





---

THE GUTNICK EDITION

---

חמשה חומשי תורה  
**Chumash**

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

ספר בראשית

*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  
**Rabbi Chaim Miller**

**First Edition . . . . . September 2003**  
**Second Edition . . . . . August 2004**  
**Third Edition . . . . . June 2005**  
**Fourth Edition . . . . . September 2008**

CHUMASH - THE BOOK OF GENESIS

with commentary from Classic Rabbinic Texts and the Lubavitcher Rebbe

ISBN-13: 978-0-9725010-1-9 (Set: 978-0-9725010-0-2)

ISBN-10: 0-9725010-1-0 (Set: 0-9725010-0-2)

LCCN: 2008928858

© Copyright 2003-8 by Chaim Miller

Published and Distributed by:

Kol Menachem

827 Montgomery Street, Brooklyn N.Y. 11213

For orders tel: 1-888-580-1900 718-951-6328 Fax:718-953-3346

[www.kolmenachem.com](http://www.kolmenachem.com) e-mail: [info@kolmenachem.com](mailto:info@kolmenachem.com)

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission from the copyright holder, except in the case of brief quotations in reviews for inclusion in a magazine, newspaper or broadcast.





## **Table of Contents**

---

<i>Preface</i> . . . . .	ix
<i>Foreword</i> . . . . .	xi
<i>Bereishis</i> . . . . .	1
<i>Noach</i> . . . . .	39
<i>Lech Lecha</i> . . . . .	69
<i>Vayeira</i> . . . . .	99
<i>Chayei Sarah</i> . . . . .	139
<i>Toldos</i> . . . . .	165
<i>Vayeitzei</i> . . . . .	191
<i>Vayishlach</i> . . . . .	223
<i>Vayeishev</i> . . . . .	257
<i>Mikeitz</i> . . . . .	285
<i>Vayigash</i> . . . . .	317
<i>Vayechi</i> . . . . .	339
<i>Haftaros</i> . . . . .	365
<i>Bibliography</i> . . . . .	407





# Foreword

**W**hat can a Torah commentator living in our times possibly add to two thousand years of Rabbinic scholarship? He might attempt to interpret the Torah as it relates to modern times. He may reorganize the thoughts of his predecessors, rendering them more accessible to his own generation. Or, he might attempt to innovate gems of profundity, lifting the Torah student to new horizons of inspiration.

In his commentaries to the Torah, the Lubavitcher Rebbe demonstrates all of these qualities. His words have highlighted the relevance of ancient teachings to a generation which faced the uneasy task of acclimatizing to postwar life in the western world. His voice was heard by Torah scholars, Chasidim and non-Chasidim, women, children, and even non-Jews. He skillfully articulated Talmud, Midrash, Halacha, and Chasidic teachings, bringing depth and warmth to a vast variety of Torah subjects. His vast body of over one hundred published works demonstrates expertise in virtually every field of specialized Torah study, including Bible, Talmud, Midrash, Jewish Philosophy, Mussar, Kabbalah and Chasidic teachings. His most famous work, bearing the deceptively unsophisticated title of *Likutei Sichos* (“Selected Sermons”), cites literally thousands of different sources in exhaustive footnotes throughout its thirty nine volumes.

However, one particular area of the Rebbe's Torah writings which stands out, perhaps more than all others, as being *truly* original are his talks on *Rashi's* commentary to the Torah – colloquially referred to as “*Rashi Sichos*.” It is on these studies that the current work has been predominantly based.

## THE “RASHI SICHA”

*Rashi*—an acronym for Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki (1040-1105)—authored what is considered to be the most fundamental of Rabbinic commentaries on the Bible and Talmud. His commentary on the Torah was the first Hebrew book to be printed (in Rome c. 1470), and is appended to all standard editions of the Chumash.

Rashi's commentary is considered to be basic to the understanding of the text of Chumash, and has been the subject of numerous volumes of “supercommentary,” which attempt to explain the precise reasoning behind each of Rashi's comments. Most prominent of the supercommentators include Rabbi Yehudah Loewe, (the “*Maharal*” of Prague, 1512-1609), Rabbi R' Eliyahu Mizrachi (1450-1525) and R' David ben Shmuel HaLevi (1586-1667, author of *Taz*, a major commentary on the *Shulchan Aruch*). These are a mere few

of over one hundred published works of supercommentary on *Rashi's* commentary to the Torah.

In 1964, shortly after the passing of his mother, the Rebbe began to devote a portion of his regular public talks to developing an innovative approach to the study of *Rashi's* commentary to the Torah. This continued on a regular basis until 1988, by which time over 800 such talks had been delivered, recorded and published.

The Rebbe argued that *Rashi's* commentary was written to be understood by a small child who is studying scripture for the first time. This assertion is based on *Rashi's* own words, that “I only come to explain the simple meaning of scripture” (*Rashi to Bereishis* 3:8). Thus, any explanation of *Rashi's* words which would require a knowledge of Talmud or Midrash is immediately rejected, for the child who is beginning a study of scripture has not yet learned these texts. In fact, a solution based on a later verse, or a later comment of *Rashi* is also unacceptable, for we can presume that *Rashi* expected his reader to know no more than what he has already learned.

Thus, while the classic supercommentators interpreted *Rashi* through the lens of Talmudic and Midrashic literature, the Rebbe contended that this was not *Rashi's* true intention. Rather, each line of *Rashi's* monumental commentary is to be understood with two basic tools: a.) Simple logic, basic enough for a five-year-old to appreciate. b.) A knowledge of the verses and *Rashi's* comments up to this point.

But somehow, the simple answers are the hardest to find. One intellectual feat which is difficult for the scholar is simplicity, and the greater the scholar the harder he finds it to embrace the simple logic of a child.

The Rebbe, however, despite having achieved mastery in so many areas of Torah study (and academic excellence), never lost the ability to relate to ordinary people. It was once said of the Rebbe that, “His mind is that of a great genius, and yet he believes with the simple faith of a small child.” This too is reflected in the Rebbe's talks, for after challenging the greatest commentators on their “own ground” of Talmudic agility, he then proceeds to offer an answer that even a small child could have thought of, if he would have applied his mind with sufficient effort.

Being simple and “obvious” in nature, the Rebbe's solutions are extremely convincing. This quality is enhanced by his technique of analyzing the precise phraseology of *Rashi* meticulously, explaining the necessity for each sentence, word, and often, letter.

Obviously, a thorough analysis of the method and system of the *Rashi Sichos* is far beyond the scope of this short introduction, and much has already been written on the subject.<sup>1</sup>

The current work is a humble attempt to generate further interest in the study of these fascinating talks among a broader audience. Since each Parsha of the Torah has been the subject of approximately sixteen such talks, they collectively cover a vast range of major issues in each of the 53 Parshiyos of the Torah. Thus, when placed alongside each other, they form a formidable body of Torah commentary.

---

1. *Klalei Rashi* (“Principles of Rashi [Study]) by Rabbi Tuvia Bloy (expanded edition 1991, Kehos Publication Society) cites some 389 (!) principles for the study of *Rashi* which are innovated in *Likutei Sichos*. See also *Chumash Peshuto Shel Mikrah* by Rabbi Avraham Zayentz (published by the author in 2001).

Understandably, the entire project has been carried out with considerable trepidation. To provide the reader with the full text of the Chumash in Hebrew and English, together with the fundamental texts of *Rashi* and Onkelos, leaves little room in which to compact the *Sichos*. Add to that the fact that the Rebbe's *Sichos* do not lend themselves to simplification or translation. Each *Sicha* is truly a work of art – where countless details and ideas coexist harmoniously – and, like any work of art, as soon as a few details are compromised the entire structure is weakened. In order to be explained in English, many ideas need to be amplified and clarified, leaving no space for many other beautiful and inspiring comments found within the *Sicha*.

In all of his edited talks, the Rebbe cross-referenced his own ideas to those of the classic commentators, indicating clearly that he did not wish his own ideas to be perceived in isolation of the Rabbinic scholarship which preceded. Therefore, in order to remain loyal to his directive it has proved crucial to include a digest of “classic commentaries” to the Torah, on each issue which is addressed within the *Sichos*. However, in this edition the “classic commentaries” and the *Sichos* have been kept distinct (but cross-referenced) for the sake of clarity. This also means that the Chumash together with the “classic commentaries” can be appreciated separately, as a complete work in itself.

Finally, numerous ideas from the Rebbe's vast body of Chasidic teachings and practical directives have been included on the page (in shaded boxes), under the headings “Sparks of Chasidus” (Chasidic insights) and “The Last Word” (Practical directives). The main body of the text (entitled “*Toras Menachem*”) is based predominantly on the Rebbe's *Rashi Sichos* which, as argued above, is the most fundamental contribution of the Rebbe to the study of Chumash.

Despite the fact that this volume proudly bears the Rebbe's name, its contents were not checked by him personally, though every effort has been made to be loyal to the original source. At the end of each explanation a reference has been provided for the reader to research the topic further. Our words here are intended as no more than a “taste” in order to tempt the reader to open up the *Sicha* itself, or ask his teacher to study it with him. While we have taken every precaution to be loyal to the original ideas, it is inevitable that the adaptation here will not retain the impact and character of the original. Thus, we urge the reader not to judge the Rebbe's *sichos* from what is presented here. This is merely an extremely diluted sample which is intended to encourage further study of a fascinating and enlightening original text.

## **FURTHER NOTES ON TRANSLATION AND ADAPTATION**

In addition to the Hebrew texts of Chumash, *Rashi* and Onkelos, the English texts are divided into seven sections: a.) English translation of the Chumash. b.) “Classic Questions” c.) Summary of the *mitzvos* found in each Parsha according to the *Sefer haChinuch*. d.) Commentaries of the Rebbe, divided into four parts: i.) *Toras Menachem* (explanations at the simple level of Torah interpretation), ii.) Sparks of Chasidus, iii.) The Last Word (practical insights), iv.) Explanations of the name of each Parsha.

## ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF CHUMASH

In his “Bible Unauthorized,”<sup>2</sup> Moose<sup>3</sup> highlights the pitfalls of translating the Chumash into English:

*“Even the most perfect literal translation would not truly represent the Bible. It was not composed in such a way as to permit a literal translation.*

*The original text of the Bible, particularly of the Pentateuch, is in reality no more than a shorthand text, but so cleverly composed that it makes sense even in its shorthand form, while its full meaning is discernable only by making use of the keys incorporated in it through a code of many signs, elaborated for that purpose...*

*A literal translation is thus out of the question if one is to understand the true meaning of the Bible. The correct way to understand the Bible is to give each verse in its shorthand text, and then give the traditional commentary...”*

To address the above problem, numerous comments have been included within the current translation. All the comments are based on *Rashi’s* commentary to the Torah, which is the foremost of all rabbinic commentaries.

Until recent years, an English translation of Chumash according to *Rashi’s* commentary was not available. The translations which did remain loyal to classic rabbinic interpretation adopted a “pluralistic” approach, following whichever commentator provided the most straightforward or aesthetically satisfying interpretation to each verse.

Recently, a number of translations have emerged that are loyal to *Rashi*, including those of Goldberg<sup>4</sup>, Moore<sup>5</sup>, Herczeg<sup>6</sup> and Scherman<sup>7</sup>. However, all these works have chosen to draw only from *Rashi’s* shorter and less elaborate comments. Presumably this is based on a presumption that *Rashi’s* commentary is a mixture of literal interpretation together with longer, midrashic insights and parables, the latter of which could be omitted in a plain translation.

A cornerstone of the Rebbe’s analysis is that all of *Rashi’s* words are essential to a basic understanding of the text. Therefore, if *Rashi* on occasion makes a seemingly elaborate comment, or cites a midrashic teaching, this in no way represents a temporary deviation from his remit to “explain the simple meaning of scripture.” Rather, each comment, however elaborate it may be, is required in order to understand the *literal* meaning of scripture.<sup>8</sup>

Therefore, in the current translation—which is entirely new—we have attempted to incorporate many more of *Rashi’s* comments than in previous works. Ideas from *Rashi* have

---

2. *In the Beginning—The Bible Unauthorized* by A. H. Moose (pp. 23-24, 28). First published in 1942. Revised edition by David Sternlight Ph.D., published by Thirty Seven Books, 2001. This work was promoted by the previous Lubavitcher Rebbe (see his *Igros Kodesh* vol. 7, p. 399).

3. A pseudonym for Rabbi Aharon Levit, editor of the Lubavitcher Journal *Hakriyah Vehakedushah*. For biographical details see *Toldos Chabad Be’artsos Habris* (Kehos Publication Society 1988), pp. 344-5.

4. *The Linear Chumash* by Rabbi Pesach Goldberg (Feldheim Publications, 1992).

5. *Torah - The Margolin Edition*, by Rabbi Binyamin S. Moore (Feldheim Publications, 1999).

6. *Rashi - Commentary on the Torah* by Rabbi Yisrael Isser Zvi Herczeg (Mesorah Publications 1994).

7. *The Chumash - Stone Edition*, by Rabbi Nosson Scherman (Mesorah Publications 1993).

8. See *Klalei Rashi* chap. 1.

been placed in brackets to distinguish them from the words of scripture.

Obviously it has not been possible to include all of *Rashi's* comments in a translation, but it is hoped that the numerous additional comments which have been added will give the reader a greater appreciation of the Chumash as it has been learned classically for hundreds of years.

The translation itself has been written in a contemporary style, attempting to make the words of Torah relevant to the modern reader. Nevertheless, every attempt has been made to remain loyal to scripture. Unlike Kaplan<sup>9</sup>, we have not omitted awkward words or abandoned translation for idiom. However, we have also rejected the opposite extreme exemplified by Scherman<sup>7</sup>, where the precise sequence of words within each verse is preserved, and loyalty to original Hebrew grammar has led to abnormal English usage.

In addition, the text has been punctuated and paragraphed at the discretion of the translator, following the precedent of Kaplan and Scherman. Headings have been inserted within the English translation, to focus the attention of the reader, in a similar fashion to Kaplan. Practical *mitzvos* have been “bulleted” to highlight their significance.

## CLASSIC QUESTIONS

Due to limitations of space and for the sake of clarity the following guidelines were followed:

- a.) The issues discussed are limited to those which are analyzed in the Sichos adapted within “Toras Menachem.”
- b.) The commentators quoted are usually those cited in the original Sichos.
- c.) The commentators’ words are paraphrased, rather than translated (with the exception of *Rashi's* words, which are usually translated).
- d.) The commentators are depicted as “debating” a particular “Classic Question.” However, in most cases this “debate” is somewhat artificial, since each commentator will invariably be discussing a range of issues in the original text from which the comment cited here will be a tiny portion.
- e.) Sometimes, the ideas are arranged so that one commentator appears to “pick up” where the previous comment finished, which may not be the case in the original.
- f.) Each commentator is depicted as answering a particular “Classic Question,” though, in the original, he may not have been addressing this question directly.

## TORAS MENACHEM

Only a small fraction of the Rebbe’s published teachings were actually penned by the Rebbe himself. The vast majority of his works are transcripts of public talks which were transcribed by Chasidim (*hanachos*<sup>10</sup>). A significant number of these talks were

---

9. *The Living Torah* by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, (Moznaim Publishing Corporation 1981).

10. These have been collected and published in two major works: *Sichos Kodesh* (50 volumes), containing public talks from the years 5710-5741 (1950-1981), published in 1985-7, and *Hisvaduyos*, containing public talks from the years 5742-5752 (1982-1992), published by *Va’ad Hanachos Belahak* (43 volumes).

reconstructed by a team of scholars, with numerous cross-references to classic rabbinic texts, and edited extensively by the Rebbe for publication (*Likutei Sichos*<sup>11</sup> and *Sefer Hasichos*<sup>12</sup>).

The Sicha has a distinct style, described succinctly by Solomon<sup>13</sup>:

*“The genre of edited Sicha usually comprised inaugural questions and explorations of themes, tentative hypotheses, subsequent redefinition and restatement of the Sicha’s central concern, and a critical elucidation of the subject matter under analysis, thus facilitating the resolution of initial dilemmas.”*

The introductory sections of a Sicha (the “inaugural questions and explorations of themes”) are often extremely complicated. The Rebbe may ask as many as ten or fifteen sequential questions, each accompanied by numerous proofs and logical substantiation. Often, these questions focus on hairsplitting details (described by Sacks<sup>14</sup> as “microscopic tensions”) within the phraseology of source texts. In the light of such an intellectually demanding introduction, some effort is required to appreciate the “tentative hypotheses” which follow.

To reduce the level of complexity, most English adaptations have focussed on delivering only the “critical elucidation” which lies at the heart of a Sicha. This however, diminishes the impact of the ideas substantially, as the solution is no longer seen to resolve a host of “initial dilemmas.” Thus, Solomon<sup>15</sup> criticizes such adaptations as being “skeletal.”

In this edition, we have attempted to preserve, to a considerable extent, the “explorations of themes” and analysis which occurs at the beginning of a Sicha. In order to simplify matters, sources which are cited in the Sicha have been recorded separately in the section entitled “Classic Questions.” This enables the reader to first familiarize himself with the rabbinic debate which is to be discussed in the Sicha, enabling the Sicha to be adapted in a more succinct form.

Nevertheless, numerous questions, hypotheses and their solutions have been omitted for the sake of brevity and clarity. Thus, the reader should bear in mind that the English adaptation contains but a few ideas which have been extracted from a Sicha which, hopefully, form a self-contained argument in themselves. Obviously, the adaptations differ in style tremendously from the original Sichos and, besides the omissions, the sequence of arguments has often been edited to be compatible with the format of this work.

Nevertheless, all the ideas contained in this work are to be found in the Rebbe’s published works. The editor has taken extreme care not to add arguments of his own. On a few rare occasions a brief note or cross-reference has been added, delineated clearly by square brackets.

A final note of importance: In addition to drawing from *Likutei Sichos*, we have also

11. Published by *Va’ad Lehafatzas Sichos* between 1962 and 2001 (39 volumes).

12. Containing talks from 5747-5752, published by *Va’ad Lehafatzas Sichos* in 12 volumes.

13. *Educational Teachings of Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson* by Aryeh Solomon (Jason Aronson 2000), page 25.

14. *Torah Studies* by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi of the United Kingdom and British Commonwealth. Published by Lubavitch Foundation UK (1986).

15. *Ibid.* p. 324.

referred considerably to *hanachos*, transcripts of the Rebbe's talks which he did not edit (see note 10 above).

Although these *hanachos* were not edited by the Rebbe, they remain the only extant source of many of his teachings on *Rashi*, and we have relied on them considerably. This decision was largely based on the Rebbe's own words to a volume of *hanachos* of the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe (Rabbi Sholom Dovber Schneersohn) which he published in 1946<sup>16</sup>:

*"Those who transcribed the sichos were veteran chasidim to whom every word and utterance of their Rebbe was holy to them. There is no doubt that they made every possible effort to preserve the wording of their teacher, not to add to or detract from it. While it is possible that, due to the length of the Sicha etc., they erred in transcribing some words...generally speaking, the content is certainly accurate."*

## SPARKS OF CHASIDUS

There is a tradition that, in addition to explaining Chumash at the literal level, *Rashi's* commentary to the Torah contains allusions to mystical concepts<sup>17</sup>. Thus, virtually every one of the Rebbe's "*Rashi Sichos*" climaxes in a mystical interpretation based on the teachings of Kabbalah and Chasidus. Under the heading of "Sparks of Chasidus" many of these ideas have been included, though they are considerably adapted to be suitable for a reader who has no grounding in Kabbalah or Chasidus. Many insights have also been culled from other talks and chasidic discourses of the Rebbe.

## THE LAST WORD

A further hallmark of the Rebbe's teachings is a strong emphasis on the practical application of Torah concepts in everyday contemporary life. The Rebbe stated repeatedly that the Hebrew word "Torah" is etymologically connected to the word "Hora'ah," meaning instruction<sup>18</sup>. According to the Rebbe, no discussion—however sublime it may be—should remain totally academic.

In this vein, we have included many practical insights that are to be found in the *Sichos*. Once again, limitations of space have forced these ideas to be selected and condensed.

## THE NAME OF THE PARSHA

On a regular basis, the Rebbe would refer to the significance of the name of each Parsha, and explain how the name reflects the content of the entire Parsha<sup>19</sup>. Ideas sampled from these *sichos* have been included at the beginning of each Parsha.

---

16. *Sefer Hasichos Toras Sholom*, Kehos Publication Society, p. iii.

17. See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 1 and note 4 *ibid*. Sources cited in *Klalei Rashi*, chapter 17.

18. See *Zohar* III:53b. See also Solomon, *Educational Teachings* (cited above, note 13), pp. 94-5 and sources cited *loc. cit*.

19. See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 57.

## LIST OF MITZVOS

As an additional aid, a summary of all the *mitzvos* to be found in each Parsha has been included at the end of each Parsha. The reader should note however that the precise division of these *mitzvos* is an issue of contention among the commentators. We have followed the system of *Sefer Hachinuch*, since his codification follows the sequence of the weekly parsha.

## HAFTAROS

The text of the Haftaros has been translated according to the interpretation of *Metzudos*, a pair of commentaries (*Metzudas Tziyon* and *Metzudas David*) by Rabbi Yechiel Hillel Altschuler (eighteenth century), which stresses the plain meaning of the text. In a similar vein to our translation to Chumash, numerous small annotations have been included (in brackets) within the translation, to assist the reader in appreciating the text according to its classic, rabbinic interpretation.

At present, we have only included the text of the Haftaros according to Chabad custom. We have also made no reference to the vast body of rabbinic commentary on the Haftaros (with the exception of *Metzudos*), nor have we attempted to incorporate any of the Rebbe's teachings on the Haftaros.

## NOTES ON TRANSLITERATION

We have followed the transliteration system of Dr. Binyamin Kaplan (Tulane University in New Orleans, L.A.), which has been employed recently in a number of Lubavitch publications:

1. Words with a final *hei* are spelled with a final "h."
2. "Ei" (the vowel-sound in "weight") is used for *tzeirei*.
3. "Ai" is used for the vowel sound in the word "tide."
4. An apostrophe is used between consecutive vowel sounds, as in "mo'eid."
5. An "e" is used for a vocalized *sheva*, e.g. "bemeizid," not "b'meizid."
6. "A" is used for *kamatz*.
7. "O" is used for *cholam*.
8. "I" is used for *chirik*.
9. "F" is preferred to "ph."
10. Doubling of consonants is avoided.
11. "S" is used for *saf*.
12. "Ch" is used for *chaf* and *ches*.

Where it was felt appropriate, various exceptions have been made to the above rules.



## VOWELS AND CANTILLATION MARKS

In this edition, the vowels and cantillation marks in the Hebrew text of the Chumash have been edited to be consistent with accurate source-texts. We have followed three sources: 1) Chumash “Torah Temimah”; 2) The well-known “Koren” Tanach; 3) Tanach according to the Aleppo Codex and other manuscripts, edited by Mordechai Breuer (published by Mosad Harav Kook).

When these texts differ, we have followed the majority, unless there was another source (Minchas Shai or similar) that supported the minority version. When Chumash Torah Temimah is contradicted by the other texts and the difference is significant, we indicate one version inside the Chumash, and the other by a footnote.

The above applies for all variations in vowels or cantillation marks, with the exception of *meseg* (a vertical line under a letter, usually used to denote a secondary accent). Regarding *meseg*, the following guidelines have been adopted:

1.) A regular “light” *meseg*, occurring in any open syllable not immediately followed by the primary accent or by another *meseg*, is printed in every applicable case, and also on the last available syllable, even if there is an available syllable on the previous word (as in 1, unlike 3).

2.) A *meseg* before *hei* or *ches* in words with the roots h-y-h and ch-y-h is likewise printed in every case (as in 1), even in nouns containing these roots (as in 3).

3.) A *meseg* before two identical letters, the first vocalized with a *sheva*, is also universally used (as in 1), except for words where the *masorettes* considered the *sheva* to be silent (as evidenced by 3).

4.) A *meseg* in a closed unaccented syllable containing a *tenuah gedolah* (large vowel) is also always used (following 1), except where using it would require removing a regular light *meseg* immediately preceding it (found in 3).

5.) A *meseg* in a closed syllable (known as “*keveidah*,” heavy) is used based on its occurrence in 3 (unlike 1).

6.) A *meseg* in an open syllable following the accent is used only if there is more than one source.

7.) A *meseg* is used on the word “*vaihi*” if it is accented with a *pashta*, or hyphenated to the next word.

8.) A *meseg* before a guttural at the end of a word – follows 3.

9.) *Meseg* together with *sheva* – follows 3.

## HEBREW TEXT OF RASHI’S COMMENTARY

The Hebrew text of *Rashi*’s commentary to the Torah has been prepared according to the Lubavitcher Rebbe’s directives, printed in *Chumash Shai Lamora*, Jerusalem 5763:

a.) The publisher should not deviate from the common text of *Rashi's* commentary which is to be found in *Chumashim* that have been *widely used* in recent generations. Textual variants should be included only *in footnotes*.

b.) The fact that *Rashi* does not usually cite sources for his comments was intentional. Therefore, no references (other than those made by *Rashi* himself) should be included in the body of the text.

c.) While *Rashi* did not include punctuation marks etc., their inclusion by the publisher may, perhaps, be justified.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to gratefully acknowledge the following people:

Mr. Shmuel Dubosky, for his sustained and dedicated efforts in the editing and critical evaluation of this work; Rabbi Moshe Levin for checking the accuracy of the commentaries and editing the text; Rabbi Mendel Sufrin for checking the accuracy of the English translation of the Chumash. Rabbi Hillel Blesofsky and Mrs. Y. Homnick for checking and proofreading; Rabbi Shmuel Rabin, for editing the vowels and cantillation marks of the Hebrew text.

Rabbi Mordechai Sufrin, Rabbi Shalom Osdoba, Rabbi Heschel Greenberg, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Greenberg, Rabbi Uri Kaploun, Rabbi Daniel Levy for their assistance.

My wife, Chani, for her constant encouragement and emergency proofreading.

My parents and parents-in-law for supporting all my endeavors.

Those who were formative in my education and development are too many to list here, although I would like to make a special mention of my *mashpia*, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok ("Fitzy") Lipskier, of blessed memory, whose inspiration I live with on a daily basis.

The patron of this edition is **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, when all the Jewish people will be free to observe God's commands and study His Torah.

Rabbi Chaim Miller  
20 Menachem Av 5764





טעמי המקרא / CANTILLATION MARKS

פִּשְׁטָא מְנַח זֶרְקָא מְנַח סְגוּלָּה מְנַח | מְנַח רְבִיעִי  
מֵהַפֶּךְ פִּשְׁטָא זְקַף קָטָן זְקַף-גָּדוֹל מְרַכָּא טַפְחָא  
מְנַח אֶתְנַחְתָּא פִּזְרֵי תְּלִישָׁא-קִטְנָה  
תְּלִישָׁא-גָּדוֹלָה קְדָמָא וְאַזְלָא אֶזְלָא-גֵּרֶשׁ גֵּרֶשִׁים  
דְּרַגָּא תְּבִיר יְתִיב פְּסִיק | סוּף-פְּסוּקִי: שְׁלֵשִׁת  
קַרְנֵי-פֶרֶה מְרַכָּא-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*<sup>1</sup>, unrolls the *Sefer Torah* and, with his *tallis* (or the belt of the Torah) touches the beginning and end<sup>2</sup> 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 beginning<sup>3</sup> 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 נִטַּע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ. 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 Bereishis

פֶּרֶשַׁת בְּרֵאשִׁית

## 🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

Why does the Torah begin with the second letter of the Hebrew alphabet, *beis* (ב), and not the first letter, *alef* (א)?

The Jerusalem Talmud suggests that *alef* would be an inappropriate beginning, since it is the first letter of the word *arirah*, meaning “cursing.” *Beis*, on the other hand, begins the word *bracha*, meaning “blessing” (*Chagigah* 2:1).

But surely there are many positive words in Hebrew that begin with an *alef*, and many negative words that begin with a *beis*? Why should *beis* be identified with “blessing” in particular?

The fact that the Torah begins with the second letter of the Hebrew alphabet, *beis*, indicates that reading the text is actually the *second phase* of Torah study. Before a person even looks at the first verse of the Torah, he needs to prepare himself for the experience that he is about to undergo.

Basically, Torah study is somewhat of a paradox. On the one hand, it is a *mitzvah* that connects a person to God and—as with any *mitzvah*—the person needs to be aware of this fact to achieve a full “connection.” On the

other hand, if a person actually thinks about God *while* he is studying Torah, he will not be able to concentrate on the subject at hand.

The solution to this problem is through *preparation*. Before even opening the book, a person should take a few moments to reflect that he is about to study God’s wisdom that has been “condensed” into a humanly intelligible form. He is about to bind his mind into a total union with God.

Of course, when he actually studies the Torah, he will not be able to meditate on this fact, since he will be concentrating on the text. Therefore, it is crucial that a person has the correct intentions *before* he begins.

And that is why the Torah begins with a *beis*, to hint to its reader that *study is only the second phase of this mitzvah*.

Through studying Torah with the appropriate preparations blessings will come into a person’s life. Thus, the Jerusalem Talmud taught that the *beis* at the beginning of the Torah stands for *bracha*—blessing.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, pp. 1ff; *ibid.* p. 326)

א בְּקֶדְמַיִן בְּרָא יי ית שְׁמַיָא וַיֵּת אֲרֵעָא:  
 ב וְאַרְעָא הָיְתָה צְדָיָא וְרִיקְנִיָא וְחֲשׂוּכָא פְּרִשׁ עַל  
 אֲפִי תְהוּמָא וְרוּחָא מִן קָדָם יי מְנַשְׁבָּא עַל

א בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ: ב וְהָאָרֶץ  
 הָיְתָה תְהוֹ וְזָהוּ וְחֶשֶׁךְ עַל-פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֶפֶת

\*ב' רבתי

רש"י

ואם תאמר להורות צא שאלו תחלה נבראו, ופירושו בראשית הכל צרא אלו, ויש לך מקראות שמקלרים לשונם וממעטים תיבה אחת, כמו כי לא סגר דלתי צטני<sup>9</sup>, ולא פירש מי הסוגר. כמו ישא את חיל דמשק<sup>10</sup>, ולא פירש מי ישאנו, וכמו אם יחרוש בצקרים<sup>11</sup>, ולא פירש אם יחרוש אדם בצקרים, וכמו מגיד מראשית אחרית<sup>12</sup>, ולא פירש מגיד מראשית דבר אחרית דבר. (כ"י וכן בכאן בראשית כל). אם כן תמה על ענמך, שהרי המים קדמו, שהרי כתיב ורוח אלהים מרחפת על פני המים, ועדיין לא גלה המקרא בסידור הקודמים ובמאחרים כלום בריית המים מתי היתה, הא למדת, שקדמו המים לארץ, ועוד שהמים מאש ומים נבראו, על כרחך לא לימד המקרא בסדר המוקדמים והמאחרים כלום: ברא אלהים. ולא אמר צרא ה', שנתחלה עלה במחשבה לבראותו צדמת דין, וראה שאין העולם מתקיים, והקדים מדת רחמים ושתפה למדת דין, וכיניו דכתיב ציוס עשות ה' אלהים ארץ ושמים<sup>13</sup>: (ג) תהו ובהו. תהו לשון תמה ושמומן, שאדם תוכה ומשתומם על צבו שבה: תהו. אשטורדי"שין צלע"ו: בהו. לשון רקות ולדו (סא"א): על פני תהום. על פני המים שעל הארץ: ורוח אלהים מרחפת. כסא

(ה) בראשית. אמר רבי יצחק, לא היה לריך להתחיל את התורה אלא מהחדש הזה לכם, שהיא מזוה ראשונה שנלטו צב ישראל, ומה טעם פתח בצראשית, משום כח מעשיו הגיד לעמו לתת להם נחלת גוים<sup>1</sup>, שאם יאמרו אומות העולם לישראל, ליסטים אתם, שכבשתם ארלות שבעה גוים, הם אומרים לכם, כל הארץ של הקצ"ה היא, הוא צראה ונתנה לאשר ישר בעיניו, צרנונו נתנה לכם, וצרנונו נטלה מהם ונתנה לנו: בראשית ברא. אין המקרא הזה אומר אלא דרשנוי, כמ"ש רז"ל<sup>2</sup> שציל התורה שנקראה ראשית דרכו<sup>3</sup>, וצציל ישראל שנקראו ראשית תבואתו<sup>4</sup>, ואם זאת לפרשו כפשוטו כך פרשבו, בראשית בריית שמים וארץ, והארץ היתה תהו ובהו וחושך (וגו'), ויאמר אלהים יהי אור. ולא צא המקרא להורות סדר הבריאה לומר שאלו קדמו, שאם צא להורות כך, היה לו לכתוב, בראשונה צרא את השמים וגו', שאין לך ראשית במקרא שאינו דצוק לתיבה שלאחריו, כמו בראשית ממלכת ויחוקים<sup>5</sup>, ראשית ממלכתו<sup>6</sup>, ראשית דגנך<sup>7</sup>, אף כאן אתה אומר בראשית צרא אלהים וגו' כמו בראשית צרא, ודומה לו תחלת דבר ה' צבושע, כלומר תחלת דבורו של הקצ"ה צבושע ויאמר ה' אל הושע וגו'<sup>8</sup>.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the Torah begin with the creation of the world? (v.1)

**RASHI:** Rabbi Yitzchak said: Surely, the Torah should have begun from the words, "This month shall be for you..." (*Shemos* 12:2), the first commandment which the Jewish people were given. Why does it begin with "In the beginning?"

The reason is [conveyed by the verse]: "He declared to His people the power of His works in order to give them the inheritance of the nations" (*Psalms* 111:6), i.e., if the nations of the world will say to the Jewish people, "You are robbers, for you seized the land of the seven nations [who inhabited Canaan]," they will reply: "The whole earth belongs to God. He created it and granted it to whoever was deemed

fit in His eyes! It was His will that they should have it; and, by His will, He took it from them and gave it to us!"

**SIFSEI CHACHAMIM:** *Rashi* was troubled by the fact that the Torah begins with stories when the Torah was given for the sake of its *mitzvos*. These stories seem superfluous.

**NACHALAS YA'AKOV:** *Rashi* was not suggesting that the section from *Bereishis* until "This month shall be for you..." should not be written at all. Rather, his question was: Why did the Torah begin with discursive narrative rather than with its primary content, the *mitzvos*. The account of creation, together with all the stories that follow it could have been included at the end of the *Chumash*, or in a separate book.

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 WHAT IS TROUBLING RASHI? (v. 1)

**Sifsei Chachamim** writes that *Rashi* was troubled by the inclusion of stories in the Torah, which is primarily a code of *mitzvos*.

However, it is difficult to accept that this was the only point troubling *Rashi*, since there are many other stories written throughout the Torah whose necessity he does not challenge. Therefore, the inclusion of a story does not appear to be a "problem" which requires explanation.

One could argue [as **Nachalas Ya'akov** does] that *Rashi* was not troubled by the actual inclusion of these stories, but rather, he was concerned why the Torah should begin with narrative, rather than with its primary content, the *mitzvos*. The account of creation and other stories should have been included at a later point in the *Chumash*.

But if this indeed is *Rashi's* question, then what is his answer? According to *Rashi*, the account of creation was written here, at the beginning of the Torah, to answer a potential challenge from non-Jewish nations that the Land of Israel was unlawfully possessed. Our response to the nations—that the land was given to us by its Creator—would be equally valid wherever

it was recorded in the Torah; the fact that it was recorded at the beginning is not crucial to the argument. So, if *Rashi* was merely questioning the position in which the account of creation was included [as **Nachalas Ya'akov** argues], then he does not appear to have provided us with a solution.

FURTHER QUESTIONS ON RASHI

a.) *Rashi* suggests that the Torah should have begun from the words, "This month shall be for you" (*Shemos* 12:2), because it is the first *mitzvah*. However, in the book of *Bereishis* there are no fewer than three *mitzvos* recorded: the *mitzvah* of having children (1:28), the *mitzvah* of circumcision (17:10), and the prohibition against eating the sciatic nerve (32:33). How could *Rashi* suggest that the Torah should have only begun with *Shemos* chapter 12, omitting the above *mitzvos*?

b.) According to the seven Noachide laws which are binding on non-Jews, robbery is prohibited. Yet, we do not find that any nation was punished for conquering another because it was an act of robbery. On what basis could the nations challenge the Jewish people that "You are robbers, for you seized the land of the seven nations"?

## 🕍 CREATION: THE FIRST DAY—LIGHT & DARKNESS 🕍

**I**n the beginning of God's creation of the heavens\* and the earth (and their contents),<sup>2</sup> when the earth was astoundingly desolate, darkness was on the surface of the deep (waters that covered the land), and the (throne of) God's glory hovered over the water (at the command of God's) breath,

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why was the world created? (v.1)

**RASHI:** The word *Bereishis* is crying out for a Midrashic interpretation: *Bereishis* means "two beginnings" (ב' ראשית), suggesting that God created the world for the sake of the Torah which is called, "the beginning of His way" (Prov. 8:22), and for the sake of the Jewish people who are called, "the first of His grain" (Jer. 2:3).

**MASKIL LeDAVID:** Since the verse employs the singular ("in the beginning") from where did *Rashi* conclude that there are two beginnings, the Torah and the Jewish people?

However, *Rashi* is referring to the Jewish people as they are learning and observing the Torah, i.e. as they form two parts of one greater whole.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### THE EXPLANATION

The Torah contains the collected teachings given to the Jewish people. Since the Jewish people first assumed their current national character through the Exodus from Egypt and the giving of the Torah, *Rashi* was troubled, "Surely, the Torah should have begun from the words, 'This month shall be for you...', i.e. the first commandment which the Jewish people were given." The stories before the period of the Exodus did not occur to members of the Jewish nation, so why are they recorded in the Torah, which is a text of instruction for Jews? They could have been recorded in a separate book, or handed down orally, but they should not have been included in a text of instructions which is specifically addressed to members of the Jewish nation.

Even the *mitzvos* which are recorded in the book of *Bereishis* were not given to the Jewish people, but rather to *Avraham* and his family etc. Thus, our obligation to circumcise and to refrain from eating the sciatic nerve comes from Sinai, and not from God's words to *Avraham* etc.\*\*

*Rashi* answers that the stories which predate the Exodus from Egypt and the giving of the Torah were recorded as a proof to the nations of the world that the land of Israel belongs to the Jewish people:

According to both Noachide Law and Jewish Law, land acquired as a result of military conquest is not considered to be stolen property (see *Shulchan Aruch Admor Hazakein, Orach Chayim* 649:10). Therefore, the nations of the world could not possibly accuse the Jewish people of being "robbers" merely due to the fact that they seized the land of Cana'an.

Rather, the nations' complaint is that the Jewish people have transformed the land permanently to be an essentially Jewish one, precluding any nation from identifying it as their own at any future time.

Even if the land will be conquered by another nation, it will remain the "Land of Israel" and Jewish people will refer to it as their own, perceiving the loss of the land as a temporary "exile." For after Jewish conquest and inhabitation, the land became a holy, uniquely Jewish land at its very essence, remaining associated with the Jewish people forever.

### 🕍 The Last Word 🕍

According to *Rashi* (v. 1) the book of *Bereishis* was written to provide a response to the non-Jewish nations about our claim to the Land of Israel. However, it appears far-fetched to suggest that the entire book of *Bereishis*, and all the passages up to chapter 12 of *Shemos*, were written merely to answer a question that might be posed by non-Jews!

In truth, there is an extremely powerful message in these words for Jewish people, a lesson so profound that *Rashi* deemed it appropriate to form the "introduction" to his commentary.

Namely, despite the fact that the Jewish people are but a tiny minority, the Torah gives us the strength not to be intimidated by the nations of the world. At the very outset of Torah study, the Jew learns that he will be able to defend himself from the criticism of non-Jews, and observe the *mitzvos* proudly, with the full awareness that God created the world for this very purpose (see *Rashi* to v.1 at top of page).

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Bereishis* 5741)

### 🕍 Sparks of Chasidus 🕍

- "In the beginning... the earth was astoundingly desolate." God's plan is that a home should be made for Him in the lowest realms (*Midrash Tanchuma, Naso* 16). Therefore, the world began with utter desolation—the lowest of all existence—into which light, Torah and the Jewish people were then added.
- "The (throne of) God's glory hovered over the water (at the command of God's) breath." Our sages said that this "breath" refers to the "spirit of Mashiach" (*Bereishis Rabah* 2:4, 8:1). From this we see that the concept of Mashiach is even more primal than that of light, for the "spirit of Mashiach" (v. 2) preceded the creation of light (v. 3).
- "The (throne of) God's glory hovered." *Kabalah* teaches that the purpose of creation is to elevate 288 Godly sparks which are trapped in the physical world. This number is hinted to by the word מְרֻחָת ("hovered") which contains the letters חפ"ח, equaling 288.

(Based on *Sefer Hasichos* 5751, p. 63; *ibid.* p. 804; *ibid* 5752, p. 459)

\* See *Sichas Shabbos Nitzavim* 5745, ch. 25. \*\* Although the Torah does not repeat the prohibition of eating the sciatic nerve after the Jewish people assumed a national identity, it nevertheless comes from Sinai. Thus, if the book of *Bereishis* was omitted—as *Rashi* suggests—details of these *mitzvos* would have been included at some later point.

אפי מִיָּא: ג וַיֹּאמֶר יי יְהִי נְהוֹרָא וְהָיָה נְהוֹרָא:  
 ד וַתֵּזֶן יי יֵת נְהוֹרָא אֲרֵי טָב וְאִפְרִישׁ יי בֵּין  
 נְהוֹרָא וּבֵין חֲשׁוּכָא: ה וַקָּרָא יי לְנְהוֹרָא יּוֹמָא  
 וּלְחֲשׁוּכָא קְרָא לַיְלָיָא וְהָיָה רִמְשׁ וְהָיָה צִפְר  
 יּוֹמָא חֵד: ו וַיֹּאמֶר יי יְהִי רְקִיעָא בְּמִצְעוֹת

עַל-פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם: ג וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אֹר וַיְהִי-אֹר: ד וַיֵּרָא  
 אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאֹר כִּי-טוֹב וַיַּבְדֵּל אֱלֹהִים בֵּין הָאֹר וּבֵין  
 הַחֹשֶׁךְ: ה וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאֹר יוֹם וְאֶת-הַחֹשֶׁךְ לַיְלָה  
 וַיְהִי-עֶרֶב וַיְהִי-בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד: פ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי רְקִיעַ

ש"י

היה לו לכתוב יום ראשון, כמו שכתוב בשאר הימים, שני, שלישי, רביעי, למה כתב אחד, לפי שהיה הקצ"ה יחיד צעולמו, שלא נזכרו המלאכים עד יום שני, כן מפורש בצראשית רבא: (ו) יהי רקיע. יתחזק הרקיע, שאף על פי שנזכרו שמים ציום ראשון, עדיין לחים היו, וקראו צשני מגערת הקצ"ה צאמרו יכי רקיע, וזהו שכתוב עמודי שמים ירופפו, כל יום ראשון, וצשני יתמהו מגערתו, כאדם שמשחמם ועומד מגערת המאיים

הכבוד עומד באויר, ומרחף על פני המים ברוח פיו של הקצ"ה וצמאמרו, כיונה המרחפת על הקן, אקוב"טיר בלע"ז: (ד) וירא אלהים את האור כי טוב ויבדל. אף בזכ אנו לריכס לדברי אגדה, ראהו שאינו כדאי להשתמש בו רשעים, והבדילו ללדיקים לעתיד לזכ. ולפי פשוטו כך פרשהו, ראהו כי טוב, ואין נאה לו ולחשך שיהיו משחמשין בערבוזיא, וקצע לזה תחומו ציום ולזה תחומו צלילה: (ה) יום אחד. לפי סדר לשון הפרשה

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did God separate the light from the darkness? (v. 4)

**RASHI:** Here too, we need the words of the *Midrash*: He saw that it was not proper for the wicked to use it, so He separated it for the righteous in the future.

According to its literal meaning, the explanation of the verse is as follows: He saw that it was good, and it was not fitting that it (the light) and darkness should function in a jumble, so He assigned for one its boundary by day, and for the other one its boundary by night.

**BARTENURA:** Verse 2 states that, “darkness was on the surface of the deep (waters that covered the land),” and then, in verse 3, light is created. Surely then, God had *already* distinguished the light from the darkness, so why does verse 4 state, “God separated the light from the darkness”?

To answer this problem, *Rashi* writes “we need the words of the *Midrash*,” and explains that the additional “separation” in verse 4 refers to God separating the light for the righteous in the future.

TORAS MENACHEM

This could cause the non-Jewish nations to complain, “You are robbers!” For by conquering the Land of Israel, the Jewish people “robbed” all the nations of the world from ever identifying themselves with the land again. From that point on it became the Land of *Israel*, an identity that it retained even after the Jewish people were exiled from it.

The Jewish people can thus reply, “The whole earth belongs to God. He created it and granted it to whomever was deemed fit in His eyes!” I.e. the *permanent acquisition* of the Land of Israel by the Jewish people is *God’s will*. From the moment He created the world, He already intended that the Jewish people should inherit the land. The permanent acquisition of the land by the Jewish people is thus not robbery, but Divinely willed.

However, this begs the question: If God intended at the very outset of creation that the Land of Israel should be an exclusively Jewish land, to the extent that no other nation could identify with it, then why did He allow other nations to possess it before the Jewish people?

To answer this question, *Rashi* continues, “*It was His will that they should have it; and, by His will, He took it from them and gave it to us!*” I.e. the very same Divine will caused both events.

God’s intention was that the Jewish people should acquire a non-Jewish land and *transform* it into a holy land, the Land of Israel. Therefore, He first gave it to the nations, and then He told the Jewish people to conquer it.

In the final analysis, we see that *Rashi* has explained the necessity for the narrative up to *Shemos* chapter 12. All this information is required to explain how God intended the Land of Israel for the Jewish people at the very outset of Creation (*Parshas Bereishis*), and yet He first gave it to the nations (see *Noach* 10:5, *Lech Lecha* 12:6 and *Rashi* *ibid.*). In order to explain the lengthy delay which occurred before the Jewish people received the land, the Torah describes the “Covenant of the Parts” where Avraham was told

that his descendants would be exiled for hundreds of years (15:13). The remaining part of the book of *Bereishis* is thus required to explain how this occurred in actuality, i.e. how Avraham’s descendants went down into Egypt and were enslaved. Then we read finally, at the beginning of the book of *Shemos*, how the exile ended and the Jewish people left Egypt to receive the Torah and conquer the Land of Israel.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, pp. 1ff; *Sichas Shabbos Bereishis* 5726)

☞ LIGHT & DARKNESS (v. 4)

**Bartenura** writes that *Rashi* cites the *Midrash* in his commentary to verse 4, in order to explain why the Torah states, “God separated the light from the darkness,” a detail which seems to have already occurred in verses 2 and 3.

However, *Bartenura* fails to explain why *Rashi* chose to cite the *Midrashic* interpretation *before* he explains the verse at the literal level. Surely *Rashi* should have written the straightforward explanation first, before citing the more esoteric words of the *Midrash*?

RASHI’S PROBLEM

*Rashi* was troubled why the verse states, “God said, ‘Let there be light!’—and there was light. God saw that *the light* was good, and God separated...” The term “the light” appears to be superfluous here, as the verse could have stated more simply, “God saw that *it* was good.”

This led *Rashi* to the conclusion that, here in verse 4, God must have perceived some additional “good” quality within the light which was not yet apparent in verse 3. Therefore, in addition to telling us that “there was light” (v. 3), the Torah adds here that “God saw that *the light* was good” (v. 4), suggesting that *within* the light an especially good quality was to be found.

<sup>3</sup> God said, “Let there be light!”—and there was light.

<sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good, and God separated the (times of) light from the (times of) darkness (in the following manner:)<sup>5</sup> God called out to the light (and assigned it to the) day, and He called out to the darkness (and assigned it to) the night.\*

*It became evening and it became morning—one day.*

---

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

---

● **Why does the verse write, “one day” and not “the first day”?** (v. 5)

**RASHI:** To fit in with the context of the chapter, the verse should have stated, “the first day,” as is written regarding the other days: “second,” “third,” “fourth.” Why did Scripture write “one”?

Because God was alone in His world, since the angels were not created until the second day. This is explained in *Bereishis Rabah* (3:8).

---

TORAS MENACHEM

---

In other words, the light contained two qualities: a.) Its natural property of illumination; b.) A deeper aspect of “goodness.” *Rashi* explains that

God separated out the latter from the former, to be reserved for the righteous in the future.

We have thus answered *Bartenura*’s question (why the Torah needs to repeat the separation of the light in verse 4), for the separation here refers to a separation *within the light itself*; and clearly, this information is not conveyed by verses 2 and 3.

Furthermore, we have also explained why the Midrashic interpretation is so crucial at the literal level (such that *Rashi* cites it first), since only the Midrashic interpretation explains how an actual “separation” took place *within* a single entity. According to the plain meaning however—that God separated the *times* of light from the times of darkness (see *Rashi*)—the verse is speaking more of an “allocation” or “redistribution,” rather than a genuine “separation.”

**WHY WAS GOD ALONE ON THE FIRST DAY?**

Based on the above, we can explain a difficulty with *Rashi*’s comment to verse 5. The verse states, “*It became evening and it became morning, one day.*” *Rashi* questions why the Torah employs the expression “one day” rather than saying “the first day,” and he answers that this alludes to the Midrashic teaching that God was totally “alone in His world” on that day.

This begs the question: Since God had already created light on the first day, then surely He was not alone, since He was accompanied by His first creation: the light. Why does *Rashi* write that God was “alone in His world.”

The answer to this problem is to be found in the nature of light:

It was explained above that the light which was created on the first day

🌀 *The Last Word* 🌀

**THE AGE OF THE WORLD**

Those well-meaning persons who felt impelled to interpret certain passages in the Torah differently from the time-honored traditional interpretation, did so only in the mistaken belief that the Torah view (on the age of the world etc.) was at variance with science; otherwise they would not have sought new interpretations in the Torah.

The apologetic literature—at least a substantial part of it—that was created as a result of this misconception, relied on the principle that, as in the case of “*muttar leshanos mipnei darchei shalom*” [it is permissible to alter the facts for the sake of peace], there was no harm in making an “innocent” verbal concession to science, if it would be helpful in strengthening commitment to Torah and *mitzvos* of many.

At the bottom of this attitude was the mistaken belief that scientific “conclusions” were categorical and absolute...

The crucial point, however, is that the latest conclusions of science introduced a radical change into science’s own evaluation of itself, clearly defining its own limitations. Accordingly, there is nothing categorical in science; the principle of cause and effect is substituted by “probable sequence of events” etc....

Science demands empirical verification: “conclusions” are considered “scientific” if they have been investigated experimentally—but certainly not in relation to conditions which have never been known to mankind and can never be duplicated.

In view of all that has been said above, there is no reason whatever to believe that science (as different from scientists) can state anything definitive on something which occurred in the remote past, in the pre-dawn of history. Consequently, there is no need to seek new reinterpretations in the Torah to “reconcile” them with science....

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe)

🌀 *Sparks of Chasidus* 🌀

Why did God create light first of all, only then to hide it? (see *Rashi* to v. 4)

Because the ultimate purpose of Creation is that God’s presence should be revealed in the lowest realms (*Midrash Tanchumah, Naso* 16), therefore, at the very outset of Creation God made a “mission statement” declaring what the ultimate purpose of the world should be—revelation; like an architect (so to speak) who draws up plans before constructing a building.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 10, p. 7ff.)

\* See *Sichas Shabbos Bereishis* 5743, ch. 36.

מִיָּא וַיְהִי מִפְּרִישׁ בֵּין מִיָּא לְמִיָּא: וְעַבְדַּי יִי ית  
 רְקִיעָא וְאַפְרִישׁ בֵּין מִיָּא דִּי מְלַרְע לְרְקִיעָא  
 וּבֵין מִיָּא דִּי מְעַל לְרְקִיעָא וְהוּהוּ בְּ: ה וַיִּקְרָא  
 יִי לְרְקִיעָא שְׁמַיָּא וְהוּהוּ רְמִשׁ וְהוּהוּ צִפְר יוֹם  
 תְּנִינָ: ט וְאָמַר יִי יתְּכַנְשׁוֹן מִיָּא מִתְּחִלָּתָא שְׁמַיָּא  
 לְאַתְרָא חַד וְתִתְּחַנְוּ יִבְשָׁתָא וְהוּהוּ בְּ: ו וַיִּקְרָא  
 יִי לְיִבְשָׁתָא אֲרֶעָא וּלְבֵית פְּנִישׁוֹת מִיָּא קְרָא  
 יִמְמִי וְהוּא יִי אַרְי טַב: יא וְאָמַר יִי תְּדַאֲרִית  
 אֲרֶעָא דְתִתָּה עֲשָׂבָא דְבַר זְרַעִיה מוֹדְרַע אִילָן  
 פְּרִין עֵבֶד פְּרִין לְזִנְיָה דִּי בַר זְרַעִיה בֵּיה עַל  
 אֲרֶעָא וְהוּהוּ בְּ: יב וְאִפִּיקַת אֲרֶעָא דְתִתָּה  
 עֲשָׂבָא דְבַר זְרַעִיה מוֹדְרַע לְזִנְיָה וְאִילָן עֵבֶד  
 פְּרִין דְּבַר זְרַעִיה בֵּיה לְזִנְיָה וְהוּא יִי אַרְי טַב:  
 יג וְהוּהוּ רְמִשׁ וְהוּהוּ צִפְר יוֹם תְּלִיתָא:  
 יד וְאָמַר יִי יְהוֹן גְּהוֹרִין בְּרְקִיעָא דְשְׁמַיָּא

בְּתוֹךְ הַמַּיִם וַיְהִי מִבְּדִיל בֵּין מַיִם לְמַיִם: ו וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים  
 אֶת־הַרְקִיעַ וַיַּבְדִּיל בֵּין הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר מִתַּחַת לַרְקִיעַ וּבֵין הַמַּיִם  
 אֲשֶׁר מַעַל לַרְקִיעַ וַיְהִי־כֵן: ה וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים לַרְקִיעַ שָׁמַיִם  
 וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם שֵׁנִי: פ ט וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יִקְוּ הַמַּיִם  
 מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמַיִם אֶל־מְקוֹם אֶחָד וְתִרְאֶה הַיַּבְשָׁה וַיְהִי־כֵן:  
 י וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים א לַיַּבְשָׁה אֶרֶץ וּלְמִקְוֵה הַמַּיִם קָרָא יַמִּים וַיֵּרָא  
 אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב: יא וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים תְּדַשָּׂא הָאָרֶץ דְּשָׂא עֵשֶׂב  
 מוֹרֵיעַ זֶרַע עֵיץ פְּרִי עֹשֶׂה פְּרִי לְמִינּוֹ אֲשֶׁר זֶרְעוּ־בוֹ  
 עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיְהִי־כֵן: יב וַתּוֹצֵא הָאָרֶץ דְּשָׂא עֵשֶׂב מוֹרֵיעַ זֶרַע  
 לְמִינְהוּ וְעֵץ עֹשֶׂה־פְּרִי אֲשֶׁר זֶרְעוּ־בוֹ לְמִינְהוּ וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים  
 כִּי־טוֹב: יג וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם שְׁלִישִׁי: פ יד וַיֹּאמֶר

כש"י

וכלא יס אחד הוא, אלא אינו דומה טעם דג העולה מן היס צעכו לדג העולה מן היס צאספמיא: (יא) תדשא הארץ דשא עשב. לא דשא לשון עשב ולא עשב לשון דשא, ולא היה לשון המקרא לומר תעשיב הארץ, שמיני דשאים מחולקין, כל אחד לעלמו נקרא עשב פלוני, ואין לשון למדבר לומר דשא פלוני, שלשון דשא הוא לבישת הארץ כשהיא מתמלאת בדשאים: תדשא הארץ. תתמלא ותתכסה לצוש עשבים, בלשון לע"ז נקרא דשא ארצרייזן בלע"ז, כולן בערבוביא, וכל שורש לעלמו נקרא עשב: מזריע זרע. שיגדל צו זרע לזרוע ממנו במקום אחר: עץ פרי. שיהא טעם העץ כטעם הפרי. והיא לא עשהה כן, אלא ותולא הארץ וגו' ועץ עושה פרי, ולא העץ פרי, לפיכך כשתקלל אדם על עונו נפקדה גם היא על עוניה (ותקללה): אשר זרעו בו. הן גרעיני כל פרי, שמכן האילן נומה כשנוטעין אותו: (יב) ותוצא הארץ

עליו: בתוך המים. צאמלע המים, שיש הפרש בין מים העליונים לרקיע כמו בין הרקיע למים שעל הארץ, הא למדת, שהם תלויים צמאמרו של מלך: (י) ויעש אלהים את הרקיע. תקנו על עמדו, והיא עשייתו, כמו ועשהה את לפרנייה: מעל לרקיע. על הרקיע לא נאמר, אלא מעל לרקיע, לפי שהן תלויים באויר. ומפני מה לא נאמר כי טוב ביום שני, לפי שלא היה נגמר מלאכת המים עד יום השלישי, והרי התחיל זה בשני, ודבר שלא נגמר אינו צמילואו וטובו, ובשלישי שנגמרה מלאכת המים והתחיל נגמר מלאכה אחרת, כפל צו כי טוב שני פעמים, אחת לגמר מלאכת השני, ואחת לגמר מלאכת היום: (ח) ויקרא אלהים לרקיע שמים. שא מים, שם מים, אש ומים, שערבן זה צוה ועשה מהם שמים: (ט) יקוו המים. שטוחין היו על פני כל הארץ, והקוים באוקיינוס, הוא היס הגדול שצכל הימים: (י) קרא ימים.

#### TORAS MENACHEM

had two properties: a.) Its superficial quality of physical illumination, and b.) An inner, deeper "good" that was separated out.

The inner quality of the light had the effect of revealing the purpose of creation, how every entity that exists is, in essence, totally one with God.

God found it necessary to hide this inner aspect of the light in order to grant man free choice. For if the inner purpose of every object was plainly evident, it would be impossible to sin, since a sin is only made possible via concealment of the truth.

Therefore *Rashi* writes that, despite the existence of light on the first day, "God was alone in the world," for, the inner light revealed how God is truly at one with His creations to the extent that there is "nothing but God." I.e. despite the fact that creation had started on the first day, God was still "alone in His world," since the inner light revealed how everything that existed was totally one with Him.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 1ff)

#### 🔥 Sparks of Chasidus 🔥

##### "LET THE FIRMAMENT (MATERIALIZE)..." (v. 6)

The verse states, "Forever, O God, Your word stands firm in the heavens" (Psalms 119:89). The *Baal Shem Tov*, of blessed memory, has explained that "Your word" which You uttered, "Let the firmament (materialize) between the waters..." (v. 6), these very words and letters stand firmly forever within the firmament of heaven and are forever found within all the heavens to give them life.... For if the letters were to depart even for an instant, God forbid, and return to their source, all the heavens would become naught and absolute nothingness, and it would be as though they had never existed at all, exactly as before the utterance, "Let the firmament (materialize)..."

(Tanya, *Sha'ar Hayichud Veha'emunah*, chap. 1)

## 🌀 THE SECOND DAY—SEPARATION OF WATERS 🌀

1:6 **G**od said, “Let the firmament (materialize) between the waters, and let it separate between (the upper) waters and (the lower) waters.”

<sup>7</sup> God made the firmament (fixed in its position). He separated between the waters that were below the firmament and the waters that were above the firmament (by suspending the upper waters in mid-air), and it remained that way. <sup>8</sup> God called the firmament “sky.”

*It became evening and it became morning—a second day.*

## 🌀 THE THIRD DAY—LAND & VEGETATION 🌀

1:9 **G**od said, “Let the water that is below the skies gather into one location, and let the dry land appear!”—and that is what happened.

<sup>10</sup> God called the dry land “earth,” and He called the gathering of the waters “seas.” God saw that (the work of the second and third days) was good.

<sup>11</sup> God said, “Let the earth be covered with vegetation, plants that reproduce by seed and trees (with edible bark that tastes like) fruit, which produce fruit of their own species containing their own seed, over the earth!”—and that is what happened. <sup>12</sup> The earth germinated vegetation, plants that reproduce by seed of their own species and fruit-producing trees, in which its seeds of its own species are found.

*God saw that it was good.*

<sup>13</sup> *It became evening and it became morning—a third day.*

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why did God call the firmament “skies” (v. 8)

**RASHI:** The Hebrew word for “skies,” שָׁמַיִם, is a combination of different words: שָׂא מַיִם (“bear water”), שָׁם מַיִם (“there is water”), אֵשׁ וּמַיִם (“fire and water”). He mixed them together and made the skies from them (See “The Last Word” below).

### TORAS MENACHEM

## 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

### THE FOUR ELEMENTS

**D**uring the first three days of Creation, God distinguished the four elements: earth (v. 9-10), water (v. 6-7), air (alluded to by the word רֵיחַ in v. 2) and fire (see *Rashi* to v. 8). In the following letter, this concept is reconciled with the view of Science that there are over 100 elements:

“Modern chemistry does not recognize over one hundred basic elements but a considerably fewer number if matter is to be reduced to its basic components or particles. For the so-called elements themselves are made up of atoms, which are the smallest particles into which an element can be divided and yet retain its properties and characteristics, but the atoms themselves are further made up of smaller particles, such as electrons, protons, neutrons.

“Thus the answer to your question lies in the proper definition of the terms under discussion. For as indicated above, the so-called element is not the basic particle matter. Even the term ‘atom’ which

originally meant something invisible, is an archaism now employed only for convenience, as it no longer corresponds to its original meaning. Similarly when we speak of an individual as being an element of society this does not mean that the individual himself is not composite.

“This should be born in mind when we consider the term Yesodoth in the *Zohar*, *Midrash Rabba*, *Kabbalah*, etc. and of course, in the *Tanya* and other *Chabad* sources. This does not mean something which under normal circumstances is indivisible or unchangeable, [everything that exists in the world.] I might also mention that there is another school of thought that conceives these four Yesodoth, not in their physical aspects, but rather qualitatively, this is to say, ‘fire’ in the sense of the properties of heat and dryness; ‘water’, in the sense of coolness and humidity.”

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe)

לְאֶפְרָשָׁא בֵּין יָמָא וּבֵין לַיְלִיא וַיְהוּן לְאֶתִין  
וּלְזַמְנִין וּלְמַמְנֵי בְּהוּן יוֹמִין וְשָׁנִין: טו וַיְהוּן  
לְנְהוּרִין בְּרַקִּיעָא דְשָׁמַיָא לְאַנְהָרָא עַל אַרְעָא  
וַהוּה בֵּן: טז וְעַבְדַּי יְיָ יַת תְּרִין נְהוּרִיא רַבְרַבִּיא  
יַת נְהוּרָא רַבָּא לְמַשְׁלַט בִּימְמָא וַיַּת נְהוּרָא  
זְעִירָא לְמַשְׁלַט בְּלִילִיא וַיַּת כּוֹכְבֵיא: יז וַיְהִי  
יַתְהוּן יְיָ בְּרַקִּיעָא דְשָׁמַיָא לְאַנְהָרָא עַל  
אַרְעָא: יח וּלְמַשְׁלַט בִּימְמָא וּבְלִילִיא  
וּלְאֶפְרָשָׁא בֵּין נְהוּרָא וּבֵין חֲשׂוּכָא וַחֲזָא יְיָ אֲרִי  
טָב: יט וַהוּה רִמְשׁ וַהוּה צֶפֶר יוֹם רַבִּיעָא:  
כ וְאָמַר יְיָ יִרְחֶשׁוּן מִיָּא רְחֵשׁ נִפְשָׁא חִיתָא  
וְעוֹפָא דְפֶרַח עַל אַרְעָא עַל אִפִּי רַקִּיעָא

אֱלֹהִים יְהִי מְאֹרֵת בְּרַקִּיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הַיּוֹם וּבֵין  
הַלַּיְלָה וְהָיוּ לְאֹתוֹת וּלְמוֹעֲדִים וּלְיָמִים וּשְׁנָיִם: טו וְהָיוּ לְמְאֹרֵת  
בְּרַקִּיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהָאִיר עַל-הָאָרֶץ וַיְהִי-כֵן: טז וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים  
אֶת-שְׁנֵי הַמְּאֹרֹת הַגְּדֹלִים אֶת-הַמְּאֹר הַגָּדֹל לְמַשְׁשֵׁלֵת הַיּוֹם  
וְאֶת-הַמְּאֹר הַקָּטָן לְמַשְׁשֵׁלֵת הַלַּיְלָה וְאֵת הַכּוֹכָבִים: יז וַיִּתֵּן  
אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים בְּרַקִּיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהָאִיר עַל-הָאָרֶץ: יח וּלְמַשְׁלַ  
בֵּינָם וּבְלִילִיָהּ וּלְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הָאֹר וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים  
כִּי-טוֹב: יט וַיְהִי-עֶרֶב וַיְהִי-בֹקֶר יוֹם רַבִּיעִי: כ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים  
יִשְׂרְצוּ הַמַּיִם שָׂרָץ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה וְעוֹף יְעוֹפֵף עַל-הָאָרֶץ עַל-פְּנֵי

דש"י

מאורות השמים אל תחתו וגו',<sup>2</sup> צעשוכס רלון הקצ"ה, אין אתם לריכין לדאוג מן הפורענות: ולמועדים. על שם העתיד, שעתידיס ישראל להלטוט על המועדות, והס נמיס למוולד הלצנה: ולימים. שמוש החמה חלי יוס ושמוש הלצנה חליו הרי יוס שלס: ושנים. לסוף שס"ה ימים (ס"א ורציע יוס), יגמרו מהלכתס צי"צ מזלות המשרתס אותס, וחיס שנה, וחוזרים ומתחילים פעס שניס לסצצ צגלגל כמהלכן הראשון: (טו) והיו למאורות. עוד זאח ישמשו שיאירו לעולס: (טז) המארת הגדולים. שויס נצראו, ונתמעטס הלצנה, על שקטרגס ואמרס אי אפשר לשני מלכס שישתמשו צכתר אחד: ואת הכוכבים. על ידי שמיעט אח הלצנה, הרצה לצאיה להפיס דעתס: (כ) נפש חיה. שיכס צכ חיות: שרץ. כל דצר חי שאינו צבוח מן

וגו'. אף על פי שלא נאמר למינכו צדשאין צלוייכו, שמשו שלטוו החילנות על כך, ונשאו קל וחומר צעלמן, כדמפרש צאגדה צשחיתס חולין! (יד) יהי מארת וגו'. מיוס ראשון נצראו, וצריעוי לוח עליכס להתלות צרקיע, וכן כל תולדות שמים ורחן נצראו ציוס ראשון, וכל אחד ואחד נקצע ציוס שנגזר עליו, הוא שכתוצ אח השמים, לצרות תולדותיכס, וזאח הארץ, לצרות תולדותיכ: יהי מארת. חסר וי"ו כתיב, על שכוח יוס מארה ליפול אסכרה צתינוקות, הוא שניינו, צריעוי היו מתענים על אסכרה שלא תפול צתינוקות: להבדיל בין היום ובין הלילה. משגנו האור הראשון, אצל צצצעת (כ"א צג) ימי צראשית, שמשו האור והחשך הראשונים שניכס יחד, צין ציוס צין צלילה: והיו לאתת. כשכמאורות לוקין סימן רע הוא לעולס, שנאמר

## CLASSIC QUESTIONS

## ● When were the luminaries created? (v. 14)

**RASHI:** They were created on the first day, and on the fourth day, He commanded them to be suspended in the sky.

Similarly, all the creations of the skies and the earth were created

on the first day, and each one was fixed in its proper place on the day that was decreed upon it. Verse 1 is thus to be read, "In the beginning of God's creation of the skies and the earth and their contents."

## TORAS MENACHEM

## 🔗 GOD'S METHOD OF CREATING THE WORLD (v. 14)

*Rashi* explains (v. 14) that everything was created on the first day, and merely "fixed" on subsequent days. From this it follows that God's utterances were only made on the subsequent days where it was necessary to *change* various details of the creation. Those details which did not need to be changed were thus not "mentioned" by God in His utterances.

This explains why, for example, God did not say, "Let there be fire," since the nature of fire did not change after creation. This is in contrast to "earth" which was mentioned (on the second day and third days) since its nature changed when it began to emerge from the water and sprout vegetation.

One might ask: since the above concept is crucial to our understanding of the creation story, why did *Rashi* not mention it at the beginning of his commentary when he describes the events of the first day?

The reason why *Rashi* only mentions this concept here for the first time is because there has been no indication in scripture up to this point that the entire creation was already in existence on the first day. God said, "Let there be light... Let the earth be covered, etc." suggesting that these entities were appearing for the first time. Only when *Rashi* encountered the phrase, "The luminaries shall be positioned in the firmament" (v. 14), which suggests the positioning of *previously existing* luminaries, did *Rashi* come to the conclusion that "all the creations of the skies and the earth were created on the first day, and each one was fixed in its proper place on the day that was decreed upon it."

That is to say, verse 14 forces us to reconsider our understanding of verse 1. Initially we presumed that only skies and earth were created on the first day and the other details were added later; but on reading verse 14 we realize that God also created "their contents" on the first day, and merely fixed them in place during the rest of the week.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Bereishis* 5734; *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 469)



## ☞ THE FOURTH DAY—SUN, MOON & STARS ☞

1:14 **G**od said, *"The luminaries shall be positioned in the firmament of the skies to separate between the day and the night! They will serve as omens (of bad events, when there is an eclipse, and will determine the time of the Jewish) festivals, (and the sun and moon will define) the days and years! <sup>15</sup> They will (also) act as luminaries in the firmament of the skies to shed light upon the earth!"*—and that is what happened.

<sup>16</sup> God made two large luminaries (but since they clashed, He reduced one in size. Thus,) the large luminary was to rule over the day and the small luminary was to rule over the night, and (He made) the stars (in order to appease the moon). <sup>17</sup> God placed them in the firmament of the skies to shed light upon the earth, <sup>18</sup> to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate between the light and between the darkness.

God saw that it was good.

<sup>19</sup> It became evening and it became morning—a fourth day.

## ☞ THE FIFTH DAY—SMALL CREATURES, FISH & BIRDS ☞

<sup>20</sup> God said, *"Let the waters produce swarms of (small) living creatures, and let birds fly over the earth, across the firmament of the skies!"*

TORAS MENACHEM

### ☞ The Last Word ☞

#### ORBIT OF THE CELESTIAL BODIES

**Y**ou touch upon the question of whether the sun revolves around the earth or vice versa, in view of the fact that you heard from a college student that "the truth is that the earth revolves around the sun."

It greatly surprises me that, according to your letter, the student declared that science has resolved that the earth revolves around the sun. The surprising thing is that a person making such a declaration would be about one half a century behind the times insofar as the position of modern science is concerned. For it is approximately one half a century ago that the theory of Relativity was expounded, which was accepted by all scientists as the basis for all the branches of science. One of the basic elements of this theory is that when two bodies in space are in motion relative to one another (actually the theory was initiated on the basis of the movements of stars, planets, the earth, etc.), science declares with "absolute certainty" that from the scientific point of view, both possibilities are equally valid, namely that the earth revolves around the sun, or the sun revolves around the earth.

An essential point in the above conclusion is that it is not based on a lack of more definitive knowledge, but this is the inevitable conclusion based upon the present position of science, namely that in principle it is impossible that it could be scientifically proven

which of the two, the sun or the earth, revolves around the other.

Needless to say, any particular scientist, like any individual, is entitled to his own opinion as to which alternative he prefers, or that he simply is inclined to believe in one rather than in the other. However, this is only an expression of a personal preference which any individual human being is entitled to. But it would not be true to say that science has resolved the question in favor of one school of thought against the other. To be sure, there were scientists who made such declarations over one half century ago, as mentioned above, and this provides at least some explanation why the textbooks in the elementary schools have still retained that outdated position. However, it is surprising that a college student, who has already passed through high school and has entered college, and should therefore have some knowledge of the theory of Relativity, should attribute to science such an unscientific and obsolete statement.

To sum up the above, it is clear that where one says that it is possible to be a scientist and accept the idea that the sun revolves around the earth, and another one says that science rejects this idea (I emphasize the word science, as distinct from scientist, as a human being—no more, as mentioned above)—the first one has both his feet firmly on a modern scientific foundation, while the second one appears to have remained in the world and time of Copernicus.

(Excerpted from a letter written by the Rebbe on 23rd of Elul, 5723 [1962].)

דְּשָׁמַיָּא: כא וַיִּבְרָא יי ית תַּנְיָנָא רַבְרְבָנָא וְיֵת  
 כָּל נַפְשָׁא חַיְתָא דְרַחֲשָׂא דִי אֲרַחֲשׁוּ מִיָּא  
 לְזַנְיָהוּן וְיֵת כָּל עוֹפֵא דְפָרַח לְזַנְיָהוּ וְחֹזָא יי  
 אָרִי טָב: כב וַיִּבְרֵךְ יְתְהוֹן יי לְמִימְרָא פּוּשׁוּ וּסְגוּ  
 וּמְלוּ יֵת מִיָּא בְיַמְמָיָא וְעוֹפֵא יִסְגִי בְאַרְעָא:  
 כג וְהוּהוּ רִמְשׁ וְהוּהוּ צִפּוֹר יוֹם חַמִּישָׁאִי: כד וַאֲמַר  
 יי תַּפְיִק אֲרַעָא נַפְשָׁא חַיְתָא לְזַנְיָה בְעִיר  
 וּרְחִישׁ וְחַתּוּת אֲרַעָא לְזַנְיָה וְהוּהוּ כֵן: כה וַעֲבַד  
 יי יֵת חַתּוּת אֲרַעָא לְזַנְיָה וְיֵת בְּעִירָא לְזַנְיָה וְיֵת  
 כָּל רִיחֲשָׂא דְאַרְעָא לְזַנְיָה וְחֹזָא יי אָרִי טָב:  
 כו וַאֲמַר יי נַעֲבַד אֲנִישָׁא בְּצַלְמֵנָא כְּדַמּוּתֵנָא  
 וַיִּשְׁלַטוּן בְּנוּנֵי יָמָא וּבְעוֹפֵא דְשָׁמַיָּא וּבְבְעִירָא  
 וּבְכָל אֲרַעָא וּבְכָל רִיחֲשָׂא דְרַחֲשִׁישׁ עַל אֲרַעָא:  
 כז וַיִּבְרָא יי יֵת אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵיהּ בְּצַלְמֵי אֱלֹהִין  
 בְּרָא יְתִיהָ דְכַר וְנוֹקְבָא בְּרָא יְתְהוֹן:  
 כח וַיִּבְרֵךְ יְתְהוֹן יי וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן יי פּוּשׁוּ וּסְגוּ  
 וּמְלוּ יֵת אֲרַעָא וְתִקְוּפוּ עֲלֶיהָ וּשְׁלוּטוּ בְּנוּנֵי יָמָא  
 וּבְעוֹפֵא דְשָׁמַיָּא וּבְכָל חַיְתָא דְרַחֲשָׂא עַל  
 אֲרַעָא: כט וַאֲמַר יי הָא יִהְיֶה לְכּוֹן יֵת כָּל

רְקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם: כא וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הַתַּנִּינִם הַגְּדֹלִים וְאֶת  
 כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ הַחַיָּה | הַרְמִשֵׁת אֲשֶׁר שָׂרְעוּ הַמַּיִם לְמִינֵהֶם וְאֶת  
 כָּל־עוֹף כָּנָף לְמִינֵהוּ וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב: כב וַיִּבְרַךְ אֹתָם  
 אֱלֹהִים לֵאמֹר פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת־הַמַּיִם בַּיַּמִּים וְהָעוֹף יִרְבֶּה  
 בָּאָרֶץ: כג וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם חַמִּישִׁי: כד וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים  
 תּוֹצֵא הָאָרֶץ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה לְמִינָהּ בַּהֵמָּה וּרְמֵשׂ וְחַי־תוֹ־אָרֶץ  
 לְמִינָהּ וַיְהִי־כֵן: כה וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־חַיַּת הָאָרֶץ לְמִינָהּ  
 וְאֶת־הַבְּהֵמָה לְמִינָהּ וְאֶת כָּל־רִמְשׁ הָאֲדָמָה לְמִינָהּ וַיִּבְרָא  
 אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב: כו וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֵׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ  
 כְּדַמּוּתֵנוּ וַיִּרְדּוּ בְדִגְתַּת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה  
 וּבְכָל־הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל־הַרְמֵשׂ הַרְמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ: כז וַיִּבְרָא  
 אֱלֹהִים | אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצַלְמֵי אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר  
 וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם: כח וַיִּבְרַךְ אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים  
 פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וּכְבִשְׁתָּהּ וּרְדוּ בְּדִגְתַּת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף  
 הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבְכָל־חַיָּה הַרְמִשֵׁת עַל־הָאָרֶץ: כט וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים

דש"י

קדישין שאלתא, אף כאן צפמליא שלו נטל רשות, אמר להם יש צעליונים כדמותי, אם אין כדמותי צחטונוס הרי יש קנאה צמטשא בראשית: נעשה אדם. אף על פי שלא סיעעכו ביצירתו, ויש מקום למינים לרדות, לא נמנע הכתוב מללמד דרך ארץ ומדת ענוה, שיהא הגדול נמלך ונטל רשות מן הקטן, ואם כתב אעשה אדם, לא למדנו שיהא מדבר עם בית דינו, אלא עם עלמו. ותשובתו כתובה צלדו, ויצרל את האדם, ולא כתיב ויצרלו: בצלמו. צדפוס שלנו: כדמותנו. להצין ולהשכיח: וירדו בדגת הים. יש בלשון הזה לשון ריודו ולשון ירידה, זכה רודכ בחיות וצבחות, לא זכה, נעשה ירוד לפניהם והחיה מושלת זו: (כז) ויברא אלהים את האדם בצלמו. צדפוס העשוי לו, שהכל נצרא צמאמר והוא נצרא צידים, שנאמר ותשת עלי כפכה<sup>2</sup>, נעשה צחותם, כמטבע העשויה על ידי רושם שקורין קווייץ, (וכ"י קוויץ) וכן הוא אומר תהפך כחומר חותם<sup>3</sup>: בצלם אלהים ברא אותו. פירש לך, שאותו אלם המתוקן לו, אלם דיוקן יולרו הוא: זכר ונקבה ברא אותם. ולהלן הוא אומר ויקח אחת מללעותיו וגו'<sup>4</sup>, מדרש אגדה שנצראו שני פרנזופים צריאה ראשונה ואחר כך חלקן. ופשוטו של מקרא, כאן הודיעך שנצראו שניהם בשש, ולא פירש לך כיצד צרייתן, ופירש לך צמקוס אחרי: (כח) ובבשה. חסר וי"ו, ללמדך שהזכר כובש את הנקבה, שלא תהא ילאנית, ועוד ללמדך, שהאיש שדרכו לכבוש, מלווה על

הארץ קרוי שרץ. צעוף כגון צבוצים, צשקליס כגון נמלים וחיפושין ותולעים, וצצרות כגון חולד ועכצר וחומט וכיוצא בהם וכן הדגים: (כח) התנינכם. דגים גדולים שצים. וצצצרי אגדה<sup>1</sup> הוא לויתן וצן זוגו, שצצראס זכר ונקבה, והרג את הנקבה ומלחה ללדיקים לעתיד לבא, שאס יפרו וירצו, לא יתקיים העולם צפניהם: נפש החיה. נפש שיש בה חיות: (כצ) ויברך אותם. לפי שמחסרים אותם ולדין מהם ואוכלין אותם, הולרכו לצרכה, ואף החיות הולרכו לצרכה, אלא מפני הנחש שעתיד לקללה לכך לא צרכו, שלא יהא הוא צכלל: פרו. לשון פרי, כלומר עשו פירות: ורבו. אם לא אמר אלא פרו, היה אחד מוליד אחד ולא יותר, וצא ורצו שאחד מוליד הרבה: (כד) תוצא הארץ. הוא שפירשתי שהכל נצרא מיוס ראשון ולא הולרכו אלא להוליאס: נפש חיה. שיש בה חיות: ורמש. הם שרליס, שהם נמוכים ורומשים על הארץ ונראים כאילו נגריס, שאין הלוכן ניכר. כל לשון רמש ושרץ בלשוננו קונומוצריי"ש: (כה) ויעש. תקנס צלציונס צחיקונו וצקומתן: (כו) נעשה אדם. ענותותו של הקצ"ה למדנו מכאן, לפי שהאדם הוא צדמות המלאכים ויתקנאו צו, לפיכך נמלך בהם, וכשהוא דן את המלאכים הוא צפמליא שלו, שכן מלינו צחאצב, שאמר לו מיכח רחיתי את ה' וישב על כסאו וכל צבא השמים עומד עליו מימינו ומשמאלו, וכי יש ימין ושמאל לפניו, אלא אלו מימינים לזכות ואלו משמאילים לחוצה, וכן בגזירת עירין פתגמא וצמאמר

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What is the unique quality of the fifth day? (v. 20-23)

TALMUD: Anybody born on the fifth day of the week will have a tendency to be kind, because fish and birds were created on this day and fish and birds do not need to work hard for their sustenance, but are fed purely by the kindness of God (Shabbos 156a and Rashi ibid.).

<sup>21</sup> God created the large sea fish, all the creeping living creatures that the waters produced in swarms, according to their species, and all the winged birds according to their species.

God saw that it was good.

<sup>22</sup> God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters of the seas, and let the birds multiply upon the earth!”

<sup>23</sup> It became evening and it became morning—a fifth day.

## 🌀 THE SIXTH DAY—ANIMALS & MAN 🌀

1:24 **G**od said, “Let the earth produce living creatures according to their (various) species, cattle, creeping things and wild animals of the earth according to their (various) species!”—and that is what happened.

<sup>25</sup> God made the wild animals of the earth according to their (various) species, the cattle according to their (various) species, and all the creeping things of the ground according to their (various) species.

God saw that it was good.

<sup>26</sup> God (consulted the Heavenly Court and) said, “Let us make man (Adam) in our mold, (intellectually endowed) like us, and (if he is worthy) let him rule over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the skies, over the cattle, over all the earth and over all the creeping things that creep on the earth!”

<sup>27</sup> God created man (by hand) in (the) mold (which was made for) him. The mold (which He used) to create him (resembled the image of) God. (On that day) He created (both) male and female.

<sup>28</sup> God blessed them. God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth! (Let the man be responsible for) taking control of it! Rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the skies and over all the wild animals that move upon the earth!”

---

### TORAS MENACHEM

---

### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

#### “BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY” (v. 28)

The first *mitzvah* in the Torah is to be fruitful and multiply (v. 28). To rear a child, to initiate him or her into the Jewish faith, to educate children in Torah and *mitzvos*—this is true *nachas* (satisfaction). Being childless, no matter how much freedom it allows, is no comparison.

One who fears that he will not be able to cope financially unless he uses birth control is assuming that he succeeds through his own efforts alone. True, Torah requires that man work to provide for his family, but it is a primary tenet of Judaism that all success comes from God, that His blessings give sustenance and not one's own efforts alone. It is God who provides for all of His creatures; another mouth will not overburden Him.

Our Sages also explain that Mashiach will not come until all the souls have descended into this world (*Yevamos* 62a). Through having children the time of his coming is hastened. May it be speedily in our days.

*(Sichas Shabbos Parshas Naso 5740, Rosh Chodesh Shevat 5741)*

#### 🌀 THE FIFTH DAY (v. 20-23)

The **Talmud** states that a person born on the fifth day of the week will have a tendency to kindness since birds and fish, who are fed by the kindness of God, were created on that day.

Elsewhere in the *Talmud* a further statement is made that Jewish people can be recognized by “three signs,” one of which is that they are “kindhearted” (*Yevamos* 89a; See also *Tanya*, end of ch. 1). So, if all Jews are kindhearted in any case, what is the unique quality of being born on the fifth day?

Clearly, these two texts of the *Talmud* are speaking of two different forms of kindness:

The inherent kind nature of the Jewish people is a function of their personalities. This is limited in the sense that a person will only extend himself to a certain point to help another. However kind-hearted a person might be, his willingness to put himself aside for another person will have its limit when stretched.

In contrast, a person born on the fifth day will have a tendency to help others to the extent that he totally disregards his own personal needs and interests, in a way that is somewhat reminiscent of God's boundless kindness.

However, although those born on the fifth day may be predisposed towards a greater form of kindness, they only have a “tendency” towards this trait which may or may not express itself. It is not an actual conscious

עֲשָׂבָא דְּבַר זְרַעיה מְזֻדְרָע דִּי עַל אֲפִי כָּל אֲרֵעָא וְנִתְּן כָּל אֵילָנָא דִּי בֵיה פִּירֵי אֵילָנָא דְּבַר זְרַעיה מְזֻדְרָע לְבוֹן יְהִי לְמִיכָל: ל וְלִכְל חוֹת אֲרֵעָא וְלִכְל עוֹפָא דְּשָׂמִיָּא וְלִכְל דְּרַחֲשֵׁי עַל אֲרֵעָא דִּי בֵיה נִפְשָׂא חִיתָא יִתְּ כָּל יְרוּק עֲשָׂבָא לְמִיכָל וְהוּהוּ בִּן: לֹא וְחֹזָא יִי יִתְּ כָּל דְּעֵבֵד וְהָא תְּקִין לְחֻדָּא וְהוּהוּ רְמֵשׁ וְהוּהוּ צִפּוֹר יוֹם שְׁתִּיתָאֵי: א וְאֲשַׁתְּכֻלּוּ שְׂמִיָּא וְאֲרֵעָא וְכָל חִילִיחוּן: ב וְשִׂיֵּצִי יִי בְּיוֹמָא שְׁבִיעָאָה עֲבִידְתִּיהָ דִּי עֲבָד וְנָח בְּיוֹמָא שְׁבִיעָאָה מְכָל

הִנֵּה נָתַתִּי לָכֶם אֶת־כָּל־עֵשֶׂב | זֶרַע זֶרַע אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי כָּל־הָאָרֶץ וְאֶת־כָּל־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ פְּרִי־עֵץ זֶרַע זֶרַע לָכֶם יִהְיֶה לְאֹכְלָהּ: ל וְלִכְל־חַיַּת הָאָרֶץ וְלִכְל־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלִכְל | רוֹמֵשׁ עַל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה אֶת־כָּל־יֶרֶק עֵשֶׂב לְאֹכְלָהּ וַיְהִי־כֵן: לֹא וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וְהִנֵּה־טוֹב מְאֹד וַיְהִי־עֶרְב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי: פ ב א וַיִּכְלּוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ וְכָל־צְבָאָם: נ וַיִּכְל אֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְלֹאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיִּשְׁבַּת בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְכָל־מְלֹאכְתּוֹ

כ"ט

אחר, יום הששי, כלם תלוים ועומדים עד יום הששי, הוא ששי צסיון (ס"א) שציוס ו' צסיון שקצלו ישראל התורה נתחזקו כל יצירת בראשית ונחשז כאלו נצרא העולם עתה וזכו יום הששי כ"א שחוחו יום ו' צסיון) המוכן למתן תורה: (ג) ויכל אלהים ביום השביעי. ר' שמעון אומר, צשר ודס שאינו יודע עתיו ורגעיו, לריך להוסיף מחול על הקודש, אזל הקצ"ח שיודע עתיו ורגעיו, נכנס צו כחוט השערה ונראה כאלו כלל צו ציוס. דצר אחר, מה היה

פריה ורביה, ולא האשה: (כט) לכם יהיה לאכלה ולכל חית הארץ. השוכה להם צהמות וחיות למאכל, ולא הרשה לאדם ולאשתו להמית צריה ולאכול צשר, אך כל ירק עשב יאכלו יחד כלם, וכשצחו צני נח הציר להם צשר, שנאמר כל רמש אשר הוא חי וגו', כירק עשב שבתרתי לאדם הראשון, נתתי לכם את כל: (לא) יום הששי. הוסיף ה' צששי, צגמר מעשה בראשית, לומר שבתנה עמהם על מנת שיקצלו עליהם ישראל חמשה חומשי תורה. דצר

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What were Adam and Chava allowed to eat? (v. 29-30)

**RASHI:** The Torah states that vegetable matter should be food, "for you, for all the wild animals etc." (v. 29-30). I.e. [the Torah] equated cattle and the animals to man regarding the food that they were permitted to eat. He did not allow Adam and his wife to kill a creature and to eat its flesh. They were only permitted to eat the vegetation, as were the animals.

Later, He permitted the sons of Noach to eat flesh, as it is written (9:3): "Every creeping thing that is alive, etc." Like the green herbs, which I permitted to the first man, I have given you everything.

**GUR ARYEH:** When Rashi writes that, "The Torah equated cattle and the animals to man," he means that just like animals were only allowed to eat vegetation, likewise man was only permitted to eat vegetable matter.

**LEVUSH HA'OHRAH:** The argument of *Gur Aryeh* is untenable. How can he write that "animals were only allowed to eat vegetation," when many animals do indeed kill other animals for food?

**MIZRACHI:** Rather, Rashi's comparison is: Just as animals were not permitted to kill humans, so too, humans were not permitted to kill animals.

TORAS MENACHEM

part of their personality. Thus, there remains an advantage to the general kind nature shared by all Jews, for it is a *tangible* character trait which expresses itself openly.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 10ff.)

☛ THE DIET OF MAN AND THE ANIMALS (v. 29-30)

Rashi writes, "The Torah equated cattle and the animals to man regarding the food that they were permitted to eat," that they were only allowed to eat vegetation, and not meat.

The following points, however, remain to be clarified:

- a.) Rashi's commentary to the Torah was written to explain the simple meaning of scripture, i.e. information which is crucial for a basic understanding of the verses. What question is Rashi answering?
- b.) The Torah states explicitly, that "I have hereby given you every plant...and every tree that has seed-bearing fruit! They shall be food for you" (v. 29-30). From the fact that God makes no mention of meat, it is obvious that man was required to be a vegetarian. Why does Rashi feel it necessary to prove this by comparing man to animals?

c.) What exactly is meant by the comparison, "The Torah equated cattle and the animals to man regarding the food that they were permitted to eat"?

d.) Rashi writes that, "He did not allow Adam and his wife to kill a creature and to eat its flesh," which suggests that they were allowed to eat meat from an animal that died by itself, or was killed by another animal. What led Rashi to this conclusion?

THE EXPLANATION

On reading verses 29 and 30, Rashi was troubled by two questions:

- a.) Of what relevance is the diet of Adam and Chava to the account of the creation of the world?
- b.) Why did God inform Adam and Chava about the diet of the animals?

Due to the force of these questions, Rashi came to the conclusion that the Torah could not merely be teaching us some details of dietary laws that pertain to man and animals (as the commentators suggest—see "Classic Questions"). Rather, the Torah clarifies here the importance and priority of man above the other creations:

<sup>29</sup> God said, “I have hereby given you every plant that reproduces by seed that is upon the surface of the entire earth, and every tree that has seed-bearing fruit! They shall be food for you, <sup>30</sup> for all the wild animals of the earth, for all the birds of the skies, and for everything which moves upon the earth that is alive! The food (for humans and animals) shall be plant vegetation (only)!”—and that is what happened.

<sup>31</sup> God saw everything that He had made, and—look!—it was very good.

It became evening and it became morning—the sixth day.

## 🌀 THE SEVENTH DAY—GOD RESTS FROM WORK 🌀

2 **T**he skies, the earth and all their numerous components were completed.

<sup>2</sup> On the seventh day, God completed His work that He had made. On the seventh day, He rested from all His work that He had done.

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● When did God finish working? (v. 2)

**RASHI:** Rabbi Shimon said: A man of flesh and blood, who cannot judge his times and his moments, must add some time from the week to Shabbos. God, who can judge His times and His moments, entered a hairsbreadth into Shabbos, and it appeared as if He completed the work on that day.

Another explanation: What was the world lacking? Rest. When Shabbos came, rest came. The work was completed and finished.

**CHIZKUNI:** The verse states that God only finished working on Shabbos, which seems to suggest that some of the work was carried out on Shabbos itself. However, in truth, it only appeared that God

finished the work on Shabbos. For on Friday it was not yet clear whether God had finished working, or whether He was going to do more work the following day. Only on Shabbos did it become apparent that God had finished working

**IBN EZRA:** Thus, the verse should not be translated, “On the seventh day, God finished his work,” but rather, “By the seventh day, God finished his work.”

**SFORNO:** God actually finished work at the beginning of the seventh day, but He only worked for an infinitesimally small moment, as our Sages expressed with the term “with a hairsbreadth.”

### TORAS MENACHEM

First, we read that, “God created man (by hand) in (the) mold (which was made for) him. The mold (which He used) to create him (resembled the image of) God” (v. 27) Then, God told man to “rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the skies and over all the wild animals that move upon the earth,” indicating his primary role in the purpose of creation.

Thus, when reading verses 29 and 30, which describe the diet of man and the animals, *Rashi* understood that this information was not being stated as a parenthetical detail, but rather, to clarify further the role of man which had been described in the previous verses.

The knowledge that man is the pinnacle of creation (described in v. 26-28) could lead him to become arrogant and disrespectful of the world’s contents. So, after describing the greatness of man, the Torah continued and “equated cattle and the animals to man regarding the food that they were allowed to eat.” I.e. these verses are an attempt to humble man with the knowledge that, despite the fact that he is the pinnacle of creation formed in the image of God, he is nevertheless a creature that needs to eat in order to survive, like any animal.

Despite the fact that God told man to “rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the skies and over all the wild animals that move upon the earth” (v. 28), he nevertheless limited the authority of man, in that “He did not allow Adam and his wife to kill a creature and to eat its flesh.” This was in order to ensure that man’s awareness of his own genuine greatness should not lead to arrogance or pompousness.

Nevertheless, if an animal died naturally, there was no objection to man eating it, as the intention here is that man should be humbled by withholding his authority to kill other animals.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 7ff.)

#### 🌀 DID GOD WORK ON SHABBOS? (v. 2)

*Rashi*’s comment to verse 2 appears to contradict itself. First he writes that God’s work activities “entered a hairsbreadth into Shabbos,” which suggests that, for a miniscule amount of time, God was actually working on Shabbos [c.f. *Sforno*]. But then, *Rashi* states that it only “appeared as if He completed the work on that day” [c.f. *Chizkuni*].

Both of these interpretations are difficult to accept since:

a.) How could God possibly work on Shabbos, even for a fraction of the day, when work is prohibited the *entire* day?

b.) If God only *appeared* to work on Shabbos, then why does the Torah state that “on the seventh day, God completed His work,” when in truth He completed it on the sixth day?

#### RASHI’S FIRST INTERPRETATION

The Torah appears to be extremely ambiguous about the precise point when the creation was completed. First we read that on the sixth day, “God saw *everything* that He had made...The skies, the earth and all their multitudes *were completed*” (1:31-2:1). But then, the Torah continues that it was only “on the seventh day” that “God *completed* His work that He had made” (v. 2).

So, when did God actually finish, on the sixth day or the seventh?

To answer this question, *Rashi* cites the teaching of Rabbi Shimon, that God can perform acts with such extreme precision that he is able to “enter a hairsbreadth into Shabbos,” continuing to do work without actually transgressing Shabbos. This explains why the Torah states, “on the seventh day, God completed His work that He had made,” (despite the fact that “the skies, the earth and all their multitudes were completed,” on

עבדתיה די עבד: ג וברוך יי נת יומא  
שביעאה וקדיש יתיה ארי ביה נח מכל  
עבדתיה די ברא יי למעבד: ד אלון תולדת  
שמיא וארעא כד אתבראו ביומא די עבד יי  
אלהים ארעא ושמיא: ה וכל אילני תקלא  
עד לא הוו בארעא וכל עשבא דתקלא עד  
לא צמח ארי לא אחית מתרא יי אלהים על  
ארעא ואנש לית למפלה ית אדמתא:  
ו ועננא הוה סליק מן ארעא ואשקי ית כל אפי

אשר עשה: ג ויברך אלהים את-יום השביעי ויקדש אתו כי  
בו שבת מכל-מלאכתו אשר-ברא אלהים לעשות: פ  
[שני] ד אלה תולדות השמים והארץ בהבראם\* ביום עשות  
יהוה אלהים ארץ ושמים: ה וכל אשית השדה טרם יהיה  
בארץ וכל-עשב טרם יצמח כי לא המטיר יהוה  
אלהים על-הארץ ואדם אין לעבד את-האדמה: ו ואד יעלה

\*ה' זעירא

רש"י

לראות שחת, כה"א זאת שסתומה מכל לדדיה, ופתוחה למטה לרדת דרך שס:  
(כ) טרם יהיה בארץ. כל טרם שבמקרא לשון עד לא הוא, ואינו לשון קודם,  
ואינו נפעל לומר הטרים כאשר יאמר הקדים, וזה מוכיח, ועוד אחר כי טרם  
תיראו<sup>3</sup>, עדיין לא תיראו. ואף זה תפרש עדיין לא היה בארץ, כשנגמרה בריאת  
העולם בשש קודם שנברא אדם וכל עשב השדה עדיין לא צמח, וצג' שכתוב  
ותולא, לא ילאו אלא על פתח קרקע עמדו עד יום ששי. ולמה כי לא המטיר,  
ומה טעם לא המטיר, לפי שאדם אין לעבוד את האדמה, ואין מכיר בטובתן של  
גשמים, וכשבא אדם וידע שהם צורך לעולם, התפלל עליהם וירדו, ולמחו האילנות  
והדשאים: ה' אלהים. ה' הוא שמו, אלהים, שהוא שליט ושופט על כל העולם,  
וכן פירושו זה בכל מקום לפי פשוטו, ה' שהוא אלהים: (ו) ואד יעלה.

העולם חסר, מנוחה, זאת שבת מנוחה, כלתה ונגמרה המלאכה: (ג) ויברך  
ויקדש. ברכו זמן, שכל ימות השבוע ירד להם עומר לגלגולת, ובששי לחם משנה.  
וקדשו זמן, שלא ירד כלל בשבת, והמקרא כתוב על שם העתיד: אשר ברא  
אלהים לעשות. המלאכה שהיתה ראויה לעשות בשבת, כפל ועשאה בששי, כמו  
שמפורש בצרשית רבה: (ד) אלה. האמורים למעלה: תולדות השמים  
והארץ בהבראם ביום עשות ה'. ללמדך שכלם נבראו צרשון. דבר אחר  
בהצראם, צב' צראם, שנאמר ציב' ה' צור עולמים, צב' אוחיות הללו של השם, יאר  
שני עולמים<sup>2</sup>, ולמדך כאן שהעולם הזה נברא צה"א, (ס"א כמו שה"א פתוחה  
למטה כך העולם פתוח לשמים שחשבה ועולם הצב' צור ציו"ד לומר שצדיקים  
שצדו זמן מועטים כמו י' שהיא קטנה בצדיות) רמז שירדו הרשעים למטה

## TORAS MENACHEM

the sixth day), because God did in fact carry out a small amount of work on the seventh day. Nevertheless, it was such a miniscule amount of work that it did not constitute a desecration of Shabbos.

To illustrate this point *Rashi* described it as a “hairsbreadth” of work, since a single hair is virtually imperceptible on its own, and only becomes noticeable when combined with other hairs. Similarly, the work that God did on Shabbos was so miniscule it was totally imperceptible.

Nevertheless, *Rashi* writes that it still “appeared as if He completed the work on that day”—despite the fact that only a miniscule amount of work was done on the seventh day—since, technically speaking, the work was finished then.

## RASHI'S SECOND INTERPRETATION

In the final analysis however, the above explanation is not completely satisfying since:

a.) The verse, “on the seventh day, God completed His work that He had made” is rendered somewhat non-literally, to read, “in the first few moments of the seventh day, God completed his work, etc.”

b.) The above statement still contradicts the declaration in verses 1:31 and 2:1 that, “God saw everything that He had made...The skies, the earth and all their multitudes were completed,” already on the sixth day.

Therefore, *Rashi* brought a second explanation: “What was the world lacking? Rest. When Shabbos came, rest came. The work was completed and finished.” I.e. the creation of the world was indeed complete on the sixth day, and the only additional “creation” that was added on the seventh day was “rest.”

However, this interpretation is rather difficult to accept since, at the literal level, “rest” is not a type of creation or work, but rather, the absence

of work. It is thus inconsistent with the verse which states, “On the seventh day, God completed His work that He had made,” for it turns out that God did not do any *real* work on the seventh day.

Since this interpretation is less plausible than the first, *Rashi* cited it last.

## WHAT WORK DID GOD DO?

Returning to the first interpretation of *Rashi*, we are left with the question: What work did God do for that momentary instant of time during the first Shabbos of creation? And why was it not considered to be a transgression of Shabbos?

On the sixth day God created only man and the animals. In chapter 3, verse 8, *Rashi* writes that Adam and Chava sinned during the tenth hour of the day, from which it is obvious that they must have been created before this time. Thus, in the remaining period of the day God would have been completing His other work of that day: creating the animals (which He had begun before the creation of man), “establishing their form and stature” (*Rashi* to 1:25). Therefore, we can presume that the “hairsbreadth” of work during Shabbos signified the completion of the animal kingdom.

Since the work done on Shabbos was merely the completion of acts carried out during the week, it was not considered to be a desecration of Shabbos.

One might ask: One of the forbidden types of work on Shabbos is *makeh bepatish*, completing the formation of an object with a final blow of the hammer. From this we see that even the completion of work is forbidden on Shabbos, so how could God complete His formation of the animals on Shabbos?

It could be argued that a person is only liable for *makeh bepatish* when

<sup>3</sup> God blessed the seventh day (that a double portion of manna should descend in its honor) and He sanctified it (that no manna should descend on Shabbos itself), because on that (day) God rested from all His work that He had created, (for the remaining work which was left) to be done (on Shabbos, He carried out on Friday instead, by doubling His workload).

SECOND  
READING

<sup>4</sup> These (above mentioned details) are the chronology of the skies and the earth when they were created, on the (first) day when God, Almighty God, made earth and skies (and the subsequent days when He materialized the creations).

## 🕎 DETAILS OF THE CREATION OF MAN & WOMAN 🕎

(The Torah now adds further details concerning the creation of man and woman, mentioned above, 1:27)

<sup>5</sup> (The vegetation had only germinated within the ground, but) none of the trees of the field were yet (sprouting) on the (surface of the) earth, nor had any vegetation of the field yet grown, because God, Almighty God, had not brought rain upon the earth (since) there was no man to (appreciate the rain and) work the soil.

<sup>6</sup> (God caused) a mist to ascend from the earth (moistening the clouds in order to) soak the entire

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why had God not sent rain? (v. 5)

**RASHI:** He had not caused it to rain, because there was no man to work the soil, and no one recognized the benefit of rain. But when

man came and recognized that it is a necessity for the world, he prayed for it. Then rain came down, and the trees and the herbs sprouted (See “Sparks of Chasidus”).

### TORAS MENACHEM

the entire act that he performs occurs on Shabbos. In our case however, only a small portion of the act occurred on Shabbos (a “hairsbreadth”) so God did not desecrate Shabbos.

One still might ask: There is a rabbinic prohibition which forbids even half a creative act (*melacha*) to be performed on Shabbos. For example,

the prohibition of carrying in the public domain on Shabbos involves two phases, “picking up” and “placing down.” But, if a person picked an object up on Friday afternoon and then, after carrying it in the public domain, placed it down on Shabbos, he would have transgressed a rabbinic prohibition of performing half a creative act (see *Shabbos* 3b). (Even though these rabbinic laws were only introduced formally at the time of the second Temple, we are nevertheless taught that they were observed as early as the times of Avraham (*Rashi to Toldos* 26:5), so we can presume that God observed them too).

## 🕎 The Last Word 🕎

**W**hy did God deem it necessary to continue working all the way up to *Shabbos*, and even to extend His work by a hairsbreadth into *Shabbos*? What was gained by this feat of precision?

God was teaching a lesson to mankind about the preciousness of time. So long as a person has the opportunity to carry out his Divinely ordained mission in this world, he should utilize every moment in order to realize its fullest potential, pushing every allocation of time to its utmost limits.

**A**lternatively: a person might bemoan the fact that we are living in such a spiritually desensitized generation. Gone are the days of the prophets and Talmudic sages, when the Jewish people served God with the utmost fervor! What could our lowly generation possibly achieve beyond the accomplishments of our ancestors?

The answer to this question can be derived from God’s conduct when creating the world. Just like we see that every moment was precious to God, to the extent that he continued working to the very last opportunity—likewise the final work of the very last generations is of paramount importance. (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 24ff.)

## 🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

### “(GOD CAUSED) A MIST TO ASCEND...” (v. 6)

**W**hen a person prays to God, it is not merely that God “listens” to his prayers from above and responds accordingly. Rather, the process of prayer itself refines the person spiritually, rendering him a suitable receptacle for additional Divine blessings. The receipt of a blessing is thus the *direct outcome* of sincere, focused prayer.

This process is mirrored in the physical world by the method in which rain is formed: Rain is not a new entity that is formed in heaven, but rather, the same “mist” that ascends from the ground, forms clouds and eventually condenses into rain which showers back down onto the earth.

In this light, we can appreciate the inner intention of *Rashi’s* comment (v. 5) that the first rain shower only occurred in response to Adam’s prayer. (*Sefer Hama’amarim Melukat* vol. 4, pp. 254-5)

אֶדְמָתָא: וּבָרָא יי אֱלֹהִים ית אָדָם עֶפְרָא מִן אֶדְמָתָא וּנְפַח בְּאִפּוּהִי נִשְׁמָתָא דְחַיִּי וְהוּת בְּאָדָם לְרוּחַ מְמַלְלָא: ה וּנְצִיב יי אֱלֹהִים וּנְתָא כְעֵדֵן מְלַקְדָּמִין וְאִשְׁרֵי תַמָּן ית אָדָם דִּי בְרָא: ט וְאִצְמַח יי אֱלֹהִים מִן אַרְעָא כֹּל אֵילָן דְּמִרְגָּנָא לְמַחְזִיו וְטָב לְמִיכַל וְאֵילָן תַּיִיא בְּמִצְיֵעוֹת וּנְתָא וְאֵילָן דְּאֶכְלִין פִּירוּהִי חֲכִימִין בֵּין טָב לְבִישׁ: י וּנְהָרָא הָוָה נִפְיָק מֵעֵדֵן לְאִשְׁקָאָה ית וּנְתָא וּמִתַּמָּן מִתְפָּרֵשׁ וְהוּהוּ לְאַרְבָּעָא רִישֵׁי נְהָרִין: יא שׁוּם חַד פִּישׁוֹן הוּא מְקִיף ית כֹּל אַרְעָא דְחַוִּילָה דִּי תַמָּן דְּהָבָא: יב וְדְהָבָא דְאַרְעָא תְּהִיָא טָב תַּמָּן בְּדִלְחָא וְאֶבְנֵי בּוֹרְלָא: יג וְשׁוּם נְהָרָא תְּנַגְנָא גִּיחוֹן הוּא מְקִיף ית כֹּל אַרְעָא דְכּוּשׁ: יד וְשׁוּם

מִן־הָאָרֶץ וְהִשְׁקָה אֶת־כָּל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה: ז וַיִּצְרֹ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם עֶפְרָא מִן־הָאֲדָמָה וַיִּפַּח בְּאִפּוֹ נִשְׁמַת חַיִּים וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה: ח וַיֹּטֵעַ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים גֶּן־בְּעֵדֵן מִקְדָּם וַיִּשֶׂם שָׁם אֶת־הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר יָצָר: ט וַיִּצְמַח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִן־הָאֲדָמָה כָּל־עֵץ נֹחֵמֵד לְמִרְאֵה וְטוֹב לְמֵאֲכָל וְעֵץ הַחַיִּים בְּתוֹךְ הַגֶּן וְעֵץ הַדַּעַת טוֹב וְרָע: י וְנָהָר יֵצֵא מֵעֵדֵן לְהִשְׁקוֹת אֶת־הַגֶּן וּמִשָּׁם יִפְרָד וְהָיָה לְאַרְבָּעָה רָאשִׁים: יא שָׁם הָאֶחָד פִּישׁוֹן הוּא הַסֹּבֵב אֶת כָּל־אֶרֶץ הַחַוִּילָה אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם הַזֹּהָב: יב וְהַב הָאֶרֶץ הַהִוא טוֹב שָׁם הַבְּרִלָח וְאֶבֶן הַשֹּׁהַם: יג וְשֵׁם־הַנְּהָר הַשְּׁנַי גִּיחוֹן הוּא הַסֹּבֵב אֶת כָּל־אֶרֶץ כּוּשׁ: יד וְשֵׁם הַנְּהָר הַשְּׁלִישִׁי

דש"י

בו דעה ודבור: (ח) מקדם. במזרחו של עדן נטע את הגן, ואם תאמר כרי כבר נאמר ויצר וגו' את האדם וגו', ראינו בצרייתא של ר' אליעזר בנו של ר' יוסי בגלילי מל"ב מדות שהתורה נדרשת וזו אחת מהן, כלל שלאחריו מעשה הוא פרטו של ראשון, ויצר את האדם וגו', זהו כלל, סתם צרייתא מהיכן וסתם מעשיו, חזר ופירש ויירר ה' אלהים וגו', וילמד לו גן עדן, ויניחהו בגן עדן, ויפל עליו תרדמה, השומע סבור שהוא מעשה אחר, ואינו אלא פרטו של ראשון. וכן אלל הבהמה חזר וכתב וילר ה' וגו' מן האדמה כל חית השדה, כדי לפרש ויצר אל האדם לקרות שם, וללמד על העופות שנבראו מן הרקק: (ט) ויצמח. לענין הגן הכתוב מדבר: בתוך הגן. באמצע הגן: (יא) פישון. הוא נילוס נהר מצרים, ועל שם שמימינו מתצרכין ועולין ומשקין את הארץ נקרא פישון, כמו ופשו פרשיו? דבר אחר פישון, שהוא מגדל פשתן, שנאמר אלל מצרים ובושו עובדי פשתים: (יג) גיחון. שהיה כולך והומה והמייתו גדולה מאד, כמו וכי יגח, שמנגח וכולך והומה:

לענין צרייתו של אדם העלה התכום, והשקה עננים לשרות העפר, ונצרה אדם, כגזל זה שנותן מים ואחר כך לש את העיסה, אף כאן והשקה, ואחר כך וייער: (ז) וייער. שתי יצירות, יצירה לעולם הזה ויצירה לתחיית המתים, אבל צבהמה שאינה עומדת לדין, לא נכתב ציוריה שני יודי"ן: עפר מן האדמה. כבר עפרו מכל האדמה, מארבע רוחות, שכל מקום שימות שם, תהא קולעתו לקבורה. דבר אחר, נעל עפרו ממקום שנאמר בו מצבה אדמה תעשה לי', הלואי תהא לו כפרה ויוכל לעמוד: ויפח באפיו. עשאו מן התחתונים ומן העליונים, גוף מן התחתונים ונשמה מן העליונים, לפי שציוס ראשון נבראו שמים וארץ, צשני צרר רוקיע לעליונים, צשלישי תראה היצשה לתחתונים, צרביעי צרר מאורות לעליונים, צחמישי ישראו המים לתחתונים, הוצק צששי לצררות צו בעליונים ומתחתונים, ואם לאו יש קגחה צמעשה צראשית, שיכיו אלו רצום על אלו צצריאת יום אחד: לבפש חייה. אף צבהמה וחייה נקראו נפש חייה, אך צו של אדם חייה שצכולן, שנחוסף

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How was man formed? (v. 7)

**RASHI:** God gathered soil from the entire earth from all four directions, so that wherever man would die, the earth would accept him for burial.

Another explanation: God took soil from the place of which it is said, "You shall make Me an altar of earth" (Shemos 20:21), to symbolize that it [the earth of the altar] should be an atonement for him, so that he would be able to endure.

● When did God create the Garden of Eden? (v. 8)

**TALMUD:** Seven things were [intended to be] created before the creation of the world: Torah, Teshuvah, the Garden of Eden,

Gehinom, God's throne of glory, the Holy Temple and the name of Mashiach (Pesachim 54a; Nedarim 39b).

**MIDRASH:** Man was created on the sixth day of creation, and the Garden of Eden on the third day (Bereishis Rabah ch. 15).

● Why didn't God create man in the Garden of Eden? (v. 8)

**CHIZKUNI:** Because then man would have thought that the entire world was as beautiful as the Garden of Eden. Therefore, God first created man outside the Garden, to see how unpleasant the world really was, and then He placed him in the haven of the Garden.

**RADAK:** In this way man would recognize the kindness which God performed for him by placing him in the Garden.

TORAS MENACHEM

It does appear therefore that God "transgressed" a rabbinic law by carrying out part of a creative act on Shabbos.

However, in the final analysis, God did not transgress Shabbos at all. For the rabbinic prohibition of performing half a creative act on Shabbos

only applies when each half is a significant proportion of the total act. In our case however, God only performed a miniscule portion of the act on Shabbos (a hairsbreadth), and was thus totally "exempt."

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 5, p. 24ff.)



surface of the ground (so that man should be created from moist earth). <sup>7</sup> God, Almighty God, formed man out of soil from (the four corners of) the Earth. He blew into his nostrils a living soul, and man became a living, (thinking and speaking) being.

<sup>8</sup> God, Almighty God, planted a garden in Eden to the east, and placed there the man which He had formed. <sup>9</sup> (In the garden,) God, Almighty God, made every tree that is pleasant to look at and good to eat grow out from the ground. The Tree of Life (grew) in the middle of the garden, and the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil (also grew in the garden).

<sup>10</sup> A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it separated and became the source of four riverheads. <sup>11</sup> The name of one is Pishon (the Nile), which surrounds the entire land of Chavilah, where there is gold. <sup>12</sup> The gold of that land is good. Crystal and onyx (are found) there. <sup>13</sup> The name of the second river is Gichon, which surrounds the entire land of Kush. <sup>14</sup> The name of the third river is

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why did the four rivers receive their names? (v. 10-14)

**RASHI:** *Pishon* is the Nile, the river of Egypt. Because its waters are blessed, and they rise and water the land, it is called *Pishon*, as in the verse, “and their riders shall increase (וַיִּבְשְׁרוּ)” (Habakkuk 1:8). Another explanation: It is called *Pishon* because it causes flax (פִּשְׁתָּן) to grow, as is stated in reference to Egypt, “And those who work at flax (פִּשְׁתָּן) ... shall be ashamed” (Isaiah 19:9).

*Gichon* flowed and roared, and its roaring was very great, as in the

verse: “If an ox gores (וַיִּגְחַק)” (*Shemos* 21:28), for he gores and roars while goring along.

*Chidekel* received its name because its waters are sharp (חַד) and light (קָל).

*Pras* received its name because its waters are fruitful (פְּרִיָּה) and increase abundantly, and make people healthy. It is the most important of all the rivers because it is mentioned in conjunction with the Land of Israel.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🕯️ MAN AND THE GARDEN OF EDEN (v. 7-8)

a.) Why does *Rashi* not explain why Adam was created outside the Garden of *Eden*, only to be brought there later? [c.f. **Chizkuni, Radak**]

b.) In his second interpretation regarding how man was formed, *Rashi* writes that man was created on the site of the Altar. This is a fifteen-day journey by foot to the Euphrates River (see *Mishnah, Ta'anis* 1:3), which is in the proximity of the Garden of *Eden* (see v. 14). Why does *Rashi* not make any mention of Adam's miraculous transportation to the Garden of *Eden*, where he covered a journey of fifteen days within one day?

#### 🕯️ Sparks of Chasidus 🕯️

#### “HE BLEW INTO HIS NOSTRILS A LIVING SOUL” (v. 7)

- God created the world with Divine “speech.” Man's soul however, was “blown” by God into his body (v. 7). When a person blows, he exhales from deep within his body. This analogy illustrates that the soul contains a deeper aspect of Divinity than the rest of the world, since it was “blown” out from God's “innards” (so to speak) rather than the more effortless method of speech.
- In the case of animals (and plants) God created the soul and body together as a single unit. In creating man though, God first created a lifeless body into which He later infused a “soul of life.” This is because the soul of man is so high in comparison to the body that it could not be formed as a single unit. Rather, a separate act of God was required to achieve the remarkable union between them.

(Based on *Tanya* ch. 2; *Sefer Hama'amarim* 5714, p. 126)

#### THE EXPLANATION

The common conception [based on **Talmud** and **Midrash**] is that the Garden of *Eden* was created before man. *Rashi* however accepted the literal sequence of events recorded in the Torah, that first, “God, Almighty God, formed man out of soil” (v. 7), and that only afterwards, “God, Almighty God, planted a Garden in Eden to the east” (v. 8). Therefore, it is obvious why *Rashi* did not need to address the question why Adam was not created in the Garden of *Eden*, because when Adam was formed the Garden did not yet exist!

Similarly, *Rashi* did not need to explain Adam's miraculous transferral to the Garden of *Eden* within one day, since the very fact he was formed from earth was itself miraculous. It is therefore not surprising that Adam's miraculous formation should be followed by a miraculous transportation.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Bereishis* 5745)

#### 🕯️ NAMES OF THE FOUR RIVERS (v. 10-14)

Why did *Rashi* feel the need to explain the significance behind the name of each river (cited in verses 10-14)? *Rashi* does not explain every name that is mentioned in the Torah, so presumably when he does offer an explanation it must be for a specific reason. What could that be in our case?

*Rashi* was troubled by the following question: since man had only just been created, and there were no other people around to talk to in any case, what is the point of naming the rivers? Surely a name is only required to communicate with another person?

Thus, on reading the verse, “A river flowed out of Eden to water the Garden, and from there it separated” (v. 10), *Rashi* came to the conclusion that the Torah must be adding these details about the various rivers, to stress the greatness of the Garden of *Eden*. Therefore he explains how each of the names enhances the Torah's praise of the Garden of *Eden*, indicating how four mighty rivers arose from this sublime location.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Bereishis* 5729)

נִהְרָא תְּלִיתָא דִּינְגֵלַת הוּא מְהֵלֵךְ לְמַדִּינְהָא דְאַתּוּר וְנִהְרָא רְבִיעָאָה הוּא פְּרַת: 18 וְדָבַר יְיָ אֱלֹהִים יַת אָדָם וְאִשְׁרֵיהּ בְּגַנְתָּא דְעֵדֶן לְמַפְלְחָה וּלְמִטְרָה: 19 וּפְקִיד יְיָ אֱלֹהִים עַל אָדָם לְמִימַר מִכָּל אֵילָן גִּנְתָּא מִיכָל תִּיכּוּל: 20 וּמֵאֵילָן דְאֶכְלִין פִּירוּהֵי חִכְמִין בִּין טַב לְבִישׁ לֹא תִיכּוּל מִנֵּיהּ אַרְי פִּיּוּמָא דְתִיכּוּל מִנֵּיהּ מִמַּת תְּמוּת: 21 יְיָ וְאָמַר יְיָ אֱלֹהִים לֹא תִקְיִן דִּיהֵי אָדָם בְּלַחֲדוּהֵי אַעֲבַד לֵיהּ סְמִךְ לְקַבְלֵיהּ: 22 וּבְרָא יְיָ אֱלֹהִים מִן אַרְעָא כָּל חַיּוֹת הַבְּרָא וַיַּת כָּל עוֹפֵא דְשָׁמַיָא וַאֲחֵי לוֹת אָדָם לְמַחְזֵי מַה יִּקְרִי לֵיהּ וְכָל דִּי הוּא קָרִי לֵיהּ אָדָם נִפְשָׁא חַיָּתָא הוּא שְׁמִיָּה: 23 וּקְרָא

חֲדָקְל הוּא הֶהֱלֵךְ קִדְמַת אֲשׁוּר וַתִּנְהַר הָרְבִיעִי הוּא פְּרַת: 18 וַיִּקַּח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם וַיַּנְחֵהוּ בְּגַן־עֵדֶן לְעִבְדָּהּ וּלְשִׁמְרָהּ: 19 וַיִּצְוֵ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים עַל־הָאָדָם לֵאמֹר מִכָּל עֵץ־הַגֶּן אָכַל תֹּאכְל: 20 וּמִעֵץ הַדְּעֵת טוֹב וְרָע לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ כִּי בַיּוֹם אָכַלְתָּ מִמֶּנּוּ מוֹת תָּמוּת: 21 יְיָ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לֹא־טוֹב הָיִיתָ הָאָדָם לְבַדּוֹ אֶעֱשֶׂה־לּוֹ עֵזֶר כְּנֶגְדּוֹ: 22 וַיִּצַּר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִן־הָאָדָמָה כָּל־חַיֵּי הָאָרֶץ וְאֵת כָּל־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיָּבֵא אֶל־הָאָדָם לְרְאוֹת מַה־יִּקְרָא־לוֹ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָא־לוֹ הָאָדָם נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה הוּא שְׁמוֹ: [שלישי] 23 וַיִּקְרָא הָאָדָם

כ"ט

(יט) ויצר וגו' מן האדמה. היא ילירכ היא עשייה האמורה למעלה ויעש אלהים את חית הארץ וגו', אלא צא ופירש שהעופות נבראו מן הרקק, לפי שאמר למעלה מן המים נבראו, וכאן אמר מן האדמה נבראו. ועוד ללמדך כאן, שצבעת ילירכן, מיד צו ציוס, הביאם אל האדם לקרות להם שם. וצדצרי אגדה<sup>4</sup> ילירכ זו לשון ריודי וכבוש, כמו כי תלור אל עיר<sup>5</sup>, שכבשן תחת ידו של אדם: וכל אשר יקרא לו האדם נפש חיה וגו'. כרסכו ופרשכו, כל נפש

(יד) חדקל. שמימי חדין וקלין: פרת. שמימי פרין ורצין, ומצרין את האדם: כוש ואשור. עדיין לא היו, וכחז המקרא על שם העתיד: קדמת אשור. למזרח של אשור: הוא פרת. החשוב על כולם, הנזכר על שם ארץ ישראל: (טו) ויקח. לקחו צדצרים נאים, ופתחו ליכנס! (יח) לא טוב היות וגו'. שלא יאמרו שחי רשויות הן, הקצ"ב בעליונים יחיד ואין לו זוג, וזה תחתונים ואין לו זוג: עזר כנגדו. זכר עזר, לא זכר כנגדו להלחם?

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How did God bring man to the Garden of Eden? (v. 15)

**RASHI:** God enticed him with pleasant words and persuaded him to enter.

**GUR ARYEH:** Why would man need to be convinced to enter such a wonderful place as the Garden of Eden? Because man did not know how great the Garden of Eden was and he needed to be informed by God. Thus, the "pleasant words" with which God convinced man to enter were merely a description of the garden.

● Why was it "not good" for man to be alone? (v. 18)

**RASHI:** Because people might say, "There are two dominions! God alone rules over the upper worlds and He has no partner, and man is the sole ruler of the lower worlds, and he has no partner."

● Why was woman created "opposite" man? (v. 18)

**RASHI:** If he is worthy, she will be a helpmate. If he is not worthy, she will be against him, to fight him.

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 MAN'S ENTRY INTO THE GARDEN OF EDEN (v. 15)

Rashi writes that God persuaded Adam to enter the Garden of Eden with, "pleasant words." But why did he need to be persuaded to enter the garden, which was the most desirable of all places in the world? [See Gur Aryeh].

The answer to this question is to be found at the end of the verse, "God...settled him in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and to guard it," i.e. he was placed there to carry out a Divine mission. Adam was sensitive to the awesome responsibility that carrying out God's command entailed, so he was reluctant to enter. Consequently, it was necessary for God to persuade him with "pleasant words," describing the pleasant quality of Divine service.

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Bereishis 5745)

🔗 THE NEED FOR MAN'S PARTNER (v. 18)

Even a child who is studying Chumash for the first time understands that his father depends on the assistance and moral support of his mother. Consequently, when he reads verse 15, "It is not good that man is alone. I will make him a helpmate opposite him," the matter is self-understood. What forced Rashi to conclude that the Torah is speaking here of an ideological fear that "people might say, 'There are two dominions,'" when he could have written more simply that man needs the physical and emotional support of a partner?

THE EXPLANATION

If the Torah was informing us here that woman was created to provide support for man, the verse would have stated, "It is not good for man to be alone" (לא טוב לאדם היות לבדו). In fact, however, the Torah

*Chidekel, which flows to the east of Ashur (Assyria), and the fourth river is Pras (Euphrates).*

<sup>15</sup> God, Almighty God, (persuaded) the man (to enter the Garden), and settled him in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and to guard it.

<sup>16</sup> God, Almighty God, commanded man, saying, “You may eat freely from every tree of the Garden,  
<sup>17</sup> but you must not eat from the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil. For on the day that you will eat from it you will certainly die.”

<sup>18</sup> God, Almighty God, said, “It is not good that man is alone. I will make him a helpmate opposite him.”

<sup>19</sup> God, Almighty God, formed from the earth every beast of the field and every bird of the skies, and He brought (each species straight-away as it was formed) to man to see what he would call it. Whatever the man called each living thing, (remained) its name (forever).

---

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

---

#### ● How did Adam know the names of the animals? (v. 19-20)

**MINCHAH BELULAH:** A Hebrew name indicates an entity’s essential qualities. In his great wisdom, Adam was able to discern the correct name for each species upon observing its nature.

**SHALOH:** Adam’s wisdom here was that merely through seeing the physical animal he was able to determine its spiritual source.

#### ● Did Adam name the fish too? (v. 19)

**MIDRASH:** Yes. Even though the Torah makes no mention of the fact, Adam actually named the fish (*Midrash Chaser Veyatir*).

**CHIZKUNI:** No. If God had brought the fish out of the sea to Adam, they would have died.

---

### TORAS MENACHEM

---

states, “It is not good that man is alone” (לֹא טוֹב הָיִיתָ הָאָדָם לְבַדּוֹ), indicating that we are speaking here of something which is *essentially* “not good,” regardless of its emotional effect on man. Therefore, *Rashi* explained that the presence of a single man is undesirable in the sense that it may give the false impression that he is a deity.

#### GOD’S SOLUTION

However, even after the creation of woman this problem seems to remain since, in the final analysis, man was *created* alone, and remained that way for a period of time before he was joined by woman. Couldn’t that give the impression that man is some type of god?

This problem is solved by *Rashi*’s second comment that, “If he is worthy, she will be a helpmate. If he is not worthy, she will be against him, to fight him.” I.e. man will always be dependent on the support of woman to the extent that (if he is not worthy) they will fight with each other. Since he will constantly feel dependent on another, and he will be aware of the potential conflict that could arise with his partner at any moment, it will surely be fixed in man’s mind that he is not a self-sufficient being.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 20)

#### 🕊️ NAMING OF THE ANIMALS (v. 19-20)

The naming of the animals by Adam could be understood in one of two ways:

a.) It was for the benefit of man, enabling him to distinguish one species from another.

b.) It was for the benefit of the creatures being named. (This is because a Hebrew name indicates an entity’s spiritual source (see **Shaloh**), so by calling each species by its correct name Adam illuminated the animal’s spiritual source within its physical body).

It could be argued that this, in fact, is the basis of the dispute between the **Midrash** and **Chizkuni** as to whether Adam named the fish:

**Chizkuni** understood that the naming was for the benefit of man. Thus, there was no need to name the fish which are not observable by man, as they inhabit the sea and die as soon as they leave the water.

The **Midrash** understood that the naming was for the benefit of the creatures being named. Consequently, the **Midrash** came to the conclusion that Adam would have named the fish too, as it was for their benefit to do so.

### 🕊️ The Last Word 🕊️

Our Sages taught that the verse “God, Almighty God, commanded man, saying, “You may eat freely from every tree of the Garden” (v. 16), alludes to the seven universal laws that God gave to all mankind:

“God”—belief in God

“Almighty God”—not to worship idols

“commanded”—establishing courts of law

“man”—not to murder

“saying”—not to indulge in forbidden relations (see *Jeremiah* 3:1)

“you may eat freely”—not to eat a limb from a living animal

“from every tree of the garden”—not to steal. (*Sanhedrin* 56b)

According to Jewish Law we are obliged to promote the observance of these laws among the nations of the world (*Rambam, Laws of Kings* 8:10-11). Unfortunately, in previous generations this was not possible, as any act which could be perceived as proselytizing would have threatened the security of the Jewish community. However nowadays, thanks to God’s blessings, we live in a free society which enables us to fulfill this holy obligation.

(See *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 26, pp. 132ff.)

אדם שמהן לכל בעי"א ולעופא דשמיא ולכל חיות ברא ולאדם לא אשכח סמך לקבליה: כא ורמא יי אלהים שנתא על אדם ודמך ונסיב דא מעלעוהי ומלי בשרא תחותה: כב ובנא יי אלהים ית עלעא דנסיב מן אדם לאתתא ואיתה לות אדם: כג ואמר אדם דא ומנא נרמא מנרמי ובסרא מבסרי לדא יתקרי אתתא ארי מבעלא נסיבא דא: כד על כן ישבוק גבר בית משכבי אבוהי ואמיה ודבך באתתיה ויהוין לבסרא חד: כה והוון תרויהוון ערשילאין אדם ואתתיה ולא מתפלמין: א והווא הוה חכים מכל חות ברא די עבד יי אלהים ואמר לאתתא בקושטא ארי אמר יי לא תיכלון מכל אילן גנתא: ב ואמרת אתתא לחווא מפירי אילן גנתא ניכול: ג ומפירי אילנא די במציעות גנתא אמר יי לא תיכלון מניה ולא תקרבון ביה דלמא תמותון: ד ואמר חווא לאתתא לא

שמות לכל הבהמה ולעוף השמים ולכל חית השדה ולאדם לאמצא עזר כנגדו: כא ויפל יהוה אלהים | תרדמה על האדם וישן ויקח אחת מצלעותיו ויסגר בשר תחתנה: כב ויבן יהוה אלהים | את הצלע אשר לקח מן האדם לאשה ויבאה אל האדם: כג ויאמר האדם זאת הפעם עצם מעצמי ובשר מבשרי לזאת יקרא אשה כי מאיש לקחה זאת: כד על כן יעזב איש את אביו ואת אמו ודבק באשתו והיו לבשר אחד: כה ויהיו שניהם ערומים האדם ואשתו ולא יתבששו: ג א והנחש היה ערום מכל חית השדה אשר עשה יהוה אלהים ויאמר אל האשה אף כי אמר אלהים לא תאכלו מכל עץ הגן: ב ותאמר האשה אל הנחש מפרי עץ הגן נאכל: ג ומפרי העץ אשר בתוך הגן אמר אלהים לא תאכלו מפניו ולא תגעו בו פן תמתון: ד ויאמר הנחש

כש"י

הקדש חומר כן, לאסור על בני נח העריות: לבשר אחד. הולד נולד על ידי שניהם, ושם נעשה זכרם אחד: (כב) ולא יתבששו. שלא היו יודעים דרך לניעות להבחין בין טוב לרע, ואף על פי שנתנה זו דעה לקרות שמות, לא נתן זו יצר הרע, עד אכלו מן העץ ונכנסו בו יצר הרע, וידע מה בין טוב לרע: (ה) והנחש היה ערום. מה ענין זה לכאן, היה לו לסמוך ויעש לאדם ולאשתו כהנות עור וילבישם, אלא ללמדך מאיזו סבה קפץ הנחש עליהם, ראה אותם ערומים ועסוקים בתשמיש לעין כל, ונתאחז להם? ערום מכל. לפי ערמתו וגדולתו היתה מפלתו, ערום מכל, ארוך מכל: אף כי אמר וגוי. שמה אמר לכם לא תאכלו מכל וגוי, ואף על פי שראה אותם אוכלים משאר פירות, הרבה עליה דברים, כדי שחשיבנו ויבא לדבר באותו העץ: (ג) ולא תגעו בו. הוסיפה על הנווי, לפיכך צאח ליד גרעון, הוא שנאמר אל

חיה אשר יקרא לו האדם שם, הוא שמו לעולם: (כ) ולאדם לא מצא עזר: (כא) ויפל ה' אלהים תרדמה. כשהציאן, הציאן לפניו כל מין ומין, זכר ונקבה, אמר, לכלם יש צן זוג ולי אין צן זוג, מיד ויפל: מצלעותיו. מסערי, כמו וללע המשכן, זהו שאמרו שני פרלופין נצראו? ויסגור. מקום החתך: וישן ויקח. שלא יראה חסוכת בשר שממנו נצראת, ותחצה עליו: (כב) ויבן. כבנין, רחבה מלמטה וקצרה מלמעלה, לקבל הולד, כאזכר של חטים שהוא רחב מלמטה וקצר מלמעלה, שלא יכבד משאו על קירותיו: ויבן את הצלע לאשה. להיות אשה, כמו ויעש אותו געון לאפוד<sup>4</sup>, להיות אפוד: (כג) זאת הפעם. מלמד שצא אדם על כל צהמה וחייה, ולא נתקררה דעתו עד שצא על חוה: לזאת יקרא אשה כי מאיש וגוי. לשון נופל על לשון, מכאן שנצרא העולם בלשון הקדש: (כד) על כן יעזב איש. רוח

TORAS MENACHEM

AN ALTERNATIVE ARGUMENT

Alternatively, it could be argued that both the *Midrash* and *Chizkuni* agreed that Adam named the animals for their own benefit. Rather, they differed over the more subtle implications of the naming process:

The story of Adam naming the animals is recorded at a significant juncture in the *Chumash*. Up to this point we have read solely about the creation of the world; and from here onwards we begin to read about the efforts—and transient failings—of man, to carry out God’s will in the world, in order to “cultivate it and to guard it.”

The question therefore arises: At which side of the “junction” does the account of Adam’s naming of the species fall? Does this naming represent the completion of the *creative process*, where each living entity was finally assigned its own name? Or are we reading here of the first act of Divine *service* by man? Let us discuss each of these two avenues:

a.) Naming as an act of creation

The creation process witnessed the differentiation of primordial matter into different materials and creatures, i.e. a transition from unity (Godliness) to multiplicity (creation). The act of naming was the final stage of bringing multiplicity to the world, as each general category of animals became distinguished into specific species. Since multiplicity conceals God’s presence—for in truth there is nothing but the *one* God—the process of naming the species endowed them with a greater sensation of individuality and separateness from God.

In this respect, there is a distinction between aquatic life and land animals. Fish die as soon as they leave their natural habitat of water, which is a graphic expression of their fragility and dependency. Land animals, by contrast, can survive for long periods of time in a variety of environments. Thus, land animals demonstrate multiplicity to a greater extent than fish, since they are more self-sufficient and independent.

THIRD READING <sup>20</sup> Man named all the cattle and the birds of the skies and all the beasts of the field (and saw that each had a male and female counterpart). Man, however, did not find any helpmate opposite him (so he complained to God).

<sup>21</sup> God, Almighty God, caused a deep sleep to fall upon man, and he slept. He took (a piece from) one of his sides, and He sealed the flesh in its place. <sup>22</sup> God, Almighty God, built the side that He had taken from man into a woman, and He brought her to man. <sup>23</sup> Man said, "(After searching amongst all the animals and failing,) this time (I have found the) bone from my bones, and flesh from my flesh. This shall be called 'ishah' (woman) because she was taken from 'ish' (man)." <sup>24</sup> Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother, and cling to his wife, and they shall become one flesh (through their children).

## 🕎 THE SIN OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE 🕎

2:25 **T**hey were both naked, the man and his wife, and they were not ashamed (since they had no evil inclination, but their nakedness aroused the interest of the serpent).

**3** <sup>1</sup> The serpent was cunning, more than all the beasts of the field that God, Almighty God, had made. It said to the woman, "Did God perhaps say, 'You shall not eat of any of the trees of the garden?'"

<sup>2</sup> The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat from the fruit of the trees of the garden, <sup>3</sup> but from the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, God has said, "You shall not eat of it, and you shall not touch it, lest you die."

### TORAS MENACHEM

Fish, by contrast, show the underlying unity of creation to a greater degree, for as soon as they are separated from their "source," they die. This is a physical expression of the spiritual reality that no entity is independent of God.

According to the above approach—that the naming of the animals was for the sake of increasing multiplicity—there was no need to name the fish, since multiplicity is not particularly pronounced in aquatic life. Thus *Chizkuni*, who adopted the approach that the fish were not named by Adam, alluded to the above reasoning with the words, "If God would have brought the fish out of the sea to Adam they would have died."

b.) Naming as an act of Divine service.

According to the second approach above, that man's naming of the animals was the first act of Divine service, it follows that the naming must have accomplished the purpose of all Divine service—to make the world more subservient to God. This was achieved through the naming, which connected the *spiritual* source of each creature with its existence on the physical plane.

This concurs with the view of the *Midrash* that the fish were named too, since all creatures would benefit from such a spiritual revelation

*(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 35, p. 1ff)*

## 🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

### THE SIN OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE (2:25-3:24)

Three points require clarification:

a.) Why did God not want man to "be like God knowing good and evil" (v. 5)? Surely, God is utterly benevolent, and He would want His creations to share some of His exalted wisdom? After all, man was created in the image of God.

b.) Even if man sinned, why could he not eat from the Tree of Life and live forever (v. 22)? Surely if man would "stretch out his hand and take also from the Tree of Life and eat (from it, and he will be able to) live forever" (ibid.), it would eliminate the "death" that was imposed by the sin?

c.) The fact that man was expelled from the Garden of Eden is understood, since he abused his right to remain there by eating from the tree. But why was Adam then told to "cultivate the earth" (v. 23)?

**G**od did not want man to become aware of the concept of evil, because man is unable to remain totally aloof from things that he comes to understand. Man's nature is to inquire, to empathize and to interact. When he encounters a new phenomenon, he wonders how it might affect his life. He begins to measure the idea according to the established norms of his conscious existence, and he allows his emotions to explore the new entity to see if he has discovered a new "love" or a new "hate." In short, when a person encounters something utterly new, he investigates it with the totality of his personality. From that point on, the concept leaves an indelible mark on his life.

So, God was aware that if man was to come to "know evil," the results would be disastrous, for in the process of his exploratory investigations, man would inevitably become attached to it.

*(continued on page 23)*

ממת תמותון: ה ארי גלי קדם יי ארי ביזמא  
 דתיכלון מניה ויתפתח עיניכון ותהון  
 כרבבין חכימין בין טב לבישו ותות אתתא  
 ארי טב אילנא למיכל וארי אפי הוא לענין  
 ומרג אילנא לאסתכלא ביה ונסבת מאבה  
 ואכלת ויהבת אף לבעלה עמה ואכל:  
 ואתפתחא עיני תרויהון וידעו ארי ערשילאין  
 אנון וחטיטו להון טרפי תאנין ועבדו להון  
 זרין: ה ושמעו ית קל מימרא דיי אלהים  
 דמהלך בגנתא למנה יומא ואטמר אדם  
 ואתתיה מן קדם יי אלהים בגו אילן גנתא:  
 וקרא יי אלהים לאדם ואמר לה אן את:  
 וואמר ית קל מימרך שמעית בגנתא ודחלית  
 ארי ערשילאי אנא ואטמריה: יא ואמר מן חוי  
 לך ארי ערשילאי את המן אילנא דפקדתך  
 בדיל דלא למיכל מניה אכלת: יב ואמר אדם  
 אתתא דיהבת עמי היא יהבת לי מן אילנא

אלהאשה לאמות תמותון: ה כי ידע אלהים כי ביום  
 אכלכם ממנו ונפקחו עיניכם והייתם כאלהים ידעי טוב ורע:  
 ותרא האשה כי טוב העץ למאכל וכי תאוה הוא לעינים  
 ונחמד העץ להשכיל ותקח מפריו ותאכל ותתן גם לאישה  
 עמה ויאכל: ז ותפקחה עיני שניהם וידעו כי עירמם הם  
 ויתפרו עלה תאנה ויעשו להם חגרת: ה וישמעו את-קול  
 יהוה אלהים מתהלך בגן לרוח היום ויתחבא האדם ואשתו  
 מפני יהוה אלהים בתוך עץ הגן: ט ויקרא יהוה אלהים  
 אל-האדם ויאמר לו איכה: י ויאמר את-קולך שמעתי בגן  
 ואירא כיי-עירם אנכי ואחבא: יא ויאמר מי הגיד לך כי עירם  
 אתה המן-העץ אשר צויתך לבלתי אכל-ממנו אכלת:  
 יב ויאמר האדם האשה אשר נתתה עמדי הוא נתנה-לי

כש"י

ומפני מה לא נתפרסם העץ, שאין הקצ"ח חפץ להונות צריה, שלא יכלימוכו  
 ויאמרו זהו שלקה בעולם על ידו:<sup>7</sup> (ח) וישמעו. יש מדרשו אגדה רבים, וכבר  
 סדרוס רבותינו על מכונס צבראשית רבה ובשאר מדרשות, ואני לא באתי אלא  
 לפשוטו של מקרא, ולאגדה המיישבת דברי המקרא דבר דבור על אופניו: וישמעו.  
 מה שמעו, שמעו את קול הקצ"ח שהיה מתהלך בגן: לרוח היום. לאותו רוח  
 שהשמש באה משם [ס"א לשם ודוק כי כן עיקר] וזו היא מערבית, שלפנות ערב  
 חמה צמערב ובה סרחו צעשירית:<sup>8</sup> (ט) איכה. יודע היה היכן הוא, אלא ליכנס  
 עמו בדברים, שלא יהא נזהל להשיב אם יענישוהו פתאום. וכן צקין אמר לו אי  
 הצל אחיך,<sup>9</sup> וכן צבלטס מי האנשים האלה עמך,<sup>10</sup> ליכנס עמכם בדברים, וכן  
 צחוקיבו בשלוחי מרוך צלאון:<sup>11</sup> (יא) מי הגיד לך. מאין לך לדעת מה צשת יש  
 צעומד ערוס: המן העץ. צתמיה: (יב) אשר נתתה עמדי. כאן כפר צעוב:<sup>12</sup>

חוסף על דבריו:<sup>1</sup> (ד) לא מות תמותון. דחפה עד שנגעה צו, אמר לה כשם  
 שאין מיתה צנגיעה כך אין מיתה צאכילה:<sup>2</sup> (ה) כי יודע. כל אומן שונא את  
 צני אומנותו, מן העץ אכל וצברא את העולם:<sup>3</sup> והייתם באלהים. יולרי עולמות:  
 (ו) ותרא האשה. ראתה דבריו של נחש והנאו לה וכאמינותו: כי טוב העץ.  
 להיות כאלהים: וכי תאוה הוא לעינים. כמו שאמר לה ונפקחו עיניכם:  
 ונחמד להשכיל. כמו שאמר לה יודעי טוב ורע: ותתן גם לאישה. שלא  
 תמות היא ויחיה הוא וישא אחרת: גם. לרצות צכמה וחייה: (ז) ותפקחה וגו'.  
 לענין הצכמה דבר הכחצו, ולא לענין רחיה ממש, וסוף המקרא מוכיח: וידעו  
 כי עירומים הם. אף הסומא יודע כשהוא ערוס, אלא מהו וידעו כי עירומים  
 הם, מצוה אחת היתה צידם ונתערטלו הימנע:<sup>4</sup> עלה תאנה. הוא העץ שאכלו  
 ממנו, צדבר שנתקלקלו צו נתקנו,<sup>5</sup> אצל שאר העצים מנעוס מליטול עליהם,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● When did the Sin of the Tree of Knowledge occur? (v. 8)

**RASHI:** The verse states that they heard God's voice in the "direction of the day." This refers to the direction in which the sun sets, which is the west. For towards evening the sun is in the west, and they sinned in the tenth hour [of daylight].

**TALMUD:** The day on which Adam was created consisted of twelve hours. During the first hour his dust was gathered; the second hour

it was made into a shapeless mass; the third hour his limbs were stretched out; the fourth hour a soul was placed in him; the fifth hour he stood on his feet; the sixth hour he named the animals; the seventh hour he was paired with Chava; the eighth hour they had two children; the ninth hour he was commanded not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge; the tenth hour he sinned; the eleventh hour he was judged and the twelfth hour he was banished from the Garden of Eden and went on his way (*Sanhedrin* 38b).

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 WHEN DID THE SIN OCCUR? (v. 8)

*Rashi's* commentary is not a mere anthology of Talmudic and Midrashic teachings. Rather, as *Rashi* declares himself, his commentary was written exclusively to: "explain the *literal meaning* of scripture" (comment to *Bereishis* 3:8). Consequently, when *Rashi* does cite a Talmudic teaching, it would be a mistake to presume that he is citing the words in the same context

that they are brought in the Talmud itself, for the Talmud does not confine itself exclusively to literal interpretations. In fact, the large body of Talmudic and Midrashic commentary to the Torah is predominantly allegorical and *non-literal*. Thus, even when *Rashi* uses a Talmudic phrase, he does so in the context of his own literalist commentary, which was not necessarily the intention of the Talmud.

<sup>4</sup> The serpent said to the woman, “You will surely not die. <sup>5</sup> God (told you not to eat it, because He) knows that on the day that you eat from it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God (with the ability to create worlds and) knowing good and evil.”

<sup>6</sup> The woman (believed the serpent) that the tree was good food (that would make a person like God), that it was desirable to the eyes (for it would open them up), and that the tree was desirable to make one wise (knowing good and evil). She took of its fruit, and she ate (it), and she also gave (some to the cattle and wild animals, and fearing that she would die and that her husband would remarry, she gave some) to her husband (who was) with her, and he ate (it).

<sup>7</sup> The “eyes” (of the intellects) of both of them were opened, and they realized that they were naked (of mitzvos, having ignored the only command they had been given). They sewed together fig leaves (from the tree) and made themselves loin cloths.

<sup>8</sup> They heard the sound of God, Almighty God, walking in the garden in the direction (which the sun sets every) day. The man and his wife hid from God, Almighty God, among the trees of the garden.

<sup>9</sup> God, Almighty God, called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?” (to engage him in conversation).

<sup>10</sup> (Man) said, “I heard Your sound in the garden, and I was afraid because I am naked, so I hid.”

<sup>11</sup> (God) said, “Who told you that you are naked? Have you eaten from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat?”

<sup>12</sup> The man said, “The woman whom You gave (to be) with me gave me from the tree, and I ate.”

---

TORAS MENACHEM

---

In our case, *Rashi* writes that man sinned “in the tenth hour,” which at first glance would seem to refer to the Talmudic teaching that he sinned in the tenth hour of the sixth day of creation (see **Talmud**). However, at the literal level of Torah interpretation to which *Rashi* always confines himself, it could not possibly be argued that man sinned on the sixth day, for a number of reasons:

a.) At the end of the sixth day, the Torah states, “God saw everything that He had made, and look! *It was very good*” (1:31). Now, if the sixth day had been witness to man’s sin which brought i.) death, ii.) the labor of childbirth and iii.) the toils of earning a living to the world (see v. 16-19,

below), God would surely not have said, “It was *very good*”?

b.) It is reasonable to presume that Adam and Chava were of sufficiently strong moral caliber not to have stumbled in sin as soon as they were created, and the serpent would surely have taken some time to persuade Chava to eat from the tree. So at the literal level, it is extremely unlikely that all the events described here in chapter three occurred in the space of a few hours.

c.) Furthermore, the story is recorded after the story of creation has been completed, and *Rashi* gives no indication that it occurred beforehand, on the sixth day.

 *Sparks of Chasidus* 

**THE SIN OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE (CONT. FROM P. 21.)**

**T**hus, when man sinned and became attached to evil, two major problems arose:

a.) If man were now to live forever, he would cause evil to be perpetuated eternally. For since he had now incorporated evil into his system, eternal life would provide an “eternal host” for man’s newly found parasite. Therefore, God decreed that man must die, and prevented him from eating from the Tree of Life which would return him to his previous, immortal status.

b.) A further, more serious problem was how to correct the event which had occurred. The boundaries between good and evil had become blurred and man found himself attracted to two mutually exclusive forces. His sin had generated cosmic repercussions in the upper realms, causing good and evil to coalesce, resulting in a

corrupted spirituality which had penetrated the entire universe, right down to the physical world.

The solution: “*God, Almighty God, sent him out of the Garden of Eden, to cultivate the earth from which he had been taken*” (v. 23).

Man had mixed good and evil throughout the spiritual and physical worlds, so he was sent out to correct the damage that he had caused. Since evil had penetrated the actual earth, man was given the task of refining the entire world. By performing the appropriate action with each “piece” of physicality, he would set free the kernel of good within it, allowing it to return to its holy source. To correct the world which he had profaned, man was required to “pick up the pieces”—literally—by separating with his own hands the good and evil which he had caused to be mixed together.

(Based on Torah Ohr 5c ff; Toras Chaim Bereishis 30a ff)

ואכלית: י' ואמר יי אלהים לאתתא מה דא עבדת ואמרת אתתא הווא אמעיני ואכלית: י' ואמר יי אלהים לחווא ארי עבדת דא ליט את מכל בעירא ומכל חיות ברא על מעד תיזיל ועפרא תיכול כל יומי תייד: טו ודכבו אשני בינד ובין אתתא ובין בניד ובין בנהא הוא יהא דכיר לך מה דעבדת ליה מלקדמין ואת תהא נטר ליה לסופא: טז לאתתא אמר אסנאה אסני צעריכי ועדוייכי בצער תלדין בנין ולות בעליד תהא תאובתיד והוא ישלט ביד: יז ולאדם אמר ארי קבילתא למימר אתתד ואכלת מן אילנא די פקדתד למימר לא תיכול מגיה ליטא ארעא בדילד בעמל תיכלינה כל יומי תייד: יח וכובין ואמדין תצמח לך ותיכול ית עשבא דחקלא: יט בזיעתא דאפד תיכול לחמא עד דתיתוב לארעא דמינה אתברייתא ארי עפרא את ולעפרא תתוב: כ וקרא אדם שום אתתיה חיה ארי היא הות אפא דכל בני אנשא: כא ועבר יי אלהים לאדם ולאאתתיה לבושין דיקר על משד בשריהון ואלבשינון: כב ואמר יי אלהים הא אדם הוה יחיד בעלמא מגיה למידע טב וביש וכען דלמא יושיט ידיה ויטב אף מאילן תייד ויכול ויחי לעלם: כג ושלחיה יי אלהים מנגתא דעדן למפלח ית אדמתא דאתברי מתמן: כד ותריד ית אדם ואשרי מלקדמין לנגתא דעדן ית כרוביא ית שגן חרבא דמתהפכא למטר ית

מן העץ ואכל: י' ויאמר יהוה אלהים לאשה מה זאת עשית ותאמר האשה הנחש השיאני ואכל: י' ויאמר יהוה אלהים | אל הנחש פי עשית זאת ארור אתה מכל הבהמה ומכל חית השדה על גהנך תלך ועפר תאכל כל ימי חייך: טו ואיבה | אשית בינד ובין האשה ובין זרעך ובין זרעה הוא ישופך ראש ואתה תשופנו עקב: טז אל האשה אמר הרבה ארבה עצבוך והרנד בעצב תלדי בנים ואל אישך תשוקתך והוא ימשל בך: טז ולאדם אמר כי שמעת לקול אשתך ותאכל מן העץ אשר צויתיד לאמר לא תאכל ממנו ארוה האדמה בעבורך בעצבון תאכלנה כל ימי חייך: יח וקוץ ודרדר תצמיח לך ואכלת את עשב השדה: יט בזעת אפיד תאכל לחם עד שובך אל האדמה כי ממנה לקחת כיעפר אתה ואל עפר תשוב: כ ויקרא האדם שם אשתו חיה כי הוא היתה אם כל חי: כא ויעש יהוה אלהים לאדם ולאשתו כתנות עור וילבשם: פ ורביעי כב ויאמר | יהוה אלהים הן האדם היה כאחד ממנו לדעת טוב ורע ועתה | פן ישלח ידו ולקח גם מעץ החיים ואכל וחי לעלם: כג וישלחהו יהוה אלהים מגן עדן לעבד את האדמה אשר לקח משם: כד ויגרש את האדם וישכן מקדם לגן עדן את הפרזים ואת להט החרב המתהפכת לשמר את דרך עץ החיים: ט

כש"י

לך מלח לחוצו צפה, אלא הוא ימשול בך, הכל ממנו ולא ממך: תשוקתך. תאותך, כמו ונפשו שוקק<sup>א</sup>: (ז) ארורה האדמה בעבורך. תעלה לך דברים ארוכים, כגון זבוצים ופרעושים וגמלים, משל ליואל לתרבות רעה, וכבריות מקללות שדים שינק מהם: (יח) וקוץ ודרדר תצמיח לך. הארץ, כשתזרענה מיני זרעים, תלמיה קוץ ודרדר קודם ועכבות, והן נאכלים על ידי תיקון<sup>ב</sup>: ואכלת את עשב השדה. ומכ קללה היא זו, והלא צרכה נאמר לו הכה נחתי לכם את כל עשב זרע וגוי, אלא מה אמור כאן בראש הענין, ארורה האדמה בעבורך בעצבון תאכלנה, ואחר העצבון וקוץ ודרדר תלמיה לך, כשתזרענה קטניות או ירקות גנה, היא תלמיה לך קוליס ודרדרים ושאר עשבי השדה, ועל כרחך תאכלס: (יט) בזעת אפיד. לאחר שתעריזו ברצה: (כ) ויקרא האדם. חזר הכתוב לענינו כראשון ויקרא האדם שמות, ולא הפסיק, אלא ללמדך שעל ידי קריאת שמות זדווגה לו חובה, כמו שכתוב ולאדם לא מלא עזר כנגדו, לפיכך ויפל תרדמה, ועל ידי שכתב ויחיו שניהם ערומים, סמך לו פרשת הנחש, להודיעך, שמתוך שראה

(ג) השיאני. הטעני, כמו אל ישא אחסך חזקיהו: (יד) בי עשית זאת. מכאן שאין מהפכים בזכותו של מסית, שאילו שאלו למה עשית זאת, היכ לו להשיב דברי הרב ודברי התלמיד דברי מי שומעין<sup>א</sup>. מכל הבהמה ומכל חית השדה. אם מצהמה נתקלל, מחיה לא כל שכן, העמידו רבותינו מדרש זה במסכת בכורות<sup>ב</sup>, ללמד שימי עיזורו של נחש שצט שנים: על גחונך תלך. רגלים היו לו ונקללו: (טו) ואיבה אשית. אהה לא נחכוונה אלא שימות אדם כשיאכל הוא תחלה ותשא את חוה, ולא זאת לדבר אל חוה תחלה אלא לפי שהנשים דעתן קלות להפתות, ויודעות לפתות את צעליהן, לפיכך ואיבה אשית: ישופך. יכתך, כמו ואכות אותי<sup>ג</sup>, ותרוממו ושפית יתיה: ואתה תשופנו עקב. לא יחא לך קומה, ותשכנו בעקבו, ואף משם תמיתנו. ולשון תשופנו, כמו נשך צהס<sup>ד</sup>, כשהנחש צא לנשך הוא נושף כמין שריקה, ולפי שהלשון נופל על הלשון, כתב לשון נשיפה צהסיה: (טז) עצבוך. זה עזר גידול צניס<sup>ה</sup>: והרנד. זה עזר העצור: בעצב תלדי בנים. זה עזר הלידה: ואל אישך תשוקתך. לתשמיש, ואף על פי כן אין

1 דברי הימים-ב לב, טו 2 טנהדרין כט: 3 דף ח. 4 סוטה ט: 5 דברים ט, כא 6 ישע"י מ, ד 7 עירובין ק: 8 ישע"י כט, ח 9 ב"ר כ, י



<sup>13</sup> God, Almighty God, said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?”

The woman said, “The serpent misled me, and I ate.”

<sup>14</sup> God, Almighty God, said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, you are (now) cursed more than all the cattle and more than all the wild animals of the field! You (will have your legs cut off so that you) shall walk on your belly, and you shall eat soil all the days of your life! <sup>15</sup> I shall place hatred between you and between the woman (you desired), and between your descendants and between her descendants. (Man) will crush you (on the) head, and you will bite his heel.”

<sup>16</sup> To the woman He said, “I will greatly increase your anguish (of rearing children) and your (labor pains of) pregnancy. You will give birth to children in pain. You will desire (to be with) your husband but he will rule over you (to be with you when he desires).”

<sup>17</sup> To man He said, “Since you listened to your wife’s voice, and you ate from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, ‘Do not eat from it,’ the ground will be cursed because of you (producing loathsome insects), and you will toil to eat from it all the days of your life. <sup>18</sup> (When you sow seeds, artichokes and cardoons, which have) thorns and thistles, will grow (with) your (crops) and you will eat the(se artichokes, cardoons and other) herbs of the field (that take a long time to prepare, due to lack of an alternative. <sup>19</sup> Only) with the sweat of your face (after much toil) will you eat bread, until you go back to the earth from where you were taken. For you are (from the) soil, and to soil you will return.”

(The narrative now returns to the subject of giving names, mentioned above 2:19-20)

<sup>20</sup> The man named his wife Chava, because she was the mother of all life.

<sup>21</sup> God, Almighty God, made for Adam and for his wife skin-tight garments (alternatively: garments of animal skins), and He clothed them.

## 🌀 EXPULSION FROM THE GARDEN OF EDEN 🌀

3:22  
FOURTH  
READING

**G**od, Almighty God, said, “Look!—man has become unique in the (lower) world by himself (since) he has the ability of knowing good and evil (unlike the animals). Now, (there is a fear that) perhaps he will stretch out his hand and take also from the Tree of Life and eat (from it, and he will be able to) live forever (and is likely to lead others astray, as they will think he is a god).”

<sup>23</sup> God, Almighty God, sent him out of the Garden of Eden to cultivate the earth from which he had been taken. <sup>24</sup> He drove the man out, and to the east (side) of the Garden of Eden He stationed angels (of destruction) and the flame (alternatively: blade) of the revolving sword, to guard the way to the Tree of Life.

רש"י

צטלוינים, ומה היא יחידתו, לדעת טוב ורע, מה שאין כן בצמח וחייה: ועתה פן ישלח ידו וגו'. ומשיחיה לעולם, כרי הוא קרוב להטעות הצריות אחריו, ויאמרו אף הוא אלוה. ויש מדרשי אגדה, אצל אין מיושבין על פשוטו: (כד) מקדם לגן עדן. צמזרחו של גן עדן, חוץ לגן: את הברובים. מלאכי חבלה: החרב המתהפכת. ולה להט לאיים עליו מלכום עוד לגן. תרגום לכת שכן, כמו שלף שנגא ולשון לע"ז למ"א. ומדרשי אגדה יש, ואני איני צא

אותם ערומים וראה אותם עסוקים בתשמיש, נחאזה לה וצא עליהם צמחשבה וצמרמה: חוה. נופל על לשון חיה, שמחיה את ולדותיה, כאשר תאמר מה הוזה לאדם<sup>10</sup> צלשון חיה: (כא) בתנות עור. יש דברי אגדה אומרים חלקים כלפורן היו מדובקים על עורן. ויש אומרים דבר הבא מן העור, כגון אמר הארניצים שהוא רך וחס, ועשה להם כתנות ממנו: (כב) היה באחד ממנו. כרי הוא יחיד בתחתונים כמו שאני יחיד

TORAS MENACHEM

Thus, when *Rashi* encountered the Talmudic teaching that Adam and Chava sinned during the afternoon of the sixth day, he accepted the first premise (that they sinned in the afternoon), for this is indicated by scripture in verse 8; but he rejected the second premise that they sinned

on the sixth day, which is not indicated in scripture at all and, on the contrary, is incompatible with a literal rendering of the verses.

Instead, *Rashi* understood that the sin took place at some later date.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Bereishis* 5749)

אורח אילן תינא: א ואדם ידע ית מנה אהתיה ועדיאת וילידת ית קין ואמרת קניתי גברא (מן) קדם יי: ב ואוספת למילד ית אהוהי ית הבל והוה הבל רעי ענא וקין הוה גבר פלח בארעא: ג והוה מסוף יומין ואיתי קין מאבא דארעא תקרובתא קדם יי: ד והבל אייתי אף הוא מבכירי עניה ומשמניהון והות רעוא מן קדם יי בהבל ובתקרובתיה: ה ובקין ובתקרובתיה לא הוה רעוא ותקוף לקין לתרא ואתבבישו אפיה: ו ואמר יי לקין למא תקוף לך ולמא אתבבישו אפך: ז הלא אם תוטיב עובדך ישתביק לך ואם לא תוטיב עובדך ליום דינא תסאך נטיר דעתיד לאתפרעא מנך אם לא תתוב ואם תתוב ישתביק לך: ח ואמר קין להבל אהוהי והוה בטהויהון בתקלא וקם קין על הבל אהוהי וקטליה: ט ואמר יי לקין אן הבל אחיד ואמר לא ידענא הנטר אחי אנא: י ואמר מה עבדת קל דם זרעין דעתידין

ד א והאדם ידע את-הנה אשתו ותהר ותלד את-קין ותאמר קניתי איש את-יהוה: ג ותסף ללדת את-אחיו את-הבל ויהי-הבל רעה צאן וקין הנה עבד אדמה: ד ויהי מקץ ימים ויבא קין מפרי האדמה מנחה ליהוה: ה והבל הביא גם-הוא מבכרות צאנו ומחלבהן וישע יהוה אל-הבל ואל-מנחתו: ו ואל-קין ואל-מנחתו לא שעה ויחר לקין מאד ויפלו פניו: ז ויאמר יהוה אל-קין למה חרה לך ולמה נפלו פניך: ח הלא אס-תיטיב שיאת ואם לא תיטיב לפתח חטאת רבץ ואליד תשוקתו ואתה תמשל-בו: ט ויאמר קין אל-הבל אחיו ויהי בהיותם בשדה ויקם קין אל-הבל אחיו ויהרגהו: ט ויאמר יהוה אל-קין אי הבל אחיד ויאמר לא ידעתי השמר אחי אנכי: י ויאמר מה עשית קול דמי אחיד צעקים אלי

רש"י

מעליו, פנה מעליו: וישע. ירדה אש ולחכה מנחתו: (ז) הלא אם תיטיב. כהרגומו פירושו: לפתח חטאת רובץ. לפתח קצרך חטאך שמור: ואליד תשוקתו. של חטאת, הוא יצר הרע, תמיד שוקק ומתאוה להכשילך: ואתה תמשל בו. אם חרצת תגבר עליו: (ח) ויאמר קין. נכנס עמו בדברי ריב ומלך, להטעול עליו להרגו. ויש צדק מדרשי אגדה, אך זה ישובו של מקרא: (ט) אי הבל אחיד. ליכנס עמו בדברי נחת, אולי ישוב ויאמר אני כהגתיו וחטאתי לך: לא ידעתי. נעשה כגונז דעת העליונה: השומר אחי. לשון תימה הוא, וכן כל ה"א הנקודה בחטף פתח: (י) דמי אחיד. דמו ודם זרעיותיו. דבר אחר שעשה בו פלעים הרבה, שלא היה יודע מהיכין נפשו

אלה לפשוטו: (ח) והאדם ידע. כבר קודם הענין של מעלה, קודם שחטא ונטרד מגן עדן, וכן הכריון והלידה, שאם כתב וידע אדם, נשמע שלאחר שנטרד היו לו צניס: קין. על שם קניית: את ה'. כמו עס ה', כשברא אותי ואת אישי, לצדו צראנו, אבל צדק שחפס אנו עמו: את קין את אחיו את הבל. ג' חטים ריבויים הם, מלמד שחאומה נולדה עם קין, ועם הכל נולדו שטים, לכך נאמר ותוסף: (ז) רועה צאן. לפי שנתקללה האדמה, פירש לו מעבודתה: (ג) מפרי האדמה. מן הגרוע. ויש אגדה שאומרת זרע פשתן היה. (די"א מפרי מאיזה שצא לידו לא טוב ולא מוצר): (ד) וישע. ויפן. וכן ואל מנחתו לא שעה, לא פנה. וכן ואל ישעו<sup>3</sup>, אל יפנו. וכן שעה

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Who said, "I have acquired a man (as a partner) with God"? (v. 1)

**TIKUNEI ZOHAR:** This was said by Adam (99b).  
**VILNA GA'ON:** There must be a printing mistake in the *Tikunei Zohar*, as it is clearly implicit from the Torah that *Chava* said these words.

● What kind of offering did *Kayin* Bring? (v. 3)

**RASHI:** He brought from the poorest crops. The *Midrash* says that it was flax seed. (An alternative explanation: from whatever fruit came to hand neither good nor choice).

**MIZRACHI:** One is forced to conclude that he brought the poorest of his crops, otherwise it is difficult to understand why God rejected the offering.

**SIFSEI CHACHAMIM:** *Rashi* brings the *Midrash* that *Kayin's* offering was flax-seed because he is troubled why the verse says "fruit of the land" rather than the more simple expression, "he brought an offering from the land."

The term "fruit" of the earth implies that it was a fruit similar to the land. The only species which could be termed both "fruit" and "of the land" is flax, because: a.) The Talmud teaches that any species whose stem does not disintegrate in the winter (such as flax) is termed "of the earth" (*Brachos* 40a). b.) It is also referred to as a fruit in the verse, "and she hid them in the stalks of flax" (*Ioshua* 6:26), where flax is referred to as an *eitz* (fruit tree).

**GUR ARYEH:** If *Kayin* was attempting to express gratitude to God by bringing an offering, why would he intentionally choose his poorest produce? *Kayin* recognized that his power rested with the *Ayin Hara* (evil eye), and so he brought a poor offering in an attempt to strengthen this evil power. But God, who is good, turned to *Hevel's* offering.

Why did *Hevel* not endeavor to bring a better species, such as an ox? He also felt the need to compete with *Kayin*, so he brought a sheep, which produces wool that is an alternative to flax.

**BACHAYE:** *Hevel* brought the most inferior type of cattle, demonstrating his lack of interest in worldly matters.

## 🕎 KAYIN AND HEVEL 🕎

4 **T**he man knew his wife Chava (before the sin), and she conceived and bore Kayin (together with a twin girl. When he was born) she said, “I have acquired (‘KaNisi) a man (as a partner) with God.”<sup>2</sup> She gave birth again to his brother Hevel (together with two twin girls).

Hevel was a shepherd of flocks (because he did not want to work with the land, which was cursed), and Kayin was a worker of the land.

<sup>3</sup> It was at the end of (a number of) days, that Kayin brought some of the (worst) fruit of the land as an offering to God. <sup>4</sup> Hevel also offered from the firstborn of his flocks, from their fattest ones.

God turned to Hevel and to his offering (and it was consumed by a fire from heaven),<sup>5</sup> but to Kayin and to his offering He did not turn. Kayin became very angry, and his face was dejected.

<sup>6</sup> God said to Kayin, “Why are you angry, and why is your face dejected? <sup>7</sup> Surely, if you improve yourself you will be forgiven? If you do not improve yourself, however, then (your) sin is crouching (in wait) at the entrance (of your grave. The evil inclination) is longing (to entice you), but you can rule over it (if you want).”

<sup>8</sup> Kayin (started an argument) with Hevel his brother (to find a pretext to kill him). Then, when they were in the field, Kayin assaulted Hevel his brother and killed him.

<sup>9</sup> God said to Kayin, “Where is Hevel your brother?”

He said, “I don’t know. Am I my brother’s guardian?”

<sup>10</sup> (God) said, “What have you done? Your brother’s blood (and the blood of his would-be

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🕎 WHO NAMED KAYIN (v. 1)

The **Vilna Ga'on** argues that it was Chava who said, “I have acquired a man with God,” upon Kayin’s birth (and our text of the **Tikunei Zohar** which states that Adam said these words is incorrect).

However, this assertion is problematic, since the entire section in the

*Tikunei Zohar* speaks of Adam (and not Chava). It would thus appear that the text itself (which attributes the statement to Adam) is correct.

Nevertheless, we are left with the problem that according to Hebrew grammar the verse tells us that Chava said, “I have acquired a man (as a partner) with God,” when Kayin was born.

This could be resolved by a statement of *Da’as Zekeinim*, “from my teacher of blessed memory, I heard that their custom was that the man named the first child and the woman the second” (comm. to Bereishis 38:5). Thus, in our case, the Torah relates that Chava suggested the name Kayin, on the basis that “I have acquired (*kanisi*) a man with God,” and the *Tikunei Zohar* informs us of Adam’s approval, which finalized the name.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 4, p. 1248)

#### 🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

**C**learly, both Kayin and Hevel wished to thank God and make a statement of His absolute unity with their offerings (v. 3-4), but it seems that they differed in their understanding of the term “unity.” Kayin understood that God’s unity is totally beyond the multiplicity found in the world. Thus, he picked the best of all species (flax), indicative of God’s greatness; but he paid no attention to the quality of the species, bringing the worst produce that he could find (*Rashi* to v. 3). He presumed that giving credence to the possibility of better and worse produce is not an appropriate offering to God, Who is totally beyond any distinction between “better” and “worse.”

However, his presumption was mistaken, as the ultimate expression of God’s unity is to show how He is One, *within* the multiplicity of the world. I.e. that every detail of creation, while it may be divided into better and worse, can nevertheless be elevated to God. Thus, Hevel was correct in understanding that the multiplicity of the world must be given credence, and so he was careful to offer the best of his chosen species.

(*Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, pp. 25-6)

#### 🕎 KAYIN’S OFFERING (v. 3)

**Sifsei Chachamim** writes that *Rashi* was troubled by the rather elaborate expression, “fruit of the land.”

However, it appears unlikely that the term “fruit of the land” would trouble *Rashi*, as it is a commonplace expression of the Torah, e.g., “You shall take of the first of all the fruit of the land” (*Devarim* 26:2), and similarly, “I have brought the first fruits of the land” (*ibid.* 10). Thus, *Rashi* would not be bothered why the Torah used this expression.

#### RASHI’S THREE COMMENTS

According to the first interpretation of *Rashi* that Kayin brought the worst fruits, it is difficult to understand why the Torah made no mention whatsoever of such an important detail.

Furthermore (as **Gur Aryeh** asks), Kayin surely brought the offering to show gratitude to God, so why would he bring from the worst produce? And, having offered the worst of his produce why would he have been so surprised when it was rejected by God, to the extent that, “Kayin became

למפק מן אֶחָד קְבִילִין קְדָמִי מִן אֲרָעָא: י"א וּכְעַן לִיט אֵת מִן אֲדָמָתָא דְפִתְחַת יַת פּוּמָה לְמִסְבַּי יַת דְּמִי אֶחָד מִן יָדָהּ: י"ב אֲרִי תִפְלַח יַת אֲדָמָתָא לֹא תוֹסִיף לְמִתֵּן חֵילָה לְךָ מִמְּלִטָל וְגַלִּי תִהִי בְּאַרְעָא: י"ג וְאָמַר קַיִן קְדָם י"י סְגִי חוֹבִי מִלְּמִשְׁבֵּק: י"ד הָא תְּרִיבְתָא יַתִּי יוֹמָא דִּין מַעַל אֲפִי אֲרָעָא וּמִן קְדָמָךְ לִית אֲפִשֵׁר לְאַטְמָרָא וְאִהִי מִמְּלִטָל וְגַלִּי בְּאַרְעָא וַיְהִי כֹל דִּישְׁכַּחֲנִינִי יִקְבְּלִינִי: י"ו וְאָמַר לִיהִי י"ז בְּכֹן כֹּל דִּיקְטוּל קַיִן לְשִׁבְעָא דְרִין יַתְפָּרַע מְגִיָּה וְשׁוּי י"י לְקַיִן אֲתָא בְּדִיל דְּלֹא לְמִקְטַל יַתִּיהָ כֹּל דִּישְׁכַּחֲנִינִי: י"ח וְנִפְקַ קַיִן מִן קְדָם י"י וַיִּתֵּיב בְּאַרְעָא גְלִי וּמִמְּלִטָל דְּהָהּ עֲבִידָא עֲלוּהִי מִלְּקַדְמִין בְּגִנְתָּא דְעֵדֶן: י"י וַיֵּדַע קַיִן יַת אֲתֵרְיָה וְעֵדִיאת וַיִּלְיֵד יַת חֲנוּךְ וַיְהִי בְּנֵי קַרְתָּא וְקָרָא שְׁמָא דְקַרְתָּא כְּשׁוּם בְּרִיָּה חֲנוּךְ: י"י וְאֲתֵרְיָה לִחְנוּךְ יַת עֵיֶרֶד וְעֵיֶרֶד אוֹלִיד יַת מְחוּיָאֵל וּמְחִיָּאֵל אוֹלִיד יַת מְתוּשָׁאֵל וּמְתוּשָׁאֵל אוֹלִיד יַת לָמֶךְ: י"ט וְנִסִּיב לִיהִי לְמֶךְ

מִן־הָאֲדָמָה: י"א וְעֵתָה אָרֹר אֶתְּהָ מִן־הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר פָּצְתָה אֶת־פִּיהָ לְקַחַת אֶת־דְּמִי אֶחָד מִיָּדְךָ: י"ב כִּי תֵעַבֵד אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה לֹא־תוֹסֵף תִּתֶּן־כֹּחָהּ לְךָ נָע וְנָד תִּהְיֶה בְּאָרְצְךָ: י"ג וַיֹּאמֶר קַיִן אֶל־יְהוָה גְּדוֹל עֲוֹנִי מִנְּשׂוּאָה: י"ד הֵן גִּרְשַׁתְּ אֹתִי הַיּוֹם מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה וּמִפְּנֵיךְ אֶסְתֵּר וְהִיִּיתִי נָע וְנָד בְּאָרְצְךָ וְהָיָה כָּל־מֵצְאֵי יְהִרְגֵנִי: י"ו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יְהוָה לֵכֵן כָּל־הֹרֵג קַיִן שִׁבְעָתַיִם יִקָּם וַיִּשָּׂם יְהוָה לְקַיִן אוֹת לְבִלְתִּי הַפּוֹת־אֹתוֹ כָּל־מֵצְאֵוֹ: י"ח וַיֵּצֵא קַיִן מִלְּפָנָי יְהוָה וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּאָרְצ־נֹד קְדַמַּת־עֵדֶן: י"י וַיֵּדַע קַיִן אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וַתֵּהָרֵ וַתֵּלֶד אֶת־חֲנוּךְ וַיְהִי בְּנָה עֵיר וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הָעֵיר כְּשֵׁם בְּנֵו חֲנוּךְ: י"י וַיִּוֹלֵד לְחֲנוּךְ אֶת־עֵיֶרֶד וְעֵיֶרֶד יָלַד אֶת־מְחוּיָאֵל וּמְחִיָּאֵל יָלַד אֶת־מְתוּשָׁאֵל וּמְתוּשָׁאֵל יָלַד אֶת־לָמֶךְ: (חמישיין) י"ט וַיִּקְחָהּ לוֹ לְמֶךְ

כ"ש"י

אני נוקם נקמתי ממנו, שיעמוד למך מצני צניו ויכרהו. וסוף המקרא שאמר שבעתים יוקם, והוא נקמת הכל מקין, למדנו שתחלת מקרא לשון גערה הוא, שלא תהא צריה מזיקתו. וכיוצא בו ויאמר דוד כל מכה יבוסו ויגע זנור<sup>3</sup>, ולא פירש מה ישעיה לו, אבל דבר הכתוב ברמז, כל מכה יבוסו ויגע זנור ויקרב אל השער וכצננו, ואת העורים וגו', וגם אותם יכה על אשר אמרו העור והפסח לא יבא אל תוך הבית, המכה את אלו אני אעשנו ראש ושר, כאן קצר דבריו, ובדברי הימים<sup>4</sup> פירש יהיה לראש ולשר: וישם ה' לקין אות. חקק לו אות משמו בצמחו [ס"א] דבר אחר כל מולאי יכרני

יואלה! מן האדמה. יותר ממה שנתקללה היא כבר צעונה, וגם צו רוספה לחטוא: (יא) אשר פצתה את פיה לקחת את דמי אחיך וגו'. וכנני מוסף לה קללה אלך, לא תוסף תה כחה [ס"א] הכל דבור אחד ממן האדמה ע"כ: (יב) נע וגד. אין לך רשות לדור במקום אחד: (יג) גדול עוני מנשוא. בתמייה, אהב טוען עליונים ותחונים, ועוני אי אפשר לך לטעון? (טו) לכן כל הורג קין. זה אחד מן המקראות שקלרו דצריהם ורמזו ולא פירשו, לכן כל הורג קין, לשון גערה, כה ישעיה לו, כך וכך עונשו, ולא פירש עונשו: שבעתים יוקם. איני רוצה להנקם מקין עכשיו, לסוף שבעה דורות

TORAS MENACHEM

very angry, and his face was dejected" (v.5)? Surely, there must have been some (mistaken) logic on the part of Kayin as to why God should have accepted the worst produce?

To answer these problems Rashi brings two further explanations: a.) It was flax-seed, and b.) It was whatever fruit came to hand. Let us examine these two interpretations in order.

The student of Rashi has learned already of the significance of flax. When the Torah describes how a river went out from Eden and divided into four, the verse states, "The name of one was Pishon" (above 2:11). Rashi comments (in his second interpretation), "because it made pishtan (flax) grow."

Obviously, if a river is named after a product, it must be highly regarded. So from this comment of Rashi we can understand that although Kayin brought the worst flax, he nevertheless brought the worst of one of the best types of produce. Clearly, he understood that the most important element of the offering was the species, and in that respect he picked the best. Only, within that species itself, he brought the worst available. Hevel, on the other hand, did not endeavor to bring the best species (he only brought sheep, not oxen), but within that species he brought the very best: "firstborn" and "the fattest ones."

However, it still remains somewhat of a question why Kayin did not bring the best flax, if indeed he was trying to bring only the very best?

Thus (in many editions of Rashi) a further interpretation is brought, that Kayin merely brought whatever came to hand, neither the best nor the worst. According to this understanding, there is no question at all why Kayin would have been upset that God rejected his offering.

However, it remains problematic why God indeed rejected the offering. Thus Rashi places this interpretation last, as it is the most troublesome.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 15, pp. 20-26)

**The Last Word**

We can learn from all the above the extent to which *hiddur* (enhancement of a) *mitzvah* is important. Despite the fact that Kayin brought an offering from a highly-regarded species, nevertheless, since he did not take care to bring the best flax available (a *hiddur* within a *hiddur*) his actions were considered sinful.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 15, p. 26)

descendants) is crying out to Me from the earth! <sup>11</sup> Now, you are (going to be) even more cursed than the ground, which opened its mouth to take your brother's blood from your hand! <sup>12</sup> (Therefore) when you work the soil, it will no longer give its strength to you! You will be a wanderer over the earth."

<sup>13</sup> Kayin said to God, "Is my sin too great to bear (for You, God, who carries the burden of the upper and lower worlds)? <sup>14</sup> You have already driven me today off the face of the earth! (Is it possible) to hide from Your Face? I will be a wanderer in the land, and then whoever finds me will kill me!"

<sup>15</sup> God said to him, "In that case, whoever kills Kayin (will be punished. Hevel will only be) avenged after seven generations (when Lemech will kill Kayin)." God placed (His holy Name as) a mark (inscribed) on Kayin's forehead) so that he should not be killed by anyone who would find him.

<sup>16</sup> Kayin left God's presence (humbly), and he dwelt in the land of the wanderers, to the east of Eden (where his father had been expelled after his sin).

(The seven generations—mentioned in verse 15—occurred as follows:)

<sup>17</sup> Kayin knew his wife. She conceived and gave birth to Chanoch. (Kayin) was building a city, and he named the city like in son's name, Chanoch. <sup>18</sup> Irad was born to Chanoch, Irad fathered Mechuya'el, Mechuya'el fathered Mesusha'el, and Mesusha'el fathered Lemech.

<sup>19</sup> Lemech took for himself two wives: one was named Adah, and the other was named Tzilah. <sup>20</sup> Adah

FIFTH  
READING

רש"י

מזרחה שמש<sup>5</sup>. דבר אחר בארץ נוד, כל מקום שבלך, היתה הארץ מזדעזעת תחתיו, והבניות אומרים סורו מעליו, זהו שכרג את אחיו: (יז) ויהי קין בונה עיר, ויקרא שם העיר לזכר בנו חנוך: (יח) ועירד ילד. יש מקום שהוא אומר בזכר הוליד, ויש מקום שהוא אומר ילד, שהלידה משמשת שתי לשונות, לידת האשה וישטר"א בלע"ז, זריעת תולדות האיש אינזינדר"ר בלע"ז, כשהוא אומר הוליד בלשון הפעיל, מדבר בלידת האשה, פלוני הוליד את אשתו בן או בת, וכשהוא אומר ילד, מדבר בזריעת האיש והוא בלע"ז אינזינדר"ר: (יט) ויקח לו למך. לא היה לו לפרש כל זה, אלא ללמדנו מסוף

הבכמות והחיות, אבל בני אדם עדיין לא היו שיירא מהם רק אצו ואמו ומהם לא היה ירא שיבגרובו, אלא אמר עד עכשיו היה פחדתי על כל החיות כמו שכתוב ומוראכם וגו' ועכשיו צשציל עון זה לא ייראו ממני החיות ויהרגוני, מיד וישם ה' לקין אות החזיר מוראו על הכל: (עז) ויצא קין. ילא צהכנעה כגונז דעת העליונה: בארץ נוד. בארץ שכל הגולים נדים שם: קדמת עדן. שם גלה אצו כשגורש מגן עדן, שנאמר וישכן מקדם לגן עדן וגו', לשמור את שמירת דרך מצוא הגן, שיש ללמוד שהיה אדם שם, ומליו רוח מזרחית קולעת בכל מקום את הרולחים, שנאמר אז יבדיל משה וגו'

TORAS MENACHEM

## 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

### KAYIN—THE FIRST BA'AL TESHUVAH

**K**ayin was the first person to do *teshuvah* (return; repentance). Thus, God set him as an example for all future *Ba'alei Teshuvah* (penitents) (*Bereishis Rabah* 22:12-13; *Midrash Tehillim* 100).

Kayin's *teshuvah* consisted of three practical phases:

a.) **Confession.** Kayin declared to God, "My sin is too great to bear" (v.13—י-רלא כפרש"י-באן). The Torah then states that, "Kayin left God's presence" (v. 16), on which the *Midrash* comments that Kayin was rejoicing that his confession had been accepted by God (*Bereishis Rabah* *ibid.*).

b.) **Exile.** Rambam writes that one of the routes of *teshuvah* is for a person to send himself into exile, for this generates a spirit of humility within a person (*Hilchos Teshuvah*, 2:4). Thus we find that Kayin, "dwelt in the land of the wanderers" (v. 16).

c.) **Rebound into Positive Action.** There is a tremendous temptation for the *Ba'al Teshuvah* to remain low-spirited for the rest of his days. The mere thought of his past deeds, which cannot be erased from his

mind, is sufficient to give him feelings of inferiority. Obviously, in the midst of such a mood he will find it difficult to be active within the world, being plagued by the eternal question, "Who am I to carry out a holy activity like this?"

Consequently, the challenge of the *Ba'al Teshuvah* is that when his *teshuvah* is complete, he must propel himself "outwards" into the world. He must free himself from his feelings of inferiority, and start to contribute constructively to the world in the most expansive manner possible.

Thus, we find that after doing *teshuvah*, Kayin propelled himself back into the world: a.) He fathered a son. b.) He built a city—an ambitious project aimed at repairing the world that he had damaged. And, furthermore, c.) "He named the city after his son's name, Chanoch" (v. 17). I.e. Not only did he free himself from feelings of inferiority, he actually went to the opposite extreme and *publicized* his achievements boldly to the entire world.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, pp. 7-9)

תרתין נשין שום תרא עדה ושום תניתא  
 צלה: כ וילדת עדה ית יבל הוא הוה רבהון  
 דיתבי משכנין ומרי בעיר: כא ושום אחוהי  
 יובל הוא הוה רבהון דכל המנגן על פום  
 נבלא וידעי זמר פנורא ואבוכא: כב וצלה  
 אף היא ילדת ית תובל קין רבהון דכל  
 דידעי עבדת נחשא ופרזלא ואחתיה דתובל  
 קין נעמה: כג ואמר למך לנשוהי עדה וצלה  
 שמעא קלי נשי למך אציתא למימרי לא  
 נברא קטלית דבדיליה אנא סביל חובין  
 (לממת) ואף לא עולימא חבלית דבדיליה  
 ישתיצי זרעי: כד ארי שבעא דרין אתליאו  
 לקין הלא ללמך בריה שבעין ושבעא:  
 כה וידע אדם עוד ית אתתיה וילדת בר וקרת  
 ית שמייה שתי ארי אמרת יהב לי יי בר  
 אוחרן חלף הקל דקטליה קין: כו ולשת אף

שתי נשים שם האחת עדה ושם השנית צלה: כ ותלד עדה  
 את יובל הוא היה אבי ישב אהל ומקנה: כא ושם אחיו יובל  
 הוא היה אבי כל תפיש פנור ועוגב: כב וצלה גם היא ילדה  
 את תובל קין למש כל חרש נחשת וברזל ואחות תובל קין  
 נעמה: [ששין] כג ויאמר למך לנשיו עדה וצלה שמען קולי נשי  
 למך האזנה אמרתי כי איש הרגתי לפעמי וילד לחברתי:  
 כד כי שבעתים יקם קין ולמך שבעים ושבעה: כה וידע אדם  
 עוד את אשתו ותלד לו ותקרא את שמו שתי כי שת-לי  
 אלהים זרע אחר תחת הקל כי הרגו קין: כו ולשת גם היא  
 ילד לו ויקרא את שמו אנוש אז הוחל לקרא בשם יהוה: ס

כש"י

כחיה, ואמר לאציו למשך צקשת וברגו, וכיון שידע שהוא קין זקנו, הכה כף  
 אל כף וספק את בנו ציניהם וברגו, וכיו נשיו פורשות ממנו, והוא מפיסן:  
 שמען קולי. להשמע לי לתשמיש, וכי איש אשר הרגתי לפעמי הוא נכר, וכי  
 אני פלעתי מזיד שיבא הפעל קרוי על שמי, וילד אשר הרגתי לחזורי נכר,  
 כלומר על ידי חזורתי בתמייה, והלא שוגג אני ולא מזיד, לא זכו פלעי ולא  
 זכו חזורתי: פצעי. מכת חרב אז חן, מקאדור"י בלע"י: (כד) בי שבעתים  
 יקם קין. קין שהרג מזיד נתלה לו עד שזעב דורות, אני שהרגתי שוגג לא  
 כל שכן שיתלה לי שזעיות הרבה: שבעים ושבעה. לשון רבוי שזעיות אחר  
 לו, כך דרש רבי תנחומא<sup>6</sup>. ומדרש בראשית רבה<sup>7</sup>, לא הרג למך כלום, ונשיו  
 פורשות ממנו משקיימו פריה ורביה, לפי שגזרה גזרה לכלות זרעו של קין  
 לאחר שזעב דורות, אמרו, מה אנו יולדות לזכרה, למחר המבול צא ושוטף  
 את הכל, והוא אומר להן וכי איש הרגתי לפעמי, וכי אני הרגתי את הכל,  
 שהיה איש צקומה וילד צשנים, שיבא זרעי כלה צאותו עון, ומה קין שהרג  
 נתלה לו שזעב דורות, אני שלא הרגתי לא כל שכן שיתלו לי שזעיות הרבה,  
 וזה קל וחומר של שטות, אם כן אין הקדוש ברוך הוא גוצה את חובו ומקיים  
 את דברו: (כה) וידע אדם וגו'. צא לו למך אלל אדם הראשון וקבל על נשיו,  
 אמר להם, וכי עליכם לדקדק על גזירתו של מקום, אחס עשו מלוחכם והוא  
 יעשה את שלו, אמרו לו קשוט עמך תחלה, והלא פרשת מאשךך זה מאה  
 ושלושים שנה משנקסה מיתח על ידך, מיד וידע אדם וגו', ומה עוד, ללמד  
 שנתוספה לו תאוה על תאוותו. צבראשית רבה<sup>8</sup>: (כו) אז הוחל. לשון חולין,

הענין שקיים הקצ"ח בצעתו, שאמר שזעתיים יוקם קין, ועמד למך לאחר  
 שהוליד צנים ועשה דור שזעי, וברג את קין, זה שאמר כי איש הרגתי לפעמי  
 וגו': שתי נשים. כך היה דרכן של דור המבול, אחת לפריה ורביה ואחת  
 לתשמיש, זו שיבא לתשמיש משקה כוס של עקרין (סא"א) כדי ששעקר,  
 ומקושטת ככלה ומאכילה מעדנים, וחזרתה נזופה ואזלה כאלמנה, וזהו  
 שפירש ח"ו<sup>1</sup> רועה עקרה לא תלד ואלמנה לא ייטיב, כמו שמפורש בצאגדת  
 חלק: עדה. היא של פריה ורביה, על שם שמגונה עליו ומוסרת מאללו, נס"א  
 ממאכלון עדה חרגום של סורה: צלה. היא של תשמיש, על שם שיושבת תמיד  
 צללו, דברי אגדה הם צבראשית רבה<sup>2</sup>: (כ) אבי ישב אהל ומקנה. הוא  
 היה הראשון לרועה צבמות צמדצרות, ויושז אהלים חדש כאן וחדש כאן  
 צשביל מרעה לאנו, וכשכלה המרעה צמקום זה הולך ותוקע אהלו צמקום  
 אחר. ומדרש אגדה צונה צחים לעבודת אלילים, כמה דאת אמר סמל  
 הקנאה<sup>3</sup> המקנה, וכן ואחיו תופש כנור ועוגב, לומר לעבודת אלילים:  
 (כז) תובל קין. תיבל חומנתו של קין. תובל לשון תצלין, תיבל והתקין חומנתו  
 של קין לעשותו כלי זיין לרוחאים: לוטש כל חרש נחשת וברזל. מחדד  
 חומנות נחושת וברזל, כמו ילעוש עיניו ל<sup>4</sup>, חורש אינו לשון פועל צבגול אלא  
 לשון פועל צירי, שהרי נקוד קמץ קטן, וטעמו למטה, כלומר מחדד ומלחח  
 כל כלי חומנות נחשת וברזל: נעמה. היא אשתו של נח, צבראשית רבה<sup>5</sup>:  
 (כג) שמען קולי. שהיו נשיו פורשות ממנו מתשמיש, לפי שהרג את קין ואת  
 תובל קין בנו, שהיה למך סומא ותובל קין מושכו, וראה את קין ונדמה לו

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How did people come to worship idols? (v. 26)

**RAMBAM:** In the days of Enosh, people made a serious mistake, and the counsel of the wise people degenerated into foolishness....Their mistaken reasoning was that since God created the skies and spheres as part of nature, and placed them on high, giving them dignity, and since they (the skies and spheres) are servants who serve Him, it would be appropriate to laud, glorify and honor them. [They argued that] it is the will of the Almighty for man to make great and to dignify those who make God great and honor Him, in the same way that a king wants to honor the servants who serve him—such is the honor

of a king....This is the fundamental basis of idolatry....However, they did not deny the existence of God by saying that only such-and-such a star exists...

After some time, prophets of falsehood arose, and said that the Almighty had commanded them to serve such-and-such a star, to bring sacrifices to it, to offer libations to it and to build a temple containing its form, in order that all people—including women, children and ignoramuses—will be able to bow down to it. Each of these prophets made known a form which he had invented himself, and claimed that it was the form of such-and-such a star which had

1 כד, כא 2 כג, ב 3 יחזקאל ח, ג 4 איוב טו, ט 5 כג, ג 6 בראשית יא 7 כג, ד 8 כג, ח

bore Yaval. He was the father of nomadic cattle rearing. <sup>21</sup> His brother's name was Yuval. He was the father of those who play harp and flute (for idol worship). <sup>22</sup> Tzilah also gave birth, to Tuval-Kayin, who would sharpen all crafting tools for copper and iron (making weapons). Tuval-Kayin's sister was Na'amah.

SIXTH  
READING

<sup>23</sup> Lemech (accidentally killed Kayin and Tuval-Kayin, and his wives separated from him. He) said to his wives, "Adah and Tzilah, listen to my voice (and accept me back)! Wives of Lemech, incline your ears to my words! (Did) I slay a man by wounding (him intentionally), or a child by hitting (him intentionally)?"

<sup>24</sup> If Kayin (who killed intentionally) was avenged after seven generations, then Lemech (who killed unintentionally) shall be (avenged after) seventy-seven (generations)!"

<sup>25</sup> Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son. She named him Sheis, (saying), "For God has given ('shas') me another seed, instead of Hevel, for Kayin killed him." <sup>26</sup> Sheis also fathered a son, and he named him Enosh.

Then, (God's Name) became profaned, by (people) calling (humans and idols) by the Name of God.

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

been made known to him in a prophecy. In this manner, people started to make figures in the temples, under trees and on the tops of mountains and hills, and they congregated and bowed down to them. The prophets said that it was a form which brought good and evil, and that it was fitting to serve and fear it. The prophets said that through this service one would multiply and be successful, and issued instructions concerning what may and may not be done. Other prophets of falsehood began to make themselves known, and said that the star itself, or a sphere or angel, had spoken to them about how to be served, and what may or may not be done. This matter, namely the worship of forms in different manners, the offering of sacrifices to them and the bowing down to them, became

propagated throughout the entire world. Due to the passage of time, the honored and fear-inducing Name was forgotten by all of nature, and was not recognized. Everybody, women and children included, knew only their forms of wood and stone, and the temples of stone, to which, from childhood, they had been educated to bow down, worship and take the name of for oaths. The wise people among them, such as the priests, imagined that there is no God, but only the stars and spheres, because of which they made representative figures. But as for the Creator, there was not a single person who recognized Him, except for various individuals, such as Chanoch, Mesushalach, Noach, Sheim and Aiver. Things continued in this manner until Avraham Avinu, pillar of the world, was born."

(Beginning of *Laws of Idol Worship*)

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🕯️ THE BEGINNINGS OF IDOL WORSHIP (v. 26)

**Rambam** describes the evolution of idolatry throughout the ages. But although very interesting to read, this passage would appear to belong better in a history book. *Rambam's Mishneh Torah* is a strictly halachic text (as *Rambam* himself writes in his introduction to the work) so we can presume that all the information conveyed here has a strong halachic connotation, which is crucial to an understanding of the prohibition of worshipping idols.

In addition, there are a number of difficulties with *Rambam's* description:

*Rambam* omits here the fact that *Adam HaRishon*, the first man, was commanded by God that neither he nor his descendants should worship idols (See above, p. 19, "The Last Word" to 2:16). How could he omit such a crucial point?

Furthermore, why does *Rambam* call idolatry a "mistake" ("In the days of *Enosh*, people made a serious mistake...Their mistaken reasoning was...")? Surely, this idol worship was much more than a mere "mistake"? It was a grave sin, a rebellion against God and an act of total heresy!

#### THE EXPLANATION

*Rambam* is teaching us here that idol worship, albeit a very practical prohibition, is based on a *philosophical* misjudgment, a "mistake." Therefore, in order that a person should not come to actually worship an

idol, it is insufficient for him to practice mere restraint. Rather, he must *understand* the false concepts on which idolatry is based.

Thus, he describes at length what the mistake actually was, why it is unfounded and how one mistake led to another. Only through understanding this mistake can a person have a firm basis that will protect him from the temptation to worship idols.

Consequently, it would have made no sense to mention that *Adam HaRishon* was commanded not to worship idols, for the whole purpose of this passage of *Rambam* is to teach us that first and foremost a person must come to the *logical* conclusion that God did not hand over any free choice to heavenly spheres, and that they are merely like "an axe in the hand of a lumberjack."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p.17ff)

#### 🕯️ Sparks of Chasidus 🕯️

Chasidic teachings explain that not only is there no deity or power other than God, but in fact, there is *no true existence at all* besides God. The fact that we see a physical world is only due to our inability to see the Godly energy which enlivens it. In truth however, we are totally absorbed within the absolute oneness of God. (See *Derech Mitzvosecha, Miztvav Achdus Havayah* ch. 3)

הוא את־יליד בַר וַקְרָא ית שְׁמִיה אֲנוּשׁ כִּכּוּן  
 בְּיוֹמוֹהִי חָלוּ בְּנֵי אֲנָשָׁא מִלְּצִלָּאָה בְּשֵׁמַא דִּי:  
 א דִּין סִפְר תּוֹלְדַת אָדָם בְּיוֹמָא דִּבְרָא יִי אָדָם  
 בְּדַמּוֹת אֱלֹהִים עֲבַד יְתִיה: ב דְּכַר וְנוֹקְבָא  
 בְּרֵאנִין וּבְרִיד יְתֵהוּן וַקְרָא ית שְׁמֵהוּן אָדָם  
 בְּיוֹמָא דְאֵת־בְּרִיאָא: ג וְחֵיא אָדָם מָאָה וּתְלַתִּין  
 שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּדַמּוֹתֶיהָ דְדַמֵּי לִיה וַקְרָא ית  
 שְׁמִיה שַׁת: ד וְהוּוּ יוֹמֵי אָדָם כְּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד ית  
 שַׁת תְּמַנֵּי מָאָה שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבָנָן: ה וְהוּוּ  
 כָּל יוֹמֵי אָדָם דְּחֵיא תְּשַׁע מָאָה וּתְלַתִּין שָׁנִין  
 וּמִית: ו וְחֵיא שַׁת מָאָה וְחֲמִשׁ שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד ית  
 אֲנוּשׁ: ז וְחֵיא שַׁת כְּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד ית אֲנוּשׁ  
 תְּמַנֵּי מָאָה וְשִׁבְעַ שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבָנָן:  
 ח וְהוּוּ כָּל יוֹמֵי שַׁת תְּשַׁע מָאָה וְתַרְתֵּי עֶשְׂרֵי  
 שָׁנִין וּמִית: ט וְחֵיא אֲנוּשׁ תְּשַׁעִּין שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד  
 ית קִינָן: י וְחֵיא אֲנוּשׁ כְּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד ית קִינָן  
 תְּמַנֵּי מָאָה וְחֲמִשׁ עֶשְׂרֵי שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין  
 וּבָנָן: יא וְהוּוּ כָּל יוֹמֵי אֲנוּשׁ תְּשַׁע מָאָה וְחֲמִשׁ  
 שָׁנִין וּמִית: יב וְחֵיא קִינָן שִׁבְעִין שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד  
 ית מְהֻלְלָאֵל: יג וְחֵיא קִינָן כְּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד ית  
 מְהֻלְלָאֵל תְּמַנֵּי מָאָה וְאַרְבַּעִין שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד  
 בְּנִין וּבָנָן: יד וְהוּוּ כָּל יוֹמֵי קִינָן תְּשַׁע מָאָה  
 וְעֶשְׂרָא שָׁנִין וּמִית: טו וְחֵיא מְהֻלְלָאֵל שְׁתֵּין  
 וְחֲמִשׁ שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד ית יָרֵד: טז וְחֵיא מְהֻלְלָאֵל  
 כְּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד ית יָרֵד תְּמַנֵּי מָאָה וּתְלַתִּין שָׁנִין  
 וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבָנָן: יז וְהוּוּ כָּל יוֹמֵי מְהֻלְלָאֵל  
 תְּמַנֵּי מָאָה וְתְשַׁעִּין וְחֲמִשׁ שָׁנִין וּמִית: יח וְחֵיא  
 יָרֵד מָאָה וְשְׁתֵּין וְתַרְתֵּין שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד ית  
 חֲנוּךְ: יט וְחֵיא יָרֵד כְּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד ית חֲנוּךְ תְּמַנֵּי  
 מָאָה שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבָנָן: כ וְהוּוּ כָּל יוֹמֵי  
 יָרֵד תְּשַׁע מָאָה וְשְׁתֵּין וְתַרְתֵּין שָׁנִין וּמִית:  
 כא וְחֵיא חֲנוּךְ שְׁתֵּין וְחֲמִשׁ שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד ית  
 מְתוּשֶׁלַח: כב וְהֵלִיךְ חֲנוּךְ בְּדַחְלָתָא דִּי כְּתַר  
 דְּאוֹלִיד ית מְתוּשֶׁלַח תְּלַת מָאָה שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד  
 בְּנִין וּבָנָן: כג וְהוּוּ כָּל יוֹמֵי חֲנוּךְ תְּלַת מָאָה  
 וְשְׁתֵּין וְחֲמִשׁ שָׁנִין: כד וְהֵלִיךְ חֲנוּךְ בְּדַחְלָתָא  
 דִּי וְלִיתְהוּי אָרִי (לֹא) אָמִית יְתִיה יִי:

ה א זֶה סֵפֶר תּוֹלְדֹת אָדָם בְּיוֹם בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אָדָם בְּדַמּוֹת  
 אֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה אֹתוֹ: ב זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בְּרָאם וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם וַיִּקְרָא  
 אֶת־שֵׁמֶם אָדָם בְּיוֹם הַבְּרָאָם: ג וַיְחִי אָדָם שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאֵת  
 שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֵד בְּדַמּוֹתוֹ בְּצִלְמוֹ וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ שֵׁת: ד וַיְהִי  
 יְמֵי־אָדָם אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־שֵׁת שְׁמֹנֶה מֵאֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֵד  
 בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: ה וַיְהִי כָּל־יְמֵי אָדָם אֲשֶׁר־חֵי תְשַׁע מֵאֹת שָׁנָה  
 וּשְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת: ו וַיְחִי־שֵׁת חֲמִשׁ שָׁנִים וּמֵאֵת שָׁנָה  
 וַיּוֹלֵד אֶת־אֲנוּשׁ: ז וַיְחִי־שֵׁת אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־אֲנוּשׁ שִׁבְעַ  
 שָׁנִים וּשְׁמֹנֶה מֵאֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֵד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: ח וַיְהִי כָּל־  
 יְמֵי־שֵׁת שְׁתַּיִם עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה וְתְשַׁע מֵאֹת שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת: ט וַיְחִי  
 אֲנוּשׁ תְּשַׁעִּים שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֵד אֶת־קִינָן: י וַיְחִי אֲנוּשׁ אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ  
 אֶת־קִינָן חֲמִשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה וּשְׁמֹנֶה מֵאֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֵד בָּנִים  
 וּבָנוֹת: יא וַיְהִי כָּל־יְמֵי אֲנוּשׁ חֲמִשׁ שָׁנִים וְתְשַׁע מֵאֹת שָׁנָה  
 וַיָּמָת: ס יב וַיְחִי קִינָן שִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֵד אֶת־מְהֻלְלָאֵל: יג וַיְחִי  
 קִינָן אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־מְהֻלְלָאֵל אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה וּשְׁמֹנֶה מֵאֹת  
 שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֵד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: יד וַיְהִי כָּל־יְמֵי קִינָן עֶשֶׂר שָׁנִים  
 וְתְשַׁע מֵאֹת שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת: טו וַיְחִי מְהֻלְלָאֵל חֲמִשׁ שָׁנִים  
 וְשְׁשִׁים שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֵד אֶת־יָרֵד: טז וַיְחִי מְהֻלְלָאֵל אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ  
 אֶת־יָרֵד שְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה וּשְׁמֹנֶה מֵאֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֵד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת:  
 יז וַיְהִי כָּל־יְמֵי מְהֻלְלָאֵל חֲמִשׁ וְתְשַׁעִּים שָׁנָה וּשְׁמֹנֶה מֵאֹת  
 שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת: ס יח וַיְחִי־יָרֵד שְׁתַּיִם וְשְׁשִׁים שָׁנָה וּמֵאֵת שָׁנָה  
 וַיּוֹלֵד אֶת־חֲנוּךְ: יט וַיְחִי־יָרֵד אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־חֲנוּךְ שְׁמֹנֶה  
 מֵאֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֵד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: כ וַיְהִי כָּל־יְמֵי־יָרֵד שְׁתַּיִם  
 וְשְׁשִׁים שָׁנָה וְתְשַׁע מֵאֹת שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת: ס כא וַיְחִי חֲנוּךְ חֲמִשׁ  
 וְשְׁשִׁים שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֵד אֶת־מְתוּשֶׁלַח: כב וַיְתֻהַלֵּךְ חֲנוּךְ אֶת־  
 הָאֱלֹהִים אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־מְתוּשֶׁלַח שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֵד  
 בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: כג וַיְהִי כָּל־יְמֵי חֲנוּךְ חֲמִשׁ וְשְׁשִׁים שָׁנָה וּשְׁלֹשׁ  
 מֵאֹת שָׁנָה: כד וַיְתֻהַלֵּךְ חֲנוּךְ אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים וַאֲיָנָנוּ כִּי־לָקַח

רש"י

לקרא את שמות האדם ואת שמות העצבים צשמו של הקצ"ב, לעשותן רלילים ומרדשי אגדה יש רצים: ביום ברא וגו'. מגיד שציוס שכרח כוליד: ולקרוטן אלכות: (6) זה ספר תולדות אדם. זו היא ספירת תולדות אדם, (ג) שלשים ומאת שנה. עד כאן פירש מן האשכ: (כד) ויתהלך חנוך. לדיק



## 🕎 THE OFFSPRING OF ADAM 🕎

**5** **T**his is the account of Adam's offspring:  
 On the day that God created man (he fathered children). He created him with a resemblance to God. <sup>2</sup> He created them male and female, and He blessed them. He named them man (Adam) on the day they were created.

<sup>3</sup> Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and he fathered (a son) resembling him and with his form, and he named him Sheis. <sup>4</sup> After he had fathered Sheis, Adam lived for eight hundred years and he fathered sons and daughters. <sup>5</sup> Adam lived a total of nine hundred and thirty years, and he died.

<sup>6</sup> Sheis lived one hundred and five years, and then he fathered Enosh. <sup>7</sup> After he had fathered Enosh, Sheis lived eight hundred and seven years, and he fathered sons and daughters. <sup>8</sup> Sheis lived a total of nine hundred and twelve years, and he died.

<sup>9</sup> Enosh lived ninety years, and then he fathered Keinan. <sup>10</sup> After he had fathered Keinan, Enosh lived eight hundred and fifteen years, and he fathered sons and daughters. <sup>11</sup> Enosh lived a total of nine hundred and five years, and he died.

<sup>12</sup> Keinan lived seventy years, and then he fathered Mahalaleil. <sup>13</sup> After he had fathered Mahalaleil, Keinan lived eight hundred and forty years, and he fathered sons and daughters. <sup>14</sup> Keinan lived a total of nine hundred and ten years, and he died.

<sup>15</sup> Mahalaleil lived sixty-five years, and then he fathered Yared. <sup>16</sup> After he had fathered Yared, Mahalaleil lived eight hundred and thirty years, and he fathered sons and daughters. <sup>17</sup> Mahalaleil lived a total of eight hundred and ninety-five years, and he died.

<sup>18</sup> Yared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and then he fathered Chanoch. <sup>19</sup> After he had fathered Chanoch, Yared lived eight hundred years, and he fathered sons and daughters. <sup>20</sup> Yared lived a total of nine hundred and sixty-two years, and he died.

<sup>21</sup> Chanoch lived sixty-five years, and he fathered Mesushalach. <sup>22</sup> After he had fathered Mesushalach, Chanoch followed God for three hundred years, and he fathered sons and daughters. <sup>23</sup> Chanoch lived a total of three hundred and sixty-five years. <sup>24</sup> Chanoch followed God (but he could easily be misled, so

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

The "Generations of man" are all descended from Adam's son Sheis, whereas the descendants of Kayin died out (*Rashi* 4:24). Sheis thus represents man's quality of building and propagating the world (*tikun*). Kayin on the other hand, is indicative of man's tendency to struggle within himself, toiling with his own darker side in a search for personal perfection (*tohu*). Sheis was world-orientated; Kayin was self-orientated.

Which is the correct approach?

Presumably, Sheis was correct, since we see that the descendants of Sheis prevailed whereas those of Kayin did not (See *Rashi* to 4:24).

However, the outward, world-orientated approach of Sheis was not entirely correct. For even a person whose goals are to cultivate the world around him still needs to strive for personal perfection in his own life. His worldliness needs to be tempered with inwardness; his productivity coupled with piety.

So, even Sheis—the pioneer of all civilization—had a descendent, Chanoch, who was a total isolationist. In fact Chanoch was so detached from the world that he would have become corrupted with the slightest exposure to humanity, so God acted mercifully and took him away before his time (See *Rashi* to v. 24). And yet he was a descendent of Sheis, the founder of humanity!

But this, precisely, is the point. The quality of Sheis within us—the outwardness and the ambition—should harbor within it the quality of Chanoch—inwardness and piety. We should study Torah expansively, aiming to acquire vast amounts of knowledge, but at least occasionally we should study Torah without any ulterior motive at all. We should observe the *mitzvos* to make ourselves better people, but sometimes we should do a *mitzvah* simply because it is God's will. In that way, we ensure that the Sheis within us gives birth to the occasional Chanoch.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 7ff.)

כה וַתָּא מְתוּשֶׁלַח מֵאָה וַתִּמְנֵן וּשְׁבַע שָׁנִין  
 וְאוֹלִיד יֵת לָמֶךְ: כו וַתָּא מְתוּשֶׁלַח בְּתֵר  
 דְּאוֹלִיד יֵת לָמֶךְ שְׁבַע מֵאָה וַתִּמְנֵן וַתִּרְתֵּן  
 שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבָנָן: לו וַהֲוּ כָּל יוֹמֵי  
 מְתוּשֶׁלַח תִּשְׁעַ מֵאָה וּשְׁתַּיִן וַתִּשַׁע שָׁנִין  
 וּמִיֵּת: כח וַתָּא לָמֶךְ מֵאָה וַתִּמְנֵן וַתִּרְתֵּן  
 שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בָּר: כט וַקְרָא יֵת שְׁמִיָּה נַח  
 לְמִימֵר דִּין וְנַחֲמַנְנָא מְעוּבְדָּנָא וּמַלְאוּת יְדָנָא  
 מִן אַרְעָא דִּי לְמִטָּה יֵי: ל וַתָּא לָמֶךְ בְּתֵר  
 דְּאוֹלִיד יֵת נַח חֲמֵשׁ מֵאָה וַתִּשְׁעִין וַחֲמֵשׁ  
 שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבָנָן: לא וַהֲוּ כָּל יוֹמֵי לָמֶךְ  
 שְׁבַע מֵאָה וּשְׁבַעִין וּשְׁבַע שָׁנִין וּמִיֵּת:  
 לב וַהֲוּה נַח בֵּר חֲמֵשׁ מֵאָה שָׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד נַח יֵת  
 שֵׁם יֵת חָם וַיֵּת יֵפֶת: \* וַהֲוּה כְּד שְׂרִיאֵו בְּנֵי  
 אֲנָשָׁא לְמִסְגֵּי עַל אֲפִי אַרְעָא וּבְנָתָא אֲתִילִידוּ  
 לְהוּ: ב וַהֲוּוּ בְנֵי רִבְרֵבְיָא יֵת בְּנַת אֲנָשָׁא אֲרִי  
 שְׁפִירָו אֲנִין וְנִסְבּוּ לְהוּן נָשִׁין מְכַל דִּי  
 אֲתִרְעִיאֵו: ג וְאָמַר יֵי לֹא יִתְקִים דְּרָא בִּישָׂא  
 הַדִּין קְדָמִי לְעֵלַם כְּדִיל דְּאֲנֹן בְּשָׂרָא  
 וְעוּבְדִיהוּן בִּישָׂא אַרְכָּא יְהִיבַת לְהוּן מֵאָה  
 וְעִשְׂרִין שָׁנִין אִם יִתּוּבוּ: ד גְּבִרְיָא הוּוּ  
 בְּאַרְעָא בְּיוֹמֵיָא הָאֲנֹן וְאַף בְּתֵר כֵּן דִּי יַעֲלוּן  
 בְּנֵי רִבְרֵבְיָא לְבַנַּת אֲנָשָׁא וּלְדָן לְהוּן אֲנֹן  
 גְּבִרְיָא דְּמַעֲלָמָא אֲנָשִׁין דְּשָׂמָא: ה וַתָּא יֵי  
 אֲרִי סְגִיַּאת בִּישַׁת אֲנָשָׁא בְּאַרְעָא וְכָל יַעֲרָא  
 מִחֻשְׁבַּת לְבִיָּה לְחוּד בִּישׁ כָּל יוֹמֵיָא: ו וַתֵּב יֵי  
 בְּמִימְרִיָּה אֲרִי עֶבֶד יֵת אָדָם בְּאַרְעָא וְאָמַר  
 בְּמִימְרִיָּה לְמַתְּבֵר תְּקַפְּהוּן כִּרְעוּתִיָּה:  
 ז וְאָמַר יֵי אֲמַחִי יֵת אֲנָשָׁא דִּי בְּרַאתִי מֵעַל אֲפִי

אֹתוֹ אֱלֹהִים: ס [שביעי] כה וַיְחִי מְתוּשֶׁלַח שְׁבַע וּשְׁמֹנִים שָׁנָה  
 וּמֵאַת שָׁנָה וַיֹּולֵד אֶת־לָמֶךְ: כו וַיְחִי מְתוּשֶׁלַח אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ  
 אֶת־לָמֶךְ שְׁתַּיִם וּשְׁמוֹנִים שָׁנָה וּשְׁבַע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיֹּולֵד בָּנִים  
 וּבָנוֹת: כז וַיְהִי כָּל־יְמֵי מְתוּשֶׁלַח תִּשְׁעֵ וּשְׁשִׁים שָׁנָה וַתִּשְׁעַ  
 מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת: ס כח וַיְחִי־לָמֶךְ שְׁתַּיִם וּשְׁמֹנִים שָׁנָה וּמֵאַת  
 שָׁנָה וַיֹּולֵד בָּן: כט וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ נַח לֵאמֹר \*זֶה יִנְחַמְנוּ  
 מִמַּעַשְׁנוֹ וּמִמַּעַצְבוֹן יְדִינוֹ מִן־הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר אֲרָרָה יְהוָה:  
 ל וַיְחִי־לָמֶךְ אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־נַח חֲמֵשׁ וַתִּשְׁעִים שָׁנָה וַחֲמֵשׁ  
 מֵאַת שָׁנָה וַיֹּולֵד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: לא וַיְהִי כָּל־יְמֵי־לָמֶךְ שְׁבַע  
 וּשְׁבַעִים שָׁנָה וּשְׁבַע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת: ס לב וַיְהִי־נַח בֶּן־חֲמֵשׁ  
 מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיֹּולֵד נַח אֶת־שֵׁם אֶת־חָם וְאֶת־יֵפֶת: ו \* וַיְהִי  
 כִּי־הִחַל הָאָדָם לָרֵב עַל־פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה וּבָנוֹת יִלְדוּ לָהֶם:  
 ב וַיִּרְאוּ בְנֵי־הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־בָּנוֹת הָאָדָם כִּי טֹבֹת הֵנָּה וַיִּקְחוּ  
 לָהֶם נָשִׁים מְכַל אֲשֶׁר בָּחֲרוּ: ג וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה לֹא־יִדְוֹן רוּחִי  
 בָּאָדָם לְעַלְם בְּשַׁגְּם: \* הוּא בָּשָׂר וְהָיָו יָמָיו מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה:  
 ד הַנְּפֹלִים הָיָו בְּאָרְצָן בְּיָמֵים הָהֵם וְגַם אַחֲרֵי־כֵן אֲשֶׁר יָבֹאוּ  
 בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים אֶל־בָּנוֹת הָאָדָם וַיִּלְדוּ לָהֶם הַמָּה הַגְּבִרִים אֲשֶׁר  
 מַעֲוָלָם אֲנָשֵׁי הַשָּׁם: פ [מפטיר] ה וַיִּרְא יְהוָה כִּי רַבָּה רָעַת הָאָדָם  
 בְּאָרְצָ וְכָל־יֵצֵר מַחֲשַׁבַּת לְבָו רַק רַע כָּל־הַיּוֹם: ו וַיִּנְחַם יְהוָה  
 כִּי־עָשָׂה אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּאָרְצָ וַיִּתְּעַצֵּב אֶל־לְבוֹ: ז וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה

\*הקורא יטעים הגריש לפני התלישא \*\*ס"א בשגם

כ"ד

לעתיד, וכן לפני מתן תורה: את שם את חם ואת יפת. והלא יפת הגדול הוא, אלא צחחלכ אחכ דורש את שהוא לדיק, ונולד כשהוא מכול, ושצרכס ילא ממנו וכי'. צבראשית רבא: (ג) בני האלהים. בני השרים והשופטים. דבר אחר בני האלהים, הם השרים ההולכים בשליחותו של מקום, אף הם היו מתערבים בהם. כל אלהים שבמקרא לשון מרות, וזה יוכיח ואתה תכיר לו לאלהים<sup>6</sup>, ראה נחתיך אלהים: בי טבת הגנה. אמר רבי יודן טבת כתיב, כשהיו מטיצין אותה מקושטת ליכנס לחופה, היה גדול נכנס וצועלה תחלה:<sup>7</sup> מכל אשר בחרו. אף צעולת צעל, אף הזכר והצמחה:<sup>8</sup> (ג) לא ידון רוחי באדם. לא יתרעם ויריב רוחי עלי צצציל האדם: לעולם. לאורך ימים, כנה רוחי נדון בקרצבי אס להשמית ואס לרחס, לא יכיר מדון זה צרוחי לעולם, כלומר לאורך ימים: בשגם הוא בשר. כמו צגגס צסגו'ל, כלומר צצציל שגס זאת זו שהוא צשר, ואף על פי כן אינו נכעט לפני, ומה אס יכיר אש או דבר קסה. כיולא צו עד טקמטי דצורה<sup>10</sup>, כמו טקמטי, וכן<sup>10</sup> טקסה

היה, וקל (ס"א וקצל) צדעתו לשו צ להרשיע, לפיכך מיכר הקצ"ח וסילקו והמיתו קודס זמנו<sup>1</sup>, וזכו שטינה הכחוצ צמיתחו לכחוצ ואינונו צעולס למלאות שנותיו: כי לקח אותו. לפני זמנו, כמו הנני לוקח ממך את מחמד עיניך<sup>2</sup> (כה) ויולד בן. שממנו נצנה העולם: (כט) זה ינחמנו. ינח ממנו את עצבון ידינו, עד שלא צא נח לא היה להס כלי מחרשה, וכוא הכין להס, וכיחה הארץ מוליאה קוליס ודרדרים כשזרעים חטים, מקללתו של אדם הראשון, וצימי נח נחה, וזכו ינחמנו. ואס לא תפרשהו כך, אין טעס הלשון נופל על השס, ואתה לריך לקרות שמו מנחס: (לצ) בן חמש מאות שנה. אמר רבי יודן, מה טעס כל הדורות הולידו למאה שנה זה לחמש מאות, אמר הקצ"ח, אס רשעים הם, יאצדו צמים ורע (ס"א רע של לדיק זה) ללדיק זה, ואס לדיקים הם, אטריח עליו לעשות תיבות הרצה, כצש את מעייו ולא הוליד עד חמש מאות שנה, כדי שלא יכא יפת הגדול צצצניו ראוי לעושין לפני המצול<sup>3</sup>, דכתיב כי הנער צן מאה שנה ימות<sup>4</sup>, ראוי לעושט

1 ב"ד כה, א 2 יחזקאל כד, כו 3 ב"ד כו, ב 4 ישעי' סה, כ 5 כו, ג 6 שמות ז, טז 7 שם ז, א 8 ב"ד כו, ה 9 ב"ד שם 10 שופטים ה, ז \* 10 שם ו, י"ז

God saved him by taking him away before his time), and he was no longer (around), for God had taken him.

SEVENTH  
READING

<sup>25</sup> Mesushalach lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, and he fathered Lemech. <sup>26</sup> After he had fathered Lemech, Mesushalach lived seven hundred and eighty-two years, and he fathered sons and daughters. <sup>27</sup> Mesushalach lived a total of nine hundred and sixty-nine years, and he died.

<sup>28</sup> Lemech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and he fathered a son (from whom the whole world was built). <sup>29</sup> He named him Noah, saying, "This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands from the ground, which God has cursed" (because he was to invent agricultural tools). <sup>30</sup> After he had fathered Noah, Lemech lived five hundred and ninety-five years, and he fathered sons and daughters. <sup>31</sup> Lemech lived a total of seven hundred and seventy-seven years, and he died.

<sup>32</sup> (After) Noah was five hundred years old, Noah fathered Sheim, Cham, and Yafes.

### 🌀 MORAL CORRUPTION OF MAN 🌀

**6** **T**hen, when man began to multiply upon the face of the earth and daughters were born to them, <sup>2</sup> the sons of nobility (violated) the daughters of (common) people when they were beautifying themselves (for their weddings). They took for themselves wives from whomever they chose (even married women, men and animals).

<sup>3</sup> God said, "My Spirit will not remain in conflict over (whether to destroy) man for a long time! Furthermore, he is (only) flesh (and yet he does not humble himself before Me! I will give him) one hundred and twenty years to live (and if he does not repent, I will destroy him with a flood)!"

<sup>4</sup> There were giants on the earth in the days of (Enosh and Kayin), and also afterwards (when they witnessed a flood that destroyed a third of the world), when the sons of the nobles (who were giants) would (violate) the daughters of (common) people, and they would bear (giant) children for them. They were the greatest (rebels of all) men who ever existed, men who were (mentioned above) by name(s which hinted to their later destruction).

MAFTIR <sup>5</sup> God saw that man's wickedness on earth was increasing, and every thought which came from his heart throughout the day was purely evil. <sup>6</sup> God was consoled (by the fact) that He had made man upon the earth (and not in heaven, where he would have caused the angels to rebel. God decided) in His heart (to cause man) pain.

רש"י

אצדן, שנמחו ורוחותיו. דבר אחר, אנשי שממון, ששממו את העולם: (ו) וינחם ה' בי עשה. נחמה היתה לפניו שצראו צחחוניים, שאילו היה מן העליונים היה ממרידן. צבראשית רבה<sup>13</sup>: ויתעצב. האדם: אל לבו. של מקום, עלה צמחשצתו של מקום להעליצו, זכו תרגום אונקלוס. דבר אחר וינחם, נהפכה מחשבתו של מקום ממדת רחמים למדת הדין, עלה צמחשצת לפניו מה לעשות צדום שעשה צדן. וכן כל לשון נוחם צמקרא לשון נמלך מה לעשות, וכן אדם ויתנחם<sup>14</sup>, ועל עבדיו יתנחם<sup>15</sup>, וינחם ה' על הרעה<sup>16</sup>, נחמתי כי המלכתי<sup>17</sup>, כולם לשון מחשבה אחרת הם: ויתעצב אל לבו. נחאצל על אצדן מעשה ידיו, כמו נעלז המלך על צנו<sup>18</sup>, וזה נחמתי לתשובת אפיקורוס אחד ששאל את רבי יבועש בן קרחא, אמר לו, אין אתם מודים

מדבר עמי, כמו ש'אח'ה, אף צ'צ'גם כמו צ'צ'גם: והיו ימיו וגו'. עד ק"ך שנה אצריך להם אפי, ואם לא ישובו, אציא עליהם מצול. ואם תאמר משגולד יפת עד המצול אינו אלא מאה שנה, אין מוקדם ומאוחר צתורה, כבר היתה גזרה גזורה עשרים שנה קודם שהוליד נח תולדות, וכן מצינו צסדר עולם<sup>11</sup>. ויש מדרשי אגדה רבים צלא ידון, אצל זה הוא נחאוה פשוטו: (ד) הנפילים. על שם שנפלו והפילו את העולם, וצלשון עברית לשון ענקים הוא: בימים ההם. צימי דור אנוש וצני קין: וגם אחרי כן. אף על פי שראו צאצדן של דור אנוש, שעלה אוקיינוס והציף שליש העולם, לא נכנע דור המצול ללמוד מהם<sup>12</sup>: אשר יבאו. היו יולדות ענקים כמוהם: הגבורים. למרוד צמקום: אנשי השם. אותם שנקצו צשמות, עירד, מחויאל, מתושאל, שנקצו על שם

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● What did God say he would do to man? (v. 7)

**RASHI:** God said, "Man is from the earth. I will bring water upon him and wash him away... for I have been reckoning what to do about the fact that I created him."

**ONKELOS:** God regretted that He had made man and planned to destroy him.

אָרְעָא מֵאַנְשָׁא וְעַד בְּעִירָא עַד רִיחֵשָׁא וְעַד  
 עוֹפָא דְשָׁמַיָא אֲרִי תְּבִית בְּמִימְרֵי אֲרִי  
 עֲבַדְתָּנוּ: ה וְנָח אֲשַׁבַּח רַחֲמֵי קָדְשׁ יי: פ פ פ

אָמְחָה אֶת־הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר־בָּרָאתִי מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאָרֶץ מֵאָדָם  
 עַד־בְּהֵמָה עַד־רֶמֶשׂ וְעַד־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּי נִחַמְתִּי כִּי עָשִׂיתָם:  
 ה וְנָח מִצָּא חַן בְּעֵינָי יְהוָה: פ פ פ

קמ"ו פסוקים, אמצו"ה סימן. יחזקיה"ו סימן.

כ"ש"י

העתידים לעמוד מהם: (f) ויאמר ה' אמחה את האדם. הוא עפר, ואזיא עליו מים ואמחה אותו, לכך נאמר לשון מחוי: מאדם עד בהמה. אף הם השחיתו דרכם! דבר אחר, הכל נצרא בשביל האדם, וכיון שהוא כלה מה נורח באלו? כי נחמתי כי עשיתם. חשבתי מה לעשות על אשר עשיתם: חסלת פרשת בראשית

שקצ"ה רואה את הנולד, אמר לו הן, אמר לו והא כתיב ויתעלז אל לבו, אמר לו נולד לך בן זכר מימך, אמר לו הן, אמר לו ומה עשית, אמר לו שמחתי ושימחתי את הכל, אמר לו ולא היית יודע שסופו למות, אמר לו בשעת חדותא חדותא בשעת אכלא אכלא. אמר לו כך מעשה הקצ"ה, אף על פי שגלוי לפניו שסופן לחטוא ולאצדן, לא נמנע מלצדאן, בשביל הדיקים

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 GOD'S DECREE AGAINST MANKIND (v. 7)

*Onkelos* renders a straightforward translation of verse 7: "God said, "I will obliterate (אָמְחָה) man from the face of the earth... because I regret (נִחַמְתִּי) the fact that I created him."

*Rashi*, however, appears to offer a non-literal translation, "I will wash away man from the face of the earth... because I have been reckoning what to do about the fact that I created him."

Why did *Rashi* not render אָמְחָה as "I will obliterate," as it is usually translated, and נִחַמְתִּי as "I regret"?

THE EXPLANATION

If one translates verse 7 literally (like *Onkelos*), that God planned to obliterate mankind, one will immediately be struck that reality testifies otherwise. Since we are still here to read the story, and there is no evidence that God retracted His plan, it is inconceivable that He actually intended to destroy mankind. Furthermore, in the very next verse we read that, "Noah found favor in the eyes of God," which introduces us to the following account of how Noah and his family were saved by God. Obviously then, God did not decide to "obliterate" mankind.

Therefore, *Rashi* came to the conclusion that in our verse אָמְחָה could not be understood in its usual translation (obliterate), but rather, it is to be rendered, "I will wash away." I.e. God decreed that He would bring a flood upon mankind, but this did not preclude the possibility of individuals being saved in the ark.

Similarly, *Rashi* rejected the interpretation that God regretted creating man, as we see that He did indeed allow man's existence to continue through Noah and his family. Therefore, *Rashi* was forced to adopt a slightly unusual translation, "I have been reckoning what to do about the fact that I created him."

DID GOD CHANGE HIS MIND?

One problem with this explanation is that it appears to contradict an earlier comment of *Rashi*. On verse 6, *Rashi* writes (in his second interpretation), "God's thoughts of mercy were transformed to judgment," from which it appears that God indeed regretted creating man. How does this correlate with *Rashi's* stance, as explained above, that God could not possibly have regretted making man since we see that man continues to exist?

<sup>7</sup> God said, “I will wash away man, whom I created, from upon the face of the earth, man as well as cattle, creeping things and birds of the skies, for I have reckoned (what to do) about (the fact that) I made them.”

<sup>8</sup> But Noach found favor in the eyes of God.

THE HAFTARAH FOR BEREISHIS IS ON PAGE 368. THE HAFTARAH FOR EREV ROSH CHODESH IS ON PAGE 394.

---

#### T O R A S M E N A C H E M

---

The solution to this problem lies in the distinction between Divine “thought,” and Divine “speech.” In verse 6, “God’s *thoughts* of mercy were transformed to judgment,” i.e. He did indeed regret making man, but only in thought. However, in verse 7, “God *said*, ‘I will wash away man *etc.*’ From this we see that God was indeed harboring some regret to Himself (in “thought”) about creating man, but when He finally issued His decree in “speech,” the harshness of the plan was softened to

exclude those who would be saved in the Ark, from which mankind could be reconstructed.

This begs the question: what finally caused God to soften his decree?

This point is answered by the end of the verse itself, “because I have been reckoning what to do about the fact that *I created him.*” I.e. the fact that man was created by God Himself (“I created him”), eventually led God to have mercy on His own handiwork.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 27ff.)

### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

From God’s reaction to the corruption of mankind, we can learn two powerful lessons in everyday life:

a.) *God thought about destroying mankind, but He only issued His decree verbally after He had softened His anger.* This teaches us how important it is to speak positively about other people. If God himself refrained from committing negative thoughts to speech, then all the more so should we be careful not to speak badly about others.

Our Sages taught that *Lashon Hara* (gossip) harms 1.) The gossiper, 2.) The listener and 3.) The one about whom the gossip is spoken (see *Arachin* 15b). Now it is easy to understand why the gossiper and listener suffer, since they participated in the sin. But why should the *subject* of the gossip suffer? After all, he was not even present at the time!

The answer lies in the fact that speech is a *revelation* of something that was previously hidden (in thought). Therefore, by speaking badly about another person it actually causes that person’s bad traits to be

more pronounced in the world, which could lead him to be the subject of a heavenly decree of punishment. Thus, it is bad *speech* that can harm another (and not thoughts, that remain hidden), which teaches us how careful a person should be with the words he utters about another.

b.) *God “reckoned” what to do with man, but He did not come to any firm resolution, even in thought.* This teaches us that even when we see a person do something bad, we should not come to any firm conclusion about the merit of his actions, even in thought (and certainly not in speech). For if God, who is all-knowing and never makes mistakes, still took time to “ponder” and “reckon” His harsh thoughts about man, then we, who are capable of easily misjudging another, should certainly not condemn another even in thought. Rather, we should always endeavor to “judge every person favorably” (*Avos* 1:5).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 31ff.)



**Parshas Bereishis** contains 1 positive *mitzvah*.

1. To be fruitful and multiply [1:28]



# parshas Noach

פרשת נח

## 🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

Our Parsha begins, “These are the offspring of Noach, Noach was...”

The Midrash asks: “Why is Noach’s name written twice, when once would have sufficed?”

“Because,” answers the Midrash, “Noach (נח) [can be translated as] ‘serenity’ (שְׁלוֹמָה). Noach brought serenity for himself, and serenity for the world; serenity for his ancestors (who could rest in peace in their graves) and serenity for his children; serenity in the upper worlds (since the heavenly prosecutions against mankind stopped) and serenity in the lower worlds; serenity in this world and serenity in the next world” (Bereishis Rabah 30:5 and Rashi ibid.).

This serenity was achieved by the floodwaters, referred to by the Torah as “the waters of Noach” (Isaiah 54:9). Chasidic thought explains that, before the flood, physical matter was brittle and insensitive to anything spiritual.

In such an atmosphere corruption flourished, as people felt little accountability for their actions.

Chasidus teaches that the waters of the flood were like a mikvah (ritual bath). A person who immerses in a mikveh might notice that his thoughts are slightly purer that day, or that his conscience agitates him a little more. So too, the global mikveh which occurred in Noach’s generation had a purifying effect on the physical world, bringing soul and body to a heightened level of communication.

After the flood, the world and its inhabitants now had a conscience and a greater appreciation of God. And this ensured that the world would have a genuine “serenity”—a continued existence. For, even if people became corrupt, their newfound spiritual sensitivity would ensure that they would have the motivation to repent. Thus, it would always be worthwhile for God to continue sustaining His world.

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Noach 5751)

ט אֱלֹהֵי תוֹלְדֹת נֹחַ נֹחַ אִישׁ צַדִּיק תָּמִים הָיָה בְּדִרְתּוֹ אֶת־  
הָאֱלֹהִים הִתְהַלְקֵד־נֹחַ: וַיִּוָּלַד נֹחַ שְׁלֹשָׁה בָנָיִם אֶת־שֵׁם  
ט אֱלֹהֵי תוֹלְדֹת נֹחַ נֹחַ גִּבֹּר וְכָבֵד וְכָבֵד וְכָבֵד וְכָבֵד וְכָבֵד  
בְּדִרְתּוֹ בְּדִרְתּוֹ בְּדִרְתּוֹ בְּדִרְתּוֹ בְּדִרְתּוֹ בְּדִרְתּוֹ בְּדִרְתּוֹ בְּדִרְתּוֹ

רש"י

(ט) אלה תולדת נח נח איש צדיק. הואיל והזכירו, סיפר בשבחו, שנאמר זכר לדיק לצרכי. דבר אחר, ללמדך שעיני תולדותיהם של דיוקים מעשים טובים: בדורותיו. יש מרבותיו דורשים אותו לשבח, כל שכן שאילו היה צדור דיוקים היה דיק יותר, ויש שדורשים אותו לגנאי, לפי דורו היה דיק, ואילו היה צדורו של אברהם לא היה נחשז לכלום:<sup>2</sup>

את האלהים התהלך נח. ובאברהם הוא אומר אשר התהלכתי לפניו,<sup>3</sup> נח היה לדיק סעד לחומכו, אבל אברהם היה מתחזק ומהלך צדקו מאליו: התהלך. לשון עבר, וזכו שמושו של ל' בלשון כד משמשת להבא ולשעבר בלשון אחד, קום התהלך,<sup>4</sup> להבא. התהלך נח, לשעבר. התפלל צעד עבדיך,<sup>5</sup> להבא. ובא והתפלל אל הבית הזה,<sup>6</sup> לשון עבר, אלא שהו"ו שבראשו

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the Torah state that Noah was a righteous man? (v. 9)

**RASHI:** Since the Torah mentions him, it tells his praise, as the verse states: *“The mention of a righteous man is for a blessing”* (Prov. 10:7). Another explanation: To teach you that the main “offspring” of the righteous are their good deeds.

**GUR ARYEH:** *Rashi* writes that when a righteous man is mentioned he should be praised. Why then, do we find that numerous righteous individuals—such as the Patriarchs—are mentioned consistently in the Torah without words of praise?

*Rashi’s* point here is that a righteous man should be praised when he is mentioned in the context of wicked men. Therefore, in our case, where Noah is being mentioned in comparison to his wicked generation, the Torah praises him. Similarly, when Avraham is mentioned in the context of the wicked people of Sodom and

Amorah, the Torah praises him (see below, 18:18 and *Rashi* ibid.). In other cases however, no praise is necessary.

**LEVUSH HA’OHRAH:** *Gur Aryeh’s* solution is untenable. For, at the end of *Parshas Bereishis*, Noah is mentioned in the context of the ten wicked generations between Adam and Noah, and yet he is not praised.

Rather, in truth, Noah was not praised in *Parshas Bereishis* because the subject of discussion there is not Noah’s life in particular, but the general history preceding Noah’s life, up to and including his generation. Thus, in *Parshas Bereishis* the Torah does not make an issue of Noah’s fine qualities, because the context there is still broadly historical and not specifically biographical.

In our *Parsha* however, where Noah is mentioned in his own right, the Torah praises him, based on the principle cited by *Rashi* that, *“The mention of a righteous man is for a blessing.”*

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 WHEN SHOULD A RIGHTEOUS MAN BE PRAISED? (v. 9)

A number of commentators [including *Gur Aryeh*] ask why the Torah does not praise Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya’akov when they are mentioned, based on *Rashi’s* principle that a righteous man should be praised when he is mentioned.

The solution to this problem appears to be obvious:

From *Parshas Lech Lecha* to the end of *Parshas Vayechi*, the Torah describes at length the lives of the Patriarchs and the good deeds that they performed. Consequently, there is no need to praise Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya’akov when they are mentioned since the *Book of Bereishis* itself is a lengthy account of their virtues and good deeds.

Noach, on the other hand, is not praised at length in the Torah. Therefore, when he is mentioned here, it is appropriate to praise him, based on *Rashi’s* principle that a righteous man should be praised when he is mentioned.

One might still ask: surely Noach is praised at least throughout the whole of *Parshas Noach*, as we read how he followed God’s instruction to build the ark?

However, this could not be classified as praise, for two reasons:

a.) Praise is given for acts of an exceptional quality, beyond what might be expected. The building of the ark, however, was a direct command

from God. The fact that Noach followed this command is thus not an “exceptional” feat of righteousness, but rather, simple obedience.

b.) Noach built the ark to save his own life. The story of how Noach saved himself is thus hardly a tremendous “praise” of his acts of kindness to others.

QUESTION OF LEVUSH HA’OHRAH

We are still left with the problem raised by *Levush Ha’ohrah*, that Noach should have been praised the first time that he was mentioned, in *Parshas Bereishis*.

One could, perhaps, argue that Noach is indeed praised when he is mentioned in *Parshas Bereishis* with the words “Noach found favor in the eyes of God.”

However, such a notion is difficult to accept. For *Rashi* only teaches us this principle (to praise a righteous man when he is mentioned) for the first time at the beginning of our *Parsha*, and not at the end of *Parshas Bereishis*. If the words “Noach found favor in the eyes of God” (at the end of *Parshas Bereishis*) were indeed praise, then *Rashi* would have stated the principle in his commentary to that verse.

THE EXPLANATION

The basic solution to this problem was already proposed by *Levush Ha’orah* himself. Namely, that there is a significant contextual distinction



## THE OFFSPRING OF NOACH

6:9 **T**hese are the offspring of Noach.

Noach was a righteous man. He was perfect(ly righteous) in (relation to) his generation. Noach walked (only) with (the support of) God.

<sup>10</sup> Noach fathered three sons: Sheim, Cham, and Yafes.

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● What does it mean that “Noach was perfect(ly righteous) in (relation) to his generation”? (v. 9)

**RASHI:** Some of our Sages interpret this favorably, i.e. that if he had lived in a generation of righteous people then he would have been even more righteous.

Others interpret it derogatorily, i.e. in comparison with his generation he was righteous, but if he had been in Avraham’s generation he would not have been considered especially righteous at all.

**ZOHAR:** God told Noach that He was going to bring a flood and wipe out mankind. But since Noach was told that he and his family would be saved he did not pray to God for the salvation of the rest of the world, and they were destroyed. On the other hand, when the Jewish people worshipped the golden calf, Moshe prayed for them and they were saved. Rabbi Yehudah said that Moshe asked for forgiveness in the merit of the righteousness of the Patriarchs, but Noach—who had no such merits—was unable to do so. Rabbi Yitzchak said that notwithstanding this impediment, Noach should have prayed for his generation (*Zohar* I 67b–68a).

### TORAS MENACHEM

between *Parshas Bereishis* and *Parshas Noach*, and only here where Noach is mentioned in his own right does *Rashi*’s principle (of praising a righteous man) apply.

By carefully examining the verses in *Parshas Bereishis*, we could perhaps clarify a little more precisely the exact context of Noach’s appearance there, and understand why the Torah did not deem it necessary to praise him at that point.

After recording the life and times of Adam, the first man, and his children, *Parshas Bereishis* continues with a brief genealogy of ten generations of his family (ch. 5), and then concludes with an account of the moral corruption which inspired God to “wash man away” (6:1-8).

At first glance, one might imagine that both the genealogy and the concluding passage represent a “second installment” of world history, subsequent to the chronicles of Adam’s life. To counteract this notion, the Torah states at the very outset: “*This is the account of Adam’s offspring*” (5:1), as if to say, “The following is part of Adam’s biography. We will now discuss his posthumous influence on the world.”

Viewed in this light we can appreciate that the purpose of this entire passage is to explain that as a result of Adam ten generations later “*man’s wickedness was increasing*” to such an extent that God was moved “*to wash away man*” (6:5,7). The conclusion of *Parshas Bereshis* is thus the conclusion of Adam’s biography: One of the unfortunate elements of Adam’s legacy to mankind was sin, and, we are told, this was so influential that ten generations later this negative influence had escalated to intolerable proportions.

With this in mind we can appreciate that when Noach appears in *Parshas Bereishis*, he is mentioned solely to complete our picture of Adam’s life and posthumous influence. First, Noach is cited as a part of the genealogical chain, which, as stated above, comes to highlight the extent of Adam’s influence over subsequent generations. And second, amid the general message of Adam’s negative contribution to mankind, Noach is cited as an “exception to the rule,” and the source of humanity’s ultimate salvation.

But, all along, the context is Adam’s life and influence. Noach appears only as a part of Adam’s story. Therefore, here is not the time to praise Noach, or to highlight his righteousness. That belongs in Noach’s “biography” which, of course, begins at the opening of *Parshas Noach*.

#### RASHI’S TWO INTERPRETATIONS

*Rashi* was troubled by the question: why does the Torah state, “These are the offspring of Noach,” and then digress to inform us that “Noach

### The Last Word

The *Mishnah* teaches us, to “*Judge every person favorably*” (*Avos* 1:6). So why did “some of our sages” interpret Noach’s standing “derogatively” when they could have interpreted the matter favorably (see *Rashi* to v. 9)? And why did Rabbi Yitzchak (cited in the *Zohar*) conclude that Noach was sinful in not praying for his generation, when he could have judged Noach favorably, like Rabbi Yehudah?

The principle of judging people favorably is an admirable trait that should always be followed, *except when it could have a misleading result*. In our case, if all the sages had judged Noach favorably, to be totally pious, then people might have concluded that all of Noach’s acts were indeed acceptable for a righteous man. When we read that Noach did not pray for his generation to be saved (see *Zohar*) and that he did not really believe that the flood was going to come (see *Rashi* to 7:7), one might think that such behavior is acceptable even for the most righteous of people. Therefore, “some of our Sages” felt the obligation to proclaim that Noach did not in fact represent the epitome of piety, so we should not learn from *all* of his ways. Rather, we should not be satisfied with saving ourselves, but accept responsibility for the people around us, both physically and spiritually.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 25, p. 19ff.)

תִּלְתָּא בְּנֵי יֵת שָׁם יֵת חָם וְיֵת יִפְתָּ:  
 יֵא וְאֶתְחַבְּלֵת אֲרַעָא קֳדָם יי וְאֶתְמַלִּיאַת אֲרַעָא  
 חֲמוּפִין: יב וְחֹזָא יי יֵת אֲרַעָא וְהָא אֶתְחַבְּלֵת  
 אַרְי חֲבִילוֹ כָּל בְּשָׂרָא אָנֹשׁ יֵת אֲרַחֲיָה עַל  
 אֲרַעָא: יג וְאָמַר יי לְנֹחַ קִצָּא דְכָל בְּשָׂרָא עַל  
 לְקַדְמֵי אַרְי אֶתְמַלִּיאַת אֲרַעָא חֲמוּפִין מִן קֳדָם  
 עוֹבְדֵיהוֹן בִּישְׂיָא וְהָא אָנֹא מְחַבְּלֵהוֹן עִם  
 אֲרַעָא: יד עֲבַד לְךָ תִּיבּוֹתָא דְאֵעִין דְקַבְרֹום  
 מְדוּרִין תַּעֲבִיד יֵת תִּיבּוֹתָא וְתַחֲפִי יֵתָה מִן  
 וּמִבָּרָא בְּכוּפְרָא: טו וְדִין דְתַעֲבִיד יֵתָה תִּלְתָּ

אֶתְחָם וְאֶת־יִפְתָּ: יא וְתִשְׁתַּחֲת הָאָרֶץ לְפָנַי הָאֱלֹהִים וְתִמְלֵא  
 הָאָרֶץ חֲמוֹם: יב וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְהִנֵּה נִשְׁחַתָּה  
 כִּי־הִשְׁחִית כָּל־בָּשָׂר אֶת־דַּרְכּוֹ עַל־הָאָרֶץ: ס יג וַיֹּאמֶר  
 אֱלֹהִים לְנֹחַ קַח לְךָ בָּשָׂר כָּל־מִלְּאָה הָאָרֶץ חֲמוֹם  
 מִפְּנֵיהֶם וְהִנְנִי מִשְׁחִיתֶם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ: יד עֲשֵׂה לְךָ תִּבְתָּ  
 עֲצֵי־גֹפֶר קַנִּים תַּעֲשֶׂה אֶת־הַתִּיבָּה וְכִפַּרְתָּ אֹתָהּ מִבַּיִת וּמִחוּץ  
 בַּכֹּפֶר: טו וְזֶה אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה אֹתָהּ שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת אַמָּה אַרְבָּ

קשׁ

שלשה טפחים של עומק המחרישה נמוחו ונטשטשו: (יד) עשה לך תבת.  
 הרבה ריוח והללה לפניו, ולמה הטריחו צננין זה, כדי שיראוהו אנשי דור  
 המבול עוסק בה ק"כ שנה, ושואלין אותו מה זאת לך, וכוף אומר להם  
 עתיד הקצ"ה להביא מבול לעולם, אולי ישוּבו: עצי גופר. כך שמו, ולמה  
 ממין זה, על שם גפריית, שגזר עליהם להמחות בו: קניום. מדורים מדורים  
 לכל זהמה וחייה: בכפר. זפת בלשון ארמי. ומלניו בגמרא כופרה. צתיחתו  
 של משה, על ידי שהיו המים תשים, דיה בחומר מצפנים זפת מצחוץ, ועוד  
 כדי שלא יריח אותו לדיק ריח רע של זפת, אזל כאן, מפני חוזק המים

הופכו להבא: (יא) ותשחת. לשון ערוה ועבודה אלילים<sup>1</sup>, (ס"א, ערוה, כי  
 השחית כל בשר את דרכו, ועבודה אלילים) כמו פן תשחיתון?<sup>2</sup> ותמלא  
 הארץ חמום. גזל (ס"א, שנאמר ומן החמום אשר צפיהם<sup>3</sup>): (יג) כי  
 השחית כל בשר. אפילו צמח חי ועוף נזקקין לשחיין מיין: (יד) קח  
 כל בשר. כל מקום שאתה מולא זנות ועבודה אלילים, אנדרלמוסיה צאה  
 לעולם, והורגת טובים ורעים: כי מלאה הארץ חמום. לא נחתם גזר דינם  
 אלא על הגזל<sup>4</sup>: את הארץ. כמו מן הארץ, ודומה לו כלאחתי את העיר<sup>5</sup>,  
 מן העיר. חלה את רגליו<sup>6</sup>, מן רגליו. דבר אחר את הארץ, עם הארץ, שאף

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why was the ark chosen as a method of salvation? (v. 14)

**RASHI:** God has many ways at His disposal with which to bring relief and salvation. Why then, did He burden Noach with constructing an ark? In order that the people of the generation of the Flood should see him busy with the construction for 120 years and ask him, "Why do you need this?" He would say to them, "God is going to bring a flood upon the world," and perhaps they would repent.

**MASKIL LE DAVID:** *Rashi* was troubled by the seemingly illogical sequence of verses here. First the Torah states, "The end of all flesh

has come before Me... I am going to destroy them from the earth" (v. 13), but we are not told how. Then Noach is told to build an ark (v. 14-16), and only afterwards in verse 17 are we told for the first time about the flood, "I am ready to bring a flood of water upon the earth." Surely, God should have told Noach about the flood before instructing him to build the ark?

To explain this peculiarity, *Rashi* writes that the ark was not merely a method of salvation from the flood—for God could have saved Noach in a variety of ways—but an attempt to inspire the generation to repentance.

TORAS MENACHEM

was a righteous man etc.," before telling us who the offspring of Noach were (namely, "Sheim, Cham, and Yafes")?

To answer this problem *Rashi* explains, "Since the Torah mentions him, it tells his praise," i.e. the Torah digresses temporarily to mention the righteousness of Noach before telling us who his offspring are, based on the principle that a righteous man should always be praised when mentioned.

However, this explanation is problematic, since it is difficult to accept that the Torah would make such an awkward digression in the middle of a sentence.

Therefore, *Rashi* continues with a second explanation that our verse teaches us: "the main 'offspring' of the righteous are their good deeds." This solves the problem of digression, for it allows verse nine to be read as a self-contained idea: "These are the good deeds of Noach, he was a righteous man etc."

A problem with this second interpretation is that we are forced to render the word "offspring" non-literally, i.e. not as physical but spiritual

offspring. Since this is somewhat of a deviation from the literal meaning of the words, *Rashi* placed this interpretation second.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 36ff.)

🔗 WHY DID NOACH BUILD THE ARK FOR SO LONG? (v. 14)

*Rashi* writes that Noach took 120 years to build the ark (v. 14), which begs the question: why did he take so long? Surely a *mitzvah* from God should be done with the greatest enthusiasm and speed possible?

One might argue that this was indeed a shortcoming on Noach's part. We find that, in various areas, Noach was lacking in righteousness, to the extent that "some of our Sages" argued, "If he had been in Avraham's generation, he would not have been considered especially righteous at all" (*Rashi* to v. 9, above; see also *Zohar* *ibid.*). So, perhaps Noach's lengthy delay in constructing the ark was a further indication of his spiritual shortcomings.

This solution however is untenable, since it contradicts an explicit verse. The Torah states below, "Noach made (the ark). He did everything that

🌀 NEWS OF THE FLOOD—NOACH BUILDS THE ARK 🌀

6:11 **T**he earth became depraved (and idolatrous) before God, and the earth became full of robbery.  
<sup>12</sup> God saw the earth, and—look!—it had become depraved, for all (human and animal) flesh had depraved its nature upon the earth.

<sup>13</sup> God said to Noach, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, as the earth has become full of robbery because of them. I am going to destroy them from the earth (alternatively: with the earth).”

<sup>14</sup> “You should make an ark of gopher wood. You should make the ark with compartments. You should coat both inside and outside with tar.

<sup>15</sup> “This is how you should make it: the length of the ark—three hundred cubits, its breadth—fifty cubits, and its height—thirty cubits.

TORAS MENACHEM

God had commanded him” (v. 22). Thus, while Noach may have been guilty of some spiritual shortcomings, he did not err at all in the construction of the ark. If he took 120 years, this must have been God’s intention, since “he did *everything* that God had commanded him.”

Another possible solution could be argued, based on a verse in *Parshas Bereishis*. When we begin to read about man’s corruption, God says, “My Spirit will not remain in conflict over (whether to destroy) man for a long time! ... (I will give him) one hundred and twenty years to live (and if he does not repent, I will destroy him with a flood)!” (6:3).

If we presume that Noach was aware of this fact, we can understand why he saw no urgency in building the ark. His first priority would have been to arouse the generation to repent (which would preclude the need for an ark in any case). Then, when this proved unsuccessful and the 120-year deadline was approaching, he would have completed the construction of the ark.

However, this solution too is flawed, because:

a.) When God told Noach, “You should make an ark of gopher wood...” He did not give any indication that the *mitzvah* may be delayed at Noach’s discretion. Therefore, he must have presumed that God wanted it done immediately.

b.) The above logic would explain why Noach would have delayed building the ark until the *end* of 120 years. But it does not explain *Rashi’s* statement that Noach was “*busy with the construction* for 120 years.”

### THE EXPLANATION

Every *mitzvah* involves two elements: a.) The *materials* with which the *mitzvah* is performed. b.) The *actions* performed by the person with those materials to fulfill the *mitzvah*.

The precise legal obligation of any given *mitzvah* could rest on either of these two aspects: a.) That the materials should be modified to achieve the appropriate *result*. b.) That the *actions* of the person himself are the focus of the requirement.

[For example, in the case of the *mitzvah* of *tefilin*: Is the requirement to *put on tefilin* (i.e. the action)? Or is it that *tefilin* should be *worn* (i.e. the result)? In the former case, the *donning* of the *tefilin* (the action) would constitute the actual *mitzvah*; whereas in the latter case the *mitzvah* would only commence *after* the *tefilin* had been put on (the result).—*Ed.*]

In our case, we could pose the question: was God commanding Noach to achieve a *result*, a fully built ark. Or was *action* the requirement, that Noach should busy himself with *building* the ark?

*Rashi* concluded that the latter was the case. This is evident from the fact that God told Noach to build the ark *before* He told him that there

would be a flood (See *Maskil leDavid*), which suggests that there was a purpose in building the ark *besides* salvation from the flood. *Rashi* understood this purpose to be the effect of Noach’s *actions* in building the ark, which would inspire the generation to repentance.

And this explains why Noach took so long to build the ark. For if the *mitzvah* would have been to produce the *result*, a built ark, then Noach could have delegated the work to somebody else. The only obligation resting on Noach would have been to get an ark built, regardless of the method.

But since the *mitzvah* here was not the result (a built ark), but the *action* of building an ark, Noach could not delegate the *mitzvah* to another—for the actual requirement was that *Noach himself* should be busy with building the ark. For one man to build such a large structure, inevitably took 120 years. In fact, if one contemplates the fact that the ark was 300x50x30 cubits, with three storeys, it is quite remarkable that Noach built it singlehandedly so quickly!

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15. p. 34ff.)

### 🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

**W**e learned above (*Zohar* to v. 9), that the generation of the flood was destroyed because Noach did not pray for their salvation, since he knew that his own personal safety was assured. This seems to contradict *Rashi’s* statement here that Noach spent no less than 120 years rebuking the people to repent!

Chasidic teachings explain that Noach lacked the quality of *mesiras nefesh* (self-sacrifice) in his dedication to God’s command to rebuke his generation. Thus, Noach only rebuked the generation *because he was commanded to do so*. His main priority was to discharge the obligation which God had given him, and it did not bother him too much whether the generation would repent. So, his rebuke was lacking sincerity, and thus it was unsuccessful.

In contrast, Moshe demonstrated *mesiras nefesh* when his generation was at risk of being eliminated, pleading to God, “If You forgive their sin (then well and good), but if not, please erase me from Your book (the Torah), which You have written” (*Shemos* 32:32).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, pp. 40-41)

מֵאֵה אֲמִין אֹרְכָא דְתִיבּוּתָא חֲמִשִּׁין אֲמִין פּוּתְיָהּ וְתִלְתִּין אֲמִין רוּמָה: טו נְהוּר תַּעֲבִיד לְתִיבּוּתָא וְלֵאמָתָא תִּשְׁכַּלְלִינָה מְלַעֲיָלָא וְתִרְעָא דְתִיבּוּתָא בְּסִטְרָה תִּשְׁנִי מְדוּרִין אֲרַעָאין תִּנְיִנִין וְתִלְתָּאין תַּעֲבַדְנָה: יז וְאֵנָּה הָא אֵנָּה מִיִּיתֵי ית טוּפְנָא מִיָּא עַל אֲרַעָא לְחַבְלָא כָּל בְּשָׂרָא דִּי בֵּיה רוּחָא דְחַי מִתְּחִיל שְׁמִיָּא כָּל דִּי בְּאֲרַעָא יָמוּת: יח וְאֶקִּים ית קִנְיִי עִמָּךְ וְתִיעוּל לְתִיבּוּתָא אֵת וּבְנִיד וְאִתְתַּד וְנִשִּׁי בְּנִיד עִמָּךְ: יט וּמִכָּל דְּחַי מִכָּל בְּשָׂרָא תִּרְיַן מִכּוּלָּא תַּעֲיִל לְתִיבּוּתָא לְקִימָא עִמָּךְ דְּכַר וְנוֹקְבָא יְהוּן: כ מַעוּפָא לְזִנּוּהֵי וּמִן בְּעִירָא לְזִנּוּהֵי וּמִכָּל רִיחֵשָׂא דְאֲרַעָא לְזִנּוּהֵי תִּרְיַן מִכּוּלָּא יַעֲלוּן לְזִתְדָּ לְקִימָא: כא וְאֵת סַב

הַתְּבָה חֲמִשִּׁים אַמָּה רְחֵבָה וּשְׁלֹשִׁים אַמָּה קוֹמְתָה: טו צָהָר | תַּעֲשֶׂה לְתֵבָה וְאֶל־אִמָּה תְּבַלְנָה מְלִמְעָלָה וּפֶתַח הַתְּבָה בְּצַדָּהּ תִּשְׁמֹם תַּחְתִּים שְׁנַיִם וּשְׁלֹשִׁים תַּעֲשֶׂה: יז וְאֲנִי הִנְנִי מְבִיא אֶת־הַמַּבּוּל מִיַּם עַל־הָאָרֶץ לְשַׁחַת כָּל־בְּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר־בוּ רוּחַ חַיִּים מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמַיִם כָּל אֲשֶׁר־בָּאָרֶץ יָגוּעַ: יח וְהִקְמַתִּי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אִתְּךָ וּבָאתְ אֵל־הַתְּבָה אִתָּהּ וּבְנִידָּ וְאִשְׁתְּךָ וְנִשְׁי־בְנִידָּ אִתְּךָ: יט וּמִכָּל־הַחַי מִכָּל־בְּשָׂר שְׁנַיִם מִכָּל תְּבִיא אֶל־הַתְּבָה לְהַחֲיֵת אִתְּךָ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה יְהִיו: כ מִהָעוֹף לְמִינֵהוּ וּמִן־הַבְּהֵמָה לְמִינָהּ מִכָּל רֶמֶשׂ הָאֲדָמָה לְמִינֵהוּ שְׁנַיִם מִכָּל יָבֹאוּ אֵלֶיךָ לְהַחֲיֹת: כא וְאִתָּה קַח־לְךָ מִכָּל־מֵאֲכָל אֲשֶׁר יֵאָכֵל

רש"י

שהכיל את הכל מן הגבוה לגמור, וזכו לשון אונקלוס שחרגס טופנא, שהלך את הכל והביאם לצבל שהיא עמוקה, לכך נקראת שגער, שנעטרו שם כל מתי (ס"א מימי) מזול: (יח) והקמתני את בריתי. צרית היה לר"ך, על הפירות שלא ירקצו ויעפשו, ושלא יכרעו רשעים שדור: אתה ובניך ואשתך. האנשים לצד והנשים לצד, מכאן שנאסרו בשמיים המטה: (יט) ומכל החי. אפילו שדים: שנים מכל. מן הפחות שבהם לא פחתו משנים, אחד זכר ואחד נקבה: (כ) מהעוף למיניהו. אותן שדצקו צמיניהם ולא השחיתו דרכם,

זפתה מצית ומצחון: (טו) צהר. יש אומרים חלון, ויש אומרים ארץ טובה המאירה להם: ואל אמה תבלנה מלמעלה. כסויה משופע ועולה, עד שהוא קצר מלמעלה ועומד על אמה, כדי שיצו המים למטה (ס"א אינו) (מכאן ומכאן): בצדה תשים. שלא יפלו הגשמים זה: תחתים שנים ושלושים. ג' עליון ז' על ג' ז', עליונים לאדם, אמצעים למדור, תחתים לצבל: (יז) ואני הנני מביא. הנני מוכן להסכים עם אותם שרצוני ואמרו לפני כזר מה<sup>2</sup> אנוש כי תזכרו: מבול. שזבל את הכל, שזבל את הכל,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What was the "light" that Noah made for the ark? (v. 16)**  
**RASHI:** According to one opinion it was a window. According to another opinion, it was a precious stone which shone, providing them with light.  
**MIZRACHI:** According to *Rashi* (comment to 8:22, below) the heavenly bodies did not shine throughout the period of the flood, and the difference between day and night was not recognizable. So what point was there in having a window in the ark if there was no light in any case? (8:22)  
**SIFSEI CHACHAMIM:** One could answer *Mizrachi's* question as follows. When *Rashi* writes, "the difference between day and night

was not recognizable" he does not mean that there was no light at all. Rather there was a small amount of light, which made having a window worthwhile, but the boundary between day and night became blurred.  
**NACHALAS YA'AKOV:** Alternatively, one could argue that the cessation of natural light only occurred according to the opinion that Noah took a precious stone into the ark. According to the opinion that he made a window, there was day and night during the flood.  
**CHIZKUNI:** The word צָהָר could also be rendered as "oil" (a derivative of the word יִצְהָר), i.e. that Noah illuminated the ark with oil lamps.

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 **HOW WAS THE ARK ILLUMINATED? (v. 16)**  
**Mizrachi** questions the point of placing a window in the ark if there was no light during the flood in any case.  
**Sifsei Chachamim** answers that there was some light, but that the distinction between night and day became blurred.  
 However, this solution is difficult to accept because it is not clearly indicated in *Rashi's* words. *Rashi* writes: "The verse implies that [day and night] ceased all the days of the flood and that the heavenly bodies did not function" (8:22). So, how can one accept *Sifsei Chachamim's* argument that the heavenly bodies functioned partially when *Rashi* writes unambiguously that "the heavenly bodies did not function"?

**Nachalas Ya'akov** answers that the cessation of the heavenly bodies corresponds to the opinion that Noah took a precious stone into the ark. According to the opinion that he made a window, there was day and night during the flood.  
 However, this too is difficult to accept, since *Rashi's* statement that the heavenly bodies stopped functioning is based on an *explicit verse*, where God promises—after the flood—that "so long as the earth exists... day and night will not cease" (8:22). I.e. *scripture itself* testifies that day and night did cease during the flood. So at the literal level of Torah interpretation, to which *Rashi* confines himself, there can be no dispute about this matter.

<sup>16</sup> “You should make a light for the ark. You should finish it (slanting) a cubit (high) at the top. You should place the entrance of the ark at its side. You shall make it with a bottom, second and third storeys.

<sup>17</sup> “I am ready to (consent to man’s destruction and) bring a flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh beneath the skies in which there is the spirit of life. All that is upon the earth will perish.

<sup>18</sup> “I will set up My covenant with you, and you will come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife and your sons’ wives with you. <sup>19</sup> From every living (demon), and from all flesh, you should bring two of each (species) into the ark to keep alive with you; they shall be male and female. <sup>20</sup> From the birds (which had only bred with) their own species, from the animals (which had only bred with) their own species, and from every creeping thing on the ground (which had only bred with) their own species, two of each will come to you (of their own accord) to be kept alive.

<sup>21</sup> “As for you, take for yourself from every edible food and bring it in with you. It will be for you and for them to eat.”

---

TORAS MENACHEM

---

Thus, we are left with *Mizrachi*’s question: What was the point of making a window if it was dark in any case?

### HOW WOULD ONE SOURCE OF LIGHT SUFFICE?

A further problem with *Rashi*’s comment here is that it appears to make no practical sense. We are speaking here of a substantial structure 300 cubits (approx. 450 ft.) long and three storeys high, divided into numerous separate compartments (see *Rashi* to 6:14, above). How could one window, or one precious stone possibly provide sufficient light?

Admittedly, *Rashi* was forced to write that there was only one window (or stone) since the verse uses the singular “light” (צֶהָרִי). But surely *Rashi* could have opted for the interpretation of **Chizkuni**, that צֶהָרִי means oil, which still allows for the possibility that many oil lamps were used?

### THE EXPLANATION

In verses 14-16, where God instructs Noach how to make the ark, not every detail is included. For example, later we find that “Noach removed the covering of the ark” (8:13), and yet God never told Noach explicitly to make a covering. Obviously, God left it to Noach to figure out for himself those details which were a self-understood necessity.

Similarly, in the case of light: God did not have to tell Noach to bring a source of light into the ark, for light is a basic necessity whose need is self-understood.

Thus, on reading our verse, *Rashi* was troubled: Why was Noach told to “make a light for the ark.” Surely that is an obvious point which was self-understood?

*Rashi* concluded that Noach would certainly have brought candles and oil lamps into the ark in any case without being instructed to do so explicitly by God. Our verse therefore, must be speaking of a further source of light, besides the basic source of light which Noach and his family used for living purposes.

The most simple explanation is that Noach made a window. For, without an explicit command from God it was unlikely that Noach would have made a window (or windows) on his own accord, since: a.) He had to carry candles in any case for use at night, so he might as well have used them in the day too. b.) A window might have compromised the safety of the ark.

However, God told him to make a window to provide extra light. Therefore, even though during the forty days of rain there was no light, (since the heavenly bodies stopped functioning) the window was still of value as it provided light during the following period when the waters were subsiding. And since Noach had another light source, he was able to use that during the forty days when no light came through the window.

Nevertheless, *Rashi* was not completely satisfied with this explanation since: a.) The light would only have reached a small portion of the ark. b.) During the forty days when there was no natural light, the window was useless. This appears to be incompatible with the verse which states, “You should make a light for the ark,” since it turns out that most of the ark did not benefit from this light in any case, and the part that did benefit only did so after the rains had ceased.

Therefore *Rashi* offered a second interpretation, that the supplementary light source was a precious stone, for this: a.) could have been moved around the whole of the ark, and, b.) could have been used the entire period of the ark’s occupation, even during the forty days of darkness.

However, in the final analysis, this solution is the inferior of the two, since the verse states, “You should make a light for the ark,” and one does not “make” a precious stone. Rather, the correct expression would have been, “You should bring a precious stone into the ark.” So, while this interpretation is logically more acceptable, it is less scripturally compatible, so *Rashi* recorded it last.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 10, p. 19ff.)

### 🕯️ Sparks of Chasidus 🕯️

- Noach’s mission was to take a world of misery and transform it into a world of light. God told him to make a light (צֶהָרִי) which has the same letters as צָרָה, the Hebrew word for “misery,” replacing misery with light.
- The Hebrew word for ark is *teivah* (תֵּיבָה) which can also mean “word,” alluding to words of prayer and Torah study. Thus, the command to “make a light for the *teivah*,” means that a person should make his words of prayer and Torah study “shine with light,” by saturating them with inner feeling and sincerity.
- This can be achieved through two routes: a.) Removing obstacles in Divine service—like the window in the ark which removed an obstacle which was blocking the light, or: b.) Generating fountains of energy from within, like the precious stone which shone from within (see *Rashi*).

(Keser Shem Tov ch. 87; addendum ch. 9; Shabbos Parshas Noach 5747)

לך מכל מיכל דמתאכיל ותכנוש לותך ויהי לך ולהון למיכל: כב ועבד נח ככל די פקד יתיה יי פן עבד: א ואמר יי לנח עול את וכל אנש ביתך לתיבותא ארי יתך חיותי ופאי קדמי בדרא דרין: ב מכל בעירא דכיא תסב לך שבועא שבועא דכר ונוקבא ומן בעירא דלא איתחא דכיא היא תרין דכר ונוקבא: ג אף מעופא דשמיא שבועא שבועא דכר ונוקבא לקימא ורעא על אפי כל ארעא: ד ארי לזמן יומין עוד שבועא אגא מחית מסרא על ארעא ארבעין ימין וארבעין לילון ואמחי ית כל יקומא די עבדית מעל אפי ארעא: ה ועבד נח ככל די פקדיה יי: ו נח בר שית מאה שנין וטופנא הוא מיא על ארעא: ז ועל נח ובנוהי ואתתיה ונשי בנוהי עמיה לתיבותא מן קדם מי טופנא: ח מן בעירא דכיא ומן בעירא דליתחא דכיא ומן עופא וכל די רחש על ארעא: ט תרין תרין עלו עם (לות) נח לתיבותא דכר ונוקבא בְּמֵא דַּפְקִיד יי ית נח: י והנה לזמן שבועא יומין ומי טופנא הוּו על ארעא: יא בשנת שית מאה שנין לחיי נח בירחא תגינא בשבעת עשרא יומא לירחא ביומא תדין אתבזעו כל מבועי תהומא רבא וכוי שמיא אתפתחו: יב והנה מסרא נחית על ארעא ארבעין ימין

ואספת אליך והיה לך ולָהֶם לְאֹכְלָהּ: כב ויעש נח כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֹתוֹ אֱלֹהִים כִּן עָשָׂה: ז א ושניו ויאמר יהוה לנח בא אתה וכל־ביתך אל־התבה כי־אתך ראיתי צדיק לפני בדור הזה: ב מכל א הבהמה הטהורה תקח־לך שבעה שבעה איש ואשתו ומן־הבהמה אשר לא טהרה הוא שנים איש ואשתו: ג גם מעוף השמים שבעה שבעה זכר ונקבה לחיות זרע על־פני כל־הארץ: ד כי לימים עוד שבעה אנכי ממטיר על־הארץ ארבעים יום וארבעים לילה ומחיתי את־כל־היקום אשר עשיתי מעל פני האדמה: ה ויעש נח ככל אשר־צוהו יהוה: ו ונח בן־שש מאות שנה והמבול היה מים על־הארץ: ז ויבא נח ובניו ואשתו ונשי־בניו אתו אל־התבה מפני מי המבול: ח מן־הבהמה הטהורה ומן־הבהמה אשר איננה טהרה ומן־העוף וכל אשר־רמש על־האדמה: ט שנים שנים באו אל־נח אל־התבה זכר ונקבה באשר צוה אלהים את־נח: י ויהי לשבעת הימים ומי המבול היו על־הארץ: יא בשנת שש־מאות שנה לחיי־נח בחדש השני בשבעה עשר יום לחדש ביום הזה נבקעו כל־מעיינות תהום רבה וארבת השמים נפתחו: יב ויהי הגשם על־הארץ ארבעים יום

כ"ט

האנשים לצד והגשים לצד, לפי שנאסרו צתשמיש המטה, מפני שהעולם שרוי בצער: מפני מי המבול. אף נח מקטני אמנה היה, מאמין ואינו מאמין שיצא המצול, ולא נכנס לתיבה עד שדחקוהו המים: (ט) באו אל נח. מאלוהי: שנים שנים. כלם הושבו צמנין זה, מן הפחות היו שנים: (יא) בחודש השני. רבי אליעזר אומר זה מרחשון, ר' יבועש אומר זה אייר: נבקעו. להוליא מימיו: תהום רבה. מדה כנגד מדה, הס חטאו צרכה רעת האדם ולקו צתהוס רצה: (יג) ויהי הגשם על הארץ. ולהלן הוא אומר ויהי המצול, אלא כשהורידן הורידן צרחמים, אם יחזרו יהיו גשמי צרכה, וכשלא חזרו היו למצול: ארבעים יום וגו'. אין יום ראשון מן המנין, לפי שאין לילו עמו, שהרי כתיב ציוס הזה נבקעו כל מעינות, נמלאו ארבעים יום כלים צכ"ח צכסלו לרבי אליעזר,

ומאלוהים צאו, וכל שכתוב קולעתו הכנים צה: (כג) ויעש נח. זה צנין התיבה: (ה) ראיתי צדיק. ולא נאמר לדיק תמים, מכאן שאומרים מקלת שצחו של אדם צפניו וכולו שלא צפניו: (ג) הטהורה. העתידה להיות טהורה לישראל, למדנו שלמד נח תורה: שבעה שבעה. כדי שיקריב מהם קרבן צלאתו: (ג) גם מעוף השמים וגו'. צטחורים הכתוב מדבר, ולמד סתום מן המפורש: (ד) כי לימים עוד שבעה. אלו ז' ימי אצלו של מחושלח הדיק, שחס הקדוש צרוך הוא על צודו ועכז את הפורענות, לא וחשז שנותיו של מחושלח, ותמלא שחס כלים צשנת ת"ר שנה לחיי נח: כי לימים עוד. מהו עוד, זמן אחר זמן, זה נוסף על ק"כ שנה: ארבעים יום. כנגד יצירת הולד, שקלקלו להטריח ליזרס לצור תורת ממזרים: (ה) ויעש נח. זה ציאתו לתיבה: (ז) נח ובניו.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did the flood last forty days? (v. 4)

RASHI: This corresponds to the time that is required for a fetus to form, because the people sinned by burdening the One Who formed them by fashioning illegitimate children.

● How heavy was the rain? (v. 12)

RASHI: Verse 12 states, "There was rain on the earth for forty days

and nights" [suggesting that there was only comparatively weak "rain"], and yet below in verse 17 the Torah states: "The flood was on the earth for forty days" [indicating a much stronger downfall].

However [the resolution of this matter is that] when God brought the rains down, He brought them down with mercy, so that if the people would repent, they would be rains of blessing. When they failed to repent, the rains became a flood.

<sup>22</sup> Noach made (the ark). He did everything that God had commanded him.

## 🕍 NOACH ENTERS THE ARK 🕍

7  
SECOND  
READING

**G**od said to Noach, “Come into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen you as a righteous man before Me in this generation. <sup>2</sup> From all the (species of) animals that are pure (in Jewish law) you should take for yourself seven pairs of male and female, and from the (species of) animals that are not pure (in Jewish law), two (animals), a male and female. <sup>3</sup> Also, from the birds of the skies (that are pure, take) seven pairs, male and female, to keep (their) seed alive on the face of the earth. <sup>4</sup> For, in another seven days, I will make it rain upon the earth for forty days and forty nights, and I will wash away from off the face of the earth all existence that I have made.”

<sup>5</sup> Noach obeyed (coming into the ark), according to all that God had commanded him.

<sup>6</sup> Noach was six hundred years old when the flood water came upon the earth.

<sup>7</sup> Noach, his sons, his wife and his sons’ wives with him, (eventually) went into the ark (when they were forced to) because of the floodwaters. <sup>8</sup> From the pure animals and from the animals that are not pure, from the birds, and from all that creeps upon the earth, <sup>9</sup> two by two they came to Noach into the ark, male and female, as God had commanded Noach. <sup>10</sup> And then, after seven days, the floodwaters were on the earth.

## 🕍 THE FLOOD DESTROYS HUMAN & ANIMAL LIFE 🕍

7:11 **I**n the six hundredth year of Noach’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day, all the wellsprings of the great depths burst forth, and the apertures of the skies opened up. <sup>12</sup> There was rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights.

TORAS MENACHEM

### 🕍 Sparks of Chasidus 🕍

#### “THE WELLSPRINGS OF THE GREAT DEPTHS BURST FORTH...” (7:11)

In the Zohar (I 117a), the following prediction is recorded:

*“In the six hundredth year of the sixth millennium [i.e. the year 5500 (1740)], there will be an opening of the supernal gates of wisdom and the lower wellsprings of wisdom, preparing the world for the seventh millennium [i.e. the final redemption], like a person who begins to prepare himself for Shabbos on Friday, when the sun heads downwards. This is indicated by the verse, “In the six hundredth year of Noach’s life...all the wellsprings of the great depths burst forth, and the apertures of the skies opened up” (v. 11).*

By the year 1840, two major schools of thought had caused revolutions in their respective spheres of influence. In the Jewish world, the Chasidic movement had popularized the teachings of mysticism and Kabbalah. In the secular world the Industrial Revolution had reached its peak. These two developments were the, “opening of the supernal gates of wisdom and the lower wellsprings of wisdom,” to which the Zohar refers.

The Zohar states that these two developments were both a preparation for the final redemption with Mashiach. This begs the question: One can appreciate why the dissemination of mystical thought was a preparation for redemption, since with the coming

of Mashiach, “the earth will be filled with the *knowledge of God*” (Isaiah 11:9), of which Kabbalistic teachings are a foretaste. But why is the development of scientific and technological wisdom a prelude to Mashiach?

One of the prophecies regarding the time of redemption is that “all *flesh* will see together that God is speaking” (ibid. 40:5), i.e. that God’s presence will be discernable to the physical senses. Scientific developments over the past 150 years have brought to our senses phenomena that were previously deemed to be supernatural. For example, through television, radio and the telephone, man is able to see and hear from one end of the world to the other instantaneously. So now, the concept that there is “*an Eye that sees, and an Ear that hears, and all your deeds are recorded in a book*” (Avos 2:1), is no longer something left for the imagination alone to appreciate, for now our *physical senses* can begin to appreciate this phenomenon too.

