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

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CHUMASH - THE BOOK OF GENESIS

with commentary from Classic Rabbinic Texts and the Lubavitcher Rebbe

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Table of Contents

Preface ix
Foreword xi

Bereishis 1
Noach 39
Lech Lecha 69
Vayeira 99
Chayei Sarah 139
Toldos 165
Vayeitzei 191
Vayishlach 223
Vayeishev 257
Mikeitz 285
Vayigash 317
Vayechi 339

Haftaros 365

Bibliography 407

Foreword

What 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, Kabalah 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.[1]

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.

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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 that 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,"[2] Moose[3] 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 [4], Moore [5], Herczeg [6] and Scherman[7]. 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.[8]

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

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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[9], we have not omitted awkward words or abandoned translation for idiom. However, we have also rejected the opposite extreme exemplified by Scherman[7], 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*[10]). A significant number of these talks were

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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*[11] and *Sefer Hasichos*[12]).

The Sicha has a distinct style, described succinctly by Solomon[13]:

> *"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[14] 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[15] 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

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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[16]:

> *"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[17]. Thus, virtually every one of the Rebbe's "*Rashi Sichos*" climaxes in a mystical interpretation based on the teachings of Kabalah 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 Kabalah 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[18]. 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[19]. Ideas sampled from these sichos have been included at the beginning of each Parsha.

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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 *masoretes* 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.

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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

Cantillation Marks / טעמי המקרא

פַּשְׁטָא֙ מֻנַּח֙ זַרְקָא֙ מֻנַּח֙ סֶגוֹל֙ מֻנַּח֙ | מֻנַּח֙ רְבִיעִ֙י
מַהְפַּ֫ךְ פַּשְׁטָא֙ זָקֵף֙ קָטֹ֙ן זָקֵף־גָּד֙וֹל֙ מֵרְכָא֙ טִפְחָ֫א
מֻנַּח֙ אֶתְנַחְתָּ֫א פָּזֵ֙ר תְּלִישָׁא־קְטַנָּ֫ה
תְּלִישָׁא־גְּדוֹלָ֫ה קַדְמָ֫א וְאַזְלָ֫א אַזְלָא־גֵּרֵ֫שׁ גֵּרְשַׁ֙יִם
דַּרְגָּ֫א תְּבִ֙יר יְתִ֙יב פְּסִ֙יק | סוֹף־פָּסֽוּק׃ שַׁלְשֶׁ֫לֶת
קַרְנֵי־פָרָ֫ה מֵרְכָא־כְּפוּלָ֫ה יְרַ֙ח־בֶּן־יוֹמ֙וֹ׃

Blessings on Reading the Torah

The person who is called to the Torah takes hold of the handles of the *Sefer Torah* with his *tallis*[1], unrolls the *Sefer Torah* and, with his *tallis* (or the belt of the Torah) touches the beginning and end[2] of the reading. The scroll is then closed, he turns slightly to the right and says:

בָּרְכוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְבֹרָךְ׃

The congregation responds:

בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְבֹרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד׃

The person called to the Torah continues:

בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְבֹרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד׃

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים, וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת תּוֹרָתוֹ. בָּרוּךְ 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[3] 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:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת, וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נָטַע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ. בָּרוּךְ 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

פרשת בראשית

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. 1*ff; ibid.* p. 326)

א א בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֵת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֵת הָאָרֶץ: ב וְהָאָרֶץ הָיְתָה תֹהוּ וָבֹהוּ וְחֹשֶׁךְ עַל־פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֶפֶת

א בְּקַדְמִין בְּרָא יְיָ יַת שְׁמַיָּא וְיַת אַרְעָא:
ב וְאַרְעָא הֲוַת צַדְיָא וְרֵיקַנְיָא וַחֲשׁוֹכָא פָּרֵשׂ עַל אַפֵּי תְהוֹמָא וְרוּחָא מִן קֳדָם יְיָ מְנַשְּׁבָא עַל

*ב' רבתי

רש"י

(א) **בראשית.** אמר רבי יצחק, לא היה צריך להתחיל את התורה אלא מהחדש הזה לכם, שהיא מצוה הראשונה שנצטוו בה ישראל, ומה טעם פתח בבראשית, משום כח מעשיו הגיד לעמו לתת להם נחלת גויים[1], שאם יאמרו אומות העולם לישראל, ליסטים אתם, שכבשתם ארצות שבעה גויים, הם אומרים להם, כל הארץ של הקב"ה היא, הוא בראה ונתנה לאשר ישר בעיניו, ברצונו נתנה להם, וברצונו נטלה מהם ונתנה לנו: **בראשית ברא.** אין המקרא הזה אומר אלא דרשני, כמ"ש רז"ל[2] בשביל התורה שנקראת ראשית דרכו[3], ובשביל ישראל שנקראו ראשית תבואתו[4], ואם בשביל לפרשו כפשוטו כך פרשהו, בראשית בריית שמים וארץ, והארץ היתה תהו ובהו וחושך (וגו'), ויאמר אלהים יהי אור. ולא בא המקרא להורות סדר הבריאה לומר שאלו קדמו, שאם בא להורות כך, היה לו לכתוב, בראשונה ברא את השמים וגו', שאין לך ראשית במקרא שאינו דבוק לחבירו שלאחריו, כמו בראשית ממלכת יהויקים[5], ראשית ממלכתו[6], ראשית דגנך[7], אף כאן אתה אומר בראשית ברא אלהים וגו' כמו בראשית ברוא, ודומה לו תחלת דבר ה' בהושע, כלומר תחלת דבורו של הקב"ה בהושע ויאמר ה' אל הושע וגו'[8].

ואם תאמר להורות בה שאלו תחלה נבראו, ופירושו בראשית הכל ברא אלו, ויש לך מקראות שמקדימים לשנות וממעטים תיבה אחת, כמו כי לא סגר דלתי בטני[9], ולא פירש מי הסוגר. כמו ישא את חיל דמשק[10], ולא פירש מי ישאנו, וכמו אם יחרוש בבקריס[11], ולא פירש אם יחרוש אדם בבקריס, וכמו מגיד מראשית אחרית[12], ולא פירש מגיד מראשית דבר אחרית דבר. (כ"י וכן בכאן בראשית כנ). אם כן תמה על עצמך, שהרי המים קדמו, שהרי כתיב ורוח אלהים מרחפת על פני המים, ועדיין לא גלה המקרא בסידור הקודמים והמאוחרים כלום בריית המים מתי היתה, בא למדת, שקדמו המים לארץ, ועוד שהשמים מים ומים נבראו, על כרחך לא לימד המקרא בסדר המוקדמים והמאוחרים כלום: **ברא אלהים.** ולא אמר ברא ה', שבתחלה עלה במחשבה לברואתו במדת הדין, ורואה שאין העולם מתקייס, והקדיס מדת רחמים ושתפה למדת הדין, והייגו דכתיב ביום עשות ה' אלהים ארץ ושמים[13]: **(ב) תהו ובהו.** תהו לשון תמה וממון, שאדם תוהה ומשתומם על נכסי שנכה: **תהו.** משטורדי"ש בלע"ז: **בהו.** לשון רקות ולדו (סא"ח): **על פני תהום.** על פני המים שעל הארץ: **ורוח אלהים מרחפת.** כשה

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 Cana'an]," 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"?

1 תהלים קיא, ו 2 ב"ר א, ו 3 משלי ח, כב 4 ירמי' ב, ג 5 שם כו, א 6 בראשית י', י 7 דברים יח, ד 8 הושע א, ב 9 איוב ג, י 10 ישעי' ח, ד 11 עמוס ו, יב 12 ישעי' מו, י 13 ב"ר פי"ב

CREATION: THE FIRST DAY—LIGHT & DARKNESS

I *In the beginning of God's creation of the heavens* and the earth (and their contents),* [2] *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" (**בְּ רֵאשִׁית**), 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 **מְרַחֶפֶת** ("hovered") which contains the letters **רפ"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.

עַל־פְּנֵי הַמָּיִם: ג וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אוֹר וַיְהִי־אוֹר: ד וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאוֹר כִּי־טוֹב וַיַּבְדֵּל אֱלֹהִים בֵּין הָאוֹר וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ: ה וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים | לָאוֹר יוֹם וְלַחֹשֶׁךְ קָרָא לָיְלָה וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד: פ ו וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי רָקִיעַ

אַפֵּי מַיָּא: ג וַאֲמַר יְיָ יְהֵי נְהוֹרָא וַהֲוָה נְהוֹרָא: ד וְחָזָא יְיָ יַת נְהוֹרָא אֲרֵי טָב וְאַפְרֵישׁ יְיָ בֵּין נְהוֹרָא וּבֵין חֲשׁוֹכָא: ה וּקְרָא יְיָ לִנְהוֹרָא יְמָמָא וְלַחֲשׁוֹכָא קְרָא לֵילְיָא וַהֲוָה רְמַשׁ וַהֲוָה צְפַר יוֹמָא חַד: ו וַאֲמַר יְיָ יְהֵי רְקִיעָא בְּמֵצִיעוּת

רש"י

הכבוד עומד בחוץ, ומרחף על פני המים ברוח פיו של הקב"ה ובמאמרו, כיוצא המרחפת על הקן, מקוב"ט בלע"ז: (ד) וירא אלהים את האור כי טוב ויבדל. אף זאת אמרו לריכים לדברי חגדה[1], ראתה שאינו כדאי להשתמש בו רשעים, והבדילו לצדיקים לעתיד לבא. ולפי פשוטו כך פרשתה, ראתה כי טוב, ויאין נאה לו ולחשך שיהיו משתמשין בערבוביא, וקבע לזה תחומו ביום ולזה תחומו בלילה: (ה) יום אחד. לפי סדר לשון הפרשה

היה לו לכתוב יום ראשון, כמו שכתוב בשאר הימים, שני, שלישי, רביעי, למה כתב אחד, לפי שהיה הקב"ה יחיד בעולמו, שלא נבראו המלאכים עד יום שני, כך מפורש בברייתות רבה[2]: (ו) יהי רקיע. יתחזק הרקיע, שאף על פי שנבראו שמים ביום ראשון, עדיין לחים היו, וקרעו בשני מגערת הקב"ה בשמרו יכי רקיע, וזהו שכתוב עמודי שמים ירופפו[3], כל יום ראשון, ובשני יתמהו מגערתו, כמדש שמשתומם ועומד מגערת המהייס

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. 1*ff; 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.

1 חגיגה יב. 2 ג, יא, יב 3 איוב כו, יא

[3] *God said, "Let there be light!"—and there was light.*

[4] *God saw that the light was good, and God separated the (times of) light from the (times of) darkness (in the following manner:)* [5] *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. 7*ff*.)

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

בְּתוֹךְ הַמָּיִם וִיהִי מַבְדִּיל בֵּין מַיִם לָמָיִם: ז וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים
אֶת־הָרָקִיעַ וַיַּבְדֵּל בֵּין הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר מִתַּחַת לָרָקִיעַ וּבֵין הַמַּיִם
אֲשֶׁר מֵעַל לָרָקִיעַ וַיְהִי־כֵן: ח וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים לָרָקִיעַ שָׁמָיִם
וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם שֵׁנִי: פ ט וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יִקָּווּ הַמַּיִם
מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמַיִם אֶל־מָקוֹם אֶחָד וְתֵרָאֶה הַיַּבָּשָׁה וַיְהִי־כֵן:
י וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים | לַיַּבָּשָׁה אֶרֶץ וּלְמִקְוֵה הַמַּיִם קָרָא יַמִּים וַיַּרְא
אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב: יא וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים תַּדְשֵׁא הָאָרֶץ דֶּשֶׁא עֵשֶׂב
מַזְרִיעַ זֶרַע עֵץ פְּרִי עֹשֶׂה פְּרִי לְמִינוֹ אֲשֶׁר זַרְעוֹ־בוֹ
עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיְהִי־כֵן: יב וַתּוֹצֵא הָאָרֶץ דֶּשֶׁא עֵשֶׂב מַזְרִיעַ זֶרַע
לְמִינֵהוּ וְעֵץ עֹשֶׂה־פְּרִי אֲשֶׁר זַרְעוֹ־בוֹ לְמִינֵהוּ וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים
כִּי־טוֹב: יג וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם שְׁלִישִׁי: פ יד וַיֹּאמֶר

מָיָא וִיהֵי מַפְרִישׁ בֵּין מָיָא לְמָיָא: ז וַעֲבַד יְיָ יָת
רְקִיעָא וְאַפְרֵישׁ בֵּין מָיָא דִי מִלְרַע לִרְקִיעָא
וּבֵין מָיָא דִי מֵעַל לִרְקִיעָא וַהֲוָה כֵן: ח וּקְרָא
יְיָ לִרְקִיעָא שְׁמַיָּא וַהֲוָה רְמַשׁ וַהֲוָה צְפַר יוֹם
תִּנְיָן: ט וַאֲמַר יְיָ יִתְבַּנְשׁוּן מָיָא מִתְּחוֹת שְׁמַיָּא
לְאַתְרָא חַד וְתִתְחֲזֵי יַבֶּשְׁתָּא וַהֲוָה כֵן: י וּקְרָא
יְיָ לְיַבֶּשְׁתָּא אַרְעָא וּלְבֵית כְּנִישׁוּת מָיָא קְרָא
יַמְמֵי וַחֲזָא יְיָ אֲרֵי טָב: יא וַאֲמַר יְיָ תַּדְאֵית
אַרְעָא דְּתָאָה עִשְׂבָּא דְּבַר זַרְעֵיהּ מְזַדְרַע אִילָן
פֵּרִין עָבֵד פֵּרִין לְזָנֵיהּ דִּי בַר זַרְעֵיהּ בֵּיהּ עַל
אַרְעָא וַהֲוָה כֵן: יב וְאַפֵּיקַת אַרְעָא דְּתָאָה
עִשְׂבָּא דְּבַר זַרְעֵיהּ מְזַדְרַע לְזָנוֹהִי וְאִילָן עָבֵד
פֵּרִין דְּבַר זַרְעֵיהּ בֵּיהּ לְזָנוֹהִי וַחֲזָא יְיָ אֲרֵי טָב:
יג וַהֲוָה רְמַשׁ וַהֲוָה צְפַר יוֹם תְּלִיתָאי:
יד וַאֲמַר יְיָ יְהוֹן נְהוֹרִין בִּרְקִיעָא דִשְׁמַיָּא

רש"י

עליו: **בתוך המים**. בתמצע המים, שיש הפרש בין מים העליונים לרקיע כמו בין הרקיע למים שעל הארץ, כח למדת, שכס תלויס בתמתרו של מלך: **(ז) ויעש אלהים את הרקיע**. תקנו על עמדו, והיה עשייתו, כמו ועשתה את נפריחיה: **מעל לרקיע**. על הרקיע לא נאמר, אלא מעל לרקיע, לפי שהן תלויים בחויר. ומפני מה לא נאמר כי טוב ביוס שני, לפי שלא היה נגמר מלאכת המים עד יוס השליסי, והרי התחיל בה בשני, ודבר שלא נגמר תיגו בתילוגו וטובו, ובשליסי שנגמרה מלאכת המים והתחיל וגמר מלאכה אחרת, כפל בו כי טוב שני פעמים, אחת לגמר מלאכת השני, ואחת לגמר מלאכת היוס: **(ח) ויקרא אלהים לרקיע שמים**. שח מים, שס מים, אש ומים, שערבן זה בזה ועשה מהם שמים: **(ט) יקוו המים**. שטותין היו על פני כל הארץ, והקוום בתוקיינוס, הוא היס הגדול שבכל הימים: **(י) קרא ימים**.

וכלא יש אחד הוא, אלא תינו דומה טעם דג העולה מן היס בעכו לדג העולה מן היס בתספמיא: **(יא) תדשא הארץ דשא עשב**. לא דשא לשון עשב ולא עשב לשון דשא, ולא היה לשון המקרא לומר תעשיב הארץ, שמיני דשהיס מחולקין, כל אחד לעלמו נקרא עשב פלוני, ואין לשון למדבר לומר דשא פלוני, שלשון דשא הוא לביסת הארץ כשהיא מתמלאת בדשאים: **תדשא הארץ**. תתמלא ותתכסה לבוש עשביס, בלשון לע"ז נקרא דשא תרבריי"ן בלע"ז, כולן בערבובית, וכל שורש לעלמו נקרא עשב: **מזריע זרע**. שיגדל בו זרע לזרוע ממנו במקום אחר: **עץ פרי**. שיהא טעם העץ כטעם הפרי. והיה לא עשתה כן, אלא תוגת הארץ וגו' ועץ עושה פרי, ולא העץ פרי, לפיכך כשנתקללל אדם על עונו נפקדה גם היא על עונה (ונתקללה): **אשר זרעו בו**. הן גרעיני כל פרי, שמהן האילן לומה כשנוטעין אותן: **(יב) ותוצא הארץ**

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. 1*ff*)

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 God said, *"Let the firmament (materialize) between the waters, and let it separate between (the upper) waters and (the lower) waters."*

7 *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.* 8 *God called the firmament "sky."*

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

The Third Day—Land & Vegetation

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

10 *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.*

11 *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.* 12 *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.

13 *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

During 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 רוּחַ 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)

אֱלֹהִים יְהִי מְאֹרֹת בִּרְקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הַיּוֹם וּבֵין
הַלָּיְלָה וְהָיוּ לְאֹתֹת וּלְמוֹעֲדִים וּלְיָמִים וְשָׁנִים: טו וְהָיוּ לִמְאוֹרֹת
בִּרְקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהָאִיר עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיְהִי־כֵן: טז וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים
אֶת־שְׁנֵי הַמְּאֹרֹת הַגְּדֹלִים אֶת־הַמָּאוֹר הַגָּדֹל לְמֶמְשֶׁלֶת הַיּוֹם
וְאֶת־הַמָּאוֹר הַקָּטֹן לְמֶמְשֶׁלֶת הַלַּיְלָה וְאֵת הַכּוֹכָבִים: יז וַיִּתֵּן
אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים בִּרְקִיעַ הַשָּׁמָיִם לְהָאִיר עַל־הָאָרֶץ: יח וְלִמְשֹׁל
בַּיּוֹם וּבַלַּיְלָה וְלַהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הָאוֹר וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים
כִּי־טוֹב: יט וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם רְבִיעִי: פ כ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים
יִשְׁרְצוּ הַמַּיִם שֶׁרֶץ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה וְעוֹף יְעוֹפֵף עַל־הָאָרֶץ עַל־פְּנֵי
לְאַפְרָשָׁא בֵּין יְמָמָא וּבֵין לֵילְיָא וְיהוֹן לְאָתִין
וּלְזִמְנִין וּלְמַמְנֵי בְּהוֹן יוֹמִין וּשְׁנִין: טו וְיהוֹן
לִנְהוֹרִין בִּרְקִיעָא דִשְׁמַיָּא לְאַנְהָרָא עַל אַרְעָא
וַהֲוָה כֵן: טו וַעֲבַד יְיָ יָת תְּרֵין נְהוֹרַיָּא רַבְרְבַיָּא
יָת נְהוֹרָא רַבָּא לְמִשְׁלַט בְּיוֹמָא וְיָת נְהוֹרָא
זְעִירָא לְמִשְׁלַט בְּלֵילְיָא וְיָת כּוֹכְבַיָּא: יז וְיהַב
יָתְהוֹן יְיָ בִּרְקִיעָא דִשְׁמַיָּא לְאַנְהָרָא עַל
אַרְעָא: יח וּלְמִשְׁלַט בְּיוֹמָא וּבְלֵילְיָא
וּלְאַפְרָשָׁא בֵּין נְהוֹרָא וּבֵין חֲשׁוֹכָא וַחֲזָא יְיָ אֲרֵי
טָב: יט וַהֲוָה רְמַשׁ וַהֲוָה צְפַר יוֹם רְבִיעָאי:
כ וַאֲמַר יְיָ יִרְחֲשׁוּן מַיָּא רְחֵשׁ נַפְשָׁא חַיְתָא
וְעוֹפָא דְפָרַח עַל אַרְעָא עַל אַפֵּי רְקִיעָא

לט"י

וגו'. אף על פי שלא נאמר למינהו בדשחין בצוויהן, שמעו שנלמוד החילוקות על כך, ונשתו קל וחומר בעלמן, כדמפרש בשחיטת חולין[1]: **(יד) יהי מארת וגו'**. מיום ראשון נברתו, וברביעי נוה עליהם להתלות ברקיע, וכן כל תולדות שמים וארץ נברתו ביום ראשון, וכל אחד ואחד נקבע ביום שנגזר עליו, הוא שכתוב את השמים, לרבות תולדותיהם, ואת הארץ, לרבות תולדותיה: **יהי מארת**. חסר וי"ו כתיב, על שהוא יום מארה ליפול בסכרה בתיווקות, הוא שאמרו, ברביעי היו מתעניס על הסכרה שלא תפול בתיווקות: **להבדיל בין היום ובין הלילה**. משנגזר בארור הראשון, אבל בשבעת (ג"ל בג') ימי בראשית, שמשו בארור והשך הראשונים שניהם יחד, בין ביום בין בלילה: **והיו לאתת**. כשהמאורות לוקין סימן רע הוא לעולם, שנאמר מאותות השמים אל תחתו וגו'[2], בעשותם רצון הקב"ה, אין אתם לריכין לדאוג מן הפורענות: **ולמועדים**. על שם הצפיד, שעתידים ישראל להלטוות על המועדות, והם נמנים למולד הלבנה: **ולימים**. שמוש החמה חלי יום ושמוש הלבנה חליו הרי יום שלם: **ושנים**. לסוף שס"ה ימים (ס"ו ורביע יום), יגמרו מהלכתם בי"ב מזלות המערתים אותם, והיא שנה, ואחזרים ומתחילים פעם שניה לסבב בגלגל כמהלכן הראשון: **(טו) והיו למאורת**. עוד זאת ישמשו שיאירו לעולם: **(טז) המארת הגדולים**. שויה ובראה, ונתמעטה הלבנה, על שקטרגה ואמרה אי אפשר לשני מלכים שישתמשו בכתר אחד: **ואת הכוכבים**. על ידי שמיעט את הלבנה, הרבה לבחיה להפיס דעתה: **(כ) נפש חיה**. שיהא בה חיות: **שרץ**. כל דבר שאין גדוש מן

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)

1 חולין ס. 2 ירמי' י', ב

The Fourth Day—Sun, Moon & Stars

1:14 God 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!* [15] *They will (also) act as luminaries in the firmament of the skies to shed light upon the earth!"* —*and that is what happened.*

[16] *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).* [17] *God placed them in the firmament of the skies to shed light upon the earth,* [18] *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.

[19] *It became evening and it became morning—a fourth day.*

The Fifth Day—Small Creatures, Fish & Birds

[20] *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

You 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].)

רָקִ֖יעַ הַשָּׁמָ֑יִם׃ כא וַיִּבְרָ֣א אֱלֹהִ֗ים אֶת־הַתַּנִּינִם֙ הַגְּדֹלִ֔ים וְאֵ֥ת
כָּל־נֶ֖פֶשׁ הַחַיָּ֣ה | הָרֹמֶ֑שֶׂת אֲשֶׁ֨ר שָׁרְצ֜וּ הַמַּ֗יִם לְמִינֵהֶם֙ וְאֵ֣ת
כָּל־עֹ֣וף כָּנָ֔ף לְמִינֵ֑הוּ וַיַּ֣רְא אֱלֹהִ֔ים כִּי־טֽוב׃ כב וַיְבָ֣רֶךְ אֹתָ֔ם
אֱלֹהִ֖ים לֵאמֹ֑ר פְּר֣וּ וּרְב֗וּ וּמִלְאוּ֙ אֶת־הַמַּ֣יִם בַּיַּמִּ֔ים וְהָע֖וף יִרֶ֥ב
בָּאָֽרֶץ׃ כג וַיְהִי־עֶ֥רֶב וַיְהִי־בֹ֖קֶר יֹ֥ום חֲמִישִֽׁי׃ פ כד וַיֹּ֣אמֶר אֱלֹהִ֑ים
תֹּוצֵ֤א הָאָ֙רֶץ֙ נֶ֣פֶשׁ חַיָּ֔ה לְמִינָ֖הּ בְּהֵמָ֥ה וָרֶ֖מֶשׂ וְחַיְתֹו־אֶ֥רֶץ
לְמִינָ֑הּ וַיְהִי־כֵֽן׃ כה וַיַּ֣עַשׂ אֱלֹהִ֗ים אֶת־חַיַּ֤ת הָאָ֙רֶץ֙ לְמִינָ֔הּ
וְאֶת־הַבְּהֵמָ֥ה לְמִינָ֖הּ וְאֵ֥ת כָּל־רֶ֣מֶשׂ הָֽאֲדָמָ֑ה לְמִינֵ֔הוּ וַיַּ֣רְא
אֱלֹהִ֔ים כִּי־טֽוב׃ כו וַיֹּ֣אמֶר אֱלֹהִ֗ים נַֽעֲשֶׂ֤ה אָדָם֙ בְּצַלְמֵ֔נוּ
כִּדְמוּתֵ֑נוּ וְיִרְדּ֗וּ בִּדְגַ֤ת הַיָּם֙ וּבְעֹ֣וף הַשָּׁמַ֔יִם וּבַבְּהֵמָ֕ה
וּבְכָל־הָאָ֖רֶץ וּבְכָל־הָרֶ֣מֶשׂ הָרֹמֵ֑שׂ עַל־הָאָֽרֶץ׃ כז וַיִּבְרָ֨א
אֱלֹהִ֜ים | אֶת־הָאָדָ֣ם בְּצַלְמֹ֗ו בְּצֶ֤לֶם אֱלֹהִים֙ בָּרָ֣א אֹתֹ֔ו זָכָ֖ר
וּנְקֵבָ֥ה בָּרָ֖א אֹתָֽם׃ כח וַיְבָ֣רֶךְ אֹתָ֣ם אֱלֹהִ֔ים וַיֹּ֨אמֶר לָהֶ֤ם אֱלֹהִים֙
פְּר֣וּ וּרְב֔וּ וּמִלְא֖וּ אֶת־הָאָ֑רֶץ וְכִבְשֻׁ֔הָ וּרְד֗וּ בִּדְגַ֤ת הַיָּם֙ וּבְעֹ֣וף
הַשָּׁמַ֔יִם וּבְכָל־חַיָּ֖ה הָרֹמֶ֥שֶׂת עַל־הָאָֽרֶץ׃ כט וַיֹּ֣אמֶר אֱלֹהִ֔ים

דְּשִׁמַּיָּא׃ כא וּבְרָא֙ יְיָ֣ יָת֔ תַּנִּינַיָּ֖א רַבְרְבַיָּ֑א וְיָת֙
כָּל֙ נַפְשָׁ֣א חַיְתָ֔א דְּרָחֵישָׁ֕א דִּי֙ אַרְחִישׁ֣וּ מַיָּ֔א
לְזַנֵיהוֹן֙ וְיָת֙ כָּל֙ עוֹפָ֣א דְפָרַ֔ח לְזַנּוֹהִ֖י וַחֲזָ֣א יְיָ֑
אֲרֵ֥י טָֽב׃ כב וּבָרִיךְ֙ יַתְהוֹן֙ יְיָ֣ לְמֵימָ֔ר פּ֥וּשׁוּ וּסְגִ֖ו
וּמְל֣וּ יָת֑ מַיָּ֣א בְּיַמְמַיָּ֔א וְעוֹפָ֖א יִסְגֵּ֥י בְּאַרְעָֽא׃
כג וַהֲוָה֙ רְמַ֣שׁ וַהֲוָ֔ה צְפַ֖ר יוֹם֙ חֲמִישָׁ֑אי׃ כד וַאֲמַ֣ר
יְיָ֔ תַּפֵּ֤יק אַרְעָא֙ נַפְשָׁ֣א חַיְתָ֔א לְזַנָּ֖הּ בְּעִ֥יר
וְרֶחֱיׁ֛שׁ וְחֵוֹ֥ת אַרְעָ֖א לְזַנֵּ֑הּ וַהֲוָ֖ה כֵּֽן׃ כה וַעֲבַ֣ד
יְיָ֔ יָת֙ חֵוֹ֣ת אַרְעָ֔א לְזַנֵּ֖הּ וְיָת֙ בְּעִ֣ירָא֔ לְזַנֵּ֑הּ וְיָת֙
כָּל֙ רִיחֲשָׁ֣א דְאַרְעָ֔א לְזַנּוֹהִ֖י וַחֲזָ֣א יְיָ֑ אֲרֵ֥י טָֽב׃
כו וַאֲמַ֣ר יְיָ֔ נַעֲבַ֥ד אֱנָשָׁ֖א בְּצַלְמָ֑נָא כְּדִמּוּתָ֣נָא
וְיִשְׁלְט֗וּן בְּנ֤וּנֵי יַמָּא֙ וּבְעוֹפָ֣א דִשְׁמַיָּ֔א וּבִבְעִירָ֖א
וּבְכָל֙ אַרְעָ֣א וּבְכָל֙ רִיחֲשָׁ֣א דְרָחֵ֔שׁ עַל֙ אַרְעָֽא׃
כז וּבְרָ֨א יְיָ֜ יָת֙ אָדָ֣ם בְּצַלְמֵ֗יהּ בְּצֶ֤לֶם֙ אֱלָהִ֣ין
בְּרָ֔א יָתֵ֖יהּ דְּכַ֣ר וְנוּקְבָ֑א בְּרָ֖א יָתְהוֹן׃
כח וּבָרִיךְ֙ יַתְהוֹן֙ יְיָ֔ וַאֲמַ֣ר לְהוֹן֙ יְיָ֔ פּ֥וּשׁוּ וּסְגִ֖ו
וּמְל֣וּ יָת֑ אַרְעָ֣א וּתְקוֹפ֗וּהָ֙ עֲלָ֔הּ וּשְׁלוֹט֖וּ בְּנ֣וּנֵי יַמָּ֔א
וּבְעוֹפָ֥א דִשְׁמַיָּ֖א וּבְכָל֙ חַיְתָ֣א דְרָחֵ֔שׁ עַל֙
אַרְעָֽא׃ כט וַאֲמַ֣ר יְיָ֔ הָא֙ יְהָבִ֣ית לְכ֔וֹן יָת֙ כָּל֙

כתרן קרוי ארץ. בעוף כגון זבובים, בשקצים כגון נמלים וחיפושין ותולעים, ובבריות כגון חולד ועכבר וחומט וכיוצא בהם וכן כדגים: (כא) **התנינם**. דגים גדולים שבים. ובדברי חגדה[1] הוא לויתן ובן זוגו, שברחם זכר ונקבה, וכרג את הנקבה ומלחה לצדיקים לעתיד לבא, שאם יפרו וירבו, לא יתקיים העולם בפניהם: **נפש החיה**. נפש שיש בה חיות: (כב) **ויברך אותם**. לפי שמחסרים חותם ונדין מהם ומוכלין חותם, כוללהו לברכה, ואף בחיות כוללהו לברכה, אלא מפני המחם שעתיד לקללה לכך לא ברכן, אלא יהא הוא בכלל: **פרו**. לשון פרי, כלומר עשו פירות: **ורבו**. אם לא אמר אלא פרו, היה אחד מוליד אחד ולא יותר, וכאן אמר שאחד מוליד הרבה: (כד) **תוצא הארץ**. הוא שפירשתי שברח מיום רחשון ולא כוללהו אלא לחוליאם: **נפש חיה**. שיש בה חיות: **ורמש**. הם שרציס, שהם נמוכים ורומשים על הארץ וגרחיס כחילו גגריס, שאין הלוכן ניכר. כל לשון רמש ושרץ בלשוננו קונמוברי"ם: (כה) **ויעש**. תקנם בלציונם בתיקונן ובקומתן: (כו) **נעשה אדם**. עצותותו של הקב"ה למדנו מכאן, לפי שהאדם הוא דמות המלאכים ויתקנאו בו, לפיכך נמלך בהם, וכשהוא דן את המלכים הוא נמלך בפמליא שלו, שכן מלינו בתחאב, שאמר לו מיכה רחיתי את ה' יושב על כסאו וכל צבא השמים עומד עליו מימינו ומשמאלו, וכי יש ימין ושמאל לפניו, אלא אלו מימינים לזכות ואלו משמחילים לחובה, וכן בגזירת עירין פתגמא ובמאמר קדישין שאלתא, אף כאן בפמליא שלו נטל רשות, אמר להם יש בעליונים כדמותי, אם אין כדמותי בתחתונים הרי יש קנאה במעשה ברחשית: **נעשה אדם**. אף על פי שלא סייעוהו ביצירתו, ויש מקום למיני לרדות, לא נמנע הכתוב מללמד דרך ארץ ומדת ענוה, שיהא הגדול נמלך ונוטל רשות מן הקטן, ואם כתב מעשה אדם, לא למדנו שיהא מדבר עם בית דינו, אלא עם עלמו. ותשובתו כתובה בלדו, ויברח את האדם, ולא כתיב ויברחו: **בצלמנו**. דדפוס שלנו: **כדמותנו**. להבין ולהשכיל: **וירדו בדגת הים**. יש בלשון הזה לשון רידוי ולשון ירידה, זהה רודה בחיות ובבהמות, לא זהה, נעשה יהוד לפניהם והחיה מושלת בו: (כז) **ויברא אלהים את האדם בצלמו**. דדפוס העשוי לו, שהכל נברא במאמר והוא נברא בידיים, שנאמר ותשת עלי כפכה[2], נעשה בחותם, כמטבע העשויה על ידי רושם שקורין קוניי"ן, (ובכ"י קוי"ן) וכן הוא אומר תתהפך כחומר חותם[3]: **בצלם אלהים ברא אותו**. פירש לך, שאותו שלם המתוקן לו, שלם דיוקן יוצרו הוא: **זכר ונקבה ברא אותם**. ולהלן הוא אומר ויקח אחת מצלעותיו וגו'[4], מדרש אגדה שנבראו שני פרלופים בריאה ראשונה ואחר כך תלקן. ופשוטו של מקרא, כאן כוודיעך שנבראו שניהם בשעה, ולא פירש לך כיצד בריינן, ופירש לך במקום אחר: (כח) **וכבשה**. חסר וי"ו, ללמדך שהזכר כובש את הנקבה, שלא תהא יצחנית, ועוד ללמדך, שהחיים שדרכו לכבוש, מצווה על

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.).

1 בבא בתרא עד: 2 תהילים קלט, ה 3 איוב לח,יד 4 בראשית ב, כא

[21] *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.

[22] *God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters of the seas, and let the birds multiply upon the earth!"*

[23] *It became evening and it became morning—a fifth day.*

The Sixth Day—Animals & Man

1:24 *God 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.*

[25] *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.

[26] *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!"*

[27] *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.*

[28] *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

הִנֵּה֩ נָתַ֨תִּי לָכֶ֜ם אֶת־כָּל־עֵ֣שֶׂב | זֹרֵ֣עַ זֶ֔רַע אֲשֶׁ֖ר עַל־פְּנֵ֣י
כָל־הָאָ֑רֶץ וְאֶת־כָּל־הָעֵ֞ץ אֲשֶׁר־בּ֤וֹ פְרִי־עֵץ֙ זֹרֵ֣עַ זָ֔רַע לָכֶ֥ם
יִהְיֶ֖ה לְאָכְלָֽה: ל וּלְכָל־חַיַּ֣ת הָאָ֗רֶץ וּלְכָל־עוֹף֙ הַשָּׁמַ֔יִם וּלְכֹ֖ל |
רוֹמֵ֣שׂ עַל־הָאָ֑רֶץ אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ֙ נֶ֣פֶשׁ חַיָּ֔ה אֶת־כָּל־יֶ֥רֶק עֵ֖שֶׂב
לְאָכְלָ֑ה וַיְהִי־כֵֽן: לא וַיַּ֣רְא אֱלֹהִ֔ים אֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁ֥ר עָשָׂ֖ה
וְהִנֵּה־טֹ֣וב מְאֹ֑ד וַיְהִי־עֶ֥רֶב וַיְהִי־בֹ֖קֶר יֹ֥ום הַשִּׁשִּֽׁי: פ ב א וַיְכֻלּ֗וּ
הַשָּׁמַ֛יִם וְהָאָ֖רֶץ וְכָל־צְבָאָֽם: ב וַיְכַ֤ל אֱלֹהִים֙ בַּיֹּ֣ום הַשְּׁבִיעִ֔י
מְלַאכְתֹּ֖ו אֲשֶׁ֣ר עָשָׂ֑ה וַיִּשְׁבֹּת֙ בַּיֹּ֣ום הַשְּׁבִיעִ֔י מִכָּל־מְלַאכְתֹּ֖ו

עִשְׂבָּא דְּבַר זַרְעֵיהּ מִזְדְּרַע דִּי עַל אַפֵּי כָל
אַרְעָא וְיָת כָּל אִילָנָא דִּי בֵיהּ פֵּירֵי אִילָנָא
דְּבַר זַרְעֵיהּ מִזְדְּרָע לְכוֹן יְהֵי לְמֵיכַל: ל וּלְכָל
חֵוַת אַרְעָא וּלְכָל עוֹפָא דִּשְׁמַיָּא וּלְכָל דְּרָחֵישׁ
עַל אַרְעָא דִּי בֵיהּ נַפְשָׁא חַיְתָא יָת כָּל יְרוֹק
עִשְׂבָּא לְמֵיכַל וַהֲוָה כֵן: לא וַחֲזָא יְיָ יָת כָּל
דַּעֲבַד וְהָא תַקִּין לַחֲדָא וַהֲוָה רְמַשׁ וַהֲוָה צְפַר
יוֹם שְׁתִיתָאי: א וְאִשְׁתַּכְלִלוּ שְׁמַיָּא וְאַרְעָא
וְכָל חֵילֵיהוֹן: ב וְשֵׁצֵי יְיָ בְּיוֹמָא שְׁבִיעָאָה
עֲבִידְתֵּיהּ דִּי עֲבָד וְנַח בְּיוֹמָא שְׁבִיעָאָה מִכָּל

רס"י

פריה ורביה, ולא כתב: (כט) **לכם יהיה לאכלה ולכל חית הארץ.** משום לכם בהמות וחיות למאכל, ולא כתב לחדש ולאמתו להמית בריה ולאכול בשר, אך כל ירק עשב יאכלו יחד כלם, וכשבאו בני נח התיר להם בשר, שנאמר כל רמש אשר הוא חי וגו', כירק עשב שהתירתי לחדש הרשעון, נתתי לכם את כלו: (לא) **יום הששי.** כוסיף ר' בשמי, בגמר מעשה בראשית, לומר שהתנה עמהם על מנת שיקבלו עליהם ישראל חמשה חומשי תורה. דבר אחר, יום הששי, כלם תלוים ועומדים עד יום הששי, הוא שהי בשיון (ס"ח שבויום ו' בשיון שקבלו ישראל התורה נתחזקו כל יצירת בראשית ונחשב כאלו נגזרת הטולם עתה וזהו יום הששי בכ"ח שמותו יום ו' בשיון) כמוכן למתן תורה: (ב) **ויכל אלהים ביום השביעי.** ר' שמעון אומר, בשר ודם שהיו יודע עתיו ורגעיו, לריך להוסיף מחול על הקודש, אבל הקב"ה שיודע עתיו ורגעיו, נכנס בו כחוט השערה ונראה כאלו כלה בו ביום. דבר אחר, מה היה

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. 10*ff.*)

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:

29 *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,* 30 *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.*

31 *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 *The skies, the earth and all their numerous components were completed.*

2 *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. 7*ff.*)

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

אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה: ג וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדֵּשׁ אֹתוֹ כִּי בוֹ שָׁבַת מִכָּל־מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר־בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת: פ
[שני] ד אֵלֶּה תוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ בְּהִבָּרְאָם* בְּיוֹם עֲשׂוֹת יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶרֶץ וְשָׁמָיִם: ה וְכֹל | שִׂיחַ הַשָּׂדֶה טֶרֶם יִהְיֶה בָּאָרֶץ וְכָל־עֵשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה טֶרֶם יִצְמָח כִּי לֹא הִמְטִיר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים עַל־הָאָרֶץ וְאָדָם אַיִן לַעֲבֹד אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה: ו וְאֵד יַעֲלֶה

עֲבִידְתֵּיהּ דִּי עֲבָד: ג וּבָרִיךְ יְיָ יַת יוֹמָא שְׁבִיעָאָה וְקַדִּישׁ יָתֵיהּ אֲרֵי בֵיהּ נַח מִכָּל עֲבִידְתֵּיהּ דִּי בְרָא יְיָ לְמֶעֱבַד: ד אִלֵּין תּוֹלְדַת שְׁמַיָּא וְאַרְעָא כַּד אִתְבְּרִיאוּ בְּיוֹמָא דִּי עֲבַד יְיָ אֱלֹהִים אַרְעָא וּשְׁמַיָּא: ה וְכָל אִילָנֵי חַקְלָא עַד לָא הֲווֹ בְּאַרְעָא וְכָל עִשְׂבָּא דְּחַקְלָא עַד לָא צְמַח אֲרֵי לָא אַחֵית מְטָרָא יְיָ אֱלֹהִים עַל אַרְעָא וֶאֱנָשׁ לֵית לְמִפְלַח יַת אַדְמְתָא: ו וַעֲנָנָא הֲוָה סָלִיק מִן אַרְעָא וְאַשְׁקֵי יַת כָּל אַפֵּי

*ה' זעירא

רס"י

העולם חסר, מוחה, בחת שבת בחת מוחה, כלתה וגמרה המלאכה: (ג) **ויברך ויקדש**. ברכו במן, שכל ימות השבוע ירד להם עומר לגלגולת, ובששי לחם משנה. וקדשו במן, שלא ירד כלל בשבת, והמקרא כתוב על שם העתיד: **אשר ברא אלהים לעשות**. המלאכה שהיתה רחויה לעשות בשבת, כפל ועשתה בששי, כמו שמפורש בברייתא דרבי[1]: (ד) **אלה**. כהמוריס למעלה: **תולדות השמים והארץ בהבראם ביום עשות ה'**. ללמדך שכלם נבראו ברחשון. דבר אחר בהבראם, בה' ברחש, שנאמר ביה כי נור עולמים, בני חותיות הללו של השם, יצר שני עולמים[2], ולמדך כאן שהעולם הזה נברא בה"ח, (ס"ת כמו שכ"ח פתוחה למטה כך העולם פתוח לששים בתשובה ועולם הבא נברא ביו"ד לומר שנדיקים שבאותו זמן מועטים כמו י' שהיא קטנה באותיות) רמז שירדו הרשעים למטה לרחות שחת, כה"ח זאת שששתה מכל נדדיה, ופתוחה למטה לרדת דרך שס: (ה) **טרם יהיה בארץ**. כל טרס שבמקרא לשון עד לא הוא, והיו לשון קודש, והיו נפעל לומר הטריס כאשר יאמר הקדיש, וזה מוכיח, ועוד אחר כי טרס תירגון[3], עדיין לא תירגון. ואף זה תפרס עדיין לא היה בארץ, כשנגמרה בריאת העולם בששי קודם שנברא אדם וכל עשב השדה עדיין לא נמח, וגי' שכתוב ותולח, לא יצאו חלח 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 שכח לורך לעולם, התפלל עליהם וירדו, ולמחו בחילוקות והדשאים: **ה' אלהים**. כי הוא שמו, מלכיס, שהוא שליט ושופט על כל העולם, וכן פירוש זה בכל מקום לפי פשוטו, כי שהוא מלכיס: (ו) **ואד יעלה**.

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

1 יא, י 2 ישעי' כו, ד 3 שמות ט, ל

[3] *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

[4] *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*)*

[5] *(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.*

[6] *(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 in 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

Why 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.

Alternatively: 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)

When 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)

מִן־הָאָ֖רֶץ וְהִשְׁקָ֕ה אֶת־כָּל־פְּנֵ֖י הָאֲדָמָֽה׃ ז וַיִּיצֶר֩ יְהוָ֨ה אֱלֹהִ֜ים
אֶת־הָאָדָ֗ם עָפָר֙ מִן־הָאֲדָמָ֔ה וַיִּפַּ֥ח בְּאַפָּ֖יו נִשְׁמַ֣ת חַיִּ֑ים וַיְהִ֥י
הָאָדָ֖ם לְנֶ֥פֶשׁ חַיָּֽה׃ ח וַיִּטַּ֤ע יְהוָה֙ אֱלֹהִ֔ים גַּ֖ן בְּעֵ֣דֶן מִקֶּ֑דֶם וַיָּ֥שֶׂם
שָׁ֖ם אֶת־הָאָדָ֥ם אֲשֶׁר־יָצָֽר׃ ט וַיַּצְמַ֨ח יְהוָ֤ה אֱלֹהִים֙ מִן־הָ֣אֲדָמָ֔ה
כָּל־עֵ֛ץ נֶחְמָ֥ד לְמַרְאֶ֖ה וְט֣וֹב לְמַאֲכָ֑ל וְעֵ֤ץ הַחַיִּים֙ בְּתוֹךְ֙ הַגָּ֔ן
וְעֵ֖ץ הַדַּ֥עַת טֽוֹב־וָרָֽע׃ י וְנָהָ֥ר יֹצֵ֖א מֵעֵ֣דֶן לְהַשְׁקוֹת֑ אֶת־הַגָּ֔ן
וּמִשָּׁ֖ם יִפָּרֵ֥ד וְהָיָ֖ה לְאַרְבָּעָ֥ה רָאשִֽׁים׃ יא שֵׁ֥ם הָאֶחָ֖ד פִּישׁ֑וֹן הוּא֙
הַסֹּבֵ֣ב אֵ֔ת כָּל־אֶ֖רֶץ הַחֲוִילָ֑ה אֲשֶׁר־שָׁ֖ם הַזָּהָֽב׃ יב וְזְהַ֣ב הָאָ֔רֶץ
הַהִ֖וא ט֑וֹב שָׁ֣ם הַבְּדֹלַ֔ח וְאֶ֖בֶן הַשֹּֽׁהַם׃ יג וְשֵׁ֥ם־הַנָּהָ֖ר הַשֵּׁנִ֑י
גִּיחֹ֔ון הוּא֙ הַסּוֹבֵ֣ב אֵ֔ת כָּל־אֶ֖רֶץ כּֽוּשׁ׃ יד וְשֵׁ֥ם הַנָּהָ֖ר הַשְּׁלִישִׁ֑י

אַדְמָתָא׃ ז וּבְרָא יְיָ אֱלֹהִים יַת אָדָם עַפְרָא מִן
אַדְמָתָא וּנְפַח בְּאַפּוֹהִי נִשְׁמְתָא דְחַיֵּי וַהֲוַת
בְּאָדָם לְרוּחַ מְמַלְלָא׃ ח וּנְצִיב יְיָ אֱלֹהִים
גִּנְתָא בְּעֵדֶן מִלְקַדְמִין וְאַשְׁרֵי תַּמָּן יַת אָדָם
דִּי בְרָא׃ ט וְאַצְמַח יְיָ אֱלֹהִים מִן אַרְעָא כָּל
אִילָן דִּמְרַגֵּג לְמֶחֱזֵי וְטַב לְמֵיכַל וְאִילַן חַיֵּיא
בְּמִצְיעוּת גִּנְתָא וְאִילַן דְּאָבְלִין פֵּירוֹהִי חַכִּימִין
בֵּין טַב לְבִישׁ׃ י וְנַהֲרָא הֲוָה נָפִיק מֵעֵדֶן
לְאַשְׁקָאָה יַת גִּנְתָא וּמִתַּמָּן מִתְפָּרֵשׁ וַהֲוָה
לְאַרְבְּעָא רֵישֵׁי נַהֲרִין׃ יא שׁוּם חַד פִּישׁוֹן הוּא
מַקִּיף יַת כָּל אַרְעָא דַחֲוִילָה דִּי תַמָּן דַּהֲבָא׃
יב וְדַהֲבָא דְאַרְעָא הַהִיא טָב תַּמָּן בְּדֶלְחָא
וַאֲבְנֵי בוּרְלָא׃ יג וְשׁוּם נַהֲרָא תִנְיָנָא גִּיחוֹן
הוּא מַקִּיף יַת כָּל אַרְעָא דְכוּשׁ׃ יד וְשׁוּם

לע"י

לעניין צרייתו של אדם העלה בתכוס, והשקה עניים לשרות העפר, ונצרף
אדם, כנגד זה שנותן מים ואחר כך לש את העיסה, קף כתן והשקה, ואחר
כך ויייצר: (ז) **וייצר**. שתי יצירות, יצירה לעולם הזה ויצירה לתחיית המתים,
אבל בבהמה שאינה עומדת לדין, לא נכתב ביצירתה שני יודי"ן: **עפר מן
האדמה**. לפי עפרו מכל האדמה, מארבע רוחות, שבכל מקום שימות שם,
תהא קולטתו לקבורה. דבר אחר, נטל עפרו ממקום שנאמר בו מזבח אדמה
תעשה לי[1], הלוחי תהא לו כפרה ויוכל לעמוד: **ויפח באפיו**. עשאו מן
התחתונים ומן העליונים, גוף מן התחתונים ונשמה מן העליונים, לפי
שביום רחשון נבראו שמים וארץ, בשני ברח רקיע לעליונים, בשלישי תראה
היבשה לתחתונים, ברביעי ברח מאורות לעליונים, בחמישי ישרצו המים
לתחתונים, הוקק בשתי לברואות בו בעליונים ומתחתונים, ואם לאו יש
קנאה במעשה ברחשית, שיהיו אלו רבים על אלו בבריאת יום אחד: **לנפש
חיה**. קף בבהמה וחיה נקראו נפש חיה, אף זו של אדם חיה שבכולן, שתוסף
בו דעה ודבור: (ח) **מקדם**. במזרחו של עדן נטע את הגן, ואת תאמר הרי
כבר נאמר ויברח וגו' את האדם וגו', ראיתי בבריייתא של ר' אליעזר בנו של
ר' יוסי הגלילי מל"ג מדות שהתורה נדרשת וזו אחת מהן, כלל שלאחריו
מעשה הוא פרטו של ראשון, ויברח את האדם וגו', זהו כלל, ואת בריאתו
מהיכן ואתם מעשיו, חזר ופירש ויייצר ה' אלהים וגו', וילמח לו גן עדן,
ויניחהו בגן עדן, ויפל עליו תרדמה, השומע שבור שהוא מעשה אחר, ואינו
אלא פרטו של ראשון. וכן אלל בבהמה חזר וכתב ויצר ה' וגו' מן האדמה כל
חית השדה, כדי לפרש ויצא אל האדם לקרות שם, ולמד על העופות שנברחו
מן הרקיע: (ט) **ויצמח**. לעניין הגן הכתוב מדבר: **בתוך הגן**. בחלצע הגן:
(יא) **פישון**. הוא נילוס נהר מלריים, ועל שם שמימיו מתברכין ועולין
ומשקין את האדר נקרא פישון, כמו ופשו פרשיו[2]. דבר אחר פישון, שהוא
מגדל פשתן, שנאמר אלל מלריים ובושו עובדי פשתים[3]: (יג) **גיחון**. שהיה
הולך והולה והמייתו גדולה מאד, כמו וכי יגח[4], שמנגח והולך והומה:

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. 24*ff*.)

1 שמות כ, כ 2 חבקוק א, ח 3 ישעי' יט, ט 4 שמות כא, כח

surface of the ground (so that man should be created from moist earth). [7] *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.*

[8] *God, Almighty God, planted a garden in Eden to the east, and placed there the man which He had formed.* [9] *(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).*

[10] *A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it separated and became the source of four riverheads.* [11] *The name of one is Pishon (the Nile), which surrounds the entire land of Chavilah, where there is gold.* [12] *The gold of that land is good. Crystal and onyx (are found) there.* [13] *The name of the second river is Gichon, which surrounds the entire land of Kush.* [14] *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* (וּפָשׁוּ)*"* (Habbakuk 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* (פִּשְׁתִּים) *... shall be ashamed"* (Isaiah 19:9).

Gichon flowed and roared, and its roaring was very great, as in the verse: "If an ox gores (יִגַּח)" (*Shemos* 21:28), for he gores and roars while goring along.

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

Pras received its name because its waters are fruitful (פָּרִין) 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?

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)

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)

חַפֵּ֖קֶל הַ֣וּא הַֽהֹלֵ֑ךְ קִדְמַ֥ת אַשּׁ֖וּר וְהַנָּהָ֥ר הָרְבִיעִ֖י הֽוּא פְּרָֽת׃ טו וַיִּקַּ֗ח יְהוָ֤ה אֱלֹהִים֙ אֶת־הָאָדָ֔ם וַיַּנִּחֵ֖הוּ בְּגַן־עֵ֑דֶן לְעָבְדָ֖הּ וּלְשָׁמְרָֽהּ׃ טז וַיְצַ֣ו יְהוָ֤ה אֱלֹהִים֙ עַל־הָאָדָ֔ם לֵאמֹ֖ר מִכֹּ֣ל עֵֽץ־הַגָּ֔ן אָכֹ֖ל תֹּאכֵֽל׃ יז וּמֵעֵ֗ץ הַדַּ֙עַת֙ טֹ֣וב וָרָ֔ע לֹ֥א תֹאכַ֖ל מִמֶּ֑נּוּ כִּ֗י בְּי֛וֹם אֲכָלְךָ֥ מִמֶּ֖נּוּ מ֥וֹת תָּמֽוּת׃ יח וַיֹּ֣אמֶר יְהוָ֣ה אֱלֹהִ֗ים לֹא־טֹ֣וב הֱיוֹת֮ הָאָדָם֒ לְבַדּ֔וֹ אֶֽעֱשֶׂה־לּ֥וֹ עֵ֖זֶר כְּנֶגְדּֽוֹ׃ יט וַיִּצֶר֩ יְהוָ֨ה אֱלֹהִ֜ים מִן־הָאֲדָמָ֗ה כָּל־חַיַּ֤ת הַשָּׂדֶה֙ וְאֵת֙ כָּל־עֹ֣וף הַשָּׁמַ֔יִם וַיָּבֵ֖א אֶל־הָאָדָ֑ם לִרְאֹ֣ות מַה־יִּקְרָא־לֹ֗ו וְכֹל֩ אֲשֶׁ֨ר יִקְרָא־לֹ֥ו הָאָדָ֛ם נֶ֥פֶשׁ חַיָּ֖ה הֽוּא־שְׁמֹֽו׃ [שלישי] כ וַיִּקְרָ֨א הָאָדָ֜ם

נַהֲרָ֣א תְּלִיתָ֔אָה דִּיגְלַ֖ת הִ֣וא מְהַלֶּ֑כֶת לְמַדִּינְחָ֖א דְּאַתּ֥וּר וְנַהֲרָ֖א רְבִיעָ֥אָה הִ֖וא פְּרָֽת׃ טו וּדְבַ֣ר יְיָ֣ אֱלֹהִ֗ים יַ֚ת אָדָ֔ם וְאַשְׁרֵ֖יהּ בְּגִנְּתָ֣א דְּעֵדֶ֑ן לְמִפְלְחָ֖הּ וּלְמִטְרַ֥הּ׃ טז וּפַקֵּ֥יד יְיָ֣ אֱלֹהִ֗ים עַל אָדָם֙ לְמֵימָ֣ר מִכָּל֩ אִילַ֨ן גִּנְּתָ֜א מֵיכַ֥ל תֵּיכֽוֹל׃ יז וּמֵאִילָ֣ן דְּאָכְלִ֔ין פֵּרוֹהִ֖י חַכִּ֣ימִין בֵּ֑ין טַ֚ב לְבִישׁ֙ לָ֣א תֵיכ֔וֹל מִנֵּ֖יהּ אֲרֵ֣י בְיוֹמָ֔א דְּתֵיכ֖וֹל מִנֵּ֑יהּ מֹ֥ותָא תְמ֖וּת׃ יח וַאֲמַ֣ר יְיָ֣ אֱלֹהִ֗ים לָא֩ טַ֨ב תִּקּ֜וּן דְּיֵהֵ֤וי אָדָם֙ בִּלְחוֹדֹ֔והִי אֶֽעְבֵּ֥ד לֵיהּ֙ סָמֵ֣ךְ לְקִבְלֵ֔יהּ׃ יט וּבְרָ֣א יְיָ֣ אֱלֹהִ֗ים מִן֩ אַרְעָ֨א כָּל֜ חֵיוַ֤ת בָּרָא֙ וְיַ֣ת כָּל֔ עוֹפָ֖א דִּשְׁמַיָּ֑א וְאַיְתִ֣י לְוָ֔ת אָדָ֖ם לְמֶחֱזֵ֣י מָ֣ה יִקְרֵ֣י לֵיהּ֮ וְכָל֣ דִּ֣י הֲוָה֩ קָרֵ֨י לֵיהּ֜ אָדָ֗ם נַפְשָׁ֥א חַיְתָ֛א הִ֥וא שְׁמֵֽיהּ׃ כ וּקְרָ֥א

לקמ"ו

(יד) **חדקל.** שמימיו חדין וקלין: **פרת.** שמימיו פרין ורבין, ומבדין את האדם: **בוש ואשור.** עדיין לא היו, וכתב המקרא על שם העתיד: **קדמת אשור.** למזרחה של אשור: **הוא פרת.** החשוב על כולם, הנזכר על שם ארץ ישראל: (טו) **ויקח.** לקחו בדברים נחים, ופתהו ליכנס[1]: (יח) **לא טוב היות וגו'.** שלא יאמרו שתי רשויות הן, הקב"ה בעליונים יחיד ואין לו זוג, וזה בתחתונים ואין לו זוג: **עזר כנגדו.** זכה עזר, לא זכה כנגדו להלחם[2]:

(יט) **ויצר וגו' מן האדמה.** היה יצירה כיוצא בחמורה למעלה ויעש אלהים את חית הארץ וגו', אלא בא ופירש שהעופות נבראו מן הרקק, לפי שאמר למעלה מן המים נבראו, וכאן אמר מן האדמה נבראו. ועוד ללמדך כאן, שבשעת יצירתן, מיד בו ביום, הביאם אל האדם לקרות להם שם[3]. ודדברי מגדה[4] יצירה זו לשון ריידו וכבושם, כמו כי תצור אל עיר[5], שכבשן תחת ידו של אדם: **וכל אשר יקרא לו האדם נפש חיה וגו'.** סרסרו ופרסרו, כל נפש

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" (**לֹא טוֹב לְאָדָם הֱיוֹת לְבַדּוֹ**). In fact, however, the Torah

1 ב"ר יז, ה 2 שם יז, ג 3 חולין נח: 4 ב"ר יז, ד 5 דברים כ, יט

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

[15] *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.*

[16] *God, Almighty God, commanded man, saying, "You may eat freely from every tree of the Garden,* [17] *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."*

[18] *God, Almighty God, said, "It is not good that man is alone. I will make him a helpmate opposite him."*

[19] *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 הֱיוֹת 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.

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. 132*ff.*)

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.

שֵׁמוֹת לְכָל־הַבְּהֵמָה וּלְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּלְכֹל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה וּלְאָדָם
לֹא־מָצָא עֵזֶר כְּנֶגְדּוֹ: כא וַיַּפֶּל יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים | תַּרְדֵּמָה
עַל־הָאָדָם וַיִּישָׁן וַיִּקַּח אַחַת מִצַּלְעֹתָיו וַיִּסְגֹּר בָּשָׂר תַּחְתֶּנָּה:
כב וַיִּבֶן יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים | אֶת־הַצֵּלָע אֲשֶׁר־לָקַח מִן־הָאָדָם
לְאִשָּׁה וַיְבִאֶהָ אֶל־הָאָדָם: כג וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם זֹאת הַפַּעַם עֶצֶם
מֵעֲצָמַי וּבָשָׂר מִבְּשָׂרִי לְזֹאת יִקָּרֵא אִשָּׁה כִּי מֵאִישׁ לֻקְחָה־
זֹּאת: כד עַל־כֵּן יַעֲזָב־אִישׁ אֶת־אָבִיו וְאֶת־אִמּוֹ וְדָבַק בְּאִשְׁתּוֹ
וְהָיוּ לְבָשָׂר אֶחָד: כה וַיִּהְיוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם עֲרוּמִּים הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וְלֹא
יִתְבֹּשָׁשׁוּ: ג א וְהַנָּחָשׁ הָיָה עָרוּם מִכֹּל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה
יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה אַף כִּי־אָמַר אֱלֹהִים לֹא
תֹאכְלוּ מִכֹּל עֵץ הַגָּן: ב וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה אֶל־הַנָּחָשׁ מִפְּרִי עֵץ־
הַגָּן נֹאכֵל: ג וּמִפְּרִי הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר בְּתוֹךְ־הַגָּן אָמַר אֱלֹהִים לֹא
תֹאכְלוּ מִמֶּנּוּ וְלֹא תִגְּעוּ בּוֹ פֶּן־תְּמֻתוּן: ד וַיֹּאמֶר הַנָּחָשׁ

אָדָם שְׁמָהָן לְכָל בְּעִירָא וּלְעוֹפָא דִּשְׁמַיָּא
וּלְכָל חֵיוַת בָּרָא וּלְאָדָם לָא אַשְׁכַּח סָמֵךְ
לְקִבְלֵיהּ: כא וּרְמָא יְיָ אֱלֹהִים שְׁנָתָא עַל אָדָם
וּדְמֵךְ וּנְסִיב חֲדָא מֵעִלְעוֹהִי וּמְלִי בִשְׂרָא
תְּחוֹתָהּ: כב וּבְנָא יְיָ אֱלֹהִים יַת עִלְעָא דִּנְסִיב
מִן אָדָם לְאִתְתָּא וְאַיְתֵהּ לְוַת אָדָם: כג וַאֲמַר
אָדָם הֲדָא זִמְנָא גַּרְמָא מִגַּרְמַי וּבִסְרָא מִבִּסְרִי
לְדָא יִתְקְרֵי אִתְּתָא אֲרֵי מִבַּעְלָא נְסִיבָא דָּא:
כד עַל כֵּן יִשְׁבּוֹק גְּבַר בֵּית מִשְׁכְּבֵי אֲבוּהִי
וְאִמֵּיהּ וְיִדְבַּק בְּאִתְּתֵיהּ וִיהוֹן לְבִסְרָא חָד:
כה וַהֲווֹ תַּרְוֵיהוֹן עַרְטִילָאִין אָדָם וְאִתְּתֵיהּ וְלָא
מִתְכַּלְמִין: א וְחִוְיָא הֲוָה חַכִּים מִכָּל חֵיוַת בָּרָא
דִּי עֲבַד יְיָ אֱלֹהִים וַאֲמַר לְאִתְּתָא בְּקוּשְׁטָא
אֲרֵי אֲמַר יְיָ לָא תֵיכְלוּן מִכָּל אִילַן גִּנְּתָא:
ב וַאֲמַרַת אִתְּתָא לְחִוְיָא מִפֵּירֵי אִילַן גִּנְּתָא
נֵיכוֹל: ג וּמִפֵּירֵי אִילָנָא דִּי בְמִצְיעוּת גִּנְּתָא
אֲמַר יְיָ לָא תֵיכְלוּן מִנֵּיהּ וְלָא תִקְרְבוּן בֵּיהּ
דִּלְמָא תְּמוּתוּן: ד וַאֲמַר חִוְיָא לְאִתְּתָא לָא

רס"ו

חיה תשר יקרא לו כתדש שם, הוא שמו לעולם: (כ) **ולאדם לא מצא עזר**:
(כא) **ויפל ה' אלהים תרדמה**. כשהניחן, הכניסן לפניו כל מין ומין, זכר
ונקבה, אמר, לכולם יש בן זוג ולי אין בן זוג, מיד ויפל[1]: **מצלעותיו**.
מסטריו, כמו ולצלע המשכן, זהו שאמרו שני פרצופין נבראו[2]: **ויסגור**. מקום
החתך[3]: **ויישן ויקח**. שלא ירתח תחיכת הבשר שממנו נברית, ותתבזה עליו:
(כב) **ויבן**. כבנין, רחבה מלמטה וקורה מלמעלה, לקבל הולד, כאומר של
חטים שהוא רחב מלמטה וקור מלמעלה, שלא יכניד משלו על קירותיו: **ויבן
את הצלע לאשה**. להיות תשא, כמו ויעש אותו גדעון לאפוד[4], להיות
לאפוד: (כג) **זאת הפעם**. מלמד שבא תדש על כל בהמה וחיה, ולא נתקררה
דעתו עד שבא על חוה[5]: **לזאת יקרא אשה כי מאיש וגו'**. לשון נופל על
לשון, מכאן שנברית בעולם בלשון הקדש[6]: (כד) **על כן יעזב איש**. רוח

הקדש אומרת כן, לתסור על בני נח בעריות[7]: **ודבק באשתו**. יחיד שייבם, ושם נעשה בשרם אחד[8]: (כה) **ולא יתבוששו**. שלא היו יודעים
דרך ערוה להכאין בין טוב לרע, ואף על פי שאתה בו דעה לקרות שמות,
לא נתן בו יצר הרע, עד שאכלו מן העץ ונכנס בו יצר הרע, וידע מה בין טוב
לרע: (ג א) **והנחש היה ערום**. מה ענין זה לכאן, היה לו לסמוך ויעש לתדש
ולשתו כתנות עור וילבישם, אלא ללמדך שאיזו שבח קפץ הנחש עליהם,
ראה אותם ערומים ועסוקים בתשמיש לעין כל, ותאוה לה[9]: **ערום מכל**.
לפי ערמתו וגדולתו היתה מפלתו, ערוס מכל, תרוך מכל[10]: **אף כי אמר
וגו'**. שמא תמר לכם לא תאכלו מכל וגו', ואף על פי שראה אותם אוכלים
משאר פירות, הרבה עליה דברים, כדי שתשיבנו ויבא לדבר באותו הענין:
(ג) **ולא תגעו בו**. הוסיפה על המצוה, לפיכך באה לידי גרעון, הוא שאמר אל

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 junction 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.

1 ב"ר יד, ד 2 ברכות ס: 3 שם 4 שופטים ח, כז 5 יבמות סג. 6 ב"ר יח, ד 7 סנהדרין נז: 8 שם נח. 9 ב"ר יח, ו 10 שם יט, א

Third Reading

[20] *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).*

[21] *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.* [22] *God, Almighty God, built the side that He had taken from man into a woman, and He brought her to man.* [23] *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)."* [24] *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 *They 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 [1] *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'?"*

[2] *The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat from the fruit of the trees of the garden,* [3] *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. 1*ff*)

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)?

God 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)

אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה לֹא־מוֹת תְּמֻתוּן: ה כִּי יֹדֵעַ אֱלֹהִים כִּי בְיוֹם
אֲכָלְכֶם מִמֶּנּוּ וְנִפְקְחוּ עֵינֵיכֶם וִהְיִיתֶם כֵּאלֹהִים יֹדְעֵי טוֹב וָרָע:
ו וַתֵּרֶא הָאִשָּׁה כִּי טוֹב הָעֵץ לְמַאֲכָל וְכִי תַאֲוָה־הוּא לָעֵינַיִם
וְנֶחְמָד הָעֵץ לְהַשְׂכִּיל וַתִּקַּח מִפִּרְיוֹ וַתֹּאכַל וַתִּתֵּן גַּם־לְאִישָׁהּ
עִמָּהּ וַיֹּאכַל: ז וַתִּפָּקַחְנָה עֵינֵי שְׁנֵיהֶם וַיֵּדְעוּ כִּי עֵירֻמִּם הֵם
וַיִּתְפְּרוּ עֲלֵה תְאֵנָה וַיַּעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם חֲגֹרֹת: ח וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶת־קוֹל
יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִתְהַלֵּךְ בַּגָּן לְרוּחַ הַיּוֹם וַיִּתְחַבֵּא הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ
מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים בְּתוֹךְ עֵץ הַגָּן: ט וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים
אֶל־הָאָדָם וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אַיֶּכָּה: י וַיֹּאמֶר אֶת־קֹלְךָ שָׁמַעְתִּי בַגָּן
וָאִירָא כִּי־עֵירֹם אָנֹכִי וָאֵחָבֵא: יא וַיֹּאמֶר מִי הִגִּיד לְךָ כִּי עֵירֹם
אָתָּה הֲמִן־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לְבִלְתִּי אֲכָל־מִמֶּנּוּ אָכָלְתָּ:
יב וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה עִמָּדִי הִוא נָתְנָה־לִּי

מֵמַת תְּמוּתוּן: ה אֲרֵי גְּלֵי קֳדָם יְיָ אֲרֵי בְּיוֹמָא
דְּתֵיכְלוּן מִנֵּיהּ וְיִתְפַּתְּחָן עֵינֵיכוֹן וּתְהוֹן
כְּרַבְרְבִין חַכִּימִין בֵּין טַב לְבִישׁ: ו וַחֲזַת אִתְּתָא
אֲרֵי טָב אִילָנָא לְמֵיכַל וַאֲרֵי אַסְיָ הוּא לְעֵינִין
וּמְרַגֵּג אִילָנָא לְאִסְתַּכָּלָא בֵּיהּ וּנְסִיבַת מֵאִבֵּהּ
וַאֲכָלַת וִיהָבַת אַף לְבַעְלָהּ עִמָּהּ וַאֲכָל:
ז וְאִתְפַּתָּחָא עֵינֵי תַרְוֵיהוֹן וְיָדְעוּ אֲרֵי עַרְטִילָאִין
אִנּוּן וְחַטִּיטוּ לְהוֹן טַרְפֵי תְּאֵנִין וַעֲבָדוּ לְהוֹן
זָרְזִין: ח וּשְׁמָעוּ יַת קָל מֵימְרָא דַיְיָ אֱלֹהִים
דְּמְהַלֵּךְ בְּגִנְתָּא לְמָנַח יוֹמָא וְאִטְמַר אָדָם
וְאִתְּתֵיהּ מִן קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלֹהִים בְּגוֹ אִילַן גִּנְתָּא:
ט וּקְרָא יְיָ אֱלֹהִים לְאָדָם וַאֲמַר לֵהּ אָן אַתְּ:
י וַאֲמַר יַת קָל מֵימְרָךְ שְׁמָעִית בְּגִנְתָּא וּדְחֵלִית
אֲרֵי עַרְטִילָאי אֲנָא וְאִטְמָרִית: יא וַאֲמַר מַן חַוִי
לָךְ אֲרֵי עַרְטִילָאי אָתְּ הֲמִן אִילָנָא דְּפַקֶּדְתָּךְ
בְּדִיל דְּלָא לְמֵיכַל מִנֵּיהּ אֲכָלְתְּ: יב וַאֲמַר אָדָם
אִתְּתָא דִּיהַבְתְּ עִמִּי הִיא יַהֲבַת לִי מִן אִילָנָא

רס"י

תוספ על דבריו[1]: **(ד) לא מות תמותון.** דחפס עד שגגעב בו, חמר לה כשם שחין מיתה בגגיעב כך חין מיתה בחכילה[2]: **(ה) כי יודע.** כל חומן שוחש חת בני חומותו, מן הטן חכל וברח חת הטוחש[3]: **והייתם באלהים.** יוברי עולמות: **(ו) ותרא האשה.** רחתה דבריו של נחש והגחו לה והחמינתו[4]: **כי טוב העץ.** להיות כחלהים: **וכי תאוה הוא לעינים.** כמו שחמר לה ונפקחו עיניכם: **ונחמד להשכיל.** כמו שחמר לה יודעי טוב ורע: **ותתן גם לאישה.** שלח תמות היח ויהיה כוח ויש חחרת: **גם.** לרבות בהמה וחיה: **(ז) ותפקחנה וגו'.** לעניו החכמה דבר הכתוב, ולח לעניו רחיה ממש, וסוף המקרח מוכיח: **וידעו כי עירומים הם.** חף הסומח יודע כשהוח ערוס, שלח מהו וידעו כי עירומים הם, חלח מלוה חחת היתה בידם ונתערטלו היומנ[5]: **עלה תאנה.** כוח העץ שחכלו ממנו, בדבר שנתקלקלו בו נתקנו[6], חבל שחר הטעים מנעוס מליטול עליהם,

ומפני מה לח נתפרסס העץ, שחין הקב"ה חפץ להזמין בריה, שלח יכלימוהו ויחמרו זהו שלקה הטוחש על ידו[7]: **(ח) וישמעו.** יש מדרשי חגדה רבים, וכבר סדרוס רבותינו על מכונס בדרשות רבה ובשחר מדרשות, ומי לח בחתי חלח לפשוטו של מקרח, ולחגדה המיוסבת דברי המקרח דבר דבור על חופניו: **וישמעו.** מה שמעו, שמעו חת קול הקב"ה שהיה מתהלך בגן: **לרוח היום.** לחותו רוח שהשמש בחה משם [ס"ח לשם ודוק כי כן עיקר] וזו היח מערבית, שלפנות ערב חמה במערב והם סרחו בעזיות[8]: **(ט) איכה.** יודע היה היכן הוח, חלח ליכנס עמו בדבריס, שלח יהח נבהל להשיב חס יעיישהו פתחום. וכן בקין חמר לו חי הבל חחיך[9], וכן בבלעם מי החניסים החלה עמך[10], ליכנס עמהם בדבריס, וכן בחזקיהו בשלוחי מרודך בבלחדן[11]: **(יח) מי הגיד לך.** מחין לך לדעת מה בשת יש בעומד ערום: **המן העץ.** בתמיה: **(יג) אשר נתתה עמדי.** כחן כפר בטובה[12]:

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.

1 משלי ל, ו 2 ב"ר יט, ג 3 שם 4 שם 5 ב"ר יט, ו 6 ברכות מ. 7 תנחומא וירא פי"ד 8 סנהדרין לח: 9 בראשית ד, ט 10 במדבר כב, ט 11 ישעי' לט, א 12 ע"ז ה:

[4] The serpent said to the woman, "You will surely not die. [5] 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."

[6] 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).

[7] 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 loincloths.

[8] 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.

[9] God, Almighty God, called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" (to engage him in conversation).

[10] (Man) said, "I heard Your sound in the garden, and I was afraid because I am naked, so I hid."

[11] (God) said, "Who told you that you are naked? Have you eaten from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat?"

[12] 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.)

Thus, 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*)

מִן־הָעֵץ וָאֹכֵל: יג וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לָאִשָּׁה מַה־זֹּאת עָשִׂית
וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה הַנָּחָשׁ הִשִּׁיאַנִי וָאֹכֵל: יד וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים |
אֶל־הַנָּחָשׁ כִּי עָשִׂיתָ זֹּאת אָרוּר אַתָּה מִכָּל־הַבְּהֵמָה וּמִכֹּל
חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה עַל־גְּחֹנְךָ תֵלֵךְ וְעָפָר תֹּאכַל כָּל־יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ:
טו וְאֵיבָה | אָשִׁית בֵּינְךָ וּבֵין הָאִשָּׁה וּבֵין זַרְעֲךָ וּבֵין זַרְעָהּ הוּא
יְשׁוּפְךָ רֹאשׁ וְאַתָּה תְּשׁוּפֶנּוּ עָקֵב: ס טז אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה אָמַר
הַרְבָּה אַרְבֶּה עִצְּבוֹנֵךְ וְהֵרֹנֵךְ בְּעֶצֶב תֵּלְדִי בָנִים וְאֶל־אִישֵׁךְ
תְּשׁוּקָתֵךְ וְהוּא יִמְשָׁל־בָּךְ: ס יז וּלְאָדָם אָמַר כִּי שָׁמַעְתָּ לְקוֹל
אִשְׁתֶּךָ וַתֹּאכַל מִן־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לֵאמֹר לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ
אֲרוּרָה הָאֲדָמָה בַּעֲבוּרֶךָ בְּעִצָּבוֹן תֹּאכְלֶנָּה כֹּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ:
יח וְקוֹץ וְדַרְדַּר תַּצְמִיחַ לָךְ וְאָכַלְתָּ אֶת־עֵשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה: יט בְּזֵעַת
אַפֶּיךָ תֹּאכַל לֶחֶם עַד שׁוּבְךָ אֶל־הָאֲדָמָה כִּי מִמֶּנָּה לֻקָּחְתָּ
כִּי־עָפָר אַתָּה וְאֶל־עָפָר תָּשׁוּב: כ וַיִּקְרָא הָאָדָם שֵׁם אִשְׁתּוֹ
חַוָּה כִּי הִוא הָיְתָה אֵם כָּל־חָי: כא וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לְאָדָם
וּלְאִשְׁתּוֹ כָּתְנוֹת עוֹר וַיַּלְבִּשֵׁם: פ [רביעי] כב וַיֹּאמֶר | יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים
הֵן הָאָדָם הָיָה כְּאַחַד מִמֶּנּוּ לָדַעַת טוֹב וָרָע וְעַתָּה | פֶּן־יִשְׁלַח
יָדוֹ וְלָקַח גַּם מֵעֵץ הַחַיִּים וְאָכַל וָחַי לְעֹלָם: כג וַיְשַׁלְּחֵהוּ יְהוָה
אֱלֹהִים מִגַּן־עֵדֶן לַעֲבֹד אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר לֻקַּח מִשָּׁם:
כד וַיְגָרֶשׁ אֶת־הָאָדָם וַיַּשְׁכֵּן מִקֶּדֶם לְגַן־עֵדֶן אֶת־הַכְּרֻבִים וְאֵת
לַהַט הַחֶרֶב הַמִּתְהַפֶּכֶת לִשְׁמֹר אֶת־דֶּרֶךְ עֵץ הַחַיִּים: ס

וַאֲכָלִית: יג וַאֲמַר יְיָ אֱלֹהִים לְאִתְּתָא מַה דָּא
עֲבַדְתְּ וַאֲמָרַת אִתְּתָא חִוְיָא אַטְעֵינִי וַאֲכָלִית:
יד וַאֲמַר יְיָ אֱלֹהִים לְחִוְיָא אֲרֵי עֲבַדְתְּ דָּא לֵיט
אַתְּ מִכָּל בְּעִירָא וּמִכָּל חֵיוַת בָּרָא עַל מְעָךְ
תֵּיזֵיל וְעַפְרָא תֵּיכוֹל כָּל יוֹמֵי חַיָּיךְ: טו וּדְבָבוּ
אֵשַׁוֵּי בֵּינָךְ וּבֵין אִתְּתָא וּבֵין בְּנָיךְ וּבֵין בְּנָהָא
הוּא יְהֵא דְכִיר לָךְ מַה דַּעֲבַדְתְּ לֵיהּ מִלְּקַדְמִין
וְאַתְּ תְּהֵא נָטַר לֵיהּ לְסוֹפָא: טז לְאִתְּתָא אֲמַר
אַסְגָּאָה אַסְגֵּי צַעֲרָיְכִי וְעִדּוּיָיְכִי בְּצַעַר תֵּלְדִין
בְּנִין וּלְוָת בַּעֲלָיךְ תְּהֵא תְּאוּבְתִּיךְ וְהוּא יִשְׁלַט
בִּיךְ: יז וּלְאָדָם אֲמַר אֲרֵי קַבֵּילְתָּא לְמֵימַר
אִתְּתָךְ וַאֲכַלְתְּ מִן אִילָנָא דִי פַּקֶּדְתָּךְ לְמֵימַר
לָא תֵיכוֹל מִנֵּיהּ לֵיטָא אַרְעָא בְּדִילָךְ בַּעֲמַל
תֵּיכְלִינַהּ כָּל יוֹמֵי חַיָּיךְ: יח וְכוּבִין וְאַטְדִין
תַּצְמַח לָךְ וְתֵיכוֹל יַת עִשְׂבָּא דְחַקְלָא:
יט בְּזִיעָתָא דְאַפָּךְ תֵּיכוֹל לַחְמָא עַד דְּתֵיתוּב
לְאַרְעָא דְּמִינַהּ אִתְבְּרֵיתָא אֲרֵי עַפְרָא אַתְּ
וּלְעַפְרָא תְּתוּב: כ וּקְרָא אָדָם שׁוּם אִתְּתֵיהּ
חַוָּה אֲרֵי הִיא הֲוַת אִמָּא דְּכָל בְּנֵי אֱנָשָׁא:
כא וַעֲבַד יְיָ אֱלֹהִים לְאָדָם וּלְאִתְּתֵיהּ לְבוּשִׁין
דִיקַר עַל מְשַׁךְ בִּשְׂרֵיהוֹן וְאַלְבֵּשִׁינוּן:
כב וַאֲמַר יְיָ אֱלֹהִים הָא אָדָם הֲוָה יְחִידִי בְּעַלְמָא
מִנֵּיהּ לְמִידַע טַב וּבִישׁ וּכְעַן דִּלְמָא יוֹשִׁיט
יְדֵיהּ וְיִסַּב אַף מֵאִילַן חַיֵּיא וְייכוֹל וְיֶחֱי לְעָלַם:
כג וְשַׁלְּחֵיהּ יְיָ אֱלֹהִים מִגִּנְתָּא דְעֵדֶן לְמִפְלַח
יַת אַדְמְתָא דְאִתְבְּרֵי מִתַּמָּן: כד וְתָרִיךְ יַת
אָדָם וְאַשְׁרֵי מִלְּקַדְמִין לְגִנְתָּא דְעֵדֶן יַת
כְּרוּבַיָּא וְיַת שְׁנַן חַרְבָּא דְמִתְהַפְּכָא לְמִטַּר יַת

לט"י

(יג) **השיאני**. כטעני, כמו אל יסיח אתכם חזקיהו[1]: (יד) **כי עשית זאת**. מכאן שאין מהפכים בזכותו של מסית, שאילו שאלו למה עשית זאת, כיצד לו להשיב דברי הרב ודברי התלמיד דברי מי שומעין[2]: **מכל הבהמה ומכל חית השדה**. אם מבהמה נתקלל, מחיה לא כל שכן, כעמידו רבותינו מדרש זה במסכת כלורות[3], ללמד שימי עיבורו של נחש שבע שניס: **על גחונך תלך**. רגליס היו לו ונקללו: (טו) **ואיבה אשית**. אתה לא נתכוונת אלא שיומות אדם כשיאכל הוא תחלה ואחר אם חוה, ואלא כאת לדבר אל חוה תחלה אלא לפי שכנשים דעתן קלות להתפתות, ויודעות לפתות את בעליהן, לפיכך ואיבה אשית[4]: **ישופך**. יכתתך, כמו ומכות חותו[5], ותרגומו ושפית יתיה: **ואתה תשופנו עקב**. לא יכא לך קומה, ואשכנו בעקבו, ואף אשם תמיתנו. ולאחר תשופנו, כמו ואף בכס[6], כשהוא בא לנשוך הוא נופף כמין שריקה, ולפי שהנחש נופל על הנשון, כתב לשון נשיפה בשניהם: (טז) **עצבונך**. זה לער גידול בניס[7]: **והרנך**. זה לער העבור: **בעצב תלדי בנים**. זה לער הלידה: **ואל אישך תשוקתך**. לתשמיש, ואף על פי כן תין לך אלא לתוכחו בפה, אלא הוא ישמוש בך, הכל ממנו ואל ממך: **תשוקתך**. תאותך, כמו ונפשו שוקקה[8]: (יז) **ארורה האדמה בעבורך**. תעלה לך דברים מרוריס, כגון זבובים ופרעושים ונמלים, אשל ליואל לתרבות רעה, והכריות מקללות שדים שיקו מכם: (יח) **וקוץ ודרדר תצמיח לך**. כאלו, כשתזרענה מיני זרעים, תאמיה קוץ ודרדר קודם ועכשיות, וכן נאכלים על ידי תיקון[9]: **ואכלת את עשב השדה**. ומה קללה היא זו, והלא בברכה נאמר לו הנה נתתי לכם את כל עשב זורע זרע וגו', אלא מה אמור כאן ברשע הטעין, אחורה כאדמה בעבורך בעצבון תאכלנה, ואחר העצבון וקוץ ודרדר תצמיח לך, כשתזרענה קטניות או ירקות גסה, היא תצמיח לך קוניס ודרדרים ושאר עשבי השדה, ועל כרחך תאכלם: (יט) **בזעת אפיך**. לאחר שתטריח בו הרבה: (כ) **ויקרא האדם**. חזר הכתוב לעניני הרשעו ויקרא האדם שמות, אלא הפסיק, אלא ללמדך שעל ידי קריאת שמות נזדווגה לו חוה, כמו שכתוב ולאדם לא מצא עזר כנגדו, לפיכך ויפל תרדמה, ועל ידי שכתב ויהיו שניהם ערומים, סמך לו פרשת הנחש, להודיעך, שמתוך שרואה

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

13 *God, Almighty God, said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?"*

The woman said, "The serpent misled me, and I ate."

