote the true religion, to fill the world with righteousness,” to the extent that the entire world lives with an awareness of God is an unprecedented innovation.

The role of *nasi*, on the other hand, is specific to the teaching of Torah. And while Mashiach will teach phenomenal, new insights into Torah, these are actually deeper insights of the original Torah that was given at Mount Sinai. Thus, the role of king is more revolutionary than that of *nasi*.

Nevertheless, there is a distinctive quality that Mashiach's role of *nasi* possesses over that of king. Namely, that eventually Mashiach's role as king will end. For when the world is united in serving God it will no longer be necessary “to promote the true religion, to fill the world with righteousness, to crush the might of the wicked and to fight the wars of God.” However, the task of expounding the secrets of Torah, the role of *nasi*, will endure forever.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 23, p.190ff; vol. 35, p.206ff.)

🌀 The Last Word 🌀

“MY FOOD ON MY FIRES...” (v. 1)

God describes the daily sacrifices as “My food,” a metaphor that suggests that the sacrifices actually “sustain” the Almighty, so to speak. So, being that the prayers were instituted as a direct compensation for the absence of the sacrifices (Brachos 26b), it follows that every one of our daily prayers is of tremendous significance to God, to the extent that He describes them as His very “sustenance” (“My food”).

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 13, pp. 103-4)

*See Shemos 28:30. **Out of this discussion comes a halachic peculiarity. It was explained above that when a person is both king and *nasi*, he is not anointed. Thus, it appears that Mashiach too will not be anointed. Such a conclusion is difficult to understand, as the very word “Mashiach” means “anointed one,” but perhaps it could be argued that the word *Mashiach* comes from an entirely different etymological root, from the word **למשה** meaning “greatness”—See *Zevachim* 91a.

להיון דיון קרבנא די תקרבון קדם יי אמרין
 בני שגא שלמין תרין ליומא עלתא תדירא:
 ד ית אמרא חד תעבד בצפרא וית אמרא
 תנינא תעבד בין שמשוא: ה וחד מן עשרא
 בתלת סאין סלתא למנחתא דפילא במשה
 כתישא רבעות הינא: ו עלתא תדירא
 דאתעבידא בטורא דסיני לאתקבלא ברעוא
 קרבנא קדם יי: ז ונספה רבעות הינא לאמרא
 חד בקודשא יתנסף נסוף דחמר עתיק קדם
 יי: ה וית אמרא תנינא תעבד בין שמשוא
 כמנחת צפרא וכןספה תעבד קרבן דמתקבל
 ברעוא קדם יי: ט וביומא דשבתא תרין
 אמרין בני שגא שלמין ותרין עשרונין סלתא
 דמנחתא דפילא במשה ונספה: י עלת
 שבתא דתתעבד בשבתא על עלתא תדירא
 ונספה: יא וברישי ירחיכון תקרבון עלתא
 קדם יי תורין בני תורי תרין ודכר חד אמרין
 בני שגא שבגא שלמין: יב ותלתא עשרונין
 סלתא מנחתא דפילא במשה לתורא חד
 ותרין עשרונין סלתא מנחתא דפילא במשה
 לדכרא חד: יג ועשרונא עשרונא סלתא
 מנחתא דפילא במשה לאמרא חד עלתא
 לאתקבלא ברעוא קרבנא קדם יי:
 יד ונספיהון פלגות הינא יהי לתורא ותלתות
 הינא לדכרא ורבעות הינא לאמרא חמרא

ניחתי תשמרו להקריב לי במועדו: ג ואמרת להם זה האשה
 אשר תקריבו ליהוה כבשים בני־שנה תמימם שנים ליום
 עלה תמיד: ד את־הכבש אחד תעשה בבקר ואת הכבש
 השני תעשה בין הערבים: ה ועשירית האיפה סלת למנחה
 בלולה בשמן כתית רביעת ההין: ו עלת תמיד העשיה בהר
 סיני לריח ניחח אשה ליהוה: ז ונסכו רביעת ההין לכבש
 האחד בקדש הסף נסך שכר ליהוה: ח ואת הכבש השני
 תעשה בין הערבים כמנחת הבקר וכןסכו תעשה אשה ריח
 ניחח ליהוה: ט וביום השבת שני־כבשים בני־שנה תמימם
 ושני עשרונים סלת מנחה בלולה בשמן ונסכו: י עלת שבת
 בשבתו על־עלת התמיד ונספה: פ יא ובראשי חדשיכם
 תקריבו עלה ליהוה פרים בני־בקר שנים ואיל אחד כבשים
 בני־שנה שבעה תמימם: יב ושלשה עשרונים סלת מנחה
 בלולה בשמן לפר האחד ושני עשרונים סלת מנחה בלולה
 בשמן לאיל האחד: יג ועשרן עשרון סלת מנחה בלולה
 בשמן לכבש האחד עלה ריח ניחח אשה ליהוה: יד ונספיהם

כ"ט

הכבש אחד. חף על פי שכבר נאמר צפרשת ואתה תלוח וזה אשר תעשה וגו', היא היכה אזכרה לימי המלוואים, וכאן לוח לדורות: (ב) סלת למנחה. מנחת נכסים: (ו) העשיה בהר סיני. כמות שנעשו זימי המלוואים. דבר אחר העשויה דבר סיני, הקיש עולת תמיד לעולת הר סיני

תשמרו. שיכו כהנים ולוים וישראלים עומדין על גביו מכאן למדו ותקנו מעמדות! במועדו. בכל יום הוא מועד התמידים:² (ג) ואמרת להם. אזכרה לזית דין:³ שנים ליום. כפשוטו, ועיקרו צא ללמד שיכו נשחטין כנגד היום, תמיד של שחר צמערז ושל צון הערבים צמזרחן של טבעות:⁴ (ד) את

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Sparks of Chasidus

CONTINUAL OFFERINGS AND OCCASIONAL OFFERINGS

Through the sacrifices, the *Shechinah* (Divine Presence) entered the Holy Temple, from which it spread throughout the entire world. It follows then, that each different type of sacrifice was responsible for a different aspect of Godly revelation, and this was reflected by the nature of the sacrifice and the mode in which it was offered.

The sacrifices which are discussed here in the current passage could be broadly divided into two categories: a.) *Continual Offerings*—the two offerings which are offered on a daily basis, each morning

and afternoon (v. 3-8). b.) *Occasional Offerings*—brought on a special occasion, such as *Shabbos*, *Rosh Chodesh* (New Month) or a festival (v. 8ff.).

The fact that the occasional offerings were bound by a specific time suggests that, likewise, the spiritual revelation which they brought also possessed a certain limitation. The continual offerings, however, were offered every single day, suggesting that they brought a totally unlimited form of spiritual revelation that could not be “contained” by any particular time or moment.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, p. 189)

THE CONTINUAL OFFERINGS

³ Say to the (court): This is the fire-offering which you should (ensure is) offered to God:

- Two perfect (unblemished) lambs in their first year each day, as a daily burnt-offering. ⁴ You should offer one lamb in the morning, and you should offer the other lamb in the afternoon.
- ⁵ (Offer) a tenth of an eifah* of fine flour as a meal-offering, mixed with a quarter of a hin** of crushed (olive) oil.

⁶ (It is) a daily burnt-offering, (like) the one offered up at Mount Sinai—a pleasant aroma (for God), a fire-offering to God.

- ⁷ Its accompanying libation should be a quarter of a hin (of wine) for each lamb, to be poured on the holy (Altar) as a libation of strong wine to God.
- ⁸ You should offer up the second lamb in the afternoon. You should offer it up with the same meal-offering and libation as the morning (offering). It is) a fire-offering with a pleasant aroma to God.

THE ADDITIONAL OFFERING OF SHABBOS

⁹ On the day of Shabbos, (offer):

- Two perfect (unblemished) lambs in their first year.
- Two tenths (of an eifah of) fine flour as a meal-offering, mixed with oil.
- Its accompanying (wine) libation.
- ¹⁰ The burnt-offering of Shabbos (may only be offered) on its (appropriate) Shabbos; (it may not be compensated for on a later Shabbos).
- (All of the above is to be offered) in addition to the daily burnt-offering and its accompanying libation.

THE COMMUNAL ROSH CHODESH OFFERING

¹¹ At the beginning of every month, you should offer:

- A burnt-offering to God: two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year, (all) perfect (and unblemished).
- ¹² Three tenths (of an eifah) of fine flour mixed with oil as a meal-offering for each bull, two tenths (of an eifah) of fine flour mixed with oil as a meal-offering for each ram, ¹³ and one tenth (of an eifah) of fine flour mixed with oil as a meal-offering for each lamb.

(It is) a burnt-offering with a pleasant aroma (for God), a fire-offering to God.

— כ"ט —

שצצת זו שומע אני יקריב שחיס לשצת הבאה, תלמוד לומר בשצתו, מגיד שחיס עזר יומו צטל קרבנו: על עלת התמיד. אלו מוספין, לצד אותן שני כצשים של עולת התמיד. ומגיד שאין קרבין אלא צין שני התמידין,⁷ וכן צכל המוספין נאמר על עולת התמיד לתלמוד זה: (יב) ושלושה עשרונים.

אותה שנתקרב להפני מתן תורה שכתוב זה וישם צאגנות⁵ מלמד שטעונה כלי: (ז) ונסכו. יין: בקדש הסך. על המזבח יתנסכו: נסך שבר. יין המשכר פרט ליין מגתו:⁶ (ח) ריח ניחה. נחת רוח לפני שאמרתי ונטעה רלוני:⁷ (י) עלת שבת בשבתו. ולא עולת שצת זו בשצת אחרת, הרי שלא הקריב

*Equivalent to 2.48 liters or 5.26 U.S. pints. **Equivalent to 1.04 liters or 2.19 U.S. pints.

דא עלת ריש ירחא באתחדתותה פן לכל רישי ירחי שתא: טו וצפיר בר עזי חד לחטאתא קדם יי על עלתא תדירא ותעבד ונספה: טז ובירחא קדמאה בארבעת עשרא יומא לירחא פסקא קדם יי: יז ובחמשת עשרא יומא לירחא קדמאה פסקא קדמיש פסיר ותאכל: יח ביומא קדמאה מערע קדיש כל עבדת פלחן לא תעבדון: יט ותקרבו קרבנא עלתא קדם יי תורין בני תורי תרין ודבר חד ושבעא אמרין בני שנא שלמין יהון לבון: כ ומנחתהון סלתא דפילא במשח תלתא עשרונין לתורא ותרין עשרונין לדקרא תעבדון: כא עשרונא עשרונא תעבד לאמרא חד פן לשבעא אמרין: כב וצפירא דחטאתא חד לכפרא עליבון: כג בר מעלת צפרא דהיא עלת תדירא תעבדון ית אליו: כד פאליו תעבדון ליומא שבעא יומין לחם קרבן דמתקבל ברעוא קדם יי על עלתא תדירא ותעבד ונספה: כה וביומא שביעאה מערע קדיש יהי לבון כל עבדת פלחן לא תעבדון: כו וביומא דבפוריא בקרוביבון מנחתא חדתא קדם יי בעצרתיובון מערע קדיש יהי לבון כל עבדת פלחן לא תעבדון: כז ותקרבו עלתא לאתקבלא ברעוא קדם יי תורין בני תורי תרין ודבר חד ושבעא אמרין בני שנא: כח ומנחתהון סלתא דפילא במשח תלתא עשרונין לתורא חד תרין עשרונין

חצי ההין יהיה לפר ושלישת ההין לאיל ורביעת ההין לכבש יין זאת עלת החדש בחדשו לחדשי השנה: טו ושעיר עזים אחד לחטאת ליהוה על-עלת התמיד יעשה ונסכו: ס [וששין] טז ובחדש הראשון בארבעה עשר יום לחדש פסח ליהוה: יז ובחמשה עשר יום לחדש הזה חג שבועת ימים מצות יאכל: יח ביום הראשון מקרא-קדש כל-מלאכת עבודה לא תעשו: יט והקרבתם אשה עלה ליהוה פרים בני-בקר שנים ואיל אחד ושבעה כבשים בני שנה תמימם יהיו לכם: כ ומנחתם סלת בלולה בשמן שלשה עשרונים לפר ושני עשרונים לאיל תעשו: כא עשרון עשרון תעשה לכבש האחד לשבעת הכבשים: כב ושעיר חטאת אחד לכפר עליכם: כג מלבד עלת הבקר אשר לעלת התמיד תעשו את-אלה: כד פאלה תעשו ליום שבועת ימים לחם יהי-ניתח ליהוה על-עולת התמיד יעשה ונסכו: כה וביום השביעי מקרא-קדש יהיה לכם כל-מלאכת עבודה לא תעשו: ס כו וביום הבכורים בהקריבכם מנחה חדשה ליהוה בשבעתיכם מקרא-קדש יהיה לכם כל-מלאכת עבודה לא תעשו: כז והקרבתם עולה לרית ניתח ליהוה פרים בני-בקר שנים איל אחד ושבעה כבשים בני שנה: כח ומנחתם סלת

כח"י

כמשפט נסכי פר, שכן הן קלובין צפרשת נסכים: (יד) זאת עלת חדש בחדשו. שאם עבר יומו בטל קרבנו ושוב אין לו תשלומין? (טו) ושעיר עזים וגו'. כל שעירי המוספין צאין לכפר על טומאת מקדש וקדשיו, הכל כמו שמפורש צמס' שזעות. ושחנה שעיר ראש חדש שנאמר צו לה', ללמדך

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The Last Word

"IN THE FIRST MONTH..."

Pesach ushers in sunny and warm springtime. In Nature, spring brings forth to the surface the natural forces which were hidden during the winter, and out come the blossoms, which turn into ripe fruits later on.

"Applying this idea to the human element, there can be a state of 'winter,' of apparent unproductivity in the life of a person. But no Jew

or Jewess should consider themselves and certainly should not be considered by others as having terminated their usefulness, even though a long time of fruitlessness has elapsed. Given the proper inspiration and stimulus, the state of 'winter' can easily and suddenly be changed into 'spring' and blossom time, which eventually will ripen into good fruits for God and man."

(Excerpt from a Letter written by the Rebbe on the 1st of Iyar 5711)

- ¹⁴ The accompanying libations are: A half of a hin (of wine) for each bull, a third of a hin for each ram, and a quarter of a hin for each lamb.
- This burnt-offering of each new month (must be offered) on its (appropriate) month throughout the months of the year; (there is no possibility of compensation).
- ¹⁵ One young male goat should be offered up as a sin-offering to God (to atone for your inadvertent ritual contamination of the Temple).
- (All of the above is to be offered) in addition to the daily burnt-offering and its libation.

🕍 THE COMMUNAL PESACH OFFERINGS 🕍

SIXTH
READING

- ¹⁶ In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, (bring) a Pesach-offering to God.
- ¹⁷ On the fifteenth day of this month, a festival (begins). You must eat matzos for seven days.
- ¹⁸ The first day is a holy celebration:
 - You may not perform any manual work.
 - ¹⁹ You should offer a fire-offering, a burnt-offering to God: Two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year. They should be perfect (and unblemished) for you.
 - ²⁰ Their accompanying meal-offerings (should be from) fine flour mixed with oil. You should offer three tenths (of an eifah of flour) for each bull, two tenths for the ram, ²¹ and you should offer one tenth for each lamb, for all seven lambs.
 - ²² One young male goat (should be brought) as a sin-offering, to atone for your (inadvertent ritual contamination of the Temple).
 - ²³ You should offer these up in addition to the morning burnt-offering which is offered as a daily burnt-offering.
- ²⁴ You should offer the same as this every day for seven days.

It is a fire-offering, “food” for the Altar, a pleasant aroma for God.

- You should offer all this in addition to the daily burnt-offering and its accompanying libation.
- ²⁵ The seventh day will be a holy celebration for you. You may not perform any manual work.

🕍 THE COMMUNAL SHAVU'OS OFFERINGS 🕍

²⁶ On your festival of Shavu'os, the “Day of the Firstfruits,” when you offer a meal-offering to God from the new (crop of wheat), you will have a holy celebration:

- You may not perform any manual work.
- ²⁷ You should offer a burnt-offering as a pleasant aroma to God: Two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year.

רש"י

המותרת בחולו של מועד אסורה ציוס עוב: (יט) פרים. כנגד אצרהס, שגאמר ואל הבקר רץ אצרהס: אילים. כנגד חילו של יאחק: בבשים. כנגד יעקב, והכשבים הפריד יעקב. ציסודו של רבי משה הדרשן ראיתי זאת: (כד) באלה תעשו ליום. שלא יהיו פוחתין והולכין כפרי החג? (כו) וביום הבבורים. חג השבועות קרוי צבורי קליז חטים על שם שתי הלחם, שהם

שמכפר על שאין צו ידיעה לא צתחילה ולא צסוף, שאין מכיר צחטא אלא הקצ"ה צלצד, ושאר השעירין למדין ממנו. ומדרשו צאגדה אמר הקצ"ה, הציאו כפרה עלי על שמעטתי את הירח: על עלת התמיד יעשה. כל הקרבן הזה: ונסכו. אין ונסכו מוסב על השעיר, שאין נסכים לחטאה: (יח) כל מלאכת עבודה. אפילו מלאכה האריכה לכם, כגון דבר האצד

לְדַבְּרָא חַד: כט עֲשׂוּנָא עֲשׂוּנָא לְאִמְרָא חַד
 לְשִׁבְעָא אִמְרִין: ל צִפִּיר בַּר עֲזִין חַד לְכַפְרָא
 עֲלִיכוּן: לא בַּר מַעְלַת תְּדִירָא וּמִנְחָתָהּ
 תַּעֲבִדוּן שְׁלָמִין יְהוּן לְכוּן וְנִסְכֵּיהוּן:
 א וּבִירְחָא שְׁבִיעָא בְּחַד לִירְחָא מְעַרְע
 קִדִּישׁ יְהִי לְכוּן כָּל עֲבִידַת פְּלַחַן לֹא תַעֲבִדוּן
 יוֹם וּבִבְבָא יְהִי לְכוּן: ג וְתַעֲבִדוּן עֲלֵתָא
 לְאִתְקַבְּלָא בְּרַעְוָא קָדָם יי תוֹר בַּר תוֹרֵי חַד
 דְּכַר חַד אִמְרִין בְּנֵי שְׁנָא שְׁבִיעָא שְׁלָמִין:
 ג וּמִנְחָתָהוּן סְלֵתָא דְפִילָא בְּמִשַׁח תִּלְתָּא
 עֲשׂוּנָא לְתוֹרָא תְּרִין עֲשׂוּנָא לְדַבְּרָא:
 ד וְעֲשׂוּנָא חַד לְאִמְרָא חַד לְשִׁבְעָא אִמְרִין:
 ה וְצִפִּיר בַּר עֲזִין חַד לְחַטָּאתָא לְכַפְרָא
 עֲלִיכוּן: ו בַּר מַעְלַת יְרְחָא וּמִנְחָתָהּ וְעֵלַת
 תְּדִירָא וּמִנְחָתָהּ וְנִסְכֵּיהוּן כְּדָתוּי לְהוּן
 לְאִתְקַבְּלָא בְּרַעְוָא קָדָם יי: ז וּבְעִשְׂרָא
 לִירְחָא שְׁבִיעָא תְּרִין מְעַרְע קִדִּישׁ יְהִי לְכוּן
 וְתַעֲנֹן יַת נַפְשֵׁיכוּן כָּל עֲבִידַתָּא לֹא
 תַעֲבִדוּן: ח וְתִקְרְבוּן עֲלֵתָא קָדָם יי לְאִתְקַבְּלָא
 בְּרַעְוָא תוֹר בַּר תוֹרֵי חַד דְּכַר חַד אִמְרִין בְּנֵי
 שְׁנָא שְׁבִיעָא שְׁלָמִין יְהוּן לְכוּן: ט וּמִנְחָתָהוּן
 סְלֵתָא דְפִילָא בְּמִשַׁח תִּלְתָּא עֲשׂוּנָא לְתוֹרָא
 תְּרִין עֲשׂוּנָא לְדַבְּרָא חַד: י עֲשׂוּנָא
 עֲשׂוּנָא לְאִמְרָא חַד לְשִׁבְעָא אִמְרִין:
 יא צִפִּיר בַּר עֲזִין חַד חַטָּאתָא בַּר חַטָּאתָא
 דְּכַפּוּרָא וְעֵלַת תְּדִירָא וּמִנְחָתָהּ וְנִסְכֵּיהוּן:

בְּלוּלָה בְּשִׁמְן שְׁלֹשָׁה עֶשְׂרִים לְפָר הָאֶחָד שְׁנַי עֶשְׂרִים
 לְאֵיל הָאֶחָד: כט עֲשָׂרוֹן עֲשָׂרוֹן לְכַבֵּשׁ הָאֶחָד לְשִׁבְעַת
 הַכֹּבָשִׁים: ל שְׁעִיר עֲזִים אֶחָד לְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיכֶם: לא מִלְבָּד עֲלֵת
 הַתְּמִיד וּמִנְחָתוֹ תַעֲשׂוּ תְּמִימִם יְהִיוּ-לְכֶם וְנִסְפִיֵהֶם: פ
 כט « וּבַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ מִקְרָא-קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לְכֶם
 כָּל-מִלְאכַת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ יוֹם תְּרוּעָה יִהְיֶה לְכֶם:
 ג וְעִשְׂיֹתֶם עֲלֶיהָ לְרִיחַ נִיחֹחַ לַיהוָה פֶּר בֶּן-בֶּקָר אֶחָד אֵיל אֶחָד
 כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי-שָׁנָה שְׁבַע־הַתְּמִימִם: ג וּמִנְחָתָם סֵלֶת בְּלוּלָה
 בְּשִׁמְן שְׁלֹשָׁה עֶשְׂרִים לְפָר שְׁנַי עֶשְׂרִים לְאֵיל: ד וְעֲשָׂרוֹן
 אֶחָד לְכַבֵּשׁ הָאֶחָד לְשִׁבְעַת הַכֹּבָשִׁים: ה וְשְׁעִיר-עֲזִים אֶחָד
 חַטָּאת לְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיכֶם: ו מִלְבָּד עֲלֵת הַחֹדֶשׁ וּמִנְחָתָהּ וְעֵלַת
 הַתְּמִיד וּמִנְחָתָהּ וְנִסְפִיֵהֶם כְּמִשְׁפָּטֵם לְרִיחַ נִיחֹחַ אֲשֶׁה לַיהוָה:
 ס ז וּבַעֲשׂוֹר לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי הַזֶּה מִקְרָא-קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לְכֶם
 וְעִנִּיתֶם אֶת-נַפְשֵׁיכֶם כָּל-מִלְאכָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ: ח וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם
 עֲלֶיהָ לַיהוָה רִיחַ נִיחֹחַ פֶּר בֶּן-בֶּקָר אֶחָד אֵיל אֶחָד כְּבָשִׂים
 בְּנֵי-שָׁנָה שְׁבַע־הַתְּמִימִם יְהִיוּ לְכֶם: ט וּמִנְחָתָם סֵלֶת בְּלוּלָה
 בְּשִׁמְן שְׁלֹשָׁה עֶשְׂרִים לְפָר שְׁנַי עֶשְׂרִים לְאֵיל הָאֶחָד:
 י עֲשָׂרוֹן עֲשָׂרוֹן לְכַבֵּשׁ הָאֶחָד לְשִׁבְעַת הַכֹּבָשִׁים: יא שְׁעִיר-
 עֲזִים אֶחָד חַטָּאת מִלְבָּד חַטָּאת הַכֹּפְרִים וְעֵלַת הַתְּמִיד

Sparks of Chasidus

FOUR ASPECTS OF THE FESTIVALS (v. 1-34)

It has often been pointed out that man’s mission in life includes also “elevating” the environment in which he lives, in accordance with the Divine intent in the entire Creation and in all its particulars, by infusing holiness and Godliness into all the aspects of the physical world within his reach—in the so-called “Four Kingdoms”—*domeim, tzome’ach, chai* and *medaber* (inorganic matter, vegetable, animal, and man).

Significantly, this finds expression in the special *mitzvos* which are connected with the beginning of the year, by way of introduction to the entire year—in the festivals of the month of *Tishrei*:

The *mitzvah* of the *succah*, the Jew’s house of dwelling during the seven days of *Succos*, where the walls of the *succah* represent the “inorganic kingdom”;

The *mitzvah* of the “four kinds”—*esrog, lulav, myrtle and willow*—which come from the “vegetable kingdom”;

The *mitzvah* of *shofar* on *Rosh Hashanah*, the *shofar* being a horn of an animal;

And all of these things (by virtue of being Divine commandments, *mitzvos*) are elevated through the *medaber*, the “speaking” (human) being—the person carrying out the said (and all other) *mitzvos*, whereby he elevates also himself and mankind—Both in the realm of doing as well as that of not doing—the latter is represented in the *mitzvah* of the fast on the Holy Day, the Day of Atonement, *Yom Kippur*.

Thus, through infusing holiness into all four kingdoms of the physical world and making them into “vessels” (and instruments) of Godliness in carrying out God’s command—a Jew elevates them to their true perfection.

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe on the 18th of *Elul*, 5738)

- ²⁸ Their accompanying meal-offerings (should be) fine flour mixed with oil: Three tenths (of an eifah) for each bull, two tenths for the ram, ²⁹ and one tenth for each lamb, for all seven lambs.
- ³⁰ (Offer) one young male goat to atone for your (inadvertent ritual contamination of the Temple).
- ³¹ You should offer this in addition to the daily burnt-offering and its accompanying meal-offering.
- The (offerings) should be perfect (quality) for you, as well as their libations.

🌀 THE COMMUNAL ROSH HASHANAH OFFERINGS & SHOFAR 🌀

29

¹ In the seventh month, on the first day, you will have a holy celebration:

- You may not perform any manual work.
- It will be a day of (shofar) sounding for you.
- ² You should bring a burnt-offering as a pleasant aroma to God: One young bull, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year, (all) perfect (and unblemished).
- ³ Their accompanying meal-offerings (should be) fine flour mixed with oil: Three tenths (of an eifah) for the bull, two tenths for the ram, ⁴ and one tenth for each lamb, for the seven lambs.
- ⁵ (Offer) one young male goat as a sin-offering to atone for your (inadvertent ritual contamination of the Temple).
- ⁶ (All this is) in addition to the Rosh Chodesh burnt-offering and its accompanying meal-offering, and (in addition to) the daily burnt-offering and its accompanying meal-offering and libations, as prescribed for them

(It will be) a pleasant aroma, a fire-offering to God.

🌀 THE COMMUNAL YOM KIPPUR OFFERINGS 🌀

⁷ On the tenth day of this seventh month, you will have a holy celebration:

- You must afflict yourselves.
- You may not perform any work.
- ⁸ You should bring a burnt-offering to God, as a pleasant aroma: one young bull, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year. They should be perfect (and unblemished).
- ⁹ Their accompanying meal-offering (should be) fine flour mixed with oil: Three tenths (of an eifah) for the bull, two tenths for the ram, ¹⁰ and one tenth for each lamb, for the seven lambs.
- ¹¹ (Offer) one young male goat for a sin-offering (to atone for your inadvertent ritual contamination of the Temple).
- (All this is) in addition to the atonement sin-offering and the daily burnt-offering, its accompanying meal-offering and libations.

רש"י

ראשונים למנחת חטים הצאים מן החדש¹: (לא) תמימים יהיו לכם ונסכיהם. אף הנסכים יהיו תמימים. למדו רבותינו² מכאן שהיון שהעלה קמחין פסול לנסכים: (ו) מלבד עלת החדש. מוספי ראש חדש שהוא ציום ראש השנה: (יא) מלבד חטאת הכפרים. שער הנעשה בפנים האמור באחרי מות³, שגם הוא חטאת: ועלת התמיד. ומלבד עולת התמיד תעשו עולות הללו:

יב ובחמשת עשר יומא לירחא שביעאה מערע קדיש יהי לבון כל עבידת פלחנא לא תעבדון ותחגון חגא קדם יי שבועא יומין: יג ותקרבוני עלתא קרבן דמתקבל ברעוא קדם יי תורין בני תורי תלת עשר דכרין תרין אמרין בני שנא ארבעא עשר שלמין יהון: יד ומנחתהון סלתא דפילא במשח תלתא עשרונין לתורא חד לתלתא עשר תורין תרין עשרונין לדכרא חד לתרין דכרין: טו ועשרונא עשרונא לאמרא חד לארבעת עשר אמרין: טז וצפיר בר עזין חד חטאתא בר מעלת תדירא מנחתה ונסכיה: יז וביומא תנינא תורין בני תורי תרי עשר דכרין תרין אמרין בני שנא ארבעא עשר שלמין: יח ומנחתהון ונסכיהון לתורין לדכרין ולאמרין במניניהון כדתוי: יט וצפיר בר עזין חד חטאתא בר מעלת תדירא ומנחתה ונסכיהון: כ וביומא תליתאה תורין חד עשר דכרין תרין אמרין בני שנא ארבעא עשר שלמין: כא ומנחתהון ונסכיהון לתורין לדכרין ולאמרין במניניהון כדתוי: כב וצפירא דחטאתא חד בר מעלת תדירא

ומנחתה ונסכיהם: ט [שביעין] יב ובחמשה עשר יום לחדש השביעי מקרא קדש יהיה לכם כל-מלאכת עבודה לא תעשו וחותם חג ליהוה שבעת ימים: יג והקרבתם עלה אשה ריח ניחח ליהוה פרים בני-בקר שלשה עשר אילים שנים כבשים בני-שנה ארבעה עשר תמימם יהיו: יד ומנחתם סלת בלולה בשמן שלשה עשרנים לפר האחד לשלשה עשר פרים שני עשרנים לאיל האחד לשני האילים: טו *ועשרון עשרון לכבש האחד לארבעה עשר כבשים: טז ושעיר-עזים אחד חטאת מלבד עלת התמיד מנחתה ונסכיה: טז וביום השני פרים בני-בקר שנים עשר אילים שנים כבשים בני-שנה ארבעה עשר תמימם: יח ומנחתם ונסכיהם לפרים לאילים ולכבשים במספרם כמשפט: יט ושעיר-עזים אחד חטאת מלבד עלת התמיד ומנחתה ונסכיהם: ס כ וביום השלישי פרים עשתי-עשר אילים שנים כבשים בני-שנה ארבעה עשר תמימם: כא ומנחתם ונסכיהם לפרים לאילים ולכבשים במספרם כמשפט: כב ושעיר חטאת

*נקוד על ו' השני

רש"י

המקדש היו מגינין עליהם מן היסורים: ולכבשים. כנגד ישראל שנקראו שה פזורה!¹ והם קצועים ומינס תשעים ושמונה לכלות מהם תשעים ושמונה קללות שצמשה תורה. צשני נאמר ונסכיהם על שני תמידי היום ולא שינה הלשון אלא לדרוש, כמו שאמרו רז"ל צשני ונסכיהם, צשני ונסכיה, צשני כמשפטם, מ"ס יו"ד מ"ס, הרי כאן מים, רמז לנסוך המים מן התורה צחג?²

ונסכיהם. מוסצ על המוספין הכתוצים ועל תעשו והוא לשון ציווי מלצד עולת התמיד ומנחתה תעשו את אלה ונסכיהם. וכן כל ונסכיהם האמורים צכל המועדות חוץ משל קרצנות החג שכל ונסכה ונסכיהם ונסכיהם שזהם מוסצים על התמיד ואינן לשון ציווי, שהרי נסכיהם של מוספין כתוצין לעלמן צכל יוס ויוס: (יח) ומנחתם ונסכיהם לפרים. פרי החג צשעים הס. כנגד צשעים אומות שמתמעטים והולכים, סימן כליה להם, וצימי

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What do the bulls and lambs of Succos represent?

RASHI: "Their accompanying meal-offerings and their libations, for the bulls" (v. 18)—The seventy bulls of the festival correspond to the seventy nations, which progressively decrease in number, symbolizing their destruction. In Temple times, [the bulls] would protect [the nations] from punishments. "The lambs"—correspond to the Jewish people, who are called, "a scattered lamb" (Jer. 50:17), but

their number remains constant [fourteen lambs per day], totalling ninety-eight [over the seven days], in order to eradicate the ninety-eight curses related in Deuteronomy (28:15-68).

GUR ARYEH: Rashi was troubled why the number of bulls offered decreases each day, in seeming defiance of the principle that we always increase in matters of holiness (*Brachos* 28a). Rashi explains that the decrease in bulls alludes to the destruction of the nations.

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 THE ANIMAL SACRIFICES OF SUCCOS (v. 12-34)

In his commentary to verse 18, Rashi explains the significance of the seventy bulls and ninety-eight lambs that were sacrificed over the course of the festival of Succos. This prompts the following questions:

- a.) Why is Rashi's comment necessary at the *literal* level?
- b.) Why does Rashi explain the *general* significance of the sacrifices here in his commentary to verse 18, amid the Torah's description of the sacrifices offered on the *second* day of Succos?

THE COMMUNAL SUCCOS OFFERINGS

SEVENTH
READING

¹² On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, you will have a holy celebration:

- You may not perform any manual work.
- You will celebrate a festival to God for seven days.

(On the first day):

- ¹³ You should offer a burnt-offering, a fire-offering as a pleasant aroma to God: Thirteen young bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs in their first year. They should be perfect (and unblemished).
- ¹⁴ Their accompanying meal-offering (should be) fine flour mixed with oil: three tenths (of an eifah) for each bull, for the thirteen bulls, two tenths for each ram, for the two rams, ¹⁵ and one tenth for each lamb, for the fourteen lambs.
- ¹⁶ (Offer) one young male goat for a sin-offering (to atone for your inadvertent ritual contamination of the Temple).
- (All this is) in addition to the daily burnt-offering, its accompanying meal-offering and libation.

¹⁷ On the second day:

- Twelve young bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs in their first year, perfect (and unblemished).
- ¹⁸ Their accompanying meal-offerings and their libations, for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, according to their legally required number (stated on the first day*).
- ¹⁹ (Offer) one young male goat for a sin-offering (to atone for your inadvertent ritual contamination of the Temple).
- (All this is) in addition to the daily burnt-offering, its accompanying meal-offering and libations.

²⁰ On the third day:

- Eleven bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs in their first year, perfect (and unblemished).
- ²¹ Their accompanying meal-offerings and their libations, for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, according to their legally required number (stated on the first day).

DAY OF SUCCOS	BULLS	LAMBS
FIRST	13	14
SECOND	12	14
THIRD	11	14
FOURTH	10	14
FIFTH	9	14
SIXTH	8	14
SEVENTH	7	14
TOTAL	70	98

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At first glance, we might argue that *Rashi* was troubled by the question why the number of bulls offered decreases on a daily basis [as **Gur Aryeh** writes], and this fact only becomes apparent upon reading the sacrifices offered on the second day.

However, if this was genuinely troubling *Rashi* then he would have alerted us to this point on reading verse 17, as it is there that we discover that only 12 bulls were being offered on the second day, in contrast to 13 on the previous day. The fact that *Rashi* makes his comment on verse 18 suggests that he is addressing a problem that arises on reading *this* verse.

c.) What message do the bulls convey about the nations? On the one hand, they symbolize *destruction*; but on the other hand, these sacrifices would *protect* the nations from punishments.

THE EXPLANATION

When a person studies the Torah strictly at the literal level—the method of *Rashi*—this does not mean that he is *unaware* of the presence of deeper allusions and insights within the text; it is simply that these allusions are beyond the scope of his current study. Thus, when a person reads that the number of sacrifices has a varying pattern on a daily basis, it is obvious—even at the literal level—that there is significance to the change occurring each day, even though it may fall outside a literal discussion to discern *what* the significance is.

Thus, the changing number of bulls offered each day during *Succos* is not a problem which *Rashi* needed to address. *The fact* that there is some significance here is obvious to the reader without *Rashi's* assistance; but

ומנחתה ונסכה: כג וביומא רביעאה תורין
 עשרא דכרין תרין אמרין בני שנה ארבעא
 עשר שלמין: כד מנחתהון ונסכיהון לתורין
 לדכרין ולאמרין במנניהון כדתוי: כה וצפיר
 בר עזין חד חטאתא בר מעלת תדירא
 מנחתה ונסכה: כו וביומא חמישאה תורין
 תשע דכרין תרין אמרין בני שנה ארבעא
 עשר שלמין: כז ומנחתהון ונסכיהון לתורין
 לדכרין ולאמרין במנניהון כדתוי:
 כח וצפירא דחטאתא חד בר מעלת תדירא
 ומנחתה ונסכה: כט וביומא שתיאה תורין
 תמניא דכרין תרין אמרין בני שנה ארבעא
 עשר שלמין: ל ומנחתהון ונסכיהון לתורין
 לדכרין ולאמרין במנניהון כדתוי:
 לא וצפירא דחטאתא חד בר מעלת תדירא
 מנחתה ונסכה: לב וביומא שביעאה תורין
 שבועא דכרין תרין אמרין בני שנה ארבעא
 עשר שלמין: לג ומנחתהון ונסכיהון לתורין
 לדכרין ולאמרין במנניהון כדתוי להון:
 לד וצפירא דחטאתא חד בר מעלת תדירא

אחד מלבד עלת התמיד ומנחתה ונסכה: ס כג וביום הרביעי
 פרים עשרה אילים שנים כבשים בני-שנה ארבעה עשר
 תמימם: כד מנחתם ונסכיהם לפרים לאילים ולכבשים
 במספרם כמשפט: כה ושעיר-עזים אחד חטאת מלבד עלת
 התמיד מנחתה ונסכה: ס כו וביום החמישי פרים תשעה
 אילים שנים כבשים בני-שנה ארבעה עשר תמימם:
 כז ומנחתם ונסכיהם לפרים לאילים ולכבשים במספרם
 כמשפט: כח ושעיר חטאת אחד מלבד עלת התמיד ומנחתה
 ונסכה: ס כט וביום הששי פרים שמונה אילים שנים כבשים
 בני-שנה ארבעה עשר תמימם: ל ומנחתם ונסכיהם לפרים
 לאילים ולכבשים במספרם כמשפט: לא ושעיר חטאת אחד
 מלבד עלת התמיד מנחתה ונסכיה: ס לב וביום השביעי
 פרים שבעה אילים שנים כבשים בני-שנה ארבעה עשר
 תמימם: לג ומנחתם ונסכיהם לפרים לאילים ולכבשים
 במספרם כמשפטם: לד ושעיר חטאת אחד מלבד עלת

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the concept which is being alluded to falls outside a discussion at the literal level.

However, what *did* trouble *Rashi* is why the Torah appears to send contradictory messages about the change (and lack of change) between one day's sacrifices and the next. First we read that the number of bulls changed on the second day (v. 17), suggesting that the *significance* of the sacrifices on the second day had also changed. But then, we read in verse 18 that meal-offerings and libations for the sacrifices were “according to their legally required number (stated on the first day),” which sends the opposite message, that the offerings were so similar in number (and consequently, in significance) that there is no need to say *how many* were offered since they were the *same as the first day*. Thus the reader will wonder: Are we speaking here of a series of offerings that share a similar theme, or not?

To answer this question, *Rashi* writes: “The seventy bulls of the festival corresponded to the seventy nations, which progressively decrease in number,” i.e. in truth there is one *single* significance behind all the bull sacrifices here: they refer to the seventy nations. The fact that the sacrifices change in number every day is not, in this case, indicative that the concept has changed; it always refers to the nations. Rather, the decrease in number here merely alludes to a further detail about the nations themselves, that they will eventually be destroyed.

However, this leaves us with another question: The reader already knows that offering sacrifices is always associated with something positive, since the Torah has mentioned on numerous occasions how sacrifices bring Divine forgiveness, atonement and cause “a pleasant aroma for

God.” How could this case be different, that the sacrifices are associated with the *destruction* of the nations?

To answer this question, *Rashi* stresses that the sacrifices are merely “symbolizing their destruction,” i.e. the sacrifices themselves are indeed

🌀 The Last Word 🌀

THE SEVENTY BULLS OF SUCCOS

- The gradually decreasing number of bulls, which symbolizes the “destruction” of the nations in the future era (as *Rashi* writes), does not mean that the non-Jewish nations will cease to exist. Rather, it means that their *negative influence* will cease, leaving only nations that are allies and friends to the Jewish people.

(Sicha of Night of Hoshanah Rabah 5747)

- While the spiritual refinement of the nations cannot be achieved by offering sacrifices in the current era, nevertheless, by reciting scriptural verses which speak of these sacrifices this effect is achieved today too—as the verse states, “the words of our lips will be instead of bulls” (*Hoshe’a* 14:3).

(Sefer Hama’amorim Melukat vol. 4, p. 24)

- ²² (Offer) one young male goat for a sin-offering (to atone for your inadvertent ritual contamination of the Temple).
- (All this is) in addition to the daily burnt-offering, its accompanying meal-offering and libation.

²³ On the fourth day:

- Ten bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs in their first year, perfect (and unblemished).
- ²⁴ Their accompanying meal-offerings and their libations, for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, according to their legally required number (stated on the first day).
- ²⁵ (Offer) one young male goat for a sin-offering (to atone for your inadvertent ritual contamination of the Temple).
- (All this is) in addition to the daily burnt-offering, its accompanying meal-offering and libation.

²⁶ On the fifth day:

- Nine bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs in their first year, perfect (and unblemished).
- ²⁷ Their accompanying meal-offerings and their libations, for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, according to their legally required number (stated on the first day).
- ²⁸ (Offer) one young male goat for a sin-offering (to atone for your inadvertent ritual contamination of the Temple).
- (All this is) in addition to the daily burnt-offering, its accompanying meal-offering and libation.

²⁹ On the sixth day:

- Eight bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs in their first year, perfect (and unblemished).
- ³⁰ Their accompanying meal-offerings and their libations, for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, according to their legally required number (stated on the first day).
- ³¹ (Offer) one young male goat for a sin-offering (to atone for your inadvertent ritual contamination of the Temple).
- (All this is) in addition to the daily burnt-offering, its accompanying meal-offering and libations.

³² On the seventh day:

- Seven bulls, two rams and fourteen lambs in their first year, perfect (and unblemished).
- ³³ Their accompanying meal-offerings and their libations, for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, according to the legally required number for them (stated on the first day).
- ³⁴ (Offer) one young male goat for a sin-offering (to atone for your inadvertent ritual contamination of the Temple).
- (All this is) in addition to the daily burnt-offering, its accompanying meal-offering and libation.

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positive and do not have a destructive effect on the nations. Their decreasing number is merely symbolic of the fact that these nations will eventually cease to exist (however, see “The Last Word,” here).

But what, then, is the positive effect of the sacrifices? Rashi continues: “In Temple times,” (i.e. when the sacrifices were actually offered and had an effect), they “would protect [the nations] from punishments.”

And this is not a contradiction to Rashi’s earlier statement that the bulls are a symbol of destruction, since: a.) Here we are speaking of the effect of the sacrifices as distinct from their symbolism. b.) Even their positive effect does not contradict their negative symbolism, for ultimately the sacrifices only offered a temporary protection for the nations from “punishments,” but those punishments will eventually be visited upon them.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 23, p. 198ff.)

מִנְחָתָהּ וְנִסְכָּהּ: לֹא בְיוֹמָא תְמִינָאָה כְּנִשׁ (כְּנִישִׁין) יְהִי לְכוּן כָּל עֲבִידַת פְּלָחַן לֹא תַעֲבֹדוּ: לוֹ וְתִקְרְבוּן עֲלֵתָא קֶרְבַּן דְּמִתְקַבֵּל כְּרַעֲוֵא קָדָם יְיָ תוֹר חַד דְּכַר חַד אֲמַרִין כְּנִי שָׂנֵא שְׂבָעָא שְׁלָמִין: לוֹ מִנְחָתָהוֹן וְנִסְכָּהוֹן לְתוֹרָא לְדַכְרָא וְלֵאמֹרִין בְּמִנְיַגְיָהוֹן כְּדָתוּזִי: לֹא וְצִפְרָא דְחֻטָּאתָא חַד כְּרַ מַעְלַת תְּדִירָא וּמִנְחָתָהּ וְנִסְכָּהּ: לֹא אֲלִין תַעֲבֹדוּן קָדָם יְיָ בְּמוֹעֲדֵיכוֹן כְּרַ מְנַדְרֵיכוֹן וְנִדְבַתְכוֹן לְעֻלּוֹתְכוֹן וּלְמִנְחַתְכוֹן וְלִנְסָפִיכוֹן וּלְנִגְסַת קוּדְשִׁיכוֹן: א וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כֹּל דֵּי פְקִיד יְיָ יֵת מִשָּׁה: פ פ פ

הַתְּמִיד מִנְחָתָהּ וְנִסְכָּהּ: ס [מַפְטִיר] לֹא בְיוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי עֲצֶרֶת תִּהְיֶה לָּכֶם כָּל־מִלְאכַת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ: לוֹ וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם עֲלֶיהָ אִשָּׁה רִיחַ נִיחַח לַיהוָה כְּרַ אֶחָד אֵיל אֶחָד כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה שִׁבְעָה תְמִימִם: לוֹ מִנְחָתָם וְנִסְכֵיהֶם לְפָר לְאֵיל וּלְכַבָּשִׂים בְּמִסְפָּרָם כְּמִשְׁפָּט: לֹא וְשִׁעִיר חֲטָאת אֶחָד מִלְּבַד עֲלֵת הַתְּמִיד וּמִנְחָתָהּ וְנִסְכָּהּ: לֹא אֱלֹהֵי תַעֲשׂוּ לַיהוָה בְּמוֹעֲדֵיכֶם לְבַד מְנַדְרֵיכֶם וְנִדְבַתֵיכֶם לְעֻלְתֵיכֶם וּלְמִנְחַתֵיכֶם וּלְנִסְפֵיכֶם וּלְשִׁלְמֵיכֶם: ל א וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־ מִשָּׁה: פ פ פ

קס"ח פסוקים, לחל"ק סימן. ואל"י פלה"ו סימן.

רש"י

והולך כפרי החג: (לט) אלה תעשו לה' במועדיכם. דבר הקטוב לחובה: לבד מנדריכם. אם צאתם לידור קרצות צרגל, מזה הוא צידכם או נדרים או נדבות שנדרתם כל השנה תקריצו צרגל, שמה יקשה לו לחזור ולעלות לירושלים ולהקריב נדריו, ונמצא עובר צבל תאחר: (6) ויאמר משה אל בני ישראל. להפסיק הענין, דברי רבי ישמעאל, לפי שעד כאן דבריו של מקום ופרשת נדרים מתחלת בדבורו של משה, הולך להפסיק תחלה ולומר שחזר משה ואמר פרשה זו לישראל, שאם לא כן יש צמממע שלא אמר להם זו חלף צפרשת נדרים התחיל דבריו: חסלת פרשת פנחס

(לה) עצרת תהיה לכם. עלורים צעשיית מלאכה¹. דבר אחר עזרת עלרו מללאת, מלמד שטעון לינה². ומדרשו צאגדה לפי שכל ימות הרגל הקריבו כנגד שבעים אומות וכשצאין ללכת, אמר להם המקום צצקשה מכס עשו לי סעודה קטנה כדי שאהנה מכס³: (לו) פר אחד איל אחד. איל (אלו) כנגד ישראל, התעכבו לי מעט עוד. ולשון חזה הוא זה, כצנים הנפטרים מאזיהם והוא אומר להם קשה עלי פרידתכם עכבו עוד יום אחד. משל למלך שעשה סעודה וכו', כדאיתא צצמס³. וצמדדש רבי תנחומא למדה תורה דרך ארץ, שמי שיש לו אכסנאי יום ראשון מאכילו פטומות, למחר מאכילו דגים, למחר מאכילו צשר צבהמה, למחר מאכילו קטניות, למחר מאכילו ירק, פוחת

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How is *Shemini Atzeres* a day of “restriction”? (v. 35)

RASHI: It is restricted from performing manual work.

Alternatively: *atzeres* means “restrict yourselves from leaving.” This indicates that they were required to remain [in Jerusalem] overnight.

The *Agadic* interpretation is: Being that they brought sacrifices all the days of the festival [of *Succos*], corresponding to the seventy nations, when they came to leave, God said to them, “Please make Me a small feast, so that I can have some pleasure from you alone.”

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 SHEMINI ATZERES (v. 35)

Whenever *Rashi* brings more than one interpretation we need to clarify the various strengths and weaknesses of each interpretation, and how those strengths and weaknesses complement each other. The sequence of *Rashi*'s interpretations is also significant, as *Rashi* always places the most preferable interpretation first. How, then, are we to understand *Rashi*'s three interpretations of verse 35?

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi was troubled why all the other festivals which are referred to in this *Parsha* are described by scripture as a **מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ** (“a holy celebration”), with the exception of *Shemini Atzeres*, which is merely described as “a day of restriction.” This suggested to *Rashi* that the Torah is giving here a *new definition* to the festival of *Shemini Atzeres* that differs in nature from all the other festivals recorded in the Torah.

🌀 THE COMMUNAL SHEMINI ATZERES OFFERINGS 🌀

MAFTIR ³⁵ *The eighth day will be a time of restriction for you:*

- You may not perform any manual work.
- ³⁶ You should bring a burnt-offering, a fire-offering as a pleasant aroma to God: One bull, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year, perfect (and unblemished).
- ³⁷ (Offer) their accompanying meal-offerings and their libations, for the bull, for the ram, and for the lambs, according to the legally required number.
- ³⁸ (Offer) one young male goat for a sin-offering (to atone for your inadvertent ritual contamination of the Temple).
- (All this is) in addition to the daily burnt-offering, its accompanying meal-offering and libation.

³⁹ All the above is what you should offer to God on your festivals, in addition to (voluntary offerings that) you vowed and (other) voluntary offerings—your burnt-offerings, your meal-offerings, your libations, and your peace offerings.

30 ¹ Moshe told the children of Israel everything that God had commanded Moshe.

THE HAFTARAH FOR PINCHAS IS ON PAGE 309. [IF PARSHAS PINCHAS FALLS IN THE THREE WEEKS, THE HAFTARAH FOR PARSHAS MATOS IS READ INSTEAD - PAGE 312]

TORAS MENACHEM

But how is this festival different from all other festivals?

Rashi's first interpretation is that “it is restricted from performing manual work,” i.e. on other festivals the prohibition against manual work is a function of the holiness of the day (the fact that it is a “holy celebration”). In the case of *Shemini Atzeres*, however, the prohibition against performing work is the very definition of the day itself. We do not refrain from work because it is a “holy celebration,”* but rather, due to the fact that it is “a time of restriction”—as the verse stresses, “*The eighth day will be a time of restriction for you*” therefore, “*You may not perform any manual work.*”

Rashi, however, was not satisfied with this interpretation, as it leaves the verse out of context with the surrounding passage. For this entire section discusses the sacrifices of the festival, but according to the above interpretation verse 35 breaks the thematic flow to discuss a completely different aspect of festival observance, the requirement to refrain from manual work.

Due to this problem, *Rashi* cited a further interpretation which explains how our verse is consistent with the theme of the passage—the sacrifices: “*atzeres means restrict yourselves from leaving,*” i.e. they were required to stay in Jerusalem, because this is the site where the sacrifices were offered.

However, while this interpretation is more contextually consistent, it presents us with a problem why the Torah went out of its way to describe this festival as an *atzeres* (“restriction”). For already by informing us that it is the “eighth day” the reader understands that staying in Jerusalem was required, just as it was on the seven previous days. Thus, according to this interpretation, it appears that the Torah went out of its way to use an unusual expression (*atzeres*) when it was not necessary to do so.

Therefore, *Rashi* continues: “This teaches that they were required to remain overnight,” i.e. at the literal level the term *atzeres* teaches us a

unique quality about this festival, that in contrast to all the other festivals where one was only required to be in Jerusalem during the day, here one was required to remain at night too.

Nevertheless, in the final analysis this interpretation also has a major drawback, as it renders the first half of verse 35 disconnected from the second half: First we read, “*The eighth day will be a time of restriction for you,*” i.e. one must stay in Jerusalem overnight, and then the subject immediately jumps: “*You may not perform any manual work.*”

Thus, while this interpretation is contextually superior (as explained above), it is nevertheless a less satisfactory explanation of the verse itself. So *Rashi* cited it only as a secondary interpretation.

THE AGADIC INTERPRETATION

Having read *Rashi's* first two interpretations, the reader will appreciate how *Shemini Atzeres* is different from the other festivals—either because it is defined by a restraint from work (1st interpretation) or because it requires staying overnight in Jerusalem (2nd interpretation). However, the reader is still left without an explanation why this festival is different.

Therefore, *Rashi* cited the “Agadic interpretation,” not as a third interpretation of the verse, but rather, as a clarification of the unique quality of this festival which was highlighted by the previous two interpretations: “*Being that all the days of the festival [of Succos] they brought sacrifices, corresponding to the seventy nations, when they came to leave, God said to them, ‘Please make Me a small feast, so that I can have some pleasure from you alone,’*” i.e. since this day is merely an “extension” of *Succos*, we can understand why its definition is just to refrain from work (since it is not really a festival, “a holy day” in its own right); and why one is required to stay overnight, since the whole purpose of the day is to remain “with God” in Jerusalem a little longer.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 33, p. 176ff.)

* For a comparison of the Torah’s descriptions of *Shemini Atzeres* in *Parshas Pinchas* and *Parshas Emor*, see *Likutei Sichos* vol. 33, p. 179.



Parshas Pinchas contains 6 positive *mitzvos*

1. The laws of inheritance [27:8ff.].
2. The daily burnt-offerings [28:2].
3. The additional offering of Shabbos [28:9].
4. The additional offering of Rosh Chodesh [28:11-15].
5. The additional offering of Shavuos [28:26].
6. To sound the shofar on Rosh Hashanah [29:1].



parshas Matos

פרשת מטות

🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

Parshas Matos is always read during the three weeks of mourning over the destruction of the Holy Temple, an event which plunged the Jewish people into a physical and spiritual exile from which they have not yet recovered. It is not surprising, therefore, that the name of the *Parsha* contains a message of inspiration which helps us overcome the adversities of exile.

Scripture uses two terms to refer to the tribes of Israel: a.) *shevatim*; b.) *matos*. The difference between them is that "*matos*" are branches that have become *detached* from the tree, and have *hardened* to form a staff or a rod. "*Shevatim*," on the other hand, refers to branches that still remain attached to their trunk, and are thus soft and flexible.

Chasidic thought teaches that the "branch" and the "rod" allude to the soul's development as it passes from a heavenly setting to an earthly setting. In heaven, the soul is consciously "attached" to God, like the branch which remains attached to its trunk. But before embarking on its mission, the soul is "immature." It has never faced an obstacle in its relationship with God and, conse-

quently, has never enjoyed the additional "bonding" that is brought to a relationship by overcoming obstacles. Likewise, the "hidden reserves" of powers that were granted to the soul to overcome situations of adversity lie dormant and undiscovered.

However, when the soul is placed in its earthly setting, in a physical body in the times of exile, all this soon changes. Like a branch that is detached from its trunk, the soul loses its effortless, emotional enwrapment with the Creator and finds itself in a world which is antagonistic to holiness and truth. But we are promised that, with the necessary effort, the tender "branch" will soon harden to become a firm and rigid "rod" that is unbending in its dedication to God.

Parshas Matos thus teaches us that God has given us the ability to live according to the laws of the Torah under *all circumstances*. It is only a matter of will and determination on the part of the Jew, since, potentially, we have the fullest capacity to live up to the will and the commandments of God, the Creator and Master of the world.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, pp. 382-4)

ב ומליל משה עם רישי שבטיא לבני ישראל למימר דין פתגמא די פקיד יי: ג נבר ארי ידר נדר קדם יי או יקום קום למסר אסר על נפשה לא יבטל פתגמא ככל דיפוק מפומה יעבד: ד ואתתא ארי תדר נדר קדם יי ותסר אסר בבית אבוהא ברביותהא: ה וישמע אבוהא ית נדרה ואסרה די אסרת על נפשה וישתוק לה אבוהא ויקומון כל נדרהא וכל אסרי די אסרת על נפשה יקומון: ו ואם אעדי אבוהא יתה ביומא דשמע כל נדרהא ואסרה די אסרת על נפשה לא יקומון ומן קדם יי ישתבק לה ארי אעדי אבוהא יתה:

ב וידבר משה אל־ראשי המטות לבני ישראל לאמר זה הדבר אשר צוה יהוה: ג איש כי־ידר נדר ליהוה או־השבע שבעה לאסר אסר על־נפשו לא יחל דברו בכל־היצא מפיו יעשה: ד ואשה כי־תדר נדר ליהוה ואסרה אסר בבית אביה בנעריה: ה ושמע אביה את־נדרה ואסרה אשר אסרה על־נפשה והחריש לה אביה וקמו כל־נדריה וכל־אסר אשר־אסרה על־נפשה יקום: ו ואם־הניא אביה אתה ביום שמעו כל־נדריה ואסריה אשר־אסרה על־נפשה לא יקום

רשי

קוגם שלא אוכל או שלא אעשה דבר פלוני, יכול אפילו נשבע שיאכל נצלות אני קורא עליו ככל היואל מפיו יעשה, תלמוד לומר לאסור אסר, את המותר ולא להתיר את האסור: לא יחל דברו. כמו לא יחלל דברו, לא יעשה דבריו חולין: (ד) בבית אביה. צרעות אביה ואפילו אינה צביתו: בנעוריה. ולא קטנה ולא צוגרת, שהקטנה אין גדרה נדר ובצוגרת אינה צרעותו של אביה להפך נדריה. ואי זו היא קטנה, אמרו רבותינו צת אחת עשרה שנה ויום אחד נדריה נצדקין. אם ידעה לשם מי נדרה ולשם מי הקדישה נדרה נדר. צת שחיס עשרה שנה ויום אחד אינה לריכח להצדק: (ו) ואם הניא אביה אותה. אם מנע אותה מן הנדר, כלומר שהפך לה. הנאח זו איני יודע מה היא, כשהוא אומר ואם ציום שמוע אישה יניא אותה והפך, בוי אומר הנאח זו הפכה. ופשוטו לשון מניעה והסרה וכן ולמה תניחון⁸, וכן שמן ראש אל

(3) ראשי המטות. חלק כבוד לגשיאים ללמדם תחלה ואחר כך לכל בני ישראל. ומניין שאף שאר הדברות כן, תלמוד לומר וישוצו אליו אהרן וכל הנשיאים צעדה וידבר משה אליהם ואחרי כן נגשו כל בני ישראל! ומה ראה לאומרם כאן, למד שהפרת נדרים ציחיד מומחה² ואם אין יחיד מומחה מפר בשלשה הדיוטות³. או יכול שלא אמר משה פרשה זו אלא לגשיאים צלצד, נאמר כאן זה הדבר, ונאמר בשחוטין חוץ זה הדבר⁴, מה להלן נאמרם לאהרן ולצניו ולכל בני ישראל, שנאמר דבר אל אהרן וגו'⁴, אף זו נאמרם לכולן: זה הדבר. משה נתנצח צכה אמר ה' כחלות הלילה⁵, והנציאים נתנצחו צכה אמר ה', מוסף עליהם משה שנתנצח צלשון זה הדבר². דבר אחר זה הדבר מיעוט הוא, לומר שהחכם צלשון התרה ובעל (ואצ) צלשון הפרה, כלשון הכתוב כאן, ואם חלפו אין מותר ואין מופר: (ג) נדר. האומר הרי עלי

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Was this passage said *only* to the tribal heads? (v. 2)

RASHI: [Moshe] honored the leaders by teaching them first, and only later the rest of the Jewish people.

From where do we know that with other commandments he did likewise? From the following verse: “Aharon and all the leaders of the community returned to him, and Moshe would speak to them. Afterwards, all the children of Israel would draw near” (Shemos 34:31-32).

But why did scripture choose to mention this point here?

To indicate that when the annulment of vows is done by an individual he must be an expert [such as a tribal “leader”]. If no individual expert is available, it may be annulled by three laymen.

MISHNAH: The Rabbinic principle of releasing vows [through asking an expert] “floats in the air,” i.e. it has no real basis in scripture (Chagigah 10a).

TORAS MENACHEM

☞ THE CONNECTION BETWEEN VOWS & TRIBAL HEADS (v. 2)

Rashi addresses the question why verse 2 suggests that the current passage was said only to the “tribal heads” and not to all the Jewish people. Surely, the laws of vows which are recorded here apply to all Jews?

Rashi rejects the notion that these laws were actually taught only to the tribal leaders, and concludes that scripture is alluding to an unwritten law: The reason why the Torah stresses the connection between tribal leaders and the laws of vows is “to indicate that when the annulment of vows is done by an individual he must be an expert,” such as a tribal leader. And, “if no individual expert is available, it may be annulled by three laymen,” who, in the absence of any better solution, constitute an ad hoc “Jewish court.”

Rashi here is alluding to the rabbinic principle that a person who regrets a vow that he made may seek an “expert” to release him from the vow. As Rashi himself explains in his commentary to the Talmud, the expert is able to “find a loophole for the person, due to the implications that this vow imposes on him. [The expert demonstrates that] if the person had originally been aware of these implications he would never have made the vow, thus showing that the vow was invalid in the first place” (Rashi to Gitin 63b, s.v. charatah).

However, this principle is a rabbinic law which “has no real basis in scripture,” as the **Mishnah** states. Rashi, in his commentary to the Chumash, however, presumes that the reader is familiar with this concept, writing, “when the annulment of vows is done by an individual...,” as if the student of scripture is already aware that vows can be annulled by

🕎 THE LAWS OF PERSONAL VOWS 🕎

30:2 **M**oshe spoke to the children of Israel's tribal heads, saying: This is what God has commanded: ³ (Concerning the principle that*) when a person makes a vow to God or makes an oath to prohibit himself (something which the Torah permits), he may not violate his word (and) he must act in accordance with whatever he uttered—(the following rules apply*):

- ⁴ If a woman is in her adolescence (and thus still) under (the jurisdiction) of her father's house, (and) she makes a vow to God, or imposes a ban (on herself):
 - ⁵ If her father heard about her vow, or her ban which she forbade to herself, and her father remained silent, then all her vows stand, and any ban that she forbade to herself stands.
 - ⁶ But if, on the day he hears about it, her father vetoes her (vow by annulling her words) then all her vows and her bans that she forbade to herself will not stand.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Is it desirable for a person to make vows? (v.3)

MISHNAH: Vows are a “fence” for abstinence (Avos 3:13).

JERUSALEM TALMUD: Is it not enough what the Torah has forbidden to you that you wish to forbid yourself from other things too? (*Nedarim* 9:1)

TORAS MENACHEM

finding a loophole. All that our verse seems to add is the detail that this individual must be an expert.

But how is the reader supposed to know that an individual can release a person from vows *in the first place*?

A LOGICAL APPROACH

Perhaps it could be argued that *Rashi* deemed the process of finding a loophole in a vow to be totally logical, and thus (at the literal level) does not *require* any basis in scripture. The expert does not *annul* a pre-existing vow, which would definitely need some scriptural source, since scripture decrees that all vows are binding; instead, he *releases* the person from the vow by demonstrating that *the vow was never valid in the first place* (as explained above). This, it would seem, is in sharp contrast to the laws described in the current passage, where a father or husband *annuls* his daughter or wife's vow through a *scripturally empowered* right of annulment.

Rashi deemed it to be *obvious* that if a loophole is found in any vow, a person can avoid observing what he originally (and mistakenly) thought to be a binding vow. Therefore, *Rashi* did not have to inform us of this principle.

What *Rashi* did teach us, based on verse 2, is that the person who finds that loophole must be an expert, which is why the Torah openly addressed this passage to the leaders, the “experts” of the Jewish people.