This was the Zohar’s intention in connecting the scientific revolution with the coming of Mashiach. Modern technology has brought unimaginable phenomena to our senses which help us to envision the time when “all *flesh* will see together that God is speaking.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 42f.)

וארבעים לילה: י"ב בעצם היום הזה בא נח ושם וחתם ויפת בני נח ואשת נח ושלשת נשי בניו אתם אל התבה: י"ד המה וכל החיה למינה וכל הבהמה למינה וכל הרמש הרמש על הארץ למינהו וכל העוף למינהו כל צפור כל כנף: טו ויבאו אל נח אל התבה שנים שנים מכל הבשר אשר בו רוח חיים: טז והבאים זכר ונקבה מכל בשר באו באשר צנה אתו אלהים ויסגר יהוה בעדו: [שלישין] י"ז והי המבול ארבעים יום על הארץ וירבו המים וישאו את התבה ותרו מעל הארץ: י"ח ויגברו המים וירבו מאד על הארץ ותלך התבה על פני המים: י"ט והמים גברו מאד מאד על הארץ ויכסו כל ההרים הגבהים אשר תחת כל השמים: כ חמש עשרה אמה מלמעלה גברו המים ויכסו ההרים: כא ויגוע כל בשר הרמש על הארץ בעוף ובבהמה ובחיה ובכל השרץ הרמש על הארץ וכל האדם: כב כל אשר נשמת רוח חיים באפיו מכל אשר בחרבה מתו: כג וימח את כל היקום אשר על פני האדמה מאדם עד בהמה עד רמש ועד עוף השמים וימחו מן הארץ וישאר אד נח ואשר אתו בתבה: כד ויגברו

וארבעים לילון: י"ב בכרן יומא דתינ על נח ושם וחס ויפת בני נח ואמת נח ותלת נשי בנוהי עמהון לתיבותא: י"ד אנון וכל חיתא לזנה וכל בעירא לזנה וכל רחשא דרחש על ארעא לזנהי וכל עופא לזנהי כל צפר כל דפרח: טו ועלו עם (לות) נח לתיבותא תרינ תרינ מכל בשרא די ביה רוחא דחיי: טז ועליא דבר ונוקבא מכל בשרא עלו כמא דפקד יתיה י"ז ואנין י"ז (במיכריה) עלוה: י"ח ותה סופנא ארבעין יממין על ארעא וסניאו מיא ונסלו ית תיבותא ואתרמת מעל ארעא: י"ח ותקיפו מיא וסניאו לחדא על ארעא ומהלכא תיבותא על אפי מיא: י"ט ומיא תקיפו לחדא לחדא על ארעא ואתחפיו כל טוריאי ומיא די תחות כל שמיא: כ חמש עשרי אמין מלעילא תקיפו מיא ואתחפיו טוריאי: כא ומית כל בשרא דרחש על ארעא בעופא ובבעירא ובחיתא ובכל רחשא דרחש על ארעא וכל אנשא: כב כל די נשמת רוחא דחיינ באפוהי מכל די ביבשתא מיתו: כג ומחא ית כל יקומא די על אפי ארעא מאנשא עד בעירא עד רחשא ועד עופא דשמיא ואתמחיו מן ארעא ואשתאר ברם נח ודי עמיה בתיבותא: כד ותקיפו מיא על

כש"י

עור צעד עור<sup>3</sup>, מגן צעדי<sup>4</sup>, החפלה צעד צעדיק<sup>5</sup>, כנגד צעדיק: (יז) ותרם מעל הארץ. משוקעת היתה צמים י"א אמה, כספיה טעונה המשוקעת מקלחת צמים, ומקראות שלפנינו ויכוחו: (יח) ויגברו. מאלוהי: (כ) חמש עשרה אמה מלמעלה. למעלה של כל גובה כל הכריס, לאחר שהשווה המים לראשי הכריס: (כג) נשמת רוח חיים. נשימה של רוח חיים: אשר בחרבה. ולא דגים שצים<sup>6</sup>: (כג) וימח. לשון ויפעל<sup>7</sup> הוא, ואינו לשון ויפעל<sup>8</sup>, וכוא מגזרת ויפן ויפן. כל תיבה שסופה ה"א, כגון צנה, מחה, קנה, כשהוא נותן וי"ו יו"ד צראה, נקוד צמירק תחת חיו"ד: אך נח. לצד נח, זהו פשוטו. ומדרש אגדה, גונח וכוכה דס"ט מטורח

שהחדשים נמנין כסדרן אחד מלא ואחד חסר, כרי י"ב ממרחשון וכ"ח מכסליו: (יג) בעצם היום הזה. למדך הכתוב שכיו צני דורו אומרים, חילו חנו רואים אותו נכנס לתיבה, חנו שזרין אותה וכוונתו, אמר הקצ"ח אני מכניסו לעיני כלם ונראה דבר מי יקום: (יד) צפור כל בנה. דבוק הוא, לפור של כל מין כנף, לרבות חגבים. (כנף זה לשון נוה, כמו ושסע אותו צנפיו<sup>1</sup>, שאפילו נוהתה עולה, אף כאן לפור כל מין מראית נוה): (טז) ויסגור ה' בעדו. הגין עליו שלא שזרוב, הקיף התיבה דוצים ואריות והיו הורגים בהם. ופשוטו של מקרא, סגר כנגדו מן המים, וכן כל צעד שצמקרא לשון כנגד הוא, צעד כל רחס<sup>2</sup>, צעדך וצעד צניך,

TORAS MENACHEM

Forty Days (v. 4, 12, 17)

Rashi notes the contradiction that verse 12 describes "rain" falling on the earth, whereas verse 17 refers to a more intense "flood," denoting utter chaos (c.f. Rashi to 6:17).

Rashi answers that God initially brought down "merciful rain" which was less intense, but because the people failed to repent the rain turned into a flood. However, even after reading Rashi's solution, we still seem to

be left with a contradiction between the verses. Verse 12 states, "There was rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights," and verse 17 states, "The flood was on the earth for forty days." Now, even if we bear in mind Rashi's comment that, at some point, the mild "rain" was transformed into a "flood," we are still left with the problem that neither the "rain" nor the "flood" occurred for a full forty days. Rather, collectively they totalled forty days. So how can verses 12 and 17 state that both the "rain" and the "flood" lasted for forty days each?



<sup>13</sup> On that very day (in full view of the wicked generation), Noah came into the ark, with Sheim, Cham and Yafes—Noach’s sons—together with Noah’s wife and his sons’ three wives. <sup>14</sup> They (came) with every wild animal (which had only bred with) its own species, every domesticated animal (which had only bred with) its own species, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth (which had only bred with) its own species, every bird (which had only bred with) its own species, and every winged creature (i.e. grasshoppers). <sup>15</sup> From all flesh in which there is the spirit of life, they came to Noah, to the ark, two by two. <sup>16</sup> From all flesh they came, male and female, as God had commanded him. God closed off (the ark with bears and lions for protection) in front of him.

THIRD  
READING

<sup>17</sup> The flood was on the earth for forty days. The waters increased, they lifted the ark, and it rose off the earth. <sup>18</sup> The waters surged, and they increased very much upon the earth, and the ark moved upon the waters. <sup>19</sup> The waters became extremely powerful upon the earth, and all the tall mountains that were under the skies were covered up. <sup>20</sup> The mountains were totally covered by fifteen cubits of water above. <sup>21</sup> All flesh that moved upon the earth perished, among the birds, the domesticated animals, the wild animals, all creeping creatures that creep upon the earth and all mankind. <sup>22</sup> Everything from that which was on the dry land that had the breath of the spirit of life in its nostrils died. <sup>23</sup> He washed away all existence that was on the face of the earth, from man to animal to creeping thing and to the birds of the skies, and they were washed out from the earth. Only Noah and those with him in the ark survived. <sup>24</sup> The waters surged on the earth for one hundred and fifty days.

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

One possible solution is that, when the waters left the skies they were in the mild form of rain, but at some point during their descent, they turned to floodwaters. Thus, both the “rain” and the “flood” lasted forty days, albeit at different altitudes.

However, this interpretation is incompatible with verse 12 which states, “There was rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights.” This proves that the mild rain did descend all the way down to earth.

So we are left with our original question: How could the rain and the flood each last for forty days?

#### THE EXPLANATION

We can solve this problem by first posing another question:

Presumably, one day’s flood would be sufficient to wipe out the whole of mankind (especially according to the *Talmudic* teaching that the waters were boiling hot—see *Zevachim* 113b). So, when the Torah informs us that the flood was for forty days, does that mean that God punished the generation *forty times over*? Or, was it a *single* punishment?

In his comment to verse 4, above, *Rashi* appears to answer this question. He writes that the forty days of the flood correspond to the first forty days in which a fetus develops. During this initial period, the fetus does not develop specific organs and limbs, but rather, it grows as a single, undifferentiated entity. Each day of development does not add any new details to the fetus.

So, in effect, *Rashi* is teaching us that the forty days constituted one *single entity*, one punishment. If so, we can presume that God released the water from the skies as a *single unit* which contained sufficient water for all forty days.

With the above in mind, we can explain our earlier contradiction between verses 12 and 17:

First, God released forty days’ worth of rain from the skies as a single unit of water, which began to fall on the earth as rain. Then, when the people failed to repent, God transformed *all* the water that he had released to torrential floodwater. Both verses (12 and 17) describe God’s actions to the unit of water as a *whole*, since it was one single entity.

First, verse 12 states, “There was rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights,” meaning to say, “God released *enough* rain to fall on the earth for forty days and nights,” and the rain started to fall. Then, when the people failed to repent, verse 17 informs us that some time during the first day God transformed that *single unit* of water into a “flood” which in actuality, “was on the earth for forty days.”

I.e. verse 12 speaks of “Plan A” where God released a single unit of water to provide rain for forty days. Verse 17 describes “Plan B,” where soon after it began to fall, the water was quickly transformed into a flood. But, in each case, the Torah uses the expression “forty days,” since it is referring to the same unit of water that was sufficient to last forty days.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 23ff)

#### 🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

The flood came to purify the earth... because the earth had become filled with robbery and corruption to the extreme and required purification. It was for this reason that the floodwaters came for forty days, like a *mikveh* (ritual bath) which must contain a minimum of forty *se’ah* of rainwater if it is to purify the ritually unclean (*Torah Ohr* 8c).

Thus, for the generation of the flood, the waters were a punishment, but for the *world itself*, the waters were a blessing, since the world became cleansed through them.

This sheds light on the Torah’s statement that the waters were *both* mild “rain” (of blessing) (v. 12), and at the same time torrential floodwaters (v. 17), for even though the floods destroyed all the inhabitants of the world, they still had the positive effect of cleansing and purifying physicality itself.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, pp. 26-27)

אֲרָעָא מֵאָה וְתַמְשִׁין יוֹמִין: א וְדָכִיר יְיָ יַתְּנֵה וַיַּתְּנֵה כָּל חַיְתָא וַיַּתְּנֵה כָּל בְּעִירָא דִּי עֲמִיָּה בְּתִיבוֹתָא וְאָעֵבֵר יְיָ רוּחָא עַל אֲרָעָא וַנְּחֹו מִיָּא: ב וְאֶסְתְּכְרוּ מִבּוֹעֵי תְּהוֹמָא וְכוּי דְשָׁמַיָּא וְאֶתְכַלִּי מִטְרָא מִן שָׁמַיָּא: ג וְתָבוּ מִיָּא מֵעַל אֲרָעָא אֲזִלִּין וְתִיבִין וְחִסְרוּ מִיָּא מִסּוּף מֵאָה וְתַמְשִׁין יוֹמִין: ד וְנַחַת תִּיבוֹתָא בִּירְחָא שְׂבִיעָאָה בְּשַׁבְעַת עֶשְׂרָא יוֹמָא לִירְחָא עַל טוּרֵי קָרְדֵי: ה וּמִיָּא הוּוּ אֲזִלִּין וְחִסְרִין עַד יִרְחָא עֶשְׂרִיָּאָה בְּעֶשְׂרִיָּאָה בְּתַד לִירְחָא אֶתְחִיזִאוּ רִישֵׁי טוּרֵיָּא: ו וְהוּוּ מִסּוּף אֲרָבַעִין

הַמַּיִם עַל־הָאָרֶץ הַמְּשִׁיִּים וּמֵאֵת יוֹם: ח א וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נֹחַ וְאֶת כָּל־הַחַיָּה וְאֶת־כָּל־הַבְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ בַּתִּבְּה וַיַּעֲבֹר אֱלֹהִים רוּחַ עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּשְׁכּוּ הַמַּיִם: ב וַיִּסְכְּרוּ מֵעֵינַת תְּהוֹם וְאֶרְבַּת הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיִּכְלָא הַנֶּשֶׁם מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם: ג וַיִּשְׁבּוּ הַמַּיִם מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ הַלֹּדֶז וְשׁוּב וַיִּחְסְרוּ הַמַּיִם מִקְצֵה הַמְּשִׁיִּים וּמֵאֵת יוֹם: ד וַתֵּנַח הַתִּבְּה בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּשַׁבְעָה־עֶשְׂרֵי יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ עַל הָרֵי אֲרָרָט: ה וְהַמַּיִם הָיוּ הַלֹּדֶז וְחִסּוּר עַד הַחֹדֶשׁ הָעֶשְׂרִי בְּעֶשְׂרֵי בְּאַחַד לַחֹדֶשׁ נִרְאוּ רָאשֵׁי הַהָרִים: ו וַיְהִי

כ"ד

בשבעה עשר יום. מכאן אתה למד שהיתה התיבה משוקעת במים י"א אמה. שהרי כתיב צעשירי צאחד לחדש נראו ראשי ההרים, זה אצ שהוא עשירי למרחשון לירידת גשמים, והם היו גבוהים על ההרים חמש עשרה אמה, וחסרו מים אחד בסיון עד אחד בצב, חמש עשרה אמה לששים יום, הרי אמה לדי ימים, נמצא שצ"ו בסיון לא חסרו אלא ד' אמות, ונחה התיבה ליום המחרת, למדת שהיתה משוקעת י"א אמה במים שעל ראשי ההרים: (ה) בעשירי וגו' נראו ראשי ההרים. זה אצ, שהוא עשירי למרחשון שהתחיל הגשם. ואם תאמר הוא אלול, ועשירי לכסליו שפסק הגשם, כשם שאתה אומר צאחד השביעי סיון והוא שביעי להפסקה, אי אפשר לומר כן, על כרחך שביעי אי אתה מונה אלא להפסקה, שהרי לא כלו ארבעים יום של ירידת גשמים ומאה וחמשים של תגבורת המים עד אחד בסיון, ואם אתה אומר שביעי לירידה אין זה סיון, והעשירי אי אפשר למנות אלא לירידה, שאם אתה אומר להפסקה והוא אלול, אי אתה מוצא צראשון צאחד לחדש חרצו המים מעל הארץ, שהרי מקץ ארבעים משגראו

הצבמות והחיות. ויש אומרים שאיחר מזונות לארי והכישו, ועליו נאמר הן לדיק צארץ ישולס! (ה) ויזכור אלהים. זה השם מדת הדין הוא, ונהפכה למדת רחמים על ידי תפלת הדיקים, ורשעתן של רשעים הופכת מדת רחמים למדת הדין, שנאמר וירא ה' כי רבה רעת האדם וגו' ויאמר ה' אמהכ<sup>3</sup>, והוא שם מדת רחמים: ויזכור אלהים את נח וגו'. מה זכר להם לצבמות, זכות שלא השחיתו דרכם קודם לכן, ושלא שמשו צדיקה: ויעבר אלהים רוח. רוח תנחומין והנחה עזרה לפניו: על הארץ. על עסקי הארץ: וישבו. כמו כשור חמת המלך<sup>4</sup>, לשון הנחת חמה: (ג) ויסכרו מעינות. כשנפתחו כתיב כל מעינות, וכאן אין כתיב כל, לפי שנשתיירו מהם אותן שיש צבם לורך לעולם, כגון חמי טבריא וכיוצא בהם: ויכלא. וימנע, כמו לא תכלא רחמיך<sup>5</sup>, לא יכלה ממך<sup>6</sup>: (ג) מקצה חמשים ומאת יום. התחילו לחסור והוא אחד בסיון. כיצד, צכ"ז צכסליו פסקו הגשמים, הרי ג' מכסליו, וכ"ט מטבת הרי ל"ב, ושצט ואדר וניסן ואייר קי"ח, הרי ק"י: (ד) בחדש השביעי. סיון, והוא שביעי לכסליו שצו פסקו הגשמים:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did the flood subside? (v. 1)

**RASHI:** This verse uses the Divine Name *Elokim*—which represents God’s attribute of justice—even though the verse is speaking about an act of Divine mercy, because the attribute of justice was converted to mercy through the prayers of the righteous [i.e. Noah].

Conversely, wicked people transform God’s attribute of mercy [indicated by the Tetragrammaton, *Havayah*] to the attribute of justice, as the verse states: “God saw that man’s wickedness on earth was increasing....God [*Havayah*] said, ‘I will wash away man, whom I created...’” (*Bereishis* 6:5-7). I.e. even though the verse speaks of destruction (justice) the Tetragrammaton is used here, indicating God’s attribute of mercy, since it was transformed to justice through man’s wickedness.

TORAS MENACHEM

☞ JUSTICE -V- MERCY (v. 1)

In Hebrew, two different names are used to indicate God’s actions through two different “attributes.” The Torah uses the name *Elokim* when God acts in a manner of strict justice. The Tetragrammaton (*Havayah*) indicates that God is acting mercifully.

Our verse is thus somewhat of an anomaly. On the one hand, we are speaking here of an act of Divine mercy where “God remembered (the prayers of) Noah and (the decent behavior of) all the wild animals and all the domesticated animals that were with him in the ark.” And yet, on the other hand, the verse employs the Divine Name *Elokim* which indicates Divine justice? *Rashi* answers, “the attribute of justice was converted to mercy through the prayers of the righteous.”

*Rashi* then continues to cite another similar case in *Parshas Bereishis*: “God saw that man’s wickedness on earth was increasing...God [*Havayah*] said, ‘I will wash away man, whom I created...’” (*Bereishis* 6:5-7). I.e. even though the verse speaks of destruction (justice) the Tetragrammaton is used here, indicating God’s attribute of mercy, since it was transformed to justice through man’s wickedness.

However, one detail requires clarification here. The first instance of this phenomenon—the use of a seemingly inappropriate Divine Name—was the verse in *Parshas Bereishis*. If so, why did *Rashi* not explain this concept straightaway? Why did he wait until the second inappropriate use of a Divine Name, here in *Parshas Noach*, before informing the reader of an explanation?

## 🌀 THE FLOOD SUBSIDES 🌀

8 **G**od remembered (the prayers of) Noach and (the decent behavior of) all the wild animals and all the domesticated animals that were with him in the ark. God caused a spirit (of consolation and relief) to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. <sup>2</sup> The wellsprings of the depths and the apertures of the skies were closed, and the rain from the skies was held back. <sup>3</sup> The waters continued progressively to recede off the earth and, at the end of one hundred and fifty days, the waters diminished.

<sup>4</sup> The (base of the) ark (which was still submerged) came to rest on the Ararat mountains in the seventh month (Sivan), on the seventeenth day of the month.

<sup>5</sup> The waters constantly diminished until the tenth month. In the tenth (month), on the first of the month, the mountain peaks appeared.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### THE EXPLANATION

At the very beginning of the Torah, when describing the creation of the world, the Torah employs the Divine Name *Elokim*, indicating justice rather than mercy. *Rashi* explains:

*“In the beginning it was God’s intention to create the world with the Divine attribute of justice, but He realized that the world would not be able to endure. So, He gave precedence to the attribute of mercy, and allied it with the attribute of justice.”*

Presumably, the “precedence to the attribute of mercy,” to which *Rashi* refers, means that the attribute of justice does not have the right to finalize any decisions on its own. Rather, it must have the consent of the attribute of mercy, which is always given precedence.

When reaching the verse, “God saw that man’s wickedness on earth was increasing... God [*Havayeh*] said, ‘I will wash away man, whom I created...’” (*Bereishis* 6:5-7), the reader will initially be struck by the question: Why does this verse use the name *Havayeh* (mercy) when it speaks of destruction (justice)? However, when the reader recalls *Rashi*’s comment at the very beginning of the Torah, this question will fade away. For the reader is already aware that every decision of the attribute of justice *must* have the consent of the attribute of mercy, which is always given “precedence.” Therefore in this case the reader will understand that even though the verse speaks of destruction, the name *Havayeh* (mercy) was used to indicate that God’s plan of destruction *received the consent* of the attribute of mercy. Therefore, *Rashi* felt no need to make a comment to this verse at all, relying on his earlier comment at the beginning of the Torah.

On reaching our verse that “God [*Elokim*] remembered (the prayers of) Noach etc.,” the reader will immediately be struck by the question: Why does the Torah use the name *Elokim* (justice) here, where God is performing an act of mercy?

In this case, *Rashi*’s comment at the beginning of the Torah will not help us. For *Rashi*’s words there only explain why an act of justice requires the consent of the attribute of mercy (since the latter is given precedence). In our verse however, we are witnessing the opposite: that the attribute of justice (*Elokim*) appears to be giving its consent to an act of mercy! The reader will thus be troubled: if the attribute of mercy always takes precedence, why does it need the consent of the attribute of justice?

To answer this question *Rashi* explains, “The attribute of justice was converted to mercy through the prayers of the righteous.” I.e. the reason why the Torah uses the name *Elokim* (justice) here for an act of mercy is to teach us that God’s attribute of justice had been utterly transformed by

the prayers of Noach to the extent that it too wanted to perform acts of mercy.

At this point, we have to reconsider our previous understanding of the verse in *Parshas Bereishis*. Previously, we had presumed that in the verse, “God [*Havayeh*] said, ‘I will wash away man, whom I created...,’” the Torah had employed the name *Havayeh* (mercy) for an act of justice to teach us that the attribute of mercy had *consented* to this act. One problem with this interpretation is that, from a simple reading of the verse, it appears that the attribute of mercy is actually *performing* the action and not merely consenting to it (“God [*Havayeh*] said, ‘I will wash away...”).

Thus, after learning here, in *Parshas Noach*, that one attribute can actually be transformed to be like the other (and not merely consent), we can re-evaluate our understanding of the earlier verse. Presumably, in *Parshas Bereishis* too, the attribute of mercy actually became transformed to act in a manner of justice. This explains more satisfactorily why, “God [*Havayeh*] said, ‘I will wash away man, whom I created...’” Therefore, after explaining the interpretation of our verse in *Parshas Noach*, *Rashi* retraces his steps to the verse in *Parshas Bereishis*, since one sheds light on the other.

According to the above explanation we can understand why: a.) *Rashi* makes no comment to the verse in *Parshas Bereishis*—since at that point it is self-understood, and, b.) Why *Rashi* explains *both* verses here in *Parshas Noach*, since the explanation of our verse invites a re-evaluation of our earlier understanding.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 30ff.)

### 🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

**W**hy was it necessary to transform God’s attribute of justice to be merciful (See *Rashi*)? Would it not have been sufficient for His attribute of justice merely to be *suppressed* and *subdued*?

God, however, wanted to make a covenant with Noach that the world would never be destroyed by a flood again (see below, 9:11). For this to be effective, there needed to be an absolute certainty that the attribute of justice would never arise again and attempt to wipe out the world. Therefore, it was crucial that the attribute of justice be permanently *transformed* to mercy, and not just temporarily subdued.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, pp. 33-34)

יִזְמִין וּפְתַח נֹחַ יַת פְּנֹת תִּיבוֹתָא דִּי עֵבֶד:  
 וְיִשְׁלַח יַת עוֹרְבָא וְנִפְק מִפֶּק וְתִיב עַד דְּיִבְיִשׁוּ  
 מִיָּא מַעַל אֲרֵעָא: ה וְיִשְׁלַח יַת יוֹנָה מִלְּוֹתִיָּה  
 לְמַחֲזֵי אִם קָלוּ מִיָּא מַעַל אֲפִי אֲרֵעָא: ט וְלֹא  
 אֲשַׁבְּחַת יוֹנָה מִנָּח לְפָרְסַת רִגְלָה וְתַבַּת  
 לְוֹתִיָּה לְתִיבוֹתָא אֲרִי מִיָּא עַל אֲפִי כָל אֲרֵעָא  
 וְאוֹשִׁיט יְדֵיהּ וְנִסְבָּה וְאָעַל יְתָה לְוֹתִיָּה  
 לְתִיבוֹתָא: י וְאוֹרִיךְ עוֹד שְׁבַעַא יוֹמִין אֲחֻרְגִין  
 וְאוֹסִיף שְׁלַח יַת יוֹנָה מִן תִּיבוֹתָא: יא וְאַתָּה  
 לְוֹתִיָּה יוֹנָה לְעַדן רַמְשָׂא וְהָא טָרַף וְיַתָּה  
 תְּבִיר מַחַת בְּפוֹמָה וְיַדַּע נֹחַ אֲרִי קָלוּ מִיָּא

מִקֵּץ אַרְבַּעִים יוֹם וַיִּפְתַּח נֹחַ אֶת־חַלּוֹן הַתֵּבָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה:  
 וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת־הָעֹרֵב וַיֵּצֵא וַיָּצוּא וְשׁוֹב עַד־יִבְשֹׁת הַמַּיִם מֵעַל  
 הָאָרֶץ: ה וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת־הַיּוֹנָה מִאֹתוֹ לְרֹאוֹת הַקָּלוּ הַמַּיִם מֵעַל  
 פְּנֵי הָאָרֶץ: ט וְלֹא־מָצְאָה הַיּוֹנָה מָנוּחַ לְכַף־רַגְלָהּ וַתָּשֶׁב  
 אֵלָיו אֶל־הַתֵּבָה בֵּי־מַיִם עַל־פְּנֵי כָל־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּשְׁלַח יְדוֹ  
 וַיִּקְחָהּ וַיָּבֵא אֹתָהּ אֵלָיו אֶל־הַתֵּבָה: י וַיַּחַל עוֹד שִׁבְעַת יָמִים  
 אַחֲרָיִם וַיִּסָּף שַׁלַּח אֶת־הַיּוֹנָה מִן־הַתֵּבָה: יא וַתָּבֵא אֵלָיו הַיּוֹנָה  
 לְעֵת עָרֵב וְהִנֵּה עָלֶיהָ זֵית טָרַף בְּפִיהָ וַיֵּדַע נֹחַ בֵּי־קָלוּ הַמַּיִם

— כש"י —

אחרת, צעירות גשמים צימיו אליהו, שנאמר והעורצים מציאים לו לחם וצשר:<sup>4</sup>  
 (ח) וישלח את היונה. לכוף ז' ימים, שהרי כתיב ויחל עוד ז' ימים אחרים,  
 מכלל זה אהב למד שאף בראשונה הוחל ז' ימים: וישלח. אין זה לשון שליחות  
 אלא לשון שלוח, שלוח ללכת לדרכה, וצו יראה אם קלו המים, שאם תמלא  
 מנוח לא תשוב אליו: (י) ויחל. לשון המתנה, וכן לי שמעו ויחלו,<sup>5</sup> והרבה יש  
 במקרא: (יא) טרף בפייה. אומר אני שזכר היה, לכן קוראו פעמים לשון זכר  
 ופעמים לשון נקבה, לפי שכל יונה שבמקרא לשון נקבה, כמו כיונים על אפיקי  
 מים רוחות,<sup>6</sup> כיוני הגאיות כולם הומות,<sup>7</sup> כיונה פותה:<sup>8</sup> טרף. חטף. ומדרש

ראשי הכרים שלח את העורב, וכ"א יום הוחל בשליחות היונה, הרי ששים  
 יום משנראו ראשי הכרים עד שחרבו פני האדמה. ואם תאמר בצלול נראו,  
 נמצא שחרבו במרחשון, והוא קורא אותו ראשון, ואין זה אלא תשרי, שהוא  
 ראשון לצריחת עולם, ולרבי יהושע הוא ניסן: (ו) מקץ ארבעים יום.  
 משנראו ראשי הכרים: את חלון התבה אשר עשה. ללכה,<sup>1</sup> ולא זה פתח  
 התיבה העשוי לציאה ויציאה: (ז) יצוא ושוב. הולך ומקיף סביבות התיבה,  
 ולא הלך בשליחותו, שהיה חושדו על צת זוגו, כמו ששינוי באגדת חלק?<sup>2</sup> עד  
 יבשת המים. פשוטו כמשמעו. אבל מדרש אגדה,<sup>3</sup> מוכן היה העורב לשליחות

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

##### ● Where did the dove get an olive leaf? (v. 11)

**MIDRASH:** Rabbi Levi said, "The dove got its leaf from the Mount of Olives, since the floodwaters did not fall in the Land of Israel."

Rabbi Biryei said, "The gates of the Garden of Eden were opened for the dove, and it brought the leaf from there" (*Bereishis Rabah* 33:6).

**RAMBAN:** Clearly the Rabbis of the *Midrash* understood that wherever the floodwaters fell, they destroyed all plant life. According to Rabbi Levi's opinion—that the floodwaters did not fall in the land of Israel—we can presume that the land was nevertheless flooded by water that overflowed from the surrounding areas. Nevertheless, since the waters did not actually fall there, the effects of the water would not have been so devastating, allowing some vegetation to remain, which explains why the dove was able to get an olive leaf from there.

According to Rabbi Biryei's opinion—that the leaf was taken from the Garden of Eden, which was unaffected by the flood—it is difficult to understand how this proved to Noah that the floods had

subsided. For, since the Garden was unaffected by the flood in any case, finding vegetation from there was hardly a reflection of the state of affairs in the rest of the world.

Perhaps it could be argued, therefore, that the doors of the Garden were only opened after all the waters had subsided. Consequently, the fact that the dove was able to enter the garden was proof that the floods had subsided.

All of the above, however, is according to the *Midrashic* interpretation that the flood destroyed all plant life. At the literal level, it would seem that the trees were not destroyed by the flood, because being that the whole world was filled with water in any case, there were no currents of water sufficiently strong to uproot a tree.

**ABARBANEL:** Many olive branches would have been floating on the surface of the flood water. As soon as the mountain tops appeared, some of these branches would have become stuck in the earth and sprouted roots. Within 40-50 days they would have sprouted leaves too, and it is from here that the dove found an olive leaf.

#### TORAS MENACHEM

##### 🕊️ THE OLIVE LEAF (v. 11)

**Ramban** writes that, at the literal level of Torah interpretation, we can presume that the flood did not uproot trees.

However, it is difficult to accept that strong rains would not cause trees to uproot, especially when one considers that: a.) It rained for forty consecutive days. b.) The floodwaters prevailed for 150 days. Thus, the

<sup>6</sup> Then, after forty (more) days, Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made. <sup>7</sup> He sent out the raven, but it (refused to go on its mission and just) circled (the ark) until the waters dried up off the earth.

<sup>8</sup> (Seven days later,) he sent out the dove from (being) with him, to see whether the waters had gone down from the earth's surface. <sup>9</sup> But the dove could not find a resting place for the sole of its foot because there was water upon the entire surface of the earth, so it returned to him, to the ark. He stretched out his hand and took it, and brought it to him, to the ark.

<sup>10</sup> He waited again another seven days, and he sent out the dove from the ark again. <sup>11</sup> The dove returned to him in the evening, and—look!—it had a torn olive leaf in its mouth. So Noah knew that the water had gone down from the surface of the earth.

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

soil and trees would have been immersed in deep water for several months.

Therefore, it would seem that at the literal level, all trees were destroyed by the flood. We are thus left with the question: From where did the dove get an olive leaf?

#### TWO SOLUTIONS OF THE MIDRASH

The *Midrash* offers two solutions to this problem. However, both interpretations of the *Midrash* are difficult to accept at the literal level, for the following reasons:

*Rabbi Levi* said, “The dove got its leaf from the Mount of Olives, since the floodwaters did not fall in the Land of Israel.”

This is problematic because:

a.) If the floodwaters did not fall directly on the Land of Israel then how would an olive leaf from there prove to Noah that the waters had subsided *outside* the land of Israel, where the waters *did* fall?

Although we can presume that the waters spilled over into the land of Israel from the surrounding lands (as *Ramban* writes), nevertheless, the effects of the flood would have been far less devastating there than in the rest of the world where the waters fell directly, from which it follows that the recovery would also have been quicker. So what proof was an olive leaf from the land of Israel to Noah?

b.) Above, we read that Noah's ark found its resting place on the Ararat mountains, which was the first piece of dry land to appear after the flood (v. 4). But if rain did not fall at all in the Land of Israel, then surely it would have dried up first, before the Ararat mountains (even if it was flooded by the surrounding areas)? Why then did the ark not settle in the Land of Israel first, and not on the Ararat mountains?

From this, we can conclude that, at the literal level, the floodwaters *did* fall in the land of Israel.

*Rabbi Biryei* said, “The gates of the Garden of Eden were opened for the dove, and it brought the leaf from there”

At the literal level, it would be acceptable to argue that the floodwaters did not fall in the Garden of Eden since the flood was a punishment for corrupt behavior (see above 6:5, *ibid.* 11), and this did not apply to the Garden whose inhabitants had been evicted.

Nevertheless, *Rabbi Biryei's* interpretation is problematic at the literal level because:

a.) *Rashi* writes that the animals also ate from the Tree of Knowledge (*Rashi* to 3:6), from which we can presume that they too were banished from the Garden of Eden. The Torah states explicitly, “To the east (side)

of the Garden of Eden He stationed angels (of destruction) and the flame of the revolving sword, to guard the way...” (*Bereishis* 3:4), preventing those who were banished from re-entering. If so, how would the dove have gained entrance to the Garden?

b.) In any case, if the floodwaters did not fall in the Garden of Eden then how would an olive leaf from there prove to Noah that the waters *outside* the garden had subsided?

**Ramban** answers that the gates of the Garden opened after the flood. Thus, the finding of an olive leaf would have indicated to Noah indirectly that the flood had ended, for it proved that the gates had opened, which in turn indicated that the flood had ended.

However, the Torah suggests that the finding of the olive leaf indicated to Noah *directly* that the flood had ended: “It had a torn olive leaf in its mouth. So Noah knew that the water had gone down....”

#### FURTHER QUESTIONS

Two further matters require an explanation here:

1.) Surely the dove could have found an olive leaf from the mountain-top where the ark was already resting? How did the leaf prove to Noah that, “the water had gone down *from the surface of the earth*” (v. 11)?

2.) Why did the Torah inform us that the leaf was from an olive tree, in particular?

[**Abarbanel's** solution that entire trees grew in this period is difficult to accept, since the time period is too short for an entire tree to root and sprout leaves. Furthermore, *Abarbanel* fails to explain why the Torah refers to an olive leaf in particular.]

#### THE EXPLANATION

It is a plainly observable fact that the olive tree is an extremely hardy variety which is more resistant to extreme conditions than other plants. In fact, our Sages testify in numerous places to the strength of the olive tree (see sources cited in *Tzafnas Paneach* to our verse).

Therefore, at the literal level one could argue that while other trees were uprooted by the flood, many olive trees remained. However, the foliage would obviously have been destroyed after being soaked in water for several months.

Consequently, the olive leaf brought back by the dove must have been a fresh leaf which had sprouted after the waters had subsided. This informed Noah that the waters had subsided from the earth, for even if the dove had taken a leaf from an olive tree on a mountain, it was still a sign that considerable time had passed since the mountain had become exposed, since the leaf would have taken time to sprout.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 10, p. 30ff)

מעל הארץ: יב ויִיחַל עוֹד שְׁבַעַת יָמִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת־הַיּוֹנָה וְלֹא־יָסְפָה שׁוֹב־אֵלָיו עוֹד: יג וַיְהִי בְאַחַת וַיִּשְׁשׁ־מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה בְּרֵאשׁוֹן בְּאַחַד לַחֹדֶשׁ חָרְבוּ הַמַּיִם מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ וַיִּסַּר נֹחַ אֶת־מִכְסֵה הַתֶּבֶה וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה חָרְבוּ פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה: יד וּבַחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי בְשִׁבְעָה וָעֶשְׂרִים יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ יָבִשָׁה הָאָרֶץ: טו (רביעי) טו וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־נֹחַ לֵאמֹר: טז צֵא מִן־הַתֶּבֶה אַתָּה וְאִשְׁתְּךָ וּבְנֵיךָ וּנְשֵׁי־בְנֵיךָ אִתְּךָ: יז כָּל־הַחַיָּה אֲשֶׁר־אִתְּךָ מִכָּל־בֶּשֶׂר בְּעוֹף וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל־הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ הוֹצֵא וְקַיְיֵמָה אִתְּךָ וְשָׂרְצוֹ בְּאָרֶץ וּפְרוּ וּרְבוּ עַל־הָאָרֶץ: יח וַיֵּצֵא־נֹחַ וּבָנָיו וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וּנְשֵׁי־בָנָיו אִתּוֹ: יט כָּל־הַחַיָּה כָּל־הָרֶמֶשׂ וְכָל־הָעוֹף כָּל רֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ לְמִשְׁפַּחְתֵיהֶם יֵצְאוּ מִן־הַתֶּבֶה: כ וַיִּבֶן נֹחַ מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה וַיִּקַּח מִכָּל אֲבֹתֵי הַבְּהֵמָה הַטְּהוֹרָה וּמִכָּל הָעוֹף הַטְּהוֹר וַיַּעַל עֲלֵת בַּמִּזְבֵּחַ: כא וַיִּרַח יְהוָה אֶת־רִיחַ הַנִּיחֹחַ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־לְבוֹ לֹא אֲסַף לְקַלֵּל עוֹד אֶת־הָאָדָמָה בְּעֵבֹר הָאָדָם כִּי יַצַּר לִב הָאָדָם רַע מִנְעֻרָיו וְלֹא־אֲסַף עוֹד לְהַבֹּת אֶת־כָּל־חַי כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי: כב עַד כָּל־יְמֵי הָאָרֶץ זָרַע וְקָצִיר וְקֹר וְחָם וְקִיץ וְחֹרֶף וַיּוֹם וְלַיְלָה

מעל ארעא: יב ואוריד עוד שבועא יומין אחרנין ושלח ית יונה ולא אוסיפת למיתב לותיה עוד: יג והנה בשית מאה וחד שנין בקדמאה בחד לירחא נגיבו מיא מעל ארעא ואערי נח ית חופאה דתיבותא וחזא והא נגיבו אפי ארעא: יד ובירחא תנינא בעסרין ושבועא יומין לירחא יבישת ארעא: טו ומליל יי עם נח למימר: טז פוק מן תיבותא את ואתתך ובניך ונשי בניך עמך: יז כל חיתא דעמד מכל בשרא בעופא ובבעירא ובכל רחשא דרחש על ארעא אפיק עמד ויתילדון בארעא ויפשוו ויסגון על ארעא: יח ונפק נח וקנחוי ואתתיה ונשי בנוהי עמה: יט כל חיתא כל רחשא וכל עופא כל דרחש על ארעא לזרעיתיהון נפקו מן תיבותא: כ ובנא נח מדבחה קדם יי ונסיב מכל בעירא דכיא ומכל עופא דכי ואסק עלון על מדבחה: כא וקבל יי ברעוא ית קרבניה ואמר יי במימריה לא אוסיף למילט עוד ית ארעא בדיל חובי אנשא ארי יצרא לבא דאנשא ביש מזעירה ולא אוסיף עוד לממחי ית כל דחי כמא דעבדית: כב עוד כל יומי ארעא זרעא וקציר וחורף וקורא וחזא

כ"ט

לבקריב קרבן מהס': (כא) מנעריו. מנעריו כתיב, משנער ללאת ממעי אמו יתן צו יצר הרע: לא אסף. ולא אסף. כפל הדבר לשבועה, הוא שכתוב אשר נשבעתי מעבור מי נח, ולא מלינו זה שבועה אלא זו שכפל דבריו, והיא שבועה, וכן דרשו חכמים במסכת שבעות': (כב) עוד כל ימי הארץ וגו' לא ישבתו. ו' עתים הללו שני חדשים לכל אחד ואחד, כמו ששנינו, חצי תשרי ומרחשון וחצי כסליו, זרע, חצי כסליו וטבת וחצי שבט, קור, וכו' צצצא מליעא'. (ס"א) עוד כל ימי. כלומר תמיד, כמו עוד טומאתו צו: קור. קשה מחורף: חורף. עת זרע שעורים וקטניות החריפין להצבצל מהר. קור הוא חצי שבט ואדר וחצי ניסן: קיץ. הוא זמן לקיטת תאנים, וזמן שמייבישים אותן בשדות, ושמו קיץ, כמו והלחם והקיץ ללכול הנערים': חוב. הוא סוף ימות החמה, חצי אב וחלוץ חצי תשרי, שהעולם חס ציורם, כמו ששנינו במסכת יומא', שלחי קייטא קשי מקייטא: ויום ולילה לא ישבתו. מכלל ששבתו כל

אגדה! לשון מזון, ודרשו צפיה לשון מאמר, אמרה יהיו מזונותי מרורין כזית צידו של הקצ"ה, ולא מתוקין כדבש צידי צמר ודס: (צ) ויחל. הוא לשון ויחל, אלא שזה לשון ויפעל וזה לשון ויתפעל, ויחל וימתן, ויחל וימתן: (יג) בראשון. לרצי אליעזר הוא תשרי ולרצי יהושע הוא ניסן: חרבו. נעשה כמין טיט, שקרמו פניה של מעלה: (יד) בשבעה ועשרים. וירידתן בחדש השני צי". אלו י"א ימים שהחמה יתירה על הלבנה, שמשפט דור המבול שנה תמימה היב: יבשה. נעשה גריד כהלכתה: (טז) אתה ואשתך וגו'. איש ואשתו, כאן התיר להם תשמיש המטה: (יז) הוצא. הוצא כתיב הוצא קרי, הוצא, אמור להם שיצאו, הוצא, חס אינס רוצים ללאת הוליאם חתה: ושרצו בארץ. ולא צתיבה, מגיד שאף הצבחה והעוף נאסרו בתשמיש: (יט) למשפחתיהם. קבלו עליהם על מנת לידבק צמיקו: (כ) מכל הבהמה הטהורה. אמר, לא טוב לי הקדוש צרוך הוא להכניס מאלו ז' ז', אלא כדי

## CLASSIC QUESTIONS

### ● Why did God have to tell Noah to leave the ark? (v. 16)

**MIDRASH:** Since he only entered the ark according to God's instruction, he waited for God's command to leave (*Tanchuma* 8).

**TIFERES YEHONASON:** Noah did not want to leave the ark, since the world was in a desolate condition and was polluted with the disintegrated remains of human and animal life. Furthermore, since all buildings had been destroyed, Noah reasoned that it would be preferable to stay in the ark than live in a tent. However, God told Noah to leave the ark, since He was angry with him for not praying for the generation to be saved (see *Classic Questions*, p. 41).

<sup>12</sup> He made himself wait again for another seven days, and he sent out the dove, and it did not return to him any more.

<sup>13</sup> It was in the six hundredth and first year, in the first (month), on the first of the month, that the waters dried up from the surface of the earth (leaving a hard crust). Noach removed the covering of the ark. He gazed, and—look!—the surface of the ground had dried up.

<sup>14</sup> In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was (properly) dry.

## 🌀 NOACH AND HIS FAMILY LEAVE THE ARK 🌀

8:15 **F**ourth Reading: God spoke to Noach, saying: <sup>16</sup> “Go out of the ark, you, your wife, your sons, and your sons’ wives with you. <sup>17</sup> Bring out with you every living thing, all flesh that is with you, from the birds, animals and from all the creeping things that creep on the earth. They shall swarm upon the earth, and they shall be fruitful and multiply upon the earth.”

<sup>18</sup> So Noach went out, his sons, his wife and his sons’ wives with him. <sup>19</sup> Every wild animal, every creeping thing, all birds, and everything that moves upon the earth went out from the ark, (vowing to mate only) with their own species.

<sup>20</sup> Noach built an altar to God. He took from all the pure animals and from all the pure birds and brought up burnt offerings on the altar. <sup>21</sup> God smelled the pleasant aroma, and God said to Himself, “I will no longer curse the earth because of man, for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his (first) stirrings (in the womb). I will never again kill all living things as I have done. <sup>22</sup> So long as the earth exists there will not cease (six seasons of) seedtime, harvest, cold, heat, summer and winter, and day and night.”

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🌀 LEAVING THE ARK (v. 16)

The explanation of the *Midrash* is difficult to accept at the literal level, since: a.) It is not cited by *Rashi*. b.) *Rashi* writes earlier that “Noach, too, was of those who had little faith, believing and not believing that the flood would come, and he did not enter the ark until the waters forced him to do so” (7:7). I.e., he did not enter the ark because of God’s instruction, but rather, because he was forced to do so. Thus, it is unlikely that he would only have left on God’s instruction.

This, however, leaves us with the question: why did God have to tell Noach to leave the ark?

#### THE EXPLANATION

To answer this question let us first address another important issue at the literal level of Torah interpretation which does not appear to be addressed by *Rashi*.

Consider for a moment that the ark contained every species of animal known to man, including many ferocious beasts. How is it possible for so many creatures to co-exist in such a small space for an entire year, without total mayhem breaking loose? Admittedly, the ark was divided into a number of compartments (see above 6:14), but: a.) This confinement would have only served to exacerbate the animals’ aggressive nature. b.) Unlike a zoo, which is well staffed, Noach and his family were responsible for looking after all the animals without assistance.

There seems to be no other possible explanation except that a miracle occurred allowing so many animals to coexist for so long, under such conditions. But this begs the question: why does *Rashi* fail to mention this miracle, if at the literal level of Torah interpretation we are forced to conclude that it occurred?

However, it could be argued that *Rashi* did indicate explicitly that the conduct of the animals in the ark was supernatural:

Above, in chapter 6, verse 20, when the Torah describes which animals would enter the ark, *Rashi* writes, “They came by themselves, and all that the ark accepted, he brought into it.”

From this we see that the entry of animals into the ark was miraculous in the sense that: a.) The appropriate number of animals came automatically of their own accord. b.) They did not kill each other on the way. c.) The ark miraculously rejected those animals that were unfit.

From this information alone, *Rashi* left the reader to conclude that the entire organization of animals within the ark continued in the same miraculous fashion in which it had begun, which explains why the animals did not attack each other.

Thus, in effect, Noach and his family enjoyed in the ark a taste of the Messianic era when animals will coexist in peace (see Isaiah 11:6-9).

And this explains why Noach was reluctant to leave the ark, for he was exposed to a sublime level of supernatural behavior which resembled the Messianic era.

Nevertheless, God told Noach to “leave the ark,” since his mission in life was not to isolate himself in an atmosphere of holiness, but rather, to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth!” (9:2).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 28ff.)

### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

A person might be tempted to lock himself away in an “ark” of personal spirituality. The Torah, however, teaches a Jew that he must “go out of the ark...” and take responsibility for the world around him.

(*Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 34ff.)





## 🕍 GOD COMMANDS NOACH TO POPULATE THE WORLD 🕍

9 **G**od blessed Noach and his sons, and He said to them: “(May you) be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth! <sup>2</sup> Fear and dread of you will be upon all the animals of the earth, all the birds of the skies, everything that creeps upon the ground and all the fish of the sea. They have been given into your hand. <sup>3</sup> Every moving thing that lives shall be yours to eat. Like the green vegetation (which was all that man could eat before) I have (now) given you everything. <sup>4</sup> But, you shall not eat flesh (detached from an animal) or its blood, while it is still alive.

<sup>5</sup> “But I will demand (an account) for your blood (if you take) your own lives (through suicide).”

“I will demand (the same) from every animal (that takes a human life).”

“From a man (who intentionally kills another man, or) a man (who kills another man whom he loves like) his brother (unintentionally), I will demand the man’s life.”

<sup>6</sup> “Whoever spills human blood (killing a person, and is witnessed) by men, shall have his own blood spilled, for in the image of God (the Creator) made man.”

<sup>7</sup> “As for you, (I am commanding you to) be fruitful and multiply! Populate the earth and become numerous on it!”

## 🕍 GOD ESTABLISHES A COVENANT WITH MANKIND 🕍

9:8  
FIFTH  
READING

**G**od (saw that Noach was afraid to have children, so He) said to Noach and to his sons (who were) with him, <sup>9</sup> “Look! I am setting up My covenant with you and with your seed after you, <sup>10</sup> and with every living creature that is with you, among the birds, the domesticated animals, all the wild animals of the earth that (walk) with you, all those (loathsome insects and reptiles) who came out of the ark, all the living creatures of the earth. <sup>11</sup> I will confirm My covenant with you that never again will any flesh be wiped out by the floodwaters, and there will never again be a flood to destroy the earth.”

<sup>12</sup> God said: “This is the sign of the (confirmation of the) covenant, which I am placing between Me and you, and every living soul that is with you, for all generations. <sup>13</sup> I have placed my rainbow in the cloud, and it will be a sign of a covenant between Myself and the earth. <sup>14</sup> Then, when I (will consider) causing clouds (of darkness and destruction) to come upon the earth, the rainbow will appear in the cloud, <sup>15</sup> and I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you, and every living creature

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● When does God show a rainbow? (v. 14)

**RASHI:** When it arises in His mind to bring darkness and destruction to the world.

**BACHAYE:** The rainbow does not appear on every cloudy day or on any occasion that it rains, but only when the generation deserves destruction, to indicate that God is guarding his promise.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🕍 THE RAINBOW (v. 14)

*Rashi* writes that a rainbow appears in the world when God is thinking of re-enacting the destruction of the flood.

But this assertion appears to be totally outrageous: How could one possibly accept that *every time* a rainbow appears God is actually thinking of destroying the entire world, and if it were not for the covenant which He made with Noach, He would actually do so?

Is the reader to conclude that, since he sees a rainbow in the sky on a regular basis, his generation is as depraved as the generation of the flood, where “all flesh” became corrupt?

Clearly, such a conclusion is unacceptable. Therefore, at the literal level, it seems that *Rashi’s* intention here is that God shows a rainbow when it “arises in His mind” to destroy *part* of the world. I.e. if there is one location on earth where God is so dissatisfied with the people to the extent that He regrets creating them, then God makes a rainbow to indicate that He has promised never to wipe out *even part* of the world in the same indiscriminate way that he decimated the world with the flood.

Consequently, when a person sees a rainbow, even if he lives in a righteous neighborhood, he can be assured that in some location in the world people are corrupt to the extent that God would destroy them, if it were not for the covenant with Noach.

חִיתָא בְּכָל בְּשָׂרָא וְלֹא יְהוֹן עוֹד מִיָּא לְמוֹפְנָא  
 לְחַבְלָא כָּל בְּשָׂרָא: טו וְתַהֵי קִשְׁתָּא בְּעֵנְנָא  
 וְאַחֲזִינָהּ לְמַדְבַּר קָיָם עֲלָם בֵּין מִימְרָא דִּי וּבֵין  
 כָּל נַפְשָׂא חִיתָא בְּכָל בְּשָׂרָא דִּי עַל אַרְעָא:  
 יז וְאָמַר יי לְנֹחַ דָּא אַתְּ קָמָא דִּי אַקִּימִית בֵּין  
 מִימְרֵי וּבֵין כָּל בְּשָׂרָא דִּי עַל אַרְעָא: יח וְהוּוּ  
 בְּנֵי נֹחַ דִּי נָפְקוּ מִן תִּיבֹתָא שְׁם וְחָם וְיֹפֶת  
 וְחָם הוּא אָבוּהֵי דְכְנַעַן: יט תִּלְתָּא אֱלִין בְּנֵי  
 נֹחַ וּמֵאֱלִין אֲתַבְּרִדּוּ כָּל אַרְעָא: כ וּשְׂרֵי נֹחַ  
 נָבַר פְּלַח בְּאַרְעָא וּנְצִיב בְּרָמָא: כא וּשְׂרֵת  
 חֲמִרָא וּרְוֵי וְאֲתַנְגְּלֵי בְּגוּ מִשְׁכְּנֵיהּ: כב וְחָזָא  
 חָם אָבוּהֵי דְכְנַעַן יֵת עֲרִיתָא דְאָבוּהֵי וְחָזִי  
 לְתַרְוֵן אַחוּהֵי בְּשׁוּקָא: כג וְנָסִיב שְׁם וְיֹפֶת יֵת  
 כְּסוּתָא וְשׁוּיָאוּ עַל כְּתָף תַּרְוֵיהוֹן וְאָזְלוּ מִחֲזָרִין  
 וְכִסְיָאוּ יֵת עֲרִיתָא דְאָבוּהוֹן וְאַפִּיהוֹן מִחֲזָרִין

הַמַּיִם לְמַבּוּל לְשַׁחַת כָּל-בְּשָׂרָא: טו וְהִיְתָה הַקִּשְׁתַּת בְּעֵנָן  
 וּרְאִיתֶיהָ לְזָכֹר בְּרִית עוֹלָם בֵּין אֱלֹהִים וּבֵין כָּל-נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה  
 בְּכָל-בְּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר עַל-הָאָרֶץ: יז וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל-נֹחַ זֹאת  
 אֲוֹת־הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר הִקְמֹתִי בֵּינִי וּבֵין כָּל-בְּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר עַל-  
 הָאָרֶץ: פ [ששׁ] יח וַיְהִי בְנֵי-נֹחַ הַיְצָאִים מִן-הַתֵּבָה שְׁם וְחָם  
 וְיֹפֶת וְחָם הוּא אָבִי כְנַעַן: יט שְׁלֹשָׁה אֱלֹהִים בְּנֵי-נֹחַ וּמֵאֱלֹהִים  
 נִפְצְצָה כָּל-הָאָרֶץ: כ וַיַּחַל נֹחַ אִישׁ הָאָדָמָה וַיִּטַּע כָּרְם: כא וַיִּשְׂרֵת  
 מִן-הַיַּיִן וַיִּשְׁכַּר וַיִּתְגַּל בְּתוֹךְ אֹהֶלֶת: כב וַיֵּרָא חָם אָבִי כְנַעַן  
 אֶת עֶרְוַת אָבִיו וַיַּגִּיד לְשְׁנֵי-אֶחָיו בְּחוּץ: כג וַיִּקַּח שְׁם וְיֹפֶת  
 אֶת-הַשְּׂמֹלָה וַיְשִׁימוּ עַל-שִׁכְמָם שְׁנֵיהֶם וַיֵּלְכוּ אַחֲרָנִית וַיִּכְסּוּ  
 אֶת עֶרְוַת אָבִיהֶם וּפְנֵיהֶם אַחֲרָנִית וְעֶרְוַת אָבִיהֶם לֹא רָאוּ:

רש"י

אהל כתיב, רמז ל"י שצטים שנקראו על שם שומרון שנקראת אהל, שגלו על  
 עסקי כיון, שנאמר השמים צמזקרי יין<sup>4</sup>: ויתגל. לשון ויתפעל: (כג) וירא חם  
 אבי כנען. יש מרבותיו אומרים כנען ראה והגיד לאביו<sup>5</sup>, לכך הוזכר על הדבר  
 ונתקלל: וירא את ערות אביו. יש אומרים סרסו ויש אומרים רבעו<sup>6</sup>:  
 (כג) ויקח שם ויפת. אין כתיב ויקחו אלא ויקח<sup>7</sup>, לימד על שם שנתאמן במזבח  
 יותר מיפת, לכך זכו בניו לטלית של ציצית, ויפת זכה לקצורה לבניו, שנאמר אתן  
 לגוג מקום שם קבר<sup>8</sup>. וחס שצזח את אביו, נאמר צזרעו כן ינהג מלך אשר את  
 שזי מלרים ואת גלות כוש נערים וזקנים ערום ויחף וחשופי שת וגו'<sup>9</sup>: ופניהם  
 אחורנית. למה נאמר פעם שניה, מלמד שכשקצרו אללו והזכרו להפוך עלמם

(טז) בין אלהים ובין כל נפש חיה. בין מדת הדין של מעלה וזיוניכס, שהיה  
 לו לכתוב בניו ובין כל נפש חיה. אלא זכו מדרשו, כשתצא מדת הדין לקטרג  
 עליכס (לחייב אתכס), אני רואה את האות וזוכר: (יז) זאת אות הברית.  
 הראהו הקשת ואמר לו, הרי האות שאמרתי: (יח) וחס הוא אבי כנען. למה  
 הולך לומר כאן, לפי שהפרשה עסוקה וצאה בשכרותו של נח, שקלקל זה חס  
 ועל ידו נתקלל כנען, ועדיין לא כתב תולדות חס ולא ידענו שכנען בנו, לפיכך  
 הולך לומר כאן וחס הוא אבי כנען: (כ) ויחל. עשה עלמו חולין<sup>1</sup>, שהיה לו  
 לעסוק תחלה בזניעה אחרת: איש האדמה. אדוני האדמה, כמו איש נעמי<sup>2</sup>:  
 ויטע ברם. כשכנס לתיבה הכניס עמו זמורות ויחורי תאנים<sup>3</sup>: (כא) אהלה.

TORAS MENACHEM

Based on the above, we can explain a difficulty with Rashi's comment to v. 12, above: "There were generations that did not require the sign [the rainbow] because they were completely righteous, such as the generations of Chizkiyah, king of Yehudah, and that of R' Shimon bar Yochai."

generations [where the rainbow did not appear]: the generation of Chizkiyah and the generation of the Great Assembly. Rabbi Chizkiyah said that the two generations were those of the Great Assembly and Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai" (Bereishis Rabah 35:2).

The source of Rashi's comment is from the Midrash: "There were two

Why did Rashi conclude that there were many "generations that did not

The Last Word

"THEY DID NOT SEE THEIR FATHER'S NAKEDNESS..." (v. 23)

When a person sees another stumble in an inappropriate act, there are two possible reactions: a) one is disgusted by the act, or b) one thinks what can be done to help the person.

Cham took the former approach, "he looked at his father's nakedness" (v. 22) i.e. he focused on the inappropriateness of the situation. Sheim and Yafes, on the other hand, "did not see their

father's nakedness," i.e. they did not become disgusted at what had occurred. They simply took action to correct the situation.

What leads people to react in these two different ways? The Ba'al Shem Tov taught that a person who is himself unclean sees and is frustrated by the uncleanness of others. A pure person sees only that his fellow is in need of help.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 10, p. 24ff.)

among all flesh, and the water will no longer become a flood to destroy all flesh. <sup>16</sup> The rainbow will be in the cloud, and I will look at it to remember the everlasting covenant between God (‘s attribute of judgment) and every living creature among all flesh, which is on the earth.”

<sup>17</sup> (Showing him a rainbow,) God said to Noah: “This is the sign of the covenant that I have set up, between Myself and all flesh that is on the earth.”

## 🌀 NOACH IS ASSAULTED BY CHAM 🌀

9:18  
SIXTH  
READING

**T**he sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Sheim, Cham, and Yafes. Cham was the father of Cana’an. <sup>19</sup> These three were the sons of Noah. From them, the entire earth was populated. <sup>20</sup> Noah, a master of the soil, degraded himself by planting a vineyard (first of all). <sup>21</sup> He drank of the wine, became drunk, and uncovered himself in his tent. <sup>22</sup> (Cana’an told his father what had happened and) Cham, the father of Cana’an, looked at his father’s nakedness (and assaulted him). He publicly related (the incident) to his two brothers.

<sup>23</sup> Sheim and Yafes took a garment and placed it on both of their shoulders. They walked backwards, and covered their father’s nakedness. (Even when they had to turn themselves round to cover him) their faces were turned backwards, so that they did not see their father’s nakedness.

### TORAS MENACHEM

require the sign because they were completely righteous, such as...” whereas the *Midrash—Rashi’s* source—was of the opinion that there were only two such generations?

The *Midrash* understood that when a rainbow did not appear throughout an entire generation, it must be because an exceptionally pious man was living at the time, and in his merit the rainbow did not appear. Therefore, the *Midrash* states that, in history, there were only two righteous men of such caliber (though it is disputed who they were.)

However, at the literal level of Torah interpretation, *Rashi* was forced to

reject this interpretation. Since, as explained above, even if one part of the world is wicked, God may be tempted to destroy it, leading Him to show a rainbow as a sign that He is observing the covenant made with Noah. It follows therefore, that for a rainbow not to appear at all, the entire generation must be righteous (to preclude the possibility of a single “pocket” of wicked people). Therefore, *Rashi* concluded that the presence of two exceptionally righteous people alone would not prevent a rainbow from appearing.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Noach* 5745; *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 31ff.)

## 🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

### THE POST-FLOOD ERA

**C**hasidic thought teaches that before the flood, God sustained the world despite its low spiritual standing, due to His attribute of kindness. There was a limit, however, to how long God was willing to sustain a world without merit—hence the flood.

The waters of the flood were not merely a punishment. They purified the world, making physicality in general more refined and spiritually attuned. (see above, *Sparks of Chasidus* to 7:12,17).

Consequently, in the post-flood era, people were more predisposed to repentance. This ensured that God would always sustain the world—not despite of, but—because of its spiritual standing. For, even if man would become corrupt, people would inevitably repent, ensuring that the world itself would have sufficient merits for its continued existence.

With this in mind, we can explain the following details:

- Noah was unaware of the above, so he was scared to repopulate the world, fearing it would be destroyed again. Therefore, God had to re-command him to “be fruitful and multiply” (9:1).

- The inner reason why Noah’s generation failed to repent was because, before the flood, the world was spiritually insensitive.
- Meat is an extremely coarse food that can lead a person to excessive physicality. Thus, it was only permitted to the spiritually-attuned post-flood generation (see v. 3, above).
- Before the flood, people had extremely long lifespans because the world was sustained by God’s kindness which was bestowed disproportionately to people’s merits.
- Before the flood, physicality was more coarse. This was true in a literal sense, to the extent that the clouds were too thick to refract light, so a rainbow never appeared. After the flood, physicality became more refined, so the clouds began to refract light. Thus, the rainbow was not only a “sign” of God’s promise not to destroy the world, it was also a physical consequence of the refinement of the world that ensured its permanent existence.

(Based on *Sefer Hasichos* 5751 p. 75ff.; *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p.51ff.)

וְעָרִיתָא דְאֲבוּהוֹן לֹא חֲזוּ: כד וְאֲתַעֲרָ נַח  
מִחֲמַרְהָ וַיֵּדַע יֵת דִּי עֶבֶד לִיָּה בְרַה זְעִירָא:  
כה וְאָמַר לִישׁ כְּנַעַן עֶבֶד פְּלַח יֵהָא לְאַחוּהִי:  
כו וְאָמַר בְּרִידָא יֵי אֱלֹהִיָּה דְשִׁם וַיְהִי כְנַעַן  
עֶבְדָּא לְהוֹן: כז וַיִּפְתִּי יֵי לִיפְתָא וַיִּשְׂרִי שְׂכִינְתִּיהָ  
בְּמִשְׁכְּנֵיהָ דְשִׁם וַיְהִי כְנַעַן עֶבְדָּא לְהוֹן:  
כח וַחֲיָא נַח בְּתַר טוֹפְנָא תְּלַת מָאָה וַחֲמִשִּׁין  
שָׁנָיִם: כט וַחֲזוּ כָּל יוֹמֵי נַח תְּשַׁע מָאָה וַחֲמִשִּׁין  
שָׁנָיִם וּמִית: א וְאַלְזִין תּוֹלְדַת בְּנֵי נַח שִׁם חָם  
וַיִּפְתָּא וַאֲתִילִידוּ לְהוֹן בְּנֵינִי בְּתַר טוֹפְנָא: ב בְּנֵי  
יִפְתָּא גֹמֶר וּמִגְנוֹג וּמְדִי וַיִּוֹן וַתּוֹבֵל וּמִשְׁדָּךְ  
וַתִּירָם: ג וּבְנֵי גֹמֶר אֲשַׁכְּנִיז וְרִיפְתָּא וַתּוֹגְרָמָה:  
ד וּבְנֵי יוֹן אֱלִישָׁה וַתְּרַשִּׁישׁ פְּתִים וְדוֹדָנִים:  
ה מֵאַלְזִין אֲתַפְרָשׁוּ נְגוֹת עֲמֻמָּא בְּאַרְעֵתְהוֹן  
גְּבַר לְלִישְׁנֵיהָ לְזַרְעֵיתְהוֹן פְּעַמְמִיהוֹן: וּבְנֵי חָם  
כּוֹשׁ וּמִצְרַיִם וְפוּט וּכְנַעַן: ז וּבְנֵי כּוֹשׁ סִבָּא  
וַחֲוִילָה וְסִבְתָּה וְרַעְמָה וְסִבְתָּכָא וּבְנֵי רַעְמָה  
שָׁבָא וְדָדָן: ח וְכוֹשׁ יָלַד אֶת־נִמְרֹד הוּא הֵחָל לְהִיּוֹת גְּבַר  
בְּאַרְצָא: ט הוּא־הָיָה גְּבַר־צִיד לִפְנֵי יְהוָה עַל־כֵּן יֹאמַר כְּנִמְרֹד  
גְּבוּר צִיד לִפְנֵי יְהוָה: י וַתְּהִי רֵאשִׁית מַמְלַכְתּוֹ בְּכָל אֶרֶץ  
וְאַכְד וּכְלָנָה בְּאַרְצָא שֹׁנַעַר: יא מִן־הָאָרֶץ הַהִוא יֵצֵא אֲשׁוּר  
וַיִּבְן אֶת־נִינְוָה וְאֶת־רְחֹבַת עִיר וְאֶת־כַּלְח: יב וְאֶת־רֶסֶן בֵּין  
נִינְוָה וּבֵין כַּלְח הוּא הָעִיר הַגְּדֹלָה: יג וּמִצְרַיִם יָלַד אֶת־לוֹדִים  
וְאֶת־עַנְמִים וְאֶת־לֵהָבִים וְאֶת־נַפְתָּחִים: יד

כד וַיִּקְיָן נַח מֵיָּנֹו וַיֵּדַע אֶת אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה לוֹ בְּנֵו הַקָּמָן:  
כה וַיֹּאמֶר אָרוּר כְּנַעַן עֶבֶד עֲבָדִים יִהְיֶה לְאַחִיו: כו וַיֹּאמֶר בְּרוּךְ  
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי שָׁם וַיְהִי כְנַעַן עֶבֶד לָמוֹ: כז יִפְתָּא אֱלֹהִים לִיפְתָּא  
וַיִּשְׁכֵּן בְּאַהֲלֵי־שָׁם וַיְהִי כְנַעַן עֶבֶד לָמוֹ: כח וַיְחִי־נַח אַחַר  
הַמַּבּוּל שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַחֲמִשִּׁים שָׁנָה: כט וַיְהִי כָּל־יְמֵי־נַח  
תְּשַׁע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַחֲמִשִּׁים שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת: פ י וְאַלְהָ תּוֹלְדַת  
בְּנֵי־נַח שִׁם חָם וַיִּפְתָּא וַיִּוֹלְדוּ לָהֶם בְּנִים אַחַר הַמַּבּוּל: ג בְּנֵי  
יִפְתָּא גֹמֶר וּמִגְנוֹג וּמְדִי וַיִּוֹן וַתּוֹבֵל וּמִשְׁדָּךְ וַתִּירָם: ד וּבְנֵי גֹמֶר  
אֲשַׁכְּנִיז וְרִיפְתָּא וַתּוֹגְרָמָה: ה וּבְנֵי יוֹן אֱלִישָׁה וַתְּרַשִּׁישׁ פְּתִים  
וְדוֹדָנִים: ו מֵאַלְהָ נִפְרְדּוּ אֵינִי הַגּוֹיִם בְּאַרְצֵתָם אִישׁ לְלִשְׁנֵו  
לְמִשְׁפַּחְתָּם בְּגוֹיָהֶם: ז וּבְנֵי חָם כּוֹשׁ וּמִצְרַיִם וְפוּט וּכְנַעַן:  
ח וּבְנֵי כּוֹשׁ סִבָּא וַחֲוִילָה וְסִבְתָּה וְרַעְמָה וְסִבְתָּכָא וּבְנֵי רַעְמָה  
שָׁבָא וְדָדָן: ט וְכוֹשׁ יָלַד אֶת־נִמְרֹד הוּא הֵחָל לְהִיּוֹת גְּבַר  
בְּאַרְצָא: ט הוּא־הָיָה גְּבַר־צִיד לִפְנֵי יְהוָה עַל־כֵּן יֹאמַר כְּנִמְרֹד  
גְּבוּר צִיד לִפְנֵי יְהוָה: י וַתְּהִי רֵאשִׁית מַמְלַכְתּוֹ בְּכָל אֶרֶץ  
וְאַכְד וּכְלָנָה בְּאַרְצָא שֹׁנַעַר: יא מִן־הָאָרֶץ הַהִוא יֵצֵא אֲשׁוּר  
וַיִּבְן אֶת־נִינְוָה וְאֶת־רְחֹבַת עִיר וְאֶת־כַּלְח: יב וְאֶת־רֶסֶן בֵּין  
נִינְוָה וּבֵין כַּלְח הוּא הָעִיר הַגְּדֹלָה: יג וּמִצְרַיִם יָלַד אֶת־לוֹדִים  
וְאֶת־עַנְמִים וְאֶת־לֵהָבִים וְאֶת־נַפְתָּחִים: יד

רש"י

יפת בית שני, לא שרחה צו שכינה, וסיכן שרחה, במקדש ראשון שצנח שלמה  
שכיב מצני שס: ויהי כנען עבד. אף משיגלו בני שס, ימכרו להם עבדים מצני  
כנען: (ג) ותירס. ז פרס: (ח) להיות גבור. להמריד כל העולם על הקדוש  
ברוך הוא צעלח דור הפלגה: (ט) גבור ציד. לד דעתן של צריות צפיו, ומטען  
למרוד במקום: לפני ה'. מתכוין להקניטו על פניו: על כן יאמר. על כל אדם  
מרשיע בעצות פנים, יודע רצונו ומתכוין למרוד צו, יאמר, זה, כנמרוד גבור ליד:<sup>4</sup>  
(יא) מן הארץ. כיון שראה אשור את בניו שומעין למרוד, ומורדין במקום  
לצנות כמגדל, ילא מתוכס:<sup>5</sup> (יב) העיר הגדולה. היא נינוה, שנאמר ונינוה  
היתה עיר גדולה לאלהים:<sup>6</sup> (יג) להבים. שפניהם דומים ללכז: (יד) פתרוסים

לכסוחו, הפכו פניהם אחרונות: (כד) בנו הקטן. הפסול והצווי, כמו הכה קטן  
נחתיך בגוים צווי:<sup>1</sup> (כה) ארוור כנען. אהה גרמת לי שלא אוליד צן רביעי אחר  
לשמעני, ארוור צן רביעי להיות משמש את זרעם של אלו הגדולים, שהוטל  
עליהם טורח עצודתי מעתה. ומה ראה חס שסרסו, אמר להם לאחיו, אדם  
הראשון שני צנים היו לו, והרג זה את זה צשציל ירושת העולם, ואצינו יש לו ג'  
צנים ועודנו מצקש צן רביעי: (כו) ברוך ה' אלהי שם. שעתיד לשמור  
הצטחחו לזרעו לתת להם את ארץ כנען: ויהי. להם כנען למס עובד: (כז) יפת  
אלהים ליפת. מתורגס יפת ירחיב: וישכון באהלי שם. ישרה שכינתו  
בישראל. ומדרש חכמים,<sup>2</sup> אף על פי שיפת אלהים ליפת, שצנה כורש שכיב מצני

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How old was Noah when he died? (v. 29)

MIDRASH: The year of the Flood is not included in the "total of nine hundred and fifty years" of his life (Bereishis Rabah 32:6).

TZROR HAMOR: This is because life in the ark was extremely taxing for Noah, as he had to feed and maintain so many animals almost singlehandedly. Since he had little of a "life" in that year, the Torah omits it in the summary of the "years of his life" (7:11).

<sup>24</sup> Noach woke up from his wine, and he realized what his youngest son had done to him. <sup>25</sup> He said, “Cursed be Cana’an! He shall be a slave among slaves to his brethren!”

<sup>26</sup> He said, “Blessed be God, the God of Sheim, and may Cana’an be a (subjugated) slave to them! <sup>27</sup> May God make Yafes spread out, may He dwell in the tents of Sheim, and may Cana’an be a slave to them (even after Sheim is exiled)!”

<sup>28</sup> Noach lived three hundred and fifty years after the Flood. <sup>29</sup> Noach lived a total of nine hundred and fifty years, and he died.

## 🌀 THE DESCENDANTS OF NOACH 🌀

**IO** **T**hese are the offspring of the sons of Noach: Sheim, Cham, and Yafes. Sons were born to them after the Flood.

<sup>2</sup> The sons of Yafes were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Yavan, Tual, Meshech and Tiras.

<sup>3</sup> The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Rifas and Togarmah.

<sup>4</sup> The sons of Yavan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kitim, and Dodanim. <sup>5</sup> They were dispersed into the islands of the nations in their (various) lands, each one with its own language, according to their local and national identity.

<sup>6</sup> The sons of Cham were Kush, Mitzrayim, Poot and Cana’an.

<sup>7</sup> The sons of Kush were Seva, Chavilah, Sautah, Ramah and Sautecha.

The sons of Ramah were Sheva and Dedan.

<sup>8</sup> Cush fathered Nimrod. He started to be a rebel (against God) in the land. <sup>9</sup> He was a powerful trapper (of people’s minds, turning them) against God. Therefore it is said (about rebellious people, that they are), “Like Nimrod, a powerful trapper against God.” <sup>10</sup> The beginning of his kingdom was Bavel, Erech, Akad and Kalneih, in the land of Shinar. <sup>11</sup> Ashur left that land (due to Nimrod), and he built Ninveih, Rechovos-Ir, Kalach, <sup>12</sup> and Resen, between Ninvei—which is the great city—and Kalach.

<sup>13</sup> Mitzrayim fathered Ludim, Anamim, Lehavim, Naftuchim, <sup>14</sup> Pasrusim, Kasluchim—from whom the Philistines were descended—and Kaftorim.

---

### TORAS MENACHEM

---

#### 🌀 HOW LONG DID NOACH LIVE? (v. 29)

We read above: “Noach was six hundred years old when the flood water came upon the earth” (7:6). “It was in the six hundredth and first year, in the first (month), on the first of the month, that the waters dried up” (8:13). I.e. at the end of the flood Noach was 601 years old.

Then, we learn that “Noach lived three hundred and fifty years after the Flood” (9:28), which makes a total of 951 years. How then can the Torah state in the following verse that “Noach lived a total of nine hundred and fifty years, and he died”?

The **Midrash** answers that the year of the flood is not included in the total of Noach’s years, since it was a year of hardship (as **Tzror Hamor** explains). However, **Rashi** in his commentary to the Torah does not cite this **Midrash**, and it would be unfair to presume that the reader is left to come to this conclusion himself. Rather, there must be a simple explanation for the matter at the literal level—an explanation that is so obvious that **Rashi** saw no need to write it down.

#### THE EXPLANATION

Presumably, at the literal level, if the Torah states that a person was, for example, 40 years old when a particular event occurred, it does not mean to say that he was 40 years old on that very day. Rather, 40 years was the *closest* whole number of years to his actual age. He could have been anything between 39½ and 40½ years.

Thus, when the Torah stated, “Noach was six hundred years old when the flood water came upon the earth,” he was actually a little over 599½ (but less than 600). The flood then lasted a year, bringing him to 600½ (but less than 601). The Torah then states, “Noach lived three hundred and fifty years after the Flood,” but again, he would actually have lived between 349½ and 350 years more, so that his total lifespan was 950 years plus a few months, but less than 950½ years. Therefore, the Torah states, “Noach lived a total of 950 years.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 25ff.)

נפקו מתמן פלשתאי ונת קפוטקאי: טו וכנען  
 אוליד נת צידון ובוכריה ונת חת: טז ונת  
 יבוסאי ונת אמוראי ונת גרנשאי: יז ונת הנאי  
 ונת ערקאי ונת אנתוסאי: יח ונת ארוכאי ונת  
 צמראי ונת חמתאי ובתר בן אתפרדו ורעית  
 כנענאי: יט והנה תחום כנענאה מצידון ממי  
 לגר עד עזה ממי לסדום ועמורה ואדמה  
 וצבויים עד לשע: כ אלין בני חם לזרעיתהון  
 ללישנהון בארעתהון בעממיהון: כא ולשם  
 אתיליד אף הוא אבוהון דכל בני עבר אחוהי  
 דיפת רבא: כב בני שם עילם ואשור  
 וארפכשד ולוד וארם: כג ובני ארם עויז וחול  
 ונתר ומש: כד וארפכשד אוליד ית שלח  
 ושלח אוליד יד עבר: כה ולעבר אתילידו  
 תרין בנין שום חר פלג ארי ביזמוהי  
 אתפלגית ארעא ושום אחוהי יקטן: כו ויקטן  
 אוליד ית אלמונד וית שלף וית חצרמנות וית  
 ירח: כז וית הדורם וית אוזל וית דקלה:  
 כח וית עובל וית אבימאל וית שבא: כט וית  
 אופיר וית חוילה וית יובב כל אלין בני יקטן:  
 ל והנה מותבנהון ממשא ממי לספר טור  
 מדינחא: לא אלין בני שם לזרעיתהון  
 ללישנהון בארעתהון בעממיהון: לב אלין  
 ורעית בני נח לתולדתהון בעממיהון ומאלין  
 אתפרשו עממיא בארעא בתר טופנא:  
 א והנה כל ארעא לישן חר וממלל חר: ב והנה  
 במטלהון בקדמיתא ואשכחו בקעתא  
 בארעא דבבל ויתבו תמן: ג ואמרו גבר  
 לחברה הבו גרמי לבנין ונשרפנון בגורא

וְאֶת־כְּסִלְחִים אֲשֶׁר יֵצְאוּ מִשָּׁם פְּלִשְׁתִּים וְאֶת־כַּפְתָּרִים: ט  
 וְכַנְעֵן יֶלֶד אֶת־צִידֹן בְּכָרוֹ וְאֶת־חַת: טו וְאֶת־הַיְבוּסִי וְאֶת־  
 הָאֱמֹרִי וְאֶת הַגְּרַנְשִׁי: יז וְאֶת־הַנְּאִי: יח וְאֶת־הָעֲרֹקִי וְאֶת־הַסִּנְיִי:  
 יח וְאֶת־הָאֲרוּרִי וְאֶת־הַצְּמֵרִי וְאֶת־הַחֲמַתִּי וְאַחַר נִפְצְאוּ  
 מִשְׁפַּחֹת הַכְּנַעֲנִי: יט וַיְהִי גְבוּל הַכְּנַעֲנִי מִצִּידוֹן בְּאֵכָה גְרָרָה  
 עַד־עֵזָה בְּאֵכָה סְדֹמָה וְעַמְרָה וְאֲדָמָה וְצַבְוִיִּם עַד־לְשֶׁע:  
 כ אֵלֶּה בְנֵי־חָם לְמִשְׁפַּחְתָּם לְלִשְׁנָתָם בְּאַרְצֹתָם בְּגוֹיֵיהֶם: ט  
 כא וְלִשָּׁם יֶלֶד גַּם־הוּא אָבִי כָּל־בְּנֵי־עֶבֶר אֲחִי יִפְתַּח הַגְּדוֹל:  
 כב בְּנֵי שָׁם עִילָם וְאַשּׁוּר וְאַרְפַּכְשָׁד וְלוֹד וְאַרָם: כג וּבְנֵי אָרָם  
 עוֹיִז וְחוּל וְנִתְר וּמִשׁ: כד וְאַרְפַּכְשָׁד יֶלֶד אֶת־שֶׁלַח וְשֶׁלַח יֶלֶד  
 אֶת־עֶבֶר: כה וְלַעֲבָר יֶלֶד שְׁנֵי בָנִים שֵׁם הָאֶחָד פִּלֵּג כִּי בִימּוֹ  
 נִפְלְגָה הָאָרֶץ וְשֵׁם אֲחִיו יֶקְטָן: כו וַיִּקְטֵן יֶלֶד אֶת־אֱלִמוֹרָד  
 וְאֶת־שֶׁלֶף וְאֶת־חֲצֵרְמוֹת וְאֶת־יָרַח: כז וְאֶת־הַדּוֹרָם וְאֶת־  
 אוֹזֵל וְאֶת־דְּקָלָה: כח וְאֶת־עוֹבֵל וְאֶת־אֲבִימָאל וְאֶת־שְׁבָא:  
 כט וְאֶת־אוֹפִיר וְאֶת־חוּלָה וְאֶת־יּוֹבָב כָּל־אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי יֶקְטָן:  
 ל וַיְהִי מוֹשְׁבָם מִמִּשְׁא מִבְּאֵכָה סְפָרָה הַר הַקָּדָם: לא אֵלֶּה  
 בְּנֵי־שָׁם לְמִשְׁפַּחְתָּם לְלִשְׁנָתָם בְּאַרְצֹתָם לְגוֹיֵיהֶם: לב אֵלֶּה  
 מִשְׁפַּחַת בְּנֵי־נֹחַ לְתוֹלְדֹתָם בְּגוֹיֵיהֶם וּמֵאֵלֶּה נִפְרְדוּ הַגּוֹיִם  
 בְּאָרֶץ אַחַר הַמַּבּוּל: פ יא א [שביעין] וַיְהִי כָּל־הָאָרֶץ שְׁפָה אַחַת  
 וּדְבָרִים אֶחָדִים: ג וַיְהִי בְּנִסְעָם מִקֶּדֶם וַיִּמְצְאוּ בְּקָעָה בְּאָרֶץ  
 שִׁנְעָר וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם: ג וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל־רֵעֵהוּ הֲבֵה נִלְבְּנָה

כש"י

שצסוף ימיו נתפלגו, שאם תאמר צתחלת ימיו, הכי יקטן אחיו לעיר ממנו, והוליד כמה משפחות קודם לכן, שנאמר ויקטן ילד וגו', ואחר כך ויהי כל הארץ גו'י, ואם תאמר צתאמע ימיו, לא צא הכחוצ לסתום אלא לפרש, הא למדת, שצשנת מות פלג נתפלגו: יקטן. שהיה עניו ומקטין עצמו, לכך זכה להעמיד כל המשפחות הללו: (כ) חצרמות. על שם מקומו, דצרי אגדה? (ח) שפה אחת. לשון הקודש: ודברים אחדים. צאו צעלה אחת ואמרו, לא כל הימנו שיצור לו את העליונים, נעלה לרקיע ונעשה עמו מלחמה. דצרי אחר, על יחידו של עולם. דצרי אחר ודצריים אחדים, (ס"א דצריים חדים) אמרו אחת לאלף ותרנ"ו שנים הרקיע מתמוטט, כשם שעשה צימי המצול, צואו ונעשה לו סמוכות: (צ) בנסעם מקדם. שהיו יושבים שם, כדכתיב למעלה ויהי מושבם וגו' הר הקדם, ונסעו משם לתור להם מקום להחזיק את כלם, ולא מצאו אלא שנער: (ג) איש אל רעהו. אומה לאומה, מלרים לכוש, וכוש לפוט, ופוט לכנען: הבה. הזמינו עצמכם. כל הצה לשון הזמנה

ואת כסלוחים אשר יצאו משם פלשתים. משניהם יאלו, שהיו פתרוסים וכסלוחים מחליפין משכב נשותיהם אלו לאלו, ויאלו מהם פלשתים: (יח) ואחר נפצו. מאלה נפולו משפחות הרבה: (יט) גבול. סוף ארצו. כל גבול לשון סוף וקצה: באכה. שם דצרי. ולי נראה כאלה האומר לחצירו, גבול זה מגיע עד אשר תצא לגבול פלוני: (כ) ללשונותם בארצותם. אף על פי שנחלקו ללשונות ורעות, כולם בני חם הם: (כא) אבי כל בני עבר. הנהר, היה שם: אחי יפת הגדול. אינו יודע אם יפת הגדול, אם שם, כשהוא אומר שם צן מאת שנה וגו' שנתים אחר המצול, הוי אומר יפת הגדול, שהרי צן ח"ק שנה היה נח כשהתחיל להוליד, והמצול היה צשנת שש מאות שנה, נמלא שהגדול צצניו היה צן מאה שנה, ושם לא הגיע למאה עד שנתים אחר המצול: אחי יפת. ולא אחי חם, שאלו שניהם כצדו את אביהם, וזה צהו: (כה) נפלגה. נתצללו הלשוניות, ונפולו מן הצקעה, ונתפלגו ככל העולם, למדנו שהיה עצר נצוא, שקרא שם צנו על שם העתיד. ושנינו צסדר עולם'

<sup>15</sup> Cana'an fathered Tzidon—his firstborn—and Cheis, <sup>16</sup> the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, <sup>17</sup> the Chivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, <sup>18</sup> the Arvadites, the Tzemarites and the Chamasites. From them, the families of the Canaanites were dispersed. <sup>19</sup> The border of the Canaanites was from Tzidon as you come to Gerar, as far as Aza reaching Sodom, Amorah, Admah and Tzevoiyim, until Lasha.

<sup>20</sup> The (above) are the descendants of Cham according to their families, and their languages, by their lands and their nations.

<sup>21</sup> Children were also born to Sheim, the father of all those who lived on the other side (of the river), the brother of Yafes, the eldest.

<sup>22</sup> The sons of Sheim were Eilam, Ashur, Arpachshad, Lud and Aram.

<sup>23</sup> The sons of Aram were Utz, Chul, Geser and Mash.

<sup>24</sup> Arpachshad fathered Shalach, and Shelach fathered Eiver.

<sup>25</sup> Eiver fathered two sons: one was named Peleg, because in his days the earth was split (by languages), and the name of his brother was Yaktan.

<sup>26</sup> Yaktan fathered Almodad, Shalef, Chatzarmaves, Yarach, <sup>27</sup> Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, <sup>28</sup> Oval, Avima'eil, Sheva, <sup>29</sup> Ofir, Chavilah and Yovav. All these were the sons of Yaktan. <sup>30</sup> Their place of settlement extended from Meisha, towards Sefar, the mountain of the east.

<sup>31</sup> The (above) are the sons of Sheim according to their families, and their languages, by their lands and their nations.

<sup>32</sup> The (above) are the families of the sons of Noach, according to their generations, by their nations. From them the nations were dispersed on the earth after the Flood.

## 🕍 NATIONS UNITE TO BUILD A GIANT TOWER 🕍

**II** **T**he whole earth spoke one language (Hebrew), and had a united cause (against God). <sup>2</sup> Then, when they migrated from the east (to find a new, larger home big enough for them all) they (only) found a valley in the land of Shinar, and they settled there.

SEVENTH  
READING

<sup>3</sup> Each (nation) said to the other, "Prepare yourselves! Let us mold bricks and fire them!" (since they had no stones in the valley). So the bricks were like stones for them, and they used clay for plastering.

TORAS MENACHEM

### 🕍 Sparks of Chasidus 🕍

#### THE GENERATION OF DISPERSION

**W**hy was the "Generation of Dispersion," who built the Tower of Babel, so afraid of becoming "scattered upon the face of the entire earth" (v. 4)? What would be the problem with inhabiting the world with people?

The people of that generation wanted to draw down God's blessings without following God's will. They understood that Divine energy will always flow into a place of peace and harmony, so they figured that by keeping together, in one giant community where harmony prevails, they would bring down sufficient Divine energy to grant them physical blessings of prosperity. Therefore, their primary

fear was that of being scattered, for the destruction of their community would stop the flow of "easy" blessings from above.

The key to their unity was the language that they spoke—Hebrew. Being the language of the Torah and the language with which God created the world, the "holy tongue" provided them with a powerful tool to unify themselves.

So, to thwart their plan, God took away the power that was unifying them—"Let us descend and confuse their language, so that they will not understand each other's language" (v. 7).

(Based on *Toras Chaim, Bereishis 63c ff.*)

והות להון לביתא לאבנא וחמרא הוה להון לשיע: - ואמרו הבו נבני לנא קרתא ומנדלא ורישה מטי עד צית שמיא ונעביד לנא שום דלמא נתבדר על אפי כל ארעא: ה ואתגלי יי לאתפרעא על עובדי קרתא ומנדלא די בנו בני אנשא: ו ואמר יי הא עמא חד ולישן חד לכולהון ודין דשריאו למעבד וכען לא יתמנע מנהון כל דחשיבו למעבד: ז הבו נתגלי ונבלבל תמן לישנהון דלא ישמעון אנש לישן חבריה: ח ובדר יי יתהון מתמן על אפי כל ארעא ואתמניעו מלמבני קרתא: ט על בן קרא שמה בכל ארי תמן כלבל יי לישן כל ארעא ומתמן בדרניון יי על אפי כל ארעא: י אלין תולדת שם שם בר מאה שנין ואוליד ית ארפכשד תרתין שנין בטר מופנא: יא ותיא שם בטר דאוליד ית ארפכשד חמש מאה שנין ואוליד בנין ובנן: יב וארפכשד תיא תלתין וחמש שנין ואוליד ית שלח: יג ותיא ארפכשד בטר דאוליד ית שלח ארבע מאה ותלת שנין ואוליד בנין ובנן: יד ושלח תיא תלתין שנין ואוליד ית עבר: טו ותיא שלח בטר דאוליד ית עבר ארבע מאה ותלת שנין ואוליד בנין ובנן: טז ותיא עבר תלתין וארבע שנין ואוליד ית פלג: יז ותיא עבר בטר דאוליד ית פלג ארבע מאה ותלתין שנין ואוליד בנין ובנן: יח ותיא פלג תלתין שנין ואוליד ית רעו: יט ותיא פלג בטר דאוליד ית רעו מאתן ותשע שנין ואוליד בנין ובנן: כ ותיא רעו תלתין ותרתין שנין ואוליד ית שרוג: כא ותיא רעו בטר דאוליד ית שרוג מאתן ושבע שנין ואוליד בנין ובנן: כב ותיא שרוג תלתין שנין ואוליד ית נחור: כג ותיא שרוג בטר דאוליד ית נחור מאתן שנין ואוליד בנין ובנן: כד ותיא נחור עשרין ותשע שנין ואוליד ית תרח: כה ותיא נחור בטר דאוליד ית תרח מאה ותשע עשרי שנין ואוליד בנין ובנן: כו ותיא תרח שבעין שנין ואוליד ית אברם ית נחור וית הרן: כז ותיא תרח שבעים שנין ואוליד בנין ובנן: כח ותיא תרח תולדת תרח תרח אוליד ית אברם ית נחור וית הרן וית

לבנים ונשרפה לשרפה ותהי להם הלבנה לאבן והחמר היה להם לחמר: - ויאמרו הבה | נבנה לנו עיר ומגדל וראשו בשמים ונעשה לנו שם פון פון על פני כל הארץ: ה וירד יהוה לראות את העיר ואת המגדל אשר בנו בני האדם: ו ויאמר יהוה הן עם אחד ושפה אחת לכלם וזה החלם לעשות ועתה לא יבצר מהם כל אשר יזמו לעשות: ז הבה נרדה ונבלה שם שפתם אשר לא ישמעו איש שפת רעהו: ח ויפץ יהוה אתם משם על פני כל הארץ ויחדלו לבנת העיר: ט על פן קרא שמה בכל כי שם בלל יהוה שפת כל הארץ ומשם הפיעם יהוה על פני כל הארץ: פ אלה תולדת שם שם בין מאת שנה ויולד את ארפכשד שנתים אחר המבול: יא ויחי שם אחרי הולידו את ארפכשד חמש מאות שנה ויולד בנים ובנות: ס יב וארפכשד חי חמש ושלשים שנה ויולד את שלח: יג ויחי ארפכשד אחרי הולידו את שלח שלש שנים וארבע מאות שנה ויולד בנים ובנות: ס יד ושלח חי שלשים שנה ויולד את עבר: טו ויחי שלח אחרי הולידו את עבר שלש שנים וארבע מאות שנה ויולד בנים ובנות: ס טז ויחי עבר שלש שנים וארבע מאות שנה ויולד את פלג: יז ויחי עבר אחרי הולידו את פלג שלשים שנה וארבע מאות שנה ויולד בנים ובנות: ס יח ויחי פלג שלשים שנה ויולד את רעו: יט ויחי פלג אחרי הולידו את רעו שלשים שנים ומאתים שנה ויולד בנים ובנות: ס כ ויחי רעו שתים ושלשים שנה ויולד את שרוג: כא ויחי רעו אחרי הולידו את שרוג שבע שנים ומאתים שנה ויולד בנים ובנות: ס כב ויחי שרוג שלשים שנה ויולד את נחור: כג ויחי שרוג אחרי הולידו את נחור מאתים שנה ויולד בנים ובנות: ס כד ויחי נחור תשע ועשרים שנה ויולד את תרח: כה ויחי נחור אחרי הולידו את תרח תשע עשרה שנה ומאת שנה ויולד בנים ובנות: ס כו ויחי תרח שבעים שנה ויולד את אברם את נחור ואת הרן: כז ואלה תולדת תרח תרח



<sup>4</sup> They said, "Prepare yourselves! Let us build ourselves a city with a tower whose top is in the skies! Let us make ourselves a name, so we do not become scattered upon the face of the entire earth."

<sup>5</sup> God descended to see the city and the tower that the descendants of Adam had built.

<sup>6</sup> God said, "(Despite the fact) that they are one people, and they all have one language, this is what they have begun to do! Shouldn't they be stopped from everything they have planned to do? <sup>7</sup> Prepare yourselves! Let us descend and confuse their language, so that they will not understand each other's language."

<sup>8</sup> God dispersed them from there upon the face of the entire earth, and they stopped building the city.

<sup>9</sup> Therefore, He named it Bavel, for there God confused ("BalaL") the language of the entire earth, and from there God dispersed them upon the face of the entire earth.

### 🌀 DESCENDANTS OF SHEIM 🌀

11:10 **T**hese are the offspring of Sheim:

Sheim was one hundred years old, and he fathered Arpachshad, two years after the Flood.

<sup>11</sup> After he had fathered Arpachshad, Sheim lived five hundred years, and he fathered sons and daughters.

<sup>12</sup> Arpachshad lived thirty-five years, and then he fathered Shalach. <sup>13</sup> After he had fathered Shelach, Arpachshad lived four hundred and three years, and he fathered sons and daughters.

<sup>14</sup> Shelach lived thirty years, and then he fathered Eiver. <sup>15</sup> After he had fathered Eiver, Shelach lived four hundred and three years, and he fathered sons and daughters.

<sup>16</sup> Eiver lived thirty-four years, and then he fathered Peleg. <sup>17</sup> After he had fathered Peleg, Eiver lived four hundred and thirty years, and he fathered sons and daughters.

<sup>18</sup> Peleg lived thirty years, and then he fathered Re'u. <sup>19</sup> After he had fathered Re'u, Peleg lived two hundred and nine years, and he fathered sons and daughters.

<sup>20</sup> Re'u lived thirty-two years, and then he fathered Serug. <sup>21</sup> After he had fathered Serug, Re'u lived two hundred and seven years, and he fathered sons and daughters.

<sup>22</sup> Serug lived thirty years, and then he fathered Nachor. <sup>23</sup> After he had fathered Nachor, Serug lived two hundred years, and he fathered sons and daughters.

<sup>24</sup> Nachor lived twenty-nine years, and then he fathered Terach. <sup>25</sup> After he had fathered Terach, Nachor lived one hundred and nineteen years, and he fathered sons and daughters.

<sup>26</sup> Terach lived seventy years, and he fathered Avram, Nachor, and Charan.

רש"י

נרדה. צבית דינו נמלך מענותותו יתירה: הבה. מדה כנגד מדה, הם אמרו הצב נצבה, והוא כנגד מדד ואמר הצב נרדה: ובלה. ונצלל נר"ן משמש בלשון רבים, וה"א אחרונה יתירה, כה"א של נרדה: לא ישמעו. זה שואל לצנה וזה מציא טיט, וזה עומד עליו ופולט את מוחו: (ח) ויפץ ה' אותם משם. בעולם הזה, מה שאמרו פן נפון נתקיים עליהם, הוא שאמר שלמה מגורת רשע היא תבואנו<sup>3</sup>: (ט) ומשם הפיצם. למד שאין להם חלק לעולם הבא. וכי אי זו קשה של דור המבול או של דור הפלגה, אלו לא פשטו יד בעיקר, ואלו פשטו יד בעיקר להלחם בו, ואלו נשטפו ואלו לא נאצדו מן העולם, אלא שדור המבול היו גזלים והיתה מריבה ביניהם, לכך נאצדו, ואלו היו נוכחים אצבה וריעות ביניהם, שנאמר שפה אחת ודברים אחדים. למד ששנאוי המחלוקת וגדול השלוש: (י) שם בן מאת שנה. כשהוליד את ארפכשד שנתים אחר המבול:

הוא, שמכונים עלמין ומתחברים למלאכה או לענה או למשא. הצב הזמינו אפרקליי"ר בלעז: לבנים. שאין אצנים צבצל שהיא צקטה: ונשרפה לשרפה. כך עושין הלבנים שקורים טוול"ש שורפים אותם בצקשן: לחמרה. לטוח הקיר: (ד) פן נפוצן. שלא יביא עלינו שום מכב להפילנו מכאן: (ה) וירד ה' לראות. לא הוצרך לכך, אלא צא ללמד לדיינים, שלא ירשיעו הנידון עד שיראו ויצינו. במדרש רבי תנחומא<sup>1</sup>: בני האדם. אלא בני מי, שמא בני חמורים וגמלים, אלא בני אדם הראשון, שכפה את הטובה ואמר האשה אשר נתתה עמדי, אף אלו כפו בטובה למרוד צמי שהשפיעט טובה ומלטם מן המבול: (ו) הן עם אחד. כל טובה זו יש עמכן שעם אחד הם ושפה אחת לכולם, ודבר זה החלו לעשות: החלם. כמו אמרם עשותם, להתחיל הם לעשות: לא יבצר מהם וגו' לעשות. צתמיה. יבצר לשון מניעה כתרגומן, ודומה לו יבצור רוח נגידיס<sup>2</sup>: (ז) הבה

אוליד ית לוט: כח ומית הרן על אפי תרח  
 אבוהי בארע ילדותיה באורא דכסדאי:  
 כט ונסיב אברם ונחור להון נשין שום אתת  
 אברם שרי ושום אתת נחור מלכה בת הרן  
 אבוהא דמלכה ואבוהא דיסקה: ל וחות שרי  
 עקרה לית לה ולד: לא ודבר תרח ית אברם  
 בריה וית לוט בר הרן בר בריה וית שרי  
 פלתיא אתת אברם בריה ונפקו עמהון  
 מאורא דכסדאי למיזל לארעא דנגען ואתו  
 עד הרן ויתיבו תמן: לב והווי יומי תרח מאתן  
 וחמש שנין ומית תרח בחרן: פ פ פ

הוליד את-אברם את-נחור ואת-הרן והרן הוליד את-לוט:  
 כח וימת הרן על-פני תרח אביו בארץ מולדתו באור פשרים:  
 [מפמיר] כט ויקח אברם ונחור להם נשים שם אשת-אברם שרי  
 ושם אשת-נחור מלכה בת-הרן אבי-מלכה ואבי יסקה:  
 ל ותהי שרי עקרה אין לה ולד: לא ויקח תרח את-אברם בנו  
 ואת-לוט בן-הרן בן-בנו ואת שרי פלתו אשת אברם בנו  
 ויצאו אתם מאור פשרים ללכת ארצה כנען ויבאו עד-חרן  
 וישבו שם: לב ויהיו ימי-תרח חמש שנים ומאתים שנה וימת  
 תרח בחרן\*: פ פ פ

קנ"ג פסוקים, בצלא"ל סימן. אב"י יסכ"ה לו"ט סימן.

\*ראה פירוש רש"י ד"ה בחרן. להלכה, יש כמה חילוקי דעות בענין זה. ראה מנחת שי כאן, משנת אברהם שער הנו"ן כד:טזיז, חומש שי למורא כאן. ובלקו"ש חט"ו ע' 423, הערה 10: "כדאי להחזיר עטרה ליושנה ולהדפיס כן בחומשים שלנו... ואם מפני שלא להכניס במחלוקת - הרי גם בבהעלותך - מחלוקת ישנה באופן הסימנים". וראה גם לקו"ש חט"ו ע' 63, ובהערות 1-2.

#### רש"י

משל אצרים אני, השליכוהו לכבשן האש ונשרף, וזהו אור כשדים. ומנחם פירש, אור, בקעה, וכן באורים כבדו ה'<sup>2</sup>, וכן מאורת לפעוני'<sup>3</sup>, כל חור וזקק עמוק קרוי אור: (כט) יסבה. זו שרה, על שם שסוכה צרוח הקודש, ושהכל סוכין ציפיה, (ס"א כמו שנאמר ויראו אותה שרי פרעה). ועוד יסכה לשון

(כח) על פני תרח אביו. בחיי אביו, ומדרש אגדה<sup>1</sup>, יש אומרים שעל ידי אביו מת, שקבל תרח על אצרים בנו לפני נמרוד, על שכתת את נלמיו, והשליכו לכבשן האש, והרן יושב ואומר בלבו, אם אצרים נו"ח, אני משלו, ואם נמרוד נו"ח, אני משלו, וכשני"ל אצרים אמרו לו להרן משל מי אתה, אמר להם הרן

🌀 DESCENDANTS OF TERACH 🌀

- 11:27 **T**hese are the offspring of Terach:  
 Terach fathered Avram, Nachor, and Haran.  
 Haran fathered Lot. <sup>28</sup> Haran died during the lifetime of his father Terach, in the land of his birth, Ur Kasdim.
- MAFTIR <sup>29</sup> Avram and Nachor took themselves wives. The name of Avram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nachor's wife was Milcah, the daughter of Haran, who was the father of Milcah and Yiskah (=Sarai).
- <sup>30</sup> Sarai was barren, she had no child.
- <sup>31</sup> Terach took Avram his son, Lot—the son of Haran, his grandson—and Sarai—his daughter-in-law, the wife of Avram his son—and they (Terach and Avram) went out with them (Lot and Sarai) from Ur Kasdim to go to the land of Cana'an. They reached as far as Charan and settled there.
- <sup>32</sup> Terach lived a total of two hundred and five years. Terach died in Charan.

THE HAFTARAH FOR NOACH IS ON PAGE 371. THE HAFTARAH FOR ROSH CHODESH IS ON PAGE 396.

Maftir: Rosh Chodesh—p. 403.

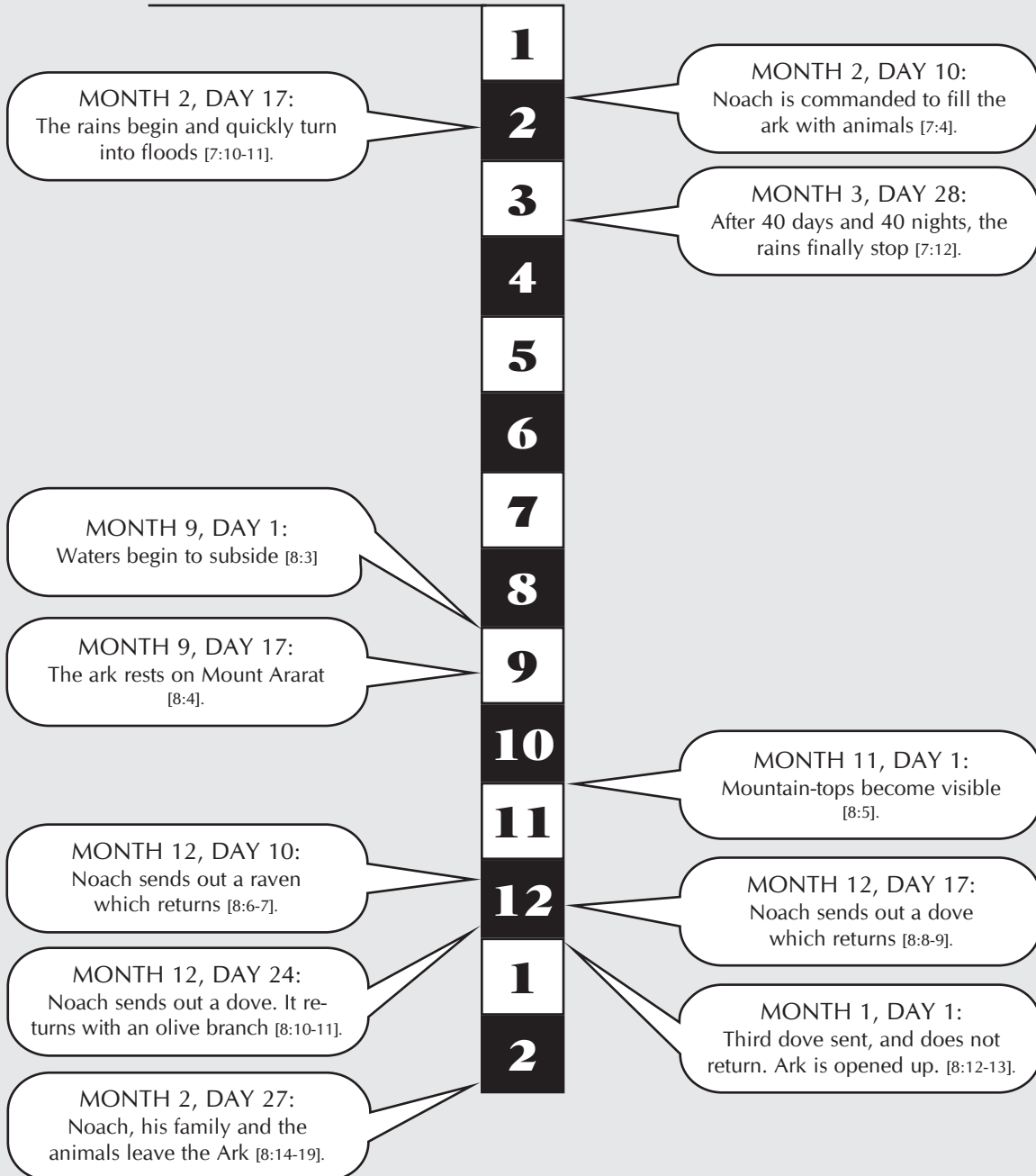
רש"י

מיתתו של תרח ליציאתו של אברהם, שלא יבא הדבר מפורסם לכל ויאמרו לא קיים אברהם את כבוד אביו, שהניחו זקן והלך לו, לפיכך קראו הכתוב מת, (ס"א ועוד) שהרשעים אף בחייהם קרוים מתים, והלדיקים אף במיתתן קרוים חיים, שנאמר וצניחו בן יהוידע בן איש חי: בחרן. הגו"ן הפוכה, לומר לך עד אברהם חרון אף של מקום: חסלת פרשת נח

נסיבות, כמו שרש לשון שררה: (לא) ויצאו אתם. וילאו תרח ואברהם עם לוט ושרי: (לב) וימת תרח בחרן. לאחר שיאל אברהם מחרן ואל לחרן כנען והיה שם יותר מששים שנה, שהרי כתיב ואברהם בן חמש שנים ושבעים שנה צלאתו מחרן, ותרח בן שבעים שנה היה כשנולד אברהם, הרי קמ"ה לתרח כשיאל אברהם מחרן, עדיין נשארו משנותיו הרבה, ולמה הקדים הכתוב

# 🌀 CHRONOLOGY OF THE FLOOD 🌀

## 600TH YEAR OF NOACH'S LIFE



# parshas Lech Lecha

פרשת לך לך

## 🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

The Rebbe Rashab, Rabbi Shalom Dov Ber of Lubavitch, once said:

*“Bereishis is a joyous Parsha, even though its end is not too pleasant. Noach is all about the flood, though it has a joyous ending with the birth of Avraham our father. Lech Lecha however is a truly joyous week. Every day of the week we live with Avraham our father, who was the first person to dedicate his life to spreading Godliness in the world. And Avraham’s trait of self-sacrifice has since been inherited by all Jews.”*

This begs the question: If *Bereishis* had ended a few verses earlier, it would have been an entirely joyous *sedra*, since its “not too pleasant” parts would have been included in the more somber *Parshas Noach*. Similarly, *Parshas Noach* could have ended before the birth of Avraham, keeping its content more uniform. Why is the Torah arranged so that the first two *parshiyos* contain contradictory themes, and only *Parshas Lech Lecha* is the first “truly joyous week”?

**B**ereishis describes the work of God; *Noach*, the efforts of man; and *Lech Lecha*, the cooperation of man (Avraham) and God.

Therefore, *Bereishis* ends with the birth of Noach, and that “*Noach found favor in the eyes of God*,” since neither of these events required any effort from Noach; they were both the work of God.

*Noach* ends with the birth of Avraham and his efforts to come close to God. But since God had not yet communicated with Avraham, these details were included in *Parshas Noach*, which speaks of man’s efforts.

Only in *Parshas Lech Lecha* do we begin to read of the convergence between God and His creations. For only when God spoke to Avraham for the first time, at the beginning of our *Parsha*, did the era of human-Divine cooperation begin. This communication to Avraham was the precursor of Sinaitic revelation, which would witness the development of this “cooperation” into a coherent system of 613 *mitzvos*.

God told Avraham to “Go away (*Lech Lecha*)” from all his prior value systems—“*from your land, your birthplace etc.*” This new era of cooperation required a totally fresh approach: the willingness to progress beyond that which man can achieve through his own efforts (the theme of *Parshas Noach*), so that he can become a “partner” with God in enacting the Divine plan of creation.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 83ff.)

א וַיֹּאמֶר יי לְאַבְרָם אֵינִיל לְךָ מֵאַרְצְךָ וּמִלְדוֹתֶיךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ לָרֶעָא דִּי אַחְוַיְנֶךָ: ב וְאַעֲבֹדִינְךָ לְעַם סְנִי וְאַבְרָכִינְךָ וְאַרְבִּי שְׂמֹךְ וְתִהְיֶיךָ מְבָרֵךְ: ג וְאַבְרָךְ מְבָרֵךְ וּמְלַטְטֵךְ אֵילוּם וְיִתְבָּרְכוּן בְּדִילְךָ כָּל יִרְעֵית אֶרֶעָא: ד וְאַזֵּל אַבְרָם כְּמֵא דִּי מְלִיל עֵמִיחָ יי וְאַזֵּל עֵמִיחָ לֹט וְאַבְרָם בֵּר שִׁבְעִין וַחֲמִשׁ שָׁנָיו בְּמִפְקֵיה מִחָרָן: ה וּדְבַר אַבְרָם ית שְׂרִי אֶתְתִּיחָ וְיֵת לֹט בֵּר אַחְוַי וְיֵת כָּל קְנִינְהוֹן דִּי קְנֹו וְיֵת נַפְשָׁתָא דְשַׁעֲבִידוּ לְאוּרִיטָא בְּחָרָן וּנְפָקוּ לְמִיזֵל לְאַרְעָא דְכְּנַעַן וְאַתּוּ לְאַרְעָא דְכְּנַעַן: ו וְעֵבֶר

יב א וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-אַבְרָם לְךָ-לְךָ מֵאַרְצְךָ וּמִמְּלֹכְדֶיךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲרָאָךְ: ב וְאַעֲשֶׂךָ לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל וְאַבְרָכְךָ וְאַגְדִּלָּהּ שְׂמֹךְ וְהָיָה בְּרָכָה: ג וְאַבְרָכָה מְבָרֵכְךָ וּמְקַלְלְךָ אָאֵר וְנִבְרָכוּ בְךָ כָּל מְשַׁפְּחַת הָאָדָמָה: ד וְיִלְךָ אַבְרָם בְּאֶשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֵלָיו יְהוָה וְיִלְךָ אִתּוֹ לֹט וְאַבְרָם בֶּן-חֲמִשׁ שָׁנָיִם וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה בְּצֵאתוֹ מִחָרָן: ה וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָם אֶת-שְׂרֵי אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת-לֹט בֶּן-אָחִיו וְאֶת-כָּל-רְכוּשׁוֹ אֲשֶׁר רָכְשׁוּ וְאֶת-הַנַּפְשׁ אֲשֶׁר-עָשׂוּ בְּחָרָן וַיֵּצְאוּ לְלֶכֶת אֶרְצָה כְּנַעַן וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶרְצָה כְּנַעַן:

דש"י

חותמין זכולן, תלמוד לומר והיה צרכה, כך חותמין ולא זהם: מארצך. והלא כבר ילא משם עם אביו וזא עד לחרן, הלא כך אמר לו, התרחק עוד משם ולא מבית אביך: אשר אראך. לא גלה לו הארץ מיד, כדי לחצבה בעיניו, ולתת לו שכר על כל דבור ודבור. כיוצא בו את בןך את יחידך אשר הוצאת את יצחק<sup>3</sup>, כיוצא בו על אחד ההרים אשר אומר אליך<sup>4</sup>, כיוצא בו וקרא עליה את הקריאה אשר אנכי דובר אליך<sup>5</sup>: (ג) ונברכו בך. יש אגדות רבות. וזה פשוטו, אדם אומר לבנו תהא כאברהם, וכן כל ונצרכו כך שבמקרא, וזה מוכיח, כך יצרך ישראל לאמר ישומך אלהים כאפרים וכמנשה<sup>6</sup>: (ה) אשר עשו בחרן. שהכניסן תחת כנפי השכינה, אברהם מגייר את האנשים ושרה מגיירת הנשים, ומעלה עליהם הכחוצ כאילו עשאוהם (לכך

(ה) לך לך. להנחתך ולטובתך. ושם אעשך לגוי גדול וכאן אי אתה זוכה לבנים. ועוד שאודיע טבעך בעולם: (ב) ואעשך לגוי גדול. לפי שהדרך גורמת לשלשה דברים, ממעטת פריה ורביה, ממעטת את הממון, וממעטת את השם, לכך הוצק לשלשה צרכות הללו, שהצטיחו על הבנים ועל הממון ועל השם (ס"א) וזהו ואגדלה שמך הריני מוסיף אות על שמך שעד עכשיו שמך אצרכם מכאן ואילך אצרכם, ואצרכם עולה רמ"ח כנגד איצריו של אדם. צרש"י (ישן): ואברכך. צממון, צ"ר<sup>1</sup>: והיה ברובה. הצרכות נחונות צידך, עד עכשיו היו צידי, צרכתי לאדם ונה, ומעכשיו אתה תצרך את אשר תחפון, צ"ר<sup>2</sup>. דבר אחר ואעשך לגוי גדול, זהו שאומרים אלהי אברהם, ואצרכך, זהו שאומרים אלהי יצחק, ואגדלה שמך, זהו שאומרים אלהי יעקב, יכול יהיו

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● When did God tell Avraham to “Go away... from your land... to the land which I will show you”? (v. 1)

IBN EZRA: At the end of *Parshas Noach*, we read, “Terach took Avram his son, Lot...and Sarai...and they went out... from Ur Kasdim to go to the land of Canaan” (11:31). Obviously, God’s command here in *Parshas Lech Lecha* to “Go... to the land which I will show you,” must have occurred prior to their departure, recorded earlier in *Parshas Noach*. This does not pose a difficulty because the Torah was not written in chronological order (11:31).

RAMBAN: Terach left Ur Kasdim with his family, not due to a command from God, but rather to flee from danger. Terach was terrified of King Nimrod, who had killed his son Haran and attempted to kill Avraham too.

Our verse here in *Parshas Lech Lecha* is thus the first time that Avraham was commanded to go to the land of Canaan. (11:28).

RASHI: God told Avraham to, “Go away... from your land,” but

surely he had already gone out of there with his father and come as far as Charan (see 11:31)? Rather, God was saying to him, “Distance yourself even more from there and leave your father’s house.”

● God said, “Go...to the land which I will show you.” Why did He not tell him where to go? (v. 1)

RASHI: God did not reveal the land to him immediately, in order to make it dear in Avraham’s eyes and to give him reward for every statement [about the land].

OHR HACHAYIM: God *did* tell him where to go, but the Torah does not relate this detail, since it is self-understood.

ABARBANEL: God didn’t want others to follow Avraham, so He didn’t inform him of his destination.

BA’AL HATURIM: The word אֲרָאָךְ (“I will show you”) has the same numerical value as the word בְּעִנְיָיִם (“in clouds”). This hints to the fact that Avraham was guided by clouds to the appropriate land.

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 AVRAHAM’S DEPARTURE (v. 1-5)

The Torah states, “Avram took Sarai, his wife, and Lot, his brother’s son, all the possessions which they had acquired... they departed, heading for the land of Canaan. They arrived at the land of Canaan” (v. 5).

A number of points require clarification here:

a.) Obviously, the fact that “they arrived at the land of Canaan,” indicates that they “departed, heading for the land of Canaan.” Why did

the Torah repeat this detail? If we were just told “they arrived at the land of Canaan,” we would have realized that this was their destination to start with.

b.) Avraham and his family had *already* begun heading for Canaan a while earlier, as we read at the end of *Parshas Noach*, “Terach took Avram his son, Lot...and Sarai...and they went out... from Ur Kasdim to go to the land of Canaan” (11:31). Thus, the only point that is added here in *Parshas*

## 🕎 AVRAM'S 3RD TEST: LEAVING HIS HOME 🕎

**I2** **G**od said to Avram, “Go (further) away—for your (own benefit)—from your land, your birthplace and your father’s house, to the land which I will show you. <sup>2</sup> (There), I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you (with money). I will make your name great (by adding a letter to it), and you will (have the power of) blessing (other people). <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you. I will curse (any person) that curses you. All the families of the earth will bless (their children to be like) you.”

<sup>4</sup> Avram left, as God had told him, and Lot went with him.

Avram was seventy-five years old when he left Charan.

<sup>5</sup> Avram took Sarai, his wife, and Lot, his brother’s son, all the possessions which they had acquired, and the people they had (converted) in Charan, and they departed, heading for the land of Cana’an.

They arrived at the land of Cana’an.

### TORAS MENACHEM

Lech Lecha is, “they arrived at the land of Cana’an.” Why are we told again here, “they departed, heading for the land of Cana’an” (v. 5)?

c.) God told Avraham, and not Terach, to, “go away from your land” (v. 1). Why then did Terach go out, “from Ur Kasdim to go to the land of Cana’an”? (11:31)

d.) Finally, why does *Rashi*—who aims to explain every problem at the literal level—fail to address the above points?

#### THE EXPLANATION: TWO DISTINCT JOURNEYS

On the verse, “Haran died during the lifetime of his father Terach” (11:28), *Rashi* writes:

“The Midrash teaches us that he died on account of his father. For Terach complained to Nimrod that Avraham had crushed his idols, so Nimrod cast Avraham into a fiery furnace. Haran sat and thought,

“If Avraham is victorious, I am on his side, and if Nimrod is victorious, I am on his side.” When Avraham was saved, they said to Haran, “Whose side are you on?” Haran said to them, “I am on Avraham’s side!” They cast him into the fiery furnace and he was burned.”

Having described these events in detail, *Rashi* considered it unnecessary to explain why “Terach took Avram his son... and they went out... from Ur Kasdim to go to the land of Cana’an,” since he was quite obviously fleeing from Nimrod. How could Terach possibly remain in a country whose king had killed one of his sons, and almost tried to kill the other? [c.f. **Ramban**].

The reason why Terach headed for Cana’an in particular is also self-understood, since Terach was a descendant of Sheim (see above 11:10-26), and *Rashi* writes that the land of Cana’an “fell into Sheim’s share when Noach apportioned the land to his sons” (*Rashi* to 12:6).

### 🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

#### AVRAHAM'S 1ST & 2ND TESTS

**T**he *Mishnah* states that Avraham was tried by ten tests (*Avos* 5:3).

First, Nimrod sought to kill him because of his belief in the One God, which forced Avraham into hiding for 13 years. Secondly, on refusing to bow down to an idol, Avraham was thrown into the fire by Nimrod, only to be saved by a miracle.

Why is there no mention of these two tests in the written Torah? Surely, they were truly remarkable acts of courage?

A person’s connection to God can be based on either *rationalization* or *revelation*. If a person’s worship is essentially rational, it is bound by human limitations. A person who serves God based on Divine revelation enjoys an *unlimited* form of worship, since the parameters are *determined by God*, who is unlimited. For this reason, Judaism is based on the latter approach.

Consequently, Avraham’s first two tests were omitted from the written Torah—the most fundamental text of Judaism—since they preceded God’s first *revelation* to Avraham, the system on which Judaism is primarily based.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 47ff.)

### 🕎 The Last Word 🕎

**T**he practical message within the opening of our *Parsha* is:

לך לך—Usually translated as “Go for yourself,” it could also be rendered as “go to yourself.” Reveal your true identity as a Jew—you are a child of Avraham. To do this:

מֵאֶרֶץ—“from your land.” Go away from your worldliness, from your physical desires.

וּמִמּוֹלֶדְתְּךָ—“from your birthplace.” Do not do *mitzvos* by rote, as a habitual routine which you were brought up to follow.

וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ—“from your father’s house.” In Chasidic thought, *wisdom* is referred to as “father.” In this verse, the “father” refers to the wisdom of the *Evil Inclination*. The Torah tells us: Go away from your “father”! Don’t be a “wise guy” when it comes to *mitzvos*. Don’t rationalize them away.

And through all of the above, we come:

אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֶרְאֶה—“to the land which I will show you.” God will lead us to, and reveal to us true spirituality, God’s supernal “land.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 2, p. 659)

אֲבָרָם בְּאַרְעָא עַד אֲתֵר שְׂכָם עַד מִישַׁר מוֹרָה וּבְנֵעֲנָא בְּכַן בְּאַרְעָא: וְאִתְגַּלִּי יִי לְאַבְרָם וְאָמַר לְבְנֵיךָ אֲתֵן יַת אֲרֻעָא הָדָא וּבְנָא תַמָּן מִדְּבַחָא קָדָם יִי דְאִתְגַּלִּי לִיה: ה וְאִסְתַּלַּק מִתַּמָּן לְטוֹרָא מִמְדִּנְהָ לְבֵית אֵל וּפְרַסִּיהָ לְמִשְׁכְּנֵיהָ בֵּית אֵל מִמְעַרְבָא וְעַי מִמְדִּינְהָא וּבְנָא תַמָּן מִדְּבַחָא קָדָם יִי וְצִלִּי בְשֵׁמָא דִּי: ט וְנִטְל אֲבָרָם אֲזִיל וְנִטְלִיל לְדְרוֹמָא: וְהוּהוּ כִּפְנָא בְּאַרְעָא וּנְחַת אֲבָרָם לְמַצְרַיִם לְאַתְוֹתְבָא תַמָּן אַרְי תְּקִיף כִּפְנָא בְּאַרְעָא: יא וְהוּהוּ כַּד קָרִיב לְמִיעַל לְמַצְרַיִם וְאָמַר לְשָׂרֵי אֲתַתִּיהָ הָא כְּעֵן יְדַעִית אַרְי אֲתַתָּא שְׂפִירַת חִיוּן אַתָּה: יב וַיְהִי כַּד (אַרְי) יַחְוּוּן יַתִּיד מְצַרְאֵי וַיִּמְרוּן אֲתַתִּיהָ דָא וַיִּקְטְלוּן יַתִּי וַיִּתִּיד יִקְטְמוּן: יג אֲמַרִי כְּעֵן אֲחַתִּי אֲתָּ בְדִיל דְּיִטֵּב לִי

וַיַּעֲבֹר אֲבָרָם בְּאַרְצֵי עַד מְקוֹם שְׂכָם עַד אֵלּוֹן מוֹרָה וְהִכְנִיעֵנִי אֲזִי בְּאַרְצֵי: וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה אֶל-אַבְרָם וַיֹּאמֶר לְזִרְעֶךָ אֲתֵן אֶת-הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת וַיְבִן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה הַנְּרָאָה אֵלָיו: ה וַיַּעֲתֶק מִשָּׁם הָהָרָה מִקְדָּם לְבֵית-אֵל וַיֵּט אֶהְלֵה בֵּית-אֵל מִיָּם וְהָעֵי מִקְדָּם וַיְבִן-שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה וַיִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה: ט וַיִּסַּע אֲבָרָם הַלֹּךְ וְנִסּוּעַ הַנְּנַבָּה: פ וַיְהִי רָעַב בְּאַרְצֵי וַיֵּרֶד אֲבָרָם מִצְרַיִמָּה לְגוֹר שָׁם כִּי-כָבֵד הָרָעַב בְּאַרְצֵי: יא וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר הִקְרִיב לְבּוֹא מִצְרַיִמָּה וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-שָׂרֵי אֲשֶׁתּוֹ הִנְהִנָּא יְדַעִיתִי כִּי אִשָּׁה יִפְתַּח-מְרָאָה אֲתָּ: יב וְהָיָה כִּי-יֵרְאוּ אֹתְךָ הַמִּצְרַיִם וְאָמְרוּ אֲשֶׁתּוֹ זֹאת וְהִרְגוּ אֹתִי וְאֹתְךָ יַחְוִי: יג אֲמַרִי-נָא אֲחַתִּי

דש"י

נמלאת בית אל צמערצו הוא שנאמר בית אל מים: אהלה. אהלה כתיב, צתחלה נטע את אהל אשתו, ואחר כך את שלו. ז"ר: ויבן שם מזבח. נתנצח שעחידיו ציוו להכשל שם על עון עכו, והתפלל שם עליהם: (ט) הלוך ונסוע. לפרקים יושב כאן חדש או יותר ונוסע משם, ונוטה אהלו במקום אחר, וכל מסעיו הנגזר, ללכת לדרומה של ארץ ישראל, והוא ללד ירושלים שהיא בחלקו של יהודה, שנטלו צדומומה של ארץ ישראל הר המוריה שהיא נחלתו. צ"ר: (י) רעב בארץ. צדומומה הארץ ללד, לנסותו אם יבררר אחר דבריו של הקצ"ב, שאמר לו ללכת אל ארץ כנען, ועכשיו משיאו ללאת ממנה: (יא) הנה נא ידעתי. מדרש אגדה, עד עכשיו לא הכיר צב, מתוך לניעות שצשיהם, ועכשיו הכיר צב על ידי מעשה. דבר

כתיב אשר עשו). ופשוטו של מקרא, עצדים ושפחות שקנו להם, כמו עשה את כל הכבוד הזה (לשון קנין)<sup>1</sup>, וישראל עושה חיל<sup>2</sup>, לשון קונה וכונס: (ו) ויעבור אברם בארץ. נכנס לחוכה: עד מקום שכם. להתפלל על בני יעקב כשיבאו להלחם בשכם: אלון מורה. הוא שכם, הראהו הר גריזים ובר עיבל ששם קבלו ישראל שבועת החורב: והבנעני אז בארץ. היה הולך וכובש את ארץ ישראל מזרעו של שם, שצחלקו של שם נפלה כשחלק נח את הארץ לצניו, שנאמר ומלכי דק מלך שלם<sup>3</sup>, לפיכך ויאמר אל אצמם לזרעך אתן את הארץ הזאת, עתיד אני להחזירה לצניך שהם מזרעו של שם: (ז) ויבן שם מזבח. על צדומומה ועל צדומומה ארץ ישראל: (ח) ויעתק משם. אהלו: מקדם לבית אל. צמזרחה של בית אל,

## CLASSIC QUESTIONS

## ● Why did Avraham build two altars? (v. 7, 8)

**RASHI:** The first Altar in Shechem was to thank God for the good news about his descendants and the Land of Israel. Avraham built the

second Altar in Beis Ail because he prophesied that his descendants were destined to stumble there because of the sin of Achan, so he prayed for them there (See *Sparks of Chasidus*).

## TORAS MENACHEM

Nevertheless, the Torah relates that Terach and his family never arrived at their destination, but rather, when, “they reached as far as Charan,” they changed their plans and, “settled there,” instead (11:31).

Since their original plan to go to Canaan had been abandoned, it follows that Avraham’s trip to Canaan in our *Parsha* was a totally new event. Therefore, the Torah writes *again* that, “Avram took Sarai, his wife, and Lot, his brother’s son, all the possessions... and they departed” (v. 5).

And, since their last trip to Canaan was aborted, the Torah informs us that this time, they completed their journey and, “they arrived at the land of Canaan.”

## HOW DID AVRAHAM KNOW WHERE TO GO?

One further problem is that God told Avraham to go, “to the land which I will show you,” without specifying any particular place. How did Avraham know to go to Canaan?

**Ohr haChayim** answers that God did tell Avraham where to go, but the Torah fails to relate this fact. However: a.) At the literal level of Torah

interpretation we cannot presume that events occurred unless they are recorded explicitly.

b.) *Rashi* makes no mention of this point. We therefore require a solution that is either i.) So obvious that *Rashi* did not need to mention it or, ii.) A solution indicated by an earlier comment of *Rashi*.

The answer to this problem can be found in the above explanation that Terach headed for Canaan because it, “fell in Sheim’s share when Noah apportioned the land to his sons,” and Avraham’s father, Terach was a descendant of Sheim. Thus, in the absence of any specific directions from God—other than to “go (further) away... from your father’s house”—Avraham continued the family migration towards Canaan, which had previously stopped in Charan.

On reaching Canaan, Avraham did not stop traveling, since he received no sign that this was his final destination. Thus, we read that, “Avram travelled through the land” (v. 6).

However, on reaching Shechem, God appeared to Avraham, and He



<sup>6</sup> Avram traveled through the land, as far as the area of Shechem, (which is in) the plain of Moreh. At that time, the Cana'anites were in (the process of conquering) the land (from the descendants of Sheim). <sup>7</sup> God appeared to Avram, and He said, "I will give this land to your descendants!" (Avram) built an altar there to God, Who had appeared to him.

<sup>8</sup> He moved (his tent) from there to the mountain which is to the east of Beis Ail, where he pitched his (wife's tent first and then his own) tent. Beis Ail was to the west and Ai was to the east. He built an altar there to God, and he (prayed) in the Name of God.

<sup>9</sup> Avram traveled (periodically), always traveling southward (towards Jerusalem).

## 🌀 4TH & 5TH TESTS: FAMINE IN CANA'AN & CAPTURE OF SARAI 🌀

12:10 **T**here was a famine in the land (of Cana'an). Avram went down to Egypt to settle there temporarily, because the famine was severe in the land (of Cana'an). <sup>11</sup> Then, when he approached Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, "(Until now, I had not noticed but) now I realize that you are an attractive woman. <sup>12</sup> When the Egyptians will see you, they will say, 'It's his wife!' They will kill me and keep you alive!

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● How did Avraham pitch his tent? (v. 8)

**RASHI:** According to the masoretic text, the term "his tent" is written אהלה, which can be read אהלה, "her tent." I.e. first he pitched his wife's tent and afterwards his own.

**SIFSEI CHACHAMIM:** How does *Rashi* know that Avraham erected his wife's tent before his own. Perhaps he put up his own tent first?

*Rashi's* words are based on the Talmud's statement that "a person should give more honor to his wife than to himself" (*Yevamos* 62b).

### TORAS MENACHEM

## 🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

### AVRAHAM'S THREE ALTARS

The Torah relates that Avraham built three altars, mentioned in verses 7 and 8, and later in 13:18. *Rashi* explains the reasons for Avraham's first two altars (see "Classic Questions" to v. 7-8). Why does he not explain the reason for Avraham's third altar?

The *Talmud* attributes three qualities to the Altar in the Holy Temple: i.) "It feeds," i.e. the world is sustained by the blessings which sacrifices bring about. ii.) "It wipes [away evil decrees]" and "atones" iii) "It endears the Jewish people to their Father [in heaven]." (*Kesubos* 10b and *Rashi* *ibid.*)

Perhaps it could be argued that Avraham's three altars pioneered these three qualities which the Altar in the Temple would later possess:

i.) Avraham's first altar was to thank God for blessing him, like the Altar in the Temple which "feeds" the world with blessings.

ii.) His second altar was to pray for his descendants who stumbled in sin, like the Altar in the Temple which wipes away evil decrees.

iii.) For Avraham's third altar *Rashi* writes nothing, since the third aspect of the Altar is that sacrifices are brought for no reason other than to endear the Jewish people to their Father in heaven, which is the purpose of every altar.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, pp. 36ff.)

said, "I will give *this land* to your descendants!" (v. 7). I.e. God "showed" the land to Avraham.

At that point, Avraham knew that this was the destination which God had in mind when He had said, "Go (further) away—for your (own benefit)—from your land, your birthplace and your father's house, to the land which I will *show* you."

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha* 5745)

#### 🌀 PROBLEMS WITH SIFSEI CHACHAMIM (v. 8)

**Sifsei Chachamim** writes that Avraham erected Sarah's tent before his own based on the Talmudic principle that "a person should give more honor to his wife than to himself" (*Yevamos* 62b).

This however is difficult to accept, because *Rashi's* commentary was written for a readership that includes a first-time student of *Chumash*. Clearly such a child would not yet have studied Tractate *Yevamos*, so how is he to understand *Rashi's* words here?

#### THE EXPLANATION

While *Rashi* did not expect his readership to have studied the entire Talmud, he did presume that even a child who is learning *Chumash* for the first time would have grown up in an observant Jewish home. For example, even before the child studies the Ten Commandments, *Rashi* expects him to be aware of the *mitzvah* of Shabbos, and the prohibition of stealing, since by growing up in an observant home the child would have naturally become familiar with these principles.

Likewise, *Rashi* presumed that even a small child would have observed in his own home the extent to which his father honors his mother. It will thus come as no surprise to him that Avraham pitched Sarah's tent before his own.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha* 5748)

בְּדִילָךְ וְתִתְקַנְּנָם נַפְשֵׁי בְּפִתְגָמֶיכִי: יד וְהָיָה כִּדְבַר  
עַל אַבְרָם לְמַצְרַיִם וְחֹזוּ מִצְרָאֵי יֵת אֶתְתָּא  
אַרְי שְׁפִירָא הֵיא לְחֻדָּא: טו וְחֹזוּ יֵתָה רַבְרָבִי  
פְרַעָה וְשִׁבְחוּ יֵתָה לְפְרַעָה וְאִדְבַרְתּ אֶתְתָּא  
לְבֵית פְרַעָה: טז וְלֹאֲבָרָם אוֹטִיב בְּדִילָה וְהָוּ  
לִיה עָאן וְתוֹרִין וְחֻמְרִין וְעִבְדִין וְאִמְהָן וְאִתְנָן  
וְגַמְלִין: יז וְאִתִּי יי עַל פְרַעָה מִכְתָּשִׁין  
רַבְרָבִין וְעַל אֲנֶשׁ בֵּיתִיהָ עַל עֵימֶק שְׂרֵי אֶתְתָּ  
אַבְרָם: יח וְקִרָא פְרַעָה לְאַבְרָם וְאָמַר מַה דָּא  
עִבְדָתְ לִי לְמָא לֹא חֹוִיתָא לִי אַרְי אֶתְתָּד  
הֵיא: יט לְמָא אֲמַרְתָּ אַחְתִּי הֵיא וְדִבְרִית יֵתָה  
לִי לְאִנְתִּי וְכַעַן הָא אֶתְתָּד דְבַר וְאִזִּיל:  
כ וּפְקַד עֲלוּהִי פְרַעָה גּוֹבְרִין וְאִלּוּיָאוּ יֵתִיהָ וְיֵת

אֶת לְמַעַן יֵיטֵב לִי בְעִבּוֹרְךָ וְחִיתָה נַפְשִׁי בְּגִלְלָךְ: (שנין יד וְיֵהִי  
כְּבּוֹא אַבְרָם מִצְרַיִמָה וַיִּרְאוּ הַמִּצְרַיִם אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה כִּי־יִפְהָ  
הִיא מְאֹד: טו וַיִּרְאוּ אֹתָהּ שְׂרֵי פְרַעָה וַיְהַלְלוּ אֹתָהּ אֶל־פְרַעָה  
וַתִּקַּח הָאִשָּׁה בֵּית פְרַעָה: טז וְלֹאֲבָרָם הֵיטֵיב בְּעִבּוֹרָה וַיְהִי־לּוֹ  
עֲאִן־וּבְקָר וְחֻמְרִים וְעִבְדִים וְשִׁפְחֹת וְאִתְנַת וְגַמְלִים: יז וַיִּנְגַע  
יְהוָה | אֶת־פְרַעָה נְגַעִים גְּדֹלִים וְאֶת־בֵּיתוֹ עַל־דְּבַר שְׂרֵי  
אִשְׁתְּ אַבְרָם: יח וַיִּקְרָא פְרַעָה לְאַבְרָם וַיֹּאמֶר מַה־זֹּאת עֲשִׂיתְ  
לִי לְמָה לְאִ־הַגְּדַתְ לִי כִי אֲשַׁתְּךָ הִוא: יט לְמָה אֲמַרְתְּ אַחְתִּי  
הִוא וְאִקַּח אֹתָהּ לִי לְאִשָּׁה וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה אֲשַׁתְּךָ קַח וְלָךְ: כ וַיִּצְוּ

כש"י

ועל ידי שתצטוו את המכס, פתחו וראו אותה: (טו) ויהללו אתה אל  
פרעה. כללוא ציויכס, לומר כגונה זו למלך: (טז) ולאברם היטיב. פרעה  
בעצורה: (יז) וינגע ה' וגו'. צמכת ראתן לקה, שהשתמיש קשה ל: ואת  
ביתו. כתרומו ועל אנש ביתיה (ומדרשו לרבות כותליו ועמודיו וכליו,  
כרש"י ישן): על דבר שרי. על פי דבורה, אומר מללך כך, וכוא מכס:  
(יט) קח ולך. לא כציוימלך שאמר לו הכה ארזי לפניך, אלא אמר לו לך ואל

אחר, מנהג העולם שעל ידי טורח הדרך אדם מתצוה, וזאת עמדה ציויפיה.  
ופשוטו של מקרא, הכה נא הגיע השעה שיש לדאוג על יפך, ודעתי זה ימים  
רבים כי יפת מראה את, ועכשיו אנו צאים צין אנשים שחורים ומכוערים,  
אחיכה של כושים, ולא כורגלו צאשה יפה. ודומה לו, הכה נא ארזי סורו נא:  
(יג) למען ייטב לי בעבורך. יתנו לי מתנות: (יד) ויהי כבוא אברם  
מצרימה. היה לו לומר כבוא מצרימה, אלא למד שהטמין אותה ציויבה,

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● How could Avraham say that Sarah was his sister to save his own life, placing her at risk of being captured? (v. 13)

**RAMBAN:** Avraham unintentionally committed a great sin by bringing his righteous wife into a compromising situation in an attempt to save his own life. He should have trusted in God that He would save them. In fact, Avraham's departure from the land of Canaan to Egypt as a result of the famine was also a sin, since he should have trusted in God to save him from hunger. As a result of Avraham's mistake, the Egyptian exile was decreed on his descendants.

**ABARBANEL:** Avraham was willing to sacrifice his life to save Sarah from being abducted. However he realized that if he had been identified as Sarah's husband they would have killed him and abducted her *in any case*. Therefore, allowing himself to be killed for her sake would have been totally futile.

Avraham's actions here could be compared to Aharon's sanctioning of the golden calf, for Aharon knew that if he had objected to the calf the Jewish people would have killed him in any case—so what was to be gained?

**BE'ER MAYIM CHAYIM:** Avraham did not tell the Egyptians that Sarah was not married. Rather, he said that her husband had not accompanied them. Consequently, Avraham was not suggesting in any way to the Egyptians that Sarah was available for marriage. He simply saw no benefit in revealing to them that he was her husband.

**GUR ARYEH:** Avraham did not expect that Sarah would be abducted at all. He thought that the aristocrats of Egypt would offer him gifts in an attempt to win his favor, and so Avraham would give Sarah to

them. He was sure that they would not be thugs that would take her by force. He did not expect the king himself to abduct her.

**TIFERES YEHONASON:** The Patriarchs only had the halachic status of Jews while they remained in the Land of Israel. Thus, when Avraham and Sarah left the Land of Israel, entering Egypt, they left the jurisdiction of Jewish Law and were bound only by Noachide law. According to Noachide Law, a man can divorce his wife simply by disassociating with her. Therefore, Avraham disassociated from his wife by saying, "Please say that you are my sister," which was effectively a divorce. In this way, if Sarah were taken, her association with another man would not be sinful.

**ZOHAR:** Rabbi Elazar said, "The verse, 'Please say that you are my sister,' is problematic. Would Avraham, who feared God and was loved by God, say that about his wife for his own benefit?"

He answered: "Even though Avraham feared God, he did not rely on his own merit. He did not ask God (to save her) in his own merit, but rather, in hers. [He knew that it was] through her merit that he would accumulate wealth from the other nations, since a person acquires money in the merit of his wife... Avraham went to Egypt to obtain food from the other nations in her merit. He relied on her merit that he would not be hurt and she would not be touched, and because of this he was not afraid to say, 'she is my sister'" (III 52b).

#### ● How did Avraham expect the Egyptians to "favor him" by saying that Sarah was his sister? (v. 13)

**RADAK:** He hoped that they would favor him and not kill him.

**RASHI:** He thought that they would favor him by giving him gifts.

SECOND  
READING

<sup>13</sup> “Please say that you are my sister, so that they will favor me because of you, and my life will be spared thanks to you.”

<sup>14</sup> And so it happened, that when Avram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the lady was very attractive. <sup>15</sup> Pharaoh’s ministers saw her, and they praised her (among themselves that she was fit for) Pharaoh.

The lady was taken to the house of Pharaoh. <sup>16</sup> He (bestowed gifts) on Avram because of her. So, (Avram) had flocks, cattle, donkeys, menservants, maidservants, she-donkeys and camels.

<sup>17</sup> God afflicted Pharaoh and his household with a severe disease because Sarai, Avram’s wife (told an angel to do so).

<sup>18</sup> Pharaoh summoned Avram, and he said, “What have you done to me? Why didn’t you tell me that she was your wife? <sup>19</sup> Why did you say, ‘She is my sister,’ (causing) me to take her as a wife for myself? Look! here is your wife. Take (her) and go!”

<sup>20</sup> Pharaoh gave men orders (to protect Avram). They escorted him and his wife and all their possessions.

## TORAS MENACHEM

### 🔍 WHY DID AVRAHAM WORRY ABOUT GIFTS? (v. 13)

Rashi writes that when Avraham said, “Please say that you are my sister, so that they will favor me because of you,” he was hoping “that they would favor him by giving him gifts” (v. 13).

This statement seems, at first glance, to be quite bizarre. We are reading here of an extremely tense moment for Avraham and Sarah when they are forced to postpone God’s request to remain in the Land of Israel and make a detour into a corrupt and murderous Egypt. So severe is the situation that Avraham deems it appropriate to put his wife at risk of being abducted, by claiming that she is his sister (as the commentators discuss at length—see ‘Classic Questions’). And yet, in the midst of this life-threatening quandary, Rashi informs us that Avraham was worrying about receiving gifts! How could he be concerned with such comparative trivialities as receiving gifts from the Egyptians, when his life and that of his wife were in grave danger?

In fact, the **Zohar** seems to place a similar stress as Rashi, explaining that “through her merit he would accumulate wealth from the other nations, since a person acquires money in the merit of his wife.” But surely, financial gain was not the main issue of concern here?

#### THE EXPLANATION

According to **Ramban**, when Avraham left the land of Cana’an—where God had explicitly told him to go—due to famine, he committed “a sin, since he should have trusted in God to save him from hunger.”

Rashi however makes it clear that, in his opinion, Avraham’s journey to Egypt was with Divine consent. Rashi writes that the “famine in the land” (v. 10), was, “in that land alone, to test him, whether he would question the words of God, Who commanded him to go to the land of Cana’an, and now He was forcing him to leave it.”

Thus, according to Rashi, Avraham’s trust in God remained perfect, and it would have been *incorrect* for him to remain in Cana’an at a time of famine, and simply rely on God to provide food.

At first glance, a person’s efforts to save himself in a time of personal disaster could be perceived as a lack of trust in God. For, if the person genuinely believed that God would save him, then why would he do anything at all to be saved?

In truth, however, the Torah requires a person to pursue acts of self-

preservation. These acts do not in any way detract from the person’s trust in God, since he believes with complete faith that his salvation will come from God. It is only that, for whatever reason, God in His wisdom has commanded man to make a natural “channel” through which the Divine blessing of salvation will come. A failure to create this physical channel, if it is available to the person, would be a transgression of the command “not to rely on a miracle” (*Shabbos* 32a). The result would be that either: a.) The person’s salvation may not come, and he will be answerable for taking his life in vain, or, b.) If God does save him through a miracle, his merits are diminished (*ibid*), and he is considered to be a “nuisance to God” (see *Sha’ar haGemul*).

(If, however, there are no means of natural self-preservation available to the person, he should not despair, for this is a clear sign that God has “exempted” him from making a “physical channel.”)

Thus, in our case, Avraham was correct to leave Cana’an and pursue a “physical channel” by which he might obtain food, to save his family’s life.

Furthermore, God had promised Avraham, “I will bless you” (12:2), on which Rashi comments “with money.” Thus, we can presume that Avraham was constantly vigilant of a possible “physical channel” through which God’s blessing of wealth might occur.

### 🔥 Sparks of Chasidus 🔥

Chasidic thought explains that Avraham and Sarah’s descent into Egypt was a precursor of the Egyptian exile:

- Avraham’s escape from Egypt as a wealthy man opened the spiritual channels of redemption that enabled his children to leave Egypt laden with gold and silver
- Similarly, Sarah’s extreme caution against becoming defiled by Pharaoh later empowered her descendants, the Jewish women in Egypt, with the strength to remain faithful to their families.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 61.)

אתתיה ונת כל די ליה א וסליק אברם  
ממצרים הוא ואתתיה וכל די ליה ולוט  
עמיה לדרומא: ב ואברם תקיף לחדא  
בבערא בכספא ובדהבא: ג ואזל למטלגוהי  
מדרומא ועד בית אל עד אתרא דפרסיה תמן  
למשכניה בקדמיתא בין בית אל ובין עי:  
ד לאתר מדבחא די עבד תמן בקדמיתא  
וצלי תמן אברם בשמא די: ה ואף ללוט  
דאזיל עם אברם הוה עאן ותורין ומשכנין:  
ו ולא סוברת יתהון ארעא למתב כחדא ארי  
הוה קנינהון סני ולא יכילו למתב כחדא:  
ז והות מצותא בין רעי בעיריה דאברם ובין  
רעי בעיריה דלוט וקנינאה ופרואה כון  
יתיב בארעא: ח ואמר אברם ללוט לא כען  
תהי מצותא בינא ובינד ובין רעותי ובין  
רעותך ארי גברין אחין אנתנו: ט הלא כל  
ארעא קדמך אתפרש כען מלותי אם את  
לצפונא ואנא לדרומא ואם את לדרומא  
ואנא לצפונא: י וקף לוט ית עינוהי ותוא ית  
כל מישר ירדנא ארי כליה בית שקיא קדם  
חבלות יי ית סדום ונת עמורה כננתא די  
בארעא דמצרים מטי לצוער: יא ובחר ליה  
לוט ית כל מישר ירדנא ונטל לוט מלקדמין

עליו פרעה אנשים וישלחו אתו ואת-אשתו ואת-כל-  
אשר-לו: יג א ויעל אברם ממצרים הוא ואתו וכל-אשר-  
לו ולוט עמו הנגבה: ב ואברם כבד מאד במקנה בכסף  
ובזהב: ג וילך למסעיו מנגב ועד-בית-אל עד-המקום אשר-  
היה שם אהלה בתחלה בין בית-אל ובין העי: ד אל-מקום  
המוצת אשר-עשה שם בראשנה ויקרא שם אברם בשם  
יהוה: [שלישין] ה וגם-ללוט ההלך את-אברם היה צאן-ונקר  
ואהלים: ו ולא-נשא אתם הארץ לשבת יחדו כי-היה  
רבושם רב ולא יכלו לשבת יחדו: ז והיה-ליב בין רעי  
מקנה-אברם ובין רעי מקנה-לוט והכנעני והפרזי אז ישב  
בארץ: ח ויאמר אברם אל-לוט אל-נא תהי מריבה ביני  
ובינד ובין רעי ובין רעיד כי-אנשים אחים אנתנו: ט הלא  
כל-הארץ לפניך הפרד נא מעלי אם-השמאל ואימנה  
ואם-הימין ואשמאילה: י וישא-לוט את-עיניו וירא את-כל-  
כפר הירדן כי בלה משקה לפני | שחת יהוה את-סדם  
ואת-עמרה כגן-יהוה בארץ מצרים באכה צער: יא ויבחר-  
לו לוט את כל-כפר הירדן ויסע לוט מקדם ויפרדו איש

כ"ט

זמסעות וצגזולי הארץ: (ב) כבד מאד. טעון משאות: (ג) וילך למסעיו.  
כשחזר ממצרים לארץ כנען, היה הולך ולן בצאכמיות שלן צבס בהליכתו  
למצרים, למדך דרך ארץ שלא ישכח אדם מאכסניא שלו. דבר אחר, בחזרתו  
פרע הכפותיו: מנגב. ארץ מצרים דרומה של ארץ כנען: (ד) אשר עשה  
שם בראשונה ויקרא שם. ואשר קרא שם אברם צבס כ'. וגם יש לומר

תעמוד, שהמצרים טופי זמכ הס, שנאמר וזרמת סוכים זרמתס! (כ) ויצו  
עליו. על אודותיו, לשלחו ולשמרו: וישלחו. כתרגומו ולוויאו: (ח) ויעל  
אברם וגו' הנגבה. לצא לדרומה של ארץ ישראל, כמו שאמר למעלה הלוך  
ונסוע כנגבה, להר המוריה, ומכל מקום כשהוא הולך ממצרים לארץ כנען,  
מדרום לנפון הוא מהלך, שארץ מצרים דרומה של ארץ ישראל, כמו שמוכיח

#### TORAS MENACHEM

Consequently, when he was forced to go to Egypt he perceived it, not as the retraction of God's promise to make him wealthy, but rather, the possible fulfillment of God's blessing. For perhaps, Avraham's attempt to protect his life by presenting Sarah as his sister would actually bring him wealth.

In fact, this is precisely what occurred. The Torah states that, "He (bestowed gifts) on Avram (because of) her. So, he had flocks, cattle, donkeys, menservants, maidservants, she-donkeys and camels" (v. 16).

And, as the *Zohar* states, Avraham did not place Sarah at any unnecessary risk at all, since he was aware of her great merits which would surely stand her in good stead. To the contrary, it was her merit which ensured Avraham's survival, and her merit proved to be the means by which Avraham received God's blessing of wealth, since "a person acquires money in the merit of his wife."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, pp. 38-39; vol. 15, pp. 486-7)

#### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

**B**itachon—trust in God—is not an *effortless* emotion, which leads a person to sit back and wait presumptuously for God's blessings. To the contrary, a person who truly trusts in God knows that, in order to merit God's blessings, he must *actively* arouse feelings of total dependency on God—a realization that his salvation can only come from the Almighty, and not from "luck," "statistics" or any other imaginary source of good fortune.

This message was encapsulated in the Chasidic aphorism, "Think good, and it will be good." I.e. through *actively* arousing feelings of total dependency on God—"think good"—a person elevates himself to be a suitable receptacle for God's blessings—"it will be good."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 36, p. 4ff.)

## AVRAM AND LOT PART COMPANY

**I3** Avram went up from Egypt to the south (of the Land of Israel)—both he, his wife and all their possessions, together with Lot. <sup>2</sup> Avram was heavily (laden) with cattle, silver, and gold. <sup>3</sup> He journeyed (retracing the same route and the same lodgings), from the south (i.e. Egypt), passing Beis Ail, until reaching the place where his tent had been previously, between Beis Ail and Ai, <sup>4</sup> at the site of the altar which he had made there to start with. Avram (prayed) there in the name of God.

**THIRD READING** <sup>5</sup> Lot, who went with Avram, also had flocks and cattle and tents. <sup>6</sup> The (pasture of the) land was insufficient for them to live together, for they possessed many (cattle that needed to graze), so they failed to live together. <sup>7</sup> A quarrel erupted between the herdsmen of Avram's cattle (who rebuked) the herdsmen of Lot's cattle (for grazing on other people's property. Lot's herdsman argued that Lot would inherit the whole land one day in any case, but in truth, it was theft because) the Canaanites and the Perizites were inhabiting the land at that time.

<sup>8</sup> Avram said to Lot, "Please don't let there be a quarrel between me and you, between my herdsmen and your herdsmen, for we are relatives. <sup>9</sup> Don't you have the whole land in front of you (to choose from)? Please part from me. If you go left, I will go (not too far) to the right (to support you), and if you go right, I will go (not too far) to the left (to support you)."

<sup>10</sup> Lot surveyed (the land), and he saw that the entire plain of the Jordan until Tzo'ar, which was well irrigated—before God destroyed Sodom and Amorah—(with trees) like the garden of God, and (fertile) like the land of Egypt. <sup>11</sup> So, Lot chose for himself the entire plain of the Jordan.

רש"י

לך למגן ולעזר, וסוף דבר הולך לו, שנאמר וישמע אברם כי נשבע אחיו וגו': ואימנה. חימין את עלמיו, כמו ואשמאילה אשמאיל את עלמיו. ואם תאמר היה לו לינקד ואיימינה, כך מנינו במקום אחר את על לבמין, ואין נקוד להימין: (י) כי בלה משקה. ארץ נחלי מים: לפני שחת ה' את סדום ואת עמורה. היה אותו מישור: בגן ה'. לאילנות: בארץ מצרים. לזרעים: באבה צער. עד לער. ומדרש אגדה דורשו לגנאי, על שהיו שטופי זמה צחר לו לוט בשכונתם. במסכת הוריות: (יא) כבר. מישור כתרומה: מקדם. נסע מאלל אברם (למזרח), והלך לו למערבו של אברם, נמלא נוסע ממזרח למערב. ומדרש אגדה הסיע עלמו מקדמונו של עולם, אמר, אי אפשי

ויקרא שם עכשיו נשם ה': (ה) ההלך את אברם. מי גרם שהיה לו זאת, הליכתו עם אברם: (ו) ולא נשא אותם. לא היתה יכולה להספיק מרעה למקניהם, ולשון קצר הוא, ונריך להוסיף עליו, כמו ולא נשא אותם מרעה הארץ, לפיכך כתב ולא נשא בלשון זכר: (ז) ויהי ריב. לפי שהיו רועיו של לוט רשעים, ומרעים צהמתם בשדות אחרים, ורועי אברם מוכיחים אותם על הגזל, והם אומרים נתנה הארץ לאברם ולו אין יורש, ולוט יורשו, ואין זה גזל, והכתוב אומר והכנעני והפריזי אז יושב בארץ, ולא זכה זה אברם עדיין: (ח) אנשים אחים. קרובים. ומדרש אגדה דומין בקלסתר פנים: (ט) אם השמאל ואימנה. ככל אשר תשב (אשכ) לא תרחק ממך, ואעמוד

TORAS MENACHEM

### Sparks of Chasidus

Lot was a wicked man. His corrupt attitude led Avraham to plead, "Please part from me" (v. 9). When they parted company Lot said, "I care neither for Avram nor for his God" (Rashi to v. 11). And, of all places, Lot chose to settle in Sodom, whose inhabitants "were perverted and corrupt to God, to the extreme" (v. 13, below).

This begs the question: Why is Lot's story recorded at all in Parshas Lech Lecha? The theme of this Parsha is the *mesiras nefesh* (self-sacrifice) and devoted service of Avraham to God. So why is it of any relevance to read of Lot's corrupt actions and heretical beliefs?

The Torah tells us Lot's story, not to inform us of his wickedness *per se*, but rather, to teach us about the extent of Avraham's influence on him. Avraham's goal was that even a wicked person such as Lot should come to appreciate God, and have self-sacrifice to

observe a *mitzvah*. So, even when it became necessary for Avraham to send Lot away, Avraham still kept a strong connection with him, saying, "Wherever you live, I will not distance myself from you, and I will stand by you as a protector and a helper" (Rashi to v. 9). Avraham's commitment to Lot was so strong that he was willing to risk his life to fight a war against the four kings to save Lot (see chapter 14, below), and it was this that finally convinced Lot of the greatness of Avraham and the truth of his teachings.

Thus, we find that even though Lot remained wicked and dwelled in Sodom, he was nevertheless inspired by Avraham's self-sacrifice, to the extent that he too risked his own life in order to welcome guests (see chapter 19, below).

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha* 5750)

וְאֶת־פָּרְשׁוֹ גִבּוֹר מְלֹחַת אַחֲוָהּ: יב אֲבָרָם יְתִיב בְּאַרְעָא דְכְנָעַן וְלוֹט יְתִיב בְּקִרְוֵי מִישְׁרָא וּפְרָם עַד סְדוּם: יג וְאַנְשֵׁי דְסְדוּם בִּישׁוּן בְּמִמּוֹנְהוֹן וְתִיבִין בְּנוֹתְהוֹן קָדָם יי לְחֵדָא: יד וְיֵי אֲמַר לְאַבְרָם בְּתֵר דְאַתְפָּרֵשׁ לוֹט מְנִיָּה זְקוּף כְּעַן עֵינְךָ וְחַזִּי מִן אֶתְרָא דְאֵת תַּמָּן לְצַפּוֹנָא וְלְדְרוּמָא וְלְמִדִּינְהָא וְלְמַעְרָבָא: טו אַרְי יַת כָּל אֲרַעָא דִּי אֵת חַזִּי לְךָ אֶתְנִינְהָ וְלִבְנִיךָ עַד עֲלָמָא: טז וְאַשּׁוּי יַת בְּנִיךָ סְנִיאִין כְּעַפְרָא דְאַרְעָא כְּמָא דְלִית אֲפִשֵׁר לְגִבּוֹר לְמִמְנֵי יַת עַפְרָא דְאַרְעָא אַף בְּנִיךָ לֹא יִתְמַנּוּן: יז קוּם הַלִּיד בְּאַרְעָא לְאַרְכָּהּ וּלְפּוֹתֶיהָ אַרְי לְךָ אֶתְנִינְהָ: יח וּפְרָם אֲבָרָם וְאַתָּא וְיִתִיב בְּמִישְׁרֵי מִמְרָא דִּי בְּחִבְרוֹן וּבְנָא תַּמָּן מְדַבְּחָא קָדָם יי: א וְהוּהּ בְּיוֹמֵי אֲמַרְפֵּל מְלָכָא דְבָבֶל אַרְיִוּךָ מְלָכָא דְאַלְסַר כְּדִרְלַעוּמָר מְלָכָא דְעִילָם וְתַדְעַל מְלָכָא דְעַמְמִי: ב סְדְרוּ (עֲבָדוּ) קִרְבָּא עִם בְּרַע מְלָכָא דְסְדוּם וְעִם בְּרַשַׁע מְלָכָא דְעַמּוּרָה שְׁנָאֵב מְלָכָא דְאַדְמָה וְשְׁמַאֲבַר מְלָכָא דְצַבּוּיִם וּמְלָכָא דְבַלַּע הִיא צוּעַר: ג כָּל אַלְיִן אֶתְכַנְשׁוּ לְמִישְׁרַת חֲקִלְיָא הוּא אֶתֵר יִמָּא דְמִלְחָא: ד תַּרְתֵּי עֶשְׂרֵי שְׁנִין פְּלַחוּ יַת כְּדִרְלַעוּמָר וְתַלַּת עֶשְׂרֵי שְׁנִין מְרָדוּ: ה וּבְאַרְבַּעַ עֶשְׂרֵה שְׁנִין אֶתָּא כְּדִרְלַעוּמָר וּמְלַכְיָא דְעַמְיָה וּמַחוּ יַת גְּבַרְיָא דִּי בְּעֶשְׂתֵּרֹת קַרְנִים וְיַת תְּקִיפִיָּא דְבַהֲמַתָּא וְיַת אִימְתַנִּי דְבִשְׁוֹה קַרְיָתִים: ו וְיַת הוֹרָאֵי דִּי כְּטוֹרְהוֹן דְשַׁעִיר עַד מִישְׁרַת פְּאָרְן דְסַמִּיד עַל מְדַבְּרָא: ז וְתַבּוּ וְאַתּוּ לְמִישְׁרַת פְּלוּג דִּינָא הִיא

מֵעַל אֲחִיו: יב אֲבָרָם יֹשֵׁב בְּאַרְצֵי-כְנָעַן וְלוֹט יֹשֵׁב בְּעָרֵי הַכְּפָר וַיֵּאָהֵל עַד-סְדוּם: יג וְאַנְשֵׁי סְדוּם רָעִים וְחַטָּאִים לַיהוָה מְאֹד: יד וַיהוָה אָמַר אֶל-אַבְרָם אַחֲרֵי הַפָּרֶד־לוֹט מֵעִמּוֹ שָׂא נָא עֵינֶיךָ וּרְאֵה מִן-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-אַתָּה שָׂם צַפְנָה וְנִגְבְּהָ וְקַדְמָה וַיִּמָּה: טו כִּי אֶת-כָּל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר-אַתָּה רֹאֶה לְךָ אֶתְנַנֶּה וְלִזְרַעְךָ עַד-עוֹלָם: טז וְשִׁמְתִי אֶת-זֶרְעֶךָ כְּעַפְרַת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר | אִם-יִוָּכַל אִישׁ לְמַנּוֹת אֶת-עַפְרַת הָאָרֶץ \*גַּם-זֶרְעֶךָ יִמָּנֶה: יז קוּם הִתְהַלֵּךְ בְּאַרְצֵי לְאַרְכָּהּ וּלְרַחְבֶּיהָ כִּי לְךָ אֶתְנַנֶּה: יח וַיֵּאָהֵל אֲבָרָם וַיָּבֵא וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּאַלְנֵי מִמְרָא אֲשֶׁר בְּחִבְרוֹן וַיְבַן-שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה: פ יד א וּרְבִיעִין וַיְהִי בְיַמֵּי אֲמַרְפֵּל מֶלֶךְ-שֹׁנַעַר אַרְיִוּךָ מֶלֶךְ אֶלְסַר כְּדִרְלַעוּמָר מֶלֶךְ עִילָם וְתַדְעַל מֶלֶךְ גּוֹיִם: ג עֲשׂוּ מִלְחָמָה אֶת-בְּרַע מֶלֶךְ סְדוּם וְאֶת-בְּרַשַׁע מֶלֶךְ עַמּוּרָה שְׁנָאֵב | מֶלֶךְ אַדְמָה וְשְׁמַאֲבַר מֶלֶךְ צַבּוּיִם [קַן צַבּוּיִם] וּמֶלֶךְ בַּלַּע הִיא-צוּעַר: ג כָּל-אַלֶּה חֲבָרוּ אֶל-עַמְקַת הַשָּׂדִים הוּא יָם הַמֶּלַח: ד שְׁתַּיִם עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה עָבְדוּ אֶת-כְּדִרְלַעוּמָר וּשְׁלֹשׁ-עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה מְרָדוּ: ה וּבְאַרְבַּעַ עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה בָּא כְּדִרְלַעוּמָר וְהַמְּלָכִים אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶת-רִפְאִים בְּעֶשְׂתֵּרֹת קַרְנִים וְאֶת-הַזּוּזִים בָּהֶם וְאֵת הָאִימִים בְּשׁוֹה קַרְיָתִים: ו וְאֶת-הַחֲרֵי בְּהַרְרָם שַׁעִיר עַד אֵיל פְּאָרְן אֲשֶׁר עַל-הַמְּדַבֵּר: ז וַיֵּשְׁבוּ וַיָּבֵאוּ אֶל-עֵין

\*גם זרעה

דש"י

(6) אמרפל. הוא נמרוד, שאמר לאברהם פול לתוך כנען האש: מלך גוים. מקום יש ששמו גוים. על שם שנתקצלו שמה מכמה חומות ומקומות, והמליכו איש עליהם, ושמו חדעל: (3) ברע. רע לשמים ורע לזריות: ברשע. שנתעלה ברשעו: שנאב. שואל אצו שצממס: שמאבר. שם אבר לעוף ולקפון, ולמרוד צהקצ"ה: בלע. שם העור: (ג) עמק השדים. כך שמו, על שם שהיו צו שדות הרצה. ומדרשו אגדה יש הרצה: הוא ים המלח.

לא צארכס ולא צאלכיו: (צ) ויאהל. נטע אהלים לרועיו ולמקנהו עד סדום: (יג) ואנשי סדום רעים. ואף על פי כן לא נמנע לוט מלשכון עמהם. ורבותינו למדו מכאן שם רשעים ירקצ: רעים. בגופם: וחטאים. בממונס: לה' מאד. יודעים רכונס ומתכוונים למרוד צו: (יד) אחרי הפרד לוט. כל זמן שהרשע עמו, היה הדבור פורש ממנו: (טז) אשר אם יוכל איש. כשם שאי אפשר לעפר להמנות, כך זרעך לא ימנה: (יח) ממרא. שם אדם:

## CLASSIC QUESTIONS

## ● Who was Amrafel (אמרפל)? (v. 1)

**RASHI:** Amrafel was actually Nimrod, who said (אמר) to Avram: fall (פול) into the fiery furnace [אמר and פול = אמרפל].

**TALMUD:** This was a dispute between Rav and Shmuel. Rav said that his real name was Nimrod, but he was also called Amrafel because he said (אמר) [the command that caused] Avram to fall (פול) into the fiery furnace. Shmuel said his real name was Amrafel, but he was also called Nimrod (נמרוד) because he caused the whole world to rebel (שהמרוד) against God (*Eruvin* 53a).

**MAHARSHA:** In *Parshas Noach*, the Torah states, "Cush fathered Nimrod. He started to be a rebel in the land" (10:8). I.e. he was the first person to fight wars.

Since the war between the four kings and the five kings is the first war that is recorded in the Torah (and the first which occurred in the world), it is logical to presume that the Torah is now filling in more information about what was stated earlier. Therefore, the two names Nimrod and Amrafel must be referring to the same person, one being his real name and one an acquired name (*ibid.*).

Lot traveled from the east (westward), and they parted from one another.

<sup>12</sup> Avram dwelt in the land of Cana'an. Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain, and he pitched tent(s) for his (shepherds and cattle) as far as Sodom.

<sup>13</sup> The people of Sodom were (intentionally) perverted and corrupt to God, to the extreme.

## 🌀 GOD PROMISES LAND TO AVRAM 🌀

13:14 **G**od said to Avram, after Lot had parted from him, “Please raise your eyes and, from the place where you are positioned, look northward, southward, eastward and westward. <sup>15</sup> Because, I will give all the land that you see to you and to your descendants for eternity. <sup>16</sup> I will make your descendants like the soil of the earth. (Just as) a man is (not) able to count the soil (particles) of the earth, so too your descendants will (not) be (able to be) counted. <sup>17</sup> Get up and walk through the land, across its length and its breadth, for I am going to give it to you.”

<sup>18</sup> Avram pitched his tent (with Sarai, since he had now been promised children), and he settled in the plain of Mamre, which is in Chevron. He built an altar to God there.

## 🌀 WAR BETWEEN FIVE KINGS & FOUR KINGS 🌀

**I4** **I**t happened in the days of Amrafel King of Shinar, Aryoch King of Elasar, Kedarla'omer King of Ailam, and Tidal King of Goyim, <sup>2</sup> that they waged war with Bera King of Sodom, Birsha King of Amorah, Shinav King of Admah, Shemaiver King of Tzevoyim, and the King of Bela, which is (now) Tzo'ar. <sup>3</sup> These (five latter kings) had joined (Kedarla'omer) in the valley of Sidim, which is (now) the Dead Sea. <sup>4</sup> For twelve years they served Kedarla'omer, and for thirteen years they rebelled.

FOURTH  
READING

<sup>5</sup> In the fourteenth year (of their rebellion), Kedarla'omer came, with the (three) kings who were his allies, and they struck the Refa'im in Ashteros-Karnayim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Aimim in Shavei-Kiryasayim, <sup>6</sup> and the Chorites at their mountain of Se'ir, until the plain of Paran, which is alongside the desert. <sup>7</sup> They returned and came to Ein Mishpat, which is (now) Kadeish, and they smote the entire

רש"י

פארן. כתרגומו מישור. ואומר אני, שאין איל לשון מישור, אלא מישור של פארן איל שמו, ושל ממרא אלוני שמו, ושל ירדן כנר שמו, ושל שטים אצל שמו, אצל השטים, וכן צעל גד צעל שמו, וכולם מתורגמין מישור, וכל אחד שמו עליו: על המדבר. אלא המדבר, כמו ועליו מטה מנשה: (ז) עין משפט הוא קדש. על שם העתיד, שעתידין משה ואהרן להשפט שם על עסקי אותו

לאחר זמן נמשך היס לתוכו ונעשה ים המלח. ומדע אגדה חומר, שנחזקו הלוויים סביבותיו ונמשכו יאורים לתוכו: (ד) שתיים עשרה שנה עברו. חמשה מלכים הללו את כדלעומר: (ה) ובארבע עשרה שנה. למרדן צא כדלעומר, לפי שהוא היה צעל המעשה, נכנס צעזעי הקורה: והמלכים. אלה שלשה מלכים: הזוזים. הם זמזומים: (ו) בהררם. צהר שלהם: איל

## TORAS MENACHEM

### 🌀 THE DISPUTE OF RAV AND SHMUEL (v. 1)

The dispute of Rav and Shmuel is a reflection of their different approaches to Torah study. Rav preferred the straightforward study of *Mishnah*, where ideas are self-explanatory and can be taken at face-value (see *Bava Basra* 145b). Shmuel, on the other hand, favored the complex analytical approach of *pilpul*, where arguments are refuted, honed and fine-tuned through focused application of the mind (see *Chagigah* 10a).

Similarly, Rav tended to interpret a verse at face value, translating the words of scripture literally; whereas Shmuel would analyze each statement of the Torah more logically, adapting the interpretation to ensure contextual consistency.

With this in mind, we can explain their differing opinions on our verse:

When Rav read the verse in *Parshas Noach*, “Kush fathered Nimrod. He

started to be a rebel in the land” (10:8), he took the Torah’s words at face value, i.e. that Nimrod was the actual name of Kush’s son. On reading our verse, Rav discovered that Nimrod could also be referred to as Amrafel, so he explained how the name Amrafel was the Torah’s alternative-descriptive name: “he was also called Amrafel because he said to Avraham: fall into the fiery furnace.”

Shmuel, however, rejected this “face value” approach and analyzed the verses according to their context. Thus, when the Torah stated in *Parshas Noach*, “Kush fathered Nimrod. He started to be a rebel in the land,” Shmuel was struck by the following problem:

The preceding section of *Parshas Noach* lists, at length, the descendants of Noach. When listing all the other names, the Torah tells us nothing about the personalities involved. Only when we read about Nimrod does the Torah interject and say, “He started to be a rebel (against God) in the

רָקַם וּמָחוּ ית כָּל תְּקַל עֲמַלְקָאָה וְאַף ית  
אֲמֹרָאָה דִּיתִיב בְּעֵין גְּדִי: ה וּנְפַק מִלְכָּא  
דְּסָדוּם וּמִלְכָּא דְעִמּוּרָה וּמִלְכָּא דְאֲדָמָה  
וּמִלְכָּא דְצִבּוּיִם וּמִלְכָּא דְבַלַע הִיא צוּעֵר  
וְסִדְרוּ עֲמָהוּן קִרְבָּא בְּמִישַׁר תְּקַלְיָא: ט עם (ית)  
כְּדָרְלָעוּמָר מִלְכָּא דְעֵילָם וְתִדְעַל מִלְכָּא  
דְעַמְמִי וְאֲמַרְפַּל מִלְכָּא דְכִבְל וְאֲרִיזָה מִלְכָּא  
דְאַלְסָר אֲרַבְעָה מִלְכִּין לְקַבִּיל חַמְשָׁא:  
י וּמִישַׁר תְּקַלְיָא בִּירִין בִּירִין מִסְקֵן חִימְרָא  
וְעַרְקוּ מִלְכָּא דְסָדוּם וְעִמּוּרָה וּנְפָלוּ תַמָּן  
וְדִאֲשַׁתְּאֲרוּ לְמוֹרָא עֲרָקוּ: יא וּשְׁבוּ ית כָּל  
קִנְיָנָא דְסָדוּם וְעִמּוּרָה וְיִת כָּל מִיכְלָהוּן וְאֲלוּ:  
יב וּשְׁבוּ ית לוֹט וְיִת קִנְיָנִיה בַּר אַחוּהִי  
דְאַבְרָם וְאֲלוּ וְהוּא יְתִיב בְּסָדוּם: יג וְאַתָּא  
מְשִׁיבָא וְחִי לְאַבְרָם עֲבָרָאָה וְהוּא שְׂרִי  
בְּמִישַׁרִי מִמְרָא אֲמֹרָאָה אַחוּהִי דְאַשְׁכּוּל  
וְאַחוּהִי דְעַנָּר וְאֲנֹן אֲנָשִׁי קִימִיה דְאַבְרָם:  
יד וְשָׁמַע אֲבָרָם אֲרִי אֲשַׁתְּבִי אַחוּהִי וְזָרִי ית  
עוֹלִימוּהִי יְלִידֵי בֵיתָהּ תֵּלֵת מָאָה וְתַמְנֵי עֶסֶר  
וְרַבָּה עַד דָּן: טו וְאַתְּפִלַּג עֲלֵיהוּן לִילְיָא הוּא

מְשִׁפֵּט הוּא קָדַשׁ וַיְכֹו אֶת־כָּל־שָׂדֶה הָעֵמֶלְקִי וַיְנַם  
אֶת־הָאֲמֹרִי הַיֹּשֵׁב בְּחֻצְצַן תְּמֹר: ה וַיֵּצֵא מִלְכָּד־סָדָם וּמִלְכָּד  
עִמּוּרָה וּמִלְכָּד אֲדָמָה וּמִלְכָּד צִבּוּיִם וְכִי צִבּוּיִם וּמִלְכָּד בַּלַּע הוּא־צוּעֵר  
וַיַּעֲרְבוּ אֹתָם מִלְחָמָה בְּעַמְקֵי הַשָּׂדִים: ט אֵת כְּדָרְלָעוּמָר מִלְכָּד  
עֵילָם וְתִדְעַל מִלְכָּד גּוֹיִם וְאֲמַרְפַּל מִלְכָּד שְׁנַעֲר וְאֲרִיזָה מִלְכָּד  
אֲלָסָר אֲרַבְעָה מִלְכִּים אֶת־הַחֲמִשָּׁה: י וְעַמְקֵי הַשָּׂדִים בְּאַרְת  
בְּאַרְת חֲמָר וַיִּנְסוּ מִלְכָּד־סָדָם וְעִמּוּרָה וַיִּפְּלוּ־שָׁמָּה וְהַנְּשֹׂאֲרִים  
הָרָה נָסוּ: יא וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־כָּל־רֶכֶשׁ סָדָם וְעִמּוּרָה וְאֶת־כָּל־  
אֲכָלָם וַיִּלְכּוּ: יב וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־לוֹט וְאֶת־רַכְשׁוֹ בְּיַד־אָחִי אֲבָרָם  
וַיִּלְכּוּ וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב בְּסָדָם: יג וַיָּבֵא הַפְּלִיט וַיִּגַּד לְאַבְרָם הָעֵבְרִי  
וְהוּא שָׁכֵן בְּאֵלְנֵי מִמְרָא הָאֲמֹרִי אָחִי אֲשַׁכַּל וְאָחִי עֲנָר וְהֵם  
בְּעַלֵי בְרִית־אֲבָרָם: יד וַיִּשְׁמַע אֲבָרָם כִּי נִשְׁבָּה אָחִיו וַיִּרְק  
אֶת־הַנִּיכּוֹי יְלִידֵי בֵיתוֹ שְׂמֹנֶה עָשָׂר וּשְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת וַיִּרְדֹּף  
עַד־דָּן: טו וַיַּחֲלַק עֲלֵיהֶם | לִילָה הוּא וְעַבְדָּיו וַיִּבְּסוּ וַיִּרְדְּפֵם

כ"ש"י

שיצתו צדום: (יג) ויבא הפליט. לפי פשוטו זה עוג שפלט מן המלחמה, והוא שכתוב כי רק עוג נשאר מיתר הרפאים, וזכו נשאר, שלא הרגוהו אמרפל וחזיריו כשהכו הרפאים בעשרות קרנים. תנחומא<sup>3</sup>. ומדרש בראשית רב<sup>4</sup>, זה עוג שפלט מדור המבול, וזכו מיתר הרפאים, שנאמר הגפלים היו בארץ וגו', ומתכוין שיכרג אצרכם וישא את שרכ: העברי. שצא מעבר הנהר<sup>5</sup>: בעלי ברית אברם. שכרתו עמו ברית (ס"א), דבר אחר שהשיאו לו ענה על המילה כמו שפורש במקום אחר: (יד) וירק. כתרגומו וזריו, וכן והריקותי אחריכם חרצ<sup>6</sup>, אזדיין חרצני עליכם, וכן אריק חרצ<sup>7</sup>, וכן וחרק חנית וסגור<sup>8</sup>: חגיביו. חניכו כתיב (ס"א קרי), זה אליעזר שהנכו למנות, והוא לשון התחלת כניסת האדם או כלי לאומנות שהוא עתיד לעמוד צה, וכן חנוך לנער<sup>9</sup>, חנוכת המצח<sup>10</sup>, חנוכת הבית<sup>11</sup>, וצלע"ז קורין לו אינלניי"ר: שמונה עשר וגו'. רבותינו אמרו<sup>12</sup> אליעזר לצדו היה, והוא מנין גימטריא של שמו: עד דן. שם טש כחו, שראה שחידוין צניו להעמיד שם עגל<sup>13</sup>: (טו) ויחלק עליהם. לפי פשוטו סרס המקרא, ויחלק הוא ועבדיו עליהם לילה, כדרך הרודפים שמתפלגים אחר הנרדפים כשזורחים זה לכאן וזה לכאן: לילה. כלומר אחר שחשכה לא נמנע מלרדפם. ומדרש אגדה,

העין, והם מי מריבה. ואונקלוס תרגמו כפשוטו, מקום שהיו צני המדינה מתקבלים שם לכל משפט: שדה העמלקי. עדיין לא נולד עמלק, ונקרא על שם העתיד: בחצצן תמר. הוא עין גדי, מקרא מלא<sup>1</sup> ציבופשט: (ט) ארבעה מלכים וגו'. ואף על פי כן נלחו המועטים, להודיעך שגבורים היו, ואף על פי כן לא נמנע אצרכם מלרדוף אחריכם: (י) בארת בארת חמר. בארות הרבה היו שם, שנותלים משם אדמה לטיט של צנין. ומדרש אגדה, שהיה הטיט מוגבל צהם, ונעשה גם למלך סדום שינא משם, לפי שהיו באומות מקצתן שלא היו מאמינין שינאל אצרכם מאור כשדים מכשן האש, וכיון שינא זה מן החמר האמינו באצרכם למפרע<sup>2</sup>: הרה נסו. להר נסו. הרה כמו להר, כל תיבה שזרכה למ"ד בתחלתה הטיל לה ה"א בצופה. ויש חילוק צין הרה לההרה שה"א שצסוף התיבה עומדת במקום למ"ד שצראשה, אבל (ס"א זו) אינה עומדת במקום למ"ד, ונקודה (ס"א לנקוד) פת"ח תחתי, והרי הרה כמו להר, או כמו אל הר, ואינו מפרש לאיזה הר, אלא שכל אחד נס באשר מלא הר תחלה. וכשהוא נותן ה"א צראשה לכתוב ההרה או המדברה, פתרונו כמו אל ההר או כמו לההר (ס"א להר), ומשמע לאותו הר הידוע ומפורש צפרשה: (יז) והוא יושב בסדום. מי גרס לו זאת,

#### TORAS MENACHEM

land. He was a powerful trapper (of people's minds, turning them) against God. Therefore it is said (about rebellious people, that they are), 'Like Nimrod, a powerful trapper against God'" (ibid. 9-10). This sudden change of pattern troubled Shmuel. Why did the Torah only tell us about Nimrod's personality?

Shmuel came to a logical solution to this problem: In contrast to all the names that preceded his, Nimrod was not in fact this person's actual

name, but rather, a name which the Torah used to describe his personality. This explains why, after telling us that his "name" was Nimrod, the Torah digressed to tell us why he acquired this name: "because he caused the whole world to rebel (שְׁהִמְרִיד) against God."

Therefore, on reading our verse in *Parshas Lech Lecha*, Shmuel understood that Amrafel must have been Nimrod's real name, since we had only discovered his "acquired" name in *Parshas Noach*.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 16, pp. 4-5)



area (which was later to be inhabited by) the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who dwelt in Chatzetzon Tamar.

<sup>8</sup> The King of Sodom, the King of Amorah, the King of Admah, the King of Tzevoyim, and the King of Bela, which is (now) Tzo'ar, came forth, and they fought a battle in the valley of Sidim, <sup>9</sup> with Kedarla'omer King of Ailam, Tidal King of Goyim, Amrafel King of Shinar, and Aryoch King of Elasar, four kings against the five (and yet, the minority prevailed).

<sup>10</sup> The valley of Sidim had many clay mines. The kings of Sodom and Amorah fled and fell into them. The survivors fled to a mountain.

<sup>11</sup> The (four kings) took all the possessions of Sodom and Amorah, and all their food, and they left.

<sup>12</sup> (Since) he was residing in Sodom, they took Lot, the son of Avram's brother, and his possessions, and they left.

## 🌀 6TH TEST: AVRAM FIGHTS TO RESCUE LOT 🌀

14:13 **A** runaway came and informed Avram, the Hebrew. He was living in the plains of Mamre the Amorite—the brother of Eshkol and the brother of Aner, who had all made a covenant with Avram.

<sup>14</sup> When Avram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he armed three hundred and eighteen trained men who were born in his household, and he pursued them as far as Dan. <sup>15</sup> He and his servants divided themselves (to pursue the enemy) through the night, and smote them, and pursued them as far

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● What is the significance of “318 trained men”? (v. 14)

**RASHI:** Our Sages said that it was Eliezer alone, and the number 318 represents the numerical value (*gematria*) of his name.

**TARGUM YONASON:** Avraham picked Eliezer since he was Nimrod's son, who was as strong as all the 318 warriors put together.

**BACHAYE:** Does this mean to say that the 318 men which the Torah mentions did not really exist, and are merely an allusion to Eliezer? Surely, the verse must be taken literally? In fact, however, after Avraham and his 318 staff mobilized themselves for war, he dismissed any warrior not free of sin, since it is merit which wins a war and not numbers. The only remaining warriors were Avraham and Eliezer.

**GUR ARYEH:** There were definitely 318 warriors. *Rashi* informs us that the war was won *in the merit* of Eliezer and Avraham alone.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🌀 ELIEZER'S ROLE IN THE WAR (V. 14)

Since *Rashi* confined himself to explain scripture only at the literal level (*Rashi* to *Bereishis* 3:8) his comment here to verse 14 is difficult to understand. Are we to accept that, at the literal level, the soldiers were, in fact, “only one”—namely Eliezer—since the numerical value of his name equals 318? Surely this is a *totally non-literal* interpretation?

Admittedly, *Rashi* does write, “*Our sages said that it was Eliezer alone,*” indicating that this interpretation is not a purely literal one, but rather, a teaching of the sages. However, there must be some difficulty with the verse at the literal level which forced *Rashi* to cite this explanation.

Furthermore: a.) Avraham's victory against four powerful kings (who had already defeated five kings) with an army of only 318 men is an outstanding miracle in itself. What forced *Rashi* to add a *further* miracle, that the entire defeat was brought about by Eliezer alone?

b.) The Torah states explicitly, “*He and his servants (plural) divided themselves (to pursue the enemy) through the night*” (v. 15). So, how can *Rashi* write that “it was Eliezer alone”?

#### THE EXPLANATION

*Rashi* was troubled why the Torah describes Avraham's war in such extensive detail, “*He armed three hundred and eighteen trained men...he*

*pursued them as far as Dan. He and his servants divided themselves (to pursue the enemy) through the night, and smote them, and pursued them as far as Chovah (i.e. Dan), which is to the left of Damascus. He brought back all the possessions, etc.*” (v. 14-16). Why does the reader need to know all these details?

*Rashi* came to the conclusion that the Torah stated these specific details to stress an additional dimension to the magnitude of Avraham's miraculous victory.

In what respect was the miracle so great?

*Rashi* explains that the 318 men allude to a teaching which is not specifically recorded in the Torah, but was handed down by our Sages, that Eliezer alone secured the victory.

Of course, this does not mean that the 318 men were not present at all, since the Torah states explicitly that, “*He and his servants divided themselves*” (v. 15), and not merely “*Eliezer alone.*” Rather, *Rashi* wishes to teach us that Eliezer was *primarily responsible* for the victory. I.e. not that he led the army—for we can be sure that Avraham took this role—but rather that Eliezer (together with Avraham) secured the victory. (See also commentary to 15:2)

ועבדוהי ומחוננו ורדפינו עד חובה דמצפונא לדמשק: טו ואתיב ית כל קנינא ואף ית לוט בר אחוהי וקניניה אתיב ואף ית נשיא וית עמא: יז ונפק מלכא דסדום לקדמותיה בתר דתב מלממחי ית בדרלעומר וית מלכיא די עמיה למישר מפנא הוא אתר בית ריפא דמלכא: יח ומלכי צדק מלכא דירושלם אפיק לחם וחמר והוא משמש קדם אל עלאה: יט וברכיה ואמר בריך אברם קדם (ל)אל עלאה דקניניה שמיא וארעא: כ ובריד אל עלאה די מסר סנאך בידך ויהב ליה חד מן עשרא מבולא: כא ואמר מלכא דסדום לאברם הב לי נפשאתא וקנינא סב (דבר) לך: כב ואמר אברם למלכא דסדום ארמית ידי בצלו קדם יי אל עלאה דקניניה שמיא וארעא: כג אם מהוטא ועד ערקת מסנא ואם אסב מכל די לך ולא תימר אנא אעתיית ית אברם: כד בר מדאכלו עולמיא וחלק גבריא די אזלו עמי ענר אשכול וממרא אנון

עד-חובה אשר משמאל לדמשק: טו וישב את כל-הרכש וגם את-לוט אחיו ורכשו השיב וגם את-הנשים ואת-העם: יז ויצא מלך-סדום לקראתו אחרי שובו מהכות את-בדרלעומר ואת-המלכים אשר אתו אל-עמק שוה הוא עמק המלך: יח ומלכי-צדק מלך שלם הוציא לחם ויין והוא כהן לאל עליון: יט וברכהו ויאמר ברוך אברם לאל עליון קנה שמים וארץ: כ וברוך אל עליון אשר-מגן צריך בידך ויתן-לו מעשר מכל: (המישי) כא ויאמר מלך-סדום אל-אברם תן-לי הנפש והרכש קח-לך: כב ויאמר אברם אל-מלך סדום הרמתי ידי אל-יהוה אל עליון קנה שמים וארץ: כג אם-מחוט ועד שרוך-נעל ואם-אקה מכל-אשר-לך ולא תאמר אני העשרתי את-אברם: כד בלעדי רק אשר אכלו הנעלים וחלק האנשים אשר הלכו אתי ענר אשכול וממרא הם יקחו

כש"י

כח: (כא) תן לי הנפש. (הגופים מן) השבי שלי שהללתי, החזר לי הגופים לזכר: (כב) הרמתי ידי. לשון שבועה, מרים אני את ידי לאל עליון, וכן צי נשבעתי<sup>4</sup>, נשבע אני, וכן נחתי כסף השדה קח ממני<sup>5</sup>, נותן אני לך כסף השדה וקחתי ממני: (כג) אם מחוט ועד שרוך נעל. אטכז לעלמי מן השבי: ואם אקה מכל אשר לך. ואם תאמר לתת לי שכר מצית גניזך, לא אקה: ולא תאמר וגו'. שהקב"ה הצטייני לעשרתי, שנאמר ואזכרך וגו': (כד) הנערים. עבדי אשר הלכו אחי, ועוד ענר אשכול וממרא וגו', ואף על פי שעבדי נכנסו למלחמה, שנאמר הוא ועבדיו ויכס, וענר וחזיריו ישבו על הכלים לשמור, אפלו הכי הם יקחו חלקם, וממנו למד דוד, שאמר כחלק היורד למלחמה וכחלק היושב על הכלים יהיו וחלוק<sup>6</sup>, ולכך נאמר ויהי מהיום הוא ומעלה ושימה לחוק ולמשפט<sup>7</sup>, ולא נאמר והלאה, לפי שכבר ניתן

שחלק הלילה, וצחצחו הראשון נעשה לו נס, וחציו השני נשמר וזכר לו לחיות לילה של מזרים: עד חובה. אין מקום ששמו חובה, ודן קורא חובה, על שם עבודת אלילים שעתידה להיות שם: (יז) עמק שוה. כך שמו, ותרגומו למישר מפנא, פנוי מאילנות ומכל מכשול: עמק המלך. בית ריפא דמלכא, בית ריפא אחד, שהוא שלשים קנים, שהיה מיוחד למלך לחקק שם. ומדרש אגדה, עמק שבושו שם כל האומות, ומליוכו את אברהם עליהם לנשיא אלהים ולקנין: (יח) ומלכי צדק. מדרש אגדה הוא שם בן נח: לחם ויין. כך עושים ליגיעי מלחמה, והראה לו שאין צלבו עליו על שהרג את בניו. ומדרש אגדה, רמז לו על המנחות ועל הנסכים שיקריבו שם בניו: (יט) קנה שמים וארץ. כמו עושה שמים וארץ<sup>2</sup>, על ידי עשייתן קנאן להיות שלו: (כ) אשר מגן. אשר הסגיר, וכן אמגנך ישראל<sup>3</sup>: ויתן לו. אצרם, מעשר מכל אשר לו, לפי שהיה

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

##### ● What did Avram give Malkitzedek? (v. 20)

**RASHI:** Avram gave him *ma'aser* (tithes) from all his possessions, because Malkitzedek was a priest.

**RAMBAM:** Avraham was commanded regarding circumcision and he introduced the concept of morning prayers. Yitzchak was the first to separate *ma'aser*, and he also introduced the concept of afternoon prayers (*Hilchos Melachim* 9:1).

**RA'AVAD:** This is incorrect. It should read, "Avraham introduced the idea of morning prayers and was the first to separate *ma'aser*, and Yitzchak introduced the concept of afternoon prayers."

**RADVAZ:** Evidently, *Rambam* held that when Avraham "gave him *ma'aser* from everything (he owned)" (v. 20), he did not actually

perform the *mitzvah* of giving *ma'aser* as we know it. This is because a person is only obligated to separate *ma'aser* from his *agricultural* produce. Avraham gave *ma'aser*, "from everything," not only from his agricultural produce.

Since Avraham's *ma'aser* did not follow the same laws that would be observed by future generations, *Rambam* writes, "Yitzchak was the first to separate *ma'aser*," as he separated tithes only from his (agricultural) crops. This is indicated explicitly by the verse, "Yitzchak sowed in the land, and in that year he reaped a hundred-fold" (*Bereishis* 26:12), on which our sages stated explicitly, "he estimated them for the purposes of giving *ma'aser*" (*Bereishis Rabah* 64:6; cited in *Rashi* *ibid.*). Consequently, *Rambam* writes, "Yitzchak was the first to give *ma'aser*."

as Chovah (i.e. Dan), which is to the left of Damascus.

<sup>16</sup> He brought back all the possessions, and he also restored Lot his relative and his possessions, as well as the women and the people.

## 🌀 AVRAM REFUSES THE SPOILS OF WAR 🌀

14:17

**A**fter his return from smiting Kedarla'omer and the kings who were (allied) with him, the King of Sodom went out to meet him at the valley of Shaveh, in the King's (private recreation) grounds. <sup>18</sup> Malkitzedek King of Shaleim (who was, in fact, Sheim the son of Noah) brought out bread and wine (to show that he was not angry with Avram for killing the people of Ailam, his descendants). He was a priest to the supreme God. <sup>19</sup> He blessed him, saying, "Blessed be Avram to the supreme God, who possesses heaven and earth!" <sup>20</sup> Blessed be the supreme God, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!"

(Avram) gave him a tenth ("ma'aser") from everything (he owned).

FIFTH  
READING

<sup>21</sup> The King of Sodom said to Avram, "Give me the people (of mine whom you captured), and take the possessions for yourself."

<sup>22</sup> Avram said to the King of Sodom, "I raise my hand (in an oath) to God, the supreme God, Who possesses heaven and earth, <sup>23</sup> that (I will not take from the spoils) even a thread or a shoelace, nor will I take (payment) from whatever (treasure) you possess—so that you will not say, 'I have made Avram wealthy,' (for God Himself promised to make me rich)—<sup>24</sup> except for what the lads (my servants who went with me) ate, and the share of the men who went with me. Aner, Eshkol, and Mamre (who stayed with our equipment to guard it) will take their share."

## TORAS MENACHEM

### 🌀 AVRAHAM'S MA'ASER (v. 20)

From *Rashi* words, it appears that he adopted the opinion of **Ra'avad**, that Avraham did indeed perform the *mitzvah* of *ma'aser*. *Rashi* stresses that, "Avram gave him *ma'aser* from all his possessions," thus rejecting **Rambam's** view (as explained by **Radvaz**) that Avraham's offering could not be considered as *ma'aser* because it was not limited to agricultural produce alone.

However, after reading *Radvaz's* defense of **Rambam**, we are left with a question: How are we to understand the opinion of *Ra'avad* (and *Rashi*) that Avraham did perform the *mitzvah* of *ma'aser*?

Two points could be argued:

a.) Even though *halachah* only requires that *ma'aser* be separated from crops, nevertheless, this particular detail was introduced *after* the giving of the Torah. We find this with a number of other *mitzvos* too, where additional details were added at the giving of the Torah to *mitzvos* which our Patriarchs previously observed. E.g. before the giving of the Torah, *Yibum* (a levirate marriage between a childless widow and her deceased husband's brother) could be performed by a brother, father or any close relative (*Ramban*, *Vayeishev* 38:8), whereas today it can only be performed by a brother. Similarly, when Avraham was given the *mitzvah* of circumcision, certain details that we observe today as crucial procedures were omitted (see *Yevamos* 71b).

Thus, it turns out that Avraham did give *ma'aser* when he separated a tenth from "everything," because the clause that *ma'aser* is required only from crops was not yet introduced.

b.) A further argument in support of *Ra'avad* (that Avraham did separate *ma'aser*) is that Avraham's *ma'aser* was comparable to *ma'aser kesafim* (the obligation to donate a tenth of one's income to charity),

which is an offshoot of the *mitzvah* of *ma'aser* (See *Sifri* cited in *Tosfos* s.v. *Aser, Ta'anis* 9a). This, of course, must be given from "all one's possessions."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, pp. 120-121)

## 🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

**A**t first glance, a person might presume that all the money that he earns belongs to himself. The *mitzvah* of *ma'aser* however obliges a Jew to give away one tenth of his or her earnings to charity. In effect, the Torah is teaching us that only ninety percent of our earnings actually belong to ourselves, and the remaining ten percent was placed in our hands as a challenge to see if we would return the funds to their "rightful owner." The *mitzvah* of *ma'aser* tests whether a Jew recognizes that money which appears to belong to himself actually belongs to God.

This explains why **Rambam** rejected the notion that Avraham performed the *mitzvah* of *ma'aser*: Avraham's victory over the four mighty kings with a tiny army was totally miraculous. Thus, it could hardly be said that the spoils of war "appeared to belong to man," for their miraculous acquisition was a clear and open proof that these possessions were not earned through man's efforts at all. Therefore, **Rambam** wrote that the *mitzvah* of *ma'aser*, where a portion of one's own earnings are "returned" to God, began with *Yitzchak*.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 68)

יִקְבְּלוּן חִלְקֵהוֹן: א בְּתַר פְּתִיחַתָּא הָאֵלִין הָוּה פְּתִיחַתָּא דִּי לְאַבְרָם בְּנִבּוּאָה לְמִימְרָא לֹא תִדְחַל אַבְרָם מִימְרֵי תְקוּפָה לְךָ אֲנִיךְ סִגִּי לְחִדָּא: ב וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם יְיָ אֱלֹהִים מַה תַּתֵּן לִי וְאֲנִי אֲזַל בְּלֹא וְלֹד וְכִר פְּרִנְסָא הַדִּין דְּבִבְיַתִּי הוּא דְמִשְׁקָאָה אֱלִיעֶזֶר: ג וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם הֵא לִי לֹא יִהְיֶה וְלֹד וְהָא בֵּר בֵּיתִי יָרִית יַתִּי: ד וְהָא פְּתִיחַתָּא דִּי עֲמִיּוּה לְמִימְרָא לֹא יִרְתִּינְךָ דִּין אֱלֹהִין בֵּר דְּתוּלִיד הוּא יִרְתִּינְךָ: ה וְאַפִּיק יַתִּיה לְבָרָא וַיֹּאמֶר אֶסְתְּבִי כַּעֲן לְשִׁמְיָא וּמְנִי כּוּכְבִּיא אִם תִּפּוּל לְמַמְנִי יַתְהוּן וַיֹּאמֶר לִיה כְּדִין יְהוּן בְּנִיךָ: ו וְהִימִין בְּמִימְרָא דִּי וְחִשְׁבָּה לִיה לִזְבוּ: ז וַיֹּאמֶר לִיה אֲנִי יְיָ דִּי אֶפְקִיד מְאוּרָא דְכַשְׁדָּאי לְמַתָּן לְךָ יַת אַרְעָא הַדָּא לְמִירְתָּה: ח וַיֹּאמֶר יְיָ אֱלֹהִים בְּמָא אַדְע

חִלְקָם: ט טו « אַחַר | הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה הָיָה דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם בְּמַחְזָה לְאֹמֶר אֶל־תִּירָא אַבְרָם אֲנִכִּי מִגֵּן לְךָ שְׂכָרְךָ הַרְבֵּה מְאֹד: ב וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם אֲדֹנָי \*יְהוָה מַה־תַּתֵּן־לִי וְאֲנִכִּי הוֹלֵךְ עִרְיָי וּבֶן־מִשְׁק בֵּיתִי הוּא דְמִשְׁק אֱלִיעֶזֶר: ג וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם הֵן לִי לֹא נִתְּתָה זֶרַע וְהִנֵּה בֶן־בֵּיתִי יוֹרֵשׁ אֹתִי: ד וְהִנֵּה דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלָיו לְאֹמֶר לֹא יִירָשְׁךָ זֶה כִּי־אִם אֲשֶׁר יַעֲזַב מִמֶּעֶיךָ הוּא יִירָשְׁךָ: ה וַיּוֹצֵא אֹתוֹ הַחוּצָה וַיֹּאמֶר הַבְּטָנָא הַשְּׂמִימָה וְסַפֵּר הַכּוּכְבִּים אִם־תּוּכַל לְסַפֵּר אֹתָם וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ כֹּה יִהְיֶה זֶרְעֶךָ: ו וְהֶאֱמַן בִּיהוָה וַיַּחְשְׁבָה לוֹ צְדָקָה: [ששין] ז וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲנִי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאוּר כַּשְׁדִּים לְתַת לְךָ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת לְרִשְׁתָּהּ: ח וַיֹּאמֶר אֲדֹנָי \*יְהוָה

\*הקריאה אלהים

כ"ט

על שלי: דמשק. לפי התרגום מדמשק הים, ולפי מדרש אגדה שדף המלכים עד דמשק, ובגמרא שלנו דרשו נוטריקון, דולח ומסקה מתורת רבו לאחרים: (ג) הן לי לא נתתה זרע. ומה תועלת בכל אשר נתן לי: (ד) ויוצא אתו החוצה. לפי פשוטו הוציאו מהלכו לחון לראות הכוכבים. ולפי מדרשו, אמר לו לא מאלטגנינות שלך שראית בזמנות שאינך עתיד להעמיד בן, אצרכם אין לו בן, אצל אצרכם יש לו בן, וכן שרי לא תלד, אצל שרם תלד, אני קורא לך שם אחר וישתנה המזל. דבר אחר, הוציאו מחלליו של עולם והגזיבו למעלה מן הכוכבים, וזהו לשון הצטלה מלמעלה למטה: (ו) והאמין בה'. לא שאל לו אות על זאת, אצל על ירושת הארץ שאל לו אות, ואמר לו צמה דע: ויחשבה לו צדקה. הקצ"ה חשבה לאצרכם לזכות ולצדקה, על האמונה שהאמין בו. דבר אחר צמה דע, לא שאל לו אות, אלא אמר לפניו, הודיעני

החוק צימי אצרכם: (ב) אחר הדברים האלה. כל מקום שנאמר אחר, סמוך, אחרי, מופלג! אחר הדברים האלה, אחר שנעשה לו גם זה שברג את המלכים, והיה דואג ואומר שמא קבלתי שכר על כל דקותי, לכך אמר לו המקום אל תירא אצרכם אנכי מגן לך. מן העונש, שלא תענש על כל אותן נפשות שהרגת, ומה שאתה דואג על קבול שכרך, שכך הרבה מאד: (ג) הולך עירי. מנחם בן סרוק פירשו לשון יורש, וחזר לו ער ועונה<sup>2</sup>, עירי בלא יורש, כאשר תאמר ובכל תצוהי תשרש<sup>3</sup>, תעקר שריש, כך לשון עירי חסר צנים ובלע"ז דעזנפאנט"ס. ולי נראה ער ועונה, מגזרת ולבי ער<sup>4</sup>, ועירי לשון חורבן, וכן ערו ערו<sup>5</sup>, וכן ערות יסוד<sup>6</sup>, וכן ערער תחערער<sup>7</sup>, וכן כי ארז ערה<sup>8</sup>: ובן משק ביתי. כהתרגומו, שכל ציתי נזון על פיו, כמו ועל פיה ישיק<sup>9</sup>, אפטרופא שלי, ואלו הים לי בן הים בני ממונה

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the Torah use an Aramaic word, **מַחְזָה** (vision), rather than a Hebrew word? (v. 1)

**ZOHAR:** Rabbi Yossi said: There are many Aramaic words in the Torah...This language is not understood by the supernal angels, and they did not recognize it when God spoke to Avraham.

Since Avraham was not circumcised...therefore God spoke in Aramaic, which is incomprehensible to the angels...

God revealed Himself to Avraham in this concealed manner, so that the holy angels would not look upon him and have an excuse to make an accusation to God for appearing before an uncircumcised man...When did God openly reveal Himself to Avraham before the supernal angels? At the time when He gave Avraham the sign of the holy covenant (Zohar I 98b—see Sparks of Chasidus).

● Why did God reveal Himself to Avraham? (v. 1)

**RASHI:** After Avraham miraculously slew the kings, he was worried and said, "Perhaps I have received reward for all my righteous deeds." Therefore, God said to him, "Don't be afraid, Avram! I am

your shield," from punishment, so that you will not be punished for all those people you killed. And, as far as your worries about receiving reward, "your reward is extremely great."

**RAMBAM:** Anyone who serves God out of love, occupies himself with Torah and *mitzvos* and follows the ways of wisdom should not do so for any worldly motives, or out of fear of curses or to receive blessings. Rather, he should do the truth because it is true, and the ultimate good will come as a result. This level is an extremely high one, and not every sage reaches it. It is the level of Avraham our father, whom God called His loved one, for the reason that he served God solely out of love (*Hilchos Teshuvah* 10:2).

● Why would Eliezer inherit Avraham? (v. 2)

**RASHI:** My entire household is sustained by his orders...but if I had a son, then he would be appointed over my possessions.

**MIDRASH:** In fact, Lot would have inherited Avraham. He is the one the Torah refers to as "the steward of my household." The verse continues to mention Eliezer, since he helped Avraham fight for the rescue of Lot in Damascus (*Bereishis Rabah* 44:9).

## 🕎 GOD PROMISES AVRAM CHILDREN 🕎

**15** **A**fter the words (of Avram, who verbalized his worries about losing his future reward), the word of God came to Avram in a vision, saying, “Don’t be afraid, Avram! I am your shield (to protect you from being punished for the people you killed in battle). Your reward is extremely great!”

<sup>2</sup> Avram said, “God, Almighty God, what could You possibly give me? For, I am childless, and the steward of my household is (not my own son but) Eliezer of Damascus.” <sup>3</sup> Avram said, “Look! You have given me no children (so there is no point in rewarding me), as a member of my household will inherit me!”

<sup>4</sup> Then, the word of God came to him, saying, “He will not be your heir. Rather, you will be inherited by someone who comes out from within you.”

<sup>5</sup> He took him outside (his tent), and He said, “Please look heavenward and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” He said to him, “That is how (numerous) your descendants will be.”

<sup>6</sup> He believed in God (without asking for a sign), and (God) considered this an act of righteousness.

## 🕎 7TH TEST: VISION OF EXILE AT THE COVENANT OF THE PARTS 🕎

15:7  
SIXTH  
READING

**H**e said to him, “I am God, who brought you out from Ur-Kasdim, to give you this land as an inheritance.”  
<sup>8</sup> He (Avram) said, “God, Almighty God, (give me a sign) through which I can know that I will inherit it.”

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🕎 WHY WOULD ELIEZER INHERIT AVRAHAM (v. 2)

Avraham said, “I am childless, and the steward of my household is (not my own son but) Eliezer of Damascus... a member of my household will inherit me!”

This begs the question: Eliezer may well have been a loyal servant of Avraham, but why should he inherit Avraham merely because he worked for him? [c.f. *Midrash*]

However, it was explained above (see commentaries to 14:14) that Avraham’s war against the four kings was won entirely through the assistance of Eliezer. This was true to the extent that, while Avraham had a staff of 318 men, *Rashi* writes that the war was won by “Eliezer alone.”

#### 🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

**W**hy would God have listened to the angel’s accusations (mentioned in the *Zohar*)?

Because, before circumcision, Avraham was on a *similar spiritual level* to the angels. Therefore, they were in a position to complain to God if Avraham’s revelation exceeded their own.

Through circumcision, Avraham entered into a *covenant with God*, i.e. a “partnership” with the Creator. At that point he was able to receive much higher revelations that no mere “creation,” such as an angel, could withstand.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 10, p. 53)

From this it is self-understood why Eliezer, more than any other person, would have been Avraham’s heir.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha* 5748)

#### 🕎 The Last Word 🕎

#### “YOUR REWARD IS EXTREMELY GREAT” (v. 2)

**A** *tzadik* (righteous individual) does not seek the reward for a *mitzvah* because he desires physical benefits, or even spiritual delights. Just as he is devoid of a personal agenda in the observance of the *mitzvos*, likewise, the *tzadik* has no personal interest in the reward. He simply does “the truth because it is true” (See *Rambam*).

Nevertheless, the *tzadik* still desires the reward, not for his own sake, but rather, because the physical or spiritual reward of a *tzadik* is proof to others of the greatness of Torah and *mitzvos*. The reward thus sanctifies God’s name further, and encourages the observance of Torah, which is desirable to the *tzadik*.

Thus, Avraham was concerned, “*Perhaps I have received reward for all my righteous deeds*” (*Rashi* to v. 1), not because he desired the reward personally, but rather, because he knew the impact that his rewards would have in convincing others to observe the *mitzvos*.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 45ff)

אָרִי אֲרִיתִינָה: <sup>ט</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר לִיָּה קָרֵב קְדָמִי עֲגָלִין תִּלְתָּא וְעִזִּין תִּלְתָּא וְדָבְרִין תִּלְתָּא וְשִׁפְנִינָא וְבַר יוֹנָה: י וְקָרִיב קְדַמוּהֵי ית כָּל אֲלִין וּפְלִיגֵי יתְהוּן בְּשׂוּי וַיְהִי פִלְגִינָא פְלִיגֵי לְקַבֵּיל חֲבֵרִיהּ וַיֵּת עוֹפָא לֹא פְלִיגֵי: יא וְנָחַת עוֹפָא עַל פְּלִיגֵי וַאֲפִרְחָ יתְהוּן אֲבָרְם: יב וַהֲוֹת שְׁמֵשָׁא לְמִיעַל וְשִׁינְתָּא נְפֹלַת עַל אֲבָרְם וְהָא אִימְתָּא קָבַל סָגִי נְפֹלַת עֲלוּהֵי: יג וַאֲמַר לְאֲבָרְם מַדַּע תַּדַּע אָרִי דִּירִין יְהוּן בְּנִידָא בְּאַרְעָא דְלֹא דִילְהוּן וַיִּפְלְחוּן בְּהוּן וַיעֲנִין יתְהוּן אֲרַבְעֵ מֵאָה שָׁנִין: יד וְאַף ית עֲמָא דִּיפְלְחוּן בְּהוּן דִּיין אָנָּא וְכֹתֵר כֵּן יִפְקוּן בְּקַנְיָא סָגִי: טו וְאַתְּ תַתְּכַנְיֵישׁ לֹת אֲבַהֲתֵךְ בְּשִׁלְמֵ תַתְּקַבֵּר בְּסִיבֵי מְבֵא: טז וְדָרָא רְבִיעֵאָה יתּוּבֵין הֵבֵא אָרִי לֹא שְׁלִים חוּבָא דְאִמּוּרָאָה עַד פְּעֻן: יז וַהֲוֹת שְׁמֵשָׁא עֲלַת וְקַבְלָא הָוָה וְהָא תַנּוּר דְתַנּוּן וּבְעוּר דְאִשָּׁא דִי עָדָא בֵּין פְּלִיגֵי הָאֲלִין: יח בִּיּוֹמָא הַהוּא גָזַר יי עִם אֲבָרְם קָיִם לְמִימְרָא

בַּמָּה אִדְעַ כִּי אִירְשֶׁנָּה: <sup>ט</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹוִי קָחָה לִי עֲגָלָה מְשֻׁלֶּשֶׁת וְעִזִּי מְשֻׁלֶּשֶׁת וְאֵיל מְשֻׁלֶּשׁ וְתוֹר וְגוֹזֵל: י וַיִּקְחֵהּ לוֹ אֶת־כָּל־אֵלֶּה וַיְבַתֵּר אֹתָם בַּתּוֹךְ וַיִּתֵּן אִישׁ־בְּתָרוֹ לְקָרְאֹת רַעְיָהוּ וְאֶת־הַצֶּפֶר לֹא בָתָר: יא וַיֵּרֶד הָעַיִט עַל־הַפְּגָרִים וַיֵּשֶׁב אֹתָם אֲבָרְם: יב וַיְהִי הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לָבוֹא וְתַרְדֵּמָה נָפְלָה עַל־אֲבָרְם וְהִנֵּה אִימָה חֲשֵׁכָה גְדֹלָה נֹפֶלֶת עֲלֵיוֹ: יג וַיֹּאמֶר לְאֲבָרְם יָדַע תִּדְעַ כִּי־גַר אִיְהִיהֶיּה זְרַעְךָ בְּאַרְצֵי לֹא לָהֶם וְעַבְדוּם וְעָנּוּ אֹתָם אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה: יד וְגַם אֶת־הַגּוֹי אֲשֶׁר יַעֲבֹדוּ דָּן אָנֹכִי וְאַחֲרָיו־כֵּן יַצְאוּ בְּרַכְשׁ גָּדוֹל: טו וְאַתָּה תָּבוֹא אֶל־אֲבֹתֶיךָ בְּשָׁלוֹם תִּקְבָּר בְּשִׁיבָה טוֹבָה: טז וְדוֹר רְבִיעִי יָשׁוּבוּ הִנֵּה כִּי לֹא־שָׁלֵם עֵינֵי הָאֲמָרִי עַד־הִנֵּה: יז וַיְהִי הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ בָּאָה וְעֲלָטָה הָיָה וְהִנֵּה תַנּוּר עֶשֶׂן וְלִפְיֵד אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר עָבַר בֵּין הַגְּזָרִים הָאֵלֶּה: יח בֵּינָם הָהוּא כָּרַת יְהוָה אֶת־אֲבָרְם בְּרִית לְאָמֹר לְזַרְעֶךָ נִתְתִּי אֶת־הָאָרֶץ

ש"י

היה, לא וחשוב שנתינו של קחת ושל עמרם, ושמונים של משה שהיה כשילאו ישראל ממצרים, אין אתה מולא אלא שלש מאות וחמשים, ואתה לריך לכוזיא מהן כל השנים שחי קחת אחר לידת עמרם, ושחי עמרם אחר לידת משה: בארץ לא להם. ולא נאמר בארץ מצרים, אלא לא להם, ומשולד ילחק ויגר מצרים וגו', ויגר ילחק צגר, ויעקב גר בארץ חס', לגור בארץ צלנו<sup>10</sup>: (יד) וגם את הגוי. וגם, לרבות ארבע מלכיות, שאף הם כלים על שעצדו את ישראל: דן אנבי. בעשר מכות: ברבוב גדול. בזמון גדול כמו שנאמר וינלו את מצרים<sup>11</sup>: (טו) ואתה תבא. ולא תראה כל אלה: אל אבותיך. אצוי עווד עווד זרע וכו' והוא מצשרו שיבא אלי, למדך שעשה תרח תשובה: תקבר בשויבה טובה. צשרו שיעשה ישמעאל תשובה צימיו, ולא ילא עשו לתרבות רעה צימיו, ולפיכך מת ה' שנים קודם זמנו, וצו ציוס מרד עשו: (טז) דודר רביעי. לאחר שיגלו למצרים יכיו שם ג' דורות, והרביעי ישובו לארץ הזאת, לפי שבארץ כנען היה מדבר עמו וכתר צרית זה, כדכתיב לתח לך את הארץ הזאת לרשתה, וכן היה, יעקב ירד למצרים, לא וחשוב דורותיו, יכודר פרץ וחלרון, וכל צן חלרון מצחי הארץ היה: בי לא שלם עון האמורי. להיות משתלח מארצו עד ארצו זמן, שאין הקצ"ה נפרע מאומה עד שתמלח סאתה, שנאמר צסאסאה צשלח תריב<sup>12</sup>: (יז) ויהי השמש באה. כמו ויהי הם מריקים שקיבס<sup>13</sup>, ויהי הם קוצרים איש<sup>14</sup>, כלומר ויהי דבר זה: השמש באה. שקעה: ועלטה היה. חשך היום: והנה תנור עשן וגו'. רמז לו שיפלו המלכיות עובדי אלילים צגיבס. צאה טעמו למעלה, לכך הוא מצואר צצאה צבר, ואם היה טעמו למטה צאל"ף, היה מצואר צשביא שוקעת, ואי אפשר לומר כן, שהרי צבר כתיב ויהי השמש לצא, והעצרת תנור עשן לאחר מכאן היתה, נמלא צכצר שקעה. וזה חילוק צכל תיבא לשון נקצה שיסודה שתי אותיות, כמו צא, קס, צצ, כשהטעם למעלה לשון עבר הוא, כגון זה, וכגון ורחל צאה, קמה אלומתי, הנה צצה יצמתך<sup>15</sup>, וכשהטעם למטה הוא לשון הווה, דבר שנעשה עכשיו וכוך, כמו צצה עם האלף, צעצב היא צצה וצצקר היא צצה<sup>16</sup>: (יח) לזרעך נתתי. אמירתו של הקצ"ה כאלו היא עשויה<sup>17</sup>:

באזה זכות יתקיימו צה, אמר לו הקצ"ה צזכות הקרבות: (ט) עגלה משלשת. שלש עגלים רמז לשלש פרים, פרי יום הכפורים ופרי העלם דבר של צבור ועגלה ערופה<sup>1</sup>: ועז משלשת. רמז לשעיר העשה צפנים ושעירי מוספין של מועד ושעיר חטאת יחיד: ואיל משולש. אשם ודאי ואשם תלוי וכצבה של חטאת יחיד: ותור וגוזל. תור וצן יונה: (י) ויבתר אתם. חלק כל אחד לשני חלקים. ואין המקרה יולא מידי פשוטו, לפי שהיה כורת צרית עמו לשמור הצטחתו להוריש לצניו את הארץ, כדכתיב ציוס הווא כרת ה' את הצרם צרית לאמר וגו', ודרך כורת צרית לחלק צבהם ולעצור צין צתריה, כמה שנאמר להבן העוצרים צין צתרי העגל<sup>2</sup>, אף כאן תנור עשן ולפיד אש אשר עבר צין הגזרים, הוא שלוחו של שכניה שהוא אש: ואת הצפור לא בתר. לפי שהאומות עובדי כוכבים ומזלות נמשלו לפרים ואלילים ושעירים, שנאמר סצצוני פרים רבים וגו'<sup>3</sup>, ואומר והאליל אשר ראית צעל הקרנים, מלכי מדי ופרס<sup>4</sup>, ואומר והצפיר והשעיר, מלך יון. וישראל נמשלו לצני יונה, שנאמר יונתי צחגוי הסלע<sup>5</sup>, לפיכך צתר הצבמות, רמז על האומות שיכיו כלין והולכין, ואת הצפור לא צתר, רמז שיכיו ישראל קיימין לעולם: (יא) העיט. הוא עוף, ועל שם שהוא עט ושואף את הצלות לטוש עלי אוכל, כמו ותעט אל השלל<sup>6</sup>: על הפגרים. הצתרים. (ס"א הפגרים מתרגמינן פגליא, אלא מתוך שהורגלו לתרגם איש צתרו ויהב פגליא, נתחלק להם תיבא פגליא לפגליא, ותרגמו הפגרים פגליא, וכל המתרגם כן טועה, לפי שאין להקיש צתרים לפגרים, צצתרים תרגומו פגליא, ופגרים תרגומו פגליא לשון פגול, כמו פגול הוא<sup>7</sup>, לשון פגור: וישב. לשון נשיב והפרחה, כמו ישב רוחו<sup>8</sup>, רמז שיבא דוד צן ישי לכלותם, ואין מניחים ארצו מן השמים, עד שיבוא מלך המשיח: (יב) והנה אימה וגו'. רמז ללרות וחשך של גליות: (יג) בי גר יהיה זרעך. משולד ילחק עד שילאו ישראל ממצרים ארבע מאות שנה, כילד, ילחק צן ששים שנה כשנולד יעקב, ויעקב כשירד למצרים אמר ימי שני מגורי שלשים ומאת שנה, הרי ק"ץ, וצמצרים היו מאתים ועשר כמנין רד"ו, הרי ארבע מאות שנה. ואם תאמר צמצרים היו ארבע מאות, הרי קחת מיורדי מצרים

1 ב"ר מד, יד 2 ירמ"י לד, יט 3 תהלים כב, יג 4 דניאל ח, כ 5 ש"ש ב, יד 6 שמואל א טו, יט 7 ויקרא יט, ז 8 תהלים קמז, יח 9 שם קה, כג 10 בראשית מז, ד 11 שמי"ב, לו 12 יש"י כז, ז 13 בראשית מב, לה 14 מלכים ב, יג, כא 15 רות א, טו 16 אסתר ב, יד 17 ב"ר מד, כב

<sup>9</sup> He said to him, “Take for Me three heifers, three goats, three rams, a turtle-dove and a young bird.”

<sup>10</sup> (Avram) took all these (animals) for (God), and he cut (each one) in the middle (into two parts). He placed each part opposite the other, but he did not divide the birds (which represented the Jewish people). <sup>11</sup> Birds of prey descended upon the (pieces of the) carcasses, but Avram drove them away.

<sup>12</sup> Then, when the sun was ready to set, a deep sleep fell upon Avram, and—look!—a great, frightening darkness was falling upon him (alluding to the exiles of the Jewish people).

<sup>13</sup> He said to Avram, “You should know that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs. They will enslave them and oppress them, for four hundred years! <sup>14</sup> I will also pronounce judgment on the nation they will serve (with ten plagues), and afterwards they will leave with substantial wealth.”

<sup>15</sup> “(Before any of this happens,) you will come to your forefathers in peace, and you will be buried in a good old age. <sup>16</sup> (After three generations of exile in Egypt), the fourth generation will return here (to this land), for the Amorites (who currently inhabit the land) will not be completely sinful (deserving eviction) until then.”

<sup>17</sup> Then, when the sun had set and it became dark, and—look!—a smoking furnace with a fiery torch passed between these parts.

<sup>18</sup> On that day, God struck a covenant with Avram, saying, “I have given this land to your descendants,

---

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

---

##### ● Why did God say, “I have given this land to your descendants,” in the past tense? (v. 18)

**RASHI:** God’s word is considered as if it has already happened.

**MIDRASH:** God’s speech has the power of action, as the verse states, “I have given this land.” It does not state, “I will give this land,” but rather, “I have given this land” (*Bereishis Rabah* 44:22).

**JERUSALEM TALMUD:** Rabbi Shmuel Bar Nachman said, “It does not say here, ‘I will give,’ but rather, ‘I have given,’ suggesting that “I have already given it” (*Chalah* 2:1).

**TALMUD:** The Land of Israel already belonged to the Jewish people before they entered it. It is an inheritance from our Patriarchs (*Bava Basra* 119a).

**OHR HACHAYIM:** Earlier, God told Avraham, “Get up and walk through the land, across its length and its breadth, for I am going to give it to you” (13:17). Through this procedure, Avraham made a legal acquisition (*chazakah*) of the Land of Israel. Consequently, God now told him, “I have given this land to your descendants,” in the past tense, because Avraham had already acquired the land legally.

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

##### 🕊️ OUR RIGHTS TO THE LAND OF ISRAEL (v. 18)

A number of stages can be discerned in the acquisition of the Land of Israel by the Jewish people:

a.) *Divine intent at the outset of creation.*

The permanent acquisition of the Land of Israel by the Jewish people is God’s Will. From the moment He created the world He already intended that the Jewish people inherit the Land. The permanent acquisition of the Land by the Jewish people is thus Divinely Willed, as *Rashi* makes clear at the beginning of his commentary to the Torah, “The whole earth belongs to God. He created it and granted it to whomever was deemed fit in His eyes,” (i.e. the Jewish people). Temporarily however He allowed non-Jewish nations to occupy it. (See, at length, “*Toras Menachem*” to beginning of *Bereishis*.)

b.) *God’s promise to Avraham.*

When Avraham reached the Land of Israel for the first time, God told him, “I will give this land to your descendants!” (above, 12:7). Later, when Lot parted company from Avraham, God reiterated this promise, “I will give all the land that you see to you and to your descendants for eternity” (13:15).

c.) *Avraham walks across the length and breadth of the Land* (13:17).

According to some opinions (including **Ohr haChayim**) Avraham actually made a legal acquisition of the Land at this point.

d.) *The Covenant of the Parts.*

At the Covenant of the Parts, God made a binding agreement for eternity concerning the Jewish ownership of the Land of Israel (v. 18-21).

#### 🕊️ Sparks of Chasidus 🕊️

##### “THEY WILL LEAVE WITH SUBSTANTIAL WEALTH” (v. 14)

The above verse indicates that amassing wealth was one of the purposes of Egyptian exile. For this to be achieved, it was necessary for Yosef to become the ruler of Egypt and gather wealth from all the other lands.

According to Chasidic teachings, “sparks of holiness” are trapped within the physical world and are released when a Jew takes the object and uses it to perform a *mitzvah*. Therefore, one of the inner purposes of exile is for the Jew to utilize physical objects in the service of God.

Thus, someone who truly desires to cleave to God needs to involve himself in the physical performance of *mitzvos*, for this is also the only way he can fulfill his soul’s mission.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 3, p. 823ff.)

לְבָנֶיךָ יִהְיֶה יַת אֲרֻעָא הִקְרָא מְנַחֵמָא דְמַצְרַיִם  
 עַד נִהְרָא רַבָּא נִהְרָא פָּרַת: יט וַיֵּת שְׁלֹמֹאֵי  
 וַיֵּת קִנְזָאֵי וַיֵּת קַדְמוֹנָאֵי: כ וַיֵּת הַתְּאֵי וַיֵּת  
 פְּרוֹזָאֵי וַיֵּת גְּבְרָאֵי: כא וַיֵּת אֲמוֹרָאֵי וַיֵּת  
 כְּנַעֲנָאֵי וַיֵּת גְּרִנְשָׁאֵי וַיֵּת יְבוּסָאֵי: א וַיֵּת  
 אֶתְת אַבְרָם לֹא יֵלֶדֶת לִיה וְלֹא אִמְתָּא  
 מְצָרִיתָא וּשְׁמָהּ הִנְרָ: ב וַאֲמַרְת שְׂרֵי לְאַבְרָם  
 הָא כְּעַן מִנְעֵנִי יִי מִלְמִילֵד עוּל כְּעַן לֹת  
 אִמְתִּי מָאִים אֲהַבְנִי מִנָּה וְקָבִיל אַבְרָם לְמִימֵר  
 שְׂרֵי: ג וְדַבַּרְת שְׂרֵי אֶתְת אַבְרָם יַת הִנְר  
 מְצָרִיתָא אִמְתָּהּ מְסוּף עֶשֶׂר שָׁנִין לְמַתָּב  
 אַבְרָם בְּאַרְעָא דְכְּנַעַן וַיִּהְיֶה יַתָּה לְאַבְרָם  
 בְּעֵלְהָ לִיָּה לְאַנְתָּה: ד וְעַל לֹת הִנְר וְעַדִּיאַת  
 וַחֲזוּת אַרְי עַדִּיאַת וְקָלַת רַבּוּנְתָהּ בְּעֵינְהָ:  
 ה וַאֲמַרְת שְׂרֵי לְאַבְרָם דִּין לִי עֲלֵךְ אֲנָא יִהְיֶה

הַזֹּאת מְנַחֵר מְצָרִים עַד־הִנְהָר הַגָּדֹל נְהַר־פָּרַת: יט אֶת־הַקִּינִי  
 וְאֶת־הַקְּנָזִי וְאֶת הַקְּדֹמֹנִי: כ וְאֶת־הַתְּאֵי וְאֶת־הַפְּרוֹזִי  
 וְאֶת־הַרְפָּאִים: כא וְאֶת־הָאֲמֹרִי וְאֶת־הַכְּנַעֲנִי וְאֶת־הַגְּרִנְשִׁי  
 וְאֶת־הַיְבוּסִי: ס טז א וְשְׂרֵי אִשְׁת אַבְרָם לֹא יֵלֶדֶת לוֹ וְלֹא  
 שְׁפַחָה מְצָרִית וּשְׁמָהּ הִנְרָ: ב וַתֹּאמֶר שְׂרֵי אֶל־אַבְרָם הִנְהָרָא  
 עֲצָרְנִי יְהוֹה מְלֻדָת בִּאֲנָא אֶל־שְׁפַחְתִּי אוּלַי אֲבָנָה מִמְּנָה  
 וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָם לְקוֹל שְׂרֵי: ג וַתִּקַּח שְׂרֵי אִשְׁת־אַבְרָם אֶת־הִנְר  
 הַמְצָרִית שְׁפַחְתָּהּ מִקִּץ עֶשֶׂר שָׁנִים לְשֵׁבַת אַבְרָם בְּאַרְץ  
 כְּנַעַן וַתִּתֵּן אֹתָהּ לְאַבְרָם אִשָּׁה לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה: ד וַיָּבֵא אֶל־הִנְר  
 וַתֵּהָר וַתֵּרָא כִּי הָרְתָהּ וַתִּקַּל גְּבִרְתָּהּ בְּעֵינֶיהָ: ה וַתֹּאמֶר שְׂרֵי

כ"ט

ולא גזירה צבית אחר: (ב) אולי אבנה ממנה. לימד על מי שאין לו צנים שאינו צנוי חלל הרום: אבנה ממנה. בזכות שאכניס רחמי לתוך צייתי: לקול שרי. לרוח הקדש שצב: (ג) ותקח שרי. לקחתה דצברים אשריך שוכית לידצק צגוף קדוש כזה: מקץ עשר שנים. מועד הקצוב לאשה ששכתה עשר שנים ולא ילדה לצעלה חייב לישא אחרת: לשבת אברם וגו'. מגיד, שאין ישיבת חולה לארץ עולה לו מן המניין, לפי שלא נאמר לו ואתשך לגוי גדול עד שיצא לארץ ישראל: (ד) ויבא אל הגר ותהר. מציאה ראשונה: ותקל גברתה בעיניה. אמרה, שרי זו אין סתרה כגלויה, מראה עלמה

הנהר הגדול נהר פרת. לפי שהוא דבוק לארץ ישראל קוראכו גדול, אף על פי שהוא מאוחר בצרבעה נהרות היוצאים מעדן, שנאמר והנהר הרביעי הוא פרת, משל הדיוט, עזר מלך מלך, הדבק לשחור וישתחוו לך: (יט) את הקיני. עשר חומות יש כאן, ולא נתן להם אלא שבעה גוים, והשלישה אדום ומואב ועמון, והם קיני קניזי קדמוני, עתידים להיות ירושה לעתיד, שנאמר אדום ומואב משלוח ידם וצני עמון משמעתם: (כ) ואת הרפאים. ארץ עוג, שנאמר זה הכוה יקרא ארץ רפאים: (ח) שפחה מצרית. צת פרעה היטה, כשראה נסים שנעשו לשרה, אמר, מוטב שכתה צתי שפחה צבית זה,

#### TORAS MENACHEM

However, the precise significance of this covenant is different at the *scriptural* level, than its meaning at the *halachic* level:

According to the literal interpretation of scripture, Avraham did not *acquire* ownership of the Land of Israel at the Covenant of the Parts. The Torah merely employs the past tense ("I have given this land to your descendants") although the land had actually not been given yet, because, "God's word, is considered as if it has already happened" (*Rashi*). At the *scriptural* level, God made a binding *promise* to give Avraham's *descendants* the Land of Israel.

At the *halachic* level, however, the **Talmud** and **Jerusalem Talmud** (and **Midrash**) indicate that Avraham actually owned the Land of Israel, which he was *given* at the Covenant of the Parts.

*Rashi*, however, rejected this view for the following reason:

*Rashi's* opinion is that the acquisition of the Land of Israel by the Jewish people *transformed* the Land *permanently* to be an *essentially* Jewish one, precluding any nation from identifying it as their own at a future time (see, at length, "*Toras Menachem*" to beginning of *Bereishis*). This could not occur before the giving of the Torah since, at that time, physical objects were not affected by the observance of a *mitzvah*. Consequently, the physical acquisition of the Land by Avraham would not have transformed it into an essentially Jewish Land. So, God delayed the actual possession of the Land until later, and He merely committed Himself to give it at the Covenant of the Parts.

Despite the above dispute, one area which the *scriptural* and *halachic* viewpoints do agree upon, concerns the holiness of the Land at this point:

Even according to the *halachic* view that Avraham actually acquired the Land of Israel, he did not acquire a *holy* land.

The proof of this point is that, despite the fact that the Patriarchs kept the entire Torah (see *Rashi* to *Toldos* 26:5), we still find that they would leave the Land of Israel without a *halachically* valid reason, in seeming defiance of the prohibition against leaving the Holy Land for the Diaspora. For example, while Avraham's visit to Egypt due to famine (above 12:10ff.) would have been permissible in Jewish law, his departure from the Land of Israel after the Covenant of the Parts did not appear to have a valid reason, since it was not a time of famine (see *Da'as Zekeinim* to 12:4). Similarly, Ya'akov left the Land of Israel to see Yosef, even though Ya'akov was already being provided with food in the Land of Israel itself. So too, we do not find that Ya'akov and his sons returned to the Land of Israel immediately after the famine ended.

Obviously, the Patriarchs would not have transgressed Jewish law. So, we can only conclude that the prohibition of leaving the Land of Israel simply did not apply, because the Land was not yet holy.

(Yitzchak did not leave the Land of Israel, but this was due to a special prohibition given to him; see *Toldos* 26:2-3 and *Rashi* *ibid.*.)

e.) *The Conquests of Yehoshua and Ezra*

The Land of Israel finally acquired its sanctity when it was conquered by Yehoshua. This sanctity, however, did not persist, as *Rambam* explains, because the first conquest by Yehoshua "was merely the result of a war. Consequently, when the Land was later taken from them [the Jewish people,] the effects of the initial conquest were annulled, and the Biblical



from the river of Egypt until the great river, the Euphrates river, <sup>19</sup> the (land of the) Kenites, the Kenizites, the Kadmonites, <sup>20</sup> the Chitites, the Perizites, the Refa'im, <sup>21</sup> the Amorites, the Cana'anites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites.”

## SARAI GIVES HER HANDMAID TO AVRAHAM

**16** Sarai, Avram's wife, had not borne him children. She had an Egyptian handmaid named Hagar. <sup>2</sup> Sarai said to Avram, “Now look, God has kept me from bearing children. Please come to my handmaid. Perhaps, through her, I will become established.”

Avram listened to Sarai's (prophetic) voice. <sup>3</sup> At the end of ten years of Avram's dwelling in the land of Cana'an, Avram's wife Sarai persuaded Hagar the Egyptian, her handmaid, (to consent) and she gave her to Avram her husband for a wife.

<sup>4</sup> He came to Hagar, and she conceived (immediately). When (Hagar) noticed that she was pregnant, her mistress (who had failed to become pregnant) became unimportant in her eyes. (Sarai cast the “evil eye” on her, causing her to miscarry).

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Did the Jewish people ever occupy all ten lands? (v. 19)

**RASHI:** Ten nations are listed here, but [God] gave them only seven nations. The three lands of Edom, Mo'av, and Amon—those of the Kenites, Kenizites, and Kadmonites—are destined to be our heritage in the future.

#### ● Who was Hagar? (v. 1)

**RASHI:** She was Pharaoh's daughter. For when Pharaoh saw the miracles that were wrought for Sarah, he said, “It is better that my daughter should be a handmaid in this household, than a lady in another household.”

### TORAS MENACHEM

precepts of *ma'aser* (tithes) and *shevi'is* (sabbatical year) no longer applied, for it was no longer “the Land of Israel.” When Ezra consecrated the Land however, he did not do so with war, but with legal acquisition (*chazakah*)... and thus it remains sanctified to this day. Even though the Land was taken from them, the obligations of *shevi'is* and *ma'aser* still apply” (*Hilchos Beis Habechira* 6:16).

The distinction between these two conquests could be explained as follows. If one examines the exact wording of the various verses which speak of the first and second occupations of the Land, a key distinction emerges. God stipulated that the first conquest of the Land of Israel should be by military conquest: “You shall pass armed before your brothers, all the mighty men of valor” (*Yehoshua* 1:14). In contrast, the prophecies which speak of the occupation of the Land of Israel in the time of Ezra depict a more organic process of settling and living in the Land (see *Yirmiyahu* 29:10; *Daniel* 9:2).

Presumably, the Land of Israel became sanctified by the exact mechanism specified by God in the Torah. Thus, in the first conquest where the Divine command was to conquer the Land, it was the conquest that conferred it with sanctity. When the effects of the conquest were reverted, and the Land was lost, the mechanism of “holiness via conquest” could no longer function. Thus, the obligation in *ma'aser* and *shevi'is* ceased.

In contrast, God's request with the second occupation, in the times of Ezra, was that it should be an organic one, by a process of acquisition. Consequently, a later military conquest by non-Jewish nations would not interfere with the sanctity of the Land, because the mechanism by which the sanctity was conferred was by forging a bond with the Land through settling in it.

f.) Occupation of all ten lands in the Messianic Era

God gave (or promised) the land of ten nations to the Jewish people at the Covenant of the Parts (v. 18-21), but in actuality only seven of these lands were occupied and sanctified. The Land of Israel will be occupied in its entirety in the Messianic Era.

Thus, the account of the Covenant of the Parts is still immediately relevant, since we are still in the process of acquiring the lands which were given (or promised) to the Jewish people by God.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 200ff; *ibid.* p. 100ff.; *ibid.* vol. 5, pp. 8-9; *Sefer Hasichos* 5752, pp. 73-75)

## The Last Word

Hagar left a position of importance in Pharaoh's house to become a maid to Sarah so that she could join Avraham's household (see *Rashi*). Certainly, she would have raised Yishma'el in the same spirit of self-sacrifice. This explains why Avraham was content with Yishma'el, pleading to God, “If only Yishma'el will live (in fear of) You, (that would be sufficient!)” (17:18).

Nevertheless, Yishma'el's education was based on a rational commitment to God, whereas Yitzchak was educated to serve God in a manner that transcends rational considerations. Therefore, Avraham's true joy came from Yitzchak.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 1, p. 19ff.)

אמתי לך ותות ארי עדיאת וקלית בעינהא ידיו יי ביני וביניך: ו ואמר אברם לשרי הא אמתיך בידך עבידי לה פדתקין בעיניכי ועניתה שרי וערקת מקדמהא: ו ואשכחה מלאכא דיי על עינא דמיא במדברא על עינא באורחא דחנרא: ה ואמר הגר אמרת דשרי מנן את אתיא ולאן את אזלא ואמרת מן קדם שרי רבונתי אנא ערקא: ט ואמר לה מלאכא דיי טובי לות רבונתיך ואשתעבדי תחות ידהא: י ואמר לה מלאכא דיי אסגאה אסגי ית בניכי ולא יתמנן מסגי: יא ואמר לה מלאכא דיי הא את מעדיא ותילדין בר ותקרין שמייה ישמעאל ארי קביל יי עלותיך: יב והוא יהא מרוד באנשא הוא יהא צריך לכולא ואף כל בני אנשא יהון צריכין ליה ועל אפי כל אחוהי ישרי: יג וצליאת בשמא דיי דמתמלל עמה ואמרת את הוא אלהא דחוי כולא ארי אמרת הברם הקא (האף אנא) שריתי חויא בתר דאתגלי לי: יד על כן קרא לבירא בירא דמלאך קימא אתחוי עלה הא היא בין רקם ובין חנרא: טו וילידת הגר לאברם בר וקרא אברם שום בריה דילידת הגר ישמעאל: טז ואברם בר תמנן ושית שנין כד ילידת הגר ית ישמעאל לאברם: א והנה אברם בר תשעין ותשע שנין ואתגלי יי לאברם ואמר ליה אנא אל שדי פלח קדמי והוי שלים: ב ואתן קימי בין מימרי וביניך

אל-אברם חמסי עליך אנכי נתתי שפחתי בחיקך ותרא כי הרתה ואקל בעיניה ישפט יהוה ביני וביניך: ו ואמר אברם אל-שרי הנה שפחתך ביך עשי-לה הטוב בעיניך ותענה שרי ותברח מפניה: ז וימצאה מלאך יהוה על-עין המים במדבר על-העין בדרך שור: ח ואמר הגר שפחת שרי אי-מזה באת ואנה תלכי ותאמר מפני שרי גברתי אנכי ברכת: ט ויאמר לה מלאך יהוה שובי אל-גברתך והתעני תחת ידיה: י ויאמר לה מלאך יהוה הרבה ארבה את-זרעך ולא יספר מרב: יא ויאמר לה מלאך יהוה הנה הרה וילדת בן וקראת שמו ישמעאל כי-שמע יהוה אל-עניך: יב והוא יהיה פרא אדם ידו בכל ויד כל בו ועל-פני כל-אחיו ישב: יג ותקרא שם-יהוה הדבר אליה אתה אל ראי כי אמרה הגם הלים ראיתי אחרי ראוי: יד על-כן קרא לבאר באר לחי ראי הנה בין-קדש ובין ברד: טו ותלד הגר לאברם בן ויקרא אברם שם-בנו אשר-ילדה הגר ישמעאל: טז ואברם בן-שמונים שנה ושש שנים בלדת-הגר את-ישמעאל לאברם: ס יז « ויהי אברם בן-תשעים שנה ותשע שנים וירא יהוה אל-אברם ויאמר אליו אני-אל שדי התהלך לפני והיה תמים: ב ואתנה בריתי ביני ובייך וארבה אותך במאד מאד:

\*נקוד על י"ד בתרא

כש"י

אל ראי. נקוד חטף קמ"ן, מפני שהוא שם דבר, אלוה הראיה, שרואה צעלזון של עלוזין. (ס"א דבר אחר אתה אל ראי, משמע שהוא רואה הכל, ואין שום דבר רואה אותו): הגם הלב. לשון חימה, וכי סבורה הייתי שאף כלום צמדצרות, ראיתי שלוחו של מקום, אחר רואי אותם צביתו של אברהם, ששם הייתי רגילה לראות מלאכים, ותדע שהיתה רגילה לראותם, שהרי מנוח ראה את המלאך פעם אחת ואמר מות נמות, וזו ראתה ארבעה זכר אחר זה ולא חרדה: (יד) באר לחי רואי. כתרוממו צלרא דמלאך קימא אתחוי עלה: (טו) ויקרא אברם שם וגו'. אף על פי שלא שמע אברהם דברי המלאך שאמר וקראת שמו ישמעאל, שרתה רוח הקודש עליו וקראו ישמעאל: (טז) ואברם בן שמונים שנה וגו'. לשבחו של ישמעאל נכתב, להודיע שהיה בן י"ג שנה כשנימול, ולא עכב: (א) אני אל שדי. אני הוא שיש די צלכותיו לכל צריה, לפיכך התהלך לפני, והכיה לך לאלוה ולפטרון. וכן כל מקום שהוא במקרא פירושו כך, די שלו, והכל לפי הענין: התהלך לפני. כתרוממו פלח קדמי, הדבק בעבודתי: והיה תמים. אף זה לזוי אחר לזוי, היה שלם בכל נסיונותיו. ולפי מדרשו, התהלך לפני צמנות מילה, וצדבר הזה תכיה תמים, שכל זמן שהעלה כך אתה בעל מוס לפני. דבר אחר והיה תמים, עכשיו אתה חסר ה' אברים, צ' עינים, צ' אזנים, וראש הגויב, אוסיף לך אות על שמך, ויהיו מנין אותיותך רמ"ח, כמנין אצריך: (ג) ואתנה

כאילו היא לדקת, ואינה לדקת, שלא זכתה להריון כל השנים הללו, ואני נתעברתי מציאה ראשונה: (ב) חמסי עליך. חמס העשוי לי, עליך אני מטיל העונש, כשהתפללת להקצ"ח מה תתן לי ואנכי הולך ערירי, לא התפללת לאל עליו, והיה לך להתפלל על שנינו, והייתי אני נפקדת עמך. ועוד, דצריך אתה חומס ממני, שאתה שומע ציוני ושחק? אנכי נתתי שפחתי וגו' ביני וביניך. כל צינך צמקרא חסר, וזה מלא, קרי ציב וציניך, שהכניסה עין הרע בעיבורה של הגר והפילה עוצרה, הוא שהמלאך אומר להגר הנך הרה, והלא כבר הרתה והוא מבשר לה שתכרי, אלא מלמד שהפילה הריון הראשון: (ו) ותענה שרי. היתה משעבדת זה צקושי: (ח) אי מזה באת. מהיכן באת. יודע הבה, אלא ליתן לה פתח ליכנס עמה דצדריס. ולשון אי מזה, איב המקום שהאמר עליו מזה אני צא: (ט) ויאמר לה מלאך ה' וגו'. על כל אמירה הבה שלוח לה מלאך אחר, לכך נאמר מלאך ככל אמירה ואמירה: (יא) הנך הרה. כשתשובי תכרי, כמו הנך הרה דאשת מנוח: וילדת בן. כמו וילדת, ודומה לו יושבץ בלבזון מקננת בצרזים: וקראת שמו. לזוי הוא, כמו שאומר לזכר וקראת את שמו יחא: (יג) פרא אדם. ארוב מדצרות לזוד חיות, כמו שכתוב ויהי רובה קשת ויש צמדצר פארן: ידו בכל. לסטים: ויד כל בו. הכל שונאין אותו ומתגרין צו: ועל פני כל אחיו ישכון. שיהיה זרעו גדול: (יג) אתה

<sup>5</sup> Sarai said to Avram, “May (the punishment) for wronging me (by praying only for yourself) be upon you! I gave my handmaid into your bosom, and when she saw that she had become pregnant, I became unimportant in her eyes (and you were silent). Let God judge between me and you!”

<sup>6</sup> Avram said to Sarai, “Here is your handmaid. Treat her as you see fit!”

Sarai mistreated her, and she ran away from her.

<sup>7</sup> An angel of God found her by a water fountain in the desert, by the fountain on the road to Shur.

<sup>8</sup> He said, “Hagar, maid of Sarai, where are you coming from? And where are you going to?”

She said, “I am running away from Sarai, my mistress.”

<sup>9</sup> (Another) angel of God said to her, “Return to your mistress, and allow yourself to be subjugated under her hands.”

<sup>10</sup> (Another) angel of God said to her, “I will greatly multiply your descendants, so that they will not be (able to be) counted due to (their) great number.”

<sup>11</sup> (Another) angel of God said to her, “Look!—(when you return) you will conceive and bear a son. You shall name him Yishma’el, for God has heard (‘shama’) your affliction. <sup>12</sup> He will be an outdoor man (who loves hunting. He will be a bandit) whose hand will be upon everyone. Everyone (will hate him and put their) hands upon him (to attack him). He will live among his (numerous) descendants.”

<sup>13</sup> She called in the name of God, who had spoken to her, “You are the God of vision (who has seen my humiliation)!”

Because she said, “I may have seen (angels in Avram’s house), but would I have expected (them) here too?” <sup>14</sup> therefore the well was called “the well at which the living (angel) appeared.” It is found between Kadeish and Bared.

<sup>15</sup> Hagar bore a son to Avram. Avram (prophetically) named his son, whom Hagar had borne, Yishma’el. <sup>16</sup> Avram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Yishma’el to Avram.

## 🌀 AVRAM’S NAME IS CHANGED TO AVRAHAM 🌀

**17** **W**hen Avram was ninety-nine years old, God appeared to Avram, and said to him, “I am the Almighty God! Come close to Me in worship and be perfect. <sup>2</sup> I will place My covenant between Me and you, and I will multiply you very greatly.”

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● How was Avraham to “be perfect”? (v. 1)

**RASHI:** According to the *Midrash*, God was telling Avraham, “Walk before Me with the *mitzvah* of circumcision, and through this you will be perfect, for as long as the foreskin is upon you, I consider you imperfect.”

**MISHNAH:** Circumcision is greater than all the other *mitzvos*, for with all the *mitzvos* that Avraham our father did, he was not called “perfect” until he circumcised himself, as the verse states, “Walk before me and be perfect” (*Nedarim* 31b).

**TALMUD:** Rabbi said, “Circumcision is great, for there was no one who occupied himself with *mitzvos* so much as Avraham our father, and yet he was only called ‘perfect’ because of his circumcision—as the verse states, “Walk before Me and be perfect... I will place My covenant between Me and you” (*ibid* 32a).

**IBN EZRA:** Circumcision was a test of perfection to see if Avraham would accept the *mitzvah* unquestioningly.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🌀 “PERFECTION” THROUGH CIRCUMCISION (v. 1-2)

At first glance, the **Mishnah** and **Talmud** appear to be making identical statements. On closer examination however, there is a subtle but significant difference between them:

The *Mishnah* states, “With all the *mitzvos* that Avraham our father did, he was not called ‘perfect’ until he circumcised himself.” This suggests that

circumcision was the climax of a life of Divine service for Avraham, an act which completed and sealed his “portfolio” of good deeds.

The *Talmud*, on the other hand, stresses, “He was only called ‘perfect’ because of his circumcision,” suggesting that the act of circumcision alone brought Avraham perfection, regardless of his prior acts of kindness.

וַאֲסֵי יִתֵּךְ לְחֶדְאָ לְחֶדְאָ: ג וַנִּפְלַ אַבְרָם עַל אִפְוֵהוּ וּמְלִיל עֲמִיּוּהוּ יִי לְמִימְרֵי: ד אֲנָא הָא (גִּזְר) קִימִי עֲמִךְ וּתְהִי לְאָב סְגִי עֲמִי: ה וְלֹא יִתְקַרֵּי עוֹד יֵת שְׁמֶךְ אַבְרָם וְיִהִי שְׁמֶךְ אַבְרָהָם אֲרִי לְאָב סְגִי עֲמִי: ו וְהַבְּתִיךָ: ז וְאִפְּשִׁי יִתֵּךְ לְחֶדְאָ לְחֶדְאָ וְאִתְנִינְךָ לְכַנְשֵׁין וּמְלָכִין דְּשַׁלְיִטִין בְּעַמְמֵי מְנַדְּ יַפְקִין: ח וְאַקִּים יֵת קִימִי בִּין מִימְרֵי וּבִינְךָ וּבִין בְּנֵיךָ בְּתֶרְךָ לְדְרֵיהוֹן לְקָם עֲלָם לְמַהוּי לְךָ לְאַלְהָ וּלְבְּנֵיךָ בְּתֶרְךָ: ט וְאַתָּן לְךָ וּלְבְּנֵיךָ בְּתֶרְךָ יֵת אַרְעָא תוֹתְבוֹתְךָ יֵת כָּל אַרְעָא דְכְנַעַן לְאַחְסָנָת עֲלָם וְאַהוּי לְהוֹן לְאַלְהָ: י וְאָמַר יִי לְאַבְרָהָם וְאַתָּ יֵת קִימִי תִּשְׂר אֵת וּבְנֵיךָ בְּתֶרְךָ לְדְרֵיהוֹן: יא דִּין קִימִי דִּי תִּשְׂרוֹן בִּין מִימְרֵי וּבִינְיֹכֹן וּבִין בְּנֵיךָ בְּתֶרְךָ מְנַדְּ לְכוֹן כָּל דְּבוֹרָא: יב וְתִגְזְרוֹן יֵת בְּשַׂרָא

ג וַיִּפְלַ אַבְרָם עַל-פְּנֵיו וַיִּדְבַּר אֶתֹּו אֱלֹהִים לְאֹמֵר: ד אֲנִי הִנֵּה בְרִיתִי אֵתְךָ וְהָיִיתָ לְאָב הַמּוֹן גּוֹיִם: ה וְלֹא יִקְרָא עוֹד אֶת-שְׁמֶךָ אַבְרָם וְהָיָה שְׁמֶךָ אַבְרָהָם כִּי אֲבִי-הַמּוֹן גּוֹיִם נִתְתִּיךָ: ו וְהִפְרַתִּי אֵתְךָ בְּמֵאֵד מְאֵד וְנִתְתִּיךָ לְגוֹיִם וּמְלָכִים מִמֶּךָ יֵצְאוּ: ז וְהִקְמַתִּי אֶת-בְּרִיתִי בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ וּבֵין זֶרְעֶךָ אַחֲרָיְךָ לְדֹרֹתֶם לְבְרִית עוֹלָם לְהָיוֹת לְךָ לְאֱלֹהִים וּלְזֶרְעֶךָ אַחֲרָיְךָ: ח וְנִתְתִּי לְךָ וּלְזֶרְעֶךָ אַחֲרָיְךָ אֵת אֶרֶץ מִגְדֵיךָ אֵת כָּל-אֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן לְאַחֲזֹת עוֹלָם וְהָיִיתִי לָהֶם לְאֱלֹהִים: ט וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל-אַבְרָהָם וְאַתָּה אֶת-בְּרִיתִי תִשְׁמֹר אֵתְךָ וּזְרַעְךָ אַחֲרָיְךָ לְדֹרֹתֶם: י וְאַתָּ בְרִיתִי אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁמְרוּ בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם וּבֵין זֶרְעֶךָ אַחֲרָיְךָ הַמּוֹל לָכֶם כָּל-זֶכֶר: יא וְנִמְלַתֶם אֵת בְּשַׂר

כ"ט

ולא היה מצטבר עליו: (ז) והקמותי את בריתי. ומה היא הצריכה, להיות לך לאלהים: (ח) לאחוזת עולם. ושם אחיה לכם לאלהים, אבל דבר צחוק לארץ כמו שאין לו אלוה: (ט) ואתה. וי"ז מוסף על ענין ראשון, אני הכה צריתי אֵתְךָ, ואתה הוי זכיר לשמרה, ומה היא שמירתה. זאת צריתי אשר חשמרו המול לכם וגו': (י) ביני וביניכם וגו'. אותם של עכשיו: ובין זרעך אחריך. העמידין להוולד אחריך: המול. כמו להמול, כמו שאתה אומר עשות כמו לעשות: (יא) ונמלתם. כמו ומלתם, והגו"ן צו יתירה ליסוד הנופל צו לפרקים, כמו נ' של נושך ונ' של נושא. ונמלתם כמו ונשאתם, אבל

בריתי. צרית של אבכה, וצרית הארץ להורשה לך על ידי מצוה זו: (ג) ויפל אברם על פניו. ממורא השכינה, שעד שלא מל לא היה צו כח לעמוד ורוח הקדש נצטת עליו, וזכו שנאמר צלעם נופל וגלוי עינים, בצרייתך דר"א מלאתי כן: (ה) כי אב המון גוים. לשון נועריון של שמו, ורי"ש שהיתה צו צחלה, שלא היה אז אלא לארם שהוא מקומו, ועכשיו אז לכל העולם, ואפילו רי"ש שהיתה צו מתחלה לא זז ממקומה, שאף יו"ד של שרי נתרעמה על השכינה, עד שהוסיפה ליהושע, שנאמר ויקרא משה להושע צן נון יהושע? (ו) ונתתיך לגוים. ישראל ואדום, שהרי ישמעאל כבר היה לו

## TORAS MENACHEM

In other words, the *Mishnah* sees circumcision as the *pinnacle* of Avraham's Divine service, whereas according to the *Talmud*, Avraham reached perfection through circumcision alone.

But what, exactly, are these two sources arguing about?

### TWO TYPES OF PERFECTION

The concept of "perfection" can suggest two, quite distinct qualities:

- The lack of imperfection, i.e. the absence of negative qualities.
- Choiceness and wholeness, i.e. the presence of positive qualities.

With the *mitzvah* of circumcision, this would correspond to:

- The absence of the foreskin.
- The advantages of being circumcised.

The *Mishnah* chose to stress the former quality of circumcision: "With all the *mitzvos* that Avraham our father did, he was not called 'perfect' until he circumcised himself." I.e. so long as Avraham remained uncircumcised, he harbored a negative quality which impinged upon the perfection which he had achieved throughout his entire life. The removal of this impediment thus rendered him perfect.

*Rashi* also stresses this aspect of circumcision, even more explicitly, writing that, "as long as the foreskin is upon you, I consider you imperfect."

The *Talmud*, on the other hand, chose to stress the *additional* choiceness and wholeness which circumcision conferred on Avraham, i.e. the positive effects of circumcision. These unique qualities were bestowed upon him as a result of circumcision *alone*: "He was only called 'perfect' because of his circumcision."

### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

The *mitzvos* which a person performs affect the physical limbs with which they are fulfilled. E.g. putting on *tefillin* refines one's head and hands and brings holiness into them. This holiness lingers even after one removes the *tefillin*. Certainly, a hand on which *tefillin* has been placed is incomparable to a hand on which *tefillin* has, God forbid, not been placed.

The distinction is that *tefillin*, like all the other *mitzvos*, refines the body spiritually and confers holiness on it, but the *mitzvah itself* does not continue forever. In contrast, with circumcision, the *mitzvah* itself is forever a part of the person's body.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 3, pp. 759-60)

<sup>3</sup> Avram fell upon his face (in awe of the Divine presence).

God spoke with him, saying, <sup>4</sup> “As for Me, this is My covenant with you: you shall become the father of a multitude of nations. <sup>5</sup> Your name shall no longer be called Avram, but your name shall be Avraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. <sup>6</sup> I will make you extremely fruitful. I will make you into the nations (of Israel and Edom), and kings will emerge from you. <sup>7</sup> I will establish My covenant between Me and between you and between your descendants after you throughout their generations as an everlasting covenant, to be to you for a God and to your descendants after you. <sup>8</sup> I will give you, and your descendants after you, the Land in which you live, the entire Land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession. I will be God to the (inhabitants of the land).”

SEVENTH  
READING

## 🕎 THE COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION 🕎

17:9 **G**od said to Avraham, “As for you, you should keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you, throughout their generations. <sup>10</sup> This is My covenant, which you should observe between Me and you, and your seed after you: that every male among you should be circumcised.

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● If Avraham observed the *mitzvos* before they were given, why didn't he circumcise himself before God's command? (v. 11)

**RIVA:** Since the act of circumcision can only be performed once, Avraham waited for the command, based on the principle that, “One who is commanded and fulfills is greater than one who is not commanded and fulfills.”

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### A THIRD TYPE OF PERFECTION

**Ibn Ezra's** comment to our verse indicates a third dimension to the concept of “perfection.” He writes, “Circumcision was a test of perfection to see if Avraham would accept the *mitzvah* unquestioningly.” I.e. in addition to the removal of negative qualities and the acquisition of positive qualities mentioned above, perfection can also suggest the untarnished simplicity of pure, unquestioning faith.

The two aspects of perfection described above both arise because the *personality* achieves a higher degree of sophistication—be it through the removal of the bad traits, or the acquisition of good traits. This third type of perfection however, is not a function of any particular quality that a person possesses but, to the contrary, it arises from his ability to *disregard* his own personal greatness for the sake of a higher cause.

This third type of perfection expresses itself in the act of circumcision itself. For a father to allow this painful act to be performed on his child, he must disregard his own personal feelings, and reveal within himself the true and unfailing commitment to God which lies within every Jew.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, pp. 44ff.)

#### 🕎 WHY DID AVRAHAM NOT CIRCUMCISE HIMSELF BEFORE BEING TOLD TO DO SO? (v. 11)

**Riva's** explanation is based on a Talmudic passage in tractate *Kidushin* (31a):

*Rabbi Chanina said, “One who is commanded to observe a precept and fulfills the command is greater than one who is not commanded to do so and fulfills it regardless.”*

*Rabbi Yosef [who was blind] said, “Originally, I thought that if anyone would come and tell me that the law favors Rabbi Yehudah, who ruled that a blind person is exempt from mitzvos, I would make a celebratory*

*feast for the Rabbis, since [it turns out that] I was not commanded to observe them and I fulfilled them in any case. Now, I heard the words of Rabbi Chanina that “one who is commanded to observe a precept and fulfills the command is greater than one who is not commanded to do so and fulfills it regardless.” I have decided that, to the contrary, I will make a feast if somebody tells me that the law does not favor Rabbi Yehudah.”*

Rabbi Yosef's change of stance indicates that this issue, whether a command is greater than voluntary observance, is by no means simple. Even Rabbi Yosef had presumed that voluntary observance was greater, until Rabbi Chanina taught him otherwise.

Certainly, a child who is studying Chumash for the first time is unaware

### 🕎 The Last Word 🕎

The covenant of circumcision has a threefold implication:

- a.) It is one of the 613 *mitzvos*, like any other.
- b.) It represents the general connection (covenant) between a Jew and God via the 613 *mitzvos*.
- c.) It represents the intrinsic connection (covenant) that a Jew has with God by virtue of being Jewish.

It is this third aspect (“c”) that began with Avraham our father, for he was the first Jew from whom all other Jews are descended, and he struck a covenant with God. The other two aspects (“a” and “b”) represent a further development of that initial covenant via the giving of the Torah.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 57ff.)

דְּעוֹרְלָתְכוֹן וְתָהִי לְאֵת קָנִים בֵּין מִימְרֵי וּבִינֵיכוֹן: יב וְכֵן תִּמְנָא יוֹמִין יְתַגְזֵר (יְגִזֵר) לְכוֹן כָּל דְּכוּרָא לְדְרִיכוֹן יְלִיד בֵּיתָא וּבֵין כְּסָפָא מִכָּל בַּר עַמְמִין דִּי לֹא מִבְּנֵי הוּא: יג אֲתַגְזֵרָא יְתַגְזֵרוּן (מְגֵזֵר יְגִזֵר) יְלִיד בֵּיתָד וּבֵין כְּסָפָד וְתָהִי קְיָמִי בְּבִשְׂרֻכוֹן לְקָנִים עֲלֵם: יד וְעַרְל דְּכוּרָא דִּי לֹא יְתַגְזֵר (יְגִזֵר) ית בְּשָׂרָא דְּעוֹרְלָתֵיהּ וְיִשְׁתַּיְצִי אֲנָשָׂא הוּא מַעֲמִיָּה ית קְיָמִי אֲשַׁנֵּי: טו וְאָמַר יי לְאַבְרָהָם שְׂרֵי אֲתַתְּדָ לֹא תִקְרִי ית שְׁמָה שְׂרֵי אֲרֵי שְׂרָה שְׁמָה: טז וְאַבְרָהָ יְתָה וְאָף אֲתָן מְנָה לָךְ בַּר וְאַבְרָכִינָהּ וְתָהִי לְכַנְשֵׁין מְלַכִּין דְּשְׁלִיטִין בְּעַמְמִיָּא מְנָה יְהוּן: יז וְנִפְל אֲבָרְהָם עַל אֲפוּהֵי

עֲרֻלְתְּכֶם וְהָיָה לְאוֹת בְּרִית בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם: יב וּבֶן־שָׁמְנַת יָמִים יִמּוֹל לָכֶם כָּל־זָכָר לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם יְלִיד בְּיָת וּמִקְנַת־כֶּסֶף מִכָּל בֶּן־זָכָר אֲשֶׁר לֹא מִזְרַעְךָ הוּא: יג הַמּוֹל | יִמּוֹל יְלִיד בֵּיתְךָ וּמִקְנַת כֶּסֶף וְהִיתָה בְרִיתִי בְּבִשְׂרֻכְךָ לְבְרִית עוֹלָם: יד וְעַרְל | זָכָר אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִמּוֹל אֶת־בְּשָׂר עֲרָלְתּוֹ וְנִבְרָתָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהוּא מֵעַמְמִיָּה אֶת־בְּרִיתִי הַפֶּר: טו וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־אַבְרָהָם שְׂרֵי אֲשַׁתְּךָ לֹא־תִקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמָה שְׂרֵי כִּי שְׂרָה שְׁמָה: טז וּבְרַכְתִּי אֹתָהּ וְגַם נָתַתִּי מִמֶּנָּה לָךְ בֶּן וּבְרַכְתִּיָּהּ וְהִיתָה לְגוֹיִם מְלֻכֵי עַמִּים מִמֶּנָּה יְהוּן: יז וַיִּפֹּל אֲבָרְהָם עַל־פָּנָיו וַיִּצְחַק וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלָבוֹ הֲלִבְן מֵאָה־שָׁנָה יוֹלֵד וְאִם־שְׂרָה הִבְתָּ־תִשְׁעִים

כש"י

בהנחת שדים כשלארכה לכך ציוס משתה של יחזק, שהיו מרננים עליהם שהציוס אסופי מן השוק ואומרים צנוו הוּא, והציוס כל אחת צנוו עמה ומניקתה לא הביאה, והיא היניקה את כולם. הוא שנאמר היניקה צניס שרה. צ"ר רמזו צמקל"ט: (יז) ויפל אברהם על פניו ויצחק. זה תרגום אונקלוס לשון שמחה וחדו, ושל שרה לשון מחוך, למדת שאצרכה האמין ושמת, ושרה לא האמינה ולגלגה, וזהו שהקפיד הקצ"ח על שרה ולא הקפיד על אצרכה: הלבן. יש תמיכות שכן קיימות, כמו הנגלה נגלית, הרואה אתה, אף זו היא קיימת, וכך אמר צלצו, הנעשה חסד זה לאחר מה שהקצ"ח עושה לי: ואם שרה הבת תשעים שנה. היתה כדאי לילד, ואף על פי שדורות הראשונים היו מולידים צני ת"ק שנה, צימי

ימול לשון יפגל, כמו ישעה, יאכל. (צ"ר"י ישן אינו): (יז) יליד בית. שילדתו השפחה צנית: ומקנת כסף. שקנאו משולד: (יג) המול ימול יליד ביתך. כאן כפל עליו, ולא אמר לשמונה ימים, ללמדך שיש יליד בית נמול לאחר (ס"א לאחד) שנה ימים, כמו שפורש צמסכת שנת: (יד) וערל זכר. כאן למד שהמילה צארתו מקום שהוא ניכר בין זכר לנקבה: אשר לא ימול. משיגיב לכלל עונשין ונכרתה, אבל אצו חין ענוש עליו כרת, אבל עובר צעשה: ונברתה הנפש. הולך עירי ומת קודם זמנו: (טו) לא תקרא את שמה שרי. דמשמע שרי לי ולא לאחרים, כי שרה סתם שמה, שחאה שרה על כל: (טז) וברכתי אתה. ומה היא הצרכה, שחזרה לנעורתה שנאמר היתה לי עדנה: וברכתיה.

#### TORAS MENACHEM

of this debate, and one could not possibly expect a *child* to come to the correct conclusion when the matter was not even clear to the Sages of the Talmud!

This leaves us with the question, at the literal level of Torah interpretation, why Avraham did not circumcise himself before he was commanded to do so.

#### THE EXPLANATION

After the flood, God told Noah, "I will demand (an account) for your blood and for your souls" (9:5), on which *Rashi* comments that "your blood" refers to, "one who sheds his own blood."

At first glance, this appears to be a prohibition against suicide, as *Rashi* continues, commenting on the words "and your souls," that this refers to, "one who strangles himself, even though no blood issued from him."

However, if the verse was merely prohibiting suicide, the Torah could simply have written, "I will demand (an account) for your souls," and it would have been self-understood that spilling one's own blood in an act of suicide was prohibited. Why did the Torah include the additional words, "I will demand (an account) for your blood and for your souls"? *Rashi* explains that this refers to, "one who sheds his own blood," i.e. a separate prohibition of spilling one's own blood, regardless of whether

this occurred in an act of suicide. It is thus prohibited under Noachide law for a person to make himself bleed, even with a small cut.

Halachically, Avraham was obligated by the laws which God gave to Noah, which were binding on all mankind. Avraham's decision to observe the *mitzvos* of the Torah before they were given was, technically speaking, a *hiddur* (an enhancement of his obligatory observance of the Noachide laws).

Under Noachide law, Avraham was prohibited from circumcising himself before he was commanded to do so, as this would involve spilling his own blood. And since, for Avraham, circumcision was only a *hiddur* (enhancement) prior to God's command, he would not have been permitted to transgress an outright *prohibition* of spilling blood, in order to achieve a non-obligatory enhancement to his Divine Service.

#### TWO PROBLEMS

The above explanation however presents us with two problems:

a.) Ya'akov's sons told the people of Shechem that, for Dinah to marry Shechem, all the people of Shechem would need to circumcise themselves (below 34:14-17).

But, if spilling blood was prohibited under Noachide law, how could Ya'akov's sons have demanded circumcision?

- <sup>11</sup> “You should circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and it will be the sign of a covenant between Me and you.”
- <sup>12</sup> At the age of eight days, every male shall be circumcised to you, throughout your generations, one that is born in the house (to a slavewoman), or one that is purchased with money (after he is born) from any foreigner, who is not of your seed. <sup>13</sup> Those born in your house and those purchased with your money shall be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh as an everlasting covenant.
- <sup>14</sup> “(As for) an uncircumcised male who does not circumcise the flesh of his foreskin, (when he reaches the age of liability,) that soul will be cut off from its people (so that he remains childless, and dies before his time). He has broken My covenant.”

### 🕎 SARAI'S NAME IS CHANGED—SHE IS PROMISED A CHILD 🕎

17:15 **G**od said to Avraham, “As for your wife Sarai, you shall not call her by the name Sarai, for Sarah is now her name. <sup>16</sup> I will bless her (so that she can produce milk), and I will also give you a son from her. I will bless her, and she will become (a mother of) nations. Kings of nations will come from her.”

<sup>17</sup> Avraham fell on his face and rejoiced. He said to himself, “Could (anyone be so fortunate as me) that a child be born to a person who is a hundred years old? Could (anyone be so fortunate as) Sarah,

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

##### ● Why was Sarai's name changed to Sarah? (v. 15)

**RASHI:** Sarai (שָׂרַי), suffixed by the letter Yud) means “my princess,” suggesting that she is a princess for me (i.e. for Avraham), but not for others. Now, Sarah (שָׂרָה) shall be her name. The absence of any suffix indicates that she will be a princess to all mankind.

#### TORAS MENACHEM

Admittedly, the request for circumcision was a ploy, for Ya'akov's sons planned to eliminate the people of Shechem while they were weakened

from circumcision (see commentaries to 34:30). But, surely, if spilling blood was prohibited by Noachide law, wouldn't the people of Shechem have become suspicious when they were asked to be circumcised? Wouldn't they have wondered: “Why are Ya'akov's sons asking us to transgress Noachide law?”

b.) In *Parshas Mikeitz*, Rashi writes that Yosef refused to give grain to the Egyptian people unless they circumcised themselves (*Rashi* to 41:55). How are we to understand Yosef's request if spilling blood was prohibited for a non-Jew?

Both these questions can be answered with God's command to Avraham here in *Parshas Lech Lecha*. God told Avraham that, in addition to circumcising “you and your descendants after you” (v. 9), he should also circumcise “those born in your house and those purchased with your money” (v. 13), i.e. those people who were under Avraham's direct control.

Therefore Yosef, who was the dictator of the entire land of Egypt, was required to instruct his citizens to circumcise themselves, since they were all under his control. They thus required circumcision as the extended household of Yosef.

And similarly, the people of Shechem were led to believe that they were becoming part of the extended household of Ya'akov: “We will be one people” (34:16). Therefore they would be required to circumcise themselves, based on God's command to Avraham here in *Parshas Lech Lecha*.

### 🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

Sarah's name signified that she became “a princess to all mankind” (*Rashi*, v. 15), whereas Avraham did not become a prince but rather, “the father of a multitude of nations” (v. 5).

This indicates that Sarah remained aloof from the nations to a greater extent than Avraham, since a princess remains aloof from her nation, whereas a father interacts with his children.

Because Avraham was more connected to the nations, it was more difficult for him to perceive the exclusive quality of Yitzchak, his Jewish son, over Yishma'el, a non-Jew. Thus, when he is informed here of Yitzchak's birth, Avraham exclaimed, “If only Yishma'el will live (in fear of) You, (that would be sufficient)!” (v. 18).

Sarah, however, was a “princess,” totally aloof from the nations of the world. Consequently, it was she who perceived the superior quality of Yitzchak and convinced Avraham to send Yishma'el away (see 21:9ff.).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 147ff.)

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 146; vol. 10, pp. 138-9)

וחדו ואמר בלביה הלבר מאה שנין יהי ולד  
 ואם שרה הבת תשעין שנין תליד: יה ואמר  
 אברהם קדם יי לוי וישמעאל יתקום קדמך:  
 יט ואמר יי בקושטא שרה אתתך תליד לך  
 בר ותקרי ית שמייה יצחק ואקים ית קימי  
 עמיה לקים עלם לבנוהי בתרוהי: כ ועל  
 וישמעאל קבילית צלותך הא ברכת יתיה  
 ואפיש יתיה ואסגי יתיה לחדא לחדא תרי  
 עשר רברבין יוליד ואתנינה לעם סגי: כא ונת  
 קימי אקים עם יצחק די תליד לך שרה לזמנא  
 הדין בשתא אוחרנתא: כב ושיצי למלא  
 עמיה ואסתלק יקרא די מעלוהי דאברהם:  
 כג ודבר אברהם ית וישמעאל בריה וית כל  
 ילידי ביתיה וית כל וביני כספיה כל דכורא  
 באנשי בית אברהם וגזר ית בשרא  
 דעורלתהון בכרן יומא הדין כמא די מליל  
 עמיה יי: כד ואברהם בר תשעין ותשע שנין  
 כד גזר בשרא דעורלתיה: כה וישמעאל  
 בריה בר תלת עשרי שנין כד גזר ית בשרא  
 דעורלתיה: כו בכרן יומא הדין אתגזר (גזר)  
 אברהם וישמעאל בריה: כז וכל אנשי ביתיה  
 ילידי ביתא וזביני כספא מן בני עממיא  
 אתגזרו (גזרו) עמיה: פ פ פ

שנה תלד: יח ויאמר אברהם אל-האלהים לו וישמעאל יחיה  
 לפניך: יט ויאמר אלהים אבל שרה אשתך ילדת לך בן  
 וקראת את-שמו יצחק והקמתי את-בריתי אתו לברית  
 עולם לזרעו אחריו: כ ולישמעאל שמעתיד הנה | ברכתי  
 אתו והפריתי אתו והרביתי אתו במאד מאד שנים-עשר  
 נשיאם יוליד ונתתיו לגוי גדול: כא ואת-בריתי אקים  
 את-יצחק אשר תלד לך שרה למועד הזה בשנה האחרת:  
 כב ויכל לדבר אתו ויעל אלהים מעל אברהם: כג ויפקח  
 אברהם את-ישמעאל בנו ואת כל-ילידי ביתו ואת  
 כל-מקנת כספו כל-זכר באנשי בית אברהם ומל את-בשר  
 ערלתם בעצם היום הזה כאשר דבר אתו אלהים:  
 (מפמיר) כד ואברהם בן-תשעים ותשע שנה בהמלו בשר  
 ערלתו: כה וישמעאל בנו בן-שלוש עשרה שנה בהמלו את  
 בשר ערלתו: כו בעצם היום הזה נמול אברהם וישמעאל  
 בנו: כז וכל-אנשי ביתו יליד בית ומקנת-כסף מאת בן-גכר  
 נמלו אתו: פ פ פ

קכ"ו פסוקים, נמל"ו סימן. מכנדי"ב סימן.

כש"י

שנימול, וק' שנה של אברהם. (ס"א, ואת צריתי למח נאמר, הרי כבר כתיב  
 ואתה את צריתי תשמור אתה וזרעך וגו', אלא לפי שאומר והקמותי וגו',  
 יכול בני ישמעאל ובני קטורה בכלל הקיום, תלמוד לומר והקמותי את צריתי  
 אתו, ולא עם אחרים. ואת צריתי אקים את יצחק למח נאמר, אלא למח שהיה  
 קדוש מצטן. דבר אחר, אמר רבי אבא, מכאן למד קל וחומר בן הבצירה מבן  
 האמה, כתיב הנה צרכתי אותו והפריתי אותו והרביתי אותו זה ישמעאל,

אברהם נתמעטו השנים כבר, וצח תשות כח צעולם, ולא ולמד מעשרה דורות  
 שמנה ועד אברהם, שמיכרו חולדותיהן בני ס' ובני ע': (יח) לו ישמעאל  
 יחיה. הלואי שיחיה ישמעאל, איני כדאי לקבל מתן שכר כזה: יחיה לפניך.  
 יחיה ציראתך, כמו התהלך לפני, פלח קדמי: (יט) אבל. לשון אמתת דברים,  
 וכן אצל אשמים אנהגו', אצל בן אין לה? וקראת את שמו יצחק. על שם  
 הלחוק. ויש אומרים, על שם העשרה נסיונות, ולי שנה של שרה, וחי ימים



who, at ninety years old, (will have the merit) of giving birth?”

<sup>18</sup> Avraham said to God, “If only Yishma’el will live (in fear of) You, (that would be sufficient!)”

<sup>19</sup> God said, “Indeed, your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will name him Yitzchak. I will establish My covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him. <sup>20</sup> Regarding Yishma’el, I have heard you. Look!—I have blessed him, I will make him fruitful, and extremely numerous. He will father twelve princes, and I will make him into a great nation. <sup>21</sup> But I will establish My covenant with Yitzchak, whom Sarah will bear to you at this time next year.”

<sup>22</sup> He finished speaking with him, and God ascended from Avraham.

## 8TH TEST: AVRAHAM CIRCUMCISES HIMSELF AND HIS HOUSEHOLD

17:23 **A**vraham took Yishma’el his son, all those born in his house and all those purchased with his money,—every male of the people of Avraham’s household, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins on that very day, like God had told him.

<sup>24</sup> Avraham was ninety-nine years old, when the flesh of his foreskin was circumcised.

MAFTIR <sup>25</sup> Yishma’el his son was thirteen years old, when he had the flesh of his foreskin circumcised.

<sup>26</sup> On that very day, Avraham was circumcised, and (so was) Yishma’el his son. <sup>27</sup> All the people of his household, those born in his house and those bought with money from foreigners, were circumcised with him.