14 *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!* 15 *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."*

16 *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)."*

17 *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.* 18 *(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.* 19 *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*)*

20 *The man named his wife Chava, because she was the mother of all life.*

21 *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

God, 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)."

23 *God, Almighty God, sent him out of the Garden of Eden to cultivate the earth from which he had been taken.* 24 *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.*

רס"י

מותם ערומים ורואה אותם עסוקים בתשמיש, נתאוה לה ובא עליהם בתשמדה ובמרמה: **חוה**. נופל על לשון חיה, שמחיה את ולדותיה, כאשר תאמר מה הווה לאדם[10] בלשון היה: **(כא) כתנות עור**. יש דברי אגדה אומרים חלקים כלפורין היו מדובקים על עורן. ויש אומרים דבר הבא מן העור, כגון למר המרגיש שהוא רך וחם, ועשה לכם כתנות ממנו: **(כב) היה באחד ממנו**. הרי הוא יחיד בתחתונים כמו שאני יחיד בעליונים, ומה היא יחידתו, לדעת טוב ורע, מה שאין כן בבהמה וחיה: **ועתה פן ישלח ידו וגו'**. ומשיחיה לעולם, הרי הוא קרוב להטעות הבריות אחריו, ויאמרו אף הוא אלוה. ויש מדרשי אגדה, אבל אין מיושבין על פשוטו: **(כד) מקדם לגן עדן**. במזרחו של גן עדן, חוץ לגן: **את הכרובים**. מלאכי חבלה: **החרב המתהפכת**. ולא לחיים עליו מלכנוס עוד לגן. תרגום להט שנן, כמו שלף שננה ולשון לע"ז למ"ח. ומדרשי אגדה יש, ואני איני נותן

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)

10 קהלת ב, כב

ד א וְהָאָדָם יָדַע אֶת־חַוָּה אִשְׁתּוֹ וַתַּהַר וַתֵּלֶד אֶת־קַיִן וַתֹּאמֶר
קָנִיתִי אִישׁ אֶת־יְהוָה: ב וַתֹּסֶף לָלֶדֶת אֶת־אָחִיו אֶת־הָבֶל
וַיְהִי־הֶבֶל רֹעֵה צֹאן וְקַיִן הָיָה עֹבֵד אֲדָמָה: ג וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ יָמִים
וַיָּבֵא קַיִן מִפְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה מִנְחָה לַיהוָה: ד וְהֶבֶל הֵבִיא גַם־הוּא
מִבְּכֹרוֹת צֹאנוֹ וּמֵחֶלְבֵהֶן וַיַּשַׁע יְהוָה אֶל־הֶבֶל וְאֶל־מִנְחָתוֹ:
ה וְאֶל־קַיִן וְאֶל־מִנְחָתוֹ לֹא שָׁעָה וַיִּחַר לְקַיִן מְאֹד וַיִּפְּלוּ פָּנָיו:
ו וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־קַיִן לָמָּה חָרָה לָךְ וְלָמָּה נָפְלוּ פָנֶיךָ: ז הֲלוֹא
אִם־תֵּיטִיב שְׂאֵת וְאִם לֹא תֵיטִיב לַפֶּתַח חַטָּאת רֹבֵץ וְאֵלֶיךָ
תְּשׁוּקָתוֹ וְאַתָּה תִּמְשָׁל־בּוֹ: ח וַיֹּאמֶר קַיִן אֶל־הֶבֶל אָחִיו וַיְהִי
בִּהְיוֹתָם בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיָּקָם קַיִן אֶל־הֶבֶל אָחִיו וַיַּהַרְגֵהוּ: ט וַיֹּאמֶר
יְהוָה אֶל־קַיִן אֵי הֶבֶל אָחִיךָ וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא יָדַעְתִּי הֲשֹׁמֵר אָחִי
אָנֹכִי: י וַיֹּאמֶר מָה עָשִׂיתָ קוֹל דְּמֵי אָחִיךָ צֹעֲקִים אֵלַי

אוֹרֵחַ אֵילַן חַיָּא: א וְאָדָם יְדַע יַת חַוָּה
אִתְּתֵיהּ וְעַדְיָאַת וְיַלִּידַת יַת קַיִן וַאֲמָרַת קְנֵיתִי
גַּבְרָא (מן) קֳדָם יְיָ: ב וְאוֹסִיפַת לְמֵילַד יַת
אֲחוּהִי יַת הָבֶל וַהֲוָה הֶבֶל רָעֵי עָנָא וְקַיִן הֲוָה
גָּבַר פָּלַח בְּאַרְעָא: ג וַהֲוָה מִסּוֹף יוֹמִין וְאַיְתִי
קַיִן מֵאִבָּא דְאַרְעָא תְּקָרוּבְתָּא קֳדָם יְיָ:
ד וְהֶבֶל אַיְתִי אַף הוּא מִבְּכִירֵי עָנֵיהּ
וּמִשְּׁמַנֵּיהוֹן וַהֲוָת רַעֲוָא מִן קֳדָם יְיָ בְּהֶבֶל
וּבְתִקְרוּבְתֵּיהּ: ה וּבְקַיִן וּבְתִקְרוּבְתֵּיהּ לָא הֲוָה
רַעֲוָא וּתְקֵיף לְקַיִן לַחֲדָא וְאִתְכְּבִישׁוּ אַפּוֹהִי:
ו וַאֲמַר יְיָ לְקַיִן לְמָא תְקֵיף לָךְ וּלְמָא אִתְכְּבִישׁוּ
אַפָּךְ: ז הֲלָא אִם תּוֹטִיב עוֹבָדָךְ יִשְׁתְּבִיק לָךְ
וְאִם לָא תוֹטִיב עוֹבָדָךְ לְיוֹם דִּינָא חֲטָאָךְ נְטִיר
דְּעָתִיד לְאִתְפְּרָעָא מִנָּךְ אִם לָא תְּתוּב וְאִם
תְּתוּב יִשְׁתְּבִיק לָךְ: ח וַאֲמַר קַיִן לְהֶבֶל אֲחוּהִי
וַהֲוָה בְּמֶהֱוֵיהוֹן בְּחַקְלָא וְקָם קַיִן עַל הֶבֶל
אֲחוּהִי וְקַטְלֵיהּ: ט וַאֲמַר יְיָ לְקַיִן אָן הֶבֶל
אֲחוּךְ וַאֲמַר לָא יָדַעְנָא הֲנָטֵר אָחִי אֲנָא:
י וַאֲמַר מָה עֲבַדְתָּ קַל דַּם זַרְעִין דַּעֲתִידִין

רס"י

מעליו, פנה מעליו[4]: **וישע.** ירדה אש ולחכה מנחתו: **(ז) הלא אם תיטיב.** כתרגומו פירושו: **לפתח חטאת רובץ.** לפתח קברך חטאך שמור: **ואליך תשוקתו.** של חטאת, כוח יצר הרע, תמיד שוקק ומתאוה להכשילך: **ואתה תמשל בו.** אם תרצה תתגבר עליו: **(ח) ויאמר קין.** נכנס עמו בדברי ריב ומלה, להתעולל עליו להרגו. ויש בזה מדרשי אגדה, אך זה ישובו של מקרא: **(ט) אי הבל אחיך.** ליכנס עמו בדברי נחת, אולי ישוב ויאמר אני הרגתיו ואטאתי לך: **לא ידעתי.** נעשה כגונב דעת הקליפה: **השומר אחי.** לשון תימה הוא, וכן כל כ"מ הנקודה בחטף פתח: **(י) דמי אחיך.** דמו ודם זרעיותיו. דבר אחר שעשה בו פגיעים הרבה, שלא היה יודע מהיכן נפשו

מלא לפשוטו: **(ח) והאדם ידע.** כבר קודם הענין של מעלה, קודם שחטא ונטרד מגן עדן, וכן בהריון והלידה, שאם כתב וידע מדם, נשמע שלאחר שנטרד היו לו בנים: **קין.** על שם קניתי: **את ה'.** כמו עם כ', כשברית אותי ואת חיטי, לבדו ברחמו, אבל בזה שותפים אנו עמו[1]: **את קין את אחיו את הבל.** ג' אתים ריבויים הם, מלמד שאתאומה נולדה עם קין, ועם כל נולדו שתים, לכך נאמר ותוסף[2]: **(ב) רועה צאן.** לפי שנתקללה האדמה, פירש לו מעבודתה: **(ג) מפרי האדמה.** מן הגרוע. ויש אגדה שאומרת זרע פשתן היה. (ד"א מפרי מחזה שגם לידו לא טוב ולא מובחר): **(ד) וישע.** ויפן. וכן ואל מנחתו לא שעה, לא פנה. וכן ושעו[3], 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 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" (*Joshua* 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.

1 ב"ר כב, ב 2 שם כב, ג 3 שמות ה, ט 4 איוב יד, ו

Kayin and Hevel

4 The 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." [2] 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.

[3] 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. [4] 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), [5] but to Kayin and to his offering He did not turn. Kayin became very angry, and his face was dejected.

[6] God said to Kayin, "Why are you angry, and why is your face dejected? [7] 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)."

[8] 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.

[9] God said to Kayin, "Where is Hevel your brother?"

He said, "I don't know. Am I my brother's guardian?"

[10] (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)

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

Sparks of Chasidus

Clearly, 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)

מִן־הָאֲדָמָה: יא וְעַתָּה אָרוּר אָתָּה מִן־הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר פָּצְתָה
אֶת־פִּיהָ לָקַחַת אֶת־דְּמֵי אָחִיךָ מִיָּדֶךָ: יב כִּי תַעֲבֹד אֶת־
הָאֲדָמָה לֹא־תֹסֵף תֵּת־כֹּחָהּ לָךְ נָע וָנָד תִּהְיֶה בָּאָרֶץ:
יג וַיֹּאמֶר קַיִן אֶל־יְהוָה גָּדוֹל עֲוֹנִי מִנְּשֹׂוא: יד הֵן גֵּרַשְׁתָּ אֹתִי
הַיּוֹם מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה וּמִפָּנֶיךָ אֶסָּתֵר וְהָיִיתִי נָע וָנָד בָּאָרֶץ
וְהָיָה כָּל־מֹצְאִי יַהַרְגֵנִי: טו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יְהוָה לָכֵן כָּל־הֹרֵג קַיִן
שִׁבְעָתַיִם יֻקָּם וַיָּשֶׂם יְהוָה לְקַיִן אוֹת לְבִלְתִּי הַכּוֹת־אֹתוֹ
כָּל־מֹצְאוֹ: טז וַיֵּצֵא קַיִן מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּאֶרֶץ־נוֹד
קִדְמַת־עֵדֶן: יז וַיֵּדַע קַיִן אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וַתַּהַר וַתֵּלֶד אֶת־חֲנוֹךְ
וַיְהִי בֹּנֶה עִיר וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הָעִיר כְּשֵׁם בְּנוֹ חֲנוֹךְ: יח וַיִּוָּלֶד
לַחֲנוֹךְ אֶת־עִירָד וְעִירָד יָלַד אֶת־מְחוּיָאֵל וּמְחִיָּאֵל יָלַד
אֶת־מְתוּשָׁאֵל וּמְתוּשָׁאֵל יָלַד אֶת־לָמֶךְ: [חמישי] יט וַיִּקַּח־לוֹ לֶמֶךְ

לְמִפַּק מִן אֲחוּךְ קַבִּילִין קֳדָמַי מִן אַרְעָא:
יא וּכְעַן לִיט אַתְּ מִן אַרְמְתָא דִּפְתָחַת יַת פּוּמַהּ
לְמִסַּב יַת דְּמֵי אֲחוּךְ מִן יְדָךְ: יב אֲרֵי תִפְלַח
יַת אַרְמְתָא לָא תּוֹסִיף לְמִתַּן חֵילַהּ לָךְ
מְטַלְטֵל וְגָלֵי תְּהֵי בְּאַרְעָא: יג וַאֲמַר קַיִן קָדָם
יְיָ סַגִּי חוֹבִי מִלְמִשְׁבַּק: יד הָא תָּרִיכְתָּא יָתִי
יוֹמָא דֵּין מֵעַל אַפֵּי אַרְעָא וּמִן קֳדָמָךְ לֵית
אֶפְשַׁר לְאִתְפָּרָעָא וֶאֱהֵי מְטַלְטֵל וְגָלֵי בְּאַרְעָא
וִיהֵי כָּל דְּיִשְׁכְּחִנַּנִי יְקְטְלִינַנִי: טו וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ יְיָ
בְּכֵן כָּל דְּיִקְטוֹל קַיִן לְשַׁבְעָא דָּרִין יִתְפְּרַע
מִנֵּיהּ וְשַׁוִּי יְיָ לְקַיִן אָתָא בְּדִיל דְּלָא לְמִקְטַל
יָתֵיהּ כָּל דְּיִשְׁכְּחִנֵּיהּ: טז וּנְפַק קַיִן מִן קֳדָם יְיָ
וְיָתִיב בְּאַרְעָא גָּלֵי וּמְטַלְטֵל דַּהֲוָה עֲבִידָא
עָלוֹהִי מִלְקַדְמִין בְּגִנְתָא דְעֵדֶן: יז וְיָדַע קַיִן יַת
אִתְּתֵיהּ וְעַדְיַאת וְיַלִּידַת יַת חֲנוֹךְ וַהֲוָה בָּנֵי
קַרְתָּא וּקְרָא שְׁמָא דְקַרְתָּא כְּשׁוּם בְּרֵיהּ חֲנוֹךְ:
יח וְאִתְיְלִיד לַחֲנוֹךְ יַת עִירָד וְעִירָד אוֹלִיד יַת
מְחוּיָאֵל וּמְחִיָּאֵל אוֹלִיד יַת מְתוּשָׁאֵל
וּמְתוּשָׁאֵל אוֹלִיד יַת לֶמֶךְ: יט וּנְסֵיב לֵיהּ לֶמֶךְ

רס"י

יולאכ[1]: **מן האדמה.** יותר ממה שנתקללה היא כבר בעונה, וגם זו כוסיפס לחטוא: **(יא) אשר פצתה את פיה לקחת את דמי אחיך וגו'.** והגני מוסיף לה קללה חלוף, לא תוסף את כחה [ס"ח ככל דבור אחד ממן כתדמה ע"כ]: **(יב) נע ונד.** חין לך רשות לדור במקום אחד: **(יג) גדול עוני מנשוא.** בתמיה, אתה טוען עליונים ותחתונים, ועוני מי יפשר לך לטעון?: **(טו) לכן כל הורג קין.** זה אחד מן המקרחות שקללו דבריהם ורמזו ולא פירשו, לכן כל הורג קין, לשון גערה, כה יעשה לו, כך וכך עונשו, ולא פירש עונשו: **שבעתים יוקם.** חיני רוצה להגיש מקין עכשיו, לסוף שבעה דורות חני נוקם נקמתי ממנו, שיעמוד למך מבני בניו ויהרגנו. וסוף המקרא שאמר שבעתיים יוקם, והוא נקמת הבל מקין, למדנו שאחלת מקרא לשון גערה הוא, שלא תהא בריה מזיקתו. וכיוצא בו ויאמר דוד כל מכה יבוסי ויגע בצמור[3], ולא פירש מה יעשה לו, אבל דבר הכתוב ברמז, כל מכה יבוסי ויגע בצמור ויקרב אל השער ויכבשנו, ואת העוריס וגו', וגם אותם יכה על אשר ממרו העור והפשח לא יבא אל תוך הבית, המכה את אלו חני יעשנו רחם ושכר, כאן קלר דבריו, ובדברי הימים[4] פירש יהיה לראש ועשר: **וישם ה' לקין אות.** חקק לו אות משמו במצחו [ס"ח] דבר אחר כל מוצאי יהרגני

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)

1 סנהדרין לז: 2 ב"ר כב, יא 3 שמואל-ב ה, ח 4 יא, א

descendants) is crying out to Me from the earth! [11] *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!* [12] *(Therefore) when you work the soil, it will no longer give its strength to you! You will be a wanderer over the earth."*

[13] *Kayin said to God, "Is my sin too great to bear (for You, God, who carries the burden of the upper and lower worlds)?* [14] *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!"*

[15] *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.*

[16] *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:)

[17] *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.* [18] *Irad was born to Chanoch, Irad fathered Mechuya'el, Mechuya'el fathered Mesusha'el, and Mesusha'el fathered Lemech.*

Fifth Reading

[19] *Lemech took for himself two wives: one was named Adah, and the other was named Tzilah.* [20] *Adah*

רס"י

מזרחה שמם[5]. דבר אחר בארץ נוד, כל מקום שהלך, היתה הארץ מזדעזעת תחתיו, והבריות הומריס סורו מעליו, זהו שהרג 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 אחי לשונות, לידת האשה ויסטר"ח בלע"ז, וזריעת תולדות האיש אינזימד"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 בלעז מניידרי"ר: **(יט) ויקח לו למך.** לא היה לו לפרש כל זה, אלא ללמדנו מסוף

הבהמות והחיות, אבל בני אדם עדיין לא היו שיירא אכס רק אדיו ואמו ומכס לא היה ירא שיהרגוהו, אלא אמר עד עכשיו היה פחדתי על כל החיות כמו שכתוב ומוראכם וגו' ועכשיו בשביל עון זה לא ייראו ממני החיות ויהרגוני, מיד ויאמר ה' לקין אות החזיר מוראו על הכל: **(טז) ויצא קין.** יצא בהכנעה כגונא דעת העליונה: **בארץ נוד.** בארץ שכל הגולים נדים שם: **קדמת עדן.** שם גלה אדיו כשגורש מגן עדן, שנאמר וישכן מקדם לגן עדן וגו', לשמור את שמירת דרך מבוא הגן, שים ללמוד שהיה אדם שם, ומליצו רוח מזרחית קולטת בכל מקום את הרוגחים, שנאמר אז ידבל משה וגו'

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

Kayin—The First Ba'al Teshuvah

Kayin 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—ראה רמב"ן וראב"ע כאן, דלא כפרש"י). 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)

5 דברים ד, מא

שְׁתֵּי נָשִׁים שֵׁם הָאַחַת עָדָה וְשֵׁם הַשֵּׁנִית צִלָּה: כ וַתֵּלֶד עָדָה
אֶת־יָבָל הוּא הָיָה אֲבִי יֹשֵׁב אֹהֶל וּמִקְנֶה: כא וְשֵׁם אָחִיו יוּבָל
הוּא הָיָה אֲבִי כָּל־תֹּפֵשׂ כִּנּוֹר וְעוּגָב: כב וְצִלָּה גַם־הִוא יָלְדָה
אֶת־תּוּבַל קַיִן לֹטֵשׁ כָּל־חֹרֵשׁ נְחֹשֶׁת וּבַרְזֶל וַאֲחוֹת תּוּבַל־קַיִן
נַעֲמָה: [ששי] כג וַיֹּאמֶר לֶמֶךְ לְנָשָׁיו עָדָה וְצִלָּה שְׁמַעַן קוֹלִי נְשֵׁי
לֶמֶךְ הַאְזֵנָּה אִמְרָתִי כִּי אִישׁ הָרַגְתִּי לְפִצְעִי וְיֶלֶד לְחַבֻּרָתִי:
כד כִּי שִׁבְעָתַיִם יֻקַּם־קָיִן וְלֶמֶךְ שִׁבְעִים וְשִׁבְעָה: כה וַיֵּדַע אָדָם
עוֹד אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ שֵׁת כִּי שָׁת־לִי
אֱלֹהִים זֶרַע אַחֵר תַּחַת הֶבֶל כִּי הָרָגוֹ קָיִן: כו וּלְשֵׁת גַּם־הוּא
יֻלַּד־בֵּן וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ אֱנוֹשׁ אָז הוּחַל לִקְרֹא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה: ס

תַּרְתֵּין נָשִׁין שׁוּם חֲדָא עָדָה וְשׁוּם תִּנְיָתָא
צִלָּה: כ וְיָלֶדַת עָדָה יָת יָבָל הוּא הֲוָה רַבְּהוֹן
דְּיָתְבֵי מַשְׁכְּנִין וּמָרֵי בְעִיר: כא וְשׁוּם אָחוּהִי
יוּבָל הוּא הֲוָה רַבְּהוֹן דְּכָל דְּמְנַגֵּן עַל פּוּם
נְבָלָא וְיָדְעֵי זְמַר בְּנוֹרָא וַאֲבוּבָא: כב וְצִלָּה
אַף הִיא יְלֵידַת יָת תּוּבַל קַיִן רַבְּהוֹן דְּכָל
דְּיָדְעֵי עֲבִידַת נְחָשָׁא וּפַרְזְלָא וַאֲחָתֵיהּ דְּתוּבַל
קַיִן נַעֲמָה: כג וַאֲמַר לֶמֶךְ לְנָשׁוֹהִי עָדָה וְצִלָּה
שְׁמַעָא קָלִי נְשֵׁי לֶמֶךְ אַצִיתָא לְמֵימְרִי לָא
גַבְרָא קְטָלִית דְּבְדִילְיֵהּ אֲנָא סָבִיל חוֹבִין
(לְמִמָּת) וְאַף לָא עוּלֵימָא חַבָּלִית דְּבְדִילְיֵהּ
יְשֻׁתֵּיצֵי זַרְעִי: כד אֲרֵי שַׁבְעָא דָּרִין אִתְלִיאוּ
לְקָיִן חַיָּלָא לְלֶמֶךְ בְּרֵיהּ שַׁבְעִין וְשַׁבְעָא:
כה וְיָדַע אָדָם עוֹד יָת אִתְּתֵיהּ וְיָלֶדַת בַּר וּקְרַת
יָת שְׁמֵיהּ שֵׁת אֲרֵי אֲמָרַת יְהַב לִי יְיָ בַּר
אָחֳרָן חֲלַף הֶבֶל דְּקַטְלֵיהּ קָיִן: כו וּלְשֵׁת אַף

רס"י

כעניין שקייס הקב"ה בדטחתו, שאמר שבעתיים יוקם קין, ועמד למך לאחר שהוליד בניס ועשה דור שביעי, והרג את קין, זה שאמר כי איש הרגתי לפצעי וגו': **שתי נשים**. כך היה דרכן של דור המבול, אחת לפריה ורביה ואחת לתשמיש, זו שהיה לתשמיש משקה כוס של עקרין (סנ"ח) כדי שתעקר, ומקושטת ככלה ומאכילה מעדניס, ומבריאה גופה ומגלה כאלמנה, וזהו שפירש יוסף[1] רועה עקרה לא תלד ואלמנה לא ייטיב, כמו שמפורש בתגדת חלק: **עדה**. היא של פריה ורביה, על שם שמגופה עליו ומוסרת מאללו, [ס"ח ממאכלו] עדה תרגום של סורה: **צלה**. היא של תשמיש, על שם שיושבת תמיד בצלו, דברי מגדה הם בבראשית רבה[2]: **(כ) אבי ישב אהל ומקנה**. היה הרועה לרועה בהמות במדבריות, ויושב מהלים חדש כאן וחדש כאן בשביל מרעה לאנו, וכשכלה המרעה במקום זה הולך ותוקע מהלו במקום אחר. ומדרש אגדה הוא בתיס לעבודת מלילים, כמה דתא אמר סמל הקנאה[3] במקנה, וכן ואחיו תופש כנור ועוגב, לזמר לעבודת מלילים: **(כב) תובל קין**. תיבל חומנתו של קין. תובל לשון תבלין, תיבל ותתקין חומנתו של קין לעשותו כלי זיין לרוצחים: **לוטש כל חרש נחשת וברזל**. מחדד חומנות נחושת וברזל, כמו ילטוש עיניו לי[4], חורש היה לשון פועל בסגול אלא לשון פועל בצירי, שהרי נקוד קמץ קטן, וטעמו למטה, כלומר מחדד ומלחלח כל כלי חומנות נחשת וברזל: **נעמה**. היה חשתו של נח, בבראשית רבה[5]: **(כג) שמען קולי**. שהיו נשיו פורשות ממנו מתשמיש, לפי שהרג את קין ואת תובל קין גנו, שהיה למך סומא ותובל קין מושכו, ורואה את קין ונדמה לו כחיה, ואמר להביו למשוך בקשת והרגו, וכיון שידע שהוא קין זקנו, הכה כף על כף וספק את גנו ביניהם והרגו, והיו נשיו פורשות ממנו, והוא מפייסן: **שמען קולי**. להשמע לי לתשמיש, וכי היה אשר הרגתי לפצעי הוא נהרג, וכי מני פצעתיו מזיד שיהא בפצע קרוי על שמי, וילד אשר הרגתי לחבורתי נהרג, כלומר על ידי חבורתי בתמיה, והלא שוגג היה והלא מזיד, לא זהו פצעי והלא זהו חבורתי: **פצעי**. מכת חרב הוא חן, מקאדור"ה בלע"ז: **(כד) כי שבעתים יקם קין**. קין שהרג מזיד נתלה לו עד שבעה דורות, היי שהרגתי שוגג לא כל שכן שיתלה לי שביעיות הרבה: **שבעים ושבעה**. לשון רבוי שביעיות אחז לו, כך דרש רבי תנחומא[6]. ומדרש אגדה רבה[7], לא הרג למך כלום, וגיו פורשות ממנו משקיימו פריה ורביה, לפי שגגזרה גזרה לכלות זרעו של קין לאחר שבעה דורות, אמרו, מה אנו יולדות לבהלה, לאחר המבול בא ושוטף את הכל, והוא אומר להן וכי היה הרגתי לפצעי, וכי היי הרגתי את הכל, שהיה היה בקומה וילד בשניס, שיהא זרעי כלה בתוכו עון, ומה קין שהרג נתלה לו שבעה דורות, היי שלא הרגתי לא כל שכן שיתלו לי שביעיות הרבה, וזה קל וחומר של שטות, אם כן מין הקדוש ברוך הוא גובה את חובו ומקיים את דברו: **(כה) וידע אדם** וגו'. בא לו למך אצל אדם הראשון וקבל על נשיו, אמר להם, וכי עליכם לדקדק על גזירתו של מקום, אתם עשו מלותכם והוא יעשה את שלו, אמרו לו קשוט עלמך תחלה, והלא פרשת מתשמיש זה מאה ושלשים שנה מתנקשה מיתה על ידך, מיד וידע אדם וגו', ומהו עוד, ללמד שנתוספה לו תשוקה על תשוקתו. בבראשית רבה[8]: **(כו) אז הוחל**. לשון חולין,

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 טז, ט 5 כג, ג 6 בראשית יא 7 כג, ד 8 כג, ה

bore Yaval. He was the father of nomadic cattle rearing. [21] *His brother's name was Yuval. He was the father of those who play harp and flute (for idol worship).* [22] *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

[23] *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)?* [24] *If Kayin (who killed intentionally) was avenged after seven generations, then Lemech (who killed unintentionally) shall be (avenged after) seventy-seven (generations)!"*

[25] *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."* [26] *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.17*ff*)

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, Miztvas Achdus Havayah* ch. 3)

ה א זֶה סֵפֶר תּוֹלְדֹת אָדָם בְּיוֹם בְּרֹא אֱלֹהִים אָדָם בִּדְמוּת
אֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה אֹתוֹ: ב זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בְּרָאָם וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם וַיִּקְרָא
אֶת־שְׁמָם אָדָם בְּיוֹם הִבָּרְאָם: ג וַיְחִי אָדָם שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמְאַת
שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד בִּדְמוּתוֹ כְּצַלְמוֹ וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ שֵׁת: ד וַיִּהְיוּ
יְמֵי־אָדָם אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־שֵׁת שְׁמֹנֶה מֵאֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד
בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: ה וַיִּהְיוּ כָּל־יְמֵי אָדָם אֲשֶׁר־חַי תְּשַׁע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה
וּשְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה וַיָּמֹת: ס ו וַיְחִי־שֵׁת חָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים וּמְאַת שָׁנָה
וַיּוֹלֶד אֶת־אֱנוֹשׁ: ז וַיְחִי־שֵׁת אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־אֱנוֹשׁ שֶׁבַע
שָׁנִים וּשְׁמֹנֶה מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: ח וַיִּהְיוּ כָּל־
יְמֵי־שֵׁת שְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה וּתְשַׁע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיָּמֹת: ס ט וַיְחִי
אֱנוֹשׁ תִּשְׁעִים שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד אֶת־קֵינָן: י וַיְחִי אֱנוֹשׁ אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ
אֶת־קֵינָן חָמֵשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה וּשְׁמֹנֶה מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד בָּנִים
וּבָנוֹת: יא וַיִּהְיוּ כָּל־יְמֵי אֱנוֹשׁ חָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים וּתְשַׁע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה
וַיָּמֹת: ס יב וַיְחִי קֵינָן שִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד אֶת־מַהֲלַלְאֵל: יג וַיְחִי
קֵינָן אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־מַהֲלַלְאֵל אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה וּשְׁמֹנֶה מֵאוֹת
שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: יד וַיִּהְיוּ כָּל־יְמֵי קֵינָן עֶשֶׂר שָׁנִים
וּתְשַׁע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיָּמֹת: ס טו וַיְחִי מַהֲלַלְאֵל חָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים
וְשִׁשִּׁים שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד אֶת־יָרֶד: טז וַיְחִי מַהֲלַלְאֵל אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ
אֶת־יֶרֶד שְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה וּשְׁמֹנֶה מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת:
יז וַיִּהְיוּ כָּל־יְמֵי מַהֲלַלְאֵל חָמֵשׁ וְתִשְׁעִים שָׁנָה וּשְׁמֹנֶה מֵאוֹת
שָׁנָה וַיָּמֹת: ס יח וַיְחִי־יֶרֶד שְׁתַּיִם וְשִׁשִּׁים שָׁנָה וּמְאַת שָׁנָה
וַיּוֹלֶד אֶת־חֲנוֹךְ: יט וַיְחִי־יֶרֶד אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־חֲנוֹךְ שְׁמֹנֶה
מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: כ וַיִּהְיוּ כָּל־יְמֵי־יֶרֶד שְׁתַּיִם
וְשִׁשִּׁים שָׁנָה וּתְשַׁע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיָּמֹת: ס כא וַיְחִי חֲנוֹךְ חָמֵשׁ
וְשִׁשִּׁים שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד אֶת־מְתוּשָׁלַח: כב וַיִּתְהַלֶּךְ חֲנוֹךְ אֶת־
הָאֱלֹהִים אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־מְתוּשֶׁלַח שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד
בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: כג וַיִּהְיוּ כָּל־יְמֵי חֲנוֹךְ חָמֵשׁ וְשִׁשִּׁים שָׁנָה וּשְׁלֹשׁ
מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה: כד וַיִּתְהַלֶּךְ חֲנוֹךְ אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים וְאֵינֶנּוּ כִּי־לָקַח

הוּא אֹתְיָלִיד בַּר וּקְרָא יַת שְׁמֵיהּ אֱנוֹשׁ בְּכֵן
בְּיוֹמוֹהִי חָלוּ בְּנֵי אֱנָשָׁא מִלְצַלָּאָה בִּשְׁמָא דַיְיָ:
א דֵּין סֵפֶר תּוֹלְדַת אָדָם בְּיוֹמָא דִּבְרָא יְיָ אָדָם
בִּדְמוּת אֱלֹהִים עֲבַד יָתֵיהּ: ב דְּכַר וְנוּקְבָא
בְּרָאנוּן וּבָרִיךְ יַתְהוֹן וּקְרָא יַת שְׁמְהוֹן אָדָם
בְּיוֹמָא דְּאִתְבְּרִיאוּ: ג וַחֲיָא אָדָם מְאָה וּתְלָתִין
שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בִּדְמוּתֵיהּ דְּדָמֵי לֵיהּ וּקְרָא יַת
שְׁמֵיהּ שֵׁת: ד וַהֲווֹ יוֹמֵי אָדָם בָּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד יַת
שֵׁת תַּמְנֵי מְאָה שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבְנָן: ה וַהֲווֹ
כָּל יוֹמֵי אָדָם דְּחָיָא תְּשַׁע מְאָה וּתְלָתִין שְׁנִין
וּמִית: ו וַחֲיָא שֵׁת מְאָה וַחֲמֵשׁ שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד יַת
אֱנוֹשׁ: ז וַחֲיָא שֵׁת בָּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד יַת אֱנוֹשׁ
תַּמְנֵי מְאָה וּשְׁבַע שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבְנָן:
ח וַהֲווֹ כָּל יוֹמֵי שֵׁת תְּשַׁע מְאָה וְתַרְתֵּי עַשְׂרֵי
שְׁנִין וּמִית: ט וַחֲיָא אֱנוֹשׁ תִּשְׁעִין שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד
יַת קֵינָן: י וַחֲיָא אֱנוֹשׁ בָּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד יַת קֵינָן
תַּמְנֵי מְאָה וַחֲמֵשׁ עַשְׂרֵי שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין
וּבְנָן: יא וַהֲווֹ כָּל יוֹמֵי אֱנוֹשׁ תְּשַׁע מְאָה וַחֲמֵשׁ
שְׁנִין וּמִית: יב וַחֲיָא קֵינָן שַׁבְעִין שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד
יַת מַהֲלַלְאֵל: יג וַחֲיָא קֵינָן בָּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד יַת
מַהֲלַלְאֵל תַּמְנֵי מְאָה וְאַרְבְּעִין שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד
בְּנִין וּבְנָן: יד וַהֲווֹ כָּל יוֹמֵי קֵינָן תְּשַׁע מְאָה
וְעַשְׂרָא שְׁנִין וּמִית: טו וַחֲיָא מַהֲלַלְאֵל שִׁתִּין
וַחֲמֵשׁ שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד יַת יָרֶד: טז וַחֲיָא מַהֲלַלְאֵל
בָּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד יַת יֶרֶד תַּמְנֵי מְאָה וּתְלָתִין שְׁנִין
וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבְנָן: יז וַהֲווֹ כָּל יוֹמֵי מַהֲלַלְאֵל
תַּמְנֵי מְאָה וְתִשְׁעִין וַחֲמֵשׁ שְׁנִין וּמִית: יח וַחֲיָא
יֶרֶד מְאָה וּשְׁתִּין וְתַרְתֵּין שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד יַת
חֲנוֹךְ: יט וַחֲיָא יֶרֶד בָּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד יַת חֲנוֹךְ תַּמְנֵי
מְאָה שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבְנָן: כ וַהֲווֹ כָּל יוֹמֵי
יֶרֶד תְּשַׁע מְאָה וּשְׁתִּין וְתַרְתֵּין שְׁנִין וּמִית:
כא וַחֲיָא חֲנוֹךְ שִׁתִּין וַחֲמֵשׁ שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד יַת
מְתוּשֶׁלַח: כב וְהַלִּיךְ חֲנוֹךְ בִּדְדַחֲלְתָּא דַיְיָ בָּתַר
דְּאוֹלִיד יַת מְתוּשֶׁלַח תְּלַת מְאָה שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד
בְּנִין וּבְנָן: כג וַהֲווֹ כָּל יוֹמֵי חֲנוֹךְ תְּלַת מְאָה
וְשִׁתִּין וַחֲמֵשׁ שְׁנִין: כד וְהַלִּיךְ חֲנוֹךְ בִּדְדַחֲלְתָּא
דַיְיָ וְלֵיתוֹהִי אֲרֵי (לָא) אֲמִית יָתֵיהּ יְיָ:

ולקרוץ מלכות: (ו) **זה ספר תולדות אדם.** זו היא ספירת תולדות מדם, ומדרשי חגדה יש רבים: **ביום ברא וגו'.** מגיד שכיוס שנכרא כוליד: לקרוץ את שמות כחדש ואת שמות כעגדים בשמו של הקב"ה, לעשותן מלילים לקרוץ את שמות כחדש ואת שמות כעגדים בשמו של הקב"ה, לעשותן מלילים

(ג) **שלשים ומאת שנה.** עד כאן פירש מן כחמכ׳: (כד) **ויתהלך חנוך.** לדיק

1 ב"ר כד,1

The Offspring of Adam

5 This 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. [2] He created them male and female, and He blessed them. He named them man (Adam) on the day they were created.

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

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

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

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

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

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

[21] Chanoch lived sixty-five years, and he fathered Mesushalach. [22] After he had fathered Mesushalach, Chanoch followed God for three hundred years, and he fathered sons and daughters. [23] Chanoch lived a total of three hundred and sixty-five years. [24] 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. 7*ff*.)

אֹתוֹ אֱלֹהִים: ס [שביעי] כה וַיְחִי מְתוּשֶׁלַח שֶׁבַע וּשְׁמֹנִים שָׁנָה
וּמְאַת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד אֶת־לָמֶךְ: כו וַיְחִי מְתוּשֶׁלַח אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ
אֶת־לֶמֶךְ שְׁתַּיִם וּשְׁמוֹנִים שָׁנָה וּשְׁבַע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד בָּנִים
וּבָנוֹת: כז וַיִּהְיוּ כָּל־יְמֵי מְתוּשֶׁלַח תֵּשַׁע וְשִׁשִּׁים שָׁנָה וּתְשַׁע
מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיָּמֹת: ס כח וַיְחִי־לֶמֶךְ שְׁתַּיִם וּשְׁמֹנִים שָׁנָה וּמְאַת
שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד בֵּן: כט וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ נֹחַ לֵאמֹר֒ זֶה* יְנַחֲמֵנוּ
מִמַּעֲשֵׂנוּ וּמֵעִצְּבוֹן יָדֵינוּ מִן־הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר אֵרְרָהּ יְהוָה:
ל וַיְחִי־לֶמֶךְ אַחֲרֵי הוֹלִידוֹ אֶת־נֹחַ חָמֵשׁ וְתִשְׁעִים שָׁנָה וַחֲמֵשׁ
מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת: לא וַיְהִי כָּל־יְמֵי־לֶמֶךְ שֶׁבַע
וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה וּשְׁבַע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיָּמֹת: ס לב וַיְהִי־נֹחַ בֶּן־חֲמֵשׁ
מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד נֹחַ אֶת־שֵׁם אֶת־חָם וְאֶת־יָפֶת: ו א וַיְהִי
כִּי־הֵחֵל הָאָדָם לָרֹב עַל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה וּבָנוֹת יֻלְּדוּ לָהֶם:
ב וַיִּרְאוּ בְנֵי־הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־בְּנוֹת הָאָדָם כִּי טֹבֹת הֵנָּה וַיִּקְחוּ
לָהֶם נָשִׁים מִכֹּל אֲשֶׁר בָּחָרוּ: ג וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה לֹא־יָדוֹן רוּחִי
בָאָדָם לְעֹלָם בְּשַׁגַּם** הוּא בָשָׂר וְהָיוּ יָמָיו מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה:
ד הַנְּפִלִים הָיוּ בָאָרֶץ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם וְגַם אַחֲרֵי־כֵן אֲשֶׁר יָבֹאוּ
בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים אֶל־בְּנוֹת הָאָדָם וְיָלְדוּ לָהֶם הֵמָּה הַגִּבֹּרִים אֲשֶׁר
מֵעוֹלָם אַנְשֵׁי הַשֵּׁם: פ [מפטיר] ה וַיַּרְא יְהוָה כִּי רַבָּה רָעַת הָאָדָם
בָּאָרֶץ וְכָל־יֵצֶר מַחְשְׁבֹת לִבּוֹ רַק רַע כָּל־הַיּוֹם: ו וַיִּנָּחֶם יְהוָה
כִּי־עָשָׂה אֶת־הָאָדָם בָּאָרֶץ וַיִּתְעַצֵּב אֶל־לִבּוֹ: ז וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה

כה וַחֲיָא מְתוּשֶׁלַח מְאָה וְתַמְנִין וּשְׁבַע שְׁנִין
וְאוֹלִיד יַת לֶמֶךְ: כו וַחֲיָא מְתוּשֶׁלַח בָּתַר
דְּאוֹלִיד יַת לֶמֶךְ שְׁבַע מְאָה וְתַמְנִין וְתַרְתֵּין
שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבְנָן: כז וַהֲווֹ כָּל יוֹמֵי
מְתוּשֶׁלַח תְּשַׁע מְאָה וְשִׁתִּין וּתְשַׁע שְׁנִין
וּמִית: כח וַחֲיָא לֶמֶךְ מְאָה וְתַמְנִין וְתַרְתֵּין
שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בַּר: כט וּקְרָא יַת שְׁמֵיהּ נֹחַ
לְמֵימַר דֵּין יְנַחֲמָנָא מֵעוֹבָדָנָא וּמֵלְאוּת יְדָנָא
מִן אַרְעָא דִּי לַטָּטָה יְיָ: ל וַחֲיָא לֶמֶךְ בָּתַר
דְּאוֹלִיד יַת נֹחַ חֲמֵשׁ מְאָה וְתִשְׁעִין וַחֲמֵשׁ
שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבְנָן: לא וַהֲווֹ כָּל יוֹמֵי לֶמֶךְ
שְׁבַע מְאָה וְשַׁבְעִין וּשְׁבַע שְׁנִין וּמִית:
לב וַהֲוָה נֹחַ בַּר חֲמֵשׁ מְאָה שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד נֹחַ יַת
שֵׁם יַת חָם וְיַת יָפֶת: א וַהֲוָה כַּד שָׂרִיאוּ בְנֵי
אֱנָשָׁא לְמִסְגֵּי עַל אַפֵּי אַרְעָא וּבְנָתָא אִתְיְלִידוּ
לְהוֹן: ב וַחֲזוֹ בְנֵי רַבְרְבָיָא יַת בְּנָת אֱנָשָׁא אֲרֵי
שַׁפִּירָן אִנּוּן וּנְסִיבוּ לְהוֹן נָשִׁין מִכֹּל דִּי
אִתְרְעִיאוּ: ג וַאֲמַר יְיָ לָא יִתְקַיְּמוּן דָּרָא בִישָׁא
הָדֵין קֳדָמַי לְעָלָם בְּדִיל דְּאִנּוּן בִּשְׂרָא
וְעוֹבָדֵיהוֹן בִּישַׁיָּא אַרְכָּא יְהִיבַת לְהוֹן מְאָה
וְעַשְׂרִין שְׁנִין אִם יְתוּבוּן: ד גִּבָּרַיָּא הֲווֹ
בְּאַרְעָא בְּיוֹמָיָא הָאִנּוּן וְאַף בָּתַר כֵּן דִּי יַעֲלוּן
בְּנֵי רַבְרְבָיָא לְבְנָת אֱנָשָׁא וְיָלְדָן לְהוֹן אִנּוּן
גִּבָּרַיָּא דְּמֵעַלְמָא אֱנָשֵׁי דִּשְׁמָא: ה וַחֲזָא יְיָ
אֲרֵי סַגִּיאַת בִּישַׁת אֱנָשָׁא בְּאַרְעָא וְכָל יְצַרָא
מַחְשָׁבַת לִבֵּיהּ לְחוֹד בִּישׁ כָּל יוֹמָיָא: ו וְתָב יְיָ
בְּמֵימְרֵיהּ אֲרֵי עֲבַד יַת אָדָם בְּאַרְעָא וַאֲמַר
בְּמֵימְרֵיהּ לְמִתְבַּר תְּקִפְּהוֹן כְּרְעוּתֵיהּ:
ז וַאֲמַר יְיָ אֲמְחֵי יַת אֱנָשָׁא דִּי בְרֵאתִי מֵעַל אַפֵּי

*הקורא יטעים הגרש לפני התלישא **ס״א בְּשַׁגַּם

רס״ו

היה, וקל (ס״ל וקבל) בדעתו לעשות להרשיע, לפיכך מיכר הקב״ה וסילקו ומיתו קודם זמנו[1], וזכו שיהיה הכתוב במיתתו לכתוב ויהיגו בעולם למלאות שנותיו: **כי לקח אותו**. לפני זמנו, כמו הגני לוקח ממך את מחמד עיניך[2]: (כח) **ויולד בן**. שממנו נעשה העולם: (כט) **זה ינחמנו**. ינח ממנו את עצבון ידינו, עד שלא בא נח לא היה להם כלי מחרישה, והוא הכין להם, והיתה הארץ מוציאה קוצים ודרדרים כשזרעים חטים, מקללתו של אדם הרשעון, ובימי נח נחה, וזכו ינחמנו. ואם לא תפרשהו כך, אין טעם הלשון נופל על השם, ואתה לריך לקרות שמו מנחם: (לב) **בן חמש מאות שנה**. אמר רבי יודן, מה טעם כל הדורות הולידו למאה שנה וזה לחמש מאות, אמר הקב״ה, אם רשעים הם, יאבדו במיס ורע (ס״ל זרע של לדיק זה) לדיק זה, ואם לדיקים הם, אטריח עליו לעשות תיבות הרבה, כשם שמעיינו ולא הוליד עד חמש מאות שנה, כדי שלא יהא יפת הגדול שבבניו רחוי לעומדין לפני המבול[3], דכתיב כי הנער בן מאה שנה ימות[4], רחוי לעומד

היה, וקל (ס״ל וקבל) בדעתו לעשות להרשיע, לפיכך מיכר הקב״ה וסילקו ומיתו קודם זמנו[1], וזכו שיהיה הכתוב במיתתו לכתוב ויהיגו בעולם למלאות שנותיו: **כי לקח אותו**. לפני זמנו, כמו הגני לוקח ממך את מחמד עיניך[2]: (כח) **ויולד בן**. שממנו נעשה העולם: (כט) **זה ינחמנו**. ינח ממנו את עצבון ידינו, עד שלא בא נח לא היה להם כלי מחרישה, והוא הכין להם, והיתה הארץ מוציאה קוצים ודרדרים כשזרעים חטים, מקללתו של אדם הרשעון, ובימי נח נחה, וזכו ינחמנו. ואם לא תפרשהו כך, אין טעם הלשון נופל על השם, ואתה לריך לקרות שמו מנחם: (לב) **בן חמש מאות שנה**. אמר רבי יודן, מה טעם כל הדורות הולידו למאה שנה וזה לחמש מאות, אמר הקב״ה, אם רשעים הם, יאבדו במיס ורע (ס״ל זרע של לדיק זה) לדיק זה, ואם לדיקים הם, אטריח עליו לעשות תיבות הרבה, כשם שמעיינו ולא הוליד עד חמש מאות שנה, כדי שלא יהא יפת הגדול שבבניו רחוי לעומדין לפני המבול[3], דכתיב כי הנער בן מאה שנה ימות[4], רחוי לעומד לעתיד, וכן לפני מתן תורה: **את שם את חם ואת יפת**. והלא יפת הגדול הוא, אלא בתחלה אתה דורש את שהוא לדיק, וגולד כשהוא מהול, ומשהרשם יצא ממנו וכו׳. **ברחשית רבה**[5]: (ג) **בני האלהים**. בני השריס והשופטים. דבר אחר בני האלהים, שם השריס המולכים בשליחותו של מקום, אף שם היו מתערבים בהם. כל אלהים שבמקרא לשון מרות, וזה יוכיח ואתה תהיה לו לאלהים[6], ראה נתתיך אלהים[7]: **כי טבת הנה**. אמר רבי יודן בשם כתיב, כשהיו מטיפין חותם מקושטת ליכנס לחופה, היה גדול נכנס ובועלה תחלה[8]: **מכל אשר בחרו**. אף בעולת בעל, אף הזכר והנקבה[9]: (ג) **לא ידון רוחי באדם**. לא יתרעם ויריב רוחי עלי בשביל האדם: **לעולם**. לאורך ימים, שהרי רוחי נדון בקרבי שם להשחית ואם לרחם, לא יהיה מדון זה ברוחי לעולם, כלומר לאורך ימים: **בְּשַׁגַּם הוא בשר**. כמו בְּשַׁגַּם בסגו״ל, כלומר בשביל שגם זאת הוא שהוא בשר, ואף על פי כן חיו וכנגע לפני, ומה שם יהיה שם דבר קשה. כיולא בו עד שַׁקַּמְתִּי דבורה[10], כמו שָׁקַמְתִּי, וכן[*10] שָׁתַמְתָּ

1 ב״ר כה, א 2 יחזקאל כד,כז 3 ב״ר כו, ב 4 ישעי׳ סה, כ 5 כו, ג 6 שמות ד, טז 7 שם ז, א 8 ב״ר כו, ה 9 ב״ר שם 10 שופטים ה, ז *10 שם ו, יז

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

Seventh Reading

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

[28] *Lemech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and he fathered a son (from whom the whole world was built).* [29] *He named him Noach, 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).* [30] *After he had fathered Noach, Lemech lived five hundred and ninety-five years, and he fathered sons and daughters.* [31] *Lemech lived a total of seven hundred and seventy-seven years, and he died.*

[32] *(After) Noach was five hundred years old, Noach fathered Sheim, Cham, and Yafes.*

Moral Corruption of Man

6 *Then, when man began to multiply upon the face of the earth and daughters were born to them,* [2] *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).*

[3] *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)!"*

[4] *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

[5] *God saw that man's wickedness on earth was increasing, and every thought which came from his heart throughout the day was purely evil.* [6] *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.*

רס"י

מדבר עמי, כמו בְּשַׁגַּם הוא בָשָׂר, לפי בְּשַׁגַּם כמו בְּשָׂגַם: **והיו ימיו וגו'**. עד ק"ך שנה מאריך לכם אפי, ואם לא ישובו, אביא עליהם מבול. ואם תאמר מצינוהו יפת עד המבול חיו אלא מאה שנה, אין מוקדם ומאוחר בתורה, כבר היתה גזרה גזורה עשרים שנה קודם שהוליד נח תולדות, וכן מניו בסדר עולם[11]. ויש מדרשי אגדה רבים בלא יהון, אבל זה הוא לאלוה פשוטו: **(ד) הנפילים**. על שם שנפלו והפילו את העולם, ובלשון עברית לשון ענקים הוא: **בימים ההם**. בימי דור אנוש ובני קין: **וגם אחרי כן**. אף על פי שראו באבדן של דור אנוש, שעלה מוקיינוס והציף שליש העולם, לא נכנע דור המבול ללמוד מהם[12]: **אשר יבאו**. היו יולדות ענקים כמותם: **הגבורים**. למרוד במקום: **אנשי השם**. אותם שנקבו בשמות, עירד, מחויאל, מתושאל, שנקבו על שם מעשיהם הרעים, שמתו בחרב, ולא נשתייר מהם זכר, אלא שמותם בלבד, כמו שנאמר בנמרוד: **על כן יאמר משל**. אחר שנשתקעו מימות עולם, חזרו ונתחדשו בימי משה, ונעשו משל ומליצה לדורות: **(ה) וירא ה' כי רבה**. ראה שלא יועיל להם תוכחה, שהרי ראה שהיו מתגברים בחטאיהם: **ויתעצב**. נתאבל על שהוא עתיד להביא מבול לעולם: **אל לבו**. בלבו של מקום, שלא במחשבתו של מקום להעניבו, זהו תרגום אונקלוס. דבר אחר ויאמר, נהפכה מחשבתו של מקום ממדת רחמים למדת הדין, שלא במחשבה לפניו מה לעשות בחדש שעשה בארץ. וכן כל לשון ויחוס שנמקרא לשון נמלך מה לעשות, וכן אדם ויתנחם[14], ושל עבדיו יתנחם[15], ויאמר כי על הרעה[16], נחמתי כי המלכתי[17], כולם לשון מחשבה אחרת הם: **ויתעצב אל לבו**. נתאבל על אבדן מעשה ידיו, כמו נעצב המלך על בנו[18], וזה כתבתי לתשובת אפיקורוס אחד ששאל את רבי יהושע בן קרחה, אמר לו, אין אתם מודים

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.

11 פרק כח 12 ב"ר כו, ז 13 כז, ד 14 במדבר כג, יט 15 דברים לב, לו 16 שמות לב, יד 17 שמואל-א טו, יא 18 שמואל-ב יט, ג

אֶמְחֶה אֶת־הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר־בָּרָאתִי מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה מֵאָדָם
עַד־בְּהֵמָה עַד־רֶמֶשׂ וְעַד־עוֹף הַשָּׁמָיִם כִּי נִחַמְתִּי כִּי עֲשִׂיתִם:
ח וְנֹחַ מָצָא חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה: פ פ פ

אַרְעָא מֵאֱנָשָׁא וְעַד בְּעִירָא עַד רִיחֲשָׁא וְעַד
עוֹפָא דִשְׁמַיָא אֲרֵי תָּבִית בְּמֵימְרִי אֲרֵי
עֲבַדְתִּנוּן: ח וְנֹחַ אַשְׁכַּח רַחֲמִין קֳדָם יְיָ: פ פ פ

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

רס"י

שהקב"ה רואה את הגולד, אמר לו כן, אמר לו והא כתיב ויתעצב אל לבו, אמר לו גולד לך בן זכר מימיך, אמר לו כן, אמר לו ומה עשית, אמר לו שמחתי ושימחתי את הכל, אמר לו ולא היית יודע שסופו למות, אמר לו בשעת חדותה חדותה בשעת חבלה חבלה. אמר לו כך מעשה הקב"ה, אף על פי שגלוי לפניו שסופן לחטוא ולחבדן, לא נמנע מלבראן, בשביל הצדיקים שבתוכן. וכן מצינו בנח שנאמר ויחל נח איש האדמה ויטע כרם, ואומות העולם אומרים שיכור היה ומגונה היה, אלא לומר לך כל הצדיקים שבתוכן לפיכך לא נמנע מלבראן. ואומר ויאמר ה' אמחה את האדם. כוח עפר, ואדיבת עליו מים ואמחה חותו, לכך נאמר לשון מחוי: מאדם עד בהמה. אף הם בשחיתו דרכם[1]. דבר אחר, הכל נגזרת בשביל האדם, וכיון שהוא כולה מה צורך בהלוי[2]: כי נחמתי כי עשיתם. השבתי מה לעשות על אשר עשיתים:

חסלת פרשת בראשית

TORAS MENACHEM

God's Decree Against Mankind (v. 7)

Onkelos renders a straightforward translation of verse 7: "God said, "I will obliterate (אֶמְחֶה) 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 אֶמְחֶה 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, *"Noach found favor in the eyes of God,"* which introduces us to the following account of how Noach 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 אֶמְחֶה 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 Noach 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?

1 ב"ר כח ז 2 שם ו

[7] 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."

[8] 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.

TORAS MENACHEM

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. 27*ff.*)

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. 31*ff.*)



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* (נֹחַ) [*can be translated as*] *'serenity'* (נְיָחָא). *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 אֵ֚לֶּה תּוֹלְדֹ֣ת נֹ֔חַ נֹ֖חַ אִ֣ישׁ צַדִּ֑יק תָּמִ֥ים הָיָ֖ה בְּדֹרֹתָ֑יו אֶת־ הָאֱלֹהִ֖ים הִתְהַלֶּךְ־נֹֽחַ׃ י וַיּ֣וֹלֶד נֹ֔חַ שְׁלֹשָׁ֖ה בָּנִ֑ים אֶת־שֵׁ֥ם

ט אֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת נֹחַ נֹחַ אִישׁ צַדִּיק תָּמִים הָיָה בְּדֹרֹתָיו אֶת־ הָאֱלֹהִים הִתְהַלֶּךְ־נֹחַ׃ י וַיּוֹלֶד נֹחַ שְׁלֹשָׁה בָנִים אֶת־שֵׁם

רש"י

(ט) **אלה תולדת נח נח איש צדיק.** כומיל וכזכירו, סיפר בשבחו, שנאמר זכר לצדיק לברכה[1]. דבר אחר, ללמדך שעיקר תולדותיהם של צדיקים מעשים טובים: **בדורותיו.** יש מרבותינו דורשים לחותו לשבח, כל שכן שלולו היה בדור לדיקים היה לדיק יותר, ויש דורשים לותו לגנאי, לפי דורו היה לדיק, ולולו היה בדורו של אברהם לא היה נחשב לכלום[2]:

את האלהים התהלך נח. ובאברהם הוא אומר אשר התהלכתי לפניו[3], נח היה לריך סעד לתומכו, אבל אברהם היה מתחזק ומהלך בלדקו מלליו: **התהלך.** לשון עבר, וזהו שמושו של ו' בלשון כבד משמשת להבא ולשעבר בלשון אחד, קום התהלך[4], להבא. התהלך נא, לשעבר. התפלל בעד עבדיך[5], להבא. ובא והתפלל אל הבית הזה[6], לשון עבר, אלא שהויי"ו שברחשו

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Why does the Torah state that Noach 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 Noach 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*, Noach is mentioned in the context of the ten *wicked generations* between Adam and Noach, and yet he is *not* praised.

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

In our *Parsha* however, where Noach 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

1 משלי י, ז 2 סנהדרין קח. 3 בראשית כד, מ 4 שם יג, יז 5 שמואל-א יב, יט 6 מלכים-א ח, מב

The Offspring of Noach

6:9 *These 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.

10 *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.

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. 19*ff*.)

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

אֶת־חָם וְאֶת־יָפֶת: יא וַתִּשָּׁחֵת הָאָרֶץ לִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים וַתִּמָּלֵא
הָאָרֶץ חָמָס: יב וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְהִנֵּה נִשְׁחָתָה
כִּי־הִשְׁחִית כָּל־בָּשָׂר אֶת־דַּרְכּוֹ עַל־הָאָרֶץ: ס יג וַיֹּאמֶר
אֱלֹהִים לְנֹחַ קֵץ כָּל־בָּשָׂר בָּא לְפָנַי כִּי־מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ חָמָס
מִפְּנֵיהֶם וְהִנְנִי מַשְׁחִיתָם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ: יד עֲשֵׂה לְךָ תֵּבַת
עֲצֵי־גֹפֶר קִנִּים תַּעֲשֶׂה אֶת־הַתֵּבָה וְכָפַרְתָּ אֹתָהּ מִבַּיִת וּמִחוּץ
בַּכֹּפֶר: טו וְזֶה אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה אֹתָהּ שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת אַמָּה אֹרֶךְ

תֵּלְדָה בְּנִין אֵת שֵׁם אֵת חָם וְאֵת יָפֶת:
יא וְאִתְחַבָּלַת אַרְעָא קֳדָם יְיָ וְאִתְמְלִיאַת אַרְעָא
חֲטוֹפִין: יב וַחֲזָא יְיָ יָת אַרְעָא וְהָא אִתְחַבָּלַת
אֲרֵי חַבִּילוּ כָל בִּשְׂרָא אֳנַשׁ יָת אָרְחֵיהּ עַל
אַרְעָא: יג וַאֲמַר יְיָ לְנֹחַ קְצָא דְכָל בִּשְׂרָא עַל
לְקָדָמַי אֲרֵי אִתְמְלִיאַת אַרְעָא חֲטוֹפִין מִן קֳדָם
עוֹבָדֵיהוֹן בִּישַׁיָּא וְהָא אֲנָא מְחַבֵּלְהוֹן עִם
אַרְעָא: יד עֲבֵד לָךְ תֵּיבוּתָא דְאָעִין דְקַדְרוֹם
מְדוֹרִין תַּעֲבֵיד יָת תֵּיבוּתָא וְתַחֲפֵי יָתָהּ מִגָּו
וּמִבָּרָא בְּכוּפְרָא: טו וְדֵין דְתַעֲבֵיד יָתָהּ תְּלַת

רש"י

כופכו להכעיס: (יח) **ותשחת.** לשון ערוה ועבודת גלולים[1], (ס"ח, ערוה, כי השחית כל בשר את דרכו, ועבודת גלולים) כמו פן תשחיתון[2]: **ותמלא הארץ חמס.** גזל (ס"ח, שנאמר ומן החמס אשר בכפיהם[3]): (יג) **כי השחית כל בשר.** אפילו בהמה חיה ועוף נזקקין לשחין מינן: (יג) **קץ כל בשר.** כל מקום שאתה מוצא זנות ועבודת גלולים, מגדלמוסיא באה לעולם, והורגת טובים ורעים: **כי מלאה הארץ חמס.** לפי שחתם גזר דינם תלה על הגזל[4]: **את הארץ.** כמו מן הארץ, ודומה לו כלאתי את העיר[5], מן העיר. חלה את רגליו[6], מן רגליו. דבר אחר את הארץ, עם הארץ, שאף

שלשה טפחים של עומק המחריבה נמוחו ונטשטשו: (יד) **עשה לך תבת.** הרבה ריוח והגלה לפניו, ולמה הטריחו בבנין זה, כדי שירחוהו אנשי דור המבול עוסק בה ק"כ שנה, ושואלין אותו מה זאת לך, והוא אומר להם עתיד הקב"ה להביא מבול לעולם, אולי ישובו: **עצי גופר.** כך שמו, ולמה ממין זה, על שם גפרית, שנגזר עליהם להמחות בו: **קנים.** מדוריס מדורים לכל בהמה וחיה: **בכפר.** זפת בלשון ארמי. ומליגו בגמרא כופרא. בתיבתו של משה, על ידי שהיו המים תשיס, היה בחומר מבפנים וזפת מבחוץ, ועוד כדי שלא יריח אותו לדיק ריח רע של זפת, אבל כאן, מפני חוזק המים

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 LEDAVID: *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. 36*ff.*)

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*

1 סנהדרין נז. 2 דברים ט, טו 3 יונה ג, ח 4 סנהדרין קח. 5 שמות ט, כט 6 מלכים-א טו, כג

News of the Flood—Noach Builds the Ark

6:11 *The earth became depraved (and idolatrous) before God, and the earth became full of robbery.*

12 *God saw the earth, and—look!—it had become depraved, for all (human and animal) flesh had depraved its nature upon the earth.*

13 *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).*

14 *"You should make an ark of gopher wood. You should make the ark with compartments. You should coat both inside and outside with tar.*

15 *"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. 34*ff.*)

Sparks of Chasidus

We 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)

הַתֵּבָה חֲמִשִּׁים אַמָּה רָחְבָּהּ וּשְׁלֹשִׁים אַמָּה קוֹמָתָהּ: טז צֹהַר | תַּעֲשֶׂה לַתֵּבָה וְאֶל־אַמָּה תְכַלֶּנָּה מִלְמַעְלָה וּפֶתַח הַתֵּבָה בְּצִדָּהּ תָּשִׂים תַּחְתִּיִּם שְׁנִים וּשְׁלִשִׁים תַּעֲשֶׂהָ: יז וַאֲנִי הִנְנִי מֵבִיא אֶת־הַמַּבּוּל מַיִם עַל־הָאָרֶץ לְשַׁחֵת כָּל־בָּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ רוּחַ חַיִּים מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמָיִם כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־בָּאָרֶץ יִגְוָע: יח וַהֲקִמֹתִי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אִתָּךְ וּבָאתָ אֶל־הַתֵּבָה אַתָּה וּבָנֶיךָ וְאִשְׁתְּךָ וּנְשֵׁי־בָנֶיךָ אִתָּךְ: יט וּמִכָּל־הָחַי מִכָּל־בָּשָׂר שְׁנַיִם מִכֹּל תָּבִיא אֶל־הַתֵּבָה לְהַחֲיֹת אִתָּךְ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה יִהְיוּ: כ מֵהָעוֹף לְמִינֵהוּ וּמִן־הַבְּהֵמָה לְמִינָהּ מִכֹּל רֶמֶשׂ הָאֲדָמָה לְמִינֵהוּ שְׁנַיִם מִכֹּל יָבֹאוּ אֵלֶיךָ לְהַחֲיוֹת: כא וְאַתָּה קַח־לְךָ מִכָּל־מַאֲכָל אֲשֶׁר יֵאָכֵל

מְאָה אַמִּין אוֹרְכָא דְּתֵיבוּתָא חַמְשִׁין אַמִּין פּוּתְיָהּ וּתְלָתִין אַמִּין רוּמָהּ: טז נְהוֹר תַּעֲבִיד לְתֵיבוּתָא וּלְאַמְּתָא תְּשַׁכְלְלִינָהּ מִלְּעֵילָּא וְתַרְעָא דְּתֵיבוּתָא בְּסִטְרָהּ תְּשַׁוֵּי מְדוֹרִין אַרְעָאִין תְּנָנִין וּתְלִיתָאִין תַּעְבְּדִנָּהּ: יז וַאֲנָא הָא אֲנָא מַיְתֵי יַת טוֹפָנָא מַיָּא עַל אַרְעָא לְחַבָּלָא כָּל בִּשְׂרָא דִּי בֵיהּ רוּחָא דְחַיֵּי מִתְּחוֹת שְׁמַיָּא כָּל דִּי בְאַרְעָא יְמוּת: יח וַאֲקִים יַת קְיָמִי עִמָּךְ וְתֵיעוֹל לְתֵיבוּתָא אַתְּ וּבְנָיךְ וְאִתְּתָךְ וּנְשֵׁי בְנָיךְ עִמָּךְ: יט וּמִכָּל דְּחַי מִכָּל בִּשְׂרָא תְּרֵין מִכּוֹלָּא תָּעֵיל לְתֵיבוּתָא לְקַיָּמָא עִמָּךְ דְּכַר וְנוּקְבָא יְהוֹן: כ מֵעוֹפָא לְזָנוֹהִי וּמִן בְּעִירָא לְזָנָהּ וּמִכָּל רִיחֲשָׁא דְאַרְעָא לְזָנוֹהִי תְּרֵין מִכּוֹלָּא יַעֲלוּן לְוָתָךְ לְקַיָּמָא: כא וְאַתְּ סַב

רס"י

זפתה מבית ומבחוץ: (טז) **צהר**. יש מומרים חלון, ויש מומרים מבן טובה כמאירה לכם[1]: **ואל אמה תכלנה מלמעלה**. כסויה משופע ועולה, עד שהוא קצר מלמעלה ועומד על אמה, כדי שיזובו המים למטה (ס"ח חינו) (מכלן ומכלן): **בצדה תשים**. שלא יפלו כגשמים בה: **תחתים שנים ושלשים**. ג' עליות זו על גב זו, עליונים לאדם, אמצעים למדור, תחתיים לזבל: (יז) **ואני הנני מביא**. הגיד מוכן להסכיס עם מותם שזרזוני ואמרו לפני כבר מה[2] תוגם כי תזכרנו[3]: **מבול**. שבלה את הכל, שבלבל את הכל, שהפתה מבית ומבחוץ: (טז) **צהר**. יש מומרים חלון, ויש מומרים מבן טובה כמאירה לכם[1]: **ואל אמה תכלנה מלמעלה**. כסויה משופע ועולה, עד שהוא קצר מלמעלה ועומד על אמה, כדי שיזובו המים למטה (ס"ח חינו) (מכלן ומכלן): **בצדה תשים**. שלא יפלו כגשמים בה: **תחתים שנים ושלשים**. ג' עליות זו על גב זו, עליונים לאדם, אמצעים למדור, תחתיים לזבל: (יז) **ואני הנני מביא**. הגיד מוכן להסכיס עם מותם שזרזוני ואמרו לפני כבר מה[2] תוגם כי תזכרנו[3]: **מבול**. שבלה את הכל, שבלבל את הכל, שהפתה מבית ומבחוץ: (טז) **צהר**. יש מומרים חלון, ויש מומרים מבן טובה כמאירה לכם[1]: **ואל אמה תכלנה מלמעלה**. כסויה משופע ועולה, עד שהוא קצר מלמעלה ועומד על אמה, כדי שיזובו המים למטה (ס"ח חינו) (מכלן ומכלן): **בצדה תשים**. שלא יפלו כגשמים בה: **תחתים שנים ושלשים**. ג' עליות זו על גב זו, עליונים לאדם, אמצעים למדור, תחתיים לזבל: (יז) **ואני הנני מביא**. הגיד מוכן להסכיס עם מותם שזרזוני ואמרו לפני כבר מה[2] תוגם כי תזכרנו[3]: **מבול**. שבלה את הכל, שבלבל את הכל,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What was the "light" that Noach 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 Noach 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 **צֹהַר** could also be rendered as "oil" (a derivative of the word **יִצְהָר**), i.e. that Noach 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 Noach 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.

1 ב"ר לא, יא 2 תהלים ח, ה 3 ב"ר לא, יב 4 שם

16 *"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.*

17 *"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.*

18 *"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.* 19 *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.* 20 *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.*

21 *"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" (צֹהַר). But surely *Rashi* could have opted for the interpretation of ***Chizkuni,*** that צֹהַר 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. 19*ff.*)

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 (צֹהַר) which has the same letters as צָרָה, the Hebrew word for "misery," replacing misery with light.
- The Hebrew word for ark is *teivah* (תֵּבָה) which can also mean "word," alluding to words of prayer and Torah study. Thus, the command to "make a light for the *taivah*," 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)

וְאַתָּה֙ קַח־לְךָ֣ מִכָּל־מַאֲכָ֣ל אֲשֶׁ֣ר יֵאָכֵ֔ל וְאָסַפְתָּ֖ אֵלֶ֑יךָ וְהָיָ֥ה לְךָ֛ וְלָהֶ֖ם לְאָכְלָֽה׃ כב וַיַּ֥עַשׂ נֹ֖חַ כְּכֹ֣ל אֲשֶׁ֣ר
צִוָּ֣ה אֹת֑וֹ אֱלֹהִ֔ים כֵּ֥ן עָשָֽׂה׃ ז א (שני) וַיֹּ֨אמֶר֙ יְהוָ֣ה לְנֹ֔חַ בֹּ֥א־
אַתָּ֛ה וְכָל־בֵּיתְךָ֖ אֶל־הַתֵּבָ֑ה כִּי־אֹתְךָ֥ רָאִ֛יתִי צַדִּ֥יק לְפָנַ֖י בַּדּ֥וֹר
הַזֶּֽה׃ ב מִכֹּ֣ל | הַבְּהֵמָ֣ה הַטְּהוֹרָ֗ה תִּקַּ֤ח־לְךָ֙ שִׁבְעָ֣ה שִׁבְעָ֔ה אִ֥ישׁ
וְאִשְׁתּ֑וֹ וּמִן־הַבְּהֵמָ֗ה אֲשֶׁ֤ר לֹֽא־טְהֹרָה֙ הִ֔וא שְׁנַ֖יִם אִ֥ישׁ וְאִשְׁתּֽוֹ׃
ג גַּ֚ם מֵע֣וֹף הַשָּׁמַ֔יִם שִׁבְעָ֥ה שִׁבְעָ֖ה זָכָ֣ר וּנְקֵבָ֑ה לְחַיּ֥וֹת זֶ֖רַע
עַל־פְּנֵ֥י כָל־הָאָֽרֶץ׃ ד כִּ֣י לְיָמִ֗ים עֽוֹד־שִׁבְעָה֙ אָנֹכִ֣י מַמְטִ֔יר עַל־
הָאָ֖רֶץ אַרְבָּעִ֣ים י֑וֹם וְאַרְבָּעִ֣ים לָ֔יְלָה וּמָחִ֙יתִי֙ אֶת־כָּל־הַיְקוּם֙
אֲשֶׁ֣ר עָשִׂ֔יתִי מֵעַ֖ל פְּנֵ֥י הָאֲדָמָֽה׃ ה וַיַּ֥עַשׂ נֹ֖חַ כְּכֹ֣ל אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּ֑הוּ
יְהוָֽה׃ ו וְנֹ֖חַ בֶּן־שֵׁ֣שׁ מֵא֑וֹת שָׁנָ֔ה וְהַמַּבּ֖וּל הָיָ֥ה מַ֙יִם֙ עַל־הָאָֽרֶץ׃
ז וַיָּבֹ֨א נֹ֜חַ וּבָנָ֣יו וְאִשְׁתּ֗וֹ וּנְשֵׁי־בָנָיו֙ אִתּ֔וֹ אֶל־הַתֵּבָ֖ה מִפְּנֵ֣י מֵ֑י
הַמַּבּֽוּל׃ ח מִן־הַבְּהֵמָה֙ הַטְּהוֹרָ֔ה וּמִן־הַבְּהֵמָ֖ה אֲשֶׁ֣ר אֵינֶ֑נָּה
טְהֹרָ֔ה וּמִן־הָע֖וֹף וְכֹ֣ל אֲשֶׁר־רֹמֵ֥שׂ עַל־הָאֲדָמָֽה׃ ט שְׁנַ֤יִם שְׁנַ֙יִם֙
בָּ֣אוּ אֶל־נֹ֔חַ אֶל־הַתֵּבָ֖ה זָכָ֣ר וּנְקֵבָ֑ה כַּאֲשֶׁ֛ר צִוָּ֥ה אֱלֹהִ֖ים
אֶת־נֹֽחַ׃ י וַיְהִ֕י לִשְׁבְעַ֖ת הַיָּמִ֑ים וּמֵ֣י הַמַּבּ֔וּל הָי֖וּ עַל־הָאָֽרֶץ׃
יא בִּשְׁנַ֣ת שֵׁשׁ־מֵא֗וֹת שָׁנָה֙ לְחַיֵּי־נֹ֔חַ בַּחֹ֥דֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִ֖י בְּשִׁבְעָ֣ה־
עָשָׂ֣ר י֔וֹם לַחֹ֕דֶשׁ בַּיּ֥וֹם הַזֶּ֖ה נִבְקְעוּ֙ כָּל־מַעְיְנוֹת֙ תְּה֣וֹם רַבָּ֔ה
וַאֲרֻבֹּ֥ת הַשָּׁמַ֖יִם נִפְתָּֽחוּ׃ יב וַיְהִ֥י הַגֶּ֖שֶׁם עַל־הָאָ֑רֶץ אַרְבָּעִ֥ים י֖וֹם

לְךָ֔ מִכָּל֙ מַאֲכָ֣ל הַֽאֲכֶ֔ל וְתֶאֱסֹ֖ף אֵלֶ֑יךָ וְהָיָ֥ה לְךָ֖ וְלָהֶֽם׃ כב וַיַּ֥עַשׂ נֹ֖חַ
כְּכֹ֣ל אֲשֶׁ֣ר צִוָּ֣ה אֹת֑וֹ אֱלֹהִ֔ים כֵּ֥ן עָשָֽׂה׃ ז א וַיֹּ֨אמֶר֙ יְהוָ֣ה לְנֹ֔חַ בֹּ֥א־
אַתָּ֛ה וְכָל־בֵּיתְךָ֖ אֶל־הַתֵּבָ֑ה כִּי־אֹתְךָ֥ רָאִ֛יתִי צַדִּ֥יק לְפָנַ֖י בַּדּ֥וֹר
הַזֶּֽה׃ ב מִכֹּ֣ל | הַבְּהֵמָ֣ה הַטְּהוֹרָ֗ה תִּקַּ֤ח־לְךָ֙ שִׁבְעָ֣ה שִׁבְעָ֔ה אִ֥ישׁ
וְאִשְׁתּ֑וֹ וּמִן־הַבְּהֵמָ֗ה אֲשֶׁ֤ר לֹֽא־טְהֹרָה֙ הִ֔וא שְׁנַ֖יִם אִ֥ישׁ וְאִשְׁתּֽוֹ׃
ג גַּ֚ם מֵע֣וֹף הַשָּׁמַ֔יִם שִׁבְעָ֥ה שִׁבְעָ֖ה זָכָ֣ר וּנְקֵבָ֑ה לְחַיּ֥וֹת זֶ֖רַע
עַל־פְּנֵ֥י כָל־הָאָֽרֶץ׃ ד כִּ֣י לְיָמִ֗ים עֽוֹד־שִׁבְעָה֙ אָנֹכִ֣י מַמְטִ֔יר עַל־
הָאָ֖רֶץ אַרְבָּעִ֣ים י֑וֹם וְאַרְבָּעִ֣ים לָ֔יְלָה וּמָחִ֙יתִי֙ אֶת־כָּל־הַיְקוּם֙
אֲשֶׁ֣ר עָשִׂ֔יתִי מֵעַ֖ל פְּנֵ֥י הָאֲדָמָֽה׃ ה וַיַּ֥עַשׂ נֹ֖חַ כְּכֹ֣ל אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּ֑הוּ
יְהוָֽה׃ ו וְנֹ֖חַ בֶּן־שֵׁ֣שׁ מֵא֑וֹת שָׁנָ֔ה וְהַמַּבּ֖וּל הָיָ֥ה מַ֙יִם֙ עַל־הָאָֽרֶץ׃
ז וַיָּבֹ֨א נֹ֜חַ וּבָנָ֣יו וְאִשְׁתּ֗וֹ וּנְשֵׁי־בָנָיו֙ אִתּ֔וֹ אֶל־הַתֵּבָ֖ה מִפְּנֵ֣י מֵ֑י
הַמַּבּֽוּל׃ ח מִן־הַבְּהֵמָה֙ הַטְּהוֹרָ֔ה וּמִן־הַבְּהֵמָ֖ה אֲשֶׁ֣ר אֵינֶ֑נָּה
טְהֹרָ֔ה וּמִן־הָע֖וֹף וְכֹ֣ל אֲשֶׁר־רֹמֵ֥שׂ עַל־הָאֲדָמָֽה׃ ט שְׁנַ֤יִם שְׁנַ֙יִם֙
בָּ֣אוּ אֶל־נֹ֔חַ אֶל־הַתֵּבָ֖ה זָכָ֣ר וּנְקֵבָ֑ה כַּאֲשֶׁ֛ר צִוָּ֥ה אֱלֹהִ֖ים
אֶת־נֹֽחַ׃ י וַיְהִ֕י לִשְׁבְעַ֖ת הַיָּמִ֑ים וּמֵ֣י הַמַּבּ֔וּל הָי֖וּ עַל־הָאָֽרֶץ׃
יא בִּשְׁנַ֣ת שֵׁשׁ־מֵא֗וֹת שָׁנָה֙ לְחַיֵּי־נֹ֔חַ בַּחֹ֥דֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִ֖י בְּשִׁבְעָ֣ה־
עָשָׂ֣ר י֔וֹם לַחֹ֕דֶשׁ בַּיּ֥וֹם הַזֶּ֖ה נִבְקְעוּ֙ כָּל־מַעְיְנוֹת֙ תְּה֣וֹם רַבָּ֔ה
וַאֲרֻבֹּ֥ת הַשָּׁמַ֖יִם נִפְתָּֽחוּ׃ יב וַיְהִ֥י הַגֶּ֖שֶׁם עַל־הָאָ֑רֶץ אַרְבָּעִ֥ים י֖וֹם

רס"י

ומליכם בהו, וכל שכתיבה קולטתו ככיום בה[1]: (כב) **ויעש נח.** זה בנין כתיבה[2]: (ו) **ראיתי צדיק.** ולא נאמר לדיק תמיס, מכאן שאומרים מקלת שבחו של אדם בפניו וכולו שלא בפניו[3]: (ג) **הטהורה.** בעתידה לכיות טהורה ליטרולא, למדנו שלמד נח תורה: **שבעה שבעה.** כדי שיקריב ממה קרבן בלאתו: (ג) **גם מעוף השמים וגו'.** בטהוריס בכתוב מדבר, ולמד סתום מן המפורש: (ד) **כי לימים עוד שבעה.** אלו ז' ימי אבלו של מתושלח בלדיק[4], שאם בקדוש ברוך הוא על כבודו ועכב את הפורענות, לא ושאוב שנותיו של מתושלח, ותמלא שאם כליס בשנת 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 ליוצרם לעור עורת ממזריס: (ה) **ויעש נח.** זה ביאתו לתיבה: (ז) **נח ובניו.** המגשים לבד והנשים לבד, לפי שנאסרו בתשמיש המטה, מפני שהעולם שרוי בלעבר: **מפני מי המבול.** אף נח מקטני אמנה היה, מאמין ואינו מאמין שיבא המבול, ולא נכנס לתיבה עד שדחקוהו המיס: (ט) **באו אל נח.** מאליהן: **שנים שנים.** כלם הושוו בזמנין זה, מן הפחות היו שניס: (יא) **בחודש השני.** אליעזר אומר זה מרחשון, ר' יהושע אומר זה אייר: **נבקעו.** להועיל מימיהן: **תהום רבה.** מדה כנגד מדה, הס חטאו בדבה רעת בחדס ולקו בתהום רבה[5]: (יב) **ויהי הגשם על הארץ.** ולהלן הוא אומר ויהי המבול, אלא שהטורידן ברחמיס, הס יחזרו ישיבו גשמי ברכה, וכשלא חזרו היו למבול: **ארבעים יום וגו'.** אין יום רחשון מן המנין, לפי שאין לילו עמו, שהרי כתיב ביום הזה נבקעו כל מעיונות, ממלאו מרבעים יום כליס בכ"ח בכסלו לרבי אליעזר,

1 סנהדרין קח: 2 ב"ר לא, יד 3 ב"ר לב, ג 4 סנהדרין קח: 5 שם

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.