However, in the final analysis, this explanation is unacceptable, because:

i.) It is difficult to accept at the literal level that there are two totally different mechanisms (“annulment” and “release through a loophole”) through which the obligation of vows can be removed, when *Rashi* makes no indication of such a major distinction in his commentary.

ii.) On the contrary, *Rashi* writes explicitly that the only distinction between an expert and a father in the way they remove vows is in the *language* they must use (“an expert must use *words that imply releasing*,

🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

At first glance, the advice of the **Jerusalem Talmud** (see *Classic Questions*), that one should avoid making vows, appears to contradict the **Mishnah's** teaching that vows are a valuable tool for a person to restrain himself from physical indulgence.

In truth, however, there is no contradiction, since these two texts are addressing two different types of people. The *Mishnah* addresses a person who *cannot* restrain himself from excessive physical indulgence which interferes with his observance of Torah. Thus for him the *only solution* is to make a vow of abstinence. The *Jerusalem Talmud*, however, speaks of a person who is able to utilize physical pleasures for holy purposes, and for such a person it would be *inadvisable* to abstain from these physical things, since the purpose

of creation is to *sanctify the physical world*, so that it becomes a “home” for God below.

Based on the above we can also appreciate why an “expert” may release a person from his vows (see *Rashi* to v. 2). For, at first glance this is difficult to understand: Surely the purpose of a Jewish sage is to guide a person to a more spiritual life; so if a person has vowed to abstain from something physical should he not be *encouraged* to do so by the sage, and not be released from his vow? In truth, however, one who is at the highest level of Godly service must *involve* himself with the physical world to sanctify it. And it is to this goal that the sage attempts to lift the person, rendering the vow unnecessary.

(*Likutei Sichos* vol. 13, pp. 107-8; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Matos-Masei* 5733)

* See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 13, p. 106.

וְיָהוָה יִסְלַח-לָּהּ כִּי-הֵנִיא אָבִיהָ אֹתָהּ: וְאִם-הָיוּ תַּהֲיֶיהָ לְאִישׁ וְנִדְרֶיהָ עָלֶיהָ אוּ מִבְּטָא שְׁפָתֶיהָ אֲשֶׁר אָסְרָה עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ: ה וְשָׁמַע אִישָׁהּ בְּיוֹם שָׁמְעוֹ וְהַחֲרִישׁ לָהּ וְקָמוּ נִדְרֶיהָ וְאָסְרָה אֲשֶׁר-אָסְרָה עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ יִקְמוּ: ט וְאִם בְּיוֹמָא דְשָׁמַע בְּעֵלָה אַעֲדֵי יָתָהּ וּבִטְלָ יָת נִדְרָהָ דִּי עָלָה וְיָת פְּרוּשׁ סְפֹתָהָ דִּי אָסְרָת עַל נַפְשָׁהּ וּמִן קָדָם יִי יִשְׁתַּבֵּק לָהּ: י וְנִדְרָ אַרְמְלָא וּמִתְרַכָּא כַּל דִּי אָסְרָת עַל נַפְשָׁהּ יָקוּם עָלָה: יא וְאִם בֵּית בְּעֵלָה נִדְרָת אוּ אָסְרָת אָסַר עַל נַפְשָׁהּ בְּקִיּוּם: יב וְשָׁמַע בְּעֵלָה וְיִשְׁתַּוֵּךְ לָהּ לֹא אַעֲדֵי יָתָהּ וְיִקְמוּן כָּל נִדְרָהָ וְכָל אָסַר דִּי אָסְרָת עַל נַפְשָׁהּ יִקְמוּן: יג וְאִם בְּטִלָּא יִבְטַל יִתְהוֹן בְּעֵלָה בְּיוֹמָא דִּי שָׁמַע כָּל אִפְקוּת סְפֹתָהָ לְנִדְרָהָ וְלֹאֲסַר נַפְשָׁהּ לֹא יִקְמוּן בְּעֵלָה בְּטַלְנוּן וּמִן קָדָם יִי יִשְׁתַּבֵּק לָהּ: יד כָּל נִדְרָ וְכָל קִיּוּמָת אָסַר לְסַנְפָּא נַפְשָׁ בְּעֵלָה יִקְיַמְנוּן וּבְעֵלָה יִבְטַלְנוּן: טו וְאִם מִשְׁתַּק וְיִשְׁתַּוֵּךְ לָהּ בְּעֵלָה מִיּוֹם לְיוֹם וְיִקְיַם יָת כָּל נִדְרָהָ אוּ יָת כָּל אָסְרָהָ דִּי עָלָה יִקְיַם

וְיָהוָה יִסְלַח-לָּהּ כִּי-הֵנִיא אָבִיהָ אֹתָהּ: וְאִם-הָיוּ תַּהֲיֶיהָ לְאִישׁ וְנִדְרֶיהָ עָלֶיהָ אוּ מִבְּטָא שְׁפָתֶיהָ אֲשֶׁר אָסְרָה עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ: ה וְשָׁמַע אִישָׁהּ בְּיוֹם שָׁמְעוֹ וְהַחֲרִישׁ לָהּ וְקָמוּ נִדְרֶיהָ וְאָסְרָה אֲשֶׁר-אָסְרָה עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ יִקְמוּ: ט וְאִם בְּיוֹם שָׁמַע אִישָׁהּ יִנִּיא אֹתָהּ וְהִפֵּר אֶת-נִדְרָהָ אֲשֶׁר עָלֶיהָ וְאֵת מִבְּטָא שְׁפָתֶיהָ אֲשֶׁר אָסְרָה עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ וְיָהוָה יִסְלַח-לָּהּ: י וְנִדְרָ אֲלֻמְנָה וְגִירוּשָׁה כָּל אֲשֶׁר-אָסְרָה עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ יָקוּם עָלֶיהָ: יא וְאִם-בֵּית אִישָׁהּ נִדְרָה אוּ-אָסְרָה אָסַר עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ בְּשִׁבְעָהּ: יב וְשָׁמַע אִישָׁהּ וְהַחֲרִישׁ לָהּ לֹא הֵנִיא אֹתָהּ וְקָמוּ כָּל-נִדְרֶיהָ וְכָל-אָסַר אֲשֶׁר-אָסְרָה עַל-נַפְשָׁהּ יָקוּם: יג וְאִם-הִפִּיר יָפֵר אֹתָם | אִישָׁהּ בְּיוֹם שָׁמְעוֹ כָּל-מוֹצָא שְׁפָתֶיהָ לְנִדְרֶיהָ וְלֹאֲסַר נַפְשָׁהּ לֹא יָקוּם אִישָׁהּ הַפֵּרָם וְיָהוָה יִסְלַח-לָּהּ: יד כָּל-נִדְרָ וְכָל-שְׁבַעַת אָסַר לְעֵנַת נַפְשָׁהּ אִישָׁהּ יִקְיַמְנוּ וְאִישָׁהּ יִפְרְנוּ: טו וְאִם-הִחֲרִישׁ יִחֲרִישׁ לָהּ אִישָׁהּ מִיּוֹם אֶל-יּוֹם וְהַקִּים אֶת-כָּל-נִדְרֶיהָ אוּ אֶת-כָּל-אָסְרֶיהָ אֲשֶׁר עָלֶיהָ הַקִּים אֹתָם כִּי-הִחֲרִישׁ לָהּ בְּיוֹם שָׁמְעוֹ:

רש"י

ולא הוקמו: (ח) ושמע אישה וגו'. הכי לך שאם קיים הצעל שהוא קיים: (ט) והפר את נדרה אשר עליה. יכול אפילו לא הפר האז, תלמוד לומר צנעוריה בית אציה⁶, כל שצנעוריה צרעות אציה היא: (י) כל אשר אסרה על נפשה יקום עליה. לפי שאינה לא צרעות אצ ולא צרעות בעל, ובאלמנה מן הנשואין הכתוב מדבר⁴, אזל אלמנה מן האירוסין, מת הצעל נתרוקנה וחזרה לרשות האז: (יא) ואם בית אישה נדרה. נשואה הכתוב מדבר: (יד) כל נדר וכל שבועת אסר וגו'. לפי שאמר שהצעל מפר, יכול כל נדרים צמשמע, תלמוד לומר לענות נפש, אינו מפר אלא נדרי ענוי נפש צלצד. והם מפורשים צמסכת נדרים⁸: (טו) מיום אל יום. שלא תאמר מעת

יני ראשי¹, וכן וידעתם את תנאית², את אשר סרתם מעלי: וה' יסלח לה. צמח הכתוב מדבר צמשה שנדרה צנעור ושמע צעלה³ והפר לה וכיא לא ידעה ועוצרת על נדרה ושוחת יין ומטמאה למתים, זו היא שצריכה סליחה, ואף על פי שהוא מופר. ואם המופרים צריכים סליחה, קל וחומר לשאינן מופרים: (ז) ואם היו תהיה לאיש. זו ארוסה, או אינו אלא נשואה, כשהוא חומר ואם בית אישה נדרה, הכי נשואה חומר, וכאן בארוסה, וצא לחלוק צה, שאציה וצעלה מפירין נדריה. הפר האז ולא הפר הצעל או הפר הצעל ולא הפר האז, הכי זה אינו מופר, ואין לריך לומר אם קיים אחד מהם: ונדריה עליה. שנדרה צבית אציה ולא שמע צכן אציה ולא הופרו

TORAS MENACHEM

and a husband, *words of annulment*”—*Rashi to v. 2, s.v. ze hadavar*), which indicates that the actual *mechanism* though which the vow is removed is the same.

THE EXPLANATION

Rather, it would seem that at the literal level there is only one mechanism by which a vow can be canceled, and that is through *annulment*, as the Torah indicates explicitly in the current passage how a father or husband may annul the vow of his daughter or wife. Likewise in the case of an expert, at the literal level, the expert has the power to *annul* the words of a vow, as *Rashi* stresses, “When the *annulment* of vows is done by an individual he must be an expert.”

Rashi did not need to clarify the scriptural basis that an expert has the right to annul a vow, since he deemed it to be self-evident: In the same way a father has the right to annul his daughter’s vow, because he is an authority figure (*Rashi to v. 4*), the tribal leaders have the right to annul the vows of their followers, over whom they are authority figures. *Rashi* only adds that this is not limited to the head of one’s tribe in particular, but rather *any* authority figure (such as an expert in Jewish law) is acceptable for this purpose. And, in exceptional circumstances where an expert cannot be found, even three laymen can form an *ad hoc* “court,” which is authorized to annul a vow.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 33, p. 186ff.)

1 תהלים קמ"א, ה' 2 במדבר י"ד, ל"ד 3 בספר הזכרון כאן: "ומצאתי כנוסחא אחת דפרוסיית באשה שנדרה בניזיר ושמע אביי והפר לה, ונכון הוא", וחו הגירסא הנכונה בהתאם למ"ש בפסוק "ואם הניא אביי אותה... כי הניא אביי אותה". ומה שמצינו ברוב הדפוסים הגירסא "ושמע בעלה", הרי זה שיבוש וטעות (שיחת ש"פ מסו"מ תשמ"ז). 4 ספרי 5 נדרים סו. 6 פסוק י"ז 7 נדרים ע. 8 ד"ט עט.

- *(If she is unaware of her father's veto, and subsequently violated her "vow"), God will forgive her because her father vetoed her (vow, and thus annulled it).*
- ⁷ *If she is (betrothed) to a man while her (earlier) vows (are still pending) upon her, (because her father did not hear about the vows, so they were never ratified or annulled); or (she has a pre-existing) verbal obligation which she imposed upon herself (which was not heard by her father):*
 - ⁸ *(If) the man to whom she is (betrothed) hears about it but remains silent on the day that he hears about it, her vows will stand, and her ban that she forbade to herself will stand (even if her father annuls them).*
 - ⁹ *But if the man to whom she is (betrothed) vetoes her (vow) on the day he heard about it (as her father did), he revokes the vow (pending) upon her, or the verbal obligation which she forbade to herself (jointly with her father).*
 - *(If she is unaware of the veto, and subsequently violated her "vow"), God will forgive her (because it was, in fact, annulled).*
- ¹⁰ *(Concerning) the vow of a widow or a divorcee: Anything that she forbids to herself will stand for her (as a vow, since she is not under the jurisdiction of her husband or her father).*
- ¹¹ *If (a married woman) made a vow or banned something from herself with an oath in her husband's house:*
 - ¹² *(If) her husband heard about it and remained silent, not vetoing her, all her vows will stand, and every ban that she forbade to herself will stand.*
 - ¹³ *But if her husband vetoes them on the day he hears about them, then anything she uttered as her vows or personal bans will not stand.*
 - *(Since) her husband has vetoed them (thus annulling them, if she is unaware of this and subsequently violated her "vow"), God will forgive her (because it was, in fact, annulled).*
 - ¹⁴ *(However, it is only regarding) a vow or oath of self-affliction (that) her husband (has the right) either to ratify or annul it.*
 - ¹⁵ *(Concerning the time limit on the husband): If her husband remained silent (during the whole) day until (the next) day (begins, in the evening), then he has ratified all the vows and prohibitions which are (pending) upon her. He has ratified them because he remained silent on the day he heard about it.*

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🌀 The Last Word 🌀

Ironically, the Torah attributes more power of annulment to a man who is merely *betrothed** to a woman than a man who is fully married. For a man who is betrothed to a woman can annul her vows made prior to betrothal (v. 7-9), whereas a man who is fully married is only able to annul vows made "in her husband's house" (v. 11), and not beforehand. The reason for this peculiarity is because a man annuls his betrothed wife's earlier vows jointly with her father, in whose house she made the vows (see v. 9 and *Rashi* *ibid*).

One who is betrothed to a woman represents a person whose service of God is still incomplete. Nevertheless, the betrothed person has an advantage that he still relies on "the father" of his betrothed, i.e. on Divine assistance. However, when a person reaches spiritual maturity, alluded to by full marriage, this may ironically give him a false sense of independence, causing him to forget "the Father." The moral is obvious: A person should always attribute his success to Divine blessing, and not to himself.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 2, pp. 613-4)

* In Jewish law, once a woman is betrothed she is considered a married woman, and if her husband wishes to leave her, she needs a divorce. However, this does not permit the couple to live together as man and wife until the procedure of *nisu'in* (full marriage) is carried out. In Talmudic times there would be a break, usually of a full year, between these two procedures. Nowadays, both procedures are carried out consecutively, under the wedding canopy.

יתהון אבי שתק לה ביומא דשמע: טו ואם
 בפלא ובטל יתהון בטר דשמע ויקבל ית
 חובה: יז אלון קמונא די פקיד יי ית משה בין
 גבר לאתתה בין אבא לברתה ברביותהא
 בית אבוהא: א ומליל יי עם משה למימר:
 ב אתפרע פרענות בני ישראל מן מדינאי
 בטר בן התכנש לעמיד: ג ומליל משה עם
 עמא למימר וריוו מנכון גברין לחילא ויהון
 על מדין למיחב פרענות דין עמא דיי במדין:
 ד אלפא לשבטא אלפא לשבטא לכל שבטאי
 דישראל תשלחון לחילא: ה ואתבחרו
 מאלפאי דישראל אלפא לשבטא תרי עשר
 אלפין מורזי חילא: ו ושלח יתהון משה
 אלפא לשבטא לחילא יתהון וית פינחס בר
 אלעזר כהנא לחילא ומני דקודשא ותיצרת
 יבבטא בידה: ז ואתחילו על מדין כמא די
 פקיד יי ית משה וקטלו כל דבורא: ח וית
 מלכי מדין קטלו על קטיליהון ית אוי וית
 רקם וית צור וית חור וית רבע חמשא מלכי
 מדין וית בלעם בר בעור קטלו בחרבא:
 ט ושבו בני ישראל ית נשי מדין וית טפלחון
 וית כל בעיריהון וית כל גיתיהון וית כל

טו ואם הפר יפר אתם אחרי שמעו ונשא את-עונה: יז אלה
 החקים אשר צוה יהוה את-משה בין איש לאשתו בין אב
 לבתו בנעריה בית אביה: פ [שני] לא א וידבר יהוה אל-משה
 לאמר: ב נקם נקמת בני ישראל מאת המדינים אחר תאסף
 אל-עמיד: ג וידבר משה אל-העם לאמר החלצו מאתכם
 אנשים לצבא ויהיו על-מדין לתת נקמת יהוה במדין: ד אלף
 למטה אלף למטה לכל מטות ישראל תשלחו לצבא:
 ה וימסרו מאלפי ישראל אלף למטה שנים עשר אלף חלוצי
 צבא: ו וישלח אתם משה אלף למטה לצבא אתם ואת-
 פינחס בן-אלעזר הכהן לצבא וכלי הקדש והצעירות
 התרועה בידו: ז ויצבאו על-מדין כאשר צוה יהוה את-
 משה ויהרגו כל-זכר: ח ואת-מלכי מדין הרגו על-חלליהם
 את-אוי ואת-רקם ואת-צור ואת-חור ואת-רבע חמשת
 מלכי מדין ואת בלעם בן-בעור הרגו בחרב: ט וישבו בני-
 ישראל את-נשי מדין ואת-טפם ואת כל-בהמתם ואת-כל-

כ"ט

שהתחיל צמזוה, שברג כזבי צת לור, יגמור. דבר אחר שהלך לנקום נקמת
 יוסף אבי אמו, שנאמר והמדינים מכרו אותם¹⁰. ומנין שהיתה אמו של פנחס
 משל יוסף, שנאמר מצנות פוטיאל¹¹, מזרע יתרו שפיטס עגלים לעבודה זרה
 ומזרע יוסף שפטט צילרו. דבר אחר שהיה משוח מלחמה¹²: ובלי הקדש.
 זה הארון והלץ. שהיה בלעם עמם ומפריח מלכי מדין כשפים, והוא
 עלמו פורח עמם. הראה להם את הליץ, שהשם חקוק בו, והם נופלים, לכך
 נאמר על חלליהם צמלכי מדין¹³, שנופלים על החללים מן האויר, וכן בצלעם
 כתיב אל חלליהם צספר יהושע¹⁴: בידו. צרשותו וכן ויקח את כל ארצו
 מיודו¹⁵: (ח) חמשת מלכי מדין. וכי אינו רואה שחמשה מנה הכתוב, למה
 הוצק לומר חמשה, אלא ללמדך ששון כולם צעלה והשוו כולם צפורענות.
 בלעם הלך עם ליעול שר עשרים וארבעה אלף שהפיל מישראל צעלחו, ויאל
 ממדין לקראת ישראל ומשיאן ענה רעה. אמר להם אם כשהייתם ששים רבוא
 לא יכולתם להם, ועכשיו צי"צ אלף אתם צאים להלחם. נתנו לו שכרו משלם
 ולא קפחוהו¹⁶: בחרב. הוא צא על ישראל, והחליף אומנתו צאומנותם, שאין
 נושעים אלא צפיהם ע"י תפלה וצקשה. וצא הוא תפס אומנותם לקללם
 צפיו, אף הם צאו עליו והחליפו אומנותם צאומנות האומות שצאין צחרצ,

לעת, לכך נאמר מיום אל יום, ללמדך שאין מפר אלא עד שתשקף:
 (טז) אחרי שמעו. אחרי שמעו וקיים, שאמר אפשי צו, וחזר והפר לה
 אפילו צו ציוס²: ונשא את עונה. הוא נכנס תחתי. למדנו מכאן שהגורם
 תקלה לחצירו הוא נכנס תחתיו לכל עונשין³: (צ) מאת המדינים. ולא מאת
 המואבים, שהמואבים נכנסו לדבר מחמת יראה שהיו יראים מהם, שיהיו
 שוללים אותם, שלא נאמר אלא אל תהרג צם מלחמה. אצל מדינים נתעצרו
 על ריב לא להם. דבר אחר מפני שתי פרידות טובות שיש לי להוציא מהם,
 רות המואביה ונעמה העמונית⁴: (ג) וידבר משה וגו'. אף על פי ששמע
 שמיחתו תלויה צדבר עשה צשמחה ולא איחר²: החלצו. כתרומתו לשון חלוצי
 צבא⁴ מזויינים: אנשים. לדיקים⁵, וכן צחר לנו אנשים⁶, וכן אנשים חכמים
 ויודעים⁷: נקמת ה'. שהעומד כנגד ישראל, כאלו עומד כנגד הקצ"ה⁸:
 (ד) לכל מטות ישראל. לצרות צצט לוי: (ה) וימסרו. להודיעך שצחן של
 רוטי ישראל כמה הם חציצים על ישראל, עד שלא שמשו צמיחתו מה הוא
 אומר עוד מעט וסקלוניו⁹, ומשמעו שמיחת משה תלויה צנקמת מדין, לא
 רצו ללכת עד שנמסרו על כרחן: (ו) אותם ואת פינחס. מגיד שהיה פינחס
 שקול כנגד כולם. ומפני מה הלך פינחס ולא הלך אלעזר, אמר הקצ"ה מי

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Did the tribe of Levi have to fight? (v. 4)

RASHI: [The words] "All the tribes" come to include the tribe of Levi.

RAMBAM: Why did the tribe of Levi not merit a portion in the Land of Israel and its spoils, as their brothers did? Because they have been

separated out to serve God as His ministers... Therefore they were also separated from worldly matters. They are not required to fight in war, like other Jewish people, and they do not inherit the Land (Laws of the Sabbatical and Jubilee Years 13:12).

8 ראה לקו"ש חכ"ג ע"י 76 הערה 25, ושיחת ש"פ מסו"מ תש"מ. 9 שמות יז, ד 10 בראשית לז, לז

1 נדרים עו: 2 ספרי 3 בבא קמא לז: 4 פסוק ה 5 תנחומא 6 שמות יז, ט 7 דברים א, טו 8 שמות ו, כה 9 סוטה מג. 10 פסוק ז 11 י"ג, כב. תנחומא. 12 במדבר כא, ט

- ¹⁶ If, after having heard about (a vow and ratifying it that day), he then annuls it (later in the day), he will be responsible for her sin.

¹⁷ These are the suprarational* commands which God commanded Moshe concerning a man and his wife, (and) a father and his adolescent daughter who is (under the jurisdiction of) her father's house.

🌀 THE WAR AGAINST MIDIAN 🌀

31
SECOND
READING

God spoke to Moshe, saying, ² "Take revenge against the Midianites for the children of Israel. After that, you will be gathered to your people."

³ Moshe (immediately) spoke to the people, saying, "From among yourselves, get men armed and ready for combat against Midian, to carry out God's revenge against Midian. ⁴ You should send for the army a thousand from each tribe; a thousand from each tribe. (This applies to) all the tribes of Israel."

⁵ From Israel's population, one thousand (men) were handed over from each tribe, (totaling) twelve thousand armed for combat. ⁶ Moshe sent them, the thousand from each tribe, for the army. (He sent) them with Pinchas the son of Elazar the priest to the army, with the sacred vessels and the signal trumpets entrusted to him.

⁷ They besieged Midian, as God had commanded Moshe, and they killed every male. ⁸ They killed the Midianite kings, (who fell) upon their (own people's) corpses. The five kings of Midian (that they killed were): Evi, Rekem, Tzur, Chur, and Reva. They killed Bilam the son of Be'or with a sword.

⁹ The children of Israel took the Midianite women captive, along with their small children.

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 THE WAR AGAINST MIDIAN (v. 1ff.)

In contrast to other wars, where the Levites did not fight, Rashi writes (in his commentary to verse 4) that the Levites were required to fight in the war against Midian.

However, this is difficult to understand in light of **Rambam's** explanation that the Levites were exempt from fighting because: "they have been separated out to serve God as His ministers.... Therefore they were also separated from worldly matters." Why was an exception made in this case?

The explanation is that the war against the seven Cana'anite nations was fought in order to conquer and settle their land, which would then lead to a life of plowing and sowing the land. Thus the Levites, who were "separated from worldly matters," did not participate in this war.

However, the war against Midian was not fought in order to conquer territory, but rather it was purely "to carry out God's revenge."** Thus, the war did not fall into the category of "worldly matters," but rather, it was solely an act of serving God—fitting indeed for the Levites, who "have been separated out to serve God as His ministers."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, p. 344; vol. 23, p. 210)

🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

According to Chasidic thought, the war against the seven Cana'anite nations alludes to the "battle" of refining one's overtly undesirable character traits (which fall into seven broad categories, stemming from the seven emotional faculties of the Animal Soul). Consequently, this "war" is not relevant to the tribe of Levi, or to those who aspire to their spiritual level—as **Rambam** writes that this could be: "any type of person... whose spirit inspires him, and he resolves in his mind to set himself apart [from worldly pursuits], to stand before God and serve as His minister, to work for Him, and to know God" (end of *Laws of the Sabbatical and Jubilee Years*).

In contrast, the war against Midian involved fighting against a subtle type of evil which is found in virtually every personality, even

those who dedicate themselves as full time "ministers" of God. Thus, even the Levites, and those among the Jewish people who devote themselves "to stand before God and serve as His minister," must participate in waging the spiritual war against Midian.

What is the "subtle evil" that can plague even the most dedicated servant of God? Chasidic thought explains that this is a lack of unity and camaraderie between one man and another, indicating underlying emotions of divisiveness and unjustified hatred. All this arises from a sense of over-inflated self-importance, which causes a person to be intolerant of others and eventually view them as enemies. Clearly the war against these attributes is very important indeed!

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, p. 344; s.v. *Heichlatzu 5659****)

* For an explanation why the apparently rational laws of vows are described by the Torah as *chukim* (suprarational commands) see *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Matos-Masei 5733*.

It was only after the war that the tribes of Re'uva and Gad decided to settle there. *In English: *On Ahavas Yisra'el (Sichos in English, 1988)*.

נכסיהון בָּזוּ: י וַיֵּת כָּל קְרוֹיָהוֹן בְּמוֹתְבְּנֵיהוֹן
וַיֵּת כָּל בֵּית סִנְדְּתֵיהוֹן אוֹקִידוֹ בְּנוֹרָא: יא וּשְׁבוּ
יֵת כָּל עֲדָה וַיֵּת כָּל דְּבַרְתָּא בְּאַנְשָׁא
וּבְכַעֲרָא: יב וַאֲיָתֵיו לֹות מִשָּׁה וּלֹות אֲלַעֲזֹר
כְּהֵנָּא וּלֹות כְּנִשְׁתָּא דְּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יֵת שְׁבִיָּא
וַיֵּת דְּבַרְתָּא וַיֵּת עֲדָה לְמִשְׁרֵיתָא לְמִיִּשְׂרָאֵל
דְּמוֹאֵב דִּי עַל יִרְדְּנָא דִּירְחוּ: יג וַנִּפְקֹו מִשָּׁה
וְאֲלַעֲזֹר כְּהֵנָּא וְכָל רִבְרֵבֵי כְּנִשְׁתָּא
לְקַדְמוֹתֵיהוֹן לְמִבְרָא לְמִשְׁרֵיתָא: יד וְהִנֵּי מִשָּׁה
עַל דְּמִמְנָן עַל חֵילָא רִבְנֵי אֶלְפִין וּרְבִנֵי
מְאוֹתָא דְּאָתוּ מִחֵיל קְרָבָא: טו וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן
מִשָּׁה הִקְיִמְתוּן כָּל נְקָבָא: טז הָא אֲנִין הִנּוּחָה
לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֵצַת בַּלְעָם לְשַׁקְרָא שְׁקֹר
קְרָם יי עַל עֶסֶק פְּעוֹר וְהוֹת מוֹתָנָא בְּכְנִשְׁתָּא
דִּי: יז וְכַעַן קְטוּלוּ כָל דְּכוּרָא בְּטַפְלָא וְכָל
אֲתָתָא דִּידַעַת נְבִיר לְמִשְׁכְּבֵי דְּכוּרָא קְטוּלוּ:
יח וְכָל מַפְלָא בְּנִשְׂיָא דִּי לֹא יִדְעָא מִשְׁכְּבֵי
דְּכוּרָא קִיִּימוּ לְכוּן: יט וַאֲתוּן שְׂרוּ מִבְרָא
לְמִשְׁרֵיתָא שְׁבַעַא יוֹמִין כָּל דִּי קָטַל נַפְשָׁא
וְכָל דִּי קָרַב בְּקַטִּילָא תְּדוּן עֲלוּהִי בְּיוֹמָא
תְּלִיתָאָה וּבְיוֹמָא שְׁבִיעֵאָה אֲתוּן וּשְׁבִיבוּן:
כ וְכָל לְבוּשׁ וְכָל מִן דְּמִשְׁדָּ וְכָל עוֹבֵד מַעֲזִי
וְכָל מִן דְּאָע תְּדוּן עֲלוּהִי: כא וַאֲמַר אֲלַעֲזֹר
כְּהֵנָּא לְנִבְרֵי חֵילָא דְּאָתוּ לְקָרְבָא דָּא גֹּזֵרַת
אוֹרִיתָא דִּי פְקִיד יי יֵת מִשָּׁה: כב כָּרַם יֵת

מְקַנְהֵם וְאֶת־כָּל־חֵילֵם בָּזוּ: י וַאֲתַ כָּל־עַרְיָהֶם בְּמוֹשְׁבֹתָם
וְאֶת כָּל־טִירְתָם שָׂרְפוּ בְּאֵשׁ: יא וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־כָּל־הַשָּׁלָל וְאֶת
כָּל־הַמְּלָקוֹחַ בְּאֶדְם וּבְבַהֲמָה: יב וַיָּבֵאוּ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל־אֲלַעֲזָר
הַכֹּהֵן וְאֶל־עֲדַת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַשְּׁבִי וְאֶת־הַמְּלָקוֹחַ וְאֶת־
הַשָּׁלָל אֶל־הַמִּחְנֶה אֶל־עֲרֶבֶת מוֹאָב אֲשֶׁר עַל־יַרְדֵּן יְרֵחוֹ: ס
[שלישין] [שני כשהן מחוברין] יג וַיֵּצְאוּ מִשָּׁה וְאֲלַעֲזָר הַכֹּהֵן וְכָל־נְשִׂאֵי
הָעֵדָה לְקִרְיָתָם אֶל־מַחֲוִיץ לְמִחְנֶה: יד וַיִּקְצַף מֹשֶׁה עַל פְּקוּדֵי
הַחֵיל שָׂרֵי הָאֲלָפִים וְשָׂרֵי הַמְּאֹות הַבָּאִים מִצִּבְיָא הַמְּלַחְמָה:
טו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם מֹשֶׁה הַחַיִּיתֶם כָּל־נְקָבָה: טז הֵן הִנֵּה הָיוּ
לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּדַבַּר בַּלְעָם לְמַסַּר־מַעַל בִּיהוָה עַל־דְּבַר־פְּעוֹר
וַתְּהִי הַמַּגִּפָּה בְּעֵדַת יְהוָה: יז וְעַתָּה הֲרִגוּ כָל־זָכָר בְּטָף וְכָל־
אִשָּׁה יָדַעַת אִישׁ לְמִשְׁכָּב זָכָר הֲרִגוּ: יח וְכָל הַטָּף בְּנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר
לֹא־יָדְעוּ מִשְׁכָּב זָכָר הַחַיּוּ לָכֶם: יט וְאַתֶּם חָנוּ מַחֲוִיץ לְמִחְנֶה
שִׁבְעַת יָמִים כָּל הָרֶג נָפֶשׁ וְכָל אֶנְגַע בַּחֲלָל תִּתְחַטְּאוּ בַּיּוֹם
הַשְּׁלִישִׁי וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי אַתֶּם וּשְׁבִיכֶם: כ וְכָל־בְּגָד וְכָל־כְּלִי־
עוֹר וְכָל־מַעֲשֵׂה עֵזִים וְכָל־כְּלִי־עֵץ תִּתְחַטְּאוּ: ס כא וַיֹּאמֶר
אֲלַעֲזָר הַכֹּהֵן אֶל־אֲנָשֵׁי הַצִּבְיָא הַבָּאִים לְמַלְחָמָה זֹאת חֻקַּת
הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: כב אַךְ אֶת־הַזֹּהָב וְאֶת־

כ"ש"י

הטף צנעים וגו' איני יודע אם להרוג (וכל אשה יודעת) עם הזכרים או להחיות עם הטף, לכך נאמר הרגו:⁹ (יט) מחוץ למחנה. שלא יכנסו לעזרה: כל הורג נפש. ר' מאיר אומר צבור צדצר המקבל טומאה הכחוצ מדצר, ולמדך הכחוצ שהכלי מטמא אדם צחצורי המת, כאלו נוגע צמת עצמו, או יכול אפילו זרק צו חץ והרגו, תלמוד לומר וכל הנוגע צחלל, מקיש הורג לנוגע, מה נוגע ע"י חצוריו, אף הורג ע"י חצוריו:¹⁰ תתחטאו. צמי נדה, כדן שאר טמאי מתים, שאף לדברי האומרים קברי עובדי גלולים אינן מטמאין צחלל, שנאמר ואתן לאני לאן מרעיתי אדם אתם:¹¹ אחס קרויין אדם ואין הגוים קרויין אדם, מודה הוא שהגוים מטמאין צמגע וצמשא, שלא נאמר אדם אלל אלל טומאת אהלים, שנאמר:¹² אדם כי ימות צחלל:¹³ אתם ושביכם. לא שהנכרים מקבלין טומאה ולריכין הזאה, אלא מה אתם בני צרית, אף שצרכם כשיצואו לצרית ויעמאו, לריכין הזאה:¹⁴ (כ) וכל מעשה עזים. להציא כלי הקרניים והטלפים והעצמות:¹⁵ (כא) ויאמר אלעזר הכהן וגו'. לפי שצא משה לכלל כעס צא לכלל טעות, שנעלמו ממנו הלכות גיעולי נכרים. וכן אהה מולא צשמיני למלואים, שנאמר ויקצוף (משה) על אלעזר ועל איתמר:¹⁶ צא לכלל כעס, צא לכלל טעות, וכן צשמעו נא המורים ויך את הסלע:¹⁶ ע"י הכעס טעה:¹⁷ אשר צוה ה' וגו'. תלה ההוראה צצבו: (כב) אך את הזהב וגו'. אף על פי שלא הזהיר לכס משה אלא על הלכות טומאה,

שנאמר ועל חרצך תחיה:¹ (י) טירתם. מקום פלטרין שלהם, שהוא לשון מושצ כומרים יודעי חוקיהם. דצר אחר לשון מושצ שריהם, כמו שמתורגם סרני פלשתיים² טורני פלשתיים:³ (יא) ויקחו את כל השלל וגו'. מגיד שהיו כשרים ודיוקים ולא נחשדו על הגזל לשלוח יד בצזה שלא צרשות, שנאמר את כל השלל וגו',³ ועליהם מפורש צקבלה שניך כעדר החללים וגו',⁴ אף אנשי המלחמה צצין כולם לדיוקים:⁵ שלא. הן מטלטלין של מלצוש ותכשיטין: בז. הוא ציזת מטלטלין שאינם תכשיטין: מלקוח. אדם ובהמה. וצמקום שכתוב צצו אלל מלקוח, צצו צאדם ומלקוח צבהמה: (יג) ויצאו משה ואלעזר הכהן. לפי שראו את נערי ישראל יולאים לחטוף מן הצזה:⁶ (יד) ויקצוף משה על פקודי החיל. ממונים על החיל, ללמדך שכל סרחון הדור תלוי צגדולים שיש כה צידס למחות:⁷ (טז) בדבר בלעם. אמר להם אפילו אתם מכניסים כל המונות (ס"א האומות) צצעולס אין אתם יכולים להם, שמה מרובים אתם מן המזרים שהיו שש מאות רכצ צחור. צואו ואשיאכם ענה. אלהיכם של אלו שונא זמה הוא וכו', כדאיחא צחלקו⁸ וצספרי:⁹ הן הגדה. מגיד שהיו מכירין אותן. זו היא שנכשל פלוני צה: (יז) וכל אשה יודעת איש. ראויה להצעל אף על פי שלא נצעלה. ולפני הליץ העצירים והראוייה להצעל פניה מוריקות:⁸ הרגו. למח חזר ואמר, להפסיק הענין, דצרי רי ישמעאל,³ שאם אני קורא הרגו כל זכר צטף וכל אשה יודעת איש וכל

1 בראשית כז, מ 2 ירושע יג, ג 3 ספרי 4 שה"ש 1, 1 5 ראה שיחת ש"פ מטות תשמ"א. 6 סנהדרין קו. 7 ראה לקו"ש ח"י"ח ע' 357 8 יבמות ט: 9 ראה שיחת ש"פ מטות תשמ"ו. 10 ספרי. וראה לקו"ש ח"כ"ז ע' 200 ואי"ך. 11 יחזקאל לז, לא 12 במדבר יט, יד 13 יבמות טא. וראה שיחת ש"פ מטות תשמ"ו. 14 חולין כה: 15 ויקרא יג, טז 16 במדבר כ, י"א

They plundered all their animals and herds, and all their possessions. ¹⁰ They set fire to all their residential cities and their cloisters.

¹¹ *They took all the booty and all the plunder of both man and beast (but kept nothing for themselves).*

¹² *They brought the captives, the plunder, and the booty to Moshe, Elazar the priest and the entire community of Israel, to the camp at the plains of Mo'av by the Jordan at Jericho.*

THIRD
READING
(2ND WHEN
JOINED)

¹³ *(When they heard that some youths had gone outside the camp to grab plunder) Moshe, Elazar the priest, and all the leaders of the community went out to meet them outside the camp (to put an end to it).*

¹⁴ *Moshe became angry with the officers of the army, (both) the officers over thousands (of men) and the officers over hundreds (of men), who had returned from the campaign of war. ¹⁵ Moshe said to them, "You've allowed all the females to live? ¹⁶ They were the very ones who acted on Bilam's words against the children of Israel to betray God in the Pe'or affair, resulting in a plague among God's congregation!"*

¹⁷ *"Now kill every male child! And kill every woman capable of knowing a man, (I mean every one) who could sleep with a male. ¹⁸ But you may keep alive all the young girls who have never experienced sleeping with a man."*

🌀 PURIFICATION, PURGING & IMMERSION FOLLOWING THE WAR 🌀

31:19 **“Y**ou must stay outside the camp for seven days. Whoever killed a person or who touched a corpse should cleanse himself (with the sprinkling water of the Red Heifer*) on the third and seventh day. (And just as) you (require purification because you are members of the covenant, so too,) your captives (will require purification when they enter the covenant). ²⁰ All garments, leather articles, any goat products, and every wooden article must be cleansed (with sprinkling water).”

²¹ *Elazar the priest said to the soldiers returning from battle: “This (purification through sprinkling water which was stated above**) is the suprarational law of the Torah that God commanded Moshe.*

- ²² *“However, (in addition to ritually purifying the vessels with sprinkling water, Moshe also taught us that they must be purged from the flavor of the non-kosher food, as follows): The gold, the*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Elazar clarify the law of purging vessels, and not Moshe? (v. 21)

RASHI: Since Moshe fell into a state of anger (v. 14), he fell into a state of error: The laws of purging vessels belonging to gentiles were concealed from him. We find a similar incident occurred on the eighth day of inauguration, as the verse states, “*He became angry with Elazar and Isamar*” (Vayikra 10:16)—he fell into a state of anger, so he fell into a state of error [criticizing them for burning the sin-offering

(see Rashi *ibid*.)]. Likewise [when Moshe said]: “*Listen, you rebels!*” (above 20:10), “*he hit the rock*” (*ibid.* 11). Through anger, he came to err.

● What did Elazar tell them? (v. 22)

RASHI: Even though Moshe warned you only about the laws of ritual impurity, you must be further warned about the laws of purging.... Even after their purification from the ritual impurity caused by a corpse (v. 20), you still may not use vessels until they have been purified from the [flavor of] non-kosher meat that they absorbed.

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🌀 MOSHE'S ERROR (RASHI TO V. 21)

In the current passage we read how the vessels that were captured by the Jewish people as plunder from the war against Midian were required to be cleansed with sprinkling water (into which ashes of the Red Heifer had been mixed), to remove the ritual impurity that had been caused by contact with a corpse. This law was taught to the Jewish people by Moshe in verse 20.

In verse 22, Elazar added another law, that the vessels needed to be purged, i.e. since these vessels had been used to cook non-kosher food, the flavor of that food had seeped into the walls of the vessels. Thus, if a person cooked kosher food in one of these vessels, the non-kosher flavor

would seep out of the walls of the vessel into the food, thus rendering it non-kosher. To avoid this problem, the vessels had to be “*passed through fire*” (v. 23), which would purge the flavors that are in the walls of the vessel (see Rashi to v. 22).

In his commentary to verse 21, Rashi explains why this latter law was taught by Elazar, and not Moshe: “*Since Moshe fell into a state of anger (v. 14), he fell into a state of error: The laws of purging vessels belonging to gentiles were concealed from him.*” Rashi continues to explain that this had occurred on two previous occasions: In *Parshas Shemini*, when Moshe had become angry that a sin-offering goat had been burned; and in *Parshas Chukas*, when Moshe erred in hitting the rock.

* See above 19:9. **See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, p. 183.

דִּבְרָא וְנָתַתָּא יְתָּא נְחֻשְׁתָּא יְתָּא פְּרוּלָא יְתָּא אֲבָעָא וְיָת אֲבָרָא: כּג כָּל מַדְעָם דְּמַתְעַל בְּנוּרָא תַעֲבָרְנָה בְּנוּרָא וְיִדְבְּי פְּרָם בְּמִי אֲדִיּוּתָא יְתִדִי וְכָל דִּי לֹא מַתְעַל בְּנוּרָא תַעֲבָרְנָה בְּמִיָּא: כּד וְתַחֲוּוֹן לְבוּשִׁיכוֹן בְּיוֹמָא שְׁבִיעָא וְתִדְכּוֹן וּבְתֵר בֶּן תַּעֲלוֹן לְמִשְׁרֵיתָא: כה וְאָמַר יְיָ לְמֹשֶׁה לְמִיּוֹר: כו קִבַּל יְתָּא חֲשָׁבֵן דְּבֵרַת שְׁבִיָּא בְּאִנְשָׁא וּבְכַעֲרָא אֶת וְאֶלְעֹר כְּהֵנָּה וְרִישֵׁי אֲבָהַת כְּנֻשְׁתָּא: כז וְתַפְלִיג יְתָּא דְּבֵרַתָּא בִּין גְּבַרֵי מְגִיחֵי קִרְבָּא דְּנַפְקוּ לְחִילָא

הַכֶּסֶף אֶת־הַנְּחֹשֶׁת אֶת־הַבְּרֹזֶל אֶת־הַבְּדִיל וְאֶת־הָעֹפְרַת: כג כָּל־דָּבָר אֲשֶׁר־יָבֹא בְּאֵשׁ תַּעֲבִירוּ בְּאֵשׁ וְטָהַר אֵךְ בְּמִי נִדְּהָ יִתְחַטָּא וְכָל אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָבֹא בְּאֵשׁ תַּעֲבִירוּ בְּמַיִם: כד וְכִבְּסֹתֶם בְּגִדֵיכֶם בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וְטָהַרְתֶּם וְאַחַר תָּבֹאוּ אֶל־הַמִּחֲנֶה: ס [רביעי] כה וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: כו שָׂא אֶת רֹאשׁ מַלְקוֹת הַשָּׁבִי בְּאַדָּם וּבְבַהֲמָה אֶתָּה וְאֶלְעֹר הַכֹּהֵן וְרֹאשֵׁי אֲבוֹת הָעֵדָה: כז וְחֻצִיתָ אֶת־הַמַּלְקוֹת בֵּין תַּפְשֵׁי הַמַּלְחָמָה

רש"י

אמר להם לריכין הכלים גיעול לטהרם מן האיסור, וחטוי לטהרן מן הטומאה. ורבותינו דרשו מכאן, שאף להכשירן מן האיסור הטעין טבילה לכלי מתכות. ומי נדה ככתובין כאן דרשו מים הראויים לטבול בהם נדה. וכמה הם, ארבעים סאה: וכל אשר לא יבא באש. כל דבר שאין תשמישו ע"י האור, כגון כוסות ולוחיות ששמישן זנון ולא זלשו איסור: תעבירו במים. מטבילין דווי ודוקא כלי מתכות: (כד) אל המחנה. למחנה שכינה, שאין טמא מת טעון שילוח ממחנה לוי וממחנה ישראל: (כו) שא את ראש. קח את החשבון: (כז) וחצית את המלקוח

עוד יש להזכיר לכם על הלכות גיעול. ואך לשון מיעוט, כלומר ממועטין אתם מלהשתמש בכלים אפילו לאחר טהרתן מטומאת המת, עד שיטהרו מזליעת איסור נבלות. ורבותינו אמרו אך את הזכזכומ לומר שלריך להעביר חלודה שלו קודם שיגעילנו, וזהו לשון אך, שלא יהא שם חלודה, אך המתכת יהיה כמות שהוא: (כג) כל דבר אשר יבא באש. לזבל זו כלום: תעבירו באש. כדרך תשמישו הגעלותו, מה שתשמישו ע"י חמין, יגעילנו בחמין, ומה שתשמישו ע"י ללי, כגון השפוד והאסכלבה, ילזנוו צאור: אך במי נדה יתחטא. לפי פשוטו חטוי זה לטהרו מטומאת מת.

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Rashi's comments prompt the following questions:

- a.) Being that Moshe's anger had led him to err on these two previous occasions, why did Rashi wait until this *third* occasion to explain the principle that anger leads to error?
- b.) What Moshe said was, in fact, correct. He had *rightly* instructed the people to purify the vessels from the ritual impurity of a corpse by applying sprinkling water. What Moshe had failed to do was to inform them of the *additional* procedure, that the vessels needed to be purged too, since he had failed to recall this detail—as Rashi writes, “The laws of purging vessels belonging to gentiles *were concealed from him.*” Surely this is not an “error” (i.e. a misjudgment), but rather, an *omission* of an additional, totally unrelated law, being that ritual purification and purging are two completely different concepts?

THE EXPLANATION

The fact that non-kosher flavors absorbed in a vessel need to be removed before kosher food is cooked in it is *logical*, and clearly, Moshe would have been aware of this fact. Thus when “*the laws of purging vessels... were concealed from him,*” and he failed to recall the *method* of removing these flavors, Moshe was nevertheless aware of the *necessity* to remove them. But since he could only recall one procedure that *needed* to be performed with these vessels (the application of sprinkling water) Moshe presumed that *this single procedure* would achieve *both* goals: It would remove the ritual impurity caused by a corpse, *and* it would remove the non-kosher flavors from the vessels.

Moshe's reasoning was simple: We see that a few drops of sprinkling water had an effect that was far beyond its site of application, removing ritual impurity from the *entire* vessel, even though the water was only applied to a small part of the vessel. So Moshe reasoned: Being that the sprinkling water is extremely powerful and has a far-reaching effect *beyond the site where it is applied*, it must be able to remove the flavors from the vessel too.

Of course, if Moshe had remembered the law that flavors are actually removed through purging, he would not have been led to make this assumption. But since the law was concealed from him, and he knew that the flavors had to be removed somehow, he presumed that the far-reaching effects of the sprinkling water were not limited to removing impurity, and that they could remove flavor too.

The Last Word

ANGER AND FORGETFULNESS

Arizal considered anger to be a more serious sin than all others. For when a person commits any sin other than becoming angry, his soul still remains in his body. But when angry, a person's soul *departs* from his body and is replaced by an “external soul.” This explains why one tends to forget his Torah studies through becoming angry, due to the departure of the soul.

(Sha'ar Ha-Yichudim at end; see Likutei Torah, Pinchas 80d; see Sich'a of Shabbos Parshas Va'eira 5711).

With regard to the question of temper, and especially where we are speaking of anger, this weakness can be controlled by reflecting on the verse, “*I visualize God before me always*” (Psalms 16:8), which is also the introduction to the first part of the *Shulchan Aruch* [Code of Jewish Law], and thus an introduction to the entire code regulating Jewish behavior in the daily life. By reflecting upon the fact that one is *always*—at every moment—in the presence of God, how is it possible for him to sink so far as to display any kind of temper?”

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe in 5733)

silver, the copper, the iron, the tin, and the lead,²³ whatever is used in fire, must be passed through fire by you, and then it will be purified.

- “They must, however, (also) be cleansed with sprinkling water (alternatively: with mikvah water).
- “Whatever (utensils) are not used in fire (but rather, with cold foods), should be passed through (mikvah) water by you (straightaway, since they do not need to be purged).
- ²⁴ “You should wash your garments on the seventh day and (they will) become ritually pure. Afterwards, you may enter the camp.”

🌀 DIVIDING THE SPOILS OF WAR 🌀

31:25
FOURTH
READING

God spoke to Moshe, saying,²⁶ “Calculate the total plunder of the captured people and animals. You (should do this) together with Elazar the priest and the community’s paternal (tribal) leaders.²⁷ Divide the plunder equally between the soldiers that went out to battle and (the rest of) the entire congregation.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why were the laws of purging given here? (v. 23)

RAMBAN: In the earlier wars with Sichon and Og the Jewish people had also taken plunder (*Devarim* 2:35), which presumably included non-kosher vessels. Nevertheless, those wars were part of the conquest of the Land of Israel, and the *Talmud* states that during the conquest they were allowed to eat non-kosher food (*Chulin* 17a)—and certainly then, to eat from non-kosher vessels. The war with Midian, however, was not part of the conquest of the Land of Israel so, for the first time, the Jewish people were faced with purging the non-kosher vessels, which is why the laws of purging were given at this point.

HAR TZVI: *Ramban* explains why the laws of purging were given at this point, but he does not explain why the requirement to immerse

vessels in a *mikvah* (v. 23) was only given here. In truth, however, it is inappropriate to ask why a *mitzvah* was given at a particular time and not beforehand, since the obligation only arises at the time when the Torah deemed fit to introduce it. The case of purging vessels however, appears to be an exception to this principle, since it is a *logical extension* of the prohibitions against eating non-kosher food, that were *already in force*. That is why *Ramban* was troubled by this question in particular (*Har Tzvi, Responsa Yoreh De'ah* 109).

● What law do we learn from verse 23?

RASHI: Our Rabbis expounded from here that even to make [vessels] fit for use from [their association with] forbidden food, immersion [in a *mikvah*] is required for metal utensils.

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Thus, when *Rashi* writes that “he fell into a state of *error*,” this does not contradict his statement that “the laws of purging vessels...were *concealed* from him.” Because, as a result of the fact that the law of purging was concealed from Moshe, he was led to make the erroneous presumption that sprinkling water can remove flavors too.

MOSHE’S PRIOR ERRORS

While Moshe came to an erroneous conclusion here as a result of his anger, the previous occasions where Moshe seemed to have erred in anger were not such clear-cut mistakes. In our case, Moshe had been lacking crucial information (which was “concealed from him”) that led him to make a presumption that has no basis in Torah. But on the previous occasions, it appeared that Moshe had followed a path of Torah logic:

In the case of the sin-offering that was burnt, provoking Moshe’s anger in *Parshas Shemini*, *Rashi* explains (*Vayikra* 10:16) that Moshe and Aharon differed over an extremely subtle and intricate argument (about whether the laws of mourning concerning a temporary offering applied to a permanent offering too), and both sides appear to have a Torah-based argument. Likewise, the reason why Moshe hit the rock had a logic within the system of Torah, as *Rashi* explains (above 20:11) that Moshe followed the instructions which God gave to him on a previous occasion, to strike the rock at Choraiv (*Shemos* 17:6).

In both these cases the *final conclusion* of the argument was not in Moshe’s favor. But if a person presents an argument which is valid

according to Torah, he is not deemed to be mistaken if the *final ruling* does not favor him. Rather, he made a valid point, but ultimately, another view was deemed to be more appropriate. So, from these previous two cases we have no proof that anger leads to error, since it was not clear that Moshe erred.

In our case, however, where Moshe clearly made an outright mistake—when he failed to recall crucial information—we have a clear basis to conclude, “*Since Moshe fell into a state of anger, he fell into a state of error.*”

And now, having proven that anger does indeed lead to error, we see *retroactively* that in the previous two cases where Moshe’s argument was rejected it was probably not because Moshe had a valid point of view but rather, it was a clouding of judgment that came as a result of anger.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, p. 182ff.)

🌀 IMMERSION OF VESSELS (RASHI TO V. 23)

Ramban explains why the laws of purging vessels were given at this time, and not earlier, after the wars against Sichon and Og. **Har Tzvi** asks why *Ramban* did not explain a similar question: Why was the requirement to immerse vessels acquired from a non-Jew in the *mikvah* introduced only here? He answers that the question why a *mitzvah* was introduced at a certain point is not a valid one, since the Torah has the right to introduce a precept whenever it sees fit to do so. *Har Tzvi* also explains that *Ramban*

ובין כל כְּנִשְׁתָּא: כה ותפּרש נסיבא קדם יי מן נכרי מגיחי קרבא דנפקו לחילא חד נפשא מחמש מאה מן אנשא ומן תורי ומן חמרי ומן ענא: כט מפלגותהון תסבון ותייב לאלעזר כהנא אפרשותא קדם יי: ל ומפלגות בני ישראל תסב חד דאפתח מן חמשי מן אנשא מן תורי מן חמרי ומן ענא מכל בעירא ותייב יתהון ללואי נטרי מטרת משכנא דיי: לא ועבד משה ואלעזר כהנא כמא די פקיד יי ית משה: לב והנה דברתא שאר בוא די בוא עמא די נפקו לחילא ענא שית מאה ושבעין וחמשא אלפין: לג ותורי שבעין ותריין אלפין: לד וחמרי שתין וחד אלפין: לה ונפשא דאנשא מן נשיא די לא ידעא משכבי דכורא כל נפשתא תלתין

היציאים לצבא ובין כל־העדה: כה והרמת מכם ליהוה מאת אנשי המלחמה היציאים לצבא אחד נפש מחמש המאות מן האדם ומן הבקר ומן החמרים ומן־הצאן: כט מִמַּחְצֵיתֶם תִּקְחוּ וְנִתְּתָה לְאַלְעָזָר הַכֹּהֵן תְּרוּמַת יְהוָה: ל וממחצת בני־ישראל תקח | אחד | אתו מן־החמשים מן־האדם מן־הבקר מן־החמרים ומן־הצאן מִכָּל־הַבְּהֵמָה וְנִתְּתָה אֹתָם לְלוֹיִם שְׂמֵרֵי מִשְׁמֶרֶת מִשְׁכַּן יְהוָה: לא ויעש משה ואלעזר הכהן כאשר צוה יהוה את־משה: לב ויהי המלקוח יתר הבז אשר בזו עם הצבא צאן שש־מאות אֶלֶף וְשִׁבְעִים אֶלֶף וְחַמֵּשֶׁת אֶלְפִים: לג ובקר שנים וְשִׁבְעִים אֶלֶף: לד וחמרים אחד וְשִׁשִּׁים אֶלֶף: לה ונפש אדם מן־הנשים אשר לא־ידעו משכב זכר

כ"ז

הלשון הזה ויחי המלקוח שזא כלל חלוקה ולכלל מכם, שכיח עורך על צו המטלטלין אשר צו עס הכזא איש לו ולא צא כלל חלוקה, מספר הכאן וגוי:

בין תפשי המלחמה וגוי. הלוי לאלו וחלוי לאלו: (לג) ויהי המלקוח יתר הבז. לפי שלא נלטו לכריס מכם מן המטלטלין אלא מן המלקוח, כתב את

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had a special reason for asking his question in connection with the purging of vessels (since purging is connected with the laws of *kashrus* in general, which were already in force).

However, being that *Ramban* himself does not make even a brief reference to the distinction that *Har Tzvi* suggests, it would be preferable to find a solution which is indicated in the words of *Ramban* himself—or in *Rashi's* words (on which *Ramban's* comments here are based).

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi writes that the reason why vessels need to be immersed in a *mikvah* before use is “to make [vessels] fit for use from [their association with] forbidden food.” At first glance this is difficult to understand, since even if the vessels of a gentile were never used with forbidden food, they still require immersion when a Jew acquires them (*Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh De'ah* 120:1). In fact, *Rashi* himself emphasizes this point, writing that those vessels from the plunder of Midian that, “had not absorbed [the flavor] of forbidden food” nevertheless required immersion (*Rashi* to v. 23, s.v. *vechol asher lo yavo*). Why then does he write that the purpose of immersion is “to make [vessels] fit for use after [their association with] forbidden food”?

The answer to this problem can be gleaned by comparing this comment of *Rashi* with his explanation of the *mitzvah* of purging vessels: “You still may not use vessels until they have been purified from the [flavor of] non-kosher meat that they absorbed” (*Rashi* to v. 22, cited in *Classic Questions* above). Note that *Rashi* describes purging as a process of “purification” whereas he defines immersion in a *mikvah* as a process aimed at making the vessels “fit for use.” Now, “purification” can only occur when some impurity is present (in this case, the flavor of non-kosher food), which is then removed. Rendering something “fit for use” however, does not necessarily mean that an item has become contaminated; rather, we could just be speaking here of an additional phase of preparation required before use.

Thus, when *Rashi* describes immersion in a *mikvah*, not as a type of purification (to *remove* impurity), but as a process of rendering vessels “fit for use,” he makes clear that this preparatory phase is required both for vessels that *have* been contaminated with non-kosher food *and* for those that were *never* contaminated.

Rashi clarifies that the reason for this immersion is “to make [vessels] fit for use from [their association with] forbidden food.” The fact that the vessels were in the possession of a gentile means that they were associated with forbidden food, i.e. they were in a position where contamination with non-kosher food was a *possibility*. Therefore, the Torah requires immersion to rid the vessels of this association, regardless of whether they were actually contaminated or not.

(In fact, this resembles another command issued in the current passage, to “kill every woman capable of knowing a man, (I mean every one) who could sleep with a male” (v. 17), regardless of whether this had occurred or not, since it had been a possibility).

We now have a simple answer to *Har Tzvi's* problem (that *Ramban* explained why the *mitzvah* of purging was not given directly after the war against Sichon and Og, but failed to address the same question about the *mitzvah* of immersing vessels in a *mikvah*). For being that *Ramban's* words are based on *Rashi's* comment here, and *Rashi* clarifies that the purpose of immersion is “to make [vessels] fit for use after [their association with] forbidden food,” it is obvious from *Ramban's* comments why immersion of vessels was not required after the war against Sichon and Og—because that war was part of the conquest of the Land of Israel during which it was *permitted* to eat non-kosher food. Therefore, it is self-evident that at that time there was no need to “disassociate” the vessels from forbidden food through the precept of immersion.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 363ff.)

²⁸ “You should take a tax for God from the soldiers who went out to battle: From the people, from the cattle, donkeys, and sheep (take) one individual from every five hundred. ²⁹ Take this from their half (of the plunder) and give it to Elazar the priest as a gift to God.*

³⁰ “From the half belonging to the children of Israel take one fiftieth of the people, cattle, donkeys, sheep, and all the animals, and give them to the Levites, the guardians of God’s Tabernacle.”*

³¹ Moshe and Elazar the priest did what God had commanded Moshe.

³² The (total) plunder—in addition to the spoils that the army had taken as spoils (from inanimate objects that were not taxable)—was:

- Six hundred and seventy-five thousand sheep.
- ³³ Seventy-two thousand cattle.
- ³⁴ Sixty-one thousand donkeys.
- ³⁵ And people: The total number of the women who had not experienced sleeping with a man, was thirty-two thousand.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the Torah state in detail how God’s instructions to divide plunder were carried out? (v. 32-47)

RAMBAN: To inform us of a miracle, that from the time the plunder was taken, until the time it was distributed, not one of the animals died.

OHR HACHAYIM: Ramban’s explanation does not convince me, for the fact that no animals were lost in this short period of time does not appear to be a miracle. And why would the Torah list all these details of the plunder just to convey that single point?

Rather, it appears to me that the details of the plunder’s distribution were recorded to clarify the meaning of the command to take “one individual from every five hundred” (v. 28). For this could have one of two interpretations:

- i.) Either one counts 500 animals and then gives one as the “tax”;
- ii.) Or perhaps one was to take 499 and then give one to the “tax”?

The details of the plunder’s distribution were thus recorded to indicate that the latter method was God’s intention.

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 THE DETAILS OF THE PLUNDER’S DISTRIBUTION (v. 32-47)

Ramban and **Ohr haChayim** both address the question why the Torah describes in such great detail how God’s instructions to divide the plunder were carried out.

Being that this is a question at the literal level, we would have expected *Rashi* to address it. *Rashi*’s silence here suggests that he deemed the explanation to require no further commentary, so we need to clarify how this matter can be explained at the literal level.

Ramban’s solution (that the Torah informs us here of a miracle that none of the animals died before they were distributed), appears difficult to accept at the literal level, for what was the purpose of this miracle? Are we not taught that God does not perform a miracle in vain? And if God’s intention was to prevent the Jewish people from losing resources through the death of animals, surely God has many means of ensuring that His people are supported financially and do not have to resort to a miracle?

Ohr haChayim’s solution indeed appears to be more literal, but *Rashi* makes no indication of it at all. What then was *Rashi*’s understanding of the matter?

THE EXPLANATION

After reading God’s command to divide the plunder into two, and take a tax of 1 in 500 from one half and 1 in 50 to form the other half, we are left with the question: What was to be done with the remainder? Surely the number of cattle, donkeys, sheep and people in each half of the plunder would not have *each* been exactly divisible by 500 and by 50?

The Torah thus specifies the details of how all the different types of plunder were divided to inform the reader that, remarkably, this was the

case: half of *each type* of plunder was exactly divisible by 500 and 50, with no remainder at all! Consequently, the reader will understand why God had not given any instructions what to do with the remaining plunder, since there simply was no remainder.

While the fact that this division occurred precisely was not supernatural (for it is *possible* that the division would be completed perfectly) it was nevertheless an extremely unlikely occurrence. So it begs the question: Why did God orchestrate the plunder to be perfectly divisible?

Again, *Rashi* did not answer this question, as it can be understood from a literal reading of scripture. After stating that a tax of 1 in 500 was to be given (v. 28), the Torah instructs, “Take this from their half” (v. 29), suggesting that the *entire* half was to be taxed, *without exception*. So, if the entire plunder had not been exactly divisible into two, or if this half of the plunder had not been exactly divisible by 500, God’s command would not have been fulfilled properly, since some of the plunder would have remained untaxed.

The unusual occurrence of *ohr* the amounts being exactly divisible was thus orchestrated on High in order to help the Jewish people perform a *mitzvah*, that of taxing *all* the plunder.

Likewise, the fact that not one of the animals died during the entire procedure was not a breach of the laws of nature, but rather, a highly unusual occurrence which enabled the Jewish people to do this *mitzvah* in the best way possible.

The lesson is obvious: We should always trust that God will orchestrate events, enabling observance of His *mitzvos* in the best way possible.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 13, p. 110ff.)

*Even though plunder was forbidden for priests and Levites (*Rashi* to *Devarim* 18:1), here the plunder first passed into the Jewish people’s possession, before being given *by the Jewish people* to the priests and Levites as a “gift for God” (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, p. 217, note 84. For an explanation according to *halachah*, see *Likutei Sichos* vol. 23, p. 206ff.).