THE HAFTARAH FOR LECH LECHA IS ON PAGE 373.

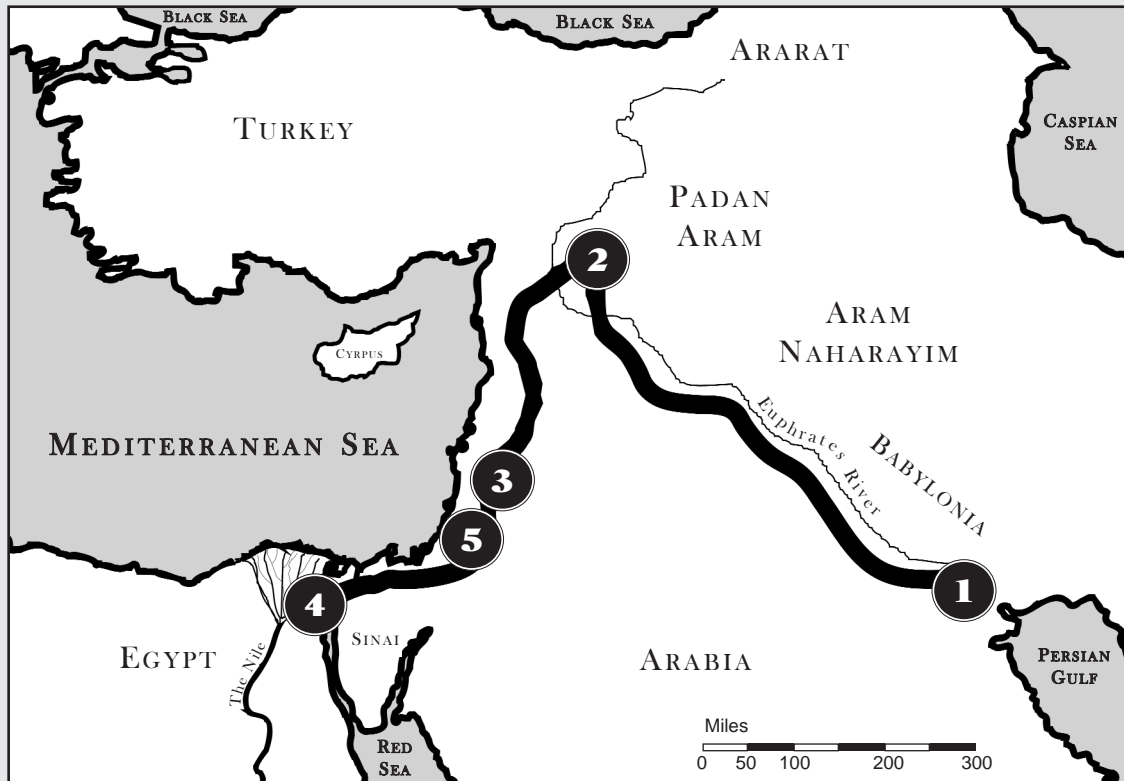
### Parshas Lech Lecha contains 1 positive *mitzvah*

1. The *mitzvah* of circumcision [17:10]

אברהם סבין, ואחז בערלתו ורצה לחתוך, והיה מתירא שיהי זקן, מה עשה הקב"ה שלא ידו ואחז עמו, שנאמר וברית עמו הברית, לו לא נאמר, אלא עמו, זרעית רב. רש"י יטן): (כז) בהמולו את בשר ערלתו. זאברהם לא נאמר את, לפי שלא היה חסר אלא חתוך בשר, שכבר נתמך על ידי תשמיש, אבל ישמעאל שיהי ילד, הוצק לחתוך ערלה ולפרוע המילה, לכך נאמר זו את': (כו) בעצם היום הזה. שמלאו לאברהם ל"ט שנה ולישמעאל שלש עשרה שנים, נמול אברהם וישמעאל בנו: חסלת פרשת לך לך

וקל וחומר ואת בריתי אקים את יצחק): את בריתי. ברית המילה תהא מסורה לזרעו של יצחק: (כ) שנים עשר נשיאים. כעניים יכלו, כמו נשיאים ורוח': (כז) מעל אברהם. לשון נקיה הוא כלפי שכניה, ולמדנו שהלדיקים מרכבתו של מקום': (כג) בעצם היום. זו זיוס שנלוכה, זיוס ולא בלילה, לא נתיירא לא מן הגוים ולא מן הליניס, ושלא יהיו אויביו וזני דורו אומרים, אילו ראינוהו לא הנחנוהו למול ולקיים מצותו של מקום: וימל. לשון ויפעל: (כד) בהמולו. כהפעלו. כמו זכראס': (כה) בהמולו. נעל

## THE JOURNEYS OF AVRAHAM



- 1 — **UR KASDIM.** Avraham is born here in the year 1948 (from creation). Sarah is born in 1958. They marry in 1973 [11:27,29. *Seder Hadoros*].
- 2 — **CHARAN.** In the year 2000 Avraham escapes Nimrod's fiery furnace and the family flees to Charan [11:31, *Seder Hadoros*].
- 3 — **THE LAND OF CANA'AN.** In the year 2023, God reveals Himself to Avraham and tells him to go to "the land which I will show you." Avraham travels to the land of Cana'an, leaving Terach and Nachor in Charan. On reaching Shechem he builds an altar and offers sacrifices to God. He moves progressively southwards towards Jerusalem [12:1-9].
- 4 — **EGYPT.** That year, when famine strikes, Avraham moves temporarily to Egypt [12:10ff].
- 5 — **RETURN TO THE LAND OF CANA'AN.** After the famine ends, he retraces his steps through the land of Cana'an, returning to the site where his tent was pitched in Beis Ail [13:1-3].

# parshas Vayeira

פרשת וירא

## 🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

At first glance, *Parshas Vayeira* is a direct continuation of *Parshas Lech Lecha*. In *Parshas Lech Lecha* we read of Avraham's journeys, disputes, wars and family life. And here, in *Parshas Vayeira* the story continues, as we read a further installment in the life and times of the first Jew.

The Torah, however, is not a history book. It is intended to be a source of valuable teachings and inspiration to guide us along the path towards our Creator. So we could not possibly be reading here two "installments" of Avraham's story. Each *Parsha* is a self-contained entity in itself, complete with its own unique message, conveyed by its name.

So, what is the lesson of *Vayeira*, and how is it distinct from *Lech Lecha*?

The basic distinction between these two *Parshiyos* is that *Parshas Vayeira* describes Avraham's life and efforts *after being circumcised*.

Circumcision is referred to not only as a *mitzvah*—a particular method of connecting to God—but, more importantly, as a *covenant*. I.e. it encapsulates the message of Judaism *in general*.

There is a basic principle of Judaism that spirituality should not be relegated to the abstract higher spheres of existence. Instead, the Torah's principles need to become tangible and apparent in man's flesh and blood.

Chasidic thought shuns the approach of abandoning physicality in a search for spirituality. On the contrary, our goal is to make the physical world *receptive* and *sensitive* to the Divine. And this occurs most vividly and effectively in the covenant of circumcision, where the spirituality associated with a *mitzvah* becomes permanently embossed in man's flesh.

And that is why this *Parsha* is called *Vayeira*—"God appeared to him"—because everything that we read in the following pages describes a new era in Avraham's life, where his physical body had become a receptacle for Divinity, through the covenant of circumcision.

The lesson for us: As descendants of Avraham, God's presence is very apparent in our lives. For this reason we find that even children are naturally drawn to kissing a *mezuzah*, or saying a blessing, etc.

So when we read in the Torah how God appears to Avraham, we should be aware that God also appears to us. The only real difference is that Avraham was given the ability to see this with his eyes.

But, as descendants of Avraham, we should not be satisfied with God's invisible presence. We should cry out and ask: Why is it that God showed Himself to Avraham, and He does not show Himself to us?

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 10, p. 49ff; *Sichas Parshas Vayeira* 5752)

« וַיִּרְא אֱלֹהִים וְהוּא יִתְבַּר בְּתַרְעֵי מִשְׁכְּנָא בְּמִיתָם יוֹמָא: ב וַיִּקַּף עֵינָוְהוּי וְחִזָּא וְהוּא תִּלְתָּא גּוֹבְרִין קְנִימִין עֲלוּזְהוּי וְחִזָּא וְרַחֵם לְקַדְמוּתְהוֹן מִתְרַע מִשְׁכְּנָא וְסָגִיד עַל אַרְעָא: ג וַיֹּאמֶר יי אִם בְּעֵן אֲשַׁכְּחִית רַחֲמִין

יח א וַיִּרְא אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה בְּאֵלֹנֵי מִמְרָא וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב פֶּתַח-הָאֹהֶל בְּתָם הַיּוֹם: ב וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנְשִׁים נֹצְבִים עָלָיו וַיִּרְא וַיִּרְץ לְקִרְאתָם מִפֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אַרְצָה: ג וַיֹּאמֶר אֲדֹנָי אִם-נָא מָצְאתִי חַן בְּעֵינֶיךָ אֶל-נָא תֵּעָבֵר מֵעַל

רש"י

המלט על נפשך, למדת שהאחד היה מנילי: נצבים עליו. לפניו, כמו ועליו מטב מנשה<sup>8</sup> אצל לשון נקיה הוא כלפי המלאכים: וירא. מהו וירא וירא שני פעמים, הראשון כמשמעו, והשני לשון הבנה, נסתכל שהיו נלצים במקום אחד, וכבין שלא היו רואים להטריחו, ואף על פי שידועים היו שאלא לקראתם, עמדו במקומם לכבודו, ולהראותו שלא ראו להטריחו, וקדם הוא ורץ לקראתם. (כך הגירסא ברש"י ישן) צצא מניעא<sup>9</sup> כתיב נלצים עליו, וכתיב וירץ לקראתם, כד חזוהו דכוכ שרי ואסר פירשו ממנו, מיד וירץ לקראתם: (ג) ויאמר אדני אם נא וגו'. לגדול שבהם אמר, וקראם כולם אדונים, ולגדול אמר אל נא תעבור, וכיון שלא יעבור הוא, יעמדו חזיריו עמו, ובלשון זה הוא חול. דבר אחר, קודם הוא<sup>10</sup>, והיה אומר להקצ"ה לכמתין לו עד שירון ויכניס את האורחים, ואף על פי שכתוב אחר וירץ לקראתם, האמירה קודם לכן היתה, ודרך המקראות לדבר כן, כמו שפירשתי אלל לא ידון רוחי צאדם, שנכתב אחר ויולד נח, ואי אפשר לומר, אלא אם כן קודם גזרת ק"כ

(ה) וירא אליו. לזכר את החולה, אמר רבי חמא זר חנינא, יום שלישי למילתו היה, וצא הקצ"ה ושאל בשלומי<sup>1</sup>: באלוני ממרא. הוא שנתן לו ענה על המילה, לפיכך נגלה אליו בחלקו<sup>2</sup>: ישב. ישב כתיב, צקש לעמוד, אמר לו הקצ"ה שב ואני אעמוד, ואחר סימן לבניך<sup>3</sup> שעתיד אני להתיב צעדת דידין וכן יושבין, שנאמר אליהם נצב צעדת אל<sup>4</sup>: פתח האהל. לראות אם יש עובר ושז ויכניסם צדיתו: בחם היום. הוליא הקצ"ה חמה מנרתיקה שלא להטריחו צאורחים<sup>5</sup>, ולפי שראהו מנטער שלא היו אורחים צאים, הביא המלאכים עליו צדמות חגשים: (ב) והנה שלשה אנשים. אחד לזכר את שרה, ואחד להפוך את סדום, ואחד לרפאות את אברהם, שאין מלאך אחד עושה שתי שליחות<sup>6</sup>, תדע לך שכן כל הפרשה הוא מזכירן בלשון רבים, ויאכלו, ויאמרו אליו, וצבשורה נאמר שוב אשוב אליך, ובהפכת סדום הוא אומר כי לא אוכל לעשות דבר, לבלתי הפכי, ורפאל שרפא את אברהם הלך משם להגיל את לוט<sup>7</sup>, הוא שנאמר ויהי כהוליאם אותם החולה ויאמר

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did God reveal Himself to Avraham? (v. 1)

**RASHI:** To visit the sick. Rabbi Chama bar Chanina said: It was the third day from Avraham's circumcision, and [God] came to inquire about his welfare.

**MIZRACHI:** Why did God wait until the third day after his circumcision to visit Avraham? Because, on the first day Avraham was busy circumcising Yishma'el and all the members of his household, so God did not visit him. God then chose to visit him on the third day and not the second, since the third day after circumcision is particularly dangerous, whereas the second day is not.

**OHR HACHAYIM:** The *Shulchan Aruch* rules that "friends and relatives are allowed to visit a sick person immediately, whereas others must wait three days" (*Yoreh De'ah* 335:1). The reason for this is because the immediate presence of anyone but a friend or relative would publicly "declare" the person as being sick, which is not good for his *mazal* (fortune).

Even though God is a "relative," so to speak, of every Jew, nevertheless a visit from God is a highly public affair. Therefore, in this respect, God could not be considered a "relative" and therefore He waited before visiting Avraham.

**RAMBAN:** God revealed himself to Avraham in order to heal him. The Divine revelation was a cure for the sickness caused by his circumcision, as the verse states, "In the light of the King's countenance there is life" (*Proverbs* 16:15).

● Did Avraham feel pain from his circumcision? (v. 1)

**MIDRASH:** Rabbi Abba bar Kahana said, "He felt pain, in order that God could double his reward."

Rabbi Levi said, "Avraham didn't circumcise himself. He simply looked and found himself circumcised." Rabbi Birchya said, "On that occasion, Rabbi Abba bar Kahana cursed Rabbi Levi, saying, 'You are a liar and a cheater!'" (*Bereishis Rabah* 47:9).

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 WHY DID GOD WAIT THREE DAYS?

**Mizrachi** argues that God waited until the third day after Avraham's circumcision before visiting him because the third day in particular is a dangerous time. However, this solution is problematic since:

a.) The question whether the second or third day is more dangerous is disputed among the Talmudic commentaries. Thus, *Mizrachi's* solution would only be valid according to those opinions which hold that the third day is more dangerous than the second. According to the other opinions, that the second day is more dangerous, an explanation is still required. [In fact, *Rashi* himself, in his commentary to the *Talmud*, rules in accordance with this latter opinion (*Shabbos* 134b).]

b.) The *mitzvah* of visiting the sick applies to *all* sick people, and not only those who are in severe danger. So, even if one does accept *Mizrachi's* assertion that the third day is more dangerous, it still fails to explain why God did not visit Avraham on the second day after his circumcision, even if it was a less dangerous time.

**Ohr haChayim** argues that God did not visit Avraham immediately, so as not to attract attention.

However, this is difficult to accept since:

a.) It is certainly within God's capability to visit a person privately. God is not *forced* to appear in a public manner.

b.) Verse 1 states that God appeared during "the heat of the day," on

## ☞ THREE ANGELS VISIT AVRAHAM ☞

**I8** **G**od appeared to (Avraham) in the plains of Mamre (three days after his circumcision), while he was sitting at the entrance of the tent (where he had been looking for passersby to welcome), in the heat of the day.

<sup>2</sup> He looked around and saw—look!—three (angels, in the form of) men were standing in front of him. He (realized that they did not wish to trouble him) so he ran toward them from the entrance of the tent, and he prostrated himself on the ground.

<sup>3</sup> He said, “My lords! If I have found favor in your eyes, please do not go away from your servant!”

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### ☞ Sparks of Chasidus ☞

The *Kabalah* speaks of “50 gates of spiritual understanding,” 49 of which can be achieved by a person as a result of his own initiative. The final 50<sup>th</sup> gate is then granted by God from above.

When Avraham had circumcised himself, he had reached the greatest degree of spiritual perfection that he could possibly achieve as a human being—the 49<sup>th</sup> gate—and he became “sick” yearning for the fiftieth gate. This is alluded to by the fact that חֲלוּהוּ (the Hebrew term for ‘sick person’) has the numerical value (*gematria*) of 49. Then, “God appeared to him,” revealing to him the 50<sup>th</sup> gate of spiritual understanding, which cured his spiritual sickness.

And, being that his physical sickness was a reflection of his spiritual dissatisfaction, the Divine revelation healed him physically too.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeira* 5750)

#### ☞ The Last Word ☞

When the Rebbe *Rashab* was four or five years old and he learned that “God appeared to (Avraham),” he burst into tears and complained to his grandfather (the *Tzemach Tzedek*): “Why doesn’t God reveal Himself to me?”

The *Tzemach Tzedek* replied, “When a Jew decides to circumcise himself at the age of 99, he deserves that God should reveal Himself to him.”

The fact that the previous Rebbe (Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch) told this story in public and publicized it, proves that it contains a practical lesson in the education of all children, not just exceptional individuals, such as the Rebbe *Rashab*.

Namely, that while in the past children could only be drawn towards physical prizes and rewards—as the *Rambam* writes that children should be tempted to observe Torah and *mitzvos* with prizes of nuts etc.” (*Perush Hamishnayos, Sanhedrin, beg. perek Cheilek*); nowadays however, times have changed and even small children can be taught to have a desire for spiritual things, for Divine revelation, to the extent that its absence reduces them to tears.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 66)

which *Rashi* comments, “God took the sun out of its sheath so as not to trouble him with guests.” From this we see that nobody was present in any case when “God appeared to Avraham,” and that it was indeed a private affair.

We are thus left with the question: why did God wait until the third day before visiting Avraham?

#### THE EXPLANATION

We can solve the above problem by first posing a further question:

The act of circumcision was the first—and only—*mitzvah* that Avraham performed with his body. With it he entered, together with all his future descendants, into a holy covenant with God. It represented an unprecedented leap in his own Divine service, towards which he had been heading his entire life.

So, why did he feel pain at all? Surely, Avraham should have been so overwhelmed with joy at receiving the *mitzvah* of circumcision that he should not have felt any pain?

In fact, we find in Jewish Law that although it is generally prohibited to fast on *Shabbos* (since it is a time when a person may not cause himself suffering), nevertheless a person who experienced a bad dream is permitted to fast on *Shabbos* to annul the dream. This is because its annulment through fasting actually causes him pleasure, and not suffering, because he is so disturbed by the dream (See *Shulchan Aruch Admor Hazakein, Orach Chaim* 288:3).

Now, if this spiritual alleviation of physical distress is possible even by an ordinary person—since the *Code of Jewish Law* speaks to the average person—then all the more so would we expect Avraham to feel only joy at his circumcision, and not pain?

Furthermore, when Rabbi Levi (in the *Midrash*) expressed such a view, that Avraham felt no pain, he was personally insulted by his colleague Rabbi Abba bar Kahana, who called him a “liar and a cheater.” Surely Rabbi Abba bar Kahana could have made a more dignified response? What was the need for such harsh language?

The solution to all the above problems lies in the fact that the sensation of pain is actually a *fundamental part of the mitzvah of circumcision*. The verse states, “My covenant should be in your flesh” (above, 17:13), which suggests that the *flesh itself* should feel the effects of the *mitzvah*. So, a failure to feel pain would mean that God’s covenant had not properly penetrated the “flesh” of man.

Consequently, if Avraham would not have felt pain while, and as a result of, circumcising himself then he would not have been observing the *mitzvah* properly. Therefore, *despite* his great joy and spiritual elation, Avraham *forced himself* to be aware of the natural pain which his body was experiencing, so that God’s covenant should penetrate the physical body.

קָדְמוֹ לֹא כָּעַן תִּעֲבֹר מֵעַל עֲבֹדָה: ד יִסְבוּן כָּעַן זְעִיר מִיָּא וְאֶסְחוּ רִגְלֵיכֶם וְאֶסְתַּמְיִכוּ תַּחְתֵּי אֵילָנָא: ה וְאֶסְבּ פֶּתַח דְּלִחְמָא וְסַעְדוּ לְבָבוֹן בְּתַר כֹּן תִּעֲבְרוּן אַרְי עַל כֹּן עֲבַרְתוּן עַל עֲבֹדְכוֹן וְאָמְרוּ כֹּן תִּעֲבִיד כְּמָא דִּי מְלִילְתָא: ו וְאוּחֵי אֲבָרְהָם לְמִשְׁכְּנָא לֹת שָׂרָה וְאָמַר אוּחֵי תִּלַּת סָאִין קְמָחָא דְסוּלְתָא לְוִישֵׁי וְעֲבִידֵי גְרִיצָן: ז וְלֹת תּוֹרֵי רְהַט אֲבָרְהָם וְנָסִיב בְּר תּוֹרֵי רַבִּיד וְטַב וַיְהִי לְעוֹלָמָא וְאוּחֵי לְמַעֲבַד יְתִיה: ח וְנָסִיב שְׁמֹן וְחֵלֶב וּבֵר תּוֹרֵי דֵי עֶבֶד וַיְהִי קְדָמֵיהוֹן וְהוּא מְשַׁמֵּשׁ עֲלוֹנֵיהוֹן תַּחְתֵּי אֵילָנָא וְאָכְלוּ: ט וְאָמְרוּ לִיה אֵן שָׂרָה אֲתַתְּךָ וְאָמַר הָא כְּמִשְׁכְּנָא: י וְאָמַר מִיתֵב אֲתוּב לְוִתְךָ כְּעַדָן

עֲבֹדָה: ד יִקְחֵנָא מְעַט־מִים וְרַחֲצוּ רִגְלֵיכֶם וְהִשְׁעֵנוּ תַּחַת הָעֵץ: ה וְאִקְחָה פֶּתַח־לָחֶם וְסַעְדוּ לְבַבְכֶם אַחֵר תִּעֲבְרוּ כִּי־עַל־כֵּן עֲבַרְתֶּם עַל־עֲבֹדְכֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ כֹּן תַּעֲשֶׂה כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ: ו וַיִּמְהַר אֲבָרְהָם הָאֵהָלָה אֶל־שָׂרָה וַיֹּאמֶר מִהֲרֵי שְׁלֹשׁ סָאִים קָמַח סֹלֶת לְוִישֵׁי וְעֵשִׂי עֲגוֹת: ז וְאֶל־הַבָּקָר רֵץ אֲבָרְהָם וַיִּקַּח בֶּן־בָּקָר הֶדֶד וְטוֹב וַיִּתֵּן אֶל־הַזֶּעֶר וַיִּמְהַר לַעֲשׂוֹת אֹתוֹ: ח וַיִּקַּח חֲמָאָה וְחֵלֶב וּבֶן־הַבָּקָר אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיִּתֵּן לְפָנֵיהֶם וְהוּא־עַמֵּד עֲלֵיהֶם תַּחַת הָעֵץ וַיֹּאכְלוּ: ט וַיֹּאמְרוּ \*אֵלֵינוּ אֵיהָ שָׂרָה אֲשֶׁתְּךָ וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה בְּאֵהָל: י וַיֹּאמֶר שׁוּב אָשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ כְּעֵת חַיָּה

\*נקוד על אי

רש"י

ג' פרים היו, כדי להכילן ג' לשונות צחרלל<sup>11</sup>: אל הנער. זה ישמעאל, לחנכו צמלות<sup>12</sup>: (ח) ויקח חמאה וגו'. ולחם לא הביא, לפי שפירסה שרה נדה, שחזר לה אורח כנשים אותו היום, ונטמאת העיסה<sup>13</sup>: חמאה. שומן החלב שקולטין מעל פניו: ובן הבקר אשר עשה. אשר תקן, קמח קמח שתקן, אמטי ואייתי קמייכו: ויאכלו. נראו כמו שאכלו, מכאן שלא ישנה אדם מן המנהג<sup>14</sup>: (ט) ויאמרו אליו. נקוד על אי"ו שצאליו, ותניא רבי שמעון בן אלעזר אומר, כל מקום שהכתב רצה על הנקודה, אתה דורש הכתב וכו', וכאן הנקודה רצה על הכתב אתה דורש הנקודה, שאף לשרה שאלו היו אברהם למדנו שישאל אדם צאכסניא שלו לריש על האשה ולאשה על האיש. צצצא מליעא<sup>15</sup>, אומרים יודעים היו מלאכי השרת שרה אמנו היכן הייתה, אלא להודיע שנזועה הייתה, כדי לחצצה על צעלה, אמר רבי יוסי בר חיניא, כדי לשגר לה כוס של ברכה: הנה באהל. נזועה היא: (י) בעת חיה. כעת הזאת לשנה הצאה, ופסח היה, ולפסח הצא נולד יצחק, מדלא קרינן

שנה. ושתי הלשונות צבראשית רצה<sup>1</sup>: (ד) יקח נא. על ידי שליח, והקצ"ח שלם לצניו על ידי שליח, שנאמר וירס משה את ידו ויך את הסלע? ורחצו רגליכם. כסבור שהם ערביים, שמשחחיים לאצק רגליהם, והקפיד שלא להכניס עבודה אלוים לביתו<sup>3</sup>, אבל לוט שלא הקפיד, הקדים לינה לרחינה, שנאמר ולינו ורחצו רגליכם: תחת העץ. תחת האילן: (ה) וסעדו לבכם. צחורכ צבאיאם וצכחצויס מלינו דפתח סעדחא דלצא. צחורכ, סעדו לצכס. צבאיאם, סעד לצך פת לחס<sup>4</sup>. צכחצויס, ולחם לצב אנוש יסעד<sup>5</sup>. אמר רבי חמא, לצצכס אין כתיב כאן, אלא לצכס, מגיד שאין יר הרע שולט צמלאכיס<sup>6</sup>: אחר תעבורו. אחר כן תלכו: בי על בן עברתם. כי הדבר הזה אני מצקש מכס, מאחר שעברתם עלי לצבודי: בי על בן. כמו על אשר, וכן כל כי על כן שבמקרא, כי על כן צאו צלל קורת<sup>7</sup>, כי על כן רחיתי פניך<sup>8</sup>, כי על כן לא נחת<sup>9</sup>, כי על כן ידעת חנות<sup>10</sup>: (ו) קמח סלת. סלת לעוגות. קמח לעמילן של עבחים, לכסות את הקדרה ולשאוב את הזוכמא: (ז) בן בקר רך וטוב.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How could Avraham serve milk and meat together? (v. 8)

DA'AS ZEKEINIM: Rashi writes that Avraham yerked them, "bit by bit as each item was prepared" (v. 8). Thus, he did not serve them meat and milk together, which is forbidden, but rather milk and then afterwards meat ("cream and milk and the calves"), which is permissible.

TORAS MENACHEM

This is why Rabbi Abba bar Kahana reacted so vociferously to Rabbi Levi's claim that Avraham felt no pain. For, without a physical feeling in the "flesh," the covenant of circumcision loses its significance. Therefore, Rabbi Abba bar Kahana felt the need to negate such a notion as sharply as possible.

Based on the above, we can now explain Rashi's words that God waited until the third day before visiting Avraham:

Ramban writes that when "God appeared to (Avraham)," he was instantly healed by the Divine revelation.

Therefore, if God had revealed Himself to Avraham earlier he would have been immediately healed, and he would not have felt the pain,

which was associated with the mitzvah, to a sufficient degree. Therefore, only after Avraham had experienced the pain of circumcision in his physical flesh for a prolonged period, did God reveal himself to Avraham, causing a miraculous recovery.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 5, p. 77ff; vol. 10, p. 47; Sefer Hasichos 5750, p. 104ff.)

☞ MILK & MEAT (v. 8)

In addition to the argument [of Da'as Zekeinim], that the cream and calves were served separately, thus circumventing the prohibition of eating milk and meat, one could also argue that he offered each of the angels either milk or meat. Thus, "three calves' tongues with mustard"

1 מז, י' במדבר כ, יא 3 ב"מ 19: 4 שופטים יט, ה 5 תהלים קד, טו 6 ב"ד מז, יא 7 בראשית יט, ח 8 שם לג, י 9 שם לח, כו 10 במדבר י, לא 11 ב"מ 19: 12 ב"ד מז, יג 13 ב"מ 19. 14 שם 19: ב"ד מז, יד 15 דף 19.

<sup>4</sup> “Please, let some water be brought (by my staff) so you can bathe your feet and recline under the tree. <sup>5</sup> I will get some bread for you to satisfy your hearts. Afterwards, you may continue on. (I ask this of you) because you have (honored me by) visiting your servant.”

They said, “Do what you have suggested.”

<sup>6</sup> Avraham rushed to Sarah’s tent, and he said, “Quickly, get three se’ah of sifted flour, knead them and make loaves!”

<sup>7</sup> Avraham ran to the cattle, took (three) tender and good calves, and he gave (them) to the young lad (Yishma’el), and he hurried to prepare (three cooked tongues with mustard).

<sup>8</sup> He took cream, milk and the calves that he had prepared, and placed them in front of (the angels). He stood over them, under the tree, as they (pretended) to eat.

<sup>9</sup> They said to him, “Where is Sarah your wife?”

He said, “Here, in the tent.”

<sup>10</sup> (One angel) said (on behalf of God), “I will be returning to you at this time next year, and then,

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why are there dots on the word אָלָיו? (v. 9)

**RASHI:** In the word אָלָיו (“to him”), there are dots over the letters alef, yud and vav. Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar taught: “Wherever a word has more undotted letters than dotted letters, one should give a special interpretation to the undotted letters.” But here, the dotted letters are more numerous than the undotted letters, so the dotted letters [אָיו] require a special interpretation.

[The word אָיו means “where is” (masculine), so the dotted letters here suggest that] the angels also asked, “Where is Avraham?” to Sarah. This teaches us that a person should always enquire from his host about his hostess, and from his hostess about his host.

The Sages said in tractate *Bava Metzia*: The ministering angels knew where Sarah was [but they still asked where she was] to make it known that she was modest, in order to endear her to her husband.

Rabbi Yosef bar Chanina said: “[They asked where she was] in order to send her the cup of blessing [i.e., the cup of wine upon which the Grace after Meals is recited].

**SFORNO:** The angels asked, “Where is Sarah, your wife,” since the purpose of their mission was to inform Sarah that she was going to give birth to a child.

**ABARBANEL:** The angels were concerned that Sarah was unwell, since she did not join them for the meal.

### TORAS MENACHEM

## 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

### “THEY (PRETENDED) TO EAT...” (v. 8)

The Torah states that the angels ate the food which Avraham served them (v. 8), on which *Rashi* comments, “They pretended to eat.”

It appears, therefore, that Avraham did not perform a *mitzvah* by feeding his guests, for ultimately they were angels who did not need to eat. Thus, a.) Avraham interrupted his audience with the Divine Presence unnecessarily, and, b.) How can we learn the principle, “Welcoming guests is greater than welcoming the Divine Presence” (*Shabbos* 127a), from an incident where there were *no real guests* present?

Generally speaking, with acts of kindness, the primary focus is on the results of the *mitzvah*, i.e. the benefits given to the guests—food, drink etc.

The unique quality of the *mitzvah* of welcoming guests is that the primary focus is *not* on the benefits received by the guests, but rather, on the good will demonstrated by the host. In this light, it turns out that Avraham did fulfill the *mitzvah* of welcoming guests, in the most exemplary manner.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 70ff)

were prepared (*Rashi*, v. 7), to give each of the guests the *option* of eating meat. This was done in order to fulfill the *mitzvah* of welcoming guests in the best possible fashion. No guest, however, was served milk and meat.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 6, p. 150)

#### 🌀 THE ANGELS’ ENQUIRY (v. 9)

*Rashi*’s lengthy comment here prompts a number of questions:

a.) Dots appear on top of a word in many places in the *Chumash*, and *Rashi* does not always explain their significance. Why did he choose to do so here?

b.) Why did *Rashi* reject the simple explanation [of **Sforno**] that the angels asked where Sarah was because they came to inform her of the good news that she was about to bear a child?

c.) If Sarah was very modest, as *Rashi* writes, then why did she accept wine from strange men instead of from her husband?

#### THE EXPLANATION

On verse 2 above, where the Torah states that three angels came to visit Avraham and Sarah, *Rashi* comments, “One to bring the news (of Yitzchak’s birth) to Sarah, one to overturn Sodom, and one to heal Avraham, since one angel does not perform two errands.”

On reading our verse, that, “they (plural) said to him, ‘Where is Sarah your wife,’” *Rashi* could not accept the interpretation [of **Sforno**] that they were *all* asking about Sarah’s whereabouts in order to inform her of good news, since he had written earlier that only *one* angel was appointed to any single task.

דָּאֲתוּן קַיְמִין וְהָא בַר לְשָׂרָה אֲתַתְּךָ וְשָׂרָה  
שָׁמְעַת בְּתִרְעָה מִשְׁכָּנָא וְהוּא אַחֲוֵרוּהִי:  
י"א וְאֲבָרְהָם וְשָׂרָה סִיבוּ עָלָו בְּיוֹמִין פֶּסֶק  
מִלְמַהוּי לְשָׂרָה אֹרַח בְּנִשְׂיָא: י"ב וְחִיבַת שָׂרָה  
בְּמַעְהָא לְמִימָר בְּתֵר דְּסִיבִית הָוֵת לִי עוֹלִימוּ  
וְרַבּוּנֵי סִיב: י"ג וְאָמַר י"י לְאֲבָרְהָם לְמָא דְגַן  
חִיבַת שָׂרָה לְמִימָר הַבְּרַם בְּקוּשְׂטָא אוֹלִיד  
וְאָנָּא סִיבִית: י"ד הִיתְפְּסִי מִן קְדָם י"י פְּתִנְמָא  
לְזַמֵּן אִיתּוּב לְוִתְךָ בְּעַדָן דָּאֲתוּן קַיְמִין

וְהִנֵּה-בָּן לְשָׂרָה אֲשֶׁתְּךָ וְשָׂרָה שָׁמְעַת פְּתַח הָאֵהָל וְהוּא  
אֲחֵרָיו: י"א וְאֲבָרְהָם וְשָׂרָה זְקָנִים בָּאִים בַּיָּמִים חָדָל לְהֵיוֹת  
לְשָׂרָה אֹרַח בְּנִשְׂיָם: י"ב וַתִּצְתַּק שָׂרָה בְּקִרְבָּהּ לְאָמֹר אֲחֵרֵי  
בְּלַתִּי הֵיטְהָה־לִּי עַד־נָה וְאֲדַנִּי זְקָן: י"ג וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-אֲבָרְהָם  
לְמָה זֶה צָחֲקָה שָׂרָה לְאָמֹר הֲאֵת אֲמַנָּם אֵלֶּךְ וַאֲנִי זְקַנְתִּי:  
י"ד הִיפְלֵא מִיְהוָה דְּבַר לְמוֹעֵד אָשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ בְּעֵת תִּהְיֶה וּלְשָׂרָה

דש"י

למועד הזה (וגו'): והוא אחריו. הפתח היה אחר המלאך: (יא) חדל להיות.  
פסק ממנה: אורח בנשים. אורח נדות: (יג) בקרבה. מסתכלת במעיה  
ואמרה, אפשר הקרצים הללו טעונים ולד, השדים הללו שלמקו מושכין חלב.  
תחומא<sup>2</sup>: עדנה. לחלוח צער, ולשון משכה משיר את השער ומעדן את הצער.  
דבר אחר, לשון עידן זמן וסת נדות: (יג) האף אמנם. הגם אמת אלד: ואני  
זקנתי. שינה הכחוש מפני השלום, שהרי היא אמרה ודני זקן:  
(יד) היפלא. כתרגומו היתכסי, וכי שום דבר מופלא ומופרד ומכוסה ממני  
מלעשות כרזוני: למועד. לאותו מועד המיועד שקבעתי לך אתמול, למועד

בְּעֵת אֵלָּא בְּעֵת. כעת חיה כעת הזאת שתהא חיה לכם, שתהיו כלכם שלמים  
וקיימים: שוב אשוב. לא צשרו המלאך שישב אליו, אלא בשליחותו של  
מקום אמר לו, כמו ויאמר לה מלאך ה' הרבה ארצה, וכו' אין צידו  
לכרבות, אלא בשליחותו של מקום, אף כאן בשליחותו של מקום אמר לו כן.  
(אלישע אמר לשוגמית למועד הזה כעת חיה את חוצקת צן, ותאמר אליו  
דני חיש האלכיים אל תכזב צשפתך, אותן המלאכים צצשרו את שרם אמרו  
למועד אשוב, אמר לה אלישע, אותן המלאכים שהם חיים וקיימים לעולם,  
אמרו למועד אשוב, אבל אני צשר ודס, שהיום חי ומחר מת, צין חי וצין מת

## TORAS MENACHEM

Therefore *Rashi* concluded that they were merely inquiring about her welfare based on the teaching of our Sages that, "a person should always inquire from his host about his hostess, and from his hostess about his host."

This however begs the question: the Torah records that the angels inquired from Avraham about Sarah's welfare, but where do we find that they enquired from Sarah about Avraham's welfare?

*Rashi* answers that this inquiry is alluded to by the dots on top of the word. I.e. *Rashi* does not always explain the significance of dots, since at the literal level of Torah interpretation they are not always significant. Since, however, in our case they do solve a basic question at the literal level, *Rashi* explained their meaning.

A problem with the above solution is that it is slightly inconsistent with the precise wording of the verse. If the angels were merely inquiring about the welfare of Sarah, then why did they ask, "Where is Sarah your wife"? Surely, it would have been more appropriate to say, "How is Sarah, your wife"?

Due to this problem, *Rashi* felt it was necessary to bring an alternative solution. So, he wrote, "The ministering angels knew where Sarah was [but they still asked where she was] to make it known that she was modest, in order to endear her to her husband." This explains why the angels asked, "Where is your wife," since their intent was to highlight her modest absence from the meal.

But, while this interpretation explains the angels' question, it fails to explain why the Torah relates the specific content of Avraham's answer, since it was irrelevant to the angels where Sarah was located.

Therefore, *Rashi* brought a third interpretation: "Rabbi Yosef bar Chanina said: [They asked where she was] in order to send her the cup of blessing." This explains the need for the angels' question and Avraham's answer, since they needed to know where Sarah was to bring her the cup of blessing.

## THE CUP OF BLESSING

One might think at first glance that it would have been preferable for Avraham to send his own cup of blessing. However, the Torah states explicitly: "He stood over them, under the tree, as they (pretended) to eat" (v. 8). From this we see that Avraham did not eat at all, since he was serving his guests the entire time, so he would not have participated in the Grace after Meals. It was thus not disrespectful for the angels to send her from their cup, as this was the only way that Sarah could participate in this *mitzvah*.

Nevertheless, the astute reader might still be troubled that this action had a subtle overtone of immodesty. After all, they were strange men so it would appear somewhat inappropriate for Sarah to drink from their cup, even if it was the only chance to perform this *mitzvah*.

*Rashi*, however, deemed this to be a more subtle problem, which would only bother the more discerning reader. Therefore, he hinted to the solution in an indirect manner by citing the author of the above teaching. At the literal level of Torah interpretation, it is of no relevance to know the author of a particular Talmudic or Midrashic teaching, so *Rashi* usually omits these details from his commentary. On those occasions where he does mention the author of a teaching, it is obviously of some particular significance. Namely, that a subtle question which may be bothering the more discerning reader can be answered when one considers the author of the teaching at hand.

In our case, *Rashi* cites, "Rabbi Yosef bar Chanina said: [They asked where she was] in order to send her the cup of blessing."

Rabbi Yosef bar Chanina is famous for the teaching, "A woman recognizes the nature of her guests more than a man" (*Brachos* 10b). In our case, this means that Sarah would have recognized, more so than Avraham, that her guests were really angels. It was thus not immodest of her to accept their cup of blessing, since she was aware of their true identity.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 110ff.)



your wife Sarah will have a son.”

Sarah heard from the entrance of the tent, which was right behind (the angel).

<sup>11</sup> Avraham and Sarah were old, (but still) immersed into daily life. Sarah had stopped having a woman's cycle. <sup>12</sup> (Looking at) her bodily organs, Sarah laughed, saying, “After I have withered, will I (now) have smooth skin? And my husband is old!”

<sup>13</sup> God said to Avraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, saying, ‘Is it really true that I will give birth, even though I am old?’ <sup>14</sup> Is anything hidden from God? I will return to you at the time (which we have just) fixed, this time next year, and Sarah will have a son.”

<sup>15</sup> Sarah denied it, saying, “I didn't laugh,” because she was afraid.

He said, “No! You did laugh.”

SECOND  
READING

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What does it mean that Avraham and Sarah were בָּיָמֵם בָּאִים (lit. “coming into days”) ? (v. 11)**

**IBN EZRA:** That they were exceptionally old.

**RAMBAN:** When a person gets very old, exceeding the lifespan of most people in the generation, he is called “coming into days.” This is because his continued life is precarious, as if he were traveling on a daily basis from one city to another, “coming” into each day of his life.

**ZOHAR:** The days were whole, and not lacking. Not a day passed when they did not observe a *mitzvah* (l 129a; 222a; 224a).

● **What was the difference between Avraham and Sarah's reaction to the news that they would have a child? (v. 12)**

**RASHI:** According to Onkelos, Sarah laughed, but Avraham rejoiced (above 17:17). Avraham believed and rejoiced, but Sarah did not believe and ridiculed, and for this reason God was angry with Sarah [see v. 13], but was not angry with Avraham [Rashi to 17:17; see “Sparks”].

### TORAS MENACHEM

🕯️ **“COMING INTO DAYS” (v. 11)**

At the literal level, the phrase “coming into days” (בָּיָמֵם בָּאִים) could not mean “exceptionally old” as **Ibn Ezra** and **Ramban** suggest, since:

a.) Avraham and Sarah were *not* exceptionally old at the time, relative to the life expectancy of that generation.

b.) In the *Haftarah* to *Parshas Chayei Sarah* we read, “David was old, coming into days” (beg. *Kings* I), and at that time he was only seventy years old, i.e. not exceptionally old.

Rather, if one takes the words at face value, “coming into days,” just as one would say, for example, “coming into a house,” the term is describing the way Avraham and Sarah lived each and every day of their lives: They “came into” it. I.e. they did not let the day pass them by uneventfully, but rather, they immersed themselves totally into their days. [Thus, we have translated above, “immersed into daily life.”]

In fact, the *Zohar*, while being primarily a kabalistic text, offers the interpretation which is the closest of all to the literal meaning of the verse. The *Zohar*, however, is speaking of spiritual perfection whereas, at the literal level, the verse is describing the intensity of Avraham and Sarah's physical lives.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, pp. 90ff.)

🕯️ **SARAH'S LAUGHTER (v. 12-15)**

**Rashi** writes (v. 12) that Sarah was in disbelief when she heard that she would give birth to a child. Avraham, on the other hand, rejoiced at the news (See above 17:17).

Perhaps their different reactions could be explained as follows:

**Rashi** writes above, in his commentary to 17:17, “Although the first generations had children at the age of five hundred, in Avraham's time the average lifespan became shorter and people became weaker. This is evident from the ten generations from Noah to Avraham, who used to father children at the age of sixty or seventy.”

When Avraham was told that he would father another son he was 100 years old (17:17), which is clearly above the ceiling of 60 or 70.

However, in a later comment, **Rashi** states that, “When he (Avraham) was one hundred years old, he was like a person who is seventy years old” (25:7). **Rashi** does not specify here what Avraham's hundredth year had in common with his seventieth. Presumably, this is because he relies on his earlier statement that, in those days, a person would lose the ability to have children after 70. Since, “when he was one hundred years old, he was like a person who is seventy years old,” it follows that Avraham had not lost his ability to have children at 100. Therefore, when he heard the good news, he did not laugh in disbelief, but rather, he rejoiced.

Sarah on the other hand, “had stopped having a woman's cycle” (v. 11), indicating that she had passed the natural child-bearing age of that era. Therefore, she found it difficult to believe that she would have children.

### 🕯️ Sparks of Chasidus 🕯️

The Patriarchs and Matriarchs were all perfect *tzadikim* (righteous people) who never sinned. They were a “vehicle of expression” for the Divine Will their entire lives (*Tanya* ch. 23).

Therefore, when the Torah describes Sarah's “sin” here—of laughing in disbelief at the news that she would bear a child—this does not mean to say that she sinned *in the literal sense of the word*. Rather: a.) She performed an act that, outwardly, appeared to be a sin. And, b.) The act was not a *transgression* (*cheit*) but rather, a shortcoming (*chesaron*), i.e. a failure to act in the best possible manner.

Most people struggle with their evil inclination, to choose good over evil. A *tzadik*, however, struggles between a choice of two good actions, one greater than the other. Thus, if they fail, and choose the lesser good, it still remains a positive act.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, pp. 64, 100)

וְלִשְׂרָה בַּר: טו וְכַדִּיבַת שְׂרָה לְמִימַר לֹא תִיכִית אַרְי דְחִילַת וְאָמַר לֹא בְרַם תִּיכִית: טז וְקָמוּ מִתַּמָּן גַּבְרִיָא וְאַסְתְּכִיאוּ עַל אַפֵּי סְדוֹם וְאַבְרָהָם אָוִיל עִמָּהוֹן לְאֵלוֹאֵיהוֹן: יז וַיֵּי אָמַר הַמְכֹּסִי אָנָּה מֵאַבְרָהָם דִּי אָנָּה עֵבֵיד: יח וְאַבְרָהָם מִתְּוֹה יְהוּי לְעַם סְגִי וְתַקִּיף וְיִתְבָּרְכוּן בְּדִילִיהָ בַל עִמְמִי אֲרַעָא: יט אַרְי גְּלִי קְדָמִי בְּדִיל דִּי יַפְקֵד ית בְּנוֹהֵי וְיִת אִנְשׁ בֵּיתָהּ בְּתֵרוּהֵי וְיִטְרוּן אֲרִחוֹן דְתַקְנֵן קְדָם יֵי לְמַעַבְד צְדָקָתָא וְדִינָא בְּדִיל דִּי תֵי יֵי עַל אַבְרָהָם ית דִּי מְלִיל עֲלוּהֵי: כ וְאָמַר יֵי קְבִילַת סְדוֹם וְעִמּוּרָה אַרְי סְגִיָּאֵת וְחֻבְתָּהוֹן אַרְי תְּקִיפַת לְחֻדָּא: כא אֲתַגְלִי כַעַן וְאֲדוֹן דְתַקְבַּלְתָּהוֹן דְעֵלַת לְקַדְמֵי עֲבָדוֹ אַעֲבִיד עִמָּהוֹן גַּמְיָא אִם לֹא תִיבִין וְאִם תִּיבִין לֹא אֲתַפְרַע: כב וְאַתְּפָנִיאוּ מִתַּמָּן גַּבְרִיָא וְאָלוּ לְסְדוֹם וְאַבְרָהָם עַד כַּעַן מִשְׁמַשׁ בְּצִלוֹ קְדָם יֵי: כג וְקָרִיב

בְּז: [שני] טו וְתַכְחֵשׁ שְׂרָה | לֹא אָמַר לֹא צִחְקִיתִי בִּי | יִרְאָה וְיֹאמֶר | לֹא בִּי צִחְקִיתִי: טז וַיִּקְמוּ מִשָּׁם הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיִּשְׁקְפוּ עַל־פְּנֵי סְדוֹם וְאַבְרָהָם הִלֵּךְ עִמָּם לְשַׁלְּחָם: יז וַיְהִי הָאָמַר הַמְכֹּסֶה אֲנִי מֵאַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה: יח וְאַבְרָהָם הָיוּ יְהִיָּה לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל וְעַצוֹם וְנִבְרָכוּ בּוֹ כָּל גּוֹי הָאָרֶץ: יט בִּי יַדְעִיתִי לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר יַצִּיחַ אֶת־בְּנָיו וְאֶת־בֵּיתוֹ אַחֲרָיו וְשָׁמְרוּ דְרָךְ יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט לְמַעַן הֵבִיא יְהוָה עַל־אַבְרָהָם אֵת אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר עֲלָיו: כ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה זַעֲקַת סְדוֹם וְעִמּוּרָה כִּי־רַבָּה וְחַטָּאתָם בִּי כְּבָדָה מְאֹד: כא אֲרַדְדָּהָנָא וְאַרְאָה הַבְּצִעְקָתָהּ הַבְּאֵה אֵלַי עֲשׂוּ | פְּלָה וְאִם־לֹא אֲדַעָה: כב וַיִּפְּנוּ מִשָּׁם הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיֵּלְכוּ סְדוֹמָה וְאַבְרָהָם עֹדְנֹו עִמָּד לְפָנָי יְהוָה: כג וַיִּגַּשׁ אַבְרָהָם

כ"ט

הוא מלווה לבניו, שמרו דרך ה' כדי שיצא ה' על אברהם וגו'. על בית אברהם לא נאמר, אלא על אברהם, למדנו כל המעמיד בן לדיק כאלו אינו מת: (כ) ויאמר ה'. אל אברהם, שעשה כאשר אמר שלא יכסה ממנו: בי רבה. כל רבה שצמקרה הטעם למטה צדי"ת, לפי שהן מתורגמין גדולה, או גדלה והולכת, אזל זה עמו למעלה צדי"ש, לפי שמתורגס גדלה כזר, כמו שפירשתי ויהי השמש צבה, הנה שבה יצמתך: (כא) ארדה נא. למד לדיינים שלא יפסקו דיני נפשות אלא בצדי"ה, הכל כמו שפירשתי צפרשת הפלגה. דבר אחר, ארדה נא לסוף מעשיכם: הבצעקתה. של מדינה: הבאה אלי עשו. וכן עומדים צמרדס, כלה אני עושה בהם, ואם לא יעמדו צמרדן, אדעה מה אעשה, להפריע מהן ציסורין ולא אכלה אותן. וכיוצא בו מלינו צמקוס אחר, ועתה הורד עדיך מעליך ואדעה מה אעשה לך, ולפיכך יש הפסק נקודת פסוק צין עשו לכלה, כדי להפריד תיבה מצרחה. ורצותינו דרשו הכלעקתה, לעקת ריבה אחת, שהרובה מיתה משונה, על שנתנה מזון לעני, כמפורש חלק: (כב) ויפנו משם. ממקום שאברהם ליווס שם: ואברהם עודנו עומד לפני ה'. והלא לא הלך לעמוד לבניו, אלא הקצ"ה צא אלנו ואמר לו זעקת סדום ועמורה כי רבה, והיה לו לכתוב וכו' עודנו עומד לפני אברהם, אלא תיקון סופרים הוא זה<sup>א</sup> (אשר הפכוהו ז"ל לכתוב כן): (כג) ויגש אברהם. מלינו הגשה למלחמה ויגש יואז וגו',<sup>ב</sup> הגשה

הזה בשנה האחרת: (טו) בי יראה וגו' כי צחקת. הראשון משמש לשון דהא הוא, שנותן טעם לדבר ותכחש שרה לפי שיראה. והשני משמש בלשון אלא, ויאמר לא כדצריך הוא אלא לחקת, שאמרנו רבותינו כי משמש צד' לשונות, חי, דלמא, אלא, דהא: (טז) וישקיפו. כל השקפה שצמקרה לרעה, חוץ מהשקיפה ממתוך קדשך<sup>1</sup>, שגדול כח מתנות עניים, שהופך מדת הרוגז לרחמים: לשלחם. ללוותם, כסבור אורחים הם: (יז) המכסה אנו. צממיה: אשר אני עושה. בסדום, לא יפה לי לעשות דבר זה שלא מדעתו, אני נחתי לו את הארץ הזאת, וחמשה כרכין הללו שלו הן, שנאמר גדול הכנעני מזידון וגו' צואכה סדומה ועמורה וגו', קראתי אותו אברהם, אז המון גויים, ואשמיד את הצנים ולא אודיע לאצ שהוא אובד: (יח) ואברהם היו יהיה. מדרש אגדה זכר לדיק לצרכה, הואיל והזכירו צרכו. ופשוטו, וכי ממנו אני מעלים, והרי הוא חציב לפני להיות לגוי גדול, ולהתצרך צו כל גוי הארץ: (יט) בי ידעתיו. לשון חיבה, כמו מודע לחישה<sup>2</sup>, הלא צועז מודעתנו<sup>3</sup>, ואדעך צשם<sup>4</sup>, ואמנם עיקר לשון כולם אינו אלא לשון ידיעה, שהמחצב את האדם מקרצו אלנו ויודעו ומכירו. ולמה ידעתיו, למען אשר יראה, לפי שהוא מלווה את בניו עלי, לשמור דרכי. ואם תפרשבו כתרגומו, יודע אני צו שיזכר את בניו וגו', אין למען נופל על הלשון: יצוה. לשון הווה, כמו ככה יעשה חיוב<sup>5</sup> (על פי ה' יחוו): למען הביא. כך

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What was the "outcry of Sodom"? (v. 20-21)

**RASHI:** Literally it means the outcry of the land. Our Sages, however, interpreted it to refer to the cry of a certain girl, whom they killed by a horrible method because she gave food to a poor man, as is described in [Tractate *Sanhedrin*, Chapter] "*Cheilek*."

**TALMUD:** There was a certain girl who would bring bread out to the poor when nobody was looking, hiding it in her pitcher when she went to draw water. When the matter was discovered, they smeared her with honey and placed her on top of the city wall. Bees came and devoured her (*Sanhedrin* 109b and *Rashi* *ibid.*).

**RADAK:** The people of Sodom violated all 7 Noachide laws (13:13).

TORAS MENACHEM

Furthermore, she was unaware that Avraham was capable of having children, since he was well above seventy, and she did not know that he had retained his strength. Therefore, in addition to her disbelief at her own inability to have children, she said, "And my husband is old!" (v. 12).

Thus in the final analysis we see that at the literal level of Torah interpretation to which *Rashi* adheres, the birth of Yitzchak was miraculous for Sarah, but natural for Avraham.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, pp. 80-81)

## 🌀 AVRAHAM PLEADS FOR SODOM AND AMORAH 🌀

18:16 **T**he (angels) got up from there, and gazed (disparagingly) upon Sodom. Avraham went with them to escort them.

<sup>17</sup> God said, “(How) could I conceal from Avraham what I am doing (to Sodom, in the very land I promised to give to him)?” <sup>18</sup> (Since Avraham was mentioned by God, He blessed him:) “Avraham will become a great and powerful nation, and all the nations of the world will be blessed through him. <sup>19</sup> For I have known (and cherished) him because he instructs his sons and his household after him to keep the way of God, acting with charity and justice. (He instructs them to do so) in order that God will bring upon Avraham everything He had said (He would do for) him.”

<sup>20</sup> (Keeping to His word,) God said (to Avraham), “Since the outcry of Sodom and Amorah has become great, and since their sin has become very grave, <sup>21</sup> I will descend now and see: if they have actually caused the outcry which has reached Me, then (there will be) destruction! If not, I will know (how to punish them).”

<sup>22</sup> The (angels) turned from there (where Avraham had escorted them to) and went to Sodom. (God) was still present before (Avraham). <sup>23</sup> Avraham approached (God) and said, “Will You also destroy the

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● How did Avraham “approach” God? (v. 23)

**RASHI:** We find the expression “approaching” used in the context of war: “Yoav approached, etc.” (Samuel II 10:13), “approaching” in the context of placating: “Yehudah approached him” (below 44:18), and “approaching” in the context of prayer: “Eliyahu the prophet approached” (Kings I 18:36). Avraham entered himself into all of these: to speak harshly, to appease, and to pray.

**BE’ER YITZCHAK:** Rashi was troubled by the question: Surely God is everywhere, so why did the Torah state that Avraham approached God? *Rashi* explains that “approaching” is not to be understood in the literal sense, but rather, as “preparing,” i.e. that Avraham prepared himself for an intense interaction with God.

**RALBAG:** Avraham went as close to God as possible so that his prayers should be heard as clearly as possible.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🌀 AVRAHAM’S “APPROACH” (v. 23)

*Rashi* writes that Avraham approached God, “to speak harshly, to appease, and to pray.” Presumably, this refers to the three verses below:

i.) *Speaking harshly.* “Will You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?” (v. 23). ii.) *Appeasement.* “To do such a thing as this...would desecrate (people’s perception of) You” (v. 25). iii.) *Prayer.* “I want to speak with God! I (would be) dust and ashes (if it were not for You!)” (v. 27).

## 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

### THE OUTCRY OF SODOM (v. 20-21)

**E**ven though the people of Sodom transgressed *all* of the seven *mitzvos* given to Noah (as **Radak** writes) nevertheless, their primary sin, for which destruction was decreed upon them, was their failure to be charitable. Scripture states this explicitly: “This was the sin of Sodom... they did not strengthen the hand of the poor and needy” (Ezekiel 16:49), in contrast to Avraham, who “instructs his sons and his household after him... acting with charity and justice” (v. 19).

This however begs the question: Why is giving charity *not* listed as one of the seven Noachide laws (see p. 19)?

A number of possible solutions could be suggested:

a.) The Noachide laws are a codification of prohibitions, and not positive *mitzvos*. Therefore charity, a positive act, was not included (*Chidushei HaRan to Sanhedrin* 56b).

b.) The obligation to give charity is included within the obligation to “establish courts of law,” which in a broader sense means to

maintain all forms of social welfare (c.f. *Ramban* to 34:13).

c.) *Rambam*, however, writes explicitly that charity is *not* a *mitzvah* that is binding on non-Jews (*Hilchos Melachim* 10:10). Therefore, according to *Rambam* it would appear that Sodom was punished, not because they failed to give charity, but rather because they *opposed* the giving of charity (as in the case of the girl who was murdered for feeding the poor—see *Rashi* and *Talmud* above). I.e. since people, who were put on the earth to promote civilization, actively oppose social welfare, they deny themselves the right of existence.

Thus, according to all opinions, it is necessary to promote the observance of charity among the nations of the world. And, in the current world climate where peaceful civilization is a priority among world leaders, it is easier to promote charity among non-Jews than ever before.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 155ff, *Sefer Hasichos* 5752, p. 372)

אברָהָם וְאָמַר הִבְרֵנּוּ תְּשִׁיבֵי זַכָּאָה עִם חֵיבָא: כד מָאִים אֵית חֲמִשִּׁין זַכָּאִין בְּגוּ קִרְתָּא הִבְרֵנּוּ תְּשִׁיבֵי וְלֹא תִשְׁבּוּק לְאַתְרָא בְּדִיל חֲמִשִּׁין זַכָּאִין דִּי בְּגוּה: כה קוּשְׁטָא אֲנֹן דִּינְךָ מִלְּמַעְבַּד בְּפִתְנָמָא הֲדִין לְשִׁינְעָאָה זַכָּאָה עִם חֵיבָא וְיְהִי זַכָּאָה בְּחֵיבָא קוּשְׁטָא אֲנֹן דִּינְךָ הֲדִין כֹּל אֲרַעָא לֹא יַעֲבִיד דִּינָא: כו וְאָמַר יִי אֱמֻנָא עִפְר וְקָסָם: כז מָאִים יַחְסְרוּן חֲמִשִּׁין זַכָּאִין חֲמִשָּׁא הֲתַחְבַּל בְּחֲמִשָּׁא יֵת כֹּל קִרְתָּא וְאָמַר לֹא אַחְבַּל אִם אֲשַׁבַּח תַּמָּן אַרְבַּעִין וְחֲמִשָּׁא: כח וְאֹסִיף עוֹד לְמַלְלָא קְדָמוּהִי וְאָמַר מָאִים יִשְׁתַּכְּחוּן תַּמָּן אַרְבַּעִין וְאָמַר לֹא אַעֲבִיד גְּמִירָא בְּדִיל אַרְבַּעִין: ל וְאָמַר לֹא כְעַן יִתְקַף רוּגְזָא דִּי וְאִמְלִיל מָאִים יִשְׁתַּכְּחוּן תַּמָּן תְּלָתִין וְאָמַר לֹא אַעֲבִיד גְּמִירָא אִם אֲשַׁבַּח תַּמָּן תְּלָתִין: לא וְאָמַר הָא כְעַן שְׂרִיתִי לְמַלְלָא קְדָם יִי מָאִים יִשְׁתַּכְּחוּן תַּמָּן עֶשְׂרִין וְאָמַר לֹא אַחְבַּל בְּדִיל עֶשְׂרִין: לב וְאָמַר לֹא כְעַן יִתְקַף רוּגְזָא דִּי וְאִמְלִיל בְּרַם זַמְנָא הָדָא מָאִים יִשְׁתַּכְּחוּן תַּמָּן עֶשְׂרָא וְאָמַר לֹא אַחְבַּל בְּדִיל עֶשְׂרָא: לד וְאִסְתַּלַּק וְקָרָא דִּי כַּד שִׁיבֵי לְמַלְלָא עִם אַבְרָהָם וְאַבְרָהָם תֵּב לְאַתְרֵיהּ: א וְעָלוּ תְרִין מְלֹאכֵי לְסָדוּם בְּרַמְשָׁא וְלוֹט יָתִיב בְּתַרְע דְסָדוּם וְחוּזָא לוֹט וְקָם

וַיֹּאמֶר הָאֵף תִּסְפָּה צְדִיק עִם־רָשָׁע: כד אֹלֵי יֵשׁ חֲמִשִּׁים צְדִיקִים בְּתוֹךְ הָעִיר תִּסְפָּה וְלֹא־תִשָּׂא לְמָקוֹם לְמַעַן חֲמִשִּׁים הַצְדִיקִים אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבָּה: כה חָלְלָה לָךְ מַעֲשֵׂת | כְּדַבֵּר הַזֶּה לְהַמִּית צְדִיק עִם־רָשָׁע וְהָיָה כְּצְדִיק כְּרָשָׁע חָלְלָה לָךְ הַשֹּׁפֵט כָּל־הָאָרֶץ לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה מִשְׁפָּט: כו וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אִם־אֲמַצָּא בְּסָדוּם חֲמִשִּׁים צְדִיקִים בְּתוֹךְ הָעִיר וְנִשְׂאתִי לְכָל־הַמָּקוֹם בְּעִבּוּרָם: כז וַיַּעַן אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה־נָא הוּא־לְתִי לְדַבֵּר אֶל־אֲדֹנָי וְאֲנֹכִי עֹפֵר וְאֹפֵר: כח אֹלֵי יַחְסְרוּן חֲמִשִּׁים הַצְדִיקִים חֲמִשָּׁה הַתְּשֻׁחִית בְּחֲמִשָּׁה אֶת־כָּל־הָעִיר וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אֲשַׁחִית אִם־אֲמַצָּא שָׁם אַרְבָּעִים וְחֲמִשָּׁה: כט וַיֹּסֵף עוֹד לְדַבֵּר אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֹלֵי יִמְצְאוּן שָׁם אַרְבָּעִים וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אַעֲשֶׂה בְּעִבּוֹר הָאֲרָבָעִים: ל וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־נָא יָחַר לְאֲדֹנָי וְאֲדַבְּרָה אֹלֵי יִמְצְאוּן שָׁם שְׁלֹשִׁים וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אַעֲשֶׂה אִם־אֲמַצָּא שָׁם שְׁלֹשִׁים: לא וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה־נָא הוּא־לְתִי לְדַבֵּר אֶל־אֲדֹנָי אֹלֵי יִמְצְאוּן שָׁם עֶשְׂרִים וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אֲשַׁחִית בְּעִבּוֹר הָעֶשְׂרִים: לב וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־נָא יָחַר לְאֲדֹנָי וְאֲדַבְּרָה אֶת־הַפֶּעַם אֹלֵי יִמְצְאוּן שָׁם עֶשְׂרָה וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אֲשַׁחִית בְּעִבּוֹר הָעֶשְׂרָה: לג וַיֵּלֶךְ יְהוָה כַּאֲשֶׁר כָּלָה לְדַבֵּר אֶל־אַבְרָהָם וְאַבְרָהָם שָׁב לְמַקְוֹ: יט א [שלישית] וַיָּבֹאוּ שְׁנֵי הַמְּלָאכִים סְדוּמָה בְּעָרֵב וְלוֹט

רש"י

ימצאון שם ארבעים. וימלטו ד' הכרכים. וכן שלשים יליו ג' מהם, או עשרים יליו ז' מהם, או עשרה יליו ח' מהם: (לא) הואלתי. רלתי, כמו ויואל משה: (לב) אולי ימצאון שם עשרה. על פחות לא זקש, אמר, דור המבול היו ח', נח וצניו ונשיכם, ולא הלילו על דורם, ועל ט' על ידי צירוף כזר זקש ולא מלא: (לג) וילך ה' וגו'. כיון שנשתק הסניגור הלך לו הדיין: ואברהם שב למקומו. נסתלק הדיין, נסתלק הסניגור, והקטיגור מקטרג, ולפיכך ויצאו שני המלאכים סדומה להשחית. אחד להשחית את סדום, ואחד להליל את לוט, וכוא אותו שזא לרפאות את אברהם, והשלישי שזא לזכר את שרה, כיון שעשה שליחותו נסתלק לו: (ה) המלאכים. והללן קראם אנשים, כשהיתה שכניה עמהם קראם אנשים. דבר אחר, אלל אברהם שכחו גדול, והיו המלאכים תדירין אללו כאנשים, קראם אנשים, ואלל לוט קראם מלאכים: בערב. וכי כל כך שכו המלאכים מחזרון לסדום, אלל מלאכי רחמים היו, וממתינים שמה יוכל אברהם ללמד עליהם סגוריה: ולוט ישב בשער סדום. יש כתיב, אותו היום מינוהו שופט עליהם?

לפיוס ויגש אליו יהודה, והגשה לתפלה ויגש אליהו הנביא, ולכל אלה נכנס אברהם, לדבר קשות ולפיוס ולתפלה: האף תספה. הגם תספה. ולתרגום של חונקלוס שתרגמו לשון רוגז, כך פירושו, האף ישיאך שחספה לדיק עם רשע: (כד) אולי יש חמשים צדיקים. עשרה לדיקים לכל כרך וכרך, כי ה' מקומות יש: (כה) חלילה לך. ואם תאמר לא יליו הצדיקים את הרשעים, למח תמית הצדיקים: חלילה לך. חולין הוא לך, יאמרו כך הוא אומנתו, שוטף הכל לדיקים ורשעים, כך עשית לדור המבול ולדור הפלגה: כדבר הזה. לא הוא ולא כיוצא בו: חלילה לך. לעולם הבא: השופט כל הארץ. נקוד צחט"ף פתי"ח ה"א של השופט, לשון תמיה, וכי מי שהוא שופט לא יעשה משפט אמת: (כו) אם אמצא בסדום וגו' לכל המקום. לכל הכרכים, לפי סדום היתה מטרפולין וחשוכה מכולם, תלה זה הכחוז: (כז) ואנכי עפר ואפר. וכבר הייתי ראוי להיות עפר על ידי המלאכים, ואפר על ידי נמרוד, לולי רחמיך אשר עמדו לי: (כח) התשחית בחמשה. והלא הן ט' לכל כרך, ואחרי לדיקו של עולם תנטרף עמהם: (כט) אולי

righteous with the wicked? <sup>24</sup> Perhaps there are fifty righteous men in the midst of the city. Will You still destroy it, and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous people who are in it? <sup>25</sup> To do such a thing as this, to put to death the righteous with the wicked, equating the innocent and the guilty, would desecrate (people's perception of) You (in this world and it would desecrate You in the next world). Would the Judge of the entire earth not perform (true) justice?"

<sup>26</sup> God said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous men within the city, I will forgive the entire (region of five cities) for their sake."

<sup>27</sup> Avraham responded and said, "I wish to speak with God! I (would be) dust and ashes (if it were not for You)! <sup>28</sup> What if the fifty righteous men will be missing five? Will You destroy the entire city because of the five?"

He said, "I will not destroy it if I find there forty-five."

<sup>29</sup> (Avraham) continued to speak to Him. He said, "What if forty will be found there?"

He said, "I will not do it for the sake of the forty."

<sup>30</sup> (Avraham) said, "Please don't let God's anger be kindled, and let me speak: What if thirty will be found there?"

He said, "I will not do it if I find thirty there."

<sup>31</sup> (Avraham) said, "Please! I want to speak to God! What if twenty will be found there?"

He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of the twenty."

<sup>32</sup> (Avraham) said, "Please don't let God's anger be kindled, and let me speak once more: what if ten will be found there?"

He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of the ten."

<sup>33</sup> When He had finished speaking to Avraham, God (the Judge) departed. Avraham (the advocate) returned home. (But the prosecution remained.)

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

Why though did Rashi see the need to explain the meaning of the word "he approached" (שָׁרַף) in the first place? Surely we are speaking here of a common word, whose meaning is self-understood, as we see from the fact that in many other places Rashi does not explain the meaning of the word.

#### THE EXPLANATION

Verse 22 states that after the angels departed, "(God) was still present before (Avraham)." Rashi was thus troubled why the Torah continues, "Avraham approached (God)..." If he was already in God's presence, why did he have to approach Him?

This question led Rashi to conclude that we are not speaking here of a physical relocation from place to place, since Avraham was already located at a site where God's presence was revealed.

Rather, the Torah's intention here with the word "approach," is the mental preparation required for an impassioned plea. Therefore, Rashi writes, "Avraham entered himself into all of these," i.e. he put himself into a frame of mind which would give him the courage and stamina to plead with, and even criticize God for His planned destruction of Sodom.

But where do we find that the word שָׁרַף ("and he approached") is used in such a metaphorical sense?

To answer this question Rashi found it necessary to cite three verses which illustrate how "approaching" can also be understood as a form of mental preparation. To stress this point, Rashi begins with the words,

"We find the expression "approaching" used in the context of etc.," i.e. while "approaching" is usually understood in the literal sense *we do find* other explanations.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 10, p. 55ff.)

#### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

Since Avraham excelled in the attribute of kindness, it is somewhat surprising to find that he "spoke harshly" with God, arguing aggressively for the salvation of Sodom (Rashi v.23).

This teaches us that, when faced with the task of saving another's life, a person may be required to overcome his natural disposition and personality, and take radical action. Thus Avraham, whose nature was to be only kind and polite, managed to gather the courage ("he entered himself") to act in a manner of harshness and severity, in an attempt to save lives.

This also applies to the *spiritual* life of our fellow Jew. If one sees another Jew "drowning" spiritually, due to a lack of Jewish education, one should make every effort to help him—even if this entails an act which is out of character with one's personality.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 10, pp. 58-59)

לקדמותהון וסגיד על אפיה על ארעא: ב ואמר בקעו כען רבוני זורו כען לבית עבדכון וביתו ואסחו רגליכון ותקדמונו ותהבון לארתיכון ואמרו לא אלהן ברחוקא נבית: ג ותקריף בהון לחדא וורו לותיה ועלו לביתייה ועבד להון משתניא ופטייר אפא להון ואכלו: ד עד לא שכיבו ואנשי קרתא אנשי דסדום אקיפו על ביתא מעולימא ועד סבא כל עמא מסופיה: ה וקרו ללוט ואמרו ליה אן נגבריא דאתו לותך בליליא אפיקינו לותנא ונדע יתהון: ו ונפק לותהון לוט לתרעא ודשא אחד בתרוה: ז ואמר בקעו כען אחי לא תבאיטון: ח הא כען לי תרתין בנן דלא ידענון גבר אפק כען יתהון לותכון ועבידו להן בדתקין בעיניכון לחוד לגובריא האלין לא תעבדון מדעם ארי על בן עלו בטלל שרותי: ט ואמרו קרב להלא ואמרו חד אתא לאתותבא והא דאין דינא כען נבאיט לך מדילהון ואתקיפו בגברא בלוט

ישב בשער סדם וירא לוט ויקם לקראתם וישתחו אפים ארצה: ב ויאמר הנה נא אדני סורו נא אל בית עבדכם ולינו ורחצו רגליכם והשכמתם והלכתם לדרבכם ויאמרו לא כי ברחוב נלין: ג ויפער בם מאד ויסרו אליו ויבאו אל ביתו ויעש להם משתה ומצות אפה ויאכלו: ד טרם ישכבו ואנשי העיר אנשי סדם נסבו על הפתח ויעדו וקון כל העם מקצה: ה ויקראו אל לוט ויאמרו לו אייה האנשים אשר באו אליך הלילה הוציאם אלינו ונדעה אתם: ו ויעא אלהם לוט הפתחה והדלת סגר אחרייו: ז ויאמר אל נא אחי תרעו: ח הנה נא לי שתי בנות אשר לא ידעו איש אוציאה נא אתהן אליכם ועשו להן כטוב בעיניכם רק לאנשים האל אל תעשו דבר כי על כן באו בעל קרתי: ט ויאמרו | גש הלאה ויאמרו האחד בא לגור וישפט שפוט עתה נרע

רש"י

צפיהם של מלאכים, שהיו שואלים ללוט מה טיבם ומעשיהם, והוא אומר להם רובם רשעים, עודם מדברים צהם, ואנשי סדם וגוי. ופשוטו של מקרא, ואנשי העיר אנשי רשע, נסבו על הבית, ועל שהיו רשעים נקראים אנשי סדם, כמו שאמר הכתוב, ואנשי סדם רעים וחטאים: כל העם מקצה. מקצה העיר עד הקצה, שאין אחד מהם מוחה בידם, שאפילו לדיק אחד אין צהם: (ב) ונדעה אותם. צמשכ זכר, כמו אשר לא ידעו איש: (ג) האל. כמו הלאה: בי על בן באו. כי הטובה הזאת תעשו לכבודי, על אשר צאו צלל קורתי. תרגום צטלל שרותי, תרגום של קורה שרותא: (ט) ויאמרו גש הלאה. קרב להלאה, כלומר התקרב ללדדין והתרחק ממנו, וכן כל הלאה שצמקרא לשון ריחוק, כמו זרה הלאה, הנה החזי ממך והלאה. גש הלאה, המשך להלן, צלשון לע"ז טריטי" דנו"ש, ודבר נזיפה הוא, לומר, אין אנו חוששין לך, ודומה לו קרב אליך אל תגש צי, וכן גשה לי ואשכח, המשך ללדדין בעצורי ואשכח אלך. אהה מליץ על האורחין, איך מלאך לצך. על שאמר להם על הצנות אמרו לו גש הלאה, לשון נחת, ועל שהיה מליץ על האורחים

וירא לוט וגוי. מצית אברהם למד לחזור על האורחים: (ג) הנה נא אדני. הנה נא אהם אדונים לי, אחר שעברתם עלי. דבר אחר הנה נא, לריכים אתם לתת לב על הרשעים הללו שלא יכירו צכס, וזו היא ענה נכונה: סורו נא. עקמו את הדרך לביתי דרך עקלתון, שלא יכירו שאתם נכנסים שם, לכך נאמר סורו: ולינו ורחצו רגליכם. וכי דרכן של בני אדם ללון תחלה ואחר כך לרחוץ. ועוד שהרי אברהם אמר להם תחלה ורחצו רגליכם, אלא כך אמר לוט, אם כשיבאו אנשי סדם ויראו שכבר רחצו רגליהם, יעלילו עלי ויאמרו, כבר עזבו שני ימים או שלשה שבאו לביתך ולא הודעתנו, לפיכך אמר, מוטב שיתעכבו כאן בצדק רגליהם, שיהיו נראין כמו שבאו עכשיו, לפיכך אמר לינו תחלה, ואחר כך רחצו: ויאמרו לא. ולאברהם אמרו כן תעשה, מכאן שמסרבין לקטן ואין מסרבין לגדול? כי ברחוב נלין. הרי כי משמש צלשון אלא, שאמרו לא נסור אל ביתך אלא צרוצה של עיר נלין: (ג) ויסרו אליו. עקמו את הדרך ללד ציתו: ומצות אפה. פסח היה: (ד) טרם ישכבו ואנשי העיר אנשי סדם. כך נרע צצראשית רבה, טרם ישכבו, ואנשי העיר היו

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Which angels came to Sodom? Which one came to save Lot? (v. 1)

**RASHI:** Three angels came to visit Avraham, one to bring the news (of Yitzchak's birth), one to overturn Sodom, and one to heal Avraham...The angel Rafa'el first healed Avraham, and then he went on to save Lot (18:2).

**TALMUD:** The angel Gavriel came to destroy Sodom, and Micha'el came to save Lot (Bava Metzia 96b).

**MIDRASH:** Micha'el announced the good news and left. Gavriel was sent to destroy Sodom, and Rafa'el to save Lot (Bereishis Rabah 50:2).

● What did the angels discuss with Lot? (v. 4)

**RASHI:** Before they went to bed, the angels discussed the people of the city with Lot. They were asking Lot about their character and their deeds and he told them that the majority were evil. While they were still speaking about them, "The people of Sodom [surrounded the house]."

## 🌀 ANGELS COME TO DESTROY SODOM AND SAVE LOT 🌀

**19** **T**he two angels came to Sodom in the evening (one to destroy, and one to save Lot. That day,) Lot was (appointed to be the chief judge) at the gate of Sodom.

**THIRD READING** Lot (always looked for guests, so he) saw them. He went up to greet them, and prostrated himself, face to the ground. <sup>2</sup> He said, “Look now my lords, please (go inconspicuously) to your servant’s house. Stay overnight, wash your feet, and you can get up early and go on your way.”

They said, “No. We will stay overnight in the street.”

<sup>3</sup> He urged them strongly, so they (went inconspicuously) towards his (house).

When they came to his house, he made them a feast and he baked matzos (since it was Pesach), and they ate. <sup>4</sup> Before they went to bed (they were talking about the wickedness of) the people of the city.

The people of Sodom surrounded the house, both young and old, the entire population from every end (of the city, without exception). <sup>5</sup> They called out to Lot, saying to him, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, and let us (sodomize) them!”

<sup>6</sup> Lot came out to them at the entrance, and he shut the door behind him. <sup>7</sup> He said, “My brothers! Please don’t act wickedly. <sup>8</sup> Look!—I have two daughters who have never known a man. I will bring them out to you, and you can do to them as you see fit. But don’t do anything to these men, because they have come under the shelter of my roof.”

<sup>9</sup> They said, “Get out of the way!”

(In response to his protection of the visitors,) they said, “(You are) one (single person) who has come

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🌀 LOT’S SALVATION (v. 1)

The **Talmud** maintains that Lot was a *tzadik* (righteous man). Therefore, he was saved by the angel Micha’el who helps the souls of the righteous (*Chagigah* 12b, *Tosafos to Menachos* 110a).

The **Midrash**, on the other hand, maintains that Lot was a *rasha* (wicked person). Therefore, he was saved by Rafa’el who is the angel that heals the sick, because helping a wicked person to repent is a form of spiritual healing.

Since *Rashi* understood that Lot was a *rasha* (see *Rashi* to 13:14), therefore he accepted the view of the *Midrash* that Rafa’el came to rescue him.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 283)

#### 🌀 THE ANGELS’ MISSION (v. 4)

One further detail that needs to be explained about the angels’ visit is why they went only to Sodom, and not to the other cities upon which God decreed destruction. *Rashi* states explicitly that God planned to destroy five cities in the plain (18:17, 24) (though He eventually destroyed only four cities, because Lot pleaded for the city of Tzo’ar to be saved [19:18-25]). Why did the angel which came to destroy all the cities visit only Sodom, and not the other cities that God had condemned?

The answer to this question can be found in *Rashi*’s comment to v. 4. *Rashi* writes that the angels inquired of Lot about the “character and deeds” of the people of Sodom, and this could have been for one of two reasons: a.) To ascertain that they were indeed deserving of punishment, or, b.) in order to cause them to repent.

According to the first approach (“a”), that the angels came merely to find information about the people, we can understand why the angels only came to Sodom, because Sodom was the largest metropolis amongst the cities of the plain (*Rashi* to 18:26). Therefore it was the most likely place

to find 50 righteous people. When the angels failed to find any righteous people in Sodom among its vast population (*Rashi* to v. 4 above), it was obvious that the other small cities would not have any either.

According to the second approach (“b”), that the angels actually came to inspire the people to repent, we can explain why they only came to Sodom based on an earlier comment of *Rashi*:

After the war with Avraham, only the King of Sodom was saved, as *Rashi* writes, “A miracle was wrought for the king of Sodom that he escaped from there, because some of the nations did not believe [in miracles so they did not believe] that Avraham had been saved from *Ur Kasdim*, from the fiery furnace. But since this one king escaped from being stuck in the clay, they believed in Avraham retroactively” (14:10).

Clearly, the miraculous salvation of one king was sufficient for this purpose, and God would not have saved any of the other wicked kings.

### 🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

In Sodom, welcoming guests was a capital offense (see above 18:20-21). Why did Lot, who was a wicked person, risk his life to welcome the angels? Even after the giving of the Torah, there is no obligation to risk one’s life in order to fulfill an act of charity.

Because, being with Avraham, Lot had been affected by Avraham’s trait of *mesiras nefesh* (self-sacrifice). Thus, even though Lot remained wicked—to the extent that he chose to live in Sodom—he nevertheless remained influenced by Avraham.

(Based on *Sefer Hasichos* 5750, p. 102)

לְךָ מֵהֶם וַיַּפְצְרוּ בְּאִישׁ בְּלוֹט מְאֹד וַיִּגְשׂוּ לְשֶׁבֶר הַדְּלָתָה:   
 וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים אֶת־יָדָם וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶת־לוֹט אֲלֵיהֶם הַבַּיְתָה   
 וְאֶת־הַדְּלָת סָגְרוּ: <sup>י</sup> וְאֶת־הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־פָּתַח הַבַּיִת הַבּוֹ   
 בַּסְּגוּרִים מִקָּטָן וְעַד־גָּדוֹל וַיִּלְאוּ לְמַצָּא הַפֶּתַח: <sup>יב</sup> וַיֹּאמְרוּ   
 הָאֲנָשִׁים אֶל־לוֹט עַד מִי־לָךְ פֹּה חֵתָן וּבְנֵיךָ וּבְנֵי־יָדְךָ וְכָל   
 אֲשֶׁר־לָךְ בְּעִיר הוּצָא מִן־הַמָּקוֹם: <sup>יג</sup> כִּי־מִשְׁחַתֵּימֵנו אֲנַחְנוּ   
 אֶת־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה כִּי־גָדְלָה צַעֲקַתְּם אֶת־פְּנֵי יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁלַחְנוּ   
 יְהוָה לְשַׁחֲתָהּ: <sup>יד</sup> וַיֵּצֵא לוֹט וַיְדַבֵּר אֶל־חֵתָנָיו אֶל־לִקְחֵי בְנֵיתָיו   
 וַיֹּאמֶר קוּמוּ צֵאוּ מִן־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה כִּי־מִשְׁחַתִּית יְהוָה אֶת־הָעִיר   
 וַיְהִי כַמְצַחֵק בְּעֵינָי חֵתָנָיו: <sup>טו</sup> וַכְּמוֹ הַשָּׁחַר עָלָה וַיֵּאֲצִיזוּ   
 הַמְּלֹאכִים בְּלוֹט לֵאמֹר קוּם קַח אֶת־אִשְׁתְּךָ וְאֶת־שְׁתֵּי בְנֵי־יָדְךָ   
 הַנִּמְצָאֹת פֶּן־תִּסְפָּה בְּעֵינֵי הָעִיר: <sup>טז</sup> וַיִּתְמַהֲמַהּ אֶל־וַיִּחַזְקוּ   
 הָאֲנָשִׁים בְּיָדוֹ וּבִיד־אִשְׁתּוֹ וּבִיד־שְׁתֵּי בְנֵיתָיו בַּחֲמַלַת יְהוָה   
 עָלָיו וַיֵּצֵאֵהוּ וַיַּנְתְּהוּ מֵחוּץ לָעִיר: <sup>יז</sup> וַיְהִי כַהוֹצִיאֵם אֹתָם   
 הַחוּצָה וַיֹּאמֶר הַמַּלְטֵ עַל־נַפְשְׁךָ אֶל־תְּבִיט אַחֲרֶיךָ וְאַל־   
 תַּעֲמֹד בְּכָל־הַפֶּכֶר הַהֲרָה הַמַּלְטֵ פֶן־תִּסְפָּה: <sup>יח</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹט   
 אֱלֹהִים אֶל־נָא אֲדֹנָי: <sup>יט</sup> הִנֵּה־נָא מַצָּא עֲבָדְךָ חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ וַתִּגְדַּל   
 חַסְדְּךָ אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ עִמָּדִי לְהַחְיֹת אֶת־נַפְשִׁי וְאַנְכִי לֹא אוֹכֵל   
 לְהַמְלִיט הַהֲרָה פֶּן־תִּדְבַּקְנִי הָרָעָה וּמָתִי: <sup>כ</sup> הִנֵּה־נָא הָעִיר   
 הַזֹּאת קָרְבָּה לָנוּם שָׁמָּה וְהוּא מַצְעֵר אֶמְלִיטָה נָא שָׁמָּה הֲלֹא

לחַדָּא וּקְרִיבוּ לְמַתְבַּר דְּשָׂא: י וְאוּשִׁימוּ   
 גּוּבְרֵיָא יַת יְדֵיהוֹן וְאֵעִילוּ יַת לוֹט לְוַתְּהוֹן   
 לְבֵיתָא וַיַּת דְּשָׂא אַחֲדוּ: יא וַיַּת גּוּבְרֵיָא דִּי   
 בְּתַרְע בֵּיתָא מָחוּ בְּשִׁבְרֵירֵיָא מְזַעֲרָא וְעַד   
 סְבָא וְלֹאֵיו לְאַשְׁכְּחָא תַרְעָא: יב וַיֹּאמְרוּ   
 גּוּבְרֵיָא לְלוֹט עוֹד מָאן לָךְ הִכָּא חֵתָנָא וּבְנֵיךָ   
 וּבְנֵי־יָדְךָ וְכָל דִּי לָךְ בְּקַרְתָּא אַפִּיק מִן אַתְרָא:   
 יג אַרִי מַחְבְּלִין אֲנַחְנָא יַת אַתְרָא דְּדִין אַרִי   
 סְגִיאתָ קַבְּלַתְהוֹן קְדָם יְיָ וְשַׁלְחָנָא יְיָ   
 לְחַבְּלוּתְהוּ: יד וַנִּפְק לּוֹט וּמְלִיל עִם חֵתָנוּהִי   
 נְסִבֵי בְּנֵיתֵיה וַאֲמַר קוּמוּ פּוּקוּ מִן אַתְרָא דְּדִין   
 אַרִי מַחְבֵּל יְיָ יַת קַרְתָּא וְהוּהוּ בְּמַחְדָּי בְּעֵינֵי   
 חֵתָנוּהִי: טו וּכְמַסַּק צַפְרָא הָוָה וּדְחִיקוּ   
 מִלְּאֲכֵיָא בְּלוֹט לְמִימַר קוּם דַּבֵּר יַת אַתְרָךְ   
 וַיַּת תַּרְתִּין בְּנֵתְךָ דְּאַשְׁתְּכִתָּן מְהִימְנָן עִמָּךְ   
 דִּילְמָא תִּלְקִי בַּחוּבֵי קַרְתָּא: טז וְאַתְעֵבֵב   
 וְאַתְקִיפוּ גּוּבְרֵיָא בִּידֵיהִ וּבִידָא דְּאַתְתֵּיהִ   
 וּבִידָא דְּתַרְתִּין בְּנֵיתֵיה בְּדַחַס יְיָ עֲלוּהִי   
 וְאַפְקוּהִי וְאַשְׁרוּהִי מִבְּרָא לְקַרְתָּא: יז וְהוּהוּ כַּד   
 אַפִּיקוּ יַתְהוֹן לְבְרָא וַאֲמַר חוּם עַל נַפְשְׁךָ לֹא   
 תִּסְתְּכִי לְאַחוּרְךָ וְלֹא תִקּוּם בְּכָל מִישְׁרָא   
 לְטוּרָא אֲשֶׁתִּיב דְּלִמָּא תִּלְקִי: יח וַאֲמַר לוֹט   
 לְהוֹן בְּבִעוּ כְעַן יְיָ: יט הָא כְעַן אֲשַׁכַּח עֲבָדְךָ   
 רַחֲמִין קְדָמְךָ וְאַסְגִּיתָא טוּבְךָ דִּי עֲבַדְתָּא עִמִּי   
 לְקִימָא יַת נַפְשִׁי וְאַנָּא לִית אֲנָא יָכִיל   
 לְאַשְׁתַּזְבָּא לְטוּרָא דְּלִמָּא תַעֲרַעֲנֵנִי בִישְׁתָּא   
 וְאַמוּת: כ הָא כְעַן קַרְתָּא דְּרָא קְרִיבָא   
 לְמַעֲרוֹק לְתַמְנָן וְהִיא זַעֲרָא אֲשֶׁתִּיב כְעַן לְתַמְנָן

כ"ט

המזומנות לך צבית להלילם. ומדרש אגדה יש, וזה יסודו של מקרא: תספה.   
 תהיה כלה, עד תום כל הדור, מתורגס, עד דסף כל דרא: (טז) ויתמהמה.   
 כדי להליל את ממונו: ויחזיקו. אחד מהם היה שליח להלילו, וחזירו להפוך   
 את סדום, לכך נאמר ויאמר המלט, ולא נאמר ויאמרו: (יז) המלט על   
 נפשך. דייך להליל נפשות אל תחוס על הממון: אל תביט אחרוך. אתה   
 הרשעת עמכם, וצזכות אצרכם אתה נילול, איך כדאי לראות צפורענותם   
 ואתה נילול: בכל הכבד. כבר הירדן: ההרה המלט. אלל אצרכם צרם,   
 שהוא יושב צדק, שנאמר ויעתק משם הכרה, ואף עכשיו היה יושב שם,   
 שנאמר אל המקום אשר היה שם אהלו צתחלה, ואף על פי שכתוב ויאכל   
 אצרכם וגו', אהלים הרבה היו לו, וגמשכו עד חצרון. המלט לשון השמטה, וכן   
 כל המלטש שמקרא, אשמוני"ר צלע"ז, וכן והמליטה זכר<sup>3</sup>, שנשמט העובר

אמרו, האחד צל לגור. אדם נכרי יחידי אתה ציינו שצאת לגור, וישפוט   
 שפוט, ונעשית מוכיה אותנו: הדלת. דלת הסוצצת לנעול ולפתוח:   
 (יא) פתח. הוא החלל שבו נכנסין ויוצאין: בסגורים. מכת עורון: מקטן   
 ועד גדול. הקטנים התחילו בצעירה תחלה, שנאמר מנער ועד זקן, לפיכך   
 התחילו הפורענות מהם: (יב) עוד מי לך פה. פשוטו של מקרא, מי לך   
 עוד צעיר האת, חוץ מאשחק וצנותיך שצבית: חתן ובניך ובנותיך. אם יש   
 לך חתן או צנים וצנות, הולא מן המקום: ובניך. בני צנותיך הנשואות.   
 ומדרש אגדה, עוד, מאחר שעושיין נצלה כזאת, מי לך פתחון פה ללמד   
 סיגוריא עליהם, שכל הלילה היה מליץ עליהם טובות. קרי ציה מי לך פה:   
 (יד) חתניו. שתי צנות נשואות היו לו צעיר: לקחי בנותיו. שאותן שצבית   
 ארוכות להם: (טו) ויאיצו. כתרומו ודחיקו, מהרובו: הנמצאות.

1 ב"ד ג, ח 2 שם ג, יא 3 ישע"י טו, 1 4 תהלים קכד, 1 5 ישע"י מו, ב 6 שבעות לה: 7 מלכים-א י, יח 8 שבת י:



(from foreign parts) to live here, and now (you are) rebuking us! Now, we'll treat you worse than them!" They pushed hard on the man, on Lot, and they came forward to break the door.

<sup>10</sup> The (angels) stretched their hands out, brought Lot to them in the house, and they shut the door.

<sup>11</sup> They struck the men who were at the entrance of the house with (a plague of) blindness—young and old alike—who toiled in vain to find the entrance.

<sup>12</sup> The (angels) said to Lot, "Who else do you have here? A son-in-law? Your own sons? Your daughters? Get anyone you have in the city out of the area! <sup>13</sup> For we are going to destroy this place, since the (people's) outcry is great before God. God has sent us to destroy it."

<sup>14</sup> So Lot went and spoke to his (two) sons-in-law (and) the fianc[es] of his daughters. He said, "Get moving and get out of here! God is destroying the city!"—but he seemed like a comedian in the eyes of his sons-in-law.

### 🌀 LOT IS SAVED—SODOM & AMORAH ARE DESTROYED 🌀

19:15 **A**s the dawn was breaking, the angels hurried Lot, saying, "Get up and take your wife, and your two daughters who (are willing to come), so that you won't be wiped out because of the city's sins!"

<sup>16</sup> (In trying to save his money) he was delayed. Out of God's pity for him, (the angels) took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, and they took him out, placing him outside the city.

<sup>17</sup> Then, when they took them outside, (one of the angels) said, "(Don't worry about your money,) flee for your life! Don't look behind you (as you don't deserve to see their punishment)! Don't stand in the entire plain (of Jordan). Flee to (Avraham, who is in) the mountain, so that you won't be wiped out."

<sup>18</sup> Lot said to them, "Please, My God, don't (tell me to flee to the mountain)! <sup>19</sup> Right now, Your servant has found favor in Your eyes, and Your kindness that You did in saving my life was great. But I cannot flee to the mountain, in case (I will be considered) evil (in comparison to Avraham) and I will die. <sup>20</sup> Now here, there is a city which I can flee to which (is recently inhabited) and (its sins are) small. Please let me flee there and live! (After all), doesn't it have (only a) few (sins)?"

רש"י

היה הקב"ה רואה מעשי ומעשי עמי ואני נדקת ציניהם, ומשצבת אללי, לפי מעשיך אני רשעה: (כ) העיר הזאת קרובה. קרובה ישיבתה<sup>8</sup>, נתישבה מקרוב, לפיכך לא נתמלחה סאתה עדיין, ומה היא קריבתה, מדור הפלגה שנתפלגו האנשים והתחילו להתיישב איש איש במקומו, והיא היתה בשנת מות פלג, ומשם עד כאן נ"צ שנה, שפלג מת בשנת מ"ח לאצרהם, כיצד פלג חי אחרי הולידו את רעו ר"ט שנה, לא מהם ל"ב כשגולד שרוג ומשרוג עד שגולד נחור ל', הרי ס"ב, ומנחור עד שגולד תרח כ"ט, הרי ל"א, ומשם עד

מן הרחם. כשפור נמלטת<sup>4</sup>, ולא יכלו מלט משא<sup>5</sup>, להשמיט משא הרעי שצנקהים: (יח) אל נא אדני. רבותינו אמרו<sup>6</sup> שם זה קדש, שנאמר זו להחיות את נפשי, מי שיש בידו להמית ולהחיות, ותרגומו צצו כען ה': אל נא. אל נא תאמר אלי להמלט הרה: נא. לשון צקשה: (יט) פן תדבקני הרעה. כשהייתי אלל אנשי סדום, היה הקב"ה רואה מעשי ומעשי בני העיר, והייתי נראה לדיק וכדאי להגלל, וכשאצב אלל לדיק, אני כרשע, וכן אמרה הטרפית לאליהו כי צבת אלי להזכיר את עוני<sup>7</sup>, עד שלא צבת אללי,

### TORAS MENACHEM

Now, a logical plan for the angels would have been to seek out the king of a city, since if they had been able to influence the king with a warning of potential destruction, then he in turn could have had a major impact on the people. Therefore, the angels headed for Sodom, since it was the only one of the five cities that had a king.

This however begs the question: why does the Torah not relate that they went to visit the king? The answer to this question becomes obvious when

reading Rashi's comment to verse 4. The Torah states, "The people of Sodom surrounded the house, both young and old, the entire population from every end," on which Rashi comments that they came, "from one end of the city to the other, for not one of them protested, because there was not even one righteous man among them." On witnessing this, the angels would have been convinced that there was no point in visiting the king at all, as there was no chance of saving this nation.

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeira & Chayei Sarah 5743)

הָלָא זְעִירָא הֵיא וְתַתְּקִינָם נַפְשֵׁי: כּא וַיֹּאמֶר לִיהָ הָא נְסִיבִית אַפְדָּ אַף לְפַתְנָמָא הָדִין בְּדִיל דְּלֵא לְמַהֲפָד ית קַרְתָּא דְּבַעִיתָא עֲלָה: כב אֹחֵי אֲשֶׁתָּוּב לְתַמְנָן אֲרִי לֹא אִכּוּל לְמַעַבְד פַּתְנָמָא עַד מִיתָדָּ לְתַמְנָן עַל בֶּן קָרָא שְׂמָא דְקַרְתָּא צוּעַר: כג שְׂמָשָׁא נִפְק עַל אֲרֵעָא וְלוּט עַל לְצוּעַר: כד וַיִּי אֲמַטֵּר עַל סְדוּם וְעַל עַמּוּרָה נְפִרִיתָא וְאַשְׁתָּא מִן קַדָּם יִי מִן שְׂמָיָא: כה וַהֲפָד ית קַרְוִיָּא הָאֵלִין וַיִּת פֶּל מִיִּשְׂרָאָל וַיִּת פֶּל יִתְבִּי קַרְוִיָּא וְצַמְחָא דְאַרְעָא: כו וַאֲסַתְּכִיָּאת אֲתַתִּיהָ מִפְתְּרוּהִי וְהוּת קָמָא דְמַלְחָא: כז וַאֲקָדִים אֲבָרְהָם

מִצְעָר הוּא וְתַחֲי נַפְשֵׁי: [רביעי] כּא וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הִנֵּה נִשְׂאֵתִי פְּנִיךָ גַם לְדַבֵּר הַזֶּה לְבִלְתִּי הִפְכִּי אֶת־הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ: כב מִהֵר הַמְּלִט שְׂמָה כִּי לֹא אֹכֵל לַעֲשׂוֹת דְּבָר עַד־בְּאֵךְ שְׂמָה עַל־בֶּן קָרָא שְׂם־הָעִיר צוּעַר: כג הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ יֵצֵא עַל־הָאָרֶץ וְלוּט בָּא צְעָרָה: כד וַיְהוֹה הַמְטִיר עַל־סְדוּם וְעַל־עַמּוּרָה נְפִרִית וְאַשְׁ מֵאֵת יְהוָה מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם: כה וַיַּהֲפֹךְ אֶת־הָעָרִים הָאֵל וְאֵת כָּל־הַכְּפָר וְאֵת כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי הָעָרִים וְצַמְחָה הָאֲדָמָה: כו וַתִּבְטַ אֲשֶׁתּוֹ מֵאַחֲרָיו וְתַחֲי נַצִּיב מַלְחָ: כז וַיִּשְׁכֶּם אֲבָרְהָם בְּבֶקֶר

דש"י

שעה שהלצנה עומדת בזרקיע עם החמה, לפי שהיו מהם עוזדיו לחמה ומהם ללצנה, אמר הקב"ה אם אפרע מהם ציוס, יהיו עוזדי לצנה אומרים, אילו היה בלילה כשהלצנה מושלת, לא היינו חרזין, ואם אפרע מהם בלילה, יהיו עוזדי החמה אומרים אילו היה ציוס כשהחמה מושלת, לא היינו חרזים, לכך כתיב וכמו שהשר עלה, ונפרע מהם בשעה שהחמה והלצנה מושלים: המטיר וגו' גפרית ואש. בתחלה מטר, ונעשה גפרית ואש? מאת ה'. דרך המקראות לדבר כן, כמו נשי למך, ולא אמר נשיי. וכן אמר דוד קחו עמכם את עבדי אדוניכם<sup>3</sup>, ולא אמר מעבדי. וכן אחשוורוש צסם המלך, ולא אמר בשמי. אף כאן אמר מאת ה', ולא אמר מאתו: מן השמיים. והוא שאמר הכתוב כי צם ידין עמים וגו'<sup>4</sup>, כשצא ליסר הצריות, מציא עליהם אש מן השמים, כמו ששעה לסדום, וכשצא להוריד המן, מן השמים, הניי ממטיר לכס לחם מן השמים<sup>5</sup>: (כה) ויהפך את הערים וגו'. ארבעתן יושבות צסלע אחד, והפכן מלמעלה למטה, שנאמר צחלמיש שלח ידו וגו'<sup>6</sup>: (כו) ותבט אשתו מאחריו. מאחריו של לוט: ותהי נציב מלח. צמלח חטאה וצמלח

שנולד אברהם ע', הרי קס"א, תן להם מ"ח, הרי ר"ט, ואותה שנה היתה שנת הפלגה, וכשנחרצה סדום היה אצרהם צן ל"ט שנה, הרי מדור הפלגה עד כאן נ"צ שנה, ולוער איחרה ישיבתה אחרי ישיבת סדום וחרבותיה שנה אחת, הוא שנאמר חמלטה נא, נא צנימטירא נ"א: הלא מצער היא. והלא עונותיה מועטין ויכול אחת להניחה: ותחי נפשי. צה, זה מדרשו. ופשוטו של מקרא, הלא עיר קטנה היא ואנשים צה מעט, אין לך להקפיד אם תניחנה, ותחי נפשי צה: (כא) גם לדבר הזה. לא דיך שאתה נילול, אלא אף כל העיר אילל צגללך: הפכו. הופך אני, כמו עד צואי, אחרי רואי, מדי דברי צו': (כב) בי לא אוכל לעשות. זה עונשן של מלאכים, על שאמרו כי משחיתים אנחנו, ותלו הדבר בצלמן, לפיכך לא זז משם עד שהזקקו לומר שאין הדבר צרשותן: בי לא אוכל. לשון יחיד, מכאן אתה למד שבהאחד הופך והאחד מניל, שאין שני מלאכים נשלחים לדבר אחד: על בן קרא שם העיר צוער. על שם והיא מלערי: (כד) וה' המטיר. כל מקום שנאמר וכו', הוא וצית דינו: המטיר על סדום. צעלות השחר כמו שנאמר וכמו השחר עלה,

## CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why were only Sodom and Amorah punished with fiery sulfur and not the other cities too? (v. 24-25)

**TZAFNAS PANE'ACH:** The Jerusalem Talmud (*Sanhedrin* 10:8) states that Sodom and Amorah had the status of an *Ir Hanidachas* (a city containing a majority of idol worshippers) which, in Jewish Law, must be *burned*. Therefore, God destroyed these cities with *fire*. However, there is a law that three or more cities in close proximity

cannot all be declared an *Ir Hanidachas* (*Mishnah, Sanhedrin* 1:5). This explains why Sodom and Amorah alone were destroyed with fire.

**TZROR HAMOR:** Since the residents of Sodom were extremely arrogant, "lifting themselves up" in their own estimation, they were destroyed by fire which ascends upwards.

**MINCHA BELULAH:** Since the land of Israel is holy, the abominations of Sodom had to be obliterated completely, with fire.

## TORAS MENACHEM

🔥 FIERY SULFUR (v. 24)

**Tzafnas Pane'ach** questions why only Sodom and Amorah received the punishment of fiery sulfur, whereas the other two cities were merely "turned over" (v. 24-25). Basing his answer on the Jerusalem Talmud, he states that the cities had a status of an *Ir haNidachas* (a city containing a majority of idol worshippers) which, in Jewish Law, must be burned. But since three or more cities in close proximity cannot all be declared an *Ir haNidachas*, only Sodom and Amorah were destroyed with fire.

At the literal level of Torah interpretation, this solution is difficult to accept since: a.) The primary sin of Sodom and Amorah for which they were destroyed was not idol worship, but the violent opposition towards charitable behavior (see above, "The Last Word," to 18:20).

b.) The law of *Ir haNidachas* was only introduced *after* the giving of the Torah and is not applicable to non-Jews.

We are thus left with the question why the punishment of Sodom and Amorah differed from that of the cities of Admah and Tzevoiyim?

At first glance, one might argue simply that the corruption of Sodom and Amorah vastly exceeded that of the other two cities, meriting a more severe punishment where the inhabitants were burned alive.

However, this solution is untenable, since we find that Lot begged God for the city of Tzo'ar to be saved, on the basis that "its sins are few, and therefore, You should leave it alone" (*Rashi* to v. 20). From this we can infer that the other four cities were all very corrupt.

Why then did they suffer different punishments?

FOURTH  
READING

<sup>21</sup> (One of the angels) said to him (on God's behalf), "Look! I am giving you a special dispensation that (not only will you be saved) but I will not overturn the city that you have mentioned. <sup>22</sup> Hurry and flee there, for I will not be able to do anything until you arrive there."

The city was therefore named Tz'oar (meaning, "small").

<sup>23</sup> As the sun rose over the earth, Lot came to Tz'oar.

<sup>24</sup> God (and His court) caused it to rain down upon Sodom and Amorah (first rain and then fiery) sulfur. It came from God, from the sky. <sup>25</sup> (God) turned over (the bedrock on which) these (four) cities (were situated) and the entire plain, with all the inhabitants of the cities, and the earth's vegetation.

<sup>26</sup> (Lot's) wife looked (backwards) from behind where (Lot stood), and she became a pillar of salt (as a punishment for withholding salt from guests).

## TORAS MENACHEM

## THE EXPLANATION

At the end of Parshas Noach, Rashi writes:

"Which sins were worse, those of the generation of the Flood or those of the Generation of the Dispersion (from the Tower of Bavel)? The former did not antagonize God intentionally, whereas the latter did antagonize God intentionally, waging war against Him. Nevertheless, the former were drowned, while the latter did not perish from the world!

"This is because the generation of the Flood were robbers and there was strife between them, and therefore they were destroyed. But the (Generation of the Dispersion) behaved with love and friendship among themselves..."

"From this you can learn that discord is hateful, and that peace is great."

From these words of Rashi we can gain a general insight into the reasoning behind God's punishments. Clearly, discord between man and his fellow merits a more severe punishment than rebellion against God. Presumably, this is because it opposes the very notion of society, which is man's mission on earth. Thus, when man turns against his fellow, *the very earth*—which was created to support civilization—becomes corrupt. Consequently, God's punishment is required, not only to destroy man, but to *cleanse the earth* which he has corrupted.

In our case therefore, we can presume that Sodom and Amorah were destroyed (burned) down to the very earth, since their sins were predominantly humanitarian crimes. Seeing that the other two cities suffered a lesser punishment, it follows—based on the above Rashi—that their sins did not corrupt the earth itself, but rather, they were between man and God.

## "CORRUPTION AT THE TOP"

Support for the above explanation can be found in an earlier comment of Rashi, in Parshas Lech Lecha:

When the Torah lists the five kings who ruled over the five cities mentioned here in our Parsha (the four that were destroyed, and Tz'ar), Rashi informs us of the significance of each of the kings' names:

- Bera (בֶּרַע), the king of Sodom, had a twofold evil (בִּי רַע), evil to Heaven and evil to people.
- Birsha (בִּרְשָׁע) the king of Amorah, was elevated [twofold] in wickedness (בִּי רֶשַׁע).
- Shinav (שִׁנְאַב) the king of Admah, hated (שִׁנְאָה) his Father (אָב) in Heaven.
- Shemaiver (שִׁמְאַיִבֵּר) the king of Tzevoiyim, made (שָׁם) wings (אֵבֵר) to fly and rebel against God.

We see here explicitly in Rashi's words that the kings of Sodom and Amorah were not only sinful directly to God, but they were also corrupt in their dealings with their fellow man—a conduct which we can presume spread from the monarchy downwards to the people (continuing even after the kings were executed). Therefore, these cities were destroyed right down to the earth, with fiery sulfur.

The kings of Admah and Tzevoiyim, on the other hand, sinned primarily to God, and not to man. Thus these cities were not destroyed by fiery sulfur, since the harmony among the inhabitants of the city ensured them a milder punishment.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 35, p. 70ff.)

 Sparks of Chasidus 

The Midrash states, "I have found David, my servant (i.e. Mashiach)" (Psalms 89:21). Where did I find him? In Sodom." Similarly, the prophet Ezekiel writes that, in the Messianic Era the city of Sodom will be reinhabited, "When I shall bring back their exiles, the exiles of Sodom and her daughters..." (16:53). In fact, Shaloh writes that Avraham made such a tremendous effort to save the city of Sodom because he was aware of its future significance (Shaloh 289a).

What is the connection between Sodom and Mashiach?

Before the world was created, God created another spiritual world, a world that collapsed. It collapsed because the components of that spiritual world—the world of *Tohu*—were highly charged free-radicals that would not interact.

In principle, that intensity was good, for it was a powerhouse of spirituality. In practice however, it failed.

Nevertheless, in the future redemption, the intensity of *Tohu* will once again be revealed, and this time, it will not collapse. This is because man's good deeds throughout history will act as receptacles to "bind" with the intense free-radicals of *Tohu*.

Sodom was a physical manifestation of the failed world of *Tohu*. The city was destroyed because its citizens were free-radicals who refused to pay attention to anybody else but themselves. Therefore, in the Messianic era, Sodom will be inhabited once again, for then the world will be a stable environment for the highly charged free-radicals of *Tohu*.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 35, p. 74)

בצפרא לאתרא דשמש תמן בצלו קדם יי: כה ואסתכי על אפי סדום ועמורה ועל כל אפי ארע מישרא וחזא והא סליק תננא דארעא כתננא דאתונא: כט והנה בחבלות יי ית קרוי מישרא ודכיר יי ית אברהם ושלח ית לוט מגו הפכתא כד הפך ית קרויא די הנה יתיב בהן לוט: ל וסליק לוט מצוער ויתיב בטורא ותרתינ בנתיה עמיה ארי החיל למתב בצוער ויתיב במערתא הוא ותרתינ בנתיה: לא ואמרת רבתא לזערתא אבונא סיב וגבר לית בארעא למיעל עלנא כאורח כל ארעא: לב איתא נשקי ית אבונא חמרא ונשכוב עמיה ונקים מאבונא בנין: לג ואשקיאה ית אבוהן חמרא בליליא הוא ועלת רבתא ושכיבת עם אבוהא ולא ידע במשכבה ובמקימה: לד והנה ביומא דבתרוהי ואמרת רבתא לזערתא הא שכיבת רמשא עם אבא נשקיניה חמרא אף בליליא ועולי שכוכי עמיה ונקים מאבונא בנין: לה ואשקיאה אף בליליא ההוא ית אבוהן חמרא וקמת זערתא ושכיבת עמיה ולא ידע במשכבה ובמקימה: לו ועדיאו תרתין בנת לוט מאבוהן: לו וילדת רבתא בר וקרת שמייה מואב הוא אבוהון דמואבאי עד יומא דין: לה וזערתא אף היא ילדת בר וקרת שמייה בר עמי הוא אבוהון דבני עמון

אל-המקום אשר-עמד שם את-פני יהוה: כה וישקף על-פני סדם ועמורה ועל כל-פני ארץ הכנען וירא והנה עלה קיטר הארץ כקיטר הכבשן: כט ויהי בשחת אלהים את-ערי הכנען ויזכר אלהים את-אברהם וישלח את-לוט מתוך ההפכה בהפך את-הערים אשר-ישב בהן לוט: ל ויעל לוט מצוער וישב בהר ושתי בנותיו עמו כי ירא לשבת בצוער וישב במערה הוא ושתי בנותיו: לא ותאמר הבכירה אל-הצעירה אבינו זקן ואיש אין בארץ לבוא עלינו פדרך כל-הארץ: לב לכה נשקה את-אבינו יין ונשכבה עמו ונחיה מאבינו זרע: לג ותשקינ את-אביהן יין בלילה הוא ותבא הבכירה ותשכב את-אביה ולא-ידע בשכבה ובקומה: לד ויהי ממחרת ותאמר הבכירה אל-הצעירה הן-שכבתי אמש את-אבי נשקנו יין גם-הלילה ובאי שכבי עמו ונחיה מאבינו זרע: לה ותשקינ גם בלילה ההוא את-אביהן יין ותקם הצעירה ותשכב עמו ולא-ידע בשכבה ובקמה: לו ותהרין שתי בנות-לוט מאביהן: לו ותלד הבכירה בן ותקרא שמו מואב הוא אבי-מואב עד-היום: לה והצעירה גם-הוא ילדה בן ותקרא שמו בן-עמי הוא אבי בני-עמון עד-היום: ס

\*נקוד על ר' בתרא

כש"י

נזמן להם צמעה, להוליא מכן שני אומות: ותשכב את אביה. וזלעירה כתיב ותשכב עמו, זעירה לפי שלא פתחה בזנות, חלף אחותה למדתה, חיכך עליה הכחוש ולא פירש גנותה. אזל זכירה שפתחה בזנות, פרסמה הכחוש צמפורה. וצקומה של זכירה נקוד לומר, שצקומה ידע, ואף על פי כן לא נשמר ליל שני מלשחות. (א"ר לוי כל מי שהוא להוט אחר צולמוס של עריות, לסוף מאכילים אותו מצשרו): (לו) ותהרין וגו'. אף על פי שאין האשה מתעצרת מזיאה ראשונה, אלו שלטו בעלמן והוליאו ערותן (ס"א עדותן) לחוץ, ונתעצרו מזיאה ראשונה: (לז) מואב. זו שלא היתה לנועה פירסמה שמאזיב הוא, אזל זעירה קראתו זלשון נקיה, וקצלה שר דימי משה,

לקחה, אמר לה תני מעט מלח לאורחים הללו, אמרה לו אף המנהג הרע הזה אחת צא להכניג במקום הזה: (כח) קיטור. חימור של עשן, שור"א זלע"ז: בבשן. חפירה שזורפין בה את האזנים לסוד, וכן כל כשנן שצחורה: (כט) ויזכור אלהים את אברהם. מהו זכירתו של אברהם על לוט, מזכר שהיה לוט יודע ששרה אשתו של אברהם, ושמע שאמר אברהם צמלרים על שרה אחותי היא, ולא גלה הדבר, שהיה חס עליו, לפיכך חס הקב"ה עליו?: (ל) כי ירא לשבת בצוער. לפי שהיתה קרובה לסדום: (לא) אבינו זקן. ואם לא עכשיו חימתי, שמא ימות או יפסוק מלהוליד: ואיש אין בארץ. יין סזורות היו שכל העולם נחרב, כמו דבור המזול?: (לג) ותשקינ וגו'. יין

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why is there a dot on the word וּבִקְוִמָה (v. 33) ?

**RASHI:** The word וּבִקְוִמָה "her getting up," mentioned in conjunction with the older sister, is dotted over the [second] letter "vav." This denotes that, really, when she got up *he was aware* of the fact, but nevertheless, it did not deter him from drinking on the second night.

**TALMUD:** The dot teaches that he was aware of her getting up, but how does that help? Surely, it was already too late? However, the following night Lot should have learned his lesson and not have drunk wine again (*Nazir* 23a).

**BE'ER MAYIM CHAIM:** If a person is writing a document and he is thinking of erasing a word but he is not yet quite sure, he may place a small mark next to it in order to remind himself that the word is questionable. So too, when a dot appears in the Torah it indicates that the word is only partially there, not in full force (18:9).

**DIVREI DAVID:** The dot signifies that the word should be uprooted completely, as if it were not written at all. Thus, even though the verse states that Lot did not know about his daughters' getting up, the dot indicates the very opposite, that he did know (18:9).

<sup>27</sup> Avraham got up early in the morning (and returned) to the place where he had stood before God (in prayer). <sup>28</sup> He gazed at the site of Sodom and Amarah, and over the entire area of the plain, and he saw that—look!—(a pillar of) smoke from the earth had risen like the smoke from a lime-kiln.

<sup>29</sup> When God had destroyed the cities of the plain, God had remembered (how Lot kept secret that Sarah was not) Avraham’s sister). Thus, when He overturned the cities in which Lot had lived, He sent Lot from the midst of the destruction.

### 🕯️ LOT HAS CHILDREN FROM HIS DAUGHTERS 🕯️

19:30 **L**ot left Tz’oar, and he settled in the mountain with his two daughters, since he was afraid to live in Tz’oar (as it was so close to Sodom). He lived in a cave, (just) he and his two daughters.

<sup>31</sup> (The daughters thought that the whole world had been obliterated, like it had been with the flood, so) the older one said to the younger one, “Our father is old (and who knows how much longer he will be able to father children? There is no man on earth to marry us in the usual fashion. <sup>32</sup> Come, let’s give our father wine to drink, and let’s lie with him. We’ll produce offspring through our father.”

<sup>33</sup> They gave their father wine to drink on that night, and the older one came and lay with her father, and he wasn’t aware of her lying down or of her getting up.

<sup>34</sup> Then, on the next day, the older one said to the younger one, “Look! Last night I lay with my father. Let’s give him wine to drink tonight too, and you’ll come and lie with him, and we’ll produce offspring through our father.”

<sup>35</sup> So they gave their father to drink on that night also, and the younger one got up and lay with him, and he wasn’t aware of her lying down or of her getting up.

<sup>36</sup> Lot’s two daughters conceived from their father. <sup>37</sup> The older one bore a son, and she named him Mo’av (lit. “from the father”). He is the father of (the people of) Mo’av (which continues) to this day.

<sup>38</sup> The younger one also bore a son, and she named him Ben-ami (lit. “son of my people”). He is the father of the people of Amon (which continues) to this day.

#### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🕯️ THE MEANING OF A DOT (v. 33)

A dot on top of a word in the Torah could have one of two meanings:

- a.) That the meaning of the word is weakened [c.f. *Be’er Mayim Chaim*].
- b.) That the word should be totally uprooted [c.f. *Divre David*].

At the literal level of Torah interpretation, the latter explanation—that the word is uprooted—is unacceptable. For then, one would have the simple, logical question: Why was the word written in the first place? Therefore, at the literal level, a dot comes to *weaken* the implication of a word.

This poses a problem in our case. *Rashi* writes, “When she got up he was aware of the fact,” despite the fact that the Torah states explicitly that “he wasn’t aware of her lying down or of her getting up” (v. 33). Surely this means that the dot is *uprooting* the simple meaning, and not just weakening the word?

To answer this problem, let us first ask another question. If, as *Rashi* writes, Lot did discover that his oldest daughter had lain with him, then surely the younger daughter would have been afraid to play the same trick of plying him with wine the following evening, as Lot would surely see through her ploy? Clearly, the daughters were not aware that Lot had discovered what had happened, which is why the younger daughter tried again the following night.

#### 🕯️ Sparks of Chasidus 🕯️

According to the *Zohar*, the dot on the word **וּבְקִימָה** (v. 33), alludes to the fact that God was secretly assisting this event, because Mashiach was to materialize from it (since Rus, King David’s great-grandmother, was a convert from the Moabites). The latter event, between Lot and his younger daughter (v. 35), is written without the letter vav, to indicate that the union did not produce such great offspring. Rabbi Shimon said, “When the verse states that Lot, ‘wasn’t aware,’ it means he wasn’t aware that Mashiach was destined to come from this union” (*Zohar* I 110b).

Why should the beginnings of Mashiach occur in such an undignified manner? *Ramak* explains that when a very lofty soul is about to descend into the world, the forces of *kelipah* (evil) oppose the soul’s descent vehemently. Sometimes however, *kelipah* will consent to the soul’s descent if it occurs amid a particularly sinful act. Thus we find that from this undesirable act the ancestor of Mashiach was born.

עד יומא דין: א ונטל מתמן אברהם לארע דרומא ותיב בין רקם ובין חגרא ואתותב בגרר: ב ואמר אברהם על שרה אתתיה אהתי היא ושלח אבימלך מלפא דגרר ודבר ית שרה: ג ואתא מימר מן קדם יי לות אבימלך בחלמא דליליא ואמר ליה הא את מאית על עיסק אתתא די דברתא והיא אתת גבר: ד ואבימלך לא קריב לותיה ואמר יי העם אף זכאי תקטול: ה הלא הוא אמר לי אהתי היא והיא אף היא אמרת אחי הוא בקשיטות לבי ובזכאות ידי עבדית דא: ו ואמר ליה יי בחלמא אף קדמי גלי ארי בקשיטות לבד עבדת דא ומנעית אף אנא יתך מלמחטי קדמי על פן לא שבקתיך למקרב לותיה: ז וכען אתב אתת גברא ארי נביא הוא ויצלי עלך ותיחי ואם ליתך מתיב דע ארי ממת תמות את וכל די לך: ח ואקדם אבימלך בצפרא וקרא לכל עבדוהי ומליל ית כל פתגמיא האלין קדמיהון ודחילו גובריא לחדא: ט וקרא אבימלך לאברהם ואמר ליה מה עבדת לנא ומה תביית לך ארי איתתא עלי ועל מלכותי חובא רבתא עובדין דלא כשרין לאתעבדא עבדת עמי: י ואמר אבימלך לאברהם מה חזיתא ארי עבדת ית פתגמא דדין: יא ואמר אברהם ארי אמרית לחוד לית דחלתא דני באתרא דדין וקטלונני על עיסק אתת: יב וברם בקושטא אהתי בת אבא היא ברם לא בת אמי והות לי לאנתו: יג והוה בד טעו עממיא

כ א ויסע משם אברהם ארצה הנגב וישב בין קדש ובין שור ויגר בגרר: ב ויאמר אברהם אל-שרה אשתו אחתי הוא וישלח אבימלך מלך גרר ויקח את-שרה: ג ויבא אלהים אל-אבימלך בחלום הלילה ויאמר לו הנה מת על-האשה אשר-לקחת והוא בעלת בעל: ד ואבימלך לא קרב אליה ויאמר אדני הגוי גם-צדיק תהרג: ה הלא הוא אמר לי אחתי היא והיא גם-היא אמה אחי הוא בתם-לבבי ובנקיין פפי עשיתי זאת: ו ויאמר אליו האלהים בחלום גם אנכי ידעתי כי בתם-לבבך עשית זאת ואחשך גם-אנכי אותך מחטו\* לי על-כן לא-נתתיך לנגע אליה: ז ועתה השב אשת-האיש כי-נביא הוא ויתפלל בעדך ותיח ואת-אינך משיב דע כי-מות תמות אתה וכל-אשר-לך: ח וישכם אבימלך בפקר ויקרא לכל-עבדיו וידבר את-כל-הדברים האלה באזניהם ויראו האנשים מאד: ט ויקרא אבימלך לאברהם ויאמר לו מה-עשית לנו ומה-חטאתי לך כי-הבאת עלי ועל-ממלכתי חטאה גדלה מעשים אשר לא-יעשו עשית עמדי: י ויאמר אבימלך אל-אברהם מה ראית כי עשית את-הדבר הזה: יא ויאמר אברהם כי אמרתי רק אין-יראת אלהים במקום הזה והרגוני על-דבר אשתי: יב וגם-אמנה אחתי בת-אבי הוא אך לא בת-אמי ותהי לי לאשה: יג ויהי כאשר התעו

\* חסר א

כש"י

ולא נתנו חלכיס<sup>4</sup>, וכן ולא נתנו חזיה לבוא<sup>5</sup>: (f) השב אשת האיש. ואל תהא סבור שמה תחגכה צעיניו ולא יקבלנה, או ישנאך, ולא יתפלל עליך. (אמר לו אבימלך ומי מפרסמו שלא נגעתי צה, אמר לו): כי נביא הוא. ויודע שלא נגעתי צה, לפיכך ויתפלל בעדך<sup>6</sup>: (ט) מעשים אשר לא יעשו. מכח אשר לא הורגלה לצא על צריה צאה לנו על ידך, עזירת כל נקצים של זרע, ושל קטנים, ורעי, ואזנים וחוטם: (יח) רק אין יראת אלהים. אכסנאי שצא לעיר, על עסקי אכילה ושחיה שואלין אותו, או על עסקי אשתו שואלין אותו, אשתך היא או אחותך היא: (יז) אחותי בת אבי היא. ונת אז מותרת לכן נח, שאין צרות לעובדי עבודה חלילים, וכדי לאמת דכריו השיבו כן. ואם תאמר וכלא צת אחיו היתה, צני צנים כרי הן כצנים, וכרי היא צתו של תרח, וכן הוא אומר ללוט, כי אנשים אחים אנחנו: אך לא בת אמי. הן מאם אחרת היא: (יג) ויהי כאשר התעו אותי וגו'. אונקלוס תרגם מה שתרגם. ויש לישב עוד דבר דבור על אופניו, כשהוא יאמר "הקצ"ה מצית אבי לכיות משוטט ונד ממקום למקום, וידעתי שאעבור במקום רשעים, ואומר לה זה חסדך וגו': כאשר התעו. לשון רבים, ואל תחמה, כי צרכה מקומות

שנאמר צני עמון אל תחגר צם<sup>1</sup>, כלל, וצמואצ לא הזכיר אלא שלא ילחס צם, אבל ללערן הכיר לו: (ח) ויסע משם אברהם. כשראש שחרכו הכרכיס, ופסקו העוצרים והשצים, נסע לו משם. דבר אחר להרחק מלוט, שלא עליו שם רע שצא על צנחיו<sup>2</sup>: (צ) ויאמר אברהם. כאן לא נטל רשות, אלא על כרחי שלא צטוהה, לפי שכבר לוקחה לבית פרעה על ידי כן: אל שרה אשתו. על שרה אשתו, וכיוצא בו אל הלכה ארון וגו'<sup>3</sup>, ואל מות חמיה, שניהם שלשון על: (ד) לא קרב אליה. המלאך מנעו, כמו שנאמר לא נחתיך לנגוע חלכה: הגוי גם צדיק תהרגו. אף אם הוא לדיק תהרגנו, שמה כך דרכך לצדד האומות חנם, כך עשית לדור המצול ולדור הפלגה, אף אני אומר שהרגתם על לא דבר, כמו שאתה אומר להרגני: (ה) גם היא. לרצות עבדים וגמלים וחמרים שלה את כולם שאלתי ואמרתי לי אחי הוא: בתם לבבי. שלא דמייתי לחטוא: ובנקיין כפי. נקי אני מן החטא, שלא נגעתי צה: (ו) ידעתי כי בתם לבבך וגו'. אמת שלא דמיית מחללה לחטוא, אבל נקיין כפיס אין כאן. (כד) אמרה משמוש ידים יש כאן: לא נתתיך. לא ממך היא שלא נגעתי צה, אלא חשכתי אני אותך מחטוא, שלא נחתי לך כח, וכן

## 🌀 AVIMELECH SEIZES SARAH 🌀

**20** **A**vraham traveled away from the area (since he was unable to find guests after the destruction of Sodom) to the land of the Negev, and he settled between Kadeish and Shur, living in Gerar. <sup>2</sup> (Without her consent) Avraham said about his wife Sarah that “She is my sister.”

Avimelech the king of Gerar sent for and took Sarah.

<sup>3</sup> God came to Avimelech in a dream at night. He said to him, “Look! You are going to die because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a married woman!”

<sup>4</sup> Avimelech had not come near to her, so he said, “God! Would you kill even a righteous nation? <sup>5</sup> Didn’t he say to me, ‘She is my sister’? And she also said, ‘He is my brother,’ (and so did her staff) too. I have done this with the innocence of my heart and with the purity of my hands (for I haven’t touched her!)”

<sup>6</sup> God said to him in the dream, “I know that you did this with the innocence of your heart, (but you do not have “pure hands.”) I have prevented you from sinning against Me, and that is why I did not give you (the strength) to touch her. <sup>7</sup> Now, return the man’s wife (and do not worry that he will hate you), because he is a prophet (and he will know you did not touch her). He will pray for you and you will live. But if you do not return (her), know that you will surely die, both you and all that is yours.”

<sup>8</sup> Avimelech got up early in the morning, and he summoned all his servants, and he spoke about all these occurrences into their ears. The men were very frightened.

<sup>9</sup> Avimelech summoned Avraham and said to him, “What have you done to us? What have I sinned against you, that you have brought upon me and upon my kingdom a great sin? You have caused me (to get a disease) which never happens (where every bodily orifice becomes blocked!)”

<sup>10</sup> “What led you to do this thing?” Avimelech said to Avraham.

<sup>11</sup> Avraham said, “(It was) because I said, ‘Surely, there is no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife. <sup>12</sup> Besides, she really is my sister—my father’s (grand)daughter (which is like a daughter), but not my mother’s daughter—and she became my wife. <sup>13</sup> Then, when God caused me

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What does it mean that Avimelech related his dream “into the ears” of his servants? (v. 8)**

**ONKELOS:** It means that he related the dream *in front of them*, not literally “into their ears.”

● **Why did his servants become “very frightened”? (v. 8)**

**MIDRASH:** They knew that Sodom had been completely obliterated, so they feared that the angels which had destroyed Sodom were now coming to wreak destruction upon them (*Bereishis Rabah* ch. 52).

### TORAS MENACHEM

So when the Torah states, “he *wasn’t* aware of her lying down or of her getting up,” the statement is partially true, since the daughters *thought*, “He *wasn’t* aware of her lying down or of her getting up.” The dot, however, informs us that Lot was aware, but it did not deter him from drinking on the second night.

Thus, in the final analysis, we see that the dot does not uproot the word, but limits its implication.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 113)

🌀 **THE FRIGHTENING NEWS OF AVIMELECH’S DREAM (v. 8)**

When the Torah states that Avimelech related his dream “into the ears” of his servants, it does not mean that he literally spoke into their ears, but rather, that he spoke in front of them [as **Onkelos** writes]. The point which the Torah wishes to stress here is that Avimelech *himself* related the news of his dream, which was an extremely unusual occurrence, since he would usually communicate with his servants via messengers. Thus, the fact that the King himself “*summoned all his servants, and he spoke about all these occurrences into their ears,*” caused them to become “*very frightened*” (v. 8).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 214)

בְּתֵר עֹבְדֵי יְדִהוֹן יְתִי קָרִיב יִי לְחַמְלָתֶיהָ מִבֵּית אָבָא וְאִמְרִית לָהּ דִּין טַיְבוּתֶיךָ דִּי תַעֲבְרֵי עִמִּי לְכָל אַתְרָא דִּי נִהַךְ לְתַמָּן אִמְרֵי עָלֵי אַחֵי הוּא: יד וְדַבֵּר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ עִאן וְתוֹרִין וְעַבְדִּין וְאַמְהָן וַיְהִי לְאֲבָרְהָם וְאַתִּיב לֵיהּ ית שָׂרָה אֶת־תִּיהָ: טו וְאָמַר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ הָא אֲרַעֲי קְדָמָךְ בְּדַתְקִין בְּעֵינֶיךָ תִּיב: טז וְלִשְׂרָה אָמַר הָא יְהִיבִית אֵלַי סְלֵעִין דְּכֶסֶף לְאַחוּךְ הָא הוּא לֵיךְ כְּסוּת דִּיקָר עֵינִין חֲלַף דְּשִׁלְחִית דְּבַרְתֶּיךָ וְחוּזִית יְתִיךָ וַיֵּת כָּל דְּעַמְךָ וְעַל כָּל מָה דְאַמְרַת אֶתְּוֹכַחַת: יז וְצָלִי אֲבָרְהָם קְדָם יי וְאָפִי יי ית אֲבִימֶלֶךְ וַיֵּת אֶת־תִּיהָ וְאֶת־הַתִּיהָ וְאֶת־רוּחוֹ: יח אֲרִי מִיחַד אַחַד יי בְּאָפִי כָל פֶּתַח וְלָדָא לְבֵית אֲבִימֶלֶךְ עַל עֵיסַק שָׂרָה אֶת־תִּיהָ אֲבָרְהָם: א וַיִּי דְכִיר ית שָׂרָה כְּמָא דִּי אָמַר וְעַבְדֵי יי לְשָׂרָה כְּמָא דִּי מְלִיל: ב וְעֵדִיאת וַיִּלְיֵדֵת שָׂרָה לְאֲבָרְהָם בֶּר לְסִיבְתוּהֵי לְזַמְנָא דִּי מְלִיל יְתִיהָ יי: ג וְקָרָא אֲבָרְהָם ית שׁוּם בְּרִיהַ דְּאֶת־יְלִיד לֵיהּ דִּילִידֵת לֵיהּ שָׂרָה יִצְחָק: ד וְגַר אֲבָרְהָם ית יִצְחָק בְּרִיהַ בֶּר

אֶת־י אֱלֹהִים מִבֵּית אָבִי וְאָמַר לָהּ זֶה חֲסִדְךָ אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשִׂי עִמָּדֵי אֵל כָּל־הַמְּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר נָבֹא שְׁמָה אִמְרֵי־לִי אָתִי הוּא: יד וַיִּקַּח אֲבִימֶלֶךְ צֹאן וּבָקָר וְעַבְדִּים וַשְּׂפָחֹת וַיֵּתֵן לְאֲבָרְהָם וַיָּשָׁב לוֹ אֶת שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ: טו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ הֲנִיָּה אֲרַעֲי לְפָנֶיךָ בְּטוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ שָׁב: טז וְלִשְׂרָה אָמַר הֲנִיָּה נָתַתִּי אֵלַי כְּסֶפֶר לְאַחֶיךָ הֲנִיָּה הוּא־לְךָ כְּסוּת עֵינַיִם לְכָל אֲשֶׁר אֲתָדָּ וְאֶת כָּל וְנִכְחַת: יז וַיִּתְּפַלֵּל אֲבָרְהָם אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים וַיִּרְפָּא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־אֲבִימֶלֶךְ וְאֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאַמְהַתָּיו וַיִּלְדוּ: יח בִּי־עֵצֶר עֵצֶר יְהוֹה בְּעַד כָּל־רָחֵם לְבֵית אֲבִימֶלֶךְ עַל־דְּבַר שָׂרָה אִשְׁת־אֲבָרְהָם: ט ס כֹּא וַיְהוֹה פָּקַד אֶת־שָׂרָה בְּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוֹה לְשָׂרָה כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר: ט וַתֵּהָרֵם וַתֵּלֶד שָׂרָה לְאֲבָרְהָם בֶּן לְזַקְנָיו לְמוֹעֵד אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר אֵתוֹ אֱלֹהִים: ט ג וַיִּקְרָא אֲבָרְהָם אֶת־שֵׁם־בְּנוֹ הַנּוֹלָד־לוֹ אֲשֶׁר־יִלְדָהּ־לוֹ שָׂרָה יִצְחָק: ד וַיִּמַּל אֲבָרְהָם אֶת־יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ בֶּן־שְׁמֹנֶת יָמִים כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֵתוֹ

כש"י

מקום, צרור דברים, ובלעז אשפורפיר, ואונקלוס תרגם בפנים אחרים, ולשון המקרא כך הוא נופל על התרגום, הנה הוא לך כסות של כבוד על העינים שלי ששלטו צד, ובכל אשר אתך, ועל כן תרגומו וחזית יתיך וית כל דעמך. ויש מדרש אגדה, אבל ישוה לשון המקרא פירשתי: (ז) וילדו. כתרגומו ואתרוחו. נפתחו נקביוס והוליו, והיא לידה שלמה: (ח) בעד בל רחם. כנגד כל פתח: על דבר שרה. על פי דבורה של שרה: (ט) וה' פקד את שרה וגו'. סמך פירש ז', ללמדך שכל המבקש רחמים על חבירו והוא לריך לאותו דבר, הוא נענה תחלה, שנאמר ויתפלל וגו' וסמך ליה וכו' פקד את שרה, שפקדה כבר קודם שרפא את אבימלך: פקד את שרה כאשר אמר. זכריון: כאשר דבר. זלידה, וכיכן היא אמירה וכיכן הוא דבור. אמירה, ויאמר אלהים אזל שרה אשתך וגו'. דבור, היה דבר ה' אל אברהם, זכרית זין הכתרים, ושם נאמר לא יירשך זה וגו'. והביא ה' עורש משרה: ויעש ה' לשרה כאשר דבר. לזכרה: (ג) (למועד אשר דבר אתה. ר' יודן ורבי חמא, רבי יודן אומר מלמד שגולד לט' חדשים, שלא יאמרו מזיתו של אבימלך הוא, ור' חמא אומר לשבעה חדשים): למועד אשר דבר אתה. דמליל יתי, את המועד אשר

לשון אלהים ולשון מרות קרוי לשון רבים. אשר הלכו אלהים. אלהים חיים. אלהים קדושים. וכל לשון אלהים לשון רבים. וכן ויקח אדוני יוסף. אדוני האדונים. אדוני הארץ. וכן בעליו יומת. והועד זבעליו. ואם תאמר מהו לשון התעו, כל הגולה ממקומו ואינו מיושב קרוי תועה, כמו ותלך ותתע'. תעיתי כשכ אוזד<sup>2</sup>, יתעו לזלי אוכל<sup>3</sup>, יאלו ויתעו לבקש אכלם: אמרי לי. עלי, וכן וישאלו אנשי המקום לאשתו<sup>4</sup>, על אשתו. וכן ואמר פרעה לזני ישראל<sup>5</sup>, כמו על זני ישראל. פן יאמרו לי אשה הכרתהו<sup>6</sup>: (יד) ויתן לאברהם. כדי שיתפייס ויתפלל עליו: (טו) הנה ארצי לפניך. אבל פרעה אמר לו הנה אשתך קח ולך, לפי שתיארה, שהמלרים שטופי זמה: (טז) ולשרה אמר. אבימלך לכבודך, כדי לפייסה, הנה עשיתי לך כבוד זה, נתיי ממון לאחיק, שאמרת עליו אחי הוא, הנה הממון והכבוד הזה לך כסות עינים: לבל אשר אתך. יכסו עיניהם שלא יקילוך, שאילו השיבותיך ריקנית, יש להם לומר, לאחר שנתעלל זה החזירה, עכשיו שהורכתי לזכר ממון ולפייסך, יודעים יהיו שעל כרחי השיבותיך, ועל ידי נס: ואת כל. ועם כל צאי העולם: ונכחת. יבא לך פתחון פה להחוכה, ולהראות דברים נכרים הללו, ולשון תוכחה בכל

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why does the story of Yitzchak's birth follow the incident with Avimelech? (v. 1)

**RASHI:** This section was placed immediately following the preceding section to teach you that if a person prays for his friend, when he himself needs that very thing he is praying for, he is answered first. Thus, "Avraham prayed (for Avimelech) etc." (v. 17), and in the next section, "God remembered Sarah" (21:1), indicating that she became pregnant before Avimelech was healed.

**EITZ YOSEF:** When a person prays for another and sweetens a Divine Judgment, the flow of blessing descends downwards into the soul of the one who prayed, and from there the blessing spreads to other souls. Therefore if the person who prayed is in need of the very same blessing as the one he is praying for, he will inevitably receive the blessing first, as his soul is the channel through which the blessing enters the world (comment to Bava Kama 92a).



to wander from my father's house (among wicked people), I said to her, 'Do me a favor! Whatever place we come to, say about me, 'He is my brother.'"

<sup>14</sup> Avimelech took flocks, cattle, servants and maids, and he gave (them) to Avraham (to appease him that he should pray for him), and he restored his wife Sarah to him.

<sup>15</sup> Avimelech said, "Here is my land before you! You may settle wherever you like."

<sup>16</sup> To Sarah he said, "Look! I have given a thousand pieces of silver to (Avraham, who you said was) your brother. (If anyone suspects you of being abused by me and then discarded, the money) will be a veil (to divert the suspicion from) you and all those who are with you. You can prove (your innocence) to everybody."

<sup>17</sup> Avraham prayed to God. God healed Avimelech, his wife and his handmaids, and they were relieved. <sup>18</sup> For God had shut every (orifice) of Avimelech's household, because of Sarah, Avraham's wife.

## 🕍 THE BIRTH OF YITZCHAK 🕍

**21** **G**od remembered (His promise of pregnancy) to Sarah as He had said (when the angels visited Avraham). God made Sarah (pregnant) as He had told (Avraham, at the covenant of the parts). <sup>2</sup> Sarah conceived and bore a son to Avraham in his old age, at the time of which God had told him (through the angels). <sup>3</sup> Avraham named his son who had been born to him—whom Sarah had borne to him—Yitzchak. <sup>4</sup> Avraham circumcised his son Yitzchak when he was eight days old, as God had

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🕍 AVRAHAM'S PRAYER (20:17, 21:1)

Rashi's comment to verse 1 leaves us with two, very pertinent questions:

a.) Rashi questions why "this section was placed immediately following the preceding section." But surely this is not an issue at all, since the entire Parsha up to this point has followed chronological order. Why *shouldn't* this section follow, since that is how it actually occurred?

b.) God has *already* promised Avraham that he would have a child (at the "Covenant of the Parts"). So how can Rashi suggest that Sarah only became pregnant in the merit of Avraham's prayer for Avimelech, if they had been promised a child in any case?

The explanation: a.) The Torah was not written in chronological order. Rashi was troubled as to why the account of Yitzchak's birth was written

here, rather than *immediately after* God promises Avraham and Sarah a child at the beginning of the Parsha. Surely, it would have been more appropriate to record all the related details together? This question led Rashi to understand that the position of the account of Yitzchak's birth here must be to teach us a lesson.

b.) God promised Avraham a child already at the "Covenant of the Parts," an event which preceded Yitzchak's birth by *thirty years* (Rashi to Bo 12:40). Nevertheless, when Avraham prayed for Avimelech, Sarah became pregnant *immediately*. From this we see the power of praying for another, which was able to bring to fruition a promise which had been lying dormant for almost thirty years!

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeira 5743)

### 🕍 Sparks of Chasidus 🕍

#### "AVRAHAM CIRCUMCISED HIS SON..." (v. 4)

Circumcision enters a person into a covenant with God, a feat which can only be initiated by God, not by man. Therefore, Yitzchak's circumcision, which occurred eight days after his birth (v. 4), was superior to that of Yishma'el's (at 13 years) or even Avraham's (at 99 years). For in the latter cases it could appear that circumcision was a just reward for the years of Divine service which preceded the . circumcision

In truth, however, circumcision is a Divine gift that a person could never justly "earn." This fact is stressed most by Yitzchak's circumcision at eight days, which was clearly not "earned" at all by his prior good deeds.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 25, p. 86ff.)

### 🕍 The Last Word 🕍

A person might pray for his friend before praying for himself for one of two reasons:

a.) Because his friend's problem genuinely bothers him more than his own problems. Or, b.) Because he wants the reward of being answered first (see Rashi to v. 1).

Generally, with acts of kindness, the result for the recipient is more important than the donor's motive. So even if a person prays for another because he wants the reward (of being answered first) he will still be rewarded, for after all he performed an act of kindness in praying for another.

Nevertheless, it goes without saying that the first approach above—the person with pure motives—is vastly superior.

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeira 5743)

תִּמְנָא יוֹמִין כְּמָא דִּי פִּקִּיד יְתִיבָה זְיָה וְאַבְרָהָם  
 בְּרַ מֵאָה שְׁנַיִן בְּדִ אֶתְיֵלִיד לִיהָ יֵת יִצְחָק  
 בְּרִיהָ: וְאָמְרַת שָׂרָה תְּדוּא עֶבֶד לִי יֵי כֹל  
 דְּשָׁמַע יְחֵדִי לִי: וְאָמְרַת מִן מְהִימָן דְּאָמַר  
 לְאַבְרָהָם וְקָיָם דְּתוֹנִיק בְּנִין שָׂרָה אֲרִי יְלִידִית  
 בְּרַ לְסִיבְתוּהִי: ה וְרָבָא רָבִיא וְאַתְחַסִּיל וְעֶבֶד

אֱלֹהִים: (חמישי) ה וְאַבְרָהָם בְּיָמָת שָׁנָה בְּהוֹלֵד לוֹ אֶת יִצְחָק  
 בְּנֹו: ו וְתֹאמֶר שָׂרָה צָחַק עָשָׂה לִי אֱלֹהִים כָּל־הַשְּׁמַע  
 יִצְחָק־לִי: ז וְתֹאמֶר מִי מִלֵּל לְאַבְרָהָם הִינִיקָה בָנִים שָׂרָה  
 כִּי־יִלְדָתִי בֵּן לְזַקְנָיו: ח וַיְגַדֵּל הַיֶּלֶד וַיִּגְמַל וַיַּעַשׂ אֲבָרָהָם

רש"י

היה צעולס: (ז) מי מלל לאברהם. לשון שצה וחשיבות, כמו מי פעל ועשה<sup>3</sup>, מי צר אלה<sup>4</sup>, ראו מה הוא, ומי הוא (וכמה הוא גדול) שומר הצטחחו, הקצ"ח מצטיח ועושה: מלל. שינה הכחוצ ולא אמר דבר, גימטריא שלו ק', כלומר לסוף מאה לאצרכס: היניקה בנים שרה. ומכו

דבר וקצט כשאמר לו למועד אשוב אליך, שרט לו שריטה צכותל, ואמר לו, כשחגיג חמה לשריטה זו בשנה האחרת תלד: (לזקניו. שביה זו איקונין שלו דומה לו): (ו) יצחק לי. ישמה עלי. ומדרש אגדה<sup>2</sup>, הרצה עקרות נפקדו עמה, הרצה חולים נתרפאו זו ציוס, הרצה תפלות נענו עמה, ורצ שחוק

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why were people happy about Sarah giving birth? (v. 6)

**RASHI:** The *Midrash* says that many barren women were remembered with her; many sick people were healed on that very day; many prayers were answered with hers, and there was much joy in the world.

**DIVREI DAVID:** When people heard of the great miracle that had occurred to Sarah, their *bitachon* (trust in God) became strengthened, and in that merit they became healed.

● Why did Sarah nurse “children” in the plural? (v. 7)

**RASHI:** On the day of the feast (see v. 8), the princesses brought their children with them, and she nursed them, for they were saying, “Sarah did not give birth! She brought an abandoned child from the market!”

**TALMUD:** The nations were being cynical, saying, “All that happened is that an elderly couple brought an abandoned child from the market, saying it is their son!”

What did Avraham do? He went and invited all the great people of the generation, and Sarah invited their wives. Each couple brought a baby, but without a nurse. A miracle occurred to Sarah and she produced milk endlessly, like a fountain, nursing all the babies.

But they were still cynical, saying, “Even if Sarah at 90 could give birth, could Avraham father a child at 100?”

Immediately, the facial features of Yitzchak began to resemble Avraham’s. On seeing this, everybody declared in unison, “It is Avraham who fathered Yitzchak!” (*Bava Metzia* 87a).

**TORAH TEMIMAH:** Why did Sarah have to nurse the babies of all the guests? If she just nursed Yitzchak, wouldn’t that have been sufficient proof that she had given birth?

However, the Torah states that Avraham only made the feast after Yitzchak had been weaned (v. 8), at which point he refused to take Sarah’s milk. Thus, the only possible proof for the guests that Sarah had indeed given birth was for her to nurse their babies.

TORAS MENACHEM

🕯 SARAH’S MIRACLE (v. 6-7)

*Rashi* describes how Sarah miraculously nursed the babies of numerous princesses, to prove that she had not, “brought an abandoned child from the market.” This, however, poses a number of problems:

- 1.) Surely, if Sarah had only nursed Yitzchak it would have been sufficient proof to the assembled crowd that she had indeed given birth [as *Torah Temimah* asks]? Since God does not perform a miracle in vain, what was the point of making Sarah able to nurse numerous non-Jewish babies?
- 2.) Why did many barren women become pregnant, and the sick healed?
- 3.) Even after she nursed an astonishing number of babies, that was still only proof that Sarah was capable of giving birth at an advanced age. Where was the proof that Avraham had fathered Yitzchak?

The *Talmud* solves this problem with the miraculous account of how Yitzchak’s features changed to resemble Avraham. However, *Rashi* does not cite this solution here, presumably because he holds that the matter is self-understood already.

(Later in *Parshas Toldos*, *Rashi* does mention this miracle, but since it is not cited here, we can presume that this miracle is not required to answer the above question, because *Rashi*’s commentary was intended to be read in order).

MIRACLES AS A PROOF OF SARAH’S PIETY

If Sarah had nursed Yitzchak alone, it would have been apparent that she was capable of having children, but there would be no proof that Avraham was the father.

However, when she merited a *stunning open miracle* from God, nursing countless babies before everybody’s eyes, people would have realized that Sarah was an extremely pious woman who would only have conceived a child from her husband. Similarly, the healing of the sick that accompanied Yitzchak’s birth would have proved Sarah’s piety to the majority of those present. Thus the further proof of Yitzchak’s features changing was, generally speaking, not required.

(Nevertheless, the “cynics” of the generation were still not satisfied with this logical proof, for the nature of a cynic is to deny and ridicule even the most sound of arguments. Therefore, God performed for them a visible proof, transforming the features of Yitzchak—as the *Talmud* states, and *Rashi* cites in *Parshas Toldos*).

HOW MANY MIRACLES?

One could argue that *Rashi* and the *Talmud* differed over the question of how many miracles occurred here:

From a straightforward reading of the *Talmud*, it appears that two miracles occurred here: 1.) Sarah gave birth at an advanced age. 2.) She produced an enormous volume of milk. The *Talmud* stresses that this

FIFTH  
READING

commanded him. <sup>5</sup> Avraham was a hundred years old, when his son Yitzchak was born to him.

<sup>6</sup> Sarah said, “God has made me happy! Whoever hears (about this) will be happy for me.”

<sup>7</sup> She said, “How (awesome is God) who said to Avraham that Sarah would nurse children, for I have borne a son in his old age!”

<sup>8</sup> The child grew and was weaned (at twenty-four months). On the day that Yitzchak was weaned, Avraham made a feast (inviting all the) great (people of the generation).

## TORAS MENACHEM

second point was an *additional* miracle, “A miracle occurred to Sarah and she produced milk endlessly.”

*Rashi* however makes no mention that Sarah’s large quantity of milk was an additional miracle. Thus, *Rashi*’s view is that we are speaking here of *one general miracle*. I.e. the birth of Yitzchak, Sarah’s exceptional quantity of milk and the healing of the sick were *all one* miraculous occurrence, with one single purpose.

*Rashi* does not have to inform us what the purpose of this miracle was, as it is self-evident from some of his earlier comments:

In *Parshas Lech Lecha*, we learned how God told Avraham that Sarah’s name would change before she would give birth: “Sarai will not give birth, but Sarah will give birth. I will give you another name, and your destiny will change” (*Rashi* to 15:5). Later, when God actually changed her name, *Rashi* explains: “Sarai means ‘my princess,’ suggesting that she is for Me, but not for others. Sarah, (“princess”) shall be her name, suggesting that she will be a princess over all (nations)” (*Rashi* to 17:15). From this we see that Yitzchak’s birth was accompanied by Sarah’s appointment as “princess over all nations,” i.e. a leader over gentile nations.

Therefore, the general miracle of Yitzchak’s birth was associated with miraculous occurrences for non-Jews: “Many barren women were remembered with her, many sick people were healed etc.,” and, “The princesses brought their children with them, and she nursed them.”

## AVRAHAM’S MIRACLES

This however begs the question: Avraham’s name was also changed before Yitzchak’s birth to indicate that he was to be a person who influences non-Jews: “Your name shall no longer be called Avram, but your name shall be Avraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations” (17:5). If so, why do we not find that Avraham merited miracles in connection with Yitzchak’s birth, to indicate his role as a person who influences non-Jews?

However, it could be argued that Avraham did indeed merit such miracles. In *Parshas Chayei Sarah*, the Torah relates, “Avraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah.” As a result of this union Avraham had six more sons, who went on to father various non-Jewish nations. At this time Avraham was already 140 years old, so the event was clearly miraculous.

It could be argued that this event was a delayed miracle *which occurred as a result of Yitzchak’s birth*, as it caused Avraham to be “the father of a multitude of nations,” literally.

The obvious problem with this solution is it seems rather farfetched to suggest that Avraham’s miracle should have been delayed for forty years.

However, the reason for this is actually quite straightforward:

Avraham could not have had these children through Sarah, since the point here was that he should father non-Jewish nations. Also, it would certainly have disturbed Sarah greatly if she had had more children, only to find that they abandoned the path of Judaism. God spared her this pain, and allowed Avraham to father these children from another woman.

Furthermore, according to *Rashi* (25:1) the mother of these children, Keturah, was actually Hagar, whom Sarah suffered from intensely and had expelled from Avraham’s house (above v. 10). To spare Sarah the distress of seeing Avraham reunite with Hagar and have children, God delayed Avraham’s miracle until after Sarah had passed away, forty years later.

Nevertheless, since Avraham’s six additional sons were, in fact, part of the general miraculous occurrence of Yitzchak’s birth, the Torah does not stress that an *additional* miracle occurred to Avraham (enabling him to have children at the age of 140). For, the miracle was *already* specified explicitly in the Torah, in connection with Yitzchak’s birth.

(Based on *Sichos of Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sarah & Toldos* 5745)

## 🔥 Sparks of Chasidus 🔥

### YITZCHAK’S BIRTH: A PROTOTYPE OF JEWISH INFLUENCE ON THE NATIONS

**I**nfluencing the nations of the world to serve the One God is a fundamental aspect of Judaism. Both the *active* and *passive* effects of Jewish influence are evident at every stage:

a.) Yitzchak was the first person to be born a Jew, so his birth was associated with a positive influence on non-Jews. Sarah had a *passive* effect—miracles simply surrounded her. Avraham took a more active role, by fathering non-Jewish nations.

b.) *Rambam* writes that even in our times it is incumbent on all Jewish people to coerce non-Jews to observe the seven Noachide laws (*Rambam, Hilchos Melachim* 8:10). Obviously, this requires an *active* effort to educate the nations, highlighting the importance of their

*mitzvos*. However, it can be proven from the words of *Rambam* that this is followed by a second, *passive* phase, where non-Jews come to a heightened perception of the Noachide code themselves, without direct input from the Jewish people.

c.) The Messianic era begins with *Mashiach*’s *active* efforts to perfect the world, including his work with non-Jews, “He will fix the entire world” (*ibid.* 11:4). However, at some point this will catalyze into the heightened redemption, where non-Jews will study God’s wisdom of *their own accord*, without the direct input of *Mashiach*—as *Rambam* states, “The entire world will only be busy with knowing God” (*ibid.* 12:5) without the need for *Mashiach*’s direct intervention.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 96ff.)

אברהם משתנה גדול ביום הנמל את-יצחק: ויתרא שרה את-  
 בן-הגזר המצריית אשר-ילדה לאברהם מצחק: ותאמר  
 לאברהם גרש האמה הזאת ואת-בנה כי לא יירש בן  
 האמה הזאת עם-בני עם-יצחק: וירע הדבר מאד  
 בעיני אברהם על אודת בנו: ויאמר אלהים אל-אברהם  
 אל-ירע בעיניך על-הנער ועל-אמתך כל אשר תאמר אליך  
 שרה שמע בקלה כי ביצחק יקרא לך זרע: וגם את-  
 בן-האמה לגוי אשימנו כי זרעך הוא: וישכם אברהם |  
 בבקר ויקח-לחם וחמת מים ויתן אל-הגר שם על-שכמה  
 ואת-הילד וישלחה ותלך ותתע במדבר באר שבע: ויכלו  
 המים מן-החמת ותשלך את-הילד תחת אתר השיחם:  
 ותלך ותשב לה מנגד הרחק במטחוי קשת כי אמרה  
 אל-אראה במות הילד ותשב מנגד ותשא את-קלה ותבך:  
 וישמע אלהים את-קול הנער ויקרא מלאך אלהים |  
 אל-הגר מן-השמים ויאמר לה מה-לך הגר אל-תיראי  
 כי-שמע אלהים אל-קול הנער באשר הוא-שם: יה קומי

אברהם משתניא רבא ביומא דאתחטיל ית  
 יצחק: ו תות שרה ית בר הגזר מצריתא  
 דילינדת לאברהם מחייד: ו אמרת לאברהם  
 תריד ית אמתא הדא וית ברה ארי לא יירת  
 בר אמתא הדא עם ברי עם יצחק: ו ובאיש  
 פתנמא לחדא בעיני אברהם על עיסק בריה:  
 יב ואמר יי לאברהם לא יבאיש בעיניך על  
 עולימא ועל אמתך כל דתימר לך שרה קבל  
 מנה ארי ביצחק יתקרין לך בנין: י ואף ית  
 בר אמתא לעמא אשוינייה ארי בךך הוא:  
 יד ואקדים אברהם בצפרא ונסיב לחמא  
 ורקבא דמיא ויהב להגר שוי על פתפה וית  
 רביא ושלחה ואזלת וטעת במדברא באר  
 שבע: ו ושלמו מיא מן רקבא ורמת ית  
 רביא תחות חד מן אילניא: ו ואזלת ותיבת  
 לה מקביל ארתיק מניגר בקשתא ארי  
 אמרת לא אחוי במותא דרביא ותיבת  
 מקביל וארימת ית קלה ובכת: ו ושמיע  
 קדם יי ית קליה דרביא וקרא מלאכא דיי  
 להגר מן שמיא ואמר לה מה לך הגר לא  
 תדחלי ארי שמיע קדם יי קליה דרביא  
 באתר דהוא תמן: יה קומי טולי ית רביא

רש"י

בקלה. (צקול רוכ"ק שצה) למדנו שהיה אברהם טפל לשרה צנזירות:  
 (יד) לחם וחמת מים. ולא כסף וזכב, לפי שהיה שונאו על שיאל לתרבות רעה:  
 ואת הילד. אף הילד שם על שכמה, שהכניסה זו שרה עין רעה, ואחזתו חמה<sup>8</sup>,  
 ולא יכול לילך צגגלו: ותלך ותתע. חזרה לגלולי בית אביה: (טו) ויכלו המים.  
 לפי שדרך חולים לשחות הרצה?<sup>9</sup> (טז) מנגד. מרחוק: במטחוי קשת. כשתי  
 טיחות<sup>10</sup>, והוא לשון יריית חץ, צלשון משנה שהטיח צאשחו, על שם שחזרע יורה  
 כחץ. ואם תאמר היה לו לכתוב כמעתי קשת, משפט הוי"ו ליכנס לכאן, כמו צחגוי  
 הסלע<sup>11</sup>, מגזרת והיתה אדמת יודזה למלרים לחגא<sup>12</sup>, ומגזרת יחוגו וינעו  
 כשכור<sup>13</sup>, וכן קלוי ארץ<sup>14</sup>, מגזרת קאה: ותשב מנגד. כיון שקרב למות, הוסיפה  
 להתרחק: (יז) את קול הנער. מכאן שיפה תפלת החולה מתפלת אחרים עליו,  
 וכיא קודמת להתקבל<sup>15</sup>: באשר הוא שם. לפי מעשים שהוא עושה עכשיו הוא  
 נדון, ולא לפי מה שהוא עתיד לעשות, לפי שהיו מלאכי השרת מקטרגים

צנים לשון רבים, ציום המשחה הביאו השרות את צניכין עמהן, והיניקה אותם,  
 שהיו חומרות לא ילדה שרה, אלא אסופי הביאה מן השוק: (ח) ויגמל. לסוף  
 כ"ד חדש: משתה גדול. שהיו שם גדולי הדור<sup>2</sup>, שם ועבר ואצמלך:  
 (ט) מצחק. לשון עבודת אלילים, כמו שנאמר ויקומו ללחץ<sup>3</sup>. דבר אחר לשון  
 גילוי ערוות, כמה דתימא ללחץ צי. דבר אחר לשון ריחה, כמה דתימא ויקומו  
 נח הנערים וישחקו לפנינו וגו'<sup>4</sup>: (י) עם בני וגו'. מתשובת שרה כי לא יירש בן  
 האמה הזאת עם בני, אהה למד שהיה מריב עם יצחק על הירושה, ואומר, אני  
 זכור ונוטל פי שנים, ויואלים צשדה ונוטל קשתו ויורה צו חלים, כמה דאת אמר  
 כמתלהב הירור זקום וגו', ואמר הלא משחק אני<sup>5</sup>: עם בני עם יצחק. מכיון  
 שהוא בני, אפילו אם אינו בגון כילחק, או בגון כילחק, אפילו אם אינו בני, אין  
 זה כדאי לירש עמו, קל וחומר עם בני עם יצחק ששתיבן צו<sup>6</sup>: (יא) על אודות  
 בנו. על שמע שיאל לתרבות רעה. ופשוטו, על שאומרת לו לשלחו? (יב) שמע

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What was Yishma'el's bad behavior? (v. 9-10)

RASHI: The word מצחק (lit. "having fun") is an expression of idolatry, as the verse states [in reference to the Golden Calf] "they became depraved" (Shemos 32:6). Alternatively, it is an expression of adultery, as the verse states [in connection with Potifar's wife], "to deprave me" (below 39:17). Alternatively, it is an expression of murder, as the verse states, "Let the boys get up now and kill (וישחקו) before us, etc." (Sam. II 2: 14).

From Sarah's response, "The son of this handmaid (is not worthy) to share an inheritance with (anyone who is) my son" (v. 10), we see that [Yishma'el] used to argue with Yitzchak about their inheritance. He would say, "I am the firstborn, so I should take a double portion!" They would go out to the field, and Yishma'el would take his bow and shoot arrows at Yitzchak, "like one who wears himself shooting firebrands, etc. and says: I'm only joking!" (Prov. 26:18f.).

1 גיטין עה: 2 ב"ד נג, י 3 שמות לב, ו 4 שמואל-ב ב, יג 5 משלי כו, יח-יט 6 ב"ד נג, יא 7 דברים רבה ד, ה 8 ב"ד נג, יג 9 שם 10 שם 11 שה"ש ב, יד 12 ישע"י יט, יז 13 תהלים קו, כו 14 שם סה, ו 15 ב"ד נג, יד

## 🕎 AVRAHAM'S 9TH TEST: EXPULSION OF HAGAR & YISHMA'EL 🕎

21:9 Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian—whom she had borne to Avraham—become depraved (worshipping idols).<sup>10</sup> Sarah said to Avraham, “Get rid of this handmaid and her son! The son of this handmaid (is not worthy) to share an inheritance with (anyone who is) my son, (or) with (anyone as righteous as) Yitzchak.”

<sup>11</sup> His son's (idol worship) disturbed Avraham greatly. <sup>12</sup> God said to Avraham, “Don't be disturbed about the boy and about your handmaid. Whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her (prophetic) voice, because your (true) descendants will be through Yitzchak. <sup>13</sup> I will also make the son of the handmaid into a nation, because he is your (physical) descendant.”

<sup>14</sup> Avraham got up early in the morning, and he took bread and a leather pouch of water, and he gave them to Hagar. He placed them on her shoulder with the boy, and he sent her away.

She went (back to idolatry) and wandered in the desert of Be'er Sheva.

<sup>15</sup> (Yishma'el became ill and drank a lot of water.) When the water was depleted from the leather pouch, she cast the child under one of the bushes. <sup>16</sup> She went and sat down some distance away—approximately two bow-shots—as she said, “I don't want to see the boy die.” She sat from afar, and she cried loudly and wept.

<sup>17</sup> God heard the boy's cry. An angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, “What's the matter, Hagar? Don't be afraid, because God has heard the boy's cry (and judged him) according to his current circumstances (and not according to what he is destined to do). <sup>18</sup> Get up and pick up the boy

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● What “disturbed Avraham greatly”? (v. 11)

**RASHI:** The fact that Yishma'el had begun wicked ways.

The simple meaning however, is that Avraham was disturbed by Sarah's request (in v. 10) to send Yishma'el away.

**BE'ER BASADEH:** Sarah perceived through Divine inspiration that Yishma'el was evil. Avraham, however, loved Yishma'el his son, and being weaker in prophecy than Sarah (*Rashi* to v. 12), he was not

able to perceive Yishma'el's future. Thus Avraham became very surprised and disturbed when he discovered that Yishma'el had begun to follow evil ways, since he was unaware of Yishma'el's destiny. Sarah, however, perceived Yishma'el future regression, and told Avraham to expel him, along with his mother.

#### ● Why did God tell Avraham to listen to Sarah? (v. 12)

**RASHI:** Because Avraham was inferior to Sarah in prophecy.

### TORAS MENACHEM

## 🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

Sarah's soul was rooted in a higher source than Avraham's (see *Rashi* to v. 12). Thus, she was aware of the necessity to expel Hagar and Yishma'el, whereas Avraham was not.

Sarah's superiority is alluded to in the Talmudic account of how Rabbi Bana'ah visited the Cave of Machpeilah, and saw that “Avraham was lying down in Sarah's arms, and she was looking at his head” (*Bava Basra* 58a). This alludes to Sarah's superiority, since his head was only at the level of her arms.

She was looking at his head to remove lice from his hair. These lice allude to the wicked nations who are parasites to Avraham, the father of all nations. Sarah's removal of the lice is analogous to her dismissal of Hagar and Yishma'el, whom she perceived to be spiritual parasites of Avraham, though he was unaware of the fact.

(Based on *Ohr Hatorah, Bereishis* 442b ff.)

#### 🕎 YISHMA'EL'S EXPULSION (v. 9-13)

*Rashi* cites three opinions regarding Yishma'el's wicked behavior: that he was idolatrous, adulterous and murderous (v. 9-10). On seeing this depravity, Sarah implored Avraham, “Get rid of this handmaid and her son! The son of this handmaid (is not worthy) to share an inheritance with (anyone who is) my son” (v. 10).

Perhaps it could be argued that Yishma'el's primary sin was his claim to the inheritance, i.e. his failure to recognize his proper place as the mere “son of this handmaid.” After harboring this resentment for a period of time, it gave rise to the rebellious behavior of murder etc.

In other words, even though Yishma'el's depraved behavior seems, at first glance, much more serious than his claim to inheritance, the former is in fact the *result* of the latter. Yishma'el's identity crisis actually caused him to degenerate into evil ways.

Thus, *Rashi* writes, “He would say, ‘I am the firstborn, so I should take a double portion!’” and, as a *direct result*, “they would go out to the field, and Yishma'el would take his bow and shoot arrows at Yitzchak.”

Based on the above we can understand the difference between Sarah's reaction to Yishma'el's behavior and Avraham's. Yishma'el was

ואתקיפי ית ידך ביה ארי לעם סגי אשונייה: יש ונלא יי ית עינהא וחות בירא דמיא ואזלת ומלת ית רקבא מיא ואשקואת ית רביא: כ והוה מימרא דיי בסעדיה דרביא ורבא ויטיב במדברא והוה רבי קשתא: כא ויטיב במדברא דפארן ונסיבת ליה אמהא אתהא מארעא דמצרים: כב והוה בעדנא ההיא ואמר אבימלך ופיכל רב חיליה לאברהם למימר מימרא דיי בסעדה בכל די את עביד: כג ובען קים לי במימרא דיי הכא דלא תשקר בי ובכרי ובבר ברי כטיבותא די עבדית עמד תעביד עמי ועם ארעא די אתותבתא בה: כד ואמר אברהם אנא אקים: כה ואוכח אברהם ית אבימלך על עיסק בירא דמיא די אנסו עבדי אבימלך: כו ואמר אבימלך לא ידעית מאן עבד ית פתנמא דדין ואף את לא חויתא לי ואף אנא לא שמעית אלהין יומא דין: כז ודבר אברהם עאן ותורין ויהב לאבימלך וגורו תרויהון קים: כח ואקם אברהם ית שבע חורפן דען בלחודיהון: כט ואמר אבימלך לאברהם מה אנון שבע חורפן אלין די אקימתא בלחודיהון: ל ואמר ארי ית שבע חורפן תקביל מן ידי בדיל דתהי לי לסהרו ארי חפרית ית בירא הדא: לא על פן קרא לאתרא ההוא באר שבע ארי תמן קימו תרויהון: לב וגורו קים בבאר שבע וקם אבימלך ופיכל רב חיליה ותבו לארע

שאי את הנער והחניקי את ידך בו כי לגוי גדול אשימנו: יט ויפקח אלהים את עיניה ותרא באר מים ותלך ותמלא את החמת מים ותשק את הנער: כ ויהי אלהים את הנער ויגדל וישב במדבר ויהי רבה קשת: כא וישב במדבר פארן ותקח לו אמו אשה מארץ מצרים: פ וששין כב ויהי בעת ההוא ויאמר אבימלך ופיכל שר צבאו אל אברהם לאמר אלהים עמד בכל אשר אתה עשה: כג ועתה השבעה לי באלהים הנה אסתשקר לי ולגני ולגנדי פחסד אשר עשיתי עמד תעשה עמדי ועם הארץ אשר גרתה בה: כד ויאמר אברהם אנכי אשבע: כה והוכח אברהם את אבימלך על אדות באר המים אשר גזלו עבדי אבימלך: כו ויאמר אבימלך לא ידעתי מי עשה את הדבר הזה וגם אתה לא הגדת לי וגם אנכי לא שמעתי בלתי היום: כז ויקח אברהם עאן ובקר ויתן לאבימלך ויכרתו שניהם ברית: כח וישב אברהם את שבע כבשת הצאן לבדהון: כט ויאמר אבימלך אל אברהם מה הנה שבע כבשת האלה אשר העבית לבדנה: ל ויאמר בי את שבע כבשת תקח מידי בעבור תהיה לי לעדה כי חפרתי את הבאר הזאת: לא על פן קרא למקום ההוא באר שבע כי שם נשבעו שניהם: לב ויכרתו ברית בבאר שבע ויקם אבימלך ופיכל שר צבאו וישבו אל ארץ פלשתים:

כש"י

האומנות, כמו חמר, גמל, ליד, לפיכך השי"ן מודגשת. היה יושב צמדצר ומלסטם את העוזרים, הוא שנאמר ידו צכל וגוי: (כא) מארץ מצרים. ממקום גדולה, שנאמר ולה שפחה מזרית וגוי, היינו דאמרי אינשי, זרוק חוטרא לאוירא אעיקריה קאי: (כב) אלהים עמך. לפי שראו שילא משכונת סדום לשלוס, ועם המלכים נלחם ונפלו צדו, ונפקדה אשתו לקווי: (כג) ולגני ולגנדי. עד כאן רחמי האז על הבן: בחסד אשר עשיתי עמך תעשה עמדי. שאמרתי לך הנה ארני לפניך: (כד) והוכח. נחוכח עמו על כך: (ל) בעבור תהיה לי. זאת: לעדה. לשון עדות של נקבה, כמו ועדה המלצה: כי חפרתי את הבאר. מריצים היו עליה רועי אבימלך, ואומרים אנחנו

ואומרים, רצונו של עולם, מי שעתיד זרעו להמית צניק צלמא אחס מעלה לו באר, והוא משיצם, עכשיו מה הוא, לדיק או רשע, אמרו לו לדיק. אמר להם, לפי מעשיו של עכשיו אני דנו, וזה באשר הוא שם, והיכן המית את ישראל צלמא, כשהגלם נבוכדנצר, שנאמר משה צערב וגוי לקראת למא התיו מים וגוי<sup>1</sup>, כשהיו מוליכין אותם אל ערביים, היו ישראל אומרים לשבאים, צקשה מכס, הוליכונו אל בני דודנו ישמעאל וירחמו עלינו, שנאמר אורחות דודנים<sup>2</sup>, אל תקרי דודנים, אלף דודים, ואלו יולאים לקראתם ומצויין להם צער ודג מלות, ונודות נפוחים, כסצורים ישראל שמלאים מים, וכשמכניסו לתוך פיו ופותחו, הרוח נכנס בגופו ומת: (כ) רובה קשת. יורה חלים צקשת: קשת. על שם

TORAS MENACHEM

Avraham's own son, so it was more difficult for him to perceive how Yitzchak alone was his true heir. In fact, before Yitzchak was born, Avraham had made it clear to God that he would be happy for Yishma'el to be his sole heir, saying, "If only Yishma'el will live (in fear of) You, (that

would be sufficient)!" (17:18). Consequently, the thought of expelling Yishma'el "disturbed Avraham greatly" (v. 11). Sarah, on the other hand, was not the mother of Yishma'el, so it was easier for her to perceive his true status as an outsider who was unfit to inherit Avraham.

and grasp hold of him, because I will make him into a great nation.”

<sup>19</sup> God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. She went and filled the pouch with water and gave the boy to drink.

<sup>20</sup> God was with the boy. He grew up and he lived in the desert, and he became an archer. <sup>21</sup> He settled in the desert of Paran, and his mother found him a wife from the land of Egypt (where she came from originally).

## 🕎 AVIMELECH MAKES A COVENANT WITH AVRAHAM 🕎

21:22 **SIXTH READING** **A**round that time, Avimelech—and Pichol, his army general—said to Avraham, “(Judging by your miraculous salvation from Sodom, victory in war and fatherhood at old age,) God is with you in all that you do. <sup>23</sup> Now, swear to me here by God, that you will not deceive me, or my son, or my grandson. In the same way I have been kind to you (offering you the pick of my whole land), do the same to me, and to the land where you have lived.”

<sup>24</sup> Avraham said, “I will swear.”

<sup>25</sup> Avraham argued with Avimelech about the well of water that the servants of Avimelech had seized.

<sup>26</sup> Avimelech said, “I don’t know who did this thing. You never told me about it, and I never heard about it until today.”

<sup>27</sup> Avraham took flocks and cattle, and gave them to Avimelech, and they both formed a covenant.

<sup>28</sup> Avraham placed seven female lambs by themselves. <sup>29</sup> Avimelech said to Avraham, “What are these seven female lambs, which you have placed by themselves?”

<sup>30</sup> He said, “You are going to take these seven female lambs from my hand, as a proof that I dug this well.”

<sup>31</sup> The place was therefore named Be’er Sheva (“well of the oath”), because the two of them took an oath. <sup>32</sup> They formed a covenant in Be’er Sheva.

Avimelech and Pichol, his army general, got up and they returned to the land of the Philistines.

## TORAS MENACHEM

### YISHMA’EL’S TESHUVAH

Based on the above, we can resolve a problem relating to Yishma’el’s *teshuvah* (repentance):

When Avraham passed away, the Torah relates, “Yitzchak and Yishma’el buried him” (25:9). *Rashi* notes that Yitzchak’s name precedes that of Yishma’el, and comments, “From here we learn that Yishma’el did *teshuvah* and allowed Yitzchak to go before him.”

The *Talmud* (*Bava Basra* 16b) and *Midrash* (*Bereishis Rabah* 59:7) however, both state explicitly that Yishma’el did *teshuvah* during Avraham’s lifetime. This begs the question: why does the Torah inform us of Yishma’el’s *teshuvah* only after Avraham already passed away?

Based on our earlier explanation, the answer to this question becomes clear. Since Yishma’el’s primary sin (which caused all of his later wicked behavior) was the failure to recognize that he was not Avraham’s true heir, it follows that his *teshuvah* only became apparent *when the prospect of inheritance became a reality*, after Avraham passed away.

When Yishma’el allowed Yitzchak to go before him, he indicated his concession to the fact that it was Yitzchak who was the true heir, obligated in the burial of his father, and that he, Yishma’el, was a mere hand-maid’s son.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 147ff.)

### 🕎 The Last Word 🕎

Quoting the verse, “as a proof that I dug this well” (v. 30), the *Zohar* (III 284b) refers, rather strangely, to “Yitzchak’s well.” Why is the well dug by Avraham accredited to Yitzchak?

Avraham embodied the attribute of love of God, whereas Yitzchak represented the fear of God. In general, a Jew should endeavor to be in Avraham’s positive mode of loving God, continuing always in joyful Divine worship. However, if a Jew possesses *only* love of God, and no fear, then his Divine service will not prevail, for inevitably his love of God will degenerate into a love for other things... Fear of God is required to *preserve* a person’s love of God.

The well which Avraham dug did not prevail. It was filled in by the Philistines, until Yitzchak redug it. So, the *Zohar* refers to them both as Yitzchak’s well, since it was Yitzchak’s fear that perpetuated Avraham’s love.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 15, p. 118ff.)

פְּלִשְׁתֵּי־אֵלֶּיךָ: לָג וּנְצִיב נִצְבָּא (אֵילָנָא) בְּבֵּאָר  
שְׁבַע וְצִלֵי תַמְּן בְּשִׁמְאָא דִּי אֵלְהָא דְעֵלְמָא:  
לד וְאִתּוּתַב אֲבָרְהָם בְּאֵרֵע פְּלִשְׁתֵּי־אֵלֶּיךָ יוֹמִין  
סְגִי־אֵינִי: א וְהָוָה בָּתֵּר פְּתַנְמִיָּא הָאֵלִין וַיִּי נָסִי

לג וַיִּטַּע אֲשֵׁל בְּבֵּאָר שְׁבַע וַיִּקְרָא־שָׁם בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה אֵל עוֹלָם:  
לד וַיִּגַּר אֲבָרְהָם בְּאֵרֵץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים יָמִים רַבִּים: פ  
כב א [שביעי] וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וְהָאֱלֹהִים נָסְתָה

רש"י

ממרא אשר בחברון, שם ישב עד שנכפכה סדום, מיד ויסע משם אברהם מפני צובה של לוט, וצא לארץ פלשתים, וכן נ"ט שנה היה, שהרי בשלישי למילתו צאו אללו המלאכים, הרי כ"ה שנה, וכאן כתיב ימים רבים, מרובים על הראשונים, ולא צא הכתוב לסתום אלא לפרש, ואם היו מרובים עליהם שתי שנים או יותר היה מפרשם, ועל כרחך אינם יתירים יותר משנה, הרי כ"ו שנה, מיד יצא משם וחזר לחברון, ואותה שנה קדמה לפני עקידתו של יצחק י"ב שנים. כך שנויה בסדר עולם<sup>4</sup>: (ה) אחר הדברים האלה. יש מרבותינו אומרים<sup>5</sup> אחר דבריו של שטן, שהיה מקטרג ואומר, מכל סעודה שעשה אברהם לא הקריב לפניך פר אחד או איל אחד, אמר לו, כלום עשה אלא בשביל צנו, אילו הייתי אומר לו צח אותו לפני, לא היה מעכב. ויש אומרים אחר דבריו של ישמעאל, שהיה מתפאר על יצחק שמל צן י"ג שנה ולא מיחה, אמר לו יצחק צאבר אחד אתה מיראני, אילו אמר לי הקב"ה צח

חפרנוה, אמרו צניקה, כל מי שיתראה על הצאר ויעלו המים לקראתו, שלו הוא, ועלו לקראת אברהם: (לג) אשל. רב ושמואל, חד אמר פרדם להציא ממנו פירות לאורחים בסעודה. וחד אמר פונדק לאכסניא וכו' כל מיני פירות. ומלינו לשון נטיעה צהלים, שנאמר ויטע אהלי אפרו: ויקרא שם וגו'. על ידי אותו אשל, נקרא שמו של הקב"ה אלוה לכל העולם, לאחר שאוכלים ושוחים, אמר להם צרכו למי שאכלתם משלו, סבורים אתם שמשלי אכלתם, משל מי שאמר ויהי העולם אכלתם<sup>2</sup>: (לד) ימים רבים. מרובים על של חברון, בחברון עשה כ"ה שנה, וכאן כ"ו<sup>3</sup>, שהרי צן ע"ה שנה היה בלאתו מחנו, אותה שנה ויצא וישב בצלוני ממרא, שלא מלינו קודם לכן שנתיישב אלא שם, שצכל מקומותיו היה כאורת, חונה ונוסע והולך, שנאמר ויעבור אצרים. ויעתק משם. ויהי רעז וירד אצרים מזרימה. וצמארים לא עשה אלא שלשה חדשים, שהרי שלחו פרעה מיד וילך למסעיו עד ויצא וישב בצלוני

## CLASSIC QUESTIONS

### ● What was the אֲשֵׁל which Avraham planted? (v. 33)

**RASHI:** This was disputed between Rav and Shmuel. One said that it was an orchard from which fruits were brought for guests during their meal. The other said that it was an inn for lodging, in which there were all sorts of fruits. [The reason why the verse states that he “planted” an inn, is like] we find the expression of “planting” used in conjunction with the construction of tents, as the verse states, “And he will plant (וַיִּטַּע) his palatial tents” (Dan. 11:45).

**RADAK:** The *Aishel* was a type of tree. According to the *Midrash*, Ya'akov took this tree to Egypt with him, and it was later used to make the central supporting bar of the Tabernacle.

**BACHAYE:** Since he had a well, Avraham wanted to plant an orchard which could be nurtured from the well-water. Avraham's main intention was to benefit guests with the fruit, as the verse continues, “*He (encouraged all guests) there to proclaim the Name of God, the God of the world.*”

## TORAS MENACHEM

### 🔗 THE AISHEL (v.33)

The literal translation of the word *Aishel* is “tree” [c.f. **RADAK**], as we see from the following verses:

“*Sha'ul sat in Giveah under the tree (הָאֵשֶׁל) in Ramah*” (Sam. I 22:6).

“*They buried them under the tree (הָאֵשֶׁל)*” (end of Sam I).

In both of these verses it would be impossible to render either of *Rashi's* translations of “orchard” or “inn,” since one cannot sit under an orchard, and certainly not under an inn! Neither is burial likely under an orchard or an inn.

So, why did *Rashi* reject the simple meaning of *Aishel* here, and suggest two non-literal translations?

#### THE EXPLANATION

*Rashi* was troubled by the following question:

Avraham's home, Be'er Sheva, was not a barren desert but a normal, inhabited area. If so, why are we told, “He planted a tree”? Surely this is quite an unremarkable event which does not merit inclusion in the Torah?

Furthermore, the very same verse continues, that he caused people “*to proclaim the Name of God, the God of the world.*” This begs the question: what is the connection between planting a tree and causing people to proclaim the Name of God which caused these two events to be included in the same verse?

Due to these problems, *Rashi* wrote that we are speaking here of an orchard, which explains: a.) Why the event was significant enough to be recorded in the Torah, and, b.) Its connection with Avraham's work of welcoming guests and encouraging them to believe in God—namely, serving them food.

One problem with this explanation is that the connection between the beginning and end of the verse is weak. An orchard would have been a relatively minor enhancement to Avraham's work of welcoming, feeding and accommodating guests. It would merely have provided some fruit for their dessert.

Therefore, *Rashi* offered the second interpretation (of Shmuel) which explains the verse as a whole more satisfactorily. If we understand *Aishel* to mean an “inn,” it makes more sense why the Torah continues to tell us immediately that, as a direct result of the *Aishel*, people came to believe in God. For the full service of accommodation offered by an inn would have certainly left a greater impact on the visitors.

However, a problem with this latter interpretation is that it deviates more from the literal translation of the word *Aishel* which literally means “tree,” so *Rashi* recorded it last.

And since each interpretation is slightly problematic, *Rashi* chose to cite both Rav's more scripturally precise solution, as well as Shmuel's more contextually appropriate answer.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeira* 5747)



<sup>33</sup> (Avraham) planted an orchard (alternatively: established an inn) in Be'er Sheva, and he (encouraged all guests) there to proclaim the Name of God, the God of the world, (after they finished eating).

<sup>34</sup> Avraham dwelt in the land of the Philistines for (twenty-six years) several days (more than the twenty-five years he lived in Chevron).

## AVRAHAM'S TENTH TEST: THE AKEIDA

22

SEVENTH  
READING

**W**hat happened was, after the words (of the Satan, who accused Avraham of not offering a sacrifice to God at his celebratory feast), God tested Avraham. He said to him, "Avraham!"

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● How did Avraham "proclaim the Name of God"? (v. 33)

**RASHI:** By means of that *Aishel*, God was called "God of the whole world." After the guests would eat and drink, [Avraham] would say to them, "Bless the One of Whose food you have eaten! Do you think that you've eaten *my* food? It belongs to the One Who spoke and the world came into being!"

**MIDRASH:** If the people refused to thank God for the meal, then Avraham asked them for a large sum of money. Thus, rather than pay the exorbitant price, the guests would agree to thank God (49:4).

**YEFAY TO'AR:** Even though the guests may have thanked God insincerely since they were pressured to do so, nevertheless Avraham fulfilled his duty to make others aware of God. If the guests were insincere, it was their sin and not Avraham's.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🔗 AVRAHAM'S COERCION (v.33)

The explanation of *Yefay To'ar* is difficult to accept since:

- a.) If the guests were not sincere when they thanked God, what was gained?
- b.) It is unlikely that Avraham welcomed guests and encouraged them to recognize God merely to fulfill his duty, not caring whether the guests were genuinely affected or not.
- c.) The *Midrash* states elsewhere, that Avraham's work led God to say, "I consider him to be a partner with Me in creation... since he made My creations recognize Me" (*Bereishis Rabah* 43:7). From this we see clearly that Avraham *did* succeed in making his guests come to a true recognition of God.

But how could it be said that they recognized God if they merely paid lip service to avoid paying a hefty fee?

The explanation can be found in the following incident from the *Talmud*:

*Once Rabbi Elazar ben Rabbi Shimon was riding...and he met a very ugly man. The man said to him, "Greetings Rabbi!"*

*Rabbi Elazar did not return the greeting. Instead, he said to him, "Empty one, you are truly ugly! Are all your fellow citizens as ugly as you are?"*

*The man replied, "I don't know. Go and tell the Craftsman Who made me: 'How ugly is the vessel which You have made!'"*

*When Rabbi Elazar realized that he had done wrong, he dismounted the donkey, prostrated himself before the man, and said to him, "I submit myself to you, forgive me!"*

*The man replied, "I will not forgive you until you go to the Craftsman Who made me and say to Him: 'How ugly is the vessel You have made!'"*

*Rabbi Elazar walked behind the man until he reached his native city. His fellow citizens came out to meet R' Elazar greeting him with the words, "Greetings to our teacher and mentor!"*

*The man asked them, "Whom are you addressing?"*

*They replied, "The man who is walking behind you."*

*He said to them, "If this is a teacher, may there not be anymore like him in Israel."*

*"Why?" the people asked him. When he told them what happened to him, they said, "Nevertheless, forgive him, for he is a man who is extremely learned in Torah."*

*The man replied, "For your sake, I forgive him, but only on condition that he doesn't do this again too often" (Ta'anis 20a ff.).*

Two points are extremely perplexing about this story:

- 1.) Why was Rabbi Elazar, the great Talmudic sage, so rude to an innocent man who greeted him politely in the street?
- 2.) At the end of the story, why did the man say, "I forgive him, but only on condition that he doesn't do this again *too often*"? Surely, such a disgraceful act should never be repeated *at all*?

#### THE EXPLANATION

Rabbi Elazar saw that the man was not merely ugly in the physical sense but, most importantly, his physical ugliness was a reflection of a spiritual repugnance, i.e. the man was an atheist.

Some atheists are easier to bring to a recognition of God than others. This man was an "exceptionally ugly" one, an extremely egotistical and haughty person.

Rabbi Elazar understood that the only hope for this man was to be rude to him. Perhaps by being extremely offensive—telling the man to his face that he was physically repulsive—it might break down his rough exterior and bring out the potential which the man had to believe in God.

Rabbi Elazar's plan worked. The man responded, "Go and tell the Craftsman Who made me: 'How ugly is the vessel which You have made!'" Rabbi Elazar's sharp words had wounded the man's pride, making him realize that there was something higher than himself.

The only problem was, Rabbi Elazar's plan worked *too quickly*, which indicated that he had *overestimated* the man's resistance to belief in God, and had thus been unnecessarily harsh with his words. Therefore, he begged for forgiveness.

ית אברהם ואמר ליה אברהם ואמר הֲאֵנָּה בְּאֵמֶר דְּבַר קָעַן ית בְּרַךְ ית יְחִידָךְ דִּי רְחִימְתָּא ית יִצְחָק וְאוּזִיל לָךְ לְאַרְעָא פּוֹלְחָנָא וְאַסְקִיָּה קְדָמִי תַּמָּן לְעֵלְתָּא עַל חַד מִן טוֹרֵיָא דִּי אִימַר לָךְ: ג וְאַקְדִּים אֲבָרְהָם בְּצַפְרָא וּרְוִי ית חֲמֵרִיה וְדַבֵּר ית תְּרִין עוֹלִימוֹהִי עִמּוּהָ וְיִת יִצְחָק בְּרִיָּה וְצִלַח אֵעִי לְעֵלְתָּא וְקָם וְאוּזִיל לְאַתְרָא דִּי אִמַר לִיה יִי: ד בְּיוֹמָא תְּלִיתָאָה וְיִקַּף אֲבָרְהָם ית עֵינֹהִי וְחָזָא ית אֲתְרָא מְרַחֲקִי: ה וְאִמַר אֲבָרְהָם לְעוֹלִימוֹהִי אִוְרִיכוּ לְכוּן הֲבָא עִם חֲמֵרָא וְאַנָּא וְעוֹלִימָא נְתַמְטִי

אֶת-אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִנִּי: ג וַיֹּאמֶר קַח-נָא אֶת-בְּנִךְ אֶת-יְחִידְךָ אֲשֶׁר-אֶהְבֶּתְּ אֶת-יִצְחָק וְלֶךְ-לְךָ אֶל-אֶרֶץ הַמֹּרִיָּה וְהַעֲלֵהוּ שָׁם לְעֹלָה עַל אֶתֶר הַהָרִים אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֱלֹהִים: ג וַיִּשְׁפֹּם אַבְרָהָם בַּבֶּקֶר וַיַּחֲבֹשׁ אֶת-חַמְלוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת-שְׁנֵי נְעָרָיו אִתּוֹ וְאֶת יִצְחָק בְּנֹו וַיִּבְקַע עֵצִי עֹלָה וַיִּקֶּם וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-אָמַר-לוֹ הָאֱלֹהִים: ד בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי וַיִּשָּׂא אַבְרָהָם אֶת-עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא אֶת-הַמָּקוֹם מְרַחֵק: ה וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל-נְעָרָיו שְׁבוּ-לָכֶם פֹּה עִם-הַחֲמֹל וְאַנִּי וְהַנְּעַר

לש"י

היה חפץ בקדוש צ"ח לשחטו, אלא להעלוהו לכה לעשותו עולה, ומשעלהו, אמר לו הורידוהו: אחד ההרים. הקצ"ח מתבאר הלדיקים (ס"ח משבא ללדיקים) ואחר כך מגלה להם, וכל זה כדי להרבות שכר, וכן הארץ אשר ארצה<sup>3</sup>, וכן ציונה וקרא עליה את הקריאה<sup>4</sup>: (ג) וישבם. נזרז למצוה<sup>5</sup>: ויחבש. הוא צלמו, ולא נזרז לאחד מעדויו, שהאבד מקלקלת השורה<sup>6</sup>: את שני נעריו. ישמעאל ואליעזר, שאין אדם חשוב ראוי ללכת לדרך צלא צ' אנשים<sup>7</sup>, שאם יאטרך האחד לנקצו ויתרחק, יהיה השני עמו: ויבקע. תרגומו וללח, כמו וללחו הירדן<sup>8</sup>, לשון זיקוע סיגדר"א צלע"ו: (ד) ביום השלישי. למה אחר מלבראותו מיד, כדי שלא יאמרו הממו וערצבו פתאום וטרד דעתו, ואילו היה לו שבות להמלך אל לבו, לא היה עושה: וירא את המקום. ראה

עלמך לפני, לא הייתי מעבד: הנבי. כך היא עניינת של חסידים, לשון ענוה הוא, ולשון זימון: (ב) קח נא. אין נא אלא לשון בקשה, אמר לו בבקשה ממך עמוד לי בזכ הנסיון, שלא יאמרו הראשונות לא היה צדק ממני! את בנך. אמר לו שני צנים יש לי, אמר לו את יחידך, אמר לו זה יחיד לאמו זה יחיד לאמו, אמר לו אשר אהבתי, אמר לו שניהם אני אוהב, אמר לו את יצחק. ולמה לא גילה לו מתחלה, שלא לערצבו פתאום, ותזוח דעתו עליו ותטרף, וכדי להצב עליו את המצוה, וליתן לו שכר על כל דבור ודבור: ארץ המוריה. ירושלים, וכן צדברי הימים<sup>2</sup> לצנות את בית ה' צירושלים צבר המוריה. ורבותינו פירשו, על שם שמעם הוראה יולאה לישראל. ואונקלוס תרגומו על שם עזודת הקטרת, שיש צו מור נרד ושאר צממים: והעלהו. לא אמר לו שחטבו, לפי שלא

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What was the uniqueness of Avraham's tenth test? (v. 2)

**RASHI:** "Please take" (קח נָא) is a request. God said to him, "I beg of you! Pass this test for Me, so that people will not say that the first [nine] tests were totally insignificant."

**RAN:** God only *requested* that Avraham offer up his son; He did not *command* him to do so. Therefore, if Avraham would have ignored God, he would not have been punished at all. This makes the test of the *Akeida* unique (*Drashos HaRan* ch. 6).

**IKARIM:** In future generations, all those that gave up their lives to sanctify God's Name were obligated to do so by the force of Jewish

Law. Avraham, however, had no halachic obligation to sacrifice Yitzchak, since the event occurred before the giving of the Torah at Sinai (3:36).

**RADAK:** What was the point of God's testing of Avraham, if God already knew that Avraham would pass the test?

It was certainly not a demonstration of Avraham's faith to others, since not even the two lads who accompanied Avraham were present at the time.

Rather, the purpose of the test was to inspire the later generations of Jewish people who would follow in Avraham's footsteps.

TORAS MENACHEM

Finally, the man forgave him, on the condition that he would not do the same again "too often." I.e. After disavowing his atheism and becoming a believer, the man appreciated that sometimes it is necessary to speak harshly to an atheist, to wound his pride. But one must be extremely careful not to use this painful approach unless it is absolutely necessary, i.e. one should not do it "too often."

In the final analysis we see that, with those who are particularly resistant to recognizing God, a little pressure can break down their resistance. This explains why Avraham would challenge and threaten those particularly "ugly" people who, after benefiting from Avraham's warm hospitality and lavish food, refused to praise God. In this way Avraham revealed the potential within even the most atheistic guests to believe in God, to the

extent that he became "a partner with Me in creation... since he made My creations recognize Me"

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 122ff.)

🕯 THE TENTH TEST (v.2)

**Ran** and **Ikarim** write that the *Akeida*, Avraham's tenth test, was unique because God presented the challenge to Avraham, not as an obligation, but as an option.

However, this is difficult to accept, because:

a.) If God visits a person personally, and asks him to do something, it could hardly be considered as optional (!) If the Creator of the universe says, "Please" do something, it clearly *has* to be done.

(Avraham) said, “I’m here (for You)!”

<sup>2</sup> He said, “Please take your son, your only one, whom you love, Yitzchak, and go away to the land of Moriah (Jerusalem) and bring him up there for a burnt offering on one of the mountains, where I will tell you.”

<sup>3</sup> Avraham got up early in the morning (to perform God’s command), and he saddled his donkey (personally). He took his two young men (Yishma’el and Eliezer) with him (so at least one of them would be with him all the time) and Yitzchak his son. He cut wood for a burnt offering, departed, and went to the place of which God had told him.

<sup>4</sup> On the third day, Avraham looked around and he saw from afar (one particular mountain with a cloud on it).

<sup>5</sup> Avraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey, while I and the boy will go (a little)

---

TORAS MENACHEM

---

b.) Even if one would accept that Avraham was not actually obligated to sacrifice his son, it would still not render the test of the Akeida unique, since there were many Jewish people in history who sacrificed their lives for Judaism even though they were not obligated to do so. In Jewish law, a person is only required to sacrifice his life if he is being coerced to a.) murder, b.) worship idols, c.) commit an act of forbidden relations (See Rambam, *Hilchos Yesodei Hatorah*, ch. 5). Nevertheless, we find that many Jews gave up their lives rather than transgress commandments other than these, an act of self-sacrifice which goes beyond the requirements of Jewish Law. So, even if Avraham was not obligated to sacrifice his son, this would not render the Akeida unique.

A further problem concerns Rashi’s statement that Avraham was given this final test, “so that people will not say that the first [nine] tests were totally insignificant”:

Consider that, prior to this date, Avraham had passed a series of extremely challenging tests, including an act of remarkable self-sacrifice where he allowed himself to be thrown into a fiery furnace, rather than bow down once in idol worship (*Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer* ch. 26). So, even if Avraham were not given the test of the Akeida, how could it possibly be said, “The first [nine] tests were totally insignificant”? Surely such acts of outstanding courage and trust in God are eternally valid in their own right?

#### THE EXPLANATION

When a person observes a *mitzvah*, there is always the possibility that he is partly (or wholly) guilty of having an ulterior motive. Perhaps he wishes to appear pious and righteous; or maybe he is motivated by the prospect of earning a reward rather than the desire to carry out God’s Will.

Even if a person has a totally pure motive—that he wishes to sanctify the world through the observance of a *mitzvah*—though noble, it is still a *motive*. Not that this is a problem *per se*, but there is always the possibility that this “holy motive” veils a kernel of insubordination which the person is harboring, wittingly or unwittingly. Perhaps, subconsciously, that person’s true agenda is not Divine service at all, to perform *mitzvos for God*, but it is simply that the idea of making the world holy is pleasing to him.

The only way of proving that such a person is observing God’s Will out of pure and unquestioning submission to a higher authority, is if he were asked to perform an act which would compromise his “career” of charity and sanctity. Only then would it become apparent whether the person’s observance of God’s commands had been calculated in terms of personal gain.

Thus, the Akeida was the ultimate test, since Avraham, who had devoted his life to promote awareness of the One God in the world, was asked to execute the only person who could continue this cause after him. This test would prove whether Avraham had promoted the awareness of God in the world for God’s sake, or for his own.

Avraham’s earlier tests did not fully clarify this point, since it could be argued that even allowing himself to be burned in the fiery furnace at Ur Kasdim was ultimately an act which would have furthered his life’s mission. Avraham knew that giving up his life *in public* would have made a tremendous impression on all those present, and would possibly be recorded as an act of true martyrdom for all time. While it *appeared* to be an act of total self-sacrifice, one could not rule out the *possibility* that Avraham desired to be a martyr, and he entered the furnace because it suited him to do so, at least partially.

Only at the Akeida where Avraham was asked to perform an act which was a.) contrary to everything that he desired, and b.) in total privacy, could it be proven without doubt that all Avraham’s earlier trials were done out of an unquestioning submission to God’s Will.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 73ff.)

### 🔥 Sparks of Chasidus 🔥

Our Sages taught, “All beginnings are difficult” (*Mechilta to Shemos* 19:5). Chasidic thought explains that for a person to perform a new type of act which he has never done before, a “channel” needs to be opened, allowing the reserves of spiritual potential in his soul to spread through his body.

In a more general sense this applies on a global scale. A person who commits a spiritually unprecedented act in the world becomes a pioneer, who actually makes it possible for others to follow in his footsteps. He opens a new “channel,” breaking down barriers not only for himself, but for his descendants and followers.

Thus, the Akeida was not merely an inspiring historical event from which we can learn. It actually made an indelible mark on the Jewish personality, enabling Avraham’s outstanding subordination to God to be duplicated by any Jewish person who avails himself, or herself, of the challenge.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 74ff.)

עד כאן ונסגור ונתוב לותכון: ו נסיב אברהם  
 ית אעי דעלתא ושוי על יצחק בריה ונסיב  
 בדיה ית אישתא וית ספינא ואולו תרויהון  
 כחדא: ו ואמר יצחק לאברהם אבוהי ואמר  
 אבא ואמר הא אנא ברי ואמר הא אישתא  
 ואעינא ואן אמרא לעלתא: ה ואמר אברהם  
 קדם יי גלי ליה אמרא לעלתא ברי ואולו  
 תרויהון כחדא: ט ואתו לאהרא די אמר ליה  
 יי ובנא תמן אברהם ית מדבחה וסדר ית  
 אעינא ועקד ית יצחק בריה ושוי ותייה על  
 מדבחה עיל מן אעינא: י ואושיט אברהם ית  
 ידיה ונסיב ית ספינא למיכס ית בריה:  
 יא וקרא ליה מלאכא די מן שמיא ואמר  
 אברהם אברהם ואמר הא אנא: יב ואמר לא  
 תושיט ירך לעולימא ולא תעביד ליה מדעם  
 ארי בען ידענא ארי דחלא די את ולא  
 מנעפת ית ברך ית יחידך מנני: יג וזקף אברהם  
 ית עינוהי בתר אליו וחזא והא דכרא חדא  
 אחיד באילנא בקרנאיה ואולו אברהם ונסיב  
 ית דכרא ואסקיה לעלתא חלף בריה: יד ופלח  
 וצלי אברהם תמן באהרא ההוא ואמר  
 קדם יי הקא יהון פלחין דרנא בכן יתאמר

גִּלְגָּה עַד-כֹּה וְנִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה וְנִשְׁוֹבָה אֲלֵיכֶם: ו וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָהָם  
 אֶת-עֵצֵי הָעֵלֶה וַיִּשֶׂם עַל-יִצְחָק בְּנֹו וַיִּקַּח בְּיָדוֹ אֶת-הָאֵשׁ  
 וְאֶת-הַמֵּאֲכֹלֶת וַיִּלְכוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם יַחְדָּו: ז וַיֹּאמֶר יִצְחָק אֶל-  
 אַבְרָהָם אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִי וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִי בְנִי וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִה הָאֵשׁ  
 וְהָעֵצִים וְאִיִּה הִשָּׂה לְעֵלֶה: ח וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהִים  
 יִרְאֵה-לוֹ הִשָּׂה לְעֵלֶה בְנִי וַיִּלְכוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם יַחְדָּו: ט וַיָּבֹאוּ  
 אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אָמַר-לוֹ הָאֱלֹהִים וַיִּבֶן שָׁם אַבְרָהָם  
 אֶת-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וַיַּעֲרֹךְ אֶת-הָעֵצִים וַיַּעֲקֹד אֶת-יִצְחָק בְּנֹו וַיִּשֶׂם  
 אֹתוֹ עַל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ מִמַּעַל לָעֵצִים: י וַיִּשְׁלַח אַבְרָהָם אֶת-יָדוֹ  
 וַיִּקַּח אֶת-הַמֵּאֲכֹלֶת לִשְׁחַט אֶת-בְּנֹו: יא וַיִּקְרָא אֵלָיו מִלְאָךְ  
 יְהוָה מִן-הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם | אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִי:  
 יב וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-תְּשַׁלַּח יָדְךָ אֶל-הַנֶּעֱר וְאֶל-תַּעַשׂ לוֹ מְאוּמָה כִּי |  
 עַתָּה יִדְעֵתִי כִּי-יִרְאֵ אֱלֹהִים אֹתָהּ וְלֹא חֲשַׁכְתָּ אֶת-בְּנֵךְ  
 אֶת-יַחֲדָךְ מִמֶּנִּי: יג וַיִּשָּׂא אַבְרָהָם אֶת-עֵינָיו וַיִּרְאֵ וְהִנֵּה-אֵיל  
 אֲחֵר נֹאֲתוֹ בְּסֶבֶךְ בְּקֶרְנָיו וַיִּלְךְ אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח אֶת-הָאֵיל  
 וַיַּעֲלֵהוּ לְעֵלֶה תַּחַת בְּנֹו: יד וַיִּקְרָא אַבְרָהָם שֵׁם-הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא

רש"י

ממנו מעט דם, אמר לו אל תעש לו מאומה, אל תעש צו מוס: כי עתה  
 ידעתי. אמר רבי אבא, אמר לו אברהם, אפרש לפניך את שיחתי, אתמול  
 אמרת לי כי יצחק יקרא לך זרע, וחזרת ואמרת קח נא את בנך, עכשיו אתה  
 אומר לי אל תשלח ירך אל הנער, אמר לו הקב"ה, לא חללתי זרעתי ומואל שפתי  
 לא אשנה, כשאמרתי לך קח מואל שפתי לא אשנה, לא אמרתי לך שחטבו אלא  
 העלבו, אסקתיב אחתיב: כי עתה ידעתי. מעתה יש לי מה להשיב לשטן  
 ולאומות התמכים מה היא חצתי אלך, יש לי פתחון פה, עכשיו, שרואים כי ירא  
 אלהים אתה: (יג) והנה איל. מוכן היה לכך מששת ימי בראשית: אחר. אחרי  
 שאמר לו המלאך אל תשלח ירך, ראבו כשכחו נאחו, וכו' שמתרגמין וזקף  
 אברהם עינוהי בתר אליו. (ס"א) ולפי האגדה אחר כל דברי המלאך והשכינה  
 ואחר ענותיו של אברהם: בסבך. אילין: בקרניו. שכיב רץ אלל אברהם,  
 והשטן סובכו ומערבכו באילנות: תחת בנו. מאחר שכתבו ויעלכו לעולה לא

עני קשור על הכר: (ה) עד כה. כלומר דרך מועט למקום אשר לפנינו. ומדרש  
 אגדה, אראה היכן הוא מה שאמר לי המקום כה יהיה זרעך: ונשובה.  
 נתנחש שישונו שניהם: (ו) המאבלת. סכין, על שם שאוכלת את הבשר, כמה  
 דתימא וחרזי תאכל זשר', ושמשרת זשר לאכילה. דבר אחר, זאת נקראת  
 מאכלת, על שם שישראל אוכלים מתן שכרה: וילכו שניהם יחדו. אברהם  
 שהיה יודע שהולך לשחוט את בנו היה הולך זרעו ושחמה כילחק שלא היה  
 מרגיש בדבר: (ח) יראה לו השעה. כלומר יראה ויבחר לו השעה, ואם אין שעה,  
 לעולה בני, ואף על פי שהבין יחזק שהוא הולך לישחט, וילכו שניהם יחדו בלז  
 שוב: (ט) ויעקד. ידיו ורגליו מאחוריו, הידים והרגלים זיחד הוא עקידה,<sup>2</sup>  
 וכו' לשון עקודים, שהיו קרסוליהם לבנים, מקום שעוקדין אותן זו היה  
 ניכר: (יא) אברהם אברהם. לשון חכה הוא, שכופל את שמו: (יב) אל  
 תשלח. לשחוט. אמר לו אם כן לחנס צחתי לכאן, אעשה צו חזלה ואוליא

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did the angel tell Avraham not to do “the slightest thing” to the boy? (v. 12)

RASHI: When the angel told Avraham not to slaughter Yitzchak, Avraham replied, “If so, I have come here in vain. I will inflict a wound on him and extract a little blood.”

Therefore, the angel said to him, “Don’t do the slightest thing to him,” i.e. do not make the slightest blemish.

● Why was the ram offered “instead of his son” ? (v. 13)

RASHI: After the verse already stated, “he offered it up as a burnt offering,” no information is lacking. Why does the verse then say, “instead of his son”? For over every sacrificial act that [Avraham] performed with the ram, he prayed, “May it be God’s will that this should be deemed as if it were being done to my son... as if my son were slaughtered... as if his blood were sprinkled... as if my son were skinned... as if he were burnt and reduced to ashes.”

further (to our destination). We will prostrate ourselves and return to you.”

<sup>6</sup> Avraham took the wood for the burnt offering, and he placed it upon his son Yitzchak. He took into his hand the fire and the knife, and they both went together.

<sup>7</sup> Yitzchak spoke to Avraham his father, saying, “My father!”

He said, “I’m here (for you), my son.”

(Yitzchak) said, “Here is the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?”

<sup>8</sup> Avraham said, “God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son,” and they both went together.

<sup>9</sup> They came to the place which God had told him about. Avraham built the altar there and arranged the wood, and he tied (the hands and feet of) Yitzchak his son (behind him) and placed him on the altar upon the wood.

<sup>10</sup> Avraham stretched out his hand and took the knife, to slaughter his son.

<sup>11</sup> An angel of God called to him from heaven and said, “Avraham! Avraham!”

He said, “I’m here!”

<sup>12</sup> (The angel) said, “Do not stretch out your hand to (slaughter) the boy, or do the slightest thing to him, for now I know (some evidence to answer the Satan) that you are a God-fearing man and that you did not withhold your son, your only one, from Me.”

<sup>13</sup> Avraham looked around to see and—look!—there was a ram. (Avraham saw it) after (the angel spoke to him, noticing that) it was caught in a tree by its horns. Avraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son.

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

**SFORNO:** Avraham had resolved in his heart that he was going to slaughter his son. Since a righteous man “speaks the truth in his heart” (Psalms 15:2), Avraham thought it was necessary to offer a substitute sacrifice, to fulfill in some way the resolution of his heart.

**ABARBANEL:** Avraham did not want his trip to be pointless, so he searched for an animal to sacrifice. Since he had resolved to sacrifice

his son, he offered the ram as a replacement instead of his son, in order to discharge his obligation.

**RASHBAM:** When Avraham saw a ram “caught in a tree by its horns,” he was certain that this was an act of Divine Providence, that the ram had been sent to him by God to be sacrificed instead of his son.

#### TORAS MENACHEM

##### 🔗 AVRAHAM’S “ALTERNATIVE” SACRIFICE (v.13)

At first glance, Avraham offered a ram instead of Yitzchak as a substitute (see **Sforno** and **Abarbanel**). However, it is extremely unlikely that Rashi would have accepted this explanation, in light of his comment to v. 12:

“Avraham said to God, ‘I will explain my complaint before You: Before-hand, You said to me, “Your (true) descendants will be through Yitzchak” (above 21:12), and then You retracted and said: “Please take your son. . . [and bring him up there for a burnt offering]” (above verse 2). Now, You are saying to me, “Do not stretch out your hand to (slaughter) the boy!”’” (v. 12)

“God said to him, “I shall not profane My covenant, nor shall I alter the utterance of My lips” (Psalms 89:35). From when I said to you, [‘Please] take [your son...],’ I did not alter the utterance of My lips! I never said to you, ‘Slaughter him,’ but rather [I said], ‘Bring him up.’ You have brought him up. Now, take him down.”

From Rashi’s words here, we see clearly that God did not “change His mind” at the last moment, and spare Yitzchak’s life. Rather, *He never intended that Yitzchak be slaughtered in the first place.* Therefore, it was totally unnecessary to look for a replacement sacrifice for Yitzchak, as the entire premise that God had required a sacrifice at all was *mistaken*.

We are thus left with the question: Why did Avraham offer a sacrifice, “instead of his son” (v. 13)? And why did he pray, “May it be God’s will

that this should be deemed as if it were being done to my son,” over every single act?

One might argue that his “chance” sighting of a trapped ram suggested to Avraham that the animal had been prepared by God for a sacrifice—as **Rashbam** writes. However:

a.) This only explains why Avraham sacrificed the ram *at all*. It does not answer why the Torah states that the ram was offered *instead* of Yitzchak, if there was no obligation to slaughter him in the first place.

b.) The Torah states, “Avraham looked around to see—and look!—there was a ram” (אֵת עֵינָיו וַיִּרְאֵ אֶת אֲבִרְהָם אֲשֶׁר בְּעֵץ) [v. 13], i.e. that he *actively* looked for an animal to sacrifice. So, it was not the “chance encounter” of finding the trapped ram that inspired Avraham to sacrifice on the spur of the moment. Rather, he decided *on his own* to do so.

The question thus remains: Why was the ram a substitute for Yitzchak, if Yitzchak was never intended to be sacrificed in the first place?

##### THE ANGEL OF GOD’S SECOND CALLING

In order to answer this problem, let us pose a further question which Rashi surprisingly appears to neglect. After Avraham offered the ram, the Torah relates, “An angel of God called to Avraham a second time from heaven. He said, “I Myself have sworn,’ says God, ‘that because you

בְּיוֹמָא הַדִּין בְּטוֹרָא הַדִּין אַבְרָהָם קָדָם יי  
 פִּלְחָ: טו וְקָרָא מְלֹאכָא דִּי לְאַבְרָהָם תְּנִינִיגוֹת  
 מִן שְׁמַיָא: טז וְאָמַר בְּמִימְרֵי קְיָמִית אָמַר יי  
 חֲלַף דִּי עֲבַדְתָּא ית פְּתִנְמָא הַדִּין וְלֹא מְנַעַתָּ  
 ית בְּרַךְ ית יְחִידְךָ: יז אַרְי בְּרַכָּא אַבְרָכִינְךָ  
 וְאַסְנָאָה אַסְנֵי ית בְּנִיךָ כְּכּוֹכְבֵי שְׁמַיָא וְכַחֲלָא  
 דִּי עַל פִּי יִמָּא וְיִירְתוּן בְּנִיךָ ית קְרוּי סְנְאִיהוּן:  
 יח וְיִתְבָּרְכוּן בְּדִל בְּנִיךָ כֹּל עַמְמֵי אַרְעָא חֲלַף  
 דְּקַבִּילְתָּא לְמִימְרֵי: יט וְתָב אַבְרָהָם לְוֹת  
 עוֹלָמוּהִי וְקָמוּ וְאָזְלוּ כַּחֲדָא לְבָאָר שְׁבַע

יְהוָה | יִרְאֶה אֲשֶׁר יֹאמַר הַיּוֹם בְּהַר יְהוָה יִרְאֶה: טו וַיִּקְרָא  
 מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָהָם שֵׁנִית מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם: טז וַיֹּאמֶר בִּי  
 נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי נְאֻם־יְהוָה כִּי יַעַן אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה וְלֹא  
 חָשַׁבְתָּ אֶת־בְּנֶךָ אֶת־יְחִידְךָ: יז כִּי־בָרַךְ אֲבָרְכְךָ וְהִרְבֵּה אֲרַבֶּה  
 אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ כְּכּוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְכַחֲלוֹל אֲשֶׁר עַל־שַׁפְתַּי הֵימָּן וַיִּרְשׁ  
 זַרְעֲךָ אֶת שְׁעַר אֵיבָיו: יח וְהִתְבָּרְכוּ בְּזַרְעֲךָ כֹּל גּוֹיֵי הָאָרֶץ עֲקֵב  
 אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקֹלִי: יט וַיֵּשֶׁב אַבְרָהָם אֶל־נַעֲרָיו וַיִּקְמוּ וַיֵּלְכוּ  
 יַחְדָּו אֶל־בְּאֵר שֶׁבַע וַיֵּשֶׁב אַבְרָהָם בְּבְאֵר שֶׁבַע: פ (ומפסיר)

רש"י

המקרא, שכל הדורות הבאים הקוראים את המקרא הזה אומרים עד היום הזה, על היום שעומדים בו. ומדרש אגדה, כי יראה עקידה זו לסלוח לישראל בכל שנה ולהלילם מן הפורענות, כדי שיאמר היום הזה בכל דורות הבאים, צהר כי יראה אפרו של יצחק לצור ועומד לכפרה: (יז) ברך אברכך. אחת לאז ואחת לבן: והרבה ארבה. אחת לאז ואחת לבן: (יט) וישב אברהם בבאר שבע. לא ישיבה ממש שהרי צהרון היה יושב, י"ג שנים לפני

חסר המקרא כלום, מהו תחת צנו, על כל עבודה שעשה ממנו, היה מתפלל ואומר, יכי רלון שטהא זז כאלו היא עשויה צצני, כאלו צני שחוט, כאלו דמו זרוק, כאלו צני מופשט, כאלו הוא נקטר ונעשה דשן: (יז) ה' יראה. פשוטו כתרגומו, כי יצחק ויראה לו את המקום הזה, להשרות בו שכינתו ולהקריב כאן קרבנות: אשר יאמר היום. שיאמרו לימי הדורות עליו צהר כי זה יראה הקצ"ה לעמו: היום. הימים העתידין, כמו עד היום הזה שצכל

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What did the angel of God add when he called to Avraham the second time? (v. 15-18)

**TZOR HAMOR:** Avraham was convinced that he had made a mistake. He was sure that the angel who said, “Do not stretch out your hand to (slaughter) the boy” (v. 12), had come to trick him, and that God really did want him to slaughter Yitzchak. Therefore, it was necessary for God to call out to Avraham a second time to confirm that he had acted correctly.

**RAMBAN:** In this second calling, God promised that He would, “multiply your descendants (and your son’s) like the stars of the heavens and like the sand that is on the seashore, and your descendants will inherit the cities of their enemies” (v. 17). But surely He had already promised this to Avraham before (above 15:5)?

In fact however, God had merely promised that He would multiply Avraham’s descendants, but the promise could have been retracted

if Avraham’s descendants would have sinned. Here however, God swore (v. 15), that he would keep his promise, regardless of whether the Jewish people sinned or not.

This constitutes the Divine assurance of the redemption which is destined to come in the future.

**KLI YAKAR:** In the second calling to Avraham, God added an additional, double blessing in reward for two acts carried out by Avraham after God’s first calling:

a.) “Because you have done this thing”—this refers to the sacrifice of the ram (v. 13). b.) God then added, “and you did not withhold your son, your only one.” This refers to the “virtual” sacrificing of Yitzchak which occurred when offering the ram—as Rashi writes (v. 13), that, “over every sacrificial act that he performed, he prayed, “May it be God’s Will that this should be deemed as if it were being done to my son.”

TORAS MENACHEM

have done this thing and you did not withhold your son, your only one, I will bless you (and your son), and I will multiply your descendants (and your son’s) like the stars of the heavens...” (v. 15-17).

While various commentators (see **Tzror Hamor**, **Ramban** and **Kli Yakar**) ask the question why the angel of God called to Avraham a second time, *Rashi* strangely appears to neglect this point

It could be argued however that *Rashi* held in accordance with the view of **Ramban**, that the angel’s second calling was to cement God’s earlier blessing with the commitment of an oath. Thus, the reason why *Rashi* did not write any comment here, is because –

a.) The Torah states explicitly, “I Myself have sworn,” says God,” indicating that an oath is being sworn, so no further comment is required.

b.) *Rashi* did not need to explain why God’s oath was stated only after Avraham’s sacrifice of the ram, because he presumed that the reader will remember the Torah’s earlier account of a Divine oath in *Parshas Noach*:

“Noach built an altar to God. He took from all the pure animals and from all the pure birds and brought up burnt offerings on the altar. God smelled the pleasant aroma, and God said to Himself, ‘I will no longer curse the earth because of man... I will never again kill all living things as I have done’” (8:20-21).

*Rashi* comments, “He repeated the words to denote an oath.” This implies that a Divine oath occurs as a direct result of man offering a sacrifice, since God swore the oath only when He “smelled the pleasant aroma.”

<sup>14</sup> Avraham named that place 'Adonoy Yireh' ("God will select"). To this day it is the mountain (associated with) God's revelation.

<sup>15</sup> An angel of God called to Avraham a second time from heaven. <sup>16</sup> He said, "I Myself have sworn," says God, 'that because you have done this thing and you did not withhold your son, your only one, <sup>17</sup> I will bless you (and your son), and I will multiply your descendants (and your son's) like the stars of the heavens and like the sand that is on the seashore, and your descendants will inherit the cities of their enemies. <sup>18</sup> All the nations of the world will be blessed through your children, because you listened to My voice.'"

<sup>19</sup> Avraham returned to his young men, and they got up and went together to Be'er Sheva. Avraham stayed in Be'er Sheva (for a while before returning to Chevron, where he had already lived for twelve years after leaving Be'er Sheva).

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

Thus, in our case, *Rashi* presumed that the reader would understand that God's oath to Avraham came as a direct result of his sacrifice. It was therefore unnecessary for *Rashi* to explain why God's oath came in a second statement, after Avraham's sacrifice, and not before.

#### THE ROLE OF YITZCHAK

Based on the above, we can also answer our earlier question why Avraham offered the ram "instead" of Yitzchak, praying, "This should be deemed as if it were being done to my son," at every single stage of the sacrificial procedure:

Noach's sacrifices to God after the flood were *directly connected* to the Flood in two respects:

- a.) They were carried out *immediately* after he left the ark—"Noach went out...Noach built an altar to God" (v. 18, 20).
- b.) He took animals which had been taken into the ark *specifically* for this purpose, so that he could sacrifice them when he left (see *Rashi* to 7:2, 8:20).

Thus, in order for Avraham to succeed in bringing about an oath from God (as Noach had done), it was insufficient for him merely to offer a general sacrifice which had no particular connection to the *Akeida*. Rather, Avraham needed to forge a *direct connection* between the *Akeida* and his offering of a ram that followed.

To achieve this goal, Avraham decided to offer the ram, imagining throughout the entire process that he was actually sacrificing Yitzchak. Therefore, *Rashi* explained, "Over every sacrificial act that he performed, he prayed, 'May it be God's will that this be deemed as if it were being done to my son....'"

In other words, when the Torah states that Avraham offered the ram, "instead of his son," it does not mean that he *removed* the obligation resting on his son and used a ram instead (for, as explained above, there was no obligation to offer a sacrifice here). Rather, *despite* the fact that there was no obligation to slaughter his son, Avraham nevertheless made an offering (like Noach) in order that God "smell the pleasant aroma" of his sacrifice and swear an eternal oath. For this purpose, an ordinary sacrifice would not suffice, since it would have no direct connection with the *Akeida*. So, instead of sacrificing his son, Avraham did the second best, and imagined that the ram was actually Yitzchak.

In order to impress upon the reader how Yitzchak was really the intended subject of Avraham's sacrifice, *Rashi* describes Avraham's prayers at length: "May it be God's will that this should be deemed as if it were being done to my son...as if my son were slaughtered...as if his blood were sprinkled...as if my son were skinned...as if he were burnt and reduced to ashes" (c.f. **Kli Yakar**).

#### WHAT WAS THE NEED FOR A SACRIFICE?

One point however still requires clarification:

Surely the *Akeida*—an historic act of courage and unprecedented devotion—was a sufficiently impressive act to inspire God to swear an oath to Avraham? Why was an additional sacrifice required? Are we to understand that the sacrifice of a mere ram was superior to the *Akeida* itself?

This problem can be solved by examining an earlier comment of *Rashi*:

When God told Avraham not to slaughter Yitzchak, *Rashi* writes, Avraham wished to "inflict a wound on him and extract a little blood" (*Rashi* to v. 12). Avraham's suggestion was rejected by the angel, who said "Don't do the slightest thing to him" (v. 12).

What was the reason for this peculiar desire of Avraham? If he was not obligated to slaughter Yitzchak, then why cause him any pain at all?

The reason is that Avraham appreciated the superiority of *actual* self-sacrifice over *potential* self-sacrifice. A person who gives up his life for God in actuality, commits a far greater sanctification of God's Name than a person who was *prepared* to give up his life for God, but was saved at the last minute. For, at the actual moment when the person loses his life, he dedicates himself to God in the strongest way possible.

Thus, while Avraham would certainly have been delighted that Yitzchak's life had been spared, he was nevertheless disappointed that he did not have the opportunity to dedicate himself to God with the absolute commitment which would have occurred at the moment of slaughter. So, he sought for some compensatory act that would simulate the actual slaughter of Yitzchak, at which moment Avraham would arouse—to the best of his ability—the feeling of slaughtering his son in actuality.

In other words, since Yitzchak's life was saved, it turned out that Avraham only performed an act of *potential* self-sacrifice. Nevertheless, since there are different levels of potential self-sacrifice, Avraham wished

#### 🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

It is only in this final exile—a doubled and redoubled spiritual darkness—that we have been given the ability not to be perturbed by trials and to overcome them. This ability has only been given to us in the period immediately preceding the Final Redemption (*Ikvesa deMeshicha*).

(Sefer Hama'amorim 5711-3, p. 82ff.)

ויתיב אברהם בבאר שבע: כ וְהוּהוּ בְּתֵר  
 פְּתֻמָּיָא הָאֵלִין וְאִתְחַנּוּא לְאַבְרָהָם לְמִימַר הָא  
 יְלִידָת מְלָכָה אָף הִיא בְּנִין לְנַחֲוֹר אַחֻוד:  
 כא ית עוין בוכרייה וית בוז אחוהי וית קמואל  
 אבוהי דאָרם: כב וְיֵת פֶּשֶׁד וְיֵת תּוֹז וְיֵת  
 פְּלִדֶּשׁ וְיֵת יִדְלָף וְיֵת בְּתוּאֵל: כג וּבְתוּאֵל  
 אוֹלִיד יֵת רֵבְקָה תְּמַנְיָא אֵלִין יְלִידָת מְלָכָה  
 לְנַחֲוֹר אַחֻודִי דְאַבְרָהָם: כד וְלַחֲיַנְתִּיהָ וְשָׂמָה  
 רְאוּמָה וְיִלְדַת אָף הִיא יֵת טַבַּח וְיֵת גְּחָם וְיֵת  
 תַחֲשׁ וְיֵת מַעֲכָה: פ פ פ

כ ויהי אחרי הדברים האלה ויגד לאברהם לומר הנה ילדה  
 מלכה גם הוא בנים לנחור אחיד: כא את עוין בכרו ואת בוז  
 אחיו ואת קמואל אבי ארם: כב ואת פשד ואת תוז  
 ואת פלדש ואת ידלף ואת בתואל: כג ובתואל ילד  
 את רבקה שמנה אלה ילדה מלכה לנחור אחי אברהם:  
 כד ופילגשו ושמה ראומה ותלד גם הוא את טבח ואת גחם  
 ואת תחש ואת מעכה: פ פ פ

קמ"ז פסוקים, אמנו"ן סימן.

רש"י

שולדה רבקה בת זוגו, וזהו אחרי הדברים האלה, הכרוי דברים שהיו על  
 ידי עקידה: גם היא. אף היא השוותה משפחותיה למשפחות אברהם י"ב,  
 מה אברהם י"ב שצטים שילאו מיעקב ח' בני גזירות וד' בני שפחות, אף  
 אלו ח' בני גזירות וד' בני פלגש: (כג) ובתואל ילד את רבקה. כל  
 היחוסין הללו לא נכתבו אלא צביל פסוק זה: חסלת פרשת וירא

עקידתו של יצחק ולא מצא שצט והלך לו לחצרון, כמו שנאמר ויגר אברהם  
 צרף פלשתיים ימים רבים, מרובים משל חצרון הראשונים, והם כ"ו שנה,  
 כמו שפירשנו למעלה: (כ) אחרי הדברים האלה ויגד וגו'. צבוב מהר  
 המוריה היה אברהם מהרהר ואומר, אילו היה בני שחוט כבר היה הולך  
 בלא בניס, היה לי להשיאו אשה מצוות ענר אשכול וממרא, צשרו הקצ"ב

#### TORAS MENACHEM

to achieve the highest degree possible by imagining that he was  
 slaughtering Yitzchak in actuality, while inflicting a tiny wound.

When this idea was rejected by the angel, Avraham opted for "plan 'B'"  
 and slaughtered a ram instead, imagining to the best of his ability that it  
 was actually his own son.

Thus, in the final analysis, Avraham's slaughter of the ram aroused in  
 him a greater feeling of self-sacrifice than the Akeida itself.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 30, p. 76ff.)



🕎 THE BIRTH OF RIVKAH 🕎

22:20 **T**hen, after the words (of Avraham, who expressed his view that Yitzchak should marry and have children,) Avraham was told (by God about the birth of Rivkah): “Milkah, has given birth to sons from Nachor your brother and she too (has eight boys in the family, like Ya’akov will have from his main wives:)<sup>21</sup> Uz the first born, Buz his brother, Kemu’el the father of Aram,<sup>22</sup> Kesed, Chazo, Pildash, Yidlaf, and Besu’el.<sup>23</sup> Besu’el fathered Rivkah.” Milkah bore these eight to Nachor, Avraham’s brother.

MAFTIR

<sup>24</sup> His concubine, whose name was Re’umah, had also given birth to (four boys, just as Ya’akov had from his concubines): Tevach, Gacham, Tachash and Ma’achah.

THE HAFTARAH FOR VAYEIRA IS ON PAGE 375.

TORAS MENACHEM

🕎 *Sparks of Chasidus* 🕎

**THE END OF PARSHAS VAYEIRA**

**T**he general theme of *Parshas Vayeira* is revelation of Godliness in the world. The *Parsha* begins with God appearing to Avraham, and climaxes with the *Akeida* where Avraham demonstrated the utmost commitment to God that is possible here in the physical world.

This theme is also alluded to at the end of the *Parsha*, which finishes with the word “Ma’acha” (מַעֲכָה). In Hebrew this is an acronym for **Melech al kol Ha’aretz** (King of the whole world), indicating that the ultimate purpose of Divine revelation and self-sacrifice is to reveal how every detail *in this world* is one with God.

This also explains a peculiar detail, that on the second day of *Rosh Hashanah*, when the *Akeida* is read from the Torah, we also read the section concerning Rivka’s birth, which seems at first glance to have no connection with *Rosh Hashanah*.

However, since the theme of *Rosh Hashanah* is to “coronate” God as “king of the world”—as we mention many times in the prayers of that day—it was deemed appropriate to conclude with the word “Ma’acha,” alluding to that very same theme: **Melech al kol Ha’aretz**.

(Based on *Sefer Hasichos* 5749, p. 53)



# parshas Chayei Sarah

פרשת חיי שרה

## 🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

**C**hayei Sarah means “the life of Sarah”—an inappropriate name, it would appear, for a *Parsha* which chronicles events following the *passing* of Sarah. How does this name reflect the theme of the *Parsha*?

Our Sages teach that Sarah passed away when she heard that her son had almost been slaughtered at the *Akeida* (see *Rashi* to 23:2). Why is it that Sarah could not withstand the notion of the *Akeida*, whereas Avraham was able to cope with it?

This point reflects the difference in disposition between Avraham and Sarah. Avraham was willing to slaughter his son, and he carried out the process with joy, since he knew that he was following God’s Will. He was content with a spirituality which requires a person to negate the world, and escape from normal existence.

Sarah, on the other hand, could not cope with this idea, since her focus was to serve God *within* the world. As far as Sarah was concerned, Yitzchak’s soul needed to stay in his body so that he could make *the world* a better, holier place.

Thus, Sarah’s purpose in life was most aptly expressed by the events in this *Parsha*, when two fundamental elements of the Jewish nation became established *in the world* for the first time:

a.) *The Jewish People*. Yitzchak—the first person born a Jew—marries Rivkah, who matches his ethical and spiritual caliber; a woman who is an appropriate replacement for Sarah as a mother in Israel.

b.) *The Jewish Land*. In our *Parsha* we read how Avraham purchases the first plot in the Land of Israel which was now openly and indisputably under Jewish ownership. This was the first expression *in the world* of the Jewish right to the Land of Israel.

So, even though our *Parsha* describes events after Sarah’s passing, it is nevertheless called “the life of Sarah,” for in it we read how Sarah’s true purpose in life begins to be fulfilled: the beginnings of the Jewish nation and their Land, here in the physical world.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sarah* 5748)

א ויהיו חיי שרה מאה שנה ועשרים שנה ושבע שנים  
 שני חיי שרה: ב ומיתת שרה בקרית ארבע  
 היא חברון בארעא דקנען ואתא אברהם  
 למספדה לשרה ולמבנה: ג וקם אברהם  
 מעל אפי מיתיה ומליל עם בני התאה

כג א ויהיו חיי שרה מאה שנה ועשרים שנה ושבע שנים  
 שני חיי שרה: ב ומיתת שרה בקרית ארבע הוא חברון בארץ  
 קנען ויבא אברהם לספד לשרה ולבנתה: ג ויקם אברהם

\*כ' זעירא

— כ"ש —

ארבע ענקים שכיו שס, אחימן ששי ותלמי ואזיכס. דבר אחר, על שם ארבע זוגות שנקברו שם איש ואשתו, אדם וחיה. אברהם ושרה. יחזק ורצקה. יעקב ולאח! ויבא אברהם. מצאנו שבע: לספוד לשרה ולבנתה. ונסמכה מיתת שרה לעקידת יחזק, לפי שטל ידי צשורת העקידה, שגזמן צנה

(ה) ויהיו חיי שרה מאה שנה ועשרים שנה ושבע שנים. לכך נכתב שנה בכל כלל וכלל, לומר לך שכל אחד נדרש לעלמו, צת ק' צבת כ' לחטא, מה צת כ' לא חטאה שהרי אינה צת עונשין, אף צת ק' צלא חטא, וצת כ' צבת ז' ליופי: שני חיי שרה. כלן שוין לטובה: (ג) בקרית ארבע. על שם

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why is the word “years” repeated three times? (v. 1)

**RASHI:** The reason that the word “years” is written after every number [“one hundred years, twenty years and seven years”] is to inform you that every number has its own message:

When [Sarah] was one hundred years old, she was like a twenty-year-old regarding sin: Just as a person of twenty has not sinned—for one is not liable for punishment [by the Heavenly court below the age of twenty]—likewise, when she was one hundred years old, she was without sin.

And when she was twenty, she was like a seven-year-old with regard to beauty.

**MIDRASH:** The verse states, “God knows the days of the perfect ones, and their inheritance shall be forever” (Psalms 37:18)—just as their days are perfect, their years are perfect too. At twenty, she (Sarah) was as beautiful as at seven. At one hundred, she was as free from sin as at twenty. An alternative explanation: “God knows the days of the perfect ones”—this refers to Sarah who was perfect in her actions. Rabbi Yochanan said, “like a perfect calf.”

TORAS MENACHEM

🕯 SARAH’S PERFECTION (v. 1)

Why did the **Midrash** bring two interpretations of Sarah’s perfection? What, exactly, is the distinction between them? And why did *Rashi* favor the first interpretation?

The perfection of Sarah’s entire lifetime could be understood in two different ways:

- a.) Perfection in every detail, i.e. each day of her life was perfect.
- b.) Her life as a whole was perfect, i.e. an overall perfection.

A practical difference between these two approaches is illustrated by the case of a *ba’al teshuvah* (a person who becomes observant after a period of non-observance). Clearly, the *ba’al teshuvah* does not possess the perfection of type “a” above, where every detail in his life is perfect, for there was a period when he was not observant. But he could claim to have perfection of type “b” (overall perfection) since his *teshuvah* atones for the past, and we look at his former life in the context of his present *teshuvah*.

Thus, perfection of type “a” is greater than type ‘b,’ since a person possessing perfection of type “a” has perfect days *literally*. Type “b” perfection—the *ba’al teshuvah*—takes a more holistic approach, which perceives *retrospectively* the positive quality even within imperfect days.

**THE ADVANTAGE OF APPROACH “B”**

Nevertheless, it could be argued that approach “b” has a distinct advantage of its own, even for a *tzadik* (totally pious individual):

A true *tzadik* is not a stagnant character, whose piety and knowledge remains stable throughout his entire life. Rather, the *tzadik* is constantly growing so that at the end of his life he has vastly superseded the achievements of his youth. In fact, a truly perfect *tzadik* grows exponentially on a *daily* basis.

For such a *tzadik*, the perfection of type “b” above (overall perfection)

is superior, for by taking a holistic approach we perceive his entire life’s work in the light of the higher spiritual standing that he achieved in his last days. We thus look at the *tzadik*’s first achievements and realize how they were merely stepping-stones to the climax of perfection reached at the end of his life.

In other words, just like we re-evaluate the earlier life of a *ba’al teshuvah* in light of his latter days, similarly a *tzadik*’s latter years of spiritual perfection actually elevate his earlier years of lesser spiritual standing.

*Sparks of Chasidus*

The *Zohar* teaches that Sarah represents the body, whereas Avraham represents the soul (*Zohar* I 122b). Even after death, the soul still remains related to the body, thus: “Avraham—the soul—came to eulogize Sarah—the body—and to weep for her” (v. 2).

Chasidic teachings emphasize the importance of the body as a tool in the service of God. Since the ultimate purpose of creation is to sanctify the physical world, the body has a distinct advantage over the soul, in that it is the means by which God’s Will is enacted. Therefore, God told Avraham (the soul), “Whatever Sarah—the body—tells you, listen to her voice” (21:12), indicating that there is an inherent superiority to the body over the soul.

Although the soul is incomparably more refined than the body, nevertheless, in the times of Mashiach we are promised that the superiority of the body will be revealed such that “the soul will be animated by the body.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 1, p. 31ff.)

## 🌀 SARAH PASSES AWAY 🌀

**23** Sarah's lifetime was (a total of) one hundred years, twenty years and seven years. The years of Sarah's life (were all equally good).

<sup>2</sup> Sarah died in Kiryas-Arba, which is Chevron, in the land of Cana'an. Avraham came (from Be'er Sheva, immediately after the Akeida, the shock of which had caused her death) to eulogize Sarah and to weep over her.

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● What caused Sarah's death? (v. 2)

**RASHI:** The account of Sarah's passing was recorded after the binding of Yitzchak, because through hearing the news of the Akeida, that her son was prepared for slaughter and was almost slaughtered, her soul flew out of her, and she died.

**BIURAY MAHARAY:** A person reported to Sarah that her son had been prepared for slaughter, and planned on telling her straight-away that he was saved at the last minute. However, before he had the chance to tell her the good news, "her soul flew away."

**NACHALAS YA'AKOV:** Why does *Rashi* tell us here, in verse 2, that "the account of Sarah's passing was recorded after the binding of Yitzchak"? Surely, this matter should have been explained at the beginning of "the account of Sarah's passing," and not in the second verse?

However, *Rashi* was troubled why the verse states, "Avraham came to eulogize Sarah and to weep over her." Why did the Torah state that Avraham had to "come" from somewhere? *Rashi* concluded that scripture was hinting to the Midrashic teaching that Avraham was coming from the Akeida, which caused Sarah's passing.

**OHR HA'CHAYIM:** It is not clear whether Sarah died before her time. Sarah's unusual death—on hearing the news of the Akeida—may have occurred after her allotted years in the world.

Alternatively, one could understand that this shocking occurrence caused her to pass away before her time.

#### ● Surely, weeping comes before a eulogy? Why does the verse record them the other way around? (v. 2)

**RIVA:** When Avraham arrived, the household had already wept for Sarah and were already eulogizing her. Therefore, Avraham joined in the eulogy first, and then wept for her later.

**KLI YAKAR:** The feeling of loss, which normally weakens with time, actually grew stronger after Sarah's passing. Thus, the weeping continued long after the eulogies.

#### ● Why is the word וְלִבְכֹתָהּ ("to weep over her") written with a small letter *kaf*? (v. 2)

**BA'AL HATURIM:** This indicates that Avraham did not weep a lot, since Sarah was already old when she died.

### TORAS MENACHEM

Obviously, the *tzadik* did not sin like the *ba'al teshuvah*, but the principle of re-adjusting our view of his comparatively inferior past in light of later progress remains the same.

Since both types of perfection have a distinct advantage over each other, even for a *tzadik*, the *Midrash* deemed it appropriate to attribute both to Sarah. First we read that, "just as their days are perfect, so are their years perfect. At twenty, she (Sarah) was as beautiful as at seven etc," i.e. the perfection of each individual day and year in its own right (type "a"). Then, the *Midrash* describes type "b": "God knows the days of the perfect ones"—this refers to Sarah, who was perfect in her actions. Rabbi Yochanan said, "like a perfect calf." i.e. her actions as a whole were perfect.

#### DID SARAH DIE BEFORE HER TIME? (v. 2)

A further distinction between the two interpretations of the *Midrash* concerns the question whether Sarah passed away prematurely, before her allotted time in this world (see *Ohr haChayim*):

According to the first interpretation of the *Midrash*, that every day of Sarah's life was perfect, it follows that she might have passed away before her time. For, the fact that each day was perfect does not necessarily mean that she lived out her total number of allotted days in the world. All we know is that the days which she *did* merit to live were indeed perfect.

According to the second interpretation of the *Midrash*, that Sarah's life as a whole was perfect, we are forced to conclude that she did live out her allotted number of days in full. For, if she passed away before her time

she would surely not have had the opportunity to carry out her mission in this world to perfection.

Since *Rashi* cites only the first interpretation of the *Midrash*, we can presume that, at the literal level of Torah study to which *Rashi* limits himself, Sarah did indeed pass away before her time.

#### WEEPING FOR SARAH (v. 2)

A further problem with verse 2 is why Avraham came "to eulogize Sarah and to weep over her." The *Talmud* states, "weeping is carried out for three days and eulogies for seven days" (*Mo'ed Katan* 27b), so why does the Torah mention eulogy before weeping? [see *Riva* & *Kli Yakar*]

If Sarah passed away after her fully allotted time in this world, then there would have been even less weeping (compared to the scenario of a premature passing). This would explain why the Torah mentions the eulogy first, for the long and impressive eulogy which Sarah deserved would have vastly overshadowed the weeping which, in this case, was relatively minimal. Thus the Torah mentions weeping as a secondary detail (and the word וְלִבְכֹתָהּ "to weep over her" was written with a small letter *kaf* to indicate that only a small amount of weeping took place [see *Ba'al Haturim*]).

However, according to the view that Sarah passed away before her allotted time, we can presume that there would have been a great deal of weeping before the eulogy. If so, why is the weeping mentioned last?

And, since *Rashi* adopts this latter view, that Sarah passed away before her time (as explained above), where is *Rashi's* solution to this problem?

למימר: ד היר ותוב אנא עמכון הבו לי אחסנת קבורא עמכון ואקבר מיתי מן קדמי: ה ואתיבו בני התאה ית אברהם למימר ליה: ו קבל מננא רבוננא רב קדם יי את ביננא בשפר קברנא קבר ית מיתד אנש מננא ית קבריה לא יכלי מנד מלמקבר מיתד: ז וקם אברהם וסגיד לעמא דארעא לבני התאה: ח ומליל עמהון למימר אם אית רעוא בנפשכון

מעל פני מתו וידבר אל בני חת לאמר: ד גר ותושב אנכי עמכם תנו לי אחות קבר עמכם ואקברה מתי מלפני: ה ויענו בני חת את אברהם לאמר לו: ו שמענו א אדני נשיא אלהים אתה בתוכנו במבחר קברינו קבר את מתד איש ממונו את קברו לא יכלה ממך מקבר מתד: ז ויקם אברהם וישתחו לעם הארץ לבני חת: ח וידבר אתם לאמר אם יש

רש"י

לשחיטה וכמעט שלא נשחט, פרח נשמתה ממנה ומתה: (ד) גר ותושב אנכי עמכם. גר מארץ אחרת, ונחישצתי עמכם. ומדש אגדה, אם תלכו כריני גר, כזאת: אחוזת קבר. אחוזת קרקע לבית הקברות: (ו) לא יכלה. לא ימנע,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Avraham describe himself as an “immigrant and a resident among you”? (v. 4)

**RASHI:** He was saying, “I am an immigrant from another land, and I have settled among you.”

According to the *Midrash*, he was saying, “If you wish [to sell me a burial site] then I am [like] an immigrant [and will purchase it from you for a good price]. But, if not, I will be a resident and will take it by rights, since God said to me, ‘I will give this land to your descendants’ (above 12:7).

**BARTENURA:** If God said, “I will give this land to your descendants,” how was this a proof that it belonged to Avraham himself?

Presumably, we are to conclude that Avraham was actually given the land by God and that his descendants inherited it.

**NACHALAS YA’AKOV:** In fact, God had given the land not only to Avraham’s descendants but to Avraham himself, with the words, “I will give all the land that you see to you” (13:15).

**PIRKEI D’RABBI ELIEZER:** The people of Cheis said to Avraham, “We know that in the future God is going to give all these lands to you and your descendants. Strike a covenant with us that the Jewish people will only inherit the city of the Jebusites with the consent of the Jebusite people” [who were descendants of Cheis]. Avraham struck the covenant with them and purchased the Cave of Machpeilah.

TORAS MENACHEM

THE EXPLANATION

In verse 2, *Rashi* writes, “The account of Sarah’s passing was recorded after the binding of Yitzchak because through hearing the news of the Akeida, that her son was prepared for slaughter and was almost slaughtered, her soul flew out of her, and she died.” [**Nachalas Ya’akov** to v. 2] asks: why did *Rashi* write, “The account of Sarah’s passing was recorded after the binding of Yitzchak,” here in verse 2? Surely this matter should have been dealt with at the beginning of the *Parsha*?

However, *Rashi* was not attempting to explain the order in which the Torah recorded the events. The events are recorded in the same order in which they occurred, so their sequence did not trouble *Rashi* at all.

What did trouble *Rashi* was our earlier question: Why Sarah’s eulogy is mentioned in the verse before weeping (“to eulogize Sarah and to weep over her”). *Rashi* answers this question by explaining that Sarah’s passing reflected a subtle weakness on her part, which caused the mourning to be toned down. When she heard that her son was prepared for slaughter and then saved at the last minute, she would have rejoiced in utter delight. Unfortunately, she was not capable of containing this joy, and “her soul flew out of her, and she died.” True service of God, however, requires a person to channel moments of joy into further activity, and not to allow oneself to be carried away by them.

So, since Sarah’s passing reflected a weakness on her part, it would have caused the weeping to be reduced, allowing the eulogy to take priority. Therefore, the sequence in the verse reflects this priority, stating that Avraham came “to eulogize Sarah and to weep over her.”

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sarah* 5726)

“IMMIGRANT” OR “RESIDENT” (v. 4)

*Rashi*’s comment here to verse 4 presents us with a number of problems:

- a.) If Avraham could have demanded the cave of Machpeilah “by rights,” then why did he go to such great lengths to purchase it?
- b.) The people of Cheis referred to Avraham as a “prince of God” (v. 6), due to his reputation for kindness and righteousness. If he had demanded the cave by force, he would have lost this reputation and made a *chilul Hashem* (desecration of God’s name). Why did Avraham consider this a worthwhile option?
- c.) Why did Avraham prove his rights to the land from the verse, “I will give this land to your descendants”? Surely, a better proof would have been from the verse, “I will give all the land that you see to you” (13:15). [See **Bartenura** and **Nachalas Ya’akov**].
- d.) We explained above, in *Parshas Lech Lecha* (*Toras Menachem* to 15:18), that according to *Rashi*, Avraham did not make any legal acquisition of the Land of Israel at all, and it was merely promised by God to his descendants. If so, on what basis would Avraham take the cave of Machpeilah “by rights”?

Besides these difficulties with *Rashi*’s words, the incident related in **Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer** (that Avraham entered into an agreement over the land of the Jebusites) is extremely difficult to understand:

If God had already promised Avraham, “I will give this land to your descendants,” how could Avraham make a covenant promising part of the land to the Jebusites in total defiance of God’s promise?

## 🕎 AVRAHAM PURCHASES THE CAVE OF MACHPEILAH 🕎

- 23:3 **A**vraham got up from in front of his deceased (wife).  
 He spoke to the people of Cheis, saying, <sup>4</sup> “I am an immigrant and a resident among you. Let me have some land for a burial ground with you, so that I may bury my dead from in front of me.”  
<sup>5</sup> The people of Cheis answered Avraham, saying to him, <sup>6</sup> “Listen to us, sir! You are a prince of God in our midst. You may bury your dead in the choicest of our burial places. Not one of us will hold back his burial place from you to bury your dead.”  
<sup>7</sup> Avraham got up and prostrated himself to the people of the land, the people of Cheis.  
<sup>8</sup> He said to them, “If you wish me to bury my dead from in front of me, listen to me and ask Efron

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### THE EXPLANATION

Ownership of land can occur on two different levels.

- a.) *National ownership*, where a sovereign or government possesses the rights to an entire country or empire.
- b.) *Private ownership*, where an individual possesses land for himself.

Obviously, these two types of ownership can coexist. An individual may own a piece of land privately, but at the same time, its general right of ownership belongs to the government, which may impose taxes on the owner. Ultimately, the government possesses the right to evict the owner from his land if certain circumstances prevail (*Bava Kama* 100b).

Despite this overlap between these two forms of ownership, they are otherwise independent. The national ownership of a land by one group of people, or one family, does not preclude the possibility of other people owning property within it, so long as they pay the appropriate taxes and observe the laws of the land.

Likewise, if a group loses national ownership of a land, this does not preclude the possibility that they may continue to own some of the land privately (under another regime).

In history, this is precisely what occurred to the Jewish ownership of the Land of Israel. At times, we have enjoyed the national ownership of the land; but even when the national ownership was lost, some parts of the land often remained under private Jewish ownership (see *Jer.* 32, 44; *Bava Basra* 28b).

Based on the above, we can now understand the distinction between the two statements said by God to Avraham, “I will give this land to your descendants” (12:7, and similarly 15:18), and “I will give all the land that you see to you” (13:15):

When God promised the Land of Israel to Avraham’s descendants, He was promising the entire land (“this land”), i.e. national ownership.

However, what God promised to Avraham (“to you”) was sufficient land to accommodate his descendants, who would be as numerous as “the soil of the earth” (ibid. 16). I.e. the promise here is on a personal level, that each one of Avraham’s descendants would *privately* possess a piece of the land.

With the above in mind, we can now explain Avraham’s argument to the people of Cheis, as articulated by *Rashi*:

Avraham presumed, quite rightly, that the time had not yet come for the national ownership of the Land of Israel by the Jewish people, which had only been promised to “his descendants.” Obviously, this did not preclude his private acquisition of a part of the land, so he endeavored to purchase the cave and field of Machpeilah from its current owners at the time, the people of Cheis. Therefore, he said, “If you wish (to sell me a burial site) then I am an immigrant (and will purchase it from you).”

Avraham was also prepared for the possibility that the people of Cheis would refuse to sell him the land. But Avraham deemed it an unacceptable alternative to bury Sarah anywhere else but the Cave of Machpeilah, since he knew that Adam and Chavah were buried there, and that Sarah, the mother of the Jewish people, belonged next to Adam and Chavah who were formed by God’s hand.

Therefore, if the people of Cheis refused to sell the cave, it would be sufficient proof to Avraham that *the time had now come for national acquisition of the Land of Israel* against the will of its inhabitants. Thus, Avraham quoted to the people of Cheis God’s promise of the Land of Israel as a whole to the Jewish people, “If not, I will be a resident and will take it by rights, since God said to me, ‘I will give this land to your descendants.’”

According to the above explanation, we can now understand why Avraham was willing to make a covenant with the people of Cheis, “that the Jewish people will only inherit the city of the Jebusites with the consent of the Jebusite people.” Avraham was only offering the Jebusites *private ownership* of some land within the Land of Israel, which would still belong to the Jewish people on a national level. Thus, if the Jebusites refused to comply with “the law of the land” they could be evicted.

And, in fact, this is what actually happened. When the Jebusites obstructed the construction of the Temple, King David evicted them by force (*Sam.* II 5:6-10). For, at that point, the private ownership of land by the Jebusites became incompatible with the national ownership of the Land of Israel by the Jewish people, and such a concession was never made by Avraham to the people of Cheis.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 82ff.)

### 🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

**W**hile Adam and Chavah were the parents of *all mankind*, they later became connected specifically with *the Jewish people*. Therefore, they were buried together with the Patriarchs and Matriarchs of the Jewish people.

This association occurred in the merit of Sarah: Sarah was capable of discerning the uniqueness of the Jewish people more than Avraham, for it was she who taught Avraham about Yitzchak’s superiority over Yishma’el. Therefore, it was through Sarah’s burial that Adam and Chavah were “discerned” to be ancestors of the Jewish people in particular.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, pp. 147-148)

למקבר ית מיתי מן קדמי קבילו מני ובעו לי מן עפרון בר צוחר: ט ויתן לי ית מערת כפלתא די ליה די בסטר תקליה בכספא שלים ותננה לי בניכוון לאחסנת קבורא: י ועפרון יתיב בגו בני התאה ואתיב עפרון התאה ית אברהם קדם בני התאה לכל עאלי תרע קרתיה למימר: יא לא רבוני קבל מני תקלא יתבית לך ומערתא די ביה לך יתביתה לעיני בני עמי יתביתה לך קבר מיתך: יב וסגיד אברהם קדם עמא דארעא: יג ומליל עם עפרון קדם עמא דארעא למימר ברם אם את עביר לי טיבו קבל מני אתן כספא דמי תקלא סב מני ואקבר ית מיתי תמן: יד ואתיב עפרון ית אברהם למימר ליה: טו רבוני קבל מני ארעא שווא ארבע מאה סלעין דכסף בינא ובינד מה היא וית מיתך קבר: טז וקביל אברהם מן עפרון ותקל אברהם לעפרון ית כספא די מליל קדם בני התאה ארבע מאה סלעין דכסף מתקבל סחורה בכל מדינתא: יז וקם תקל עפרון די בכפלתא די קדם ממרא

את־נפשכם לקבר את־מתי מלפני שמעוני ופגעו־לי בעפרון בן־צחר: ט ויתן־לי את־מערת המכפלה אשר־לו אשר בקצה שדהו בכסף מלא יתננה לי בתוככם לאחזת־קבר: י ועפרון ישב בתוך בני־חת ויען עפרון החתי את־אברהם באזני בני־חת לכל באי שער־עירו לאמר: יא לא־אדני שמעני השדה נתתי לך והמערה אשר־בו לך נתתיה לעיני בני־עמי נתתיה לך קבר מתך: יב וישתחו אברהם לפני עם־הארץ: יג וידבר אל־עפרון באזני עם־הארץ לאמר אך אם־אתה לו שמעני נתיב כסף השדה קח ממני ואקברה את־מתי שמה: יד ויען עפרון את־אברהם לאמר לו: טו אדני שמעני ארץ ארבע מאת שקל־כסף ביני ובינך מה־הוא ואת־מתך קבר: טז וישמע אברהם אל־עפרון וישקל אברהם לעפרון את־הכסף אשר דבר באזני בני־חת ארבע מאות שקל כסף עבר לסחר: ויגם יז ויקם עפרון אשר במכפלה אשר לפני ממרא השדה והמערה אשר־בו

כש"י

אך אם חסה לו שמעני, הלאו ותשמעני: נתתי. דונו"ש זלע"ז, מוכן הוא אללי, והלאו נחתי לך כצר: (טו) ביני ובינך. צין שני אוהבים כמונו, מה היא חשוכה לנלום, אלא הנה את המכר, ואת מתך קבור: (טז) וישקל אברהם לעפרון. חסר וי"ו, לפי שאמר הרצב ואפילו מעט לא עשה, שנטל ממנו שקלים גדולים שהן קנטרין שנאמר עוצר לסוחר, שמתקבלים זשקל בכל מקום, ויש מקום ששקליהן גדולים שהן קנטרין, לנטיאר"ש זלע"ז: (יז) ויקם שדה עפרון. תקומה היתה לה, שזלחה מיד הדיוט ליד מלך. ופשוטו של מקרא, ויקם השדה והמערה אשר בו וכל העץ לאצרכם למקנה וגו':

כמו לא תכלא רחמיק', וכמו ויכלא הגשם: (ח) נפשכם. רלונכס: ופגעו לי. לשון זקשה, כמו אל חפגעי ציב: (ט) המכפלה. צית ועליה על גציו. דבר אחר, שפולה זוגות: בכסף מלא. אשלים כל שוויה, וכן דוד אמר לארוכה בכסף מלא: (י) ועפרון ישב. כתיב חסר, אותו היום מנוכו שוטר עליהם, מפני חשיבותו של אצרכם שהיה לריך לו, עלה לגדולה: לכל באי שער עירו. שכולן בטלו ממלכתן, וזאו לגמול חסד לשרה: (יא) לא אדני. לא תקנה אותה דמיס: נתתי לך. כרי הוא כמו שנחתי לך: (יג) אך אם אתה לו שמעני. אהה אומר לי לשמוע לך וליקח בחנם, אני אי אפשי בך,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What does *Machpeilah* mean? (v. 9)

**RASHI:** A house with an upper story over it.

Another interpretation: it was doubled for couples (*Rashi* to v. 9). Four couples were buried there, man and wife: Adam and Chavah, Avraham and Sarah, Yitzchak and Rivkah, Ya'akov and Leah (*Rashi* to v. 2, above).

**RAMBAN:** Verse 17 below states, "The field of Efron which was in *Machpeilah*," suggesting that it was the area and not the cave which was called *Machpeilah*. *Rashi* is incorrect in attempting to explain why the cave was called *Machpeilah*.

The *Midrash* states that the cave was called *Machpeilah* (lit. "double") because God doubled the height of Adam and buried him there. For this reason the area had become known as *Machpeilah*, but the local people did not know this. Efron sold the place at

normal market value, as he was not aware that Adam was buried there.

● What does it mean that "Efron sat"? (v. 10)

**RASHI:** On that very day they had appointed him as an officer over them. Because someone of Avraham's stature needed him, he rose to an exalted position.

● How was the field "established"? (v. 17)

**RASHI:** In Hebrew, ויקם literally means "it arose." It experienced an elevation, for it left the possession of a common person and entered into the possession of a king. The literal meaning of the verse is: the field and the cave which was within it, and all the trees...were established as Avraham's possession.

**PANEACH RAZA:** Avraham bought a cubit of land for each of the 600,000 Jews who left Egypt.



the son of Tzochar <sup>9</sup> to give me his Cave of Machpeilah, which is at the end of his field. Let him give it to me for its full price as land for a burial plot in your midst.”

<sup>10</sup> (Due to Avraham’s importance) Efron sat (in a high position) among the people of Cheis.

Efron the Chitite responded to Avraham in (front of) an audience of the people of Cheis—who had all (stopped work and) come to the gate of the city (in honor of Sarah)—saying, <sup>11</sup> “No, sir, (I will not accept your money). Listen to me! I have given you the field, and I have given you the cave which is in it. I have given it to you, in the presence of my people, to bury your dead.”

<sup>12</sup> Avraham threw himself to the ground in front of the local people. <sup>13</sup> He spoke to Efron, in (front of) the (gathered) audience of local people, saying, “But if only you would listen to me! I have the money (ready) for the field. Take it from me, and I will bury my dead there.”

<sup>14</sup> Efron replied to Avraham, saying to him, <sup>15</sup> “Sir, listen to me! What is a (piece of) land worth four hundred shekels of silver between (friends like) me and you? (Forget about the money) and bury your dead!”

<sup>16</sup> Avraham listened to Efron. Avraham weighed to Efron the (amount of) silver that he had mentioned in the presence of the people of Cheis: four hundred shekels of silver in standard currency (and he accepted it).

<sup>17</sup> The field of Efron which was in Machpeilah, facing Mamre, was established (as Avraham’s possession. This included) the field and the cave which was in it, all the trees that were in the field, which

SECOND  
READING

---

TORAS MENACHEM

---

### 🔗 THE CAVE OF MACHPEILAH (v. 9)

It is not disputed among the commentators that the word *Machpeilah* means “double,” but we do see a difference of opinion about what the “double” refers to. *Rashi’s* comment presents us with the following problems:

- a.) Why does *Rashi* use the word “house” when surely he means that it was a double cave?
- b.) How could we defend *Rashi* from the attack of **Ramban**?
- c.) Why did *Rashi* bring two interpretations and not suffice with one?
- d.) From the low price that Avraham paid, we can presume that Efron did not know that Adam and Chavah were buried in the cave (as *Ramban* writes). Why then (according to *Rashi’s* second interpretation) did Avraham refer to it as a cave “doubled with couples”?

#### THE EXPLANATION

In the current story, the term *Machpeilah* is mentioned three times, each with a different connotation:

- 1.) “His Cave of Machpeilah, which is at the end of his field” (v. 9). This suggests that the cave was called *Machpeilah*.
- 2.) “The field of Efron which was in Machpeilah” (v. 17). This suggests that the area was called *Machpeilah*.
- 3.) “The cave in the field of Machpeilah” (v. 19). This suggests that some other quality in the field besides the cave gave it the name *Machpeilah*.

The latter two verses strongly suggest that it was not the cave which was called *Machpeilah*, but some other local feature. Therefore *Rashi* explained, that there was “a house with an upper story over it.” I.e. *Rashi* is not suggesting, as one might presume, that the cave consisted of an upper and lower chamber, for then it would turn out that the field was named after the cave, and this notion is refuted by verse 19. Rather, to resolve the contradiction between the three verses above, *Rashi* writes that there was an *additional* feature in the field which gave it its name. Namely, a two-storey house, which presumably was quite a remarkable

feature at the time, sufficient to give the area its name. This explains why the Torah uses the expression “the cave in the field of Machpeilah,” since the field acquired its name due to the two-storey house (“the field of Machpeilah”) and not due to the cave itself.

#### RASHI’S SECOND INTERPRETATION

*Rashi*, however, perceived a problem with this interpretation: Surely, the term “cave of Machpeilah” was sufficient information to identify the cave? Why did Avraham need to add, “Ask Efron the son of Tzochar to give me his Cave of Machpeilah, which is at the end of his field”? (v. 9)

Due to this problem, *Rashi* deemed it necessary to bring an alternative explanation, “It was doubled for couples,” i.e. the cave had sufficient space to bury couples together. According to this interpretation, the “Cave of Machpeilah” was not a location, but rather, a *description* indicating the capacity of the cave. Therefore, Avraham had to add the location too, asking for the “Cave of Machpeilah, which is at the end of his field.”

Nevertheless, this second interpretation is also problematic, since it renders Avraham’s words somewhat inconsistent: First of all, Avraham requested only “to bury my dead,” in the singular; and then he asked for a cave big enough for *eight* people.

Since *Rashi* deemed this problem more serious than the difficulty with his first interpretation, he cited this solution last.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 105ff.)

### 🔗 “ESTABLISHING” THE FIELD (v. 17)

*Rashi’s* comment to verse 17 presents us with two problems:

- a.) How can *Rashi* write that Efron was a “common person,” when just a few verses earlier he states that Efron was “an officer over them”? (v. 10)
- Wouldn’t a more appropriate comparison be that the field “left the possession of a wicked man and entered into the possession of a righteous man”?

תקלא ומערתא די ביה וכל אינא די בתקלא די בכל תחומיה סחור סחור: יה לאברהם לזבינדהי לעיני בני התאה בכל עאלי תרע קרתיה: יט ובתר כן קבר אברהם ית שרה אתתיה במערת תקל כפלתא דעל אפי מקרא היא חרון בארעא דכנען: כ וקם תקלא ומערתא די ביה לאברהם לאחסנת קבורא מן בני התאה: א ואברהם סב עאל ביומין וי' בריד ית אברהם בכולא: ב ואמר אברהם לעבדיה סבא דביתיה דשליט בכל די ליה שוי כען ידך תחות ירכי: ג ואקום ערך במימרא די אלהא דשמיא ואלהא דארעא די לא תסב אתתא לברי מבנת כנענאי די אנא יתיב ביניהון: ד אלהין לארעי ולילדותי תיזיל ותסב אתתא לברי ליצחק: ה ואמר ליה עבדא מאים לא תיבי אתתא למיתי בתרי לארעא דא האתבא אתיב ית ברך לארעא די נפקתא מתמן: ו ואמר ליה אברהם אסתמר לך דלמא תתיב ית ברי לתמן: ז יי אלהא דשמיא די דברני

וְכָל־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר בַּשָּׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר בְּכַל־גְּבֻלוֹ סָבִיב: יח לְאִבְרָהָם לְמִקְנָה לְעֵינַי בְּנֵי־חַת בְּכָל בְּאֵי שְׁעַר־עִירוֹ: יט וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן קָבַר אֲבֹרָהִם אֶת־שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ אֶל־מְעֵרַת שָׂדֶה הַמְּכַפְלָה עַל־פְּנֵי מְמָרָא הוּא חָרוֹן בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן: כ וַיָּקָם הַשָּׂדֶה וְהַמְעָרָה אֲשֶׁר־בוֹ לְאִבְרָהָם לְאַחֲזֹת־קֶבֶר מֵאֵת בְּנֵי־חַת: ס כד « וְאַבְרָהָם זָקֵן בָּא בַיָּמִים וַיהוָה בֵּרַךְ אֶת־אֲבְרָהָם בְּכָל: ב וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבְרָהָם אֶל־עַבְדּוֹ זָקֵן בֵּיתוֹ הַמִּשְׁלָל בְּכָל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ שֵׁים־גַּא יִדְּךָ תַּחַת יָרְכִי: ג וְאַשְׁבִּיעֶךָ בַּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֱלֹהֵי הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תִקַּח אִשָּׁה לְבְנֵי מִבְּנוֹת הַכְּנַעֲנִי אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּקִרְבּוֹ: ד כִּי אֶל־אֶרֶצִי וְאֶל־מוֹלַדְתִּי תִלְךָ וְלִקְחַתְּ אִשָּׁה לְבְנִי לְיִצְחָק: ה וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הָעֶבֶד אוֹלִי לֹא־תֵאבֶה הָאִשָּׁה לְלַכֵּת אַחֲרַי אֶל־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת הֲהֵשֵׁב אָשִׁיב אֶת־בְּנִךְ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יֵצֵאתָ מִשָּׁם: ו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲבְרָהָם הֲשָׁמַר לְךָ פֶּן־תָּשִׁיב אֶת־בְּנִי שָׁמָּה: ז יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם אֲשֶׁר

רש"י

וכמילה הינה מלוח ראשונה לו, וזאה לו על ידי זער, והינה חזיצה עליו, ונטלה: (ז) ה' אלהי השמים אשר לקחני מבית אבי. ולא אמר ולא הכי הארץ, ולמעלה אמר ואשביעך וגו'. אמר לו עכשיו הוא אלהי השמים ולא הכי הארץ, שהרגלתיו צפי בצריות, אבל כשלקחני מצית אבי, היה אלהי השמים

(יח) בכל באי שער עירו. בקרב כולם וצמטמד כולם הקנהו לו: (א) ברך את אברהם בכל. ככל עולה בגימטריא כן, ומאחר שכיח לו כן, היה לריך להשיאו אשה: (ב) זקן ביתו. לפי שהוא דבוק נקוד זקן; תחת ירכי. לפי שהנשבע לריך שיטול צידו חפץ של מזוה, כגון ספר תורה, או תפילין,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the Torah repeat that “Avraham was old,” (v. 1) when this was already written in *Parshas Vayeira* (18:11)?

**MIDRASH:** The statement in *Parshas Vayeira* refers to old age with vigor. Our *Parsha* speaks of old age lacking vigor (48:19).

**RAMBAN:** The Torah wishes to explain why Avraham asked Eliezer to find a son for Yitzchak—it was because Avraham was getting old.

TORAS MENACHEM

b.) First *Rashi* writes that וַיָּקָם means “it was elevated,” and then in a second interpretation, he explains that the “literal meaning” of the word is “it was established.” Surely *Rashi* should have taught us the literal translation *first*, before the more allegorical interpretation about the field’s “elevation”?

THE EXPLANATION

Normally, when Mr. X buys a piece of land from Mr. Y one might say that, “Mr. X now owns Mr. Y’s field.” I.e. even though Mr. X now has full ownership of the field, it is still somewhat associated, at least historically speaking, with Mr. Y, who owned it in the past.

On the other hand, if *the king* acquires Mr. Y’s field, one would not refer to it as “his Royal Highness’s land, which used to belong to Mr. Y.” Clearly, when a king acquires something from a commoner, it becomes completely stripped of its former ‘common’ association, and acquires a new, exalted identity.

Avraham’s intention in purchasing Efron’s field for its “full price,” rather than accepting it as a gift (see v. 9-16) was in order to disassociate the plot with its former owner as much as possible. Therefore, *Rashi* stressed that, at the literal level, Avraham’s primary intention was to “elevate” the field to complete Jewish ownership.

*Sparks of Chasidus*

Based on the comment of *Paneach Raza* (*Classic Questions*, v. 17), that Avraham bought a cubit of land for every Jew, it follows that the purchase of the field of Machpeilah was the first step towards the final redemption.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 1, p. 44)

were within its entire border around. <sup>18</sup> (It became) Avraham's as a possession in the presence of the people of Cheis, who had come to the gate of his city.

<sup>19</sup> Afterwards, Avraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave in the field of Machpeilah, facing Mamre, which is Chevron, in the land of Cana'an. <sup>20</sup> The field and the cave within it were established as Avraham's burial plot, (purchased) from the people of Cheis.

## 🌀 AVRAHAM SENDS ELIEZER TO FIND A WIFE FOR YITZCHAK 🌀

**24** Avraham was old, (but still) immersed into daily life. God had blessed Avraham with everything (including a son). <sup>2</sup> Avraham said to his servant, the senior member of his house, who was in charge of everything he had, "Please place your hand under my thigh (to swear an oath). <sup>3</sup> I will make you swear by God, the God of the heavens and the God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Cana'anites, amongst whom I live. <sup>4</sup> Rather, you should go to my Land, to my birthplace, and you will take a wife for my son, for Yitzchak."

<sup>5</sup> The servant said to him, "What if the woman will not want to follow me to this land? Shall I take your son back to the land from where you came?"

<sup>6</sup> Avraham said to him, "Be insistent not to take my son back there. <sup>7</sup> God, the God of the heavens—

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why was Yitzchak not allowed to leave Cana'an? (v. 6)

**MINCHAH BELULAH:** Yitzchak had the status of a 'perfect burnt-offering' and was not permitted to leave the Land of Israel.

**KLI YAKAR:** Avraham did not want Yitzchak to marry a girl from Cana'an (v. 3), for the local people had a genetic disposition to self-indulgent desires. The family of Lavan and Besu'el did not possess this genetic predisposition but, on the other hand, they were idol-worshippers.

A tendency to idol worship, however, is not a genetically inherited quality, but rather, a cultural phenomenon. Therefore, Avraham requested that: a.) Yitzchak's wife should not be from Cana'an but from "my birthplace," so that she should be of good genetic

disposition. b.) He insisted "not to take my son back there." i.e. the girl must be removed from the idol worshipping culture and brought to Yitzchak, and not the other way round.

#### ● Why did Avraham say "God of the heavens"? (v. 7)

**RASHI:** He did not say, "And the God of the earth," as he had said above, "I will make you swear [by God, the God of the heavens and the God of the earth]" (v. 3). Avraham said to him, "Now He is the God of the heavens and the God of the earth, because I have made it habitual for creatures to mention Him. But when He took me from my father's house, He was the God of the heavens but *not* the God of the earth, because mankind did not acknowledge Him, and His Name was not commonplace on the earth."

### TORAS MENACHEM

In fact, since this was the first piece of the Land of Israel which was acquired by the Jewish people, it was of the utmost importance to possess the land totally, stripping it of any non-Jewish connection.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 35, p. 82ff.)

#### 🌀 "AVRAHAM WAS OLD" (v. 1)

It was explained above (*Toras Menachem* to 18:11), that the term **בְּיָמָיו** means "immersed into daily life." For as one becomes older there is a tendency to become apathetic and detached from everyday events. Therefore the Torah informs us that even when Avraham and Sarah grew old they were still immersed in daily life.

With this we can explain why the Torah repeats here the fact that "Avraham was old, (but still) immersed in daily life," because Avraham was now around forty years older than his "advanced age" mentioned in *Parshas Vayeira* (since Yitzchak was married at forty years [*Toldos* 25:20], and Avraham's old age was mentioned in *Parshas Vayeira* before Yitzchak's birth). Therefore, a person might think that by this time Avraham had become apathetic and detached. Consequently the Torah teaches us that "Avraham was old (but still) immersed in daily life," even some forty years later.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 89ff.)

#### 🌀 AVRAHAM'S REQUEST (v. 6-7)

[**Minchah Belulah** writes] that Avraham did not want Yitzchak to leave the Land of Israel because he had the status of a "perfect burnt offering." However, this explanation does not appear to be consistent with *Rashi's* explanation later, in *Parshas Toldos*:

On the verse, "God appeared to him and said, 'Do not go down to Egypt! ... Settle in this land...'" (26:1-3), *Rashi* comments, "[Yitzchak] had in mind to go down to Egypt as his father had gone down in the days of the famine. God said to him, 'Do not go down to Egypt! You are a perfect burnt offering, and being outside the Land [of Israel] is not fitting for you!'"

[Yitzchak was consecrated to God as a burnt offering on the Altar (during the incident of the *Akeida*—see above 22:2ff.), he was not permitted to leave the Land of Israel, just as a burnt offering may not be taken out of the Temple Courtyard—(*Mizrachi*)]

This begs the question: Yitzchak clearly knew that he had been placed onto the Altar as a burnt offering at the *Akeida*, so how could he have ignored the prohibition of leaving the Land?

It seems therefore that until God told Yitzchak, "Do not go down to Egypt!" it was *not yet prohibited* for him to leave the Land of Israel. And that is why Yitzchak innocently planned on leaving the Land, until he was told otherwise by God.

מבית אבי ומארח ילדו ודי מליל לי ודי קים לי למימר לבריך אתן ית ארעא הדא הוא ישלח מלאכיה קדמך ותסב אתתא לברי מתמן: ה ואם לא תיבי אתתא למיתי בתרך ותהי זכאה ממומתי דא לחוד ית ברי לא תתיב לתמן: ט ושוי עבדא ית ידיה תחות ירכא דאברהם רבוניה וקים ליה על פתנמא הרין: י ודבר עבדא עשרא נמלין מנמלי דרבוניה ואזל וכל שפר רבוניה בידיה וקים ואזל לארם די על פרת לקרתא

לקחני מבית אבי ומארחי מולדתי ואשר דבר לי ואשר נשבע לי לאמר לזרעך אתן את הארץ הזאת הוא ישלח מלאכו לפניך ולקחת אשה לבני משם: ה ואם לא תאבה האשה ללכת אחריך ונקית משבעתי זאת רק את בני לא תשב שמה: ט וישם העבד את ידו תחת ירך אברהם אדניו וישבע לו על הדבר הזה: (שלישין) ויקח העבד עשרה נמלים מנמלי אדניו וילך וכל טוב אדניו בידו ויקם וילך אל ארם

רש"י

ולא חלפי הארץ, שלא היו צאי עולם מכירים צו, ושמו לא היה רגיל בארץ: מבית אבי. מחנך: ומארח מולדתי. מאור כשדים: ואשר דבר לי. לזרכי, כמו אשר דבר עלי. וכן כל לי ולו ולהם הסמוכים אלל דבור, מפורשים בלשון על. ותרגום שלהם עלי, עלוכי, עליהון, שאין נופל אלל דיבור לשון לי, ולו, ולהם, אלא אלי, אליו, אליהם. ותרגום שלהם עמי, עמי, עמכון, אלל אלל אמירה נופל לשון לי, ולו, ולהם: ואשר נשבע עמי. לוי. צין בכתריס: (ח) ונקית משבועתי וגו'. וקח לו אשה מצנות ענר אשכול וממרא: רק את בני וגו'. רק מיטוט הוא, בני אינו חוזר, אלל יעקב צן בני סופו לחזור: (י) מגמלי אדוניו. נכרין היו משאר גמלים, שהיו יולאין זמזמין<sup>1</sup>, מפני הגזל, שלא ירעו צדוד אחרים: וכל טוב

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Eliezer place his hand “under the thigh” of Avraham to swear the oath? (v. 9)

**RASHI:** Avraham told him to grasp his circumcised organ, because a person who swears an oath must take an object used to perform a *mitzvah* in his hand such as a Torah scroll or *tefillin*. Since circumcision was his first *mitzvah*, and he had fulfilled it with pain, it was dear to him, so he took it (v. 2).

TORAS MENACHEM

Thus, in our *Parsha* when Avraham told Eliezer, “Be insistent not to take my son back there” (v. 6), he could not have possibly meant that Yitzchak should not leave the Land of Israel because he is a “perfect burnt-offering” [as *Minchah Belulah* writes], since Yitzchak had not yet been prohibited by God from leaving the land.

This, however leaves us with the question: Why did Avraham not allow Yitzchak to leave the land of Cana’an? And, if the land of Cana’an was so special, why was he not allowed to marry a girl from there? (c.f. *Kli Yakar*)

**RASHI’S SOLUTION**

*Rashi* appears to remain silent on this issue. However, since it is a question which needs to be explained at the literal level, *Rashi* must explain the matter somewhere, in keeping with his goal to clarify every issue that is not self-understood at the literal level.

It could be argued however that *Rashi* clarified this matter in his comment to verse 7: “Avraham said to him, ‘Now He is the God of the

heaven and the God of the earth, because I have made it habitual for creatures to mention Him, etc.”

At first glance, *Rashi’s* comment is somewhat perplexing. What forced *Rashi* to conclude that Avraham told Eliezer (“Avraham said to him”) this lengthy explanation about publicizing God’s Name? How is this connected with Eliezer’s mission to find a wife for Yitzchak?

However, *Rashi’s* comment here was prompted by our previous

🕯 Sparks of Chasidus 🕯

“THE SERVANT PLACED HIS HAND...” (v. 9)

Even though Avraham observed the entire Torah before it was given, his observance of the *mitzvos* did not impart sanctity into the objects with which they were performed. This is because Avraham had not been commanded to observe the *mitzvos*, an event which only occurred later at Sinai.

The only exception to this rule was the *mitzvah* of circumcision, which Avraham had received from God. Therefore, Avraham asked Eliezer to hold his circumcised organ when making the oath—despite the fact that it was the very opposite of the modest behavior by which Avraham was known (see *Rashi to Lech Lecha* 12:11)—since this was the only *mitzvah* object that existed at the time.