22 *Noach made (the ark). He did everything that God had commanded him.*

Noach Enters the Ark

7 Second Reading

God 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. 2 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. 3 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. 4 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."

5 *Noach obeyed (coming into the ark), according to all that God had commanded him.*

6 *Noach was six hundred years old when the flood water came upon the earth.*

7 *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. 8 From the pure animals and from the animals that are not pure, from the birds, and from all that creeps upon the earth, 9 two by two they came to Noach into the ark, male and female, as God had commanded Noach. 10 And then, after seven days, the floodwaters were on the earth.*

The Flood Destroys Human & Animal Life

7:11 *In 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. 12 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 Kabalah. 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 Kabalistic 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. 42*ff*.)

וְאַרְבָּעִים לֵילָה: יג בְּעֶצֶם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה בָּא נֹחַ וְשֵׁם־וְחָם וְיֶפֶת
בְּנֵי־נֹחַ וְאֵשֶׁת נֹחַ וּשְׁלֹשֶׁת נְשֵׁי־בָנָיו אִתָּם אֶל־הַתֵּבָה: יד הֵמָּה
וְכָל־הַחַיָּה לְמִינָהּ וְכָל־הַבְּהֵמָה לְמִינָהּ וְכָל־הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׂ
עַל־הָאָרֶץ לְמִינֵהוּ וְכָל־הָעוֹף לְמִינֵהוּ כֹּל צִפּוֹר כָּל־כָּנָף:
טו וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־נֹחַ אֶל־הַתֵּבָה שְׁנַיִם שְׁנַיִם מִכָּל־הַבָּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ
רוּחַ חַיִּים: טז וְהַבָּאִים זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה מִכָּל־בָּשָׂר בָּאוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה
אֹתוֹ אֱלֹהִים וַיִּסְגֹּר יְהוָה בַּעֲדוֹ: [שלישי] יז וַיְהִי הַמַּבּוּל אַרְבָּעִים
יוֹם עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּרְבּוּ הַמַּיִם וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֶת־הַתֵּבָה וַתָּרָם מֵעַל
הָאָרֶץ: יח וַיִּגְבְּרוּ הַמַּיִם וַיִּרְבּוּ מְאֹד עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַתֵּלֶךְ הַתֵּבָה
עַל־פְּנֵי הַמָּיִם: יט וְהַמַּיִם גָּבְרוּ מְאֹד מְאֹד עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיְכֻסּוּ
כָּל־הֶהָרִים הַגְּבֹהִים אֲשֶׁר־תַּחַת כָּל־הַשָּׁמָיִם: כ חֲמֵשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה
אַמָּה מִלְמַעְלָה גָּבְרוּ הַמָּיִם וַיְכֻסּוּ הֶהָרִים: כא וַיִּגְוַע כָּל־בָּשָׂר |
הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ בָּעוֹף וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבַחַיָּה וּבְכָל־הַשֶּׁרֶץ הַשֹּׁרֵץ
עַל־הָאָרֶץ וְכֹל הָאָדָם: כב כֹּל אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁמַת־רוּחַ חַיִּים בְּאַפָּיו
מִכֹּל אֲשֶׁר בֶּחָרָבָה מֵתוּ: כג וַיִּמַח אֶת־כָּל־הַיְקוּם | אֲשֶׁר | עַל־
פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה מֵאָדָם עַד־בְּהֵמָה עַד־רֶמֶשׂ וְעַד־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם
וַיִּמָּחוּ מִן־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּשָּׁאֶר אַךְ־נֹחַ וַאֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ בַּתֵּבָה: כד וַיִּגְבְּרוּ

וְאַרְבָּעִין לֵילְיָן: יג בְּכַרְן יוֹמָא הָדֵין עַל נֹחַ וְשֵׁם
וְחָם וְיֶפֶת בְּנֵי נֹחַ וְאִתַּת נֹחַ וּתְלַת נְשֵׁי בְנוֹהִי
עִמְּהוֹן לְתֵיבוּתָא: יד אִנּוּן וְכָל חַיְתָא לְזִנָּהּ וְכָל
בְּעִירָא לְזִנָּהּ וְכָל רְחֲשָׁא דְּרָחֵשׁ עַל אַרְעָא
לְזִנּוֹהִי וְכָל עוֹפָא לְזִנּוֹהִי כָּל צִפַּר כָּל דְּפָרַח:
טו וְעָלוּ עִם (לְוָת) נֹחַ לְתֵיבוּתָא תְּרֵין תְּרֵין מִכָּל
בִּשְׂרָא דִּי בֵיהּ רוּחָא דְחַיֵּי: טז וְעָלַיָא דְּכַר
וְנוּקְבָא מִכָּל בִּשְׂרָא עָלוּ כְּמָא דְפַקֵּד יָתֵיהּ יְיָ
וַאֲגַן יְיָ (בְּמֵימְרֵיהּ) עֲלוֹהִי: יז וַהֲוָה טוֹפָנָא
אַרְבְּעִין יְמָמִין עַל אַרְעָא וּסְגִיאוּ מַיָּא וּנְטָלוּ
יָת תֵּיבוּתָא וְאִתְרָמַת מֵעַל אַרְעָא: יח וּתְקִיפוּ
מַיָּא וּסְגִיאוּ לַחֲדָא עַל אַרְעָא וּמְהַלְכָא
תֵּיבוּתָא עַל אַפֵּי מַיָּא: יט וּמַיָּא תְּקִיפוּ לַחֲדָא
לַחֲדָא עַל אַרְעָא וְאִתְחַפִּיאוּ כָּל טוּרַיָּא רָמַיָּא
דִּי תְחוֹת כָּל שְׁמַיָּא: כ חֲמֵשׁ עֲשְׂרֵי אַמִּין
מִלְעֵילָא תְּקִיפוּ מַיָּא וְאִתְחַפִּיאוּ טוּרַיָּא:
כא וּמִית כָּל בִּשְׂרָא דְּרָחֵשׁ עַל אַרְעָא בְּעוֹפָא
וּבִבְעִירָא וּבְחַיְתָא וּבְכָל רְחֲשָׁא דְּרָחֵשׁ עַל
אַרְעָא וְכָל אֱנָשָׁא: כב כָּל דִּי נִשְׁמַת רוּחָא
דְחַיִּין בְּאַפּוֹהִי מִכָּל דִּי בְיַבֶּשְׁתָּא מִיתוּ:
כג וּמְחָא יַת כָּל יְקוּמָא דִּי עַל אַפֵּי אַרְעָא
מֵאֱנָשָׁא עַד בְּעִירָא עַד רְחֲשָׁא וְעַד עוֹפָא
דִשְׁמַיָּא וְאִתְמְחִיאוּ מִן אַרְעָא וְאִשְׁתָּאַר בְּרַם
נֹחַ וְדִי עִמֵּיהּ בְּתֵיבוּתָא: כד וּתְקִיפוּ מַיָּא עַל

רס"י

עור בעד עור[3], מגן בעדי[4], כתפלל בעד עבדיך[5], כנגד עבדיך: (יז) **ותרם מעל הארץ**. משוקעת היתה במים י"ח אמה, כספינה טעונה המשוקעת מקצתה במים, ומקראות שלפנינו יוכיחו: (יח) **ויגברו**. מאליהן: (כ) **חמש עשרה אמה מלמעלה**. למעלה על כל גובה כל הכריס, לאחר שהושוו המים לראשי הכריס: (כב) **נשמת רוח חיים**. נשימה של רוח חיים: **אשר בחרבה**. ולא דגים שבים[6]: (כג) **וימח**. לשון ויפעל[7] הוא, ומינו לשון ויפעל[8], והוא מגזרת ויפן ויבן. כל תיבה שסופה ה"ח, כגון בנה, מחה, קנה, כשהוא נותן וי"ו יו"ד בראשה, נקוד בחירק תחת היו"ד: **אך נח**. לבד נח, זהו פשוטו. ומדרש מגדה, גוזם וכוכה דס[9] מטורח שהחדשים נמנין כסדרן אחד מלא ואחד חסר, כדי י"ג ממרחשון וכ"ח מכסליו: (יג) **בעצם היום הזה**. למדך הכתוב שהיו בני דורו מומריס, חילו אנו רואים אותו ונכנס לתיבה, אנו שומרין אותה והורגין אותו, אמר הקב"ה אני מכניסו לעיני כלם ורואה דבר מי יקוס: (יד) **צפור כל כנף**. דבוק הוא, לפור של כל מין כנף, לרבות חגבים. (כנף זה לשון גולה, כמו ומסע אותו כנגפיו[1], שאפילו גולה עולה, אף כאן לפור כל מין מרחית גולה): (טז) **ויסגור ה' בעדו**. הגין עליו שלא שברוה, הקיף התיבה דובים ואריות והיו הורגים בכם. ופשוטו של מקרא, סגר כנגדו מן המים, וכן כל בעד שבמקרא לשון כנגד הוא, בעד כל רחם[2], בעדך ובעד בניך,

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*?

1 ויקרא א, יז 2 בראשית כ, יח 3 איוב ב, ד 4 תהלים ג, ד 5 שמואל-א יב, יט 6 סנהדרין קח. 7 וַיִּפְעַל 8 וַיִּפָּעֵל 9 ב"ר לב, יא

13 *On that very day (in full view of the wicked generation), Noach came into the ark, with Sheim, Cham and Yafes—Noach's sons—together with Noach's wife and his sons' three wives.* 14 *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).* 15 *From all flesh in which there is the spirit of life, they came to Noach, to the ark, two by two.* 16 *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

17 *The flood was on the earth for forty days. The waters increased, they lifted the ark, and it rose off the earth.* 18 *The waters surged, and they increased very much upon the earth, and the ark moved upon the waters.* 19 *The waters became extremely powerful upon the earth, and all the tall mountains that were under the skies were covered up.* 20 *The mountains were totally covered by fifteen cubits of water above.* 21 *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.* 22 *Everything from that which was on the dry land that had the breath of the spirit of life in its nostrils died.* 23 *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 Noach and those with him in the ark survived.* 24 *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. 23*ff*)

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)

הַמַּיִם עַל־הָאָרֶץ חֲמִשִּׁים וּמְאַת יוֹם: ח א וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים
אֶת־נֹחַ וְאֵת כָּל־הַחַיָּה וְאֶת־כָּל־הַבְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ בַּתֵּבָה
וַיַּעֲבֵר אֱלֹהִים רוּחַ עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיָּשֹׁכּוּ הַמָּיִם: ב וַיִּסָּכְרוּ מַעְיְנֹת
תְּהוֹם וַאֲרֻבֹּת הַשָּׁמָיִם וַיִּכָּלֵא הַגֶּשֶׁם מִן־הַשָּׁמָיִם: ג וַיָּשֻׁבוּ
הַמַּיִם מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ הָלוֹךְ וָשׁוֹב וַיַּחְסְרוּ הַמַּיִם מִקְצֵה חֲמִשִּׁים
וּמְאַת יוֹם: ד וַתָּנַח הַתֵּבָה בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּשִׁבְעָה־עָשָׂר יוֹם
לַחֹדֶשׁ עַל הָרֵי אֲרָרָט: ה וְהַמַּיִם הָיוֹ הָלוֹךְ וְחָסוֹר עַד הַחֹדֶשׁ
הָעֲשִׂירִי בָּעֲשִׂירִי בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ נִרְאוּ רָאשֵׁי הֶהָרִים: ו וַיְהִי

אַרְבָּא מְאָה וְחַמְשִׁין יוֹמִין: א וּדְכִיר יְיָ יָת נֹחַ
וְיָת כָּל חַיְתָא וְיָת כָּל בְּעִירָא דִי עִמֵּיהּ
בְּתֵיבוּתָא וְאַעֲבַר יְיָ רוּחָא עַל אַרְעָא וְנָחוּ
מַיָּא: ב וְאִסְתְּכָרוּ מַבּוּעֵי תְהוֹמָא וְכַוֵּי דְשְׁמַיָּא
וְאִתְכְּלִי מִטְרָא מִן שְׁמַיָּא: ג וְתָבוּ מַיָּא מֵעַל
אַרְעָא אָזְלִין וְתָיְבִין וַהֲסָרוּ מַיָּא מִסּוֹף מְאָה
וְחַמְשִׁין יוֹמִין: ד וְנָחַת תֵּיבוּתָא בְּיַרְחָא
שְׁבִיעָאָה בְּשַׁבְעַת עַשְׂרָא יוֹמָא לְיַרְחָא עַל
טוּרֵי קַרְדּוּ: ה וּמַיָּא הֲווֹ אָזְלִין וְהָסְרִין עַד
יַרְחָא עֲשִׂירָאָה בַּעֲשִׂירָאָה בְּחַד לְיַרְחָא
אִתְחֲזִיאוּ רֵישֵׁי טוּרַיָּא: ו וַהֲוָה מִסּוֹף אַרְבְּעִין

רס"י

כבמות ובמיות. ויש מומרים שמיחר מזונות לאדי ובניהו, ועליו נאמר כן נדיק במרן יפולס[1]: (ח) **ויזכור אלהים**. זה בשם מדת הדין הוא, ונהפכה למדת רחמים על ידי תפלת הצדיקים, ורשעתן של רשעים הופכת מדת רחמים למדת הדין, שנאמר וירע כי רבה רעת האדם וגו'[2] ויאמר כי אמחה[3], והוא שם מדת רחמים: **ויזכור אלהים את נח וגו'**. מה זכר לבהמות, זכות שלא השחיתו דרכם קודם לכן, ושלא שמשו בתיבה: **ויעבר אלהים רוח**. רוח תנחומין ונאמר עברה לפניו: **על הארץ**. על עסקי הארץ: **וישכו**. כמו בשוך חמת המלך[4], לשון הנחת חמה: (ג) **ויסברו מעינות**. בשנפתחו כתיב כל מעיינות, וכאן אין כתיב כל, לפי שנסתיירו מהם חותן שיש בהם צורך לעולם, כגון חמי טבריה וכיולא בהם: **ויבלא**. ויחסר, כמו לא תבלה רחמיך[5], לא יכלה ממך[6]: (ג) **מקצה חמשים ומאת יום**. התחילו לחסור והוא אחד בסיון. כיצד, בי"ז בכסליו פסקו הגשמים, הרי ג' מכסליו, וכ"ט מטבת הרי ל"ב, ושבט ואדר ויסן ואייר קי"ח, הרי ק"כ: (ד) **בחדש השביעי**. סיון, והוא שביעי לכסליו שבו פסקו הגשמים:

בשבעה עשר יום. מכאן אתה למד שהיתה התיבה משוקעת במים י"ח אמה. שהרי כתיב בעשירי באחד לחדש נראו ראשי ההרים, זה אב, שהוא עשירי למרחשון לירידת הגשמים, והם היו גבוהים על ההרים חמש עשרה אמה, וחסרו מיום אחד בסיון עד אחד באב, חמש עשרה אמה לשבעים יום, הרי אמה לד' ימים, נמצא שביו"ז בסיון לא חסרו אלא ד' אמות, ונאמר התיבה ליום השמרת, למדת שהיתה משוקעת י"ח אמה במים שעל ראשי ההרים: (ה) **בעשירי וגו' נראו ראשי ההרים**. זה אב, שהוא עשירי למרחשון שהתחיל הגשם. ואם תאמר הוא אלול, ועשירי לכסליו שפסק הגשם, כשם שאתה אומר בחדש השביעי סיון והוא שביעי להפסקה, אי אפשר לומר כן, על כרחך שביעי אי אתה מונה אלא להפסקה, שהרי לא כלו מרבעים יום של ירידת גשמים ומאה וחמשים של תגבורת המים עד אחד בסיון, ואם אתה אומר שביעי לירידה הין זה סיון, והעשירי אי אפשר למנות אלא לירידה, שאם אתה אומר להפסקה והוא אלול, אי אתה מונה ברחשון באחד לחדש חרבו המים מעל האדץ, שהרי מקץ מרבעים משנתנו

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. Noach].

Conversely, wicked people transform God's attribute of mercy [indicated by the Tetragrammaton, *Havayeh*] to the attribute of justice, as the verse states: "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). 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 (*Havayeh*) 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) Noach 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 [Havayeh] 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?

1 משלי יא, לא 2 בראשית ו, ה 3 שם ז 4 אסתר ב, א 5 תהלים מ, יב 6 בראשית כג, ו

The Flood Subsides

8 God 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. [2] The wellsprings of the depths and the apertures of the skies were closed, and the rain from the skies was held back. [3] The waters continued progressively to recede off the earth and, at the end of one hundred and fifty days, the waters diminished.

[4] 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.

[5] 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. 30*ff.*)

Sparks of Chasidus

Why 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)

מִקֵּץ אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וַיִּפְתַּח נֹחַ אֶת־חַלּוֹן הַתֵּבָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה:
ז וַיְשַׁלַּח אֶת־הָעֹרֵב וַיֵּצֵא יָצוֹא וָשׁוֹב עַד־יְבֹשֶׁת הַמַּיִם מֵעַל
הָאָרֶץ: ח וַיְשַׁלַּח אֶת־הַיּוֹנָה מֵאִתּוֹ לִרְאוֹת הַקַּלּוּ הַמַּיִם מֵעַל
פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה: ט וְלֹא־מָצְאָה הַיּוֹנָה מָנוֹחַ לְכַף־רַגְלָהּ וַתָּשָׁב
אֵלָיו אֶל־הַתֵּבָה כִּי־מַיִם עַל־פְּנֵי כָל־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּשְׁלַח יָדוֹ
וַיִּקָּחֶהָ וַיָּבֵא אֹתָהּ אֵלָיו אֶל־הַתֵּבָה: י וַיָּחֶל עוֹד שִׁבְעַת יָמִים
אֲחֵרִים וַיֹּסֶף שַׁלַּח אֶת־הַיּוֹנָה מִן־הַתֵּבָה: יא וַתָּבֹא אֵלָיו הַיּוֹנָה
לְעֵת עֶרֶב וְהִנֵּה עֲלֵה־זַיִת טָרָף בְּפִיהָ וַיֵּדַע נֹחַ כִּי־קַלּוּ הַמַּיִם

יוֹמִין וּפְתַח נֹחַ יַת כַּוַּת תֵּיבוּתָא דִּי עֲבַד:
ז וְשַׁלַּח יַת עוֹרְבָא וּנְפַק מִפַּק וְתָיֵב עַד דְּיִבְּישׁוּ
מַיָּא מֵעַל אַרְעָא: ח וְשַׁלַּח יַת יוֹנָה מִלְוָתֵיהּ
לְמֶחֱזֵי אִם קַלּוּ מַיָּא מֵעַל אַפֵּי אַרְעָא: ט וְלָא
אַשְׁכַּחַת יוֹנָה מְנַח לְפַרְסַת רִגְלָהּ וְתָבַת
לְוָתֵיהּ לְתֵיבוּתָא אֲרֵי מַיָּא עַל אַפֵּי כָל אַרְעָא
וְאוֹשִׁיט יְדֵיהּ וְנַסְבָהּ וְאָעַל יָתָהּ לְוָתֵיהּ
לְתֵיבוּתָא: י וְאוֹרִיךְ עוֹד שַׁבְעָא יוֹמִין אָחֳרָנִין
וְאוֹסִיף שַׁלַּח יַת יוֹנָה מִן תֵּיבוּתָא: יא וַאֲתַת
לְוָתֵיהּ יוֹנָה לְעִדַּן רַמְשָׁא וְהָא טְרַף זֵיתָא
תְּבִיר מָחַת בְּפוּמָהּ וִידַע נֹחַ אֲרֵי קַלּוּ מַיָּא

רש"י

רחמי הכריס שלח את העורב, וכ"ח יוס הוחיל בשליחות היונה, הרי שמיס יוס משגרתו רחמי הכריס עד שחרבו פני האדמה. ואס תאמר בחלון נרחו, נמלא שחרבו במרחשון, והוא קורא אותו רחשון, ואין זה אלא תשרי, שהוא רחשון לגריחת עולם, ולרבי יהושע הוא ניסן: **(ו) מקץ ארבעים יום.** משגרתו רחמי הכריס: **את חלון התבה אשר עשה.** לגחר[1], ולא זה פתח התיבה העשוי לגיחה ויציחה: **(ז) יצוא ושוב.** הולך ומקוף סביבות התיבה, ולא הלך בשליחותו, שהיה חושדו על בת זוגו, כמו ששניהו בחגדת חלק[2]: **עד יבשת המים.** פשוטו כמשמעו. אבל מדרש אגדה[3], מוכן היה העורב לשליחות אחרת, בעגירת גשמים בימי אליהו, שנאמר והעורבים מביאים לו לחם ובשר[4]: **(ח) וישלח את היונה.** לסוף ז' ימים, שהרי כתיב ויחל עוד ז' ימים אחרים, מכלל זה אתה למד שאף ברחשונה הוחיל ז' ימים: **וישלח.** אין זה לשון שליחות אלא לשון שלוח, שלחה ללכת לדרכה, וכן ירחה אם קלו המים, שאם תמצא מנוח לא תשוב אליו: **(י) ויחל.** לשון המתנה, וכן לי שמעו ויחלו[5], והרבה ים במקרא: **(יא) טרף בפיה.** אומר אני שזכר היה, לכן קורהו פעמים לשון זכר ופעמים לשון נקבה, לפי שכל יונה שבמקרא לשון נקבה, כמו כיונים על אפיקי מים רוחצות[6], כיוני הגאיות כולם הומות[7], כיונה פותה[8]: **טרף.** חטף. ומדרש

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 Noach 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

1 ב"ר לג, ה 2 סנהדרין קח: 3 ב"ר שם 4 מלכים-א יז, ו 5 איוב כט, כא 6 שיר השירים ה, יב 7 יחזקאל ז, טז 8 הושע ז, יא

6 Then, after forty (more) days, Noach opened the window of the ark that he had made. 7 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.

8 (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. 9 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.

10 He waited again another seven days, and he sent out the dove from the ark again. 11 The dove returned to him in the evening, and—look!—it had a torn olive leaf in its mouth. So Noach 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 Noach 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 Noach?

b.) Above, we read that Noach'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 Noach 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 Noach 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 Noach *directly* that the flood had ended: "It had a torn olive leaf in its mouth. *So Noach 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 Noach 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 Noach 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. 30*ff*)

מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ: יב וַיִּיָּחֶל עוֹד שִׁבְעַת יָמִים אֲחֵרִים וַיְשַׁלַּח
אֶת־הַיּוֹנָה וְלֹא־יָסְפָה שׁוּב־אֵלָיו עוֹד: יג וַיְהִי בְּאַחַת וְשֵׁשׁ־
מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה בָּרִאשׁוֹן בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ חָרְבוּ הַמַּיִם מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ
וַיָּסַר נֹחַ אֶת־מִכְסֵה הַתֵּבָה וַיַּרְא וְהִנֵּה חָרְבוּ פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה:
יד וּבַחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי בְּשִׁבְעָה וְעֶשְׂרִים יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ יָבְשָׁה הָאָרֶץ: ס
[רביעי] טו וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־נֹחַ לֵאמֹר: טז צֵא מִן־הַתֵּבָה אַתָּה
וְאִשְׁתֶּךָ וּבָנֶיךָ וּנְשֵׁי־בָנֶיךָ אִתָּךְ: יז כָּל־הַחַיָּה אֲשֶׁר־אִתְּךָ
מִכָּל־בָּשָׂר בָּעוֹף וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל־הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ
הוצא [ק הַיְצֵא] אִתָּךְ וְשָׁרְצוּ בָאָרֶץ וּפָרוּ וְרָבוּ עַל־הָאָרֶץ:
יח וַיֵּצֵא־נֹחַ וּבָנָיו וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וּנְשֵׁי־בָנָיו אִתּוֹ: יט כָּל־הַחַיָּה כָּל־
הָרֶמֶשׂ וְכָל־הָעוֹף כֹּל רוֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתֵיהֶם יָצְאוּ
מִן־הַתֵּבָה: כ וַיִּבֶן נֹחַ מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה וַיִּקַּח מִכֹּל | הַבְּהֵמָה
הַטְּהוֹרָה וּמִכֹּל הָעוֹף הַטָּהוֹר וַיַּעַל עֹלֹת בַּמִּזְבֵּחַ: כא וַיָּרַח יְהוָה
אֶת־רֵיחַ הַנִּיחֹחַ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־לִבּוֹ לֹא אֹסִף לְקַלֵּל עוֹד
אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה בַּעֲבוּר הָאָדָם כִּי יֵצֶר לֵב הָאָדָם רַע מִנְּעֻרָיו
וְלֹא־אֹסִף עוֹד לְהַכּוֹת אֶת־כָּל־חַי כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי: כב עֹד
כָּל־יְמֵי הָאָרֶץ זֶרַע וְקָצִיר וְקֹר וָחֹם וְקַיִץ וָחֹרֶף וְיוֹם וָלָיְלָה

מֵעַל אַרְעָא: יב וְאוֹרִיךְ עוֹד שַׁבְעָא יוֹמִין
אָחֳרָנִין וְשַׁלַּח יַת יוֹנָה וְלָא אוֹסִיפַת לְמֵיתַב
לְוָתֵיהּ עוֹד: יג וַהֲוָה בְּשִׁית מְאָה וְחַד שְׁנִין
בְּקַדְמָאָה בְּחַד לְיַרְחָא נְגִיבוּ מַיָּא מֵעַל אַרְעָא
וַאֲעַדִי נֹחַ יַת חוֹפָאָה דְתֵיבוּתָא וַחֲזָא וְהָא
נְגִיבוּ אַפֵּי אַרְעָא: יד וּבְיַרְחָא תְּנִינָא בְּעַסְרִין
וְשַׁבְעָא יוֹמִין לְיַרְחָא יַבִּישַׁת אַרְעָא: טו וּמַלֵּיל
יְיָ עִם נֹחַ לְמֵימָר: טז פּוֹק מִן תֵּיבוּתָא אַתְּ
וְאִתְּתָךְ וּבְנָיךְ וּנְשֵׁי בְנָיךְ עִמָּךְ: יז כָּל חַיְתָא
דְעִמָּךְ מִכָּל בִּשְׂרָא בְּעוֹפָא וּבִבְעִירָא וּבְכָל
רְחֲשָׁא דְרָחֵשׁ עַל אַרְעָא אַפֵּיק עִמָּךְ
וְיִתְיַלְדוּן בְּאַרְעָא וְיִפְּשׁוּן וְיִסְגּוּן עַל אַרְעָא:
יח וּנְפַק נֹחַ וּבְנוֹהִי וְאִתְּתֵיהּ וּנְשֵׁי בְנוֹהִי עִמֵּהּ:
יט כָּל חַיְתָא כָּל רְחֲשָׁא וְכָל עוֹפָא כָּל
דְּרָחֵשׁ עַל אַרְעָא לְזַרְעַיְתְהוֹן נְפָקוּ מִן
תֵּיבוּתָא: כ וּבְנָא נֹחַ מַדְבְּחָא קֳדָם יְיָ וּנְסִיב
מִכֹּל בְּעִירָא דַכְיָא וּמִכָּל עוֹפָא דְכֵי וְאַסֵּק
עֲלָוָן עַל מַדְבְּחָא: כא וְקַבֵּל יְיָ בְּרַעֲוָא יַת
קָרְבָּנֵיהּ וַאֲמַר יְיָ בְּמֵימְרֵיהּ לָא אוֹסִיף לְמֵילַט
עוֹד יַת אַרְעָא בְּדִיל חוֹבֵי אֱנָשָׁא אֲרֵי יִצְרָא
לִבָּא דֶאֱנָשָׁא בִּישׁ מִזְּעֵירֵיהּ וְלָא אוֹסִיף עוֹד
לְמִמְחֵי יַת כָּל דְּחַי כְּמָא דַעֲבָדִית: כב עוֹד כָּל
יוֹמֵי אַרְעָא זַרְעָא וַחֲצָדָא וְקוֹרָא וְחוֹמָא

ל"ס י"ו

מגדל[1] לשון מזון, ודרשו בפיה לשון מאמר, לומר יהיו מזונותי מרורין כזית בידו של הקב"ה, ולא מתוקין כדבש בידי בשר ודם: **(יב) וייחל.** הוא לשון ויחל, שלא שזה לשון ויפעל וזה לשון ויתפעל, ויחל ויימתן, וייחל ויתמתן: **(יג) בראשון.** לרבי אליעזר הוא תשרי ולרבי יהושע הוא ניסן[2]: **חרבו.** נעשה כמין טיט, שקרמו פניה של מעלה: **(יד) בשבעה ועשרים.** ויריתן בחדש השני ביי"ז. אלו י"ח ימים שהחמה יתירה על הלבנה, שמשפט דור המבול שנה תמימה היה: **יבשה.** נעשה גריד כהלכתה: **(טז) אתה ואשתך וגו'.** אית ומשתא, כאן כתיב לכם תשמיש המטה: **(יז) הוצא.** הולא כתיב הילא קרי, הילא, לומר לכם שילמו, הולא, מה אינם רוצים לצאת הוליאם אתה: **ושרצו בארץ.** ולא בתיבה, מגיד שאף הבהמה והעוף נאסרו בתשמיש: **(יט) למשפחתיהם.** קבלו עליכם על מנת לידבק במינן: **(כ) מכל הבהמה הטהורה.** לומר, לא נוח לו לקדוש ברוך הוא להכניס מאלו ז' ז', אלא כדי

להקריב קרבן מהם[3]: **(כא) מנעריו.** מנעריו כתיב, משנוער ליצת ממעי אמו ניתן בו יצר הרע: **לא אסף. ולא אסף.** כפל הדבר לשבועה, הוא שכתוב אשר נשבעתי מעבור מי נח, ולא מלינו בה שבועה אלא זו שכפל דבריו, והיא שבועה, וכן דרשו חכמים במסכת שבועות[4]: **(כב) עוד כל ימי הארץ וגו' לא ישבתו.** ו' עתים הללו שני חדשים לכל אחד ואחד, כמו שמנינו, חלי תשרי ומרחשון וחלי כסליו, זרע, חלי כסליו ושבת וחלי שבט, קור, וכו' בשבת מלינעא[5]. **(ס"ח עוד כל ימי. כלומר תמיד, כמו עוד טומאתו בו): קור.** קשה מחורף: **חורף.** עת זרע שעוריס וקטניות בחריפין להתבשל מכר. קור הוא חלי שבט ואדר וחלי ניסן: **קיץ.** הוא זמן לקיטת תאנים, וזמן שמייבשים אותן בשדות, ושמו קיץ, כמו והלחם וקיץ לאכול המערים[6]: **חום.** הוא סוף ימות החמה, חלי אב וחלול וחלי תשרי, שהעולם חם ביותר, כמו שמנינו במסכת יומא[7], שלחי קייטא קשי מקייטא: **ויום ולילה לא ישבתו.** מכלל שמצאנו כל

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Why did God have to tell Noach 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: Noach 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, Noach reasoned that it would be preferable to stay in the ark than live in a tent. However, God told Noach to leave the ark, since He was angry with him for not praying for the generation to be saved (see *Classic Questions*, p. 41).

1 ערובין יח: 2 ר"ה יא: 3 ב"ר כו, א. לד, ט 4 דף לו. 5 דף קו: 6 שמואל-ב טז, ב 7 דף כט.

[12] *He made himself wait again for another seven days, and he sent out the dove, and it did not return to him any more.*

[13] *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.*

[14] *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 Fourth Reading

God spoke to Noach, saying: [16] *"Go out of the ark, you, your wife, your sons, and your sons' wives with you.* [17] *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."*

[18] *So Noach went out, his sons, his wife and his sons' wives with him.* [19] *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.*

[20] *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.* [21] *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.* [22] *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. 28*ff*.)

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. 34*ff*.)

לֹא יִשְׁבְּתוּ׃ ט א וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נֹחַ וְאֶת־בָּנָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם
פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמִלְאוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ׃ ב וּמוֹרַאֲכֶם וְחִתְכֶם יִהְיֶה עַל
כָּל־חַיַּת הָאָרֶץ וְעַל כָּל־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם בְּכֹל ק אֲשֶׁר תִּרְמֹשׂ
הָאֲדָמָה וּבְכָל־דְּגֵי הַיָּם בְּיֶדְכֶם נִתָּנוּ׃ ג כָּל־רֶמֶשׂ אֲשֶׁר הוּא־
חַי לָכֶם יִהְיֶה לְאָכְלָה כְּיֶרֶק עֵשֶׂב נָתַתִּי לָכֶם אֶת־כֹּל׃ ד אַךְ־
בָּשָׂר בְּנַפְשׁוֹ דָמוֹ לֹא תֹאכֵלוּ׃ ה וְאַךְ אֶת־דִּמְכֶם לְנַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם
אֶדְרֹשׁ מִיַּד כָּל־חַיָּה אֶדְרְשֶׁנּוּ וּמִיַּד הָאָדָם מִיַּד אִישׁ אָחִיו
אֶדְרֹשׁ אֶת־נֶפֶשׁ הָאָדָם׃ ו שֹׁפֵךְ דַּם הָאָדָם בָּאָדָם דָּמוֹ יִשָּׁפֵךְ
כִּי בְצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה אֶת־הָאָדָם׃ ז וְאַתֶּם פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ שִׁרְצוּ
בָאָרֶץ וּרְבוּ־בָהּ׃ ס [חמישי] ח וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־נֹחַ וְאֶל־בָּנָיו
אִתּוֹ לֵאמֹר׃ ט וַאֲנִי הִנְנִי מֵקִים אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אִתְּכֶם וְאֶת־זַרְעֲכֶם
אַחֲרֵיכֶם׃ י וְאֵת כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ הַחַיָּה אֲשֶׁר אִתְּכֶם בָּעוֹף בַּבְּהֵמָה
וְכֹל־חַיַּת הָאָרֶץ אִתְּכֶם מִכֹּל יֹצְאֵי הַתֵּבָה לְכֹל חַיַּת הָאָרֶץ׃
יא וַהֲקִמֹתִי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אִתְּכֶם וְלֹא־יִכָּרֵת כָּל־בָּשָׂר עוֹד מִמֵּי
הַמַּבּוּל וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה עוֹד מַבּוּל לְשַׁחֵת הָאָרֶץ׃ יב וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים
זֹאת אוֹת־הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר־אֲנִי נֹתֵן בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם וּבֵין כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ
חַיָּה אֲשֶׁר אִתָּכֶם לְדֹרֹת עוֹלָם׃ יג אֶת־קַשְׁתִּי נָתַתִּי בֶּעָנָן
וְהָיְתָה לְאוֹת בְּרִית בֵּינִי וּבֵין הָאָרֶץ׃ יד וְהָיָה בְּעַנְנִי עָנָן
עַל־הָאָרֶץ וְנִרְאֲתָה הַקֶּשֶׁת בֶּעָנָן׃ טו וְזָכַרְתִּי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אֲשֶׁר
בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם וּבֵין כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה בְּכָל־בָּשָׂר וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה עוֹד

וְקִיטָא וְסִיתָוָא וְיָמָם וְלֵילְיָא לָא יִבְטְלוּן׃
א וּבָרִיךְ יְיָ יָת נֹחַ וְיָת בְּנוֹהִי וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן פּוּשׁוּ
וְסְגוּ וּמְלוּ יָת אַרְעָא׃ ב וְדַחֲלַתְכוֹן וְאֵימַתְכוֹן
תְּהֵא עַל כָּל חֵיוַת אַרְעָא וְעַל כָּל עוֹפָא
דִשְׁמַיָּא בְּכֹל דִי תַרְחֵשׁ אַרְעָא וּבְכָל נוּנֵי יַמָּא
בִּיְדְכוֹן יְהוֹן מְסִירִין׃ ג כָּל רְחֵשָׁא דְּהוּא חַי
לְכוֹן יְהֵא לְמֵיכַל כִּירוֹק עִשְׂבָּא יְהָבִית לְכוֹן
יָת כּוֹלָא׃ ד בְּרַם בִּשְׂרָא בְּנַפְשֵׁיהּ דְּמֵיהּ לָא
תֵיכְלוּן׃ ה וּבְרַם יָת דְּמְכוֹן לְנַפְשָׁתֵיכוֹן אֶתְבַּע
מִיַּד כָּל חֵיתָא אֶתְבְּעִנֵּיהּ וּמִיַּד אֱנָשָׁא מִיַּד גְּבַר
דִּיְשׁוֹד יָת דְּמָא דַּאֲחוּהִי אֶתְבַּע יָת נַפְשָׁא
דֶּאֱנָשָׁא׃ ו דְּיִשּׁוֹד דְּמָא דֶּאֱנָשָׁא בְּסַהֲדִין עַל
מֵימַר דַּיָּנַיָּא דְּמֵיהּ יִתְשָׁד אֲרֵי בְּצַלְמָא דַיְיָ
עֲבַד יָת אֱנָשָׁא׃ ז וְאַתּוּן פּוּשׁוּ וְסְגוּ אִתְיַלִּידוּ
בְּאַרְעָא וּסְגוּ בָהּ׃ ח וַאֲמַר יְיָ לְנֹחַ וְלִבְנוֹהִי
עִמֵּהּ לְמֵימָר׃ ט וַאֲנָא הָא אֲנָא מֵקִים יָת קְיָמִי
עִמְּכוֹן וְעִם בְּנֵיכוֹן בַּתְרֵיכוֹן׃ י וְעִם כָּל נַפְשָׁא
חַיְתָא דְּעִמְּכוֹן בְּעוֹפָא בִּבְעִירָא וּבְכָל חֵיוַת
אַרְעָא עִמְּכוֹן מִכֹּל נָפְקֵי תֵּיבוּתָא לְכָל חֵיוַת
אַרְעָא׃ יא וַאֲקִים יָת קְיָמִי עִמְּכוֹן וְלָא יִשְׁתֵּיצֵי
כָּל בִּשְׂרָא עוֹד מֵמֵי טוֹפָנָא וְלָא יְהֵא עוֹד
טוֹפָנָא לְחַבָּלָא אַרְעָא׃ יב וַאֲמַר יְיָ דָּא אָת
קְיָמָא דִּי אֲנָא יָהֵב בֵּין מֵימְרִי וּבֵינֵיכוֹן וּבֵין כָּל
נַפְשָׁא חַיְתָא דִּי עִמְּכוֹן לְדָרֵי עָלְמָא׃ יג יָת
קַשְׁתִּי יְהָבִית בַּעֲנָנָא וּתְהֵא לְאָת קְיָם בֵּין
מֵימְרִי וּבֵין אַרְעָא׃ יד וִיהֵי בַּעֲנָנוּתִי עֲנָנָא עַל
אַרְעָא וְתִתְחֲזֵי קַשְׁתָּא בַּעֲנָנָא׃ טו וְדָכִירְנָא יָת
קְיָמִי דִּי בֵּין מֵימְרִי וּבֵינֵיכוֹן וּבֵין כָּל נַפְשָׁא

רס״י

ימות המבול, שלא שמשו המזלות, ולא ניכר בין יום ובין לילה[1]: **לא ישבתו.** לא יפסקו כל אלה מלהתנהג כסדרן: (ג) **וחתכם.** ומיומתכם, כמו תרתו חתת[2]. ומגדה, לשון חיות[3], שכל זמן שהתינוק בן יומו חי, אין אתה צריך לשומרו מן העכברים, עוג מלך הבשן אמת, צריך לשומרו מן העכברים, שנאמר ומורככם וחתכם יכיה, לימתי יכיה מורככם על החיות כל זמן שאתם חיים: (ג) **לכם יהיה לאכלה.** שלא הרשיתי לאדם הראשון בשר אלא ירק עשב, ולכם, כירק עשב שהפקרתי לאדם הראשון, נתתי לכם את כל[4]: (ד) **בשר בנפשו.** אסר לכם אבר מן החי, כלומר, כל זמן שנפשו בו לא תאכלו הבשר: **בנפשו דמו.** בעוד נפשו בו: **בשר בנפשו לא תאכלו.** הרי אבר מן החי, ואף בנפשו דמו לא תאכלו, הרי דם מן החי: (ה) **ואך את דמכם.** אף על פי שהתרתי לכם נטילת נשמה בזכאי, את דמכם אדרוש מהשופך דם עלמו: **לנפשותיכם.** אף החונק עלמו, אף על פי שלא יצא ממנו דם: **מיד כל חיה.** לפי שחטאו דור המבול, והופקרו למאכל חיות רעות לשלוט בהן, שנאמר ומשל בבהמות נדמו[5], לפיכך הוצרך להזהיר עליהן את החיות: **ומיד האדם.** מיד הכורג במיד ואין עדים, אני אדרוש: **מיד איש אחיו.** מיד שהוא מוכב לו כאח והרגו שוגג, אני אדרוש אם לא יגלה ויבקש על עונו ליהרג, שאף השוגג לריך כפרה, ואם אין עדים להייבו גלות והוא אינו נכנע, הקב"ה דורש ממנו. כמו שדרשו רבותינו והאלכיס אנה לידו, בממכת מכות[6], הקדוש ברוך הוא מזמין לפונדק אחד וכו׳: (ו) **באדם דמו ישפך.** אם יש עדים במיתתו אתם, למה, כי בצלם אלהים וגו׳: **עשה את האדם.** זה מקרא מסר, ולריך להיות עשה העושה את האדם, וכן הרבה במקרא: (ז) **ואתם פרו ורבו.** לפי פשוטו, הרשאתה לברכה וכאן לנזוי[7], ולפי מדרשו, להקים מי שאינו עוסק בפריה ורביה לשופך דמיהם: (ט) **ואני הנני.** מסכים אני עמך, שהיה נח דואג לעסוק בפריה ורביה, עד שהבטיחו הקב"ה שלא לשחת העולם עוד, וכן עשה, ובאחרונה אמר לו הנני מסכים לעשות קיום וחוזק ברית להבטחתי ואתן לך חות: (י) **חית הארץ אתכם.** הם המתהלכים עם הבריות: **מכל יצאי התיבה.** להביא שקנים ורמשים: **לכל חית הארץ.** להביא המזיקין, שאין בכלל החיה אשר אתכם, שאין הילוכן עם הבריות: (יא) **והקמתי.** אעשה קיום לבריתי, ומהו קיומו, את הקשת, כמו שמסיים והולך: (יב) **לדרת עולם.** נכתב חסר, שיש דורות שלא הוגרכו לאות, לפי שלדיקים גמורים היו, כמו דורו של חזקיהו מלך יהודה, ודורו של רבי שמעון בן יוחאי[9]: (יד) **בענני ענן.** כשתעלה ממחשבה לפעיל להביא חשך ואבדון לעולם:

1 ב״ר כה, ב. לד, יא 2 איוב ו, כא. 3 שבת קנא: 4 סנהדרין נט: 5 תהלים מט, יג 6 דף י: 7 כתובות ה. 8 יבמות סג: 9 ב״ר לה, ב

God Commands Noach To Populate the World

9 God blessed Noach and his sons, and He said to them: "(May you) be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth! [2] 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. [3] 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. [4] But, you shall not eat flesh (detached from an animal) or its blood, while it is still alive.

[5] "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."

[6] "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."

[7] "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

God (saw that Noach was afraid to have children, so He) said to Noach and to his sons (who were) with him, [9] "Look! I am setting up My covenant with you and with your seed after you, [10] 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. [11] 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."

[12] 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. [13] I have placed my rainbow in the cloud, and it will be a sign of a covenant between Myself and the earth. [14] Then, when I (will consider) causing clouds (of darkness and destruction) to come upon the earth, the rainbow will appear in the cloud, [15] 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.

הַמַּיִם לְמַבּוּל לְשַׁחֵת כָּל־בָּשָׂר: טז וְהָיְתָה הַקֶּשֶׁת בֶּעָנָן
וּרְאִיתִיהָ לִזְכֹּר בְּרִית עוֹלָם בֵּין אֱלֹהִים וּבֵין כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה
בְּכָל־בָּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר עַל־הָאָרֶץ: יז וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־נֹחַ זֹאת
אוֹת־הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר הֲקִמֹתִי בֵּינִי וּבֵין כָּל־בָּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר עַל־
הָאָרֶץ: פ (ששי) יח וַיִּהְיוּ בְנֵי־נֹחַ הַיֹּצְאִים מִן־הַתֵּבָה שֵׁם וְחָם
וָיֶפֶת וְחָם הוּא אֲבִי כְנָעַן: יט שְׁלֹשָׁה אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי־נֹחַ וּמֵאֵלֶּה
נָפְצָה כָל־הָאָרֶץ: כ וַיָּחֶל נֹחַ אִישׁ הָאֲדָמָה וַיִּטַּע כָּרֶם: כא וַיֵּשְׁתְּ
מִן־הַיַּיִן וַיִּשְׁכָּר וַיִּתְגַּל בְּתוֹךְ אָהֳלֹה: כב וַיַּרְא חָם אֲבִי כְנַעַן
אֶת עֶרְוַת אָבִיו וַיַּגֶּד לִשְׁנֵי־אֶחָיו בַּחוּץ: כג וַיִּקַּח שֵׁם וָיֶפֶת
אֶת־הַשִּׂמְלָה וַיָּשִׂימוּ עַל־שְׁכֶם שְׁנֵיהֶם וַיֵּלְכוּ אֲחֹרַנִּית וַיְכַסּוּ
אֶת עֶרְוַת אֲבִיהֶם וּפְנֵיהֶם אֲחֹרַנִּית וְעֶרְוַת אֲבִיהֶם לֹא רָאוּ:

חַיְתָא בְּכָל בִּשְׂרָא וְלָא יְהוֹן עוֹד מַיָּא לְטוֹפָנָא
לְחַבָּלָא כָּל בִּשְׂרָא: טז וּתְהֵי קַשְׁתָּא בַּעֲנָנָא
וְאֶחֱזִינֵהּ לְמִדְכַּר קְיָם עָלָם בֵּין מֵימְרָא דַיָי וּבֵין
כָּל נַפְשָׁא חַיְתָא בְּכָל בִּשְׂרָא דִי עַל אַרְעָא:
יז וַאֲמַר יְיָ לְנֹחַ דָּא אָת קְיָמָא דִי אֲקִימִית בֵּין
מֵימְרִי וּבֵין כָּל בִּשְׂרָא דִי עַל אַרְעָא: יח וַהֲווֹ
בְנֵי נֹחַ דִי נְפָקוּ מִן תֵּיבוּתָא שֵׁם וְחָם וְיָפֶת
וְחָם הוּא אֲבוּהִי דִכְנָעַן: יט תְּלָתָא אִלֵּין בְּנֵי
נֹחַ וּמֵאִלֵּין אִתְבַּדָּרוּ כָּל אַרְעָא: כ וְשָׁרֵי נֹחַ
גְּבַר פָּלַח בְּאַרְעָא וּנְצִיב כַּרְמָא: כא וּשְׁתִי מִן
חַמְרָא וּרְוִי וְאִתְגְּלִי בְּגוֹ מַשְׁכְּנֵיהּ: כב וַחֲזָא
חָם אֲבוּהִי דִכְנַעַן יַת עֶרְיְתָא דַאֲבוּהִי וְחַוִי
לְתַרִין אַחוֹהִי בְּשׁוּקָא: כג וּנְסִיב שֵׁם וְיָפֶת יַת
כְּסוּתָא וְשַׁוִיאוּ עַל כְּתַף תַּרְוֵיהוֹן וַאֲזָלוּ מְחַזְּרִין
וְכַסִיאוּ יַת עֶרְיְתָא דַאֲבוּהוֹן וְאַפֵּיהוֹן מְחַזְּרִין

רס"י

(טז) **בין אלהים ובין כל נפש חיה**. בין מדת הדין של מעלה וביניכם, שהיה לו לכתוב ביני ובין כל נפש חיה. ללמד זכות מדרשו, כשתבא מדת הדין לקטרג עליכם (לחייב אתכם), תני רואה את הקשת ונזכר: (יז) **זאת אות הברית**. הרואהו הקשת ומאמר לו, הרי האות שאמרתי: (יח) **וחם הוא אבי כנען**. למה הזכיר לומר כאן, לפי שהפרשה עסוקה ובאה בשבחותו של נח, שקלקל בה חס ושלום ידו ונתקלל כנען, ועדיין לא כתב תולדות חם ולא ידענו שבנען בנו, לפיכך הזכירו לומר כאן וחם הוא אבי כנען: (כ) **ויחל**. עשה עצמו חולין[1], שהיה לו לעסוק תחלה בנטיעה אחרת: **איש האדמה**. אדוני האדמה, כמו איש נעמי[2]: **ויטע כרם**. כשנכנס לתיבה הכניס עמו זמורות ויחורי תאנים[3]: (כא) **ויתגל**. אהלה. חלכה כתיב, רמז לי שבטים שנקראו על שם שומרון שנקראת אהלה, שגלו על עסקי היין, שנאמר בשותים במזרקי יין[4]: **ויתגל**. לשון ויתפעל: (כב) **וירא חם אבי כנען**. יש מרבותינו אומרים כנען ראה וסגיד לאביו[5], לכך הוזכר על הדבר ותקללו: **וירא את ערות אביו**. יש אומרים סרסו ויש אומרים רבעו[6]: (כג) **ויקח שם ויפת**. אין כתיב ויקמו אלא ויקח[7], לימד על שם שנתאמץ במלוה יותר מיפת, לכך זכו בניו לטלית של ציצית, ויפת זכה לקבורה לבניו, שנאמר יתן לגוג מקום שם קבר[8]. ומה שזכה את אביו, שנאמר בזרעו כן יעשה מלך אשור את שבי מצרים ואת גלות כוש נערים וזקנים ערום ויחף וחשופי שת וגו'[9]: **ופניהם אחורנית**. למה נאמר פעם שניה, מלמד שכשקרבו אללו והולרכו להפוך עלמם

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."*

The source of *Rashi's* comment is from the *Midrash: "There were two 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).

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 uncleanliness of others. A pure person sees only that his fellow is in need of help.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 10, p. 24*ff.*)

1 ב"ר לו, ג 2 רות א, ג 3 ב"ר שם 4 עמוס ו, ו 5 ב"ר לו, ז 6 סנהדרין ע. 7 ב"ר לו, ו 8 יחזקאל לט, יא 9 ישע' כ, ד

among all flesh, and the water will no longer become a flood to destroy all flesh. [16] *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."*

[17] *(Showing him a rainbow,) God said to Noach: "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

The sons of Noach who came out of the ark were Sheim, Cham, and Yafes. Cham was the father of Cana'an. [19] *These three were the sons of Noach. From them, the entire earth was populated.*

[20] *Noach, a master of the soil, degraded himself by planting a vineyard (first of all).* [21] *He drank of the wine, became drunk, and uncovered himself in his tent.* [22] *(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.*

[23] *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 Noach. 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. 31*ff.*)

Sparks of Chasidus

The Post-Flood Era

Chasidic 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:

- Noach 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 Noach'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. 75*ff.*; *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p.51*ff.*)

כד וַיִּקַ֥ץ נֹ֖חַ מִיֵּינ֑וֹ וַיֵּ֕דַע אֵ֚ת אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂ֣ה לֹ֔ו בְּנֹ֖ו הַקָּטֹֽן׃
כה וַיֹּ֕אמֶר אָר֖וּר כְּנָ֑עַן עֶ֥בֶד עֲבָדִ֖ים יִהְיֶ֥ה לְאֶחָֽיו׃ כו וַיֹּ֗אמֶר בָּר֣וּךְ
יְהוָ֔ה אֱלֹהֵ֖י שֵׁ֑ם וִיהִ֥י כְנַ֖עַן עֶ֥בֶד לָֽמֹו׃ כז יַפְתְּ֤ אֱלֹהִים֙ לְיֶ֣פֶת
וְיִשְׁכֹּ֖ן בְּאָהֳלֵ֣י שֵׁ֑ם וִיהִ֥י כְנַ֖עַן עֶ֥בֶד לָֽמֹו׃ כח וַיְחִי־נֹ֕חַ אַחַ֖ר
הַמַּבּ֑וּל שְׁלֹ֥שׁ מֵא֖וֹת שָׁנָ֥ה וַחֲמִשִּׁ֖ים שָׁנָֽה׃ כט וַיִּהְי֣וּ כָל־יְמֵי־נֹ֔חַ
תְּשַׁ֥ע מֵא֖וֹת שָׁנָ֣ה וַחֲמִשִּׁ֣ים שָׁנָ֑ה וַיָּמֹֽת׃ פ י א וְאֵ֖לֶּה תֹּולְדֹ֥ת
בְּנֵי־נֹ֖חַ שֵׁ֣ם חָ֑ם וָיֶ֖פֶת וַיִּוָּלְד֥וּ לָהֶ֖ם בָּנִ֣ים אַחַ֔ר הַמַּבּֽוּל׃ ב בְּנֵ֣י
יֶ֔פֶת גֹּ֖מֶר וּמָג֣וֹג וּמָדַ֑י וְיָוָ֥ן וְתֻבַ֖ל וּמֶ֥שֶׁךְ וְתִירָֽס׃ ג וּבְנֵ֥י גֹמֶ֖ר
אַשְׁכְּנַ֣ז וְרִיפַ֑ת וְתֹגַרְמָֽה׃ ד וּבְנֵ֣י יָוָ֔ן אֱלִישָׁ֥ה וְתַרְשִׁ֖ישָׁ כִּתִּ֥ים
וְדֹדָנִֽים׃ ה מֵאֵ֖לֶּה נִפְרְד֣וּ אִיֵּ֣י הַגֹּויִ֔ם בְּאַרְצֹתָ֑ם אִ֣ישׁ לִלְשֹׁנֹ֔ו
לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָ֖ם בְּגֹויֵהֶֽם׃ ו וּבְנֵ֥י חָ֖ם כּ֣וּשׁ וּמִצְרַ֑יִם וּפ֖וּט וּכְנָֽעַן׃
ז וּבְנֵ֣י כ֔וּשׁ סְבָ֥א וַחֲוִילָ֖ה וְסַבְתָּ֑ה וְרַעְמָ֖ה וְסַבְתְּכָ֔א וּבְנֵ֥י רַעְמָ֖ה
שְׁבָ֥א וּדְדָֽן׃ ח וְכ֣וּשׁ יָלַ֔ד אֶת־נִמְרֹ֑ד ה֣וּא הֵחֵ֔ל לִהְיֹ֖ות גִּבֹּ֥ר
בָּאָֽרֶץ׃ ט ה֣וּא־הָיָ֤ה גִבֹּר־צַ֙יִד֙ לִפְנֵ֣י יְהוָ֔ה עַל־כֵּ֗ן יֵאָמַ֕ר כְּנִמְרֹ֖ד
גִּבֹּ֣ור צַ֑יִד לִפְנֵ֖י יְהוָֽה׃ י וַתְּהִ֣י רֵאשִׁ֣ית מַמְלַכְתֹּ֗ו בָּבֶ֛ל וְאֶ֥רֶךְ
וְאַכַּ֖ד וְכַלְנֵ֑ה בְּאֶ֥רֶץ שִׁנְעָֽר׃ יא מִן־הָאָ֣רֶץ הַהִ֔וא יָצָ֖א אַשּׁ֑וּר
וַיִּבֶן֙ אֶת־נִינְוֵ֔ה וְאֶת־רְחֹבֹ֥ת עִ֖יר וְאֶת־כָּלַֽח׃ יב וְאֶת־רֶ֔סֶן בֵּ֥ין
נִינְוֵ֖ה וּבֵ֣ין כָּלַ֑ח הִ֥וא הָעִ֖יר הַגְּדֹלָֽה׃ יג וּמִצְרַ֗יִם יָלַ֛ד אֶת־לוּדִ֥ים
וְאֶת־עֲנָמִ֖ים וְאֶת־לְהָבִ֑ים וְאֶת־נַפְתֻּחִֽים׃ יד וְאֶת־פַּתְרֻסִּ֗ים

וְעֶרְיָתָ֣א דַאֲבוּהִ֔ון לָ֥א חֲזֹ֖ו׃ כד וְאִתְּעַר֥ נֹחַ֙
מֵחַמְרֵ֔הּ וְיָדַ֕ע יַ֚ת דִּ֣י עֲבַ֣ד לֵ֔יהּ בְּרֵ֖הּ זְעֵיר֑א׃
כה וַאֲמַ֕ר לִיט֥ כְּנָ֖עַן עַבְדָ֣א פָלַ֔ח יְהֵ֥א לַאֲחוֹהִֽי׃
כו וַאֲמַ֕ר בְּרִ֥יךְ יְיָ֖ אֱלָהֵ֣יהּ דְּשֵׁ֑ם וִיהֵ֥י כְנַ֖עַן
עַבְדָ֥א לְהֹֽון׃ כז יַפְתֵּ֤י יְיָ֙ לְיֶ֣פֶת וְיִשְׁרֵ֣י שְׁכִינְתֵּ֔יהּ
בְּמַשְׁכְּנֵ֖יהּ דְּשֵׁ֑ם וִיהֵ֥י כְנַ֖עַן עַבְדָ֥א לְהֹֽון׃
כח וְחַיָּ֥א נֹחַ֙ בָּתַ֣ר טוּפָנָ֔א תְּלַ֥ת מְאָ֖ה וְחַמְשִׁ֣ין
שְׁנִ֑ין׃ כט וַהֲוֹ֥ו כָּל֙ יוֹמֵ֣י נֹחַ֔ תְּשַׁ֥ע מְאָ֖ה וְחַמְשִׁ֣ין
שְׁנִ֑ין וּמִית׃ א וְאִלֵּ֗ין תּוֹלְדַ֛ת בְּנֵ֥י נֹחַ֖ שֵׁ֣ם חָ֑ם
וְיָפֶ֖ת וְאִתְיְלִ֥ידוּ לְהֹ֖ון בְּנִ֥ין בָּתַ֖ר טוּפָנָֽא׃ ב בְּנֵ֣י
יֶ֔פֶת גּוֹמַ֖ר וּמָגּ֣וֹג וּמָדַ֑י וְיָוָ֥ן וְתוּבָ֖ל וּמֶשֶׁ֥ךְ
וְתִירָֽס׃ ג וּבְנֵ֥י גּוֹמַ֖ר אַשְׁכְּנַ֣ז וְרִיפַ֑ת וְתוֹגַרְמָֽה׃
ד וּבְנֵ֣י יָוָ֔ן אֱלִישָׁ֥ה וְתַרְשִׁ֖ישָׁ כִּתִּ֥ים וְדוֹדָנִֽים׃
ה מֵאִלֵּ֗ין אִתְפָּרְשׁ֛וּ נַגְוָ֥ת עַמְמַ֖יָּא בְּאַרְעָתְהֹ֑ון
גְּבַ֕ר לְלִישָׁנֵ֖יהּ לְזַרְעַיָּתְהֹ֑ון בְּעַמְמֵיהֹֽון׃ ו וּבְנֵ֥י חָ֖ם
כּ֣וּשׁ וּמִצְרַ֑יִם וּפ֖וּט וּכְנָֽעַן׃ ז וּבְנֵ֣י כ֔וּשׁ סְבָ֥א
וַחֲוִילָ֖ה וְסַבְתָּ֑ה וְרַעְמָ֖ה וְסַבְתְּכָ֔א וּבְנֵ֥י רַעְמָ֖ה
שְׁבָ֥א וּדְדָֽן׃ ח וְכ֣וּשׁ אוֹלִ֔יד יַ֚ת נִמְרֹ֔וד הוּא
שָׁרֵ֥י לְמֶהֱוֵ֖י גִּבַּ֣ר תַּקִּ֑יף בְּאַרְעָֽא׃ ט הוּא֙ הֲוָ֣ה
גִּבַּ֣ר תַּקִּ֔יף קֳדָ֖ם יְיָ֑ עַל֩ כֵּ֨ן יִתְאֲמַ֜ר כְּנִמְרֹ֗וד
גִּבַּ֣ר תַּקִּ֔יף קֳדָ֖ם יְיָ֑ ׀ וַהֲוָ֣ה רֵישׁ֙ מַלְכוּתֵ֔יהּ
בָּבֶ֖ל וְאֶ֥רֶךְ וְאַכַּ֖ד וְכַלְנֵ֑ה בְּאַרְעָ֥א דְבָבֶֽל׃ יא מִן
אַרְעָ֣א הַהִ֔יא נְפַ֖ק אָתּ֣וּרָאָ֑ה וּבְנָ֞ה יַ֣ת נִינְוֵ֗ה וְיַ֛ת
רְחוֹבוֹת֙ קִרְתָּ֔א וְיַ֖ת כָּלַֽח׃ יב וְיַ֣ת רֶסֶ֔ן בֵּ֥ין נִינְוֵ֖ה
וּבֵ֣ין כָּלַ֑ח הִיא֙ קִרְתָּ֣א רַבְתָּ֔א׃ יג וּמִצְרַ֗יִם
אוֹלִ֛יד יַ֥ת לוּדָאֵ֖י וְיַ֣ת עֲנָמָאֵ֑י וְיַ֖ת לְהָבָאֵ֥י וְיַ֛ת
נַפְתּוּחָאֵ֖י׃ יד וְיַ֣ת פַּתְרוּסָאֵ֑י וְיַ֖ת כַּסְלוּחָאֵ֥י דִּי

לע״ז

לכסותו, כפכו פניהם מחוריות: (כד) **בנו הקטן**. כפסול וכבזוי, כמו כנה קטן נתתיך בגויים בזוי[1]: (כה) **ארור כנען**. מתה גרמת לי שלא תוליד בן רביעי מחר לשמשני, תרור בנך רביעי להיות משמש את זרעם של אחיו הגדולים, שכועסו עליהם טורח עבודתי מעתה. ומה ראה חם שקרסו, אמר לכם לאחיו, מדם הרשון שני בניו היו לו, והרג זה את זה בשביל ירושת העולם, ומביניו יש לו ג׳ בניו ועודנו מבקש בן רביעי: (כו) **ברוך ה׳ אלהי שם**. שעתיד לשמור הבטחתו לזרעו לתת להם את ארץ כנען: **ויהי**. להם כנען למס עובד: (כז) **יפת אלהים ליפת**. מתורגם יפת ירחיב: **וישכון באהלי שם**. ישרה שכינתו ביזרעאל. ומדרש חכמים[2], אף על פי שיפת אלהים ליפת, שבנה כורש שהיה מבני

יפת בית שני, לא שרתה בו שכינה, והיכן שרתה, במקדש ראשון שבנה שלמה שהיה מבני שם: **ויהי כנען עבד**. אף משיגלו בני שם, ימכרו להם עבדים מבני כנען: (ג) **ותירס**. זו פרס[3]: (ח) **להיות גבור**. להמריד כל העולם על הקדוש ברוך הוא בשעת דור הפלגה: (ט) **גבור ציד**. לד דעתן של בריות בפיו, ומטעין למרוד במקום: **לפני ה׳**. מתכוין להקניטו על פניו: **על כן יאמר**. על כל חדש מרשיע בעזות פניס, יודע רבונו ומתכוין למרוד בו, יאמר, זה, כנמרוד גבור ליד[4]: (יא) **מן הארץ**. כיון שראה אשור את בניו שומעין לנמרוד, ומורדין במקום גבוה כמגדל, יצא מתוכם[5]: (יב) **העיר הגדולה**. היא ניניה, שנאמר ונינוה היתה עיר גדולה לאלהים[6]: (יג) **להבים**. שפניהם דומים ללהב: (יד) **פתרוסים**

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **How old was Noach 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 Noach, 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).

1 ירמי׳ מט, טו 2 ב״ר לז, ח 3 ב״ר לז, א 4 שם, ב 5 שם, ד 6 יונה ג, ג

[24] *Noach woke up from his wine, and he realized what his youngest son had done to him.* [25] *He said, "Cursed be Cana'an! He shall be a slave among slaves to his brethren!"*

[26] *He said, "Blessed be God, the God of Sheim, and may Cana'an be a (subjugated) slave to them!* [27] *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)!"*

[28] *Noach lived three hundred and fifty years after the Flood.* [29] *Noach lived a total of nine hundred and fifty years, and he died.*

The Descendants of Noach

10 *These are the offspring of the sons of Noach: Sheim, Cham, and Yafes. Sons were born to them after the Flood.*

[2] *The sons of Yafes were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Yavan, Tuval, Meshech and Tiras.*

[3] *The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Rifas and Togarmah.*

[4] *The sons of Yavan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kitim, and Dodanim.* [5] *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.*

[6] *The sons of Cham were Kush, Mitzrayim, Poot and Cana'an.*

[7] *The sons of Kush were Seva, Chavilah, Savtah, Ramah and Savtecha.*

The sons of Ramah were Sheva and Dedan.