ותרין אלפין: לו ונות פלגותא חלק גבריא די נפקו לחילא מנן ענא תלת מאה ותלתין ושבע אלפין וחמש מאה: לו ונהו נסיבא קדם יי מן ענא שית מאה שבעין וחמש: לה ותורי תלתין ושפא אלפין ונסיבהון קדם יי שבעין ותרי: לא וחמרי תלתין אלפין וחמש מאה ונסיבהון קדם יי שתין וחד: מ ונפשא דאנשא שתא עשר אלפין ונסיבהון קדם יי תלתין ותרי נפשו: מא ויהב משה ית נסיב אפרשותא קדם יי לאלעזר כהנא כמא די פקיד יי ית משה: מב ומפלגות בני ישראל די פלג משה מן גבריא די נפקו לחילא: מג ונות פלגות כנשתא מן ענא תלת מאה ותלתין ושבעא אלפין וחמש מאה: מד ותורי תלתין ושפא אלפין: מה וחמרי תלתין אלפין וחמש מאה: מו ונפשא דאנשא שתא עשר אלפין: מז ונסיב משה מפלגות בני ישראל ית דאתחד חד מן חמשין מן אנשא ומן בעירא ויהב וניהון ללואי נטרי מסרת משפנא דין כמא די פקיד יי ית משה: מח וקרבו לות משה המנן על אלפי חילא רבני אלפין ורבני מאותא: מט ואמרו למשה עבדיך קבילו ית חשבון גברי מיחי קרבא די עמנא ולא שגא מננא אנש: נ וקרבנא ית קרבנא דין גבר דאשפח מן דדהב שרין ושככי עוקן קדשין ומחוד לכפרא על נפשתינא קדם יי: נא ונסיב משה ואלעזר כהנא ית דהבא מנהון כל מן דעובדא: נב ונהו כל דהב אפרשותא די אפרישו קדם יי שתא עשר אלפין שבע מאה וחמשין סלעין מן רבני אלפין ומן רבני מאותא: נג גברי דחילא בוו גבר לנפשה: נד ונסיב משה ואלעזר כהנא ית דהבא מן רבני אלפין ומאותא ואיתוי ויהו למשפון זמנא דכרנא לבני ישראל קדם

כל־נפש שנים ושלשים אלה: לו ותהי המחצה חלק היצאים בצבא מספר הצאן שלש־מאות אלה ושלשים אלה ושבעת אלפים וחמש מאות: לו ויהי המכס ליהוה מן־הצאן שש מאות חמש ושבעים: לה והבקר ששה ושלשים אלה ומכסם ליהוה שנים ושבעים: לה וחמרים שלשים אלה וחמש מאות ומכסם ליהוה אחד ושלשים: מ ונפש אדם ששה עשר אלה ומכסם ליהוה שנים ושלשים נפש: מא ויתן משה את־מכס תרומת יהוה לאלעזר הכהן כאשר צוה יהוה את־משה: (חמישי) מב וממחצית בני ישראל אשר תצה משה מן־האנשים הצבאים: מג ותהי מחצת העדה מן־הצאן שלש־מאות אלה ושלשים אלה שבעת אלפים וחמש מאות: מד ובקר ששה ושלשים אלה: מה וחמרים שלשים אלה וחמש מאות: מו ונפש אדם ששה עשר אלה: מז ויקח משה ממחצת בני־ישראל את־האזו אחד מן־החמשים מן־האדם ומן־הבהמה ויתן אותם ללויים שמרי משמרת משפן יהוה כאשר צוה יהוה את־משה: מח ויקרבו אל־משה הפקדים אשר לאלפי הצבא שרי האלפים ושרי המאות: מט ויאמרו אל־משה עבדיך נשאו את־ראש אנשי המלחמה אשר בידנו ולא־נפקד ממנו איש: נ ונקרב את־קרבן יהוה איש אשר מצא כלי־זהב אצערדה וצמיד טבעת עגיל וכומז לכפר על־נפשתינו לפני יהוה: נא ויקח משה ואלעזר הכהן את־הזהב מאתם כל כלי מעשה: נב ויהי כל־זהב התרומה אשר הרימו ליהוה ששה עשר אלה שבע־מאות וחמשים שקל מאת שרי האלפים ומאת שרי המאות: נג אנשי הצבא בזזו איש לו: נד ויקח משה ואלעזר הכהן את־הזהב מאת שרי האלפים והמאות ויבאו אתו אל־אהל מועד וקרן לבני־ישראל לפני יהוה: פ

כש"י

שגיא ממנינא, וכן כי יפקד מושכך², יחסר מקום מושכך, איש הרגיל לישב שס. וכן ויפקד מקום דוד³, נחסר מקומו ואין איש יושב שס: (ב) אצערדה. אלו צמידים של רגל: וצמיד. של יד: עגיל. זמני חזון: וכומז. דפוס של צית כרחס לכפר על הרכור הלז של צנות מדין:

(מב) וממחצית בני ישראל אשר חצה משה. לעדכ והוליאכ להס מן האנשים הלוזאים: (מג) ותהי מחצת העדה. כך וכך: (מז) ויקח משה וגוי: (מח) הפקודים. הממונים: (מט) ולא נפקד. ולא נחסר ותרגומו ולא שגא, אף הוא בלשון ארמי חסרון, כמו אנכי אחטב¹, תרגומו דכות

- ³⁶ (Thus, these were the taxes from) the half that was apportioned to those who went out to battle:
- The number of sheep was three hundred and thirty-seven thousand, five hundred. ³⁷ Thus, the tax to God from the sheep was six hundred and seventy-five.
 - ³⁸ Thirty-six thousand cattle, of which the tax to God was seventy-two.
 - ³⁹ Thirty thousand, five hundred donkeys, of which the tax to God was sixty-one.
 - ⁴⁰ Sixteen thousand people, of which the tax to God was thirty-two people.

⁴¹ Moshe gave the tax, which was a gift to God, to Elazar the priest, as God had commanded Moshe.

FIFTH
READING

⁴² (The following was the calculation) from the half allotted to the children of Israel, which Moshe had divided from the men who had gone into the army. ⁴³ The community's half (consisted of):

- Three hundred and thirty-seven thousand, five hundred sheep.
- ⁴⁴ Thirty-six thousand cattle.
- ⁴⁵ Thirty-thousand, five hundred donkeys.
- ⁴⁶ Sixteen thousand people.

⁴⁷ Moshe took one fiftieth of the children of Israel's half, (from) the people and the animals, and gave them to the Levites, the guardians of God's Tabernacle.

🌀 THE OFFICERS' OFFERING 🌀

31:48 **T**he officers appointed over the army's thousands (of men)—the commanders of (units of) a thousand (men) and the commanders of (units of) a hundred (men)—approached Moshe. ⁴⁹ They said to Moshe, “Your servants counted the soldiers who were under us, and not one man is missing from us! ⁵⁰ So we have brought an offering for God: All the gold items which people found—anklets, bracelets, rings, earrings, and body ornaments—to atone for our souls before God (for thoughts about the Midianite women).

⁵¹ Moshe and Elazar the priest took all the finished gold items from them. ⁵² The total of the gift of gold which they dedicated to God was sixteen thousand, seven hundred and fifty shekels, donated by the officers over thousands (of men) and the officers over hundreds (of men).

—⁵³ The soldiers, however, took the spoils (they found) for themselves.—

⁵⁴ Moshe and Elazar the priest took the gold from the officers over thousands (of men) and the officers over hundreds (of men) and brought it to the Tent of Meeting, as a remembrance for the children of Israel before God.

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 The Last Word 🌀

“NOT ONE MAN IS MISSING FROM US!” (v. 49)

Although the Jewish people won numerous victories in the other wars they waged, they always suffered some casualties. In the war against Midian, however, all the Jewish soldiers returned safely, and the officers declared in astonishment, “Not one man is missing from us” (v. 49).

From the victory of the physical battle against Midian, we can learn a lesson about the ongoing spiritual war against Midian: Eradicating conflicts and bringing love and unity between Jews (see *Sparks of*

Chasidus at beginning of chapter 31). When a person embarks on such a war, he is given the assurance that he will return whole in body, soul and even financially, and he will declare, “Not one man is missing from us!”

And surely, with this in mind he will carry out his mission with joy and gladness, knowing that with the proper dedication, he is assured of success.

(Based on *Sicha* of the 16th of Tammuz 5744)

י: א ובעיר סני הוה לבני ראובן ולבני גד תקיף לחדא וחזו ית ארע ועור ונת ארע גלעד והא אתרא אתר פשר לבית בעיר: ב ואתו בני גד ובני ראובן ואמרו למשה ולא לעור כהנא ולרברבי כנשתא למימרי: ג מכללתא ומלבשתא וכומרין ובית נמרין ובית השבנא ובעלי דבכא וסימא ובית קברתא דמשה ובעון: ד ארעא די מחא יי ית יתבהא קדם כנשתא דישראל ארע פשרא לבית בעיר היא ולעבדיה אית בעיר: ה ואמרו אם אשכחנא רחמין בעיניך תהיהיב ית ארעא דרא לעבדיך לאחסנא לא תעברנא ית ירדנא: ו ואמר משה לבני גד ולבני ראובן האחיכון יעלו לקרבא ואתון תיתבון קמא: ז ולמא תונון ית לבא דבני ישראל מלמעבר לארעא דיהב להון יי: ח פדיו עבדו אבהתכון פד שלחית ויהוון מרקם גיאה למחוי ית ארעא: ט וסליקו עד נחלא דאתכלא וחזו ית ארעא ואוניו ית לבא דבני ישראל בדיל דלא למעל לארעא דיהב להון יי: י ותקף רגזא דיי ביומא ההוא וקיים למימרי: יא אם יחזון גבריא דסליקו ממעברים מבר עשרין שניו ולעלא ית ארעא די קומית לאברהם ליצחק וליעקב ארי לא אשלימו בתר דחלתי יב אלהן כלב בר יפנה קנזאה ויהושע בר נון ארי אשלימו בתר דחלתא דיי: יג ותקף רגזא דיי בישראל ופרדגון במדברא ארבעין שניו עד דסף כל דרא דעביד דביש קדם יי: יד והא קמתון חלף אבהתכון תלמידי גבריא תיביא לאוספא עוד על תקוף רגזא דיי לישראל: טו ארי תרובון מבתר דחלתה ויוסף עוד לאחרותהון

ישׁו] [שלישי כשהן מחוברין] לב א ומקנה | זב הׁיה לבני ראובן ולבני גד עצום מאד ויראו את ארץ יעור ואת ארץ גלעד והנה המקום מקום מקנה: ב ויבאו בני גד ובני ראובן ויאמרו אל משה ואל אלעזר הכהן ואל נשיאי העדה לאמר: ג עטרות ודיבן ויעור ונמזה וחשבון ואלעלה ושכם ונגו ובעז: ד הארץ אשר הנה יהוה לפני עדת ישראל מקנה הוא ולעבדיך מקנה: ס ה ויאמרו אם מצאנו חן בעיניך יתן את הארץ הזאת לעבדיך לאתנה אל תעברנו את הירדן: ו ויאמר משה לבני גד ולבני ראובן האחיכם יבאו למלחמה ואתם תשבו פה: ז ולמה תנואון [ק תניאון] את לב בני ישראל מעבר אל הארץ אשר נתן להם יהוה: ח פה עשו אבותיכם בשלחי אתם מקדש ברנע לראות את הארץ: ט ויעלו עד נחל אשכול ויראו את הארץ ויניאו את לב בני ישראל לבלתי בא אל הארץ אשר נתן להם יהוה: י ויחר אף יהוה ביום ההוא וישבע לאמר: יא אם יראו האנשים העלים ממערים מן עשרים שנה ומעלה את האדמה אשר נשבעתי לאברהם ליצחק וליעקב כי לא מלאו אחרי: יב בלתי כלב בן יפנה הקנזי ויהושע בן נון כי מלאו אחרי יהוה: יג ויחר אף יהוה בישראל וינעם במדבר ארבעים שנה עדתם כל הדור העשה הרע בעיני יהוה: יד והנה קמתם תחת אבותיכם תרבות אנשים חטאים לספות עוד על חרון אף יהוה אל ישראל: טו כי תשובן מאחרי ויוסף עוד להניחו

רש"י

שמה, ושני קדש היו: (יז) הקנזי, חורגו של קנז היה, וילדה לו אמו של כלב את עתניאל: (יג) וינעם, ויטלטל. מן נע ונד (ס"א וטלטלם זנע ונד): (יד) לספות, כמו ספו שנה על שנה, עולותיכם ספו וגו', לשון חוספת:

(ג) עטרות ודיבון וגו'. מרחץ סיחון ועוג היו: (ו) האחיכם. לשון תמיכה הוא: (ז) ולמה תניאון. תסירו ותמינעו לכם מעבור שיכיו סצורים שאתם יראים לעבור מפני המלחמה וחוזק הערים והעם: (ח) מקדש ברנע. כך

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Did Re'uvain and Gad's descendants not want to join their brothers at war? What did Moshe reply? (v. 2ff).**
RAMBAN: Moshe suspected that they were scared to fight, like the spies (see above 13:31), so he accused them of lacking trust in God (v.6-15). Therefore they responded that they were not at all scared and that they would lead the conquest (v. 16-19).

OHR HACHAYIM: Re'uvain and Gad's descendants stressed that since God had defeated so many lands for the Jewish people (v. 4), the conquest of the Land of Israel was clearly also going to be aided by miraculous assistance from God, and that their own help would thus not be required. Moshe replied that, while it was indeed true that God would assist them and that, in essence, the help of Re'uvain and

THE REQUEST OF RE'UVAIN AND GAD'S DESCENDANTS

32 **R**e'uvain and Gad's descendants had a lot of livestock, an extraordinarily large amount. They saw the land of Ya'azer and the land of Gilad, and it was clearly a suitable place for livestock. ² Gad's descendants and Re'uvain's descendants came and spoke to Moshe and to Elazar the priest and to the leaders of the community, saying, ³ "(The lands of) Ataros, Divon, Ya'azer, Nimrah, Cheshbon, Elaleh, Sevam, Nevo, and Be'on—⁴ the land which God defeated in front of the congregation of Israel—is a land suitable for livestock, and your servants have (a lot of) livestock." ⁵ They said, "If it finds favor in your eyes, let this land be given to your servants as a heritage. Do not take us across the Jordan."

SIXTH
READING
(3RD WHEN
JOINED)

⁶ Moshe said to Gad's descendants and Re'uvain's descendants, "Your brothers should go to war while you stay here? ⁷ Why are you discouraging the children of Israel from crossing over to the Land which God has given them? ⁸ This is exactly what your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh-Barne'a to explore the Land. ⁹ They went up to the Valley of Eshkol, saw the Land, and then they discouraged the children of Israel from crossing into the land which God has given them. ¹⁰ God became angry on that day, and He made an oath, saying, ¹¹ 'None of the men from the age of twenty years and over who came out of Egypt will see the Land that I swore to Avraham, to Yitzchak, and to Ya'akov, because they did not follow Me wholeheartedly ¹²—except for Calev the son of Yefuneh the Kenizite, and Yehoshua the son of Nun, because they followed God wholeheartedly.' ¹³ God became angry with Israel, and He made them wander in the desert for forty years until the entire generation who acted wrongly in God's eyes had passed on.

¹⁴ "You've just now protested in the same way as your fathers. What a group of wicked men, who are further inciting God's anger against Israel! ¹⁵ If you turn away from Him, He will leave you in the desert

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

Gad's descendants was not required, nevertheless, the rest of the Jewish people would not understand that this was their intention. The people would interpret the lack of willingness to fight as plain fear. So Moshe argued to them, "Why are you discouraging the children of Israel?" (v. 7).

TZROR HAMOR: Moshe said to them: The Land is the most glorious of lands! How could you treat it with such disdain [by choosing not to live in it]? Perhaps the Jewish people will think it has something really disgraceful about it, or some hidden defect.... You are blaspheming and despising the Holy Land!

TORAS MENACHEM

THE REQUEST OF RE'UVAIN AND GAD'S DESCENDANTS

Ramban writes that Moshe suspected Re'uvain and Gad's descendants of being scared to fight and lacking trust in God, which is why he strongly criticized them, comparing them to the spies.

However, at the literal level it is difficult to accept **Ramban's** argument, because:

a.) According to this interpretation, it seems that from the very first instance Re'uvain and Gad's descendants were in fact willing to participate in the war, and it was only that Moshe had *incorrectly* presumed that they were not willing to fight because they were scared. However, at the literal level, their statement, "Do not take us across the Jordan" (v. 5), suggests that initially they did *not* wish to fight and that later they changed their mind.

b.) Furthermore, it is difficult to accept that Moshe totally misunderstood the intentions of Re'uvain and Gad's descendants.

Therefore, it would seem that, at the literal level the explanation of **Ohr haChayim** is more acceptable (Re'uvain and Gad's descendants felt that their assistance in conquering the Land was unnecessary, because God was going to fight the war for the Jewish people in any case). According

to this explanation, Moshe *correctly* understood their intentions, but feared that *the Jewish people* would misinterpret them. Therefore, he convinced Re'uvain and Gad's descendants to change their minds and join the war.

However, this leaves us with the following questions:

a.) If Moshe indeed understood that Re'uvain and Gad's descendants did not lack confidence that the Jewish people would safely enter the Land, then why (in v. 8-14) did he compare them to the spies, who had said, "We are unable to go up against the people, for they are stronger than us" (13:31)?

b.) Re'uvain and Gad's descendants merely made a *request* not to enter the Land, "if it finds favor in your eyes..." (v. 5). Why, then did Moshe rebuke them so strongly?

Apparently, in addition to criticizing Re'uvain and Gad's descendants for the bad impression they were making on the rest of the Jewish people (as explained above), Moshe also felt that, regardless of their willingness to go to war, their very request to live outside the Land of Israel was a disgrace, as **Tzror Hamor** writes. Therefore, he rebuked them harshly, comparing them to the spies (see *Sparks of Chasidus* overleaf).

במדבר ושחתם לכל העם הזה: ס טו ויגשו אליו ויאמרו
גדרת צאן נבנה למקננו פה וערים לטפנו: יז ואנחנו נחליץ
חשים לפני בני ישראל עד אשר אס-הביאנם אל-מקומם
וישב טפנו בערי המבצר מפני ישובי הארץ: יח לא נשוב אל-
פתנינו עד התנחל בני ישראל איש נחלתו: יט כי לא נחל
אתם מעבר לירדן והלאה פי באה נחלתנו אלינו מעבר
הירדן מזרחה: פ [שביעי] ורביעי כשהן מחוברין כ [ויאמר אליהם משה
אם-תעשו את-הדבר הזה אם-תחלצו לפני יהוה למלחמה:
כא ועבר לכם כל-חלוץ את-הירדן לפני יהוה עד הורישו
את-איביו מפניו: כב ונכבשה הארץ לפני יהוה ואחר תשבו
והייתם נקים מיהוה ומישראל והייתה הארץ הזאת לכם
לאחזה לפני יהוה: כג ואם-לא תעשו כן הנה תטאתם ליהוה
ודעו חטאתכם אשר תמצא אתכם: כד בנור-לכם ערים
לטפכם וגדרת לצנאכם והיצא מפיכם תעשו: כה ויאמר בני-
גד ובני ראובן אל-משה לאמר עבדיך יעשו כבאשר אדני
מצוה: כו טפנו נשינו מקננו וכל-בהמתנו יהיו-שם בערי
הגלעד: כז ועבדיך יעברו כל-חלוץ צבא לפני יהוה למלחמה
כאשר אדני דבר: כח ויצו להם משה את אלעזר הכהן ואת
יהושע בן-נון ואת-ראשי אבות המטות לבני ישראל:
כט ויאמר משה אלהם אם-יעברו בני-גד ובני-ראובן | אתכם
את-הירדן כל-חלוץ למלחמה לפני יהוה ונכבשה הארץ
לפניכם ונתתם להם את-ארץ הגלעד לאחזה: ל ואם-לא
יעברו חלוצים אתכם ונאחזו בתככם בארץ כנען: לא ויענו
בני-גד ובני ראובן לאמר את אשר דבר יהוה אל-עבדיך בן

במדברא ותחבלון לכל עמא דדון: טו וקרבו
לותה ואמרו חטרין דען נבני לבעירנא הכא
וקרוין לטפלנא: יז ואנחנו נזדרו מבעין קדם
בני ישראל עד די נעלינו לאתריהון ויתבון
מפלנא בקרוין קריכו מן קדם יתבי ארעא:
יח לא נתוב לביתנא עד דיתסנו בני ישראל
גבר אחסנתה: יט ארי לא נחסינ עמהון
מעברא לירדנא ויהלא ארי קפלנא
אחסנתנא לנא מעברא לירדנא מדינחא:
כ ואמר להון משה אם תעבדון ית פתנמא
הדון אם תזדונון קדם עמא די לקרבא:
כא ויעבר לבון כל דמורו ית ירדנא קדם
עמא די עד דיתרד ית בעלי דבבוהי מן
קדמוהי: כב ותתפבש ארעא קדם עמא די
ובתר פן תתובון ותהון זכאין מן קדם יי
ומישראל ותהי ארעא קדא לבון לאחסנא
קדם יי: כג ואם לא תעבדון פן הא חבתון
קדם יי ודעו חובתכון די תשפח יתכון:
כד פנו לבון קרוין לטפלכון וחטרין לענכון
ודיפוק מפומכון תעבדון: כה ואמרו בני גד
ובני ראובן למשה למימר עבדיך יעבדון
כמא די רבוני מפקד: כו טפלנא נשנא ויתנא
וכל בעירנא יהון תמן בקרוי גלעד:
כז ועבדיך יעברון כל מורו חילא קדם עמא
די לקרבא כמא די רבוני ממלל: כח ופקיד
להון משה ית אלעזר כהנא וית יהושע בר
נון וית רישי אבחת שבטיא לבני ישראל:
כט ואמר משה להון אם יעברון בני גד ובני
ראובן עמכון ית ירדנא כל דמורו לקרבא
קדם עמא די ותתפבש ארעא קדמיכון
ותתנון להון ית ארעא דגלעד לאחסנא:
ל ואם לא יעברון מורוין עמכון ויתסנו
ביניכון בארעא דכנען: לא ואתיבו בני גד
ובני ראובן למימר ית די מליל יי לעבדיך פן

כש"י

(טו) נבנה למקננו פה. חסידים היו על ממונם יותר מנביאים וצדוקים, שהקדימו מקניהם לעם. אמר להם משה לא כן עשו העיקר עיקר והטפל טפל, בנו לכם תחלה ערים לטפכם ואחר כך גדרות לנאככם: (יז) ואנחנו נחליץ חשים. מזדיין מהירים, כמו מהר שלל חש צד, ימהר יחיש: לפני בני ישראל. צדאשי גייסות, מתוך שגזורים היו, שכן נאמר בגד וטרף זרוע אף קדקד, ואף משה חזר ופירש להם בצלחה הדברים ולאזו חתכם צעת הדין וגו' חלוצים תעברו לפני אחיכם בני ישראל כל בני חיל. וזכירוחו כתיב והחלוץ הולך לפניכם, זה ראובן וגד שקיימו תנאים: וישב טפנו. צדודו

אלל אחינו: בערי המבצר. שנצרכו עכשיו: (יט) מעבר לירדן וגו'. צעבר המערכה: כי באה נחלתנו. כבר קבלנו צעבר המזרחי: (כד) לצנאכם. חיצה זו מגזרת לנכ ואלפים כלל, שאין זו אל"ף מפסוק צין ויו"ן לנדי, ואל"ף שצא כחן אחר הנו"ן במקום ה"א של לנכ הוא. מיסודו של ר' משה הדרשן למדתי כן: והיצא מפיכם תעשו. לגזרה שקבלתם עליכם לעזור למלחמה עד כבוש וחלוק. שמשח לא בקש מהם חלא ונכבשו ואחר תשובו, וכס קבלו עליהם עד התנחל, הרי וסופו להתעכב שבע שחלקו, וכן עשו: (כח) ויאמר בני גד. כולם כאיש אחד: (כח) ויצו להם. כמו עליהם, ועל

again, and you'll destroy this entire nation!"

¹⁶ They approached him and said, "We'll build sheep enclosures for our livestock here and cities for our children. ¹⁷ We'll then arm ourselves quickly (and go) ahead of the children of Israel (and fight) until we've brought them to their place. (Meanwhile) our children will live in the fortified cities due to the (threat of) the land's inhabitants. ¹⁸ We'll not return to our homes until each member of the children of Israel has taken possession of his inheritance. ¹⁹ For we will not inherit with them on the other side of the Jordan and beyond, because our inheritance (will have already) come to us on the east side of the Jordan."

SEVENTH
READING
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²⁰ Moshe said to them, "If you do this thing (that you said), if you arm yourselves for battle before God, ²¹ and your army crosses the Jordan before God until He has driven out His enemies before Him, ²² and the Land will be conquered before God—then afterwards you may return. You will be free (of any obligation) to God and Israel, and this land will become your heritage before God.

²³ "But, if you do not do so, then you will have sinned against God, and you should know that your sin will find you. ²⁴ So build yourselves cities for your children and enclosures for your sheep, and do what your mouths have uttered."

²⁵ Gad's descendants and Re'uvain's descendants spoke to Moshe, saying, "Your servants will do as my master commands. ²⁶ Our children and our wives, our livestock and our cattle will remain there, in the cities of Gilad. ²⁷ (We), your servants, who are armed for combat before God, will cross over (the Jordan) to battle, as my master has spoken."

²⁸ Moshe gave instructions about them to Elazar the priest and Yehoshua the son of Nun and all the paternal heads of the children of Israel's tribes. ²⁹ Moshe said to them, "If the descendants of Gad and Re'uvain cross the Jordan with you before God, and the Land is conquered before you, give them the land of Gilad as a heritage. ³⁰ But if they do not cross over with you armed (for battle), they will receive an inheritance with you in the land of Canaan."

³¹ Gad's descendants and Re'uvain's descendants answered, saying, "We will do what God has said

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What was the result of Re'uvain and Gad's descendants' mentioning their sheep before their children? (v. 16)

MIDRASH: God said to them: "You have shown more affection for your sheep than for your [children's] souls! Your lives will have no blessing!" About them it is said, "An inheritance gained hastily in the beginning will not be blessed in the end" (Prov. 20:21)... They cherished their money and settled outside the Land of Israel, therefore they were exiled first of all the tribes (*Bamidbar Rabah* 22:9,7).

TORAS MENACHEM

🔥 Sparks of Chasidus 🔥

If the suggestion of Re'uvain and Gad's descendants was so inappropriate, as the **Midrash** suggests, why did Moshe agree to it? Surely, Moshe was concerned with the interests of *all* the Jewish people, including the descendants of Re'uvain and Gad?

Chasidic thought explains that, like the spies, Re'uvain and Gad's descendants wished to live a spiritual life, detached from worldly affairs (see *Sparks of Chasidus* to 13:32 above). Thus, they did not wish to enter the Land, which would lead to a demanding life of agriculture, but preferred instead to remain as shepherds, a profession that would leave them much time for Torah study and prayer.

However, *unlike* the spies, they did not suggest that *all* the Jewish people follow their example. They were fully aware that the ultimate purpose of creation is to sanctify the physical world, which means that most Jews need to be engaged in a predominantly physical life. But, they argued, there was a need for a *minority* of the Jewish people

to be less involved with physical matters, devoting all their time to Torah study and prayer, to provide support and inspiration for the rest of the people (as indeed is the case to this day). And to make this intention clear, they offered to lead the conquest of the Land (v. 17-19), showing that they wished to *assist* the rest of the people and not remain aloof from them.

Thus, being that Re'uvain and Gad's descendants did not propose that *all* the people remain outside the Land, and they delineated a role for themselves which was supportive of (and not isolated from) the rest of the Jewish people, Moshe agreed to their plan.

However, in the final analysis, while they presented a plan which appeared to harmonize introspection with integration, their decision not to enter the Land reflected a *subtle* imbalance away from the Torah's emphasis on integration. And, as a result of this, many years later they were the first tribes to be exiled, as the *Midrash* states.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, pp. 189-191)

נַעֲשֶׂה: לב נַחֲנוּ נַעֲבֹר חֲלוּצִים לְפָנַי יְהוָה אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וְאַתָּנוּ אַחֲזַת נַחֲלָתָנוּ מֵעֵבֶר לַיַּרְדֵּן: לג וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם א מֹשֶׁה לְבִנְיָדָד וּלְבִנְי רְאוּבֵן וְלַחֲצִי אֲשֶׁר בְּנֵי יוֹסֵף אֶת־מַמְלַכַת סִיחֵן מִלֶּדֶד הָאֲמֹרִי וְאֶת־מַמְלַכַת עֹג מִלֶּדֶד הַבָּשָׁן הָאֲרָץ לְעַרְיָה בְּגִבְלַת עָרֵי הָאֲרָץ סָבִיב: לד וַיִּבְנוּ בְנֵי־דָד אֶת־דִּיבֵן וְאֶת־עֶטְרָת וְאֶת עֶרְעֵר: לה וְאֶת־עֶטְרָת שׁוּפָן וְאֶת־יַעֲזֵר וַיִּגְבְּהָהּ: לו וְאֶת־בֵּית נְמֹרָה וְאֶת־בֵּית הָרָן עָרֵי מִבְּצָר וְגִדְרַת צֹאן: לו וּבְנֵי רְאוּבֵן בָּנוּ אֶת־חֶשְׁבֹּן וְאֶת־אֶלְעָלָא וְאֶת קַרְיָתִים: לה וְאֶת־נָבוֹ וְאֶת־בַּעַל מְעוֹן מוֹסַבַת שֵׁם וְאֶת־שִׁבְמָה וַיִּקְרְאוּ בְּשֵׁמֹת אֶת־שְׁמוֹת הָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר בָּנוּ: [מפמיר] לט וַיִּלְכּוּ בְנֵי מְכִיר בֶּן־מְנַשֶּׁה גִלְעָדָה וַיִּלְכְּדָהּ וַיּוֹרֶשׁ אֶת־הָאֲמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר־בָּהּ: מ וַיִּתֵּן מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הַגִּלְעָד לְמְכִיר בֶּן־מְנַשֶּׁה וַיֵּשֶׁב בָּהּ: מא וַיֵּאִיר בֶּן־מְנַשֶּׁה הַלֵּד וַיִּלְכְּד אֶת־חֻוֹתֵיהֶם וַיִּקְרָא אֶתְהֵן חֻוֹת יֵאִיר: מב וַנִּבַח הַלֵּד וַיִּלְכְּד אֶת־קִנְתָּה וְאֶת־בְּנֵיהָ וַיִּקְרָא לָהּ* נִבַח בְּשֵׁמֹהּ: פ פ פ

נַעֲשֶׂה: לב נַחֲנוּ נַעֲבֹר חֲלוּצִים לְפָנַי יְהוָה אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וְאַתָּנוּ אַחֲזַת נַחֲלָתָנוּ מֵעֵבֶר לַיַּרְדֵּן: לג וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם א מֹשֶׁה לְבִנְיָדָד וּלְבִנְי רְאוּבֵן וְלַחֲצִי אֲשֶׁר בְּנֵי יוֹסֵף אֶת־מַמְלַכַת סִיחֵן מִלֶּדֶד הָאֲמֹרִי וְאֶת־מַמְלַכַת עֹג מִלֶּדֶד הַבָּשָׁן הָאֲרָץ לְעַרְיָה בְּגִבְלַת עָרֵי הָאֲרָץ סָבִיב: לד וַיִּבְנוּ בְנֵי־דָד אֶת־דִּיבֵן וְאֶת־עֶטְרָת וְאֶת עֶרְעֵר: לה וְאֶת־עֶטְרָת שׁוּפָן וְאֶת־יַעֲזֵר וַיִּגְבְּהָהּ: לו וְאֶת־בֵּית נְמֹרָה וְאֶת־בֵּית הָרָן עָרֵי מִבְּצָר וְגִדְרַת צֹאן: לו וּבְנֵי רְאוּבֵן בָּנוּ אֶת־חֶשְׁבֹּן וְאֶת־אֶלְעָלָא וְאֶת קַרְיָתִים: לה וְאֶת־נָבוֹ וְאֶת־בַּעַל מְעוֹן מוֹסַבַת שֵׁם וְאֶת־שִׁבְמָה וַיִּקְרְאוּ בְּשֵׁמֹת אֶת־שְׁמוֹת הָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר בָּנוּ: [מפמיר] לט וַיִּלְכּוּ בְנֵי מְכִיר בֶּן־מְנַשֶּׁה גִלְעָדָה וַיִּלְכְּדָהּ וַיּוֹרֶשׁ אֶת־הָאֲמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר־בָּהּ: מ וַיִּתֵּן מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הַגִּלְעָד לְמְכִיר בֶּן־מְנַשֶּׁה וַיֵּשֶׁב בָּהּ: מא וַיֵּאִיר בֶּן־מְנַשֶּׁה הַלֵּד וַיִּלְכְּד אֶת־חֻוֹתֵיהֶם וַיִּקְרָא אֶתְהֵן חֻוֹת יֵאִיר: מב וַנִּבַח הַלֵּד וַיִּלְכְּד אֶת־קִנְתָּה וְאֶת־בְּנֵיהָ וַיִּקְרָא לָהּ* נִבַח בְּשֵׁמוֹ: פ פ פ

קי"ב פסוקים, בקי"י סימן. יק"ב סימן. עיב"ל סימן.

*לא מפי' ה'

רש"י

זנו שצמח והיא שצם האמורה למעלה²: (לט) ויורש. כתרנומו ותריר. שתיבת רי"ש משמשת שתי חלוקות לשון ירושה ולשון כורשה, שהוא טירוד ותיור: (מא) חותיהם. כפריכו³: ויקרא אתהן חות יאיר. לפי שלא היו לו זנים קראם שמו לזכרו³: (מב) ויקרא לה נבח. לה אינו מפי' ה"א. וראיתי ביסודו של רבי משה דרשן לפי שלא נתקיים לה שם זה, לפיכך הוא רפה, שמשמע מדרשו כמו לא. ותמכני מה ידרוש ששתי תיבות הדומות לה ויאמר לה זועז⁴, לזנות לה זית⁵: חסלת פרשת מטות

תנאם מינה אלעזר ויושע, כמו ה' ילחם לנכס¹: (לז) ואתנו אחזת נחלתנו. כלומר זדינו וזרשוננו תכי אחזת נחלתנו מעבר הזה: (לו) ערי מבצר וגדרות צאן. זה סוף הפסוק מוסב על תחלת הענין, ויזנו בני גד את הערים הללו להיות ערי מצור וגדרות לאן: (לח) ואת נבו ואת בעל מעון מוסבת שם. נבו ובעל מעון שמות עבודה זרה הם, והיו האמוריים קורים עריהם על שם עבודה זרה שלהם, ובני ראובן הסבו את שם לשמות אחרים, וזו מוסבת שם, נבו ובעל מעון מוסבות לשם אחר: ואת שבמה.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why was “half the tribe of Menasheh” also given an inheritance of land on the east of the Jordan? (v. 33)

IBN EZRA: They had also petitioned with the descendants of Re’uvain and Gad, but the Torah did not mention them up to this point because they were only half a tribe.

RAMBAN: Initially, only Re’uvain and Gad’s descendants had requested land to the east of the Jordan, but when Moshe saw that this land was too big for them, he asked if any other tribe wished to join them. Part of the tribe of Menasheh took him up on the offer, presumably because they too had a lot of livestock (cf. v. 1).

TZOR HAMOR: The half of Menasheh’s tribe that settled east of the Jordan did not choose to settle there. Rather, Moshe commanded them to settle there in order to protect the tribes of Re’uvain and Gad. For it was the merit of Yosef—Menasheh’s father—that protected the Jewish people, so Moshe wanted Yosef’s descendants to live wherever the Jewish people were found.

PNEI MOSHE: The Torah states that “Moshe gave” the land to one half of the tribe of Menasheh (v. 33), and no mention is made that they requested it for themselves, as was the case with Re’uvain and Gad’s descendants (commentary to *Jerusalem Talmud, Bikurim* 1:8).

to your servants. ³² We will cross over, armed before God to the land of Canaan (and conquer it). Then we will come to possess our inheritance on this side of the Jordan.”

³³ Moshe gave Gad's descendants and Re'uvain's descendants and half the tribe of Menasheh, Yosef's son: The kingdom of Sichon, King of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og, King of Bashan. (He gave) the land together with the cities within its borders, and the cities of the surrounding territory.

³⁴ Gad's descendants built (the cities of) Divon, Ataros, Aro'er, ³⁵ Atros-Shofan, Ya'azer, Yogbehah, ³⁶ Bais Nimrah and Bais Haran. (They built them all to be) fortified cities with sheep enclosures.

³⁷ The descendants of Re'uvain built (the cities of): Cheshbon, Elaleh, Kiryasayim, ³⁸ Nevo, Ba'al Me'on—changing the names (of these latter two, since they were named after foreign deities)—and Siumah. They retained the names of the other cities that they built.

MAFTIR ³⁹ The children of Machir, the son of Menasheh went to Gilad and conquered it, driving out the Amorites who were there. ⁴⁰ Moshe gave Gilad to Machir the son of Menasheh, and he settled in it.

⁴¹ Ya'ir, the son of Menasheh, went and conquered their villages, and called them “Ya'ir's Villages.”

⁴² Novach went and conquered Kenas and its surrounding villages. He called it Novach, after his own name.

HAFTARAH: MATOS - P.312. MATOS-MASEI - P. 314.

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 THE LAND OF HALF THE TRIBE OF MENASHEH (v. 33)

After the lengthy discussion of the plea made by Re'uvain and Gad's descendants to settle on the east side of the Jordan, it is somewhat surprising to read that Moshe also gave some of this land to “half the tribe of Menasheh,” a group that had not been mentioned at all up to this point. **Ramban** explains that the land had been too big for the tribes of Re'uvain and Gad, so Moshe requested that another tribe offer to join them.

However, this appears to be difficult to accept, since Moshe had strongly opposed the petition of the tribes of Re'uvain and Gad to settle outside the Land of Israel, to the extent that he compared them to the spies (v. 6-15), and he only conceded when they promised to lead the military conquest of the Land. Thus, it appears unlikely that Moshe would *actively* seek more tribes to join Re'uvain and Gad *outside* the Land of Israel.

Tzror Hamor argues that Moshe commanded half the tribe of Menasheh to remain with Re'uvain and Gad's descendants so that the merit of Yosef would protect them. However, it is difficult to accept that Moshe would have prevented half a tribe from entering the promised Land, in order to protect individuals that had *not* wanted to enter.

Ibn Ezra argues that half the tribe of Menasheh had in fact petitioned with the descendants of Re'uvain and Gad all along, but that the Torah makes no mention of this because they were only half a tribe.

However, at the literal level, the argument of **Pnei Moshe** would be more acceptable, that: a.) Menasheh's descendants were not mentioned earlier because they did not request to settle east of the Jordan; and, b.) It was *Moshe* who commanded them to settle there, as the Torah states that “Moshe gave” the land to them (v. 33).

But this leaves us with the question: Why did Moshe *prevent* half the tribe of Menasheh from entering the Promised Land?

THE EXPLANATION

When Moshe received the Torah at Sinai, it was a single revelation that contained every aspect of Judaism that was later to develop from it. Even the future revelations of the Messianic Era, which will greatly surpass anything witnessed until then, are rooted in the Torah that was already given to Moshe.

From this we can understand that even though Moshe did not merit to enter the Land of Israel he nevertheless had a connection to it—which is why “God showed him the Land” (*Devarim* 34:1) before he passed away. Likewise the expanded borders of the Land of Israel that will exist in the Messianic Era, including the lands east of the Jordan, also have an intrinsic connection to Moshe, by virtue of the fact that he received the entire Torah. Consequently, Moshe wished some of these lands to be inhabited upon his instruction, as a *prelude* to their full occupation in the times of Mashiach, in order to stress his personal connection with the *entire* Land.

Nevertheless, Moshe did not wish to deprive any one tribe from entering the Land, so he instructed *half* a tribe to settle there, spreading this tribe across the Land's present and future borders.

Why was the tribe of Menasheh chosen for this special task? Because this tribe had expressed a unique love for the Land, when Tzelafchad's daughters (who were from the tribe of Menasheh) pleaded to Moshe that they wanted to be included in the allocation of the Land, and God consented to their plea (see above 27:1ff).

The tribes of Re'uvain and Gad settled east of the Jordan: a.) Due to their own request; b.) Because they cared about their material possessions (see *Classic Questions* to v. 16); and, c.) In a way that they forfeited their rights to the Land of Israel. The “half of the tribe of Menasheh,” by contrast, settled there as an expression of their connection to Moshe, his Torah and the *full* territory of the Land of Israel which will be occupied in the future.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, p. 210ff.)



Parshas Matos contains 1 positive *mitzvah* & 1 prohibition

1. The law of annulling a vow [30:3].
2. Not to break a vow [30:3].



parshas Masei

פרשת מסעי

🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

It is a problem that we all suffer from in one form or another—complacency. Not because we are lazy or shy away from hard work, but simply because any genuine accomplishment brings a sense of satisfaction, and that naturally leads a person towards complacency.

Recall, for a moment, the last time you set yourself an ambitious goal and then worked hard to achieve it. You put yourself under tremendous pressure, imposed restrictions on yourself and on others and were constantly grappling with self-doubt that jeopardized the prospects of success. And what did you feel like when the goal was finally achieved? A sense of relief, of satisfaction and true freedom: “At last, I can now breathe!”

Now ask yourself: At that very moment, did you feel like setting yourself *another* ambitious goal, and plunging back into the constraints of a strict regimen all over again?

Of course, if you felt that you had not yet acquired enough knowledge, made enough money or performed enough good deeds, you would overcome the feeling of complacency that success brings and start all over again. But how many times could you do it? Our natural tendency, especially in areas of Torah and *mitzvos*, is that at a certain point we simply lose the drive to change, and so we allow our personal limitations—real or imaginary—to take a firm grasp.

Our *Parsha* teaches an inspiring message about the need to re-inspire ourselves with continuous growth spurts. The word *Masei* means “journeys,” as in the opening verse of our *Parsha*, “*The following are the journeys of the children of Israel by which they left the land of Egypt.*” Now, to be precise, only the *first* of the 42 journeys listed here was actually a journey out of the geographical border of Egypt; the remainder were wanderings in the desert. So why does the Torah suggest that *all* 42 journeys were a process by which they “left Egypt”?

Chasidic thought explains that *Mitzrayim*, the Hebrew term for Egypt, connotes “limitation” (*meytzar*). Thus, the Torah is teaching us here that even when we leave our personal “Egypt,” breaking through a limitation to achieve a goal, *another* “Egypt” looms ahead to hold us back from achieving our *next* goal.

There is simply no limit to how much we can achieve with dedicated effort and simple faith. We may have “camped” after our prior “journey,” but we must prepare straightaway to journey again, *departing from the new* “Egypt” we find ourselves in. For we will only reach our true destination when we and all the Jewish people arrive in the Land of Israel, with the true and complete redemption.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 2, p. 348ff.)

א אליו מפלגי בני ישראל די נפקו מארעא
 דמצרים לחיליהון בידי דמשה ואהרן:
 ב וכתב משה ית מפקניהון למפלגיהון על
 מימרא דיי ואליו מפלגיהון למפקניהון:
 ג ונטלו מרעמסס בירחא קדמאה בחמשא
 עשרא יומא לירחא קדמאה מבתר פסחא
 נפקו בני ישראל בריש גלי לעיני כל מצראי:
 ד ומצראי מקברין ית די קטל יי בהון כל
 בוכרא ובטעותהון עבד יי דינין: ה ונטלו בני
 ישראל מרעמסס ושרו בסבת: ו ונטלו מסבת
 ושרו באתם די בסטר מדברא: ז ונטלו
 מאתם ותב על פום חירתא די קדם בעל צפון

לג א אלה מסעי בני ישראל אשר יצאו מארץ מצרים
 לצבאתם ביד משה ואהרן: ב וכתב משה את-מוצאייהם
 למסעיהם על-פי יהוה ואלה מסעיהם למוצאייהם: ג ויסעו
 מרעמסס בחדש הראשון בחמשה עשר יום לחדש הראשון
 ממחרת הפסח יצאו בני ישראל ביד רמה לעיני כל מצרים:
 ד ומצרים מקברים את אשר הפך יהוה בהם כל-בכור
 ובאלהיהם עשה יהוה שפטים: ה ויסעו בני ישראל מרעמסס
 ויחנו בסבת: ו ויסעו מסבת ויחנו באתם אשר בקצה המדבר:
 ז ויסעו מאתם וישב על-פי החירת אשר על-פני בעל צפון

רש"י

למדת שהיא צמדצר פארן. ועוד הולא משם שמונה מסעות שהיו לאחר מיתת
 אהרן מהר בהר עד ערבות מואב צגנת הארבעים, גמלא שכל שמנה ושלשים
 שנה לא נסעו חלא עשרים מסעות. זה מיסודו של רבי משה דרשן. ורבי
 תנחומא דרש צו דרשה אחרת משל למלך שהיה צנו חולה וחוליכו למקום רחוק
 לרפאותו, כיון שהיו חוזרין התחיל אציו מונה כל המסעות. אמר לו כאן ישנונו,
 כאן הוקרנו, כאן חששת את ראשך וכיו': (ד) ומצרים מקברים. טרודים צאצלס:

(ח) אלה מסעי. למד נכתבו המסעות הללו, להודיע חסדיו של מקום, שאעפ"י
 שגזר עליהם לטלטלם ולהניעם צמדצר, לא תאמר שהיו נעים ומטולטלים ממסע
 למסע כל ארבעים שנה ולא היתה להם מנוחה, שהרי אין כאן חלא ארבעים
 ושחים מסעות. לא מהם י"ד, שכולם היו צגנה ראשונה, קודם גזירה, משנסעו
 מרעמסס עד צצאו לרתמה, שמשם נשתלחו המרגלים, שנאמר ואחר נסעו העם
 מחלרות וגוי¹ שלח לך אנשים וגוי², וכאן הוא אומר ויסעו מחלרות ויחנו צרתמה,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Are these journeys not already documented? (v. 1ff)

RASHI: Why were these journeys written? To inform us of God's kindness, that although He had decreed that they would wander aimlessly in the desert, one should not imagine that they were wandering from place to place throughout the forty years and they had no rest. For we see that there are only forty-two encampments; deduct fourteen of them which all took place in the first year, before the decree, from when they journeyed from Ramses (v. 3) until they arrived in Rismah (v. 18) where the spies were sent... subtract a further eight encampments which took place after Aharon's death: from Hor

Hahar to the plains of Mo'av (v. 37-48), which were all during the fortieth year—and you will find that throughout the thirty-eight years they made only twenty journeys. I found this in the treatise of R' Moshe Hadarshan.

R' Tanchuma offers a different explanation: [The account of the journeys] is analogous to a king whose son became sick, and he took him to a faraway place to be healed. On the way back, the father began to mention all the stages of their journey, saying to him, "This is where we slept. This is where we felt cold. Here you had a headache, etc."

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 THE FORTY-TWO JOURNEYS (v. 1ff)

Whenever Rashi brings two interpretations it is because each has a significant problem at the literal level, which is compensated for by the other interpretation. In our case, we need to explain why Rashi cited two explanations for the list of encampments which the Torah records here: that of R' Moshe Hadarshan and of R' Tanchuma.

And why does Rashi use the unusual expression, "R' Tanchuma offers a different explanation," unlike the normal practice of Rashi to write, "R' Tanchuma says," or, "another opinion," etc.?

THE EXPLANATION

According to R' Moshe Hadarshan, the Torah recorded a list of the encampments of the Jewish people here to inform us of "God's kindness... that throughout the thirty-eight years they made only twenty

journeys." However, if this were the only reason why the Torah recorded these encampments, then it could have just mentioned those twenty journeys, which occurred over a period of thirty-eight years (journeys 16-33). Surely, the other journeys do not bring to light "the kindness of God," and thus they need not have been mentioned?

Due to this difficulty, Rashi cited the further interpretation of R' Tanchuma, that since the Jewish people had now reached their final port of call before entering the Land, God was "recalling," so to speak, the events that had occurred in the various locations. This explains why journeys 1-15 and 34-42 are mentioned here, even though they were also recorded earlier.

However, R' Tanchuma's interpretation fails to explain why journeys 16-33 were recorded here, since the details of these encampments are mentioned here for the first time, and thus at the literal level there is

🕎 THE FORTY-TWO JOURNEYS OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE 🕎

33 **T**he following are the journeys of the children of Israel by which they left the land of Egypt, in their regiments, by the hand of Moshe and Aharon. ² Moshe recorded the starting points of their journeys, (given) by the word of God. The following were their journeys and their starting points.

🕎 JOURNEYS I-12: FROM THE EXODUS TO SINAI 🕎

- [1] ³ They journeyed from Ramses in the first month. On the fifteenth day of the first month, the day following the Pesach offering, the children of Israel left triumphantly in the presence of all the Egyptians. ⁴ The Egyptians were (busy) burying (their dead) because God had struck their firstborn and had performed acts of judgment upon their gods.
- [2] ⁵ The children of Israel journeyed from Ramses and camped in Sukos.
- [3] ⁶ They journeyed from Sukos and camped in Eisam, at the edge of the desert.
- [4] ⁷ They journeyed from Eisam and settled at the “Mouth of the Rocks,” opposite Ba’al Tzefon, and they camped in front of Migdal.

NOTES: JOURNEYS 1-12: FROM LEAVING EGYPT UNTIL THE GIVING OF THE TORAH: [1-2] *Shemos* 12:37. This was on 15th of Nisan 2448. [3] *ibid.* 13:20. This was the following day (*Rashi* *ibid.*). [4] *ibid.* 14:2. This was the third day after their departure, throughout which they headed back towards Egypt in order to confuse Pharaoh into thinking that they were trapped (*ibid.* 3 and *Rashi*). The “Mouth of the Rocks” is also known as Pisom (*ibid.*).

TORAS MENACHEM

nothing to recall about these encampments, as there do not appear to be any special events that were associated with them.

In the final analysis, the interpretations of R' Moshe Hadarshan and R' Tanchuma are perfectly complementary: R' Moshe Hadarshan explains why the Torah recorded journeys 16-33, and R' Tanchuma explains the need for journeys 1-15 and 34-42. Therefore, to highlight the perfect

symmetry here, *Rashi* stressed, “R' Tanchuma offers a *different* explanation,” i.e. his explanation is not an *alternative approach* to that of R' Moshe Hadarshan, but rather, he simply explains a *different part* of the text.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 390, note 4;
Sichas Shabbos Parshas Matos-Masei 5725)

🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

Living in this world which conceals God’s presence, while striving constantly to remain loyal to His Will is a considerable challenge. The eventful journeys of the Jewish people, with all the ups and downs that they endured, allude to the *spiritual* journeys of life, “from the day one is born until one passes to the next world” (*Ba’al Shem Tov*, cited in *Degel Machaneh Efrayim*, beginning of *Parshas Masei*).

Upon reaching the afterlife, however, we are granted a higher perspective of things, where we can appreciate in retrospect how every obstacle was, in fact, for the good. Similarly, we are promised that with the coming of Mashiach we will actually *thank* God for the trials and tribulations that He placed in our path—“*You will say on that day, ‘Thank you God for becoming angry with me’*” (*Isaiah* 12:1).

R*ashi*’s two interpretations of life’s journeys (see *Classic Questions*) reflect the two perspectives of “life” and “afterlife.” R' Moshe Hadarshan spoke about the journeys and their difficulties as they were experienced *at the time*. Thus, despite the apparently harsh decree of wandering in the desert for 40 years (an expression of God’s anger, which they could not truly appreciate at the time), they were nevertheless grateful for “the kindness of God,” that they *could*

recognize: the fact that they were only required to relocate their camp twenty times in thirty-eight years.

R' Tanchuma, however, spoke from the perspective of the afterlife, where one “looks back” and “recalls” one’s time in this world and is able to truly appreciate how every setback was nothing more than a prelude to reaching greater heights.

These two perspectives were thus a reflection of the Sages that taught them:

The name “Moshe” connotes “drawing down” from the heavens *into this world* [*“She named him Moshe, and she said, ‘For I drew him from the water’—Shemos* 2:10]. R' Moshe Hadarshan’s view of the soul’s journeys was thus the view of the soul as it is invested in a body *in this world*, i.e. amid the journeys of life where the truth is obscured.

R' Tanchuma’s name, on the other hand, means “comfort,” alluding to the appreciation of the inner purpose of life’s obstacles that comes in the afterlife—bringing him to the realization that they were completely worthwhile, after all.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 394, note 40)

צִפּוֹן וַיִּשְׂרוּ קָדָם מִגְדָּל: ה וַנִּטְלוּ מִן פּוֹם
חִירְתָּא וַעֲבְרוּ בְּגוּ יַמָּא לְמִדְבָּרָא וְאוּלוּ מִהַלְדָּ
תְּלִתָּא יוֹמִין בְּמִדְבָּרָא דְאַתֶּם וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּמִרְהָ:
ט וַנִּטְלוּ מִמִּרְהָ וְאַתּוּ לְאַיִלִם וּבְאַיִלִם תְּרִי
עֶשֶׂר מְבוּעֵין דְּמִנּוּן וְשִׁבְעֵין דִּיקְלִין וַיִּשְׂרוּ תַּמּוּן:
י וַנִּטְלוּ מִאֵילִם וַיִּשְׂרוּ עַל יַמָּא דְסוּף: יא וַנִּטְלוּ
מִיַּמָּא דְסוּף וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּמִדְבָּרָא דְסִין: יב וַנִּטְלוּ
מִמִּדְבָּרָא דְסִין וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּדַפְקָה: יג וַנִּטְלוּ
מִדַּפְקָה וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּאַלוּשׁ: יד וַנִּטְלוּ מִאֵלוּשׁ וַיִּשְׂרוּ
בְּרַפִּידִים וְלֹא הָוּה תַּמּוּן מִיָּא לְעִמָּא לְמִשְׁתִּי:
טו וַנִּטְלוּ מִרַפִּידִים וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּמִדְבָּרָא דְסִינִי:
טז וַנִּטְלוּ מִמִּדְבָּרָא דְסִינִי וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּקַבְרֵי
דְּמִשְׁאַל: יז וַנִּטְלוּ מִקַּבְרֵי דְּמִשְׁאַלִּי וַיִּשְׂרוּ
בְּחֻצְרֵת: יח וַנִּטְלוּ מִחֻצְרֵת וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּרַתְמָה:
יט וַנִּטְלוּ מִרַתְמָה וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּרַמְזֵן פְּרִיז: כ וַנִּטְלוּ
מִרַמְזֵן פְּרִיז וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּלִבְנָה: כא וַנִּטְלוּ מִלִּבְנָה
וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּרַסָּה: כב וַנִּטְלוּ מִרַסָּה וַיִּשְׂרוּ
בְּקַהֲלָתָה: כג וַנִּטְלוּ מִקַּהֲלָתָה וַיִּשְׂרוּ
בְּטוֹרָא דְשִׁפְר: כד וַנִּטְלוּ מִטוֹרָא דְשִׁפְר
וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּחֻרְדָּה: כה וַנִּטְלוּ מִחֻרְדָּה וַיִּשְׂרוּ
בְּמַקְהֲלָת: כו וַנִּטְלוּ מִמַּקְהֲלָת וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּתַחַת:
כז וַנִּטְלוּ מִתַּחַת וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּתַרְח: כח וַנִּטְלוּ
מִתַּרְח וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּמַתְקָה: כט וַנִּטְלוּ מִמַּתְקָה
וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּחַשְׁמִנָּה: ל וַנִּטְלוּ מִחַשְׁמִנָּה וַיִּשְׂרוּ
בְּמִסְרוֹת: לא וַנִּטְלוּ מִמִּסְרוֹת וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּבִנֵי יַעֲקֹן:
לב וַנִּטְלוּ מִבְּנֵי יַעֲקֹן וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּחֹר הַגְּדֻד:
לג וַנִּטְלוּ מִחֹר הַגְּדֻד וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּיַטְבְּתָה:
לד וַנִּטְלוּ מִיַּטְבְּתָה וַיִּשְׂרוּ בְּעֵבְרָנָה: לה וַנִּטְלוּ

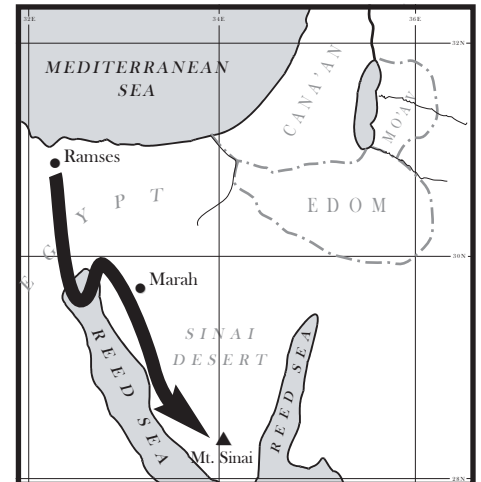
וַיַּחֲנוּ לְפָנֵי מִגְדָּל: ה וַיִּסְעוּ מִפְּנֵי הַחִירְתָּא וַיַּעֲבְרוּ בְּתוֹדֵי הַיָּם
הַמִּדְבָּרָה וַיֵּלְכוּ דֶרֶךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים בְּמִדְבָּר אֲתֶם וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּמִרְהָ:
ט וַיִּסְעוּ מִמִּרְהָ וַיָּבֹאוּ אֵילָמָה וּבְאַיִלִם שְׁתֵּימִם עֶשְׂרֵה עֵינַת מַיִם
וְשִׁבְעֵים תְּמָרִים וַיַּחֲנוּ שָׁם: י וַיִּסְעוּ מֵאֵילִם וַיַּחֲנוּ עַל-יַם-סוּף:
יא וַיִּסְעוּ מֵיַם-סוּף וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּמִדְבָּר-סִין: יב וַיִּסְעוּ מִמִּדְבָּר-סִין
וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּדַפְקָה: יג וַיִּסְעוּ מִדַּפְקָה וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּאַלוּשׁ: יד וַיִּסְעוּ מִאֵלוּשׁ
וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּרַפִּידִים וְלֹא-הָיָה שָׁם מַיִם לָעַם לְשִׁתוֹת: טו וַיִּסְעוּ
מִרַפִּידִים וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּמִדְבָּר סִינִי: טז וַיִּסְעוּ מִמִּדְבָּר סִינִי וַיַּחֲנוּ
בְּקַבְרֵת הַתַּאֲוָה: יז וַיִּסְעוּ מִקַּבְרֵת הַתַּאֲוָה וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּחֻצְרֵת:
יח וַיִּסְעוּ מִחֻצְרֵת וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּרַתְמָה: יט וַיִּסְעוּ מִרַתְמָה וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּרַמְזֵן
פְּרִיז: כ וַיִּסְעוּ מִרַמְזֵן פְּרִיז וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּלִבְנָה: כא וַיִּסְעוּ מִלִּבְנָה וַיַּחֲנוּ
בְּרַסָּה: כב וַיִּסְעוּ מִרַסָּה וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּקַהֲלָתָה: כג וַיִּסְעוּ מִקַּהֲלָתָה
וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּחֻרְדָּה: כד וַיִּסְעוּ מִחֻרְדָּה וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּחֻרְדָּה: כה וַיִּסְעוּ
מִחֻרְדָּה וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּמַקְהֲלָת: כו וַיִּסְעוּ מִמַּקְהֲלָת וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּתַחַת:
כז וַיִּסְעוּ מִתַּחַת וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּתַרְח: כח וַיִּסְעוּ מִתַּרְח וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּמַתְקָה:
כט וַיִּסְעוּ מִמַּתְקָה וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּחַשְׁמִנָּה: ל וַיִּסְעוּ מִחַשְׁמִנָּה וַיַּחֲנוּ
בְּמִסְרוֹת: לא וַיִּסְעוּ מִמִּסְרוֹת וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּבִנֵי יַעֲקֹן: לב וַיִּסְעוּ מִבְּנֵי
יַעֲקֹן וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּחֹר הַגְּדֻד: לג וַיִּסְעוּ מִחֹר הַגְּדֻד וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּיַטְבְּתָה:
לד וַיִּסְעוּ מִיַּטְבְּתָה וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּעֵבְרָנָה: לה וַיִּסְעוּ מִעֵבְרָנָה וַיַּחֲנוּ

כש"י

(יח) ויחנו ברתמה. על שם לשון הרע של מרגלים, שנאמר¹ מה יתן לך ומה יוסיף לך לשון רמיה חלי גזור שנויים עס גחלי רחמים²:

[5] Pharaoh began to pursue the Jewish people from the 19th to 20th of Nisan, and on the eve of the 21st of Nisan the Reed Sea split (*Rashi* to *Shemos* 14:5). They arrived at Marah three days later, on the 24th of Nisan (*ibid.* 15:22), where Moshe sweetened the bitter waters for them. They were also given some parts of the Torah to study and some *mitzvos* (see *Rashi* to 15:25 *ibid.*). [6] *Ibid.* 15:27. (See *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Masei* 5744 for an explanation why the Torah stresses the presence of "twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees.") [7] Journeys 2-12 were all in the vicinity of the Reed Sea, but here they camped literally at the edge of the Sea (*Onkelos* and *Targum Yonason*). Cf. *Shemos* 15:27. [8] They arrived at the Desert of Sin on the 15th of Iyar (*ibid.* 16:1). Here their supplies of bread ran out and the manna came down (see *Rashi* to 16:35 *ibid.*). [9-10] Journeys within the Desert of Sin, not mentioned in the book of *Shemos*. [11] *ibid.* 17:1. [12] They arrived at the Sinai Desert on the 1st of Sivan (*ibid.* 19:1). Here the Torah was given and the Tabernacle constructed and inaugurated, as described in the remainder of the book of *Shemos* and the book of *Vayikra*. **JOURNEYS 13-15: FROM THE GIVING OF THE TORAH UNTIL THE SIN OF THE SPIES:** [13] The departure from the Sinai Desert was almost a year later, on the 20th of Iyar 2449 (*Bamidbar* 10:11). Miraculously, they covered the three-day journey to Kivros-Hata'avah in just one day (*Rashi* to *Bamidbar* 10:33), arriving on the eve of the 21st of Iyar (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 1, note 6). They remained there 30 days (*Rashi* to *Devarim* 1:2). [14] *Bamidbar* 11:35. They departed Kivros-Hata'avah on the 21st of Sivan, and arrived in Chatzairos that evening, the eve of the 22nd of Sivan (*Likutei Sichos* *ibid.*). Miriam then slandered Moshe, and she was quarantined for seven days (22nd of Sivan until the morning of the 28th—*Likutei Sichos* *ibid.*), during which time they remained in Chatzairos (*Bamidbar* 12:15). [15] They departed Chatzairos immediately and arrived in Rismah (Kadaish-Barne'a) in the desert of Paran (*Bamidbar* 12:16) that evening, the eve of the 29th of Sivan (*Likutei Sichos* *ibid.*). They thus completed the eleven-day journey from Mount Sinai to Kadaish-Barne'a in just three days (*Rashi* to *Devarim* *ibid.*), namely the 20th, 21st, and 28th of Sivan (*Likutei Sichos* *ibid.*). The spies were sent out on the 29th of Sivan (*Rashi* to *Devarim* *ibid.*), probably on the morning of the 29th (*Likutei Sichos* *ibid.*). **JOURNEYS 16-33: WANDERING IN THE DESERT FOR 38 YEARS:** [16] After the sin of the spies, it was decreed that the generation would not enter the Land and would wander in the desert (*Bamidbar* 14:33). For the next 19 years they stayed in Kadaish-Barne'a (*Rashi* to *Devarim* 1:46). The following 18 encampments spanned a further 19 years, as they moved gradually eastwards across the entire southern border of Mount Se'ir as far east as Mo'av (*Rashi* to *Devarim* 2:1), before returning via Etzyon Gaver to Kadaish-Barne'a (*Bamidbar* 33:36; *Rashi* to *Devarim* 1:46). The precise location of these encampments is not known (with the exception of Etzyon-Gaver).