(Based on *Sefer Hasichos* 5751, vol. 2, p. 587)

🕯 The Last Word 🕯

Avraham, our father—the first of the Patriarchs, the first Jew—demonstrated the goal of a Jew: that wherever he may find himself, and in whatever company he may be, the focus of everyday life is to spread awareness of God, such that all those around him see that God is “God of the heavens and God of the Earth.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 565)

who took me from my father's house (in Charan) and from the land (of Ur Kasdim) where I was born; who spoke to me (about my needs), and swore to me (at the Covenant of the Parts), saying, 'I will give this land to your descendants'—He will send His angel ahead of you, and you will take a wife for my son from there. <sup>8</sup> If the woman doesn't want to follow you, then you will be absolved of this oath of mine. But don't take my son back there!"

<sup>9</sup> The servant placed his hand under the thigh of Avraham, his master, and made him this oath.

## 🌀 ELIEZER'S SUCCESSFUL TRIP 🌀

24:10  
THIRD  
READING

**T**he servant took ten camels from his master's (stock of muzzled) camels, and he left. In his hand was all his master's belongings.  
He set out, and went to Aram-Naharayim, Nachor's city.

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● How did Eliezer carry "all his master's belongings"? (v. 10)

**RASHI:** Avraham wrote a deed stating that he had given everything he owned to Yitzchak as a gift, so that they would jump at the chance to send him their daughter.

**BE'ER MAYIM CHAYIM:** Rashi explains how we can take the verse literally, that "In his hand was all his master's belongings."

**PIRKEI D'RABBI ELIEZER:** Avraham gave Eliezer a will stating that he had bequeathed everything to Yitzchak.

### TORAS MENACHEM

question: Why did Avraham demand that Eliezer bring a wife from his birthplace back to Cana'an? Since this point is crucial to our understanding of the story, Rashi concluded that Avraham must have said some sort of explanation to Eliezer.

In order to clarify exactly what Avraham's explanation was, let us examine Rashi's precise choice of words:

"Now... I have made it habitual (שְׁהֵרַגְלִיתִי) for creatures to mention Him." The use of the word "habitual" suggests that Avraham merely brought the people of Cana'an to a superficial awareness of God. They merely "mentioned Him," habitually.

This explains why Avraham said not to "take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Cana'anites, amongst whom I live" (v. 3), since their recognition of God—despite Avraham's efforts—was only superficial and habitual. Avraham thus preferred to take a wife from his own family,

who were naturally better and more refined people, closer to the qualities of Avraham.

Nevertheless, Avraham did not want Yitzchak to leave Cana'an and return to Charan, because, "when He took me from my father's house He was the God of the heavens but not the God of the earth, because mankind did not acknowledge Him, and His Name was not commonplace on the earth." I.e. in Charan, Avraham had not succeeded in making God's Name known (even habitually or superficially). Therefore, it was preferable for Yitzchak to stay in Cana'an, where at least it was "habitual for creatures to mention Him."

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 15, p. 155ff.)

#### 🌀 AVRAHAM'S GIFT TO YITZCHAK (v. 10)

Rashi's comment to verse 10 raises the following questions:

a.) What is the proof, at the literal level, that Avraham gave all his possessions to Yitzchak, and not to Eliezer? Eliezer was "the senior member of his house, who was in charge of everything he had" (above, v. 2), so surely he could be entrusted with all of Avraham's property?

b.) Why did Rashi reject the view of **Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer**, that "Avraham gave Eliezer a will stating that he had bequeathed everything to Yitzchak"?

c.) What led Rashi to conclude that Avraham gave all his possessions to Yitzchak? Surely his most valuable belongings would have been enough?

d.) If Avraham had given away all his possessions how did he support himself financially?

#### THE EXPLANATION

a.) Rashi was troubled by an implicit contradiction in verse 10: "In his hand was all his master's belongings." Surely, the very definition of a "master" is a person who is rich in belongings? If Avraham had indeed given all his belongings away to Eliezer, then in what respect was he still a "master" over Eliezer? It appears that, to the contrary, Eliezer is now the master! Nevertheless, Eliezer states below that "I am Avraham's servant" (v. 34). So Rashi wondered: how could Eliezer be a servant if he now owned all his master's property?

To solve the problem, Rashi answered that Avraham gave his

### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

**S**ome parents think that when a child reaches the age of 20, the obligations of parenthood end. The son or daughter is now a mature adult who can, and must, learn to fend for his or herself.

However, we can learn from the conduct of Avraham that education never ceases. At this point, Yitzchak was 37 years old, and Avraham could have quite reasonably taken a "back seat," allowing Yitzchak to make his own choices about where to live and whom to marry.

If fact, Avraham did precisely the opposite. Instead of relaxing and enjoying his own life, he relinquished his life's savings and all his possessions, giving them to Yitzchak in an attempt to help him find an appropriate wife (Rashi to v.10).

From this we can learn that parenthood never ends. Even when our children become mature adults, we should be willing to sacrifice everything that we have for their benefit.

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sarah 5730)

דנחור: יא ואשרי נמלא מברא לקרוא עם בירא דמיא לעדן רמשא לעדן דנפשו מליאת: יב ואמר יי אלהה דרבוני אברהם ומין פנן קדמי יומא דין ועבד טיבו עם רבוני אברהם: יג הא אנא קאים על עינא דמיא ובנת אנשי קרוא נפקון לממלי מיא: יד ותהי עולמתא די אמר לה ארכיני כען קולתיד ואשתי ותימר אשת ואף נמליד אשקי יתה ומנתא לעבדך ליצחק ובה אדע ארי עבדת טיבו עם רבוני: טו והנה הוא עד לא שיצי למלא וקא רבקה נפקת די אתילידת לבתואל בר מלכה אתת נחור אחוהי דאברהם וקולתה על פתפה: טז ועולמתא שפירת חיוו לחדא בתולתא וגבר לא ידעה ונחתת לעינא ומלת קולתה וסליקת: יז ורהט עבדא לקדמותה ואמר אטעמני כען זעיר מיא מקולתיד: יח ואמרת אשת רבוני ואחיות ואחיתת קולתה על ידה ואשקיתיה: יט ושיציאת לאשקיותיה ואמרת אף לגמליד אמלי עד די ספקון למשתי: כ ואחיות ונפצת קולתה לבית שקיא ורהטת עוד לבירא לממלי ומלת לבל נמלוהי: כא וגברא שחי בה מסתבל שתיק למדע

נהרים אל-עיר נחור: יא ויברך הגמלים מחוץ לעיר אל-באר המים לעת ערב לעת צאת השאבת: יב ויאמר א יהוה אלהי אדני אברהם הקרהנא לפני היום ועשה-חסד עם אדני אברהם: יג הנה אנכי נצב על-עין המים ובנות אנשי העיר יצאת לשאב מים: יד והיה הנער אשר אמר אליה הטינא כדך ואשתה ואמרה שתה וגם-גמליך אשקה אתה הכחת לעבדך ליצחק ובה אדע כיעשית חסד עם-אדני: טו ויהי-הוא טרם בלה לדבר והנה רבקה יצאת אשר ילדה לבתואל בן-מלכה אשת נחור אחי אברהם וכדה על-שכמה: טז והנער טבת מראה מאד בתולה ואיש לא ידעה ותדר העינה ותמלא כדה ותעל: יז וירץ העבד לקראתה ויאמר הגמיאיני נא מעט-מים מברך: יח ותאמר שתה אדני ותמהר ותדר כדה על-ידה ותשקהו: יט ותבל להשקותו ותאמר גם לגמליך אשאב עד אם-כלו לשות: כ ותמהר ותער כדה אל-השקת ותריץ עוד אל-הבאר לשאב ותשאב לכל-גמליו: כא והאיש משתאה לה מחריש

\* הנערה קרי

רש"י

כלי, וצמקרא יש לו דומה אל תער נפשי<sup>4</sup>, אשר הערה למות נפשו: השקת. אכן חלולה ששוחים צב הגמלים: (כא) משתאה. לשון שאיבה, כמו שאו ערים, תשאה שממה: משתאה. משתומם ומתבהל, על שראה דברו קרוב להכלית, אבל אינו יודע אם ממשפחת אברהם היא אם לאו. ואל תממה צחי"ו של משתאה, שאין לך תיבה שתחלת יסודה ש"יון ומדברת בלשון מתפעל, שאין תי"ו מפרידה בין שתי אותיות של עיקר היסוד, כגון משתאה מגזרת שאה, משתולל<sup>7</sup> מגזרת שולל, וישתומס<sup>8</sup> מגזרת שממה, וישתמר חקות עמרי<sup>9</sup> מגזרת וישמר, אף כאלו משתאה מגזרת תשאה, וכשם שתאה מולא לשון משומס בחדס נזהל ונאלס ובעל מחשבות, כמו על יומו נשמו אחרונים<sup>10</sup>, שומו שמים<sup>11</sup>, אשתומס כשעה חדא<sup>12</sup>, כך תפרש לשון שאיבה בחדס ובעל מחשבות. ואונקלוס תרגם לשון שהייה, וגזרעא שחי, שובא ועומד במקום אחד, לראות בהכלית כי דרכו, ואין לתרגם שחי, שכרי אינו לשון שחי, שאין אל"ף נופלת

אדוניו בידו. שער מתנה כחז ליצחק על כל אשר לו, כדי שיקפלו לשלוח לו צחסי! ארם נהרים. בין שחי נכרות וישצת: (יא) ויברך הגמלים. הרצילס: (יד) אותה הוכחת. ראויי היא לו, שתאה גומלת חסדים, וכדאי ליכנס צביתו של אברהם, ולשון הוכחת, צירפת, אפרוציש"ט בלע"ז: ובה אדע. לשון תמנה, הודע לי צב: כי עשית חסד. אם תהיה ממשפחתו וכוונת לו, אדע כי עשית חסד: (טז) בתולה. ממקום צחוליס: ואיש לא ידעה. שלא כדרכה, לפי שבנות הכנענים היו משמרות מקום צחוליס, ומפקירות ענמן ממקום אחר, בעיד על ז' שנקייה מכל: (יז) וירץ העבד לקראתה. לפי שראה שעלו המים לקראתה: הגמיאיני נא. לשון גמייעה, הומייר"ר בלע"ז: (יח) ותורד כדה. מעל שכמה: (יט) עד אם בלו. הכי אם משמש בלשון אשר: אם בלו. תרגם אונקלוס די ספקון, שזו היא גמר שתייתו כששתו די ספקון: (כ) ותער. לשון נפילה, וכרצה יש בלשון משנה, המערה מכלי אל

TORAS MENACHEM

possessions, not to Eliezer, but to Yitzchak, in order that the marriage proposal was accepted.

b.) Rashi rejected the view of Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer that Avraham gave a will to Eliezer, since this would not have made an immediate impression on Lavan and Besu'el, since it was likely that many years would pass before Yitzchak would inherit the money. In those days, life expectancy was very long, as we see that Avraham actually lived another fifty years

after this episode. Seeing a will would not have made anybody, "jump at the chance to send him their daughter."

c.) Similarly, Avraham gave Eliezer "all his possessions" in order to guarantee as speedy a response as possible from Lavan's family.

d.) As for Avraham's own financial situation, we could presume that either: a.) Yitzchak supported him, thus fulfilling the mitzvah of honoring one's parents. Or, b.) He sought means of making money.

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sarah 5730; Sefer Hasichos 5752, p. 103)

<sup>11</sup> *He made the camels lie down outside the city, beside the well of water, towards the evening time when the girls go out to draw water.*

<sup>12</sup> *He said, "O God! The God of my master Avraham, please let something happen to me today and do kindness to my master, Avraham. <sup>13</sup> Look, I am standing by the water well. The daughters of this city's residents are coming out to draw water. <sup>14</sup> If I say to a girl, 'Please tilt down your pitcher and let me drink,' and she says, 'Drink, and I will also give your camels to drink,' (she will be fit to) be chosen by You for Your servant, for Yitzchak (since she performs acts of kindness. If she is from the right family and shows kindness) I will know that through her You have acted kindly with my master."*

<sup>15</sup> *He had not yet finished speaking, and—look!—Rivkah, the daughter of Besu'el, the son of Milkah, who was the wife of Avraham's brother Nachor, came out, and her pitcher was on her shoulder.*

<sup>16</sup> *The girl was very pretty, a virgin, and no man had known her.*

*She went down to the spring, filled her pitcher and came back up.*

<sup>17</sup> *(When he saw that the water rose from the well towards her) the servant ran toward her, and said, "Please let me sip a little water from your pitcher."*

<sup>18</sup> *She said, "Drink, sir." She quickly took down her pitcher (from her shoulder) into her hand, and gave him a drink. <sup>19</sup> When she finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will also draw (water) for your camels, until they have finished drinking (as much as they want)."*

<sup>20</sup> *She quickly emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran to the well again to draw water. She drew*

---

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

##### ● What was unique about Eliezer's prayer? (v. 15)

**MIDRASH:** Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai said: Three people were answered while their words were still upon their tongues: Avraham's servant Eliezer, Moshe and Shlomo. Regarding Eliezer, the verse states, "*He had not yet finished speaking, and—look!—Rivkah...came out*" (v. 15). Regarding Moshe, the verse states [that after his authority had been challenged by Korach], "*When he finished speaking all these words, the ground split open*" (*Bamidbar*

16:31). Regarding Shlomo, the verse states [that at the inauguration of the Holy Temple], "*When Shlomo finished speaking to God, the fire descended from heaven*" (*Chron. II 7:1*).

In fact, it appears that Eliezer's prayer was even greater than that of Moshe or Shlomo, since they were only answered *after* finishing speaking, whereas Eliezer "*had not yet finished speaking,*" when Rivkah came out with a pitcher on her shoulder (*Bereishis Rabah 60:4; Midrash Seichel Tov*)

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

##### 🕊️ ELIEZER'S PRAYER (v. 15)

The **Midrash** cites Eliezer's prayer as one of the greatest in history, since he was answered immediately. In fact his prayer appears to be even greater than that of Moshe and Shlomo, since Eliezer was answered even before he had finished his prayer.

However, at the literal level of Torah interpretation, it would be difficult to accept that Rivkah's sudden appearance was actually a result of Eliezer's prayer, since she must clearly have departed from her home *before* Eliezer started praying. Thus, her arrival was not caused by Eliezer's prayer at all. What then was the significance of Rivkah's arrival during Eliezer's prayer?

##### THE EXPLANATION

When Avraham sent Eliezer on the mission to find a wife for Yitzchak, he said, "*God, the God of the heavens... will send His angel ahead of you, and you will take a wife for my son from there*" (above, v. 7). Note that Avraham did not say, "God will send his angel *with* you," which would suggest a mere "helping hand" of Divine assistance on occasion. Rather, he said, "God... will send his angel *ahead* of you," indicating that Divine intervention would *preempt* Eliezer's efforts, ensuring his success.

This preemptive help from above became evident during Eliezer's prayer. The fact that he was answered before he had finished praying

indicated that God had orchestrated the events in Eliezer's favor, even before he had begun to pray. This gave Eliezer much encouragement, as he witnessed Avraham's promise of an angel going "ahead" actually unfold. The Divine providence in Rivkah's appearance, before Eliezer concluded his prayer, was a first indication to him that this girl was none other than Yitzchak's future wife.

##### ELIEZER'S CONTINUED SUCCESS

On reading the entire account of Eliezer's mission, we see that he consistently relied on Avraham's promise of preemptive Divine providence and that various supernatural events occurred which precluded problems arising later:

a.) *Rashi* writes that Eliezer miraculously completed his journey to *Aram-Naharayim* in only one day (*Rashi* to v. 42 & v. 66). This caused the timing to be such that Rivkah appeared in the middle of Eliezer's prayer.

b.) Eliezer gave Rivkah the golden nose-ring and bracelets before he even asked who she was (v. 22-23). This appears to be irrational—surely he should have verified who she was before giving her the presents (see *Rashi* *ibid.*)? Here we see that Eliezer trusted in Avraham's promise of preemptive Divine assistance: The fact that Rivkah had appeared in the middle of Eliezer's prayers was sufficient proof to him that this was the correct girl.

האצלה יי ארחיה אם לא: כד והנה כד ספיקו גמליא למשתי ונסיב גברא קדשא דדהבא מתקלא מתקליה ותרין שירין על ידהא מתקל עשר סלעין דדהבא מתקלהון: כג ואמר בת מן את חוי כען לי האית בית אבוך אתר פשר לנא למבת: כד ואמרת ליה בת בתואל אנא בר מלכא דילדת לנחור: כה ואמרת ליה אף תבנא אף כפתא סני עמנא אף אתר פשר למבת: כו וכרע גברא וסגיד קדם יי: כז ואמר בריך יי אלהא דרבוני אברהם די לא מנע סיבותיה וקושטיה מן רבוני אנא באורח תקנא דברני יי בית אחוהי דרבוני: כח ורהטת עולמתא וחויאת לבית אמה כפתגמיא האליו: כט ולרבקה אחא ושמייה לבן ורהט לבן לות גברא לברא לות עינא: ל והנה כד הוא ית קדשא וית שיריא על ידי אחתיה וכד שמע ית פתגמי רבקה אחתיה למימר בדין מליל עמי גברא ואתא לות גברא והא קאים עלוי גמליא על עינא: לא ואמר עול בריכא דיין למא את קאים בברא ואנא פניתי ביתא ואתר פשר לגמליא: לב ועאל גברא לביתא ושרא גמליא ויהב

לדעת ההצליח יהנה דרכו אם-לא: כד ויהי כאשר כלו הגמלים לשותות ויקח האיש גזם זהב בקע משקלו ושני צמידים על-ידיה עשרה זהב משקלם: כג ויאמר בת-מי את הגידי נא לי היש בית-אביך מקום לנו ללין: כד ותאמר אליו בת-בתואל אנכי בין-מלכה אשר ילדה לנחור: כה ותאמר אליו גם-תבן גם-מספוא רב עמנו גם-מקום ללון: כו ויקד האיש וישתחו ליהוה: ורביעין כז ויאמר ברוך יהוה אלהי אדני אברהם אשר לא-עזב חסדו ואמתו מעם אדני אנכי בדרך נחתי יהוה בית אחי אדני: כח ותריץ \*הנער ותגד לבית אמה בדברים האלה: כט ולרבקה אח ושמו לבן וירץ לבן אל-האיש החוצה אל-העין: ל ויהי א בראת את-הגזם ואת-הצמידים על-ידי אחתו וכשמעו את-דברי רבקה אחתו לאמר כה-דבר אלי האיש ויבא אל-האיש והנה עמד על-הגמלים על-העין: לא ויאמר בוא ברוך יהוה למה תעמד בחוץ ואנכי פניתי הפית ומקום לגמלים: לב ויבא האיש הפיתה ויפתח הגמלים ויתן תבן ומספוא לגמלים ומים

\* הנעה קרי

כש"י

הישר, בצוותו דרך שהייתי צריך. וכן כל צי"ת ולמ"ד וה"א המשמשים צראש התיבה ונקודים צפת"ח, מדברים דדבר הפשוט שזכר כבר במקום אחר, או שהוא מצורר ויכר באיזו הוא מדבר: (כח) לבית אמה. דרך הנשים היתכ, להיות לכן בית ליצב צו למלכתן, ואין הבת מגדת אלא לאמה: (כט) וירץ. למה רץ ועל מה רץ, ויהי כראות את הנזם, אמר, עשיר הוא זה, ונתן עיניו צממון: (ל) על הגמלים. לשמרון, כמו וכוא עומד עליהם. לשמש: (לא) פניתי הבית. מעבודת אלילים: (לב) ויפתח. התייר זמס שלהם,<sup>4</sup> שהיה סותם את פיהם שלא ירעו בדרך צשדות אחרים:

בלשון שתייה: משתאה לה. משתומם עליה, כמו אמרי לי אחי הוא<sup>1</sup>, וכמו וישאלו אנשי המקום לאשח<sup>2</sup>: (כצ) בקע. רמז לשקלי ישראל, בקע לגלגלה: ושני צמידים. רמז לשני לוחות מלומדות: עשרה זהב משקלם. רמז לעשרת הדברות שבהן: (כג) ויאמר בת מי את. לאחר שנתן לה שאלה, לפי שהיה צטוח צוכותו של אברהם שהלליח הקצ"ח דרכו: ללין. לינה אחת, לין שם דבר, וכוא אמרה ללון כמה לינות: (כד) בת בתואל. השיבתו על ראשון ראשון ועל אחרון אחרון: (כה) מספוא. כל מאכל הגמלים קרוי מספוא, כגון תבן ושעורים: (כז) בדרך. דרך המזומן, דרך

TORAS MENACHEM

c.) When Besu'el heard of the supernatural assistance that Eliezer had enjoyed, he exclaimed, "This thing has come from God!" (v. 50).

d.) Rashi writes that Besu'el was planning to oppose Rivkah's marriage to Yitzchak and therefore, "An angel came and put him to death" (Rashi to v. 55, below). Here again, we see that God's angel eliminated potential problems for Eliezer before they arose.

e.) When Rivkah's brother and mother suggested, "Let the girl stay with us a year or ten (months). Afterwards, she will go" (v. 55), Eliezer asked that she leave with him immediately, and Rivkah was called in to decide for herself (v. 55-7). Now, at that time, Rivkah was totally unaware of the reason for Eliezer's visit. When he gave Rivkah the gold nose-ring and bracelet, the Torah makes no mention that he suggested a marriage partner to her, and when Eliezer discussed the matter later with her

brother Lavan and her mother, Rivkah was not present. Thus, when she was called into the room for consent, Rivkah was being asked for the first time to agree to a marriage, without any prior thought. Nevertheless, she replied immediately, saying, "I will go (whether you like it or not)!" (v. 58). Here we see further the Divine assistance which Eliezer enjoyed, for he was not required to make any efforts to secure Rivkah's approval.

ELIEZER'S "ADJUSTED" REPORT

According to the above explanation—that Eliezer was assisted by an angel going ahead of him—we can explain an interesting point that arises when reading Eliezer's report to Besu'el. Instead of repeating Avraham's words, "God...will send His angel ahead of you," Eliezer told Besu'el that Avraham had said, "God...will send His angel with you and lead your way to success."



(water) for all his camels. <sup>21</sup> The man was amazed by her. He (observed her) silently to know whether God had led his way to success or not.

<sup>22</sup> Then, when the camels had finished drinking, the man took a golden nose ring, weighing a beka, and two bracelets, weighing ten gold (shekels), for her hands. <sup>23</sup> (After giving her the presents) he said, “Whose daughter are you? Please tell me if there is place for us to stay in your father’s house?”

<sup>24</sup> She said to him, “I am the daughter of Besu’el, the son born to Milcah and Nachor.” <sup>25</sup> (In response to the second question,) she said to him, “We have plenty of straw and fodder and also a place to stay.”

<sup>26</sup> The man knelt and prostrated himself to God.

<sup>27</sup> He said, “Blessed is God, the God of my master, Avraham, Who has not withheld His lovingkindness and His truth from my master. God has led me on the path to the house of my master’s brothers!”

FOURTH  
READING

### 🕎 ELIEZER RECOUNTS THE STORY 🕎

24:28

The girl ran, and she told her mother, (who was sitting in her work)-house, what had happened. <sup>29</sup> Rivkah had a brother whose name was Lavan. Lavan ran to the man outside by the fountain (because) <sup>30</sup> he saw the nose ring and the bracelets on his sister’s hands, and he heard his sister Rivkah say, “This is what the man spoke to me...” (so he set his eyes on the money).

So, he came to the man, and—look!—he was standing over the camels at the well. <sup>31</sup> He said, “Come, you who are blessed by God! Why should you stand outside, when I have cleared the house (of idols), and made a place for the camels?”

<sup>32</sup> So the man came to the house and unmuzzled the camels. (Lavan) gave straw and fodder to the camels and water (to Eliezer) to wash his feet, and the feet of the men who accompanied him. <sup>33</sup> Food was placed before him, but he said, “I will not eat until I have spoken my words.”

“Speak,” said (the host).

#### TORAS MENACHEM

Why did Eliezer find it necessary to alter Avraham’s words? According to the above explanation, we can understand that Eliezer could not possibly have repeated to Besu’el Avraham’s exact words. Saying that, “God...will send His angel *ahead of you*,” was tantamount to declaring that, “I have already been granted success by God.” This would have led Besu’el to respond, “If you’ve already been guaranteed success, then why are you bothering to speak to me?” Therefore, Eliezer was forced to adjust Avraham’s words, reporting that the angel had merely *accompanied* him, providing Divine assistance, rather than telling the truth, that the angel had gone ahead to ensure a Divine guarantee of success.

This however begs the question: How could Eliezer accredit Avraham with a statement which he did not say?

In fact though, Eliezer *did* tell the truth, but not the whole truth. Eliezer had received Divine assistance, so he told Besu’el that God’s angel had helped him (the angel was “with him”). What he did not reveal to Besu’el was the *additional* fact that God’s assistance had been granted to him to the extent that his success was totally disproportionate to his efforts, and had been guaranteed in advance.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 99ff.)

### 🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

Shortly before his marriage, Yitzchak had reached a remarkable degree of spiritual perfection. Right at the beginning of his life he was the first Jew to be circumcised at eight days. He was then educated by Avraham our father and later showed an eagerness to sacrifice his life to God, at the *Akeida*, from which point on he attained the sanctity of a burnt offering (an *olah temimah*).

Rivkah, on the other hand was “a rose among the thorns,” born into a wicked, idol-worshipping family.

The union of Yitzchak and Rivkah was thus a meeting of extremes.

And, for this very reason it is recorded in the Torah, since Torah itself is a guide to uniting extremes. For when any *mitzvah* is observed, a mundane physical object becomes infused with Godliness and holiness.

Thus, the marriage of Yitzchak and Rivkah represents the marriage of the spiritual and the physical. And, this explains why our *Parsha* spends so much time discussing their story, since it was the basis of everything that was to follow.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, pp. 95-96)

תבנא וכסתא לגמליא ומיא לאסחאה  
 הגלוהי ורגלי גובריא די עמיה: לנ ושוואו  
 קדמוהי למיכל ואמר לא איכול עד די  
 אמליל פתנמי ואמר מליל: לנ ואמר עבדא  
 דאברהם אנא: לה וין בריד ית רבוני לחדא  
 ורבא ויהב ליה עאן ותורין וכסף ודהב  
 ועבדין ואמהן ונמלין ותמרין: לו וילידת  
 שרה אתת רבוני בר לרבוני פתר דסיבת  
 ויהב ליה ית כל די ליה: לו וקום עלי רבוני  
 למימר לא תסב אתתא לברי מבנת פנענאה  
 די אנא יתיב בארעיה: לה אלהין לבית אבא  
 תיזיל ולזרעיתי ותסב אתתא לברי:  
 לט ואמרית לרבוני מאים לא תיתי אתתא  
 בתרי: מ ואמר לי יי די פלחית קדמוהי ושלח  
 מלאכיה עמד ויצלח ארחד ותסב אתתא  
 לברי מזרעיתי ומבית אבא: מא ככן תהא  
 זכאי ממומתי ארי תהד לזרעיתי ואם לא  
 יתגון לך ותהי זכאי ממומתי: מב ואתייתי  
 יומא דין לעינא ואמרית יי אלהה דרבוני  
 אברהם אם אית כען רעוא קדמד לאצלהא  
 ארחי די אנא אזיל עלה: מג הא אנא קאם  
 על עינא דמיא ותהי עולמתא דתפוק לממלי  
 ואימר לה אשקיני כען זעיר מיא מקולתי:  
 מד ותימר לי אף את אשת ואף לגמליך אמלי  
 היא אתתא דזמין יי לבר רבוני: מה אנא עד

לרחין רגליו ורגלי האנשים אשר אתו: לנ ויישם [כן וישם] לפניו  
 לאכל ויאמר לא אכל עד אם דברתי דברי ויאמר דבר:  
 לז ויאמר עבד אברהם אנכי: לה ויהוה ברה את-אדני מאד  
 ויגדל ויתן-לו עאן ובקר וכסף וזהב ועבדום ושפחת ונמלים  
 וחמרים: לו ותלד שרה אשת אדני בן לאדני אחרי וקנתה  
 ויתן-לו את-כל-אשר-לו: לו וישבעני אדני לא-תקח  
 אשה לבני מבנות הכנעני אשר אנכי ישב בארעו: לה אם-לא  
 אל-בית-אבי תלך ואל-משפחתי ולקחת אשה לבני:  
 לט ואמר אל-אדני אלי לא-תלך האשה אחרי: מ ויאמר אלי  
 יהוה אשר-התהלכתי לפניו ישלח מלאכו אתך והעליח  
 דרפך ולקחת אשה לבני ממשפחתי ומבית אבי: מא אז תנקה  
 מאלתי כי תבוא אל-משפחתי ואם-לא יתנו לך והיית נקי  
 מאלתי: מב ואבא היום אל-העין ואמר יהוה אלהי אדני  
 אברהם אם-ישד-נא מעליח דרפי אשר אנכי הלך עליה:  
 מג הנה אנכי נעב על-עין המים והיה העלמה היצאת לשאב  
 ואמרתי אליה השקיני-נא מעט-מים מברך: מד ואמרה אלי  
 גם-אתה שתה וגם לגמליך אשאב הוא האשה אשר-הכית  
 יהוה לבן-אדני: מה אני טרם אכלה לדבר אל-לפי והנה

רש"י

צני ברוך ואתה ארוך, ואין ארוך מדבק בצרוך: (מז) ואבא היום. כיום  
 ילאתי והיום צאתי, מכאן שקפלה לו הארץ. אמר רבי אחא, יפה שיחתן של  
 עבדי אבות לפני המקום מתורתן של צנים, שכרי פרשע של אליעזר כפולה  
 צתורה, וכרצה גופי תורה לא נתנו אלא צרמיזח: (מד) גם אתה. גם לרבות  
 אנשים שעמו: הוביח. ציור והודיע, וכן כל הוכחה שבמקרא, צרור דבר:  
 (מה) טרם אכלה. טרם שאני מכלה, וכן כל לשון כוונה, פעמים שהוא מדבר

(לג) עד אם דברתי. כרי אם משמש בלשון אשר ובלשון כי, כמו עד כי יבא  
 שילה', זכו שאמרו חז"ל כי משמש ב'ד' לשונות, והאחד אי, והוא אס: (לו) ויתן  
 לו את כל אשר לו. שטר מתנה הראה להם: (לז) לא תקח אשה לבני  
 מבנות הכנעני. אס לא תלך תחלה אל צית אבי ולא תאבד ללכת אחריו:  
 (לט) אלי לא תלך האשה. אלי כתיב, צת היתה לו לאליעזר, והיה מחזר  
 למנול עילה שיאמר לו אצרכם לפנות אליו להשיאו צתו, אמר לו אצרכם,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Eliezer say, "I came today"? (v. 42)

**RASHI:** He was saying, "Today I left, and today I arrived." From here we learn that his journey was miraculously shortened.

Rabbi Acha said: "The ordinary conversation of the Patriarchs' servants is even more cherished by God than the Torah of their children. For, the section dealing with Eliezer is repeated in the Torah, whereas many fundamentals of the Torah were given only through allusions.

**MIZRACHI:** *Rashi* was troubled by the seemingly unnecessary word "today."

**CHIZKUNI:** *Rashi* cites a *Midrashic* teaching here. However, at the literal level, Eliezer's account is repeated here in the Torah for

without it, the reader would wonder why Rivkah's family consented to her marriage so quickly.

**TORAH TEMIMAH:** Why was it necessary for Eliezer to inform Besu'el that his journey had been miraculously shortened?

Before Eliezer's departure, Avraham gave him a deed stating that he had given everything he owned to Yitzchak as a gift, in order that he would jump at the chance to send him their daughter (*Rashi* to v. 10, above). Consequently, if Eliezer had not revealed the nature of his miraculous journey, the deed would appear to have been post-dated. Besuel would thus have doubted the validity of the deed, since it is unlikely that Avraham would have made a post-dated document, an act which is discouraged by the Torah.

<sup>34</sup> He said, “I am Avraham’s servant. <sup>35</sup> God blessed my master tremendously, and he became great. (God) gave him sheep, cattle, silver, gold, manservants, maidservants, camels and donkeys. <sup>36</sup> After she had become old, Sarah, my master’s wife, gave birth to a son for my master. (My master) has given him all that he possesses.”

<sup>37</sup> “My master made me swear, saying, ‘Do not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell. <sup>38</sup> Instead, you must go to my father’s house, to my family, and take a wife for my son.’

<sup>39</sup> “I said to my master, ‘What if the woman will not want to follow me?’”

<sup>40</sup> “He replied, ‘God, before Whom I walked, will send His angel with you and lead your way to success. You should take a wife for my son from my family, from my father’s house. <sup>41</sup> You will then be absolved from my oath. When you come to my family, if they do not give her to you, you will be absolved from my oath.’”

<sup>42</sup> “So, I came today to the well, and I said, ‘God, God of my master Avraham, please lead my way to success! <sup>43</sup> Look, I am standing by the well. When a girl comes out to draw (water), I will say to her, ‘Please, give me a little water to drink from your pitcher.’ <sup>44</sup> If she says to me, ‘You (and your men) too can drink, and I will also draw water for your camels,’ she is the woman whom God has designated for my master’s son.’”

<sup>45</sup> “I had not yet finished speaking to myself, and Rivkah suddenly came out with her pitcher on her

---

TORAS MENACHEM

---

#### 🕒 THE HALACHIC IMPLICATIONS OF ELIEZER’S MIRACLE (v. 42)

Rashi stated above that when Eliezer departed, Avraham gave him, “a deed stating that he had given everything he owned to Yitzchak as a gift, so that they would jump at the chance to send him their daughter.”

This action presented Avraham with a *halachic* dilemma:

The *Mishnah* discourages a person from giving away all his possessions to another (*Arachin* 8:4). Obviously, in this case, there was a good reason for Avraham’s gift, but he would still have wanted to give away his property at the last possible moment, so as to observe the *Mishnah*’s directive as much as possible. Therefore, it would have been preferable to post-date the deed by 17 days, the period required for Eliezer’s journey.

However, since post-dating a deed is halachically undesirable, as **Torah Temimah** writes (see *Shulchan Aruch, Choshen Mishpat* 43:13), Avraham chose not to do so.

Nevertheless, to assist Avraham in observing the *Mishnah*’s words to the greatest extent possible, God made a miracle, allowing Eliezer to arrive on the same day he departed.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 1, pp. 34-35)

#### 🕒 THE REPETITION OF ELIEZER’S STORY (v. 42)

In his comment to verse 42, Rashi explains why the Torah repeated Eliezer’s lengthy account to Besu’el of his remarkable encounter with Rivkah, since “the ordinary conversation of the Patriarchs’ servants is even more cherished by God than the Torah of their children.”

This however begs the question: Why did Rashi wait until verse 42 before providing us with this information? Surely we should have been told this detail at the beginning of Eliezer’s account, not here in the middle?

Furthermore, on examining the source of Rashi’s comment (in the *Talmud, Sanhedrin* 95a) one sees that Rabbi Acha’s teaching is indeed associated with the beginning of Eliezer’s account (verse 32 above). Why did Rashi move this teaching from a place which appears to be logically correct?

Another further problem is why Rashi incorporated two seemingly diverse interpretations in the same comment. First, he writes that Eliezer’s journey was miraculously shortened, and then he adds the teaching of Rabbi Acha, about the precious quality of “the ordinary conversation of the Patriarchs’ servants.” Surely, these are two totally distinct concepts? Why does Rashi combine them together?

#### THE EXPLANATION

At the literal level of Torah interpretation, the repetition of Eliezer’s story is not problematic at all. The story is not inappropriate since it explains why Rivkah’s family consented so quickly to her marriage (as **Chizkuni** writes), and lengthiness alone does not pose a problem at the literal level. Therefore, at the outset of Eliezer’s story, Rashi found no need to comment at all.

On reading verse 42, Rashi was troubled why Eliezer stated that he had arrived “today.” Surely, this is an unnecessary detail which is redundant at the literal level? Rashi concluded that this must be hinting to the *Talmudic* teaching that Eliezer enjoyed a miraculously shortened journey, allowing him to arrive on the same day he departed (as **Mizrachi** writes).

(Presumably, the miracle was stressed here, and not earlier when we read of Eliezer’s journey to Aram-Naharayim (v. 10), because at this point

### 🕒 The Last Word 🕒

Avraham sent Eliezer to fetch Rivkah at the earliest opportunity, as soon as she had reached marriageable age. Eliezer’s miracle—where his journey was miraculously shortened, allowing him to complete a seventeen day journey in one day—thus spared Rivkah from spending an additional seventeen days in an atmosphere of idol worship.

From this we can be assured of the speed with which God will send Mashiach, saving the Jewish people from even an additional moment in exile.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 1, *ibid.*)

לא שיעייתי למללא עם לבי והא רבקה נפקת וקולתה על כתפה ונתת לעינא ומלת ואמרית לה אשקיני כען: מו ואוהיא ואתת קולתה מנה ואמרית אשת ואף גמליד אשקי ושתיתי ואף גמליא אשקיא: מו ושאלית יתה ואמרית בת מן את ואמרית בת בתואל בר נחור דילדת ליה מלכה ושוייתי קדשא על אפה ושיריא על ידה: מה וברעית וסגדית קדם יי וברכיית ית יי אלהה דרבוני אברהם די דברני באורח קשומ למסב ית בת אחוהי דרבוני לבריה: מט וכען אם איתיכון עבדין טיבו וקשומ עם רבוני חונו לי ואם לא חונו לי ואתפני על ימינא או על שמאלא: נ ואתיב לבן ובתואל ואמרו מן קדם יי נפק פתגמא לית אנתא יכלין למללא עמד ביש או טב: נא הא רבקה קדמד דבר ואיזיל ותהא אתתא לבר רבונד קמא די מליל יי: נב והוה כד שמע עבדא דאברהם ית פתגמיהון וסגיד על ארעא קדם יי: נג ואפיק עבדא מנין דכסף ומנין דדבב ולבושין ויהב לרבקה ומגדנין יהב לאחוקא ולאמה: נד ואכלו ושתיאו הוא וגובריא די עמיה וביתו וקמו בצפרא ואמר שלחוני לות רבוני: נה ואמר אחוקא ואמה תיתב עולמתא עמנא עדן בעדן או עשרא ורחין בתר כן תיזיל: נו ואמר להון לא תאחרון יתי

רבקה יצאת וכדה על-שכמה ותדר העינה ותשאב ואמר אליה השקיני נא: מו ותמהר ותורד כדה מעליה ותאמר שתה וגם-גמליד אשקה ואשת וגם הגמלים השקתה: מו ואשאל אתה ואמר בת-מי את ותאמר בת-בתואל בן-נחור אשר ילדה-לו מלכה ואשם הנזם על-אפה והצמידים על-ידיה: מה ואקד ואשתתחה ליהוה ואברך את-יהוה אלהי אדני אברהם אשר הנחני בדרך אמת לקחת את-בת-אחי אדני לבנו: מט ועתה אם-ישכם עשום חסד ואמת את-אדני הגידו לי ואם-לא הגידו לי ואפנה על-ימין או על-שמאל: נ ויען לבן ובתואל ויאמרו מיהוה יצא הדבר לא נוכל דבר אליך רע או-טוב: נא הנה-רבקה לפניך קח ולך ותהי אשה לבן-אדניך באשר דבר יהוה: נב ויהי באשר שמע עבד אברהם את-דבריהם וישתחו ארצה ליהוה: (חמישין) נג ויוצא העבד כסף וכלי זהב ובגדים ויתן לרבקה ומגדנת נתן לאחיה ולאמה: נד ויאכלו וישתו הוא והאנשים אשר-עמו וילינו ויקומו בבקר ויאמר שלחני לאדני: נה ויאמר אחיה ואמה תישב \*הנער אתנו ימים או עשור אחר תלך: נו ויאמר אלהם אל-תאחרו אתי ויהוה הצליח דרכי שלחוני

\* הנערה קרי

כ"ד

ולא על ידי תשובת דבר כגון, לפי שניכר שמה' ילא הדבר לפי דרכי שזימנה לך: (כז) וישתחו ארצה. מכאן שמודים על צעורה טובה: (כח) ומגדנות. לשון מגדים, שהציא עמו מיני פירות של ארץ ישראל: (כד) וילינו. כל לינה שבמקרא לינת לילא אחד: (כה) ויאמר אחיה ואמה. ובתואל היכן היה, הוא היה רוצה לעכז וצא מלאך והמיתו: ימים. שנה<sup>4</sup> כמו ימים תהיה גאולתו<sup>5</sup> שכן עותנין לכתולה זמן י"ב חדש, לפרנס את עלמה צחכשיטיס: או עשור. י' חדשים. ואם תאמר ימים ממש, אין דרך המצקשים לצקש דבר מועט, ואם לא תרצה, תן לנו מרוב מזה:

בלשון עבר, כמו טרס כליתי, ופעמים שמדבר בלשון עתיד, כמו כי אמר איוב, הרי לשון עבר, ככה יעשה איוב<sup>1</sup> הרי לשון עתיד, ופירוש שיהיה לשון כוונה, כי חומר היה איוב חולי חטאו בני וגו' והיה עושה כך: (מז) ואשאל ואשים. שנה הסדר, שהיה הוא תחלה נתן ואחר כך שאל, חלף שלא יתפשו בו צדכריו ויאמרו, היאך נתת לה ועדיין איך יודע מי היא: (מט) על ימין. מצנות ישמעאל: על שמאל. מצנות לוט, שהיה יושב לשמאלו של אברהם?<sup>2</sup> (נ) ויען לבן ובתואל. רשע היה, וקפץ להשיב לפני אביו: לא נוכל דבר אליך. למאן צדכר הזה, לא על ידי תשובת דבר רע

TORAS MENACHEM

the miracle assisted Eliezer in convincing Besu'el, whereas earlier it was not of any direct relevance.)

However, while the immediate problem—of the verse's inclusion of the word "today"—has now been solved, *Rashi's* explanation has actually generated a new, more serious difficulty:

At the outset, we presumed that the Torah's repetition of Eliezer's account was not problematic at the literal level. We had a rational explanation why each detail was mentioned twice, because the two accounts were each said in a different context—once to inform the reader as to what had occurred, and once again to impress Besu'el.

However, this explanation is only viable if *every detail* is repeated twice. As soon as we find that a particular detail is only mentioned once, we will immediately be struck with the question: If this detail could be mentioned only once then why could not *all* the details be mentioned only once?

Therefore, after *Rashi* explained that Eliezer's miraculous journey was only hinted at once, in the repetition of his story, *Rashi* had to explain why the story was repeated *at all*.

Consequently, he continues (in the same comment), "*Rabbi Acha said: 'The ordinary conversation of the Patriarchs' servants is even more cherished by God than the Torah of their children....'*" I.e. the Torah

shoulder, went down to the well and drew water. I said to her, ‘Please give me a drink.’<sup>46</sup> She quickly lowered her pitcher from her (shoulder), and said, ‘Drink, and I will give your camels to drink too!’ I drank, and she gave the camels to drink.”

<sup>47</sup> “I questioned her and said, ‘Whose daughter are you?’”

“She replied, ‘The daughter of Besu’el, the son born to Milcah and Nachor.’ I then placed the ring on her nose and the bracelets on her hands.”

<sup>48</sup> “I knelt and prostrated myself to God, and I blessed God, the God of my master Avraham, Who led me on the true path, to take the daughter of my master’s brother for his son.”

<sup>49</sup> “Now, if you want to be kind and truthful to my master, tell me. If not, say so, and I will turn to the right (and find a girl from the daughters of Yishma’el) or to the left (and find a girl from the daughters of Lot).”

## 🌀 THE CONSENT 🌀

24:50 **L**avan and Besu’el replied, saying, “This thing has come from God! We cannot refuse you (for any reason) either bad or good.<sup>51</sup> Rivkah is now yours. Take her and leave, and let her be a wife for your master’s son, as God has spoken.”

<sup>52</sup> When Avraham’s servant heard their words, he prostrated himself on the ground to God.

FIFTH READING <sup>53</sup> (Later, when he saw Rivkah), the servant took out silver and gold items and pieces of clothing, and he gave them to Rivkah. He gave delicious (fruits from the land of Israel) to her brother and her mother.

<sup>54</sup> Both (Eliezer) and the men who accompanied him ate and drank, and they stayed overnight.

When they got up in the morning, (Eliezer) said, “Send me away to my master.”

<sup>55</sup> (Rivkah’s) brother and mother said, “Let the girl stay with us a year or ten (months). Afterwards, she will go.”

<sup>56</sup> He said to them, “Do not delay me now that God has made my trip successful. Send me away, and I will go to my master.”

## CLASSIC QUESTIONS

### ● Why are only Rivkah’s “brother and mother” mentioned in verse 55, and not her father Besu’el?

**RASHI:** Where was Besu’el? He wanted to stop Rivkah’s marriage, so an angel came and killed him.

**IBN EZRA:** Since Lavan surpassed his father in wisdom and stature, he answered on behalf of his father. Similarly, we find in verse 50 that Lavan answered before his father Besu’el.

**TUR HA’ARUCH:** Besu’el consented immediately to the marriage,

saying, “Rivkah is now yours. Take her and leave” (v. 51). In v. 55, Rivkah’s brother (Lavan) and mother spoke up, requesting that she stay home a while longer. Besu’el is not mentioned in v. 55 as he was willing to let Rivkah leave immediately.

### ● Why did they request that Rivkah stay home for another year or ten months? (v. 55)

**RASHI:** Because a girl is given twelve months before marriage to acquire adornments for herself.

## TORAS MENACHEM

repeats Eliezer’s account because the subject matter is extremely cherished by God.

This establishes for us a new principle of Torah interpretation at the literal level, that passages are sometimes repeated in the Torah merely because of their special content (c.f. *Toras Menachem* to *Shemos* 36:8ff).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 90ff.)

### 🌀 BESU’EL’S UNTIMELY DEMISE (v. 55)

*Rashi* writes that the omission of Besu’el’s name in verse 55 indicates that he suffered an unnatural death, because he was planning to oppose the marriage of Yitzchak and Rivkah. This, however, appears to be a non-

literal, Midrashic interpretation. Why did *Rashi* reject the more straightforward and logical explanations of *Ibn Ezra* and *Tur Ha’aruch*?

We can answer this problem by first addressing another question. Verse 53 states that Eliezer “gave delicious (fruits from the land of Israel) to her brother and her mother,” omitting any mention of Besu’el. Why did *Rashi* wait until verse 55 to ask the question “where was Besu’el?” when Besu’el’s name was already omitted from verse 53?

Presumably, *Rashi* reasoned that one cannot prove Besu’el’s absence conclusively from the fact that he did not receive any presents. In fact, to give a gift of mere fruit to Besu’el, the owner of the house, might be insulting, whereas to Rivkah’s mother and brother it was a more

וַיִּזְעַק רִבְקָה לְאֹדְנֶיהָ: נָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ נְקָרָא \*לְנַעֲרָה וְנִשְׁאַלְהָ אֶת־פִּיהָ: נח וַיִּקְרְאוּ לְרִבְקָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלֶיהָ הֲתִלְכִי עִם־הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו: נט וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ אֶת־מִנְקָתָהּ וְאֶת־עֶבֶד אַבְרָהָם וְאֶת־אֲנָשָׁיו: ס וַיִּבְרְכוּ אֶת־רִבְקָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהּ אַחֲתֵנוּ אַתְּ הִי לְאֶלְפֵי רִבְקָה וַיִּירֶשׁ זְרַעְךָ אֶת שְׂעַר שְׂנָאֵיו: סא וַתֵּקֶם רִבְקָה וְנִעְרָתֶיהָ וַתִּרְפְּבֵנָה עַל־הַגְּמִלִים וַתִּלְכְּנָה אַחֲרֵי הָאִישׁ וַיִּקַּח הָעֶבֶד אֶת־רִבְקָה וַיֵּלֶךְ: סב וַיִּצְחַק בָּא מְבֹוא בְּאֵר לְחֵי רְאִי וְהוּא יוֹשֵׁב בְּאֶרֶץ הַנְּגֹב: סג וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לְשׁוּחַ בַּשָּׂדֶה לַפְּנוֹת עָרֵב וַיֵּשֶׂא עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה גְמִלִים בְּאֵיִם: סד וַתִּשָּׂא רִבְקָה אֶת־עֵינֶיהָ וַתִּרְאֵהוּ וַתִּצְחַק וַתִּפְּלֹ

וַיִּזְעַק רִבְקָה לְאֹדְנֶיהָ: נח וַיֹּאמְרוּ נְקָרָא \*לְנַעֲרָה וְנִשְׁאַלְהָ אֶת־פִּיהָ: נח וַיִּקְרְאוּ לְרִבְקָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלֶיהָ הֲתִלְכִי עִם־הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו: נט וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ אֶת־מִנְקָתָהּ וְאֶת־עֶבֶד אַבְרָהָם וְאֶת־אֲנָשָׁיו: ס וַיִּבְרְכוּ אֶת־רִבְקָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהּ אַחֲתֵנוּ אַתְּ הִי לְאֶלְפֵי רִבְקָה וַיִּירֶשׁ זְרַעְךָ אֶת שְׂעַר שְׂנָאֵיו: סא וַתֵּקֶם רִבְקָה וְנִעְרָתֶיהָ וַתִּרְפְּבֵנָה עַל־הַגְּמִלִים וַתִּלְכְּנָה אַחֲרֵי הָאִישׁ וַיִּקַּח הָעֶבֶד אֶת־רִבְקָה וַיֵּלֶךְ: סב וַיִּצְחַק בָּא מְבֹוא בְּאֵר לְחֵי רְאִי וְהוּא יוֹשֵׁב בְּאֶרֶץ הַנְּגֹב: סג וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לְשׁוּחַ בַּשָּׂדֶה לַפְּנוֹת עָרֵב וַיֵּשֶׂא עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה גְמִלִים בְּאֵיִם: סד וַתִּשָּׂא רִבְקָה אֶת־עֵינֶיהָ וַתִּרְאֵהוּ וַתִּצְחַק וַתִּפְּלֹ

\* לנערה קרי

כש"י

אברהם ארלכ הנגז ויש צין קדש וצין שור, ושם היה הצאר, שנאמר הכה צין קדש וצין כד: (סג) לשוח. לשון חפלה<sup>3</sup>, כמו ישפך שיחו<sup>4</sup>: (סד) ותרא את יצחק. ראתה אותו הדור ותוכה (ס"א ותמכה) מפניו<sup>5</sup>: ותפל. השמיטה עלמה לארץ, כתרומתה ואחריותה, בטחה עלמה לארץ ולא הגיעה עד הקרקע, כמו הטי נא כדך, ארכיוני. ויט שמיס<sup>6</sup>, וארכיון, לשון מוטע לארץ, ודומה לו כי יפול לא יוטל<sup>7</sup>, כלומר אם יטה לארץ לא יגיע עד

(נו) ונשאלה את פיה. מכאן שאין משיאין את האשה אלא מדעתה<sup>1</sup>: (נח) ותאמר אלך. מעלמי ואלף אם אינכם רואים: (ס) את הוי לאלפי רבבה. את זרעך תקבלו אותה כרכה שנאמר לאברהם כבר המוריה, כרכה ארכה את זרעך וגוי, ויכי רצון שיכח אותו הזרע ממך ולא מאשה אחרת: (סג) מבוא באר לחי ראי. שהלך להביא הגר לאברהם אביו שישאלה<sup>2</sup>: יושב בארץ הנגב. קרוב לאותו צר, שנאמר ויסע מש

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did they call Rivkah and ask her? (v. 57)

**RASHI:** From here we learn that one may not marry off a woman without her consent.

**SIFSEI CHACHAMIM:** *Rashi* was troubled as to why they asked for Rivkah's consent, when they had already said earlier, "This thing has come from God! We cannot refuse you etc.," without asking for her consent. *Rashi* thus explains that, even though her parents had

consented earlier, they still required Rivkah's personal consent.

**RASHBAM:** They asked Rivkah if she wanted to go now, or to stay for a while and go later.

● What was Rivkah's response? (v. 58)

**RASHI:** She said, "I will go of my own accord, even if you do not desire it."

TORAS MENACHEM

appropriate present. Thus, there is no proof in verse 53 that Besu'el was no longer alive.

However, since it says in verse 55 that, "(Rivkah's) brother and mother said, 'Let the girl stay with us a year or ten (months),' it would be unreasonable to presume (at the literal level) that Besu'el would have remained quiet over this issue (as *Ibn Ezra* argues). Therefore, *Rashi* concluded that the *Midrashic* tradition that Besu'el had died was acceptable at the literal level, since it is indicated by scripture in verse 55.

(We thus see *retroactively* that, in verse 53, Besu'el was not given presents by Eliezer because he had in fact died).

*Tur Ha'aruch's* solution—that Besu'el did not speak up here because he had already expressed his opinion earlier in verses 50-51—was also unacceptable to *Rashi*, since Lavan also expressed his opinion above in verses 50-51, and yet he spoke up here too. So why did Besu'el not do the same?

Rather, the most straightforward explanation is, as *Rashi* writes, that Besu'el was not present since he had died for opposing Rivkah's marriage.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 10, p. 65-66; vol 25, p. 101)

🔗 RIVKAH'S CONSENT (v. 57-58)

As soon as Eliezer finished his story, "Lavan and Besu'el replied, saying, 'This thing has come from God! We cannot refuse you (for any reason) either bad or good. Rivkah is now yours. Take her and leave'" (v. 50-51).

The next day, Rivkah's family requested that she should stay for ten months or a year, which was the normal period of preparation for marriage (v. 55 and *Rashi* *ibid.*), but Eliezer insisted that she come with him immediately. To this they replied, "let us call the girl and ask her" (v. 57).

Now, presumably, they were not asking Rivkah to consent to the actual marriage itself, since Lavan and Besu'el had *already* agreed to the marriage with Eliezer the previous day (v. 50-51). Rather, it appears that they merely wanted to ask her whether she would like to go with Eliezer now, or wait a year like her family suggested (as **Rashbam** writes).

*Rashi* however understood that they were asking her to consent to the actual marriage itself. This is perplexing since, if "one may not marry off a woman without her consent," as *Rashi* writes, then how could Lavan and Besu'el have told Eliezer to "take her and leave" (in verses 50-51) without Rivkah's prior consent?

<sup>57</sup> They said, “Let us call the girl and ask her.”

<sup>58</sup> They called Rivkah, and said to her, “Will you go with this man?”

She said, “I will go (whether you like it or not)!”

<sup>59</sup> So they sent away their sister Rivkah, with her nurse, Avraham’s servant and his men. <sup>60</sup> They blessed Rivkah saying to her, “Our sister! May you come to be thousands of myriads, and may your descendants inherit the cities of their enemies (like God blessed Avraham).”

<sup>61</sup> Rivkah and her maidens set off, riding on camels, following the man. The servant took Rivkah and left.

## 🌀 THE MARRIAGE OF YITZCHAK AND RIVKAH 🌀

24:62 **Y**itzchak had returned (from escorting Hagar) from Be’er Lachai Ro’i (to Avraham, so that he could marry her), he was living in the southern part of the land. <sup>63</sup> Yitzchak went out to pray in the field towards evening. He looked up and saw—look!—camels were approaching.

<sup>64</sup> Rivkah looked up and saw Yitzchak (and she was stunned by his appearance). She lowered herself

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### PROBLEMS WITH SIFSEI CHACHAMIM & RASHBAM

**Sifsei Chachamim** answers that Rivkah’s consent in verse 57-58 is a continuation of Besu’el’s promise in verses 50-51. I.e. Even after Besu’el promised his daughter in marriage, Rivkah’s consent was still required.

However, this is difficult to accept, because:

a.) The expression, “take her and leave,” appears to be an immediate and emphatic directive and not a tentative decision that was dependent on further consent.

b.) If Rivkah’s consent was required, why was she not asked immediately? Why did they wait until the next day?

c.) Rivkah’s response was, “I will go (whether you like it or not)!” (v. 58 and *Rashi* *ibid.*). This suggests that when Rivkah was asked about the marriage, her family was opposed to the idea, and had not consented at all!

Despite the simplicity of **Rashbam**’s logic (that Rivkah was asked only about the *time* of departure) *Rashi* rejected it, since it is incompatible with verse 58. The Torah does not state that she was asked, “will you go now with this man,” but rather, “will you go with this man,” i.e. will you go with him *at all*?

We can only conclude that something must have happened soon after Lavan and Besu’el’s consent that caused Rivkah’s family to have second thoughts.

#### THE EXPLANATION

Let us review the precise sequence of events in detail, according to *Rashi*:

The first reaction of Rivkah’s family was, “*This thing has come from God! We cannot refuse you (for any reason) either bad or good*” (v. 50). I.e. they were shocked at the amazing Divine providence within Eliezer’s story, causing them to consent to the marriage on the spot. They thought, “Even if she will refuse, it will happen anyway!” Of course, this was an extremely unusual occurrence, for in the vast majority of cases a girl is consulted about her marriage partner before a final decision is made. However, in this case, the miracles and Divine providence of Eliezer’s story overwhelmed Lavan and Besu’el into an immediate decision.

In those days it was customary for a girl to be given, “12 months before marriage to acquire adornments for herself” (*Rashi* to v. 55). So, when Eliezer declared the next day to, “send me away to my master,” straight away, along with Rivkah (v. 54), his request must have aroused some suspicion. They would have wondered, “Why does he want to take her already? Surely every girl is given 12 months to prepare?” So they complained, “*Let the girl stay with us a year or ten (months). Afterwards, she will go*” (v. 55). But Eliezer persisted, saying, “*Do not delay me now that God has made my trip successful. Send me away, and I will go to my master*” (v. 56).

Eliezer appeared to be making an unreasonable demand. Why should Rivkah not be allowed 12 months to prepare for the wedding, like any other girl? Eliezer’s miracles had indicated that the match was Divinely ordained, but this did not prove in any way that the 12 month period should be waived.

Within a short period of time, this would have led them to re-evaluate Eliezer’s credibility. His seemingly excessive demands would have made them wonder: Is this man really genuine? And perhaps his deed—stating that Avraham had left everything to Yitzchak—is a fake? (see *Rashi* to v. 10)

Unconvinced either way, Rivkah’s family concluded, “since we are no longer ‘swept away’ by Eliezer’s miracles, we can make a decision about this marriage in the usual fashion, by asking Rivkah herself.” So they called her in to see if she would consent to the marriage.

#### ELIEZER’S ARGUMENT

This however leaves us with the question: Why *did* Eliezer make an unreasonable demand which led them to doubt his veracity? Surely he must have had some basis for leaving immediately, which he presumed they would accept?

The solution to this problem can be found in *Rashi*’s words that, “a girl is given 12 months before marriage to acquire adornments for herself” (v. 55). Eliezer showed Rivkah’s family the deed which indicated that *all* Avraham’s possessions, including Sarah’s adornments, had been given to Yitzchak. Thus, in contrast to the usual custom, there was no need to spend a year acquiring adornments before the wedding, as Rivkah would receive all the adornments that she required through marrying Yitzchak.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 10. p. 65ff.)

מעל הנמל: <sup>סח</sup> ותאמר אל-העבד מי-האיש הלזה ההלך בשדה לקראתנו ויאמר העבד הוא אדני ותקח הצעיף ותתכס: <sup>סו</sup> ויספר העבד ליצחק את כל-הדברים אשר עשה: <sup>סז</sup> ויבאה יצחק האהלה שרה אמו ויקח את-רבקה ותהי-לו לאשה ויאהבה וינתם יצחק אחרי אמו: <sup>פ</sup> [ששי] כה א ויסף אברהם ויקח אשה ושמה קטורה: <sup>ג</sup> ותלד לו את-זמרון ואת-יקשון ואת-מדן ואת-מדן ואת-ישבק ואת-שוות: <sup>ד</sup> ויקשן ילד את-שבא ואת-דדן ובני דדן היו אשורם

מעל הנמל: <sup>סח</sup> ותאמר אל-העבד מי-האיש הלזה ההלך בשדה לקראתנו ויאמר העבד הוא אדני ותקח הצעיף ותתכס: <sup>סו</sup> ויספר העבד ליצחק את כל-הדברים אשר עשה: <sup>סז</sup> ויבאה יצחק האהלה שרה אמו ויקח את-רבקה ותהי-לו לאשה ויאהבה וינתם יצחק אחרי אמו: <sup>פ</sup> [ששי] כה א ויסף אברהם ויקח אשה ושמה קטורה: <sup>ג</sup> ותלד לו את-זמרון ואת-יקשון ואת-מדן ואת-מדן ואת-ישבק ואת-שוות: <sup>ד</sup> ויקשן ילד את-שבא ואת-דדן ובני דדן היו אשורם

רש"י

פסקו, וכשצאת רבקה חזרו, ז"ר<sup>2</sup>: אחרי אמו. דרך ארץ, כל זמן שאמו של אדם קיימת כרוך הוא אללה, ומשמחה, הוא מתנחם באשתו: (6) קטורה. זו הגר, ונקראת קטורה על שם שנאס מעשיה כקטרת, ושקשרה פתחה, שלא נדווגה לאדם מיום שפרשה מאברהם: (ג) אשורם ולטושם. שם ראשי אומות<sup>4</sup>. ותרגום של אונקלוס אין לי לישבו על לשון המקרא. שפירש למשירין,

הקרקע: (סח) ותתכס. לשון ותחפ על, כמו ותקצר, ותשבר: (סו) ויספר העבד. גלה לו נסים שנעשו לו, שקפלה לו הארץ, ושנזדמנה לו רבקה בתפלתו: (סז) האהלה שרה אמו. ויצואה האהלה, והרי היא שרה אמו, כלומר ונעשית דוגמת שרה אמו, שכל זמן ששרה קיימת, היה נר דלוק מערב שבת לערב שבת, וזרחה מזויה צעיסה, ועני קשור על האהל, ומשמחה

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What did Eliezer tell Yitzchak? (v. 66)

**RASHI:** Eliezer revealed to him the miracles which had occurred: that his journey had been shortened, and that Rivkah had appeared during his prayer.

● How was Yitzchak comforted? (v. 67)

**RASHI:** The verse states that, "he brought her to the tent of Sarah his mother," suggesting that, "he brought her to the tent, and look!—it was Sarah his mother," i.e. she became the likeness of Sarah his mother. For, as long as Sarah was alive, a candle burned from one Shabbos eve to the next, the dough would be blessed, and a cloud was attached to the tent. When she died these things ceased, but when Rivkah arrived, they resumed. From *Bereishis Rabah*.

**MIDRASH:** Four practices resumed when Rivkah came into Sarah's tent: a.) A cloud was joined to the entrance. b.) The doors were always open wide to welcome the poor. c.) The candles burned from

one Shabbos eve to the next. d.) She prepared her dough in a state of purity. (60:16).

**GUR ARYEH:** Why did *Rashi* omit the fourth practice mentioned in the *Midrash*, that Sarah's doors were always open wide for the poor?

The three miracles that *Rashi* cites correspond to the three *mitzvos* for which women take the primary responsibility: separating of *Chalah* from dough, lighting *Shabbos* candles and Family Purity (symbolized by the cloud fixed to the tent). Since the fourth practice mentioned in the *Midrash* had no special significance, therefore *Rashi* omitted it.

**LEVUSH HA'OHRAH:** Rivkah could not perform the *mitzvah* of providing for the poor until she was married, since she did not yet have the financial means with which to do so.

**TZEIDAH LADERECH:** Unlike the three practices which *Rashi* cites, the *mitzvah* of helping the poor is not specifically associated with women. Therefore, *Rashi* omitted it.

TORAS MENACHEM

☞ RIVKAH'S THREE MIRACLES (v. 67)

*Rashi's* comment to verse 67 presents us with the following difficulties:

- What forced *Rashi* to conclude that Rivkah's worthiness as a wife was proven to him through *miracles*, and not through her good deeds?
- At the literal level, if miraculous proof was indeed required, what led *Rashi* to believe that there were no less than *three* miracles?
- On the other hand, *Rashi* did not mention the fourth practice mentioned in the *Midrash* (welcoming the poor). Why? (See *Gur Aryeh*)
- Rashi* does not usually cite any sources. Why does he mention here that the source is "*Bereishis Rabah*."

e.) Why does *Rashi* cite the three miracles in a different order than that which they are recorded in the *Midrash*?

THE EXPLANATION

a.) The verse states, "Yitzchak brought her to the tent of his mother Sarah. He took Rivkah, she became his wife, and he loved her." *Rashi* was troubled that the three words שָׂרָה אָמוּ ("the tent of Sarah his mother") are totally superfluous. The verse could simply have stated, "Yitzchak brought her to himself and took Rivkah, she became his wife and he loved her." Why do we need to be informed *where* he brought her?

*Rashi* came to the conclusion that even after Eliezer told Yitzchak about the miraculous manner in which he had found Rivkah (v. 66 and *Rashi* *ibid.*),



from the camel,<sup>65</sup> and said to the servant, “Who is that man walking in the field towards us?”

The servant said, “He is my master.” She took the veil and covered herself.

<sup>66</sup> The servant told Yitzchak about all the (miraculous) things that had been done (for him).

<sup>67</sup> Yitzchak brought her to the tent of his mother Sarah. He took Rivkah, she became his wife, and he loved her. Yitzchak was comforted for (the loss of) his mother.

## 🌀 AVRAHAM REMARRIES 🌀

**25** **A**braham took another wife and her name was Keturah, (also known as Hagar).<sup>2</sup> She bore him Zimran, Yakshan, Medan, Midyan, Yishbak and Shu’ach.  
SIXTH READING <sup>3</sup> Yakshan fathered Sheva and Dedan.

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Who was Keturah? (v. 1)

**RASHI:** Hagar. She was called Keturah because her deeds were as pleasant as incense (קְטוּרָת).  
**CHIZKUNI:** How could Hagar be described as a person whose “deeds were as pleasant as incense” when, after Avraham sent her away, she returned to idol worship (*Rashi* to 21:14, above)? Clearly, she

must have done *teshuvah* before Avraham took her for the second time, and the Torah calls her Keturah due to the sweet “aroma” of her *teshuvah*.

**KLI YAKAR:** Avraham actually named her Keturah to make it known that she had done *teshuvah*.

**RASHBAM:** At the literal level Keturah was not Hagar.

### TORAS MENACHEM

Yitzchak was still not entirely convinced that she was fit to marry into the family, and whether she was of a similar caliber to Sarah, his mother. Therefore, when he took her into “the tent of Sarah his mother,” Yitzchak must have witnessed even greater miracles which convinced him that Rivkah was definitely fit to be his wife. And only then, “he took Rivkah, she became his wife, and he loved her,”

b.) What, exactly, was the nature of these miracles? *Rashi* concluded that the Torah hinted to them in the *three* extra words הַאֵהָלָה שָׂרָה אִמּוֹ (and thus there were three miracles in all):

הַאֵהָלָה (“the tent”) refers to a cloud joined to the tent.

שָׂרָה (“of Sarah”) refers to something unique to Sarah, namely the dough which we find that Sarah *alone* prepared (and when she was unable to do so, no bread *at all* was served—*Rashi* to 18:8)

אִמּוֹ (“his mother”) refers to the *mitzvah* given to Jewish women in general, especially the Jewish mother, the lighting of *Shabbos* candles.

c.) The fourth practice mentioned by the *Midrash* was thus omitted by *Rashi* as it is not alluded to by the verse.

d.) However, in the final analysis the miracle of *Shabbos* candles burning for an entire week is difficult to accept at the literal level. Therefore, *Rashi* cited the source of this comment—“*Bereishis Rabah*”—to indicate that while this miracle is indicated by the verse, it is somewhat beyond a literal interpretation.

e.) *Rashi* listed the miracles neither in the order they are mentioned in the verse, nor the order cited by the *Midrash*, but rather, in order of their impressiveness to Yitzchak as righteous acts: First, a miracle connected with a *mitzvah*, the lighting of *Shabbos* candles, which indicated her piety in the observance of *mitzvos*. Second, a miracle connected with her activities, making dough. And, third, a miracle which was not directly connected with her activities: the cloud by her tent.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, pp. 163ff.)

#### 🌀 HAGAR’S TESHUVAH (v. 1)

What is *Rashi*’s proof that, at the literal level, Keturah was Hagar? (see **Rashbam**)

*Rashi* was troubled by a general question regarding the story of Avraham and Hagar. In *Parshas Lech Lecha* (12:5), *Rashi* wrote that, “Avraham would convert the men, and Sarah would convert the women.” From this it follows that Hagar lived in a household where a primary focus was weaning people off idol worship and bringing them to a knowledge of the One God.

This begs the question: after living so many years in such an environment, how is it possible that Hagar, “reverted to the idols of her father’s house” (*Rashi* to 21:14) after leaving Avraham’s home? Even Yishma’el, who initially deviated from Avraham’s path, eventually did *teshuvah* (*Rashi* to v. 7, below). Surely then, Hagar too must have done *teshuvah*? But where is this fact hinted at in the Torah?

*Rashi* concluded that this problem can be solved at the literal level, by presuming that Keturah was Hagar, a new name which she acquired indicating that she did indeed do *teshuvah* (see **Chizkuni** & **Kli Yakar**).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, pp. 174ff.)

## 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

In recent years the custom for girls to light *Shabbos* candles before their marriage has re-emerged. This is actually an ancient practice which is indicated by *Rashi*’s comment to verse 67. Here we see that Rivkah lit candles before she was married, for only after Yitzchak had taken her into “the tent of Sarah his mother” and witnessed her *Shabbos* candles burning for the entire week, did he take her to be his wife. If fact, it was primarily the observance of this *mitzvah* that proved to Yitzchak the suitability of Rivkah as a spouse, and a mother in Israel.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, pp. 168ff.)

וּלְטוֹשֶׁם וּלְאֲמִים: ה' וּבְנֵי מִדְיָן עֵיפָה וְעֶפְרַיִם וְחִנֹּךְ וְאֲבִידֶעַ  
 וְאֶלְדָּעָה כָּל־אֵלֶּה בְנֵי קַטּוּרָה: ה' וַיִּתֵּן אֲבָרְהָם אֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־  
 לוֹ לְיִצְחָק: ו' וּלְבְנֵי הַפִּילִגְשִׁים אֲשֶׁר לְאֲבָרְהָם נָתַן אֲבָרְהָם  
 מִתְּנַת וַיִּשְׁלַחֵם מֵעַל יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ בַּעֲוֹדָנוּ חֵי קְדָמָה אֶל־אֶרֶץ  
 קְדָם: ז' וְאֵלֶּה יְמֵי שְׁנַי־חַיֵּי אֲבָרְהָם אֲשֶׁר־חַי מֵאֵת שָׁנָה  
 וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה וְחָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים: ח' וַיָּגֹעַ וַיָּמָת אֲבָרְהָם בְּשִׁיבָה  
 טוֹבָה זָקֵן וְשָׁבַע וַיֵּאָסֶף אֶל־עַמּוּיוֹ: ט' וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֹתוֹ יִצְחָק  
 וַיִּשְׁמַעְאֵל בְּנֵיו אֶל־מַעֲרַת הַמַּכְפֵּלָה אֶל־שְׂדֵה עֶפְרָן בֶּן־עֲחָר  
 הַחִתִּי אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי מִמְרָא: י' הַשְּׂדֵה אֲשֶׁר־קָנָה אֲבָרְהָם מֵאֵת  
 בְּנֵי־חֵת שָׁמָּה קָבַר אֲבָרְהָם וְשָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ: י"א וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי מוֹת  
 אֲבָרְהָם וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ וַיֵּשֶׁב יִצְחָק עִם־בְּאֵר  
 לְחֵי רְאִי: פ' (שביעין) יב' וְאֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת יִשְׁמַעְאֵל בֶּן־אֲבָרְהָם אֲשֶׁר  
 יָלְדָה הָגָר הַמִּצְרַיִת שִׁפְחַת שָׂרָה לְאֲבָרְהָם: יג' וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת  
 בְּנֵי יִשְׁמַעְאֵל בְּשִׁמְתָם לְתוֹלְדֹתָם בְּכֹר יִשְׁמַעְאֵל נְבִית וְקָדָר  
 וְאֲדָבְאֵל וּמְבַשֶּׁם: יד' וּמִשְׁמַעַ וְדוּמָה וּמִשָּׂא: טו' חֲדָד וְתִימָא  
 יְטוֹר נְפִישׁ וְקֹדְמָה: (מפפירן) טז' אֵלֶּה הֵם בְּנֵי יִשְׁמַעְאֵל וְאֵלֶּה  
 שְׁמוֹתָם בְּחִצְרֵיהֶם וּבְמִירְתָם שְׁנַי־עָשָׂר נְשִׂאִים לְאִמָּתָם:  
 יז' וְאֵלֶּה שְׁנֵי חַיֵּי יִשְׁמַעְאֵל מֵאֵת שָׁנָה וּשְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה וְשִׁבְעַת  
 שָׁנִים וַיָּגֹעַ וַיָּמָת וַיֵּאָסֶף אֶל־עַמּוּיוֹ: יח' וַיִּשְׁכְּנוּ מִחֻילָה עַד־שׁוֹר  
 אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי מִצְרַיִם בְּאֶכָה אֲשׁוּרָה עַל־פְּנֵי כָל־אֶחָיו נָפַל:

**פ פ פ**

ק"ה פסוקים, יהויד"ע סימן.

דָּדוּ וּבְנֵי דָדוּ הוּוּ לְמִשְׁרָנָו וּלְשִׁכְנָיו וּלְגִנְנוֹ:  
 ד' וּבְנֵי מִדְיָן עֵיפָה וְעֶפְרַיִם וְחִנֹּךְ וְאֲבִידֶעַ וְאֶלְדָּעָה  
 כָּל אֵלִין בְּנֵי קַטּוּרָה: ה' וַיְהִי אֲבָרְהָם ית כל  
 די ליה לְיִצְחָק: ו' וּלְבְנֵי לְחִינְתָא די לְאֲבָרְהָם  
 יְהִי אֲבָרְהָם מִתְּנָו וּשְׁלַחֵינוּ מֵעַל יִצְחָק בְּרִיה  
 עַד דְּהוּא קָם קְדוּמָא לְאַרְעֵי מִדְיָנָא: ז' וְאֵלִין  
 יוֹמֵי שְׁנֵי חַיֵּי אֲבָרְהָם דְּחַיָּא מֵאָה וְשִׁבְעִין  
 וְחָמֵשׁ שָׁנִין: ח' וַיָּגֹעַ וַיָּמָת אֲבָרְהָם בְּסִיבֵי  
 מְבָא סִיב וְשִׁבְעַת יוֹמִין וְאֲתַכְנִישׁ לְעַמִּיה:  
 ט' וַיִּקְבְּרוּ יְתִיהָ יִצְחָק וַיִּשְׁמַעְאֵל בְּנוֹהִי בְּמַעֲרַת  
 כְּפִלְתָא בְּחַקְל עֶפְרָן בְּרֵי צוֹחַר חֲתָמָה די עַל  
 אֶפְרַיִם מִמְרָא: י' חֲקֵלָא די זְבָן אֲבָרְהָם מִן בְּנֵי  
 חֲתָמָה תְּמָן אֲתַקְבַר אֲבָרְהָם וְשָׂרָה אִתְתִּיהָ:  
 י"א וְהוּוּ בְּתַר דְּמִית אֲבָרְהָם וּבְרִידָא יִי ית  
 יִצְחָק בְּרִיה וַיְתִיב יִצְחָק עִם בְּיָרָא דְּמִלְאָךְ  
 קְנִימָא אִתְחַזֵּי עֲלֵיהֶּיב וְאֵלִין תּוֹלְדֹת  
 יִשְׁמַעְאֵל בְּרֵי אֲבָרְהָם די יְלִידַת הָגָר מִצְרַיִתָא  
 אִמָּתָא דְּשָׂרָה לְאֲבָרְהָם: יג' וְאֵלִין שְׁמֵתָת בְּנֵי  
 יִשְׁמַעְאֵל בְּשִׁמְתָהוֹן לְתוֹלְדָתָהוֹן בּוּכְרָא  
 דְּיִשְׁמַעְאֵל נְבִיית וְקָדָר וְאֲדָבְאֵל וּמְבַשֶּׁם:  
 יד' וּמִשְׁמַעַ וְדוּמָה וּמִשָּׂא: טו' חֲדָד וְתִימָא יְטוֹר  
 נְפִישׁ וְקֹדְמָה: טז' אֵלִין אֲנוּן בְּנֵי יִשְׁמַעְאֵל  
 וְאֵלִין שְׁמֵתָהוֹן בְּפִצְחִיהוֹן וּבְכַרְפִּיהוֹן תְּרִי  
 עָשָׂר רַבְרָבִין לְאוּמִיָּהוֹן: יז' וְאֵלִין שְׁנֵי חַיֵּי  
 יִשְׁמַעְאֵל מֵאָה וְתַלְתִּין וְשִׁבְעַת שָׁנִין וְאֲתַכְנִיד  
 וּמִית וְאֲתַכְנִישׁ לְעַמִּיה: יח' וַיִּשְׁכְּנוּ מִחֻילָה עַד  
 חֲתָמָא די עַל אֶפְרַיִם מִצְרַיִם מְטִי לְאַתּוֹר עַל אֶפְרַיִם  
 כָּל אֲחֻוּהֵי שָׂרָא: פ פ פ

לשון מחנה, ואם תאמר שאינו כן מפני האל"ף שאינה יסודית, הרי לנו  
 חיצות שאין בראשם אל"ף, ונתוספה אל"ף בראשם, כמו חומת חנן, שהוא  
 מן נכח רגלים, וכמו אסוך שמן, שהוא מן ורחלת וסכת: ולטושים. הם צעלי  
 אהלים, המתפזרים אנה ואנה, ונוסעים איש צהלי אפדנו, וכן הוא אומר  
 והנה נטושים על פני כל הארץ<sup>1</sup>, שכן למ"ד ונו"ן מתחלפות זו בזו: (כ) ויתן  
 אברהם וגו'. אמר ר' נחמיה, ברכת דייטיקי נתן לו, שאמר לו הקב"ה  
 לאברהם והיה ברכה, הצרכות מסורות צידך לצרך את מי שתראה, ואברהם  
 מסרם ליחזק: (ו) הפילגשים. חסר כתיב, שלא היה אלא פלגש אחת<sup>2</sup>, היא  
 הגר, היא קטורה. נשים ככתובה. פלגשים צלא כתובה, כדאמרין  
 צסכהדרינ<sup>3</sup> צנשים ופלגשים דוד: נתן אברהם מתנות. פירשו רבותינו<sup>4</sup>,

The sons of Dedan were Ashurim, Letushim, and Le'umim.

<sup>4</sup> The sons of Midyan were Aifah, Aifer, Chanoch, Avida and Elda'ah.

All these were Keturah's descendants.

<sup>5</sup> Avraham gave all (the power of blessing) that he possessed to Yitzchak. <sup>6</sup> To the sons of Avraham's concubine (Hagar, also know as Keturah), Avraham gave gifts. He sent them away eastward from his son Yitzchak while he (Avraham) was still alive, to the land of the East.

### AVRAHAM PASSES AWAY

25:7 **T**his is the total of the years of Avraham's life that he lived: one hundred years, seventy years and five years.

<sup>8</sup> Avraham breathed his last and died at a good age, old and satisfied, and his (soul) was gathered to (be with the souls of) his people. <sup>9</sup> His sons Yitzchak and Yishma'el buried him in the Cave of Machpeilah in the field of Efron—the son of Tzochar the Chittite—which faces Mamre, <sup>10</sup> the field that Avraham had bought from the sons of Cheis. Avraham and his wife Sarah were buried there.

<sup>11</sup> After Avraham died, God blessed Yitzchak his son. Yitzchak lived near Be'er Lachai Ro'i.

### YISHMA'EL'S DESCENDANTS

25:12 **T**he following are the descendants of Yishma'el the son of Avraham, whom Hagar the Egyptian—Sarah's maid—bore to Avraham:

SEVENTH READING  
MAFTIR <sup>13</sup> These are the names of the sons of Yishma'el listed according to (the order of) their births: the firstborn of Yishma'el was Nevayos, then Kaidar, Adbe'ail, Miusam, <sup>14</sup> Mishma, Dumah, Masa, <sup>15</sup> Chadad, Teiyma, Yetur, Nafish, and Kaidmah. <sup>16</sup> These were Yishma'el's sons and this is how they were called in their towns and their walled cities. There were twelve princes for their nations.

<sup>17</sup> These were the years of Yishma'el's life: (a total of) one hundred years, thirty years and seven years. He breathed his last and died, and he was gathered to his people.

<sup>18</sup> (His descendants) lived between Chavilah and Shur, which is near Egypt, towards Ashur. They dwelt (near) all their brethren.

THE HAFTARAH FOR CHAYEI SARAH IS ON PAGE 378.

רש"י

ויגוע. לא נאמר גויטה אלא בצדיקים: (יח) נפל. שכן, כמו מדין ועמלק וכל בני קדם נופלים בעמק.<sup>9</sup> כאן הוא אומר לשון נפילה, ולהלן הוא אומר על פני כל אחיו ישכון,<sup>10</sup> עד שלא מת אברהם ישכון, משמת אברהם נפל: חסלת פרשת חיי שרה

כמו פלחו ורננו: (יז) ואלה שני חיי ישמעאל וגו'. אמר רבי חייא בר אבא, למה נמנו שנותיו של ישמעאל, כדי לייחס בהם שנותיו של יעקב, משנותיו של ישמעאל למדנו, שמש יעקב צבית עבר י"ד שנה כשפירש מאביו, קודם שצא אל לבן, שהרי כשפירש יעקב מאביו מת ישמעאל, שנאמר וילך עשו אל ישמעאל וגו', כמו שמפורש בסוף מגילה נקראת:<sup>8</sup>

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why is Yitzchak mentioned before Yishma'el? (v. 9)

**RASHI:** From here we learn that Yishma'el did teshuvah and allowed Yitzchak to go before him [See *Toras Menachem* to 21:9-13 above].



# parshas Toldos

## פרשת תולדות

### 🕯 The Name of the Parsha 🕯

On the words, “*These are the descendants (Toldos) of Yitzchak*,” Rashi comments, “*These are Ya’akov and Eisav mentioned in the Parsha.*”

According to Chasidic teachings, Ya’akov represents the soul, and Eisav, the body. The *Parsha* is thus named after both Ya’akov and Eisav, because the soul and the body each have their own exclusive qualities.

The soul is described as a “child” of God, because the love shared between the soul and God is a natural type of love, resembling the parent-child relationship.

The body, on the other hand, has no inherent love for God — on the contrary, it conceals God’s presence. But, ironically, when God “chose” the Jewish people, He chose primarily our bodies. For, it would not have been an act of true *self-expression* to choose the Jewish soul, since *anybody* would choose a superior product over an

inferior one. Rather, it is the Jewish body, which appears to be quite similar to that of the non-Jew, that was selected by God (See *Tanya* ch. 49).

Of course, this does not mean to say that the soul was not chosen by God *at all*. It is only that the body has no redeeming feature of its own *other than the fact* that it was chosen by God—so its chosenness “stands out” more than in the case of the soul.

When soul and body are *together*, each begins to learn from the other’s unique quality: Through observing Torah and *mitzvos*, the soul teaches the body how to love God; the body, in turn, teaches the soul how to reveal its chosenness.

And that is why Ya’akov, the soul, and Eisav, the body, are both “mentioned in the *Parsha*.”

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Toldos* 5752)

יֵשׁ וְאֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת יִצְחָק בֶּן אַבְרָהָם אַבְרָהָם אָבִי יִצְחָק: כ וַיְהִי יֵשׁ וְהוּא יִצְחָק: כג וְהוּא יִצְחָק בֶּן אַרְבָּעִין שָׁנָיִן כִּד נָסִיב יֵת רַבֵּקָה בַּת בְּתוּאֵל אַרְמָאָה מִפְּדַן אֲרָם אֶחְתִּיּוֹהָ דְלָבָן אַרְמָאָה לִיּוֹהָ לְאִנְתּוֹ: כא וְצִלִּי יִצְחָק קָדָם יי לְקַבֵּל אֶת־תִּיבָה אֲרִי עֲקָרָה הִיא וְקַבֵּל צְלוֹתֶיהָ יי וְעַד־יָאֵת רַבֵּקָה אֶת־תִּיבָה: כב וְדַחְקִין בְּנִיָּא בְּמַעֲהָ וְאִמְרַת אִם בֵּן לְמָא דְנָן אִנְא וְאִנְא לְמַתְבַּע אֹלְפָן מִן קָדָם יי: כג וְאִמַר יי לָהּ תְּרִין

יֵשׁ וְאֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת יִצְחָק בֶּן אַבְרָהָם אַבְרָהָם אָבִי יִצְחָק: כ וַיְהִי יֵשׁ וְהוּא יִצְחָק: כג וְהוּא יִצְחָק בֶּן אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה בְּקַחְתּוֹ אֶת־רַבֵּקָה בַּת־בְּתוּאֵל הָאֲרָמִי מִפְּדַן אֲרָם אֶחָת לָבָן הָאֲרָמִי לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה: כא וַיַּעֲתֶר יִצְחָק לַיהוָה לְנִכַח אִשְׁתּוֹ כִּי עֲקָרָה הוּא וַיַּעֲתֶר לוֹ יְהוָה וַתַּהַר רַבֵּקָה אִשְׁתּוֹ: כב וַיִּתְרַצְצוּ הַבָּנִים בְּקַרְבָּהָ וַתֹּאמֶר אִם־כֵּן לָמָּה זֶה אֲנֹכִי וַתִּלְדֶּה לְדָרְשׁ אֶת־יְהוָה: כג וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה

רש"י

מפדן ארם. על שם ששני ארס היו, ארס נכרים וארס נובה, קורא אותו פדן, לשון נמד צקר, תרגום, פדן תורין, ויש פותרין פדן ארס כמו שדה ארס, שבלשון ישמעאל קורין לשדה פדן: (כא) ויעתר. הרבז והפליזר צתפלה: ויעתר לו. נתפלר ונתפייס ונתפתח לו. ואומר אני, כל לשון עתה, לשון הפלר ורצוי הוא, וכן עתה ענין הקטורת<sup>1</sup>, מרצית עליית העשן. וכן העתרתם עלי דזריכס<sup>2</sup>, וכן ועתרות נשיקות שונא<sup>3</sup>, דומות למרובות והנס למשא, אנקירש"א זלע"ז: לנכח אשתו. זה עומד בזוית זו ומתפלל, וזו עומדת בזוית זו ומתפללת: ויעתר לו. לו ולא לה, שאין דומה תפלת לדיק בן לדיק לתפלת לדיק בן רשע<sup>4</sup>, לפיכך לו ולא לה: (כג) ויתרוצצו. על כרחך המקרא הזה אומר דורשני, שסתם מה היא רצויה זו, וכתיב אס כן למה זה אנכי. רצותיו דרשוהו לשון רינה, כשכיחה עוברת על פתחי תורה של שם ועבר, יעקב רץ ומפרכס ללאת, עוברת על פתחי ע"א, עשו מפרכס ללאת. דבר אחר, מתרוללים זה עם זה, ומריצים צנחלת שני עולמות: ותאמר אם כן. גדול לער העבור: למה זה אנכי. מתאוה ומתפללת על כריון: ותלך לדרוש. לבית מדרשו של שם: לדרוש את ה'. שיגיד לה מה

(יש) ואלה תולדות יצחק. יעקב ועשו האמורים צפרשה: אברהם הוליד את יצחק. (לאחר שקרא הקב"ה שמו אברהם אחר כך הוליד את יצחק. דבר אחר), על ידי שכתב הכתוב יצחק בן אברהם, הוזקק לומר אברהם הוליד את יצחק, לפי שהיו לינני הדור אומרים מאציומלך נתעצרה שרה, שהרי כמה שנים שהתה עם אברהם ולא נתעצרה הימנו, מה עשה הקב"ה, לר קלסתר פניו של יצחק דומה לאברהם, והעידו הכל אברהם הוליד את יצחק, וזהו שכתב כאן יצחק בן אברהם (היה), שהרי עדות יש שאברהם הוליד את יצחק: (כ) בן ארבעים שנה. שהרי כשצא אברהם מהר המוריה נתצער שולדה רצקה, ויצחק היה בן ל"ז שנה, שהרי צו צפרק מתה שרה, ומשנולד יצחק עד העקידה שמתה שרה ל"ז שנה, דבת ל' היתה כשנולד יצחק, ובת קכ"ז כשמתה, שנאמר ויהיו חי שרה וגו', הרי ליצחק ל"ז שנים, וצו צפרק נולדה רצקה, המחין לה עד שחא ראויה לביאה ג' שנים, ונשאה: בת בתואל מפדן ארם אחות לבן. וכי עדיין לא נכתב שהיא בת בתואל ואחות לבן ומפדן ארם, אלא להגיד שצחקה, שהיתה בת רשע ואחות רשע ומקומה אנשי רשע, ולא למדה ממעשיהם:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Why does the Torah repeat, "Avraham fathered Yitzchak"? (end of v. 19)**  
**RASHI:** After the verse stated, "Yitzchak, the son of Avraham," it was then found necessary to stress, "Avraham fathered Yitzchak," because the cynics of the generation were saying that Sarah had conceived from Avimelech, since she had lived with Avraham for

many years and had not conceived from him. What did God do? He fashioned the features of Yitzchak's face to resemble Avraham's, and everyone witnessed that Avraham had indeed given birth to Yitzchak. Thus the verse stresses here, "Yitzchak [is certainly] the son of Avraham," because there is evidence that "Avraham fathered Yitzchak."

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

According to Chasidic teachings, Avraham primarily served God with love, and Yitzchak with fear. In fact, their faces bore very little resemblance to one another, as an indication of their contrasting spiritual qualities. Thus, it took a miracle to make Yitzchak's facial features resemble those of Avraham (see *Rashi* to v. 19).  
 With the above in mind however, Yitzchak's name appears to be somewhat out of character with his nature. "Yitzchak" means "laughter," which is associated with happiness and rejoicing—a rather inappropriate name, it would seem, for a person whose life was dedicated to the fear of God.

God chooses to be close to those who are humble, as the verse states, "I dwell on high in holiness, and with the crushed and humble in spirit" (Isaiah 57:15). Thus, ultimately, it is fear of God that brings a person closer to his Creator more than love, because fear makes a person feel low and humble. Ironically, by feeling low a person actually makes himself great, because his humility acts as an empty vessel in which God can "dwell."  
 Therefore Yitzchak, who excelled in fear of God was named "laughter," because his humility propelled him to a more intimate and joyful unity with the Almighty than love alone can achieve.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* 30, p. 103ff; vol. 20, p. 116ff)

## 🌀 THE BIRTH OF YA'AKOV & EISAV 🌀

25:19

**A**nd these are the descendants of Yitzchak, the son of Avraham:  
*(The Torah now digresses, before continuing with Yitzchak's descendants in verses 25-26)*  
*(After God gave Avram the name) Avraham, (he) fathered Yitzchak. <sup>20</sup> Yitzchak was forty years old when he took Rivkah for himself as a wife. (Even though she was) the daughter of Besu'el the Aramean of Padan Aram, sister of Lavan the Aramean (she did not learn from their wicked ways).*

<sup>21</sup> Yitzchak prayed (repeatedly) to God (in one corner of the room) opposite his wife, because she was barren. God accepted his prayer, and his wife Rivkah conceived.

<sup>22</sup> The children struggled inside her. She said, "If (the pain of pregnancy is) so (much) why did I (want to be like) this?" She went (to the Yeshivah of Sheim) to ask God (what was going to happen to her).

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Was Yitzchak unable to have children too, or just Rivkah? (v. 21)

**MIDRASH HAGADOL:** In fact, Yitzchak was also unable to have children. This is hinted at by verse 21, where the word "she" is not spelled in the Torah in the usual manner (אִתָּהּ), but rather אִתִּי, which can also be read as אִתִּי, also could not have children.

#### ● Why did the children "struggle inside her"? (v. 22)

**RASHI:** When she passed by the entrances of the Yeshivos of Sheim and Aiver, Ya'akov would run and struggle to come out. When she

passed the entrance of a temple of idolatry, Eisav would run and struggle to come out. (See *The Last Word*)

#### ● How did Rivkah "ask God" about her pregnancy? (v. 22)

**RASHI:** She went to the Yeshivah of Sheim. Sheim revealed to her what would happen through Divine inspiration (*Rashi* to v. 22-23).

**TUR HA'ARUCH:** Why did Rivkah ask Sheim and not Avraham? Perhaps she did not wish to distress Avraham with the bad news that she was having a difficult pregnancy.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🌀 YITZCHAK'S CERTAINTY (v. 21)

The Torah states, "Yitzchak prayed (repeatedly) to God (in one corner of the room) opposite his wife, because she was barren" (v. 21). This begs the question: How did Yitzchak know that "she was barren"? Perhaps their inability to have children was his problem and not hers?\*

At first glance, one might argue that Yitzchak was sure of his own ability to have children because Avraham had already been promised by God that "your (true) descendants will be through Yitzchak" (above 21:12).

However, this solution is problematic, because we find that Ya'akov also received a promise from God that he would have children (below 32:13), and he still prayed to God that this promise be fulfilled in the fear that he had forfeited God's promises to him through inadvertent sin (see *Rashi* ibid. v. 11). Surely then, Yitzchak would also have feared that perhaps he had stumbled in sin, thus forfeiting God's promise to him?

#### THE EXPLANATION

In fact however, Yitzchak was certain that God's promise to him would be fulfilled, and he was sure that he had not stumbled in sin at all. *Rashi* writes (v. 26): "Since she did not conceive, he knew that she was barren, and he prayed for her, but he did not wish to take a maid [as Avraham had done] because he had been hallowed on Mount Moriah to be an *olah temimah* (perfect burnt offering)." I.e. since Yitzchak knew he was an *olah temimah*, a perfectly holy being (which God told him explicitly—see *Rashi* to 26:2 below) he knew that he had not stumbled in sin. Therefore, he could be certain that the failure to have children, which he had been promised by God, was because of her inability to have children, not his.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Toldos* 5748)

#### 🌀 WHY DID RIVKAH SEEK SHEIM'S ADVICE (v. 22)

*Rashi* writes that Rivkah went to the Yeshivah of Sheim to find an explanation as to why her pregnancy was so difficult. However, this begs the following questions:

a.) Why did she not ask her husband, Yitzchak, or her father-in-law Avraham? Surely, they both could have helped her equally as well as

### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

**H**ow could Yitzchak, our righteous Patriarch, have a son whose very nature even *in the womb* was inclined towards idol worship? (see *Rashi* to v.22)

God can either make a person's disposition naturally good or naturally bad. However, even if a person has a natural inclination to evil, that does not mean that he is evil *per se*, for he is given free choice. Rather, the reason why he was given such an inclination was to rise to the challenge *and overcome it*. Thus Eisav was given a natural tendency to evil so that he could excel in the Divine service of "quashing" the evil inclination.

Even though he failed in his task, we can nevertheless learn from Eisav that if a person has strong desires to do something bad, it means that he has been given the special Divine mission of overcoming his inclinations.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 108ff.)

\* [Presumably the explanation of *Midrash Hagadol*, that they were both unable to have children, would have been unacceptable to *Rashi* since, at the literal level, we generally interpret a word as it is read, and not according to how it is written (c.f. *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 114, note 18)—Ed.]

עִמָּיִן בְּמַעֲיָכִי וְתַרְתִּינִי מִלִּבְּךָן מִמַּעֲיָכִי  
 יִתְפָּרֵשׁן וּמִלְכוֹ מִמְּלִכּוֹ יִתְקַף וּרְבֵא  
 יִשְׁתַּעֲבֵד לְעֵינֵי־אֵל: כד וּשְׁלִימוֹ יוֹמָהּ לְמִילָד  
 וְהָא תִיּוּמִין בְּמַעֲהָא: כה וּנְפֵק קְדַמָּהּ סְמוּךְ  
 בּוּלְיָהּ בְּנָלִים (בְּכֻלָּן) דְּשַׁעֲרֵי וּקְרוֹ שְׁמִיָּה עֲשׂוּ:  
 כו וּבְתַר בֵּן נִפְק אַחֵיהִי וַיְדִיָּה אַחִידָא בְּעַקְבָא  
 דְּעֲשׂוֹ וּקְרָא שְׁמִיָּה יַעֲקֹב וַיִּצְחָק בַּר שְׁתִּינִי  
 שְׁנִינִי בַד לִילְדַת יִתְהוֹן: כז וּרְבִיאוֹ עוֹלִימָיָא  
 וְהוּהוּ עֲשׂוֹ נְבֵר נְחֻשִׁירְכֵן נְבֵר נְפִיק לְחַקְלָא  
 וַיַּעֲקֹב נְבֵר שְׁלִים מְשֻׁמֵשׁ בֵּית אוֹלְפָנָא:  
 כח וּרְחִים יִצְחָק יֵת עֲשׂוֹ אַרְי מַצִּידִיָּה הוּהוּ אֶבְלִי

לָּה שְׁנֵי גַיִים [קַן גוֹיִם] בְּבִטְנָךְ וּשְׁנֵי לְאֻמִּים מִמַּעֲיָךְ יִפְרְדּוּ וּלְאֵם  
 מִלְאָם יִאֻמִּין וְרַב יַעֲבֹד צָעִיר: כד וַיִּמְלְאוּ יָמֶיהָ לָלֶדֶת וְהִנֵּה  
 תּוֹמֵם בְּבִטְנָהּ: כה וַיֵּצֵא הָרֵאשׁוֹן אֲדָמוּנִי בְּלוֹ כְּאֶדְרֵת שַׁעַר  
 וַיִּקְרְאוּ שְׁמוֹ עֲשׂוֹ: כו וְאַחֲרָיֶיךָ יֵצֵא אָחִיו וַיְדוּ אֶחָזֶת בְּעַקֵּב  
 עֲשׂוֹ וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב וַיִּצְחָק בֶּן־שָׁשִׁים שָׁנָה בְּלֶדֶת אֶתֶם:  
 כז וַיִּגְדְּלוּ הַנְּעָרִים וַיְהִי עֲשׂוֹ אִישׁ יָדַע צִיד אִישׁ שָׂדֵה וַיַּעֲקֹב  
 אִישׁ תָּם יֹשֵׁב אֲהָלִים: כח וַיֹּאדָּב יִצְחָק אֶת־עֲשׂוֹ כִּי־צִיד בְּפִיו

— כ"ט —

הנוצר באחרונה יאל ראשון, ויעקב שנולד ראשונה יאל אחרון, ויעקב צא לעכבו  
 שיהא ראשון ללידה כראשון ליצירה, ויפטור את רחמה, ויטול את הבכורה מן  
 הדין: בעקב עשו. סימן שאין זה מספיק לגמור מלכותו עד שזה עומד ונוטלה  
 הימנו: ויקרא שמו יעקב. הקב"ה, (אמר, אחס קריתון לצבורכם שם, אף אני  
 אקרא לצני בכורי שם, הדא הוא דכתיב ויקרא שמו יעקב). דבר אחר אצוי קרא  
 לו יעקב על שם אחיזת העקב: בן ששים שנה. י' שנים משנשאה עד שנעשית  
 צת י"ג שנה ורחייה להריון, וי' שנים הללו, לפה והמתין לה, כמו שעשה אצוי  
 לשרה, כיון שלא נתעברה, ידע שהיא עקרה והתפלל עליה, ושפחה לא ראה  
 לישא, לפי שנתקדש צבר המוריה להיות עולה תמימה: (כז) ויגדלו הנערים  
 ויהי עשו. כל זמן שהיו קטנים לא היו נכרים צמעיהם, ואין אדם מדקדק  
 בהם מה טיבם, כיון שנעשו בני י"ג שנה, זה פירש לבתי מדרשות וזה פירש  
 לעבודת אלילים: יודע ציד. לאוד ולרמות את אצוי צפוי, ושואלו, אבא היאך  
 מעשרין את המלח ואת התבן, כסבור אצוי שהוא מדקדק צמאות: איש שדה.  
 כמשמעו, אדם צטל, ואודה בקשתו חיות ועופות: תם. אינו צקי בכל אלה, אלא  
 כלבו כן פיו. מי שאינו חריף לרמות קרוי תם: ישב אהלים. אהלו של שם ואהלו

תהא צסופה: (כג) ויאמר ה' לה. על ידי שליח, לשם נאמר צרוח הקדש, והוא  
 אמר לה: שני גוים בבטנך. גיים כתיב כמו (המו) גאים, אלו אנטוניוס ורבי,  
 שלא פסקו מעל שולחנם לא לנן ולא חזרת, לא צימות החמה ולא צימות  
 הגשמים: ושני לאמים. אין לאום אלא מלכות: ממועך יפרדו. מן המעים הם  
 נפרדים, זה לרשעו וזה לתומו: מלאם יאמץ. לא ישו צגדולה, כשזה קם זה  
 נופל, וכן הוא אומר אמלאה החרבה<sup>1</sup>, לא נתמלאה צור אלא מחרבנה של  
 ירושלים: (כד) וימלאו ימיה. אכל צחמר כתיב ויהי צעת לדתה. שלא מלאו  
 ימיה, כי לז' חדשים ילדתם: והנה תומם. חסר. וצחמר תאומים מלא, לפי  
 שניהם נדיקים, אכל כאן אחד נדיק ואחד רשע: (כה) אדמוני. סימן הוא  
 שיהא שופך דמיו<sup>2</sup>: בלו באדרת שער. מלא שער כטלית של אמר המלאה  
 שער, פלוקיר"א צלע"ז: ויקראו שמו עשו. הכל קראו לו כן, לפי שהיה נעשה  
 ונגמר צשערו כצן שנים הרצה: (כו) ואחרי בן יצא אחיו וגו'. שמעתי מדרש  
 אגדה הדורשו לפי פשוטו, צדין היה אוחז צו לעכבו, ויעקב נולד מטיפה ראשונה  
 ועשו מן השנייה, לא ולמד משפופרת שפיה קלרה, תן צה שתי אצנים צו תחת  
 צו, הכנסת ראשונה תלא אחרונה, והכנסת אחרונה תלא ראשונה, נמלא עשו

#### TORAS MENACHEM

Sheim, and she would thereby avoid the undesirable journey, on her own, to the Yeshivah of Sheim?

b.) In many places, this Yeshivah is referred to as, "the Yeshivah of Sheim and Aiver." Why did *Rashi* describe it here only as the "Yeshivah of Sheim"?

#### THE EXPLANATION

Verse 22 states, "*She went to ask God.*" This suggests that she made some sort of journey. Obviously, this means that she did not ask Yitzchak, who was with her at home, or Avraham, who lived locally.

What led *Rashi* to conclude that she went to Sheim?

The Torah states earlier, "*Malkitzedek King of Shaleim brought out bread and wine. He was a priest to the supreme God*" (14:18). *Rashi* explains that Malkitzedek was none other than Sheim.

Since the Torah describes Sheim as "a priest to the supreme God," we could presume that Rivkah would have sought his advice when "she went to ask God." I.e she was not seeking to study Torah in the Yeshivah of Sheim and Aiver, but rather, to "ask God." Therefore, she sought the advice of Sheim in particular (and not Aiver) since he was "a priest to the supreme God."

Why did Rivkah prefer to speak to Sheim than to Yitzchak or Avraham?

Presumably, this was because either:

a.) She asked their advice first, but they failed to provide her with an explanation. Therefore she sought the advice of Sheim. Nevertheless, *Rashi* does not mention this point, as it is not hinted to at all in the Torah.

Or: b.) Perhaps she did not want to mention the matter to Yitzchak or Avraham, so as not to distress them. For, after so many years of waiting for Rivkah to become pregnant, Yitzchak (and Avraham) would surely have become pained to hear that "the children struggled inside her," causing her such distress that she regretted wanting to have children (v. 22).

In fact, for Yitzchak and Avraham, this state of affairs would have been particularly distressing, because it would have been reminiscent of the *Akeida* (binding of Yitzchak) where, after finally being given a son, Avraham was asked to slaughter him. So too here, after many years of praying for Rivkah to become pregnant, Yitzchak and Avraham would surely be devastated to hear that Rivkah was suffering from an extremely difficult pregnancy. So, in order to save Yitzchak and Avraham from a challenge of faith resembling the *Akeida*, Rivkah sought the advice of Sheim instead.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Toldos* 5748)



<sup>23</sup> (Through Sheim's Divine inspiration) God said to her, "(The ancestors of) two esteemed individuals are in your womb. (Furthermore,) two kingdoms will separate from your innards (one to wickedness, one to innocence) One kingdom will (always) become mightier than the other kingdom (for when one rises the other will fall). The elder (son) will serve the younger (son)."

<sup>24</sup> The term of her pregnancy was complete, and—look!—there were twins in her womb.

<sup>25</sup> The first one came out reddish and completely (covered in hair), like a fur coat of hair. They named him Eisav. <sup>26</sup> Afterwards, his brother emerged, and his hand was grasping Eisav's heel. (God) named him Ya'akov.

Yitzchak was sixty years old when she gave birth to them.

## 🌀 YA'AKOV BUYS THE BIRTHRIGHT FROM EISAV 🌀

25:27 **T**he boys grew up (and their differences became recognizable). Eisav was a man who knew how to trap (people with his mouth), a man of the field (who enjoyed hunting). Ya'akov was an honest person, dwelling in tents (the Yeshivah of Sheim and Aiver).

<sup>28</sup> Yitzchak loved Eisav because (he provided) his mouth with game; but Rivkah loved Ya'akov.

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● How did Eisav trap? (v. 27)

**RASHI:** He knew how to trap and deceive his father with his mouth, asking him, "Father, how do we separate *ma'aser* (tithes) from salt and straw?" This made his father think that he was precise in the observance of *mitzvos*.

**MIZRACHI:** Why did *Rashi* not interpret the term "trap" literally, to mean trapping animals? *Rashi* was troubled by the repetition of the verse, "Eisav was a man who knew how to trap, a man of the field." Surely, these two expressions both mean the same thing, so why did the Torah make an unnecessary repetition? *Rashi* understood that "knew how to trap" must be referring to something else besides hunting, i.e. his ability to trap others with his mouth.

Eisav's question, "How do we separate *ma'aser* (tithes) from salt and straw?" was deceptive because there is in fact no obligation in

Jewish Law to separate *ma'aser* from salt or straw (*ma'aser* is only separated from agricultural produce). This would have led Yitzchak to think that Eisav was extremely particular in *mitzvos*, going beyond the letter of the law to separate *ma'aser* even in a case where there is no obligation to do so.

**MASKIL LE DAVID:** Surely, by asking, "How do we separate *ma'aser* (tithes) from salt and straw?" Eisav would have appeared to be an ignoramus, who did not know the basic law that *ma'aser* is only taken from agricultural produce? We must presume that Eisav was actually asking, "Since I am separating this as an additional stringency, not as a legal requirement, perhaps I should make some indication of this fact by altering some of the procedures?"

**BARTENURA:** Eisav was not asking how to take *ma'aser*, since the answer to this is obvious: one simply separates a tenth of the produce.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### RASHI'S PROBLEM (v. 27)

In addition to the answers of the commentators, the following could be argued: *Rashi* was troubled why the verse states, "Eisav was a man who knew how to trap, a man of the field." Surely, the appropriate sequence should be "a man of the field who knew how to trap," for one only starts trapping *after* going out into the field. Due to this problem, *Rashi* concluded that the "trapping" must have occurred *at home*, before Eisav went out "to the field."

What "trapping" could be done in the house? Answers *Rashi*: "He knew how to trap and deceive his father with his mouth."

#### EISAV'S DECEPTIVE QUESTION

*Rashi's* comment, that Eisav asked his father, "How do we separate *ma'aser* (tithes) from salt and straw?" is somewhat perplexing. Since salt and straw are in fact exempt from *ma'aser*, Eisav's question would seem to display ignorance rather than precision, "in the observance of the *mitzvos*" (as **Maskil leDavid** writes).

*Maskil leDavid* [and **Mizrachi**] answer that Eisav indicated to his father that he wished to separate *ma'aser* beyond the letter of the law, even from his possessions that were exempt from *ma'aser*.

However, from *Rashi's* choice of words this does not appear to be the case. Eisav said, "How do we separate *ma'aser* from salt and straw?" Taking this statement at face value, it appears that Eisav *did* think that salt and straw were obligated in *ma'aser*. So what, then, was Eisav's trap?

#### THE EXPLANATION

Earlier, in *Parshas Lech Lecha*, we read, "(Avram) gave him a tenth (*ma'aser*) from everything" (14:20). *Rashi* writes, "Avram gave him *ma'aser* from all his possessions, because Malkitzedek was a priest."

Here we see that, at the literal level of Torah interpretation, Avraham did indeed give *ma'aser* from *all* his possessions ("everything"), and not only from agricultural produce. Presumably, the clause that *ma'aser* is only separated from agricultural produce must have been added later, with the giving of the Torah (see *Toras Menachem* to *Lech Lecha* *ibid.*).

וּרְבֵקָה רְחִימַת יִתְ יַעֲקֹב: כט וּבְשִׁיל יַעֲקֹב תְּבַשִּׁילָא וְאַתָּא עֲשׂו מִן חֲקֵלָא וְהוּא מְשַׁלְהִי: ל וְאָמַר עֲשׂו לְיַעֲקֹב אֲטַעֲמֵנִי כְעֵן מִן סְמוּקָא סְמוּקָא הָדִין אֲרִי מְשַׁלְהִי אָנָּא עַל כֵּן קָרָא שְׁמִיָּה אָדוּם: לא וְאָמַר יַעֲקֹב זָבִין כְּיוֹם דְּלֵהֵן יֵת בְּכֻרְתָּךְ לִי: לב וְאָמַר עֲשׂו הָא אָנָּא אָזִיל לְמַמַּת וְלִמָּא דְנָן לִי בְּכֻרְתָּא: לד וְאָמַר יַעֲקֹב קַיִם לִי כְּיוֹם דְּלֵהֵן וְקַיִם לִיָּה וְזָבִין יֵת בְּכֻרְתִּיהָ לְיַעֲקֹב: לה וְיַעֲקֹב יָהֵב לְעֲשׂו לֶחֶם וְתַבְשִׁיל דְּמִלּוּפְחִין וְאֵכֵל וְשָׂתִי וְקָם וְאָזֵל וְשָׂם עֲשׂו יֵת בְּכֻרְתָּא: א וְהוּא כִפְנָא בְּאַרְעָא בַר מִכְּפְנָא קְדָמָאָה דִּי הוּא בְּיוֹמֵי אֲבָרְהָם וְאָזֵל יִצְחָק לֹת אֲבִימֶלֶךְ מִלְכָּא דְּפְלִשְׁתִּי לְגַרְרִי: ב וְאַתְנַגְלִי לִיָּה יִי וְאָמַר לֹא תִיחֹת לְמַצְרַיִם שְׂרֵי בְּאַרְעָא דִּי אִמֵּר לָךְ: ג דוֹר בְּאַרְעָא דְקָדָא וְיִהְיֶה מִיִּמְרֵי בְּסַעֲדָךְ וְאַבְרָכִינֶךָ אֲרִי לָךְ וְלִבְנֶיךָ

וּרְבֵקָה אֶהְבֵּת אֶת־יַעֲקֹב: כט וַיִּזְד וַיַּעֲקֹב נֹזֵד וַיָּבֵא עֲשׂו מִן הַשָּׂדֶה וְהוּא עֵיף: ל וַיֹּאמֶר עֲשׂו אֶל־יַעֲקֹב הֲלֵעִיטְנִי נָא מִן־הָאָדָם הָאָדָם הַזֶּה כִּי עֵיף אָנֹכִי עַל־כֵּן קָרָא־שְׁמוֹ אָדוּם: לא וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב מְכַרָּה כְּיוֹם אֶת־בְּכֻרְתְּךָ לִי: לב וַיֹּאמֶר עֲשׂו הֲיֵה אֲנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ לָמוֹת וְלִמָּה־יָנִיחַ לִי בְּכַרְהָ: לד וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב הַשִּׁבְעָה לִי כְּיוֹם וַיִּשְׁבַּע לוֹ וַיִּמְכֹּר אֶת־בְּכֻרְתּוֹ לְיַעֲקֹב: לה וַיַּעֲקֹב נָתַן לְעֲשׂו לֶחֶם וַיִּזְד עֲדָשִׁים וַיֵּאכֵל וַיִּשְׂתֵּי וַיִּקָּם וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיָּבֹז עֲשׂו אֶת־הַבְּכֻרָה: פ כו « וַיְהִי רָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וְהָרָעַב הָרֵאשִׁוֹן אֲשֶׁר הָיָה בְּיַמֵּי אֲבָרְהָם וַיֵּלֶךְ יִצְחָק אֶל־אֲבִימֶלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ־פְּלִשְׁתִּים נְרָרָה: ג וַיִּרְא אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־תֵּרַד מִצְרַיִמָּה שָׁכֵן בְּאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֱלֹהֶיךָ: ג גֹּדֵר בְּאֶרֶץ הַזֹּאת וְאַהֲרִיָּה עִמָּךְ וְאַבְרָכֶךָ כִּי־לָךְ וְלִזְרַעֲךָ אֶתֵּן אֶת־כָּל־

רש"י

קטן<sup>3</sup>. אצל, כל שלשה ימים הראשונים אינו משיב שלום לכל אדם, וכל שכן שאינו שואל בתחלה, מג' ועד ז' משיב ואינו שואל וכו', ברש"י (ישן): (לא) מכרה ביום. כתרומתו כיום דילהו, כיום שהוא צרו, כך מכור לי מכירה צרורה: בכרתך. לפי שהעבודה צרכורה, אמר יעקב אין רשע זה כדאי שיקריב להקדש: (לג) הגה אנכי הולך למוות. (מתבודדת והולכת היא הצרכורה, שלא תהא כל עת העבודה צרכורה, כי שצט לוי יטול אותה. ועוד) אמר עשו מה טיבה של עבודה זו, אמר לו כמה אזכרות ועונשין ומיתות תלוין בה, כאותה ששנינו<sup>4</sup>, אלו הן שצמיחה, שחיי יין ופרועי ראש, אמר, אני הולך למוות על ידה, אם כן מה חפץ לי בה: (לד) ויבז עשו. העיד הכתוב על רשעו שצוה עבודתו של מקום: (ז) אל תרד מצרימה. שהיה דעתו לרדת למצרים כמו שירד אציו צימי הרעב, אמר לו אל תרד מצרימה, שאתה עולה

של עבר: (כח) בפיו. כתרומתו בפיו של יחזק. ומדרשו, בפיו של עשו, שהיה גד אורו ומרמכו דצדקו: (כט) ויזד. לשון ביטול כתרומתו: והוא עיף. צדקו<sup>1</sup>, כמה דתימא כי עיפה נפשי להורגים? (ל) הלעיטני. אפתח פי ושפוך הרבה לתוכה, כמו ששנינו, אין אוכסין את הגמל אצל מלעיטין אותו: מן האדום האדום. עדיש אדומות, ואותו היום מת אצרכס, שלא יראה את עשו בן זנו יולא לתרבות רעה, ואין זו טיבה טובה שהצטומו הקצ"ה, לפיכך קצר הקצ"ה כי שנים משנותיו, שיחזק חי ק"פ שנה, וזה קע"ה שנה, ובישל יעקב עדיש להצרות את האצל, ולמה עדיש שדומות גלגל, שהצלות גלגל החוזר בעולם. (ועוד מה עדיש אין להם פה, כך האצל אין לו פה, שאסור לדבר, ולפיכך המנהג להצרות את האצל בתחלת מאכלו בימים, שהם עגולים ואין להם פה, כך אצל אין לו פה, כדאמרינן צמועד

TORAS MENACHEM

Since Avraham commanded “his household after him to keep the way of God, doing charity and justice” (ibid 18:19), we can presume that Yitzchak too was educated to separate *ma'aser* from all of his possessions (in addition to the Torah’s explicit statement that he separated *ma'aser* from agricultural produce—26:12, and *Rashi* ibid.). Likewise, Yitzchak would have taught Ya’akov and Eisav to give *ma'aser* from all their personal belongings too.

In this light, Eisav’s question, “How does one take *ma'aser* from salt and straw?” was quite appropriate, as in their household it was customary to take *ma'aser* from all possessions, even salt and straw.

We are now only left with one question: What, exactly was Eisav asking with his inquiry, “How does one separate *ma'aser* from salt and straw?” Surely, one simply takes off a tenth (as *Bartenura* asks)?

However, there is a complication with salt and straw, as they are both substances of very little value, but when they are mixed with other things they can prove extremely important. E.g. salt is not merely a seasoning for food, but it brings out the flavor of the entire dish, without which it is

tasteless. Similarly, straw as it stands alone is mere animal fodder, but mixed with other components it can make bricks (see *Shemos* 5:7).

Hence, in an attempt to appear pious in his father’s eyes, Eisav devised an ingenious question: Do we simply take a tenth of the salt or straw as it is worth *now*, or do we take into consideration their increase in value when used in a final product, since that is when their genuine use becomes apparent? This would make a practical difference when the *ma'aser* was separated, because Avraham’s custom (which he passed on to his children) was not to separate *ma'aser* from each type of produce individually, but rather, to take a tenth of the value of “all his possessions” *collectively*. Thus there would be a difference in the total amount of *ma'aser*, depending on whether the salt and straw were evaluated as raw materials or not.

“This made his father think that he was precise in the observance of *mitzvos*,” as Eisav appeared to be paying attention to such subtle details within the obligations incumbent upon him.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 116ff)

<sup>29</sup> (On the day Avraham died), Ya'akov was cooking a (lentil) stew (to feed his father), when Eisav came (home) from the field, exhausted (from his murderous activities).

<sup>30</sup> Eisav said to Ya'akov, "Pour some of this red stuff (down my throat) because I'm exhausted!"—He was therefore given the name Edom (meaning "red").

<sup>31</sup> Ya'akov (thought that Eisav was not fit to perform the sacrificial services carried out by the firstborn, so he) said, "Sell me your birthright (so that I own it indisputably) like day(light)."

<sup>32</sup> Eisav replied, "Look, (with my lifestyle) I am going to (be punishable by) death (if I retain the right to sacrificial services) so why do I need this birthright?"

<sup>33</sup> Ya'akov said, "Swear to me (so that I own it indisputably) like day(light)." So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Ya'akov.

<sup>34</sup> Ya'akov gave bread and lentil stew to Eisav, who ate and drank. Then he got up and left. Eisav despised (the whole idea of serving God which came with) the birthright.

## 🌀 YITZCHAK MOVES TO GERAR BECAUSE OF FAMINE 🌀

**26** **T**here was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that had been in the days of Avraham. Yitzchak went to Avimelech, King of the Philistines, in Gerar.  
<sup>2</sup> God appeared to him, and said, "Do not go down to Egypt! Inhabit the land which I will tell you (about). <sup>3</sup> Settle in this land, and I will be with you and I will bless you. For I will give all these lands

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why did God tell Yitzchak not to go to Egypt? (v.2)

**RASHI:** He had in mind to go down to Egypt, as his father had gone down in the days of the famine. God said to him, "Do not go down to Egypt! You are a perfect burnt offering, and being outside the Land [of Israel] is not fitting for you.

**MIDRASH:** The verse states, "Settle in this land" (v. 3). Rabbi Hoshiyah said, "[Yitzchak had the sanctity of] a perfect burnt offering. Just like a burnt offering is invalidated if it is taken outside its prescribed area, likewise, if you go outside the Land [of Israel] you will be invalidated (*Bereishis Rabah* 64:3).

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🌀 "A PERFECT BURNT OFFERING" (v. 2-3)

While, *Rashi* and the **Midrash** seem to be making similar points, there are nevertheless two important differences between them: a.) The *Midrash* bases itself on verse 3, "Settle in this Land," a *positive* statement, whereas *Rashi's* comment is based on the *negative* verse 2, "Do not go down to Egypt" b.) The *Midrash* stresses that leaving the Land of Israel would render Yitzchak "invalidated." *Rashi* merely writes, "Being outside the Land [of Israel] is not fitting for you."

These two points are connected: The *Midrash* sees the Land of Israel as being the *appropriate place* for a "perfect burnt offering," therefore it cites the *positive* verse, "Settle in the Land." *Rashi*, however, stresses the *negative qualities* of the Diaspora ("being outside the Land is not fitting for you") so he quotes the *negative* verse, "Do not go down to Egypt."

What is the underlying difference between *Rashi* and the *Midrash*?

#### THE EXPLANATION

At first glance, one might presume that, according to the *Midrash*, Yitzchak was prohibited by God from leaving the Land of Israel because of its holiness, i.e. a positive quality. *Rashi* on the other hand was of the opinion that the land did not possess any holiness during the time of the Patriarchs, so he merely stressed the negative qualities of the Diaspora.

However, it was explained above (*Toras Menachem* to *Lech Lecha* 15:18) that according to *all* opinions, the Land of Israel did not possess holiness at that time. Therefore *Rashi* and the *Midrash* would not be arguing about this point. Rather, the following distinction could be argued.

a.) *Opinion of the Midrash.*

The *Midrash* states, "Just as a burnt offering is invalidated if it is taken outside its prescribed area, likewise, etc.," This is based on the principle that every sacrifice has its prescribed area. Some sacrifices may not be

## 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

### "EISAV DESPISED THE BIRTHRIGHT..." (v. 34)

**E**ven though Eisav's moral and spiritual standing was extremely low, to the extent that he "*despised (the whole idea of serving God which came with) the birthright,*" and his very disposition indicated that he was a murderous person (*Rashi* to 25:25); nevertheless, we still find later on that Ya'akov sent messengers ("angels") to inform Eisav that he was at peace with him, and sought his affection (see *Vayishlach* 32:4; *Rashi* to v. 6 *ibid.*).

From this we can learn a powerful lesson: We should "reach out" and "send messengers" even to those Jews who appear to be on the level of Eisav. Even such a Jew is your "brother," who needs to be treated in a pleasant and peace-loving manner, with love and affection. He needs to be drawn closer to the Torah with "ropes of love" (*Tanya* ch. 32).

(Based on *Hisvaduyos* 5746, vol. 1, p. 693)

אתן ית כל ארעתא האלין ואקים ית קומא די קומית לאברהם אבנד: ד ואסני ית בניד ככוכבי שמיא ואתן לבניד ית כל ארעתא האלין ויתברכו בניד כל עממי ארעא: ה חלף די קבל אברהם למימרי ונטר מטרת מימרי פקודי קימי ואורתי: ו ותיב יצחק בגר: ז ושאלו אנשי אתרא על עיסק אתתיה ואמר אחתי היא ארי החיל למימר אתתי דלמא יקטלונני אנשי אתרא על רבקה ארי שפירת חייו היא: ח והנה פד סגיא ליה תמן יומיא ואסתכי אבימלך מלכא דפלשתאי מן הרפא והוא והא יצחק מחייד עם רבקה אתתיה: ט וקרא אבימלך ליצחק ואמר ברם הא אתתך היא ואיכדן אמרת אחתי היא ואמר ליה יצחק ארי אמרת דילמא אימות עלה: י ואמר אבימלך מא דא עבדת לנא פועיר פון שכיב דמוחד בעמא עם אתתך ואיתיתא עלנא חובא: יא ופקיד אבימלך ית כל עמא למימר דינויק לנברא דדין ולא אתתיה אתקטלא יתקטל: יב וזרע יצחק בארץ ההיא ואשכח בשתא

הארצת האל והקמתי את-השבעה אשר נשבעתי לאברהם אביד: ד והרביתי את-זרעך ככוכבי השמים ונתתי לזרעך את כל-הארצת האל והתברכו בזרעך כל גויי הארץ: ה עקב אשר-שמע אברהם בקלי וישמר משמרתִי מצותי חקותי ותורתִי: [שני] ו ישב יצחק בגר: ז וישאלו אנשי המקום לאשתו ויאמר אחתי הוא כי ירא לאמר אשתי פן-יהרגני אנשי המקום על-רבקה כי טובת מראה הוא: ח ויהי כי ארכו-לו שם הימים וישקף אבימלך מלך פלשתים בעד החלון וירא והנה יצחק מצחק את רבקה אשתו: ט ויקרא אבימלך ליצחק ויאמר אך הנה אשתך הוא ואיך אמרת אחתי הוא ויאמר אליו יצחק כי אמרתי פן-אמות עליה: י ויאמר אבימלך מה-זאת עשית לנו כמעט שכב אחד העם את-אשתך והבאת עלינו אשם: יא ויצו אבימלך את-כל-העם לאמר הנניע באיש הזה ובאשתו מות יומת: יב ויזרע יצחק בארץ ההוא וימצא בשנה ההוא מאה שערים

כ"ט

שטעטן, שאין טעם בדבר אלא גזירת המלך וחקותיו על עצדיו: ותורתו. להביא תורה שבעל פה, הלכה למשה מסיני: (f) לאשתו. על אשתו, כמו אמרי לי אחי הוא<sup>3</sup>: (ח) בני ארבו. אמר, מעתה אין לי לדאוג, מאחר שלא אנסוכ עד עכשיו, ולא נזכר להיות נשמר: וישקף אבימלך וגו'. שראוכו משמש מטתו: (י) אחד העם. המיוחד צעם, זה המלך: והבאת עלינו אשם. אם שכב, כבר הצאת אשם עלינו: (יב) בארץ ההוא. אף על פי שאינה חשובה כארץ ישראל עומה, כארץ שבעת הגוים<sup>4</sup>: בשנה ההוא. אף על פי שאינה כחקה, שביטה שנת רעזון<sup>5</sup>: בארץ ההוא בשנה ההוא. שיהס למה, לומר שהארץ קשה והשנה קשה: מאה שערים. שאמדוכ כמה

תמימה, ואין חולק לארץ כדאי לך: (ג) האל. כמו האלה: (ד) והתברכו בזרעך. אדם אומר לבני יחא זרעך כזרעו של יצחק, וכן בכל המקרא, וזה אב לכולן, כך יברך ישראל לאמר ישמך וגו', ואף לענין הקללה מלינו כן, וביטה האשה לאלה, שהמקלל שונאו אומר תהא כפלונית, וכן והנחתם שמכם לשבעה לזחירי<sup>1</sup>, שהנשבע אומר, אהא כפלוני אם עשיתי כך וכך: (ה) שמע אברהם בקולי. כשנסיתי אותו: וישמור משמרתִי. גזרות להרחקה על אזכרות שפתורה, כגון שניות לעריות<sup>2</sup>, ושבות לשבת: מצותי. דברים שאילו לא נכתבו ראיון כן להטעות, כגון גזל ושפיכות דמים: חקותי. דברים שירר הרע ואומות העולם משיבין עליהם, כגון אכילת חזיר ולבישת

#### TORAS MENACHEM

taken out of the Temple courtyard; others, of a lesser degree of holiness, may not be taken outside Jerusalem; the Pesach Sacrifice may not be taken outside the group of people who are assigned to eat it, and so on. This principle has nothing to do with holiness of the land, but rather, it is a general law that every sacrifice has its own prescribed area outside of which the meat may not be taken (see *Tosfos to Makos 18a*).

Thus, we can presume that since Yitzchak was considered to be a "burnt offering" from when he was offered up on the Altar by the Akeida, there was a specific prescribed area within which he must not leave.

What were the boundaries of this area?

It was explained above (*ibid.*) that, according to the *Midrash in Parshas Lech Lecha*, Avraham and his family actually were granted ownership of the Land of Israel at the Covenant of the Parts. If we presume that the *Midrash in Parshas Lech Lecha* is consistent with the *Midrash here*, then

it follows that the prohibition against Yitzchak leaving the Land of Israel is connected with Avraham's ownership of the land.

Therefore, when Avraham offered up Yitzchak on the Altar as a burnt offering, the entire Land of Israel became the prescribed area of the "sacrifice," since this was a natural boundary, based on the fact that Avraham owned the entire land. Consequently the Diaspora became a prohibited area for Yitzchak.

b.) *Opinion of Rashi*

*Rashi*, however, rejected the notion that the Land of Israel was given to Avraham at the Covenant of the Parts. Therefore, he was forced to adopt a different approach from the *Midrash*.

*Rashi* explained earlier, in *Parshas Chayei Sarah*, that when Avraham sent his servant Eliezer to find a wife for Yitzchak, he said, "Now He is the God of the heaven and the God of the earth, because I have made it

to you and to your descendants, and I will uphold the oath that I swore to Avraham, your father. <sup>4</sup> I will multiply your descendants like the stars of the heavens, and I will give your descendants all these lands. All the nations of the Earth will give blessings to each other by (comparing themselves to) your descendants. <sup>5</sup> (All this is) because Avraham listened to My voice (when I tested him); he guarded My (secondary prohibitions that) protect (a person from transgressing Biblical prohibitions), My rational commands, My supra-rational commands, and My instructions (in the Oral Law).”

SECOND  
READING

<sup>6</sup> So, Yitzchak settled in Gerar. <sup>7</sup> When the local men asked about his wife, he said, “She is my sister,” because he was afraid to say, “(She is) my wife,” (because he said to himself,) “perhaps the local men will kill me because of Rivkah, for she is pleasant looking.”

<sup>8</sup> Then, when he had been there for many days (he felt it was safe to stop pretending as if Rivkah was his sister). Avimelech, king of the Philistines, looked through the window, and he saw—look!—Yitzchak was courting Rivkah, his wife.

<sup>9</sup> Avimelech summoned Yitzchak, and he said, “She really is your wife! How could you have said, ‘She is my sister?’”

Yitzchak said to him, “Because I said (to myself), ‘perhaps I’ll die because of her.’”

<sup>10</sup> “What have you done to us?” said Avimelech. “(I the king,) the highest of the people, might easily have lain with your wife, and (if I had done so) you would have brought guilt upon us.”

<sup>11</sup> Avimelech instructed all the people, saying, “Whoever touches this man or his wife will be put to death.”

## 🌀 YITZCHAK PROSPERS 🌀

26:12 **Y**itzchak sowed (crops) in that land (which was not as fertile as the main part of the Land of Israel), and he found (even) in that year (which was a bad one for crops, that the land yielded) a hundred times (more than average)—and God blessed him.

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● How did they know that the land yielded a hundred times more than average? (v. 12)

**RASHI:** They had estimated how much the land was fit to produce, and it produced one hundred measures for each measure that they had estimated. Our Rabbis said that the purpose of this estimate was for separating *ma’aser* (tithes).

**MIDRASH:** There is a principle that God’s blessing does not rest on something which is weighed, measured or counted. However, in the case of measuring for a *mitzvah*, this principle does not apply. Therefore, Yitzchak measured the field for the purposes of tithing.

**GUR ARYEH:** We see from the *Midrash* that *Rashi’s* two comments are one single explanation: Yitzchak measured the field specifically for a *mitzvah*, and therefore he received God’s blessings.

### TORAS MENACHEM

*habitual for creatures to mention Him. But, when He took me from my father’s house, He was the God of the heavens but not the God of the earth, because mankind did not acknowledge Him, and His Name was not commonplace on the earth” (Rashi to 24:7).*

From this we see that, according to *Rashi*, the Land of Israel (where Avraham lived) had become a place where it was “habitual” for people to mention God, in contrast to the Diaspora where “mankind did not acknowledge Him.”

On this basis, *Rashi* concluded that God told Yitzchak not to leave the Land of Israel because, being a holy entity (a perfect burnt offering), it was not appropriate for him to reside in a place where “mankind did not acknowledge” the Almighty.

Nevertheless, *Rashi’s* choice of the phrase, “I have made it *habitual* for creatures to mention Him,” suggests that the local Cana’anite residents

had not come to a genuine recognition of God. Rather, they had merely been trained to mention God’s Name, and even that was only done *habitually*. Consequently, *Rashi* could not stress that Yitzchak needed to stay in the Land of Israel for a *positive* reason, since the habitual, insincere “mention” of God’s name by Cana’anite “creatures” was not a quality worth staying for. Therefore, *Rashi* stressed the negative features of the Diaspora, which was something inappropriate for Yitzchak, who was “a perfect burnt offering.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 200ff.)

#### 🌀 YITZCHAK’S HUNDRED-FOLD BLESSING (V. 12)

After explaining that Yitzchak compared the yield of his land with that year’s expected yield, *Rashi* continues with the explanation of “our Rabbis” that, “the purpose of this estimate was for separating *ma’aser*.”

ההיא על חר מִאֵה בְדַשְׁעֲרוֹהִי וּבְרַבִּיהִי יִי: יי וּרְבָא נִבְרָא וְאוּל אֲוִיל וְרַבִּי עַד דִּי רַבָּא לְחֵדָא: יד וְהוּוּ לִיה גִּיתִי עָנָא וְגִיתִי תוּרִי וּפּוֹלְחָנָא סְנִיא וְקִנְיָאוּ בֵּיה פְּלִשְׁתָּאִי: טו וְכַל בִּירִין דִּי חֲפְרוּ עֲבָדֵי אֲבוּהִי בְיוֹמֵי אֲבָרְהָם אֲבוּהִי טַמּוֹנֵן פְּלִשְׁתָּאִי וּמְלוֹנֵן עִפְרָא: טז וְאִמֵּר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ לִיצְחָק אוּל מִעֲמָנָא אֲרִי תִקְפֵּתָא מִנְנָא לְחֵדָא: יז וְאוּל מִתְּמֵן יִצְחָק וְיִשְׂרָא בְּנַחֲלָא דְגִרָר וּיְתִיב תְּמָן: יח וְתֵב יִצְחָק וְחֲפַר יֵת בִּירֵי דְמִנְיָא דִּי חֲפְרוּ בְיוֹמֵי אֲבָרְהָם אֲבוּהִי וְטַמּוֹנֵן פְּלִשְׁתָּאִי בְּתַר דְּמִית אֲבָרְהָם וְקִרָא לְהוֹן שְׂמֵהוֹן כְּשִׂמְהוֹן דִּי הוּוּ קִרִּי לְהוֹן אֲבוּהִי: יט וְחֲפְרוּ עֲבָדֵי יִצְחָק בְּנַחֲלָא וְאִשְׁכְּחוּ תְּמָן בִּירָא דְמִינֵי נְבֻעִין: כ וְנִצּוּ רַעוּתָא דְגִרָר עִם רַעוּתָא דִּיצְחָק לְמִימַר דִּי לָנָא מִיָּא וְקִרָא שְׂמָא דְבִירָא עִסְקָא אֲרִי אֲתַעֲסִקוּ עִמִּיהָ: כא וְחֲפְרוּ בִירָא אַחֲרֵי וְנִצּוּ אַף עֲלֵהּ וְקִרָא שְׂמָה שְׂמֵנָה: כב וְאִסְתַּלַּק מִתְּמֵן וְחֲפַר בִּירָא אַחֲרֵי וְלֹא נִצּוּ עֲלֵהּ וְקִרָא שְׂמָה רַחוּבוֹת וְאִמֵּר אֲרִי כִעֵן אִפְתִּי יִי לָנָא וְנִפּוּשׁ (וְיִפְשַׁנָּא)

וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ יְהוָה: (שלישין) יג וַיִּגְדַּל הָאִישׁ וַיֵּלֶךְ הַלֹּךְ וַיִּגְדַּל עַד כִּי־גָדַל מְאֹד: יד וַיְהִי־לּוֹ מְקַנְהָ צֹאן וּמְקַנְהָ בָקָר וַעֲבָדָה רַבָּה וַיִּקְנֵאוּ אֹתוֹ פְּלִשְׁתִּים: טו וְכָל־הַבְּאֵרֹת אֲשֶׁר חָפְרוּ עֲבָדֵי אָבִיו בְּיַמֵּי אֲבָרְהָם אָבִיו סִתְּמוּם פְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיִּמְלְאוּם עֶפְרָא: טז וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ אֶל־יִצְחָק לֵךְ מֵעַמְּנֵנוּ כִּי־עֲצַמְתָּ מִמֶּנּוּ מְאֹד: יז וַיֵּלֶךְ מִשָּׁם יִצְחָק וַיַּחַן בְּנַחֲל־גִרָר וַיֵּשֶׁב שָׁם: יח וַיֵּשֶׁב יִצְחָק וַיַּחֲפַר אֶת־בְּאֵרֹת הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר חָפְרוּ בְיַמֵּי אֲבָרְהָם אָבִיו וַיִּסְתְּמוּם פְּלִשְׁתִּים אַחֲרֵי מוֹת אֲבָרְהָם וַיִּקְרָא לָהֶן שְׁמוֹת כְּשִׁמְתֹת אֲשֶׁר־קִרָא לָהֶן אָבִיו: יט וַיַּחֲפְרוּ עֲבָדֵי־יִצְחָק בְּנַחֲל וַיִּמְצְאוּ־שָׁם בְּאֵר מַיִם חַיִּים: כ וַיְרִיבוּ רַעֲיֵי גִרָר עִם־רַעֲיֵי יִצְחָק לֵאמֹר לָנוּ הַמַּיִם וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם־הַבְּאֵר עֵשֶׂק כִּי הִתְעַשְׂקוּ עִמּוֹ: כא וַיַּחֲפְרוּ בְּאֵר אַחֲרֵת וַיְרִיבוּ גַם־עָלֶיהָ וַיִּקְרָא שְׂמָה שְׂמֵנָה: כב וַיִּעַתֶּק מִשָּׁם וַיַּחֲפַר בְּאֵר אַחֲרֵת וְלֹא רָבוּ עָלֶיהָ וַיִּקְרָא שְׂמָה רַחוּבוֹת וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי־עָתָה הִרְחִיב יְהוָה לָנוּ וּפְרִינוּ בְּאֶרֶץ:

רש"י

עלינו. טמונין פלשתאי, לשון סתימה, וזלשון התלמוד מטמטס את כל: (יז) בנחל גרר. רחוק מן העיר: (יח) יושב ויחפר. את בצרות אשר חפרו צימי אזרחים אציו, ופלשתים סתמוס, וקודם שנסע יצחק מגרר, חזר וחפרן: (כ) עשק. ערעור: כי התעשקו עמו. נתעשקו עמו עליה צמריכה וערעור: (כא) שטנה. נושמי"ט: (כב) ופרינו בארץ. תרגומו וניפוש צלרעא:

ראוייה לעשות, ועשה על אחת שאמדוכ, מאה. ורבותינו אמרו, אומד זה למעשרות כיה: (יג) כי גדל מאד. שכיו אומרים זל פרדותיו של יצחק, ולא כספו וזכבו של אבימלך: (יד) ועבדה רבה. פעולה רבה, זלשון לע"ז אצורויני"א, עזזקה משמע עבודה אחת. עזזקה משמע פעולה רבה: (טו) סתמום פלשתים. מפני שאמרו תקלה הם לנו מפני כגייסות הצרות

## TORAS MENACHEM

This begs the question: What is lacking with *Rashi's* first explanation, that led him to bring the interpretation of the Rabbis?

**Gur Aryeh**, following the **Midrash**, explains that *Rashi* was troubled as to why Yitzchak would measure his field, knowing that "God's blessing does not rest on something which is weighed, measured or counted."

However, at the literal level of Torah interpretation, there is no indication that this was Yitzchak's concern. Therefore, it is difficult to accept that this was *Rashi's* problem.

So what forced *Rashi* to conclude that Yitzchak measured the field for the purposes of separating *ma'aser*, and not simply because he had wanted to estimate its approximate yield at the time of purchase, to see if he was being charged the correct price?

## THE EXPLANATION

A key distinction between *Rashi's* two explanations, concerns the time at which the estimate was made. According to *Rashi's* first interpretation—that Yitzchak measured the field to estimate how much it would yield—he obviously measured it before the crops had grown, presumably when purchasing the field, to assess its value. However, according to *Rashi's* second interpretation (from "our Rabbis") that he measured it for the purposes of separating *ma'aser*, it turns out that

Yitzchak would have measured the crops *after* they had fully grown, since *ma'aser* is one tenth of the *actual* yield.

Obviously (according to both interpretations) the blessing of finding one hundred-fold must have occurred *after* Yitzchak had made his calculations, otherwise he would have no way of knowing that the magnitude of the increase was one hundredfold.

Thus, according to *Rashi's* second interpretation (that he measured for the purposes of separating *ma'aser*), the one-hundredfold increase would have occurred *after* Yitzchak measured them. Thus, a great miracle must have occurred, that the crops increased onehundred fold, *after* they had fully grown!

According to the first interpretation, however, that Yitzchak estimated how much the field would produce in advance, the one-hundredfold increase could have occurred more naturally, throughout the entire period of the crops' growth. Thus, *Rashi* placed this interpretation first, as it is more acceptable at the literal level.

Nevertheless, there is a problem with the first interpretation which led *Rashi* to add the explanation of the Rabbis:

According to *Rashi*, the land where Yitzchak was situated was infertile, and that year was a famine (*Rashi* to beginning of v. 12). Though it would

THIRD  
READING

<sup>13</sup> *The man (Yitzchak) became prosperous, and he grew constantly greater until he had grown very great (even in comparison to Avimelech). <sup>14</sup> He had flocks of sheep and cattle and many enterprises, and the Philistines envied him. <sup>15</sup> The Philistines stopped up all the wells that his father's servants had dug in the days of Avraham, his father, and they filled them with earth.*

<sup>16</sup> *Avimelech said to Yitzchak, "Go away from us, for you have become much stronger than us."*

<sup>17</sup> *Yitzchak went away from there, set up camp in the Gerar valley, and settled there.*

<sup>18</sup> *(However, before he left Gerar) Yitzchak re-dug the water wells which had been dug in the days of his father, Avraham, and were stopped up by the Philistines after Avraham's death. He gave them names; the same names that his father had given them.*

<sup>19</sup> *(After settling) in the valley, Yitzchak's servants dug, and they found there a well of living waters.*

<sup>20</sup> *The shepherds of Gerar argued with Yitzchak's shepherds, saying, "The water is ours," so he named the well "Aisek" ("argument"), because they had argued with him.*

<sup>21</sup> *They dug another well, and the (shepherds) quarreled about it also, so he named it Sitnah ("harassment").*

<sup>22</sup> *He moved away from there and dug another well. They did not quarrel over it, so he named it Rechovos. He said, "For now God has made space ("hirschiv") for us, and we will be fruitful in the land."*

## CLASSIC QUESTIONS

## ● Why does the Torah inform us that Yitzchak dug three wells? (v. 19-22)

**RAMBAN:** This account does not appear to have much significance at the literal level. However, there is a hidden meaning here, that the three wells hint to the three Holy Temples. The first well, named *Aisek* ("argument"), alludes to the First Temple, which was contested by the nations, who oppressed the Jewish people with wars, until they destroyed it. The second well, *Sitnah* ("harassment"), is a name actually used by scripture to refer to the Second Temple (see *Ezra* 4:6). The third well was called *Rechovos* ("spacious"), alluding to the future Third Temple which will be built without quarrel or feud, when God will expand our borders, speedily, in our days.

## TORAS MENACHEM

have been quite surprising for Yitzchak to find one hundred times more than the average yield for that year, nevertheless, even that would not have made him prosperous, since the average for that year was so pitiful. The Torah, however, appears to indicate that Yitzchak *did* become wealthy from the harvest, as the next verse continues, "*The man (Yitzchak) became prosperous.*"

Therefore, in order to explain why he became prosperous, *Rashi*

brought the second explanation "of the Rabbis," that Yitzchak's yield multiplied miraculously one hundred times after it had already grown. This yield would have been much greater, since we are speaking here of 100 times Yitzchak's *real* yield, rather than 100 times the estimated average local yield. And surely, Yitzchak—being a *tzadik*—would have been blessed by God to reap *well above* the average yield for that year.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 121ff; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Toldos* 5727)

## 🔥 Sparks of Chasidus 🔥

According to **Ramban**, the three wells dug by Yitzchak allude to the three Holy Temples. The analogy of digging a well precisely describes the process of building the Temple: First there is a phase of intense physical effort to dig the well, followed by the actual filling of the well with water which does not require any direct effort, it simply floods in. Similarly, the building of the Temple requires tremendous human effort, but the indwelling of the *Shechinah* (Divine Presence)—which is the very purpose of building the Temple—is an effortless consequence of the Temple's construction.

This analogy appears to break down, however, in the case of the Third Temple which, according to the *Zohar* (III 221a), will be built by God, and not by man. It seems at first glance that *Ramban's* analogy for the Third temple of *digging* a well is inappropriate.

However, even according to the *Zohar*, the Third Temple is built through human effort too. Not through the physical effort of working with stones and mortar, but rather, by the dedicated acts of supra-rational *mitzvah* observance by Jewish people, in defiance of the challenges of exile. The cumulative effects of these acts are thus described by the *Zohar* as a "building made by God," though in fact, it is a building made by human *mitzvah* acts that are *totally dedicated* to God.

Thus, the building process of the Third Temple consists of *mitzvos* performed out of simple obedience to God. Therefore, they are eternal.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, p.116ff.)

בארעא: כג וסלק מתמן לבאר שבע: כד ואתגלי ליה יי בליליא ההוא ואמר אנא אלהה דאברהם אבוד לא תדחל ארי בסעדך מימרי ואברכנך ואסגי נת בניך גדיל אברהם עבדי: כה ובנא תמן מדבחה ועלי בשמא דיי ופרסיה תמן למשכניה וברו תמן עבדי יצחק בירא: כו ואבימלך אול לותיה מגרר וסיעת מרחמוהי ופיכול רב חיליה: כז ואמר להון יצחק מא דין אתיתון לותי ואתון סניתון יתי ושלחתיני מלותכון: כח ואמרו מחזא חוינא ארי הנה מימרא דיי בסעדך ואמרנא תתקום כען מומתא דהוה בין אברהמא בינא ובינך ונגור קום עמך: כט אם תעבד עמנא בישא כמא די לא אנזיקנך וכמא די עבדנא עמך לחוד טב ושלחנך בשלם את כען בריכא דיי: ל ועבד להון משתיא ואכלו ושתיאו: לא ואקדימו בצפרא וקיימו גבר לאחויי ושלחינו יצחק ואולו מלותיה בשלם: לב והוה ביומא ההוא ואתו עבדי יצחק וחויאו ליה על עיסק בירא די חפרו ואמרו ליה אשכחנא מיא: לג וקרא יתה שבעה על פן שמא דקרתא באר שבע עד יומא הדין: לד והוה עשו בר ארבעין שנין ונסיב אתתא ית יהודית בת בארי התאה וית בשמת בת אילון התאה: לה והואה מסרבן ומרגון על מימר יצחק ולרבקה: א והוה פד

ורביעין כג ויעל משם באר שבע: כד וירא אליו יהוה בלילה ההוא ויאמר אנכי אלהי אברהם אביך אל-תירא כי-אתך אנכי וברכתוך והרביתי את-זרעך בעבור אברהם עבדי: כה ויבן שם מזבח ויקרא בשם יהוה ויט-שם אהלו ויכרו-שם עבדי-יצחק באר: כו ואבימלך הלך אליו מגרר ואחזת מרעהו ופיכל שר-צבאו: כז ויאמר אלהם יצחק מדוע באתם אלי ואתם שנאתם אתי ותשלחוני מאתכם: כח ויאמרו ראו ראינו כי-היה יהוה | עמך ונאמר תהי נא אלה בינותינו בינינו ובינך ונברתה ברית עמך: כט אם-תעשה עמנו רעה באשר לא נגענך וכאשר עשינו עמך רק-טוב ונשלחך בשלום אתה עתה ברוך יהוה: לח המישו ל ויעש להם משתה ויאכלו וישתו: לא וישכמו בבקר וישבעו איש לאחיו וישלחם יצחק וילכו מאתו בשלום: לב ויהי | ביום ההוא ויבאו עבדי יצחק ויגדו לו על-אדות הבאר אשר חפרו ויאמרו לו מצאנו מים: לג ויקרא אתה שבעה על-פן שם-העיר באר שבע עד היום הזה: ס לד ויהי עשו בן-ארבעים שנה ויקח אשה את-יהודית בת-בארי החתי ואת-בשמת בת-אילן החתי: לה ותהיין מרת רוח ליצחק ולרבקה: ס כז א ויהי כן-

כש"י

אציק, תהי גס עתה צנינו וצניק: (כט) לא נגענוך. כשאמרנו לך לך מעמנו: אתה. גס אתה (ס"א עתה) עשה לנו כמו כן: (לג) שבעה. על שם הכרית: (לד) בן ארבעים שנה. עשו היב נמשל לחזיר, שנאמר יכרסמנה חזיר מיער<sup>5</sup>, החזיר הזה, כשהוא שוכב פושט טלפיו לומר ראו שאני טכור, כך אלו גזולים וחומסים, ומראים עלמם כשרים. כל מ' שנה היב עשו לד נשים מתחת יד צעליהן, ומענה אותם, כשהיב בן מ', אמר, אבא בן מ' שנה נשא אשה, אף אני כן: (לכ) מורת רוח. לשון המראת רוח, כמו ממריס כייסס<sup>6</sup>, כל מעשיהן היו להכעיס ולעצבן: ליצחק ולרבקה. שהיו עוזרות

(כו) ואחזת מרעהו. כחרגומו וסיעת מרחמוהי סיעת מאוכזביו. ויש פותרין מרעהו מ' מיסוד התיבה<sup>1</sup>, כמו שלשים מרעיס<sup>2</sup> דשמשון, כדי שתהיב תיבת ואחוזת דבוקה, אצל אין דרך ארץ לדבר על המלכות כן, סיעת אוכזביו, שאם כן כל סיעת אוכזביו חוליך עמו, ולא היב לו אלא סיעה אחת של אוכזבים, לכן יש לפותרו כלשון כראשון. ואל תתמה על תי"ו של אחזת, ואף על פי שאינה תיבה סמוכה, יש דוגמתה במקרא עזרת מזר<sup>3</sup>, ושכורת ולא מיינ<sup>4</sup>: אחזת. לשון קבולה ואגודה, שנאחזין יחד: (כח) ראו ראינו. ראו צאציק ראינו כך: תהי נא אלה בינותינו וגו'. האלה אשר ציוותינו מימי

	ALIAS (PARSHAS TOLDOS)	REAL NAME (PARSHAS VAYISHLACH)
EISAV'S WIVES	YEHUDIS, DAUGHTER OF BE'AIRIY THE CHITITE (26:34)	AHALIVAMAH, DAUGHTER OF TZIVON THE CHITITE (36:2)
	BASMAS, DAUGHTER OF AILON THE CHITITE (26:34)	ADAH, DAUGHTER OF AILON THE CHITITE (36:2)
	MACHALAS, DAUGHTER OF YISHMA'EL (28:9)	BASMAS, DAUGHTER OF YISHMA'EL (36:3)



FOURTH  
READING

<sup>23</sup> He went up from there to Be'er-Sheva. <sup>24</sup> That night, God appeared to him and said, "I am the God of Avraham, your father. Do not be afraid, because I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for the sake of Avraham, My servant."

<sup>25</sup> He built an altar there, and he (prayed) in the Name of God. He pitched his tent there, and Yitzchak's servants dug a well there.

### 🌀 AVIMELECH SWEARS AN OATH WITH YITZCHAK 🌀

26:26

**A**vimelech went to him from Gerar with a group of his companions and Pichol, his army-general. <sup>27</sup> Yitzchak said to them, "Why have you come to me, if you hate me, and you sent me away from you?"

<sup>28</sup> They said, "We see that God was with you (and) we saw (that God was with your father), so we said: Let the oath that was between us (from the days of your father) be between ourselves and you. Let us form a covenant with you, <sup>29</sup> that you do no harm to us, just like as have not touched you. And, just as we only treated you well and we sent you away in peace, you too—blessed one of God—now (do the same)."

FIFTH  
READING

<sup>30</sup> (Yitzchak) made a feast for them, and they ate and drank. <sup>31</sup> They got up early in the morning and swore an oath with each other. Yitzchak sent them off, and they went away from him in peace.

<sup>32</sup> Then, on that same day, Yitzchak's servants came and told him about the well that they had dug. They said to him, "We have found water." <sup>33</sup> He named it Shivah ("oath"). The city is therefore called Be'er-sheva to this very day.

### 🌀 EISAV MARRIES 🌀

<sup>34</sup> When Eisav was forty years old he married Yehudis, the daughter of Be'airiy the Chitite, and Basmah, the daughter of Ailon the Chitite. <sup>35</sup> (Their idol-worship) tormented Yitzchak and Rivkah.

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

##### ● Why did Eisav marry when he was forty years old? (v. 34)

**RASHI:** Eisav has been compared to a pig, as the verse states, "The pig from the forest gnaws at it" (Ps. 80:14). This pig, when it lies down, stretches out its hooves, as if to say, "See, I am a clean (kosher) animal." So do these [descendants of Eisav] rob and plunder and then pretend to be honorable. For forty years, Eisav kidnapped wives from their husbands and violated them. When he was forty years old, he said, "My father married at forty. I too will do the same."

#### TORAS MENACHEM

##### 🌀 EISAV'S WIVES (v. 34)

In *Parshas Vayishlach*, when Eisav's descendants are listed, the Torah reveals the true names of Eisav's wives (36:2-3). *Rashi* (ibid.) explains the significance of each of the pseudonyms that are used here in *Parshas Toldos*. However, one detail *Rashi* does not explain is why the name of Yehudis's father is changed here from Tzivon the Chitite to Be'airiy the Chitite.

There is another, more general question: What is the connection between Eisav's marriage and the preceding passage, about Yitzchak's digging of wells and the oath with Avimelech?

##### THE EXPLANATION

According to *Rashi*, Eisav married at the age of forty to fool people into thinking that he was a loyal son who followed in his father's footsteps, to the extent that he even married at the same age. In this vein, *Rashi*

### 🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

The Talmud states that in the future redemption we will say to Yitzchak, "You are our father," more so than to the other Patriarchs (*Shabbos* 89b). This messianic quality of Yitzchak is evident here in the account of how Avimelech came of his own volition to make peace with Yitzchak (v. 26ff.), an act which is reminiscent of the time when, "in the End of Days, the mountain of God's house will be established on the top of the mountains... all nations will flood to it...and many people will go and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of God.'" (*Isaiah* 2:2-3).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, pp. 127-8)

סיב יצחק וכתביו עינוהי מלמחזי וקרא ית  
 עשו בריה רבא ואמר ליה ברי ואמר ליה  
 הא אגא: ב ואמר הא כען סיבית לית אגא  
 ידע יומא דאימות: ג וכען סב כען וננד סיפוד  
 וקשתה ופוק לחקלא וצוד לי צידא: ד ועבד  
 לי תבשילין כמא די רחימית ותעיל לי  
 ואיכול בדיל די תברכינך נפשי עד לא  
 אימות: ה ורבקה שמעת כד מליל יצחק עם  
 עשו בריה ואזל עשו לחקלא למיצד צידא  
 לאותאה: ו ורבקה אמרת ליעקב ברה  
 למימר הא שמעית ית אבוד ממלל עם עשו  
 אבוד למימר: ז איתי לי צידא ועבד לי  
 תבשילין ואיכול ואברכינך קדם יי קדם  
 מותי: ח וכען ברי קביל מני למא די אגא  
 מפקדא יתך: ט אזיל כען לות ענא וסב לי  
 מתמן תרין גדיי (בר) עזין טגן ואעבד ותהון  
 תבשילין לאבוד כמא די רחים: י ותיתי  
 לאבוד ויכול בדיל די יברכינך קדם מותיה:  
 יא ואמר יעקב לרבקה אמיה הא עשו אחי  
 גבר שערן ואגא גבר שעיע: יב מאים

יצחק ותבחינו עינוי מראת ויקרא את-עשו | בנו הגדל  
 ויאמר אליו בני ויאמר אליו הנני: ב ויאמר הנהגא וקנתי לא  
 ידעתי יום מותי: ג ועתה שאגא בליך תליך וקשתך וצא  
 השדה וצוד לי צידה [ק' ציד]: ד ועשה לי מטעמים כאשר  
 אהבתי והביאה לי ואכלה בעבור תברכה נפשי בטרם  
 אמות: ה ורבקה שמעת בדבר יצחק אל-עשו בנו וילך עשו  
 השדה לצוד ציד להביא: ו ורבקה אמרה אל-יעקב בנה  
 לאמר הנה שמעתי את-אביך מדבר אל-עשו אחיך לאמר:  
 הביאה לי ציד ועשה לי מטעמים ואכלה ואברכה לפני  
 יהוה לפני מותי: ח ועתה בני שמע בקלי לאשר אני מצנה  
 אתך: ט לךגא אל-הצאן וקח לי משם שני גדיי עזים טבים  
 ואעשה אתם מטעמים לאביך כאשר אהב: י והבאת לאביך  
 ואכל בעבר אשר יברכה לפני מותו: יא ויאמר יעקב אל-  
 רבקה אמו הן עשו אחי איש שער ואנכי איש חלק: יב אולי

כש"י

(ג) תליך. חרצך, שדרך לתלוה: שא נא. לשון השחזק, כחותה שנינו<sup>2</sup>, אין משחזין את הסכין אבל משיאה על גבי חרצה, חדד סכין ושחוט יפה שלא תאכלני נבלה<sup>3</sup>: וצודה לי. מן ההפקר, ולא מן הגזל: (ה) לצוד ציד להביא. מכו להצוא, אם לא ימצא ליד, יצא מן הגזל: (ז) לפני ה'. צרשותו, שיסכים על ידי: (ט) וקח לי. משלי הם ואינם גזל, כך כחז לה יחזק צתוצתה ליעול שני גדיי עזים בכל יום<sup>4</sup>: שני גדיי עזים. וכי שני גדיי עזים היה מאכלו של יחזק, אלא פסח היה, האחד הקריב לפסחו, והאחד עשה מטעמים. צפרקו דרבי אליעזר: כאשר אהב. כי טעם הגדי כטעם הנזי: (יא) איש שער. צטל

עזות חלילים<sup>1</sup>: (ח) ותבחינו. צעשן של אלו, (שכיו מעשנות ומקטירות לעבודת חלילים). דבר אחר, כשנעקד על גבי המזבח, והיה אציו רוצה לשחוט, צאותה שעה נפתחו השמים, וראו מלאכי השרת והיו צוכים, וירדו דמעותיהם ונפלו על עיניו, לפיכך כהו עיניו. דבר אחר, כדי שיטול יעקב את הצרכות: (צ) לא ידעתי יום מותי. אמר רבי יהושע בן קרחה, אם מגיע אדם לפרק אצותיו, ידאג חמש שנים לפניכם, וחמש לאחר כן, ויחזק היה בן קכ"ג, אמר, שמא לפרק אמי אני מגיע, והיא צת קכ"ז מתה, והריני בן ה' שנים סמוך לפרקה, לפיכך לא ידעתי יום מותי, שמא לפרק אמי שמא לפרק אבה:

TORAS MENACHEM

explains in *Parshas Vayishlach* that he gave his wife (who was really called Ahalivamah) the name Yehudis, a name whose meaning suggests that she had abandoned idol worship (*Rashi* 36:2).

And since Ahalivamah was born from a wicked family, as *Rashi* explains, Eisav was forced to change her father's name too, in order to maintain the image that he had married a righteous person. So he called her Yehudis, daughter of Be'airiy the Chittite.

At the literal level, there is no need to explain the significance of every name. (Only those names which pose some sort of question or contradiction are explained by *Rashi*). Therefore, *Rashi* was not required to explain why Eisav chose the name Be'airiy in particular, since it is already self-evident from *Rashi's* commentary why Eisav was forced to change this name.

Perhaps it could be argued that Eisav chose the name Be'airiy in order to further promote his deception. We read in the previous section that after Yitzchak dug a series of wells which were contested by Philistines, his

third well was left in peace, and Yitzchak then swore an oath of peace with Avimelech, king of the Philistines. Therefore, after marrying at forty years to mimic his father, Eisav continued his ploy of paternal imitation by acquiring his own well—not in the literal sense, but rather, by acquiring a father-in-law whose name was Be'airiy, literally: "my well." Thus he was intimating, "just like my father has his own well, I have my own too."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 163ff.)

☞ RASHI'S THREE INTERPRETATIONS (v. 1)

*Rashi* offers three explanations as to why Yitzchak's sight became weak. However, *Rashi's* comment is perplexing because:

- a.) The Torah itself appears to explain why Yitzchak's vision became impaired, because he was old: "*Yitzchak had grown old*. The vision of his eyes had dimmed" (See **Rashbam**). Why did *Rashi* need to offer any explanation at all?
- b.) Why did *Rashi* find it necessary to bring *three* interpretations?

🌀 YA'AKOV TAKES EISAV'S BLESSING 🌀

**27** **Y**itzchak had grown old (and he wanted to bless Eisav\*).  
The vision of his eyes had dimmed. He summoned Eisav, his older son, and he said to him,  
“My son.”

“I’m here,” he replied.

<sup>2</sup> “Look, now I have grown old. I don’t know when I will die. <sup>3</sup> So now, sharpen your tools, (take) your sword and your bow, and go out to the field to hunt game for me. <sup>4</sup> Make for me the tasty foods that I love, and bring them to me to eat. For (doing this) my soul will bless you before I die.”

<sup>5</sup> Rivkah was listening when Yitzchak spoke to Eisav, his son.

Eisav went to the field to hunt game. (He intended) to bring (meat from stolen animals if he was unable to trap his own).

<sup>6</sup> Rivkah said to her son Ya’akov, “Look, I heard your father speaking to Eisav your brother, saying, <sup>7</sup> ‘Bring me game and make me tasty foods to eat, and I will bless you before my death, before God.’ <sup>8</sup> Now, my son, listen to my voice, to what I am commanding you: <sup>9</sup> Go now to the flock, and take two of my choice kids from there, and I will make (one of) them into tasty foods for your father, (the types) that he loves (since a goat tastes like game). <sup>10</sup> You will bring (them) to your father to eat. For (doing this) he will bless you before he dies.”

<sup>11</sup> Ya’akov said to Rivkah his mother, “But my brother Eisav is a hairy person, and I am a smooth

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why was Yitzchak’s vision weak? (v. 1)

**RASHI:** Because of the smoke of the above-mentioned [wives of Eisav] who would burn incense in idol worship.

Another explanation: When Yitzchak was bound on the altar and his father was about to slaughter him, the heavens opened and the ministering angels looked on and wept. Their tears fell upon Yitzchak’s eyes and as a result, his eyes became dim.

Another explanation: To enable Ya’akov to take the blessings.

**RASHBAM:** Yitzchak’s eyes dimmed from old age.

**SIFSEI CHACHAMIM:** First *Rashi* offers an explanation which is based on the juxtaposition of verses (since the previous verse alludes to the idol worship of Eisav’s wives). However, this leaves the reader with the question: How could God cause this to happen to Yitzchak? Therefore *Rashi* brings the latter reason, that Yitzchak’s blindness was to enable Ya’akov to take the blessings. However, we are still left with the question: Why did Rivkah not become blind too from the smoke? Therefore, *Rashi* brings the additional explanation that Yitzchak’s eyes had already been weakened at the *Akeida*, therefore his eyes were more severely affected by the smoke.

TORAS MENACHEM

**THE EXPLANATION**

Towards the end of *Parshas Chayei Sarah*, the Torah states, “After Avraham died, God blessed Yitzchak his son” (25:11). *Rashi* explains why it was God, and not Avraham, who blessed Yitzchak: “Even though God gave over the blessings to Avraham, he was afraid to bless Yitzchak, since he foresaw Eisav coming forth from him. He said, ‘Let the Master of blessings come and bless whomever He pleases!’ So, God came and blessed him.”

Thus, on reaching our verse, “The vision of his (Yitzchak’s) eyes was dimmed,” *Rashi* was troubled by an obvious question: If God personally blessed Yitzchak, then how is it possible that he should lose his sight? Surely God’s blessing should have spared him from this aggravation?

Thus, *Rashi* searched for an explanation why Yitzchak’s loss of vision was not due to his old age, but rather, due to some external factor. In the final analysis, *Rashi* found it necessary to bring three interpretations, since each of them have their own respective advantages and disadvantages:

a.) *Rashi’s* first explanation: smoke damage

This explanation is preferable, as it is indicated by the Torah itself. In the previous verse, we read that Eisav and his wives, “tormented Yitzchak and Rivkah” (26:35), and *Rashi* writes that this was due to their idol worship. In the following verse we read, “Yitzchak had grown old. The vision of his eyes had dimmed” (27:1), so it follows that Yitzchak’s visual impediment here in 27:1 was caused by the idol worship mentioned in 26:35 (see **Sifsei Chachamim**). Since this is the most contextually preferable solution, *Rashi* cited it as his first and primary interpretation.

However, this explanation alone is insufficient, as we are left with two questions: Presumably, Eisav and his family would not have burned incense to idols in Yitzchak’s presence—they probably lived in a separate residence in any case—so why should Yitzchak have been affected by the smoke? And, if Yitzchak was affected, why was Rivkah not harmed too?

Therefore, *Rashi* looked for another interpretation.

יְמוֹשִׁינֵנִי אָבָא וְאֵחִי בְעֵינֹהוּי כְּמִתְלַעֵב וְאֵחִי מִיְתִי עָלַי לְוֹטִין וְלֹא בִרְכָן: יג וְאִמְרַת לִיה אַמְיָה עָלַי אֲתֵאֲמֵר בְּנִבּוּאָה דְלֹא יִתּוֹן לְוֹטִיָא עֲלֵךְ בְּרִי בְרַם קַבִּיל מְנִי וְאִזְלִי סָב לִי: יד וְאִזְלִי וְנָסִיב וְאִתִּי לְאִמְיָה וְעִבְדַת אַמְיָה תְּכַשְׁלִין כְּמָא דִּי רַחִים אַבּוּהִי: טו וְנָסִיבַת רִבְקָה ית לְבוּשֵׁי עֵשָׂו בְּרָה רְבָא דְכִיתָא דִּי עֵמָה בְּבִיתָא וְאֵלְבִישִׁת ית יַעֲקֹב בְּרָה זְעִירָא: טז וַיֵּת מִשְׁכֵּי הַגִּדִּי בַר עֲזִי אֵלְבִישִׁת עַל יְדוּהִי וְעַל שְׁעֵעֹוֹת צוּרִיה: יז וַיִּהְיֶבֶת ית תְּכַשְׁלִיָא וַיֵּת לְחֵמָא דִּי עִבְדַת בִּידָא דִּיעֲקֹב בְּרָה: יח וְעַל לוֹת אַבּוּהִי וְאִמְר אָבָא וְאִמְר הָא אֲנָא מָאן אַתְּ בְּרִי: יט וְאִמְר יַעֲקֹב לְאַבּוּהִי אָנָא עֵשָׂו בּוֹכְרֵךְ עִבְדִּית כְּמָא דִּי מִלְּתָא עֲמִי קוּם כְּעַן אֶסְתַּחֲר וְתִיכּוֹל מְצִידִי בְּדִיל דִּי תִבְרַכְנִינִי נִפְשָׁךְ: כ וְאִמְר יַצְחָק לְבְרִיהָ מָא דִּין אוֹחִיָא לְאַשְׁכְּחָא בְּרִי וְאִמְר אֲרִי זְמִין יי אֵלְהֵךְ קְדָמִי: כא וְאִמְר יַצְחָק לִיעֲקֹב קְרִיב כְּעַן וְאִמּוּשִׁינֵךְ בְּרִי הֵאֵת דִּין בְּרִי עֵשָׂו אִם לֹא: כב וְקְרִיב יַעֲקֹב לוֹת יַצְחָק

יְמוֹשִׁנִי אָבִי וְהִיִּיתִי בְעֵינָיו כְּמִתְעַתֵּעַ וְהִבְאִתִּי עָלַי קָלְלָה וְלֹא בִרְכָה: יג וְתֵאֲמֵר לוֹ אִמּוֹ עָלַי קָלְלַתְּךָ בְּנִי אַךְ שָׁמַע בְּקֻלִי וְלֹךְ קַח-לִי: יד וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּקַּח וַיָּבֵא לְאִמּוֹ וַתַּעַשׂ אִמּוֹ מִטְעָמִים כַּאֲשֶׁר אָהֵב אָבִיו: טו וַתִּקַּח רִבְקָה אֶת-בְּנֵי עֵשָׂו הַגְּדֹל הַחֲמֹדֹת אֲשֶׁר אִתָּהּ בַּבַּיִת וַתִּלְבַּשׁ אֶת-יַעֲקֹב בְּנֵה הַקָּטָן: טז וַיֵּאת עֹרֹת גִּדְיֵי הָעֵזִים הַלְבִּישָׁה עַל-יָדָיו וְעַל חֻלְקֹת צְוֹאֲרָיו: יז וַתִּתֵּן אֶת-הַמִּטְעָמִים וְאֶת-הַלֶּחֶם אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂתָה בְּיַד יַעֲקֹב בְּנֵה: יח וַיָּבֵא אֶל-אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִי וַיֹּאמֶר הַנְּנִי מִי אַתָּה בְּנִי: יט וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל-אָבִיו אָנֹכִי עֵשָׂו בְּכֹרֵךְ עֲשִׂיתִי כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ אֵלַי קוּם-נָא שָׁבָה וְאֲכַלְהָ מִצִּידִי בַּעֲבוּר תִּבְרַכְנִי נִפְשָׁךְ: כ וַיֹּאמֶר יַצְחָק אֶל-בָּנָו מַה-זֶּה מַתְרַתְּ לְמִצְאָ בְּנִי וַיֹּאמֶר בִּי הִקְרָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְפָנָי: כא וַיֹּאמֶר יַצְחָק אֶל-יַעֲקֹב נִשְׂהֵ-נָא וְאִמְשָׁךְ בְּנִי הֵאֵתָה זֶה בְּנִי עֵשָׂו אִם-לֹא: כב וַיִּגַּשׁ

כ"ז

(יט) אנכי עשו בכרך. אנכי המציא לך, ועשו הוא צכורך: עשיתי. כמה דברים, כאשר דצרת אלי: שבה. לשון מיכס על השלחן, לכך מתורגם אסתחרי: (כא) גשה נא ואמשך. אמר יצחק בלבו, אין דרך עשו להיות שם שמים

שערי: (יב) ימושני. כמו ממשש בלחיים! (טו) החמדות. הנקיות כתרנומו דכיתא. דבר אחר שחמד אותן מן נמרוד: אשר אתה בבית. והלא כמה נשים היו לו, והוא מפקיד אלל אמו, אלל שכיב צקי צמעטיכון וחושדן:

TORAS MENACHEM

(As for Eisav’s wives, we can presume that either they indeed lost their sight, or they knew how to avoid the ill effects of the smoke. Eisav himself was “a man of the field” (25:27), who spent little time at home, so presumably he was unaffected).

b.) *Rashi’s second interpretation: damage by angels’ tears at the Akeida*

This interpretation—that Yitzchak’s eyes were damaged by tears of the angels at the Akeida—is preferable to the other two explanations which Rashi brings, for two reasons. Firstly, it explains how Ya’akov received the blessing from Yitzchak due to a *positive* reason (Yitzchak’s courage at the Akeida) rather than the negative reasons of the other two interpretations. Secondly, this interpretation explains more satisfactorily why Yitzchak never noticed that Eisav worshipped idols, since he lost his sight at the Akeida, before Eisav was born. According to the other interpretations however, it is somewhat difficult to imagine how Eisav’s unholy activities would have remained totally undiscovered by Yitzchak for so many years.

However, this interpretation alone is unsatisfactory, since it is a non-literal, Midrashic teaching which is not indicated at all by scripture. Therefore, Rashi sought for a third solution.

c.) *Rashi’s third interpretation: God took away Yitzchak’s sight*

Rashi’s third interpretation—that God took away Yitzchak’s sight in order for Ya’akov to receive the blessings—is superior to the other

interpretations, since it explains how Yitzchak lost his sight only at the end of his life, a fact stated *explicitly* by scripture (“*Yitzchak had grown old. The vision of his eyes had dimmed*”). According to the second interpretation, Yitzchak lost his sight at the Akeida, at the age of 37, well before old age; and according to the first interpretation, he lost his sight from the age of 100 when Eisav married, 80 years before his passing. The verse should thus have stated, “The vision of his eyes had

The Last Word

Rather than take away Yitzchak’s sight, God could have made Yitzchak give the blessing willingly to Ya’akov in a very simple manner: he could have revealed to Yitzchak that Eisav was in fact a wicked person.

From this we can learn to what extremes a person should go to avoid speaking negatively about another Jew. For God was willing to allow Yitzchak to lose his sight rather than to speak badly about Eisav.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, pp. 215-6)

(skinned) person. <sup>12</sup> Maybe my father will feel me, and see that I am an imposter—I will bring upon myself a curse and not a blessing.”

<sup>13</sup> But his mother said to him, “Let your curse be on me, my son. Listen to my voice: go and get (the goats) for me.”

<sup>14</sup> So he went, and took (the goats), and he brought (them) to his mother. His mother made tasty foods, that his father loved. <sup>15</sup> Rivkah took her older son Eisav’s clean clothing which she had in the house, and she dressed Ya’akov, her younger son. <sup>16</sup> She put the goats’ skins on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. <sup>17</sup> She gave the tasty foods and the bread which she had made, into the hand of Ya’akov, her son.

<sup>18</sup> He came to his father and said, “My father!”

(Yitzchak) said, “I’m here. Who are you, my son?”

<sup>19</sup> Ya’akov said to his father, “I am...Eisav your firstborn. I did what you told me. Please come and sit (at the table) and eat some of my game, in order that your soul will bless me.”

<sup>20</sup> Yitzchak said to his son, “How did you find it so quickly, my son?”

He said, “Because God, your God, brought it to me.”

<sup>21</sup> (When Ya’akov mentioned God, Yitzchak became suspicious, so) Yitzchak said to Ya’akov, “Please come closer, so that I may feel you, my son, to see if you are my son Eisav, or not.”

---

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

---

##### ● Why did Yitzchak tell Ya’akov to come closer? (v. 21)

**RASHI:** Yitzchak said to himself, “Eisav doesn’t usually mention God’s name, but this man said: ‘Because God, your God, brought it.’”

**MIDRASH:** Yitzchak said, “I know that Eisav doesn’t mention God’s name, and this man did mention it. He must be Ya’akov and not Eisav.”

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

dimmed,” before, “Yitzchak had grown old,” and not the other way around.

However, this interpretation too is flawed, since we are left with the question: Why did God make Yitzchak suffer in order for Ya’akov to receive the blessing? Surely, God has many possible ways at His disposal of achieving any given result, so why did He not find a less harmful method for Ya’akov to receive the blessing, than causing Yitzchak to lose his vision?

In fact, *Rashi* deemed the force of this question to be so strong, he recorded this interpretation last, indicating that it is the least preferable of the three.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 211ff.)

##### 🔦 YITZCHAK’S SUSPICION (v. 21)

At first glance, *Rashi* appears to differ in opinion from the *Midrash*:

*Rashi* writes, “Eisav doesn’t usually mention God’s Name,” whereas the *Midrash* stresses, “Eisav doesn’t mention God’s Name,” suggesting that he never mentioned it.

However, at the literal level we can only conclude that Eisav never mentioned God’s Name, otherwise the casual reference to God in verse 20 would not have aroused Yitzchak’s suspicion. *Rashi*’s intention here must be that Eisav never mentioned God’s Name, and he does not differ with the *Midrash*. Their slightly different phraseology is thus inconsequential in this instance (see *Sparks of Chasidus*).

(Based on *Sefer Hama’amarim Melukat*, vol. 4, p. 64, note 14)

### 🔦 Sparks of Chasidus 🔦

#### YITZCHAK’S BLESSING

If Yitzchak knew that “Eisav doesn’t mention God’s Name” (see *Classic Questions & Toras Menachem* to v. 21), then why did he want to bless Eisav, and not Ya’akov?

Yitzchak perceived that within Eisav were holy sparks of an extremely lofty spiritual source, more so than in Ya’akov’s case. Therefore, he chose to bless Eisav, because Yitzchak understood that his blessing had the spiritual power to elevate the sparks which were trapped within Eisav’s unholy existence, allowing them to return back to their source.

In a sense, Yitzchak was indeed correct—his blessings did have the power to rescue the sparks trapped within Eisav. But the blessing needed to pass first via Ya’akov, because Eisav was not sufficiently prepared to utilize Yitzchak’s blessing properly.

So, God arranged matters such that Ya’akov would first receive the blessing, and then, Ya’akov in turn would utilize the blessing to elevate the sparks trapped in Eisav.

(Based on *Sefer Hama’amarim Melukat*, vol. 4, p. 64, note 14)

אָבוהי וּמְשֹׁהָ וַאֲמַר קָלָא קָלִיָּה דְעַקְבִּי וַיְדַבֵּר אֲבִי הוּא יְדוּהֵי דְעֵשָׂו: כג וְלֹא אֲשַׁתְּמוּדְעִיָּה אֲרִי הוּא יְדוּהֵי בִידֵי עֵשָׂו אַחוּהֵי שְׁעִירָן וּבְרָכִיָּה: כד וַאֲמַר אֶת־דִּין בְּרִי עֵשָׂו וַאֲמַר אָנָּא: כה וַאֲמַר קָרִיב קָדְמִי וְאִיבֹל מְצִידָא דְבָרִי בְּדִיל דְתִבְרָכִינְדָּא נְפִשֵׁי וּקְרִיב לִיָּה וְאִכְל וְאִתִּי לִיָּה חֲמָרָא וּשְׂתִי: כו וַאֲמַר לִיָּה יִצְחָק אָבוהֵי קָרִיב כְּעַן וְנִשְׁק לִי בְרִי: כז וְקָרִיב וְנִשְׁק לִיָּה וְאַרְחַ יֵת רִיחָא דְלְבוּשׁוֹהֵי וּבְרָכִיָּה וַאֲמַר חֲזִי רִיחָא דְבָרִי כְּרִיחַ חֲקֵלָא דִּי בְרָכִיָּה: כח וַיִּתֵּן לָדָּ יֵי מִטְלָא דְשִׁמְיָא וּמְטוּבָא דְאַרְעָא וּסְגִיאוֹת עֵבוֹר וּחְמָר: כט וּפְלֹחֹנְדָּא עֲמִינִי וַיִּשְׁתַּעְבְּדוּן

יִעֲקֹב אֶל־יִצְחָק אָבִיו וַיְמַשְׁהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר הַקֵּל קוֹל יִעֲקֹב וְהִידִים יְדֵי עֵשָׂו: כג וְלֹא הִכִּירוּ כִּי־הָיוּ יָדָיו כִּי־דֵי עֵשָׂו אָחִיו שְׁעֵרַת וַיְבָרְכֶהוּ: כד וַיֹּאמֶר אֶתָּה זֶה בְּנִי עֵשָׂו וַיֹּאמֶר אָנֹכִי: כה וַיֹּאמֶר הַגֵּשָׁה לִי וְאִכְלָה מְצִיד בְּנִי לְמַעַן תִּבְרָכְךָ נְפִשִׁי וַיִּגְשֵׁהוּ וַיֹּאכַל וַיָּבֵא לוֹ יֵיִן וַיִּשְׂתֵּי: כו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו יִצְחָק אָבִיו וְנִשְׁתַּעְבְּדוּ אִישְׁקָה־לִּי בְּנִי: כז וַיִּגְשֵׁהוּ וַיִּשְׁק־לוֹ וַיִּרְחַ אֶת־רִיחַ בְּגָדָיו וַיְבָרְכֶהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר רִיחַ רִיחַ בְּנִי כְּרִיחַ שְׂדֵה אֲשֶׁר בִּרְכוּ יְהוָה: [וששין] כח וַיִּתֵּן־לָדָּ הָאֱלֹהִים מִטְלַל הַשָּׁמַיִם וּמִשְׁמַנֵּי הָאָרֶץ וְרֵב דָּגָן וְתִירֵשׁ: כט יַעֲבֹדוּךָ עַמִּים וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לָךְ לְאֲמִים הַזֶּה

\*ס"א וישקה

כש"י

כמשמעו, ומדרש אגדה יש להרבה פנים. (דבר אחר, מכו האלכיס, דין, אם ראוי לך, יתן לך, ואם לאו לא יתן לך, אבל לעשו אמר, משמני הארץ יהיה מושבך, צין לדיק צין רשע יתן לך. וממנו למד שלמה, כשעשה הבית סודר תפלתו, ישראל שהוא בעל אמונה ומלדיק עליו הדין, לא יקרא עליך תגר, לפיכך ונתת לאיש כדרכיו אשר תדע את לבבו, אבל נכרי מחוסר אמונה, לפיכך אמר ואתה תשמע השמים וגוי ועשית ככל אשר יקרא אליך הנכרי, צין ראוי צין שאינו ראוי תן לו, כדי שלא יקרא עליך תגר. כש"י ישן מדויק):

שגור צפיו, וזה אמר כי הקרה ה' אלהיך: (כז) קול יעקב. שמדבר בלשון תחנונים, קום נא, אבל עשו בלשון קנטוריא דבר, יקום אבי: (כד) ויאמר אני. לא אמר אני עשו, אלא אני: (כז) וירח וגו'. והלא אין ריח רע יותר משטף העזים, אלא מלמד שנכנסה עמו ריח גן עדן: בריח שדה אשר ברבו ה'. שנתן זו ריח טוב, וזה שדה תפוחים, כן דרשו רז"ל: (כח) ויתן לך. יתן ויחזור ויתן! ולפי פשוטו מוסב לענין הראשון, ריח ריח בני שנתן לו הקב"ה, כריח שדה וגו', ועוד יתן לך מטל השמים וגו': מטל השמים.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What “fragrance” did Yitzchak smell? (v. 27)

**RASHI:** Surely there is no odor more offensive than that of goat’s hair? [which Ya’akov was wearing—see v. 16]. This teaches us that the fragrance of the Garden of Eden entered with him [and it was *this* fragrance that is referred to in v. 27]. “The fragrance of a field, which God has blessed,” indicates it had a pleasant fragrance, that of a field of apples. This is how our Sages explain it..

**SIFSEI CHACHAMIM:** Eisav’s garments, which Ya’akov was wearing,

originally belonged to Nimrod, and they were coveted [and stolen from him] by Eisav. Nimrod obtained them from Adam, who wore them in the Garden of Eden.

**NACHALAS YA’AKOV:** Rashi cited the teaching of our Sages, that Yitzchak smelled a field of apples since it explains why the verse uses the term “field” in the singular. However, at the literal level, we can presume that the verse refers to fields in general. Thus Yitzchak smelled the fragrance of grasses and flowers.

TORAS MENACHEM

☞ YA’AKOV’S PLEASANT AROMA (v. 27)

What forced Rashi to conclude, at the *literal level* of Torah interpretation, that the fragrance of the Garden of Eden entered with Ya’akov? [*Sifsei Chachamim* suggests] that the aroma came from Eisav’s garments, which were originally owned by Adam in the Garden of Eden.

This argument is based on an earlier comment of Rashi to v. 15. The Torah describes Eisav’s garments as *המודות*, and Rashi offers two interpretations: “*המודות* means “the clean ones,” as Onkelos renders, *דְּכִיָּתָא* (clean ones). Another explanation: the garments that he had coveted (*שְׁחָמַד*) from Nimrod.”

However, even though Rashi does mention that Eisav acquired his garments from Nimrod, he makes no indication *at all* that they had a specific smell. Therefore, at the literal level, we can conclude that they had no particular smell. And, obviously, according to Rashi’s first

interpretation that they were “clean garments,” they would have been odorless. So, why did Rashi conclude that he had the aroma of the Garden of Eden?

Similarly, we need to explain why, at the literal level, Yitzchak exclaimed that Ya’akov had the aroma of an apple field, in particular. What would be wrong with presuming that we are speaking here of an ordinary field, of grasses and flowers? [see *Nachalas Ya’akov*]

THE EXPLANATION

In order to answer the above questions, we need to first address an obvious problem with Rashi’s comment here:

Presumably, Rivkah did not foresee that the aroma of the Garden of Eden would enter with Ya’akov into Yitzchak’s chamber. So, if “there is no odor more offensive than that of goats’ hair,” why did Rivkah not take

<sup>22</sup> *Ya'akov drew near to Yitzchak his father, and he felt him. (Yitzchak) said, "The voice is (polite like) the voice of Ya'akov, but the hands are the hands of Eisav!"* <sup>23</sup> *He did not recognize him because his hands were hairy like his brother Eisav's hands, and he blessed him.*

<sup>24</sup> *He said, "Are you my son Eisav?"*

*"I am," he said.*

<sup>25</sup> *He said, "Serve me, so that I can eat my son's game. For (doing this) my soul will bless you."* *(Ya'akov) served him, and he ate. He brought him wine, and he drank.*

<sup>26</sup> *His father Yitzchak said to him, "Please come closer and kiss me, my son."*

<sup>27</sup> *(Ya'akov) came closer, and he kissed him. (Yitzchak) smelled the fragrance of (what he thought was) his garments, and he blessed him. He said, "Look, the fragrance of my son is like the fragrance of a field (of apples), which God has blessed!"*

<sup>28</sup> *"And may the Almighty give you (repeatedly) from the dew of the skies and from the fatness of the earth, an abundance of grain and wine."* <sup>29</sup> *Nations will serve you; kingdoms will bow down to you.*

SIXTH  
READING

---

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

---

#### ● What did Yitzchak *begin* his blessing with the word, "And..." (v. 28)

**RASHI:** [He was saying:] "May He give, and give again."

According to its literal meaning, the verse is a continuation of the previous topic: "Look, the fragrance of my son," which God has

given him, "is like the fragrance of a field...." (v. 27), and furthermore, "May He give you from the dew of the skies...." (v. 28).

**SIFSEI CHACHAMIM:** According to *Rashi's* first interpretation, Yitzchak said, "May He give" blessings initially, and even if you will sin, He will "give again."

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

any precaution to stop Yitzchak from smelling the goats' hair? Surely such a foul odor would have been an obvious giveaway?

The solution to this problem, however, lies in Yitzchak's instructions to Eisav: "Go out to the field to hunt game for me. Make for me the tasty foods that I love, and bring them to me to eat" (v. 3-4). Clearly this involved hunting an animal, slaughtering it, skinning and gutting it and then preparing it to eat. All these jobs would have rendered Eisav quite odorous indeed, so we can presume that Yitzchak was *expecting* Eisav to have a bad smell.

Therefore, when the Torah relates in verse 27 that Ya'akov actually had a pleasant fragrance, *Rashi* immediately asks: "Surely there is no odor more offensive than that of goats' hair?" What happened to the foul smell of goats' hair that Ya'akov was wearing, which served to imitate the bad aroma which Yitzchak was expecting?

Due to this question, *Rashi* understood that the Torah is hinting here, at the literal level, to the *Midrashic* teaching that the aroma of the Garden of Eden entered with Ya'akov.

Since Yitzchak was not aware that the aroma of the Garden had entered the room, he presumed that Ya'akov must have picked up the pleasant smell while he was cooking the "tasty foods," which obviously involved the use of spices and sweet-smelling ingredients. Thus, *Rashi* rejected the notion that Yitzchak thought he was smelling a field of grasses and flowers, since these items are not used in cooking. Rather, *Rashi* accepted the *Midrashic* account that he smelled like a field of apples, since apples could be used when cooking "tasty foods."

*(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Toldos 5741)*

#### 🔊 THE BEGINNING OF YITZCHAK'S BLESSING (v. 28)

*Rashi* was troubled as to why Yitzchak would have *begun* his blessing with the word "and." He therefore explained that Yitzchak was alluding to a twofold blessing, "May He give and give again."

However, this interpretation is difficult to accept, since it begs the question: Since God's blessing is *unlimited* and devoid of any imperfection, why would He need to give it *twice*?

Therefore, *Rashi* brought a second interpretation, that verse 28 begins with the word "and" because it is a continuation of verse 27.

Nevertheless, this interpretation is problematic, as there appears to be no connection between the subject of verses 27 and 28. So, *Rashi* cited both interpretations: The first, because it explains better the *context* of the verse, and the second, because it explains the use of the word "and," in particular.

#### WHY IS GOD'S BLESSING REPEATED?

According to **Sifsei Chachamim**, Yitzchak gave a twofold blessing ("May He give, and give again"), to indicate that God's blessings would be "given again," even if Ya'akov and his descendants sinned.

However, this interpretation appears to contradict verse 40 below, where Yitzchak tells Eisav, "You shall serve your brother. But, when you grieve (about the blessings he took, because the Jewish people have transgressed the Torah,) then you will break his yoke off your neck." Here we see that if the Jewish people would sin, Yitzchak's blessing, "You will be a master over your brothers, and your mother's sons will bow down to you" (v. 29), would indeed be revoked, and that instead, "You (Eisav) will break his yoke off your neck."

Rather, it would seem that the implication of Yitzchak's twofold blessing is that the recipient would: a.) first receive the actual blessing itself; b.) He is then given the ability to *utilize* the blessing to its full extent. I.e. since God's blessing is unlimited, there is reason to fear that the person will not use it to his full potential, so the person actually requires a *further* blessing, to enable him to use the initial blessing properly.

Thus, God gives the blessing, and then, He "gives again" the ability to utilize and internalize the blessing properly.

*(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 10, p. 80ff.; Sichas Shabbos Parshas Toldos 5724)*

לך מלכון הוי רב לאחיה ויסגדו לך בני אמה מלמטה יהוה ליטין ומברכה יהוה פריכין: ל והוה פד שיצי יצחק לברכא ית יעקב והוה בראם מפק נפק יעקב מן קדם יצחק אבוהי ועשו אחוהי אתא מצידיה: לא ועבד אף הוא תבשילין ואעיל לאבוהי ואמר לאבוהי יקום אבא ויכול מצידא דבריה בדיל די תברכינני נפשך: לב ואמר ליה יצחק אבוהי מאן אתא ואמר אנא ברה בוכרה עשו: לד ותוה יצחק תוהא רבא עד לחדא ואמר מאן הוא דיכי דצד צידא ואעיל לי ואכלית מכולא עד לא תיעול ובקריבתיה אף בריך יהי: לה פד שמע עשו ית פתגמי אבוהי וצוה צוהתא רבא ומרידא עד לחדא ואמר לאבוהי ברכני אף אנא אבא: לה ואמר על אחוה ברכתא וקביל ברכתך: לו ואמר יאות קרא שמייה יעקב וחפמני דנן תרתין זמנין ית בכירותי נסיב והא פען קביל ברכתי ואמר הלא שבקת לי ברכתא: לו ואתיב יצחק ואמר לעשו הא רב שויתיה עלוך וית פל אחוהי יקבית ליה לעבדין ובעיבור ובחמר סעידתיה ולך פען מא אעביד ברי: לה ואמר עשו לאבוהי הברכתא חדא היא לך אבא ברכני אף אנא אבא וארים עשו קליה ובכא: לש ואתיב יצחק אבוהי ואמר ליה הא

גביר לאחיה וישתחוו לך בני אמה ארריך ארור ומברכה ברוך: ל ויהי כאשר בלה יצחק לברך את יעקב ויהי אך יצא יצא יעקב מאת פני יצחק אביו ועשו אחיו בא מצידו: לא ויעש גם הוא מטעמים ויבא לאביו ויאמר לאביו יקם אבי ויאכל מציד בנו בעבר תברכני נפשך: לב ויאמר לו יצחק אביו מי אתה ויאמר אני בנה בכהך עשו: לד ויחרד יצחק חרדה גדלה עד מאד ויאמר מי אפוא הוא הצד ציד ויבא לי ואכל מכל בטרם תבוא ואברכהו גם ברוך יהיה: לה כשמע עשו את דברי אביו ויצעק צעקה גדלה ומרה עד מאד ויאמר לאביו ברכני גם אני אבי: לה ויאמר בא אחיה במרמה ויקח ברכתך: לו ויאמר הכי קרא שמו יעקב ויעקבני זה פעמים את בכתתי לקח והנה עתה לקח ברכתי ויאמר הלא אצלתי לי ברכה: לו ויען יצחק ויאמר לעשו הן גביר שמתיו לך ואת כל אחיו נתתי לו לעבדים ודגן ותירש סמכתיו ולכה אפוא מה אעשה בני: לה ויאמר עשו אל אביו הברכה אחת הוא לך אבי ברכני גם אני אבי וישא עשו קלו ויבך: לש ויען יצחק אביו ויאמר אליו הנה משמני הארץ

רש"י

תימה הוא, כמו הכי אחי אתה<sup>4</sup>, שמה לכך נקרא שמו יעקב, על שם סופו שהוא עתיד לעקבני. תנחומא<sup>5</sup>, למה חרד יצחק, אמר, שמה עון יש בי שזכרתי קטן לפני גדול, ושנית סדר היחס, החיל עשו מלעק ועקבני זה פעמים, אמר לו אביו מה עשה לך, אמר לו את זכרתי לקח, אמר, זכך הייתי מלך וחרד, שמה עזרתי על שורת הדיון, עכשיו לזכור זכרתי, גם ברוך יהיה: ויעקבני. כתרגומו וכמני, ארצני. וחרב, וכמן. ויש מתרגמין וחכמני, נתחכם לי: אצלת. לשון הפרשה, כמו ויאלל (ס"א וילל): (לז) הן גביר. זכרתי זה שזיעית היא, והוא עושה אותה ראשונה, אלא אמר לו, מה תועלת לך בזכרה, אם תקנה נכסים שלו הם, שהרי גביר שמתיו לך, ומה שקנה עזר קנה רבו: ולכה אפוא מה אעשה. איב איפא צקש מה לעשות לך: (לח) הברכה אחת. ה"א זו משמשת לשון תמימה, כמו הצמחניס<sup>6</sup>, השמנה היא<sup>7</sup>, הכמות נבל<sup>8</sup>: (לט) משמני הארץ וגו'. זו

(כט) בני אמה. ויעקב אמר ליהודה בני אבך, לפי שהיו לו צנים מכמה אמכות, וכאן שלא נשא אלא אחת, אמר בני אמה: ארריך ארור ומברכה ברוך. ובזלטס הוא אומר מזכריך ברוך וארריך ארור, הדיקום תחלתם יסורים וסופן שלום, ואורריהם ומלעריהם קודמים למזכריהם, לפיכך יצחק הקדים קללת אוררים לזכרת מזכרים, והרשעים תחלתן שלום וסופן יסורין, לפיכך בלעם הקדים זכרה לקללה: (ל) יצא יצא. זה יולא וזה בא: (לג) ויחרד. כתרגומו ותוה, לשון תמימה. ומדרשו, ראה גיבסם פתוחה מתחתיו: מי אפוא. לשון לעלמו, משמש עם כמה דברים. דבר אחר איפוא, איב פה, מי הוא ואיפוא הוא הלא ליד: ואבל מבל. מכל טעמים שצקשתי לטעום טעמתי בזי: גם ברוך יהיה. שלא תאמר, אילולי שרימה יעקב לאביו לא נטל את הזכרות, לכך הסכים וזכרו מדעתו<sup>3</sup>: (לה) במרמה. בזכמה: (לו) הכי קרא שמו. לשון

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Yitzchak become “extremely bewildered”? (v. 33)

**RASHI:** The *Midrash Tanchumah* states: Why did Yitzchak become bewildered? He said, “Perhaps I am guilty of a sin, for I have blessed the younger son before the older one, and thus altered the order of the relationship.”

Then, Eisav began to weep, “He has already deceived me twice!”

His father said to him, “What did he do to you?”

He replied, “He took my birthright.”

[Yitzchak] said, “That is why I was troubled and bewildered, for I was afraid that perhaps I had transgressed the line of the law. But now I know that I actually blessed the firstborn, let him be blessed too” (see v. 33). (*Rashi* to v. 36)



*You will be a master over your brothers, and your mother's sons will bow down to you. Those who curse you will be cursed, and those who bless you will be blessed."*

## EISAV DISCOVERS THAT HIS BLESSING WAS GIVEN AWAY

27:30 **T**hen, when Yitzchak had finished blessing Ya'akov—just as Ya'akov had left his father Yitzchak's presence—his brother Eisav came back from his hunt. <sup>31</sup> He had also made tasty foods, and he brought (them) to his father.

*He said to his father, "My father should get up and eat his son's game, so that your soul will bless me."*

<sup>32</sup> *His father, Yitzchak, said to him, "Who are you?"*

*He said, "I am your son, your firstborn, Eisav."*

<sup>33</sup> *Yitzchak was extremely bewildered. He said, "Who then is the one who hunted game and brought it to me, then I ate it all before you came, and I blessed him? Let him be blessed too (in any case)."*

<sup>34</sup> *When Eisav heard his father's words, he cried extremely loudly and bitterly. He said to his father, "Bless me too, my father!"*

<sup>35</sup> *(Yitzchak) said, "Your brother came ingeniously and took your blessing."*

<sup>36</sup> *(Eisav) said, "Is that why he was called Ya'AKOV, (because he was destined to deceive me [le'AKVeini])? He has deceived me twice! He took my birthright, and look, now he has taken my blessing!"*

*(Eisav) said (to Yitzchak), "Haven't you saved a blessing for me?"*

<sup>37</sup> *Yitzchak answered, saying to Eisav, "(Whatever blessing I give you will be of no use, because) I have already made him a master over you, given him all his brothers as servants, and I have sustained him with grain and wine. So, for you then, what shall I do, my son (if I bless you he will acquire your possessions in any case, since he is your master)?"*

<sup>38</sup> *Eisav said to his father, "Haven't you got just one blessing, my father? Bless me too, my father." Eisav raised his voice and wept.*

<sup>39</sup> *His father Yitzchak answered saying, "Look, your dwelling place shall be from the fat places of the*

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### YITZCHAK'S BEWILDERMENT (v. 33)

Why was Yitzchak "extremely bewildered" by the thought that he had blessed the wrong son? Surely this was an over-reaction?

However, Yitzchak's primary concern was not that he had blessed the wrong person, but rather, that he had lost the status of "a perfect burnt offering," a Divine assurance of purity and perfection (See Rashi to 26:2). It now appeared that he had not been given special protection *from above* to prevent him from giving the blessing to the wrong son (see Rashi's citation of Tanchuma in *Classic Questions*).

Thus, when he discovered that Eisav had in fact sold the birthright to Ya'akov, Yitzchak was relieved that he had, after all, been protected from above against blessing the wrong son, and his that apparent "mistake" was actually Divinely inspired.

One might ask: surely the fact that Yitzchak wanted to bless Eisav was a mistake in itself? Why did Yitzchak not lose his status of "a perfect burnt offering" for this misjudgment alone?

However, earlier we witnessed that a misplaced intention is not sufficient to revoke the status of "a perfect burnt offering." For Yitzchak actually *planned* to go down to Egypt when God told him, "Do not go down to Egypt! You are a perfect burnt offering, and being outside the

*land [of Israel] is not fitting for you" (Rashi 26:2). From this we see that the intention to leave the Land of Israel did not invalidate Yitzchak as a "perfect burnt offering." Likewise in our case, the intention to bless Eisav did not tarnish Yitzchak's perfect holy status, and he was still protected from above to bless Ya'akov, his true firstborn son.*

*(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Toldos 5748)*

#### Sparks of Chasidus

##### "YOUR BROTHER CAME INGENIOUSLY..." (v. 35)

**A**ccording to Kabbalistic teachings, Ya'akov corrected the spiritual damage caused by Adam's sin.

Therefore, just like Adam had been misled by the ingenious plot of the serpent, the correction of Adam's sin had to come through ingenious trickery—"Your brother came ingeniously and took your blessing" (v. 35).

*(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 1, p. 56)*

מטובא דארעא יהי מותבך ומטלא דשמאי  
 מלעילא: מ ועל חרבך תחי וית אחוד תפלח  
 ויהי פד ועברון בנזיה על פתגמי אוריתא  
 ותעדי ניריה מעל צורף: מא ונטר עשו  
 דבבו ליעקב על ברכתא די ברביה אבוהי  
 ואמר עשו בלביה יקרבוני יומי אכלא דאבא  
 ואקטול ית יעקב אחי: מב ואתחנא לרבקה  
 ית פתגמי עשו ברה רבא ושלחת וקרת  
 ליעקב ברה זעירא ואמרת ליה הא עשו  
 אחוד כמין לך למקטלך: מג וכען ברי קבל  
 מני וקום אזיל לך לות לבן אחי לחרן:  
 מד ותתיב עמיה יומין זעירין עד דיתוב  
 רונגא דאחוד: מה עד דיתוב רונגא דאחוד  
 מנד ויתנשי ית די עבדת ליה ואשלח  
 ואדברנד מתמן למא אתפל אף תרויכו  
 יומא חד: מו ואמרת רבקה ליעחק עקית  
 בתי מן קדם גנת התאה אם נסיב יעקב  
 אהתא מבנת התאה פאלין מבנת ארעא  
 למא לי חיי: א וקרא יצחק ליעקב ובריד  
 יתיה ופקדיה ואמר ליה לא תסב אתתא  
 מבנת כנען: ב קום אזיל לפדן ארם לבית  
 בתואל אבוהא דאמך וסב לך מתמן אתתא  
 מבנת לבן אחוהא דאמך: ג ואל שדי יברך  
 יתך ופשניך ויסגינך ותחי לכנשת שבטין:  
 ד ויתן לך ית ברכתא דאברהם לך ולבניך  
 עמך למירתך ית ארע הותבותך די יתב וי

יהיה מושבך ומטל השמים מעל: מ ועל חרבך תחיה  
 ואת אחיך תעבד והיה כאשר תריד ופרקת עלו מעל  
 צוארך: מא וישטם עשו את יעקב על הברכה אשר ברכו  
 אביו ויאמר עשו בלבו יקרבו ימי אבל אבי ואהרנה  
 את יעקב אחי: מב ויגד לרבקה את דברי עשו בנה הנגדל  
 ותשלח ותקרא ליעקב בנה הקטן ותאמר אליו הנה עשו  
 אחיך מתנתם לך להרגך: מג ועתה בני שמע בקלי וקום  
 ברח לך אל לבן אחי חרנה: מד וישבת עמו ימים אחדים עד  
 אשר תשוב חמת אחיך: מה עד שוב אף אחיך ממוך ושכח  
 את אשר עשית לו ושלחתי ולקחתיך משם למה אשב  
 גם שניכם יום אחד: מו ותאמר רבקה אל יצחק קצתי בחיי  
 מפני בנות חת אם לקח יעקב אשה מבנות חת פאלה  
 מבנות הארץ למה לי חיים: כח א ויקרא יצחק אל יעקב  
 ויברך אתו ויצוהו ויאמר לו לא תקח אשה מבנות כנען:  
 כ קום לך פדנה ארם ביתה בתואל אבי אמך וקח לך משם  
 אשה מבנות לבן אחי אמך: ג ואל שדי יברך אתך ויברך  
 וירבך והיית לקהל עמים: ד ויתן לך את ברכת אברהם לך  
 ולזרעך אתך לרשתך את ארץ מגריך אשר נתן אלהים

\* ק' זעירא \*\* בחומש תורת מוסמן כאן "תרי טעמי", ו"א שכאן שייד מ"ש המנחת שי (במדבר יז, כג) שקריאת המלה אינה מלעיל גמור ולא מלרע גמור אלא בהעמדה מועטת בשני הטעמים.

רש"י

תנחומים, מתחם הוא על הצרכות צהריגתך: (מד) אחדים. מועטים:  
 (מה) למה אשכל. אהיה שכולה משניכם. (למד על) הקוצר את בניו קרוי  
 שכול. וכן ציעקז אמר כאשר שכלתי שכלתי: גם שניכם. אם יקום עליך ואתה  
 תהרגנו, יעמדו בניו ויהרגוך, ורוח הקדש זרקב צה, ונתנצח שציוס אחד  
 ימותו, כמו שמפורש צפרק המקנא לאשחוי: (מו) קצתי בחיי. מאסתי צחיי:  
 (צ) פדנה. כמו לפדן: ביתה בתואל. לצית בתואל, כל תיבה שזריכה למ"ד  
 בתחלתה הטיל לה ה"א צסופה: (ג) ואל שדי. מי שדי צצרכותיו למחצרכין  
 מפיו, יצרך אוחך: (ד) את ברכת אברהם. שאמר לו ואתשך לגוי גדול.

איטליא"ה של יון: (מ) ועל חרבך. כמו צהרצך, יש על שהוא צמקוס אות  
 צ, כמו עמדתם על חרצכס<sup>2</sup>, צהרצכס. על צצחחס<sup>3</sup> צצצחחס: והיה כאשר  
 תריד. לשון זער, כמו חריד צשיחי<sup>4</sup>, כלומר כשיעצרו ישראל על התורה,  
 ויהיה לך פחחון פה להצטער על הצרכות שנטל, ופרקת עלו וגוי: (מא) יקרבו  
 ימי אבל אבי. כמשמעו, שלא אלער את אבא. ומדרש אגדה לכמה פנים יש:  
 (מב) ויגד לרבקה. צרוח הקודש כוגד לה מה שעשו מהכרח צלצו: מתנחם  
 לך. נחם על החסוך, לחשוב מחצבה אחרת להחנכך לך ולהרגך. ומדרש אגדה,  
 כצך אהב מת צעיניו, ושחם עליך כוס של תנחומים. ולפי פשוטו, לשון

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Rivkah suggest that Ya'akov get married at this point? (v. 46)

BIURAY MAHARAY: Rivkah did not want to tell Yitzchak that Eisav wanted to kill Ya'akov. She feared that Yitzchak might withhold some blessing from Ya'akov, so as not to further anger Eisav. She therefore claimed that she had sent Ya'akov away, because "I am sick of my life, etc."

● What is the "blessing of Avraham"? (v. 4)

RASHI: [God] said to [Avraham], "I will make you into a great nation" (above 12:2), "[All the nations of the world] will be blessed through your children" (22:18). May those blessings be for you. May that nation and those blessed children come out from you."

MIZRACHI: Why did Rashi not learn, more simply, that the "blessing of Avraham," which Yitzchak gave to Ya'akov, is precisely that which

land, and from the dew of the skies from above. <sup>40</sup> You will live by your sword, and you shall serve your brother. But, when you grieve (about the blessings he took, because the Jewish people have transgressed the Torah) then you will break his yoke off your neck.”

### 🌀 EISAV PLANS TO KILL YA'AKOV / RIVKAH TELLS HIM TO FLEE 🌀

27:41 **E**isav hated Ya'akov because of the blessing which his father had given him. Eisav said to himself, “The days of mourning for my father will soon come, and then I will kill my brother Ya'akov.” <sup>42</sup> Rivkah was told (by Divine inspiration) the words of Eisav, her older son. She sent (a message) and summoned Ya'akov, her younger son. She said to him, “Beware, your brother Eisav regrets (his relationship) to you (and wishes) to kill you. <sup>43</sup> Now, my son, listen to my voice! Go and run away to my brother Lavan, in Charan. <sup>44</sup> You can live with him for a few days until your brother's anger has calmed down, <sup>45</sup> until your brother's anger against you has calmed down, and he forgets what you did to him. Then I will send (for you) and bring you from there. Why should I be bereaved from both of you on one day (for if you kill him, his sons will kill you)?”

### 🌀 YITZCHAK INSTRUCTS YA'AKOV TO MARRY 🌀

27:46 **R**ivkah said to Yitzchak, “I am sick of my life because of the Chitite girls. If Ya'akov takes a wife from a Chitite girl like one of these, from the daughters of this Land, what use is life to me?” <sup>1</sup> Yitzchak called Ya'akov and blessed him. He instructed him, saying to him, “You should not take a wife from the Cana'anite girls. <sup>2</sup> Go and travel to Padan-Aram, to the house of Besu'el, your mother's father, and take yourself a wife from there, from the daughters of Lavan, your mother's brother. <sup>3</sup> May God Almighty bless you, make you fruitful and multiply, and you will become an assembly of nations. <sup>4</sup> May He give you the blessing of Avraham to you, and to your seed with you, that you will inherit the land in which you (only) wandered (in up until now), which God gave to Avraham.”

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

is mentioned in verse 4 itself, “that you will inherit the land in which you wandered, which God gave to Avraham”?

However, this could not be Yitzchak's blessing, as the Land of Israel was given to Avraham as a gift, and not as a blessing.

#### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🌀 “THE BLESSING OF AVRAHAM” (v. 4)

**Mizrachi** questions why *Rashi* needed to explain the meaning of “the blessing of Avraham” at all, since the verse itself seems to state precisely what the blessing was: “May He give you the blessing of Avraham to you, and to your seed with you, that you will inherit the land in which you wandered, which God gave to Avraham.”

*Mizrachi* explains that the inheritance of the Land of Israel could not possibly have been “the blessing of Avraham,” since the Land was already given to Avraham as a gift, and not as a blessing for the future.

However, it was explained above that a precise reading of *Rashi* indicates conclusively that, at the literal level of Torah interpretation, God only promised to give the land in the future, He did not actually give it, so the blessing was not yet fulfilled (See *Toras Menachem* to 15:18, sec. “d”).

Why then does *Rashi* refuse to take the verse at face value, that Yitzchak was now blessing Ya'akov that the “blessing of Avraham” should be fulfilled in him?

#### THE EXPLANATION

Normally, when the Torah relates how a certain individual received a particular blessing, we are informed *why* the blessing was given. For

example, in the preceding section we read how Yitzchak wanted to bless Eisav because he was getting old. Similarly, we read earlier that God gave a series of blessings to Yitzchak to prosper in the Land of Israel, to counter his intention to leave the Land (above 26:1-4). Avraham likewise received God's blessing for a specific reason, “All the nations of the world will be blessed through your children, because you listened to My voice.” (22:18).

In the current passage, we read how Yitzchak blessed Ya'akov before his departure to Padan-Aram to find a wife. The blessing in verse 3, to be “fruitful and multiply, and you will become an assembly of nations,” thus makes sense, as this was connected to Ya'akov's marriage.

However, when reading verse 4, *Rashi* was troubled by the question: How is the blessing of Avraham and the inheritance of the Land of Israel connected with Ya'akov's journey to find a wife? This blessing seems rather out of place.

Therefore, *Rashi* searched for an explanation as to why the “blessing of Avraham” could be connected with Ya'akov's marriage preparation. *Rashi* came to the conclusion that Yitzchak's blessing here must have been the words that God said to Avraham in connection with having children: “I will make you into a great nation” (12:2), and, “[All the nations of the world] will be blessed through your children” (22:18).

לְאַבְרָהָם: ה' וַיִּשְׁלַח יִצְחָק ית יַעֲקֹב וְאָזַל לְפָדֵן אֶרֶם לְוֹת לְבָן בֶּן-בְּתוּאֵל הָאֲרָמִי אֲחִיהָ אֲחִיהָ אֲחִיהָ דְרַבְקָה אֲמִיָּה דְיַעֲקֹב וְעָשׂוּ: ו' וְחָזָא עָשׂוּ אָרִי בְרִיד: יִצְחָק ית יַעֲקֹב וַיִּשְׁלַח יתִיהָ לְפָדֵן אֶרֶם לְמַסָּב לִיהָ מִתְמָן אֲתָתָא כִּד בְּרִיד יתִיהָ וּפְקִיד עֲלוּהִי לְמִימֵר לֹא תִסַּב אֲתָתָא מִבְּנֵי כְּנָעַן: ז' וְקָבַל יַעֲקֹב מִן אֲבוּהִי וּמִן אֲמִיָּה וְאָזַל לְפָדֵן אֶרֶם: ח' וְחָזָא עָשׂוּ אָרִי בִישׁוֹן בְּנֵי כְּנָעַן בְּעֵינֵי יִצְחָק אֲבוּהִי: ט' וְאָזַל עָשׂוּ לְוֹת יִשְׁמַעֵאל וְנִסִּיב ית מַחֲלַת בַּת יִשְׁמַעֵאל בַּר אֲבָרָהָם אֲחֵתִיהָ דְנִבְיֹת עַל נְשׁוּהִי לִיהָ לְאַנְתָּו: ס ס ס

לְאַבְרָהָם: [שביעי] ה' וַיִּשְׁלַח יִצְחָק אֶת-יַעֲקֹב וַיֵּלֶךְ \*פְּדִינָה אֶרֶם אֶל-לְבָן בֶּן-בְּתוּאֵל הָאֲרָמִי אֲחִי רַבְקָה אִם יַעֲקֹב וְעָשׂוּ: ו' וַיֵּרָא עָשׂוּ כִּי-בָרַךְ יִצְחָק אֶת-יַעֲקֹב וַיִּשְׁלַח אֹתוֹ \*פְּדִינָה אֶרֶם לְקַחַת-לוֹ מְשָׁם אִשָּׁה בְּבָרְכוֹ אֹתוֹ וַיֵּצֵא עָלָיו לְאֵם-תַּקְחָה אִשָּׁה מִבְּנֹת כְּנָעַן: [מפסיר] ז' וַיִּשְׁמַע יַעֲקֹב אֶל-אָבִיו וְאֶל-אִמּוֹ וַיֵּלֶךְ \*פְּדִינָה אֶרֶם: ח' וַיֵּרָא עָשׂוּ כִּי רָעוֹת בְּנֹת כְּנָעַן בְּעֵינָיו יִצְחָק אָבִיו: ט' וַיֵּלֶךְ עָשׂוּ אֶל-יִשְׁמַעֵאל וַיִּקַּח אֶת-מַחֲלַת | בַּת-יִשְׁמַעֵאל בֶּן-אֲבָרָהָם אֲחֹת נְבִיֹת עַל-נְשָׁיו לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה:

ס ס ס

ק"ו פסוקים. על"ו סימן.

\*עיין לעיל פסוק ב'.

רש"י

של רעב, ויעקב אמר לפרעה ימי שני מגורי שלשים ומאת שנה, לא וחשוב י"ד שנה שלפני לידת יוסף, ושלשים של יוסף, ותשע משמלך עד שצא יעקב, הרי כ"ג, וכשפירש מאציו היה בן ס"ג, הרי קי"ו, והוא אומר שלשים ומאת שנה, הרי חסריס י"ד שנים, הא למדת, שאחר שקבל הצרכות נטמן צבית עבר י"ד שנים. (אבל לא נענש עליהם צרכות התורה, שהרי לא פירש יוסף מאציו אלא כ"ב שנה, דהיינו מ"ז עד ל"ט, כנגד כ"ב שפירש יעקב מאציו ולא כצדו, והס' כ' שנים צבית לבן, ושתי שנים ששה דרך, כדכתיב ויצן לו צית ולמקנהו עשה סכות, ופירשו רז"ל מזה הפסוק ששה י"ח חדשים דרך, דצית הוב צימות הגשמים וסכות הוב צימות החמה, ולחשבון הפסוקים שחשבנו לעיל, משפירש מאציו עד שירד למלרים שהיה בן ק"ל שנים, שם אנו מולאים עוד י"ד שנים, אלא ודאי נטמן צבית עבר בהליכותו לצית לבן ללמוד תורה ממנו, וצביל זכות התורה לא נענש עליהם, ולא פירש יוסף ממנו אלא כ"ב שנה, מדה כנגד מדה, עד כאן מלאתי צרש"י (ישן): על נשיו. הוסיף רשע על רשעו' שלא גרש את הראשונות: חסלת פרשת תולדות

והתצרכו צזרעך. יהיו אותן צרכות האמורות צשצילך, ממך ילא אותה הגוי ואתו הצרע המצורך: (ה) אם יעקב ועשו. איני יודע מה מלמדנו: (ז) וישמע יעקב. מחובר לענין של מעלה, וירא עשו כי צרך יצחק וגוי וכי שלח אותו פדנה ארם, וכי שמע יעקב אל אציו והלך פדנה ארם, וכי רעות צנות כנען, והלך גם הוא אל ישמעאל: (ט) אחות נביות. ממשמע שנאמר צת ישמעאל איני יודע שהיא אחות נביות, אלא למדנו שמת ישמעאל משועדה לעשו קודם נשואיה, והשיאה נביות אחיה, ולמדנו שהיה יעקב צאותו הפרק בן ס"ג שנים, שהרי ישמעאל בן ע"ד שנים היה כשנולד יעקב, ש"ד שנה היה גדול ישמעאל מילחק, וילחק בן ס' שנה צלדת אותם, הרי ע"ד, ושנתיו היו קל"ז, שנאמר ואלה שני חיי ישמעאל וגוי, נמלא יעקב כשמת ישמעאל בן ס"ג שנים היה, ולמדנו מכאן שנטמן צבית עבר י"ד שנה, ואחר כך הלך לחרן, שהרי לא שבה צבית לבן לפני לידתו של יוסף אלא י"ד שנה, שנאמר עבדתיך י"ד שנה צבתי צבתיך ושש שנים צלאך, ושכר האלן משנולד יוסף היה, שנאמר ויהי כאשר ילדה רחל את יוסף וגוי, ויוסף בן ל' שנה היה כשמלך, ומשם עד שירד יעקב למלרים ט' שנים, ז' של שובע וצ'

TORAS MENACHEM

In fact, the former blessing is particularly appropriate in this case as it was given to Avraham before embarking on a journey, which is precisely what Ya'akov was about to do here. *Rashi* comments there that God gave Avraham this blessing because, "traveling diminishes... fertility," so "the blessing of Avraham," was especially apt for Ya'akov at this time, when he was embarking on the task of building a family.  
One serious problem here however is that God's blessing to Avraham to have many children was not, in fact, fulfilled. For during his travels, Avraham only merited *one* son who proved to be a true heir.

In response to this problem, *Rashi* continued, "May those blessings be for you." I.e. that God's words for Avraham were actually intended for Ya'akov. (And we see that they were indeed fulfilled, for despite all his travels Ya'akov established twelve tribes who were all true heirs.)

**WHY DID YITZCHAK SEND YA'AKOV AWAY?**

Based on the above explanation, we can solve a problem with the Torah's narrative here:  
In *Parshas Chayei Sarah* we read that when Avraham was seeking a marriage partner for Yitzchak, he did not send his son away, but that

SEVENTH READING <sup>5</sup> *Yitzchak sent Ya'akov off, and he went to Padan-aram, to Lavan the son of Besu'el the Aramean, the brother of Rivkah, Ya'akov and Eisav's mother.*

### 🌀 EISAV MARRIES YISHMA'EL'S DAUGHTER 🌀

28:6 **E**isav saw that Yitzchak had blessed Ya'akov and sent him away to Padan-aram, to take himself a wife from there, and that when he blessed him, he instructed him, saying, "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Cana'an"; <sup>7</sup> (and he saw that) Ya'akov listened to his father and his mother, and went to Padan-Aram. <sup>8</sup> (So, since) Eisav saw that the daughters of Cana'an were displeasing to his father Yitzchak, <sup>9</sup> Eisav went to Yishma'el, and took for a wife Machalas, the daughter of Avraham's son Yishma'el, a sister of Nevayos—in addition to his other wives.

THE HAFTARAH FOR TOLDOS IS ON PAGE 380. THE HAFTARAH FOR EREV ROSH CHODESH IS ON PAGE 394.

#### TORAS MENACHEM

rather, he sent his servant Eliezer to find a wife, and bring her back home to Yitzchak. So why did Yitzchak not do the same for his son?

At first glance it seems that Yitzchak sent Ya'akov away to save him from being murdered by Eisav.

However, at the literal level, we can presume that Rivkah did not tell Yitzchak about Eisav's plot, for fear that Yitzchak might refuse to bless Ya'akov further (as **Biuray Maharay** explains).

One might suggest that Avraham did not want Yitzchak to leave the Land of Israel, because he had the status of a "perfect burnt offering" that must remain within the Land (See *Rashi* to 26:2, above).

However, Yitzchak was only informed that he was a "perfect burnt offering" that must stay in the Land of Israel *after* his marriage. So, this could not have been the reason why Avraham insisted that he not leave home to find a wife (see above, *Toras Menachem* to 24:6-7).

Rather, the reason why Yitzchak instructed Ya'akov to travel away from home to find a wife is because: a.) Avraham's blessing for having many children had not yet been fulfilled, so Yitzchak was certain that it would be fulfilled through Ya'akov; and, b.) Avraham's blessing was to have children *while he was traveling away from home*. Therefore, Yitzchak instructed Ya'akov to leave.

#### INHERITANCE OF THE LAND

After giving Ya'akov the "blessing of Avraham," only one fear might have remained in Ya'akov's mind: Since Eisav was remaining in the Land of Israel and Ya'akov was leaving, perhaps Eisav would seize the land for himself?

To relieve Ya'akov from this worry, Yitzchak added "*that you will inherit the land in which you (only) wandered (in up until now), which God gave to Avraham.*"

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 116ff.)

### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

#### EISAV'S MARRIAGE TO MACHALAS

**I**n *Parshas Toldos* we read about Eisav's deceptive acts towards his father, climaxing here at the end of the *Parsha*, where he marries one of Yishma'el's daughters in order to appear righteous in Yitzchak's eyes. *Rashi*, however, comments that, in fact, "*He added wickedness upon his wickedness, in that he did not divorce the first ones*" (v. 9). I.e. just like he had married his first wives in an attempt to appear righteous (see 26:34 above), so too here "he added wickedness upon wickedness," marrying once again, this time to a member of Avraham's family in order to maintain his deceptive veil of righteousness.

In the following *Parsha*, *Vayeitzei*, we read of another trickster, Lavan, who acted deceptively towards Ya'akov. However, it could be argued that Eisav's deception towards his father represented a greater degree of moral corruption than the acts of Lavan, because Eisav *actively promoted himself* as a righteous person. Lavan, on the other hand, may have acted deceptively, but he did not scheme to find ways of proving his righteousness to others. He merely *concealed* his selfish and corrupt motives so that Ya'akov would not come to uncover his plans.

So, the Torah's description of Eisav here, at the end of *Parshas Toldos*, comes to warn us of the moral corruption which was exemplified by Eisav. Here we are warned to steer clear of this lowly activity: promoting oneself as righteous while the truth is something very different indeed.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 116ff)



# parshas Vayeitzei

פרשת ויצא

## 🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

**V**ayeitzei connotes having “departed.” At the beginning of our *Parsha*, Ya’akov leaves his home in the Land of Israel, and at the end he returns, having become “exceedingly wealthy.” While he was away from home, Ya’akov established most of his family—eleven of his twelve sons—all of whom remained loyal to the path of their father.

And yet ironically, Avraham and Yitzchak who spent all their days in the Land of Israel, both suffered from rebellious children. Why was it that Ya’akov achieved a “perfect complement” of children *outside* the Land?

**W**hile Ya’akov was a *tzadik* (a naturally righteous person), being the founder of the Jewish people, he also possessed the spiritual advantage of the *beinoni* and the *ba’al teshuvah*—those who struggle with evil and overcome it.

This element of his personality began to express itself when Ya’akov departed from the spiritually conducive

atmosphere of the Land of Israel, and joined Lavan in Charan. Here Ya’akov was forced to immerse himself in a corrupt world, and yet at the same time build a family and conduct his business dealings honestly. This brought to the surface Ya’akov’s innate abilities as a spiritual fighter.

The other Patriarchs, by contrast, *expelled* the negative traces within them rather than fight with them. Thus, Yishma’el became totally *disassociated* from Avraham as an heir, and likewise Eisav from Yitzchak.

Ya’akov however had the ability to *fight* evil. His period in Charan, where he fought the *external* evil of his surroundings, was also a time where he learned how to eliminate any potential evil within his family.

And thus, it was precisely in an unholy environment that he built a perfect complement of loyal sons, because fighting the evil around him taught him how to conquer—and not expel—the potential evil within.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeitzei* 5750)

י וַיִּפַּק יַעֲקֹב מִבְּאֵר שֶׁבַע וַאֲזַל לְחָרָן:  
 יא וְעָרַע בְּאֵתְרָא וּבֵת תַּמּוֹן אָרִי עַל שְׂמֵשׂא  
 וּנְסִיב מֵאֲבָנֵי אֶתְרָא וְשׂוּי אֶסְדוּהֵי וּשְׂכִיב  
 בְּאֶתְרָא הָהוּא: יב וַחֲלָם וְהָא סוּלְמָא נַעֲיִין  
 בְּאֶרְעָא וְרִישִׁיָּה מְטִי עַד צִית שְׂמִיָּא וְהָא  
 מְלֹאכֵיָּא דִּי סְלָקִין וְנִתְתִּין בֵּיהּ: יג וְהָא יִקְרָא

י וַיֵּצֵא יַעֲקֹב מִבְּאֵר שֶׁבַע וַיֵּלֶךְ חָרָנָה: יא וַיִּפְגַּע בַּמָּקוֹם וַיִּלָּן  
 שָׁם כִּי-בָא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וַיִּקַּח מֵאֲבָנֵי הַמָּקוֹם וַיִּשֶׂם מְרֹאשֹׁתָיו  
 וַיִּשְׁכַּב בַּמָּקוֹם הַהוּא: יב וַיַּחֲלֵם וַהֲגָה סֵלָם מִצֵּב אֲרֻצָּה וְרֹאשׁוֹ  
 מִגֵּיעַ הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וַהֲגָה מְלֹאכֵי אֱלֹהִים עֲלֵים וַיִּרְדִּים בּוֹ: יג וַהֲגָה

רש"י

תפלה, כמו ואל תפגע ב'י', ולמדנו שתקן תפלת ערצית, ושנה הכתוב ולא כתב ויתפלל, ללמדך שקפלה לו הארץ, כמו שמפורש בפרק גיד הנשה: כי בא השמש. היה לו לכתוב ויצא השמש וילן שם, כי זה השמש משמע, שקעה לו חמה פתאום שלא צעונתה כדי שליון שם: וישם מראשותיו. עשאו כמין מרצב סביב לראשו, שירא מפני חיות רעות, התחילו מריבות זו את זו, זאת אומרת עלי ניח לדיק את ראשו, וזאת אומרת עלי ניח, מיד עשאו הקב"ה אצן אחת, וזהו שנאמר ויקח את האצן אשר שם מראשותיו: וישכב במקום ההוא. לשון מיעוט, באתו מקום שכב, אבל י"ד שנים שמש צבית עבר, לא שכב צלילה, שהיה עוסק בצורה: (יג) עולים ויורדים. עולים תחלה ואחר כך יורדים.

(י) ויצא יעקב. על ידי שצטביל שרעות צוות כנען צעני יחזק אצו הלך עשו אל ישמעאל, הפסיק הענין צפרשתו של יעקב, וכתב וירא עשו כי צרך וגו', ומשגמר, חזר לענין הראשון: ויצא. לא היה לריק לכתוב אלא וילך יעקב חרנה, ולמה הזכיר יציאתו, אלא מגיד שזיאת לדיק מן המקום עושה רושם, שבזמן שהלדיק צעיר, הוא הודק, הוא זיוה, הוא הדרכה, ילא משם, פנה הודק, פנה זיוה, פנה הדרכה. וכן ותלא מן המקום<sup>1</sup>, האמור צנעמי ורות: וילך חרנה. ילא ללכת לחרן: (יא) ויפגע במקום. לא הזכיר הכתוב צאזיה מקום, אלא צמקום הנזכר צמקום אחר, הוא הר המורייה, שנאמר צו וירא את המקום מרחוק: ויפגע. כמו ופגע ציריחו<sup>2</sup>, ופגע צדצשת. ורבותיו פירשו<sup>3</sup> לשון

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

##### ● Why did the Torah mention Ya'akov's departure? (v. 10)

**RASHI:** Scripture only needed to write: "Ya'akov went to Charan." Why did it mention his departure?

This teaches us that the departure of a righteous man (*tzadik*) from a place makes an impression. For while the righteous man is in the city, he is its [awesome] aura, he is its [guiding] light, and he is its honor. When he departs from there, its [awesome] aura has departed, its [guiding] light has departed, its honor has departed.

Similarly, "She left the place" (Rus 1:7), is stated in reference to Naomi and Rus.

**MIDRASH:** This explanation is satisfactory in the latter case [of Naomi,] since she was the only righteous woman in the city at the time. But surely, in the former case [of Ya'akov's departure], Yitzchak and Rivkah remained?

Rabbi Azaryah said in the name of Rabbi Simon, "The merit of one righteous person is incomparable to the merit of two righteous people."

#### TORAS MENACHEM

##### ☞ YA'AKOV'S DEPARTURE (v.10)

The *Midrash* asks why Ya'akov's departure caused the light and honor of Be'er Sheva to leave, when Yitzchak and Rivkah still remained. The *Midrash* answers that the departure of even one righteous person is noticeable.

This question seems to be an issue that needs to be addressed at the literal level of Torah interpretation. Why did *Rashi* fail to clarify this point?

##### THE EXPLANATION

*Rashi* and the *Midrash* differed in their understanding of how a *tzadik* influences the town in which he lives. The *Midrash* stressed, that "You cannot compare *the merit* of one righteous person to *the merit* of two righteous people." I.e., according to the *Midrash*, the *tzadik* does not influence his neighbors *directly* by his actions, but rather, his mere presence is a "merit" for the town, which helps protects it.

*Rashi*, however, rejected this interpretation since, at the literal level, this concept has *already* been taught earlier in the Torah:

In the account of the destruction of Sodom, in *Parshas Vayeira*, we read how Avraham pleaded with God to save the city if he could find a handful of righteous people there (above 18:26ff). Though he ultimately failed to do so, we nevertheless learned from the story that the presence of righteous people in a town is a merit which help protects it. Therefore, *Rashi* concluded that here—in the account of Ya'akov's departure from

Be'er Sheva—it is unlikely that the Torah would be teaching the same concept *again*.

*Rashi* reasoned that the Torah must be speaking here of a different way that a *tzadik* affects his locality, not by the spiritual effects of his presence, but rather, through his direct, physical influence on his neighbors.

Thus, *Rashi* describes the *tzadik's* actions as having three effects:

"Honor" (הדר)—The visible presence of the *tzadik* makes the local inhabitants proud that their town is the place where a great person resides.

"[Guiding] light" (זו)—A "ziv" is a ray of light which is emitted from a light source. This depicts how the *tzadik* "emits" inspiration for others to perform more good deeds.

"[Awesome] aura" (הוד)—"Hod" indicates a stronger beam of light, as in the expression קרני הודו של משה (Moshe's beams of splendor)—*Rashi* to Shemos 34:30). Thus, at the literal level of Torah interpretation, the "beam" (or "aura") of a *tzadik* refers to his intimidating effect on others, promoting fear of God in his vicinity—as in the verse, "the skin of his face had become radiant, and they were afraid to come near him" (ibid.).

Obviously, in order to affect other people in these ways, the *tzadik* must be *seen visibly* by others and interact with them. Thus, when Ya'akov left Be'er Sheva, the, "honor," "[guiding] light" and "[awesome] aura" actually departed from the town, since Yitzchak was homebound due to his blindness (see *Rashi* to 28:13, below), and thus he was not seen by any of



## 🕎 YA'AKOV'S JOURNEY 🕎

28:10 **Y**a'akov left Be'er Sheva, and went (towards) Charan.

<sup>11</sup> He came across the place (i.e. Mount Moriah) and spent the night there because the sun had set (suddenly). He took some of the stones of the place and placed (them) around his head (for protection from wild animals), and he lay down (to sleep) in that place.

<sup>12</sup> He dreamt, and—look!—a ladder was wedged in the ground and its top reached to heaven, and—look!—angels of God were going up and down on it.

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why does the Torah stress that he departed from Be'er Sheva? (v. 10)

**MIDRASH:** Be'er Sheva means “the well of the oath.” [Ya'akov] said, “I do not want Avimelech to approach me and demand, ‘Swear to me, like your grandfather swore to me,’ and then I would cause the rejoicing of my descendants to be delayed by seven generations,” because Avraham’s oath with Avimelech delayed the entry of the Jewish people into the Land of Israel by seven generations (*Bereishis Rabah* 68:7; 54:4).

**MATNOS KEHUNAH:** Since Yitzchak also made an oath with Avimelech, we find that the full conquest of the Land of Israel, including the lands of Sichon and Og, was delayed until seven generations after Yitzchak (see “*Sparks of Chasidus*”).

#### ● Why were the angels “going up and down” (v. 12)

**RASHI:** [Note that] they went up before they went down. The angels that escorted him in the Land [of Israel were those that] do not go outside the Land, so they ascended to heaven. Then, the angels assigned to the outside of the Land descended to escort him.

### TORAS MENACHEM

the local inhabitants. Presumably, Rivkah spent all of her time attending to Yitzchak, so she was not seen either (in addition to her general modesty).

Therefore, *Rashi* was not troubled by the *Midrash*’s question—how could the honor etc. of the town have departed when Yitzchak and Rivkah remained—since *Rashi* understood that we are speaking here of the *personal* influence of the *tzadik* on others, which was out of the question at that time for Yitzchak and Rivkah.

The *Midrash*, on the other hand, understood that we are speaking here of the merit of the *tzadik* (as explained above), and that merit remains regardless of whether the *tzadik* is publicly active or not.

So the *Midrash* was troubled: Why did the town’s merit leave with Ya’akov when Yitzchak and Rivkah remained? The *Midrash* answers that

each *tzadik* makes his own unique contribution to the town’s merit, and, “The merit of one righteous person is incomparable to the merit of two righteous people.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 119ff.)

#### 🕎 THE ANGELS IN YA'AKOV'S DREAM (v. 12)

*Rashi* writes that the angels which escorted Ya’akov in the Land of Israel were not permitted to leave the Land, so they ascended to heaven, and that the angels of the Diaspora descended from heaven to escort him further.

### 🕎 The Last Word 🕎

**Y**a’akov’s descent to Charan alludes to the descent of the Jewish people into exile (see *Bereishis Rabah* 68:13).

Besides the negative reason for Ya’akov’s journey—to flee from Eisav—there was also a positive intent, that Ya’akov set off to build a family, thereby establishing the Jewish people. (In fact, Yitzchak was totally unaware of the negative reason for Ya’akov’s departure, and he knew only the positive intention—see 27:46).

From this we can learn that the current exile too is not merely a negative phenomenon, but rather, “God *only* exiled the Jewish people in order to add converts to them” (*Pesachim* 87b). I.e. to convert the spiritual vacuum of exile so that it becomes an environment which is conducive to holiness—as the *Tzemach Tzedek* told a person who wanted to leave the Diaspora, “Make *this* place the Land of Israel.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 154)

### 🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

**A**ccording to the *Midrash* (and *Matnos Kehunah*), Ya’akov did not want to make an oath with Avimelech, as his father and grandfather did, for this would delay the Jewish people’s entry into the Land of Israel by seven generations (see “*Classic Questions*”).

This, however, begs the question: Why *did* Avraham and Yitzchak make such an oath?

Avraham and Yitzchak both promoted the awareness of God, but their effect was more superficial. They did not *win over* the forces of evil; they merely *appeased* them. Therefore, both Avraham and Yitzchak were forced to make peace treaties with their enemies.

Ya’akov, on the other hand, succeeded in bringing people to a deeper recognition of God. Therefore, it would have been inappropriate for him to make peace with his enemy, as he had the ability to *transform* the forces of evil to become good.

And that is why *all* of his children were righteous, because he transformed any negative traits into positive ones.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 10, p. 88ff)

דיי מעתד עלוהי ויאמר אָנָּא יי אֱלֹהֵהּ  
 דְּאַבְרָהָם אַבְנִיד וְאַלְהֵהּ דִּי־יַחֲזֵק אַרְעָא דִּי אַתָּ  
 שְׂרִי עֲלֵהּ לְךָ אֶתְנִינָה וְלְבְנֵיךָ: יד ויהוה בְּנִיד  
 סְגִיאיִן כְּעִפְרָא דְאַרְעָא וְתַתְקַף לְמַעַרְבָא  
 וְלְמַדְיִנְחָא וְלְצַפּוֹנָא וְלְדְרוֹמָא וְיַתְבָּרְכוּן  
 בְּדִילְךָ כֹּל זְרַעֵית אַרְעָא וּבְדִיל בְּנֵיךָ: טו וְהָא  
 מִימְרֵי בְּסַעֲדָךָ וְאַתְרָנְךָ בְּכֹל אֶתֶר דִּי תַתְקַף  
 וְאַתְיַבִּינְךָ לְאַרְעָא הָאָרֶץ אֲרִי לֹא אֶשְׁבְּקִינְךָ עַד

יְהוָה נֹצֵב עָלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אָבִיךָ וְאַלְהֵי  
 יַחֲזֵק הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה שׁוֹב עָלֶיהָ לְךָ אֶתְנַנָּה וְלִזְרַעְךָ:  
 יד וְהִיא זְרַעְךָ כְּעִפְרַיִן וּפְרָצֵת יַמָּה וְקַדְמָה וְצַפְנָה וְנִגְבָּה  
 וְנִבְרָכוּ בְךָ כָּל־מְשַׁפְּחֹת הָאָדָמָה וּבִזְרַעְךָ: טו וְהִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי עֹמֵךְ  
 וְשִׁמְרֵתִיךָ בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־תֵּלֵךְ וְהִשְׁבַּתִּיךָ אֶל־הָאָדָמָה הַזֹּאת כִּי  
 לֹא אֶעֱזָבְךָ עַד אֲשֶׁר אִם־עָשִׂיתִי אֵת אֲשֶׁר־דִּבַּרְתִּי לְךָ:

רש"י

קיפל הקצ"ה כל ארץ ישראל תחתיו, רמז לו שתכא נוחה ליכבש לצניו<sup>2</sup> (כד'  
 אמות, שזכ מקומו של אדם)<sup>3</sup>: (יד) ופרצת. וחזקת, כמו וכן יפרוך<sup>4</sup>:  
 (טו) אנכי עמך. לפי שכיב ירא מעשו ומלצו: עד אשר אם עשיתי. אם  
 משמש בלשון כי: דברתי לך. ללרכך ועליך, מה שכבחתיו לאזרכה על  
 זרעו, לך כבחתיו ולא לעשו, שלא אמרתי לו כי יחזק יקרא לך רע, אלא כי

מלאכים שליווהו בדרך חין יולאים חוזה לארץ ועלו לרקיע, וירדו מלאכי  
 חוזה לארץ ללוותו: (יג) נצב עליו. לשמרו: ואלהי יצחק. אף על פי שלא  
 מצינו במקרא שיחד הקצ"ה שמו על הכדיקים בחייהם לכתוב אלהי פלוני,  
 משום שנאמר הן כקדושו לא יאמין, כאן ייחד שמו על יצחק, לפי שכבו  
 עיניו, וכלוא צדיק, והרי הוא כמת, ויזר הרע פסק ממנו<sup>1</sup>: שכב עליה.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What happened to the place where Ya'akov slept? (v. 13)

**RASHI:** God folded the entire Land of Israel under him, hinting to him that it would be easily conquered by his children.

**CHIZKUNI:** *Rashi* does not mean that the entire Land of Israel was folded under Ya'akov *literally*. Rather, this was part of Ya'akov's dream.

**MASKIL LE DAVID:** *Rashi* was troubled by the fact that the verse states, "I will give to you and to your descendants *the land on which you are lying*," suggesting that God was only promising him the four cubits on which he was lying! Therefore, *Rashi* explained that, in

this instance, the entire Land of Israel had been miraculously folded under Ya'akov.

But how was such an astonishing miracle possible? And what was the point of it? Where did all its inhabitants go?

It seems to me, that the whole of the Land of Israel was not folded under Ya'akov in the literal sense. Rather, God uprooted Mount Moriah, on which the "foundation stone" of the world is located, and placed it under Ya'akov (see *Rashi* to v. 11). Since that stone was the foundation of the entire Land of Israel, the result is that when Ya'akov was lying there, it was as if the whole Land was underneath him.

TORAS MENACHEM

It was explained at length above that the Land of Israel was not yet holy in the time of the Patriarchs, which is why we find that they left the Land on a number of occasions (see *Toras Menachem* to 15:8; see also *ibid.* 26:2-3).

This begs the question: If the Land was not yet holy, why were the angels forbidden to leave?

THE EXPLANATION

When we say that the Land of Israel was not holy in the times of the Patriarchs, it means that the *physical Land* itself had not become holy. In heaven, however, the Land has always been desired by God.

Therefore, the Patriarchs who lived down here on earth were permitted to leave the Land, since the physical Land had not yet become holy. But the angels, who dwelled in heaven, were not permitted to leave, because in heaven the Land of Israel has always been associated with holiness.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 152ff.)

☞ DID THE LAND OF ISRAEL FOLD LITERALLY? (v.13)

*Rashi* writes that when Ya'akov was sleeping, the entire Land of Israel was folded by God miraculously underneath him, as a sign that the Land would be easy to conquer by his children.

**Chizkuni** and **Maskil leDavid** write that this miracle could not have happened literally, for it appears to be an unnecessarily extreme violation of nature, and they offer alternative explanations for *Rashi's* words.

*Rashi* however gives no indication whatsoever that the miracle did not occur in the literal sense, and bearing in mind that *Rashi* wrote his commentary for a child who is learning the Torah for the first time, we can presume that *Rashi* expected the reader to take his words at face value.

This however leaves us with the question: Why did God make such a grandiose miracle, compacting hundreds of miles into the space of a few feet, merely as a "hint" to Ya'akov that the land would be easy to conquer in the future?

*Rashi's* comment is even more alarming when one compares his words with the source of this teaching in the *Talmud* (*Chullin* 91b):

The *Talmud* states that, "God folded the entire Land of Israel under Ya'akov our father, so that its conquest by his children would be easy." I.e. according to the *Talmud*, this miracle somehow *helped* Ya'akov's children conquer the land.

*Rashi*, however, adapted the *Talmud's* words to read, "God folded the entire Land of Israel under him, *hinting to him* that it would be as easily conquered by his children." I.e. the miracle was of no *practical* help. It merely *hinted* to Ya'akov about the future conquest of the Land.

Hence with *Rashi's* turn of phrase, he actually *reduced* the impact of the miracle, from miraculous assistance, to a mere "hint." This magnifies our earlier question: Why did God perform such an earth-shattering miracle merely to provide Ya'akov with a *hint*?

<sup>13</sup> Suddenly, God was standing over him, and He said, “I am God, the God of Avraham your father, and the God of Yitzchak. I will give to you and to your descendants the land on which you are lying.

<sup>14</sup> Your descendants will be as (widespread as) the dust of the earth, and you will be strong to the west, to the east, to the north and to the south. All the families of the earth will be blessed through you and your descendants.”

<sup>15</sup> “Look, I am with you, and I will guard you wherever you go (from Eisav and Lavan). I will bring you back to this land, for I will not abandon you until I have carried out what I have spoken (to Avraham, a promise that was intended) for you (and not Eisav).”

---

TORAS MENACHEM

---

### WHAT WAS TROUBLING RASHI?

In order to solve this problem, we first need to clarify why our verse troubled *Rashi*, prompting him to offer an explanation.

At first glance, *Rashi* appears to have explained this matter in his commentary to the *Talmud* (ibid). There he writes that the reader will be troubled as to why the verse states, “I will give to you and to your descendants the land on which you are lying,” which seems to suggest that God was only promising Ya’akov the four cubits on which he was lying. (The *Talmud* thus answers that God compacted the Land of Israel into four cubits underneath him to make the whole Land as easy to conquer as if it were merely four cubits).

However, it appears unlikely that this was *Rashi*’s problem here in his commentary to the Torah, for the following reasons:

a.) *Rashi*’s commentary to the *Talmud* was written for a more advanced student than his commentary to the Torah, since “a five year-old begins scripture and...a fifteen year old begins *Talmud*” (*Avos* 5:22). Therefore, it would be unacceptable to presume that a detail which required clarification in the *Talmud* to the fifteen-year old was obvious to the student of scripture at the age of five. *Rashi* does not indicate here in his commentary to the Torah that he was troubled by the above question (why God was only giving four cubits of land to Ya’akov), and he would not have expected the five-year-old to work it out by himself, if even the fifteen-year-old student of *Talmud* needed prompting on this matter.

b.) Earlier, in *Parshas Lech Lecha*, God told Avraham, “Please raise your eyes and, from the place where you are positioned, look northward, southward, eastward and westward. Because, I will give all the land that you see to you and to your descendants for eternity” (13:14-15).

Now, even if Avraham was on a high mountain, he would not have been able to see the entire Land of Israel. Nevertheless, it is obvious to the reader that when God said, “I will give all the land that you see to you etc.,” He was not limiting the promise to the area which Avraham was

able to see physically at that moment in time. Rather, it is *self-evident* that God promised him the entire Land, and that Avraham was looking at a portion of it. This point is so obvious that *Rashi* deemed it unnecessary to make any comment.

The same applies in our *Parsha*, when God promised Ya’akov, “I will give to you... the Land on which you are lying”: It is self-evident, at the literal level, that God intended to give Ya’akov the entire Land, and that Ya’akov was sleeping on part of it. God was merely giving an indication to which land He was referring.

Rather, *Rashi* was troubled by a much simpler question: Why did God need to mention *at all* that Ya’akov was sleeping on the land? He could have simply said, “I will give *this Land* to you and your descendants.” What was the significance of Ya’akov sleeping on it?

Due to this problem, *Rashi* came to the conclusion that with the words, “the Land on which you are lying,” God was not indicating to Ya’akov the geographic location of the land. Rather, He was hinting to Ya’akov’s ownership of it.

In other words, just like in the above case of Avraham, God told him to carry out a *physical act* which reinforced his future ownership of the land (“Get up and walk through the land, across its length and its breadth, for I am going to give it to you”—13:17); so too here in the case of Ya’akov, God miraculously compacted the entire land *physically* underneath where Ya’akov was sleeping, to underscore the future ownership of the land by his descendants.

There is however one significant difference between Avraham and Ya’akov’s acts: Avraham actually performed a positive act, whereas Ya’akov merely slept, while God compacted the land underneath him. So, what did Ya’akov accomplish?

To clarify, *Rashi* continues that this event served the purpose of “hinting

### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

#### “UFARATZTA” (v. 14)

**U**faratzta—spreading forth without limits—means the breaking down of barriers, even when those barriers represent good and valid limitations. For example: extending beyond one’s fixed times for Torah study; or giving more charity than Jewish law requires; or meditating on the greatness of God for extended periods before, during and even after prayer.

This ability to break beyond all constraints is the inheritance of Ya’akov, our father.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 1, p. 168-70)

### 🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

**T**he highest aspect of the Jewish soul—the *yechidah*—is so sublime that it cannot be contained within the body, and it spreads to a distance of four cubits (approx. 6 ft) around a person. The *yechidah* is also a level of the soul which can never become tarnished, because it is not susceptible to any negative influences.

Thus, when God placed the entire Land of Israel within four cubits of Ya’akov to stress his future ownership of it (see *Toras Menachem*), the Land became connected with Ya’akov’s *yechidah*, and so too, with the *yechidah* of every single one of his descendants.

And that is the reason why “it would be as easily conquered by his children,” because the land was associated with a level of the soul which is impervious to any opposition.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 134ff.)

די אַעביד ית די מללית לך: טו ואתער יעקב משנתיה ואמר בקושטא אית יקרא די שרי באתרא הדין ואנא לא הויתי ידע: יז ודחילו ואמר מא דחילו אתרא הדין לית דין אתר הדיוט אלהין אתר דרענא ביה מן קדם יי ודין תרע קבל שמיא: יח ואקדים יעקב בצפרא ונסיב ית אבנא די שוי אסדוהי ושוי יתה קמא ואריק משחא על רישה: יט וקרא ית שמיא דאתרא ההוא בית אל וברם לוז שמיא דקרתא בקדמיתא: כ וקים יעקב קים למימר אם יהי מימרא דיין בסעדי וישרינני בארחה הדא די אנא אויל ויתן לי לחמא למיכל וכסו למלכש: כא ואיתוב בשלום לבית אבא ויהי מימרא דיין לי לאלה: כב ואבנא דהא די שויתי קמא תהי דאהי פלח עליה קדם יי וכל די תתן לי חד מן עשרא

טו וייקין יעקב משנתו ויאמר אכן יש יהוה במקום הזה ואנכי לא ידעתי: יז וירא ויאמר מה נזרא המקום הזה אין זה כי אם בית אלהים וזה שער השמים: יח וישכם יעקב בבקר ויקח את האבן אשר שם מראשתיו וישם אתה מצבה ויעק שמן על ראשה: יט ויקרא את שם המקום ההוא בית אל ואולם לוז שם העיר לראשונה: כ וידר יעקב נדר לאמר אם יהיה אלהים עמדי ושמרני בדרך הזה אשר אנכי הולך ונתן לי לחם לאכל ובגד ללבוש: כא ושבתי בשלום אל בית אבי והיה יהוה לי לאלהים: כב והאבן הזאת אשר שמתי מצבה יהיה בית אלהים וכל אשר תתן לי עשר אעשרנו לך:

כ"ט

הסמוך לעי אלא לירושלים, ועל שם שהיכה עיר האלכים קראה צית אל, וכוה בר המוריה שהתפלל צו אצרכס, וכוה השדה שהתפלל צו יחא, וכן אמרו צבוטה לכו ונעלה וגו' לא כאצרכס שקראו בר, ולא כילחק שקראו שדה, אלא כיעקב שקראו צית אל. ע"כ מפרש"י מדוייק: מה נזרא. תרגום מה דחילו אתרא הדין. דחילו שם דבר הוא, כמו סוכלתנו, וכסו למלכש: וזה שער השמים. מקום תפלה, לעלות תפלתם השמימה. ומדרשו שבית המקדש של מעלה מכון כנגד צית המקדש של מטה: (כ) אם יהיה אלהים עמדי. אם ישמור לי הצטחות הללו, שהצטיחני להיות עמדי, כמו שאמר לי וכהה אנכי עמך: ושמרני. כמו שאמר לי ושמרתוך ככל אשר תלך: ונתן לי לחם לאכול. כמו שאמר כי לא אעזבך, והצטקש לחם הוא קרוי נעזב, שנאמר ולא ראיתי לדיק נעזב וזרעו מצקש לחם: (כא) ושבתי. כמו שאמר לי והשיבותוך אל האדמה: בשלום. שלום מן החטא, שלא אלמד מדרכי לבן: והיה ה' לי לאלהים. שיחול שמו עלי מתחלה ועד סוף, שלא ימלא פסול צרעני, כמו שאמר אשר דברתי לך, והצטחה זו הצטיחני לאצרכס, שנאמר להיות לך לאלהים ולזרעך אחריו: (כב) ואבנא קמא תהי דאהי פלח עליה קדם יי"ו זו של והאבן, אם תעשה לי את אלה ואלף אני אעשה זאת והאבן הזאת אשר שמתי מצבה וגו'. כתרגומו אבי פלח עליה קדם ה',

צינחק, ולא כל יחא, וכן כל לי, ולך, ולו, ולהם, הסמוכים אלא דבור, משמשים לשון על, וזה יוכיח, שהרי עם יעקב לא דבר קודם לכן: (טז) ואנכי לא ידעתי. שם ידעתי, לא ישנתי במקום קדוש כזה: (יז) כי אם בית אלהים. אמר רבי אלעזר צבס רבי יוסי בן זמרא, הסולם הזה עומד צבאר שבע, וחמטע שיפועו מגיע כנגד צית המקדש, שצבאר שבע עומד צדרומה של יבודה, וירושלים צבפונה, צבצול שבין יבודה וצנימין, וצית אל היה צבפון של נחלת צנימין, צבצול שבין צנימין וצין בני יוסף, נמצא סולם שרגליו צבאר שבע וראשו צבצית אל, מגיע חמטע שיפועו נגד ירושלים, וכלפי שאמרו צבותינו, שאמר הקב"ה, לדיק זה צא לצית מלוני ויפטר צלא לינה. ועוד אמרו, יעקב קראו לירושלים צית אל, וזו לוז היא ולא ירושלים, ומהיכן למדו לומר כן, אמר אני שנעקר בר המוריה וצא לכאן, וזו היא קפיאת הארץ האמורה צשחיתת חולין<sup>1</sup> שצא צית המקדש לקראתו עד צית אל, וזהו ויפגע צמקום. ואם תאמר וכשעבר יעקב על צית המקדש מדוע לא עכצו שם, איכו לא יהיב לציה להתפלל צמקום שהתפללו אצותיו, ומן השמים יעכצוהו, איכו עד חרן אזל, כדאמרינן צפרק גיד הנשה<sup>2</sup> וקרא מוכיח וילך חרנה, כי מעא לחרן אמר, אפשר שעצרתו על מקום שהתפללו אצותיו ולא התפללתי צו. יבז דעתיה למדער, וחזר עד צית אל, וקפצא לו הארץ. (צית אל לא זה הוא

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Ya'akov make his promises (v. 22) conditional on the clauses specified in v. 20-21?

**PANE'ACH RAZA:** Ya'akov did not intend to fulfill his promise only if God would abide by the specified clauses, since a person should serve God regardless of the reward. Rather, he was saying to God, "Just as I am fulfilling my promise, I hope You will fulfill Yours."

**MASKIL LE DAVID:** A person is only obligated to separate a tenth of his produce for *ma'aser* (tithe) but Ya'akov promised to separate a fifth, on the condition that God fulfill His promises. This was not inappropriate since Ya'akov made his *additional* gift to God conditional, but not his basic obligation.

● What did Ya'akov mean with the phrase, "God will be my God"? (v. 21)

**RASHI:** That His Name will rest on me from beginning to end so that no disqualification should be found among my descendants.

**RAMBAN:** Rashi is incorrect in his assertion that the words "God will be my God" was the last of Ya'akov's clauses. In fact, it was the first of his promises. Ya'akov was saying, "If I return to my father's house then I will worship God as He is known by His true Name, in the Chosen Land, at the location of this stone which will be for me a house of God, and there I will separate *ma'aser*."

<sup>16</sup> Ya'akov woke up from his sleep, and he said, "God is truly in this place, and I didn't realize (otherwise I wouldn't have slept here)!"

<sup>17</sup> He felt frightened. He said, "How awesome this place is! This is none other than the house of God. This is the gate of heaven (through which all prayers ascend)."

<sup>18</sup> Ya'akov arose early in the morning. He took the stone that he had placed at his head, set it up as a monument, and poured oil on top of it. <sup>19</sup> He named the place Beis-Ail, but Luz was originally the name of the city.

<sup>20</sup> Ya'akov made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me (keeping His promises), and He will guard me on this route in which I am going (like He said He would), and He will give me bread to eat (as He promised not to abandon me) and garments to wear, <sup>21</sup> and if I return in peace to my father's house (as He promised I would), and God will be my God (to prevent any of my children from going off the path—<sup>22</sup> then I will do the following for You:) This stone, which I have placed as a monument, will (eventually be built to) be a house of God, and I will definitely separate tithes for You from everything that You give me."

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

to him that it would be easily conquered by his children." I.e. unlike Avraham's symbol of future ownership—which had entailed a significant effort on his part, walking from one end of the land to the other—Ya'akov's act had been effortless. This hinted to him that the future conquest of the Land of Israel by his descendants would likewise be devoid of any effort at all.

Thus, in the final analysis, it turns out that at the literal level of Torah interpretation God gave Ya'akov an even greater promise than that which the *Talmud* conveys. For, according to the *Talmud*, God was making the Land of Israel as easy to conquer for Ya'akov as if it were only four cubits, but nevertheless, those four cubits still needed conquering. According to *Rashi's* commentary on the Torah however, God was promising that the conquest would be totally effortless, just like sleeping on the ground.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 129ff.)

#### 🕯️ YA'AKOV'S PROMISE (v.20-22)

**Pane'ach Raza** and **Maskil leDavid** question why Ya'akov made a conditional promise to God, when a Jew is supposed to serve God without contemplating the benefits that might result from his observance.

**Maskil leDavid** answers that Ya'akov was not expecting God to

reward him for his observance of *mitzvos*, but for his *additional* promises that extended beyond the basic obligations of Jewish law. Therefore, Ya'akov attached conditions only to his additional promises to God, which he expected to yield fruit.

However, such an act appears to be out of character with the moral caliber of the Patriarchs. Our Sages taught that the Patriarchs were so devoted to God, at the expense of any personal agenda, that they are compared to a "chariot" which follows the direction in which it is led without deviating to either side (see *Bereishis Rabah* 47:6). Thus, it is somewhat unsatisfying to conclude that Ya'akov would have made any conditions in his Divine service, even in matters in which he was not strictly obligated.

Rather, it would appear that Ya'akov was not demanding rewards from God; he was merely requesting the necessary *working conditions* to fulfill his promise. I.e. in order to build a "house of God" and perform the *mitzvos* (tithes) properly, Ya'akov would need God's protection, provision of food and clothing, assistance to return back to the Land of Israel, assistance to build a family. Thus Ya'akov was merely requesting from God the necessary means to be able to serve Him.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 243)

### 🕯️ Sparks of Chasidus 🕯️

According to Chasidic teachings, Ya'akov's promise could be understood as follows (translation follows **Ramban**):

*If God will be with me*—to help me serve Him.

*And He will guard me on this route in which I am going*—He guards me from transgressing the prohibitions of the Torah.

*And He will give me bread to eat*—i.e. he will help me to study Torah which is described as "bread" (spiritual sustenance).

*And garments to wear*—this refers to *mitzvos*, which are described as "garments" for the soul.

*And if I return in peace to my father's house*—this refers to utilizing non-holy objects for the sake of heaven, causing the sparks of holiness within them to "return" to their source.

*Then God will be my God*—Then I will reap personal, spiritual gain, because the soul which descended into my body will enjoy an "ascent," having completed its mission successfully.

*And this stone, which I have placed as a monument, will be a house of God*—But, more importantly, the physical world itself ("this stone") will become a home for God below (a "house of God") through my Divine service.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, pp. 249-250)

אפרשיניה קדמך: א ונטל יעקב רגלו וואל לארע בני מדינתא: ב וחוא וקא בירא בחקלא וקא תמן תלתא עדרין דעאן רביעין עלה ארי מן בירא והיא משקן עדריא ואבנא רבתא על פומא דבירא: ג ומתפנשין לתמן כל עדריא ומגנדרין ית אבנא מעל פומא דבירא ומשקין ית ענא ומתיבין ית אבנא על פומא דבירא לאתרה: ד ואמר להון יעקב אחי מנן אתון ואמרו מתרן אנהא: ה ואמר להון הידעתון ית לבן בר נחור ואמרו ידענן: ו ואמר להון השלם ליה ואמרו שלם וקא רחל ברתיה אתיא עם ענא: ז ואמר קא עוד יומא סני לא עדן למכנש בעיר אשקו ענא ואילו רעו: ח ואמרו לא נבול עד די יתכנשו כל עדריא ומגנדרין ית אבנא מעל פומא דבירא ומשקין ענא: ט עד דהוא ממלל עמהון ורחל אתת עם ענא די לאבוהא ארי רעיתא היא: י והנה פד חוא יעקב ית רחל בת לבן אחוהא דאמיה וית ענא דלבן אחוהא דאמיה וקריב יעקב ומגדר ית אבנא מעל פומא דבירא ומשקין ית ענא דלבן אחוהא דאמיה: יא ומשק יעקב לרחל וארים ית קליה ובכא: יב וחוי יעקב לרחל ארי בר אחת אבוהא הוא ומארי בר רבקה הוא ורהסת וחויאת לאבוהא: יג והנה פד שמע לבן ית שמע יעקב בר אהתיה ורהסת לקדמותיה ונפיה ליה ומשק ליה ומעליה לביתיה ומשק ליה ית כל פתגמא האליו: יד ואמר ליה לבן ברם

[שני] כט א וישא יעקב רגליו וילך ארצה בני-קדם: ב וירא והנה באר בשדה והנה שם שלשה עדרי-צאן רבצים עליה פי מן-הבאר ההוא ישקו העדרים והאבן גדלה על-פי הבאר: ג ונאספו כל-העדרים ונגלו את-האבן מעל פי הבאר והשקו את-הצאן והשיבו את-האבן על-פי הבאר למקמה: ד ויאמר להם יעקב אחי מאין אתם ויאמרו מתרן אנהנו: ה ויאמר להם הידעתם את-לבן בן-נחור ויאמרו ידענו: ו ויאמר להם השלום לו ויאמרו שלום והנה רחל בתו באה עם-הצאן: ז ויאמר הן עוד היום גדול לא-עת האסף המקנה השקו הצאן ולכו רעו: ח ויאמרו לא נוכל עד אשר יאספו כל-העדרים ונגלו את-האבן מעל פי הבאר והשקינו הצאן: ט עודנו מדבר עמם ורחל באה עם-הצאן אשר לאביה פי רעה הוא: י ויהי כאשר ראה יעקב את-רחל בת-לבן אחי אמו ואת-צאן לבן אחי אמו ויגש יעקב ויגל את-האבן מעל פי הבאר וישק את-צאן לבן אחי אמו: יא וישק יעקב לרחל וישא את-קלו ויבך: יב ויגד יעקב לרחל כי אחי אביה הוא וכי בן-רבקה הוא ותריך ותגד לאביה: יג ויהי כשמע לבן את-שמע יעקב בן-אחותו וירץ לקראתו ויחבק-לו וינשק-לו ויביאהו אל-ביתו ויספר ללבן את כל-הדברים האלה: יד ויאמר לו לבן אך עצמי

רש"י

ויגל. כמי שמעביר את הפקק מעל פי ללוחית, להודיעך שכחו גדול:<sup>1</sup> (יא) ויבך. לפי שפסל צרוח הקודש שאינו נכנסת עמו לקבורה. דבר אחר, לפי שצא צידים ריקניות, אמר, אליעזר עבד אבי אצא, היו צידיו זמנים ומימדים ומגדות, ואני אין צידו כלום. לפי שרדף אליפז בן עשו בצמלות אצו אחריו להורגו, והשיגו, ולפי שגדל אליפז בחיקו של יצחק, משך ידו, אמר לו מה אעשה לזיווי של אצא, אמר לו יעקב טול מה שצדו, והעני חסוד כמת: (יב) בי אחי אביה הוא. קרוב לאציה, כמו אצנים אחים אנחנו.<sup>2</sup> ומדרשו, אם לרמאות הוא צא, גם אני אחיו צממות, ואם אדם כשר הוא, גם אני בן רבקה אחותו הכשרה: ותגד לאביה. לפי שאמה מתה, לא היה לה להגיד אלא לו:<sup>3</sup> (יג) וירץ לקראתו. כסבור ממון הוא טעון, שהרי עבד הבית צא לכאן צערה גמלים טעונים:<sup>4</sup> ויחבק. כשלא ראה עמו כלום, אמר, שמה זכובים הביא והנס בחיקו:<sup>5</sup> וינשק לו. אמר, שמה מרגליות הביא והס צפיו:<sup>6</sup> ויספר ללבן. שלא צא אלא מתוך אונס אחיו, ושטלו ממנו ממנו: (יד) אך עצמי ובשרי. מעתה אין לי לאספק הביתה, הואיל ואין צידך

וכן עשה בשומו מפרן ארס, כשאמר לו קום עלה בית אל! מה נאמר שם, ויבא יעקב ממצה וגוי ויסך עליה נסך:<sup>2</sup> (ה) וישא יעקב רגליו. משנתצער בשורה טובה, שהוצטח בשמירה, נשא לבו את רגליו ונעשה קל ללכת. כך מפורש בצראשית רבה:<sup>3</sup> (ז) ישקו העדרים. משקים הרועים את העדרים, והמקרא דבר זלשון קלרה: (ג) ונאספו. רגילים היו להאסף, לפי שהיטה האבן גדולה וגללה. וגולליו ותרגומו ומגנדרין. כל לשון הוה, משתנה לדבר זלשון עתיד וזלשון עבר, לפי שכל דבר ההוב תמיד, כבר היה ועתיד להיות: והשיבו. תרגומו ומתיבין: (ו) באה עם הצאן. הטעם צאל"ף, ותרגומו אחיא. ורחל צאה. הטעם למעלה צב"ית, ותרגומו אחת, הראשון לשון עושה והשני לשון עשחה: (ז) הן עוד היום גדול. לפי שראה אותם רוצים, כסבור שרוצים לאסוף המקנה הציתה ולא ירעו עוד, אמר להם, הן עוד היום גדול, כלומר אם שכירי יום אחס, לא שלמתם פעולת היום, ואם הצהמות שלכם, אף על פי כן לא עת האסף המקנה וגוי:<sup>4</sup> (ח) לא נוכל. להסקות לפי שהאבן גדולה: וגללה. זה מתורגם ויגנדרון, לפי שהוא לשון עתיד: (י) ויגש יעקב

🕍 YA'AKOV MEETS ROCHEL BY THE WELL 🕍

29  
SECOND  
READING

**Y**a'akov (found it easy to) lift his feet (after hearing the good news), and went off towards the land of the people of the East.

<sup>2</sup> He glanced, and—look!—a well was in the field; and—look!—three flocks of sheep were lying beside it, because they would give water to the flocks from that well.

There was a huge rock on the mouth of the well. <sup>3</sup> (When) the flocks would gather there, they would roll the rock off the mouth of the well and give water to the sheep, and (then) they would return the rock onto the mouth of the well, to its place.

<sup>4</sup> Ya'akov said to them, “Where are you from, my brothers?”

They said, “We’re from Charan.”

<sup>5</sup> He said to them, “Do you know Lavan, the (grand)son of Nachor?”

They said, “We know (him).”

<sup>6</sup> He said to them, “Is he well?”

They said, “He’s fine. Here is his daughter Rochel, coming with the sheep.”

<sup>7</sup> (Ya'akov saw that the flocks were lying down before the day’s work had ended, so) he said, “It’s still the middle of the day. It’s not yet the time to take in the flocks. (Why don’t you) water the sheep and then go and pasture.”

<sup>8</sup> They said, “We can’t, until all the flocks are gathered together and they’ll roll the rock off the mouth of the well. Then we’ll give water to the sheep.”

<sup>9</sup> While he was still talking with them, Rochel came with her father’s sheep, for she was a shepherdess.

<sup>10</sup> Then, when Ya'akov saw Lavan’s daughter Rochel, his mother’s brother, and the sheep of Lavan, his mother’s brother, Ya'akov stepped forward and rolled the rock off the mouth of the well (effortlessly, showing his great strength), and he watered the sheep of Lavan, his mother’s brother.

<sup>11</sup> Ya'akov kissed Rochel. (He perceived prophetically that she would not be buried with him so) he wept loudly.

<sup>12</sup> Ya'akov told Rochel that he was her father’s relative and that he was Rivkah’s son. She ran and told her father (since her mother was no longer alive).

🕍 YA'AKOV WORKS SEVEN YEARS FOR ROCHEL 🕍

29:13 **T**hen, when Lavan heard the news about Ya'akov, his sister’s son, he ran towards him (thinking that he would be laden with money, like Eliezer. When he saw no money) he embraced him (to feel what was in his pockets), and he kissed him (to see if pearls were hidden in his mouth).

(Lavan) brought him into his house. He told Lavan what had happened (with Eisav, how he had run for his life without any money). <sup>14</sup> Lavan said to him, “(Since you have no money I should really turn

TORAS MENACHEM

🕍 Sparks of Chasidus 🕍

**T**he word “well” is mentioned seven times in our Parsha. This alludes to the seven wells which were dug by Avraham and Yitzchak (who dug three and four wells respectively).

Thus, Ya'akov merited that the well that he saw had the spiritual greatness of all the other seven wells put together.

(Toras Levi Yitzchak p. 174)

קריבני ובכרי אתי ויתבי עמייה ירח יומיני: טו ואמר לבן ליעקב המדאחי אתי ותפלחנני מגן חוי לי מה אנדך: טז וללבן תרתין בגן שום רבתיא לאה ושום זערתא רחל: יז ועיני לאה יאזן ורחל חות שפירא בריוא ויאזא בחווא: יח ורחים יעקב ית רחל ואמר אפלחינד שבע שנין ברחל ברתיא זערתא: יט ואמר לבן טב דאתן יתה לד מדאתן יתה לגבר אחרן תיב עמי: כ ופלה יעקב ברחל שבע שנין והווי בעיניהו כיומין זעירין פד רחים יתה: כא ואמר יעקב ללבן חב ית אתתי ארי שלימו יומי פולחני ואיעול לותה: כב וכגש לבן ית כל אנשי אתרא ועבד משתיא: כג והוה ברמשא ודבר ית לאה ברתיא ואעיל יתה לותיה ועל לותה: כד ויהב לבן לה ית זלפה אמתיא ללאה ברתיא לאמה: כה והוה בעפרא והא היא לאה ואמר ללבן מא דא

ובשרי אתה וישב עמו חדש ימים: טו ויאמר לבן ליעקב הכי אתי אתה ועבדתני חנם הגידה לי מה משפרתיך: טז וללבן שתי בנות שם הגדלה לאה ושם הקטנה רחל: יז ועיני לאה רבות ורחל היתה יפת תאר ויפת מראה: ושלישין יח ויאהב יעקב את רחל ויאמר אעבדך שבע שנים ברחל בתיא הקטנה: יט ויאמר לבן טוב תתי אתה לך מתתי אתה לאיש אחר שבה עמדי: כ ויעבד יעקב ברחל שבע שנים ויהיו בעיניו כיומים אחדים באהבתו אתה: כא ויאמר יעקב אל לבן הבה את אשתי כי מלאו ימי ואבואה אליה: כב ויאסף לבן את כל אנשי המקום ויעש משתה: כג ויהי בערב ויקח את לאה בתו ויבא אתה אליו ויבא אליה: כד ויתן לבן לה את זלפה שפחתו ללאה בתו שפחה: כה ויהי

כש"י

שנים. הם ימים אחדים שאמרה לו אמו וישבת עמו ימים אחדים<sup>3</sup>, ותדע שכן הוא, שכרי כתיב ויהיו צעניו כיומים אחדים: ברחל בתך הקטנה. כל הסימנים הללו למה, לפי שהיא יודע צו שהוא רמאי, אמר לו אעבדך ברחל, ושמא תאמר רחל אחרת מן השוק, תלמוד לומר בתך, ושמא תאמר אחליף ללאה שמה ואקרא שמה רחל, תלמוד לומר הקטנה, ואף על פי כן לא הועיל, שהרי רמבו: (כא) מלאו ימי. שאמרה לי אמי. ועוד מלאו ימי, שהרי אני צן פ"ד שנה, ואימתי אעמיד י"ג צעטים, וזהו שנאמר ואבואה אליה, והלא קל

כלום, אלא מפני קורבה הטפל כך חדש ימים, וכן עשה, ואף זו לא לחנם, שהיה רועה לאנו: (טו) הכי אחי אתה. לשון תימה, וכי בשביל שאחי אחי תעבדני חנם: ועבדתני. כמו ותעבדני, וכן כל תיבה שהוא לשון עבר, הוסיף וי"ו בראש, היא הופכת התיבה לבזא: (יז) רבות. שהיתה סצורה לעלות צגורלו של עשו וצכתה, שהיו הכל אומרים, שני צנים לרצקה ושתי צנות ללבן, הגדולה לגדול והקטנה לקטן! תאר. הוא אורת הפרנוף, לשון יתארכו צשרד<sup>2</sup>, קונפא"ס צלע"ז: מראה. הוא זיו קלסתר: (יח) אעבדך שבע

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why were Leah's eyes tender (v. 17)?

**RASHI:** She expected to fall into Eisav's lot [and become his wife], so she wept. For everyone was saying, "Rivkah has two sons, and Lavan has two daughters: the older daughter is for the older son, and the younger daughter for the younger son." (see "Sparks of Chasidus")

● If the Patriarchs kept the entire Torah before it was given, how could Ya'akov marry two sisters (v. 18-30)?

**CHIZKUNI:** Our Sages said that a person who converts to Judaism is

like a newborn baby. [Thus, since Ya'akov converted Rochel and Leah before marrying them, they were "newly born" and thus no longer considered to be sisters in Jewish Law.] (v. 28)

**RAMBAN:** The Patriarchs only kept the entire Torah while they were in the Land of Israel. Ya'akov, at this point, was outside the Land, so he was able to marry two sisters (26:5).

**PARASHAS DERACHIM:** Ya'akov was told by God to marry both Leah and Rochel. This was in order that he would be able to establish twelve tribes (בשם מהר"ש יפה) (דרוש ראשון, יג).

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 How could Ya'akov marry two sisters? (v. 18-30)

Rashi does not offer any explanation as to why Ya'akov married two sisters, which seems to defy the principle that the Patriarchs kept the entire Torah before it was given (Rashi to 26:5). Rashi clearly rejected the assertion of Ramban that this rule only applied in the Land of Israel, since he writes that Ya'akov said, "I lived with the wicked Lavan, but I guarded the 613 commandments, and I did not learn from his evil deeds" (Rashi to 32:5). Clearly, according to Rashi, Ya'akov did keep the entire Torah even outside the Land of Israel.

The solution [of Chizkuni,] that Rochel and Leah ceased to be sisters after their "conversion," is difficult to accept because:

a.) At the literal level of Torah interpretation, there is no evidence that Avraham or his descendants were obligated to observe the mitzvos of the Torah. The Patriarchs who kept the mitzvos did so as a personal stringency, not because they were obligated to do so (with obvious exceptions, such as circumcision, etc.). Consequently, the concept of "conversion" did not exist in the literal, halachic sense.

b.) Rashi does not mention anywhere in his commentary that "a person



you away) but, you are my bone and my flesh (so you can stay).” (Ya’akov) stayed with him a month (and pastured Lavan’s sheep).

<sup>15</sup> Lavan said to Ya’akov, “Should you work for me for free just because you are my relative? Tell me what your wages should be!”

<sup>16</sup> Lavan had two daughters, the older one was called Leah, and the younger one was called Rochel.

<sup>17</sup> Leah’s eyes were tender, and Rochel had beautiful (facial) features and a beautiful complexion.

THIRD  
READING

<sup>18</sup> Ya’akov loved Rochel, so he said, “I will work for you seven years for Rochel, your younger daughter.”

<sup>19</sup> Lavan said, “It’s better for me to give her to you than for me to give her to another man. Stay with me.” <sup>20</sup> So Ya’akov worked for Rochel seven years, but to him it felt like a few days because of his love for her.

## 🌀 LAVAN DECEPTIVELY GIVES LEAH TO YA’AKOV IN MARRIAGE 🌀

29:21 **Y**a’akov said to Lavan, “Give me my wife, for my time is up, and let me come to her (and establish the future generations).”

<sup>22</sup> Lavan gathered all the local people, and he made a feast. <sup>23</sup> Then, in the evening (when it was dark), Lavan took his daughter Leah, and brought her to (Ya’akov. She told Ya’akov the secret code which Rochel had divulged) and he came to her. <sup>24</sup> Lavan gave Zilpah his maid to his daughter Leah as a maid.

### TORAS MENACHEM

who converts to Judaism is like a newborn baby.” So, it would be unreasonable to presume that *Rashi* expected his readership—which includes the child studying *Chumash* for the first time—to be familiar with this concept (especially when one considers this concept appears to fly in the face of reality).

The solution cited by **Parashas Derachim** is also difficult to accept at the literal level since there is no indication in scripture itself that God told Ya’akov to marry two sisters.

#### THE EXPLANATION

*Rashi* did not explain why Ya’akov married two sisters, as he felt the explanation was obvious from scripture itself:

After being fooled into marrying Leah, Ya’akov challenged Lavan, “Why have you deceived me?” (v. 25). I.e. Ya’akov accused Lavan of fraud. From this we see (at the literal level) that Noachide Law prevented one person from deceiving another, otherwise Ya’akov’s words would have had no basis.

Consequently, Lavan could not merely shrug off Ya’akov’s remark—for then he would be admitting liability for fraudulent behavior. Rather, he was forced to give a *legal* defense: “In our land, we don’t do such a thing, to give the younger one before the firstborn” (v. 26). I.e. his behavior was not fraudulent because Ya’akov’s request to marry Rochel was a breach of local practice.\*

However, since Ya’akov had promised to marry Rochel, and she had been waiting to get married for seven years, Ya’akov was unable to renege on his promise. Otherwise, he too would be guilty of deception, which we see from scripture was prohibited at that time.

Thus, Ya’akov was forced to overlook his *personal stringency* of keeping

the entire Torah, which does not allow a person to marry two sisters, so as not to be guilty of deception towards Rochel, which was *prohibited*.

### 🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

#### LEAH & ROCHEL (v. 17 & RASHI)

**R**ochel represents the approach of *tzadikim* (righteous individuals) whose lives are totally holy; and Leah, the approach of *ba’alei teshuvah* (penitents) who elevate the secular world to holiness.