[8] *Cush fathered Nimrod. He started to be a rebel (against God) in the land.* [9] *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."* [10] *The beginning of his kingdom was Bavel, Erech, Akad and Kalneih, in the land of Shinar.* [11] *Ashur left that land (due to Nimrod), and he built Ninveih, Rechovos-Ir, Kalach,* [12] *and Resen, between Ninvei—which is the great city—and Kalach.*

[13] *Mitzrayim fathered Ludim, Anamim, Lehavim, Naftuchim,* [14] *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 that 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. 25*ff.*)

וְאֶת־כַּסְלֻחִים אֲשֶׁר יָצְאוּ מִשָּׁם פְּלִשְׁתִּים וְאֶת־כַּפְתֹרִים: ס
טו וּכְנַעַן יָלַד אֶת־צִידֹן בְּכֹרוֹ וְאֶת־חֵת: טז וְאֶת־הַיְבוּסִי וְאֶת־
הָאֱמֹרִי וְאֶת הַגִּרְגָּשִׁי: יז וְאֶת־הַחִוִּי וְאֶת־הָעַרְקִי וְאֶת־הַסִּינִי:
יח וְאֶת־הָאַרְוָדִי וְאֶת־הַצְּמָרִי וְאֶת־הַחֲמָתִי וְאַחַר נָפֹצוּ
מִשְׁפְּחוֹת הַכְּנַעֲנִי: יט וַיְהִי גְּבוּל הַכְּנַעֲנִי מִצִּידֹן בְּאֲכָה גְּרָרָה
עַד־עַזָּה בְּאֲכָה סְדֹמָה וַעֲמֹרָה וְאַדְמָה וּצְבֹיִם עַד־לָשַׁע:
כ אֵלֶּה בְנֵי־חָם לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָם לִלְשֹׁנֹתָם בְּאַרְצֹתָם בְּגוֹיֵהֶם: ס
כא וּלְשֵׁם יֻלַּד גַּם־הוּא אֲבִי כָּל־בְּנֵי־עֵבֶר אֲחִי יֶפֶת הַגָּדוֹל:
כב בְּנֵי שֵׁם עֵילָם וְאַשּׁוּר וְאַרְפַּכְשַׁד וְלוּד וַאֲרָם: כג וּבְנֵי אֲרָם
עוּץ וְחוּל וְגֶתֶר וָמָשׁ: כד וְאַרְפַּכְשַׁד יָלַד אֶת־שֶׁלַח וְשֶׁלַח יָלַד
אֶת־עֵבֶר: כה וּלְעֵבֶר יֻלַּד שְׁנֵי בָנִים שֵׁם הָאֶחָד פֶּלֶג כִּי בְיָמָיו
נִפְלְגָה הָאָרֶץ וְשֵׁם אָחִיו יָקְטָן: כו וְיָקְטָן יָלַד אֶת־אַלְמוֹדָד
וְאֶת־שֶׁלֶף וְאֶת־חֲצַרְמָוֶת וְאֶת־יָרַח: כז וְאֶת־הֲדוֹרָם וְאֶת־
אוּזָל וְאֶת־דִּקְלָה: כח וְאֶת־עוֹבָל וְאֶת־אֲבִימָאֵל וְאֶת־שְׁבָא:
כט וְאֶת־אוֹפִר וְאֶת־חֲוִילָה וְאֶת־יוֹבָב כָּל־אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי יָקְטָן:
ל וַיְהִי מוֹשָׁבָם מִמֵּשָׁא בְּאֲכָה סְפָרָה הַר הַקֶּדֶם: לא אֵלֶּה
בְנֵי־שֵׁם לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָם לִלְשֹׁנֹתָם בְּאַרְצֹתָם לְגוֹיֵהֶם: לב אֵלֶּה
מִשְׁפְּחֹת בְּנֵי־נֹחַ לְתוֹלְדֹתָם בְּגוֹיֵהֶם וּמֵאֵלֶּה נִפְרְדוּ הַגּוֹיִם
בָּאָרֶץ אַחַר הַמַּבּוּל: פ יא א [שביעי] וַיְהִי כָל־הָאָרֶץ שָׂפָה אֶחָת
וּדְבָרִים אֲחָדִים: ב וַיְהִי בְּנָסְעָם מִקֶּדֶם וַיִּמְצְאוּ בִקְעָה בְּאֶרֶץ
שִׁנְעָר וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם: ג וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל־רֵעֵהוּ הָבָה נִלְבְּנָה

נִפָּקוּ מִתַּמָּן פְּלִשְׁתָּאֵי וְיַת קַפּוּטְקָאֵי: טו וּכְנַעַן
אוֹלִיד יַת צִידוֹן בּוּכְרֵיהּ וְיַת חֵת: טז וְיַת
יְבוּסָאֵי וְיַת אֱמוֹרָאֵי וְיַת גִּרְגָּשָׁאֵי: יז וְיַת חִוָּאֵי
וְיַת עַרְקָאֵי וְיַת אֲנַתּוֹסָאֵי: יח וְיַת אַרְוָדָאֵי וְיַת
צְמָרָאֵי וְיַת חֲמָתָאֵי וּבָתַר כֵּן אִתְבַּדָּרוּ עַרְעָיַת
כְּנַעֲנָאֵי: יט וַהֲוָה תְּחוּם כְּנַעֲנָאָה מִצִּידוֹן מָטֵי
לְגֶרָר עַד עַזָּה מָטֵי לְסְדוֹם וַעֲמוֹרָה וְאַדְמָה
וּצְבוֹיִם עַד לָשַׁע: כ אִלֵּין בְּנֵי חָם לְזַרְעֲיָתְהוֹן
לְלִישָׁנְהוֹן בְּאַרְעָתְהוֹן בְּעַמְמֵיהוֹן: כא וּלְשֵׁם
אִתְיְלִיד אַף הוּא אֲבוּהוֹן דְּכָל בְּנֵי עֵבֶר אֲחוּהִי
דְּיֶפֶת רַבָּא: כב בְּנֵי שֵׁם עֵילָם וְאַשּׁוּר
וְאַרְפַּכְשַׁד וְלוּד וַאֲרָם: כג וּבְנֵי אֲרָם עוּץ וְחוּל
וְגֶתֶר וָמַשׁ: כד וְאַרְפַּכְשַׁד אוֹלִיד יַת שֶׁלַח
וְשֶׁלַח אוֹלִיד יַת עֵבֶר: כה וּלְעֵבֶר אִתְיְלִידוּ
תְּרֵין בְּנִין שׁוּם חַד פֶּלֶג אֲרֵי בְּיוֹמוֹהִי
אִתְפְּלִיגַת אַרְעָא וְשׁוּם אֲחוּהִי יָקְטָן: כו וְיָקְטָן
אוֹלִיד יַת אַלְמוֹדָד וְיַת שֶׁלֶף וְיַת חֲצַרְמָוֶת וְיַת
יָרַח: כז וְיַת הֲדוֹרָם וְיַת אוּזָל וְיַת דִּקְלָה:
כח וְיַת עוֹבָל וְיַת אֲבִימָאֵל וְיַת שְׁבָא: כט וְיַת
אוֹפִיר וְיַת חֲוִילָה וְיַת יוֹבָב כָּל אִלֵּין בְּנֵי יָקְטָן:
ל וַהֲוָה מוֹתְבָנְהוֹן מִמֵּשָׁא מָטֵי לְסַפַּר טוּר
מַדִּינְחָא: לא אִלֵּין בְּנֵי שֵׁם לְזַרְעֲיָתְהוֹן
לְלִישָׁנְהוֹן בְּאַרְעָתְהוֹן בְּעַמְמֵיהוֹן: לב אִלֵּין
זַרְעֲיַת בְּנֵי נֹחַ לְתוּלְדָתְהוֹן בְּעַמְמֵיהוֹן וּמֵאִלֵּין
אִתְפָּרְשׁוּ עַמְמַיָּא בְּאַרְעָא בָּתַר טוֹפָנָא:
א וַהֲוָה כָל אַרְעָא לִישָׁן חַד וּמַמְלַל חָד: ב וַהֲוָה
בְּמִטַּלְהוֹן בְּקַדְמֵיתָא וְאַשְׁכָּחוּ בִקְעָתָא
בְּאַרְעָא דְבָבֶל וְיַתִּיבוּ תַמָּן: ג וַאֲמָרוּ גְּבַר
לְחַבְרֵהּ הָבוּ נִרְמֵי לִבְנִין וְנִשְׂרְפִנּוּן בְּנוּרָא

רס"י

ואת כסלוחים אשר יצאו משם פלשתים. מצריים ילדו, שהיו פתרוסים וכסלוחים מחליפין משכב נשותיהם הלו ללאו, וילדו מהם פלשתים: (יח) **ואחר נפצו.** מלכי נפולו משפחות הכנעני: (יט) **גבול.** סוף תרגומו. כל גדול לשון סוף וקצה: **באכה.** שם דגר. ולי נראה כאדם האומר לחבירו, גדול זה מגיע עד מאיר תצא לגבול פלוני: (כ) **ללשונותם בארצותם.** אף על פי שנחלקו ללשונות ולארצות, כולם בני חם הם: (כא) **אבי כל בני עבר.** הגיהר, היה שם: **אחי יפת הגדול.** ליני יודע אם יפת הגדול, אם שם, כשהוא אומר שם בן מאת שנה וגו' שניתים אחר המבול, הוי אומר יפת הגדול, שהרי בן ת"ק שנה היה גם כשהתחיל להוליד, והמבול היה בשנת שם מאות שנה, מלמד שהגדול בניהו היה בן מאה שנה, ושם לא הגיע למאה עד שניתים אחר המבול: **אחי יפת.** ולא אחי חם, שהלו שניהם כבדו את אביהם, וזה בזהו: (כה) **נפלגה.** נתבלבלו הלשונות, ונפולו מן הבבלה, ונתפלגו בכל העולם, למדנו שהיה עבר נביא, שקרא שם בנו על שם העתיד. ומניהו בסדר עולם[1] לכוש, וכוש לפוט, ופוט לכנען: **הבה.** הזמינו עלמכם. כל הבה לשון הזמנה שבסוף ימיו נתפלגו, שאם תאמר בתחלת ימיו, הרי יקטן אחיו לעיר ממנו, והוליד כמה משפחות קודם לכן, שנאמר ויקטן ילד וגו', ואחר כך ויהי כל הארץ וגו', ואם תאמר בחמשע ימיו, לא נא הכתוב לספור אלא לפרש, הא למדת, שבשנת מות פלג נתפלגו: **יקטן.** שהיה עניו ומקטין עלמו, לכך זכה להעמיד כל המשפחות הללו: (כו) **חצרמות.** על שם מקומו, דברי אגדה[2]: (ל) **שפה אחת.** לשון הקודש: **ודברים אחדים.** הלו בעלה אחת ואמרו, לא כל היעלו עיבור לו את העליונים, נעלה לרקיע ונעשה עמו מלחמה. דבר אחר, על יחידו של עולם. דבר אחר ודברים אחדים, (ס"ת דבריס חדיס) אמרו אחת לאלף ותרנ"ו שניס ברקיע מתמוטט, כשם שעשה בימי המבול, בואו ונעשה לו סמוכות[3]: (ג) **בנסעם מקדם.** שהיו יוצאים שם, כדכתיב למעלה ויהי מוסעם וגו' כר הקדם, ונסעו משם לתור להם מקום להחזיק את כלם, ולא מצאו אלא שנער: (ג) **איש אל רעהו.** לומר לחומר, מלריס לכוש, וכוש לפוט, ופוט לכנען: **הבה.** הזמינו עלמכם. כל הבה לשון הזמנה

1 פ"א 2 ב"ר לז, ח 3 שם לח, ו

15 *Cana'an fathered Tzidon—his firstborn—and Cheis,* 16 *the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites,* 17 *the Chivites, the Arkites, the Sinites,* 18 *the Arvadites, the Tzemarites and the Chamasites. From them, the families of the Cana'anites were dispersed.* 19 *The border of the Cana'anites was from Tzidon as you come to Gerar, as far as Aza reaching Sodom, Amorah, Admah and Tzevoiyim, until Lasha.*

20 *The (above) are the descendants of Cham according to their families, and their languages, by their lands and their nations.*

21 *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.*

22 *The sons of Sheim were Eilam, Ashur, Arpachshad, Lud and Aram.*

23 *The sons of Aram were Utz, Chul, Geser and Mash.*

24 *Arpachshad fathered Shalach, and Shelach fathered Eiver.*

25 *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.*

26 *Yaktan fathered Almodad, Shalef, Chatzarmaves, Yarach,* 27 *Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah,* 28 *Oval, Avima'eil, Sheva,* 29 *Ofir, Chavilah and Yovav. All these were the sons of Yaktan.* 30 *Their place of settlement extended from Meisha, towards Sefar, the mountain of the east.*

31 *The (above) are the sons of Sheim according to their families, and their languages, by their lands and their nations.*

32 *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 Seventh Reading

The whole earth spoke one language (Hebrew), and had a united cause (against God). 2 *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.*

3 *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

Why was the "Generation of Dispersion," who built the Tower of Bavel, 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.*)

לִבֵנִים וְנִשְׂרְפָה לִשְׂרֵפָה וַתִּהְיֶ֤ה לָהֶם֙ הַלְּבֵנָ֣ה לְאָ֔בֶן וְהַחֵמָ֖ר
הָיָ֣ה לָהֶ֑ם לַחֹֽמֶר׃ ד וַיֹּאמְר֗וּ הָבָ֤ה | נִבְנֶה־לָּ֙נוּ֙ עִ֣יר וּמִגְדָּ֔ל
וְרֹאשׁ֖וֹ בַּשָּׁמַ֑יִם וְנַֽעֲשֶׂה־לָּ֙נוּ֙ שֵׁ֔ם פֶּן־נָפ֖וּץ עַל־פְּנֵ֥י כָל־הָאָֽרֶץ׃
ה וַיֵּ֣רֶד יְהוָ֔ה לִרְאֹ֖ת אֶת־הָעִ֑יר וְאֶת־הַמִּגְדָּ֕ל אֲשֶׁ֥ר בָּנ֖וּ בְּנֵ֥י
הָאָדָֽם׃ ו וַיֹּ֣אמֶר יְהוָ֔ה הֵ֚ן עַ֣ם אֶחָ֔ד וְשָׂפָ֥ה אַחַ֖ת לְכֻלָּ֑ם וְזֶ֣ה
הַחִלָּ֗ם לַעֲשׂ֔וֹת וְעַתָּ֕ה לֹֽא־יִבָּצֵ֥ר מֵהֶ֖ם כֹּ֣ל אֲשֶׁר־יָזְמ֑וּ לַעֲשֽׂוֹת׃
ז הָבָ֣ה נֵרְדָ֔ה וְנָבְלָ֥ה שָׁ֖ם שְׂפָתָ֑ם אֲשֶׁ֥ר לֹֽא־יִשְׁמְע֖וּ אִ֥ישׁ שְׂפַ֖ת
רֵעֵֽהוּ׃ ח וַיָּפֶץ֩ יְהוָ֨ה אֹתָ֜ם מִשָּׁ֗ם עַל־פְּנֵ֤י כָל־הָאָ֙רֶץ֙ וַיַּחְדְּל֔וּ
לִבְנֹ֖ת הָעִֽיר׃ ט עַל־כֵּ֛ן קָרָ֥א שְׁמָ֖הּ בָּבֶ֑ל כִּי־שָׁ֣ם בָּלַ֔ל יְהוָ֖ה
שְׂפַ֣ת כָּל־הָאָ֑רֶץ וּמִשָּׁ֣ם הֱפִיצָ֔ם יְהוָ֖ה עַל־פְּנֵ֥י כָל־הָאָֽרֶץ׃ פ
י אֵ֚לֶּה תּוֹלְדֹ֣ת שֵׁ֔ם שֵׁם֙ בֶּן־מְאַ֣ת שָׁנָ֔ה וַיּ֥וֹלֶד אֶת־אַרְפַּכְשַׁ֖ד
שְׁנָתַ֑יִם אַחַ֖ר הַמַּבּֽוּל׃ יא וַיְחִי־שֵׁ֕ם אַחֲרֵ֥י הוֹלִיד֖וֹ אֶת־אַרְפַּכְשָׁ֑ד
חֲמֵ֤שׁ מֵאוֹת֙ שָׁנָ֔ה וַיּ֥וֹלֶד בָּנִ֖ים וּבָנֽוֹת׃ ס יב וְאַרְפַּכְשַׁ֕ד חַ֥י חֲמֵ֖שׁ
וּשְׁלֹשִׁ֣ים שָׁנָ֑ה וַיּ֖וֹלֶד אֶת־שָֽׁלַח׃ יג וַיְחִ֣י אַרְפַּכְשַׁ֗ד אַחֲרֵי֙ הוֹלִיד֣וֹ
אֶת־שֶׁ֔לַח שָׁלֹ֥שׁ שָׁנִ֖ים וְאַרְבַּ֣ע מֵא֑וֹת שָׁנָ֔ה וַיּ֥וֹלֶד בָּנִ֖ים וּבָנֽוֹת׃
ס יד וְשֶׁ֕לַח חַ֥י שְׁלֹשִׁ֖ים שָׁנָ֑ה וַיּ֖וֹלֶד אֶת־עֵֽבֶר׃ טו וַיְחִי־שֶׁ֕לַח
אַחֲרֵ֥י הוֹלִיד֖וֹ אֶת־עֵ֑בֶר שָׁלֹ֤שׁ שָׁנִים֙ וְאַרְבַּ֣ע מֵא֔וֹת שָׁנָ֖ה וַיּ֥וֹלֶד
בָּנִ֖ים וּבָנֽוֹת׃ ס טז וַיְחִי־עֵ֕בֶר אַרְבַּ֥ע וּשְׁלֹשִׁ֖ים שָׁנָ֑ה וַיּ֖וֹלֶד
אֶת־פָּֽלֶג׃ יז וַיְחִי־עֵ֕בֶר אַחֲרֵ֥י הוֹלִיד֖וֹ אֶת־פָּ֑לֶג שְׁלֹשִׁ֣ים שָׁנָ֔ה
וְאַרְבַּ֥ע מֵא֖וֹת שָׁנָ֑ה וַיּ֖וֹלֶד בָּנִ֖ים וּבָנֽוֹת׃ ס יח וַיְחִי־פָ֕לֶג שְׁלֹשִׁ֖ים
שָׁנָ֑ה וַיּ֖וֹלֶד אֶת־רְעֽוּ׃ יט וַיְחִי־פֶ֕לֶג אַחֲרֵ֥י הוֹלִיד֖וֹ אֶת־רְעֽוּ תֵּ֣שַׁע
שָׁנִ֑ים וּמָאתַ֣יִם שָׁנָ֔ה וַיּ֖וֹלֶד בָּנִ֖ים וּבָנֽוֹת׃ ס כ וַיְחִ֣י רְעֽוּ שְׁתַּ֤יִם
וּשְׁלֹשִׁים֙ שָׁנָ֔ה וַיּ֖וֹלֶד אֶת־שְׂר֑וּג׃ כא וַיְחִ֣י רְעֽוּ֮ אַחֲרֵי֒ הוֹלִיד֣וֹ
אֶת־שְׂר֗וּג שֶׁ֤בַע שָׁנִים֙ וּמָאתַ֣יִם שָׁנָ֔ה וַיּ֥וֹלֶד בָּנִ֖ים וּבָנֽוֹת׃ ס
כב וַיְחִ֣י שְׂרֽוּג שְׁלֹשִׁ֖ים שָׁנָ֑ה וַיּ֖וֹלֶד אֶת־נָחֽוֹר׃ כג וַיְחִ֣י שְׂרֽוּג
אַחֲרֵ֥י הוֹלִיד֖וֹ אֶת־נָחֹ֑ור מָאתַ֣יִם שָׁנָ֔ה וַיּ֥וֹלֶד בָּנִ֖ים וּבָנֽוֹת׃ ס
כד וַיְחִ֣י נָחֹ֔ור תֵּ֥שַׁע וְעֶשְׂרִ֖ים שָׁנָ֑ה וַיּ֖וֹלֶד אֶת־תָּֽרַח׃ כה וַיְחִ֣י
נָחֹ֗ור אַחֲרֵי֙ הוֹלִיד֣וֹ אֶת־תָּ֔רַח תְּשַׁע־עֶשְׂרֵ֥ה שָׁנָ֖ה וּמְאַ֣ת שָׁנָ֑ה
וַיּ֥וֹלֶד בָּנִ֖ים וּבָנֽוֹת׃ ס כו וַיְחִי־תֶ֕רַח שִׁבְעִ֥ים שָׁנָ֖ה וַיּ֣וֹלֶד
אֶת־אַבְרָ֔ם אֶת־נָחֹ֖ור וְאֶת־הָרָֽן׃ כז וְאֵ֚לֶּה תֹּולְדֹ֣ת תֶּ֔רַח

וַהֲוַת לְהוֹן לְבֵינְתָא לְאַבְנָא וְחֵימָרָא הֲוָה
לְהוֹן לְשֵׁיעַ׃ ד וַאֲמָרוּ הָבוּ נִבְנֵי לָנָא קַרְתָּא
וּמַגְדְּלָא וְרֵישֵׁהּ מְטֵי עַד צֵית שְׁמַיָּא וְנֶעֱבֵיד
לָנָא שׁוּם דִּלְמָא נִתְבַּדַּר עַל אַפֵּי כָל אַרְעָא׃
ה וְאִתְגְּלִי יְיָ לְאִתְפָּרָעָא עַל עוֹבְדֵי קַרְתָּא
וּמַגְדְּלָא דִּי בְנוֹ בְּנֵי אֱנָשָׁא׃ ו וַאֲמַר יְיָ הָא
עַמָּא חַד וְלִישָׁן חָד לְכוּלְהוֹן וְדֵין דְּשָׁרִיאוּ
לְמֶעְבַּד וּכְעַן לָא יִתְמְנַע מִנְּהוֹן כֹּל דַּחֲשִׁיבוּ
לְמֶעְבַּד׃ ז הָבוּ נִתְגְּלֵי וּנְבַלְבֵּל תַּמָּן לִישָׁנְהוֹן
דְּלָא יִשְׁמְעוּן אֱנַשׁ לִישָׁן חַבְרֵיהּ׃ ח וּבַדַּר יְיָ
יַתְהוֹן מִתַּמָּן עַל אַפֵּי כָל אַרְעָא וְאִתְמְנִיעוּ
מִלְמִבְנֵי קַרְתָּא׃ ט עַל כֵּן קְרָא שְׁמָהּ בָּבֶל אֲרֵי
תַמָּן בַּלְבֵּל יְיָ לִישָׁן כָּל אַרְעָא וּמִתַּמָּן בַּדַּרִינוּן
יְיָ עַל אַפֵּי כָל אַרְעָא׃ י אִלֵּין תּוֹלְדַת שֵׁם שֵׁם
בַּר מְאָה שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד יַת אַרְפַּכְשָׁד תַּרְתֵּין
שְׁנִין בָּתַר טוּפָנָא׃ יא וְחַיָּא שֵׁם בָּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד
יַת אַרְפַּכְשָׁד חֲמֵשׁ מְאָה שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין
וּבְנָן׃ יב וְאַרְפַּכְשָׁד חַיָּא תְּלָתִין וַחֲמֵשׁ שְׁנִין
וְאוֹלִיד יַת שֶׁלַח׃ יג וְחַיָּא אַרְפַּכְשָׁד בָּתַר
דְּאוֹלִיד יַת שֶׁלַח אַרְבַּע מְאָה וּתְלַת שְׁנִין
וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבְנָן׃ יד וְשֶׁלַח חַיָּא תְּלָתִין שְׁנִין
וְאוֹלִיד יַת עֵבֶר׃ טו וְחַיָּא שֶׁלַח בָּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד
יַת עֵבֶר אַרְבַּע מְאָה וּתְלַת שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין
וּבְנָן׃ טז וְחַיָּא עֵבֶר תְּלָתִין וְאַרְבַּע שְׁנִין
וְאוֹלִיד יַת פָּלֶג׃ יז וְחַיָּא עֵבֶר בָּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד יַת
פָּלֶג אַרְבַּע מְאָה וּתְלָתִין שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין
וּבְנָן׃ יח וְחַיָּא פָּלֶג תְּלָתִין שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד יַת
רְעוּ׃ יט וְחַיָּא פָּלֶג בָּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד יַת רְעוּ מָאתָן
וּתְשַׁע שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבְנָן׃ כ וְחַיָּא רְעוּ
תְּלָתִין וְתַרְתֵּין שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד יַת שְׂרוּג׃ כא וְחַיָּא
רְעוּ בָּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד יַת שְׂרוּג מָאתָן וּשְׁבַע
שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבְנָן׃ כב וְחַיָּא שְׂרוּג תְּלָתִין
שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד יַת נָחוֹר׃ כג וְחַיָּא שְׂרוּג בָּתַר
דְּאוֹלִיד יַת נָחוֹר מָאתָן שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבְנָן׃
כד וְחַיָּא נָחוֹר עַסְרִין וּתְשַׁע שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד יַת
תָּרַח׃ כה וְחַיָּא נָחוֹר בָּתַר דְּאוֹלִיד יַת תָּרַח
מְאָה וּתְשַׁע עַסְרֵי שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִין וּבְנָן׃
כו וְחַיָּא תָּרַח שַׁבְעִין שְׁנִין וְאוֹלִיד יַת אַבְרָם יַת
נָחוֹר וְיַת הָרָן׃ כז וְאִלֵּין תּוֹלְדַת תָּרַח תָּרַח
אוֹלִיד יַת אַבְרָם יַת נָחוֹר וְיַת הָרָן וְהָרָן

4 *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."*

5 *God descended to see the city and the tower that the descendants of Adam had built.*

6 *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?* 7 *Prepare yourselves! Let us descend and confuse their language, so that they will not understand each other's language."*

8 *God dispersed them from there upon the face of the entire earth, and they stopped building the city.*

9 *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 *These are the offspring of Sheim:*

Sheim was one hundred years old, and he fathered Arpachshad, two years after the Flood. 11 *After he had fathered Arpachshad, Sheim lived five hundred years, and he fathered sons and daughters.*

12 *Arpachshad lived thirty-five years, and then he fathered Shalach.* 13 *After he had fathered Shelach, Arpachshad lived four hundred and three years, and he fathered sons and daughters.*

14 *Shelach lived thirty years, and then he fathered Eiver.* 15 *After he had fathered Eiver, Shelach lived four hundred and three years, and he fathered sons and daughters.*

16 *Eiver lived thirty-four years, and then he fathered Peleg.* 17 *After he had fathered Peleg, Eiver lived four hundred and thirty years, and he fathered sons and daughters.*

18 *Peleg lived thirty years, and then he fathered Re'u.* 19 *After he had fathered Re'u, Peleg lived two hundred and nine years, and he fathered sons and daughters.*

20 *Re'u lived thirty-two years, and then he fathered Serug.* 21 *After he had fathered Serug, Re'u lived two hundred and seven years, and he fathered sons and daughters.*

22 *Serug lived thirty years, and then he fathered Nachor.* 23 *After he had fathered Nachor, Serug lived two hundred years, and he fathered sons and daughters.*

24 *Nachor lived twenty-nine years, and then he fathered Terach.* 25 *After he had fathered Terach, Nachor lived one hundred and nineteen years, and he fathered sons and daughters.*

26 *Terach lived seventy years, and he fathered Avram, Nachor, and Charan.*

הוא, שמכיוים עצמן ומתחברים למלאכה זו לעצה זו למשא. הבה הזמינו חפרקליי"ר בלעז: **לבנים**. שחין מבניס בבבל שכיח בקעה: **ונשרפה לשרפה**. כך עושין הלבניס שקוריס טוול"ס שורפיס חותס בכבשן: **לחמר**. לטוח הקיר: (ד) **פן נפוץ**. שלא יביא עליהו שוס מכה להפילהו מכאן: (כ) **וירד ה' לראות**. לא הולרך לכך, אלא בא ללמד לדייניס, שלא ירבישו הבידון עד שיראו ויבינו. במדרש רבי תנחומא[1]: **בני האדם**. אלא בני מי, שמא בני חמוריס וגמליס, אלא בני אדם הרחשון, שבפה את הטובה ואמר האשה אשר נתתה עמדי, אף אלו כפו בטובה למרוד במי שהשפיעה טובה ומלטה מן המבול: (ו) **הן עם אחד**. כל טובה זו יש עמהן שעם אחד הס ושפה אחת לכולס, ודבר זה התלו לעשות: **החלם**. כמו אמרס עשותס, להתחיל הס לעשות: **לא יבצר מהם וגו' לעשות**. בתמיה. יבלר לשון מניעה כתרגומו, ודומה לו יבלור רוח נגידיס[2]: (ז) **הבה נרדה**. בבית דינו ומלך מעוטתנותו יתירה: **הבה**. מדה כנגד מדה, הס אמרו הבה נבנה, והוא כנגדס מדד ואמר הבה נרדה: **ונבלה**. ונבלבל גו"ן משמש בלשון רבים, וה"ף אחרונה יתירה, כה"ף של נרדה: **לא ישמעו**. זה שופל לבנה וזה מביא טיט, וזה עומד עליו ופופע את מוחו: (ח) **ויפץ ה' אותם משם**. בעולם הזה, מה שאמרו פן נפוץ נתקייס עליהס, הוא שאמר שלמה מגורת רשע היא תבוחנו[3]: (ט) **ומשם הפיצם**. למד שאין להס חלק לעולם הבא. וכי אי זו קשה של דור המבול או של דור הפלגה, אלו לא פשטו יד בעיקר, ואלו פשטו יד בעיקר להלחס בו, ואלו נשטפו ואלו לא נאבדו מן העולם, אלא שדור המבול היו גזלנים והיתה מריבה ביניהס, לכך נאבדו, ואלו היו עוהגים אהבה וריעות ביניהס, שנאמר שפה אחת ודבריס אחדים. למדת ששנאוי המחלוקת וגדול השלום: (י) **שם בן מאת שנה**. כשהוליד את ארפכשד שנתים אחר המבול:

1 פ' נח יח 2 תהלים עו, יג 3 משלי י, כד

הוֹלִיד אֶת־אַבְרָם אֶת־נָחוֹר וְאֶת־הָרָן וְהָרָן הוֹלִיד אֶת־לוֹט: כח וַיָּמָת הָרָן עַל־פְּנֵי תֶּרַח אָבִיו בְּאֶרֶץ מוֹלַדְתּוֹ בְּאוּר כַּשְׂדִּים: [מפטיר] כט וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָם וְנָחוֹר לָהֶם נָשִׁים שֵׁם אֵשֶׁת־אַבְרָם שָׂרָי וְשֵׁם אֵשֶׁת־נָחוֹר מִלְכָּה בַּת־הָרָן אֲבִי־מִלְכָּה וַאֲבִי יִסְכָּה: ל וַתְּהִי שָׂרַי עֲקָרָה אֵין לָהּ וָלָד: לא וַיִּקַּח תֶּרַח אֶת־אַבְרָם בְּנוֹ וְאֶת־לוֹט בֶּן־הָרָן בֶּן־בְּנוֹ וְאֵת שָׂרַי כַּלָּתוֹ אֵשֶׁת אַבְרָם בְּנוֹ וַיֵּצְאוּ אִתָּם מֵאוּר כַּשְׂדִּים לָלֶכֶת אַרְצָה כְּנַעַן וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד־חָרָן וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם: לב וַיִּהְיוּ יְמֵי־תֶרַח חָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים וּמָאתַיִם שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת תֶּרַח בְּחָרָן*: פ פ פ

אוֹלִיד אֵת לוֹט: כח וּמֵית הָרָן עַל אַפֵּי תֶּרַח אֲבוּהִי בַּאֲרַע יַלְדוּתֵיהּ בְּאוּר דְּכַסְדָּאֵי: כט וּנְסִיב אַבְרָם וְנָחוֹר לְהוֹן נְשִׁין שׁוּם אִתַּת אַבְרָם שָׂרָי וְשׁוּם אִתַּת נָחוֹר מִלְכָּה בַּת הָרָן אֲבוּהָא דְּמִלְכָּה וַאֲבוּהָא דְּיִסְכָּה: ל וַהֲוָת שָׂרַי עָקָרָה לֵית לָהּ וְלָד: לא וּדְבַר תֶּרַח יַת אַבְרָם בְּרֵיהּ וְיַת לוֹט בַּר הָרָן בַּר בְּרֵיהּ וְיַת שָׂרַי כַּלְתֵּיהּ אִתַּת אַבְרָם בְּרֵיהּ וּנְפָקוּ עִמְּהוֹן מֵאוּר דְּכַסְדָּאֵי לְמֵיזַל לְאַרְעָא דִכְנָעַן וַאֲתוֹ עַד חָרָן וְיִתְיְבוּ תַּמָּן: לב וַהֲווֹ יוֹמֵי תֶּרַח מָאתָן וַחֲמֵשׁ שְׁנִין וּמִית תֶּרַח בְּחָרָן: פ פ פ

*ראה פירוש רש"י ד"ה בחרן. להלכה, יש כמה חילוקי דעות בענין זה. ראה מנחת שי כאן, משנת אברהם שער הנו"ן כד:טז-יז, 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 2-1.

רס"י

(כח) **על פני תרח אביו.** בחיי חביו, ומדרש חגדה[1], יש חומרים שעל ידי חביו מת, שקבל תרח על חבירו גדו לפני ממרוד, על שכתח חת גלמיו, ושעליכו לכבשן האש, וכרן יושב ושומר בגבו, שם חבירו נוגח, חני משלו, ושם ממרוד נוגח, חני משלו, וכשניצל חבירו חמרו לו לכרן משל מי חתה, חמר לכם כרן משל חבירו, כשניצל חבירו חמרו לו לכרן משל מי חתה, חמר לכם כרן מסר חני, כשליכוהו לכבשן האש ונשרף, וזהו חור כשדים. ומנחס פירש, חור, בקעה, וכן בחוריס כבדו כ'[2], וכן מחורת נפעוני[3], כל חור ובקע עמוק קרוי חור: (כט) **יסכה.** זו שרה, על שם שסוכה ברוח הקודש, ושכל סוכין ביפיה, (ס"ח כמו שנאמר וירחו חותה שרי פרעה). ועוד יסכה לשון

1 ב"ר לח, יג 2 ישעי' כד, יד 3 שם יא, ז

Descendants of Terach

11:27 *These are the offspring of Terach:*
Terach fathered Avram, Nachor, and Haran.
Haran fathered Lot. [28] *Haran died during the lifetime of his father Terach, in the land of his birth, Ur Kasdim.*

Maftir [29] *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).*

[30] *Sarai was barren, she had no child.*

[31] *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.*

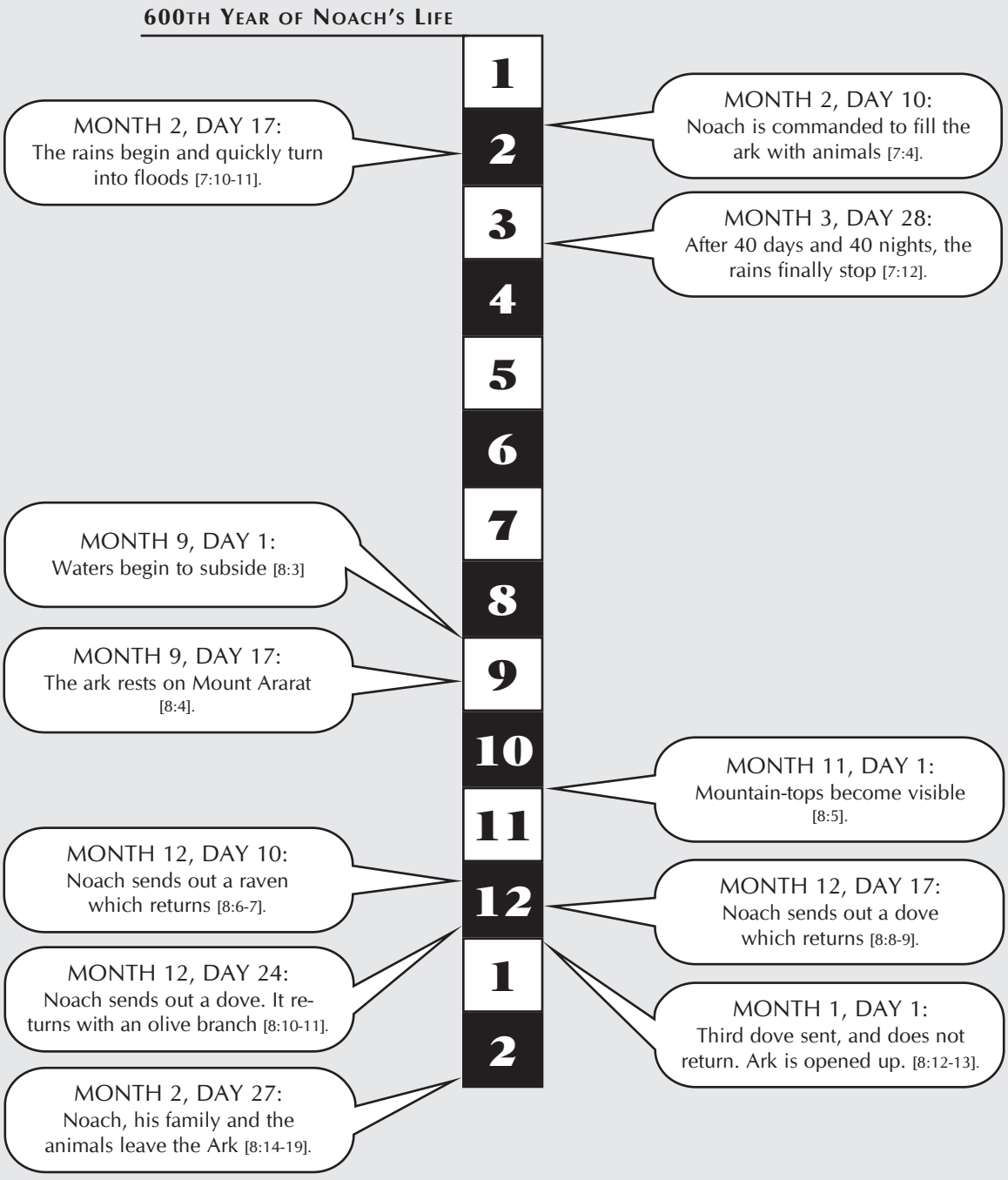
[32] *Terach lived a total of two hundred and five years. Terach died in Charan.*

THE HAFTARAH FOR NOACH IS ON PAGE 371. THE HAFTARAH FOR ROSH CHODESH IS ON PAGE 396.

Maftir: *Rosh Chodesh*—p. 403.

נסיכות, כמו שרה לשון שררה: (לא) **ויצאו אתם**. וילמ תרח ואברם עם לוט ושרי: (לב) **וימת תרח בחרן**. לאחר שיצא אברם מחרן ובא לארץ כנען והיה שם יותר ממשים שנה, שהרי כתיב ואברם בן חמש שנים ושבעים שנה בצאתו מחרן, ותרח בן שבעים שנה היה כשנולד אברם, הרי קמ"ה לתרח כשיצא אברם מחרן, עדיין נשארו משנותיו הרבה, ולמה הקדים הכתוב מיתתו של תרח ליציאתו של אברם, שלא יהא הדבר מפורסם לכל ויאמרו לא קויס אברם את כבוד אביו, שהניחו זקן וכלך לו, לפיכך קראו הכתוב מת, (ס"ח ועוד) שהרשעים אף בחייהם קרויס מתים, והצדיקים אף במיתתן קרויס חיים, שנאמר ובניהו בן יהוידע בן איש חי: **בחרן**. הנו"ן הפוכה, לומר לך עד אברם חרון אף של מקום: **חסלת פרשת נח**

CHRONOLOGY OF THE FLOOD



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"?

Bereishis 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. 83*ff.*)

יב א וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם לֶךְ־לְךָ מֵאַרְצְךָ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ
וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַרְאֶךָּ: ב וְאֶעֶשְׂךָ לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל
וַאֲבָרֶכְךָ וַאֲגַדְּלָה שְׁמֶךָ וֶהְיֵה בְּרָכָה: ג וַאֲבָרְכָה מְבָרְכֶיךָ
וּמְקַלֶּלְךָ אָאֹר וְנִבְרְכוּ בְךָ כֹּל מִשְׁפְּחֹת הָאֲדָמָה: ד וַיֵּלֶךְ אַבְרָם
כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֵלָיו יְהוָה וַיֵּלֶךְ אִתּוֹ לוֹט וְאַבְרָם בֶּן־חָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים
וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה בְּצֵאתוֹ מֵחָרָן: ה וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָם אֶת־שָׂרַי אִשְׁתּוֹ
וְאֶת־לוֹט בֶּן־אָחִיו וְאֶת־כָּל־רְכוּשָׁם אֲשֶׁר רָכָשׁוּ וְאֶת־הַנֶּפֶשׁ
אֲשֶׁר־עָשׂוּ בְחָרָן וַיֵּצְאוּ לָלֶכֶת אַרְצָה כְּנַעַן וַיָּבֹאוּ אַרְצָה כְּנָעַן:

א וַאֲמַר יְיָ לְאַבְרָם אִיזֵיל לָךְ מֵאַרְעָךְ
וּמִיַּלְדוּתָךְ וּמִבֵּית אֲבוּךְ לְאַרְעָא דִּי אַחֲזִינָךְ:
ב וְאַעְבְּדִינָךְ לְעַם סַגִּי וַאֲבָרְכִינָךְ וַאֲרַבֵּי שְׁמָךְ
וּתְהֵי מְבָרָךְ: ג וַאֲבָרֵךְ מְבָרְכָיךְ וּמְלַטְּטָךְ אֵילוּט
וְיִתְבָּרְכוּן בְּדִילָךְ כָּל זַרְעַיַּת אַרְעָא: ד וַאֲזַל
אַבְרָם כְּמָא דִּי מַלֵּיל עִמֵּיהּ יְיָ וַאֲזַל עִמֵּיהּ לוֹט
וְאַבְרָם בַּר שַׁבְעִין וַחֲמֵשׁ שְׁנִין בְּמִפְּקֵיהּ מֵחָרָן:
ה וּדְבַר אַבְרָם יַת שָׂרַי אִתְּתֵיהּ וְיַת לוֹט בַּר
אֲחוּהִי וְיַת כָּל קִנְיָנְהוֹן דִּי קְנוֹ וְיַת נַפְשָׁתָא
דְּשַׁעְבִּידוּ לְאוֹרַיְתָא בְּחָרָן וּנְפָקוּ לְמֵיזַל
לְאַרְעָא דִּכְנַעַן וַאֲתוֹ לְאַרְעָא דִּכְנָעַן: ו וַעֲבַר

רס"ו

(ו) **לך לך**. להנאתך ולטובתך. ומה תעשה לגוי גדול וכאן מי יתן זוכה לבניו. ועוד שמודיע טבעה בעולם: (ב) **ואעשך לגוי גדול**. לפי שהדרך גורמת לשלשה דברים, ממעטת פריה ורביה, וממעטת את הממון, וממעטת את השם, לכך הוזקק לשלשה ברכות כנגדו, שהבטיחו על הבניו ועל הממון ועל השם (ס"ח וזכו ואגדלה שמך הריני מוסיף חות על שמך שעד עכשיו שמך חברס מכאן ואילך חברכם, ואברכם עולה רמ"ח כנגד חיברין של חדם. ברמ"י יצן): **ואברכך**. בממון, ב"ר[1]: **והיה ברכה**. הברכות נתונות בידך, עד עכשיו היו בידי, ברכתי לחדם ואת, ומעכשיו חתה תברך את חשר תחפון, ב"ר[2]. דבר חחר ואעשך לגוי גדול, זכו שחומרים חלהי חברכם, ואברכך, זכו שחומרים חלהי יצחק, ואגדלה שמך, זכו שחומרים חלהי יעקב, יכול יהיו מותמין בכולן, תלמוד לומר והיה ברכה, ך חותמין ולח בכם: **מארצך**. ומולדתך כבר יצח משה עם חביו ובח עד לחרן, חלח כך חמר לו, התרחק עוד משה ולח מביח חביך: **אשר אראך**. לח גלה לו כחרן מיד, כדי לחבבה בעיניו, ולתת לו שכר על כל דבור ודבור. כיוצח בו חת בנך חת יחידך חשר חחבת חת יצחק[3], כיוצח בו על חחד כהריס חשר חומר חליך[4], כיוצח בו וקרח עליה חת הקריחה חשר חנכי דובר חליך[5]: (ג) **ונברכו בך**. יש חגדות רבות. וזכו פשוטו, חדם חומר לבנו תהח כחברכם, וכן כל ונברכו בך שבמקרח, וזה מוכיח, בך יברך ישרחל לומר ישימך חלהים כחפריס וכמנשה[6]: (ה) **אשר עשו בחרן**. שהבניסן תחת כנפי השכינה, חברכם מגייר חת החנשים ושרה מגיירת הנשים, ומעלה עליהם הכתוב כחילו עשחום (לכך

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 Cana'an"* (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 Cana'an. (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 אַרְאֶךָּ ("I will show you") has the same numerical value as the word בְּעֲנָנִים ("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 Cana'an. They arrived at the land of Cana'an"* (v. 5).

A number of points require clarification here:

a.) Obviously, the fact that "they arrived at the land of Cana'an," indicates that they "departed, heading for the land of Cana'an." Why did the Torah repeat this detail? If we were just told "they arrived at the land of Cana'an," we would have realized that this was their destination to start with.

b.) Avraham and his family had *already* begun heading for Cana'an 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 Cana'an"* (11:31). Thus, the only point that is added here in *Parshas*

1 לט, יא 2 שם 3 בראשית כב, ב 4 שם 5 יונה ג, ב 6 בראשית מח, כ

Avram's 3rd Test: Leaving his Home

12 God 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.* [2] *(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).* [3] *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."*

[4] *Avram left, as God had told him, and Lot went with him.*

Avram was seventy-five years old when he left Charan.

[5] *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

The *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. 47*ff*.)

The Last Word

The practical message within the opening of our *Parsha* is:

לְךָ לְךָ—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:

מֵאַרְצְךָ—*"from your land."* Go away from your worldliness, from your physical desires.

וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ—*"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 אַרְאֶךָּ—*"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)

ו וַיַּעֲבֹר אַבְרָם בָּאָרֶץ עַד מְקוֹם שְׁכֶם עַד אֵלוֹן מוֹרֶה וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי
אָז בָּאָרֶץ: ז וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם וַיֹּאמֶר לְזַרְעֲךָ אֶתֵּן אֶת־
הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת וַיִּבֶן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה הַנִּרְאֶה אֵלָיו: ח וַיַּעְתֵּק
מִשָּׁם הָהָרָה מִקֶּדֶם לְבֵית־אֵל וַיֵּט אָהֳלָה בֵּית־אֵל מִיָּם וְהָעַי
מִקֶּדֶם וַיִּבֶן־שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה וַיִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה: ט וַיִּסַּע
אַבְרָם הָלוֹךְ וְנָסוֹעַ הַנֶּגְבָּה: פ י וַיְהִי רָעָב בָּאָרֶץ וַיֵּרֶד אַבְרָם
מִצְרַיְמָה לָגוּר שָׁם כִּי־כָבֵד הָרָעָב בָּאָרֶץ: יא וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר
הִקְרִיב לָבוֹא מִצְרָיְמָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־שָׂרַי אִשְׁתּוֹ הִנֵּה־נָא יָדַעְתִּי
כִּי אִשָּׁה יְפַת־מַרְאֶה אָתְּ: יב וְהָיָה כִּי־יִרְאוּ אֹתָךְ הַמִּצְרִים
וְאָמְרוּ אִשְׁתּוֹ זֹאת וְהָרְגוּ אֹתִי וְאֹתָךְ יְחַיּוּ: יג אִמְרִי־נָא אֲחֹתִי

אַבְרָם בְּאַרְעָא עַד אֲתַר שְׁכֶם עַד מֵישַׁר מוֹרֶה
וּכְנַעֲנָאָה בְּכֵן בְּאַרְעָא: ז וְאִתְגְּלִי יְיָ לְאַבְרָם
וַאֲמַר לִבְנָיךְ אֶתֵּן יַת אַרְעָא הָדָא וּבְנָא תַמָּן
מַדְבְּחָא קֳדָם יְיָ דְּאִתְגְּלִי לֵיהּ: ח וְאִסְתַּלַק
מִתַּמָּן לְטוּרָא מִמַּדְנַח לְבֵית אֵל וּפַרְסֵיהּ
לְמַשְׁכְּנֵיהּ בֵּית אֵל מִמַּעַרְבָא וְעַי מִמַּדִּינְחָא
וּבְנָא תַמָּן מַדְבְּחָא קֳדָם יְיָ וְצַלִּי בִּשְׁמָא דַיְיָ:
ט וּנְטַל אַבְרָם אָזֵיל וְנָטֵיל לְדָרוֹמָא: י וַהֲוָה
כַפְנָא בְּאַרְעָא וּנְחַת אַבְרָם לְמִצְרַיִם
לְאִתּוֹתָבָא תַמָּן אֲרֵי תַקִּיף כַּפְנָא בְּאַרְעָא:
יא וַהֲוָה כַּד קָרֵיב לְמֵיעַל לְמִצְרַיִם וַאֲמַר לְשָׂרַי
אִתְּתֵיהּ הָא כְעַן יְדָעִית אֲרֵי אִתְּתָא שַׁפִּירַת
חֵיזוּ אָתְּ: יב וִיהֵי כַּד (אֲרֵי) יֶחֱזוּן יָתִיךְ מִצְרָאֵי
וְיֵימְרוּן אִתְּתֵיהּ דָּא וְיִקְטְלוּן יָתִי וְיָתִיךְ יְקַיְּמוּן:
יג אִמְרִי כְעַן אֲחָתִי אָתְּ בְּדִיל דְּיֵיטַב לִי

כתיב חסר עצו). ופשוטו של מקרא, עבדיס ושפחות שקנו לכס, כמו שעשה כל הכבוד הזה (לעזן קנין)[1], ויש"ל טושה חיל[2], לעזן קונה וכונס: **(ו) ויעבור אברם בארץ.** ככנס לתוכה: **עד מקום שכם.** להתפלל על בני יעקב כשיבאו להלחס בשכס: **אלון מורה.** הוא שכס, כרחבו כר גריזים וכר עיבל שכס קבלו יש"ל שבועת התורה: **והכנעני אז בארץ.** היה הולך וכובש את ארץ יש"ל מזרעו של כס, שבחלקו של כס נפלה כשחלק נח את הארץ לבניו, שנאמר ומלכי זדק מלך שלס[3], לפיכך ויאמר אל אברס לזרעך אתן את הארץ הזאת, עתיד אני להחזירה לבניך שכס מזרעו של כס: **(ז) ויבן שם מזבח.** על בשורת הזרע ועל בשורת ארץ יש"ל: **(ח) ויעתק משם.** מהלו: **מקדם לבית אל.** במזרחה של בית אל, נמלאת בית אל במערבו הוא שנאמר בית אל ומיס: **אהלה.** מהלה כתיב, בתחלה נטע את אהלו אחחו, ואחר כך את שלו. ב"ר[4]: **ויבן שם מזבח.** נתנבא שעתידין בניו להכשל שס על עון עכן, והתפלל שס עליהס: **(ט) הלוך ונסוע.** לפרקיס יושב כאן חדש או יותר ונוסע משס, ונוטה אהלו במקום אחר, וכל מסעיו בנגבה, ללכת לדרומה של ארץ יש"ל, והוא לגד ירושלים שהיא בחלקו של יהודה, שנטלו בדרומה של ארץ יש"ל כר כמוריה שהיא נחלתו. בב"ר[5]: **(י) רעב בארץ.** בחותה הארץ לבדה, לנסותו שס יהרהר אחר דבריו של הקב"ה, שאמר לו ללכת אל ארץ כנען, ועכשיו משיאו ללאת ממנה: **(יא) הנה נא ידעתי.** מדרש אגדה, עד עכשיו לא הכיר בה, מתוך לניעות שבשניהס, ועכשיו הכיר בה על ידי מעשה. דבר

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 Cana'an had been abandoned, it follows that Avraham's trip to Cana'an 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 Cana'an was aborted, the Torah informs us that this time, they completed their journey and, "they arrived at the land of Cana'an."

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 Cana'an?

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 Cana'an because it, *"fell in Sheim's share when Noach 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 Cana'an, which had previously stopped in Charan.

On reaching Cana'an, 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

1 להלן לא, א 2 במדבר כד, יח 3 בראשית יד, יח 4 לט, טו 5 לט, טז

[6] *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).* [7] *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.*

[8] *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.*

[9] *Avram traveled (periodically), always traveling southward (towards Jerusalem).*

4th & 5th Tests: Famine in Cana'an & Capture of Sarai

12:10 *There 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).* [11] *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.* [12] *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 אָהֳלָהּ, "*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. 36*ff*.)

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)

אָתְּ לְמַעַן֙ יִיטַב־לִ֣י בַעֲבוּרֵ֔ךְ וְחָיְתָ֥ה נַפְשִׁ֖י בִּגְלָלֵֽךְ׃ [שני] יד וַיְהִ֗י
כְּבֹא֙ אַבְרָ֣ם מִצְרַ֔יְמָה וַיִּרְא֧וּ הַמִּצְרִ֛ים אֶת־הָאִשָּׁ֖ה כִּי־יָפָ֣ה
הִ֑וא מְאֹֽד׃ טו וַיִּרְא֣וּ אֹתָ֔הּ שָׂרֵ֖י פַּרְעֹ֑ה וַיְהַֽלְל֥וּ אֹתָ֖הּ אֶל־פַּרְעֹ֑ה
וַתֻּקַּ֥ח הָאִשָּׁ֖ה בֵּ֥ית פַּרְעֹֽה׃ טז וּלְאַבְרָ֥ם הֵיִ֖יטִיב בַּעֲבוּרָ֑הּ וַיְהִי־לֹ֞ו
צֹ֣אן־וּבָקָ֗ר וַחֲמֹרִים֙ וַעֲבָדִ֣ים וּשְׁפָחֹ֔ת וַאֲתֹנֹ֖ת וּגְמַלִּֽים׃ יז וַיְנַגַּ֥ע
יְהוָ֛ה | אֶת־פַּרְעֹ֥ה נְגָעִ֖ים גְּדֹלִ֑ים וְאֶת־בֵּיתֹ֕ו עַל־דְּבַ֥ר שָׂרַ֖י
אֵ֥שֶׁת אַבְרָֽם׃ יח וַיִּקְרָ֣א פַרְעֹ֔ה לְאַבְרָ֖ם וַיֹּ֑אמֶר מַה־זֹּ֣את עָשִׂ֔יתָ
לִ֖י לָמָ֣ה לֹא־הִגַּ֑דְתָּ לִּ֣י כִּי֙ אִשְׁתְּךָ֣ הִ֔וא׃ יט לָמָ֥ה אָמַ֖רְתָּ אֲחֹ֣תִי
הִ֑וא וָאֶקַּ֥ח אֹתָ֛הּ לִ֖י לְאִשָּׁ֑ה וְעַתָּ֕ה הִנֵּ֥ה אִשְׁתְּךָ֖ קַ֥ח וָלֵֽךְ׃ כ וַיְצַ֥ו

בְּדִילָךְ וְתִתְקַיֵּם נַפְשִׁי בְּפִתְגָמָיְכִי׃ יד וַהֲוָה כַּד
עַל אַבְרָם לְמִצְרַיִם וַחֲזוֹ מִצְרָאֵי יַת אִתְּתָא
אֲרֵי שַׁפִּירָא הִיא לַחֲדָא׃ טו וְחָזוֹ יָתָהּ רַבְרְבֵי
פַּרְעֹה וְשַׁבָּחוּ יָתָהּ לְפַרְעֹה וְאִתְּבָרַת אִתְּתָא
לְבֵית פַּרְעֹה׃ טז וּלְאַבְרָם אוֹטִיב בְּדִילָהּ וַהֲווֹ
לֵיהּ עָאן וְתוֹרִין וַחֲמָרִין וְעַבְדִין וְאַמְהָן וְאַתָּנָן
וְגַמְלִין׃ יז וְאַיְתִי יְיָ עַל פַּרְעֹה מַכְתָּשִׁין
רַבְרְבִין וְעַל אֱנָשׁ בֵּיתֵיהּ עַל עֵיסָק שָׂרַי אִתַּת
אַבְרָם׃ יח וּקְרָא פַרְעֹה לְאַבְרָם וַאֲמַר מָה דָּא
עֲבַדְתְּ לִי לְמָא לָא חַוֵיתָא לִי אֲרֵי אִתְּתָךְ
הִיא׃ יט לְמָא אֲמַרְתְּ אֲחָתִי הִיא וּדְבָרִית יָתָהּ
לִי לְאִנְתּוּ וּכְעַן הָא אִתְּתָךְ דְּבַר וְאִזֵיל׃
כ וּפַקֵּד עֲלוֹהִי פַּרְעֹה גּוּבְרִין וְאַלְוִיאוּ יָתֵיהּ וְיָת

רס"ו

מחר, מנהג הטועים שעל ידי טורח הדרך מדם מתנזה, וזאת עמדה ביופיה. ופשוטו של מקרא, כאה גא כגיע כשעה שים לדאוג על יפיך, ידעתי זה ימים רבים כי יפת מראה את, ועכשיו אנו בחיס בין אנשים שחוריס ומכוערים, מחיכם של כושיס, ולא הוגבלנו בחשה יפה. ודומה לו, כאה גא מדני סורו גא[1]: **(יג) למען ייטב לי בעבורך.** יתנו לי מתנות: **(יד) ויהי כבוא אברם מצרימה.** היה לו לומר כבואם מלרימה, אלא למד שהטמין אותה בתיבה,

ועל ידי שתצעו את המכס, פתחו ורמו אותה: **(טו) ויהללו אתה אל פרעה.** הללוה ביניהם, לומר הגונה זו למלך: **(טז) ולאברם היטיב.** פרעה בעבורה: **(יז) וינגע ה' וגו'.** במכת רחתן לקה, שהתעמים קשה לו[2]: **ואת ביתו.** כתרגומו ועל אנס ביתה (ומדרשו לרבות כותליו ועמודיו וכליו, ברמ"י יען): **על דבר שרי.** על פי דבורה, אומרת למלאך כך, והוא אכה: **(יט) קח ולך.** לא כאבימלך שאמר לו הנה ארלי לפניך, אלא אמר לו לך ואל

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 Cana'an 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.

1 בראשית יט, ב 2 ב"ר מא, ב

13 *"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."*

SECOND READING

14 *And so it happened, that when Avram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the lady was very attractive.* 15 *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. 16 *He (bestowed gifts) on Avram because of her. So, (Avram) had flocks, cattle, donkeys, menservants, maidservants, she-donkeys and camels.*

17 *God afflicted Pharaoh and his household with a severe disease because Sarai, Avram's wife (told an angel to do so).*

18 *Pharaoh summoned Avram, and he said, "What have you done to me? Why didn't you tell me that she was your wife?* 19 *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!"*

20 *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.)

עָלָיו פַּרְעֹה אֲנָשִׁים וַיְשַׁלְּחוּ אֹתוֹ וְאֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת־כָּל־
אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ: יג א וַיַּעַל אַבְרָם מִמִּצְרַיִם הוּא וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־
לוֹ וְלוֹט עִמּוֹ הַנֶּגְבָּה: ב וְאַבְרָם כָּבֵד מְאֹד בַּמִּקְנֶה בַּכֶּסֶף
וּבַזָּהָב: ג וַיֵּלֶךְ לְמַסָּעָיו מִנֶּגֶב וְעַד־בֵּית־אֵל עַד־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־
הָיָה שָׁם אָהֳלֹה בַּתְּחִלָּה בֵּין בֵּית־אֵל וּבֵין הָעָי: ד אֶל־מְקוֹם
הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה שָׁם בָּרִאשֹׁנָה וַיִּקְרָא שָׁם אַבְרָם בְּשֵׁם
יְהוָה: [שלישי] ה וְגַם־לְלוֹט הַהֹלֵךְ אֶת־אַבְרָם הָיָה צֹאן־וּבָקָר
וְאֹהָלִים: ו וְלֹא־נָשָׂא אֹתָם הָאָרֶץ לָשֶׁבֶת יַחְדָּו כִּי־הָיָה
רְכוּשָׁם רָב וְלֹא יָכְלוּ לָשֶׁבֶת יַחְדָּו: ז וַיְהִי־רִיב בֵּין רֹעֵי
מִקְנֵה־אַבְרָם וּבֵין רֹעֵי מִקְנֵה־לוֹט וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַפְּרִזִּי אָז יֹשֵׁב
בָּאָרֶץ: ח וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם אֶל־לוֹט אַל־נָא תְהִי מְרִיבָה בֵּינִי
וּבֵינֶךָ וּבֵין רֹעַי וּבֵין רֹעֶיךָ כִּי־אֲנָשִׁים אַחִים אֲנָחְנוּ: ט הֲלֹא
כָל־הָאָרֶץ לְפָנֶיךָ הִפָּרֶד נָא מֵעָלָי אִם־הַשְּׂמֹאל וְאֵימְנָה
וְאִם־הַיָּמִין וְאַשְׂמְאִילָה: י וַיִּשָּׂא־לוֹט אֶת־עֵינָיו וַיַּרְא אֶת־כָּל־
כִּכַּר הַיַּרְדֵּן כִּי כֻלָּהּ מַשְׁקֶה לִפְנֵי | שַׁחֵת יְהוָה אֶת־סְדֹם
וְאֶת־עֲמֹרָה כְּגַן־יְהוָה כְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּאֲכָה צֹעַר: יא וַיִּבְחַר־
לוֹ לוֹט אֶת כָּל־כִּכַּר הַיַּרְדֵּן וַיִּסַּע לוֹט מִקֶּדֶם וַיִּפָּרְדוּ אִישׁ

אִתְּתֵיהּ וְיַת כָּל דִּי לֵיהּ: א וּסְלִיק אַבְרָם
מִמִּצְרַיִם הוּא וְאִתְּתֵיהּ וְכָל דִּי לֵיהּ וְלוֹט
עִמֵּיהּ לְדָרוֹמָא: ב וְאַבְרָם תַּקִּיף לַחֲדָא
בִּבְעִירָא בְּכַסְפָּא וּבְדַהֲבָא: ג וַאֲזַל לְמַטָּלָנוֹהִי
מִדָּרוֹמָא וְעַד בֵּית אֵל עַד אַתְרָא דְּהַרְסִיהּ תַּמָּן
לְמַשְׁכְּנֵיהּ בְּקַדְמֵיתָא בֵּין בֵּית אֵל וּבֵין עָי:
ד לַאֲתַר מַדְבְּחָא דִּי עֲבַד תַּמָּן בְּקַדְמֵיתָא
וְצַלִּי תַמָּן אַבְרָם בִּשְׁמָא דַיְיָ: ה וְאַף לְלוֹט
דְּאָזֵיל עִם אַבְרָם הֲוָה עָאן וְתוֹרִין וּמַשְׁכְּנִין:
ו וְלָא סוֹבְרַת יַתְהוֹן אַרְעָא לְמִתַּב כַּחֲדָא אֲרֵי
הֲוָה קִנְיַנְהוֹן סַגִּי וְלָא יְכִילוּ לְמִתַּב כַּחֲדָא:
ז וַהֲוַת מַצּוּתָא בֵּין רָעֵי בְעִירֵיהּ דְּאַבְרָם וּבֵין
רָעֵי בְעִירֵיהּ דְּלוֹט וּכְנַעֲנָאָה וּפְרִזָאָה בְּכֵן
יָתִיב בְּאַרְעָא: ח וַאֲמַר אַבְרָם לְלוֹט לָא כְעַן
תְּהֵי מַצּוּתָא בֵּינָא וּבֵינָךְ וּבֵין רַעֲוָתַי וּבֵין
רַעֲוָתָךְ אֲרֵי גְּבָרִין אֲחִין אֲנַחְנָא: ט הֲלָא כָל
אַרְעָא קֳדָמָךְ אִתְפְּרֵשׁ כְּעַן מִלְּוָתִי אִם אַתְ
לִצְפּוּנָא וַאֲנָא לְדָרוֹמָא וְאִם אַתְ לְדָרוֹמָא
וַאֲנָא לִצְפּוּנָא: י וּזְקַף לוֹט יַת עֵינוֹהִי וַחֲזָא יַת
כָּל מֵישַׁר יַרְדְּנָא אֲרֵי כּוּלֵּיהּ בֵּית שַׁקְיָא קֳדָם
חַבָּלוּת יְיָ יַת סְדוֹם וְיַת עֲמוֹרָה כְּגִנְתָא דַיְיָ
כְּאַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם מָטֵי לְצוֹעַר: יא וּבְחַר לֵיהּ
לוֹט יַת כָּל מֵישַׁר יַרְדְּנָא וּנְטַל לוֹט מִלְקַדְמִין

תעמוד, שהמלריס שטופי זמה הם, שנאמר וזרמת סוסיס זרמתס[1]: (כ) **ויצו עליו.** על מודותיו, לשלחו ולשמרו: **וישלחו.** כתרגומו ומלוויהו: (ז) **ויעל אברם וגו' הנגבה.** לצד לדרומה של ארץ ישראל, כמו שאמר למעלה הלוך ונסוע הנגבה, לכך המוריה, ומכל מקום כשהוא הולך ממלריס לארץ כנען, מדרוס לצפון הוא מהלך, שארץ מלריס בדרומה של ארץ ישראל, כמו שמוכיח

במסעות ובגבולי הארץ: (ג) **כבד מאד.** טעון מקנות: (ג) **וילך למסעיו.** כשחזר ממלריס לארץ כנען, היה הולך ולן בתחנויות שלן בהם בהליכתו למלריס, למדך דרך ארץ שלא ישנה מדס מהכנסיה שלו. דבר אחר, בחזרתו פרע הקפותיו[2]: **מנגב.** ארץ מלריס בדרומה של ארץ כנען: (ד) **אשר עשה שם בראשונה ויקרא שם.** ושאר קרא שם אברס בשם כ'. וגס יש לומר

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

Bitachon—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. 4*ff.*)

1 יחזקאל כג, כ 2 ב"ר מא, ג 3 שם מא, ה 4 שם מא, ז 5 דף י:

Avram and Lot Part Company

13 *Avram went up from Egypt to the south (of the Land of Israel)—both he, his wife and all their possessions, together with Lot.* [2] *Avram was heavily (laden) with cattle, silver, and gold.* [3] *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,* [4] *at the site of the altar which he had made there to start with. Avram (prayed) there in the name of God.*

Third Reading

[5] *Lot, who went with Avram, also had flocks and cattle and tents.* [6] *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.* [7] *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 Cana'anites and the Perizites were inhabiting the land at that time.*

[8] *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.* [9] *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)."*

[10] *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.* [11] *So, Lot chose for himself the entire plain of the Jordan.*

רש"י

ויקרא שם בעבור בשם כ': (כ) **ההלך את אברם**. מי גרם שהיה לו זאת, הליכתו עם אברם: (ו) **ולא נשא אותם**. לא היתה יכולה להספיק מרעה למקניהם, ועשון קנר הוא, ועריך להוסיף עליו, כמו ולא נשא אותם מרעה הארץ, לפיכך כתב ולא נשא בעשון זכר: (ז) **ויהי ריב**. לפי שהיו רועיו של לוט רשעים, ומרעים בהמתם בשדות אחרים, ורועי אברם מוכיחים אותם על הגזל, והם אומרים נתנה הארץ לאברם ולו אין יורש, ולוט יורשו, ואין זה גזל, והכתוב אומר והכנעני והפרזי אז יושב בארץ, ולא זכה בה אברם עדיין[3]: (ח) **אנשים אחים**. קרובים. ומדרש אגדה דומין בקלסתר פניהם: (ט) **אם השמאל ואימנה**. בכל אשר תשב (תשב) לא אתרחק ממך, ואעמוד לך למגן ולעזר, וסוף דבר הוצרך לו, שנאמר וישמע אברם כי נשבה אחיו וגו': **ואימנה**. לימין את עצמי, כמו ואשמאילה אשמאיל את עצמי. ואם תאמר היה לו לינקד ואיימינה, כך מצינו במקום אחר אם אם להמין, ואין נקוד להיימין: (י) **כי בלה משקה**. ארץ נחלי מים: **לפני שחת ה' את סדום ואת עמורה**. היה אותו מישור: **כגן ה'**. לחילגות: **בארץ מצרים**. לזרעים[4]: **באבה צער**. עד צער. ומדרש אגדה דורשו לגנאי, על שהיו שטופי זמה בחר לו לוט בשכונתם. במסכת הוריות[5]: (יא) **בבר**. מישור כתרגומו: **מקדם**. נסע מאצל אברם (למזרח), והלך לו למערבו של אברם, ומצא נוסע ממזרח למערב. ומדרש אגדה הסיע עצמו מקדמונו של עולם, אמר, אי אפשי

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)

מֵעַל אָחִיו: יב אַבְרָם יָשַׁב בְּאֶרֶץ־כְּנָעַן וְלוֹט יָשַׁב בְּעָרֵי הַכִּכָּר
וַיֶּאֱהַל עַד־סְדֹם: יג וְאַנְשֵׁי סְדֹם רָעִים וְחַטָּאִים לַיהוָה מְאֹד:
יד וַיהוָה אָמַר אֶל־אַבְרָם אַחֲרֵי הִפָּרֶד־לוֹט מֵעִמּוֹ שָׂא נָא
עֵינֶיךָ וּרְאֵה מִן־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה שָׁם צָפֹנָה וָנֶגְבָּה וָקֵדְמָה
וָיָמָּה: טו כִּי אֶת־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה רֹאֶה לְךָ אֶתְּנֶנָּה
וּלְזַרְעֲךָ עַד־עוֹלָם: טז וְשַׂמְתִּי אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ כַּעֲפַר הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר |
אִם־יוּכַל אִישׁ לִמְנוֹת אֶת־עֲפַר הָאָרֶץ *גַּם־זַרְעֲךָ יִמָּנֶה: יז קוּם
הִתְהַלֵּךְ בָּאָרֶץ לְאָרְכָּהּ וּלְרָחְבָּהּ כִּי לְךָ אֶתְּנֶנָּה: יח וַיֶּאֱהַל
אַבְרָם וַיָּבֹא וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּאֵלֹנֵי מַמְרֵא אֲשֶׁר בְּחֶבְרוֹן וַיִּבֶן־שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ
לַיהוָה: פ יד א [רביעי] וַיְהִי בִּימֵי אַמְרָפֶל מֶלֶךְ־שִׁנְעָר אַרְיוֹךְ
מֶלֶךְ אֶלָסָר כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר מֶלֶךְ עֵילָם וְתִדְעָל מֶלֶךְ גּוֹיִם: ב עָשׂוּ
מִלְחָמָה אֶת־בֶּרַע מֶלֶךְ סְדֹם וְאֶת־בִּרְשַׁע מֶלֶךְ עֲמֹרָה שִׁנְאָב |
מֶלֶךְ אַדְמָה וְשֶׁמְאֵבֶר מֶלֶךְ צְבוֹיִם [ק צְבוֹיִם] וּמֶלֶךְ בֶּלַע
הִיא־צֹעַר: ג כָּל־אֵלֶּה חָבְרוּ אֶל־עֵמֶק הַשִּׂדִּים הִוא יָם הַמֶּלַח:
ד שְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה עָבְדוּ אֶת־כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר וּשְׁלֹשׁ־עֶשְׂרֵה
שָׁנָה מָרָדוּ: ה וּבְאַרְבַּע עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה בָּא כְדָרְלָעֹמֶר וְהַמְּלָכִים
אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ וַיַּכּוּ אֶת־רְפָאִים בְּעַשְׁתְּרֹת קַרְנַיִם וְאֶת־הַזּוּזִים
בְּהָם וְאֶת הָאֵימִים בְּשָׁוֵה קִרְיָתָיִם: ו וְאֶת־הַחֹרִי בְּהַרְרָם
שֵׂעִיר עַד אֵיל פָּארָן אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַמִּדְבָּר: ז וַיָּשֻׁבוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־עֵין

*ס"א גַּם זַרְעֲךָ

וְאִתְפָּרְשׁוּ גְּבַר מִלְוָת אֲחוֹהִי: יב אַבְרָם יְתֵיב
בְּאַרְעָא דִכְנָעַן וְלוֹט יְתֵיב בְּקִרְוֵי מֵישְׁרָא
וּפְרַס עַד סְדוֹם: יג וֶאֱנָשִׁין דְּסְדוֹם בִּישִׁין
בְּמָמוֹנְהוֹן וְחַיָּבִין בִּגְוֵיתְהוֹן קֳדָם יְיָ לַחֲדָא:
יד וַיְיָ אֲמַר לְאַבְרָם בָּתַר דְּאִתְפְּרַשׁ לוֹט מִנֵּיהּ
זְקוֹף כְּעַן עֵינָךְ וַחֲזֵי מִן אַתְרָא דְּאַתְּ תַּמָּן
לְצִפּוּנָא וּלְדָרוֹמָא וּלְמַדִּינְחָא וּלְמַעַרְבָא:
טו אֲרֵי יַת כָּל אַרְעָא דִּי אַתְּ חָזֵי לָךְ אֶתְּנִנָּהּ
וְלִבְנָיךְ עַד עָלְמָא: טז וַאֲשַׁוֵּי יַת בְּנָיךְ סַגִּיאִין
כְּעַפְרָא דְאַרְעָא כְּמָא דְּלֵית אֶפְשַׁר לְגִבַר
לְמִמְנֵי יַת עַפְרָא דְאַרְעָא אַף בְּנָיךְ לָא יִתְמְנוֹן:
יז קוּם הַלֵּיךְ בְּאַרְעָא לְאָרְכָּהּ וּלְפוּתְיֵהּ אֲרֵי
לָךְ אֶתְּנִנָּהּ: יח וּפְרַס אַבְרָם וַאֲתָא וְיתֵיב
בְּמֵישְׁרֵי מַמְרֵא דִּי בְחֶבְרוֹן וּבְנָא תַּמָּן מַדְבְּחָא
קֳדָם יְיָ: א וַהֲוָה בְּיוֹמֵי אַמְרָפֶל מַלְכָּא דְּבָבֶל
אַרְיוֹךְ מַלְכָּא דְאֶלָסַר כְּדָרְלָעוֹמֶר מַלְכָּא
דְעֵילָם וְתִדְעָל מַלְכָּא דְעַמְמֵי: ב סְדָרוּ (עֲבָדוּ)
קְרָבָא עִם בֶּרַע מַלְכָּא דִסְדוֹם וְעִם בִּרְשַׁע
מַלְכָּא דַעֲמוֹרָה שִׁנְאָב מַלְכָּא דְאַדְמָה
וְשֶׁמְאֵבֶר מַלְכָּא דִצְבוֹיִם וּמַלְכָּא דְבֶלַע הִיא
צוֹעַר: ג כָּל אִלֵּין אִתְכְּנָשׁוּ לְמֵישַׁר חַקְלָיָא הוּא
אַתַר יַמָּא דְמִלְחָא: ד תַּרְתֵּי עֶשְׂרֵי שְׁנִין פָּלְחוּ
יַת כְּדָרְלָעוֹמֶר וּתְלַת עֲשְׂרֵי שְׁנִין מְרָדוּ:
ה וּבְאַרְבַּסַר עַשְׂרֵה שְׁנִין אֲתָא כְּדָרְלָעוֹמֶר
וּמַלְכַיָּא דְעִמֵּיהּ וּמְחוֹ יַת גִּבָּרַיָּא דִי
בְעַשְׁתְּרוֹת קַרְנַיִם וְיַת תַּקִיפַיָּא דִבְהֶמְתָא וְיַת
אֵימְתָנֵי דִּבְשָׁוֵה קִרְיָתָיִם: ו וְיַת חוֹרָאֵי דִי
בְטוּרְהוֹן דְּשֵׂעִיר עַד מֵישַׁר פָּארָן דְּסָמִיךְ עַל
מַדְבְּרָא: ז וְתָבוּ וַאֲתוֹ לְמֵישַׁר פְּלוּג דִּינָא הִיא

לח בְּמִדְרָס וְלֹא בְּמִלְכִיו: (יב) ויאהל. נוֹטֶה מְהֵלִיס לְרוּעִיו וְלִמְקוֹמוֹ עַד סְדוֹם:
(יג) ואנשי סדום רעים. וְאַף עַל פִּי כֵן לֹא נִמְנַע לוֹט מִלִּשְׁכּוֹן עִמָּהֶם.
וּרְבוּתֵינוּ לִמְּדוּ מִכָּאן[1] שֶׁם רִשְׁעִים יִרְקָב[2]: רעים. בְּגוּפָם: וחטאים. בְּמָמוֹנָם[3]:
לה' מאד. יוֹתֵר מִדַּאי וּמְתַכְוְונִים לְמָרוֹד בּוֹ: (יד) אחרי הפרד לוט. כָּל
זְמַן שֶׁהָרָשָׁע עִמּוֹ, כֵּיוָן דְּנָפַל פֻּרְעָנוּת מִמֶּנּוּ: (טז) אשר אם יוכל איש. כְּשֵׁם
שֶׁאִי אֶפְשָׁר לִסְפֹּר לְחֹמֶר הָעָפָר, כָּךְ זַרְעֲךָ לֹא יִמָּנֶה: (יח) ממרא. שֶׁם אָדָם:

(ח) אמרפל. כּוֹתִי גְּמָרוּד, שֶׁאָמַר לְאַבְרָהָם פּוֹל לְתוֹךְ כִּבְשַׁן הָאֵשׁ[4]: מלך
גוים. מְקוֹם יֵשׁ שֶׁנִּמְצָא גּוֹיִם. עַל שֵׁם שֶׁנִּתְקַבְּצוּ שָׁמָּה מִכָּאן מִזּוֹת וּמִקּוֹמוֹת,
וְכֵן מְלִיכוֹ חַיִּים עֲלֵיהֶם, וְשָׁמוֹ תִּדְעָל[5]: (ג) ברע. רַע לְשָׁמַיִם וְרַע לִבְרִיּוֹת:
ברשע. שֶׁנִּתְעַלֵּם בְּרִשְׁעוֹ: שנאב. שׂוֹנֵא חִבּוּי שֶׁבְּשָׁמַיִם: שמאבר. שֶׁם מַכַּר
לְעוֹף וּלְקִפּוֹן, וְלִמְרוּד בְּהַקָּבָ"ה: בלע. שֶׁם הָעִיר: (ג) עמק השדים. כָּךְ
שְׁמוֹ, עַל שֵׁם שֶׁהָיוּ בּוֹ שְׂדוֹת הַרְבֵּה. וּמִדְרְשֵׁי אַגָּדָה יֵשׁ הַרְבֵּה: הוא ים המלח.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Who was Amrafel (אַמְרָפֶל)? (v. 1)**

Rashi: Amrafel was actually Nimrod, who said (אָמַר) to Avram: fall (פּוֹל) into the fiery furnace [אַמְרָפֶל = אָמַר and פּוֹל].

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 (אָמַר) [the command that caused] Avram to fall (פּוֹל) into the fiery furnace. Shmuel said his real name was Amrafel, but he was also called Nimrod (נִמְרֹד) because he caused the whole world to rebel (שֶׁהִמְרִיד) 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.).

1 יומא לח: 2 משלי י, ז 3 סנהדרין קט. 4 ב"ר מב,ד 5 שם 6 במדבר ב, כ

Lot traveled from the east (westward), and they parted from one another.

[12] *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.*

[13] *The people of Sodom were (intentionally) perverted and corrupt to God, to the extreme.*

God Promises Land to Avram

13:14 *God 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.* [15] *Because, I will give all the land that you see to you and to your descendants for eternity.* [16] *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.* [17] *Get up and walk through the land, across its length and its breadth, for I am going to give it to you."*

[18] *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

14 Fourth Reading

It happened in the days of Amrafel King of Shinar, Aryoch King of Elasar, Kedarla'omer King of Ailam, and Tidal King of Goyim, [2] *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.* [3] *These (five latter kings) had joined (Kedarla'omer) in the valley of Sidim, which is (now) the Dead Sea.* [4] *For twelve years they served Kedarla'omer, and for thirteen years they rebelled.*

[5] *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,* [6] *and the Chorites at their mountain of Se'ir, until the plain of Paran, which is alongside the desert.* [7] *They returned and came to Ein Mishpat, which is (now) Kadeish, and they smote the entire*

רס"י

לאחר זמן נמשך היס לתוכו ונעשה יס המלח. ומדרש אגדה הומר, שנתבקעו הלוריס סביבותיו ונמשכו יהוריס לתוכו: **(ד) שתים עשרה שנה עבדו.** חמשה מלכיס הללו את כדרלעומר: **(ה) ובארבע עשרה שנה.** למרדן בה כדרלעומר, לפי שהוא היה בעל המעשה, ונכנס בעובי הקורה: **והמלבים.** הלה שלשה מלכיס: **הזוזים.** הס זמזומיס: **(ו) בהרים.** בהר שלהס: **איל פארן.** כתרגומו מיסור. ואומר אני, שהין איל לשון מיסור, אלא מיסור של פארן איל עמו, ושל ממרא אלוני עמו, ושל ירדן ככר עמו, ושל שטיס אבל עמו, אבל השטיס, וכן בעל גד בעל עמו, וכולס מתורגמין מיסור, וכל אחד עמו עליו: **על המדבר.** אגל המדבר, כמו ועליו מטה מנשה[6]: **(ז) עין משפט הוא קדש.** על שם העתיד, שעתידין משה ואהרן להשפט שם על עסקי אותו

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*

מִשְׁפָּט הֲוָא קָדֵשׁ וַיַּכּוּ אֶת־כָּל־שְׂדֵה הָעֲמָלֵקִי וְגַם אֶת־הָאֱמֹרִי הַיֹּשֵׁב בְּחַצְצֹן תָּמָר: ח וַיֵּצֵא מֶלֶךְ־סְדֹם וּמֶלֶךְ עֲמֹרָה וּמֶלֶךְ אַדְמָה וּמֶלֶךְ צביים [ק׳ צְבוֹיִם] וּמֶלֶךְ בֶּלַע הִוא־צֹעַר וַיַּעַרְכוּ אִתָּם מִלְחָמָה בְּעֵמֶק הַשִּׂדִּים: ט אֶת כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר מֶלֶךְ עֵילָם וְתִדְעָל מֶלֶךְ גּוֹיִם וְאַמְרָפֶל מֶלֶךְ שִׁנְעָר וְאַרְיוֹךְ מֶלֶךְ אֶלָסָר אַרְבָּעָה מְלָכִים אֶת־הַחֲמִשָּׁה: י וְעֵמֶק הַשִּׂדִּים בְּאֵרֹת בְּאֵרֹת חֵמָר וַיָּנֻסוּ מֶלֶךְ־סְדֹם וַעֲמֹרָה וַיִּפְּלוּ־שָׁמָּה וְהַנִּשְׁאָרִים הָרָה נָסוּ: יא וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־כָּל־רְכֻשׁ סְדֹם וַעֲמֹרָה וְאֶת־כָּל־אָכְלָם וַיֵּלֵכוּ: יב וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־לוֹט וְאֶת־רְכֻשׁוֹ בֶּן־אֲחִי אַבְרָם וַיֵּלֵכוּ וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב בִּסְדֹם: יג וַיָּבֹא הַפָּלִיט וַיַּגֶּד לְאַבְרָם הָעִבְרִי וְהוּא שֹׁכֵן בְּאֵלֹנֵי מַמְרֵא הָאֱמֹרִי אֲחִי אֶשְׁכֹּל וַאֲחִי עָנֵר וְהֵם בַּעֲלֵי בְרִית־אַבְרָם: יד וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָם כִּי נִשְׁבָּה אָחִיו וַיָּרֶק אֶת־חֲנִיכָיו יְלִידֵי בֵיתוֹ שְׁמֹנָה עָשָׂר וּשְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת וַיִּרְדֹּף עַד־דָּן: טו וַיֵּחָלֵק עֲלֵיהֶם | לַיְלָה הוּא וַעֲבָדָיו וַיַּכֵּם וַיִּרְדְּפֵם

רָקָם וּמְחוֹ אֵת כָּל חֲמַל עֲמַלְקָאָה וְאַף אֵת אֱמוֹרָאָה דְיָתֵיב בְּעֵין גֶּדִי: ח וּנְפַק מַלְכָּא דְסִדוֹם וּמַלְכָּא דַעֲמוֹרָה וּמַלְכָּא דְאַדְמָה וּמַלְכָּא דִצְבוֹיִם וּמַלְכָּא דְבֶלַע הִיא צוֹעַר וְסַדָּרוּ עִמְּהוֹן קְרָבָא בְּמֵישַׁר חַקְלַיָּא: ט עִם (ית) כְּדָרְלָעוֹמֶר מַלְכָּא דְעֵילָם וְתִדְעָל מַלְכָּא דְעַמְמֵי וְאַמְרָפֶל מַלְכָּא דְבָבֶל וְאַרְיוֹךְ מַלְכָּא דְאֶלָסָר אַרְבְּעָה מַלְכִין לָקֳבֵיל חַמְשָׁא: י וּמֵישַׁר חַקְלַיָּא בֵּירִין בֵּירִין מַפְקָן חֵימָרָא וַעֲרָקוּ מַלְכָּא דְסִדוֹם וַעֲמוֹרָה וּנְפָלוּ תַמָּן וּדְאִשְׁתַּאֲרוּ לְטוּרָא עֲרָקוּ: יא וּשְׁבוּ יַת כָּל קִנְיָנָא דִסְדוֹם וַעֲמוֹרָה וְיַת כָּל מֵיכְלְהוֹן וַאֲזָלוּ: יב וּשְׁבוּ יַת לוֹט וְיַת קִנְיָנֵיהּ בַּר אֲחוּהִי דְאַבְרָם וַאֲזָלוּ וְהוּא יָתֵיב בִּסְדוֹם: יג וַאֲתָא מְשֵׁיזְבָא וְחַוִי לְאַבְרָם עִבְרָאָה וְהוּא שָׁרֵי בְּמֵישְׁרֵי מַמְרֵא אֱמוֹרָאָה אֲחוּהִי דְאֶשְׁכּוֹל וַאֲחוּהִי דְעָנֵר וְאִנּוּן אֱנָשֵׁי קְיָמֵיהּ דְאַבְרָם: יד וּשְׁמַע אַבְרָם אֲרֵי אֶשְׁתְּבִי אֲחוּהִי וְזָרִיז יַת עוּלֵימוֹהִי יְלִידֵי בֵיתֵיהּ תְּלַת מְאָה וְתַמְנֵי עַסַר וּרְדַף עַד דָּן: טו וְאִתְפְּלֵג עֲלֵיהוֹן לֵילְיָא הוּא

רש"י

כעין, וכמ מי מריבה. ומונקלוס תרגמו כפשוטו, מקום שהיו בני המדינה מתקבצים שם לכל משפט: **שדה העמלקי**. עדיין לא נולד עמלק, ונקרא על שם העתיד: **בחצצן תמר**. הוא עין גדי, מקרא מלא[1] ניכוספט: (ט) **ארבעה מלכים וגו'**. ולפי על פי כן נלמו המועטים, להודיעך שגבורים היו, ולפי על פי כן לא נמנע מאברם מלרדוף אחריהם: (י) **בארת בארת חמר**. בארות הרבה היו שם, שנוטלים משם אדמה לטיט של בנין. ומדרש אגדה, שהיה הטיט מוגבל בהם, ונעשה גם למלך סדום שילא משם, לפי שהיו בלומות מקלתן שלא היו מאמינין שיילא מאברהם כשבשן האש, וכיון שילא זה מן האמר האמינו באברהם למפרע[2]: **הרה נסו**. לאבר נסו. הרה כמו האר לאבר, כל תיבה שאריכה למ"ד בתחלתה הטיל לה ה"א בסופה. ויש חילוק בין הרה לאהרה שה"א שבסוף התיבה עומדת במקום למ"ד שברחשה, אבל (ס"א זו) תיבה עומדת במקום למ"ד, ונקודה (ס"א לנקוד) פת"ח תחתיה, והרי הרה כמו לאבר, או כמו אל הר, וחיזו מפרש לאיזה הר, אלא שכל אחד גם בחשר מלא הר תחלה. וכשהוא נותן ה"א ברחשה לכתוב הרה או המדבר, פתרונו כמו אל הבר או כמו לאבר (ס"א לבר), ומשמע לאותו הר כידוע ומפורש בפרשה: (יג) **והוא יושב בסדום**. מי גרס לו זאת,

יציאתו בסדום: (יג) **ויבא הפליט**. לפי פשוטו זה עוג שפלט מן המלחמה, והוא שכתוב כי רק עוג נשאר מיתר הרפאים, וזכו נשאר, שלא הרגוהו אמרפל וחבריו כשהכו הרפאים בעשתרות קרניס. תנחומא[3]. ומדרש גרחשית רבה[4], זה עוג שפלט מדור המבול, וזכו מיתר הרפאים, שנאמר הנפלים היו בחרן וגו', ומתכוין שיהרג חברם ויבא לת ברכה: **העברי**. שבא מעבר הנהר[5]: **בעלי ברית אברם**. שכרתו עמו ברית (ס"א, דבר אחר שהשיאו לו עלה על המילה כמו שמפורש בחקום אחר): (יד) **וירק**. כתרגומו וזריז, וכן והריקותי אחריכם חרב[6], אזדיין בחרבי עליכם, וכן אריק חרבי[7], וכן והרק חנית וסגור[8]: **חניכיו**. חניכו כתיב (ס"א קרי), זה אליעזר שחנכו למצות, והוא לשון התחלת כניסת האדם או כלי לאומנות שהוא עתיד לעמוד בה, וכן חנוך לנער[9], חנוכת המזבח[10], חנוכת הבית[11], ובלע"ז קורין לו אינגלייר"ה: **שמונה עשר וגו'**. רבותינו אמרו[12] אליעזר לבדו היה, והוא מנין גימטריא של שמו: **עד דן**. שם תשם כאן, שראה שעתידין בניו להעמיד שם עגל[13]: (טו) **ויחלק עליהם**. לפי פשוטו סרס המקרא, ויחלק הוא ועבדיו עליהם לילה, כדרך הרודפים שמתפלגים אחר הגרדפים כשבורחים זה לכאן וזה לכאן: **לילה**. כלומר אחר שחשכה לא נמנע מלרדפם. ומדרש אגדה,

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 (שֶׁהֵמְרִיד) 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)

1 דברי הימים-ב כ, ב 2 ב"ר מב, ז 3 חזקת כה 4 מב, ח 5 ב"ר שם 6 ויקרא כו, לג 7 שמות טו, ט 8 תהלים לה, ג 9 משלי כב, ו 10 במדבר ז, יא 11 תהלים ל, א 12 נדרים לב. 13 סנהדרין צו.

area (which was later to be inhabited by) the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who dwelt in Chatzetzon Tamar.