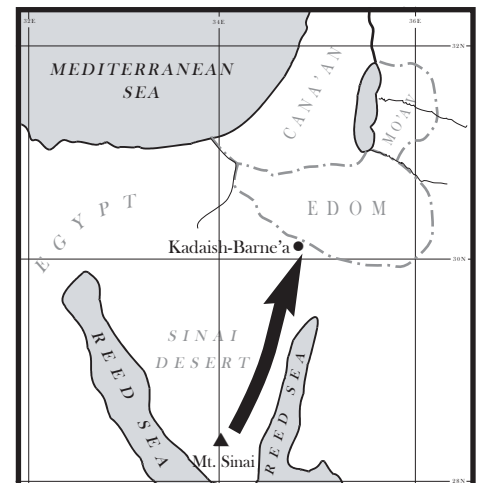
- [5] ⁸ They journeyed from “the Rocks,” and crossed through the sea to the desert. They walked for three days in the Eisam desert and camped in Marah.
- [6] ⁹ They journeyed from Marah and arrived in Eilim. In Eilim there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees, and they camped there.
- [7] ¹⁰ They journeyed from Eilim and camped by the Reed Sea.
- [8] ¹¹ They journeyed from the Reed Sea and camped in the Desert of Sin.
- [9] ¹² They journeyed from the Desert of Sin and camped in Dofkah.
- [10] ¹³ They journeyed from Dofkah and camped in Alush.
- [11] ¹⁴ They journeyed from Alush and camped in Refidim, but there was no water for the people to drink.
- [12] ¹⁵ They journeyed from Refidim and camped in the Sinai desert.



**JOURNEYS 1-12: EXODUS TO SINAI
(6 WEEKS)**

🌀 JOURNEYS 13-15: SINAI-KADAISH-BARNE'A 🌀

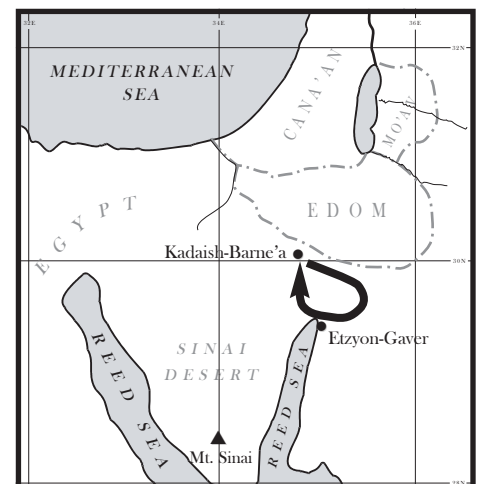
- [13] ¹⁶ They journeyed from the Sinai desert and camped in Kivros-Hata'avah.
- [14] ¹⁷ They journeyed from Kivros-Hata'avah and camped in Chatzairos.
- [15] ¹⁸ They journeyed from Chatzairos and camped in Rismah (also known as Kadaish-Barne'a).



**JOURNEYS 13-15: SINAI TO KADAISH-BARNE'A
(5 WEEKS)**

🌀 JOURNEYS 16-33: DESERT WANDERINGS 🌀

- [16] ¹⁹ They journeyed from Rismah and camped in Rimon-Paretz.
- [17] ²⁰ They journeyed from Rimon-Paretz and camped in Livnah.
- [18] ²¹ They journeyed from Livnah and camped in Risah.
- [19] ²² They journeyed from Risah and camped in Kehailasah.
- [20] ²³ They journeyed from Kehailasah and camped in Mount Shafer.
- [21] ²⁴ They journeyed from Mount Shafer and camped in Charadah.
- [22] ²⁵ They journeyed from Charadah and camped in Makhailos.
- [23] ²⁶ They journeyed from Makhailos and camped in Tachas.
- [24] ²⁷ They journeyed from Tachas and camped in Tarach.
- [25] ²⁸ They journeyed from Tarach and camped in Miskah.
- [26] ²⁹ They journeyed from Miskah and camped in Chashmonah.
- [27] ³⁰ They journeyed from Chashmonah and camped in Mosairos.
- [28] ³¹ They journeyed from Mosairos and camped in Benay Ya'akan.
- [29] ³² They journeyed from Benay Ya'akan and camped in Chor Hagidgad.
- [30] ³³ They journeyed from Chor Hagidgad and camped in Yotvasah.
- [31] ³⁴ They journeyed from Yotvasah and camped in Avronah.



**JOURNEYS 16-33: WANDERINGS IN THE DESERT
(38 YEARS)**

מעברנה ושרו בעציו נבר: לו ונטלו מעציו נבר ושרו במדברא דצן היא רקם: לו ונטלו מרקם ושרו בהר טורא בספי ארעא דאדום: לה וסלק אהרן כהנא להר טורא על מימרא דיי ומית תמן בשנת ארבעין למפק בני ישראל מארעא דמצרים בירחא חמשאה כחד לירחא: מט ואהרן בר מאה ועשרין ותלת שנין כד מית בהר טורא: מ ושמע כנענאה מלכא דערד והוא יתב כדרומא בארעא דכנען במיתי בני ישראל: מא ונטלו מהר טורא ושרו בצלמנה: מב ונטלו מצלמנה ושרו כפונן: מג ונטלו מפונן ושרו באבת: מד ונטלו מאבת ושרו במנות עבראי בתחום מואב: מה ונטלו ממנותא ושרו כדיבן נד: מו ונטלו מדיבן נד ושרו בעלמן דבלתימה: מז ונטלו מעלמן דבלתימה ושרו כטורי דעברא דקדם נבו: מח ונטלו מטורי דעברא ושרו במישרא דמואב על ירדנא דירחו: מט ושרו על ירדנא מבית הישמת עד

בעציו נבר: לו ויסעו מעציו נבר ויחנו במדבר-צן הוא קדש: לו ויסעו מקדש ויחנו בהר ההר בקצה ארץ אדום: לה ויעל אהרן הכהן אל-הר ההר על-פי יהוה וימת שם בשנת הארבעים לצאת בני-ישראל מארץ מצרים בחדש החמישי באחד לחדש: מט ואהרן בן-שלש ועשרים ומאת שנה במתו בהר ההר: ס וישמע הפנעני מלך ערד והוא ישב בנגב בארץ כנען בבא בני ישראל: מא ויסעו מהר ההר ויחנו בצלמנה: מב ויסעו מצלמנה ויחנו בפונן: מג ויסעו מפונן ויחנו באבת: מד ויסעו מאבת ויחנו בעיי העברים בנבול מואב: מה ויסעו מעיים ויחנו כדיבן נד: מו ויסעו מדיבן נד ויחנו בעלמן דבלתימה: מז ויסעו מעלמן דבלתימה ויחנו בהרי העברים לפני נבו: מח ויסעו מהרי העברים ויחנו בערבית מואב על ירדן ירחו: מט ויחנו על-הירדן מבית הישמת עד

רש"י

וגלים, כמו לעי השדה³, שמו את ירושלים לעי⁴: (מט) מבית הישמת עד אבל השטים. כאן למדך שיעור מחנה ישראל י"ג מיל, דאמר רבה זר זר חנה לדידי חזי לי הכוא אתרא וכו'⁵: אבל השטים. מישור של שטים אל

(לח) על פי ה'. מלמד שמת צניקה¹: (מ) וישמע הכנעני. כאן למדך שמינת אהרן היא השמועה, שנסתלקו עניי כבוד וכסבור שנתנה רשות להלחם בישראל, לפיכך חזר וכתצה²: (מד) בעיי העברים. לשון חרבות

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the Torah state the age at which Aharon passed away? (v. 39)

JERUSALEM TALMUD: The 123 years of Aharon’s life correspond to the 123 times that the Jewish people answer “halleluka” when reciting *hallel* (*Shabbos* 16:1).

RAMBAM: In the days of the early sages the custom for reciting *hallel* was as follows:

After the leader who was reciting the *hallel* made the blessing, he said the word “*halleluka*” and the congregation responded “*halleluka!*”

He said, “*halelu avdei Hashem,*” and the congregation responded “*halleluka!*”

He then said, “*halelu es shaim Hashem,*” and the congregation responded “*halleluka!*”

He then said, “*Yehi shaim Hashem mevorach me’atah ve’ad olam,*” and the congregation responded “*halleluka!*”

This continued with each verse so that they answered “*halleluka!*” a total of 123 times throughout the recitation of *hallel*. This number corresponds to the years that Aharon lived...

This is an ancient custom which is appropriate to follow.

(*Laws of Megilah and Chanukah* 3:12-14)

TORAS MENACHEM

🕯️ THE YEARS OF AHARON’S LIFE (v. 39)

The *Jerusalem Talmud* and *Rambam* explain that Aharon’s 123 years correspond to the number of verses in *hallel*. But what is the significance of this connection, more than the superficial similarity between the number of verses and his lifespan? And why did *Rambam* deem it necessary to mention the connection between Aharon and *hallel*?

A further question concerns *Rambam*’s recommendation that “*this is an ancient custom which is appropriate to follow.*” Commentaries to the *Talmud* (*Succah* 38a) explain that this custom of a responsive *hallel* was instituted because there was a decline in Jewish knowledge in those days,

to the extent that many people were not familiar with the text of *hallel*. Thus, it became necessary to devise a method whereby the congregation could fulfill their obligation to recite *hallel* without knowing the words.

So what, according to *Rambam*, is so admirable about this practice that makes it “appropriate to follow” at other times, when people are familiar with *hallel*? Surely it was only devised for negative reasons, due to the desperation of the times?

And why does *Rambam* require the response of “*halleluka*” after every verse in *hallel*, in contrast to other opinions (*Tosfos, Ran & Ritvah*) which only require responses for the first chapter of *hallel*?

[32] ³⁵ They journeyed from Avronah and camped in Etzyon-Gaver.

[33] ³⁶ They journeyed from Etzyon-Gaver and camped in the Desert of Tzin, which is Kadaish.

🌀 JOURNEYS 34-42: JOURNEY TOWARDS THE LAND OF ISRAEL 🌀

[34] ³⁷ They journeyed from Kadaish and camped at Hor Hahar, at the edge of the land of Edom.

—³⁸ Aharon the priest went up Hor Hahar and died there (by a kiss) from God’s mouth, on the first day of the fifth month in the fortieth year of the children of Israel’s exodus from Egypt. ³⁹ Aharon was one hundred and twenty-three years old when he died at Hor Hahar. ⁴⁰ The Canaanite King of Arad, who dwelt in the south in the land of Canaan, heard (that the clouds of glory had departed after Aharon’s passing and) the children of Israel had come. (Presuming that they were weak, he attacked them).—

[35] ⁴¹ They journeyed from Hor Hahar and camped in Tzalmonah.

[36] ⁴² They journeyed from Tzalmonah and camped in Punon.

[37] ⁴³ They journeyed from Punon and camped in Ovos.

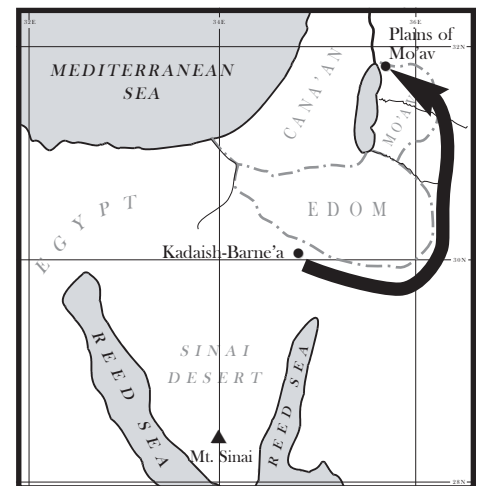
[38] ⁴⁴ They journeyed from Ovos and camped at Iyay Ha’auarim, on the Mo’avite boundary.

[39] ⁴⁵ They journeyed from Iyim and camped in Divon-Gad.

[40] ⁴⁶ They journeyed from Divon-Gad and camped in Almon-Divlasoymah.

[41] ⁴⁷ They journeyed from Almon-Divlasoymah and camped in the Avarite mountains, in front of Mount Nevo.

[42] ⁴⁸ They journeyed from the Avarite mountains and camped in the plains of Mo’au, by the Jordan, near Jericho. ⁴⁹ They camped along the Jordan from Bais Yeshimos to Avel Shitim, in the plains of Mo’au.



JOURNEYS 34-42: TOWARDS THE LAND OF ISRAEL
(3-6 MONTHS)

[33] They arrived at Kadaish on 1st of Nissan, 2484 (*Bamidbar* 20:1), and Miriam passed away there. Kadaish appears to be identical with Rismah (Kadaish-Barne'a) mentioned above (journeys 15-16). See appendix to the book of *Devarim*. **JOURNEYS 34-42: JOURNEY AROUND EDMO AND MO'AV THROUGH AMORITE TERRITORY TO THE PLAINS OF MO'AV:** At this point, the Jewish people were ready to enter the Land of Israel, since the previous generation had died (*Rashi* to *Bamidbar* 20:22). Moshe requested permission from the King of Edom to pass northward through the Land of Edom into the Land of Israel, but his request was denied (*Bamidbar* 20:14-21). Thus, they were forced to retrace the steps of their parents along the south side of Mount Se'ir, heading east (*Rashi* to *Bamidbar* 21:4), circumventing the Land of Edom until they reached Mo'au (journeys 34-38): [34] Hor Hahar was a double mountain on the border of Edom (See *Bamidbar* 20:23). Aharon passed away there on 1st of Av, 2484. (For an explanation as to why the Torah stresses this point: see *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Masei* 5744 for a literal explanation; and *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, pp. 198-199; *ibid.* vol. 18, p. 411 for a Chasidic interpretation.) At this point a rebellion occurred when, fearing the imminent attack by the King of Arad, a group turned back eight journeys, until they were halted in their tracks by the Levites (see *Devarim* 10:6-7 and *Rashi*). The Jewish people were then attacked by the King of Arad (*Bamidbar* 21:1). [37] See *Bamidbar* 21:10. [38] *Ibid.* 11. [39] This appears to be the encampment at the "Zered Brook" mentioned in *Bamidbar* 21:12. They then traveled north, circumventing the land of Mo'au (*Rashi* to 21:13 *ibid.*). [40] This appears to be the encampment "on the other side of the Arnon (Brook)" (*ibid.* 13), where the Amorites were miraculously defeated (see *ibid.* 14-20 and *Rashi*). The Jewish people then traveled through the Land of the Amorites, defeating Sichon (*ibid.* 21:21-30). [41] This was followed by the war against Og (*ibid.* v. 33-35) and the Ba'al Pe'or affair (ch. 25 *ibid.*). [42] They passed across the width of the Amorite Land and camped by the Jordan (*ibid.* 22:1). This was followed by the events of the remainder of the book of *Bamidbar* chapters 26ff. and the book of *Devarim*.

TORAS MENACHEM

THE EXPLANATION

If *Rambam* understood that answering "halleluka!" alone was a mere leniency, then he certainly would not recommend that "it is appropriate to follow" this custom. How could it be "appropriate" to follow a leniency?

Rather, according to *Rambam* the "ancient custom" of reciting *hallel* is not a leniency at all. In fact, it is the *ideal* method of reciting *hallel*. Despite

the fact that the causes that led to this method of reciting *hallel* were negative, the solution nevertheless contains no compromise or leniency. This is because *Rambam* understood that by answering "halleluka!" alone one fulfills the obligation to recite *hallel* exactly as if one would have said the *entire hallel* oneself (rather like the principle that a person who says *amen* is like the one who makes the blessing—*Rambam, Laws of Blessings* 1:11).

מישר שטין במישריא דמואב: נ ומליל יי עם משה במישריא דמואב על ירדנא דירחו למימר: נא מלל עם בני ישראל ותימר להון ארי אתון עברין ית ירדנא לארעא דכנען: נב ותתרכון ית כל יתבי ארעא מן קדמיכון ותברון ית כל בית סגדהון וית כל צלמי מתכתהון תברון וית כל במתהון תשצון: נג ותתרכון ית יתבי ארעא ותיתבון בה ארי לכון ויהבית ית ארעא למירת יתה: נד ותחסנון ית ארעא בעדבא לזרעיתכון לסגיא תסגון ית אחסנתהון ולזעירי תזעירון

אבל השמים בערבית מואב: ס [שני] וחמישי כשהן מחוברין נ וידבר יהוה אל משה בערבית מואב על ירדן ירחו לאמר: נא דבר אל בני ישראל ואמרת אליהם כי אתם עברים את הירדן אל ארץ כנען: נב והורשתם את כל ישיבי הארץ מפניכם ואבדתם את כל משפחתם ואת כל צלמי מסכתם תאבדו ואת כל במותם תשמידו: נג והורשתם את הארץ וישבתם בה כי לכם נתתי את הארץ לרשת אתה: [שלישי] נד והתנחלתם את הארץ בגורל למשפחתים לרב תרבו את נחלתו

כ"ש

של שיש להשתחוות עליהם צפיטו ידים ורגלים, כדכתיב ואזן משכית לא תתנו בצרכם להשתחוות עליהם: מסבתם. כתרנומו מתכחון: (נג) והורשתם את הארץ. והורשתם אותה מיושביה ולא וישבתם בה, חוכלו להתקיים בה, ואם לאו לא תוכלו להתקיים בה: (נד) אל אשר יצא לו שמה. מקרא קצר הוא זה, אל מקום אשר יאל לו שמה הגורל לו יהיה:

שמו: (נא) כי אתם עברים את הירדן וגו' והורשתם וגו'. וכלא כמה פעמים הוזכרו על כך, חלא כך אמר להם משה כשאתם עוזרים צירדן דיצשה, על מנת כן תעברו, ואם לאו מים צאין וטופין אחכם, וכן מלינו שאמר להם יהושע¹ צעודם צירדן²: (נב) והורשתם. וגרשתם: משביתם. כתרנומו בית סגדתהון, על שם שהיו מסכין את הקרקע צרפת אצנים

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What does verse 53 teach us?

RASHI: "You shall rid the Land"—You should rid it of its inhabitants, and then: "You should settle in it"—Only then will you be able to survive there. But if not, you will not be able to survive there.

RAMBAN: In my opinion, this verse conveys a positive command of the Torah...that God commanded the Jewish people to settle in the Land of Israel...Thus we find that our Sages greatly praised the *mitzvah* of living in the Land of Israel and the prohibition of leaving it. It is in this verse that the *mitzvah* is conveyed.

MEGILAS ESTHER: Rambam clearly did not agree with Ramban that it is a *mitzvah* from the Torah to live in the Land of Israel, as he omitted this precept from his *Sefer Hamitzvos*. Presumably, Rambam maintained that verse 53 was a command to Moshe and Yehoshua which was only in force until the Jewish people were exiled from the Land, but not to all future generations, until Mashiach will come (commentary to Ramban's "omissions" from *Sefer Hamitzvos*, positive 4).

RAMBAM: [9] One should not emigrate from the Land of Israel, except for the purposes of studying Torah or in order to get married... so too, one may leave for the purposes of business. However, one may not leave on a permanent basis.... [10] The Sages would kiss the ground of the Land of Israel, and kiss its rocks and roll on its earth... [11] Our Sages said that any person who lives in the Land of Israel will be forgiven for his sins...even if he walks four cubits there, he will merit life in the World to Come. So too if a person is buried there, he is atoned for.... [12] A person should always live in the Land of Israel, even in a town which is mainly inhabited by non-Jews, rather than live in the Diaspora in a town which is predominantly Jewish. If a person leaves [the Land of Israel] to go to the Diaspora it is as if he worshiped idols, as the verse states, "For they have driven me this day from abiding with the inheritance of God, saying, go serve other gods" (Sam. I 26:19). Just as one may not emigrate from the Land to the Diaspora, so too one may not emigrate from Babylon in order to live in another country, as the verse states (Jer. 27:22), "They will be carried to Babylon, and there they will be" (Laws of Kings, 5:9-12).

TORAS MENACHEM

Since one is fulfilling one's entire obligation through answering "halleluka!" it follows that, according to Rambam, it is necessary to make a response after every single verse, and not just at specific highlights. Thus a total of 123 responses are required.

In the final analysis, Rambam's recommended method of *hallel* has both advantages of being: a.) in total communal harmony, through responsive recital; and yet b.) not at the expense of any individual following a leniency, for each person is considered to have recited the entire *hallel* himself.

Genuine unity without compromise was the life mission of Aharon. After he passed away, at 123 years, the entire Jewish people mourned (above 20:29). And they mourned even more than after Moshe's passing, as Aharon was a person who constantly pursued communal peace (See *Rashi ibid.*). Thus the communal recital of *hallel* and Aharon's 123 years share a common theme.

In fact, even the reason for this type of *hallel* recital is reminiscent of Aharon. For, just as the responsive *hallel* was instituted for the sake of simple Jews, likewise, Aharon's life was devoted to bringing simple people closer to Torah.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 23, p. 229ff.)

🌀 ENTERING THE LAND 🌀

33:50 **G**od spoke to Moshe in the plains of Mo'av by the Jordan near Jericho, saying: ⁵¹ "Speak to the children of Israel and say to them: 'When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan (the waters of the Jordan will split for you. But this is on condition that) ⁵² you drive out all the inhabitants of the Land from before you, destroy all their temples, destroy their molten idols, and demolish their high places. ⁵³ You should rid the Land (of its inhabitants, then) you should settle in it, for I have given you the Land to occupy it.

THIRD READING ⁵⁴ "You should allocate the possession of the Land to your families by a lottery. Give a larger inheritance to a large (family), and give a smaller inheritance to a small (family). Wherever the lot falls

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 "YOU SHOULD SETTLE IN IT" (v. 53)

Even though **Rambam** (and *Rashi**) disagreed with the view of **Ramban**, and maintained that it is *not* a biblical command to live in the Land of Israel—as **Megilas Esther** writes—**Rambam** nevertheless devoted a significant part of his *Laws of Kings* in praise of living in the Land.

Rambam's words prompt a number of questions:

a.) *Rambam* does not cite any verse from the Torah to prove that there is an obligation to live in the Land or that there is a prohibition to leave. Nevertheless, he does write that, according to Torah, a Jew *should* live in the Land of Israel, and *should not* leave. What, then, is the basis of this requirement?

b.) The sequence of laws here is difficult to understand. First, in law 9 *Rambam* writes that, "One should not emigrate from the Land of Israel, etc." Then, in laws 10 and 11 he describes the great qualities of the Land and how it was cherished by the Sages. And only afterwards, in law 12, does he write, "A person should always live in the Land of Israel etc." But surely it would be more logical to place this last statement ("A person should always live in the Land of Israel") at the beginning, and then go on to describe how one should not leave and how the Land is great?

c.) Why does *Rambam* write, "Just as one may not emigrate from the Land to the Diaspora," instead of, "one may not emigrate from the Land of Israel to the Diaspora"? Surely, he is not merely trying to be brief, as he has written "the Land of Israel" in full so many other times?

d.) One of the reasons for the prohibition of leaving Babylon "is because there are many *Yeshivos* (Talmudic academies) found there which are constantly strengthening the institution of Torah" (*Rashi* to end of *Kesubos*). Presumably, this would mean that after the *Yeshivos* in Babylon closed down, the prohibition of leaving ceased. However, *Rambam* does not mention this point at all. His sole proof is from the verse, "They will be carried to Babylon," which suggests that the prohibition of leaving Babylon continued after its *Yeshivos* closed. What, then, is the basis of *Rambam's* position?

THE EXPLANATION

When we speak of the uniqueness of the Land of Israel we always speak of its *holiness*. We call it the Holy Land, and we understand that holiness is the key distinguishing quality which sets it apart from all other lands. However, there is a further uniqueness of the Land of Israel, that it is a land that was *chosen* by God: "The Land of Israel is cherished, as it was chosen by God" (*Midrash Tanchuma, Re'eh* 8). This is totally distinct from the concept of holiness. We find this also by the Jewish people, who also possess the two independent qualities of *holiness* and *choseness*.

Rambam does not state explicitly which of these two qualities is the basis of the laws cited above. But, we will attempt to fathom which is the key *halachic* factor behind each of the above laws, and in this way we will be able to answer all of the above questions.

Let us turn first to the final law, "Just as one may not emigrate from the Land to the Diaspora, so too one may not emigrate from Babylon, etc."

It would seem that this law arises due to the *choseness* of the Land, for a number of reasons:

a.) Babylon is not a holy land. Therefore, *Rambam's* comparison between the Land of Israel and Babylon cannot be based on the former's holiness: "Just as one may not emigrate from the Land to the Diaspora, so too one may not emigrate from Babylon etc." Therefore we must be speaking here of the *choseness* of the Land. God *chose* Babylon as the place where the Jewish people would reside during exile, and so *Rambam* argues that "just as" God chose the Land of Israel as the ideal place to live for the Jewish people in good times, "so too" He chose Babylon as their home during exile times.

b.) To support this assertion, *Rambam* cites the verse, "They will be carried to Babylon, and there they will be," which indicates that God chose Babylon as an Exile-home for the Jewish people.

c.) To stress the point further, *Rambam* refers, not to the "Holy Land," or even "the Land of Israel," but simply, "the Land." In this way, he

🌀 The Last Word 🌀

As for your mentioning the fact that according to the opinion of several *poskim* [legal authorities] it is a *mitzvah* to live in *Eretz Yisra'el*, surely you know that all *poskim* agree that there are 612 additional *mitzvos* to be observed by Jews everywhere, and especially by those already living in the Holy Land. Indeed, those who are already there and are fulfilling the *mitzvah* of living in *Eretz Yisra'el* should surely concentrate on the rest of the 612 *mitzvos*—those which apply nowadays, of course....

"*Yishuv Eretz Yisra'el* [settling in the Land of Israel] is so closely linked with the observance of the *mitzvah*, as also so clearly underscored in the prayer which we have been saying for thousands of years: "Because of our sins we have been exiled from our Land" [Additional service for festivals]. This clearly indicates that every Jew who wants to help nullify the result (exile from our land) must first of all nullify the cause (our sins)."

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe in 5731)

* See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 13, p. 122, note 4.

ית אֲחֻסְנָתְהוֹן לְדִיפּוֹק לֵה תִּמְן עֲדָבָא דִּי לֵה יְהִי לְשִׁבְטֵי אֲבֹתְהוֹן תְּחַסְנוּן: נה וְאִם לֹא תִתְּרָבוּן יֵת יִתְבִּי אֲרַעָא מִן קְדָמִיכוּן וַיְהִי דִּי תִשְׁאֲרוּן מְנַהוֹן לְסִיעֵן נְטָלוּן זִין לְקַבְּלִיכוּן וְלִמְשָׁרְזֵן מִקְפַּנְכוּן וַיַּעֲקוּן לְכוּן עַל אֲרַעָא דִּי אַתּוּן יִתְבִּין בְּהַ: נו וַיְהִי כְּמָא דִּי חֻשְׁבִּית לְמַעְבַּד לְהוֹן אַעְבַּד לְכוּן: א וּמְלִיל יי עִם מִשְׁהָ לְמִימְרָ: ב פִּקְדַּד יֵת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְתִימְרָ לְהוֹן אַרְי אַתּוּן עֲלִין לְאֲרַעָא דְכָנְעֵן דָּא אֲרַעָא דִּי תִתְּפַלַּג לְכוּן בְּאַחְסָנָא אֲרַעָא דְכָנְעֵן לְתַחוּמָהָ: ג וַיְהִי לְכוּן רוּחַ דְּרוּמָא מִמְּדַבְּרָא דְצִין עַל תְּחוּמֵי אַדוּם וַיְהִי לְכוּן תְּחוּם דְּרוּמָא מִסִּיפֵי יַמָּא דְּמִלְחָא קְדוּמָא:

וְלִמְעַט תִּמְעִיט אֶת־נַחְלָתוֹ אֶל אֲשֶׁר־יֵצֵא לוֹ שָׂמָה הַגּוֹרֵל לוֹ יְהִיָּה לְמִטּוֹת אֲבֹתֵיכֶם תִּתְּנַחֲלוּ: נה וְאִם־לֹא תוֹרְיִשׁוּ אֶת־יִשְׂבֵּי הָאָרֶץ מִפְּנֵיכֶם וְהָיָה אֲשֶׁר תוֹתִירוּ מֵהֶם לְשָׂבִים בְּעֵינֵיכֶם וְלִעֲנִינֵם בְּעֵדֵיכֶם וְצָרְרוּ אֶתְכֶם עַל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם יֹשְׁבִים בָּהּ: נו וְהָיָה כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי לַעֲשׂוֹת לָהֶם אֲעֲשֶׂה לָכֶם: פ לד א וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: ב עֲזוּ אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם כִּי־אַתֶּם בָּאִים אֶל־הָאָרֶץ כְּנַעַן זֹאת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר תִּפְּל לָכֶם בְּנַחֲלָהּ אֲרֶץ כְּנַעַן לְגַבְלֹתֶיהָ: ג וְהָיָה לָכֶם פְּאֵת־נֹגֵב מִמְּדַבְּר־עַן עַל־יְדֵי אַדוּם וְהָיָה לָכֶם גְּבוּל

כש"י

אדום מתחלת מקצוע דרומית מזרחית של ארץ תשעת המטות. כילד, שלש ארצות יושבות דרומה של ארץ ישראל זו אלל זו, קצת ארץ מזרים, וארץ אדום כולה וארץ מואב כולה. ארץ מזרים במקצוע דרומית מערבית, שנאמר בצרפשה ז' מעלמון נחלה מזרים והיו תולדותיו הימה. ונחל מזרים היה מהלך על פני כל ארץ מזרים⁵, שנאמר מן השיחור אשר על פני מזרים, ומפסיק בין ארץ מזרים לארץ ישראל. וארץ אדום אללה לזד המזרח וארץ מואב אלל ארץ אדום בצוף הדרום למזרח, וכשילוא ישראל ממזרים, אם רצה המקום לקרצ את כניסתם לארץ היה מעבירם את הנילוס לזד לפון ובאין לארץ ישראל, ולא עשה כן, וזהו שנאמר ולא נחם אללהים דרך ארץ פלשתיים⁶, שהם יושבים על הים צמערבה של ארץ כנען, כענין שנאמר פלשתיים יושבי חבל הים גוי כרתים⁷. ולא נחם אותם הדרך אלל הסיצן והוליאם דרך דרומה

למטות אבותיכם. לפי חשבון יולאי מזרים. דבר אחר צניס עשר גבולין כמנין השצטים: (נה) והיה אשר תותירו מהם. יהיו לכס לרעה: לשבים בעיניכם. ליתדות המנקרות עיניכם. תרגום של יתדות שיכיא: ולצנינם. פותרים זו הפותרים לשון מסוכת קוליס הסוככת אתכם לסגור ולכלוא אתכם מאין יולא וזא: וצרו אתכם. כתרגומו: (ז) זאת הארץ אשר תפול לכם וגו'. לפי שהרבה ממות נובגות בארץ ואין נובגות בחולה לארץ, הולרך לכתוב מזרני גבול רוחותיה סביב, לומר לך מן הגבוליס הללו ולפניס הממות נובגות: תפול לכם. על שם שנתחלקה צגורל נקראת חלוקה לשון נפילה. ומדרש אגדה אומר ע"י שהפיל הקצ"ה שריכס של ע"י² אומות מן השמים וכפתן לפני משה, אמר לו ראה אין צכס עוד כח³: (ג) והיה לכם פאת נגב. רוח דרומית אשר מן המזרח למערב: ממדבר צן. אשר אלל

TORAS MENACHEM

indicates that we are speaking here of a quality possessed by the Land independent of its holiness, namely, its chosenness.

d.) Since the distinctiveness of Babylon was that it was chosen by God, it follows that even after the Yeshivos of Babylon closed, the prohibition of leaving *during exile* remained (unlike *Rashi's* view, mentioned above).

From all of this we can conclude that here, in law 12, *Rambam* is speaking of the chosenness of the Land of Israel, and not its holiness.

Now, let us turn to the beginning of this section of *Rambam*. In laws 10-11 *Rambam* describes how the Sages cherished the Land and how it can atone for sin, which can only be a result of the Land's holiness. Therefore, it follows that when he opens the section with the words, "One should not emigrate from the Land of Israel etc." (law 9), he is speaking of a prohibition that arises from the holiness of the land (not its chosenness).

We have now established that laws 9-11 speak of the holiness of the Land of Israel, and that the concluding part of law 12 (the prohibition of leaving Babylon) is speaking of chosenness. However, the opening passage of law 12 gives evidence in both directions.

Rambam begins, "A person should always live in the Land of Israel... If a person leaves [the Land of Israel] to go to the Diaspora it is as if he

worshipped idols." This suggests that by leaving the Land one is turning away from the Divine Presence (*Shechinah*) which rests there, i.e. one rejects the holiness of the Land. However, the fact that *Rambam* quotes the verse, "for they have driven me this day from abiding with the inheritance of God," suggests that we are speaking here of chosenness.

Thus, it appears that *Rambam* perceived both elements here, and ruled that a Jew should live in the Land of Israel, for both reasons: because it is holy and because it is chosen.

To stress this point further he placed this law ("A person should always live in the Land of Israel,"), not at the beginning of the entire discussion, where it would seem to belong, but in between the discussion of the holiness of the Land (laws 9-11) and the chosenness of Babylon (end of law 12) to show that the Land of Israel possesses both aspects.

Nevertheless, in the final analysis, the fact that *Rambam* included the recommendation to live in *Eretz Yisra'el* in law 12 (which speaks of chosenness) would suggest that, ultimately, he perceived that the main reason that a Jew should live in *Eretz Yisra'el* is because it is chosen.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 399ff.)

1 שמות לז, כ 2 בכל הדפוסיס שראיתי נאמר שבעים אומות! לבד דפוס ראשון ושני וברשי" כתי" בהם נאמר "שבעה אומות". וכן הובא ברבנו בחיי. ואולי הי' כתובה רק התחלת התיבה ובקו הסיים על אות האחרונה, והשלימה המעתיק כפי דעתו (לקו"ש ח"י"ג ע"י 122, הערה 6). 3 תנחומא 4 פסוק ה 5 יהושע יג, ג 6 שמות יג, יז 7 צפני" ב, ה

(for a person) that will be his (portion). You will inherit (a portion) corresponding to (the size) of your paternal tribes (that left Egypt).

⁵⁵ “But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the Land from before you, then those whom you leave over will be like spikes in your eyes and thorns in your sides. They will harass you in the Land in which you settle. ⁵⁶ Then I will do to you what I had intended to do to them.”

BORDERS OF THE LAND

34 God spoke to Moshe, saying: ² Command the children of Israel and say to them: When you arrive in the land of Cana’an, the following is the Land which will fall to you as an inheritance: The Land of Cana’an according to its borders:

³ Your southern border (from east to west) will be by the desert of Tzin, along (the border of) Edom:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the Torah specify the borders of the Land here? (v. 2ff)

RASHI: Since many *mitzvos* are practiced in the Land [of Israel] and do not apply outside the Land, it was necessary for scripture to chart

the outer limits of its boundaries from all sides, to inform you that the *mitzvos* are practiced everywhere within these borders.

RALBAG: God informed them of the precise parameters of the Land, so that they would not conquer too little or too much land.

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🔗 THE BORDERS OF THE LAND (v. 2ff.)

In his commentary to verse 2, *Rashi* explains that the Torah describes the borders of the Land of Israel here in order to make known where the *mitzvos* that only apply in the Land are to be performed.

However, at the literal level, it seems that the interpretation of **Ralbag** is more appropriate here, that God informed the Jewish people of the borders so they would know exactly which lands to conquer. For at this point in time the Jewish people were preparing to conquer the Land. What forced *Rashi* to conclude that the description of the Land’s borders here was primarily connected with the observance of *mitzvos* which would only become relevant *much later*, after they conquered the Land?

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi’s conclusion was based on two points: a.) Verse 2 stresses: “the following is the Land which will fall to you as an inheritance.” The stress

that the Land would “fall” to the Jewish people appears superfluous here, suggesting that the Land would pass *effortlessly* into the possession of the Jewish people through the help of God. From this, *Rashi* concluded that the current passage cannot only be referring to the conquest of the Land by the people, but it must also be connected with God’s relationship with the Land. So *Rashi* concluded that we are speaking here about the *mitzvos* which are observed exclusively in the Land.

b.) Since the conquest was to be conducted by Yehoshua, and not Moshe, we would have expected the Torah to state, “Command Yehoshua.” The fact that this passage was addressed specifically to Moshe indicated to *Rashi* that the main emphasis here is not the *conquest* of the Land, but the *mitzvos* that are to be observed in the Land, which were indeed taught to the Jewish people by Moshe.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 13, pp. 122-4)

The Last Word

“THE LAND...ACCORDING TO ITS BORDERS” (v. 2)

I am completely and unequivocally opposed to the surrender of any of the liberated areas currently under negotiation, such as Yehudah and Shomron, the Golan, etc., for the simple reason, and only reason, that surrendering any part of them would contravene a clear *Psak-Din* [ruling] in *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chayim*, sec. 329, par. 6,7). I have repeatedly emphasized that this *Psak-Din* has *nothing* to do with the sanctity of *Eretz Yisra’el*, or with the “days of Mashiach,” the Geulah, and similar considerations, but solely with the rule of *Pikuach-Nefesh* [danger to life]. This is further emphasized by the fact that this *Psak-Din* has its source in the *Talmud* (*Eruvin* 45a), where the *Gemora* cites as an illustration of a “border-town” under the terms of this *Psak-Din*—the city of Neharde’a in *Babylon* (present-day Iraq)—clearly *not* in *Eretz Yisra’el*. I have emphasized time and time again that it is a

question of, and should be judged purely on the basis of, *Pikuach-Nefesh*, not geography.

The said *Psak-Din* deals with a situation where gentiles (the term is **גוים**, *not* enemies) besiege a Jewish border-town, ostensibly to obtain “straw and hay,” and then *leave*. But because of the *possible* danger, not only to the Jews of the town, but also to other cities, the *Shulchan Aruch* rules that upon receiving news of the gentiles (even only *preparations*), the Jews must mobilize *immediately* and take up arms even on *Shabbos*—in accordance with the rule that “*Pikuach-Nefesh* supersedes *Shabbos*.”

Should there be a question whether the risk does in fact create a situation of *Pikuach-Nefesh*, then—as in the case of illness, where a medical authority is consulted—the authority to make a judgment is

(continued on p. 277)

ד וַיִּסְחַר לְבוֹן תְּחוּמָא מִדְרוֹמָא לְמִסְקָנָא דְעִקְרֵיבִים וַיַּעֲבֵר לְצִן וַיְהוּן מִפְּקִנְוֵיהִי מִדְרוֹמָא לְרָקִם גִּיאָה וַיִּפּוֹק לְחֶצֶר אֲדָר וַיַּעֲבֵר לְעִצְמוֹן: ה וַיִּסְחַר תְּחוּמָא מִעִצְמוֹן לְנַחְלֵא דְמַצְרִים וַיְהוּן מִפְּקִנְוֵיהִי לְיָמָא: ו וַתְּחוּם מִעֲרָבָא וַיְהִי לְבוֹן יָמָא רַבָּא וַתְּחוּמָה דִּין יְהִי לְבוֹן תְּחוּם מִעֲרָבָא: ז וַדִּין יְהִי לְבוֹן תְּחוּם צְפוֹנָא מִן יָמָא רַבָּא תְּכֻנְוֵנוֹן לְבוֹן לְהַר טוֹרָא: ח מֵהַר טוֹרָא תְּכֻנְוֵנוֹן לְמִטֵּי חֲמַת וַיְהוּן מִפְּקִנְוֵיהִי דְתְּחוּמָא לְצַדְדִּ: ט וַיִּפּוֹק תְּחוּמָא לְזַפְרוֹן וַיְהוּן מִפְּקִנְוֵיהִי לְחֶצֶר עֵינָן דִּין יְהִי לְבוֹן תְּחוּם צְפוֹנָא: י וַתְּכֻנְוֵנוֹן לְבוֹן לְתְּחוּם קְדוּמָא מִחֶצֶר עֵינָן לְשַׁפָּם: יא וַיַּחֲוֹת תְּחוּמָא מִשְׁפָּם לְרַבְלָה מִפְּדִנְחָא לְעֵין וַיַּחֲוֹת תְּחוּמָא וַיִּמְטֵי עַל פִּיָּה יָם גִּינְסַר קְדוּמָא: יב וַיַּחֲוֹת תְּחוּמָא לְיִרְדְנָא וַיְהוּן מִפְּקִנְוֵיהִי לְיָמָא דְמִלְחָא דָּא תְּהִי לְבוֹן אֲרַעָא לְתְּחוּמָהָא סְחוֹר סְחוֹר: יג וּפְקִיד מִשָּׁה יַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִימַר דָּא אֲרַעָא דִּי תִתְחַסְנוּן יְתָה בְּעַדְבָא דִּי פְקִיד יֵי לְמִיתָן לְתַשְׁעַת

נִגְבִּי מִקְצֵה יַם־הַמֶּלַח קְדָמָה: ד וַנִּסַּב לָכֶם הַגְּבוּל מִנִּגְבִּי לְמַעְלָה עִקְרֵיבִים וַעֲבַר לְצִנָּה וְהָיָה נָקִי וְהָיוּ תּוֹצְאֹתָיו מִנִּגְבִּי לְקִדְשׁ בְּרִנְעֵי וַיֵּצֵא חֶצֶר־אֲדָר וַעֲבַר עִצְמוֹנָה: ה וַנִּסַּב הַגְּבוּל מִעִצְמוֹן נַחְלֵה מַצְרִים וְהָיוּ תּוֹצְאֹתָיו הַיָּמָה: ו וַגְּבוּל יָם וְהָיָה לָכֶם הַיָּם הַגָּדוֹל וַגְּבוּל זְהִי־יְהִיֶּה לָכֶם גְּבוּל יָם: ז וְזֶה־יְהִיֶּה לָכֶם גְּבוּל צְפוֹן מִן־הַיָּם הַגָּדוֹל תִּתְּאוּ לָכֶם הַר הַהָר: ח מֵהַר הַהָר תִּתְּאוּ לְבֵא חֲמַת וְהָיוּ תּוֹצְאֹת הַגְּבֹל צַדְדָּה: ט וַיֵּצֵא הַגְּבֹל זְפִרְנָה וְהָיוּ תּוֹצְאֹתָיו חֶצֶר עֵינָן זְהִי־יְהִיֶּה לָכֶם גְּבוּל צְפוֹן: י וְהִתְּאוּיֶתֶם לָכֶם לַגְּבוּל קְדָמָה מִחֶצֶר עֵינָן שַׁפָּמָה: יא וַיִּרְד הַגְּבֹל מִשְׁפָּם הָרַבְלָה מִקְדָּם לְעֵין וַיִּרְד הַגְּבֹל וּמָחָה עַל־בְּתָף יַם־כְּנָרֶת קְדָמָה: יב וַיִּרְד הַגְּבוּל הַיִּרְדְנָה וְהָיוּ תּוֹצְאֹתָיו יָם הַמֶּלַח זֹאת תְּהִיֶּה לָכֶם הָאָרֶץ לַגְּבֻלְתֶּיהָ סְבִיב: יג וַיֵּצֵאוּ מִשָּׁה אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר זֹאת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר תִּתְּנַחֲלוּ אֹתָהּ בְּגוֹרָל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה לָתֵת לָתֵשַׁעַת הַמַּטּוֹת

כ"ש"י

מערבית דרומית: (ה) והיו תוצאותיו הימה. אל מלך המערב שאין עוד גבול נגד מאריך לזד המערב משם והלאה: (ז) וגבול ים. ומלך מערבי מהו: והיה לכם הים הגדול. למלך: וגבול. הכסין שצחוק הים אף הם מן הגבול" וחס אייס, שקורין אינזול"ס: (ז) גבול צפון. מלך לפון: מן הים הגדול תתאו לכם הר ההר. שהוא במקצוע לפונית מערבית. וראשו משפיע ונכנס לתוך הים ויש מרוחב הים לפנים הימנו וחולב הימנו: תתאו. תשפטו לכם לנטות ממערב לזפון אל הר הכר: תתאו. לשון סיבה, כמו אל תא הכאים², ותאי השער¹ היזיע שקורין אפנדי"ן, שהוא מוכב ומשופט: (ח) מהר ההר. תסבו ותלכו אל מלך הלפון לזד המזרח ותפגעו בלזב חמת, זו אנטוכיא: תוצאות הגבול. סופי הגבול. כל מקום שנאמר תולאות הגבול, או המלך כלב שם לגמרי ואינו עובר להלן כלל, או משם מתפשט ומרחיב ויואל לאחוריו להמשיך להלן צאלכסון יותר מן הרוחב הראשון, ולענין רוחב המדע הראשון קראו תולאות, ששם כלתה אותה מדע: (ט) והיו תוצאותיו חצר עינן. הוא היה סוף המלך הלפוני. ונמלאת חצר עינן במקצוע לפונית מזרחית. ומשם והתאוויתם לכם אל מלך המזרחי: (י) והתאוויתם. לשון הסבב ונטיב כמו תתאו: שפמה. צמל המזרחי ומשם הרבלה: (יא) מקדם לעינן. שם מקום. והמלך הולך צמזרחו נמלא העינן לפניו מן המלך ומארץ ישראל הוא: וירד הגבול. כל שהגבול הולך מלפון לדרום הוא יורד והולך: ומחה על בתף. עבר: ים כנרת קדמה. שיבה ים כנרת תוך לגבול צמערב, והגבול צמזרח ים כנרת, ומשם יורד אל הירדן והירדן מושך וזא מן הלפון לדרום צאלכסון נוטה לזד מזרח ומתקרב לזד ארץ כנען כנגד ים כנרת ומושך לזד מזרח שם אל"י כנגד ים כנרת עד שופל צים המלך ומשם כלב הגבול צתולאותיו אל ים המלך, שממנו התחלת

אל המדבר, והוא שקראו יחזקאל מדבר העמים¹, לפי שכיו כמה אומות יושבות בלדו, והולכין אלל דרומה מן המערב כלפי מזרח תמיד, עד שזאו לדרומה של ארץ אדום, ובקשו ממלך אדום שיניחם לעבור דרך ארצו ולהכנס לארץ דרך רחבה, ולא רצה. והולרכו לכבוב את כל דרומה של אדום עד זואם לדרומה של ארץ מואב, שנאמר וגם אל מלך מואב שלח ולא אצבה. והלכו כל דרומה של מואב עד סופה ומשם הפכו פניהם לזפון עד שצבו כל מלך מזרחי שלח לרחבה וכשכלו את מזרחם מלאו את ארץ סיחון ועוג שהיו יושבין צמזרחם של ארץ כנען והירדן מפסיק ציניהם. וזהו שנאמר ציפתח וילך צמדבר ויסב את ארץ אדום ואת ארץ מואב ויצא ממזרח שמש לארץ מואב³. וכצבו את ארץ סיחון ועוג שהיתה בלפונה של ארץ מואב. וקרצו עד הירדן והוא כנגד מקצוע לפונית מערבית של ארץ מואב, נמלא שארץ כנען צצער הירדן למערב היה מקצוע דרומית מזרחית שלח אלל אדום: (ד) ונסב לכם הגבול מנגב למעלה עקרבים. כל מקום שנאמר ונסב או יואל, מלמד שלח היה המלך שוב אלל הולך ויואל לחוץ, יואל המלך ועוקם לזד לפונו של עולם צאלכסון למערב ועובר המלך צדרומה של מעלה עקרבים, נמלא מעלה עקרבים לפניו מן המלך: ועבר צנה. אל לין כמו מלרימה: והיו תוצאותיו. קלותיו. צדרומה של קדש צרנע: ויצא חצר אדר. מתפשט המלך ומרחיב לזד לפון של עולם ונמשך עוד צאלכסון למערב וצא לו לחצר אדר ומשם לעמון ומשם לנחל מלרים. ולשון ונסב האמור כאן לפי שכתב ויואל חצר אדר שהתחיל להרחיב משעבר את קדש צרנע ורוחב אותה רלועה צבלטה לזד לפון היתה מקדש צרנע עד עלמון ומשם והלאה נתקלר המלך ונסב לזד הדרום וצא לו לנחל מלרים ומשם לזד המערב אל הים הגדול שהוא מלך מערב של כל ארץ ישראל. נמלא שנחל מלרים במקצוע

1 יחזקאל כ, לה 2 שופטים יא, ז 3 שם פסוק יח 4 גיטין ח. 5 דברי הימים ב, יב, יא 6 יחזקאל מ, י

The southern border will stretch from the edge of the Salt Sea in the east; ⁴ the border then turns south of Ma'aleh-Akrabim, passing toward Tzin, and its edge will be south of Kadaish-Barne'a; then it will extend to Chatzar-Adar and continue towards Azmon; ⁵ the border then turns from Azmon to the stream of Egypt (which forms the border with Egypt), and its end will be at the (Mediterranean) Sea.

⁶ Your western border will be through the Great (Mediterranean) Sea (including the islands within) the border. This will be your western border.

⁷ The following will be your northern border: From the Great (Mediterranean) Sea turn yourselves toward Hor Hahar; ⁸ from Hor Hahar turn towards the route to Chamas; the (northernmost) point of the border will be towards Tzedad; ⁹ the border will then extend to Tzifron, and its end will be Chatzar-Ainan. This will be your northern border.

¹⁰ You should then turn yourselves toward the eastern border: From Chatzar-Ainan to Shefam; ¹¹ the border then goes down from Shefam towards Rivlah, to the east of Ayin; the border then goes down and hits the eastern shore of Lake Kineret. ¹² The border then continues down along the Jordan, and its end is the Salt Sea.

This will be your Land, defined by its surrounding borders.

¹³ Moshe commanded the children of Israel saying, "This (stated above) is the Land that God has commanded to give to nine and a half tribes, which you are to apportion as an inheritance through a

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vested in the military experts. If military experts decide that there is a danger of *Pikuach-Nefesh*, there could be no other overriding considerations, since *Pikuach-Nefesh* overrides everything else. Should the military experts declare that while there is such a risk, yet it should be taken for some other reason, such as *political* considerations (good will of the gentiles) this would clearly be contrary to the *Psak-Din*, for the *Psak-Din* requires that *Pikuach-Nefesh*, not political expediency, should be the decisive factor.

Now in regard to the liberated areas, all military experts, Jewish and non-Jewish, agree that in the present situation giving up any part of them would create serious security dangers. No-one says that giving up any part of them would enhance the *defensibility* of the borders. But some military experts are prepared to take a chance in order not to antagonize Washington and/or to improve the "international image," etc. To follow this line would not only go against the clear *Psak-Din*, but would also ignore costly lessons of the *past*. One glaring case in point is "the Yom-Kippur War." Days and hours before the attack, there were urgent sessions of the government discussing the situation with the military. Military intelligence pointed to unmistakable evidence that an Egyptian attack was imminent, and the military experts advised a preemptive strike that would save many lives and prevent an invasion. However, the politicians, with the acquiescence of some military experts, rejected this action on the ground that such a step, or even a general mobilization, before the Egyptians *actually* crossed the border, would mean being branded as the aggressor, and would jeopardize relations with the USA. This decision was contrary to the said *Psak-Din* of the *Shulchan Aruch*, as pointed out above. The tragic results of that decision bore out the validity of the *Shulchan Aruch's* position (as if it were necessary), for many lives were *needlessly* sacrificed, and the situation came close to total disaster, but for God's mercies. Suffice it to mention that the then Prime Minister later admitted that all her life she would be haunted by that tragic decision.

I know, of course, that there are Rabbis who are of the opinion that in the present situation, as they see it, it would be permissible from the viewpoint of the *Shulchan-Aruch* to return areas from *Eretz Yisra'el*. But it is also known on what information they based this view. One argument is that the present situation is not identical with the hypothetical case of a state of "being besieged by gentiles." A second argument is that the present surrendering of some areas would not endanger lives.

That these arguments are based on misinformation is patently clear. The Arab neighbors are prepared *militarily*; what is more, they do demand these areas as theirs *to keep*, and openly declare that if not surrendered voluntarily, they will take them by force, and eventually everything else. A Rabbi who says that the said *Psak-Din* of the *Shulchan Aruch* does not apply in the present situation is completely misinformed on what the situation actually is...

I was taken to task for placing so much emphasis on the security of *Eretz Yisra'el*, the argument being that what has protected the Jewish people during the long *Galus* has been the study of Torah and the practice of *Mitzvos*; hence Torah-observant Jews should not make the inviolability of *Eretz Yisra'el* as the overriding cause. I countered that they missed the point, for my position has nothing to do with *Eretz Yisra'el* as such, but with the *Pikuach-Nefesh* of the Jews living there—which would apply to any part of the world.

It is said that my pronouncements on the issues are more political than Rabbinic. Inasmuch as the matter has to do with *Pikuach Nefesh*, it is surely the duty of every Jew, be he Rabbi or layman, to do all permitted by the *Shulchan Aruch* to help forestall—or, at any rate, minimize—the danger. In a case of *Pikuach-Nefesh*, every possible effort must be made, even if there is **ספק** (doubt) and many doubts whether the effort will succeed.

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe in 5741)

שִׁבְטֵינִי וּפְלִגְוֹת שִׁבְטָא: יד אַרְי קבילו שִׁבְטָא דְבְנֵי רְאוּבֵן לְבֵית אֲבֹתָהוֹן וּשְׁבֻטָא דְבְנֵי נָדָב לְבֵית אֲבֹתָהוֹן וּפְלִגְוֹת שִׁבְטָא דְמְנַשֶּׁשׁ קבילו אַחְסַנְתָּהוֹן: טו תְּרִין שִׁבְטֵינִי וּפְלִגְוֹת שִׁבְטָא קבילו אַחְסַנְתָּהוֹן מִעֵבְרָא לְיִרְדְּנָא דִירְחוּ קְדוּמָא מְדִינָתָא: טז וּמְלִיל יי עִם מִשָּׁה לְמִימְרָא: יז אֲלֵינִי שְׁמַתָּת גְּבֻרָא דֵי יַחְסַנְוֹן לְכוּן ית אַרְעָא אֲלַעֲזֹר בְּהִנָּא וַיהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּר נֹון: יח וְרַבָּא חַד רַבָּא חַד מִשְׁבֻטָא תַסְבֹון לְאַחְסַנָא ית אַרְעָא: יט וְאֲלֵינִי שְׁמַתָּת גְּבֻרָא לְשִׁבְטָא דִיהוּדָה כָּלֵב בֶּר יִפְנָה: כ וּלְשִׁבְטָא דְבְנֵי שִׁמְעוֹן שְׁמוּאֵל בֶּר עֲמִיהוּד: כא לְשִׁבְטָא דְבְנֵימֶן אֶלִידָד בֶּר כְּסֹולֹון: כב וּלְשִׁבְטָא דְבְנֵי דָן רַבָּא בְקִי בֶר יִגְלִי: כג לְבְנֵי יוֹסֵף לְשִׁבְטָא דְבְנֵי מְנַשֶּׁשׁ חֲנִיאל בֶּר אֶפְדִ: כד וּלְשִׁבְטָא דְבְנֵי אֶפְרַיִם רַבָּא קְמוּאֵל בֶּר שִׁפְטָן: כה וּלְשִׁבְטָא דְבְנֵי זְבוּלֹון רַבָּא אֶלִיצְפָן בֶּר פֶּרְנָד: כו וּלְשִׁבְטָא דְבְנֵי יִשְׁשַׁכָּר נְשִׁיא פְּלִטְיָאל בֶּר עֲזֹון: כז וּלְמִטָּה בְנֵי־אֲשֵׁר נְשִׁיא אַחִיהוּד בֶּר־שְׁלֹמִי: כח וּלְמִטָּה בְנֵי־נַפְתָּלִי נְשִׁיא פְּדֵהָאֵל בֶּר־עֲמִיהוּד: כט אֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה לְנַחַל

וַחֲצֵי הַמִּטָּה: יד כִּי לָקַחְוּ מִטָּה בְנֵי הָרְאוּבֵנִי לְבֵית אֲבֹתָם וּמִטָּה בְנֵי־הַנָּדָבִי לְבֵית אֲבֹתָם וַחֲצֵי מִטָּה מְנַשֶּׁשׁ לָקַחְוּ נַחֲלָתָם: טו שְׁנֵי הַמִּטּוֹת וַחֲצֵי הַמִּטָּה לָקַחְוּ נַחֲלָתָם מִעֵבֶר לְיִרְדֵּן יִרְחוּ קְדוּמָה מְזֻרְחָה: פ [רביעין] וְשֵׁי כִשְׁהוֹן מַחֻבְרִין] טז וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: יז אֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־יִנְחַלוּ לָכֶם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲלַעֲזֹר הַכֹּהֵן וַיהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן־נֹון: יח וְנְשִׂיא אַחַד נְשִׂיא אַחַד מִמִּטָּה תִקְחוּ לְנַחַל אֶת־הָאָרֶץ: יט וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת הָאֲנָשִׁים לְמִטָּה יְהוּדָה כָּלֵב בֶּן־יִפְנָה: כ וּלְמִטָּה בְנֵי שִׁמְעוֹן שְׁמוּאֵל בֶּן־עֲמִיהוּד: כא לְמִטָּה בְנֵימֶן אֶלִידָד בֶּן־כְּסֹולֹון: כב וּלְמִטָּה בְנֵי־דָן נְשִׂיא בְקִי בֶן־יִגְלִי: כג לְבְנֵי יוֹסֵף לְמִטָּה בְנֵי־מְנַשֶּׁשׁ נְשִׂיא חֲנִיאל בֶּן־אֶפְדִ: כד וּלְמִטָּה בְנֵי־אֶפְרַיִם נְשִׂיא קְמוּאֵל בֶּן־שִׁפְטָן: כה וּלְמִטָּה בְנֵי־זְבוּלֹון נְשִׂיא אֶלִיצְפָן בֶּן־פֶּרְנָד: כו וּלְמִטָּה בְנֵי־יִשְׁשַׁכָּר נְשִׂיא פְּלִטְיָאל בֶּן־עֲזֹון: כז וּלְמִטָּה בְנֵי־אֲשֵׁר נְשִׂיא אַחִיהוּד בֶּן־שְׁלֹמִי: כח וּלְמִטָּה בְנֵי־נַפְתָּלִי נְשִׂיא פְּדֵהָאֵל בֶּן־עֲמִיהוּד: כט אֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה לְנַחַל

כש"י

למשפחות ולגברים וצורך לכל אחד ואחד חלק הגון. ומה שחס עושים יהיה עשוי כאלו עשאו שלוחים'. ולא יתכן לפרש לכס זה ככל לכס שבמקרא, שאם כן היה לו לכחוצ ינחילו לכס. ינחלו משמע שהם נחלים לכס שבזולכס ובמקומכס, כמו ה' ילחם לכס? (יח) לנחול את הארץ. שיהא נחל וחולק

מזר מקצוע דרומית מזרחית. הרי סוצצת אותה לארבע רוחותיה: (טו) קדמה מזרחה. אל פני העולם שחס צמזר, שרוח מזרחית קרויה פנים, ומערבית קרויה אחר, לפיכך דרום לימין ולפון לשמאל: (יז) אשר ינחלו לכם. שבזולכס כל נשיא ונשיא אפטרופוס לשצטו ומחלק נחלת השצט

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How did these leaders represent their tribes? (v. 17)

RASHI: "Who will inherit the Land for you" (v. 17)—on your behalf. Each leader is a trustee for his tribe, to divide the tribal inheritance among families and men. He chooses an appropriate portion for each one, and whatever they do is binding, as if they had been designated as agents [by the members of the tribes].

One cannot render the word לָכֶם according to its usual meaning in scripture ("to you"), for then the Torah would have used [the causative conjugation] יִנְחִילוּ לָכֶם "they will inherit it to you." The use of [the simple conjugation] יִנְחִלוּ means that "they will inherit for

you," on your behalf and in your place—as in the verse, "God will fight for you" (Shemos 14:14).

MIZRACHI: The Torah only mentions the leaders inheriting land on behalf of their tribes. What led Rashi to conclude that these leaders were also appointed to divide the land amongst the families and other individuals within the tribe?

Because the division of land among the tribes was accomplished by means of the lottery (see Rashi to 26:54), so the appointment of the leaders as trustees must have been just to divide the land within the tribe.

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🔗 TRIBAL LEADERS APPOINTED TO DIVIDE THE LAND (v. 17)

In his commentary to verse 17, Rashi explains that the purpose of appointing the tribal leaders at this time was so that each would act as "a trustee for his tribe, to divide the tribal inheritance among families and individuals."

Rashi's comments prompt the following questions:

a.) Verse 17 makes no mention of the tribal leaders, referring only to "Elazar the priest and Yehoshua the son of Nun," and it is only in verse 18 that we are told to "take one leader from each tribe." So how could Rashi conclude from verse 17 that the tribal leaders were trustees?

b.) Scripture makes no reference here to the division of land within the tribes themselves to the various families and individuals. Why then did

lottery. ¹⁴ For the tribe of Re'uvaïn's descendants, according to their paternal house, and the tribe of Gad's descendants, according to their paternal house, and half the tribe of Menasheh have already received their inheritance. ¹⁵ (These) two and a half tribes have received their inheritance on this side of the Jordan, near Jericho, facing 'forward,' (i.e.) eastward."

🌀 TRIBAL LEADERS APPOINTED TO DIVIDE THE LAND 🌀

34:16 **G**od spoke to Moshe saying: ¹⁷ These are the names of the men who will inherit the Land for you: Elazar the priest and Yehoshua the son of Nun. ¹⁸ You should take one leader from each tribe; one leader is to acquire the Land (on your behalf).

FOURTH
READING
(6TH WHEN
JOINED)

¹⁹ These are the names of the men:

For the tribe of Yehudah, Calev the son of Yefuneh.

²⁰ For the tribe of Shimon's descendants, Shmuel the son of Amihud.

²¹ For the tribe of Binyamin, Elidad the son of Kislou.

²² The leader of the tribe of Dan's descendants is Buki the son of Yogli.

²³ For the descendants of Yosef:

The leader for the tribe of Menasheh's descendants is Chanial the son of Aifod.

²⁴ The leader for the tribe of Efrayim's descendants is Kemu'ail the son of Shifatan.

²⁵ The leader of the tribe of Zevulun's descendants is Elitzafan the son of Parnach.

²⁶ The leader of the tribe of Yissachar's descendants is Palti'ail the son of Azan.

²⁷ The leader of the tribe of Asher's descendants is Achihud the son of Shlomi.

²⁸ The leader of the tribe of Naftali's descendants is Pedah'ail the son of Amihud.

²⁹ These are the ones whom God commanded to apportion the inheritance of the land of Cana'an to the children of Israel.

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Rashi not simply conclude that the Torah is speaking here of the distribution of land at the *tribal* level?

Mizrachi answers that the tribal allocation of land was via lottery, as Rashi himself writes (26:54), so the appointment of the leaders here must have been for a *further* purpose: to divide the land *within* the tribes.

However this begs the question: Why could we not learn simply that the leaders were appointed here to represent their tribes *in the lottery itself*? I.e. that each leader represented his tribe in the lottery by drawing the lots on the tribe's behalf (see Rashi *ibid.*).