Thus, Rochel was naturally attractive—“*Rochel had beautiful (facial) features and a beautiful complexion*” (v. 17)—like the *tzadik* whose character is flawless; whereas Leah cried profusely (see *Rashi*), alluding to the process of *teshuvah*. She was also naturally outgoing (see below 30:16; *Rashi* to 34:1), a talent which helps a person to bring the outside world to the realm of holiness.

“*Ya’akov was an honest person, dwelling in tents*” (*Toldos* 25:27), i.e. he busied himself only with matters of holiness—the approach of *tzadikim*. Therefore, people said that Ya’akov was destined for Rochel, since their characters matched. Eisav, on the other hand, was an outgoing “man of the field.” Therefore people said that he would be a good match for Leah, for only the talented, outgoing Leah would have the ability to make Eisav do *teshuvah*.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, pp. 152-3)

\* Of course, this begs the question why Ya’akov attempted to marry Rochel first, in breach of local practice? *Rashi*, however, explains this matter with his comment to v. 17: Since “everybody was saying that Ya’akov was a perfect match for Rochel, and that Leah was destined for Eisav, he presumed that it was already accepted locally that he could marry Rochel. Lavan however argued that, notwithstanding the above, the local policy of marrying the older daughter first cannot be waived—*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeitzei* 5732.

עבדת לי הלא ברחל פלחית עמך ולמא שפרת בי: כי ואמר לכן לא מתעביר בן באהרנא למתן וערתא קדם רבתא: כי אשלים שבועתא דדא ונתן לך אף ית דא בפולחנא די תפלה עמי עוד שבע שנין אחרנין: כה ועבד יעקב בן ואשלים שבועתא דדא ויהב ליה ית רחל ברתיה ליה לאנתו: כט ויהב לכן לרחל ברתיה ית בלהה אמתיה לה לאמה: ל ועל אף לות רחל ורחים אף ית רחל מלאה ופלח עמיה עוד שבע שנין אחרנין: לא והוא יי ארי שניאתא לאה ויהב לה עדוי ורחל עקרא: לב ועדיאת לאה ולידת בר וקרת שמייה ראובן ארי אקרת ארי גלי קדם יי עלבוני ארי קען ירחמני בעלי: לג ועדיאת עוד ולידת בר

בבקר והנה הוא לאה ויאמר אל-לכן מה-זאת עשית לי הלא ברחל עבדתי עמך ולמה רמיתני: כי ויאמר לכן לא יעשה בן במקומנו לתת הצעירה לפני הבכירה: כי מלא שבע זאת ונתנה לך גם-את-זאת בעבדה אשר תעבד עמדי עוד שבע-שנים אחרות: כה ויעש יעקב בן וימלא שבע זאת ויתן-לו את-רחל בתו לו לאשה: כט ויתן לכן לרחל בתו את-בלהה שפחתו לה לשפחה: ל ויבא גם אל-רחל ויאהב גם-את-רחל מלאה ויעבד עמו עוד שבע-שנים אחרות: לא וירא יהוה כי-שנואה לאה ויפתח את-רחמה ורחל עקרה: לב ותהר לאה ותילד בן ותקרא שמו ראובן כי אמרה כי-ראה יהוה בעניי כי עתה יאהבני אישי: לג ותהר עוד

רש"י

כדכתיב שבע שבעות חספר לך, לפיכך אין משמע שבע חלא שבע, שטיינ"א צלע"ז: ונתנה לך. לשון רבים, כמו נדכו ונבלה, ונשרפה, אף זה לשון רבים ונתן ונתנה וגו': גם את זאת. מיד לאחר שבעת ימי המשחה ותעבדו לאחר נשואיה: (ב) עוד שבע שנים אחרות. אחרות הקישן לראשונות, מכ ראשונות צאמונה<sup>2</sup> אף באחרונות צאמונה, ואף על פי שצאמונה צא עליו: (ג) ותקרא שמו ראובן. רבותינו פירשו<sup>3</sup>, אמרה, ראו

שצקלים אינו אומר כן, חלא להוליד תולדות אמר כך: (כה) ויהי בבקר והנה הוא לאה. חאל צלילה לא היתה לאה, לפי שמסר יעקב סימנים לרחל, וכשראתה רחל שמכניסין לו לאה, אמרה, עכשיו תכלס אחותי, עמדה ומסרה לה אותן סימנים<sup>1</sup>: (כז) מלא שבע זאת. דבוק הוא, שכרי נקוד צחטף, שבע של זאת, וכן ז' ימי המשחה, בגמ' ירושלמית צמועד קטן. ור"א לומר שבע ממש, שאם כן היה לריך לינקד השי"ן צפת"ח, ועוד ששבע לשון זכר,

TORAS MENACHEM

(Divorcing Leah was not an option since: a.) In any case the Torah prohibits marrying the sister of one's ex-wife in the latter's lifetime (see *Vayikra* 18:18). b.) This would have caused unnecessary distress to Leah.)

Nevertheless, Ya'akov was still able to declare confidently, "I lived with the wicked Lavan, but I guarded the 613 commandments"—even though he did not refrain from marrying two sisters—since he did not say that he *observed* the 613 commandments, but rather he "guarded" them. I.e. he avoided transgressing them whenever it was possible to do so.

One further detail requires explanation: While scripture indicates that it was forbidden to deceive or defraud another, this prohibition is not mentioned explicitly in the Noachide code. On what basis was it prohibited?

Presumably, in addition to the Noachide code of seven basic *mitzvos*, the non-Jewish nations had added further prohibitions which were universally accepted, and thus had the force of law.

In fact, this idea is supported by various statements of *Rashi*: "The nations had restricted themselves from illicit relationships because of the Flood" (*Rashi* to 34:7, below), i.e. they restricted themselves from further illicit relationships, more than was already prohibited by Noachide law.

Similarly, we find, "Scripture related Terach's death before Avram's departure, so that the matter should not be publicized to everybody and they would say, 'Avram did not honor his father, for he left him in his old age and went away'" (*Rashi* to 11:32, above). Here we see that, even though honoring one's parents is not part of the Noachide code, it was nevertheless universally accepted by non-Jews as a necessity.

So too in our case, we can presume that the principle of not deceiving or defrauding another had been accepted universally by the nations, and Ya'akov was thus bound by it.

AN ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATION

In the final analysis however, there remains the possibility that, at the literal level, the nations would also have instituted a prohibition against marrying two sisters, since it is an act of cruelty which breeds enmity between sisters.

Nevertheless, it could be argued that in Ya'akov's case the prohibition would not apply:

The Torah states, "You should not take a woman in addition to her sister, to make them rivals" (*Vayikra* 18:18). In our case though, there was

**The Last Word**

Ya'akov was willing to forego his own personal stringency—to keep the Torah before it was given—to avoid hurting the feelings of Rachel, who had waited seven years to marry him.

From this we can learn that a person should be willing to overlook his own spiritual luxury to help another person acquire a spiritual necessity.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 148)

<sup>25</sup> Then, in the morning, (Ya'akov saw that)—look—it was Leah! He said to Lavan, “What’s this that you’ve done to me? Didn’t I work with you for Rachel? Why have you deceived me?”

<sup>26</sup> Lavan said, “In our neighborhood, we don’t do such a thing, to give the younger one before the firstborn. <sup>27</sup> Finish the week (of feasting for) this (newlywed), and we’ll give you (her sister) too (for a wife straightaway—in return) for the work that you will do for me for another seven years (after the second wedding).”

<sup>28</sup> Ya'akov did just that. He completed the week (of feasting for) this (newlywed), and (Lavan) gave his daughter Rachel to him as a wife. <sup>29</sup> Lavan gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as a maid.

<sup>30</sup> (Ya'akov) came to Rachel too. He also loved Rachel, rather than Leah.\*

He worked with (Lavan) for another seven years.

## 🌀 YA'AKOV BUILDS HIS FAMILY 🌀

29:31 **G**od saw that Leah was hated, so He opened her womb. Rachel was barren.  
<sup>32</sup> Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Re'uvain, because she said, “For God has seen (Ra'ah) my affliction (Be'aNiy), since now my husband will love me.”

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why was Re'uvain given this name (v. 32)?

**RASHI:** Our Sages explained: [Leah] said, “See (RE'U) what is the difference between my son (BeNiy) and my father-in-law's son [Eisav], who sold the birthright to Ya'akov. But this [son of mine] did not sell [his birthright] to Yosef. He did not protest [against Yosef when the birthright was taken from him]. To the contrary, he attempted to take him out of the pit.”

**MASKIL LE DAVID:** Why did *Rashi* need to offer any explanation at all here, when the *verse itself* explains why Re'uvain received his name?

*Rashi* was troubled why, in this verse, the name is given before the reason, because with the other sons the Torah states the reason before the name (i.e. cause before effect). *Rashi* concluded that, in our case, the Torah states the name before the reason to indicate that the reason offered by the verse is not the full explanation. Therefore, he cited the teaching of our Sages.

### TORAS MENACHEM

no such fear because Rachel had actually *helped* Leah marry Ya'akov, transmitting to her the secret signs which Ya'akov had given her (see *Rashi* to v. 25). Therefore, in our case, the prohibition of marrying two sisters was waived, since it had already been proven that the marriage did not make them rivals.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 141ff; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz* 5728)

#### 🌀 RE'UVAIN'S NAME (v. 32)

**Maskil leDavid's** solution is difficult to accept, because:

a.) At this point, the reader will not be troubled why Re'uvain's name occurs before its explanation in the verse, in contrast to the other sons, since we have not yet read about the naming of the other sons. Why would *Rashi* address a problem *here* which only arises later?

b.) The fact that this verse adopts a different sequence is not a sufficient basis, at the literal level, for *Rashi* to offer an explanation of Re'uvain's name which is *completely different* than the explanation given by the *verse itself*.

We are thus left with *Maskil leDavid's* question: Why did *Rashi* make any comment at all?

Two further points require an explanation here:

a.) Why did *Rashi* cite an explanation which involves a prophecy well into the future?

b.) According to *Rashi*, Re'uvain received his name in connection with the fact that his birthright was taken away and given to Yosef, which

occurred due to sinful behavior on Re'uvain's part (“*since he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Yosef,*” Chron. I 5:1). But why should Re'uvain receive his name in commemoration of something negative?

#### THE EXPLANATION

After Re'uvain was born, Leah exclaimed, “Now my husband will love me.” In any normal case, this would make sense, since when a woman gives birth to a child it endears her more to her husband.

However, in this case, we read in the previous verse that, “Leah was hated.” It thus seems unlikely that the birth of a son would have been sufficient to transform Ya'akov's *hatred* into love. At that time, Ya'akov was expecting to have children from Rachel—since it is unlikely that he had realized that she was barren—so why would the fact that Leah happened to give birth *first* radically affect his feelings towards her?

A further problem here concerns Ya'akov's family history in general. The firstborn sons of both Avraham and Yitzchak deviated from the paths exemplified by their respective fathers. This was likely to have placed a doubt in Ya'akov's mind about the future of his own firstborn son.

So, *Rashi* was troubled by the question: Why was Leah sure that Re'uvain's birth would bring a radical change in Ya'akov's feelings for her—“now my husband will love me”?

To solve this problem, *Rashi* cited a teaching of our Sages which explains why Re'uvain's birth would have been a sufficiently powerful event to transform Ya'akov's hatred into love, because:

וְאָמְרַת אֲרִי שְׁמִיעַ קִדְּם יְיָ אֲרִי שְׁנִיאֲתָא אָנָּא וַיְהִי לִי אֵף יַת דִּין וְקָרַת שְׁמִיָּה שְׁמִעוֹן: לֹד וְעַדִּיאַת עוֹד וַיִּלְדַּת בְּרַ וְאָמְרַת הָדָא זְמָנָא יִתְחַבֵּר לִי בְּעַלִּי אֲרִי וַיִּלְדִּית לִיָּה תְלָתָא בְּנִין עַל בֶּן קָרָא שְׁמִיָּה לְוִי: לֹד וְעַדִּיאַת עוֹד וַיִּלְדַּת בְּרַ וְאָמְרַת הָדָא זְמָנָא אֹדְהָ קִדְּם יְיָ עַל בֶּן קָרַת שְׁמִיָּה יְהוּדָה וְקָמַת מִלְּמִילָד: « וְחֹזֵת רַחֵל אֲרִי לֹא יִלְדַת לְיַעֲקֹב וְקִנְיַאֵת רַחֵל בְּאַחֲתָהּ וְאָמְרַת לְיַעֲקֹב הֵב לִי בְּנִין וְאִם לֹא מִיָּתָא אָנָּא: ב וְתַקִּיף רוּגְזָא דְיַעֲקֹב בְּרַחֵל וְאָמַר הָא מְנִי אֲתָּ בְּעִיָּא הָלָא מִן קִדְּם יְיָ תְּבַעִין דִּי מְנַע מְנִיָּד וְלָדָא דְמַעִין: ג וְאָמְרַת הָא אֲמַתִּי בְּלָהָה עוֹל לְוִתָּהּ וְתִלְיִד וְאָנָּא אֲרַבִּי וְאֲתַבְּנִי אֵף אָנָּא מְנַה: ד וַיְהִיבַת לִיָּה יַת בְּלָהָה אֲמַתָּהּ לְאִנְתּוֹ וְעַל לְוִתָּהּ יַעֲקֹב: ה וְעַדִּיאַת בְּלָהָה וַיִּלְדַּת לְיַעֲקֹב בְּרַ: ו וְאָמְרַת רַחֵל דְּנִנִּי יְיָ וְאֵף קַבִּיל צְלוֹתִי וַיְהִי לִי בְּרַ עַל

וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן וַתֹּאמֶר כִּי־שָׁמַע יְהוָה כִּי־שָׁנוּאָה אָנֹכִי וַיִּתֶּן־לִי גַם־אֶת־זֶה וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ שְׁמִעוֹן: לֹד וַתִּהְרַ עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן וַתֹּאמֶר עַתָּה הַפַּעַם יִלְוֶה אִישִׁי אֵלַי כִּי־יִלְדֵתִי לוֹ שְׁלֹשָׁה בָּנִים עַל־בֶּן קָרָא־שְׁמוֹ לְוִי: לֹד וַתִּהְרַ עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן וַתֹּאמֶר הַפַּעַם אֹדְהָ אֶת־יְהוָה עַל־בֶּן קָרָאָה שְׁמוֹ יְהוּדָה וַתַּעֲמִד מִלְּדַת: ל « וַתִּרְא רַחֵל כִּי לֹא יִלְדָה לְיַעֲקֹב וַתִּקְנֶנָּה רַחֵל בְּאַחֲתָהּ וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־יַעֲקֹב הִבְהִלֵּנִי בָנִים וְאִם־אֵין מִתָּה אָנֹכִי: ג וַיַּחֲרֵ־אֵף יַעֲקֹב בְּרַחֵל וַיֹּאמֶר הִתַּחַת אֱלֹהִים אָנֹכִי אֲשֶׁר־מָנַע מִמֶּנּוּ פְרִי־בִטְוִן: ד וַתֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה אֲמַתִּי בְּלָהָה בָּא אֵלַיָּה וַתֵּלֶד עַל־בְּרָכִי וְאִבְנָה גַם־אָנֹכִי מִמְּנָה: ד וַתִּתֶּן־לוֹ אֶת־בְּלָהָה שִׁפְחָתָהּ לְאִשָּׁה וַיָּבֵא אֵלַיָּה יַעֲקֹב: ה וַתִּהְרַ בְּלָהָה וַתֵּלֶד לְיַעֲקֹב בֵּן: ו וַתֹּאמֶר רַחֵל דְּנִנִּי אֱלֹהִים וְגַם שָׁמַע בְּקִלִּי

ש"י

מעשה יש לי להודות: (ה) ותקנא רחל באחיה. קנאה צמטשיה הטובים, אמרה, חלולי שלדקא ממני לא זכחה לבנים? הבה לי. וכי כך עשה אביך לאמך, והלא התפלל עליה: מתה אנכי. מכאן למי שאין לו בנים שחשוב כמת? (ג) התחת. וכי במקומו אני: אשר מנע ממך. את אומרת שאעשה כאצא, אני איני כאצא, אצא לא היו לו בנים, אני יש לי בנים, ממך מנע ולא ממני: (ג) על ברבכי. כתרנומו והנא ארצי: ואבנה גם אנכי. מהו גם, אמרה לו, זקנך אצרכם היו לו בנים מהגר, וחגר מתניו כנגד שרה. אמר לה, זקנתי הכניסה לרחה לביתה, אמרה לו אם הדבר הזה מעכב, הנה אחתי: ואבנה גם אנכי ממנה. כשרה: (ו) דנני אלהים. דנני וחייבני וזכני:

מה בין בני לבן חמי, שמכר בזכורה ליעקב, וזה לא מכרה ליוסף, ולא ערער עליו, ולא עוד שלא ערער עליו, אלא שצקש להוציאו מן הבור: (לד) הפעם ילוה אישיו. לפי שהאמהות נזירות היו ויודעות ש"צ שצטים יולאים מיעקב, ודי נשים ישא, אמרה, מעתה חין לו פתחון פה עלי, שהרי נטלתי כל חלקי בזנים: על בן. כל מי שנאמר צו על כן, מרובה באוכלוסין, חזן מלוי, שהארון היה מכלה צבס: קרא שמו לוי. צבולס כתיב ותקרא, (שהיא קראה), וזה כתב צו קרא, ויש מדרש אגדה צאלה הדברים רבה, ששלה הקצ"ה גצריאל והביאו לפניו, וקרא לו שם זה, ונתן לו כ"ד מתנות כהונה, ועל שם שלוכו צמתנות קראו לוי: (לה) הפעם אודה. שנטלתי יותר מחלקי,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Leah think that, “my husband will be attached to me” after Levi’s birth (v. 34)?

RASHI: Since the Matriarchs were prophetesses, they knew that twelve tribes would come from Ya’akov, and that he would marry four wives. She said, “From now on, he has no cause for complaint against me, for I have contributed my [quarter] share of sons.”

CHIZKUNI: Leah thought, “Up until now I had two sons, whom I looked after with my two hands. Now, with the third son, I will need my husband’s help.”

SFORNO: When something occurs three times, it constitutes a *chazakah* (legal precedent). Levi’s birth thus appeared to be evidence that Leah would have many more children.

TORAS MENACHEM

- a.) It stresses that Leah had given birth to a person who cherished his position as Ya’akov’s firstborn.
- b.) Despite the fact that Re’uvain valued the birthright, and did not sell it (like Eisav), he showed further good character by not protesting when the birthright was taken away and given to Yosef.
- c.) Not only did Re’uvain not harbor any ill feelings, he did not even show resentment against Yosef. To the contrary, he wanted to save Yosef from the pit, demonstrating utter selflessness.

Thus, when Ya’akov would see that such a special son had been born, quite distinct from the firstborn sons of Avraham and Yitzchak, Leah was convinced that, “now my husband will love me.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 10, p. 92ff.)

Le’AH’S PROPHECY (V. 34)

Rashi’s comment provokes a number of questions: a.) What evidence is there, at the literal level, that “the Matriarchs were prophetesses”?

<sup>33</sup> She became pregnant again and gave birth to a son. She said, “Since God has heard (SHaMah) that I am hated, He gave me this one too,” and she named him Shimon.

<sup>34</sup> She became pregnant again and gave birth to a son. She said, “Now this time my husband will be attached (yiLaVeh) to me, for I have borne him three sons (one quarter of the twelve tribes).” Therefore, (God) named him Levi.

<sup>35</sup> She became pregnant again and gave birth to a son. She said, “This time, I will thank (oDeH) God (because I have had more than my quarter-share of the twelve tribes).” Therefore, she named him Yehudah.

Then, she stopped having children.

**30** <sup>1</sup> Rochel saw that she had not borne Ya’akov children. Rochel was jealous of her sister(’s good deeds, due to which she had merited children). She said to Ya’akov, “Give me children (through your prayers), Otherwise, I am (as good as) dead.”

<sup>2</sup> Ya’akov became angry with Rochel. He said, “Am I in place of God, who has withheld the fruit of the womb from you?”

<sup>3</sup> She said, “Here is my maid Bilhah—come to her. She will bear children whom I will raise, so that I too will be built up from her.”

<sup>4</sup> So she gave him Bilhah, her maid, for a wife, and Ya’akov came to her.

<sup>5</sup> Bilhah became pregnant, and she gave birth to a son for Ya’akov. <sup>6</sup> Rochel said, “God has judged

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

##### ● Who gave Levi his name (v. 34)?

**RASHI:** In all the other cases, the Torah states, “and she named,” whereas in this instance, the Torah states, “and he named.” There is a Midrash in *Devarim Rabah*, that God sent [the angel] Gavriel who

brought [the baby] before Him. He gave [Levi] this name, and gave him the twenty-four priestly gifts. Because he was accompanied (קָרָה) with gifts, He named him Levi.

**RASHBAM:** Ya’akov gave Levi his name.

#### TORAS MENACHEM

b.) Since Leah was a prophetess, surely she knew that she was to bear six children for Ya’akov?

c.) Why does *Rashi* change the positive expression of the verse for a negative one: The verse states, “Now this time my husband will be attached to me for I have borne him three sons,” but *Rashi* rewords Leah’s statement to read, “From now on, he has no cause for complaint against me for I have contributed my [quarter] share of sons.”

##### THE EXPLANATION

a.) When Sarah told Avraham to expel Hagar, God told Avraham, “Whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her voice” (above 21:12). *Rashi* comments, “We learn from here that Avraham was inferior to Sarah in prophecy.”

Similarly, in the case of Rivkah, the Torah states that, “Rivkah was told the words of Eisau, her older son” (27:42), and *Rashi* comments, “She was told by Divine Inspiration what Eisau was thinking in his heart.”

Since Sarah and Rivkah were both prophetesses, it follows that this was a quality of the Matriarchs in general. So *Rashi* writes, “Since the Matriarchs were prophetesses...,” without the need for any clarification.

b.) Being a prophetess, Leah would have indeed been aware that she was destined to bear another three sons. Nevertheless, she declared, “Now this time my husband will be attached to me, for I have borne him three sons,” since at this point she had *actually* borne one quarter of Ya’akov’s twelve sons.

c.) Since “Avraham was inferior to Sarah in prophecy,” it was quite possible that Ya’akov too was inferior to Leah, and that he had not prophesied his children’s births (at least, not as clearly as Leah).

Therefore, at the literal level, Leah could not be certain that Ya’akov of his own accord would “be attached” to her, since he may not have known that Leah had given birth to a quarter of his sons. So, *Rashi* could not write that Leah was totally confident that “my husband will be attached to me.”

Nevertheless, Leah could be sure that if for whatever reason Ya’akov would have complaints against her, she was armed with a defense which proved her legitimacy as his wife, for she could reveal her prophecy to Ya’akov. Therefore, *Rashi* adapted Leah’s reaction to read, “From now on, he has no cause for complaint against me, for I have contributed my [quarter] share of sons.”

(Based of *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeitzei* 5729)

##### 🔗 WHO NAMED LEVI? (v. 34)

Why did *Rashi* reject the simple explanation of *Rashbam* that the Torah states, “And he named him Levi,” in the masculine, because Ya’akov named him, and not Leah?

However, it was explained above (previous section) that, at the literal level, Ya’akov did not know of Leah’s statement, “Now this time my husband will be attached to me etc.” Therefore, he could not have given Levi his name.

(ibid.)

בן קרת שְׁמִיָּה דָן: ו ועדיאת עוד וילידת בְּלָהָה אִמְתָּא דְרַחֵל בַּר תַּנְיִן לְיַעֲקֹב: ה ואמרת רחל קבל יי בעויתי באתחננתי בצלותי חמידית דיחי לי ולד באחתי אף אתיחייב לי וקרת שְׁמִיָּה נְפֹתְלִי: ט וחזת לאה ארי קמת מלמילד ודברת ית זלפה אמתה ויהבת יתה ליעקב לאנתה: י וילידת זלפה אמתה דלאה ליעקב בר: יא ואמרת לאה אהא גד וקרת ית שְׁמִיָּה גֵד: יב וילידת זלפה אמתה דלאה בר תננין ליעקב: יג ואמרת לאה תושבחהא הות לי ארי בכנ ישבחהנני נשיא וקרת ית שְׁמִיָּה אֲשֶׁר: יד ואול ראובן ביומי חצד חסין ואשכח יברוחין בתקלא ואיתי יתהון ללאה אמיה ואמרת רחל ללאה הבי כען לי מיברוחי דברייך: טו ואמרת לה חזעיר דברת ית בעלי ותסבין (ולמסב) אף ית יברוחי דברי ואמרת רחל בכנ ישכוב עמך בליליא חלף יברוחי דברייך: טז ואתא יעקב מן חקלא ברמשא ונפקת לאה לקדמותיה ואמרת לותי תיעול ארי מינר אנרתיד ביברוחי דברי ושכיב עמה בליליא הוא: יז וקביל יי צלותה דלאה ועדיאת וילידת ליעקב בר חמישא: יח ואמרת לאה יחב יי אנרי דיהבית אמת לבעלי וקרת שְׁמִיָּה יששכר: יט ועדיאת עוד לאה וילידת בר שתייתאי ליעקב: כ ואמרת לאה יחב יי יתיה לי חלק טב הדא זמנא יהי מדורה דבעלי לותי ארי וילידת ליה שתא בנין וקרת ית שְׁמִיָּה זבולון: כא ובתר בן וילדת ברתא וקרת ית שְׁמִיָּה דינה: כב ועל דוכרנא

ויתן לי בן על-בן קראת שְׁמוּ דָן: ז ותהר עוד ותלד בְּלָהָה שְׁפַחַת רַחֵל בֵּן שְׁנֵי לְיַעֲקֹב: ח ותאמר רחל נפתולי אלהים | נפתלתי עם-אחותי גם-יכללתי ותקרא שְׁמוּ נְפֹתְלִי: ט ותרא לאה כי עמדה מלדת ותקח את-זלפה שפחתה ותתן אותה ליעקב לאשה: י ותלד זלפה שפחת לאה ליעקב בן: יא ותאמר לאה בגד וק' בא גֵד | ותקרא את-שְׁמוּ גֵד: יב ותלד זלפה שפחת לאה בן שְׁנֵי לְיַעֲקֹב: יג ותאמר לאה באשרי כי אשרוני בנות ותקרא את-שְׁמוּ אֲשֶׁר: (רביעי) יד וילד ראובן בימי קציר-חטים וימצא דודאים בשדה ויבא אתם אל-לאה אמו ותאמר רחל אל-לאה תנינא לי מדודאי בנגד: טו ותאמר לה המעט קחתך את-אישי ולקחת גם את-דודאי בני ותאמר רחל לכן ישכב עמך הלילה תחת דודאי בנגד: טז ויבא יעקב מן-השדה בֶּעֶרְבַּ ותיצא לאה לקראתו ותאמר אלי תבוא כי שכר שכרתיד בדודאי בני וישכב עמה בלילה הוא: יז וישמע אלהים אל-לאה ותהר ותלד ליעקב בן חמישי: יח ותאמר לאה נתן אלהים שכרי אשר-נתתי שפחתי לאישי ותקרא שְׁמוּ יששכר: יט \*ותהר עוד לאה ותלד בן-שְׁנֵי לְיַעֲקֹב: כ ותאמר לאה זבדני אלהים | אתי זבד טוב הפעם וזבלני אישי כי-ילדתי לו ששה בנים ותקרא את-שְׁמוּ זבולון: כא ואחר ילדה בת ותקרא את-שְׁמָהּ דינה: כב ויזכר אלהים את-רחל וישמע אליה אלהים ויפתח את-

\*ס"א ותהר עוד לאה

כש"י

חטים. להגיד שזחן של שצטים, שעת הקציר הים, ולא פשע ידו בגזל להביא חטים ושעורים, אלא דבר ההפקר שאין אדם מקפיד בו: דודאים. שיגלי עשב הוא, וזלשון ישמעאל יסמיי"ן: (טו) ולקחת גם את דודאי בני. צתמיא, ולעשות עוד זאת, ליקח גם את דודאי בני, ותרגומו ולמיסב: לכן ישכב עמך הלילה. שלי היטה שכיצת לילה זו, ואני נותנה לך תחת דודאי בנך. ולפי שזלזה במשכב הדאי, לא זכתה להקצר עמו: (טז) שכר שכרתיד. נתתי לרחל שכרה: בלילה הוא. הקצ"ח סייע, שילא משש יששכר: (יז) וישמע אלהים אל לאה. שהיטה מתארח ומחזרת להכרות שצטים: (כ) זבד טוב. כתרגומו: יזבלני. לשון בית זבול, הוצריי"ח צלע", בית מדור, מעטה לא תהא עיקר דירתה אלא עמי, שיש לי צנים כנגד כל נשיו: (כא) דינה. פירשו רבותינו<sup>1</sup>, שדנה לאה דין בעלמה, אם זה זכר, לא תהא רחל אחותי כחצת השפחות, והתפללה עליו ונהפך לנקבה: (כב) ויזכור אלהים את רחל. זכר לה שמסרה סימניה לאחותה<sup>2</sup>, ושהיטה מזירה שלא תעלה בגורלו של עשו,

(ח) נפתולי אלהים. מנחם בן סרוק פירשו במחצרת למיד פחיל, חצורים מאת המקום, נחצרתה עם אחותי לזכות לצנים. ואני מפרשו לשון עקש ופתול, נחעקשתי והפצתי פצרות ונפתולים הרבה למקום, להיות שוכ לאחותי: גם יכלתי. הסכים על ידי. ואונקלוס תרגם לשון תפלה. נפתולי אלהים נפתלתי, כמה בקשות החציות לפניו נתקבלתי ונחשתי כאלותי: נפתלתי. נתקבלה תפילתי. ומדרשי אגדה יש רבים צלשון נוטריקון: (י) ותלד זלפה. בזולן נאמר הריון, חוץ מזלפה, לפי שהיטה בחורה מכולן ותיוקת צנים, ואין הריון ניכר בה, וכדי לרמות ליעקב נתנה לזן ללאה, שלא יבין שמניסין לו את לאה, שכך מנהגן, ליתן שפחה הגדולה לגדולה והקטנה לקטנה: (יא) בא גֵד. זא מזל טוב, כמו גֵד גדי וסנוק לא<sup>3</sup>, ודומה לו העורכים לגד שלחן? ומדרש אגדה, שגולד מכול כמו גדו חילנא<sup>4</sup>, ולא ידעתי על מה נכתב תיבה אחת. דבר אחר למה נקראת תיבה אחת בגד, כמו בגדת כי כשצאת אל שפחתי, כאיש שצגד צאשת נעורים: (יד) בימי קציר

me (DANani, and acquitted me). He has also listened to my voice and given me a son.” Therefore she named him Dan.

<sup>7</sup> Rochel’s maid Bilhah became pregnant again and gave birth to a second son for Ya’akov. <sup>8</sup> Rochel said, “I have stubbornly offered my tortuous prayers (NAFTuLaiy) to God, and my prayers were accepted, as with my sister. I too have been successful,” and she named him Naftali.

<sup>9</sup> When Leah saw that she had stopped having children, she took her maid Zilpah and gave her to Ya’akov for a wife. <sup>10</sup> Leah’s maid Zilpah gave birth to a son for Ya’akov.

<sup>11</sup> Leah said, “Good fortune (GAD) has come,” and she named him Gad.

<sup>12</sup> Leah’s maid Zilpah gave birth to a second son for Ya’akov <sup>13</sup> Leah said, “I am praised (ASHRiy), because women (now) praise me,” so she named him Asher.

FOURTH READING <sup>14</sup> In the days of the wheat harvest, Re’uvain went and found jasmine plants in the field, and he brought them to Leah, his mother. Rochel said to Leah, “Please give me some of your son’s jasmine plants.”

<sup>15</sup> “Isn’t it enough that you’ve taken away my husband?” she said to her. “(Now you want) to take my son’s jasmine plants too!”

Rochel said, “In that case, Ya’akov can sleep with you tonight (instead of me) as payment for your son’s jasmine plants.”

<sup>16</sup> When Ya’akov came from the field in the evening, Leah came out towards him. She said, “You can come to me (tonight), because I have paid a fee for you (to Rochel) with my son’s jasmine plants.” And he slept with her on that night.

<sup>17</sup> God listened to Leah(’s prayers to have more tribes born through her). She became pregnant and gave birth to a fifth son for Ya’akov. <sup>18</sup> Leah said, “God has given (me) my reward (SeCHARiy) because I have given my maid to my husband,” and she named him Yissachar.

<sup>19</sup> Leah became pregnant again, and she gave birth to a sixth son for Ya’akov. <sup>20</sup> Leah said, “God has given me a good portion (ZeVed). This time, my husband will live with me (more than with his other wives), for I have borne him six sons (as many as all the other wives put together will produce),” and she named him Zevulun.

<sup>21</sup> Afterwards, she gave birth to a daughter, and she named her Dinah.

<sup>22</sup> God remembered (that) Rochel (had divulged Ya’akov’s code to Leah to save her from Eisav. She feared Ya’akov would divorce her for being childless, and Eisav had already set his eyes on her). So, God listened to her, and opened her womb.

---

TORAS MENACHEM

---

 Sparks of Chasidus 

**THE NAMING OF THE TWELVE TRIBES**

**O**ur Sages taught, “Only three may be called Patriarchs” (Brachos 16b)—Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya’akov—because the spiritual qualities of these three are to be found within every Jewish person.

The twelve tribes, on the other hand, each had their own distinct qualities, but these qualities are not found universally amongst all Jews. Thus, the Patriarchs represent the general source of Jewish spirituality, whereas the tribes highlight more specific features.

As we pass from the general to the specific, emphasis on detail becomes more important. Therefore the name of each tribe is

explained in the Torah—in contrast to the Patriarchs, whose names are not formally explained—since the more detailed spiritual motif of each tribe requires a more specific emphasis.

And this too sheds light on the fact that it was the matriarchs, and not Ya’akov, who named each tribe. For just like it is the mother who nurtures the specific features of the child in her womb, so too the more detailed spiritual features of the Jewish nation were defined by our matriarchs.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 10, p. 96ff)

דְּרַחַל קָדָם יי וְקָבַל צְלוֹתָהּ יי וַיִּהְיֶה לָּהּ עֲדוּי:  
 כג וְעִדְיָאֵת וַיִּלְיֶדֶת בָּר וַאֲמַרְתָּ כְּנֵשׁ יי ית  
 חֲסוּדֵי: כד וַקִּרְתָּ ית שְׁמִיָּה יוֹסֵף לְמִימָר יוֹסֵף  
 יי לי בר אֲחֵרָן: כה וְהָוָה כֹּד וַיִּלְיֶדֶת רַחֵל ית  
 יוֹסֵף וַאֲמַר יַעֲקֹב לְלֶבֶן שְׁלַחֲנִי וַאֲחִיךָ לְאַתְרֵי  
 וּלְאַרְעֵי: כו הֵב ית נְשֵׂי וַיִּתְּ בְּנֵי דֵי פְלִחִית  
 יִתְּךָ בְּהוֹן וַאֲיוּזֵל אַרְי אַתְּ יִדְעָתָּ ית פּוֹלְחֵנִי דֵי  
 פְּלַחְתָּךְ: כז וַאֲמַר לִיהָ לָבָן אִם פְּעֵן אֲשַׁכְּחִית  
 רַחֲמִין בְּעֵינֶיךָ נְסִיתִי וּבְרַכְנִי יי בְּדִילְךָ:  
 כח וַאֲמַר פְּרִישׁ אֲנִיךָ עָלַי וְאַתָּה: כט וַאֲמַר לִיהָ  
 אַתְּ יִדְעָתָּ ית דֵי פְּלַחְתָּךְ וַיִּתְּ דֵי הָוָה בְּעֵינֶיךָ  
 עֲמִי: ל אַרְי זְעִיר דֵי הָוָה לָךְ קְדָמִי וְתִקְוִי  
 לְמִסְגֵּי וּבְרִיךְ יי יִתְּךָ בְּדִילִי וּכְעֵן אִימְתִי אַעֲבֹד  
 אֲךָ אֲנָא לְבֵיתִי: לא וַאֲמַר מָה אֲתָן לָךְ וַאֲמַר  
 יַעֲקֹב לֹא תִתֶּן לִי מְדַעַם אִם תַּעֲבִיד לִי  
 פְּתֻנְמָא דְדִין אִיתּוּב אַרְעֵי עֲנָךְ אַסְרָ:  
 לב אַעֲבֹר בְּכָל עֲנָךְ יוֹמָא דִין אַעֲדִי מִתְּמָן כָּל  
 אֲמֹר נְמוֹר וּרְקוּעַ וְכָל אֲמֹר שְׁחוּם בְּאֲמָרְיָא  
 וּרְקוּעַ וּנְמוֹר בְּעִזְיָא וַיְהִי אַנְרֵי: לד וַתִּסְתַּדֵּר בִּי  
 זְכוּתִי בְּיוֹם דְּמִתְּר אַרְי תִּיעוּל עַל אַנְרֵי  
 קְדָמְךָ כָּל דֵי לִיתוּהִי נְמוֹר וּרְקוּעַ בְּעִזְיָא  
 וּשְׁחוּם בְּאֲמָרְיָא נְנוּבָא הוּא עֲמִי: לה וַאֲמַר  
 לָבָן בְּרָם לִנִּי יְהִי כְּפִתְנָמְךָ: לה וַאֲעֲדִי בְּיוֹמָא  
 הַהוּא ית תְּנִישְׂיָא רְגוּלְיָא וּרְקוּעִיָא וַיִּתְּ כָּל  
 עִזְיָא נְמוֹרְתָא וּרְקוּעִתָא כָּל דֵי חוֹר בֵּיהּ וְכָל

רַחֲמָה: כג וַתִּהְרַר וַתִּלְדַּבּ בֶּן וַתֹּאמֶר אֶסְף אֱלֹהִים אֶת־חֲרָפְתִּי:  
 כד וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ יוֹסֵף וַאֲמַר יוֹסֵף יְהוָה לִי בֶן אַחֵר: כה וַיְהִי  
 בְּאֲשֶׁר יִלְדָה רַחֵל אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־לָבָן שְׁלַחֲנִי  
 וְאֶלְכָה אֶל־מְקוּמִי וְלֹא־רָצִי: כו תַּנְּהָ אֶת־נְשֵׂי וְאֶת־יִלְדֵי אֲשֶׁר  
 עֲבַדְתִּי אִתְּךָ בְּהוֹן וְאֶלְכָה בִּי אַתָּה יִדְעָתָּ אֶת־עֲבַדְתִּי אֲשֶׁר  
 עֲבַדְתִּיךָ: כז וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו לָבָן אִם־נָא מַעֲצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ  
 נְחַשְׂתִּי וּבִרְכֵנִי יְהוָה בְּגִלְגָּלְךָ: וַחֲמִישִׁין כח וַיֹּאמֶר נִקְבְּהָ שְׁכָרְךָ  
 עָלַי וְאַתְנָה: כט וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אַתָּה יִדְעָתָּ אֵת אֲשֶׁר עֲבַדְתִּיךָ  
 וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר־הָיָה מִקְנֶךָ אִתִּי: ל כִּי מַעֲטָ אֲשֶׁר־הָיָה לָךְ לְפָנַי  
 וַיִּפְרָץ לְרֹב וַיִּבְרַךְ יְהוָה אֶתְךָ לְרִגְלֵי וְעַתָּה מָתִי אַעֲשֶׂה  
 גַּם־אֲנֹכִי לְבֵיתִי: לא וַיֹּאמֶר מָה אֲתָן־לָךְ וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב  
 לֹא־תִתֶּן־לִי מְאוּמָה אִם־תַּעֲשֶׂה־לִּי הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה אֲשׁוּבָה  
 אַרְעָה צְאֻנְךָ אֲשַׁמְרֶ: לב אַעֲבֹר בְּכָל־צְאֻנְךָ הַיּוֹם הַסֵּר מִשְׁם  
 כָּל־שֶׂה | נִקְדָּ וּטְלוּא וְכָל־שֶׂה־חֹמֶם בְּכַשְׂבִּים וּטְלוּא וְנִקְדָּ  
 בְּעִזִּים וְהָיָה שְׁכָרִי: לד וְעַנְתָּה־בִּי צִדְקָתִי בְּיוֹם מָחָר כִּי־תָבוֹא  
 עַל־שְׂכָרִי לְפָנֶיךָ כָּל אֲשֶׁר־אֵינְנֹו נִקְדָּ וּטְלוּא בְּעִזִּים וְחֹמֶם  
 בְּכַשְׂבִּים גָּנוּב הוּא אִתִּי: לה וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן הֵן לוֹ יְהִי כְּדַבְּרְךָ:  
 לה וַיִּסֵּר בְּיוֹם הַהוּא אֶת־הַתִּישִׁים הָעֹקְדִים וְהַטְּלָאִים וְאֵת  
 כָּל־הָעִזִּים הַנִּקְדָּוֹת וְהַטְּלָאֵת כָּל אֲשֶׁר־לָבָן בּוֹ וְכָל־חֹמֶם

רש"י

(כט) ואת אשר היה מקנך אתי. את חשבון מיעוט מקנך שבא לידי מתחלה  
 כמה היו: (ל) לרגלי. עם רגלי, שבביל ציאת רגלי זאת אללך הצרכה, כמו  
 העם אשר צרגליך. לעם אשר צרגליך. הצאים עמי: גם אנכי לביתי. לזורך  
 ציתי, עכשיו אין עושין ללרכי אלל בני, ולריך (אני) להיות עושה גם אני עמכם  
 לסמך, וזכו גם: (לז) בקד. מנומר בחצוצרות דקות כמו נקודות, פונטר"א  
 זלע"ו: טלוא. לשון טלואים, חצוצרות רחבות: חום. שחום דומה ללדום רש"ו  
 זלע"ו, לשון משנה, שחמתית ונמלאת לזכ, לענין התצואה: והיה שכרי. אותן  
 שיוולדו מכאן ולהבא נקודים וטלואים צעזים ושחומים כצבצים יהיו שלי, ואותן  
 שישנן עכשיו, הפרש מהם והפקידם ציד צניך, שלא תאמר לי על הנוולדים  
 מעתה, אלו היו שם מתחלה, ועוד, שלא תאמר לי, על ידי הזכרים שהן נקודים  
 וטלואים, תלדנה הנקבות דוגמתן מכאן ואילך: (לג) וענתה בי וגו'. אם  
 תחשדני שאני נוטל משלך כלום, תענה בי דקדתי, כי תצוא דקדתי ותעיד על  
 שכרי לפניך, שלא תמלא צעדרי כי אם נקודים וטלואים, וכל שתמלא צדן שאינו  
 נקוד או טלוא או חום, צידוע שגנבתיו לך, וצגינצבה הוא שריו אללי: (לד) הן.  
 לשון קבלת דברים: לו יהי בדברך. הלואי שתחפון צכך: (לה) ויסר. לצן ציוס  
 ההוא וגו': התישום. עזים זכרים: כל אשר לבן בו. כל אשר היתה בו

שמה יגררנה יעקב לפי שאין לה צנים, ואף עשו הרשע כך עלה בלבו כששמע  
 שאין לה צנים. הוא שייסד הפייע, האדמון כצט שלא חלה צבה לקחתה לו  
 ונתצלה: (כג) אסף. הכניסה צמקוס שלא תראה, וכן אסף חרפתנו, ולא  
 יאסף הציתה, אספו נגהס, וירחך לא יאסף, לא יעמן: חרפתני. שהייתי  
 לחרפה שאני עקרה, והיו אומרים עלי שאעלה לחלקו של עשו הרשע. ואגדה,  
 כל זמן שאין לאשה בן, אין לה צמי לתלות כרחובה, משיש לה בן תולה בו, מי  
 שצר כלי זה, צנך, מי אכל תאנים אלו, צנך: (כד) יסף ה' לי בן אחר. יודעת  
 היתה בצבואה, שאין יעקב עתיד להעמיד אלה שנים עשר צצטים, אמרה, יהי  
 רצון שאותו שהוא עתיד להעמיד, יהא ממני, לכך לא התפללה אלה על בן אחר:  
 (כה) באשר ילדה רחל את יוסף. משנולד שטנו של עשו, שנאמר והיה בית  
 יעקב אש ובית יוסף להצבה ובית עשו לקש, אש בלא להצבה אינו שולט למרחוק,  
 משנולד יוסף, בטח יעקב בצבא"ו ורצה לשו: (כו) תנה את נשי וגו'. אינו  
 רוצה לזאת כי אם צרשות: (כז) נחשתי. מנחש הייתי, נסיתי צנחוש שלי שעל  
 ידך צבה לי צרכה. כשצאת ללחן לא היו לי צנים, שנאמר והנה רחל צתו צבה  
 עם הלאן, אפשר יש לו צנים והוא שולט צתו אלל הרועים, ועכשיו היה לו צנים,  
 שנאמר וישמע את דברי צני לבן: (כח) נקבה שכרך. כתרגומו פריש אגרך:



<sup>23</sup> She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She said, “God has concealed (aSaF) my disgrace.”

<sup>24</sup> She named him Yosef, saying, “May God add (YOSEF) another son for me!”

## 🌀 YA'AKOV CONTINUES TO WORK FOR LAVAN AND HE PROSPERS 🌀

30:25 **T**hen, when Rochel had given birth to Yosef (who was destined to destroy Eisav, Ya'akov felt safe to return). Ya'akov said to Lavan, “Send me away! I will go to my place and to my land. <sup>26</sup> Let me have my wives and my children, for whom I served you, and I will go—for you are aware of my services, which I have carried out for you.”

FIFTH READING <sup>27</sup> Lavan said to him, “If I have found favor in your eyes, please (stay)! I have found out by divining, that God has blessed me because of you.” <sup>28</sup> He said, “Specify (what is to be) your wage from me, and I will give (it).”

<sup>29</sup> (Ya'akov) said to him, “You know how I have worked for you, and how (few) your flocks were (when they first came to be) with me. <sup>30</sup> For the few that you had before I (came) have increased extensively, and God blessed you (because of) my arrival. But now, when will I also do something for my own household?”

<sup>31</sup> (Lavan) said, “What can I give you?”

Ya'akov said, “Don't give me anything. If you'll do the following for me, I will come back, pasture your flocks (and) guard (them): <sup>32</sup> Let me pass throughout all your flocks today, and remove from there every spotted and patched lamb and every brown lamb, from among the sheep; and every patched and spotted one from among the goats (for your sons to guard separately, so you will not claim that I am breeding these types). My wages shall be (any spotted or patched goats, or brown sheep that are born from the remaining sheep that I guard). <sup>33</sup> Thus, at a future time (when I leave), my financial integrity will be self-evident before you, (because) any non-spotted or non-patched goats or non-brown sheep in my (personal) possession will (obviously be) stolen (from you).”

<sup>34</sup> “Agreed!” said Lavan. “(I) only (hope) it will be as you say (and you won't change your mind)!”

<sup>35</sup> On that day (Lavan) removed the ringed and patched male goats and all the spotted and patched female goats, whichever had white (patches) on them, and all the brown ones (from) among the sheep,

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● How much did Lavan prosper due to Ya'akov? (v. 27, 30)

**ZOHAR:** “I have found out by divining, that God has blessed me because of you” (v. 27). Lavan used magic and sorcery and tested his mazal to see if [he was blessed] because of Ya'akov. He found that due to Ya'akov he received an additional hundred sheep, a hundred lambs, and a hundred male goats to his flocks every month.

R' Abba said: Ya'akov used to bring an additional thousand cattle, a thousand lambs, and a thousand male goats every month, as the verse states, “For the few that you had before I (came) have increased extensively, and God blessed you (because of) my arrival” (v. 30). Blessing from above does not dwell on less than a thousand of each kind. So there were a thousand sheep, a thousand lambs, and a thousand male goats (*Zohar* I 161a).

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🌀 LAVAN'S BLESSING (v. 27, 30)

Did Lavan receive the blessing which God had reserved for him? Or, did he merit to share in a portion of Ya'akov's personal blessing?

This point was disputed by the two opinions of the **Zohar**:

The first opinion understood that Lavan was receiving his own blessing. Therefore, he received a smaller amount (100 per month), and the *Zohar* quotes Lavan's own words (v. 27) as proof.

R' Abba understood that Lavan actually merited to receive part of Ya'akov's blessing. Thus, the blessing was greater (1000 per month) and, to stress this point, R' Abba quoted a proof from Ya'akov's words (v. 30).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 136ff.)

#### 🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

The first opinion of the **Zohar** perceived the non-Jew to be secondary to the Jew. Therefore, Lavan received an inferior blessing to Ya'akov.

R' Abba on the other hand took a deeper approach, seeing the non-Jew not merely as an assistant but as a *real partner* in a Jew's observance of Torah and *mitzvos*. Therefore, Lavan was able to share a part of Ya'akov's personal blessing (*ibid.*).

שחום באמריא ויהב ביד בְּנוֹהֵי לוֹ וְשׂוּי מְהֵלֶךְ תִּלְתָּא יוֹמִין בְּיַנְוֵהוּ וּבֵין יַעֲקֹב וַיַּעֲקֹב רָעִי ית עָנָא דְלָבָן דְאִשְׁתְּאָרָן: לו וְנָסִיב לִיהַּ יַעֲקֹב חוֹטְרִין דְלָבָן בְּרִיבִין דְדָלּוּ וְדָלּוּף וְקָלִיף בְּהוּן קָלִפִּין חוֹרִין קָלוּף חוֹר דִּי עַל חוֹטְרִיא: לה וְדַעֲיִן ית חוֹטְרִיא דִּי קָלִיף בְּרִהֲטִיא אֲתֵר בֵּית שְׁקִיא דְמִיא אֲתֵר דִּי אֲתִין עָנָא לְמִשְׁתִּי לְקַבְלִיהוּן דְעָנָא וּמְתִיחְמִן בְּמִיתִיהוּן לְמִשְׁתִּי: מט וְאֲתִיחְמָא עָנָא לְחוֹטְרִיא וְיִלְדִין עָנָא רְגֻלִין נְמוּרִין וְרִקְעִין: מ ואֲמַרִיא אֲפָרִישׁ יַעֲקֹב וְיֵהֵב בְּרִישׁ עָנָא כָּל דְרְגֻל וְכָל דְשָׁחֹם בְּעָנָא דְלָבָן וְשׂוּי לִיהַּ עֲדָרִין בְּלַחוּדוּהִי וְלֹא עֲרִיבִינוּן עִם עָנָא דְלָבָן: מא וְהוּהּ בְּכָל עֲדָן דְמְתִיחְמִן עָנָא מְבִירִיא וְשׂוּי יַעֲקֹב ית חוֹטְרִיא לְעִנֵּי עָנָא בְּרִהֲטִיא לְיַחְמוּתִיהוּן בְּחוֹטְרִיא: מב וּבְלִקְשִׁישׁוֹת עָנָא לֹא מְשׂוּי וְהוּן לְקִישִׁיא לְלָבָן וּבְכִירִיא לְיַעֲקֹב: מג וּתְקִיף גְּבֵרָא לְחֵדָא לְחֵדָא וְהוּוּ לִיהַּ עָאן

בְּכִשְׁבִּים וַיִּתֵּן בְּיַד בְּנָיו: לו וַיִּשְׂם דְרָךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים בֵּינוּ וּבֵין יַעֲקֹב וַיַּעֲקֹב רָעִה אֶת־צֹאן לָבָן הַנּוֹתֶרֶת: לו וַיִּקְחֵלוּ יַעֲקֹב מִקָּל לְבַנְהָ לָח וְלוֹז וְעֶרְמוֹן וַיַּפְצֵל בְּהוּן פְּצָלוֹת לְבָנוֹת מַחֲשָׁף הַלָּבָן אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַמְּקָלוֹת: לה וַיִּצַּג אֶת־הַמְּקָלוֹת אֲשֶׁר פָּצַל בְּרִהֲטִים בְּשִׁקְתוֹת הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר תְּבֹאֵן הַצֹּאן לְשִׁתוֹת לְנֹכַח הַצֹּאן וַיַּחְמְנֶה בְּבֹאֵן לְשִׁתוֹת: מט וַיַּחְמוּ הַצֹּאן אֶל־הַמְּקָלוֹת וַתִּלְדֶּן הַצֹּאן עֲקָדִים נְקָדִים וּטְלָאִים: מ וְהַכְּשָׁבִים הַפְּרִיד יַעֲקֹב וַיִּתֵּן פְּנֵי הַצֹּאן אֶל־עֶקֶד וְכָל־חֹם בְּצֹאן לָבָן וַיִּשֶׁת לוֹ עֲדָרִים לְבָדוֹ וְלֹא שָׁתֵם עַל־צֹאן לָבָן: מא וְהָיָה בְּכָל־יַחַם הַצֹּאן הַמְּקֻשְׁרוֹת וְשֵׁם יַעֲקֹב אֶת־הַמְּקָלוֹת לְעִנֵּי הַצֹּאן בְּרִהֲטִים לְיַחְמְנֶה בַּמְּקָלוֹת: מב וּבְהַעֲטִיף\* הַצֹּאן לֹא יִשְׂוִים וְהָיָה הָעֲטָפִים לְלָבָן וְהַקְּשָׁרִים לְיַעֲקֹב: מג וַיִּפְרֹץ הָאִישׁ מְאֹד מְאֹד וַיְהִי־לוֹ צֹאן רַבּוֹת וּשְׁפָחוֹת וְעֲבָדִים וּגְמָלִים וַחֲמָרִים:

\*יש גורסים י' הבתי

רש"י

אומר, המים נעשין זרע צמטיכון ולא היו לריכות לזכר, וזכו ויחמנה וגו': (לט) אל המקלות. אל מראות המקלות: עקודים. משונים במקום עקידתן, הם קרסולי ידיהן ורגליהן: (מ) והכשבים הפריד יעקב. הכולדים עקודים נקודים, הצדיל והפריד לעלמן, ועשה אותן עדר עדר לצדו, והולך אותו העדר העקוד לפני האלן, לפני האלן הכולכות אחריהם צופות אליהם, וזה שנאמר ויתן פני האלן אל עקוד, שביו פני האלן אל העקודים, ואל כל חום שמלא צללן לצן: וישת לו עדרים. כמו שפירשתי: (מא) המקשרות. כתרומו הצכירות, ואין לו עד במקרא. ומנחם חזרו עם אחיתופל בקושרים<sup>3</sup>. ויהי הקשר אמין אותן המתקשרות יחד למהר עזרון: (מב) ובהעטיף. לשון איחור, כתרומו וצלקשות. ומנחם חזרו עם המחללות והמעטפות<sup>4</sup>, לשון עטיפת כסות, כלומר מתעטפות עזרון ולמרון, ואינן מתאוות להתיסם על ידי הזכרים: (מג) צאן רבות. פרות ורבות יותר משאר לאן<sup>5</sup>: ושפחות ועבדים. מוכר לאנו דמיס

חצרורות לצנות: ויתן. לצן ציד צניו: (לו) הנותרות. הרעועות שבהן, החולות והעקרות שאינן אלא שירים, אותן מסר לו: (לז) מקל לבנה. עץ הוא, ושמו לצנה, כמא דתימא, תחת אלון ולצנה<sup>6</sup>, ואומר אני הוא שקורין טרימצי"ל שהוא לצן: לח. כשהוא רטוב: ולזו. ועוד לקח מקל לזו, עץ שגדלן צו אגוזים דקים, קולדר"י צלע": וערמון. קשטיי"ר צלע": פצלות. קילופים קילופים, שהיה עושהו מנומר: מחשף הלבן. גלוי לזבן של מקל. כשהיה קולפו, היה נראה ונגלה לזבן שלו במקום הקילוף: (לח) ויצג. תרגומו ודעיץ, לשון תחיבה ונעיבה הוא צלשון ארמית, והרבה יש צגמי דלח ושלפה, דן ציב מידו. דלח כמו דעלה, אלא שמק"ר את לשונו: ברהטים. צמרולות המים צצרכות העשויות צארץ להשקות שם האלן: אשר תבאן וגו'. צרכטים אשר תצאן האלן לשתות, שם הציג המקלות לנכח האלן: ויחמנה וגו'. הצכמה רואה את המקלות והיא נחתפת לאחוריה, והזכר רוצעה, ויולדת כיואל צו<sup>7</sup>. רצי הושטיא

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Where did Ya'akov obtain servants and maids? (v. 43)**  
**RASHI:** He would sell his flocks at a high price and purchase all these things.  
**BE'ER YITZCHAK:** The Torah only mentions that Ya'akov possessed flocks, so *Rashi* was troubled why our verse states that he had

“manservants, maids, camels and donkeys.” *Rashi* concluded that he must have acquired these possessions through the sale of his flocks. *Rashi's* statement that he sold the animals at a “high price” was his own conclusion based on logic. For, since Ya'akov's flocks were “extremely fertile,” it follows that he would have fetched a high price for them.

TORAS MENACHEM

● **YA'AKOV'S WEALTH (v. 43)**  
 There are two problems here:  
 a.) Verse 43 states that Ya'akov accumulated great wealth and, as *Rashi* explains, he sold off some of his flocks to buy, “maids, servants, camels

and donkeys.” Later, when the Torah describes Ya'akov's departure from Charan, the matter resurfaces. The verse states, “He led off all his livestock and all his possessions that he had acquired in Padan-Aram—purchased from what he owned” (31:18). On the words, “purchased from

1 הוושע ד, יג. 2 ב"ד עג, י. 3 שמואל-ב ט, לא. 4 ישעי' ג, כב. 5 אוצ"ל: משאר צאן ושפחות (שיחת יו"ד כסלו תשמ"ו).

and he gave (them) into the hands of his sons.<sup>36</sup> He set three days' journey between himself and Ya'akov, and Ya'akov tended (the dregs of) Lavan's remaining flocks.

<sup>37</sup> Ya'akov took himself fresh sticks of poplar, hazel and chestnut (wood), and he peeled white streaks on them by uncovering the white that was (inside) the sticks.<sup>38</sup> He inserted the sticks that he had peeled, into the (ground, by the) pools (into which) the watering troughs (would fill) where the flocks would come to drink, so that they faced the animals. (This caused them) to become stimulated (and mate) when they came to drink.<sup>39</sup> The flocks became stimulated (and mated on seeing) the rods, and the flocks bore ringed, patched, and striped (young).

<sup>40</sup> Ya'akov segregated the (newborn) sheep: He made the (other) animals in Lavan's flocks (in a group behind, so that) they faced the ringed ones and all the brown ones. (Ya'akov) separated the flocks (in the above manner) for his own (benefit). He did not place them with Lavan's animals.

<sup>41</sup> What happened was, that whenever the early-bearing flocks would become stimulated (ready to mate), Ya'akov would place the sticks in the troughs, before the eyes of the animals, (in order) to stimulate them (into mating) by (means of) the rods.<sup>42</sup> But when the flocks were late in bearing, he would not place (the sticks). Thus, the ones that were born late went to Lavan, and the ones that were born early to Ya'akov.

<sup>43</sup> The man (Ya'akov) became exceedingly wealthy. He had extremely fertile flocks and maids, servants, camels and donkeys.

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

what he owned," *Rashi* comments, "The servants, maids, camels, and donkeys which he had purchased from [the sale of] his flocks." This is clearly a reference to our verse here (v. 43).

One detail however requires clarification: Why did *Rashi* alter the sequence of Ya'akov's possessions as described by the Torah? In our verse we read that he had, "maids, servants, camels and donkeys," whereas below (31:18), *Rashi* switches the first two items, stating that he had, "servants, maids, camels, and donkeys"?

b.) A further problem arises in *Parshas Vayishlach*, when we read that Ya'akov told Eisav, "I have acquired oxen, donkeys, flocks, servants, and maids" (32:6). Again, there appears to be an inconsistency: In our verse, here in *Parshas Vayeitzei*, we are not informed at all that Ya'akov acquired oxen, and yet this was the *first thing* that Ya'akov told Eisav in *Parshas Vayishlach*. Furthermore, Ya'akov omitted to tell Eisav that he had acquired camels. What is the reason for all these changes?

#### THE EXPLANATION

a.) After God blessed Ya'akov with "extremely fertile flocks," Ya'akov would soon have been unable to tend to them singlehandedly. Thus, the first purchase that Ya'akov made with the money raised from the sale of his flocks would have been servants, to help him attend the flocks. Therefore, when *Rashi* lists Ya'akov's acquisitions (below 31:18) he places servants first, as this would surely have been Ya'akov's first purchase.

But this begs the question: If Ya'akov purchased servants first then why does our verse (v. 43) mention maids *before* servants?

Presumably, just as God blessed Ya'akov's flocks to be "extremely fertile," He would also have blessed Ya'akov's maids to bear many children. To stress this point, the Torah juxtaposed "flocks" to maids: "He had *extremely fertile flocks, maids, servants, camels and donkeys.*" In this way, the term "extremely fertile" actually refers both to the flocks *and* the maids.

In other words, since we are coming to stress here how Ya'akov "became exceedingly wealthy," the Torah slightly altered the actual sequence in which Ya'akov acquired his possessions, to stress *how* he

became so wealthy—because he had "extremely fertile flocks *and* maids."

However, when *Rashi* listed Ya'akov's possessions, below in 31:18, there was no need to cite the list out of order. So *Rashi* wrote servants first, as this would have been Ya'akov's first acquisition.

b.) In order to explain why no mention is made in our verse of Ya'akov's oxen, let us first pose another question:

Before Ya'akov came to Lavan's house, he asked that God give him "bread to eat and garments to wear" (28:20). Why do we not find any mention in the Torah that this request was fulfilled? Presumably this is

### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

The *Midrash* describes the Jewish people as God's "sheep" (*Shir Hashirim Rabah* 2:16), as an expression of their total dedication to God, like sheep that follow their shepherd unquestioningly.

Ya'akov exemplified this level of dedication while he worked for Lavan, remaining loyal to God's commands despite the spiritually alien environment. Thus, to hint to Ya'akov's dedication, God rewarded him with wealth that came about through amassing sheep.

However, when Ya'akov returned to confront Eisav, he did not stress sheep as his most important acquisition, but rather, oxen (32:6). Ya'akov was hinting, "Because I am dedicated to God like a quiet sheep, therefore I have God's might behind me, so I will be as strong as an ox against you!"

This teaches us that, in our observance of *mitzvos* we should be utterly humble towards God like a sheep; but when fighting the forces that oppose Judaism in the outside world, we cannot stand by sheepishly and watch Jews be drawn away from their heritage. Rather, we must fight for Jewish values with the strength of an ox.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 252ff.)

סגיאון ואמקון ועבדין וגמלין ותמרין: א וישמע  
 ית פתגמי בני לבן למימר נסיב יעקב ית כל  
 די לאבונא ומדי לאבונא קנא ית כל נכסיא  
 האלין: ב ותוא יעקב ית סבר אפי לבן והא  
 ליתוהי עמיה כמאתמלי ומדקמוהי: ג ואמר  
 יי ליעקב תוב לארע אבהתך וילדוהי ויהי  
 מימרי בסעדך: ד וישלח יעקב ויקרא לרחל  
 וללאה לחקלא לות עניה: ה ואמר להן חזי  
 אנא ית סבר אפי אבוך ארי ליתוהי עמי  
 כמאתמלי ומדקמוהי ואלהה דאבא הוה  
 בסעדי: ו ואתון ידעתון ארי בכל חילי  
 פלחית ית אבוך: ז ואבוך שקר בי ואשני ית  
 ארי עשר ומנין ולא שבקיה יי לאבאשא  
 עמי: ח אם כדן הוה אמר נמורין יהא אנרך  
 וילדן כל ענא נמורין ואם כדן הוה אמר  
 רגולין יהא אנרך וילדן כל ענא רגולין:  
 ט ואפריש יי מן בעירא דאבוך ויהב לי ויהוה  
 בעדן דאתיחמא ענא ווקפית עיני וחזית  
 בחלקמא והא תישא דסקלון על ענא רגולין  
 נמורין ופציחין: י ואמר לי מלאכא די  
 בחלקמא יעקב ואמרית הא אנא: יב ואמר  
 וקור בען עניך וחזי כל תישא דסקלון על  
 ענא רגולין נמורין ופציחין ארי גלי קדמי  
 ית כל די לבן עביד לך: יג אנא אלהא

לא א וישמע את דברי בני לבן לאמר לקח יעקב את כל-  
 אשר לאבינו ומאשר לאבינו עשה את כל הכבוד הזה:  
 ב וירא יעקב את פני לבן והנה איננו עמו בתמול שלשום:  
 ג ויאמר יהוה אל יעקב שוב אל ארץ אבותיך ולמולתך  
 ואהיה עמך: ד וישלח יעקב ויקרא לרחל וללאה השדה  
 אל צאנו: ה ויאמר להן ראה אנכי את פני אביכן כי איננו  
 אלי בתמול שלשם ואלהי אבי הנה עמדי: ו ואתנה ידעתן כי  
 בכל כחי עבדתי את אביכן: ז ואביכן התל בי והחלף  
 את משפחתי עשרת מנים ולא נתנו אלהים להרע עמדי:  
 ח אם כה יאמר נקדים יהיה שכרך וילדו כל הצאן נקדים  
 ואם כה יאמר עקדים יהיה שכרך וילדו כל הצאן עקדים:  
 ט ויצל אלהים את מקנה אביכם ויתן לי: י ויהי בעת יחם  
 הצאן ואשא עיני וארא בחלום והנה העתדים העלים  
 על הצאן עקדים נקדים וברדים: יא ויאמר אלי מלאך  
 האלהים בחלום יעקב ואמר הנני: יב ויאמר שאנא עיניך  
 וראה כל העתדים העלים על הצאן עקדים נקדים וברדים  
 כי ראיתי את כל אשר לבן עשה לך: יג אנכי האל בית אל

כ"ט

פחות מעשרה: מנים. לשון כסוס כלל החשבון, וכן עשירות, למדנו שהחליף  
 תגלו מאה פעמים: (י) והנה העתודים. אף על פי שהדילס לבן כולס שלא  
 יתעברו הלאן דוגמתן, היו המלאכים מביאים אותן מעדר המסור ציד בני לבן,  
 לעדר שציד יעקב? וברדים. תרגומו ופליחין, פייס"ר צלע"ז, חוט של לבן  
 מקיף את גופו סביב, וחברצורות שלו פתוחה ומפולשת מזו אל זו, (ס"א מזן  
 אל זן), ואין לי להביא עד מן המקרא: (יג) האל בית אל. כמו אל בית אל,

יקרים, ולוקח לו כל אלה: (ח) עשה. כנס, כמו ויעש חיל ויך את עמלק:  
 (ג) שוב אל ארץ אבותיך. ושם אהיה עמך, אבל צעודך מחובר לטמא, אי  
 אפשר להשרות שכינתי עליך: (ד) ויקרא לרחל וללאה. לרחל תחלה ואחר  
 כך ללאה, שהיא היחס עקרת הבית, שצבילה מזדווג יעקב עם לבן, ואף צניח  
 של לאה מודים צדצר, שהרי צועז וצית דינו משצט יכודה אומרים, כרחל  
 וכלאה אשר צנו שתיכן וגו', הקדימו רחל ללאה: (י) עשרת מנים. אין מונים

TORAS MENACHEM

because when we read that "the man became exceedingly wealthy" it is  
 obvious that he had the basic necessities of food and clothing.  
 Thus, it turns out that when our verse states that Ya'akov had,  
 "extremely fertile flocks, maids, servants, camels and donkeys," we are  
 not reading an exhaustive list of all of Ya'akov's possessions. Rather, the  
 items that are mentioned here are those which Ya'akov possessed in  
 extreme abundance.  
 Consequently, it goes without saying that Ya'akov would have  
 possessed some oxen, for he would have needed to carry out some  
 agricultural work to provide his family with food—and for this, oxen are  
 a necessity. But since his primary work was with sheep and goats, which  
 are highly mobile, he would have had to keep his agricultural interests to

a minimum, since he would not have been able to stay in one place with  
 his flocks for a prolonged period. Therefore he would not have purchased  
 too many oxen, so the Torah omits any mention of them here as they  
 were not an expression of Ya'akov's exceptional wealth.  
 Eisav, on the other hand, lived predominantly in one place: Mount Se'ir  
 (Vayishlach 32:4, 33:16, 36:8). So his main interest would have been in oxen,  
 and not flocks. Similarly, he would have had little interest in camels,  
 which are used primarily for travel.  
 Therefore, when Ya'akov wanted to impress Eisav with his wealth, he  
 said, "I have acquired oxen, donkeys, flocks, servants, and maids,"  
 stressing oxen—Eisav's primary interest—and omitting any mention of  
 camels, which he would not be interested in at all.

(Based on Sichas Yud Kislev and Shabbos Parshas Vayeitzei 5740)

🌀 YA'AKOV FLEES FROM LAVAN WITH HIS FAMILY 🌀

**31** **T**hen, he heard the words of Lavan's sons, saying, "Ya'akov has taken everything that belonged to our father, and he has amassed this entire fortune from what belonged to our father." <sup>2</sup> Ya'akov saw Lavan's face, and—look!—it was not (friendly) towards him like yesterday and the day before.

<sup>3</sup> God said to Ya'akov, "Return to the Land of your forefathers, to your birthplace, and I will be with you."

<sup>4</sup> So Ya'akov sent (a message) and called Rochel and Leah to the field, to his flocks. <sup>5</sup> He said to them, "I see that your father's face is not (friendly) toward me like yesterday and the day before, but (my riches came because) the God of my father was with me. <sup>6</sup> You know that I served your father with all my might. <sup>7</sup> Your father mocked me and changed my wages a hundred times, but God did not permit him to harm me. <sup>8</sup> If he would say, 'Spotted ones shall be your wages,' then all the animals would give birth to spotted ones. If he would say, 'Ringed ones shall be your wages,' then all the animals would give birth to ringed ones. <sup>9</sup> God took away your father's livestock and gave it to me. <sup>10</sup> Then, at the time when animals became stimulated, I lifted my eyes and saw in a dream, that—look!—(angels were bringing) ringed, spotted, and striped he-goats (from the flocks of Lavan's sons) to mate with the (female) animals."

<sup>11</sup> "In the dream, an angel of God said to me, 'Ya'akov!'"

"I said, 'Here I am.'"

<sup>12</sup> "He said, 'Now lift your eyes and see (that) all the he-goats mounting the animals are ringed, spotted, and striped, for I have seen all that Lavan is doing to you. <sup>13</sup> I am the God of Beis-Ail, where

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What did Ya'akov dream? (v. 10)**

**RASHI:** Although Lavan had set aside all [the goats], so that the animals would not conceive in their likeness, the angels were bringing them from the flock that had been transferred into the hands of Lavan's sons to the flock that was in Ya'akov's hands (see above v. 32ff.).

● **Were the animals born naturally or miraculously (v. 10)?**

**RALBAG:** Ya'akov's technique of rods (above 30:37ff.) was a natural method of causing animals to mate, though it was of course by Divine Providence.

**OHR HACHAYIM:** It was a phenomenal miracle, a reversal of nature.

**RAMBAN:** In the dream, God's angel told Ya'akov that he no longer needed to use the mating method of the sticks, for from now on the sheep would be born with the correct patterns miraculously.

● **What kind of animals were בְּרֵדִים (v. 10)**

**RASHI:** *Onkelos* renders: וּפְצִיחִין ("open"), *faissier* in Old French ("striped"). A white strip [made of many spots] encircles his body all around. The spots [of the strip] are disconnected [but give the impression of being] continuous from end to end, but I have no evidence from Scripture.

**IBN EZRA:** They were patched (the same as טְלָאִים).

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 **YA'AKOV'S DREAM (v. 10)**

In Ya'akov's dream we read for the first time about a type of animal called בְּרֵדִים, which was not mentioned in the previous accounts of Ya'akov's flocks. **Ibn Ezra** understood that this is a type of patched animal, similar to the patched טְלָאִים variety mentioned above (v. 32ff.).

**Rashi** however rejected this interpretation and learned instead that בְּרֵדִים is a totally new type of animal, which has not been mentioned before. Why did **Rashi** reject the interpretation of **Ibn Ezra** and come to the conclusion that Ya'akov saw a new type of goat in his dream?

**THE EXPLANATION**

To clarify this matter, let us turn to the discussion of the commentaries concerning Ya'akov's method of promoting mating, using sticks (described above 30:37ff.). **Ralbag** argues that this was a totally natural process; **Ohr haChayim** suggests that it was totally miraculous; and **Ramban** offers a third opinion, that up to the dream Ya'akov promoted mating naturally with the sticks, and that afterwards the process was supernatural.

Now, according to the first two approaches (totally natural or totally miraculous), Ya'akov would have continued to use the sticks after the dream in exactly the same way as before—either naturally or supernaturally. Thus, the same types of animals would have been produced both before and after the dream.

However, according to the third approach (**Ramban**), the dream witnessed a shift from a natural mating process to a supernatural mating process. Consequently, it is feasible that animals with a different mating pattern (בְּרֵדִים) would have resulted from the mating process.

According to **Rashi**, Ya'akov saw in the dream, "Angels were bringing them... to the flock that was in Ya'akov's hands," i.e. a new, supernatural method of breeding flocks, similar to the third opinion above (of **Ramban**). Therefore **Rashi** sympathized with the view that בְּרֵדִים was a new type of animal, heralding the new era of supernatural success for Ya'akov.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 131ff.)

דאתגליתי עֲלֶיךָ בְּבֵית אֵל דִּי מִשְׁחַתָּא תַמְן קָמָא דִּי קִימְתָא קְדָמִי תַמְן קַיִם כְּעֵן קוּם פּוּק מִן אַרְעָא הָדָא וְתוּב לְאַרְעֵי יְלֻדוֹתְךָ: יד וְאַתִּיבִית רַחֵל וְלֵאָה וְאָמְרוּ לִיהָ הַעוֹד כְּעֵן לָנָא חֵלֶק וְאַחֲסַנָּא בְּבֵית אַבְוִנָא: טו הֲלֵא נּוֹכְרֵאִין אַתְחַשְׁבְּנָא לִיהָ אַרְי וּבְנֵינָא וְאָכַל אַף מִיכַל יַת כֶּסֶפְנָא: טז אַרְי כָּל עוֹתֵרָא דִּי אַפְרִישׁ יִי מֵאַבְוִנָא דִּילָנָא הוּא וּלְבְנֵינָא וּכְעֵן כָּל דִּי אָמַר יִי לָךְ עֵבִיד: יז וְקָם יַעֲקֹב וַיִּטַּל יַת בְּגוּדֵי וַיַּת נְשׁוּתֵי עַל גְּמָלָא: יח וְדָבַר יַת כָּל גִּיתוּהֵי וַיַּת כָּל קַנְיָנֵיהָ דִּי קָנָא גִיתֵי קַנְיָנֵיהָ דִּי קָנָא בְּפָדֵן אַרְם לְמִיתֵי לֹות יַעֲחֵק אַבְוֵיהָ לְאַרְעָא דְכְנָעַן: יט וְלָבָן אָזַל לְמִנְזֵן יַת עֲנִיָּה וְנִסְיַבֵּת רַחֵל יַת עֲלֻמְנָא דִּי לְאַבְוֵהָ: כ וְכַסִּי יַעֲקֹב מִן לָבָן אַרְמָאָה עַל דִּילָא חַיִּי לִיהָ אַרְי אָזַל הוּא: כא וְאָזַל הוּא וְכָל דִּי לִיהָ וְקָם וַעֲבַר יַת פְּרֵת וְשׁוּי יַת אַפְוֵיהָ לְמוֹרָא דְגֻלְעָד: כב וְאַתְחִוָּא לְלָבָן בְּיוֹמָא תְּלִיתָאָה אַרְי אָזַל יַעֲקֹב: כג וְדָבַר יַת אַחֻוֵי עַמִּיָּה וְרָדַף בְּתַרוּחָה מִהַלָּךְ שִׁבְעָא יוֹמִין וְאַדְבִּיק יַתִּיהָ בְּמוֹרָא דְגֻלְעָד: כד וְאַתָּא מִימַר מִן קָדָם יִי לֹות לָבָן אַרְמָאָה בְּחֻלְמָא דִּלְיָא וְאָמַר לִיהָ אִסְתַּמַּר לָךְ דִּלְמָא תִּמְלַל עִם יַעֲקֹב מִשֵּׁב עַד

אֲשֶׁר מִשְׁחַתָּ שָׁם מִצְבֵּה אֲשֶׁר נִדְרַתָּ לִי שָׁם נִדְרַתָּ עִתָּה קוּם יֵצֵא מִן־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת וְשׁוּב אֶל־אֶרֶץ מוֹלַדְתְּךָ: יד וְתַעַן רַחֵל וְלֵאָה וְתֹאמְרֵנָה לוֹ הַעוֹד לָנוּ חֵלֶק וְנַחֲלָה בְּבֵית אָבִינוּ: טו הֲלֹוא נִכְרִיּוֹת נַחֲשַׁבְנוּ לוֹ כִּי מִכְרַנּוּ וַיֹּאכַל גַּם־אֲכֹל אֶת־כֶּסֶפְנוּ: טז כִּי כָל־הָעֵשָׂר אֲשֶׁר הִצִּיל אֱלֹהִים מֵאֲבִינוּ לָנוּ הוּא וְלְבַנֵּינוּ וְעִתָּה כָּל־אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֱלֹהִים אֵלֶיךָ עֲשֵׂה: [ששין] יז וַיִּקָּם יַעֲקֹב וַיִּטַּל יַת־בְּגָדָיו וַיִּטַּל יַת־הַגְּמָלוֹת: יח וַיִּנְהַג אֶת־כָּל־מִקְנֵהוּ וַאֲת־בָּנָיו וַאֲת־נְשָׁיו עַל־הַגְּמָלוֹת קַנְיָנוּ אֲשֶׁר רָכַשׁ בְּפָדֵן אַרְם לָבֹוא אֶל־יַעֲחֵק אָבִיו אַרְעָה כְּנָעַן: יט וְלָבָן הֵלֶךְ לְגִזּוֹ אֶת־עֲאֵנוּ וְתַגְנֹב רַחֵל אֶת־הַתְּרָפִים אֲשֶׁר לְאֵבִיהָ: כ וַיִּגְנֹב יַעֲקֹב אֶת־לֶבֶן לָבָן הָאֶרְמִי עַל־בְּלִי הַגֵּיד לוֹ כִּי בָרַח הוּא: כא וַיְבָרַח הוּא וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ וַיִּקָּם וַיַּעֲבֹר אֶת־הַנָּהָר וַיִּשָּׂם אֶת־פָּנָיו הַר הַגֻּלְעָד: כב וַיִּגֵּד לְלָבָן בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי כִּי בָרַח יַעֲקֹב: כג וַיִּקַּח אֶת־אֲחִיו עִמּוֹ וַיַּרְדֻּף אַחֲרָיו דֶּרֶךְ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים וַיִּדְבֹּק אֹתוֹ בְּהַר הַגֻּלְעָד: כד וַיָּבֹא אֱלֹהִים אֶל־לָבָן הָאֶרְמִי בַחֲלֹם הַלַּיְלָה וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הֲשֹׁמֵר לָךְ

רש"י

כלום, אלא מה שהזיל הקב"ה מאזינו, שלנו הוא: הציל. לשון הפריש, וכן כל לשון הלכה שצמקרא לשון הפרשה, שמפרישו מן הרעב ומן האויב: (יז) את בניו ואת נשיו. הקדים זכרים לנקבות, ועשו הקדים נקבות לזכרים, שנאמר ויקח עשו את נשיו ואת בניו וגו': (יח) מקנה קנינו. מה שקנה מלאנו, עבדים ושפחות וגמלים וחמורים: (יט) לגזוז את צאנו. שנתן ביד בניו דרך שלשת ימים צינו וצין יעקב: ותגנב רחל את התרפים. להפריש את אציה מעבודת אלילים נחכוונה: (כג) ביום השלישי. שהרי דרך שלשת ימים היה צנייהם: (כג) את אחיו. קרוביו: דרך שבעת ימים. כל אותן ג' ימים שהלך המגיד להגיד ללצן הלך יעקב לדרכו, ומלא יעקב

הכ"א יתירה, ודרך המקראות לדבר כן, כמו כי אחס צאים אל הארץ כנען: משחת שם. לשון רצוי וגדולה כשנמשח למלכות, כך וילק שמן על ראשה להיות משוחה למזבח: אשר נדרת לי. ולריך אתה לשלמו, שאמרת יהיה בית אלהים, שתקריב שם קרבנות: (יד) העוד לנו. למה נטכז על ירך מלשז, כלום אנו מיחלות לירש מנכסי אצינו כלום צין הזכרים: (טו) הלא נבריות נחשבנו לו. אפילו בשעה שדרך צני אדם לתת נדוניה לצנותיו בשעת נשואין, נכז עמנו כנכריות כי מכרנו לך (שעצדת אותו צנו י"ד שנה ולא נחננו לך אלא) בשכר הפעולה: את בספנו. שעכז דמי שכר פעולתך: (טז) כי כל העשר. כי זה משמש בלשון אלא. כלומר משל אצינו אין לנו

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What can be learned from the way Ya'akov loaded the camels? (v. 17)**  
**RASHI:** He put the males before the females, but Eisav put the females before the males, as the verse states, "Eisav took his wives and his sons, etc." (below, 36:6).  
**GUR ARYEH:** Eisav was more interested in his wives, whom he married to satisfy his desires, than his children. Ya'akov however, only married in order to raise twelve tribes. Therefore, he placed his sons before his wives, for they were the reason for his marriage.  
 A problem with this explanation is that Moshe mounted his wives before his children (*Shemos* 4:20), and we even find later that Ya'akov too mounted his wives before his children (below 32:23).

However, Moshe mounted his children first because they were small at the time and needed to be placed into the care of their mother on the donkey. Below, Ya'akov mounted his wives first, since he transported them across a stream of water, and it is normal for a person who transports things across water to move the easiest things first.  
 Thus, the only instance where it is of significance that Ya'akov placed his children first is here, in our verse. For here, Ya'akov was embarking on a journey to the Land where they planned to settle permanently. Therefore, in this case, Ya'akov felt it necessary to stress that his sons would form his main "settlement."

you anointed a monument and where you made a vow to Me. Now, get moving, leave this land, and return to the Land of your birth.”

<sup>14</sup> Rochel and Leah replied, saying to him, “(It’s not as if) we still have a share or an inheritance in our father’s house (for that will go to our brothers) <sup>15</sup> Aren’t we considered strangers to him, for he sold us (to you in marriage without a dowry) and (when you worked for him to marry us) he totally consumed our money! <sup>16</sup> Rather, all the wealth that God separated from our father belongs to us and our children. So now, do everything that God said to you.”

SIXTH READING <sup>17</sup> Ya’akov got moving. He lifted up his sons and his wives onto the camels, <sup>18</sup> and he led off all his livestock and all his possessions that he had acquired in Padan-Aram—purchased (through the sale of the livestock) that he owned—to come to Yitzchak, his father, in the land of Cana’an.

<sup>19</sup> Lavan had gone to shear his sheep (which were with his sons, three days’ journey away), so Rochel stole her father’s idols (attempting to wean him off idol worship).

<sup>20</sup> Ya’akov duped Lavan the Aramean by not telling him that he was running away. <sup>21</sup> He fled, with all his belongings. He got moving, crossed the river, and headed towards Mount Gilad.

### 🌀 LAVAN CHASES AFTER YA’AKOV AND CONFRONTS HIM 🌀

31:22 **O**n the third day, Lavan was informed that Ya’akov had fled. <sup>23</sup> He took his relatives with him and pursued him. (He covered) seven days journey (in one day), and he reached (Ya’akov) at Mount Gilad.

<sup>24</sup> God came to Lavan the Aramean in a nighttime dream. He said to him, “Beware not to speak with

#### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🌀 YA’AKOV’S DEPARTURE (v. 17)

Rashi’s comment to verse 17 presents us with a number of questions:

a.) Rashi expected the reader to follow the *Chumash* in order. At this point the reader will not yet be troubled by the contradiction in the way Ya’akov and Eisav mounted their families, since we do not read about Eisav’s mounting until later, in *Parshas Vayishlach*. So, why does Rashi address the matter here?

b.) What exactly is Rashi’s point? He merely notes a difference between the conduct of Ya’akov and Eisav (which is self-evident from the verses themselves) without adding any commentary.

c.) What happened to Dinah, Ya’akov’s daughter? There is no doubt that Ya’akov must have taken her with him when the family fled from Lavan, and yet the verse only mentions that Ya’akov “lifted up his sons and his wives onto the camels,” without mentioning his daughter. Why does Rashi not address this basic point?

d.) The question of **Gur Aryeh**: Below, in *Parshas Vayishlach*, the Torah states that Ya’akov mounted his wives *before* his children (32:23). We also find that Moshe did likewise (*Shemos* 4:20). This appears to contradict Rashi’s statement here that placing the females before the males was an act which only Eisav would do!

#### THE EXPLANATION

The fact that both Ya’akov and Moshe mounted their wives before their children on other occasions does not present us with a problem at the literal level of Torah interpretation, for it is only respectful for a child to wait while his mother mounts a camel. To the contrary, for a child to mount the camel while his mother is standing below would be the very opposite of honoring one’s parents! Therefore both Ya’akov and Moshe mounted their wives before their children.

When reading our verse however, the reader will be troubled why Ya’akov indeed mounted his sons *before* his wives, an act which appeared disrespectful to his wives.

Rashi answers, “He put the *males* before the *females*.” This case was an historic moment, where Ya’akov set off with his family to make a permanent settlement in the Land of Israel, to build twelve tribes which would form the Jewish people as a whole. Therefore, on this occasion, Ya’akov decided that it was appropriate—as an exception, and not the rule—to mount “the males before the females,” i.e. to stress the importance of his sons as the founders of the Jewish nation.

Thus Rashi informs us that even though the verse uses the words “sons and wives,” the significance here is that he placed “males before females.” (Thus, Dinah was not mentioned explicitly as she was included in the term “wives” which means “females” in general).

However, even after this explanation Rashi was still troubled: Why did the Torah go out of its way to stress the above point which seems, at first glance, to be relatively unremarkable?

Therefore, in order to bring to light how Ya’akov’s actions were indeed impressive, Rashi cited the contrasting case of Eisav:

At first glance, when Eisav mounted his wives before his children, one might think that he was acting respectably, teaching his children the importance of honoring parents. Therefore, Rashi reveals to us that, in truth he “put the *females* before the *males*.” I.e. the parent/child relationship was irrelevant to Eisav here. He placed his wives first, merely for one reason: because they were females, who gave him pleasure.

This contrast stresses even further the greatness of Ya’akov our father who “put the males before the females.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, pp. 141ff.; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeitzei* 5742)

ביש: כה ואדביק לבן ית יעקב ויעקב פרס  
 ית משכניה במורא ולבן אשרי ית אחוהי  
 במורא דגלעד: כו ואמר לבן ליעקב מא  
 עבדת וכסיתא מני ודברת ית בנתי בשבית  
 הרבא: כז למא אסמרתא למיזל וכסיתא מני  
 ולא חויתא לי ושלחתך פון בחדוא ובתשבתן  
 בתפין ובכנרין: כח ולא שבקתני לנשקא  
 לבני ולבנתי כען אספלתא למעבד: כט אית  
 חילא בידי למעבד עמכון ביש ואלהא  
 דאבוכון ברמשא אמר לי למימר אסתמר לך  
 מלמללא עם יעקב מטב עד ביש: ל ובען  
 מיזל אולת ארי תמדא חמדתא לבית אבוד  
 למא נסיבתא ית דחלת: לא ואתיב יעקב  
 ואמר ללבן ארי דחילית ארי אמרית דילמא  
 תניס ית בנתך מני: לב (אתר) עם די תשפח ית  
 דחלתך לא ותקום קדם אהנא אשתמודע  
 לך מא דעמי וסב לך ולא ידע יעקב ארי  
 רחל נסיבתהון: לד ועל לבן במשכנא  
 דיעקב ובמשכנא דלאה ובמשכנא דתרתי  
 לחינתא ולא אשפח ונפק ממשכנא דלאה  
 ועל במשכנא דרחל: לו ורחל נסיבת ית  
 צלמניא ושוייתינון בעביטא דנמלא ויחיבת  
 עליהון ומשש לבן ית כל משכנא ולא  
 אשפח: לה ואמרת לאבוקא לא ותקוף בעיני  
 רבוני ארי לא איכול למיקם מן קדמך ארי  
 אורח נשין לי ובלש ולא אשפח ית צלמניא:  
 לו ותקוף ליעקב ונצא עם לבן ואתיב יעקב  
 ואמר ללבן מא חובי מא סורחני ארי רדפתא  
 בתרי: לו ארי מששת ית כל מני מא  
 אשפחתא מכל מני ביתך שוי דכא קדם אחי  
 ואחיד ויוביחון בין תרונא: לה דגן עשרין שנין  
 אגא עמד רחליך ועיך לא אתכילו ודברי  
 ענד לא אכלית: לט דתביקא לא איתית לותך

פן תדבר עם יעקב מטוב עד רע: כה וישג לבן את יעקב  
 ויעקב תקע את אהלו בהר ולבן תקע את אחיו בהר  
 הגלעד: כו ויאמר לבן ליעקב מה עשית ותגנב את לבבי  
 ותנהג את בנתי בשביות הרב: כז למה נתפאת לברח ותגנב  
 אתי ולא הגדת לי ואשלחה בשמחה ובשרים בתך ובכנור:  
 כח ולא נטשתני לנשק לבני ולבנתי עתה הסבלת עשו:  
 כט יש לאל ידי לעשות עמכם רע ואלהי אביכם אמש | אמר  
 אלי לאמר השמר לך מדבר עם יעקב מטוב עד רע:  
 ל ועתה הלך הלכת פי נכסף נכספתה לבית אביך למה  
 גנבת את אלהי: לא ויען יעקב ויאמר ללבן פי יראתי פי  
 אמרתי פן תגזל את בנותיך מעמי: לב עם אשר תמצא  
 את אלהיך לא יחיה נגד אחינו הכר לך מה עמדי וקח לך  
 ולא ידע יעקב פי רחל וגנבתם: לד ויבא לבן באהל יעקב |  
 ובאהל לאה ובאהל שתי האמהות ולא מצא ויצא מאהל  
 לאה ויבא באהל רחל: לה ורחל לקחה את התרפים ותשמים  
 בכר הנמל ותשב עליהם וימשש לבן את כל האהל ולא  
 מצא: לה ותאמר אל אביה אל יחר בעיני אדני פי לוא אוכל  
 לקום מפניך כי דרך נשים לי ויחפש ולא מצא את  
 התרפים: לו ויחר ליעקב וירב בלבן ויען יעקב ויאמר  
 ללבן מה פשעי מה חטאתי פי דלקת אחרי: לו פי מששת  
 את כל כלי מה מצאת מכל כלי ביתך שים פה נגד אחי  
 ואחיד ויוביחו בין שנינו: לה זה עשרים שנה אנכי עמד  
 רחליך ועיך לא שכלו ואילי צאנך לא אכלתי: לט טרפה

כס"י

אלה, וכן הוא אומר בני רחל אשת יעקב, וזכרון לא נאמר אשת יעקב: ויבא  
 באהל רחל. כשילא מאהל לאה חזר לו לאהל רחל קודם שחפש צאהל  
 האמהות (ס"א השפחות), וכל כך למה, לפי שהיה מכיר צה שהיא  
 משמשנית: (לד) בכר הגמל. לשון כרים וכסחות, כתרונא צעזיטא דגמלא,  
 והיא מרדעת העשויה כמין כר, וצעזיטא דקפוסה צעזיטא, והן עזיטא  
 גמלים, בצט"ו צלע"ז: (לו) דלקת. רדפת, כמו על הכרים דלקונו<sup>1</sup>, וכמו  
 מדלוק אחרי פלשתיים<sup>2</sup>: (לז) ויוביחו. ויבררו עם מי הדין, אפרוזי"ר צלע"ז:  
 (לח) לא שכלו. לא הפילו עיבורם, כמו רחס משכיל<sup>3</sup>, תפלט פרתו ולא  
 תשכל<sup>4</sup>: ואילי צאנך. מכאן אמרו, חיל צן יומו קרוי חיל, שאם לא כן מה  
 שצחו, חילום לא אכל אצל כצעים אכל, אם כן גזלן הוא: (לט) טרפה. על

רחוק מלצן ששכ ימים, וצעזיטא הסיגו לבן, למדנו שכל מה שהלך יעקב  
 צעזעב ימים, הלך לבן ציוס אחד, (שנאמר וירדוף אחריו דרך צעזעב ימים,  
 ולא נאמר וירדוף אחריו צעזעב ימים): (כד) מטוב עד רע. כל טובתן של  
 רשעים רעה היא אלל הצדיקים<sup>5</sup>: (כו) בשביות הרב. כל חיל הצא למלחמה  
 קרוי חרב: (כז) ותגנב אתי. גנבה את דעתה: (כט) יש לאל ידי. יש כח  
 וחיל בידי לעשות עמכם רע. וכל אל שכוף לשון קדש, על שם עוז ורוב חוים  
 הוא: (ל) ובספתה. חמדת, והרצה יש צמקרא נכספה וגם כלחה נפשי<sup>6</sup>,  
 למעשה ידך תכסוף<sup>7</sup>: (לא) כי יראתי וגו'. השיצו על ראשון ראשון, שאמר  
 לו ותנב את צנותי וגו': (לב) לא יחיה. ומאותה קללה מתה רחל דרך<sup>8</sup>:  
 מה עמדי. משלך: (לג) באהל יעקב. הוא אהל רחל, שהיה יעקב תדיר

1 יבמות קג; 2 תהלים פד, ג; 3 איוב יד, טו; 4 ב"ר עד, ט; 5 טז; 6 איכה ד, יט; 7 שמואל א, יז, נג; 8 הושע ט, יד; 9 איוב כא, י



Ya'akov either good or bad (for even your 'good' is bad).”

<sup>25</sup> When Lavan caught up Ya'akov, Ya'akov had pitched his tent on the mountain, and Lavan pitched (his tent) with his relatives on Mount Gilad.

<sup>26</sup> Lavan said to Ya'akov, “What have you done? You duped me, and led away my daughters like prisoners of war! <sup>27</sup> Why did you flee secretly and deceive me? Why didn't you tell me? I would have sent you off with rejoicing, songs, drum and harp! <sup>28</sup> You didn't allow me to kiss my sons and daughters. You have now acted foolishly.”

<sup>29</sup> “I am sufficiently strong to harm you, but the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, ‘Beware not to speak with Ya'akov either good or bad.’”

<sup>30</sup> “Now, you have repeatedly (wanted) to go away, because you longed again and again for your father's house (but we worked things out sensibly and you stayed!\*) And why have you stolen my gods?”

<sup>31</sup> Ya'akov replied (to the questions in order). He said to Lavan, “(I ran off without telling you) because I was afraid, since I said (to myself), ‘perhaps you will kidnap your daughters from me.’”

<sup>32</sup> “(In answer to your second question:) Whoever you find has your idols shall not live. In front of our relatives, identify for yourself which (of your possessions) is with me, and take (it) for yourself”—but Ya'akov did not know that Rochel had stolen them.

<sup>33</sup> Lavan entered Ya'akov's (and Rochel's) tent, then Leah's tent and the tent of the two handmaids, but he did not find (them). When he came out of Leah's tent he (re-)entered Rochel's tent (since he was suspicious of her).

<sup>34</sup> Rochel had taken the idols and placed them into the camel saddle, sitting on them. Lavan rummaged the entire tent, but he did not find (them).

<sup>35</sup> She said to her father, “I hope my master will not be annoyed that I can't get up before you, because the way of women is upon me.” (Lavan) searched, but did not find the idols.

<sup>36</sup> Ya'akov became angry and argued with Lavan. He said to Lavan, “What is my crime? What is my sin, that you have pursued me? <sup>37</sup> You have rummaged about all my things. Whatever you have found from among any of the utensils of your house, place it here, in front of my relatives and your relatives, and let them decide between the two of us (who is right).”

<sup>38</sup> “It's already twenty years that I've been with you, and your ewes and she-goats have not miscarried. I have not eaten the (newborn) rams of your flocks. <sup>39</sup> I have not brought home to you an animal torn

---

TORAS MENACHEM

---

## 🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

### LAVAN'S CHASE

The Maggid of Mezritch taught: “Ya'akov had left behind letters from the Torah which he had not yet extracted from Lavan. This is why Lavan pursued him—to give him the letters which remained with him. An entire chapter was added to the Torah by these letters.”

(Ohr Hame'ir, beg. Parshas Vayeitzei; see Ohr Hatorah vol. 5, p. 869a)

The “letters of the Torah” which Ya'akov left behind were “sparks” of holiness. In fact, Ya'akov had spent twenty years in Lavan's house extracting whatever sparks of holiness he could find there, and when the process was complete, he left. At least he thought it was complete....

In truth however, Ya'akov had left some sparks behind, so Lavan chased after Ya'akov to give them to him.

Why did Ya'akov leave sparks behind?

Chasidic teachings explain that while most of a person's achievements in life come through his own conscious efforts, there are some “super-conscious” achievements that are so lofty they cannot occur intentionally. So, while we are usually the ones that choose our own paths in life—to find the sparks which we are destined to elevate—sometimes our “sparks” pursue us, because they are too sublime to be “extracted” solely by our own endeavors.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 15, p. 260ff.)

דהות שגיא ממנניא מני את פעי לה נטרית ביממא ונטרית בלילא: מ הויתי ביממא אכלני שרבא וגלידא (הוה) נחית עלי בלילא ונדת שגתי מעיני: מא דנן לי עשרין שנין בביתך פלחתיך ארבע עשרי שנין בתרתין בנתך ושית שנין בענד ואשניתא ית אנרי עשר זמנין: מנ אילולא פון אלהה דאבא אלהה דאברהם ודחיל ליה יצחק הוה בסעדי ארי כען ריקן שלחתי ית עמלי וית ליאות ידי גלי קדם יי ואוכח ברמשא: מנ ואתיב לבן ואמר לייעקב בנתא בנתי ובניא בני וענא עני וכל די את חזי דילי הוא ולבנתי מא אעביד לאלין יומא דין או לבניהן דילידא: מד וכען איתא נגור קום אנא ואת ויהי לסהיד בינא ובינד: מה ונסיב יעקב אננא וזקיפה קמא: מו ואמר יעקב לאחוזי לקוטו אבנין ונסיבו אבנין ועבדו דגורא ואכלו תמן על דגורא: מז וקרא ליה לבן יגר שהדותא ויעקב קרא ליה גלעד: מח ואמר לבן דגורא הדין סהיד בינא ובינד יומא דין על פן קרא שמיא גלעד: מט וסכותא די אמר ייסד מימרא דיי בינא ובינד ארי נתכסי גבר מחבריה: נ אם תעני ית בנתי ואם תסב נשין על בנתי לית אנש עמנא חזי מימרא דיי סהיד בינא ובינד: נא ואמר לבן לייעקב הא דגורא הדין והא קמתא די אקמית בינא ובינד: נב סהיד דגורא הדין וסחדא קמתא אם אנא לא אעבר לותך ית דגורא הדין ואם את לא תעבר לותי ית דגורא הדין וית קמתא הדיא לבישו: נג אלהה דאברהם ואלהה דגורא

לא־הבאתי אליך אנכי אחטנה מידי תבקשנה ונבתי יום ונבתי לילה: מ הייתי ביום אכלני חרב וקרח בלילה ותנד שגתי מעיני: מא זה־לי עשרים שנה בביתך עבדתך ארבע־עשרה שנה בשתי בנתיך ושש שנים בעאנד ותחלף את־משפחתי עשרת מנים: מד לולי אלהי אבי אברהם ופחד יצחק היה לי בי עתה ריקם שלחתי את־עניי ואת־יגיע פפי ראה אלהים ויוכח אמש: מנ ויען לבן ויאמר אל־יעקב הבנות בנתי והבנים בני והצאן צאני וכל אשר־אתה ראה לי־הוא ולבנתי מה־אעשה לאלה היום או לבניהן אשר ילדו: מד ועתה לכה נכרתה ברית אני ואתה והיה לעד ביני ובינד: מה ויקח יעקב אבן וירימה מצבה: מו ויאמר יעקב לאחיו לקטו אבנים ויקחו אבנים ויעשו־גל ויאכלו שם על־הגל: מז ויקרא־לו לבן יגר שהדותא ויעקב קרא לו גלעד: מח ויאמר לבן הגל הזה עד ביני ובינד היום על־בן קרא־שמו גלעד: מט והמצפה אשר אמר יצף יהנה ביני ובינד כי נסתר איש מרעהו: נ אם־תענה את־בנתי ואם־תקח נשים על־בנתי אין איש עמנו ראה אלהים עד ביני ובינד: נא ויאמר לבן לייעקב הנה הנה והנה המצבה אשר יריתי ביני ובינד: נב עד הגל הזה ועדה המצבה אם־אני לא־אעבר אליך את־הגל הזה ואם־אתה לא־תעבר אלי את־הגל הזה ואת־המצבה הזאת לרעה: נג אלהי אברהם ואלהי נחור ישפטו בינינו אלהי אביהם

כשׁ

ולאכי, ואמר ופחד: ויובח. לשון תוכחה הוא, ולא לשון כוכחה: (מג) מה אעשה לאלה. חזק תעלה על לזי לברע לבן: (מד) והיה לעד. הקצ"ב: (מו) לאחיו. הם בניו<sup>8</sup>, שבו לו אחים, נגשים אליו ללרע ולמלחמה: (מז) יגר שהדותא. תרגומו של גלעד: (מח) (ע"כ קרא שמו) גלעד. גל עד: (מט) והמצפה אשר אמר וגו'. והמלפס אשר צבר בגלעד, וכמו שנאמר ויעצר את מפסג גלעד<sup>9</sup>, ולמה נקרא שמה מפסג, לפי שאמר כל אחד מהם לחצרו, ילף ה' זיני וזיך את תעבור את הצרית: בי נסתר. ולא נראה איש את רעהו: (ס) בנתי בנתי. צ' פעמים, אף בלכה וזלפס צותיו היו מפלגש: אם תענה את בנתי. למנוע מהן עונת תשמיש<sup>10</sup>: (נא) יריתי. כמו ירע ציס, כזכ שכוה יורה החזן: (נב) אם אני. הכי אם משמש בלשון אשר, כמו עד אם דברתי דברתי<sup>11</sup>: לרעה. לרעה אי אחס עובר, אצל אחס עובר לפרקמטיא<sup>12</sup>: (נג) אלהי

ידי ארי וחזק: אנכי אחטנה. לשון קולע באצן אל השערך ולא יחטיא<sup>1</sup>, אני וזני שלמה תטא<sup>2</sup>. חסרים. חזני אחסרנה, אם חסרה, חסרה לי, שמידי תבקשנה: אנכי אחטנה. תרגומו דכות שגיא ממנינא, שהיכה נפקדת ומחוסרת, כמו ולא נפקד ממנו איש<sup>3</sup>, תרגומו ולא שגא: גנבתי יום וגנבתי לילה. גנובת יום או גנובת לילה הכל שלמתי: גנבתי. כמו רצתי בגויס שרתי במדינות<sup>4</sup>, מלחתי משפט<sup>5</sup>, ארובתי לדוש<sup>6</sup>: (מ) אכלני חרב. לשון אש אוכלה: וקרח. כמו משליך קרחו<sup>7</sup>, תרגומו גלידא: שגתי. לשון שיכה: (מא) ותחלף את משפחתי. היית משכח תנאי שציניו, מנקוד לעלוא, ומעקודים לצרודים: (מב) ופחד יצחק. לא רלכ לומר אלהי יצחק, שאין הקצ"ב מייחד שמו על כלדיקים צחייכה, ואף על פי שאמר לו בלאתו מצאר שבע אני ה' אלהי אברהם אציק ואלהי יצחק, שבציל שכו עיניו ורכי הוא כמת יעקב נתיירא לומר

1 שופטים כ, טז 2 מלכים א-א, כא 3 במדבר לא, מט 4 איכה א, א 5 ישע"י א, כא 6 הושע י, יא 7 תהלים קמז, יז 8 ב"ר עד, יג 9 שופטים יא, כט 10 יומא נו: 11 ב"ר עד, טז 12 שם טז

(by a lion or a wolf. In such a case) I would suffer its loss (because) you would demand (payment) from my hand. (I also paid for) that which was stolen by day and that which was stolen at night.”

<sup>40</sup> “(Where) I was by day, the heat consumed me. At night there was frost, and my eyes were deprived of sleep.”

<sup>41</sup> “It’s twenty years that I’ve spent in your house. I served you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your animals, and you changed my wages a hundred times. <sup>42</sup> If it wasn’t for the God of my father, the God of Avraham and the (One who) Yitzchak feared that was with me, you would now have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and the toil of my hands, and He reprimanded (you) last night.”

## LAVAN MAKES A PACT WITH YA’AKOV

31:43  
SEVENTH  
READING

**L**avan answered Ya’akov and said, “The daughters are my daughters! The sons are my sons! The flocks are my flocks! All that you see is mine! As for my daughters...what (harm) would I (dream of) doing to them today? Or to the children that they have borne?”

<sup>44</sup> “Now come! Let’s make a pact—you and I. And may (God) be a witness between me and you.”

<sup>45</sup> Ya’akov took a stone and set it up as a monument.

<sup>46</sup> Ya’akov said to his (sons), “Gather stones!”

They took stones and made a pile, and they ate there by the pile. <sup>47</sup> Lavan called it Yegar-Sahadusa (“the pile is a witness,” in Aramaic). Ya’akov called it Gal-Aid (the same in its Hebrew translation).

<sup>48</sup> Lavan said, “This pile is a witness between me and you today”—it was therefore named Gal-Aid. <sup>49</sup> (It is also known as) Mitzpah (“watch”), because he said, “May God watch me and you when we are hidden from each other. <sup>50</sup> If you neglect my daughters, or if you take wives in addition to my daughters when no one is with us—look!—God is a witness between me and you.”

<sup>51</sup> Lavan said to Ya’akov, “Here is the pile and here is the monument which I have set up between me and you. <sup>52</sup> This pile is a witness, and this monument is a witness, that I am not to pass this pile (to go) to you, and nor are you to pass this pile and this monument to (come to) me to (do) harm. <sup>53</sup> May the God of Avraham, the god of Nachor and the god of their father judge between us.”

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● When could the “pile” be passed? (v. 52)

**RASHI:** [Lavan said:] “You may not pass to do harm, but you may pass to do business” (see *Sparks of Chasidus*).

### TORAS MENACHEM

## Sparks of Chasidus

### THE “PILE”

The “pile of stones” represents the boundary between the Jew (Ya’akov) and his non-Jewish surroundings (Lavan). This boundary is not a total barrier, whereby the Jew totally isolates himself from the world and wants nothing to do with his non-Jewish neighbors—or, for that matter, anything mundane.

Rather, as *Rashi* describes (ibid.), it is a “semi-permeable” interface: “You may not pass to do harm, but you may pass to do business.” I.e. a Jew should indeed interact with his surroundings, but not in a manner that causes him spiritual “harm.” Rather, he should “profit”

spiritually from his interaction with the world, by training his eye to perceive how its physical existence is being constantly renewed at every moment by God.

Consequently, the person elevates himself and realizes that he is not dealing with mundane matters at all, but with physical objects that are a manifestation of God. In this way he will come to fulfill the dictum (*Proverbs 3:6*), “In all your ways know Him,” i.e. in one’s own mundane affairs, one comes to a heightened awareness of God.

(Based on *Sefer Hasichos* 5748, vol. 2, p. 437-8)

ידונון ביננא אלהא דאבוהון וקיים יעקב  
 בדרחיל ליה אבוהי יצחק: נד ונכיס יעקב  
 נכסתא בטורא וקרא לאחוהי למיכל לחמא  
 ואכלו לחמא וכתו בטורא: א ואקדים לבן  
 בצפרא ונשיק לבנוהי ולבנותיה ובריד יתהון  
 ואזל ותב לבן לאתריה: ב ויעקב אזל  
 לארחה וערעו ביה מלאכיא דיי: ג ואמר  
 יעקב פד תנונו משריתא מן קדם יי דין  
 וקרא שמה דאתרא ההוא מחנים: פ פ פ

וַיִּשְׁבַּע יַעֲקֹב בְּפֶתַח אָבוֹי יִצְחָק: נד וַיִּזְבַּח יַעֲקֹב זֶבַח בְּהָר  
 וַיִּקְרָא לְאֶחָיו לְאָכַל-לֶחֶם וַיֵּאכְלוּ לֶחֶם וַיְלִיְנוּ בְּהָר:  
 [מפמיר] לב א וַיִּשְׁכֶּם לָבֶן בְּבֹקֶר וַיִּנְשֹׁק לְבָנָיו וּלְבָנוֹתָיו וַיְבָרֵךְ  
 אֹתָהֶם וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיֵּשֶׁב לָבֶן לְמִקְמוֹ: ב וַיַּעֲקֹב הֵלֵךְ לְדַרְבּוֹ  
 וַיִּפְגְּעוּ-בּוֹ מַלְאָכֵי אֱלֹהִים: ג וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב פֶּאֶשֶׁר רָאִים מַחֲנֵה  
 אֱלֹהִים זֶה וַיִּקְרָא שְׁם-הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא מַחֲנֵי: פ פ פ

קמ"ח פסוקים, חלק"י. מחני"ם סימן.

כ"ט

אברהם. קדש: ואלהי נחור. חול: אלהי אביהם. חול: (נד) ויזבח יעקב זבח. שחט צממות למסתח: לאחיו. לאוכזיו שעס לבן: לאכל לחם. כל דבר מאכל קרוי לחם, כמו עזד לחם רב<sup>1</sup>, נשחיתת עץ בלחמו<sup>2</sup>: (ז) ויפגעו בו

מלאכי אלהים. מלאכיס של ארץ ישראל צאו לקראתו, ללותו לארץ: (ג) מחנים. שחי מחנות, של חוזה לארץ שצאו עמו עד כאן. ושל ארץ ישראל שצאו לקראתו<sup>3</sup>: חסלת פרשת ויצא

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did angels of God encounter Ya'akov? (v. 2)

**RASHI:** Angels from the Land of Israel came to greet him, to escort him to the Land.

The place was thus called "Double-Camp"—the camp of angels from the Diaspora who came with him up to this point, and those of the Land of Israel who came to greet him.

**RAMBAN:** Why would the angels of the Land of Israel have come to greet Ya'akov, as *Rashi* writes, since Ya'akov was still a long way from the Land? Rather, Ya'akov had a vision of angels here that came

to inform him, "We are more with you than with your enemies," since he was entering enemy territory

**GUR ARYEH:** In my opinion, *Ramban's* question is not valid at all. Since Ya'akov was on his way to the Land of Israel, it was appropriate that the angels of the Land should come and protect him, even though he was still some distance away, for it was for the benefit of the Land [that Ya'akov should arrive safely]. The other angels from the Diaspora protected him from other potential hazards.

**BECHOR SHOR:** The angels came to escort Ya'akov out of respect, not to guard him.

TORAS MENACHEM

👁️ ANGELS FROM THE LAND OF ISRAEL (v. 2)

According to *Gur Aryeh*, angels came from the Land of Israel to protect Ya'akov on his journey to the Land, in addition to the angels from

the Diaspora, who were already accompanying him.

However, this argument is somewhat difficult to accept, for why would Ya'akov need *two* sets of angels to protect him?

Ya'akov swore by the (One whom) his father Yitzchak feared.

<sup>54</sup> Ya'akov slaughtered animals (for a feast) on the mountain. He invited his friends (who were with Lavan) to eat a meal. They ate a meal and slept over on the mountain.

32

MAFTIR

<sup>1</sup> Lavan got up early in the morning. He kissed his sons and daughters and blessed them, and then Lavan went off and returned to his home.

## ANGELS FROM THE LAND OF ISRAEL GREET YA'AKOV

32:2 **Y**a'akov went on his way, and angels of God (from the Land of Israel) encountered him (to escort him to the land). <sup>3</sup> When he saw them, Ya'akov said, "This is a camp of God," and he named the place Machanayim ("Double-Camp"—due to the two sets of angels that had escorted him from the Diaspora, and that had escorted him to the Land of Israel).

THE HAFTARAH FOR VAYEITZEI IS ON PAGE 382.

### TORAS MENACHEM

Rather, it seems more logical to say that angels from the Diaspora were already protecting him, while additional angels came from the Land of Israel purely to show respect for Ya'akov—as Rashi appears to stress, that they came "to escort him." [See **Bechor Shor**]

This however leaves us with another problem: Rashi writes near the beginning of our *Parsha* that the angels of the Land of Israel were not permitted to leave the Land (28:12; see *Toras Menachem* *ibid.*). Why then, were they allowed in this instance to come outside the Land to escort Ya'akov?

(According to *Gur Aryeh* the angels had a special sanction to leave the Land, because they came to protect Ya'akov, whose safe arrival in the Land of Israel was in the Land's own best interest. Therefore, it could be argued that the angels were allowed to leave because their mission was a.) crucial, and b.) for the sake of the Land itself.

But, according to our above conclusion—that the angels only came to escort Ya'akov out of honor—we are left with the question: why would the angels be allowed to leave the land, merely to provide an escort?)

#### THE EXPLANATION

Rambam writes, "It is forbidden to leave the Land of Israel for the Diaspora in any circumstances, other than to study Torah, get married or to save oneself from gentiles, and afterwards one must return" (*Hilchos Melachim* 5:9).

*Me'iri* adds a further detail, based on the *Talmud* (*Kidushin* 31b), that "it is permissible to leave the Land of Israel to greet one's father or mother, or for any other matter of offering respect."

At first glance, it appears that Rambam did not consent to the ruling of *Me'iri*, since he omitted this case from his codification of the law.

However, there is a principle in Talmudic study that one always seeks to minimize disputes, and thus it would be preferable to argue here that Rambam did indeed consent to the ruling of *Me'iri*, but he did not include it in his codification for the following reason:

Rambam was listing the cases where there is a special sanction to leave the Land of Israel despite the person's obligation to remain there. *Me'iri*, on the other hand, cited a case where a person leaves the Land of Israel for the sake of the Land itself, i.e. to greet a person who has decided to come and live in the Land. Therefore, Rambam did not list this specific case, as it is not an exception to the requirement to stay in the land, but an extension of it.

In our case, it follows therefore that the angels were permitted to leave the Land of Israel in order to escort Ya'akov to the Land, since this was the very purpose of the angels: to promote matters pertaining to the Land of Israel.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 150ff.)



# parshas Vayishlach

## פרשת וישלח

### 🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

**V**ayishlach means, “he sent,” which refers to the concept of *shlichus*, sending an emissary or representative.

In the broader sense, we are all *shluchim* (emissaries) of the Almighty. He placed our souls into our bodies in order for us to carry out a mission here on earth: to perform the *mitzvos* of the Torah, and to influence our surroundings positively so that the physical world becomes a “home” for God.

More specifically, this *shlichus* to affect the outside world can be divided into two phases:

- a.) When he is away from the synagogue and study-hall, the Jew spreads the light of Judaism to his surroundings.
- b.) He is not satisfied with the *shlichus* which he alone is carrying out, and he endeavors to make more

*shluchim*—others who will also be charged with the enthusiasm to spread Torah and Judaism.

**T**hese two phases are alluded to in the two *Parshiyos* *Vayeitzei* and *Vayishlach*:

a.) *Vayeitzei* means “he departed.” Ya’akov left his homeland on a *shlichus* to influence an environment which was alien to Judaism.

b.) *Vayishlach* means “he sent,” alluding to the second phase of *shlichus*, where a *shliach* is not satisfied with his own ongoing achievements, and he inspires others to be *shluchim*.

Subsequently, we proceed to *Vayeishev*, which means “he settled,” (“Ya’akov wished to settle in peace”—*Rashi*), alluding to the peaceful harmony of the true and complete redemption.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayishlach* 5748)

ד וישלח יעקב מלאכים לפניו אל-עשו ארצה שעיר שדה אדום: ה ויצו אתם לאמר כה תאמרון לאדני לעשו כה אמר עבדך יעקב עם-לבן גרתי ואחר עד-עתה: ו ויהי-לי שור וחמור צאן ועבד ושפחה ואשלחה להגיד לאדני למצאתיך בעיניך: ז וישבו המלאכים אל-יעקב לאמר באנו אל-אחידך אל-עשו וגם הלך לקראתך וארבע-מאות איש עמו: ח וירא יעקב מאד ויצר לו ויחזן את-העם אשר-אתו ואת-הצאן ואת-הבקר והגמלים לשני מחנות: ט ויאמר

ד וישלח יעקב מלאכים לפניו אל-עשו ארצה שעיר שדה אדום: ה ויצו אתם לאמר כה תאמרון לאדני לעשו כה אמר עבדך יעקב עם-לבן גרתי ואחר עד-עתה: ו ויהי-לי שור וחמור צאן ועבד ושפחה ואשלחה להגיד לאדני למצאתיך בעיניך: ז וישבו המלאכים אל-יעקב לאמר באנו אל-אחידך אל-עשו וגם הלך לקראתך וארבע-מאות איש עמו: ח וירא יעקב מאד ויצר לו ויחזן את-העם אשר-אתו ואת-הצאן ואת-הבקר והגמלים לשני מחנות: ט ויאמר

כ"ט

זו אינה לא מן השמים ולא מן הארץ: שור וחמור. דרך ארץ לומר על שורים הרבה שור, אדם אומר לחזירו, זלילה קרא התרגול, ואינו אומר קראו התרגולים: ואשלחה להגיד לאדני. להודיע שאני צא אליך: למצא חן בעיניך. שאני שלם עמך ומצא אהבה: (ז) באנו אל אחיך אל עשו. שביית אומר אחי הוא, אבל הוא נוכח עמך כעשו הרשע, עודנו צמא: (ח) וירא ויצר. וירא שמא יכרך, ויצר לו, אם יכרוג הוא את אחרי: (ט)

(ד) וישלח יעקב מלאכים. מלאכים ממשי: ארצה שעיר. לארץ שעיר, כל חיבה שצריכה למ"ד בתחלתה הטיל לה הכתוב ה"א צפופה: (ה) גרתי. לא נעשיתי שר וחשוב, אלא גר, איך כדאי לשנוא אותי על צרכות איך שצרכני הוה גביר לאחיד, שהרי לא נתקיימה צי. דבר אחר, גרתי בגימטריא תרי"ג, כלומר עם לבן הרשע גרתי, ותרי"ג מלות שמרתי, ולא למדתי ממעשיו הרעים: (ו) ויהי לי שור וחמור. אצא אמר לי מעל השמים ומשמני הארץ,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What kind of messengers (מלאכים) did Ya'akov send? (v. 4)

**RASHI:** He sent actual angels.

**MIDRASH:** He sent human messengers. The Rabbis said: actual angels.

**MIZRACHI:** Since the end of the previous *Parsha* spoke about Ya'akov's encounter with angels, *Rashi* favored the opinion of the

Rabbis that Ya'akov sent actual angels, achieving a consistency between the end of the previous *Parsha* and the beginning of our *Parsha*—both are speaking of angels.

**LEVUSH HA'OHRAH:** Ya'akov sent Eisav actual angels to intimidate him. Eisav would wonder, "Is my brother so powerful that he has a host of angels under his control? Surely, I will not be able to overcome him."

TORAS MENACHEM

❖ WHY DID YA'AKOV SEND ACTUAL ANGELS? (v. 4)

The **Midrash** cites two opinions, that Ya'akov either sent human messengers to inform Eisav of his arrival, or he sent actual angels. *Rashi* came to the conclusion that, at the literal level of Torah interpretation, Ya'akov sent actual angels.

**Mizrachi** explains that *Rashi* deduced this fact from the connection between the beginning of our *Parsha* and the end of the previous *Parsha*, *Vayeitzei*: Since the end of *Parshas Vayeitzei* speaks about actual angels—"Ya'akov went on his way, and angels of God (from the Land of Israel) encountered him" (32:2)—it follows that in our *Parsha* too the word **מלאכים** is to be translated "angels" and not as human "messengers."

*Mizrachi's* solution, however, seems to have two problems:

a.) In the previous *Parsha* the Torah refers to **מלאכי אלקים** ("angels of God"), in contrast to our verse where they are plain **מלאכים** ("angels"). This would suggest that we are speaking of two different entities.

b.) The Torah itself makes no indication whatsoever that the end of the previous *Parsha* and the beginning of our *Parsha* are linked. If there were a connection between them, then surely our verse should have stated, "Ya'akov sent some of the angels ahead of him"?

**Levush Ha'ohrah** argues that Ya'akov sent angels to Eisav to intimidate him, since Eisav would be deeply impressed that Ya'akov had angels under his control.

However, this appears to be inconsistent with a comment of *Rashi* below. On Ya'akov's remark to Eisav, "I have seen your face, which is like seeing the face of God" (33:10), *Rashi* comments, "It is worthy and proper for you to accept my gift, because I have seen your face, and to me this is tantamount to seeing the face of the angel, for I saw your guardian angel... Why did [Ya'akov] mention that he saw the angel? In order that [Eisav] should fear him and say, 'He saw angels and was saved. From now on, I will not be able to prevail over him.'"

Now, if Ya'akov had *already* sent angels to Eisav, at the very outset, in order to intimidate him—as *Levush Ha'ohrah* suggests—then what would be added by Ya'akov's remark later on that he had seen an angel? Surely, Eisav was *already* aware that Ya'akov dealt with angels from the very outset, when Ya'akov's gift arrived, accompanied by angels.

It therefore seems that according to *Rashi*, the original gift-bearing angels must have appeared to Eisav as if they were human beings, otherwise Ya'akov's ploy later on of hinting that he had an encounter with an angel would not have been necessary.



## 🕎 YA'AKOV PREPARES TO CONFRONT EISAV 🕎

32:4 **Y**a'akov sent angels ahead of him to his brother Eisav, to the Land of Se'ir, to the fields of Edom. <sup>5</sup> He instructed them, saying, "Say the following to my master, to Eisav: 'This is what your servant Ya'akov said, "I have been living with Lavan (like a stranger, so there's no need to be jealous of me), and I have been delayed until now. <sup>6</sup> I possess oxen, donkeys, flocks, servants and maids (but Father's blessing for 'dew of the heavens and fatness of the earth' has not been fulfilled). I have sent (this message) to tell this to my master (to let you know that I am coming), to find favor in your eyes (since I seek peace with you).'"

<sup>7</sup> The angels returned to Ya'akov, saying, "We came to your brother (but he is still behaving like the wicked) Eisav. He is also heading toward you, and four hundred men are with him!"

<sup>8</sup> Ya'akov was very worried (that he might be killed) and pained (that he may kill other people too), so he divided the people who were with him, the flocks, the cattle and the camels into two camps.

### TORAS MENACHEM

We are thus left with the question: what led *Rashi* to conclude that Ya'akov sent actual angels to Eisav, especially when one considers that they looked like human beings?

#### THE EXPLANATION

*Rashi* writes earlier that when "Eisav came (home) from the field, exhausted" (25:29), he was exhausted "from committing murder." Similarly, after Eisav discovered that Ya'akov had taken the blessing intended for him, "Eisav said to himself, 'The days of mourning for my father will soon come, and then I will kill my brother Ya'akov'" (27:41).

Since Eisav was a murderous person and there was a considerable possibility that he still harbored resentment twenty years later, *Rashi* was

troubled by the question: How could Ya'akov send messengers to Eisav when it is likely that they would be killed on the spot? And while Ya'akov had received a message that it was an appropriate time to return home [see 31:3 above], nevertheless, in a case where there is a threat to life every precaution must be taken.

Of course, Ya'akov could have sent spies, and not messengers, which would not have put them in any direct danger. Nevertheless, the Torah states explicitly that Ya'akov sent *malachim*, which means "messengers" and not "spies."

Therefore, *Rashi* concluded that Ya'akov had sent "actual angels," who of course could not possibly have been harmed by Eisav.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 389ff.)

### 🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

**B**etween the giving of the Torah and the final redemption two types of "spiritual elevation" need to be carried out:

a.) The "spiritual elevation" of the objects found in this physical world, by using them for holy purposes. This is achieved by the observance of the *mitzvos*, and also by dedicating non-religious acts "for the sake of heaven" etc.

b.) The "spiritual elevation" of the non-Jewish nations leading to the point where "I will convert the peoples to a pure language that all of them call in the Name of God, to worship Him of one accord" (Zeph. 3:9).

These two phases were also implicit in the life of Ya'akov:

While in the house of Lavan, Ya'akov observed the 613 *mitzvos* (see *Rashi* to v. 5), corresponding to "a" above.

Then, Ya'akov attempted to "spiritually elevate" Eisav, who represents the non-Jewish nations, by sending him angels, gifts and words of appeasement—corresponding to "b" above.

Only then was Ya'akov's spiritual mission complete, enabling him to return back to "his father's house" in the Land of Israel—corresponding to the true and complete redemption.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayishlach* 5751, *Vayeitzei* 5752)

### 🕎 The Last Word 🕎

**R***ashi* writes that Ya'akov sent Eisav actual angels (*malachim mamash*). The *Maggid* of Mezritch taught that Ya'akov sent the "mamash" of the angels, their angelic "bodies," to Eisav but that their souls remained with him.

Obviously, this does not mean to say that Ya'akov split the angels apart, dividing their "bodies" and souls. Rather, the *Maggid's* intent was that even after the angels were sent off on their mission, they remained totally loyal to Ya'akov—their "souls" were with him.

**T**his teaches us that when a Jew becomes involved with the physical world, he too must send out metaphorical "angels" or "messengers," i.e. he must use his "sixth sense" to determine whether his physical endeavors could prove to be detrimental to his spiritual "health," asking himself: Is this a physical pursuit that can easily be dedicated or "steered" to a higher purpose, or not?

And, even then, the person should not put the "soul" of his senses and faculties into physical matters. Rather, while he may use the "mamash" (body) of his senses for his physical pursuits, a Jew's genuine enthusiasm—the "soul" of his senses—should be reserved only for spiritual matters.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 392ff.; vol. 10, p. 101)

וּמְחִינָה וְתִּיּוֹתַי מִשְׁרִיתָא דְתַשְׁתָּאָר לְשִׁיזְבָּא:  
 י וְאָמַר יַעֲקֹב אֱלֹהֵי דְאָבָא אַבְרָהָם וְאֱלֹהֵי  
 דְאָבָא יִצְחָק יי די אָמַר לי תּוֹב לְאַרְעֵךָ  
 וּלְיִלְדוּתְךָ וְאוֹטִיב עִמָּךְ: יא זְעִירִי זְכוּתִי מִכָּל  
 חֲסִדִּין וּמִכָּל טַבָּון דִּי עֲבַדְתָּ עִם עֲבָדְךָ אֲרִי  
 יְחִידִי עֲבָרִית יַת יִרְדְּנָא דְרִין וּכְעַן הִוִּיתִי  
 לְתַרְתִּין מִשְׁרִין: יב שִׁיזְבָּנִי כְעַן מִיָּדָא דְאָחִי  
 מִיָּדָא דְעִשׂוֹ אֲרִי דְחִיל אֲנָא מְנִיָּה דְלָמָא יִיתִי  
 וּמְחִינָנִי אָמַר עַל בְּנֵיָא: יג וְאֵת אֲמַרְתָּ  
 אוֹטִבָא אוֹטִיב עִמָּךְ וְאַשְׁוִי יַת בְּנִיךָ סְנִיאִין  
 כְּחֵלָא דְיָמָא דִּי לֹא יִתְמַנּוּן מִסְגֵּי: יד וּבַת  
 תַּמּוֹן בְּלִילְיָא הָהוּא וְנָסִיב מִן דְאִיתִי בִידֵיהָ

אִם-יָבוֹא עֲשׂוֹ אֶל-הַמַּחֲנֶה הָאֶחָד וְהִכּוּ וְהָיָה הַמַּחֲנֶה  
 הַנִּשְׁאָר לְפָלִיטָה: י וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי אַבְרָהָם וְאֱלֹהֵי  
 אָבִי יִצְחָק יְהוָה הָאֵמַר אֵלַי שׁוּב לְאַרְצְךָ וּלְמוֹלְדֹתֶךָ וְאִיטִיבָה  
 עִמָּךְ: יא קִטְנֹתַי מִכָּל הַחֲסִדִּים וּמִכָּל-הָאֲמֹת אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ  
 אֶת-עֲבָדְךָ כִּי בְמִקְלִי עָבַרְתִּי אֶת-הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה וְעַתָּה הִיִּיתִי  
 לְשֵׁנִי מַחֲנֹת: יב הֲצִילֵנִי נָא מִיַּד אָחִי מִיָּד עֲשׂוֹ כִּי-יֵרָא אֲנֹכִי  
 אִתּוֹ פֶּן-יָבוֹא וְהִכְנִי אִם-עַל-בְּנֵים: יג וְאֵתָה אֲמַרְתָּ הֵיטֵב  
 אִיטִיב עִמָּךְ וְשַׁמְתִּי אֶת-זֶרְעֶךָ כְּחֹל הַיָּם אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יִסְפָּר  
 מֶרֶב: וְיִלְּן יִד וְיִלְּן שָׁם בְּלִילְיָא הָהוּא וַיִּקַּח מִן-הַבָּא בִידּוֹ מִנְחָה

כ"ט

ארץ אבותיך ולמולדתך וחיכה עמך, ושם נגלית אלי צבם המיוחד לצדו, שנאמר ויאמר ה' אל יעקב שוב אל ארץ אבותיך וגו', צבתי בצטחות האלו אני צא לפניך: (יא) קטנתי מכל החסדים. נתמעטו זכותי על ידי החסדים והאמת שעשית עמי, לכך אני ירא שמא משהצטחתי נתלכלכתי צטחא, ויגרסו לי להמסר ציד עשוי<sup>11</sup>: ומכל האמת. אמתת דצריך, שמרת לי כל ההצטחות שהצטחתי: בי במקלי. לא היה עמי לא כסף ולא זכב ולא מקנה, אלא מקלי לצדו. ומדרש אגדה, נתן מקלו צידן וצקע הירדן: (יב) מיד אחי מיד עשו. מיד אחי, שאין גובה עמי כאח אלא כעשו הרשע: (יג) היטב איטיב. היטב צכותך, איטיב צכות אבותיך<sup>12</sup>: ושמתו את זרעך כחול הים. וכינן אמר לו כן, והלא לא אמר לו אלא ויהי זרעך כעפר הארץ<sup>13</sup>. אלא שאמר לו, כי לא אעזבך עד אשר אס עשיתי את אשר דברתי לך<sup>14</sup>, ולא צרבה אמר ה' צרבה את זרעך ככוכבי השמים וכחול אשר על שפת הים: (יד) הבא בידו. צרשותו, וכן ויקח את כל ארצו מידו<sup>15</sup>. ומדרש אגדה מן הצאצאים, צדונים טובות ומרגלות, שאדם צר צלורו ונושאם צידו. דבר אחר מן

(ט) המחנה האחת והבהו. מחנה משמש לשון זכר ולשון נקבה. אם תחנה עלי מחנה<sup>1</sup>, הרי לשון נקבה. המחנה הזכר<sup>2</sup>, לשון זכר. וכן יש שאר דברים משמשים לשון זכר ולשון נקבה, השמש יא על הארץ<sup>3</sup>, מקצה השמים מולאו<sup>4</sup>, הרי לשון זכר, השמש זרחה על המים<sup>5</sup> הרי לשון נקבה. וכן רוח, והנה רוח גדולה צאה<sup>6</sup>, הרי לשון נקבה. ויגע צרבע פנות הצית<sup>7</sup>, הרי לשון זכר. ורוח גדולה וזק מפרק הרים<sup>8</sup>, הרי לשון זכר ולשון נקבה. וכן אש, ואש יאלה מאת ה'<sup>9</sup>, לשון נקבה. אש לוכט<sup>10</sup>, לשון זכר: והיה המחנה הנשאר לפליטה. על כרחו, כי אלחם עמו. התקין עלמו לשלשה דברים, לדורון, לתפלה, ולמלחמה. לדורון, ותעבור המחנה על פניו. לתפלה, אלהי אבי אברהם. למלחמה, והיה המחנה הנשאר לפליטה: (י) ואלהי אבי יצחק. ולהלן הוא אומר ופחד יצחק, ועוד, מהו שחזר וזכיר שם המיוחד, היה לו לכתוב האומר אלי שוב לארצך וגו'. אלא כך אמר יעקב לפני הקב"ה, שתי הצטחות הצטחתי, אחת בצלחתי מצית אבי מצאר שבע, שאמרת לי אני ה' אלהי אברהם אביך ואלהי יצחק, ושם אמרת לי ושמרתך ככל אשר תלך. וצבית לכן אמרת לי שוב אל

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Was Ya'akov certain that the “remaining camp” would survive? (v. 9)

**RASHI:** [Ya'akov said]: “The remaining camp will survive against [Eisav's] will, for I will wage war with him.”

[Ya'akov] adjusted himself for three things: for giving a gift, for war, and for prayer. For giving a gift: “So the gift passed on ahead of him” (v. 22). For prayer: “O God of my father Avraham” (v. 10). For war: “the remaining camp will survive” (v. 9).

**IBN EZRA:** Ya'akov was not certain that the second camp would survive. He was merely expressing a hope that perhaps the second camp would flee while the first was being attacked, or that Eisav's anger might become subdued after attacking one camp.

**RAMBAN:** Ya'akov knew that, with God's help, Eisav would not obliterate his family entirely. Therefore, he knew that at least one camp would be saved, containing part of his family.

● Why did Ya'akov refer to the “God of Yitzchak”? (v. 10)

**RASHI:** But above, the verse states: “the (One whom) Yitzchak feared” (31:42). And why did he repeat the Tetragrammaton? The

verse should have stated: “[God of my father Yitzchak] Who said to me, “Return to your land, etc.” [omitting the extra word “God”].

Rather, this is what Ya'akov said to God: “You gave me two promises. Firstly, when I left my father's house in Be'er-Sheva, when You said to me: “I am God, the God of Avraham your father, and the God of Yitzchak” (28:13), and there You said to me, “I will guard you wherever you go” (ibid. v. 15).

[Secondly,] in Lavan's house You said to me, “Return to the land of your forefathers, to your birthplace, and I will be with you” (31:3). There You revealed Yourself to me with the Tetragrammaton alone, as the verse states: “God (י-ה-ו-ה) said to Ya'akov, ‘Return to the land of your forefathers, etc.’” [Thus, the extra Tetragrammaton in our verse hints to this second promise].

“With these two promises I am coming before You,” [Ya'akov said].

● Why did Ya'akov say that he was “small”? (v. 11)

**RASHI:** [He said]: “My merits have diminished because of the kindnesses and the truth that You have rendered me. Therefore, I fear that perhaps, since You made those promises to me, I have become soiled by sin and it will cause me to be delivered into Eisav's hand.

<sup>9</sup> He said, “If Eisav comes to one camp and strikes it down, (then I will fight with him), so the remaining camp will survive.”

<sup>10</sup> Ya’akov said, “O God of my father Avraham and God of my father Yitzchak! God, Who said to me, ‘Return to the land of your forefathers, to your birthplace, and I will be with you,’ <sup>11</sup> (My merits) have become small due to all the acts of kindness and the true (fulfillment of all Your promises) that You have done for Your servant, (so I fear that I’ve lost the merit to be saved from Eisav)—for (when) I crossed this (river) Jordan, I (only) had my stick, and now I have amassed two camps. <sup>12</sup> Please save me from the hand of my (so-called) brother, from the hand of Eisav, for I am afraid of him. He might come and strike me, (and even) a mother with (her) children. <sup>13</sup> You said, ‘I will do good to you (in your merit and) I will do good (in the merit of your forefathers), and I will make your descendants (as widespread) as the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted because of their great number.’”

<sup>14</sup> He slept there that night.

(As a further preparation) he took a gift from his possessions for his brother Eisav: <sup>15</sup> 200 female goats,

SECOND  
READING

## TORAS MENACHEM

### 🕯️ YA’AKOV’S CERTAINTY (v. 9)

According to *Rashi*, Ya’akov was *certain* that at least one of his two camps would be saved: “The remaining camp *will survive against [Eisav’s] will*, for I will wage war with him.”

This begs the question: On what basis did *Rashi* conclude that Ya’akov was certain of at least a partial victory? Surely, it would be more logical to accept the interpretation of *Ibn Ezra* that Ya’akov was *hopeful* that by dividing into two camps, one camp *might* be saved?

**Ramban** suggests that Ya’akov’s certainty was based on the fact that he knew from God’s promise that his children would not be completely obliterated by Eisav. Therefore, by splitting his family into two camps, at least one must be saved.

However, it appears unlikely that this was *Rashi*’s logic, since *Rashi* gives no indication that this was Ya’akov’s reasoning. The only guarantee of Ya’akov’s victory according to *Rashi* was that “I will wage war with him.” So, we are left with the question: What was the basis of Ya’akov’s certainty?

In addition, *Rashi*’s further comments also require explanation: What is the purpose of *Rashi*’s statement that “[Ya’akov] *adjusted himself for three things: for giving a gift, for war, and for prayer*”? These details are *explicit* in the Torah itself—so what is *Rashi* adding?

### THE EXPLANATION

*Rashi* was troubled by the following problem: When a Jew is faced with an approaching enemy, his first reaction is to pray to God and to strengthen his trust that God will save him. But since the person does not know whether God will save him a.) miraculously or, b.) if he will be assisted from Above to fight within the laws of nature, he must also prepare for the latter possibility by making tactical plans.

Nevertheless, by praying to God and strengthening his faith *before* resorting to tactics, the Jew makes clear that he believes salvation will not come through his own might, but rather, through the help of God.

With this in mind, Ya’akov’s conduct here appears at first glance to be inappropriate. Instead of praying to God *first* and then making preparations for the encounter with Eisav, we find that Ya’akov immediately made the tactical maneuver of splitting into two camps (v. 8-9), and only then did he begin to pray to God (v. 10-13).

So, *Rashi* was troubled: How could Ya’akov have carried out his own war tactics *before* turning to God, an act which suggests that in Ya’akov’s eyes his own plans were more important than God’s assistance?

Clearly, such a notion is unacceptable. Therefore, *Rashi* was forced to conclude that Ya’akov’s maneuver in verses 8-9, of splitting into two camps, was not meant as an immediate tactical preparation, but rather, *it was part of his appeal to the Almighty in prayer*.

To understand why this is the case, we first need to examine the content of Ya’akov’s prayer. *Rashi* writes, “This is what Ya’akov said to God: ‘You gave me two promises. Firstly...“I will guard you wherever you go.” [Secondly]...“Return to the land of your forefathers, to your birthplace, and I will be with you”...With these two promises I am coming before You” (v. 10).

Now, while God had promised Ya’akov protection wherever he would go, and He promised that Ya’akov could return safely home with his

### 🕯️ Sparks of Chasidus 🕯️

#### “(MY MERITS) HAVE BECOME SMALL...” (v. 11)

When God shows His kindness to a person, it brings that person closer to God, causing his feeling of self-importance to diminish, since “*everything is like nothing before God.*”

Therefore, it was precisely due to the fact that God had been so kind to Ya’akov, that he became small in his own eyes—for the kindness brought him closer to God, and so he felt that he was not worthy of God’s promise to be saved.

(Based on *Tanya, Igeres Hakodesh* ch. 2)

How could Ya’akov the patriarch fear that “*perhaps...I have become soiled by sin*” (*Rashi*, v. 11), when surely he was aware that he had *not* sinned?

A *tzadik* (perfectly pious individual) is not static—he constantly grows spiritually from one level to the next. After reaching a higher level, his previous actions are spiritually deficient compared to his current standing. They are thus considered as “sins,” metaphorically speaking. (The Hebrew word חטא can also mean “deficiency”—see Kings I 1:21). Thus, Ya’akov was worried that perhaps due to such “sins,” he was not worthy to be saved.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 396ff.)

תקרוּבְתָא לַעֲשׂוֹ אַחוּהִי: טו עֵינִי מֵאֲתָנָן וּתְיִשְׂאֵי עֲשָׂרִין רְחִילִין מֵאֲתָנָן וּדְכָרִין עֲשָׂרִין: טז גְּמָלֵי מִיְנִיקְתָּא וּבְנֵיהוֹן תְּלָתִין תּוֹרְתָא אַרְבַּעִין וְתוֹרֵי עֲשָׂרָא אֲתָנָן עֲשָׂרִין וְעִירֵי עֲשָׂרָא: יז וַיְהִי בִּידָא דְעַבְדוּהִי עָרָא עָרָא בְּלַחֲדוּהִי וְאָמַר לְעַבְדוּהִי עֲבְרוּ קְדָמִי וְרוּחָא תְּשׁוּוּן בֵּין עָרָא וּבֵין עָרָא: יח וּפְקִיד יֵת קְדָמָא לְמִימַר אֲרִי יַעֲרֵעַנְדָּ עֲשׂוֹ אַחִי וַיִּשְׂאַלְנֵד לְמִימַר לָמֵן אַתְּ וְלָאֵן אַתְּ אֲזִיל וּדְמָאֵן אֲלִין דְּקַדְמָדָ: יט וְתִימַר דְּעַבְדָּד דִּיעֲקֵב תְּקַרְוֵבְתָא הִיא דְּמִשְׁלָחָא לְרַבּוּנֵי לַעֲשׂוֹ וְהָא אָף הוּא אֲתֵי בְּתַרְנָא: כ וּפְקִיד אָף יֵת תְּנַנְנָא אָף יֵת תְּלִיתָאָא אָף יֵת כָּל דְּאֲזִילִין בְּתַר עָרְנָא לְמִימַר בְּפִתְנָמָא הֲדִין תְּמַלְלוֹן עִם עֲשׂוֹ כִּד תְּשַׁכְּחוּן תְּהִי: כא וְתִימַרוֹן אָף הָא עַבְדָּד יַעֲקֵב אֲתֵי בְּתַרְנָא אֲרִי אָמַר אֲנַחְשִׁינְהָ לְרַבּוּנֵיהָ בְּתַקְרוּבְתָּא דְּאֲזִילָא קְדָמִי וּבְתַר בֵּין אַחוּי אֲפּוּהִי מָאִים יִסַּב אֲפִי: כב וְעַבְרַת תְּקַרְוֵבְתָּא עַל אֲפּוּהִי וְהוּא בְּתַ בְּלִילָא הִיא בְּמִשְׁרִיתָא: כג וְקָם בְּלִילָא הוּא וּדְבַר יֵת תְּרַתִּין נְשׁוּהִי וְיֵת תְּרַתִּין לְחִינְתִּיהָ וְיֵת חַד עֲשָׂר בְּגוּהִי וְעַבְרַת יֵת מֵעַבְרַת יוּבְקָא: כד וּדְבַרְיֵינוֹן וְאֲעַבְרִינוֹן יֵת נַחְלָא וְאֲעַבְרַת יֵת דִּילִיהָ: כה וְאֲשַׁתָּאָר יַעֲקֵב

לַעֲשׂוֹ אַחוּי: טו עֵינִים מֵאֲתָנִים וּתְיִשְׂאִים עֲשָׂרִים רְחִלִים מֵאֲתָנִים וְאִילָיִם עֲשָׂרִים: טז גְּמָלִים מִיְנִיקוֹת וּבְנֵיהֶם שְׁלֹשִׁים פָּרוֹת אַרְבָּעִים וּפְרִים עֲשָׂרָה אֲתַנֹּת עֲשָׂרִים וְעִירָם עֲשָׂרָה: יז וַיִּתֵּן בְּיַד־עַבְדָּיו עֵדֶר עֵדֶר לְבַדּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־עַבְדָּיו עֲבְרוּ לְפָנַי וְרוּחַ תְּשִׁימוּ בֵּין עֵדֶר וּבֵין עֵדֶר: יח וַיַּעַז אֶת־הָרֵאשׁוֹן לֵאמֹר כִּי יִפְגַּשְׁדָּ עֲשׂוֹ אַחִי וְשִׂאֲלֵדָּ לֵאמֹר לְמִי־אַתָּה וְאַנְהָ תֵלֵד וְלָמִי אֵלֶּה לְפָנֶיךָ: יט וְאָמַרְתָּ לְעַבְדָּד לִיעֲקֹב מִנְתָּה הוּא שְׁלוּחָהּ לְאֲדָנִי לַעֲשׂוֹ וְהִנֵּה גַם־הוּא אַחֲרֵינוּ: כ וַיַּעַז גַּם אֶת־הַשְּׂלִישִׁי גַם אֶת־כָּל־הַהֲלָכִים אַחֲרֵי הָעֲדָרִים לֵאמֹר כִּדְבַר הַזֶּה תִּדְבְּרוּן אֶל־עֲשׂוֹ בְּמִצְעָכֶם אֹתוֹ: כא וְאָמַרְתֶּם גַּם הִנֵּה עַבְדָּד יַעֲקֹב אַחֲרֵינוּ כִּי־אָמַר אֲכַפְרָה פָּנָיו בְּמִנְחָה הַהֲלָכַת לְפָנָי וְאַחֲרָיִכֶן אֲרָאָה פָּנָיו אוֹלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל פָּנָיו: כב וְתַעֲבַר הַמִּנְחָה עַל־פָּנָיו וְהוּא לֵן בְּלִילָהּ־הַהוּא בְּמִנְחָה: כג וַיָּקָם אֲבִילָהּ הוּא וַיִּקָּח אֶת־שְׁתֵּי נָשָׁיו וְאֶת־שְׁתֵּי שַׁפְחֹתָיו וְאֶת־אֶחָד עֶשֶׂר יְלָדָיו וַיַּעֲבַר אֶת מַעֲבַר יַבְקָ: כד וַיָּקָחֵם וַיַּעֲבֵרֵם אֶת־הַנַּחַל וַיַּעֲבַר אֶת־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ: כה וַיִּזְתַּר

כ"ט"י

אחכה, מי שולחך, ותרגומו דמאן את: ולמי אלה לפניך. ולאכ שלפניך של מי הם, למי המנחה הזאת שלוחה למי? משמשת צראש התיבה צמקוס של, כמו וכל אשר אחכה רואה לי הוא<sup>3</sup>, שלי הוא, לה' הארץ ומלוואה<sup>4</sup>, של ה': (יט) ואמרת לעבדך ליעקב. על ראשון ראשון ועל אחרון אחרון, ששאלת למי אחכה, לעבדך ליעקב אני, ותרגומו דעבדך דיעקב, וששאלת ולמי אלה לפניך, מנחה היא שלוחה וגוי': והנה גם הוא. יעקב: (כא) אכפרה פניו. אצטל רוגזו, וכן וכופר צריחכס את מות<sup>5</sup>, לא תוכלו כפרה<sup>6</sup>. ונראה צעיני, שכל כפרה שאכל עון וחטא ואלל פנים, כולן לשון קווח והעצרה הן, ולשון ארמי הוא, והרצה בגמרא וכפר ידיה, צעי לכפורי ידיה צהכוא גצרא, וגם צלשון המקרא נקראים המזרקים של קדש כפורי זהב, על שם שהכהן מקנה ידיו צהן צשפת המזרק: (כב) על פניו. כמו לפניו, וכן חמס ושוד ישמע צה על פני חמיד<sup>7</sup>, וכן המכעיסים אותי על פני<sup>8</sup>, ומדרש אגדה על פניו, אף הוא שרוי צכעס שהיב לריך לכל זה<sup>9</sup>: (כג) ואת אחד עשר ילדיו. ודינה היכן היחה, נתנה צתיבה ונעל צפניה, שלא יתן צה עשו עיניו, ולכך נענש יעקב שמנעה מאחיו, שמא תחזירונו למוטצ, ונפלה ציד שסכס<sup>10</sup>: יבק. שם הנכר: (כד) את אשר לו. הצכמה והמעטלים, עשה עלמו כגשר, נוטל מכאן ומניח כאן: (כה) ויותר

הצא צידו, מן החולין, שנטל מעשר, כמה דאת אמר עשר אעשרנו לך, והדר לקח מנחה: (טו) עזים מאתים ותיששים עשרים. מאתים עזים לריכות עשרים תישים, וכן כולס, הצכרים כדי לורך הנקצות. וצבראשית רבה<sup>1</sup> דורש מכאן לעונה האמורה צתורה, הטיילים צכל יוס, הפועלים שתיס צשצת, החמרים אחת צשצת, הגמלים אחת לשלשים יוס, הספונים אחת לששה חדשים, ואויני יודע לכיוון המדרש הזה צכוון. אך נראה צעיני שלמדנו מכאן, שאין העונה שוב צכל אדם, אלא לפי תורח המוטל עליו, שמלניו כאן שמכר לכל חיט עשר עזים, וכן לכל חיל, לפי שהס פנוים ממלאכה, דרכן להרצות השמיט לעבר עשר נקצות, וצממה משנתעצרה אינה מקצלת זכר, ופרים שעוסקין צמלאכה, לא מסר לזכר אלא ארבע נקצות, ולחמור שהולך צדרך רחוקה, שתי נקצות לזכר. ולגמלים שהולכים דרך יותר רחוקה, נקצה אחת לזכר: (טז) גמלים מיניקות ובניהם שלשים. וצניכס עמהס. ומדרש אגדה<sup>2</sup> וצניכס, צנאיכס, זכר כנגד נקצה, ולפי שנוע צתשמיט, לא פרסמו הכחצו: ועירים. חמורים זכריס: (יז) עדר עדר לבדו. כל מין ומין לעלמו: עברו לפני. דרך יוס או פחות, ואני אצוא אחריכס: ורוח תשימו. עדר לפני חצרו מלא עין, כדי להשציע עינו של אחו רשע, ולתווכו על רצוי הדורון: (יח) למי אתה. של מי

TORAS MENACHEM

family, God had *not* promised that Ya'akov would retain his immense personal wealth of flocks and servants.  
Therefore, before turning to God and pleading with Him to keep his earlier promises, Ya'akov decided that it was only logical to divide his

camp into two groups: those which God had promised to save—his family and their personal needs—into one camp, and the remaining possessions which God had *not* promised to save, into another. (As we see from the Torah's narrative below, that *all* of Ya'akov's family was in one single

20 male goats, 200 ewes and 20 rams, <sup>16</sup> 30 nursing camels with their young, 40 cows, 10 bulls, 20 female donkeys and 10 male donkeys. <sup>17</sup> He gave each (species in its own) herd separately into the hands of his servants.

He said to his servants, “Pass on ahead of me (about one day’s distance) and make a space (no more than the eye can see) between one herd and another herd (so that Eisav appreciates the size of the gift).”

<sup>18</sup> He instructed the first (group), saying, “When my brother Eisav encounters you and questions you, saying, ‘Whose property are you? Where are you going? Whose property are these (animals) in front of you?’ <sup>19</sup> You should say, ‘(We belong) to your servant Ya’akov. This is a gift sent to my master, to Eisav, and—look!—(Ya’akov) himself is (coming right) behind us.’”

<sup>20</sup> He also instructed the second (group), the third (group), and all those who followed the herds, saying, “This is how you should speak to Eisav when you meet him. <sup>21</sup> You should also say, ‘Look, your servant Ya’akov is behind us.’” For (Ya’akov) said (to himself), “I’ll appease his anger with the gift that is going ahead of me, and afterwards I’ll see him face(-to-face). Perhaps he’ll accept me.”

<sup>22</sup> So the gift passed on ahead of him, and he slept that night in the camp.

<sup>23</sup> (During) that night he got up, and he took his two wives, his two maids and his eleven children (together with Dinah, who was hidden in a chest), and crossed the shallow part of (the river) Yabok. <sup>24</sup> He took them and brought them across the stream. He (went backwards and forwards and) took across everything he had.

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

camp—see 33:1-5). Thus, it turns out that Ya’akov’s division into two camps was not a direct act of preparation for war. Rather, since he was about to turn to God in prayer, pleading with Him to keep His earlier promises, Ya’akov found it necessary to *delineate* whom exactly he was praying for.

Then, armed with God’s protection, Ya’akov was confident that even if war would occur and “Eisav comes to one camp,” containing his flocks and servants “and strikes it down,” then “the remaining camp,” in which Ya’akov’s family are found, “will survive against [Eisav’s] will, for I will wage war with him,” with the *complete confidence* that God’s *earlier promises* to save Ya’akov’s family would be fulfilled.

#### RASHI’S FURTHER PROOF

In order to prove further that Ya’akov was certain he would be saved by God, Rashi continues, “[Ya’akov] *adjusted himself for three things: for giving a gift, for war, and for prayer.*”

Rashi stresses here that Ya’akov did not merely *prepare* (הִתְכַּיֵּן) for the encounter with Eisav by adding in activities and in mental focus, but rather, he *adjusted* (הִתְקַיֵּן) and positively revamped himself internally, totally *transforming* his prior emotional disposition. I.e. despite Ya’akov’s natural reaction of fear when hearing of Eisav’s approach with “four hundred men” (v. 7), Ya’akov nevertheless “adjusted” his emotions based on his faith in God’s promises, and he was certain that “the remaining camp would survive.”

Similarly, even though Ya’akov was “in an angry mood” that he was required to send Eisav a gift (Rashi to v. 22 below), he nevertheless “adjusted himself” to have faith that this was a possible method by which God would send salvation.

And furthermore, even though Ya’akov naturally feared that “*perhaps I have become soiled with sin since You made those promises to me, and it will cause me to be delivered into Eisav’s hand*” (Rashi to v. 11), nevertheless he “adjusted himself” emotionally to rely on God’s promise of salvation which was given in the merit of “*God of my father Avraham...*”

#### “THAT NIGHT”

The above explanation, however, leaves us with a problem: Ya’akov’s three-fold “adjustment” was surely an act of emotional turmoil. At the same time that Ya’akov was adjusting his emotions to greet Eisav with good will and to appease him with love and kindness, he was also adjusting himself to fight in battle, and at the same time Ya’akov was pleading to God for mercy. Could a single human being be capable of harboring all these diametrically opposed emotions at once?

At first glance, it would appear that Ya’akov dealt with these three matters sequentially and he did not feel all three emotions at the same time.

However, at the literal level, the Torah seems to indicate that Ya’akov did manage to feel all these sentiments at once:

On three occasions in the current section, the Torah adds the seemingly superfluous statement that the events occurred “on that night.” a.) After Ya’akov’s prayer, the Torah concludes, “He slept *that night*” (v. 14). b.) After sending the gift to Eisav, “He slept *that night* in the camp” (v. 22). c.) Before Ya’akov attempts to save his family and possessions by transporting them across the Yabok river, the Torah states “*that night* he got up.”

Here we see that the Torah is coming to emphasize that all these three emotions— adjustment to a) prayer, b) appeasement and c) war tactics— all occurred “on that night,” i.e. at the *same time*. Even though they appear to be contradictory, Ya’akov immersed himself in all three activities simultaneously.

Ya’akov achieved this feat since he was not expressing his own personal emotions. Rather, he “adjusted himself” to follow God’s directive, that a Jew should always plan for salvation that may come either through war or peace, naturally or supernaturally.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 265ff; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayishlach* 5745)

בלחודוהי ואשתדל גברא עמיה עד דסליק צפרא: כו ותוא ארי לא יכיל ליה וקריב בפתה ירכיה ווע פתי ירפא דייעקב באשתדלותיה עמיה: כז ואמר שלחני ארי סליק צפרא ואמר לא אשלחנך אלהין ברכתני: כח ואמר ליה מא שמך ואמר יעקב: כט ואמר לא יעקב ותאמר עוד שמך אלהין ישראל ארי רברבת קדם יי ועם גובריא ויבלתא: ל ושאיל יעקב ואמר חוי כען שמך ואמר למא דנן את שאיל לשמי ובריך יתיה תמן: לא וקרא יעקב שמא דאתרא פניאל ארי חזיתי מלאכא דיי אפין באפין ואשתזבת נפשי: לב ודנה ליה שמשא בד עבר ית פנואל והוא מטלע על ירביה: לג על בן לא ייכלון בני ישראל ית גידא דנשניא די על פתי ירפא עד יומא דדין ארי קריב

יעקב לבדו ויאבק איש עמו עד עלות השחר: כו וירא כי לא יכל לו ויגע בכפי ירכו ותקע בכפי ירך יעקב בהאבקו עמו: כז ויאמר שלחני כי עלה השחר ויאמר לא אשלחך כי אם ברכתני: כח ויאמר אליו מה שמך ויאמר יעקב: כט ויאמר לא יעקב יאמר עוד שמך כי אם ישראל כי שרית עם אלהים ועם אנשים ותוכל: ל וישאל יעקב ויאמר הגידה נא שמך ויאמר למה זה תשאיל לשמי ויברך אתו שם: [שלישי] לא ויקרא יעקב שם המקום פניאל כי ראיתי אלהים פנים אל פנים ותנצל נפשי: לב ויזרח לו השמש כאשר עבר את פנואל והוא צלע על ירכו: לג על בן לא יאכלו בני ישראל את גיד הנשה אשר על כף הירך עד היום הזה כי נגע בכפי ירך יעקב בגיד הנשה:

כש"י

מלאך ויוכל צכח ויתחנן לו,<sup>5</sup> צכח המלאך ויתחנן לו, ומח נתחנן לו, בית אל ימלאנו ושם ידבר עמו, המחן לי עד שידבר עמו שם, ולא רצה יעקב, ועל כרחו הודה לו עליהו, וזכו ויברך אותו שם, שהיה מתחנן להמתין לו ולא רצה: ועם אנשים. עשו ולבן: ותוכל. להס: (ל) למה זה תשאיל. אין לנו שם קבוע, משתנין שמוחיו,<sup>6</sup> (הכל) לפי מלות עבודת השליחות שאנו משתלחים: (לז) ויזרח לו השמש. לשון בני אדם הוא, כשהגענו למקום פלוני האיר לנו השחר, זה פשוטו. ומדרש אגדה ויזרח לו, לזרכו, לרפאות את ללעתו, כמה דתימא שמש דקרא ומרפא בכנפיה,<sup>7</sup> ואותן שעות שמיארה לשקוע בשצילו כשיאל מצאח שבע, מיארה לזרוח בשצילו: והוא צולע. היה זולע כשזרחה השמש: (לג) גיד הנשה. ולמה נקרא שמו גיד הנשה, לפי נשכה ממקומו ועלה, והוא לשון קפילה, וכן נשכה גזרתה,<sup>8</sup> וכן כי נשני אלהים את כל עמלי:<sup>9</sup> (על כף הירך. פולפ"א צלע"ז כל צמר גזר וחלול

יעקב. שכה פכים קטנים וחזר עליהם:<sup>1</sup> ויאבק איש. מנחם פירש ויתעפר איש, מלשון אבק, שהיו מעלים עפר דרגליהם על ידי נענועם. ולי נראה שהוא לשון ויתקשר, ולשון ארמי הוא, צחר דאציקו ציה, ואבק ליה מיצק לשון עניבה, שכן דרך שנים שמחלמים להפיל איש את רעבו, שחזקו ואצקו צזרעותיו, ופירשו רז"ל שהוא שרו של עש:<sup>2</sup> (כו) ויגע בכפי ירכו. קולית הירך התקוע בקלצוסת קרוי כף, על שם שהצטר עליה כמין כף של קדירה: ותקע. נתקעקע ממקום הצרתה, ודומה לו פן תקע נפשי ממך,<sup>3</sup> לשון הסרה, וצמשה לקעקע צילתו, לשרש שרשיהו: (כז) כי עלה השחר. ולריך אני לומר שירה ציוס:<sup>4</sup> ברכתני. הודה לי על הצרכות שצרכני אצו, שעשו מערער עליהם: (כט) לא יעקב. לא יאמר עוד שהצרכות צאו לך צעקבה ורמיה, כי אם צשררה וגלוי פנים, וסופך שהקצ"ה נגלה עליך צצית אל ומחליף שמך, ושם הוא מצרכך, ואני שם אהיה ואודה לך עליהו, וזהו שכתוב וישר אל

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What is the significance of Ya'akov's fight with the angel?

**RAMBAN:** Our Sages said in the *Midrash*: “[The angel] touched all the righteous people who were destined to come from Ya'akov. This refers to the generation of religious persecution.” (*Bereishis Rabah* 87:3).

This entire event constitutes a hint to his descendants, indicating that there will be a generation from the seed of Ya'akov against whom Eisav will prevail, to the extent of almost uprooting them. This occurred in one generation during the period of the Sages of the *Mishnah*, which was the generation of Rabbi Yehudah ben Baba and his colleagues [117-138 c.e.].

There are other generations in which they have done to us such things as these, and even worse, but we have endured and it has passed over us. This is hinted to by the verse: “Ya'akov came to the city of Shechem—which is in the land of Canaan—perfect (in health, wealth and Torah knowledge)” (below 33:18).

● Why is the place named “Peniy’ail” in verse 31 then called “Penu’ail” in verse 32?

**OHR HACHAYIM:** Only Ya'akov *himself* called the place Peniy’ail. Thus when the Torah mentions the place in verse 32 it changes the name to Penu’ail.

**BACHAYE:** Of the different levels of angels [see *Rambam, Yesodei Hatorah* 2:7], the tenth level is called an *ish* (lit. “man”). This is the term with which the Torah refers to the angel that fought with Ya'akov (v. 25).

The difference between פניאל and פנואל is that the *yud* is swapped for a *vav*. When Ya'akov was fighting the angel, and his mind was fixed in the spiritual realms, he called the place *Peniy’ail* with a *yud*, hinting to his involvement with the angel of the tenth level (*yud*=10). However, later when he came back “down to earth” he changed the *yud* for a *vav* (=6) representing the physical world which consists of the six directions: north, south, west, east, up and down.

## 🌀 YA'AKOV FIGHTS WITH EISAV'S GUARDIAN ANGEL 🌀

32:25 **Y**a'akov (forgot some small jars, and went back for them. He) was left alone... (Eisav's guardian angel, appearing as) a man, wrestled with him until the break of dawn. <sup>26</sup> When he saw that he could not prevail against (Ya'akov), he touched the joint of his hip. As he wrestled with him, the socket of Ya'akov's hip became dislocated.

<sup>27</sup> (The angel) said, "Let me go, for the morning has arrived (and I must recite songs of praise)."

(Ya'akov) said, "I will not let you go unless you (consent to the) blessing (which Eisav is grieved that my father gave) me."

<sup>28</sup> (The angel) said to him, "What is your name?"

"Ya'akov," he said.

<sup>29</sup> "(Please be patient!)" he said, "(God will reveal Himself to you in Beis-Ail, and then) your name will no longer be called Ya'akov (which denotes trickery [aKaVah] and deceit), but rather, Yisra'el (suggesting that the blessings were authorized [beSeRarah]), because you have fought with (an angel of) God and with (Lavan and Eisav), and you have overcome (them. I will be there too, and I will consent to your blessing then.)"

<sup>30</sup> Ya'akov questioned him and said, "Tell me your name."

He said, "Why is it that you ask for my name? (We angels simply don't have a fixed name)."

(Ya'akov persisted that the angel consent to his blessings. Eventually the angel conceded) and he blessed him there.

THIRD READING <sup>31</sup> Ya'akov named the place Peniy'ail ("God's face"), "because I saw God face to face, and my soul was saved."

<sup>32</sup> When he passed Penu'ail, the sun rose for him, and he was limping on his thigh.

- <sup>33</sup> Consequently, to this day, the children of Israel may not eat the sciatic nerve (of an animal) which (arises) by the hip joint, because (the angel) touched the joint of Ya'akov's hip at the sciatic nerve.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🌀 PENIY'AIL / PENU'AIL (V. 31-32)

At the literal level of Torah interpretation, not every name needs to be explained. However, when the Torah itself explains the reason for a particular name, that reason needs to make sense at the literal level.

In our case, when the verse states, "Ya'akov named the place Peniy'ail: 'because I saw God face to face, etc.," clearly we are to understand that the word is a compound of the two words פְּנֵי אֵל ("God's face"). When reading the following verse the reader will therefore question why the name, and presumably the meaning, has changed. Why does *Rashi*, who addresses every difficulty at the literal level, fail to comment on this point?

#### THE EXPLANATION

*Rashi* felt it unnecessary to offer any explanation as the matter is self-understood from the verse itself. Ya'akov said, "I saw God face to face," indicating that we are speaking of two faces here: God's face and Ya'akov's face. Thus, while Ya'akov was in the actual place where he saw the angel, he called it "God's face." After he left, he called it פְּנוּאֵל after his own face: [= פְּנֵי (אֵל) אֵל] "His (Ya'akov's) face (has seen) God."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 137ff.)

#### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

According to **Ramban**, Ya'akov's fight with the guardian angel of Eisav alludes to the suffering of the Jewish people during the times of Exile.

The fact that Ya'akov was later healed *completely* (see below 33:18 and *Rashi* *ibid.*) indicates that when the exile finally ends there will be no remnant whatsoever of Jewish suffering. In other words, the key emphasis here in Ya'akov's battle with the angel is not the injury that Ya'akov suffered, but rather, the fact that it was only a *temporary* injury.

Thus, when we observe the prohibition against eating the sciatic nerve (*gid hanashe*), our emphasis too should be a positive one. Namely, that rather than focusing on Ya'akov's *injury* to the sciatic nerve, we should stress the fact that later he was *totally healed*, representing the ability of the Jew to withstand all the tribulations of exile and emerge unblemished.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 174; *Sefer Hasichos* 5751, p. 263)

בפתי ירפא דיעקב בגידא דנשיא: א וזקף יעקב עינוהי וחזא והא עשו אתי ועמיה ארבע מאה גברא ופליג ית בגיא על לאה ועל רחל ועל תרתין לחינתא: ב ושוי ית לחינתא וית בגיהן קדמאין וית לאה ובגהא בתראין וית רחל וית יוסף בתראין: ג והוא עבר קדמיהון וסגיד על ארעא שבע זמנין עד מקרביה עד (לות) אחוהי: ד ורפט עשו לקדמותיה ונפפיה ונפל על צוניה ונשקיה ובכו: ה וזקף ית עינוהי וחזא ית נשיא וית בגיא ואמר מאן אלין לך ואמר בגיא די חס יי ית עבדך: ו וקרביא לחינתא אנין ובגיהן וסגידא: ז וקרבת אף לאה ובגהא וסגידו ובתר בן קריב יוסף ורחל וסגידו: ח ואמר מאן לך כל משריתא הדא די ערעית ואמר לאשכחא רחמין בעיני רבנני: ט ואמר עשו אית לי סגי אחי אצלח בדילך: י ואמר יעקב בכעו אם כען אשכחית רחמין בעיניך ותקביל תקרובתי מן ידי ארי על בן חזיתינון

לג א וישא יעקב עיניו וירא והנה עשו בא ועמו ארבע מאות איש ויחז את הילדים על-לאה ועל-רחל ועל שתי השפחות: ב וישם את השפחות ואת-ילדיהן ראשנה ואת-לאה וילדיה אחרנים ואת-רחל ואת-יוסף אחרנים: ג והוא עבר לפניהם וישתחו ארצה שבע פעמים עד-גשתו עד-אחיו: ד וירץ עשו לקראתו ויחבקהו ויפל על-צוארו\* וישקוהו ויבכו: ה וישא את-עיניו וירא את-הנשים ואת-הילדים ויאמר מי-אלה לך ויאמר הילדים אשר-חנן אלהים את-עבדך: ו רביעין ו ותגשן השפחות הנה וילדיהן ותשתחוין: ז ותגש גם-לאה וילדיה וישתחוו ואחר נגש יוסף ורחל וישתחוו: ח ויאמר מי לך כל-המתנה הוה אשר פגשתי ויאמר למצאתי בן בעיני אדני: ט ויאמר עשו יש-לי רב אחי יהי לך אשר-לך: י ויאמר יעקב אל-נא אם-נא מצאתי

\*צוארו קרי \*\*נקוד על וישקוהו

רשי

כל המחנה. מי כל המחנה אשר פגשתי שהוא שלך, כלומר למה הוא לך. ופשוטו של מקרא על מוליכי המחנה. ומדרשו, כחות של מלאכים פגע, שהיו דוחפין אותו ואת אנשיו, ואומרים להם, של מי אתם, וחס אומרים להם של עשו, וכן אומרים הכו, ואלו אומרים בניו, וכן של יצחק הוא, ולא היו משגיחים עליו. זן צנו של אזרכס הוא, ולא היו משגיחים עליו. אחיו של יעקב הוא, אומרים להם אם כן משלנו אתם: (ט) יהי לך אשר לך. כאן הודעה לו על הצרכות: (י) אל נא. אל נא תאמר לי כן: אם נא מצאתי חן בעיניך ולקחת מנחתי מידי בי על בן ראיתי פניך וגו'. כי כדאי וכגון לך שתקבל מנחתי, על אשר ראיתי פניך, וכן חשבוני לי כראיית פני המלאך, שראיתי שר שלך, ועוד על שנתרצית לחמול לי על סורחני. ולמה הזכיר לו

ועגול קרוי כף, כמו עד שתתמך הכף, צסימני צרות): (ג) ואת לאה וילדיה אחרונים. אחרון אחרון חציב: (ג) עבר לפניהם. אמר, אם יבא אותו רשע לכלם, ילחם צי תחלה: (ד) ויחבקהו. נתגלגלו רחמיו כשראבו משתחוה כל השתחוואות הללו: וישקוהו. נקוד עליו, ויש חולקין בדבר הזה צברייתא דספרי<sup>1</sup>, יש שדרשו נקודה זו, לומר שלא נשקו בכל לבו? אמר רבי שמעון זן יוחאי, הלכה היא, זידוע שעשו שונא ליעקב, אלא שנכמרו רחמיו צאותה שעה, ונשקו בכל לבו: (ה) מי אלה לך. מי אלה להיות שלך: (ו) נגש יוסף ורחל. צכלן האמכות נגשות לפני הצנים, אצל צרחל, יוסף נגש לפניו, אמר, אחי יפת תואר, שמה יתלה צב עיניו אותו רשע, אעמוד כנגדה ואעכצנו מלכסחכל צב, מכאן זכה יוסף לצרכת עלי עין: (ח) מי לי רב

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Eisav embrace Ya'akov? (v. 4)

RASHI: [Eisav's] compassion was aroused when he saw [Ya'akov] prostrate himself all those times (see v. 3).

● Was Eisav's kiss sincere? (v. 4)

RASHI: There are dots over the word וישקוהו ("and he kissed him") and there is a difference of opinion about this matter found in a braisa [teaching] of the Sifri. Some interpret the dots to mean that he did not kiss him wholeheartedly. Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai said: The fact that Eisav hates Ya'akov is obvious and [incontrovertible, like] a ruling in Jewish Law. However, at that moment Eisav's compassion was warmed, and he kissed him wholeheartedly.

SEFER HAZIKARON: Dots on a word indicate that the word has a weaker meaning than one would have otherwise presumed.

According to Rashi's first interpretation ("he did not kiss him wholeheartedly") this is understood—even though the verse states that "he kissed him," this was a "weak," insincere kiss.

However, Rabbi Shimon was troubled by this interpretation, since even without the dots we would have realized that Eisav did not kiss Ya'akov wholeheartedly, for "the fact that Eisav hates Ya'akov is obvious and [incontrovertible, like] a ruling in Jewish Law."

Therefore, according to Rabbi Shimon, in this case the dots teach us that the kiss was not insincere, as one would presume, but to the contrary, "Eisav kissed him wholeheartedly."

● Why did Eisav weep? (v. 4)

IBN EZRA: At the literal level it appears that Eisav did not intend to harm his brother Ya'akov. The proof of this is that he wept, just as Yosef wept when he confessed to his brothers (below 45:15).



🌀 YA'AKOV CONFRONTS EISAV 🌀

**33** **Y**a'akov looked around to see, and—look!—Eisav was coming, and four hundred men were with him! So (Ya'akov) divided the children among Leah, Rochel and the two maids. <sup>2</sup> He placed the maids and their children first, Leah and her children behind (because they were more cherished), and Rochel with Yosef last (because they were most cherished).

<sup>3</sup> He went ahead of them (to protect them) and prostrated himself (progressively) on the ground seven times, until he approached his brother. <sup>4</sup> (This aroused Eisav's compassion, so) Eisav ran toward him and embraced him. He fell on (Ya'akov's) neck and kissed him, and they wept.

<sup>5</sup> (Eisav) looked around and saw the women and the children. He said, "How are these (people related) to you?"

(Ya'akov) said, "(They are) the children whom God has graciously given your servant."

<sup>6</sup> The maids approached (Eisav, both) they and their children, and they prostrated themselves. <sup>7</sup> Leah and her children approached and prostrated themselves, and afterwards, Yosef and Rochel approached and prostrated themselves.

<sup>8</sup> (Eisav) said, "What was your (idea of) this whole entourage that I met?"

"To find favor in my master's eyes," said Ya'akov.

<sup>9</sup> Eisav said, "I have plenty (more than I need). My brother, you can keep what is yours."

<sup>10</sup> Ya'akov said, "Please don't (say that). If indeed I have now found favor in your eyes, then take my gift from my hand."

FOURTH  
READING

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 WAS EISAV SINCERE? (v. 4)

Rashi's comments to verse 4 prompt a number of questions:

a.) Why was Rashi certain that Eisav's embrace was sincere, whereas regarding his kiss Rashi cites a difference of opinion?

b.) When dots are found on a word, they indicate that the word's meaning is weakened. Thus, Rashi's first cited opinion appears to be acceptable, since the dots indicate a weakening—even though Eisav kissed Ya'akov, "he did not kiss him wholeheartedly."

However, according to Rashi's second cited opinion (of Rabbi Shimon), that Eisav did kiss Ya'akov sincerely, it turns out that the word **וַיִּשָׁקוּ** ("and he kissed him") is not weakened *at all* by the dots. Thus, the dots appear to be *redundant*.

How is this acceptable, at the literal level?

(**Sefer Hazikaron** explains that in this instance the dots do not come to weaken the word, but that they have a different meaning. However, at the literal level, dots *always* weaken the meaning of a word, so it is difficult to accept that this case is an unprecedented exception)

**THE EXPLANATION**

Rashi was troubled by an obvious question in the current narrative: How was Eisav—who vied to kill Ya'akov (above 27:41), still hated him passionately (Rashi to 32:7), and was now approaching with 400 men—suddenly transformed from one emotional extreme to the other, to the extent that he embraced Ya'akov and kissed him?

To explain Eisav's embrace, Rashi writes, "[Eisav's] compassion was aroused when he saw [Ya'akov] prostrate himself all those times." I.e. the exceptional honor which Ya'akov showed Eisav in bowing to him progressively seven times (v. 3), caused a sudden emotional change on Eisav's part, and he hugged his brother.

In the case of Eisav's kiss, however, this is not a satisfactory explanation, since a kiss is a far deeper and more sincere expression of emotion than a mere hug. So Rashi was troubled: Ya'akov's prostrating on the ground may have been enough to elicit an embrace from Eisav, but surely not a hearty, brotherly kiss?

Rashi answers: "There are dots over the word **וַיִּשָׁקוּ** ('and he kissed him.')

 I.e. the dots weaken the word, indicating that Eisav's kiss was deficient in some respect.

One possible explanation why Eisav's kiss was deficient, is that it was insincere—"he did not kiss him wholeheartedly." Nevertheless, Rashi could not suffice with this interpretation alone, since it appears to be out of character with the rest of Eisav's behavior here. Not only do we read that Eisav cried, which must have been sincere (see **Ibn Ezra**) but he also declined to accept Ya'akov's gift, saying, "My brother, you can keep what is yours" (v. 9). And, finally, Eisav offers to, "Please let me station with you some of the men that are with me" (v. 15). There does not appear to be any indication that Eisav was insincere with these actions, which begs the question: Why would his kiss have been insincere? And if it was sincere, then why are there dots above the word, indicating a weakness?

Because of this problem, Rashi found it necessary to bring a second interpretation: "Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai said: The fact that Eisav hates Ya'akov is obvious and [incontrovertible, like] a ruling in Jewish Law. However, at that moment Eisav's compassion was warmed, and he kissed him wholeheartedly."

Here we see that the dots indicate a different kind of weakness in Eisav's kiss. Rabbi Shimon explained that Eisav's kiss was indeed sincere, but only *at that moment* of his encounter with Ya'akov. This sincerity was temporary and totally uncharacteristic of Eisav, since, "the fact that Eisav hates Ya'akov is obvious and [incontrovertible, like] a ruling in Jewish Law."

לְאֶפֶד כְּחִיּוֹ אִפִּי רִבְרִבְיָא וְאִתְרַעִית לִי: יא קָבַל כְּעֵן יַת תְּקַרְוִבְתִּי דְאִיתוּתִיאת לְךָ אַרְי רַחִים עָלַי (קָדָם) יי וְאִרִי אִית לִי כּוֹלָא וְאִתְקִיף בֵּיה וְקָבִיל: יב וְאִמַר טוֹל וְנִהְדָּ וְאִיהָדָּ לְקַבְלָךְ: יג וְאִמַר לִיה רְבוּנִי יַדַע אַרְי יְנַקְנִיא רְפִיכִין וְעָנָא וְתוּרִי מִיְנַקְתָּא עָלַי וְאִם יְדְחוּקִינוּן יוֹמָא חָד וְיִמּוּתוּן כָּל עָנָא: יד יַעֲבַר כְּעֵן רְבוּנִי קָדָם עֲבָדִיה וְאִנָּא אֲדַבֵּר בְּנִית לְרַגְלָא עוֹבְדָתָא דִּי קְדָמִי וְלְרַגְלָא יְנַקְנִיא עַד דִּי אִיתִי לְנֹת רְבוּנִי לְשַׁעִיר: טו וְאִמַר עֲשׂוּ אֲשִׁבּוּב כְּעֵן עֲמָד מִן עֲמָד דִּי עָמִי וְאִמַר לְמָא

חֵן בְּעֵינַיְךָ וְלִקְחַתָּ מִנְחָתִי מִיָּדַי כִּי עַל-כֵּן רָאִיתִי כְּפִיךָ בְּרֵאת פְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים וְתַרְצֵנִי: יא קָח־נָא אֶת-בְּרִכְתִּי אֲשֶׁר הִבַּאת לְךָ כִּי-חֲנַנִּי אֱלֹהִים וְכִי יֵשׁ-לִי-כָּל וַיִּפְצַר-בּוֹ וַיִּקָּח: יב וַיֹּאמֶר נִסְעָה וְנִלְכָה וְאִלְכָה לְנִגְדָךְ: יג וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲדֹנָי יְדַע כִּי-הִילָדִים רַבִּים וְהֵצֵאן וְהִבְקֵר עָלוֹת עָלַי וּדְפַקוּם יוֹם אֶחָד וּמָתוּ כָּל-הֵצֵאן: יד יַעֲבֹר-נָא אֲדֹנָי לְפָנַי עֲבָדוּ וְאֲנִי אֶתְנַהֲלָה לְאַפִּי לְרַגְלָא הַמְּלֹאכָה אֲשֶׁר-לְפָנַי וְלְרַגְלָא הִילָדִים עַד אֲשֶׁר-אָבֵא אֶל-אֲדֹנָי שַׁעִירָה: טו וַיֹּאמֶר עֲשׂוּ אֲצִינָה-נָא עֲמָד מִן-הָעָם אֲשֶׁר אֵתִי וַיֹּאמֶר לְמָה זֶה אֲמַצְא־חֵן בְּעֵינַי אֲדֹנָי:

רש"י

מהלכתי ללכת לאט כאשר אחי רריך, וזכו לנגדך, צבוח לך: (יג) עלות עלי. האן והצקר שהן עלות, מוטלות עלי לנהלן לאט. עלות. מגדלות עולליות, לשון עולל ויונק<sup>9</sup>, עול ימים<sup>7</sup>, שתי פרות עלות<sup>8</sup>, צלע<sup>2</sup> אנפטיי"ש: ודפקום יום אחד. (ואם ידפקום יום אחד) ליגסם בדרך צמורה, ומתו כל האן: ודפקום. כמו קול דודי דופק<sup>9</sup>, נוקס צלחת: (יד) יעבר נא אדני. אל תאריך ימי הליכתך, עבור כפי דרכך, ואף אם תתרחק: אתנהלה. אתנהל, ה"א יתירה, כמו ארדה, אשמעה: לאטי. לאט שלי, לשון נחת ההולכים לאט<sup>10</sup>, לאט לי לנער<sup>11</sup>. לאטי, הלמ"ד מן היסוד ואינו משמשת, אתנהל נחת שלי: לרגל המלאכה. לפי אורך הליכת רגלי המלאכה המוטלת עלי להוליך: ולרגל הילדים. לפי רגליהם שהם יכולים לילך: עד אשר אבא אל אדני שעירה. הרחיב לו הדרך, שלא היה דעתו ללכת אלא עד סוכות, אמר, אם דעתו לעשות לי רעה, ימתין עד צואי אללו, וכוא לא הלך, ואימתו ילך, בימי המשיח<sup>12</sup>, שנאמר ועלו מושיעים צבוח ליון לשפוט את הר עשו<sup>13</sup>. ומדרשי אגדה יש לפרשה זו רבים: (טו) ויאמר למה זה. תעשה לי טובה זו שאיני רריך לה: אמצא חן בעיני אדני. ולא תשלם לי עתה שום גמול:

ראיית המלאך, כדי שתיירא הימנו, ויאמר, ראה מלאכים וניאלו, איני יכול לו מעשה: ותרצני. נתפייסת לי. וכן כל רצון שצמקרא לשון פיוס, אפילומו"ט צלע<sup>2</sup>, כי לא לרצון יהיה לכס<sup>1</sup>, הקרצנות צחות לפיים ולרצון, וכן שפתי דליק ידעון רצון<sup>2</sup>, יודעים לפיים ולרצות: (יא) ברבתי. מנחתי, מנחה זו הצחה על ראיית פנים, ולפרקים אינה צחה אלא לשאלת שלום, וכל צרכה שהיא לראיית פנים, כגון ויצרך יעקב את פרעה, עשו אחי צרכה<sup>3</sup>, דסנחריב. וכן לשחול לו לשלום ולצרכו<sup>4</sup>, דתועי מלך חמת, כולם לשון צרכת שלום הן, שקורין צלע<sup>2</sup> שלודא"ר, אף זו צרכת, מו"ן שלו"ד: אשר הובאת לך. לא תרחת צה, ואני יגעתי להגיע עד שצחה לידך<sup>5</sup>: חנני. נוי"ן ראשונה מודגשת, לפי שהיא משמשת צמקום שתי נוי"ן, שהיה לו לומר חנני, שאין חנן צלח שתי נוי"ן, והשלישית לשימוש, כמו עשני, צדנני: יש לי בל. כל ספוקי, ועשו דבר צלשון גאוח, יש לי רב, יותר ויותר מכדי לרכי: (יב) נסעה. כמו שמעה, סלחה, שהוא כמו שמע, סלח, אף כאן נסעה כמו נסע, והכו"ן יסוד צחיבה, ותרגום של אונקלוס טול ונהך, עשו אמר ליעקב נסע מכאן ונלך: ואלכה לנגדך. צבוח לך, טובה זו אטעה לך, שאאריך ימי

TORAS MENACHEM

Therefore, the Torah placed dots on the word to indicate that Eisav's kiss was deficient in that it represented only a temporary sincerity. And this explanation fits well with the following narrative, how Eisav acted generously towards Ya'akov.

Nevertheless, this interpretation too is somewhat problematic, since it exacerbates further Eisav's sudden change from hatred to love, which is difficult to understand. Therefore, *Rashi* also cited the first interpretation—that Eisav's kiss was insincere—which fits better with his prior status of anger against his brother.

**RABBI SHIMON BAR YOCHAI**

In the final analysis however, the more astute reader may persist and argue that *Rashi's* second interpretation appears to be a contradiction in terms. The same opinion which stresses that "The fact that Eisav hates Ya'akov is obvious and [incontrovertible, like] a ruling in Jewish Law," also stressed the opposite, that "Eisav... kissed him wholeheartedly"(!)

*Rashi* hinted to the solution to this problem by quoting the author of the teaching, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. *Rashi* does not usually cite the various authors of the Talmudic teachings that he cites, from which it

follows that when he *does* do so, it is with an obvious intent. Namely, that a subtle problem with *Rashi's* explanation can be solved by bearing in mind who its author was.

Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai was a victim of the Roman regime, which forced him into exile in a cave for 13 years. Nevertheless, at a later date, when an ambassador was required to plead with the Roman government to annul a decree which had been passed against the Jewish people, the very same Rabbi Shimon who had fled from the Romans was chosen to appeal against them, on the basis that he was a miracle worker (*Me'ilah* 17a).

With this in mind, we can appreciate why it was Rabbi Shimon who saw it feasible that Ya'akov who fled from Eisav was later able to appeal successfully for mercy from his brother, since Rabbi Shimon had achieved the same feat in his own lifetime.

And just as Rabbi Shimon was chosen for the job because he was "a miracle worker" (*ibid.*) similarly we find that Ya'akov also performed wondrous acts, as *Rashi* writes, "He placed his staff into the Jordan, and the Jordan split" (*Rashi* to 32:11, above).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 144ff.)

(Ya'akov intimidated Eisav by saying, "You deserve the gift simply because I have seen your face, which is like seeing the face of (an angel of) God, (for I have indeed seen your guardian angel)—and you have been appeased by me."<sup>11</sup> Please take my gift, which has been brought to you (through tremendous effort), for God has favored me, and I have everything (I need)."

(Ya'akov) urged him, and he took it.

<sup>12</sup> (Eisav) said, "Set off and we'll go (together). I will go alongside you (as slowly as you want)."

<sup>13</sup> (Ya'akov) said to him, "My master knows that the children are tender. The flocks and the cattle, (which) are raising their young, depend upon me. If they push them too hard one day, all the flocks will die. <sup>14</sup> Let my master please go ahead (at his own pace) before his servant, and I will move at my own slow pace—according to the pace of the (animal) workforce (that I'm responsible for), and according to the pace of the children—until I come (and meet) my master at (our final destination of) Se'ir."

<sup>15</sup> Eisav said, "Please let me station with you some of the men that are with me."

"Why is that (necessary)?" (Ya'akov) said. "May I find favor in my master's eyes (and don't pay me anything)."

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why did Ya'akov tell Eisav that he would meet him in Se'ir? (v. 14)

**RASHI:** [Ya'akov] broadened the journey for him, for he only intended to go as far as Sukos. He said to himself, "If he [Eisav] intends to do me harm, he'll wait until I come to him." But [Ya'akov] didn't go [to Se'ir]. And when will he go? In the days of Mashiach, as the verse states, "Deliverers will go up... etc."

**TALMUD:** "If [an idolator] asks you, 'Where you are traveling to?' you should broaden the journey for him, just as Ya'akov our father did to Eisav the wicked one. The verse states [that Ya'akov said, "I will move ...] until I come (and meet) my master at Se'ir" (v. 14), but the Torah states, "Ya'akov traveled to Sukos" (v. 17). (*Avodah Zarah* 25b)

**MIDRASH:** We have searched through all of scripture and we have not found that Ya'akov ever went to Mt. Se'ir. Could it be that

Ya'akov, who was such a truthful person, deceived him? Actually, he was truthful, for he will come to him in the future, as the verse states, "Deliverers will go up on Mt. Tziyon to judge the Mt. of Eisav" (*Ovadiah*. 1:21). (*Bereishis Rabah* 78:14)

**MAHARSHA:** The *Talmud* and *Midrash* appear to be contradictory. The *Talmud* suggests that Ya'akov lied to Eisav in order to protect himself, whereas the *Midrash* suggests that he did not lie. How could *Rashi's* commentary on the *Chumash* combine both the interpretation of the *Talmud* and that of the *Midrash* when they are contradictory?

However, it could be argued that Ya'akov made a statement which he knew would deceive Eisav. Nevertheless, since Ya'akov was such a righteous person, even his misleading statements will ultimately be fulfilled (i.e. his promise will be fulfilled in the Messianic era).

#### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🕒 DID YA'AKOV LIE TO EISAV? (v. 14)

**Maharsha** explains that Ya'akov lied to Eisav but, that being a righteous person, even his "lie" will ultimately come true.

However, this is difficult to accept because the *Talmud* states explicitly, "If he asks you, 'Where you are traveling to?' you should broaden the journey for him, just as Ya'akov Avinu did to Eisav the wicked one." I.e. we are told to speak to the non-Jew in exactly the same manner ("just as") that Ya'akov did to Eisav. Therefore, if Ya'akov lied, we must also lie; and if he told the truth we must also tell the truth. Thus, to answer that only Ya'akov is capable of telling a "truthful lie," and that we cannot emulate him at all, is unacceptable.

Therefore we must find an answer that explains: a.) How Ya'akov told the truth, and b.) How he told the truth in a way that an average person can copy.

#### THE EXPLANATION

At the literal level, Eisav showed no animosity towards Ya'akov during their encounter. Eisav hugged Ya'akov, kissed him and wept with him, and throughout their conversation Eisav addressed Ya'akov with the greatest respect. Thus, there is no reason to conclude, at the literal level, that Ya'akov would have found it necessary to lie to Eisav.

Consequently, *Rashi* does not write that Ya'akov "lengthened the journey for Eisav," suggesting that he fabricated a false destination, but rather, that he "broadened the journey." Increasing the "breadth" stresses that the length of the journey was not extended at all, but rather, that the same journey was undertaken, but it took more time, due to various delays and other considerations.

Thus, at the literal level, Ya'akov did not lie. He merely explained to Eisav that his journey was going to be extremely time-consuming—as the Torah states explicitly, "My master knows that the children are tender. The flocks and the cattle, (which) are raising their young, depend upon me."

#### 🕒 The Last Word 🕒

A Jew should never feel "at home" while we are still in exile. Rather, we must always be aware that the exile is only a temporary state, for in truth, we are in the process of a journey heading towards redemption—like Ya'akov whose journey will be completed only in the Messianic Era.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 164)

דגן אֲשֶׁכַח רַחֲמִין בְּעֵינֵי רַבּוֹנֵי טוֹ וְתָב בְּיוֹמָא  
ההוא עֲשׂוּ לְאַרְחִיָּה לְשַׁעֲרֵי: י וַיַּעֲקֹב נָטַל  
לְסוּבוֹת וּבָנָא לִיָּהּ בֵּיתָא וְלִבְעִירָה עֶבֶד מְטַלְלִין  
עַל כֵּן קָרָא שְׁמָא דְאַתְרָא סוּבוֹת: י וְאַתָּא  
יַעֲקֹב שְׁלִים קָרְתָּא דְשָׁכָם דִּי בְּאַרְעָא  
דְכַנְעַן בְּמִיתוּהֵי מִפְדֵּן אָרָם וּשְׂרָא לְקַבֵּל אִפִּי  
קָרְתָּא: י וּזְבִן יַת אַחְסָנָתָא חֲקֵלָא דִּי פְרָסִיָּה  
תַּמְּן לְמִשְׁפָּנֵיהּ מִיּוֹדָא דְבַנְיָ חֲמוּר אַבּוּהֵי  
דְשָׁכָם בְּמִאָּה חוּרְפָּן: כ וְאַקִּים תַּמְּן מִדְּבָרָא

טו וַיָּשָׁב בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא עָשׂוּ לְדַרְכּוֹ שַׁעֲרָה: י וַיַּעֲקֹב נָסַע סָכְתָּה  
וַיָּבֶן לוֹ בַּיִת וַלְמַקְנָהוּ עָשָׂה סָכְתַּת עַל-בֵּין קָרָא שְׁם-הַמָּקוֹם  
סָכוֹת: ס י וַיָּבֵא יַעֲקֹב שָׁלֹם עֵיר שָׁכָם אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן  
בְּבֹאוֹ מִפְּדֵן אָרָם וַיַּחֲזֵן אֶת-פָּנָיו הָעִיר: יט וַיִּקֶּן אֶת-חֶלְקַת  
הַשָּׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר נָטָה שָׁם אֶהְלוֹ מִיַּד בְּנֵי-חֲמוּר אָבִי שָׁכָם בְּמִאָּה  
קִשְׁיָטָה: כ וַיַּצְבֵּי-שָׁם מוֹזְבֵּת וַיִּקְרָא-לוֹ אֵל אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ס

כ"ט

עקיצא, כשהלכתי לכרכי היס היו קורין למעה, קשיטה. (ותרגומו חורפן טובים, חריפים בכל מקום, כגון עוזר לסוחר): (כ) ויקרא לו אל אלהי ישראל. לא שהמזבח קרוי אלהי ישראל, אלא על שם שהיה הקב"ה עמו והלילו, קרא שם המזבח על שם הכס, להיות שזכו של מקום נזכר בקריאת השם, כלומר, מי שהוא אל, הוא הקב"ה, הוא לאלהים לי, ששמי ישראל, וכן מלינו במשה, ויקרא שמו ה' נסִי, לא שהמזבח קרוי ה', אלא על שם הכס קרא שם המזבח, להזכיר שזכו של הקדוש צרוך הוא, ה' הוא נסִי. ורבותינו דרשו<sup>6</sup>, שהקדוש צרוך הוא קראו ליעקב אל, ודברי תורה כפטיש יפוצן סלט, מתחלקים לכמה טעמים, ואני ליישב פשוטו של מקרא צאתי:

(טז) וישב ביום ההוא עשו לדרך. עשו לדוד, וד' מאות איש שהלכו עמו נשמטו מאללו אחד אחד<sup>1</sup>, והיכן פרע להם הקב"ה בימי דוד, שנאמר כי אם ארבע מאות איש נער אשר רכזו על הגמלים?<sup>2</sup> (יז) ויבן לו בית. שבה שם י"ח חדש, קיץ וחורף וקיץ, סכות קיץ, בית חורף, סכות קיץ: (יח) שלם. שלם בגופו, שנתרפא מללעתו. שלם בזממו, שלא חסר כלום מכל אותו דורו. שלם בתורתו<sup>3</sup>, שלא שנה תלמודו צדיק לזן: עיר שכם. כמו לעיר, וכמוהו עד צואנה בית לחם<sup>4</sup>: בבאו מפדן ארם. כאדם האומר לחצירו, יאל פלוני מבין שיני אריות וצא שלם, אף כאן ויצא שלם מפדן ארם, מלזן ומעשו שנזווגו לו צדק: (יט) קשיטה. מעה. אמר רבי

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Where did Eisav's 400 men go? (v. 16)

RASHI: The verse states, "Eisav returned on...his way." Eisav was alone. The four hundred men slipped away one by one.

TORAS MENACHEM

If they push them too hard one day, all the flocks will die. Let my master please go ahead (at his own pace) before his servant, and I will move at my own slow pace" (v. 13-14).

However, this begs the question why "Ya'akov traveled to Sukos," which suggests that Ya'akov did lie, saying that he was traveling to Se'ir, and yet instead he went to Sukos?

To answer this problem, Rashi writes: "And when will he go? In the days of Mashiach, as the verse states, 'deliverers will go up...'" I.e. Ya'akov's journey to Sukos was not an act of deception. Rather, on his "broader" journey to Se'ir—which is so delayed that it will only be completed in the Messianic Era—the first port of call for Ya'akov was Sukos.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 20, p. 154ff.)

🔗 EISAV'S 400 MEN (v. 16)

What forced Rashi to conclude that, at the literal level, Eisav's four hundred men "slipped away"? And of what relevance is it that they slipped away "one by one"?

Rashi was troubled how Eisav could have returned home peacefully, without carrying out his intent to harm Ya'akov. While we do find that Eisav was temporarily moved by Ya'akov's prostration on the ground, and he even kissed him (v. 3-4), this was surely not representative of Eisav's true feelings for Ya'akov. (As Rashi stresses that either: a.) it was insincere, or b.) only a temporary, uncharacteristic burst of brotherly love).

How could it possibly be that Eisav, who vied to kill his brother and had approached him with an army of 400 men, should return home in peace?

Surely, as soon as his emotions passed, Eisav would have resumed his prior attack?

Rashi answers: "four hundred men slipped away." I.e. Eisav's emotions did pass very quickly, and he soon wanted to harm Ya'akov, but he was simply unable to do so because his army deserted him.

To stress this point further, Rashi writes that they slipped away, "one by one," i.e. they left surreptitiously, trying to avoid Eisav noticing their departure. Now, if Eisav no longer wanted to harm Ya'akov, why would his army need to sneak away? Surely, they would be discharged, being no longer necessary?

From this we see that Eisav's men were fully aware of their master's intention. They were not fooled by Eisav's emotional outburst, for they knew that it would soon pass and he would decide to launch an attack on Ya'akov. So, while Eisav was busy talking, they slipped away one by one, to avoid having to fight a war when Eisav's anger would resurface.

Why did the men have a change of heart, and not want to fight against Ya'akov on Eisav's behalf?

This can be understood from an earlier comment of Rashi. On verse 8, above, Rashi writes:

(Eisav) encountered groups of angels, who were shoving him and his men and asking them, "To whom do you belong?"

They responded, "We belong to Eisav."

(The angels) said, "Strike them! Strike them!"

[Eisav's men] said, "Leave off! [Our master] is Yitzchak's son!" But [the angels] paid no attention.

<sup>16</sup> *On that day, Eisav went back to Se'ir, his usual hang-out, (alone).*

<sup>17</sup> *Ya'akov traveled to Sukos and built himself a house. He made huts ("sukos") for his cattle—therefore he named the place Sukos.*

<sup>18</sup> *(After 18 months) on his way from Padan-Aram, Ya'akov came to the city of Shechem—which is in the land of Canaan—whole (in health, wealth and Torah knowledge), and he encamped in front of the city. <sup>19</sup> He bought the part of the field where he had pitched his tent from the sons of Chamor, Shechem's father, for a hundred kesitas. <sup>20</sup> He erected an altar there, and he named it (to commemorate the miracle of his salvation): "God (is the) God of Israel."*

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

##### ● How was Ya'akov "whole" when he arrived? (v. 18)

**RASHI:** He was physically whole, for he was cured of his limp; financially whole, for he did not lose anything because of the entire gift that he had given Eisav; and whole in his Torah knowledge, for he had not forgotten his Torah knowledge in Lavan's house.

**TALMUD:** Rav said, "He was physically whole, financially whole and whole in his Torah knowledge" (*Shabbos* 33b).

**MIDRASH:** Also, his family was whole, as the verse states, "If Eisav

comes to one camp and strikes it down, the remaining camp [will survive]," but now his family was whole.

**YEFAY TO'AR:** Why does the *Midrash* add a fourth reason which was not cited by the Talmud, that Ya'akov was "whole in his family"?

Because the *Midrash* is of the opinion that Ya'akov was frightened of an attack by Eisav even while Ya'akov was in Sukos. The *Talmud*, on the other hand, understood that Eisav's friendliness to Ya'akov's family indicated that he no longer intended to attack them.

#### TORAS MENACHEM

"He is Avraham's grandson," [said Eisav's men,] but the [angels] paid no attention.

[Eisav's men again retorted,] "He is Ya'akov's brother."

[The angels] then said to them, "If so, he is one of ours."

From this we see that Eisav's men had become intimidated by the angels, and were scared to fight Ya'akov, which explains why they made a quick and subtle exit.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 143ff.)

##### 🕊️ YA'AKOV ARRIVES INTACT (v. 18)

*Rashi's* comment here prompts a number of questions:

a.) The most logical reason why the Torah states that Ya'akov arrived "whole" in Shechem is to teach us that he arrived safely home from the dangers of Lavan and Eisav. What convinced *Rashi* that the verse is speaking here of physical, financial and educational welfare?

b.) The *Midrash* cites a fourth aspect of Ya'akov's well-being, "his family was whole." Why did *Rashi* omit this reason?

(**Yefay To'ar** explains that this fourth reason is only applicable according to the opinion that Ya'akov was still afraid of an attack while in Sukos. *Rashi* however writes explicitly that *only upon arriving at Shechem* (in v. 17, where he traveled *after leaving Sukos*) had Ya'akov, "come out from between the teeth of lions and returned safely," clearly indicating that Ya'akov was still in danger while he remained in Sukos. So why did *Rashi* omit the emphasis that Ya'akov arrived in Shechem, "whole in family"?)

##### THE EXPLANATION

When Ya'akov left his home to travel to Lavan's house, God promised him, "Look, I am with you, and I will guard you wherever you go (from Eisav and Lavan)" (above 28:15 and *Rashi* *ibid.*).

Thus, on reaching our verse, which describes the final return of Ya'akov to the Land of Israel, the reader will immediately be struck by the question: Why does the Torah need to inform us that "Ya'akov came to the city of Shechem... whole"? God had promised Ya'akov that he would return safely, so why would we presume otherwise? The statement that Ya'akov was "whole" appears to be totally redundant here.

Due to this problem, *Rashi* concluded that the verse must be informing us of some new information, a wholeness greater than that which God had promised. *Rashi* explains that Ya'akov's additional wholeness expressed itself in three ways:

a.) God had only promised Ya'akov that he would not be harmed by other men (Eisav and Lavan). He had not promised that Ya'akov would not be harmed by an *act of God*. Thus, when Ya'akov was injured by an angel (an agent of God) it did not contradict God's earlier promise.

Consequently, the fact that Ya'akov arrived back in the Land of Israel, "Physically whole, for he was cured of his limp," represented a wholeness greater than God had promised him, since there was no prior guarantee from God that Ya'akov would be healed from the angel's attack.

b.) God had not promised that Ya'akov would become, or remain wealthy. Thus Ya'akov's "financial wholeness" vastly exceeded God's promise to him.

#### 🕊️ The Last Word 🕊️

While a Jew believes that he will ultimately emerge victorious from this long and bitter exile, he might think that the exile will nevertheless have taken its toll. Even after the redemption comes, one would presume that the Jewish people will be permanently "scarred"—both physically and spiritually—from the long and horrid tribulations of exile.

However, from the Torah's account of Ya'akov's arrival back in the Land of Israel, we can learn that this will not be the case! Ya'akov not only arrived safely—a point the Torah presumed too obvious for the Torah to mention—but, "he was physically whole, financially whole and whole in his Torah knowledge." Likewise the Jewish people will emerge from this final exile unscarred by the experiences of exile, undrained of our physical resources and devoid of any spiritual compromise.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, pp. 173ff.)

ופלח עלוהי קדם אל אלהא דישראל: א ונפקת דינה בת לאה די גלדת לייעקב למחזי בבנת ארעא: ב ותוא יתה שכם בר חמור חואה רבא דארעא ודבר יתה ושכיב יתה ועניה: ג ואתרעיות נפשיה בדינה בת יעקב ורחים ית עולמתא ומליל על לבא דעולמתא: ד ואמר שכם לחמור אבוהי למימר סב לי ית עולמתא הדא לאנתו: ה ויעקב שמע ארי סאיב ית דינה ברתיה ובגוהי הוו עם גיתוהי בחקלא ושתיק יעקב עד מיתיהון: ו ונפק חמור אבוהי דשכם לות יעקב למלא עמיה: ז ובגוי יעקב עלו מן חקלא פד שמעו ואתנסיכו גובריא ותקיף להון לחדא ארי קלנא עבד בישראל למשכב עם בת יעקב וכן לא כשר לאתעבדא: ח ומליל חמור עמהון למימר שכם ברי אתרעיות נפשיה בברתכון הבו כען יתה ליה לאנתו: ט ותתחננו בנא בנתיכון תחננו לנא וית בנתנא תסבון לבון: י ועמנא תיתבון וארעא תהי קדמיכון תיבו ועבידו בה סחורתא ואחסינו בה: יא ואמר שכם לאבוהא ולאתהא אשכח רחמין בעיניכון ודי תימרון לי אתן: יב אסגו עלי לחדא מוחרין ומתנן ואתן כמא די תימרון לי וקבו לי ית עולמתא לאנתו: יג ואתיבו בני יעקב ית שכם וית חמור אבוהי בחקמתא ומלילו די סאב ית דינה אהתהון: יד ואמרו להון לא נכול למעבד פתנמא הדין למתן ית אהתנא לגבר די ליה ערלתא ארי חסודא היא לנא: טו ברם בדא נתפס לבון אם תהון

[חמישי] לד א ותעא דינה בת לאה אשר ילדה ליעקב לראות בבנות הארץ: ב וירא אתה שכם בן חמור החוי נשיא הארץ ויקח אתה וישכב אתה ויענה: ג ותדבק נפשו בדינה בת יעקב ויאהב את הנער: ד וידבר על לב הנער: ה ויאמר שכם אל חמור אביו לאמר קח לי את הילדה הזאת לאשה: ה ויעקב שמע כי טמא את דינה בתו ובגיו היו את מקנהו בשדה והחרש יעקב עד באם: ו ויעא חמור אביו שכם אל יעקב לדבר אתו: ז ובגוי יעקב באו מן השדה כשמעם ויתעצבו האנשים ויחר להם מאד כי נבלה עשה בישראל לשכב את בת יעקב וכן לא יעשה: ח וידבר חמור אתם לאמר שכם בני חשקה נפשו בביתכם תנו נא אתה לו לאשה: ט והתחתנו אתנו בנתיכם תתנו לנו ואת בנותינו תקחו לכם: י ואתנו תשבו והארץ תהיה לפניכם שבו וסחרו והאחוזו בה: יא ויאמר שכם אל אביה ואל אחיה אמצא חן בעיניכם ואשר תאמרו אלי אתן: יב הרבו עלי מאד מהר ומתן ואתנה באשר תאמרו אלי ותנו לי את הנער: יג ויענו בני יעקב את שכם ואת חמור אביו במרמה וידברו אשר טמא את דינה אהתם: יד ויאמרו אליהם לא נוכל לעשות הדבר הזה לתת את אחתנו לאיש אשר לו ערלה כי חרפה הוא לנו: טו אך בזאת נאות לכם

\*הנערה קרי

כש"י

אח הצולות, שהאומות גדרו עלמן מן העריות על ידי המזול: (ח) חשקה. חפלה: (יג) מהר. כחוצה: (יג) במרמה. צחכמה: אשר טמא. ככתוב אומר שלא היתה רמיה, שכרי טמא את דינה אחותם: (יד) חרפה הוא. שמן פסול הוא אללנו, הצא לחרף חברו הוא אומר לו, ערל אתה, או צן ערל. חרפה בכל מקום, גזוף: (טו) נאות לכם. נתרצ לכס, לשון

(ח) בת לאה. ולא צת יעקב. אלא על שם ייחודה נקראת צת לאה, שאף היא ילאנית היתה, שנאמר ותלא לאה לקראתו<sup>1</sup>, (ועליה משלו המשל כאמה כצתה): (ג) וישכב אותה. כדרכה: ויענה. שלא כדרכה? (ג) על לב הנערה. דברים המתיישבים על הלצ, ראי אציק בחלקת שדך קטנה כמה ממון בצזז, אני אשיאך ותקנה העיר וכל שדוטיה: (ד) וכן לא יעשה. לנעות

TORAS MENACHEM

c.) Similarly, God did not promise that Ya'akov would not forget his Torah studies, which could only be expected when working day and night, without sleep, for 20 years (see above 31:40). Therefore, *Rashi* stresses that Ya'akov arrived "whole in his Torah knowledge."

Based on the above we can also understand why *Rashi* omitted the fourth explanation of the *Midrash*—that Ya'akov's family was whole—

since God's blessing, "I will guard you wherever you go," obviously included protection for Ya'akov's family. Therefore, it would be unnecessary for *Rashi* to stress here that God fulfilled his *explicit* promise, mentioned earlier.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 168ff.)

🌀 DINAH & SHECHEM 🌀

34  
FIFTH  
READING

**D**inah—Leah’s daughter, whom she had borne to Ya’akov—went out to observe the daughters of the Land. <sup>2</sup> Shechem—the son of Chamor the Chivite, prince of the land—saw her. He took her, lay with her, and violated her.

<sup>3</sup> His soul cleaved to Dinah, Ya’akov’s daughter. He loved the girl. He spoke to the girl’s heart (telling her how much wealth he had, more than Ya’akov).

<sup>4</sup> Shechem spoke to his father, Chamor, saying, “Take this girl for me as a wife.”

<sup>5</sup> While his sons were with his flocks in the field, Ya’akov heard that (Shechem) had defiled his daughter Dinah. Ya’akov kept silent (waiting) until they came (home).

<sup>6</sup> Chamor, Shechem’s father, went off to Ya’akov to speak with him.

<sup>7</sup> When they heard (the news), Ya’akov’s sons came (home) from the field. The men were distressed and extremely angry, for (Shechem) had committed a disgraceful act in Israel, to lie with a daughter of Ya’akov. Such (acts) were not done (even by the nations, at that time).

<sup>8</sup> Chamor spoke with them, saying, “My son Shechem’s soul yearns for your daughter. Please give her to him for a wife. <sup>9</sup> (Your whole family can) marry with us: give your daughters to us, and take our daughters for yourselves. <sup>10</sup> Live with us! The land will be (free) before you. Settle (in it), do business in it and buy property in it.”

<sup>11</sup> Shechem said to (Dinah’s) father and to her brothers, “May I find favor in your eyes. Whatever you tell me I will give! <sup>12</sup> Impose upon me a large dowry and gifts and I’ll give whatever you ask me. (Just) give me the girl for a wife.”

<sup>13</sup> Ya’akov’s sons responded ingeniously to Shechem and his father Chamor, and they spoke (up. Their response was not dishonest when one considers that) he had defiled their sister Dinah. <sup>14</sup> They said to them, “We are unable to do this thing—to give our sister to a man who has a foreskin, as to us it’s a (blemish of) disqualification.”

<sup>15</sup> “We will consent to you, however, with this (condition): if you will be like us, to have all your males

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why is Dinah described as the “daughter of Leah”? (v. 1)

**RASHI:** Was she not the daughter of Ya’akov? However, because she “went out” [to observe the daughters of the land] she was called the daughter of Leah, since she [Leah] too was outgoing, as the verse states, “Leah came out towards him” (above 30:16). (About her, they coined the saying: “Like mother, like daughter.”)

**ABARBANEL:** The Torah does not come here to disparage Dinah, as *Rashi* suggests, but rather to speak of her praise. She merely “went out to observe the daughters of the land,” and not to get up to any mischief. Since she was the only daughter in Ya’akov’s home, she wanted to see how other girls dress and adorn themselves. And she certainly would not have gone out alone.

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 WAS DINAH AT FAULT? (v. 1)

Why did *Rashi* choose an interpretation which seems to speak negatively about Dinah, rather than adopting a more positive approach [such as that of **Abarbanel**]?

At first glance, one might argue that *Rashi*’s comment was intended to prove Dinah’s innocence, for her outgoing nature was not her own fault, but rather a trait that she had inherited from her mother.

However, such an argument is clearly unacceptable, for it would make no sense to prove Dinah’s innocence at the expense of incriminating Leah. Furthermore, *Rashi* stresses that Leah’s famous act of outgoingness had the purest of motives: “She desired and was seeking means to increase the number of tribes” (*Rashi* to 30:17, above).

Why then did *Rashi* intimate that the incident with Shechem occurred because Dinah was outgoing, just like her mother?

**THE EXPLANATION**

On the night before Ya’akov’s confrontation with Eisav, the Torah states that Ya’akov woke up in the night, and “he took his two wives, his two maids and his eleven children, and crossed the shallow part of (the river) Yabok” (32:23, above). *Rashi* notes (ibid.) that the Torah’s mention of Ya’akov’s “eleven children” does not seem to account for his daughter:

“Where was Dinah? He put her into a chest and locked her in, so that Eisav should not set eyes on her. Because of this, Ya’akov was punished for withholding her from his brother—for perhaps she would have influenced him positively—and she fell into the hands of Shechem.”

בְּתַנְאֵי לְמַגֵּזֵר לְכוּן כָּל דְּכוּרָא: טו וְנָתַן יֵת בְּתַנְאֵי לְכוּן וְיֵת בְּנִתְיֹכוֹן נֶסֶב לְנָא וְנִיתִיב עִמְכוּן וְנָהִי לְעֵמָא חָד: יז וְאִם לֹא תִקְבְּלוּן מִנְנָא לְמַגֵּזֵר וְנִדְבַר יֵת בְּתַנְאֵי וְנִיזִיל: יח וְשִׁפְרוּ פְתַנְמִיהוֹן בְּעֵינֵי חָמוֹר וּבְעֵינֵי שְׂכָם בַּר חָמוֹר: יט וְלֹא אוֹחַר עוֹלִימָא לְמַעֲבַד פְּתַנְמָא אַרִי אַתְרֵעִי בְּבֵת יַעֲקֹב וְהוּא יִקְרוּ מְכַל בֵּית אַבְוֵהִי: כ וְאַתָּא חָמוֹר וְשְׂכָם בְּרִיה לְתַרַע קַרְתֵּהוֹן וּמְלִילוּ עִם אַנְשֵׁי קַרְתֵּהוֹן לְמִימְרָ: כא גּוֹבְרִיא הָאֲלִין שְׁלַמִּין אֲנֹן עֲמָנָא וְיִתְבוּן בְּאַרְעָא וְעֵבְדוּן בָּהּ סְחוּרְתָא וְאַרְעָא הֵא פְתִיּוֹת יְדִין קְדַמִּיהוֹן יֵת בְּנִתְהוֹן נֶסֶב לְנָא לְנִשִּׁין וְיֵת בְּתַנְאֵי נָתַן לְהוֹן: כב בְּרַם בְּדָא יִתְפַסּוּן לְנָא גְבַרִיא לְמַתֵּב עֲמָנָא לְמַהוּי לְעֵמָא חָד בְּמַגֵּזֵר לְנָא כָּל דְּכוּרָא כְּמָא דִּי אֲנֹן גְּזִירִין: כג גִּיתִיהוֹן וְקִנְיִנְהוֹן וְכָל בְּעִירְהוֹן הִלָּא דִּילְנָא אֲנֹן בְּרַם נִתְפַסּ לְהוֹן וְיִתְבוּן עֲמָנָא: כד וְקִבְּלוּ מִן חָמוֹר וּמִן שְׂכָם בְּרִיה כָּל נְפָקֵי תַרַע קַרְתִּיהָ וְגִזְרוּ כָּל דְּכוּרָא כָּל נְפָקֵי תַרַע קַרְתִּיהָ: כה וְהוּא בְּיוֹמָא תְּלִיתָאָה כַּד תְּקִיפוּ עֲלֵיהוֹן בִּיבִיהוֹן וְנִסְיְבוּ תְרִין בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב שְׁמַעוֹן וְלוֹי אַחֵי דִּינָה גְבַר חַרְבִּיהָ וְעָלוּ עַל קַרְתָּא דִּיתְבָּא לְרַחֲצֵן וְקָטְלוּ כָּל דְּכוּרָא: כו וְיֵת חָמוֹר יֵת שְׂכָם

אִם תִּהְיוּ כְּמַנּוּ לְהַמּוֹל לָכֶם כָּל-זָכָר: טו וְנָתַנוּ אֶת-בְּנֹתֵינוּ לָכֶם וְאֶת-בְּנֹתֵיכֶם נִקַּח-לָנוּ וַיֵּשְׁבֵנוּ אִתְּכֶם וְהֵינּוּ לְעַם אֶחָד: יז וְאִם-לֹא תִשְׁמָעוּ אֲלֵינוּ לְהַמּוֹל וְלִקְחָנוּ אֶת-בָּתְנוּ וְהִלְכָנוּ: יח וַיֵּיטְבוּ דְבָרֵיהֶם בְּעֵינֵי חָמוֹר וּבְעֵינֵי שְׂכָם בֶּן-חָמוֹר: יט וְלֹא-אַחַר הִנְעַר לַעֲשׂוֹת הַדָּבָר כִּי חָפֵץ בְּבֵת-יַעֲקֹב וְהוּא נִכְבָּד מְכַל בֵּית אָבִיו: כ וַיָּבֹא חָמוֹר וּשְׂכָם בְּנוֹ אֶל-שַׁעַר עִירָם וַיְדַבְּרוּ אֶל-אֲנָשֵׁי עִירָם לֵאמֹר: כא הָאֲנָשִׁים הָאֵלֶּה שְׁלָמִים הֵם אֲתָנוּ וַיֵּשְׁבוּ בְּאַרְצָן וַיִּסְחָרוּ אֹתָהּ וְהָאָרֶץ הִנְּהָ רַחֲבַת-יָדַיִם לְפָנֵיהֶם אֶת-בְּנֹתָם נִקַּח-לָנוּ לְנָשִׁים וְאֶת-בְּנֹתֵינוּ נָתַן לָהֶם: כב אֲדָ-בְּזָאת יֵאָתוּ לָנוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים לְשֶׁבֶת אֲתָנוּ לְהִיּוֹת לְעַם אֶחָד בְּהַמּוֹל לָנוּ כָּל-זָכָר בְּאֲשֶׁר הֵם נְמַלִּים: כג מִקְנֵיהֶם וּקְנִינָם וְכָל-בְּהֵמָתָם הֲלוֹא לָנוּ הֵם אֲדָ נִאֲוֹתָהּ לָהֶם וַיֵּשְׁבוּ אֲתָנוּ: כד וַיִּשְׁמָעוּ אֶל-חָמוֹר וְאֶל-שְׂכָם בְּנוֹ כָּל-יִצְחָק שַׁעַר עִירוֹ וַיִּמְלֹךְ כָּל-זָכָר כָּל-יִצְחָק שַׁעַר עִירוֹ: כה וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי בְּהִיּוֹתָם כְּאֲבִים וַיִּקְחוּ שְׁנֵי-בְנֵי-יַעֲקֹב שְׁמַעוֹן וְלוֹי אַחֵי דִּינָה אִישׁ חַרְבּוֹ וַיָּבֹאוּ עַל-הָעִיר בַּטַּח וַיַּהַרְגוּ כָּל-זָכָר: כו וְאֶת-

רש"י

בנותיו נתן להם, כדי לרצותם שיאותו להמוני: (כא) שלמים. בשלום ובלבד לשון להפעל: (טו) ונתנו. גוי"ן שניה מודגשת, לפי שהיא משמשת במקום שחי נוי"ן, ונתנו: ואת בנותיכם נקח לנו. אתה מולא בתנאי שאמר חמור ליעקב ובתשובת בני יעקב לחמור, שתלו החשיבות צניי יעקב, ליקח בנות שכם את שיצחרו להם, ובנותיהם יתנו להם לפי דעתם, דכתיב ונתנו את בנותינו, לפי דעתנו, ואת בנותיכם נקח לנו, ככל אשר נחפז, וכשדברו חמור ושכם בנו אל יושבי עירם, הפכו הדברים, את בנותם נקח לנו לנשים, ואת

בנותינו נתן להם, כדי לרצותם שיאותו להמוני: (כא) שלמים. בשלום ובלבד לשון להפעל: (טו) ונתנו. גוי"ן שניה מודגשת, לפי שהיא משמשת במקום שחי נוי"ן, ונתנו: ואת בנותיכם נקח לנו. אתה מולא בתנאי שאמר חמור ליעקב ובתשובת בני יעקב לחמור, שתלו החשיבות צניי יעקב, ליקח בנות שכם את שיצחרו להם, ובנותיהם יתנו להם לפי דעתם, דכתיב ונתנו את בנותינו, לפי דעתנו, ואת בנותיכם נקח לנו, ככל אשר נחפז, וכשדברו חמור ושכם בנו אל יושבי עירם, הפכו הדברים, את בנותם נקח לנו לנשים, ואת

TORAS MENACHEM

At first glance, this appears to be an outrageous assertion: How could Ya'akov possibly have been expected to put his daughter at risk, allowing her to marry the morally debased Eisav, on the mere chance that "perhaps she would have influenced him positively"? Could any person be blamed, never mind punished, for wanting to withhold his daughter from a wicked man?

Rashi's account of Ya'akov's punishment implies that Dinah was so obviously talented that Ya'akov was in fact certain that she had the ability to make Eisav into a good person, without becoming corrupted herself. The only doubt here was that since ultimately Eisav had free choice, there was no guarantee that even Dinah would make him repent. Therefore, Rashi writes that there was a possibility of failure, "perhaps she would have influenced him positively." Nevertheless, Ya'akov was wrong in withholding his daughter from Eisav because she definitely had the ability to make him a better person, and every effort should be made to help a

person do *teshuvah*, even if one is not guaranteed of success. So, in the final analysis, Ya'akov was guilty. He had nothing to lose, for he could be certain that Dinah's personality would be impervious even to Eisav's wickedness, and on the other hand, Eisav had everything to gain.

From the above discussion we see that, Dinah was certainly not a weak person whose natural outgoingness was liable to lead her "off the track," as it appears at first glance. To the contrary, she was blessed with the precious talent of returning people to the path of morality through her wonderful, outgoing personality.

Thus, in our verse, Rashi could not possibly be coming to suggest any bad intention on the part of Dinah in "going out to observe the girls of the Land." Rather, Rashi wished to stress that just like her mother, Leah used her outgoing personality only for the sake of heaven ("she desired and was seeking means to increase the number of tribes"), so too, it goes without saying that Dinah "went out" to use her God-given talent of



circumcised. <sup>16</sup> Then we will give you our daughters, and we will take your daughters for ourselves. We will live with you and become one people.”

<sup>17</sup> “But if you do not listen to us, to be circumcised, we will take our daughter and go.”

<sup>18</sup> Chamor and Shechem, Chamor’s son, were pleased with their words. <sup>19</sup> The young man did not delay carrying out the matter, because he desired Ya’akov’s daughter. He was the most honored of all his father’s household.

<sup>20</sup> Chamor and his son Shechem came to the gate of their city, and they spoke to the people of their city, saying, <sup>21</sup> “These men are peaceful (and sincere) with us. They’re going to live in the land and do business in it. The land is clearly spacious enough for them (so there’s nothing to lose). We’ll take their daughters for ourselves as wives, and we’ll give them our daughters.”

<sup>22</sup> “But the men will only agree to live with us, to be one family, on this (condition): by all our males being circumcised, just as they are circumcised.”

<sup>23</sup> “Then, won’t all their flocks, their property, and all their cattle be ours? Let’s consent to them, and (then) they will live with us.”

<sup>24</sup> All the residents of his city listened to Chamor and his son Shechem, and every male that lived in his city became circumcised.

<sup>25</sup> And then, on the third day when they were in pain, Ya’akov’s two sons Shimon and Levi, Dinah’s brothers, took each man a sword. They came to the city confidently (since they knew the people were weak), and they killed every male.

---

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

---

#### ● How were Shimon and Levi justified in killing *all* the men of Shechem? (v. 25)

**RAMBAM:** One of the seven Noachide Laws, binding on all non-Jews, is to establish a justice system. Since the people of Shechem failed to judge Shechem for his crime against Dinah, all the people of Shechem were collectively liable for the death penalty for failing to uphold justice (*Hilchos Melachim* 9:14).

**RAMBAN:** Establishing a justice system is a *positive* command, but there is no *prohibition* punishable by death against failing to uphold justice, as *Rambam* argues. Rather, the people of Shechem were *already* liable for the death penalty, even before the incident with Dinah, since they were idol worshippers in any case. Thus, after Dinah’s abduction, Shimon and Levi sought revenge based on the people of Shechem’s prior sins (comment to v.13). [continued on p. 242]

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

attracting “the girls of the land” and bringing them to the ways of righteousness.

#### DINAH’S WISH (PARTIALLY) GRANTED

Of course, Dinah’s plan ended in tragedy, as she was abducted by Shechem (though this was through no fault of her own, since it was a punishment for Ya’akov, as explained above.)

Nevertheless, it could be argued that Dinah’s desire to bring the local people closer to Judaism was partially fulfilled as a result of the incident. For, when Ya’akov’s family encouraged the people of Shechem to circumcise themselves, this actually represented a process of conversion to Judaism. And, even though only the men underwent circumcision, it follows that the women would have converted too, as Ya’akov’s sons stressed, “If you will be like us, to have all your males circumcised. Then we will give you our daughters, and *we will take your daughters for ourselves*” (v. 15-16).

Thus, despite the fact that the men of Shechem were ultimately liable for the death penalty (see “Classic Questions” to v. 25), nevertheless, Dinah’s saintly desire to bring the people closer to Judaism did reach partial fruition, since all the people of the town ended up converting because of her. For, even though the men were killed, the women were not—as the verse states, “They captured and plundered all their wealth, all their infants, *their wives* and everything that was in the house” (v. 29). And we

can presume that these women actually became part of Ya’akov’s household.

Thus, in the final analysis, Dinah’s well-meaning attempt to bring the “daughters of the Land” closer to Judaism was ultimately fulfilled, at least in part.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 150ff; see also *Sparks of Chasidus* to 29:17)

#### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

From Dinah’s conduct we can learn that those Jewish women who are blessed with a God-given ability to influence others positively, should make sure to use their talents productively outside the home as well. Of course, a Jewish woman must always maintain an air of modesty, and even when she is outside the home it should be recognizable in her actions that “*the entire glory of the king’s daughter is within*” (Psalms. 45:14). Nevertheless, while retaining the utmost guard in all matters of modesty, it is crucial that Jewish women who are capable of bringing others closer to Judaism spend time outside the home, utilizing their God-given talents for the sake of Heaven.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, pp. 154-5)

בְּרִיחַ קָטְלוּ לְפָתְנָם דְּחָרָב וּדְחָרוּ יַת דִּינָה מִבֵּית שָׁכֶם וּנְפָקוּ: כו בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב עָלוּ לְחַלְצָא קְטִילֵיָא וּבְזוּ קְרָתָא דִּי סְאִיבוּ אֶתְהֵדוּן: כח יַת עֲנָהוּן וַיַּת תּוֹרִיָהוּן וַיַּת חֲמָרִיָהוּן וַיַּת דִּי בְּקָרְתָא וַיַּת דִּי בְּחַקְלָא דְּחָרוּ: כט וַיַּת כָּל נְכִסְיָהוּן וַיַּת כָּל מַפְלָהוּן וַיַּת נְשִׂיָהוּן שָׁבוּ וּבְזוּ וַיַּת כָּל דִּי בְּבֵיתָא: ל וַאֲמַר יַעֲקֹב לְשִׁמְעוֹן וְלֵוִי עֲבַרְתוּן יַתִּי לְמַתָּן דְּכָבוּ בִּינְנָא וּבִין יַתְבִּי אַרְעָא בְּכַנְעֵנָאָה וּבְכַרְוָאָה וְאַנָּא עִם

חֲמֹר וְאֶת־שָׁכֶם בְּזוּ הָרְגוּ לְפִי־חָרָב וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־דִּינָה מִבֵּית שָׁכֶם וַיֵּצְאוּ: כו בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב בָּאוּ עַל־הַחֲלָלִים וַיִּבְזוּ הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר טָמְאוּ אַחֲזָתָם: כח אֶת־צֵאֲנָם וְאֶת־בְּקָרָם וְאֶת־חֲמֹרֵיהֶם וְאֶת־אֲשֶׁר־בְּעִיר וְאֶת־אֲשֶׁר בְּשָׂדֶה לָקְחוּ: כט וְאֶת־כָּל־חֵילָם וְאֶת־כָּל־טַפָּם וְאֶת־נְשֵׂיהֶם שָׁבוּ וַיִּבְזוּ וַיַּת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר בְּבֵיתָא: ל וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־שִׁמְעוֹן וְאֶל־לֵוִי עֲבַרְתֶּם אִתִּי לְהַבְאִישְׁנִי

רש"י

של זקן': (כז) על החללים. לפשט החללים, וכן חרגם חונקלום לחללם קטוליא: (כט) חילם. ממנוס, וכן עשה לי חת החיל הזה<sup>2</sup>, וישראל עושה חיל<sup>3</sup>, ועזבו לאחרים חילם<sup>4</sup>: שבו. לשון שזיה, לפיכך טעמו מלרע: (ל) עברתם. לשון מים עכורים<sup>5</sup>, חין דעמי ללולה עכשיו. ואגדה, ללולה

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why was Ya'akov angry with Shimon and Levi? (v. 30)

**RASHI:** עֲבַרְתָּם is an expression denoting murky water. [Thus, Ya'akov was saying,] "Now my mind is not clear."

According to the *Midrash* [he was saying]: "The barrel was clear, but you have made it murky." The Canaanites had a tradition that they would fall into the hands of Ya'akov's sons, but they said [that this would not happen], "Until you have increased and can occupy

the land" (*Shemos* 23:30). Therefore, they have been silent [until now].

**RADVAZ:** If the people of Shechem were liable for the death penalty in any case [see Classic Questions to v. 25, above] why did Ya'akov become angry with Shimon and Levi?

Because, when the people of Shechem circumcised themselves, they actually converted to Judaism, and a convert is considered to be like a newborn baby, clean of sin.

TORAS MENACHEM

🕯️ YA'AKOV'S REBUKE (v. 30)

Both **Rambam** and **Ramban** explain that Shimon and Levi did not spill innocent blood, God forbid, when they killed the people of Shechem. Rather the people were in fact liable for the death penalty (see above, "Classic Questions" to v. 25).

A further proof of this point is that Ya'akov did not criticize Shimon and Levi for the actual killing of the people of Shechem. He appeared only to be worried about the consequences which could arise: "You have made (my mind) troubled, creating hostility (between) me and the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and among the Perizites. I have only a few (men). They can gather against me and attack me, and then I and my household will be destroyed!" (v. 30 see Rashi ibid).

However, from a later comment of Rashi in *Parshas Vayechi* it appears that Ya'akov was unhappy, not only with the potential consequences of the episode, but also with the actions of Shimon and Levi themselves. In his blessing to Shimon and Levi, before he passed away, Ya'akov criticized them, "They killed (every) man (in Shechem) to vent their anger" (49:6). Similarly he indicates his dissatisfaction that "their (murderous use of) weapons has been stolen" (ibid. 5), on which Rashi comments, "This craft of murder is in their hands wrongfully, [for] it is [part] of Eisav's blessing. It is his craft, and you, Shimon and Levi, have stolen it from him."

From this we see clearly that Ya'akov was dissatisfied with the method which Shimon and Levi used to eliminate the people of Shechem, and not merely the potential dangers which could have arisen after the attack.

So we are left with the question (posed by **Radvaz**): If the people of Shechem were liable for the death penalty (as **Rambam** and **Ramban** write), why did Ya'akov disapprove of Shimon and Levi's actions?

Two explanations could be argued:

a.) In principle, Ya'akov agreed that the people of Shechem were liable for the death penalty. However, it was physically impossible for Ya'akov and his family to eliminate an entire community singlehandedly, without resorting to actions which could be interpreted as "foul play," i.e. to encourage the people to circumcise themselves and then kill them when they were weak. Obviously, such apparently deceptive plans would bring about a *chilul Hashem* (desecration of God's Name). Therefore, considering the circumstances, Ya'akov considered it better to do nothing at all.

b.) Alternatively, perhaps Ya'akov argued that to the contrary, the deception was totally unnecessary in this case. The people of Shechem were liable for the death penalty, so despite the fact that it appeared to be impossible for two young men to wipe out an entire community in the natural order of things, Shimon and Levi should nevertheless have trusted that God would assist them in their actions. Thus, Ya'akov felt that it was totally unnecessary for them to resort to the ethically dubious plan of encouraging the people to circumcise themselves under false pretenses, for this would cause a *chilul Hashem*. Shimon and Levi should simply have trusted in God, since they were intending to carry out a Divinely decreed punishment of death on the people of Shechem.

[In other words, while a person should always seek ways of carrying out his affairs in the natural order, ultimately success comes not from one's own deeds, but from God's assistance. It is only that God desired that a person make a physical effort though which His intervention can be channeled. However, if no "channel" is available which is both natural and ethical, then the only option is to rely on God's supernatural assistance.]

<sup>26</sup> They killed Chamor and his son Shechem with a sword. They took Dinah out of Shechem's house and left.

<sup>27</sup> Ya'akov's sons came (to strip) the corpses (of their possessions). They plundered the city that had defiled their sister: <sup>28</sup> They took their flocks, their cattle, their donkeys—whatever was in the city and whatever was in the field. <sup>29</sup> They captured and plundered all their wealth, all their infants, their wives and everything that was in the house.

<sup>30</sup> Ya'akov said to Shimon and to Levi, "You have made (my mind) troubled, creating hostility (between) me and the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and among the Perizites. I have

---

TORAS MENACHEM

---

Thus, in this case, Ya'akov criticized his sons: "Since your plan was justified on halachic (legal) grounds, you would have had God's help. The fact that you did not see any means of success in the natural scheme of things should not have stopped you. You should have relied on God to help you, and not made a deceptive plan which has caused a *chilul Hashem*."

In fact, this explanation seems to be supported by a later statement of *Rashi*. In Ya'akov's rebuke of Shimon and Levi before his passing, he uses the expression *הָרְגוּ אִישׁ* (49:6), which literally means, "They killed a man." Noting the obvious discrepancy, that Shimon and Levi killed many men, *Rashi* writes, "All of them are considered as no more than one man."

At first glance, this appears to be perplexing. Why was it relevant to Ya'akov's rebuke that "all of them are considered as no more than one man"?

However, based on the above explanation, we can understand that Ya'akov was implying: "Why did you resort to plans of deception? You should have trusted in God's help and considered them all to be as no more than one man!"

#### IN DEFENSE OF SHIMON AND LEVI

Why indeed did Shimon and Levi not trust in God and wage war on the people of Shechem without deception?

Two explanations could be offered: a.) Even though they trusted in God, in their humility they considered themselves unworthy of an open miracle. Or, b.) Since they were angry, they made a miscalculation (cf. *Rashi* to *Bamidbar* 31:21; *Pesachim* 66b).

### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

**O**n the words "each man his sword" (v. 25), our Sages comment in the *Midrash*: "They were thirteen years old," and it is on this basis that we derive that a boy becomes obligated in *mitzvos* at the age of thirteen.

At first glance, this appears to be perplexing: Why should the Torah teach us about the positive status of becoming obligated in *mitzvos* with the most negative incident, where Shimon and Levi slaughtered the people of Shechem?

However, in truth, the brothers' act was not a negative one at all. They acted passionately, to defend the cause of righteousness, putting rational considerations aside to ensure an immediate and effective response.

This is a lesson for every Jewish boy who reaches the age of thirteen, that the observance of *mitzvos* should be carried out with every fiber of one's being, with total self-sacrifice.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, pp. 150, 161-2)

Nevertheless, Shimon and Levi defended their actions to their father. They responded, "Could we (allow them) to make our sister like a harlot?" (v. 31). I.e. they were implying, "The way in which Shechem disgraced our sister aroused in us a feeling of utter indignation. We simply could not tolerate what had occurred, so we had to take some action. When one is in such a state, it is impossible to think rationally. One simply has to take action."

#### WAS YA'AKOV SATISFIED WITH SHIMON AND LEVI'S REPLY?

We do not find that Ya'akov made any response to Shimon and Levi's reply, which would suggest that he accepted what they said. Presumably, Ya'akov understood the value of passionate zealotry in matters of holiness—as the Torah praises Pinchas for being a zealot (*Bamidbar* 25:11ff)—and he understood that in such a heightened state of indignation it is not possible to be entirely rational about one's actions.

However, this begs the question: If Ya'akov was indeed satisfied with Shimon and Levi's response, as the Torah appears to indicate here, then why did he rebuke them before his passing? ("Their murderous use of weapons has been stolen," "This craft of murder is in their hands wrongfully... they killed (every) man (in Shechem) to vent their anger" 49:5-6 and *Rashi* *ibid*).

This problem can be explained in light of the end of the above-cited verse: "They killed (every) man (in Shechem) to vent their anger, and they willingly (attempted) to maim an ox." *Rashi* writes, "They wanted to eliminate Yosef, who was called an 'ox,' as the verse states, 'The firstborn of his oxen, grandeur is his' (*Devarim* 33:17)."

Clearly, when the brothers harmed Yosef, it was *not* an act of righteous indignation or holy zealotry. Thus, the incident with Yosef caused Ya'akov to re-evaluate Shimon and Levi's earlier actions with the people of Shechem. Now it was evident that these two brothers did have a subtle aggressive streak. So, while their actions against Shechem were still justified, it was nevertheless likely that their response was also a function of their personalities rather than being totally for the sake of Heaven. So, while Ya'akov had accepted Shimon and Levi's argument for killing the people of Shechem *at the time*, he nevertheless considered it later on to be only partially valid.

#### WERE SHIMON AND LEVI DISRESPECTFUL TO THEIR FATHER?

One problem which remains is that Shimon and Levi appear to have been disrespectful to their father in seeking retribution against Shechem without his consent. As *Rashi* writes, "They were his sons, but nevertheless, Shimon and Levi conducted themselves like other people, who were not his sons, for they did not seek his advice" (v. 25).

However, it could be argued that, while Ya'akov may have initially complained that he had not been consulted, Shimon and Levi's response proves that they had no requirement to consult their father first. In order to explain why this is the case, we first need to clarify the precise halachic requirement of honoring parents before the giving of the Torah (and likewise, for non-Jews after the giving of the Torah).

בְּיָשֶׁב הָאָרֶץ בְּכַנְעַנִי וּבְפָרְזִי וְאֲנִי מִתִּי מִסְפָּר וְנֶאֱסָפוּ עָלַי  
וְהַפּוֹנִי וְנִשְׁמַדְתִּי אֲנִי וּבֵיתִי: ל א וַיֹּאמְרוּ \*הַכּוֹזֵנָה יַעֲשֶׂה  
אֶת־אֲחוֹתָנוּ: פ לה א וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־יַעֲקֹב קוּם עֲלֶה  
בֵּית־אֵל וְשִׁב־שָׁם וַעֲשֵׂה־שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לְאֵל הַנִּרְאָה אֵלֶיךָ  
בְּבָרְחֶךָ מִפְּנֵי עֲשׂוֹ אֲחִיךָ: ג וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ וְאֵל  
כָּל־אֲשֶׁר עִמּוֹ הָסְרוּ אֶת־אֱלֹהֵי הַנֶּכֶר אֲשֶׁר בְּתוֹכְכֶם וְהִטְהַרוּ  
וְהִחְלִיפוּ שִׁמְלֹתֵיכֶם: ד וְנִקְוָמָה וְנַעֲלֶה בֵּית־אֵל וְאֶעֱשֶׂה־שָׁם  
מִזְבֵּחַ לְאֵל הָעֵנָה אֲתִי בְּיוֹם עֲרַתִּי וְיְהִי עִמָּדִי בַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר  
הִלַּכְתִּי: ה וַיִּתְּנוּ אֶל־יַעֲקֹב אֶת כָּל־אֱלֹהֵי הַנֶּכֶר אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדָם  
וְאֶת־הַנְּזֻמִּים אֲשֶׁר בְּאֲזִנֵיהֶם וַיִּטְמְנוּ אֹתָם יַעֲקֹב תַּחַת הָאֵלֶּה  
אֲשֶׁר עִם־שָׁכֶם: ו וַיִּסְעוּ וַיְהִי אֲחֵת אֱלֹהִים עַל־הָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר  
סָבִיבוֹתֵיהֶם וְלֹא רָדְפוּ אַחֲרֵי בְנֵי יַעֲקֹב: ז וַיָּבֵא יַעֲקֹב לְוֵזָה  
אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן הוּא בֵּית־אֵל הוּא וְכָל־הָעַם אֲשֶׁר־עִמּוֹ:  
ח וַיָּבֵן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ וַיִּקְרָא לְמָקוֹם אֵל בֵּית־אֵל כִּי שָׁם נִגְלוּ אֵלָיו  
הָאֱלֹהִים בְּבָרְחוֹ מִפְּנֵי אֲחִיו: ט וַתָּמַת דְּבָרָה מִיַּנְקַת רַבֵּקָה  
וַתִּקְבֹּר מִתַּחַת לְבֵית־אֵל תַּחַת הָאֵלֹן וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ אֵלֹן  
בְּכוֹת: פ ט וַיָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶל־יַעֲקֹב עוֹד בְּבֹאוֹ מִפְּדַן אֲרָם

דַּמְנִין וַיִּתְכַּנְּשׁוּן עָלַי וַיִּמְחַנְּנִי וַאֲשֶׁתִּי צִי אָנָּה  
וְאֲנִשׁ בֵּיתִי: לא וַאֲמָרוּ הַכּוֹנְפֶקֶת בְּרָא יַעֲבִיד  
יֵת אֲחֵתָנָא: א וַאֲמַר יִי לַיעֲקֹב קוּם סָק לְבֵית  
אֵל וְתִיב תַּמָּן וְעַבֵּד תַּמָּן מִדְּבַחָא לְאֵלֵהָא  
דְּאֲתַנְגְּלִי לָךְ בְּמִיעֲרָקָךְ מִן קַדְשׁ עֲשׂוֹ אֲחִיךָ:  
ג וַאֲמַר יַעֲקֹב לְאֲנִשׁ בֵּיתִיהָ וְלִכְל דִּי עִמִּיהָ  
אֲעִדוּ יֵת טַעֲוֹת עַמְמֵיָא דִּי בִינִיכוּן וְאֲדַכּוּ  
וְשִׁנוּ כְּסוּתוֹכוּן: ג וְנִקְוָמָה וְנִסְק לְבֵית אֵל  
וְאֲעִבִיד תַּמָּן מִדְּבַחָא לְאֵלֵהָא דְקַבִּיל צְלוֹתִי  
בְּיוֹמָא דְעַקְתִּי וְהוּהוּ מִימְרִיהָ בְּסַעֲדִי בְּאַרְחָא  
דִּי אֲזַלִּית: ד וַיְהִיבוּ לַיעֲקֹב יֵת כָּל טַעֲוֹת  
עַמְמֵיָא דִּי בִידִיהוֹן וַיֵּת קַדְשֵׁיָא דִּי בְּאוֹדְנִיהוֹן  
וַטְמַר יֵתֵהוֹן יַעֲקֹב תַּחֲוֹת בּוֹטְמָא דִּי עִם שָׁכֶם:  
ה וְנִטְלוּ וְהוֹת דַּחְלָא מִן קַדְשׁ יִי עַל עַמְמֵיָא  
דִּי בְקַרְוֵי סַחְרֵיָהוֹן וְלֹא רָדְפוּ בְּתֵר בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב:  
ו וַאֲתָא יַעֲקֹב לְלוּזֵי דִּי בְּאַרְעָא דְכְנָעַן הוּא  
בֵּית אֵל הוּא וְכָל עַמָּא דִּי עִמִּיהָ: ז וַיָּבֵן תַּמָּן  
מִדְּבַחָא וַיִּקְרָא לְאֲתָרָא אֵל בֵּית אֵל אֲרִי תַּמָּן  
אֲתַנְגְּלִי לִיהָ יִי בְּמִיעֲרָקִיהָ מִן קַדְשׁ  
אֲחִיהָ: ח וּמִיתַת דְּבּוֹרָה מִנְקַתָּא דְרַבֵּקָה  
וַאֲתַקְבֵּרַת מִלְרַע לְבֵית אֵל בְּשַׁפּוּלֵי מִישְׁרָא  
וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמִיהָ מִישְׁרָא בְּכִיתָא: ט וַאֲתַנְגְּלִי יִי  
לַיעֲקֹב עוֹד בְּמִיתוּהִי מִפְּדַן אֲרָם וּבְרִידֵי יֵתִיהָ:

\*יש גורסים ז' רבתי

רש"י

רבים, כמו אדני יוסף, אס צעלו עמו, ולא נאמר צעלו, וכן אלוהות שהוא  
לשון שופט ומרות נזכר בלשון רבים, אצל אחד מכל שאר השמות לא תמצא  
בלשון רבים: (ח) ותמת דבורה. מה ענין דבורה צדיקת יעקב, אלא לפי  
שאמרה רבקה ליעקב ושלחתי ולקחתך משם, שלחה דבורה אללו לפדן ארם  
ללאח משם, ומתה דרך, מדברי רבי משה הדרשן למדתי: מתחת לבית  
אל. העיר יושבת צהר, ונקצרה צרגלי הכר: תחת האלון. בשפולי מישרא,  
שהיה מישור למעלה בשפוע הכר, והקצורה מלמטה, ומישור של בית אל  
היו קורין לו אלון. ואגדה<sup>5</sup>, נחשך שם צאל שני, שהוגד לו על אמו שמתה.  
ואלון בלשון יוני (אצל) [אחר], ולפיכך (ולפי ש) בעליומו את יום מותה, שלא  
יקללו הצריות הכרם שיאל ממנו עשו, אף הכתוב לא פרסמה: (ט) עוד.

היתה הכזיב, ועכרתם אותה!<sup>1</sup> מסורת היתה ציד כנענים שיפלו ציד בני  
יעקב, אלא שהיו אומרים עד אשר תפרכ ונחלת את הארץ, לפיכך היו  
שוקקין: מתי מספר. אנשים מועטים: (ל) הכוזבה. הפקר: את אחותנו.  
ית אחתנא: (א) קום עליה. לפי שאחרת דרך<sup>2</sup>, נעשת וצא לך זאת מצדך:  
(ג) הנבר. שיש צידכם משלל של שכם: והטהרו. מעבודת אלילים: והחליפו  
שמלותיכם. שמא יש צידכם כמות של עבודת אלילים: (ד) האלה. מין אילן  
סרק: עם שכם. אלא שכם: (ה) חתת. פחד: (ז) אל בית אל. הקצ"ה צדיק  
אל, גילווי שכינתו צדיק אל. יש חיבה חסרה צי"ת המשמשת צראשה, כמו  
הנה הוא צדיק מכיר בן עמיאל<sup>3</sup>, כמו צדיק מכיר, צדיק אציק<sup>4</sup>, כמו צדיק  
אציק: נגלו אליו האלהים. במקומות הרבה יש שם אלוהות ואלוהות בלשון

TORAS MENACHEM

Honoring parents is not one of the Seven Noachide Laws which are binding on all mankind. In fact, this *mitzvah* was given for the first time to the Jewish people while they were encamped at Marah (see *Sanhedrin* 56b), which suggests that beforehand there was no obligation to honor one's parents. On the other hand, *Rashi* indicates clearly, in a number of places, that there was a precept of honoring one's parents even before the

giving of the Torah. For example, we find, "Scripture related Terach's death before Avram's departure, so that the matter should not be publicized to everybody and they would say, 'Avram did not honor his father, for he left him in his old age and went away'" (*Rashi* to 11:32, above). Here we see that honoring parents was a precept accepted universally by the nations of the world, and not a personal stringency of Avraham, for

only a few (men). They can gather against me and attack me, and then I and my household will be destroyed!”

<sup>31</sup> (Shimon and Levi) said, “Could we (allow them) to make our sister like a harlot?”

## 🌀 JOURNEY TO BEIS-AIL / YA'AKOV'S NAME IS CHANGED 🌀

**35** **G**od said to Ya'akov, “Get going and travel up to Beis-Ail, and settle there. Make there an altar to the God Who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Eisav.”

<sup>2</sup> Ya'akov said to his household, and to all those who were with him, “Remove the foreign gods which are among you (from the booty of Shechem). Purify yourselves (from idol worship) and change your clothes (in case they were used for idol worship too). <sup>3</sup> We're setting off to go up to Beis-Ail. I will make an altar to the God Who answered me on the day of my distress, and Who was with me on the way that I went.”

<sup>4</sup> They gave Ya'akov all the foreign gods that were in their possession and the earrings that were in their ears. Ya'akov hid them under the (non fruit-bearing) tree that was near Shechem.

<sup>5</sup> Then they journeyed. The fear of God was upon the cities that were around them, and they did not pursue the children of Ya'akov.

<sup>6</sup> Ya'akov came to Luz—which is Beis-Ail—that is in the land of Cana'an—(both) he and all the people who were with him. <sup>7</sup> He built an altar there, and he called the place “God (is in) Beis-Ail,” for God was revealed to him there when he was fleeing from his brother.

<sup>8</sup> Rivkah's nurse Devorah (who had come to fetch Ya'akov from Lavan's house) died. She was buried beneath Beis-Ail, at the bottom of the plain (“Alon”), so he named it Alon-Bachus.

<sup>9</sup> God appeared again to Ya'akov (in the same location) as he was coming from Padan-Aram, and He

---

### TORAS MENACHEM

---

otherwise the Torah would not be concerned about publicizing Avraham's act to the nations.

In fact, we even find that Ya'akov was punished for failing to honor his father, which proves that there was indeed an obligation to do so: “Yosef was separated from his father only twenty-two years...corresponding to the twenty-two years that Ya'akov was separated from his father [when] he did not honor him...measure for measure” (Old text of Rashi, 28:9. See also 37:34).

How are these statements to be reconciled with the fact that the *mitzvah* of honoring parents was only given at Marah?

#### THE EXPLANATION

This matter can be explained, based on a statement of Ramban: “In my opinion, the requirement of making ‘laws’ which is included among the Seven Noachide commandments is not merely that they must appoint judges in each district [as Rambam suggests], but rather, He commanded them concerning the laws of theft, overcharge, wronging, a hired man's wages, the laws of guardians and property, violation of a woman, seduction, principles of damage and wounding another, laws of creditors and debtors, laws of buying and selling etc.” (Ramban to 34:13).

In other words, Ramban understands that the Noachide code contains within it a requirement for *all* aspects of civil rights and social welfare which are needed to uphold civilization in *general*. This would obviously include a requirement to honor one's parents, for by the very same reasoning that a person is required to pay back a financial debt, so he should repay his parents for caring for him when he was unable to do so himself (see *Jerusalem Talmud, Pe'ah* 1:1; *Sefer Hachinuch, mitzvah* 33).

Nevertheless, at that time, honoring parents was not a *particular mitzvah* in itself, but rather, a ramification of the *general principle* of maintaining a stable society. Only later, at Marah, did honoring parents become a specific halachic requirement in itself (for Jewish people).

A significant practical ramification which was added at Marah would occur, for example, in a case where a person wishes to carry out an act which is of tremendous social benefit, but which is offensive to his parents. If honoring parents is a *particular obligation* in itself, then the act may simply not be done, for a person may not commit a sin in order to enable him to carry out a *mitzvah*.

But if, on the other hand, we are speaking of a single, general requirement of upholding civilization, then each act needs to be evaluated in terms of how it achieves this purpose as a *whole*. Thus, if an act was of particular social value but it was offensive to one's parents, it might nevertheless be permitted if it could be argued that there was an *overall gain* to society.

So, in the case of Shimon and Levi, when they replied to their father, “Could we (allow them) to make our sister like a harlot?” they actually provided *halachic* justification for their apparent failure to consult their father. Namely, that since they were involved in a significant act of social justice—to correct the appalling crime against Dinah, “a disgraceful act in Israel” (34:7)—it was crucial for the good of society that action be taken immediately, without delaying the matter for consultation. Thus, in this case, society was best served by Shimon and Levi in their *not* consulting their father.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 150ff.; *ibid.* p. 403 ff.)

י ואמר ליה יי שמך יעקב לא יתקרי שמך עוד יעקב אלהיו ישראל יהי שמך וקרא את שמייה ישראל: יא ואמר ליה יי אנא אל שדי פוש וסני עם וכנשת שבטין יהון מנך ומלכין דשליטין בעממנא מנך יפקון: יב ונת ארעא די יהבית לאברהם וליצחק לך אתגנינה ולבניך בתרך אתן את ארעא: יג ואסתלק מעלווהי יקרא דיין באתרא די מליל עמיה: יד ואקים יעקב קמתא באתרא די מליל עמיה קמת אבנא ונסך עלה נסובין ואריק עלה משחא: טו וקרא יעקב את שמא דאתרא די מליל עמיה תמן יי בית אל: טז ונסלו מבית אל והוה עוד כרוב ארעא למיעל לאפרת וליידת רחל וקשיאת במילדה: יז והוה בקשייתה במילדה ואמרת לה חיתא לא תדחלין ארי אף דין ליד בר: יח והוה במפק נפשה ארי מיתת וקרת שמייה בר דני ואבוהי קרא ליה בנימין: יט ומיתת רחל ואתקברת באורח אפרת היא בית לחם: כ ואקים יעקב קמתא על קבורתה היא קמת קבורתא דרחל עד יומא דין: כא ונטל ישראל ופרסיה למשפניה מהלאה למגדלא דעדר: כב והוה בד שרא ישראל בארעא ההיא ואול ראובן ושכב עם בלהה לחינתא דאבוהי ושמע ישראל והוה בני יעקב תרי

ויברך אתו: י ואמר לו אלהים שמך יעקב לא יקרא שמך עוד יעקב כי אם ישראל יהיה שמך ויקרא את שמו ישראל: יא ואמר לו אלהים אני אל שדי ורבה גוי וקהל גוים יהיה ממך ומלכים מחלצוך יצאו: [ששין] יב ואת הארץ אשר נתתי לאברהם וליצחק לך אתגנינה ולזרעה אחריך אתן את הארץ: יג ועל מעליו אלהים במקום אשר דבר אתו: יד ויעב יעקב מצבה במקום אשר דבר אתו מצבת אבן ויסך עליה נסך ויצק עליה שמן: טו ויקרא יעקב את שם המקום אשר דבר אתו שם אלהים בית אל: טז ויסעו מבית אל ויהי עוד בכרת הארץ לבוא אפרתה ותלד רחל ותקש בלדתה: יז והי בהקשתה בלדתה ותאמר לה המילדת אל תיראי כי גס זה לך בן: יח והי בצאת נפשה כי מתה ותקרא שמו בן אונן ואביו קרא לו בנימין: יט ותמת רחל ותקבר בדרך אפרתה הוא בית לחם: כ ויעב יעקב מצבה על קברתה הוא מצבת קברת רחל עד היום: כא ויסע ישראל ויט אהלה מהלאה למגדל עדר: כב והי בשבן ישראל בארץ ההוא וילד ראובן וישכב את בלהה פילגש אביו וישמע ישראל \* פ והיו בני יעקב שנים עשר:

\*99 סקא באמצע 109

רש"י

מאתו כצרת ארץ<sup>6</sup>, ואומר אני שהוא שם מדת קרקע, כמו מהלך פרסה או יותר, כמו שאתה אומר למד כרס, חלקת שדה, כך צמהלך אדם נותן שם מדה (קרקע כמו מהלך מיל) כצרת ארץ: (יז) כי גם זה. נוסף לך על יוסף. ורבותיו דרשו, עס כל שצט נולדה תאומה, ועס צנימין נולדה תאומה יחירה: (יח) בן אונן. בן לערי: בנימין. נראה צעוני, לפי שהוא לצדו נולד צאריך כנען, שהיא צנגז כש'אדם צא מארס נהרים, כמו שנאמר צנגז צאריך כנען, הלך ונסוט הנגצה: בנימין. בן ימין, לשון לפון וימין אתה צראתס<sup>7</sup>, לפיכך הוא מלא. (דבר אחר צנימין, בן ימים, שנולד לעת צקנתו, ונכתב צניו"ן כמו לקן הימין<sup>8</sup>): (כב) בשבן ישראל בארץ ההיא. עד שלא צא לצברון אלל יצחק, ארעוכו כל חלה: וישכב. מתוך שצלבל משכבו, מעלה עליו הכתוב כאילו שכב. ולמה צלבל וחלל יאועו, שכשמתה רחל, נעל יעקב מעתה שהיתה נתונה דעיר צאהל רחל, ולא צשאר אהלים, ונתנה צאהל צלה, צא ראוונ ותצט עלצון אמו, אמר, אס אחות אמי היתה לרה לאמי, שפחת אחות אמי תהא לרה לאמי, לכך צלבל<sup>9</sup>: ויהיו בני יעקב שנים עשר. מתחיל לענין ראשון, משנולד צנימין נשלמה המטה, ומעתה ראויס להמנות, ומנאן.

פעם שני צמקוס הזה, אחד צלכתו ואחד צשוצו: ויברך אתו. צרכת אכליס: (י) לא יקרא שמך עוד יעקב. לשון אדם הצא צמארצ ועקצה, אלל לשון שר ונגיד: (יא) אבני אל שדי. שאני כדאי לצרך, שהצרכות שלי: פרה ורבה. על שס שעדיין לא נולד צנימין, ואף על פי שכצר נתעצרה ממנו: גוי. צנימין: גויים. מנשה ואפריס<sup>2</sup>, שעחידים ללאת מיוסף, והס צמנין השצטים: ומלכיס. שאלו ואיש צשח<sup>3</sup>, שהיו משצט צנימין שעדיין לא נולד (ופסוק זה דרשו אצנר כשהמליך איש צושח, ואף השצטים דרשוכו וקרצו צנימין, דכתיב איש ממנו לא יתן את צתו לצנימין לאשה<sup>4</sup>, וחזרו ואמרו, אלמלא היה עולה מן השצטים, לא היה הקצ"ה אומר ליעקב ומלכיס מחלצוך ילאו): גוי וקהל גויים. (שגויים) עחידים צניו ליעשות כמנין הגויים, שהס ע' אומות, וכן כל הסנהדרין שצעים. דבר אחר, שעחידים צניו להקריב צשעת איסור הצמות כגויס צימי חליכו (צרש"י ישן): (יג) במקום אשר דבר אתו. איני יודע, מה מלמדנו: (טז) כברת הארץ. מנחס פירש לשון כציר, רצוי מהלך רב. ואגד<sup>5</sup>, צומן שהארץ חלולה ומנוקצת כצברה, שהניר מלוי, והסתיו עבר, והכרצ עדיין לא צא. ואין זה פשוטו של מקרא, שהרי צנעמן מצינו, וילך

blessed him. <sup>10</sup> God said to him, “Your name is Ya’akov. You will no longer be named Ya’akov (which denotes deception [aKaVah]). Rather, Yisra’el shall be your name (denoting a leader [SaR]),” and He named him Yisra’el.

<sup>11</sup> God said to him, “I am the Almighty God (Who has the power to bless). Be fruitful and multiply! A nation (through Binyamin) and a multitude of nations (through Menasheh and Efrayim) will come from you, and kings (Sha’ul and Ish Boshes, descended from Binyamin) shall emerge from your loins.”

SIXTH  
READING

<sup>12</sup> “I will give you the Land that I gave to Avraham and to Yitzchak, and I will give the Land to your descendants after you.”

<sup>13</sup> God’s glory ascended from him, in the place where He had spoken with him. <sup>14</sup> Ya’akov erected a monument in the place where (God) had spoken with him, a stone monument. He poured a drink-offering on it, and then he poured oil on it.

<sup>15</sup> Ya’akov named the place where God had spoken with him Beis-Ail.

### 🕎 BINYAMIN IS BORN / ROCHEL PASSES AWAY 🕎

35:16 **T**hey journeyed from Beis-Ail, and there was still considerable distance to come to Efras (when Rochel went into labor. Her labor was difficult.

<sup>17</sup> And then, when she was having difficulty giving birth, the midwife said to her, “Do not be afraid, for this one, too, is a son for you.”

<sup>18</sup> And then, as her soul was departing, for she was dying, she named him Ben-Oni (“son of my sorrow”)—but his father called him Binyamin (“son of the south,” i.e. the Land of Canaan).

<sup>19</sup> Rochel died. She was buried on the road to Efras, which is Beis-Lechem. <sup>20</sup> Ya’akov erected a monument on her grave which is the monument of Rochel’s grave until this day.

### 🕎 RE’UVAIN MOVES YA’AKOV’S BED 🕎

35:21 **Y**isra’el journeyed, and he pitched his tent at some distance past the Tower of Aider.

<sup>22</sup> And then, when Yisra’el was living in that land, Re’uvain (moved the bed of Ya’akov from where it) lay with Bilhah, his father’s concubine (as a protest that Ya’akov had not moved his bed to Leah’s tent after Rochel’s passing). Yisra’el heard (about it).

TORAS MENACHEM

### 🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

#### “YOU WILL NO LONGER BE NAMED YA’AKOV” (v 10)

Ya’akov is a name which represents tactical wisdom (see above 32:29 and *Rashi* *ibid*). This teaches us that a Jew has the ability to tackle the spiritual concealment of this physical world, evaluating each move that he makes to ensure that it is spiritually productive.

The name Yisra’el was given, “because you have fought with (an angel of) God and with (Lavan and Eisav), and you have overcome (them)” (*ibid*). This represents the ability to see through the concealment of “angels and men” and rise above it.

Even after Ya’akov’s name was changed to Yisra’el, we still find that the Torah refers to him with the name Ya’akov, indicating that both names—and the approaches they represent—are eternally appropriate.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 3, p. 795ff.)

#### “RE’UVAIN (MOVED THE BED OF YA’AKOV)” (v. 22)

The *Midrash* refers to Re’uvain as “the first one to repent” for his sin (of moving his father’s bed). God said to him, “No man has ever sinned before me and repented. You have opened the path of *teshuvah*” (*Bereishis Rabah* 82:11, 84:19).

Even though we find that Adam and Kayin repented before Re’uvain, nevertheless they did so out of fear of Divine retribution. Re’uvain however, was the first one to truly return to God, because he realized that his sin was wrong.

For this reason, Ya’akov is said to have a “perfect complement” of children, for not only did he have sons who were *tzadikim* (perfectly righteous), he also had a son who was a genuine *ba’al teshuvah*.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 201; *Sefer Hasichos* 5750, pp. 164-6)

עשר: כג בני לאה בכורה דיעקב ראובן ושמעון ולוי ויהודה ויששכר וזבלון: כד בני רחל יוסף ובנימן: כה ובני בלהה אמתא דרחל דן ונפתלי: כו ובני זלפה שפחת לאה ג' ובני זלפה אמתא דלאה ג' ובני אשר אליו בני יעקב די אתילידו ליה בפדן ארם: כז ואתא יעקב לות יצחק אבוהי ממרא קרית הארבע הוא חברון אשר-גר שם אברהם ויצחק: כח ויהיו ימי יצחק מאת שנה ושמונים שנה: כט ויגוע יצחק וימת ויאסף אל-עמיו זקן ושבע ימים ויקברו אתו עשו ויעקב בניו: פ לו א ואלה תלדות עשו הוא אדום: ב עשו לקח את-נשיו מבנות כנען את-עדה בת-אילון החתי ואת-אהליבמה בת-ענה בת-צבעון החוי: ג ואת-בשמת בת-ישמעאל אחות נביות: ד ותלד עדה לעשו את-אליפו ובשמת ילדה את-רעואל: ה ואהליבמה ילדה את-יעיש [ק יעיש]

כג בני לאה בכור יעקב ראובן ושמעון ולוי ויהודה ויששכר וזבלון: כד בני רחל יוסף ובנימן: כה ובני בלהה שפחת רחל דן ונפתלי: כו ובני זלפה שפחת לאה ג' ובני זלפה אמתא דלאה ג' ובני אשר אליו בני יעקב די אתילידו ליה בפדן ארם: כז ואתא יעקב לות יצחק אבוהי ממרא קרית הארבע הוא חברון אשר-גר שם אברהם ויצחק: כח ויהיו ימי יצחק מאת שנה ושמונים שנה: כט ויגוע יצחק וימת ויאסף אל-עמיו זקן ושבע ימים ויקברו אתו עשו ויעקב בניו: פ לו א ואלה תלדות עשו הוא אדום: ב עשו לקח את-נשיו מבנות כנען את-עדה בת-אילון החתי ואת-אהליבמה בת-ענה בת-צבעון החוי: ג ואת-בשמת בת-ישמעאל אחות נביות: ד ותלד עדה לעשו את-אליפו ובשמת ילדה את-רעואל: ה ואהליבמה ילדה את-יעיש [ק יעיש]

כש"י

עד שלא נמכר יוסף, הרי מאה ושמונה. (עוד מפורש מן המקרא, משנמכר יוסף עד שצא יעקב מזרימה כ"ב שנה, שנאמר ויוסף בן שלשים שנה וגו', ו' שנים שובע ושנים רעב, הרי כ"ב, וכתיב ימי שני מגורי שלשים ומאת שנה, נמלא יעקב זמכירתו ק"ח: ט) עדה בת אילון. היא צשמת בת אילון, ונקראת צשמת על שם שהיחא מקטרת צשמים לעבודת אלילים: אהליבמה. היא יהודית, והוא כינה שמה יהודית, לומר, שהיא כופרת בעבודת אלילים כדי להטעות את אציו: בת ענה בת צבעון. אם צה ענה לא צה צבעון, ענה צנו של צבעון, שנאמר ואלה בני צבעון ואיה וענה, מלמד שצא צבעון על כלתו אשת ענה, וילאח אהליבמה מציו שיהבס, והודיעך הכתוב שכולן בני ממזרות היו: ג) בשמת בת ישמעאל. ולהלן קורא לה מחלת, מנינו באגדת מדרש ספר שמואל<sup>4</sup>, ג' מוחלין להן עוונותיהם, גר שנתגייר, והעולה לגדולה, והנושא אשה, ולמד הטעם מאן, לכך נקראת מחלת, שנמחלו עוונותיה: אחות נביות. על שם שהיא השיאה לו משמת ישמעאל, נקראת על שמו: ה) ואהליבמה ילדה וגו'. קרה זה ממזר היה, וכן אליפו היה, שצא על אשת אציו אל, אהליבמה אשת עשו, שהרי הוא מניו

ורבותיו דרשו, ללמדנו צא, שכולן שוין וכולן לדיקוס, שלא חטא ראובן: (כג) בכור יעקב. אפילו צשמת הקלקלה קראו בכור: בכור יעקב. בכור לנחלה, בכור לעבודה בכור למנון, ולא נתנה בכורה ליוסף אלא לענין השצטים, שנעשה לשני צצטים: (כז) ממרא. שם המישור: קרית הארבע. שם העיר. ממרא קרית הארבע, איל מישור של קרית ארבע. ואם תאמר היה לו לכתוב ממרא הקרית ארבע, כן דרך המקרא בכל דבר ששמו כפול, כגון זה, וכגון בית לחם אציו עזר, בית אל, אם הולרך להטיל צו ה"א, נותנה צראש התיבה השניה, בית הלחמי<sup>1</sup>, צעפרת אציו העזרי<sup>2</sup>, צנה חיאל בית האלי<sup>3</sup>: (כט) ויגוע יצחק. אין מוקדם ומאוחר צחורה, מכירתו של יוסף קדמה למיתתו של יצחק י"ב שנה, שהרי כשגולד יעקב היה יצחק בן ס' שנה, שנאמר וילחק בן שלשים שנה וגו', וילחק מת צשמת ק"ב ליעקב, אם תוליא ששים מק"פ שנה, נשאר ק"ב, ויוסף נמכר בן י"ז שנה, ואותה שנה שנת מאה ושמונה ליעקב, כינר, בן ששים ושלוש נחצרך, וארבע עשרה שנה נעמן צצית עבר, הרי צצטים ושצט, וארבע עשרה עבד באשה, וצסוף ארבע עשרה גולד יוסף, שנאמר ויהי כאשר ילדה רחל את יוסף וגו', הרי תשעים ואחת, וי"ז

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Did Yitzchak actually pass away at this point? (v. 29)

**RASHI:** The Torah is not in chronological order. The sale of Yosef actually preceded Yitzchak's passing by 12 years:

- When Ya'akov was born, Yitzchak was 60 years old (25:26).
- Yitzchak died in Ya'akov's 120th year, [because] the verse states, "Yitzchak was 60 years old [when she gave birth to them]" (ibid.), and if you subtract 60 from 180 [Yitzchak's age at his death; v. 28], you have 120 left.
- Yosef was 17 years old when he was sold, and Ya'akov was 108 years old. How is this so? [Ya'akov] was blessed [by Yitzchak] at the age of 63 (Rashi to 28:9). For 14 years he hid in the academy of Aiver, until he was 77. He worked 14 years for a wife, at the end

of which time Yosef was born—as the verse states: "Then, when Rachel had given birth to Yosef, [Ya'akov said to Lavan, "Send me away!]" (30:25)—totalling 91. [Add to this] the 17 [years] until Yosef was sold, and it totals 108.

**RAMBAN:** Normally, the Torah relates the chronicles of a person, lists his children and then recounts his death before recounting the chronicles of the children, even if the generations overlap. Thus, in this case, Yitzchak's passing should really have been recorded before the chronicles of Ya'akov's life. Nevertheless, the Torah delayed the account of Yitzchak's passing to stress how he passed away "in good old age" after his son Ya'akov had returned to him, and how Eisav and Ya'akov buried him together [which could obviously have only occurred after they had made peace].



## 🕍 YA'AKOV'S DESCENDANTS 🕍

35:22  
(cont.)

**Y**a'akov now had twelve sons (after Binyamin's birth):  
<sup>23</sup> Leah's sons: Reu'vain—Ya'akov's firstborn—Shimon, Levi, Yehudah, Yissachar, and Zevulun.  
<sup>24</sup> Rochel's sons: Yosef and Binyamin.  
<sup>25</sup> Rochel's maid Bilhah's sons: Dan and Naftali.  
<sup>26</sup> Leah's maid Zilpah's sons: Gad and Asher.  
 (All) these are Ya'akov's sons who were born to him in Padan-Aram.

## 🕍 YITZCHAK PASSES AWAY 🕍

*(Yitzchak's passing occurred much later, 12 years after the sale of Yosef.)*

35:27

**Y**a'akov came to his father Yitzchak, at (the plain of) Mamre in Kiryas-Arba, which is Chevron, where Avraham and Yitzchak lived.  
<sup>28</sup> Yitzchak lived a total of one hundred and eighty years. <sup>29</sup> Yitzchak breathed his last and died, and (his soul) was gathered to (be with the souls of) his people. (He was) old and satisfied with (lengthy) days. His sons Eisav and Ya'akov buried him.

## 🕍 EISAV'S DESCENDANTS 🕍

36

**T**hese are the descendants of Eisav, who is (also called) Edom:  
<sup>2</sup> Eisav took his wives from the Cana'anite girls:  
 Adah (also known as Basmah) daughter of Ailon the Chitite;  
 Ahaliyah (also known as Yehudis), daughter of Anah and daughter of Tzivon the Chivite;  
<sup>3</sup> and Basmah (also known as Machalas), sister of Nevayos, daughter of Yishma'el,  
<sup>4</sup> Adah gave birth to Elifaz for Eisav, and Basmah gave birth to Re'uel. <sup>5</sup> Ahaliyah gave birth to Ye'ush, Yalam and Korach. (All) these are the children of Eisav who were born to him in the Land of Cana'an.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🕍 YITZCHAK'S PASSING (v. 29)

While “the Torah is not in chronological order,” any deviation from the actual chronology of events still needs to be explained. For the Torah is generally speaking written in chronological order, but exceptions are made on occasion to prove a certain point.

In our case, *Rashi* proves at some length how “the sale of Yosef actually preceded Yitzchak's passing,” but *Rashi* does not explain *why* the Torah chose to record this event out of chronological sequence [c.f. *Ramban*].

Since *Rashi's* commentary is a *comprehensive* analysis of the Torah at the literal level, we can presume that when an important detail appears to be omitted it is because: a.) The explanation was deemed by *Rashi* to be self-evident, or, b.) The matter can be understood based on one of *Rashi's* prior comments.

In our case, the reason why Yitzchak's passing is recorded here, well before its actual occurrence, could be explained based on *Rashi's* earlier comment about Avraham's passing:

“On that day [when Eisav sold the birthright] Avraham died, so he should not see Eisav his grandson falling into bad ways, for that would not be the ‘good old age’ (15:15) which God had promised him. Therefore, God shortened his life by five years, as we see that Yitzchak lived to 180, but he [Avraham, lived] 175 years” (*Rashi* to 25:30).

From this we can understand that in our case, even though Yitzchak did live to see his grandchildren “falling into bad ways” with the sale of Yosef, nevertheless, the Torah did not wish to *publicize the fact*. Therefore, Yitzchak's passing was recorded discreetly, out of chronological sequence, before the sale of Yosef.

In fact, this concept has a precedent in an earlier comment of *Rashi*:

“Scripture related Terach's death before Avram's departure, so that the matter should not be publicized to everybody and they would say, ‘Avram did not honor his father, for he left him in his old age and went away’” (*Rashi* to 11:32, above). Here we see clearly that the Torah will, on occasion, adjust the recording of the sequence of events so as to avoid publicizing something negative.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Bo*, 5743)

יעלם וית קרח אליו בני עשו די אתילידו ליה בארעא דכנען: ו דבבר עשו ית נשוהי וית בנוהי וית בנתיה וית כל נפשת ביתיה וית גיתוהי וית כל בעיריה וית כל קניניה די קנא בארעא דכנען ואול לארעא אחרי מן קדם יעקב אחוהי: ו ארי הוה קניניהו סני מלמתב פחדא ולא יכילת ארע תותבותהון לסוכרא יתהון מן קדם גיתיהון: ה ויתבי עשו בסוכרא דשעיר עשו הוא אדום: ו ואלין תולדת עשו אבנהון דאדומאי בסוכרא דשעיר: ו אלין שמחה בני עשו אליפו בר עדה אמת עשו רעואל בר בשמת אמת עשו: י ו והו בני אליפו תימן אומר צפו ונעתם וקנו: יב ותמנע הות לחינתא לאליפו בר עשו וילידת לאליפו ית עמלק אליו בני עדה אמת עשו: יג ואלין בני רעואל נחת וזרח שמה ומוה אליו הו בני בשמת אמת עשו: יד ואלין הו בני אהליבמה בת ענה בת צבעון אמת עשו וילידת לעשו ית ועוש וית יעלם וית קרח: טו אליו ברבבי בני עשו בני אליפו בוכרא דעשו רבא תימן רבא אומר רבא צפו רבא קנו: טז רבא קרח רבא נעתם רבא עמלק אליו ברבבי אליפו בארעא דאדום אליו בני עדה: יז ואלין בני רעואל בר עשו רבא נחת רבא זרח רבא שמה רבא מוה אליו ברבבי רעואל בארעא דאדום אליו בני בשמת אמת עשו:

וְאֶת־יַעֲלָם וְאֶת־קֶרַח אֱלֹה בְנֵי עֵשָׂו אֲשֶׁר יְלָדוּ־לוֹ בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: ו וַיִּקַּח עֵשָׂו אֶת־נָשָׁיו וְאֶת־בְּנָתָיו וְאֶת־כָּל־נַפְשֹׁת בֵּיתוֹ וְאֶת־מִקְנֵהוּ וְאֶת־כָּל־בְּהֵמָתוֹ וְאֶת כָּל־קִנְיָנוֹ אֲשֶׁר רָכַשׁ בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־אֶרֶץ מִפְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב אַחִיו: ו כִּי־הָיָה רְכוּשָׁם רַב מִשְׁבֶּת יְהוּדָה וְלֹא יָכֹלָה אֶרֶץ מְגוּרֵיהֶם לְשִׂאת אֹתָם מִפְּנֵי מְקִינָהֶם: ה וַיֵּשֶׁב עֵשָׂו בְּהַר שְׁעִיר עֵשָׂו הוּא אֲדוּם: ו וְאֱלֹה תְלָדוֹת עֵשָׂו אַבְי אֲדוּם בְּהַר שְׁעִיר: ו אֱלֹה שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי־עֵשָׂו אֱלִיפֹ בֶן־עֵדָה אִשְׁת עֵשָׂו רְעוּאֵל בֶּן־בְּשֵׁמֶת אִשְׁת עֵשָׂו: י וַיְהִי בְנֵי אֱלִיפֹ תִימָן אֹמֵר צָפוּ וְנַעֲתֶם וְקָנוּ: יב וְתִמְנַע א הִיְתָה פִּילֶגֶשׁ לְאֱלִיפֹ בֶן־עֵשָׂו וַתֵּלֶד לְאֱלִיפֹ אֶת־עַמְלָק אֱלֹה בְנֵי עֵדָה אִשְׁת עֵשָׂו: יג וְאֱלֹה בְנֵי רְעוּאֵל נַחַת וְזֶרַח שְׁמָה וּמוֹה אֱלֹה הָיוּ בְנֵי בְּשֵׁמֶת אִשְׁת עֵשָׂו: יד וְאֱלֹה הָיוּ בְנֵי אֶהְלִיבְמָה בַת־עֵנָה בַת־צִבְעוֹן אִשְׁת עֵשָׂו וַתֵּלֶד לְעֵשָׂו אֶת־יַעֲיִשׁ וְקִי יַעֲיִשׁ וְאֶת־יַעֲלָם וְאֶת־קֶרַח: טו אֱלֹה אֱלוֹפֵי בְנֵי־עֵשָׂו בְנֵי אֱלִיפֹ בְּכוֹר עֵשָׂו אֱלוֹף תִּימָן אֱלוֹף אֹמֵר אֱלוֹף צָפוּ אֱלוֹף קָנוּ: טז אֱלוֹף־קֶרַח אֱלוֹף נַעֲתָם אֱלוֹף עַמְלָק אֱלֹה אֱלוֹפֵי אֱלִיפֹ בְּאֶרֶץ אֲדוּם אֱלֹה בְנֵי עֵדָה: יז וְאֱלֹה בְנֵי רְעוּאֵל בֶּן־עֵשָׂו אֱלוֹף נַחַת אֱלוֹף זֶרַח אֱלוֹף שְׁמָה אֱלוֹף מוֹה אֱלֹה אֱלוֹפֵי רְעוּאֵל בְּאֶרֶץ אֲדוּם אֱלֹה בְנֵי בְּשֵׁמֶת

כ"ט

אזרכס כמה היו תאזים לידצק צרעו, תמנע זו צת אלופים היתה, שנאמר ואחות לטון תמנע, ולטון מאלופי יושבי שעיר הים, מן החורים שיצבו צה לפנים, אמרה, איני זוכה להנשא לך, הלאו ואהיה פילגש. וצדצרי הימים מונח אותה צביו של אליפו, מלמד שצא על אשתו של שעיר וילאח תמנע מצנייכה, וכשגלה נעשית פילגש, וזהו ואחות לטון תמנע, ולא מנאח עס צני שעיר, שהיתה אחותו מן האס ולא מן האצ: (טו) אלה אלופי בני עשו.