[8] *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,* [9] *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).*

[10] *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.*

[11] *The (four kings) took all the possessions of Sodom and Amorah, and all their food, and they left.* [12] *(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.*

[14] *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.* [15] *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)

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha* 5748)

עַד־חוֹבָה אֲשֶׁר מִשְׁמְאל לְדַמֶּשֶׂק: טז וַיָּשֶׁב אֶת כָּל־הָרְכֻשׁ וְגַם
אֶת־לוֹט אָחִיו וּרְכֻשׁוֹ הֵשִׁיב וְגַם אֶת־הַנָּשִׁים וְאֶת־הָעָם:
יז וַיֵּצֵא מֶלֶךְ־סְדֹם לִקְרָאתוֹ אַחֲרֵי שׁוּבוֹ מֵהַכּוֹת אֶת־
כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר וְאֶת־הַמְּלָכִים אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ אֶל־עֶמֶק שָׁוֵה הוּא עֶמֶק
הַמֶּלֶךְ: יח וּמַלְכִּי־צֶדֶק מֶלֶךְ שָׁלֵם הוֹצִיא לֶחֶם וָיָיִן וְהוּא כֹהֵן
לְאֵל עֶלְיוֹן: יט וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ וַיֹּאמַר בָּרוּךְ אַבְרָם לְאֵל עֶלְיוֹן קֹנֵה
שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ: כ וּבָרוּךְ אֵל עֶלְיוֹן אֲשֶׁר־מִגֵּן צָרֶיךָ בְּיָדֶךָ
וַיִּתֶּן־לוֹ מַעֲשֵׂר מִכֹּל: [חמישי] כא וַיֹּאמֶר מֶלֶךְ־סְדֹם אֶל־אַבְרָם
תֶּן־לִי הַנֶּפֶשׁ וְהָרְכֻשׁ קַח־לָךְ: כב וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם אֶל־מֶלֶךְ סְדֹם
הֲרִמֹתִי יָדִי אֶל־יְהוָה אֵל עֶלְיוֹן קֹנֵה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ: כג אִם־
מִחוּט וְעַד שְׂרוֹךְ־נַעַל וְאִם־אֶקַּח מִכָּל־אֲשֶׁר־לָךְ וְלֹא תֹאמַר
אֲנִי הֶעֱשַׁרְתִּי אֶת־אַבְרָם: כד בִּלְעָדַי רַק אֲשֶׁר אָכְלוּ הַנְּעָרִים
וְחֵלֶק הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר הָלְכוּ אִתִּי עָנֵר אֶשְׁכֹּל וּמַמְרֵא הֵם יִקָּחוּ

וְעַבְדוֹהִי וּמְחוֹנוֹן וּרְדָפִינוּן עַד חוֹבָה דְּמִצְפּוּנָא
לְדַמָּשֶׂקְ: טז וַאֲתֵיב יַת כָּל קִנְיָנָא וְאַף יַת לוֹט
בַּר אֲחוּהִי וְקִנְיָנֵיהּ אֲתֵיב וְאַף יַת נְשַׁיָּא וְיַת
עַמָּא: יז וּנְפַק מַלְכָּא דִּסְדוֹם לְקַדָּמוּתֵיהּ בָּתַר
דְּתָב מִלְּמִמְחֵי יַת כְּדָרְלָעוֹמֶר וְיַת מַלְכַיָּא דִּי
עִמֵּיהּ לְמֵישַׁר מַפְּנָא הוּא אֲתַר בֵּית רֵיסָא
דְּמַלְכָּא: יח וּמַלְכִּי צֶדֶק מַלְכָּא דִּירוּשְׁלֵם
אַפֵּיק לְחֵם וַחֲמָר וְהוּא מְשַׁמֵּשׁ קֳדָם אֵל
עִלָּאָה: יט וּבָרְכֵיהּ וַאֲמַר בְּרִיךְ אַבְרָם קֳדָם
(לְ)אֵל עִלָּאָה דְּקִנְיָנֵיהּ שְׁמַיָּא וְאַרְעָא: כ וּבְרִיךְ
אֵל עִלָּאָה דִּי מְסַר סַנָּאָךְ בִּידָךְ וִיהַב לֵיהּ חַד
מִן עַשְׂרָא מִכּוֹלָּא: כא וַאֲמַר מַלְכָּא דְּסְדוֹם
לְאַבְרָם הַב לִי נַפְשָׁתָא וְקִנְיָנָא סַב (דְּבַר) לָךְ:
כב וַאֲמַר אַבְרָם לְמַלְכָּא דְּסְדוֹם אֲרֵמִית יְדַי
בְּצְלוֹ קֳדָם יְיָ אֵל עִלָּאָה דְּקִנְיָנֵיהּ שְׁמַיָּא
וְאַרְעָא: כג אִם מֵחוּטָא וְעַד עַרְקַת מָסָנָא וְאִם
אֶסַּב מִכָּל דִּי לָךְ וְלָא תֵימַר אֲנָא אַעְתָּרִית יַת
אַבְרָם: כד בַּר מִדְּאֶכְלוּ עוּלֵמַיָּא וַחֲלַק גֻּבְרַיָּא
דִּי אֲזָלוּ עִמִּי עָנֵר אֶשְׁכּוֹל וּמַמְרֵא אִנּוּן

רס"י

שנחלק בלילה, ובחלוקו הרשעון נעשה לו נס, וחלוקו הטוב נשמר ונתן לו לחנות לילה של מלריס: **עד חובה**. יש מקום שעמו חובה, ודן קורא חובה, על שם עבודת מלילים שעתידה להיות שם: **(יז) עמק שוה**. כך שמו, ותרגומו למישר מפנה, פנוי מחילוגות ומכל מכשול: **עמק המלך**. בית ריסא דמלכא, בית ריס אחד, שהוא שלשים קנים, שהיה מיוחד למלך לנחת שם. ומדרש אגדה, עמק שהושוו שם כל החומות, והמליכו את מלרכם עליהם לנשיא מלהים ולקלין: **(יח) ומלכי צדק**. מדרש אגדה הוא שם בן נח[1]: **לחם ויין**. כך עושים ליגיעי מלחמה, והרואה לו שהין בלבו עליו על שהרג את בניו. ומדרש אגדה, רמז לו על המנחות ועל הנסכים שיקריבו שם בניו: **(יט) קנה שמים וארץ**. כמו עושה שמים וארץ[2], על ידי עשייתן קנאן להיות שלו: **(כ) אשר מגן**. אשר הסגיר, וכן תמגנך ישרמל[3]: **ויתן לו**. מלרם, מעשר מכל אשר לו, לפי שהיה

כהן: **(כא) תן לי הנפש**. (הגופים מן) השבי שלי שהצלת, החזר לי הגופים לבדם: **(כב) הרמתי ידי**. לשון שבועה, מריש אמי את ידי לאל עליון, וכן בי נשבעתי[4], נשבע אני, וכן נתתי כוס השדה קח ממני[5], נותן אני לך כוס השדה וקחהו ממני: **(כג) אם מחוט ועד שרוך נעל**. מעטב לעגמי מן השבי: **ואם אקח מכל אשר לך**. ושם תאמר לתת לי שכר מדית גנזיך, לא תקח: **ולא תאמר וגו'**. שהקב"ה הבטיחני לעשרני, שנאמר ואברכך וגו': **(כד) הנערים**. עבדי אשר הלכו אתי, ועוד ענר אשכול וממרא וגו', ואף על פי שעבדי נכנסו למלחמה, שנאמר הוא ועבדיו ויכם, וענר ואחיריו יושבו על הכלים לשמור, אפילו הכי כיס יקחו חלקם, וממנו למד דוד, שאמר כחלק היורד למלחמה וכחלק היושב על הכלים יחדיו יחלוקו[6], ולכך נאמר ויכי מהיום ההוא ומעלה ויושיעה לחוק ולמשפט[7], ולא נאמר והלאה, לפי שהכבר ניתן

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*."

1 נדרים לב: 2 תהלים קמו,ו 3 הושע יא, ז 4 בראשית כב, טז 5 שם כג, יג 6 שמואל-א ל, כד 7 שם פסוק כה

as Chovah (i.e. Dan), which is to the left of Damascus.

[16] *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 *After 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.* [18] *Malkitzedek King of Shaleim (who was, in fact, Sheim the son of Noach) 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.* [19] *He blessed him, saying, “Blessed be Avram to the supreme God, who possesses heaven and earth!* [20] *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 [21] *The King of Sodom said to Avram, “Give me the people (of mine whom you captured), and take the possessions for yourself.”*

[22] *Avram said to the King of Sodom, “I raise my hand (in an oath) to God, the supreme God, Who possesses heaven and earth,* [23] *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)—*[24] *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

At 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)

חֶלְקָם: ס **טו** א אַחַר | הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה הָיָה דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם בַּמַּחֲזֶה לֵאמֹר אַל־תִּירָא אַבְרָם אָנֹכִי מָגֵן לָךְ שְׂכָרְךָ הַרְבֵּה מְאֹד: ב וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם אֲדֹנָי *יֱהוִה מַה־תִּתֶּן־לִי וְאָנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ עֲרִירִי וּבֶן־מֶשֶׁק בֵּיתִי הוּא דַּמֶּשֶׂק אֱלִיעֶזֶר: ג וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם הֵן לִי לֹא נָתַתָּה זָרַע וְהִנֵּה בֶן־בֵּיתִי יוֹרֵשׁ אֹתִי: ד וְהִנֵּה דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר לֹא יִירָשְׁךָ זֶה כִּי־אִם אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא מִמֵּעֶיךָ הוּא יִירָשֶׁךָ: ה וַיּוֹצֵא אֹתוֹ הַחוּצָה וַיֹּאמֶר הַבֶּט־נָא הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וּסְפֹר הַכּוֹכָבִים אִם־תּוּכַל לִסְפֹּר אֹתָם וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ כֹּה יִהְיֶה זַרְעֶךָ: ו וְהֶאֱמִן בַּיהוָה וַיַּחְשְׁבֶהָ לּוֹ צְדָקָה: [ששי] ז וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲנִי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאוּר כַּשְׂדִּים לָתֶת לְךָ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת לְרִשְׁתָּהּ: ח וַיֹּאמֶר אֲדֹנָי *יֱהוִה

יְקַבְּלוּן חֶלַקְהוֹן: א בָּתַר פִּתְגָמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין הֲוָה פִּתְגָמָא דַיְיָ לְאַבְרָם בְּנְבוּאָה לְמֵימָר לָא תְדַחַל אַבְרָם מֵימְרִי תְּקוֹף לָךְ אַגְרָךְ סַגִּי לַחֲדָא: ב וַאֲמַר אַבְרָם יְיָ אֱלֹהִים מָה תִּתֶּן לִי וַאֲנָא אָזֵל בְּלָא וָלָד וּבַר פַּרְנָסָא הָדֵין דִּבְבֵיתִי הוּא דַּמַשְׁקָאָה אֱלִיעֶזֶר: ג וַאֲמַר אַבְרָם הָא לִי לָא יְהַבְתְּ וָלָד וְהָא בַר בֵּיתִי יָרִית יָתִי: ד וְהָא פִּתְגָמָא דַיְיָ עִמֵּיהּ לְמֵימָר לָא יֵרִיתִנָּךְ דֵּין אֱלָהֵין בַּר דְּתוֹלִיד הוּא יֵרִיתִנָּךְ: ה וְאַפֵּיק יָתֵיהּ לְבָרָא וַאֲמַר אִסְתְּכִי כְעַן לִשְׁמַיָּא וּמְנִי כּוֹכְבַיָּא אִם תְּכוֹל לְמִמְנֵי יַתְהוֹן וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ כְּדֵין יְהוֹן בְּנָיְךְ: ו וְהֵימִין בְּמֵימְרָא דַיְיָ וְחַשְׁבַהּ לֵיהּ לְזָכוּ: ז וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ אֲנָא יְיָ דִּי אַפֵּקְתָּךְ מֵאוּרָא דְכַשְׂדָּאֵי לְמִתַּן לָךְ יַת אַרְעָא הָדָא לְמֵירְתָהּ: ח וַאֲמַר יְיָ אֱלֹהִים בְּמָא אִדַּע

*הקריאה אֱלֹהִים

רש"י

כמוך בימי מצרים: **(א) אחר הדברים האלה.** כל מקום שנאמר אחר, סמוך, אחרי, מופלג[1]. אחר הדברים האלה, אחר שנעשה לו נס זה שהרג את המלכים, וכיה דומה ומומר שמע קבלתי שכר על כל נדקותי, לכך אמר לו במקום אל תירא מצרם מגכי מגן לך. מן הטומם, שלא תטגם על כל מותן נפשות שהרגת, ומה שאתה דומה על קטול שכרך, שכרך הרבה מאד: **(ג) הולך ערירי.** מגאס בן סרוק פירשו לשון יורש, וחבר לו ער ועומר[2], ערירי בלא יורש, כאשר תאמר ובכל תבואתי תשרש[3], תעקר שרשיה, כך לשון ערירי חסר בניס ובלע"ז דעזענפאנט"ס. ולי נראה ער ועומר, מגזרת ולבי ער[4], ועריכי לשון מורבן, וכן ערו ערו[5], וכן ערות יסוד[6], וכן ערער תתערער[7], וכן כי תרזה ערה[8]: **ובן משק ביתי.** כתרגומו, שכל ביתי נזון על פיו, כמו ועל פיך ישק[9], לפותרופוס שלי, ואלו היה לי בן היה בני ממונה על שלי: **דמשק.** לפי התרגום מדמשק היה, ולפי מדרש אגדה שרדף המלכים עד דמשק, ובגמרא שלנו דרשו טוטריקון, דולה ומשקה מתורת רבו לתלמיד: **(ג) הן לי לא נתתה זרע.** ומה תועלת בכל אשר תתן לי: **(ה) ויוצא אתו החוצה.** לפי פשוטו כוליתו מהלכו לחוץ לרחות הכוכבים. ולפי מדרשו, אמר לו לא מהלטגיונות שלך שרחית במזלות שתיך עתיד להעמיד בן, אבל יש לו בן, אבל אברהם יש לו בן, וכן שרי לא תלד, אבל שרה תלד, אני קורא לכם שם אחר ויתקיים במזל. דבר אחר, כוליתו מהלנו של עולם והגביהו למעלה מן הכוכבים, וזהו לשון הכתוב מלמעלה למטה: **(ו) והאמין בה'.** לא שאל לו אות על זאת, אבל על ירושת הארץ שאל לו אות, ואמר לו במה אדע: **ויחשבה לו צדקה.** הקב"ה חשבה לאברם לזכות ולצדקה, על האמונה שהאמין בו. דבר אחר במה אדע, לא שאל לו אות, אלא אמר לפניו, הודיעני

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Why does the Torah use an Aramaic word, מַחֲזֶה (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).

1 ב"ר מד, ה 2 מלאכי ב, יב 3 איוב לא, יב 4 שה"ש ה, ב 5 תהלים קלז, ז 6 חבקוק ג, יג 7 ירמי' נא, נח 8 צפני' ב, יד 9 בראשית מא, מ

God Promises Avram Children

15 *After 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!"*

[2] *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."* [3] *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!"*

[4] *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."*

[5] *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."*

[6] *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 *He said to him, "I am God, who brought you out from Ur-Kasdim, to give you this land as an inheritance."*

[8] *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."

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)

Sparks of Chasidus

Why 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)

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)

בַּמָּה אֵדַע כִּי אִירָשֶׁנָּה: ט וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו קְחָה לִי עֶגְלָה מְשֻׁלֶּשֶׁת
וְעֵז מְשֻׁלֶּשֶׁת וְאַיִל מְשֻׁלָּשׁ וְתֹר וְגוֹזָל: י וַיִּקַּח־לוֹ אֶת־כָּל־אֵלֶּה
וַיְבַתֵּר אֹתָם בַּתָּוֶךְ וַיִּתֵּן אִישׁ־בִּתְרוֹ לִקְרַאת רֵעֵהוּ וְאֶת־
הַצִּפֹּר לֹא בָתָר: יא וַיֵּרֶד הָעַיִט עַל־הַפְּגָרִים וַיַּשֵּׁב אֹתָם
אַבְרָם: יב וַיְהִי הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לָבוֹא וְתַרְדֵּמָה נָפְלָה עַל־אַבְרָם וְהִנֵּה
אֵימָה חֲשֵׁכָה גְדֹלָה נֹפֶלֶת עָלָיו: יג וַיֹּאמֶר לְאַבְרָם יָדֹעַ תֵּדַע
כִּי־גֵר | יִהְיֶה זַרְעֲךָ בְּאֶרֶץ לֹא לָהֶם וַעֲבָדוּם וְעִנּוּ אֹתָם אַרְבַּע
מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה: יד וְגַם אֶת־הַגּוֹי אֲשֶׁר יַעֲבֹדוּ דָּן אָנֹכִי וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן
יֵצְאוּ בִּרְכֻשׁ גָּדוֹל: טו וְאַתָּה תָּבוֹא אֶל־אֲבֹתֶיךָ בְּשָׁלוֹם תִּקָּבֵר
בְּשֵׂיבָה טוֹבָה: טז וְדוֹר רְבִיעִי יָשֻׁבוּ הֵנָּה כִּי לֹא־שָׁלֵם עֲוֹן
הָאֱמֹרִי עַד־הֵנָּה: יז וַיְהִי הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ בָּאָה וַעֲלָטָה הָיָה וְהִנֵּה תַנּוּר
עָשָׁן וְלַפִּיד אֵשׁ אֲשֶׁר עָבַר בֵּין הַגְּזָרִים הָאֵלֶּה: יח בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא
כָּרַת יְהוָה אֶת־אַבְרָם בְּרִית לֵאמֹר לְזַרְעֲךָ נָתַתִּי אֶת־הָאָרֶץ

אֲרִי אֵרְתִּינָהּ: ט וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ קָרֵב קֳדָמַי עֶגְלִין
תְּלָתָא וְעִיזִין תְּלָתָא וְדִכְרִין תְּלָת וְשַׁפְנִינָא
וּבַר יוֹנָה: י וְקָרֵיב קֳדָמוֹהִי יַת כָּל אִלֵּין וּפַלֵּיג
יַתְהוֹן בְּשָׁוֵי וִיהַב פַּלְגֵיָא פְּלוּגֵי לָקֳבֵיל חַבְרֵיהּ
וְיַת עוֹפָא לָא פַלֵּיג: יא וּנְחַת עוֹפָא עַל פִּגְלֵיָא
וְאַפְרַשׁ יַתְהוֹן אַבְרָם: יב וַהֲוַת שִׁמְשָׁא לְמֵיעַל
וְשֵׁינְתָא נְפָלַת עַל אַבְרָם וְהָא אֵימְתָא קְבֵל
סַגִּי נְפָלַת עֲלוֹהִי: יג וַאֲמַר לְאַבְרָם מְדַע
תִּדַּע אֲרֵי דַיָּרִין יְהוֹן בְּנָיְךְ בְּאַרְעָא דְּלָא
דִילְהוֹן וְיִפְלְחוּן בְּהוֹן וְיענּוּן יַתְהוֹן אַרְבַּע
מְאָה שְׁנִין: יד וְאַף יַת עַמָּא דְיִפְלְחוּן בְּהוֹן
דַּיָּין אֲנָא וּבָתַר כֵּן יִפְּקוּן בְּקִנְיָנָא סַגִּי: טו וְאַתְּ
תִּתְכְּנִישׁ לְוָת אֲבָהָתָךְ בְּשָׁלָם תִּתְקְבַר בְּסֵיבוּ
טָבָא: טז וְדָרָא רְבִיעָאָה יְתוּבוּן הָכָא אֲרֵי לָא
שְׁלִים חוֹבָא דֶּאֱמוֹרָאָה עַד כְּעָן: יז וַהֲוַת
שִׁמְשָׁא עַלַת וְקִבְלָא הֲוָה וְהָא תַּנּוּר דִּתְנַן
וּבְעוּר דְּאֶשָּׁא דִּי עְדָא בֵּין פַּלְגֵיָא הָאִלֵּין:
יח בְּיוֹמָא הַהוּא גְּזַר יְיָ עִם אַבְרָם קְיָם לְמֵימָר

בחיזק זכות יתקיימו בה, לומר לו הקב"ה בזכות הקרבנות: (ט) **עגלה משלשת.** שלשה עגלים רמז לשלשה פרים, פר יוסי הכפוריס ופר הטעה דבר שלא נצוו ועגלה ערופה[1]: **ועז משלשת.** רמז לשעיר הנעשה בפנים ושעירי מוספין של מועד ושעיר חטאת יחיד: **ואיל משולש.** חסה ודאי וחסה תלוי וכשבה של חטאת יחיד: **ותור וגוזל.** תור ובן יונה: (י) **ויבתר אתם.** חלק כל אחד לשני חלקים. ואין המקרא יוצא מידי פשוטו, לפי שהיה כורת ברית עמו לשמור הכתחתו להוריש לבניו את הארץ, כדכתיב ביוסף הכוזב כרת כי' את אברם ברית לומר לכלן הכוזבים בין בתרי הטעל[2], אף כאן תנור עשן ולפיד אש אשר עבר בין הגזרים, הוא שלומו של שהיה שהוא אש: **ואת הצפור לא בתר.** לפי שהאומות עובדי כוכבים ומזלות נמשלו לפרים וחילוס ושעירים, שנאמר שבעוני פרים רבים וגו'[3], ואומר והחיל אשר רחית בעל הקרניים, מלכי מדי ופרס[4], ואומר והכפיר והשעיר, מלך יון. וישראל נמשלו לבני יונה, שנאמר יונתי בחגוי הסלע[5], לפיכך בתר הבהמות, רמז על האומות שיהיו כלין והולכין, ואת הצפור לא בתר, רמז שיהיו ישראל קיימין לעולם: (יא) **העיט.** הוא עוף, ועל שם שהוא עט ושומף את הבגדות לטוש עלי אוכל, כמו ותעט אל השלל[6]: **על הפגרים.** הבתרים. (ס"א הפגרים מתרגמינן פגליא, אלא מתוך שהורגלו לתרגם אית בתרו ויהב פלגיא, נתחלף להם תיבת פגליא לפגליא, ותרגמו הפגרים פגליא, וכל המתרגם כן טועה, לפי שאין להקיש בתריס לפגרים, שבתריס תרגומו פגליא, ופגרים תרגומו פגליא לשון פגול, כמו פגול הוא[7], לשון פגר): **וישב.** לשון נשיבה והפרחה, כמו ישב רוחו[8], רמז שיבוא דוד בן יסי לכלותם, ואין מניחים אותו מן השמים, עד שיבוא מלך המשיח: (יב) **והנה אימה וגו'.** רמז לגרות וחשך של גליות: (יג) **כי גר יהיה זרעך.** משנולד יצחק עד שיצאו ישראל ממצרים מרבע מאות שנה, כיצד, יצחק בן ששים שנה כשנולד יעקב, ויעקב כשירד למצרים אמר ימי שני מגורי שלשים ומאת שנה, הרי ק"ץ, ומצרים היו מחתים ועשר כמנין רד"ו, הרי מרבע מאות שנה. ואם תאמר במצרים היו מרבע מאות, הרי קהת מיורדי מצרים היה, לא וחשוב שנותיו של קהת ושל עמרם, ושמואל של משה שהיה כשיצאו ישראל ממצרים, אין אתה מוצא אלא שלש מאות וחמשים, ואתה לריך להוציא מכן כל השנים שחי קהת אחר לידת עמרם, ושחי עמרם אחר לידת משה: **בארץ לא להם.** ולא נאמר בארץ מצרים, אלא לא לכם, ומשנולד יצחק ויגר אברהם וגו', ויגר יצחק בגרר, ויעקב גר בארץ חם[9], לגור בארץ כנען[10]: (יד) **וגם את הגוי.** וגם, לרבות מרבע מלכיות, שאף הם כלים על שנשתעבדו את ישראל: **דן אנכי.** בשעה מכות: **ברכוש גדול.** בממון גדול כמו שנאמר ויעלו את מצרים[11]: (טו) **ואתה תבוא.** ולא תראה כל אלה: **אל אבותיך.** אבוי עובד עבודה זרה והוא מבשרו שיצא אליו, למדך שאשה תרח תשובה: **תקבר בשיבה טובה.** בשרו שיעשה ישמעאל תשובה בימיו, ולא יצא עשו לתרבות רעה בימיו, ולפיכך מת ה' שנים קודם זמנו, ובו ביום מרד עשו: (טז) **ודור רביעי.** לאחר שיגלו למצרים יהיו שם ג' דורות, והכריעני ישובו לארץ הזאת, לפי שבארץ כנען היה מדבר עמו וכרת ברית זה, כדכתיב לתת לך את הארץ הזאת לרשתה, וכן היה, יעקב ירד למצרים, לא וחשוב דורותיו, יהודה פרץ וחצרון, והלא בן חצרון מבאי הארץ היה: **כי לא שלם עון האמורי.** להיות משתלם מארבע עד לותו זמן, שהיו הקב"ה נפרע מהומה עד שתתמלא סאתה, שנאמר בשמשאה בשלחה תריבנה[12]: (יז) **ויהי השמש באה.** כמו ויהי הם מריקים שקיהם[13], ויהי הם קוברים איש[14], כלומר ויהי דבר זה: **השמש באה.** שקטה: **ועלטה היה.** חשך היוס: **והנה תנור עשן וגו'.** רמז לו שיפלו במלכיות עובדי גלולים בגיהנם. בשה טעמו למעלה, לכך הוא מצוהר שבשה כבר, ואם היה טעמו למטה בשל"ף, היה מצוהר כשהיא שוקעת, ואי אפשר לומר כן, שהרי כבר כתיב ויהי השמש לבא, ולעברת תנור עשן לשון אחר מכאן היתה, ומלא שכבר שקטה. וזה חילוק בכל תיבה לשון נקבה שיסודה שתי אותיות, כמו בא, קם, שב, כשהטעם למעלה לשון עבר הוא, כגון זה, וכגון ורחל בשה, קמה חלומתי, הנה שבה יצמתך[15], וכשהטעם למטה הוא לשון הווה, דבר שנעשה עכשיו והולך, כמו בשה עם הלשן, בערב היא בשה ובבקר היא שבה[16]: (יח) **לזרעך נתתי.** למיריהו של הקב"ה כאילו היה עשויה[17]:

1 ב"ר מד, יד 2 ירמי' לד, יט 3 תהלים כב, יג 4 דניאל ח, כ 5 שה"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 שמ' יב, לו 12 יש' כז, ז 13 בראשית מב, לה 14 מלכים-ב יג, כא 15 רות א, טו 16 אסתר ב, יד 17 ב"ר מד, כב

[9] *He said to him, "Take for Me three heifers, three goats, three rams, a turtle-dove and a young bird."*

[10] *(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).* [11] *Birds of prey descended upon the (pieces of the) carcasses, but Avram drove them away.*

[12] *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).*

[13] *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!* [14] *I will also pronounce judgment on the nation they will serve (with ten plagues), and afterwards they will leave with substantial wealth."*

[15] *"(Before any of this happens,) you will come to your forefathers in peace, and you will be buried in a good old age.* [16] *(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."*

[17] *Then, when the sun had set and it became dark, and—look!—a smoking furnace with a fiery torch passed between these parts.*

[18] *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. 823*ff*.)

הַזֹּאת מִנְּהַר מִצְרַיִם עַד־הַנָּהָר הַגָּדֹל נְהַר־פְּרָת: יט אֶת־הַקֵּינִי
וְאֶת־הַקְּנִזִּי וְאֶת הַקַּדְמֹנִי: כ וְאֶת־הַחִתִּי וְאֶת־הַפְּרִזִּי
וְאֶת־הָרְפָאִים: כא וְאֶת־הָאֱמֹרִי וְאֶת־הַכְּנַעֲנִי וְאֶת־הַגִּרְגָּשִׁי
וְאֶת־הַיְבוּסִי: ס טז א וְשָׂרַי אֵשֶׁת אַבְרָם לֹא יָלְדָה לוֹ וְלָהּ
שִׁפְחָה מִצְרִית וּשְׁמָהּ הָגָר: ב וַתֹּאמֶר שָׂרַי אֶל־אַבְרָם הִנֵּה־נָא
עֲצָרַנִי יְהוָה מִלֶּדֶת בֹּא־נָא אֶל־שִׁפְחָתִי אוּלַי אִבָּנֶה מִמֶּנָּה
וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָם לְקוֹל שָׂרָי: ג וַתִּקַּח שָׂרַי אֵשֶׁת־אַבְרָם אֶת־הָגָר
הַמִּצְרִית שִׁפְחָתָהּ מִקֵּץ עֶשֶׂר שָׁנִים לְשֶׁבֶת אַבְרָם בְּאֶרֶץ
כְּנָעַן וַתִּתֵּן אֹתָהּ לְאַבְרָם אִישָׁהּ לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה: ד וַיָּבֹא אֶל־הָגָר
וַתַּהַר וַתֵּרֶא כִּי הָרָתָה וַתֵּקַל גְּבִרְתָּהּ בְּעֵינֶיהָ: ה וַתֹּאמֶר שָׂרַי

לְבָנָיִךְ יָהֲבִית יַת אַרְעָא הָדָא מִנַּהֲרָא דְמִצְרַיִם
עַד נַהֲרָא רַבָּא נַהֲרָא פְּרָת: יט יַת שַׁלְמָאֵי
וְיַת קְנָזָאֵי וְיַת קַדְמוֹנָאֵי: כ וְיַת חִתָּאֵי וְיַת
פְּרִזָּאֵי וְיַת גִּבָּרָאֵי: כא וְיַת אֱמוֹרָאֵי וְיַת
כְּנַעֲנָאֵי וְיַת גִּרְגָּשָׁאֵי וְיַת יְבוּסָאֵי: א וְשָׂרַי
אִתַּת אַבְרָם לָא יְלִידַת לֵיהּ וְלָהּ אַמְתָא
מִצְרֵיתָא וּשְׁמָהּ הָגָר: ב וַאֲמַרַת שָׂרַי לְאַבְרָם
הָא כְעַן מַנְּעַנִי יְיָ מִלְמִילַד עוֹל כָּעַן לְוַת
אַמְתִי מָאִים אִתְבְּנֵי מִנָּהּ וְקַבִּיל אַבְרָם לְמֵימַר
שָׂרָי: ג וּדְבָרַת שָׂרַי אִתַּת אַבְרָם יַת הָגָר
מִצְרֵיתָא אַמְתָהּ מִסּוֹף עֲשַׂר שְׁנִין לְמִתַּב
אַבְרָם בְּאַרְעָא דִכְנַעַן וִיהָבַת יָתָהּ לְאַבְרָם
בַּעֲלָהּ לֵיהּ לְאִנְתּוּ: ד וְעַל לְוַת הָגָר וְעִדְּיאַת
וַחֲזַת אֲרֵי עִדְּיאַת וְקַלַּת רִבּוּתָהּ בְּעֵינָהָא:
ה וַאֲמַרַת שָׂרַי לְאַבְרָם דִּין לִי עֲלָךְ אֲנָא יְהָבִית

רס"י

הנהר הגדול נהר פרת. לפי שהוא דבוק לארץ ישראל קוראהו גדול, אף על פי שהוא מחוץ למרבעה נהרות היוצאים מעדן, שנאמר ונהר הרביעי הוא פרת, משל לדיוט, עבד מלך מלך, הדבק לאחוור ויאתאוו לך: **(יט) את הקיני.** עשר חומות יש כאן, ולא נתן לכם אלא שבעה גויים, והשלשה חדוש ומואב ועמון[1], והם קיני קניזי קדמוני, עתידים להיות ירושה לעתיד, שנאמר חדוש ומואב משלוח ידם ובני עמון משמעתם[2]: **(כ) ואת הרפאים.** ארץ עוג, שנאמר כי רוח ארץ רפאים[3]: **(ז) שפחה מצרית.** בת פרעה היתה, כשראה נסים שנעשו לשרה, אמר, מוטב שתהא בתי שפחה בבית זה, ולא גבירה בבית אחר: **(ג) אולי אבנה ממנה.** לימד על מי שאין לו בנים שאימו בלא אלא כרוסו: **אבנה ממנה.** בזכות שאכניס צרתי לתוך ביתי: **לקול שרי.** לרוח הקדש שבה[4]: **(ג) ותקח שרי.** לקחתה בדברים שאריך עזכית לידבק בגוף קדוש כזה[5]: **מקץ עשר שנים.** מועד הקבוע לאשה שאהבה שאהבה עשר שניס ולא ילדה לבעלה מייב ליטא אחרת[6]: **לשבת אברם וגו'.** מגיד, שאין יושבת חוצה לארץ עולה לו מן המנין, לפי שלא נאמר לו ואתאך לגוי גדול עד שיבא לארץ ישראל: **(ד) ויבא אל הגר ותהר.** מדיאה רשאוכה[7]: **ותקל גברתה בעיניה.** אמרה, שרי זו אין סתרה כגלויה, מראה עצמה

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 12:10*ff.*) 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*

1 ב"ר מד, כג 2 ישעי' יא , יד 3 דברים ג, יג 4 ב"ר מה, ב 5 שם ג 6 יבמות סד. 7 ב"ר מה, ד

from the river of Egypt until the great river, the Euphrates river, [19] *the (land of the) Kenites, the Kenizites, the Kadmonites,* [20] *the Chitites, the Perizites, the Refa'im,* [21] *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. [2] *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. [3] *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.*

[4] *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. 200*ff*; *ibid.* p. 100*ff*.; 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. 19*ff*.)

אֶל־אַבְרָם חֲמָסִי עָלֶיךָ אָנֹכִי נָתַתִּי שִׁפְחָתִי בְּחֵיקֶךָ וַתֵּרֶא כִּי הָרָתָה וָאֵקַל בְּעֵינֶיהָ יִשְׁפֹּט יְהוָה בֵּינִי *וּבֵינֶיךְ׃ ו וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם אֶל־שָׂרַי הִנֵּה שִׁפְחָתֵךְ בְּיָדֵךְ עֲשִׂי־לָהּ הַטּוֹב בְּעֵינָיִךְ וַתְּעַנֶּהָ שָׂרַי וַתִּבְרַח מִפָּנֶיהָ׃ ז וַיִּמְצָאָהּ מַלְאַךְ יְהוָה עַל־עֵין הַמַּיִם בַּמִּדְבָּר עַל־הָעַיִן בְּדֶרֶךְ שׁוּר׃ ח וַיֹּאמַר הָגָר שִׁפְחַת שָׂרַי אֵי־מִזֶּה בָאת וְאָנָה תֵלֵכִי וַתֹּאמֶר מִפְּנֵי שָׂרַי גְּבִרְתִּי אָנֹכִי בֹרַחַת׃ ט וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מַלְאַךְ יְהוָה שׁוּבִי אֶל־גְּבִרְתֵּךְ וְהִתְעַנִּי תַּחַת יָדֶיהָ׃ י וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מַלְאַךְ יְהוָה הַרְבָּה אַרְבֶּה אֶת־זַרְעֵךְ וְלֹא יִסָּפֵר מֵרֹב׃ יא וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מַלְאַךְ יְהוָה הִנָּךְ הָרָה וְיֹלַדְתְּ בֵּן וְקָרָאת שְׁמוֹ יִשְׁמָעֵאל כִּי־שָׁמַע יְהוָה אֶל־עָנְיֵךְ׃ יב וְהוּא יִהְיֶה פֶּרֶא אָדָם יָדוֹ בַכֹּל וְיַד כֹּל בּוֹ וְעַל־פְּנֵי כָל־אֶחָיו יִשְׁכֹּן׃ יג וַתִּקְרָא שֵׁם־יְהוָה הַדֹּבֵר אֵלֶיהָ אַתָּה אֵל רֳאִי כִּי אָמְרָה הֲגַם הֲלֹם רָאִיתִי אַחֲרֵי רֹאִי׃ יד עַל־כֵּן קָרָא לַבְּאֵר בְּאֵר לַחַי רֹאִי הִנֵּה בֵין־קָדֵשׁ וּבֵין בָּרֶד׃ טו וַתֵּלֶד הָגָר לְאַבְרָם בֵּן וַיִּקְרָא אַבְרָם שֵׁם־בְּנוֹ אֲשֶׁר־יָלְדָה הָגָר יִשְׁמָעֵאל׃ טז וְאַבְרָם בֶּן־שְׁמֹנִים שָׁנָה וְשֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים בְּלֶדֶת־הָגָר אֶת־יִשְׁמָעֵאל לְאַבְרָם׃ ס

יז א וַיְהִי אַבְרָם בֶּן־תִּשְׁעִים שָׁנָה וְתֵשַׁע שָׁנִים וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲנִי־אֵל שַׁדַּי הִתְהַלֵּךְ לְפָנַי וֶהְיֵה תָמִים׃ ב וְאֶתְּנָה בְרִיתִי בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ וְאַרְבֶּה אוֹתְךָ בִּמְאֹד מְאֹד׃

אַמְתִּי לָךְ וַחֲזֹת אֲרֵי עֲדִיאַת וְקַלִּית בְּעֵינָהָא יְדִין יְיָ בֵּינִי וּבֵינָךְ׃ ו וַאֲמַר אַבְרָם לְשָׂרַי הָא אַמְתִּיךְ בִּידִיךְ עֲבִידִי לָהּ כִּדְתַקִּין בְּעֵינָיְכִי וְעַנִּיתַהּ שָׂרַי וַעֲרָקַת מִקֳּדָמָהָא׃ ז וְאַשְׁכְּחַהּ מַלְאֲכָא דַיְיָ עַל עֵינָא דְמַיָא בְּמַדְבְּרָא עַל עֵינָא בְּאוֹרְחָא דְחַגְרָא׃ ח וַאֲמַר הָגָר אַמְתָא דְשָׂרַי מְנַן אַתְּ אָתְיָא וּלְאָן אַזְלָא וַאֲמָרַת מִן קֳדָם שָׂרַי רִבּוֹנְתִּי אֲנָא עָרָקָא׃ ט וַאֲמַר לָהּ מַלְאֲכָא דַיְיָ תּוּבִי לְוַת רִבּוֹנְתִּיךְ וְאִשְׁתַּעְבְּדִי תְּחוֹת יְדָהָא׃ י וַאֲמַר לָהּ מַלְאֲכָא דַיְיָ אַסְגָּאָה אַסְגֵּי יַת בְּנָיְכִי וְלָא יִתְמְנוּן מִסְּגִי׃ יא וַאֲמַר לָהּ מַלְאֲכָא דַיְיָ הָא אַתְּ מְעַדְּיָא וְתֵילְדִין בַּר וְתִקְרִין שְׁמֵיהּ יִשְׁמָעֵאל אֲרֵי קַבִּיל יְיָ צְלוֹתִיךְ׃ יב וְהוּא יְהֵא מָרוֹד בֶּאֱנָשָׁא הוּא יְהֵא צָרִיךְ לְכוֹלָא וְאַף כָּל בְּנֵי אֱנָשָׁא יְהוֹן צָרִיכִין לֵיהּ וְעַל אַפֵּי כָל אֲחוֹהִי יִשְׁרֵי׃ יג וְצַלִּיאַת בִּשְׁמָא דַיְיָ דְּמִתְמַלֵּל עִמָּהּ וַאֲמַרַת אַתְּ הוּא אֱלָהָא דְחָזֵי כוֹלָא אֲרֵי אֲמַרַת הֲבָרָם הָכָא (הַאַף אֲנָא) שָׁרֵיתִי חָזֵיָא בָּתַר דְּאִתְגְּלִי לִי׃ יד עַל כֵּן קָרָא לְבֵירָא בֵּירָא דְמַלְאֲכָא קַיָמָא אִתְחֲזֵי עֲלָהּ הָא הִיא בֵּין רְקֹם וּבֵין חַגְרָא׃ טו וִילִידַת הָגָר לְאַבְרָם בַּר וּקְרָא אַבְרָם שׁוּם בְּרֵיהּ דִילִידַת הָגָר יִשְׁמָעֵאל׃ טז וְאַבְרָם בַּר תְּמָנָן וְשֵׁית שְׁנִין כַּד יְלִידַת הָגָר יַת יִשְׁמָעֵאל לְאַבְרָם׃ א וַהֲוָה אַבְרָם בַּר תְּשְׁעִין שְׁנִין וְאִתְגְּלִי יְיָ לְאַבְרָם וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ אֲנָא אֵל שַׁדַּי פְּלַח קֳדָמַי וֶהֱוֵי שְׁלִים׃ ב וְאֶתֵּן קְיָמִי בֵּין מֵימְרִי וּבֵינָךְ

*נקוד על י״ד בתרא

רש״י

כחילו היה לדקת, ואינה נדקת, שלא זכתה להריון כל השנים הללו, ומני נתעברתי מביאה ראשונה[1]: (ה) **חמסי עליך**. חמס הנעשו לי, עליך הני מטיל הטונס, כשהתפללת להקב״ה מה תתן לי ואתכי הולך ערירי, לא התפללת אלא עליך, והיה לך להתפלל על שנינו, והייתי אני נפקדת עמך. ועוד, דבריך אתה חומס ממני, שאתה שומע בזיוני ושותק[2]: **אנכי נתתי שפחתי וגו׳ ביני ובינך**. כל זינך שנמקרע חסר, וזה מלא, קרי ביה ובינין, שהכניסה עין הרע בעיבורה של הגר והפילה עוברה, הוא שהמלאך חומר להגר הנך הרה, והלא כבר הרתה והוא מבשר לה שתהר, אלא מלמד שהפילה הריון הראשון: (ו) **ותענה שרי**. היתה משעבדת בה בקושי[3]: (ח) **אי מזה באת**. מהיכן נאת. יודע היה, אלא ליתן לה פתח ליכנס עמה בדברים. ולשון אי מזה, היה במקום שתאמר עליו מזה אני בא: (ט) **ויאמר לה מלאך ה׳ וגו׳**. על כל אמירה היה שלוח לה מלאך אחר, לכך נאמר מלאך בכל אמירה ואמירה: (יא) **הנך הרה**. כשתשובי תראי, כמו הנך הרה דאתא מנוח[4]: **וילדת בן**. כמו ויולדה בן. ודומה לו יוסבה בלבון מקבנתה בחרוסי[5]: **וקראת שמו**. לשון הוא, כמו שאומר לזכר וקראת את שמו ילחק: (יב) **פרא אדם**. מהוכח מדברות לעוד חיות, כמו שכתוב ויהי רובב קשת ויצא במדבר פתרן: **ידו בכל**. לסטים: **ויד כל בו**. כלל שונאין אותו ומתגרין בו[6]: **ועל פני כל אחיו ישכון**. שיהיה זרעו גדול: (יג) **אתה**

1 ב״ר מה, ד 2 שם מה, ה 3 שם מה, ו 4 שופטים יג, ז 5 ירמי׳ כב, כג 6 ב״ר מה, ט

אל ראי. נקוד חטף קמ״ץ, מפני שהוא שם דבר, אלוה הרואני, שרואה בעלבון של עלובין). (ס״ל דבר אחר אתה אל ראי, משמע שהוא רואה הכל, ואין שום דבר רואה אותו): **הגם הלם**. לשון תימה, וכי סבורה הייתי שאף כאן במדבריות, ראיתי שלוחו של מקום, אחר ראני אותם בזיונו של אברהם, שמא הייתי רגילה לראות מלאכים, ודע שהיתה רגילה לראותם, שהרי מנוח ראה את המלאך פעם אחת ואמר מות נמות, וזו ראתה מרובה זה אחר זה ולא מרדה: (יד) **באר לחי רואי**. כתרגומו באר שהמלאך קיים אתחזי עלה: (טו) **ויקרא אברם שם וגו׳**. אף על פי שלא שמע אברהם דברי המלאך שאמר וקראת שמו ישמעאל, שרוח 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 בתלאותי לכל דורות, לפיכך התהלך לפני, ותהיה לך לתלוה ולפטרון. וכן כל מקום שהוא שהוא במקרא פירושו כך, די שלו, וכלל לפי הענין: **התהלך לפני**. כתרגומו פלח קדמי, כדבק בעבודתי: **והיה תמים**. אף זה לשון אחר לשון, היה שלם בכל נסיונותי. ולפי מדרשו, התהלך לפני במצות מילה, ובדבר הזה תהיה תמים, שכל זמן שהערלה בך אתה בעל מום לפני. דבר אחר והיה תמים, עכשיו אתה חסר כ׳ אברים, ג׳ עיניים, ג׳ אזניים, ורמח הגויה, חוסיף לך חות על שמך, ויהיו מנין חותיותיך רמ״ח, כמנין אברייך: (ב) **ואתנה**

5 *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!"*

6 *Avram said to Sarai, "Here is your handmaid. Treat her as you see fit!"*

Sarai mistreated her, and she ran away from her.

7 *An angel of God found her by a water fountain in the desert, by the fountain on the road to Shur.*

8 *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."

9 *(Another) angel of God said to her, "Return to your mistress, and allow yourself to be subjugated under her hands."*

10 *(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."*

11 *(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.* 12 *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."*

13 *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?" 14 *therefore the well was called "the well at which the living (angel) appeared." It is found between Kadeish and Bared.*

15 *Hagar bore a son to Avram. Avram (prophetically) named his son, whom Hagar had borne, Yishma'el.* 16 *Avram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Yishma'el to Avram.*

Avram's Name is Changed to Avraham

17 *When 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.* 2 *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: Rebbi 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.

ג וַיִּפֹּל אַבְרָם עַל־פָּנָיו וַיְדַבֵּר אִתּוֹ אֱלֹהִים לֵאמֹר: ד אֲנִי הִנֵּה בְרִיתִי אִתָּךְ וְהָיִיתָ לְאַב הֲמוֹן גּוֹיִם: ה וְלֹא־יִקָּרֵא עוֹד אֶת־שִׁמְךָ אַבְרָם וְהָיָה שִׁמְךָ אַבְרָהָם כִּי אַב־הֲמוֹן גּוֹיִם נְתַתִּיךָ: ו וְהִפְרֵתִי אֹתְךָ בִּמְאֹד מְאֹד וּנְתַתִּיךָ לְגוֹיִם וּמְלָכִים מִמְּךָ יֵצֵאוּ: [שביעי] ז וַהֲקִמֹתִי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ וּבֵין זַרְעֲךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ לְדֹרֹתָם לִבְרִית עוֹלָם לִהְיוֹת לְךָ לֵאלֹהִים וּלְזַרְעֲךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ: ח וְנָתַתִּי לְךָ וּלְזַרְעֲךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ אֵת | אֶרֶץ מְגֻרֶיךָ אֵת כָּל־אֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן לַאֲחֻזַּת עוֹלָם וְהָיִיתִי לָהֶם לֵאלֹהִים: ט וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־אַבְרָהָם וְאַתָּה אֶת־בְּרִיתִי תִּשְׁמֹר אַתָּה וְזַרְעֲךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ לְדֹרֹתָם: י זֹאת בְּרִיתִי אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁמְרוּ בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם וּבֵין זַרְעֲךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ הִמּוֹל לָכֶם כָּל־זָכָר: יא וּנְמַלְתֶּם אֵת בְּשַׂר

וְאַסְגִּי יָתָךְ לַחֲדָא לַחֲדָא: ג וּנְפַל אַבְרָם עַל אַפּוֹהִי וּמַלִּיל עִמֵּיהּ יְיָ לְמֵימָר: ד אֲנָא הָא (גְּזַר) קְיָמִי עִמָּךְ וּתְהֵי לְאַב סַגִּי עַמְמִין: ה וְלָא יִתְקְרֵי עוֹד יַת שְׁמָךְ אַבְרָם וְיֵהֵי שְׁמָךְ אַבְרָהָם אֲרֵי לְאַב סַגִּי עַמְמִין יְהַבְתִּיךְ: ו וְאַפֵּישׁ יָתָךְ לַחֲדָא לַחֲדָא וְאֶתְּנִינָךְ לְכִנְשִׁין וּמַלְכִין דְּשַׁלִּיטִין בְּעַמְמַיָּא מִנָּךְ יִפְקוּן: ז וַאֲקִים יַת קְיָמִי בֵּין מֵימְרִי וּבֵינָךְ וּבֵין בְּנָיךְ בַּתְרָךְ לְדָרֵיהוֹן לְקְיָם עָלָם לְמֶהֱוֵי לָךְ לֵאלָהּ וְלִבְנָיךְ בַּתְרָךְ: ח וְאֶתֵּן לָךְ וְלִבְנָיךְ בַּתְרָךְ יַת אַרַע תּוֹתְבוּתָךְ יַת כָּל אַרְעָא דִכְנַעַן לְאַחְסָנַת עָלָם וֶאֱהֵוִי לְהוֹן לֵאלָהּ: ט וַאֲמַר יְיָ לְאַבְרָהָם וְאַתָּ יַת קְיָמִי תִּטַּר אַתְּ וּבְנָיךְ בַּתְרָךְ לְדָרֵיהוֹן: י דֵּין קְיָמִי דִּי תִטְּרוּן בֵּין מֵימְרִי וּבֵינֵיכוֹן וּבֵין בְּנָיךְ בַּתְרָךְ מִנָּזַר לְכוֹן כָּל דְּכוּרָא: יא וְתִגְּזְרוּן יַת בִּשְׂרָא

רס"ו

בריתי. ברית של מהכא, ובברית כתרן להוריסה לך על ידי מלוה זו: **(ג) ויפל אברם על פניו.** ממורת הסכינה, שעד שלא מל לא היה בו כח לעמוד ורוח הקדש נגדת עליו, וזהו שנאמר בנלעס נופל ונלוי עיניס, בנבריאתא דר"מ מלאתי כן[1]: **(ה) כי אב המון גוים.** לשון מוטריקון של אמו, ורי"ם שהיתה בו בתחלה, שלא היה אב אלא לתרס שהוא מקומו, ועכשיו אב לכל העולם, ואפילו ריי"ם שהיתה בו מתחלה לא זזה ממקומה, שאף יו"ד של שרי נתרעמה על הסכינה, עד שהוסיפה ליהושע, שנאמר ויקרא משה להושע בן נון יהושע[2]: **(ו) ונתתיך לגוים.** ישראל ואדום, שהרי ישמעאל כבר היה לו

ולא היה מדשרו עליו: **(ז) והקמותי את בריתי.** ומה היא הבריח, להיות לך לאלהים: **(ח) לאחוזת עולם.** ושם אהיה לכם לאלהים, אבל הדר בחולה לאחרן כמו שאין לו אלוה: **(ט) ואתה.** וי"ו זו מוסיף על ענין ראשון, אני הנה בריתי אתך, ואתה הוי זהיר לשמרה, ומה היא שמירתה. זאת בריתי אשר תשמרו המול לכם וגו': **(י) ביני וביניכם וגו'.** אותם של עכשיו: **ובין זרעך אחריך.** העתידין להוולד אחריך: **המול.** כמו להמול, כמו שאתה אומר עשות כמו לעשות: **(יא) ונמלתם.** כמו ומלתם, והגו"ן בו יתירה ליסוד המופל בו לפרקים, כמו נ' של נופך ו' של נושא. ומלתם כמו ונשאתם, אבל

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:

a.) The lack of imperfection, i.e. the absence of negative qualities.

b.) Choiceness and wholeness, i.e. the presence of positive qualities.

With the *mitzvah* of circumcision, this would correspond to:

a.) The absence of the foreskin.

b.) 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 *tefilin* refines one's head and hands and brings holiness into them. This holiness lingers even after one removes the *tefilin*. Certainly, a hand on which *tefilin* has been placed is incomparable to a hand on which *tefilin* has, God forbid, not been placed.

The distinction is that *tefilin,* 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)

1 פרקי דר"א פכ"ט 2 במדבר יג, טז

[3] *Avram fell upon his face (in awe of the Divine presence).*

God spoke with him, saying, [4] *"As for Me, this is My covenant with you: you shall become the father of a multitude of nations.* [5] *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.* [6] *I will make you extremely fruitful. I will make you into the nations (of Israel and Edom), and kings will emerge from you.* [7] *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.* [8] *I will give you, and your descendants after you, the Land in which you live, the entire Land of Cana'an, as an everlasting possession. I will be God to the (inhabitants of the land)."*

Seventh Reading

The Covenant of Circumcision

17:9 *God said to Avraham, "As for you, you should keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you, throughout their generations.* [10] *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. 44*ff.*)

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. 57*ff.*)

עָרְלַתְכֶם וְהָיָה לְאוֹת בְּרִית בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם: יב וּבֶן־שְׁמֹנַת יָמִים
יִמּוֹל לָכֶם כָּל־זָכָר לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם יְלִיד בָּיִת וּמִקְנַת־כֶּסֶף מִכֹּל
בֶּן־נֵכָר אֲשֶׁר לֹא מִזַּרְעֲךָ הוּא: יג הִמּוֹל | יִמּוֹל יְלִיד בֵּיתְךָ
וּמִקְנַת כַּסְפֶּךָ וְהָיְתָה בְרִיתִי בִּבְשַׂרְכֶם לִבְרִית עוֹלָם: יד וְעָרֵל |
זָכָר אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִמּוֹל אֶת־בְּשַׂר עָרְלָתוֹ וְנִכְרְתָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהִוא
מֵעַמֶּיהָ אֶת־בְּרִיתִי הֵפַר: ס טו וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־אַבְרָהָם
שָׂרַי אִשְׁתְּךָ לֹא־תִקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמָהּ שָׂרָי כִּי שָׂרָה שְׁמָהּ:
טז וּבֵרַכְתִּי אֹתָהּ וְגַם נָתַתִּי מִמֶּנָּה לְךָ בֵּן וּבֵרַכְתִּיהָ וְהָיְתָה
לְגוֹיִם מַלְכֵי עַמִּים מִמֶּנָּה יִהְיוּ: יז וַיִּפֹּל אַבְרָהָם עַל־פָּנָיו וַיִּצְחָק
וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלִבּוֹ הַלְּבֶן מֵאָה־שָׁנָה יִוָּלֵד וְאִם־שָׂרָה הֲבַת־תִּשְׁעִים

דְּעוֹרַלְתְּכוֹן וּתְהֵי לְאָת קְיָם בֵּין מֵימְרִי
וּבֵינֵיכוֹן: יב וּבַר תְּמַנְיָא יוֹמִין יִתְגְּזַר (יִגְזַר)
לְכוֹן כָּל דְּכוּרָא לְדָרֵיכוֹן יְלִיד בֵּיתָא וּזְבִין
כַּסְפָּא מִכָּל בַּר עַמְמִין דִּי לָא מִבְּנָךְ הוּא:
יג אִתְגַּזָּרָא יִתְגַּזְרוּן (מִגְזַר יִגְזַר) יְלִיד בֵּיתָךְ
וּזְבִין כַּסְפָּךְ וּתְהֵי קְיָמִי בִּבְשַׁרְכוֹן לִקְיָם עָלַם:
יד וְעָרֵל דְּכוּרָא דִּי לָא יִתְגְּזַר (יִגְזַר)
יַת בִּשְׂרָא דְעוּרְלְתֵּיהּ וְיִשְׁתֵּיצֵי אֱנָשָׁא הַהוּא
מֵעַמֵּיהּ יַת קְיָמִי אַשְׁנִי: טו וַאֲמַר יְיָ לְאַבְרָהָם
שָׂרַי אִתְּתָךְ לָא תִקְרֵי יַת שְׁמָהּ שָׂרַי אֲרֵי
שָׂרָה שְׁמָהּ: טו וַאֲבָרֵךְ יָתָהּ וְאַף אֶתֵּן מִנָּהּ לָךְ
בַּר וַאֲבָרְכִינַהּ וּתְהֵי לְכִנְשִׁין מַלְכִין דְּשַׁלִּיטִין
בְּעַמְמַיָּא מִנָּהּ יְהוֹן: יז וּנְפַל אַבְרָהָם עַל אַפּוֹהִי

רס"י

ימול לשון יִפָּעֵל, כמו יעשה, יאכל. (ברע"י יסן חיון): (יב) **יליד בית.** שילדתו השפחה בביתו: **ומקנת כסף.** שקנאו מאדונו: (יג) **המול ימול יליד ביתך.** כאן כפל עליו, ולא אמר לשמונה ימים, ללמדך שים יליד בית ימול לאחר (ס"ח לאחד) שמנה ימים, כמו שמפורש במסכת שבת[1]: (יד) **וערל זכר.** כאן למד שהמילה בחותו מקום שהוא ניכר בין זכר לנקבה[2]: **אשר לא ימול.** משיגיע לכלל עושין וכרתה, אבל אביו חין עונש עליו כרת, אבל עובר בעשה: **ונכרתה הנפש.** כולך עיריי ומת קודם זמנו: (טו) **לא תקרא את שמה שרי.** דמשמע שרי לי ולא לאחרים, כי שרה סתם שמה, שהרי שרה על כל[3]: (טז) **וברכתי אתה.** ומה היא הברכה, שחזרה לנעורותה שנאמר היתה לי עדנה[4]: **וברכתיה.** שהנקת שדים כשנתברכה לכך ניוס משהה של יצחק, שהיו מרגיש עליהם שהניחו מסופי מן הסוק ומוחריס בגנו הוא, והניאה כל אחת בנה עמה ומיקתה לה הניאה, והיא היניקה את כולם. הוא שנאמר היניקה בניס שרה. ב"ר רמזו במקלת[5]: (יז) **ויפל אברהם על פניו ויצחק.** זה תרגם אונקלוס לשון שמחה וחדי, ושל שרה לשון מחון, למדת שאברהם החמין ושמח, ושרה לא החמיה ולגלגה, וזהו שהקפיד הקב"ה על שרה ולא הקפיד על אברהם: **הלבן.** יש תמיהות שהן קיימות, כמו הגגלה גגליתי[6], הרואה אתה[7], אף זו היא קיימת, וכך אמר בלבו, הנעשה חסד זה לאחר מה שהקב"ה עושה לי: **ואם שרה הבת תשעים שנה.** היתה כדאי לילד, ואף על פי שדורות הרחשונים היו מולידים בני ת"ק שנה, בימי

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 Noach, "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 Noach, 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?

1 דף קלח: 2 ב"ר מו, יג 3 ברכות יג. 4 בראשית יח, יב 5 נג, ט 6 שמואל-א ב, כז 7 שם-ב טו, כז

- [11] *"You should circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and it will be the sign of a covenant between Me and you."*
- [12] *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.* [13] *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.*
- [14] *"(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 *God said to Avraham, "As for your wife Sarai, you shall not call her by the name Sarai, for Sarah is now her name.* [16] *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."*

[17] *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*.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 5, p. 146; vol. 10, pp. 138-9)

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.)

שָׁנָה תֵּלֵד: יח וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים לוּ יִשְׁמָעֵאל יִחְיֶה
לְפָנֶיךָ: יט וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֲבָל שָׂרָה אִשְׁתְּךָ יֹלֶדֶת לְךָ בֵּן
וְקָרָאתָ אֶת־שְׁמוֹ יִצְחָק וַהֲקִמֹתִי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אִתּוֹ לִבְרִית
עוֹלָם לְזַרְעוֹ אַחֲרָיו: כ וּלְיִשְׁמָעֵאל שְׁמַעְתִּיךָ הִנֵּה | בֵּרַכְתִּי
אֹתוֹ וְהִפְרֵיתִי אֹתוֹ וְהִרְבֵּיתִי אֹתוֹ בִּמְאֹד מְאֹד שְׁנֵים־עָשָׂר
נְשִׂיאִם יוֹלִיד וּנְתַתִּיו לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל: כא וְאֶת־בְּרִיתִי אָקִים
אֶת־יִצְחָק אֲשֶׁר תֵּלֶד לְךָ שָׂרָה לַמּוֹעֵד הַזֶּה בַּשָּׁנָה הָאַחֶרֶת:
כב וַיְכַל לְדַבֵּר אִתּוֹ וַיַּעַל אֱלֹהִים מֵעַל אַבְרָהָם: כג וַיִּקַּח
אַבְרָהָם אֶת־יִשְׁמָעֵאל בְּנוֹ וְאֵת כָּל־יְלִידֵי בֵיתוֹ וְאֵת
כָּל־מִקְנַת כַּסְפּוֹ כָּל־זָכָר בְּאַנְשֵׁי בֵּית אַבְרָהָם וַיָּמָל אֶת־בְּשַׂר
עָרְלָתָם בְּעֶצֶם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אִתּוֹ אֱלֹהִים:
[מפטיר] כד וְאַבְרָהָם בֶּן־תִּשְׁעִים וָתֵשַׁע שָׁנָה בְּהִמֹּלוֹ בְּשַׂר
עָרְלָתוֹ: כה וְיִשְׁמָעֵאל בְּנוֹ בֶּן־שְׁלֹשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה בְּהִמֹּלוֹ אֵת
בְּשַׂר עָרְלָתוֹ: כו בְּעֶצֶם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה נִמּוֹל אַבְרָהָם וְיִשְׁמָעֵאל
בְּנוֹ: כז וְכָל־אַנְשֵׁי בֵיתוֹ יְלִיד בָּיִת וּמִקְנַת־כֶּסֶף מֵאֵת בֶּן־נֵכָר
נִמֹּלוּ אִתּוֹ: פ פ פ

קכ"ו פסוקים, נמל"ו סימן. מכנדי"ב סימן.

וַחֲדִי וַאֲמַר בִּלְבֵּיהּ הַלְבַר מְאָה שְׁנִין יְהֵי וְלָד
וְאִם שָׂרָה חֲבַת תִּשְׁעִין שְׁנִין תְּלִיד: יח וַאֲמַר
אַבְרָהָם קֳדָם יְיָ לְוַי יִשְׁמָעֵאל יִתְקַיַּם קֳדָמָךְ:
יט וַאֲמַר יְיָ בְּקוּשְׁטָא שָׂרָה אִתְּתָךְ תְּלִיד לָךְ
בַּר וְתִקְרֵי יַת שְׁמֵיהּ יִצְחָק וַאֲקִים יַת קְיָמִי
עִמֵּיהּ לִקְיָם עָלָם לִבְנוֹהִי בַּתְרוֹהִי: כ וְעַל
יִשְׁמָעֵאל קַבֵּילִית צְלוֹתָךְ הָא בָּרֵכִית יָתֵיהּ
וְאַפֵּישׁ יָתֵיהּ וְאַסְגֵּי יָתֵיהּ לַחֲדָא לַחֲדָא תְּרֵי
עֲשַׂר רַבְרְבִין יוֹלִיד וְאֶתְּנִינֵהּ לְעַם סַגִּי: כא וְיָת
קְיָמִי אַקִים עִם יִצְחָק דִּי תְלִיד לָךְ שָׂרָה לְזִמְנָא
הָדֵין בְּשַׁתָּא אָחֳרָנָתָא: כב וְשֵׁיצִי לְמַלָּלָא
עִמֵּיהּ וְאִסְתַּלַק יְקָרָא דַיְיָ מֵעִלְוֹהִי דְּאַבְרָהָם:
כג וּדְבַר אַבְרָהָם יַת יִשְׁמָעֵאל בְּרֵיהּ וְיַת כָּל
יְלִידֵי בֵיתֵיהּ וְיַת כָּל זְבִינֵי כַסְפֵּיהּ כָּל דְּכוּרָא
בֶּאֱנָשֵׁי בֵּית אַבְרָהָם וּגְזַר יַת בִּשְׂרָא
דְעוּרְלַתְהוֹן בְּכַרַן יוֹמָא הָדֵין כְּמָא דִי מַלִּיל
עִמֵּיהּ יְיָ: כד וְאַבְרָהָם בַּר תִּשְׁעִין וְתִשַׁע שְׁנִין
כַּד גְּזַר בִּשְׂרָא דְעוּרְלָתֵיהּ: כה וְיִשְׁמָעֵאל
בְּרֵיהּ בַּר תְּלַת עַשְׂרֵי שְׁנִין כַּד גְּזַר יַת בִּשְׂרָא
דְעוּרְלָתֵיהּ: כו בְּכַרַן יוֹמָא הָדֵין אִתְגְּזַר (גְּזַר)
אַבְרָהָם וְיִשְׁמָעֵאל בְּרֵיהּ: כז וְכָל אֱנָשֵׁי בֵיתֵיהּ
יְלִידֵי בֵיתָא וּזְבִינֵי כַסְפָּא מִן בְּנֵי עַמְמַיָּא
אִתְגְּזָרוּ (גְּזָרוּ) עִמֵּיהּ: פ פ פ

רש"י

שנימול, וק' שנה של אברהם. (ס"ח, ואת בריתי למה נאמר, הרי כבר כתיב ואתה את בריתי תשמור אתה וזרעך וגו', אלא לפי שאומר והקמותי וגו', יכול בני ישמעאל ובני קטורה בכלל הקיום, תלמוד לומר והקמותי את בריתי אתו, ואין עם אחרים. ואת בריתי אקים את יצחק למה נאמר, אלא למד שהיה קדוש מבטן. דבר אחר, למה רבי אבא, מכאן למד קל וחומר בן הגבירה מבן האמה, כתיב הכא ברכתי אותו והפריתיו אותו והרביתי אותו זה ישמעאל,

מבריכם נתמעטו הנשים כבר, ואף תשות כח בעולם, ואין ולמד מעשרה דורות שמנח ועד אברהם, שמיכרו תולדותיהן בני ס' ובני ע': (יח) **לו ישמעאל יחיה**. כלומי יחיה ישמעאל, חיני כדאי לקבל מתן שכר כזה: **יחיה לפניך**. יחיה בירחתך, כמו התהלך לפני, פלא קדמי: (יט) **אבל**. לשון ממתק דבריס, וכן אבל תשמיס תנחמו[1], אבל בן חין לה[2]: **וקראת את שמו יצחק**. על שם הלאוק. ויש אומריס, על שם העשרה נסיונות, ולי שנה של שרה, ואי יאמיס

1 בראשית מב, כא 2 מלכים-ב ד, יד

who, at ninety years old, (will have the merit) of giving birth?"

18 *Avraham said to God, "If only Yishma'el will live (in fear of) You, (that would be sufficient)!"*

19 *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.* 20 *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.* 21 *But I will establish My covenant with Yitzchak, whom Sarah will bear to you at this time next year."*

22 *He finished speaking with him, and God ascended from Avraham.*

8th Test: Avraham Circumcises Himself and His Household

17:23 *Avraham 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.*

24 *Avraham was ninety-nine years old, when the flesh of his foreskin was circumcised.*

Maftir 25 *Yishma'el his son was thirteen years old, when he had the flesh of his foreskin circumcised.* 26 *On that very day, Avraham was circumcised, and (so was) Yishma'el his son.* 27 *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*

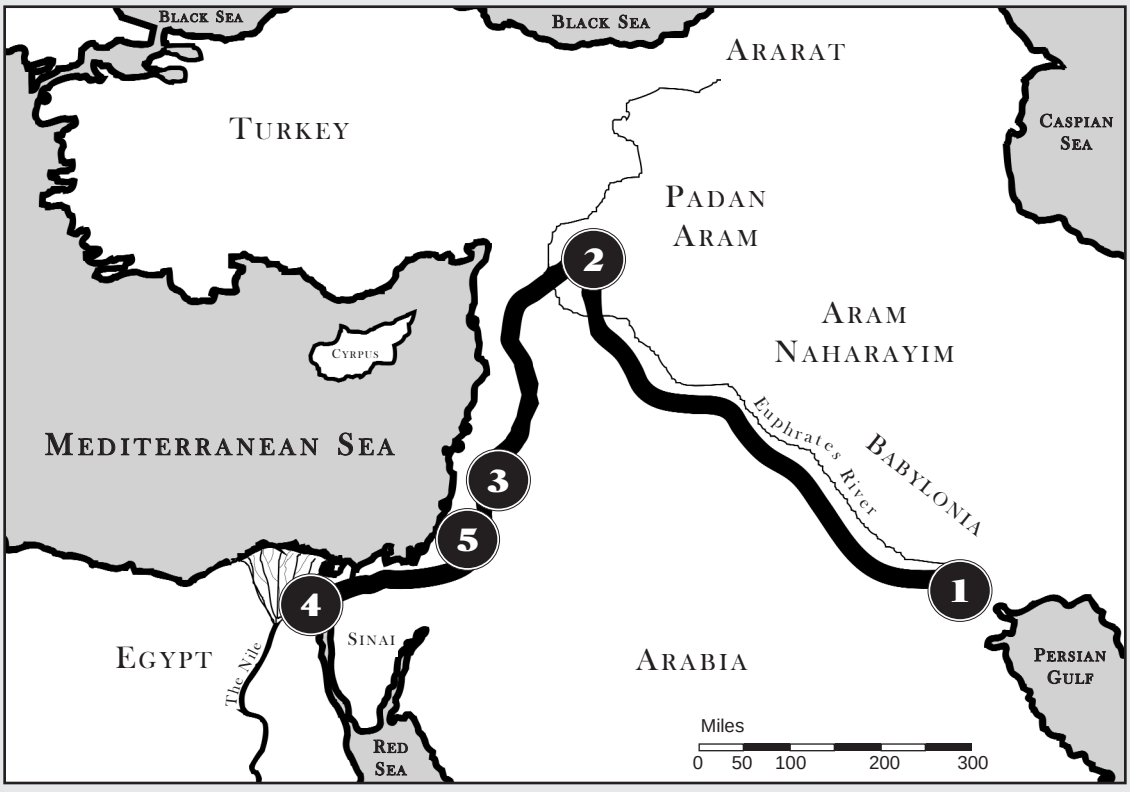
1. The *mitzvah* of circumcision [17:10]

וקל וחומר ומת בריתי מקיש את יצחק): **את בריתי**. ברית המילה תהא מסורה לזרעו של יצחק: (כ) **שנים עשר נשיאים**. כענניס יכלו, כמו נשיאים ורוח[3]: (כב) **מעל אברהם**. לשון נקיה הוא כלפי שכינה, ולמדנו שהלדיקים מרכבתו של מקום[4]: (כג) **בעצם היום**. הוי ביום שנלטוה, ביום ולא בלילה, לא נתיירא לא מן הגויס ולא מן הלילים, ושלא יהיו חויביו ובני דורו חומריס, חילו רחינוהו לא הגחנוהו למול ולקויס מלותו של מקום: **וימל**. לשון ויפעל: (כד) **בהמולו**. בהפעלו. כמו בהברחס[5]: (בהמולו. עטל

3 משלי כה, יד 4 ב"ר מז, ו 5 בראשית ב, ד 6 ב"ר מז, ז

מברחס סכין, ומחז בערלתו ורלה לחתוך, והיה מתירא שהיה זקן, מה עשה הקב"ה שלח ידו ומחז עמו, שנאמר וכרות עמו הברית, לו לא נאמר, אלא עמו, ברחשית רבה. רש"י יען): (כה) **בהמולו את בשר ערלתו**. בהברחס לא נאמר את, לפי שלא היה חסר אלא חתוך בשר, שכבר נתמעך על ידי תשמיש, אבל ישמעאל שהיה ילד, הוזקק לחתוך ערלה ולפרוע המילה, לכך נאמר בו את[6]: (כו) **בעצם היום הזה**. שמלתו לאברהם ג"ט שנה וישמעאל שלש עשרה שניס, נמול אברהם וישמעאל בנו: **חסלת פרשת לך לך**

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 [12:10*ff*].

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. 49*ff; Sichas Parshas Vayeira* 5752)

יח א וַיֵּרָ֖א אֵלָ֣יו יְהוָ֑ה בְּאֵלֹנֵ֖י מַמְרֵ֥א וְה֛וּא יֹשֵׁ֥ב פֶּֽתַח־הָאֹ֖הֶל
כְּחֹ֥ם הַיּֽוֹם: ב וַיִּשָּׂ֤א עֵינָיו֙ וַיַּ֔רְא וְהִנֵּ֥ה שְׁלֹשָׁ֖ה אֲנָשִׁ֣ים נִצָּבִ֑ים
עָלָ֔יו וַיַּ֕רְא וַיָּ֥רָץ לִקְרָאתָ֖ם מִפֶּ֣תַח הָאֹ֑הֶל וַיִּשְׁתַּ֖חוּ אָ֥רְצָֽה:
ג וַיֹּאמַ֕ר אֲדֹנָ֖י אִם־נָ֣א מָצָ֣אתִי חֵ֔ן בְּעֵינֶ֖יךָ אַל־נָ֣א תַעֲבֹ֔ר מֵעַ֖ל

א וְאִתְגְּלִי לֵיהּ יְיָ בְּמֵישְׁרֵי מַמְרֵא וְהוּא יָתֵב
בְּתְרַע מַשְׁכְּנָא כְּמֵיחַם יוֹמָא: ב וּזְקַף עֵינוֹהִי
וַחֲזָא וְהָא תְלָתָא גוּבְרִין קָיְמִין עֲלָווֹהִי וַחֲזָא
וּרְהַט לְקַדָּמוּתְהוֹן מִתְרַע מַשְׁכְּנָא וּסְגִיד עַל
אַרְעָא: ג וַאֲמַר יְיָ אִם כְּעַן אַשְׁכָּחִית רַחֲמִין

רש"י

(ה) וירא אליו. לבקר את החולה, אמר רבי חמא בר חנינא, יוס שלישי למילתו היה, ובא הקב"ה ושאל בשלומו[1]: באלוני ממרא. הוא שנתן לו עצה על המילה, לפיכך נגלה אליו בחלקו[2]: ישב. יצא כתיב, בקש לעמוד, אמר לו הקב"ה צא ואני אעמוד, ואתה סימן לבניך[3] שעתיד אני להתיצב בעדת הדיינין והן יושבין, שנאמר אלהים נצב בעדת אל[4]: פתח האהל. לרוות אם יש עובר ושב ויכניסם בניהו: כחם היום. הוליך הקב"ה חמה מגרתיקה שלה לטבריה בחורחים[5], ולפי שרואהו מצטער שלא היו חורחים בחוץ, הביא המלאכים עליו בדמות אנשים: (ב) והנה שלשה אנשים. אחד לבשר את שרה, ואחד להפוך את סדום, ואחד לרפואת את אברהם, שהיו מלאך אחד עושה שתי שליחות[6], תדע לך שכן כל הפרשה הזו מזכירן בלשון רבים, ויאכלו, ויאמרו אליו, ובצעורה נאמר ויאמר שוב אשוב אליך, ובכפיכת סדום הוא אומר כי לא אוכל לעשות דבר, לגלתי הפכי, ורפאל שרפא את אברהם הלך משם להגיל את לוט[7], הוא שנאמר ויהי כהוציאם אותם החוצה ויאמר

המלט על נפשך, למדת שהאחד היה מגיל: נצבים עליו. לפניו, כמו ועליו מטה מנשה[8] אבל לשון נקיבה הוא כלפי המלאכים: וירא. מהו וירא וירא שני פעמים, הראשון כמשמעו, והשני לשון הבנה, נסתכל שהיו נגדיס במקום אחד, והבין שלא היו רואים להטריחו, ואף על פי שיודעים היו שילא לקראתם, עמדו במקומם לכבודו, ולהרחותו שלא רצו להטריחו, וקדם הוא ורץ לקראתם. (כך הגירסא ברש"י ישן) בגמרא מציעא[9] כתיב נגדיס עליו, וכתיב וירץ לקראתם, כך מזיזהו דהוה שרי ואסר פירסו 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 חביריו עמו, ובלשון זה הוא חול. דבר אחר, קודש הוא[10], והיה הומר להקב"ה להמתין לו עד שירון ויכניס את האורחים, ואף על פי שכתוב אחר וירץ לקראתם, האמירה קודם לכן היתה, ודרך המקראות לדבר כן, כמו שפירשתי אצל לא ידון רוחי באדם, שנכתב אחר ויולד נח, ואי אפשר לומר, אלא אף כן קודם גזרת ק"כ

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

1 בבא מציעא פו: 2 ב"ר מב, ח 3 שם מח, ז 4 תהלים פב, א 5 בבא מציעא פו: 6 ב"ר נ, ב 7 שם 8 במדבר ב, כ 9 פו: 10 שבועות לה:

Three Angels Visit Avraham

18 God 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.

2 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.

3 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 50th 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 49th gate— and he became "sick" yearning for the fiftieth gate. This is alluded to by the fact that חוֹלֶה (the Hebrew term for 'sick person') has the numerical value (*gematria*) of 49. Then, "God appeared to him," revealing to him the 50th 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.

עַבְדֶּךָ: ד יֻקַּח־נָא מְעַט־מַיִם וְרַחֲצוּ רַגְלֵיכֶם וְהִשָּׁעֲנוּ תַּחַת
הָעֵץ: ה וְאֶקְחָה פַת־לֶחֶם וְסַעֲדוּ לִבְּכֶם אַחַר תַּעֲבֹרוּ כִּי־
עַל־כֵּן עֲבַרְתֶּם עַל־עַבְדְּכֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ כֵּן תַּעֲשֶׂה כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ:
ו וַיְמַהֵר אַבְרָהָם הָאֹהֱלָה אֶל־שָׂרָה וַיֹּאמֶר מַהֲרִי שְׁלֹשׁ סְאִים
קֶמַח סֹלֶת לוּשִׁי וַעֲשִׂי עֻגוֹת: ז וְאֶל־הַבָּקָר רָץ אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח
בֶּן־בָּקָר רַךְ וָטוֹב וַיִּתֵּן אֶל־הַנַּעַר וַיְמַהֵר לַעֲשׂוֹת אֹתוֹ: ח וַיִּקַּח
חֶמְאָה וְחָלָב וּבֶן־הַבָּקָר אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיִּתֵּן לִפְנֵיהֶם וְהוּא־עֹמֵד
עֲלֵיהֶם תַּחַת הָעֵץ וַיֹּאכֵלוּ: ט וַיֹּאמְרוּ *אֵלָיו אַיֵּה שָׂרָה אִשְׁתֶּךָ
וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה בָאֹהֶל: י וַיֹּאמֶר שׁוֹב אָשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ כְּעֵת חַיָּה

*נקוד על איו

קָמָתְךָ לָא כֵּעַן תְּעַבֵּר מֵעַל עַבְדָּךְ: ד יִסְבּוּן
כְּעַן וְעִיר מַיָּא וְאַסְחוּ רַגְלֵיכוֹן וְאִסְתְּמִיכוּ
תְּחוֹת אִילָנָא: ה וְאֶסַּב פִּתָּא דְלַחְמָא וּסְעוּדוּ
לִבְּכוֹן בָּתַר כֵּן תְּעִבְרוּן אֲרֵי עַל כֵּן עֲבַרְתּוּן
עַל עַבְדְּכוֹן וַאֲמָרוּ כֵּן תַּעֲבִיד כְּמָא דִי
מַלֵּילְתָּא: ו וְאוֹחִי אַבְרָהָם לְמַשְׁכְּנָא לְוַת
שָׂרָה וַאֲמַר אוֹחִי תְּלַת סְאִין קְמְחָא דְסוּלְתָּא
לוּשִׁי וַעֲבִידִי גְרִיצָן: ז וּלְוַת תּוֹרֵי רְהַט
אַבְרָהָם וּנְסִיב בַּר תּוֹרֵי רַכִּיךְ וְטַב וְיַהַב
לְעוּלֵימָא וְאוֹחִי לְמֶעְבַּד יָתֵיהּ: ח וּנְסִיב שְׁמַן
וַחֲלָב וּבַר תּוֹרֵי דִי עֲבַד וְיַהַב קֳדָמֵיהוֹן וְהוּא
מְשַׁמֵּשׁ עֲלֵיהוֹן תְּחוֹת אִילָנָא וַאֲכָלוּ:
ט וַאֲמָרוּ לֵיהּ אָן שָׂרָה אִתְּתָךְ וַאֲמַר הָא
בְמַשְׁכְּנָא: י וַאֲמַר מֵיתַב אֵתוּב לְוָתָךְ כְּעִדָּן

רס"י

שנה. ומתי הלשונות נבראתים רבה[1]: **(ד) יקח נא.** על ידי שליח, ובקב"ה שלש לגויו על ידי שליח, שנאמר וירם משה את ידו ויך את הסלע[2]: **ורחצו רגליכם.** כשבור שהם ערבייס, שמשתחוים לאבק רגליהם, והקפיד שלא להכניס עבודת אלילים לביתו[3], אבל לוט שלא הקפיד, הקדים ליהם לרחילה, שנאמר ולינו ורחצו רגליכם: **תחת העץ.** תחת האילן: **(ה) וסעדו לבבכם.** בתורה בנביאים ובכתובים מליהו דפתח סעדתך דלבא. בתורה, סעדו לבכם. בנביאים, סעד לבך פת לחם[4]. בכתובים, ולחם לבב אנוש יסעד[5]. אמר רבי חמא, לבבכם אין כתיב כאן, אלא לבכם, מגיד שאין יצר הרע שולט במלאכים[6]: **אחר תעבורו.** אחר כן תלכו: **כי על כן עברתם.** כמו על אשר, וכן כל כי על כן שבמקרא, כי על כן באו בגלל קורתי[7], כי על כן רחיתי פניך[8], כי על כן לא נתתיך[9], כי על כן ידעת חנותנו[10]: **(ו) קמח סלת.** סלת לעוגות. קמח לעמילן של טבחים, לכסות את הקדרה ולשמוך את הזוכמא: **(ז) בן בקר רך וטוב.** גי' פריס היו, כדי להאכילן ג' לשונות בחרדל[11]: **אל הנער.** זה ישמעאל, לחנכו במצות[12]: **(ח) ויקח חמאה וגו'.** ולחם לא הביא, לפי שפירסם שרה נדה, שחזר לה חורח כנעים חותו היום, ונטמאת הטיפה[13]: **חמאה.** שומן החלב שקולטין מעל פניו: **ובן הבקר אשר עשה.** אשר תקן, קמח שתקן, ממטי ותייתי קמייהו: **ויאכלו.** נראו כמו שאכלו, מכאן שלא יאכל אדם מן המנחג[14]: **(ט) ויאמרו אליו.** נקוד על חי"ו שנאמליו, ותניא רבי שמעון בן אלעזר אומר, כל מקום שהכתוב רבה על הנקודה, אתה דורש הכתוב וכו', וכאן הנקודה רבה על הכתוב אתה דורש הנקודה, שמא לשרה שאלו איו אברהם למדנו שישאל אדם בחסניות שלו לאיש על האשה ולאשה על האיש. בבבא מציעא[15], אומרים יודעים היו מלאכי השרת שרה אמנו היכן היתה, אלא להודיע שענוה היתה, כדי לחבבה על בעלה, אמר רבי יוסי בר חנינא, כדי לשגר לה כוס של ברכה: **הנה באהל.** לאוטה היא: **(י) בעת חיה.** כעת הזאת לשנה הבאה, ופסח היה, ולפסח הבא נולד יצחק, מדלא קרינן

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **How could Avraham serve milk and meat together? (v. 8)**

Da'as Zekeinim: *Rashi* writes that Avraham served 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 "G*od 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. 77*ff*; vol. 10, p. 47; *Sefer Hasichos* 5750, p. 104*ff.*)

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 מח, י 2 במדבר כ, יא 3 ב"מ פו: 4 שופטים יט, ה 5 תהלים קד, טו 6 ב"ר מח, יא 7 בראשית יט, ח 8 שם לג, י 9 שם לח, כו 10 במדבר י, לא 11 ב"מ פו: 12 ב"ר מח, יג 13 ב"מ פז. 14 שם פו: ב"ר מח, יד 15 דף פז.