THE EXPLANATION

Verse 17 states, "These are the names of the men who will inherit the Land for you," i.e. that the leaders would actually take possession of the land *on behalf* of their followers, as Rashi explains here at length. Therefore, Rashi concluded that the "leaders" referred to here could not possibly be Elazar and Yehoshua mentioned at the end of the verse, since neither of these two individuals inherited land on behalf of a segment of the Jewish people. While it could be said that Elazar and Yehoshua were responsible for the task of apportioning the land to the Jewish people, they did not take possession of the land themselves (on behalf of the people) and then pass it to the people. So, "the men who will inherit the Land for you," must refer to the leaders of each tribe.

However, this begs the question: If verse 17 refers to the tribal leaders, and *not* Elazar and Yehoshua, then why are Elazar and Yehoshua mentioned at all in the verse?

TWO TYPES OF LEADERSHIP

In order to answer this question, we must first address a general issue concerning the role of the tribal leaders, for we find that their leadership possessed two dimensions:

a.) They were communal representatives, whose task was to be concerned for the needs of their communities.

b.) They were Divinely appointed leaders. Just as we find that Moshe was appointed by God to be the head of the Jewish nation, so too the tribal leaders were appointed by God to be the heads of their tribes.

A major distinction between these two roles is that, as communal representatives, the leaders acted as "executive officers" on behalf of the public, as agents of the community. On the other hand, in their Divinely appointed role, the leaders remained as *private* individuals who were like "sovereigns" or "heads of state" who remained distinct from the rest of their tribe. Their actions were only considered to be representative of their tribes because they were the most important members of their tribes in their own right, and they thus were a reflection of the entire tribe.

The above distinction is not only a theoretical one, it also has a practical ramification:

In their communal role, the leaders were representatives of the community *as a whole*. Thus, they did not focus on the private needs of any individual person, but only on how those individuals were affected by *communal* issues. On the other hand, in their Divinely appointed role as tribal heads the leaders had a *personal* connection with every member of

יִי לְאַחֲסָנָא ית בני ישראל בארעא דכנען; א ומליל יי עם משה במישריא דמואב על ירדנא דירחו למימר: ב פקיד ית בני ישראל ויתנון ללואי מאחסנת אהודתהון קרוין למתב ורוח לקרויא סחרניהון תתנון ללואי: ג ויהון קרויא להון למתב ורוחיהון יהון לבעירהון ולקניניהון ולכל חיותהון: ד ורוחי קרויא די תתנון ללואי מפתל קרתא ולברא אלף אמין סחור סחור: ה ותמשוון מברא לקרתא ית רוח דרומא תרין אלפין באמין וית רוח דרומא תרין אלפין באמין וית רוח מערבא תרין אלפין באמין וית רוח צפונא תרין אלפין באמין וקרתא במציעא דין יהי להון רוחי קרויא: ו וית קרויא די תתנון ללואי ית שית קרוי שובותא די תתנון למערק לתמן קטולא ועליהון תתנון ארבעין ותרתין קרויו: ז כל קרויא די תתנון ללואי

אֶת־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: פ (חמישין) לֵאמֹר א וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בְּעֶרְבַת מוֹאָב עַל־יַרְדֵּן יְרֵחוֹ לֵאמֹר: ג עֹו אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְנָתַנּוּ לְלוֹיִם מִנַּחֲלַת אֲחֻזְתֵּם עָרִים לְשֹׁבְתֵי מִגְרָשׁ הָעָרִים סְבִיבֹתֵיהֶם תִּתְּנוּ לְלוֹיִם: ד וְהָיוּ הָעָרִים לָהֶם לְשֹׁבְתֵי מִגְרָשֵׁיהֶם יִהְיוּ לְבִהְמֹתָם וְלִרְכֻשָׁם וְלִכְל חֵיטָם: ה וּמִגְרָשֵׁי הָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר תִּתְּנוּ לְלוֹיִם מִקִּיר הָעִיר וְחוּצָה אֶלָּף אַמָּה סְבִיב: ו וּמִדֹּתָם מְחוּץ לְעִיר אֶת־פְּאֵת־קִדְמָה אֶלְפִים בְּאַמָּה וְאֶת־פְּאֵת־נֶגֶב אֶלְפִים בְּאַמָּה וְאֶת־פְּאֵת־צָפוֹן אֶלְפִים בְּאַמָּה וְהָעִיר בֵּתוּךָ זֶה יִהְיֶה לָהֶם מִגְרָשֵׁי הָעָרִים: ז וְאֵת הָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר תִּתְּנוּ לְלוֹיִם אֵת שְׁש־עָרֵי הַמִּקְלָט אֲשֶׁר תִּתְּנוּ לְגַם שָׂמָה הָרֵצָח וְעַלֵּיהֶם תִּתְּנוּ אַרְבָּעִים וּשְׁתַּיִם עִיר: ח כָּל־הָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר תִּתְּנוּ לְלוֹיִם

כ"ט

ואין רשאים לזנות שם צית ולא לנטוע כרם ולא לזרוע זריעה: (ג) ולכל חיתם. לכל ארכיבס: (ד) אלף אמה סביב. ואחריו הוא אומר אלפים

אוחה במקומכם: (כט) לנחל את בני ישראל. שכם ונחילו אוחה להם למחלקותיהם: (3) ומגרש. ריוח מקום חלק חוץ לעיר סביב להיות לנוי לעיר,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Verse 2 states that the Levites were given cities “to live in.” Does that mean they owned the cities or not?

JERUSALEM TALMUD: Rabbi Meir says: “Priests and Levites may not [make the tithe declaration (see *Devarim* 26:12ff.)] since they did not take

a portion of the Land.” Rabbi Yosi says: “They have cities with their open spaces!”

[In another place] we learned: “[The cities] were given to them as an inheritance”—these are the words of Rabbi Yehudah. Rabbi Meir

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their tribe which they represented. Consequently they were expected to care for the needs of every individual, as *Rashi* stressed above, “a leader who can tolerate each individual, according to his disposition” (27:16).

Based on the above distinction, we can now explain *Rashi’s* comments to verse 17:

Above, we posed the question why verse 17 mentions Elazar and Yehoshua, being that, according to *Rashi*, the verse is referring to the inheritance of land by the tribal leaders on behalf of their tribes.

Now, Elazar and Yehoshua were divinely appointed leaders who did not represent their tribes by communal appointment. The tribal leaders, on the other hand, fulfilled both communal and divinely appointed roles. Thus, when reading verse 17, *Rashi* understood that the Torah chose to equate the tribal leaders with Elazar and Yehoshua to indicate that we are speaking here of Divinely appointed leadership in which the tribal leaders are similar to Elazar and Yehoshua. Thus, it is as if the verse is saying: “These are the names of the men (that are tribal leaders) who will inherit the Land for you. (They will do so in their Divinely appointed capacity, similar to that of) Elazar the priest and Yehoshua the son of Nun.”

In their Divinely appointed capacity, the leaders were responsible for seeing to the needs of every individual member of the tribe, as explained

above. And this is what led *Rashi* to conclude, “Each leader was a trustee for his tribe, to divide the tribal inheritance among families and individuals,” i.e. right down to the needs of the individual members of their tribes—“He chose an appropriate portion for each one.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 33, p. 199ff.)

🔗 OWNERSHIP OF THE LEVITE CITIES (v. 2)

The *Jerusalem Talmud* cites a difference of opinion whether the cities which were given to the Levites were actually owned by the Levites or not. Rabbi Meir maintained that the Levites did not own their cities, and that consequently, a.) they did not make a tithe declaration, which depends on land ownership; and, b.) they did not charge rent to a person seeking haven there. However, Rabbi Yosi and Rabbi Yehudah maintained that the Levites did own their cities, and thus they could, a.) make a tithe declaration and, b.) charge rent.

Rambam does not give any clear ruling concerning the ownership of the cities. He does, however, make a ruling regarding the issue of whether the Levites had the right to charge rent to a murderer seeking haven in one of the cities. *Rambam* rules that the law differs, depending on which cities we are speaking about: The Levites had a total of 48 cities, of which

CITIES FOR THE LEVITES

35 **FIFTH READING** **G**od spoke to Moshe in the plains of Mo'au, by the Jordan near Jericho, saying: ² Command the children of Israel:

- They should give the Levites cities to live in from their hereditary possession (of land).
- You should give the Levites (non-developed) open spaces around the cities (to enhance their beauty).
- ³ The cities will be theirs to live in, and the open spaces will be for their cattle, their property, and for all their needs.
- ⁴ The areas of open space for the cities which you should give to the Levites (should extend) from the wall of the city outward, one thousand cubits all around (as a non-developed space).
- ⁵ You should measure from outside the city, two thousand cubits on the eastern side, two thousand cubits on the southern side, two thousand cubits on the western side, and two thousand cubits on the northern side, with the city in the middle. This will be your (Levite) cities' (extended) open spaces, (for agriculture).
- ⁶ Among the cities you will give to the Levites, six should be Cities of Refuge, which you should provide (as places) to which a murderer can flee.
- In addition to this, you should provide forty-two cities. ⁷ Thus, the total number of cities you should give to the Levites will be forty-eight cities, together with their open spaces.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

says: "They were given the rights to live there [but not rights of ownership]." Thus, we see that Rabbi Yehudah held in accordance with Rabbi Yosi, and that Rabbi Meir was consistent in his opinion.

Likewise [we see the same consistency in what] we learned: "[A murderer seeking refuge] would have to pay rent to the Levites"—these are the words of Rabbi Yehudah [who maintained that the Levites owned their cities]. Rabbi Meir says: "They did not have to pay the Levites rent" [since Rabbi Meir maintained that the Levites did not own their cities." (*Jerusalem Talmud, Ma'aser Sheni* 5:9, according to the text and interpretation of *Pnei Moshe*).

RAMBAM: Even though the tribe of Levi does not have a portion in the Land, the Jewish people have already been commanded to give them cities to live in and for open space. These cities are: the six Cities of Refuge, to which were added 42 [further] cities, and the additional Cities of Refuge in the days of Mashiach. All these are for the Levites (*Laws of the Sabbatical and Jubilee Years* 13:1).

If a murderer lives in one of the [six] Cities of Refuge, he does not have to pay rent. If he lives in one of the other [42] Levite cities, he must pay rent to his landlord (*Laws of a Murderer and the Protection of Life* 8:10).

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Sparks of Chasidus

It is no coincidence that the Cities of Refuge were also Levite cities. When Levi was born, his mother said, "Now this time my husband will be attached (*yiLaVeh*) to me" (*Bereishis* 29:34), indicating that the name Levi denotes reattachment after a period of disconnection. Thus, when the accidental murderer becomes "disconnected" from God via his sin, he seeks refuge in a Levite city, so that the association with the Levites will assist in re-establishing and revealing his connection with God. And practically speaking, this was the result of associating with the Levites, who were full time "ministers" of God that devoted their entire lives to promoting the observance of *mitzvos*—both *mitzvos* between man and God, and *mitzvos* between man and his fellow.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, pp. 97-8)

six were dedicated Cities of Refuge (see v. 6-7), and the remaining 42 also acted as Cities of Refuge if an accidental murderer actively sought refuge there. *Rambam* rules that in the 42 cities, the Levites had the right to charge rent to a murderer seeking haven, whereas in the six dedicated Cities of Refuge, the Levites did not have the right to charge rent.

Thus, based on the argument of the *Jerusalem Talmud* that charging rent is an indication of ownership, it follows that *Rambam* ruled that the Levites owned their 42 cities, but not the six dedicated Cities of Refuge.

However, it could be argued that even according to *Rambam*, the Levites had the rights of ownership of all 48 cities, and the only reason why they were prohibited from charging rent in the six Cities of Refuge is due to an additional clause in the law. For the *Babylonian Talmud* teaches that scripture itself exempts any murderer seeking haven from paying rent in one of the six cities, in v. 12: "These cities should serve for you as a refuge from an avenger." The stress that the cities are "for you," says the *Babylonian Talmud*, indicates that the cities are set aside "for all your needs," so that someone seeking asylum will have no expenses at all (*Makos* 13a).

אֲרַבְעִין וְתִמְנֵי קָרוֹיִן יִתְּהוּן וְגַם רִמְתִּיקוֹן: ה וְקָרוֹיִא דִּי תַתְּנִין מֵאַחֲוֹדַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן סְגִיָּאֵי תַסְגִּוֹן וּמִן זַעֲרֵי תַזְעִירוֹן גְּבַר כְּפֹם אַחְסַנְתָּה דִּי יַחְסִנֹן יִתֵּן מִקָּרוֹוְהִי לְלֹאֵי: ט וּמְלִיל יֵי עִם מוֹשֶׁה לְמִימְרֵי: י מְלַל עִם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְתִימַר לְהוֹן אֲרִי אַתְּוֹן עֲבָרִין יַת יִרְדְּנָא לְאַרְעָא דְבְּנֵי: יא וְתַזְמִנֹן לְכוֹן קָרוֹיִן קָרוֹי שׁוֹבוֹתָא יְהוֹיִן לְכוֹן וְנִעְרוֹק לְתַמָּן קְטוּלָא דִּיקְטוּל נַפְשָׁא בְּשָׁלוֹ: יב וְיִהוֹן לְכוֹן קָרוֹיִא לְשׁוֹבָא מְנַאֵל דְּמָא וְלֹא יָמוּת קְטוּלָא עַד דִּיקוּם קָדָם בְּנִשְׁתָּא לְדִינָא: יג וְקָרוֹיִא דִּי תַתְּנִין שִׁית קָרוֹי שׁוֹבוֹתָא יְהוֹיִן לְכוֹן: יד יַת תַּלַּת קָרוֹיִא תַתְּנִין מַעְבְּרָא לִירְדְּנָא וְגַם תַּלַּת קָרוֹיִא תַתְּנִין בְּאַרְעָא דְבְּנֵי קָרוֹי שׁוֹבוֹתָא יְהוֹיִן: טו לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּלְגִיזְרָא וּלְתוֹתְבָא בִּינִיכוֹן יְהוֹיִן שִׁית קָרוֹיִא הָאֵלִין לְשׁוֹבָא לְמַעְרוֹק לְתַמָּן כָּל דִּיקְטוּל נַפְשָׁא בְּשָׁלוֹ: טז וְאִם בְּמִן דְּפָרוּלָא מְחָהי וְקְטָלָה קְטוּלָא הוּא אַתְקַטְלָא יַתְקַטְל קְטוּלָא: יז וְאִם בְּאַבְנָא דְּמַתְנַסְבָּא בִּידָא דְּהִיא כְּמַסַּת דִּי יָמוּת בְּהַ מְחָהי וְקְטָלָה קְטוּלָא הוּא אַתְקַטְלָא יַתְקַטְל קְטוּלָא: יח אִז בְּמִן דְּאֵע דְּמַתְנַסַּב בִּידָא דְּהִיא

אֲרַבְעִים וְשִׁמְנֵה עִיר אֲתֵהוּן וְאֶת־מִגְרְשֵׁיהֶן: ה וְהָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר תִּתְּנוּ מֵאַחֲזֹת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֵת הָרֶבֶב תִּרְבּוּ וּמֵאֵת הַמַּעֲט תִמְעָטוּ אִישׁ כְּפִי נַחֲלָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר יִנְחָלוּ יִתֵּן מֵעָרֵיו לְלוֹיִם: פ [שש"י] [שבועי כשהן מחוברין] ט וְיִדְבַר יְהוָה אֶל־מוֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: י דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם כִּי אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן אֶרְצָה בְּנֵעֵן: יא וְהִקְרִיתֶם לָכֶם עָרֵי מְקַלָּט תַּהֲיִינָה לָכֶם וְגַם שְׂמָה רֵצִחַ מִכַּהֲנֵפֶשׁ בְּשִׁנְגָה: יב וְהָיוּ לָכֶם הָעָרִים לְמְקַלָּט מְנַאֵל וְלֹא יָמוּת הָרֵצִחַ עַד־עַמְדוֹ לְפָנֵי הָעֵדָה לְמִשְׁפָּט: יג וְהָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר תִּתְּנוּ שִׁשׁ־עָרֵי מְקַלָּט תַּהֲיִינָה לָכֶם: יד אֵת א שְׁלֹשׁ הָעָרִים תִּתְּנוּ מֵעֵבֶר לַיַּרְדֵּן וְאֵת שְׁלֹשׁ הָעָרִים תִּתְּנוּ בְּאֶרֶץ בְּנֵעֵן עָרֵי מְקַלָּט תַּהֲיִינָה: טו לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּלְגֵר וְלַתּוֹשֵׁב בְּתוֹכָם תַּהֲיִינָה שִׁשׁ־הָעָרִים הָאֵלֶּה לְמְקַלָּט לָנוּם שְׂמָה כָּל־מִכַּהֲנֵפֶשׁ בְּשִׁנְגָה: טז וְאִם־בְּכָלִי בְרוּזִל א הַפְּהוּ וְיָמַת רֵצִחַ הוּא מוֹת יוֹמַת הָרֵצִחַ: יז וְאִם בְּאַבְּן יָד אֲשֶׁר־יָמוּת בְּהַ הַפְּהוּ וְיָמַת רֵצִחַ הוּא מוֹת יוֹמַת הָרֵצִחַ: יח אִז בְּכָלִי עֵץ־יָד

כש"י

שהכורג בכל דבר לריך שיהא צו שיעור כדי להמית, שנאמר ככולם אשר ימות צו, דמתרגמינן דהיא כמסת דיומות ציה, חוץ מן הצרול, שגלוי וידוע לפני הקב"ה שהצרול ממית ככל שהוא אפילו מחט, לפיכך לא נתנה צו חורה שיעור לכחוצ צו אשר ימות צו.³ ואם תאמר כבורג צשוגג הכחוצ מדבר, הרי הוא אומר למטה או בכל אבן אשר ימות צה בלא ראות וגו', למד על האמורים למעלה שצבורג צמזוד הכחוצ מדבר: (יז) באבן יד. שיש צה מלא יד: אשר ימות בה. שיש צה שיעור להמית, כתרגומו. לפי שנאמר והכה איש את רעהו צאצן⁶, ולא נתן צה שיעור, יכול כל שהוא, לכך נאמר אשר ימות צה:³ (יח) או בכלי עץ יד. לפי שנאמר וכי יכה איש את עבדו או את

צאמה, הא כיצד, אלפים הוא נותן להם סביב, ומכאן חלף הפנימים למגרש והחילוונים לשדות וכרמים:¹ (יא) והקרייתם. אין הקרייה אלא לשון הזמנה וכן הוא אומר כי הקרה כי אלהיך לפני:² (יב) מגאל. מפני גואל הדם שהוא קרוב לנרצח: (יג) שש ערי מקלט. מגיד שאע"פ שהצדיל משה בחייו שלש ערים צעבר הירדן, לא היו קולטות עד שנצחרו שלש שנתן יחושע צארץ כנען:³ (יד) את שלש הערים וגו'. אף על פי שצארץ כנען תשעה שצטים וכאן אינן אלא שנים וחצי, השנה מנין ערי מקלט שלהם משום דצנגלעד נפישו רולחיס, דכתיב⁴ גלעד קרית פועלי און עקוצה מדס:⁵ (טז) ואם בכלי ברזל הבהו. אין זה מדבר צבורג צשוגג הסמוך לו, אלא צבורג צמזוד. וצא ללמד,

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Thus, when Rambam wrote that a murderer does not have to pay rent in one of the six cities, it is not because he maintained that the cities were not owned by the Levites, as we had earlier presumed, but rather, because he held in accordance with the clause of the *Babylonian Talmud*. So in the final analysis, Rambam maintained that all 48 cities were actually owned by the Levites. In fact, this conclusion seems to be supported by Rambam's statement that "all these are for the Levites" (see *Classic Questions*), i.e. that all the Levite cities have the same status in terms of their Levite ownership. Now we are left with just one question: If the Levites owned their cities, then why does verse 2 state that they were merely given "cities to live in"?

Two explanations could be argued:
 a.) The Torah uses this expression about the Levite's property since they did not have their own unified portion of Land, but only cities that were scattered among the portions of the other tribes.
 b.) The 48 cities were owned collectively by the tribe of Levi. So each individual Levite did not have full ownership of the property that he occupied. Thus, even though a Levite was entitled to sell his property or bequeath it to his children, he was nevertheless only selling the right to live on the property. The overall ownership of Land belonged to the tribe of Levi as a whole.
 (Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, pp. 93-6)

- ⁸ When you give cities from the hereditary land of the children of Israel, you should take more (land) from a larger (inheritance) and less (land) from a smaller one. Each one should give cities to the Levites, commensurate with (the size of) the inheritance allotted to him.

CITIES OF REFUGE FOR UNINTENTIONAL MURDER

35:9
SIXTH
READING
(7TH WHEN
JOINED)

- G**od spoke to Moshe, saying: ¹⁰ Speak to the children of Israel and say to them:
- When you cross the Jordan to the land of Cana'an, ¹¹ you should prepare (special) cities for yourselves. They will be Cities of Refuge for you, such that a murderer who killed a person unintentionally can flee there.
 - ¹² These cities should serve for you as a refuge from an avenger, so that the murderer will not die until he stands in judgment before the congregation.
 - ¹³ The cities that you will provide will serve as six Cities of Refuge for you: ¹⁴ You should provide the three cities in Transjordan and the three cities in the land of Cana'an to act as Cities of Refuge.
 - ¹⁵ These six cities should be a refuge for the children of Israel, the convert and resident (alien) among them, so that anyone who unintentionally kills a person can flee there.

LAWS PERTAINING TO INTENTIONAL MURDER

- ¹⁶ If a person struck another with an iron instrument and he dies, he is a murderer (no matter how small the instrument was). The murderer must be put to death.
- ¹⁷ If a person struck another with a fist-sized stone which is (big enough to be) deadly, and he dies, he is a murderer. The murderer must be put to death. ¹⁸ Or (if he strikes) with a fist-sized

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Sparks of Chasidus

Parshas Masei is a bright conclusion to the first four Books of Moshe, where we read how the Jewish people had completed all their difficult journeys in the desert and how they finally stood ready to enter their homeland. Consequently, most of this *Parsha* concerns the various laws which would become relevant after the Jewish people would actually enter their Land.

However, amid all this “good news,” we read here a rather negative chapter about “Cities of Refuge” for murderers, and further laws of unintentional and intentional murder (v. 9-33).

Now admittedly, designating Cities of Refuge is a *mitzvah* connected with entering the Land, but why does the Torah then digress to discuss *further* laws of unintentional and intentional murder (v. 16-33) which could have been included in another *Parsha*?

According to conventional thinking the Torah’s primary meaning is its literal interpretation, and more spiritual interpretations are present only in the form of metaphor and allusion. However, Rabbi Yeshayah Hurwitz (1560-1630) taught, “*The Torah speaks about the upper worlds and alludes to the lower worlds*” (*Shaloh* 13b), *i.e.* the Torah’s *primary* meaning is its spiritual message, and the fact that this is expressed in physical terms “alludes” to the counterpart of that message in the physical world, which is a reflection (“allusion”) of the true, spiritual reality.

On this basis it could be argued that the Torah’s primary intent here in discussing murder is a form of spiritual “murder,” of which a person may be guilty after completing numerous spiritual “journeys”:

It was explained above (“*The Name of the Parsha*”), that the 42 journeys in the desert are *all* described as “journeys out of Egypt (*Mitzrayim*).” This is because each “journey” of spiritual growth that we make ultimately leads to a feeling of restriction and limitation (*meytzar*) with our prior accomplishments, and this in turn inspires a further “journey” of growth.

However, having completed *numerous* journeys, our spiritual aspirations become greater, and consequently, we might find our current spiritual state not only “limiting,” but *totally unacceptable*. Perhaps, when the person reflects upon all the time that he wasted in the past and all the God-given talents that he failed to utilize effectively, he will feel that his current spiritual standing is outrageous—like an act of murder!

A person’s desire to grow will always be proportional to the void that he feels. Thus, by coming to an awareness that one has committed spiritual “murder,” one will surely be motivated, not only to improve, but to make a *quantum leap* by which one’s perfection of tomorrow bears no resemblance to that of today.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Matos-Masei* 5749)

כמסת די ימות בה מִתְּהי וְקָמְלָה קְטוּלָא הוּא אֲתִקְמְלָא וְתִקְמַל קְטוּלָא: יט גֵּאֵל דְּמָא הוּא יְקַטוּל ית קְטוּלָא כּד אֲתִתְיַב לֵה מִן דִּינָא הוּא יְקַטְלָנָה: כ ואם בְּסָנְאָה דִּתְהי אוּ רְמָא עֲלוּהי בְּכַמְנָא וְקָמְלָה: כא אוּ בְּדַבְּבוּ מִתְּהי בִּידֵה וְקָמְלָה אֲתִקְמְלָא וְתִקְמַל מִתְּהי קְטוּלָא הוּא גֵּאֵל דְּמָא יְקַטוּל ית קְטוּלָא כּד אֲתִתְיַב לֵה מִן דִּינָא: כב ואם בְּתַבְּרָא בְּלָא דְבָבוּ דִּתְהי אוּ רְמָא עֲלוּהי כֵּל מִן בְּלָא כְּמִן לֵה: כג אוּ בְּכֵל אֲבָנָא דִּתְהי כְּמִסְתַּת דִּי יָמוֹת בְּה בְּלָא חֲזִי וְרְמָא עֲלוּהי וְקָמְלָה וְהוּא לֹא סָנִי לֵה וְלֹא תִבַּע בִּישְׁתָּה: כד ויִדְוֹנוּן בְּנִשְׁתָּא בִּין מִתְּהי וּבִין גֵּאֵל דְּמָא עַל דִּינָא הָאֵלִין: כה ויִשְׁיִזְבוּן בְּנִשְׁתָּא ית קְטוּלָא מִיד גֵּאֵל דְּמָא ויִתִּיבוּן יְתֵה בְּנִשְׁתָּא לְקָרִית שְׁבוּתָה דִּי עֵרַק לְתַמָּן ויִתֵּב בְּה עַד דִּימוֹת בְּהִנָּא רַבָּא דִּי רַבִּי יְתֵה בְּמִשַׁח קוּדְשָׁא: כו ואם מִפְּק יִפּוּק קְטוּלָא ית תַּחוּם קָרִית שְׁבוּתָה דִּי עֵרַק לְתַמָּן: כז ויִשְׁפַּח יְתֵה גֵּאֵל דְּמָא מִבְּרָא לְתַחוּם קָרִית שְׁבוּתָה וְקָטוּל גֵּאֵל דְּמָא ית

אֲשֶׁר־יָמוֹת בּוֹ הִבְהוּ וַיָּמַת רֹצֵחַ הוּא מוֹת יוֹמַת הָרֹצֵחַ: יט גֵּאֵל הַדָּם הוּא יָמִית אֶת־הָרֹצֵחַ בְּפָנָעוֹ־בּוֹ הוּא יִמְתָּנוּ: כ וְאִם־בְּשִׁנְאָה יִהְיֶהנּוּ אוֹ־הַשְּׁלִיךְ עָלָיו בְּצַדִּיקָה וַיָּמַת: כא אוּ בְּאֵיבָה הִבְהוּ בִּידוֹ וַיָּמַת מוֹת־יוֹמַת הַמַּכָּה רֹצֵחַ הוּא גֵּאֵל הַדָּם יָמִית אֶת־הָרֹצֵחַ בְּפָנָעוֹ־בּוֹ: כב וְאִם־בְּפִתְעַ בְּלֹא־אֵיבָה הִדְּפוּ אוֹ־הַשְּׁלִיךְ עָלָיו כָּל־כְּלֵי בְּלֹא צַדִּיקָה: כג אוּ בְּכָל־אֲבָן אֲשֶׁר־יָמוֹת בְּה בְּלֹא רְאוֹת וַיִּפֹּל עָלָיו וַיָּמַת וְהוּא לֹא־אוֹיֵב לוֹ וְלֹא מִבְּקִשׁ רָעָתוֹ: כד וְשִׁפְטוֹ הָעֵדָה בֵּין הַמַּכָּה וּבֵין גֵּאֵל הַדָּם עַל הַמְּשַׁפְּטִים הָאֵלֶּה: כה וְהֶעֱלִינוּ הָעֵדָה אֶת־הָרֹצֵחַ מִיַּד גֵּאֵל הַדָּם וְהִשִּׁיבוּ אֹתוֹ הָעֵדָה אֶל־עִיר מְקַלְטוֹ אֲשֶׁר־נָס שָׁמָּה וַיֵּשֶׁב בָּהּ עַד־מוֹת הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדֹל אֲשֶׁר־מָשַׁח אֹתוֹ בְּשֶׁמֶן הַקֹּדֶשׁ: כו וְאִם־יֵצֵא יֵצֵא הָרֹצֵחַ אֶת־גְּבוּל עִיר מְקַלְטוֹ אֲשֶׁר יָנוּס שָׁמָּה: כז וּמָצָא אֹתוֹ גֵּאֵל הַדָּם מִחוּץ לְגְבוּל עִיר מְקַלְטוֹ

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ומקצר את ימי החיים. אינו כדאי שיבא לפני כהן גדול? דבר אחר לפי שביב לו לכהן גדול להתפלל שלא תאריך תקלה זו לישראל צחי"ו: אשר משח אותו בשמן הקדש. לפי פשוטו מן המקראות הקארים הוא, שלא פירש מי משחו, אלא כמו אשר משחו המושח אותו בשמן הקדש. ורבותינו דרשו בו במסכת מכות⁵ לראיית דבר, ללמד שאם עד שלא נגמר דינו מת כהן גדול ומנו אחר תחתיו ולאחר מכן נגמר דינו, חוזר במיתתו של שני, שנאמר אשר משח אותו, וכי הוא משחו לכהן או הכהן משח אותו, אלא לכביא את הנמשח

אמתו כשצט'¹, יכול כל שהוא, לכך נאמר בעין אשר ימות בו, שיבא בו כדי לכמית?² (וט' בפגועו בו. אפילו בתוך ערי מקלט: (כ) בצדיקה. כתרוממו ככמנא כמארצ: (כג) בפתע. צאונס. ותרוממו כתיב שיבא סמוך לו, ולא היה לו שכות להזכר עליו: (כד) או בכל אבן אשר ימות בה. ככבו: בלא ראות. שלא ראהו: ויפל עליו. מכאן אמרו הכורג דרך ירידה גולה, דרך עלייה אינו גולה:³ (כה) עד מות הכהן הגדול. שהוא צא להשרות שכינה בישראל ולהאריך ימיהם, וכרונא צא לסלק את השכינה מישראל

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● May the murderer leave his City of Refuge under any circumstances? (v.26)

RAMBAM: If a person leaves the boundaries of the City of Refuge intentionally, then he is permitting himself to die, and the [bereaved relative] may avenge the [deceased's] blood and kill him. If another person kills him, he is not liable for any penalty, since the verse states, "he has no blood" (v. 27)....

A person who is exiled may never leave his City of Refuge, even to perform a *mitzvah*...or even to act as a witness in court to save a person's life, or to save a person from a non-Jew or from a river, or from a fire, or from a collapsed building. In fact, even if the entire Jewish people depend on this person, he may not leave. This law applies until the High Priest passes away. If the person does leave the City of Refuge, he is permitting himself to die, as we have explained. (*Laws of a Murderer and the Protection of Life* 5:10; 7:8).

TIFERES YISRA'EL: Being that all of the Torah's laws are suspended in a case of danger to life, why should our case be an exception, that to

save a person's life the exiled murderer cannot be permitted to leave the City of Refuge, even on a temporary basis?

One might argue that a person is not expected to put his own life at risk in order to save another person's life, and through leaving the City of Refuge the accidental murderer is freeing himself to be a target for the bereaved family who may wish to avenge the deceased's blood. However this fails to explain the law that if the lives of the entire Jewish people depend on this person, he may not leave. For, how could this person close the door to the entire Jewish people, merely to protect himself from the risk of being attacked? (*Makos*, end of chap. 2).

ARUCH HASHULCHAN: Since the person in question was the agent of an accidental murder, it is unlikely that such an unfortunate person could be the one who will bring good fortune to others. Therefore, he is not permitted to leave (*Choshen Mishpat* 425:57).

MINCHAS CHINUCH: This requirement for the murderer to stay in the City of Refuge is a decree of scripture (*mitzvah* 410).

wooden instrument which is (big enough to be) deadly, and he dies, he is a murderer. The murderer must be put to death.

- ¹⁹ An avenger of the blood may kill the (intentional) murderer. He may kill him (even) when he meets him (in a City of Refuge).
- ²⁰ If a person pushed another out of hatred, or he threw something at him with premeditation, and he died; ²¹ or if he maliciously struck him with his hand and he died, the attacker must be put to death. He is (considered to be) an (intentional) murderer. The avenger of the blood may kill this murderer (even) when he meets him (in a City of Refuge).

🔮 LAWS PERTAINING TO UNINTENTIONAL MURDER 🔮

35:22 **B**ut if a person pushed another accidentally, without malice, or threw an object at him without premeditation, ²³ or he threw a stone which is deadly down at another without seeing (him) and it killed him, but he was not his enemy and did not want to hurt him, ²⁴ then the congregation should enact justice between the attacker and the avenger of the blood, according to the following laws:

- ²⁵ The congregation should protect the murderer from the avenger of the blood. The congregation should return him to the City of Refuge to which he had fled.
- He must remain there until the death of the High Priest, the one who was anointed with the sacred oil.
- ²⁶ But if the murderer goes outside the border of the City of Refuge to which he had fled, ²⁷ and the avenger of the blood finds him outside the limits of his City of Refuge, and the avenger of the

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🔮 STRAYING FROM A CITY OF REFUGE (v. 25)

Rambam records the law that a person who is exiled to a City of Refuge is not required to leave under any circumstances, even to perform a *mitzvah* or to save another's life. **Tiferes Yisra'el** questions why this should be the case, being that all the laws of the Torah are suspended in order to save life, and yet here we read that the person is not forced to leave the City of Refuge even to save the entire Jewish people!

Aruch Hashulchan argues that since the person in question was the agent of an accidental murder, it is unlikely that he will bring good fortune to others. However, this answer seems to be of no *halachic* relevance,

since any danger to life *always* causes the suspension of Jewish law, no matter how "fortunate" or "unfortunate" the potential rescuer may be.

Minchas Chinuch writes that the requirement for an accidental murderer to stay in the City of Refuge is a suprarational "scriptural decree." However, this answer is also difficult to understand, since when faced with a danger to life we override even a scriptural decree.

Why then is the accidental murderer not permitted to leave the City of Refuge in order to save another person?

THE EXPLANATION

Rambam's statement, "If a person leaves the boundaries of the City of Refuge intentionally, he is permitting himself to die," seems to be superfluous. What would be lacking if **Rambam** would have written more simply, "If a person leaves the boundaries of the City of Refuge intentionally, then the bereaved relative may avenge the deceased's blood and kill him *etc.*?"

It could be argued that, in addition to the basic principle that a bereaved family member may kill the accidental murderer if he leaves the City of Refuge, **Rambam** is teaching us here a further point:

In reference to the Cities of Refuge the Torah states, "He may flee to one of these cities and live" (*Devarim* 4:42). This suggests that in essence the accidental murderer no longer deserves to live and that the Torah has decreed that his life should be taken away. Only, this decree of the Torah does not apply within the boundaries of the City of Refuge, and therefore according to Jewish Law this person is only permitted to remain alive so long as he is within a City of Refuge.

Thus the accidental murderer is "legally dead," but the Torah grants him a new lease of life within the strict boundaries of the City of Refuge. So, if

🔮 The Last Word 🔮

Our Sages taught, "The words of Torah protect," like a City of Refuge (*Makos* 10a). A person may be tempted to step outside the spiritual "City of Refuge" of Torah, and make compromises in Jewish law on the basis that he is "saving a life" (cf. *Classic Questions*). I.e. while he admits the compromise is wrong, he feels it is necessary in order to draw the person towards Torah and *mitzvos* and to save his life, spiritually.

The law teaches that one does not leave the City of Refuge, even to save a life. For the "city" of Torah is the very life of a Jew, from which he cannot leave.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 38, pp. 131-2)

קטולא לית לה דמא: כה ארי בקרית שובותה יתב עד דימות פהנא רבא ובתר דימות פהנא רבא יתוב קטולא לארע אחסנתה: כט ויהון אלין לבון לגורת דין לדריכון בכל מותבניכון: ל כל דיקטול נפשא לפום סהדין יקטול ית קטולא וסהיד חד לא יסחד באנש למקטל: לא ולא תקבלון ממון על אנש קטול די הוא תיב למקטל ארי אתקטלא יתקטל: לב ולא תקבלון ממון למערוק לקרית שובותה למתוב למתב בארעא עד דימות פהנא: לג ולא תחייבון ית ארעא די אתון פה ארי דמא הוא מתיב ית ארעא ולא ארעא לא מתכפר על דם ופי דאתשר פה אלהן בדם אשדה: לד ולא תסאבון ית ארעא די אתון יתבין פה די שכינתי שריא בננה ארי אנא יי דשכנתי שריא בנו בני ישראל: א וקריובו רישי אבהתא לזרעית בני גלעד בר מכיר בר מנשה מזרעית בני יוסף ומלילו קדם משה וקדם רברביא רישי אבהתא לבני ישראל: ב ואמרו ית רבוני פקוד יי למתן ית ארעא באחסנא בערבא לבני ישראל ורבוני אתפקד במימרא דיי למתן ית אחסנת צלפחד אהונא לבנתיה: ג ויהונו לחד מבני שבטיא דבני ישראל לנשין ותתמנע אחסנתהן מאחסנת אבהתנא ותתוסף על אחסנת שבטיא די תהנו להון ומעדב אחסנתנא יתמנע: ד ואם יהי יובלא לבני ישראל

ורצה גאל הדם את הרצח אין לו דם: כה פי בעיר מקלטו ישב עד-מות הפהן הגדל ואחרי מות הפהן הגדל ישוב הרצח אל-ארץ אחזתו: כט והיו אלה לכם לחקת משפט לדרתיכם בכל מושבתיכם: ל כל-מכה נפש לפי עדים ירצה את-הרצח ועד אחד לא-יענה בנפש למות: לא ולא-תקחו כפר לנפש רצח אשר-הוא רשע למות פי-מות יומת: לב ולא-תקחו כפר לנזם אל-עיר מקלטו לשוב לשבת בארץ עד-מות הפהן: לג ולא-תחניפו את-הארץ אשר אתם פה פי הדם הוא יחניף את-הארץ ולא-יכפר לדם אשר שפך-פה פי-אם בדם שפכו: לד ולא תטמא את-הארץ אשר אתם ישבים פה אשר אני שכן בתוכה פי אני יהוה שכן בתוך בני ישראל: פ [שביעי] לו א ויקרבו ראשי האבות למשפחת בני-גלעד בין-מכיר בין-מנשה ממשפחת בני יוסף וידברו לפני משה ולפני הנשאים ראשי אבות לבני ישראל: ב ויאמרו את-אדני צוה יהוה לתת את-הארץ בנחלה בגורל לבני ישראל ואדני צוה ביהוה לתת את-נחלת צלפחד אחינו לבנותיו: ג והיו לאחד מבני שבטי בני-ישראל לנשים ונגרעה נחלתן מנחלת אבותינו ונוסף על נחלת המטה אשר תהיינה להם ומגורל נחלתנו יגרע: ד ואם-יהיה היבל לבני

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שנס כבר, וקורכו נוס כלומר מוצרם. ואם תאמר לנו לזרות, ותפרשכו לא תקחו כופר למי שיש לו לזרוח לפטרו מן הגלות, לא ידעתי היאך יאמר לשוב לשבת בארץ, הרי עדיין לא נס ומכינן ישוב: (ג) ולא תחניפו. ולא תרשיעו, כתרנומו ולא תחייבון: (ד) אשר אני שכן בתוכה. שלא תשכינו אותי בטומאתה: כי אני ה' שוכן בתוך בני ישראל. אף בזמן שהם טמאים שכינה (שרויה) ציניכס:⁶ (ג) ונוסף על נחלת המטה. שהרי צנה יורשכ וכן מתחס על שצט אציו: (ד) ואם יהיה היובל. מכאן כי רצי יכודכ⁷ אומר עתיד היוכל שיפסוק:⁸ ואם יהיה היובל. כלומר אין זו מכירה שחוזרת ציובל, שכירושכ אינכ חוזרת, ואפילו אם יכיה היוכל לא תחזור

צימיו שמחזירו צמיתתו: (כז) אין לו דם. הרי הוא ככורג את המת שאין לו דם: (כט) בכל מושבתיכם. למד שחכא סנהדרין [קטנכ] נוכחכ צחולכ לארץ כל זמן שנוכחכ בארץ ישראל:¹ (ל) כל מכה נפש וגו'. הכא להרגו על שככ את הכפש: לפי עדים ירצה. שיעידו שצמזיד וככתרככ הרגו:¹ (לא) ולא תקחו כפר. לא יפטר צממונו:² (לב) ולא תקחו כפר לנוס אל עיר מקלטו. למי שנס אל עיר מקלטו שברג צשווג אינו נפטר מגלות צממון ליתן כופר לשוב לשבת בארץ צטרס ימות הככן: לנוס. כמו לנס, כמו שזכי מלחמכ,³ שצכו מן המלחמכ, וכן גוגי ממועד,⁴ וכן כי מוליס היו,⁵ כשכר תאמר שזכ על מי שצכ כבר, ומול על מי שמל כבר, כן תאמר לנוס על מי

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he leaves, it is as if he passes upon himself the death sentence, and he is literally "permitting himself to die."
And with this, we can understand why the accidental murderer is not permitted to leave the City of Refuge even to save a life. For even if one

argued that a person should risk his life to save another, one could never permit a person to render himself halachically dead, under any circumstances.
(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 38, p. 127ff.)

blood kills the murderer, he has no (liability for the) blood (he spilled).²⁸ For (the accidental murderer) must remain in his City of Refuge until the High Priest dies, and only after the High Priest has died may the murderer return to the land which is his possession.

- ²⁹ (The small Sanhedrin) will be (a body that issues) laws of justice for you, throughout all your generations, in all the places that you live (even outside the Land of Israel, so long as the small Sanhedrin exists inside the Land too).
- ³⁰ (When an avenger of the blood) kills a person, the murderer may only be put to death based on the testimony of witnesses (who first warned the murderer).
- A single witness may not testify against a person to put him to death.
- ³¹ Do not accept an atonement fee for the life of a murderer who is condemned to death, because he must be put to death.
- ³² Do not accept an atonement fee for one who has fled to his City of Refuge, to allow him to return to live in the Land, before the priest has died.

³³ Do not corrupt the Land in which you live, for the (spilling of) blood corrupts the Land, and blood which is shed in the Land cannot be atoned for except by the blood of the one who shed it. ³⁴ Do not defile the Land where you reside, in which I dwell, for I am God Who dwells among the children of Israel.

🌀 PRESERVING THE TRIBAL INHERITANCE OF LAND 🌀

36
SEVENTH
READING

The paternal heads of the family of the descendants of Gilad—the son of Machir, the son of Menasheh, of the families of Yosef’s descendants—approached and spoke before Moshe and the leaders, the paternal heads of the children of Israel. ² They said, “God commanded my master to give the Land as an inheritance via lottery to the children of Israel, and our master was commanded by God to give the inheritance of Tzelafchad, our brother, to his daughters. ³ Now, if they marry a member of another tribe of the children of Israel, their inheritance will be deducted from the inheritance of our father, and it will be added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry. Thus, it will be deducted from the lot of our inheritance. ⁴ Even when the children of Israel will have a Jubilee year

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● When does God dwell among the children of Israel? (v.34)

SIFRI: The Jewish people are cherished [by God], for even when they are impure, the *Shechinah* (Divine Presence) is with them, as the verse states, “In which I dwell” (v. 34), and it further states, “Do not defile the Land” (ibid.). Rabbi Nasan says: “The Jewish people are

cherished, for in every place that they were exiled the *Shechinah* was with them....” Rebbi says: “What could this be compared to? To a king who said to his servant, ‘If you want me, I am with my son. Any time that you want me, I am with my son.’” Thus, the verse states, “He dwells among them amid their impurity” (Vayikra 16:16).

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

Being that Rabbi Nasan already taught, “Even when they are impure, the *Shechinah* is with them” (**Sifri**, cited in *Classic Questions*), what did Rebbi add with his analogy?

Rabbi Nasan was speaking about the *soul’s* relationship with God, which is “literally a piece of God from above” (*Tanya* ch. 2). Thus God “cherishes” the Jewish people because of their special souls and wishes always to be found “among them.”

Rebbi, on the other hand, was describing the Jewish *body’s* relationship with God. Unlike the soul, the body does not openly exhibit any holiness, and is not enwrapped in a natural, emotional bond with its Creator. Nevertheless, God has an *essential* connection with the Jewish body due to the fact that He chose the Jewish people to be His own. Thus, even when the body demonstrates no overt connection to God, the *Shechinah* nevertheless says, “I am with my son.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 23, pp. 220-1)

ותתוסף אחסנתהן על אחסנת שבטא די תהונו להון ומאחסנת שבטא דאבהתנא ותמנע אחסנתהן: ה ופקיד משה ית בני ישראל על מימרא דיי למימר זאת שבטא דבני יוסף ממללין: ו דין פתגמא די פקיד יי לבנת צלפחד למימר לדתקין בעיניהון תהונו לנשין ברם לזרעית שבטא דאבוהן תהונו לנשין: ז ולא תסחר אחסנא לבני ישראל משבטא לשבטא ארי גבר פאחסנת שבטא דאבהתוהי ידבקון בני ישראל: ח וכל ברתא ירתת אחסנא משבטא דבני ישראל לחד מזרעית שבטא דאבוהא תהי לאנתו בדיל די ירתון בני ישראל גבר אחסנת אבהתוהי: ט ולא תסחר אחסנא משבטא לשבטא אחרנא ארי גבר פאחסנתה ידבקון שבטא דבני ישראל: י פמא די פקיד יי ית משה פן עבדו בנת צלפחד: יא ותואה מחלה תרצה וחגלה ומלכה ונעה בני אבוהן לנשין: יב מזרעית בני מנשה בר יוסף תואה לנשין ותות אחסנתהן על שבטא זרעית אבוהן: יג אלין פקודיא ודיניא די פקיד יי בידא דמשה לות בני ישראל במישריא דמואב על ירדנא דירחו: חזק

ישראל ונוספה נחלתן על נחלת המטה אשר תהיינה להם ומנחלת מטה אבותינו יגדע נחלתן: ה ויצו משה את בני ישראל על פי יהוה לאמר פן מטה בני יוסף הדברים: ו זה הדבר אשר צוה יהוה לבנות צלפחד לאמר לטוב בעיניהם תהיינה לנשים אך למשפחת מטה אביהם תהיינה לנשים: ז ולא תסב נחלה לבני ישראל ממטה אל מטה כי איש בנחלת מטה אבותיו ידבקו בני ישראל: ח וכל ברת ירשת נחלה ממשות בני ישראל לאחד משפחת מטה אביה תהיה לאשה למען ירשו בני ישראל איש נחלת אבותיו: ט ולא תסב נחלה ממטה למטה אחר כי איש בנחלתו ידבקו משות בני ישראל: י פאשר צוה יהוה את משה פן עשו בנות צלפחד: [מפסיר] יא ותהיינה מחלה תרצה וחגלה ומלכה ונעה בנות צלפחד לבני דדיהן לנשים: יב משפחת בני מנשה בן יוסף היו לנשים ותהי נחלתן על מטה משפחת אביהן: יג אלה המצוות והמשפטים אשר צוה יהוה ביד משה אל בני ישראל בערבת מואב על ירדן ירחו:

חֲזַק חֲזַק וְנַתְחִיזְךָ

קל"ב פסוקים, מחל"ה חול"ה סימן.

סכום פסוקי דספר במדבר אלף ומאתים ושמנים ושמנה אפר"ח סימן. וחציו והיה האיש אשר אבחר בו מטהו יפרח: ופרשיותיו עשרה. יי בדד ינחנו סימן. וסדריו ל"ב. לב טהור ברא לי אלהים סימן. (ס"א וסדריו כ"ח). ופרקיו ל"ו. לו חכמו ישכילו זאת סימן. מנין הפתוחות שתיים ותשעים והסתומות ששים ושש. הכל מאה וחמשים ושמנה פרשיות. אני חלקך ונחלתך סימן:

דש"י

לפי גדולתן זו מזו צענים ונשאו כסדר חולדותן, וכל המקרא מנאן לפי חכמתן ומגיד ששקולות זו כזו: חסלת פרשת מסעי

הנחלה לשצטו, ונמלא שנוספה על נחלת המטה אשר תהיינה להם: (ח) וכל בת ירשת נחלה. שלא היה צן לאביה: (יא) מחלה תרצה וגו'. כאן מנאן

(when hereditary land returns to its owner), their inheritance will be added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry, and their inheritance will be deducted from the inheritance of our father's tribe."

⁵ Moshe commanded the children of Israel with God's word saying, "The tribe of Yosef's descendants speak well. ⁶ This is what God has commanded regarding Tzelafchad's daughters: Let them marry whom they wish, but they may marry only within the family of their father's tribe. ⁷ Thus, the inheritance of the children of Israel will not be transferred from tribe to tribe, as each person from the children of Israel will remain attached to the inheritance of his father's tribe. ⁸ Every girl from the children of Israel's tribes who inherits property (because her father had no son) should marry a member of her father's tribe, so that each one of the children of Israel will inherit the property of his fathers. ⁹ No inheritance will be transferred from one tribe to another tribe, for each person of the tribes of the children of Israel will remain bound to his own inheritance." ¹⁰ Tzelafchad's daughters did what God had commanded Moshe.

MAFTIR ¹¹ Machlah, Tirtzah, Choglah, Milcah and No'ah married their cousins. ¹² They married into the families of the descendants of Menasheh, Yosef's son, and their inheritance remained within the family of their father's tribe.

¹³ These are the commandments and the laws that God commanded the children of Israel through Moshe in the plains of Mo'av, by the Jordan near Jericho.

The congregation*, followed by the reader, proclaim:

Be strong! Be strong! And may we be strengthened!

THE HAFTARAH FOR MASEI (& MATOS-MASEI) IS ON PAGE 314 [IT IS READ EVEN ON ROSH CHODESH].

Maftir: Rosh Chodesh—p. 322.

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

THE END OF THE BOOK OF BAMIDBAR—THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE TORAH

One represents *unity*, which is indicative of Godliness and spirituality. *Two* represents *dichotomy* and *division*, alluding to the physical world, which hides God and acts as an obstacle in Divine service. *Three* is the reconciliation of *one* and *two*, i.e. to bring Divine illumination and inspiration to the physical world, which is the goal and purpose of creation.

But, as we know, this process is fraught with difficulty. In attempting to sanctify the physical world, a person is likely either to remain too spiritual and aloof—in which case he will not be effective in bringing his spirituality "down to earth"—or too influenced by the physical world, which would compromise his ability to live in a spirit of true sanctity and purity.

So *three* represents the *incomplete* harmonization of *one* and *two*, because it still remains influenced by, and torn between, both of these worlds.

However, if one persists, a perfect balance can be achieved, and eventually a person is able to lift himself above both spiritual and physical imbalance. He no longer has moods of transcendence, when

he desires only to escape the world's limitations and join in an ecstatic union with God. And likewise, he no longer finds that involving himself in physical matters distracts him from his mission in this world.

This level of perfect integration between spiritual enlightenment and worldly involvement (*one* and *two*), is alluded to by the number *four*, which is a step removed from both *one* and *two*, representing the ability not to be over influenced by either of these two contradictory worlds. The *four*-type personality is balanced and stable, like a chair possessing four legs which stands firmly on the ground.

All this sheds light on the fact that we finish the *fourth* book of the Torah in the period of mourning for the destruction of the Temple. For the way to end this long, bitter exile** and bring the true and final redemption is to harmonize our personalities in a *four*-like manner. And then we will enjoy a *permanent* redemption, because it is built on steady foundations.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Matos-Masei* 5751)

*According to *Chabad* custom, the person called to the Torah also recites *chazak chazak venischazeik*, in contrast to those authorities who deem this to be an interruption before the blessing which is said after reading the Torah (*Sefer Haminhagim*, p. 31; See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 24, p. 411; *ibid.* vol. 25, p. 474ff. See also *Chikrai Minhagim* by Rabbi Eliyahu Yochanan Gurary (*Oholei Shem—Lubavitch*, 5759), p. 126ff.). **Which is in fact the *fourth* exile: 1. The Babylonian exile (423-371 BCE), 2. The Median exile (371-356 BCE), 3. The Greek exile (318-138 BCE), and 4. The exile of Rome (68 CE until the present day).



Parshas Masei contains 2 positive *mitzvos* & 4 prohibitions

1. To provide cities for the Levites, which also act as Cities of Refuge [35:2].
2. Not to execute a guilty person before he is tried [35:12].
3. To compel an unintentional murderer to go to a City of Refuge [35:25].
4. A witness in a capital case should not judge it [35:30].
5. Not to take a redemption fee to save a murderer from the death penalty [35:31].
6. Not to take a redemption fee to free a person from being exiled to a City of Refuge [35:32].



Haftaros

הַפְּטָרוֹת

🕍 BLESSINGS ON READING THE HAFTARAH 🕍

The person who was called up for *Maftir* says the following before reading the *Haftarah*:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר
בְּנְבִיאִים טוֹבִים וְרָצָה בְּדְבָרֵיהֶם הַנְּאֻמִּים
בְּאַמֶּת בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה הַבוֹחֵר בַּתּוֹרָה וּבְמִשְׁנֵה
עַבְדּוֹ וּבְיִשְׂרָאֵל עַמּוֹ וּבְנְבִיאֵי הָאֱמֶת וְצִדְקָה:

After the *Haftarah* the following blessings are recited:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, צוֹר כָּל
הָעוֹלָמִים, צְדִיק בְּכָל הַדּוֹרוֹת, הָאֵל הַנְּאֻמָּן
הַאֹמֵר וַעֲשֵׂה, הַמְדַבֵּר וּמְקַיֵּם, שֶׁכֵּל דְּבָרָיו אֱמֶת וְצִדְקָה:
נְאֻמָּן אַתָּה הוּא יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, וְנְאֻמָּנִים דְּבָרֶיךָ, וְדָבָר
אֶחָד מִדְּבָרֶיךָ אַחֲזוֹר לֹא יִשׁוּב רִיקָם, כִּי אֵל
מֶלֶךְ נְאֻמָּן וְרַחֲמָן אַתָּה. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, הָאֵל הַנְּאֻמָּן
בְּכָל דְּבָרָיו:

רַחֵם עַל צִיּוֹן כִּי הִיא בֵּית חַיֵּינוּ, וְלַעֲלוּבַת נַפְשׁ
תּוֹשִׁיעַ וְתִשְׁמַח בְּמִהְרָה בְּיַמֵּינוּ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי,
מְשַׁמֵּחַ צִיּוֹן בְּבִנְיָהּ:

שְׂמֹחֵנוּ, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, בְּאֵלֶיהוּ הַנְּבִיא עַבְדְּךָ, וּבְמַלְכוּת
בֵּית דָּוִד מְשִׁיחֲךָ, בְּמִהְרָה יָבֹא וַיְגַל לְבַנּוּ,
עַל כִּסְאוֹ לֹא יֵשֵׁב זָר, וְלֹא יִנְחֲלוּ עוֹד אַחֲרָיִם אֶת
כְּבוֹדוֹ, כִּי בְשֵׁם קֹדֶשְׁךָ נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לוֹ, שְׁלֹא יִכְבֶּה נֵרוֹ
לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, מִגֵּן דָּוִד:

On fast days end here. On Shabbos (including Shabbos Chol HaMo'ed) continue°:

עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוּדָה וְעַל הַנְּבִיאִים וְעַל
יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה, שְׁנַתֶּתָּ לָנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְקַדְּשָׁה
וּלְמַנוּחָה, לְכָבוֹד וּלְתַפְאֶרֶת:

עַל הַכֹּל, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים לָךְ וּמְבָרְכִים אוֹתְךָ,
יִתְבָּרֵךְ שְׁמֶךָ בְּפִי כָל חַי תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. בְּרוּךְ

אַתָּה יי, מְקַדֵּשׁ הַשַּׁבָּת (On Shabbos Chol HaMo'ed Succos add — וישראל והזמנים):

°On a Festival, and Shabbos that coincides with a Festival continue here:

עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוּדָה וְעַל הַנְּבִיאִים (On Shabbos—וְעַל יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה) וְעַל יוֹם

Shemini Atzeres / Simchas Torah	Succos	Shavuos	Pesach
שְׁמִינִי עֲצַרַת הַחַג	חַג הַסּוּכּוֹת	חַג הַשָּׁבוּעוֹת	חַג הַמִּצּוֹת

הַזֶּה, וְעַל-יוֹם טוֹב מְקַרָּא קָדֵשׁ הַזֶּה, שְׁנַתֶּתָּ לָנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ (On Shabbos—לְקַדְּשָׁה
וּלְמַנוּחָה) לְשִׁשּׁוֹן וּלְשִׂמְחָה, לְכָבוֹד וּלְתַפְאֶרֶת. עַל הַכֹּל, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ
מוֹדִים לָךְ וּמְבָרְכִים אוֹתְךָ, יִתְבָּרֵךְ שְׁמֶךָ בְּפִי כָל חַי תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. בְּרוּךְ
אַתָּה יי, מְקַדֵּשׁ (On Shabbos—הַשַּׁבָּת ו) וישראל והזמנים:

°On Rosh Hashanah continue here:

עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוּדָה וְעַל הַנְּבִיאִים (On Shabbos—וְעַל יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה) וְעַל יוֹם
הַזִּכְרוֹן הַזֶּה, וְעַל-יוֹם טוֹב מְקַרָּא קָדֵשׁ הַזֶּה, שְׁנַתֶּתָּ לָנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ (On Shabbos—
לְקַדְּשָׁה וּלְמַנוּחָה) לְכָבוֹד וּלְתַפְאֶרֶת. עַל הַכֹּל, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים לָךְ,
וּמְבָרְכִים אוֹתְךָ, יִתְבָּרֵךְ שְׁמֶךָ בְּפִי כָל חַי תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד, וּדְבָרְךָ מְלַבְּנוּ
אִמַּת וְקָיָם לְעַד. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, מְלַךְ עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ, מְקַדֵּשׁ (On Shabbos—הַשַּׁבָּת
ו) וישראל ויום הזכרון:

°On Yom Kippur continue here:

עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוּדָה וְעַל הַנְּבִיאִים (On Shabbos—וְעַל יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה) וְעַל יוֹם
הַכַּפּוּרִים הַזֶּה, וְעַל-יוֹם סְלִיחַת הָעוֹן הַזֶּה, וְעַל יוֹם מְקַרָּא קָדֵשׁ הַזֶּה, שְׁנַתֶּתָּ
לָנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ (On Shabbos—לְקַדְּשָׁה וּלְמַנוּחָה) לְסְלִיחָה וּלְמַחִילָה וּלְכַפְרָה, לְכָבוֹד
וּלְתַפְאֶרֶת. עַל הַכֹּל יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים לָךְ וּמְבָרְכִים אוֹתְךָ, יִתְבָּרֵךְ
שְׁמֶךָ בְּפִי כָל חַי תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד, וּדְבָרְךָ מְלַבְּנוּ אִמַּת וְקָיָם לְעַד. בְּרוּךְ
אַתָּה יי, מְלַךְ מוֹחֵל וְסוֹלֵחַ לְעוֹנוֹתֵינוּ, וְלְעוֹנוֹת עַמּוֹ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, וּמַעֲבִיר
אֲשָׁמוֹתֵינוּ בְּכָל שָׁנָה וְשָׁנָה, מְלַךְ עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ, מְקַדֵּשׁ (On Shabbos—הַשַּׁבָּת
ו) וישראל ויום הכפורים:

BAMIDBAR / במדבר

(Hosea 2:1-22)

ב * וְהָיָה מִסְפַּר בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּחֹל הַיָּם אֲשֶׁר
 לֹא־יִמָּד וְלֹא יִסָּפָר וְהָיָה בְּמִקְוֵם אֲשֶׁר־יֹאמַר לָהֶם
 לֹא־עַמִּי אַתֶּם יֹאמַר לָהֶם בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים: ^ב וְנִקְבְּעוּ
 בְּנֵי־יְהוּדָה וּבְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל יַחְדָּו וְשִׁמּוּ לָהֶם רֹאשׁ
 אֶחָד וְעָלוּ מִן־הָאָרֶץ כִּי גָדוֹל יוֹם יִזְרַעֲאֵל: ^ג אָמְרוּ
 לְאַחֵיכֶם עַמִּי וְלְאֶחָוֵתֵיכֶם רַחֲמָה: ^ד רִיבוּ בְּאִמְכֶם
 רִיבוּ כִּי־הִיא לֹא אִשְׁתִּי וְאַנְכִּי לֹא אִישָׁה וְתָסַר
 זְנוּנִיָּה מִפְּנֵיהָ וְנִאֲפֹפֶיהָ מִבֵּין שִׁדְיָהּ: ^ה פֶּן־
 אֶפְשִׁיטְנָה עַרְפָּה וְהִצַּנְתִּיהָ כַּיּוֹם הַחֲלָה וְשִׁמְתִיהָ
 כְּמִדְבָּר וְשִׁתָּהּ כְּאָרֶץ צָיָה וְהִמְתִּיהָ בְּצַמָּא: ^ו וְאֶת־
 בְּנֵיהָ לֹא אֲרַחֵם כִּי־בָנֵי זְנוּנִים הֵמָּה: ^ז כִּי זָנְתָה
 אִמְּךָ הַבִּישָׁה הוֹרְתֶם כִּי אָמְרָה אֶלְכָּה אַחֲרַי
 מֵאֲהָבִי נָתַנִּי לַחֲמִי וּמִיָּמִי צִמְרִי וּפִשְׁתִּי שִׁמְנִי
 וְשִׁקְוִי: ^ח לָבֵן הַנְּבִי־שָׂדָה אֶת־דֶּרֶכְךָ בְּסִירִים וּגְדַרְתִּי
 אֶת־גְּדָרָה וּנְתִיבֹתֶיהָ לֹא תִמְצָא: ^ט וְרִדְפָה אֶת־
 מֵאֲהָבֶיהָ וְלֹא־תִשָּׁג אִתָּם וּבִקְשָׁתָם וְלֹא תִמְצָא
 וְאָמְרָה אֶלְכָּה וְאֲשׁוּבָה אֶל־אִישִׁי הָרֹאשׁוֹן כִּי טוֹב
 לִי אִזְ מֵעַתָּה: ^י וְהִיא לֹא יִדְעָה כִּי אֲנִכִּי נָתַתִּי לָהּ

^{2:1} (In the time of the redemption) the number of the children of Israel will be like the sand of the sea(shore), which can neither be measured nor counted. Instead of being called “You are not My people,” they will be called “children of the living God.”

Unified leadership of Mashiach

² The children of Yehudah and the children of Yisra’el will be gathered together, and they will appoint for themselves (Mashiach as their) one head. They will go up from the land (of their exile to their own Land), for great is the day when God’s scattered (people will be gathered). ³ Say to your brothers (from the ten lost tribes), “My people!” and to your (lost) sisters, “Object of pity!”

⁴ (But until the redemption, O righteous ones), reprimand your (congregation which is compared to a) “mother.” Reprimand her (for her bad ways), for she is no (longer) My “wife” (since she has betrayed Me), and I am no (longer) her Husband. Let her remove her (make-up) from her face (which she used as an enticement for) harlotry, and her (perfume) from between her breasts (which she used as an enticement) for adultery. ⁵ Or else, I will strip her naked (to embarrass her) and leave her standing like the day she was born. I will make her (public property) like a desert, and I will make her (public) like an arid land, and cause her to die of thirst.