עס אלופי אליפו צסוף הענין: (ו) וילך אל ארץ. לגור צאשר ימלא: (ז) ולא יכלה ארץ מגוריהם. להספיק מרעב לצכמות שלהם. ומדרש הגדל<sup>2</sup> מפני יעקב אחיו, מפני שטר חוב של גזירת כי גר יהיה זרעך, המוטל על זרעו של יחוק, אמר, אלך לי מכאן, אין לי חלק לא צמתנה שנתנה לו הארץ הזאת, ולא צפרעון השטר, ומפני הצושה שמכר צכורחו: (ט) ואלה. החולדות שהולידו צביו עכשיו משהלך לשעיר: (יב) ותמנע היתה פילגש. להודיע גדולתו של

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Ya'akov and Eisav part company? (v. 6-7)  
**RASHI:** The land in which they lived could not provide [sufficient] pasture for their animals.  
 The Midrash Agadah explains [that Eisav left] "due to his brother Ya'akov" (v. 6), because of the writ of obligation which [accompanied] the decree, "that your descendants will be strangers [in a land that is not theirs. They will enslave them and oppress them]" (15:13), which was put upon the descendants of Yitzchak. He [Eisav] said, "I will go away from here. I want no part in the gift—this

land which he [Yitzchak] was given—nor in the payment of the debt."  
 Also, [he left] on account of the shame for having sold his birthright.  
**RASHBAM:** Ya'akov had purchased the birthright from Eisav, and thus owned the rights to inherit the Land of Israel. Therefore Ya'akov remained in the Land, and Eisav was forced to leave.  
**ABARBANEL:** Since Eisav loved Ya'akov, he left him the Land of Cana'an, knowing that Ya'akov desired it and that his descendants would inherit it in the future.

<sup>6</sup> Eisav took his wives, his sons, his daughters, all the people of his household, his flocks, all his animals and all his property that he had acquired in the land of Cana'an, and he went to (find another) land, due to his brother Ya'akov, <sup>7</sup> because their possessions were too numerous for them to dwell together. The land which they inhabited could not support them because (there was not enough space) for their flocks (to graze). <sup>8</sup> So Eisav settled in Mount Se'ir. Eisav is (also known as) Edom.

<sup>9</sup> These are the descendants of Eisav, the father of the Edom(ites), on Mount Se'ir:

<sup>10</sup> These are the names of Eisav's sons: Elifaz, son of Eisav's wife Adah, Re'uel, son of Eisav's wife Basmah. <sup>11</sup> The children of Elifaz were Taiman, Omar, Tzefo, Gatam, and Kenaz. <sup>12</sup> Timna was a concubine to Elifaz, Eisav's son, and she gave birth to Amalek for Elifaz. (All) these are the children of Adah, the wife of Eisav.

<sup>13</sup> These are the children of Re'uel: Nachas, Zerach, Shamah, and Mizah. They are the children of Basmah, the wife of Eisav.

<sup>14</sup> These are the children of Ahaliivamah, daughter of Anah and daughter of Tzivon, Eisav's wife: She gave birth to Ye'ush, Yalam, and Korach for Eisav.

<sup>15</sup> These are the (family) heads of the children of Eisav:

(From) the children of Elifaz, Eisav's firstborn: (the) head (of the) Taiman (family, the) head (of the) Omar (family, the) head (of the) Tzefo (family, the) head (of the) Kenaz (family), <sup>16</sup> (the) head (of the) Korach (family, the) head (of the) Gatam (family, the) head (of the) Amalek (family). They are the (family) heads of Elifaz in the land of Edom. (All) these are the children of Adah.

---

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

---

#### ● Eisav was already living in Se'ir earlier (32:4). Why does the Torah state *now* that "Eisav settled in Mount Se'ir?" (v. 8)

**CHIZKUNI:** Beforehand, Eisav was living in the land of Cana'an but he used to spend a lot of time in Se'ir, since there were many fields there (as in the verse, "the land of Se'ir, to the fields of Edom"—32:4) and Eisav was, "a man of the field" (25:27). Now, however, Eisav was forced to settle exclusively in Se'ir. [commentary to 32:4, 36:6]

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

#### 🕊️ EISAV'S DEPARTURE (v. 6-7)

Rashi's comment here presents a number of problems:

a.) Why did Rashi find it necessary to bring no less than *three* explanations?

b.) Why did Rashi reject the simple explanation, argued by **Rashbam**, that Eisav was forced to leave because he had sold the birthright to Ya'akov?

c.) Why did Rashi bring an explanation from the "Midrash Agadah," that Eisav left because of the "writ of obligation," when the Torah *itself* stresses a *different* reason altogether: "because their possessions were too numerous for them to dwell together" (v. 7)? How can this be reconciled with Rashi's statement that "I am coming *only* to explain the *literal* meaning of scripture" (Rashi to 3:8, above)?

d.) According to the Midrash Agadah, that Eisav left to avoid the decree of exile, why did Eisav wait until Ya'akov arrived back from Charan before vacating the Land of Israel? Surely Eisav was aware of the "writ of obligation" well before?

e.) There is a most strikingly obvious question: The decree of 'exile' which Eisav was trying to avoid, was to live in a land other than the Land of Israel: "Your descendants will be strangers in a land *that is not theirs*" (15:13), "It does not say, 'in the land of Egypt,' but, '[in a land] that is not theirs'" (Rashi *ibid.*). Thus, it appears to make no sense at all, that in order to avoid the decree of being exiled from the Land of Israel, Eisav *left the Land of Israel?* Eisav seems to have imposed upon himself the very decree that he was trying to avoid!

#### THE EXPLANATION

The Torah states explicitly the reason for Eisav's departure: "Eisav took his wives...and he went to (find another) land...*because their possessions were too numerous for them to dwell together etc.*" (v. 6-7). Thus, Rashi could not accept, at the literal level, the explanation of **Rashbam**—that Eisav left because he had relinquished his rights to the land by selling the birthright—since the Torah stresses a totally different reason: "because their possessions were too numerous."

(**Abarbanel's** explanation, that Eisav willingly left the land to Ya'akov is unacceptable at the literal level, since Rashi clarified earlier that Eisav still hated Ya'akov—see Rashi to 33:4 above).

At the literal level it could be argued that Eisav left because Ya'akov was "exceedingly wealthy. He had extremely fertile flocks, maids, servants, camels and donkeys" (30:43), so when it became apparent that, "the land which they inhabited could not support them because (there was not enough space) for their flocks (to graze)," it was only fair to let Ya'akov stay, as his need for the land was more pressing than Eisav's.

However, Rashi found this reason alone difficult to accept. Why should Eisav leave the land because, "their possessions were too numerous for them to dwell together," when Eisav was the one who had been living there for the past twenty years, and Ya'akov had just arrived? Surely, it was only fair that Ya'akov should leave? And yet, we find that without any argument about the matter, Eisav simply "took his wives, his sons, his daughters, all the people of his household, his flocks, all his animals and his property that he had acquired," and left of his own accord!

יה ואלו בני אהליבמה אשת עשו רבא יעוש רבא יעלם אלו קרח אלו רב רבי אהליבמה בת ענה אשת עשו: יט אלה בני-עשו ואלה אלופיהם הוא אדום: ס ושביעי) כ אלה בני-שעיר החרי ישיבי הארץ לוטן ושובל וצבעון וענה: כא ורשון ואצר ודישן אלה אלופי החרי בני שעיר בארץ אדום: כב ויהיו בני-לוטן חרי ויהימם ואחות לוטן תמנע: כג ואלה בני שובל עלון ומנחת ועיבל שפן ואונם: כד ואלו בני צבעון ואיה וענה הוא אלה בני-צבעון ואיה וענה הוא הימם במדבר ברעתו את-החמרים לצבעון אביו: כה ואלה בני-ענה דישן ואהליבמה בת-ענה: כו ואלה בני דישן חמדן ואשבן ויתרן וכרן: כז אלה בני-אצר בלהן וועון ועקן: כח אלה בני-דישן עוץ וארן: כט אלה אלופי החרי אלוף לוטן אלוף שובל אלוף צבעון אלוף ענה: ל אלוף דישן אלוף אצר אלוף דישן אלה אלופי החרי לאלפיהם בארץ שעיר: פ לא ואלה המלכים אשר מלכו בארץ אדום לפני מלך-מלך לבני ישראל: לב ומלך באדום בן-בעור ושם עירו

יה ואלו בני אהליבמה אשת עשו רבא יעוש רבא יעלם אלו קרח אלו רב רבי אהליבמה בת ענה אשת עשו: יט אלה בני-עשו ואלה אלופיהם הוא אדום: ס ושביעי) כ אלה בני-שעיר החרי ישיבי הארץ לוטן ושובל וצבעון וענה: כא ורשון ואצר ודישן אלה אלופי החרי בני שעיר בארץ אדום: כב ויהיו בני-לוטן חרי ויהימם ואחות לוטן תמנע: כג ואלה בני שובל עלון ומנחת ועיבל שפן ואונם: כד ואלו בני צבעון ואיה וענה הוא אלה בני-צבעון ואיה וענה הוא הימם במדבר ברעתו את-החמרים לצבעון אביו: כה ואלה בני-ענה דישן ואהליבמה בת-ענה: כו ואלה בני דישן חמדן ואשבן ויתרן וכרן: כז אלה בני-אצר בלהן וועון ועקן: כח אלה בני-דישן עוץ וארן: כט אלה אלופי החרי אלוף לוטן אלוף שובל אלוף צבעון אלוף ענה: ל אלוף דישן אלוף אצר אלוף דישן אלה אלופי החרי לאלפיהם בארץ שעיר: פ לא ואלה המלכים אשר מלכו בארץ אדום לפני מלך-מלך לבני ישראל: לב ומלך באדום בן-בעור ושם עירו

כש"י

הימים. פרדים. הרציע חמור על סוס נקצב וילדה פרד, והוא היה ממזר והביא פסולין לעולם. ולמה נקרא שם ימים, שאימתן מוטלת על הצריות, דאמר רבי חנינא, מימי לא שאלני אדם על מכת פרדה לצנב, וחיה<sup>4</sup>. (והלא קא חזינו דחיה, אל תקרי וחיה אלא וחיתה, כי המכה לא תתרפא לעולם. כרש"י ישן). ולא הוזקק לכתוב לנו משפחות החורי, אלא מפני תמנע, ולהודיע גדולת אצרהם כמו שפירשתי למעלה: (לא) ואלה המלכים וגו'.

ראשי משפחות: (כ) יושבי הארץ. שהיו יושבי קודם שצא עשו לשם. ורבותינו דרשו<sup>1</sup> שהיו צקאין בישוב של ארץ, מלא קנה זה לזתים, מלא קנה זה לגפנים, שהיו טועמין ויודעין אי זו נטיעה ראויה לה: (כד) ואיה וענה. וי"ו יתירה, והוא כמו איך וענה, והרצה יש צמקרא, תת וקדש וצא מרמס<sup>2</sup>, נרדס ורכז וסוס<sup>3</sup>: הוא ענה. האמור למעלה שהוא אחיו של צבעון, וכאן הוא קורא אותו צנו, מלמד שצא צבעון על אמו והוליד את ענה: את

#### TORAS MENACHEM

Clearly, this explanation alone is vastly insufficient, since it is highly unlikely that Eisav would vacate the land, along with his family and possessions, just because Ya'akov had arrived. Therefore, *Rashi* searched for an additional explanation which would complement the above reasoning, making it more feasible at the literal level.

*Rashi* concluded that this additional explanation is hinted by the words "due to his brother Ya'akov," and he cites the *Midrash Agadah* that Eisav left to avoid the decree of exile. When both these explanations are combined together, we have a plausible scenario: Eisav had always planned to leave the Land of Israel to avoid the decree of exile, and so when "their possessions were too numerous for them to dwell together," Eisav decided that this was a prime opportunity to enact his plan to move to Se'ir. Thus, both explanations complement each other, and both are indicated in the Torah itself.

Nevertheless, *Rashi* was not satisfied with the above, since one further problem remains: Even if Eisav had been planning to leave the Land for many years, the fact that he was prompted to do so by Ya'akov's arrival would be perceived as an act of acquiescence to Ya'akov, and weakness on the part of Eisav. Surely, Eisav would have waited for another opportunity? To address this problem, *Rashi* explained that there was a third factor in Eisav's decision: "Also, [he left] on account of the shame for having sold his birthright." I.e. that Eisav's entire stay in the Land of Israel was associated with embarrassment, since it constantly reminded him of how he sold the birthright to Ya'akov, and when Ya'akov arrived this embarrassment would have been exacerbated all the more.

Therefore, despite the fact that his departure may have been perceived as an act of weakness, Eisav decided that it was time to leave the Land once and for all, rather than live in a state of eternal embarrassment.

<sup>17</sup> These are (the family heads from) the children of Re'uel, Eisav's son: (the) head (of the) Nachas (family, the) head (of the) Zerach (family, the) head (of the) Shamah (family), and (the) head (of the) Mizah (family). They are the (family) heads of Re'uel in the land of Edom. (All) these are the children of Basmah, Eisav's wife.

<sup>18</sup> These are (the family heads from) the children of Ahaliyah, Eisav's wife: (the) head (of the) Ye'ush (family, the) head (of the) Yalam (family, the) head (of the) Korach (family). They are the (family) heads of Ahaliyah, daughter of Anah, Eisav's wife.

<sup>19</sup> These (mentioned above) are the children of Eisav. (All) these are their family chiefs. (Eisav is also known) as Edom.

### SE'IR'S DESCENDANTS

36:20  
SEVENTH  
READING

**T**hese are the children of Se'ir the Chorite, the inhabitants of the land (before Eisav arrived there): Lotan, Shoal, Tzivon, Anah, <sup>21</sup> Dishon, Aitzer, and Dishan. (All) these are the (family) heads of the Chorites, Se'ir's children, in the land of Edom.

<sup>22</sup> The children of Lotan were Chori and Heimam. The sister of Lotan was Timna.

<sup>23</sup> These are the children of Shoal: Alvan, Manachas, Aival, Shefo and Onam.

<sup>24</sup> These are the children of Tzivon: Ayah and Anah. He is Anah who (crossbred) mules in the wilderness when he pastured the donkeys for his father Tzivon.

<sup>25</sup> These are the children of Anah: Dishon and Ahaliyah, the daughter of Anah.

<sup>26</sup> These are the children of Dishon: Chemdan, Eshban, Yisran, and Keran.

<sup>27</sup> These are the children of Aitzer: Bilhan, Za'avan, and Akan.

<sup>28</sup> These are the children of Dishan: Utz and Aran.

<sup>29</sup> These are the (family) chiefs of the Chorites: (the) head (of the) Lotan (family, the) head (of the) Shoal (family, the) head (of the) Tzivon (family, the) head (of the) Anah (family), <sup>30</sup> (the) head (of the) Dishon (family, the) head (of the) Aitzer (family), and (the) head (of the) Dishan (family). All) these are the (family) heads of the Chorites according to their families in the land of Edom.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### EISAV SETTLES IN SE'IR

The Torah continues, "Eisav settled in Mount Se'ir" (v. 8). This is difficult to understand since the Torah indicated above that Eisav was *already* living in Se'ir: "Ya'akov sent angels ahead of him to his brother Eisav, to the land of Se'ir, to the fields of Edom" (32:4).

Why did Rashi not explain this significant point?

It could be argued that Rashi did not clarify this matter, as he understood it to be self-evident from scripture itself. The Torah stated above that Se'ir was Eisav's "usual (hang out)" (וְרֵכֵז), and not his land (אֶרֶץ). From this it is clear that Eisav had not made Se'ir his permanent home, and he shared his time between the Land of Israel and Se'ir—presumably because being a "man of the field" (25:27) he enjoyed "the fields of Edom" (32:4) very much. Thus, the Torah informs us here that, "Eisav settled in Mount Se'ir," i.e. he made it his *permanent*, exclusive home (c.f. **Chizkuni**).

Based on the above we can also explain our earlier question ("e"), that in attempting to avoid the decree of exile on Avraham's descendants, Eisav seems to have, in any case, imposed upon himself an exile from the Land of Israel. The meaning of "exile" is that a person *temporarily* finds

himself away from his homeland; Eisav, on the other hand, "*settled* in Mount Se'ir," *permanently*. Thus, he was not *exiled* from the Land of Israel, as he had totally disassociated himself from it.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 10, pp. 109ff.)

#### The Last Word

So long as we have not reached the end of exile when the Holy Temple will be built and we will all return to the Land of Israel, a Jew needs to be conscious that he is, "a stranger in a land that is not his own." The fact that Jews inhabit any land other than the Land of Israel is a temporary situation. It was Eisav that "settled" in the Diaspora, but a Jew waits impatiently the time when he will cease to be a "stranger" in a foreign land, and he will return to his true home, the Land of Israel, in full and total settlement.

(ibid.)

בָּלַע בַּר בַּעוֹר וְשׁוֹם קָרְתִּיָּה דְנִהְבָּה: לַג וּמִית בָּלַע וּמִלְךְ תְּחֹתָיו יוֹכֵב בַּר זָרַח מִבְּצָרָה: לַד וּמִית יוֹכֵב וּמִלְךְ תְּחֹתָיו חֶשֶׁם מֵאַרְעָא דְרוּמָא: לֵה וּמִית חֶשֶׁם וּמִלְךְ תְּחֹתָיו הֲדַד בַּר בְּדַד דְקָמִיל יַת מְדִינָאִי בְחֻקְלָא דְמוֹאָב וְשׁוֹם קָרְתִּיָּה עֲוִית: לו וּמִית הֲדַד וּמִלְךְ תְּחֹתָיו שְׁמֶלְה מִמְשַׁרְקָה: לז וּמִית שְׁמֶלְה לֹא וּמִית שְׁמֶלְה וּמִלְךְ תְּחֹתָיו שְׂאוּל מִרְחֻבֵי דְעַל פְּרָת: לח וּמִית שְׂאוּל וּמִלְךְ תְּחֹתָיו בַּעַל חֲנָן בַּר עַכְבּוֹר: לח וּמִית בַּעַל חֲנָן בַּר עַכְבּוֹר וּמִלְךְ תְּחֹתָיו הֲדַד וְשׁוֹם עֲבָדוּ וְשׁוֹם קָרְתִּיָּה פְּעוּ וְשׁוֹם אֶתְתִּיָּה מְהֵיטְבָאֵל בַּת מִטְרַד בַּת מְצַרְף דְהֶבֶא: ט וְאֵלִין שְׁמַתָּה רְבַרְבִּי עֲשׂוּ לְזַרְעֵינְהוֹן לְאַתְרִיָּהוֹן בְּשִׁמְתָהוֹן רַבָּא תִמְנַע רַבָּא עֲלוּהָ רַבָּא יְתָת: מא רַבָּא אֶהְלִיבְמָה רַבָּא קְנָו רַבָּא מְגִדִיאֵל רַבָּא תִימָן רַבָּא מְבָצָר: מג רַבָּא מְגִדִיאֵל רַבָּא עֵירָם אֵלִין רְבַרְבִּי אָדוּם לְמוֹתְבְנִיָּהוֹן בְּאַרְעֵי אֶחְזָתָהוֹן הוּא עֲשׂוּ אַבְוּהוֹן דְאַדוּמָאִי:

פ פ פ

דְנִהְבָּה: לַג וּמִית בָּלַע וּמִלְךְ תְּחֹתָיו יוֹכֵב בַּר זָרַח מִבְּצָרָה: לַד וּמִית יוֹכֵב וּמִלְךְ תְּחֹתָיו חֶשֶׁם מֵאַרְץ הַתִּימָנִי: לֵה וּמִית חֶשֶׁם וּמִלְךְ תְּחֹתָיו הֲדַד בַּר בְּדַד הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־מְדִין בְּשׂוּדָה מוֹאָב וְשׁוֹם עִירוֹ עֲוִית: לו וּמִית הֲדַד וּמִלְךְ תְּחֹתָיו שְׁמֶלְה מִמְשַׁרְקָה: לז וּמִית שְׁמֶלְה וּמִלְךְ תְּחֹתָיו שְׂאוּל מִרְחֻבֹת הַנֶּהָר: לח וּמִית שְׂאוּל וּמִלְךְ תְּחֹתָיו בַּעַל חֲנָן בַּר־עַכְבּוֹר: לח וּמִית בַּעַל חֲנָן בַּר־עַכְבּוֹר וּמִלְךְ תְּחֹתָיו הֲדַד וְשׁוֹם עִירוֹ פְּעוּ וְשׁוֹם אֶשְׁתּוֹ מְהֵיטְבָאֵל בַּת־מִטְרַד בַּת מִי זָהָב: (ומפסיר) מ וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת אֱלֹפֵי עֲשׂוֹ לְמִשְׁפַּחַתָּם לְמַקְמַתָּם בְּשִׁמְתָם אֱלֹף תִּמְנַע אֱלֹף עֲלוּהָ אֱלֹף יְתָת: מא אֱלֹף אֶהְלִיבְמָה אֱלֹף אֱלֶה אֱלֹף פִּינָן: מב אֱלֹף קְנָו אֱלֹף תִּימָן אֱלֹף מְבָצָר: מג אֱלֹף מְגִדִיאֵל אֱלֹף עֵירָם אֱלֶה | אֱלֹפֵי אָדוּם לְמוֹשְׁבַתָּם בְּאַרְץ אֶחְזָתָם הוּא עֲשׂוֹ אֲבִי אָדוּם: פ פ פ

קנ"ד פסוקים, קליט"ה סימן.

רש"י

את מואב, ומכאן אנו למדים, שהיו מדון ומואב מריבים זה עם זה, וזימני בלעט עשו שלום להקשר על ישראל: (לט) בת מי זהב. מכו זכב, עשיר היה, ואין זכב חסוד בעיניו לכלום: (מ) ואלה שמות אלופי עשו. שנקראו על שם מדינותיהם לאחר שמת הדך, ופסקה מהם מלכות, והראשונים הנזכרים למעלה הם שמות חולדותם, וכן מפורש בדברי הימים<sup>4</sup> וימת הדד ויהיו אלופי אדום אלוף תמנע וגוי: (מג) מגדיאל. היא רומי: חסלת פרשת וישלח

שמנה היו, וכנגדן העמיד יעקב, וביטל מלכות עשו צימיהם, ואלו הן, שאל, ואיש זשה, דוד ושלמה, רחבעם, אביה, אסא, יהושפט. וזימני יורם בנו כתיב, צימיו פשע אדום מתחת יד יהודה וימליכו עליהם מלך<sup>1</sup>, וזימני שאל כתיב אין מלך בצדום נצב מלך: (לג) יובב בן זרח מבצרה. זלרה מערי מואב היא, שנאמר ועל קריות ועל זלרה וגוי<sup>2</sup>. ולפי שהעמידה מלך לאדום עתידה ללקות עמהם, שנאמר כי זכח לבי בצלרה<sup>3</sup>: (לה) המכה את מדין בשדה מואב. שזא מדין על מואב למלחמה, והלך מלך אדום לעזור

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why were there Eight Edomite kings? (v. 31)

RASHI: There were eight [Edomite kings], and Ya'akov established a corresponding number [of eight kings] in whose days the kingdom of Eisav [temporarily] ceased to exist. These [eight Jewish kings] were: Sha'ul, Ish-boshes, David, Shlomo, Rachavam, Aviyah, Asa, and Yehoshafat. But in the time of his [Yehoshafat's] son Yoram, the Torah states, "In his days, Edom revolted from under the power of Yehudah, and they appointed a king over themselves" (Kings II 8:20), whereas [from] Sha'ul's days [until the times of Yehoshafat] the Torah states: "There was no king in Edom. A deputy was king" (Kings I 22:48).

MIZRACHI: Rashi informs us of this detail, because it is the fulfillment of the prophecy, "One kingdom will (always) become mightier than the other kingdom (for when one rises the other will fall)" (25:23 and Rashi ibid). From Rashi's comment we see that so long as the eight Jewish kings ruled, the Edomite dynasty did not exist.

● Why does the Torah state where each king was from?

SFORNO: Because there was no one from among the people of Edom who was fit to rule, and so leaders had to be found from elsewhere.

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 THE KINGS OF EDMOM (V. 31)

Since Rashi's commentary is aimed exclusively at explaining the literal meaning of the Torah, his discussion here of eight Jewish kings who ruled many generations later, appears to be out of place. Why is this information crucial for us to understand the literal meaning of the text?

Mizrachi answers that Rashi cited the account of eight Jewish kings in order to explain how an earlier promise recorded in the Torah was ultimately fulfilled. When Rivkah was pregnant with Ya'akov and Eisav, she was told, "One kingdom will (always) become mightier than the other kingdom (for when one rises the other will fall)" (25:23 and Rashi ibid). Thus,

🌀 THE KINGS OF EDOM 🌀

36:31 **T**hese are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the children of Israel: <sup>32</sup> Bela, son of Be'or reigned in Edom, and the name of his city was Dinhavah.

<sup>33</sup> Bela died, and Yovav, son of Zerach of Batzrah, reigned in his place.

<sup>34</sup> Yovav died, and Chusham from the land of the Temanites reigned in his place.

<sup>35</sup> Chusham died, and Hadad, son of Bedad—who defeated the Midian(ites) in the field of Moav—reigned in his place. The name of his city was Avis.

<sup>36</sup> Hadad died, and Samlah of Masraikah reigned in his place.

<sup>37</sup> Samlah died, and Sha'ul of Rechovos on the River (Euphrates) reigned in his place.

<sup>38</sup> Sha'ul died, and Ba'al Chanan, son of Achbor, reigned in his place.

<sup>39</sup> Ba'al Chanan son of Achbor died, and Hadar reigned in his place. The name of his city was Pa'u. His wife's name was Mehaytavail, daughter of Matraid, the daughter of May Zahav.

*(After Hadar died, Eisav's descendants lost their autonomy over their family groups. Instead the authority structure became regional, and each place was assigned its own leader):*

MAFTIR <sup>40</sup> These are the names of the (regional) heads of Eisav's land), according to (what was previously) their families, (but now assigned by) their places, (all of which had) their (own) names:

(The) head (of the) Timna (area, the) head (of the) Alvah (area, the) head (of the) Yesais (area), <sup>41</sup> (the) head (of the) Ahaliivamah (area, the) head (of the) Ailah (area, the) head (of the) Pinon (area), <sup>42</sup> (the) head (of the) Kenaz (area, the) head (of the) Taiman (area, the) head (of the) Miutzar (area), <sup>43</sup> (the) head (of the) Magdi'ail (area, which is Rome, the) head (of the) Iram (area). These are the (regional) heads of Edom according to the inhabited areas in the land of their inheritance.

(Edom is also known) as Eisav, father of the Edomites.

THE HAFTARAH FOR VAYISHLACH IS ON PAGE 386.

TORAS MENACHEM

Rashi explains here that this prophecy was eventually fulfilled, for during the entire period that the Jewish kings ruled, the Edomite kings fell.

However, Mizrahi's solution is difficult to accept at the literal level, for two reasons:

a.) Rashi's commentary is aimed at explaining *discrepancies* that arise when attempting to make a literal rendering of the text. Rashi did not undertake to explain how various prophecies have materialized over the course of history. Thus the question *when* the prophecy of "one kingdom will (always) become mightier than the other kingdom," came true, is not a matter which requires explanation at the literal level.

b.) Rashi himself stresses that after the rulership of the eight kings, "Edom revolted from under the power of Yehudah, and they appointed a king over themselves," i.e. both the Jewish people and the Edomites had their own monarchies *side by side*. Now, if Rashi's primary intention here was to prove that, "One kingdom will (always) become mightier than the other kingdom (for when one rises the other will fall)," then why would he bring a proof to the contrary, that both kingdoms existed *simultaneously*?

**THE EXPLANATION**

Rashi was troubled by the question: Why did the Torah, which is a book of instruction to Jewish people, include a lengthy account of the kings of Edom? Of course, one might ask the same question about the previous account of Eisav's descendants, which does not appear to merit inclusion

in the Torah. However, in that case, one could argue that the Torah included the details of Eisav's descendants in order to stress how Yitzchak's blessings to Eisav actually came true (see above 27:39-40).

But in the case of the Kings of Edom, the Torah stresses that these kings were *not* in fact descendants of Eisav (see **Sforno**), so their inclusion in the Torah is not connected at all to Yitzchak's blessings. (To the contrary, it is a *disgrace* to Eisav that, despite Yitzchak's blessings, his descendants were not able to find any person fit to rule from among themselves.)

Furthermore, the account of the Edomite dynasty seems to *contradict* Yitzchak's blessing to Ya'akov, "You will be a master over your brother" (27:29), and his promise to Eisav, "You shall serve your brother" (ibid. 40). For the Torah stresses here, "These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom *before* any king reigned over the children of Israel," and one would have expected the "master" (Ya'akov) to have established a monarchy before his "servant" (Eisav).

Therefore Rashi stresses that a.) The Edomite dynasty only lasted for a mere eight generations. b.) The eight Edomite Kings were totally nullified by the eight Jewish kings who later ruled over the land of Edom and its people of Edom.

Thus, *overall*, it could truly be said that Ya'akov was "a master over his brother."

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayishlach 5748)



**Parshas Vayishlach** contains 1 prohibition

1. Not to eat the *gid hanashe* (sciatic nerve) [32:33]





# parshas Vayeishev

פרשת וישב

## 🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

**A**t first glance this *Parsha* seems to have a most inappropriate name. *Vayeishev* means “settled,” and yet in this *Parsha* we read of the most *unsettling* event in Ya’akov’s life: the disappearance of Yosef. In fact, at the beginning of the *Parsha*, *Rashi* writes, “When Ya’akov sought to settle in tranquility, Yosef’s anger [against his brothers] sprang upon him.”

So how could a *Parsha* which speaks of Ya’akov’s upheaval come to be known as “Ya’akov settled”?

**I**n truth, however, Ya’akov’s request for peace and tranquility was eventually granted by God, as we find that in Ya’akov’s last 17 years he lived a peaceful, comfortable life in Egypt. It is only that when Ya’akov

sought peace, God wanted to give him a more sublime peace and tranquility than Ya’akov was yet worthy of. *Therefore*, God sent him the ordeal with Yosef, in order to challenge Ya’akov and *thereby uplift him* spiritually to the level at which he would be deserving of the greater peace.

**A**nd that is why our *entire Parsha* is called *Vayeishev*—“settled”—for in this *Parsha* we read of the ordeals which God sent Ya’akov to elevate him spiritually to the point where he could live a totally harmonious life in this world, as well as in the next.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 176ff.)

א וַיִּשְׁבּוּ יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ תּוֹתְבוֹת אַבְוֵהִי  
בְּאֶרֶץ דְּכַנְעַן: ב אֵלֶּיךָ תוֹלְדֹת יַעֲקֹב יוֹסֵף בַּר  
שִׁבְעָה עָשָׂרִי שְׁנַיִן הָיָה רָעִי עִם אָחוּהִי בְּעֵנָה  
וְהוּא מְרַבֵּי עִם בְּנֵי בְלָחָה וְעִם בְּנֵי זְלָפָה נְשֵׁי  
אָבוּהִי וְאֵתִי יוֹסֵף ית דְּבָרוֹן בִּישׂא לֹת אַבְוֵהוֹן:  
ג וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל רַחִים ית יוֹסֵף מִכָּל בְּנוֹהִי אָרִי בַר

לז א וַיִּשְׁבּוּ יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ מְגוּרֵי אָבִיו בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: ב אֵלֶּה הַ  
תּוֹלְדֹת יַעֲקֹב יוֹסֵף בֶּן־שִׁבְעֵ־עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה הָיָה רָעִי אֶת־אָחִיו  
בְּעֵנָה וְהוּא נֶעַר אֶת־בְּנֵי בְלָחָה וְאֶת־בְּנֵי זְלָפָה נְשֵׁי אָבִיו  
וַיָּבֵא יוֹסֵף אֶת־דְּבַתָּם רָעִי אֶל־אֲבִיהֶם: ג וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל אָהָב

כ"ט

פשוטו של מקרא, להיות דבר דבור על אופניו. ומדרש אגדה דורש, תלה הכתוב תולדות יעקב ביוסף, מפני כמה דברים, אחת, שכל עלמו של יעקב לא עבד אלא לבן אלה ברחל, ושכיהו זהו איוקונו של יוסף דומה לו, וכל מה שאירע ליעקב אירע ליוסף, זה נשטם זה נשטם, זה אחיו מבקש להרגו זה אחיו מבקשים להרגו, וכן הרבה צבאשית רבה. ועוד מדרש בו, וישב, ביקש יעקב לישב בשלוה, קפץ עליו רוגזו של יוסף, לדיקוס מבקשים לישב בשלוה, אומר הקצ"ב, לא דיין לדיקוס מה שמתוקן להם לעולם הבא, אלא שמבקשים לישב בשלוה בעולם הזה: והוא נער. שהיה עושה מעשה נערו, מתקן בשערו, ממשמש בעיניו, כדי שיהיה נראה יפה: את בני בלהה. כלומר, ורגיל אלל בני בלהה, לפי שהיו אחיו מצזין אותן, והוא מקרבן: את דבתם רעה. כל רעה שהיה רואה בצאחיו בני לאה, היה מגיד לצדיו, שהיו אוכלין אצר מן החי, ומזלזלין בצני השפחות לקרותן עבדים, וחשודים על העריות. ובשלתן לקה. על אצר מן החי, וישחטו עזים במכירתן, ולא אכלוהו חי ועל דבה שספר עליהם שקורין לאחיהם עבדים, לעבד נמכר יוסף. ועל העריות שספר עליהם, ותשא אשת אדוניו וגו': דבתם. כל לשון דבה פרלייזן בלע"ז. כל מה שהיה יכול לדבר בהם רעה, היה מספר: דבה. לשון

(ח) וישב יעקב וגו'. אחר שכתב לך ישובי עשו ותולדותיו צדק קלרה, שלא היו ספונים וחשובים לפרש היאך נתיישבו, וסדר מלחמותיהם איך הורישו את החורי, פירש לך ישובי יעקב ותולדותיו צדק ארוכה, כל גלגולי צבתם, לפי שהם חשובים לפני המקום להאריך בהם, וכן אהה מולא בעשירה דורות שמאדם ועד נח, פלוני הוליד פלוני, וכשבא לנח האריך בו, וכן בעשירה דורות שמנח ועד אברהם קלר בהם, ומשהגיע אלל אברהם האריך בו. משל למרגלית שנפלה בין החול, אדם ממשמש בחול וכזברו בצבירה עד שמואל את המרגליות, ומשמאלה, הוא משליך את הברורות מידו ונוטל המרגלית. (דבר אחר וישב יעקב, הפשטני הזה, נכנסו גמליו טעונים פשתן, הפחמי תמה, אנה יכנס כל הפשתן הזה, היה פיקח אחד משיב לו, נילון אחד יולא ממפוח שלך ששורף את כולו, כך יעקב, ראה כל האלופים הכתובים למעלה, תמה ואמר, מי יכול לכבוש את כולן, מה כתיב למטה, אלה תולדות יעקב יוסף, וכתיב והיה בית יעקב אש ובית יוסף להבה ובית עשו לקש, נילון יולא מיוסף שמכלה ושורף את כולם. צרש"י יסן): (ג) אלה תולדות יעקב. ואלה של תולדות יעקב, אלה ישוביהם וגלגוליהם, עד שצאו לכלל יישו. סבה ראשונה, יוסף בן שבע עשרה וגו', על ידי זה נתגלגלו וירדו למארים. זהו אחר ישו

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the Torah stress that Ya'akov "settled"? (v. 1)

**RASHI:** The following was expounded by the *Midrash* on the word **וַיִּשְׁבּוּ** ("he settled"): When Ya'akov sought to settle in tranquility, Yosef's anger [against his brothers] sprang upon him. The righteous seek to settle in tranquility. God said, "Isn't it enough for the righteous [to have] what's prepared for them in the World-to-Come, that they seek to settle in tranquility in this world too?"

**SIFSEI CHACHAMIM:** *Rashi* was troubled why the Torah states that "Ya'akov settled" and not "Ya'akov lived."

**KLI YAKAR:** What is the precise meaning of the expression, "Yosef's anger sprang upon him"? Yosef angered God with his evil reports about his brothers (see v. 2). Normally a lad of 17 years would not be punishable, since the heavenly court only considers a person liable at the age of 20. Nevertheless, in this case, since "Ya'akov sought to settle in tranquility," God decided to punish Yosef before the age of 20, in order to disturb Ya'akov's peace. Therefore, it is said, "Yosef's anger *sprang upon him*," i.e. the punishment for Yosef angering God was *brought forward*, before its time.

TORAS MENACHEM

☞ YA'AKOV'S TRANQUILITY IS DISTURBED (V. 1)

*Rashi* writes that when Ya'akov sought tranquility, God denied him of it, and sent instead the ordeal of Yosef's sale. This statement appears to be difficult to accept at the literal level of Torah interpretation for the following reason:

The entire ordeal of Yosef's disappearance lasted a total of 22 years. (Yosef was 30 years old when he was appointed viceroy over Egypt (below 41:46), and he was reunited with his father 9 years later—after 7 years of prosperity and 2 years of famine—making Yosef 39 years old. Since he was sold at the age of 17, it follows that the entire incident lasted [39 - 17 =] 22 years. c.f. *Rashi* to 28:9)

Now, if one considers that Ya'akov lived a total of 147 years, of which only 22 were troublesome, we still find that many of Ya'akov's years were

indeed spent in tranquility. How then can *Rashi* suggest that Ya'akov's request for tranquility *in this world* was not granted?

Of course, one might argue that the period which Ya'akov spent in Lavan's house and the following period when he encountered Eisav were not periods of tranquility.

Nevertheless, Eisav's hatred for Ya'akov was only aroused when Ya'akov took the blessings that were intended for him, at which time Ya'akov was 63 years old (*Rashi* to 28:9). So, for at least 63 years Ya'akov lived in peace. For the following 14 years he hid in the Yeshivah of Aiver (*ibid.*), where it is likely that he was completely safe. And even if he feared that Eisav would find him in the Yeshivah, we still find that Ya'akov lived a further 17 years in total tranquility after he came to Egypt, together with Yosef and his grandchildren.

## YOSEF ANGERS HIS BROTHERS

**37** **Y**a'akov settled in the Land which his father inhabited, the Land of Cana'an.  
<sup>2</sup> These are (the episodes of) Ya'akov's descendants (until they were finally settled):

Yosef was seventeen years old. (For many years previously\*) he would pasture the sheep with his brothers. He (would) do boy(ish things, like curling his hair and touching up his eyes to look attractive, and he spent his time) with Bilhah's sons and Zilpah's sons—the sons of) his father's wives—(whom Leah's sons had treated disrespectfully). Yosef (used to) bring reports to their father (of all Leah's sons' behavior which he thought was) evil.

### TORAS MENACHEM

Thus when reading *Rashi's* statement that God denied Ya'akov tranquility in this world by sending him the incident with Yosef, the reader will immediately ask: Ya'akov spent 80, or perhaps, 94 of his 147 years in peace and tranquility, so how are we to understand God's statement, "Isn't it enough for the righteous [to have] what's prepared for them in the World-to-Come, that they seek to settle in tranquility in this world too"?

#### THE EXPLANATION

When a person is still living in his parents' home, or when he goes away to study in Yeshivah, he still is relatively free of responsibility and he simply does not need to "seek tranquility" from the troubles of this world.

In Ya'akov's case, after he was married and was rearing a family, he willingly accepted upon himself 14 years of hard labor in Lavan's house, and for the following 6 years he busied himself with further work in order to accumulate wealth.

Thus, it was only upon returning to the Land of Cana'an that Ya'akov, for the first time in his life, sought a tranquil life, free of worries and responsibilities that would disturb his service of God.

#### RASHI'S PROBLEM

In order to understand *Rashi's* comment—that "Yosef's anger [against his brothers] sprang upon him" because Ya'akov desired tranquility—we first need to clarify what exactly was troubling *Rashi* here.

*Rashi* wrote earlier that Ya'akov worked for Lavan 6 years after Yosef was born, and that he then spent a further 2 years in transit on his way back to the Land of Cana'an (*Rashi* to 28:9). Thus, when "Ya'akov settled in the land which his father inhabited, the land of Cana'an," Yosef was 8 years old. And yet, straightaway the Torah tells us, "Yosef was 17 years old." So *Rashi* was troubled: What happened to the 9 years in between? Why does the Torah make such a sudden jump?

At the literal level, one could answer simply that nothing noteworthy happened in between, so the Torah jumps straight to the incident with Yosef when he was aged 17. However, *Rashi* felt that the jump is sufficiently bizarre for the reader to require some sort of explanation, even if the explanation is Midrashic and not purely literal.

Therefore, after prefacing his comment with the words, "*The following was expounded by the Midrash,*" *Rashi* explains that the Torah recorded Ya'akov's "settling" in the Land of Cana'an immediately adjacent to the incident with Yosef in order to hint that one was the cause of the other—"When Ya'akov sought to settle in tranquility, Yosef's anger [against his brothers] sprang upon him."

*Rashi*, however, does not appear to explain why there was a 9-year gap between the cause and its effect. We can presume that Ya'akov wished to dwell in tranquility as soon as he arrived in the Land of Cana'an, so why did it take 9 years for the effect of Ya'akov's request to materialize?

#### WHEN DID YOSEF START TO BRING EVIL REPORTS?

In order to solve this problem, we need to first clarify another issue. The Torah states that Yosef would bring "evil reports" to his father about his brothers' behavior. *Rashi* writes that one of the reports which Yosef brought was that, "*Leah's sons...disgraced the sons of the handmaids [Bilhah and Zilpah] by calling them 'slaves.'*"

When did all this occur? At first glance, one would presume that Yosef's reports began when "Yosef was 17 years old" (v. 2), as the Torah states in the introduction to this passage.

However, at the literal level of Torah interpretation, this is difficult to accept. Even a child studying the *Chumash* for the first time understands that a case of sibling rivalry where one group of brothers disgraces another would not suddenly have arisen when Yosef, the youngest brother, was 17 years old! Certainly, the friction between the brothers would have been a longstanding one, and surely Yosef would not have noticed this rivalry for the first time only upon reaching the age of 17. He must have been sufficiently mature at a much younger age to be aware of the disputes between the brothers, at which time he would have looked for a way to correct their behavior—and the natural reaction of a child would be to tell his father.

In fact, it could be proven from an earlier statement of *Rashi* that Yosef was indeed intellectually mature at a much younger age. Before Ya'akov confronted Eisav, the Torah states, "*Leah and her children approached and prostrated themselves, and afterwards, Yosef and Rochel approached and prostrated themselves.*" (33:7). *Rashi* comments, "*In all cases, the mothers drew near before the sons, but in Rochel's case, Yosef preceded her. He said, 'My mother is pretty. Perhaps that scoundrel will set his eyes on her. I will stand in front of her and prevent him from gazing upon her.'*"

### The Last Word

Ya'akov's request to live in tranquility was eventually fulfilled in the last 17 years of his life, when he lived peacefully in the Land of Egypt with his children and grandchildren. However, this only came about as a result of his sincere request to God.

This teaches us the importance of requesting from God that He should bring the true and complete Redemption without delay, as the *Midrash* states: "*Even if the only thing the Jewish people possess is hope, they deserve redemption in the merit of the hope*" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Tehillim, remez 636*).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 183)

\* See *Toras Menachem*.

חכים הוא ליה ועבד ליה כתיבא דפסי: ד וחזו אחוהי ארי יתיה רחיים אבוהון מכל אחוהי וסנו יתיה ולא צבן למללא עמיה לשלם: ה ותלם יוסף חלמא ותני לאחוהי ואוסיפו עוד סנו יתיה: ו ואמר להון שמעו כען חלמא הדין די חלמית: ז והא אנתנא מאסרין אסרין בגו חלמא והא קמת אסרתי ואף אודקפת והא מסתחרן אסרתכון וסגדן לאסרתי: ח ואמרו ליה אחוהי המלכו את מדמי לממלך עלנא או שולטן את סביר למשלט בגנא ואוסיפו עוד סנו יתיה על חלמוהי ועל פתגמוהי: ט ותלם עוד חלמא אחרנא ואשתעי יתיה לאחוהי ואמר הא חלמית חלמא עוד והא שמשא וסיהרא וחד עשר בוכביא סגדין לי: י ואשתעי לאבוהי

את יוסף מכל בניו כִּי-בֶן-זְקֵנִים הוּא לוֹ וְעָשָׂה לוֹ כְּתִנֶּת פָּסִים: ד וַיֵּרְאוּ אָחָיו כִּי-אֵתוּ אֶהָב אֲבֵיהֶם מִכָּל-אָחָיו וַיִּשְׁנְאוּ אֹתוֹ וְלֹא יָכְלוּ דַבְּרוּ לְשָׁלֹם: ה וַיַּחְלֵם יוֹסֵף חֲלוֹם וַיַּגִּד לְאָחָיו וַיֹּסְפוּ עוֹד שְׁנֵא אֹתוֹ: ו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם שְׁמְעוּ-נָא הַחֲלוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר חָלַמְתִּי: ז וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי חֹנֵן מֵאֱלֹמִים אֱלֹמִים בְּתוֹךְ הַשָּׂדֶה וְהִנֵּה קָמָה אֱלֹמְתִי וְגַם-נִצְבָּה וְהִנֵּה תִסְבִּינָה אֱלֹמְתֵיכֶם וְתִשְׁתַּחֲוּיֶן לְאֱלֹמְתִי: ח וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ אָחָיו הַמֶּלֶךְ תִּמְלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ אִם-מִשׁוֹל תִּמְשָׁל בָּנוּ וַיֹּסְפוּ עוֹד שְׁנֵא אֹתוֹ עַל-חֲלֹמְתּוֹ וְעַל-דַּבְּרָיו: ט וַיַּחְלֵם עוֹד חֲלוֹם אַחֵר וַיֹּסֶפֶר אֹתוֹ לְאָחָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה חֲלֹמְתִי חֲלוֹם עוֹד וְהִנֵּה הַשָּׁמֶשׁ וְהַיָּרֵחַ וְהָאֵחָד עֶשֶׂר בּוֹכָבִים מִשְׁתַּחֲוּיִם לִי: י וַיֹּסֶפֶר אֶל-אָבִיו וְאֶל-אָחָיו

רש"י

גנותם למדנו שזחס, שלא דברו אחת צפה ואחת בלז: דברו. לדבר עמו: (ז) מאלמים אלומים. כתרנומו מאסרין אסרין, עמרין, וכן נושא חלומותיו<sup>3</sup>, וכמוכו בלשון משנה וכהלומות נוטל ומכריו: קמה אלומתי. נוקפה: וגם נצבה. לעמוד על עמדה צוקיפה: (ח) ועל דבריו. על דחס רעכ שהיה מציא לאציהס: (י) ויוספר אל אביו ואל אחיו. לאחר שספר

דוצ שפתי ישנים! (ג) בן זקונים. שולד לו לעת זקנתו. ואונקלוס תרגס, דר חכים הוא ליה, כל מה שלמד משם ועבר מסר לו. דבר אחר, שהיה זוי איקונין שלו דומה לו: פסים. לשון כלי מלח<sup>2</sup>, כמו כרפס ותכלת, וכמו כתונת הפסים דתמר ורמנון. ומדרש אגדה על שם לרותיו, שנמכר לפוטיפר ולסוחרים ולישמעאלים ולמדיניים: (ד) ולא יכלו דברו לשלום. מתוך

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why is Yosef called a זְקֵנִים? (v. 3)

**RASHI:** Because he was born to [Ya'akov] in his old age (לְעֵת זְקֵנָתוֹ).

Onkelos translates: "Because he was a wise son to him." Whatever [Ya'akov] had learned from Sheim and Aiver he passed on to him.

Another explanation: [Yosef's] features (זֵיו אֵיקוֹנִין) resembled his own [Ya'akov's].

TORAS MENACHEM

From here we see explicitly that Yosef was quite mature even at the time of his father's confrontation with Eisav, when he was only 6 years old. So we can be sure that he would have noticed, and attempted to correct, the rivalry between his brothers before reaching the age of 17.

Thus, when the Torah begins the current story with the statement, "Yosef was 17 years old," it does not mean that Yosef's evil reports began only when he was 17. Rather, before telling the story of Yosef's dreams, and his sale (which did occur when he was 17), the Torah first informs us of the background behind the story, that Yosef had been telling bad reports to his father for many years previously.

Thus, in the final analysis it turns out that there was no 9 year gap. As soon as Ya'akov arrived in the Land of Canaan and sought to live in peace, "Yosef's anger [against his brothers] sprang upon him." I.e. Yosef repeatedly came to him with reports about his brothers, how he was angry with them due to what he perceived as their evil behavior. And this certainly would have prevented Ya'akov from living in tranquility.

YA'AKOV'S EVENTUAL TRANQUILITY

While we have explained why Ya'akov had no tranquility before the incident with Yosef, we nevertheless find that Ya'akov did enjoy 17 peaceful and happy years in Egypt, at the end of his life. How is this to be reconciled with Rashi's statement that the righteous only enjoy tranquility in the next world?

If one examines Rashi's words closely however, he did not in fact state that the righteous are denied tranquility in this world. Rather, "God said, 'Isn't it enough for the righteous [to have] what's prepared for them in the World-to-Come, that they seek to settle in tranquility in this world too?'" I.e. since tranquility in this world is trivial in comparison to the rewards of the next world, the righteous need not concern themselves with it.

Nevertheless, when Ya'akov sought tranquility, God Who is infinitely kind, did not wish to deny it to Ya'akov, since God "fulfills the desire of those that fear him" (Psalms 145:19). So God did indeed bless Ya'akov with 17 years of peace and tranquility in Egypt—the very best years of his life.

(Based on Sichas Motzoi Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev 5739)

<sup>3</sup> Yisra'el loved Yosef more than all his sons, because he was a son (born to him in) old age, so he made him a robe of fine wool. <sup>4</sup> When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him, and they couldn't speak with him nicely.

<sup>5</sup> Yosef had a dream and told his brothers about it, and they hated him even more. <sup>6</sup> (This is what) he said to them: "Please listen to this dream, which I have dreamed! <sup>7</sup> There we were, binding sheaves in the middle of the field, when—look!—my sheaf stood upright and it kept standing too. And then—look!—your sheaves gathered round and threw themselves down (in front of) my sheaf."

<sup>8</sup> His brothers said to him, "(Does this mean that you want to) reign constantly over us, or rule us all the time?" And they hated him even more because of his dreams, and because of his (evil) reports (to their father).

<sup>9</sup> (Yosef) had yet another dream, and he told his brothers about it. He said, "Here, I have dreamed another dream. Just look! The sun, the moon, and eleven stars threw themselves down before me!"

---

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

---

● **Why did Yosef tell over his dreams to his brothers, if he knew that they hated him? (v. 5-11)**

**ROSH:** According to Jewish Law, a person is prohibited from withholding a prophecy that he receives (*Sanhedrin* 89a). Therefore, Yosef was obligated to relate his prophetic dream, which described how he would rule over his brothers, despite what the consequences might be.

**ABARBANEL:** He was not planning on telling them the *content* of the dream right away. Often, close friends sit together and discuss their dreams, so Yosef thought that offering to have such a discussion would be interpreted by the brothers as a positive act of friendship.

**SFORNO:** Yosef was immature, and he made an unwise move.

**RADAK:** He wanted to enrage the brothers further, because they had shown hatred for him.

**CHIZKUNI:** Yosef was trying to show that the brothers need not be angry at their father for showing favoritism to him, because Yosef's greatness was in fact Divinely decreed, as was evident from the prophetic dream.

**SHACH AL HATORAH:** Unless a dream is related to others it will not materialize (*Brachos* 55b). Since Yosef wanted the dream to come true, he related it to his brothers, but inevitably, this made them hate him even more.

**OHR HACHAYIM:** Yosef wanted to indicate to his brothers that it was unwise to hate him because one day they would need him.

---

TORAS MENACHEM

---

🔗 **WHY DID YOSEF RELATE HIS DREAMS? (v. 5-11)**

When Yosef was 17 years old, we can presume that he was an extremely wise person, as *Rashi* writes, "Whatever [Ya'akov] had learned from Sheim and Aiver he gave over to him" (v. 3). So, why did he tell a dream to his brothers that "your sheaves gathered round and threw themselves down (in front of) my sheaf" (v. 7), when he already knew that they hated him?

🌀 The Last Word 🌀

Yosef had two dreams: one about physical matters (binding sheaves), and one about spiritual matters (the sun, moon and stars, which are heavenly bodies). Nevertheless, both dreams shared exactly the same message.

This teaches us that the Jew's physical and spiritual affairs should not be separated from each other, each having its own separate, "message." Rather, a person should align his physical and spiritual affairs to complement each other. For example, one's physical activities, such as eating and drinking, should be done for the sake of Heaven, in order to serve God properly.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 3, p. 805ff.)

Then, after seeing that "they hated him even more" (v. 8), Yosef persists and relates yet another provocative dream to his brothers: "The sun, the moon, and eleven stars threw themselves down before me" (v. 9!)

And even then Yosef is not satisfied and he repeats the dream in the presence of his father and his brothers.

What could have been Yosef's logic behind this entire exercise?

At first glance, one might argue that Yosef was unaware that his brothers hated him. However, *Rashi* dispels this notion with his comment to the words, "They couldn't speak with him nicely" (v. 4)—"From what is stated to their discredit, we may learn something to their credit, that they did not say one thing with their mouths and think differently in their hearts." Here we see explicitly that, according to the literal interpretation of *Rashi*, Yosef was well aware of the bad feelings that his brothers harbored towards him. Why then did he insist on relating his dreams to them?

**THE EXPLANATION**

When Yosef saw that his brothers were jealous of him, because Ya'akov had made him a special robe and taught him the wisdom of Sheim and Aiver, Yosef would have looked for a means to reduce his brother's jealousy. Obviously he could not deny receiving the robe or the wisdom, for they were indisputable facts, but he would have constantly looked for some sort of plan which might diffuse his brothers' anger.

When he had the first dream, it dawned on Yosef that he now had a perfect method of calming his brothers anger, because he presumed that his brothers would take the dream *at face value*.

ולאחיהו ויגדף ביה אבוי ויאמר ליה מה חלמא הדין די חלימתא המיתא ניתי אנא ואמך ואחיד למסגוד לך על ארעא: יא וקניאו ביה אחוהי ואבוי נטר ית פתגמא: יב ואזלו אחוהי למרעי ית ענא דאבוהון בשכם: יג ואמר ישראל ליוסף הלא אחיד רען בשכם איתא ואשליחנך לותהון ואמר ליה הא אנא: יד ואמר ליה אויל בען חוי ית שלם אחיד וית שלם ענא ואתיבני פתגמא ושלחיה ממישר חברון ואתא לשכם: טו ואשכחיה גברא והא תעי בחקלא ושאליה גברא למימר מה את בעי: טז ואמר ית אחי אנא בעי חוי קען לי היכן אנון רען: יז ואמר גברא נטלו מכא ארי שמעית דאמרין גיויל לדותן ואזל יוסף בתר אחוהי ואשכחניון בדותן: יח וחזו יתיה מרחיק ועד לא קריב לותהון וחשיבו עלוהי

ויגער-בו אביו ויאמר לו מה החלום הזה אשר חלמת הבוא נבוא אני ואמך ואחיד להשתתות לך ארצה: יא ויקנאו-בו אחיו ואביו שמר את-הדבר: [שני] יב וילכו אחיו לרעות \*את-עזאן אביהם בשכם: יג ויאמר ישראל אל-יוסף הלא אחיד רעים בשכם לכה ואשלחך אליהם ויאמר לו הנני: יד ויאמר לו לך-נא ראה את-שלום אחיד ואת-שלום העזאן והשבני דבר וישלחיו מעמק חברון ויבא שבמה: טו וימצאוהו איש והנה תעה בשדה וישאלהו האיש לאמר מה-תבקש: טז ויאמר את-אחי אנכי מבקש הגידה-נא לי איפה הם רעים: יז ויאמר האיש נסעו מזה כי שמעתי אמרים נלכה דתינה וילך יוסף אתר אחיו וימצאם בדותן: יח ויראו אתו

\*נקוד על את

רש"י

ואף על פי שכיב יודע צאחיו ששונאין אותו: (יד) מעמק חברון. והלא חזרון צבר, שנאמר ויעלו צנגז ויצא עד חזרון<sup>5</sup>, אלא מעלה עמוקה של אותו זדיק הקצור בחזרון, לקיים מה שנאמר לאצרכם צין הצתרים, כי גר יהיה זרעך<sup>7</sup>: ויבא שבמה. מקום מוכן לפורעניות, שם קלקלו השבטים, שם ענו את דינה, שם נחלקה מלכות בית דוד, שנאמר וילך רחבעם שכמה<sup>8</sup>: (טו) וימצאוהו איש. זה גבריאל<sup>9</sup> שנאמר והאיש גבריאל<sup>10</sup>: (יז) נסעו מזה. הסיעו עלמין מן האחובה: נלכה דותינה. לבקש לך נכלי דתות שימיתוך בהם. ולפי פשוטו, שם מקום הוא, ואין מקרא יולא מידי פשוטו:

אותו לאחיו, חזר וספרו לאביו צפניהם: ויגער בו. לפי שכיב מטיל שנאה עליו: הבוא נבוא. והלא אמך כבר מתה, והוא לא היה יודע שהדברים מגיעין לבלעה, שגדלתו כאמור<sup>1</sup>. ורצוחיו למדו מכאן, שאין חלום בלא דברים בטלים, ויעקב נתכוון להוליא הדבר מלצ צניו, שלא יקנאוהו, לכך חמר לו הבוא נבוא וגו', כשם שאי אפשר בחמך, כך השאר הוא בטל: (יא) שמר את הדבר. היה ממתין ומלפס מתי יבוא, וכן שומר אמונים<sup>2</sup>, וכן לא תשמור על חטאתי<sup>3</sup>, לא תמתין: (יב) לרעות. את צאן. נקוד על את, שלא הלכו אלא לרעות את עלמין<sup>4</sup>: (יג) הנני. לשון ענוה וזריזות, נזרז למות אביו,

TORAS MENACHEM

All the dreams which have been mentioned in the Torah up to this point came true in the literal sense. When Ya'akov dreamed of angels, angels did indeed accompany him (28:12 and *Rashi* *ibid.*). Later, when he dreamed that his sheep would multiply (31:12), that is precisely what happened. Similarly, when Avraham dreamed that his descendants would go into exile for 400 years (15:12-13), it actually happened; as *Rashi* writes (*ibid.*) that the 400 years began immediately upon the birth of Yitzchak. From this, the student of scripture will have understood that dreams are to be interpreted literally.

Thus Yosef presumed that when he would tell his brothers, "Your sheaves gathered round and threw themselves down (in front of) my sheaf" (v. 7), they would interpret the matter literally, i.e. that his sheaves would be stronger and more valuable than those of his brothers. This, thought Yosef, would diffuse the brothers' anger for they would see that his superiority over them was no more than a matter of being successful in rearing better crops.

However, since hatred tends to hinder a person from being rational, the brothers did not take the dream literally. Rather, they saw it in the light of their own prejudice against Yosef: "(Does this mean that you want to) reign constantly over us, or rule us all the time?" (v. 8).

When Yosef had the second dream, he thought that it would surely calm his brothers, for it demonstrated even more clearly how they had no reason to be jealous. For, in this dream, it was clear that Yosef was not destined to have any *physical* advantage over his brothers at all. Rather, it is only that "the sun, the moon, and eleven stars threw themselves down before me" (v. 9), i.e. it was only the stars, representing the *mazalos* (spiritual shadows) of the brothers (see *Rashi* to 15:5) that were bowing down to Yosef, and not the brothers themselves.

Nevertheless, when this plan failed too, Yosef thought of a further solution: He would relate the dream to his brothers in Ya'akov's presence, hoping that Ya'akov would explain to them the correct, literal interpretation of the dream. However, this too did not succeed, and instead, Ya'akov became angry.

Thus, in the final analysis we see that Yosef did indeed follow a logical path, because he expected that everybody would take his dreams literally, just as he had done. Then, his brothers would have seen that, while Yosef had received some genuine favoritism, it was really nothing to be jealous about.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev* 5734)

<sup>10</sup> He (then) told it to his father (in the presence of) his brothers. His father rebuked him (in order to calm the brothers down). He said to (Yosef), “What is this dream that you have dreamed? How could I, your mother, and your brothers come and throw ourselves down to you on the ground (when your mother has already passed away)?” <sup>11</sup> But his brothers (still) envied him.

His father (however believed in the dream) and kept (waiting) for the event (to occur).

## 🕯 THE SALE OF YOSEF 🕯

37:12  
SECOND  
READING

**H**is brothers went to pasture their father’s flocks in Shechem. <sup>13</sup> Yisra’el said to Yosef, “Aren’t your brothers pasturing in Shechem? Come, I’ll send you to join them.”

“I’m ready,” (Yosef) said to him (even though he knew his brothers hated him).

<sup>14</sup> (Yisra’el) said to him, “Go now and see how your brothers are doing and how the sheep are doing, and bring me back news.”

So (Yisra’el) sent him off from the Chevron valley, and he came to Shechem.

<sup>15</sup> (The angel Gavriel in the guise of) a man found him, and—look!—he was lost in the field. The man questioned him, saying, “What do you want?”

<sup>16</sup> (Yosef) said, “I am looking for my brothers. Please tell me where they are pasturing?”

<sup>17</sup> The man said, “They’ve left here (they’re not acting like your brothers any more), for I heard them saying, ‘Let’s go to Dosan (we’ll find a legal pretext to kill our brother).’”

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What was Ya’akov’s reaction to the dream? (v. 11)**

**RASHI:** He waited expectantly for the dream to materialize.

● **Who was the “man” that Yosef met? (v. 15)**

**RASHI:** It was [the angel] Gavriel.

**IBN EZRA:** At the literal level, it was one of the passersby.

● **What did he tell Yosef? (v. 17)**

**RASHI:** “They’ve left here” = “They’ve parted from brotherhood.”

“Let’s go to Dosan (בְּלֶכֶת דֹּסָן)” = “They went to seek legal pretexts (בְּנִכְלֵי דָתוֹת) to put you to death.”

Dosan is [also] however the name of an actual place, since scripture does not depart from its literal meaning.

**RAMBAN:** Rashi’s interpretations were not actually said by Gavriel to Yosef, for Yosef would surely not have gone to his brothers if he knew they were planning to kill him. Rather, Rashi is explaining the *double entendre* of scripture.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🕯 Sparks of Chassidus 🕯

**W**hy did Ya’akov wait expectantly for Yosef’s dream to materialize? (Rashi to v. 11)

a.) All the other brothers chose to be shepherds, because in order to devote themselves properly to God they needed to isolate themselves from the distractions of everyday life. Yosef was thus superior in the sense that he was able to be immersed in worldliness, and yet remain perfect in his service of God.

Therefore, Ya’akov waited impatiently for Yosef’s dream—that the brothers would become submissive to Yosef—to be fulfilled, for then they would also benefit from some of Yosef’s greatness. In fact, it is only through obtaining some of Yosef’s spiritual greatness that the other tribes would be able to withstand the difficulties of exile.

Or: b.) Ya’akov was waiting impatiently for Mashiach ben Yosef, the precursor of Mashiach ben David.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 160ff.)

#### 🕯 THE “MAN” IN THE FIELD (v. 15-17)

What led Rashi to conclude that, at the literal level, the “man” in the field was none other than the angel Gavriel? Why did he reject the simple interpretation [of *Ibn Ezra*] that it was one of the passersby?

Rashi was troubled by the Torah’s expression, “A man found him,” which suggests that the man was actually looking for Yosef. This begs the question: Why would a passerby be looking for Yosef?

Rashi thus concluded that the Torah is hinting to the Midrashic teaching that it was in fact the angel Gavriel who had been sent by God to find Yosef, and he appeared in the image of a “man” (*Tanchumah* 2).

However this leaves us with the question: Why was it necessary for God to send Gavriel? Surely it would have been sufficient for Yosef to ask for directions from one of the passersby?

To answer this problem, Rashi explained that the “man’s” reply actually contained a message which only the angel Gavriel would have known: “They have parted from brotherhood. They went to seek legal pretexts to put you to death” (Rashi to v. 17).

At first glance, it does not appear that Gavriel actually said this to Yosef, but rather, it is a double entendre of scripture. For otherwise we are left with **Ramban’s** question: Why would Yosef have gone to find his brothers if he knew they were plotting to kill him?

למקטליה: יט ואמרו גבר לאהויה הא מרי חלמיא דיכי אתא: כ וכען איתו ונקטליניה ונרמיניה בחד מן גופיא ונימר חיתה בישתא אכלתיה ונחתי מה יהון בסוף חלמוהי: כא ושמע ראובן ושיזביה מידיהון ואמר לא נקטליניה נפש: כב ואמר להון ראובן לא תושדון דמא רמו יתיה לגופא הדין די במדברא וידא לא תושטון ביה בדיל לשיזבא יתיה מידיהון לאתבותיה לות אבוהי:

מרחק ובטחם יקרב אליהם ויתנבלו אתו להמיתו: יט ויאמרו איש אל-אחיו הנה בעל החלמות הלזה בא: כ ועתה א לכו ונהרגו ונשליכו באתר הברות ואמרנו חיה רעה אכלתהו ונראה מה-יהיו חלמתיו: כא וישמע ראובן ויצלהו מידם ויאמר לא נכנו נפש: כב ויאמר אליהם א ראובן אל-תשפכו דם השליכו אתו אל-הבור הזה אשר במדבר ויד אל-תשליכו בו למען הציל אתו מידם להשיבו

כש"י

מה יהיו חלומותיו, נראה דבר מי יקום, או שלכם או שלי. ואי אפשר שיאמרו הם ונראה מה יהיו חלומותיו, שמכיון שיכרגוכו צטלו חלומותיו: (כא) לא נכנו נפש. מכת נפש, זו היא מיתה: (כב) למען הציל אתו. רוח הקדש

(יח) ויתנבלו. נתמלאו ככלים וערמומיות: אתו. כמו אחו, עמו, כלומר אליו: (כ) ונראה מה יהיו חלומותיו. אמר רבי יצחק מקרא זה אומר דרשני, רוח הקדש אומרת כן, הם אומרים ונהרגו, והכתוב מסיים ונראה

TORAS MENACHEM

However, if this is the case, then we are left with our original question: If the man only said that the brothers had gone to Dosan, then why did God have to send the angel Gavriel to carry out this mission? Surely, a passerby could have done precisely the same task?

Therefore, *Rashi's* intention here must be that Gavriel *actually told* Yosef, "They have parted from brotherhood. They went to seek legal pretexts to put you to death."

As for *Ramban's* question—why Yosef still went to his brothers, knowing that they wanted to kill him—*Rashi* would answer simply that this brings to light the greatness of Yosef. Even though he was fully aware of the potential dangers involved, Yosef still went to seek his brothers in order to carry out his father's instruction: "Go now and see how your brothers are doing and how the sheep are doing and bring me back news" (v. 14).

In fact, upon failing to find his brothers in Shechem, Yosef would have had the perfect excuse to return home, since his father only told him to go to Shechem, and not to Dosan (above v. 13). Nevertheless, out of his great loyalty to his father, Yosef continued on his mission, beyond the "letter of the law" of what his father had demanded, out of his tremendous enthusiasm in fulfilling this *mitzvah*.

In the final analysis, we see that God sent Gavriel—the angel of severity—to test Yosef in order to see how far his loyalty to his father would extend. Yosef passed the test with distinction, demonstrating the utmost dedication to the observance of a *mitzvah*, even at the risk to his own life.

THE HALACHIC BASIS OF YOSEF'S ACTIONS

The above dispute between *Rashi* and *Ramban*, whether Yosef was told that his brothers planned to kill him or not, follows a dispute in Jewish law about sacrificing one's life to carry out a *mitzvah*.

While it is universally accepted that a person must sacrifice his life rather than transgress the prohibitions of idol worship, forbidden relations or murder in public (*Sanhedrin* 74a), there is a dispute regarding the permissibility of sacrificing one's life to avoid other prohibitions:

*Rambam* rules: "In any case where the Torah says you should transgress rather than be killed, and the person decides to be killed rather than transgress, he is guilty of taking his own life" (*Hilchos Yesodei Hatorah* 5:4).

*Tosfos* however dissents, ruling, "If a person allows himself to be killed

rather than transgress, he is considered to have performed an act of righteousness" (*Avodah Zorah* 27b, ד"ה יכול).

In our case, we see that *Ramban* held in accordance with the opinion of *Rambam*, that Yosef would not have risked his life to fulfill the *mitzvah* of honoring his father. Thus, *Ramban* concluded that Gavriel could not possibly have told Yosef that his brothers were planning to kill him, for otherwise he would not have placed himself at risk in order to join them.

*Rashi*, however, understood that the literal level of Torah interpretation follows the view of *Tosfos*. Therefore, it is quite plausible that Gavriel actually told Yosef about his brothers' plot and that he went to join them regardless, "to perform an act of righteousness."

WHAT DID YOSEF GAIN?

One problem with the above analysis is that Yosef's actions seem to have thwarted his goal. It is all very well that he was willing to risk his life to carry out his father's instructions to join the brothers, but Ya'akov also requested Yosef to, "bring me back news" (v. 14). Thus, it turns out that in his eagerness to fulfill his father's command of joining the brothers, he actually failed to fulfill his father's *primary* request of bringing back news. Why then did Yosef see fit to join his brothers, thus putting his entire mission into jeopardy?

However, Yosef's actions can be understood in light of the ruling of *Nimukei Yosef*: "A great man who is pious and God-fearing, who sees that the generation is morally corrupt, is permitted to give up his life, even over a small *mitzvah*, in order that the people should see and learn from him" (נמוקי ס"פ בן סודר, הובא בכס"מ שם).

Yosef deemed the brothers to be "morally corrupt," since they had been consistently disrespectful to their father: Shimon and Levi massacred the people of Shechem against Ya'akov's wishes (see above 34:30); Reu'vain moved his father's bed in an act of rebellion (35:22); and, in general, their hatred for Yosef was an act of disrespect to Ya'akov because, after all, the favoritism towards Yosef had come from Ya'akov *himself*.

Therefore, in this instance, Yosef deemed it appropriate to risk his life in the fulfillment of the very *mitzvah* in which they had become corrupt—the honoring of one's parents.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev* 5743; *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 169ff.)



So Yosef went after his brothers, and he found them in Dosan. <sup>18</sup> They saw him from a distance, and before he came near them they plotted against him to put him to death. <sup>19</sup> They said to each other, “Look! That dreamer is coming. <sup>20</sup> So now, come and we’ll kill him! Then we’ll cast him into one of the pits, and we’ll say, ‘A wild beast devoured him.’”

(But God said,) “We are going to see what (indeed) will become of his dreams!”

<sup>21</sup> When Re’uvain heard (their plan) he saved (Yosef) from their hands. He said, “Let’s not give him a lethal blow.”

<sup>22</sup> “Don’t shed blood!” Re’uvain said to them. “Throw him into this pit that’s in the desert, but don’t lay a hand upon him.” (He said this only) in order to save (Yosef) from their hands, (and then he planned to rescue him and) return him to his father.

---

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

---

#### ● Why did the brothers plot to kill Yosef? (v. 18)

**SFORNO:** The brothers thought that Yosef was joining them, not in an act of friendship, but to find fault in their actions. They thought he would then make a bad report to Ya’akov, who would curse the brothers in anger (or that God himself would punish them), and they would die. Yosef would then remain alone, as the blessed of the sons.

The other brothers were complete *tzadikim* (pious individuals), as we find that all their names are mentioned on the breastplate. In this case, they followed the halachic principle that if a person comes to kill you, you should kill him first, in self-defense (*Sanhedrin* 72b).

#### ● How did Re’uvain hope to save Yosef? (v. 21-22)

**ZOHAR:** If there were snakes and scorpions in the pit [see *Rashi* to v. 24] why is it written of Re’uvain, “(He said this only) in order to save (Yosef) from their hands, to return him to his father” (v. 22)? Didn’t Re’uvain fear that the snakes and scorpions would harm Yosef? If so, how did he plan “to return him to his father”? The verse states [that his actions were] “in order to save him.”

Re’uvain saw that Yosef would surely come to harm in their hands,

for he knew how much they hated him and wished to kill him. Re’uvain said, “It is better to cast him into the pit of snakes and scorpions than to deliver him to those who hate him and who have no compassion for him...For, in a place of snakes and scorpions if a man is righteous God will perform a miracle for him and save him, or sometimes he is saved by the merit of his fathers. But once delivered into the hands of enemies, few escape...”

Come and behold the piety of Re’uvain! He knew that Shimon and Levi were ruthless and cunning when they joined forces. When they joined against Shechem, they killed all the males...Re’uvain said, “If such a great city did not escape them, then if this boy falls into their hands, not a shred of flesh will remain. Therefore, it is better to save him from them.”

**OHR HA’CHAYIM:** Since a person has free will, he is able to kill a man who is not actually liable for the death penalty in the Heavenly Court. Therefore, the verse states that Re’uvain wanted to save Yosef “from their hands,” i.e. from the hands of those that had free choice. The brothers believed that by killing Yosef they would be able to annul the effects of his prophetic dream.

---

### TORAS MENACHEM

---

#### 🕒 RE’UVAIN’S ATTEMPT TO SAVE YOSEF (v. 21-22)

If Re’uvain was attempting to save Yosef, why did he suggest throwing him into a pit which contained “snakes and scorpions” (*Rashi* to v. 24)?

At the literal level, one could argue that Re’uvain simply was not aware that the pit contained any potential danger, such as snakes or scorpions, and that he was planning to rescue Yosef later.

Nevertheless, it seems somewhat unreasonable to suggest that Re’uvain would not have realized that a dry pit was likely to contain snakes and scorpions. If so, why did he suggest putting Yosef there?

[The *Zohar* and *Ohr haChayim* explain] that the pit was less of a danger, since the brothers had free choice, whereas snakes and scorpions do not. Thus, while the brothers could have executed Yosef, the snakes and scorpions would only have been able to kill him if he actually deserved to die, according to the ruling of the Heavenly Court. So, Re’uvain felt that Yosef would be relatively safe in the pit.\*

However, this explanation is still problematic, as to be saved from a pit of snakes and scorpions one still requires a special merit. And, while Yosef may have indeed been safer there than with his brothers, we are still left with the question: How could Re’uvain consent to placing Yosef in a situation of danger, among snakes and scorpions?

#### THE EXPLANATION

The brothers argued that Yosef had to be killed in an act of self-defense, since he was effectively seeking to kill them [as *Sforno* writes]. Re’uvain disagreed with their logic, but since he was in a minority of one against nine, he had no choice other than to consent to their plan. His only hope to save Yosef was not to challenge the other brothers directly, but to devise a scheme by which Yosef could be saved.

Thus we find that, as a pretense, he agreed with the brothers’ plan. Re’uvain suggested, “Let’s not give him a lethal blow” (v. 21), including himself with the other brothers (rather than saying “Don’t give him a lethal blow”), so as to deceive them into thinking that he consented to the idea

---

\* At first glance, this is difficult to understand, since even a person who is endowed with free choice cannot act in defiance of the Heavenly court. For example, if Mr. A chooses to harm Mr. B, it must be the case that Mr. B actually deserved this harm, and God merely *arranged* it that Mr. A should be present to inflict the harm. But this does not mean to say that Mr. A is denied his free choice, for he could have chosen not to do the harm and God would have found another agent to willingly harm Mr. B instead, since “God has many agents” (See *Tanya, Igeres Hakodesh*, Ch. 25). Thus, the brothers’ free choice does not appear to render them any more of a threat than the scorpions. Nevertheless, the *Talmud* teaches that at a time of danger, the Heavenly Court judges a person to see if his merits are sufficient for him to be saved (*Shabbos* 32a). Consequently, it could be argued a person who has free will is a greater danger than an animal, which does not, and thus a greater merit is required to be saved from it. This was the basis of Re’uvain’s logic (See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 297).

כג ויהוה פד אתא יוסף לות אחוהו ואשלחו ית יוסף ית בתוניה ית בתוניה ית בתוניה דפסי די עלוהי: כד ונסבנהי ורמו יתיה לגונא וגונא ריקא לית ביה מנא: כה ואסחרו למיכל לחמא וקפו עיניהון וחזו והא שירת ערבאי אתיא מגלעד וגמליהון טעינין שעף וקטף ולמסו אזלין לאחמא למצרים: כו ואמר יהודה לאחיה מה כמון נתהני לנא ארי נקמול ית אחונא ונכסי על דמיה: כז איתו וגזבניה לערבאי וידנא לא תהי ביה ארי אחונא בסרנא הוא וקבילו מניה אחוהי: כח ועברו גברי מדינאי תגרי ונגידו ואסיקו ית יוסף מן גונא ובינו ית יוסף לערבאי בעשרין כסף ואיתאו ית יוסף למצרים: כט ותב ראובן לגונא והא לית יוסף בגונא ובזע ית לבושוהי: ל ותב לות אחוהי ואמר עולימא ליתוהי ואנא לאן אנא אתי: לא ונסבו ית בתוניה דיוסף ונכיסו צפיר בר עזי ומבלו ית

אל-אביו: [שלישין] כג ויהי כאשר בא יוסף אל-אחיו ויפשימו את-יוסף את-בתנתו את-בתנת הפסים אשר עליו: כד ויקהו וישלכו אתו הברה והבור רק אין בו מים: כה וישבו לאכל-לחם וישאו עיניהם ויראו והנה ארחת ישמעאלים באה מגלעד וגמליהם נשאים נכאת וצרי ולט הולכים להוריד מצרימה: כו ויאמר יהודה אל-אחיו מה בצע כי נהרג את-אחינו וכפינו את-דמו: כז לכו ונמכרנו לישמעאלים וידנו אל-תהי-בו כפי-אחינו בשקרנו הוא וישמעו אחיו: כח ויעברו אנשים מדינים סחרים ומשכו ויעלו את-יוסף מן-הבור וימכרו את-יוסף לישמעאלים בעשרים כסף וביאו את-יוסף מצרימה: כט וישב ראובן אל-הבור והנה אין-יוסף בבור ויקרע את-בגדיו: ל וישב אל-אחיו ויאמר הילד איננו ואני אנה אני-בא: לא ויקחו את-בתנת יוסף

רש"י

זלשון משנה, ורבותיו פירשו שרש עשז ושמו אשטרולוחיא"ה, צמס' נדכ': (כו) מה בצע. מה ממון, כתרומה: וכסינו את דמו. ועליל את מיתתו: (כז) וישמעו. וקבילו מניה, וכל שמיעה שהיא קצלת דברים, כגון זה, וכגון וישמע יעקב אל אציו, נעשה ושמע, מתורגם נקבל, וכל שהוא שמיעת האוזן, כגון וישמעו את קול ה' אלהים מתהלך בגן, ורצקה שומעת, וישמע ישראל, שמעתי את תלוות, כולן מתורגם ושמעו, ושמעת, ושמע, שמיע קדמיה: (כח) ויעברו אנשים מדינים. זו היא שירא אחרת, והודיעך הכתוב, שנמכר פעמים הרבה: וימשכו. בני יעקב את יוסף מן הבור וימכרוהו לישמעאלים, והישמעאלים למדינים, והמדינים למלרים: (כט) וישב ראובן. ובמכירתו לא היה שם, שהגיע יומו לילך ולשמע את אציו. דבר אחר, עסוק היה בשקו ובתעניתו על שזלזל יועי אציו: (ל) אנה אני בא. אנה אצרכ

העידה על ראובן שלא אמר זאת אלא להגיל אותו, שיצא הוא ויעלנו משם, אמר, אני צבור וגדול שזכונן, לא יתלה הסרחון אלא צי: (כג) את בתנתו. זה חלוק: את בתנת הפסים. הוא שהוסף לו אציו יותר על אחיו: (כד) והבור רק אין בו מים. ממשמע שנאמר והבור רק, איני יודע שאין בו מים, מה תלמוד לומר אין בו מים. מים אין בו, אצל נחשים ועקרבים יש בו: (כה) ארחת. כתרומה שירת, על שם הולכי ארחה: וגמליהם נשאים וגו'. למכ פרסם הכתוב את משאם, להודיע מתן שכרן של לדיקים, שאין דרכן של ערביים לשאת אלא נפט ועטרן שריחן רע, ולזה נזדמנו צממים, שלא יוזק מריח רע: נבאת. כל כנוסי צממים הרבה קרוי נכאת, וכן ויראם את כל בית נכח<sup>3</sup>, מרקחת צממיו. ואונקלוס תרגם לשון עשוכ: וצרי. שרף הנוטף מעלי הקטף והוא נטף הנמנה עם סמני הקטורת: ולט. לוטיחא שמו

TORAS MENACHEM

of killing Yosef in general. Re'uvain then suggested throwing Yosef into the pit where there were snakes and scorpions, since this plan would appear to the brothers not as a means of saving Yosef but rather a more humane way of killing him. Re'uvain's logic however, was that Yosef's merit would save him from the snakes and scorpions which did not have free choice, and then Re'uvain would come and rescue him later.

RE'UVAIN'S PIETY

Based on the above, we can explain the Zohar's statement, "Come and behold the piety of Re'uvain. He knew that Shimon and Levi were ruthless and cunning when they joined forces, etc."

At first glance the Zohar's stress on Re'uvain's piety appears to be perplexing: Why is it an especially impressive act of piety that he attempted to save Yosef under great danger, such that the Zohar declares, "Come and behold the piety of Re'uvain"? Surely it is a basic obligation

to save another person who is in life-threatening danger, and not an exceptional act of piety?

However, it was explained above that in order to save Yosef, Re'uvain was forced to act in a manner of deception, and that this was the very opposite of his nature. Rashi explains on the verse, "They couldn't speak with him nicely" (v. 4)—"From what is stated to their discredit, we may learn something to their credit, that they did not say one thing with their mouths and think differently in their hearts." Certainly, this statement included Re'uvain too, which indicated that he was an extremely honest person. Thus, in order to save Yosef, he was forced to change his nature and act deceptively.

And this is the very definition of a pious person (chasic): one who goes beyond his natural inclinations. Therefore, the Zohar declared, "Come and behold the piety of Re'uvain."

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev 5736)

THIRD  
READING

<sup>23</sup> Then, when Yosef came to his brothers, they stripped Yosef of his tunic, and the fine woolen robe which he had on. <sup>24</sup> They took him and cast him into a pit.

*The pit was empty. There was no water in it (but there were snakes and scorpions in it).*

<sup>25</sup> They sat down to eat a meal. They glanced around and saw—look!—a caravan of Arabs was coming from Gilad. Their camels were laden with spice mixtures, balsam, and birthwort. They were on their way to take (them) down to Egypt.

<sup>26</sup> Yehudah said to his brothers, “What (profit) will we gain if we kill our brother and hide his blood(y death)? <sup>27</sup> Come, let’s sell him to the Arabs, and let our own hands not (act) against him, for he is our brother, our flesh.” His brothers listened (to him).

<sup>28</sup> (Meanwhile, another caravan of) Midianite men, merchants, passed by.

*(The brothers) pulled Yosef and lifted him up from the pit. They sold Yosef to the Arabs for twenty silver (pieces, and the Arabs sold him to the Midianites). They brought Yosef to Egypt.*

<sup>29</sup> Re’uvain (had been tending to his father. He) returned to the pit, and —look!—Yosef wasn’t in the pit. He tore his garments. <sup>30</sup> He returned to his brothers and said, “The boy’s not there! Where can I go (to escape my father’s anguish)?”

## CLASSIC QUESTIONS

## ● What was in the pit? (v. 24)

**RASHI:** Since the verse states, “*The pit was empty*,” don’t I already know that “*there was no water in it*”? Why did the Torah need to write, “*There was no water in it*”? [The Torah is hinting that] there was no water in it, but there were snakes and scorpions in it.

## ● Where did Re’uvain go? (v. 29)

**RASHI:** When [Yosef] was sold, [Re’uvain] was absent, because it was his day to go and tend to his father.

Another explanation: He was busy with his sackcloth and his fasting for disturbing his father’s bed (see above 35:22).

**SHACH AL HATORAH:** Yosef had been tending to his father during the

period before he left, so now somebody else had to replace him. Since Re’uvain was the firstborn, he went first.

**SIFSEI CHACHAMIM:** *Rashi* understood that Re’uvain would certainly not have left for a personal matter while Yosef was in danger. He must have left to perform a *mitzvah*.

*Rashi* was not satisfied with his first interpretation, for we are left with the question: Why did the verse state that Re’uvain *returned*? It should have written that Re’uvain *went* to the pit to find Yosef.

*Rashi* saw this as a hint to the teaching that Re’uvain was busy with *teshuvah*, or “return”—as in the verse, “*Mordechai returned to the King’s gate*” (Esther 6:12), on which *Rashi* comments that Mordechai was dressed in a sackcloth and was fasting.

## TORAS MENACHEM

## 🕯️ WHERE DID RE’UVAIN GO? (v. 29)

On reading verse 29, that Re’uvain returned to the pit only to find that Yosef had gone, the reader is immediately struck by the question: Where did Re’uvain go? The Torah did not mention that he had departed, and we had presumed up until this point that he had been present all along.

*Rashi* offers two answers to this question. The first answer, that he went to help his father, is self-understood since Yosef had left Ya’akov without assistance [see **Shach al Hatorah**]. But why did *Rashi* feel it necessary to bring a second explanation, that Re’uvain was doing *teshuvah*?

**Sifsei Chachamim** answers that *Rashi*’s second explanation was prompted by the Torah’s expression, “Re’uvain *returned*,” and he cites proof from *Rashi*’s commentary to *Megillas Esther*.

However, this is difficult to accept, at the literal level, because:

a.) If *Rashi*’s comment here was based on an idea in *Megillas Esther*, he would have indicated so explicitly, because *Rashi*’s commentary was written for the first-time student of scripture, who has not yet learned other texts.

b.) The two cases are dissimilar: In *Megillas Esther*, Mordechai “returns” to his sackcloth. Here, Re’uvain returned *from* his sackcloth.

c.) In numerous other places the Torah uses the concept of “return” in the physical sense, and there is no indication that at the literal level this

## 🕯️ Sparks of Chassidus 🕯️

By selling Yosef, the brothers rendered him as their slave, not only physically, but in a spiritual sense too. Since Yosef was the future viceroy of Egypt, his sale into slavery by the brothers established Egypt as “slaves” of the Jewish people.

This proved to be of benefit to the Jewish people later on, during the Egyptian exile. For even when the Jewish people were enslaved physically, it was the Egyptians who were slaves spiritually. And this deeper truth *did* have some physical expression, in that it was impossible for the Egyptians to have total control over the Jewish people, even while they were slaves.

From this we see that, not only did the sale of Yosef have a positive *consequence* later on (that Ya’akov and his family were able to obtain food), but furthermore from a deeper perspective, the very sale *itself* was a positive act, as it rendered Yosef (Egypt) the permanent slave of the Jewish people.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, pp. 187-188)

כִּתְּוֹנָא בְּדִמָּא: לֵב וְשִׁלְחוּ ית כִּתְּוֹנָא דְפִסִּי  
וְאִיתִיאוּ לְוֹת אֲבוּהוֹן וְאָמְרוּ דָּא אֲשַׁכְּחָנָא  
אֲשַׁתְּמוּדַע כְּעֵן הִכְתְּוֹנָא דְבְרָךְ הִיא אִם לֹא:  
לֵב וְאֲשַׁתְּמוּדַע וְאָמַר כִּתְּוֹנָא דְבְרִי תִּיתָא  
בִּישְׁתָּא אֲכַלְתִּיהָ מִקְטֵל קְטִיל יוֹסֵף: לֵב וּבְעַ  
יַעֲקֹב לְבוֹשׁוּהִי וְאָסֵר שְׂקָא בְּחֶרְצִיָּה וְאִתְאַבֵּל  
עַל בְּרִיָּה יוֹמִין סְגִיָּאִין: לֵב וְקָמוּ כָּל בְּנוֹהִי  
וְכָל בְּנֵתִיהָ לְנַחְמוּתִיהָ וְסָרִיב לְקַבְּלָא  
תְּנַחוּמִין וְאָמַר אֲרִי אֵיחֻת עַל (לְוֹת) בְּרִי כִּד  
אֲבִילָא לְשִׁאוּל וּבְכָא יִתִּיהָ אֲבוּהִי: לו וּמְדִינָאִי  
וּבִינוּ יִתִּיהָ לְמַצְרִים לְפֻטִיפֵר רַבָּא

וַיִּשְׁחֲטוּ שְׂעִיר עִזִּים וַיִּטְבְּלוּ אֶת־הַכֶּתֶנֶת בַּדָּם: לֵב וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ  
אֶת־כֶּתֶנֶת הַפָּסִים וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶל־אֲבֵיהֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ זֹאת מַצָּאֵנוּ  
הַכֶּרֶזָּא הַכֶּתֶנֶת בְּנֶדֶךְ הוּא אִם־לֹא: לֵב וַיִּכִּירָה וַיֹּאמֶר כֶּתֶנֶת  
בְּנֵי חַיָּה רָעָה אֲכַלְתֶּהוּ טָרֵף טָרֵף יוֹסֵף: לֵב וַיִּקְרַע יַעֲקֹב  
שְׂמֹלְתָיו וַיִּשֶׂם שָׂק בְּמִתְנָיו וַיִּתְאַבֵּל עַל־בְּנוֹ יָמִים רַבִּים:  
לֵב וַיִּקְמוּ כָּל־בְּנָיו וְכָל־בְּנֹתָיו לְנַחֲמוֹ וַיִּמָּאֵן לְהִתְנַחֵם וַיֹּאמֶר  
כִּי־יֵרֶד אֶל־בְּנֵי אָבִל שְׂאֵלָה וַיִּבְךְ אֶתֹּו אָבִיו: לו וְהַמְדָּנִים  
מִכְּרוּ אֶתֹּו אֶל־מִצְרַיִם לְפֻטִיפֵר סָרִיס פְּרַעֲהַ שֶׁר הַטְּבָחִים: פ

כ"ט

רבים. כ"ט שנה, משפירש ממנו עד שירד יעקב למצרים, שנאמר יוסף בן  
שבע עשרה שנה וגו', וכן שלשים שנה היה צעמדו לפני פרעה, ושבע שני  
השבע ושנתיים הרעב כשצא יעקב למצרים, הרי כ"ט שנה, כנגד כ"ט שנה  
שלא קיים יעקב כבוד אב ואם, כ' שנה שהיה צדיק לבן, וז' שנה צורך צדו  
מצד לבן, שנה וחצי צדקות וששה חדשים צדיק אל. וזהו שאמר ללבן זה לי  
עשרים שנה צדיק, לי הן, עלי הן, וסופי ללקות כנגדן: (לה) וכל בנתיו.

מאשרו של אבא: (לא) שער עזים. דמו דומה לשל אדם: הכתנת. זה שמה,  
וכשהיא דבוקה לחיבה אחרת, כגון כתנת יוסף, כתנת פסים, כתנת צד, נקוד  
כתנת: (לג) ויאמר כתנת בני. היא זו: חיה רעה אבלתהו. ללנה צו רוח  
הקדש<sup>1</sup>, סופו שתתגרר צו אשת פוטיפר. ולמה לא גלה לו הקצ"ה, לפי  
שהחרימו וקללו את כל מי שיגלה, ושחפו להקצ"ה עמהם<sup>2</sup>, אבל יחזק היה  
יודע שהוא חי, אמר, היאך אגלה, והקצ"ה אינו רוצה לגלות לו: (לד) ימים

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How was the secret of Yosef's sale withheld from Ya'akov? (v. 33)

RASHI: Why did God not reveal to him [that Yosef was alive]?

Because [the brothers] excommunicated and cursed anyone who would reveal [it], and they included God as a partner with them. Yitzchak however, knew that he was alive [but] he said, "How can I reveal it [to Ya'akov] if God does not wish to reveal it to him?"

MIDRASH: They said, "Let us make a vow of excommunication among us, that none of us will tell Ya'akov, our father."

Yehudah said to them, "Re'uvain is not here, and a vow of excommunication is only valid in the presence of ten."

What did they do? They included God as a partner with them in their vow of excommunication not to tell their father...Thus even God...did not tell [Ya'akov], because of the vow. (Tanchumah 2).

TORAS MENACHEM

refers to *teshuvah*; e.g. the very next verse, "he returned to his brothers" (v. 30). See also above, 21:32.

So, we are left with the question: What was the need for, and the basis of, Rashi's second comment?

THE EXPLANATION

Obviously, when a person embarks on a long journey he departs in the morning, to leave plenty of daylight hours ahead of him. So we can presume that when Ya'akov sent Yosef off to Shechem, he would have left early in the morning and arrived late in the day, at which time his brothers threw him into the pit.

When Yosef arrived, Re'uvain was definitely with his brothers, as he argued that Yosef should not be slaughtered by their hands but thrown into the pit instead (above v. 22). So Rashi was troubled: If, as we later discover, Re'uvain left soon after this point, it is extremely unlikely that he would have embarked on a journey home so late in the afternoon. Surely, he would have waited until the next morning?

Therefore, Rashi brought a second, alternative explanation, that Re'uvain was busy with his sackcloth and *teshuvah*. This explains why Re'uvain would have left his brothers' company, since they, "sat down to

eat a meal" (v. 25), and if he was *obviously* fasting (as evident from the sackcloth), it would have aroused suspicion from his brothers. "Why is Re'uvain sitting with us if he is fasting?" the brothers would have wondered. "He must be listening to our plans in an attempt to save Yosef!" Therefore, Re'uvain was forced to go to another location.

However, in the final analysis, this interpretation is the more difficult of the two to accept at the literal level, since Rashi wrote earlier, "All of them [Ya'akov's sons] were equal, and all of them were righteous, for Re'uvain had not sinned" (Rashi to 35:22). So, if Re'uvain had not sinned, he certainly would not be sitting in a sackcloth and fasting all day. Therefore, Rashi cited this as his secondary interpretation.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev* 5736)

☞ THE BROTHERS' VOW OF EXCOMMUNICATION (v. 33)

Rashi's comment to verse 33 prompts a number of questions:

a.) What was the need to make a vow of excommunication? Surely, the brothers could have simply resolved among themselves not to reveal what they had done to Ya'akov? Similarly, they could have prayed to God not to reveal the matter to Ya'akov. Why did they "include God as a partner with them" in the vow?

<sup>31</sup> They took Yosef's robe, slaughtered a young goat, and dipped the robe into the blood. <sup>32</sup> They sent the fine woolen coat (with messengers who) brought it to their father. They said, "We have found this. Please could you identify if this is your son's coat or not."

<sup>33</sup> He recognized it, and he said, "(It's) my son's coat! A wild beast has devoured him! Yosef has been ripped apart again and again!"

<sup>34</sup> Ya'akov tore his garments, and tied sackcloth around his waist. He mourned many days for his son.

<sup>35</sup> All his sons and all his daughters tried to console him, but he was unable to be consoled. He said, "I will go down to my grave while I am (still) mourning for my son (for I will never be consoled)."

(Ya'akov's) father (Yitzchak) wept for him.

<sup>36</sup> The Midianites sold (Yosef) to Egypt, to Potifar, Pharaoh's officer, chief of the butchers.

רש"י

הדמים<sup>31</sup>, אל הלכה ארון האלהים, ואל (מות) חמיה ואישה<sup>32</sup>: אבל שאלה. כפשוטו לשון קבר הוא, באצלי הקבר ולא אחננס כל ימי. ומדרשו, גיהנם, סימן זה היה מסור בידי מפי הגבורה, אם לא ימות אחד מבני צחיי, מוצטח אני שאיני רואה גיהנם: ויברך אתו אביו. ילחק היה זוכה מפני לרשו של יעקב, אבל לא היה מתאבל שיהיה יודע שהוא חי: (לו) הטבחים. שוחטי

רבי יהודה אומר, אחיות תאומות נולדו עם כל שצט ושצט, וגשאו. רבי נחמיה אומר, כנעניות היו, אלא מהו וכל צנותיו, כלותיו, שאין אדם נמנע מלקרוא לחתנו בנו ולכלתו צתו: וימאן להתנחם. אין אדם מקבל תנחומין על החי<sup>34</sup>, וסבור שמת, שעל המת נגזרה גזירה שישתכח מן הלב, ולא על החי: ארד אל בני. כמו על בני והרבה אל משמשין בלשון על, אל שאלו ואל בית

#### TORAS MENACHEM

b.) Why did God agree to be a "partner" with them? And how did the brothers know that God had agreed? (The **Midrash** associates God's involvement with the required quorum of ten for the vow, but *Rashi* makes no mention of this concept).

c.) God was a "partner" in the vow, so presumably He was "unable," to reveal to Ya'akov that Yosef was alive. Yitzchak however did *not* participate in the vow, so what stopped him from revealing the matter to Ya'akov?

#### THE EXPLANATION

An obvious problem concerning the entire account of Yosef's sale and eventual reunion with his father is how the brothers managed to keep such a closely guarded secret for so long? Eventually, they did admit to Yosef that they regretted selling him as a slave, but that was 22 years later. How is it possible that in the meantime *not one* of the brothers had the urge to repent for his sin, leading him to approach Ya'akov and tell him the whole story?

After all, even an ordinary person has thoughts of *teshuvah* every so often—at least once a year. So it seems inconceivable that *not one* of the ten brothers decided to do *teshuvah* in the span of 22 years!

Due to this question, *Rashi* concluded that the brothers must have been bound by a very powerful force, a vow of excommunication that kept them silent.

After the sale of Yosef, the brothers assembled and vowed that if any one of them would decide at a later time to "come clean" and inform their father of what had occurred, he could not do so without the full support of the other brothers—otherwise, he would face excommunication. Thus, during the 22 years we can be sure that there were many thoughts of repentance among the brothers, but never among *all ten* brothers at the same time. Therefore, the vow was never annulled.

Nevertheless, the brothers were not satisfied with the strength of this vow, since they feared that in a uplifting, spiritual moment they might unanimously decide to reveal what they had done to Ya'akov. Or perhaps, some of the brothers would be particularly convincing, and sway the others in a moment of weakness (c.f. *Rashi* to 38:1). So in order to be

"insured" against even this possibility, the brothers "included God as a partner with them." I.e. in the event that they would all decide to repent at the same time, they vowed not to reveal the matter to Ya'akov unless there was a clear sign from God to do so.

Thus, at the literal level, the brothers did not "bind" God with their vow, or ask for His consent, for one cannot say that God was "forbidden" to do something—and how would you know if He agreed? Rather, they merely decided that even if there was a unanimous vote to "come clean" they would *wait* for a sign indicating God's consent before going further.

However, this begs the question: Yitzchak was not bound at all by this vow, so why did he not tell Ya'akov that Yosef was still alive?

Therefore, *Rashi* continued to explain that Yitzchak said, "How can I reveal it if God does not wish to reveal it to him?" I.e. since God was not "bound" by any vow, so to speak, not to tell Ya'akov that Yosef was alive, Yitzchak reasoned that God had not revealed the matter *simply because He did not want to*. Yitzchak thus considered it inappropriate to interfere with God's plan.

And, presumably, this was also the reason why Yosef did not inform his father that he was alive for 22 years, even when he would surely have had the opportunity to do so after leaving prison, for he adopted the same reasoning: "How can I reveal it if God does not wish to reveal it to him?"

#### THE END OF THE VOW

One final question which needs to be explained is: When did the vow end? We do not find any explicit mention of the brothers or God annulling the vow throughout the 22 years, so how were they eventually able to inform Ya'akov that Yosef was alive?

The answer to this problem can be found in another comment of *Rashi*. On the words, "Ya'akov saw that there was grain (שֶׁבֶר) being sold in Egypt" (42:1), *Rashi* comments, "He saw through a vision that he still had hope (שֶׁבֶר) in Egypt, but it was not a substantial prophecy to inform him explicitly that this [hope] was Yosef."

Since the brothers knew that Yosef was in Egypt, they would have interpreted Ya'akov's vision as a sign from God that the time had come to find Yosef and reveal his presence to Ya'akov. So since the brothers,

דְּפָרְעָה רַב קְטוּלָיָא: « וְהוּהוּ בְעַדְנָא הָהיא וְנָחַת יְהוּדָה מְלֻת אַחוּהי וּסְטָא עַד גְּבֵרָא עֵדְלָמְאָה וּשְׁמִיָּה חִירָה: ב וְתָזָא תַמְן יְהוּדָה בַּת גְּבֵר תַנְרָא וּשְׁמִיָּה שׁוּע וְנִסְכָּה וְעַל לְוָתָהּ: ג וְעֵדִיָּאת וּלְיֵדֵת בַּר וּקְרָא יֵת שְׁמִיָּה עַר: ד וְעֵדִיָּאת עוֹד וּלְיֵדֵת בַּר וּקְרַת יֵת שְׁמִיָּה אוֹנָן: ה וְאוֹסִיפֵת עוֹד וּלְיֵדֵת בַּר וּקְרַת יֵת שְׁמִיָּה שְׁלָה וְהוּהוּ בְכוּיב כַּד לְיֵדֵת יֵתִיה: ו וְנִסְיב יְהוּדָה אֶתְתָא לְעַר בּוֹכְרִיָּה וּשְׁמָה תְמָר: ז וְהוּהוּ עַר בּוֹכְרָא דִיְהוּדָה בִּיש קָדָם יֵי וְאִמִּיתִיה יֵי: ח וְאָמַר יְהוּדָה לְאוֹנָן עוֹל לֹת אֶתְתָא אַחוּךְ וַיְבִם יֵתָה וְאָקִים זֶרְעָא לְאַחוּךְ: ט וַיֵּדַע אוֹנָן אֲרִי לֹא עַל שְׁמִיָּה מִתְקַרֵי זֶרְעָא וְהוּהוּ כַּד עָלִיל לֹת אֶתְתָא אַחוּהי וּמְחַבֵּיל אֶרְחִיָּה עַל אֶרְעָא בְדִיל דְּלֹא לְקִימָא זֶרְעָא לְאַחוּהי: י וּבְאִישׁ קָדָם יֵי דִי עֵבֵד וְאִמִּית אַף יֵתִיה: יא וְאָמַר יְהוּדָה לְתָמַר כְּלָתִיָּה תִיבִי אֶרְמְלָא בֵּית אַבִּיךָ עַד דִּירְבִּי שְׁלָה בְרִי אֲרִי אָמַר דְּלָמָּא יָמוּת אַף הוּא כְּאַחוּהי וְאִזְלַת תְּמָר וַיִּתִּיבַת בֵּית אַבִּיהָ: יב וְסִנְיָאוּ יוֹמִיא וּמִיתַת בַּת שׁוּע אֶתְתָא יְהוּדָה וְאִתְנַחֵם יְהוּדָה וּסְלִיק עַל גּוֹזֵי עֲנִיָּה הוּא וְחִירָה רַחֲמִיָּה עֵדְלָמְאָה לְתַמְנָתִי: יג וְאִתְחַוָּא לְתָמַר לְמִימַר הָא חֲמוּיָךְ סְלִיק לְתַמְנָת לְמַנּוּ עֲנִיָּה: יד וְאֶעֱדִיָּאת לְבוּשֵׁי אֶרְמְלוּתָהּ מִנָּה וְאֶתְפְּסִיָּאת בְּעִיפָא וְאֶתְקַנַּת וַיִּתִּיבַת בְּפָרְשׁוֹת עֵינָיו דִּי עַל אוּרַח תַּמְנָת אֲרִי חֲזַת אֲרִי רְבָא שְׁלָה

וְרַבֵּיעִין) לַח א וַיְהִי בַעַת הַהוּא וַיִּרְדּוּ יְהוּדָה מֵאֵת אָחִיו וַיֵּט עַד־אִישׁ עֵדְלָמִי וּשְׁמוֹ חִירָה: ב וַיִּרְא־שָׁם יְהוּדָה בַּת־אִישׁ כְּנַעֲנִי וּשְׁמוֹ שׁוּע וַיִּקְחָהּ וַיָּבֵא אֵלֶיהָ: ג וַתַּהַר וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ עֵר: ד וַתַּהַר עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ אוֹנָן: ה וַתִּסְפֵּף עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ שְׁלָה וְהָיָה בְכוּיב בְּלִדְתָהּ אֹתוֹ: ו וַיִּקַּח יְהוּדָה אִשָּׁה לְעַר בְּכוֹרוֹ וּשְׁמָהּ תְמָר: ז וַיְהִי עַר בְּכוֹר יְהוּדָה רַע בְּעֵינָי יְהוָה וַיִּמְתְּהוּ יְהוָה: ח וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוּדָה לְאוֹנָן בֵּא אֶל־אִשְׁתְּ אַחִיךָ וַיְבִם אֹתָהּ וְהָקָם זֶרַע לְאַחִיךָ: ט וַיֵּדַע אוֹנָן כִּי לֹא לוֹ יְהִיָּה הַזֶּרַע וְהָיָה אִם־בָּא אֶל־אִשְׁתְּ אָחִיו וְשַׁחַת אֶרְצָה לְבִלְתִּי נִתֵּן זֶרַע לְאַחִיו: י וַיֵּרַע בְּעֵינָי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיָּמַת גַּם־אֹתוֹ: יא וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוּדָה לְתָמַר כְּלָתוֹ שְׁבִי אֵלַי מִנָּה בֵּית־אָבִיךָ עַד־יִגְדַּל שְׁלָה בְנִי כִּי אָמַר פְּן־יָמוּת גַּם־הוּא כְּאָחִיו וַתֵּלֶד תְּמָר וַתֵּשֶׁב בֵּית אָבִיהָ: יב וַיִּרְבּוּ הַיָּמִים וַתָּמַת בַּת־שׁוּע אִשְׁת־יְהוּדָה וַיִּנְחָם יְהוּדָה וַיַּעַל עַל־גּוֹזֵי צֵאֲנוֹ הוּא וְחִירָה רַעֲהוּ הָעֵדְלָמִי תַמְנָתָהּ: יג וַיִּגְדַּל לְתָמַר לֵאמֹר הֲנֵה חָמִיךָ עֲלֶיךָ תַמְנָתָהּ לָגוּ צֵאֲנוֹ: יד וַתִּסֹּר בְּגָדֶיהָ אֶלְמְנוּתָהּ מֵעַלְיָהּ וַתִּבְעֵרָף וַתִּתְעַלֶּף וַתֵּשֶׁב בְּפֶתַח עֵינָיִם אֲשֶׁר עַל־דֶּרֶךְ תַּמְנָתָהּ כִּי רָאָתָהּ כִּי־גָדַל שְׁלָה

לש"י

זרע. כזן יקרא על שם המת: (ט) ושחת ארצה. דש מצפנים וזוכה מצחוק:<sup>3</sup> (יא) בי אמר וגו'. כלומר, דוחה היה אותה צקש, שלא היה דעתו להשיאה לו: בי אמר פן ימות. מוחזקת היא זו שימותו אנשיכ:<sup>4</sup> (יז) ויעל על גוזזי צאנו. ויעל תמנח לעמוד על גוזזי לאנו: (יג) עלה תמנחה. וצשמון הוא אומר וירד שמשון וגו' תמנח<sup>5</sup>, צשפוע הכר היתה יושבת, עולין לה מכאן ויורדין לה מכאן: (יד) ותתעלף. כסתה פניה שלא יכיר זה: ותשב בפתח עיניו. צפתחת עינים, צפרשת דרכים שעל דרך תמנחה. ורבותינו דרשו, צפתחו של אברהם אבינו, שכל עינים מלפוח לראותו:<sup>6</sup> בי ראתה כי גדל שלה וגו'. לפיכך הפקירה עזמה אלל יכודכ, שהיתה מתאווה להעמיד ממנו

צדמות המלך: (ח) ויהי בעת ההוא. למה נסמכה פרשה זו לכאן והפסיק צפרשתו של יוסף, ללמד, שכורידוכו אחיו מגדולתו כשראו צרם אביכ, אמרו, אחכ אמרת למכרו, אלו אמרת להשיבו, היינו שומעים לך: ויש. מאת אחיו: עד איש עדלמי. נשתתף עמו: (צ) כנעני. תגרא': (כ) והיה בכזיב. שם המקום, ואומר אני, על שם שפסקה מלדת נקרא כזיב, לשון היו תהיה לי כמו אכזב, אשר לא יכזבו מימיו, דאם לא כן מה צל להודיענו. וצבראשית רב<sup>2</sup> ראיתי, ותקרא שמו שלכ וגו' פסקת: (ר) רע בעיני ה'. כרעתו של אונן, משחית זרעו, שנאמר צאונן וימת גם אותו, כמיתתו של ער מיתתו של אונן. ולמה היה ער משחית זרעו כדי שלא תתעצר ויכחיש יפיה: (ח) והקם

TORAS MENACHEM

“regretted selling him and decided to behave toward him in a brotherly manner, and to redeem him for whatever amount of money would be demanded of them” (Rashi ibid. v. 3), the vow was now nullified, and the sign of Ya’akov’s vision represented God’s “consent.” Similarly, when Yosef saw that his brothers were trying to find him, he understood that the time for his reunion with Ya’akov was near. But he

could not be sure that the vow of excommunication had ended, so he did not send a personal messenger to his father to say that he was alive. Rather, he told his brothers, that “I am Yosef, your brother,” and relied on those who had made the vow of excommunication in the first place, to decide when it had ended and reveal to Ya’akov that “Yosef is still alive.” (Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz 5733; Likutei Sichos vol. 10, p. 129ff.)

## 🕎 YEHUDAH & TAMAR 🕎

38

FOURTH  
READING

**I**t was at that time that Yehudah (‘s level of respect) from his brothers went down (since they blamed him for not averting the entire incident with Yosef), so he turned away (from his brothers and went into partnership) with an Adulamite man, named Chirah. <sup>2</sup> There, Yehudah saw the daughter of a businessman, named Shua, and he married her and came to her.

<sup>3</sup> She conceived and gave birth to a son, and he named him Air.

<sup>4</sup> She conceived again and gave birth to a son, and she named him Onan.

<sup>5</sup> She bore another son yet again, and she named him Shailah. (Yehudah) was in Keziv when she gave birth to him.

<sup>6</sup> Yehudah took a wife named Tamar for Air, his firstborn.

<sup>7</sup> Air, Yehudah’s firstborn, was evil in the eyes of God, and God made him die. <sup>8</sup> So Yehudah said to Onan, “Come to your brother’s wife and enter into levirate marriage (yibum) with her, and raise up children in your brother(‘s name).”

<sup>9</sup> Onan knew that the children would not (be named after) him. So, whenever he came to his brother’s wife, he would waste on the ground, so as not to establish children in his brother(‘s name).

<sup>10</sup> What he did was evil in the eyes of God, and He made him die too.

<sup>11</sup> Yehudah said to his daughter-in-law, Tamar, “Stay as a widow in your father’s house until my son Shailah grows up.” (Whenever she asked about Shailah, he pushed her off), for he said (to himself), “Maybe he’ll die too, like his brothers.” So Tamar went, and she stayed in her father’s house.

<sup>12</sup> Many days passed and Yehudah’s wife—Shua’s daughter—died. After Yehudah was consoled, he went up to Timnah, both he and his Adulamite friend, (to supervise) his sheepshearers. <sup>13</sup> (Someone) reported to Tamar, saying, “Look, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep.”

<sup>14</sup> She took off her widow’s clothes, covered (her head) with a scarf and covered her face. She sat down at the crossroads which is on the way to Timnah (in order to offer herself to Yehudah). For she saw that Shailah had grown up, and she had not been given to him as a wife (and she desired to have children from Yehudah).

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why is the story of Yehudah and Tamar written here?

**RASHI:** Why was this section placed here, where it interrupts the section dealing with Yosef? To teach us that [Yehudah’s] brothers demoted him from his high position when they saw their father’s distress. They said, “You told us to sell him. If you’d have told us to return him [to our father], we would have listened to you” (v. 1).

**MIDRASH:** The brothers were busy selling Yosef, Yosef was busy with his sackcloth and fasting, Re’uvain was busy with his sackcloth and fasting, Ya’akov was busy with his sackcloth and fasting, Yehudah was busy finding himself a wife—and God was creating the light of *Melech haMashiach*.” [This refers to Peretz, the ancestor of Mashiach, who was born from Yehudah and Tamar.] (*Bereishis Rabah*, 85:1).

### TORAS MENACHEM

## 🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

**R**ashi explains the simple reason why the Torah begins to speak of Yehudah in the middle of the story of Yosef, “To teach us that [Yehudah’s] brothers demoted him from his high position.” However, *Rashi* does not explain why the entire account of Yehudah and Tamar was recorded here, leading up to the birth of Peretz and Zarach.

**H**owever, according to the explanation of the *Midrash*, we can understand that the account of Yehudah and Tamar was included here to explain the reason why Yosef was sold: because God was paving the way for Mashiach. Thus, before we read of Yosef’s enslavement, and the ensuing Egyptian exile, the Torah “prefaces the cure before the disease,” informing us of God’s inner intent.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev* 5751)

והיא לא נתנה לו לאשה: טו ויראה יהודה ויחשבה לזונה כי כסתה פניה: טז ויט אליה אל הדרד ויאמר הבה נא אבוא אליך כי לא ידע כי כלתו הוא ותאמר מה תתן לי כי תבוא אלי: יז ויאמר אנכי אשלח גדי עזים מן הצאן ותאמר אם תתן ערבון עד שלחה: יח ויאמר מה הערבון אשר אתן לך ותאמר התמד ופתילך ומטף אשר בידך ויתן לה ויבא אליה ותהר לו: יט ותקם ותלך ותסר צעיפה מעליה ותלבש בגדי אלמנותה: כ וישלח יהודה את גדי העזים ביד רעהו העדלמי לקחת הערבון מיד האשה ולא מצאה: כא וישאל את אנשי מקמה לאמר איך הקדשה הוא בעינים על הדרד ויאמרו לא היתה בזה קדשה: כב וישב אל יהודה ויאמר לא מצאתי וגם אנשי המקום אמרו לא היתה בזה קדשה: כג ויאמר יהודה תקח לה פן נהיה לבוזה שלחתי הגדי הזה ואתה לא מצאתה: כד ויהי כמשלש חדשים ויגד ליהודה לאמר זנתה תמר בלתיך וגם הנה הרה לזנוגים ויאמר יהודה הוציאוה ותשרף: כה הוא מוצאת והיא שלחה

והיא לא נתנה לו לאשה: טו ויראה יהודה ויחשבה לזונה כי כסתה פניה: טז ויט אליה אל הדרד ויאמר הבה נא אבוא אליך כי לא ידע כי כלתו הוא ותאמר מה תתן לי כי תבוא אלי: יז ויאמר אנכי אשלח גדי עזים מן הצאן ותאמר אם תתן ערבון עד שלחה: יח ויאמר מה הערבון אשר אתן לך ותאמר התמד ופתילך ומטף אשר בידך ויתן לה ויבא אליה ותהר לו: יט ותקם ותלך ותסר צעיפה מעליה ותלבש בגדי אלמנותה: כ וישלח יהודה את גדי העזים ביד רעהו העדלמי לקחת הערבון מיד האשה ולא מצאה: כא וישאל את אנשי מקמה לאמר איך הקדשה הוא בעינים על הדרד ויאמרו לא היתה בזה קדשה: כב וישב אל יהודה ויאמר לא מצאתי וגם אנשי המקום אמרו לא היתה בזה קדשה: כג ויאמר יהודה תקח לה פן נהיה לבוזה שלחתי הגדי הזה ואתה לא מצאתה: כד ויהי כמשלש חדשים ויגד ליהודה לאמר זנתה תמר בלתיך וגם הנה הרה לזנוגים ויאמר יהודה הוציאוה ותשרף: כה הוא מוצאת והיא שלחה

כ"ט

שלה מכ שזידה: פן נהיה לבוזה. אם תזקשנה עוד, יתפרסם הדבר ויכיה גנאי, כי מה עלי לעשות עוד לאמת דברי: הנה שלחתי הגדי הזה. לפי שרמה יכודח את אביו בגדי עזים, שהטביל כחנת יוסף בדמו, רמוכו גם אותו בגדי עזים: (כד) במשלש חדשים. רובו של ראשון, ורובו של אחרון, ואמלעי שלם? ולשון כמשלש חדשים, כהשלש החדשים, כמו ומשלוח מנות<sup>3</sup>, משלוח יום, וכן תרגם אונקלוס כחלתות ירחיא: הרה לזנוגים. שם דבר, מעוברת, כמו אשה הרה, וכמו צרה כחמה: ותשרף. אמר אפרים מקשאה משום רבי מאיר, צתו של שם היתה שהוא כהן, לפיכך דונה בשריפה: (כה) הוא מוצאת. לישרף: והיא שלחה אל חמיה. לא ראתה לכלבין

צנים: (טו) ויחשבה לזונה. לפי שיושבת צפרשת דרכים: כי כסתה פניה. ולא יכול לראותה ולהכירה. ומדרש רבותינו כי כסתה פניה, כשהיתה צנית חמיה היתה לנועה לפיכך לא חשדה: (טז) ויט אליה אל הדרד. מדרך שכיב צה, נטה אל הדרך אשר היא צה, וצלשון לע"ז דשטרני"י: הבה נא. הכיני עלמך ודעתך לכך. כל לשון הצה לשון הזמנה הוא, חוץ ממקום שיש לתרגמו צלשון נתינה, ואף אותן של הזמנה קרוצים ללשון נתינה הם: (יז) ערבון. משכון: (יח) חתמך ופתילך. עזקתך ושופך. טבעת שאתה חותם צה, ושמלתך שאתה מתכסה צה: ותהר לו. גזורים כיוצא בו, לדיקים כיוצא בו: (כא) הקדשה. מקודשת ומזומנת לזנות: (כג) תקח לה. יכיה

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Yehudah say, "let her be burned"? (v. 24)

**RASHI:** Efraim Maksha'ah said in the name of Rabbi Meir: "She was the daughter of Sheim, who was a priest. Therefore, she was sentenced to be burned."

**RAMBAN:** *Rashi* did not explain himself clearly. The daughter of a priest is not liable to be burned for harlotry, only for adultery—as the Talmud states explicitly (*Sanhedrin 51b*)—and here, Tamar was single.

**RADAK:** Since there is an obligation for a brother-in-law to marry his brother's childless widow (i.e. levirate marriage, or *yibum*), Tamar had an obligation to marry Shailah, so she had the legal status of

being bound in marriage. Thus, Yehudah's act with her was effectively an act of adultery.

**CHIZKUNI:** Her act of harlotry would normally have been punishable by decapitation. But in this case Tamar was sentenced to the more severe penalty of burning, since she was the daughter of a priest.

**MIZRACHI:** To set an example to a morally corrupt generation.

**GUR ARYEH:** The *Talmud* states explicitly that after the Flood the court of Sheim decreed death for an act of harlotry (*Avodah Zarah 36b*). *Rashi* adds here, that for a priest's daughter who committed an act of harlotry, the decree was harsher: death by burning.



<sup>15</sup> When Yehudah saw her, he thought she was a harlot (because she was sitting by the crossroads, and he did not recognize her) because she had covered her face. <sup>16</sup> He turned off (the road on which he was traveling) to the road (where) she (was). He said, “Get ready please, let me come to you,” for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law.

She said, “What will you give me if you come to me?”

<sup>17</sup> He said, “I will send a young goat from the herd.”

“(Only) if you give me some collateral until you send it,” she said.

<sup>18</sup> “What collateral should I give you?” he said.

She said, “Your signet-ring, your cloak, and the staff that’s in your hand.”

He gave them to her, and he came to her. She conceived from him (men of similar might and righteousness as Yehudah).

<sup>19</sup> She got up and went off. She removed her scarf, and put on her widow’s clothing. <sup>20</sup> Yehudah sent the young goat through his Adulamite friend to take the collateral from the woman’s hand, but he did not find her. <sup>21</sup> So he asked the people of her locality, saying, “Where is the harlot who was at the crossroads on the way?”

They said, “There was no harlot here.”

<sup>22</sup> He returned to Yehudah, and he said, “I have not found her, and the people of the place also said, ‘No harlot was here.’”

<sup>23</sup> Yehudah said, “Let her keep them for herself, otherwise we’ll be put to shame (if everyone finds out, and I’ve made every effort to pay her, for) look, I sent this young goat, but you did not find her.”

<sup>24</sup> Then, after nearly three months, (someone) reported to Yehudah, saying, “Your daughter-in-law Tamar has acted as a harlot, and—look!—she is pregnant from harlotry!”

Yehudah said, “Take her out, and let her be burned!”

## TORAS MENACHEM

### 🔥 WHY WAS TAMAR SENTENCED TO BE BURNED? (v. 23)

According to Torah law, a priest’s daughter who commits an act of harlotry is *not* sentenced to death by burning (see *Vayikra* 21:9 and *Rashi* *ibid*). Why does *Rashi* write here that Tamar was “the daughter of Sheim, who was a priest? Therefore, she was sentenced to be burned”? (as **Ramban** asks).

**Mizrachi** and **Gur Aryeh**, explain that, in those days, it had been universally accepted (or decreed) that a harlot is punished by the death penalty. Tamar however was sentenced to the more severe penalty of burning, because she was a priest’s daughter, or in order to set an example to the generation.

However, at the literal level of Torah interpretation this argument is difficult to accept, because:

a.) If *any* act of harlotry was indeed punishable by the death penalty, in those days, then Tamar would surely not have risked her life and “sat down at the crossroads” (v. 14), acting as a harlot.

b.) We can presume that Yehudah was stringent in observing the law. Thus, the fact that he came to Tamar indicates that such an act must have been permissible in those days, according to Noachide law.\*

**Radak’s** argument (that Tamar’s act was tantamount to adultery, since she was legally bound to marry Shailah), is difficult to accept at the literal level because Tamar was *exempt* from marrying Shailah. As *Rashi* writes, that after marrying two husbands who had died, Tamar had the status of

a woman who is legally presumed to cause the death of any man that she would marry (*Rashi* to v. 11, above). On this basis, it was *prohibited* for Shailah to marry her, and thus the requirement for levirate marriage was *automatically* annulled.

Thus, we are left with the question: Why was Tamar sentenced to be burned to death?

### 🔥 Sparks of Chasidus 🔥

The *Zohar* (III 72a) teaches that the words, “Take her out and let her be burned” (v. 24), refer to the soul in the times of exile: Even though the soul has been “taken out” of its natural habitat of being close to God, it still “burns” with the love for God.

One might ask: What keeps the soul going? How does it continue to burn with love for God in a world which hides God’s presence?

*Rashi* answers, “She was the daughter of...a priest.” I.e. the soul is so closely connected to God—the “Priest”—that all the difficulties of this world can never extinguish the soul’s love for her Father in heaven.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, pp. 194-5)

\* Nevertheless, Yehudah was careful to ask, “Get ready please, let me come to you” (v.16), since the act did require the *consent* of both parties. Thus, Shechem was culpable for the abduction of Dinah, since it was done without her consent, as *Rashi* writes explicitly (34:7).

שְׁלַחַת לֹת תְּמוּקָה לְמִימְרֵי לְגִבְרֵי דֵי אֱלִין  
 דִּילֵיהּ מְנִיחָא אֲנָא מְעַדְיָא וְאִמְרַת אֲשֶׁתְּמוּדַע  
 כְּעֵן לְמֵן עֲזָקְתָּא וְשׁוֹשְׁפָא וְחוּטְרָא הָאֱלִין:  
 כּו וְאֲשֶׁתְּמוּדַע יְהוּדָה וְאָמַר וְכֹאֵה מְנֵי מְעַדְיָא  
 אֲרִי עַל כֵּן לֹא יְהִיבְתָּה לְשִׁלְחָה בְרִי וְלֹא אוֹסִיף  
 עוֹד לְמַדְעָה: כּו וְהָיָה בְּעַדֵּן מִיְלֻדָּה וְהָא  
 תְּיֻמִּין בְּמַעְהָא: כח וְהָיָה בְּמִיְלֻדָּה וְיִהְיֶה יָדָא  
 וְנִסְיַבַּת חֵיתָא וְקִטְרַת עַל יְדֵיהּ זְהוּרִיתָא  
 לְמִימְרֵי דִין נִפְקֵי קְדָמָהּ: כט וְהָיָה כִּד אֲתִיב  
 יְדֵיהּ וְהָא נִפְקֵי אַחוּהֵי וְאִמְרַת מָא תְּקוּף סְנֵי  
 עֲלֵךְ לְמַתְקָה וְקָרָא שְׁמִיהּ פְּרִיץ: ל וּבִתָּר כֵּן  
 נִפְקֵי אַחוּהֵי דֵי עַל יְדֵיהּ זְהוּרִיתָא וְקָרָא

אֶל-חַמִּיּוֹהָ לְאֹמֵר לְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר-אֵלֶּה לּוֹ אֲנֹכִי הָרָה וְתֹאמֶר  
 הַכֹּרֶנָּה לְמִי הַחֲתָמַת וְהַפְתִּילִים וְהַמַּטָּה הָאֵלֶּה: כו וַיִּבֶר  
 יְהוּדָה וַיֹּאמֶר צַדִּיקָה מְאֹד בְּי-עַל-כֵּן לֹא-נִתְתִּיחָ לְשִׁלְחָה בְנֵי  
 וְלֹא-יִסָּפֵף עוֹד לְדַעְתָּהּ: כז וַיְהִי בַעֲת לְדָתָהּ וְהִנֵּה תְּאוּמִים  
 בְּבִטְנָהּ: כח וַיְהִי בְלִדְתָּהּ וַיִּתֶּן-יָד וַתִּקַּח הַמִּיְלֻדָּת וַתִּקְשֹׁר  
 עַל-יָדוֹ שְׁנַי לְאֹמֵר זֶה יֵצֵא רֵאשִׁינָה: כט וַיְהִי אִבְמִשְׁיִב יָדוֹ וְהִנֵּה  
 יֵצֵא אָחִיו וְתֹאמֶר מַה-פְּרָצָת עֲלֶיךָ פְּרִיץ וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ פְּרִיץ:  
 ל וְאַחֲרַיִם יֵצֵא אָחִיו אֲשֶׁר עַל-יָדוֹ הַשְּׁנַי וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ זָרַח: ס

כ"ט

ויש אומרים לא פסק, (והצירו גזי אלדד ומידד, ולא יספו, ומתרגמין ולא פסקו): (כז) בעת לדתה. וברצקס הוא אומר וימלאו ימיה ללדת, להלן למלאים וכאן לחסרים: והנה תאומים. מלא, ולהלן תומים חסר, לפי שהאחד רשע, אבל אלו שניהם לדיקים: (כח) ויתן יד. הוויא האחד ידו לחוץ, ולאחר שקשרה על ידו השני, החזירה: (כט) פרצת. חזקת עליך חזק: (ל) אשר על ידו השני. ארבע ידות כתובות כאן, כנגד ארבע חרמים שמעל עכן שילא ממנו. ויש אומרים כנגד ארבעה דברים שלקה אדרת, שנער, ושני חתיכות כסף של מאתים שקלים, ולשון זהב: ויקרא שמו זרח.

פניו, ולומר ממך אני מעוברת, אלא לאיש אשר אלה לו, אמרה, אם יודה מעמנו, יודה, ואם לאו, ישרפני ואל אלצין פניו. מכאן אמרו, נוח לו לאדם שיפלוכו לכבשן האש ואל ילצין פני חצירו ברבים: הבר נא. אין נח אלא לשון צקשה, הכר נח צוראך, ואל תאבד שלש נפשות: (כו) צדקה. בדבריה: ממני. היא מעוברת. ורז"ל דרשו, שילאח בת קול ואמרה, ממני ומאתי ילאו הדברים, לפי שהיתה לנוטה בצית חמיה, גזרתי שילאו ממנה מלכים, ומשצט יכודה גזרתי להעמיד מלכים בישראל: בי על כן לא נתתיה. כי דצין עשה, על אשר לא נתתיה לשלה בני: ולא יסף עוד. יש אומרים לא הוסיף,

TORAS MENACHEM

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi writes, "Due to the Flood, the nations prohibited themselves from forbidden relations" (Rashi to 34:7). Rashi, however, does not explain which specific acts the nations prohibited themselves from, and what punishments were administered. Nor does the Torah give any indication of these details.

Thus, at the literal level, the reader only discovers that a certain act was prohibited—and punishable in a particular manner—when he reads that the act was committed and the punishment was applied.

For example, when we read that Shimon and Levi decimated the people of Shechem for the abduction of Dinah, the reader understands that Shimon and Levi would not have transgressed Noachide Law. From this we can infer that Shechem must have been liable for the death penalty in Noachide law, and that the entire nation was also liable—either for not bringing Shechem to justice, or for other sins (see commentaries to 34:25-30, above). In other words, at the literal level, we can only confirm that abducting a girl was an offense punishable by death, when we witness the law's transgression and subsequent punishment.

Likewise in our case, when we read that Tamar was liable to be burned to death for being a harlot because she was a priest's daughter, the reader can infer from this very incident that such a prohibition was in force at the time. In other words, even though harlotry in general was allowed (as explained above), it was nevertheless prohibited for a priest's daughter, with the penalty of being burned to death.

This however leaves us with the question: If Tamar committed a capital offense, and was liable for the death penalty, then why was she exempted when Yehudah discovered that she was pregnant with his child? Surely,

she had still committed an act of harlotry, and so as a priest's daughter she was liable to be punished?

The answer to this question can be gleaned from an earlier statement of Rashi. On the words, "Could we (allow them) to make our sister like a harlot?" (34:31), Rashi comments that a harlot is one who makes herself "available" (הַפְקָרָה). Therefore, Dinah was only "like a harlot," since she was abducted unwillingly, and did not make herself available to Shechem.

So in our case, when Yehudah heard that Tamar "has acted as a harlot, and look!—she is pregnant from harlotry" (v. 24), he presumed that she had made herself available to others, and therefore he judged her with the death penalty (since she was a priest's daughter). However, when he discovered what had really happened—that Tamar had not made herself loosely available to other men but had targeted Yehudah in particular in order to have children from him—it became clear that she had not been a harlot at all.

THE AUTHOR OF RASHI'S SOURCE

One remaining problem with Rashi's comment is that the current story must have occurred many years after Sheim's passing (since Ya'akov was 50 when Sheim passed away, and Yehudah did not get married until after the sale of Yosef, when Ya'akov was 108). During this time Tamar was married twice to non-priests, so her connection to priesthood through her father's house would have been lost.\* How then can Rashi assert that Tamar was liable for the death penalty for a priest's daughter?

Rashi hinted to the solution to this problem by citing the author of the teaching that Tamar was Sheim's daughter: "Efraim Maksha'ah said in the name of Rabbi Meir..." as if to say that one needs to bear in mind who authored this teaching.

<sup>25</sup> *She was taken out (to be burned). She sent (a message) to her father-in-law, saying, “I am pregnant from the man to whom these belong.” She said, “Please identify whose signet ring, cloak, and staff are these?”*

<sup>26</sup> *Yehudah recognized (them). He said, “She’s right (in what she says. She became pregnant) from me (justifiably), because I did not give her to my son Shailah.” But he didn’t continue to be intimate with her anymore (alternatively: he did continue).*

## 🌀 THE BIRTH OF PERETZ AND ZARACH 🌀

38:27 **T**hen, when she was giving birth—look!—there were twins in her womb.

<sup>28</sup> *What happened was, when she was giving birth (one baby) stretched out his hand. The midwife took a crimson thread and tied it on his hand, saying, “This one came out first.”* <sup>29</sup> *Then, after (the baby) brought his hand (back inside)—look!—his brother emerged.*

*She said, “With such strength you have forced yourself (PaRaTZta alecha PaReTZ!)” So he (Yehudah) named him Peretz.*

<sup>30</sup> *Afterwards, his brother emerged, the one who had the crimson thread on his hand, and he named him Zarach (because of the shining appearance [ZeRiCHas] of the crimson).*

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why did Zarach not succeed in becoming the firstborn, even though he began to emerge first? (v. 28-29)

**RASHI:** Four “hands” are written here, corresponding to the four violations against prohibited property committed by Achan—who was descended from [Zarach]. Another opinion is that they correspond to the four things that he looted [from the spoil of Jericho]: a cloak from Shinar, two pieces of silver worth two hundred shekels, and a wedge of gold.

### TORAS MENACHEM

The *Talmud* relates that Efraim Maksha’ah noted in the name of Rabbi Meir, the irony that Ovadiah—who prophesied the downfall of Edom in the Messianic Era—was in fact an Edomite. He compared this to the common saying that “the handle of the ax which chops the forest comes from a tree in the forest” (*Sanhedrin* 39b).

Now, Ovadiah lived in the times of the First Temple, and he was prophesying about the Messianic Era, which renders the “ax” and its “chopping” some 2000 years apart. Surely the comparison is a very distant one?

From this we see that Efraim Maksha’ah did not perceive long intervals in time as a serious interruption in *concept*. So *Rashi* stressed, that “*Efraim Maksha’ah said...She was the daughter of Sheim,*” to help us understand why the long time interval and events between Sheim’s death and the incident with Yehudah and Tamar did not weaken the connection between father and daughter.

A further teaching of Efraim Maksha’ah, in the name of Rabbi Meir, is that when Avraham was visited by the three angels, he did not serve them bread, since he only ate bread which was prepared in a state of ritual purity, and Sarah was unable to do so at that time (*Bava Metzia* 87a).

This begs the question: Just because Avraham took on the stringency to eat bread only if it had been prepared in ritual purity did not mean that he had to impose such a stringency on his guests (especially when one considers that they appeared to be idol worshippers).

However, from here we see that Efraim Maksha’ah maintained that when a person is in somebody else’s home, he is required to follow all the customs of the host.

This sheds light on our case: Since Tamar “stayed in her father’s house”

(above, v. 11), she would have been required to keep all the stringencies of her father, Sheim the priest.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, pp. 185ff.)

## 🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

**A**ccording to *Sefer Habahir* (ch. 197), Zarach and Peretz correspond to the sun and the moon respectively. The sun, whose light is constant and reliable, alludes to the *tzadik* who serves God consistently, without failure. The moon, which waxes and wanes, alludes to the *ba’al teshuvah* (penitent), who initially falls, only to rebound with greater force.

*Mashiach* arises from Peretz (the moon), since *Mashiach* is associated with *teshuvah*, to the extent that “*he will influence tzadikim to teshuvah*” (*Zohar*, cited in *Likutei Torah, Shemini Atzeres* 92b). This is also hinted to in the name Peretz, which indicates breaking through boundaries (פְּרִיצַת הַגְּדָר), a task which is crucial to the process of *teshuvah*.

Peretz was the firstborn, alluding to the fact that the *ba’al teshuvah* is higher than the *tzadik*. However, Zarach’s hand emerged first, indicating that, initially, a person should endeavor to be a *tzadik*. But, since Achan was destined to come from Zarach (see *Rashi*), Zarach too needed to recognize the advantage of *teshuvah*—and so it was Peretz who emerged first.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, pp. 188-9)

[חמישי] לט א וְיוֹסֵף הוֹרֵד מִצְרַיִם וַיִּקְנֵהוּ פֹּטִיפָר סְרִיס פְּרֹעֶה  
 עַד הַטַּבָּחִים אִישׁ מִצְרֵי מִיד הַיִּשְׁמַעְאֵלִים אֲשֶׁר הוֹרְדוּהוּ  
 שָׁמָּה: ב וַיְהִי יְהוָה אֶת-יוֹסֵף וַיְהִי אִישׁ מַצְלִיחַ וַיְהִי בְּבֵית  
 אֲדֹנָיו הַמִּצְרָיִ: ג וַיֵּרָא אֲדֹנָיו כִּי יְהוָה אִתּוֹ וְכָל אֲשֶׁר-הוּא  
 עֹשֶׂה יְהוָה מַצְלִיחַ בְּיָדוֹ: ד וַיִּמָּצֵא יוֹסֵף חֵן בְּעֵינָיו וַיִּשְׁרֹת אֹתוֹ  
 וַיַּפְקְדוּהוּ עַל-בֵּיתוֹ וְכָל-יִשְׁרָלוֹ נָתַן בְּיָדוֹ: ה וַיְהִי מֵאִזְּ הַפְּקִיד  
 אֹתוֹ בְּבֵיתוֹ וְעַל כָּל-אֲשֶׁר יֵשׁ-לוֹ וַיְבַרֵךְ יְהוָה אֶת-בְּיֵת  
 הַמִּצְרָיִ בְּגִלְלֵ יוֹסֵף וַיְהִי בְרֶכֶת יְהוָה בְּכָל-אֲשֶׁר יֵשׁ-לוֹ בְּבֵית  
 וּבְשָׂדֵה: ו וַיַּעֲזֹב כָּל-אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ בְּיַד-יוֹסֵף וְלֹא-יָדַע אֹתוֹ מְאוּמָה  
 כִּי אִם-הִלָּחֵם אֲשֶׁר-הוּא אוֹכֵל וַיְהִי יוֹסֵף יִפְהֶ-תָאֵר וַיִּפֶּה  
 מְרֹאֵה: [שש] ז וַיְהִי אַחַר הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַתִּשָּׂא אִשְׁת-אֲדֹנָיו  
 אֶת-עֵינֶיהָ אֶל-יוֹסֵף וַתֹּאמֶר שִׁכְבָּה עִמִּי: ח וַיִּמָּאֵן וַיֹּאמֶר  
 אֶל-אִשְׁת אֲדֹנָיו חֵן אֲדֹנָי לֹא-יָדַע אֹתִי מִהַ-בְּבֵית וְכָל  
 אֲשֶׁר-יֵשׁ-לוֹ נָתַן בְּיָדִי: ט אֵינְנוּ גְדוֹל בְּבֵית הַזֶּה מִמֶּנִּי  
 וְלֹא-חֲשַׁךְ מִמֶּנִּי מְאוּמָה כִּי אִם-אוֹתָךְ בְּאֲשֶׁר אֶת-אִשְׁתּוֹ  
 וַאֲיֵךְ אֶעֱשֶׂה הֲרַעָה הַגְּדֹלָה הַזֹּאת וְחָטָאתִי לְאֱלֹהִים: י וַיְהִי  
 כַּדְּבָרָה אֶל-יוֹסֵף יוֹם א' וְלֹא-שָׁמַע אֵלֶיהָ לְשֹׁכֵב אֶצְלָהּ  
 לְהִיּוֹת עִמָּה: יא וַיְהִי בַּהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וַיָּבֵא הַבִּיתָה לַעֲשׂוֹת

שְׁמִיה זָרַח: א וְיוֹסֵף אֶתְחַת לְמִצְרַיִם וּבְנֵיהָ  
 פֹּטִיפָר רַבָּא דְפְרֹעָה רַב קְטוּלָא גְבֵרָא  
 מִצְרָאָה מִידָא דְעֵרְבָאִי דִּי אַחְתּוּהִי לְתַמָּן:  
 ב וְהוּא מִימְרָא דִּי בְּסַעְדִּיה דְיוֹסֵף וְהוּא גְבֵר  
 מַצְלָח וְהוּא בְּבֵית רַבּוּנֵיה מִצְרָאָה: ג וְהוּא  
 רַבּוּנֵיה אֲרִי מִימְרָא דִּי בְּסַעְדִּיה וְכָל דִּי הוּא  
 עֹבֵד יֵי מַצְלָח בִּידֵיה: ד וְאֶשְׁכַּח יוֹסֵף רַחֲמִין  
 בְּעֵינּוּהִי וְשִׁמְשׁ יִתִּיה וּמְנִיָּה עַל בֵּיתִיה וְכָל  
 דְּאִית לִיה מְסַר בִּידֵיה: ה וְהוּא מַעֲדֵן דְּמִנֵּי  
 יִתִּיה בְּבֵיתִיה וְעַל כָּל דִּי אִית לִיה וּבִרְיָךְ יֵי  
 יֵת בֵּית מִצְרָאָה בְּדִיל יוֹסֵף וְהוּא בְּרַכְתָּא דִּי  
 בְּכָל דִּי אִית לִיה בְּבֵיתָא וּבְחַקְלָא: ו וְשִׁבְק  
 כָּל דִּי לִיה בִּידָא דְיוֹסֵף וְלֹא יָדַע עִמָּיה  
 מִדַּעַם אֶלְהִין לְחַמָּא דִּי הוּא אֹכִיל וְהוּא יוֹסֵף  
 שְׁפִיר בְּרִיָּא וַיֹּאֲבִי בְחֻזָּא: ז וְהוּא בְּתַר  
 פְּתַנְמִיָּא הָאֵלִין וּזְקַפְתָּ אֶתְת רַבּוּנֵיה יֵת  
 עֵינֵהָ לְיוֹסֵף וַאֲמַרְתָּ שְׁכֹּב עִמִּי: ח וְסָרִיב  
 וַאֲמַר לְאַתְת רַבּוּנֵיה הָא רַבּוּנִי לֹא יָדַע עִמִּי  
 מֵא דְבְּבֵיתָא וְכָל דִּי אִית לִיה מְסַר בִּידֵי:  
 ט לִיתּוּהִי רַב בְּבֵיתָא דְהִין מְנִי וְלֹא מְנַע מְנִי  
 מִדַּעַם אֶלְהִין יִתְד בְּדִיל דְּאַתְת אֶתְתִּיה וַאֲיִכְרִין  
 אַעֲבִיד בְּשָׂתָא רַבָּתָא דְהָא וַאֲיֹחֹב קָדָם יֵי:  
 י וְהוּא כַּד מְלִילַת עִם יוֹסֵף יוֹם יוֹם וְלֹא קִבֵּל  
 מְנָה לְמִשְׁכַּב לְוֹתָה לְמַהוּ עִמָּה: יא וְהוּא  
 כִּיּוֹמָא דְהִין וְעַל לְבֵיתָא לְמַכְדָּק בְּכַתְבֵי  
 חוּשְׁבָנִיה וְלִית אֲנִשׁ מְאָנְשֵי בֵיתָא תַמָּן

כש"י

כיוון שראה ענמו מושל, התחיל אוכל ושותה ומסלסל בשערו, אמר הקצ"ב,  
 אֲבִיךָ מִתְאַבֵּל וְאַתָּה מִסְלָסֵל בְּשַׁעֲרֶךָ, אֲנִי מִגְרָה צָךְ אֵת הַדּוֹב. מִיֵּד:  
 (ז) וְתִשָּׂא אִשְׁת אֲדוֹנָיו וְגו'. כָּל מְקוֹם שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר אַחֵר, סְמוּךְ: (ט) וְחֲטָאתִי  
 לְאֱלֹהִים. כִּי נֹחַ נִלְטוּ עַל הַעֲרִיּוֹת: (י) לְשֹׁכֵב אֶצְלָהּ. אֲפִילוּ כִּלְאֵי תְשׁוּבָה:  
 לְהִיּוֹת עִמָּה. לְעוֹלָם כֹּבֵא: (יא) וַיְהִי בַּהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה. כְּלוּמַר, וַיְהִי כֹּאשֶׁר הִגִּיעַ  
 יוֹם מִיּוּחַד, יוֹם לְחֹק, יוֹם אִיד שְׁלֵכֵס, שֶׁלֹּכּוּ כוֹלֵס לְבַיִת עֲזוּדַת אֲלִילִים,  
 אֲמַרְהָ, אִין לִי יוֹם הַגּוֹן לְחֹזֵק לְיוֹסֵף כְּכִיוֹם הַזֶּה, אֲמַרְהָ לְהַסֵּ, חוֹלֵב אֲנִי  
 וְאִינוּ יִכּוֹלֵה לִילָךְ: לַעֲשׂוֹת מִלֵּאכְתּוֹ. רַב וְשׂוֹמֵל, חַד אֲמַר מִלֵּאכְתּוֹ מִמֶּשׁ, וְחַד

על שם זריחת מרחיט השני: (ח) ויוסף הורד. חוזר לענין ראשון, אלא  
 שהפסיק צו כדי לסמוך ירידתו של יהודה למכירתו של יוסף, לומר לך  
 שצשצילו כורידוכו מגדולתו. ועוד, כדי לסמוך מעשה אשתו של פוטיפר  
 למעשה תמר, לומר לך, מה צו לשם שמים אף צו לשם שמים, שראתה  
 צאלטרולוגין שלכ שעתידה להעמיד צנים ממנו, ואינה יודעת אם ממנה אם  
 מצתכה: (ג) כי ה' אתו. שם שמים שגור צפיו: (ד) וכל יש לו. כרי לשון  
 קלר, חסר אשר: (ו) ולא ידע אתו מאומה. לא היה נותן לבו לכלום: כי  
 אם הלחם. היא אשתו, אלא שדבר צלשון נקייה: ויהי יוסף יפה תאר.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does this section follow the account of Yehudah and Tamar? (v. 1)

**RASHI:** [Scripture] returns to the previous topic which it had interrupted in order to juxtapose the demotion of Yehudah with the selling of Yosef, to imply that because of [Yosef, his brothers] demoted [Yehudah] from his high position; and also to juxtapose the incident of Potifar's wife with the incident of Tamar, to teach you that just as [Tamar's intentions] were for the sake of Heaven, likewise [Potifar's wife's intentions] were for the sake of Heaven. For she saw through her astrology that she was destined to raise children from [Yosef], but she did not know whether [they would be] from her or from her daughter.

🌀 YOSEF IN POTIFAR'S HOUSE 🌀

39  
FIFTH  
READING

**Y**osef had been brought down to Egypt, and Potifar—Pharaoh's officer, chief of the butchers, a native Egyptian—purchased him from the Arabs who had brought him down there.

<sup>2</sup> God was with Yosef, and he became a successful person (while) he was in the house of his Egyptian master. <sup>3</sup> His master saw that (the Name of) God was (always) on his (lips), and that whatever he put his hand to, God made successful. <sup>4</sup> Yosef found favor in his (master's) eyes, and he attended to him (personally. Potifar) appointed him over his house, and he gave everything he had into (Yosef's) hand.

<sup>5</sup> What happened was, that from the time that he appointed (Yosef) over his house and over everything he had, God blessed the house of the Egyptian because of Yosef. God's blessing was (found) in everything he had, in the house and in the field. <sup>6</sup> He left everything he had in Yosef's hand, and he didn't (care to) know about anything of his, except the crumpet that he ate. (Since Yosef was in control, he pampered himself so) Yosef had handsome features and a beautiful complexion. (God said, "You are pampering yourself while your father mourns! I will incite the Potifar's wife against you!")

SIXTH  
READING

<sup>7</sup> Then, after these words (of God), his master's wife cast her eyes on Yosef, and she said, "Sleep with me!"

<sup>8</sup> But he refused. He said to his master's wife, "Look, my master doesn't (care to) know about any of my (affairs) in the house, and he has given everything that's his into my hand. <sup>9</sup> In this house there's no one greater than me, and he has not withheld anything from me except you, since you're his wife. So how could I do this extremely wicked (act), and sin against God?"

<sup>10</sup> When she would speak to Yosef day in and day out, he would not listen to her, (even) to lie (in the same bed as) her (or) to be with her.

<sup>11</sup> Then, when a certain (religious holi)day arrived, (Yosef) came to the house to do his business, and

TORAS MENACHEM

🌀 THE TRUE INTENTIONS OF POTIFAR'S WIFE (v. 1)

Rashi writes that, "just like [Tamar's intentions] were for the sake of Heaven, likewise [Potifar's wife's intentions] were for the sake of Heaven."

This however appears to differ from one of Rashi's comments below, at the beginning of Chapter 40: "Since that cursed woman had accustomed everybody to talk [badly] about [Yosef] the righteous one, God brought to [the Egyptians] the sin of these [men, the butler and the baker], so that [the Egyptians] would turn [their attention] to them and not to [Yosef]."

Why does Rashi first describe Potifar's wife as having intentions "for the sake of Heaven," only later to call her a "cursed woman"?

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi may have written that Potifar's wife was "cursed," but he did not state that she was "wicked," for it is quite possible for a person to be both righteous and cursed at the same time. As we find in the case of Eliezer, Avraham's servant, that "Eliezer had a daughter, and he was looking for a pretext so that Avraham would allow Yitzhak to marry his daughter. Avraham said to him, 'My son is blessed, and you are cursed, and one who is cursed cannot unite with one who is blessed'" (Rashi to 24:39).

Obviously, Eliezer was not a wicked person, for "he 'drew water' from his master's teachings and gave others to drink" (Rashi to 15:2), and we even find that he risked his life to fight a war on Avraham's behalf, virtually singlehandedly (ibid. 14:14). But even though Eliezer was a

righteous individual, he was still called "cursed" by Avraham because he was a slave who was lacking in personal freedom.

Similarly, we find in the case of Cana'an, whose status of being a slave is described as a curse: "Cursed be Cana'an! He shall be a slave among slaves to his brethren!" (above, 9:25).

Thus, in the case of Potifar's wife, Rashi's two statements are not in fact contradictory. Although Potifar's wife was indeed a righteous person, and her intentions were genuinely for the sake of Heaven, she was nevertheless called "cursed" because in a certain respect she was lacking in personal freedom.

To understand why Potifar's wife was considered by Rashi to be a "slave," let us first consider the following problem:

When Yosef was asked by Potifar's wife to "sleep with me" (v. 7), Yosef would certainly have explained to her that such an act would be totally unethical, utterly irrational, and a "sin against God" (v. 9). So, if her intentions were indeed for the sake of Heaven, why did she persist?

Rashi explains, "She saw through her astrology that she was destined to raise children from [Yosef], but she did not know whether [they would be] from her or from her daughter." In other words, Potifar's wife acted irrationally because she was totally convinced by what she had perceived through astrology. In effect, she was nothing less than a "slave" to her own astrological prediction! (cf. Rashi to 15:5, above)

בביתא: יב ואחדתיה בלבושיה למימר שכוב עמי ושכביה ללבושיה בידה וערק ונפק לשוקא: יג והוה כד תזת אריי שכביה ללבושיה בידה וערק לשוקא: יד וקרת לאנשי ביתה ואמרת להון למימר חזו אניתי לנא גברא עברא לחיבא בנא על לותי למשכב עמי וקרת בקלא רמא: טו והוה כד שמע אריי ארימית קלי וקרת ושכביה ללבושיה לותי וערק ונפק לשוקא: טז ואחדתיה ללבושיה לותה עד העל רבוגיה לביתיה: יז ומלילת עמיה כפתנמא האלון למימר על לותי עבדא עברא די אניתיא לנא לחיבא בי יח והוה כד ארימית קלי וקרת ושכביה ללבושיה לותי וערק לשוקא: יט והוה כד שמע רבוגיה ית פתנמא אתתיה די מלילת עמיה למימר כפתנמא האלון עבד לי עבדך ותקוף רבוגיה: כ ודבר רבוגיה דיוסף יתיה ויהביה בבית אסירי אתרא די אסירי מלכא אסירין והוה תמן בבית אסירי: כא והוה מימרא די בסעדיה דיוסף ונגד ליה חסדא ויהביה לרחמין בעיני רב בית אסירי: כב ויהב רב בית אסירי בידא דיוסף ית כל אסיריא די בבית אסירי וית כל די עבדין תמן במימריה הוה מתעביד: כג לית רב בית אסירי חזי ית כל סרחן בידיה בדי מימרא די בסעדיה ודי הוא עבד יי מצלת: כד והוה בתר פתנמא האלון סרחו שקיא דמלכא דמצרים ונחתומא לרבוגיהוון למלכא דמצרים: כה ורגו פרעה על תרין

מלאכתו ואין איש מאנשי הבית שם בבית: יב ותתפשחו בבגדו לאמר שכבה עמי ויעזב בגדו בידה וינס ויצא החוצה: יג ויהי בראותה כיעזב בגדו בידה וינס החוצה: יד ותקרא לאנשי ביתה ותאמר להם לאמר ראו הביא לנו איש עברי לעחק בנו בא אלי לשכב עמי ואקרא בקול גדול: טו ויהי כשמעו כיהרימתי קולי ואקרא ויעזב בגדו אצלי וינס ויצא החוצה: טז ותנח בגדו אצלה עד-בוא אדניו אל-ביתו: יז ותדבר אליו כדברים האלה לאמר בא אלי העבד העברי אשר-הבאת לנו לעחק בי: יח ויהי כהרימי קולי ואקרא ויעזב בגדו אצלי וינס החוצה: יט ויהי כשמע אדניו את-דברי אשתו אשר דברה אליו לאמר כדברים האלה עשה לי עבדך ויחר אפו: כ ויקח אדני יוסף אתו ויתנהו אל-בית הסחר מקום אשר-אסורי וכן אסירין המלך אסורים ויהי-שם בבית הסחר: כא ויהי יהוה את-יוסף ויט אליו חסד ויתן חנו בעיני שר בית-הסחר: כב ויתן שר בית-הסחר ביד-יוסף את כל-האסירים אשר בבית הסחר ואת כל-אשר עשים שם הוא היה עשה: כג אין שר בית-הסחר ראה את-כל-מאומה בידו באשר יהוה אתו ואשר-הוא עשה יהוה מצליח: כד [שביעין] כה ויהי אחר הדברים האלה חטאו משקה מלך-מצרים והאפה לאדניהם למלך מצרים: כה ויקצף פרעה על שני סריסו על שר המשקים ועל

כש"י

אליו חסד. שכיח מקובל לכל רואיו, לשון כלה נאה וחסודה שזמנה: (כג) הוא היה עושה. כחרגומו, צמימריח כוכ מתעבדי: (כג) באשר ה' אתו. שצביל שכי' אהו: (כד) אחר הדברים האלה. לפי שהרגילה אותה ארוכה את הדיק צפי כולם לדבר זו, הביא להם הקצ"ח סורחנס של אלו, שיפנו אליהם ולא אליו, ועוד שהצוה כרווחה ללדיק על ידיהם: חטאו. זה נמלא צבז צפילי פוטירין שלו, וזה נמלא לרור צגלוסקין שלו: והאופה. את

אמר לעשות לרכיו עמה, אלא שגראית לו דמות דיוקנו של אצו וכו', כדאיתא צמסכת סוטה: (יד) ראו הביא לנו. כרי זה לשון קלרה, הביא לנו, ולא פירש מי הביאו, ועל צעלה אומרת כן: עברי. מעצר הנכח, מצני צניו של עזר': (טז) אדניו. של יוסף: (יז) בא אלי. לחק צו, העצד העצרי אשר הצלח לנו: (יט) ויהי כשמוע אדניו וגו'. צשעת תשמיש אמרה לו כן, וזהו שאמרה, כדצרים האלה עשה לי עצדך, עיני תשמיש כאלה: (כא) ויט

TORAS MENACHEM

Thus, due to the fact that Potifar's wife had been "enslaved" by her predictions, leading her to irrational behavior, *Rashi* described her as being "cursed," like a slave who is not a free agent to act as he pleases, but is driven by an external authority.

Even after the above explanation, we are still left with the question why Pottifar's wife "accustomed everybody to talk [badly] about [Yosef] the righteous one"? If her intentions were truly for the sake of Heaven, then why would she speak badly about Yosef?

none of the members of the house were there in the house (since they had all gone to the temple of idolatry).<sup>12</sup> She grabbed him by his clothes, saying, “Sleep with me!”

Yosef dashed off and went outside, leaving his clothes in her hand.

<sup>13</sup> Then, when she saw that he had left his clothes in her hand and had dashed outside, <sup>14</sup> she called the members of her house, and spoke to them, saying, “See! (My husband) brought us a Hebrew man to deprave us! He came to me, to lie with me, but I called loudly, <sup>15</sup> and so when he heard that I raised my voice and screamed, he left his clothes with me, and dashed off outside.”

<sup>16</sup> She left his clothes beside her, until (Yosef’s) master came home. <sup>17</sup> Then she told him the same thing, saying, “The Hebrew slave that you brought us came to me to deprave me. <sup>18</sup> And then, when I raised my voice and screamed, he left his clothes with me, and dashed off outside.”

<sup>19</sup> Then, when (Yosef’s) master heard his wife’s report which she told him, saying, “Your slave did things like this to me,” he became furious. <sup>20</sup> Yosef’s master took him and put him into prison, the place where the King’s prisoners were imprisoned.

(While) he was in the prison, <sup>21</sup> God was with Yosef, and He granted him a favor(able image), and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison’s warden. <sup>22</sup> So, the prison’s warden delivered all the captives that were in the prison into Yosef’s hand, and everything that was done there was done through his (command). <sup>23</sup> The prison’s warden did not see (fault) in anything that was in (Yosef’s) hands, because God was with him. God made whatever he did successful.

## 🕒 YOSEF INTERPRETS DREAMS IN PRISON 🕒

40

SEVENTH  
READING

**T**hen, after these words (of Potifar’s wife, who bad-mouthed Yosef throughout Egypt, the attention was taken away from Yosef when), the King of Egypt’s butler and baker committed an offense against their master, the King of Egypt. <sup>2</sup> Pharaoh became furious at his two officers, the

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why does this section follow the account of Potifar’s wife? (v. 1)

**RASHI:** Since that cursed woman had accustomed everybody to talk [badly] about [Yosef] the righteous one, God brought to [the Egyptians] the sin of these [men, the butler and the baker], so that [the Egyptians] would turn [their attention] to them and not to [Yosef].

And furthermore, so that relief would come through them to [Yosef], the righteous one.

### TORAS MENACHEM

However, this again was an expression of her “slavery” to astrology. After Yosef was already in jail, she realized that the idea of her having children through Yosef was a lost cause. The only option that remained was for her daughter to have children through Yosef.

So Potifar’s wife wondered, “How can I make sure that Yosef stays in Egypt until my daughter reaches marriageable age? He desperately wants to return home to his father. I’m sure he’ll find his way back, sooner or later.”

Potifar’s wife concluded that the only way to ensure that Yosef remained in jail until her daughter was ready was to spread a negative propaganda campaign about him throughout Egypt. Therefore, she, “accustomed everybody to talk [badly] about [Yosef],” in order to make sure that it would be impossible for him to argue his way out of jail, and return home unnoticed.

Thus, in the final analysis we see that even Potifar’s wife’s campaign to discredit Yosef throughout the whole of Egypt was in fact—at the literal level of Torah interpretation—an act carried out “for the sake of Heaven.”

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz 5740)

## 🕒 The Last Word 🕒

**F**rom the actions of Potifar’s wife, we can learn a powerful lesson about judging other people:

At first glance, Potifar’s wife’s actions appear to have been utterly evil. Not only did she cause Yosef to be sent to prison, but furthermore, she spoke badly of him so that his name was blackened throughout Egypt.

*Rashi*, however, enlightens us to the truth, that even these actions were intended for the sake of Heaven! Despite the fact that she was brought up in the corrupt, idolatrous atmosphere of Egypt her intentions were pure, to the extent that our Sages compared her to Tamar, the mother of “strong ones and righteous ones” (*Rashi* to 38:18). From this we can learn the importance of not judging other people by first appearances.

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz 5740)

רַבְרַבְנֹהוּי עַל רַב שְׁקִי וְעַל רַב נַחְתּוּמִי:  
 ג וַיְהִי יַתְהוֹן בְּמִטְרָא בֵּית רַב קְטוּלְיָא לְבֵית  
 אֲסִירֵי אַתְרָא דִּי יוֹסֵף אֲסִיר תַּמָּן: ד וּמִנֵּי רַב  
 קְטוּלְיָא יַת יוֹסֵף עֲמַהוֹן וְשִׁמְשׁ יַתְהוֹן וְהוּוּ  
 יוֹמִין בְּמִטְרָא: ה וַחֲלָמוּ חֲלָמָא תְּרֻוּהוֹן גְּבַר  
 חֲלָמִיָּה בְּלִילְיָא חָד גְּבַר כְּפוּשְׁרֵן חֲלָמִיָּה  
 שְׁקִיָּא וְנַחְתּוּמָא דִּי לְמַלְכָּא דְּמַצְרַיִם דִּי  
 אֲסִירִין בְּבֵית אֲסִירֵי: ו וְאַתָּא לַוְתַּהוֹן יוֹסֵף  
 בְּצַפְרָא וְחָזָא יַתְהוֹן וְהָא אַנְוֹן נְסִיסִין:  
 ז וְשִׂאִיל יַת רַבְרַבִּי פְּרַעָה דִּי עֲמִיָּה בְּמִטְרָא  
 בֵּית רַבּוּנִיָּה לְמִימַר מָא דִּין אֲפִיכּוֹן בִּישִׁין  
 יוֹמָא דִּין: ח וְאָמְרוּ לִיה חֲלָמָא חֲלָמָא וּפְשַׁר  
 לִית לִיה וְאָמַר לְהוֹן יוֹסֵף הָלָא מִן קַדְמִי יִי  
 פּוּשְׁרֵן חֲלָמִיָּא אֲשַׁתְּעוּ כַּעַן לִי: ט וְאֲשַׁתְּעֵי רַב  
 שְׁקִי יַת חֲלָמִיָּה לְיוֹסֵף וְאָמַר בְּחֲלָמִי וְהָא  
 גּוּפְנָא קַדְמִי: י וּבְגוּפְנָא תִּלְתָּא שְׁבָשִׁין וְהִיא  
 כַּד אֲפַרְחַת אֲפִיקַת לְבַלְבִּין וְאֲנִיעַת גִּין  
 בְּשִׁילוֹ אַתְּכִלְתָּהָא עֲנַבִּין: יא וְכִסָּא דְּפַרְעָה  
 בִּידֵי נְסִיבִית יַת עֲנַבִּיָּא וְעֲצָרִית יַתְהוֹן לְכִסָּא  
 דְּפַרְעָה וַיְהִיבִית יַת כִּסָּא עַל יְדָא דְּפַרְעָה:  
 יב וְאָמַר לִיה יוֹסֵף דִּין פּוּשְׁרֵנִיָּה תִּלְתָּא שְׁבָשִׁין  
 תִּלְתָּא יוֹמִין אַנְוֹן: יג בְּסוּף תִּלְתָּא יוֹמִין  
 יַדְבְּרִינְךָ פְּרַעָה יַת רִישְׁךָ וַיְתִיבִינְךָ עַל שְׁמוּשְׁךָ  
 וְתַתֵּן כִּסָּא דְּפַרְעָה בִּידֵיהָ כְּהַלְפָתָא קַדְמָאָה  
 דִּי הוּוּיָתָא מִשְׁקֵי לִיה: יד אֲלַחִין תְּדַבְּרִינְנִי עֲמָךָ  
 כַּד יִיטַב לְךָ וְתַעֲבִיד כַּעַן עֲמִי טִיבוּ וְתִדְבַר  
 עֲלֵי קַדְמִי פְּרַעָה וְתַפְקִינְנִי מִן בֵּית אֲסִירָא  
 חָדִין: טו אַרְי מְגַנְב גְּנַבְנָא מֵאַרְע עֲבָרָאִי וְאַף  
 הָכָא לֹא עֲבָדִית מִדְּעַם אַרְי שׁוּיָאֵו יַתִּי בְּבֵית  
 אֲסִירֵי: טז וְחָזָא רַב נַחְתּוּמִי אַרְי יָאוּת פְּשַׁר  
 וְאָמַר לְיוֹסֵף אַף אֲנָא בְּחֲלָמִי וְהָא תִּלְתָּא סְלִין  
 דְּחִירוֹ עַל רִישֵׁי: יז וּבְסִלָּא עֲלָאָה מִכַּל

שֶׁר הָאוֹפִים: ג וַיִּתֵּן אֹתָם בְּמִשְׁמַר בֵּית שֶׁר הַטְּבָחִים אֶל-בֵּית  
 הַסֹּהַר מְקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יוֹסֵף אָסוּר שָׁם: ד וַיִּפְקֹד שֶׁר הַטְּבָחִים  
 אֶת-יוֹסֵף אֹתָם וַיִּשְׁרֹת אֹתָם וַיְהִיו יָמִים בְּמִשְׁמַר: ה וַיַּחֲלִמוּ  
 חֲלוֹם שְׁנֵיהֶם אִישׁ חֲלָמוֹ בְּלַיְלָה אַחֵד אִישׁ כְּפַתְרוֹן חֲלָמוֹ  
 הַמִּשְׁקָה וְהָאֵפָה אֲשֶׁר לְמֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר אָסוּרִים בְּבֵית  
 הַסֹּהַר: ו וַיָּבֵא אֲלֵיהֶם יוֹסֵף בְּבִקְרָ וַיֵּרָא אֹתָם וְהֵגֵם זַעֲפִים:  
 ז וַיִּשְׁאַל אֶת-סָרִיסֵי פְרַעָה אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ בְּמִשְׁמַר בֵּית אֲדֹנָיו  
 לֵאמֹר מִדּוּעַ פְּנִיכֶם רָעִים הַיּוֹם: ח וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו חֲלוֹם חֲלָמְנוּ  
 וּפְתָר אֵין אִתּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם יוֹסֵף הֲלוֹא לְאֱלֹהִים פְּתָרָנִים  
 סִפְרוּ-נָא לִי: ט וַיֹּסֶפֶר שֶׁר-הַמִּשְׁקִים אֶת-חֲלָמוֹ לְיוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר  
 לוֹ בְּחֲלוּמֵי וְהִנְהַגְפִן לְפָנָי: י וּבְגַפְּן שְׁלֹשָׁה שָׁרִיגִים וְהוּא  
 כְּפָרַחַת עֲלֵתָה נִצָּה הַבְּשִׁילוֹ אֲשַׁכְּלֵתִיהָ עֲנַבִּים: יא וְכּוֹס  
 פְּרַעָה בִּידֵי וְאָקַח אֶת-הָעֲנַבִּים וְאֲשַׁחַט אֹתָם אֶל-כּוֹס פְּרַעָה  
 וְאַתֵּן אֶת-הַכּוֹס עַל-כַּף פְּרַעָה: יב וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יוֹסֵף זֶה פְּתָרְנִי  
 שְׁלֹשֶׁת הַשָּׁרְגִים שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים הֵם: יג בְּעוֹד א שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים  
 יִשָּׂא פְרַעָה אֶת-רֹאשׁוֹ וְהִשִּׁיבָה עַל-כַּנְּךָ וְנָתַתְּ כּוֹס-פְּרַעָה  
 בְּיָדוֹ כַּמִּשְׁפָּט הָרֹאשׁוֹן אֲשֶׁר הָיִיתָ מִשְׁקָהוּ: יד כִּי אִם-זָכַרְתִּינִי  
 אַתָּךְ כְּאֲשֶׁר יִיטַב לְךָ וְעֲשִׂיתָ-נָא עִמָּדִי חֶסֶד וְהִזְכַּרְתִּינִי  
 אֶל-פְּרַעָה וְהוֹצֵאתִנִי מִן-הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה: טו כִּי-גִנַּב גְּנַבְתִּי מֵאֶרֶץ  
 הָעֵבְרִים וְגַם-פָּה לֹא-עֲשִׂיתִי מְאוּמָה כִּי-שָׁמוּ אֹתִי בְּבוֹר:  
 טז וַיֵּרָא שֶׁר-הָאוֹפִים כִּי טוֹב פְּתָר וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-יוֹסֵף אַף-אֲנִי  
 בְּחֲלוּמֵי וְהִנְהַ שְׁלֹשָׁה סְלֵי חֲרִי עַל-רֹאשִׁי: יז וּבְסִלָּא הָעֲלִיזוֹן

כש"י

אפרחת אפיקת לבלבין, עד כאן חרגוס של פורחת. כן גדול מפרת, כדכתיב  
 וזכר גומל יכיה נלכ<sup>3</sup>, וכתיב ויולא פרח, וכדן ויולא לז' (יא) ואשחט.  
 כתרנומו ועלרית, וברכה יש צלשון משנה: (יג) שלשת ימים הם. סימן  
 הם לך לשלשת ימים. ויש מדרשי אגדה ברב<sup>5</sup>: (יג) ישא פרעה את  
 ראשך. לשון חשזון, כשיפקוד שאר עבדיו לשרת לפניו צטעודה, ומנה אותך  
 עמה: בנך. צסים שלך ומושצן: (יד) כי אם זכרתיני אתך. אשר אם  
 זכרתיני אתך, מאחר שיעצ לך כפתרוני: ועשית נא עמדי חסד. אין נא  
 אלא לשון צקשה: (טז) סלי חורני. סליס של נלריס קלופיס חורני חורני,  
 וצמקומונו יש ברבצה, ודך מוכרי פת כסנין שקורין אוזבלי"ש, לתחס צאוֹת

פת המלך, ואין לשון אפייח אלא צפת, וצלע"ז פיסטו"י: (ד) ויפקד שר  
 הטבחים וגו'. לכיות אתס: ויהיו ימים במשמר. שנים עשר חדש:  
 (ה) ויחלמו חלום שניהם. ויחלמו שניהם חלום, זה פשוטו. ומדרשו, כל  
 אחד חלם חלום שניהם, שחלם את חלומו ופתרון חזירו, וזה שנאמר וירא  
 שר האופים כי טוב פת: איש כפתרון חלומו. כל אחד חלם חלום הדומה  
 לפתרון הכתיד לזכ עליהם: (ו) זעפים. עלצים, כמו סר זעף<sup>1</sup>, זעף כי  
 אשא? (ז) שריגים. זמורות ארוכות שקורין ויד"ן: והיא כפרחת. דומה  
 לפורחת וכיא כפורחת, נדמה לי בחלומי כאלו היא פורחת, ואחר הפרח  
 עלתה נלח ונעשה סמדר, אשפיני"ר צלע"ז, ואחר כך כצשילו, וכיא כד



chief butler and the chief baker,<sup>3</sup> and he placed them into the custody of the chief butcher's house, in the prison where Yosef was held.<sup>4</sup> The chief butcher assigned Yosef (to be) with them, and he attended to them. They were in custody for (many) days, (a whole year).

<sup>5</sup> Both of them—the King of Egypt's butler and baker, who were confined in the prison—had a dream. Each person had his dream on the same night (as the other), and each person dreamed his own destiny.

<sup>6</sup> Yosef came to them in the morning. He saw them and—look!—they were depressed.<sup>7</sup> So he asked (these) officers of Pharaoh, who were with him in custody (in) his master's house's, saying, “Why do your faces (look) so down today?”

<sup>8</sup> They said to him, “We've had a dream, but there is no one to interpret it.”

Yosef said to them, “Don't (dream) interpretations come from God? Please tell me (your dreams).”

<sup>9</sup> The chief butler told his dream to Yosef. He said to him, “In my dream—look!—a vine was before me.<sup>10</sup> On the vine were three tendrils. It seemed to be blossoming, and its buds came out. (Then) its clusters ripened into grapes.”

<sup>11</sup> “Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes and squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup. I placed the cup on Pharaoh's palm.”

<sup>12</sup> Yosef said to him, “This is its interpretation: the three tendrils are three days.<sup>13</sup> In another three days, Pharaoh will (count his officers to serve him at a meal and) he will count your head, and restore you to your position. Then, you will place Pharaoh's cup into his hand, just like when you were his butler in the first instance.”

<sup>14</sup> “If you would then remember me, alongside you, when things go well for you, please, do me a favor and mention me to Pharaoh, and get me out of this prison.<sup>15</sup> For I was kidnapped from the Land of the Hebrews, and I haven't done anything (wrong) here either, for them to have put me into prison.”

<sup>16</sup> The chief baker saw that he had interpreted well. So, he said to Yosef, “In my dream, I too (was there) and—look!—there were three wicker baskets on my head.<sup>17</sup> In the upper basket was a selection

---

TORAS MENACHEM

---

### 🕒 YOSEF'S SALVATION (v. 1, 23)

In his commentary to verse 1, *Rashi* writes that Pharaoh's butler and baker were imprisoned, “so that relief would come through them to [Yosef], the righteous one” (see *Classic Questions* on page 279).

This, however, appears to contradict a later comment of *Rashi*, at the end of the *Parsha*:

On the words, “the chief butler did not remember Yosef” (v. 23), *Rashi* comments, “Because Yosef relied on [the butler] to remember him, he was compelled to be confined for two years, in the spirit of the verse, ‘Happy is the man who trusts in God and did not turn to the arrogant’ (Ps. 40:5), [i.e.] he did not trust in the Egyptians, who are called ‘arrogant.’”

This begs the question: If God's intent in sending the butler and the baker to be imprisoned with Yosef was “so that relief would come through them to him,” then why was Yosef wrong to have “relied on [the butler] to remember him”?

And why was Yosef's punishment a further two years in prison?

#### THE EXPLANATION

While it is indeed true that God sent the butler and baker to jail as a means of saving Yosef, Yosef nevertheless made a subtle miscalculation concerning the significance of their arrival.

Obviously, Yosef would have been very excited that he was chosen to share a cell with two of Pharaoh's top ministers, and he would have surely seen it as a possible route by which he might be able to leave jail.

### 🕒 The Last Word 🕒

The natural reaction for Yosef, after being wrongly imprisoned, would be utter contempt for Egypt and its government. Thus, when Yosef was joined by the chief butler and chief baker—two of Pharaoh's high-ranking ministers—it would only have been natural for Yosef to shun them and hate them.

Yosef, however, did the very opposite. Not only did he bear no grudge against Pharaoh's ministers, who were key members of the corrupt regime that had wrongfully imprisoned him, but he took an active interest in their welfare. In fact, he was even sensitive enough to notice that they had been troubled by their dreams, inquiring, “Why do your faces (look) so down today?” (v. 7).

In hindsight we see that from this single act of kindness Yosef was eventually saved, leading him to save the entire Egyptian people from starvation!

This teaches us: a.) How important it is to be caring about other people. And, b.) Never to underestimate the power of one single good deed. Yosef's sensitivity to another's distress, a person whom he had every right to despise, led to the salvation of Egypt.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz* 5734)

מיכל פרעה עובד נחתום ועופא אכיל  
 יתהון מן סלא מעלוי רישי: יה ואתיב יוסף  
 ואמר דין פושרניה תלתא סלין תלתא יומין  
 אנון: יט בסוף תלתא יומין יעדי פרעה ית  
 רישך מנך ויגלוב יתך על צליבא ויכול  
 עופא ית בשרך מנך: כ והנה ביומא תליתאה  
 יומא בית ולדא דפרעה ועבד משתניא לכל  
 עבדוהי ואדבר ית ריש רב שקי וית ריש רב  
 נחתומי בגו עבדוהי: כא ואתיב ית רב שקי על  
 שקיותיה ויהב פסא על ידא דפרעה: כב וית  
 רב נחתומי צלב כמא די פשר להון יוסף:  
 כג ולא דכיר רב שקי ית יוסף ואנשיה: פ פ פ

מכל מאכל פרעה מעשה אפה והעוף אכל אתם מן-הסל  
 מעל ראשי: יה ויען יוסף ויאמר זה פתרנו שלשת הסלים  
 שלשת ימים הם: יט בעוד א שלשת ימים ישא פרעה את-  
 ראשך מעליך ותלה אותך על-עץ ואכל העוף את-בשרך  
 מעליך: [מפמיר] כ ויהי ביום השלישי יום הולדת את-פרעה  
 ויעש משתה לכל-עבדיו וישא את-ראש א שר המשקים  
 ואת-ראש שר האפים בתוך עבדיו: כא וישב את-שר  
 המשקים על-משקהו ויתן הכוס על-כף פרעה: כב ואת שר  
 האפים תלה באשר פתר להם יוסף: כג ולא זכר שר-  
 המשקים את-יוסף וישכחהו: פ פ פ

ק"ב פסוקים, יב"ק סימן.

רש"י

צחוכס, כמו שאו את ראש, לשון מנין: (כג) ולא זכר שר המשקים. בו  
 ציוס: וישכחהו. לאחר מאן, מפני שתלה בו יוסף לזכרו, בזקק להיות  
 אסור עוד שתי שנים, שנאמר אשרי הגזר אשר שם ה' מצטחו ולא פנה אל  
 רכביס<sup>3</sup>, ולא צטח על מלריס הקרויס רכב:

חסלת פרשת וישב

#### TORAS MENACHEM

Yosef's mistake was that he saw his newfound relationship with the butler and the baker as *the* way out of jail, rather than *a possible* means by which God would send salvation. Thus, *Rashi* stresses, "Because Yosef relied on [the butler] to remember him, he was compelled to be confined for two years." Yosef should have relied *directly* upon God, Who can send

help in any possible manner imaginable, rather than relying on what *he thought* was God's chosen route of salvation.

Of course, Yosef was not wrong in attempting to find a natural, logical route by which God might save him. He merely erred in the *significance* that he attached to that route, attempting to "write the script" on God's

of all Pharaoh's foods, made by a baker, and the birds were eating them from the basket on top of my head."

<sup>18</sup> Yosef replied and said, "This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days. <sup>19</sup> In another three days, Pharaoh will remove your head from you and hang you on a gallows, and the birds will eat your flesh off you."

MAFTIR <sup>20</sup> And so it happened, that on the third day, (it was) Pharaoh's birthday. Pharaoh made a banquet for all his servants and he counted the chief butler and chief baker among his servants. <sup>21</sup> He restored the chief butler to his (position as) butler, and (the butler) placed the cup on Pharaoh's palm. <sup>22</sup> And, just as Yosef had predicted, he hanged the chief baker.

<sup>23</sup> But, (that day) the chief butler did not remember Yosef. And he forgot him (later on too).

THE HAFTARAH FOR VAYEISHEV IS ON PAGE 388. THE HAFTARAH FOR CHANUKAH IS ON PAGE 398.

Maftir readings for Shabbos Chanukah: **day one**—Bamidbar 7:1-17 (page 403); **day two**—ibid. 18-23 (page 403).

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

behalf. Instead of relying on God to save him *via the butler*, Yosef should have depended on God to save him *in whichever way God deemed fit*, while realizing that there was a distinct possibility that it might be through the butler.

#### TWO YEARS

Based on the above, we can also explain why Yosef was imprisoned for two further years for his "sin" of relying on the butler. To clarify this point, let us first turn to a peculiar detail in Yosef's analysis of the butler's dream.

In response to the butler's statement that, "*On the vine were three tendrils*" (v. 10), Yosef explained, "*the three tendrils are three days*" (v. 10). This begs the question: How did Yosef know that the three tendrils represented three days, and not three weeks? Or three months?

Presumably, Yosef reasoned that God had sent the butler to save him *immediately*. So, he interpreted the three tendrils to signify the lesser timespan of three days.

This would have been the case if Yosef had trusted in God sufficiently. But since Yosef erred in placing too much significance on the arrival of the

butler (as explained above), God decided to punish him by following an alternative interpretation of the dream: that Yosef would be saved only after three years!

This case is comparable to *Rashi's* earlier comment in *Parshas Noach* that "*when God brought the rains down He brought them down with mercy, so that if the people would repent they would be rains of blessing. When they failed to repent, the rains became a flood*" (*Rashi* to 7:12).

Likewise, in our case, God initially sent the butler to save Yosef and indicated that the salvation would be soon, in three days. But since Yosef responded incorrectly, the three days were increased to three years.

Nevertheless, since a punishment need not be administered in full measure, God lessened the sentence to two years and part of a third year. Thus *Rashi* writes that Yosef stayed in jail a further two years, for in fact, he remained there for two years and a few days which, in God's mercy, was considered to be an entire year.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev* 5743)



# parshas Mikeitz

## פרשת מקץ

### 🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

The word *Mikeitz* means “At the end,” as in the saying, “the end of days” (*Daniel* 12:13).

In Aramaic the word “days” is almost identical to its Hebrew equivalent, but the last letter switches from a *mem* to a *nun* (יָמִיִּם = יָמִיִן). The *Zohar* (I 62b) notes that this Aramaic word, יָמִיִן, is identical to the Hebrew word יָמִיִן, meaning “right” and on this basis, the *Zohar* concludes: “There are two ‘ends,’ one on the spiritual ‘right’ and one on the spiritual ‘left.’”

In Jewish mysticism, “left” represents the side of evil. So, the “end of the spiritual left” refers to the day when evil will cease to exist, with the end of exile, i.e. “the end of days” (קֵץ הַיָּמִים).

“Right,” on the other hand, represents goodness and holiness. Thus we refer to the “end of the right,” to indicate that there is no dilution of values in the realms of holiness, so the end is as good as the beginning. The term קֵץ הַיָּמִיִן (“end of the spiritual right”) is thus an allusion to the final redemption, when good will triumph over evil, and we will see how good is found consistently throughout the entire world.

We are thus left with the question: Which “end” does the word *Mikeitz* refer to—the “end of the left” or the “end of the right”?

In fact, both could be argued:

a.) At the beginning of our Parsha, Yosef is released from jail. This was the end of Yosef’s exile, i.e. the “end of the left.”

b.) On the other hand, we then read how Yosef suddenly rose to power and became ruler over Egypt—his redemption, represented by “the end of the right.”

How could the two opposite concepts of exile and redemption be alluded to by the same expression?

Chasidic thought explains that the inner purpose of exile is that the Jews should be scattered around the world in order to “rescue” sparks of holiness which had been lost in physicality. Thus, redemption is not the *elimination* of exile, but rather, it is the *goal* of exile. And therefore, both concepts are hinted to by the same word.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, pp. 200-1; *Biuray haZohar* p. 299)

א והיה מסוף תרתיין שנין ופרעה חלם והא  
 קאם על נהרא: ב והא מן נהרא סלקון שבע  
 תורן שפירן למחוי ופטימן בשר ורעון  
 באחוא: ג והא שבע תורן אחרנין סלקון  
 בתריהן מן נהרא בישן למחוי וחסירן בשר  
 וקמא לקבליהן תורתא על פיה נהרא:  
 ד ואכלן תורתא בישן למחוי וחסירן בשר  
 ית שבע תורתא שפירן למחוי ופטימתא  
 ואתער פרעה: ה ודמד וחלם תניגות והא  
 שבע שובלין סלקין בקניא חד פטימן וטבן:  
 ו והא שבע שובלין לקן ושקיפן קדום צמחן  
 בתריהן: ז ובלעא שובליא לקיתא ית שבע  
 שובליא פטימתא ומלייתא ואתער פרעה והא  
 חלמא: ח והיה בצפרא ומטרפא רוחיה ושלח  
 וקרא ית כל חרשי מצרים וית כל חפימקא  
 ואשתעי פרעה להון ית חלמיה ולית דפשר  
 יתהון לפרעה: ט ומליל רב שקי עם פרעה

מא א ויהי מקץ שנתים ימים ופרעה חלם והנה עמד על-  
 היאר: ב והנה מן היאר עלת שבע פרות מראה  
 ובריא את בשר ותרענה באחו: ג והנה שבע פרות אחרות  
 עלות אחריהן מן היאר רעות מראה ודקות בשר ותעמדה  
 אצל הפרות על-שפת היאר: ד ותאכלנה הפרות רעות  
 המראה ודקת הבשר את שבע הפרות יפת המראה  
 והבריא את וייקץ פרעה: ה ויישן ויחלם שנית והנה א שבע  
 שבלים עלות בקנה אחד בריאות וטבות: ו והנה שבע  
 שבלים דקות ושדופת קדים צמחות אחריהן: ז ותבלענה  
 השבלים הדקות את שבע השבלים הבריאות והמלאות  
 וייקץ פרעה והנה חלום: ח והי בבקר ותפעם רוחו וישלח  
 ויקרא את כל-חרטמי מצרים ואת כל-חכמיה ויספר פרעה  
 להם את-חלמו ואין-פותר אותם לפרעה: ט וידבר שר

כש"י

הליי"דש זלע"ז. ושקיפן קדום, חזויות, לשון משקוף, הכזוב תמיד על ידי  
 הדלת המכה עליו: קדים. רוח מזרחית, שקורין זיש"א: (f) הבריאות.  
 שיי"ש זלע"ז: והנה חלום. והנה נשלו חלום שלם לפניו והולך לפותרים:  
 (ח) ותפעם רוחו. ומטרפא רוחיה, מקשקשת בתוכו כפעמון, וזכוכדלנר  
 הוא אומר ותתפעם רוחו<sup>2</sup>, לפי שהיו שם שתי פעימות, שכחת החלום  
 והעלמת פתרונו<sup>3</sup>: חרטמי. הנחרים זימי מתיס, ששואלים זעלמות. (טימי  
 הן עלמות זלשון חרמי, וזמשנה בית שהוא מלא טימא, מלא עלמות): ואין  
 פותר אותם לפרעה. פותרים היו אותם, אזל לא לפרעה, שלא היה קולן

(6) ויהי מקץ. כתרגומו מסוף, וכל לשון קץ, סוף הוא: על היאור. כל שאר  
 נכרות אינם קרוים יאורים, חוץ מנילוס, מפני שכל הארץ עשויה יאורים  
 יאורים זידי אדם, ונילוס עולה בתוכו ומשקף אותם, לפי שאין גשמים  
 יורדין במצרים תדיר כשאר ארצות: (3) יפות מראה. סימן הוא לימי  
 השזבע, שזכריות נראות יפות זו לזו, שאין עין זריה לרה בחזרתה: באחו.  
 זאגס, מריש"ק זלע"ז, כמו ישגא אחו: (ג) ודקות בשר. טינזי"ש זלע"ז,  
 לשון דק: (ד) ותאכלנה. סימן שחבא כל שמחת השזבע נשכחת זימי הרעב:  
 (כ) בקנה אחד. טוהיד"ל זלע"ז: בריאות. שיי"ש זלע"ז: (ו) ושדופות.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why were the Egyptian sorcerers unable to interpret Pharaoh's dreams? (v. 8)

**RASHI:** They did interpret them, but not [satisfactorily] for Pharaoh, for their voice did not enter his ears, and he had no satisfaction from their interpretation. They said, "You will have seven daughters, and you will bury seven daughters."

**MIDRASH:** They said, "The seven good cows are seven daughters that will be born to you. The seven ugly cows mean that you will bury seven daughters. The seven good ears of grain are seven countries that you will conquer; the seven bad ears of grain are seven colonies that will rebel against you."

**BACHAYE:** How is it possible that not one of the Egyptian sorcerers thought of Yosef's strikingly obvious explanation—that the seven fat cows and seven good ears of grain represented seven good

agricultural years, and the seven thin cows and thin ears of grain represented seven years of famine? This matter, however, was arranged by God so as to bring greatness to Yosef.

**CHIZKUNI:** The Egyptian sorcerers thought that the two dreams each had their own meanings. Therefore, they were unable to interpret them properly.

**ABARBANEL:** The Egyptian sorcerers understood that according to the science of dream interpretation, a dream is never to be taken literally, because the imagination causes events to be expressed in a cryptic fashion. Therefore, they sought for a possible scenario which Pharaoh's dream might *hint to*, e.g. seven daughters being born etc.

Yosef, however, knew by Divine inspiration that this case was an exception to the above rule, and that Pharaoh's dream was a direct vision of the future which was indeed to be taken literally.

## 🌀 YOSEF INTERPRETS PHARAOH'S DREAMS 🌀

**4I** **A**t the end of two years, it happened that Pharaoh was dreaming, and—look!—he was standing by the Nile. <sup>2</sup> Then, from the Nile—look!—there were seven nice-looking, well-built cows coming up, and they pastured in the marshland. <sup>3</sup> Then—look!—seven other, ugly-looking, thin cows were coming up after them from the Nile, and they stood beside the (other) cows on the bank of the Nile. <sup>4</sup> Then, the ugly-looking, thin cows devoured the seven nice-looking, well-built cows, and Pharaoh woke up.

<sup>5</sup> He fell asleep and dreamed again, and—look!—seven healthy and good ears of grain were growing on one stalk. <sup>6</sup> And—look!—seven thin ears of grain, parched by the east wind, were growing up after them. <sup>7</sup> Then, the thin ears of grain swallowed up the seven healthy and full ears of grain.

Pharaoh woke up, and now (he had) a (complete) dream (that needed to be interpreted).

<sup>8</sup> In the morning, his mind was buzzing (with agitation). So he sent (messengers) and called all the sorcerers of Egypt and all its sages. Pharaoh related his dreams to them, but no one interpreted them (satisfactorily) for Pharaoh.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🌀 THE FAILURE OF THE EGYPTIAN SORCERERS (v. 8)

Rashi's comment to verse 8 prompts the following questions:

a.) Why did Rashi feel it necessary to cite—from the **Midrash**—the Egyptian sorcerers' interpretation which was rejected by Pharaoh? The Torah itself does not hint at all to the content of the sorcerers' interpretation, so why did Rashi mention it?

b.) The *Midrash* cites two interpretations offered by the Egyptian sorcerers. Rashi however, only cited one of them. Why?

c.) Why does Rashi not address the obvious question, posed by **Bachaye**, why Yosef's extremely simple interpretation could not be fathomed by any of Egypt's sorcerers?

*Bachaye* answers that God withheld the true interpretation from the sorcerers in order to bring Yosef to greatness. However, it would have been a very great miracle indeed for all the sorcerers of Egypt not to have thought of the obvious interpretation which Yosef offered. Thus,

it is difficult to accept at the literal level that such a miracle occurred, without any indication of such an occurrence in the Torah or in Rashi's commentary.

**Chizkuni** argues that Yosef's genius was the realization that Pharaoh's two dreams were actually one (see below, v. 25). However this interpretation is incompatible with Rashi's commentary since, as mentioned above (question 'b'), Rashi stresses that the sorcerers only offered one interpretation for both dreams (in contrast to the *Midrash* which offers a different interpretation for each dream). Thus according to Rashi, the Egyptian sorcerers also realized that both dreams had the same meaning.

And **Abarbanel's** explanation is difficult to accept at the literal level because: a.) We do not have a precedent in scripture for the concept of how imagination affects a person's dreams. b.) On the contrary, we find that Ya'akov and Yosef's dreams *did* come true in the literal sense.

So we are left with the question: Why could a host of Egyptian sorcerers not fathom Yosef's simple interpretation of Pharaoh's dream, which was heralded as an act of utter genius and Divine inspiration (see below v. 38)?

### 🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

Pharaoh's dream is the very beginning of the story of Egyptian exile. The dream predicted a famine which eventually caused Ya'akov and his family to settle in Egypt where, a generation later, they were enslaved.

In times of exile, the Jewish people are forced to withstand the fluctuation between two contradictory modes of life: love of God at the time of prayer, and then total immersion into the physical world during one's business and private affairs the rest of the day. Chasidic teachings compare this situation to a dream, because in a dream two opposite, contradictory phenomena can coexist simultaneously.

In order to hint to this idea, the precursor of the Egyptian exile—our current story—was recorded in the Torah as a dream.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 346)

### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

Yosef, a righteous person, dreamed about *working* in the field with his brothers, binding sheaves. Pharaoh, a wicked man, had a dream which involved no effort on his part at all.

This highlights the fact that all matters of holiness require *effort*, ensuring that what we receive from God in return should not be unearned "bread of shame" (see *Jerusalem Talmud, Orlah* 1:3).

When a person dedicates himself to serious work, he has the promise of success that "you labored (and therefore) you discovered" (*Megillah* 6b). In fact, a person is capable of achieving success far beyond the proportion of effort invested—following the pattern of "always ascending when dealing with matters of holiness."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 3, p. 819ff.)

למימר ית סרתני אנא מדבר יומא דין: פרעה רגז על עבדוהי ויהב יתי במטרת בית רב קטוליא יתי וית רב נחתומי: יא ותלמנא חלמא בלילא חד אנא והוא גבר כפושרן חלמיה חלמנא: יב ותמן עמנא עולם עבראה עבדא לרב קטוליא ואשתעינא ליה ופשר לנא ית חלמנא גבר בחלמיה פשר: יג והנה כמא די פשר לנא בן הנה יתי אתיב על שמושי ויתיה צלב: יד ושלה פרעה וקרא ית יוסף וארהיטוהי מן בית אסירי וספר ושני כסותיה ועל לנת פרעה: טו ואמר פרעה ליוסף חלמא חלמית ופשר לית ליה ואנא שמעית עלך למימר דאת שמע חלמא למפשר יתיה: טז ואתיב יוסף ית פרעה למימר בר מן חכמתי אלהין מן קדם יי ותותב ית שלמא דפרעה: יז ומליל פרעה עם יוסף בחלמי הא אנא קאים על ביה נהרא: יח והא מן נהרא סלקן שבע תורן פטימן בשר ושפירן למחוי ורעין באחוא: יט והא שבע תורן אחרנין סלקן בתריהן חסיכון ובישן למחוי לחרא וחסיכון בשר לא תזיתי כותהן בכל ארעא דמצרים לבישו: כ ואכלן תורתא חסיכתא ובישתא ית שבע תורתא קדמיתא פטימתא: כא ועלא למעיהן ולא אתידע ארי עלוי למעיהן ומחוייהן ביש כד בקדמיתא ואתעריית: כב וחזית בחלמי והא שבע שובלין סלקן בקניא חד מלין ומבין: כג והא שבע שובלין נצון לקון שקיפן קדום צמחן בתריהן: כד ובלעא שובליא לקיתא ית שבע שובליא טבתא ואמרית לחרשא ולית דמחוי

המשקים את-פרעה לאמר את-חטאי אני מזכיר היום: פרעה קצף על-עבדיו ויתן אתי במשמר בית שר הטבחים אתי ואת שר האפים: יא ונחלמה חלום בלילא אחד אני והוא איש כפתרון חלמו חלמנו: יב ושם אתנו נער עברי עבד לשר הטבחים ונספר-לו ויפתר-לנו את-חלמתינו איש כחלמו פתרו: יג ויהי כאשר פתרו-לנו בן היה אתי השיב על-בני ואתו תלה: יד וישלה פרעה ויקרא את-יוסף ויריצהו מן-הבור ויגלה ויחלף שמלתיו ויבא אל-פרעה: ושני טו ויאמר פרעה אל-יוסף חלום חלמתי ופתר אין אתו ואני שמעתי עליך לאמר תשמע חלום לפתור אתו: טז ויען יוסף את-פרעה לאמר בלעדי אלהים יענה את-שלום פרעה: יז וידבר פרעה אל-יוסף בחלמי הנני עמד על-שפת היאר: יח והנה מן-היאר עלת שבע פרות בריאות בשר ויפת תאר ותרעינה באחו: יט והנה שבע-פרות אחרות עלות אחריהן דלות ורעות תאר מאד ורקות בשר לא-ראיתי כהנה בכל-ארץ מצרים לרע: כ ותאכלנה הפרות הרקות והרעות את שבע הפרות הראשונות הבריאות: כא ותבאנה אל-קרפנה ולא נודע כי-באו אל-קרפנה ומראיהן רע כאשר בתחלה ואיקץ: כב וארא בחלמי והנה שבע שבילים עלת בקנה אחד מלאות וטבות: כג והנה שבע שבילים צנמות דקות שדפות קדים צמחות אחריהם: כד ותבלען השבילים הדקות את שבע השבילים הטבות ואמר אל-החרטמים ואין מגיד לי:

כש"י

מי שעליו לעשות הם סותמים את הדבר: (יד) מן הבור. מן בית הסוכר, שהוא עשוי כמין גומא, וכן כל צור שצמקרא לשון גומא, ואף אם אין צו מים קרוי צור, פוש"י בלע"ז: ויגלח. מפני כבוד המלכות: (טו) תשמע חלום לפתור אתו. תאזין ותבין חלום לפתור אותו: תשמע. לשון הצננה והאזנה, כמו שומע יוסף, אשר לא תשמע לשוני, אנטינדר"א בלע"ז? (טז) בלעדי. אין החכמה משלי, חלא חלבים יענה, יתן עניו צפי לשלוס פרעה: (יט) דלות. כחושות, כמו מדוע אתה ככה דל? דלמנון: ורקות בשר. כל לשון רקות שצמקרא, חסרי בשר, ובלע"ז בלוא"ש: (כג) צנמות. לונמא בלשון ארמי סלע, הרי הן כעין צלי לחלות, וקשות כסלע. ותרגומו נלן לקין,

נכנס באזניו, ולא היה לו קורת רוח צפתרוס, שהיו אומרים שבע צנות אתה מוליד, שבע צנות אתה קוצר! (יא) איש כפתרון חלומו. חלום הראוי לפתרון שפתר לנו, ודומה לו: (יב) נער עברי עבד. ארורים הרשעים, שאין טובתם שלמה, מזכירו בלשון ציון: נער. שוטב, ואין ראוי לגדולה: עברי. אפילו לשוננו אינו מכיר: עבד. וכתוב בנימוסי מזרים, שאין עבד מולך ולא לוצב צגדי שרים (ס"א שירים): איש בחלומו. לפי החלום וקרוב לעניינו: (יג) השיב על בני. פרעה הנזכר למעלה, כמו שאמר פרעה קף על עבדיו, הרי מקרא קצר לשון, ולא פירש מי השיב, לפי שאין צריך לפרש מי השיב, מי שצידו להשיב, והוא פרעה, וכן דרך כל מקראות קזרים, על



<sup>9</sup> The chief butler spoke to Pharaoh, saying, “I (have to) mention my wrongdoings today! <sup>10</sup> When Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and he put me in prison in the house of the chief slaughterer—(both) me and the chief baker, <sup>11</sup> we both dreamed a dream on the same night. Each person had a dream (that clearly depicted) his destiny.

<sup>12</sup> There was a Hebrew lad with us, a slave of the chief slaughterer, and we told (the dreams) to him. He interpreted our dreams for us. He gave each person a (feasible) interpretation of his dream.

<sup>13</sup> Then, things happened just as he had interpreted for us: (Pharaoh) restored me to my position, and he hanged (the chief baker).”

<sup>14</sup> So Pharaoh sent (a messenger) and called for Yosef.

They rushed him from the dungeon. He cut his hair (especially for the King), changed his (prison) clothes, and he came to Pharaoh.

<sup>15</sup> Pharaoh said to Yosef, “I’ve had a dream, but there is no one to interpret it, but I’ve heard it said about you with certainty\* that you listen to a dream, (understand it, and are then able) to interpret it.”

<sup>16</sup> Yosef replied to Pharaoh, saying, “(The wisdom to interpret dreams) is not from me. God will put an answer that will appease Pharaoh (into my mouth).”

<sup>17</sup> Pharaoh said to Yosef, “In my dream—look!—I was standing on the bank of the Nile. <sup>18</sup> Then—look!—seven well-built, nice looking cows were coming up from the Nile, and they pastured in the marshland. <sup>19</sup> Then—look!—seven other cows were coming up after them, (which were) weak, very ugly looking and thin. I have never seen such bad (cows) throughout the entire land of Egypt.”

<sup>20</sup> “Then, the thin, ugly cows devoured the first seven healthy cows. <sup>21</sup> They were swallowed up inside them, but it wasn’t recognizable that they’d gone inside them. They looked as ugly as they were to start with. Then I woke up.”

<sup>22</sup> “I saw in (another of) my dream(s): Look!—seven ears of healthy and good grain were growing on one stalk. <sup>23</sup> And—look!—seven thin ears of dehydrated grain, parched by the east wind, were growing up after them. <sup>24</sup> Then, the thin ears of grain swallowed up the seven good ears of grain.”

“I told (my dreams to all) the sorcerers, but no one is telling me (a satisfactory explanation).”

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

#### THE EXPLANATION

Pharaoh’s sorcerers wanted to take the dream literally, that the seven fat cows indicated seven good years etc., but there was one detail in the dream which held them back from doing so:

After the seven fat cows left the Nile, the Torah states, “Then, look!—seven other, ugly-looking, thin cows were coming up after them from the Nile, and they stood beside the (other) cows on the Nile bank” (v. 3). This perplexed the Egyptian sorcerers, for if the seven fat cows represent seven years of abundance and the seven thin cows seven years of famine, how is it possible that “they stood beside each other,” suggesting that all fourteen cows were present at the same time.

This problem led the sorcerers to conclude that the fourteen cows could not represent fourteen years which occur one after the other. Rather, the two types of cows must represent two phenomena which can occur simultaneously.

Therefore, Rashi writes that the Egyptian sorcerers told Pharaoh, “You will have seven daughters, and you will bury seven daughters.” For Pharaoh would certainly have had numerous wives and concubines, so it was quite feasible that, at the same time, he would have seven daughters and bury seven daughters.

Rashi however rejected the second interpretation of the Midrash that “The seven good ears of grain are seven countries that you will conquer; the seven bad ears of grain are seven colonies that will rebel against you,” because it is extremely unlikely, at the literal level, that Pharaoh would decide to conquer seven different countries at once, as it is militarily unwise to fight many wars at the same time.

How did Yosef overcome the above difficulty, and render the dream literally to Pharaoh’s satisfaction?

To solve this problem, let us first address a perplexing matter in the account of Yosef’s words to Pharaoh:

After interpreting Pharaoh’s dream, Yosef did not remain quiet. Rather, he continued to offer practical suggestions to Pharaoh: “And now, Pharaoh should select a person who is understanding and wise, and appoint him over the land of Egypt. Pharaoh should enact that he appoint officials over the land...Let them collect all the food...so that the land will not be destroyed by the famine” (v. 33-36, below).

This begs the question: How did Yosef have the audacity to tell Pharaoh how his country should be managed? Consider that Yosef was not an advisor of the King, but a “criminal” of Egypt, who had just been taken out of prison solely due to his excellent reputation in dream interpretation.

\* ע"פ פשוט, הוספת "לאחר" מורה על בירור גמור ודיוק (ראה רמב"ן שמות ו, י"ד) - לקו"ש ח"ל ע' 315.

לִי: כה וַאֲמַר יוֹסֵף לְפָרְעָה חֲלֹמָא דְפָרְעָה חַד  
 הוּא יַת דִּי יִי עֲתִיד לְמַעֲבַד חַוִּי לְפָרְעָה:  
 כו שְׁבַע תּוֹרְתָא מִבְּתָא שְׁבַע שָׁנִין אֲנֹנִי וְשְׁבַע  
 שׁוּבְלִיא מִבְּתָא שְׁבַע שָׁנִין אֲנֹנִי חֲלֹמָא חַד  
 הוּא: כז וְשְׁבַע תּוֹרְתָא חֲסִיכְתָּא וּבִישְׁתָּא  
 דְּסֻלְקָן בְּתַרְיָהוּן שְׁבַע שָׁנִין אֲנֹנִי וְשְׁבַע  
 שׁוּבְלִיא לְקִיחָא דְשִׁקְיָפִן קְדוּם יַחֲוִין שְׁבַע שָׁנִין  
 כְּפָנָא: כח הוּא פְתַנְמָא דִּי מְלִילִית עִם פְּרַעְה  
 דִּי יִי עֲתִיד לְמַעֲבַד אַחֲוִי לְפָרְעָה: כט הָא  
 שְׁבַע שָׁנִין אַתְּנִין שְׁבַע רַבָּא בְּכָל אַרְעָא  
 דְּמִצְרַיִם: ל וַיְקוּמוּן שְׁבַע שָׁנִין כְּפָנָא בְּתַרְיָהוּן  
 וַיִּתְנַשְׂי כָּל שְׁבַע אַרְעָא בְּאֶרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם וַיִּשְׁעִי  
 כְּפָנָא יַת עַמָּא דְאַרְעָא: לא וְלֹא יִתְיַדַע  
 שְׁבַע אַרְעָא מִן קֳדָם כְּפָנָא הוּא דִּיהִי  
 בְּתַר כֵּן אַרְי תְּקוּפָה הוּא לְחֻדָּא: לב וְעַל  
 דְּאִתְנִי חֲלֹמָא לְפָרְעָה תְּרַתִּין זְמַנִּין אַרְי תְּקוּן  
 פְתַנְמָא מִן קֳדָם יִי וּמַחֲוִי יִי לְמַעֲבַדְיָה: לג וַכְּעַן  
 יַחֲוִי פְרַעְה גְּבַר סוּכְלָתָן וְחַפִּים וַיִּמְנִיגִיה  
 עַל אַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם: לד יַעֲבִיד פְּרַעְה וַיִּמְנִי  
 מְהִימְנִין עַל אַרְעָא וַיִּזְכְּרוּ יַת אַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם  
 בְּשְׁבַע שָׁנִין שְׁבַע: לה וַיִּכְנָשׁוּן יַת כָּל עִיבּוּר  
 שְׁנִיא מִבֶּן דְּאִתְּנִין הָאֵלִין וַיִּצְבְּרוּן עֲבוּרָא  
 תַּחֲתֵי יַד (מְהִימְנִין) פְּרַעְה עֲבוּרָא בְּקַרְוִיא  
 וַיִּטְרוּן: לו וַיְהִי עֲבוּרָא גְּנִיז (עַמָּא ד) אַרְעָא  
 לְשְׁבַע שָׁנִין כְּפָנָא דִּי תַּחֲוִין בְּאֶרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם

כה וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל־פְּרַעְה חֲלוֹם פְּרַעְה אֶחָד הוּא אֵת אֲשֶׁר  
 הָאֱלֹהִים עֲשָׂה הַגִּיד לְפְרַעְה: כו שְׁבַע פָּרֹת הַטֹּבֹת שְׁבַע שָׁנִים  
 הֵנָּה וְשְׁבַע הַשָּׁבָלִים הַטֹּבֹת שְׁבַע שָׁנִים הֵנָּה \*חֲלוֹם אֶחָד הוּא:  
 כז וְשְׁבַע הַפְּרוֹת הַרְקוֹת וְהַרְעַת הָעֵלֶת אַחֲרֵיהֶן שְׁבַע שָׁנִים  
 הֵנָּה וְשְׁבַע הַשָּׁבָלִים הַרְקוֹת שְׂדֵפוֹת הַקָּדִים יִהְיוּ שְׁבַע שָׁנִי  
 רָעִב: כח הוּא הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי אֶל־פְּרַעְה אֲשֶׁר הָאֱלֹהִים  
 עֲשָׂה הִרְאָה אֶת־פְּרַעְה: כט הֵנָּה שְׁבַע שָׁנִים בָּאוֹת שְׁבַע גְּדוֹל  
 בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: ל וְקָמוּ שְׁבַע שָׁנִי רָעִב אַחֲרֵיהֶן וַנִּשְׁפַח  
 כָּל־הַשְּׁבַע בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וְכָל־הָרָעִב אֶת־הָאֶרֶץ:  
 לא וְלֹא־יֻדַע הַשְּׁבַע בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם הָרָעִב הַהוּא אַחֲרֵי־כֵן  
 כִּי־כָבֵד הוּא מְאֹד: לב וְעַל הַשָּׁנֹת הַחֲלוֹם אֶל־פְּרַעְה פְּעַמִּים  
 כִּי־נִכּוֹן הַדְּבָר מֵעַם הָאֱלֹהִים וּמִמֶּהָר הָאֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ:  
 לג וְעַתָּה יֵרָא פְרַעְה אִישׁ נָבוֹן וְחָכָם וַיִּשִׁיתָהוּ עַל־אֶרֶץ  
 מִצְרַיִם: לד יַעֲשֶׂה פְרַעְה וַיִּפְקֹד פְּקָדִים עַל־הָאֶרֶץ וְחִמְשׁ  
 אֶת־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּשְׁבַע שָׁנֵי הַשְּׁבַע: לה וַיִּקְבְּצוּ אֶת־כָּל־אֹכְלֵי  
 הַשָּׁנִים הַטֹּבוֹת הַבָּאֹת הָאֵלֶּה וַיִּצְבְּרוּ־בָר תַּחַת יַד־פְּרַעְה  
 אֹכְלֵי בְעָרִים וְשָׁמְרוּ: לו וְהָיָה הָאֹכְלֵי לְפִקְדוֹן לְאֶרֶץ לְשְׁבַע שָׁנֵי  
 הָרָעִב אֲשֶׁר תִּהְיֶינָּה בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וְלֹא־תִכְרַת הָאֶרֶץ בְּרָעִב:

\*ס"א חלום אחד הוא

רש"י

פתרון הצליחה: (לא) ולא יודע השבע. הוא פתרון ולא נודע כי צאו אל קרבנה: (לג) נבון. מזומן: (לד) וחמש. כתרומו ויזר, וכן וחמושים: (לה) את כל אבל. שם דבר הוא, לפיכך טעמו צל"ף ונקוד צפתח קטן, ואוכל שהוא פועל, כגון כי כל אוכל חלב, טעמו למטה צכ" ונקוד קמן קטן: תחת יד פרעה. צרשותו וצאולרותיו: (לו) והיה האבל. הצבור, כשאר

נלן, אין צבן אלא הנן, לפי שנתרוקנו מן הזרע: (כו) שבע שנים ושבע שנים. כולן אינן אלא שבע, ואשר נשנה החלום פעמים, לפי שהדבר מזומן, כמו שפירש לו צוסף, ועל השנות החלום גוי'. צשצט שנים הטובות נאמר הגיד לפרעה, לפי שהיה סמוך. וצשצט שני רעב נאמר הראה את פרעה, לפי שהיה הדבר מופלג ורחוק ונפל צו לשון מראה: (ל) וגשכח כל השבע. הוא

TORAS MENACHEM

Surely, Yosef should have interpreted the dream—which was all he was asked to do—and then remained silent. How could a person, who just a few minutes earlier found himself in prison, come and advise the King of Egypt how to run his country, without being requested to do so?

It could be argued that Yosef was not offering advice at all, but that rather, this too was part of his *interpretation* of Pharaoh's dream. The sorcerers' mistake was that they perceived the dream purely as a *vision* of the future. Yosef however realized that the primary focus of the dream was a *practical directive* from God, informing Pharaoh what he should do.

This made it possible for Yosef to interpret the dream literally: that the seven fat cows and good ears of grain represented seven years of abundance, and the seven thin cows and thin ears of grain represented

seven years of famine. As for the phrase which had perplexed the Egyptian sorcerers—that the thin cows “stood beside the (other) cows on the bank of the Nile”—Yosef explained that this represented God's *advice* to Pharaoh. Namely, that during the seven years of abundance the Egyptians should save grain to use during the years of famine. In this way the two sets of seven years would “coexist,” not in actual time, but in their relationship with each other. I.e. during the seven years of plenty the people would be *highly conscious* of the seven years of famine, and their behavior would be *strongly influenced* by the prospect of the upcoming famine. Thus, God showed Pharaoh an image of the seven fat cows *next* to the seven thin cows as a message to him that the first seven years would be intimately associated with the next seven years.

<sup>25</sup> Yosef said to Pharaoh, “Pharaoh’s (two) dream(s) have a single (meaning). God has told Pharaoh what He is (planning) to do: <sup>26</sup> The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears of grain are (the same) seven years—it’s one dream. <sup>27</sup> The seven thin and ugly cows coming up after them are seven years, as are the seven bare ears of grain, beaten by the east wind. They will be seven years of famine.

<sup>28</sup> “It is as I have told Pharaoh. God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do!

<sup>29</sup> “Look!—seven years of great abundance are coming throughout the entire land of Egypt. <sup>30</sup> (The significance of the swallowing is that) seven years of famine will follow after them, when all the abundance in the land of Egypt will be forgotten. The famine will destroy the land. <sup>31</sup> (The fact that it wasn’t recognizable that the thin cows had swallowed the fat cows means that) the abundance will not be recognizable because of the famine that will follow, for it (will be) very severe.

<sup>32</sup> “Concerning the repetition of the dream to Pharaoh, this is because the matter is ready before God, and God is quickly going to carry it out.

<sup>33</sup> “And now, Pharaoh should select a person who is understanding and wise, and appoint him over the land of Egypt. <sup>34</sup> Pharaoh should enact that he appoint officials over the land, and prepare the land of Egypt during the seven years of abundance. <sup>35</sup> Let them collect all the food from these coming seven good years, and let them gather the grain under Pharaoh’s control, food guarded in the storehouses. <sup>36</sup> The food (that is stored) will thus remain as a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which will be in the land of Egypt, so that the land will not be destroyed by the famine.”

---

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

---

#### ● If the repetition of a dream means that it will happen soon (v. 32), why did Yosef’s dreams take 22 years to materialize?

**RASHBAM:** The repetition of a dream is only a sign that it will occur quickly if the dream is repeated twice *on one night*. Thus, even though Yosef’s dreams were repeated (37:5-9), they did not materialize quickly, as the two dreams occurred on different nights.

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

Based on the above, we can understand why Yosef’s interpretation led Pharaoh to exclaim, “There’s no one as understanding and wise as you” (v. 39), for Yosef’s genius, with which he excelled over all of Egypt’s sorcerers, was his ability to discern within the dream not only predictions, but practical advice too.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 339ff.)

#### 🔗 THE REPETITION OF A DREAM (V. 32)

**Rashbam’s** explanation—that a dream only materializes quickly if it occurs twice in the same night—is difficult to accept at the literal level, since:

- a.) The main point of verse 32 is surely that the *theme* of the dream recurs. Precisely *when* it recurs is a relatively insignificant point.
- b.) Yosef’s explanation, as stated in the verse, does not take into account the point of Pharaoh’s dreams occurring on the same night.

So why did Yosef’s dreams not materialize quickly, since they were repeated just like Pharaoh’s? And why does *Rashi* not address this basic question?

#### THE EXPLANATION

*Rashi* did not feel it necessary to answer the above question, as he held the matter to be self-evident:

While Yosef’s two dreams contained similar elements, they were not, in fact, repeated because the second dream contained *new information*. I.e. that in addition to the brothers bowing down to Yosef, his father and stepmother\* would bow to him too. Pharaoh’s two dreams, by contrast, contained *exactly* the same message, without any new information being added the second time.

Thus the principle that “*the double repetition of the dream... is because the matter is ready before God, and God is quickly going to carry it out*” (v. 32), did not apply to Yosef’s dreams, because they were not, in fact, repeated at all. Rather they were two *separate* dreams, which shared some common elements.

In fact, *both* of Yosef’s dreams actually came true at separate times. First we read, later in our *Parsha*, that all the brothers came before Yosef, *without* their father, and threw themselves on the ground in front of him (43:26)—corresponding to Yosef’s first dream where his brothers’ sheaves bowed down to his sheaf. And then the vision that “*the sun, the moon, and eleven stars threw themselves down before me*” (37:9), was fulfilled after his father and stepmother arrived in Egypt, along with all the brothers.

#### A THIRD DREAM?

On closer examination however, we see that the brothers actually bowed down to Yosef *twice* before Ya’akov arrived in Egypt: once when they first arrived (42:6), and again when they returned with Binyamin (43:26). Thus, according to the above logic, Yosef should have had *three* dreams corresponding to: a.) When his brothers bowed down the first time, without Binyamin; b.) When they bowed down the second time with Binyamin; c.) When Ya’akov and Bilhah bowed down with the brothers.

Nevertheless he only had two dreams, corresponding to ‘b’ and ‘c.’ Why was the first bowing not predicted?

However, it could be argued that the first time that the brothers bowed to Yosef (without Binyamin), they did so merely out of courtesy, not out of subordination. Consequently, this first bowing corresponded to the

\* Or, alternatively, the detail of the “moon” bowing down in Yosef’s dream was nonsense—see *Rashi* to 37:10.

ולא ישתיצי עמא דארעא בכפנא: לו ושפר פתגמא בעיני פרעה ובעיני כל עבדוהי: לה ואמר פרעה לעבדוהי הנשפח כדון גבר די רוח נבואה מן קדם יי ביה: מט ואמר פרעה ליוסף בתר דאודע יי יתך ית כל דא לית סובלתן וחכים כותך: מ את תהי ממנא על ביתי ועל מימרך יתן כל עמי לחוד כרסי מלכותא הדין אחי יקיר מנך: מא ואמר פרעה ליוסף חוי דמנתי יתך על כל ארעא דמצרים: מב ואעדי פרעה ית עוקתיה מעל ידיה ויהב יתה על ידא דיוסף ואלבש יתיה לבושי דבויז ושוי מניכא דדקבא על צוניה: מד וארכב יתיה ברתפא תניתא די ליה ואכריוו קדמוהי דין אבא למלכא ומני יתיה על כל ארעא דמצרים: מד ואמר פרעה ליוסף אנא פרעה ובר מממרך לא ירים גבר ית ידיה למיחד זין ונת רגליה למרפב על סוסיא בכל ארעא דמצרים: מה וקרא פרעה שום יוסף גברא דמטמרן גלון ליה ויהב ליה ית אסנת בת פוטי פרע רבא דאון לאנתו ונפק יוסף (שליט) על ארעא דמצרים: מו ויוסף בר תלתין שנין פד קם

לו וייטב הדבר בעיני פרעה ובעיני כל עבדיו: לה ויאמר פרעה אל עבדיו הנמצא כזה איש אשר רוח אלהים בו: [שלישין] מט ויאמר פרעה אל יוסף אחרי הודיע אלהים אותך את כל זאת אינ נבון וחכם כמוד: מ אתה תהיה על ביתי ועל פיד ישק כל עמי רק הכסא אנדל ממך: מא ויאמר פרעה אל יוסף ראה נתתי אותך על כל ארץ מצרים: מב ויסר פרעה את טבעתו מעל ידו ויתן אתה על יד יוסף וילבש אתו בגדי שש וישם רבד הזהב על צוארו: מד וירכב אתו במרכבת המשנה אשר לו ויקראו לפניו אברך ונתון אתו על כל ארץ מצרים: מד ויאמר פרעה אל יוסף אני פרעה ובלעדיך לא יירם איש את ידו ואת רגלו בכל ארץ מצרים: מה ויקרא פרעה שם יוסף צפנת פענח ויתן לו את אסנת בת פוטי פרע כהן אן לאשה ויצא יוסף על ארץ מצרים: מו ויוסף בן שלשים שנה בעמדו לפני פרעה מלך מצרים ויצא יוסף מלפני פרעה ויעבר בכל ארץ

כ"ט

רצדתי ערשי<sup>4</sup>, רלפתי ערשי מרלפות. זלשון משנה מוקף רוצין של אבן. על הרוזד שזעזרה, והיא רלפה: (מג) במרכבת המשנה. השניה למרכבתו, המהלכת אלל שלו: אברך. כתרנומו דין אבא למלכא, רך זלשון ארמי מלך, כהשוחפין<sup>5</sup> לא ריכא ולא צר ריכא. ודצברי אגדה<sup>6</sup> דרש ר' יהודה, אצרך זכ יוסף, שהוא אב צחכמה ורך צשנים, אמר לו בן דורמסקית, עד מתי אחי מעוות עלינו את הכתוצים אין אצרך אלא לשון צרכים, שהכל היו נכנסין לפניו ויואלין תחת ידו, כענין שנאמר ונתון אותו וגו': (מד) אני פרעה. שיש יכולת צידי לגזור גזרה על מלכותו, ואני גוזר שלא ירים איש את ידו: ובלעדיך. שלא צרשותך. דבר אחר אני פרעה, אני אחי מלך, וזלעדיך וגו', וזהו דוגמת רק הכסא: את ידו ואת רגלו. כתרנומו: (מה) צפנת פענח. מפרש הלפנות, ואין לפענח דמיון צמקרא: פוטי פרע. הוא פוטיפר, ונקרא

פקדון הגנוז לקיום הארץ: (לח) הנמצא כזה. הנשכח כדון, אס נלך ונצקסנו הנמלא כמובו. הנמלא לשון תמיכה, וכן כל ה"א המשמשת צראש חיבה ונקודה צחטף פחה: (לט) אין נבון וחכם כמוד. לצקש איש נבון וחכם שאמרת, לא נמלא איש כמוד: (מ) ישק. יתזן, יתפרנס. כל לרכי עמי יהיו נעשים על ידך, כמו וכן משק ציתי<sup>1</sup>, וכמו נשקו צר<sup>2</sup>, גרגישו"ן צלע"ו: רק הבסא. שיהיו קורין לי מלך: בסא. לשון של המלוכה, כמו ויגדל את כסאו מכסא אדוני המלך: (מא) נתתי יתך, ואף על פי כן לשון נתינה הוא, כמו ולתתך עליון. צין לגדולה צין לשפלות נופל לשון נתינה עליו, כמו נחתי אתכם נצזים ושפלים<sup>3</sup>: (מב) ויסר פרעה את טבעתו. נתינת טבעת המלך, הוא אות למי שנותנה לו, להיות שני לו לגדולה: בגדי שש. דבר חשיבות הוא צמלריס: רביד. ענק, ועל שהוא רלוף צצבעות קרוי רביד. וכן

TORAS MENACHEM

brothers' sheaves gathering around Yosef's sheaf (37:7). Then later, when they bowed (along with Binyamin) in total subordination to Yosef, the first dream was fulfilled in its entirety, "Your sheaves... threw themselves down (in front of) my sheaf."

WHEN DID YOSEF KNOW THAT HIS DREAMS HAD COME TRUE?

One problem with the above explanation is that it appears to contradict an explicit statement of Rashi. On the first occasion in which Yosef's brothers bowed down to him (without Binyamin), Rashi writes: "He knew that [his dreams] had been fulfilled, for [his brothers] had prostrated themselves to him" (Rashi to 42:9). How does this fit with the above

explanation, that not even one of Yosef's dreams was fulfilled the first time that the brothers bowed down to him?

In truth, however, this comment of Rashi does not contradict our earlier explanation, for Yosef could not have been sure that all of his dreams would come true in all their detail. Thus, the first time that the brothers bowed down, Yosef presumed that *this alone* represented the fulfillment of both dreams, albeit with some details omitted. Only later did he see, retroactively, that *both* his dreams were actually fulfilled, in all their detail, on subsequent occasions.

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz 5741)

## 🌀 YOSEF IS APPOINTED AS RULER OF EGYPT 🌀

41:37 **T**he matter pleased Pharaoh and all his servants.

<sup>38</sup> Pharaoh said to his servants, “(Even if we tried,) would we find (anyone else) like this? A man who has God’s spirit in him?”

THIRD  
READING

<sup>39</sup> Pharaoh said to Yosef, “Since God has let you know all this (it proves that) there’s no one as understanding and wise as you. <sup>40</sup> You will be in charge of my household, all my people will be fed through your command. Only (by virtue of) the throne will I be greater than you.”

<sup>41</sup> Pharaoh said to Yosef, “See, I have appointed you over the entire land of Egypt!”

<sup>42</sup> Pharaoh removed his ring from his hand and placed it on Yosef’s hand. He had him dressed in linen robes, and placed a golden chain around his neck. <sup>43</sup> He had (Yosef) ride in his second (royal) chariot, and they called out before him, “(This is) the King’s advisor.” (Pharaoh thus) gave (Yosef) authority over the entire land of Egypt.

<sup>44</sup> Pharaoh said to Yosef, “I am Pharaoh (King of Egypt, and I hereby decree that), without your permission, no man may raise his hand (to hold a weapon) or his foot (to ride on a horse) in the entire land of Egypt.”

<sup>45</sup> Pharaoh named Yosef “Tzafnas Pane’ach” (“explainer of hidden things”), and he gave him Asnas—the daughter of Poti-Fera (i.e. Potifar), the priest of Oin—for a wife. And Yosef went forth (as a ruler) over the land of Egypt.

<sup>46</sup> Yosef was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh, the King of Egypt.

Yosef then left Pharaoh’s presence, and visited the entire land of Egypt.

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why was Yosef called “Tzafnas Pane’ach”? (v. 45)

**RASHI:** Tzafnas Pane’ach means, “He who explains hidden things.” The word Pane’ach has no parallel in scripture.

**IBN EZRA:** If this is an Egyptian name then we don’t understand it. If it is a translation [of his name into Hebrew], then we don’t know Yosef’s Egyptian name.

**RAMBAN:** It is possible that Pharaoh inquired of Yosef what a respectable name would be in his own language, or that he was

familiar with the language of Cana’an, as it was close to Egypt. Thus we find that Pharaoh’s daughter also gave Moshe a Hebrew name, “She named him Moshe, and she said, ‘For I drew him (MeSHisihu) from the water’” (Shemos 2:10).

**RASHBAM:** Yosef was given this name because it was the custom in Egypt to give a person a suitable name when he assumed a position of office. Thus, we find that Moshe “called Hoshea bin Nun, Yehoshua” (Bamidbar 13:16), when he was made Moshe’s assistant.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🌀 YOSEF’S NEW NAME (v. 45)

While *Rashi* explains the meaning of the name *Tzafnas Pane’ach*—“he who explains hidden things”—he fails to explain two basic issues which are addressed by the other commentators:

Was *Tzafnas Pane’ach* a Hebrew term, as **Ramban** suggests? Or was it the Torah’s translation of his Egyptian name, as **Ibn Ezra** questions?

And why did Pharaoh give Yosef a new name? Did *Rashi* accept the interpretation of *Rashbam*, that it was customary to give a new name to a person who took office? If this is the case, why did *Rashi* not say so?

#### THE EXPLANATION

*Rashi*’s commentary is indeed comprehensive, addressing every matter which will trouble the reader at the literal level. Nevertheless, *Rashi* did not comment on matters which he felt were, either: a.) So obvious that the reader can work the matter out for himself with *simple logic*; or, b.) If the matter can be understood on the basis of an earlier comment of *Rashi*.

In our case, when reading the verse, “Pharaoh named Yosef ‘Tzafnas Pane’ach,’” *Rashi* expected the reader to take the verse simply and literally, that *Tzafnas Pane’ach* was the *actual name* by which Yosef was called in Egypt, and not the Torah’s translation of this name into Hebrew.

Of course, the reader might question why Pharaoh would give Yosef a Hebrew name. But again, *Rashi* felt it unnecessary to deal with this issue, as there are a number of previous cases in the Chumash where non-Jews accepted names into their own languages which were based on Hebrew words. For example, the name “Bavel” (Babylon), was based on the idea that “God confused (BaLaL) the language of the entire earth” (Noach 11:9). Similarly, we find that Avimelech was a non-Jewish king who had a Hebrew name (which means, “My father is a king”). Presumably, this was his *actual name* and not the Torah’s translation.

Likewise in our case, since Pharaoh knew that the name Yosef was of Hebrew origin, he would have endeavored to give him an appropriate Hebrew name.

*Continued on p. 295*

קדם פרעה מלכא דמצרים ונפק יוסף מן קדם פרעה ועבר (שליט) בכל ארעא דמצרים: מו וכןשו דירי ארעא בשבע שני שבועא עבורא לאוצרין: מה וכןש ית כל עבור שבע שני די הוו בארעא דמצרים ויהב עבורא בקרניא עבור חקל קרתא די בסחרתהא יהב בנה: מט וכןש יוסף עבורא כחלא דימא סני לחדא עד די פסק לממני ארי לית מנין: נ וליוסף אתיליד תרין בנין עד לא עלת שתא דכפנא דילידת ליה אסנת בת פוטי פרע רבא דאון: נא וקרא יוסף ית שום בוקרא מנשה ארי אנשיני יי ית כל עמלי וית כל בית אבא: נב וית שום תנינא קרא אפרים ארי אפשיני יי בארע שעבודי: נג ושלמא שבע שני שבועא די הוה בארעא

מצרים: מו ותעש הארץ בשבע שני השבע לקמצים: מה ויקבץ את כל אכל אשר היו בארץ מצרים ויתן אכל בערים אכל שדה העיר אשר סביבותיה נתן בתוכה: מט ויצבר יוסף בר כחול הים הרבה מאד עד כי חדל לספר כי אין מספר: נ וליוסף ילד שני בנים בטרם תבוא שנת הרעב אשר ילדה לו אסנת בת פוטי פרע כהן און: נא ויקרא יוסף את שם הבכור מנשה כי נשני אלהים את כל עמלי ואת כל בית אבי: נב ואת שם השני קרא אפרים כי הפרני אלהים בארץ עניי: [רביעי] נג ותכלינה שבע

כש"י

תצואה מעפר המקום, ומעמיד את התצואה מלירקב: (מט) עד כי חדל לספור. עד כי חדל לו הכופר לספור, וכרי זה מקרא קלר: בי אין מספר. לפי שאין מספר וכרי כי משמש זלשון דהא: (נ) בטרם תבוא שנת הרעב. מאכן שאסור לאדם לשמש מתתו זשני רעבון:

פוטי פרע על שנסתרו מאליו, לפי שחמד את יוסף למשכנ זכור: (מו) ותעש הארץ. כהרגומו, ואין הלשון נעקר מלשון עשייה: לקמצים. קומן על קומן, יד על יד היו אולרים: (מה) אבל שדה העיר אשר סביבותיה נתן בתוכה. שכל ארץ וארץ מעמדת פירוטיה ונותנין

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the Torah stress that Menasheh and Efrayim were born “before the year that the famine set in”? (v. 50)

**RASHI:** From here we derive the principle that it is prohibited to conceive a child during years of famine.

**TOSFOS:** Our Sages taught that Yocheved was born while [her parents were] entering Egypt (*Sotah* 12a; *Rashi* to 46:15 below). Thus [Levi, Yocheved’s father] appears to have had children in the years of famine?

Evidently, we are not speaking here of an actual prohibition which existed in those days, but rather, a personal stringency of Yosef (*Ta’anis* 11a).

**MIZRACHI:** The prohibition of having children during times of famine does not apply to a person who has not yet had both a son and a daughter. Therefore, Levi was exempt from this prohibition, as he had not yet had a daughter.

**RAN:** The prohibition of having children during a famine is because it is a time when Jewish people are suffering. When Ya’akov and his family entered Egypt they were not suffering since they still had supplies of grain, and they knew that Yosef was not suffering either. Therefore, it was permissible for Levi to have a child.

However Yosef did not know that his family still had sufficient supplies of grain so he was not permitted to have children (*Ta’anis* ibid).

**BAIS YOSEF:** The argument of *Mizrachi* is difficult for me to accept, for if Levi was permitted to have children during a famine because he had not yet had a daughter, then Yosef too would be permitted for the same reason. *Ran’s* argument is also difficult to accept, for how

would the brothers have known that “Yosef was not suffering either”? At the literal level, it seems that they did not know whether Yosef was dead or alive at the time when Yocheved was conceived, some seven or nine months before they moved to Egypt.

Rather, it seems to me that before the giving of the Torah there was no prohibition against having children during times of famine, and it was enacted much later as a requirement of Rabbinic law (*commentary to Tur, Orach Chaim*, ch. 574).

**MAHARSHA:** *Bais Yosef’s* solution is difficult to accept, since we know that the Patriarchs kept the entire Torah—even Rabbinic law—before it was given. Therefore, it is unacceptable to argue that the principle of not having children during times of famine would have been neglected by them.

Thus, it seems to me that *Mizrachi’s* solution is the most appropriate: that the prohibition of having children does not apply to a person who had not yet had both a son and a daughter. Levi was clearly exempt from this prohibition, so he went on to have a daughter.

*Tosfos* however adds that Yosef chose not to follow this exemption, as a personal stringency beyond the requirements of Torah law (*Chidushei Agados, Ta’anis* ibid).

● Why was all the grain stored locally? (v. 48)

**RASHI:** Because each land preserves its own produce. They would put some of the local soil into the grain, and it would preserve the grain, preventing it from decaying (see “*The Last Word*”).

## 🌀 THE SEVEN YEARS OF ABUNDANCE 🌀

41:47 **I**n the seven years of abundance, (the inhabitants of) the land gradually made collections (of grain).<sup>48</sup> (Yosef) collected all the (surplus) grain of the seven years (of abundance) that was in the land of Egypt, and he placed the grain in the cities. He stored the grain of the fields surrounding each city in (its adjacent city, along with some local soil as a preservative).

<sup>49</sup> Yosef gathered grain in large amounts, like the sand of the sea, until (they decided to) give up counting it, since the counting had no (meaning).

## 🌀 BIRTH OF MENASHEH AND EFRAYIM 🌀

41:50 **T**wo sons were born to Yosef before the year that the famine set in, whom Asnas, the daughter of Poti-Fera, the governor of Oin, bore to him.<sup>51</sup> Yosef named the firstborn Menasheh, because (he said), “God has caused me to forget (NaSHani) all my hardships and all that was in my father’s house.”<sup>52</sup> He named the second one Efrayim, because (he said), “God has made me fruitful (hiFRani) in the land of my subjugation.”

### TORAS MENACHEM

As for the question *why* Pharaoh gave Yosef a new name, *Rashi* again found no need to explain this matter as it is self-understood from one of his earlier comments. On the words of the chief butler that, “*There was a Hebrew lad with us*” (v. 12, above), *Rashi* comments that the chief butler described him as “a lad,” saying to Pharaoh that he was “a fool, unfit for a high position” (*Rashi* *ibid.*).

Therefore, we can understand when Pharaoh discovered that in truth the very opposite was the case, and “*there’s no one as understanding and wise as you*” (v. 39), he would have wished to change Yosef’s name to reflect the way in which people’s perception of Yosef had now been utterly transformed for the good.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz* 5747)

#### 🌀 HAVING CHILDREN IN TIMES OF FAMINE (v. 50)

Why did *Rashi* not address the fundamental problem raised by **Tosfos**, a question which arises at the literal level?

**Tosfos** and **Bais Yosef** argue that not having children during times of famine was a personal stringency of Yosef, and not a prohibition. But *Rashi* apparently rejects this solution, since he writes, “From here we derive the principle that it is *prohibited* to conceive a child during years of famine,” stressing that we are speaking here of a basic halachic requirement, and not a personal stringency.

**Mizrachi**’s solution is based on the principle that a person who has not yet had a son and a daughter may continue to have children during a famine. However, this principle is not mentioned *at all* by *Rashi*, and clearly, *Rashi* could not have expected the reader to come to a conclusion that is based on information which is not mentioned, or even hinted to, in his commentary.

**Ran** explains that the prohibition of having children during times of famine is based on the sympathy of Jewish people for one another. But again, *Rashi* makes no mention of this concept at all.

Surely, there must be a simple, logical explanation, indicated by *Rashi*’s words themselves, which the reader is expected to understand of his own accord?

#### THE EXPLANATION

The Torah states, “Two sons were born to Yosef before *the* year that the famine set in,” suggesting that one should not have children during a *single* year of famine. *Rashi* however writes, “it is prohibited to conceive a child during *years* of famine,” in the *plural*\*, suggesting that the prohibition would only apply after two or more years of famine had passed.

### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

**S**oil represents humility—as in the verse recited at the end of the *Amidah* prayer, “*May my soul be like soil to everybody.*”

Just like soil preserves grain (see *Rashi* to v. 48), so too humility is an essential “preservative” for the Torah which a person studies, to prevent it from “decaying.” For without humility, knowledge of Torah may corrupt rather than refine a person, if his pursuit of wisdom is not driven by a desire to connect to God, but rather by his own self-love and inflated ego.

*Rashi* adds that, for this purpose, one must use *local* soil, i.e. one’s humility must be in the *same area* as one’s greatness. It is not sufficient for the Torah scholar to be meek and humble in his daily conduct, but silently arrogant about his understanding of the Torah. Rather, the scholar should be humbled by his Torah study too, realizing that what he knows represents but a drop of God’s infinite wisdom that is found within the words of Torah.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, pp. 224-5)

\* At first glance it would seem that this detail is inconsequential, since *Rashi* appears to have quoted the Talmud verbatim, and the Talmud also uses the plural (*Ta’anis* 11a). In truth, however, *Rashi* did not *anthologize* Talmudic teachings, but rather, he *adapted* them to form a literalist commentary on the Torah. Therefore, since the Torah uses the singular, *Rashi* should also have done so.

דְּמִצְרַיִם: נד וּשְׂרֵי־אֵהָ שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִי כִפְנָא לְמֵיעֵל  
 כְּמָא דִּי אָמַר יוֹסֵף וְהוּהוּ כִפְנָא בְּכָל אַרְעֵתָא  
 וּבְכָל אַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם הָוָה לְחֵמָא: נה וּכְפִנְתָּ  
 כָּל אַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם וְצֹחַ עִמָּא קָדָם פְּרַעָה עַל  
 לְחֵמָא וְאָמַר פְּרַעָה לְכָל מִצְרַיִם אֲזִילוּ לְוֹת  
 יוֹסֵף דִּי יִימַר לְכוּן תַּעֲבְדוּן: נו וּכְפְנָא הָוָה עַל  
 כָּל אֲפִי אַרְעָא וּפְתַח יוֹסֵף יַת כָּל אוֹצְרֵי־אִי דִּי  
 בְּהוּן עִבּוּרָא וְנִבְיָן לְמִצְרַיִם וּתְקִיף כִפְנָא  
 בְּאַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם: נז וְכָל דִּירֵי אַרְעָא עָלוּ  
 לְמִצְרַיִם לְמִזְבֵּן עִבּוּרָא מִן יוֹסֵף אֲרֵי תְקִיף

שְׁנֵי הַשָּׁבַע אֲשֶׁר הָיָה בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: נד וּתְחַלְּלֵנָה שִׁבְעַת שָׁנֵי  
 הָרָעַב לָבוֹא בְּאֶשֶׁר אָמַר יוֹסֵף וַיְהִי רָעַב בְּכָל־הָאֲרָצוֹת  
 וּבְכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם הָיָה לָחֵם: נה וּתְרַעַב כָּל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם  
 וַיִּצְעַק הָעָם אֶל־פְּרַעֲה לֵלְחֵם וַיֹּאמֶר פְּרַעֲה לְכָל־מִצְרַיִם לָכוּ  
 אֶל־יוֹסֵף אֲשֶׁר־יֹאמַר לָכֶם תַּעֲשׂוּ: נו וְהָרָעַב הָיָה עַל כָּל־פְּנֵי  
 הָאָרֶץ וַיִּפְתַּח יוֹסֵף אֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר בָּהֶם וַיִּשְׁבֹּר לְמִצְרַיִם וַיַּחֲזֹק  
 הָרָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: נז וְכָל־הָאָרֶץ בָּאוּ מִצְרַיִמָה לְשִׁבֹּר

כ"ש"י

מה אם יגזור עלינו ונמות: (נו) על כל פני הארץ. מי הם פני הארץ, אלו העשירים? את כל אשר בהם. כתרגומו די זכון עיזורא: וישבר למצרים. שזר לשון מכר ולשון קנין הוא, כאן משמש לשון מכר. שזרו לנו מעט אוכל, לשון קנין. ואל תאמר אינו כי אם בתצוה, שאף ציין וחלצ מנינו, ולכו שזרו זלל כסף וזלל מחיר יין וחלצ: (נז) וכל הארץ באו

(כה) ותרעב כל ארץ מצרים. שהקיצה תצוהתם שאלרו, חוץ משל יוסף: אשר יאמר לכם תעשו. לפי שהיה יוסף אומר להם שימולו, וכשזאו אלל פרעה ואומרים כך הוא אומר לנו, אמר להם למה לא זכרתם זר, והלא הכריתו לכם ששני הרעצ זאים, אמרו לו אספנו הרצה והקיצה, אמר להם אם כן כל אשר יאמר לכם תעשו, הרי גזר על התצוה והקיצה,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● If the Egyptians had been storing grain for seven years, why did they become hungry? (v. 55)

RASHI: Because all their grain which they had stored had rotted, except for Yosef's.

● Why did Pharaoh tell people to listen to Yosef? (v. 55)

RASHI: Yosef would tell them to circumcise themselves. When they came to Pharaoh and said, "This is what he said to us," [Pharaoh] replied to them, "Why didn't you gather grain? Didn't he announce to you that years of famine are coming?"

They replied, "We gathered a lot, but it rotted."

[Pharaoh] replied, "If so, do everything that he will tell you. He already issued a decree upon the grain, and it rotted. He might now issue a decree upon us and we'll die!"

KLI YAKAR: Why did Yosef tell the people to circumcise themselves? Because to be uncircumcised is described by the Torah as "shame" (תְּרִיפָה), which is also a term used to refer to famine (see *Ezekiel* 36:30). Thus, Yosef suggested that through circumcision the famine would cease.

YEFAY TO'AR: Since uncircumcised people tend to mock circumcised people, Yosef pushed the Egyptians to circumcise themselves so that they would not be able to mock Jewish people.

TORAS MENACHEM

Presumably, the reason why the prohibition begins after two years of famine is because it is not yet clear during the first year whether the agricultural setback is temporary or permanent. With two full years there is already a precedent (*chazakah*) that God wishes to wipe out His creations with famine, and it is thus inappropriate to have any further children. At that point one would be exempt from the Torah obligation to have children, since it has been *legally established* that a famine has begun. I.e. in order to push off a Torah obligation there must be a firm halachic basis for doing so, and this—writes *Rashi*—is after two years.

In fact, the reader will already be familiar with the concept of establishing a legal precedent from *Rashi's* comment earlier, that Tamar was "legally presumed to cause the death of any man that she would marry" (*Rashi* to 38:11) because she had married two husbands who died. Therefore, *Rashi* found it unnecessary to inform the reader that two years constitute a legal premise, being that the reader is already familiar with this concept.

Based on the above, we can explain why *Rashi* was not troubled by the question of *Tosfos* (why Levi conceived a child during the famine):

Yocheved was born to Levi at the end of the second year of famine (see *Vayigash* 45:6), from which it follows that she was conceived after one year

and three months of famine. Since the legal precedent of famine had not yet been established at that point, it was perfectly permissible for Levi to attempt to conceive a child at that point. To the contrary, it would have been *prohibited* for Levi not to do so.

Yosef, however, knew *in advance* from Pharaoh's dreams that there was going to be a seven year famine, since he knew that, "God has told Pharaoh what He is (planning) to do" (above, v. 25). Thus, Yosef did not need to wait for two years in order to prove that the famine had begun, and so he stopped having children before the famine started.

In fact, since Yosef had advance warning of the famine, he was able to ensure that, not only would his children be *conceived* before the famine started, but furthermore, he was also able to ensure that "two sons were born to Yosef before the year that the famine set in" (v. 50).

WEREN'T PHARAOH'S DREAMS PUBLICIZED?

One apparent problem with the above explanation is that Pharaoh's dreams would surely have been well publicized throughout the land of Egypt and beyond, so we can presume that Ya'akov and his family knew about them. Thus, Levi too would have been aware that there was an impending seven-year famine and he did not have to wait for two years



## ONSET OF THE FAMINE

41:53  
FOURTH  
READING

**W**hen the seven years of plenty that were in the land of Egypt were finished,<sup>54</sup> the seven years of famine began, as Yosef had said. There was famine in all the lands, but throughout the land of Egypt there was bread.<sup>55</sup> (Then all the accumulated grain rotted, except for Yosef's, so) the entire land of Egypt was hungry. (When Yosef demanded that the people become circumcised if they wanted grain) the people cried out to Pharaoh for bread, but Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Yosef. Do whatever he will tell you."

<sup>56</sup> The famine spread (even) to all the (wealthy) people of the land. Yosef opened all (the storehouses) in which there was (grain), and he sold it to the Egyptians. The famine intensified in the land of Egypt.

<sup>57</sup> All (the inhabitants of) the earth came to Egypt to buy grain from Yosef, because the famine had intensified throughout the whole earth.

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

**EITZ YOSEF:** Yosef saw prophetically that the Jewish people were to be exiled in Egypt. Therefore, he tried to ensure that the Egyptians would be circumcised, in order to prevent the Jewish people from abandoning the precept of circumcision due to assimilation (Eitz Yosef *Midrash Tanchumah* ch. 7).

**MASKIL LEDAVID:** Even though Yosef forced the Egyptians to circumcise themselves under duress, he hoped that later they would come to observe this *mitzvah* genuinely.

Alternatively, Yosef feared that the Egyptians might attempt to remove him from power on the basis that he was circumcised and of a different religion. Therefore, he forced the Egyptians to circumcise themselves too.

Or perhaps, Yosef was attempting to send a covert message to his father that he was still alive. For when Ya'akov would hear that the ruler of Egypt was forcing the nation to circumcise, he would realize that it must be Yosef.

### TORAS MENACHEM

to prove that the famine had actually arrived. So why did he continue to have children during the famine?

In truth however, Levi could not have been sure of the validity of Pharaoh's dreams. After all, he was totally unaware that it was Yosef who had interpreted the dreams—at most he might have been aware that a prisoner had interpreted the dreams for Pharaoh. And certainly this was not a legal basis from which one could push off the Torah's command to have children!

Yosef, however, knew that Pharaoh's dream was a direct message from God, and would be fulfilled in all its details.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 192ff.)

#### 🔗 CIRCUMCISION OF THE EGYPTIANS (v. 55)

None of the commentators appear to offer an explanation as to why, at the literal level, Yosef forced the Egyptians to circumcise themselves.

The simple explanation would appear to be, as explained above (*Toras Menachem* to 17:11), that God commanded Avraham to circumcise "those born in your house and those purchased with your money" (17:13), i.e. those people who were under Avraham's direct control.

Thus Yosef, who was the ruler of the entire land of Egypt, was required to instruct his citizens to circumcise themselves, as they were under his direct control.

This also explains why *Rashi* stresses, "Yosef would tell them to circumcise themselves," suggesting that he did so on a regular basis (and not that "he told them to circumcise themselves" suggesting that this was a new practice which began with the famine). For, he did not suddenly instruct the people to circumcise themselves at this point, but rather, for many years he had been encouraging the people to circumcise

themselves, in order to fulfill his *halachic* obligation. Clearly, however, with the onset of famine he was in a much stronger position to do so.

#### PHARAOH'S DISCUSSION WITH HIS PEOPLE

It could also be argued that *Rashi's* citation of the discussion between Pharaoh and his people, about whether to follow Yosef's command to circumcise (v. 55), is also crucial to understanding the Torah's narrative here at the literal level:

After reading that the people complained to Pharaoh because they were told to circumcise themselves, we are left with the question: Why did Pharaoh support Yosef's claim, saying, "Go to Yosef. Do whatever he will tell you" (v. 55)? *Rashi* concluded that Yosef must have demonstrated some awesome quality which had intimidated Pharaoh—not merely an intellectual or strategical prowess, but some sort of supernatural power. Therefore, *Rashi* accepted that, at the literal level, Yosef had decreed that all the grain in Egypt other than his own should rot, thus making Pharaoh fearful of further possible decrees: "He might now issue a decree upon us and we'll die!"

Nevertheless, Pharaoh thought that if he would tell the people this fact directly, they would find it difficult to accept that the King of Egypt was at the mercy of Yosef. Therefore, Pharaoh decided to ask the people a "loaded question" which would lead them to admit of their own accord that Yosef was a power to be reckoned with.

Thus, He asked them, "Why didn't you gather grain? Didn't he announce to you that years of famine are coming?" knowing that they would reply, "We gathered a lot, but it rotted." And having made the people themselves confess to Yosef's power, Pharaoh was now in a position to convince the people to consent to Yosef's request of circumcision.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 10, p. 136ff.)

כַּפְנָא בְּכָל אַרְעָא: א וְחָזָא יַעֲקֹב אֲרֵי אֵית  
עבוי מְזֻדְבֵן בְּמִצְרַיִם וְאָמַר יַעֲקֹב לְבָנוּהִי לָמָּא  
תַּתְּחִיזוּן: ב וְאָמַר הָא שְׂמַעִית (אֲמָרִין) אֲרֵי אֵית  
עבוי מְזֻדְבֵן בְּמִצְרַיִם חוּתוּ לְתַמְן וּזְבוּנו  
לָנָא מִתַּמְן וְנִיחִי וְלֹא נְמוּת: ג וְנִחְתּוּ אֲחֵי יוֹסֵף  
עֲשָׂרָא לְמִזְבֵּן עֲבוּרָא מִמִּצְרַיִם: ד וַיֵּת בְּנֵימִין  
אֲחוּהִי דְיוֹסֵף לֹא שְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב עִם אֲחוּהִי אֲרֵי  
אָמַר דְּלָמָּא יַעֲרֵעִינָהּ מוּתָא: ה וְאָתּוּ בְנֵי  
יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִזְבֵּן עֲבוּרָא בְּגוּ עֲלִיא אֲרֵי הוּהוּ

אֶל-יוֹסֵף בְּיַחְזֹק הָרָעֵב בְּכָל-הָאָרֶץ: מִב א וַיֵּרָא יַעֲקֹב בְּיַחְזֹק  
יִשְׂשָׁבֶר בְּמִצְרַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב לְבָנָיו לָמָּה תִּתְרָאוּ: ב וַיֹּאמֶר  
הֲנִה שְׂמַעִיתִי בְּיַחְזֹק יִשְׂשָׁבֶר בְּמִצְרַיִם רְדוּ-שָׂמָּה וְשִׁבְרוּ-לָנוּ  
מִשֶּׁם וְנִחִיָּה וְלֹא נָמוּת: ג וַיִּרְדּוּ אֲחֵי-יוֹסֵף עֲשָׂרָה לְשָׁבֶר בָּר  
מִמִּצְרַיִם: ד וְאֶת-בְּנֵימִין אֲחֵי יוֹסֵף לֹא-שְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב אֶת-אֲחֵיו  
בְּיַחְזֹק פֶּן-יִקְרָאנוּ אֶסּוֹן: ה וַיָּבֵאוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְשָׁבֶר בְּתוֹךְ

כ"ט

לשון כחישה, למה תהיו כחושים צרעו. ודומה לו ומרוה גם הוא יורה?  
(3) רדו שמה. ולא אמר לנו, רמז למאחיס ועשר שנים שנסתעזדו למלכים  
כמנין רדו: (ג) וירדו אחי יוסף. ולא כתב בני יעקב, מלמד שהיו  
מתחרטים בזכירתו, ונתנו לזם להתנהג עמו באחור, ולפדותו ככל ממון  
שיפסקו עליהם: עשרה. מה תלמוד לומר, והלא כתוב ואת בנימין אחי יוסף  
לא שלח, אלא לענין האחור היו חלוקין לעשרה, שלא היתה אהבת כולם  
ושנאת כולם שוה לו, אצל לענין לשבור צר, כלם לב אחד להם: (ד) פן  
יקראנו אסון. וצבית לא יקראנו אסון, אמר רבי אליעזר בן יעקב, מכאן

מצרימה. אל יוסף לשבור. ואם תדרשהו כסדרו, היה לרץ לכתוב לשבור מן  
יוסף: (ח) וירא יעקב כי יש שבר במצרים. ומכיון ראה, והלא לא ראה  
אלא שמע, שנאמר הנה שמעתי וגו', ומכיון ראה, ראה באספקלריא של קדש  
שעדיין יש לו שבר צמלים, ולא היתה נצוה ממנו להודיעו בפירוש שזה  
יוסף: למה תתראו. למה תראו עלמכם צפני בני ישמעאל וצני עשו כאלו  
אתם שבעים, כי צאוהם שבע עדיין היה להם תצוה! (ולי נראה כפשוטו  
למה תתראו, למה יכו הכל מסתכלין צכם, ומתמיחים צכם שאין אתם  
מנצקים לכם אוכל צטרם שיכלה מה שצידכם). ומפי אחרים שמעתי שהוא

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How did Ya'akov criticize his sons? (v. 1)

**RASHI:** [He said:] "Why do you show yourselves in front of the Yishma'elites and the sons of Eisav as if you have plenty of grain?" For at that time they still had [some] grain.

**RAMBAN:** The sons of Yishma'elites and the sons of Eisav were not even present in the land of Canaan at that time, so why would Ya'akov tell his sons not to show off "in front of them"?

Perhaps, the Yishma'elites and the sons of Eisav passed through Canaan on their way to Egypt to buy grain. So Ya'akov was concerned that if his family appeared to have grain, his relatives would come to his house to eat his food.

**MIZRACHI:** Ramban's solution is untenable, since the route from the land of Edom (which Eisav's family inhabited) to Egypt is direct, without passing through the land of Canaan.

Rather, the simple reason why Ya'akov was not concerned about his sons showing off to the people of Canaan was because the local people had grain too, so there was nothing to showoff about.

**NACHALAS YA'AKOV:** How can Mizrachi argue that the people of Canaan had grain too, when the Torah states explicitly in the

previous verse that, "All (the inhabitants of) the earth came to Egypt to buy grain from Yosef, because the famine had intensified throughout the whole earth"? Clearly the people of Canaan did not have grain, but nevertheless, Ya'akov was not afraid of them since he knew that they had been intimidated by the massacre of Shechem.

**MAHARSHA:** None of the commentators explain why the Yishma'elites and children of Eisav should be jealous of Ya'akov's family more than the other peoples of Amon and Mo'av?

It would seem that the jealousy which we are speaking about here is one that could only arise between close relatives, since a person is expected to care for his brother at a time of suffering. Therefore, Ya'akov feared jealousy only from the descendants of Avraham and Yitzchak (*Chidushei Agados, Ta'anis* 11b).

**KLI YAKAR:** The children of Eisav hated Ya'akov for taking the blessings from Yitzchak. Likewise, the children of Yishma'el resented Avraham's preference for Yitzchak. Therefore, Ya'akov told his sons to be wary of them in particular (*Devarim* 2:3).

**RASHBAM:** Ya'akov was afraid of jealousy from people in general [and not just the Yishma'elites and the children of Eisav].

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 YA'AKOV'S WARNING (v. 1)

Why did Rashi reject the simple explanation of **Rashbam** that when Ya'akov's sons made it appear that they had grain, Ya'akov feared jealousy from all the surrounding nations who were starving? What forced Rashi to conclude, at the literal level, that the jealousy would come only from the Yishma'elites and children of Eisav (as **Ramban** asks)?

Ramban's solution to this question is difficult to accept because (in addition to the objection of **Mizrachi**):

- a.) He only explains why the Yishma'elites and children of Eisav would be jealous of Ya'akov. He does not explain why the surrounding people of Canaan, who were starving, would not be jealous.
- b.) If indeed Ya'akov still had grain, it is difficult to accept that Ya'akov would actively try to avoid performing the *mitzvah* of welcoming guests.

🌀 THE BROTHERS APPEAR BEFORE YOSEF 🌀

42 **Y**a'akov saw (by Divine inspiration) that there was grain being sold in Egypt. Ya'akov said to his sons, "Why are you showing off (that we still have grain)?"

<sup>2</sup> He said, "Look, I have heard that there is grain being sold in Egypt. Go down there and buy us (some) from there, so that we will live and not die."

<sup>3</sup> So Yosef's brothers went down to Egypt (united in their mission) to buy grain (but split into) ten (about their decision to try and redeem Yosef). <sup>4</sup> But Ya'akov did not send Binyamin, Yosef's brother, with his brothers, because he said, "Perhaps a fatal (accident) will occur to him."

TORAS MENACHEM

The solution of *Mizrachi* has already been refuted by **Nachalas Ya'akov** and **Maharsha**.

The argument of *Maharsha*—that only close relatives are responsible for each other at a time of suffering—is difficult to accept at the literal level, since one would presume that a person takes responsibility for the suffering of his neighbors, as well as his relatives (c.f. *Rashi* to 7:7, above). In any case, *Rashi* makes no mention of this argument, and it would be unreasonable to suggest that *Rashi* expected the reader to fathom such a point himself.

**Kli Yakar's** point—that the families of Yishma'el and Eisav in particular hated Ya'akov—could well be true, but it fails to explain why Ya'akov would not also be afraid of his neighbors, who would certainly be jealous when they saw that he had grain while they were starving.

**THE EXPLANATION**

In order to solve the above problem, let us first consider the following question: If all the nations were starving because "the famine spread (even) to all the (wealthy) people of the land" (41:56), then how is it that Ya'akov and his family *did* still have grain? Why did *Rashi* not address this obvious question?

*Rashi* did not address this question, as he presumed the matter to be self-understood, based on the reader's prior knowledge of the Patriarchs' prosperity during times of famine. In the case of Yitzchak we find, "Yitzchak sowed (crops) in that land, and he found (even) in that year (which was a bad one for crops, the land yielded) a hundred times (more than average)—and God blessed him. The man (Yitzchak) became prosperous." (26:12-13). Thus, the reader would not be surprised by the fact that Ya'akov prospered, even in a time of famine, for since the Patriarchs were devout, pious individuals who trusted in their Creator, God continued to sustain them.

Nevertheless, this does not fully explain the above question, as we do find in the cases of both Avraham and Yitzchak that they were forced to travel away from their home due to famine. Why is it that Ya'akov continued to be sustained during the famine *without* having to relocate?

*Rashi*, however, clarified this matter earlier. In his explanation why God sent famine to the Land of Canaan in Avraham's days, *Rashi* writes that it was "to test him, whether he would doubt the words of God, Who ordered him to go to the Land of Canaan, and now He was forcing him to leave it" (12:10). I.e. in essence, there was no need at all for Avraham to leave the Land of Israel during the famine, and God could have sustained him right there. The purpose of his relocation was merely a "test" from God.

Similarly, we can understand in the case of Yitzchak, that God could certainly have sustained him during the famine, without the need to move from his home. God's intent behind Yitzchak's move to Gerar must have been for another reason—perhaps to test him, as in Avraham's case—because Yitzchak actually deserved to be sustained without having to relocate, even in times of famine.

Thus, the reader will not be surprised at all that Ya'akov had grain while his neighbors were starving, since he was a descendant of Avraham and Yitzchak.

However on reaching our verse, the reader will be troubled by a question: Why should Ya'akov be concerned that his sons were revealing to the *local inhabitants* that they still had grain? Surely the unprecedented manner in which Avraham and Yitzchak were miraculously blessed would already be *famous* even among non-Jews? Why would people be surprised to see that Ya'akov too had grain during a famine, just like his father and grandfather?

Therefore, *Rashi* explained that Ya'akov's concern was only for "the sons of Yishma'elites and the sons of Eisav," for since they were also descendants of Avraham and Yitzchak, they would have compared their situation to Ya'akov's.

The key point here is that only Ya'akov understood that Avraham and Yitzchak had been forced to relocate in times of famine for secondary reasons (as a test). The Yishma'elites and children of Eisav were not aware of this fact. Thus when they saw that famine had begun, forcing them to go to Egypt for food, they would have presumed that Ya'akov too had been forced to relocate, just like Avraham and Yitzchak in their times.

Consequently, Ya'akov warned his sons, "Why do you show yourselves in front of the Yishma'elites and the sons of Eisav as if you have plenty of grain?" For if they discovered that Ya'akov still had grain, *without being forced to go to Egypt*, the Yishma'elites and children of Eisav would have wondered: "Even our fathers, Avraham and Yitzchak, were forced to relocate in times of famine? How is it that Ya'akov still has grain without having to move?"

And since Ya'akov feared that this ill feeling and criticism might arouse heavenly prosecution against him and his family (forcing them to relocate), Ya'akov told his sons to conceal the fact that they had grain from the Yishma'elites and sons of Eisav.

In other words, even though Ya'akov's sons were demonstrating a highly admirable quality—that they trusted in God to sustain them even in times of famine, and they publicized their faith to others – in this case, Ya'akov understood it was unwise to do so.

(Based on *Sichas Motzoei Zos Chanukah* 5741; *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 190ff.)

כפנא בארעא דבנען: ו יוסף הוא השליט על ארעא הוא דובין עבורא לכל עמא דארעא ואתו אחי יוסף וסגידו ליה על אפיא על ארעא: ו ותוא יוסף ית אהויה ואשתמודעיןון וחשיב מה המליל להון ומליל עמהון קשין ואמר להון מנן אתיתון ואמרו מארעא דבנען למזבן עבורא: ה ואשתמודע יוסף ית אהויה ואנון לא אשתמודעיה: ט ודכיר יוסף ית חלמיא די חלים להון ואמר להון מאללין אתון למחוי ית בדקא דארעא אתיתון: י ואמרו ליה לא רבוני ועבדיך עלו למזבן עבורא: יא פולגא בני גברא חד גתנא פינני אנתנא לא הוון עבדיך אלילי: יב ואמר להון לא ארי בדקא דארעא אתיתון למחוי: יג ואמרו תרין עשר עבדיך אחין אנתנא בני גברא חד בארעא דבנען והא זעירא עם אבונא ימא דין וחד ליתוהי: יד ואמר להון יוסף הוא די מלילית עמכון למימר מאלילי אתון: טו בדא תתבחנון חי פרעה אם תפקון מלא אלהין במיתי אחובון ועירא קא: טז שלחו מנכון חד וידבר ית אחובון ואתון התאסרון ויתבחנון פתגמיכון הקשוט אתון

הבאים כִּי־הָיָה הָרָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: ו יוסף הוא השליט על־הָאָרֶץ הוא המִשְׁפִּיר לְכָל־עַם הָאָרֶץ ויבאו אחי יוסף וישתחוּו־לוֹ אַפָּיִם אֲרָצָה: ז וירא יוסף את־אָחִיו ויברם ויתנַבֵּר אֲלֵיהֶם וידַבֵּר אִתָּם קְשׁוֹת ויאמר אֲלֵהֶם מֵאִין בָּאתֶם ויאמרו מארץ כְּנָעַן לְשֹׁבְר־אֶכָּל: ח ויבר יוסף את־אָחִיו וְהֵם לֹא הִפְרָחוּ: ט ויזכר יוסף אֵת הַחֲלָמוֹת אֲשֶׁר חָלַם לָהֶם ויאמר אֲלֵהֶם מְרַגְלִים אַתֶּם לראות את־עֲרֹת הָאָרֶץ בָּאתֶם: י ויאמרו אֲלָיו לֹא אֲדָנִי וְעַבְדֶּיךָ בָּאוּ לְשֹׁבְר־אֶכָּל: יא פִלְגֵנוּ בְּנֵי אִישׁ־אֶחָד נִחְנוּ בְּנִים אֲנַחְנוּ לֹא־הָיוּ עַבְדֶּיךָ מְרַגְלִים: יב ויאמר אֲלֵהֶם לֹא כִי־עֲרֹת הָאָרֶץ בָּאתֶם לראות: יג ויאמרו שְׁנַיִם עֶשֶׂר עַבְדֶּיךָ אַחִים | אֲנַחְנוּ בְּנֵי אִישׁ־אֶחָד בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וְהִנֵּה הִקְטַן אֶת־אֲבִינוּ הַיּוֹם וְהָאֶחָד אֵינָנוּ: יד ויאמר אֲלֵהֶם יוסף הוא אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי אֲלֵכֶם לֵאמֹר מְרַגְלִים אַתֶּם: טו בָּזֹאת תִּבְחָנוּ חֵי פְרַעֲה אִם־תִּצְאֹו מִזֶּה כִּי אִם־בָּבֹא אַחִיכֶם הִקְטַן הָנָה: טז שְׁלַחוּ מִכֶּם אֶחָד וַיִּקַּח אֶת־אֲחִיכֶם וְאִתֶּם הֵאָסְרוּ

רש"י

המקרא: (י) לא אדני. לא תאמר כן, שהרי עבדיך צאו לשצר אוכל:<sup>7</sup> (יא) בלנו בני איש אחד נחנו. נללנא צבא רוח הקדש וכללוכו עמכס, שאף הוא צן אציהס: בנימ. אמתייס כמו כן דצרת<sup>8</sup>, כן צנות ללפחד דוצרות.<sup>9</sup> ועצרתו לא כן דציו<sup>10</sup>: (יג) בי ערות הארץ באתם לראות. שהרי נכנסתם צעשרה שערי העיר, למה לא נכנסתם צעשר אחד<sup>11</sup>: (יד) ויאמרו שנים עשר עבדיך וגו'. ובשציל אותו אחד שאינו, נחפזנו צעיר לצקשו: (יד) הוא אשר דברתי. הדבר אשר דברתי שאחס מרגלים, הוא האמת והכחון, זכו לפי פשוטו. ומדרשו, אמר להם, ואלו מלאחס אותו ויפקו עליכס ממון הרצב, תפדוכו. אמרו לו כן. אמר להם, ואס ואמרו לכס שלא יחזירוכו צשוס ממון מה תעשו, אמרו לכך צאנו, להרוג או ליהרג, אמר להם הוא אשר דברתי אליכס, להרוג צני העיר צאחס, מנחש אני צגציע שלי, ששניס מכס הכריצו כך גדול של שכס: (טו) חי פרעה. אס יחיה פרעה: אם תצאו

שהסטן מקטרג צשעת הסכנה<sup>1</sup>: (ה) בתוך הבאים. מטמינין עלמן שלא יכירו, לפי שזוכ להס אציהס שלא יתראו כולס צפתח אחד, אלא שיכנס כל אחד צפתחו, כדי שלא תשלוט צבס עיני הרע שכולס נחיס וכולס גצוריס: (ו) וישתחוּו־לוֹ אַפָּיִם. נשתעחו לו על פניהס, וכן כל השתחואח פשוט ידיס ורגליס הוא<sup>2</sup>: (ז) ויתנבֵּר אֲלֵיהֶם. נעשה להס כנכרי דצצריס לדצר קשות<sup>3</sup>: (ח) ויבר יוסף וגו'. לפי שהניחס חתומי זקן<sup>4</sup>: והם לא הכירוהו. שילא מאלס צלא חתימת זקן. ומדרש אגדה ויבר יוסף את אחיו, כשנמסרו צידו הכיר שהס אחיו וריחס עליכס, והס לא הכירוכו כשנפל צידס לנהוג צו אחוכ: (ט) אשר חלם להם. עליכס, וידע שנתקיימו, שהרי השתחוּו לו: ערות הארץ. גלוי הארץ, מביכין היא נוחה לייכצש. כמו את מקורכ הערה<sup>5</sup>, וכמו ערוס ועריה<sup>6</sup>. וכן כל ערוכ שצמקרא לשון גילוי. וחרגס אונקלוס צדקא דארעא, כמו צדק הצית, רעוע הצית, אצל לא דקדק לפרשו אחר לשון

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How did the brothers enter Egypt? (v. 5)  
**RASHI:** They mingled so that they would not be recognized, because their father had commanded them not to appear all together at one entrance. Rather, each should enter through a different entrance so that the "evil eye" would have no power over them, for they were all handsome and strong.

● What did the brothers reply to Yosef's accusation that they were spies? (v. 10)  
**RASHI:** "Don't say that! Your servants have come to buy food."  
**MIZRACHI:** Coming to buy food was not a *proof* that they were not spies, for spies often pose as merchants. They were saying, "Don't say that! It's not true! *Rather*, your servants have come to buy food."

1 ב"ד צא, ט 2 שבועות טו: 3 ב"ד צא, ז 4 ב"מ לט: 5 ויקרא כ, יח 6 יחזקאל טז, ז 7 בכתב-יד: "יהודי עבדיך באו לשבר אוכל כולנו בני איש אחד נחנו" (ואח"כ העתיק רש"י את התיבות "כולנו בני איש אחד נחנו" פעם נוספת כדי לפרש ענין נוסף בפסוק הבא) אבל ה"בחוור-הזעזער" השמיט תיבות אלו בטעות - שיחת ש"פ מקץ תשמ"ז. 8 שמות י, כט 9 במדבר כז, ז 10 ישעיה טז, ו 11 ב"ד צא, ו

<sup>5</sup> So the sons of Yisra'el came to buy (grain, mingling) among the visitors, for the land of Cana'an was in a state of famine.

<sup>6</sup> Yosef was the ruler over the land. He was the one who sold grain to all the people of the land. So, Yosef's brothers came and threw themselves to the ground in front of him, with their faces to the ground.

<sup>7</sup> Yosef saw his brothers, and he recognized them, but he acted like a stranger to them, and he spoke with them harshly. He said to them, "Where do you come from?"

"From the land of Cana'an," they said, "to purchase food."

<sup>8</sup> Yosef recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him (because they hadn't seen him with a beard). <sup>9</sup> Yosef remembered the dreams that he had had about them (and he realized that they were being fulfilled). He said to them, "You are spies! You have come to survey the land's weak points (from where it can be attacked)!"

<sup>10</sup> "No, my master," they said to him, "your servants have come to buy food. <sup>11</sup> We are all sons of one man. We are (telling the) truth. Your servants were never spies."

<sup>12</sup> "No!" he said to them. "You have come to see the land's weak points!"

<sup>13</sup> They said, "We, your servants, are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Cana'an. Right now, the youngest is with our father, and one is lost (so we split up to look for him)."

<sup>14</sup> Yosef said to them, "When I said to you, 'You are spies' I was (correct). <sup>15</sup> The following will be your test: By Pharaoh's life, you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here. <sup>16</sup> Send one of you and let him fetch your brother, and (the rest of) you will be imprisoned so that your words

---

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

---

**BE'ER BASADEH:** The brothers were clearly not denying Yosef's claim that they were spies, for they cited no proof of the matter. Rather, they were simply pleading with Yosef not to believe that they were spies: "Please don't say that!"

● **Why did they tell Yosef that they were brothers? (v. 11)**  
**SFORNO:** Because it is highly unlikely that a king would pick ten spies who were all brothers.

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

#### 🔗 WHAT WAS THE BROTHERS' PROOF (v. 10-11)

The commentators [**Mizrachi** and **Be'er Basadeh**] question the meaning of *Rashi's* comment to verse 10, for *Rashi* does not seem to explain how the brothers denied that they were spies.

However, in handwritten manuscripts of *Rashi's* commentary, an addition appears here: The brothers replied, "Don't say that! Your servants have come to buy food. *We are all sons of one man.*" I.e. in response to Yosef's accusation that they were spies, the brothers responded that this could not possibly be the case, since they were all one single group of brothers. Thus, they could not be spies, since: a.) Spies work individually, and not in large groups. b.) The qualities required to be a spy are very rare, so it is virtually impossible that ten brothers would all be sufficiently talented to be spies [cf. **Sforno**].

(*Rashi's* intention is thus: "You won't say that we are spies [any more, when you] hear this: Your servants have [clearly] come to buy food [because] we are sons of one man")

Nevertheless, Yosef replied, "You must have come to survey the land's weak points, because you entered by way of the ten gates of the city. Why did you not enter together through one gate?" (*Rashi* to v. 12).

In effect, Yosef was saying, "I did not conclude that you were spies because I thought there was no connection between you. On the contrary, the fact that you are brothers proves that you are spies, for why would members of the same family split up and enter the city through ten different gates?"

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz* 5746)

#### 🔗 Sparks of Chasidus 🔗

#### "THEY DID NOT RECOGNIZE HIM" (v. 8)

Generally speaking, there are two types of *tzadikim* (pious individuals): the "sequestrial" *tzadik*, and the "terrestrial" *tzadik*:

The sequestrial *tzadik* finds this world a distraction from his emotional union with God. The world is mundane; God is sublime. So the sequestrial *tzadik* shies away from interaction with people and things, secluding himself to a place where he can pray, meditate and study undisturbed.

The terrestrial *tzadik*, by contrast, is bound to God in a much stronger manner, to the extent that the world does not—and cannot—distract him from his consciousness of the Divine. This *tzadik* can interact with the world, at its most basic level, and yet remain totally enwrapped in Godly awareness.

Thus, the brothers who were sequestrial shepherds did not recognize Yosef who was a terrestrial governor—for they simply could not conceive how a person could be so intimately involved with the world, and yet remain a perfect *tzadik*.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 1 p. 88; vol. 3, p. 832)

אָמְרִין וְאֵם לֹא חַי פְּרַעָה אַרְי מְאֵלִילִי אֲתוֹן: יי וּכְנֶשׁ יִתְהוֹן לְבֵית מִטְרָא תְּלֵתָא יוֹמִין: יב וְאָמַר לְהוֹן יוֹסֵף בְּיוֹמָא תְּלִיתָאָה דָּא עֲבִידוּ וְאִתְקַיְמוּ מִן קָדָם יי אֲנָא דְחִיל: יט אִם בְּיֻנִי אֲתוֹן אַחֻבֹן חַד יִתְאַסֵּר בְּבֵית מִטְרָתְכוֹן וְאֲתוֹן אֲזִילוּ אוֹבִילוּ עֲבוּרָא דְחִסְרִי בְּבֵיתְכוֹן: כ וְיַת אַחֻבֹן וְעִירָא תִיתוֹן לְוִתִּי וְיִתְהַיְמַנּוּן פְּתַנְמִיכוֹן וְלֹא תְמוֹתוֹן וְעִבְדוּ כֵן: כא וְאָמְרוּ גִבְר לְאַחוּהִי בְּקוֹשְׁטָא חִיבִין אֲנַחְנָא עַל אַחוּנָא דִּי חֲוִינָא עֲקַת נְפִשְׁיָה כַּד הָוָה מִתְחַנֵּן לָנָא וְלֹא קִבְלִנָא מְנִיָּה עַל כֵּן אֲתַת לָנָא עֲקַתָּא דְדָא: כב וְאֲתִיב רְאוּבֵן יִתְהוֹן לְמִימַר הֲלָא אָמְרִית לְכוֹן לְמִימַר לֹא תַחֻבֹן בְּעוֹלָמָא וְלֹא קִבְלִתוֹן וְאַף דְמִיָּה קָא מִתְבַּעֵי: כג וְאָנּוּן לֹא יִדְעִין אַרְי שְׁמִיעַ יוֹסֵף אַרְי מְתוּרְגָמָן הָוָה בִּינְיָהוֹן: כד וְאִסְתַּחַר מְלֻתְהוֹן וּבְכָא וְתָב לְוִתְהוֹן וּמְלִיל עֲמַהוֹן וְדַבֵּר מְלֻתְהוֹן יַת שְׁמַעוֹן וְאַסֵּר יִתִּיה לְעֵינְיָהוֹן: כה וּפְקִיד יוֹסֵף וּמְלוּ יַת מְנִיָּהוֹן

וַיִּבְחַנוּ דְבַרְיָכֶם הָאֵמֶת אֲתֶכֶם וְאִם-לֹא חַי פְּרַעָה כִּי מְרַגְלִים אַתֶּם: יי וַיֹּאסֶף אֲתֶם אֶל-מִשְׁמַר שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים: יב וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יוֹסֵף בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי זֹאת עָשׂוּ וַחֲיוּ אֶת-הָאֱלֹהִים אֲנִי יֵרָא: (חמישי) יט אִם-כְּנִים אַתֶּם אַחֲיֶכֶם אַחַד יֵאָסֵר בְּבֵית מִשְׁמַרְכֶּם וְאַתֶּם לָכוּ הִבִּיאוּ שֹׁבֵר רַעְבוֹן בְּתֵיכֶם: כ וְאַת־אַחֲיֶכֶם הַקָּטָן תִּבְיִאוּ אֵלַי וַיֹּאמְרוּ דְבַרְיָכֶם וְלֹא תְמוֹתוֹ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ-כֵן: כא וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל-אָחִיו אֲבָל אֲשָׁמִים | אֲנַחְנוּ עַל-אָחִינוּ אֲשֶׁר רָאִינוּ עָרַת נַפְשׁוֹ בְּהִתְחַנְנוּ אֵלֵינוּ וְלֹא שָׁמַעְנוּ עַל-כֵּן בָּאָה אֵלֵינוּ הַצָּרָה הַזֹּאת: כב וַיַּעַן רְאוּבֵן אֲתֶם לֹאמַר הֲלוֹא אָמַרְתִּי אֵלֵיכֶם | לֹאמַר אֶל-תַּחֲטְאוּ בִּילֵד וְלֹא שָׁמַעְתֶּם וְגַם-דָּמוֹ הִנֵּה נִדְרָשׁ: כג וְהֵם לֹא יָדְעוּ כִּי שָׁמַע יוֹסֵף כִּי הַמְלִיץ בֵּינְתֶם: כד וַיִּסַּב מֵעַלֵיָּהֶם וַיִּבְדַּךְ וַיֵּשֶׁב אֱלֹהִים וַיִּדְבַּר אֱלֹהִים וַיִּקַּח מֵאֲתֶם אֶת-שְׁמַעוֹן וַיֹּאסֶר אֹתוֹ לְעֵינֵיהֶם: כה וַיַּעַן

כש"י

וגמין רזויין, דמו וגם דס הזקן: (כג) והם לא ידעו כי שומע יוסף. מזין לשונם, ובפניו היו מדברים כן: בי המליץ בינותם. כי כשכיו מדברים עמו היה המליץ צנייבם, היודע לשון עברי ולשון מלרי, והיה מליץ דצריבם ליוסף, ודברי יוסף להם, לכך היו סצורים שאין יוסף מכיר כלשון עברי: המליץ. זה מנשה בנו: (כד) ויסב מעליהם. נחרח מעליבם, שלא יראוהו בזוכה: ויברך. לפי ששמע שהיו מתחרטין: את שמעוֹן. הוא השליכו לזכור, הוא שאמר ללוי הנה בעל החלומות הלזה זא. דצר אחר, נתכוון יוסף להפרידו מלוי, שמא יתיעלו שניבם להרוג אותו: ויאסר אתו לעיניהם. לא

מזה. מן המקום הזה: (טז) האמת אתכם. אם אמת אתכם. לפיכך ה"א נקוד פתח, שהוא כמו כלשון תימה, ואם לא תצאוהו חי פרעה כי מרגלים אתם: (יז) משמר. בית הסורים: (יט) בבית משמרכם. שאתם סורים צו עכשיו: ואתם לכו הביאו. אל בית אציקם: שבר רעבון בתיבם. מה שקניתם לרעבון אנשי צדיקם: (כ) ויאמנו דבריבם. יתאמתו ויתקיימו, כמו אמן אמן<sup>1</sup>, וכמו יאמן נא דצריך<sup>2</sup>: (כא) אבל. כתרגומו בקושטא. וראיתי בצראשית רבה<sup>3</sup> לישנא דרומאה הוא, אצל צרם: באה אלינו. טעמו צדיקת, לפי שהוא כלשון עבר, שכבר צאח. ותרגומו אתת לנא: (כב) וגם דמו. אתין

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did the brothers declare “we are guilty”? (v. 21)

**RALBAG:** Just like Yosef’s brothers, a person should always see any punishment he receives as just, and search his actions in order to attribute the punishment to some bad that he has done (התועלת העשירי).