4 "Please, let some water be brought (by my staff) so you can bathe your feet and recline under the tree. 5 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."

6 Avraham rushed to Sarah's tent, and he said, "Quickly, get three se'ah of sifted flour, knead them and make loaves!"

7 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).

8 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.

9 They said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?"

He said, "Here, in the tent."

10 (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 אֵלָיו? (v. 9)

RASHI: In the word אֵלָיו ("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 [אין] require a special interpretation.

[The word אַיּוֹ 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.

וְהִנֵּה־בֵן לְשָׂרָה אִשְׁתֶּךָ וְשָׂרָה שֹׁמַעַת פֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל וְהִוא
אַחֲרָיו: יא וְאַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה זְקֵנִים בָּאִים בַּיָּמִים חָדַל לִהְיוֹת
לְשָׂרָה אֹרַח כַּנָּשִׁים: יב וַתִּצְחַק שָׂרָה בְּקִרְבָּהּ לֵאמֹר אַחֲרֵי
בְלֹתִי הָיְתָה־לִּי עֶדְנָה וַאדֹנִי זָקֵן: יג וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָהָם
לָמָּה זֶּה צָחֲקָה שָׂרָה לֵאמֹר הַאַף אֻמְנָם אֵלֵד וַאֲנִי זָקַנְתִּי:
יד הֲיִפָּלֵא מֵיְהוָה דָּבָר לַמּוֹעֵד אָשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ כָּעֵת חַיָּה וּלְשָׂרָה

הִנֵּה בֶּן לְשָׂרָה אִשְׁתֶּךָ וְשָׂרָה שֹׁמַעַת פֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל וְהִוא
אַחֲרָיו: יא וְאַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה זְקֵנִים בָּאִים בַּיָּמִים חָדַל לִהְיוֹת
לְשָׂרָה אֹרַח כַּנָּשִׁים: יב וַתִּצְחַק שָׂרָה בְּקִרְבָּהּ לֵאמֹר אַחֲרֵי
בְלֹתִי הָיְתָה־לִּי עֶדְנָה וַאדֹנִי זָקֵן: יג וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָהָם
לָמָּה זֶּה צָחֲקָה שָׂרָה לֵאמֹר הַאַף אֻמְנָם אֵלֵד וַאֲנִי זָקַנְתִּי:
יד הֲיִפָּלֵא מֵיְהוָה דָּבָר לַמּוֹעֵד אָשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ כָּעֵת חַיָּה וּלְשָׂרָה

רס"י

למועד הזה וגו'): **והוא אחריו.** הפתח היה אחר המלאך: **(יא) חדל להיות.** פסק ממנה: **אורח בנשים.** תורת נדות: **(יב) בקרבה.** מסתכלת במעיה ואומרת, אפשר הקרביים הללו טעונין ולד, הסדיס הללו שלמקו מוסכין חלב. תגמומא[2]: **עדנה.** לחנוח בשר, ולשון משנה מסיר את השער ומעדן את הבשר. דבר אחר, לשון עידן זמן וסת נדות: **(יג) האף אמנם.** הגם אמת אלד: **ואני זקנתי.** שיגה הכתוב מפני השלום, שהרי היה אומרה ואדני זקן: **(יד) היפלא.** כתרגומו היתכשי, וכי שום דבר מופלא ומופרד ומכוסה ממני מלעשות כרצוני: **למועד.** לאותו מועד המיועד שקבעתי לך אתמול, למועד

כָּעֵת חַלֹּג כָּעֵת. כעת חיה כעת הזאת שתהא חיה לכם, שתהיו כולכם שלמים וקיימים: **שוב אשוב.** לא בשרו המלאך שישוב חליו, אלא בשליחותו של מקום אמר לו, כמו ויאמר לה מלאך ה' הרתך הרבה, והוא אין בידו להרבות, אלא בשליחותו של מקום, אף כאן בשליחותו של מקום אמר לו כן[1]. (אליעזר אמר לשומית למועד הזה כעת חיה את חובקת בן, ותאמר אליו אדני איש האלהים אל תכזב בשפחתך, אותן המלאכים שבשרו את שרה אמרו למועד אשוב, אמר לה אליעזר, אותן המלאכים שהם חיים וקיימים לעולם, אמרו למועד אשוב, אבל אני בשר ודם, שהיום חי ומחר מת, בין חי ובין 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. 110*ff.*)

1 ב"ר נג,ב 2 שופטים יח

your wife Sarah will have a son."

Sarah heard from the entrance of the tent, which was right behind (the angel).

[11] *Avraham and Sarah were old, (but still) immersed into daily life. Sarah had stopped having a woman's cycle.* [12] *(Looking at) her bodily organs, Sarah laughed, saying, "After I have withered, will I (now) have smooth skin? And my husband is old!"*

[13] *God said to Avraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Is it really true that I will give birth, even though I am old'?* [14] *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."*

SECOND READING

[15] *Sarah denied it, saying, "I didn't laugh," because she was afraid.*

He said, "No! You did laugh."

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What does it mean that Avraham and Sarah were בָּאִים בַּיָּמִים (*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* (I 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" (בָּאִים בַּיָּמִים) 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. 90*ff.*)

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 Noach 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)

בֵּן: [שני] טו וַתְּכַחֵשׁ שָׂרָה | לֵאמֹר לֹא צָחַקְתִּי כִּי | יָרֵאָה וַיֹּאמֶר |
לֹא כִּי צָחָקְתְּ: טז וַיָּקֻמוּ מִשָּׁם הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיַּשְׁקִפוּ עַל־פְּנֵי סְדֹם
וְאַבְרָהָם הֹלֵךְ עִמָּם לְשַׁלְּחָם: יז וַיהוָה אָמָר הַמְכַסֶּה אֲנִי
מֵאַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה: יח וְאַבְרָהָם הָיוֹ יִהְיֶה לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל
וְעָצוּם וְנִבְרְכוּ־בוֹ כֹּל גּוֹיֵי הָאָרֶץ: יט כִּי יְדַעְתִּיו לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר
יְצַוֶּה אֶת־בָּנָיו וְאֶת־בֵּיתוֹ אַחֲרָיו וְשָׁמְרוּ דֶּרֶךְ יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת
צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט לְמַעַן הָבִיא יְהוָה עַל־אַבְרָהָם אֵת אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר
עָלָיו: כ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה זַעֲקַת סְדֹם וַעֲמֹרָה כִּי־רָבָּה וְחַטָּאתָם כִּי
כָבְדָה מְאֹד: כא אֵרְדָה־נָּא וְאֶרְאֶה הַכְּצַעֲקָתָהּ הַבָּאָה אֵלַי
עָשׂוּ | כָּלָה וְאִם־לֹא אֵדָעָה: כב וַיִּפְנוּ מִשָּׁם הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיֵּלְכוּ
סְדֹמָה וְאַבְרָהָם עוֹדֶנּוּ עֹמֵד לִפְנֵי יְהוָה: כג וַיִּגַּשׁ אַבְרָהָם

וּלְשָׂרָה בָּר: טו וְכַדִּיבַת שָׂרָה לְמֵימַר לָא חַיְכִית
אֲרֵי דְּחֵילַת וַאֲמַר לָא בְּרַם חַיְכִתְּ: טז וְקָמוּ
מִתַּמָּן גּוּבְרַיָּא וְאִסְתְּכִיאוּ עַל אַפֵּי סְדוֹם
וְאַבְרָהָם אָזֵיל עִמְּהוֹן לְאַלְוָואֵיהוֹן: יז וְיָ אֲמַר
הַמְכַסֵּי אֲנָא מֵאַבְרָהָם דִּי אֶנָא עָבִיד:
יח וְאַבְרָהָם מֶהֱוֵה יֶהֱוֵי לְעַם סַגִּי וְתַקִּיף
וְיִתְבָּרְכוּן בְּדִילֵיהּ כֹּל עַמְמֵי אַרְעָא: יט אֲרֵי גְלֵי
קֳדָמַי בְּדִיל דִּי יְפַקֵּד יַת בְּנוֹהִי וְיַת אֱנָשׁ בֵּיתֵהּ
בַּתְרוֹהִי וְיִטְרוּן אָרְחָן דְּתַקְנָן קֳדָם יְיָ לְמֶעְבַּד
צְדָקָתָא וְדִינָא בְּדִיל דְּייֵתֵי יְיָ עַל אַבְרָהָם יַת
דִּי מַלִּיל עֲלוֹהִי: כ וַאֲמַר יְיָ קְבִילַת סְדוֹם
וַעֲמוֹרָה אֲרֵי סְגִיאַת וְחוֹבַתְהוֹן אֲרֵי תְקִיפַת
לַחֲדָא: כא אֵיתְגְלֵי כְעַן וְאֶדְחוֹן הֲכִבְקְבֵלְתְּהוֹן
דַּעֲלַת לְקֳדָמַי עֲבָדוּ אַעֲבִיד עִמְּהוֹן גְּמִירָא אִם
לָא תֵּיבִין וְאִם תָּיְבִין לָא אֶתְפְּרַע: כב וְאִתְפְּנִיאוּ
מִתַּמָּן גּוּבְרַיָּא וַאֲזָלוּ לְסִדוֹם וְאַבְרָהָם עַד
כְּעַן מְשַׁמֵּשׁ בְּצִלּוֹ קֳדָם יְיָ: כג וּקְרִיב

רש"י

הוּא מְנוֹר לְבָנָיו, שֶׁמָּרוּ דֶּרֶךְ ה' כְּדֵי שֶׁיִּזְכֶּה ה' עַל אַבְרָהָם וְגוֹ'. עַל בֵּית אַבְרָהָם לֹא נֶאֱמַר, אֶלָּא עַל אַבְרָהָם, לְמִדְּנוּ כָּל הַמַּעֲמִיד בֵּן לַדִּיק כְּאִלּוּ חִינּוֹ מֵת: **(כ) וַיֹּאמֶר ה'**. אֵל אַבְרָהָם, שֶׁעָשָׂה כְּאִשָּׁה אֶחָת וְלֹא יָכְסֹה מִמֶּנּוּ: **כִּי רַבָּה**. כָּל רִבּוּי שֶׁבְּמִקְרָא הַטָּעוּן לְמַטָּה בְּצִנִּי"ת, לְפִי שֶׁהֵן מְתוּרְגְּמִין גְּדוֹלָה, אוֹ גְּדוֹלָה וְכוֹלֶכֶת, אֲבָל זֶה טָעוּן לְמַעְלָה בְּרִי"ם, לְפִי שֶׁמְּתוּרְגָּם גְּדוֹלָה כְּבָר, כְּמוֹ שֶׁפֵּרַשְׁתִּי וְיֹפִי הַשֵּׁם בְּאֹהֶל, הֲרֵי שֶׁכָּבָר יִכָּמֵהַּ: **(כא) אֵרְדָה נָּא**. לְמַד לַדַּיָּנִים שֶׁלֹּא יִפָּסְקוּ דִּינֵי נְפָשׁוֹת הַלַּיְלָה בְּרִאשׁוֹנָה, הֲכִי כְּמוֹ שֶׁפֵּרַשְׁתִּי בְּפֶרֶשַׁת הַפְּלֻגָּה. דָּבָר אַחֵר, אֵרְדָה נָּא לְסוֹף מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם: **הַכְּצַעֲקָתָהּ**. שֶׁל מְדִינָה: **הַבָּאָה אֵלַי עָשׂוּ**. וְכֵן עוֹמְדִים בְּמִרְדָּם, כְּלוֹמַר מֵי עוֹשֶׂה כָּהֶם, וְאֵם לֹא יֵעָמְדוּ בְּמִרְדָּן, אֵדָעָה מַה אֶעֱשֶׂה, לְהַפְרִיעַ מִכָּן בִּיסּוּרִין וְלֹא אֶכְלֶה אוֹתָן. וְכֵיוָן דְּנִינְהוּ בְּמָקוֹם אַחֵר, וְעָתִיד כּוֹרֵךְ עָדִיךְ מֵעָלַיִךְ וְאֵדָעָה מַה אֶעֱשֶׂה לָךְ[6], וְלִפְיָכֵךְ יֵשׁ לְפָסֵק נְקוּדָה פְּסִיק בֵּין עָשׂוּ לְכָלֶה, כְּדֵי לְהַפְרִיד תֵּיבָה מֵחֲבֶרְתָּהּ. וּרְבוֹתֵינוּ דָּרְשׁוּ כְּנֶגְעֶקְתָּהּ, נַעֲקַת רֵיבָה אַחַת, שֶׁהָרְגוּהָ מִיתָה מְשׁוּנָה, עַל שֶׁנָּתְנָה מָזוֹן לְעֵנִי, כְּמִפּוֹרָשׁ בְּחֶלְקָן[7]: **(כב) וַיִּפְנוּ מִשָּׁם**. מִמָּקוֹם שֶׁאַבְרָהָם לְיוֹשֵׁב שָׁם: **וְאַבְרָהָם עוֹדֶנּוּ עוֹמֵד לִפְנֵי ה'**. וְכֹלֵּל לֹא הָלַךְ לְעָמּוֹד לִפְנֵיהֶן, אֶלָּא כְּקַבָּ"ה בָּא אֶלָּנוּ וְאָמַר לוֹ זַעֲקַת סְדוֹם וַעֲמוֹרָה כִּי רַבָּה, וְכֵיוָן לוֹ לְכָתוּב וְכִי עוֹדֶנּוּ עוֹמֵד לִפְנֵי אַבְרָהָם, אֶלָּא תִּיקּוּן סוֹפְרִים הוּא זֶה[8] (מַסֶּכֶת סוֹפְרִים כְּהוּכוֹ ז"ל לְכָתוּב כֵּן): **(כג) וַיִּגַּשׁ אַבְרָהָם**. מִלְּמֵד שֶׁנִּגַּשׁ לְמִלְחָמָה וְיִגַּשׁ יוֹאָב וְגוֹ'[9], לְפִי

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)

1 דברים כו, טו 2 רות ב, א 3 שם ג, ב 4 שמות נג, יז 5 איוב א, ה 6 שמות לג, ה 7 סנהדרין קט: 8 ב"ר מט, ז 9 שמואל-ב י, ז

Avraham Pleads for Sodom and Amorah

18:16 *The (angels) got up from there, and gazed (disparagingly) upon Sodom. Avraham went with them to escort them.*

17 *God said, "(How) could I conceal from Avraham what I am doing (to Sodom, in the very land I promised to give to him)?"* 18 *(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.* 19 *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."*

20 *(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,* 21 *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)."*

22 *The (angels) turned from there (where Avraham had escorted them to) and went to Sodom. (God) was still present before (Avraham).* 23 *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)

Even though the people of Sodom transgressed *all* of the seven *mitzvos* given to Noach (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. 155*ff*, *Sefer Hasichos* 5752, p. 372)

וַיֹּאמֶר הַאַף תִּסְפֶּה צַדִּיק עִם־רָשָׁע: כד אוּלַי יֵשׁ חֲמִשִּׁים צַדִּיקִם בְּתוֹךְ הָעִיר הַאַף תִּסְפֶּה וְלֹא־תִשָּׂא לַמָּקוֹם לְמַעַן חֲמִשִּׁים הַצַּדִּיקִם אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבָּהּ: כה חָלִלָה לְךָ מֵעֲשֹׂת | כַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה לְהָמִית צַדִּיק עִם־רָשָׁע וְהָיָה כַצַּדִּיק כָּרָשָׁע חָלִלָה לָּךְ הֲשֹׁפֵט כָּל־הָאָרֶץ לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה מִשְׁפָּט: כו וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אִם־אֶמְצָא בִסְדֹם חֲמִשִּׁים צַדִּיקִם בְּתוֹךְ הָעִיר וְנָשָׂאתִי לְכָל־הַמָּקוֹם בַּעֲבוּרָם: כז וַיַּעַן אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמַר הִנֵּה־נָא הוֹאַלְתִּי לְדַבֵּר אֶל־אֲדֹנָי וְאָנֹכִי עָפָר וָאֵפֶר: כח אוּלַי יַחְסְרוּן חֲמִשִּׁים הַצַּדִּיקִם חֲמִשָּׁה הֲתַשְׁחֵת בַּחֲמִשָּׁה אֶת־כָּל־הָעִיר וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אַשְׁחִית אִם־אֶמְצָא שָׁם אַרְבָּעִים וַחֲמִשָּׁה: כט וַיֹּסֶף עוֹד לְדַבֵּר אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אוּלַי יִמָּצְאוּן שָׁם אַרְבָּעִים וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אֶעֱשֶׂה בַּעֲבוּר הָאַרְבָּעִים: ל וַיֹּאמֶר אַל־נָא יִחַר לַאדֹנָי וַאֲדַבֵּרָה אוּלַי יִמָּצְאוּן שָׁם שְׁלֹשִׁים וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אֶעֱשֶׂה אִם־אֶמְצָא שָׁם שְׁלֹשִׁים: לא וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה־נָא הוֹאַלְתִּי לְדַבֵּר אֶל־אֲדֹנָי אוּלַי יִמָּצְאוּן שָׁם עֶשְׂרִים וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אַשְׁחִית בַּעֲבוּר הָעֶשְׂרִים: לב וַיֹּאמֶר אַל־נָא יִחַר לַאדֹנָי וַאֲדַבְּרָה אַךְ־הַפַּעַם אוּלַי יִמָּצְאוּן שָׁם עֲשָׂרָה וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אַשְׁחִית בַּעֲבוּר הָעֲשָׂרָה: לג וַיֵּלֶךְ יְהוָה כַּאֲשֶׁר כִּלָּה לְדַבֵּר אֶל־אַבְרָהָם וְאַבְרָהָם שָׁב לִמְקֹמוֹ: יט א [שלישי] וַיָּבֹאוּ שְׁנֵי הַמַּלְאָכִים סְדֹמָה בָּעֶרֶב וְלוֹט

אַבְרָהָם וַאֲמַר הַבְרַנָּז תְּשֵׁיצֵי זַכָּאָה עִם חַיָּבָא: כד מָאִים אִית חַמְשִׁין זַכָּאִין בְּגוֹ קַרְתָּא הַבְרַנָּז תְּשֵׁיצֵי וְלָא תִשְׁבּוֹק לְאַתְרָא בְּדִיל חַמְשִׁין זַכָּאִין דִּי בְגַוָּהּ: כה קוּשְׁטָא אִנּוּן דִּינָךְ מִלְּמֶעֱבַד כִּפְתְגָמָא הָדֵין לְשֵׁיצָאָה זַכָּאָה עִם חַיָּבָא וִיהֵי זַכָּאָה כְּחַיָּבָא קוּשְׁטָא אִנּוּן דִּינָךְ הַדַּיָּן כָּל אַרְעָא לָא יַעֲבֵיד דִּינָא: כו וַאֲמַר יְיָ אִם אַשְׁכַּח בִּסְדוֹם חַמְשִׁין זַכָּאִין בְּגוֹ קַרְתָּא וְאֶשְׁבּוֹק לְכָל אַתְרָא בְּדִילְהוֹן: כז וַאֲתֵיב אַבְרָהָם וַאֲמַר הָא כְעַן שָׂרֵיתִי לְמַלָּלָא קֳדָם יְיָ וַאֲנָא עַפַר וּקְטָם: כח מָאִים יַחְסְרוּן חַמְשִׁין זַכָּאִין חַמְשָׁא הַתְהַבֵּל בְּחַמְשָׁא יַת כָּל קַרְתָּא וַאֲמַר לָא אֲהַבֵּל אִם אַשְׁכַּח תַּמָּן אַרְבְּעִין וְחַמְשָׁא: כט וְאוֹסִיף עוֹד לְמַלָּלָא קֳדָמוֹהִי וַאֲמַר מָאִים יִשְׁתַּכְחוּן תַּמָּן אַרְבְּעִין וַאֲמַר לָא אַעֲבֵיד בְּדִיל אַרְבְּעִין: ל וַאֲמַר לָא כְעַן יִתְקַף רוּגְזָא דַּיָּי וַאֲמַלֵּיל מָאִים יִשְׁתַּכְחוּן תַּמָּן תִּלָתִין וַאֲמַר לָא אַעֲבֵיד גְּמִירָא אִם אַשְׁכַּח תַּמָּן תִּלָתִין: לא וַאֲמַר הָא כְעַן שָׂרֵיתִי לְמַלָּלָא קֳדָם יְיָ מָאִים יִשְׁתַּכְחוּן תַּמָּן עַשְׂרִין וַאֲמַר לָא אֲהַבֵּל בְּדִיל עַשְׂרִין: לב וַאֲמַר לָא כְעַן יִתְקַף רוּגְזָא דַּיָּי וַאֲמַלֵּיל בְּרַם זִמְנָא הָדָא מָאִים יִשְׁתַּכְחוּן תַּמָּן עַשְׂרָא וַאֲמַר לָא אֲהַבֵּל בְּדִיל עַשְׂרָא: לג וְאִסְתַּלַק יְקָרָא דַּיָּי כַּד שֵׁיצִי לְמַלָּלָא עִם אַבְרָהָם וְאַבְרָהָם תָּב לְאַתְרֵיהּ: א וְעָלוּ תְּרֵין מַלְאָכַיָּא לִסְדוֹם בְּרַמְשָׁא וְלוֹט יָתֵיב בְּתָרַע דְּסְדוֹם וַחֲזָא לוֹט וְקָם

לקמ"ו

לפיוס ויגש אליו יהודה, והגשה לתפלה ויגש אליהו הנביא[1], ולכל אלה נכנס אברהם, לדבר קשות ולפיוס ולתפלה: **האף תספה**. הגם תספה. ולתרגום של מונקלוס שתרגומו לשון רוגז, כך פירושו, כאף יסיעך שתספה לדיק עם רשע: (כד) **אולי יש חמשים צדיקים**. עשרה לדיקים לכל כרך וכרך, כי כ' מקומות יש: (כה) **חלילה לך**. ואם תאמר לא יגלו כלדיקים את הרשעים, למה תמית כלדיקים: **חלילה לך**. חולין הוא לך, יאמרו כך הוא מומנתו, 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 בחט"ף פת"ח כ"ף של השופט, לשון תמיה, וכי מי שהוא שופט לא יעשה משפט אמת: (כו) **אם אמצא בסדום וגו' לכל המקום**. לכל הכרכים, לפי שסדום היתה מטרפולין ושסובב מכולם, תלה בה הכתוב: (כז) **ואנכי עפר ואפר**. וכבר הייתי ראוי להיות עפר על ידי המלכים, ואפר על ידי ממרוד, לולי רחמיך משר עמדו לי: (כח) **התשחית בחמשה**. ולא חן ט' לכל כרך, ואתה לדיקו של עולם תנטרף עמהם: (כט) **אולי ימצאון שם ארבעים**. וימלטו ד' הכרכים. וכן שלשים יגילו ג' מהם, או עשרים יגילו ב' מהם, או עשרה יגילו אחת מהם: (לא) **הואלתי**. רציתי, כמו ויואל משה: (לב) **אולי ימצאון שם עשרה**. על פחות לא בקש, אמר, דור המבול היו ח', נח ובניו ונשיהם, ולא הגילו על דורם, ועל ט' על ידי גילוף כבר בקש ולא מלא: (לג) **וילך ה' וגו'**. כיון שגשתתק הסניגור הלך לו הדיין: **ואברהם שב למקומו**. נסתלק הדיין, נסתלק הסניגור, והקטיגור מקטרג, ולפיכך ויצאו שני המלאכים סדומה להשחית. אחד להשחית את סדום, ואחד להגיל את לוט, והוא הוא שבא לרפאות את אברהם, והגליצי שבא לבשר את שרה, כיון שעשה שליחותו נסתלק לו: (א) **המלאכים**. ולהלן קרוים אנשים, כשהיתה שכינה עמהם קרוים אנשים. דבר אחר, אלו אברהם שכמו גדול, והיו המלאכים תדירין אללו כאנשים, קרוים אנשים, ואלו לוט קרוים מלאכים: **בערב**. וכי כל כך שהו המלאכים מאברהם לסדום, אלא מלאכי רחמים היו, וממתינים שמא יוכל אברהם ללמד עליהם סנגוריא: **ולוט ישב בשער סדום**. יפה כתיב, שהוא היום מינוהו שופט עליהם[2]:

1 מלכים-א יח, לו 2 ב"ר נ, ג

righteous with the wicked? [24] 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? [25] 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?"

[26] 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."

[27] Avraham responded and said, "I wish to speak with God! I (would be) dust and ashes (if it were not for You)! [28] 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."

[29] (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."

[30] (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."

[31] (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."

[32] (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."

[33] 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" (**וַיִּגַּשׁ**) 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 **וַיִּגַּשׁ** ("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. 55*ff.*)

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)

יֹשֵׁב בְּשַׁעַר־סְדֹם וַיַּרְא־לוֹט וַיָּקָם לִקְרָאתָם וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אַפַּיִם
אָרְצָה: ב וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֶּה נָא־אֲדֹנַי סוּרוּ נָא אֶל־בֵּית עַבְדְּכֶם וְלִינוּ
וְרַחֲצוּ רַגְלֵיכֶם וְהִשְׁכַּמְתֶּם וַהֲלַכְתֶּם לְדַרְכְּכֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא כִּי
בָרְחוֹב נָלִין: ג וַיִּפְצַר־בָּם מְאֹד וַיָּסֻרוּ אֵלָיו וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ
וַיַּעַשׂ לָהֶם מִשְׁתֶּה וּמַצּוֹת אָפָה וַיֹּאכֵלוּ: ד טֶרֶם יִשְׁכָּבוּ וְאַנְשֵׁי
הָעִיר אַנְשֵׁי סְדֹם נָסַבּוּ עַל־הַבַּיִת מִנַּעַר וְעַד־זָקֵן כָּל־הָעָם
מִקָּצֶה: ה וַיִּקְרְאוּ אֶל־לוֹט וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ אַיֵּה הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־בָּאוּ
אֵלֶיךָ הַלָּיְלָה הוֹצִיאֵם אֵלֵינוּ וְנֵדְעָה אֹתָם: ו וַיֵּצֵא אֲלֵהֶם לוֹט
הַפֶּתְחָה וְהַדֶּלֶת סָגַר אַחֲרָיו: ז וַיֹּאמַר אַל־נָא אַחַי תָּרֵעוּ:
ח הִנֵּה־נָא לִי שְׁתֵּי בָנוֹת אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדְעוּ אִישׁ אוֹצִיאָה־נָּא
אֶתְהֶן אֲלֵיכֶם וַעֲשׂוּ לָהֶן כַּטּוֹב בְּעֵינֵיכֶם רַק לָאֲנָשִׁים הָאֵל
אַל־תַּעֲשׂוּ דָבָר כִּי־עַל־כֵּן בָּאוּ בְּצֵל קֹרָתִי: ט וַיֹּאמְרוּ |
גֶּשׁ־הָלְאָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ הָאֶחָד בָּא־לָגוּר וַיִּשְׁפֹּט שָׁפוֹט עַתָּה נָרַע

לְקַדְּמוּתָהֹן וּסְגִיד עַל אַפּוֹהִי עַל אַרְעָא:
ב וַאֲמַר בְּבָעוּ כְעַן רִבּוֹנַי זוּרוּ כְעַן לְבֵית
עַבְדְּכוֹן וּבִיתוּ וְאַסְחוּ רַגְלֵיכוֹן וּתְקַדְּמוּן
וּתְהָכוּן לְאָרְחַכוֹן וַאֲמָרוּ לָא אֱלָהֵן בִּרְחוֹבָא
נְבִית: ג וּתְקֵיף בְּהוֹן לַחֲדָא וְזָרוּ לְוָתֵיהּ וְעָלוּ
לְבֵיתֵיהּ וַעֲבַד לְהוֹן מִשְׁתְּיָא וּפַטִּיר אֲפָא לְהוֹן
וַאֲכָלוּ: ד עַד לָא שְׁכִיבוּ וֶאֱנָשֵׁי קִרְתָּא אֱנָשֵׁי
דְסְדוֹם אַקִּיפוּ עַל בֵּיתָא מֵעוּלֵימָא וְעַד סָבָא
כָּל עַמָּא מִסּוֹפֵיהּ: ה וּקְרוֹ לְלוֹט וַאֲמָרוּ לֵיהּ
אָן גּוּבְרַיָּא דַּאֲתוֹ לְוָתָךְ בְּלֵילְיָא אַפֵּיקִינּוּן
לְוָתָנָא וְנִדַּע יַתְהוֹן: ו וּנְפַק לְוָתְהוֹן לוֹט
לְתָרְעָא וְדָשָׁא אֲחַד בַּתְרוֹהִי: ז וַאֲמַר בְּבָעוּ
כְעַן אַחַי לָא תַבְאִישׁוּן: ח הָא כְעַן לִי תַּרְתֵּין
בְּנָן דְּלָא יְדָעִנּוּן גְּבַר אַפֵּק כְּעַן יַתְהֶן לְוָתְכוֹן
וַעֲבִידוּ לְהֶן כִּדְתַסְקִין בְּעֵינֵיכוֹן לְחוֹד לְגוּבְרַיָּא
הָאִלֵּין לָא תַעֲבְדוּן מִדַּעַם אֲרֵי עַל כֵּן עָלוּ
בְּטְלַל שֵׁרוּתִי: ט וַאֲמָרוּ קְרֵב לְהַלָּא וַאֲמָרוּ
חַד אָתָא לְאִתּוֹתָבָא וְהָא דָאִין דִּינָא כְּעַן
נְבַאֵישׁ לָךְ מִדִּילְהוֹן וְאַתְקִיפוּ בְּגַבְרָא בְלוֹט

רס"י

וירא לוט וגו'. מניין תגדרסם למד לחזור על המורחים: **(ג) הנה נא אדני.** כגה נח תתם תדוניס לי, תחר תחר כגה נח, לריכים תתם לתת לב על הרשעים הללו שלח יכירו בכם, וזו היא עלה ונכונה: **סורו נא.** עקמו את הדרך לביתי דרך עקלתון, שלא יכירו שתתם נכנסים שם, לכך נאמר סורו[1]: **ולינו ורחצו רגליכם.** וכי דרכן של בני תדם ללון תחלה ותחר כך לרחון. ועוד שהרי תגדרסם תמר לכם תחלה ורחצו רגליכם, תלא כך תמר לוט, תם כשיבאו תנשי סדום וירחו שכבר רחצו רגליכם, יעלילו עלי ויתמרו, כבר עברו שני ימים תו שלשה שבאו לביתך ולא הודעתנו, לפיכך תמר, מוטב שיתעכבו כאן בחבק רגליכם, שיהיו נרחין כאן שבאו עכשיו, לפיכך תמר לינו תחלה, ותחר כך רחצו: **ויאמרו לא.** ולתגדרסם תמרו כן תעשה, תכאן שמסרבין לקטן ואין מסרבין לגדול[2]: **כי ברחוב נלין.** הרי כי משמע בלשון הלא, שאמרו לא נסור אל ביתך אלא ברחובה של עיר נלין: **(ג) ויסרו אליו.** עקמו את הדרך לגד ביתו: **ומצות אפה.** פסח היה: **(ד) טרם ישכבו ואנשי העיר אנשי סדום.** כך נדרש בגרשתית רבה[3], טרם ישכבו, ואנשי העיר היו

בפיהם של מלאכים, שהיו שולחים ללוט מה טיבם ומעשיהם, והוא אומר להם רובם רשעים, עודם מדבירים בהם, ואנשי סדום וגו'. ופשוטו של מקרא, ואנשי העיר אנשי רשע, נסבו על הבית, ועל שהיו רשעים נקראים אנשי סדום, כמו שאמר בתחוב, ואנשי סדום רעים וחטאים: **כל העם מקצה.** מקלה העיר עד הקלה, שאין אחד מהם מוחה בידם, שאפילו לדיק אחד אין בהם: **(ה) ונדעה אותם.** במשכב זכר, כמו משר לא ידעו איש[4]: **(ח) האל.** כמו האלה: **כי על כן באו.** כי הטובה הזאת תעשו לכבודי, על אשר באו בצל קורתי. תרגום בטלל שרותי, תרגום של קורה שרותה: **(ט) ויאמרו גש הלאה.** קרב להלאה, כלומר התקרב לגדדין והתרחק ממנו, וכן כל הלאה שבמקרא לשון ריחוק, כמו זרה הלאה[5], כגה התני ממך והלאה[6]. גם הלאה, המשך להלן, בלשון לעז"ז טריט"י דנו"ם, ודבר מזיפה הוא, לומר, אין אנו חושבין לך, ודומה לו קרב הלין אל תגש בי[7], וכן גשה לי ואשבה[8], המשך לגדדין בעבורי ואשב אצלך. אתה מלין על התורחין, אין מלאך לבך. על שאמר להם על הבנות אמרו לו גם הלאה, לשון נחת, ועל שהיה מלין על התורחים

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*]."

1 ב"ר נ, ד 2 שם 3 נ, ה 4 שם 5 במדבר יז, ב 6 שמואל-א כ, כב 7 ישעי' סה, ה 8 שם ממ, כ

Angels Come to Destroy Sodom and Save Lot

19 Third Reading

The 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.

Lot (always looked for guests, so he) saw them. He went up to greet them, and prostrated himself, face to the ground. 2 *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."

3 *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. 4 *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). 5 *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!"*

6 *Lot came out to them at the entrance, and he shut the door behind him.* 7 *He said, "My brothers! Please don't act wickedly.* 8 *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."*

9 *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 וַיִּפְצְרוּ בָאִישׁ בְּלוֹט מְאֹד וַיִּגְּשׁוּ לִשְׁבֹּר הַדָּלֶת: ט וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים אֶת־יָדָם וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶת־לוֹט אֲלֵיהֶם הַבָּיְתָה וְאֶת־הַדֶּלֶת סָגָרוּ: י וְאֶת־הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־פֶּתַח הַבַּיִת הִכּוּ בַּסַּנְוֵרִים מִקָּטֹן וְעַד־גָּדוֹל וַיִּלְאוּ לִמְצֹא הַפָּתַח: יב וַיֹּאמְרוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים אֶל־לוֹט עֲדֹ מִי־לְךָ פֹּה חָתָן וּבָנֶיךָ וּבְנֹתֶיךָ וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר־לְךָ בָּעִיר הוֹצֵא מִן־הַמָּקוֹם: יג כִּי־מַשְׁחִתִים אֲנַחְנוּ אֶת־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה כִּי־גָדְלָה צַעֲקָתָם אֶת־פְּנֵי יְהוָה וַיְשַׁלְּחֵנוּ יְהוָה לְשַׁחֲתָהּ: יד וַיֵּצֵא לוֹט וַיְדַבֵּר | אֶל־חֲתָנָיו | לֹקְחֵי בְנֹתָיו וַיֹּאמֶר קוּמוּ צְאוּ מִן־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה כִּי־מַשְׁחִית יְהוָה אֶת־הָעִיר וַיְהִי כִמְצַחֵק בְּעֵינֵי חֲתָנָיו: טו וּכְמוֹ הַשַּׁחַר עָלָה וַיָּאִיצוּ הַמַּלְאָכִים בְּלוֹט לֵאמֹר קוּם קַח אֶת־אִשְׁתְּךָ וְאֶת־שְׁתֵּי בְנֹתֶיךָ הַנִּמְצָאֹת פֶּן־תִּסָּפֶה בַּעֲוֹן הָעִיר: טז וַיִּתְמַהְמָהּ | וַיַּחֲזִיקוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים בְּיָדוֹ וּבְיַד־אִשְׁתּוֹ וּבְיַד שְׁתֵּי בְנֹתָיו בְּחֶמְלַת יְהוָה עָלָיו וַיֹּצִאֻהוּ וַיַּנִּחֻהוּ מִחוּץ לָעִיר: יז וַיְהִי כְּהוֹצִיאָם אֹתָם הַחוּצָה וַיֹּאמֶר הִמָּלֵט עַל־נַפְשֶׁךָ אַל־תַּבִּיט אַחֲרֶיךָ וְאַל־תַּעֲמֹד בְּכָל־הַכִּכָּר הָהָרָה הִמָּלֵט פֶּן־תִּסָּפֶה: יח וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹט אֲלֵהֶם אַל־נָא אֲדֹנָי: יט הִנֵּה־נָא מָצָא עַבְדְּךָ חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ וַתַּגְדֶּל חַסְדְּךָ אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ עִמָּדִי לְהַחֲיוֹת אֶת־נַפְשִׁי וְאָנֹכִי לֹא אוּכַל לְהִמָּלֵט הָהָרָה פֶּן־תִּדְבָּקַנִי הָרָעָה וָמַתִּי: כ הִנֵּה־נָא הָעִיר הַזֹּאת קְרֹבָה לָנוּס שָׁמָּה וְהִוא מִצְעָר אִמָּלְטָה נָּא שָׁמָּה הֲלֹא

לַחֲדָא וּקְרִיבוּ לְמִתְבַּר דְּשָׁא: י וְאוֹשִׁיטוּ גוּבְרַיָּא יַת יְדֵיהוֹן וְאַעִילוּ יַת לוֹט לְוָתְהוֹן לְבֵיתָא וְיַת דְּשָׁא אַחְדוּ: יא וְיַת גוּבְרַיָּא דִי בְתָרַע בֵּיתָא מְחוֹ בְּשַׁבְרִירַיָּא מִזְּעֵירָא וְעַד סָבָא וּלְאִיוּ לְאַשְׁכָּחָא תַּרְעָא: יב וַאֲמָרוּ גוּבְרַיָּא לְלוֹט עוֹד מַאן לָךְ הָכָא חַתְנָא וּבְנָיךְ וּבְנָתָיךְ וְכָל דִּי לָךְ בְּקַרְתָּא אַפֵּיק מִן אַתְרָא: יג אֲרֵי מְחַבְּלִין אֲנַחְנָא יַת אַתְרָא הָדֵין אֲרֵי סַגִּיאַת קֳבֵלְתְּהוֹן קֳדָם יְיָ וְשַׁלְחָנָא יְיָ לְחַבָּלוּתָהּ: יד וּנְפַק לוֹט וּמַלֵּיל עִם חַתְנוֹהִי נָסְבֵי בְנָתֵיהּ וַאֲמַר קוּמוּ פּוּקוּ מִן אַתְרָא הָדֵין אֲרֵי מְחַבֵּל יְיָ יַת קַרְתָּא וַהֲוָה כִּמְחָיְךְ בְּעֵינֵי חַתְנוֹהִי: טו וּכְמַסֵּק צַפְרָא הֲוָה וּדְחִיקוּ מַלְאָכַיָּא בְּלוֹט לְמֵימָר קוּם דְּבַר יַת אִתְּתָךְ וְיַת תַּרְתֵּין בְּנָתָךְ דְּאִשְׁתְּכַחַן מְהֵימְנָן עִמָּךְ דִּילְמָא תִּלְקֵי בְּחוֹבֵי קַרְתָּא: טו וְאִתְעַכָּב וְאַתְקִיפוּ גוּבְרַיָּא בִּידֵיהּ וּבִידָא דְאִתְּתֵיהּ וּבִידָא דִּתַרְתֵּין בְּנָתֵיהּ בְּדְחַס יְיָ עֲלוֹהִי וְאַפְּקוּהִי וְאַשְׁרוּהִי מִבָּרָא לְקַרְתָּא: יו וַהֲוָה כַּד אַפִּיקוּ יַתְהוֹן לְבָרָא וַאֲמַר חוּם עַל נַפְשָׁךְ לָא תִסְתְּכִי לַאֲחוֹרָךְ וְלָא תְקוּם בְּכָל מֵישְׁרָא לְטוּרָא אִשְׁתֵּיזֵב דִּילְמָא תִּלְקֵי: יח וַאֲמַר לוֹט לְהוֹן בְּבָעוּ כְעַן יְיָ: יט הָא כְעַן אַשְׁכַּח עַבְדָּךְ רַחֲמִין קֳדָמָךְ וְאַסְגֵּיתָא טוּבָךְ דִּי עֲבַדְתָּא עִמִּי לְקַיָּמָא יַת נַפְשִׁי וַאֲנָא לֵית אֲנָא יָכִיל לְאִשְׁתֵּזָבָא לְטוּרָא דִּילְמָא תְּעַרְעָנֵנִי בִּישְׁתָּא וְאָמוּת: כ הָא כְעַן קַרְתָּא הָדָא קְרִיבָא לְמֵעָרוֹק לְתַמָּן וְהִיא זְעִירָא אֶשְׁתֵּזֵב כְּעַן לְתַמָּן

רס"י

ממרו, כאחד בא לגור. מדם נכרי יחידי אתה ביניהו שבאת לגור, ויפפוט שפוט, ועשית מוכיח מותנו: **הדלת.** דלת הסובבת לגעול ולפתוח: (יא) **פתח.** הוא החלל שבו נכנסין ויולאין: **בסנורים.** מכת עורון: **מקטן ועד גדול.** הקטנים בתחילו בעבירה תחלה, שנאמר מנער ועד זקן, לפיכך בתחילה בפורענות מכם[1]: (יב) **עוד מי לך פה.** פשוטו של מקרא, מי לך עוד בעיר הזאת, חוץ מאשתך ובניתיך שבבית: **חתן ובניך ובנותיך.** אם יש לך חתן או בנים ובנות, כולם מן המקום: **ובניך.** בני בנותיך הנשואות. ומדרש אגדה, עוד, מאחר שעומדין ונגלה הזאת, מי לך פתחון פה ללמד סניגוריא עליכם, שכל הלילה היה מלין עליכם טובות. קרי ביה מי לך פה: (יד) **חתניו.** שתי בנות נשואות היו לו בעיר: **לקחי בנותיו.** שמותן שבבית מרוסות לכם: (טו) **ויאיצו.** כתרגומו ודחיקו, מהרוהו: **הנמצאות.** המזומנות לך בבית להנילם. ומדרש אגדה יש, וזה ישובו של מקרא: **תספה.** תהיה כלה, עד תום כל הדור, מתורגם, עד דסף כל דרא: (טז) **ויתמהמה.** כדי להניל את ממונו: **ויחזיקו.** אחד מהם היה שליח להניאו, וחבירו להפוך את סדום, לכך נאמר ויאמר במלט, ולא נאמר ויאמרו[2]: (יז) **המלט על נפשך.** דייק להניל נפשות אל תחוס על הממון: **אל תביט אחריך.** אתה הרשעת עמהם, וזכות אברהם אתה גיגול, חיוך כדאי לראות בפורענותם ואתה גיגול: **בכל הכבר.** ככר הירדן: **ההרה המלט.** אל תברהם ברח, שהוא יושב בהר, שנאמר ויעתק משם אברהם, ואף עכשיו היה יושב שם, שנאמר אל המקום אשר היה שם אהלו בתחלה, ואף על פי שכתוב ויאהל אברהם וגו', אהליה הרבה היו לו, ומשכו עד חברון. במלט לשון השמטה, וכן כל המלטה שבמקרא, משמואי"ר בלע"ז, וכן והמליטה זכר[3], שנשמט העובר

1 ב"ר נ, ז 2 שם נ, יא 3 ישעי' סו, ז 4 תהלים קכד, ז 5 ישעי' מו, ב 6 שבועות לה: 7 מלכים-א יז, 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.

[10] *The (angels) stretched their hands out, brought Lot to them in the house, and they shut the door.* [11] *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.*

[12] *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!* [13] *For we are going to destroy this place, since the (people's) outcry is great before God. God has sent us to destroy it."*

[14] *So Lot went and spoke to his (two) sons-in-law (and) the fianc□s 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 *As 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!"*

[16] *(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.*

[17] *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."*

[18] *Lot said to them, "Please, My God, don't (tell me to flee to the mountain)!* [19] *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.* [20] *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)?"*

רס"י

מן הרחם. כלפור נמלטה[4], ולא יכלו מלט משם[5], להשמיט משם הרעי שבנקביהם: **(יח) אל נא אדני.** רבותינו אמרו[6] שם זה קדם, שנאמר גו להחיות את נפשי, מי שיש בידו להמית ולהחיות, ותרגומו בבעו כען ר': **אל נא.** אל גא תאמר אלי להמלט ההרה: **נא.** לשון בקשה: **(יט) פן תדבקני הרעה.** כשהייתי אצל אנשי סדום, היה הקב"ה רואה מעשי ומעשי בני העיר, והייתי נראה לדיק וכדאי להנצל, וכשאמצא אצל לדיק, אני כרשע, וכן אמרה הנרפית לאליהו כי בחת אלי להזכיר את עוני[7], עד שלא בחת אצלי, היה הקב"ה רואה מעשי ומעשי עמי ואני לדקת ביניהם, ומשבחת אצלי, לפי מעשיך אני רשעה: **(כ) העיר הזאת קרובה.** קרובה ימיתתי[8], ותיישבה מקרוב, לפיכך לא נתמלאה סאתה עדיין, ומה היא קריתה, מדור הפלגה שנתפלגו האנשים ונתחילו להתיישב שם איש במקומו, והיא היתה בשנת מות פלג, ומשם עד כאן ג"ד שנה, שפלג מת בשנת מ"ח לאברהם, כיוצד פלג אי אחרי הולידו את רעו ר"ט שנה, לא מכם ל"ב כשנולד שרוג ומשרוג עד שנולד נחור ל', הרי ס"ב, ומנחור עד שנולד תרח כ"ט, הרי ל"ח, ומשם עד

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)

מִצְעָר הֲוֹא וּתְחִי נַפְשִׁי: כא [רביעי] וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הִנֵּה נָשָׂאתִי פָנֶיךָ גַּם לַדָּבָר הַזֶּה לְבִלְתִּי הָפְכִּי אֶת־הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ: כב מַהֵר הִמָּלֵט שָׁמָּה כִּי לֹא אוּכַל לַעֲשׂוֹת דָּבָר עַד־בֹּאֲךָ שָׁמָּה עַל־כֵּן קָרָא שֵׁם־הָעִיר צוֹעַר: כג הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ יָצָא עַל־הָאָרֶץ וְלוֹט בָּא צֹעַרָה: כד וַיהוָה הִמְטִיר עַל־סְדֹם וְעַל־עֲמֹרָה גָּפְרִית וָאֵשׁ מֵאֵת יְהוָה מִן־הַשָּׁמָיִם: כה וַיַּהֲפֹךְ אֶת־הֶעָרִים הָאֵל וְאֵת כָּל־הַכִּכָּר וְאֵת כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי הֶעָרִים וְצֶמַח הָאֲדָמָה: כו וַתַּבֵּט אִשְׁתּוֹ מֵאַחֲרָיו וַתְּהִי נְצִיב מָלַח: כז וַיַּשְׁכֵּם אַבְרָהָם בַּבֹּקֶר

הֲלָא וְעֵירָה הִיא וְתִתְקַיֵּם נַפְשִׁי: כא וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ הָא נְסִיבִית אַפֵּךְ אַף לְפִתְגָמָא הָדֵין בְּדִיל דְּלָא לְמֶהְפַּךְ יַת קַרְתָּא דְּבָעֵיתָא עֲלָהּ: כב אוֹחֵי אִשְׁתְּזֵב לְתַמָּן אֲרֵי לָא אִכּוֹל לְמֶעֱבַד פִּתְגָמָא עַד מֵיתָךְ לְתַמָּן עַל כֵּן קָרָא שְׁמָא דְקַרְתָּא צוֹעַר: כג שִׁמְשָׁא נְפַק עַל אַרְעָא וְלוֹט עַל לְצוֹעַר: כד וַיְיָ אַמְטַר עַל סְדוֹם וְעַל עֲמוֹרָה גָּפְרִיתָא וְאֶשָׁתָא מִן קֳדָם יְיָ מִן שְׁמַיָּא: כה וַהֲפַךְ יַת קִרְוַיָּא הָאִלֵּין וְיַת כָּל מֵישְׁרָא וְיַת כָּל יָתְבֵי קִרְוַיָּא וְצִמְחָא דְאַרְעָא: כו וְאִסְתְּכִיאַת אִתְּתֵיהּ מִבַּתְרוֹהִי וַהֲוַת קָמָא דְמִלְחָא: כז וְאַקְדֵּים אַבְרָהָם

רס"י

שעה שהלבנה עומדת נרקיע עם החמה, לפי שהיו מהם עובדין לחמה ומהם ללבנה, אמר הקב"ה אם אפרע מהם ביום, יהיו עובדי ללבנה אומרים, חילו היה בלילה כשהלבנה מושלת, לא היינו חרבין, ואם אפרע מהם בלילה, יהיו עובדי החמה אומרים חילו היה ביום כשהחמה מושלת, לא היינו חרבים, לכך כתיב וכמו השחר עלה, ופרע מהם בשעה שהחמה והלבנה מושלים: **המטיר וגו' גפרית ואש.** בתחלה מטר, ועשה גפרית ואש[2]: **מאת ה'.** דרך המקראות לדבר כן, כמו נשי למך, ולא אמר נשיו. וכן אמר דוד קחו עמכם את עבדי אדוניכם[3], ולא אמר מעבדיו. וכן אחשורוש בשם המלך, ולא אמר בשמו. אף כאן אמר מאת ה', ולא אמר מאתו: **מן השמים.** והוא שאמר הכתוב כי בם ידין עמים וגו'[4], כשבא ליסר הבריות, מביא עליהם אש מן השמים, כמו שעשה לסדום, וכשבא להוריד המן, מן השמים, הנני ממטיר לכם לחם מן השמים[5]: **(כה) ויהפך את הערים וגו'.** מרבעתן יושבות בשלש אחד, והפכן מלמעלה למטה, שנאמר בחלמים שלח ידו וגו'[6]: **(כו) ותבט אשתו מאחריו. ותהי נציב מלח.** בתלת מטאה ובמלח

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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?

1 ירמי' לא, יט 2 מכילתא בשלח שירה פ"ה 3 מלכים-א א, לג 4 איוב לו, לא 5 שמות טז, ד 6 איוב כח, ט

Fourth Reading

[21] (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. [22] 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").

[23] As the sun rose over the earth, Lot came to Tz'oar.

[24] 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. [25] (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.

[26] (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 Tzo'ar), *Rashi* informs us of the significance of each of the kings' names:

- *Bera* (בָּרַע), the king of Sodom, had a twofold evil (ב׳ רַע), evil to Heaven and evil to people.
- *Birsha* (בִּרְשַׁע) the king of Amorah, was elevated [twofold] in wickedness (ב׳ רֶשַׁע).
- *Shinav* (שִׁנְאָב) the king of Admah, hated (שׂוֹנֵא) his Father (אָב) in Heaven.
- *Shemaiver* (שֶׁמְאֵבֶר) the king of Tzevoiyim, made (שָׂם) wings (אֵבֶר) 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. 70*ff.*)

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)

אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־עָמַד שָׁם אֶת־פְּנֵי יְהוָה: כח וַיַּשְׁקֵף עַל־פְּנֵי
סְדֹם וַעֲמֹרָה וְעַל כָּל־פְּנֵי אֶרֶץ הַכִּכָּר וַיַּרְא וְהִנֵּה עָלָה קִיטֹר
הָאָרֶץ כְּקִיטֹר הַכִּבְשָׁן: כט וַיְהִי בְּשַׁחֵת אֱלֹהִים אֶת־עָרֵי הַכִּכָּר
וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־אַבְרָהָם וַיְשַׁלַּח אֶת־לוֹט מִתּוֹךְ הַהֲפֵכָה
בַּהֲפֹךְ אֶת־הֶעָרִים אֲשֶׁר־יָשַׁב בָּהֶן לוֹט: ל וַיַּעַל לוֹט מִצּוֹעַר
וַיֵּשֶׁב בָּהָר וּשְׁתֵּי בְנֹתָיו עִמּוֹ כִּי יָרֵא לָשֶׁבֶת בְּצוֹעַר וַיֵּשֶׁב
בַּמְּעָרָה הוּא וּשְׁתֵּי בְנֹתָיו: לא וַתֹּאמֶר הַבְּכִירָה אֶל־הַצְּעִירָה
אָבִינוּ זָקֵן וְאִישׁ אֵין בָּאָרֶץ לָבוֹא עָלֵינוּ כְּדֶרֶךְ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ:
לב לְכָה נַשְׁקֶה אֶת־אָבִינוּ יַיִן וְנִשْכְּבָה עִמּוֹ וּנְחַיֶּה מֵאָבִינוּ זָרַע:
לג וַתַּשְׁקֶיןָ אֶת־אֲבִיהֶן יַיִן בַּלַּיְלָה הוּא וַתָּבֹא הַבְּכִירָה וַתִּשְׁכַּב
אֶת־אָבִיהָ וְלֹא־יָדַע בְּשִׁכְבָהּ *וּבְקוּמָהּ: לד וַיְהִי מִמָּחֳרָת
וַתֹּאמֶר הַבְּכִירָה אֶל־הַצְּעִירָה הֵן־שָׁכַבְתִּי אֶמֶשׁ אֶת־אָבִי
נַשְׁקֶנּוּ יַיִן גַּם־הַלַּיְלָה וּבֹאִי שִׁכְבִי עִמּוֹ וּנְחַיֶּה מֵאָבִינוּ זָרַע:
לה וַתַּשְׁקֶיןָ גַּם בַּלַּיְלָה הַהוּא אֶת־אֲבִיהֶן יַיִן וַתָּקָם הַצְּעִירָה
וַתִּשְׁכַּב עִמּוֹ וְלֹא־יָדַע בְּשִׁכְבָהּ וּבְקוּמָהּ: לו וַתַּהֲרֶיןָ שְׁתֵּי
בְנוֹת־לוֹט מֵאֲבִיהֶן: לז וַתֵּלֶד הַבְּכִירָה בֵּן וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ מוֹאָב
הוּא אֲבִי־מוֹאָב עַד־הַיּוֹם: לח וְהַצְּעִירָה גַּם־הִוא יָלְדָה בֵּן
וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ בֶּן־עַמִּי הוּא אֲבִי בְנֵי־עַמּוֹן עַד־הַיּוֹם: ס

בְּצַפְרָא לְאַתְרָא דִּשַׁמֵּשׁ תַּמָּן בְּצִלּוֹ קֳדָם יְיָ:
כח וְאִסְתְּכִי עַל אַפֵּי סְדוֹם וַעֲמוֹרָה וְעַל כָּל
אַפֵּי אַרַע מֵישָׁרָא וַחֲזָא וְהָא סְלִיק תְּנָנָא
דְּאַרְעָא כִּתְנָנָא דְּאַתּוּנָא: כט וַהֲוָה בְּחַבָּלוּת יְיָ
יָת קִרְוֵי מֵישָׁרָא וּדְכִיר יְיָ יָת אַבְרָהָם וְשַׁלַּח
יָת לוֹט מִגּוֹ הֲפֻכְתָּא כַּד הֲפַךְ יָת קִרְוַיָּא דִּי
הֲוָה יָתִיב בְּהֶן לוֹט: ל וּסְלִיק לוֹט מִצּוֹעַר
וְיָתֵיב בְּטוּרָא וְתַרְתֵּין בְּנָתֵיהּ עִמֵּיהּ אֲרֵי דְּחֵיל
לְמִתַּב בְּצוֹעַר וְיָתֵיב בְּמְעָרְתָּא הוּא וְתַרְתֵּין
בְּנָתֵיהּ: לא וַאֲמָרַת רַבְּתָא לְזְעֵרְתָּא אֲבוּנָא
סִיב וּגְבַר לֵית בְּאַרְעָא לְמֵיעַל עֲלָנָא כְּאוֹרַח
כָּל אַרְעָא: לב אֵיתָא נַשְׁקֵי יָת אֲבוּנָא חַמְרָא
וְנִשְׁכּוּב עִמֵּיהּ וּנְקַיֵּם מֵאֲבוּנָא בְּנִין:
לג וַאַשְׁקִיאָה יָת אֲבוּהֶן חַמְרָא בְּלֵילְיָא הוּא
וְעָלַת רַבְּתָא וּשְׁכִיבַת עִם אֲבוּהָא וְלָא יְדַע
בְּמִשְׁכְּבָהּ וּבְמִקְיְמָהּ: לד וַהֲוָה בְּיוֹמָא
דְּבַתְרוֹהִי וַאֲמָרַת רַבְּתָא לְזְעֵרְתָּא הָא
שְׁכִיבִית רַמְשָׁא עִם אַבָּא נַשְׁקִינֵיהּ חַמְרָא אַף
בְּלֵילְיָא וְעוּלִי שְׁכוּבִי עִמֵּיהּ וּנְקַיֵּם מֵאֲבוּנָא
בְּנִין: לה וְאַשְׁקִיאָה אַף בְּלֵילְיָא הַהוּא יָת
אֲבוּהֶן חַמְרָא וְקָמַת זְעֵרְתָּא וּשְׁכִיבַת עִמֵּיהּ
וְלָא יְדַע בְּמִשְׁכְּבָהּ וּבְמִקְיְמָהּ: לו וְעִדְיאוּ
תַּרְתֵּין בְּנָת לוֹט מֵאֲבוּהֶן: לז וְיָלִידַת רַבְּתָא
בַּר וּקְרַת שְׁמֵיהּ מוֹאָב הוּא אֲבוּהוֹן דְּמוֹאָבָאֵי
עַד יוֹמָא דֵּין: לח וּזְעֵרְתָּא אַף הִיא יְלִידַת בַּר
וּקְרַת שְׁמֵיהּ בַּר עַמִּי הוּא אֲבוּהוֹן דִּבְנֵי עַמּוֹן

*נקוד על ו׳ בתרא

רש״י

לקתה, אמר לה תני מעט מלח לתורתים הללו, אמרה לו אף המגבא הרע הזה אתה נתת להכניס במקום הזה: (כח) **קיטור**. תימור של עשן, עור״ח בלע״ז: **כבשן**. חפירה שעורפין בה את המגיסים לסיד, וכן כל כבשן שבתורה: (כט) **ויזכור אלהים את אברהם**. מכו זכירתו של מברכם על לוט, נזכר שהיה לוט יודע שהרי חשתו של מברכם, ושמע שאמר מברכם במלריס על הרי מחתי היא, ולא גלה הדבר, שהיה חס עליו, לפיכך חס הקב״ה עליו[2]: (ל) **כי ירא לשבת בצוער**. לפי שהיתה קרובה לסדום: (לא) **אבינו זקן**. ואם לא עכשיו אימתי, שמא ימות או יפסוק מלהוליד: **ואיש אין בארץ**. סבורות היו שכל העולם נאבד, כמו בדור המבול[3]: (לג) **ותשקין וגו׳**. יין נזדמן להם במערה, להוליך מכן שני חומות: **ותשכב את אביה**. ובשעירה כתיב ותשכב עמו, לעירה לפי שלא פתחה בזנות, אלא אחותה למדתה, חיסך עליה הכתוב ולא פירש גנותה. אבל בכירה שפתחה בזנות, פרשה הכתוב במפורש. ובקומה של בכירה נקוד לומר, שבקומה ידע, ואף על פי כן לא נשמר ליל שני מלשתות. (פ״ר לוי כל מי שהוא להוט אחר בולמוס של עריות, לסוף מאכילים אותו מבשרו): (לו) **ותהרין וגו׳**. אף על פי שאין הכאב מתעברת מביאה ראשונה, אלו שלטו בעצמן והוליאו ערותן (ס״ח עדותן) לאוץ, ונתעברו מביאה ראשונה: (לז) **מואב**. זו שלא היתה לנועה פירשה שמאביה הוא, אבל לעירה קראתו בלשון נקיה, וקבלה שכר בימי משה,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Why is there a dot on the word וּבְקוּמָהּ ? (v. 33)**

Rashi: The word **וּבְקוּמָהּ** "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).

1 ב״ר נ, ד 2 שם נא, ו 3 שם ח

[27] *Avraham got up early in the morning (and returned) to the place where he had stood before God (in prayer).* [28] *He gazed at the site of Sodom and Amorah, 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.*

[29] *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 *Lot 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.*

[31] *(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.* [32] *Come, let's give our father wine to drink, and let's lie with him. We'll produce offspring through our father."*

[33] *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.*

[34] *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."*

[35] *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.*

[36] *Lot's two daughters conceived from their father.* [37] *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.* [38] *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. ***Divrei 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 וּבְקוּמָהּ (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.

כ א וַיִּסַּע מִשָּׁם אַבְרָהָם אַרְצָה הַנֶּגֶב וַיֵּשֶׁב בֵּין־קָדֵשׁ וּבֵין שׁוּר
וַיָּגָר בִּגְרָר: ב וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל־שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ אֲחֹתִי הִוא
וַיִּשְׁלַח אֲבִימֶלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ גְּרָר וַיִּקַּח אֶת־שָׂרָה: ג וַיָּבֹא אֱלֹהִים
אֶל־אֲבִימֶלֶךְ בַּחֲלוֹם הַלָּיְלָה וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הִנְּךָ מֵת עַל־הָאִשָּׁה
אֲשֶׁר־לָקַחְתָּ וְהִוא בְּעֻלַת בָּעַל: ד וַאֲבִימֶלֶךְ לֹא קָרַב אֵלֶיהָ
וַיֹּאמַר אֲדֹנָי הֲגוֹי גַּם־צַדִּיק תַּהֲרֹג: ה הֲלֹא הוּא אָמַר־לִי אֲחֹתִי
הִוא וְהִיא־גַם־הִוא אָמְרָה אָחִי הוּא בְּתֹם־לְבָבִי וּבְנִקְיֹן כַּפַּי
עָשִׂיתִי זֹאת: ו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הָאֱלֹהִים בַּחֲלוֹם גַּם אָנֹכִי יָדַעְתִּי כִּי
בְתֹם־לְבָבְךָ עָשִׂיתָ זֹּאת וָאֶחְשָׂךְ גַּם־אָנֹכִי אוֹתְךָ מֵחֲטוֹ*־לִי
עַל־כֵּן לֹא־נְתַתִּיךָ לִנְגֹּעַ אֵלֶיהָ: ז וְעַתָּה הָשֵׁב אֵשֶׁת־הָאִישׁ
כִּי־נָבִיא הוּא וְיִתְפַּלֵּל בַּעַדְךָ וֶחְיֵה וְאִם־אֵינְךָ מֵשִׁיב דַּע
כִּי־מוֹת תָּמוּת אַתָּה וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־לָךְ: ח וַיַּשְׁכֵּם אֲבִימֶלֶךְ בַּבֹּקֶר
וַיִּקְרָא לְכָל־עֲבָדָיו וַיְדַבֵּר אֶת־כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה בְּאָזְנֵיהֶם
וַיִּירְאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים מְאֹד: ט וַיִּקְרָא אֲבִימֶלֶךְ לְאַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ
מֶה־עָשִׂיתָ לָּנוּ וּמֶה־חָטָאתִי לָךְ כִּי־הֵבֵאתָ עָלַי וְעַל־מַמְלַכְתִּי
חֲטָאָה גְדֹלָה מַעֲשִׂים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יֵעָשׂוּ עָשִׂיתָ עִמָּדִי: י וַיֹּאמֶר
אֲבִימֶלֶךְ אֶל־אַבְרָהָם מָה רָאִיתָ כִּי עָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה:
יא וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם כִּי אָמַרְתִּי רַק אֵין־יִרְאַת אֱלֹהִים בַּמָּקוֹם
הַזֶּה וַהֲרָגוּנִי עַל־דְּבַר אִשְׁתִּי: יב וְגַם־אָמְנָה אֲחֹתִי בַת־אָבִי
הִוא אַךְ לֹא בַת־אִמִּי וַתְּהִי־לִי לְאִשָּׁה: יג וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר הִתְעוּ

עַד יוֹמָא דֵּין: א וּנְטַל מִתַּמָּן אַבְרָהָם לַאֲרַע
דָּרוֹמָא וְיָתֵיב בֵּין רְקֶם וּבֵין חַגְרָא וְאִתּוֹתַב
בִּגְרָר: ב וַאֲמַר אַבְרָהָם עַל שָׂרָה אִתְּתֵיהּ
אֲחָתִי הִיא וּשְׁלַח אֲבִימֶלֶךְ מַלְכָּא דִּגְרָר וּדְבַר
יַת שָׂרָה: ג וַאֲתָא מֵימַר מִן קֳדָם יְיָ לְוָת
אֲבִימֶלֶךְ בְּחֶלְמָא דְלֵילְיָא וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ הָא אַתְּ
מָאִית עַל עֵיסָק אִתְּתָא דִּי דְבַרְתָּא וְהִיא
אִתַּת גְּבַר: ד וַאֲבִימֶלֶךְ לָא קָרִיב לְוָתָהּ וַאֲמַר
יְיָ הַעַם אַף זַכַּאי תְּקָטוֹל: ה הֲלָא הוּא אֲמַר לִי
אֲחָתִי הִיא וְהִיא אַף הִיא אֲמָרַת אָחִי הוּא
בְּקַשִׁיטוּת לִבִּי וּבְזָכָאוּת יְדֵי עֲבָדִית דָּא:
ו וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ יְיָ בְּחֶלְמָא אַף אֲנָא יְדַעְנָא
בְּקַשִׁיטוּת לִבָּךְ עֲבַדְתָּ דָּא וּמְנָעִית אַף אֲנָא
יָתָךְ מִלְּמֶחֱטֵי קֳדָמַי עַל כֵּן לָא שְׁבַקְתִּיךְ
לְמִקְרַב לְוָתָהּ: ז וּכְעַן אֲתַב אִתַּת גַּבְרָא אֲרֵי
נְבִיָא הוּא וְיִצְלֵי עֲלָךְ וְתֵיחֵי וְאִם לֵיתָךְ מְתֵיב
דַּע אֲרֵי מָמַת תְּמוּת אַתְּ וְכָל דִּי לָךְ:
ח וְאַקְדֵּם אֲבִימֶלֶךְ בְּצַפְרָא וּקְרָא לְכָל עַבְדּוֹהִי
וּמַלֵּיל יַת כָּל פִּתְגָמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין קֳדָמֵיהוֹן וּדְחִילוּ
גוּבְרַיָּא לַחֲדָא: ט וּקְרָא אֲבִימֶלֶךְ לְאַבְרָהָם
וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ מָה עֲבַדְתָּ לָנָא וּמָה חָבִית לָךְ אֲרֵי
אַיְתֵיתָ עֲלַי וְעַל מַלְכוּתִי חוֹבָא רַבְּתָא
עוֹבָדִין דְּלָא כְשָׁרִין לְאִתְעֲבָדָא עֲבַדְתָּ עִמִּי:
י וַאֲמַר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ לְאַבְרָהָם מָה חֲזֵיתָא אֲרֵי
עֲבַדְתָּ יַת פִּתְגָמָא הָדֵין: יא וַאֲמַר אַבְרָהָם
אֲרֵי אֲמָרִית לְחוֹד לֵית דַּחֲלְתָּא דַיְיָ בְּאַתְרָא
הָדֵין וְיִקְטְלוּנַנִי עַל עֵיסַק אִתְּתִי: יב וּבְרַם
בְּקוּשְׁטָא אֲחָתִי בַת אַבָּא הִיא בְּרַם לָא בַת
אִמִּי וַהֲוָת לִי לְאִנְתוּ: יג וַהֲוָה כַּד טָעוּ עַמְמַיָּא

*חסר א

רש"י

שנאמר בנוי עמון על תתגר בם[1], כלל, ובמואב לא תצורו מלא שלח ילחם בם, אבל לעערן כתיב לו: (ח) ויסע משם אברהם. כשראה שחרבו הכרכים, ופסקו העוברים והשבים, נסע לו משם. דבר אחר להתרחק מלוט, שילא עליו שם רע שבא על בנותיו[2]: (ג) ויאמר אברהם. כאן לא נטל רשות, אלא על כרחה שלא בטובתה, לפי שכבר לוקחה לבית פרעה על ידי כן: **אל שרה אשתו**. על שרה משתו, וכיולא בו על הלקח תרון וגו'[3], ואל מות תמיה, שניכם בלשון על: (ד) **לא קרב אליה**. כמלאך מגעו, כמו שנאמר לא נתתיך לגגוע עליה: **הגוי גם צדיק תהרוג**. אף אם כוונ לדיק תהרגנו, שמא כך דרכך לאבד המומות חנם, כך עשית לדור המבול ולדור הפלגה, אף אני אומר שהרגתם על לא דבר, כמו שאתה אומר להרגני: (ה) **גם היא**. לרבות עבדיס וגמליס ואמריס שלה את כולם שאלתי ואמרו לי אחיכ הוא: **בתם לבבי**. שלא דמיתי לחטוא: **ובנקיון כפי**. נקי אני מן החטא, שלא נגעתי בה: (ו) **ידעתי כי בתם לבבך וגו'**. אמת שלא דמית מתחלה לחטוא, אבל נקיון כפיס אין כאן. (כדא אמרה משמוש ידיס יש כאן): **לא נתתיך**. לא ממך היה שלא נגעת בה, אלא חשכתי אני אותך מחטוא, שלא נתתי לך כח, וכן שנאמר בנוי עמון אל תתגר בם[1], כלל, ובמואב לא תצורו אלא שלח ילחם בם, אבל לעערן כתיב לו: (ז) **השב אשת האיש**. ואל תהא סבור שמא תתגנה בעיניו ולא יקבלנה, או ישנאך, ולא יתפלל עליך. (אמר לו אזילנך ומי מפרסמו שלא נגעתי בה, אמר לו): **כי נביא הוא**. ויודע שלא נגעת בה, לפיכך ויתפלל בעדך[6]: (ט) **מעשים אשר לא יעשו**. מכה אשר לא הורגלה לבא על ברית כאשה לזו על ידך, עגירת כל נקביס של זרע, ושל קטניס, ורעי, ואזניס ומוטס: (יא) **רק אין יראת אלהים**. מכסגאי שבא לעיר, על עסקי מכילה ושתיה שולחין אותו, או על עסקי אשתו שולחין אותו, אשתך היא או אחותך היא: (יב) **אחותי בת אבי היא**. מותרת לבן נח, שאין אבות לעובדי עבודת כוכבים, וכדי לאמת דבריו בשביל כן. ואם תאמר והלא בת אחיו היתה, בני בניס הרי הן כבניס, והרי היא בתו של תרח, וכן הוא אומר לעזר, כי אנשים אחיס אנחנו: **אך לא בת אמי**. הרי אמס אחרת היה: (יג) **ויהי כאשר התעו אותי וגו'**. מונקלוס תרגם מה שתרגם. ויש ליתב טוד דבר דבור על מופניו, כשהוליאוני הקב"ה מבית אבי להיות משוטט ונד ממקום למקום, וידעתי שאעבור במקום רשעים, ואומר לה זה חסדך וגו': **באשר התעו**. לשון רבים, ואל תתמה, כי בהרבה מקומות

Avimelech Seizes Sarah

20 *Avraham 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.*
2 *(Without her consent) Avraham said about his wife Sarah that "She is my sister."*

Avimelech the king of Gerar sent for and took Sarah.

3 *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!"*

4 *Avimelech had not come near to her, so he said, "God! Would you kill even a righteous nation?*
5 *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)!"*

6 *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.* 7 *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."*

8 *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.*

9 *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)!"*

10 *"What led you to do this thing?" Avimelech said to Avraham.*

11 *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.* 12 *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.* 13 *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)

1 דברים ב, יט 2 ב"ר נב, ד 3 שמואל ד, כא 4 בראשית לא, ז 5 שופטים טו, א 6 בבא קמא צב. 7 שם

אֹתִי אֱלֹהִים מִבֵּית אָבִי וָאֹמַר לָהּ זֶה חַסְדֵּךְ אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשִׂי
עִמָּדִי אֶל כָּל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר נָבוֹא שָׁמָּה אִמְרִי־לִי אָחִי הוּא:
יד וַיִּקַּח אֲבִימֶלֶךְ צֹאן וּבָקָר וַעֲבָדִים וּשְׁפָחֹת וַיִּתֵּן לְאַבְרָהָם
וַיָּשֶׁב לוֹ אֶת שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ: טו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ הִנֵּה אַרְצִי
לְפָנֶיךָ בַּטּוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ שֵׁב: טז וּלְשָׂרָה אָמַר הִנֵּה נָתַתִּי אֶלֶף כֶּסֶף
לְאָחִיךְ הִנֵּה הוּא־לָךְ כְּסוּת עֵינַיִם לְכֹל אֲשֶׁר אִתָּךְ וְאֵת כֹּל
וְנֹכָחַת: יז וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל אַבְרָהָם אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים וַיִּרְפָּא אֱלֹהִים
אֶת־אֲבִימֶלֶךְ וְאֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאַמְהֹתָיו וַיֵּלֵדוּ: יח כִּי־עָצֹר עָצַר
יְהוָה בְּעַד כָּל־רֶחֶם לְבֵית אֲבִימֶלֶךְ עַל־דְּבַר שָׂרָה אֵשֶׁת
אַבְרָהָם: ס **כא** א וַיהוָה פָּקַד אֶת־שָׂרָה כַּאֲשֶׁר אָמָר וַיַּעַשׂ
יְהוָה לְשָׂרָה כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֵּר: ב וַתַּהַר וַתֵּלֶד שָׂרָה לְאַבְרָהָם בֵּן
לִזְקֻנָיו לַמּוֹעֵד אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר אֹתוֹ אֱלֹהִים: ג וַיִּקְרָא אַבְרָהָם
אֶת־שֵׁם־בְּנוֹ הַנּוֹלַד־לוֹ אֲשֶׁר־יָלְדָה־לּוֹ שָׂרָה יִצְחָק: ד וַיָּמָל
אַבְרָהָם אֶת־יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ בֶּן־שְׁמֹנַת יָמִים כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֹתוֹ

בָּתַר עוֹבָדֵי יְדִיהוֹן יָתִי קָרִיב יְיָ לְדַמְלְתֵּיהּ
מִבֵּית אַבָּא וַאֲמָרִית לָהּ דֵּין טֵיבוּתִיךְ דִּי
תַּעְבְּדִי עִמִּי לְכָל אַתְרָא דִּי נְהַךְ לְתַמָּן אִמְרִי
עֲלַי אָחִי הוּא: יד וּדְבַר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ עָאן וְתוֹרִין
וְעַבְדִין וְאִמְהָן וְיהַב לְאַבְרָהָם וַאֲתֵיב לֵיהּ יָת
שָׂרָה אִתְּתֵיהּ: טו וַאֲמַר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ הָא אַרְעִי
קֳדָמָךְ בִּדְתַקִּין בְּעֵינָךְ תֵּיב: טז וּלְשָׂרָה אֲמַר
הָא יְהָבִית אֶלַף סְלְעִין דְּכַסַף לַאֲחוּךְ הָא הוּא
לִיךְ כְּסוּת דִּיקָר עֵינִין חֻלַּף דִּשְׁלָחִית
דְּבַרְתִּיךְ וַחֲזִית יָתִיךְ וְיָת כָּל דְּעִמָּךְ וְעַל כָּל
מָה דַּאֲמָרַת אִתּוֹכָחַת: יז וְצַלִּי אַבְרָהָם קֳדָם
יְיָ וְאַסִּי יְיָ יָת אֲבִימֶלֶךְ וְיָת אִתְּתֵיהּ וְאַמְהָתֵיהּ
וְאִתְרָוָחוּ: יח אֲרֵי מֵיחַד אֲחַד יְיָ בְּאַפֵּי כָּל
פְּתַח וַלְדָּא לְבֵית אֲבִימֶלֶךְ עַל עֵיסַק שָׂרָה
אִתַּת אַבְרָהָם: א וַיְיָ דְּכִיר יָת שָׂרָה כְּמָא דִּי
אֲמַר וַעֲבַד יְיָ לְשָׂרָה כְּמָא דִּי מַלִּיל: ב וְעַדְּיַאת
וְיָלְדַת שָׂרָה לְאַבְרָהָם בַּר לְסֵיבְתּוֹהִי
לְזִמְנָא דִּי מַלִּיל לָהּ יְיָ: ג וּקְרָא אַבְרָהָם יָת
שׁוּם בְּרֵיהּ דְּאִתְיְלִיד לֵיהּ דִּילִידַת לֵיהּ שָׂרָה
יִצְחָק: ד וּגְזַר אַבְרָהָם יָת יִצְחָק בְּרֵיהּ בַּר

לע"י

לשון מלכות ולשון מרות קרוי לשון רציס. משר הלכו מלכיס חייס. מלכיס קדושים. וכל לשון מלכיס לשון רציס. וכן ויקח מדוני יוסף. מדוני המדוניס. מדוני המרן. וכן בעליו יומת. והועד בבעליו. ואס תאמר מהו לשון התעו, כל הגולה ממקומו ואינו מיועד קרוי תועה, כמו ותלך ותתע[1]. תעיתי כשה תועד[2], יתעו לבלי תוכלו[3], יגאו ויתעו לבקש מכלס: **אמרי לי.** עלי, וכן ויעתלו מגשי המקום למשתו[4], על משתו. וכן ואמר פרעה לבני ישרשל[5], כמו על בני ישרשל. פן יאמרו לי משה הרגתהו[6]: (יד) **ויתן לאברהם.** כדי שיתפייס ויתפלל עליו: (טו) **הנה ארצי לפניך.** משל פרעה אמר לו הרס משתך קס ולך, לפי שנתירא, שהמלריס שטופי זמה: (טז) **ולשרה אמר.** מדיומלך לבבודה, כדי לפייסה, הרס עשיתי לך כבוד זה, נתתי ממון לאחיך, שאמרת עליו אחי הוא, הרס הממון והכבוד הזה לך כסות עיניס: **לכל אשר אתך.** יכסו עיניהס שלא יקילון, שאילו השיבותיך ריקניה, יש להס לומר, לאחר שנתעלל בה החזירה, עכשיו שהוללתי לבזבז ממון ולפייסך, יודעים יהיו שעל כרחי השיבותיך, ועל ידי נס: **ואת כל.** ועס כל בחי העולס: **ונכחת.** יהא לך פתחון פה להתוכח, ולהרחות דבריס נכריס הללו, ולשון תוכחת בכל מקום, בדור דבריס, ובלעז משפורפיר, ומוקלוס תרגם בפניס אחריס, ולשון המקרא כך הוא נופל על התרגוס, הרס הוא לך כסות על כבוד על העיניס שלי שלשטו בך, ובכל אשר אתך, ועל כן תרגומו וחזית יתיך ויית כל דעמך. ויש מדרש אגדה, אבל יסוד לשון המקרא פירשתי: (יז) **וילדו.** כתרגומו ואתרוחו. נפתחו נקביהס והוליחו, והיא לידה שלהס: (יח) **בעד כל רחם.** כנגד כל פתח: **על דבר שרה.** על פי דבורה של שרה: (א) **וה' פקד את שרה וגו'.** סמך פרשה זו, ללמדך שכל המבקש רחמיס על חבירו והוא צריך לאותו דבר, הוא נענה תחלה, שנאמר ויתפלל וגו' וסמיך ליה וה' פקד את שרה, שפקדה כבר קודס שריפא את אבימלך[7]: **פקד את שרה באשר אמר.** בהריון: **באשר דבר.** בלידה, והיכן היא אמירה והיכן הוא דבור. אמירה, ויאמר אלהיס אבל שרה אשתך וגו'. דבור, היה דבר כי לא אברס, בברית בין הבתריס, ושם נאמר לא יירשך זה וגו'. והבטיח היורס משרה: **ויעש ה' לשרה באשר דבר.** לאברהס: (ב) **(למועד אשר דבר אתו.** ר' יוחן ורבי חמא, רבי יוחן אומר מלמד שעולד לעל מדשיס, שלא יאמרו מביתו של אבימלך הוא, ור' חמא אומר לשבעה חדשיס): **למועד אשר דבר אתו.** דמליל יתיה, את המועד אשר

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).