Israel, the “unfaithful wife”

⁶ And I will not pity her “children” (i.e. the righteous ones of the congregation) for they are “children of harlots” (who tolerated the sins of Israel). ⁷ For their “mother” (the people of Israel) was a harlot; she who

conceived them behaved shamefully. For (the Jewish people placed their trust in the stars, believing that this would be a source of sustenance, like a woman) who says, “I will go after my lovers, those who give my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my drinks.”

⁸ Therefore, behold, I will close off her route (of sustenance) with thorns, and I make a fence against her (so she has no sustenance from the stars), and she will not find her paths (of sustenance). ⁹ Though she will pursue her “lovers” (offering incense to the stars), she will not come close to them (to receive anything from them); she will seek them and not find them.

The Husband’s reactions

Then she will say, “I will go and return to my First Husband (to God), for it was better for me then than now.” ¹⁰ For she did

HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS BAMIDBAR

This Haftarah mentions “the number of the children of Israel” (v. 1), similar to the census described in the Parsha. The Haftarah was said by Hoshe’a the prophet in the eighth century B.C.E.

The Haftarah opens with a vision of the future Redemption, when the kingdoms of Yehudah and Israel will come under the unified leadership of Mashiach (2:1-3). The Children of Israel are instructed to reprimand their “Mother” Israel, the nation who has gone astray after her “lovers”

(false gods). She abandons her first Husband (God), imagining that her “lovers” will supply her with all her needs (4-7). The threat of punishment thus looms (8-15). But God will restore His intimate relationship with the Jewish people and renew His covenant with them (16-25).

2:1—וְהָיָה מִסְפַּר בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּחֹל הַיָּם אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִמָּד וְלֹא יִסָּפָר—The number of the children of Israel will be like the sand of the sea(shore), which can neither be measured nor counted. The Talmud notes that this verse appears to be self-contradictory. First we read that that the Jewish people will be present in a finite, albeit very large number

not realize that (to begin with) it was I Who gave her the corn, the wine, and the oil. It was I Who gave her much silver and gold, but they used it for (the deity) Ba'al.

¹¹ Therefore, I will return and take My corn at its (ripening) time and My wine in its appointed season! I will (cause the sheep to die and thus) take away My wool and My flax (which I gave her) to cover her nakedness (and she will have nothing to wear). ¹² And now (that she will have no wool or flax) her disgrace will be revealed to the eyes of her “lovers” (the stars who fail to support her), and no man(-made deity) will save her from My hand.

¹³ I will put an end to all her rejoicing—her festival, her New Moon, her Shabbos, and all her (High) Holidays. ¹⁴ I will turn to wasteland her vine and her fig tree, about which she said, “They are my (harlotry) fees, which my lovers have given me.” I will make (her private orchards into a public) forest and the beasts of the field will devour them.

¹⁵ I will remind her of the days of (worshiping) the deities of Ba'al, to whom she burnt incense. (It was as if) she adorned herself with her earrings and her jewelry, and went after her lovers. Yet she forgot (to worship) Me!— says God.

Reconciliation ¹⁶ Therefore, behold, I will charm her and lead her into the desert (where no other men are found), and I will speak to her heart (to bring her back to serve Me).

¹⁷ Then, out of (her love that she reawakens for Me) there, I will give her (back her) vineyards, and (her) desolate valley will become a (charming) gate (where people) hope to gather. She will sing out loud there, as in the days of her youth (before the exile, just as she sang) on the day of her coming out from the land of Egypt. ¹⁸ What will happen on that day—says God—is that you will call Me “my man” and you will no longer call Me “my Ba'al.” ¹⁹ I will remove the names of the Ba'al deities from her mouth, and they will no longer be mentioned by their (proper) names (but rather, by derogatory names).

A new covenant ²⁰ On that day, I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, the birds of the sky and the creeping things of the earth (no longer to destroy). I will banish the bow, the sword, and war from the earth, and I will let them lie safely. ²¹ I will betroth you to Me forever (and never despise you again). I will betroth you to Me (as a reward) for your righteousness and justice, lovingkindness and mercy. ²² I will betroth you to Me with (your) faith (in Me), and you will know God.

הַדָּגָן וְהַתִּירוֹשׁ וְהַיֶּזֶהָר וְכֹסֶף הַרְבִּיתִי לָהּ וְזָהָב
עָשׂוּ לַבַּעַל: יא לָכֵן אָשׁוּב וְלִקְחֹתִי הַדָּגָן בְּעֵתוֹ
וְתִירוֹשֵׁי בְמוֹעֵדוֹ וְהַצִּלְתִּי צִמְרֵי וּפְשָׁתַי לְכַסּוֹת
אֶת־עֲרוֹתָהּ: יב וְעַתָּה אֲנִלָּה אֶת־נִבְלָתָהּ לְעֵינַי
מֵאַהֲבִיהָ וְאִישׁ לֹא־יִצְלֶנָה מִיָּדִי: יג וְהִשְׁבַּתִּי כָל־
מְשׁוֹשֶׁה חֲגֹה חֲדָשָׁה וְשַׁבְתָּה וְכָל מוֹעֲדָהּ:
יד וְהִשְׁמַתִּי נִפְנֶה וְתִאֲנַתָּה אֲשֶׁר אָמְרָה אֲתַנְּנָה הַמָּה
לִי אֲשֶׁר נִתְּנוּ לִי מֵאַהֲבֵי וְשִׂמְתִים לְיַעַר וְאִכְלָתֶם
חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה: טו וּפְקַדְתִּי עָלֶיהָ אֶת־יְמֵי הַבְּעָלִים
אֲשֶׁר תִּקְטִיר לָהֶם וְתֵעַד נִזְמָה וְחִלִּיתָה וְתִלְךְ אַחֲרַי
מֵאַהֲבִיהָ וְאֶתִּי שְׂכָחָה נְאֻם־יְהוָה: טז לָכֵן הִנֵּה אֲנִכִּי
מִפְתִּיָּה וְהִלְכֹתִיהָ הַמִּדְבָּר וְדִבַּרְתִּי עַל־לִבָּהּ:
יז וְנִתַּתִּי לָהּ אֶת־כְּרָמֶיהָ מִשֶּׁם וְאֶת־עֵמֶק עֲבוֹר
לְפֶתַח תְּקוּנָה וְעִנְתָה שְׂמָה בְיַמִּי נְעוּרֶיהָ וּבַיּוֹם
עֲלוֹתָהּ מֵאֶרֶץ־מִצְרַיִם: יח וְהָיָה בַיּוֹם־הַהוּא נְאֻם־
יְהוָה תִּקְרָאִי אִישִׁי וְלֹא־תִקְרָאִי לִי עוֹד בְּעַלְי:
יט וְהִסְרֹתִי אֶת־שְׁמוֹת הַבְּעָלִים מִפִּיהָ וְלֹא־יִזְכְּרוּ
עוֹד בְּשֵׁמָם: כ וְכִרְתִּי לָהֶם בְּרִית בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא עִם־
חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה וְעִם־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וְרִמְשׁ הָאָרֶץ
וְקִשְׁת וְחֶרֶב וּמִלְחָמָה אֲשַׁבֵּר מִן־הָאָרֶץ
וְהִשְׁפַּכְתִּים לַבָּטָח: כא וְאֶרְשָׁתִּיךְ לִי לְעוֹלָם
וְאֶרְשָׁתִּיךְ לִי בְצַדִּק וּבְמִשְׁפָּט וּבְחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים:
כב וְאֶרְשָׁתִּיךְ לִי בְּאֱמוּנָה וּיְדַעַת אֶת־יְהוָה:

(“like the sand of the sea”), but the verse then concludes that the number will in fact be infinite—“which can neither be measured nor counted” (Yoma 22b). How could something be both finite and infinite?

Chasidic thought explains that the paradox conveyed by this verse alludes to the dual identity of a *mitzvah*. Every *mitzvah* is a Divine command, the infinite will of God; and yet the successful observance of a *mitzvah* is dependent on fixed rules which dictate the time, place and other specific criteria pertaining to the act. We can thus ask a similar

question: If the *mitzvah* is an infinite, Godly act, why is it limited by so many fixed rules?

The answer is that a *mitzvah* is intended, not to replace the physical with something spiritual, but rather, to harmonize matter and spirit. And since the physical world is intrinsically limited, God, so to speak, limited the *mitzvos* to be compatible with the physical world, thus achieving a marriage of the infinite and the finite which is the very purpose of creation (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 24ff.).

NASO / נשא

(Judges 13:2-25)

יגב ויהי איש אחד מצרעה ממשפחת הדני ושמו
 מנוח ואשתו עקרה ולא ילדה: וירא מלאך יהוה
 אל האשה ויאמר אליה הנהנא את עקרה ולא
 ילדת והרית וילדת בן: ועתה השמרי נא ואל-
 תשתי יין ושכר ואל-תאכלי כל-טמא: ה כל הנד
 הרך וילדת בן ומורה לא-יעלה על-ראשו כי-
 נזיר אלהים יהיה הנער מן הבטן והוא יחל
 להושיע את ישראל מיד פלשתים: ותבא האשה
 ותאמר לאישה לאמר איש האלהים בא אלי
 ומראהו כמראה מלאך האלהים נורא מאד ולא
 שאלתיהו אי-מזה הוא ואת-שמו לא-הגיד לי:
 ויאמר לי הנד הרך וילדת בן ועתה אל-תשתי |
 יין ושכר ואל-תאכלי כל-טמא כי-נזיר אלהים
 יהיה הנער מן הבטן עד-יום מותו: ה ויעתר מנוח
 אלי יהוה ויאמר בי אדוני איש האלהים אשר
 שלחת יבוא-נא עוד אלינו ויורנו מה-נעשה לנער
 היולד: וישמע האלהים בקול מנוח ויבא מלאך
 האלהים עוד אל-האשה והיא יושבת בשדה
 ומנוח אישה אין עמה: ותמהר האשה ותרוץ
 ותגד לאישה ותאמר אליו הנה נראה אלי האיש
 אשר-בא בימים אלה: ויקם וילך מנוח אחרי
 אשתו ויבא אל-האיש ויאמר לו האתה האיש

^{13:2} There was a man from Tzarah, from the (tribal) family of Dan, whose name was Mano'ach. His wife was barren and had never given birth.

³ An angel of God appeared to the woman, and said to her, "Look! Now, you are barren and have not given birth, but you will conceive and bear a son. ⁴ So now, be careful not to (do anything forbidden to a nazirite): to drink wine or mature wine, or to eat anything that is ritually impure, ⁵ because you will conceive and bear a son, and a razor must not come upon his head, for the lad will be a nazirite to God from the womb. He will begin to save Israel from the Philistines."

God's angel appears

⁶ The woman (thinking that she had seen a prophet), came and spoke to her husband, saying, "A man of God came to me, and his appearance looked like an angel of God, (his face was) very awesome. I did not ask him where he was from, for when I asked his name, he didn't tell me. ⁷ He said to me, 'You are about to conceive and bear a son. Now, do not drink wine or mature wine, and do not eat anything that is ritually impure, for the lad will be a nazirite to God from the womb until the day of his death.'"

Mano'ach is informed

⁸ Mano'ach prayed to God and said, "Please, my Master! Let the man of God whom You sent come now again to us and teach us (more about) what we should do to the lad that will be born."

⁹ God listened to Mano'ach's request, and the angel of God came again to the woman. She was sitting in the field. Mano'ach her husband was not with her. ¹⁰ The woman hurried and ran, and told her husband.

The angel reappears

"Look!" She said to him. "The man that came to me that day has appeared to me!" ¹¹ Mano'ach stood up and followed his wife.

He came to the man and said to him, "Are you the

HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS NASO

This *Haftarah* mentions the nazirite vow made by Shimshon's (Samson's) parents, similar to the laws of a nazirite described in the *Parsha*.

The *Haftarah* relates the events surrounding the birth of Shimshon, a warrior of the Jewish people who utilized his extraordinary strength to combat the Philistine oppression of Israel and perform heroic feats. At the opening of the *Haftarah*, an angel of God appears to the barren wife of Mano'ach, promising her a child so unique that she must observe the laws of naziritiship even during pregnancy (13:2-5). She informs her husband, who promptly prays to God for a further revelation (6-8). The angel appears again, this time speaking to both Mano'ach and his wife, and

offers further encouragement. He declines an offer of food and refuses to give his name (9-18). The angel then ascends back to heaven in the flames of Mano'ach's sacrifice (19-20). Finally realizing that they had in fact seen an angel of God (and not merely a prophet), Mano'ach fears that he is destined to die, but his wife comforts him, citing the acceptance of his sacrifice as a sign of Divine approval (21-23). The *Haftarah* concludes by briefly recording Shimshon's birth and growth to a man of strength in the Camp of Dan (24-25).

5. כי נזיר אלהים יהיה הנער מן הבטן.—*For the lad will be a nazirite to God from the womb.* According to Jewish law, the promise of an angel is not sufficient to render a person a nazirite. And being that we find no indication that Shimshon took a nazirite vow in later life, how did he

man that spoke to (my) wife?”

“I am,” he said.

¹² Mano'ach said, “(At first I was uncertain about this, but) now (I see you have returned I am sure) your words will materialize! (Please tell me) what rules should be followed with the lad, and what must he do?”

¹³ The angel of God said to Mano'ach, “Be careful of everything that I said to (your) wife. ¹⁴ She must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine. She must not drink any wine or mature wine. She must not eat anything that is ritually impure. Be careful about everything that I commanded her.”

Angel refuses to stay ¹⁵ “Please stay a while,” Mano'ach said to the angel of God, “and we'll prepare a goat for you.”

¹⁶ The angel of God said to Mano'ach, “If (you want me) to stay (to feed me the goat), I will not eat your meal. And if you want to prepare (the goat as) a burnt-offering, you must offer it to God (so why keep me?)”

—(Obviously,) Mano'ach did not know that (the man) was an angel of God (otherwise he would not have offered him food).—

¹⁷ “What's your name?” Mano'ach said to the angel of God. “As when your words will materialize we (will want to) honor you.”

¹⁸ The angel of God said to him, “(I don't want honor), so why do you ask for my name? It's (actually) a secret.”

Mano'ach's offering accepted ¹⁹ Mano'ach took the goat and the meal-offering, and offered it upon the rock (as a burnt-offering) to God. (The angel) wondrously produced (fire from the rock), and Mano'ach and his wife looked on. ²⁰ Then as the flame went up from the altar towards heaven, the angel of God went up in the altar's flame. Mano'ach and his wife looked on, and they fell on their faces to the ground.

Angel departs ²¹ (After going up in the flame) the angel of God did not reappear to Mano'ach and his wife, and then (after seeing all this), Mano'ach realized that it was an angel of God. ²² Mano'ach said to his wife, “We're going to die, because we have seen (an angel of) God!”

Mano'ach fears death ²³ “If God wanted to kill us,” his wife said to him, “He would not have accepted a burnt-offering and a meal-offering from us, and He would not have shown us all these things. (If it was) time (for us to die), He would not let us (merit to) hear something like this.”

אֲשֶׁר־דִּבְרַתְּ אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה וַיֹּאמֶר אָנֹכִי: יב וַיֹּאמֶר מְנוּחַ
עִתָּה יָבֵא דְבָרֶיךָ מֵהִי יִהְיֶה מִשְׁפֹּט־הַנְּעָר וּמַעֲשֵׂהָ:
יג וַיֹּאמֶר מִלְּאֲךָ יִהְיֶה אֶל־מְנוּחַ מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר־אָמַרְתִּי
אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה תִּשְׁמַר: יד מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר־יֵצֵא מִגִּפְּן הַיַּיִן
לֹא תֹאכַל וַיִּיז וְשָׂכַר אֶל־תִּשְׁתּוּ וְכָל־טְמֵאָה
אֶל־תֹּאכַל כָּל אֲשֶׁר־צִוִּיתִיָּה תִשְׁמַר: טו וַיֹּאמֶר
מְנוּחַ אֶל־מִלְּאֲךָ יִהְיֶה נֶעְצְרָה־נָּא אוֹתְךָ וְנִעֲשֶׂה
לְפָנֶיךָ גְּדֵי עֲזִים: טז וַיֹּאמֶר מִלְּאֲךָ יִהְיֶה אֶל־מְנוּחַ
אִם־תַּעֲצֹנִי לֹא־אֲכַל בְּלַחְמְךָ וְאִם־תַּעֲשֶׂה עִלָּה
לִיהוָה תַּעֲלֶנָּה כִּי לֹא־יָדַע מְנוּחַ כִּי־מִלְּאֲךָ יִהְיֶה
הוּא: יז וַיֹּאמֶר מְנוּחַ אֶל־מִלְּאֲךָ יִהְיֶה מִי שְׂמֹךְ
כִּי־יָבֵא דְבָרְךָ וְדִבְרֶיךָ כִּן וְכִבְדֶּנּוּךָ: יח וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מִלְּאֲךָ
יִהְיֶה לָּמָּה זֶה תִּשְׁאֵל לְשָׁמִי וְהוּא־פִּלְאִי: יט וַיִּקַּח
מְנוּחַ אֶת־גְּדֵי הָעֲזִים וְאֶת־הַמִּנְחָה וַיַּעַל עַל־הַצֹּר
לִיהוָה וּמִפְּלֹא לַעֲשׂוֹת וּמְנוּחַ וְאִשְׁתּוֹ רָאִים: כ וַיְהִי
בְעֵלוֹת הַלֶּהָב מֵעַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וַיַּעַל מִלְּאֲךָ־
יִהְיֶה בְּלֶהָב הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וּמְנוּחַ וְאִשְׁתּוֹ רָאִים וַיִּפְּלוּ
עַל־פְּנֵיהֶם אֶרְצָה: כא וְלֹא־יָסַף עוֹד מִלְּאֲךָ יִהְיֶה
לְהִרְאֶה אֶל־מְנוּחַ וְאֶל־אִשְׁתּוֹ אִזּוֹ יָדַע מְנוּחַ
כִּי־מִלְּאֲךָ יִהְיֶה הוּא: כב וַיֹּאמֶר מְנוּחַ אֶל־אִשְׁתּוֹ
מוֹת נָמוֹת כִּי אֱלֹהִים רָאִינוּ: כג וַתֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִשְׁתּוֹ לוֹ
חֲפִיץ יִהְיֶה לְהַמִּיתֵנוּ לֹא־לָקַח מִיָּדֵנוּ עִלָּה וּמִנְחָה
וְלֹא הִרְאֵנוּ אֶת־כָּל־אֱלֹהִים וְכָעַתְּ לֹא הִשְׁמִיעֵנוּ

actually become a nazirite? It could be argued that Shimshon's legal naziriteship was acquired by a similar process through which a gentile child converts to Judaism. Initially, a child undergoes the necessary conversion requirements (such as ritual immersion), but it is only when the child reaches adulthood and does not revoke his observance of Jewish law that the conversion is binding. If, however, on reaching adulthood he chooses not to follow a Jewish lifestyle, then the conversion is retroactively annulled (see *Kesubos* 11a). Likewise, it could be argued that Shimshon's nazirite status was conferred tentatively upon him in childhood by the angel's statement, and the legal naziriteship became

binding retroactively when he chose not to reject the lifestyle of a nazir on reaching adulthood (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 63ff.).

23. וְכָעַתְּ לֹא הִשְׁמִיעֵנוּ כְּזֹאת (If it was) time (for us to die), He would not let us (merit to) hear something like this. After the two proofs of Divine favor offered by Mano'ach's wife—that God had accepted their sacrifice, and that they had seen an angel (v. 23)—what was added by her third proof, “(If it was) time (for us to die), He would not let us (merit to) hear something like this”? Surely, seeing the Godly angel was a bigger merit than merely hearing him, so having already pointed to a greater experience, why stress a lesser one?

בְּזָאתָ: כִּי וַתֵּלֶד הָאִשָּׁה בֶן וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ שִׁמְשׁוֹן
וַיִּגְדַּל הַנְּעָר וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ יְהוָה: כִּי וַתִּחַל רֵיחַ יְהוָה
לְפַעֲמוֹ בְּמַחֲנֵה־דָן בֵּין צָרָעָה וּבֵין אֶשְׁתָּאֵל:

²⁴ The woman gave birth to a son and called him Shimshon. The lad grew, and God blessed him. ²⁵ A spirit (of strength) from God began to move him to the camp of Dan (to show acts of strength and wonder. The camp of Dan was) between Tzarah and Eshta'ol.

BEHA'ALOSCHA / בהעלותך

(Zechariah 2:14 – 4:7)

ב יִרְנֵי וְשִׂמְחֵי בַת־צִיּוֹן כִּי הִנְנִי־בָא וְשֹׁכְנֵתִי
בְּתוֹכְךָ נְאֻם־יְהוָה: וְנִלְוּ גוֹיִם רַבִּים אֶל־יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם
הַהוּא וְהָיוּ לִי לְעָם וְשֹׁכְנֵתִי בְּתוֹכְךָ וַיְדַעַתְּ כִּי־יְהוָה
צְבָאוֹת שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלֶיךָ: וְנִחַל יְהוָה אֶת־יְהוּדָה
חֲלָקוֹ עַל אֲדָמַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ וּבָחַר עוֹד בִּירוּשָׁלַם: הִם
כָּל־בָּשָׂר מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה כִּי נִעְוָר מִמַּעַן קִדְשׁוֹ:
ג ׀ וַיְרְאֵנִי אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל עֹמֵד לִפְנֵי
מְלֶאכֶת יְהוָה וְהִשְׁטָן עֹמֵד עַל־יְמִינוֹ לְשִׁמְנוֹ: וַיֹּאמֶר
יְהוָה אֶל־הַשְׁטָן יִנְעַר יְהוָה בְּךָ הַשְׁטָן וַיִּנְעַר יְהוָה

^{2:14} “Sing and rejoice, daughter of Tziyon, for I am coming (to Jerusalem) and I will dwell in your midst,” says God. ¹⁵ “Many nations will attach themselves to God on that day, and they will become My people (too and believe in Me, but nevertheless) I will dwell (only) in your midst.” Then you will know that the God of hosts sent me (only) to you.

Return of the Divine Presence

¹⁶ God will let Yehudah take possession of his position in the Holy Land (never to be exiled again), and (God) will once again choose Yerushalayim (to have His Shechinah dwell there). ¹⁷ Be silent before God (all you nations! Never again speak badly of the Jewish people), for (then) He will be roused from His holy abode (to exact retribution on the nations).

Restoration of the Land

^{3:1} (In the prophetic vision) He then showed me Yehoshua the High Priest standing before God’s angel, with Satan standing at (Yehoshua’s) right to incriminate

The First Vision: High Priest in “Soiled Garments”

him (for failing to rebuke his children when they married non-Jewish women).

² (An angel of) God said to Satan, “God will reprimand you, O Satan! He Who chooses Yerushalayim will reprimand you!

Metzudos David argues that hearing the angel’s promise of Shimshon’s birth was the best proof that they would not die, for otherwise the child would not be able to be born. However, at the literal level, this is difficult to accept since: a.) This only proves that Mano’ach’s wife would live, not Mano’ach himself. b.) Even for Mano’ach’s wife, it was only a proof that she would live nine months more. c.) To be truly alive means to have one’s own independent existence and not merely to exist for the sake of somebody else.

Rather, it would appear that the statement of Mano’ach’s wife was intended literally, that the Godly revelation experienced through hearing the angel was greater than seeing him. How is this to be understood?

Seeing is an experience which is highly tangible and concrete, as opposed to hearing, which is more distant and vague. Thus, one normally sees physicality, but one only “hears” spirituality.

However, at the giving of the Torah, the Jewish people, “saw that which is usually heard and they heard that which is usually seen” (Mechilta), i.e. they had a direct, concrete experience (“seeing”) of spirituality (“which is usually heard (distant)”); and furthermore, even physicality itself, “which is usually seen,” was vague, as if “heard” from a distance.

Of the two experiences, the latter is, in fact, the greater. For even if one sometimes “sees” spirituality, one may at other times see physicality too.

But to “hear” physicality as something only vague and removed means that one’s awareness of the spiritual is constant, even when eating and sleeping. And this is what Mano’ach’s wife explained to her husband: The angel had given them not only a short-lived, transcendent experience of spirituality (seeing), but they had heard the angel too—spiritual awareness had become perceptible even from within their physical lives (Sichas Shabbos Parshas Naso 5726; Likutei Sichos vol. 6. p. 127).

HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS BEHA'ALOSCHA

This Haftarah describes the Menorah (4:2), which is also depicted at the beginning of the Parsha. The Haftarah was said by Zechariah around 520 B.C.E. as part of the prophet’s efforts to encourage the Jewish people returning from Babylonian captivity to rebuild the Temple.

This Haftarah is also read on the first Shabbos of Chanukah, primarily due to its reference to the Menorah. Chasidic thought explains further that even the Haftarah’s opening (“Sing and rejoice, daughter of Tziyon”) shares a thematic connection with Chanukah. Tziyon literally means “mark” or “designation,” suggesting that through their acts of worship, the Jewish people are actually a “sign” of God’s presence on earth. However, when they fail to serve God properly, they cease to be such a sign and are termed the mere “daughter of Tziyon.” The Haftarah

Why, this (Yehoshua was miraculously saved like) a brand rescued from fire (so how can you prosecute him)?”

³ Now, Yehoshua was wearing ‘soiled clothes’ (i.e. sins) while standing before the angel. ⁴ (The angel) spoke up loudly and said to (the other angels) standing before him, “Remove the ‘soiled clothes’ (i.e. the non-Jewish women) from his (sons)!”

He said to him, “See, I have taken away your (past) sins from you and (when your current sins will cease you will see that) I am clothing you in beautiful clothes (i.e. merits).”

⁵ Then I (prayed for Yehoshua), saying, “Let them place a pure (priestly) turban on his head (signifying that his descendants would inherit the priesthood.” My prayer was immediately answered) and they put the pure turban on his head and clothed him in garments, while God’s angel stood by.

The Future ⁶ (Afterwards,) God’s angel warned Yehoshua, saying, ⁷ “This is what the God of hosts said: ‘If you(r children will) walk in My paths and keep the things (I told them) to keep, then you(r children) will (be appointed) to take charge of My house (forever) and guard My courtyard. (So too in the spiritual world) I will (reward you and your children and) permit you to walk among those (angels) who stand (there).’

⁸ Now listen Yehoshua, the High Priest! You and also your companions (who were saved from a fiery furnace) who sit before you, for they are people (worthy) of miracles. Look! I will bring My servant Tzemach (i.e. Mashiach).”

⁹ “Here is the (foundation) stone (of the Third Temple) that I will place before Yehoshua’s descendant, the High Priest, for him to place. There will be) seven eyes (guarding) a single stone (of the Temple, from Above). I will (participate in the construction of the Temple by) engraving inscriptions (on its stones),” says the God of hosts, “and I will remove the sin of that

בְּךָ הִבְחַר בִּירוּשָׁלַם הַלְוֹא זֶה אֹד מִצֵּל מֵאֵשׁ:
וַיְהוֹשִׁעַ הָיָה לְבֶשׂ בְּגָדִים צֹאִים וְעַמֵּד לְפָנָי
הַמְּלֹאךְ: - וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָעֲמֻדִים לְפָנָיו לֵאמֹר
הַסִּירוּ הַבְּגָדִים הַצֹּאִים מֵעָלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו רֵאֵה
הַעֲבַרְתִּי מֵעָלָיְךָ עֹנֶךָ וְהִלְבַּשׁ אֶתְךָ מִחֻלְצוֹת:
וַאֲמֹר יִשְׁמוּ צִנּוֹף טָהוֹר עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ וַיִּשְׁמוּ הַצִּנּוֹף
הַטָּהוֹר עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ וַיִּלְבַּשְׁהוּ בְּגָדִים וּמְלֹאךְ יְהוָה
עִמָּד: וַיַּעַד מְלֹאךְ יְהוָה בְּיְהוֹשֻׁעַ לֵאמֹר:
כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אִם־בְּדַרְכֵי תֵלֵךְ וְאִם
אֶת־מִשְׁמַרְתִּי תִשְׁמַר וְגַם־אֶתְּךָ תִּדְרִין אֶת־בֵּיתִי
וְגַם תִּשְׁמַר אֶת־חֻצְרֵי וְנָתַתִּי לְךָ מִהַלְכִים בֵּין
הָעֲמֻדִים הָאֵלֶּה: הַ שְׁמַע־נָא יְהוֹשֻׁעַ | הַכִּתֵּן הַגְּדוֹל
אֶתְּךָ וְרַעֲיֵךְ הַיֹּשְׁבִים לְפָנֶיךָ כִּי־אֲנֹשִׁי מוֹפֵת הָמָּה
כִּי־הִנְנִי מֵבִיא אֶת־עַבְדְּךָ צֶמַח: בַּ כִּי | הִנֵּה הָאֶבֶן
אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְפָנָי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ עַל־אֶבֶן אַחַת שִׁבְעָה
עֵינַיִם הִנְנִי מְפַתַּח פֶּתָחָהּ נָאִם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וּמִשְׁתִּי

teaches us that even in such a pitiful state, the Jewish people are told to “sing and rejoice,” because they are inherently close to God and can easily come to serve Him again. Clearly, this is reminiscent of the story of Chanukah, when the Jewish people had become estranged from God and were at the level of “daughter of Tziyon,” but were re-instated at the level of “Tziyon” through the miracle that occurred (Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev 5740, par. 5-7).

The Haftarah opens with words of comfort about the return of the Divine presence and restoration of the Land (2:14-17). We then read the first of two visions depicted in the Haftarah, that of the “High Priest in soiled garments” who is condemned for his children’s sins by the Satan, but vindicated by God’s angel (3:1-5). This is followed by promises of a restored Temple and the coming of Mashiach (6-10). In the second vision, Zechariah sees the gold Menorah, a metaphor for Mashiach’s Divine spirit through which he will effortlessly subdue nations (4:1-7).

3:2 מִצֵּל מֵאֵשׁ—Why, this (man) is like a brand rescued from a fire. God’s angel reprimanded the Satan for speaking disparagingly about one who was a “brand rescued from a fire.” As Rabbi Yosef Caro explains, in his commentary to this verse, “Only a tiny part of the Jewish people remain, like a brand saved from a fire, and you wish to utter judgments against them so that I should destroy them?”

In our post-Holocaust generation, every Jew is, quite literally, a “brand rescued from the fire.” God’s blank dismissal of Satan’s criticisms (that Jews possess the “soiled garments” of sin etc.) teaches us a powerful lesson—that in our generation, the key emphasis must be on lifting the spirits of the Jewish people through stressing the innate worth of every single Jew, and God’s love to the Jew which is extended regardless of his level of observance (Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeichi 5751; Mikeitz 5745).

7. וְנָתַתִּי לְךָ מִהַלְכִים בֵּין הָעֲמֻדִים הָאֵלֶּה—I will permit you to walk among those (angels) who stand (there). In comparison to the angels, who are described as being static (“standing”), the soul is depicted as a dynamic (“walking”) entity. This does not mean to say that an angel cannot enjoy spiritual growth at all; rather, it means that whatever progress the angel makes is always proportional to its prior standing. A soul, on the other hand, is capable of making a truly “quantum leap.”

An illustration of these two types of progress can be found in the sphere of Torah study. Normally, whatever knowledge a person has acquired assists him in gaining further knowledge, because the fresh information that he seeks is compatible with, and builds upon, his existing structure. However, we do find, for example, that Rabbi Zeira conducted one hundred fasts in order to forget the Babylonian Talmud so that he would be able to study the Jerusalem Talmud (Bava Metzia 85a). Apparently, this

אֶת־עֵינַי הָאָרֶץ־הַזֹּאת בְּיוֹם אֶחָד: בְּיוֹם הַהוּא נֶאֱמַר
 יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת תִּקְרְאוּ אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ אֶל־תַּחַת גַּפְנֵי
 וְאֶל־תַּחַת תְּאֵנֹת: ד' וַיָּשֶׁב הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי
 וַיַּעֲרִינִי כְּאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־יִעֹרֵר מִשְׁנָתוֹ: ז' וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי מָה
 אַתָּה רֹאֶה וְאָמַר (וַיֹּאמֶר בֵּן) רֵאתִי אֶת־וְהִנֵּה מְנוֹרַת זָהָב
 בְּלֶהַךְ וְנִגְלָהּ עַל־רֹאשָׁהּ וְשִׁבְעָה נִרְתִּיחָה עָלֶיהָ שִׁבְעָה
 וְשִׁבְעָה מוֹצְקוֹת לְנִרְתוֹת אֲשֶׁר עַל־רֹאשָׁהּ: ח' וְשָׁנִים
 זְוִיתִים עָלֶיהָ אֶחָד מִיְמֵינַי הַנִּגְלָה וְאֶחָד עַל־שְׂמֹאלָהּ:
 ט' וַאֲנִי וְאָמַר אֶל־הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי לֵאמֹר מָה־אֵלֶּה
 אֲדַנִּי: י' וַיַּעַן הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי הֲלוֹא
 יָדַעְתָּ מָה־הֵמָּה אֵלֶּה וְאָמַר לֹא אֲדַנִּי: יא' וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר
 אֵלַי לֵאמֹר זֶה דְּבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־זָרְבָבֶל לֵאמֹר לֹא
 בְּחֵיל וְלֹא בְכֹחַ בִּי אִם־בְּרוּחִי אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת:
 יב' מִי־אַתָּה הִרְרֵה־הַגָּדוֹל לְפָנָי זָרְבָבֶל לְמִישֵׁר וְהוֹצִיא
 אֶת־הָאֶבֶן הָרִאשֹׁנָה תְּשִׂאוֹת תָּן חֵן לָהּ:

land in one day. ¹⁰ On that day,” says the God of hosts, “you will invite each other to come and (take shade) under the vines and under the fig trees (to enjoy the bountiful goodness which will then be).”

⁴¹ Then, the angel that spoke with me returned and roused me, like a man woken from his sleep.

Second vision: the Menorah

² “What do you see (in your prophetic vision)?” he asked me.

I said, “I see a Menorah made entirely of gold, with a bowl on its top (containing oil). It has seven lamps, and each (of these lamps) that are on its top has seven pipes (to carry the oil from the bowl). ³ Near it are two olive (trees), one to the right of the bowl and one to its left.”

⁴ Then I spoke up and asked the angel that spoke with me, “My master, what are these (alluding to)?”

⁵ “Don’t you know what they are?” replied the angel that spoke with me.

“No, my master!” I said.

⁶ Then he answered me as follows, “This is the word of God about (Mashiach, a descendant of) Zerubabel: ‘Not by (his) might, nor by (his) power (will the nations become subservient to Mashiach), but rather (it will be effortless, like the kindling of a Menorah,) through My spirit (by which I will subdue the nations),’ says the God of hosts.

Mashiach’s power

⁷ Who are you (Gog and Magog to appear as) a great mountain in Zerubabel’s (Mashiach’s) path, when (in truth you will be easily) flattened. (Mashiach) will produce the precious stone (the foundation of the Temple) amid cheers of “Beautiful (stone)! Beautiful (stone) is she!””

שֵׁלַח / SHELACH

(Joshua 2:1-24)

ב' וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּנֵי־נֹחַן מִן־הַשְּׂטִיִּים שְׁנַיִם אַנְשִׁים
 מִרְגָּלִים חָרָשׁ לֵאמֹר לָכוּ רְאוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְאֶת־
 יְרִיחוֹ וַיֵּלְכוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ בֵּית־אִשָּׁה זֹנָה וְשִׁמָּה רָחַב
 וַיִּשְׁכְּבוּ־שָׁמָּה: ג' וַיֹּאמֶר לְמַלְאָךְ יְרִיחוֹ לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה

2:1 Yehoshua the son of Nun sent two men from Shitim to spy out the mindset (of the Land’s inhabitants), saying, “Go and see the Land and Jericho.”

Yehoshua’s spies hide in Rachav’s house

They went, and came to the house of a lady named Rachav who sold food, and they slept there.

² (A messenger) informed the King of Jericho, saying,

was because Rabbi Zeira was about to make a “quantum leap” to a new level of study where his prior knowledge would actually be an impediment (Sefer Hama’amarim 5711-3, pp. 246-7).

HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS SHELACH

This Haftarah relates the story of the delegation of spies which Yehoshua sent to scout the Land of Cana’an shortly before its conquest, similar to the story of Moshe’s spies which is related in the Parsha.

The Haftarah opens as the two spies are commissioned and sent by Yehoshua and, on arriving in Cana’an, seek refuge in the house of a lady named Rachav (2:1). When news reaches the King, he demands that Rachav release the men, but she claims that they have already left the city, while in truth they are hidden on the roof (2-6). The King’s men leave the city in pursuit, and the city gate is locked (7). Rachav relates to the men how the Cana’anite people were still terrified of the Jewish people due to their miraculous assistance from God, and she strikes a

“Behold! Men from the children of Israel have come here tonight to search the land!”

³ The King of Jericho sent a message to Rachav, saying, “Release the men who have come to you that have entered your house, for they have come to search the entire land!”

⁴ The woman had taken the two men and had hidden each one (separately). She said, “Yes, the men came to me. I didn’t know where they were from. ⁵ When it was time to close the city gate at night, the men went off. I don’t know where they went. (It wasn’t long ago, so if) you chase after them quickly you’ll catch them.”

⁶ She had taken them up to the roof, and hidden them (well) in the flax stalks that were arranged upon the roof.

⁷ The (King’s) men pursued them in the direction of the Jordan, until the river-crossings. As soon as the pursuers had gone out, the gate was shut.

⁸ Before (the spies) were asleep, she came up to them on the roof. ⁹ She said to the men, “I know that God has given you the Land, and that dread of you has fallen upon us. All the inhabitants of the land have melted away because of you.

¹⁰ “For we have heard how God dried up the water of the Reed Sea for you when you came out of Egypt; and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites that were on the other side of the Jordan, Sichon and Og, whom you completely destroyed.

¹¹ “And as soon as we heard, our hearts melted. Because of you, everybody was downhearted, for God your Almighty God is Almighty in heaven above and on the earth below.”

¹² “Now, I beg, swear to me by God, since I have shown you kindness, that you will also show kindness to my father’s house, and give me a true sign (so that we will not be harmed), ¹³ and so you will keep alive my father and my mother, and my brothers and my sisters, and (preserve) all that they have. Deliver our lives from death!”

אֲנָשִׁים בָּאוּ הַנֶּהַל הַלַּיְלָה מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לַחְפֹּר
אֶת־הָאָרֶץ: וַיִּשְׁלַח מֶלֶךְ יִרְיָחוֹ אֶל־רַחָב לֵאמֹר
הֲוֹצִיָאִי הָאֲנָשִׁים הַבָּאִים אֵלֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר־בָּאוּ לְבֵיתְךָ
כִּי לַחְפֹּר אֶת־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ בָּאוּ: וַתִּקַּח הָאִשָּׁה
אֶת־שְׁנֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים וַתַּעֲפֶנּוּ וַתֹּאמֶר אֲלֵי
הָאֲנָשִׁים וְלֹא יָדַעְתִּי מֵאִיִן הֵמָּה: וַיְהִי הַשָּׁעַר
לְסֹגֹר בַּחֲשֹׁךְ וְהָאֲנָשִׁים יָצְאוּ לֹא יָדַעְתִּי אָנֹכָה הֲלָכוּ
הָאֲנָשִׁים רֹדְפוֹ מֵהָר אַחֲרֵיהֶם כִּי תִשְׁיָנוּם: וְהִיא
הֶעֱלָתָם הַנֶּהַל וַתִּטְמְנֵם בְּפִשְׁתֵּי הָעֵץ הָעֹרְכוֹת לָהּ
עַל־הַגֶּגֶז: וְהָאֲנָשִׁים רֹדְפוֹ אַחֲרֵיהֶם דֶּרֶךְ הַיַּרְדֵּן עַל
הַמַּעְבְּרוֹת וְהַשָּׁעַר סָגְרוּ אַחֲרָיִךְ כַּאֲשֶׁר יָצְאוּ
הַרְדָּפִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם: וְהָמָּה מָרָם יִשְׁכַּבּוּ וְהִיא
עָלְתָה עֲלֵיהֶם עַל־הַגֶּגֶז: וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָאֲנָשִׁים
יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־נָתַן יְהוָה לָכֶם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְכִי־נִפְלָה
אִימַתְכֶם עָלֵינוּ וְכִי נָמְנוּ כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ מִפְּנֵיכֶם:
כִּי שָׂמַעְנוּ אֵת אֲשֶׁר־הוֹבִישׁ יְהוָה אֶת־מִי יַם־סוּף
מִפְּנֵיכֶם בְּצֵאתְכֶם מִמִּצְרָיִם וְאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתֶם לְשֵׁנֵי
מַלְכֵי הָאֲמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר בַּעֲבַר הַיַּרְדֵּן לְסִיחֹן וְלִעֹג
אֲשֶׁר הִחְרַמְתֶּם אוֹתָם: וְנִשְׁמַע וַיִּמָּס לְבַבְנוּ
וְלֹא־קָמָה עוֹד רוּחַ בְּאִישׁ מִפְּנֵיכֶם כִּי יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הוּא אֱלֹהִים בְּשָׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וְעַל־הָאָרֶץ
מִתַּחַת: וְעַתָּה הַשְׁבְּעוּנָא לִי בַיהוָה כִּי־עָשִׂיתִי
עִמָּכֶם חֶסֶד וְעָשִׂיתֶם גַּם־אִתָּם עִם־בֵּית אָבִי חֶסֶד
וְנָתַתֶּם לִי אוֹת אֲמֹת: וְהִחִיתֶם אֶת־אָבִי וְאֶת־אִמִּי
וְאֶת־אֲחֵי וְאֶת־אֲחֵיוֹתַי (ואחותי בן) וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם

The
people
fear
defeat

deal that her family will be saved when the conquest of Canaan takes place (8-21). After hiding by a mountain for three days, the men return and report to Yehoshua that “the Land’s inhabitants melted (in fear) of us” (22-24).

A number of key distinctions are evident when one compares the mission of Moshe’s spies, in the Parsha, to those of Yehoshua’s, in the Haftarah: a.) Moshe sent spies on his own initiative, without a direct command from God, whereas Yehoshua must have been explicitly commanded to send spies (for he would not have personally risked repeating the fiasco that occurred in Moshe’s days). b.) Moshe’s spies

were sent “to explore the Land,” whereas Yehoshua’s spies were sent to “spy out.” c.) Moshe sent twelve spies, one from each tribe, whose names were publicized, whereas Yehoshua sent only two spies whose names are not disclosed in scripture. Likewise, Moshe’s spies did not conceal their presence and their mission was public knowledge, whereas Yehoshua’s spies went on a secret mission. d.) Moshe’s spies traveled across the entire land, whereas Yehoshua’s spies visited only Rachav’s house.

All these points reflect a difference in purpose behind the two missions. Moshe did not need to send spies for tactical reasons, because he had been promised a supernatural victory by God. His men were merely sent

וְהִצַּלְתֶּם אֶת־נַפְשֹׁתֵינוּ מִמּוֹת: ^{יד} וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהּ
הָאֲנָשִׁים נַפְשֵׁנוּ תַחְתִּיכֶם לְמוֹת אִם לֹא תִגִּידוּ
אֶת־דְּבָרֵנוּ זֶה וְהָיָה בְּתַת־יְהוָה לָנוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ
וְעֵשִׂינוּ עִמָּךְ חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת: ^{טו} וְתוֹרְדֶם בְּחֶבֶל בְּעַד
הַחֲלוֹן כִּי בֵיתָהּ בְּקִיר הַחוּמָה וּבַחוּמָה הִיא יוֹשֶׁבֶת:
^{טז} וְתֹאמַר לָהֶם הֲרַרְהָ לָכֵן פִּן־יִפְגְּעוּ בְכֶם הָרֹדְפִים
וְנִחַבְתֶּם שָׁמָּה שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים עַד שׁוֹב הָרֹדְפִים
וְאַחַר תֵּלְכוּ לְדַרְכְּכֶם: ^{יז} וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלֶיהָ הָאֲנָשִׁים
נְקִיִּם אֲנַחְנוּ מִשְׁבַּעְתְּךָ הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר הִשְׁבַּעְתָּנוּ: ^{יח} הִנֵּה
אֲנַחְנוּ בָּאִים בְּאָרֶץ אֶת־תְּקוּתָתְךָ חוּטֵי הַשָּׁנִי הַזֶּה
תִּקְשְׁרֵי בְּחֲלוֹן אֲשֶׁר הוֹרְדְתָנוּ זֶה וְאֶת־אֲבִיךָ
וְאֶת־אִמְךָ וְאֶת־אֲחִיךָ וְאֶת־כָּל־בֵּית אֲבִיךָ תֹאסֹפִי
אֵלֶיךָ הַבַּיִתָּה: ^{יט} וְהָיָה כָּל אֲשֶׁר־יֵצֵא מִדְּלֹתַי בֵּיתְךָ
הַחוּצָה דָּמוֹ בְּרֹאשׁוֹ וְאֲנַחְנוּ נְקִיִּם וְכָל אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה
אִתְּךָ בַּבַּיִת דָּמוֹ בְּרֹאשׁוֹ אִם־יָד תִּהְיֶה־בּוֹ: ^כ וְאִם־
תִּגִּידִי אֶת־דְּבָרֵנוּ זֶה וְהָיִינוּ נְקִיִּם מִשְׁבַּעְתְּךָ אֲשֶׁר
הִשְׁבַּעְתָּנוּ: ^{כא} וְתֹאמַר כְּדַבְרֵיכֶם כִּן־הוּא וְתִשְׁלַחֵם
וַיֵּלְכוּ וַתִּקְשֶׁר אֶת־תְּקוּתַת הַשָּׁנִי בְּחֲלוֹן: ^{כב} וַיֵּלְכוּ
וַיָּבֹאוּ הָרַרְהָ וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים עַד־שָׁבוּ
הָרֹדְפִים וַיִּבְקְשׂוּ הָרֹדְפִים בְּכָל־הַדֶּרֶךְ וְלֹא מָצְאוּ:
^{כג} וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שְׁנֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיֵּרְדוּ מִהָהָר וַיַּעֲבְרוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ
אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן־נֹון וַיְסַפְּרוּ־לּוֹ אֵת כָּל־הַמַּצָּאוֹת
אוֹתָם: ^{כד} וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כִּי־נָתַן יְהוָה בְּיַדְנוּ
אֶת־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ וְגַם־נִמְנוּ כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ מִפְּנֵינוּ:

¹⁴ The men said to her, “(We pledge) our lives (to defend) yours from death, if you will not tell (anybody about) this discussion of ours. Then, what will happen is, when God gives us the Land we will deal with you kindly and truly.”

The spies' promise

¹⁵ She let them down by a rope through the window (out of the town), for her house was in the town wall and she dwelt in the wall. ¹⁶ She said to them, “Go to the mountain in case the pursuers catch you. Hide yourselves there for three days until the pursuers return, and afterwards go on your way.”

¹⁷ The men said to her, “We (want to) be blameless of (not fulfilling) your oath which you made us swear (so we will make ourselves clear). ¹⁸ When we come into the Land, bind this line of scarlet thread in the window by which you let us down, and bring your father and your mother, and your brothers and your entire father's household home to you. ¹⁹ Then if anyone goes out of the doors of your house outside, his blood will be upon his head, and we will be blameless. But whoever will be with you in the house, his blood will be upon our head if a hand is laid upon him. ²⁰ And if you tell (anyone) of this discussion of ours, then we will be blameless of your oath which you have made us swear.”

²¹ She said, “It will be as you say.” She sent them off, and they left. (And later when the Jewish army invaded), she bound the scarlet line in the window.

²² They went, and came to the mountain, and stayed there three days until the pursuers returned. The pursuers chased them all the way, but they did not find them.

²³ The two men returned and came down from the mountain. They crossed over and came to Yehoshua the son of Nun, and told him all that had happened to them.

The spies return safely

²⁴ They said to Yehoshua, “God has delivered all the Land into our hands. Also, all the Land's inhabitants melted (in fear) of us.”

of his own volition to collect information (“to explore”), so that the people would have evidence that the Land “is a very, very good Land” (Bamidbar 14:7), and would thus carry out its occupation with additional enthusiasm and joy. Therefore it was important that each tribe should have its own representative, each of whom would scout the entire Land, ensuring each tribe an excellent share regardless of the portion that they would ultimately be allotted. And being that they were confident of supernatural protection, they did not need to conceal themselves.

In fact, it could be argued that, in a certain respect, this mission was actually *successful*, because positive information about the Land was

obtained and, despite the tragic rebellion that later occurred, *this positive view of the Land would eventually have made a powerful impression on the Jewish people.* Thus, when Yehoshua came to conquer the land forty years later, it was not necessary to gather information about the land so as to rouse enthusiasm among the people, as this had already been done by Moshe. Rather, Yehoshua's spies were only necessary for tactical reasons, because the promise of a supernatural victory had been forfeited, and therefore only a small number of secret spies were needed. And as soon as they had proof (from Rachav) that the Cana'inite people were expecting defeat (v. 9-11), their mission was complete and they were able to report back home (Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shelach 5751).

KORACH / קרח

(I Samuel 11:14 - 12:22)

11:14 **S**ha'ul confirmed as King *Shmuel said to the people, "Let's go to Gilgal, and renew the monarchy there." ¹⁵ All the people went to Gilgal. They (all willingly) confirmed Sha'ul as King there, before God in Gilgal, and they slaughtered peace-offerings there before God. Sha'ul and all the people rejoiced greatly.*

12:1 *Shmuel said to all Israel, "Look! I have listened to your request about everything which you said to me, and I have appointed a king to reign over you. ² Now, look! The (new) king is walking before you! I have become old and aged. My sons are (supporting the King) here with you. I have walked before you from my youth and until this day."*

3 *"Here I am! Testify against me before God and before His anointed (King): Have I taken anybody's ox? Have I taken anybody's donkey? Have I robbed anybody? Have I oppressed anybody? Did I take a payment from anyone's hand that caused me to hide my eyes (about his wrongdoing and not punish him properly? Tell me) while I can respond to you!"*

4 *They said, "You did not rob us or oppress us, nor did you take anything from anyone's hand."*

5 *He said to them, "God is your witness, and His anointed (King) is witness this day, that you have not found anything (inappropriate) in my hand."*

"(God and His anointed are our) witness," they said.

6 *Shmuel said to the people, "God made (miracles through) Moshe and Aharon, and brought your fathers up from the land of Egypt. ⁷ Now, stand and I will debate with you before God, concerning all the righteous acts which He did to you and to your forefathers."*

8 *"When Ya'akov came to Egypt, and your fathers cried out to God, and God sent Moshe and Aharon*

יא וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל־הָעָם לְכוּ וְנִלְכְּהוּ הַגִּלְגָל וְנִחַדְשׁ שָׁם הַמְּלוּכָה: ^{טו} וַיֵּלְכוּ כָּל־הָעָם הַגִּלְגָל וַיִּמְלְכוּ שָׁם אֶת־שָׁאוּל לִפְנֵי יְהוָה בְּגִלְגָל וַיִּזְבְּחוּ־שָׁם זִבְחִים שְׁלָמִים לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיִּשְׂמַח שָׁם שָׁאוּל וְכָל־אֲנָשֵׁי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד־מָאד: יב א וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל הִנֵּה שָׁמַעְתִּי בְקִלְכֶם לְכָל אֲשֶׁר־אָמַרְתֶּם לִי וְאִמְלִיךְ עֲלֵיכֶם מֶלֶךְ: יג וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה הַמֶּלֶךְ אֵלַי מֵתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵיכֶם וְאֲנִי זָקֵנְתִי וְשִׁבְתִּי וּבְנֵי הַנָּעַם אֵתְכֶם וְאֲנִי הִתְהַלַּכְתִּי לִפְנֵיכֶם מִנְעָרֵי עַד־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: יד הַנְּנִי עֲנּוּ בִי נָגֵד יְהוָה וְנָגֵד מִשִּׁיחוּ אֶת־שׁוּר אֶת־שׁוּר מִי לְקַחְתִּי וַחֲמֹר מִי לְקַחְתִּי וְאֶת־מִי עֲשִׂקְתִּי אֶת־מִי רְצוֹתִי וּמִי־מִי לְקַחְתִּי כִּפָּר וְאֲעֲלִים עֵינֵי בּוֹ וְאֲשִׁיב לָכֶם: טו וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא עֲשִׂקְתָּנוּ וְלֹא רְצוֹתָנוּ וְלֹא לְקַחְתָּ מִי־אִישׁ מְאוּמָה: טז וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם עַד יְהוָה בְּכֶם וְעַד מִשִּׁיחוּ הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה כִּי לֹא מִצְאָתֶם בְּיָדֵי מְאוּמָה וַיֹּאמֶר עַד: יז וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל־הָעָם יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה וְאֶת־אַהֲרֹן וְאֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלָה אֶת־אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: יח וְעַתָּה הִתִּיצְבוּ וְאֲשַׁפְטָה אֶתְכֶם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֵת כָּל־עֲדֻקּוֹת יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה אֶתְכֶם וְאֶת־אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם: יט כֹּאֲשֶׁר־בָּא יַעֲקֹב מִצְרָיִם וַיִּזְעַקוּ

HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS KORACH

This *Haftarah* speaks of Shmuel, a descendant of Korach, including his declaration of innocence (12:3), which is similar to that of Moshe in the *Parsha* (16:15).

The *Haftarah* opens as Shmuel gathers the nation at Gilgal in order to establish Sha'ul as King of Israel, after a long period of regional leadership under the Judges. At an earlier gathering in Mitzpah, Sha'ul had already been appointed King, but the first ceremony lacked the required consensus. Now, however, after Sha'ul had demonstrated his military prowess by saving the Gilad from Amorite hostility, Shmuel gathers the people once again to re-establish Sha'ul's monarchy. This time, the gathering is a resounding success (11:14-15).

The main body of the *Haftarah* consists of a speech by Shmuel, the outgoing leader, in which he expresses his reservations about the newly formed monarchy. (Initially, Shmuel had been opposed to the people's request to appoint a King, and acquiesced only due to a Divine command).

After opening words in which Shmuel stresses his own honest leadership—which is promptly attested to by the people—(12:1-5), he traces Jewish history from the times of the Exodus, demonstrating how a king was never necessary because God is the King (6–12). He thus warns the people how important it is to continue to recognize the supreme authority of God now that a King has been appointed (13-15). To demonstrate that God's acceptance of the people's demands for a King is no proof of the appropriateness of the request, Shmuel announces that

אֲבֹתֵיכֶם אֶל־יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה וְאֶת־
 אֶהֱרֹן וַיּוֹצִיאוּ אֶת־אֲבֹתֵיכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם וַיִּשְׁבּוּם
 בַּמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה: 9 וַיִּשְׁכְּחוּ אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם וַיִּמְכְּרוּ
 אֹתָם בְּיַד סִיסְרָא שַׂר־צָבָא חֲצוֹר וּבִיד־פְּלִשְׁתִּים
 וּבִיד־מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב וַיִּלְחֲמוּ בָּם: 10 וַיִּזְעְקוּ אֶל־יְהוָה
 וַיֹּאמְרוּ (וַיֹּאמֶר כ"ו) חָטְאנוּ כִּי עָזַבְנוּ אֶת־יְהוָה וְנַעֲבֹד
 אֶת־הַבְּעֵלִים וְאֶת־הָעִשְׁתָּרוֹת וְעַתָּה הֲצִילֵנוּ מִיַּד
 אֹיְבֵינוּ וְנַעֲבֹדְךָ: 11 וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוָה אֶת־יִרְבֵּעֵל וְאֶת־
 בְּדֹן וְאֶת־יִפְתָּח וְאֶת־שְׁמוּאֵל וַיִּצַּל אֶתְכֶם מִיַּד
 אֹיְבֵיכֶם מִסַּבִּיב וַתֵּשְׁבוּ בְּטָח: 12 וַתֵּרְאוּ כִּי נָחַשׁ מֶלֶךְ
 בְּנֵי־עַמּוֹן בָּא עֲלֵיכֶם וַתֹּאמְרוּ לִי לֹא כִּי־מֶלֶךְ יִמְלֹךְ
 עָלֵינוּ וַיְהוֶה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִלְּכֶכֶם: 13 וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה הַמֶּלֶךְ
 אֲשֶׁר בְּחַרְתֶּם אֲשֶׁר שְׁאַלְתֶּם וְהִנֵּה נָתַן יְהוָה
 עָלֵיכֶם מֶלֶךְ: 14 אִם־תִּירְאוּ אֶת־יְהוָה וְעַבַדְתֶּם אוֹתוֹ
 וּשְׁמַעְתֶּם בְּקוֹלוֹ וְלֹא תִמְרוּ אֶת־פִּי יְהוָה וְהִיתֶם
 גַּם־אַתֶּם וְגַם־הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר מֶלֶךְ עֲלֵיכֶם אַחֵר יְהוָה
 אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: 15 וְאִם־לֹא תִשְׁמְעוּ בְּקוֹל יְהוָה וּמְרִיתֶם
 אֶת־פִּי יְהוָה וְהִיתָה יַד־יְהוָה בְּכֶם וּבְאֲבֹתֵיכֶם:
 16 גַּם־עַתָּה הִתִּיצְבוּ וּרְאוּ אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַגָּדוֹל הַזֶּה
 אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה עֹשֶׂה לְעֵינֵיכֶם: 17 הֲלוֹא קִצְר־חֹטִיִּים
 הַיּוֹם אֶקְרָא אֶל־יְהוָה וַיִּתֵּן קִלּוֹת וּמָטָר וַדַּעוּ וּרְאוּ
 כִּי־רַעַתְכֶם רַבָּה אֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂיתֶם בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה לְשֹׂאֵל
 לָכֶם מֶלֶךְ: 18 וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל־יְהוָה וַיִּתֵּן יְהוָה
 קִלְת וּמָטָר בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וַיִּירָא כָּל־הָעָם מְאֹד
 אֶת־יְהוָה וְאֶת־שְׁמוּאֵל: 19 וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל־הָעָם אֶל־
 שְׁמוּאֵל הַתְּפִלָּל בְּעַד־עַבְדֶּיךָ אֶל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
 וְאֶל־נַמּוֹת כִּי־יִסְפְּנוּ עַל־כָּל־חַטָּאתֵינוּ רַעָה לְשֹׂאֵל

(without a king), they brought your fathers out of Egypt, and they settled them in this place.

9 "But they forgot God, their God, and He delivered them into the hand of Sisera—the commander of the army of Chatzor—into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the King of Mo'au, who waged war with them (without a king)."

10 "They cried out to God and said, 'We have sinned, for we have abandoned God, and have served the deities of Ba'al and Ashtaros! Now, save us from the hand of our enemies, and we will serve You!'" 11 And God sent Yeruba'al, Bedan, Yiftach, and Shmuel, and He saved you (without a king) from the hand of your surrounding enemies, and you lived in safety."

12 "When you saw that Nachash, the King of the Ammonite nation, came upon you, you said to me, 'We don't want (the judge to lead us to war, as in the days of our fathers, but we want) the king that rules over us (to lead us to war.' But you were foolish, because) God your God is your King (and He is the One Who saves you at war, not the judge or human king)."

13 "But now you have the king whom you have chosen, whom you have requested, and God has now (consented for him to be) appointed as a King over you.

14 If you will fear God, and serve Him, and listen to His voice, and do not rebel against God's commandments, both you and the King who reigns over you, then you will follow behind God your God (when He leads you at war). 15 But, if you will not listen to God's voice, and you rebel against God's commandments, God's hand will be against you and against your (kings who are like your) 'fathers.'"

16 "Now (if you are wondering why God agreed to appoint a king over you, being that it was an inappropriate request), stand and see this great thing which God will do before your eyes (which will prove that God grants people's requests even if they are inappropriate). 17 Is it not the wheat harvest today (when rain is destructive)? I will (nevertheless) call to God, and He will send thunder and rain! Then you will know and see that what you did, to ask for yourselves a King was (likewise) very bad in the eyes of God (even though He granted your request)."

18 Shmuel called to God, and God sent thunder and

rain on that day, and all the people feared God and Shmuel greatly.

19 All the people said to Shmuel, "Pray for your servants to God your God and let us not die! For we have added evil to all our sins by asking for a king for ourselves."

The people are urged to fear God

Shmuel's miraculous proof

The people beg for forgiveness

He will now pray to God for rain, which is extremely damaging at the time of the wheat harvest, and God will respond, despite the destructiveness of the request (16-17). When the rains swiftly follow, the

people beg Shmuel to pray for the rains to end, and his point is thus made emphatically (18-19). Shmuel uses the opportunity to stress, once again, the paramount importance of obedience to God (20-22).

²⁰ “Do not fear.” Shmuel said to the people. “You have (already) done all this evil, but do not turn away from following God. Serve God with all your heart (and your sin will be forgiven). ²¹ Do not turn away (from God), for then (you would be following) after empty things which cannot help or save (you), since they are empty. ²² For God will not abandon His people for the sake of His great Name, since (it would be a desecration of His Name if he abandoned you, because everyone knows that) God desired to make you a people for Himself.”

לְנוּ מִלֶּךְ: ד וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל־הָעָם אֶל־תִּיָּאָרוּ אֶתְּם עֲשִׂיתֶם אֵת כָּל־הָרָעָה הַזֹּאת אֲךָ אֶל־תִּסּוּרוּ מֵאַחֲרַי יְהוָה וְעַבַדְתֶּם אֶת־יְהוָה בְּכָל־לְבַבְכֶם: כ וְלֹא תִסּוּרוּ כִּי | אַחֲרַי הִתְּהוּ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִעִילוּ וְלֹא יִצִּילוּ כִּי־תִהְיוּ הִמָּה: כב כִּי לֹא־יִטַּשׁ יְהוָה אֶת־עַמּוֹ בְּעַבּוֹר שְׁמוֹ הַגָּדוֹל כִּי הוֹאִיל יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶתְכֶם לֹו לְעָם:

🌀 CHUKAS / חקת 🌀

(Judges 11:1-33)

Yiftach's life ^{11:1} **Y**iftach (the son) of Gilad was a mighty warrior. He was the son of a harlot (but it was nevertheless certain that) Gilad had fathered Yiftach.

² (Afterwards,) Gilad's wife bore him sons. His wife's sons grew up and drove Yiftach out. They said to him, “You will not inherit in our father's house because you are the son of another woman.”

³ Yiftach fled from his brothers and he settled in the land of Tov. Low class men gathered around Yiftach, and they went around with him.

Yiftach invited to lead the battle ⁴ A long time later, the people of Amon went to war with Israel. ⁵ What happened was, when the people of Amon were fighting with Israel the elders of Gilad went to take Yiftach from the land of Tov (back to Gilad).