**MIDRASH HAGADOL:** Happy are the righteous, who accept affliction with joy, and declare God to be just in every way that He acts.

**SFORNO:** The brothers still thought that they were justified in attempting to kill Yosef, since they believed that they followed the halachic principle that if a person comes to kill you, you should kill him first in self-defense (*Sanhedrin* 72b). However, now they regretted

being cruel to him, and not listening to his cries for help. They understood that they were now being treated harshly as a punishment for their cruelty to Yosef.

Re’uvain thus replied: “His blood is also being claimed.” I.e. Yosef was an *innocent child*, so we are not just being punished for being cruel to him. Rather, we are guilty of spilling innocent blood.

**RADAK:** The reaction of Yosef’s brothers teaches us that when bad things happen to a person, he should search his deeds to ascertain the bad that he has done, and then repent, confessing to God and asking forgiveness from Him.

TORAS MENACHEM

☞ THE BROTHERS’ REACTION (v. 21-22)

**Ralbag, Midrash Hagadol** and **Sforno** all perceive the brothers’ reaction (“It’s true, we are guilty etc.”) as a mere recognition of guilt.

Re’uvain’s response (v. 22) was thus intended to warn the brothers, that it is insufficient only to recognize that their unfortunate predicament was a consequence of their earlier actions, but moreover, they needed to repent.

will be tested whether you're telling the truth. But if you don't (bring him, I swear,) as Pharaoh lives, that you are spies!"

<sup>17</sup> He put them in prison for three days.

<sup>18</sup> On the third day, Yosef said to them, "If you do as I say you will live. I fear the Almighty."

FIFTH  
READING

<sup>19</sup> "If you are genuine, one of your brothers will remain imprisoned where you are now, while you go and bring back grain (which you purchased to relieve) the hunger of your households. <sup>20</sup> Bring your youngest brother to me, so that your words may be verified, and you will not die."

They (agreed) to do so.

## THE BROTHERS REPENT

42:21 **T**hey said to each other, "It's true, we are guilty for our brother, because we saw his distress when he begged us, and we didn't listen. That's why this trouble has come upon us."

<sup>22</sup> Re'uvain responded to them, saying, "Didn't I warn you, saying, 'Don't sin against the lad'? But you didn't listen...and also his blood (and our father's anguish) is now being claimed!"

<sup>23</sup> They did not know that Yosef understood (their language), for the interpreter was between them.

<sup>24</sup> He turned away from them and wept (since he realized that they regretted selling him).

Then he returned to them, and spoke with them. He took Shimon from among them (the one who had thrown him into the pit) and imprisoned him before their eyes (until they left, when he set him free).

### TORAS MENACHEM

One problem with this approach is that it does not explain the self-righteous connotation of Re'uvain's words, "Didn't I warn you...but you didn't listen!" If he was merely informing them that they needed to repent, and what their sins were, it would be unnecessary to do so in an I-told-you-so fashion.

Rather, it would appear that when the brothers said, "It's true, we are guilty for our brother etc.," they were, in fact, doing *teshuvah* (repenting) for their earlier sin, as **Radak** suggests. And since there are many different levels of *teshuvah*, Re'uvain interrupted the brothers to inform them that their *teshuvah* was not of a high enough level, and they that needed to repent with purer motives:

The brothers said, "It's true, we are guilty for our brother, because we saw his distress when he begged us, and we didn't listen. *That's why this trouble has come upon us.*" I.e. they only began to repent because they found themselves in dire straits.

Therefore, Re'uvain—who was the first person to carry out a genuine *teshuvah* (Bereishis Rabah 84:19)—felt the need to get his brothers to refocus on the sin itself: "Didn't I warn you, saying, 'Don't sin against the lad'? But you didn't listen..." I.e. he was telling them that it was incorrect to do *teshuvah* as a result of the misfortune which had befallen them. Rather, they should have striven to feel genuine remorse for what they had done because the very act itself was evil.

In other words, they needed to focus their attention on what Re'uvain had been telling them all along, not to "sin against the boy," so that their *teshuvah* could be complete.

To stress this point further, Re'uvain continued, "And also his blood (and our father's anguish) is now being claimed!" I.e. the punishment, which we are currently suffering is a separate matter ("And also..."). It should not be the motivation for the *teshuvah* itself.

#### WHEN DID THE BROTHERS START TO REPENT?

One problem with the above explanation is that it seems to contradict an earlier statement of Rashi. On verse 3, above, Rashi writes that when

the brothers went down to Egypt, "they regretted selling him and decided to behave toward him in a brotherly manner, and to ransom him for whatever amount of money would be demanded of them." How can this be reconciled with our above explanation that the brothers only started to repent when they were treated harshly by Yosef?

However, the solution here again is that there are many levels of *teshuvah*. Thus:

a.) When going down to Egypt they began to regret the sale of Yosef,

### The Last Word

**T**he brothers realized immediately that when misfortune befalls a person, he must search his deeds to find a negative word or action that may have brought on such a punishment. Then he should do *teshuvah*. The brother's *teshuvah* was remarkable in that:

- They were able to feel remorseful about a bad deed they performed some twenty years earlier.
- The fact that they could not find a more recent sin to explain their current misfortune shows that in the past twenty years they did not sin at all.
- Their *teshuvah* was immediately effective in reducing the punishment: Yosef had promised to imprison one of the brothers, but after the brothers did *teshuvah*, Shimon was released (see Rashi to v. 24). Similarly, Yosef's harsh attitude towards them changed, for they were given food and their money was returned (below v. 25-26). And, eventually, as a result of their *teshuvah*, Ya'akov and their entire family were saved from hunger.

(Based on Sicha of the fifth day of Chanukah 5747)

עבורא ולא תבא כספיהון גבר לסקיה ולמתן להון וודין לארחא ועבר להון בן: כו ונטלו ית עבורהון על חמרניהון ואזלו מתמן: כז ופתח חד ית סקיה למתן כספתא לחמרניה בבית מבתא ותוא ית כספיה והא הוא בפום טועניה: כח ואמר לאחיהו אתותב כספי ואף הא בטועני ונפק מדע לבהון ותהוה גבר לאחיהו למימר מה דא עבר וי לנא: כט ואתו לות יעקב אבוהון לארעא דכנען ותואו ליה ית כל הערען ותהוה למימר: ל מליל גברא רבונא דארעא עמנא קשין ויהב יתנא כמאלילי ית ארעא: לא ואמרנא ליה כינני אנתנא לא הוינא מאלילי: לב תרין עשר אנתנא אחין בני אבונא חד ליתוהי וזעירא יקא דין עם אבונא בארעא דכנען: לד ואמר לנא גברא רבונא דארעא ברא אדע ארי כינני אתון אחוכון חד שבוכו לותי וית עבוקא דחסיר בכתובון סיבו ואזיל: לה ואיתו ית אחוכון זעירא לותי ואדע ארי לא מאלילי אתון ארי כינני אתון ית אחוכון אתו לכו וית ארעא תעבדון בה סחורתא: לח ויהוה אנון מריקין סקיהון והא גברא צריר כספיה כספיה ותוהו ית צררי כספיהון אנון ואבוהון ודחיל: לו ואמר להון יעקב אבוהון יתי אתבלתון יוסף ליתוהי ושמעון לא הוה חבא (ליתוהי) וית בנימן תדברון עלי הוה בלהון: לז ואמר ראובן לאבוהי למימר ית תרין בני תמית אם לא איתנייה לך הב יתיה על ידי ואנא אתיבינה לך: לח ואמר לא יחית ברי עמכון

יוסף וימלאו את בליהם בר ולהשיב כספיהם איש אל שקו ולתת להם עדה לדרך ויעש להם בן: כו וישאו את שברם על חמרניהם וילכו משם: כז ויפתח האחד את שקו לתת מספוא לחמרו במלון וירא את כספו והנה הוא בפני אמתחתו: כח ויאמר אל אחיו הושב כספי וגם הנה באמתחתי ויעא לפם ויחרדו איש אל אחיו לאמר מה זאת עשה אלהים לנו: כט ויבאו אל יעקב אביהם ארעה כנען ויגידו לו את כל הקרת אתם לאמר: ל דבר האיש אדני הארץ אתנו קשות ויתן אתנו כמרגלים את הארץ: לא ונאמר אליו בנים אנתנו לא היינו מרגלים: לב שנים עשר אנתנו אחים בני אבינו האחד איננו והקטן היום את אבינו בארץ כנען: לד ויאמר אלינו האיש אדני הארץ בזאת אדע פי בנים אתם אחיכם האחד הניחו אתי ואת רעבון בתיכם קחו ולכו: לה והביאו את אחיכם הקטן אלי ואדעה פי לא מרגלים אתם פי בנים אתם את אחיכם אתן לכם ואת הארץ תסחרו: לה ויהי הם מריקים שקיהם והנה איש צרור כספו בשקו ויראו את צררות כספיהם המה ואביהם וייראו: לו ויאמר אלהם יעקב אביהם אתי שבלתם יוסף איננו ושמעון איננו ואת בנימן תקחו עלי היו כלנה: לז ויאמר ראובן אל אביו לאמר את שני בני תמית אם לא אביאנו אליך תנה אתו על ידי ואני אשיבנו אליך: לח ויאמר

כ"ט

עלילה זו, שלא הושג חלל להתעלל עלינו: (לד) ואת הארץ תסחרו. חסודצו. וכל לשון סוחרים וסוחרה על שם שמחזרים וסודצים אחר פרקמטיא: (לכ) צרור כספו. קשר כספו: (לו) אתי שבלתם. מלמד שחשן שמה כרגוכו או מכרוכו כיוסף: שבלתם. כל מי שזניו אצודים

חסרו חלל לעיניהם, וכיון שיאחו, הוציאו והאכילו והשקו! (כז) ויפתח האחד. הוא לוי שנשאר יחיד משמעון בן זוגו: במלון. במקום שלנו צלילה: אמתחתו. הוא שק: (כח) וגם הנה באמתחתי. גם הכסף צו עם החצובה: מה זאת עשה אלהים לנו. להביאנו לידי

#### TORAS MENACHEM

not because they thought it was an evil act, but because of the suffering it caused their father.

b.) When they found themselves in dire straits, in the hands of the Egyptian governor (alias Yosef), they began to admit that selling Yosef was in fact a sin, and they confessed verbally.

c.) Then, Re'uvain informed them that even this was an insufficient teshuvah, because it was motivated by external factors. The brothers then realized why the act itself was wrong, regardless of the consequences it brought.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 198ff.)



<sup>25</sup> Yosef commanded (his servants), and they filled (the brothers') bags with grain. (He also instructed) to return their money (with which they paid for the grain) into each person's sack, and to give them provisions for the journey, which (his servants) did for them. <sup>26</sup> They loaded their grain onto their donkeys, and departed.

<sup>27</sup> At the hotel, (Levi) opened his sack to give fodder to his donkey, and he saw his money. Look!—there it was, at the top of his sack. <sup>28</sup> He said to his brothers, “My money has been returned, and—look!—it's here in my sack!”

Their hearts sank. Trembling, they turned to one another, saying, “Why is God doing this to us?”

## 🌀 YA'AKOV REFUSES TO SEND BINYAMIN 🌀

42:29 **T**hey came to Ya'akov their father, in the land of Cana'an, and they told him everything that had happened to them: They said, <sup>30</sup> “The man, the chief of the land, spoke to us harshly. He accused us of spying on the land. <sup>31</sup> We said to him, ‘We are honest! We were never spies. <sup>32</sup> We are twelve brothers, the sons of our father. One is missing, and now the youngest is with our father in the land of Cana'an.’ <sup>33</sup> The man, the chief of the land, said to us, ‘With this (test) I'll know if you are honest: leave one of your brothers with me, and (what's needed for) the hunger of your households, take and leave. <sup>34</sup> Bring your youngest brother to me, so that I will know that you are not spies, and that you are honest. (Then) I'll give you your brother, and you can do business around the land.’”

<sup>35</sup> Then, when they were emptying their sacks—look!—each person's bundle of money was in his sack. As they saw the bundles of their money, together with their father, they became frightened.

<sup>36</sup> Their father, Ya'akov, said to them, “You have bereaved me! Yosef is gone, and Shimon is gone, and you want to take Binyamin! All these (troubles) have come upon me!”

<sup>37</sup> Re'uvain spoke to his father, saying, “You may put my two sons to death if I don't bring (Binyamin) to you. Put him into my care and I will return him to you.”

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why were they given provisions for the journey? (v. 25)

**RAMBAN:** Yosef said, “I have no intention of harming you if your words are verified.” So, he kindly gave them provisions for the journey so that they would be able to bring Binyamin back to him.

**BACHAYE:** Yosef wished to show that he had no intention of harming the brothers if they were telling the truth that they were not spies.

**ABARBANEL:** When Yosef would eventually reveal his identity to the brothers, he wanted to be able to show that he had not been unnecessarily cruel. Therefore, he gave them provisions. He also gave them back their money to ensure that they would not delay in returning to Egypt due to lack of funds.

**MALBIM:** Yosef wanted to make sure that they would not open their sacks on the way and discover that their money had been returned.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🔍 WHY DID YOSEF GIVE PROVISIONS? (v. 25)

Up to this point, Yosef had effectively concealed his identity by accusing the brothers of being spies, and treating them harshly. Then, in verse 25, Yosef suddenly changes his approach, filling the brothers' sacks with food and money, and offering them provisions for the journey. Surely, this is totally out of character with all of his previous efforts to conceal his identity!

With regards to the money, it could be argued that they would not discover it until later when they emptied their sacks on arriving home. But surely giving provisions for the journey would have aroused suspicion, for it was totally unheard of for the ruler of Egypt to provide those who had come to purchase grain with provisions for their journey home! Why does Rashi not address this basic question?

#### THE EXPLANATION

Rashi did not wish to deprive the reader of having to make any effort in the study of *Chumash*. Therefore he only offers additional information where it is *crucial* to answer questions at the literal level. But if the reader would be capable of working out difficulties that arise through applying simple logic to the information at hand, then Rashi deemed it unwise to “spoon-feed” the reader, denying him the privilege of toiling in Torah study.

In our case, a problem with the text at the literal level is that Yosef's treatment of the brothers was inconsistent. On the one hand, he spoke with them harshly, totally rejecting the notion that they were not spies, and he imprisoned them. On the other hand, Yosef *did* intimate that he suspected them of telling the truth, so since Yosef had declared himself to

ארי אחיהי מית והוא בלחודיה אשתאר ויערעניה מותא בארתא די תהנון בה ותחתון ית שיבתי בדוונא לשאול: « וכפנא תקיף בארעא: ג ויהוה פד ספיקו (שציוא) למיכל ית עבורא די איתאיו ממערים ואמר להון אבוהון תובו זבוגו לנא זעיר עבורא: ג ואמר ליה יהודה למימר אסהדא אסהיד פנא נברא למימר לא תחזון אפי אלהין פד אחוכון עמכו: ד אם איתך משלח ית אחונא עמנא נוחות ונזבן לך עבורא: ה ואם ליתך משלח לא נוחות ארי נברא אמר לנא לא תחזון אפי אלהין פד אחוכון עמכו: ו ואמר ישראל למא אבאשתון לי לתואה לנברא העד כען לבון אחא: ז ואמרו משאל שאיל נברא לנא ולילדותנא למימר העד כען אבוכון קים האית לכון אחא וחוינא ליה על מימר פתנמיא האלין המדע הוינא ידעין ארי יימר אוחיתו ית אחוכון: ח ואמר יהודה לישראל אבוהי שלח עולימא עמי ונקום וניזיל וניחי ולא נמות אף אנחנא אף את אף מפלנא: ט אנא מערבנא ביה מן ידי תבעיניה אם לא איתיניה לך ואקימיניה קדמך ואהי

לא ירד בני עמכם כי אחיו מית והוא לבדו נשאר וקראתו אסון בדרך אשר תלכו בה והורדתם את שיבתי בנינו שאולה: מו « והרעב כבד בארץ: נ ויהי כאשר פלו לאכל את השבר אשר הביאו ממערים ויאמר אליהם אביהם שבו שברו לנו מעט אכל: נ ויאמר אליו יהודה לאמר העד העד פנו האיש לאמר לא תראו פני בלתי אחיכם אתכם: ד אם ישך משלח את אחינו אתנו נרדה ונשברה לך אכל: ה ואם אינך משלח לא נרד כי האיש אמר אלינו לא תראו פני בלתי אחיכם אתכם: ו ויאמר ישראל למה הרעתם לי להגיד לאיש העוד לכם אח: ז ויאמרו שאול שאל האיש לנו ולמולדתנו לאמר העוד אביכם חל היש לכם אח ונגדלו על פי הדברים האלה הידוע גדע פי יאמר הורידו את אחיכם: ח ויאמר יהודה אל ישראל אביו שלחה הנער אתי ונקומה ונלכה ונחיה ולא נמות גם אנחנו גם אתה גם טפנו: ט אנכי אערבנו מידי תבקשנו אם לא הביאתו

רש"י

עמכו, יישב הדבר על אופנו, ולא דקדק לתרגם אחר לשון המקרא: (י) לנו ולמולדתנו. למשפחותינו. ומדרשו, אפילו עניני (ני"א עני) עריסותינו גלה לנו: ונגד לו. שיש לנו אז ואח: על פי הדברים האלה. על פי שאלותיו אשר שאל, הוזקקו להגיד: כי יאמר. אשר יאמר, כי משמש בלשון אס, ואם משמש בלשון אשר, הרי זה שמוש אחד מארבע לשונות משמש כי, והוא אי, שהרי כי זה כמו אס, כמו עד אס דברתי דברי: (ח) ונחיה. נלנח צו רוח הקדש, על ידי הליכה זו תחי רוחך, שנאמר ותחי רוח יעקב אביהם: ולא נמות. ברעב, בנימין ספק יתפשט ספק לא יתפשט, ואנו כלנו מתים ברעב אס לא נלך, מוטב שתינה את הספק

קרוי שכול: (לח) לא ירד בני עמכם. לא קבל דבריו של ראוזן, אמר, צכור שוטח הוא זה. הוא אומר להמית בניו, וכי בניו הם ולא בני: (ג) כאשר בלו לאכול. יהודה אמר להם המתינו לזמן עד שתכלה פת מן הבית: כאשר בלו. כד שזאו (והמתרגם כד ספיקו, טועה, כאשר בלו הגמלים לשתות, מתורגם כד ספיקו, כששתו די ספוקס הוא גמר שחיתם. אבל זה כאשר בלו לאכול, כאשר הם האוכל הוא, ומתרגמין כד שזאו: (ג) העד העיד. לשון התראה, שסתם התראה מתרה זו בפני עדים. וכן העידותי צכס<sup>2</sup>, רד העד צכס<sup>3</sup>: לא תראו פני בלתי אחיכם אתכם. לא תראונו בלא אחיכם אתכם. ואונקלוס תרגם אלהין כד אחוכון

TORAS MENACHEM

be honest and God-fearing (42:18), he was forced to give them the benefit of the doubt and allow them the opportunity to prove their claims  
This begs the question: After Yosef admitted that the brothers may have been telling the truth, thereby admitting that his earlier denial of their claims was unjustified, why did he not make any effort to appease the brothers for the unnecessary distress he had caused them? After all, Yosef did say that he was dealing with them fairly—"I fear the Almighty" (ibid.)—so why did he not apologize for terrorizing them before they had a chance to prove their innocence?  
Rashi did not address this question because the Torah itself provides the answer: Yosef did not appease them with words, but rather, with food,

money and provisions. I.e. since Yosef had declared that he was attempting to be fair, he offered them some compensation for the unduly aggressive way that they had been treated.  
In fact, the student of scripture has already learned of this phenomenon before: On the verse, "Avimelech took flocks, cattle, servants and maids, and he gave (them) to Avraham" (20:14), Rashi writes that this was "to appease him." Thus, with a little effort, the reader can also understand that Yosef's gift here was also an appeasement.  
So Rashi remained silent, encouraging the student to sharpen his mind, since all the necessary information is, in fact, already at hand.  
(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz 5747)

<sup>38</sup> (Ya'akov) said, "My son shall not go down with you, because his brother is dead, and he is the only one left. A fatality will occur to him on the way in which you will be going, and you will bring my old age to the grave in grief."

### 🌀 YA'AKOV ACQUIESCES 🌀

**43** **T**he famine in the land was severe. <sup>2</sup> So, when they finished eating the grain which they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, "Go back and buy us a little food."

<sup>3</sup> Yehudah spoke to him, saying, "The man repeatedly warned us, saying, 'You will not see my face if your brother is not with you.'"

<sup>4</sup> "If you send our brother with us, we'll go down and buy food for you. <sup>5</sup> But if you won't send (him), we won't go down, because the man said to us, 'You will not see my face if your brother is not with you.'"

<sup>6</sup> Yisra'el said, "Why have you harmed me, by telling the man that you have another brother?"

<sup>7</sup> They said, "The man asked about us and about our family, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Do you have a brother?' We (were forced to) tell him (that we have a father and brother) to answer his questions. Could we have known that he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'"

<sup>8</sup> Yehudah said to Yisra'el, his father, "Send the lad with me. Let us get going and travel. Then we'll live and we won't die (of hunger)—both we and you and our young children too. <sup>9</sup> I will guarantee his

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why was Ya'akov concerned that Binyamin would suffer a fatality on the way? (v. 38)

**MIDRASH:** Could an accident not occur to him at home? Rabbi Eliezer ben Ya'akov said: "From here we learn that the Satan only makes accusations at a time of danger" (*Bereishis Rabah* 91:9).

**BE'ER BASADEH:** The *Midrash* was troubled why the verse stresses, "A fatality will occur to him on the way." This led the *Midrash* to conclude that the cause of Ya'akov's concern must have been the dangerous journey, and thus, "From here we learn that the Satan only makes accusations at a time of danger."

In his commentary to the Torah, *Rashi* cites this teaching of the *Midrash*, not here on verse 38—where we are reading of the brother's second trip to Egypt—but rather on verse 4, in connection with their first trip.

This is because in verse 4 *Rashi* was already troubled by a question: Since Binyamin would be traveling with all the other brothers why was Ya'akov concerned for his safety?

Therefore, *Rashi* cited the Midrashic teaching that fear of the Satan's accusations at a time of danger even applies to a person who is not traveling alone.

#### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🌀 YA'AKOV'S CONCERN FOR BINYAMIN (v. 38)

The *Midrash* states that "from here—verse 38—we learn that the Satan only makes accusations at a time of danger." *Rashi*, however, makes a similar comment above, "From here—verse 4—we learn that the Satan makes accusations at a time of danger."

Why did *Rashi* come to this conclusion from a different verse? [cf. **Be'er Basadeh**]

A further problem is that, surely, the fear of accusation from the Satan at a time of danger applied to all the brothers, and not just Binyamin?

#### THE EXPLANATION

In verse 4, the Torah stresses that Ya'akov's fear was connected with the fact that Binyamin was Yosef's brother: "But Ya'akov did not send Binyamin, Yosef's brother, with his brothers because he said, 'Perhaps a fatal (accident) will occur to him.'"

Ya'akov was under the impression that Yosef had been torn apart by a wild animal while he was traveling, so he feared that his brother Binyamin might be prone to a similar misfortune. Furthermore, their mother Rochel

had also passed away when traveling (albeit for other reasons too), so Ya'akov was concerned that this was a further indication of susceptibility to an accusation from the Satan while on a journey. Obviously, this concern did not apply to the other brothers, for they were not children of Rochel.

Nevertheless, when the brothers returned from Egypt without Shimon, Ya'akov began to review his entire perspective of what had happened to Yosef. *Rashi* writes, "He suspected them that perhaps they had killed [Shimon] or sold him like Yosef" (v. 36, above).

So, while earlier Ya'akov had feared that an accident may happen to Binyamin as it did to Yosef, now Ya'akov suspected that Yosef had not suffered a freak accident at all. Consequently, he rejected the theory that Binyamin was prone to accidents while traveling, which is why *Rashi* omits any mention of the concept here.

Rather, Ya'akov was worried that the brothers might kill him, so he said, "A fatality will occur to him on the way in which you will be going," as if to say: "He is likely to suffer a fatality through being in your company."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 213ff.)

חָמִי לָךְ כָּל יוֹמָי: י אָרִי אֱלוֹלֶפוֹן בְּדָא  
 אֲתַעֲבֹבְנָא אָרִי כְעֵן תִּבְנָא דְנָן תְּרִינֵין זְמִינֵין:  
 יא וְאָמַר לְהוּן יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבוּהוּן אִם בֶּן הֶכָא (הוּא)  
 דָּא עֲבִידוּ סִיבּוּ מִדְּמִשְׁבַּח בְּאַרְעָא בְּמִנְיֹכּוֹן  
 וְאוּחִיתוּ לְגַבְרָא תְּקֻוּבְתָא זְעִיר קִטְפָא וְזְעִיר  
 דְּבִשׁ שְׁעָא וְלִטּוּם בְּטָנִין וְשִׁנְדִין: יב וְכִסְפָּא  
 עַל חַד תְּרִינֵין סִיבּוּ בְּיָדְכוּן וְיַת כִּסְפָּא דְּאֵתוּתָב  
 בְּפוּם טוּעִינְיֹכּוֹן תְּתִיבּוֹן בְּיָדְכוּן מָאִים שְׁלוֹ  
 הוּא: יג וְיַת אַחוּבּוֹן דְּבִרּוּ וְקוּמוּ תּוּבוּ לּוֹת  
 גְּבָרָא: יד וְאַל שְׂדֵי יִתְּן לְכוּן רַחֲמִין קָדָם  
 גְּבָרָא וְיִפְטֹר לְכוּן יַת אַחוּבּוֹן אַחֲרָנָא וְיַת  
 בְּנֵימִין וְאָנָּא כְּמָא דְּאֵתְּבִלִית תְּבִלִית:  
 טו וְנִסִּיבּוּ גּוּבְרָא יַת תְּקֻוּבְתָא הֶדָּא וְעַל חַד  
 תְּרִינֵין כִּסְפָּא נְסִיבּוּ בְּיַדְהוּן וְדִבְרוּ יַת בְּנֵימִין  
 וְקָמוּ וּנְחִתּוּ לְמַעְרִים וְקָמוּ קָדָם יוֹסֵף: טז וְחָזָא  
 יוֹסֵף עֲמָהוּן יַת בְּנֵימִין וְאָמַר לְדֵי מְמָנָא עַל  
 בֵּיתָהּ אֲעִיל יַת גּוּבְרָא לְבֵיתָא וְנִכּוּס נִכְסָתָא  
 וְאֲתַקֵּין אָרִי עִמִּי יִכְלוּן גְּבָרָא בְּשִׁירוּתָא:  
 יז וְעֵבֵד גְּבָרָא כְּמָא דִּי אָמַר יוֹסֵף וְאֲעִיל גְּבָרָא  
 יַת גּוּבְרָא לְבֵית יוֹסֵף: יח וְדַחִילוּ גְּבָרָא אָרִי  
 אֲתַעֲלוּ לְבֵית יוֹסֵף וְאָמְרוּ עַל עֵינֵי כִסְפָּא  
 דְּאֵתוּתָב בְּטוּעִנְנָא בְּקַדְמֵיתָא אֲנַחְנָא  
 מִתְּעִלִין לְאַתְרֵבְרָבָא עֲלָנָא וְלֵאסְתַּקְפָּא עֲלָנָא  
 וְלִמְקַנֵּי יִתְּנָא לְעַבְדֵּין וְלִמְדַבְּרֵי יַת חֲמֵרָנָא:  
 יט וְקָרִיבוּ לּוֹת גְּבָרָא דִּי מְמָנָא עַל בֵּית יוֹסֵף

אֲלֵיךְ וְהִצַּגְתִּיו לְפָנֶיךָ וְהִטָּאתִי לָךְ כָּל הַיָּמִים: י כִּי לֹלֵא  
 הִתְמַהֲמַהֲנּוּ בִּי-עַתָּה שָׁבְנוּ זֶה פַּעַמַּיִם: יא וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם  
 יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבִיהֶם אִם-כֵּן | אַפּוֹא זֹאת עָשׂוּ קָחוּ מִזְמַרְת הָאָרֶץ  
 בְּכַלְיֶכֶם וְהוֹרִידוּ לְאִישׁ מִנְּחָה מַעֵט צְרִי וּמַעֵט דְּבִשׁ נִכְאֵת  
 וְלִט בְּטָנַיִם וּשְׁקָדַיִם: יב וְכִסְפָּא מִשְׁנָה קָחוּ בְיַדְכֶם וְאֵת-הַכֶּסֶף  
 הַמּוֹשֵׁב בְּפִי אֲמַתְחַתִּיכֶם תְּשִׁיבוּ בְיַדְכֶם אוֹלֵי מִשְׁנָה הוּא:  
 יג וְאֵת-אֲחֵיכֶם קָחוּ וְקוּמוּ שׁוּבוּ אֶל-הָאִישׁ: יד וְאַל שְׂדֵי יִתְּן  
 לָכֶם רַחֲמִים לְפָנַי הָאִישׁ וְשַׁלַּח לָכֶם אֶת-אֲחֵיכֶם אַחֵר  
 וְאֵת-בְּנֵימִין וְאֲנִי כַּאֲשֶׁר שִׁכַּלְתִּי שִׁכַּלְתִּי: טו וַיִּקְחוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים  
 אֶת-הַמִּנְחָה הַזֹּאת וּמִשְׁנֵה-כֶּסֶף לָקְחוּ בְיָדָם וְאֵת-בְּנֵימִין  
 וַיָּקָמוּ וַיֵּרְדּוּ מִצְרַיִם וַיַּעֲמְדוּ לְפָנַי יוֹסֵף: וְשָׁי | טז וַיֵּרָא יוֹסֵף אֶת־  
 אֶת-בְּנֵימִין וַיֹּאמֶר לְאֲשֶׁר עַל-בֵּיתוֹ הֲבֵא אֶת-הָאֲנָשִׁים  
 הַבְּיָתָה וּטְבַח טְבַח וְהִכֵּן כִּי אֲתִי יֵאָכְלוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים בַּצְּהָרִים:  
 יז וַיַּעַשׂ הָאִישׁ כַּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר יוֹסֵף וַיָּבֵא הָאִישׁ אֶת-הָאֲנָשִׁים  
 בְּיָתָהּ יוֹסֵף: יח וַיֵּירָאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים כִּי הוּבְאוּ בֵּית יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמְרוּ  
 עַל-דִּבְרֵי הַכֶּסֶף הַשֵּׁב בְּאֲמַתְחַתֵּינוּ בַּתְּחִלָּה אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹבְאִים  
 לְהַתְגַּלֵּל עָלֵינוּ וְלְהַתְנַפֵּל עָלֵינוּ וְלִקְחַת אֶתְנוּ לְעַבְדִּים  
 וְאֵת-חֲמֵרֵינוּ: יט וַיִּגְשׂוּ אֶל-הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר עַל-בֵּית יוֹסֵף וַיְדַבְּרוּ

רש"י

לשון לחפשי ישלחנו, ואינו נופל בתרגום לשון וישלח, שהרי לשם הס הולכים  
 אללו: את אחיכם. זה שמעון: אחר. רוח הקודש נזקק צו<sup>3</sup>, לרבות יוסף:  
 ואני. עד שזכס אהיב שכול מספק: כאשר שבלתי. מיוסף ומשמעון:  
 שבלתי. מצנימין: (טו) ואת בנימין. מתרגמינן ודברו ית צנימין, לפי שאין  
 לקיחת הכסף ולקיחת האדם שוב בלשון חרמי, בדבר הנקח ציד מתרגמינן  
 ונסיב, ודבר הנקח כהנחת דברים מתרגמינן ודבר: (טז) וטבוח טבח  
 והבן. כמו ולטבוח טבח ולהבן, ואין טבוח לשון לווי, שהיב לו לומר וטבוח:  
 בצהרים. זה מתורגם בשירותא, שהוא לשון סעודה ראשונה בלשון חרמי  
 ובלע"ז דיוז"ר, ויש הרבה בגמרא, שדא לכלצא שירותא. בלע אכולא  
 שירותא<sup>4</sup>. אבל כל תרגום של להרים טיכרא: (יח) וייראו האנשים. כתוב  
 הוא בשני יודיין, ותרגומו ודחילו: כי הובאו בית יוסף. ואין דרך שאר  
 הצאים לשבור צר ללון צבית יוסף כי אם כפונדקאות שבעיר. וייראו שאין  
 זה אלא לאספס אל משמר: אנחנו מובאים. אל תוך הצבית הזו: להתגולל.  
 להיות מתגלגלת עלינו עלילת הכסף, ולהיות נופלת עלינו. ואונקלוס  
 שתרגם ולאסתקפא עלנא, הוא לשון להתעולל, כדמתרגמינן עלילות דברים,

ותחפוש את הודאי: (ט) והצגתיו לפניך. שלא אציאו אליך מת כי אם חי:  
 והטאתי לך כל הימים. לעולם הצא: (י) לולא התמהמהנו. על ידך, כבר  
 היינו שבים עם שמעון, ולא נלטערת כל הימים הללו: (יא) אפוא. כל לשון  
 אפוא לשון יתר הוא, לתקן המלה בלשון עברי, אם כן אזדקק לעשות  
 שאשלחנו עמכם, כריך אני לחזור ולצקש איב פה תקנה ועל להשיאכם,  
 ואומר אני זאת עשו: מזמרת הארץ. מתורגם מדמשבח צארעא, שהכל  
 מזמרים עליו כשהוא צא לעולם: נבאת. עוה. צראשית רבה: בטנים. לא  
 ידעתי מה הם, וצפירוש ח' צ' של רבי מכיר ראיתי, פושטליא"ס, ודומה לי  
 שהם אפרסקין: (יב) ובסף משנה. פי שנים כראשון: קחו בידכם. לשבור  
 אוכל, שמה הוקר השער: אולי משנה הוא. שמה הממונה על הצבית שכחו  
 שוגג: (יד) ואל שדי. מעתה אינכם חסרים כלום אלא תפלה, הריני מתפלל  
 עליכם: ואל שדי<sup>2</sup>. שדי צנתינת רחמיו, וכדי היכולת צידו ליתן, יתן לכם  
 רחמים, זהו פשוטו. ומדרשו, מי שאמר לעולם די, יאמר די לנרותי, שלא  
 שקטתי מנעורי, ארת לכן, ארת עשו, ארת רחל, ארת דינה, ארת יוסף, ארת  
 שמעון, ארת צנימין: ושלח לכם. ויפטר לכן כתרגומו, יפטרנו מאסוריו,

1 צא, יא 2 תיבות אלו אינם ד"ה בפ"ע כ"א חלק מדברי רש"י: "הריני מתפלל עליכם (ועי"ז) וא-ל ש-די כו' יתן לכם רחמים - לקו"ש חכ"ה ע' 230 3 בר"ר צא, ז 4 ברכות לט:

(safe return). You can demand him from my hand! If I do not bring him to you, standing up (alive) before you, I will have sinned against you forever.”

<sup>10</sup> “For if we had not delayed (due to your hesitation), we would have already returned by now twice in this (time, and you would not have been troubled all these days by Shimon’s absence).”

<sup>11</sup> Yisra’el, their father, said to them, “If in fact this is the case, then do the following: Take some of the land’s most exclusive products in your bags, and bring them to the man as a gift—a little balsam, a little honey, wax, birthwort, pistachios and almonds. <sup>12</sup> Take double the (previous amount of) money with you (for perhaps the prices have increased), and return the money that was given back in the top of your sacks along with you. Perhaps, it was an error.”

<sup>13</sup> “Take your brother, get going, and return to the man. <sup>14</sup> May God Almighty grant you mercy before the man, so that he will release your other brother (Shimon) and Binyamin back to you.”

“(Until your return I will consider myself to be bereft of my children due to doubt), and like I am bereaved (of Yosef and Shimon) I am (now) bereaved (of Binyamin too).”

### 🌀 YOSEF IS REUNITED WITH ALL HIS BROTHERS 🌀

43:15 **T**he men took the gift, and they took double the (previous amount of) money with them, and (they persuaded) Binyamin (to come). They got going and went down to Egypt, where they stood before Yosef.

SIXTH READING <sup>16</sup> Yosef saw Binyamin with them. He said to the supervisor of his house, “Bring the men into the house and (give orders) to slaughter an animal and to prepare (a meal), for the men will eat with me at lunch.”

<sup>17</sup> The man did as Yosef had said. The man brought the men into Yosef’s house.

<sup>18</sup> The men became afraid (that they were being framed) because they had been brought to Yosef’s house. They said, “We are being brought (here) on account of the money that was put in our sacks earlier on, so as to incite (a false accusation) against us which will fall on us. (This is in order) to take us as slaves and (confiscate) our donkeys.”

<sup>19</sup> So they approached the man who supervised Yosef’s house and spoke to him at the house’s

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What did Ya’akov say to his sons before they departed? (v. 14)**

**RASHI:** Now you lack nothing but prayer. I am praying for you [so may] God Almighty—Whose mercy is sufficient, and Who has it in His power to give—grant you compassion.

#### TORAS MENACHEM

### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

**W**hy did Ya’akov say, “Now you lack nothing but prayer,” after the brothers had prepared gifts and money? Surely the correct approach would be to pray *first* to God for success, and then seek a natural means by which God might send salvation? (see 32:9, above)

However, it could be argued that this, precisely, was Ya’akov’s complaint to his sons. Yehudah had suggested that returning Shimon was an entirely straightforward matter that could not possibly go wrong: “For if we had not delayed (due to your hesitation), we would have already returned by now twice in this (time, and you would not have been troubled all these days by Shimon’s absence)” (v. 10).

Therefore, Ya’akov warned his sons, “Even if it is true, as you say, that there is no danger here, you still need to pray to God. Don’t just pray to God when you feel it is an emergency. You need His help for a natural plan to succeed too.”

From this we can learn that a person should not only turn to God when he feels he is lacking something. He should also ask God for things which he perceives will *inevitably* come his way. For, in truth, God is the only provider, whether the blessing comes naturally or supernaturally.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz* 5745)

ומלילו עמיה בתרע ביתא: כ ואמרו בבועו רבוני מיחת נחתנא בקדמיתא למזבן עבורא: כא והנה פד אתינא לבית מבתא ופתחנא ית מועננא והא כסף גבר בפום מועניה כספנא כמתקליה ואתיבנא יתיה בידנא: כב וכספא אהרנא אוחיתנא בידנא למזבן עבורא לא ידענא מן שוי כספנא כספנא במועננא: כג ואמר שלם לבון לא תדחלון אלהכון ואלהא דאבוכון יהב לבון סימא בטועניכון כספכון אהא לותי ואפיק לותהון ית שמעון: כד ואעיל גברא ית גובריא לבית יוסף ויהב מיא ואסחו רגליהון ויהב כסתא לחמריהון: כה ואתקינו ית תקרובתא עד דעל יוסף בשירותא ארי שמעו ארי תמן ייכלון לחמא: כו ועל יוסף לביתא ואיתיאו ליה ית תקרובתא די בידיהון לביתא וסגידו ליה על ארעא: כז ושאל להון לשלם ואמר השלם לאבוכון סבא די אמרתון העד כען קים: כח ואמרו שלם לעבדך לאבונא עד כען קים וכרעו וסגידו: כט ויסקף עינוהי וחיא ית בנימין אחוהי בר אמיה ואמר הדין אחוכון ועירא די אמרתון לי ואמר מן קדם יי יתרסם עלך ברי: ל ואוחי יוסף ארי אתגוללו רחמוהי על אחוהי ובקעא למבכי ועל לאדרון בית משכבא ובכא תמן: לא ואסחי אפוהי ונפק ואתחפין ואמר שוי לחמא: לב ושויאו ליה בלחודוהי ולהון בלחודיהון ולמצראי דאכלין עמיה בלחודיהון ארי לא יכלין מצראי למיכל עם עבראי לחמא ארי בעירא דמצראי דחלין ליה עבראי אכלין: לג ואסחרו קדמוהי רבא כרביותיה וועירא

אליו פתח הבית: כ ויאמרו בי אדני ירד ירדנו בתחלה לשבר-אכל: כא ויהי כן-באנו אל-המלון ונפתחה את-אמתחתינו והנה כסף-איש בפי אמתחתו כספנו במשקלו ונשב אתו בידנו: כב וכסף אחר הורדנו בידנו לשבר-אכל לא ידענו מי-שם כספנו באמתחתינו: כג ויאמר שלום לכם אל-תיראו אלהיכם ואלהי אביכם נתן לכם מטמון באמתחתים כסףכם בא אלי ויועא אלהם את-שמעון: כד ויבא האיש את-האנשים ביתה יוסף ויתן-מים וירחצו רגליהם ויתן מספוא לחמריהם: כה ויכינו את-המנחה עד-בוא יוסף בעהרים כי שמעו כי-שם יאכלו להם: כו ויבא יוסף הביתה ויביאו לו את-המנחה אשר-בידם הביתה וישתחוו-לו ארצה: כז וישאל להם לשלום ויאמר השלום אביכם הזקן אשר אמרתם העודנו חי: כח ויאמרו שלום לעבדך לאבינו עודנו חי ויקדו וישתחו: [ק' וישתחוו]: כט וישא עניו וירא את-בנימין אחיו בן-אמו ויאמר הנה אחיכם הקטן אשר אמרתם אלי ויאמר אלהים יחנה בני: [שביעי] ל וימהר יוסף כי-נכמרו רחמיו אל-אחיו ויבקש לבבות ויבא החדרה ויבך שמה: לא וירתיץ פניו ויעא ויתאפק ויאמר שימו להם: לב וישימו לו לבדו ולהם לבדם ולמצרים האכלים אתו לבדם כי לא יוכלון המצרים לאכל את-העברים להם כי-תועבה הוא למצרים: לג וישבו לפניו

\*א' דגושה

כש"י

אמר לו אח היה לי ואיני יודע היכן הוא, יש לך צנים, אמר לו יש לי עשרה, אמר לו ומה שמם, אמר לו, בלע וזכר וכו', אמר לו מה טיבן של שמות הללו, אמר לו כולם על שם אחי והלכות אשר מלאוהו, בלע, שנבלע צין האומות. זכר, שהיה זכור לאמי. אשבל, ששצאו אל. גרא, שנתגייר באכסניא. ועמון, שהיה נעים ביותר. אחי וראש, אחי היה וראשי היה. מפיס, מפני אבי למד. וחפים, שלא ראה חופתי ולא ראיתי אני חופתי. וארד, שירד לצין האומות, כדאיחא צמס' סוטה<sup>2</sup>, מיד נכמרו רחמיו: נבמרו. נתחממו, וצלשון משנה על הכומר של זיתים<sup>3</sup>, וצלשון ארמי משום מכמר צשרא<sup>7</sup>, ובמקרא עורנו כתנור נכמרו, נתחממו ונקמטו קמטים קמטים, מפני זלעפות רעב. כן דרך כל עור כשמחממין אותו ונקמט ונתכוון: (לא) ויתאפק. נתאמץ, והוא לשון ומזיח אפיקים רפה<sup>8</sup>, וכן אפיקו מגנים<sup>9</sup>, חוזק: (לב) כי תועבה הוא. דבר שנאוי הוא למלרים לאכול את העצרים, ואונקלוס נתן טעם לדבר:

חסקופי מליו. ולא תרגמו אחר לשון המקרא. ולהתגולל שתרגם לאתרזרצא, הוא לשון גלת הזהב<sup>1</sup>, והצב גלתה העלתה<sup>2</sup>, שהוא לשון מלכות: (כ) בי אדוני. לשון צעיר ותחנונים, הוא צלשון ארמי ציח ציח<sup>3</sup>: ירד ירדנו. ירידה הוא לנו, רגילים היינו לפרנס אחרים, עכשיו אנו צריכים לך<sup>4</sup>: (כג) אלהיכם. בזכותכם, ואם אין זכותכם כדאי, אלהי אביכם, בזכות אביכם נתן לכם מטמון: (כד) ויבא האיש. הבאה אחר הבאה, לפי שהיו דוחפים אותו חוץ, עד שדצרו אליו פתח הבית, ומשארם להם שלום לכם, נמשכו וצאו אחריו: (כה) ויבינו. הזמינו, עטרוהו צכלים נאים: (כו) הביתה. מפרוזדור לטרקלין: (כח) ויקדו וישתחוו. על שאלת שלום. קודה כפיפת קדקד, השתחואה משתטח לארץ: (כט) אלהים יחנה בני. צשאר צשטים שמענו חינוכה, אשר חנן אלהים את עבדך, וצנימין עדיין לא נולד, לכך צרכו יוסף צחינה: (ל) כי נבמרו רחמיו. שאלו יש לך אח מאס,

1 קהלת יב, 1 2 נחום ב, 11 3 יזמא סט: 4 ב"ד צב, ד 5 לו: 6 בבא מציעא עד. 7 פסחים נח. 8 איוב יב, כא 9 שם מא, ט

entrance. <sup>20</sup> “Please sir,” they said, “we originally came down to purchase food. <sup>21</sup> And then, when we came to the hotel we opened our sacks, and—look!—each person’s money (with which he had paid for the grain) was (back) in the top of his sack. We’ve brought it back with us. <sup>22</sup> We brought down more money with us to purchase food. We don’t know who put our money (back) into our sacks.”

<sup>23</sup> He said, “Don’t worry, everything’s okay for you. (Either) your merit (or) the merit of the God of your father has brought you a hidden gift. I did receive the money that you paid.”

He brought Shimon out to them.

<sup>24</sup> The man brought the (brothers) into Yosef’s house. He gave (them) water, and they washed their feet. He gave fodder to their donkeys. <sup>25</sup> They prepared the gift (in beautiful containers) before Yosef came for lunch, for they heard that they would be dining there.

<sup>26</sup> When Yosef came home, they brought him the gift which they had with them, into the (main chamber of the) house and they threw themselves on the ground in front of him.

<sup>27</sup> He inquired about their welfare. Then he asked them, “Is your elderly father, whom you mentioned, well? Is he still alive?”

<sup>28</sup> They said, “Your servant, our father, is well. He is still alive.” They bowed (their heads) and then threw themselves to the ground (thanking him for inquiring about their welfare).

<sup>29</sup> (Yosef) looked around and saw Binyamin, his brother, his mother’s son. He said, “Is this your little brother, whom you told me about?”

“May God be gracious to you, my son,” (Yosef) said.

<sup>30</sup> (When Yosef heard how Binyamin had named all his sons after him,) his compassion was suddenly stirred up over his brother, and he wanted to cry, so he quickly went into the (side) room and cried there.

<sup>31</sup> He washed his face and came out. He restrained himself and said, “Put out the food.”

<sup>32</sup> They set for him separately and for them separately, and for the Egyptians who ate with him separately, since the Egyptians could not eat food with the Hebrews, because it is an abomination to the Egyptians (since Hebrews eat the animals which Egyptians worship).

---

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

---

##### ● Why was Yosef’s compassion stirred up? (v. 30)

**RASHI:** [Yosef] asked [Binyamin], “Do you have a brother from your mother’s side?”

He replied, “I had a brother, but I don’t know where he is.”

“Do you have any sons?”

“I have ten,” he replied.

“And what are their names?”

“Bela, Becher, etc.,” he replied, [reciting all their names].

[Yosef] asked, “What is the significance of these names?”

He replied, “All of them are connected to my brother and the troubles that befell him. My first son was named Bela because my brother was swallowed up (niVLa) among the nations. My second son was named Becher because my brother was the firstborn

(BeCHoR) of my mother. My third son was named Ashbail because God put my brother into captivity (SHEVa’o AIL). My fourth son was named Gaira because my brother lived away from home (nisGAyeR ba’achsanya). My fifth son was named Na’aman because my brother was very pleasant (Na’iM). My sixth and seventh sons were named Aichi and Rosh because he was my brother (ACHi), and he was my superior (ROSH). My eighth son was named Mupim because my brother learned from the mouth of (MiPi) my father. My ninth son was named Chupim because my brother did not see my wedding canopy (CHUPasi), neither did I see his wedding canopy (CHUPaso). My tenth son was named Ard because my brother descended (yARaD) among the nations.”

This is taught in Tractate *Sotah*.

Immediately, on hearing this, “his compassion was stirred up.”

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

##### 🔗 RASHI’S PROBLEM (v. 30)

Why does *Rashi* cite the Talmudic account of the discussion between Yosef and Binyamin? Why is it crucial to a literal understanding of the verses? And why do we have to be informed of so much detail?

On reaching verse 30, *Rashi* was troubled by the question: Why was Yosef’s compassion *suddenly* stirred up at this point and not earlier in verse 29, when Yosef saw Binyamin for the first time? How is it that Yosef first asked, quite calmly, “Is this your little brother?” and then continued,

בזעירותיה ותמהו גבריא גבר לתבריה: לִדּוּ וְנִטְלָה חֶלְקִין מִן קְדֻמוֹהֵי לְקַדְמֵיהוֹן וּסְגִי חֶלְקָא דְבִנְיָמִין מִחֶלְקֵי דְכָלְהוֹן חֶמְשָׁא חֶלְקִין וּשְׂתִיאוּ וְרוּיאוּ עִמֵיהּ: א וּפְקִיד ית דְמִמְנָא עַל בֵּיתֵיהּ לְמִימַר מְלִי ית טוֹעֲנֵי גְבֵרִיא עֲבוּרָא כְּמָא דִּי יְכַלִּין לְמַטְלֵי וְשׁוּי כְּסָף גְּבֵר כְּפּוּם טוֹעֲנֵיהּ: ב וַיֵּת פְּלִידֵי כְּלִידָא דְכֶסֶף תְּשׁוּי כְּפּוּם טוֹעֲנָא דְזַעֲרָא וַיֵּת כְּסָף זְבִינוּהִי וַעֲבַד כְּפִתְנָמָא דְיוֹסֵף דִּי מְלִיל: ג צִפְרָא גְהַר וְגִבְרִיא אֲתַפְטְרוּ אֲנָוֹן וְחִמְרֵיהוֹן: ד אֲנָוֹן נִפְקוּ מִן קֶרְתָּא לֹא אֲרַחֲקוּ וְיוֹסֵף אָמַר לְדִי מִמְנָא עַל בֵּיתֵיהּ קוּם רְדָף בְּתַר גִּבְרִיא וְתַדְבְּקִינוּן וְתִימַר לְהוֹן לְמָא שְׁלַמְתוּן בְּשֵׁתָא חֲלָף טַבְתָּא: ה הֲלֹא דִין דִּי שְׁתֵי רִבּוּנֵי בֵּיהּ וְהוּא בְּדָקָא מְבַדֵּק בֵּיהּ אֲבָאֲשֵׁתוֹן דִּי עֲבַדְתוּן: ו וְאֲדַבְּקִינוּן וּמְלִיל עִמְהוֹן ית פִּתְנָמֵי הַאֲלִין: ז וְאָמְרוּ לֵיהּ לְמָא יְמַלִּיל רִבּוּנֵי כְּפִתְנָמֵי הַאֲלִין חֵם לְעֲבַדְדִּיךְ מִלְּמַעֲבַד כְּפִתְנָמָא דְדִין: ח הָא כְּסָפָא דִּי אֲשַׁכְחָנָא כְּפּוּם טוֹעֲנָא אֲתִיבְנוּהִי לְךָ מֵאֲרַעָא דְכַנְעַן וְאִיכְדִין נִגְנַב מִבֵּית רִבּוּנֵךְ מִנֵּן דְכֶסֶף אוּ כְּנִין דְדָהֵב: ט דִּי יִשְׁתַּכַּח עִמֵיהּ מְעַבְדִּיךְ יתְקַטִּיל וְאִף אֲנַחְנָא נְהִי לְרִבּוּנֵי לְעֲבַדְדִין: י וְאָמַר אִף כַּעַן כְּפִתְנָמִיכוֹן כֵּן הוּא דִּי יִשְׁתַּכַּח

הַבְּכֹר כְּבִכְרָתוֹ וְהַצֵּעִיר כְּצִעֲרָתוֹ וַיִּתְמָהוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים אִישׁ אֶל־ רַעְהוֹ: לִדּוּ וַיִּשָּׂא מִשָּׂאת מֵאֵת פָּנָיו אֱלֹהִם וַתִּרְבַּ מִשָּׂאת בְּנֵימִן מִמִּשָּׂאת כָּלֵם חֲמֵשׁ יָדוֹת וַיִּשְׁתּוּ וַיִּשְׁכְּרוּ עִמּוֹ: מִדּוּ א וַיִּצְוּ אֶת־אֲשֶׁר עַל־בֵּיתוֹ לֵאמֹר מִלֵּא אֶת־אֲמֹתַתְּ הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲכַל כַּאֲשֶׁר יוֹכְלוּן שָׂאת וְשִׂים כְּסָף־אִישׁ בְּפִי אֲמֹתַתּוֹ: נ וְאֶת־ גְּבִיעֵי גְבִיעַ הַכֶּסֶף תְּשִׂים בְּפִי אֲמֹתַתְּ הַקָּטָן וְאֶת כְּסָף שִׁבְרוֹ וַיַּעַשׂ כַּדְבַר יוֹסֵף אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר: ז הַבְּקָר אֹר וְהָאֲנָשִׁים שְׁלָחוּ הֶמָּה וְחִמְרֵיהֶם: ח הֵם יֵצְאוּ אֶת־הָעִיר לֹא הִרְחִיקוּ וְיוֹסֵף אָמַר לְאֲשֶׁר עַל־בֵּיתוֹ קוּם רְדָף אַחֲרַי הָאֲנָשִׁים וְהִשְׁגַּתְּם וְאֲמַרְתָּ אֱלֹהִים לְמָה שְׁלַמְתֶּם רְעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה: ט הֲלֹא זֶה אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁתָּה אֲדֹנָי בּוֹ וְהוּא נִחַשׁ יִנְחַשׁ בּוֹ הִרְעַתְּם אֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂיתֶם: י וַיִּשְׁגֹּם וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה: יא וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֱלֹוֹ לְמָה יְדַבֵּר אֲדֹנָי כַּדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה חֲלִילָה לְעֲבַדְדִּיךְ מַעֲשׂוֹת כַּדְבַר הַזֶּה: יב הֵן כְּסָף אֲשֶׁר מָצְאָנוּ בְּפִי אֲמֹתַתֵּינוּ הִשִּׁיבְנוּ אֵלֶיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן וְאִיךְ נִגְנַב מִבֵּית אֲדֹנֶיךָ כְּסָף אוּ זָהָב: יג אֲשֶׁר יִמְצָא אֹתוֹ מְעַבְדִּיךְ וּמֵת וְגַם־אֲנַחְנוּ נִהְיֶה לְאֲדֹנֵי לְעֲבָדִים: יד וַיֹּאמֶר גַּם־עַתָּה כַּדְּבָרִיכֶם כֵּן־הוּא אֲשֶׁר יִמְצָא

כ"ט

יין, ואתו היום שמו: (3) גביע. כוס ארוך, וקורין לו מדריני"ש: (4) חלילה לעבדיך. חולין הוא לנו, לשון גנאי. ותרגום חס לעזדיך, חס מאת הקצ"ה יכי עלינו מעשות זאת, והרצח יש צנמרא חס ושלום: (ח) הן כסף אשר מצאנו. זה אחד מעשרה קל וחומר כאמורים צתורה. וכולן מנויין צבראשית רכב: (י) גם עתה כדבריכם. אף זו מן הדין אמת, כדרכים כן הוא,

(לג) הבכור בכברתו. מכה צגציע וקורא, ראובן שמעון לוי יהודה ישכר וזולגון בני חס אמת, הסצו כסדר הזה שכוא סדר תולדותיכם, וכן כולם, כיון שהגיע לצנימין, אמר, זה אין לו חס ואני אין לי חס, יש צאללי: (לד) משאות. מנות: חמש ידות. חלקו עם אחיו, ומשאת יוסף ואסנת, ומנשח ואפריס: וישכרו אמו. ומיוס שמכרוכו לא שמו יין ולא הוא שח

TORAS MENACHEM

“May God be gracious unto you, my son,” before being overcome with emotion? Surely, Yosef’s feelings would have been kindled immediately on seeing Binyamin?

Rashi concluded that in general Yosef was quite capable of holding in his emotions, which is why he did not break down in the first place. But here something specific must have occurred that is not mentioned explicitly in the Torah, which caused Yosef to lose control of himself.

What could have been powerful enough to stir Yosef’s emotions, which had been under control until this point?

Rashi concluded that the solution must be hinted to in the verse immediately prior to Yosef’s emotional outburst, “May God be gracious to you, my son” (v. 29). This particular formula of blessing is one used in connection with having children (as Ya’akov stated to Eisav, “(They are)

the children whom God has graciously given your servant,” above 33:5). Therefore, Rashi concluded that a discussion about Binyamin’s children must have caused Yosef to be overcome by emotion, so he cited the Talmudic account of how Binyamin named all his children after Yosef.

At first glance, it may seem that an abbreviated version of the story from the Talmud would have been sufficient, without the need to mention every son’s name and his connection with Yosef. Nevertheless, since the reader has seen how much control Yosef had over his emotions up to this point, it follows that a tremendously moving exchange must have occurred in order to make Yosef break down. Therefore, Rashi cited the story in full, to bring across how exceptionally moving that moment must have been.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 15, p. 348ff.)



<sup>33</sup> They sat before him (in age order): the firstborn (of each mother) according to his birthright (followed by the other sons from that mother down to) the youngest (who sat last) according to his young age, (and Binyamin sat next to Yosef).

The men (looked) in astonishment at each other. <sup>34</sup> (Yosef) had portions brought to them from (what was laid out) before him. Binyamin's portion was five times as large as any of their portions (to include Yosef, Asnas, Menasheh and Efrayim too). They drank (for the first time since Yosef was sold) and became drunk with him.

## 🌀 YOSEF'S GOBLET IS PLANTED IN BINYAMIN'S SACK 🌀

44 **H**e commanded the supervisor of his house, saying, "Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man's money (which he used to pay for the grain) into the top of his sack. <sup>2</sup> Put my goblet, the silver goblet, into the top of the youngest's sack, with his money (which he used to pay for) his grain." (The supervisor) carried out the instructions which Yosef had said.

<sup>3</sup> When it became light the (next) morning, the men were sent (on their way), both they and their donkeys. <sup>4</sup> When they had left the city, but had not gone far, Yosef said to the supervisor of his house, "Get going and chase after the men. When you overtake them, say to them, 'Why have you repaid good with evil (stealing my master's goblet)?' <sup>5</sup> This is none other than the (goblet) which my master drinks from. He (also) divines with it regularly. What you have done is evil!"

<sup>6</sup> (The supervisor) overtook them, and he said these words to them.

<sup>7</sup> They said to him, "Why should my master say such words as these? Far be it from your servants to do a thing like this! <sup>8</sup> Look, (if) we (even) returned to you the money we found in the top of our sacks (all the way) from the land of Canaan, how could we (possibly) steal silver or gold from your master's house? <sup>9</sup> Whichever one of your servants is found to have (the goblet) shall die, and also, we will be slaves to my master (if it is found)."

<sup>10</sup> He replied, "It's true as you say (that you are all collectively guilty, but I will have mercy and only)

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Was the brothers' argument logical? (v. 8)

**RASHI:** This is one of the ten *kal vachomer*\* (a fortiori) conclusions mentioned in scripture. They are all enumerated in *Bereishis Rabah*.

**TORAH SHLAIMAH:** At first glance, the brothers' logic could be refuted. The money that they returned was much less valuable than the goblet that they had allegedly stolen, so why would the fact that they returned the money prove that they had not stolen the goblet?

Two explanations could be suggested, for the brothers' argument:

a.) "The money was of little worth to the King: he didn't even ask for it back, and yet we still returned it. So, all the more so would we not take the goblet, which was of tremendous value to him."

b.) "The money was not identifiable, but we still returned it despite the fact that it could never be traced. So how could we possibly have stolen the goblet, which is identifiable and easily traced?"

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🌀 THE BROTHERS' "KAL VACHOMER" (v. 8)

What difficulty, at the literal level, was Rashi concerned that the reader would have with verse 8? And why do we need to know how many incidences of *kal vachomer* are found in the Torah, and where they are enumerated?

Rashi was troubled by a simple, logical question that the reader will have when reaching verse 8:

The brothers argued, "(If) we (even) returned to you the money we found in the top of our sacks (all the way) from the land of Canaan, how could we (possibly) steal silver or gold from your master's house?" An

obvious problem with this argument is that it did not apply to Binyamin, since he had not accompanied the brothers on their first trip and thus had not returned any money from his sack. So the reader will be troubled: How could the brothers have used an argument that exonerated themselves at the expense of incriminating Binyamin?

Rashi answers: "This is one of the ten *kal vachomer* (a fortiori) conclusions mentioned in scripture. They are all enumerated in *Bereishis Rabah*." I.e. if one looks in *Bereishis Rabah* at the other instances of *kal vachomer* which occur in scripture, they all have similar inconsistencies. Namely, that their less obvious cases (*kal*) do not exactly parallel their

\* A *kal vachomer* is a line of Talmudic reasoning where more obvious lessons are learned from less obvious cases. I.e. if a condition exists in a given situation where there is relatively little reason for it to apply, then all the more so does that condition exist in another situation where there is more reason for it to apply.

עמיה יהא לי עבדא ואתון תהון זכאין: יא ואוהיאן ואוהיתו גבר ית טועניה לארעא ופתחו גבר טועניה: יב ובלש ברבא שרי ובוערא שיצי ואשתכח פלידא בטוענא דבנימן: יג ובועו לבושיהון ורמו גבר על חמריה ותבו לקרתא: יד ועל יהודה ואחוהי לבית יוסף והוא עד כען תמן ונפלו קדמוהי לארעא: טו ואמר להון יוסף מא עובדא הדין די עבדתון הלא ידעתון ארי בדקא מדק גברא די כותי: טז ואמר יהודה מה נימר לרבני מה נמליל ומה נזכי מן קדם יי אשתכח ית חובא דעבדיך הא אנחנא עבדין לרבני אף אנחנא אף דאשתכח פלידא בידיה: יז ואמר חס לי מלמעבד דא גברא די אשתכח פלידא בידיה הוא יהי לי עבדא ואתון סקו לשלם לות אבוכון: ס ס ס

אתו יהיה לי עבד ואתם תהיו נקיים: יא וימהרו ויורדו איש את-אמתחתו ארצה ויפתחו איש אמתחתו: יב ויחפש בגדול החל ובקטן כלה וימצא הנביע באמתחת בנימן: יג ויקרעו שמלתם ויעמם איש על-חמרו וישבו העירה: יד ויבא יהודה ואחיו ביתה יוסף והוא עודנו שם ויפלו לפניו ארצה: (מפסטר) טו ויאמר להם יוסף מה-המעשה הזה אשר עשיתם הלא ידעתם כי-נחש ינחש איש אשר כמני: טז ויאמר יהודה מה-נאמר לאדני מה-נדבר ומה-נצטדק האלהים מצא את-עון עבדיך הננו עבדים לאדני גם-אנחנו גם-אשר-נמצא הנביע בידו: יז ויאמר חלילה לי מעשות זאת האיש אשר נמצא הנביע בידו הוא יהיה לי עבד ואתם עלו לשלום אל-אביכם: ס ס ס

קמ"ו פסוקים, יחזקיה"ו. אמציה"ה סימן. ותיבות אלפים כ"ה.

### רש"י

לנו זאת, מלא צעל חוב מקום לגבות שטר חובו: ומה נצטרק. לשון דק, וכן כל חובה שתחלת יסודה לד"י והיא צבה לדבר בלשון מתפעל או נתפעל, נוח טי"ת במקום טי"ו, ואינה נתנת לפני אות ראשונה של יסוד החובה, אלא צמאע אחריות העיקר, כגון נצטרק מגזרת דק, ויצטעב מגזרת צבע, ויטעירו מגזרת זיר אמונים, הצטיידנו מגזרת דב לדרך. ותיבה שתחלתה סמ"ך או שי"ן כשהיא מתפעלת, התי"ו מפרדת את אחריות העיקר כגון, ויסתכל החגב<sup>1</sup>, מגזרת סבל. מסתכל הוית צקרניא<sup>2</sup>, מגזרת סכל. וישתמר חקות עמרי<sup>3</sup>, מגזרת שמר. וסר מרע משתולל<sup>4</sup>, מגזרת מולך יועלים שולל<sup>5</sup>. מסתולל צעמי<sup>6</sup>, מגזרת דרך לא סלול<sup>7</sup>: חסלת פרשת מקץ

שכולכם חייבים צדק, עשרה שנמאלת גניבה ציד אחד מהם כולם נתפשים. אבל אני אעשה לכם לפנים משורת הדין, אשר ימצא אתו יהיה לי עבד: (יב) בגדול החל. שלא ירגישו שחוב יודע היכן הוא: (יג) ויעמם איש על חמורו. צעלי זרוע היו, ולא הולכו לסייע זה את זה לטעון: וישבו העירה. מטרפולין היתה, והוא אומר העירה, בעיר כל שהוא, אלא שלא היתה חשובה צעניוהם אלא כעיר צינונית של עשרה בני אדם לענין המלחמה: (יד) עודנו שם. שחוב ממתין להס: (טו) הלא ידעתם כי נחש ינחש וגו'. הלא ידעתם כי איש חשוב כמוני יודע לנחש, ולדעת מדעת ומסכרר וצינה כי אתם גנתם הגזיע: (טז) האלהים מצא. יודעים אנו שלא סרחנו, אבל מאת המקום נהיתה להציא

### TORAS MENACHEM

more obvious conclusions (*chomer*) in every detail. Nevertheless, since the two cases are *partially* similar in each of the ten instances, these comparisons are nevertheless termed "*kal vachomer* of scripture."

For example, the next *kal vachomer* which occurs in the Torah is the complaint of Moshe to God, that the Jewish people had not responded to his announcement of redemption: "If the children of Israel did not listen

to me, then how will Pharaoh listen to me?" (*Shemos* 6:12). Again, there is an inconsistency with this *kal vachomer*, since it could be argued that the reason why the Jewish people did not listen to Moshe was "*due to shortness of breath and hard labor*" (*ibid.* 9), whereas Pharaoh clearly did not have this disadvantage—so perhaps Pharaoh *would* listen?

*the one with whom (the goblet) is found shall be my slave. (The rest of) you will be cleared.”*

<sup>11</sup> *They hurried and each one lowered his sack to the ground and opened his sack. <sup>12</sup> (The supervisor) searched: he started with the eldest (so they would not sense that he knew where it was) and finished with the youngest. The goblet was found in Binyamin’s sack.*

<sup>13</sup> *They tore their garments. Each one loaded up his donkey, and they returned to the city.*

## BINYAMIN IS RETAINED AND THE OTHER BROTHERS SENT HOME

44:14 **Y**ehudah and his brothers came to Yosef’s house, and he was still there (waiting for them). They fell on the ground in front of him.

MAFTIR <sup>15</sup> Yosef said to them, “What is this deed that you have done? Don’t you know that an (important) person like me regularly practices divination (so I could figure out that you stole the goblet)?”

<sup>16</sup> Yehudah said, “What shall we say to my master? How can we speak? How can we justify ourselves? (We know we have done no wrong, but) God has found your servants’ guilt. Both we and the one in whose possession the goblet has been found will be (your) slaves.”

<sup>17</sup> (Yosef) said, “Far be it from me to do this! The man in whose possession the goblet was found will be my slave. You may all go in peace to your father.”

HAFTARAHs: MIKEITZ – PAGE 390. CHANUKAH – PAGE 398. CHANUKAH (LAST DAY) – PAGE 401.

Maftir readings for Shabbos Chanukah are: **day three**—*Bamidbar* 24-29 (page 403); **day four**—*ibid.* 30-35 (page 404); **day six**—six *aliyos* are read from the weekly *Parsha*, seventh *aliyah* is *Bamidbar* 28:9-15 (page 404) and *Maftir* is *ibid.* 7:42-47 (page 404); **day seven**—*ibid.* 48-53 (page 404); **day eight**—*ibid.* 54-89 (page 404).

## TORAS MENACHEM

Nevertheless, this *kal vachomer* is partially valid, since the tribe of Levi was not enslaved at all, so at least part of the Jewish people did not suffer from “shortness of breath and hard labor.” Thus Moshe’s logic would apply to them.

Consequently, *Rashi* writes (in his commentary to this verse), “This is one of the ten *kal vachomer* conclusions mentioned in scripture,” to indicate that the reader should not be troubled by the partial inconsistency, because all the ten instances of *kal vachomer* in scripture are partially inconsistent.

Likewise, in our case: Since the brothers’ argument was partially valid—for it applied to all of the brothers except Binyamin—it is thus no less a *kal vachomer* than the other cases stated in *Bereishis Rabah*, which all share similar inconsistencies.

### TWO FURTHER CASES OF KAL VACHOMER

After Miriam was struck with *tzara’as* (leprosy), Moshe argued, “If her father turned to her with an angry face wouldn’t she be humiliated [and not show herself] for seven days? All the more so [now she was humiliated] by the Divine Presence [with *tzara’as*] let her be quarantined outside the camp... for seven days” (*Bamidbar* 12:14, and *Rashi* *ibid.*).

Again, there is an inconsistency here: it is possible to send a girl away from her father in disgrace, but one cannot be “sent away” from God who is everywhere, even outside the camp.

However, *Rashi* did not find it necessary to make any comment in this case, since, at the literal level, the reader can understand that being sent outside the camp is not to “be distanced from God,” but rather it is a punishment. So, since the matter is self-understood at the literal level, *Rashi* made no comment.

The fourth case of *kal vachomer* is a statement of Moshe before he passed away: “For I know your rebelliousness and your stubbornness. Look!—even while I am still alive with you today you have been rebels against God, surely (you will be) after my death (too).” (*Devarim* 31:27).

Again, this *kal vachomer* can be refuted. For, it could be argued that the Jewish people were more rebellious when Moshe was alive, because in the back of their minds they knew that Moshe would defend their bad deeds before God. When Moshe would pass away however, they would be without their “defense attorney,” so they would be forced to improve their behavior (c.f. *Sanhedrin* 37a).

Nevertheless, since this problem is too elaborate for the five year-old student of scripture to fathom, *Rashi* felt no need to address the matter.

In the final analysis we see that all the *kal vachomer* arguments of the Torah have inconsistencies, but that *Rashi* only chose to alert the reader to this fact when the inconsistencies were problematic at the literal level.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz* 5736)



# parshas Vayigash

## פרשת ויגש

### 🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

The words, “Then Yehudah approached (Vayigash) him,” describe an occurrence which took place in three different worlds:

a.) *The perceived reality*—Yehudah was approaching the viceroy of Egypt, who was capable of deciding the future of Yehudah and his entire family.

b.) *The reality*—that the viceroy of Egypt was none other than Yosef, Yehudah’s brother.

c.) *The mystical reality*—Yehudah approaching Yosef represents a Jew approaching God in prayer (*Bereishis Rabah* 93:6; *Ohr Hatorah, Vayigash* 349a).

There is a principle that all the interpretations to any given verse are connected. In our case, the *perceived*

*reality* is that the Jewish people are in exile and are subjugated to the gentile nations. In truth, however, the Jewish people are impervious to exile and they have the ability to rise above it—rather like the “*reality*” in our *Parsha* that Yosef, a Jew, was the *ruler* of Egypt.

How does a Jew muster the strength and the courage to lift himself from the *perceived reality* to *reality*? The answer is: via the *mystical reality*.

In our case, when a Jew approaches God in prayer, he reveals his inner bond with the Almighty, which gives him the ability to rise above the challenges of exile—and to succeed.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayigash* 5751)

יה ויגש אליו יהודה ויאמר בני אדני ידבר-נא עבדך דבר באזני אדני ואל-יחר אפך בעבדך כי כמוך כפרעה: יט אדני שאל את-עבדך לאמר היש-לכם אב או-אח: כ ונאמר אל-אדני יש-לנו אב זקן וילד זקנים קטן ואחיו מת ויותר הוא לבדו לאמו ואביו אהבו: כא ותאמר אל-עבדך הורדהו אלי ואשימה עיני עליו: כב ונאמר אל-אדני לא-יוכל הנער לעזב את-אביו ועזב את-אביו ומת: כג ותאמר אל-עבדך אם-לא ירד אחיכם הקטן אתכם לא תספון לראות פני: כד ויהי כי עלינו אל-עבדך אבי ונגד-לו את דברי אדני: כה ויאמר אבנו שבו שברו-לנו מעט-אכל: כו ונאמר לא נוכל לרדת אם-יש אחינו הקטן אתנו וירדנו כי-לא נוכל לראות פני האיש ואחינו הקטן איננו אתנו: כז ויאמר עבדך אבי אלינו אתם ידעתם כי שנים ילדה-לי אשתי: כח ויצא האחד מאתי ואמר אך טרף טרף ולא ראיתו עד-הנה: כט ולקחתם גם-את-זה מעם פני וקרהו אסון והורדתם את-שיבתי ברעה שאלה: ל ועתה כבאי אל-עבדך אבי

יה ויקריב לותיה יהודה ואמר בבועו רבוני ימליל כען עבדך פתנמא קדם רבוני ולא יתקף רונקד בעבדך ארי כפרעה בן את: יט רבוני שאיל ית עבדוהי למימר האית לכוני אבא או אחא: כ ואמרנא לרבני אית לנא אבא סבא ובר סיבתין זעיר ואחוהי מית ואשתאר הוא בלחודוהי לאמיה ואבוהי רחים ליה: כא ואמרת לעבדך אחתוהי לותי ואשוני עיני עלוהי: כב ואמרנא לרבני לא יכול עולימא למשבק ית אבוהי ואם ישבוק ית אבוהי ומית: כג ואמרת לעבדך אם לא יחזת אחוכון זעירא עמכון לא תוספון למחזוי אפי: כד והוא כד סליקנא לות עבדך אבא וחוניא ליה ית פתנמי רבוני: כה ואמר אבונא טובו זבונו לנא זעיר עבורא: כו ואמרנא לא נכול למיחת אם אית אחונא זעירא עמנא וניחות ארי לא נכול למחזוי אפי נברא ואחונא זעירא ליתוהי עמנא: כז ואמר עבדך אבא לנא אתון ידעתון ארי תרין ילידת לי אתת: כח ונפק חד מלותי ואמרית ברם מקטל קטיל ולא חזיתיה עד כען: כט ותדברון אף ית דין מן קדמי ויערענייה מותא ותחתון ית שיבתי כבישתא לשאל: ל וכען כמית לות עבדך אבא

כשׁ

היה לך לשאול כל אלה, צחק ביינו מצקשים, או אחותנו אהב מצקש, ואף על פי כן נאמר אל אדוני, לא כחדנו ממך דבר: (כ) ואחיו מת. מפני היראה היה מוסיף דבר שקר מפיו, אמר, אם אומר לו שהוא קיים, יאמר הביאהו אלנו: לבדו לאמו. מאותו האס חזן לו עוד אח: (כז) ועזב את אביו ומת. אם יעזוב את אביו, דואגים אנו שמא ימות בדרכ, שכרי אמו בדרכ מתה: (כט) וקרהו אסון. שהשטן מקטרג בשעת הסכנה: והורדתם את שיבתי וגו'. עכשיו כשהוא אלנו, אני מתנחם בו על אמו ועל אחיו, ואם

(יח) ויגש אליו. דבר באזני אדני. יכנסו דברי צלזולי: ואל יחר אפך. מכאן אהב למד שדבר אליו קשות: כי כמוך כפרעה. חשבו אהב צעני כמלך, זה פשוטו. ומדרשו<sup>2</sup>, סופך ללקות עליו צרעת, כמו שלקה פרעה על ידי זקנתי שרה, על לילה אחת שעכבה. דבר אחר, מה פרעה גזר ואינו מקיים, מצטיח ואינו עושה, אף אהב כן. וכי זו היא שימת עין, שאמרת לשום עיך עליו. דבר אחר כי כמוך כפרעה, אם תקניעני, אהרוג אותך ואת אדונך<sup>3</sup>. (יט) אדני שאל את עבדיו. מתחלה צלזלה צאת עליו, למה

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why were the brothers concerned about taking Binyamin away from Ya'akov ? (v. 22)

RASHI: "If he leaves his father, we are worried that maybe he will die while traveling, for his mother died while traveling."

● What was Ya'akov's fear? (v. 29)

RASHI: That Binyamin would have a fatal accident, because the Satan makes accusations at a time of danger.

(See also Classic Questions to 42:38, above)

TORAS MENACHEM

☞ THE CONCERN FOR BINYAMIN (v. 22, 29)

It was explained above (*Toras Menachem* to 42:38), that Ya'akov's concern about Binyamin going down to Egypt changed after the brothers returned from Egypt without Shimon. Initially, Ya'akov thought that Yosef had been torn apart by a wild animal while he was traveling, and he was afraid that his brother Binyamin might be prone to a similar misfortune.

Furthermore, Rochel (their mother) had also passed away when traveling, and Ya'akov was concerned that this was a further indication of susceptibility to an accusation from the Satan while on a journey.

However, when the brothers returned without Shimon, Ya'akov "suspected them that perhaps they had killed [Shimon] or sold him like Yosef" (*Rashi* to 42:36). Ya'akov thus rejected the theory that Binyamin was

## 🕎 YEHUDAH CHALLENGES YOSEF 🕎

44:18 **T**hen Yehudah approached (Yosef) and said, “Please, my master! Your servant now (wants to) say something that (I hope) my master will listen to. (I’m going to be firm) so please don’t get angry at your servant, for you are as (important in my eyes) as Pharaoh (himself).”

<sup>19</sup> “(From the very first instance,) my master interrogated his servants (accusingly), saying, ‘Have you a father or a brother?’

<sup>20</sup> “(Nevertheless, we held nothing back from you). We said to my master, ‘We have an elderly father (who has) a baby born to him in old age. His brother is dead, so he is the only child of his mother, and his father loves him.’

<sup>21</sup> “You said to your servants, ‘Bring him down to me, so I can see him for myself.’

<sup>22</sup> “We said to my master, ‘The boy cannot leave his father, for if he leaves his father (we are concerned that) he will die (en route, for his mother died while traveling).’

<sup>23</sup> “You said to your servants, ‘If your youngest brother doesn’t come down with you, you’ll never see my face again!’

<sup>24</sup> “Then, when we went up to your servant, my father, and we told him the words of my master, <sup>25</sup> our father said, ‘Go back and buy us a bit of food.’

<sup>26</sup> “We said, ‘We can’t go down (like we did before)! We’ll (only) go down if our youngest brother is with us, because the man won’t let us see him if our youngest brother isn’t with us.’

<sup>27</sup> “Your servant, my father, said to us, ‘You know that my wife (Rochel) bore me two (children). <sup>28</sup> One of them has departed from me, and I said, “He must have been ripped apart again and again\*”—and I haven’t seen him since. <sup>29</sup> If you’ll take this one away from me too, and a fatal (accident) occurs to him, you’ll bring my old age to the grave in grief.’

<sup>30</sup> “So, if I’ll come (back) now to your servant, my father, and the boy isn’t with us, (being that) his

### TORAS MENACHEM

## 🕎 The Last Word 🕎

**I**t appears at first glance that Yehudah approaching Yosef (v. 18) reflected the power of Yosef—the ruler of Egypt to whom Yehudah had to appeal. At the time Yosef was appointed by Pharaoh as the ruler of the land. Pharaoh was an absolute monarch, and Yosef was “like Pharaoh,” as Yehudah himself said (*ibid.*).

Nevertheless we see that Yehudah, not knowing that this was in fact his brother Yosef, was not intimidated by authority and acted with the greatest measure of confidence. Without even asking permission from Yosef, he approached him in an aggressive manner and spoke to him in harsh language. This was despite the fact that it was a life-endangering move, knowing how Yosef could respond to his chutzpah!

Thus, it appears that Yehudah approaching Yosef expresses, in fact, the power of Yehudah.

**I**t could be argued that the powerful manner in which “Yehudah approached him” actually broke through a spiritual barrier, making it possible for Ya’akov and his children to later settle in a manner that

“they acquired property there. They were fertile, and their population increased very rapidly” (47:27).

The reason for this could be argued as follows. The strength of a Jew in this world during exile can be in one of two manners:

a.) One’s strength is proportionate to what is possible according to the laws of nature and conduct of the world—according to the limitations of exile, government law etc. This was represented by Yosef.

b.) One is in a state which completely transcends the limitations of the world, the nations of the world, and even the exile itself. In fact, the person conducts himself with such a strong resolve that he is even able to change the national laws and practices. This was the level of Yehudah.

Thus, the strength of Yehudah made it possible for a Jew to be, not only a controlling force over the nations of the world (like Yosef), but, in addition, able to influence the world in a manner which completely transcends any limitation.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayigash* 5752)

ועולימא ליתוהי עמנא ונפשיה חביבא ליה כנפשיה: לא ויהי כד יתווי ארי לית עולימא וימות ויתחון עבדיך ית שיבת עבדך אבונא בדוננא לשאל: לב ארי עבדך מערב בעולימא מן אבא למימר אם לא איתיניה לותך ואחי חמי לאבא כל יומיא: ג וכען יתב כען עבדך חלף עולימא עבדא לרבונא ועולימא יסק עם אחוהי: ד ארי איבדין אסק לות אבא ועולימא ליתוהי עמי דלמא אחוי כבישו די ושתכח ית אבא: א ולא יכיל יוסף לאתחסנא לכל דקימין עלוהי וקרא אפיקו כל אנש מעלוי ולא קם אנש עמיה כד אתידע יוסף לות אחוהי: ב ויהב ית קליה בכיתא ושמעו מצרים ושמע אנש בית פרעה: ג ואמר יוסף לאחוהי אנא יוסף העד כען אבא קים ולא יכילו אחוהי לאתבא תיה פתגם ארי אתבהילו מן קדמוהי: ד ואמר יוסף לאחוהי קריבו כען לותי וקריבו ואמר אנא יוסף אחוכון די זבנתון יתי למצרים: ה וכען לא תתנסון ולא יתקף בעיניכון ארי זבנתון יתי הקא ארי לקימא שלחני יי קדמיכון: ו ארי דנן

והנער איננו אתנו ונפשו קשורה בנפשו: [שני] לא והיה כראותו כי אין הנער ומת והולידו עבדיך את שיבת עבדך אבינו בנינו שאלה: לב כי עבדך ערב את הנער מעם אבי לאמר אם לא אביאנו אליך והטאתי לאבי כל הימים: ג ועתה ישבנא עבדך תחת הנער עבד לאדני והנער יעל עם אחיו: ד כי איך אעלה אל אבי והנער איננו אתי פן אראה ברע אשר ימצא את אבי: מה א ולא יכל יוסף להתאפק לכל הנצבים עליו ויקרא הוציאו כל איש מעלי ולא עמד איש אתו בהתנדע יוסף אל אחיו: ב ויתן את קלו בבכי וישמעו מצרים וישמע בית פרעה: ג ויאמר יוסף אל אחיו אני יוסף העוד אבי חי ולא יכלו אחיו לענות אתו כי נבהלו מפניו: ד ויאמר יוסף אל אחיו גשו נא אלי ויגשו ויאמר אני יוסף אחיכם אשר מכרתם אתי מצרימה: ה ועתה א אל תעצבו ואל יחר בעיניכם כי מכרתם אתי הנה כי למחיה שלחתי אלהים לפניכם: ו כי זה שנתים הרעב בקרב הארץ ועוד

רש"י

ושומעין שאחיו מתדויעין כדודו להס: (3) וישמע בית פרעה. ציתו של פרעה, כלומר עזדיו וצני ציתו. ואין זה לשון צית ממש, אלא כמו צית ישראל. צית יבודה, מישני"דע בלע"י: (ג) נבהלו מפניו. מפני הצושה: (ד) גשו נא אלי. ראה אותם נסוגים לאחור, אמר, עכשו אחי וכלמיס, קרא להם בלשון רכה ותחנונים ובראה להם שכוא מכול: (ה) למחיה. להיות להם למחיה: (ו) כי זה שנתים הרעב. עזרו משני הכרע:

ימות זה, דומה עלי ששלשתן מתו ציוס אחד: (לא) והיה כראותו כי אין הנער ומת. אציו מלרחו: (לב) כי עבדך ערב את הנער. ואם תאמר למח אני נכנס לתגר יותר משאר אחי. הס כולם מצחון, ואני נתקשרתי בקשר חזק להיות מנווד צ"י עולמות: (לג) ישב נא עבדך וגו'. לכל דבר אני מעולה ממנו, לגבורה ולמלחמה ולשמע: (לד) ולא יכול יוסף להתאפק לכל הנצבים. לא היה יכול לסבול שיבוי מצרים נלצים עליו

TORAS MENACHEM

prone to accidents while traveling, and was concerned instead that the brothers would kill Binyamin (See *Toras Menachem* *ibid.*).

Based on the above, we can explain Yehudah's comments here, in our *Parshah*. Regarding Ya'akov's initial concerns, Yehudah explained that: "If he leaves his father, we are worried that maybe he will die while traveling, for his mother died while traveling" (*Rashi* to v. 22). Obviously, this was a slight modification of the truth, since Ya'akov's real concern was that Binyamin might suffer a fatality on the way like Yosef and Rochel. But since the brothers knew that Yosef was not in fact prone to accidents while traveling, since they themselves had fabricated the account of Yosef's demise, Yehudah was only able to express Ya'akov's secondary concern that "his mother died while traveling." I.e. while Ya'akov's worry was based on a *pattern* of accidents between Yosef and Rochel, the brothers knew that no such pattern existed, so they were only able to tell "part" of the truth.

However, when Yehudah explained Ya'akov's concern for Binyamin on the second occasion that he appeared before the Egyptian governor (alias Yosef) he was forced to tell a complete lie. For, Ya'akov had now begun to suspect the brothers of disposing of Yosef and Shimon, and he did not trust the remaining brothers with Binyamin in their hands. Obviously, Yehudah could not offer this as an explanation to the Egyptian governor (alias Yosef)—for how could he reveal the fact that his father had suspected them of foul play?

Therefore, he was forced to lie and say that even on the second occasion Ya'akov's concern had been "that Binyamin would have a fatal accident because the Satan makes accusations at a time of danger" (*Rashi* to v. 29). And consequently, Yehudah felt it necessary to tell a further mistruth, that Yosef had been "been ripped apart again and again" (v. 28), for this would make it appear feasible that there was indeed a genuine fear of an accident on the way.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 216ff.)



SECOND READING soul is attached to (the boy's) soul, <sup>31</sup> he'll simply die (from grief) when he'll see that the boy is gone. Then your servants will have brought the old age of your servant, our father, to the grave in grief.

<sup>32</sup> "Now, (I am speaking out here in particular because I), your servant, assumed responsibility for the boy (when we took him) from my father, saying, 'If I don't bring him (back) to you, I will have sinned against my father forever.' <sup>33</sup> So now, please let your servant stay as a slave to my master instead of the boy, and let the boy go back with his brothers. <sup>34</sup> For how could I go back to my father if the boy is not with me? (I can't bear) to see the misery that my father would suffer!"

## 🌀 YOSEF REVEALS HIS IDENTITY 🌀

**45** **Y**osef couldn't bear (the thought that) all (the Egyptians) standing beside him (would see his brothers' shame when he revealed himself to them). So, he called out, "Take everyone away from me!" Thus, no one stood with Yosef when he revealed himself to his brothers.

<sup>2</sup> He wept so loudly, that the Egyptians (who had been sent out) heard. (Soon, the whole of Pharaoh's household heard (about it)\*.

<sup>3</sup> Yosef said to his brothers, "I am Yosef! Is my father still alive?"

But his brothers were unable to answer him because they were ashamed before him.

<sup>4</sup> (When he saw that they were ashamed) Yosef said to his brothers, "Please come closer to me." They drew closer, (and he showed them that he was circumcised).

He said, "I am your brother Yosef, whom you sold to Egypt. <sup>5</sup> But now, don't be upset or angry with yourselves that you sold me to this place, for (now we see that) God sent me ahead of you to save (your) lives <sup>6</sup> For it's two years now that there's been a famine in the land, and there won't be any plowing or

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Why did Yosef ask, "Is my father still alive" (v. 3), when he had *already* been told that Ya'akov lived? (43:27-8)

**RALBAG:** He thought they might have been lying to him as a ploy in order to get Binyamin back.

**ABARBANEL:** Yosef knew that his father was still alive. However, he thought that the brothers would be shocked when he revealed himself, so he asked them, "Is my father still alive," in order to enter into a conversation. He was then planning to ask them, "How are your families?" but the conversation could not continue, since they "were unable to answer him because they were ashamed before him."

**PANE'ACH RAZA:** Yosef was not asking whether Ya'akov was alive, but rather, what the condition of his health was.

**MAHARIK:** He was asking about Ya'akov's *spiritual* welfare. Yosef was saying: "Is my father's prophetic spirit still alive?"

**SFORNO:** Yosef was saying, "I can't believe that my father didn't die out of his deep concern for me."

**TIFERES YEHOANON:** Yosef was saying: "If you are scared that I will kill you, you have nothing to be scared of, because my father is still alive. Do you think I would be worse than Eisav, who refrained from killing his brother so long as his father was alive?" (see above, 27:41).

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

**W**e can learn from the example of Yosef towards his brothers that one should never seek revenge against a person who causes him any form of distress or damage. Rather, one should repay even a guilty offender with kindness (*Tanya* ch. 12).

Why should we be kind to *guilty* offenders?

Because whatever that person did to you ultimately stems from God. The person was merely an agent from God, Who decreed that this thing should occur to you. Thus, since "everything that God does is for the good" (*Brachos* 60b), you must repay the person—who brought this "good" to you—with kindness.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 247)

#### 🌀 YOSEF'S REVELATION

**Ralbag's** interpretation is difficult to accept, since when Yosef asked, "Is your elderly father, whom you mentioned, well? Is he still alive?" (43:27), the brothers had no reason to suspect that this was a ploy to detain Binyamin in Egypt because Yosef had not yet asked for Binyamin. Thus, there would have been no need for them to lie that Ya'akov was alive.

**Abarbanel's** solution is also difficult to accept at the literal level, for if Yosef wanted to ask his brothers "How are your families?" he could have done so immediately, without having to "enter into conversation" first.

Why does *Rashi* fail to explain this important matter?

#### THE EXPLANATION

When reading the current story, *Rashi* presumed that the reader would remember his previous comment in *Parshas Vayeishev*. On the words, "he was unable to be consoled" (37:35), *Rashi* comments: "A person is

תִּרְתִּין שְׁנַיִם כְּפָנָא בְּגוּ אַרְעָא וְעוֹד חֲמִשׁ שְׁנַיִם  
 דִּי לִית זְרוּעָא וְחֻצְדָּא: וְשִׁלְחֵנִי יְיָ כְּדַמְיִכּוֹן  
 לְשׁוּאָה לְכוּן שְׂאֲרָא בְּאַרְעָא וְלִקְנָמָא לְכוּן  
 לְשִׁיזְבָּא רִבְתָּא: ה וְכַעַן לֹא אֲתוּן שְׁלַחְתוּן  
 יְתִי הָכָא אֱלֹהִין מִן קֳדָם יְיָ וְשׁוּנֵי לְאַבָּא  
 לְפִרְעָה וּלְרַבּוֹן לְכָל אָנָּשׁ בֵּיתִיהּ וְשִׁלִּיט בְּכָל  
 אַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם: ט אֲחוּהּ וְסָקוּ לְוַת אֲבָא  
 וְתִימְרוּן לִיהּ בְּדַגְנָא אֲמַר בְּרַךְ יוֹסֵף שׁוּנֵי יְיָ  
 לְרַבּוֹן לְכָל מִצְרַיִם חוּת לְוַתִּי לֹא תִתְעַכֵּב:  
 י וְתִיתֵב בְּאַרְעָא דְּגִשְׁן וְתִהִי קָרִיב לִי אֶתְּ  
 וּבְנִיָּד וּבְנֵי בְנֵיָּד וְעַנְדָּ וְתוֹרְדָּ וְכָל דִּי לָךְ: יא וְאֲזוּן  
 יְתָד תִּמְן אַרְי עוֹד חֲמִשׁ שְׁנַיִם כְּפָנָא דְּלִמָּא  
 תְּחַמְסְכּוּן אֶתְּ וְאָנָּשׁ בֵּיתָד וְכָל דִּי לָךְ: יב וְהָא  
 עֵינִיכּוֹן חֲזוֹן וְעֵינֵי אַחֵי בְּנִימִין אַרְי כְּלִישְׁנָכוֹן  
 אָנָּא מְמַלִּיל עִמְכוּן: יג וְתַחֲוּן לְאַבָּא יְתִי כָּל  
 יְקָרֵי בְּמִצְרַיִם וְיִתִּי כָּל דִּי חֲוִיתוּן וְתוּחוּן  
 וְתַחֲתוּן יְתִי אֲבָא הָכָא: יד וְנִפְלַע עַל צוּרֵי  
 בְּנֵימִין אַחוּהִי וּבְכָא וּבְנֵימִין בְּכָא עַל  
 צוּרֵיהּ: טו וְנִשְׁקֵי לְכָל אַחוּהִי וּבְכָא עֲלִיהוּן  
 וּבְתֵרֵן בְּן מְלִילוֹ אַחוּהִי עֲמִיהּ: טז וְקָלָא אֲשַׁתְּמַע  
 בֵּית פִּרְעָה לְמִימַר אֲתוּ אַחֵי יוֹסֵף וְשִׁפְרָא בְּעֵינֵי  
 פִּרְעָה וּבְעֵינֵי עֲבָדוּהִי: יז וְאֲמַר פִּרְעָה לְיוֹסֵף  
 אֲמַר לְאַחִיָּד דָּא עֲבִידוּ טַעֲנֵנוּ יְתִי בְּעִירְכוּן  
 וְאֲזִילוּ אֲבִילוּ לְאַרְעָא דְּקִנְעָן: יח וְדָרְרוּ  
 יְתִי אֲבִיכוּן וְיִתִּי אָנָּשׁ בְּתִיכוּן וְאֲתוּ לְוַתִּי  
 וְאֲתֵן לְכוּן יְתִי טוֹב אַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם וְתִיכְלוּן

חֲמִשׁ שְׁנַיִם אֲשֶׁר אֵין-חֲרִישׁ וְקִצִּיר: ו וּשְׁלַחֲנִי אֱלֹהִים  
 לְפָנֶיכֶם לְשׁוּם לְכֶם שְׂאֲרִית בְּאַרְץ וּלְהַחֲיוֹת לְכֶם לְפָלִיטָה  
 גְּדֹלָה: [שלישין] ה וְעַתָּה לֹא-אַתֶּם שְׁלַחְתֶּם אֹתִי הִנֵּה כִּי  
 הָאֱלֹהִים וַיְשִׁימֵנִי לְאָב לְפִרְעָה וּלְאָדוֹן לְכָל-בֵּיתוֹ וּמִשָּׁל  
 בְּכָל-אַרְץ מִצְרַיִם: ט מִהֲרוּ וְעָלוּ אֶל-אָבִי וְאִמְרַתֶּם אֵלָיו כֹּה  
 אָמַר בְּנֵךְ יוֹסֵף שְׁמַעֲנִי אֱלֹהִים לְאָדוֹן לְכָל-מִצְרַיִם רַדְּה אֵלַי  
 אֶל-תַּעֲמֹד: י וַיִּשְׁבַּת בְּאַרְץ-גִּשְׁן וְהָיִתָּ קָרוֹב אֵלַי אֲתָהּ וּבְנֵיָד  
 וּבְנֵי בְנֵיָד וְצִאֲנֵךְ וּבְקָרְךָ וְכָל-אֲשֶׁר-לָךְ: יא וּכְלֹכְלֹתִי אֶתְּךָ שֵׁם  
 כִּי-עוֹד חֲמִשׁ שְׁנַיִם רָעַב פְּוֶן-תּוֹרֵשׁ אֲתָהּ וּבֵיתָךְ וְכָל-  
 אֲשֶׁר-לָךְ: יב וְהִנֵּה עֵינֵיכֶם רְאוֹת וְעֵינֵי אַחֵי בְּנֵימִין כִּי-כִּי  
 הִמְדַּבֵּר אֲלֵיכֶם: יג וְהִגַּדְתֶּם לְאָבִי אֶת-כָּל-כְּבוֹדִי בְּמִצְרַיִם  
 וְאֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר רְאִיתֶם וּמַהֲרַתֶּם וְהוֹרַדְתֶּם אֶת-אָבִי הִנֵּה:  
 יד וַיִּפְלַע עַל-צוּאֲרֵי בְּנֵימִין-אֲחִיו וַיִּבְךְּ וּבְנֵימִין בָּכָה עַל-צוּאֲרָיו:  
 טו וַיִּנְשֵׁק לְכָל-אֲחִיו וַיִּבְךְּ עֲלֵהֶם וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן דִּבְּרוּ אֲחִיו אֵתוֹ:  
 טז וְהִקְלָ נִשְׁמַע בֵּית פִּרְעָה לְאֲמֹר בָּאוּ אַחֵי יוֹסֵף וַיִּיטֵב בְּעֵינֵי  
 פִּרְעָה וּבְעֵינֵי עֲבָדָיו: יז וַיֹּאמֶר פִּרְעָה אֶל-יוֹסֵף אֲמַר אֶל-אַחִיָּד  
 זֹאת עָשׂוּ טַעֲנוּ אֶת-בְּעִירְכֶם וּלְכוּ-בָאוּ אֶרְצָה כְּנַעַן: יח וּקְחוּ  
 אֶת-אֲבִיכֶם וְאֶת-בְּתִיכֶם וּבָאוּ אֵלַי וְאֲתַנְּה לְכֶם אֶת-טוֹב

רש"י

בחלקו של בנימין וסופן ליחצ"ב: ובנימין בכה על צואריו. על משכן שלם  
 שעתיד להיות לחלקו של יוסף וסופו ליחצ"ב: (טו) וינשק. כוסיף בנשיקה, מנשק  
 וכולך. דיבייש"ר זלע"ו. ואחרי כן. מאחר שראוהו זוכה ולצו שלם עמכם:  
 דברו אחיו אתו. שמתחלה היו זושים ממנו: (טז) והקול נשמע בית פרעה.  
 כמו צבית פרעה, וזהו לשון צית ממש: (יז) טענו את בעירכם. תזאבה:  
 (יח) את טוב ארץ מצרים. ארץ גושן. ניצא ואינו יודע מה ניצא, סופה

(ח) לאב. לחצר ולפטרון: (ט) ועלו אל אבי. ארץ ישראל גזרה מכל הארצות:  
 (יא) פן תורש. דלמא תחמסכן, לשון מוריש ומעשיר: (יב) והנה עיניכם  
 רואות. זכזכדי, ושחני אחיכם, שחני מכול כסס. ועוד, כי פי המדבר אליכם  
 זלשון הקדש: ועיני אחי בנימין. השוכה את כולם יחד, לומר, שכשם שאין לי  
 שגחה על בנימין אחי, שכרי לא היכ זמכירתי, כך אין זלצי שגחה עליכם:  
 (יד) ויפל על צוארי בנימין אחיו ויברך. על שני מקדשות שעתידין להיות

TORAS MENACHEM

unable to be consoled for one who is really alive but believed to be dead.  
 For it is decreed (in Heaven) that a dead person should be forgotten from  
 the heart, but not a living person."  
 Thus, when Yosef revealed his identity, his first comment was, "I am  
 Yosef. Is my father still alive?" as if to say, "Since I, Yosef, am still alive, it  
 follows that my father has gone 22 years without being able to be  
 consoled. So, I am amazed that my father is still alive after that ordeal!"

Yosef then continued, "Hurry and go up (to the Land of Israel)... and  
 you should quickly bring my father down here" (v. 9-13), because he was  
 concerned that his father's life was in danger due to the amount of stress  
 he had suffered in the past 22 years.  
 Thus, we see that Yosef emphasized his amazement that Ya'akov was  
 still alive, in order to impress upon the brothers the urgency of bringing  
 him to Egypt.

harvesting for another five years. <sup>7</sup> God sent me ahead of you to ensure your survival in the land, and to sustain (your families and flocks for the) great salvation (they will need, due to their substantial size\*)." *THIRD READING*

<sup>8</sup> "Now (we can see that) it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me an advisor to Pharaoh, a master over all his household, and a ruler over the entire land of Egypt."

<sup>9</sup> "Hurry and go up (to the Land of Israel,) to my father, and say to him, 'This is what your son Yosef said: "God has made me a master over all the Egyptians. Come down here to me! Do not delay!" <sup>10</sup> You can dwell in the land of Goshen—you, your children, your grandchildren, your flocks, your cattle and everything that's yours—and you'll be near me. <sup>11</sup> I will sustain you there—you, your household and everything that's yours—so you don't become poor, for there are still five years of famine.'"

<sup>12</sup> "Look, you can see for yourself—and my brother Binyamin can see for himself—that (I really am Yosef, because I am circumcised and) my mouth is speaking to you (in Hebrew)."

<sup>13</sup> "You should tell my father about all the honor which I receive in Egypt and about everything that you've seen, and you should quickly bring my father down here."

<sup>14</sup> (Yosef) fell on his brother Binyamin's neck and cried, and Binyamin cried on his neck. <sup>15</sup> He kissed all his brothers and cried over them. After his brothers (saw that he was sincere, they) spoke with him.

### 🌀 PHARAOH AND YOSEF SEND GIFTS TO YA'AKOV 🌀

45:16 **T**he news was heard in Pharaoh's house: (People were) saying, "Yosef's brothers have come!" (The news) pleased Pharaoh and his servants.

<sup>17</sup> Pharaoh said to Yosef, "Tell your brothers, 'This is what you should do: Load up your animals (with grain) then go and bring them to the land of Cana'an. <sup>18</sup> Fetch your father and (the people of) your households and come to me. I will give you (the land of Goshen which is) the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the finest (produce) of the land.'

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

##### ● Why did Yosef and Binyamin cry? (v. 14)

**RASHI:** Yosef fell on his brother Binyamin's neck and wept for the two Temples which were destined to be in Binyamin's territory and would ultimately be destroyed. Binyamin wept on (Yosef's) neck for the Tabernacle at Shiloh, which was destined to be in Yosef's territory, and would ultimately be destroyed. (See "The Last Word")

#### TORAS MENACHEM

However, this begs the question: If there was such urgency, why did Yosef not go *himself* to Cana'an to greet his father, thereby fulfilling the *mitzvah* of honoring parents, rather than waiting for the brothers to bring him back to Egypt?

To clarify this matter, Yosef then said: "(Now we see that) *God sent me* ahead of you to save (your) lives... *God sent me* ahead of you to ensure your survival in the land... *it was not you who sent me here, but God.* He made me an advisor to Pharaoh, a master over all his household, and a ruler over the entire land of Egypt" (v. 5-8).

In other words, Yosef made it clear that his role in Egypt was one that was Divinely ordained ("God sent me"). Therefore, it was not possible for him to leave his position in Egypt where God had sent him.

Therefore the only solution was to bring Ya'akov to Egypt, to be reunited with his son.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 387ff.)

### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

**W**hy did Yosef and Binyamin cry over the sanctuaries which were to be destroyed in *each other's* territory, and not over the destruction that was to occur in *their own* territories (v.14)?

Eliminating other people's problems ultimately depends on the other person's own free will. Friends can help with their prayers and advice, but the person himself must take the necessary action.

So, when Yosef and Binyamin perceived that they were *powerless* to solve each other's problems, they cried in sympathy. Nevertheless, they did not cry over the future destruction of their own sanctuaries, because they had the responsibility to find a solution to their own problems, and not merely to sit and cry.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 10, pp. 148-9)

ית טובא דארעא: יט ואת מפקדא דא עבירו סיבו לכוון מארעא דמצרים עגלו למפליכוון ולנשיכוון ותמלון ית אבוכון ויתתון: כ ועינכוון לא תחום על מניכוון ארי טוב כל ארעא דמצרים דילכוון הוא: כא ועברו בן בני ישראל ויהב להון יוסף עגלן על מימרא דפרעה ויהב להון וודין לארעה: כב לכלהון יהב לגבר אצטלון דלבושא ולבנימין יהב הלל מאה סלעין דכסף וחמשה אצטלון דלבושין: כג ולאבוהי שלח כדא עשרה חמרין טעינין מטובא דמצרים ועשר אתנן טעינין עבור ולחם וודין לאבוהי לארעה: כד ושלח ית אחוהי ואזלו ואמר להון לא תתנצון בארעה: כה וסליקו ממצרים ואתו לארעא דכנען לות יעקב אבוהון: כו ותיואו ליה למימר עד כען יוסף קים וארי הוא שליט בכל ארעא דמצרים והו מליא פינן על לביה ארי לא הימין להון: כז ומלילו עמיה ית כל פתנמי יוסף די מליל עמהון וחזא ית עגלתא דשלח יוסף למטל יתיה ושרת רוח נבואה לות יעקב אבוהון: כח ואמר ישראל סגי לי הדוא עד כען יוסף ברי קים אצויל ואחזיניה עד לא אימות: א ונטל ישראל וכל די ליה ואתא לבאר שבע ודבח

ארץ מצרים ואכלו את-חלב הארץ: יט ואתה צויתה זאת עשו קחולכם מארץ מצרים עגלות למפכם ולנשיכם ונשאתם את-אביכם ובאתם: כ ועינכם אל-תהם על-כליכם כי-טוב כל-ארץ מצרים לכם הוא: כא ויעשו-בן בני ישראל ויתן להם יוסף עגלות על-פי פרעה ויתן להם צדה לדרך: כב לכלם נתן לאיש חלפות שמלת ולבנימן נתן שלש מאות כסף וחמש חלפת שמלת: כג ולאביו שלח כזאת עשרה חמרים נשאים מטוב מצרים ועשר אתנת נשאת בר ולחם ומזון לאביו לדרך: כד וישלח את-אחיו וילכו ויאמר אליהם אל-תרגזו בדרך: כה ויעלו ממצרים ויבאו ארץ כנען אל-יעקב אביהם: כו ויגדו לו לאמר עוד יוסף חי וכי-הוא משל בכל-ארץ מצרים ויפג לבו כי לא-האמין להם: כז וידברו אליו את כל-דברי יוסף אשר דבר אליהם וירא את-העגלות אשר-שלח יוסף לשאת אתו ותחי רוח יעקב אביהם: [רביעי] כח ויאמר ישראל רב עוד-יוסף בני חי אלה ואתנו בטרם אמות: מו א ויסע ישראל וכל-אשר-לו ויבא

ש"י

לכתובכח זה עס זה ולומר, על ידך נמכר, אתה ספרת לשון הרע עליו, וגרמת לנו לשנאתו: (כו) וכי הוא מושל. ואשר הוא מושל: ויפג לבו. נחלף לבו והלך מלכאמין, לא היה לבו פונה אל הדברים, לשון מפיגין טעמן בלשון משנה, וכמו מאין הפוגות<sup>1</sup>, וריחו לא נמר<sup>2</sup>, מתרגמין וריחיה לא פג: (כז) את כל דברי יוסף. סימן מסר להם, צמח היה עוסק כשפירש ממנו, בפרשת עגלה ערופה, וזה שנאמר וירא את העגלות אשר שלח יוסף, ולא נאמר אשר שלח פרעה: ותחי רוח יעקב. שרתה עליו שכונה שפירשה ממנו: (כח) רב עוד. רב לי עוד שמחה ומזון, הואיל ועוד יוסף בני חי:

לעשותה כמזולה שאין זה דגיס: חלב הארץ. כל חלב לשון מיטב הוא: (יט) ואתה צויתה. מפי לומר להם: זאת עשו. כך אמר להם שזרשתי הוא: (כג) שלח בזאת. כחשזון חזק, ומכו החשזון, עשרה חמורים וגוי: מטוב מצרים. מלינו בגמרא ששלח לו יין ישן, שדעת זקנים נוחה הימנו. ומדרש אגדה, גריסין של פול: בר ולחם. כחרגומו: ומזון. ליפתן: (כד) אל תרגזו בדרך. אל תתעסקו בדבר הלכה, שלא תרגז עליכם הדרך. דבר אחר אל תפסיעו פסיעה גסה, והתכנסו צמחה לעיר. ולפי פשוטו של מקרא יש לומר, לפי שהיו נכלמים, היה דואג שמא יריבו בדרך על דבר מכירתו,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What was “Egypt’s finest produce” (v. 23)**  
**RASHI:** We find in the Talmud that (Yosef) sent (Ya’akov) aged wine which is enjoyed by old people in particular. According to the *Midrash*, he sent split beans.  
**MAHARSHA:** Aged wine is enjoyed by old people because they tend to get cold, and wine warms them up (*Chidushei Agados, Megilah 16b*).  
**DIVREI DAVID:** The Egyptian split beans had the property of calming worries. Thus, even though Ya’akov’s worries had now ended, he needed something to calm him, as he had been distraught over Yosef

for so long. Alternatively, these beans help a person sleep. Thus Yosef sent them because elderly people have trouble sleeping.  
 ● **If 11 brothers returned, why were only 10 male donkeys sent with them (v. 23)**  
**MIDRASH LEKACH TOV:** Yosef did not send Binyamin back with the other brothers, otherwise he would have given him his own donkey.  
**TUR HA’ARUCH:** The fact that only 10 donkeys returned to Canaan does not prove that Binyamin stayed in Egypt, since it is possible that Yosef did not want to burden Binyamin with taking care of a donkey.

<sup>19</sup> (Pharaoh said to Yosef), “You have been commanded (by me to say to them), ‘This is what you should do: Take wagons for yourselves from the land of Egypt, for your young children and for your wives. Transport your father, and come here.’ <sup>20</sup> Don’t worry about (bringing) your belongings, because the best of all the land of Egypt is (now) yours.”

<sup>21</sup> Yisra’el’s sons did what (they were instructed). Yosef gave them wagons by Pharaoh’s orders, and he gave them provisions for the journey. <sup>22</sup> He gave each one of them a set of clothes, and he gave Binyamin three hundred silver pieces and five sets of clothes. <sup>23</sup> He (also) sent to his father the same (amount of donkeys that Pharaoh had sent): ten male donkeys carrying Egypt’s finest produce. (In addition, Yosef also sent) ten female donkeys carrying grain, bread, and delicacies for his father (to eat) on the way.

<sup>24</sup> He escorted his brothers off, and they went. (As they left) he said to them, “Don’t argue on the way (about the past. It’s all over now).”

<sup>25</sup> So they went up from Egypt, and came to the land of Cana’an, to their father, Ya’akov. <sup>26</sup> They told him (what had happened), saying, “Yosef is still alive.” (They told him) that (Yosef) ruled over the entire land of Egypt, but his heart denied it, because he did not believe them.

<sup>27</sup> (However) when they told him all of Yosef’s words which he had told them (including the content of the last discussion which Yosef had had with Ya’akov), and he saw the wagons that Yosef had sent to carry him, the spirit of their father Ya’akov was revived.

<sup>28</sup> Yisra’el said, “(I have) a lot (to look forward to now), because my son Yosef is still alive. Let me go and see him before I die!”

FOURTH  
READING

---

TORAS MENACHEM

---

### 🔗 DID BINYAMIN REMAIN IN EGYPT? (v. 23)

According to **Midrash Lekach Tov**, the fact that only ten male donkeys were sent back to Cana’an by Yosef\* is proof that Binyamin, the eleventh brother, must have remained in Egypt with Yosef.

However, at the literal level, this is difficult to accept because:

a.) The Torah states unequivocally that Yosef “escorted his brothers off, and they went” (v. 24), without making any indication that Binyamin remained.

b.) Yehudah stated earlier, “If I’ll come (back) now to your servant, my father, and the boy isn’t with us, (being that) his soul is attached to (the boy’s) soul, he’ll simply die (from grief) when he’ll see that the boy’s gone” (44:30-31). Here we see that it would have endangered Ya’akov’s life not to return Binyamin with the other brothers, and clearly Yosef would not have done anything that might endanger his father’s life.

### SO WHY WERE THERE ONLY TEN DONKEYS?

**Tur Ha’aruch** writes that Binyamin was indeed sent back, but the Torah only mentions 10 donkeys, even though there were eleven brothers, because Yosef did not wish to burden Binyamin with looking after a laden donkey.

However, at the literal level, these ten donkeys were a gift from Yosef to Ya’akov which Yosef sent to honor his father (see note\*). Thus, it is unlikely that Binyamin would consider his participation in this *mitzvah* of honoring his father a “burden”—especially when one considers that “his soul is attached to (the boy’s) soul.”

Rather, there appears to be a simple, logical explanation to this matter:

When the brothers came to Egypt seeking grain for the first time in *Parshas Mikeitz*, Shimon was detained as “security,” to ensure that his brothers would return. Clearly, there was no need to detain his donkey too, as Shimon alone was sufficient security. Therefore, the nine remaining brothers would have returned home with ten laden donkeys, for they would have loaded Shimon’s donkey to provide food for his family back at home.

When they returned to Egypt the *second* time, with Binyamin, they presumably took *one* donkey each, i.e. a total of *ten*. Thus, at this point in time, they had *ten* donkeys in Egypt, which Pharaoh commanded to be returned to Ya’akov, laden with grain (v. 17).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 10, pp. 155-6)

### 🔗 YOSEF’S GIFT (v. 23)

a.) Why does *Rashi* bring two interpretations of what Yosef sent Ya’akov, wine and split beans?

b.) *Rashi* does not usually cite sources for his explanations. Why, in this case, does he stress that one explanation is from the *Talmud*, and the other from the *Midrash*?

### THE EXPLANATION

Yosef’s primary intention in sending food back to the Land of Cana’an could not have been to sustain his father and family for an extended period, for Yosef had requested that Ya’akov be brought to Egypt *immediately* (above, v. 9, 13). Rather, Yosef’s primary intention was to offer a gift to Ya’akov to fulfill the precept of honoring one’s parents.

Therefore, *Rashi* concluded that Yosef would have sent Ya’akov

---

\* In verse 17 Pharaoh instructed Yosef to load the brothers’ donkeys with a gift of grain for Ya’akov. As a son, Yosef was obliged to give his father a gift exceeding that of Pharaoh’s. Therefore, in verse 23 we read that he gave 10 male-donkeys, equivalent to Pharaoh’s gift (see *Rashi* *ibid*), plus an *additional* 10 female-donkeys, in order to surpass Pharaoh’s gift. Thus, while the Torah does not state explicitly (in v. 17) how many of the brothers’ donkeys were returned to Cana’an by Pharaoh, this was in fact *equivalent* to Yosef’s gift of 10 male-donkeys (in v. 23). We are thus left with the question: Since 11 brothers returned, why were there only 10 donkeys?—*Likutei Sichos* vol. 10, pp. 154-5.



🌀 YA'AKOV TRAVELS TO EGYPT WITH HIS FAMILY 🌀

**46** **Y**isra'el traveled with all his possessions, and he arrived at Be'er-Sheva. He slaughtered sacrifices to the God of his father Yitzchak.

<sup>2</sup> In a nighttime vision, God spoke to Yisra'el. He said, "Ya'akov, Ya'akov!"  
"Here I am!" (Ya'akov) said.

<sup>3</sup> He said, "I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid of going down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. <sup>4</sup> I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up (and bury you in the Land of Israel). Yosef (will outlive you) and he will put his hands on your eyes (after you pass away\*)." <sup>5</sup> Ya'akov got going from Be'er-Sheva. The sons of Yisra'el transported their father Ya'akov, together with their young children and their wives, in the wagons Pharaoh had sent to carry him. <sup>6</sup> They took their livestock and their possessions that they had acquired in the land of Cana'an, and they came to Egypt.

<sup>5</sup> Ya'akov got going from Be'er-Sheva. The sons of Yisra'el transported their father Ya'akov, together with their young children and their wives, in the wagons Pharaoh had sent to carry him. <sup>6</sup> They took their livestock and their possessions that they had acquired in the land of Cana'an, and they came to Egypt.

Ya'akov was together with all his descendants. <sup>7</sup> His sons and his grandsons were with him. He brought his daughters, his granddaughters and all his descendants with him to Egypt.

TORAS MENACHEM

**YA'AKOV'S FEAR (v. 3)**

Rashi's comment to verse 3 prompts the following questions:

a.) It is self-understood that Ya'akov would be afraid to leave the Land of Israel and settle in Egypt. Why did Rashi need to make any comment at all?

b.) Not only does Rashi's comment appear to be unnecessary, it actually seems to contradict the verse itself. The verse states that Ya'akov's concern was about going to Egypt ("Do not be afraid of going down to Egypt") whereas Rashi informs us that this was not his worry at all, but rather, he was only concerned about leaving the Land of Israel ("The fact that he was forced to go outside the Land of Israel pained him").

Why did Rashi reject the simple interpretations of **Chizkuni** and **Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer** that Ya'akov was afraid of the upcoming exile, or about living in a place whose inhabitants did not fear God—since both these explanations take the verse literally, that Ya'akov was afraid of "going down to Egypt." Rashi, on the other hand, states that Ya'akov's concern was the opposite of what the verse states: He was not worried about going to Egypt, but rather, about leaving the Land of Israel.

At first glance, one might argue that Ya'akov's reservations about leaving the Land of Israel were because he did not wish to leave a land which was holy, and settle in the Diaspora.

However, it was explained above that at the literal level of Torah interpretation which is adhered to by Rashi, the Land of Israel was not yet endowed with holiness during the times of the Patriarchs (see *Toras Menachem* to 15:18 above). Therefore, this could not have been Ya'akov's concern.

**THE EXPLANATION**

Rashi was troubled by the following, simple question: Why does the Torah state that Ya'akov only feared going down to Egypt after he had already begun his journey, along with all his family and possessions, arriving at Be'er-Sheva? Surely, Ya'akov's main concern about journeying to Egypt would have been felt before he departed? One would imagine that by the time he had already traveled several miles, he would have

already come to terms with what he was doing. So Rashi wondered: Why was he suddenly struck with fear at Be'er-Sheva?

Since Be'er-Sheva is on the southern border of the Land of Israel, Rashi concluded that Ya'akov's distress must have been connected with reaching the Land's geographical boundary. So Rashi wrote, "The fact that he was forced to go outside the Land of Israel pained him."

In other words, when leaving his home town Ya'akov had already come to terms with the fact that at some point in the near future he was going to depart from the Land of his ancestors. However, when reaching the border, Ya'akov became pained that he was now forced to leave the land in actuality.

One problem that still needs to be explained is that this was not the first time that Ya'akov left the Land of Israel. For when he was living in Lavan's house Ya'akov was away from his homeland for 20 years, during which time he observed Torah and mitzvos and built a loyal family who followed in his footsteps. Surely then, Ya'akov was fully aware that it was possible to become "a great nation" in Egypt too? Why was he so pained at leaving the Land?

However, there is a clear distinction between Ya'akov's position here in our Parsha, and the time when he left to live in Lavan's house. For

🌀 The Last Word 🌀

God told Ya'akov, "I will make you into a great nation there"—in Egypt—but God did not tell Ya'akov that he was wrong for wanting to stay in the Land of Israel.

This teaches us that even when the Jewish people are successful in times of exile, to the extent that they become "a great nation," one must always feel the deep pain and remorse that we are still in exile, away from our homeland.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, pp. 234-5)

למצרים יעקב ובנוהי ובקרא דיעקב ראובן:  
 ט ובני ראובן חנוך ופלוא וחצרון וכרמי:  
 י ובני שמעון ימואל וימין ואהר ויכין וצחר  
 ושואל בר כנעניתא: יא ובני לוי גרשון קהת  
 ומררי: יב ובני יהודה ער ואונן ושלה ופרץ  
 וזרח ומית ער ואונן בארעא דקנען וקוו בני  
 פרץ חצרון וקמול: יג ובני יששכר תולע  
 ופנה ויוב ושמרון: יד ובני זבולון סרד  
 ויחלאל: טו אלן בני לאה דילידת ליעקב  
 בפדן ארם ונת דינה ברתיה כל נפש בנוהי  
 ובנתיה תלתין ותלת: טז ובני גד צפיון וחגי  
 שוני ואצבון ערי וארודי ואראלי: יז ובני  
 אשר ימנה וישוה וישוי ובריעה ושרח  
 אהרהון ובני בריעה חבר ומלביאל: יח אלן  
 בני זלפה דיחב לבן ללאה ברתיה וילידת  
 נת אלן ליעקב שית עשר נפשא: יט בני רחל  
 אתת יעקב יוסף ובנימין: כ ואתילידו ליוסף  
 בארעא דמצרים דילידת ליה אסנת בת  
 פוטי פרע רבא דאון ית מנשה וית אפרים:  
 כא ובני בנימין בלע ובכר ואשבל גרא ונעמן  
 אחי וראש מפים וחפים וארד: כב אלן בני  
 רחל די אתילידו ליעקב כל נפשא ארבעה  
 עשר: כג ובני דן חושים: כד ובני נפתלי  
 יחצאל וגוני ויער ושלם: כה אלן בני בלהה  
 דיחב לבן לרחל ברתיה וילידת נת אלן  
 ליעקב כל נפשא שבעה: כו כל נפשא  
 דעלא ליעקב למצרים נפקי ירבה בר מנשי  
 בני יעקב כל נפשתא שתין ושית: כז ובני  
 יוסף די אתילידו ליה במצרים נפשתא  
 תרין כל נפשתא לבית יעקב דעלו

שמות בני ישראל הבאים מצרימה יעקב ובניו בכר יעקב  
 ראובן: ט ובני ראובן חנוך ופלוא וחצרון וכרמי: י ובני שמעון  
 ימואל וימין ואהר ויכין וצחר ושואל בן-הכנענית: יא ובני לוי  
 גרשון קהת ומררי: יב ובני יהודה ער ואונן ושלה ופרץ וזרח  
 וימת ער ואונן בארץ כנען ויהיו בני-פרץ חצרון וקמול:  
 יג ובני יששכר תולע ופנה ויוב ושמרון: יד ובני זבולון סרד  
 ויחלאל: טו אלה | בני לאה אשר ילדה ליעקב בפדן  
 ארם ואת דינה בתו כל-נפש בניו ובנותיו שלשים ושלוש:  
 טז ובני גד צפיון וחגי שוני ואצבן ערי וארודי ואראלי: יז ובני  
 אשר ימנה וישוה וישוי ובריעה ושרח אחתם ובני בריעה  
 חבר ומלביאל: יח אלה בני זלפה אשר-נתן לבן ללאה בתו  
 ותלד את-אלה ליעקב שש עשרה נפש: יט בני רחל אשר  
 יעקב יוסף ובנימין: כ וילד ליוסף בארץ מצרים אשר  
 ילדה-לו אסנת בת-פוטי פרע כהן אן את-מנשה  
 ואת-אפרים: כא ובני בנימן בלע ובכר ואשבל גרא ונעמן  
 אחי וראש מפים וחפים וארד: כב אלה בני רחל אשר ילד  
 ליעקב כל-נפש ארבעה עשר: כג ובני-דן חשים: כד ובני  
 נפתלי יחצאל וגוני ויער ושלם: כה אלה בני בלהה אשר-נתן  
 לבן לרחל בתו ותלד את-אלה ליעקב כל-נפש שבעה:  
 כו כל-הנפש הבאה ליעקב מצרימה יצאי ירכו מלבד נשי  
 בני-יעקב כל-נפש שלשים ושש: כז ובני יוסף אשר-ילדו-לו  
 במצרים נפש שנים כל-הנפש לבית-יעקב הבאה מצרימה

כ"ז

הבאה ליעקב. שילאו מארץ כנען לבא למצרים, ואין הבאה זו לשון עזר,  
 אלא לשון הווה, כמו בערב היא צרה<sup>2</sup>, וכמו והנה רחל צתו צבה עם האלן,  
 לפיכך טעמו למטה בצל"ף, לפי שכשילאו לבוא מארץ כנען, לא היו אלא  
 ששים ושש. והשני, כל הנפש לבית יעקב הבאה למצרים שבעים, הוא לשון  
 עזר, לפיכך טעמו למעלה צדי"ת, לפי שמשצאו שם היו שבעים, שאלו שם  
 יוסף ושני בניו, ונתוספה להם יוכבד בן החומות. ולדברי האומר תאומות  
 נולדו עם השבעים, לריכוס אנו לומר שמתו לפני ירידתו למצרים, שהרי לא  
 נמנו כאן. מלאחי בזיקרא רבה<sup>3</sup> עשו שש נפשות היו לו, ובכתוב קורא אותן  
 נפשות ציתו לשון רבים, לפי שהיו עובדין לאלהות הרבה. יעקב שבעים היו

(ח) הבאים מצרימה. על שם השעה קורא להם הכתוב צאים. ואין לתמוה  
 על אשר לא כתב אשר צאו: (י) בן הכנענית. בן דינה שנזעלה לכנעני.  
 כשהרגו את שכם, לא היתה דינה רוצה ללאת עד שנשבע לה שמעון  
 שישאנה! (טו) אלה בני לאה ואת דינה בתו. הזכרים תלה בלאה  
 והנקבות תלה ביעקב, ללמדך, אשה מזרעת תחלה יולדת זכר, איש מזרע  
 תחלה יולדת נקבה: שלשים ושלוש. ובפרטן אי אחת מולא אלא ל"ג, אלא  
 זו יוכבד שנולדה בין החומות צכניסתן לעיר, שנאמר אשר ילדה אותה ללוי  
 צמלרים, לידתה צמלרים ואין הורחה צמלרים: (יט) בני רחל אשת יעקב.  
 וזכולן לא נאמר כהן אשת, אלא שהיתה עיקרו של צית: (כו) כל הנפש



🌀 THE SEVENTY SOULS THAT DESCENDED TO EGYPT 🌀

46:8  
FIFTH  
READING

**T**hese are the names of the children of Yisra'el, Ya'akov and his sons, who went down to Egypt: Ya'akov's firstborn was Re'uvin. <sup>9</sup> Re'uvin's sons were Chanoch, Palu, Chetzron and Carmi.

<sup>10</sup> Shimon's sons were Yemu'ail, Yamin, Ohad, Yachin, Tzohar, and Sha'ul the son of (Dinah, who was called) the Cana'anite woman (because she was violated by Shechem, a Cana'anite)

<sup>11</sup> Levi's sons were Gershon, Kehas, and Merari.

<sup>12</sup> Yehudah's sons were Air, Onan, Shailah, Peretz, and Zarach. Er and Onan died in the land of Cana'an. Peretz's sons were Chetzron and Chamul.

<sup>13</sup> Yissachar's sons were Tola, Puvah, You, and Shimron.

<sup>14</sup> Zevulun's sons were Sered, Ailon, and Yachle'ail.

<sup>15</sup> The above were (from) the sons of Leah that she bore to Ya'akov in Padan Aram—as well as Dinah his daughter. All his sons and daughters (from Leah) totalled thirty-three souls.

<sup>16</sup> Gad's sons were Tzifyon, Chagi, Shuni, and Etbzon, Airi, Arodi, and Areli.

<sup>17</sup> Asher's sons were Yimnah, Yishvah, Yishvi, and Briyah, and their sister was Serach. Briyah's sons were Chever and Malkiel.

<sup>18</sup> The above were (from) the sons of Zilpah, whom Lavan gave to his daughter Leah. She bore these sixteen souls to Ya'akov.

<sup>19</sup> The sons of Rochel, Ya'akov's (main) wife, were Yosef and Binyamin. <sup>20</sup> In the land of Egypt, Yosef fathered Menasheh and Efrayim, whom Asnas—the daughter of Poti-Fera, the governor of Oin—bore to him.

<sup>21</sup> The sons of Binyamin were Bela, Becher, Ashbail, Gaira, Na'aman, Aichi, Rosh, Mupim, Chupim, and Ard.

<sup>22</sup> The above were (from) the sons of Rochel, who were born to Ya'akov, a total of fourteen souls.

<sup>23</sup> Dan's sons were Chushim.

<sup>24</sup> Naftali's sons were Yachtze'ail, Guniy, Yaitzer, and Shilaim.

<sup>25</sup> The above were from the sons of Bilhah, whom Lavan had given to his daughter Rochel, and she bore a total of seven souls to Ya'akov.

<sup>26</sup> The total number of people coming to Egypt with Ya'akov, his offspring, excluding Ya'akov's sons' wives was sixty-six souls. <sup>27</sup> Yosef's sons, who were born to him in Egypt, were two souls (plus Yosef himself made sixty nine, and Yocheved was born to Levi while entering Egypt). Thus, on entering Egypt, the house of Ya'akov totalled seventy souls.

TORAS MENACHEM

Ya'akov had established a large family of seventy souls, so the prospect of developing a large nation was now a *reality*. Therefore, he hoped that the Jewish nation would develop in their true homeland, the Land of Israel, which was promised by God to Avraham.

We can thus imagine Ya'akov's disappointment that he was forced to leave the Land of Israel *with his entire family* and settle in Egypt. So God consoled him that, to the contrary, "I will make you into a great nation *there*." I.e. the Jewish people were destined to become a great nation in the Diaspora.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 229ff.)

🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

**T**he "seventy souls" were an intermediate level between the Patriarchs and the Jewish nation, through whom the spiritual reserves of faith are channeled to the people during the harsh times of exile. Thus *Rashi* writes (v. 26) that it was Yocheved—a woman—who "completed" the total number of seventy souls, because the quality of faith is stronger in women than it is in men.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 218ff.)

למצרים שבָּעֵינַי: כה וְאֶת־יְהוּדָה שָׁלַח לְפָנָיו אֶל־יוֹסֵף לְהוֹרֹת לְפָנָיו גְּשֵׁנָה וַיָּבֵאוּ אֶרְצָה גְּשֵׁן: כט וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף מְרַכְּבָתוֹ וַיַּעַל לְקָרְאתִי יִשְׂרָאֵל אָבִיו גְּשֵׁנָה וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו וַיִּפֹּל עַל־צַוְאַרְיוֹ וַיִּבֶךְ עַל־צַוְאַרְיוֹ עוֹד: ל וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יוֹסֵף אֲמוֹתָה הֲפַעַם אַחֲרֵי רְאוֹתַי אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ כִּי עוֹדֶךָ חַי: לא וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל־אָחָיו וְאֶל־בְּיַת אָבִיו אֲעֵלֶה וְאֶגִּידָה לְפַרְעֹה וְאֶמְרָה אֵלָיו אַחִי וּבֵית־אָבִי אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרֶץ־כְּנַעַן בָּאוּ אֵלָי: לב וְהֵאֲנִישִׁים רְעֵי צִיּוֹן כִּי־אֲנִישֵׁי מִקְנֶה הָיוּ וְצִיּוֹנָם וּבְקָרָם וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם הֵבִיאוּ: לד וְהָיָה כִּי־יִקְרָא לָכֶם פַּרְעֹה וְאָמַר מַה־מַּעֲשֵׂיכֶם: לו וְאֶמְרַתֶּם אֲנִישֵׁי מִקְנֶה הָיוּ עֲבָדֶיךָ מִנְּעוּרֵינוּ וְעַד־עַתָּה גַם־אֲנַחְנוּ גַם־אֲבֹתֵינוּ בַּעֲבוּר תִּשְׁבוּ בְּאֶרֶץ גְּשֵׁן כִּי־תוֹעֲבַת מִצְרַיִם כָּל־רְעֵה צִיּוֹן: מז וַיָּבֵא יוֹסֵף וַיִּגֵּד לְפַרְעֹה וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִי וְאָחִי וְצִיּוֹנָם וּבְקָרָם וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם בָּאוּ מֵאֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן וְהֵנִים בְּאֶרֶץ גְּשֵׁן: נ ומִקְצֵה אָחִיו לָקַח חֲמִשָּׁה אֲנִישִׁים וַיַּצִּגֵם לְפָנָי פַּרְעֹה: נ וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה אֶל־אָחִיו מַה־מַּעֲשֵׂיכֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ

למצרים שבָּעֵינַי: כה וְאֶת־יְהוּדָה שָׁלַח לְפָנָיו אֶל־יוֹסֵף לְהוֹרֹת לְפָנָיו גְּשֵׁנָה וַיָּבֵאוּ אֶרְצָה גְּשֵׁן: כט וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף מְרַכְּבָתוֹ וַיַּעַל לְקָרְאתִי יִשְׂרָאֵל אָבִיו גְּשֵׁנָה וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו וַיִּפֹּל עַל־צַוְאַרְיוֹ וַיִּבֶךְ עַל־צַוְאַרְיוֹ עוֹד: ל וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יוֹסֵף אֲמוֹתָה הֲפַעַם אַחֲרֵי רְאוֹתַי אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ כִּי עוֹדֶךָ חַי: לא וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל־אָחָיו וְאֶל־בְּיַת אָבִיו אֲעֵלֶה וְאֶגִּידָה לְפַרְעֹה וְאֶמְרָה אֵלָיו אַחִי וּבֵית־אָבִי אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרֶץ־כְּנַעַן בָּאוּ אֵלָי: לב וְהֵאֲנִישִׁים רְעֵי צִיּוֹן כִּי־אֲנִישֵׁי מִקְנֶה הָיוּ וְצִיּוֹנָם וּבְקָרָם וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם הֵבִיאוּ: לד וְהָיָה כִּי־יִקְרָא לָכֶם פַּרְעֹה וְאָמַר מַה־מַּעֲשֵׂיכֶם: לו וְאֶמְרַתֶּם אֲנִישֵׁי מִקְנֶה הָיוּ עֲבָדֶיךָ מִנְּעוּרֵינוּ וְעַד־עַתָּה גַם־אֲנַחְנוּ גַם־אֲבֹתֵינוּ בַּעֲבוּר תִּשְׁבוּ בְּאֶרֶץ גְּשֵׁן כִּי־תוֹעֲבַת מִצְרַיִם כָּל־רְעֵה צִיּוֹן: מז וַיָּבֵא יוֹסֵף וַיִּגֵּד לְפַרְעֹה וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִי וְאָחִי וְצִיּוֹנָם וּבְקָרָם וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם בָּאוּ מֵאֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן וְהֵנִים בְּאֶרֶץ גְּשֵׁן: נ ומִקְצֵה אָחִיו לָקַח חֲמִשָּׁה אֲנִישִׁים וַיַּצִּגֵם לְפָנָי פַּרְעֹה: נ וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה אֶל־אָחִיו מַה־מַּעֲשֵׂיכֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ

כש"י

פַּעַם אַחַת: (לא) ואמרה אליו אחי וגו'. ועוד אומר לו והאנשים רועי לאן וגו': (לד) בעבור תשובו בארץ גשן. והיא לריכב לכם, שהיא ארץ מרעה, וכשתאמרו לו שאין אתם בקיאים במלאכה אחרת, ירחיקכם מעליו ויושיבכם שם: כי תועבת מצרים וגו'. לפי שהם להם אלהות: (ז) ומקצה אחיו. מן הפחותים שבהם לגזורה, שאין נראים גזורים, שאם יראה אותם גזורים, יעשה אותם אנשי מלחמה. והלכה הם, ראובן, שמעון, לוי, יששכר, וזבולון. ואתן שלא ככל משה שמוחם כשזרכם. אבל שמות הגזורים ככל. וזאת ליחודה ויאמר שמע ה' קול יחודה, ולגד אמר צרוך מרחיב גד. ולנפתלי אמר נפתלי. ולדן אמר דן. וכן לזבולון, וכן לאשר. זהו לשון בראשית רבה<sup>2</sup> שהיא אגדת ארץ ישראל, אבל בגמרא צבליה שלנו מזנינו, שאותם שכל משה שמוחם הם החלשים, ואתן הביא לפני פרעה, ויחודה שהוכפל שמו, לא

לו, והכתוב קורא אותן נפש, לפי שהיו עוזדים לאל אחד: (כח) להורות לפניו. כתרוממו, לפנות לו מקום ולהורות היאך יתיישב זה: לפניו. קודם שיגיע לשם. ומדרש אגדה להורות לפניו, לתקן לו בית תלמוד שמשם תלך הוראה: (כט) ויאמר יוסף מרכבתו. הוא עלמו אשר את הסוסים למרכבה, להזדרז לכבוד צאיו: וירא אליו. יוסף נראה אל צאיו: ויבך על צואריו עוד. לשון הרבות צביה, וכן כי לא על איש ישים עוד<sup>1</sup>, לשון רצוי הוא, אינו שם עליו עילות נוספות על חטאיו, אף כחן הרבה והוסף צבכי יותר על הרגיל, אבל יעקב לא כפל על צוארי יוסף ולא נשקו, ואמרו רבותינו, שהיה קורא את שמע: (ל) אמותה הפעם. פשוטו כתרוממו. ומדרשו, סבור הייתי למות שתי מיתות. צעולם הזה ולעולם הבא, שנסתלק ממני שכינה, והייתי אומר שיתצני הקב"ה מיתתך, עכשיו שעודך חי, לא אמות אלא

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Which five brothers did Yosef present to Pharaoh? (v. 2)  
**RASHI:** From the weakest among them who would not appear to be strong, for if [Pharaoh] would see that they were strong he might enlist them into his army. The [five] ones picked were: Re'uvain, Shimon, Levi, Yissachar and Binyamin, [i.e.] those whose names Moshe did not repeat when he blessed them (*Devarim* ch. 33). But he did repeat the names of the [six] strong ones: "And this is for Yehudah—hear God, the voice of Yehudah," "And about Gad he

said, 'Blessed be He that extends Gad,'" "And about Naftali he said, 'Naftali...,'" "And about Dan he said, 'Dan...' And similarly regarding Zevulun and Asher.  
 The above is quoted from *Bereishis Rabah* which contains the Rabbinic teachings from the Land of Israel.  
 But, in our Babylonian Talmud (*Bava Kama* 92a) we find that those whose names Moshe repeated were the weak ones, and these were the ones that [Yosef] brought before Pharaoh—[except for] Yehudah,

## 🕎 YA'AKOV IS REUNITED WITH YOSEF 🕎

46:28  
SIXTH  
READING

**H**e sent Yehudah ahead of him to Yosef, to direct him to Goshen, and they came to the land of Goshen.

<sup>29</sup> Yosef harnessed his chariot, and he went up to Goshen to meet Yisra'el his father. When (Yosef) appeared before his (father), he fell on his neck, and he wept on his neck profusely.

<sup>30</sup> Yisra'el said to Yosef, "(If) I would die this time (I would be comforted), since I have seen your face, that you are still alive!"

<sup>31</sup> Yosef said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I will go up and inform Pharaoh, and I'll say to him, 'My brothers and my father's household who were in the land of Cana'an have come to me.'

<sup>32</sup> (I'll also tell him), 'The men are shepherds, and they've (always) been owners of livestock, so they've brought their flocks and their cattle and all their possessions.'<sup>33</sup> So if Pharaoh summons you and asks you, 'What is your occupation?'<sup>34</sup> Say, 'Your servants have been owners of livestock from our youth until now, both we and our ancestors.' (You should do this in order) to live in the land of Goshen, because all shepherds are abhorrent to the Egyptians (since they worship the sheep)."

## 🕎 PHARAOH MEETS YOSEF'S FAMILY 🕎

**47** **Y**osef came and informed Pharaoh. He said, "My father and my brothers have come from the land of Cana'an with their flocks, their cattle and their possessions, and now they are in the land of Goshen."

<sup>2</sup> (Yosef) took five (of the weakest) men from among his brothers, and he presented them to Pharaoh (hoping that Pharaoh would not enlist them as warriors).

<sup>3</sup> Pharaoh said to (Yosef's) brothers, "What is your occupation?"

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

whose name was repeated for a special reason, which is mentioned in *Bava Kama*, and not because he was weak.

The version which is recorded in our *Talmud* is also repeated in a *braisa* (teaching) of the [Midrashic compilation called] *Sifri*, in [the portion of] *Vezev Habrachah*.

**GUR ARYEH:** The Babylonian Talmud understood that when a name of a tribe is repeated it is a sign of weakness, because the repetition indicates that the tribe is in need of extra blessing due to its weakness. However, the Sages of the Land of Israel understood that the Torah repeated the names of the tribes that were strong, as an indication of their superiority and prowess.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🕎 WHO WERE THE STRONG BROTHERS? (v. 2)

Whenever *Rashi* brings two interpretations, this indicates that it cannot be proven *categorically* that one is superior to the other, at the literal level. The first interpretation will inevitably have a certain superiority over the second interpretation, and *vice-versa*. Nevertheless, in the final analysis the first interpretation will always be closer to the literal meaning of the text, which is why it is recorded first.

In our case, we need to explain: a.) The respective advantages and disadvantages of *Rashi's* two interpretations, and, b.) The overall superiority of the first interpretation.

#### THE EXPLANATION

The Torah states that Yosef selected five of his eleven brothers to present to Pharaoh, but we are not told which five he picked. So *Rashi* wondered: Where do we find that the Torah makes a distinction between the tribes' (Yosef's brothers) singling out *five* in particular?

The only such instance in the Torah appears to be in *Parshas Vezev Habrachah*, where Moshe blessed each of the tribes before he passed away. There we find a distinction that among the eleven tribes which came from Yosef's brothers: six of the tribes had their names repeated,

### 🕎 The Last Word 🕎

**A**ccording to *Rashi*, Ya'akov sent Yehudah ahead of him (v. 28), "to establish for him a *yeshivah* (house of study)," and throughout the harsh Egyptian exile, "our ancestors were never without a *yeshivah*." This teaches us that a *yeshivah* is the very life of the Jewish people even while we are in exile, providing the crucial direction and leadership needed for us to survive.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 1, p. 95ff.)

מה עובדיכון ואמרו לפרעה רעי ענא עבדיך אף אנחנא אף אבהתנא: ד ואמרו לפרעה לאתותבא בארעא אתינא ארי לית רעיא לענא די לעבדיך ארי תקיף כפנא בארעא דכנען וכנען יתבון כנען עבדיך בארעא דגשן: ה ואמר פרעה ליוסף למימר אבוד ואחד אתו לותך: ו ארעא דמצרים קדמך היא בדשפיר בארעא אותיב ית אבוד וית אחיד יתבון בארעא דגשן ואם ידעת ואית בהון גוברין דחילא ותמנינן רבני גיתי על די לי: ז ואיתי יוסף ית יעקב אבוהי ואקמיניה קדם פרעה וברך ית יעקב ית פרעה: ה ואמר פרעה ליעקב כמה יומי שני חייך: ט ואמר יעקב לפרעה יומי שני תותבותי מאה ותלתין שנין ועירין וכישין הון יומי שני חיי ולא אדביקו ית יומי שני חיי אבהתי ביומי תותבותהון: י וברך ית יעקב ית פרעה ונפק מן קדם פרעה: יא ואותיב יוסף ית אבוהי וית אחוהי ויהב להון אחסנא בארעא דמצרים בדשפיר בארעא בארע רעמסס כמא די פקיד פרעה: יב וזן יוסף ית אבוהי וית אחוהי וית כל בית

אל-פרעה רעה צאן עבדיך גם-אנחנו גם-אבותינו: ד ויאמרו אל-פרעה לגור בארץ פאנו כי-אין מרעה לעאן אשר לעבדיך כי-כבד הרעב בארץ כנען ועתה ישבו-נא עבדיך בארץ גשן: ה ויאמר פרעה אל-יוסף לאמר אביך ואחיד באו אליך: ו ארץ מצרים לפניך הוא במיטב הארץ הושב את-אביך ואת-אחיד ישבו בארץ גשן ואם-ידעת ויש-בם אנשי-חיל ושממתם שרי מקנה על-אשר-לי: ז ויבא יוסף את-יעקב אביו ויעמדהו לפני פרעה ויברך יעקב את-פרעה: ה ויאמר פרעה אל-יעקב כמה ימי שני חייך: ט ויאמר יעקב אל-פרעה ימי שני מגורי שלשים ומאת שנה מעט ורעים היו ימי שני חיי ולא השיגו את-ימי שני חיי אבתי בימי מגוריהם: י ויברך יעקב את-פרעה ויצא מלפני פרעה: [ושביעי] יא ויושב יוסף את-אביו ואת-אחיו ויתן להם אחזה בארץ מצרים במיטב הארץ בארץ רעמסס כאשר צוה פרעה: יב ויכלכל יוסף את-אביו ואת-אחיו ואת כל-בית

כש"י

(י) ויברך יעקב. כדרך כל הנפטרים מלפני שרים, מצרכים אותם ונוטלים רשות. ומה צרכה צרכו, שועלה נילום להגליו, לפי שאין ארץ מצרים שותה מי גשמים, אלא נילום עולה ומשקה, ומצרכתו של יעקב ואילך, היה פרעה צא אל נילום, והוא עולה לקראתו ומשקה את הארץ? (יא) רעמסס. מארץ גושן היא: (יב) לפי הטק. לפי הלרזי לכל בני ציתם:

הוכפל משום חלשות, אלא טעם יש צדכר, כדאיתא צצא קמא<sup>1</sup>. וצדרייתא דספרי שנינו צוחת הצרכה כמו בגמרא שלנו: (ו) אנשי חיל. צקיאין צאומנותן לרעות לאן: על אשר לי. על לאן שלי: (ז) ויברך יעקב. היא שאילת שלום, כדרך כל הנראים לפני המלכים לפרקים שלדו"ר צלע"ו: (ט) שני מגורי. ימי גרות, כל ימי הייתי גר צארץ: ולא השיגו. צנוצה:

TORAS MENACHEM

whereas five did not. On this basis, the "Sages of the Land of Israel" concluded that these five must have been weaker, since the repetition of the other tribes' names indicates that they were superior (as **Gur Aryeh** writes).

However, this explanation, that the weak tribes were Re'uvain, Shimon, Levi, Yissachar and Binyamin, is problematic for the following reason:

In *Parshas Vayishlach* we read that Shimon and Levi singlehandedly decimated the entire nation of Shechem (34:25ff.), which is certainly a very impressive act of strength. Therefore it is difficult to accept at the literal level that they would have been part of the weaker group of tribes.

This problem forced *Rashi* to bring a second interpretation that the repetition of the names in *Parshas Vezos Habrachah* was not a sign of strength, but of weakness. Presumably, the fact that they were weaker meant that they required *more* of Moshe's blessing, so their names were repeated (see *Gur Aryeh*).

However, this interpretation is also problematic because: a.) According to this argument, it turns out that one of the strong brothers was Binyamin. This is difficult to accept at the literal level because he is

described by the Torah as a "baby born to him (Ya'akov) in old age" (44:20), which suggests weakness [seeing that he was an adult at the time]. Furthermore, we find that Ya'akov was particularly concerned that Binyamin in particular would not survive the journey to Egypt (42:4, 38). Yet another indication of his weakness is Yehudah's statement to Yosef, "I am superior to him in all respects: in strength, in battle, and in service" (*Rashi* to 44:33). Therefore, it is unlikely that he was one of the stronger brothers, as *Rashi's* second interpretation suggests.

b.) A further problem with *Rashi's* second interpretation (that the weaker brothers' names were repeated), is that we find six names repeated, and yet Yosef only brought five weak brothers to Pharaoh.

*Rashi* answers that Yehudah was an exceptional case here, because his "name was repeated for a special reason, which is mentioned in *Bava Kama*, and not because he was weak." Nevertheless, even after *Rashi's* answer, the first interpretation has the advantage of being more straightforward: the five weak brothers are clearly delineated by the fact that their names are not repeated. According to the second interpretation however, we start with a group of six and exclude one by exception,

They said to Pharaoh, “Your servants are shepherds, both we and our forefathers.”<sup>4</sup> They said to Pharaoh, “We have come to sojourn in the land, for your servants’ flocks have no pasture, since the famine is severe in the land of Cana’an. Now, please let your servants settle in the land of Goshen.”

<sup>5</sup> Pharaoh spoke to Yosef, saying, “Your father and your brothers have come to you. <sup>6</sup> The land of Egypt is (open) before you. Settle your father and your brothers in the best of the land—let them dwell in the land of Goshen. If you know that there are capable men among them (who are good at their occupation of tending sheep), then make them livestock officers over my (sheep).”

<sup>7</sup> Yosef brought Ya’akov his father and stood him before Pharaoh, and Ya’akov greeted Pharaoh.

<sup>8</sup> Pharaoh said to Ya’akov, “How many years have you been alive?”

<sup>9</sup> Ya’akov said to Pharaoh, “I’ve been wandering around for a hundred and thirty years. (Compared to) my fathers’ lifetimes, when they were wandering around, the days of my life have been few and miserable. (Even ignoring the miseries that I’ve had, my days) have not been (as good as theirs).”\*

<sup>10</sup> Ya’akov blessed Pharaoh (that the Nile should irrigate the land) and he left Pharaoh’s presence.

<sup>11</sup> Yosef settled his father and his brothers, and he gave them property in the land of Egypt in the best of the land, in the district of Ramses (within the area of Goshen), as Pharaoh had commanded.

<sup>12</sup> Yosef sustained his father, his brothers and his father’s entire household (with an excess of) bread (as if they were) young children (who need to be given extra food, as they waste so much).\*\*

SEVENTH  
READING

#### TORAS MENACHEM

which is more difficult to accept at the literal level. Therefore, *Rashi* recorded this as his secondary interpretation.

Furthermore, it could be argued that the problem with *Rashi*’s first interpretation could be answered relatively easily. For even though we raised the concern above that Shimon and Levi, who destroyed Shechem were unlikely to have been the weaker brothers—it could be argued that: a.) They did this out of a sense of responsibility, being two of the older brothers, and not because their strength surpassed the others. b.) It was not an exceptional display of strength, since the people of Shechem were debilitated, having been circumcised a few days earlier.

Thus, in the final analysis, *Rashi*’s first interpretation is superior since it has fewer problems, and its problems are more easily solved.

#### RASHI’S SOURCES

In the vast majority of cases, *Rashi* does not cite sources for his comments. Therefore, when he deviates from this pattern—such as in our case—*Rashi* is hinting that the various arguments need to be viewed in the context of their source texts.

*Rashi* states that his first interpretation is to be found in, “*Bereishis Rabah* which contains the Rabbinic teachings of the Land of Israel,” whereas his second interpretation is derived from, “our *Babylonian Talmud*.” What is the significance, at the literal level, of *Rashi*’s citations?

In order to explain this point, we first need to clarify the underlying dispute between the two above opinions. What is the reasoning *why* the repetition of names would indicate either weakness or strength?

*Gur Aryeh* explains that the repetition of a tribe’s name could indicate weakness, for it suggests that the tribe is in need of additional blessings, represented by the repetition of the name. On the other hand, the repetition could be indicative of strength, for perhaps the Torah wished to emphasize which tribes were superior by mentioning their names twice.

A practical ramification between these two approaches is whether the repetition of the names was actually said by Moshe, as part of his blessing, or if *scripture* repeated the names for the sake of emphasis:

According to the view that the repetition of the names represents weakness, it follows that Moshe *himself* would have repeated the names

within his blessings so as to bless the weaker tribes with additional strength. However, according to the other approach (that the repetition of names indicates strength), it follows that the names were repeated by *scripture* to record for future generations which were the superior tribes, and the names were not necessarily repeated by Moshe at the time of his blessing.

With this in mind, we can explain the logic behind *Rashi*’s citations:

In general, the ‘Rabbis of the Land of Israel’ favored the approach of brevity, compacting their teachings to be as brief as possible (as we find throughout the Jerusalem Talmud). Therefore, they presumed that Moshe was as brief as possible when blessing the tribes, and he would not have needlessly repeated himself. This led the Rabbis to conclude that the tribes’ names were probably repeated by *scripture* at a later point, as a sign of superiority and strength.

The Babylonian Talmud, by contrast, tends to dwell at length upon a broader range of arguments and is less economical with words. Consequently, the Sages of Babylon would have understood it to be quite likely that Moshe’s blessings were said in rich, repetitive prose, so they came to the conclusion that the repetition of the tribes’ names was said by Moshe himself and not added later by *scripture*. It thus follows that Moshe repeated the names as a sign of additional blessing, suggesting that the tribes whose names are repeated were weak.

Of these two opinions, the Babylonian Talmud’s argument seems to be stronger, as it is more straightforward to presume that *all* of Moshe’s words were in fact blessings (and not later additions). *Rashi* hinted to this point by continuing, “*The version which is recorded in our Talmud is also repeated in a braisa of the Sifri, in [the portion of] Vezos Habrachah.*” I.e. one should bear in mind that all of Moshe’s words are part of the *Parsha* called *Vezos Habrachah* (“this is the blessing”), which would suggest that all the contents are, as their name suggests—blessings.

In conclusion, we see that in this case *Rashi* cited the various sources for his comments to provide some insight into the underlying logic of the respective arguments.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 391ff)

אָבוֹהַי לְחֶמֶת לְפָנַי מִפְּלֵא: י' וְלִחְמָא לִית  
בְּכָל אַרְעָא אַרְי תְּקִיף כִּפְנָא לְחֵדָא וְאִשְׁתַּלְחִי  
עִמָּא דְאַרְעָא דְמַצְרַיִם וְעִמָּא דְאַרְעָא דְכְנַעַן  
מִן קָדָם כִּפְנָא: יד וְלִקְיִט יוֹסֵף ית כָּל כִּסְפָּא  
דְאַשְׁתַּכַּח בְּאַרְעָא דְמַצְרַיִם וּבְאַרְעָא דְכְנַעַן  
בְּעִבּוּרָא דִּי אַנְוֹן וּבְגִינִין וְאִיתִי יוֹסֵף ית כִּסְפָּא  
לְבֵית פְּרָעָה: טו וְשָׁלִים כִּסְפָּא מֵאַרְעָא  
דְמַצְרַיִם וּמֵאַרְעָא דְכְנַעַן וְאִתּוּ כָּל מַצְרָאִי  
לְוֹת יוֹסֵף לְמִימְרָא חֵב לָנָא לְחֶמֶת וְלִמָּא נְמוּת  
לְקַבְלָדָא אַרְי שְׁלִים כִּסְפָּא: טז וְאָמַר יוֹסֵף הֲבו  
גִיתִיכּוֹן וְאִתְּן לְכוֹן בְּגִיתִיכּוֹן אִם שְׁלִים כִּסְפָּא:  
יז וְאִיתִיוֹ ית גִּיתִיהוֹן לְוֹת יוֹסֵף וַיֵּהֵב לְהוֹן יוֹסֵף  
לְחֶמֶת בְּסוֹסְקוּתָא וּבְגִיתִי עֲנָא וּבְגִיתִי תוֹרִי  
וּבְחִמְרִי וְנִינְוִן בְּלֶחֶמָא בְּכָל גִּיתִיהוֹן בְּשִׂתָּא  
הֵהִיא: יח וְשָׁלִימַת שְׂתָא הֵהִיא וְאִתּוּ לְוֹתִיהָ  
בְּשִׂתָּא תְנִינָתָא וְאָמְרוּ לִיהָ לֹא נְכֹסִי מִן רִבּוּנִי  
אַלְהוֹן שְׁלִים כִּסְפָּא וְגִיתִי בְּעִירָא לְוֹת רִבּוּנִי לֹא  
אִשְׁתָּאֵר קָדָם רִבּוּנִי אֱלֹהִין גְּוִיתָנָא וְאַרְעָנָא:  
יט לְמָה נְמוּת לְעִינִידָא אִף אֲנַחְנָא אִף אַרְעָנָא  
קִנִּי יִתְנָא וְיִת אַרְעָנָא בְּלֶחֶמָא וְנִהִי אֲנַחְנָא  
וְאַרְעָנָא עֲבָדִין לְפְרָעָה וְחֵב בְּר זָרַע וְנִיחִי  
וְלֹא נְמוּת וְאַרְעָא לֹא תִבּוּר: כ וְקָנָא יוֹסֵף ית  
כָּל אַרְעָא דְמַצְרַיִם לְפְרָעָה אַרְי וּבִינּוּ מַצְרַיִם  
גִּבְר חֲקָלִיָּה אַרְי תְּקִיף עֲלִיהוֹן כִּפְנָא וְהוּת  
אַרְעָא לְפְרָעָה: כא וְיִת עִמָּא אַעֲבַר יִתִּיהָ  
מִקְרִי לְקִרִי מִסִּיפֵי תַחֲוּם מַצְרַיִם וְעַד סוֹפֵיָּה:  
כב לְחוּד אַרְעָא דְכוּמְרָאִי לֹא קָנָא אַרְי  
חֲלָקָא לְכוּמְרָאִי מִן קָדָם פְּרָעָה וְאַבְלִין ית  
חֲלָקְהוֹן דִּי יֵהֵב לְהוֹן פְּרָעָה עַל בֶּן לֹא וּבִינּוּ  
יִת אַרְעָהוֹן: כג וְאָמַר יוֹסֵף לְעִמָּא הָא קִנִּיתִי  
יִתְכוֹן יוֹמָא דִּין וְיִת אַרְעָכוֹן לְפְרָעָה הָא לְכוֹן

אָבוֹהַי לְחֶמֶת לְפָנַי הַטּוֹף: י' וְלֶחֶם אֵין בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ כִּי־כָבֵד הָרַעֲב  
מְאֹד וַתִּלְהַ אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וְאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן מִפְּנֵי הָרַעֲב: יד וַיִּלְקַט  
יוֹסֵף אֶת־כָּל־הַכֶּסֶף הַנּוֹמָצָא בְּאֶרֶץ־מִצְרַיִם וּבְאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן  
בְּשֹׁבֵר אֲשֶׁר־הֵם שׁוֹבְרִים וַיָּבֵא יוֹסֵף אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף בֵּיתָה פְּרָעָה:  
טו וַיִּתֶּם הַכֶּסֶף מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וּמֵאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וַיָּבֵאוּ כָּל־מִצְרַיִם  
אֶל־יוֹסֵף לֵאמֹר הִבֵּה־לָּנוּ לֶחֶם וְלֶמָּה נָמוּת נִגְדָדָךְ כִּי אָפֶס  
כֶּסֶף: טז וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף הֲבוּ מִקְנֵיכֶם וְאִתְּנָה לָכֶם בְּמִקְנֵיכֶם  
אִם־אָפֶס כֶּסֶף: יז וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶת־מִקְנֵיהֶם אֶל־יוֹסֵף וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם  
יוֹסֵף לֶחֶם בְּסוּסִים וּבְמִמְקָנָה הַצֹּאן וּבְמִמְקָנָה הַבָּקָר וּבְחִמְרִים  
וַיְנַהֲלֵם בַּלְּחֶם בְּכָל־מִמְקָנָהֶם בַּשָּׁנָה הַהִוא: יח וַתִּתֶּם הַשָּׁנָה  
הַהִוא וַיָּבֵאוּ אֵלָיו בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁנִית וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ לֹא־נִכְחַד מֵאֲדָנִי  
כִּי אִם־תֶּם הַכֶּסֶף וּמִמְקָנָה הַבְּהֵמָה אֶל־אֲדָנִי לֹא נִשְׂאָר לְפָנַי  
אֲדָנִי בְּלִתִּי אִם־גְּוִיתָנוּ וְאֲדַמְתָּנוּ: יט לְמָה נָמוּת לְעִינִידָךְ  
גַּם־אֲנַחְנוּ גַם־אֲדַמְתָּנוּ קִנְיָה־אִתְּנוּ וְאֶת־אֲדַמְתָּנוּ בַּלְּחֶם וְנִהְיֶה  
אֲנַחְנוּ וְאֲדַמְתָּנוּ עֲבָדִים לְפְרָעָה וְתַן־זָרַע וְנִחְיֶה וְלֹא נָמוּת  
וְהָאֲדָמָה לֹא תִשָּׂם: כ וַיִּקֶן יוֹסֵף אֶת־כָּל־אֲדַמַּת מִצְרַיִם  
לְפְרָעָה כִּי־מָכְרוּ מִצְרַיִם אִישׁ שְׂדֵהוּ כִּי־חָזַק עֲלֵהֶם הָרַעֲב  
וַתְּהִי הָאָרֶץ לְפְרָעָה: כא וְאֶת־הָעָם הָעֵבְרִי אִתּוֹ לְעֵרִים  
מִקְצֵה גְבוּל־מִצְרַיִם וְעַד־קֶצֶהוּ: כב רַק אֲדַמַּת הַכְּהֹנִים לֹא  
קָנָה כִּי חָזַק לְכַהֲנִים מֵאֵת פְּרָעָה וְאַכְלוּ אֶת־חֶקֶם אֲשֶׁר נָתַן  
לָהֶם פְּרָעָה עַל־כֵּן לֹא מָכְרוּ אֶת־אֲדַמְתָּם: כג וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף  
אֶל־הָעָם הִן קִנִּיתִי אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם וְאֶת־אֲדַמְתְּכֶם לְפְרָעָה

רש"י

וכלה הרעב, וכן שנינו בחוספתא דטוטה: לא תשם. לא תהא שממה. לא  
תצור, לשון שדה צור, שאינו חרוש: (כ) ותהי הארץ לפרעה. קנויה לו:  
(כא) ואת העם העביר. יוסף, מעיר לעיר, לזכרון שאין להם עוד חלק בארץ,  
ובושיב של עיר זו בחצרתה. ולא הולךך הכתוב לכתוב זאת, אלא להודיעך שזכו  
של יוסף, שנחטוין להסיר חרפה מעל אחיו, שלא יכיו קורין אותם גולים:  
מקצה גבול מצרים וגו'. כן עשה לכל הערים אשר צמלכות מזרים, מקצה  
גבולה ועד קצה גבולה: (כב) הכהנים. הכוונים, כל לשון כהן, משרת לאלהות  
הוא, חוץ מאותן שהם לשון גדולה, כמו כהן מדין, כהן און: חוק לכהנים. חק,

(יג) ולחם אין בכל הארץ. חוזר לענין הראשון, לתחלת שני הרעב: ותלה.  
כמו ותלחה, לשון עייפות כהרגומו, ודומה לו כמתלכלה היורה זקים!  
(יד) בשבר אשר הם שוברים. מותנין לו את הכסף: (טו) אפס. כהרגומו  
שלים: (יז) וינהלם. כמו וינהגם, ודומה לו אין מנהל לה<sup>2</sup>, על מי מנוחות ויכלני:  
(יח) בשנה השנית. שנית לשני הרעב: כי אם תם הכסף וגו'. כי אשר תם  
הכסף והמקנה, וצא הכל אל יד אדוני: בלתי אם גויתנו. כמו אם לא גויתנו:  
(יט) ותן זרע. לזרוע האדמה, ואף על פי שאמר יוסף ועוד חמש שנים אשר  
אין חריש וקליר, מכיון שצא יעקב למלרים, צאה צרכה לרגליו, והתחילו לזרוע

1 משלי כו, יח 2 ישעיה נא, יח 3 תהלים כג, ג 4 יח, ח 5 חזקוני ט: ט

## ☞ YOSEF ACQUIRES THE LAND OF EGYPT FOR PHARAOH ☞

*(The following occurred at the beginning of the famine, two years before Ya'akov's arrival in Egypt)*

47:13 **T**here was no food in the entire land, for the famine had grown exceedingly severe. The land of Egypt and the land of Cana'an were exhausted because of the famine. <sup>14</sup> Yosef collected all the money that was to be found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Cana'an through the (purchase of) grain that they were buying, and Yosef brought the money into Pharaoh's house.

<sup>15</sup> When the money was depleted from the land of Egypt and from the land of Cana'an, all the Egyptians came to Yosef, saying, "Give us food! Why should we die in front of you because the money has run out?"

<sup>16</sup> Yosef said, "If the money has run out, give (me) your livestock, and I will give you (food in return) for your livestock." <sup>17</sup> So they brought their livestock to Yosef, and Yosef gave them food (in return) for horses, flocks of sheep (and goats), herds of cattle and donkeys. He provided them with food that (entire) year (by exchanging) bread for all their livestock.

<sup>18</sup> When that year ended, they came to him in the second year (of the famine), and said to him, "We are not withholding anything from our master! Since the money and the herds of animals have been depleted (and come) into (the hands of) our master, there's nothing left (to give to) our master except our bodies and our farmland. <sup>19</sup> Why should we die before your eyes, (eliminating) us and (leaving) our farmland (desolate\*)? Buy us and our farmland (in exchange) for food, let us and our land become subjugated to Pharaoh. Just give (us) seed (to sow the earth), so that we will live and not die, and the farmland will not be desolate."

<sup>20</sup> So Yosef bought all the farmland of the Egyptians for Pharaoh, since each one of the Egyptians sold his field because the famine had become too strong for them. Thus, the land became Pharaoh's.

<sup>21</sup> (Yosef) transferred the people (from city) to city, from (one) end of the boundary of Egypt to its (other) end (to remind them that they no longer owned the land). <sup>22</sup> The only land which he did not buy was that of the priests, for the priests were given a (daily) allotment (of bread) from Pharaoh. Since they (were able) to eat their allotment which Pharaoh had given them, they did not sell their land.

<sup>23</sup> Yosef said to the people, "Since I have now bought you and your land for Pharaoh—look!—here

TORAS MENACHEM

### ☞ The Last Word ☞

**Y**osef's decision to provide the Egyptians with grain was similar to Moshe's decision to take the "mixed multitude" out of Egypt. Both had good intentions. Both acted on their own initiative, without a specific directive from God. And both had catastrophic results.

Yosef intended to render the Egyptians homeless so that his family would not be perceived as immigrants (*Rashi* to v. 21). He also used his supply of grain to force the Egyptians to circumcise themselves (*ibid.* 41:55). Moshe too acted with good intentions in accepting the mixed multitude, attempting to embrace apparently genuine converts to Judaism. But, just as Moshe's kindness backfired when the mixed multitude instigated the golden calf, so too Yosef's benevolent offer of grain to the Egyptians was counterproductive. For it strengthened an Egypt which ultimately rebelled and enslaved the Jewish people.

**F**rom this we can learn a powerful lesson in our daily lives: When attempting to draw others closer to Judaism, there is sometimes the temptation to be "benevolent" with matters of Jewish Law, and to compromise a few halachic requirements in order to make Judaism a more attractive "product."

Nevertheless, we can learn from the cases of Yosef and Moshe that such "benevolence" will ultimately prove counterproductive, since it is not based on a directive from God (i.e. Jewish Law). Even if one will indeed attract more people by dispensing with a few precepts, one is effectively trying to extinguish a fire with kerosene. For, by offering sanctions and compromises, one will only serve to reinforce the opposition to Torah-true Judaism, as Yosef strengthened Egypt.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 1, p. 98ff.)

פר זרעא ותזרעון ית ארעא: כד ויהי באעולי עללתא ותתגון חד מן חמשא לפרעה וארבע חלקין יהון לבון לבר זרע חקלא ולמיכלבון ולגנש בתיכון ולמיכל לטפלכון: כה ואמרו קימתנא נשפח רחמין בעיני רבוני ונחי עבדיין לפרעה: כו ושוי יתה יוסף לגזירא עד יומא הדין על ארעא דמצרים דיהון יתבין חד מן חמשא לפרעה לחוד ארעא דכופריא בלחודיהון לא הות לפרעה: כז ויתב ישראל בארעא דמצרים בארעא דגשן ואחסינו כה ונפישו וסגיאו לחדא:

הא־לְכֶם זֶרַע וזָרְעֶתֶם אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה: כד וְהָיָה בְּתִבּוּאֹת וּנְתַתֶּם חֲמִישִׁית לְפַרְעֹה וְאַרְבַּע הַיְדֹת יִהְיֶה לָכֶם לְזֶרַע הַשָּׂדֶה וְלֹא־כֹלְכֶם וְלֹא־שָׂר בְּבֵיתְכֶם וְלֹא־כֹל לְמַפְכֶם: (מפסיר) כה וַיֹּאמְרוּ הַחִיתָנוּ נִמְצָא־חַן בְּעֵינֵי אֲדֹנָי וְהֵינּוּ עֲבָדִים לְפַרְעֹה: כו וַיִּשָּׂם אֹתָהּ יוֹסֵף לְחֶק עַד־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה עַל־אֲדָמַת מִצְרַיִם לְפַרְעֹה לְחֶמֶשׁ רֶק אֲדָמַת הַכֹּהֲנִים לְבָדָם לֹא הָיְתָה לְפַרְעֹה: כז וַיֵּשֶׁב יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן וַיֵּאָחֲזוּ בָּהּ וַיִּפְּרוּ וַיִּרְבּוּ מְאֹד:

בסי' אין כאן פיסקא כי אם ריווח אות אחת:

ק"ו פסוקים, יהללא"ל סימן.

כ"ז

כך וכך לחס ליוס: (כג) הא. כמו הנה, כמו וגם חני הא דרכך זראש נתתי: זאת כמו שאמרת: והיינו עבדים לפרעה. להעלות לו המס הזכ כלל שנה, לחק שלא יעזור: (כז) וישב ישראל בארץ מצרים. וכיכן, זאחן גשן שביא מארץ מצרים: ויאחזו בה. לשון אחזרה? חסלת פרשת ויגש

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

##### ● Where did the Jewish people settle? (v. 27)

RASHI: In the land of Goshen, which is part of the land of Egypt.

##### ● What did they do there? (v. 27)

RASHI: The verse states **וַיֵּאָחֲזוּ בָּהּ** which means "they acquired property in it."

MIDRASH: **וַיֵּאָחֲזוּ בָּהּ** means that the land grasped them, like a person who is grabbed against his will (מדרש תדשא פי"ז).



is grain-seed for you. Sow the farmland. <sup>24</sup> When the harvest (is gathered in) you must give one fifth to Pharaoh, and the (remaining) four parts of grain-seed will be yours—for (your) field(s), for your food, for the members of your households, and for your young children to eat.”

MAFTIR <sup>25</sup> “You have saved our lives!” they replied. “Just let us find favor in our master’s eyes, and we will be subservient to Pharaoh (paying him the tax every year).”

<sup>26</sup> So Yosef instituted a law, (that is in force) until today, that one-fifth of (whatever grows on) Egyptian farmland belonged to Pharaoh. The only (exception was that) the priests’ land did not belong to Pharaoh.

<sup>27</sup> The Jewish people settled in Egypt, in the district of Goshen, and they acquired property there. They were fertile, and their population increased very rapidly.

THE HAFTARAH FOR VAYIGASH IS ON PAGE 391.

---

TORAS MENACHEM

---

🔗 THE JEWISH SETTLEMENT IN GOSHEN (v. 2)

Why does *Rashi* inform us that Goshen was “part of the land of Egypt,” when the Torah stated this fact *explicitly* above (v. 6)?

On reading the account of how Ya’akov’s family settled comfortably in the district of Goshen, the best part of Egypt, *Rashi* was concerned that the reader would find this state of affairs at odds with God’s promise to Avraham. At the “Covenant of the Parts,” God said, “*You should know that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs... and afterwards they will leave...*” (above 15:13-14). Now, if the Jewish people had settled in the land and were even buying property in it, as *Rashi* writes, then how could they possibly be described as *strangers*?

Answers *Rashi*: they were in “the land of Goshen, *which is part of the land of Egypt.*” I.e. even though they were comfortably settled in Goshen, they were ultimately in a foreign land and thus could be considered to be “strangers.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, pp. 406-7)

🔗 Sparks of Chasidus 🔗

**R**ashi writes that the Jewish people settled comfortably in Goshen (v. 2), whereas the *Midrash* understands that, to the contrary, the land “grasped” and possessed them.

However in truth, there is no contradiction here, as each commentary is speaking from its own viewpoint: *Rashi* explains that, at the literal level, the Jewish people prospered in exile. The *Midrash* however gives a deeper insight, and explains that even while the Jewish people appeared superficially to be prospering in exile, in truth however their very presence in a non-Jewish land was “grasping” them away from Jewish values.

The solution, of course, was Torah study. Thus we find that so long as the Jewish people were immersed in Torah, the physical exile did not begin (*ibid.*).



# parshas Vayechi

פרשת ויחי

## 🌀 The Name of the Parsha 🌀

**V**ayechi means, “And he lived”—rather an inappropriate name, it would seem, for a *Parsha* which speaks almost entirely about the events surrounding Ya’akov’s passing!

**W**hat is life? The Torah teaches us: “You, who are connected to God, your God, are all alive today” (*Devarim* 4:4). I.e. true life means to be connected to God.

Of course, a Jew is *inherently* connected to God, but in order for that connection to be visible and apparent *in the world*, God sends the Jew trials and challenges in his Divine Service. When these hurdles are overcome we then have *proof* that the connection between a Jew and God is an unbreakable one.

Thus, we are only aware that a person is really alive when he is about to pass away. For only then is it evident that all the trials and tribulations of life were intended to highlight and express the powerful bond of the Jew to Torah and *mitzvos*. So, only when reaching *Parshas Vayechi* do we finally witness that Ya’akov indeed lived.

**T**he *Talmud* states, “Just as his descendants are alive, he too is alive” (*Ta’anis* 5a). For the true commitment of a person to Judaism is ultimately only discernable when we see his children and grandchildren steadfast in their observance of Torah and *mitzvos*.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, pp. 427ff.)

כח וַיְחִי יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם שְׁבַע עָשָׂר שָׁנָיִם וַהֲוֹי יוֹמֵי יַעֲקֹב שְׁנַיִם חִיּוֹתַי מֵאָה וְאַרְבָּעִין וּשְׁבַע שָׁנָיִם: כט וַקְרִיבוּ יוֹמֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמָוֶת וַקְרָא לְבָרְיָהּ לְיוֹסֵף וַאֲמַר לִיהָ אִם כֶּעֶן אֲשַׁכְּחִית רַחֲמִינָן בְּעֵינֶיךָ שׁוּי כֶּעֶן יָדְךָ תַּחֲוֹת יָרְכִי וְתַעֲבִיד עִמִּי טִיבוּ וּקְשׁוּט לֹא כֶּעֶן

כח וַיְחִי יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם שְׁבַע עָשָׂר שָׁנָה וַיְחִי יוֹמֵי יַעֲקֹב שְׁנַיִם חִיּוֹתַי שְׁבַע שָׁנָה: כט וַיְקַרְבוּ יוֹמֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמָוֶת וַיְקָרָא אֶל יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִם-נָא מִצָּאתַי חַן בְּעֵינֶיךָ שׁוּי-נָא יָדְךָ תַּחֲת יָרְכִי וְעָשִׂיתָ עִמָּדִי חֶסֶד

כ"ט

למות. כל מי שנאמר בו קריבה למוֹת, לא הביע לימי אבותיו<sup>3</sup>, נילחם חי ק"פ ויעקב קמ"ז, בדוד נאמר קריבה, אביו חי ת' שנים<sup>4</sup> והוא חי ע': ויקרא לבנו ליוסף. למי שהיה יכולת זידו לעשות<sup>5</sup>: שים נא ירך. והשבע: חסד ואמת.

(כח) ויחי יעקב. למען פרשה זו סתומה, לפי שכיון שנפטר יעקב אביו, נסתמו עיניכם ולבם של ישראל מנרת השעבוד, שהתחילו לשעבד. דבר אחר, שזקש לגלות את הקץ לבניו, ונסתם ממנו<sup>1</sup>. כ"ר<sup>2</sup>: (כט) ויקרבו ימי ישראל

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● In a Sefer Torah, why is there no gap between *Parshas Vayigash* and *Parshas Vayechi*? (v. 28)

**RASHI:** Why is the gap between this *Parsha* and the previous one closed?

Because when Ya'akov our father died, the eyes and hearts of the Jewish people were "closed" due to the suffering of slavery, for it was at that time that the Egyptians began to enslave them.

An alternative explanation: Because Ya'akov wished to reveal the End of Days, when Mashiach would come and the information was "closed" (concealed) from him.

**MIDRASH:** [After citing the above two explanations, the *Midrash* continues:] Another explanation—because all the troubles of the world were now "closed" for Ya'akov (*Bereishis Rabah* 96:1).

**SIFSEI CHACHAMIM:** Why is the absence of a gap here an indication of events that occurred *later* in the *Parsha*? Ya'akov only passes away below in chapter 49 verse 33, and the "End of Days" was only concealed from Ya'akov in chapter 49 verse 1 (see *Rashi* there). So, why did the Torah not hint to these events by "closing" the text *there*, at the point when they occur?

The reason why the Torah hints to these events here with a "closed" *Parsha* is because it would be impossible to do so in any other place. For it is only recognizable that a space in the text is missing at the *beginning* of a *Parsha* where a space is usually found. The absence of space is not recognizable in the middle of the text, for one would not expect a break there in any case.

**MIZRACHI:** *Rashi's* statement, that the Egyptians began to enslave the Jewish people after Ya'akov's death, appears to contradict his later comment that the Jewish people were only forced into slavery after Yosef and all his brothers had passed away (see *Rashi* to *Va'eira* 6:16).

And how could the Jewish people possibly have been enslaved while Yosef still ruled over Egypt for some 54 years after Ya'akov's passing?

The Talmud explains that the enslavement began gradually with the Egyptians' enticing the Jewish people to work for them with encouraging words and good pay, which gradually acclimatized the Jewish people to a working mentality (see *Sotah* 11b and *Rashi* *ibid*). Even though this was not yet slavery in the literal sense of the word, it nevertheless distressed the Jewish people since they perceived that it was the precursor of slavery which they knew was yet to come.

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 THE "CLOSED" PARSHA (v. 28)

*Rashi's* comment to verse 28 prompts the following questions:

a.) *Rashi* cites two reasons why the beginning of our *Parsha* is "closed." However in the *Midrash*, the source from which *Rashi* cited his explanations, a third explanation is offered. Why did *Rashi* conclude that, at the literal level of Torah interpretation, only the first two explanations are appropriate?

b.) Furthermore, both of *Rashi's* two cited explanations are *negative* (the death of Ya'akov and the concealment of the redemption), whereas the explanation that *Rashi* omits is *positive* (the end of suffering). Why did *Rashi* omit the positive reason, and accept two negative ones? In fact, the positive interpretation would appear to be especially appropriate when one considers that the *previous* verse is of a positive theme: "*The Jewish people settled in Egypt, in the district of Goshen, and they acquired property there. They were fertile, and their population increased very rapidly.*"

THE EXPLANATION

A solution to the above problem could be argued on the basis of *Sifsei Chachamim's* explanation that the text is "closed" at the beginning of the *Parsha* because this is the only place where the absence of a break in the text would be recognizable. In other words, the "closing" of the *Parsha* is not connected with verse 28 in particular, but rather, it alludes to an event later on.

*Rashi* concluded that the concept hinted to here by the "closing of the *Parsha*" must be connected with the *main theme* of the *Parsha* as a whole—namely, the passing of Ya'akov. Therefore he wrote that the "closed" *Parsha* alludes either to the passing of Ya'akov or the spiritual concealment which he experienced shortly before his passing. But it is unlikely at the literal level that the "closure" of the *Parsha* alludes to the troubles of the world being "closed" for Ya'akov—the third reason which the *Midrash* suggests—as this is not directly connected with Ya'akov's passing, which is the main subject of *Parshas Vayechi*.

1 ב"ר צו, א 2 הציון לב"ר הוא הוספת המעתיקים (המדפיסים), כדמוכח מכתבי-יד ודפוסים המדוייקים - סה"ש תשמ"ט, ע' 165. אבל ראה לקו"ש ח"כ ע' 228 הנרה 6. 3 ב"ר שם ג. 4 ס"א שמונים שנים 5 ב"ר שם ה

## 🌀 YOSEF SWEARS NOT TO BURY YA'AKOV IN EGYPT 🌀

47:28 **Y**a'akov lived in the land of Egypt for seventeen years. (The total of) Ya'akov's days, the years of his life, were a hundred and forty-seven years.

<sup>29</sup> When the time drew near for Yisra'el to die, he called his son Yosef and said to him, "If I have now found favor in your eyes, please place your hand beneath my thigh (and swear an oath) that you

TORAS MENACHEM

### RASHI'S TWO INTERPRETATIONS

*Rashi* deemed it necessary to bring *two* interpretations, because each has a minor shortcoming:

According to the first interpretation, that the "closing" of the *Parsha* alludes to Ya'akov's passing, we are left with the question: Why is Ya'akov's passing hinted to by a verse which speaks of the *very opposite*, "Ya'akov lived in the land of Egypt...?"

This problem is solved by *Rashi's* second interpretation, which explains that the "closing" of the *Parsha* does indeed allude to an event which occurred in Ya'akov's *life*, the concealment of the End of Days.

However, this interpretation too is not entirely satisfactory, since if one takes a look at the account of the "concealment" later in our *Parsha*, we find that it is not "closed" at all in the *Sefer Torah*, but rather, set off as an entirely new paragraph (!) Thus it is difficult to accept that the "closure" at the beginning of our *Parsha* alludes to an event which is itself recorded in an "open" *Parsha*. And since this is a more serious shortcoming than the problem with *Rashi's* first explanation, *Rashi* brought this only as his secondary interpretation.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 422ff.)

people was already apparent. This fear of impending slavery was not alleviated by the fact that Yosef was still in command, for their relationship with him appeared to be so tenuous that he might not even care to take notice whether they were living safely and freely from Egyptian persecution.

Based on the above explanation, we can explain a further detail in *Rashi's* comment. Why does *Rashi* stress that "the eyes and hearts of the Jewish people were closed" after Ya'akov's passing? Their downheartedness is understood, but why were their eyes closed?

However, based on the above we can understand that the onset of the exile began with the mere *observation* that their relationship with Yosef had weakened, and similarly, the observation that the Egyptians no longer respected them. As the years went on, this would have eventually made them downhearted because they knew that slavery was inevitable. Therefore *Rashi* stresses, "The eyes and hearts of the Jewish people were closed," for the beginning of exile was a "closing of the eyes," i.e. an *observable* change for the worse in the relationship between Jew and non-Jew.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayechi* 5749)

### 🌀 MIZRACHI'S QUESTION (v. 28)

*Mizrachi* notes the apparent contradiction between *Rashi's* comment to v. 28 that slavery began straight after Ya'akov's passing, and his statement later in *Parshas Va'eira* that the Jewish people were only enslaved after Yosef and all his brothers passed away.

At the literal level, the following explanation could be argued:

On the verse, "Yosef's brothers saw their father had died" (50:15), *Rashi* comments: "What does it mean that 'they saw'? They recognized his death through Yosef's conduct. For they used to dine at Yosef's table and he would receive them warmly out of respect to his father, but once Ya'akov died he no longer received them warmly." In other words, the passing of Ya'akov caused, to a certain extent, a split between Yosef and his brothers.

Now, if Ya'akov's absence had caused even Yosef's bond with his brothers to weaken, then certainly it would have led the Egyptians' relationship with the Jewish people to become strained. For, the Egyptians honored Ya'akov and his family, "because a blessing had come to them on account of him. Namely, the famine ended and the waters of the Nile became plentiful" (*Rashi* to 50:3). So when Ya'akov passed away, the motivating cause of their respect had gone.

Nevertheless, the Torah stresses that the brothers only "saw" that their father had died, i.e. the change in their relationship with Yosef was *recognizable*, but it was by no means sour. Similarly, one would imagine that the Egyptians would initially have had a subtle lack of respect for the Jewish people that was recognizable, but without any real practical ramification.

However even this early stage could be described as "the suffering of slavery," despite the fact that the Jewish people were not actually doing any labor, for the underlying desire of the Egyptians to enslave the Jewish

## 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

### "THE EYES...OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE WERE CLOSED" (RASHI v. 28)

**I**n our times we are witnessing signs of redemption in the world, and it is tremendously upsetting to see that the Jewish people have their "eyes closed" and do not take note of what is occurring.

Primarily, these signs are changes in the way that world leaders are acting towards Jews and Jewish values. The opposition to Jewish observance by a number of regimes has ended, most notably in the former Soviet Union where approximately one third of the Jewish people have found themselves in a position to observe the Torah and its *mitzvos* for the first time in 70 years.

Furthermore, the manner in which non-Jews perceive Jewish observance, even in the Western World, has changed radically in the past generation. Consider that before World War II, many thousands of Jewish families found themselves unable to earn a living if they were Shabbos observant, even in America, yet now we find that Jews who proudly display beards and *peyos* are accepted and respected by a broad cross-section of society.

However, the painful fact is that Jewish people have taken all this for granted, and fail to recognize that these are unprecedented changes of Messianic proportions. The redemption is no longer an unrealistic dream—we merely have to "open our eyes" to see that the time of redemption has indeed arrived.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim* 5744; *Bereishis* 5752)

תקברניני במצרים: ל ואשכוב עם אבתי ותטליניני במצרים ותקברניני בקבורתהון ואמר אָנָּא אַעֲבִיד כְּפִתְנָמְךָ: לא ואמר קים לי וקים ליה וסגיד ישראל על ריש ערסא: א ויהוה בְּתֵר פִּתְנָמְיָא הָאֵלִין וְאָמַר לְיוֹסֵף הָא אֲבוּךָ שָׁכִיב מֵרַע וּדְבַר יֵת תְּרִין בְּגוֹהֵי עֲמִיָּה יֵת מְנֹשָׁה וְיֵת אֲפָרַיִם: ב וחוי ליעקב ואמר הא בְּרַךְ יוֹסֵף אֲתִי לְוֵתָךְ וְאֲתַקֵּף יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִתִּיב עַל עֵרְסָא: ג ואמר יעקב ליוסף אל שדי אֲתַגְלִי לִי בְּלוּז בְּאַרְעָא דְכַנְעַן וּבְרִיד יִתִּי: ד ואמר לי הא אָנָּא מִפִּישׁ לָךְ וְאֲסַגְנָךְ וְאֲתַגְנָךְ לְכַנְשֵׁת שְׁבָטִין וְאֲתֵן יֵת אַרְעָא הַדָּא לְבְנֶיךָ בְּתֵרָךְ אַחֲסַנְתָּ עֲלֵם: ה ובעז תרין בְּנֵיךָ דִּי אֲתִילִידוּ לָךְ בְּאַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם עַד מִיתֵי לְוֵתָךְ לְמִצְרַיִם דִּילִי אֲנִין אֲפָרַיִם וּמְנֹשָׁה בְּרֹאבוֹן

וְאָמַת אֶלְנָא תְקַבְרֵנִי בְּמִצְרַיִם: ל וְשָׁכַבְתִּי עִם־אֲבֹתַי וְנִשְׂאֵתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם וְקִבַּרְתָּנִי בְּקִבְרֹתָם וַיֹּאמֶר אָנֹכִי אֶעֱשֶׂה כְּדַבְרֶךָ: לא וַיֹּאמֶר הַשֶּׁבַע לִי וַיִּשְׁבַּע לוֹ וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־רֹאשׁ הַמִּטָּה: פ מח « וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיֹּאמֶר לְיוֹסֵף הִנֵּה אָבִיךָ חָלָה וַיִּקָּח אֶת־שְׁנֵי בָנָיו עִמּוֹ אֶת־מְנַשֶּׁה וְאֶת־אֲפָרַיִם: ג וַיֵּגֵד לְיַעֲקֹב וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה בְנֶךָ יוֹסֵף בָּא אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּתְחַזַּק יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּשָּׁב עַל־הַמִּטָּה: ג וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־יוֹסֵף אֵל שְׁדֵי נְרָאָה־אֵלִי בְּלוּז בְּאַרְצָן כְּנַעַן וַיְבָרַךְ אֹתִי: ד וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלִי הִנְנִי מִפְּרֶךְ וְהִרְבִּיתֶךָ וְנִתְתִּיךָ לְקַהֲל עַמִּים וְנָתַתִּי אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת לְזֶרְעֶךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ אַחֲזֶת עוֹלָם: ה וְעַתָּה שְׁנֵי־בְנֶיךָ הַנוֹלָדִים לָךְ בְּאַרְצָן מִצְרַיִם עַד־בָּאִי אֵלֶיךָ מִצְרַיִמָּה לִי־הֵם

רש"י

לצין הגויים, וכרי הוא עומד בצדקו: (ח) ויאמר ליוסף. אחד מן המגידים, וכרי זה מקרא קלר. ויש אומרים אפרים היה רגיל לפני יעקב בתלמוד, וכשחלה יעקב צרף גושן, הלך אפרים אל צדו למצרים להגיד לו: ויקח את שני בניו עמו. כדי שיצרכם יעקב לפני מותו: (ט) ויגד. המגיד ליעקב, ולא פירש מי, והרבה מקראות קלרי לשון: ויתחזק ישראל. אמר, אף על פי שהוא צני, מלך הוא, אחלק לו כבוד, מכאן שחולקין כבוד למלכות. וכן משה חלק כבוד למלכות, וירדו כל עבדיך אלה אלי<sup>4</sup>, וכן אליהו, וישנם מתניו וגו'<sup>5</sup>: (ד) ונתתיך לקהל עמים. צרני שעתידים לזאת ממני עוד קהל ועמים, ואף על פי שאמר לי גוי וקהל גויים, גוי אמר לי על צנימין, קהל גויים, הרי שנים לצד צנימין, ושז לא נולד לי צן, למדני שעתיד אחד משצטי ליחלק, ועתה אוחה מתנה אני נותן לך: (ה) הנוולדים לך עד בואי אליך. לפני בואי אליך, כלומר שנולדו משפרשת ממני עד שצאתי אלך: לי הם. צחשזן

חסד שטושין עם המתים הוא חסד של אמת, שאינו מלפני לחשלוש גמול: אל נא תקברני במצרים. סופה להיות עפרה כניס (ומרחשין תחת גופי) ושחין מתי חולה לארץ חיים אלא צלעך גגול מחילות, ושלא יעשוני מצרים עבודה אלילים: (ל) ושכבתי עם אבותי. וי"ו זו מחובר למעלה לחלחל המקרא, שים נא ידך תחת ירכי והשבע לי, ואני סופי לשכב עם אבותי, ואחיה תשאני ממצרים. ואין לומר ושכבתי עם אבותי השכיבני עם אבותי צמעה, שהרי כתיב אחריו ונשאתני ממצרים וקצרתני בקצורתם, ועוד, מלינו ככל מקום לשון שכיבה עם אבותיו היא הגיועה, ולא הקצורה, כמו וישכב דוד עם אבותיו, ואחר כך ויקבר בעיר דוד<sup>2</sup>: (לא) וישתחו ישראל. תעלה צעדיה סגיד ליה: על ראש המטה. הפך עמו ללד השכיבה, מכאן אמרו<sup>3</sup>, שהשכיבה למעלה מראשותיו של חולה. דבר אחר על ראש המטה, על שהיתה מטתו שלימה ולא היה צד רשע, שהרי יוסף מלך היה, ועוד שנשבע

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Ya'akov not want to be buried in Egypt? (v. 29)

**RASHI:** [He said]: "Because its soil will ultimately become lice which will crawl beneath my body. Also, because the dead [who are buried] outside the Land of Israel will be resurrected only by suffering the pain of rolling through underground tunnels. Also, so that the Egyptians should not make a deity of me."

● Why did Ya'akov make Yosef swear an oath? Wasn't his word enough? (v. 30-31)

**RAMBAN:** Ya'akov did not suspect that his righteous and beloved son would disobey him. Rather, Ya'akov made Yosef swear an oath in order that Ya'akov's wish to be buried in the Land of Israel would be taken seriously by Pharaoh, who may not have given Yosef permission to leave. Or, Pharaoh might want such a holy person as Ya'akov to be buried in his country as an honor and privilege to the nation. But Ya'akov knew that Pharaoh would not make Yosef violate

an oath that he had sworn to his father, as we find later that Pharaoh said, "Go and bury your father, as he had you swear" (50:6).

**KLI YAKAR:** In fact, Rashi writes this explicitly in his commentary later (ibid), that Pharaoh said: "Had it not been for the oath I would not allow you to go."

● Why did Ya'akov bow down to his son? (v. 31)

**RASHI:** "When the fox is at his time of greatness, bow down to him."

**MIZRACHI:** In other words, one even bows down to the fox, which is the lowliest of all creatures, when he is needed. Therefore Ya'akov bowed down to Yosef because he was dependent on him to carry out his wishes, not out of honor for Yosef's position of royalty.

**NACHALAS YA'AKOV:** It is impossible that Ya'akov bowed down to Yosef in order to make sure that Yosef would carry out his wishes to be buried in the Land of Israel, for Yosef had already sworn an oath to that effect. Rather, Ya'akov bowed to Yosef as a lesson in etiquette.

will do for me true kindness: please don't let me be buried in Egypt. <sup>30</sup> Let me lie with my fathers. Carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their grave.”

“I will do as you say,” said (Yosef).

<sup>31</sup> (Ya'akov) said, “Swear to me,” and he swore to him. Then Yisra'el bowed down to (Yosef, turning towards the Divine Presence which was) at the top of the bed.

## 🌀 YA'AKOV BLESSES EFRAYIM AND MENASHEH 🌀

**48** **T**hen, after these words (had been exchanged between Ya'akov and Yosef<sup>31</sup>, a messenger) said to Yosef, “Beware, your father is sick!” He took his two sons Menasheh and Efrayim with him (to Ya'akov to bless them before he passed away).

<sup>2</sup> (A messenger) came to inform Ya'akov and said, “Look! Your son Yosef is coming to (visit) you.” Yisra'el summoned his strength and sat up on the bed (since Yosef was a king).

<sup>3</sup> Ya'akov said to Yosef, “God Almighty appeared to me in Luz, in the land of Cana'an, and He blessed me. <sup>4</sup> He said to me, ‘Look, I will make you fruitful and cause you to multiply, and I will make you into a multitude of peoples, and I will give this land to your descendants after you for an everlasting inheritance.’”

<sup>5</sup> “And now, your two sons—who were born to you in the land of Egypt, before I came to you (here) in Egypt—(will be counted as) mine (to receive a share in the Land of Israel): Efrayim and Menasheh

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🌀 YOSEF'S OATH (v. 30-31)

Why does *Rashi* not address the basic question of **Ramban**, as to why Ya'akov made Yosef swear an oath to bury him in the Land of Israel (v. 31) when Yosef had *already* promised to do so (in v. 30)?

**Kli Yakar** writes that the answer can be understood on the basis of a later comment of *Rashi*, that the oath was made only in order to win Pharaoh's consent.

However, *Rashi*, who wrote his commentary for the first-time reader, could not have expected the reader to be familiar with information recorded *later* in his commentary. Therefore, it seems more likely that *Rashi* held the matter to be self-evident to the reader *here*.

Also perplexing is *Rashi's* comment to v. 31, that Ya'akov bowed down to Yosef, his son, because: “When the fox is at his time of greatness, bow down to him.”

Again, this is difficult to understand—what is *Rashi's* intention here? **Mizrachi's** solution has already been refuted by **Nachalas Ya'akov**. And *Nachalas Ya'akov's* answer—that Ya'akov was teaching etiquette—is difficult to accept, for why would Ya'akov degrade himself and bow to his own son merely as a lesson in good manners to others?

#### THE EXPLANATION

Ya'akov suspected that Pharaoh would want him to be buried in Egypt, as *Rashi* indicates here (v. 29), that Ya'akov opposed this plan because he did not wish the Egyptians to worship him as a deity. Since Ya'akov knew that Yosef would have difficulty convincing Pharaoh, he made him swear an oath to *strengthen Yosef's resolve* in his difficult mission of winning Pharaoh's consent.

As a further act of encouragement in this mission, Ya'akov bowed to Yosef. This was intended to strengthen Yosef's feeling of importance, which would help in his difficult task of convincing Pharaoh.

Thus *Rashi* explains, “When the fox is at his time of greatness, bow

down to him.” I.e. Pharaoh's tendency was to look down at Yosef as a mere “fox,” the lowliest of creatures. But Yosef was nevertheless in a position of power, “a fox at his time of greatness.” So Ya'akov saw fit to “bow down to him,” to strengthen his feelings of self-importance and power so that Yosef should be able to win Pharaoh's favor on behalf of his father.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 211ff.)

#### 🌀 Sparks of Chasidus 🌀

**T**he Talmud teaches, “A prisoner cannot free himself from jail” (*Brachos* 5b). I.e. the solution to escape from a particular confinement cannot come from within the confinement itself. It has to be an external solution.

Thus, the inner reason why Ya'akov did not want to be buried in Egypt is because he wished to provide the external (spiritual) solution for the Jewish people to leave exile. Being buried outside Egypt meant that Ya'akov remained higher than the Egyptian exile, thus empowering his children with the spiritual potential to rise above their confinement, and eventually escape.

However, Yosef chose to allow his casket to remain in Egypt, for he wished to remain *with* his people while they were exiled.

And since Ya'akov understood that he and his son differed in their opinion as to where a Jewish leader should remain, he made Yosef swear an oath that he would bury his father outside the Land of Egypt.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, pp 272-3)

וְשָׁמְעוֹן יְהוֹן קְדָמָיו וּבְנֵיךָ דֵי תוֹלִיד בְּתַרְיָהוֹן  
 דִּילֵךְ יְהוֹן עַל שׁוּם אַחֵיהוֹן יִתְקַרְוּ  
 בְּאַחֲסִנְתָּהוֹן: וְאֵנָּה בְּמִיתִי מִפְּדֹן מִיתַת עָלַי  
 רַחֵל בְּאַרְעָא דְכְנַעַן בְּאַרְחָא בְּעוֹד כְּרוּב  
 אַרְעָא לְמִישַׁל לְאַפְרָת וּקְבַרְתָּהּ תַּמָּן בְּאוֹרַח  
 אַפְרָת הִיא בֵּית לָחֶם: ה וְחֹזָא יִשְׂרָאֵל יַת בְּנֵי  
 יוֹסֵף וְאָמַר מִן אֵלֵינוּ: ט וְאָמַר יוֹסֵף לְאַבְרָהָי  
 בְּנֵי אַנְוֹן דֵּי יֵהֵב לִי יֵי הָכָא וְאָמַר קְרִיבִינוּן

אֶפְרַיִם וּמְנַשֶּׁה כְּרֵאוּבֵן וְשָׁמְעוֹן יְהוּדָה לֵי: ו וּמוֹלַדְתָּךְ אֲשֶׁר-  
 הוֹלַדְתָּ אַחֲרֵיהֶם לְךָ יְהוּדָה עַל שֵׁם אֲחֵיהֶם יִקְרָאוּ בְּנִחְלָתָם:  
 וְאֵנִי | בְּבֹאֵי מִפְּדֹן מִתָּהּ עָלַי רַחֵל בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן בְּדֶרֶךְ בְּעוֹד  
 בְּבֵרַת-אֶרֶץ לְבָא אַפְרָתָהּ וְאֶקְבְּרָהּ שָׁם בְּדֶרֶךְ אַפְרָתָה הִוא  
 בֵּית לָחֶם: ה וַיֵּרָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-בְּנֵי יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר מִי-אַלְהָה:  
 ט וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל-אָבִיו בְּנֵי הֵם אֲשֶׁר-נָתַן-לִי אֱלֹהִים בְּזֶה

רש"י

לכניסה לחרץ, וידעתי שיש בלבך עלי, אזל דע לך שעל פי הדיבור קצרתיה שם, שתכא לעזרה לבניה, כשיגלה אותם נצוראדן והיו עוזרים דרך שם, ילאת רחל על קברה וזוכה ומצקשת עליהם רחמים, שנאמר קול צרמה נשמע וגו', והקצ"ה משיבה יש שכר לפעולתך נאם ה' וגו' ושזו צינס לגבולס. ואונקלוס תרגם כרוז ארעא, כדי שיעור חרישת יום [ס"א ארץ], ואומר אני שהיה להם קצב שהיו קורין אותו כדי מחרישה אחת, קוריאד"א צלע"ז, כדאמרין כרוז ותני, כמה דמסיק תעלא מצו כרזא: (ח) וירא ישראל את בני יוסף. צקש לצרכס ונסתלקה שכינה ממנו, לפי שעתיד ירבעם ואחאז ללאת מאפרים, ויהוא וצניו ממנשה: ויאמר מי אלה. מהיכן ילאו אלו שאינו ראוי לצרכה: (ט) בזה. כהא לו שטר אירוסין ושטר כתובה. וצקש יוסף רחמים על הדבר, ונחם עליו רוח

שחר בני כס, ליטול חלק בצרן איש כנגדו: (ו) ומוולדתך וגו'. אם תוליד עוד, לא יהיו צמנין בני, אלא צחוק שצטי אפרים ומנשה יהיו נכללים, ולא יהא להם שם בשצטים לענין הנחלה. ואף על פי שנתחלקה הארץ למנין גולגולתס, כדכתיב לרז תרצו נחלתו, וכל איש ואיש נטל בשוה חוץ מן הצכורים, מכל מקום לא נקראו שצטים אלא אלו, [להטיל גורל הארץ, למנין שמות השצטים, ונשיא לכל שצט ושצט, ודגלים לזה ולזה]: (ז) ואני בבואי מפדן וגו'. ואף על פי שאני מטריח עליך להוליכני להקבר בצרן כנען, ולא כך עשיתי לאמך, שהרי מתה סמוך לבית לחם: בברת ארץ. מדת ארץ, והם אלפים אמה, כמדת תחום שבת, כדברי ר' משה דרשן, ולא תאמר שעכצו עלי גשמים מלהוליכה ולקצרה בצחרון, עת הגריד היה, שהארץ חלולה ומנוקצת כצברה: ואקברה שם. לא הולכתיה אפילו לבית לחם

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did Ya'akov mention Rochel's passing? (v. 7)

**RASHI:** [He said:] "Although I am burdening you to bury me in the Land of Canaan, which I did not do for your mother, for she died near Beis Lechem....And I did not even carry her to Beis Lechem in order to bring her to a [settled] land—and I know that you have it in your heart against me."

"But you should know that it was by the word of God that I buried her there, so that she might help her descendants. For when Nevuzaradon will send them into exile and they will pass by way [of her grave,] Rochel will emerge from her grave. She'll cry and beseech mercy [from God] for them, as the verse states: "A voice is heard in Ramah, Rochel is weeping for her children..." (Jeremiah 31:14), and God answers her: "There is reward for your action," says God, "for your children will return to their borders" (ibid. 15-16).

**BIURAY MAHARAY:** A problem with *Rashi's* explanation is that it does not appear to be hinted to by the Torah *at all*. Why would the Torah tell us that Ya'akov raised an issue about Rochel's burial, without even hinting to us what Ya'akov's explanation was?

However, it could be argued that the Torah did indeed hint *Rashi's* solution to us, with the superfluous words "Rochel died on me *while traveling* through the land of Canaan...and I buried her there." What information is added by these extra words "while traveling"? This is surely a hint to *Rashi's* explanation, that God told Ya'akov to bury Rochel en route.

**RAMBAN:** Ya'akov said, "I had to bury Rochel en route, for I was unable to leave the children and their flocks unattended."

**SFORNO:** Ya'akov said, "I was so taken up with mourning that I was simply unable to travel."

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 ROCHEL'S BURIAL (v. 7)

Why did *Rashi* reject the simple explanations of **Ramban** and **Sforno**, and cite a *Midrashic* teaching which does not appear to be indicated by Scripture at all—as **Biuray Maharay** asks?

The solution of *Biuray Maharay*—that *Rashi's* solution is hinted to by some apparently superfluous words—is difficult to accept, since this is: a.) An extremely subtle scriptural allusion, and b.) It fails to explain why *Rashi* cites so much detail here.

THE EXPLANATION

In order to explain what was troubling *Rashi* here, let us first pose another question. The fact that Ya'akov never apologized to Yosef for

burying Rochel en route up to this point suggests that Yosef had never demonstrated any hard feelings about the matter. Thus, it was only now, when Ya'akov asked Yosef to bury him in the Land of Israel, that Yosef's resentment was apparently aroused. This begs the question: How could Yosef have acted so childishly? Here we are speaking about something that had not really bothered Yosef in the past, and it is only when he is asked to bury Ya'akov outside Egypt that he begins to raise an objection, "Why should I bury you in the Land of Israel when you didn't even do that for my mother?" How could Yosef have acted with such vengeance?

In truth however, Yosef was not resentful at all, neither now nor in the past. He accepted that Ya'akov must have had a good reason to bury Rochel en route, and never questioned his father. The only problem here



will be mine, like Re'uvain and Shimon. <sup>6</sup> But (if) you have more children after them, they will be (counted as) your own (and not as separate tribes). Regarding their inheritance, they will (not be tribes unto themselves, but rather) classified according to their brothers' names."

<sup>7</sup> "I (know that you are angry with me because) when I was coming from Padan (and) Rochel died on me—while traveling through the land of Canaan, when there was still (about) a (half-a-mile) stretch of land to reach Efras—and (you're upset that) I buried her there on the way to Efras, in Beis Lechem, (but you shouldn't be upset, because God told me to bury her there)."

<sup>8</sup> Yisra'el saw Yosef's sons. (When he tried to bless them, the Divine Presence departed, so) he said, "(From) where were these (boys born, who are not worthy of being blessed)?"

<sup>9</sup> (Producing his betrothal and marriage contracts,) Yosef said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God gave through (a marriage certified by) this (documentation)."

---

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

---

##### ● Why did Ya'akov ask "where were these (boys born)?" (v. 8)

**RASHI:** He attempted to bless them, but the Divine Presence withdrew from him because of [the wicked] Yeravam and Achav, who were destined to be born from Efrayim, and Yehu and his sons [who were destined to be born] from Menasheh. [Ya'akov] said, "Who are these?" i.e. "From where were these boys born, who are unfit for blessing?" So Yosef said "with this," showing [Ya'akov] his marriage deed\* and his *kesubah*.

**SIFSEI CHACHAMIM:** Ya'akov suspected Yosef of failing to convert his heathen wife, thus rendering the children unfit for blessing.

**TZEIDAH LADERECH:** It is difficult to accept that Ya'akov suspected Yosef of failing to convert his wife, since Ya'akov and Yosef had now been living in close proximity for seventeen years, so it is unlikely that such a major fault in Yosef's marriage would have remained unnoticed.

Rather, Ya'akov probably suspected his son of taking his wife as a non-Jewish concubine, which is technically permissible but it would have impaired the lineage of Yosef's sons. In response, Yosef showed his father his *kesubah*, a document which is only issued for a full-fledged marriage, and not for a concubine.

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

was that Yosef had accepted the matter *intellectually*, but in *his heart* he felt that, at the end of the day, his mother lost out.

Therefore Ya'akov said, "I know that you have it in *your heart* against me." i.e. "While I am sure you do not suspect me of doing something inappropriate, I imagine that you still feel in your heart that your mother ended up with an inadequate burial."

Consequently, Ya'akov felt it necessary to explain that Rochel was buried en route for a *positive* reason. While she may have sacrificed the opportunity to be buried in the Cave of Machpeilah, her burial near Efras nevertheless gave her the opportunity to pray for the salvation of her children. This would certainly make it clear to Yosef that his mother had not "lost out" at all. To the contrary, her unusual burial offered her the very special privilege of helping her children in a future generation.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 236ff.)

#### 🔥 Sparks of Chasidus 🔥

Rochel lost her own spiritual luxury—the privilege of being buried in the Cave of Machpeilah—in order to help her children. This represents the unparalleled quality of the "Jewish mother" who is always willing to sacrifice her own needs, spiritual or physical, for the sake of helping her children.

And this is the inner reason why Jewish identity follows the maternal and not the paternal route. For even though the father possesses a greater degree of spirituality—since he has the privilege of observing more *mitzvos* than a woman—the quality of a Jewish mother is nevertheless greater. She is willing to *forego* much of that spirituality in order to enable her to raise a family with tender loving care. And since this quality is even more quintessentially Jewish than the spirituality of the man, it is the mother that actually makes her children Jewish.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, pp. 239-240)

##### 🔥 YOSEF'S MARRIAGE DEED AND KESUBAH (v. 8-9)

**Tzeidah Laderech's** solution still fails to explain how this particular marital arrangement (that Yosef's wife was a concubine) could have remained hidden from Ya'akov for the seventeen years which Ya'akov and Yosef had been living together.

Furthermore, there is another more general issue here which requires clarification. Even though we find that our forefathers kept the entire Torah before it was given (*Rashi* to 26:5 above), we do not find any indication at the literal level of scripture that our forefathers carried out *kidushin* (the formal ceremony of marriage). In fact, the opposite seems to be the case, as we are told, "Yitzchak brought her (*Rivkah*) to the tent of his mother Sarah. He took *Rivkah*, she became his wife" (24:67). And how could Ya'akov have complained to Lavan, "Why have you deceived me" (29:25), if there had been a marriage ceremony first?

We therefore need to explain: Why did the Patriarchs *not* observe the precept of *kidushin*? And why *did* Yosef observe it?

---

\* Nowadays, the marriage ceremony (*kidushin*) is carried out by the groom giving the bride an object of value (a ring). Another permissible method, which is not practiced today, is for the groom to give the bride a "marriage deed." This should not be confused with the *kesubah*, which is a contractual relationship between husband and wife, and not a document which actually brings the marriage into being.

פען לותי ואברכינן: י ועיני ישראל יקרן מסיבו לא יכיל למחזי וקריב יתהון לותיה ונשיק להון ונפיח להון: יא ואמר ישראל ליוסף למחזי אפיך לא סברית והא אחזי יתי יי אף ית בניך: יב ואפיך יוסף יתהון מן קדמוהי וסגיד על אפוהי על ארעא: יג ודבר יוסף ית תרנויהון ית אפרים בימיניה משמאלא דישראל וית מנשה בשמאליה מימינא דישראל וקריב לותיה: יד ואושיט ישראל ית ימיניה ושוי על רישא דאפרים והוא ועירא וית שמאליה על רישא דמנשה אחבימינון לידוהי ארי מנשה בוכרא: טו וברך ית יוסף ואמר יי די פלחו אבהתי קדמוהי אברכם ויצחק יי דון יתי מדאינני עד יומא דהין: טז מלאכא די פרק יתי מפל בישא יברך ית עולימיא ויתקרי בהון שמי ושום אבהתי אברכם ויצחק וכנני ימא יסגון בגו בני אנשא על ארעא: יז וחזא יוסף ארי שוי אבוהי יד ימיניה על רישא דאפרים ובאיש בעיניהו וסעיד ידא דאבוהי לאעדא ויתא מעל רישא דאפרים לאנתותה על רישא דמנשה: יח ואמר יוסף לאבוהי לא בן אבא ארי דין בוכרא שו ימינד על רישיה: יט וסריב אבוהי ואמר ידענא ברי ידענא אף הוא יהי לעמא ואף הוא יסגי וברם אחוהי ועירא יסגי מניה ובגוהי יהון שליטין

ויאמר קחם נא אלי ואברכם: ושני י ועיני ישראל כבדו מזקן לא יוכל לראות ויגש אתם אליו וישק להם ויתבק להם: יא ויאמר ישראל אל יוסף ראה פניך לא פללתי והנה הראה אתי אלהים גם את זרעך: יב ויוצא יוסף אתם מעם ברביו וישתחו לאפיו ארצה: יג ויקח יוסף את שניהם את אפרים בימינו משמאל ישראל ואת מנשה בשמאלו מימין ישראל ויגש אליו: יד וישלח ישראל את ימינו וישת על ראש אפרים והוא הצעיר ואת שמאלו על ראש מנשה שכל את ידיו כי מנשה הבכור: טו ויברך את יוסף ויאמר האלהים אשר התהלכו אבתי לפניו אברכם ויצחק האלהים הרעה אתי מעודי עד היום הזה: טז המלאך הנאל אתי מפל רע יברך את הנערים ויקרא בהם שמי ושם אבתי אברכם ויצחק וידגו לרב בקרב הארץ: [שלישי] יז וירא יוסף כי ישיבת אביו יד ימינו על ראש אפרים וירע בעיניו ויתמד יד אביו להסיר אתה מעל ראש אפרים על ראש מנשה: יח ויאמר יוסף אל אביו לא כן אבי כי זה הבכר שים ימינד על ראשו: יט וימאן אביו ויאמר ידעתי בני ידעתי גם הוא יהיה לעם\* וגם הוא יגדל ואולם אחיו הקטן יגדל מפניו

\*לפי מנחת שי הלי רפה

כש"י

ידי. כתרומו אכמניון, כשכל וחכמה השכיל את ידיו לכך, ומדעת, כי יודע היה כי מנשה הבכור, ואף על פי כן לא שח ימינו עליו: (טז) המלאך הגואל אותי. מלאך הרגיל להשתלח אלי בצרתי, כענין שנאמר ויאמר אלי מלאך האלהים יעקב וגו' אכני האל צית אל: יברך את הנערים. מנשה ואפרים: וידגו. כדגים הללו שפרים ורצים ואין עין הרע שולטת בהם: (יז) ויתמדך יד אביו. הרימה מעל ראש בנו ותמכה בידו: (יט) ידעתי בני ידעתי. שכוה הבכור: גם הוא יהיה לעם וגו'. שעתיד גדטון ללאת ממנו, ששקצ"ה עושה נס על ידו: ואולם אחיו הקטן יגדל ממנו. שעתיד יחושע

הקודש: ויאמר קחם נא אלי ואברכם. זכו שאמר הכתוב, ואנכי תרגלתי לאפרים קחם על זרועותי. תרגלתי רוחי ציעקב צשציל אפרים, עד שלקחן על זרועותיו: (יח) לא פללתי. לא מלאני לצי לחשוב מחשבה שאראה פניך עוד. פללתי, לשון מחשבה, כמו הביאי ענה עשי פלילה: (יג) ויוצא יוסף אתם. לאחר שנשקס, הוליאם יוסף מעם צרכיו, כדי לישבם זה לימין וזה לשמאל, לסמוך ידיו עליהם ולזכרם: וישתחו לאפיו. כשחזר לאחריו מלפני אביו: (יג) את אפרים בימינו משמאל ישראל. הבא לקראת חצרו, ימינו כנגד שמאל חצרו, וכיון שהוא הבכור מיומן לזרכה: (יד) שכל את

TORAS MENACHEM

THE EXPLANATION

The introduction of marriage via a document or through a valuable object etc. (kidushin) at the giving of the Torah was so novel that it could not have been mimicked or anticipated beforehand. The very notion that a woman could be "acquired" as a wife with a ring, or through a piece of

paper is so alien to human logic that to practice such an activity before there was a Divine command to do so would be absurd. Consequently, while it is true that the forefathers pioneered the observance of many other mitzvos before the giving of the Torah, they did not do so in the case of kidushin, for it defied the conventions of their times.

*(When the Divine spirit returned, Ya'akov) said, "Bring them near to me, and I'll bless them."*

SECOND READING <sup>10</sup> *Yisra'el's eyes had become heavy with age (and) he could not see, so (Yosef) brought (the boys) near to him, and he kissed them and hugged them. <sup>11</sup> Yisra'el said to Yosef, "I didn't (even) expect to see your face, and—look!—God has shown me your children too!"*

<sup>12</sup> *(After Ya'akov kissed the boys) Yosef took them from (Ya'akov's) lap (and placed one child to his right and one to his left, so that he could rest his hands on them and bless them. Yosef stepped back and) threw himself down on the ground. <sup>13</sup> Yosef then took them both: Efrayim on his right, to Yisra'el's left, and Menasheh (the firstborn) on his left, to Yisra'el's right (so that he would place his right hand on the firstborn), and he brought (them) close to him.*

<sup>14</sup> *But Yisra'el stretched out his right hand and placed it on Efrayim's head, although he was the younger, and (he placed) his left hand on Menasheh's head. He guided his hands deliberately (in full awareness) that Menasheh was the firstborn.*

<sup>15</sup> *He blessed Yosef and said, "O God, before Whom my fathers Avraham and Yitzchak walked! O God, Who has looked after me from my birth to this day! <sup>16</sup> May the angel whom (You always sent) to redeem me from all harm bless these lads! May they be called by my name and the name of my fathers, Avraham and Yitzchak, and may they increase in the land like fish!"*

THIRD READING <sup>17</sup> *When Yosef saw that his father was placing his right hand on Efrayim's head, he became upset. So he lifted up his father's hand, removing it from upon Efrayim's head (in order to place it) on Menasheh's head. <sup>18</sup> Yosef said to his father, "Father, that's not right! This one is the firstborn. Put your right hand on his head!"*

<sup>19</sup> *But his father refused. He said, "I know, my son (that he is the firstborn), I know. He too will father a nation, and he too will be great. But his younger brother will be greater than him, and his children('s fame) will spread throughout the nations."*

---

TORAS MENACHEM

---

However Yosef, who was forced to live in a depraved Egyptian culture, felt the need to do more than his parents and grandparents. The incident with Potifar's wife brought to his awareness all the more, that some extra measure of personal fidelity was necessary for him, more than that which was required for Ya'akov, Yitzchak and Avraham. So he decided that even though it was not possible to genuinely imitate the process of *kidushin* before the giving of the Torah, he nevertheless needed to sanctify himself in some similar way, in order to protect himself from the depravity of his surroundings. Therefore, he made a note of his marriage to Asnas.

This record later proved useful when Ya'akov was about to bless Menasheh and Efrayim before his passing, and the Divine Presence suddenly departed:

When Ya'akov asked, "Where did these boys, who are unfit for blessing, come from?" he did not suspect Yosef of a marital defect. For having lived with Yosef for 17 years he would have surely discovered any major marital defect by now. Rather he was concerned that since the boys had been born and brought up in the profane atmosphere of Egypt (see *Rashi* to 12:19; 20:15), perhaps they were not sufficiently pure to be blessed?

In response, Yosef showed his father the notes that he had kept for himself in Egypt, as a sign that he had conducted himself all those years with an additional degree of purity and holiness (even more than his parents.) This was sufficient to convince Ya'akov that the boys were indeed pure, and worthy of blessing.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 241ff.)

 Sparks of Chasidus 

**"THIS ONE IS THE FIRSTBORN..." (v. 18)**

**M**enasheh received his name because, "God has caused me to forget (NaSHaNi) all my hardships and all that was in my father's house" (41:51). This expressed how Yosef was pained by the fact that he found himself in a place which made him forget his father's house. Efrayim was named, because "God has made me fruitful (hiFRani) in the land of my subjugation" (ibid. 52), expressing how Yosef had succeeded in Egypt.

Menasheh and Efrayim thus represent the two different reactions that a Jew has to being in exile. On the one hand he longs to leave the exile and return to "his father's house." But, on the other hand, since he finds himself—by Divine Providence—in exile, he realizes that there is a mission to be carried out there and he toils to succeed.

Menasheh was the firstborn because *first* of all a Jew needs to feel "out of place" in exile, to ensure that he does not assimilate. But the primary purpose of being in exile is to *succeed* in Divine service there—which is why Ya'akov wished to bless Efrayim first.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, pp. 432-4)

בְּעֵמֶמְיָא: כ וּבְרַכְיִינוּן בְּיוֹמָא הַהוּא לְמִימַר בְּךָ יִבְרַךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִימַר יְשׁוּנְךָ יְיָ כְּאַפְרַיִם וּכְמִנְשֶׁה וְשׁוּי ית אֶפְרַיִם קָדָם מִנְשֶׁה: כא וְאָמַר יִשְׂרָאֵל לְיוֹסֵף הֲאֵאָנָּה מָאִית וַיְהִי מִימְרָא דִּי בְּסַעֲדָכוֹן וַיְתִיב יתְכוֹן לְאַרְעָא דְאַבְרָהָם: כב וְאָנָּה יְהִיבִית לְךָ חֶלֶק חֵד יתִיר עַל אַחֵיךָ דִּי נְסִיבִית מִיְדָא דְאַמְוָרָאָה בְּצִלוֹתִי וּבְבָעוֹתִי: א וּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב לְבְנוֹהֵי וְאָמַר אֲתַכְנְשׁוּ וְאֲחֵי לְכוּן ית דִּי יַעֲרַע יתְכוֹן בְּסוּף יוֹמֵיָא: ב אֲתַכְנְשׁוּ וְשִׁמְעוּ בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב וּקְבִילוּ אוֹלְפָן מִן יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבוּבוֹן: ג רְאוּבֵן בּוֹכְרֵי אֵת חֵילִי וְרִישׁ תְּקִפִי לְךָ הָוָה חַוִּי לְמִסַּב תִּלְתָּא חֶלְקִין בְּכִירוּתָא כְּהוֹנְתָּא וּמְלֻכוּתָא: ד עַל דְּאֲזַלְתָּא לְקַבֵּל אֶפְרָיִם הָא כְּמֵיָא בְּרַם לָא אֲהִנְיָתָא חֶלֶק יתִיר לָא תִסַּב אַרְי סְלִיקְתָּא בֵּית מִשְׁכְּבֵי אַבְרָם בְּכוֹן

וּזְרַעוּ יְהִיָּה מְלֵאֵי הַגּוֹיִם: כ וַיְבָרְכֶם בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לְאֹמֹר בְּךָ יִבְרַךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאֹמֹר יִשְׁמְךָ אֱלֹהִים בְּאַפְרַיִם וּכְמִנְשֶׁה וַיִּשָּׂם אֶת־אַפְרַיִם לְפָנָי מִנְשֶׁה: כא וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יוֹסֵף הֲנִנְה אֲנֹכִי מֵת וְהָיָה אֱלֹהִים עִמָּכֶם וְהִשִּׁיב אֶתְכֶם אֶל־אֶרֶץ אֲבֹתֵיכֶם: כב וְאָנֹכִי נָתַתִּי לְךָ שְׁכֵם אַחֵד עַל־אֲחֵיךָ אֲשֶׁר לְקַחְתִּי מִיַּד הָאֲמֹרִי בְּחֶרְבִי וּבְקִשְׁתִּי: פ (רביעי) מט א וַיִּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב אֶל־בְּנָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הֵאֱסֹפוּ וְאֲנִידָה לָכֶם אֵת אֲשֶׁר־יִקְרָא אֶתְכֶם בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים: ג הַקְבִּעוּ וְשִׁמְעוּ בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב וְשִׁמְעוּ אֶל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבִיכֶם: ג רְאוּבֵן בְּכֹרִי אֲתָה בְּחִי וְרֵאשִׁית אוֹנִי יִתֵּר שְׂאֵת וַיִּתֵּר עָז: ד פָּחַז בְּפִימִם אֶל־תּוֹתֵר בִּי עֲלִית מִשְׁכְּבֵי

רש"י

חללקה שם<sup>2</sup>, דרך ירלחו שכמה<sup>3</sup> איש חלקו, לעצמו שם אחד<sup>4</sup>: אשר לקחתי מיד האמורי. מיד עשו, שעשה מעשה אמורי. דבר אחר, שכיב לך אזיב צלמתי פיו: בחרבי ובקשתי. היא חכמתו ותפלתו: (א) ואגידה לבם. בקש לגלות את הקץ ונסתלקה ממנו שכונה, והתחיל אומר דברים אחרים<sup>5</sup>: (ג) וראשית אוני. היא טפה ראשונה שלו, שלא ראה קרי מימיו<sup>6</sup>: אוני. כוחי, כמו מלאחי און לי<sup>7</sup>, מרוב אוניס<sup>8</sup>. ולאין אוניס<sup>9</sup>: יתר שאת. ראוי היית להיות יתר על אחיך צכהונה, לשון נשיאות כפיס: ויתר עז. צמלכות, כמו ויתן עז למלכו<sup>10</sup>. ומי גרם לך להפסיד כל אלה: (ד) פחז במימ. הפחז והצדלה אשר מהרת להראות כעסך, כמים הללו הממחרים למרוחתם. לך: אל תותר. אל תרצה ליעול כל היתרות הללו שהיו ראויות לך. ומהו הפחז אשר פחזת: בי עלית משכבי אביך אז חללת. אותו שם שעלה על יצועי, והוא השכינה שהיה דרכה להיות עולה על יצועי: פחז. שם דבר הוא, לפיכך

ללכת ממנו, שיחיל את הארץ וילמד תורה לישראל: וזרעו יהיה מלא הגוים. כל העולם יתמלא צלחת שמעו, כשיעמיד חמה בצעון וירח צעמק אילון: (כ) בך יברך ישראל. הצא לברך את בניו, יצרכם בצרכתם, ויאמר איש לבנו ישמך אלהים כאפריים וכמנשה: וישם את אפריים. בצרכתו לפני מנשה, להקדימו בדגלים ובחוכת הנשיאים: (כג) ואני נתתי לך. לפי שאתה תורח להחטק בקצורתתי, וגם אני נחתי לך נחלה שתקצר בה, ואיזו, זו שם, שנאמר ואת עלמות יוסף אשר העלו בני ישראל ממצרים קצרו בשם: שכם אחד על אחיך. שם ממש, הוא שהיה לך חלק אחד יתירה על אחיך: בחרבי ובקשתי. כשהרגו שמעון ולוי את אנשי שם, נתכנסו כל סביבותיהם להזדווג להם, וחגר יעקב כלי מלחמה כנגדן. דבר אחר שם אחד, הוא הצכורה, שיטלו בניו שני חלקים, ושם לשון חלק הוא, כתרגומו, והרצה יש לו דומים במקרא, כי תשיחמו שם<sup>1</sup>, תשית שוגחי לפני לחלקים,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What did Ya'akov want to tell his sons when he gathered them round? (v. 1)

**RASHI:** He wanted to reveal the “End” [of days when Mashiach would come] but the *Shechinah* (Divine presence) departed from him, so he began to speak about other things.

**TORAH TEMIMAH:** If the *Shechinah* departed from Ya'akov, then why did he continue to make numerous prophetic statements among his blessings to the tribes? Clearly, the *Shechinah* did not depart from him *completely*. It only left to a sufficient degree to deny Ya'akov the knowledge of when Mashiach would come, but his other prophetic abilities were still left intact.

TORAS MENACHEM

☞ THE “END OF DAYS” (v. 1)

**Torah Temimah** explains that the *Shechinah* could not possibly have departed from Ya'akov *completely*, since he continued to make a series of prophetic statements in the blessings that followed.

However, this begs the question: Why did *Rashi* write, “The *Shechinah* departed from him,” instead of stating more specifically that “the information about the End of Days departed from him,” leaving the rest of his prophetic powers intact?

It therefore seems that the term *Shechinah* refers, not to the Divine revelations which Ya'akov *himself* was privy to, but rather, to his ability to make these Godly ideas available *in the world around him* (לְהַשְׁכִּין לְמַטָּה).

In other words, Ya'akov himself never lost the knowledge of when Mashiach would come, he merely lost the ability to communicate it to others. Therefore *Rashi* did not write that the details of the “End of Days” departed from Ya'akov, for he was fully aware of them the whole time. Rather, it is only that “the *Shechinah*”—his ability to transmit that Divine inspiration—“departed from him.”

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 10, pp 168-9)

<sup>20</sup> He blessed them on that day, saying, “(The children of) Yisra’el will (always) bless (their children) with your (names), saying, ‘May God make you like Efrayim and Menasheh.’” He placed Efrayim before Menasheh (in his blessing, to indicate that he would take precedence in the order of tribes).

<sup>21</sup> Yisra’el said to Yosef, “Look, I’m going to die. God will be with you, and He will bring you back to the land of your fathers. <sup>22</sup> (Since you are taking the trouble to bury me) I have given you one portion more than your brothers, (the city) of Shechem, which I took from the hand of the Amorites with my sword and with my bow (when they waged war against us after Shimon and Levi killed the people of Shechem.)”

## 🌀 YA’AKOV BLESSES HIS SONS BEFORE PASSING AWAY 🌀

**49** **Y**a’akov called for his sons and said, “Gather round and I will tell you what will happen to you at the End of Days,” (but Ya’akov found himself unable to reveal the time when Mashiach would come, so he changed the subject).

FOURTH  
READING

<sup>2</sup> (He said,) “Sons of Ya’akov, gather round and listen. Listen to Yisra’el, your father!

<sup>3</sup> “Re’uvain, you are my firstborn, my strength, (conceived from) my first (drop) of vigor. (You were worthy of being) privileged with priesthood and privileged with kingship. <sup>4</sup> (But because of your reckless) haste (which was) like (running) water, when you interfered with your father’s bed, you will not be

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● What did Ya’akov tell Re’uvain? (v. 3-4)

**RASHI:** You were fit to be superior over your brothers with the priesthood...and superior with kingship...but you hastened to display your anger—similar to water which hastens on its course. Therefore

“you will not be privileged”—you will no longer receive all these superior positions that were fit for you.

What was the restlessness that you exhibited? You interfered with your father's bed. Then, you profaned the *Shechinah*, which would rest on my bed.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🌀 RE’UVAIN’S LOSS—YEHUDAH’S GAIN (v. 3-4)

Rashi’s comments here, about how Re’uvain sacrificed the privilege of priesthood and royalty, seem difficult to reconcile with some of his statements elsewhere:

a.) No mention is made here that Re’uvain’s *birthright* was also forfeited as a result of moving his father’s bed (35:22), and given to Yosef. Yet this detail is mentioned explicitly by Rashi on more than one occasion:

Just a few verses earlier, in his commentary to 48:22 (“I have given you one portion more than your brothers”) Rashi writes that this, “refers to the birthright, that his [Yosef’s] children will receive two shares.” Similarly, in *Parshas Vayishlach*, Rashi writes that Re’uvain was the “firstborn in regard to inheritance [of his father’s estate], firstborn to perform the sacrificial service, firstborn regarding the counting of the tribes. The birthright was only given to Yosef in respect to tribes, in that he founded two tribes [Efrayim and Menasheh, who each inherited a portion in the Land of Israel]” (Rashi to 35:23).

Here we see explicitly that Re’uvain also forfeited some of the privileges of being firstborn, which were passed to Yosef. Why then did Ya’akov omit this important detail here, and mention only that “You were fit to be superior over your brothers with the priesthood..and superior with kingship”?

b.) An even more perplexing question arises when examining the reason why Yehudah merited to receive the privileges of priesthood and royalty that Re’uvain lost. Rashi writes (in his commentary to v. 9, below): “You withdrew yourself and said, “What will we gain [if we kill our brother and hide his blood]?” (37:26). So too in the case of Tamar’s execution, he

confessed, “She’s right (in what she says. She became pregnant) from me (justifiably)” (38:26). Now, if these are the two reasons why Yehudah indeed inherited Re’uvain’s privileges of priesthood and royalty, then the matter appears to be grossly unfair on both counts:

### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

**S**urely, if Ya’akov had indeed revealed the time of Mashiach’s coming to his children they would have been totally devastated to hear that they had so long to wait?

When Ya’akov’s sons would hear that Mashiach was not scheduled to come for a long time, they would have realized that some considerable additional effort was needed to bring him sooner—as the *Talmud* states that through additional merit the Redemption comes earlier (*Sanhedrin* 98a). Thus, Ya’akov hoped that by revealing that “the End of Days” was a long way off, it would motivate his children to add substantially in Divine Service, so as to bring Mashiach sooner.

Nevertheless, despite his good intentions “the *Shechinah* departed from him,” and Ya’akov found himself unable to reveal the “End of Days.” For, ultimately, God wants us to bring Mashiach through our own efforts, and not through the assistance of “revelations” from above.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, p. 228ff.)

אחילתא לשוויי ברי סליקתא: ה שמעון ולוי אחיו גברין גברין בארע תותבותהון עבדו גבורא: ו ברזיהון לא הות נפשי באתפנשיהון למיך לא נחתית מן יקרי ארי ברזיהון קמלו קטול וברעותהון תרעו שור סנאה: ז ליט רגזיהון ארי תקיף והמתהון ארי קשיא אפלגינן בייעקב ואבדרינן בישראל: ח יהודה את אודיתא ולא בהיתתא בך יודון אחיך ידך התקיף על בעלי דבבך ותפדרון סנאך יהון מתורין קדל קדמך ויהון מקדמין ארי מדין קמלא ברי נפשא סליקתא ינוח

אביך או חללת יצועי עליה: פ ה שמעון ולוי אחים בלי חמס מכרתיהם: ו בסדם אל תבא נפשי בקהלם אל תחד בבדי ביי באפם הרגו איש וברצנם עקרו שור: ז ארור אפם ביי עז ועברתם ביי קשתה אהלכם ביעקב ואפיצם בישראל: פ ח \*יהודה אתה יודוך אחיך ידך בערף איביך ישתחוו לך בני אביך: ט גור אריה יהודה מטורף בני עלית פרע רבין באריה

\*יהודה בראש עמוד בס"ת. ב"ה שמ"ו סימן.

רש"י

עמס, כמו לא תחד חס בקצורה: כי באפם הרגו איש. אלו חמור ואנשי שכם, ואינן חשובין כולם אלא כאיש אחד, וכן הוא אומר בגדעון, והכית את מדין כאיש אחד.<sup>8</sup> וכן צמלרים סוס ורוכבו רמה צים, זהו מדרשו. ופשוטו, אנשים הרבה קורא איש, כל אחד לעלמו, בצאפם הרגו כל איש שכעסו עליו, וכן יולמד לטרוף טרף אדם אכל:<sup>9</sup> וברצונם עקרו שור. ראו לעקור את יוסף שנקרא שור, שנאמר כבוד שורו הדר לו. עקרו אשרישו"ר זלע"י, לשון את סוסיכם תעקר:<sup>10</sup> (f) ארור אפם ביי עז. אפילו זשעת תוכחה לא קלל אלא את אפם, וזהו שאמר זלעס מה לקוב לא קצה אלו: אהלכם ביעקב. אפרים זה מזה, שלא יבא לוי צמנין השצטים, והרי הם חלוקים. דבר אחר, אין לך עניים וסופרים ומלמדי תינוקות אלא משמעון, כדי שיכיו נפולים. ושצטו של לוי עשאו מחזר על הגרנות לתרומות ולמעשרות, נתן לו תפולתו דרך כבוד: (ח) יהודה אתה יודוך אחיך. לפי שהוכיח את הראשונים בקטורים, התחיל יהודה לכונן לאחוריו<sup>11</sup> [שלא יוכיחו על מעשה תמר], וקראו יעקב צדכרי רלוי, יהודה לא אחת כמותם: ידך בערף איביך. צימי דוד, ואויבי תחה לי עורף<sup>12</sup>: בני אביך. על שם שהיו מנשים הרבה, לא אמר בני אמך, כדרך שאמר ילחם: (ט) גור אריה. על דוד נתנצח בתחלה, גור, צביות שאלו מלך עלינו אתה המוליא והמביא את ישראל<sup>13</sup>, ולצוסף אריה, כשהמליכוהו עליהם. וזהו שתרנס אונקלוס שלטון יבא צשרויא, בתחלתו: מטרף. ממה שחשדתיך צטרוף טורף יוסף חיב רעה אכלתו, וזהו יהודה שנמשל לאריה: בני עלית. סלקת את עלמך ואמרת מה זלע וגוי. וכן צבריגת תמר שהודה דקה ממני, לפיכך כרע רצן וגוי, צימי שלמה איש

טעמו למעלה, וכולו נקוד פת"ח, ואלו היה לשון עבר, היה נקוד חלוי קמ"ץ וחלוי פת"ח, וטעמו למטה: יצועי. לשון משכב, על שם שמזיעים אותו על ידי לזדין וסדינין, והרצה דומים לו, אם זכרתיך על יצועי<sup>1</sup>, אם אעלה על ערש יצועי:<sup>2</sup> (ה) שמעון ולוי אחים. צעלה אחת, על שכם ועל יוסף, ויאמרו איש אל אחיו וגוי' ועתה לכו ונהרגו. מי הם, אם תאמר ראובן או יהודה, הרי לא הסכימו צבריגתו, אם תאמר צני השפחות, הרי לא היטה שנאתו שלימה, שנאמר והוא נער את צני צלבה ואת צני זלפה וגוי', יששכר וזבולון לא היו מדברים צפני אחיהם הגדולים מהם, על כרחך שמעון ולוי הם שקראם צביהם אחים: בלי חמס. אומנות זו של רליחה חמס הוא צידכם, מצרכת עשו היא, זו אומנות שלו היא, ואתם חמסתם אותה הימנו: מברתייהם. לשון כלי זיון. הסיף צלשון יוני מני"ר.<sup>3</sup> דבר אחר מברתייהם, צארץ מגורתם נהגו עלמן צכלי חמס, כמו מכורתיך ומולדותיך<sup>4</sup>, וזה תרגום של אונקלוס: (ו) בסדם אל תבא נפשי. זה מעשה זמרי, כשנתקבלו צצטו של שמעון להביא את המדינית לפני משה, ואמרו לו זו אסורה או מותרת, אם תאמר אסורה, צת יתרו מי החירה לך, אל יזכר שמי צדבר, שנאמר זמרי צן סלוה נשיא צית אצ לשמעוני, ולא כתב צן יעקב:<sup>5</sup> בקהלם. כשיקביל קרח שהוא משצטו של לוי, את כל העדה על משה ועל אהרן: אל תחד בבודי. שם אל יתיחד עמהם שמי, שנאמר צן קרח צן ילכר צן קחת צן לוי, ולא נאמר צן יעקב, אצל צדכרי הימים<sup>6</sup>, כשנתיחסו צני קרח על הדוכן, נאמר צן קרח צן ילכר צן קחת צן לוי צן ישראל: אל תחד בבודי. כבוד לשון זכר הוא, ועל כרחך אתה צריך לפרש כמדבר אל הכבוד, ואומר אתה כבודי אל תתיחד

TORAS MENACHEM

1.) While Yehudah indeed withdrew from the plot to save Yosef, he did so merely out of financial concerns. He said, "What profit will we gain if we kill our brother" (Rashi to 37:26), suggesting instead to sell him as a slave. Re'uvain, on the other hand, planned to save Yosef and bring him back to his father (see 37:21-22). So it seems absurd that Yehudah was rewarded for this act with privileges that were taken away from Re'uvain!

2.) Similarly, when one compares the teshuvah of Yehudah and Re'uvain, Re'uvain appears to be far superior. Yehudah's act of saving Tamar was unimpressive in that: i.) It was a single moment of teshuvah, after which we do not find that Yehudah continued to repent. ii.) If Yehudah had not confessed he would have caused the innocent death of Tamar and the children that she was carrying. In this light, Yehudah's confession is hardly an exceptional act of righteousness.

On the other hand, Re'uvain: i.) Continued to do teshuvah for many years after his "sin," to the extent that at the sale of Yosef nine years later he was still "busy with his sackcloth and fasting" (Rashi to 37:29). ii.) Even his "sin" of moving his father's bed was a relatively minor matter, which he did out of respect for his mother.

So why was Yehudah granted Re'uvain's privileges?

THE EXPLANATION

The distinction between the privileges of priesthood and royalty in contrast to the birthright is that the former are leadership positions which involve dealing with other people, whereas the birthright is a personal privilege. A priest is responsible for blessing the nation (Rashi v. 3), and a king is responsible for the welfare of his people (ibid. v. 9), but the birthright is a personal privilege through which the firstborn inherits a double portion for himself.

privileged. (For) then, you desecrated (the Divine Presence which) rested above my bed.

<sup>5</sup> “Shimon and Levi are (the) brothers (who plotted against Shechem and against Yosef too. Their murderous use of) weapons has been stolen (from Eisav).

<sup>6</sup> “(When the tribe of Shimon will conspire against Moshe), do not let my own (name) be mentioned with their conspiracy!

“(When Levi’s great-grandson Korach and his colleagues will rebel against Moshe) do not let my honorable (name) be associated with their (rebellious) congregation!

(Shimon and Levi) killed (every) man (in Shechem) to vent their anger, and they willingly (attempted) to maim (Yosef who is like) an ox, (the king of animals). <sup>7</sup> Cursed be their wrath, for it is powerful, and their rage, for it is callous. I will separate them (by denying Levi a share in the land, like the other sons) of Ya’akov, and I will scatter (both of) them throughout Israel (since the tribe of Levi will be searching for tithes, and the tribe of Shimon’s source of income will cause them to spread out).”

<sup>8</sup> (When Yehudah saw that Ya’akov was rebuking his sons he drew back, so Ya’akov called out to him), “Yehudah! You (are not like them)! Your brothers will acknowledge you (as their leader). Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies. Your father’s sons will bow down to you. <sup>9</sup> (From) Yehudah (King David will emerge, first as) a lion cub (during Sha’ul’s reign, and then a fully grown) lion (when he becomes king for himself).

“(Even though I suspected you of the plot) to tear (Yosef like) prey, you withdrew yourself (from the plot), my son, (and you refrained from killing Tamar. Therefore, your descendant King Shlomo will) crouch, and rest like a lion (while the Jewish people dwell in safety. No nation) will dare intimidate him, as if (he were) a lion.

---

#### TORAS MENACHEM

---

When Re’uvain moved his father’s bed he forfeited all of these privileges, because he demonstrated incompetence at both the personal and the interpersonal level.

Re’uvain’s mistake on the personal level was his *presumptuousness*. He mistakenly presumed that the presence of Ya’akov’s bed in Bilha’s tent was an affront to Leah, his mother.

His error on the interpersonal level was the invasive and hostile manner in which he carried out his plan. By “charging in” angrily (as *Rashi* writes) and moving the bed, he deeply offended his father.

Re’uvain was punished measure for measure for *both* of these errors. For his personal miscalculation and presumptuous conclusion about his father’s bed he forfeited the birthright, which is a personal privilege. For his angry and hostile approach *which caused pain to others*, he forfeited the privileges of priesthood and royalty which, being positions of leadership, demand a sensitivity to the feelings of *other people*.

In our verse, Ya’akov *only* mentions this latter error of *interpersonal* insensitivity, “(But because of your reckless) haste (which was) like (running) water, when you interfered with your father’s bed.” Therefore, *Rashi* informs us that for this error in particular, a lack of sensitivity for others, Re’uvain forfeited the leadership privileges of priesthood and royalty. His loss of the birthright for his *personal* presumptuousness is a detail mentioned elsewhere.

Based on the above we can also answer our second question, why Yehudah merited the privileges which Re’uvain lost:

While it may be true that *on a personal level* Re’uvain’s attempts to save Yosef and the intensity of his *teshuvah* were more impressive than Yehudah’s—nevertheless, with regards to the effect on *other people*, Yehudah’s efforts were vastly superior. For Yehudah *actually saved Yosef’s life*, whereas Re’uvain did not. So too, Yehudah’s few seconds of

*teshuvah* saved Tamar’s life, whereas Re’uvain’s nine years of *teshuvah* did not bring benefit to anybody but himself. In fact, it could even be argued that if Re’uvain would not have been so “busy with his sackcloth and fasting,” he might have been able to save Yosef while the brothers were busy eating a meal (37:25).

Consequently, when Re’uvain was denied the privileges of priesthood and royalty for his insensitivity to others, these privileges were granted to Yehudah. For Yehudah had demonstrated, more than all the other brothers, an ability to actually help other people. Therefore, his tribe merited to inherit the leadership roles of priesthood and royalty.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 439ff.)

#### 🌀 The Last Word 🌀

With all of Re’uvain’s piety, he allowed Yosef to be sold, an act which eventually gave rise to the Egyptian exile. Yehudah’s intentions on the other hand may not have been as pure as Re’uvain’s, but his *teshuvah* actually saved Tamar’s life, as well as the lives of her two sons—eventually giving rise to Mashiach, who is a descendant of Peretz.

From this we can learn how crucial it is not to be satisfied with one’s own spiritual achievements, but to help other people. For it is evident that Re’uvain’s personal piety led the Jewish people into exile, whereas Yehudah’s care for another Jewish person was an act which led to the blossoming of Mashiach and Redemption.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 446)

ישרי בתקוף באריא וכליתא ולית מלכו  
 דתועזענייה. לא יעדי עביר שלטן מדבית  
 יהודה וספרא מבני בנוהי עד עלמא  
 עד הייתי משיחא דדיליה היא מלכותא וליה  
 ישתמעון עממיא: יא יסחר ישראל לקרתיה  
 עמא יבנון היכליה יהון צדיקיא סחור סחור  
 ליה ועבדי אורייתא באולפן עמיה יהי ארגון  
 טב לבושוהי בסותיה מילא מילא צבע והורי  
 וצבעונין: יב יסקון טורוהי בכרמוהי וטופון  
 נעוהי בחמר יחורן בקעתיה בעבור ובעדרי  
 ענא: יג זבולן על ספר וממא ישרי והוא  
 יכבש מחוזין בספינן וטוב ימא ייכול  
 ותחומיה יהי מטי על צידון: יד יישכר עתיר  
 בנקסין ואחסנתיה בין תחומיא: טו ותוא  
 חולקא ארי טב וית ארעא ארי מעבדא פירין  
 ויכבש מחוזי עממיא וישיצי ית דיריהון  
 ודאשתארו ביהון יהון ליה פלחין ומסקי  
 מסי: טז מדבית דן יתבחר ויקום גברא ביומוהי יתפריק עמיה ובשנוהי ינחון בחדא שבטיא דישראל: יז יהי גברא דיתבחר ויקום מדבית דן  
 אימתיה תתמי על עממיא ומחתייה תתקיף בפלשתאי כחיוי חורמן ישרי על ארחה ובפתנא יכמון על שבילא יקטיל גברי משרית  
 פלשתאי פרשין עם רגלאין יעקר סוסן ורתבין וימגר רוכביהון לאחורא: יח לפוקנגד סברית יי: יט מדבית גד משרית מוזנין פד יעברון ית

ובלביא מי יקימנו: לא יסור שבט מיהודה ומחקק מבין  
 רגליו עד כייבא שילה ולו יקהת עמים: יא אסרי לגפן  
 עירה וק עירו] ולשרקה בני אתנו כבם ביין לבשו ובדם ענבים  
 סותה וק סותו: יב חבילי עינים מיין ולבן שנים מחלב: פ  
 יג זבולן לחוף ימים ישכן והוא לחוף אנית וירכתו על צידן: פ  
 יד יישכר חמר גרם רבץ בין המשפתיים: טו וירא מנחה כי  
 טוב ואת הארץ פי נעמה ויט שכמו לסבל ויהי למס עבד: ס  
 טז הן ידן עמו באחד שבטי ישראל: יז יהידן נחש עלי דרך  
 שפינן עלי ארחה הנשך עקבי סוס ויפל רכבו אחר:  
 יח לישועתה קניתי יהוה: ס [חמישין] יט גד גרוד יגודנו והוא יגד

כשי

ל' הריס שמשם לופיס למרחוק. ועוד תרגמו צפניס אחרים, לשון מעינות  
 וקילוח היקצים, נעוהי, יקצים שלו, ולשון ארמי הוא צפניס עבודה חלילים<sup>17</sup>,  
 נעוכ ארתחו. יחורון צקעתיה תרגס שניס, לשון שני הסלעים: (יג) זבלון  
 לחוף ימים. על חוף ימים תהיה ארלו. חוף, כתרנומו ספר, מרק"א זלע"ז,  
 והוא יהיה מצוי תדיר על חוף חניות, צמקוס הנמל, שאניות מצירות שס  
 פרקמטיא, שהיה זבלון עוסק בפרקמטיא, וממליא מזון לשכר יששכר, והס  
 עוסקים בתורה, הוא שאמר משה זבלון זבלון ויששכר זבלון<sup>18</sup>, זבלון  
 יולא צפרקמטיא, ויששכר עוסק בתורה זבלון<sup>19</sup>: וירבתו על צידן. סוף  
 גזולו יהיה סמוך לידון. ירכתו, סופו, כמו ולירכתי המשכן: (יד) יישכר  
 חמור גרם. חמור זעל עלמות, סוצל עול תורה כחמור חזק שמטעינין אותו  
 משא כז: רבץ בין המשפתיים. כחמור המהלך ציוס וזלילת ואין לו לינה  
 צצית, וכשהוא רואה לנוח, רוצץ בין החומיין בתחומי העיירות שמוליק שס  
 פרקמטיא: (טו) וירא מנוחה בי טוב. ראה לחלקו ארץ מזוככת וטובה  
 לכוליא פירות: ויט שכמו לסבל. עול תורה: ויהי. לכל אחיו ישראל: למס  
 עבד. לפסוק לבס הוראות של תורה וסדרי עזרוין, שנאמר ומצני יששכר  
 יודעי צינה לעתים לדעת מה יעשה ישראל ראשיהם מאתים<sup>20</sup>. מאתים ראשי  
 סנהדראות העמיד, וכל אחיהם על פיכס: ויט שכמו. השפיל שכמו, כמו  
 ויט שמים הטו אזיכס. ואונקלוס תרגס צפניס אחרים, ויט שכמו לסוצל  
 מלחמות, ולכבוש מחוזות, שסס יושבים על הספר, ויהיה האויב כבוש  
 תחתיו למס עובד: (טז) דן ידיו עמו. ינקוס נקמת עמו מפלשתים, כמו כי  
 ידיו ה' עמו: באחד שבטי ישראל. כל ישראל יהיו כאחד עמו, ואת כולס  
 ידיו, ועל שמשון נצא נצואה זו. ועוד יש לפרש כאחד צבטי ישראל, כמויחד  
 שצבטים, הוא דוד שצא מיהודה: (יז) שפינן. הוא נחש, ואומר אני שקראו  
 כן על שס שהוא נושף כמו וחתה תשופנו עקצ<sup>21</sup>: הנושך עקבי סוס. כך  
 דרכו של נחש. ודמהו לנחש הנושך עקבי סוס. ויפל רכבו אחרו. שלא נגע צו,  
 ודוגמתו מלינו צשמרון, וילפת וגו' את שני עמודי התוך וגו'<sup>22</sup>, ושעל הגג  
 מתו. ואונקלוס תרגס כחיוי חורמן, שס מין נחש שאין רפואה לנשיכתו, והוא

תחת גפנו וגו'<sup>1</sup>: (י) לא יסור שבט מיהודה. מדוד ואילך אלו ראשי גליות  
 שצצבל<sup>2</sup>, שרודים את העס צצצט, שממונים על פי המלכות: ומחקק מבין  
 רגליו. תלמידים, אלו נשיאי ארץ ישראל: עד כי יבא שילה. מלך המשוח  
 שהמלוכה שלו. וכן תרגמו אונקלוס. ומדרש אגדה, שילו, שי לו שנאמר ויזילו  
 שי למורא<sup>3</sup>: ולו יקהת עמים. אסיפת העמים, שהיו"ד עיקר היא ציסוד,  
 כמו יפתח<sup>4</sup>, ופעמים שנופלת ממנו, וכמה אותיות משמשות זלשון זה, והס  
 נקראים עיקר נופל, כגון נוי"ן של נוגף, ושל נושך, ואל"ף שצבחותי צאזיכס<sup>5</sup>,  
 ושצבחת חרצ<sup>6</sup>, (והוא לשון חרצ ופי' אימת חרצ והוא לשון זיון) ואסוך שמן<sup>7</sup>.  
 אף זה יקחת עמים, אסיפת עמים, שנאמר אליו גויס ידרשו<sup>8</sup>, ודומה לו עין  
 תלעג לאצ ותצו ליקחת אס<sup>9</sup>, לקצון קמטים שצפניה מפני זקנתה, וצגמרא  
 דיתצי ומקבו אקחתא צשוקי דכרדעא [דפומצדיתא], צמסכת יצמות<sup>10</sup>,  
 ויכול היה לומר קהיית עמים: (יא) אסרי לגפן עירה. נתנצא על ארץ  
 יהודה שתהא מושכת יין כמעיון, איש יהודה יאסור לגפן עיר אחד, ויעטנו  
 מגפן אחת, ומשורק אחד צן אחון אחד: שרקה. זמורה ארוכה, קוריי"רא  
 זלע"ז: כבס בייץ. כל זה לשון רצוי יין: סותה. לשון מין צגד הוא, ואין לו דמיון  
 צמקרא: אסרי. כמו אסר דוגמתו מקימי מעפר דל<sup>11</sup>, היושצי צשמים<sup>12</sup>, וכן  
 צני אחונו כענין זה. ואונקלוס תרגס צמלך המשוח. גפן הס ישראל, עירה  
 זו ירושלים, שורקה אלו ישראל, ואנכי נטעתוך שורק<sup>13</sup>. צני אתנו. יצנון  
 היכליה, לשון שער האיתון צספר יחזקאל<sup>14</sup>, ועוד תרגמו צפניס אחרים. גפן  
 אלו לדיקים, צני אחונו עבדי אורייתא צאלפן, על שס רוכצי אחונות  
 לחורות. כצס ציון, יהא ארגוון טצ לבושהי, שליבושו דומה ליין, וצצעוין  
 הוא לשון סותה, שהאשה לוצשתן, ומסיחה צכן את הזכר ליתן עיניו צב.  
 ואף רצותינו פירשו צגמרא, לשון הסחת שכרות, צמסכת כחוצות<sup>15</sup>, ועל  
 היין, שמה תאמר חינו מרוכ, תלמוד לומר סותה: (יב) חבילי. לשון אודס,  
 כתרנומו, וכן למי חכלילות עינים<sup>16</sup>, שכן דרך שותי יין עיניהם מאדימין:  
 מחלב. מרוצ חלב, שיהא צארלו מרעה טוב לעדרי לאן. וכן פירוש המקרא,  
 אדוס עינים יהא מרוצ יין, ולכן שניס יהא מרוצ חלב. ולפי תרגומו עינים

1 מלכיס"א ה, ה 2 טנהדרין ה. 3 תהלים ע, יב 4 יחזקאל כז, ז 5 איוב ג, ז 6 יחזקאל כא, כ 7 מלכיס"ב ד, ב 8 ישעיה יא, י 9 משלי ל, יז 10 קי: 11 תהלים קיג, ז  
 12 שם קכג, א 13 ירמיה ב, כא 14 מ, טו 15 קיא: 16 משלי כג, כט 17 עד: 18 דברים לג, יח 19 תנחומא ויחי, יא 20 דברי הימים"א יב, לג 21 בראשית ג, טו  
 22 שופטים טז, כט 23 שם כח 24 משלי כב, ב 25 איוב ז, ד 26 שופטים ה, כז 27 תהלים קמו, ט 28 ישעיה מט, ה 29 שם נח, יב 30 ירמיה י, כ



<sup>10</sup> “(The) stick (of authority) will never leave Yehudah, nor scholars from the feet (of his descendants), until the coming (of Mashiach)—to whom (kingship) belongs. He will gather the people.

<sup>11</sup> “(In Yehudah’s territory, wine will flow like a fountain such that) a man will harness his donkey to a (single) vine, or a young donkey to a (single) vine branch (and it will already be loaded to capacity). (There will be so much wine that a person could) wash his clothes with wine, and his robe with grape juice. <sup>12</sup> (People will be) red-eyed from wine and white-toothed from (the abundance of) milk.

<sup>13</sup> “Zevulun will live (in his territory) by the sea coast. He (will be) at the ships’ port (doing business). The end of his territory will be at Tzidon.

<sup>14</sup> “Yissachar is (like) a donkey with strong bones (because he bears the yoke of Torah. Like a donkey that journeys day and night) resting (temporarily) between the city borders, (the Torah scholar cannot rest day or night from Torah study).

<sup>15</sup> “(Yissachar) will see that his portion (in the Land of Israel) is good, and that the land is fertile (so he will not have to work hard. Consequently), he will bend his shoulders down to bear (the yoke of Torah) and he will pay his dues by serving (the rest of the Jewish people, teaching Torah Law).

<sup>16</sup> “Dan will enact vengeance for his people (against the Philistines) and the tribes of Israel will be as one (with him. <sup>17</sup> Shimshon, a descendant of) Dan will be a serpent on the road, a viper on the path, who bites the horse’s heels, so its rider falls backwards (without even having to fight with the rider).

<sup>18</sup> (But when Shimshon will be overcome by his enemies, he will say) ‘I hope for your salvation O God!’

<sup>19</sup> “(As for) Gad, troops will troop forth from him (over the Jordan river to conquer the Land). They will troop back in their own tracks (to the lands of their inheritance on the other side of the Jordan, and not one man will be missing from them).

FIFTH  
READING

רש"י

נודדים<sup>25</sup>, שם נפל שדוד<sup>26</sup>, מגזרת ישוד להרים, אף יגוד יגודו וגדוד מגזרה אחת הם, וכשהוא מדבר בלשון יפעל, אינו כפול, כמו יגוד, יגוד, ירום, ישוד, ישוב, וכשהוא מתפעל או מפעיל אחרים, הוא כפול, כמו יתגודד, יתגודד, יתרום, יתבולל, יתעודד. ובלשון מפעיל יתום ואלמנה יעודד<sup>27</sup>, לשבצ יעקב אליו<sup>28</sup>, משבצ נתיבות<sup>29</sup>. אף יגודו האמור כאן אין לשון שיפעילוהו אחרים, אלא כמו יגוד הימנו, כמו בני ילאוני<sup>30</sup>, ילאו ממני. גד גדוד יגודו. גדודים

לפשוני, וקרוי חורמן על שם שעושה הכל חרם. וכפיתגא, כמו פתן. וכמו, יארוז: (יה) לישועתך קויתיה ה'. נתבצא שינקרו פלשתיים את עיניו, וסופו לומר זכרני נא וחזקני נא אך הפעם<sup>23</sup>: (יט) גד גדוד יגודו. כולם לשון גדוד הם, וכך חצרו מנחם. ואם תאמר אין גדוד בלא שני דלתי"ן, יש לומר גדוד שם דבר לריב שני דלתי"ן, שכן דרך תיבה צת שתי אותיות להכפל בצופה, ואין יסודה אלא שתי אותיות, וכן אמר כלפור לגוד<sup>24</sup>, מגזרת ושבעתי

TORAS MENACHEM

### 🔥 Sparks of Chasidus 🔥

#### “ZEVLUN WILL LIVE BY THE SEA COAST...” (v. 13)

Zevulun would engage in business and provide food for the tribe of Yissachar, who would engage in Torah study. (Rashi to v. 13)

Until we reach the time when the nations will provide for the Jewish people (*Brachos* 35b)—after the coming of Mashiach—the majority of the Jewish people fall into the category of Zevulun, rather than Yissachar. Since this state of affairs is Divinely orchestrated, it follows that God’s plan for creation must be carried out to a greater extent by the businessman than the Torah scholar—for otherwise, God would have made a world with more Torah scholars than businessmen. This is because the ultimate purpose of creation is that “God desired a home in the lowest realms” (*Tanchuma, Naso* 7:1), and it is predominantly the businessman who works in those lowest realms, with the intention of elevating them to a higher purpose.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 137)

#### “DAN WILL ENACT VENGEANCE...” (v. 16)

The tribe of Dan was well populated, and they traveled last. If anyone lost property, they would return it. (Rashi to *Bamidbar* 10:23)

Dan typified the quality of *kabalas ol* (“accepting the yoke” of Heaven), which brings a person to push aside his own rational and emotional feelings towards Torah observance, and fulfill God’s laws with total obedience and submission. Thus the tribe of Dan put aside their own interests to help gather in the lost property of others.

At first glance, *kabalas ol* appears to be an inferior form of Divine service, for it demands the negation of one’s higher, more sophisticated faculties. Nevertheless, just like the foot—which has no mind of its own—actually *supports* the heart and brain, likewise the quality of *kabalas ol* is the spiritual support on which a person’s Divine service needs to be built.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 1, pp. 104-5)

יִרְדְּנָא קְדָם אֲחֵיהוֹן לְקַרְבָּא וּבְנִכְסִין סְנַיִין יִתּוּבוֹן לְאַרְעֵהוֹן: כ דָּאִשְׁר מְבָא אַרְעִיהָ וְהוּא מְרַבֵּיא בְּתַפְנוּקֵי מַלְכִין: כא נִפְתְּלֵי בְּאַרְעָא מְבָא יִתְרָמִי עֲדָבִיהָ וְאַחְסַנְתִּיהָ תְּהִי מַעֲבָדָא פִּירִין יְהוֹן מוֹדִין וּמְבָרְכִין עֲלֵיהוֹן: כב בְּרִי דִי־סָנֵי יוֹסֵף בְּרִי דִיתְבָּרַךְ בְּגוֹפֵן דְנִצְיָב עַל עֵינָא דְמֵיא תְרִין שְׁבַמִּין יַפְקוֹן מִבְּנֹהֵי יַקְבְּלוֹן חוּלְקָא וְאַחְסַנְתָּא: כג וְאַתְמַרְרוּ יִתִּיהָ וְנִקְמֹהֵי וְאַעֲקִיפוּ לֵיה גּוֹבְרִין גְּבָרִין בְּעַלֵי פְלַגּוּתָא: כד וְתַבַּת בְּהוֹן נְבִיאֹתִיהָ עַל דְקִיס אֹרִייתָא בְּסַתְרָא וְשׁוּי בְּתוֹקְפָא רֹחֲצִנְיָה בְּכֹן יִתְרָמָא דְהַב עַל דְרַעֲוֵיהָ וְאַחְסִין מְלֻכּוּתָא וְתִקְוָה דָּא תּוֹת לֵיה מִן קְדָם אֵל תִּקְיָפָא דִיעֲקֵב דֵי בְּמִימְרֵיהָ וְן אֲבָהוֹן וּבְגִין וְרַעָא דִישְׂרָאֵל: כה מִימַר אֱלֹהָא דְאֲבוּדָּי יְהִי בְּסַעֲדָךְ וְיֵת שְׂדֵי וּבְרַבְרִינְךָ בְּרַכְוֹן דְנַחְתָּן מִשְׁלָא דְשְׂמֵיא מְלַעֲיָלָא בְּרַכְוֹן דְנַגְדוֹן מִמַּעֲמַקֵי אַרְעָא מְלַרְע בְּרַכְתָּא דְאֲבוּדָּי וְדָאמְדָּ: כו בְּרַכְתָּא דְאֲבוּדָּי יִתּוֹסְפוֹן עַל בְּרַכְתָּא דֵי לִי בְּרִיכוּ אֲבָהָתִי דְחַמְיָדוּ לְהֹן בְּרַבְרֵיָא דְמִן עֲלְמָא יְהוֹן כָּל אֲלִין לְרִישָׁא דְיוֹסֵף וּלְגַבְרָא פְּרִישָׁא דְאֲחוּהִי: כז בְּנִימִין בְּאַרְעִיהָ תִּשְׁרִי שְׁכִינְתָּא וּבְאַחְסַנְתִּיהָ יִתְבְּנִי מְקַדְשָׁא בְּצַפְרָא וּבַפְּנִיָּא יְהוֹן מְקַרְבִין כְּהֵנִיא קְרַבְנֵיא וּבְעַדֵן רְמִישָׁא יְהוֹן מְפֻלְגִין מוֹתַר חוּלְקָהוֹן מִשְׁאַר קְדִישָׁא: כח כָּל אֲלִין שְׁבַטֵיא דִישְׂרָאֵל תְּרִין עֶשְׂרֵי וְדָא דֵי מְלִיל לְהוֹן

עֵקֵב: ס כ מֵאִשְׁר שְׁמִנָּה לְחָמוּ וְהוּא יִתֵּן מֵעַדְנֵי־מֶלֶךְ: ס כא נִפְתְּלֵי אֵילָה שְׁלַחַה הִנְתֵּן אִמְרֵי־שָׁפָר: ס כב בֶּן פֶּרֶת יוֹסֵף בֶּן פֶּרֶת עָלֵי־עֵין בְּנוֹת צָעֲדָה עָלֵי־שׁוּר: כג וַיִּמְרָרוּ וּרְבוּ וַיִּשְׁטְמֻהוּ בְּעָלֵי חַצִּים: כד וַתֵּשֶׁב בְּאִיתָן קִשְׁתּוֹ וַיַּפְּזוּ זִרְעֵי יָדָיו מִיַּדִּי אֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב מִשָּׁם רָעָה אֲבָן יִשְׂרָאֵל: כה מֵאֵל אֲבִיךָ וַיַּעֲזֹרְךָ וְאֵת שְׂדֵי וַיְבָרְכֶךָ בְּרֶכֶת שָׁמַיִם מֵעַל בְּרֶכֶת תְּהוֹם רִבְצַת תַּחַת בְּרֶכֶת שָׁדַיִם וְרַחֵם: כו בְּרֶכֶת אֲבִיךָ גָּבְרוּ עַל־בְּרֶכֶת הוֹרֵי עַד־תִּתְּאוֹת גְּבַעַת עוֹלָם תְּהִיִן לְרֵאשׁ יוֹסֵף וְלִקְדָּךְ נָזִיר אֲחִיו: פ [ששׁ] כז בְּנִימִין וְאַב יִטְרָף בְּבִקְרָא יֹאכַל עַד וְלַעֲרֵב יַחֲלַק שָׁלָל: כח כָּל־אֵלֶּה שְׁבַטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁנַיִם עֶשְׂרֵי אַרְעָא מְלַרְע בְּרַכְתָּא דְאֲבוּדָּי וְדָאמְדָּ: כו בְּרַכְתָּא דְאֲבוּדָּי יִתּוֹסְפוֹן עַל בְּרַכְתָּא דֵי לִי בְּרִיכוּ אֲבָהָתִי דְחַמְיָדוּ לְהֹן בְּרַבְרֵיָא דְמִן עֲלְמָא יְהוֹן כָּל אֲלִין לְרִישָׁא דְיוֹסֵף וּלְגַבְרָא פְּרִישָׁא דְאֲחוּהִי: כז בְּנִימִין בְּאַרְעִיהָ תִּשְׁרִי שְׁכִינְתָּא וּבְאַחְסַנְתִּיהָ יִתְבְּנִי מְקַדְשָׁא בְּצַפְרָא וּבַפְּנִיָּא יְהוֹן מְקַרְבִין כְּהֵנִיא קְרַבְנֵיא וּבְעַדֵן רְמִישָׁא יְהוֹן מְפֻלְגִין מוֹתַר חוּלְקָהוֹן מִשְׁאַר קְדִישָׁא: כח כָּל אֲלִין שְׁבַטֵיא דִישְׂרָאֵל תְּרִין עֶשְׂרֵי וְדָא דֵי מְלִיל לְהוֹן

כשׁ

עלמך יוסף עלי עין של עשו, לפיכך זכית לגדולה: בנות צעדה עלי שור. להסתכל כך בצלחתך על מזרים. ועוד דרשוכו לענין שלא ישלוט בזרעו עין הרע. ואף כשצרך מנשה ואפרים, צרכם כדגים שאין עין הרע שולטת בהם: (כג) וימררוהו ורבו. וימררוהו אחיו, וימררוהו פוטיפר ואשתו לאסרו, לשון וימררו את חייכם: ורבו. נעשו לו אחיו אנשי ריב, ואין הלשון הזה לשון פעלו, שאם כן היה לו לינקד וְרָבו כמו המה מי מריבה אשר רבו וגו', ואף אם לשון רביית חלים הוא, כן היה לו להנקד, ואינו אלא לשון פעלו, כמו שמו שמים<sup>2</sup>, שהוא לשון הושמו, וכן רמו מעט, שהוא לשון הורמו, אלא שלשון הורמו והושמו על ידי אחרים, ולשון שמו, רמו, רבו, מאלוהים הם, משוממים את עצמם, ותרוממו מעצמם, נעשו אנשי ריב. וכן דומו יושבי אי, כמו נדמו. וכן תרגם אונקלוס ונקמוהו: בעלי חציות. שלשונם כחן, ותרוממו מרי פלגותא, לשון ותבי המחלה, אותן שכיו ראויים לחלוק עמו נחלה: (כד) ותשב באיתן קשתו. נתישבה בחוקי: קשתו. חזקו: ויפזו זרעי ידיו. זו היא נתינת טבעת על ידו, לשון זכב מופז. זאת היתה לו מידי הקצ"ה שהוא אציר יעקב, ומשם עלה להיות רועה אבן ישראל, עקרון של ישראל, לשון אבן הראשה, לשון מלכות. ואונקלוס אף הוא כך תרגמו. ותשב ותבת בכוון נביאותיה, החלומות אשר חלם להם. על דקיים אורייתא בסתרא, תוספת הוא ולא מלשון עצמי שצמקרה. ושוי בחוקפא רוחאניו, תרגום של צאיתן קשתו. וכך לשון התרגום על העצמי, ותשב נבואיתו, שצביל שאיתנו של הקצ"ה היתה לו לקשת ולמצטת, צכן יתרמא דכב על דרעוהי, לכך ויפזו זרועי ידיו, לשון פז: אבן ישראל. לשון נוטריקון, אב וכן אבן וצנין, יעקב וצנין: (כה) מאל אביך. היתה לך זאת, והוא יעזרך: ואת שדי. ועם הקצ"ה היה לך כשלא שמעת לדברי אדונתך, והוא יצרכך: ברכת שדים ורחם. צרכתא דצבא ודאמא. כלומר יצרכו המולידים והיוולדות, שיכיו הזכרים מזרעין טיפה הראוייה להריון, והנקבות לא ישכלו את רחם שלהן להפיל עובריהן: שדים. ירה יירה מתרגמינן אישתדאי ישתדי, אף שדים כאן על שם שהזרע יורה כחן:

יגודו הימנו, שיעצרו הירדן עם אחיהם למלחמה כל חלון עד שנכבשה הארץ: והוא יגד עקב. כל גדודיו ישובו על עקבם לנחלם שלקחו בעצר הירדן, ולא יפקד מהם איש: עקב. בדרך וצמסילותם שהלכו ישובו, כמו ועקבותיך לא נודעו<sup>1</sup>, וכן בעקבי הלא<sup>2</sup>, בלשון לע"ז תרלי"א: (כ) מאשר שמנה לחמו. מאכל הבא מחלקו של אשר יהא שמן, שיכיו זיחים מרובים בחלקו, והוא מושך שמן כמעין. וכן צרכו משה וטובל בשמן רגלו, כמו ששינו צמנחות<sup>3</sup>, פעם אחת הולרכו אנשי לודקיא לשמן וכו': (כא) אילה שלחח. זו צקעת גינוסר, שהיא קלה לבשל פירותיה, כאילה זו שהיא קלה לרוץ. אילה שלחח, אילה משולחת לרוץ: הנותן אמרי שפר. כתרגמו. דבר אחר, על מלחמת סיסרא נחנצא, ולקחת עמך עשרת אלפים איש מצני נפתלי וגו'<sup>4</sup>, והלכו שם בצריחות, וכן נאמר שם לשון שלוח, בעמק שולח ברגליו. הנתן אמרי שפר. על ידם שרו דבורה וצרק שירה. ורבותינו דרשוהו על יוס קבורת יעקב, כשערער עשו על המערה, צמסכת סוטה<sup>5</sup>. ותרגומו יתרמי עדציה, יפול חבלו, והוא יודה על חלקו אמרים נאים ושבת: (כב) בן פרת. בן חן, והוא לשון ארמי, אפריון נמטייה לרבי שמעון, בסוף צבא מניעא<sup>6</sup>: בן פרת עלי עין. חנו נטוי על העין הרוחא אותו: בנות צעדה עלי שור. בנות מזרים היו לוועדות על החומה להסתכל ביפוי, ובנות הרצה לעדה כל אחת ואחת צמקום שחולק לראותו משם. (ד"ה). עלי שור. על ראייתו, כמו אשורנו ולא קרוצ<sup>7</sup>. ומדרשו אגדה יש רבים, וזה נוטה ליישב המקרא: פרת. ת"יו שבו הוא תקון הלשון, כמו על דברת בני האדם<sup>8</sup>: שור. כמו לשור. עלי שור. שצביל לשור. ותרגום של אונקלוס בנות לעדה עלי שור, תרין שצטין יפקון מצנוהי וכו', וכחצ בנות, על שם בנות מנשה, בנות אלפחד, שנעלו חלק צשני עצרי הירדן. צרי דיסגי יוסף, פורת לשון פריה ורביה. ויש מדרשי אגדה צו המחשבים על הלשון, צשעה שצא עשו לקראת יעקב, צכולן קדמו האמכות ללכת לפני צניהם להשתחוות, וצרחל כתיב נגש יוסף ורחל וישתחוו. אמר יוסף, רשע הזה עינו רמה, שמא יתן עינו צאמי, ילא לפניו ושרצב קומתו לכסותה, והוא שצרכו אציו בן פורת, הגדלת

1 תהלים עז, כ 2 שיר השירים א, ח 3 פה: 4 שופטים ד, 1 5 יג. 6 קיט. 7 במדבר כד, יז 8 קהלת ג, יח 9 ירמיה ב, יב 10 לעיל כז, יד 11 שם יג, יד-טו 12 שם כ, ג 13 ישעיה נז, יד 14 איוב ג, ג 15 במדבר לד, י 16 שם ח 17 לו: 18 שופטים כא, כא 19 שמואל"א יד, מז 20 ישעיה לג, כג

<sup>20</sup> “From Asher(’s land) will come rich food, and he will provide royal delicacies.

<sup>21</sup> “Naftali(’s land will yield fruit like) a gazelle (that has just been freed and) runs quickly, for which (the people) will give thanks and blessing.

<sup>22</sup> “Yosef is a charming son, a son whose charm impresses the eye (that sees him. Egyptian) girls would step (along a wall) to gaze at his (beauty. <sup>23</sup> His brothers) made him bitter, quarreled with him and hated him. (They were) men (with tongues) like arrows. <sup>24</sup> But (in spite of that) his power was firmly established and (a golden ring) was placed on his finger, through the hands of (God), the Mighty One of Ya’akov, and from there (he rose) to royalty (and was) the provider of Israel.