1 בראשית כא, יד 2 תהלים קיט, קעו 3 איוב לח, מא 4 בראשית כו, ז 5 שמות יד, ג 6 שופטים ט, נד 7 בבא קמא צב.

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.'"

14 *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.*

15 *Avimelech said, "Here is my land before you! You may settle wherever you like."*

16 *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."*

17 *Avraham prayed to God. God healed Avimelech, his wife and his handmaids, and they were relieved.* 18 *For God had shut every (orifice) of Avimelech's household, because of Sarah, Avraham's wife.*

The Birth of Yitzchak

21 *God 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).* 2 *Sarah conceived and bore a son to Avraham in his old age, at the time of which God had told him (through the angels).* 3 *Avraham named his son who had been born to him—whom Sarah had borne to him—Yitzchak.* 4 *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. 86*ff*.)

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)

אֱלֹהִים: [חמישי] ה וַאַבְרָהָם בֶּן־מְאַת שָׁנָה בְּהִוָּלֶד לוֹ אֵת יִצְחָק
בְּנוֹ: ו וַתֹּאמֶר שָׂרָה צְחֹק עָשָׂה לִי אֱלֹהִים כָּל־הַשֹּׁמֵעַ
יִצְחַק־לִי: ז וַתֹּאמֶר מִי מִלֵּל לְאַבְרָהָם הֵינִיקָה בָנִים שָׂרָה
כִּי־יָלַדְתִּי בֵן לְזִקְנָיו: ח וַיִּגְדַּל הַיֶּלֶד וַיִּגָּמַל וַיַּעַשׂ אַבְרָהָם

תְּמַנְיָא יוֹמִין כְּמָא דִי פַקֵּיד יָתֵיהּ יְיָ: ה וְאַבְרָהָם
בַּר מְאָה שְׁנִין כַּד אִתְיְלִיד לֵיהּ יַת יִצְחָק
בְּרֵיהּ: ו וַאֲמָרַת שָׂרָה חֲדָוָא עֲבַד לִי יְיָ כָּל
דְּשָׁמַע יֶחְדֵּי לִי: ז וַאֲמָרַת מַן מְהֵימָן דַּאֲמַר
לְאַבְרָהָם וְקַיֶּם דְּתוֹנִיק בְּנִין שָׂרָה אֲרֵי יְלֵידִית
בַּר לְסִיבְתּוֹהִי: ח וּרְבָא רַבְיָא וְאִתְחֲסִיל וַעֲבַד

רש"י

כיה בעולם: **(ז) מי מלל לאברהם.** לשון שבח ותשבוחת, כמו מי פעל ועשה[3], מי ברח מלך[4], רמז מה הוא, ומי הוא (וכמה הוא גדול) שומר הבטחתו, הקב"ה מבטיח ועושה: **מלל.** שינה הכתוב ולא אמר דבר, גימטריא שלו ק', כלומר לסוף מאה לאברהם: **היניקה בנים שרה.** ומהו

דבר וקבע כשאמר לו למועד אשוב אליך, שרט לו שריטה בכותל, ואמר לו, כשתגיע חמה לשריטה זו בשנה הבאה תלד: (לזקניו. שהיה זיו מיקונין שלו דומה לו[1]): **(ו) יצחק לי.** ישמח עלי. ומדרש אגדה[2], הרבה עקרות נפקדו עמה, הרבה חולים נתרפאו בו ביום, הרבה תפלות נענו עמה, ורב 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

1 י"ל שקטע זה אינו מרש"י. ראה התוועדויות תשמ"ה ח"ב ע' 667 2 ב"ר נג, ח 3 ישעי' מא, ד 4 שם מ, כה

Fifth Reading

commanded him. [5] Avraham was a hundred years old, when his son Yitzchak was born to him.

[6] Sarah said, "God has made me happy! Whoever hears (about this) will be happy for me."

[7] 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!"

[8] 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

Influencing 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. 96*ff*.)

מִשְׁתֶּה גָּדוֹל בְּיוֹם הִגָּמֵל אֶת־יִצְחָק: ט וַתֵּרֶא שָׂרָה אֶת־
בֶּן־הָגָר הַמִּצְרִית אֲשֶׁר־יָלְדָה לְאַבְרָהָם מְצַחֵק: י וַתֹּאמֶר
לְאַבְרָהָם גָּרֵשׁ הָאָמָה הַזֹּאת וְאֶת־בְּנָהּ כִּי לֹא יִירַשׁ בֶּן־
הָאָמָה הַזֹּאת עִם־בְּנִי עִם־יִצְחָק: יא וַיֵּרַע הַדָּבָר מְאֹד
בְּעֵינֵי אַבְרָהָם עַל אוֹדֹת בְּנוֹ: יב וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־אַבְרָהָם
אַל־יֵרַע בְּעֵינֶיךָ עַל־הַנַּעַר וְעַל־אֲמָתֶךָ כֹּל אֲשֶׁר תֹּאמַר אֵלֶיךָ
שָׂרָה שְׁמַע בְּקֹלָהּ כִּי בְיִצְחָק יִקָּרֵא לְךָ זָרַע: יג וְגַם אֶת־
בֶּן־הָאָמָה לְגוֹי אֲשִׂימֶנּוּ כִּי זַרְעֲךָ הוּא: יד וַיַּשְׁכֵּם אַבְרָהָם |
בַּבֹּקֶר וַיִּקַּח־לֶחֶם וְחֵמַת מַיִם וַיִּתֵּן אֶל־הָגָר שָׂם עַל־שִׁכְמָהּ
וְאֶת־הַיֶּלֶד וַיְשַׁלְּחֶהָ וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתֵּתַע בְּמִדְבַּר בְּאֵר שָׁבַע: טו וַיִּכְלוּ
הַמַּיִם מִן־הַחֵמֶת וַתַּשְׁלֵךְ אֶת־הַיֶּלֶד תַּחַת אַחַד הַשִּׂיחִם:
טז וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתֵּשֶׁב לָהּ מִנֶּגֶד הַרְחֵק כִּמְטַחֲוֵי קֶשֶׁת כִּי אָמְרָה
אַל־אֶרְאֶה בְּמוֹת הַיֶּלֶד וַתֵּשֶׁב מִנֶּגֶד וַתִּשָּׂא אֶת־קֹלָהּ וַתֵּבְךְּ:
יז וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶת־קוֹל הַנַּעַר וַיִּקְרָא מַלְאַךְ אֱלֹהִים |
אֶל־הָגָר מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מַה־לָּךְ הָגָר אַל־תִּירְאִי
כִּי־שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶל־קוֹל הַנַּעַר בַּאֲשֶׁר הוּא־שָׁם: יח קוּמִי

אַבְרָהָם מִשְׁתְּיָא רַבָּא בְּיוֹמָא דְאִתְחַסִיל יַת
יִצְחָק: ט וַחֲזַת שָׂרָה יַת בַּר הָגָר מִצְרֵיתָא
דִילִידַת לְאַבְרָהָם מְחָיְכָ: י וַאֲמָרַת לְאַבְרָהָם
תָּרֵיךְ יַת אַמְתָא הָדָא וְיַת בְּרָהּ אֲרֵי לָא יֵירַת
בַּר אַמְתָא הָדָא עִם בְּרִי עִם יִצְחָק: יא וּבְאֵישׁ
פִּתְגָמָא לַחֲדָא בְּעֵינֵי אַבְרָהָם עַל עֵיסַק בְּרֵיהּ:
יב וַאֲמַר יְיָ לְאַבְרָהָם לָא יַבְאֵישׁ בְּעֵינָיךְ עַל
עוּלֵימָא וְעַל אַמְתָךְ כֹּל דְּתֵימַר לָךְ שָׂרָה קַבֵּל
מִנַּהּ אֲרֵי בְיִצְחָק יִתְקְרוּן לָךְ בְּנִין: יג וְאַף יַת
בַּר אַמְתָא לְעַמָּא אֲשַׁוֵּינֵיהּ אֲרֵי בְרָךְ הוּא:
יד וְאַקְדֵּים אַבְרָהָם בְּצַפְרָא וּנְסֵיב לַחְמָא
וְרָקְבָא דְמַיָּא וִיהַב לְהָגָר שַׁוִּי עַל כַּתְפָּהּ וְיַת
רַבְיָא וְשַׁלְחָהּ וַאֲזָלַת וּטְעַת בְּמַדְבְּרָא בְּאֵר
שָׁבַע: טו וּשְׁלִימוּ מַיָּא מִן רָקְבָא וּרְמַת יַת
רַבְיָא תְּחוֹת חַד מִן אִילָנַיָּא: טז וַאֲזָלַת וְיַתִּיבַת
לָהּ מְקֳבֵיל אַרְחִיק כְּמֵיגַד בְּקַשְׁתָּא אֲרֵי
אֲמָרַת לָא אֶחֱזֵי בְּמוֹתָא דְרַבְיָא וְיַתִּיבַת
מְקֳבֵיל וַאֲרִימַת יַת קָלָהּ וּבְכָת: יז וּשְׁמִיעַ
קֳדָם יְיָ יַת קָלֵיהּ דְּרַבְיָא וּקְרָא מַלְאֲכָא דַייָ
לְהָגָר מִן שְׁמַיָּא וַאֲמַר לָהּ מַה לָךְ הָגָר לָא
תִדְחֲלִי אֲרֵי שְׁמִיעַ קֳדָם יְיָ קָלֵיהּ דְּרַבְיָא
בַּאֲתַר דְּהוּא תַמָּן: יח קוּמִי טוֹלִי יַת רַבְיָא

רס"ו

גניס לשון רגיס, גיוס המשתה הגיעו הסרות את גניהן עמהן, והגיעקה לותם, שהיו מומרות לע ילדה שרה, אלא מסופי הגיאה מן הסוק: (ח) **ויגמל**. לסוף כ"ד חדש[1]: **משתה גדול**. שהיו שם גדולי הדור[2], שם ועבר ומגיימלך: (ט) **מצחק**. לשון עבודת גלילים, כמו שנאמר ויקומו לגחק[3]. דבר אחר לשון גילוי עריות, כמה דתימא לגחק בי. דבר אחר לשון רציחה, כמה דתימא יקומו ע הנערים וישחקו לפניו וגו'[4]: (י) **עם בני וגו'**. מתשובת שרה כי ע יירש בן האמה הזאת עם בני, אתה למד שהיה מריב עם יצחק על הירושה, ואומר, אני בכור ומוטל פי שנים, ויוצאים בשדה ומוטל קשתו ויורה בו חנים, כמה דאת אמר כמתלהלה היורה זקים וגו', ואמר הלע משחק אני[5]: **עם בני עם יצחק**. מכיון שהוא בני, אפילו שם היו הגוי כיולחק, או הגוי כיולחק, אפילו שם היו בני, אין זה כדאי לירש עמו, קל וחומר עם בני עם יצחק שעתידין בו[6]: (יא) **על אודות בנו**. על שמע שיצא לתרבות רעה. ופשוטו, על שאומרת לו לשלחו[7]: (יב) **שמע בקלה**. (בקול רוח"ק שבה) למדנו שהיה אברהם טפל לשרה בנבואות: (יד) **לחם וחמת מים**. ולא כסף וזהב, לפי שהיה שונאו על שיצא לתרבות רעה: **ואת הילד**. אף הילד שם על שכמה, שהכניסה בו שרה עין רעה, ואחזתו חמה[8], ולא יכול לילך ברגליו: **ותלך ותתע**. חזרה לגלולי בית תאביה: (טו) **ויכלו המים**. לפי שדרך חולים לשתות הרבה[9]: (טז) **מנגד**. מרחוק: **כמטחוי קשת**. כשתי טיחות[10], והוא לשון יריית חץ, ולשון משנה שהיה בחשתו, על שם שהזע יורה כחץ. ואם תאמר היה לו לכתוב כמטחי קשת, משפט הוי"ו ליכנס לכאן, כמו בחגוי הסלע[11], מגזרת והיתה אדמת יהודה למגרים לחגג[12], ומגזרת יחוגו וינועו כשכור[13], וכן קלוי מרץ[14], מגזרת קלה: **ותשב מנגד**. כיון שקרב למות, הוסיפה להתרחק: (יז) **את קול הנער**. מכאן שיפה תפלת החולה מתפלת מחריש עליו, והיא קודמת להתקבל[15]: **באשר הוא שם**. לפי מעשיו שהוא עושה עכשיו הוא נדון, ולא לפי מה שהוא עתיד לעשות, לפי שהיו מלאכי השרת מקטרגים

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What was Yishma'el's bad behavior? (v. 9-10)**

Rashi: The word **מְצַחֵק** (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* (**וְיְשַׂחֲקוּ**) *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 wearies himself shooting firebrands, etc. and says: I'm only joking!"* (Prov. 26:18f.).

1 גיטין עה: 2 ב"ר נג, י 3 שמות לב, ו 4 שמואל-ב ב, יג 5 משלי כו, יח-יט 6 ב"ר נג, יא 7 דברים רבה ד, ה 8 ב"ר נג, יג 9 שם 10 שה"ש ב, יד 11 ישעי' יט, יז 12 שם 13 תהלים קז, כז 14 שם סה, ו 15 ב"ר 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).* [10] *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."*

[11] *His son's (idol worship) disturbed Avraham greatly.* [12] *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.* [13] *I will also make the son of the handmaid into a nation, because he is your (physical) descendant."*

[14] *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.

[15] *(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.* [16] *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.*

[17] *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).* [18] *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

שְׂאִי אֶת־הַנַּעַר וְהַחֲזִיקִי אֶת־יָדֵךְ בּוֹ כִּי־לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל אֲשִׂימֶנּוּ: יט וַיִּפְקַח אֱלֹהִים אֶת־עֵינֶיהָ וַתֵּרֶא בְּאֵר מָיִם וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתְּמַלֵּא אֶת־הַחֵמֶת מַיִם וַתַּשְׁקְ אֶת־הַנָּעַר: כ וַיְהִי אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הַנַּעַר וַיִּגְדָּל וַיֵּשֶׁב בַּמִּדְבָּר וַיְהִי רֹבֶה קַשָּׁת: כא וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּמִדְבַּר פָּארָן וַתִּקַּח־לוֹ אִמּוֹ אִשָּׁה מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: פ [ששי] כב וַיְהִי בָּעֵת הַהִוא וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ וּפִיכֹל שַׂר־צְבָאוֹ אֶל־אַבְרָהָם לֵאמֹר אֱלֹהִים עִמְּךָ בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה עֹשֶׂה: כג וְעַתָּה הִשָּׁבְעָה לִי בֵאלֹהִים הֻנָּה אִם־תִּשְׁקֹר לִי וּלְנִינִי וּלְנֶכְדִּי כַּחֶסֶד אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתִי עִמְּךָ תַּעֲשֶׂה עִמָּדִי וְעִם־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־גַּרְתָּה בָּהּ: כד וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אָנֹכִי אִשָּׁבֵעַ: כה וְהוֹכַח אַבְרָהָם אֶת־אֲבִימֶלֶךְ עַל־אֹדוֹת בְּאֵר הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר גָּזְלוּ עַבְדֵי אֲבִימֶלֶךְ: כו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ לֹא יָדַעְתִּי מִי עָשָׂה אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה וְגַם־אַתָּה לֹא־הִגַּדְתָּ לִּי וְגַם אָנֹכִי לֹא שָׁמַעְתִּי בִּלְתִּי הַיּוֹם: כז וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָהָם צֹאן וּבָקָר וַיִּתֵּן לַאֲבִימֶלֶךְ וַיִּכְרְתוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם בְּרִית: כח וַיַּצֵּב אַבְרָהָם אֶת־שֶׁבַע כִּבְשֹׂת הַצֹּאן לְבַדְּהֶן: כט וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ אֶל־אַבְרָהָם מָה הֵנָּה שֶׁבַע כְּבָשֹׂת הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר הִצַּבְתָּ לְבַדָּנָה: ל וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי אֶת־שֶׁבַע כְּבָשֹׂת תִּקַּח מִיָּדִי בַּעֲבוּר תִּהְיֶה־לִּי לְעֵדָה כִּי חָפַרְתִּי אֶת־הַבְּאֵר הַזֹּאת: לא עַל־כֵּן קָרָא לַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא בְּאֵר שָׁבַע כִּי שָׁם נִשְׁבְּעוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם: לב וַיִּכְרְתוּ בְרִית בִּבְאֵר שָׁבַע וַיָּקָם אֲבִימֶלֶךְ וּפִיכֹל שַׂר־צְבָאוֹ וַיָּשֻׁבוּ אֶל־אֶרֶץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים:

וְאַתְקִיפִי יַת יְדִיךְ בֵּיהּ אֲרֵי לְעַם סַגִּי אֲשַׁוֵּינֵיהּ: יט וּגְלָא יְיָ יַת עֵינָהָא וַחֲזַת בֵּירָא דְמַיָּא וַאֲזָלַת וּמְלַת יַת רָקְבָּא מַיָּא וְאַשְׁקִיאַת יַת רַבְיָא: כ וַהֲוָה מֵימְרָא דַיְיָ בְּסַעֲדֵיהּ דְּרַבְיָא וּרְבָא וִיתִיב בְּמַדְבְּרָא וַהֲוָה רָבֵי קַשְׁתָּא: כא וִיתִיב בְּמַדְבְּרָא דְפָארָן וּנְסִיבַת לֵיהּ אִמֵּיהּ אִתְּתָא מֵאַרְעָא דְמִצְרָיִם: כב וַהֲוָה בְּעִדָּנָא הַהִיא וַאֲמַר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ וּפִיכֹל רַב חֵילֵיהּ לְאַבְרָהָם לְמֵימַר דַּיְיָ בְּסַעֲדָךְ בְּכֹל דִּי אַתְּ עָבֵיד: כג וּכְעַן קַיֶּם לִי בְּמֵימְרָא דַיְיָ הָכָא דְּלָא תְשַׁקַּר בִּי וּבִבְרִי וּבְבַר בְּרִי כְּטִיבוּתָא דִּי עֲבָדִית עִמָּךְ תַּעֲבֵיד עִמִּי וְעִם אַרְעָא דִּי אִתּוֹתַבְתָּא בָּהּ: כד וַאֲמַר אַבְרָהָם אֲנָא אֲקַיֶּם: כה וְאוֹכַח אַבְרָהָם יַת אֲבִימֶלֶךְ עַל עֵיסֶק בֵּירָא דְמַיָּא דִּי אֲנָסוּ עַבְדֵי אֲבִימֶלֶךְ: כו וַאֲמַר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ לָא יְדָעִית מַאן עֲבַד יַת פִּתְגָמָא הָדֵין וְאַף אַתְּ לָא חַוֵיתָא לִי וְאַף אֲנָא לָא שְׁמָעִית אֱלָהֵין יוֹמָא דֵין: כז וּדְבַר אַבְרָהָם עָאן וְתוֹרִין וִיהַב לַאֲבִימֶלֶךְ וּגְזָרוּ תַּרְוֵיהוֹן קְיָם: כח וַאֲקֵם אַבְרָהָם יַת שְׁבַע חוּרְפַּן דְּעָן בִּלְחוֹדֵיהוֹן: כט וַאֲמַר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ לְאַבְרָהָם מָה אִנּוּן שְׁבַע חוּרְפַּן אִלֵּין דִּי אֲקֵימְתָּא בִּלְחוֹדֵיהוֹן: ל וַאֲמַר אֲרֵי יַת שְׁבַע חוּרְפַּן תְּקַבֵּיל מִן יְדִי בְּדִיל דִּתְהֵי לִי לְסַהֲדוּ אֲרֵי חָפֶרִית יַת בֵּירָא הָדָא: לא עַל כֵּן קָרָא לְאַתְרָא הַהוּא בְּאֵר שָׁבַע אֲרֵי תַמָּן קַיְימוּ תַּרְוֵיהוֹן: לב וּגְזָרוּ קְיָם בִּבְאֵר שָׁבַע וְקָם אֲבִימֶלֶךְ וּפִיכֹל רַב חֵילֵיהּ וְתָבוּ לַאֲרַע

רס"י

המומנות, כמו חמר, גמל, לייד, לפיכך הסי"ן מודגשת. כיוצ יוסב במדבר ומלסטם את הטוענים, הוא שנאמר וידו בכל וגו': **(כח) מארץ מצרים.** ממקום גדולים, שנאמר ולכ שפחה מלרית וגו', כיוצ דאמרי אינשי, זרוק חוטרא לאווירא מטייקריה קאי: **(כג) אלהים עמך.** לפי שרואה שילא מצוות סדום לשלוס, ועס המלכים נלחס ונפלו בידו, ונפקדה משפחו לזקוניו: **(כג) ולניני ולנכדי.** עד כאן רחמי כאב על בנו: **כחסד אשר עשיתי עמך תעשה עמדי.** שאמרתי לך כגב מרלי לפניך[3]: **(כד) והוכח.** נתוכח עמו על כך: **(ל) בעבור תהיה לי לעדה.** זשת: **לעדה.** לשון עדות של נקבה, כמו ועדה המלכה: **כי חפרתי את הבאר.** מריבים היו עליה רועי מצימלך, ומומרים מנחנו

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.

1 ישעי' כא, יג-יד 2 שם 3 ב"ר נד, ב

and grasp hold of him, because I will make him into a great nation."

19 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.

20 God was with the boy. He grew up and he lived in the desert, and he became an archer. 21 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

Around 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. 23 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."

24 Avraham said, "I will swear."

25 Avraham argued with Avimelech about the well of water that the servants of Avimelech had seized. 26 Avimelech said, "I don't know who did this thing. You never told me about it, and I never heard about it until today."

27 Avraham took flocks and cattle, and gave them to Avimelech, and they both formed a covenant.

28 Avraham placed seven female lambs by themselves. 29 Avimelech said to Avraham, "What are these seven female lambs, which you have placed by themselves?"

30 He said, "You are going to take these seven female lambs from my hand, as a proof that I dug this well."

31 The place was therefore named Be'er Sheva ("well of the oath"), because the two of them took an oath. 32 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 handmaid's son.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 147*ff.*)

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. 118*ff.*)

לג וַיִּטַּע אֶשֶׁל בִּבְאֵר שָׁבַע וַיִּקְרָא־שָׁם בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה אֵל עוֹלָם:
לד וַיָּגָר אַבְרָהָם בְּאֶרֶץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים יָמִים רַבִּים: פ
כב א [שביעי] וַיְהִי אַחַר הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וְהָאֱלֹהִים נִסָּה

לג וּנְצִיב נִצְבָּא (אִילָנָא) בִּבְאֵר שְׁבַע וְצַלִּי תַּמָּן בִּשְׁמָא דֵּיְיָ אֱלָהָא דְעָלְמָא:
לד וְאִתּוֹתַב אַבְרָהָם בַּאֲרַע פְּלִשְׁתָּאֵי יוֹמִין סַגִּיאִין: א וַהֲוָה בָּתַר פִּתְגָמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין וַיְיָ נַסֵּי

רס"י

חפרנוה, חמרו בניהם, כל מי שיתראה על הבאר ויעלו המים לקראתו, שלו הוא, ועלו לקראת אברהם: **(לג) אשל.** רד ושמואל, חד אמר פרדס להביא ממנו פירות לאורחים בסעודה. וחד אמר פונדק לאכסניא ובו כל מיני פירות. ומניינו לשון נטיעה בהכלים, שנאמר ויטע אהלי אפדנו[1]: **ויקרא שם וגו'.** על ידי אותו אשל, נקרא שמו של הקב"ה אלוה לכל העולם, לאחר שאוכלים ושותים, אמר להם ברכו למי שאכלתם משלו, שנאמר אחת שמשלי אכלתם, משל מי שאמר והיה העולם אכלתם[2]: **(לד) ימים רבים.** מרובים על של אברהם, באברהם עשה כ"ה שנה, וכאן כ"ו[3], שאברי בן ע"ה שנה היה בלאחתו מאחרן, אותה שנה ויצא ושב באלוני ממרא, שלא מניעו קודש לכן שנתיישב שלא בשביל שנה, שבכל מקומותיו היה באורח, אוכל ומוסע והולך, שנאמר ויעבור אברם. ויעתק משם. ויהי רעב וירד אברם מצרימה. ובמצרים לא עשה אלא שלשה חדשים, שאברי שלחו פרעה מיד וילך למסעיו עד ויצא ושב באלוני ממרא אשר באברון, שם יצב עד שנהפכה סדום, מיד ויסע משם אברהם מפני בושה של לוט, ובא לארץ פלשתים, ובן ל"ט שנה היה, שאברי בשלושי למילתו באו אנשי המלאכים, אברי כ"ה שנה, וכאן כתיב ימים רבים, מרובים על הראשונים, ולא בא בכתוב לסתום אלא לפרש, ואם היו מרובים עליהם שתי שנים או יותר היה מפרשם, ועל כרחך חיסר יתירים יותר משנה, אברי כ"ו שנה, מיד יצא משם וחזר לאברון, ואותה שנה קדמה לפני עקידתו של יצחק י"ד שניה. כך שנויה בסדר עולם[4]: **(ה) אחר הדברים האלה.** יש מדבותינו אומרים[5] 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 בנו, אילו הייתי אומר לו זבח אותו לפני, לא היה מעכב. ויש אומרים אחר דבריו של ישמעאל, שהיה מתפאר על יצחק שמל בן י"ג שנה ולא מיחה, אמר לו יצחק באבר אחד אתה מירתני, אילו אמר לי הקב"ה זבח

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What was the אֶשֶׁל 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 (**וְיִטַּע**) 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* (**הָאֶשֶׁל**) *in Ramah*" (Sam. I 22:6).

"*They buried them under the tree* (**הָאֶשֶׁל**)" (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)

1 דניאל יא, מה 2 סוטה י. 3 ב"ר נד, ו 4 פ"א 5 סנהדרין פט:

[33] *(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).*

[34] *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

What 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.

אֶת־אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּנִי: ב וַיֹּאמֶר
קַח־נָא אֶת־בִּנְךָ אֶת־יְחִידְךָ אֲשֶׁר־אָהַבְתָּ אֶת־יִצְחָק וְלֶךְ־לְךָ
אֶל־אֶרֶץ הַמֹּרִיָּה וְהַעֲלֵהוּ שָׁם לְעֹלָה עַל אַחַד הֶהָרִים אֲשֶׁר
אֹמַר אֵלֶיךָ: ג וַיַּשְׁכֵּם אַבְרָהָם בַּבֹּקֶר וַיַּחֲבֹשׁ אֶת־חֲמֹרוֹ וַיִּקַּח
אֶת־שְׁנֵי נְעָרָיו אִתּוֹ וְאֶת יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ וַיְבַקַּע עֲצֵי עֹלָה וַיָּקָם
וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־אָמַר־לוֹ הָאֱלֹהִים: ד בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי
וַיִּשָּׂא אַבְרָהָם אֶת־עֵינָיו וַיַּרְא אֶת־הַמָּקוֹם מֵרָחֹק: ה וַיֹּאמֶר
אַבְרָהָם אֶל־נְעָרָיו שְׁבוּ־לָכֶם פֹּה עִם־הַחֲמוֹר וַאֲנִי וְהַנַּעַר

יַת אַבְרָהָם וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ אַבְרָהָם וַאֲמַר הָא
אֲנָא: ב וַאֲמַר דְּבַר כְּעַן יַת בְּרָךְ יַת יְחִידָךְ דִּי
רְחֵימְתָּא יַת יִצְחָק וְאֵזֵיל לָךְ לְאַרְעָא פּוּלְחָנָא
וְאַסְקִיהּ תַּמָּן לַעֲלָתָא עַל חַד מִן טוּרַיָּא
דִּי אֵימַר לָךְ: ג וְאַקְדִּים אַבְרָהָם בְּצַפְרָא וְזָרִיז
יַת חֲמָרֵיהּ וּדְבַר יַת תְּרֵין עוּלֵימוֹהִי עִמֵּיהּ
וְיַת יִצְחָק בְּרֵיהּ וְצַלַּח אָעֵי לַעֲלָתָא וְקָם וַאֲזַל
לְאַתְרָא דִּי אֲמַר לֵיהּ יְיָ: ד בְּיוֹמָא תְּלִיתָאָה
וּזְקַף אַבְרָהָם יַת עֵינוֹהִי וַחֲזָא יַת אַתְרָא
מֵרָחִיק: ה וַאֲמַר אַבְרָהָם לְעוּלֵימוֹהִי אוֹרִיכוּ
לְכוֹן הָכָא עִם חֲמָרָא וַאֲנָא וְעוּלֵימָא נִתְמְטֵי

רש"י

כיוצא בפני עצמך לפני, לא הייתי מעכב: **הנני**. כך היא ענייתם של חסידים, לשון עמוד, ולשון זימון: **(ב) קח נא**. חין נא אלא לשון בקשה, אמר לו בבקשה ממך עמוד לי בזה הנסיון, שלא יאמרו הראשונות לא היה בהן ממש[1]: **את בנך**. אמר לו שני בניס יש לי, אמר לו את יחידך, אמר לו זה יחיד לאמו וזה יחיד לאמו, אמר לו אשר אהבת, אמר לו שניהם אני אוהב, אמר לו את יצחק. ולמה לא גילה לו מתחלה, שלא לערבבו פתאום, ותזוח דעתו עליו ותטרף, וכדי לחבב עליו את המצוה, וליתן לו שכר על כל דבור ודבור: **ארץ המוריה**. ירושלים, וכן בדברי הימים[2] לבנות את בית ה' בירושלים בהר המוריה. ורבותינו פירשו, על שם שמשם הוראה יונאה ליראה. ומונקלוס תרגומו על שם עבודת הקטרת, שיש בו מור גרד ושאר בשמים: **והעלהו**. לא אמר לו שחטהו, לפי שלא

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What was the uniqueness of Avraham's tenth test? (v. 2)**

Rashi: "Please take" (**קַח 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. 122*ff*.)

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.

1 סנהדרין פט: 2 ד"ה-ב ג, א 3 בראשית יב, א 4 יונה ג, ב 5 פסחים ד. 6 ב"ר נה, ז 7 שם 8 שמואל-ב יט, יח

(Avraham) said, "I'm here (for You)!"

[2] *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."*

[3] *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.*

[4] *On the third day, Avraham looked around and he saw from afar (one particular mountain with a cloud on it).*

[5] *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. 73*ff.*)

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. 74*ff.*)

נֵלְכָה עַד־כֹּה וְנִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה וְנָשׁוּבָה אֲלֵיכֶם: ו וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָהָם
אֶת־עֲצֵי הָעֹלָה וַיָּשֶׂם עַל־יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ וַיִּקַּח בְּיָדוֹ אֶת־הָאֵשׁ
וְאֶת־הַמַּאֲכֶלֶת וַיֵּלְכוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם יַחְדָּו: ז וַיֹּאמֶר יִצְחָק אֶל־
אַבְרָהָם אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִי וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּנִי בְנִי וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה הָאֵשׁ
וְהָעֵצִים וְאַיֵּה הַשֶּׂה לְעֹלָה: ח וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהִים
יִרְאֶה־לּוֹ הַשֶּׂה לְעֹלָה בְּנִי וַיֵּלְכוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם יַחְדָּו: ט וַיָּבֹאוּ
אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אָמַר־לוֹ הָאֱלֹהִים וַיִּבֶן שָׁם אַבְרָהָם
אֶת־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וַיַּעֲרֹךְ אֶת־הָעֵצִים וַיַּעֲקֹד אֶת־יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ וַיָּשֶׂם
אֹתוֹ עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ מִמַּעַל לָעֵצִים: י וַיִּשְׁלַח אַבְרָהָם אֶת־יָדוֹ
וַיִּקַּח אֶת־הַמַּאֲכֶלֶת לִשְׁחֹט אֶת־בְּנוֹ: יא וַיִּקְרָא אֵלָיו מַלְאַךְ
יְהוָה מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם | אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּנִי:
יב וַיֹּאמֶר אַל־תִּשְׁלַח יָדְךָ אֶל־הַנַּעַר וְאַל־תַּעַשׂ לוֹ מְאוּמָה כִּי |
עַתָּה יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־יְרֵא אֱלֹהִים אַתָּה וְלֹא חָשַׂכְתָּ אֶת־בִּנְךָ
אֶת־יְחִידְךָ מִמֶּנִּי: יג וַיִּשָּׂא אַבְרָהָם אֶת־עֵינָיו וַיַּרְא וְהִנֵּה־אַיִל
אַחַר נֶאֱחַז בַּסְּבַךְ בְּקַרְנָיו וַיֵּלֶךְ אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח אֶת־הָאַיִל
וַיַּעֲלֵהוּ לְעֹלָה תַּחַת בְּנוֹ: יד וַיִּקְרָא אַבְרָהָם שֵׁם־הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא

עַד כָּא וְנִסְגּוֹד וּנְתוּב לְוָתְכוֹן: ו וּנְסֵיב אַבְרָהָם
יָת אָעֵי דַּעֲלָתָא וְשַׁוִּי עַל יִצְחָק בְּרֵיהּ וּנְסֵיב
בִּידֵיהּ יָת אֵישָׁתָא וְיָת סַכִּינָא וַאֲזָלוּ תַּרְוֵיהוֹן
כַּחֲדָא: ז וַאֲמַר יִצְחָק לְאַבְרָהָם אֲבוּהִי וַאֲמַר
אַבָּא וַאֲמַר הָא אֲנָא בְּרִי וַאֲמַר הָא אֵישָׁתָא
וְאָעַיָּא וְאָן אִמְּרָא לַעֲלָתָא: ח וַאֲמַר אַבְרָהָם
קֳדָם יְיָ גְּלֵי לֵיהּ אִמְּרָא לַעֲלָתָא בְּרִי וַאֲזָלוּ
תַּרְוֵיהוֹן כַּחֲדָא: ט וַאֲתוֹ לְאַתְרָא דִּי אֲמַר לֵיהּ
יְיָ וּבְנָא תַמָּן אַבְרָהָם יָת מַדְבְּחָא וְסַדַּר יָת
אָעַיָּא וַעֲקַד יָת יִצְחָק בְּרֵיהּ וְשַׁוִּי יָתֵיהּ עַל
מַדְבְּחָא עֵיל מִן אָעַיָּא: י וְאוֹשִׁיט אַבְרָהָם יָת
יְדֵיהּ וּנְסֵיב יָת סַכִּינָא לְמִיכַס יָת בְּרֵיהּ:
יא וּקְרָא לֵיהּ מַלְאַכָּא דַיְיָ מִן שְׁמַיָּא וַאֲמַר
אַבְרָהָם אַבְרָהָם וַאֲמַר הָא אֲנָא: יב וַאֲמַר לָא
תוֹשֵׁיט יְדָךְ לְעוּלֵימָא וְלָא תַּעֲבֵיד לֵיהּ מִדְּעַם
אֲרֵי כְעַן יָדַעְנָא אֲרֵי דַּחֲלָא דַיְיָ אַתְּ וְלָא
מְנַעְתָּ יָת בְּרָךְ יָת יְחִידָךְ מִנִּי: יג וּזְקַף אַבְרָהָם
יָת עֵינוֹהִי בָּתַר אִלֵּין וַחֲזָא וְהָא דִכְרָא חַדָּא
אֲחִיד בְּאִילָנָא בְּקַרְנוֹהִי וַאֲזַל אַבְרָהָם וּנְסֵיב
יָת דִּכְרָא וְאַסְּקֵיהּ לַעֲלָתָא חֲלַף בְּרֵיהּ: יד וּפְלַח
וְצַלִּי אַבְרָהָם תַּמָּן בְּאַתְרָא הַהוּא וַאֲמַר
קֳדָם יְיָ הָכָא יְהוֹן פָּלְחִין דָּרָיָא בְּבֵן יִתְאֲמַר

רס"י

ענן קשור על הכר: (ה) **עד כה**. כלומר דרך מועט למקום חשר לפניהו. ומדרש מגדה, מרחה כיכן הוח מה שחמר לי במקום כה יהיה זרעך: **ונשובה**. נחנגה שיהודו שניהם: (ו) **המאכלת**. סכין, על שם שחוכלת חת הבשר, כמה דתימח ותרבי תחכל בשר[1], ושמכשרת בשר לחכילה. דבר חחר, חשת נקראת מחכלת, על שם שיהרגל חוכלים ממן הכרם: **וילכו שניהם יחדו**. מבהכם שהיה יודע שהולך לשחוט חת בנו היה הולך בדעון ושמחה כיונחק שלח היה מרגיש בדבר: (ח) **יראה לו השה**. כלומר ירחה ויבחר לו להבח, ואם חין שה, לעולה בני, ואף על פי שהבדין יונחק שהוח הולך לישחט, וילכו שניהם יחדו בלב שוה: (ט) **ויעקד**. ידיו ורגליו מחחוריו, כידיש והרגליש ביחד היה עקידה[2], והוח לשון עקודים, שהיו קרסוליהם לבניש, מקום שעוקדין חותן בו היה ניכר: (יא) **אברהם אברהם**. לשון חבה הוח, שכופל חת שמו: (יב) **אל תשלח**. לשחוט. חמר לו חס כן לחנם בחתי לכחן, חעשה בו חבלה ותוליח ממנו מעט דש, חמר לו חל תעש לו מחומה, חל תעש בו מום: **כי עתה ידעתי**. חמר רבי חבחי, חמר לו חברהם, חפרש לפניך חת שיחתי, חתמול חמרת לי כי בילחק יקרח לך זרע, וחזרת וחמרת קח נח חת בנך, עכשיו חתה חומר לי חל תשלח ידך חל הנער, חמר לו הקב"ה, לח חחלל בריתי ומולח שפתי לח חשנה, כשחמרתי לך קח מולח שפתי לח חשנה, לח חמרתי לך שחטהו חלח בעלהו, חסקתיה לחתיה: **כי עתה ידעתי**. מעתה יש לי מה להשיב לשטן ולחומות כתמיהש מה היח חבחי חלחך, יש לי פתחון פה, עכשיו, שרואים כי ירח חלהיש חתה: (יג) **והנה איל**. מוכן היה לכך משעת ימי בראשית: **אחר**. לחרי שחמר לו במלחך חל תשלח ידך, רחהו כשהוח נחחז, והוח שמתרגמינן וזקף חברהם עיניהי בתר חלין. (ס"ח ולפי המדה חחר כל דברי המלחך והשכינה ואחר טענותיו של חברהם): **בסבך**. חילן: **בקרניו**. שהיה רן חלל חברהם, והשטן סובכו ומערבבו בחילנות: **תחת בנו**. מחחר שכתוב ויעלהו לעולה

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."

1 דברים לב, מב 2 שבת נד.

further (to our destination). We will prostrate ourselves and return to you."

[6] *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.*

[7] *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?"

[8] *Avraham said, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son," and they both went together.*

[9] *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.*

[10] *Avraham stretched out his hand and took the knife, to slaughter his son.*

[11] *An angel of God called to him from heaven and said, "Avraham! Avraham!"*

He said, "I'm here!"

[12] *(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."*

[13] *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: Beforehand, 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" (וַיִּשָּׂא אַבְרָהָם אֶת עֵינָיו וַיַּרְא), 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*

יְהוָה | יְרְאֶה אֲשֶׁר יֵאָמֵר הַיּוֹם בְּהַר יְהוָה יֵרָאֶה: טו וַיִּקְרָא
מַלְאַךְ יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָהָם שֵׁנִית מִן־הַשָּׁמָיִם: טז וַיֹּאמֶר בִּי
נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי נְאֻם־יְהוָה כִּי יַעַן אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה וְלֹא
חָשַׂכְתָּ אֶת־בִּנְךָ אֶת־יְחִידֶךָ: יז כִּי־בָרֵךְ אֲבָרֶכְךָ וְהַרְבָּה אַרְבֶּה
אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ כְּכוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְכַחוֹל אֲשֶׁר עַל־שְׂפַת הַיָּם וְיִרַשׁ
זַרְעֲךָ אֵת שַׁעַר אֹיְבָיו: יח וְהִתְבָּרֲכוּ בְזַרְעֲךָ כֹּל גּוֹיֵי הָאָרֶץ עֵקֶב
אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקֹלִי: יט וַיָּשָׁב אַבְרָהָם אֶל־נְעָרָיו וַיָּקֻמוּ וַיֵּלְכוּ
יַחְדָּו אֶל־בְּאֵר שָׁבַע וַיֵּשֶׁב אַבְרָהָם בִּבְאֵר שָׁבַע: פ [מפטיר]

בְּיוֹמָא הָדֵין בְּטוּרָא הָדֵין אַבְרָהָם קֳדָם יְיָ
פִּלַח: טו וּקְרָא מַלְאֲכָא דַיְיָ לְאַבְרָהָם תִּנְיָנוּת
מִן שְׁמַיָּא: טז וַאֲמַר בְּמֵימְרִי קַיֶּמִית אֲמַר יְיָ
חֲלַף דִּי עֲבַדְתָּא יַת פִּתְגָמָא הָדֵין וְלָא מְנַעְתָּ
יַת בְּרָךְ יַת יְחִידָךְ: יז אֲרֵי בָרָכָא אֲבָרְכִינָךְ
וְאַסְגָּאָה אַסְגֵּי יַת בְּנָיךְ כְּכוֹכְבֵי שְׁמַיָּא וּכְחָלָא
דִּי עַל כֵּף יַמָּא וְיֵירְתוּן בְּנָיךְ יַת קִרְוֵי סַנְאֵיהוֹן:
יח וְיִתְבָּרְכוּן בְּדִיל בְּנָיךְ כֹּל עַמְמֵי אַרְעָא חֲלַף
דְּקַבֵּילְתָּא לְמֵימְרִי: יט וְתָב אַבְרָהָם לְוָת
עוֹלֵימוֹהִי וְקָמוּ וַאֲזָלוּ כַּחֲדָא לְבֵאֵר שָׁבַע

רש"י

חסר במקרא כלום, מכו תחת גנו, על כל עבודה שעשה ממנו, היה מתפלל ומומר, יכי רצון שתהא זו כאלו היתה עשויה בגני, כאלו בני שחוט, כאלו דמו זרוק, כאלו בני מופשט, כאלו הוא נקטר ונעשה דשן: **(יד) ה' יראה.** פשוטו כתרגומו, כי יבחר וירחם לו את המקום הזה, להשרות בו שכינתו ולהקריב כאן קרבנות: **אשר יאמר היום.** שיאמרו לימי הדורות עליו בהר כי זה ירחם הקב"ה לעמו: **היום.** היושב בעתידין, כמו עד היום הזה שבכל המקרא, שכל הדורות הבאים הקוראים את המקרא הזה מוסיפים עד היום הזה, על היום שעומדים בו. ומדרש אגדה, כי ירחם עקידה זו לסלוח לישראל בכל שנה ולהגילם מן הפורענות, כדי שיאמר היום הזה בכל דורות הבאים, בהר כי ירחם אפרו של יצחק לנגוד ועומד לכפרה: **(יז) ברך אברכך.** אחת לאב ואחת לבן: **והרבה ארבה.** אחת לאב ואחת לבן: **(יט) וישב אברהם בבאר שבע.** לא ישיבה ממש שהרי בחברון היה יושב, י"ב שניס לפני

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What did the angel of God add when he called to Avraham the second time? (v. 15-18)**

Tzror 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."*

[14] Avraham named that place 'Adonoy Yireh' ("God will select"). To this day it is the mountain (associated with) God's revelation.

[15] An angel of God called to Avraham a second time from heaven. [16] 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, [17] 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. [18] All the nations of the world will be blessed through your children, because you listened to My voice.'"

[19] 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' 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. 82*ff.*)

כ וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיֻּגַּד לְאַבְרָהָם לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה יָלְדָה
מִלְכָּה גַם־הִוא בָּנִים לְנָחוֹר אָחִיךָ: כא אֶת־עוּץ בְּכֹרוֹ וְאֶת־בּוּז
אָחִיו וְאֶת־קְמוּאֵל אֲבִי אֲרָם: כב וְאֶת־כֶּשֶׂד וְאֶת־חֲזוֹ
וְאֶת־פִּלְדָּשׁ וְאֶת־יִדְלָף וְאֶת בְּתוּאֵל: כג וּבְתוּאֵל יָלַד
אֶת־רִבְקָה שְׁמֹנָה אֵלֶּה יָלְדָה מִלְכָּה לְנָחוֹר אֲחִי אַבְרָהָם:
כד וּפִילַגְשׁוֹ וּשְׁמָהּ רְאוּמָה וַתֵּלֶד גַּם־הִוא אֶת־טֶבַח וְאֶת־גַּחַם
וְאֶת־תַּחַשׁ וְאֶת־מַעֲכָה: פ פ פ

כ וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיֻּגַּד לְאַבְרָהָם לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה יָלְדָה
מִלְכָּה גַם־הִוא בָּנִים לְנָחוֹר אָחִיךָ: כא אֶת־עוּץ בְּכֹרוֹ וְאֶת־בּוּז
אָחִיו וְאֶת־קְמוּאֵל אֲבִי אֲרָם: כב וְאֶת־כֶּשֶׂד וְאֶת־חֲזוֹ
וְאֶת־פִּלְדָּשׁ וְאֶת־יִדְלָף וְאֶת בְּתוּאֵל: כג וּבְתוּאֵל יָלַד
אֶת־רִבְקָה שְׁמֹנָה אֵלֶּה יָלְדָה מִלְכָּה לְנָחוֹר אֲחִי אַבְרָהָם:
כד וּפִילַגְשׁוֹ וּשְׁמָהּ רְאוּמָה וַתֵּלֶד גַּם־הִוא אֶת־טֶבַח וְאֶת־גַּחַם
וְאֶת־תַּחַשׁ וְאֶת־מַעֲכָה: פ פ פ

וַיִּתֵּיב אַבְרָהָם בִּבְאֵר שָׁבַע: כ וַהֲוָה בָּתַר
פִּתְגָמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין וְאִתְחַוָּא לְאַבְרָהָם לְמֵימַר הָא
יְלִידַת מִלְכָּה אַף הִיא בְּנִין לְנָחוֹר אֲחוּךְ:
כא יַת עוּץ בּוּכְרֵיהּ וְיַת בּוּז אֲחוּהִי וְיַת קְמוּאֵל
אֲבוּהִי דַּאֲרָם: כב וְיַת כֶּשֶׂד וְיַת חֲזוֹ וְיַת
פִּלְדָּשׁ וְיַת יִדְלָף וְיַת בְּתוּאֵל: כג וּבְתוּאֵל
אוֹלִיד יַת רִבְקָה תְּמַנְיָא אִלֵּין יְלִידַת מִלְכָּה
לְנָחוֹר אֲחוּהִי דְּאַבְרָהָם: כד וּלְחֵינָתֵיהּ וּשְׁמָהּ
רְאוּמָה וְיָלִידַת אַף הִיא יַת טֶבַח וְיַת גַּחַם וְיַת
תַּחַשׁ וְיַת מַעֲכָה: פ פ פ

רש"י

עקידתו של יצחק יצא מצחר שבע והלך לו לחברון, כמו שנאמר ויגר אברהם בארץ פלשתים ימים רבים, מרובים מצל חברון הרשעוים, וכס כ"ו שנה, כמו שפירשנו למעלה: **(כ) אחרי הדברים האלה ויגד וגו'.** בשובו מכר המוריה היה אברהם מהרהר ואומר, חילו היה בני שחוט כבר היה הולך בלא בניס, היה לי להשיאו אשה מבעוד עוד משכול וממרת, בשרו הקב"ה שנולדה רבקה בת זוגו, וזהו אחרי הדברים האלה, כהרהורי הדברים שהיו על ידי עקידה: **גם היא.** אף היא בשוותה מספחותיה למשפחות אברהם י"ב, מה אברהם י"ב שבטים שילחו מיעקב ח' בני הגבירות וד' בני שפחות, אף אלו ח' בני גבירות וד' בני פלגש: **(כג) ובתואל ילד את רבקה.** כל הימוסין הללו לא נכתבו אלא בשביל פסוק זה: **חסלת פרשת וירא**

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. 76*ff.*)

The Birth of Rivkah

22:20 Maftir

Then, 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:) [21] Uz the first born, Buz his brother, Kemu'el the father of Aram, [22] Kesed, Chazo, Pildash, Yidlaf, and Besu'el. [23] Besu'el fathered Rivkah." Milkah bore these eight to Nachor, Avraham's brother.

[24] 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

The 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 ***M****elech* ***a****l* ***k****ol* ***H****a'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

Chayei 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)

כג א וַיִּהְיוּ חַיֵּי שָׂרָה מֵאָה שָׁנָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וְשֶׁבַע שָׁנִים
שְׁנֵי חַיֵּי שָׂרָה: ב וַתָּמָת שָׂרָה בְּקִרְיַת אַרְבַּע הִוא חֶבְרוֹן בְּאֶרֶץ
כְּנָעַן וַיָּבֹא אַבְרָהָם לִסְפֹּד לְשָׂרָה וְלִבְכֹּתָהּ: ג וַיָּקָם אַבְרָהָם

א וַהֲווֹ חַיֵּי שָׂרָה מְאָה וְעַשְׂרִין וּשְׁבַע שְׁנִין
שְׁנֵי חַיֵּי שָׂרָה: ב וּמִיתַת שָׂרָה בְּקִרְיַת אַרְבַּע
הִיא חֶבְרוֹן בְּאַרְעָא דִכְנָעַן וַאֲתָא אַבְרָהָם
לְמִסְפְּדָהּ לְשָׂרָה וּלְמִבְכָּהּ: ג וְקָם אַבְרָהָם
מֵעַל אַפֵּי מֵיתֵיהּ וּמַלֵּיל עִם בְּנֵי חִתָּאָה

*כ' זעירא

רש"י

(א) ויהיו חיי שרה מאה שנה ועשרים שנה ושבע שנים. לכך נכתב
שכה בכל כלל וכלל, לומר לך שכל אחד מהם לעצמו, בת ק' כבת כ' לחטא,
מה בת כ' לא חטאה שהרי היתה בת עונשין, אף בת ק' בלא חטא, ובת כ'
כבת ז' ליופי: **שני חיי שרה.** כלן שוין לטובה: **(ב) בקריית ארבע.** על שם
מרבע ענקים שהיו שם, לחיותן שמי ותלמי ומבירם. דבר אחר, על שם מרבע
זוגות שנקברו שם חיש ומשתו, חדש וחוה. מבירם ושרה. ילחק ורבקה. יעקב
ולאה[1]: **ויבא אברהם.** מכאן שבעה[2]: **לספוד לשרה ולבכותה.** ונסמכה
מיתת שרה לעקידת ילחק, לפי שעל ידי בשורת העקידה, שנזדמן בנה

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. 31*ff.*)

1 ב"ר נח, ד 2 עיין בשיחת מוצאי ש"פ חיי שרה תשל"ט, סכ"ח

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).
2 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 haChayim: 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 וְלִבְכֹּתָהּ ("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 וְלִבְכֹּתָהּ "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?

מֵעַל פְּנֵי מֵתִי וַיְדַבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי־חֵת לֵאמֹר: ד גֵּר־וְתוֹשָׁב אָנֹכִי
עִמָּכֶם תְּנוּ לִי אֲחֻזַּת־קֶבֶר עִמָּכֶם וְאֶקְבְּרָה מֵתִי מִלְּפָנָי:
ה וַיַּעֲנוּ בְנֵי־חֵת אֶת־אַבְרָהָם לֵאמֹר לוֹ: ו שְׁמָעֵנוּ | אֲדֹנִי נְשִׂיא
אֱלֹהִים אַתָּה בְּתוֹכֵנוּ בְּמִבְחַר קְבָרֵינוּ קְבֹר אֶת־מֵתֶךָ אִישׁ
מִמֶּנּוּ אֶת־קִבְרוֹ לֹא־יִכְלֶה מִמְּךָ מִקְּבֹר מֵתֶךָ: ז וַיָּקָם אַבְרָהָם
וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ לְעַם־הָאָרֶץ לִבְנֵי־חֵת: ח וַיְדַבֵּר אִתָּם לֵאמֹר אִם־יֵשׁ

לְמֵימָר: ד דַּיָּר וְתוֹתָב אֲנָא עִמְּכוֹן הָבוּ לִי
אַחֲסָנַת קְבוּרָא עִמְּכוֹן וְאֶקְבַּר מִיתִי מִן קֳדָמַי:
ה וַאֲתִיבוּ בְנֵי חִתָּאָה יָת אַבְרָהָם לְמֵימַר לֵיהּ:
ו קַבֵּל מִנָּנָא רִבּוֹנָנָא רַב קֳדָם יְיָ אַתְּ בֵּינָנָא
בִּשְׁפַר קִבְרָנָא קְבַר יָת מִיתָךְ אֱנָשׁ מִנָּנָא יָת
קִבְרֵיהּ לָא יִכְלֵי מִנָּךְ מִלְּמִקְבַּר מִיתָךְ: ז וְקָם
אַבְרָהָם וּסְגִיד לְעַמָּא דְאַרְעָא לִבְנֵי חִתָּאָה:
ח וּמַלֵּיל עִמְּהוֹן לְמֵימָר אִם אִית רַעֲוָא בְּנַפְשְׁכוֹן

לשמיטה וכמעט שלח נשחט, פרחה נשמתה ממנה ומתה: (ד) **גר ותושב אנבי עמכם**. גר מארץ אחרת, ותישבתי עמכם. ומדרש מגדה, אם תרצו כריני גר, ואם לאו אהיה תושב ואטלטה מן הדין, שאמר לי הקב"ה לזרעך אתן את הארץ הזאת: **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 *Avraham got up from in front of his deceased (wife).*
He spoke to the people of Cheis, saying, [4] *"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."*

[5] *The people of Cheis answered Avraham, saying to him,* [6] *"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."*

[7] *Avraham got up and prostrated himself to the people of the land, the people of Cheis.*

[8] *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 imposes 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. 82*ff.*)

Sparks of Chasidus

While 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)

אֶת־נַפְשְׁכֶם לִקְבֹּר אֶת־מֵתִי מִלְּפָנַי שִׁמְעוּנִי וּפִגְעוּ־לִי
בְּעֶפְרֹן בֶּן־צֹחַר: ט וְיִתֶּן־לִי אֶת־מְעָרַת הַמַּכְפֵּלָה אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ
אֲשֶׁר בִּקְצֵה שָׂדֵהוּ בְּכֶסֶף מָלֵא יִתְּנֶנָּה לִי בְּתוֹכְכֶם
לַאֲחֻזַּת־קָבֶר: י וְעֶפְרֹן יֹשֵׁב בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי־חֵת וַיַּעַן עֶפְרֹן הַחִתִּי
אֶת־אַבְרָהָם בְּאָזְנֵי בְנֵי־חֵת לְכֹל בָּאֵי שַׁעַר־עִירוֹ לֵאמֹר:
יא לֹא־אֲדֹנִי שְׁמָעֵנִי הַשָּׂדֶה נָתַתִּי לָךְ וְהַמְּעָרָה אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ לְךָ
נְתַתִּיהָ לְעֵינֵי בְנֵי־עַמִּי נְתַתִּיהָ לָּךְ קְבֹר מֵתֶךָ: יב וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ
אַבְרָהָם לִפְנֵי עַם־הָאָרֶץ: יג וַיְדַבֵּר אֶל־עֶפְרֹון בְּאָזְנֵי
עַם־הָאָרֶץ לֵאמֹר אַךְ אִם־אַתָּה לוּ שְׁמָעֵנִי נָתַתִּי כֶּסֶף הַשָּׂדֶה
קַח מִמֶּנִּי וְאֶקְבְּרָה אֶת־מֵתִי שָׁמָּה: יד וַיַּעַן עֶפְרֹון אֶת־אַבְרָהָם
לֵאמֹר לוֹ: טו אֲדֹנִי שְׁמָעֵנִי אֶרֶץ אַרְבַּע מֵאֹת שֶׁקֶל־כֶּסֶף בֵּינִי
וּבֵינְךָ מַה־הִוא וְאֶת־מֵתְךָ קְבֹר: טז וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָהָם אֶל־עֶפְרֹון
וַיִּשְׁקֹל אַבְרָהָם לְעֶפְרֹן אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בְּאָזְנֵי בְנֵי־חֵת
אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שֶׁקֶל כֶּסֶף עֹבֵר לַסֹּחֵר: [שני] יז וַיָּקָם | שְׂדֵה עֶפְרֹון
אֲשֶׁר בַּמַּכְפֵּלָה אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי מַמְרֵא הַשָּׂדֶה וְהַמְּעָרָה אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ

לְמִקְבַּר יַת מֵיתִי מִן קֳדָמַי קַבִּילוּ מִנִּי וּבְעוֹ לִי
מִן עֶפְרוֹן בַּר צוֹחַר: ט וְיִתֶּן לִי יַת מְעָרַת
כָּפֶלְתָּא דִּי לֵיהּ דִּי בִּסְטַר חַקְלֵיהּ בְּכַסְפָּא
שְׁלִים יִתְּנִנַּהּ לִי בֵּינֵיכוֹן לְאַחֲסָנַת קְבוּרָא:
י וְעֶפְרוֹן יָתֵיב בְּגוֹ בְּנֵי חִתָּאָה וַאֲתֵיב עֶפְרוֹן
חִתָּאָה יַת אַבְרָהָם קֳדָם בְּנֵי חִתָּאָה לְכָל
עָאלֵי תְּרַע קִרְתֵּיהּ לְמֵימָר: יא לָא רִבּוֹנִי קַבֵּל
מִנִּי חַקְלָא יְהָבִית לָךְ וּמְעָרְתָּא דִּי בֵיהּ לָךְ
יְהָבִיתָהּ לְעֵינֵי בְּנֵי עַמִּי יְהָבִיתָהּ לָךְ קְבַר
מֵיתָךְ: יב וּסְגִיד אַבְרָהָם קֳדָם עַמָּא דְאַרְעָא:
יג וּמַלִּיל עִם עֶפְרוֹן קֳדָם עַמָּא דְאַרְעָא
לְמֵימָר בְּרַם אִם אַתְּ עָבִיד לִי טִיבוּ קַבֵּל מִנִּי
אֶתֵּן כַּסְפָּא דְּמֵי חַקְלָא סַב מִנִּי וְאֶקְבַּר יַת
מֵיתִי תַּמָּן: יד וַאֲתֵיב עֶפְרוֹן יַת אַבְרָהָם
לְמֵימַר לֵיהּ: טו רִבּוֹנִי קַבֵּל מִנִּי אַרְעָא שַׁוְיָא
אַרְבַּע מְאָה סִלְעִין דְּכַסַף בֵּינָא וּבֵינָךְ מָה הִיא
וְיַת מֵיתָךְ קְבַר: טז וְקַבִּיל אַבְרָהָם מִן עֶפְרוֹן
וּתְקַל אַבְרָהָם לְעֶפְרוֹן יַת כַּסְפָּא דִּי מַלִּיל
קֳדָם בְּנֵי חִתָּאָה אַרְבַּע מְאָה סִלְעִין דְּכַסַף
מְתְקַבֵּל סְחוֹרָה בְּכָל מְדִינְתָּא: יז וְקָם
חַקַל עֶפְרוֹן דִּי בְכָפֶלְתָּא דִּי קֳדָם מַמְרֵא

לע"י

כמו לח תכלח רחמיך[1], וכמו ויכלח הגשם[2]: **(ח) נפשכם.** לשונכם: **ופגעו לי.** לשון נקשה, כמו לא תפגעי בי[3]: **(ט) המכפלה.** בית ועליה על גביו. דבר אחר, שכפולה בזוגות[4]: **בכסף מלא.** משלם כל שוויה, וכן דוד אמר למרונה בכסף מלא[5]: **(י) ועפרון ישב.** כתיב אסר, אותו היום מנוהו שוטר עליהם, מפני חשיבותו של אברהם שהיה צריך לו, עלה לגדולה: **לכל באי שער עירו.** שכולן בטלו ממלאכתן, ובאו לגמול חסד לאברהם: **(יא) לא אדני.** לא תקנה אותה בדמים: **נתתי לך.** הרי הוא כמו שנתתיה לך: **(יג) אך אם אתה לו שמעני.** אתה אומר לי לשמוע לך וליקח בחנם, אני אי אפשי בכך,

אך אם אתה לו שמעני, כלומי ותשמעני: **נתתי.** דומי"ם בלע"ז, מוכן הוא אצלי, וכלומי נתתי לך כבר: **(טו) ביני ובינך.** בין שני אוהבים כאומו, מה היא חשובה לבלום, אלא הגח את המכר, ואת מתך קבור: **(טז) וישקל אברהם לעפרן.** אסר וי"ו, לפי שאמר הרבה ואפילו מעט לא עשה, שנטל ממנו שקלים גדולים שהן קנטרין שנאמר עובר לסוחר, שמתקבלים בשקל בכל מקום, ויש מקום שהשקליהן גדולים שהן קנטרין[6], לנטיאר"ש בלע"ז: **(יז) ויקם שדה עפרון.** תקומה היתה לה, שיצאה מיד הדיוט ליד אלך. ופשוטו של מקרא, ויקם השדה והמערה אשר בו וכל העץ לאברהם למקנה וגו':

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, **וַיָּקָם** 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.

1 תהלים מ, יב 2 בראשית ח, ב 3 רות א, יז 4 ערובין נג. 5 דברי הימים-א כא, כד 6 בבא מציעא פז. בכורות נ.

the son of Tzochar [9] *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."*

[10] *(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, [11] *"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."*

[12] *Avraham threw himself to the ground in front of the local people.* [13] *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."*

[14] *Efron replied to Avraham, saying to him,* [15] *"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!"*

[16] *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).*

SECOND READING

[17] *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*

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. 105*ff.*)

"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*"?

וְכָל־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר בַּשָּׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר בְּכָל־גְּבֻלוֹ סָבִיב: יח לְאַבְרָהָם
לְמִקְנָה לְעֵינֵי בְנֵי־חֵת בְּכֹל בָּאֵי שַׁעַר־עִירוֹ: יט וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן קָבַר
אַבְרָהָם אֶת־שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ אֶל־מְעָרַת שְׂדֵה הַמַּכְפֵּלָה עַל־פְּנֵי
מַמְרֵא הִוא חֶבְרוֹן בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: כ וַיָּקָם הַשָּׂדֶה וְהַמְּעָרָה
אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ לְאַבְרָהָם לַאֲחֻזַּת־קֶבֶר מֵאֵת בְּנֵי־חֵת: ס
כד א וְאַבְרָהָם זָקֵן בָּא בַּיָּמִים וַיהוָה בֵּרַךְ אֶת־אַבְרָהָם בַּכֹּל:
ב וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל־עַבְדּוֹ זְקַן בֵּיתוֹ הַמֹּשֵׁל בְּכָל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ
שִׂים־נָא יָדְךָ תַּחַת יְרֵכִי: ג וְאַשְׁבִּיעֲךָ בַּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם
וֵאלֹהֵי הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תִקַּח אִשָּׁה לִבְנִי מִבְּנוֹת הַכְּנַעֲנִי אֲשֶׁר
אָנֹכִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּקִרְבּוֹ: ד כִּי אֶל־אַרְצִי וְאֶל־מוֹלַדְתִּי תֵּלֵךְ וְלָקַחְתָּ
אִשָּׁה לִבְנִי לְיִצְחָק: ה וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הָעֶבֶד אוּלַי לֹא־תאבֶה
הָאִשָּׁה לָלֶכֶת אַחֲרַי אֶל־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת הֲהָשֵׁב אָשִׁיב אֶת־בִּנְךָ
אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יָצָאתָ מִשָּׁם: ו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אַבְרָהָם הִשָּׁמֶר
לְךָ פֶּן־תָּשִׁיב אֶת־בְּנִי שָׁמָּה: ז יְהוָה | אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם אֲשֶׁר

חַקְלָא וּמְעָרְתָּא דִּי בֵיהּ וְכָל אִילָנָא דִּי
בְחַקְלָא דִּי בְכָל תְּחוּמֵיהּ סְחוֹר סְחוֹר:
יח לְאַבְרָהָם לְזִבִינוּתְהִי לְעֵינֵי בְנֵי חִתָּאָה בְּכָל
עָאלֵי תְּרַע קַרְתֵּיהּ: יט וּבָתַר כֵּן קְבַר אַבְרָהָם
יָת שָׂרָה אִתְּתֵיהּ בִּמְעָרַת חַקַל כָּפֵלְתָּא דְעַל
אַפֵּי מַמְרֵא הִיא חֶבְרוֹן בְּאַרְעָא דִכְנָעַן: כ וְקָם
חַקְלָא וּמְעָרְתָּא דִּי בֵיהּ לְאַבְרָהָם לְאַחְסָנַת
קְבוּרָא מִן בְּנֵי חִתָּאָה: א וְאַבְרָהָם סִיב עָאל
בְּיוֹמִין וַיְיָ בָּרִיךְ יָת אַבְרָהָם בְּכוֹלָא: ב וַאֲמַר
אַבְרָהָם לְעַבְדֵּיהּ סָבָא דְבֵיתֵיהּ דְשַׁלִּיט בְּכָל
דִּי לֵיהּ שַׁוִּי כְעַן יְדָךְ תְּחוֹת יַרְכִּי: ג וַאֲקַיֶּמְ
עֲלָךְ בְּמֵימְרָא דַיְיָ אֱלָהָא דִשְׁמַיָּא וֵאלָהָא
דְאַרְעָא דִּי לָא תִסַּב אִתְּתָא לִבְרִי מִבְּנָת
כְּנַעֲנָאֵי דִּי אֲנָא יָתִיב בֵּינֵיהוֹן: ד אֱלָהֵין
לְאַרְעִי וּלְיַלָּדוּתִי תֵּיזֵיל וְתִסַּב אִתְּתָא לִבְרִי
לְיִצְחָק: ה וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ עַבְדָּא מָאִים לָא תֵּיבֵי
אִתְּתָא לְמֵיתֵי בַּתְרַי לְאַרְעָא הָדָא הַאֲתָבָא
אֶתֵּיב יָת בְּרָךְ לְאַרְעָא דִּי נְפַקְתָּא מִתַּמָּן:
ו וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ אַבְרָהָם אִסְתְּמַר לָךְ דִּלְמָא תָּתֵיב
יָת בְּרִי לְתַמָּן: ז יְיָ אֱלָהָא דִשְׁמַיָּא דִּי דַבְּרַנִי

רס"י

(יח) **בכל באי שער עירו.** בקרב כולם ובמעמד כולם הקנהו לו: (ח) **ברך את אברהם בכל.** בכל טוב בגימטריא בן, ומאחר שהיה לו בן, היה לריך להשיאו תמה: (ג) **זקן ביתו.** לפי שהוא דבוק נקוד זקן: **תחת ירכי.** לפי שהנשבע לריך שיטול בידו חפץ של מצוה, כגון ספר תורה, או תפילין[1], והמילה היתה מצוה רמשומה לו, ונמצא לו על ידי נער, והיתה מדובקת עליו, ונטלה: (ז) **ה' אלהי השמים אשר לקחני מבית אבי.** ולא אמר ומולדתי ומארצי, ולמעלה אמר ומשדיבך וגו'. אמר לו עכשיו הוא אלהי השמים ואלהי הארץ, שהרגלתיו בפי הבריות, אבל כשלקחני מבית אבי, היה אלהי השמים

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)

1 שבועות לח:

were within its entire border around. [18] (It became) Avraham's as a possession in the presence of the people of Cheis, who had come to the gate of his city.

[19] 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. [20] 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). [2] 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). [3] 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. [4] Rather, you should go to my Land, to my birthplace, and you will take a wife for my son, for Yitzchak."*

[5] 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?"

[6] Avraham said to him, "Be insistent not to take my son back there. [7] 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. 82*ff.*)

"Avraham was Old" (v. 1)

It was explained above (*Toras Menachem* to 18:11), that the term בָּאִים בַּיָּמִים 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. 89*ff.*)

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 22:2*ff.*), 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.