יא * וַיִּפְתַּח הַגִּלְעָדִי הָיָה גִבּוֹר חָיִל וְהוּא בֶן־אִשָּׁה זוֹנָה וַיּוֹלֵד גִּלְעָד אֶת־יִפְתָּח: ב וַתֵּלֶד אִשְׁת־גִּלְעָד לוֹ בָנִים וַיְגַדְלוּ בְנֵי־הָאִשָּׁה וַיַּגְרִשׁוּ אֶת־יִפְתָּח וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ לֹא־תִנְחַל בְּבֵית־אֲבִינוּ כִּי בֶן־אִשָּׁה אַחֲרַת אֲתָה: ג וַיִּבְרַח יִפְתָּח מִפְּנֵי אֶחָיו וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּאֶרֶץ טוֹב וַיִּתְּלַקְטוּ אֵלָיו יִפְתָּח אֲנָשִׁים רִיקִים וַיֵּצְאוּ עִמּוֹ: ד וַיְהִי מִיָּמַיִם וַיִּלְחַמוּ בְנֵי־עַמּוֹן עִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל: ה וַיְהִי כִּאֲשֶׁר־נִלְחַמוּ בְנֵי־עַמּוֹן עִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּלְכּוּ זִקְנֵי גִלְעָד לְקַחַת אֶת־יִפְתָּח מֵאֶרֶץ טוֹב: ו וַיֹּאמְרוּ

19. מִלֶּךְ לְנוּ לְשָׂאֵל רָעָה לְשִׂאֵל לְנוּ מִלֶּךְ—We have added evil to all our sins by asking for a king for ourselves. At first glance it is difficult to understand why appointing a King should have been considered a sin, when the Torah in fact states that it is a *mitzvah* for the people to appoint a king over themselves (*Devarim 17:15ff.*)!

Chasidic thought explains that a Jewish king can perform one of two very different roles. At a basic level, the king is an authority figure who is responsible for maintaining law and order, and encouraging the people to fulfill their simple religious obligations. If, however, the community has developed to the point where it is self-sufficient in basic matters of morality and *mitzvah* observance, then the king is able to fulfill a much greater role—to act as a sage and mentor for the people, guiding them in areas in which they are not sufficiently gifted to chart on their own.

This latter role was the intention when introducing the *mitzvah* to appoint a king, that the people who are *already* observing the commandments properly should be elevated by the king to a higher level of commitment than they could have achieved unaided. But the people requested from Shmuel to have “a king to judge us *like the nations*”

(I Samuel 8:5), i.e. a basic authority figure and not an exalted mentor. Therefore, he rebuked them for having fallen so low, but he nevertheless assisted them in appointing such a king, as it was indeed necessary.

And this provides us with an important lesson for our times: That while our rabbinic mentors are primarily intended for more lofty spiritual guidance, it is nevertheless necessary for *every* person to maintain a close relationship with his or her mentor, even if this is required for nothing else than to encourage that person to perform basic religious obligations (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 24, p. 104ff.).

🌀 HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS CHUKAS

This *Haftarah* discusses the conquest of Sichon and Og, mentioned in the *Parsha*.

The *Haftarah* takes place in the eleventh century B.C.E., when the nation is beginning to repent for years of idol worship which had brought about Philistine and Amonite oppression. As the people remove their alien gods, the Amonites launch a further attack on Israel, prompting the military officers to offer the prize role of army chief to whoever is first to

לִּיפְתָח לָכֶּה וְהָיִיתָ לָנוּ לְקַצֵּין וְנִלְחַמָּה בְּבְנֵי עַמּוֹן:
 וַיֹּאמֶר יִפְתָּח לְזַקְנֵי גִלְעָד הֲלֹא אַתֶּם שִׁנְאַתֶּם
 אוֹתִי וְתִגְרְשׁוּנִי מִבֵּית אָבִי וּמִדֹּעַ בְּאַתֶּם אֵלַי לְעַתָּה
 כְּאִשֶּׁר צַר לָכֶם: 6 וַיֹּאמְרוּ זִקְנֵי גִלְעָד אֶל־יִפְתָּח
 לָכֵן עָתָה שָׁבְנוּ אֵלֶיךָ וְהִלַּכְתָּ עִמָּנוּ וְנִלְחַמְתָּ בְּבְנֵי
 עַמּוֹן וְהָיִיתָ לָנוּ לְרֹאשׁ לְכָל יְשִׁבֵי גִלְעָד: 7 וַיֹּאמֶר
 יִפְתָּח אֶל־זִקְנֵי גִלְעָד אִם־מְשִׁיבִים אַתֶּם אוֹתִי
 לְהִלָּחֵם בְּבְנֵי עַמּוֹן וְנָתַן יְהוָה אוֹתָם לְפָנָי אֲנֹכִי
 אֶהְיֶה לָכֶם לְרֹאשׁ: 8 וַיֹּאמְרוּ זִקְנֵי־גִלְעָד אֶל־יִפְתָּח
 יְהוָה יִהְיֶה שֹׁמֵעַ בֵּינוֹתֵינוּ אִם־לֹא כִּדְבָרְךָ כִּן
 נִעֲשֶׂה: 9 וַיֵּלֶךְ יִפְתָּח עִם־זִקְנֵי גִלְעָד וַיְשִׁימוּ הָעַם
 אוֹתוֹ עֲלֵיהֶם לְרֹאשׁ וּלְקַצֵּין וַיִּדְבֹּר יִפְתָּח אֶת־כָּל־
 דְּבָרָיו לְפָנָי יְהוָה בַּמִּצְפָּה: 10 וַיִּשְׁלַח יִפְתָּח מַלְאָכִים
 אֶל־מֶלֶךְ בְּנֵי־עַמּוֹן לֵאמֹר מַה־לִּי וְלָךְ כִּי־בָאת אֵלַי
 לְהִלָּחֵם בְּאַרְצִי: 11 וַיֹּאמֶר מֶלֶךְ בְּנֵי־עַמּוֹן אֶל־
 מַלְאָכָיו יִפְתָּח כִּי־לָקַח יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־אַרְצֵי בְּעִלּוֹתוֹ
 מִמִּצְרַיִם מֵאַרְנוֹן וְעַד־הַיַּבֵּק וְעַד־הַיַּרְדֵּן וְעַתָּה
 הִשִּׁיבָה אֶתְהֵן בְּשָׁלוֹם: 12 וַיֹּסֶף עוֹד יִפְתָּח וַיִּשְׁלַח
 מַלְאָכִים אֶל־מֶלֶךְ בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן: 13 וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ כֹּה אָמַר
 יִפְתָּח לֹא־לָקַח יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־אַרְץ מוֹאָב וְאֶת־אַרְץ
 בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן: 14 כִּי בְּעִלּוֹתֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם וַיֵּלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל
 בַּמִּדְבָּר עַד־יַם־סוּף וַיָּבֹא קַדְשָׁה: 15 וַיִּשְׁלַח יִשְׂרָאֵל
 מַלְאָכִים | אֶל־מֶלֶךְ אֲדוֹם | לֵאמֹר אֶעֱבְרָה־נָא
 בְּאַרְצְךָ וְלֹא שָׁמַע מֶלֶךְ אֲדוֹם וְגַם אֶל־מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב
 שָׁלַח וְלֹא אָבָה וַיֵּשֶׁב יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקַדְשׁ: 16 וַיֵּלֶךְ
 בַּמִּדְבָּר וַיָּסֹב אֶת־אַרְץ אֲדוֹם וְאֶת־אַרְץ מוֹאָב וַיָּבֹא
 מִמִּזְרַח־שָׁמֶשׁ לְאַרְץ מוֹאָב וַיַּחְנוּן בְּעֵבֶר אַרְנוֹן
 וְלֹא־בָאוּ בְּגִבּוֹל מוֹאָב כִּי אַרְנוֹן גְּבוּל מוֹאָב:
 17 וַיִּשְׁלַח יִשְׂרָאֵל מַלְאָכִים אֶל־סִיחוֹן מֶלֶךְ־הָאֱמֹרִי
 מֶלֶךְ חֶשְׁבוֹן וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל נִעֱבְרָה־נָא בְּאַרְצְךָ

⁶ They said to Yiftach, “Come and become our leader, and we’ll fight with the people of Amon.”

⁷ “But didn’t you despise me,” said Yiftach to the elders of Gilad, “and (help my brothers) drive me from my father’s house? (If you sincerely regretted what you did), why have you (only) come to me now when you’re in trouble (and not before)?”

⁸ “(Not at all!)” the elders of Gilad said to Yiftach. “(We hold you in great esteem and) therefore we’ve come (in person) to you now (and did not just send a messenger). Go with us, and fight with the people of Amon, and you will become our leader, over all the inhabitants of Gilad!”

⁹ Yiftach said to the elders of Gilad, “(That’s not what I call an expression of great esteem). If you bring me back to fight with the people of Amon, and God delivers them before me, I will (obviously be entitled to) be your head. (If you want to show me esteem appoint me as your leader now!)”

¹⁰ “God will bear witness between us if we do not do as you say,” the elders of Gilad said to Yiftach.

¹¹ Yiftach went with the elders of Gilad, and the people appointed him (immediately) as a leader and ruler over them. And Yiftach recited all his words (of prayer) before God in Mitzpah.

¹² Yiftach sent messengers to the King of Amon, saying, “What (hatred) is there (between) me and you, that you have come to me to fight in my land?”

¹³ The King of Amon said to Yiftach’s messengers, “Because Israel took away my land, when they came out of Egypt, from Arnon and up to the Yabok, and up to the Jordan. Now (please) restore them peacefully.”

¹⁴ Yiftach sent messengers again to the King of Amon and said to him, “This is what Yiftach says: Israel did not take the land of Mo’av and the land of Amon (from you)! ¹⁵ What happened was, when they came up from Egypt, and Israel went through the wilderness up to the Reed Sea, they came to Kadaish. ¹⁷ Israel sent messengers to the King of Edom saying, ‘Let me pass now through your land,’ but the King of Edom did not listen. He also sent (messengers) to the King of Mo’au, and he was (also) unwilling. So Israel stayed in Kadaish. ¹⁸ Then they went through the desert, and went around the land of Edom and the land of Mo’au. They came to the east of the land of Mo’au, and encamped on the other side of the Arnon, but they did not come within the border of Mo’au, for (the) Arnon (was) the border of Mo’au.”

¹⁹ “Then Israel sent messengers to Sichon, King of the

Yiftach’s conditional consent

Yiftach attempts appeasement

fight the Amonites and defeat them. The *Haftarah* describes the diplomatic process by which the mighty warrior Yiftach is lured to this challenge, in which he is ultimately triumphant.

The *Haftarah* opens with a brief account of Yiftach’s sad life, how he was born to a harlot and expelled from his home by his half-brothers and subsequently mixed with undignified company (11:1-3). The current

Amorites, the King of Cheshbon. Israel said to him, 'Please let us pass through your land up to my place (the Land of Canaan, which God has given me).'²⁰ But Sichon did not trust Israel to pass through his border. Sichon gathered all his people, they encamped in Yahtzah, and he fought with Israel.²¹ And God, the God of Israel, delivered Sichon and all his people into the hand of Israel. They defeated them, and Israel took possession of all the land of the Amorites, the inhabitants of that land.²² They took possession of the entire border of the Amorites, from the Arnon up to the Yabok, and from the desert up to the Jordan.

²³ "Now God, the God of Israel, has driven out the Amorites from before His people Israel, and you want to possess it?²⁴ Surely that which Kamosh, your god, gives you to possess, you may possess; and all that which God our God has driven out from before us, we will possess.

²⁵ "Now, are you any better than Balak the son of Tzipor, King of Mo'av? Did he ever strive with Israel, or did he ever fight against them?²⁶ When Israel lived in Cheshbon and its towns, and in Aro'air and its towns, and in all the cities that are along Arnon for three hundred years, why did you not recover them (from us) (during) that time?²⁷ I have not sinned against you, and you are wronging me by fighting against me. May God, the Judge, decide this day between the children of Israel and between the children of Amon."

²⁸ The King of Amon did not listen to the words of Yiftach which he had sent him.

²⁹ Yiftach had a spirit (of bravery) from God. He went through Gilad and Menasheh, he went through Mitzpeh of Gilad, and from Mitzpeh of Gilad he went to (fight with) the people of Amon (in their territory).

³⁰ Yiftach made a vow to God and said, "If You will deliver the people of Amon into my hand,³¹ then whatever comes forth, that comes out of the doors of my house towards me, when I return in peace from the people of Amon, will be for God, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering (if it is fit for a sacrifice)."

³² Yiftach went over to the people of Amon to fight against them, and God delivered them into his hand.

³³ He defeated them from Aro'air until you come to Minis, twenty cities, and up to Avail Keramim, a very great defeat. The children of Amon were then subordinated to the children of Israel.

עַד־מְקוֹמִי: ^כ וְלֹא־הָאֱמִינׁ סִיחֹן אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל עִבֵּר
בְּגִבְלוֹ וַיֵּאסֹף סִיחֹן אֶת־כָּל־עַמּוֹ וַיַּחֲנוּ בִּיהָצָה
וַיִּלָּחֶם עִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^{כא} וַיִּתֵּן יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל
אֶת־סִיחֹן וְאֶת־כָּל־עַמּוֹ בְּיַד יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיָּכּוּם וַיִּירֶשׁ
יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת כָּל־אֶרֶץ הָאֱמֹרִי יוֹשְׁבֵי הָאֶרֶץ הַהִיא:
^{כב} וַיִּירֶשׁוּ אֶת כָּל־גְּבוּל הָאֱמֹרִי מֵאֲרֹנוֹן וְעַד־הַיַּבֹּק
וּמִן־הַמִּדְבָּר וְעַד־הַיַּרְדֵּן: ^{כג} וַעֲתָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל הוֹרִישׁ אֶת־הָאֱמֹרִי מִפְּנֵי עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְאֵתָה תִירָשׁנוּ: ^{כד} הֲלֹא אֵת אֲשֶׁר יוֹרֶשְׁךָ כְּמוֹשׁ
אֱלֹהֶיךָ אוֹתוֹ תִירֶשׁ וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר הוֹרִישׁ יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִפְּנֵינוּ אוֹתוֹ נִירֶשׁ: ^{כה} וְעַתָּה הֵטוֹב טוֹב
אַתָּה מִבְּלֹק בֶּן־צַפּוֹר מִלֶּדֶ מוֹאָב הַרְּוֹב רַב עִם־
יִשְׂרָאֵל אִם־נִלְחָם נִלְחָם בָּם: ^{כו} בְּשַׁבַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל
בְּחֶשְׁבוֹן וּבְכַנּוֹתֶיהָ וּבְעַרְעוֹר וּבְכַנּוֹתֶיהָ וּבְכָל־
הָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר עַל־יְדֵי אֲרֹנוֹן שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה
וּמִדּוֹעַ לֹא־הִצַּלְתֶּם בְּעֵת הַהִיא: ^{כז} וְאַנְכִי לֹא־
חָטָאתִי לָךְ וְאֵתָה עֲשֵׂה אֵתִי רַעָה לְהִלָּחֶם בִּי
יִשְׁפֹּט יְהוָה הַשֹּׁפֵט הַיּוֹם בֵּין בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבֵין בְּנֵי
עַמּוֹן: ^{כח} וְלֹא שָׁמַע מִלֶּדֶ בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן אֶל־דְּבָרֵי יִפְתָּח
אֲשֶׁר שָׁלַח אֵלָיו: ^{כט} וַתְּהִי עַל־יִפְתָּח רוּחַ יְהוָה
וַיַּעֲבֵר אֶת־הַגִּלְעָד וְאֶת־מִנְשֵׁה וַיַּעֲבֵר אֶת־מִצְפֵּה
גִלְעָד וּמִמִּצְפֵּה גִלְעָד עִבֵּר בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן: ^ל וַיִּדַּר יִפְתָּח
גִּדְרָ לַיהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר אִם־נָתַן תִּתֵּן אֶת־בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן
בְּיָדִי: ^{לא} וְהָיָה הַיּוֹצֵא אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא מִדֹּלֶתִי בֵיתִי
לְקִרְאתִי בְּשׁוֹבֵי בְשָׁלוֹם מִבְּנֵי עַמּוֹן וְהָיָה לַיהוָה
וְהִעֲלִיתָהּ עוֹלָה: ^{לב} וַיַּעֲבֵר יִפְתָּח אֶל־בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן
לְהִלָּחֶם בָּם וַיִּתְּנֶם יְהוָה בְּיָדוֹ: ^{לד} וַיִּכֶם מֵעַרְוֵעַר
וְעַד־בּוֹאֶךָ מִנֵּית עֶשְׂרִים עֵיר וְעַד אָבֵל כְּרָמִים
מִכָּה גְדוֹלָה מְאֹד וַיִּכְנַעוּ בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן מִפְּנֵי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

story then begins, as the elders of Gilad invite Yiftach to the challenge of fighting the Amonites, offering the prize of military leadership if he

succeeds (4-6). After some negotiation, Yiftach accepts on the condition that he is made the leader immediately (7-11). A communication then

BALAK (& CHUKAS-BALAK) / בלק (וחקת-בלק)

(Micah 5:6 – 6:8)

ה וְהָיָה | שְׂאֲרֵית יַעֲקֹב בְּקֶרֶב עַמִּים רַבִּים כְּטַל
מֵאֵת יְהוָה כְּרִבִּיבִים עָלֶי-עֵשֶׂב אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יִקְוֶה
לְאִישׁ וְלֹא יִיחַל לְבְנֵי אָדָם; וְהָיָה שְׂאֲרֵית יַעֲקֹב
בְּגוֹזִים בְּקֶרֶב עַמִּים רַבִּים כְּאַרְיֵה בְּבִהְמוֹת לְעַר
כְּכַפִּיר בְּעֵדְרֵי-צֹאן אֲשֶׁר אֵם-עֶבֶר וְרֹמֶם וְטָרַף וְאִין
מִצִּיל: ח תִּרְם יָדָךְ עַל-צֹרִיךְ וְכָל-אֵיבֶיךָ יִכְרְתוּ:
ט וְהָיָה בַיּוֹם-הַהוּא נֶאֱמַר יְהוָה וְהִכְרַתִּי סוּסֶיךָ
מִקֶּרְבְּךָ וְהֵאבַדְתִּי מִרְכָּבֹתֶיךָ; וְהִכְרַתִּי עֲרֵי אַרְצְךָ
וְהִרְסֵתִי כָל-מִבְצָרֶיךָ; י וְהִכְרַתִּי כְשָׁפִים מִיָּדְךָ
וּמַעֲוֹנִים לֹא יִהְיוּ-לְךָ; יב וְהִכְרַתִּי פְסִילֶיךָ
וּמִצְבּוֹתֶיךָ מִקֶּרְבְּךָ וְלֹא-תִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה עוֹד לְמַעֲשֵׂה
יָדֶיךָ; יג וְנָתַתִּי אֶשְׁרִיךְ מִקֶּרְבְּךָ וְהִשְׁמַדְתִּי עֲרִיךָ;
יד וְעֲשִׂיתִי בְּאֶף וּבַחֲמָה נֶקֶם אֶת-הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא
שָׁמְעוּ: ו שְׁמַעוּ-נָא אֶת אֲשֶׁר-יְהוָה אָמַר קוֹם
רִיב אֶת-הַהָרִים וְתִשְׁמַעְנָה הַגְּבָעוֹת קוֹלְךָ; ז שְׁמַעוּ
הָרִים אֶת-רִיב יְהוָה וְהֵאֲתַנְּיִם מִסְדֵי אֶרֶץ כִּי רִיב

^{5:6} **T**he remnant of Ya'akov will be among (Gog and his) many nations, like dew sent by God (in reward for their trust in Him); like heavy rain upon vegetation that does not hope for any man and does not wait for the sons of men. Trust in God

⁷ The remnant of Ya'akov will be among the nations, amid many peoples (but due to their trust in God they will be) like a lion among the animals of the forest, like a young lion among the flocks of sheep, which, if it passes through, tramples and tears (into pieces), and no one can save anything. ⁸ Then your hand will be raised above your oppressors, and all your enemies will be destroyed.

⁹ Then, on that day—says God—I will eliminate your (reliance on) horses from you, and I will destroy your chariots (for you will rely only on God). ¹⁰ I will eliminate the (need for walled) cities of your land, and I will break down all your fortresses. ¹¹ I will eliminate sorcery from your hand (since you will see my Providence so clearly), and you will have no soothsayers. ¹² I will eliminate your graven images and your monuments from among you (for everybody will recognize the One God), and you will no longer prostrate yourselves to (idols) that you made by hand. ¹³ I will uproot your idolatrous trees from among you, and I will destroy your enemies. ¹⁴ In anger and fury I will take vengeance upon the nations as will never have been heard (of before). The day of Redemption

^{6:1} Listen now to what God says: “Raise (your voice, O prophet, and debate with Israel) so that (your voice) competes with the mountains, and the hills hear My voice. ² Listen, O mountains, to God’s dispute, and you mighty ones, the foundations of God’s dispute

follows between Yiftach and the King of Amon, in an attempt to make peace, but it fails (12-28). Vowing to return all the booty to God, Yiftach leads Israel’s army to battle and is victorious (29-33).

HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS BALAK

This *Haftarah* mentions how God confounded the plot of Balak (6:5), described in the *Parsha*. The *Haftarah* was said by the prophet Michah (Micah), a contemporary of Yeshayah, in the eighth century B.C.E. Both prophets spoke at length about the fate of Jerusalem during a period of increasing Assyrian power, though Yeshayah focused more on political and military events, whereas Michah’s emphasis lay on social issues, such as the corrupt influences of the wealthy elite.

The *Haftarah* opens with a forecast of the time immediately preceding the future redemption, when only a remnant of Israel remains, but they are strong due to their trust in God (5:6-8). When the day of redemption arrives, God will destroy Israel’s weapons and fortresses, for God Himself will provide all necessary protection, and all idolatry will be eliminated (9-13). He will also take vengeance on the wicked nations (14).

We then begin a new chapter, in which God calls upon the prophet to rouse the people to a spiritual reckoning (6:1-2). They are to remember

all the acts of Divine kindness—the Exodus, salvation from Balak’s plot and safe arrival in the Land (3-5). Michah then questions what the people must do to repent, perhaps some form of elaborate sacrificial worship? God, however, dismisses this suggestion with a simple response, “Just to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God” (6-8).

5:6. אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִקְוֶה לְאִישׁ וְלֹא יִיחַל לְבְנֵי אָדָם—That does not hope for any man and does not wait for the sons of men. While the most obvious similarity between the *Parsha* and *Haftarah* is below, in chap. 6, verse 5, it is difficult to accept that this connection is limited to just one verse. There must also be a connection between the *Parsha* and the opening of the *Haftarah*, which expresses the theme of the *Haftarah* as a whole. Furthermore, the *Haftarah* must share a connection with the conclusion of the *Parsha* (*Tosfos, Megilah 23a*).

In our case, there is a strong thematic connection between the opening of the *Haftarah*, the need to trust in God and not man, and the conclusion of the *Parsha*, the sin of Ba’al Pe’or.

Chasidic thought explains that the worship of Ba’al Pe’or was motivated by an over-prioritization of physical pleasure (see *Sparks of Chasidus*, end of *Parshas Balak*, page 1036). Likewise, the warning at the opening of the *Haftarah* not to trust in man teaches us that God alone is

the earth! For God has a dispute with His people, and with Israel He will contend.”

Acts of Divine kindness
 3 “My people! (Remember all the good) that have I done (for you), and how have I wearied you (to accept My yoke)? Testify against Me! 4 For I brought you up out of the land of Egypt, I redeemed you from the house of (your) slavery, and I sent you (great leaders), Moshe, Aharon, and Miriam. 5 My people! Remember now what Balak King of Mo’av devised, and what Bilam the son of Be’or answered him. From Shitim (where you sinned with Ba’al Pe’or, I nevertheless took you into the Land of Israel) to Gilgal (on the other side of the Jordan, so that) you may recognize the righteous deeds of God.”

Method of repentance
 6 (But the people will say): “With what will I come before God (to reply) and bow before the Supernal God? Will I come before Him with burnt-offerings, with yearling calves? 7 Will God be pleased with thousands of rams (as sacrifices), or with myriad streams of oil (poured on meal-offerings)? Will I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”

8 “He has told you, O man, what is good, and what God demands of you:

“Just to do justice, love kindness, and walk discreetly with your God (when observing His commands).”

לְיְהוָה עַם-עַמּוֹ וְעַם-יִשְׂרָאֵל יִתְוַכַּח: 3 עַמִּי מִדָּה עֲשִׂיתִי לָךְ וּמָה הֲלֵאתִיךָ עֲנֵה בִי: 4 בְּכִי הִעֲלֵתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וּמִבֵּית עַבְדִּים פְּדִיתִיךָ וְאֶשְׁלַח לְפָנֶיךָ אֶת-מֹשֶׁה אֶהְרֹן וּמִרְיָם: 5 עַמִּי זְכַרְנָא מִדֵּי-יַעֲזֹב בְּלֶקְךָ מֹאָב וּמָה-עָנָה אֹתוֹ בְּלָעָם בֶּן-בְּעוֹר מִן-הַשְּׂטִימִים עַד-הַגִּלְגָּל לְמַעַן יָדַעַת צְדָקוֹת יְהוָה: 6 בְּמָה אֶקְדָּם יְהוָה אֶכְפֹּר לְאֱלֹהֵי מְרוֹם הָאֲקַדְמָנוּ בְּעוֹלוֹת בַּעֲגָלִים בְּנֵי שָׁנָה: 7 הֲיִרְצֶה יְהוָה בְּאַלְפֵי אֵילִים בְּרִבְבּוֹת נְחִלֵי-שֶׁמֶן הָאֲתָן בְּכוֹרֵי פִשְׁעֵי פָרִי בְטָנִי חֲטָאת נַפְשִׁי: 8 הֲהִגִּיד לָךְ אֲדָם מִדֶּה-טוֹב וּמָה-יְהוָה דּוֹרֵשׁ מִמֶּךָ בְּכִי אִם-עֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד וְהִצַּנֵּעַ לְכַת עַם-אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

🕍 PINCHAS / פִּינְחָס 🕍

(I Kings 18:46-19:21)

If Parshas Pinchas occurs during the Three Weeks, the Haftarah for Parshas Matos [page 312] is read instead.

Eliyahu flees the storm
 18:46 **G**od’s hand was with Eliyahu (granting him strength). He fastened his belt (in order to run faster) and ran in front of Achav’s (chariot) until he reached Yizre’el.

יח 18 וַיֵּרֶד יְהוָה הֵיטֵה אֱלֹהֵי הוּא וַיִּשְׁנֵם מִתַּנּוּי וַיִּרְץ לְפָנָי אַחָאָב עַד-בַּאֲכָה יוֹרְעָאֵלָהּ: יט 19 וַיִּגַּד

responsible for what happens in this world and, despite what may appear to be the case, the confines of the physical world do not dictate in any way the outcome of an event. Thus, the message of both the *Parsha* and *Haftarah* is to perceive physicality as nothing more than an “axe in the hand of the chopper,” a tool by which the Divine will can be implemented in this world (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 293ff.).

6:5. מִה יַעֲזֹב בְּלֶקְךָ מֹאָב וּמָה עָנָה אֹתוֹ בְּלָעָם בֶּן בְּעוֹר—What Balak King of Mo’av devised, and what Bilam the son of Be’or answered him. This verse clarifies why the *Parsha* is named “Balak” and not “Bilam.” For, one would think that the *Parsha*’s name should reflect its primary content, and the vast majority of the *Parsha* is devoted to Bilam’s attempts to curse the Jewish people.

However, this verse makes clear that it was Balak who “devised” the plan and Bilam merely “answered” his call. The *Parsha* is thus named Balak, after the one who instigated and masterminded Bilam’s

(unsuccessful) activities (*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Balak* 5733; *Likutei Sichos* vol. 23, p. 171, note 57).

8. וְהִצַּנֵּעַ לְכַת עַם אֱלֹהֶיךָ—And walk discreetly with your God. This verse teaches that one must be careful not to be at all conspicuous about one’s piety, as the *Talmud* states, “A person should always be artful in piety” (*Brachos* 17a), i.e. one should act wisely so that one’s piety should not be noticed at all. Many of the early Chasidim concealed their true level of observance, and if it was subsequently discovered, they were genuinely distressed (*Hayom Yom*, 8th of *Tishrei*).

In our generation, however, there is a need to spread the wellsprings of Judaism (especially Jewish mysticism) to as many people as possible, and it is impossible to do such a task “discreetly.” Rather, we need to follow the advice of *Rashba*, who wrote that, “It is a *mitzvah* to publicize those who perform a *mitzvah*” (*Responsa* 1:581). Furthermore, even in one’s own religious life, a sincere effort to be discreet about one’s piety is likely

אֶחָאֵב לְאִיזֶבֶל אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֱלֹהֵיוּ וְאֵת
כָּל־אֲשֶׁר הִרְגָה אֶת־כָּל־הַנְּבִיאִים בַּחֶרֶב: 2 וְתִשְׁלַח
אִיזֶבֶל מַלְאָךְ אֶל־אֱלֹהֵיוּ לֵאמֹר כֹּה־יַעֲשׂוּן אֱלֹהִים
וְכֹה יוֹסִפוּן כִּי־כַעַת מֵחֵר אֲשִׁים אֶת־נַפְשֶׁךָ כִּנְפֹשׁ
אֶחָד מֵהֶם: 3 וַיֵּרָא וַיִּקָּם וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־נַפְשׁוֹ וַיָּבֵא בְּאֵר
שֶׁבַע אֲשֶׁר לַיהוּדָה וַיֵּנֶה אֶת־נַעְרוֹ שָׁם: 4 וְהוּא־
הָלַךְ בַּמִּדְבָּר הַדֶּרֶךְ יוֹם וַיָּבֵא וַיֵּשֶׁב תַּחַת רֶתֶם אֶחָד
וְאֵהָת בֵּן וַיִּשְׁאַל אֶת־נַפְשׁוֹ לָמוֹת וַיֹּאמֶר א רַב עֲתָה
יְהוּהָ קַח נַפְשִׁי כִּי לֹא־טוֹב אֲנֹכִי מֵאֲבֹתַי: 5 וַיִּשְׁכַּב
וַיֵּישָׁן תַּחַת רֶתֶם אֶחָד וְהִנֵּה־זֶה מִלְּאֶךְ נֹגַע בּוֹ
וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ קוּם אֲכֹל: 6 וַיִּפֹּט וְהִנֵּה מֵרָאשֵׁיתוֹ עֹנֵת
רֶצָפִים וְצַפְחַת מַיִם וַיֹּאכַל וַיִּשֶׁת וַיֵּשֶׁב וַיִּשְׁכַּב:
וַיִּשָׁב מִלְּאֶךְ יְהוּהָ שְׁנֵית וַיִּנְעֵ־בּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר קוּם אֲכֹל
כִּי רַב מִמֶּךָ הַדֶּרֶךְ: 7 וַיִּקָּם וַיֹּאכַל וַיִּשְׁתָּה וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּכַח א
הָאֲכִילָה הֵיחָא אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְאַרְבָּעִים לַיְלָה עַד
הָר הָאֱלֹהִים חֶרֶב: 8 וַיָּבֵא־שָׁם אֶל־הַמַּעְרָה וַיֵּלֶן
שָׁם וְהִנֵּה דְבַר־יְהוּהָ אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מִה־לָּךְ פֹּה

^{19:1} Achav told Izevel everything that Eliyahu had done (bringing down fire and rain), how he had killed all of the prophets (of Ba'al) by the sword. ² Izevel sent a messenger to Eliyahu saying, "May the gods (of Ba'al) do the same to you (as you did to their prophets) and may they do more so. At this time tomorrow, I will do to you what you did to them!"

Izevel's death threat

³ He saw (that he was in danger), so he got going and fled for his life.

He came to Be'er Sheva, which was under (the rule of) Yehudah (and not Achav), and he left his servant there. ⁴ He then went into the desert, a distance of one day's travel. He came and sat under a retama bush (for shade), and he wanted to die. He said, "God, (a life of pain like I'm in) now is too much! Take my soul, as I am no better than my fathers."

Eliyahu wants to die

⁵ He lay down and slept underneath the retama bush. Suddenly, an angel touched him (to wake him up) and said to him, "Get up and eat!" ⁶ He gazed around, and—look!—by his head there was (what appeared to be) a grilled cake, and a flask of water. He ate and drank, and then lay back down.

An angel appears

⁷ The angel of God came back to him again. It touched him and said, "Get up and eat, as the journey (you wish to undertake) is too far (for you to go without food)."

⁸ He got up, ate and drank. Then (miraculously), with the energy from this meal, he went forty days and forty nights (without any more food) up to the mountain of

Eliyahu flees to Mount Sinai

God in Choraiu. ⁹ He came there to the (same) cave (where Moshe had stood), and he slept over there.

Suddenly, the word of God came to him. "Why are you here, Eliyahu?" (God) said to him.

to be counterproductive since, knowing that one's pious deeds are hidden from the eyes of others, the *yetzer hara* (evil inclination) is more likely to persuade a person to stop being pious altogether. If, on the other hand, others know of one's righteous acts, it is much more difficult to stop doing them. "Walking discreetly" is a very worthy path, but not if it is at the expense of increased activity (*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Eikev* 5748).

HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS PINCHAS

This *Haftarah* speaks of Eliyahu, who shared the same soul as Pinchas and zealously avenged God, like Pinchas. Chasidic thought highlights a further connection, that Pinchas and Eliyahu both brought Jewish people to *teshuvah* (repentance; return). When Pinchas killed Zimri and Kazby, "Everyone saw that he did not kill them needlessly" (*Rashi* to *Bamidbar* 25:8), and thus were motivated to *teshuvah*. Likewise, Eliyahu led the people, who were wavering between the service of God and idol worship, to repent, declaring, "God is the Almighty God! God is the Almighty God!" (I Kings 18:39; see page 1420—*Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 343).

The events in the *Haftarah* occurred shortly after the victory over the prophets of Ba'al at Mount Carmel (chronicled in the *Haftarah* of *Parshas Ki Sisa*), who were subsequently executed by Eliyahu at the Kishon Brook. Eliyahu then informed King Achav that the prolonged drought is about to end, advising him to run away quickly from the impending

storm. As the *Haftarah* begins, Eliyahu too is fleeing from the storm, and passes Achav's chariot (18:46). When Achav's wife, Izevel, is informed that the Ba'al prophets were slaughtered, she sends a death threat to Eliyahu, who promptly flees for his life (19:1-3). He reaches the desert and, in a moment of exasperation, asks God to end his life (4). An angel appears, offering food and drink which miraculously provide sufficient energy for the next forty days. Eliyahu camps at Mount Sinai, in the same cave where Moshe had stood (5-9). God speaks to Eliyahu and a series of astonishing angelic revelations follow, culminating with a "subtle silent voice," heralding the Divine Presence itself (9-12). God then instructs Eliyahu to return and make a number of sovereign appointments, and God names Elisha as Eliyahu's successor. These allies will assist Eliyahu in the war against Ba'al (13-18). The *Haftarah* concludes as Eliyahu meets Elisha and recruits him as his servant (19-21).

8 וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּכַח הָאֲכִילָה הֵיחָא אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְאַרְבָּעִים לַיְלָה.—*With the energy from this meal, he went forty days and forty nights.* Unlike Moshe, who did not eat a special meal before fasting for forty days on the mountain, Eliyahu's forty-day sustenance came from a "grilled cake." Chasidic thought teaches that our true sustenance comes not from the physical matter of the food that we eat, but from sparks of Godly energy which are found in the food. Thus, the reason why Eliyahu was able to last forty days on just one meal was because that "grilled cake" happened

¹⁰ He said, “I have zealously avenged God, the God of Hosts (and killed the prophets of Ba’al). For the children of Israel have abandoned Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets by the sword. I’m the only one left, and they want to take my life.”

Divine revelation ¹¹ (God) said, “Go out (of the cave) and stand at the mountain, before God. God’s (presence) is going to pass.” There was a great and strong (host) of (angels of) wind, splitting mountains and shattering boulders before God. “God does not come with (angels of) wind,” (thought Eliyahu).

After the (angels of) wind came (angels of) thunder. “God does not come with (angels of) thunder,” (thought Eliyahu).

¹² After the (angels of) thunder came (angels of) fire. “God does not come with (angels of) fire,” (thought Eliyahu).

The Divine Presence ¹³ After the (angels of) fire came a subtle, silent voice. What happened was, when Eliyahu heard this (silent voice) he covered his face with his cloak (because he realized the Divine presence was there).

Then he went out (of the cave) and stood at the entrance to the cave. A voice came to him and said, “What are you (still) doing here, Eliyahu?”

¹⁴ He said, “I have zealously avenged God, the God of Hosts (and killed the prophets of Ba’al. Please help me for Your sake!) For the children of Israel have abandoned Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets by the sword. I’m the only one left, and they want to take my life.”

New appointments ¹⁵ God said to him, “Go back on your way to the Damascus desert (through which you came). When you come (there), appoint Chaza’ail to be the King of Aram, ¹⁶ appoint Yehu the son of Nimshi as King of Israel, and appoint Elisha the son of Shafat from Aivel-Mecholah to be prophet in your place (after you depart this world).

¹⁷ What will happen is, (they will be your agents to avenge the worshipers of Ba’al on your behalf): Yehu will kill those who escape the sword of Chaza’ail, and Elisha will kill those who escape the sword of Yehu. ¹⁸ I will leave over (only) seven thousand in Israel—all the knees that did not kneel to the Ba’al and every mouth that did not kiss it.”

אֱלֹהֵינוּ: וַיֹּאמֶר קָנָא קָנֵאתִי לַיהוָה | אֱלֹהֵי עֲבָאוֹת
 כִּי־עָזְבוּ בְרִיתְךָ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־מִזְבְּחֶיךָ הַרְסוּ
 וְאֶת־נְבִיאֶיךָ הֲרִגוּ בַחֶרֶב וְאֹתָר אֲנִי לְבִדִּי וַיִּבְקְשׁוּ
 אֶת־נַפְשִׁי לְקַחְתָּהּ: וַיֹּאמֶר צֵא וְעַמְדַת בְּהָר לְפָנַי
 יְהוָה וְהִנֵּה יְהוָה עֹבֵר וְרוּחַ גְּדוּלָה וְחֹזֶק מִפְּרֻק
 הָרִים וּמִשִּׁבְר סָלְעִים לְפָנַי יְהוָה לֹא כְרוּחַ יְהוָה
 וְאַחַר הָרוּחַ זָעַשׁ לֹא בָרַעַשׁ יְהוָה: יב וְאַחַר הָרַעַשׁ
 אֵשׁ לֹא בָאֵשׁ יְהוָה וְאַחַר הָאֵשׁ קוֹל דְּמָמָה דַּקָּה:
 יג וַיְהִי | כִּשְׂמַע אֱלֹהֵינוּ וַיִּלֵּט פָּנָיו בְּאַדְרָתוֹ וַיֵּצֵא
 וַיַּעֲמֵד פֶּתַח הַמַּעְרָה וְהִנֵּה אֱלֹוֹ קוֹל וַיֹּאמֶר מַה־לָּךְ
 כֹּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ: יד וַיֹּאמֶר קָנָא קָנֵאתִי לַיהוָה | אֱלֹהֵי
 עֲבָאוֹת כִּי־עָזְבוּ בְרִיתְךָ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־מִזְבְּחֶיךָ
 הַרְסוּ וְאֶת־נְבִיאֶיךָ הֲרִגוּ בַחֶרֶב וְאֹתָר אֲנִי לְבִדִּי
 וַיִּבְקְשׁוּ אֶת־נַפְשִׁי לְקַחְתָּהּ: טו וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹוֹ לָךְ
 שׁוּב לְדַרְפֶּךָ מִדְּבָרָה דַּמְשֶׁק וּבֵאתָ וּמִשְׁחַת
 אֶת־חֹזַאֵל לְמֶלֶךְ עַל־אַרְם: טז וְאַתָּה יְהוּא בֶן־נִמְשִׁי
 תִּמְשַׁח לְמֶלֶךְ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת־אֱלִישָׁע בֶּן־שַׁפְטַן
 מֵאַבְל מְחֹלָה תִּמְשַׁח לְנָבִיא תַּחֲתֶיךָ: יז וְהִיָּה
 הַנִּמְלָט מִחֶרֶב חֹזַאֵל יָמִית יְהוּא וְהַנִּמְלָט מִחֶרֶב
 יְהוּא יָמִית אֱלִישָׁע: יח וְהִשְׁאֲרֵתִי בְיִשְׂרָאֵל שִׁבְעַת
 אֲלָפִים כָּל־הַבְּרָפִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־כָרְעוּ לְבָעַל וְכָל־

to contain an extraordinarily large spark. Moshe, on the other hand, was not sustained for forty days from any sparks he had consumed prior to ascending the mountain. His sustenance came from the Divine radiation within the Torah which he was learning at that time (The Rebbe Rashab—Hemshech Ayin Beis, vol. 2, p. 1095).

11-12. אֵשׁ...רַעַשׁ...רוּחַ—(Angels of) wind...thunder...fire. The stages of revelation which Eliyahu experienced mirrors the structure of our daily morning prayer service. The “verses of praise” which focus on the wonders of creation correspond to “wind,” because the physical world was formed by the “breath” of God. This is followed by “thunder,” the first blessing before reciting the *Shema*, which relates the tumultuous and

ecstatic motions of the angels; and the *Shema* itself is a culmination of all these meditations, where the “fiery” love of God within the Jewish heart is unleashed. The final rung of the ladder is “a subtle, silent voice,” the silent standing prayer, at which point one stands before the Divine Presence (The Rebbe Rashab—Hemshech Ayin Beis, vol. 2, p. 705, 822).

12. קוֹל דְּמָמָה דַּקָּה—A subtle, silent voice. Some people think that their task in life is to transform the entire world in one swoop. Their talents are simply too precious to be spent on the minor details of other people’s lives. This applies especially to Rabbis and communal leaders, some of whom perceive their exclusive contribution to Jewish life as speeches to the congregation, clarification of obscure minutiae of Jewish

to be a prophet), and before you emerged from the womb, I had sanctified you; I had appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”

⁶ I said, “Woe! God Almighty! I really don’t know how to speak, as I am young.”

⁷ God said to me, “Don’t say, ‘I’m young,’ (because that is not a problem), for you will go wherever I send you, you will (only have to) speak whatever I command you. ⁸ Do not be afraid (that you might mislead the people to whom you will speak prophecy), for I am with you to save you,” says God.

⁹ (In my prophetic vision I saw) God stretch out His hand and touch my mouth. God said to me, “Now I have placed My words into your mouth. ¹⁰ See, I have appointed you this day over the nations and over the kingdoms, to uproot and to crush, and to destroy and to demolish, to build and to plant.”

First Vision: almond tree ¹¹ The word of God came to me, saying, “What do you see, Yirmiyahu, (in your vision)?”

“I see a stick from an almond tree,” I said.

¹² “You have seen well,” God said to me. “(The almond, which grows quickly, is a sign) that I will put My word into action speedily.”

Second Vision: boiling pot ¹³ The word of God came to me a second time, saying, “What do you see?”

“I see a boiling pot,” I said. “It’s bubbling toward the north.”

¹⁴ God said to me, “From (Babylon, which is in) the north trouble will break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land (and they will gather in Jerusalem for protection, like pieces of meat in a pot, only to be boiled by the enemy). ¹⁵ For, behold, I am

הַקֹּדֶשׁ שֶׁתִּיָּדָה נִבְיָא לְגוֹיִם נִתְּתִיָּדָה: וַאֲמַר אֶתְּהִי אֲדֹנָי
יְהוָה הִנֵּה לֹא יָדַעְתִּי דְבַר כִּי־נָעַר אָנֹכִי: וַיֹּאמֶר
יְהוָה אֵלָי אֶל־תֹּאמַר נָעַר אָנֹכִי כִּי עַל־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר
אֲשַׁלְּחֶךָ תֵּלֶךְ וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר אֲעִנֶךָ תִּדְבֹּר: ה אֶל־
תִּירָא מִפְּנֵיהֶם כִּי־אֲתָהּ אֲנִי לְהַעֲלֶךָ נְאֻם־יְהוָה:
וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוָה אֶת־יָדוֹ וַיַּגַּע עַל־פִּי וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלָי
הִנֵּה נִתְּתִי דְבָרִי בְּפִיךָ: וְרָאָה הַפִּקֻּדְתִּיךָ הַיּוֹם
הַזֶּה עַל־הַגּוֹיִם וְעַל־הַמַּמְלָכוֹת לְנִתּוֹשׁ וּלְנִתּוּץ
וּלְהֶאֱבִיד וּלְהָרוֹס לְבָנוֹת וּלְנִשׁוֹעַ: וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה
אֵלָי לֵאמֹר מָה־אֲתָהּ רֹאָה יִרְמְיָהוּ וַאֲמַר מִקַּל
שָׂקָד אָנִי רֹאָה: י וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלָי הִיטַבְתָּ לְרֵאֻת
כִּי־שָׂקָד אָנִי עַל־דְּבָרִי לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ: י וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלָי
שְׁנַיִת לֵאמֹר מָה אֲתָהּ רֹאָה וַאֲמַר סִיר נִפְוֹת
אָנִי רֹאָה וּפְגָוִי מִפְּנֵי צְפוֹנָה: י וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלָי
מִצְפוֹן תִּפְתָּח הַרְרָעָה עַל כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ: י וַיְהִי

the exile theme (a “Haftarah of Punishment”). How does the opening of the *Haftarah*, which describes Yirmiyahu’s lineage and appointment, fit with this theme? The *Midrash* states that Yirmiyahu stemmed originally from a non-Jewish lineage (he was a descendant of Rachav), for which he suffered much ridicule. For this reason, our verse stresses the better threads of his lineage, “the son of Chizkiyah, one of the priests” (*Pesikta deRav Kahana* ch. 13). His public role as a prophet was extremely challenging too, because he lived in times of hardship and spiritual concealment for the Jewish people—as the *Talmud* notes, “Yirmiyahu speaks throughout of destruction” (*Bava Basra* 14b). Clearly, to lift both himself and his nation out of such deplorable circumstances, Yirmiyahu could not merely bring illumination to the people, like many of the other prophets; he was forced to inspire transformation. His appointment as a prophet, when God granted him with these powers, is thus a fitting introduction to the Three Weeks, during which time God grants all His people with the necessary powers to transform this bitter exile into a time of redemption (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 342ff.).

5-10. בְּטֶרֶם אֶצְרָךְ בְּבֶטֶן וְגו'.—Before I had formed you in the womb etc. How is a person to withstand the negative influences of the secular world around him? Says God: “Before I had formed you in the womb, I knew you”—the Jewish soul predates, and is thus higher than the world. So your spiritual side is more powerful than any worldly obstacle you will encounter. “And before you emerged from the womb, I had sanctified you”—and furthermore, while in the womb, you were prepared for this

task by learning the entire Torah (*Nidah* 30b). “I had appointed you as a prophet to the nations”—So, do not be insular! Do not escape interaction with the outside world and live a ghettoized lifestyle. Be a light unto the nations, because you have the resilience to withstand the temptations of the world and its corrupting influences.

But the Jew responds to God, “I really don’t know how to speak, as I am young” (v. 6)—It is true that my soul is holy and that I still retain the Torah that I learned subconsciously, but how does that help me to be resilient to the world in day-to-day life?

God replies: “Don’t say, ‘I’m young,’ for you will go wherever I send you...Do not be afraid for I am with you” (v. 7-8)—God will help to ensure that your inner resilience takes outward expression. God is with you “to uproot and to crush, and to destroy and to demolish” (v. 10), in the path of turning away from evil; and, “to build and to plant” (*ibid.*), in the path of doing good. So engage with the world and sanctify it. Do not be afraid! (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, pp. 349-50).

12. כִּי שָׂקָד אָנִי עַל דְּבָרִי לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ.—(The almond, which grows quickly, is a sign) that I will put My word into action speedily. In his commentary to this verse, Rashi writes, “From its initial budding to its full ripening, this almond takes 21 days, the same number of days that are between the 17th of Tamuz, when the city walls were breached, and the 9th of Av, when the Temple was burned.”

According to Jewish custom, however, we do not refer to this period as the “Twenty-One Days” but as the “Three Weeks.” The Twenty-One Days

הַנְּנִי קָרָא לְכָל־מִשְׁפְּחוֹת מַמְלָכוֹת צְפוֹנָה
 נְאֻם־יְהוָה וּבָאוּ וּנְתַנּוּ אִישׁ כִּסְאוֹ פֶתַח | שְׁעָרֵי
 יְרוּשָׁלַם וְעַל כָּל־חֻמּוֹתֶיהָ סָבִיב וְעַל כָּל־עָרֵי
 יְהוּדָה: ^{טו} וְדִבַּרְתִּי מִשְׁפָּטִי אוֹתָם עַל כָּל־רַעְתָּם
 אֲשֶׁר עָזְבוּנִי וַיִּקְטְרוּ לְאֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ
 לְמַעֲשֵׂי יָדֵיהֶם: ^{טז} וְאַתָּה תֵאָזֵר מִתְנִיד וּקְמַת וְדִבַּרְתָּ
 אֲלֵיהֶם אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי אֹמֵר אֶל־תַּחַת
 מִפְּנֵיהֶם פֶּן־אֲחַתְּךָ לְפָנֵיהֶם: ^{יז} וְאֲנִי הִנֵּה נֹתֵתִיךָ
 הַיּוֹם לְעִיר מְבֻצָּר וּלְעַמּוּד בְּרִזָּל וּלְחֻמוֹת נְהַשֶּׁת
 עַל־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ לְמַלְכֵי יְהוּדָה לְשָׂרֵיהָ לְכַהֲנֵיהָ
 וּלְעַם הָאָרֶץ: ^{יח} וְנִלְחַמוּ אֵלַיךָ וְלֹא־יִוָּכְלוּ לָךְ
 כִּי־אַתָּה אֲנִי נְאֻם־יְהוָה לְהַצִּילְךָ: ^{יט} וַיְהִי
 דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר: ^כ הֲלֹךְ וּקְרֵאתָ בְּאָזְנֵי
 יְרוּשָׁלַם לֵאמֹר כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה זְכַרְתִּי לָךְ חֶסֶד
 נְעוּרַיִךְ אֲהַבַת כְּלוּלַתִּיךָ לְכַתֹּךְ אַחֲרַי בַּמִּדְבָּר
 בְּאָרְצָן לֹא זְרוּעָה: ^{כא} קִדְשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל לִיהוָה רֵאשִׁית
 תְּבוּאָתָה כָּל־אֲכָלֶיךָ יִאֲשְׁמוּ רָעָה תָּבֵא אֲלֵיהֶם
 נְאֻם־יְהוָה:

calling (to the hearts of) all the families of the kingdoms of the north (to come to Jerusalem),” says God. “They will come, and each person will place his chair at the entrance gates of Jerusalem and against all its walls around and against all the cities of Yehudah. ¹⁶ Then, I will utter My judgments against them for all their evil, that they left Me and offered up burnt-offerings to other gods and that they prostrated themselves to the work of their hands.”

¹⁷ “You should (hurry up), fasten your belt and get going. Repeat to them everything that I command you. Don’t fear them (and withhold any prophecy), for then I will break you (making you vulnerable) for them (to hurt you).”

¹⁸ I have hereby made you (strong) today (like) a fortified city and an iron pillar, (like) copper walls against the entire land, against the Kings of Yehudah, its princes, its priests, and (all) the people of the land. ¹⁹ They will fight against you but they will not prevail against you, for I am with you,” says God, “to save you.”

Promise of success

²¹ The word of God came to me, saying, ² “Go and call out into the ears of Jerusalem, saying, ‘This is what God said, “I remember, for your sake, the (act of) lovingkindness (that you did for Me) in your youth (when I chose you as my people); the love (you had for Me) in the days when you were a bride (at Mount Sinai. I remember your faith), when you followed Me into the desert, to an infertile land. ³ (Even in exile) Israel is holy to God, the choicest of His grain. Anyone who devours him will be guilty, evil will befall them,” says God.

God’s love for Israel

מסעי (ומטות-מסעי) / MASEI (& MATOS-MASEI)

(Jeremiah 2:4-28; 3:4; 4:1-2)

Most communities, including Chabad, read this *Haftarah* even if Rosh Chodesh occurs on Shabbos.

ב - שְׁמַעוּ דְבַר־יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם יַעֲקֹב וְכָל־מִשְׁפְּחוֹת
 בַּיּוֹם יִשְׂרָאֵל: ^ה כֹּה | אָמַר יְהוָה מִה־מְצָאוּ
 אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם בִּי עֹל כִּי רָחֲקוּ מֵעָלַי וַיִּלְכוּ אַחֲרַי הַהֶבֶל
 וַיְהַבְּלוּ: ^ו וְלֹא אָמְרוּ אֵינָהּ יְהוָה הַמַּעֲלָה אֶתְנוּ

^{2:4} Listen to the word of God, O house of Ya’akov, and all the families of the house of Israel. ⁵ This is what God says:

“What wrong did your fathers find in Me, that they distanced themselves from Me, and they went after (gods of) emptiness, and became empty themselves? ⁶ They did not (repent and) say, ‘Where is God, Who

Ancestors abandoned God

have only a negative connotation, since they refer to the time of destruction, but the number three is positive, for it hints to the third Temple that will be built at the end of the exile. Therefore, by Divine Providence, this more positive name—the Three Weeks—was chosen (*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Pinchas* 5748).

HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS MASEI

This is the second of three “Haftaros of Punishment” which are read between the 17th of *Tamuz* and the 9th of *Av*, when we mourn the destruction of the Holy Temple.

brought us up from the land of Egypt, Who led us in the desert (providing all our needs), in a desolate land of pits, in a land of waste and gloom, in a land where no man had passed and where no man had settled?’⁷ (Didn’t I bring you to a vegetative land to eat of its produce and its goodness? But you came and contaminated My land, and made My heritage an abomination.

⁸ “The priests (who were supposed to teach truth) did not (teach the people to) say, ‘Where is God? (Why have you abandoned Him?)’ Those who hold onto the Torah did not (want to) know Me, and the (kings who are) shepherds (of the people) rebelled against Me, and the prophets prophesied (in the name of the deity) Ba’al and followed futility.⁹ “Therefore, I will still dispute with you,” says God, “and I will contend with your children’s children.

¹⁰ Go to the isles of the Kitites and see! Send (messengers) to Kedar and ponder deeply! Observe (the idolaters there to see) if there was ever anything like this, ¹¹ where a nation exchanged a god (for another)—and their (gods) are not (even real) gods! Yet My nation exchanged My glory for futility.

Abandoned God ¹² “Oh heavens, be devastated about this and storm; become very desolate,” says God. ¹³ “For My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, the Spring of living waters, (and furthermore this was only) to dig for themselves wells, broken cisterns that do not hold water.

Punishments ¹⁴ “Is Israel (left uncared for like) a slave? Is he (ignored like) a home-born slave? (So) why has he become a prey? ¹⁵ Young lions roar over him, they have raised their voices. They have made his land desolate; his cities were wiped out without an inhabitant. ¹⁶ Even descendants of Nof and Tachpanchais (whom you trust) will break the crown of your head.”

¹⁷ “Is this not brought upon you by abandoning God your God at the time He was leading you on the (right) path? ¹⁸ Now, why are you taking the path of (relying on) Egypt(ian assistance), drinking the water of the Shichor? Why do you follow the path of Assyria(n assistance), drinking the water of the (Euphrates) river (when the only source of true assistance is God)? ¹⁹ Your evil will chastise you, and you will be rebuked for (following the) thoughts (of your heart). You will know and see that abandoning God your God is evil and bitter.

מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם הַמּוֹלִיד אֶתְנֹנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר בְּאֶרֶץ עֲרָבָה
וְשׁוּחָה בְּאֶרֶץ צִיָּה וְצִלְמוֹת בְּאֶרֶץ לֹא-עֵבֶר בָּהּ
אִישׁ וְלֹא-יָשֵׁב אָדָם שָׁם: 7 וַאֲבִיא אֶתְכֶם אֶל-אֶרֶץ
הַכְּרָמָל לֵאכֹל פְּרִיָּה וְטוֹבָה וְתִבְאוּ וְתִטְמְאוּ
אֶת-אֲרָצִי וְנַחֲלָתִי שְׁמַתֶּם לְתוֹעֵבָה: 8 הַכֹּהֲנִים לֹא
אָמְרוּ אִיָּהּ יְהוָה וְתַפְשִׁי הַתּוֹרָה לֹא יִדְעוּנִי וְהָרַעִים
פָּשְׁעוּ בִּי וְהִנְבִּיאִים נִבְּאוּ בַּפֶּעַל וְאַחֲרַי לֹא-יֹעֲלוּ
הֶלְכוּ: 9 לָכֵן עַד אָרִיב אֶתְכֶם נְאֻם-יְהוָה וְאֶת-בְּנֵי
בְּנֵיכֶם אָרִיב: 10 כִּי עִבְדוּ אֵינִי כְּתִיִּים וְרָאוּ וְקָדְר
שְׁלַחוּ וְהִתְבּוֹנְנוּ מְאֹד וְרָאוּ הֵן הִיְתָה כְּזֹאת:
11 הֲהִימִיר גּוֹי אֱלֹהִים וְהִמָּה לֹא אֱלֹהִים וְעַמִּי הַמִּיר
כְּבוֹדוֹ בְּלֹא יוֹעִיל: 12 שָׁמוּ שָׁמַיִם עַל-זֹאת וְשָׁעְרוּ
חֲרָבוּ מְאֹד נְאֻם-יְהוָה: 13 כִּי-שִׁתִּים רָעוֹת עָשָׂה
עַמִּי אֹתִי עֲזָבוּ מְקוֹר אֶמֶס תַּיִם לְהִלָּב לָהֶם
בְּאֲרוֹת בְּאֲרֹת נִשְׁבְּרִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יִכְלוּ הַמַּיִם:
14 הַעֲבֹד יִשְׂרָאֵל אִם-יִלְדֵי בֵּית הוּא מְדוּעַ הִיָּה לָבוֹ:
15 עָלוּ וְיִשְׁאַנּוּ כְּפָרִים נִתְּנוּ קוֹלָם וַיִּשְׁתִּיתוּ אֶרְצוֹ
לְשִׁמָּה עָרְיוּ נִצְתּוּ [נִצְתָה כ'] מִבְּלִי יֹשֵׁב: 16 גַם-בְּנֵי-נֹף
וְתַחֲפַנְחַס [וְתַחֲפַנְס כ'] יִרְעוּ קָדְקֹד: 17 הֲלוֹא-זֹאת
תַּעֲשֶׂה לְךָ עֲזָבְךָ אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּעַת מוֹלִיבְךָ
בְּדָרְךָ: 18 וְעַתָּה מִה-לָּךְ לְדָרְךָ מִצְרַיִם לְשִׁתוֹת מִי
שְׁחֹר וּמִה-לָּךְ לְדָרְךָ אֲשׁוּר לְשִׁתוֹת מִי נֹהַר:
19 תִּיִסְרְךָ רַעֲתֶךָ וּמִשְׁבוֹתֶיךָ תִּזְכְּךָ וּדְעִי וּרְאִי
כִּי-רַע וּמָר עֲזָבְךָ אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְלֹא פָחַדְתִּי

The entire *Haftarah* is a harsh critique of Israel by the prophet Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah). The first passage is a historical review, condemning the Jews in Egypt, priests, kings and false prophets (2:4-9). The present generation is then admonished as being worse than the idol-worshipping nations (10-13), thus bringing judgments upon themselves (14-19), and they are rebuked for disloyalty (20-28). Ashkenazic tradition concludes with a hint of forthcoming repentance (3:4), whereas Chabad

and Sefardic tradition conclude with a more explicit expression of return and Divine pardon (4:1-2).

19. תִּיִסְרְךָ רַעֲתֶךָ—*Your evil will chastise you.* Based on this verse, the *Ba'al Shem Tov* taught that when you see evil in another person, you are actually seeing the evil in yourself. It is merely as if you are looking in a mirror (*Me'or Einayim, Parshas Chukas; Likutei Sichos* vol. 7, p. 18).

אֵלֶיךָ נְאֻם־אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה צְבָאוֹת: כ כי מְעוֹלָם שָׁבַרְתִּי
עֵלְיָךְ נִתְקַתִּי מִוְסְרוֹתֶיךָ וְהִנֵּמְרִי לֹא אֶעְבֹּר [אעבור כו]
כִּי עַל־כָּל־גִּבְעָה גִבְהָה וְתַחַת כָּל־עֵץ רַעֲנָן אֶת
צִעָה זָנַח: כא וְאֲנֹכִי נִטְעַתֶּיךָ שׁוֹרֵק כָּל־הָ זָרַע אֲמַת
וְאֵיךְ נִהְפַּכְתָּ לִּי סוּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן נִכְרִיָּה: כב כִּי אִם־
תִּכְבְּסִי בְּזֵתֶר וְתִרְבִּי־לֶךְ בְּרִית נִכְתָּם עֲוֹנֶךָ לְפָנָי
נְאֻם אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה: כג אֵיךְ תֵּאמְרִי לֹא נִטְמַאתִי אַחֲרֵי
הַבְּעָלִים לֹא הִלַּכְתִּי רְאִי דְרָכְךָ בְּזִיא דְעֵי מָה
עָשִׂית בְּכִרְהָ קָלָה מִשְׁרַכַת דְרַכִּיָּה: כד פָּרְהָ | לְמַד
מִדְבָר בָּאוֹת נִפְשָׁה [נפשו כו] שְׂאֵפָה רוּחַ תִּתְאַנְתָּה מִי
יִשְׁיִבְנָה כָּל־מִבְקָשֶׁיהָ לֹא יִיעָפוּ בְּחִדְשָׁה וּמִצְאוּנָה:
כה מִנְעֵי רִגְלֶךָ מִיַּחַף וּגְרוּגָךְ [וגורנד כו] מִצְמָאָה
וְתֵאמְרִי נוֹאֵשׁ לֹא כִי־אֶתְהַבְתִּי זָרִים וְאַחֲרֵיהֶם
אלֶיךָ: כו כְּבִשְׁת גִּנְבִי כִי יִמְצֵא בֶן־הַבֵּישׁוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
הִמָּה מִלְכֵיהֶם שָׂרִיָּהֶם וְכִהְנִיָּהֶם וּנְבִיאֵיהֶם:
כז אֲמַרִים לְעֵץ אָבִי אֶתְהָ וְלְאֹבֵן אֶת־יְלֻדְתָנוּ
[ילדתני כו] כִּי־פָנּוּ אֵלַי עָרַף וְלֹא פָנִים וּבָעַת רָעַתָם
וְאִמְרוּ קוֹמָה וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנו: כח וְאִיהָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר
עָשִׂיתָ לָךְ יְקוֹמוּ אִם־יוֹשִׁיעוּךָ בָּעַת רָעַתְךָ כִּי
מִסֵּפֶר עָרֶיךָ הֵיוּ אֱלֹהֶיךָ יְהוּדָה:

Fear of Me was not upon you,” says the Almighty God of Hosts.

²⁰ “For (I have helped you since) long ago. I broke off the yoke (of the nations) that was on you and severed your bonds. You said, ‘I will not transgress,’ but on every lofty hill and under every leafy tree, you wander (disloyally) like a harlot. ²¹ I planted you a good vine stock—(Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya’akov who were) all true seed—so how have you turned yourself into a foreign vine to Me? ²² Even if you wash with carbonate of soda and use much soap (by giving charity publicly), your (private) sin is still a stain before Me,” says God Almighty.