<sup>25</sup> “(All this came to you) from the God of your father, and He will (continue to) help you. (Your heart was) with God (when you refused to listen to Potifar’s wife, and therefore) He will bless you (with) the blessings of the heavens above, and the blessings of the depths that lie below, the blessings that fathers and mothers (need).

<sup>26</sup> “The blessings (which God gave) to your father surpassed the blessings (which He gave) to my parents, (for He gave me an unlimited blessing, reaching) to the end of the world’s hills. May (all these blessings) be on Yosef’s head, the man who was separated from his brothers.

SIXTH READING <sup>27</sup> “Binyamin(’s descendants will be ‘grabbers,’ like) a wolf that (grabs and) tears his prey. (From him, Sha’ul will arise) in the morning (of Israel’s history and) he will devour plunder. In the evening (of Israel’s history, Binyamin’s descendants, Mordechai and Esther,) will divide the spoil (of Haman).”

רש"י

שהזרע יורה כחן. ויפזו זרועי ידיו. כמו ויפולו, שילא הזרע מצין אלצעות ידיו. מידי אביר יעקב. שנראה לו דמות דיוקנו של אביו וכו', כדאיתא בסוטה<sup>17</sup>. ואונקלוס תרגם תאות עולם, לשון תאוה וחמדה, וגזעות עולם לשון מלוקי ארץ, (והם הברכות) שחמדתן אמו והזיקתו לקבלם: (כז) בנימין זאב יטרף. זאב הוא אשר יטרף. נצא על שיבוי עתידין להיות חטפנין, וחטפתם לכם איש אשתו<sup>18</sup>, בפלגש בגבעה. ונצא על שאול שיבוי נולא באויביו סביב, שנאמר ושאלו לכד המלוכה וגוי וילחם במואב ובאדום וגוי וכל אשר יפנה ירשיע<sup>19</sup>: בבקר יאבל עד. לשון ביזה ושלל, המתורגם עדה. ועוד יש לו דומה בלשון עברית, אז חולק עד שלל<sup>20</sup>. ועל שאול הוא אומר, שעמד בתחלת בוקרן (ס"א פריחתן) וזריחתן של ישראל: ולערב יחלק שלל. אף משתשקע שמשן של ישראל, על ידי נבוכדנצר שיגלם לבבל: יחלק שלל. מרדכי ואסתר שהם מבנימין, יחלקו את שלל המן, שנאמר הנה בית המן נתתי לאסתר. ואונקלוס תרגם על שלל הכהנים בקדשי המקדש:

(כו) ברכת אביר גברו וגוי'. הברכות שזכנו הקצ"ה גברו והלכו על הברכות שזירך את הורי: עד תאות גבעת עולם. לפי שהברכות שלי גברו עד סוף גבולי גזעות עולם, שנתן לי זכרה פרוזה בלי מלרים, מגעת עד די קלות העולם, שנאמר ופרצת ימה וקדמה וגוי<sup>10</sup>, מה שלא אמר לאברהם אביו וליצחק. לאברהם אמר לו שא נא עיניך וראה וגוי' כי את כל הארץ אשר אתה רואה לך חתונה<sup>11</sup>, ולא הראהו אלא ארץ ישראל לבד. ליצחק אמר לו כי לך ולזרעך חתן את כל הארצות האל והקימותי את השבעה וגוי<sup>12</sup>, זהו שאמר ישעיה והאכלתוך נחלת יעקב אצריך<sup>13</sup>, ולא אמר נחלת אברהם: תאות. אשמולין, כך חזרו מנחם בן סרוק: הורי. לשון ריוון, שכורוני צמעי אמי, כמו הורה גבר<sup>14</sup>: עד תאות. עד קלות, כמו והתאוויתם לכם לגבול קדמה<sup>15</sup>, תתאו לבא חמת<sup>16</sup>: תהיין. כולם לראש יוסף: נזיר אחיו. פרישא דאחוי, שנבדל מאחיו, כמו וינזרו מקדשי בני ישראל. נזורו אחור. ורבותיו דרשו ותשב באיתן קשתו, על כבישת יצרו באשת אדוניו, וקוראו קשת על שם

TORAS MENACHEM

### 🔥 Sparks of Chasidus 🔥

#### YOSEF THE “UPPER TZADIK,” AND BINYAMIN THE “LOWER TZADIK”

A *tzadik* (perfectly righteous individual) is a person who causes God to be revealed in this world. Generally speaking, there are two possible ways of achieving this goal: One approach is that the *tzadik* can act as a holy “channel” through which Godly revelation is brought into the world from the heavens above. A second approach is for the *tzadik* to work with the earth below, transforming the world itself to become open and receptive to Godly revelation from above.

This, says the *Zohar* (I 153b), is the key distinction between Rochel’s two sons, Yosef and Binyamin. Both were *tzadikim* who brought revelation to the world. But Yosef was the “upper *tzadik*” who

channeled that revelation from heaven to earth, whereas Binyamin was the “lower *tzadik*” who worked to render the earth itself receptive to spirituality.

These spiritual characteristics were also recognizable in their physical lives. Yosef was the “provider” of Egypt, who channeled God’s immense blessings into the world, to feed and sustain millions of people. Binyamin, on the other hand, is described as a “grabber” (see v. 27 and *Rashi* *ibid.*), since his holy task was to “seize” hold of the physical world and win it over to the side of holiness

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, pp. 281-2 and sources cited loc. cit)

אֲבוֹהוֹן וּבְרִיךְ יִתְהוֹן וְגַבְרַיִךְ דֵּי כְבֻרְכְתִיָּהּ  
 בְּרִיךְ יִתְהוֹן: כַּסּ וּפְקִיד יִתְהוֹן וְאָמַר לְהוֹן  
 אֲנִי מִתְכַּנְיֵשׁ לְעַמִּי קְבְּרוּ יְתִי לְוֹת אֲבֹתַי  
 בְּמַעְרְתָא דֵּי בְחַקְל עֶפְרוֹן חֲתָמָה: ל בְּמַעְרְתָא  
 דֵּי בְחַקְל כְּפֻלְתָא דֵּי עַל אֲפִי מְמַרָא  
 בְּאַרְעָא דְגֻנְעוּ דֵּי זְבוּן אֲבָרְהָם יִתְ חַקְלָא  
 מִן עֶפְרוֹן חֲתָמָה לְאַחֲסַנְתָּ קְבוּרָא: לֹא תִמְן  
 קְבְּרוּ יִתְ אֲבָרְהָם וְיִתְ שָׂרָה אֲתַתִּיָּהּ תִּמְן  
 קְבְּרוּ יִתְ יִצְחָק וְיִתְ רַבְקָה אֲתַתִּיָּהּ וְתִמְן  
 קְבָרִית יִתְ לֵאמֹר: לֹב זְבִינֵי חַקְלָא וּמַעְרְתָא דֵּי  
 בֵּיהּ מִן בְּנֵי חֲתָמָה: לֹב וְשִׁינֵי יַעֲקֹב לְפַקְדָא  
 יִתְ בְּנוֹהֵי וּבְנֵשׁ רַגְלוֹהֵי לְעֶרְסָא וְאַתְנַגִּיד  
 וְאַתְכַּנְיֵשׁ לְעַמִּיָּה: א וּנְפִל יוֹסֵף עַל אֲפִי

וְזֹאת אֲשֶׁר-דָּבַר לָהֶם אֲבִיהֶם וַיְבָרֶךְ אוֹתָם אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר  
 כְּבִרְכָתוֹ בֵּרַךְ אֹתָם: כַּסּ וַיֵּצֵא אוֹתָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם אֲנִי נְאֻסָּף  
 אֶל-עַמִּי קְבְּרוּ אֹתִי אֶל-אֲבֹתַי אֶל-הַמְּעָרָה אֲשֶׁר בְּשָׂדֵה  
 עֶפְרוֹן הַחֲתִי: ל בְּמַעְרָה אֲשֶׁר בְּשָׂדֵה הַמְּכַפְלָה אֲשֶׁר-עַל-פְּנֵי  
 מְמַרָא בְּאַרְזֵן כְּנָעַן אֲשֶׁר קָנָה אֲבָרְהָם אֶת-הַשָּׂדֶה מֵאֵת  
 עֶפְרוֹן הַחֲתִי לְאַחֲזֹת-קְבָר: לֹא שָׁמָּה קְבְּרוּ אֶת-אֲבָרְהָם וְאֵת  
 שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ שָׁמָּה קְבְּרוּ אֶת-יִצְחָק וְאֵת רַבְקָה אִשְׁתּוֹ וְשָׁמָּה  
 קְבָרְתִי אֶת-לֵאָה: לֹב מְקֻנָּה הַשָּׂדֶה וְהַמְּעָרָה אֲשֶׁר-בּוֹ מֵאֵת  
 בְּנֵי-חֵת: לֹב וַיִּבֶל יַעֲקֹב לְעֵצוֹת אֶת-בָּנָיו וַיֹּאסֹף רַגְלָיו  
 אֶל-הַמַּטָּה וַיְגֻועַ וַיֹּאסֹף אֶל-עַמּוּיוֹ: נ א וַיִּפֹּל יוֹסֵף עַל-פְּנֵי

כַּסּ

אילנה, ויכול שלא כללן כולם בכל הזכרות, תלמוד לומר צרך אותם: (כט) נאסף אל עמי. על שם שמכניסין הנפשות אל מקום גניזתן, שיש חסיפה בלשון עברי שהיא לשון הכנסה, כגון ואין איש מאסף אותם הציטה<sup>1</sup>, ואספתו אל תוך ציטה<sup>2</sup>, באספתם את תבואת הארץ<sup>3</sup>, הכנסתם לבית מפני הגשמים. באספתם את מעשיכם. וכל חסיפה האמורה במיתה אף היא לשון הכנסה: אל אבתי. עם אבותי: (ג) ויאסף רגליו. הכנים רגליו: ויגוע ויאסף. ומיתה לא נאמרה בו,

(כח) וזאת אשר דבר להם אביהם ויברך אותם. וכלא יש מהם שלא צרכם אלא קנטרן, אלא כך פירוש, וזאת אשר דבר להם אביהם מה שנאמר בענין. יכול שלא צרך לראובן שמעון ולוי, תלמוד לומר ויברך אותם, כולם בשמע: איש אשר בברכתו. צרכה בעתידה לזכ על כל אחד ואחד: ברך אתם. לא היה לו לומר אלא איש אשר בברכתו צרך אותם, מה תלמוד לומר צרך אותם, לפי שנתן ליהודה גבורת ארי, ולצנימין חטיפתו של אב, ולנפתלי קלותו של

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What was unusual about Ya'akov's passing? (v. 33)

**RASHI:** The Torah makes no mention of his death. Our Sages of blessed memory said, "Ya'akov our father did not die."

**TALMUD:** R' Nachman and R' Yitzchak were sitting at a meal. R' Nachman said to R' Yitzchak, "Please say some words [of Torah]."

He replied, "R' Yochanan said that one should not speak while eating, in case the food enters the windpipe before reaching the gullet, which would be dangerous." After the meal he added, "R' Yochanan said, 'Ya'akov our father did not die.'"

[R' Nachman] objected, "Was it for nothing that he was eulogized, embalmed and buried?"

[R' Yitzchak] replied, "I will expound a verse [for you]! It is written, "My servant Ya'akov, do not fear!" says God. "O Israel, do not be afraid! For I will save you from afar, your descendants from the land of their captivity" (Jer. 30:10).

The verse equates [Ya'akov] with his descendants, to teach us: just as his descendants are alive, he too is alive" (Ta'anis 5b).

TORAS MENACHEM

🔗 YA'AKOV'S PASSING (v. 33)

How is the student of scripture, which includes a child learning *Chumash* for the first time, supposed to understand *Rashi's* statement that "Ya'akov did not die," when the Torah states that he "breathed his last, and his (soul) was gathered in to his people" (v. 33)?

Even the *Talmud* itself—*Rashi's* source for this statement—objects, "Was it for nothing that he was eulogized, embalmed and buried?" and proceeds to offer a solution from scripture. How could *Rashi* possibly expect the reader to understand this concept unaided? And why did Ya'akov in particular merit eternal life, more than the other Patriarchs?

THE EXPLANATION

*Rashi* did not clarify any matter which he felt the student would be able to work out for himself with simple logic and a knowledge of *Rashi's*

earlier comments. Earlier, in *Parshas Bereishis*, we also find an individual of whom "the Torah makes no mention of his death." On the verse, "Chanoch... was no longer (around), for God had taken him" (above 5:24), *Rashi* comments, "He was a righteous man, but he could easily be swayed to evil, so God took him away quickly, causing him to die before his time. Therefore, the Torah describes his death in an unusual fashion, writing that he was 'no longer (around)' in the world to complete his allotted number of years."

From here the student of scripture has already learned that the Torah will sometimes avoid using the term "death" to indicate that a person passed away in unusual circumstances, such as in the case of Chanoch who was "taken away" early by God to save him from becoming wicked.

Thus the reader will understand that the Torah took a similar approach in the case of Ya'akov's passing: Like Chanoch, Ya'akov also passed away

<sup>28</sup> *These are all the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father spoke to them.*

*(In addition to rebuking Reu'vain, Shimon and Levi,) he blessed them (too. He blessed each son) with the blessing (that fitted) him, (and) he (also) blessed (all of his sons with all of the blessings, in general).*

### 🕎 YA'AKOV PASSES AWAY 🕎

49:29 **H**e instructed them, saying to them, “I (will soon die and my soul) will be gathered in to (be with the souls of) my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave which is in Efron the Chitite’s field, <sup>30</sup> in the cave that’s in the field of Machpeilah, facing Mamre in the land of Canaan—the field which Avraham bought from Efron the Chitite as a burial plot. <sup>31</sup> They buried Avraham and his wife Sarah there, they buried Yitzchak and his wife Rivkah there, and I buried Leah there. <sup>32</sup> The purchase of the field, and its cave, from the sons of Cheis (still stands).”

<sup>33</sup> *As Ya’akov finished commanding his sons, he gathered his legs onto the bed, breathed his last, and his (soul) was gathered in to (be with the souls of) his people.*

#### TORAS MENACHEM

younger than expected, at the age of 147, well before the age of 180 at which his father Yitzchak passed away. And Ya’akov himself testified to the shortness of his own life: “(Compared to) the days of my fathers’ lives... the days of my life have been few” (47:9 above).

However, this is as far as the comparison between Ya’akov and Chanoch extends. For the Torah does in fact refer to Chanoch’s passing, albeit in an unusual fashion (“he was no longer (around)”), whereas no specific mention is made of Ya’akov’s actual death. And clearly, Ya’akov did not pass away because he would “easily be swayed to evil,” like Chanoch. Why then does, “the Torah make no mention of his death”?

The answer to this question can be found in another detail in *Parshas Bereishis*: After ignoring God’s warning “You must not eat from the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil, for on the day that you will eat from it you will certainly die” (2:17), it was decreed upon man that “you are (from the) soil, and to soil you will return” (3:19). I.e. the phenomenon of death was introduced as a direct result of the sin of the Tree of Knowledge.

Thus, it follows that when *Rashi* tells us that “Ya’akov our father did not die,” it means—at the literal level—that unlike man in general, Ya’akov’s passing was not a result of the sin of the Tree of Knowledge. I.e. Ya’akov was such a unique and pious individual that he had no connection with evil or sin *whatsoever*.

### 🕎 The Last Word 🕎

**A**fter Ya’akov had finished blessing each of his sons individually, he then repeated *all* the blessings to each of his sons (*Rashi* to v. 28). This teaches us that, while we each have our own areas of Divine service in which we excel, it is important that each person should encompass, to some extent, *all* aspects of Jewish life. Thus, the businessman needs to set aside times for Torah study, just as the Torah scholar needs to be charitable.

Of course, it is only natural that a person might lack enthusiasm in those areas in which he does not excel. Therefore, after Ya’akov blessed each son according to his specific talents, he repeated all of the blessings to each of his sons, so they would have the enthusiasm to fulfill *all* of the diverse responsibilities that a Jew is challenged with.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 290ff.)

But, this begs the question: Surely Avraham and Yitzchak were also very great individuals. Why does the Torah state that they “died”?

### 🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

**G**od is unlimited; the world is limited—and the Torah is the interface between them. For the Torah deals with worldly matters, and yet it remains the undiluted wisdom of God. The Torah says, “I will show you how to carry out God’s infinite will, on the world’s limited terms.”

But why must the Torah “bend” to the world? Why can the Torah not override the world if it gets in the way?

This could be for one of two possible reasons: a.) The world will not allow it. Or, b.) The Torah does not *wish* to override the world, because the Torah wishes all its activities to be at peace with God’s creations.

This point was disputed by R’ Nachman and R’ Yitzchak in the **Talmud**. R’ Nachman found it difficult to accept that “Ya’akov our father did not die,” because the world does not allow such things to occur. The Torah itself states that he was eulogized, embalmed and buried, which surely proves that the Torah recognizes the real limitations of this world, that a person cannot live forever!

To this R’ Yitzchak replied, “I will expound a verse [for you]!” I.e. the same Torah which, at the literal level, says that Ya’akov was buried, can also be expounded to reveal a deeper truth, that Ya’akov is still alive. This is not a contradiction, but rather two different perspectives of reality: On the one hand the Torah wishes to act within the world’s limitations; but for those who are capable of appreciating a deeper perspective, it will be evident that Torah is not constrained by the world’s limitations at all.

Thus, while it is natural for a Jew to feel that he is subject to the limitations of the world at large, he should know that if he would “refocus” his attitude, he would see that the Torah truly transcends the world and all of its limitations.

After all, how else could you explain the existence of the Jewish people against all odds for over two thousand years?

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 223ff.)

אָבוהי וּבָכָא עֲלוּהי וְנִשְׁקִי לִיה: ב וּפְקִיד יוֹסֵף  
 ית עבדוהי ית אסותא למחנט ית אבוהי  
 וְחִנְיָטוּ אַסּוּתָא ית יִשְׂרָאֵל: ג וּשְׁלִימוּ לִיה  
 אַרְבַּעִין יוֹמִין אַרְי פֶּן שְׁלִימוּ יוֹמֵי חִנְיָטָא  
 וּבְכוּ יתיה מצראי שבועין יומין: ד וְעָבְרוּ יוֹמֵי  
 בְּכִיתִיה וּמְלִיל יוֹסֵף עִם בֵּית פְּרָעָה לְמִימְר  
 אִם כֶּעַן אֲשַׁפְּחִית רַחֲמִין בְּעֵינֵיכוֹן מְלִילוּ כֶּעַן  
 קָדָם פְּרָעָה לְמִימְר: ה אַבָּא קָיָם עָלֵי לְמִימְר  
 הָא אָנָּא מָאִית בְּקַבְרֵי דְאַתְקִינִית לִי  
 בְּאַרְעָא דְכַנְעַן תַּמָּן תַּקְבְּרִינִי וְכַעַן אֲסַק כֶּעַן  
 וְאַקְבֵּר ית אבא ואיתוב: ו וְאָמַר פְּרָעָה סָק  
 וּקְבוּר ית אַבְרָם בְּמָא דְקָיָם עֲלָה: ז וּסְלִיק  
 יוֹסֵף לְמַקְבֵּר ית אָבוהי וּסְלִיקוּ עִמִּיהָ כָּל  
 עַבְדֵי פְּרָעָה סְבִי בֵיתָהּ וְכָל סְבִי אַרְעָא  
 דְּמִצְרַיִם: ח וְכָל בֵּית יוֹסֵף וְאַחֲוֵי וּבֵית  
 אָבוהי לְחוּד טַפְלָהוֹן וְעַנְהוֹן וְתוֹרִיהוֹן שְׂבָקוּ  
 בְּאַרְעָא דְגֹשֶׁן: ט וּסְלִיקוּ עִמִּיהָ אַף רַתְבִּין אַף  
 פְּרָשִׁין וְהוּהּ מִשְׁרִיתָא סְנִיָּאָה לְחֻדָּא: י וְאָתוּ  
 עַד בֵּית אֵידָרֵי דְאַטְדֵּי בְּעֵבְרָא דִּירְדְנָא  
 וּסְפְדוּ תַמָּן מִסְפַּד רַב וְתַקְוִי לְחֻדָּא וְעַבְד  
 לְאָבוהי אַבְלָא שְׁבַעַא יוֹמִין: יא וְחָזָא יְתִיב  
 אַרְעָא כְּנַעֲנָאָה ית אַבְלָא בְּבֵית אֵידָרֵי דְאַטְדֵּי  
 וְאָמְרוּ אַבְל תַּקְוִי דִּין לְמַצְרָאֵי עַל כֶּן קָרָא  
 שְׁמָה אַבְל מִצְרַיִם דִּי בְּעֵבְרָא דִּירְדְנָא:  
 יב וְעַבְדוּ בְּנוֹהֵי לִיה כֶּן בְּמָא דִּי פְקִידִינוּן:  
 יג וּנְטָלוּ יְתִיהָ בְּנוֹהֵי לְאַרְעָא דְכַנְעַן וּקְבְּרוּ

אָבִיו וַיִּבֶךְ עָלָיו וַיִּשְׁקֵלֹו: ב וַיֵּצֵא יוֹסֵף אֶת־עַבְדָּיו אֶת־  
 הַרְפָּאִים לְחַנֵּט אֶת־אָבִיו וַיַּחְנְטוּ הַרְפָּאִים אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל:  
 ג וַיִּמְלְאוּ־לוֹ אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם כִּי כֵן יִמְלְאוּ יְמֵי הַחַנְטִים וַיִּבְכוּ  
 אֹתוֹ מִצְרַיִם שִׁבְעִים יוֹם: ד וַיַּעֲבְרוּ יְמֵי בְכִיתוֹ וַיְדַבֵּר יוֹסֵף  
 אֶל־בֵּית פְּרָעָה לֵאמֹר אִם־נָא מִצְעָאתִי חַן בְּעֵינֵיכֶם דְּבִרוּ־נָא  
 בְּאָזְנֵי פְרָעָה לֵאמֹר: ה אָבִי הִשְׁבִּיעַנִי לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי מֵת  
 בְּקַבְרֵי אֲשֶׁר פָּרִיתִי לִי בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן שָׁמָּה תִקְבְּרֵנִי וְעַתָּה  
 אֶעֱלֶה־נָּא וְאֶקְבְּרָה אֶת־אָבִי וְאֲשׁוּבָה: ו וַיֹּאמֶר פְּרָעָה עֲלֶה  
 וּקְבֹר אֶת־אָבִיךָ בְּאֲשֶׁר הִשְׁבִּיעֶךָ: ז וַיַּעַל יוֹסֵף לְקַבֵּר אֶת־אָבִיו  
 וַיַּעֲלוּ אֹתוֹ כָּל־עַבְדֵי פְרָעָה וְקָנִי בֵיתוֹ וְכָל זְקֵנֵי אֶרֶץ־מִצְרַיִם:  
 ח וְכָל בֵּית יוֹסֵף וְאַחֲוֵי וּבֵית אָבִיו חָק טַפָּם וְעֵאֲנָם וּבְקָרָם  
 עֲזָבוּ בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן: ט וַיַּעַל עֲמֹן גַּם־רֶכֶב גַּם־פָּרָשִׁים וַיְהִי  
 הַמַּחֲנֶה כְּבַד מְאֹד: י וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד־גֶּרֶן הָאֵטָד אֲשֶׁר בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן  
 וַיִּסְפְּדוּ־שָׁם מִסְפַּד גָּדוֹל וְכַבֵּד מְאֹד וַיַּעַשׂ לְאָבִיו אַבְל שְׁבַעַת  
 יָמִים: יא וַיֵּרָא יוֹשֵׁב הָאֶרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִי אֶת־הָאֵבֶל בְּגֶרֶן הָאֵטָד  
 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אַבְל־כְּבֹד זֶה לְמִצְרַיִם עַל־כֵּן קָרָא שְׁמָהּ אַבְל  
 מִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן: יב וַיַּעֲשׂוּ בָנָיו לוֹ כֶּן כְּאֲשֶׁר עָוָם:  
 יג וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֹתוֹ בָנָיו אֶרְצָה כְּנָעַן וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֹתוֹ בְּמַעְרַת שְׂדֵה

כש"י

יאמר אם כן אעבור על השבועה שנשבעתי לך, שלא אגלה על לשון הקודש  
 שאני מכיר עודף על שבועים לשון, ואתה אינך מכיר זו, כדאיחא זמסכת  
 סוטה<sup>5</sup>: (י) גרן האטד. מוקף אטדין היב. ורבותיו דרשו<sup>6</sup> על שם המאורע,  
 שזאו כל מלכי כנען ונשיאי ישמעאל למלחמה, וכיון שראו כתר של יוסף  
 תלוי צארונו של יעקב, עמדו כולן ותלו צו כתריהם, והקיפוכו כתרים כגורן  
 המוקף סייג של קוליס: (יב) באשר צום. מכו אשר לוס: (יג) וישאו אתו  
 בניו. ולא בני צניו, שכך לוס, אל ישא מטתי לא איש מזרי ולא אחד מזניכס  
 שהם מזנות כנען, אלא אחס, וקצע להם מקוס, ג' למזרה, וכן לארצע  
 רוחות, וכסדרן למסע מחנה של דגלים נקצעו כאן. לוי לא ישא, שהוא עתיד

ואמרו רז"ל יעקב צניו לא מת<sup>1</sup>: (ב) לחנט את אביו. ענין מרחקת צמסים  
 הוא: (ג) וימלאו לו. השלימו לו ימי חניטתו עד שמלאו לו ארבעים יום:  
 ויבכו אותו וגו'. ארבעים לחניטה ושלשים לצביה, לפי שזכה להם צרכה  
 לרגלו, שכלה הרעז והיו מי נילוס מתצרכין: (ה) אשר בריתי לי. כפשוטו,  
 כמו כי יכרה איש<sup>2</sup>. ומדרשו<sup>3</sup>, עוד מתיישב על הלשון כמו אשר קניתי, אמר  
 רבי עקיבא<sup>4</sup> כשהלכתי לכרכי היס היו קורין למכירה כירה. ועוד מדרשו לשון  
 כרי, דגור, שנטל יעקב כל כסף וזהב שהביא מצית לצן, ועשה אותו כרי,  
 ואמר לעשו, טול זה צבציל חלקך צמעה: (ו) באשר השביעך. ואם לא  
 צבציל השבועה לא הייתי מניחך, אבל ירא לומר עזור על השבועה, שלא

#### TORAS MENACHEM

Rashi did not feel obliged to address this point for, at the literal level, it is self-understood that each individual *tzadik* (righteous person) has his own unique qualities that another does not have.

On the other hand, perhaps one could argue that a *tzadik's* purity can be seen through his children. Thus the births of Yishma'el and Eisav

indicated some very subtle, undesirable qualities in their respective fathers. Only Ya'akov, who produced twelve righteous sons had the absolute purity to be totally disconnected from the sin of the Tree of Knowledge, so it can only be said of him that he truly did "not die."

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayechi* and *Shemos* 5746)

## 🕍 YA'AKOV'S BURIAL 🕍

**50** **Y**osef fell on his father's face, wept over him and kissed him.  
<sup>2</sup> Yosef commanded his staff of physicians to embalm his father, and the physicians embalmed Yisra'el (with spices). <sup>3</sup> After forty days—which is how long embalming takes—the Egyptians mourned him for (a further thirty days, totaling) seventy days.

<sup>4</sup> When the period of mourning for him had passed, Yosef spoke to Pharaoh's household, saying, "If I have now found favor in your eyes, speak now directly to Pharaoh and tell him, <sup>5</sup> (that) My father bound me by an oath, saying, 'Look, I am (soon) going to die. You should bury me in my grave which I dug for myself in the land of Cana'an.' So now, please let me go and bury my father, then I'll return."

<sup>6</sup> "Go and bury your father," Pharaoh said, "as he had you swear."

<sup>7</sup> So Yosef went to bury his father. All Pharaoh's servants, the senior members of his house, and all the senior (ministers) of the land of Egypt went with him, <sup>8</sup> together with Yosef's entire household, his brothers and his father's household. They only left behind their young children, flocks and cattle in the land of Goshen. <sup>9</sup> Chariots and horsemen also went along, so the entourage was very large.

<sup>10</sup> When they reached Goren-Ha'atad, which is on the other side of the Jordan, they made a very grandiose and intense eulogy there. Then (Yosef) designated a mourning period of seven days for his father. <sup>11</sup> When the Cana'anites, the local inhabitants, saw the mourning at Goren-Ha'atad they said, "This is an intense mourning for the Egyptians." Therefore, they named (the place), which is on the other side of the Jordan, Avel Mitzrayim ("Mourning of Egypt").

<sup>12</sup> (Ya'akov's) sons did for him exactly as he had instructed them (not to allow any Egyptian or even one of Ya'akov's grandsons to carry him). <sup>13</sup> His sons carried him to the land of Cana'an, and they buried

### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

#### ● Did all of Ya'akov's sons carry him? (v. 13)

**RASHI:** Ya'akov ordered, "Levi shall not carry it because he [i.e. his tribe] is destined to carry the Ark. Yosef shall not carry it because he is a king. Menasheh and Efrayim shall carry instead of them."

**PANE'ACH RAZA:** Ya'akov only told Yosef, "Carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their grave" (47:30), but he did not insist that Yosef

should carry him throughout the entire journey. Note that Ya'akov did not say, "Carry me out of Egypt *all the way to the land of Cana'an.*"

**CHIZKUNI:** Moshe was from the tribe of Levi, so how is it that he carried Yosef's coffin (*Shemos* 13:19)? In truth, however, Moshe did not need to carry the coffin, for it miraculously carried itself.

### TORAS MENACHEM

#### 🕍 WHY DID YOSEF AND LEVI NOT CARRY THEIR FATHER'S COFFIN? (v. 13)

*Rashi* explains the various reasons why Levi and Yosef did not carry their father's coffin from Egypt to its resting place in the Cave of Machpeilah. However, *Rashi's* explanation appears to contradict an explicit verse: Of all his sons, Ya'akov instructed Yosef *alone*, "Carry me out of Egypt, and bury me" (47:30). How is this to be reconciled with *Rashi's* comment here that Yosef did *not* carry his father's coffin?

Another problem concerns *Rashi's* comment that Levi did not carry the coffin because "he is destined to carry the Ark." This refers to the fact that the tribe of Levi was given the privilege of carrying the Holy Ark while the Tabernacle was in transit.

But why was Levi denied the privilege of observing the *mitzvah* of burying his father because of something that would happen to his descendants *several generations later*?

#### THE EXPLANATION

*Rashi* himself indicates the solution to the above problems by stressing, "Menasheh and Efrayim shall carry *instead of them.*" With this turn of phrase—which is not found in *Rashi's* source text, the *Midrash*—*Rashi* indicates that Menasheh and Efrayim did not merely fill a void left by Levi and Yosef, but they acted as *shluchim* (agents) on their behalf. In other words, Levi and Yosef did not shirk their responsibility of carrying their father's coffin, but rather, they appointed somebody else to do it for them. In Jewish law, a *shliach* is not merely a representative who carries out an act *instead of* a person; rather, when the *shliach* does an activity on behalf of a person it is as if the person did it *himself*.

Based on the above we can explain a further difficulty with *Rashi's* comment. A few lines earlier *Rashi* wrote that Ya'akov forbade any of his grandsons from carrying his coffin (*Rashi* to v. 13). This begs the question: Why were Menasheh and Efrayim exceptions to this rule?

However, based on the above explanation we can understand that Menasheh and Efrayim were merely *shluchim* of Yosef and Levi. Thus,

יְתִיבָהּ בְּמַעֲרַת חָקֵל כְּפִלְתָּהּ דֵּי זְבִן אַבְרָהָם ית  
 חֲקָלָהּ לְאַחֲסֵנַת קְבוּרָא מִן עֶפְרוֹן הַתְּאֵה עַל  
 אֶפְי מִמְרָא: יד וְתָב יוֹסֵף לְמַצְרַיִם הוּא  
 וְאַחֻוּהִי וְכָל דְּסִלְקוּ עִמָּיה לְמַקְבְּרֵי ית אַבְוּהִי  
 בְּתַר דֵּי קִבְרֵי ית אַבְוּהִי: טו וְחֻזוּ אַחֵי יוֹסֵף  
 אֶרְי מִית אַבְוּהוֹן וְאַמְרוּ דְלִמָּא יִשְׂר לָנָא  
 דְּכָבוּ יוֹסֵף וְאַתְּבָא יתִּיב לָנָא ית כָּל בִּישְׁתָּא  
 דֵּי גְמֻלָּנָא יְתִיב: טז וּפְקִידוּ לְוַת יוֹסֵף לְמִימְרֵי  
 אַבְוּד פְּקִיד כְּדָם מוֹתִיבָה לְמִימְרֵי: יז כְּדִין  
 תִּימְרוּן לְיוֹסֵף בְּבָעוּ שְׂבוּק כְּעַן לְחֻבֵי אַחֻד  
 וְלַחֲטָאִיהוֹן אֶרְי בִּישְׁתָּא גְמֻלָּד וְכְעַן שְׂבוּק  
 כְּעַן לְחֻבָּא עֲבָדֵי אֱלֹהָא דְאַבְוּד וּבְכָא יוֹסֵף  
 בְּמִלְלוּתֵהוֹן עִמָּה: יח וְאַזְלוּ אִף אַחֻוּהִי וּנְפֻלוּ  
 כְּדָמוּהִי וְאַמְרוּ הָא אַנְחָנָא לָךְ לְעֲבָדִין:  
 יט וְאַמְר לְהוֹן יוֹסֵף לָא תִדְחִלוּן אֶרְי דְחָלָא יִי

הַמְכַפְּלָה אֲשֶׁר קָנָה אַבְרָהָם אֶת־הַשְּׂדֵה לְאַחֲזֹת־קִבְרֵי מֵאֵת  
 עֶפְרָן הַחֵתִי עַל־פְּנֵי מִמְרָא: יד וַיָּשֶׁב יוֹסֵף מִצְרַיִם הוּא וְאָחִיו  
 וְכָל־הָעֲלִיִּים אִתּוֹ לְקַבֵּר אֶת־אָבִיו אַחֲרָי קָבְרוּ אֶת־אָבִיו:  
 טו וַיִּרְאוּ אֶחָי־יוֹסֵף כִּי־מֵת אָבִיָּהֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ יִשְׁטַמְנוּ יוֹסֵף  
 וְהַשֵּׁב יֹשִׁיב לָנוּ אֵת כָּל־הָרָעָה אֲשֶׁר גָּמְלָנוּ אֹתוֹ: טז וַיִּצְאוּ  
 אֶל־יוֹסֵף לֵאמֹר אָבִיךָ צָוָה לְפָנָי מוֹתוֹ לֵאמֹר: יז כְּהֵתֵאמְרוּ  
 לְיוֹסֵף אֲנָא שָׂא נָא פִּשְׁעֵ אַחֻד וְחֲטָאתֶם כִּי־רָעָה גְמֻלָּד  
 וְעַתָּה שָׂא נָא לְפִשְׁעֵ עֲבָדֵי אֱלֹהֵי אָבִיךָ וַיַּבֵּךְ יוֹסֵף בְּדַבְרֵם  
 אֵלָיו: יח וַיִּלְכוּ גַם־אָחִיו וַיִּפְּלוּ לְפָנָיו וַיֹּאמְרוּ הִנְנּוּ לָךְ לְעֲבָדִים:  
 יט וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם יוֹסֵף אֶל־תִּירְאוּ כִּי הִתַּחַת אֱלֹהִים אָנִי:

כ"ט

שוקל על כפי. ויש לו משמש בלשון שמא, לו ישטמנו, ואין לו עוד דומה  
 במקרא, והוא לשון אולי, כמו אולי לא תלך האשה אחרי, לשון שמא הוא.  
 ויש אולי לשון צקשה, כגון אולי יראה ה' צעני, אולי ישיב ה' אותי, הרי הוא  
 כמו לו יכי כדצרך. ויש אולי לשון אס, אולי יש חמשים לדיקום: (טז) ויצאו  
 אל יוסף. כמו וילום אל בני ישראל, לזה למשה ולאהרן להיות שלוחים אל  
 בני ישראל, אף זה, וילוו אל שלוחם, להיות שליח אל יוסף לומר לו כן. ואת  
 מי לוו, את בני צלחה, שהיו רגילין אללו, שנאמר והוא נער את בני צלחה:  
 אביך צוה. שינו דצבר מפני השלוש, כי לא לזה יעקב כן, שלא נחמד יוסף  
 צעיניו: (יז) שא נא לפשע עבדי אלהי אביך. אס אביך מת אלוהיו  
 קיים, והס עזדיו: (יח) וילכו גם אחיו. מוסף על השליחות: (יט) כי  
 התחת אלהים אני. שמא במקומו אני, צתמיא, אס הייתי רוצה להרע

לשאת את הארון. ויוסף לא ישא, שהוא מלך. מנשה ואפרים יהיו תחתיכם,  
 וזהו איש על דגלו בלחות, בלחות שמסר להם אביהם לישא מטתו: (יד) הוא  
 ואחיו וכל העולים איתו. בחזרתו כן הקדים אחיו למלרים העולים איתו,  
 ובהליכתו הקדים מלרים לאחיו, שנאמר ויעלו איתו כל שבדי פרעה וגו' ואחר  
 כך כל בית יוסף ואחיו, אלא לפי שראו כבוד שטעו מלכי כנען, שתלו  
 כתיבה בחרונו של יעקב, נהגו בהם כבוד: (טו) ויראו אחי יוסף בי מת  
 אביהם. מהו ויראו, הכירו צמיתתו אלל יוסף, שהיו רגילים לסעוד על  
 שולחנו של יוסף, והיה מקרצן בשביל כבוד אביו, ומשמת יעקב לא קרצן:  
 לו ישטמנו. שמא ישטמנו. לו מתחלק לעניינים הרבה, יש לו משמש בלשון  
 צקשה ולשון הלאחי, כגון לו יכי כדצרך, לו שמעני, ולו הולגנו, לו מתנו.  
 ויש לו משמש בלשון אס ואולי, כגון לו חכמו, לו הקשצת למלות, ולו אנכי

TORAS MENACHEM

the fact that they carried the coffin would not have been objectionable to Ya'akov as they did not represent themselves at all, but rather, the ones who sent them.

LEVI'S REPRESENTATION

While the above explanation is satisfactory at the literal level, one detail remains somewhat perplexing: The fact that Yosef was represented by one of his sons is logical, but why was Levi represented by Menasheh or Efrayim, one of Yosef's sons?

In order to solve this problem, let us first turn to the question of **Chizkuni**: Why was Moshe allowed to carry Yosef's coffin when he left Egypt, if Moshe too was from the tribe of Levi? (*Chizkuni's* answer, that the coffin carried itself, does not seem to be based on scripture.)

Rather, the answer can be understood based on an earlier comment of *Rashi*: "When Ya'akov our father died, the eyes and hearts of the Jewish people were "closed" due to the suffering of slavery, for [it was at that time] that [the Egyptians] began to enslave them" (48:28). It thus follows that Ya'akov's burial represented the end of the "honeymoon period" of the Jewish people in Egypt and the beginning of slavery.

Both Yosef and Levi were "exempt" from slavery. Yosef was "a king" (as *Rashi* writes here), who was obviously not subject to the decrees of his own government; and the tribe of Levi was never enslaved throughout the period of Egyptian exile.

Thus, since Yosef and Levi were both "immune" to exile they did not carry their father's coffin personally, for this was an act which represented the inception of exile. And clearly this does not contradict the fact that when Moshe left Egypt he carried Yosef's coffin, since leaving Egypt was an act of redemption, not exile, which was highly appropriate for Moshe who was both the appointed redeemer and a descendant of Levi.

However, having explained Yosef and Levi's disassociation with Ya'akov's burial, we are now left with the reverse question: If Ya'akov's burial represented the phenomenon of exile which Yosef and Levi had nothing to do with, then why did they need to send *shluchim* to represent themselves at all?

To answer this, let us pose another more general question: If God decreed that all of the Jewish people should be exiled (above 15:13), then how is it that the tribe of Levi was exempt?



him in the cave that is in the field of Machpeilah, facing Mamre—the field which Avraham had bought for a burial plot from Efron the Chitite.

<sup>14</sup> After he had buried his father, Yosef returned to Egypt—both he, his brothers, and all those who had gone with him to bury his father.

### 🕎 YOSEF AND HIS BROTHERS AFTER YA'AKOV'S PASSING 🕎

50:15 **Y**osef's brothers saw (a change for the worse in Yosef's conduct with them after) their father had died. They said, "Maybe Yosef will (start to) hate us and pay us back for all the bad things that we did to him." <sup>16</sup> So they (fabricated a plan and) instructed (messengers to go) to Yosef and say, "Your father instructed us before his death, saying, <sup>17</sup> 'This is what you should say to Yosef, "Please will you now forgive the wrongdoing of your brothers and their sin, that they did evil things to you." So, please will you now forgive the wrongdoing of the servants of the God of your father (for even though your father died, his God is alive).'"

When the (messengers) spoke to him, Yosef wept.

<sup>18</sup> (In addition to sending messengers) his brothers also went (to Yosef). They fell down in front of him, and said, "Look! We are your slaves!"

<sup>19</sup> Yosef said to them, "Don't be afraid for (God only desires the good for you). Am I instead of God?"

#### CLASSIC QUESTIONS

##### ● What did the brothers "see"? (v. 15)

**RASHI:** What does it mean that "they saw [their father had died]"? They recognized his [Ya'akov's] death in Yosef, for they used to dine at Yosef's table, and he was friendly towards them out of respect for his father. But after Ya'akov died, he ceased to be friendly toward them.

#### TORAS MENACHEM

In truth however, the tribe of Levi was not exempt from the exile, but rather, they were *partners* with the rest of the Jewish people. The exile was not an end in itself, God forbid, but a process which was intended to elevate the Jewish people spiritually to a state which they had not been able to reach before. In order to retain this positive focus, it was crucial that at least part of the nation should not be enslaved so that they would constantly raise the spirits of their less fortunate brethren, helping them to withstand the exile until the time of their liberation.

Consequently, the fact that the tribe of Levi was not enslaved was not an expression of elitism. To the contrary, the very reason why they were not enslaved was to *provide assistance* to the rest of the Jewish people during difficult times, to ensure that the people as a whole would eventually merit redemption.

Thus, when it came to Ya'akov's burial—the inception of the Egyptian exile—Levi did not physically take part, for his role in the exile was not one of direct involvement. But, on the other hand, he did send a *shliach* to indicate that his tribe would not be disassociated from the other Jewish people in exile.

And this also explains why Yosef's sons were picked as *shluchim* for both Yosef and Levi. For Yosef's sons were *born in Egypt*, so as *shluchim* they represented how the inherent ability of Levi (and Yosef) to rise above the exile was actually channeled down into the heart of Egypt, to lift the spirits of the Jewish people.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 20, pp. 235ff)

### 🕎 The Last Word 🕎

**Y**osef's brothers were all shepherds who enjoyed isolation, because they found the world a distraction from their primary interests of Torah study and prayer. Yosef, on the other hand, was able to remain strongly connected with God and, at the same time, be heavily involved in the running of a country (see "*Sparks of Chasidus*" to 42:8 above).

When the brothers came to Egypt, they were no longer able to live a life of total seclusion, and they were forced to have more involvement with worldly matters. Consequently, their relationship with Yosef became a crucial one, as only Yosef was able to teach them how to live in the world without becoming worldly.

In this light we can see the split between Yosef and his brothers (see *Rashi* to v. 15) was actually the cause of the ensuing exile. For without the support of Yosef, the brothers eventually found themselves unable to harmonize their spiritual and physical lives.

From this we can learn how crucial it is that our moments of Torah study and prayer have a direct effect on everyday life—harnessing one's inspiration towards the goal of spiritual-physical integration.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayechi* 5749)

אָנָּא: כ וְאֶתְּוֹן חֲשַׁבְתּוֹן עָלַי בִּישָׂא מִן קָדָם יי  
 אַתְּחַשְׁבֵת לְטָבָא בְּדִיל לְמַעַבְדַּי כְּיוֹמָא הַדִּין  
 לְקַיָּמָא עִם סְגִי: כא וְכַעֲנָן לֹא תִדְחֲלוּן אָנָּא  
 אִיזוֹן יִתְכוּן וְיֵת טַפְלִכוֹן וְנַחֵם יִתְהוֹן וּמְלִיל  
 תְּנַחֲוּמִין עַל לְבָהוֹן: כב וַיְתִיב יוֹסֵף בְּמִצְרַיִם  
 הוּא וּבֵית אָבוּהֵי וַחֲיָא יוֹסֵף מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרֵי שָׁנִין:  
 כג וַחֲוָא יוֹסֵף לְאֶפְרַיִם בְּנֵי תְּלִיתָאִין אֶף בְּנֵי  
 מְכִיר בְּרַ מְנַשֶּׁה אֶתְיִלִּידוּ וְרַבֵּי יוֹסֵף:  
 כד וַאֲמַר יוֹסֵף לְאַחֻוּהֵי אָנָּא מָאִית וַיֵּי מִדְּבַר  
 דְּכִיר יִתְכוּן וַיִּסַּק יִתְכוּן מִן אַרְעָא הַדָּא  
 לְאַרְעָא דֵי קַיִים לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב:  
 כה וְאוֹמְרֵי יוֹסֵף יֵת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִימְרֵי מִדְּבַר  
 דְּכִיר יי יִתְכוּן וְתַסְקוּן יֵת נְרָמֵי מִקָּא: כו וּמִית  
 יוֹסֵף בְּרַ מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרֵי שָׁנִין וַחֲנָטוּ יִתִּיהָ  
 וְשִׁמּוּהֵי בְּאֶרְזָא בְּמִצְרַיִם: הֹזֵק

כ וְאֶתְּוֹן חֲשַׁבְתּוֹן עָלַי רָעָה אֱלֹהִים חֲשַׁבְתָּה לְמַעַן עֲשֶׂה  
 כַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה לְהַחֲיִית עַם-רַב: [שבועין] כא וְעַתָּה אֶל-תִּירָאוּ אֲנֹכִי  
 אֲכַלְכֵּל אֶתְכֶם וְאֶת-טַפְכֶם וַיְנַחֵם אוֹתָם וַיְדַבֵּר עַל-לִבָּם:  
 כב וַיָּשָׁב יוֹסֵף בְּמִצְרַיִם הוּא וּבֵית אָבִיו וַיְחִי יוֹסֵף מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרֵי  
 שָׁנִים: [מפמיר] כג וַיֵּרָא יוֹסֵף לְאֶפְרַיִם בְּנֵי שְׁלֹשִׁים\* גַּם בְּנֵי מְכִיר  
 בֶּן-מְנַשֶּׁה יִלְדוּ עַל-בְּרַכְיֵי יוֹסֵף: כד וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל-אֲחֻיוּ אֲנֹכִי  
 מֵת וְאֱלֹהִים פָּקַד יִפְקַד אֶתְכֶם וְהֵעֵלָה אֶתְכֶם מִן-הָאָרֶץ  
 הַזֹּאת אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב:  
 כה וַיִּשְׁבַּע יוֹסֵף אֶת-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר פָּקַד יִפְקַד אֱלֹהִים  
 אֶתְכֶם וְהֵעֵלְתֶם אֶת-עַצְמוֹתַי מִזֶּה: כו וַיָּמָת יוֹסֵף בֶּן-מֵאָה  
 וְעֶשְׂרֵי שָׁנִים וַיְחַנְטוּ אוֹתוֹ וַיִּשְׂם בְּאֶרְזוֹן בְּמִצְרַיִם:

## חֹזֶק חֹזֶק וְנִתְחַזַּק

פ"ה פסוקים. פ"ה אל פה סימן.

סכום פסוקי דספר בראשית אלף וחמש מאות ושלושים וארבעה א"ך ל"ד סימן. וחציו ועל חרבך תחיה.  
 ופרשיותיו י"ב ז"ה שמי לעלם סימן. וסדריו מ"ג ידידי"ה סימן. ופרקיו נ' ה' חננו ל"ך קוינו סימן: מנין  
 הפתוחות מ"ג והסתומות מ"ח. הכל צ"א פרשיות צ"א אתה וכל העם אשר ברגליך סימן:

\*יש גורסים ס' רבתי

רש"י

בחורים ראה, ונשתצח צהס, ואמר אחי הס ולצסוף הרג אותס, יש לך אח  
 שחורג את אחיו<sup>1</sup>. דבר אחר<sup>2</sup>, עשרה נרות לא יכלו לכבות נר אחד וכו':  
 (כג) על ברכי יוסף. כתרנומו. גלן צין צרכיו:  
 חסלת פרשת ויחי.

לכס כלום אני יכול, והלא אחס כולכס חשצחס עלי רעה והקצ"ה חשצה  
 לטוצה, והיאך אני לצדי יכול להרע לכס: (כא) וידבר על לבם. דברים  
 המתקבלים על הלצ, עד שלא ירדחס לכאן, היו מרננים עלי שאני עבד, ועל  
 ידיכס נודע שאני צן חורין, ואני חורג אחכס מה הצריית חומרות, כת של

<sup>20</sup> “You planned to do bad things to me, (but) God (had already) intended (that what you did to me should happen) for good (reasons)—in order to make things like they are today, (where I am) keeping a great number of people alive.”

SEVENTH READING <sup>21</sup> “So don’t be afraid now. I will provide for you and your children.” He (continued to) comfort them and spoke (more words of encouragement) to their hearts.

### 🕎 YOSEF PASSES AWAY 🕎

50:22 MAFTIR **Y**osef lived in Egypt—both he and his father’s household—and Yosef lived a hundred and ten years. <sup>23</sup> Yosef saw children of a third generation (born) to Efrayim. The sons of Machir, Menasheh’s son, were born (and) Yosef (raised them) on his knee.

<sup>24</sup> Yosef said to his brothers, “I am (soon) going to die. God will surely remember you and take you out of this land, to the land that He swore to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya’akov.”

<sup>25</sup> Yosef made the children of Yisra’el swear, saying, “God will surely remember you, and you should (then) take my bones out of here.”

<sup>26</sup> Yosef died at the age of one hundred and ten years. They embalmed him and he was placed into a coffin in Egypt.

The congregation\*, followed by the reader, proclaims:

**Be strong! Be strong! And may we be strengthened!**

THE HAFTARAH FOR VAYECHI IS ON PAGE 392.

## TORAS MENACHEM

### 🕎 Sparks of Chasidus 🕎

#### THE END OF THE BOOK OF *BEREISHIS*

**W**hy does the Book of *Bereishis* finish with the rather dismal conclusion that Yosef “was placed into a coffin in Egypt”? Here we read that, not only did Yosef miss the opportunity of being buried with the Patriarchs in the Land of Israel, but—of all places—he remained in *Egypt*, a corrupt and profane land. And yet, after reading this verse we cry out “*chazak chazak venischazeik*” (“be strong, be strong and may we be strengthened”), which begs the question: What encouragement, or “strength” does one gather from reading that Yosef “was placed into a coffin in Egypt”?

**H**owever it could be argued that these words do in fact convey a very positive and crucial message of encouragement which is

needed before embarking on *Sefer Shemos*, where we read of the bitter exile which the Jewish people suffered:

How were the Jewish people able to withstand the harsh Egyptian exile? Answers the Torah: Because Yosef “was placed into a coffin in *Egypt*.” Yosef, the dear leader of the Jewish people, who had sustained and supported them in times of famine, had not deserted them! He did not choose to spend the “afterlife” in a holy place, where he would personally enjoy a greater degree of Divine radiance. No! Even after his passing, Yosef wanted to be *physically* with his people, even if it meant being buried in Egypt, until the day when “*God will surely remember you, and (then) you should take my bones out of here*” (v. 25).

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayechi* 5747)

\*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.).

## 🌀 THE THEMES OF SEFER BEREISHIS 🌀

*According to Chasidic thought, the Parshiyos in Sefer Bereishis represent a progressive message in Divine Service—from concept, to practice, and ultimate reward—Based on Sefer Hasichos 5750 pp. 176-8.*

<p><b>THE CONCEPT OF DIVINE SERVICE</b></p>	<p><b>THE PURPOSE OF CREATION</b></p>	<p><b>BEREISHIS</b></p>	<p>PURPOSE: The world was created for the Jewish people and the Torah.</p>	
		<p><b>NOACH</b></p>	<p>PLEASURE: Noach = <i>Nachas Ruach</i>, the pleasure which Divine Service brings to God</p>	
	<p><b>THE REQUIREMENT OF DIVINE SERVICE</b></p>	<p><b>LECH LECHA</b></p>	<p>DESCENT OF THE SOUL: The soul “goes out” from heaven to carry out its mission.</p>	
		<p><b>VAYEIRA</b></p>	<p>REVELATION: The soul needs additional help from God in order to succeed in its mission</p>	
		<p><b>CHAYEI SARAH</b></p>	<p>SPIRITUAL SATURATION: Full expression of the soul’s faculties, just as Sarah’s life was perfect.</p>	
	<p><b>ITS METHOD</b></p>	<p><b>TOLDOS</b></p>	<p>PRACTICAL APPLICATION: The soul’s rich faculties must be expressed in good deeds (<i>toldos</i>).</p>	
	<p><b>DIVINE SERVICE IN ACTION</b></p>		<p><b>VAYEITZEI</b></p>	<p>TRANSFORMATION: One “goes out” into the world to transform its negative elements into good.</p>
			<p><b>VAYISHLACH</b></p>	<p>COMPLETE TRANSFORMATION: Even the lowest levels of the world (Eisav) are transformed.</p>
	<p><b>THE REWARDS (CONSEQUENCES) OF DIVINE SERVICE</b></p>		<p><b>VAYEISHEV</b></p>	<p>HARMONY: After the world has been refined, Divine Service is “settled” and peaceful.</p>
		<p><b>MIKEITZ</b></p>	<p>CLIMAX: The “end,” where spirituality and physicality are totally harmonized.</p>	
		<p><b>VAYIGASH</b></p>	<p>UNIFICATION: The Jew binds to (“approaches”) God in total oneness.</p>	
		<p><b>VAYECHI</b></p>	<p>ETERNAL LIFE: All the Jewish people come back to life, with the revival of the dead.</p>	

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 בְּדִבְרֵיהֶם הַנְּאֻמִּים  
בְּאַמַּת בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה הַבוֹחֵר בַּתּוֹרָה וּבַמִּשְׁנָה  
עֲבָדוּ וּבִישְׂרָאֵל עִמּוֹ וּבְנְבִיאֵי הָאֱמֶת וְצַדִּיק:

After the *Haftarah* the following blessings are recited:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, צוֹר כָּל  
הָעוֹלָמִים, צַדִּיק בְּכָל הַדּוֹרוֹת, הָאֵל הַנְּאֻמָּן  
הָאֹמֵר וַעֲשֵׂה, הַמְדַבֵּר וּמְקַיֵּם, שְׁכַל דְּבָרָיו אֱמֶת וְצַדִּיק:  
נְאֻמָּן אַתָּה הוּא יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, וְנְאֻמָּנִים דְּבָרֶיךָ, וְדָבַר  
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 תְּהִינּוּ, וְלַעֲלוּבַת נַפְשׁ  
תּוֹשִׁיעַ וְתִשְׁמַח בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיַמֵּינוּ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי,  
מְשַׁמֵּחַ צִיּוֹן בְּבִנְיָהּ:

שְׂמֵחַנוּ, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, בְּאֵלֶיהוּ הַנְּבִיא עֲבָדֶיךָ, וּבְמַלְכוּת  
בֵּית דָּוִד מְשִׁיחֶךָ, בְּמַהֲרָה יָבֹא וַיַּגִּיל 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 לְקֹדֶשֶׁה  
וְלְמִנוּחָה, לְכַבּוֹד וְלִתְפֹאֶרֶת:

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 — וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְהַזְּמַנִּים):

°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 הַחֹג	חֹג הַסּוּכּוֹת	חֹג הַשָּׁבוּעוֹת	חֹג הַמִּצּוֹת

הַזֶּה, וְעַל-יוֹם טוֹב מְקַרָּא קֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה, שְׁנַתֶּתָּ לָנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ (On Shabbos) לְקֹדֶשֶׁה  
וְלְמִנוּחָה) לְשִׁשּׁוֹן וְלְשִׁמְחָה, לְכַבּוֹד וְלִתְפֹאֶרֶת. עַל הַכֹּל, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ  
מוֹדִים לָךְ וּמְבָרְכִים אוֹתְךָ, יִתְבָּרֵךְ שְׁמֶךָ בְּפִי כָל חַי תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. בְּרוּךְ  
אַתָּה יי, מְקַדֵּשׁ (On Shabbos) הַשַּׁבָּת (וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְהַזְּמַנִּים):

°On Rosh Hashanah continue here:

עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוּדָה וְעַל הַנְּבִיאִים (On Shabbos) וְעַל יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה וְעַל יוֹם  
הַזְּכוּרֹן הַזֶּה, וְעַל-יוֹם טוֹב מְקַרָּא קֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה, שְׁנַתֶּתָּ לָנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ (On Shabbos)  
לְקֹדֶשֶׁה וְלְמִנוּחָה) לְכַבּוֹד וְלִתְפֹאֶרֶת. עַל הַכֹּל, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים לָךְ,  
וּמְבָרְכִים אוֹתְךָ, יִתְבָּרֵךְ שְׁמֶךָ בְּפִי כָל חַי תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד, וְדְבָרְךָ מְלַבְּנוּ  
אִמָּת וְקִיָּם לְעֵד. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, מְלַךְ עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ, מְקַדֵּשׁ (On Shabbos) הַשַּׁבָּת  
(וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיוֹם הַזְּכוּרֹן):

°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 קֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה, שְׁנַתֶּתָּ  
לָנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ (On Shabbos) לְקֹדֶשֶׁה וְלְמִנוּחָה) לְסְלִיחָה וְלְמַחִילָה וְלְכַפְּרָה, לְכַבּוֹד  
וְלִתְפֹאֶרֶת. עַל הַכֹּל יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים לָךְ וּמְבָרְכִים אוֹתְךָ, יִתְבָּרֵךְ  
שְׁמֶךָ בְּפִי כָל חַי תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד, וְדְבָרְךָ מְלַבְּנוּ אִמָּת וְקִיָּם לְעֵד. בְּרוּךְ  
אַתָּה יי, מְלַךְ מוֹחֵל וְסוֹלֵחַ לְעוֹנֵינֵנוּ, וְלְעוֹנוֹת עַמּוֹ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, וּמַעֲבִיר  
אֲשָׁמוֹתֵינוּ בְּכֹל שָׁנָה וְשָׁנָה, מְלַךְ עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ, מְקַדֵּשׁ (On Shabbos) הַשַּׁבָּת  
(וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיוֹם הַכַּפּוּרִים):

BEREISHIS / בראשית

(Isaiah 42:5 – 43:10)

מב ה כה־אמר האל | יהוה בורא השמים וְנוֹמֵיהֶם  
 רַקַּע הָאָרֶץ וַיַּצְאֶצְאֶיהָ נָתַן נֶשְׁמָה לָעֵם עָלֶיהָ וְרוּחַ  
 לְהִלְכֵימָּהּ בָּהֶּן: וְאֲנִי יְהוָה קְרָאתִיךָ בְּצַדֶּק וְאַחֲזֶק  
 בִּיָּדְךָ וְאַעֲרֹךְ וְאַתְּנֶנֶךָ לְבְרִית עִם לְאוֹר גּוֹיִם: לְפָקֶחַ  
 עֵינַיִם עוֹרוֹת לְהוֹצִיא מִמְּסַגֵּר אֶסְפִּיר מִבַּיִת כִּלְאֵי  
 יוֹשְׁבֵי חֹשֶׁךְ: אֲנִי יְהוָה הוּא שְׁמִי וּכְבוֹדִי לְאַחֵר  
 לֹא־אֶתֵּן וְתַהֲלֹתִי לְפָסִילִים: הֲרֵאשֹׁנוֹת הִנֵּה־בָאוּ  
 וְחִדְּשׁוֹת אֲנִי מִגִּיד בְּטָרִם תִּצְמַחְנָה אֲשַׁמְיעַ אֶתְכֶם:  
 שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ תַּהֲלֹתוֹ מִקְּצֵה הָאָרֶץ  
 יוֹרְדֵי הַיָּם וּמְלֹאוֹ אֵיִים וַיִּשְׁבִּיהֶם: יִשְׂאוּ מִדְּבַר  
 וְעָלְיוֹ הַצִּרִּים תִּשָּׁב קֶדֶר יִרְנֹו יוֹשְׁבֵי סֹלַע מִרֵּאשׁ  
 הָרִים יִצְחֹו: יִשְׂיֹמוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְתַהֲלֹתוֹ בְּאֵיִים  
 יִגִּידוּ: יְהוָה בְּגִבּוֹר יֵצֵא כְּאִישׁ מִלְחָמוֹת יַעִיר  
 קִנְיָאָה יִרְיַע אֶף־יִעְרִיחַ עַל־אֵיבָיו יִתְנַבֵּר:  
 הַחֲשִׁיתִי מֵעוֹלָם אַחֲרִישׁ אֶתְאַפֵּק כִּי־לֹדָה אֶפְעֶה  
 אֲשֶׁם וְאֶשְׂאֵף יַחַד: אַחֲרֵיב הָרִים וְגִבְעוֹת

42:5 **T**his was said by the Almighty God, Who Created the heavens and stretched them out (like a tent), Who laid out the earth and made (all types of vegetation) grow from it, Who gives a soul to the people upon it, and a spirit to the (other creatures) who walk upon it:

God is Creator

<sup>6</sup> "I am God. (What) I have said about you, (Mashiach, through the prophets,) is true (and everlasting)! I will hold your hand (to help you overcome every obstacle). I will guard you, and give you (the might to bring) the covenant of (Torah to My) people, (in order) to enlighten the (eyes of the) nations (about God), <sup>7</sup> to (open) eyes that have blinded (themselves not to see the work of God), to release (the Jewish people—who are) prisoners—from (their) captivity, and those who dwell in darkness from (their) imprisonment.

Mashiach will open eyes of the blind

<sup>8</sup> "I am God—that is My Name. I will no (longer allow the nations to diminish) My honor (by worshiping) other (gods, as they have done until now! No longer will graven images (be given) My praise."

<sup>9</sup> The first (prophecies which I prophesized about Sanchairiv) have (already) occurred. I (will) tell (you) new ones (about the final redemption). I will (now) let you hear (what is going to happen) before (these events) unfold:

<sup>10</sup> (When the Final Redemption comes, they will) sing a new song to God, and His praise (will be heard) from

Song of the Final Redemption

the ends of the earth. Those who navigate the seas, and (the creatures that live) in it (will praise God. Even) the islands (themselves) and their inhabitants (will praise God. <sup>11</sup> The whole) desert, together with its cities and villages (which are) inhabited by (the people of) Kedar, will raise (their voices in song). Those who live on stone peaks will sing—shouts (of joy will be heard) from the mountaintops. <sup>12</sup> (With their mouths) they will ascribe glory to God, and they will tell of His praises in the islands.

<sup>13</sup> God will go out (to rescue the Jewish people), aroused with zeal (for His people) like a man of war. He will shout and cry out against His enemies, and He will overcome (them).

<sup>14</sup> (Says God), "I have kept quiet for all this time (that the nations have persecuted My people). I have been silent (and) I have restrained Myself. (But now) I will scream like a woman in childbirth (to destroy them). I will obliterate them and swallow them up all together. <sup>15</sup> I will destroy mountains and valleys, and I will dry out all their grass. I will make rivers into (dry

God punishes the nations

HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS BEREISHIS

This Haftarah praises God as Creator of Heaven and earth, similar to the Parshah which describes the creation of Heaven and earth by God.

The Haftarah opens with a description of how God will liberate the Jewish people from exile, and how the entire world will praise God after the final redemption arrives (42:5-12).

God promises to destroy the nations that have persecuted the Jewish people, and lead the people to their Land (13-17). He criticizes the Jewish people for being metaphorically "blind" and "deaf" to Torah and

mitzvos (18-21) and laments over their sorry state during exile (22-25). Finally, the prophet repeats God's promise to redeem them, just as He redeemed them from Egypt (43:1-10).

8. וְכִבּוֹדִי לֹא אֶתֵּן—I will not give My glory to another. When a Jew sins, he causes energy from his soul to be "spilled" into the domain of evil, which is known as the "other side." Nevertheless, only the peripheral layers of the soul could be involved in such an activity; the inner core of the soul always remains loyal to God. Thus, God says: I will not give My glory—the essence of the soul—to another, to the "other side" (Likutei Sichos vol.5, pp. 410-11).



and desolate) islands, and I will dry up their bodies of water.”

Jewish People are led home by God

<sup>16</sup> “I will walk (the Jewish people to their Land) on a way that they did not know (as if they were) blind. I will lead them on a path they did not know. I will turn the darkness (of an unknown path) into light before them. (I will make) crooked paths straight (for them). I have (already) done such things (previously, when they came out of Egypt), so I will (surely) not forsake them (in the future).”

<sup>17</sup> “(Then) those who trust in graven images will turn backwards, (being) embarrassed with (great) shame. (That will be the fate of) those who say to the molten idols: ‘you are our god.’”

Rebuke of the corrupt ones

<sup>18</sup> “(You, O Israel,) who are deaf (towards My words) and blind (towards My commandments, now listen and) look to see (the goodness that is awaiting you! <sup>19</sup> I call all of you blind, even the righteous ones who serve Me, for) who is (really) blind if not one who serves Me, (and who knows how corrupt people are, yet he does not attempt to correct them? Who is) deaf if not the one who I (grace with wisdom and) send (to teach the people, and yet he pretends not to hear their evil actions, failing to correct them)? Who is as blind as a person who is perfect (in himself but does not reprimand others)? Who is as blind as a servant of God (who turns a blind eye to his people)? <sup>20</sup> Such people) have seen much (wisdom), yet you do not guard (others from evil ways, so they deserve to be called ‘blind.’ They have) open ears (to understand the mitzvos), yet (act as if they) do not hear (when it comes to guiding others, so they deserve to be called ‘deaf’). <sup>21</sup> The main reason why) God wants (such people, is not for their own merits, but) in order for (them to make another person) righteous, (and in order) for him to increase and strengthen (the) Torah (knowledge of others).”

Chabad\* and Sefardic communities conclude here. Ashkenazic communities continue:

Sad state of the Jews in Exile

<sup>22</sup> This people is looted and trampled. All their young men are dejected and and hidden in prisons. They are prey with no one to rescue them (from being looted); trampled with no one to say, “Return them (so they will be trampled no more).”

<sup>23</sup> Who among you will pay attention to this, listen, and hear from now on (what will establish him in the end)?

<sup>24</sup> Who handed Ya’akov over to be trampled and Israel to looters? Was it not God, against Whom we have sinned? (For the Jewish people) did not desire His ways or obey His Torah, <sup>25</sup> so He poured out (His) anger, His wrath and the might of war upon them. It blazed around

וְכָל-עֵשְׂבִים אוֹבִישׁ וְשִׁמְתִי נְהָרוֹת לְאֵיִים וְאֲנָמִים אוֹבִישׁ: <sup>ט</sup> וְהוֹלַכְתִּי עוֹרִים בְּדֶרֶךְ לֹא יָדְעוּ בְנֵתִיבוֹת לֹא יָדְעוּ אֲדָרִיכֶם אָשִׁים מִחֶשֶׁךְ לִפְנֵיהֶם לְאוֹר וּמַעֲקָשִׁים לְמִישׁוֹר אֱלֹה הַדְּבָלִים עָשִׂיתֶם וְלֹא עֲזַבְתֶּם: <sup>י</sup> נִסְגְּנוּ אַחֲוֹר יִכְשׁוּ בְשֵׁת הַבְּטָחִים בַּפֶּסֶל הָאֲמָרִים לְמִסְכָּה אַתֶּם אֱלֹהֵינוּ: <sup>יא</sup> הַחֲרָשִׁים שָׁמְעוּ וְהָעוֹרִים הִבִּטּוּ לְרֵאוֹת: <sup>יב</sup> מִי עוֹר כִּי אִם-עֲבָדֵי וַחֲרָשׁ כְּמִלְאֲכֵי אֲשַׁלַּח מִי עוֹר כְּמִשְׁלָם וְעוֹר כְּעֶבֶד יְהוָה: <sup>יג</sup> רֵאוֹת [ראוית כן] רַבּוֹת וְלֹא תִשְׁמַר פְּקוּחַ אָזְנוֹים וְלֹא יִשְׁמַע: <sup>יד</sup> יְהוָה חֲפִיץ לְמַעַן צְדָקוֹ יִגְדִּיל תּוֹרָה וַיִּאֲדִיר:

<sup>כב</sup> וְהוּא עִם-בְּזוּי וְשִׁסּוּי הִפְּחָ בְּחוּרִים בְּלָם וּבְכַתֵּי כְלָאִים הַחֲבָאוּ הֵיוּ לְבוֹ וְאִין מַצִּיל מִשְׁפָּה וְאִין אִמֵר הָשֵׁב: <sup>כג</sup> מִי בָכֶם יִאֲזִין זֹאת יִקְשֹׁב וַיִּשְׁמַע לְאַחֲוֹר: <sup>כד</sup> מִי-נָתַן לְמִשְׁפָּה [למשוסה כן] יַעֲקֹב וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל לְבְזוּיִם הֲלוֹא יְהוָה זֶו חֲטָאנוּ לוֹ וְלֹא-אָבוּ בְדַרְכֵי הַלֹּךְ וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ בְּתוֹרָתוֹ: <sup>כה</sup> וַיִּשְׁפֹךְ עָלֵינוּ חֲמָה אֲפֹ וַעֲזוּ מִלְחָמָה וַתִּלְהַטְהוּ מִסְכִּיב וְלֹא יָדַע וַתִּבְעַר-בוֹ וְלֹא-יִשְׁיִם עַל-לֵב:

**21. יגְדִיל תּוֹרָה וַיִּאֲדִיר**—To increase and strengthen Torah. The Talmud connects this verse with the highest level of Torah study, that which is carried out purely for the sake of expanding the body of Torah wisdom itself (see Chulin 66b). On the other hand, this verse is also employed in connection with the Torah study of young children, which is clearly at a

very basic level (see Rambam, Laws of Torah Study 2:7). The fact that the same verse is employed in both cases means that they are connected: the sublime spiritual loftiness of very advanced Torah scholars is shared in some measure by even the most basic exercise of Torah study (Sichas Shabbos Parshas Bereishis 5717, par. 7).

\*While the Chabad custom is to finish the Haftarah with verse 21, in a leap year the Rebbe followed the custom of saying the extended Haftarah (according to Ashkenazic custom), finishing with 43:10. However, the Rebbe indicated that this was a personal directive that he had received from the Previous Rebbe and was not to be copied by others (See Sichas Shabbos Parshas Bereishis 5714, 5717, 5725 and 5744).

מִגּוֹ ׀ וְעַתָּה כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה בְּרֵאשִׁית יַעֲקֹב וַיִּצְרֶךְ  
 יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־תִּירָא כִּי גִאֲלִיתִיךָ קָרָאתִי בְשִׁמְךָ לִי־  
 אֶתָּה: ׀ כִּי־תַעֲבֹר בַּמַּיִם אֶתָּה אֲנִי וּבַנְּהָרוֹת לֹא  
 יִשְׁטַפּוּךָ כִּי־תִלְךָ בְּמוֹ־אֵשׁ לֹא תִכּוֹה וְלַהֲבֵה לֹא  
 תִבְעַר־בְּךָ: ׀ כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל  
 מוֹשִׁיעֶךָ נִתְתִּי כַּפָּרָךְ מִצָּרִים כּוֹשׁ וּסְבֵא תַחֲתֶיךָ:  
 ׀ מֵאֲשֶׁר יִקְרַתְּ בְּעֵינַי נִכְבַּדְתָּ וְאֲנִי אֶהְבַּתִּיךָ וְאַתָּן  
 אָדָם תַּחֲתֶיךָ וְלְאֻמִּים תַּחַת נִפְשֶׁךָ: ׀ אֶל־תִּירָא  
 כִּי אֶתְּךָ־אֲנִי מִמּוֹרָח אֲבִיא וְרֵעֶךָ וּמִמַּעַרְב אֶקְבָּעֶךָ:  
 ׀ אֲמַר לְצַפּוֹן תִּנְנִי וְלְתִימָן אֶל־תִּכְלְאִי הִבִּיאי בְנֵי  
 מִרְחוֹק וּבָנוֹתַי מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ: ׀ כֹּל הַנִּקְרָא בְּשִׁמִּי  
 וְלִכְבוֹדִי בְּרָאִיתִיו יִצְרַתִּיו אֶפ־עֲשִׂיתִיו: ׀ הוֹצִיא  
 עִם־עוֹר וְעֵינַיִם יֵשׁ וְחַרְשִׁים וְאֲזָנִים לָמוֹ:  
 ׀ כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם נִקְבְּצוּ יַחְדָּו וַיִּאֲסְפוּ לְאֻמִּים מִי בָהֶם  
 יִגִּיד זֹאת וְרֵאשֻׁנוֹת יִשְׁמִיעֵנּוּ יִתְּנוּ עֲדֵיהֶם וַיִּצְדְּקוּ  
 וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ וַיִּאֲמְרוּ אָמֵן: ׀ אַתָּם עַד־לִי נִאֲסֵ־יְהוָה וְעַבְדֵי  
 אֲשֶׁר בָּחַרְתִּי לְמַעַן תִּדְבְּעוּ וְתִאֲמִינּוּ לִי וְתִבְּנִינוּ  
 כִּי־אֲנִי הוּא לִפְנֵי לֹא־נִוצַר אֵל וְאַחֲרַי לֹא יִהְיֶה:

them, but they paid no attention (to the fact that it was caused by God, and even after) it burned them they did not take it to heart (as Divine intervention).

<sup>43:1</sup> (But despite all this) God—Who created you, O Ya'akov, and formed you, O Yisra'el—(nevertheless) says: “Do not fear, for I redeemed you (from Egypt) and I called you My own. <sup>2</sup> When you pass through water (and nearly drown) I am with you; (even powerful) rivers will not sweep you away; when you walk through the inferno (of life’s difficulties), you will not be burnt, and the flame will not consume you, <sup>3</sup> for I am God, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. (Didn’t) I make Egypt your ransom (and save you, even though you did not deserve it? Didn’t I send) Ethiopia and Seba (to be destroyed by Sanchairiv) instead of you? <sup>4</sup> Because you are precious to Me and honored. I loved you! So I will give men in exchange for you and nations (to be destroyed) in place of you.

Promise of redemption

<sup>5</sup> Do not fear, for I am with you. I will bring your children from the east and gather you from the west. <sup>6</sup> I will say to the north: “Give (Me the Jewish people who are scattered there),” and to the south, ‘Don’t hold them back!’ Bring My sons from afar and My daughters from the ends of the earth, <sup>7</sup> all (the Jewish people) who bear My Name, who (were made) for My glory. I have (already) created, fashioned and made (all that is necessary for their redemption in order to), <sup>8</sup> free the (exiled) people—who are blind though they have eyes, and deaf though they have ears.

peoples assembled, who among them (could) declare (future events like) this, or announce to us (that they had predicted) past events? (If so), let them produce their witnesses and be proven correct, such that those who hear them will say that it is true.

God’s witnesses

<sup>10</sup> “You are my witnesses,” says God, “My servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe in Me, and understand that I am He before whom no god was created, and after whom none will exist.”

**43:1.** בְּרֵאשִׁית יַעֲקֹב וַיִּצְרֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל. —Who created you, O Ya'akov, and formed you, O Israel. Rendered literally, the verse states, “This is what God says: ‘Ya'akov created you; Yisra'el formed you.’” On this, the Midrash expounds: “God said to his world, ‘World of mine! World of mine! I will tell you who created you and formed you. Ya'akov created you; Yisra'el formed you’” (Vayikra Rabah 36:4 and Maharzu ibid.). In other words, being that the purpose of creation is that the *mitzvos* should be performed by the Jewish people (“Ya'akov”; “Yisra'el”), the world’s very existence is attributed to them. The verse further explains that this takes place on two levels. The lower level of “Ya'akov”\* represents the simple observance of *mitzvos* whose merit ensures the existence of the world’s physical matter (“Ya'akov who created you”). In the merit of the higher level of *mitzvah* observance signified by Yisra'el, the world is given its form (“who formed you Yisra'el”) (s.v. *ha-ba'im* 5743).

**5-6.** מִמּוֹרָח אֲבִיא וְרֵעֶךָ. —I will bring your children from the east etc. With regard to the east and west, scripture uses the expressions:

“I will bring...and gather...,” indicating that God is informing the Jewish people how He will unite them when the Redemption arrives. But in reference to the north and south God addresses the *compass points*, saying to them “Give (Me),” and, “Don’t hold them back.” Of these latter two directions, the north is given the stronger instruction, to become a “giver,” i.e. a force which actively contributes to the Redemption, whereas the south is merely told not to interfere with or prevent the redemptive process—“Don’t hold them back.” This indicates the uniqueness of the Future Redemption: Even the north—which represents the forces of evil, “From the north, evil will venture forth” (Jer 1:14)—will be transformed into a positive force (Likutei Sichos vol. 4, p. 1065).

**10. אַתֶּם עֵדֵי.** —You are my witnesses. Witnesses are only required to establish facts that have been concealed. Thus, as God’s “witnesses,” our task is to reveal the hidden identity of this physical world, demonstrating how every detail points to the presence of God (Hisvadyos 5745, vol. 3, p. 1566).

\*Ya'akov's change of name to Yisra'el represented a spiritual elevation—see Rashi to Bereishis 32:29; Arizal, Sha'ar ha-Pesukim, Vayishlach 32, 29; Pardes, Sha'ar 23; Etz Chaim, Sha'ar 3. chap. 2; Torah Ohr, Vayeitzei 21a; Likutei Torah, Balak 70b.

## NOACH / נח

(Isaiah 54:1 - 55:5)

Jerusalem in the times of Redemption 54:1 **S**ays God: “(O Jerusalem! During exile times, you (were like a) barren woman who never gave birth, (since you were a city devoid of people. But now, in the times of the Redemption, you can) sing! (O Jerusalem!) Open your mouth and sing loudly, for you (were a woman who) never had labor pains. (Now), the inhabitants of (Jerusalem—which previously) lay desolate—are more numerous than the inhabitants of the built up cities (of Edom).”

<sup>2</sup> “(O Jerusalem!) Extend the area of your tent (to include all your children). Stretch the curtains (that mark the edge) of your dwellings so that they spread out far—do not hold (them) back. Lengthen your ropes (of your tents, expanding your borders) and strengthen your fastening-pegs (so that your borders remain enlarged forever). <sup>3</sup> For you will break through, (spilling into the territory) to the right and (to the) left. Your descendants will inherit nations and (they will multiply so much that they will) inhabit desolate cities.”

Promise to never bring another exile <sup>4</sup> “Do not fear (another exile after the redemption). Do not be ashamed or embarrassed (to proudly display your greatness, for fear that you may be exiled again), for you will not be disgraced (with another exile). You will forget the shame (of the exile) of your youth, and you will no longer remember the disgrace of your widowhood (when you were a people without a king). <sup>5</sup> For the Name of your Husband, who made you (great), is the God of hosts—(so who could possibly oppose you? Isn't) your Redeemer (none other than) the Holy One of Israel, Who will (then) be called ‘God of the entire earth’ (by all, so why be afraid)?”

<sup>6</sup> “For God has called you (to return to Him) like a (husband who calls to his) forsaken and dejected wife; like a man who was (briefly) disgusted by the wife of his youth (but soon forgives her),” says your God. <sup>7</sup> “(When) I abandoned you (it was only) for a short moment (compared to the time when) I will gather you, (which will last forever, due to My) great mercy.

<sup>8</sup> (Compared to the) everlasting kindness (with which) I will have mercy upon you, I hid My face from you for (just) a moment, (and I was) only a little angry,” says God, your Redeemer.

נד ׀ רְנִי עֲקָרָה לֹא יִלְדָה פְּעֻלָּהּ רְנָה וְצַהֲלִי לֹא-  
 חָלָה כִּי־רַבִּים בְּנֵי־שׁוֹמְמָה מִבְּנֵי בְעוֹלָה אָמַר יְהוָה:  
 ב הֲרַחֲבִי אֶמְקוֹם אֶהְלֶךְ וִירִיעוֹת מִשְׁבְּנוֹתֶיךָ יִטּוּ  
 אֶל־תַּחֲשֻׁכֵי הָאָרֶץ מִיַּתְּרוֹךָ וַיִּתְדַתֶּיךָ תִּזְקֵי:  
 ג כִּי־יִמֵן וּשְׂמֹאֹל תִּפְרָצִי וְזָרְעֶךָ גּוֹיִם יִלְּשׁ וְעָרִים  
 נִשְׁמֹת יוֹשִׁיבוּ: ד אֶל־תִּירָאִי כִּי־לֹא תִכּוֹשִׁי  
 וְאֶל־תִּכְבְּלִמֵי כִּי לֹא תַחֲפִירֵי כִּי בִשְׁתַּעַל עֲלוֹמְיֶךָ  
 תִּשְׁכַּחִי וְחִרְפַּת אֱלֹמְנוֹתֶיךָ לֹא תִזְכְּרֵי־עוֹד: ה כִּי  
 בְעֲלֶיךָ עֲשִׂיךָ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ וְגִבְאֶלְךָ קְדוֹשׁ  
 יִשְׂרָאֵל אֱלֹהֵי כָל־הָאָרֶץ יִקְרָא: ו כִּי־כֹאשָׁה עֲזוּבָה  
 וְעֲצוּבַת רוּחַ קָרְאֶךָ יְהוָה וְאִשְׁתׁ נְעוּרַיִם כִּי תִמָּאֵס  
 אָמַר אֱלֹהֶיךָ: ז בְּרִנְעָה קָטַן עֲזוּבֶתְךָ וּבְרַחֲמִים גְּדֹלִים  
 אֶקְבְּצֶךָ: ח בְּשִׁצְפָה קָצַף הִסְתַּרְתִּי פָנַי רְנַעַת מִמֶּךָ

### HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS NOACH

This *Haftarah* mentions God’s promise to Noach not to bring another flood that will destroy the world (v. 9). In general, the *Haftarah* describes the rebuilding of Jerusalem with the Final Redemption, and the universal knowledge of Torah that will be attained by the Jewish people.

The *Haftarah* opens with a description of how Jerusalem will be repopulated with the Redemption (54:1-3), followed with a promise that the present exile is only temporary (4-10). The prophet then describes how God will rebuild Jerusalem with gems (11-12) and how the Jewish people will master the study of Torah and be righteous, thus averting any threat from potential enemies (13-17). The prophet then lauds the virtues of Torah study (55:1-3) and describes the respect that the nations will have for Israel in the times of Mashiach (4-5).

**5. כִּי בְעֲלֶיךָ עֲשִׂיךָ**—Your Husband, who made you. Our Sages taught: “A woman [before marriage] is unfinished, and she enters into the covenant only with a man who will transform her [into] a [finished] vessel, as the verse states, ‘The Name of your Husband, who made you, is the God of hosts’” (Sanhedrin 22b). In the prophet’s analogy of the marriage between the Jewish people and God, the difference between being an “unfinished” or “finished vessel” is whether or not a person is a suitable receptacle to spiritual matters. If he performs *mitzvos* by rote, without enthusiasm, then he is an “unfinished vessel”; if he finds the *mitzvos* exciting and inspiring, then he is a truly receptive “vessel” to Godliness. Of course, for most people this does not come naturally, which is why the Chasidic movement stresses the importance of prolonged meditative prayer, which is aimed at transforming oneself into a “finished vessel” (*Sefer haMa’amarim* 5718, pp. 311-2).

וּבַחֶסֶד עוֹלָם רַחַמְתֶּיךָ אָמַר גְּאֻלְךָ יְהוָה: כּ כִּי־מִי  
 נָח זֹאת לִי אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי מֵעַבְר מִי־נָח עוֹד  
 עַל־הָאָרֶץ כִּן נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי מִקְצֶף עֲלֶיךָ וּמִגַּעַר־בֶּדֶךָ:  
 כּ כִּי הַהָרִים יִמוּשׁוּ וְהַגְּבָעוֹת תִּמוּטְיֶנָּה וְחֶסְדִּי  
 מֵאֲתָךְ לֹא־יִמוּשׁ וּבְרִית שְׁלוֹמִי לֹא תִמוּט אָמַר  
 מִרַחֲמֶיךָ יְהוָה:

Chabad and Sefardic communities conclude here. Ashkenazic communities continue:

כּ עֲנִיָּה סַעְרָה לֹא נִחַמָּה הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי מִרְבִּיץ  
 בַּפּוֹד אֲבָנֶיךָ וְיִסְדֵּתֶיךָ בַּסַּפִּירִים: ז וְשִׁמְתִי בְּכֹד  
 שְׁמֹשֹׁתֶיךָ וְשִׁעְרֶיךָ לְאַבְנֵי אֶקְדָּח וְכֹל־גְּבוּלְךָ  
 לְאַבְנֵי־חַפְצִין: ח וְכֹל־בְּנֵיךָ לְמוֹדֵי יְהוָה וְרַב שְׁלוֹם  
 בְּנֵיךָ: ט בַּעֲדָקָה תִּפְוֹנְנִי רַחֲמֵי מַעֲשֶׂיךָ כִּי־לֹא תִירָאִי  
 וּמִמַּחֲתָה כִּי לֹא־תִקְרַב אֵלָיךָ: י הֵן גֹּר יְגוֹר אִפְס  
 מֵאוֹתֵי מִי־גֵר אֲתָךְ עֲלֶיךָ יִפּוֹל: יא הִנֵּה הֵן כֹּן אֲנֹכִי  
 בִּרְאִיתִי חָרַשׁ נִפְחַ בְּאֵשׁ פָּחַם וּמוֹצִיא כְּלִי לְמַעֲשָׂהוּ  
 וְאֲנֹכִי בִּרְאִיתִי מִשְׁחִית לְחַבֵּל: יב כָּל־כְּלֵי יוֹצֵר עֲלֶיךָ  
 לֹא יִצְלָח וְכֹל־לְשׁוֹן תִּקְוֹם־אֲתָךְ לְמִשְׁפָּט תִּרְשָׁעֵי  
 זֹאת נִחַלַת עַבְדֵי יְהוָה וְצַדִּיקְתֶּם מֵאֵתִי נְאֻם־יְהוָה:  
 יג הוּי כָּל־צִמָּא לָכוּ לָמִים וְאֲשֶׁר אֵין־לוֹ כֶּסֶף  
 לָכוּ שִׁבְרוּ וְאָכְלוּ וּלְכוּ שִׁבְרוּ בְּלוֹא־כֶּסֶף וּבְלוֹא  
 מַחִיר יֵין וְחֶלֶב: יד לָמָּה תִשְׁקְלוּ־כֶּסֶף בְּלוֹא־לָחֶם  
 וַיִּנְיַעְכֶּם בְּלוֹא לְשִׁבְעָה שָׁמְעוּ שָׁמוֹעַ אֵלַי וְאָכְלוּ־  
 מִזֶּבֶן וְתִתְעַנְּנַ בְּדָשָׁן נִפְשְׁכֶם: טו הֲטוֹ אוֹנְכֶם וּלְכוּ אֵלַי  
 שָׁמְעוּ וּתְחִי נַפְשְׁכֶם וְאִכְרַתָּה לָכֶם בְּרִית עוֹלָם

<sup>9</sup> “This (anger) was for Me like the waters of Noach. Waters of Noach Just as I swore never to allow the waters of Noach to pass again over the earth, so too, I swore not to be angry at you or rebuke you.

<sup>10</sup> “For the mountains (may) move away and the hills might collapse (in an earthquake), but My kindness will not leave you, nor will My covenant of peace collapse,” says God, Who is merciful to you.

<sup>54:11</sup> “(O Jerusalem! You) afflicted, storm-tossed one, who has not been comforted! I will lay your (floor) stones upon antimony (instead of sand), and lay your foundations with sapphires. <sup>12</sup> I will make your window panes from emeralds, your gates from carbuncle stones, and (the floor-stones of) all your borders (will become) desirable gems.

<sup>13</sup> “All your children will be (extremely wise, as if they were) disciples of God, and your children will have much peace. Torah knowledge

<sup>14</sup> “Through (your) righteousness, you will be fit (for all this). You will distance yourself from fraudsters who have no fear of Me (at all), and from terror, for it will not come near you. <sup>15</sup> Indeed, people will fear no one but Me. Whoever attacks you will fall into your power. <sup>16</sup> Behold, it was I who created the smith to fan coal fires and make the tools of his trade, and it was I who created the destroying (enemy) to destroy (itself). <sup>17</sup> Every weapon engineered against you will not succeed, and every tongue raised against you in judgment you will have condemned. This is the inheritance of God’s servants and their just reward from Me,” says God.

<sup>55:1</sup> “Oh! Everyone who is thirsty (for God’s word), go to (the prophet and drink his) ‘water’! (Even) those who have no money, go and eat! Come and take wine and milk without paying, without charge (for the prophet’s wisdom is free)! <sup>2</sup> Why do you ‘pay money’ (and invest your energies in non-Jewish wisdom) without (getting

any real substance or) ‘bread’? Why do you labor (in something that) cannot give satisfaction? Listen to Me! (Learn Torah) and you will ‘eat’ well and satisfy your souls with ‘rich foods’!

<sup>3</sup> Incline your ears and come to Me (to hear my words)! Listen, and you will (merit to) live (again, with the revival of the

9. מִי נָח—The waters of Noach. At first glance, the term “waters of Noach” appears to be self-contradictory, as Noach was the savior of his generation, whereas the waters constituted the punishment. A simple solution is that the waters eliminated the generation because of Noach, since he failed to pray sufficiently for the people to be saved (Zohar I 67b). However, Chasidic thought explains that the waters were named after

Noach because they had a positive effect of cleansing the earth spiritually, like a mikvah, making it more sensitive to spiritual matters (Likutei Sichos vol. 15, p. 40; Torah Ohr, Noach 8c).

12. וְשִׁמְתִי בְּכֹד שְׁמֹשֹׁתֶיךָ—I will make your window panes from emeralds etc. This is not a mere metaphor. This prophecy will materialize physically in the future era (Sefer haMa’amarim 5734, p. 198, 202).

Eternal covenant with Mashiach  
 dead)! I will make an eternal covenant with you, as enduring as (My) loyalty to David. <sup>4</sup> Indeed, I have made his (enduring dynasty) as a proof to the nations (that My word always endures, and Mashiach, his descendant, will be) a ruler and leader of the nations. <sup>5</sup> (Likewise My promises to you will be fulfilled). Indeed, nations that you do not know will call upon you (to serve you), and nations which never knew you will run to you (to follow your orders. But they will not do this due to your own power, but) for the sake of the God your God, the Holy One of Israel (Who dwells among you and), Who has glorified you.”

חֲסִדֵי דָוִד הַנְּאֻמָּנִים: הַ הַן עַד לְאוֹמִים נְתַתִּיו נְגִיד  
 וּמְצֻנָה לְאֻמִּים: הַ הַן גְּוֵי לְאֵל־תַּדְעַ תִּקְרָא וְגֵוִי  
 לְאֵל־יִדְעוּד אֱלֹהֵי יְרוּצוּ לְמַעַן יְהוּה אֱלֹהֵיךָ וְלִקְדוֹשׁ  
 יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי פִאֲרָךְ:

## LECH LECHA / לך לך

(Isaiah 40:27 – 41:16)

40:27 **Y**a'akov, why do you say—and Yisra'el, why do you declare—“My way (of serving God) has been hidden from (and ignored by) God, and my judgment passes (unrewarded) from my God”?

<sup>28</sup> Don't you know (from your own mind, even) if you have not heard (from your teachers), that God is an everlasting God, the Creator of the (entire) world (from end (to) end? He does not become tired or weary (and fluctuate in His performance. So your reward will definitely come, but) there is no comprehension of His wisdom (as to why He delays it).

God will strengthen the weary  
<sup>29</sup> (The time will come when) He gives strength to the weary (people of Israel), and increases power to those without strength. <sup>30</sup> (The nations of the world who are now strong like) young men, will become tired and weary, and (their) young bachelors will repeatedly stumble. <sup>31</sup> But those who place their hope in God will regain (their) strength, (and) grow wings like eagles. They will run (to their land) and not become weary. They will walk and not get tired.

<sup>41:1</sup> (You, who live in) islands, be silent (and listen) to Me! Let (the) nations muster their strength (to defend themselves before Me). (First) let them come (and listen to My prosecution, and) then they can speak (if they indeed have anything to say in their defense). Then, (the nations and I) will debate together, to judge (their claims that I am unable to save My people).

<sup>2</sup> Who awakened (Avraham, when he was) in the East (to leave his home and despise idolatry? Everywhere that) he trod, he preached righteousness (demanding that people abandon their idols and believe in God. Who is the One that) placed nations before him, and (enabled him) to dominate (four mighty) kings? (Those killed by) his sword (were as numerous as) the dust, and his bow (killed many people) like (piles of) beaten straw. <sup>3</sup> He pursued them, and passed through in peace,

מַ לְמָה תֹאמַר יַעֲקֹב וּתְדַבֵּר יִשְׂרָאֵל נִסְתָּרָה  
 דְרָבְלִי מִיְהוָה וּמֵאֱלֹהֵי מִשְׁפָּטֵי יַעֲבֹר: בַּ הַלֹּוא יִדְעַת  
 אִם־לֹא שָׁמַעַת אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם | יְהוּה בּוֹרֵא קְצוֹת  
 הָאָרֶץ לֹא יֵעָף וְלֹא יִיָּגַע אֵין חֶקֶר לְתַבּוּנָתוֹ: כֵּס נִתַּן  
 לְיַעֲקֹב כֹּחַ וְלֵאֵין אוֹנִים עֲצָמָה יִרְבֶּה: זַ וְיַעֲפוּ נְעָרִים  
 וַיִּגְעוּ וּבַחֹרִים כָּשׁוּל יִפְשְׁלוּ: לֹא וְקוֹנֵי יְהוּה יִחַלְּפוּ  
 כֹּחַ יַעֲלוּ אֶבֶר כְּנַשְׂרִים יְרוּצוּ וְלֹא יִיָּגַעוּ יִלְכוּ וְלֹא  
 יֵעָפוּ: מֵאָה הַחֲרִישׁוּ אֵלַי אֲנִים וְלֹא־מִים יִחַלְּפוּ  
 כֹּחַ יִגְשׁוּ אֵין יִדְבְּרוּ יַחֲדוּ לְמִשְׁפָּט נִקְרָבָה: בַּ מִּי  
 הַעִיר מִמְּזוֹחַ צֶדֶק יִקְרָאֵהוּ לְרַגְלוֹ יִתֵּן לְפָנָיו גּוֹיִם  
 וּמְלָכִים יִרְדּוּ יִתֵּן כַּעֲפֹר חֲרָבוֹ כִּקֶּשׁ נִדְהַף קִשְׁתּוֹ:  
 וְיִרְדְּפֵם יַעֲבֹר שָׁלוֹם אֶרֶץ כְּרַגְלָיו לֹא יָבוֹא:

### HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS LECH LECHA

This *Haftarah* alludes to Avraham's victory over the four kings (41:2-3) which is chronicled in *Parshas Lech Lecha* (14:13-16). The *Haftarah* also recounts how God caused Avraham to leave his homeland and settle in the Land of Israel, where he taught the world about God.

The first part of the *Haftarah* contains words of comfort to the Jewish people that they will survive the sufferings of exile (40:27-41:1).

The prophet then explains to us the messages from Avraham's life (2-8), and this is followed by more words of encouragement for the Jewish people in exile (9-16).

מִי־פָעַל וְעָשָׂה קְרָא הַדְּרוֹת מֵרֹאשׁ אֲנִי יְהוָה  
 רֵאשׁוֹן וְאֶת־אֲחֵרֵינִים אֲנִי־הוּא: ה רָאוּ אַיִם וַיִּזְכְּאוּ  
 קְצוֹת הָאָרֶץ יַחֲרְדוּ קָרְבוּ וַיֵּאֲתִיּוּן: ו אִישׁ אֶת־רַעְיוֹ  
 יַעֲזְרוּ וְלֹאֲחֵיו יֹאמְרֵי חֹזֵק: ז וַיִּחַזַּק חֲרָשׁ אֶת־עֲרֹף  
 מַחֲלִיק פְּטִישׁ אֶת־הוֹלֵם פָּעַם אָמַר לְדָבָק טוֹב הוּא  
 וַיִּחַזְּקוּהוּ בְּמִסְמָרִים לֹא יִמוּט: ח וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲבָדֶי  
 יַעֲקֹב אֲשֶׁר בַּחֲרִיתֶיךָ זָרַע אֲבָרְהָם אֲהַבֵּי: ט אֲשֶׁר  
 הִחַזְּקִיתֶךָ מִקְצוֹת הָאָרֶץ וּמֵאֲצִילֶיהָ קְרָאתֶיךָ וְאָמַר  
 לְדָ עֲבָדֶי־אֲתָהּ בַּחֲרִיתֶיךָ וְלֹא מֵאֲסִיתֶיךָ: י אֶל־תִּירָא  
 כִּי עֲמָד־אֲנִי אֶל־תִּשְׁתַּע כִּי־אֲנִי אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲמַצְתֶּיךָ  
 אֶפֶר־עֲזֹרְתֶיךָ אֶפֶר־תַּמְכֵּתֶיךָ בִּימִין עֲדָקֶי: יא הֵן יִבְשׁוּ  
 וַיִּפְלְמוּ כָּל הַנְּחָרִים בְּךָ יִהְיוּ כְּאֵין וַיִּאֲבְדוּ אֲנָשֵׁי  
 רִיבֶךָ: יב תִּבְקָשׁם וְלֹא תִמְצָאם אֲנָשֵׁי מִצְּתֶיךָ יִהְיוּ  
 כְּאֵין וּכְאִפְסֵם אֲנָשֵׁי מִלַּחֲמֶתֶךָ: יג כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ  
 מִחֲזוּק יִמִּינֶךָ הָאָמַר לְךָ אֶל־תִּירָא אֲנִי עֲזֹרְתֶיךָ:  
 יד אֶל־תִּירָאִי תוֹלַעַת יַעֲקֹב מִתִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲנִי  
 עֲזֹרְתֶיךָ נְאֻם־יְהוָה וְגֵאֲלֶךָ קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל: טו הִנֵּה  
 שִׁמְתֶיךָ לְמוֹרֵג חֲרוּץ חֲדָשׁ בְּעַל פִּיפְיוֹת תְּדוּשׁ  
 הַרִים וְתִדַּק וְגִבְעוֹת כִּפְיֵן תִּשְׁחִים: טז תִּזְרַם וְרוּחַ  
 תִּשְׁאֵם וּסְעָרָה תִּפְיֵן אוֹתָם וְאַתָּה תִּגְיֵל בִּיהוָה  
 בַּקְּרוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּתְהַלֵּל:

(though it was) a path where his feet had never tread.

<sup>4</sup> Who caused and orchestrated (this for him)? The One Who calls (and designates the time and place of) each generation, from before (they are born). I, God, am the first One (before all the generations, and) I am the same (One Who remains) with the last (generations).

God orchestrated Avraham's victories

<sup>5</sup> The (inhabitants of the distant) islands saw (the miracles that I performed for Avraham) and became frightened. (Even) the (ones who live at the) ends of the earth became terrified. They drew near and came (to Avraham, not to wage war, but merely to beg for their captives).

<sup>6</sup> (Yet, despite all the miracles that the nations saw God make for Avraham,) each man (carried on) helping his friend (to make idols. Each person) would (encourage) his brother, saying "Be strong! (Keep on sculpting idols!)" <sup>7</sup> (When a) carpenter (would make an idol) he (would) hurry the (gold)smith (to finish off the idol's coating quickly). The one who smooths (the idol with the small mallet would hurry) the blacksmith (who did the initial metalwork,) beating very hard (with the large hammer. The one who glued the idol together would) say (with glee) about the glue: "It's good!" and he would fasten (the metal coating onto the idol) with nails, so that it should not fall off.

People ignore God's miracles

<sup>8</sup> But you, Israel (are not like them because you are) My servant(s)! (Children of) Ya'akov! I chose you (to be My people because you are) the descendants of Avraham who loved Me (and separated from idol worship). <sup>9</sup> (In the future) I will grasp you from the corners of the earth, and call (to release) you from (the control of) its powerful people. I told you "you are My servant" (from the time that) I have chosen you, (and) I have not despised you.

God chose Israel

<sup>10</sup> Do not be afraid, for I am with you. Do not turn away (thinking that I have abandoned you) because I am your God (as I have always been). I strengthened you (with positive words of comfort), I helped you (from the very beginning. When you were in the hands of the enemy) I supported you with My righteous right hand.

<sup>11</sup> Indeed, all those who were angry with you will (eventually) be shamed and embarrassed. Those who quarrel with you will be like nothing and perish. <sup>12</sup> (Even if) you will seek them, you will not find the men who fight with you. The men who wage war with you will be null and void. <sup>13</sup> For I am God, your God, who takes hold of your right hand, and says to you, "Don't fear, I will help you," (so you can rely on My word). <sup>14</sup> Do not fear (children) of Ya'akov, people of Israel, (who are as weak as) a worm (whose only strength is in its mouth, i.e. prayer). I have helped you (in the past), says God, and (I,) the Holy One of Israel, will be your redeemer (in the future).

Israel's enemies to be destroyed

<sup>15</sup> I have made you into a new grooved threshing-hammer with sharp edges. You will thresh (kings mighty as) mountains and crush them fine, and make hills like chaff. <sup>16</sup> You will scatter them. The wind will carry them away, and a storm will scatter them. You will rejoice with God, and praise yourself (for trusting in) the Holy One of Israel.

8. אֲבָרְהָם אֲהַבֵּי—Avraham who loved Me. Avraham loved God with such a great and sublime love that he became a "chariot" to God (see Bereishis Rabah 47:6). In other words, his total dedication and surrender to

God's will resembled a chariot which does not deviate from side to side but follows the path of its driver directly (Tanya, Igeres Hakodesh 15; Likutei Sichos vol. 20, p. 101).

## VAYEIRA / וִירָא

(Kings II 4:1–37)

Elisha  
blesses a  
widow

4:1 **A** certain woman, one of the wives of the disciples of the prophets, cried out to Elisha, saying, “Your servant, my husband, has died. You are aware that your servant feared God. (Now, Yehoram ben Achav) the creditor has come to take my two children as slaves for himself!”

<sup>2</sup> Elisha said to her, “What can I do for you? Tell me what you have in the house (that a blessing can rest in)?”

She said “Your maidservant does not have anything in the house, except a jug of oil (used for anointing).”

<sup>3</sup> He said, “Go and borrow containers from (those who are) outside (your house, namely) from all your neighbors—empty containers. Don’t ask for (just) a few.

<sup>4</sup> Then enter (your home) and shut the door behind you and your sons, and pour (the oil) into all these containers. (Once they are full) remove the filled ones (and replace them with empty ones, because the jug will be like a fountain).”

Oil flows  
miraculously

<sup>5</sup> She left him and closed the door behind her and her sons. They would bring (the empty containers) to her (so she would not have to move), and she would pour.

<sup>6</sup> When the (borrowed) containers were (all) full she said to her son, “Bring me another container.”

“There aren’t anymore containers,” he said to her. Then the oil stopped (flowing).

<sup>7</sup> She came and told the Godly man (what had happened). He said “Go and sell the oil and pay your debts. You and your sons will live off the remaining (money).”

Elisha  
blesses  
childless  
couple

<sup>8</sup> One day, Elisha passed through Shunaim. A distinguished lady (who lived) there insisted that he eat a meal (in her house. From then onwards,) whenever he passed by, he would go there to eat bread.

<sup>9</sup> She said to her husband, “I realize that (the person) who comes regularly to us is a holy man of God (so it’s not right that

ד ׀ וְאִשָּׁה אֶחַת מִנְּשֵׁי בְנֵי הַנְּבִיאִים צָעָקָה אֶל-אֱלִישָׁע לֵאמֹר עַבְדְּךָ אִישִׁי מֵת וְאַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ כִּי עַבְדְּךָ הָיָה יְרֵא אֶת-יְהוָה וְהַנָּשִׂא בָּא לְקַחַת אֶת-שְׁנֵי יְלָדָי לֹא לְעַבְדִּים: ׀ וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֶיהָ אֱלִישָׁע מָה אֶעֱשֶׂה-לָּךְ הַגִּידִי לִי מַה-יֵשֵׁב לָךְ וְלִבִּי בֹן בַּבַּיִת וְתֹאמַר אֵינִי לְשַׁפְּחָתְךָ כָּל בַּבַּיִת כִּי אִם-אֶסוּד שֶׁמֶן: ׀ וַיֹּאמֶר לָכִי שְׂאֲלִי-לָךְ בָּלִים מִן-הַחוּץ מֵאֵת כָּל-שְׂכֵנֶיךָ [שְׂכֵנֵיכִי בֵן] בָּלִים רַקִּים אֶל-תִּמְעָטִי: ׀ וְכָזֶאת וְסָגַרְתְּ הַדֶּלֶת בְּעַדְךָ וּבְעַד-בְּנֵיךָ וַיִּצְקֶתְךָ עַל כָּל-הַבָּלִים הָאֵלֶּה וְהִמָּלֵא תִסָּעִי: ׀ וְתִלְךְ מֵאֵתוֹ וְתִסְגַּר הַדֶּלֶת בְּעַדְךָ וּבְעַד בְּנֵיךָ הֵם מִנִּישִׁים אֵלֶיהָ וְהִיא מוּצָקֶת [מִצְקָת בֵּן]: ׀ וַיְהִי ׀ כְּמִלְאֵת הַבָּלִים וְתֹאמַר אֶל-בְּנֵהּ הַגִּישָׁה אֵלַי עוֹד פְּלִי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֶיהָ אֵינִי עוֹד פְּלִי וַיַּעֲמֵד הַשֶּׁמֶן: ׀ וְתָבֵא וְתִגַּד לְאִישׁ הָאֵלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר לָכִי מִכְרִי אֶת-הַשֶּׁמֶן וְשַׁלְמִי אֶת-נְשִׁיךָ [נְשִׁיכִי בֵן] וְאַתָּה וּבְנֵיךָ [בְּנֵיכִי בֵן] תִּחְיִי בְנוֹתֶיךָ: ׀ וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם וַיַּעֲבֵר אֱלִישָׁע אֶל-שׁוֹנַם וְשָׁם אִשָּׁה גְדוֹלָה וְתַחֲזִק-בּוֹ לֶאֱכֹל-לֶחֶם וַיְהִי מַדֵּי עָבְרוּ יָסַר שָׂמָה לֶאֱכֹל-לֶחֶם: ׀ וְתֹאמַר אֶל-אִשָּׁה הַזֶּה-נָּא יָדַעְתִּי כִּי אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים קָדוֹשׁ הוּא עֹבֵר עָלֵינוּ תָּמִיד:

### HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS VAYEIRA

This *Haftarah* mentions Elisha’s prophecy that Shunamis would bear a child (v. 16), resembling the Angel’s promise that Sarah would bear a child in *Parshas Vayeira* (18:10).

The *Haftarah* relates two of the miraculous incidents performed by Elisha, a prophet, mentor and guardian of the Jewish people. The first story is of Ovadia’s widow and her container of oil that continued to pour oil until she had enough money to pay off all her debts. The second is a story about Shunamis, who was unable to have children. With Elisha’s help, she is blessed with a son—according to one view, that son was Chavakuk the prophet (*Me’am Loez*)—but the child dies tragically. However, Elisha miraculously restores the boy to life.

4:1. וְאִשָּׁה אֶחַת מִנְּשֵׁי בְנֵי הַנְּבִיאִים צָעָקָה אֶל אֱלִישָׁע וגו'.—A certain woman, one of the wives of the disciples of the prophets, cried out to Elisha, etc. The opening of *Parshas Vayeira* describes how God revealed Himself to Avraham, and Chasidic thought explains that this revelation was inherited by Avraham’s descendants, such that every Jewish soul is privy to Divine revelation. The *Haftarah*, however, addresses the soul after it has been invested in a body which *conceals* the Godly revelation of the soul—indicated in this verse by “a certain woman” (the soul), who was “widowed” (concealed from God). Nevertheless, we learn here that, despite this concealment the soul still “cries out” from time to time and longs to be close to its Creator, with a powerful yearning that even the physical body cannot contain or repress (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 335).

וַנַּעֲשֶׂה נָא עֲלֵית־קִיר קַמָּנָה וְנָשִׂים לוֹ שָׂם מִטָּה  
 וְשִׁלְחָן וְכִסֵּא וּמְנוּרָה וְהָיָה בְּבֵאוֹ אֵלֵינוּ יָסוּר שָׁמָּה:  
 וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם וַיָּבֵא שָׁמָּה וַיָּסֹר אֶל־הָעֶלְיָה  
 וַיִּשְׁכַּב שָׁמָּה: <sup>יב</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־גֵּיחָזִי נַעֲרוּ קָרָא  
 לְשׁוֹנְמִית הַזֹּאת וַיִּקְרָא־לָהּ וַתַּעֲמֹד לְפָנָיו: <sup>יג</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר  
 לוֹ אֶמְרָנָא אֵלָיָה הֲנִיָּה חֲרָדָת | אֵלֵינוּ  
 אֶת־כָּל־הַחֲרָדָה הַזֹּאת מָה לַעֲשׂוֹת לָךְ הַיֵּשׁ  
 לְדַבְּרֵךְ אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ אוֹ אֶל־שָׂר הַצָּבָא וַתֹּאמֶר  
 בְּתוֹךְ עַמִּי אֲנֹכִי יִשְׁבֶּת: <sup>יד</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר וּמָה לַעֲשׂוֹת לָהּ  
 וַיֹּאמֶר גֵּיחָזִי אֲבָל בֵּן אֵין־לָהּ וְאִישָׁה זָקֵן: <sup>טו</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר  
 קָרָא־לָהּ וַיִּקְרָא־לָהּ וַתַּעֲמֹד בַּפֶּתַח: <sup>טז</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר  
 לְמוֹעֵד הַזֶּה כָּעֵת תֵּלֶה אֶת | וְאֵתִי בֵן הַבְּקֵת בֵּן וַתֹּאמֶר  
 אֶל־אֲדֹנָי אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים אֶל־תְּבִיב בְּשִׁפְחָתְךָ:  
 וַתַּהַר הָאִשָּׁה וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן לְמוֹעֵד הַזֶּה כָּעֵת תֵּלֶה  
 אֲשֶׁר־דָּבַר אֵלָיָה אֶל־יְשָׁע: <sup>יז</sup> וַיִּגְדַּל הַיֶּלֶד וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם  
 וַיֵּצֵא אֶל־אָבִיו אֶל־הַקְּצָרִים: <sup>יח</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־אָבִיו  
 רֵאשִׁי | רֵאשִׁי וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הַנָּעַר שָׂאֵהוּ אֶל־אִמּוֹ:  
 וַיִּשְׂאֵהוּ וַיְבִיאֵהוּ אֶל־אִמּוֹ וַיֵּשֶׁב עַל־בְּרֵכִיהָ  
 עַד־הַצֹּהָרִים וַיָּמָת: <sup>יט</sup> וַתַּעַל וַתִּשְׁכְּבֵהוּ עַל־מִטַּת  
 אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים וַתִּסְגֹּר בְּעֵדוֹ וַתֵּצֵא: <sup>כ</sup> וַתִּקְרָא  
 אֶל־אִישָׁהּ וַתֹּאמֶר שְׁלַחָה נָא לִי אֶחָד מִן־הַנְּעָרִים  
 וְאָחַת הָאֶתְנֹת וְאֶרְוֶצָה עַד־אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים  
 וְאִשׁוּבָה: <sup>כא</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר מָדוּעַ אֶת | וְאֵתִי בֵן הַלֶּכֶת וְהִלַּכְתִּי בֵן  
 אֵלָיו הַיּוֹם לֹא־חֲדָשׁ וְלֹא שָׁבַת וַתֹּאמֶר שְׁלוֹם:

he live in the same quarters as us). <sup>10</sup> Let's make a small room in the attic, and put a bed, table, chair and lamp there for him. When he comes to us, he will stay there (in privacy)."

<sup>11</sup> (After they built the room in the attic) the day (came) when (Elisha) arrived there. He stayed in the attic and slept there.

<sup>12</sup> He said to Geichazi, his servant, "Call this Shunamite woman (over here)." He called her and she stood before him.

<sup>13</sup> He said (to Geichazi), "Please say to her, 'You have gone to all this effort for us, what (can I) do for you (to repay you)? Is there any matter (about which you want me) to speak about to the king or army commander on your behalf?'"

She said "(It's fine,) I live (peacefully) with my family."

<sup>14</sup> (After she left,) He said (to Geichazi) "(So) what is there to do for her?"

Geichazi said, "Actually (there is something we can do). She doesn't have a son, and her husband is (too) old (to father a child)."

<sup>15</sup> "Call her," (Elisha) said. (Geichazi) called her and she stood (modestly) at the doorway.

<sup>16</sup> (Elisha) said "At the next possible occasion for you to give birth (i.e. in nine months' time), you will be embracing a son!"

She said "Please sir, man of God, do not delude your maidservant (with false hopes)."

<sup>17</sup> The woman became pregnant and gave birth to a boy, at the (earliest possible) time, just as Elisha said.

<sup>18</sup> The child grew up. One day, he went out to his father (who was supervising the reaping of) the harvests, <sup>19</sup> and he said to his father "My head (hurts)! My head (hurts)!"

(His father) said to the lad (who was working there), "Carry him to his mother."

<sup>20</sup> (The lad) carried him and brought him to his mother. (The child) sat on her knees until midday, and he died. <sup>21</sup> She went upstairs and laid him down on the

Child dies suddenly

bed of the Godly man, closed (the door) behind him and left. <sup>22</sup> She called to her husband and said "Send me one of the lads and one of the donkeys. I will rush to the Godly man and come back."

<sup>23</sup> He said, "Why are you going to him today? It's not the (New) Moon, or Shabbos (when you usually see him)."

She said "All is well," (because she thought it would be better if it happened in secret).

Sefardic communities conclude here. Chabad and Ashkenazic communities continue:

<sup>כב</sup> וַתַּחְבֹּשׁ הָאֶתְוֹן וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־נָעֲרָה נְהַג וּלְךָ  
 אֶל־תַּעֲצֵר־לִי לְרֹכֵב כִּי אִם־אֶמְרָתִי לָךְ: <sup>כג</sup> וַתֵּלֶךְ

<sup>24</sup> She saddled the donkey and said to her lad, "Get going! Don't go slowly because of me, unless I tell you."

<sup>25</sup> She traveled and came to the Godly man at Mount



Carmel. When the Godly man saw her from afar, he said to Geichazi, his servant, "The Shunamite (woman) is here!"<sup>26</sup> Now, please run towards her, and say to her, 'Are you well? Is your husband alright? Is the child well?'

Woman seeks Elisha's help

She said, "Everything is well," (for she wanted to conceal the matter even from Geichazi).

<sup>27</sup> She came to the Godly man, who was on the mountain, and grabbed hold of his feet. Geichazi came over to push her away, but the Godly man said, "Leave her, for her soul is bitter. God has hidden (the problem) from me and has not told it to me."

<sup>28</sup> She said "Was it I who asked for a son from my master? Didn't I say, 'Don't mislead me'?"

<sup>29</sup> He said to Geichazi, "Fasten your belt (so you can travel fast), take my staff in your hand, and go. If you meet someone, do not greet him. If someone greets you, do not reply to him (so as not to delay your mission). You should place my staff on the boy's face (in order to revive him)."

<sup>30</sup> The boy's mother said, "(I swear by the fact that) God lives, and by your life, that I will not leave you alone (if you don't come along)!" So he got up and followed behind her.

<sup>31</sup> Geichazi had gone ahead of them and placed the staff on the boy's face, but there was neither a sound nor a response (because Geichazi had not followed orders, and he had stopped to jest and tell people of his mission). He returned to (Elisha) and informed him, saying, "The boy did not wake up."

Elisha brings child to life

<sup>32</sup> When Elisha arrived at the house, the boy was dead, lying on his bed. <sup>33</sup> He came inside and closed the door behind both of them, and prayed to God. <sup>34</sup> He climbed up (onto the bed) and lay on the child. He placed his mouth on (the boy's) mouth, his eyes on his eyes, his palms on his palms. He spread himself out over him, and the child's flesh became warm.

<sup>35</sup> He went back (down off the bed) and walked backwards and forwards in the house. Then he climbed (back on the bed) and spread himself over (the body, and repeated these movements seven times). The boy sneezed seven times, and then he opened his eyes.

<sup>36</sup> (Elisha) called to Geichazi, and said, "Call the Shunamite woman!" He called her. When she came to him, he said, "Pick up your child!"

<sup>37</sup> She fell down at his feet and prostrated herself. Then she gathered up her son and left.

וּתְבוֹא אֶל-אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים אֶל-הַר הַכְּרִמָּל וַיְהִי כִּרְאוֹת אִישׁ-הָאֱלֹהִים אֹתָהּ מִנֶּגֶד וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-גֵּיחִזִּי נִעְדוּ הִנֵּה הַשְּׁוֹנְמִית הִלְזָה: כו עֲתָה רוֹץ-נָא לְקִרְאתָהּ וְאָמַר-לָהּ הַשְּׁלוֹם לָךְ הַשְּׁלוֹם לְאִישׁךָ הַשְּׁלוֹם לְיֶלֶד וְתֹאמַר שְׁלוֹם: כז וּתָבֹא אֶל-אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים אֶל-הַהָר וּתְחַזֵּק בְּרַגְלָיו וַיֵּזֶשׁ גֵּיחִזִּי לְהִדְפָּה וַיֹּאמֶר אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים הִרְפָּה-לָהּ כִּי-נִפְשָׁה מִרְה-לָהּ וַיְהוּהָ הָעֵלִים מִפְּנֵי וְלֹא הִגִּיד לָהּ: כח וְתֹאמַר הַשְּׂאֵלְתִי בֵּן מֵאֵת אֲדֹנָי הֲלֹא אֲמַרְתִּי לֹא תִשְׁלַח אֹתִי: כט וַיֹּאמֶר לְגֵיחִזִּי חֲנֹךְ מִתְנִיחַ וְקַח מִשְׁעֲנֹתַי בְּיָדְךָ וְלֹךְ כִּי-תִמְצָא אִישׁ לֹא תִבְרַכְנוּ וְכִי-יְבָרְכֶךָ אִישׁ לֹא תִעַנְנוּ וְשִׁמַּתְּ מִשְׁעֲנֹתַי עַל-פְּנֵי הַנְּעֵר: לו וְתֹאמַר אִם הַנְּעֵר חִי-יְהוּהָ וְחִי-נִפְשָׁה אִם-אֲעֻבְדְּ וַיִּקָּם וַיֵּלֶךְ אַחֲרָיָה: לא וּגֵיחִזִּי עָבַר לְפָנֵיהֶם וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת-הַמִּשְׁעֲנֹת עַל-פְּנֵי הַנְּעֵר וַאֲזַן קוֹל וַאֲזַן קָשָׁב וַיֵּשֶׁב לְקִרְאתוֹ וַיִּגְדֹּל לֹא אָמַר לֹא הִקְיִץ הַנְּעֵר: לב וַיָּבֹא אֶל־יִשְׁעַ הַבַּיִתָּה וְהִנֵּה הַנְּעֵר מֵת מְשָׁכָב עַל-מִטָּתוֹ: לד וַיָּבֹא וַיִּסְגֵּר הַדָּלֶת בְּעַד שְׁנֵיהֶם וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל אֶל-יְהוָה: לה וַיַּעַל וַיִּשְׁכַּב עַל-הַיֶּלֶד וַיִּשֶׂם פִּיו עַל-פִּיו וְעֵינָיו עַל-עֵינָיו וְכַפָּיו עַל-כַּפָּיו וְכַפּוֹ כַּוַּי וַיִּגְהַר עָלָיו וַיְחַם בְּשַׁר הַיֶּלֶד: לו וַיֵּשֶׁב וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּבֵית אַחַת הַנְּהָ וְאַחַת הַנְּהָ וַיַּעַל וַיִּגְהַר עָלָיו וַיִּזְרַר הַנְּעֵר עַד-שִׁבְעַ פְּעָמִים וַיִּפְקַח הַנְּעֵר אֶת-עֵינָיו: לז וַיִּקְרָא אֶל-גֵּיחִזִּי וַיֹּאמֶר קְרָא אֶל-הַשְּׁוֹנְמִית הַזֹּאת וַיִּקְרָאָהּ וּתְבוֹא אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר שְׂאֵי בְנֶדְךָ: לח וּתְבֹא וּתְפַל עַל-רַגְלָיו וּתְשִׁתְּחוּ אַרְצָה וּתִשָּׂא אֶת-בְּנָהּ וּתֵצֵא:

**35.** וַיִּפְקַח הַנְּעֵר אֶת עֵינָיו.—The boy opened his eyes. The fact that Elisha ensured the continued life of the child provides a further parallel with our Parsha. The Midrash relates that when Yitzchak was born, King Og commented that he could "crush him with his finger," suggesting

that the child would not survive too long. God replied that, to the contrary, Yitzchak would survive and that it was Og who would be eliminated by Yitzchak's descendants (*Bereishis Rabah* 53:10; *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 331).

🕍 CHAYEI SARAH / חיי שרה 🕍

(Kings I 1:1–31)

א \* וְהַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד זָקֵן בָּא בַּיָּמִים וַיִּכְסְהוּ בַּבְּגָדִים  
וְלֹא יָחַם לוֹ: ב וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ עֲבָדָיו יִבְקָשׁוּ לְאֹדֶנִי  
הַמֶּלֶךְ נַעֲרָה בְּתוּלָה וְעַמֻּדָה לְפָנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ וְתַהֲיֶי-לוֹ  
סִכְנֵת וְשִׁכְבָּה בְּחִיקוֹ וְיָחַם לְאֹדֶנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ: ג וַיִּבְקָשׁוּ  
נַעֲרָה יָפָה בְּכָל גְּבוּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּמְצְאוּ אֶת-אַבִּישָׁג  
הַשּׁוֹנַמִּית וַיָּבִאוּ אֹתָהּ לְמֶלֶךְ: ד וְהַנַּעֲרָה יָפָה  
עַד-מְאֹד וְתַהֲיֶי לְמֶלֶךְ סִכְנֵת וְתַשְׁרֶתְהוּ וְהַמֶּלֶךְ לֹא  
יָדָעָה: ה וְאֹדֶנִיָּה בֶן-חַגִּית מִתְנַשֵּׂא לֵאמֹר אֲנִי  
אֶמְלֹךְ וַיַּעַשׂ לוֹ רֶכֶב וּפָרָשִׁים וְחַמְשִׁים אִישׁ רָעִים  
לְפָנָיו: ו וְלֹא-עָצְבוּ אָבִיו מִיָּמָיו לֵאמֹר מָדוּעַ כָּכָה  
עָשִׂיתָ וְגַם-הוּא טוֹב-תֹּאֵר מְאֹד וְאִתּוֹ יִלְדָה אַחֲרַי  
אֲבִישָׁלוֹם: ז וַיְהִי דְבָרָיו עִם יוֹאָב בֶּן-צְרוּיָה וְעִם  
אֲבִיתָר הַכֹּהֵן וַיַּעֲזְרוּ אַחֲרַי אֹדֶנִיָּה: ח וַעֲדוּק הַכְּהֵן  
וּבְנָיָהוּ בֶן-יְהוֹיָדָע וְנָתַן הַנְּבִיא וְשִׁמְעִי וְרַעִי  
וְהַגְּבוּרִים אֲשֶׁר לְדָוִד לֹא הָיוּ עִם-אֹדֶנִיָּהוּ: ט וַיִּזְבַּח  
אֹדֶנִיָּהוּ עֹזֵן וּבִקְרָא וּמְרִיא עִם אֲבָן הַזֹּחֶלֶת  
אֲשֶׁר-אֵצֶל עֵינַי רִגְלֵי וַיִּקְרָא אֶת-כָּל-אֶחָיו בְּנֵי  
הַמֶּלֶךְ וְלְכָל-אֲנָשֵׁי יְהוּדָה עֲבָדֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ: י וְאֶת-נָתַן  
הַנְּבִיא וּבְנָיָהוּ וְאֶת-הַגְּבוּרִים וְאֶת-שְׁלֹמֹה אֶחָיו לֹא

1:1 King David was old. (The signs of old age were not premature but) came in the right time. They covered him with clothes, but he did not become warm.

David's old age

<sup>2</sup> His servants said to him, "Let a virgin girl be sought for my master the King. Let her stand (ready) before the King and provide warmth for him. She will lie in your bosom, so that my master the King will be warm."

<sup>3</sup> They looked for a beautiful girl throughout the entire territory of Israel. They found Avishag the Shunamite and brought her before the King. <sup>4</sup> The girl was extremely beautiful. She acted as a "warmer" for the King and served him, but the King did not know her (in an intimate way).

<sup>5</sup> (Meanwhile), Adoniyahu, son of (David and) Chagis, was acting haughtily (like a king, as if he were actually) saying, "I will reign." He prepared a chariot and horsemen for himself and fifty men running before him.

Adoniyahu presumes succession

<sup>6</sup> (Since) his father had never reprimanded him, saying "Why have you done this?" (he presumed that he had his father's approval.) He also (thought that he was fit to be king because he) was very good-looking and he was born (right) after Avshalom (who had died, leaving Adoniyahu the eldest). <sup>7</sup> He consulted with Yo'av ben Tzeruyah, and Evyasar the priest. They supported Adoniyahu (because they knew that they were disliked by David). <sup>8</sup> But Tzadok the priest, Benayahu son of Yehoyadah, Nasan the prophet, Shimi, Rayee and David's strongmen (Elazar, Adino and Shama) were not with Adoniyahu, (for they remained loyal to David).

<sup>9</sup> Adoniyahu offered sheep, cattle and fat oxen at the Zocheles stone near (the fountain) Ein-Rogail, and he invited (those that supported him from among) all his

brothers, the King's sons, and all the people of Yehudah, the King's servants. <sup>10</sup> But he did not invite Nasan the prophet, Benayahu and the strongmen, nor his brother Shlomo.

🕍 HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS CHAYEI SARAH

The opening of this *Haftarah*, which describes King David's advanced years, resembles the statement in *Parshas Chayei Sarah* that Avraham had advanced in years (24:1).

The *Haftarah* describes King David's last days before his passing (1-4), during which time his son Adoniyahu begins to celebrate his succession to the monarchy (5-10). Bas-Sheva, Shlomo's mother, is thus advised to go to the King and reiterate his promise that Shlomo would become King (11-14). She does so, and Nasan joins the audience with the King to confirm the reports of Adoniyahu's behavior (15-27). King David responds by instructing that Shlomo should be anointed as King immediately, in his own lifetime (28-31).

The notion that Shlomo was actually anointed as King in the lifetime of King David is somewhat problematic, as it appears to contradict the *Talmud's* statement that God told King David, "The time of your son Shlomo's monarchy has come, but one monarch will not overlap the other, even by a hairsbreadth" (*Shabbos* 30a). We also have the rule that "two kings cannot use the same crown" (*Chulin* 60b).

However, Shlomo's appointment in David's lifetime brings to light the distinctive quality of Davidic sovereignty. In the case of ordinary kings, the monarchy merely represents the prevailing seat of power which comes with the appointment of a king (and not a naturally endowed quality). Since it is only possible for one person to be the final authority, it follows that there can only be one king at any given time, for the term "king" has no implication other than "authority."

Nasan plots with Bas-Sheva <sup>11</sup> Nasan spoke to Bas-Sheva, Shlomo's mother, saying, "Haven't you heard that Adoniyahu, the son of Chagis, has (plans to) become king? Our master David doesn't know (about it). <sup>12</sup> Now, please let me advise you, so that you will save your life and that of your son Shlomo (for Adoniyahu will surely kill you both if he becomes king)."

<sup>13</sup> "Go, and enter before King David, and say to him, 'My master the King! Didn't you swear to your maidservant, saying, "Shlomo your son will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne"? So why has Adoniyahu become king?'"

<sup>14</sup> "Then, while you are still talking there with the King, I will enter after you and confirm your words."

Bas-Sheva pleads with the King <sup>15</sup> Bas-Sheva came to the King, into his bedroom. The King was very old and Avishag the Shunamite was serving the King. <sup>16</sup> Bas-Sheva bowed down and prostrated herself before the King. "What do you want?" the King said.

<sup>17</sup> She said to him, "My master! You swore to your maidservant (in the Name of) God Almighty that 'Shlomo, your son, will reign after me and he will sit on my throne.' <sup>18</sup> But now—look!—Adoniyahu has become King, and you—my master the King—did not know.

<sup>19</sup> (Proof of the matter is that he made a feast where) he sacrificed many cattle, fattened oxen and sheep. He invited all the King's sons, Evyasar the priest and Yo'av the army general, but he did not invite (the heir) Shlomo, your servant. <sup>20</sup> (Don't think it was the people that chose Adoniyahu, for) the eyes of all Israel are upon you, my master the King, to tell them who should sit on the throne of my master the King after him. <sup>21</sup> (However, if you do not do so), when my master the King (passes on and) lies with his fathers, I and my son Shlomo will be deprived (of our lives)."

Nasan enters <sup>22</sup> Then, while she was still talking to the King, Nasan the prophet arrived (in the King's quarters). <sup>24</sup> They announced to the King, saying, "Nasan the prophet is here." He entered the King's presence and he prostrated himself on the ground, on his face.

<sup>24</sup> Nasan said, "My master the King! (Did) you say, 'Adoniyahu should reign after me and he will sit on my throne'? <sup>25</sup> Because today he went down and sacrificed many cattle, fattened oxen and sheep, and he invited all

קרא: <sup>א</sup> ויאמר נתן אל-בת-שבע אם-שלמה לאמר הלא שמעת כי מלך אדניו בן-חגית ואדנינו דוד לא ידע: <sup>ב</sup> ועתה לבי איצחק נא ענה ומלטי את-נפשיך ואת-נפש בנך שלמה: <sup>ג</sup> לבי ובאי | אל-המלך דוד ואמרת אליו הלא-אתה אדני המלך נשבעת לאמתך לאמר כי-שלמה בנך ימלך אחרי והוא ישב על-כסאי ומדוע מלך אדניו: <sup>ד</sup> הנה עורך מדברת שם עם-המלך ואני אבוא אחריך ומלאתי את-דבריך: <sup>ה</sup> ותבא בת-שבע אל-המלך החדרה והמלך זקן מאד ואבישג השונמית משרת את-המלך: <sup>ו</sup> ותקד בת-שבע ותשתחו למלך ויאמר המלך מה-לך: <sup>ז</sup> ותאמר לו אדני אתה נשבעת ביהוה אלהיך לאמתך כי-שלמה בנך ימלך אחרי והוא ישב על-כסאי: <sup>ח</sup> ועתה הנה אדני מלך ועתה אדני המלך לא ידעת: <sup>ט</sup> ויזבח שור ומריא וצאן לרב ויקרא לכל-בני המלך ולאביתר הכהן וליאב שר הצבא ולשלמה עבדך לא קרא: <sup>י</sup> ואתה אדני המלך עיני כל-ישראל עליך להגיד להם מי ישב על-כסא אדני-המלך אחרי: <sup>יא</sup> והיה כשכב אדני-המלך עם-אבתיו והייתי אני ובני שלמה חטאים: <sup>יב</sup> והנה עורנה מדברת עם-המלך ונתן הנביא בא: <sup>יג</sup> ויגידו למלך לאמר הנה נתן הנביא ויבא לפני המלך וישתחו למלך על-אפיו ארצה: <sup>יד</sup> ויאמר נתן אדני המלך אתה אמרת אדניו ימלך אחרי והוא ישב על-כסאי: <sup>טו</sup> כי | ירד היום ויזבח שור ומריא וצאן לרב ויקרא לכל-בני המלך ולשרי הצבא ולאביתר הכהן והנזם אכלים

However, a king from the House of David possesses the rights to the monarchy as an inherent, personal quality. Thus, the concept of kingship could be revealed in two (or more) people at any one time, even though only one of them is the practical, final authority.

Consequently, the anointing of Shlomo in his father's lifetime was a process which catalyzed the fruition of Shlomo's inherent kingly qualities.

The anointing accomplished that Shlomo's ingrained nobility should no longer remain a latent talent.

Therefore, he could now be termed a king (despite the fact that he was not an acting ruler empowered with authority), as the anointing successfully brought out his royal attributes from 'potential' to 'actual' (Likutei Sichos vol. 30, p. 97ff).

וְשֵׁתִים לְפָנָיו וַיֹּאמְרוּ יְחִי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲדֹנָיְהוּ: כו וְלִי  
 אֲנִי-עֹבְדֶיךָ וְלְצֹדֵק הַכֹּהֵן וְלְבָנָיְהוּ בֶן-יְהוֹיָדָע  
 וְלִשְׁלֹמֹה עֹבְדֶיךָ לֹא קָרָא: כז אִם מֵאֵת אֲדֹנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ  
 נָהִיָה הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה וְלֹא הוֹדַעְתָּ אֶת-עֹבְדֶיךָ [ועבדיך כו]  
 מִי יֵשֵׁב עַל-כִּסֵּא אֲדֹנָי-הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲרָיו: כח וַיַּעַן  
 הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד וַיֹּאמֶר קְרְאוּ-לִי לְבַת-שֶׁבַע וּתְבֹא לְפָנָי  
 הַמֶּלֶךְ וְתַעֲמֹד לְפָנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ: כט וַיִּשָּׁבַע הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר  
 חִי-יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר-פָּדָה אֶת-נַפְשִׁי מִכָּל-צָרָה: לו פִּי  
 כְּאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לָךְ בַּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר  
 בֶּן-שְׁלֹמֹה בְנִךְ יִמְלֹךְ אַחֲרָי וְהוּא יֵשֵׁב עַל-כִּסְאִי  
 תַחְתָּי כִּי בֶן אֶעֱשֶׂה הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: לא וְתִקַּד בַּת-שֶׁבַע  
 אֶפְסִים אֶרְצָן וְתִשְׁתַּחוּ לַמֶּלֶךְ וְתֹאמַר יְחִי אֲדֹנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ  
 דָּוִד לְעֹלָם:

the King's sons, the army generals and Euyasar the priest (to what could only be a coronation feast). They are eating and drinking in his presence and they (will surely have) said, '(Long) live King Adoniyahu!' <sup>26</sup> And he did not invite me, Tzadok the priest, Benayahu son of Yehoyadah, nor Shlomo, your servant. <sup>27</sup> If this matter has come from my master the King, (I wonder why) you have not (previously) informed your servant, who should sit on the throne of my master the King after him."

<sup>28</sup> King David replied and said, "Call Bas-Sheva for me." She came before the King and stood before the King. <sup>29</sup> The King took an oath, saying "By the life of God who has delivered my soul from all suffering! <sup>30</sup> Just as I swore to you (in the Name of the) Almighty God of Israel, saying, 'Shlomo, your son, will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne,' so too I will (swear) today (that Shlomo will become King immediately, during my lifetime)!"

<sup>31</sup> Bas-Sheva bowed with her face to the ground and prostrated herself to the King. She said "May my master King David live forever!"

David reaffirms his promise

God's preference for Israel over Eisav

## TOLDOS / תולדות

(Malachi 1:1 – 2:7)

א « מִשָּׂא דְבַר-יְהוָה אֶל-יִשְׂרָאֵל בֶּיַד מַלְאָכָי:  
 ב אֶהְבַּתִּי אֶתְכֶם אָמַר יְהוָה וַאֲמַרְתֶּם בְּמַה אֶהְבַּתָּנוּ  
 ג הֲלוֹא-אֵחָ עֵשָׂו לִיעֶקֶב נָאִם-יְהוָה וְאָהַב אֶת-יעֶקֶב:  
 ד וְאֶת-עֵשָׂו שָׂנְאתִי וְאֲשִׁים אֶת-הָרָיו שְׂמֹמָה וְאֶת-

1:1 The prophecy—the word of God—to Israel, (transmitted) by Malachi (is as follows):

<sup>2</sup> "I loved you," said God. "But if you say, 'In what way did You (show Your) love for us (personally, and not merely due to the merit of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs?) I will reply to you): "Was Eisav not Ya'akov's brother (who shared the same ancestry as Ya'akov)?" said God, "Yet I loved Ya'akov, <sup>3</sup> and I hated Eisav (despite his ancestors). I laid his mountains

desolate, and his inheritance (a home) for the serpents of the desert. (So clearly, when I loved you, it was not only in the merit of your ancestors)."

**31. יְחִי אֲדֹנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד לְעֹלָם.**—May my master David live forever. This declaration represents the eternal power of Davidic monarchy. The *Haftarah* relates the means by which David's monarchy was continued through Shlomo, and it will be perfected through Mashiach, who is a descendant of David and Shlomo (*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Toldos* 5752).

### HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS TOLDOS

The opening of this *Haftarah*, which discusses God's love and preference for Ya'akov over Eisav (1:2-5), acknowledges Ya'akov's rightful claim to the blessings which he received in the *Parsha* (*Toldos* chapter 27).

The *Haftarah* was addressed to the Jewish people by the prophet Malachi, shortly after their return from their Babylonian exile (approx. 520 B.C.E.). Its predominant theme is an admonition for a lack of respect for the Holy Temple and its offerings. The *Haftarah* opens with a statement of God's love for Israel and a promise of downfall and destruction for Israel's hated enemy, Eisav (1:1-5). The prophet then laments Israel's betrayal of God, particularly in the area of sacrificial service (6-10), claiming that Israel honors God less than the idol-worshipping nations (11). Further criticisms include the slandering of the Altar (12), and the offering of low-quality animals to the Holy Temple (13-14). God finally threatens to transform the Priestly blessings into

<sup>4</sup> “If Edom, (Eisav’s descendants that destroyed the Holy Temple), say, ‘We are (now) poor, but we will return and rebuild the desolate places,’ then the God of hosts says: ‘They will build, and I will destroy! (The destruction will be so awesome that) people will call it a wicked place (which clearly merited destruction by God), and (they will be called) a people with whom God is forever angry. <sup>5</sup> (When you return to your territory, with the Redemption,) your eyes will see (the extent of Edom’s destruction), and you will say about the territory of Israel, ‘God is great (for He performs wonders).’”

Israel’s betrayal of God though improper sacrifices

<sup>6</sup> “(I love you for your own merits! You are not merely) a son (who naturally) honors his father or a servant (who naturally honors) his master. ‘And, if I am a father (to you) then where is my (proper) honor? If I am a master, then where is my fear?’ says the God of hosts to you, the priests who disgrace My Name. If you will say, ‘How have we disgraced Your Name?’ <sup>7</sup> (The answer is): You offer on My altar repulsive bread! And (if) you (still) say, ‘How (have our sacrifices) disgraced You?’ (the answer is): ‘By saying that God’s table is repulsive (since blood and fats are offered on it).’ <sup>8</sup> (Furthermore) when you offer a blind animal to be sacrificed (you do) not (see it as) bad! When you offer a lame or sick (animal you) do not (see it) as bad (because the altar is disgusting in your eyes! Try) offering (such an animal) now (as a gift) to your governor! Would he be pleased, or receive you kindly?” says the God of hosts.” <sup>9</sup> “(If you, the priests,) now pray before God that He should be gracious to us, (the Jewish people, will He listen)? This (misfortune) that will occur will occur because of you, (so how can you expect that) He will receive you favorably?” says the God of hosts.

<sup>10</sup> “If only there was (someone) among you to close the doors (of the Temple) so that you do not kindle fire on My altar in vain. (Because) I have no desire for you(r appearances in the Temple),” says the God of hosts, “and I do not desire a gift-offering from your hands.

Israel worse than the nations

<sup>11</sup> For My Name is great among the nations, from the place where the sun rises to the place where it sets. In all places offerings are brought and burnt (by the nations to their gods; but they know that the Primary Cause of all existence is) My Name, (so their) offerings are pure (in their eyes). For My Name is great among the nations,” says the God of Hosts. <sup>12</sup> “But you are profaning it when you say, ‘the table of God is despicable,’ and by saying (that) its food is repulsive.

<sup>13</sup> (When you bring a lean, skinny animal) you say, ‘This is so burdensome!’ (pretending that you are tired from carrying such

נחלתו לתנות מדבר: - כִּי־תֹאמַר אֲדוֹם רִשְׁשָׁנוּ וְנָשׁוּב וְנִבְנֶה חֲרֻבוֹת כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת הַמָּה יִבְנוּ וְאֲנִי אֶהְרֹם וְקִרְאוּ לָהֶם גְּבוּל רִשְׁעָה וְהָעַם אֲשֶׁר־זָעַם יְהוָה עַד־עוֹלָם: ה וְעֵינֵיכֶם תִּרְאֶינָה וְאַתֶּם תֹּאמְרוּ יִגְדַּל יְהוָה מֵעַל לְגְבוּל יִשְׂרָאֵל: ו בֵּן יִכְבֵּד אָב וְעֶבֶד אֲדָנָיו וְאִם־אָב אֲנִי אֵינָה כְבוֹדִי וְאִם־אֲדוֹנִים אֲנִי אֵינָה מוֹרָאִי אָמַר א יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת לָכֶם הַכְּהֻנִּים בּוֹזֵי שְׁמִי וְאַמְרַתֶּם בְּמִהַ בְּזִינוּ אֶת־שְׁמִי: ז מְגִישִׁים עַל־מִזְבְּחִי לָהֶם מִגֹּאֵל וְאַמְרַתֶּם בְּמִה גֹּאֲלֵנוּד בְּאַמְרֵכֶם שְׁלַחַן יְהוָה נִבְזָה הוּא: ח וְכִי־תִשְׁוֹן עוֹר לִזְבַּח אֵין רַע וְכִי תִגִּישׁוּ פֶסֶח וְחֵלֶה אֵין רַע הַקְּרִיבֶהוּ נָא לְפִתְחֵי הַיְרֵעֵד אוּ הִישָׂא פְּנֵיךָ אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת: ט וְעַתָּה חֲלוּ־נָא פְּנֵי־אֵל וַיִּחַנְנוּ מִיַּדְכֶם הֵיטָה זֹאת הִישָׂא מִכֶּם פְּנִים אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת: י מִי גַם־בָּכֶם וַיִּסְגֵּר דְּלָתִים וְלֹא־תֹאִירוּ מִזְבְּחִי חֲנֹם אֵין־לִי חֶפֶץ בָּכֶם אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וּמִנְחָה לֹא־אַרְעָה מִיַּדְכֶם: יא כִּי מִמִּזְרַח־שֶׁמֶשׁ וְעַד־מְבֹאוֹ גְּדוֹל שְׁמִי בְּגוֹיִם וּבְכָל־מְקוֹם מְקַטֵּר מִגִּישׁ לְשָׁמַי וּמִנְחָה מְהוּרָה כִּי־גְדוֹל שְׁמִי בְּגוֹיִם אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת: יב וְאַתֶּם מַחְלִלִים אוֹתוֹ בְּאַמְרֵכֶם שְׁלַחַן אֲדָנִי מִגֹּאֵל הוּא וְנִיבּוֹ נִבְזָה אֲכָלוּ: יג וְאַמְרַתֶּם הִנֵּה מַתְּלָאָה

curses, due to negligence in sacrificial procedure (2:1-3), which has betrayed the true, exalted nature of the priesthood (4-7).

**1:2 יהוה אמר אתכם אמר יהוה**—“I loved you,” said God. Chasidim asked the Alter Rebbe, “Which is greater, love of God or love of the Jewish people?” He replied, “Love of God and love of the Jewish people are engraved together in every Jew’s soul, as the verse states, “I loved you,” said God.’ It follows, then, that love of the Jewish people is greater, because you love the same thing as the One Who loves you” (Hayom Yom, 28 Nisan).

—הָלוֹא אַח עָשׂוּ לִיעֶקֶב וְאַהֲבָ אֶת יַעֲקֹב וְאֵת עֵשׂוֹ שִׁנְאַתִּי 2-3 Was Eisav not Ya’akov’s brother... Yet I loved Ya’akov and I hated Eisav. A true choice between two things can only occur when one entity has no obvious redeeming features over the other. For if one thing is clearly superior, its selection is merely an expression of common sense and not a personal choice. This idea is highlighted by our verse regarding God’s choice of the Jewish people: “Was Eisav not Ya’akov’s brother,” i.e. they were equal, “Yet I loved Ya’akov and I hated Eisav” (Likutei Sichos vol. 4, p. 1309).

והפחתם אותו אמר יהוה עבאות והבאתם גזול  
 ואת הפסח ואת החולה והבאתם את המנחה  
 הארצה אותה מידכם אמר יהוה: - וארוור נוכל  
 ויש בעדרו זכר וגדר וזבת משחת לאדני כי מלך  
 גדול אני אמר יהוה עבאות ושמי נורא בגוים:  
 ב « ועתה אליכם המצוה הזאת הפהנים:  
 ב אם לא תשמעו ואם לא תשימו על לב לתת  
 כבוד לשמי אמר יהוה עבאות ושלחתי בכם  
 את המארה וארותי את ברכותיכם וגם ארותיה  
 כי אינכם שמים על לב: ג הנני גער לכם  
 את הורע וזריתי פרש על פניכם פרש חניכם  
 ונשא אתכם אליו: - וידעתם כי שלחתי אליכם  
 את המצוה הזאת להיות בריתי את-לוי אמר  
 יהוה עבאות: - בריתי | היתה אתו החיים והשלום  
 ואתם לו מורא וייראני ומפני שמי נחת הוא:  
 ד תורת אמת היתה בפיהו ועולה לא נמצא  
 בשפתיו בשלום ובמישור הלך אתי ורבים השיב  
 מעונו: - כי שפתי כהן ישמרו דעת ותורה יבקשו  
 מפיהו כי מלאך יהוה עבאות הוא:

a heavy animal, when really) it could be blown over (with a breath),” says the God of Hosts. “You (also) bring stolen (animals), lame and sick ones, and you bring (them as) gift offerings. Should I accept this from your hands?” says God.

Poor quality of animal offerings

<sup>14</sup> “Cursed is the one who deceives (Me, claiming that he only has funds for a poor offering)! He has in his flock (better) male (animals) and yet he vows and then sacrifices abandoned (animals) to God. For I am a great King,” says the God of hosts, “and My Name is feared among the nations.”

<sup>21</sup> “And now, this commandment (not to accept a poor sacrifice, is given) to you, the priests. <sup>2</sup> If you do not listen, and if you do not take it to heart to honor My name,” says the God of hosts, “then I will release a curse upon you and I will make your (erstwhile) blessings into curses. Indeed, you are already (suffering from being) cursed by Me, for you do not take it to heart (to be careful about My honor). <sup>3</sup> Look! Because of you I will suppress the seeds (so that they will not grow). I will blow dung in your faces (like) the dung of your festival (sacrifices, with which you disgraced Me. Your sin) will cause you to (be disgraced like) this.

Priestly blessings become curses

<sup>4</sup> You should know that I sent you this commandment (of honoring My sacrifices) in order for (you to be rewarded from) My covenant with (Aharon, the head of the tribe of) Levi,” says the God of Hosts. <sup>5</sup> “My covenant was with him (and it brought him) life and peace. I gave these (mitzvos) to him (because of the) fear (in his heart) before Me. He was in awe of My Name. <sup>6</sup> The Torah of truth was (being taught) by his

Special qualities of the priests

mouth, and no wrong was found on his lips. (For the sake of My mitzvos) he walked with Me (guiding others) in peace and in righteousness. (Through his rebukes) he turned many (people) away from (their plans to) sin. <sup>7</sup> (All this applies to every priest) for the lips of a priest (are fit to) guard knowledge, (and it is fitting that people) should seek the Torah from his mouth (that he should teach them). For (a priest) is an emissary of the God of hosts.

## 🕍 VAYEITZEI / ויצא 🕍

(Hosea 11:7 – 14:10)

Chabad and Sefardic communities begin here. Ashkenazic communities begin below, page 384.

יא , ועמי תלואים למשובתי ואל על יקראוהו יחד  
 לא ירומם: ה איך אתנה אפרים אמנה ישראל איך

<sup>11:7</sup> “My people are wavering about (taking the first step in) returning to Me. (Even though the prophets) call to (the people) to rise up (and take the initiative to return to) the One above, (nevertheless) they are united (in that) nobody rises up!”

Reluctance to repent

<sup>8</sup> “(Nevertheless, I still have mercy on you, for) how can I give you, Efrayim, (over to the nations, and) deliver you (into their hands)? How can I let you be (overturned) like Admah, (or) make you (desolate) like Tzevoyim? (Even though I am angry

God's mercy

with you) My heart has turned inside Me (to be kind to you. All) My (attributes of) mercy have been aroused all at once. <sup>9</sup> I will not act with My fierce anger. I will not return to destroy Efrayim, for I am God and not a man (who makes rash decisions. Once again) the holiness (of My presence) will rest among you, and I will not enter a(nother) city (to join the nations instead of you).”

Times of  
Mashiach

<sup>10</sup> “(In the times of Mashiach) they will follow behind God (into their land. Just as animals follow the roar of the lion, their king, so too) He will roar like a lion (and gather them). For He will (arouse their hearts, as if they are being called by a lion’s) roar, and (His) children (the Jewish people) will hurry from the West. <sup>11</sup> They will hurry from Egypt like a bird, and from Ashur like a dove. I will settle them (securely) in their homes,” says God.

Deceit of  
Efrayim

<sup>12:1</sup> (The kingdom of) Efrayim has surrounded Me (pretending to return to Me, but it has been) with lies, (for they are not genuine), and the house of Israel (has treated me) with deceit. But Yehudah is still ruling (the people, and persuading them to be) with God, and he is faithful to (the) holy (God, to carry out His word).

<sup>2</sup> Efrayim is a shepherd (of empty things like) the wind, and pursues the east(erly) wind). All day he (speaks) much deceit, and extortion. They make a treaty with Ashur (to help them), and oil is brought (by them as a bribe) to Egypt, (to unite with Yehuda against the enemy).

<sup>3</sup> (But afterwards, Yehudah too will offend God) and God will have a quarrel with Yehudah. He will remember the (bad) ways of (the children) of Ya’akov, (and) will repay them according to their deeds.

Ya’akov’s  
life

<sup>4</sup> (While Ya’akov, their father was) in the womb he grabbed his brother’s heel, and with strength he fought with (God’s) angel, (the ministering angel of Eisav. <sup>5</sup> When) he defeated the angel and ruled over him, (the angel) cried, and begged (Ya’akov to allow him to leave, saying, “(God) will find us (together again) in Beis-Ail, and will speak with us there (and then I will bless you)—so why is Ya’akov now so weak?)

<sup>6</sup> God, is the (omnipotent) God of (all the) hosts! (Almighty) God is His Name! <sup>7</sup> Turn to your God in peace. (Just) be careful (to be) kind and just, (then you can) constantly trust in your God (that He will grant your wishes).

<sup>8</sup> (But you are like) a merchant (who) has deceitful scales in his hand, who loves to oppress others (rather than acting kindly and justly). <sup>9</sup> Efrayim said, “Surely (the reason that) I have become wealthy (is because) I have found strength for myself (and

אֶתְנַדְּךָ כְּאֶדְמָה אֲשִׁימְךָ כְּצִבְאִים נִהְפַּדְּ עָלַי לְבִי יַחַד  
נִכְמְרוּ נְחוּמִי: ֵ לֹא אֶעֱשֶׂה חֲרוֹן אַפִּי לֹא אָשׁוּב  
לְשַׁחַת אֶפְרַיִם כִּי אֵל אֲנִכִּי וְלֹא אִישׁ בְּקִרְבְּךָ קָדוֹשׁ  
וְלֹא אָבוֹא בְּעִיר: ֶ אַחֲרֵי יְהוָה יִלְכוּ כְּאַרְיֵה יִשְׂאֹג  
בִּי הוּא יִשְׂאֹג וַיַּחֲרִדוּ בְּנֵים מַיִם: ַ יַחֲרִדוּ כְּצִפּוֹר  
מִמְצָרִים וּכְיֹנֵה מֵאַרְץ אַשּׁוּר וְהוֹשִׁבְתִּים  
עַל-בְּתִיתֵהֶם נֶאֱמַר-יְהוָה: ָ יב ֹ סִבְבֵנִי בְכֹחַשׁ  
אֶפְרַיִם וּבְמִרְמָה בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְהוּדָה עַד רֹד  
עַם-אֵל וְעַם-קְדוֹשִׁים נֶאֱמָן: ֹ אֶפְרַיִם רַעְהָ רוּחַ  
וְרִדָּה קָדִים פְּלִ-הַיּוֹם פְּנוּב וְשׂוֹד יִרְבֶּה וּבְרִית  
עַם-אֲשּׁוּר יִכְרְתוּ וְשָׁמֶן לְמִצְרַיִם יוּבַל: ֺ וְרִיב  
לְיְהוָה עַם-יְהוּדָה וְלִפְקֹד עַל-יַעֲקֹב כְּדִרְכּוֹ  
כְּמַעֲלָלָיו יָשִׁיב לוֹ: ֻ בְּבִטָּן עָקַב אֶת-אֲחִיו וּבְאוּנוֹ  
שָׁרָה אֶת-אֱלֹהִים: ֻ וַיִּשָּׂר אֶל-מְלֶאכֶד וַיִּכַּל בָּכָה  
וַיִּתְחַנְּנוּ לוֹ בֵּית-אֵל יִמְצְאוּנוּ וְשָׁם יִדְבַר עִפְנוֹ:  
ֿ וַיְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הַעֲבָאוֹת יְהוָה זָכְרוּ: ֿ וְאַתָּה בְּאַלְהֵיךָ  
תָּשׁוּב חֶסֶד וּמִשְׁפָּט שְׁמֹר וּקְנֵה אֶל-אֱלֹהֵיךָ תָּמִיד:  
ֿ כִּנְעַן בִּידוֹ מֵאוּנֵי מִרְמָה לַעֲשֹׂק אָהֵב: ֿ וַיֹּאמֶר

## HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS VAYEITZEI

This *Haftarah* describes the sins of “Efrayim,” the northern tribes of the land of Israel (among whom Hoshea lived), comparing the sins to events in Ya’akov’s life. Most notably, the *Haftarah* mentions Ya’akov’s flight to Aram and life there (12:13), which is chronicled in the course of *Parshas Vayitzei*.

The *Haftarah* opens with rebuke, that the Jewish people are reluctant to repent for their sins; nevertheless, they will not be abandoned by God (11:7-9). After pausing to touch upon Hoshea’s vision of the times of Mashiach (10-11), the prophet returns to the mode of rebuke, criticizing the current deceit of Efrayim (12:1-2) and the future deceit of Yehudah (3). Ya’akov’s story is briefly retold (4-5), and his descendants

are begged to return to God (6-7). This is followed by further accusations of deceit (8-9), despite constant Divine assistance (10-12), further historical references to Ya’akov’s life and the Exodus from Egypt (13-14), and repeated promises of retribution (15).

The *Haftarah* then turns to discuss the sin of Yaravam, the idol worship he incited, and the subsequent punishments (13:1-5). The message of guilt and doom is reiterated more vividly and forcefully (13:6-14:1).

Hoshea then makes an impassioned plea for repentance and sincere confession (14:2-4), with the promise of subsequent Divine pardon and love (5-9), urging the people to heed these words of wisdom (10).

**12:8** כִּנְעַן בִּידוֹ מֵאוּנֵי מִרְמָה—(You are like) a merchant (who) has deceitful scales in his hand. The “deceitful merchant” is an analogy for

אֲפָרִים אֶדָּ עֲשֵׂרְתִי מִצָּאֵתִי אֲוֹן לִי כֹל־יִגְעֵי לֹא  
 יִמְצְאוּ־לִי עֵינֹן אֲשֶׁר־חִטָּא: , וְאֲנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ  
 מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם עַד אֲוִשִׁיבְךָ בְּאֶהָלִים בְּיַמֵּי מוֹעֵד:  
 « וְדַבַּרְתִּי עַל־הַנְּבִיאִים וְאֲנֹכִי חֲזוֹן הַרְבִּיתִי וּבְיַד  
 הַנְּבִיאִים אֲדַמָּה: » אִם־גִּלְעָד אֲוֹן אֶדְ־שׂוּא הָיוּ  
 בְּגִלְגָל שׂוּרִים זָבְחוּ גַם מִזְבְּחֹתָם כְּגֹלִים עַל  
 תְּלַמֵּי שָׂדֵי:

they sacrificed cattle (to idols). Their altars (for idol worship) are also as numerous as mounds in the furrows of the field.

Ashkenazic communities begin here. Chabad communities continue:

« וַיִּבְרַח יַעֲקֹב שָׂדֵה אַרָם וַיַּעֲבֹד יִשְׂרָאֵל  
 בְּאִשָּׁה וּבְאִשָּׁה שָׂמֵר: » וּבְנִבְיָא הַעֲלָה יְהוָה אֶת־  
 יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם וּבְנִבְיָא נִשְׁמֵר:

Chabad communities conclude here. Ashkenazic communities continue:

« הַכְּעִים אֲפָרִים תִּמְרוּרִים וְדָמָיו עָלָיו יִשּׁוּשׁ  
 וְחִרְפָּתוֹ יִשְׁיב לוֹ אֲדָנָיו: » יְג « כְּדַבֵּר אֲפָרִים רָתַת  
 נִשְׂאָה הוּא בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֵּאשֶׁם בַּבַּעַל וַיָּמָת: » וְעַתָּה |  
 יוֹסֵפוֹ לַחֲטָא וַיַּעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם מִסֶּכֶה מִכֶּסֶפֶם כְּתַבּוּנָם  
 עֲצָבִים מַעֲשֵׂה חֲרָשִׁים כָּלָה לָהֶם הֵם אֲמָרִים זָבְחֵי  
 אֲדָם עֲגֹלִים יִשְׁקוּן: » לָזֶן יְהִיוּ כַּעֲנֹן־בְּקָר וּכְטָל  
 מִשְׁכָּבִים הַלֵּךְ כְּמִן יִסְעַר מִגֶּרֶן וּכְעֵשָׂן מֵאֲרָבָה:  
 « וְאֲנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וְאֱלֹהִים זִוְלָתִי  
 לֹא תִדְעַ וּמוֹשִׁיעַ אֵין בְּלָתִי: » אֲנִי יַדְעִתִּיךָ בַּמִּדְבָּר  
 בְּאֶרֶץ תְּלַאֲבוֹת:

early like the dew; like chaff blown away from the threshing floor, like smoke from the chimney. <sup>4</sup>(They deserve this punishment, because) I have been God your God since (I took you out of) the land of Egypt (and you accepted me as you God). Do not consider any other than Me to be God, (for) I am the only Redeemer. <sup>5</sup> I took care of you in the wilderness, in a thirsty land (so you deserve destruction for abandoning Me).

it is not from God. Furthermore the Almighty) will not find in all my (business dealings and) efforts any sinful wrongdoings (for God isn't aware)."

<sup>10</sup> But am I (not) God, your God! Since (the time of your redemption from) the land of Egypt (I have looked after you. At a future time) I will again settle you in tents, as in those days. <sup>11</sup> I have spoken (about you) to the prophets and gave (them) many visions. I have given parables through the prophets (so you should understand them and be satisfied that I am carefully looking, and taking care of you). <sup>12</sup> If a misfortune befell Gilad it was (not by chance, but) because they were false. In Gilgal

<sup>13</sup> Ya'akov fled to the field of Aram. Yisra'el worked (there) for a wife, and for a wife he tended (sheep, and left a wealthy man through My blessings). <sup>14</sup> By means of a prophet God brought Israel up from Egypt, and through a prophet they were guarded (on the way).

Ya'akov's flight to Aram

<sup>15</sup> Efrayim bitterly angered (God with his evil acts. Revenge for) his (acts of) bloodshed will reach him and be upon him. His Master will repay him for his act of disgrace (of worshipping idols).

<sup>13:1</sup> When (Yaravam, a descendent of) Efrayim, spoke (strong words) with trembling (to rebuke King Shlomo), he was exalted in Israel (by becoming their King). But (later,) when he was guilty (of worshipping the deity) Ba'al, he died. <sup>2</sup> Now (this generation) sinned further. (In addition to Yaravam's golden calf, every person has) made for themselves molten images (in their own houses)—cast images from their own silver, of their own design, idols all made by craftsmen. (Because) they say, "one who kisses the calf (is as if he brought) a human sacrifice!" (Everybody wanted their own idol at home so they could kiss it frequently.)

<sup>3</sup> Therefore, they will be (destroyed) like the morning cloud (which departs swiftly), and they will disappear

Further rebuke

the soul how it is found below in this world, encloded in a body. "Deceitful," because the natural tendency of the body is to do evil; but nevertheless the soul is a "merchant," who intends to profit from this bodily "investment."

For while the soul did enjoy an intense love of God while above in heaven, its love will ultimately be strengthened by withstanding the challenges that it faces in this world (Torah Ohr, Vayeishev 26c).



Sefardic communities conclude here. Ashkenazic communities continue:

Israel's self-satisfaction and sins

<sup>6</sup> When they came to pasture (in the Land of Israel), they were content. When they were content, they became arrogant. This is why they forgot Me. <sup>7</sup> (Therefore) I have become like a lion to them, like a leopard lurking by the road (for its prey). <sup>8</sup> I confront them like a killer bear and tear (them open right down to) their hearts hidden (below the chest. When I find them) I devour them there like an awesome lion, rupture them (like) the beasts of the field. <sup>9</sup> Israel! You harmed yourself (by ignoring Me when) I was your Helper. <sup>10</sup> (I am still here but) where is your (mortal) king now? Let him come and save you in all your cities! And (where are) your rulers of whom you said, "Give us a king and ministers!" <sup>11</sup> In My anger I gave you a king, but I took him away in My wrath (because your request was not appropriate).

<sup>12</sup> (I have not forgotten) Efrayim's sin! (It is) is bound up (well); his transgression is stored away. <sup>13</sup> The pains of a woman in labor will come upon him. He is an unwise son, as otherwise he would not have delayed a moment in the womb (for he should have realized that his punishment was soon to come). <sup>14</sup> I would have redeemed him from She'ol, I would have delivered him from death. (But now,) I will utter death upon you; I will decree She'ol upon you. Reconciliation will be hidden from my eyes.

<sup>15</sup> (Originally, Efrayim) bore fruit among (his) brothers (and was greater than them. But now he has sinned with the calves) God will cause an eastern wind to come from the desert so that (Efrayim's) fountain will be dried up, and his wellspring parched. It will render the treasures of whatever is precious as plunder. <sup>14:1</sup> Let Shomron be annihilated, for she has rebelled against her God. They will fall by the sword. Their infants will be split into pieces and their pregnant women ripped open.

Call to repentance

<sup>2</sup> Israel, return to God your God, for you have stumbled on account of your sins. <sup>3</sup> (You do not need to take sacrifices. Just) take words (of confession) with you and return to God. Say to Him: "Lift away all sin and accept (our promises for) good (behavior in the future). Let (the confession) of our lips be in place of (the sacrificing of) bullocks.

<sup>4</sup> We will no longer (ask) to be saved by Assyria, and we will not (put our trust in) riding (powerful) horses (into battle). We will never again call the (idol) made by our hands, 'our god,' because (we know that) the orphan finds compassion through You (alone)." <sup>5</sup> Then (after they confess) I will forgive them for their rebelliousness. I will love them deeply, because My anger will have turned away from them. <sup>6</sup> (My love) for Israel will be (perpetual) like dew. He will blossom like a rose, and his roots will spread like (the roots of a cedar from) Lebanon. <sup>7</sup> His young leaves will spread out, he will be beautiful like an olive tree, and he will have the aroma of Lebanon.

<sup>8</sup> Those who sat in His shade will be peaceful. They will be peacefully self-sufficient like grain (sustains life), and they will blossom like the vine. Their fame will be like that of the wine of Lebanon. <sup>9</sup> (When) Efrayim asks, "What do I need idolaters

בְּמַרְעֵיתָם וַיִּשְׁפְּעוּ וַיִּשְׁבְּעוּ וַיִּרְם לָבָם עַל-בֶּן  
 שְׂכֵחוּנִי: וַאֲהִי לָהֶם כְּמוֹ-שֹׁחַל כְּנֹמֵר עַל-דֶּרֶךְ  
 אֲשׁוּר: ה אֲפַגְּשֶׁם בְּדָב שֹׁחַל וְאֶקְרַע סָגוּר לָבָם  
 וְאֶכְלֶם שֵׁם כָּל־בִּיא חֵית הַשָּׂדֶה תִּבְקַעֶם:  
 ט שִׁחַתְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי-בִי בַעֲזוּרְךָ: אֲהִי מַלְכְּךָ אֲפֹאֵ  
 וַיִּשְׁעֶיךָ בְּכָל-עֲרִיךָ וְשִׁפְטֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר אִמְרַת תְּנָה-  
 לִי מֶלֶךְ וְשָׂרִים: ׀ אֶתֶּן-לָהּ מֶלֶךְ בְּאִפִּי וְאֶקַּח  
 בְּעִבְרַתִּי: י צָרוּר עֵינָן אֲפָרִים צְפוּנָה חֲטָאתוֹ:  
 יא חֲבִלִי יוֹלְדָה יִבְאוּ לוֹ הוּא-בֶן לֹא חָכֵם כִּי-עַת  
 לֹא-יַעֲמֹד בְּמִשְׁפַּר בָּנִים: יב מִיָּד שְׂאוֹל אֲפָדֶם  
 מִמּוֹת אֲנֹאֲלֶם אֲהִי דְבַרְיֶךָ מוֹת אֲהִי קָטְבְּךָ  
 שְׂאוֹל גָּחַם יִסְתֵּר מֵעֵינַי: יג כִּי הוּא בֵּין אֲהִים  
 יִפְרִיא יִבּוֹא קָדִים רוּחַ יְהוָה מִמִּדְבָּר עֲלֶיהָ וַיְבוֹשׁ  
 מְקוּרוֹ וַיִּחַרֵּב מֵעֵינָו הוּא יִשְׁסֶה אוֹצֵר כָּל-כְּלִי  
 חֲמֹדָה: יד ׀ תֵּאֱשֶׁם שְׁמֵרוֹן כִּי מָרַתָּה בְּאֱלֹהֶיהָ  
 בַּחֲרֵב יִפְלוּ עֲלֵיהֶם יִרְפְּשׂוּ וְהִרְיוּתִיו יִבְקַעֲוּ:  
 טו שׁוּבָה יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כִּי כִשְׁלַת  
 בַּעֲזוּרְךָ: ז קָחוּ עִמָּכֶם דְּבָרִים וְשׁוּבוּ אֶל-יְהוָה אֱמֶרוּ  
 אֵלָיו כָּל-תַּשְׂא עֵוֹן וְקַח-טוֹב וְנִשְׁלַמָּה פְרִים  
 שִׁפְתֵינוּ: ח אֲשׁוּר ׀ לֹא יוֹשִׁיעֵנו עַל-סוֹס לֹא נִרְכָּב  
 וְלֹא-נֶאֱמַר עוֹד אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְמַעֲשֵׂה יַדֵינוּ אֲשֶׁר-בְּךָ  
 יִרְחַם יְתוֹם: ט אֲרַפֵּא מְשׁוּבֹתֶם אֲהַבֶּם נִדְבָה כִּי שָׁב  
 אִפִּי מִמֶּנּוּ: י אֲהִיהָ כִּטֹּל לְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִפְרַח כִּשְׁוֹשְׁנָה  
 וַיֵּךְ שָׂרְשָׁיו כְּלִבְנוֹן: יא יִלְכוּ יוֹנְקוֹתֶיו וַיְהִי כְּזֵית הוֹדוֹ  
 וְרֵיחַ לוֹ כְּלִבְנוֹן: יב יִשְׁבוּ יִשְׁבֵי בְּצֵלוֹ יִתִּיו דָּגָן וַיִּפְרְחוּ  
 כְּגִפְן וְכָרוּ כִּיִּין לְבָנוֹן: יג אֲפָרִים מֵה-לִי עוֹד  
 לְעַצְבִּים אֲנִי עֲנִיתִי וְאֲשׁוּרֹנִי אֲנִי כְּבָרוּשׁ רַעֲזָן מִמֶּנִּי

פְּרִידָה נִמְצָא: מִי חָכֵם וַיִּבֶן אֱלֹהִים נִבּוֹן וַיִּדְעֵם  
 כִּי־יִשְׁרָיִם דְּרָכָי יִהְיֶה וְצַדִּיקִים יִלְכוּ בָּם וּפְשָׁעִים  
 יִכָּשְׁלוּ בָּם:

for anymore?” I will answer (all his requests) and look over (and supervise his needs). I (will attend to him) like a fresh cypress tree (which bends its head over its roots). The fruit of your (success) comes from Me.

<sup>10</sup> Whoever is wise will understand these (words). The discerning will recognize them. For the ways of God are

straight and the righteous will walk in them, but the wicked will stumble in them.

🌀 VAYISHLACH / וישלח 🌀

(Obadiah 1:1 – 21)

All Chabad, Sefardic and most Ashkenazic communities read the following *Haftarah*.

[Some Ashkenazic communities read Hosea 11:7-12:12, printed above as *Haftarah* for *Vayeitzei* — page 382.]

א \* תִּזוֹן עֲבַדְיָה כְּהֵאמֵר אֲדַנִּי יְהוָה לְאֲדוֹם  
 שְׂמוּעָה שָׁמַעְנוּ מֵאֵת יְהוָה וְצִיר בְּגוֹיִם שָׁלַח קוֹמוּ  
 וְנִקְוָמָה עֲלֶיהָ לְמִלְחָמָה: ה הִנֵּה קָטַן נְתַתִּיד בְּגוֹיִם  
 בְּנוֹי אַתָּה מְאֹד: ו זְרוֹן לְבָבְךָ הַשִּׂיֵּאֵף שְׂכַנִּי  
 בְּחַגְגֵי־סֵלַע מְרוֹם שְׁבִתּוֹ אֵמַר בְּלִבּוֹ מִי יוֹרְהֵנִי  
 אֶרְצֵ: ז אִם־תִּגְבֶּיָה בְּנִשְׁרָ וְאִם־בֵּין כּוֹכָבִים שִׁים  
 קָנַדְתָּ מִשָּׁם אֹרִיךְ נֶאֱמַר יְהוָה: ח אִם־נִגְבִּים בָּאוּ־לְךָ  
 אִם־שׂוֹדְדֵי לִילָה אֵיךְ נִדְמִיתָה הֲלוֹא יִגְבּוּ הַיָּם  
 אִם־בְּעָרִים בָּאוּ לְךָ הֲלוֹא יִשְׂאִירוּ עֲלֵיךְ: ט אֵיךְ  
 נִחַפְּשׂוּ עֵשׂוֹ נִבְעוּ מִצִּפְּנָיו: י עַד־הַגְּבוּל שְׁלַחוּךָ כָּל  
 אֲנָשֵׁי בְרִיתְךָ הַשִּׂיֵּאֵף יִכְלּוּ לְךָ אֲנָשֵׁי שְׁלֹמֶךָ לְחִמּוֹךָ

<sup>1:1</sup> The vision of Ovadiah. This is what Almighty God said about Edom: We (the prophets) have heard a message from God, and a messenger has been sent among the nations, (saying): “Get up! Let’s wage war against her!”

The punishment of Edom

<sup>2</sup> “Look, (initially) I made you small among the nations (and) you were greatly despised. <sup>3</sup> (But now that your kingdom is great), the wickedness of your heart has enticed you (to be overly proud). You (are like one) who dwell(s) in the (sheltered) clefts of a rock, (as secure as one) whose dwelling is lofty, who says to himself: ‘Who can (lower me from my lofty position, and) bring me down towards earth?’ <sup>4</sup> (But even) if you lift (yourself) high like an eagle, and (even) if you place your nest between the stars, I will bring you down from there (to be conquered by the nations)!” says God.

<sup>5</sup> “If thieves came upon you, or robbers at night, (they would not totally clean you out, so) how have you been (totally) wiped out? Don’t they only steal what they require? If grape-gatherers came upon you, do they not

(at least) leave some gleanings? (Yet you, Edom, will be totally wiped out).”

<sup>6</sup> “How have (the houses of) Eisav been searched (and all their belongings removed? How) have his hidden places been sought out? <sup>7</sup> All your allies accompanied you (only) to the border (but then turned back, and left you to fight alone). Those who are at peace with you induced you (to go to war) and prevailed over you. Those who eat) your bread have (schemed

No help from her allies

🌀 HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS VAYISHLACH

This *Haftarah* speaks about the revenge of the nation of Edom, who are descendants of Eisav, concluding the national conflict between Israel and Edom which has its beginnings in the *Parsha*.

Ovadiah, the prophet of Edom’s downfall, was himself an Edomite convert, an irony which led the *Talmud* to remark, “From the forest itself, comes the handle of the axe which fells it” (*Sanhedrin* 39b).

The vision of Ovadiah depicts, perhaps, the most profound image of Divine awareness found in all the books of the *Tanach*, where pure

monotheism is accepted not only by the Jewish people, but by all the nations of the world (see v. 21). It is fitting, therefore, that these words were said by a *gentile* convert. It has even been suggested that the completion of Ovadiah’s prophecies in one single chapter—a quality which is not duplicated in any other book of the Bible—underscores the theme of oneness and unity which is the subject of his vision (*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayishlach* 5751).

The *Haftarah* opens with an invitation to the nations to go to war against Edom (1), as a punishment for her arrogance (2-4), promising total destruction with no help from her allies (5-7).

against you, and have thereby) made a wound in your place. (Edom) has no understanding (to realize that this is happening to him).

Image of destruction  
8 Surely, on that day (when the punishment will arrive),” says God, “I will cause the wise men from Edom and wisdom from the mountain of Eisav to perish, (for they will not have the tactics at hand to save their lives).”<sup>9</sup> And you who live in the south, (since you too are from Edom), your mighty men will be broken, so that the slaughter will wipe out every last man from the mountain of Eisav.”

Edom's guilt  
10 Because you oppressed your brother Ya'akov, you will be covered in shame, and you will be cut off forever.

11 (Yes, you oppressed your brother) when you stood aside on the day that strangers confiscated his possessions, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots over (dividing) Jerusalem (between themselves). You too are like one of them (since you did nothing to help).

12 You should not have looked on at your brother's anguish), on the day of his estrangement (from his land), and (all the more so) you should not have rejoiced at the Children of Yehudah when they were destroyed. Nor should you have spoken proudly on the day of his distress (and since you did these things, I consider them acts of oppression against your brother).

13 You should not have entered the gates of My people (to conquer their lands) on the day of their calamity (when the Temple was destroyed). Nor should you have gazed at his misfortune on the day of his downfall. You should not have stretched (your hand) out over his possessions (and looted them) on the day of his calamity. 14 You should not have stood at the dispersion to cut off his refugees, and you should not have arrested his survivors (throughout) the day(s) of his distress. 15 Because (you should have realized that) the day of God's reckoning) on all the nations is near. As you have done, so will be done to you. Your recompense will come back on your head.

Israel to inherit the nations  
16 For just as you (Yehudah) have drunk on My Holy Mount, so too all the nations will constantly drink (from the cup of turmoil). They will drink and become confounded, and they will be (destroyed) as if they never were. 17 But on the Mount of Tziyon there will (still) be a remnant, and it will be holy. The House of Ya'akov will inherit those (nations) who inherited them (previously).

18 The House of Ya'akov will be a (consuming) fire, the House of Yosef a (consuming) flame, and the House of Eisav will be (like) straw. They will set them alight and consume them, and there will be no survivors from the House of Eisav—for God has spoken. 19 They will inherit the South, the Mountain of Eisav, and the lowlands, the (land of the) Philistines. And they will inherit the field of Efrayim and the field of Shomron. Binyamin (will inherit) the Land of Gilad.

יְשִׁימוּ מְזוֹר תַּחְתִּיק אֵין תְּבוּנָה בּוֹ: הַ הַלּוֹא בַיּוֹם  
הַהוּא נָאִם יְהוָה וְהָאֲבֹדְתֵי חַכְמִים מֵאֲדוֹם וּתְבוּנָה  
מִהַר עֲשׂוֹ: בַּ וְחַתּוֹ גְּבוּרֵיהֶ תִּימֵן לְמַעַן יִכְרַת־אִישׁ  
מִהַר עֲשׂוֹ מִקְּמָל: מִחַמַּס אֲחִיד יִעֲקֹב תִּכְסֶּה בּוֹשָׁה  
וְנִכְרַת לְעוֹלָם: כַּ בַּיּוֹם עֲמֻדָה מִנְּגֵד בַּיּוֹם שְׂבוֹת  
זָרִים חִילוֹ וְנִכְרָים בָּאוּ שְׁעָרָיו וְשַׁעְרוֹ כַּוְּ וְעַל־יְרוּשָׁלַם  
יָדוּ גּוֹרֵל גַּם־אֶתָּה כְּאֶחָד מֵהֶם: יב וְאֶל־תִּרְאֵ  
בַיּוֹם־אֲחִיד בַּיּוֹם נִכְרוּ וְאֶל־תִּשְׂמַח לְבַנְי־יְהוּדָה  
בַּיּוֹם אֲבֹדָם וְאֶל־תִּגְדֹּל פִּיד בַּיּוֹם צָרָה: יג אֶל־תִּבּוֹא  
בְּשַׁעַר־עַמִּי בַיּוֹם אִידָם אֶל־תִּרְאֵ גַם־אֶתָּה בְּרַעְתּוֹ  
בַּיּוֹם אִידוֹ וְאֶל־תִּשְׁלַחְנָה בְּחִילוֹ בַּיּוֹם אִידוֹ:  
יד וְאֶל־תִּעַמֹּד עַל־הַפָּרֶק לְהִכְרִית אֶת־פְּלִיטָיו  
וְאֶל־תִּסְגֹּר שְׁרִידָיו בַּיּוֹם צָרָה: טו כִּי־קָרוֹב  
יוֹם־יְהוָה עַל־כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם כַּאֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂיתָ יַעֲשֶׂה לְךָ  
גְּמֻלָּה יָשׁוּב בְּרֹאשֶׁךָ: טז כִּי כַּאֲשֶׁר שְׁתִּיתָ עַל־הַר  
קָדְשִׁי יִשְׁתּוּ כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם תָּמִיד וְשָׁתוּ וְלָעוּ וְהָיוּ כְּלוֹא  
הָיוּ: יז וּבְהַר צִיּוֹן תִּהְיֶה פְּלִיטָה וְהָיָה קֹדֶשׁ וּרְשׁוֹ  
בַּיִת יִעֲקֹב אֶת מוֹרְשֵׁיהֶם: יח וְהָיָה בַּיִת־יַעֲקֹב אִשׁ  
וּבַיִת יוֹסֵף לְהִזְבֵּה וּבַיִת עֲשׂוֹ לְקֶשׁ וְדָלְקוּ בָהֶם  
וְאָכְלוּם וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה שְׂרִיד לְבַיִת עֲשׂוֹ כִּי יְהוָה דָּבַר:  
יט וּרְשׁוֹ הַנֶּגֶב אֶת־הַר עֲשׂוֹ וְהִשְׁפִּילָה אֶת־פְּלִשְׁתִּים

A brief image of the destruction is then painted (8-9), which is parenthetically interrupted to attribute blame to Edom for persecuting the Jewish people and rejoicing at their suffering (10-15), before the narrative of doom and destruction concludes (16-18). The *Haftarah* ends with a description of how Edom's lands will be possessed and settled through the judgment of King Mashiach (19-21).

18. וְהָיָה בַּיִת יַעֲקֹב אִשׁ...וּבַיִת עֲשׂוֹ לְקֶשׁ—The House of Ya'akov will be a (consuming) fire...and the House of Eisav will be (like) straw. If the prophet wished to describe the utter annihilation of the wicked nations (“Eisav”), why did he use the analogy of “straw,” a substance of some value, rather than “burnt ashes,” which remain *after* the straw is burned and have no value at all? This point teaches us that the wicked

וירשו את־שדה אפרים ואת שדה שמרון ובנימן  
את־הגלעד: ונגלת החלה־הזה לבני ישראל  
אשר־בנענים עד־צרפת ונגלת ירושלם אשר  
בספרד ירשו את ערי הנגב: <sup>כא</sup> ועלו מושעים בהר  
ציון לשפט את־הר עשו והיתה ליהוה המלוכה:

<sup>20</sup> The exiled army of the Children of Israel, (who lived) with the Canaanites until Tzorfas, and the exiles of Yerushalayim until Seforad, will inherit the cities of the south (i.e. Edom).<sup>21</sup> And (when Mashiach and his ministers) the saviors of Mount Tziyon, will ascend Mount Se'ir to judge (the children of Eisav for all their wrongdoings to Israel), God will be King—all nations will recognize His sole authority.)

The nations in the times of Mashiach

## VAYEISHEV / וישב

(Amos 2:6 – 3:8)

If Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev coincides with Chanukah, the Haftarah of Chanukah (I) is read, on page 398.

ב, כה אמר יהוה על־שלשה פשעי ישראל  
ועל־ארבעה לא אשיבנו על־מכרם בכסף צדיק  
ואביון בעבור נעלים: השאפים על־עפר־ארץ  
בראש דלים ודרך ענוים יטו ואיש ואביו ילכו  
אל־הנערה למען חלל את־שם קדשי: <sup>ה</sup> ועל־  
בגדים חבלים יטו אצל כל־מוזבח ויין  
ענושים ישתו בית אלהיהם: <sup>ו</sup> ואנכי השמדתי  
את־האמרי מפניהם אשר בנבה ארזים נבהו וחסן  
הוא כאלונים ואשמיד פרו מבעל ושרשוי מתחת:  
ואנכי העליתי אתכם מארץ מצרים ואולד אתכם  
במדבר ארבעים שנה לרשת את־ארץ האמרי:

<sup>2:6</sup> This is what God said: “For (the) three sins (I could forgive) Israel, but for four I will not forgive, because they (perverted justice and) traded (the fair judgment of) a righteous man for (bribes of) silver, and (cheat) the poor for a (mere) pair of shoes. <sup>7</sup> (These corrupt judges) intend that the dust of the earth be (thrust) upon the heads of the poor (by their guards, if they fail to heed the judges’ words). They cause the humble people to divert their route (from the main roads, to avoid the guards). Father and son will go together (unashamedly) to (defile) an (engaged) young woman (as if they were going) specifically to desecrate My Holy Name. <sup>8</sup> The (corrupt judges) recline beside every altar (of idolatry) on garments taken as security (from poor people that they judged unfairly), and drink the wine (purchased from extorting their) condemned (victims) in the house of their god.”

The corrupt judicial system

not know Me, such as) the Amorites, who were as tall as cedars and as strong as trees. I destroyed (them completely): their fruit from above and their roots from below.”

<sup>10</sup> “But (you know Me, because) I brought you up from the Land of Egypt and led you through the wilderness for forty years

nations will not be eliminated after the redemption, but rather, they will become useful and valuable allies. Only the evil within them will be eradicated (Sichas Yud Tes Kislev 5743, par. 32).

21. ועלו מושעים בהר עשו והיתה ליהוה המלוכה.—  
And the saviors of Mount Tziyon will ascend Mount Se'ir to judge, and God will be King. The first half of this verse (“And the saviors of Mount Tziyon will ascend Mount Se'ir to judge”) refers to the period described by Rambam as “fighting the wars of God” (Laws of Kings 11:4), i.e. when Mashiach is devoted to subduing the evil still found in the world, and coercing its inhabitants to live righteously. The verse thus compares Mashiach’s role to that of “judge,” who issues rulings against the will of the litigants. Later, however, a second phase of the Messianic process will evolve, during which time the forces that were previously antagonistic to Judaism will dissolve, and furthermore, they will be transformed to good (“and God will be King.”) This is the time when Mashiach will “build the

Holy Temple...gather the dispersed ones of Israel...and rectify the entire world to serve God together” (ibid; Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayishlach 5743).

### HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS VAYEISHEV

This Haftarah alludes to the sale of Yosef, who was sold for silver by his brothers (v. 6; see Zohar Chadash, beginning of Parshas Vayeishev). The Haftarah is a harsh rebuke by the prophet Amos for the sins of the Jewish people during the reign of King Yarovam II (8th century B.C.E).

After opening with a forceful criticism of the corrupt judicial system (2:6-8), the Haftarah muses over God’s kindness to Israel from the times of the Exodus, lamenting how God’s gift of righteous prophets and Nazirites was abused (9-11). This is followed by a startling promise of terror, from which even the most mighty will flee (13-16).

God always sends prophets (and provided all your needs so you could come and possess the Land of the Emorites. <sup>11</sup> (Throughout the generations,) I raised prophets from among your sons (so that My Divine Presence should dwell among you) and (I inspired many) Nazirites from among your young men. Would you, Israel, deny this?" says God. <sup>12</sup> "But you persuaded the Nazirites to drink wine and commanded the prophets, 'Do not prophesize.'

Punishment looms <sup>13</sup> "Watch, I will (surely) afflict you, (who were ungrateful to Me! You will not escape Me for I will afflict you) in your (own) places, as a full load of sheaves (weighs down and) afflicts a wagon. <sup>14</sup> The swift will not escape (because the enemy will be everywhere). The strong will not muster his strength (to win a war), and the warrior will not save his life. <sup>15</sup> The archer will not stand his ground (for he will flee out of fear. Even) the lightfooted will not escape, and the horse rider will not save his life (by fleeing). <sup>16</sup> On that day, even the most courageous of the warriors will run away disarmed (so he can run faster)," says God.

<sup>3:1</sup> "Listen to this word that God has spoken concerning you, O Israel, concerning the entire people that I brought up from the Land of Egypt. <sup>2</sup> Of all the nations of the earth, I loved only you (yet you sinned against Me). That is why I will punish you for all your transgressions.

Cause and effect <sup>3</sup> Do two people walk together without having arranged it (beforehand)? <sup>4</sup> Does a lion roar in the forest (and find) no prey? Does a lion cub cry out from its den without having trapped anything? <sup>5</sup> Does a bird fall into a trap on the ground if there is no snare? Does a trap spring up from the ground if it hasn't caught anything? <sup>6</sup> If a shofar is sounded in the city (to announce that the enemy is approaching), can the inhabitants fail to be terrified? (So too,) if there is a calamity in the city, can it not be God's doing? <sup>7</sup> For Almighty God does not do anything without (first) revealing His secret to His servants, the prophets. <sup>8</sup> When the lion roars, who does not fear? (So too) when Almighty God speaks (to His prophets), who (could withhold God's words) and not prophesize?

וְאִתְּכֶם לְנִבְיֵיכֶם וּמִבְּחֹרֵיכֶם לְנִזְרִים  
הָאֵף אִין־זאת בְּנִי יִשְׂרָאֵל נְאֻם־יְהוָה: יב וְתִשְׁקֹן  
אֶת־הַנְּזִירִים יִין וְעַל־הַנְּבִיאִים צוֹיִתֶם לֵאמֹר לֹא  
תִנְבְּאוּ: יג הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי מַעֲיֵק תַּחְתֵּיכֶם כַּאֲשֶׁר תַּעֲיֵק  
הָעִגְלָה הַמְּלֵאָה לָהּ עָמִיר: יד וְאָבֵד מְנוּס מִקָּל וְחֹזֵק  
לֹא־יֵאֱמִין כִּהוּ וּנְבוֹר לֹא־יִמְלֹט נַפְשׁוֹ: טו וְתִפְּשׂוּ  
הַקָּשֶׁת לֹא יַעֲמֵד וְקַל בְּרַגְלָיו לֹא יִמְלֹט וְרֹכֵב הַסּוּס  
לֹא יִמְלֹט נַפְשׁוֹ: טז וְאֵמִין לְבוֹ בְּגִבּוֹרִים עָרוֹם יָנוּס  
בַּיּוֹם־הַהוּא נְאֻם־יְהוָה: ג כֹּסֵם אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה  
אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה עֲלֵיכֶם בְּנִי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־כָּל־  
הַמְּשֻׁפָּחָה אֲשֶׁר הִעֲלִיתִי מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֵאמֹר:  
ב רַק אֶתְכֶם יִדְעֵתִי מִכָּל מְשֻׁפָּחוֹת הָאֲדָמָה עַל־בֶּן  
אֶפְקֹד עֲלֵיכֶם אֶת כָּל־עֲוֹנוֹתֵיכֶם: ז הֵילְכוּ שְׁנַיִם  
יַחַד בְּלֵתִי אִם־נוֹעְדוּ: ח הִישָׁאֵג אַרְיֵה בִיעֵר וְטָרַף  
אִין לוֹ הֵיטֵן כְּפִיר קוֹלוֹ מִמְּעַנְתּוֹ בְּלֵתִי אִם־לָכָד:  
ה הַתִּפֵּל עֲפוּר עַל־פַּח הָאֶרֶץ וּמוֹקֵשׁ אִין לָהּ  
הִנְעִלָה־פַח מִן־הָאֲדָמָה וְלָבוֹד לֹא יִלְכוּד: ו אִם־  
יִתְקַע שׁוֹפָר בְּעִיר וְעַם לֹא יִחַרְדוּ אִם־תִּתְהַיֶּה  
רָעָה בְּעִיר וַיְהוֶה לֹא עָשָׂה: ז כִּי לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה אֲדָנִי  
יְהוָה דְּבַר כִּי אִם־נִלְגָה סוּדוֹ אֶל־עַבְדָּיו הַנְּבִיאִים:  
ח אַרְיֵה שָׁאֵג מִי לֹא יִירָא אֲדָנִי יְהוָה דְּבַר מִי  
לֹא יִנְבֵּא:

The prophet opens chapter three with a statement that God's punishments are enacted only out of a profound sense of love for the Jewish people (1-2). A series of rhetorical questions are then posed that gradually impress upon the reader how every effect has its cause, rendering the concluding statement—that all calamities are orchestrated by God as a consequence of man's actions—all the more powerful (3-6). This, then, is a great incentive to heed the words of the prophet (7-8).

**3:4.** הִישָׁאֵג אַרְיֵה בִיעֵר—Does a lion roar in the forest?—The "lion" is an allusion to the months of *Elul* and *Tishrei*, when the *Shofar* (ram's horn) is sounded to instill fear in the people as an incentive to repent (see v. 6). This is hinted to by the Hebrew word for lion, אַרְיֵה, which is an acronym for *Elul* (א), *Rosh Hashanah* (ר), *Yom Kippur* (י) and *Hoshana Rabah* (ה) (*Yom Tov Shel Rosh Hashanah* 5666, p. 571).

**6.** אִם יִתְקַע שׁוֹפָר בְּעִיר וְעַם לֹא יִחַרְדוּ—If a shofar is sounded in the city, can the inhabitants fail to be terrified?—This verse is cited by *Tur* (*Orach Chaim* 581) as a scriptural basis for the custom of blowing *Shofar* (ram's horn) during the month of *Elul* as an inspiration towards repentance. Note, however, that the verse does not indicate *who* is blowing the *Shofar*; it states only that the *Shofar* is "sounded," in the passive voice.

Chasidic thought explains that this is because, in truth, the primary inspiration to return to God during *Elul* comes not from within man himself, but from Above. The fact that we blow the *Shofar* is merely the channel through which this inspiration is able to reach us.

Consequently, the verse indicates that the *Shofar*, the source of inspiration, is "sounded" not by man but by God Himself (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 159, note 13).

MIKEITZ / מקץ

(Kings I 3:15 – 4:1)

If *Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz* coincides with Chanukah, the *Haftarah* of Chanukah I is read, on page 398, or the *Haftarah* of Chanukah II 401.

ג וַיִּקְוֶן שְׁלֹמֹה וַיְהִי הַלֵּיל וַיִּבֹּא יְרוּשָׁלַם וַיַּעֲמֹד אֶל־פְּנֵי אֲרוֹן בְּרִית-אֱדֹנָי וַיַּעַל עֹלוֹת וַיַּעַשׂ שְׁלָמִים וַיַּעַשׂ מִשְׁתָּה לְכָל-עַבְדָּיו: <sup>ט</sup> אַז תִּבְאֶנָּה שְׁתֵּי נָשִׁים זָנוֹת אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ וַתַּעֲמֹדְנָה לְפָנָיו: <sup>י</sup> וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה הָאֶחָת בִּי אֲדֹנָי אֲנִי וְהָאִשָּׁה הַזֹּאת יִשְׁבֹּת בְּבֵית אָחֵךְ וְאֵלֶיךָ עָמָה בְּבֵית: <sup>יא</sup> וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי לְדֹתָי וַתֵּלֶד גַּם-הָאִשָּׁה הַזֹּאת וַאֲנַחְנוּ יַחְדָּו אִין-זָר אֲתָנוּ בְּבֵית זִוְלָתֵי שְׁתֵּי-אֲנַחְנוּ בְּבֵית: <sup>יב</sup> וַיָּמָת בֶּן-הָאִשָּׁה הַזֹּאת לַיְלָה אֲשֶׁר שָׁכְבָה עָלָיו: <sup>יג</sup> וַתִּקַּם בְּתוֹךְ הַלַּיְלָה וַתִּקַּח אֶת-בְּנֵי מַאֲצְלֵי וַאֲמַתְךָ יִשְׁנָה וַתִּשְׁכְּבֵיבְהוּ בְּחִיקָהּ וְאֶת-בְּנֵהּ הַמֵּת הִשְׁכִּיבָה בְּחִיקָי: <sup>יד</sup> וַאֲקָם בְּבֹקֶר לְהִינִיק אֶת-בְּנֵי וְהִנֵּה-מֵת וַאֲתִבּוֹן אֵלָיו בְּבֹקֶר וְהִנֵּה לֹא-הִיָּה בְּנֵי אֲשֶׁר יָלַדְתִּי: <sup>טו</sup> וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה הָאֶחָת לֹא כִי בְּנֵי הָחַי וּבְנֵי הַמֵּת וְזֹאת אֲמַרְתְּ לֹא כִי בְּנֵי הַמֵּת וּבְנֵי הָחַי וַתִּדְבַּרְנָה לְפָנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ: <sup>טז</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ זֹאת אֲמַרְתְּ וְהַבְּנֵי הָחַי וּבְנֵי הַמֵּת וְזֹאת אֲמַרְתְּ לֹא כִי בְּנֵי הַמֵּת וּבְנֵי הָחַי: <sup>יז</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ קָחוּ לִי-חֶרֶב וַיָּבֹאוּ הַחֶרֶב לְפָנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ: <sup>יח</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ גִּזְרוּ אֶת-הַיֶּלֶד הָחַי לְשָׁנַיִם וַתִּנְנוּ אֶת-הַחֶזֶי לְאֶחָת וְאֶת-הַחֶזֶי

<sup>3:15</sup> Shlomo awoke and (only then he realized) it was a dream. He then came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of God. He offered burnt offerings and peace-offerings and made a feast for all his servants.

<sup>16</sup> Then two harlots came to the king and stood before him. <sup>17</sup> One of the women said, "Please, my master (listen to me)! I and this woman live in one house. I gave birth in the house, <sup>18</sup> and on the third day after I gave birth this woman too gave birth, and we were together. There was nobody else in the house (that could see what was going on). Just the two of us were in the house."

The case of the two harlots

<sup>19</sup> "This woman's son then died during the night because she laid upon him (and crushed him). <sup>20</sup> She then got up in the middle of the night and took my son from beside me (while) your maidservant was still asleep, and laid him down in her bosom, and she put her dead son into my bosom."

<sup>21</sup> "I got up in the morning to nurse my son and—look!—he was dead. I then examined him in the morning and—look!—he was not the son whom I had given birth to."

<sup>22</sup> The other woman said, "No! My son is the living one, and your son is the dead one!" (The first woman) said, "No! My son is the living one, and your son is the dead one!" and they argued before the king.

<sup>23</sup> The king then said, "This one says, 'This, my son, is the living one and your son is the dead one,' and the other one says, 'No! Your son is the dead one, and my son is the living one.'"

Shlomo's ploy

<sup>24</sup> So the king said, "Bring me a sword," and they brought a sword before the king. <sup>25</sup> The king said, "Cut

HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS MIKEITZ

This *Haftarah* begins abruptly with the awakening of Shlomo from a dream, similar to the beginning of *Parshas Mikeitz*, which describes Pharaoh awakening from his dreams.

The preceding narrative, before the *Haftarah* begins, describes how God revealed Himself to Shlomo in a dream at Givon and offered to grant any request. God is pleased when Shlomo asks, not for his personal needs, but for wisdom to lead the nation properly. The *Haftarah* then describes an example of how Shlomo utilized this Divine gift, after returning to Jerusalem (v. 15), in adjudicating a difficult case.

Two harlots appear before Shlomo. Both share the same house and both had given birth within a period of a few days. Both concur that one of the children was smothered in the night and that the other harlot had

switched the babies so as to have the live one for herself—and both claim that the guilty party is the *other* harlot (16-22).

Having no witnesses to verify either claim, the King employs his wisdom in a tactical maneuver. After summing up the pleas of both parties (23), the King instructs that the living child be severed in two, and half be given to each of the claimants (24-25).

Inevitably, the true mother could not bear to see her child killed and pleaded to the King that the baby be given to the other woman so as to spare its life. The other woman, however, was willing to accept the King's proposition as a "fair solution" (24-26). Thus, the ploy was successful and Shlomo was able to return the child to its true mother (27).

News of Shlomo's ingenious solution spread fast, further asserting the authority of his leadership (3:28-4:1).

the living child in two and give half to one (woman) and the other half to the other (woman).

Identity of the true mother is established  
 26 The woman whose son was (really) the living one said to the king, "Please, my master! Give her the living child, but do not kill him!" for her compassion was roused for her son. But the (other) one said, "Let him be neither mine nor yours. Cut him!" 27 The king then responded and said, "Give the living child to (the first woman) and do not kill him. She is the mother."

28 All of Israel heard about the case that the king had judged and they were in awe of the king, for they saw that the wisdom of God was with him to carry out (true) justice. 41 Then King Shlomo reigned over all Israel (for all the people willingly accepted his sovereignty).

לְאַחַת: כו וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר-בְּנָהּ הָחַי אֶל-  
 הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּי-נִכְמְרוּ רַחֲמֶיהָ עַל-בְּנָהּ וַתֹּאמֶר א בִּי  
 אֲדֹנָי תִּנּוּ-לָהּ אֶת-הַיָּלֹד הַחַי וְהַמֵּת אֶל-תְּמִיתָהּ  
 וְזֹאת אִמָּרְת גִּם-לִי גִם-לְךָ לֹא יִהְיֶה גְזֵרוֹ: כז וַיַּעַן  
 הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר תִּנּוּ-לָהּ אֶת-הַיָּלֹד הַחַי וְהַמֵּת לֹא  
 תְּמִיתָהּ הִיא אִמּוֹ: כח וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ כָל-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-  
 הַמִּשְׁפָּט אֲשֶׁר שִׁפֵּט הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֵּרְאוּ מִפְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ  
 כִּי רָאוּ כִּי-חֲכָמַת אֱלֹהִים בְּקִרְבּוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט:  
 ד וַיְהִי הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה מֶלֶךְ עַל-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל:

🌀 VAYIGASH / ויגש 🌀

(Ezekiel 37:15 – 28)

Fusion of the sticks  
 37:15 Then God's word came to me, saying: 16 "And you, son of man, take a (piece of) wood and write on it, 'For Yehudah and his fellow Israelites,' and take another stick and write on it, 'For Yosef—a stick for (his son) Efrayim and (the other tribes) the whole house of Israel with him.'

17 "Bring them close to one another, so they (resemble) one stick and they will (miraculously) join in your hands to be one.

18 "When your people say to you, 'Tell us what these mean to you.' 19 Say to them, 'Almighty God says, "Observe! I am taking the stick of Yosef which is in Efrayim's hand, and the tribes of Israel with him, and I am placing the stick of Yehudah on it. I will make them one stick, and they will join in My hand.'" 20 The sticks on which you have written should be (in your hands) before their eyes."

21 "(While you are holding the sticks) tell them, 'This is what Almighty God said: "I will take the Jews from among the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from (all) around and bring them to their Land.

לו וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר: כו וְאַתָּה בֶן-אָדָם  
 קַח-לְךָ עֵץ אֶחָד וּכְתֹב עָלָיו לַיהוּדָה וּלְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל  
 חֲבֵרָיו (וַחֲבָרוּ כו) וּלְקַח עֵץ אֶחָד וּכְתֹב עָלָיו לְיוֹסֵף עֵץ  
 אֶפְרַיִם וְכָל-בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲבֵרָיו (וַחֲבָרוּ כז): י" וּקְרַב  
 אֹתָם אֶחָד אֶל-אֶחָד לְךָ לְעֵץ אֶחָד וְהָיוּ לְאַחָדִים  
 בְּיָדְךָ: יח וּבְאִשֶׁר יֹאמְרוּ אֵלֶיךָ בְּנֵי עַמֶּךָ לֵאמֹר  
 הֲלוֹא-תִגִּיד לָנוּ מַה-אֱלֹהֵה לְךָ: יט דְּבַר אֱלֹהִים  
 כָּה-אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה הִנֵּה אֲנִי לֹקֵחַ אֶת-עֵץ יוֹסֵף  
 אֲשֶׁר בְּיַד-אֶפְרַיִם וְשִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲבֵרָיו (וַחֲבָרוּ כ"ו)  
 וְנִתְּתִי אוֹתָם עָלָיו אֶת-עֵץ יְהוּדָה וַעֲשִׂיתֶם לְעֵץ  
 אֶחָד וְהָיוּ אֶחָד בְּיָדִי: כ וְהָיוּ הָעֲצִים אֲשֶׁר-תִּכְתֹּב  
 עֲלֵיהֶם בְּיָדְךָ לְעֵינֵיהֶם: כא וְדַבַּר אֱלֹהִים כָּה-אָמַר  
 אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה הִנֵּה אֲנִי לֹקֵחַ אֶת-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִבֵּין  
 הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר הִלְכּוּ-שָׁם וְקִבַּצְתִּי אֹתָם מִסָּבִיב

25. גְזְרוּ אֶת הַיָּלֹד הַחַי לְשֵׁנַיִם—Cut the living child in two. Though Shlomo decreed that the child be cut in half, this was only a tactic to bring out his final decision that the child should live and that it be returned to its mother. This is a metaphor for the negative decrees against the Jewish people in exile, which are nothing other than a Divine “tactic” to bring God’s true love for the Jewish people to light, as will be revealed after the Redemption, God’s “final decision” (Sichas Shabbos Parshas Matos-Masei 5750).

🌀 HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS VAYIGASH

This Haftarah depicts a fusion of the kingdom of Yehudah with the kingdom of Yosef that will occur in the Messianic Redemption, the historical conclusion of the conflict between Yehudah and Yosef at the opening of Parshas Vayigash.

Here we see, once again, how the Haftarah is not merely a parallel reading to the Parsha, but often, a development and conclusion of the

וְהִבֵּאתִי אוֹתָם אֶל־אֶדְמַתָּם: כִּבְּ וְעָשִׂיתִי אִתְּם לְגוֹי  
אֶחָד בְּאֶרֶץ בְּהָרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמֶלֶךְ אֶחָד יִהְיֶה לְכָל־ם  
לְמֶלֶךְ וְלֹא יִהְיֶה בֵּן עוֹד לְשָׁנֵי גוֹיִם וְלֹא יִחַצּוּ  
עוֹד לְשֹׁתֵי מִמְלָכוֹת עוֹד: כִּבְּ וְלֹא יִטְמְאוּ עוֹד  
בְּגִלוּלֵיהֶם וּבִשְׁקוּצֵיהֶם וּבְכָל פְּשָׁעֵיהֶם וְהוֹשַׁעְתִּי  
אוֹתָם מִכָּל מוֹשְׁבֵיתֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר הִטְאוּ בָהֶם וּטְהַרְתִּי  
אוֹתָם וְהָיִוּ לִי לְעָם וְאֲנִי אֶהְיֶה לָהֶם לְאֱלֹהִים:  
כִּבְּ וְעַבְדֵי דָוִד מֶלֶךְ עֲלֵיהֶם וְרוּעֵה אֶחָד יִהְיֶה לְכָל־ם  
וּבְמִשְׁפָּטַי יֵלְכוּ וְחֻקְתִּי יִשְׁמְרוּ וְעָשׂוּ אוֹתָם: כִּבְּ וַיָּשְׁבוּ  
עַל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְעַבְדֵי לְיַעֲקֹב אֲשֶׁר  
יָשְׁבוּ בָּהּ אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם וַיָּשְׁבוּ עָלֶיהָ הֵמָּה וּבְנֵיהֶם וּבְנֵי  
בְנֵיהֶם עַד־עוֹלָם וְדָוִד עַבְדֵי נָשִׂיא לָהֶם לְעוֹלָם:  
כִּבְּ וּכְרַתִּי לָהֶם בְּרִית שְׁלוֹם בְּרִית עוֹלָם יִהְיֶה אוֹתָם  
וּנְתַתִּים וְהִרְבִּיתִי אוֹתָם וְנָתַתִּי אֶת־מִקְדָּשִׁי בְּתוֹכָם  
לְעוֹלָם: כִּבְּ וְהָיָה מִשְׁכְּנִי עֲלֵיהֶם וְהָיִיתִי לָהֶם  
לְאֱלֹהִים וְהֵמָּה יִהְיוּ לִי לְעָם: כִּבְּ וַיִּדְעוּ הַגּוֹיִם כִּי  
אֲנִי יְהוָה מְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּהֵיוֹת מִקְדָּשִׁי  
בְּתוֹכָם לְעוֹלָם:

<sup>22</sup>I will make them one nation in the Land, in the hills of Israel, and all of them will have one king. They will no longer be two nations (of Yehudah and the other tribes), and they will no longer be divided into two kingdoms.

Fusion of the two kingdoms

<sup>23</sup>They will no longer be defiled by their idols, their abominations and all their sins. I will save them (from where they are lost) in all the communities where they sinned, and I will purify them (from their sins). They will be My people (who believe in Me and observe My mitzvos), and I will be their God (to save them and help them)."

<sup>24</sup>“My servant (Mashiach, a descendant of) David, will be king over them and they will all have one shepherd. They will follow My laws and guard My statutes (in their hearts), and fulfill them. <sup>25</sup>They will settle in the Land that I gave to My servant Ya’akov, the Land where their ancestors lived. They and their children and their grandchildren will live there forever, and David my servant will be their leader forever.”

Absolute monarchy of Mashiach

<sup>26</sup>“I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it will be an eternal covenant with them. I will establish them (there forever) and cause them to multiply, and I will place My Sanctuary among them (so it stands) forever. <sup>27</sup>My Divine Presence will be among them. I will be their God (to help them and save them), and they will be My people (to believe in Me and keep My mitzvos).”

Divine presence within Israel

<sup>28</sup>“The nations will know that I am God, Who sanctifies Israel, since My Sanctuary will be among them forever.”

🌀 VAYECHI / ויחי 🌀

(I Kings 2:1 - 12)

ב ׀ וַיִּקְרְבוּ יְמֵי־דָוִד לָמוֹת וַיִּצַּו אֶת־שְׁלֹמֹה בְּנוֹ  
לְאמֹר: ב ׀ אֲנֹכִי הַלֵּךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ וְחֻזְקָת וְהֵיטֵת  
לְאִישׁ: וְשִׁמְרָתָּ אֶת־מִשְׁמֶרֶת אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְלִבְתָּ  
בְּדַרְכָּיו לְשִׁמּוֹר חֻקְתָּיו מִצְוֹתָיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו וְעֲדוֹתָיו\*

<sup>2:1</sup>The time of David’s death drew near. He instructed his son Shlomo, saying, <sup>2</sup>“I am going the way of all mortals. Be strong and (though you are young, be mature like) a man (for I will no longer be here to guide you). <sup>3</sup> Look after the things that God, your God (said to) safeguard, so as to follow His ways

King David’s last wishes

\*pronounced “aidvosav”

ideas expressed by the Parsha. This additional revelation which is found in the Haftarah represents the “advantage of light over darkness” which can only be appreciated through the experience of exile, for the custom of reading the weekly Haftarah was initially introduced as a result of an anti-Semitic decree which was later annulled (Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayigash 5750).

The Haftarah opens with a command to Yechezkel the prophet to take two sticks, one representing the Southern Kingdom of Yehudah and the other the Northern Kingdom of Yosef, and to join them together (37:15-17). The symbolism is then clarified: The joining of the sticks represents

the unification of the two kingdoms at the time of the Redemption, under the leadership of Mashiach who is from the tribe of Yehudah (18-25). The Haftarah concludes with an idyllic picture of the Messianic utopia when the Divine Presence will rest among Israel (26-28).

**25. לְעוֹלָם**—David my servant will be their leader forever. This cannot possibly refer to King David himself, returning as Mashiach after the revival of the dead, because, according to Jewish law Mashiach must be a leader whose direct effect is felt in the period preceding the redemption (Rambam, Laws of Kings 11:4). The resurrection (even of tzadikim), however, will only occur much later.



Spiritual advice (of mercy and kindness), to keep His (suprarational) laws, His rational commandments (of conduct between man and God), His laws (of conduct between man and his fellow) and testimonial laws (that commemorate various events), as is written in the Torah of Moshe. (Then) you will become wise in whatever (aspect of Divine service) you do and wherever you turn. <sup>4</sup> (Do this) in order that God may fulfill His word that He spoke about me, saying, 'If your sons are careful in their ways to go before Me truthfully, with all their hearts and all their souls, (then),' said (God), 'You will never cease to have one (of your descendants) upon the throne of Israel.'"

Political advice <sup>5</sup> "You are also aware of what Yo'av ben Tzeruyah did to me, (i.e.) what he did to the two army generals of Israel, Avnair ben Nair and Amasa ben Yeser (to whom I guaranteed safety)—he killed them and (shed) the blood of war in (times of) peace. He put the blood of war in the belt around his loins and the shoes on his feet. <sup>6</sup> You must act according to your wisdom, but don't let him have (honor for his) old age, and see to it that he does not go down to the grave with (a) peace(ful death).

<sup>7</sup> "Act kindly to the sons of Barzilai the Giladite, (aside from) letting them be among those who eat at your table, for that is (precisely) how they assisted me when I was fleeing from your brother Avshalom."

<sup>8</sup> "Now Shimi ben Gairah—of (the tribe of) Binyamin, from Bachurim, who (taught) you (Torah)—cursed me bitterly on the day I went to Machanayim (when I was fleeing from Avshalom. But later) he came down to meet me at the Jordan (and appeased me), so I swore to him in God('s Name), saying, 'I will not kill you with the sword,' (so I can't take revenge against him personally). <sup>9</sup> However, now (you are not obligated by this oath, so) do not free him (from punishment), as you're a wise man and you know what to do to him. But don't let him have (honor for his) old age, and see to it that he goes down to the grave with (a) blood(y death)."

David passes away <sup>10</sup> David then lay with his fathers, and he was buried in the City of David. <sup>11</sup> David reigned over Israel for a total of forty years. In Chevron he reigned for seven years, in Jerusalem he reigned for thirty-three years.

<sup>12</sup> Shlomo then sat on the throne of his father, David, and his sovereignty was firmly established.

בְּכַתּוּב בְּתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה לְמַעַן תִּשְׁפִּיל אֶת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה וְאֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר תִּפְנֶה שָׁם: - לְמַעַן יִקִּים יְהוָה אֶת-דְּבָרָו אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר עָלַי לֵאמֹר אִם-יִשְׁמְרוּ בְנֵיךָ אֶת-דִּרְכֹּכִי לִלְכֹּת לִפְנֵי בְּאֵמֶת בְּכָל-לִבָּבָם וּבְכָל-נַפְשָׁם לֵאמֹר לֹא-יִכָּרֵת לְךָ אִישׁ מֵעַל כִּסֵּא יִשְׂרָאֵל: ה וְגַם אֶתְּהָ יִדְעֶת אֶת אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה לִי יוֹאָב בֶּן-צְרוּיָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְשֵׁנֵי-שָׂרֵי צְבָאוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאַבְנֵר בֶּן-נֵר וְלַעֲמָשָׂא בֶן-יֵתֵר וַיְהִרְגֵם וַיִּשְׁסֵם דָּמֵי מַלְחָמָה בְּשָׁלֹם וַיִּתֵּן דָּמֵי מַלְחָמָה בְּהַגִּירָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר בְּמַתְנֵיו וּבְנִעְלוֹ אֲשֶׁר בְּרַגְלָיו: ו וְעִשִׂיתָ כְּחֻמַּתְךָ וְלֹא-תוֹרֵד שְׂיִבְתּוֹ בְּשָׁלֹם שְׂאֹל: ז וּלְבָנֵי בְרוּזַי הַגִּלְעָדִי תַעֲשֶׂה-חֶסֶד וְהָיוּ בְּאֹכְלֵי שֶׁלְחַנְךָ כִּי-בֶן קָרְבוֹ אֵלַי בְּכִרְהֵי מִפְּנֵי אֲבִשְׁלוֹם אַחִיךָ: ח וְהִנֵּה עִמָּךְ שְׁמַעִי בֶן-נֵרָא בֶן-הַיְמִינִי מִבְּחָרִים וְהוּא קָלְלָנִי קָלְלָה נְמוּצָת בְּיוֹם לְכַתִּי מִחַנְּיָם וְהוּא-יִרְדַּ לְקָרְאֵתִי הַיַּרְדֵּן וְאֶשָּׁבַע לוֹ בַיהוָה לֵאמֹר אִם-אֲמִיתֶךָ בְּחָרְבִי: ט וְעַתָּה אֶל-תִּנְקְהוּ כִּי אִישׁ חָכָם אַתָּה וַיִּדְעֶת אֶת אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה-לוֹ וְהוֹרְדֶת אֶת-שְׂיִבְתּוֹ בְּדָם שְׂאֹל: י וַיִּשְׁכַּב דָּוִד עִם-אֲבֹתָיו וַיִּקָּבֵר בְּעִיר דָּוִד: יא וְהַיְמִים אֲשֶׁר מָלַךְ דָּוִד עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה בְּחֶבְרוֹן מָלַךְ שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים וּבִירוּשָׁלַם מָלַךְ שְׁלֹשִׁים וְשָׁלֹשׁ שָׁנִים: יב וּשְׁלֹמֹה יָשָׁב עַל-כִּסֵּא דָוִד אָבִיו וְתִכְּן מַלְכוּתוֹ מֵאָדָּה:

As for the fact that the *Jerusalem Talmud* (*Brachos* 2:4) mentions the possibility of King David returning as Mashiach ("If he is from the living, his name is David, and if he is from the dead, it will be David himself")—it could be argued that this refers to the soul of King David being invested into Mashiach. In fact we find that this is precisely how *Ohr HaChayim* (*Bereishis* 49:11) explains the saying of our Sages, "Moshe is the first redeemer and the last redeemer" (*Shemos Rabah* 2:6), that part of the soul of Moshe will be invested into Mashiach.

These sources thus pose no contradiction to the ruling of *Rambam* that Mashiach's leadership must arise during exile times and guide the Jewish people towards redemption from within the context of exile (Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 206, note 6).

## 🕊️ HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS VAYECHI

This *Haftarah* describes the time before David's passing and his instructions to Shlomo, his son, similar to the account of Ya'akov's words to his children shortly before his passing, in *Parshas Vayechi*.

The *Haftarah* opens with King David on his deathbed, addressing his last wishes to his son Shlomo, who was twelve years old at the time. He charges him to keep the Torah (1-4) and offers political advice concerning certain trouble-making personalities that need to be eliminated (5-9).

The *Haftarah* concludes by chronicling David's death and Shlomo's succession.

Ⓢ EREV ROSH CHODESH / ערב ראש חודש שחל בשבת Ⓢ

(I Samuel 20:18-42)

כ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יְהוֹנָתָן מִחֵר חֹדֶשׁ וְנִפְקַדְתָּ כִּי יִפְקַד מוֹשְׁבְּדִי: יט וְשְׁלֹשֶׁת תֵּרֵד מְאֹד וּבֹאֵת אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-נִסְתַּרְתָּ שָׁם בַּיּוֹם הַמַּעֲשֶׂה וַיִּשְׁבֶּתָ אֶצְלֵי הָאֶבֶן הָאֲזוּל: כ ואֲנִי שְׁלֹשֶׁת הַחֲצַיִם צְדָה אוֹרָה לְשַׁלַּח-לִי לְמִטְרָה: כא וְהִנֵּה אֶשְׁלַח אֶת-הַנֶּזֶר לְךָ מִצָּא אֶת-הַחֲצַיִם אִם-אָמַר אִמְרָ לְנֶעַר הַגֵּה הַחֲצַיִם | מִמֶּנֶּה וְהִנֵּה קָהְנוּ | וּבֹאָה כִּי-שָׁלוֹם לְךָ וְאִין דְּבַר חַי-יְהוָה: כב ואִם-כָּה אָמַר לְעֵלָם הַגֵּה הַחֲצַיִם מִמֶּנֶּה וְהִלָּאָה לְךָ כִּי שְׁלַחְךָ יְהוָה: כג וְהִדְבַּר אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְנוּ אֲנִי וְאַתָּה הִנֵּה יְהוָה בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ עַד-עוֹלָם: כד וַיִּסְתַּר דָּוִד בְּשָׂדֵה וַיְהִי הַחֹדֶשׁ וַיֵּשֶׁב הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל-עַל כֵּן הַלֶּחֶם לֶאֱכֹל: כה וַיֵּשֶׁב הַמֶּלֶךְ עַל-מוֹשְׁבֹו כַּפְעַם | בַּפְעַם אֶל-מוֹשֵׁב הַקִּיּוֹר וַיִּקָּם יְהוֹנָתָן וַיֵּשֶׁב אִבְנֵר מִצַּד שְׂאוּל וַיִּפְקַד מְקוֹם דָּוִד: כו וְלֹא-דִבֶּר שְׂאוּל מְאוּמָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא כִּי אָמַר מִקְרָה הוּא בְּלַתִּי טָהוֹר הוּא כִּי-לֹא טָהוֹר: כז וַיְהִי מִמַּחֲרַת הַחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי וַיִּפְקַד מְקוֹם דָּוִד וַיֹּאמֶר שְׂאוּל אֶל-יְהוֹנָתָן בְּנֹו מִדּוֹעַ לֹא-בָא בֶן-יִשָּׁי גַם-תָּמוּל גַּם-הַיּוֹם אֶל-הַלֶּחֶם: כח וַיַּעַן יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת-שְׂאוּל נִשְׂאָל נִשְׂאָל דָּוִד מִעַמְדֵי עַד-בֵּית לָחֶם: כט וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁלַחְנִי נָא כִּי

20:18 **Y**onasan 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.

The Plan

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 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.

David goes into hiding

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

Ⓢ 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.

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,

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."

The king is furious <sup>30</sup> 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)?" <sup>31</sup> 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."

<sup>32</sup> Yonasan answered Sha'ul, his father, and said to him, "Why should he be killed? What has he done?"

<sup>33</sup> Sha'ul raised a spear to strike him. Yonasan realized that his father was determined to slay David.

<sup>34</sup> 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).

Yonasan gives the sign <sup>35</sup> In the morning, that Yonasan went out to the field to the appointed place (he had arranged) with David, and a young lad was with him. <sup>36</sup> 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.

<sup>37</sup> 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?"

<sup>38</sup> 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. <sup>39</sup> The lad knew nothing (about the sign). Only Yonasan and David knew the matter.

<sup>40</sup> Yonasan gave his bow and arrows to his lad, and said to him, "Go and carry them to the city." <sup>41</sup> 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

וְבַח מִשְׁפָּחָהּ לָנוּ בְעִיר וְהוּא צְוֹהֵלִי אֹהֵי וְעַתָּה  
אִם-מִצָּאתַי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ אִמְלֹטָה נָא וְאַרְאֶה  
אֶת-אֹהֵי עַל-כֵּן לֹא-בָא אֶל-שֻׁלְחַן הַמֶּלֶךְ:  
וַיַּחֲרֵאֵף שָׁאוּל בִּיהוֹנָתָן וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ בְּיָדֶיךָ  
הַמַּרְדּוֹת הַלֹּא יָדַעְתִּי כִּי-בָחַר אֶתָּה לְבֶן-יִשָׁי  
לְבִשְׁתְּךָ וּלְבִשֵׁת עֲרוֹת אִמְךָ: <sup>ל</sup> כִּי כָל-הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר  
בְּיָדֵי יִשָׁי חַי עַל-הָאָדָמָה לֹא תִכּוֹן אֶתָּה וּמַלְכוּתְךָ  
וְעַתָּה שָׁלַח וְקַח אֹתוֹ אֵלַי כִּי בְּיָמֹת הוּא: <sup>מ</sup> וַיֵּעַן  
יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת-שָׁאוּל אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו לָמָּה יוֹמַת מִיָּה  
עֲשֵׂה: <sup>נ</sup> וַיִּטֵּל שָׁאוּל אֶת-הַחֲנִית עָלָיו לְהַכּוֹתוֹ וַיִּדַע  
יְהוֹנָתָן כִּי-כָלָה הֵיא מַעַם אָבִיו לְהַמִּית אֶת-דָּוִד:  
<sup>ס</sup> וַיָּקָם יְהוֹנָתָן מֵעַם הַשֻּׁלְחָן בַּחֲרֵי-אֵף וּלֹא-אָכַל  
בַּיּוֹם-הַחֲדָשׁ הַשְּׁנַי לָחֶם כִּי נִעְצַב אֶל-דָּוִד כִּי  
הִכְלָמוּ אָבִיו: <sup>ז</sup> וַיְהִי בַבֶּקֶר וַיֵּצֵא יְהוֹנָתָן הַשֶּׁדֶה  
לְמוֹעֵד דָּוִד וַנֶּעַר קִטְמֵן עִמּוֹ: <sup>ח</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר לְנַעֲרֹו רֵץ  
מִצָּא-נָא אֶת-הַחֲצִים אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מוֹרֶה הַנֶּעַר רֵץ  
וְהוֹאֲרָה הַחֲצִי לְהַעֲבֹרוֹ: <sup>ט</sup> וַיָּבֹא הַנֶּעַר עַד-מְקוֹם  
הַחֲצִי אֲשֶׁר יָרָה יְהוֹנָתָן וַיִּקְרָא יְהוֹנָתָן אַחֲרֵי הַנֶּעַר  
וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלֹא הַחֲצִי מִמֶּךָ וְהִלָּאָה: <sup>י</sup> וַיִּקְרָא יְהוֹנָתָן  
אַחֲרֵי הַנֶּעַר מְהֵרָה הוֹשֵׁה אֶל-תַּעֲמֹד וַיִּלְקֹט נֶעַר  
יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת-הַחֲצִים <sup>י</sup> וַיָּבֹא אֶל-אֲדֹנָיו: <sup>יא</sup> וְהַנֶּעַר  
לֹא יָדַע מֵאוֹמְהָ אֵךְ יְהוֹנָתָן וְדָוִד יָדְעוּ אֶת-הַדְּבָר:  
<sup>ב</sup> וַיִּתֵּן יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת-כִּלָּיו אֶל-הַנֶּעַר אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר  
לוֹ לָךְ הִבִּיא הָעִיר: <sup>ב</sup> הַנֶּעַר בָּא וְדָוִד קָם מֵאֲצֵל  
הַנֶּגֶב וַיִּפֹּל לְאֶפְרוֹ הָאָרֶצָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּוּ שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים  
וַיִּשְׁקֹוּ | אִישׁ אֶת-רַעְהוֹ וַיִּבְכּוּ אִישׁ אֶת-רַעְהוֹ

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 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.*).

עַד־דָּוָד הַגְּדִיל: <sup>כב</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹנָתָן לְדָוִד לֵךְ לְשָׁלוֹם  
 אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְנוּ שְׁנֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה לֵאמֹר יְהוָה  
 יְהִיָּה | בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ וּבֵין זַרְעֵךָ עַד־עוֹלָם:

one another, and wept with one another, until David (wept) greatly (more than Yonasan).

<sup>42</sup> 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.'"

Yonasan gives the sign

SHABBOS ROSH CHODESH / שבת ראש חודש

(Isaiah 66:1-24, ibid. 23)

The Maftir reading for Shabbos Rosh Chodesh is on page 403. (Bamidbar 28:9-15).

סו « כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּסְאִי וְהָאָרֶץ הַדָּם  
 רַגְלֵי אִי־יָהּ בֵּית אֲשֶׁר תִּבְנֶנּוּ לִי וְאִי־יָהּ מְקוֹם  
 מְנוּחָתִי: <sup>ב</sup> וְאֶת־כָּל־אֱלֹהֵי יָדַי עָשִׂיתָה וַיְהִי כָל־אֱלֹהֵי  
 נְאֻם־יְהוָה וְאֶל־יָהּ אֲבִיט אֶל־עֵנִי וּנְכַהֲרוּת וְחָרַד  
 עַל־דְּבָרֵי: <sup>ג</sup> שׁוֹחֵט הַשּׁוֹר מִכֹּה־אִישׁ זֹבֵחַ הַשֶּׁה  
 עֲרַף כָּלֵב מִעֲלֵה מִנְחָה דִם־חֲזִיר מִזְכִּיר לְבָנָה  
 מְבַרֵךְ אֹזֶן גִּם־הִמָּה בָּחַרוּ בְּדַרְכֵיהֶם וּבִשְׁקֻנֵיהֶם  
 נִפְשָׁם הִפְצִיחַ: <sup>ד</sup> גִּם־אֲנִי אֶבְחַר בְּתַעֲלָלֵיהֶם  
 וּמְגֹרָתָם אֲבִיא לָהֶם יַעַן קָרָאתִי וְאִין עֲזָנָה דְּבַרְתִּי  
 וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ הָרַע בְּעֵינַי וּבִאֲשֶׁר לֹא־הִפְצִיחַ  
 בָּחָרוּ: <sup>ה</sup> שָׁמְעוּ דְּבַר־יְהוָה הַחֲרָדִים אֶל־דְּבָרוֹ אָמְרוּ  
 אַחֵיכֶם שְׁנֵאֵיכֶם מְנַדִּיכֶם לְמַעַן שָׁמִי יִכְבֵּד יְהוָה

<sup>66:1</sup> 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? <sup>2</sup> 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 conrtrite spirit, and trembles at My word. <sup>3</sup> "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. <sup>4</sup> 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

God is everywhere

God hates insincere service

listen. They did evil before My eyes, and chose what I did not desire."

<sup>5</sup> "Hear the word of God, you who tremble at His word! Your (wicked) brothers who hate you and who ostracize you say, 'I

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. הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּסְאִי וְהָאָרֶץ הַדָּם רַגְלֵי—*The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool.* According to Chasidic thought, the various gradations 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

Enemies will be judged am so great that) God is glorified because of my name!’ (But in truth) we shall see your joy and they shall be shamed. <sup>6</sup> (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).”

Tziyon will have no labor pains <sup>7</sup> “Before she (Tziyon) feels labor pains she will give birth. Before her labor pain will come, she will be delivered a son. <sup>8</sup> 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? <sup>9</sup> 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.

Jerusalem will rejoice <sup>10</sup> “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), <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> Like one whom his mother comforts, so will I comfort you, and you shall be comforted in Jerusalem (for your suffering). <sup>14</sup> 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 <sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> For by fire God will execute judgment, and by His sword upon all flesh. The slain by God will be many.”

Nations will return <sup>17</sup> “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. <sup>18</sup> “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. <sup>19</sup> 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

וּנְרָאָה בְּשִׂמְחַתְכֶם וְהֵם יִבְשׁוּ: , קוֹל שְׂאוֹן מֵעִיר  
 קוֹל מִהִיכָל קוֹל יְהוָה מִשְׁלֵם גְּמוּלָה לְאֵיבָיו: , בְּטָרְם  
 תִּחִיל יִלְדָה בְּטָרְם יָבֹוא תִּכְבֵּל לָהּ וְהַמְּלִיטָה זָכָר:  
 הַמִּי־שָׁמַע בְּזֹאת מִי רָאָה כָּאֵלֶּה הַיּוֹחֵל אֶרֶץ בְּיוֹם  
 אֶחָד אִם־יִוָּלֵד גּוֹי פְּעַם אַחַת בְּיַחַד לְגַם־יִלְדָה  
 עֵינֹן אֶת־בְּנֵיהָ: ׀ הַאֲנִי אֲשַׁבֵּיר וְלֹא אוֹלֵיד יֹאמֶר  
 יְהוָה אִם־אֲנִי הַמוֹלֵיד וְעַצְרֹתַי אֹמֶר אֶל־הַיָּד:  
 , שְׂמַחֹו אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם וְגִילֹו בָהּ כֹּל־אֶהְבִּיָהּ שִׂישׁוּ  
 אֶתְהָ מִשׁוֹשׁ כֹּל־הַמַּתְאֲבָלִים עָלֶיהָ: ׀ לְמַעַן תִּינָקוּ  
 וּשְׂבַעְתֶּם מִשֵּׁךְ תִּנְחַמְיָהּ לְמַעַן תִּמְצְוּ וְהִתְעַנְנַתֶם  
 מִזֵּינֵי כְבוֹדָהּ: ׀ בְּיַחַד אֹמֶר יְהוָה הִנְנִי נֹטָה־אֶלֶיהָ  
 בְּנֶהָר שְׁלֹום וּכְנַחַל שׁוֹטֵף כְּבוֹד גּוֹיִם וְיִנְקַתֶם  
 עַל־צֶדַךְ תִּנְשְׂאוּ וְעַל־בְּרָכִים תִּשְׁעֶשְׂעוּ: ׀ כָּאִישׁ  
 אֲשֶׁר אָמַו תִּנְחַמְנוּ בֶן אֲנָכִי אֲנַחֲמֶכֶם וּבִירוּשָׁלַם  
 תִּנְחַמוּ: ׀ וּרְאִיתֶם וּשְׁשׁ לְבָבְכֶם וְעַצְמוֹתֵיכֶם כִּדְשָׂא  
 תִּפְרַחְנָה וְנֹדַעַה יַד־יְהוָה אֶת־עַבְדָּיו וְזַעַם  
 אֶת־אֵיבָיו: ׀ בְּיַחַד יְהוָה בָּאֵשׁ יָבֹוא וְכִסְפוּפָה  
 מִרְכַבְתָּיו לְהַשִּׁיב בְּחֶמָה אִפּוֹ וְנִעַרְתּוּ בְּלַהֲבֵי־אֵשׁ:  
 ׀ כִּי בָאֵשׁ יְהוָה נִשְׁפָּט וּבִחְרָבוֹ אֶת־כָּל־בֶּשֶׂר וּרְבוּ  
 חֲלָלֵי יְהוָה: ׀ הַמַּתְקַדְשִׁים וְהַמְשַׁתְּהִלִים אֶל־הַגְּזוֹת  
 אַחַר אַחַת וְאַחַד כֹּׁל בַּתּוֹךְ אֲכָלִי בֶּשֶׂר הַחֲזִיר וְהַשֶּׁקֶץ  
 וְהַעֲכָבֵר יַחַד יִסְפוּ נַאֲם־יְהוָה: ׀ וְאֲנָכִי מַעֲשִׂיהֶם  
 וּמַחֲשַׁבְתֵּיהֶם בָּאָה לְקַבֵּץ אֶת־כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם וְהַלְשִׁנּוֹת  
 וּבָאוּ וּרְאוּ אֶת־כְּבוֹדִי: ׀ וְשִׁמְתִי בָהֶם אוֹת וְשַׁלַּחְתִּי  
 מֵהֶם ׀ פְּלִיטִים אֶל־הַגּוֹיִם תִּרְשִׁישׁ פּוּל וְלוּד מִשְׁכֵּי

essence is through humility, simplicity and sincere dedication.

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

קִשַׁת תְּבַל וַיִּזְנוּ הָאֲנִיִּים הַרְחִלְקִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־שָׁמְעוּ  
 אֶת־שִׁמְעֵי וְלֹא־רָאוּ אֶת־כְּבוֹדִי וְהִגִּידוּ אֶת־כְּבוֹדִי  
 בְּגוֹיִם: <sup>כ</sup> וְהֵבִיאוּ אֶת־כָּל־אֲחֵיכֶם מִכָּל־הַגּוֹיִם |  
 מִנְחָה | לַיהוָה בְּסוּסִים וּבְרֶכֶב וּבַצִּבִּיּוֹת וּבַפָּרָדִים  
 וּבַבְּרִכּוֹת עַל הַר קְדְשֵׁי יְרוּשָׁלַם אָמַר יְהוָה  
 כְּאֲשֶׁר יָבִיאוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה בְּכָל־יְהוָה  
 בֵּית יְהוָה: <sup>כא</sup> וְגַם־מֵהֶם אֶקַּח לְפָהֲנַיִם לְלוֹיִם אָמַר  
 יְהוָה: <sup>כב</sup> כִּי כְּאֲשֶׁר הַשָּׁמַיִם הַחֲדָשִׁים וְהָאָרֶץ  
 הַחֲדָשָׁה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה עֲמֹדִים לְפָנַי נְאֻם־יְהוָה כֵּן  
 יַעֲמֹד זְרַעְכֶם וְשִׁמְכֶם: <sup>כג</sup> וְהָיָה מִדֵּי־הַדָּשׁ בַּחֲדָשׁוֹ  
 וּמִדֵּי שַׁבַּת בְּשַׁבְּתוֹ יָבֹוא כָּל־בָּשָׂר לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְפָנַי  
 אָמַר יְהוָה: <sup>כד</sup> וַיִּצְאוּ וּרְאוּ בַּפָּנִי הָאֲנָשִׁים הַפְּשָׁעִים  
 בִּי כִּי תוֹלְעֵתֶם לֹא תָמוּת וְאֲשֶׁם לֹא תִכָּפֵה וְהָיוּ  
 הָרְאוּן לְכָל־בָּשָׂר: <sup>כה</sup> וְהָיָה מִדֵּי־הַדָּשׁ בַּחֲדָשׁוֹ וּמִדֵּי  
 שַׁבַּת בְּשַׁבְּתוֹ יָבֹוא כָּל־בָּשָׂר לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְפָנַי  
 אָמַר יְהוָה:

declare My glory among the nations. <sup>20</sup> 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.

<sup>21</sup> From them too I will take to be priests and Levites (even though they will have forgotten their lineage),” says God. <sup>22</sup> “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).”

<sup>23</sup> “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. <sup>24</sup> 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 mankind.”

<sup>25</sup> “It will then be, that every (first of the) new month, and every Shabbos, all flesh shall come to worship before Me,” says God.

New priests

Worship on every new month

If Sunday is also *Rosh Chodesh*, Chabad communities add (I Samuel 20:18,42):

וַיֹּאמֶר־לוֹ יְהוֹנָתָן מָחָר חֲדָשׁ וְנִפְקַדְתָּ כִּי יִפְקַד  
 מוֹשְׁבֶךָ: <sup>כב</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹנָתָן לְדוֹד לֵךְ לְשָׁלוֹם אֲשֶׁר  
 נִשְׁבַּעְנוּ שְׁנֵינוּ אֲנִיחֵנוּ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה לֵאמֹר יְהוָה יִהְיֶה |  
 בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ וּבֵין זְרַעִי וּבֵין זְרַעֲךָ עַד־עוֹלָם:

<sup>20:18</sup> Yonasan said to (David), “Tomorrow is the (first of the) new month. You shall be missed, because your seat will be empty.

<sup>42</sup> 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.’”

## CHANUKAH (FIRST SHABBOS) / שבת חנוכה (א)

(Zechariah 2:14 – 4:7)

The *Maftir* readings for *Shabbos Chanukah I* are on page 403-4.

ב י רְנִי וְשִׂמְחִי בַת־צִיּוֹן כִּי הִנְנִי בָא וְשִׁכְנִיתִי  
 בְּתוֹכְךָ נְאֻם־יְהוָה: <sup>כא</sup> וְנִלְוֹוּ גוֹיִם רַבִּים אֶל־יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם

<sup>2:14</sup> “Sing and rejoice, daughter of Tziyon, for I am coming (to Jerusalem) and I will dwell in your midst,” says God. <sup>15</sup> “Many nations will attach them-

Return of the Divine Presence

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).

selves 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.

Restoration of the Land <sup>16</sup> 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). <sup>17</sup> 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).

The First Vision: High Priest in “Soiled Garments” <sup>3:1</sup> (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 him (for failing to rebuke his children when they married non-Jewish women).

<sup>2</sup> (An angel of) God said to Satan, “God will reprimand you, O Satan! He Who chooses Yerushalayim will reprimand you! Why, this (Yehoshua was miraculously saved like) a brand rescued from fire (so how can you prosecute him)?”

<sup>3</sup> Now, Yehoshua was wearing ‘soiled clothes’ (i.e. sins) while standing before the angel. <sup>4</sup> (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).”

<sup>5</sup> 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 <sup>6</sup> (Afterwards,) God’s angel warned Yehoshua, saying, <sup>7</sup> “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

הָיָא וְהָיוּ לִי לְעָם וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכְךָ וַיְדַעַתְּ כִּי־יְהוָה  
 צָבָאוֹת שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלֶיךָ: 16 וְנָחַל יְהוָה אֶת־יְהוּדָה  
 חָלְקוּ עַל אֲדָמַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ וּבָחַר עוֹד בִּירוּשָׁלָּם: 17 הִם  
 כָּל־בָּשָׂר מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה כִּי גַעֲזוּ מִמַּעוֹן קֹדְשׁוֹ:  
 ג ׀ וַיְרַאֲנִי אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל עֹמֵד לִפְנֵי  
 מְלֶאכֶּה יְהוָה וְהַשָּׁטָן עֹמֵד עַל־יְמִינוֹ לְשַׁמְנוֹ: 2 וַיֹּאמֶר  
 יְהוָה אֶל־הַשָּׁטָן יִגְעַר יְהוָה בְּךָ הַשָּׁטָן וַיִּגְעַר יְהוָה  
 בְּךָ הַבָּחַר בִּירוּשָׁלָּם הֲלוֹא זֶה אֹד מִצֵּל מֵאֵשׁ:  
 3 וַיְהוֹשֻׁעַ הָיָה לְבָשׁ בְּגָדִים צוּאִים וְעֹמֵד לִפְנֵי  
 הַמְּלָאכֶּה: 4 וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָעֹמְדִים לִפְנֵי לֵאמֹר  
 הֲסִירוּ הַבְּגָדִים הַצּוּאִים מֵעָלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו רֵא אֶה  
 הַעֲבַרְתִּי מֵעָלֶיךָ עוֹנֶךָ וְהִלְבַּשׁ אֶתְךָ מִחֻלְצוֹת:  
 5 וַאֲמַר יְשִׁימוּ צִנּוֹף טְהוֹר עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ וַיִּשְׁימוּ הַצִּנּוֹף  
 הַטְּהוֹר עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ וַיִּלְבַּשְׁהוּ בְּגָדִים וּמְלֶאכֶּה יְהוָה  
 עֹמֵד: 6 וַיַּעַד מְלֶאכֶּה יְהוָה בְּיְהוֹשֻׁעַ לֵאמֹר:  
 7 כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֱם־בְּדַרְכֵי תֵלֵךְ וְאִם  
 אֶת־מִשְׁמַרְתִּי תִשְׁמַר וְגַם־אֶתְּךָ תִּדְרִין אֶת־בֵּיתִי

**HAFTARAH OF CHANUKAH (FIRST SHABBOS)**

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 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* 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** הָלוֹא זֶה אֹד 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

וְגַם תִּשְׁמַר אֶת-חֲצְרֵי וְנָתַתִּי לָךְ מֵהַלְלִים בֵּין  
הַעֲמֻדִים הָאֵלֶּה: <sup>ה</sup> שְׁמַעֲנָא יְהוֹשֻׁעַ | הַכְּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל  
אֶתְּה וְרַעֲיָךְ הַיֹּשְׁבִים לְפָנֶיךָ כִּי-אֲנֹשִׁי מוֹפֵת הִמָּה  
כִּי-הֲנִי מֵבִיא אֶת-עַבְדֵי צֶמַח: <sup>ט</sup> כִּי | הִנֵּה הָאֶבֶן  
אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְפָנַי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ עַל-אֶבֶן אַחַת שְׁבַעֶה  
עֵינַיִם הֲנִי מִפְתִּיחַ פֶּתָחָהּ נֶאֱמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וּמִשְׁתִּי  
אֶת-עֵזֶן הָאֶרֶץ-הַזֶּה בְּיוֹם אֶחָד: <sup>י</sup> בְּיוֹם הַזֶּה הוּא נֶאֱמַר  
יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת תִּקְרְאוּ אִישׁ לְרַעְהוּ אֶל-תַּחַת גִּפְזוֹ  
וְאֶל-תַּחַת תְּאֵנָה: <sup>ד</sup> וְיִשֵּׁב הַמְּלֶאךָ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי  
וַיַּעֲרֵנִי כְּאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר-יַעֲזוֹר מִשְׁנָתוֹ: <sup>ז</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי מָה  
אַתָּה רֹאֶה וְאָמַר וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי רֹאֵתִי | וְהִנֵּה מְנוֹרַת זָהָב  
בְּלֶה וּגְלָה עַל-רֹאשָׁהּ וּשְׁבַעֶה נִרְתִּיָה עָלֶיהָ שְׁבַעֶה  
וּשְׁבַעֶה מוֹעֲקוֹת לְנִרוֹת אֲשֶׁר עַל-רֹאשָׁהּ: <sup>ח</sup> וּשְׁנַיִם  
זֵיתִים עָלֶיהָ אֶחָד מִיְמִין הַגְּלָה וְאֶחָד עַל-שְׂמֹאלָהּ:  
- וְאֵעֵן וְאָמַר אֶל-הַמְּלֶאךָ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי לֵאמֹר מַה-אֵלֶּה  
אֲדַנִּי: <sup>ה</sup> וַיַּעַן הַמְּלֶאךָ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי הֲלוֹא  
יָדַעְתָּ מַה-הִמָּה אֵלֶּה וְאָמַר לֹא אֲדַנִּי: <sup>ו</sup> וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר  
אֵלַי לֵאמֹר זֶה דְּבַר-יְהוָה אֶל-זְרַבְבָּל לֵאמֹר לֹא  
בְּחֵיל וְלֹא בְכַח כִּי אִם-בְּרוּחִי אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת:  
- מִי-אַתָּה הִרְ-הַגְּדוֹל לְפָנַי זְרַבְבָּל לְמִישֵׁר וְהוֹצִיא  
אֶת-הָאֶבֶן הָרִאשֹׁה תִּשְׂאוֹת תָּן תָּן לָהּ:

(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).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>8</sup> 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).”

<sup>9</sup> “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 land in one day. <sup>10</sup> 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).”

<sup>41</sup> Then, the angel that spoke with me returned and roused me, like a man woken from his sleep.

<sup>2</sup> “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). <sup>3</sup> Near it are two olive (trees), one to the right of the bowl and one to its left.”

<sup>4</sup> Then I spoke up and asked the angel that spoke with me, “My master, what are these (alluding to)?”

<sup>5</sup> “Don’t you know what they are?” replied the angel that spoke with me.

“No, my master!” I said.

<sup>6</sup> Then he answered me as follows, “This is the word of God about (Mashiach, a descendant of) Zerubavel: ‘Not

Second vision: the Menorah

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

<sup>7</sup> ‘Who are you (Gog and Magog to appear as) a great mountain in Zerubavel’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!”’”

single Jew, and God’s love to the Jew which is extended regardless of his level of observance (Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayechi 5751; Mikeitz 5745).

**3:7.** **וְנָתַתִּי לָךְ מֵהַלְלִים בֵּין הַעֲמֻדִים 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 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).



If Shabbos is *Rosh Chodesh*, Chabad communities add the following after the *Haftarah*\* (Isaiah 66:1,23-24; ibid. 23; I Samuel 20:18,42):

<sup>66:1</sup>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?<sup>23</sup> “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. <sup>24</sup> 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 mankind. <sup>23</sup> It will then be, that every (first of the) new month, and every Shabbos, all flesh shall come to worship before Me,” says God.

<sup>20:18</sup> Yonasan said to (David), “Tomorrow is the (first of the) new month. You shall be missed, because your seat will be empty. <sup>42</sup> 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.’”

א בַּה אָמַר יְהוָה הַשָּׁמַיִם כְּסֵאֵי וְהָאָרֶץ הַדָּם רַגְלֵי  
 אֵי-יְהוָה בַּיִת אֲשֶׁר תִּבְנֶנּוּ-לִי וְאֵי-יְהוָה מְקוֹם מְנוּחָתִי:  
 בַּ וְהָיָה מִדֵּי-הַדָּשׁ בַּחֲדָשׁוֹ וּמִדֵּי שַׁבַּת בְּשַׁבְּתוֹ יָבֹא  
 כָּל-בָּשָׂר לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְפָנַי אָמַר יְהוָה: כִּד וַיֵּצְאוּ  
 וּרְאוּ בַּפְּנֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים הַפְּשָׁעִים בִּי כִי תוֹלְעֵתָם לֹא  
 תָמוּת וְאֲשָׁם לֹא תִכְבֶּה וְהָיוּ הַרְאֹזִן לְכָל-בָּשָׂר:  
 בַּ וְהָיָה מִדֵּי-הַדָּשׁ בַּחֲדָשׁוֹ וּמִדֵּי שַׁבַּת בְּשַׁבְּתוֹ יָבֹא  
 כָּל-בָּשָׂר לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְפָנַי אָמַר יְהוָה:

ה וַיֹּאמְרוּ-לוֹ יְהוֹנָתָן מֶחֱרַח הַדָּשׁ וְנִפְקְדֹתַי כִּי יִפְקֹד  
 מוֹשָׁבֶךָ: כַּ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹנָתָן לְדָוִד לֵךְ לְשָׁלוֹם אֲשֶׁר  
 נִשְׁבַּעְנוּ שְׁנֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה לֵאמֹר יְהוָה יְהִי א  
 בֵּינוּ וּבֵינְךָ וּבֵין זְרַעִי וּבֵין זְרַעֲךָ עַד-עוֹלָם:

🕯 CHANUKAH (SECOND SHABBOS) / שבת חנוכה (ב) 🕯

(Kings I 7:40 – 50)

The *Maftir* reading for *Shabbos Chanukah II* is on page 404.

7:40 **C**hirom then made the pots, shovels and basins. Chiram completed all the work that he had done on behalf of King Shlomo for the House of God:

Columns <sup>41</sup> (The) two columns, the two bowls of the spheres which were on top of the columns, and the two nets to

ז וַיַּעַשׂ חִירֹם אֶת-הַכִּיּוֹת וְאֶת-הַיָּעִים וְאֶת-  
 הַמְּזֻרְקוֹת וַיְכַל חִירֹם לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת-כָּל-הַמְּלָאכָה  
 אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְמֶלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה בַּיִת יְהוָה: כַּא עֲמֻדָּים  
 שְׁנַיִם וְגִלְתֵּי הַכֶּתֶרֶת אֲשֶׁר-עַל-רֹאשׁ הָעֲמֻדָּים

🕯 HAFTARAH OF CHANUKAH (SECOND SHABBOS)

This *Haftarah* summarizes the copper-work completed by Chiram, the master craftsman of Shlomo’s Temple (see *Haftarah for Parshas Vayakhel*, page 52), including small utensils, columns and their fixtures and the vat (40-47). The concluding section describes the golden vessels which were made by Shlomo himself: the Altar, Table, supplementary Menorahs—hence the connection to Chanukah—musical instruments, small utensils and the keys to the Inner House (48-49).

Why was a *Haftarah* which describes the *First Temple* chosen for the *second Shabbos* of Chanukah, and a *Haftarah* describing the *Second Temple* chosen for the *first Shabbos*? *Sefer ha-Eshkol* writes that the vision of Zechariah (*Second Temple*) read on the *first Shabbos* has a

stronger connection to Chanukah, since the story of Chanukah revolves around the *Second Temple*. Therefore it is read first (*Sefer ha-Eshkol*, Auerbach edition, p. 66). A further explanation is based on the principle that “we increase in matters of holiness and do not decrease” (*Shabbos* 21b), from which it follows that the *second Shabbos* of Chanukah must be on a higher level than the first. Therefore, on this *second Shabbos* we read a *Haftarah* about the *First Temple*, which enjoyed a superior spiritual standing, being that the *Second Temple* lacked “five key elements...the Ark, its lid, the Cherubs, fire, Divine Presence and Divine inspiration” (*Yoma* 21b; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz* 5740, par. 18).

**7:40** וַיַּעַשׂ חִירֹם—Chiram then made etc. At first glance, the *Haftarah’s* connection with Chanukah appears to be superficial. Only a

\*See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 187ff.

שְׁתֵּי וְהַשְּׁבָכוֹת שְׁתֵּי לְכַפּוֹת אֶת־שְׁתֵּי גִלְתֵּי  
הַכְּתָרֹת אֲשֶׁר עַל־רֹאשׁ הָעַמּוּדִים: <sup>מב</sup> וְאֶת־הָרַמְנִים  
אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת לְשְׁתֵּי הַשְּׁבָכוֹת שְׁנֵי־טוּרִים רַמְנִים  
לְשְׁבָכָה הָאֶחָת לְכַפּוֹת אֶת־שְׁתֵּי גִלְתֵּי הַכְּתָרֹת  
אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הָעַמּוּדִים: <sup>מג</sup> וְאֶת־הַמְּכַנּוֹת עֶשֶׂר  
וְאֶת־הַבִּירֹת עֶשְׂרֵה עַל־הַמְּכַנּוֹת: <sup>מד</sup> וְאֶת־הַיָּם  
הָאֶחָד וְאֶת־הַבָּקָר שְׁנַיִם־עֶשֶׂר תַּחַת הַיָּם:  
<sup>מה</sup> וְאֶת־הַסִּירוֹת וְאֶת־הַיַּעֲשִׂים וְאֶת־הַמְּזֻרְקוֹת וְאֶת־  
כָּל־הַכֵּלִים הָאֵלֶּה (וְהָאֵלֶּה כִּי) אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה חִירָם לְמֶלֶךְ  
שְׁלֹמֹה בֵּית יְהוָה נְחֹשֶׁת מְמֻרָט: <sup>מו</sup> בְּכֶבֶד הִירְדָן  
יֻצְקָם הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּמַעְבַּה הָאֲדָמָה בֵּין סָבוֹת וּבֵין צָרְתָן:  
<sup>מז</sup> וַיִּנָּח שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת־כָּל־הַכֵּלִים מְרַב מְאֹד מְאֹד לֹא  
נִחְקַר מִשְׁקַל הַנְּחֹשֶׁת: <sup>מח</sup> וַיַּעַשׂ שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת  
כָּל־הַכֵּלִים אֲשֶׁר בֵּית יְהוָה אֵת מִזְבַּח הַזָּהָב  
וְאֶת־הַשְּׁלֶחָן אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו לֶחֶם הַפָּנִים וְהַבִּירֹת:  
<sup>מט</sup> וְאֶת־הַמְּנֹרֹת הַמֵּשׁ מִיַּמִּין וְהַמֵּשׁ מִשְׁמָאוֹל לְפָנָיו  
הַדְּבִיר וְהַבִּירֹת וְהַפָּרָח וְהַנְּרֹת וְהַמְּלָקָחִים וְהַבִּירֹת:  
וְהַסְּפֹת וְהַמְּזֻמְרוֹת וְהַמְּזֻרְקוֹת וְהַכַּפּוֹת וְהַמַּחְתּוֹת  
וְהַבִּירֹת וְהַפָּתוֹת לְדַלְתוֹת הַבַּיִת הַפְּנִימִי לְקֹדֶשׁ  
וְהַקְּדָשִׁים לְדַלְתֵי הַבַּיִת לְהִיכָל וְהַבִּירֹת:

cover the two bowls of the spheres which were on top of the columns,

<sup>42</sup> The four hundred pomegranates for the two nets: two rows of (one hundred) pomegranates for each net to cover the two bowls of the spheres, which were on top of the columns.

<sup>43</sup> The ten bases, and the ten basins (set) upon the bases.

<sup>44</sup> The one vat, with the twelve (copper) oxen under the vat.

The vat

<sup>45</sup> The pots, shovels and basins.

All these utensils which Chiram made on behalf of King Shlomo for the House of God (were made of) refined copper. <sup>46</sup> The King had them cast in earthen molds in the plain of the Jordan, between Sukos and Tzarsan.

<sup>47</sup> Shlomo left all the (copper) utensils (unweighed) because there were so very many, (so) the weight of the copper was not investigated.

Vessels not weighed

<sup>48</sup> Shlomo made all the vessels which were for the House of God:

The golden Altar, and the golden Table, on which the showbread was placed, <sup>49</sup> and the (supplementary) Menorahs of precious gold (in addition to the menorah made by Moshe): five on its right and five on its left, in front of the inner sanctuary. The(ir) flower(s), lamps and tongs were made of gold; <sup>50</sup> the hand-drums, the (various) musical instruments, the basins, spoons and firepans were of precious gold; and the keys to the doors of the Inner House (which is) the Holy of Holies, (and) to the doors of the house, (which is) the Sanctuary, were made of gold.

Shlomo makes golden vessels

passing reference is made near the end of the reading to the Menorahs which Shlomo made (v. 49), and most of the *Haftarah* discusses copper-work crafted by Chiram, a topic which appears to have no special connection to Chanukah. Why do we not read from the following section in the Book of Kings which speaks of the installation of the vessels in the dedication of the Temple, a theme which is directly related to Chanukah when the Temple was re-dedicated in the time of the Hasmoneans?

Being that “we increase in matters of holiness and do not decrease” (*Shabbos* 21b), this second and final *Haftarah* of Chanukah, which describes the crafting of the vessels, seems to be teaching us that *making* the vessels is the greatest achievement of all, even more so than *installing*

or *using* them! This rather bizarre conclusion points to a profound mystical truth: that *preparing* the world for Divine revelation (“making vessels”) is an even greater accomplishment than bringing the revelation itself (“lighting the Menorah”). Holiness and Godliness will only rest in a place which is fitting, so there is nothing especially radical about bringing holiness to a place which is *already* prepared for it. A truly remarkable feat is to take something which is unreceptive and repellent to the notion of holiness, and to transform it into a fitting receptacle.

Therefore, we can appreciate that the spiritual motif of this second *Haftarah*, that of “making vessels” is the most profound message of all to be found in the *Haftarot* of Chanukah (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 424ff.).

## MAFTIR FOR SHABBOS ROSH CHODESH / מפטיר לשבת ראש חדש

(Bamidbar 28:9-15)

בשמן לאיל האחד: » ועשרון עשרון סלת מנחה בלולה  
בשמן לבבש האחד עלה ריח ניהח אשה ליהוה: » ונספיהם  
חצי ההין יהיה לפך ושלישת ההין לאיל ורביעת ההין  
לכבש יין זאת עלת חדש בחדשו לחדשי השנה: » ושעיר  
עזים אחד לחטאת ליהוה על-עלת התמיד יעשה ונספו: ס

Haftarah is on page 396.

» וביום השבת שני כבשים בני-שנה תמימם ושני עשרנים  
סלת מנחה בלולה בשמן ונספו: » עלת שבת בשבתו  
על-עלת התמיד ונספה: פ » ובראש חודשיכם תקריבו  
עלה ליהוה פרים בני-בקר שנים ואיל אחד כבשים  
בני-שנה שבעה תמימם: י » ושלתה עשרנים סלת מנחה  
בלולה בשמן לפך האחד ושני עשרנים סלת מנחה בלולה

## MAFTIR FOR SHABBOS CHANUKAH / מפטיר לשבת חנוכה

(Bamidbar 6:22 - 7:89)

המוזבח: ס י ויהי המקריב ביום הראשון את-קרבתו נחשון  
בן-עמינדב למטה יהודה: » וקרבתו קערת-כסף אחת  
שלישים ומאה משקלה מזרק אחד כסף שבעים שקל בשקל  
הקדש שניהם | מלאים סלת בלולה בשמן למנחה: י »  
אחת עשרה זהב מלאה קמרת: » פך אחד בן-בקר איל אחד  
כבש-אחד בן-שנתו לעלה: » ושעיר-עזים אחד לחטאת:  
י ולזבח השלמים בקר שנים אילם חמשה עתודים חמשה  
כבשים בני-שנה חמשה זה קרבן נחשון בן-עמינדב: פ

### SECOND DAY OF CHANUKAH

י ביום השני הקריב נתנאל בן-צוער נשיא יששכר: י » הקרב  
את-קרבתו קערת-כסף אחת שלישים ומאה משקלה מזרק  
אחד כסף שבעים שקל בשקל הקדש שניהם | מלאים סלת  
בלולה בשמן למנחה: » פך אחת עשרה זהב מלאה קמרת:  
» פך אחד בן-בקר איל אחד כבש-אחד בן-שנתו לעלה:  
» ושעיר-עזים אחד לחטאת: » ולזבח השלמים בקר שנים  
אילם חמשה עתודים חמשה כבשים בני-שנה חמשה זה  
קרבן נתנאל בן-צוער: פ

### THIRD DAY OF CHANUKAH

» ביום השלישי נשיא לבני זבולן אליאב בן-חלן: » קרבנו  
קערת-כסף אחת שלישים ומאה משקלה מזרק אחד כסף  
שבעים שקל בשקל הקדש שניהם | מלאים סלת בלולה  
בשמן למנחה: » פך אחת עשרה זהב מלאה קמרת: » פך  
אחד בן-בקר איל אחד כבש-אחד בן-שנתו לעלה:

### FIRST DAY OF CHANUKAH

Some communities have the custom to begin here.

» וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: » דבר אל-אהרן ואל-בניו  
לאמר כה תברכו את-בני ישראל אמור להם: ס » וברכה  
יהוה וישמרו: ס » יאר יהוה | פניו אליך ויחנה: ס » וישא  
יהוה | פניו אליך וישם לך שלום: ס » ושמו את-שמי על-  
בני ישראל ואני אברכם: ס

In many communities, including Chabad, the custom is to begin here.

ז » ויהי ביום כלות משה להקים את-המשכן וימשה אתו  
ויקדש אתו ואת-כל-כליו ואת-המוזבח ואת-כל-כליו  
וימשחם ויקדש אתם: » ויקריבו נשיאי ישראל ראשי בית  
אבתם הם נשיאי המפתת הם העמדים על-הפקדים: » ויביאו  
את-קרבתם לפני יהוה שש-עגלות צב ושני עשר בקר עגלה  
על-שני הנשאים ושור לאחד ויקריבו אותם לפני המשכן:  
» ויאמר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: » קח מאתם והיו לעבד את-  
עבדת אהל מועד ונתתה אותם אל-הלויים איש כפי עבדתו:  
» ויקח משה את-העגלות ואת-הבקר ויתן אותם אל-הלויים:  
» ואת | שתי העגלות ואת ארבעת הבקר נתן לבני גרשון כפי  
עבדתם: » ואת | ארבע העגלות ואת שמנת הבקר נתן לבני  
מרי כפי עבדתם ביד איתמר בן-אהרן הכהן: » ולבני קהת  
לא נתן כי-עבדת הקדש עליהם בפתח יסאו: » ויקריבו  
הנשאים את חנפת המזבח ביום המשח אתו ויקריבו  
הנשאים את-קרבתם לפני המזבח: » ויאמר יהוה אל-משה  
נשיא אחד ליום נשיא אחד ליום יקריבו את-קרבתם לחנפת

SEVENTH DAY OF CHANUKAH

כח ביום השביעי נשיא לבני אפרים אלישמע בן-עמיהוד:  
 מט קרבנו קערת-כסף אחת שלשים ומאה משקלה מזרק  
 אחד כסף שבעים שקל בשקל הקדש שניהם | מלאים סלת  
 בלולה בשמן למנחה: נ כף אחת עשרה זהב מלאה קמרת:  
 נא פר אחד בן-בקר איל אחד כבש-אחד בן-שנתו לעלה:  
 נב שעיר-עזים אחד לחטאת: נג ולזבח השלמים כקר שנים  
 אילם חמשה עתדים חמשה כבשים בני-שנה חמשה זה  
 קרבן אלישמע בן-עמיהוד: פ

EIGHTH DAY OF CHANUKAH

נד ביום השמיני נשיא לבני מנשה גמליאל בן-פדהצור:  
 נה קרבנו קערת-כסף אחת שלשים ומאה משקלה מזרק  
 אחד כסף שבעים שקל בשקל הקדש שניהם | מלאים  
 סלת בלולה בשמן למנחה: נו כף אחת עשרה זהב  
 מלאה קמרת: נז פר אחד בן-בקר איל אחד כבש-אחד  
 בן-שנתו לעלה: נח שעיר-עזים אחד לחטאת: נט ולזבח  
 השלמים כקר שנים אילם חמשה עתדים חמשה  
 כבשים בני-שנה חמשה זה קרבן גמליאל בן-פדהצור: פ  
 ס ביום התשיעי נשיא לבני בנימן אבידן בן-נדעני: סא קרבנו  
 קערת-כסף אחת שלשים ומאה משקלה מזרק אחד כסף  
 שבעים שקל בשקל הקדש שניהם | מלאים סלת בלולה  
 בשמן למנחה: סב כף אחת עשרה זהב מלאה קמרת: סג פר  
 אחד בן-בקר איל אחד כבש-אחד בן-שנתו לעלה:  
 סד שעיר-עזים אחד לחטאת: סה ולזבח השלמים כקר שנים  
 אילם חמשה עתדים חמשה כבשים בני-שנה חמשה זה  
 קרבן אבידן בן-נדעני: פ סו ביום העשירי נשיא לבני הן  
 אחיעזר בן-עמישדי: סז קרבנו קערת-כסף אחת שלשים  
 ומאה משקלה מזרק אחד כסף שבעים שקל בשקל הקדש  
 שניהם | מלאים סלת בלולה בשמן למנחה: סח כף 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 כקר שנים אילם חמשה עתדים חמשה  
 כבשים בני-שנה חמשה זה קרבן אחיעזר בן-עמישדי: פ  
 עב ביום עשתי עשר יום נשיא לבני אשר פגעאל בן-  
 עכרון: עג קרבנו קערת-כסף אחת שלשים ומאה משקלה  
 מזרק אחד כסף שבעים שקל בשקל הקדש שניהם | מלאים

כה שעיר-עזים אחד לחטאת: כס ולזבח השלמים כקר שנים  
 אילם חמשה עתדים חמשה כבשים בני-שנה חמשה זה  
 קרבן אליאב בן-חלץ: פ

FOURTH DAY OF CHANUKAH

ל ביום הרביעי נשיא לבני ראובן אליצור בן-שדיאור:  
 לא קרבנו קערת-כסף אחת שלשים ומאה משקלה מזרק  
 אחד כסף שבעים שקל בשקל הקדש שניהם | מלאים סלת  
 בלולה בשמן למנחה: לב כף אחת עשרה זהב מלאה קמרת:  
 לד פר אחד בן-בקר איל אחד כבש-אחד בן-שנתו לעלה:  
 לה שעיר-עזים אחד לחטאת: לה ולזבח השלמים כקר שנים  
 אילם חמשה עתדים חמשה כבשים בני-שנה חמשה זה  
 קרבן אליצור בן-שדיאור: פ

SIXTH DAY OF CHANUKAH

The sixth day of Chanukah is always Rosh Chodesh. We read from three Torahs. From the first Torah we read six Aliyos from the weekly Parsha. From the second Torah we read the following:

ט וביום השבת שני-כבשים בני-שנה תמימם ושני עשרנים  
 סלת מנחה בלולה בשמן ונסכו: י עלת שבת בשבתו  
 על-עלת התמיד ונסכה: פ יא ובראש חודשיכם תקריבו  
 עלה ליהודה פרים בני-בקר שנים ואיל אחד כבשים  
 בני-שנה שבעה תמימם: יב ושלישה עשרנים סלת מנחה  
 בלולה בשמן לפר האחד ושני עשרנים סלת מנחה בלולה  
 בשמן לאיל האחד: יג ועשרן עשרון סלת מנחה בלולה  
 בשמן לכבש האחד עלה ריח ניהח אשה ליהודה: יד ונסביהם  
 חצי ההין והיה לפר ושלישת ההין לאיל ורביעת ההין  
 לכבש יין זאת עלת חדש בחדשו לחדשי השנה: טו ושעיר  
 עזים אחד לחטאת ליהודה על-עלת התמיד ועשה ונסכו: ס

From the third Torah, we read the following Maftir.

כב ביום הששי נשיא לבני גד אליסף בן-דעואל:  
 כג קרבנו קערת-כסף אחת שלשים ומאה משקלה מזרק  
 אחד כסף שבעים שקל בשקל הקדש שניהם | מלאים סלת  
 בלולה בשמן למנחה: כד כף אחת עשרה זהב מלאה קמרת:  
 כה פר אחד בן-בקר איל אחד כבש-אחד בן-שנתו לעלה:  
 כו שעיר-עזים אחד לחטאת: כז ולזבח השלמים כקר שנים  
 אילם חמשה עתדים חמשה כבשים בני-שנה חמשה זה  
 קרבן אליסף בן-דעואל: פ

קָמַרְתָּ כֶּסֶף שְׁתַּיִם עֲשֶׂה מְזוּרְקֵי-כֶּסֶף שְׁנַיִם עֶשֶׂר כִּפּוֹת זָהָב  
 שְׁתַּיִם עֲשֶׂה: <sup>פ</sup>ה שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה הַקְּעֵרָה הָאֶחָת לְכֶסֶף וְשִׁבְעִים  
 הַמְּזוּרְקֵי הָאֶחָד כֹּל כֶּסֶף הַכֵּלִים אֲלֵפִים וָאַרְבַּע-מֵאוֹת בְּשֶׁקֶל  
 הַקֹּדֶשׁ: <sup>פ</sup>ו כִּפּוֹת זָהָב שְׁתַּיִם-עֲשֶׂרָה מְלֵאֹת קְמַרְתָּ עֲשֶׂרָה  
 עֲשֶׂרָה הַכֶּף בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ כָּל-זָהָב הַכִּפּוֹת עֲשָׂרִים וּמֵאָה:  
 (מַפְטִיר) <sup>פ</sup>ז כָּל-הַבְּקָר לְעֹלָה שְׁנַיִם עֶשֶׂר וּמִנְחָתָם וְשַׁעֲרֵי עֲזִים שְׁנַיִם  
 כִּבְשִׂים בְּנֵי-שָׁנָה שְׁנַיִם עֶשֶׂר וּמִנְחָתָם וְשַׁעֲרֵי עֲזִים שְׁנַיִם  
 עֶשֶׂר לְחֻטָּאת: <sup>פ</sup>ח וְכֹל בְּקָר | זִבְחַ הַשְּׁלָמִים עֲשָׂרִים וָאַרְבַּעָה  
 פָּרִים אֵילִם שְׁשִׁים עֲתֻדִים שְׁשִׁים כִּבְשִׂים בְּנֵי-שָׁנָה שְׁשִׁים  
 זֹאת חֲנֻכַּת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אַחֲרֵי הַמִּשְׁחָ אֹתוֹ: <sup>פ</sup>ט וּבָבֹא מִשָּׁה  
 אֶל-אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לְדַבֵּר אֹתוֹ וַיִּשְׁמַע אֶת-הַקּוֹל מִדְּבַר אֱלֹוִי  
 מֵעַל הַכַּפֹּרֶת אֲשֶׁר עַל-אֶרֶץ הָעֹדֹת מִבֵּין שְׁנֵי הַכְּרֻבִּים וַיְדַבֵּר  
 אֵלָיו: <sup>פ</sup> פ פ

סֵלֶת בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: <sup>ע</sup>ד כֶּף אֶחָת עֲשֶׂרָה זָהָב מְלֵאָה  
 קְמַרְתָּ: <sup>ע</sup>ה פֶּר אֶחָד בֶּן-בָּקָר אֵיל אֶחָד כִּבְשִׂ-אֶחָד בֶּן-שָׁנָתוֹ  
 לְעֹלָה: <sup>ע</sup>ו שְׁעִיר-עֲזִים אֶחָד לְחֻטָּאת: <sup>ע</sup>ז וְזִבְחַ הַשְּׁלָמִים בְּקָר  
 שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עֲתֻדִים חֲמִשָּׁה כִּבְשִׂים בְּנֵי-שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה  
 זֶה קָרְבַּן פְּגֻעֵי-אֵל בֶּן-עֶכְרָן: <sup>פ</sup> ח בְּיוֹם שְׁנַיִם עֶשֶׂר יוֹם נִשְׂיָא  
 לְבְנֵי נִפְתָּלִי אַחִירַע בֶּן-עֵינָן: <sup>ע</sup>ט קָרְבָּנוֹ קְעֵרַת-כֶּסֶף אֶחָת  
 שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מְזוּרְקֵי אֶחָד לְכֶסֶף שִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל  
 הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְׁנַיִם | מְלֵאִים סֵלֶת בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: <sup>פ</sup> כ כֶּף  
 אֶחָת עֲשֶׂרָה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קְמַרְתָּ: <sup>פ</sup>א פֶּר אֶחָד בֶּן-בָּקָר אֵיל  
 אֶחָד כִּבְשִׂ-אֶחָד בֶּן-שָׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה: <sup>פ</sup>ב שְׁעִיר-עֲזִים אֶחָד לְחֻטָּאת:  
<sup>פ</sup>ג וְזִבְחַ הַשְּׁלָמִים בְּקָר שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עֲתֻדִים חֲמִשָּׁה  
 כִּבְשִׂים בְּנֵי-שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קָרְבַּן אַחִירַע בֶּן-עֵינָן: <sup>פ</sup> ד (שְׁבִיעִי)  
<sup>פ</sup>ה זֹאת | חֲנֻכַּת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ בְּיוֹם הַמִּשְׁחָ אֹתוֹ מֵאֵת נְשִׂאֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל





# Bibliography

---

רשימת המקורות

- Abarbanel** — Rabbi Don Yitzchak Abarbanel (1437-1508), famous Jewish philosopher and leader of Spanish Jewry. Authored an extensive, running commentary to the entire Bible.
- Alshich** — Popular commentary on the Bible by Rabbi Moshe Alshich (1508-1593?), Rabbi and preacher in Safed in the Land of Israel. Often cited in Chassidic discourses.
- Alter Rebbe** — Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, author of the *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* and *Tanya*, the First Rebbe and founder of the Chabad Movement (1745-1812).
- Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch** — Major recodification of the *Shulchan Aruch* by Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi (the *Alter Rebbe*), author of the *Tanya*. Also known as *Shulchan Aruch Harav*. First section printed in *Shklov* in 1814.
- Aruch Ha'Shulchan** — Halachic code following the sequence of the *Shulchan Aruch*, where each law is analyzed according to its development from *Mishnah* and *Talmud* by R' Yechiel Michel Epstein, Rav of Novardok, Russia (1829-1908).
- Avos** — Tractate of *Mishnah* in Order of *Nezikin* (Damages) devoted exclusively to the ethical teachings of the Sages.
- Avos d'Rabbi Nasan** — Minor tractate by R. Nasan of Babylonia; a commentary on *Avos*.
- Ba'al Haturim** — Commentary on the Torah by Rabbi Ya'akov Meir ben Asher (1268-1340), author of the *Tur*, analyzing the significance of word usage. (See *Tur Ha'aruch*)
- Bach** — Acronym for "Bayis Chadash," a legal commentary on the *Tur* by R' Yoel Sirkis (c. 1561-1640).
- Bahag** — Acronym for *Ba'al Halachos Gedolos*, lit., "Master of Great Laws," an early halachic compendium by either Rabbi Shimon Kiara, Rabbi Yom Tov Elem, or Rabbi Yehuda'i Gaon (8th cent.).
- Bachaye** — Rabbi Bachaye ben Asher (1263-1340) of Saragosa, Spain. Author of a popular Torah commentary which incorporates literal, allegorical and kabbalistic interpretations, often cited in Chassidic discourses.
- Bamidbar Rabah** — The section of *Midrash Rabah* on the Book of Numbers. (See "Midrash Rabah")
- Bartenura** — Rabeinu Ovadiah, Italy (1445-1515), author of *Amar Nekei*, a supercommentary on Rashi's commentary to the Torah. Author of classic commentary to the *Mishnah*, printed in most editions.
- Bava Basra** — Talmudic tractate in Order of *Nezikin* (Damages).
- Bava Kama** — Talmudic tractate in Order of *Nezikin* (Damages).
- Bava Metzia** — Talmudic tractate in Order of *Nezikin* (Damages).
- Bechor Shor** — R' Yosef Bechor Shor (c.1140-1190). Talmudist of the school of the Tosafists who lived in Northern France. A disciple of Rabeinu Tam and a direct descendant of Yosef Hatzadik.
- Be'er Basadeh** — Supercommentary to Rashi's commentary to the Torah by Rabbi Meir Binyamin Menachem Danon of Bosnia, a student of Rabbi David Pardo (author of *Maskil leDavid*). First printed in 1806 in Jerusalem.
- Be'er Haitev** — Supercommentary to Rashi's commentary to the Torah by Rabbi Moshe Moss (c. 1540-1606) of Poland. Author of the Halachic work *Mateh Moshe*; a disciple of the *Maharshal*.
- 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 Bartenura. 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 Ukranian 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 וחי' מושקא** 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 **חיה בתיה** אברמסאן  
הרה"ג הרה"ח ר' **דוד אריה** 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:

הרה"ת **שמואל מרדכי זאב** הכהן וזוגתו מרת **פייגא דינה**,  
וילדיהם **שיינא אסתר שפרה**, **דוד אריה** וחי' **מושקא**  
**חנה** ובעלה הרה"ת **צבי אלימלך שפירא**  
וילדיהם חי' **מושקא**, **מנחם מענדל** ו**דוד אריה**  
**מנוחה רחל** ובעלה הרה"ת **יוסף יצחק בארבער**  
וילדיהם **איטא** וחי' **מושקא**  
**זעלדא** ובעלה הרה"ת **מיכאל אלעזר לערנער**  
וילדיהם חי' **מושקא** ו**שבת**  
**מנחם מענדל** הכהן, **סימא אסתר**, **שפרינצא לאה**, **יוסף יצחק** הכהן,  
**אברהם שלמה** הכהן, **חיה בתיה**, ו**דוד אריה** הכהן  
שיחיו לאורך ימים ושנים טובות

לעילוי נשמות  
ר' דוד וזוגתו לאה סלאגער  
ר' דוד וזוגתו רינה עטר  
זכרונם לברכה  
תהיינה נשמותיהם צרורות בצרור החיים



נדפס על ידי  
ר' דוד שיחי' סלאגער  
וזוגתו מרת לארא תחי'  
ובנותיהם:  
חנה ושרה מלכה



ולזכות  
ר' ראובן שיחי' סלאגער  
וזוגתו מרת מרים תחי'

**מוקדש**  
**לחיזוק התקשרות**  
**לכבוד קדושת אדוננו מורנו ורבנו**  
**נשיא דורנו**



ISBN 978-0-9725010-1-9



9 780972 501019