Disloyalty

²³ “How could you (possibly) say, ‘I have not been defiled; I have not gone after the deities of Ba’al’? Look at what you have done in the valley (when you worshiped Ba’al)! Think about what you have done, you swift young she-camel, clinging to her ways. ²⁴ (You are like) a wild donkey accustomed to the desert, that (runs around) whenever she wants drawing the wind (into her mouth as she runs fast; like a donkey that seems) pained (to stay in one place), can anybody make her go back again? All who seek (to catch) her will not grow weary; in her (last) month (of pregnancy, she will move slowly and) they will find her. (Likewise, the Jewish people are heavy with sins, and are easily caught by their enemies.)

Ba’al worship

²⁵ “You thought of correcting your deeds to prevent your foot from going barefoot and your throat from thirst (in the exile). But you said, ‘I give up hope (of serving God). No, for I love strange (gods), and I will follow them.’

²⁶ “The house of Israel—the (common folk), their kings, their princes, their priests (of idol worship), and their prophets (of the deity Ba’al)—have been ashamed

Idol worship

(before the nations) with the shame of a thief when he is caught (for after being established as servants of God, they went and worshiped idols). ²⁷ They say to the wood, ‘You are my father,’ and to the stone, ‘You gave birth to us,’ for they turned their back to me and not their face. Then, at the time of their misfortune they say, ‘Come and save us!’ ²⁸ Where, then, are your gods that you have made for yourself? Let them come, if they are able, to save you at the time of your misfortune! For you had as many gods as cities, O Yehudah (so can’t any of them help you?)

Ashkenazic communities recite a further verse and then conclude. Chabad and Sefardic communities continue below:

ג הֲלֹא מִנְעָתָה קָרָאת וּקְרָאתִי כִּי לִי אָבִי אֲלֹהִי
נְעַרִי אַתָּה:

^{3:4} Will you not from now call Me “My Father! You are the master of my youth!”

Chabad and Sefardic communities continue here:

ד ׀ אִם־תָּשׁוּב יִשְׂרָאֵל | נְאֻם־יְהוָה אֵלַי תָּשׁוּב
וְאִם־תִּסְרֹר שְׂקוּצֵיךָ מִפָּנָי וְלֹא תִגְדֹּר: ז וְנִשְׁבַּעְתָּ

^{4:1} “If you return, O Israel (and confess your sins),” says God, “then you will (have) returned to me. If you remove your detestable things from My Presence (in

Return to God

Jerusalem), you will not wander (in exile. ² If) you will swear, 'As God lives,' (when promising to do) truth and justice and righteousness (and not swear with My name to do falsehood, as you do now), then nations will bless themselves (by wishing others that they should be) like you, and they will praise (themselves, when they are successful, that they are) like you."

On Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av many communities, including Chabad, add the following (Isaiah 66:1; ibid. 23-24; ibid 23):

^{66:1} This is what God said: "The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool, (so) what House could you build (worthy) for Me, and what place (is worthy for) My (Presence to) rest?"

²³ "It shall come to pass, that every first of the new month, and every Shabbos, all flesh (even non-Jews) shall come to worship before Me (in the holy Temple)," says God. ²⁴ The (non-Jews) shall go out (of Jerusalem, to the valley of Yehoshafat), and look upon the corpses of the men (of Gog and Magog) who have rebelled against Me, for the worms (that eat them) will not die, and the fire (that burns them) shall not be extinguished. They shall be a (symbol of) disgrace to all flesh—(non-Jews, who come to the holy Temple)."

²³ "It shall come to pass, that every new moon, and every Shabbos, shall all flesh come to worship before Me," says God.

Rosh Chodesh

חִי־יְהוָה בְּאֵמֶת בְּמִשְׁפָּט וּבְצִדְקָה וְהִתְבָּרְכוּ בּוֹ גּוֹיִם וְבוֹ יִתְהַלְלוּ:

א כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּסְאִי וְהָאָרֶץ הַדָּם רַגְלִי אֵי־יָהּ בַּיִת אֲשֶׁר תִּבְנוּ־לִי וְאֵי־יָהּ מְקוֹם מְנוּחָתִי: ב וְהָיָה מִדֵּי־חֹדֶשׁ בְּחֹדְשׁוֹ וּמִדֵּי שַׁבָּת בְּשַׁבְּתוֹ יָבוֹא כָּל־בָּשָׂר לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְפָנַי אָמַר יְהוָה: כד וַיֵּצְאוּ וּרְאוּ בְּפָנָי הָאֲנָשִׁים הַפְּשָׁעִים בִּי כִי תוֹלְעֵתֶם לֹא תָמוּת וְאִשָּׁם לֹא תִכָּפֵה וְהָיוּ דְרָאוֹן לְכָל־בָּשָׂר: ב וְהָיָה מִדֵּי־חֹדֶשׁ בְּחֹדְשׁוֹ וּמִדֵּי שַׁבָּת בְּשַׁבְּתוֹ יָבוֹא כָּל־בָּשָׂר לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְפָנַי אָמַר יְהוָה:

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(I Samuel 20:18-42)

The Plan

^{20:18} Yonasan said to (David), "Tomorrow is the (first of the) new month. You shall be missed, because your seat will be empty. ¹⁹ For three (days) you should go down (and hide yourself) well. Come to the place where you hid on the day of the incident (when the King swore to me not to kill you), and sit by the traveler's (marker) stone.

²⁰ "I will shoot three arrows to the side, as though I shot at a target. ²¹ Then, I will send a lad (saying to him), 'Go, find the arrows.' If I say to the lad, 'look!—the arrows

כ ה וַיֹּאמְרוּ־לוֹ יְהוֹנָתָן מִחֵר חֹדֶשׁ וְנִפְקַדְתָּ בִּי יִפְקַד מוֹשְׁבֶדֶךָ: יט וְשִׁלְשֵׁת תֵּרַד מְאֹד וּבֹאֲתָ אֶל־הַמְּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־נִסְתַּרְתָּ שָׁם בְּיוֹם הַמַּעֲשֵׂה וּיִשְׁבֹּתְ אֶצְלֵךָ אֲבִן הָאֲזוּל: כ וְאֲנִי שְׁלֹשֶׁת הַחֲצִיִּים עֲדָה אֹרֵה לְשַׁלַּח־לִי לְמַטְרָה: כא וְהִנֵּה אֶשְׁלַח אֶת־הַנְּעָר לְךָ מֵצֵא אֶת־הַחֲצִיִּים אִם־אָמַר אָמַר לְנְעָר הִנֵּה

🌀 HAFTARAH OF EREV ROSH CHODESH

This Haftarah mentions the eve of Rosh Chodesh: "Tomorrow is the (first of the) new month" (20:18). At first glance, this connection appears to be somewhat tenuous, as the remaining narrative of the Haftarah is not connected with the theme of Erev Rosh Chodesh. Why should this be more pertinent than reading the Haftarah connected with the weekly Parsha? Chasidic thought explains that the renewal of the moon signifies redemption, and therefore, by logical extension, the eve of the new moon (Erev Rosh Chodesh) represents the work carried out during exile in order to bring the redemption. Being that this is the underlying significance of

all our activities, it was considered a sufficiently important replacement for the Haftarah of the week (Hisvadyos 5711, vol. 2, p. 50, 56).

The Haftarah describes a climactic moment in the rift between David and Sha'ul, which arose from David's successful military career. Sha'ul, who was king at the time, perceived David as a rebel that needed to be eliminated. Fearing for his life, David seeks the assistance of Yonasan, the king's son, who was David's passionate admirer, but Yonasan finds the conspiracy theory difficult to believe. In order to verify his suspicions, David suggests a plan: he will disappear for three days to test the king's reaction, which would then be reported to David by Yonasan with a secret sign.

החצים | ממך והנה קחנו | ובאה כִּי־שָׁלוֹם לְךָ וְאִין
דָּבָר חַי־יְהוָה: כב וְאִם־כֹּה אָמַר לְעֹלָם הִנֵּה הַחֲצִים
מִמֶּךָ וְהִלָּאָה לְךָ כִּי שַׁלַּחְךָ יְהוָה: כג וְהִדְבָר אֲשֶׁר
דִּבַּרְנוּ אֲנִי וְאַתָּה הִנֵּה יְהוָה בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ עַד־עוֹלָם:
כד וַיִּסְתֵּר דָּוִד בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיְהִי הַחֹדֶשׁ וַיֵּשֶׁב הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל־
על כו | הַלֶּחֶם לֶאֱכֹל: כה וַיֵּשֶׁב הַמֶּלֶךְ עַל־מוֹשְׁבוֹ בְּפַעַם |
בְּפַעַם אֶל־מוֹשֵׁב הַקִּיר וַיָּקָם יְהוֹנָתָן וַיֵּשֶׁב אַבְנֵר
מִצַּד שְׂאוּל וַיִּפְקַד מְקוֹם דָּוִד: כו וְלֹא־דִבֶּר שְׂאוּל
מְאוּמָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא כִּי אָמַר מְקַרְהוּ הוּא בְּלִתי
טְהוֹר הוּא כִּי־לֹא טְהוֹר: כז וַיְהִי מִמַּחֲרַת הַחֹדֶשׁ
הַשֵּׁנִי וַיִּפְקַד מְקוֹם דָּוִד וַיֹּאמֶר שְׂאוּל אֶל־יְהוֹנָתָן
בְּנֹו מַדּוּעַ לֹא־בָא בְּיָשָׁי גַם־תְּמוּל גַּם־הַיּוֹם
אֶל־הַלֶּחֶם: כח וַיַּעַן יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת־שְׂאוּל נִשְׂאֵל נִשְׂאֵל
דָּוִד מִעַמְדֵי עַד־בֵּית לָחֶם: כט וַיֹּאמֶר שְׂלַחְנִי נָא כִּי
זָבַח מִשְׁפָּחָה לָנוּ בְּעִיר וְהוּא צוּה־לִי אֲחִי וְעַתָּה
אִם־מַצְאֵתִי חַן בְּעֵינֶיךָ אִמְלָטָה נָא וְאַרְאֶה
אֶת־אֲחִי עַל־בֶּן לֹא־כָּא אֶל־שַׁלְחַן הַמֶּלֶךְ:
ל וַיַּחֲרֵאֵף שְׂאוּל בִּיהוֹנָתָן וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ בֶּן־נַעֲנֹת
הַמַּרְדּוֹת הֲלוֹא יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־בַחַר אַתָּה לְבֶן־יִשָׁי
לְבָשֶׁתְךָ וּלְבִשַׁת עֲרוֹת אִמְךָ: לא כִּי כָל־הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר
בְּיָשָׁי חַי עַל־הָאֲדָמָה לֹא תִכּוֹן אַתָּה וּמַלְכוּתְךָ
וְעַתָּה שַׁלַּח וְקַח אֹתוֹ אֵלַי כִּי בְּיָמֹת הוּא: לב וַיַּעַן
יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת־שְׂאוּל אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו לָמָּה יוֹמַת מִיָּה
עֲשֵׂה: לד וַיִּטֵּל שְׂאוּל אֶת־הַחֲנִית עָלָיו לְהַכֹּתוֹ וַיִּדַע
יְהוֹנָתָן כִּי־כָלָה הִיא מַעַם אָבִיו לְהַמִּית אֶת־דָּוִד:
לה וַיָּקָם יְהוֹנָתָן מֵעַם הַשַּׁלְחָן בַּחֲרֵי־אָף וְלֹא־אָכַל
בַּיּוֹם־הַחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי לָחֶם כִּי נִעְצַב אֶל־דָּוִד כִּי
הִכְלָמוֹ אָבִיו: לו וַיְהִי בַּבֹּקֶר וַיֵּצֵא יְהוֹנָתָן הַשָּׂדֶה

are on this side of you,' then you should take them and return, for it is safe for you, and there is no (dangerous) thing (looming. I swear this) as God lives.

²² "But if I say this to the young man, 'Behold, the arrows are beyond you,' then go, because God has sent you.

²³ "This matter of which you and I have spoken, behold!—God is (a witness) between me and you forever."

²⁴ David hid himself in the field. When the (first of the new) month came, the King sat down to eat the meal.

²⁵ The King sat at his seat, as usual, on a seat by the wall.

Yonasan stood up so that Avner could sit at Sha'ul's side. David's place was empty. ²⁶ Nevertheless Sha'ul said nothing on that day, for he thought, "(He had) a (nocturnal) accident. He is not ritually pure. (He didn't come because) he has not been ritually purified."

²⁷ It came to pass on the next day, which was the second day of the month, that David's place was empty. Sha'ul said to Yonasan his son, "Why didn't the son of Yishai come to the meal, neither yesterday, nor today?"

²⁸ Yonasan answered Sha'ul, "David asked me permission to go to Beis Lechem. ²⁹ He said, 'Please let me go, because our family (is offering) sacrifice(s) today) in the city and my (oldest) brother (Eliav) has instructed me (to be there). Now, if I have found favor in your eyes, please excuse me (from the King's duties) to see my brothers.' Therefore he has not come to the King's table."

³⁰ Sha'ul became furious with Yonasan, and he said to him, "You are the son of a sinful and rebellious woman! Do I not know that you have chosen the son of Yishai (for the monarchy) to your own shame, and to the shame of your mother's nakedness (for the fact that you prefer that my enemy will lead people to suspect that you are not my son)? ³¹ For as long as the son of Yishai lives on the earth, you shall not be established, nor your Kingdom. Now (since you sent him away) send (for him) and fetch him to me, for he deserves death."

³² Yonasan answered Sha'ul, his father, and said to him, "Why should he be killed? What has he done?"

³³ Sha'ul raised a spear to strike him. Yonasan realized that his father was determined to slay David.

³⁴ Yonasan rose from the table in fierce anger. He ate no food on the second day of the new moon, for he was upset for David, and his father had put him to shame (by insulting and threatening him).

³⁵ In the morning, that Yonasan went out to the field to

David goes into hiding

The king is furious

The *Haftarah* opens as Yonasan reviews David's plan and confirms a secret sign to be enacted by shooting arrows and instructing certain phrases to his servant (20:18-23). Initially, the king appears indifferent to David's absence (24-28), but on the second day he becomes furious with Yonasan and states that David "deserves death" (29-34). So, the next morning, Yonasan goes out to the field and communicates their pre-arranged sign by shooting arrows, and sends his servant home

(35-40). David then comes out of hiding, and they part amid tears, swearing an oath "between my descendants and your descendants forever" (41-42).

21. הַחֲצִים מִמֶּךָ וּגו'—The arrows are on this side of you, etc. When arrows are shot from a bow, the more the bow is extended backwards, the further the arrows will reach. This is a metaphor for the spiritual accomplishments of exile: The more the Jewish people "extend

the appointed place (he had arranged) with David, and a young lad was with him. ³⁶ He said to his lad, "Run! Find now the arrows which I shoot." As the lad ran (for the first arrow), he shot an arrow beyond him.

Yonasan gives the sign

³⁷ When the lad came to the place of the (first) arrow which Yonasan had shot, Yonasan called out after the lad and said, "Isn't the (last) arrow beyond you?"

³⁸ Yonasan called out after the lad, "Go quickly! Hurry (after the second arrow). Don't stay (by the first)!"

Yonasan's lad gathered up (both) the arrows, and came to his master. ³⁹ The lad knew nothing (about the sign). Only Yonasan and David knew the matter.

⁴⁰ Yonasan gave his bow and arrows to his lad, and said to him, "Go and carry them to the city." ⁴¹ As soon as the lad had gone (towards the city), David (understood that it was safe and) stood up from near the south (side of the stone). He fell on his face to the ground, and prostrated himself three times. They kissed one another, and wept with one another, until David (wept) greatly (more than Yonasan).

Yonasan and David part

⁴² Yonasan said to David, "Go in peace, as both of us have sworn in the name of God, saying, 'God be (a witness) between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants forever.'"

לְמוֹעֵד דָּוִד וְנָעַר קָמַן עִמּוֹ: ^{לו} וַיֹּאמֶר לְנַעֲרוֹ רֵץ מִצֵּא־נָא אֶת־הַחֲלָצִים אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מוֹרֶה הַנֶּעַר רֵץ וְהוּא־יָרָה הַחֲצִי לְהַעֲבֹרוֹ: ^{לז} וַיָּבֵא הַנֶּעַר עַד־מְקוֹם הַחֲצִי אֲשֶׁר יָרָה יְהוֹנָתָן וַיִּקְרָא יְהוֹנָתָן אַחֲרֵי הַנֶּעַר וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלוֹא הַחֲצִי מִמֶּךָ וְהִלָּאֵה: ^{לח} וַיִּקְרָא יְהוֹנָתָן אַחֲרֵי הַנֶּעַר מִהֲרָה חוּשָׁה אֶל־תַּעֲמֹד וַיִּלְקַט נֶעַר יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת־הַחֲלָצִים ^{להחצין בן} וַיָּבֵא אֶל־אֲדֹנָיו: ^{לט} וְהַנֶּעַר לֹא־יָדַע מֵאֻמָּה אֶדְי יְהוֹנָתָן וְדוֹד יָדָעוּ אֶת־הַדְּבָר: ^מ וַיִּתֵּן יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת־כַּלָּיו אֶל־הַנֶּעַר אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לֵךְ הֲבִיֵא הָעִיר: ^{מא} הַנֶּעַר בָּא וְדוֹד קָם מֵאֲצֶל הַגִּבּוֹב וַיִּפֹּל לְאַפָּיו אֶרְצָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמַיִם וַיִּשְׁקוּ | אִישׁ אֶת־רַעְוֵהוּ וַיִּכְבְּוּ אִישׁ אֶת־רַעְוֵהוּ עַד־דָּוִד הִגִּיד: ^{מב} וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹנָתָן לְדוֹד לֵךְ לְשָׁלוֹם אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְנוּ שְׁנֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה לֵאמֹר יְהוָה יְהִיֶה | בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ וּבֵין זָרְעִי וּבֵין זָרְעֶךָ עַד־עוֹלָם:

SHABBOS ROSH CHODESH / שבת ראש חודש

(Isaiah 66:1-24, ibid. 23)

The Maftir reading for Shabbos Rosh Chodesh is on page 322. (Bamidbar 28:9-15)

God is everywhere

^{66:1} **T**his is what God said: "The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool, (so) what house could you build (worthy) for Me, and what place

סו כ פה אמר יהוה השמים כסאי והארץ הדם רגלי איזה בית אשר תבנולי ואיזה מקום

themselves" to deal with the physical world in the most difficult of circumstances, the greater and more "far reaching" is the spiritual accomplishment. David wanted to know if these accomplishments had already been completed, heralding the time of redemption. So Yonasan told him that if "the arrows are on this side of you," i.e. if the task of exile, represented by the arrows, is complete, "then you should take them and return, for it is safe for you," i.e. the time of redemption has arrived. But if the arrows are beyond you," then there is still much work to be done in exile. But do not be afraid to continue this work, "because God has sent you" (Hisvaduyos ibid.).

HAFTARAH OF SHABBOS ROSH CHODESH

This *Haftarah* mentions the sacrificial worship that will occur every new month (*Rosh Chodesh*) after the ingathering of the exiles. The *Haftarah* was addressed by the prophet Yeshayah (Isaiah) to the Jewish people in Babylon after the exile, at the end of the 6th century B.C.E.

The *Haftarah* opens with God's proclamation of omnipresence and the insufficiency of one House to contain Him (66:1). God will turn His attention to those that fear Him (2), and all types of insincere worship are abhorred by Him (3-4). Those who fear God will ultimately be joyous, but those who hate and ostracize God's servants will be chastised by a "voice from the Temple" (5-6). Tziyon's (Zion's) deliverance is compared to that of a mother who gives birth without pain (7-9), and the rejoicing at Jerusalem's rebuilding is depicted (10-14). All enemies and idol-worshippers will be punished (15-18) and the nations that remain will come to Tziyon, bringing the Jewish people along with them (19-20). New priests will be appointed, and all mankind will worship God (21-23). The rebels' corpses will remain in the valley of Yehoshafat as an ominous reminder to all mankind (24; verse 23 is then repeated so as to finish on a positive note).

1. השמים כסאי והארץ הדם רגלי. —The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. According to Chasidic thought, the various

מְנוּחָתִי: ^ד וְאֶת־כָּל־אֱלֹהֵי יָדַי עֲשֵׂתָהּ וַיְהִינוּ כָּל־אֱלֹהֵי
 נְאֻם־יְהוָה וְאֶל־זֶה אֲבִיט אֶל־עַנְי וְנִבְהֵ־רוּחַ וְחָרַד
 עַל־דְּבָרֵי: ^ה שׁוֹחֵט הַשּׁוֹר מִבְּה־אִישׁ זֹבַח הַשֶּׁה
 עֲרַף פְּלֶב מֵעֵלָה מִנְחָה דַם־חֹזִיר מִזְבִּיר לְבָנָה
 מִכְרָךְ אֹזֶן גַּם־הֵמָּה בָּחֲרוּ בְּדַרְכֵיהֶם וּבִשְׁקֹוצֵיהֶם
 נִפְשָׁם חֲפָצָה: ^ו גַּם־אֲנִי אֶבְחַר בְּתַעֲלָלֵיהֶם
 וּמְגֹרֹתָם אֲבִיא לָהֶם יַעַן קָרָאתִי וְאִין עֹנָה דְבַרְתִּי
 וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ הָרַע בְּעֵינַי וּבִאֲשֶׁר לֹא־חֲפָצָתִי
 בָּחֲרוּ: ^ז שָׁמְעוּ דְבַר־יְהוָה הַחֲרָדִים אֶל־דְּבָרוֹ אָמְרוּ
 אַחֲיֵכֶם שְׂנֵאִיכֶם מִנְדִיכֶם לְמַעַן שָׁמִי יִכְבַּד יְהוָה
 וְנִרְאָה בְּשִׂמְחַתְכֶם וְהֵם יִבְשׁוּ: ^ח קוֹל שְׂאוֹן מַעִיר
 קוֹל מְהִיכָל קוֹל יְהוָה מְשַׁלֵּם גָּמוֹל לְאִיבֵיו: ^ט בְּטָרָם
 תַּחֲלִיל יִלְדָה בְּטָרָם יָבֹוא תִּבֵּל לָהּ וְהַמְלִיטָה זָכַר:
^י מִי־שָׁמַע בְּזֹאת מִי רָאָה כְּאֱלֹהֵי הַיּוֹחֵל אֶרֶץ בְּיוֹם
 אֶחָד אִם־יִוָּלַד גּוֹי פַּעַם אַחַת כִּי־תֵלֵה גַם־יִלְדָה
 צִיּוֹן אֶת־בְּנֵיהָ: ^{יא} הֲאֲנִי אֲשַׁבֵּיר וְלֹא אוֹלִיד יֹאמֶר
 יְהוָה אִם־אֲנִי הַמוֹלִיד וְעַצְרָתִי אָמַר אֱלֹהֵי־דָ:
 שְׂמָחוּ אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם וְגִילוּ בָּהּ כֹּה כָּל־אֲהַבְיָה שִׂישׁוּ
 אַתְּהָ מְשׁוֹשׁ כָּל־הַמְתָּאֲבָלִים עֲלֶיהָ: ^{יב} לְמַעַן תִּיַּנְקוּ
 וּשְׂבַעְתֶּם מִשָּׂד תִּנְחַמְיָה לְמַעַן תִּמְצְאוּ וְהַתְעַנְנֹתֶם
 מִזֵּי כְבוֹדָהּ: ^{יג} כִּי־כֹה אָמַר יְהוָה הִנְנִי נֹטֶה־אֲלֶיהָ
 בְּנֶהַר שָׁלוֹם וּכְנַחַל שׁוֹטֵף כְּבוֹד גּוֹיִם וַיִּנְקָתֶם
 עַל־צַד תִּנְשְׂאוּ וְעַל־בְּרָכִים תִּשְׁעֲשְׂעוּ: ^{יד} כְּאִישׁ
 אֲשֶׁר אָמוּ תִנְחַמְנוּ בֵּן אֲנֹכִי אֲנַחֲמְכֶם וּבִירוּשָׁלַם

(is worthy for) My (Presence to) rest? ² My hand has made all these things (Heaven and earth), and (therefore) all these things came into being,” says God. “But (even though I am so exalted), to this I will pay attention: to he who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at My word. ³ “However, he who kills an ox (offering his sacrifice without trembling at My word) it is as if he slew a man. He who sacrifices a lamb (without trembling), is as if he cut off a dog’s neck. He who offers a meal-offering (without trembling), is as if he offered swine’s blood. He who burns incense (without trembling), is as if he blessed an idol. He who offers up frankincense (without trembling) is as if he offered an inappropriate gift. They have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations. ⁴ So too I will choose to mock them, and will bring their fears upon them, because when I called (to them through the prophets), none answered. When I spoke, they did not listen. They did evil before My eyes, and chose what I did not desire.”

God hates insincere service

⁵ “Hear the word of God, you who tremble at His word! Your (wicked) brothers who hate you and who ostracize you say, ‘(I am so great that) God is glorified because of my name!’ (But in truth) we shall see your joy and they shall be shamed. ⁶ (Then there will be) a voice of rumbling from the city (of Tziyon), a voice from the Temple, the voice of God rendering recompense to his enemies (Gog and Magog).”

Enemies will be judged

⁷ “Before she (Tziyon) feels labor pains she will give birth. Before her labor pain will come, she will be delivered a son. ⁸ Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such a thing? Has a land gone through its labor in one day? Has a nation been born all at once, for Tziyon labored and gave birth to her children? ⁹ Shall I bring to the birthstool, and not cause her to give birth?” says God. “Shall I, who cause birth, hold back?” says your God.

Tziyon will have no labor pains

¹⁰ “Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all you who love her (to see her rebuilt). Rejoice for joy with her, all you who mourn for her (in her destruction),

Jerusalem will rejoice

¹¹ so that you may (be rewarded to) nurse, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations. That you may drink deeply, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. ¹² For this is what God says: ‘Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the wealth of the nations (will rush to her) like a flowing stream. (You who mourned for her) shall (be rewarded) to draw (effortlessly from) the wealth of the nations. You shall be (honored by the nations, like a baby who is) carried on (its mother’s) sides, and dandled on her knees. ¹³ Like one whom his mother comforts, so will I comfort you, and you shall be comforted in

graduations of the human soul can be divided into three broad categories: a.) *Internal*. Those powers which rest within the body and interact with it. These parts of the soul give life to the body and control its intellectual and emotional activity. b.) *External*. The aura (*makif*) of the soul which surrounds the body and ordinarily has no direct contact with it.

On occasion, however, one can draw from these energies of the soul in order to break free from existing limitations in one’s life.

c.) *Essence*. Then there is the very essence of the soul which is not limited to being inside or outside the body. The route to access the soul’s essence is through humility, simplicity and sincere dedication.

Jerusalem (for your suffering). ¹⁴ When you see (Jerusalem rebuilt), your heart will rejoice, and (the health of) your bones will (be strengthened) like flourishing grass. The (mighty) Hand of God will be known to His servants, and His anger toward His enemies.

Gog and
Magog
destroyed

¹⁵ For, behold, God will come with fire (to destroy the armies of Gog and Magog), and with His chariots like a storm to repay (His enemies) with fury. His rebuke (will be) with flames of fire. ¹⁶ For by fire God will execute judgment, and by His sword upon all flesh. The slain by God will be many.”

¹⁷ “Those who prepare and purify themselves (to go) to the gardens (of idolatry, one group) after another (to worship the idol) in the center (of the garden); those who eat swine’s flesh, abominable creatures, and mice—they will all perish together,” says God. ¹⁸ “I (know) their works and their thoughts. (The time) has come, that I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see My glory. ¹⁹ I will scar them, but from them I will let survivors escape to the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, the archers, to Tual, and Yavan, to far off islands, that have not heard My fame, nor have they seen My glory. They shall declare My glory among the nations.

Nations
will return

²⁰ They will (then) bring all your brothers from all nations as an offering to God, on horses, in chariots, in covered wagons, on mules and with songs and dances to My holy mountain in Jerusalem,” says God, “just as (respectfully as) the people of Israel bring an offering in a pure utensil to the House of God.

New
priests

²¹ From them too I will take to be priests and Levites (even though they will have forgotten their lineage),” says God. ²² “For just as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make (in those days), shall remain before Me, says God, so shall your descendants and your name remain (forever).”

Worship
on every
new month

²³ “It will then be, that every (first of the) new month, and every Shabbos, all mankind shall come to worship before Me (in the holy Temple),” says God. ²⁴ The (non-Jews) shall go out (of Jerusalem, to the valley of Yehoshafat), and look upon the corpses of the men (of Gog and Magog) who have rebelled against Me, for the worms (that eat them) will

תִּנְחָמוּ: ^ד וּרְאִיתֶם וְשִׂשׁ לְבַבְכֶם וְעֲצְמוֹתֵיכֶם כִּדְשָׁא
תִּפְרַחְנָה וְנֹדְעָה יַד־יְהוָה אֶת־עַבְדָּיו וְזַעַם
אֶת־אֵיבָיו: ^{טו} כִּי־הִנֵּה יְהוָה בָּאֵשׁ יָבוֹא וְכִסְפוּהָ
מִרְכַּבְתָּיו לְהֵשִׁיב בְּחַמָּה אֶפְרוֹ וְגַעַרְתּוֹ בְּלִהְבֵי־אֵשׁ:
^{טז} כִּי בָאֵשׁ יְהוָה נִשְׁפָּט וּבַחֲרָבוֹ אֶת־כָּל־בֶּשֶׂר וְרַבּוֹ
חָלְלִי יְהוָה: ^{יז} הַמִּתְקַדְּשִׁים וְהַמְשַׁהֲרִים אֶל־הַנְּזוֹת
אֶחָד אַחַת (ואחד כ"ו) בַּתְּנוּךְ אֶכְלִי בֶּשֶׂר הַחֲזִיר וְהַשְּׂקִיז
וְהַעֲכָבֵר יַחְדָּו יִסְפוּ נַאֲם־יְהוָה: ^{יח} וְאֲנֹכִי מַעֲשִׂיהֶם
וּמַחֲשַׁבְתֵּיהֶם בָּאָה לְקַבֵּץ אֶת־כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם וְהַלְשׁוֹת
וּבָאוּ וְרָאוּ אֶת־כְּבוֹדִי: ^{יט} וְשָׁמַתִּי בָהֶם אוֹת וְשַׁלַּחְתִּי
מֵהֶם אֶפְלִיטִים אֶל־הַגּוֹיִם תִּרְשִׁישׁ פּוּל וְלוּד מִשְׁכִּי
קֶשֶׁת תִּבֵּל וַיּוֹן הָאֵיִים הִרְחִקִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־שָׁמְעוּ
אֶת־שְׁמִעִי וְלֹא־רָאוּ אֶת־כְּבוֹדִי וְהִגִּידוּ אֶת־כְּבוֹדִי
בְּגוֹיִם: ^כ וְהִבִּיאוּ אֶת־כָּל־אֲחֵיכֶם מִכָּל־הַגּוֹיִם אֶל
מִנְחָה אֶל־יְהוָה בְּסוּסִים וּבְרֶכָב וּבַצְּבִים וּבַפָּרָדִים
וּבַבְּרָכוֹת עַל־הַר קֹדְשִׁי יְרוּשָׁלַם אָמַר יְהוָה
כִּי־אֲשֶׁר יָבִיאוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה בְּכָלִי טְהוֹר
בֵּית יְהוָה: ^{כא} וְנָם־מֵהֶם אֶקַּח לְכֹהֲנִים לְלוֹיִם אָמַר
יְהוָה: ^{כב} כִּי כִּי־אֲשֶׁר הַשָּׁמַיִם הַחֲדָשִׁים וְהָאָרֶץ
הַחֲדָשָׁה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה עֹמְדִים לְפָנַי נַאֲם־יְהוָה בֵּן
יַעֲמֹד זֶרְעֵכֶם וְשִׁמְכֶם: ^{כג} וְהָיָה מִדֵּי־הַדָּשׁ בְּחֲדָשׁוֹ
וּמִדֵּי שַׁבַּת בְּשַׁבְתּוֹ יָבוֹא כָּל־בֶּשֶׂר לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְפָנַי
אָמַר יְהוָה: ^{כד} וַיֵּצְאוּ וְרָאוּ בְּפָנָי הָאֲנָשִׁים הַפְּשָׁעִים
בִּי כִּי תוֹלְעֵתָם לֹא תָמוּת וְאֲשָׁם לֹא תִכָּפֵה וְהָיוּ

These three levels of the soul are alluded to in the opening of the Haftarah. “The heavens” and “earth” allude to Torah and mitzvos respectively (because Torah was given from Heaven, and the mitzvos are performed with physical objects here on earth), i.e. things which are observed in everyday life with the normal faculties of the soul found in the body. The “house” mentioned by the verse alludes to the soul powers which encompass the body, just as a house encompasses a person. While these powers are indeed impressive, scripture nevertheless bemoans their insufficiency (“What house could you build (worthy) for Me?”), because the most profound form of Divine service comes from the essence of the

soul. And this essence is reached through humility: “To this I will pay attention: to he who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at My word” (v. 2).

This explanation adds further significance to the reading of this passage on Rosh Chodesh (new moon). For just as the disappearance of the moon and its re-emergence as a miniscule point is the key to its later growth, likewise it is the path of humility and self-renunciation which reaches the essence of the soul, bringing the person to a genuine spiritual rebirth (Sefer Hama’amarim Melukat vol. 3, p. 133).

הָרְאוּן לְכָל-בָּשָׂר׃ וְהָיָה מִדֵּי-חֹדֶשׁ בְּחֹדֶשׁוֹ וּמִדֵּי שַׁבָּת בְּשַׁבְּתוֹ יָבֹא כָל-בָּשָׂר לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְפָנָי אָמַר יְהוָה׃

They shall be a (symbol of) disgrace to all mankind."

²³ "It will then be, that every (first of the) new month, and every Shabbos, all flesh shall come to worship before Me," says God.

If Sunday is also *Rosh Chodesh*, Chabad communities add (I Samuel 20:18,42):

וַיֹּאמֶר-לוֹ יְהוֹנָתָן מָחָר חֹדֶשׁ וְנִפְקַדְתָּ כִּי יִפְקַד מוֹשְׁבֶדְךָ׃ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹנָתָן לְדָוִד לֵךְ לְשָׁלוֹם אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְנוּ שְׁנֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה לֵאמֹר יְהוָה יִהְיֶה אִי בֵּינֵינוּ וּבֵינֶךָ וּבֵינֵינוּ וּבֵינֶךָ עַד-עוֹלָם׃

²⁰⁻¹⁸ Yonasan said to (David), "Tomorrow is the (first of the) new month. You shall be missed, because your seat will be empty.

⁴² Yonasan said to David, "Go in peace, as both of us have sworn in the name of God, saying, 'God be (a witness) between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants forever.'"

MAFTIR FOR SHABBOS ROSH CHODESH / מפטיר לשבת ראש חודש

(Bamidbar 28:9-15)

בַּשָּׁמֶן לְאֵיל הָאֶחָד׃ י וְעֶשְׂרֵן עֶשְׂרוֹן סֶלֶת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה בַשָּׁמֶן לִכְבֹּשׁ הָאֶחָד עֲלֵה רֵיחַ נִיחֹחַ אִשָּׁה לַיהוָה׃ יד וְנִסְפִיחָם חֲצִי הַחֵיזֵן יִהְיֶה לְפָר וּשְׁלִישִׁתָּהּ הַחֵיזֵן לְאֵיל וּרְבִיעֶת הַחֵיזֵן לִכְבֹּשׁ יַיִן זֹאת עֲלֵת חֹדֶשׁ בְּחֹדֶשׁוֹ לְחֹדֶשִׁי הַשָּׁנָה׃ טו וּשְׁעִיר עֲזִים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת לַיהוָה עַל-עֲלֹת הַתְּמִיד יַעֲשֶׂה וְנִסְבּוֹ׃ ס

ט וּבִיּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת שְׁנֵי-כִבְשִׁים בְּנֵי-שָׁנָה תְּמִימִם וּשְׁנֵי עֶשְׂרִים סֶלֶת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה בַשָּׁמֶן וְנִסְבּוֹ׃ י עֲלֹת שַׁבָּת בְּשַׁבְּתוֹ עַל-עֲלֹת הַתְּמִיד וְנִסְבּוֹ׃ פ יא וּבְרֵאשֵׁי חֳדָשֵׁיכֶם תִּקְרִיבוּ עֲלֵה לַיהוָה פָּרִים בְּנֵי-בָקָר שְׁנַיִם וְאֵיל אֶחָד כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי-שָׁנָה שֶׁבַע תְּמִימִם׃ יב וּשְׁלֹשָׁה עֶשְׂרִים סֶלֶת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה בַשָּׁמֶן לְפָר הָאֶחָד וּשְׁנֵי עֶשְׂרִים סֶלֶת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה

Haftarah is on page 319.



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- Be'er Mayim Chayim** — Supercommentary to Rashi's commentary to the Torah by Rabbi Chaim ben Betzalel (1515-1588), older brother of the *Maharal* of Prague, first published in Brooklyn and London between 1965 and 1971.
- Be'er Yitzchak** — Supercommentary to Rashi's commentary to the Torah by Rabbi Yitzchak Ya'akov Horowitz of Yaroslav (d. 1864).
- Beis Yosef** — Halachic commentary by R' Yosef Caro (1488-1575) on the *Tur*. He was also the author of the *Shulchan Aruch* and *Kesef Mishneh*, a commentary on *Rambam's* code.
- Bereishis Rabah** — The section of *Midrash Rabah* on the Book of Genesis. (See “*Midrash Rabah*”)
- Bi'ur HaGra** — Commentary to *Shulchan Aruch* by the *Vilna Ga'on* (See: *Vilna Ga'on*).
- Biuray Maharay** — Commentary to the Torah by R' Yisra'el Isserlein (c.1390-1460), German *halachist*, author of *Sha'alos v'Teshuvos Terumas Hadeshen*. First printed in Venice in 1419.
- Chacham Tzvi** — Responsa by R' Tzvi Ashkenazi of Amsterdam (1660-1718).
- Chelkas Mechokaik** — Primary commentary to the *Even Ha'ezer* section of *Shulchan Aruch* by Reb Moshe Lima of Vilna (17th cent.).
- Chiddushei Aggados** — See *Maharsha*.
- Chizkuni** — Commentary on the Torah by Rabbi Chezkiah ben Manoach, who lived in the thirteenth century, in Provence.
- Da'as Zekeinim** — Commentary to the Torah by the Tosafists of France and Germany, circa. 1100-1300. Edited by Rabbi Yehudah ben Eliezer and first printed in 1783.
- Degel Machaneh Efrayim** — Important chassidic commentary to the Torah, based strongly on the teachings of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*, by Rabbi Moshe Chaim Efraim of Sidlikov (1748-1800), a grandson of the *Ba'al Shem Tov*. Published in Koretz.
- Devarim Rabah** — The section of *Midrash Rabah* on the Book of Deuteronomy. (See “*Midrash Rabah*”)
- Devek Tov** — Commentary on *Rashi* by Rabbi Shimon Oshenburg Halevi of Frankfurt, 16th century.

- Derech Mitzvosecha** — Compendium of fundamental Chasidic discourses on many *mitzvos* of the Torah by the third Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch (the “Tzemach Tzedek”). Also known as “*Ta’amei Hamitzvos*.” First published in 1911, in Poltova Ukraine.
- Divrei David** — Supercommentary to Rashi’s commentary on the Torah by Rabbi David ben Shmuel HaLevi (1586-1667), author of *Taz*, a major commentary on the *Shulchan Aruch*.
- Drashos Haran** — Fundamental discourses by Rabbi Nissim of Gerona, Spain (14th century). See: *Ran*.
- Eitz Yosef** — Commentary to *Ein Ya’akov*, the homiletic passages of the *Talmud*, by Rabbi Chanoch Zundel (d. 1867).
- Emunos v’Deos** — Classic philosophical work written by Sa’adiah Ga’on, discussing the basic foundations of Judaism. First published in Constantinople in 1562. (See: *Sa’adiah Ga’on*)
- Epistle to Yemen** — Letter written by the *Rambam* in 1172 to the Jews of Yemen who were suffering from a fanatical Muslim movement that threatened the existence of their community.
- Gur Aryeh** — Supercommentary to Rashi’s commentary on the Torah by the *Maharal* of Prague, Rabbi Yehudah Loewe, (1512-1609), Chief Rabbi in Moravia, Posen, and Prague. Author of numerous works in all fields of Torah. He was a descendant of King David. All the *Chabad Rebbeim* are descendants of the *Maharal*.
- Hadar Zekeinim** — Commentary to the Torah by the Tosafists of France and Germany from around 1100-1300. First published in 1840.
- Har Tzvi** — Responsa by Rabbi Tzvi Pesach Frank (1874-1960), Rabbi of Jerusalem for many decades; active in establishing the chief rabbinate of Israel.
- Hatamim** — Scholarly journal published by the Students’ Organization of the Lubavitcher Yeshivah in Warsaw. A total of eight issues were printed, between 1935 and 1937.
- Hayom Yom** — Handbook of chasidic insights following the calendar, compiled by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson. First printed in 1942.
- Ibn Ezra** — R’ Avraham (1080-1164). Born in Spain, he was the author of a classic commentary to *Tanach*, and was also a prominent grammarian and poet.
- Igeres Hateshuvah** — Third section of *Tanya*, discussing the concept of *Teshuvah* according to Talmudic and Kabbalistic sources (see *Tanya*).
- Ikarim** — “Book of Principles” which stresses three fundamental aspects of Jewish belief – faith in G-d, Torah from Sinai, and reward and punishment – by R’ Yosef Albo (1380-1444) of Spain.
- Imray Shefer** — Supercommentary to *Rashi’s* and *Mizrachi’s* commentary on the Torah by R’ Nasan Nata Shapira (d. 1577). First published in 1597.
- Iyun Ya’akov** — Commentary to the homiletic passages of the *Talmud* by Rabbi Ya’akov Back Reischer (1670-1733), which appears in standard editions of *Ein Ya’akov*.
- Kesef Mishneh** — Commentary to *Rambam’s Mishneh Torah* by R’ Yosef Caro, author of *Shulchan Aruch*.
- Kli Yakar** — Commentary on the Torah by Rabbi Shlomo Ephraim Lunshitz (c.1550-1619), Rosh Yeshiva in Lemberg and Rabbi of Prague.
- Kuzari** — Important work on Jewish Philosophy by Rabbi Yehuda Halevi (1074-1141) written in the form of a dialogue between the King of the Khazars and a Jewish scholar.
- Levush Ha’ohrah** — Supercommentary to Rashi’s commentary on the Torah by Rabbi Mordechai Yaffe (c. 1535-1612). Commonly known as the “Levush” after the ten works he wrote which contain that word within their names.
- Likutei Torah** – Fundamental chasidic discourses of Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, author of the *Shulchan Aruch Ha’Rav* and *Tanya*, on Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.
- Likutei Sichos** — 39-volume work of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, analyzing all parts of the Torah in an original manner and bringing them into harmony with one another. Published by Va’ad Lehafatzas Sichos (Kehos) from 1962 to 2001.
- Magid Mishneh** – Commentary to *Rambam’s Mishneh Torah*, by Rabbi Vidal of Tolosa (c. 1360), printed in standard editions.
- Maharik** — Rabbi Yosef ben Shlomo Kolon (1420-1480) of France, and later northern Italy. Author of classic responsa and teacher of Rabbi Ovadiah of Bartanura. His commentary to the Torah was first published in Jerusalem in 1970.
- Maharsha** — Acronym for *Moreinu HaRav Shmuel Eliezer Halevi Eidel’s* of Ostroh, Poland (1555-1632), Rosh Yeshiva and Rabbi in a number of the leading communities of Poland. Author of important commentaries on the *Talmud*, divided into halachic and Aggadic sections.
- Maharshal** — Acronym for Rabbi Shlomo ben Yechiel Luria (1510-1573), famed Talmudist, author of *Yam Shel Shlomo*, *Chochmas Shlomo*, *Yerios Shlomo*, and other important works.
- Maharzu** — Commentary to the *Midrash Rabah* by Rabbi Ze’ev Wolf Einhorn (19th century). (See “*Midrash Rabah*”)
- Malbim** — Acronym for *Meir Leibush ben Yechiel Michel* (1809-1879), Rabbi in Germany, Romania, and Russia. Author of popular Bible commentary which connects the Oral and Written traditions.

- Maskil leDavid** — Supercommentary to Rashi's commentary on the Torah by Rabbi David Pardo (1710-1792), Rabbi in Sarajevo and Jerusalem, author of important commentaries on *Tosefta* and *Sifri*. He was one of the leading Sephardic Torah scholars of the eighteenth century.
- Matnos Kehunah** — Commentary on *Midrash Rabbah* by Rabbi Yissachar Ber HaKohen (c.1520-1590), a student of the *Rama*.
- Mechilta** — Halachic *Midrash* of the Tannaic period to the Book of Exodus.
- Megaleh Amukos** — 252 explanations of Moshe's Prayer in *Parshas Vaeschanan* and 1000 explanations on the small alef in the first word of *Vayikra*, according to Kabbalah, by R' Noson Noteh Shapiro. First printed in Cracow in 1637.
- Megilas Esther** — Scholarly commentary to *Sefer haMitzvos* defending the *Rambam* against attacks from the *Ramban*, by Rabbi Yitzchok Lioven. First published in Venice in 1591.
- Me'or Einayim** — Chasidic commentary to the Torah by Rabbi Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl (1730-1797), a student of the *Baal Shem Tov* and the *Maggid of Mezritch*. First published in Slavita, 1798.
- Meiri** — Extensive Commentary to the Talmud by R' Menachem HaMeiri (c. 1249-c. 1306).
- Metzudos** — Commentary to the Prophets and Writings, consisting of two parts, *Metzudas Tziyon*, which explains the meaning of individual words, and *Metzudos David*, a running commentary to the text. Initial manuscripts of the commentary were authored by Rabbi David Altschuler, and published shortly before his passing in 1753. The commentary was edited and completed by his son, Rabbi Yechiel Hillel, and published in 1780. The commentary has attained great popularity for being concise and comprehensive.
- Midrash** — Aggadic and Halachic teachings of the Talmudic period arranged according to the verses of the Torah.
- Midrash Hagadol** — Midrashic anthology arranged by R' David al-Adeni of South Arabia (13th century). Many Midrashic teachings which were lost throughout the course of time have been preserved in this work. First printed in 1967 in Jerusalem.
- Midrash Lekach Tov** — (also known as *Pesikta Zutrasa*). Midrashic anthology arranged by R' Toviah Hagadol (1036-1108) of Greece and Bulgaria.
- Midrash Rabah** — A major collection of homilies and commentaries on the Torah, ascribed to R' Oshiah Rabah (c. 3rd century), perhaps assembled during the early Geonic period. First printed in Constantinople 1512.
- Mikdash Melech** — Commentary to the *Zohar* culled from the works of R. Chaim Vital, R. Avraham Azulai, and their students R. Yaakov Pinto, R. Yeshaya Cohen and R. Moshe Zacutto.
- Minchah Belulah** — Commentary to the Torah by R' Avraham Menachem Rapaport (c. 1540-1604), Italian Torah scholar, doctor and grammarian.
- Minchas Chinuch** — Scholarly supercommentary to *Sefer haChinuch* by Rabbi Yosef Babad (1800-1875), Rabbi of Tarnipol, Poland.
- Mishnah** — Fundamental collection of the legal pronouncements and discussion of the *Tanna'im*, edited by Rabbi Yehuda haNassi early in the third century. The *Mishnah* is the basic text of the Oral Law.
- Mishneh Torah** — 14-volume halachic code by *Rambam* (Maimonides) encompassing all the laws found in the Talmud.
- Mitteler Rebbe** — Rabbi Dov Ber Schneuri (1773-1827), son of Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi; second Lubavitcher Rebbe.
- Mizrachi** — Exhaustive supercommentary to Rashi's commentary on the Torah by Rabbi Eliyahu Mizrachi (1450-1525) of Constantinople, Chief Rabbi of the Turkish Empire.
- Moreh Nevuchim** — "Guide for the Perplexed" by Maimonides.
- Moshav Zekeinim** — Anthology of comments of about 130 different sources, the majority of whom are Tosafists of France and Germany, circa. 1100-1300. First printed in 1959.
- Nachalas Ya'akov** — Supercommentary to Rashi's commentary on the Torah by Rabbi Ya'akov Yekl Solnick. First published in Cracow in 1642.
- Nimukei Yosef** — Halachic commentary on *Sefer Hahalachos* (of the *Rif*), by R' Yosef Chaviva of Spain (14-15th centuries).
- Noda Biyehudah** — Halachic Responsa of Rabbi Ezekiel Landau, (1713-1793) Chief Rabbi of Prague.
- Ohr haChayim** — Commentary on the Torah by Talmudic and Kabbalist scholar Rabbi Chaim ben Attar (1696-1743).
- Ohr haTorah** — Extensive exposition of *Chabad* chasidic thought by the third Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel (the *Tzemach Tzedek*, 1789-1866). Printed in New York between 1951 and 1983 in 48 volumes.
- Ohr Torah** — Anthology of Chasidic commentaries by Rabbi Dovber, the *Maggid of Mezritch* (d. 1773). First published in Koretz in 1781.
- Orach Chayim** — One of the four sections of the *Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch*, dealing with laws that follow a time cycle.

- Onkelos** — Proselyte (c. 90 C.E.) who reinstated a forgotten, authoritative translation of the Torah into Aramaic, which was read alongside the Torah in Talmudic times to assist the congregation in understanding the Torah reading.
- Pane'ach Raza** — Commentary to the Torah by R' Yitzchak ben Yehudah Halevi of France, 13th century. First printed in Prague in 1607.
- Parashas Derachim** — Treatises by Rabbi Yehudah Rozanes (1657-1727) of Constantinople, Turkey, author of *Mishneh Lemelech*, a major commentary to *Rambam's Mishneh Torah*.
- Pesachim** — Tractate of Talmud in the Order of *Moed* (Festivals).
- Pesikta Rabasi** — Compendium of teachings by Sages of the Talmud, first published in Prague in 1653.
- Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer** — Midrashic work by the school of Eliezer ben Hyrcanus (c. 100). First published in Constantinople in 1514.
- Pnei Moshe** — Running commentary to the *Jerusalem Talmud*, by Rabbi Moshe Margulies of Amsterdam and Zamut. (1710-1781).
- Rabeinu Chananel** — (died c. 1056). Author of important commentary to the Talmud, and commentary to the Torah. Headed Yeshivah in Kairouan, North Africa.
- Rabeinu Tam** — Rabbi Yaakov ben Meir (1100-1171), his Talmudic discourses served as the basis for the *Tosfos* commentary to the *Talmud*. He often challenged *Rashi's* interpretations, offering original and brilliant insights. *Rabeinu Tam* was also a successful wine merchant and financier.
- Radvaz** — (c. 1480-1573) Acronym for Rabbi David ibn Zimra, Chief Rabbi of Egypt. Author of a commentary to the *Rambam's Mishneh Torah* and extensive responsa.
- Ralbag** — “Gersonides,” acronym for Rabbi Levi ben Gershom (1288-1344). Author of rationalistic commentary to the Bible.
- Ramak** — R' Moses Cordovero, Kabbalist of 16th century Safed. Student of R' Yosef Caro. Author of numerous works, including *Pardes Rimonim*, a classic work which explains fundamental concepts of Kabbalah.
- Rambam** — “Maimonides,” acronym for Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon, (1135-1204) leading Torah scholar of the Middle Ages. His major works are *Sefer haMitzvos*, *Commentary to the Mishnah*, *Mishneh Torah (Yad Hachazakah)*, a comprehensive code of Jewish law, *Moreh Nevuchim*, “Guide for the Perplexed,” a primary work of Jewish philosophy.
- Ramban** — “Nachmanides” (1194-1270), Acronym for Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman of Gerona, Spain, one of the leading Torah scholars of the Middle Ages; author of major commentary to the Torah and numerous other works.
- Ran** — Acronym for Rabbenu Nissim (1308-1376). Authored an important commentary to the Talmud, published in most major editions.
- Rashbam** — Acronym for Rabbi Shmuel ben Meir, Talmud and Torah Commentator, who supplemented *Rashi's* (his grandfather's) commentary on the Talmud (c. 1085-1174). Brother of *Rabeinu Tam*.
- Rashi** — Acronym for Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki (1040-1105), author of basic commentary on the Bible and Talmud. According to Chasidic tradition, his commentary to the Torah contains allusions to kabalistic concepts.
- Rema** — R' Moshe Isserles (1530-1572), Rav and Rosh Yeshiva of Cracow. Author of many works. Most famous are his Ashkenazic annotations to Rabbi Yosef Caro's *Shulchan Aruch*, which transformed this predominantly Sephardic work into a universal Code of Jewish Law.
- Ritvah** — Acronym for R' Yom Tov Ibn Asevili (1248-1330), Talmudic Commentator and Halachist.
- Riva** — R' Yehudah ben Eliezer. Authored commentary to the Torah in 1313. First printed in Warsaw in 1776.
- Rosh** — Acronym for R' Asher ben Yechiel, Talmudic commentator and author of halachic compendium arranged on the tractates of the *Talmud* (c. 1250-1327).
- Sa'adiah Ga'on** — (882-942) Author of works in many areas of Torah, including the philosophical work, *Emunos v'Deos*.
- Sanhedrin** — Tractate of Talmud in Order of *Nezikin* (Damages).
- S'dei Chemed** — Extensive Halachic encyclopedia by R' Chaim Chizkiyahu Medini (1832-1904), Rav of Karasubazar in Crimea, Russia, and later Chief Rabbi of Chevron in the Land of Israel. Revised edition by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, New York, 1949-1953 (Kehos Publication Society).
- Seder Hadoros** — A chronology of events and personalities from creation until 1696, based on rabbinic sources, by Rabbi Yechiel Heilprin (1660-1746) Lithuanian Rabbi, Kabbalist, and chronicler. First published in 1769.
- Sefer Chasidim** — Classical work of ethical and halachic instruction by R' Yehudah haChasid, (c. 1150-1217).
- Sefer Ha'Agur** — Halachic compendium by R. Yaakov ben Yehuda Landa (Germany, fifteenth century), based primarily on the Tur. Widely used as a source for halachic decisions until the appearance of the *Shulchan Aruch*.

- Sefer haChinuch** — Compendium of basic explanations on the 613 mitzvos by an unknown Spanish author among the *Rishonim* of the 13th century.
- Sefer haMa'amarim Melukat** — Chasidic discourses of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, in six volumes, published by Vaad Lehafatzas Sichos (Kehos) between 1987 and 1992.
- Sefer haMitzvos** — Comprehensive list of the 613 *mitzvos* of the Torah and their basic requirements, by *Rambam*.
- Sefer haSichos** — Public talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, from the years 1986-92.
- Sefer haZikaron** — Supercommentary to *Rashi's* commentary to the Torah, by R' Avraham Bukrat Halevi (15th Century) of Spain. First published in Leghorn in 1845.
- Sforno** — Commentary on the Torah by Rabbi Ovadiah Sforno of Rome and Bologna, Italy (1470-1550).
- Sha'ar haGemul** — Short eschatological treatise of the *Ramban* discussing reward and punishment. In this work the author refutes *Rambam's* assertion that the climax of Creation will be a spiritual "soul world," arguing instead that the Resurrection of the Dead will be the ultimate era of perfection.
- Shach al Hatorah** — Abbreviation for *Sifsei Kohein*, a commentary on the Torah by Rabbi Mordechai Hakohein, incorporating numerous mystical interpretations and *gematrios*. First published in 1610. (Not to be confused with Rabbi Shabsai Hakohein of Cracow, author of *Shach*, a major commentary to the *Shulchan Aruch*).
- Shaloh** — Acronym for *Shnei Luchos Habris* ("The two tablets of the Covenant"), by Rabbi Yeshayah Hurwitz (1560-1630). There is a tradition that the *Tanya* is significantly based on the *Shaloh*.
- Shemoneh Perakim** — Philosophical treatise of *Rambam*, discussing the ills and cures of man's soul, prophecy, reward and punishment, free will, and the rule of the "golden mean."
- Shemos Rabah** — The section of Midrash Rabah on the Book of Exodus. See "*Midrash Rabah*."
- Shitah Mekubetzes** — Compilation of numerous medieval commentaries to the Talmud by R' Betzalel Ashkenazi (1520-1592).
- Shulchan Aruch** — Universally accepted halachic code encompassing all areas of practical halacha, by Rabbi Yosef Caro (1488-1575).
- Sifri** — *Halachic Midrash* on the books of *Bamidbar* and *Devarim*.
- Sifri debay Rav** — Comprehensive commentary to *Sifri* by Rabbi David Pardo (1710-1792), author of *Maskil leDavid*.
- Sifsei Chachomim** — Anthology of supercommentary to *Rashi's* commentary on the Torah by Rabbi Shabsai Bass (1641-1719). First published in 1712.
- Smag** — Acronym for *Sefer Mitzvos Gadol*, an important compendium of the 613 *mitzvos* by the *Tosafist* R' Moshe ben Ya'akov of Coucy (13th century).
- Talmud** — Comprehensive term for the *Mishnah* and *Gemara* as joined in the two compilations known as Babylonian Talmud (6th century) and Jerusalem Talmud (5th century).
- Tanchuma** — Aggadic Midrash on the Torah by Rabbi Tanchuma bar Abba (4th cen.)
- Tanna debey Eliyahu** — A *Midrash*, consisting of two parts, whose final redaction took place at the end of the tenth century of the Common Era. The first part is called "Seder Eliyahu Rabah" (31 chapters); the second, "Seder Eliyahu Zuta" (15 chapters).
- Tanya** — Primary chasidic text authored by Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi. (See: *Alter Rebbe*)
- Targum Yonason** — Elaborate Aramaic translation of the Torah by Yonason ben Uziel, a disciple of Hillel.
- Tiferes Yehonason** — Commentary to the Torah by Rabbi Yehonason Eybeshutz (d. 1764) of Prague, Metz and Altona.
- Tikunei Zohar** — Section of the *Zohar* discussing seventy permutations of the first word of the Torah – *Bereishis*, and commentaries on various other sections of Scripture.
- Torah Shlaimah** — Comprehensive encyclopedia of all Talmudic and Midrashic commentaries on the Torah, with scholarly notes and essays, by R' Menachem Kasher (1895-1983). This work is still being compiled and currently spans 47 volumes, covering the books of *Bereishis-Bamidbar*, *Megillos* and *Hagadah Shel Pesach*.
- Torah Temimah** — Anthology of main Talmudic references to the Torah, along with commentary, by Rabbi Baruch Epstein (1860-1942), son of Rabbi Yechiel Michel Epstein, author of *Aruch Hashulchan*.
- Toras Ha'olah** — A work discussing the measurements of the Holy Temple and reasons for sacrifices according to philosophy by *Rema*. (See: *Rema*)
- Toras Kohanim** — *Halachic Midrash* to the Book of Leviticus. Also known as *Sifra*.
- Toras Levi Yitzchak** — Kabbalistic commentary to the Talmud by Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson (1878-1944), Chief Rabbi of the Ukrainian city of Yekaterinoslav (Dnepropetrovsk) from 1907-1939, and father of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson. First published in New York in 1971.
- Tosfos** — Talmudic commentary of the French, German and English rabbis of the 12th and 13th centuries.
- Tsafnas Pane'ach** — Precedent setting commentary to the Torah and *Rambam's Mishneh Torah* which innovated a fresh, deeply analytical approach to Talmudic study, by Rabbi

Yosef Rozin, Chief Rabbi of Dvinsk, known as the *Rogatchover Gaon* (1858-1936). He also authored Responsa and a commentary on the Torah by the same name. *Likutei Sichos* makes much use of the Rogatchover's methodology.

Tzemach Tzedek — Title of responsa authored by the third Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch (1789-1866), after which he is usually referred to.

Tzror Hamor — Commentary to the Torah by R' Avraham Saba (15th century) of Portugal, and later Morocco.

Tur Ha'aruch — Second half of commentary to the Torah by Rabbi Ya'akov Meir ben Asher (1268-1340), author of the Tur. (See *Ba'al Haturim*)

Turei Even — Prodigious commentary to tractates *Rosh Hashanah*, *Chagigah*, *Taanis* and *Megilah* by Rabbi Aryeh Leib of Metz, author of *Sha'agas Aryeh*.

Tzeidah Laderech — Supercommentary to *Rashi's* commentary on the Torah by Rabbi Yissachar Ber Ailenberg. First printed in Prague in 1623.

Vayikra Rabah — The section of *Midrash Rabah* on the Book of Leviticus. (See "*Midrash Rabah*")

Vilna Ga'on — R' Eliyahu ben Shlomo of Vilna (1720-1797) Lithuanian Talmudist, Kabbalist, grammarian, and mathematician.

Yad Malachi — Compendium of rules and principles on which various major Rabbinic texts are based (including the principles on which the *Mishneh Torah* is based) by R' Malachi ben R' Yaakov haKohain, published in 1767.

Yefay To'ar — Major commentary on *Midrash Rabah*, by R' Shmuel Yaffa-Ashkenazi, Rabbi in Constantinople, 16th century.

Yalkut Re'uvaini — An anthology of Midrashic and Kabbalistic commentaries on the Torah, collected by Rabbi Avraham Re'uvain Hakohain Katz of Prague (d. 1673).

Yalkut Shimoni — Comprehensive Midrashic anthology, covering the entire Bible, attributed to Rabbi Shimon HaDarshan of Frankfurt (13th century).

Yere'im — Halachic discussion of the *mitzvos*, by Tosafist R. Eliezer ben R. Shmuel of Metz (France, twelfth century) a student of *Rabeinu Tam*. First printed in condensed form in Venice, in 1565. Unabridged version published in 1892 in Vilna.

Yerios Shlomo — Supercommentary to *Rashi's* commentary on the Torah. (See: *Maharshal*)

Yoma — Tractate of Talmud in the Order of *Mo'ed* (Festivals).

Zohar — Basic text of Kabbalah, compiled by Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai and his disciples in the form of a commentary on the Torah. First published in the late 13th century by Rabbi Moshe de Leon (c.1250-1305), in Spain.



לזכות

הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' **חיים מילער** שיחי'

וזוגתו מרת **חנה רות** תחי'

וילדיהם **לאה, מנחם מענדל, חי' מושקא ולוי יצחק** שיחיו

והוריהם שיחיו



לעילוי נשמת

ר' **יעקב** בן ר' **מנחם דוב**

ניומאן

זכרונו לברכה

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.



לעילוי נשמת

הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' **יוסף יצחק** בן ר' **יעקב**

ליפסקער

זכרונו לברכה

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

לעילוי נשמות

הרה"ג הרה"ח ר' **מרדכי זאב** הכהן גוטניק
החסיד ר' **אברהם** וזוגתו **זעלדא פייגלין**
הרה"ג הרה"ח ר' **אשר** וזוגתו **חי'ה בת'ה אברמסאן**
הרה"ג הרה"ח ר' **דוד ארי'ה** הכהן **יארמוש**
זכרונם לברכה
תהיינה נשמותיהם צרורות בצרור החיים



ולזכות

הרה"ג הרה"ת ר' **שלום דובער** שיחי' הכהן גוטניק
ראב"ד דק"ק מעלבורן יע"א
וזוגתו מרת **דבורה** תחי'



מרת **שרה נחמה** תחי' **יארמוש**



נדפס ע"י

הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' **מאיר** שיחי' הכהן גוטניק
וזוגתו מרת **שיינדל טעמא** תחי'
בניהם ובנותיהם:
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