לְקַחַנִי מִבֵּית אָבִי וּמֵאֶרֶץ מוֹלַדְתִּי וַאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר־לִי וַאֲשֶׁר
נִשְׁבַּע־לִי לֵאמֹר לְזַרְעֲךָ אֶתֵּן אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת הוּא יִשְׁלַח
מַלְאָכוֹ לְפָנֶיךָ וְלָקַחְתָּ אִשָּׁה לִבְנִי מִשָּׁם: ח וְאִם־לֹא תֹאבֶה
הָאִשָּׁה לָלֶכֶת אַחֲרֶיךָ וְנִקֵּיתָ מִשְּׁבֻעָתִי זֹאת רַק אֶת־בְּנִי לֹא
תָשֵׁב שָׁמָּה: ט וַיָּשֶׂם הָעֶבֶד אֶת־יָדוֹ תַּחַת יֶרֶךְ אַבְרָהָם אֲדֹנָיו
וַיִּשָּׁבַע לוֹ עַל־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה: [שלישי] י וַיִּקַּח הָעֶבֶד עֲשָׂרָה גְמַלִּים
מִגְּמַלֵּי אֲדֹנָיו וַיֵּלֶךְ וְכָל־טוּב אֲדֹנָיו בְּיָדוֹ וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־אֲרַם

מִבֵּית אַבָּא וּמֵאַרַע יַלָּדוּתִי וְדִי מַלִּיל לִי וְדִי
קַיֵּם לִי לְמֵימָר לִבְרָיְדְ אֶתֵּן יַת אַרְעָא הָדָא
הוּא יִשְׁלַח מַלְאֲכֵיהּ קֳדָמָךְ וְתִסַּב אִתְּתָא
לִבְרִי מִתַּמָּן: ח וְאִם לָא תֵּיבֵי אִתְּתָא לְמֵיתֵי
בַּתְרָךְ וּתְהֵי זַכָּאָה מִמּוֹמָתִי דָּא לְחוֹד יַת בְּרִי
לָא תְתֵיב לְתַמָּן: ט וְשַׁוִּי עַבְדָּא יַת יְדֵיהּ
תְּחוֹת יַרְכָּא דְאַבְרָהָם רִבּוֹנֵיהּ וְקַיֵּם לֵיהּ עַל
פִּתְגָמָא הָדֵין: י וּדְבַר עַבְדָּא עַשְׂרָא נַמְלִין
מִגַּמַלֵּי דְרִבּוֹנֵיהּ וַאֲזַל וְכָל שְׁפַר רִבּוֹנֵיהּ
בִּידֵיהּ וְקָם וַאֲזַל לַאֲרָם דִּי עַל פָּרָת לְקַרְתָּא

רס"י

ולא תלכי כתרץ, שלא היו בחי עולם מכיריס בו, ושמו לא היה רגיל בתרץ: **מבית אבי**. מתרן: **ומארץ מולדתי**. מאור כשדיס: **ואשר דבר לי**. לגרכי, כמו אשר דבר עלי. וכן כל לי ולו ולכם הסמוכיס אצל דבור, מפורשיס בלשון עב. ותרגוס שלכס עלי, עלוהי, עליהון, שאין נופל אצל דיבור לשון לי, ולו, ולכם, אלא אלי, אליו, אליכם. ותרגוס שלכם עמי, עמיה, עמהון, אבל אצל אמירה נופל לשון לי, ולו, ולכם: **ואשר נשבע לי**. בין הכתריס: (ח) **ונקית משבועתי וגו'**. וקא לו אשב מצוות ענר אשכול וממרא: **רק את בני וגו'**. רק מיעוט הוא, בני היו חוזר, אבל יעקב בן בני סופו לחזור: (י) **מגמלי אדוניו**. נכרין היו משאר גמליס, שהיו יוצאין זמומין[1], מפני הגזל, שלא ירעו בשדות אחריס: **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 *tefilin*. 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

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)

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)

1 ב"ר נט, י

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. [8] *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!"*

[9] *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

The 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 (שֶׁהִרְגַּלְתִּיו) *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. 155*ff.*)

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

Some 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)

נַהֲרַיִם אֶל־עִיר נָחוֹר: יא וַיַּבְרֵךְ הַגְמַלִּים מִחוּץ לָעִיר אֶל־בְּאֵר
הַמָּיִם לְעֵת עֶרֶב לְעֵת צֵאת הַשֹּׁאֲבֹת: יב וַיֹּאמֶר | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי
אֲדֹנִי אַבְרָהָם הַקְרֵה־נָא לְפָנַי הַיּוֹם וַעֲשֵׂה־חֶסֶד עִם אֲדֹנִי
אַבְרָהָם: יג הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי נִצָּב עַל־עֵין הַמָּיִם וּבְנוֹת אַנְשֵׁי הָעִיר
יֹצְאֹת לִשְׁאֹב מָיִם: יד וְהָיָה *הַנַּעֲרָ אֲשֶׁר אֹמַר אֵלֶיהָ הַטִּי־נָא
כַדֵּךְ וְאֶשְׁתֶּה וְאָמְרָה שְׁתֵה וְגַם־גְּמַלֶּיךָ אַשְׁקֶה אֹתָהּ הֹכַחְתָּ
לְעַבְדְּךָ לְיִצְחָק וּבָהּ אֵדַע כִּי־עָשִׂיתָ חֶסֶד עִם־אֲדֹנִי:
טו וַיְהִי־הוּא טֶרֶם כִּלָּה לְדַבֵּר וְהִנֵּה רִבְקָה יֹצֵאת אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה
לִבְתוּאֵל בֶּן־מִלְכָּה אֵשֶׁת נָחוֹר אֲחִי אַבְרָהָם וְכַדָּהּ
עַל־שִׁכְמָהּ: טז *וְהַנַּעֲרָ טֹבַת מַרְאֶה מְאֹד בְּתוּלָה וְאִישׁ לֹא
יְדָעָהּ וַתֵּרֶד הָעַיְנָה וַתְּמַלֵּא כַדָּהּ וַתָּעַל: יז וַיָּרָץ הָעֶבֶד
לִקְרָאתָהּ וַיֹּאמֶר הַגְמִיאִינִי נָא מְעַט־מַיִם מִכַּדֵּךְ: יח וַתֹּאמֶר
שְׁתֵּה אֲדֹנִי וַתְּמַהֵר וַתֹּרֶד כַּדָּהּ עַל־יָדָהּ וַתַּשְׁקֵהוּ: יט וַתְּכַל
לְהַשְׁקֹתוֹ וַתֹּאמֶר גַּם לִגְמַלֶּיךָ אֶשְׁאָב עַד אִם־כִּלּוּ לִשְׁתֹּת:
כ וַתְּמַהֵר וַתְּעַר כַּדָּהּ אֶל־הַשֹּׁקֶת וַתָּרָץ עוֹד אֶל־הַבְּאֵר
לִשְׁאֹב וַתִּשְׁאַב לְכָל־גְּמַלָּיו: כא וְהָאִישׁ מִשְׁתָּאֵה לָהּ מַחֲרִישׁ

דַּעַת הַיְהוָה הִצְלִיחַ אִם־לֹא: כב וַיְהִי הַגְּמַלִּים לִשְׁתּוֹת וַיִּקַּח
הָאִישׁ נֶזֶם זָהָב בֶּקַע מִשְׁקָלוֹ וּשְׁנֵי צְמִידִים עַל־יָדֶיהָ עֲשָׂרָה
זָהָב מִשְׁקָלָם: כג וַיֹּאמֶר בַּת־מִי אָתְּ הַגִּידִי נָא לִי הֲיֵשׁ בֵּית־
אָבִיךְ מָקוֹם לָנוּ לָלִין: כד וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו בַּת־בְּתוּאֵל אָנֹכִי בֶּן־
מִלְכָּה אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה לְנָחוֹר: כה וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו גַּם־תֶּבֶן גַּם־מִסְפּוֹא
רַב עִמָּנוּ גַּם מָקוֹם לָלִין: כו וַיִּקֹּד הָאִישׁ וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ לַיהוָה:
כז וַיֹּאמַר בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲדֹנִי אַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־עָזַב חַסְדּוֹ
וַאֲמִתּוֹ מֵעִם אֲדֹנִי אָנֹכִי בַּדֶּרֶךְ נָחָנִי יְהוָה בֵּית אֲחֵי אֲדֹנִי:
כח וַתָּרָץ הַנַּעֲרָ וַתַּגֶּד לְבֵית אִמָּהּ כַּדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה: כט וּלְרִבְקָה
אָח וּשְׁמוֹ לָבָן וַיָּרָץ לָבָן אֶל־הָאִישׁ הַחוּצָה אֶל־הָעָיִן: ל וַיְהִי
כִּרְאֹת אֶת־הַנֶּזֶם וְאֶת־הַצְּמִידִים עַל יְדֵי אֲחֹתוֹ וּכְשָׁמְעוֹ אֶת־
דִּבְרֵי רִבְקָה אֲחֹתוֹ לֵאמֹר כֹּה דִבֶּר אֵלַי הָאִישׁ וַיָּבֹא אֶל־הָאִישׁ
וְהִנֵּה עֹמֵד עַל־הַגְּמַלִּים עַל־הָעָיִן: לא וַיֹּאמֶר בּוֹא בְרוּךְ יְהוָה
לָמָּה תַעֲמֹד בַּחוּץ וְאָנֹכִי פִּנִּיתִי הַבַּיִת וּמָקוֹם לַגְּמַלִּים: לב וַיָּבֵא
הָאִישׁ הַבָּיְתָה וַיְפַתַּח הַגְּמַלִּים נָתַן תֶּבֶן וּמִסְפּוֹא לַגְּמַלִּים
וּמַיִם לִרְחֹץ רַגְלָיו וְרַגְלֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ: לג וַיּוּשֶׂם לְפָנָיו
לֶאֱכֹל וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אֹכַל עַד אִם־דִּבַּרְתִּי דְבָרָי וַיֹּאמֶר דַּבֵּר:
לד וַיֹּאמֶר עֶבֶד אַבְרָהָם אָנִי: לה וַיהוָה בֵּרַךְ אֶת־אֲדֹנִי מְאֹד וַיִּגְדָּל
וַיִּתֶּן־לוֹ צֹאן וּבָקָר וְכֶסֶף וְזָהָב וַעֲבָדִים וּשְׁפָחֹת וּגְמַלִּים וַחֲמֹרִים:
לו וַתֵּלֶד שָׂרָה אֵשֶׁת אֲדֹנִי בֵּן לַאדֹנִי אַחֲרֵי זָקְנָתָהּ וַיִּתֶּן־לוֹ אֶת־
כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ: לז וַיַּשְׁבִּעֵנִי אֲדֹנִי לֵאמֹר לֹא־תִקַּח אִשָּׁה לִבְנִי
מִבְּנוֹת הַכְּנַעֲנִי אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּאַרְצוֹ: לח אִם־לֹא אֶל־בֵּית
אָבִי תֵּלֵךְ וְאֶל־מִשְׁפַּחְתִּי וְלָקַחְתָּ אִשָּׁה לִבְנִי: לט וָאֹמַר אֶל־
אֲדֹנִי אוּלַי לֹא תֵלֵךְ הָאִשָּׁה אַחֲרָי: מ וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר
הִתְהַלַּכְתִּי לְפָנָיו יִשְׁלַח מַלְאָכוֹ אִתָּךְ וְהִצְלִיחַ דַּרְכֶּךָ וְלָקַחְתָּ
אִשָּׁה לִבְנִי מִמִּשְׁפַּחְתִּי וּמִבֵּית אָבִי: מא אָז תִּנָּקֶה מֵאָלָתִי כִּי
תָבוֹא אֶל־מִשְׁפַּחְתִּי וְאִם־לֹא יִתְּנוּ לָךְ וְהָיִיתָ נָקִי מֵאָלָתִי:
מב וָאָבוֹא הַיּוֹם אֶל־הָעָיִן וָאֹמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲדֹנִי אַבְרָהָם אִם־
יֶשְׁךָ נָא מַצְלִיחַ דַּרְכִּי אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי הֹלֵךְ עָלֶיהָ: מג הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי נִצָּב
עַל־עֵין הַמָּיִם וְהָיָה הָעַלְמָה הַיֹּצֵאת לִשְׁאֹב וְאָמַרְתִּי אֵלֶיהָ הַשְׁקִינִי
נָא מְעַט־מַיִם מִכַּדֵּךְ: מד וְאָמְרָה אֵלַי גַּם־אַתָּה שְׁתֵה וְגַם לִגְמַלֶּיךָ
אֶשְׁאָב הִוא הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר יָכַח יְהוָה לְבֶן־אֲדֹנִי: מה אֲנִי טֶרֶם
אֲכַלֶּה לְדַבֵּר עַל־לִבִּי וְהִנֵּה רִבְקָה יֹצֵאת וְכַדָּהּ עַל־שִׁכְמָהּ וַתֵּרֶד
הָעַיְנָה וַתִּשְׁאָב וָאֹמַר אֵלֶיהָ הַשְׁקִינִי נָא: מו וַתְּמַהֵר וַתּוֹרֶד כַּדָּהּ
מֵעָלֶיהָ וַתֹּאמֶר שְׁתֵה וְגַם־גְּמַלֶּיךָ אַשְׁקֶה וָאֶשְׁתְּ וְגַם הַגְּמַלִּים
הִשְׁקָתָה: מז וָאֶשְׁאַל אֹתָהּ וַתֹּאמֶר בַּת־בְּתוּאֵל בֶּן־נָחוֹר אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה
לוֹ מִלְכָּה וָאָשִׂם הַנֶּזֶם עַל־אַפָּהּ וְהַצְּמִידִים עַל יָדֶיהָ: מח וָאִקֹּד
וָאֶשְׁתַּחוּ לַיהוָה וָאֲבָרֵךְ אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲדֹנִי אַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר
הִנְחַנִי בְּדֶרֶךְ אֱמֶת לָקַחַת אֶת־בַּת־אֲחִי אֲדֹנִי לִבְנוֹ: מט וְעַתָּה
אִם־יְשְׁכֶם עֹשִׂים חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת אֶת־אֲדֹנִי הַגִּידוּ לִי וְאִם־לֹא הַגִּידוּ
לִי וְאֶפְנֶה עַל־יָמִין אוֹ עַל־שְׂמֹאל: נ וַיַּעַן לָבָן וּבְתוּאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ
מֵיְהוָה יָצָא הַדָּבָר לֹא נוּכַל דַּבֵּר אֵלֶיךָ רָע אוֹ טוֹב: נא הִנֵּה רִבְקָה
לְפָנֶיךָ קַח וָלֵךְ וּתְהִי אִשָּׁה לְבֶן־אֲדוֹנֶיךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה:
נב וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמַע עֶבֶד־אַבְרָהָם אֶת־דִּבְרֵיהֶם וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אַרְצָה
לַיהוָה: נג וַיּוֹצֵא הָעֶבֶד כְּלֵי־כֶסֶף וּכְלֵי זָהָב וּבְגָדִים וַיִּתֵּן לְרִבְקָה
מַתָּנֹת גַּם לְאָחִיהָ וּלְאִמָּהּ נָתַן מִגְדָּנוֹת: נד וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּשְׁתּוּ הוּא
וְהָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר עִמּוֹ וַיָּלִינוּ וַיָּקוּמוּ בַבֹּקֶר וַיֹּאמֶר שַׁלְּחֻנִי
לַאדֹנִי: נה וַיֹּאמֶר אָחִיהָ וְאִמָּהּ תֵּשֶׁב הַנַּעֲרָ אִתָּנוּ יָמִים אוֹ עָשׂוֹר
אַחַר תֵּלֵךְ: נו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם אַל־תְּאַחֲרוּ אֹתִי וַיהוָה הִצְלִיחַ דַּרְכִּי
שַׁלְּחוּנִי וְאֵלְכָה לַאדֹנִי: נז וַיֹּאמְרוּ נִקְרָא לַנַּעֲרָ וְנִשְׁאֲלָה אֶת־פִּיהָ:
נח וַיִּקְרְאוּ לְרִבְקָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלֶיהָ הֲתֵלְכִי עִם־הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה וַתֹּאמֶר
אֵלֵךְ: נט וַיְשַׁלְּחוּ אֶת־רִבְקָה אֲחֹתָם וְאֶת־מֵנִקְתָּהּ וְאֶת־עֶבֶד
אַבְרָהָם וְאֶת־אֲנָשָׁיו: ס וַיְבָרְכוּ אֶת־רִבְקָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהּ אֲחֹתֵנוּ
אַתְּ הֱיִי לְאַלְפֵי רְבָבָה וְיִירַשׁ זַרְעֵךְ אֶת שַׁעַר שֹׂנְאָיו: סא וַתָּקָם
רִבְקָה וְנַעֲרֹתֶיהָ וַתִּרְכַּבְנָה עַל־הַגְּמַלִּים וַתֵּלַכְנָה אַחֲרֵי הָאִישׁ
וַיִּקַּח הָעֶבֶד אֶת־רִבְקָה וַיֵּלֶךְ: סב וְיִצְחָק בָּא מִבּוֹא בְּאֵר לַחַי רֹאִי
וְהוּא יוֹשֵׁב בְּאֶרֶץ הַנֶּגֶב: סג וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לָשׂוּחַ בַּשָּׂדֶה לִפְנוֹת
עָרֶב וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיַּרְא וְהִנֵּה גְמַלִּים בָּאִים: סד וַתִּשָּׂא רִבְקָה אֶת־
עֵינֶיהָ וַתַּרְא אֶת־יִצְחָק וַתִּפֹּל מֵעַל הַגָּמָל: סה וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָעֶבֶד
מִי הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה הַהֹלֵךְ בַּשָּׂדֶה לִקְרָאתֵנוּ וַיֹּאמֶר הָעֶבֶד הוּא אֲדֹנִי
וַתִּקַּח הַצָּעִיף וַתִּתְכַּס: סו וַיְסַפֵּר הָעֶבֶד לְיִצְחָק אֵת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים
אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה: סז וַיְבִאֶהָ יִצְחָק הָאֹהֱלָה שָׂרָה אִמּוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת־רִבְקָה
וַתְּהִי־לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה וַיֶּאֱהָבֶהָ וַיִּנָּחֵם יִצְחָק אַחֲרֵי אִמּוֹ: סח וַיֹּסֶף
אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח אִשָּׁה וּשְׁמָהּ קְטוּרָה: סט וַתֵּלֶד לוֹ אֶת־זִמְרָן וְאֶת־
יָקְשָׁן וְאֶת־מְדָן וְאֶת־מִדְיָן וְאֶת־יִשְׁבָּק וְאֶת־שׁוּחַ: ע וְיָקְשָׁן יָלַד
אֶת־שְׁבָא וְאֶת־דְּדָן וּבְנֵי דְדָן הָיוּ אַשּׁוּרִים וּלְטוּשִׁים וּלְאֻמִּים:
עא וּבְנֵי מִדְיָן עֵיפָה וָעֵפֶר וַחֲנוֹךְ וַאֲבִידָע וְאֶלְדָּעָה כָּל־אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי
קְטוּרָה: עב וַיִּתֵּן אַבְרָהָם אֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ לְיִצְחָק: עג וְלִבְנֵי
הַפִּלַגְשִׁים אֲשֶׁר לְאַבְרָהָם נָתַן אַבְרָהָם מַתָּנוֹת וַיְשַׁלְּחֵם מֵעַל
יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ בְּעוֹדֶנּוּ חַי קֵדְמָה אֶל־אֶרֶץ קֶדֶם: עד וְאֵלֶּה יְמֵי שְׁנֵי
חַיֵּי אַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר חָי מֵאָה שָׁנָה וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה וּשְׁתֵּי שָׁנִים:
עה וַיִּגְוַע וַיָּמָת אַבְרָהָם בְּשֵׂיבָה טוֹבָה זָקֵן וְשָׂבֵעַ וַיֵּאָסֶף אֶל־
עַמָּיו: עו וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֹתוֹ יִצְחָק וְיִשְׁמָעֵאל בָּנָיו אֶל־מְעָרַת הַמַּכְפֵּלָה
אֶל־שְׂדֵה עֶפְרוֹן בֶּן־צֹחַר הַחִתִּי אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי מַמְרֵא: עז הַשָּׂדֶה
אֲשֶׁר קָנָה אַבְרָהָם מֵאֵת בְּנֵי־חֵת שָׁמָּה קֻבַּר אַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ:
עח וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי מוֹת אַבְרָהָם וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ וַיֵּשֶׁב
יִצְחָק עִם־בְּאֵר לַחַי רֹאִי: עט וְאֵלֶּה תֹּלְדוֹת יִשְׁמָעֵאל בֶּן־אַבְרָהָם
אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה הָגָר הַמִּצְרִית שִׁפְחַת שָׂרָה לְאַבְרָהָם: פ וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת
בְּנֵי יִשְׁמָעֵאל בְּשֵׁמוֹתָם לְתוֹלְדֹתָם בְּכֹר יִשְׁמָעֵאל נְבָיוֹת וְקֵדָר
וְאַדְבְּאֵל וּמִבְשָׂם: פא וּמִשְׁמָע וְדוּמָה מַשָּׂא: פב חֲדַד וְתֵימָא יְטוּר
נָפִישׁ וְקֶדְמָה: פג אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי יִשְׁמָעֵאל וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹתָם בְּחַצְרֵיהֶם
וּבְטִירֹתָם שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר נְשִׂאִם לְאֻמֹּתָם: פד וְאֵלֶּה שְׁנֵי חַיֵּי יִשְׁמָעֵאל
מְאַת שָׁנָה וּשְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה וְשֶׁבַע שָׁנִים וַיִּגְוַע וַיָּמָת וַיֵּאָסֶף אֶל־
עַמָּיו: פה וַיִּשְׁכְּנוּ מֵחֲוִילָה עַד־שׁוּר אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי מִצְרַיִם בֹּאֲכָה
אַשּׁוּרָה נֹכַח כָּל־אֶחָיו נָפָל: פו וְאֵלֶּה תֹּלְדוֹת יִצְחָק בֶּן־אַבְרָהָם
אַבְרָהָם הוֹלִיד אֶת־יִצְחָק: פז וַיְהִי יִצְחָק בֶּן־אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה בְּקַחְתּוֹ
אֶת־רִבְקָה בַּת־בְּתוּאֵל הָאֲרַמִּי מִפַּדַּן אֲרָם אֲחוֹת לָבָן הָאֲרַמִּי לוֹ
לְאִשָּׁה: פח וַיֶּעְתַּר יִצְחָק לַיהוָה לְנֹכַח אִשְׁתּוֹ כִּי עֲקָרָה הִוא וַיֵּעָתֶר
לוֹ יְהוָה וַתַּהַר רִבְקָה אִשְׁתּוֹ: פט וַיִּתְרֹצְצוּ הַבָּנִים בְּקִרְבָּהּ וַתֹּאמֶר
אִם־כֵּן לָמָּה זֶּה אָנֹכִי וַתֵּלֶךְ לִדְרֹשׁ אֶת־יְהוָה: צ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה לָהּ
שְׁנֵי גוֹיִם בְּבִטְנֵךְ וּשְׁנֵי לְאֻמִּים מִמֵּעַיִךְ יִפָּרֵדוּ וּלְאֹם מִלְאֹם יֶאֱמָץ
וְרַב יַעֲבֹד צָעִיר: צא וַיִּמְלְאוּ יָמֶיהָ לָלֶדֶת וְהִנֵּה תוֹמִם בְּבִטְנָהּ:
צב וַיֵּצֵא הָרִאשׁוֹן אַדְמוֹנִי כֻּלּוֹ כְּאַדֶּרֶת שֵׂעָר וַיִּקְרְאוּ שְׁמוֹ עֵשָׂו:
צג וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן יָצָא אָחִיו וְיָדוֹ אֹחֶזֶת בַּעֲקֵב עֵשָׂו וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב
וְיִצְחָק בֶּן־שִׁשִּׁים שָׁנָה בְּלֶדֶת אֹתָם: צד וַיִּגְדְּלוּ הַנְּעָרִים וַיְהִי עֵשָׂו
אִישׁ יֹדֵעַ צַיִד אִישׁ שָׂדֶה וְיַעֲקֹב אִישׁ תָּם יֹשֵׁב אֹהָלִים: צה וַיֶּאֱהַב
יִצְחָק אֶת־עֵשָׂו כִּי־צַיִד בְּפִיו וְרִבְקָה אֹהֶבֶת אֶת־יַעֲקֹב: צו וַיָּזֶד
יַעֲקֹב נָזִיד וַיָּבֹא עֵשָׂו מִן־הַשָּׂדֶה וְהוּא עָיֵף: צז וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו אֶל־
יַעֲקֹב הַלְעִיטֵנִי נָא מִן־הָאָדֹם הָאָדֹם הַזֶּה כִּי עָיֵף אָנֹכִי עַל־כֵּן קָרָא
שְׁמוֹ אֱדוֹם: צח וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב מִכְרָה כַיּוֹם אֶת־בְּכֹרָתְךָ לִי: צט וַיֹּאמֶר
עֵשָׂו הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ לָמוּת וְלָמָּה זֶּה לִי בְּכֹרָה: ק וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב
הִשָּׁבְעָה לִּי כַּיּוֹם וַיִּשָּׁבַע לוֹ וַיִּמְכֹּר אֶת־בְּכֹרָתוֹ לְיַעֲקֹב: קא וְיַעֲקֹב
נָתַן לְעֵשָׂו לֶחֶם וּנְזִיד עֲדָשִׁים וַיֹּאכַל וַיֵּשְׁתְּ וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלַךְ וַיִּבֶז עֵשָׂו
אֶת־הַבְּכֹרָה: קב וַיְהִי רָעָב בָּאָרֶץ מִלְּבַד הָרָעָב הָרִאשׁוֹן אֲשֶׁר הָיָה
בִּימֵי אַבְרָהָם וַיֵּלֶךְ יִצְחָק אֶל־אֲבִימֶלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ־פְּלִשְׁתִּים גְּרָרָה:
קג וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר אַל־תֵּרֵד מִצְרַיְמָה שְׁכֹן בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר
אֹמַר אֵלֶיךָ: קד גּוּר בָּאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת וְאֶהְיֶה עִמְּךָ וַאֲבָרְכֶךָּ כִּי לְךָ וּלְזַרְעֲךָ
אֶתֵּן אֶת־כָּל־הָאֲרָצֹת הָאֵל וַהֲקִמֹתִי אֶת־הַשְּׁבֻעָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי
לְאַבְרָהָם אָבִיךָ: קה וְהִרְבֵּיתִי אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ כְּכוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמָיִם וְנָתַתִּי
לְזַרְעֲךָ אֵת כָּל־הָאֲרָצֹת הָאֵל וְהִתְבָּרֲכוּ בְזַרְעֲךָ כֹּל גּוֹיֵי הָאָרֶץ:
קו עֵקֶב אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַע אַבְרָהָם בְּקֹלִי וַיִּשְׁמֹר מִשְׁמַרְתִּי מִצְוֹתַי חֻקּוֹתַי
וְתוֹרֹתָי: קז וַיֵּשֶׁב יִצְחָק בִּגְרָר: קח וַיִּשְׁאֲלוּ אַנְשֵׁי הַמָּקוֹם לְאִשְׁתּוֹ
וַיֹּאמֶר אֲחֹתִי הִוא כִּי יָרֵא לֵאמֹר אִשְׁתִּי פֶּן־יַהַרְגֻנִי אַנְשֵׁי הַמָּקוֹם
עַל־רִבְקָה כִּי־טוֹבַת מַרְאֶה הִוא: קט וַיְהִי כִּי אָרְכוּ־לוֹ שָׁם הַיָּמִים
וַיַּשְׁקֵף אֲבִימֶלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ־פְּלִשְׁתִּים בְּעַד הַחַלּוֹן וַיַּרְא וְהִנֵּה יִצְחָק
מְצַחֵק אֵת רִבְקָה אִשְׁתּוֹ: קי וַיִּקְרָא אֲבִימֶלֶךְ לְיִצְחָק וַיֹּאמֶר אַךְ
הִנֵּה אִשְׁתְּךָ הִוא וְאֵיךְ אָמַרְתָּ אֲחֹתִי הִוא וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו יִצְחָק כִּי
אָמַרְתִּי פֶּן־אָמוּת עָלֶיהָ: קיא וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ מַה־זֹּאת עָשִׂיתָ לָנוּ
כִּמְעַט שָׁכַב אַחַד הָעָם אֶת־אִשְׁתֶּךָ וְהֵבֵאתָ עָלֵינוּ אָשָׁם: קיב וַיְצַו
אֲבִימֶלֶךְ אֶת־כָּל־הָעָם לֵאמֹר הַנֹּגֵעַ בָּאִישׁ הַזֶּה וּבְאִשְׁתּוֹ מוֹת יוּמָת:
קיג וַיִּזְרַע יִצְחָק בָּאָרֶץ הַהִוא וַיִּמְצָא בַּשָּׁנָה הַהִוא מֵאָה שְׁעָרִים
וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ יְהוָה: קיד וַיִּגְדַּל הָאִישׁ וַיֵּלֶךְ הָלוֹךְ וְגָדֵל עַד כִּי־גָדַל מְאֹד:
קטו וַיְהִי־לוֹ מִקְנֵה־צֹאן וּמִקְנֵה בָקָר וַעֲבֻדָּה רַבָּה וַיְקַנְאוּ אֹתוֹ פְּלִשְׁתִּים:
קטז וְכָל־הַבְּאֵרֹת אֲשֶׁר חָפְרוּ עַבְדֵי אָבִיו בִּימֵי אַבְרָהָם אָבִיו סִתְּמוּם
פְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיְמַלְאוּם עָפָר: קיז וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ אֶל־יִצְחָק לֵךְ מֵעִמָּנוּ
כִּי־עָצַמְתָּ מִמֶּנּוּ מְאֹד: קיח וַיֵּלֶךְ מִשָּׁם יִצְחָק וַיִּחַן בְּנַחַל גְּרָר וַיֵּשֶׁב
שָׁם: קיט וַיָּשָׁב יִצְחָק וַיַּחְפֹּר אֶת־בְּאֵרֹת הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר חָפְרוּ בִּימֵי
אַבְרָהָם אָבִיו וַיְסַתְּמוּם פְּלִשְׁתִּים אַחֲרֵי מוֹת אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקְרָא לָהֶן
שֵׁמוֹת כַּשֵּׁמוֹת אֲשֶׁר קָרָא לָהֶן אָבִיו: קכ וַיַּחְפְּרוּ עַבְדֵי יִצְחָק בַּנָּחַל
וַיִּמְצְאוּ־שָׁם בְּאֵר מַיִם חַיִּים: קכא וַיָּרִבוּ רֹעֵי גְרָר עִם־רֹעֵי יִצְחָק
לֵאמֹר לָנוּ הַמָּיִם וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַבְּאֵר עֵשֶׂק כִּי הִתְעַשְּׂקוּ עִמּוֹ: קכב וַיַּחְפְּרוּ
בְּאֵר אַחֶרֶת וַיָּרִיבוּ גַּם עָלֶיהָ וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמָהּ שִׂטְנָה: קכג וַיַּעְתֵּק מִשָּׁם
וַיַּחְפֹּר בְּאֵר אַחֶרֶת וְלֹא רָבוּ עָלֶיהָ וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמָהּ רְחֹבוֹת וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי
עַתָּה הִרְחִיב יְהוָה לָנוּ וּפָרִינוּ בָאָרֶץ: קכד וַיַּעַל מִשָּׁם בְּאֵר שָׁבַע:
קכה וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו יְהוָה בַּלַּיְלָה הַהוּא וַיֹּאמֶר אָנֹכִי אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אָבִיךָ
אַל־תִּירָא כִּי־אִתְּךָ אָנִי וּבֵרַכְתִּיךָ וְהִרְבֵּיתִי אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ בַּעֲבוּר אַבְרָהָם
עַבְדִּי: קכו וַיִּבֶן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ וַיִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה וַיֵּט שָׁם אָהֳלוֹ וַיִּכְרוּ שָׁם
עַבְדֵי יִצְחָק בְּאֵר: קכז וַאֲבִימֶלֶךְ הָלַךְ אֵלָיו מִגְּרָר וַאֲחֻזַּת מֵרֵעֵהוּ
וּפִיכֹל שַׂר צְבָאוֹ: קכח וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם יִצְחָק מַדּוּעַ בָּאתֶם אֵלָי וְאַתֶּם
שְׂנֵאתֶם אֹתִי וַתְּשַׁלְּחוּנִי מֵאִתְּכֶם: קכט וַיֹּאמְרוּ רָאוֹ רָאִינוּ כִּי־הָיָה
יְהוָה עִמָּךְ וַנֹּאמֶר תְּהִי־נָא אָלָה בֵּינֵינוּ בֵּינֵינוּ וּבֵינֶיךָ וְנִכְרְתָה בְרִית
עִמָּךְ: קל אִם־תַּעֲשֶׂה עִמָּנוּ רָעָה כַּאֲשֶׁר לֹא נְגַעֻנוּךָ וְכַאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂינוּ עִמְּךָ
רַק טוֹב וַנְּשַׁלֵּחֲךָ בְּשָׁלוֹם אַתָּה עַתָּה בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה: קלא וַיַּעַשׂ לָהֶם
מִשְׁתֶּה וְאָכְלוּ וַיִּשְׁתּוּ: קלב וַיַּשְׁכִּמוּ בַבֹּקֶר וַיִּשָּׁבְעוּ אִישׁ לְאָחִיו וַיְשַׁלַּח
אֹתָם יִצְחָק וַיֵּלְכוּ מֵאִתּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם: קלג וַיְהִי בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וַיָּבֹאוּ עַבְדֵי
יִצְחָק וַיַּגִּדוּ לוֹ עַל אֹדוֹת הַבְּאֵר אֲשֶׁר חָפָרוּ וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ מָצָאנוּ מָיִם:
קלד וַיִּקְרָא אֹתָהּ שִׁבְעָה עַל־כֵּן שֵׁם־הָעִיר בְּאֵר שָׁבַע עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה:
קלה וַיְהִי עֵשָׂו בֶּן־אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה וַיִּקַּח אִשָּׁה אֶת־יְהוּדִית בַּת־בְּאֵרִי
הַחִתִּי וְאֶת־בָּשְׂמַת בַּת־אֵילֹן הַחִתִּי: קלו וַתִּהְיֶינָה מוֹרַת רוּחַ לְיִצְחָק
וּלְרִבְקָה: קלז וַיְהִי כִּי־זָקֵן יִצְחָק וַתִּכְהֶיָן עֵינָיו מֵרְאֹת וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־עֵשָׂו
בְּנוֹ הַגָּדֹל וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו בְּנִי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הִנֵּנִי: קלח וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה־נָא
זָקַנְתִּי לֹא יָדַעְתִּי יוֹם מוֹתִי: קלט וְעַתָּה שָׂא־נָא כֵלֶיךָ תֶּלְיְךָ וְקַשְׁתֶּךָ
וְצֵא הַשָּׂדֶה וְצוּדָה לִי צָיִד: קמ וַעֲשֵׂה לִי מַטְעַמִּים כַּאֲשֶׁר אָהַבְתִּי
וְהָבִיאָה לִי וְאֹכֵלָה בַּעֲבוּר תְּבָרֶכְךָ נַפְשִׁי בְּטֶרֶם אָמוּת: קמא וְרִבְקָה
שֹׁמַעַת בְּדַבֵּר יִצְחָק אֶל־עֵשָׂו בְּנוֹ וַיֵּלֶךְ עֵשָׂו הַשָּׂדֶה לָצוּד צַיִד
לְהָבִיא: קמב וְרִבְקָה אָמְרָה אֶל־יַעֲקֹב בְּנָהּ לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה שָׁמַעְתִּי אֶת־
אָבִיךָ מְדַבֵּר אֶל־עֵשָׂו אָחִיךָ לֵאמֹר: קמג הָבִיאָה לִי צַיִד וַעֲשֵׂה לִי
מַטְעַמִּים וְאֹכֵלָה וַאֲבָרֶכְךָ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לִפְנֵי מוֹתִי: קמד וְעַתָּה בְּנִי
שְׁמַע בְּקֹלִי לַאֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֹתָךְ: קמה לֵךְ־נָא אֶל־הַצֹּאן וְקַח־לִי
מִשָּׁם שְׁנֵי גְדָיֵי עִזִּים טוֹבִים וְאֶעֱשֶׂה אֹתָם מַטְעַמִּים לְאָבִיךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר
אָהֵב: קמו וְהֵבֵאתָ לְאָבִיךָ וְאָכָל בַּעֲבוּר אֲשֶׁר יְבָרֶכְךָ לִפְנֵי מוֹתוֹ:
קמז וַתֹּאמֶר רִבְקָה אֶל־יַעֲקֹב בְּנָהּ לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה שָׁמַעְתִּי אֶת־אָבִיךָ
מְדַבֵּר אֶל־עֵשָׂו אָחִיךָ לֵאמֹר: קמח הָבִיאָה לִי צַיִד וַעֲשֵׂה לִי מַטְעַמִּים
וְאֹכֵלָה וַאֲבָרֶכְךָ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לִפְנֵי מוֹתִי: קמט וְעַתָּה בְּנִי שְׁמַע בְּקֹלִי
לַאֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֹתָךְ: קנ לֵךְ־נָא אֶל־הַצֹּאן וְקַח־לִי מִשָּׁם שְׁנֵי
גְדָיֵי עִזִּים טוֹבִים וְאֶעֱשֶׂה אֹתָם מַטְעַמִּים לְאָבִיךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר אָהֵב:
קנא וְהֵבֵאתָ לְאָבִיךָ וְאָכָל בַּעֲבוּר אֲשֶׁר יְבָרֶכְךָ לִפְנֵי מוֹתוֹ: קנב וַתֹּאמֶר
רִבְקָה אֶל־יַעֲקֹב בְּנָהּ לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה שָׁמַעְתִּי אֶת־אָבִיךָ מְדַבֵּר אֶל־עֵשָׂו
אָחִיךָ לֵאמֹר: קנג הָבִיאָה לִי צַיִד וַעֲשֵׂה לִי מַטְעַמִּים וְאֹכֵלָה וַאֲבָרֶכְךָ
ל

11 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.

12 He said, "O God! The God of my master Avraham, please let something happen to me today and do kindness to my master, Avraham. 13 Look, I am standing by the water well. The daughters of this city's residents are coming out to draw water. 14 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."

15 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. 16 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.

17 (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."

18 She said, "Drink, sir." She quickly took down her pitcher (from her shoulder) into her hand, and gave him a drink. 19 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)."

20 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.

לָדַעַת הַהִצְלִיחַ יְהוָה דַּרְכּוֹ אִם־לֹא: כב וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר כִּלּוּ
הַגְּמַלִּים לִשְׁתּוֹת וַיִּקַּח הָאִישׁ נֶזֶם זָהָב בֶּקַע מִשְׁקָלוֹ וּשְׁנֵי
צְמִידִים עַל־יָדֶיהָ עֲשָׂרָה זָהָב מִשְׁקָלָם: כג וַיֹּאמֶר בַּת־מִי אָתְּ
הַגִּידִי נָא לִי הֲיֵשׁ בֵּית־אָבִיךְ מָקוֹם לָנוּ לָלִין: כד וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו
בַּת־בְּתוּאֵל אָנֹכִי בֶּן־מִלְכָּה אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה לְנָחוֹר: כה וַתֹּאמֶר
אֵלָיו גַּם־תֶּבֶן גַּם־מִסְפּוֹא רַב עִמָּנוּ גַּם־מָקוֹם לָלוּן: כו וַיִּקֹּד
הָאִישׁ וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ לַיהוָֹה: [רביעי] כז וַיֹּאמֶר בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲדֹנִי
אַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־עָזַב חַסְדּוֹ וַאֲמִתּוֹ מֵעִם אֲדֹנִי אָנֹכִי בַּדֶּרֶךְ
נָחַנִי יְהוָה בֵּית אֲחֵי אֲדֹנִי: כח וַתָּרָץ *הַנַּעֲרָ וַתַּגֶּד לְבֵית אִמָּהּ
כַּדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה: כט וּלְרִבְקָה אָח וּשְׁמוֹ לָבָן וַיָּרָץ לָבָן
אֶל־הָאִישׁ הַחוּצָה אֶל־הָעָיִן: ל וַיְהִי | כִּרְאֹת אֶת־הַנֶּזֶם
וְאֶת־הַצְּמִדִים עַל־יְדֵי אֲחֹתוֹ וּכְשָׁמְעוֹ אֶת־דִּבְרֵי רִבְקָה אֲחֹתוֹ
לֵאמֹר כֹּה־דִבֶּר אֵלַי הָאִישׁ וַיָּבֹא אֶל־הָאִישׁ וְהִנֵּה עֹמֵד
עַל־הַגְּמַלִּים עַל־הָעָיִן: לא וַיֹּאמֶר בּוֹא בְרוּךְ יְהוָה לָמָּה תַעֲמֹד
בַּחוּץ וְאָנֹכִי פִּנִּיתִי הַבַּיִת וּמָקוֹם לַגְּמַלִּים: לב וַיָּבֵא הָאִישׁ
הַבַּיְתָה וַיְפַתַּח הַגְּמַלִּים וַיִּתֵּן תֶּבֶן וּמִסְפּוֹא לַגְּמַלִּים וּמַיִם

הַאַצְלַח יְיָ אָרְחֵיהּ אִם לָא: כב וַהֲוָה כַּד
סַפִּיקוּ נַמְלַיָּא לְמִשְׁתֵי וּנְסֵיב גַּבְרָא קָדָשָׁא
דְּדַהֲבָא תְּקָלָא מִתְקָלֵיהּ וּתְרֵין שִׁירִין עַל
יְדָהָא מַתַּקַל עֲשַׂר סַלְעִין דְּדַהֲבָא מַתַּקַלְהוֹן:
כג וַאֲמַר בַּת מַן אַתְּ חַוִי כְעַן לִי הַאִית בֵּית
אֲבוּךְ אֲתַר כְּשַׁר לָנָא לְמִבָּת: כד וַאֲמָרַת לֵיהּ
בַּת בְּתוּאֵל אֲנָא בַּר מִלְכָּא דְּיַלִּידַת לְנָחוֹר:
כה וַאֲמָרַת לֵיהּ אַף תִּבְנָא אַף כִּסְתָא סַגִּי
עִמָּנָא אַף אֲתַר כָּשַׁר לְמִבָּת: כו וּכְרַע גַּבְרָא
וּסְגִיד קֳדָם יְיָ: כז וַאֲמַר בְּרִיךְ יְיָ אֱלָהָא דְּרִבּוֹנִי
אַבְרָהָם דִּי לָא מְנַע טִיבוּתֵיהּ וְקוּשְׁטֵיהּ מִן
רִבּוֹנִי אֲנָא בְּאוֹרַח תַּקְנָא דַּבְּרַנִי יְיָ בֵּית אֲחוֹהִי
דְּרִבּוֹנִי: כח וּרְהָטַת עוּלֶמְתָא וְחַוִיאַת לְבֵית
אִמַּהּ כְּפִתְגָמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין: כט וּלְרִבְקָה אָחָא
וּשְׁמֵיהּ לָבָן וּרְהַט לָבָן לְוַת גַּבְרָא לְבָרָא לְוַת
עֵינָא: ל וַהֲוָה כַּד חֲזָא יַת קָדָשָׁא וְיַת שֵׁירָיָא
עַל יְדֵי אֲחָתֵיהּ וְכַד שְׁמַע יַת פִּתְגָמֵי רִבְקָה
אֲחָתֵיהּ לְמֵימָר כְּדֵין מַלִּיל עִמִּי גַּבְרָא וַאֲתָא
לְוַת גַּבְרָא וְהָא קָאִים עִלָּוֵי נַמְלַיָּא עַל עֵינָא:
לא וַאֲמַר עוּל בְּרִיכָא דַיְיָ לְמָא אַתְּ קָאֵים
בְּבָרָא וַאֲנָא פַּנֵּיתִי בֵּיתָא וַאֲתַר כָּשַׁר לְנַמְלַיָּא:
לב וְעַאל גַּבְרָא לְבֵיתָא וּשְׁרָא נַמְלַיָּא וִיהַב

* הנערה קרי

רס"י

כיסר, בחותו דרך שכייתי לריך. וכן כל בי"ת ולמ"ד וכ"ף כמשמעיס בדרשם כתיבה ומקודיס בפת"ח, מדבריס בדבר הפשוט שמזכר כבר במקום אחר, או שכוח מבורר ויכר בחיזו כוח מדבר: **(כח) לבית אמה.** דרך הנשיס כיתה, לביות לכן בית ליצד בו למלכתן, ואין כצת מגדת חלת לאמה: **(כט) וירץ.** למה רן ועל מה רן, ויכי כרחות את הנזם, אמר, עשיר הוא זה, ונתן עיניו בממון: **(ל) על הגמלים.** לשמרן, כמו וכוא עומד עליכס[3]. לשמשס: **(לא) פניתי הבית.** מעבודת אלילים: **(לב) ויפתח.** כתיר זמס שלכס[4], שביה סותס את פיכס שלא ירעו בדרך בשדות אחריס:

בלשון שתיה: משתאה לה. משתומס עליה, כמו אמרי לי אחי הוא[1], וכמו **וישתלו** אנשי המקום לאשתו[2]: **(כב) בקע.** רמז לשקלי ישראל, בקע לגלגלת: **ושני צמידים.** רמז לשני לוחות מלומדות: **עשרה זהב משקלם.** רמז לעשרת הדברות שבהן: **(כג) ויאמר בת מי את.** לאחר שנתן לה שאלה, לפי שהיה בטוח בזכותו של אברהם שהגליח הקב"ה דרכו: **ללין.** ליגה אחת, לין שם דבר, והיא אמרה ללון ליומת: **(כד) בת בתואל.** כשיצתו על רשעון רשעון ועל אחרון אחרון: **(כה) מספוא.** כל מאכל הגמלים קרוי מספוא, כגון תבן ושעוריס: **(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."

1 בראשית כ, יג 2 שם כו, ז 3 שם יח, ח 4 ב"ר ס, ח

(water) for all his camels. [21] *The man was amazed by her. He (observed her) silently to know whether God had led his way to success or not.*

[22] *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.* [23] *(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?"*

[24] *She said to him, "I am the daughter of Besu'el, the son born to Milcah and Nachor."* [25] *(In response to the second question,) she said to him, "We have plenty of straw and fodder and also a place to stay."*

[26] *The man knelt and prostrated himself to God.*

FOURTH READING

[27] *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!"*

Eliezer Recounts the Story

24:28 *The girl ran, and she told her mother, (who was sitting in her work)-house, what had happened.* [29] *Rivkah had a brother whose name was Lavan. Lavan ran to the man outside by the fountain (because)* [30] *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. [31] *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?"*

[32] *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.* [33] *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. 99*ff.*)

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)

לְרַחְצָ֑ן רַגְלָ֥יו וְרַגְלֵ֖י הָאֲנָשִׁ֥ים אֲשֶׁר אִתּֽוֹ׃ לג וַיִּשֶׂם [ק׳ וַיּוּשָׂם] לְפָנָ֣יו
לֶאֱכֹ֔ל וַיֹּ֖אמֶר לֹ֣א אֹכַ֑ל עַ֚ד אִם־דִּבַּ֣רְתִּי דְבָרָ֔י וַיֹּ֥אמֶר דַּבֵּֽר׃
לד וַיֹּ֣אמֶר עֶ֣בֶד אַבְרָהָ֣ם אָנֹֽכִי׃ לה וַיהוָ֞ה בֵּרַ֣ךְ אֶת־אֲדֹנִ֣י מְאֹ֗ד
וַיִּגְדָּ֔ל וַיִּתֶּן־לוֹ֙ צֹ֣אן וּבָקָ֔ר וְכֶ֥סֶף וְזָהָ֖ב וַעֲבָדִ֣ם וּשְׁפָחֹ֑ת וּגְמַלִּ֖ים
וַחֲמֹרִֽים׃ לו וַתֵּ֤לֶד שָׂרָה֙ אֵ֣שֶׁת אֲדֹנִ֔י בֵּ֖ן לַאדֹנִ֑י אַחֲרֵ֣י זִקְנָתָ֔הּ
וַיִּתֶּן־לוֹ֖ אֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־לֽוֹ׃ לז וַיַּשְׁבִּעֵ֥נִי אֲדֹנִ֖י לֵאמֹ֑ר לֹֽא־תִקַּ֨ח
אִשָּׁ֜ה לִבְנִ֗י מִבְּנ֤וֹת הַֽכְּנַעֲנִי֙ אֲשֶׁ֣ר אָנֹכִ֣י יֹשֵׁ֔ב בְּאַרְצֽוֹ׃ לח אִם־לֹ֗א
אֶל־בֵּ֤ית אָבִי֙ תֵּלֵ֔ךְ וְאֶל־מִשְׁפַּחְתִּ֖י וְלָקַחְתָּ֥ אִשָּׁ֖ה לִבְנִֽי׃
לט וָאֹמַ֖ר אֶל־אֲדֹנִ֑י אֻלַ֛י לֹא־תֵלֵ֥ךְ הָאִשָּׁ֖ה אַחֲרָֽי׃ מ וַיֹּ֣אמֶר אֵלַ֔י
יְהוָ֗ה אֲשֶׁר־הִתְהַלַּ֤כְתִּי לְפָנָיו֙ יִשְׁלַ֣ח מַלְאָכ֣וֹ אִתָּ֔ךְ וְהִצְלִ֥יחַ
דַּרְכֶּ֖ךָ וְלָקַחְתָּ֥ אִשָּׁ֛ה לִבְנִ֖י מִמִּשְׁפַּחְתִּ֥י וּמִבֵּ֖ית אָבִֽי׃ מא אָ֚ז תִּנָּקֶ֔ה
מֵאָלָ֖תִי כִּ֣י תָבֹ֑וא אֶל־מִשְׁפַּחְתִּ֔י וְאִם־לֹ֥א יִתְּנ֖וּ לָ֑ךְ וְהָיִ֖יתָ נָקִ֥י
מֵאָלָתִֽי׃ מב וָאָבֹ֣א הַיּ֔וֹם אֶל־הָעַ֖יִן וָאֹמַ֑ר יְהוָ֞ה אֱלֹהֵ֣י אֲדֹנִ֗י
אַבְרָהָ֛ם אִם־יֶשְׁךָ־נָ֥א מַצְלִ֖יחַ דַּרְכִּ֥י אֲשֶׁ֖ר אָנֹכִ֥י הֹלֵ֖ךְ עָלֶֽיהָ׃
מג הִנֵּ֣ה אָנֹכִ֔י נִצָּ֖ב עַל־עֵ֣ין הַמָּ֑יִם וְהָיָ֡ה הָעַלְמָה֩ הַיֹּצֵ֨את לִשְׁאֹ֜ב
וְאָמַרְתִּ֣י אֵלֶ֗יהָ הַשְׁקִינִי־נָ֥א מְעַט־מַ֛יִם מִכַּדֵּֽךְ׃ מד וְאָמְרָ֥ה אֵלַ֖י
גַּם־אַתָּ֣ה שְׁתֵ֑ה וְגַ֣ם לִגְמַלֶּ֔יךָ אֶשְׁאָ֕ב הִ֥וא הָאִשָּׁ֖ה אֲשֶׁר־הֹכִ֣יחַ
יְהוָ֔ה לְבֶ֥ן אֲדֹנִֽי׃ מה אֲנִי֙ טֶ֣רֶם אֲכַלֶּ֔ה לְדַבֵּ֖ר אֶל־לִבִּ֑י וְהִנֵּ֣ה

תִּבְנָ֗א וְכִפְתָּא֙ לְנַמְלַיָּ֣א וּמַיָּ֔א לְאַסְחָאָ֖ה
רַגְלְוֹהִ֥י וְרַגְלֵ֖י גּוּבְרַיָּ֑א דִּ֥י עִמֵּ֖יהּ׃ לג וְשַׁוְיָ֣ו
קֳדָמְוֹהִ֥י לְמֵיכַ֖ל וַאֲמַ֣ר לָ֑א אֵיכוֹל֙ עַ֣ד דִּי
אֲמַלֵּ֣יל פִּתְגָמַ֔י וַאֲמַ֖ר מַלֵּ֑יל׃ לד וַאֲמַ֣ר עַבְדָּ֔א
דְּאַבְרָהָ֖ם אֲנָֽא׃ לה וַיְ֠י בָּרִ֨יךְ יַת֙ רִבּוֹנִ֣י לַחֲדָ֔א
וּרְבָ֣א וִיהַ֔ב לֵ֥יהּ עָ֖אן וְתוֹרִ֑ין וּכְסַ֥ף וּדְהַ֛ב
וְעַבְדִּ֥ין וְאַמְהָ֖ן וְגַמְלִ֥ין וַחֲמָרִֽין׃ לו וְיָלִ֣דַת
שָׂרָ֞ה אִ֤תַּת רִבּוֹנִי֙ בַּ֣ר לְרִבּוֹנִ֔י בָּתַ֖ר דְּסִיבַ֑ת
וִיהַ֥ב לֵ֛יהּ יַת כָּל֥ דִּי לֵ֖יהּ׃ לז וְקַיֶּ֥ם עָלַ֛י רִבּוֹנִ֖י
לְמֵימַ֑ר לָ֣א תִסַּ֤ב אִתְּתָא֙ לִבְרִ֣י מִבְּנָ֣ת כְּנַעֲנָאָ֔ה
דִּ֥י אֲנָ֖א יָתִ֥יב בְּאַרְעֵֽיהּ׃ לח אֱלָהֵ֣ין לְבֵ֔ית אַבָּ֖א
תֵּיזֵ֑יל וּלְזַרְעִיתִ֥י וְתִסַּ֖ב אִתְּתָ֥א לִבְרִֽי׃
לט וַאֲמַ֥רִית לְרִבּוֹנִ֖י מְאִ֣ים לָ֑א תֵּיתֵ֥י אִתְּתָ֖א
בַּתְרָֽי׃ מ וַאֲמַ֣ר לִ֔י יְיָ֗ דִּ֣י פָלְחִ֤ית קֳדָמוֹהִי֙ יִשְׁלַ֣ח
מַלְאֲכֵ֔יהּ עִמָּ֖ךְ וְיַצְלַ֣ח אָרְחָ֑ךְ וְתִסַּ֖ב אִתְּתָ֥א
לִבְרִ֛י מִזַּרְעִיתִ֖י וּמִבֵּ֥ית אַבָּֽא׃ מא בְּכֵ֗ן תְּהֵ֣א
זַכַּ֔אי מִמּוֹמָתִ֖י אֲרֵ֣י תֵּיתֵ֔ךְ לְזַרְעִיתִ֖י וְאִם־לָ֥א
יִתְּנ֖וּן לָ֑ךְ וּתְהֵ֥י זַכַּ֖אי מִמּוֹמָתִֽי׃ מב וַאֲתֵ֣יתִי
יוֹמָ֔א דֵּ֖ין לְעֵינָ֑א וַאֲמַ֗רִית יְיָ֞ אֱלָהֵ֣ הּ דְּרִבּוֹנִ֜י
אַבְרָהָ֗ם אִם־אִ֣ית כְּעַן֮ רַעֲוָא֒ קֳדָמָךְ֙ לְאַצְלָחָ֔א
אָרְחִ֖י דִּ֣י אֲנָ֣א אָזֵ֔יל עֲלָֽהּ׃ מג הָ֚א אֲנָ֣א קָאֵ֔ם
עַל֙ עֵינָ֣א דְמַיָּ֔א וּתְהֵ֕י עוּלֶמְתָּ֖א דְּתִפּ֣וֹק לְמִמְלֵ֑י
וְאֵימַ֣ר לָ֔הּ אַשְׁקִינִי֙ כְּעַן֙ זְעֵ֣יר מַ֔יָּא מִקּוּלְתִ֖יךְ׃
מד וְתֵימַ֣ר לִ֔י אַף֩ אַתְּ֨ שְׁתִ֜י וְאַף֙ לְגַמְלָ֔יךְ אֶמְלֵ֖י
הִ֣יא אִתְּתָ֗א דְּזַמִּ֤ין יְיָ֙ לְבַ֣ר רִבּוֹנִ֔י׃ מה אֲנָ֣א עַד

(לג) **עד אם דברתי.** כרי חס משמש בלשון חסר וכלשון כי, כמו עד כי יבא שילה[1], זכו שאמרו חז"ל כי משמש בד' לשונות, וכאחד מי, והוא חס: (לו) **ויתן לו את כל אשר לו.** שטר מתנה כראה לכסף: (לז) **לא תקח אשה לבני מבנות הכנעני.** חס לא תלך תחלה אל בית חמי ולא תאכל לחמך: (לט) **אלי לא תלך האשה.** חלי כתיב, בת כיתה לו לחליעזר, וכיה מחזר למלוח עילה שיאמר לו חברכס לפנות חליו להשיאו בתו, אמר לו חברכס,

צני גרוך ואתה חרור, ואין חרור מדבק בגרוך: (מג) **ואבא היום.** כיום יצאתי וכיום בחתי, מכאן שקפצה לו הארץ. אמר רבי אחא, יפה שיחתן של עבדי חבות לפני המקום מתורתן של בניס, שכרי פרשה של אליעזר כפולה בתורה, והרבה גופי תורה לא נתנו אלא ברמיזה: (מד) **גם אתה.** גס לרבות מנשים שעמו: **הוביח.** ביכר וכוזיע, וכן כל כוכחה שבמקרא, ברור דבר: (מה) **טרם אבלה.** טרם שאני מכלה, וכן כל לשון כווה, פעמים שהוא מדבר

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 they 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.

1 בראשית מט, י

[34] He said, "I am Avraham's servant. [35] God blessed my master tremendously, and he became great. (God) gave him sheep, cattle, silver, gold, manservants, maidservants, camels and donkeys. [36] 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."

[37] "My master made me swear, saying, 'Do not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Cana'anites, in whose land I dwell. [38] Instead, you must go to my father's house, to my family, and take a wife for my son.'

[39] "I said to my master, 'What if the woman will not want to follow me?'"

[40] "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. [41] 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.'"

[42] "So, I came today to the well, and I said, 'God, God of my master Avraham, please lead my way to success! [43] 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.' [44] 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.'"

[45] "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 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.).

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

רִבְקָה יֹצֵאת וְכַדָּהּ עַל־שִׁכְמָהּ וַתֵּרֶד הָעֲיָנָה וַתִּשְׁאַב וָאֹמַר
אֵלֶיהָ הַשְׁקִינִי נָא: מו וַתְּמַהֵר וַתּוֹרֶד כַּדָּהּ מֵעָלֶיהָ וַתֹּאמֶר
שְׁתֵּה וְגַם־גְּמַלֶּיךָ אַשְׁקֶה וָאֶשְׁתְּ וְגַם הַגְּמַלִּים הִשְׁקָתָה:
מז וָאֶשְׁאַל אֹתָהּ וָאֹמַר בַּת־מִי אָתְּ וַתֹּאמֶר בַּת־בְּתוּאֵל
בֶּן־נָחוֹר אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה־לּוֹ מִלְכָּה וָאָשִׂם הַנֶּזֶם עַל־אַפָּהּ
וְהַצְּמִידִים עַל־יָדֶיהָ: מח וָאֶקֹּד וָאֶשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לַיהוָה וָאֲבָרֵךְ
אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲדֹנִי אַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר הִנְחַנִי בְּדֶרֶךְ אֱמֶת לָקַחַת
אֶת־בַּת־אֲחִי אֲדֹנִי לִבְנוֹ: מט וְעַתָּה אִם־יֶשְׁכֶם עֹשִׂים חֶסֶד
וֶאֱמֶת אֶת־אֲדֹנִי הַגִּידוּ לִי וְאִם־לֹא הַגִּידוּ לִי וְאֶפְנֶה עַל־יָמִין
אוֹ עַל־שְׂמֹאל: נ וַיַּעַן לָבָן וּבְתוּאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ מֵיְהוָה יָצָא הַדָּבָר
לֹא נוּכַל דַּבֵּר אֵלֶיךָ רַע אוֹ־טוֹב: נא הִנֵּה־רִבְקָה לְפָנֶיךָ קַח
וָלֵךְ וּתְהִי אִשָּׁה לְבֶן־אֲדֹנֶיךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה: נב וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר
שָׁמַע עֶבֶד אַבְרָהָם אֶת־דִּבְרֵיהֶם וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אַרְצָה לַיהוָה: [חמישי]
נג וַיּוֹצֵא הָעֶבֶד כְּלֵי־כֶסֶף וּכְלֵי זָהָב וּבְגָדִים וַיִּתֵּן לְרִבְקָה
וּמִגְדָּנֹת נָתַן לְאָחִיהָ וּלְאִמָּהּ: נד וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּשְׁתּוּ הוּא וְהָאֲנָשִׁים
אֲשֶׁר־עִמּוֹ וַיָּלִינוּ וַיָּקוּמוּ בַבֹּקֶר וַיֹּאמֶר שַׁלְּחֻנִי לַאדֹנִי: נה וַיֹּאמֶר
אָחִיהָ וְאִמָּהּ תֵּשֶׁב *הַנַּעֲרָ אִתָּנוּ יָמִים אוֹ עָשׂוֹר אַחַר תֵּלֵךְ:
נו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם אַל־תְּאַחֲרוּ אֹתִי וַיהוָה הִצְלִיחַ דַּרְכִּי שַׁלְּחוּנִי

לָא שֵׁיצֵיתִי לְמַלָּא עִם לִבִּי וְהָא רִבְקָה
נְפָקַת וְקוּלְתָהּ עַל כַּתְפָּהּ וּנְחָתַת לְעֵינָא
וּמְלַת וַאֲמָרִית לָהּ אַשְׁקִינִי כְעַן: מו וְאוֹחְיַאת
וַאֲחָתַת קוּלְתָהּ מִנָּהּ וַאֲמָרַת אֵשְׁתְּ וְאַף
גַּמְלָיִךְ אַשְׁקֵי וּשְׁתֵיתִי וְאַף גַּמְלַיָּא אַשְׁקִיאַת:
מז וּשְׁאֵלִית יָתָהּ וַאֲמָרִית בַּת מַן אַתְּ וַאֲמָרַת
בַּת בְּתוּאֵל בַּר נָחוֹר דְּיַלִּידַת לֵיהּ מִלְכָּה
וְשַׁוִּיתִי קָדָשָׁא עַל אַפָּהּ וְשֵׁירָיָא עַל יְדָהָא:
מח וּכְרָעִית וּסְגָדִית קֳדָם יְיָ וּבָרִיכִית יַת יְיָ
אֱלָהֵהּ דְּרִבּוֹנִי אַבְרָהָם דִּי דַבְּרַנִי בְּאוֹרַח
קְש׋ט לְמִסַּב יַת בַּת אֲחוּהִי דְרִבּוֹנִי לִבְרֵיהּ:
מט וּכְעַן אִם אִיתֵיכוֹן עָבְדִין טִיבוּ וּקְש׋ט עִם
רִבּוֹנִי חַוּוֹ לִי וְאִם לָא חַוּוֹ לִי וְאֶתְפְּנֵי עַל
יַמִּינָא אוֹ עַל שְׂמָאלָא: נ וַאֲתֵיב לָבָן וּבְתוּאֵל
וַאֲמָרוּ מִן קֳדָם יְיָ נְפַק פִּתְגָמָא לֵית אֲנַחְנָא
יָכְלִין לְמַלָּלָא עִמָּךְ בִּישׁ אוֹ טָב: נא הָא רִבְקָה
קֳדָמָךְ דְּבַר וְאִיזֵיל וּתְהֵא אִתְּתָא לְבַר רִבּוֹנָךְ
כְּמָא דִי מַלִּיל יְיָ: נב וַהֲוָה כַּד שְׁמַע עַבְדָּא
דְּאַבְרָהָם יַת פִּתְגָמֵיהוֹן וּסְגִיד עַל אַרְעָא קֳדָם
יְיָ: נג וְאַפֵּיק עַבְדָּא מָנִין דְּכַסַף וּמָנִין דְּדָהַב
וּלְבוּשִׁין וְיַהַב לְרִבְקָה וּמְגַדָּנִין יְהַב לַאֲחוּהָא
וּלְאִמָּהּ: נד וַאֲכָלוּ וּשְׁתִיאוּ הוּא וְגוּבְרַיָּא דִי
עִמֵּיהּ וּבִיתוּ וְקָמוּ בְצַפְרָא וַאֲמַר שַׁלְּחוּנִי לְוָת
רִבּוֹנִי: נה וַאֲמַר אֲחוּהָא וְאִמָּהּ תִּיתֵב
עוּלְמְתָא עִמָּנָא עִדַּן בְּעִדַּן אוֹ עַשְׂרָא יַרְחִין
בָּתַר כֵּן תֵּיזֵיל: נו וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן לָא תְאַחֲרוּן יָתִי

* הנערה קרי

רס"י

בלשון עבר, כמו טרם כליתי, ופעמיס שמדבר בלשון עתיד, כמו כי חמר חיוב, הרי לשון עבר, ככה יעשה חיוב[1] הרי לשון עתיד, ופירוש שניכם לשון כוזב, כי חומר היה חיוב חלו חטאו בני וגו' וכיה עושה כך: (מז) **ואשאל ואשים.** שהכי הוה סדר, שהרי הוא תחלה נתן ואחר כך שאל, אלא שלא יתפשוהו בדבריו ויאמרו, היאך נתת לה ועדיין חיוך יודע מי היא: (מט) **על ימין.** מצנעת ישמעאל: **על שמאל.** מצנעת לוט, שהיה יושב לשמאלו של אברהם[2]: (נ) **ויען לבן ובתואל.** רשע היה, וקפץ להשיב לפני חניו: **לא נוכל דבר אליך.** למאן דהכי הוה, לא על ידי תשובת דבר רע ולא על ידי תשובת דבר הגון, לפי שניכר שהכי יצא מדבר לפי דבריך שזימנת לך: (נב) **וישתחו ארצה.** מכאן שמודים על בשורה טובה[3]: (נג) **ומגדנות.** לשון מגדיש, שהכניס עמו מיני פירות של ארץ ישראל: (נד) **וילינו.** כל לינה שמקרקע לינת לילה אחד: (נה) **ויאמר אחיה ואמה.** ובתואל היכן היה, הוא היה רוצה לעכב ושם מלאך ומיתתו: **ימים.** שנה[4] כמו ימים תהיה גמולתו[5] שכך נותנין לבתולה זמן י"ב חדש, לפרנס את עלמה בתכשיטים: **או עשור.** י' חדשים. ואם תאמר ימים ממש, אין דרך המבקשים לבקש דבר מועט, ואם לא תרצה, תן לנו מרובה מזה:

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

1 איוב א, ה 2 ב"ר ס, ט 3 שם ס, ו 4 כתובות נז: 5 ויקרא כה, נד

shoulder, went down to the well and drew water. I said to her, 'Please give me a drink.' [46] *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."*

[47] *"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."

[48] *"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."*

[49] *"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 *Lavan and Besu'el replied, saying, "This thing has come from God! We cannot refuse you (for any reason) either bad or good.* [51] *Rivkah is now yours. Take her and leave, and let her be a wife for your master's son, as God has spoken."*

[52] *When Avraham's servant heard their words, he prostrated himself on the ground to God.*

FIFTH READING [53] *(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.* [54] *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."

[55] *(Rivkah's) brother and mother said, "Let the girl stay with us a year or ten (months). Afterwards, she will go."*

[56] *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* 36:8*ff*).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 90*ff*.)

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

וְאֵלְכָה לַאדֹנָי: נז וַיֹּאמְרוּ נִקְרָא *לַנַּעֲרָ וְנִשְׁאֲלָה אֶת־פִּיהָ:
נח וַיִּקְרְאוּ לְרִבְקָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלֶיהָ הֲתֵלְכִי עִם־הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה
וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלֵךְ: נט וַיְשַׁלְּחוּ אֶת־רִבְקָה אֲחֹתָם וְאֶת־מֵנִקְתָּהּ
וְאֶת־עֶבֶד אַבְרָהָם וְאֶת־אֲנָשָׁיו: ס וַיְבָרְכוּ אֶת־רִבְקָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ
לָהּ אֲחֹתֵנוּ אַתְּ הֱיִי לְאַלְפֵי רְבָבָה וְיִירַשׁ זַרְעֵךְ אֵת שַׁעַר
שֹׂנְאָיו: סא וַתָּקָם רִבְקָה וְנַעֲרֹתֶיהָ וַתִּרְכַּבְנָה עַל־הַגְּמַלִּים
וַתֵּלַכְנָה אַחֲרֵי הָאִישׁ וַיִּקַּח הָעֶבֶד אֶת־רִבְקָה וַיֵּלֶךְ: סב וְיִצְחָק
בָּא מִבּוֹא בְּאֵר לַחַי רֹאִי וְהוּא יוֹשֵׁב בְּאֶרֶץ הַנֶּגֶב: סג וַיֵּצֵא
יִצְחָק לָשׂוּחַ בַּשָּׂדֶה לִפְנוֹת עֶרֶב וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיַּרְא וְהִנֵּה גְמַלִּים
בָּאִים: סד וַתִּשָּׂא רִבְקָה אֶת־עֵינֶיהָ וַתֵּרֶא אֶת־יִצְחָק וַתִּפֹּל

* לנערה קרי

וַיְ אַצְלַח אָרְחִי שַׁלְּחוּנִי וְאֵיהַךְ לְוַת רִבּוֹנִי:
נז וַאֲמָרוּ נִקְרֵי לְעוּלְמְתָא וְנִשְׁמַע מַה דְּהִיא
אָמְרָה: נח וּקְרוֹ לְרִבְקָה וַאֲמָרוּ לָהּ הֲתֵיזְלִי
עִם גַּבְרָא הָדֵין וַאֲמָרַת אֵיזִיל: נט וְשַׁלְּחוּ יַת
רִבְקָה אֲחַתְהוֹן וְיַת מֵנִקְתָּהּ וְיַת עַבְדָּא
דְּאַבְרָהָם וְיַת גַּבְרוֹהִי: ס וּבָרִיכוּ יַת רִבְקָה
וַאֲמָרוּ לָהּ אֲחָתָנָא אַתְּ הֲוֵי לְאַלְפִין וּלְרִבְוָן
וְיֵרְתוּן בְּנַיְכִי יַת קִרְוֵי סַנְאֵיהוֹן: סא וְקָמַת
רִבְקָה וְעוּלְמְתָהָא וּרְכִיבָא עַל גַּמְלַיָּא וַאֲזָלוּ
בָּתַר גַּבְרָא וּדְבַר עַבְדָּא יַת רִבְקָה וַאֲזַל:
סב וְיִצְחָק עַל (אָתָא) בְּמֵיתוֹהִי מִבֵּירָא דְּמַלְאָךְ
קַיָּמָא אִתְחֲזִי עֲלָהּ וְהוּא יָתִיב בַּאֲרַע דָּרוֹמָא:
סג וּנְפַק יִצְחָק לְצַלָּאָה בְּחַקְלָא לְמִפְנֵי רַמְשָׁא
וּזְקַף עֵינוֹהִי וַחֲזָא וְהָא גַּמְלַיָּא אָתָן: סד וּזְקַפַת
רִבְקָה יַת עֵינָהָא וַחֲזַת יַת יִצְחָק וְאִתְרְכִינַת

רש"י

(נז) ונשאלה את פיה. מכאן שאין משיאין את האשה אלא מדעתה[1]:
(נח) ותאמר אלך. מעצמי ואף אם אינכם רוצים: **(ס) את היי לאלפי רבבה.** את וזרעך תקבלו אותה ברכה שנאמר לאברהם זכר למוריה, ברכה ארבה את זרעך וגו', יכי רגון שיהא אותו הזרע ממך ולא מאשה אחרת: **(סא) מבוא באר לחי ראי.** שהלך להביא הגר לאברהם מדיו שנאמר[2]: **וישב בארץ הנגב.** קרוב לאותו באר, שנאמר ויסע משם

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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?

1 ב"ר ס, יב 2 שם ס, יד 3 שם 4 תהלים קב, א 5 ב"ר ס, טו 6 שמואל-ב כ,י 7 תהלים לז, כד

[57] *They said, "Let us call the girl and ask her."*

[58] *They called Rivkah, and said to her, "Will you go with this man?"*

She said, "I will go (whether you like it or not)!"

[59] *So they sent away their sister Rivkah, with her nurse, Avraham's servant and his men.* [60] *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)."*

[61] *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 *Yitzchak 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.* [63] *Yitzchak went out to pray in the field towards evening. He looked up and saw—look!—camels were approaching.*

[64] *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. 65*ff.*)

מֵעַל הַגָּמָל: סה וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָעֶבֶד מִי־הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה הַהֹלֵךְ
בַּשָּׂדֶה לִקְרָאתֵנוּ וַיֹּאמֶר הָעֶבֶד הוּא אֲדֹנִי וַתִּקַּח הַצָּעִיף
וַתִּתְכָּס: סו וַיְסַפֵּר הָעֶבֶד לְיִצְחָק אֵת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה:
סז וַיְבִאֶהָ יִצְחָק הָאֹהֱלָה שָׂרָה אִמּוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת־רִבְקָה וַתְּהִי־לוֹ
לְאִשָּׁה וַיֶּאֱהָבֶהָ וַיִּנָּחֶם יִצְחָק אַחֲרֵי אִמּוֹ: פ [ששי] כה א וַיֹּסֶף
אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח אִשָּׁה וּשְׁמָהּ קְטוּרָה: ב וַתֵּלֶד לוֹ אֶת־זִמְרָן
וְאֶת־יָקְשָׁן וְאֶת־מְדָן וְאֶת־מִדְיָן וְאֶת־יִשְׁבָּק וְאֶת־שׁוּחַ:
ג וְיָקְשָׁן יָלַד אֶת־שְׁבָא וְאֶת־דְּדָן וּבְנֵי דְדָן הָיוּ אַשּׁוּרִם

מֵעַל גַּמְלָא: סה וַאֲמָרַת לְעַבְדָּא מַאן גַּבְרָא
דֵּיכִי דְּמְהַלֵּךְ בְּחַקְלָא לְקַדָּמוּתָנָא וַאֲמַר עַבְדָּא
הוּא רִבּוֹנִי וּנְסֵיבַת עֵיפָא וְאִתְכַּסְיַאת:
סו וְאִשְׁתָּעֵי עַבְדָּא לְיִצְחָק יַת כָּל פִּתְגָמַיָּא דִּי
עֲבַד: סז וְאַעְלָהּ יִצְחָק לְמַשְׁכְּנָא וַחֲזָא וְהָא
תַקְנִין עוֹבָדָהָא כְּעוֹבָדֵי שָׂרָה אִמֵּיהּ וּנְסֵיב יַת
רִבְקָה וַהֲוָת לֵיהּ לְאִנְתּוּ וּרְחִימָהּ וְאִתְנַחַם
יִצְחָק בָּתַר דְּמִיתַת אִמֵּיהּ: א וְאוֹסִיף אַבְרָהָם
וּנְסֵיב אִתְּתָא וּשְׁמָהּ קְטוּרָה: ב וְיָלִידַת לֵיהּ
יַת זִמְרָן וְיַת יָקְשָׁן וְיַת מְדָן וְיַת מִדְיָן וְיַת
יִשְׁבָּק וְיַת שׁוּחַ: ג וְיָקְשָׁן אוֹלִיד יַת שְׁבָא וְיַת

רס"י

הקרקע: (סה) **ותתכס**. לשון ותתפעל, כמו ותקבר, ותסבר: (סו) **ויספר העבד**. גלה לו נסים שנעשו לו, שקפלה לו הארץ[1], ושנזדמנה לו רבקה בתפלתו: (סז) **האהלה שרה אמו**. ויבינה האהלה, וכי היה שרה חמו, כלומר ונעשית דוגמת שרה חמו, שכל זמן ששרה קיימת, היה נר דלוק מערב שבת לערב שבת, וברכה מצויה בעיסה, וענן קשור על האהל, ומשמתה

פסקו, וכשמתה רבקה חזרו, ב"ר[2]: **אחרי אמו**. דרך ארץ, כל זמן שחמו של מדם קיימת כרוך הוא אצלה, ומשמתה, הוא מתנחם בחמתו: (ח) **קטורה**. זו הגר, ונקראת קטורה על שם שנאים מעשיה כקטרת, ושקשרה פתחה, שלח נזדווגה למדם מיוס שפרשה מאברהם[3]: (ג) **אשורם ולטושם**. שם רחמי חומות[4]. ותרגוס של אונקלוס אין לי ליישבו על לשון המקרא. שפירש למשירין,

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:

a.) What forced *Rashi* to conclude that Rivkah's worthiness as a wife was proven to him through *miracles*, and not through her good deeds?

b.) At the literal level, if miraculous proof was indeed required, what led *Rashi* to believe that there were no less than *three* miracles?

c.) On the other hand, *Rashi* did not mention the fourth practice mentioned in the ***Midrash*** (welcoming the poor). Why? (See ***Gur Aryeh***)

d.) *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 הָאֹהֱלָה שָׂרָה אִמּוֹ ("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.),

1 ב"ר ס, טו 2 שם סז 3 שם סא, ד 4 שם ה

from the camel, [65] 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.

[66] The servant told Yitzchak about all the (miraculous) things that had been done (for him).

[67] 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 Sixth Reading

Avraham took another wife and her name was Keturah, (also known as Hagar). [2] She bore him Zimran, Yakshan, Medan, Midyan, Yishbak and Shu'ach.

[3] 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 (קְטוֹרֶת).

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 הָאֹהֱלָה שָׂרָה אִמּוֹ (and thus there were three miracles in all):

הָאֹהֱלָה ("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. 163*ff.*)

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. 174*ff.*)

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. 168*ff*).

וּלְטוּשִׁם וּלְאֻמִּים: ד וּבְנֵי מִדְיָן עֵיפָה וָעֵפֶר וַחֲנֹךְ וַאֲבִידָע
וְאֶלְדָּעָה כָּל־אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי קְטוּרָה: ה וַיִּתֵּן אַבְרָהָם אֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־
לוֹ לְיִצְחָק: ו וְלִבְנֵי הַפִּילַגְשִׁים אֲשֶׁר לְאַבְרָהָם נָתַן אַבְרָהָם
מַתָּנֹת וַיְשַׁלְּחֵם מֵעַל יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ בְּעוֹדֶנּוּ חַי קֵדְמָה אֶל־אֶרֶץ
קֶדֶם: ז וְאֵלֶּה יְמֵי שְׁנֵי־חַיֵּי אַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר־חָי מְאַת שָׁנָה
וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה וְחָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים: ח וַיִּגְוַע וַיָּמָת אַבְרָהָם בְּשֵׂיבָה
טוֹבָה זָקֵן וְשָׂבֵעַ וַיֵּאָסֶף אֶל־עַמָּיו: ט וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֹתוֹ יִצְחָק
וְיִשְׁמָעֵאל בָּנָיו אֶל־מְעָרַת הַמַּכְפֵּלָה אֶל־שְׂדֵה עֶפְרֹן בֶּן־צֹחַר
הַחִתִּי אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי מַמְרֵא: י הַשָּׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר־קָנָה אַבְרָהָם מֵאֵת
בְּנֵי־חֵת שָׁמָּה קֻבַּר אַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ: יא וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי מוֹת
אַבְרָהָם וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ וַיֵּשֶׁב יִצְחָק עִם־בְּאֵר
לַחַי רֹאִי: פ [שביעי] יב וְאֵלֶּה תֹּלְדֹת יִשְׁמָעֵאל בֶּן־אַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר
יָלְדָה הָגָר הַמִּצְרִית שִׁפְחַת שָׂרָה לְאַבְרָהָם: יג וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת
בְּנֵי יִשְׁמָעֵאל בִּשְׁמֹתָם לְתוֹלְדֹתָם בְּכֹר יִשְׁמָעֵאל נְבָיֹת וְקֵדָר
וְאַדְבְּאֵל וּמִבְשָׂם: יד וּמִשְׁמָע וְדוּמָה וּמַשָּׂא: טו חֲדַד וְתֵימָא
יְטוּר נָפִישׁ וָקֶדְמָה: [מפטיר] טז אֵלֶּה הֵם בְּנֵי יִשְׁמָעֵאל וְאֵלֶּה
שְׁמוֹתָם בְּחַצְרֵיהֶם וּבְטִירֹתָם שְׁנֵים־עָשָׂר נְשִׂיאִם לְאֻמֹּתָם:
יז וְאֵלֶּה שְׁנֵי חַיֵּי יִשְׁמָעֵאל מְאַת שָׁנָה וּשְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה וְשֶׁבַע
שָׁנִים וַיִּגְוַע וַיָּמָת וַיֵּאָסֶף אֶל־עַמָּיו: יח וַיִּשְׁכְּנוּ מֵחֲוִילָה עַד־שׁוּר
אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי מִצְרַיִם בֹּאֲכָה אַשּׁוּרָה עַל־פְּנֵי כָל־אֶחָיו נָפָל:
פ פ פ

דְּדָן וּבְנֵי דְדָן הָיוּ לְמַשָּׁרְיָן וְלִשְׁכוּנִין וּלְנַגְוָן:
ד וּבְנֵי מִדְיָן עֵיפָה וְעֵפֶר וַחֲנוֹךְ וַאֲבִידָע וְאֶלְדָּעָה
כָּל אִלֵּין בְּנֵי קְטוּרָה: ה וְיָהַב אַבְרָהָם יַת כָּל
דִּי לֵיהּ לְיִצְחָק: ו וְלִבְנֵי לְחֵינָתָא דִּי לְאַבְרָהָם
יְהַב אַבְרָהָם מַתְּנָן וְשַׁלְּחִינוּן מֵעַל יִצְחָק בְּרֵיהּ
עַד דְּהוּא קָיֵם קְדוּמָא לַאֲרַע מַדִּינְחָא: ז וְאִלֵּין
יוֹמֵי שְׁנֵי חַיֵּי אַבְרָהָם דַּחֲיָא מְאָה וְשַׁבְעִין
וַחֲמֵשׁ שְׁנִין: ח וְאִתְנְגִיד וּמִית אַבְרָהָם בְּסֵיבוּ
טָבָא סִיב וּשְׂבַע וּמִתְכְּנֵישׁ לְעַמֵּיהּ:
ט וּקְבָרוּ יָתֵיהּ יִצְחָק וְיִשְׁמָעֵאל בְּנוֹהִי בְּמְעָרַת
כָּפֶלְתָּא בַּחֲקַל עֶפְרוֹן בַּר צוֹחַר חִתָּאָה דִּי עַל
אַפֵּי מַמְרָא: י חַקְלָא דִּי זְבַן אַבְרָהָם מִן בְּנֵי
חִתָּאָה תַּמָּן אִתְקְבַר אַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה אִתְּתֵיהּ:
יא וַהֲוָה בָּתַר דְּמִית אַבְרָהָם וּבָרִיךְ יְיָ יַת
יִצְחָק בְּרֵיהּ וִיתֵיב יִצְחָק עִם בֵּירָא דְמַלְאָךְ
קַיָמָא אִתְחֲזִי עֲלָהּ: יב וְאִלֵּין תּוֹלְדַת
יִשְׁמָעֵאל בַּר אַבְרָהָם דִּי יְלִידַת הָגָר מִצְרֵיתָא
אַמְתָא דְשָׂרָה לְאַבְרָהָם: יג וְאִלֵּין שְׁמָהַת בְּנֵי
יִשְׁמָעֵאל בְּשְׁמָהַתְהוֹן לְתוּלְדָתְהוֹן בּוּכְרָא
דְיִשְׁמָעֵאל נְבָיוֹת וְקֵדָר וְאַדְבְּאֵל וּמִבְשָׂם:
יד וּמִשְׁמָע וְדוּמָה וּמַשָּׂא: טו חֲדַד וְתֵימָא
יְטוּר נָפִישׁ וְקֶדְמָה: טז אִלֵּין אִנּוּן בְּנֵי יִשְׁמָעֵאל
וְאִלֵּין שְׁמָהַתְהוֹן בְּפַצְחֵיהוֹן וּבְכַרְכֵיהוֹן תְּרֵי
עֲשַׂר רַבְרְבִין לְאוּמֵיהוֹן: יז וְאִלֵּין שְׁנֵי חַיֵּי
יִשְׁמָעֵאל מְאָה וּתְלָתִין וּשְׁבַע שְׁנִין וְאִתְנְגִיד
וּמִית וְאִתְכְּנֵישׁ לְעַמֵּיהּ: יח וּשְׁרוֹ מֵחֲוִילָה עַד
חַגְרָא דִּי עַל אַפֵּי מִצְרַיִם מָטֵי לְאַתּוּר עַל אַפֵּי
כָּל אֲחוֹהִי שְׁרָא: פ פ פ

ק״ה פסוקים, יהוי״ע סימן.

רס״י

לשון מחנה, ומש תאמר שמיעו כן מפני הכל״ף שמיעה יסודית, כרי לנו תיבות שמין ברחמש מל״ך, ומתוספה מל״ך ברחמש, כמו חומת חנך, שהוא מן נכה רגליס, וכמו מסוך שמן, שהוא מן ורחצת וסכת: **ולטושם**. כש בעלי מחליס, כמתפזריס מנה ומנה, ומוסעיס היס בתחלי תפדנו, וכן הוא אומר ובנה נטועים על פני כל הארץ[1], שכן למ״ד ונו״ן מתחלפות זו בזו: (ה) **ויתן אברהם** וגו׳. אמר ר׳ נחמיה, ברכת דייתיקי נתן לו, שאמר לו הקב״ה לאברהם והיה ברכה, הברכות מסורות בידך לברך את מי שתרצה, ואברהם מסרם ליצחק: (ו) **הפילגשים**. חסר כתיב, שלש היתה שלש פלגש אחת[2], היא הגר, היא קטורה. נשים בכתובה. פלגשים בלא כתובה, כדאמרינן בסנהדרין[3] נשים ופלגשים דוד: **נתן אברהם מתנות**. פירש רבותינו[4], שם טומאה מסר להם. דבר אחר, מה שניתן לו על תורת שרה, ושאר מתנות שניתנו לו, הכל נתן להם, שלא רצה ליכנות מהם: (ז) **מאת שנה ושבעים שנה וחמש שנים**. בן ק׳ כתן ע׳, וכן ע׳ כתן כ׳ בלא חטא: (ט) **יצחק וישמעאל**. מכאן שהשר ישמעאל תשובה, והוליך את יצחק לפניו, והיא שיבה טובה שנאמר בתורה[5]: (יא) **ויהי אחרי מות אברהם ויברך** וגו׳. נחמו תנחומי אבלים[6]. דבר אחר, אף על פי שמסר הקדוש ברוך הוא את הברכות לאברהם, נתיירא ליברך את יעקב, מפני שהפה את עשו יוצא ממנו, אמר, יבא בעל הברכות ויברך את אשר ייעד בעיניו, ובא הקב״ה וברכו: (יג) **בשמותם לתולדותם**. סדר לידתן זה אחר זה: (טז) **בחצריהם**. כרכיס שאין להם חומה. ותרגומו בפצחיהון, שהם מפולחים, לשון פתיחה,

1 שמואל ל, טז 2 ב״ר מא, ד 3 דף כא. 4 שם צא. 5 ב״ר לח, יב 6 סוטה יד.

The sons of Dedan were Ashurim, Letushim, and Le'umim.

4 *The sons of Midyan were Aifah, Aifer, Chanoch, Avida and Elda'ah.*

All these were Keturah's descendants.

5 *Avraham gave all (the power of blessing) that he possessed to Yitzchak.* 6 *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 *This is the total of the years of Avraham's life that he lived: one hundred years, seventy years and five years.*

8 *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.* 9 *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,* 10 *the field that Avraham had bought from the sons of Cheis. Avraham and his wife Sarah were buried there.*

11 *After Avraham died, God blessed Yitzchak his son. Yitzchak lived near Be'er Lachai Ro'i.*

Yishma'el's Descendants

25:12 Seventh Reading *This is the descendants of Yishma'el the son of Avraham, whom Hagar the Egyptian—Sarah's maid—bore to Avraham:*

13 *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, Mivsam,* 14 *Mishma, Dumah, Masa,* 15 *Chadad,* Maftir *Teiyma, Yetur, Nafish, and Kaidmah.* 16 *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.*

17 *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.*

18 *(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

כמו פלחו ורננו[7]: **(יז) ואלה שני חיי ישמעאל וגו'.** לומר רבי חייא בר אבא, למה נמנו שנותיו של ישמעאל, כדי לייחס בהם שנותיו של יעקב, משנותיו של ישמעאל למדנו, שמשם יעקב בניה עבר י"ד שנה כשפירש מאביו, קודם שבא אליו לבן, שכרי כשפירש יעקב מאביו מת ישמעאל, שנאמר וילך עשו אל ישמעאל וגו', כמו שמפורש בסוף מגילה נקראת[8]:

ויגוע. לא נאמרה גויעה אלא בצדיקים: **(יח) נפל.** שכן, כמו מדין ועמלק וכל בני קדם נופלים בעמק[9]. כאן הוא אומר לשון נפילה, ולהלן הוא אומר על פני כל אחיו ישכון[10], עד שלא מת אברהם ישכון, משמת אברהם נפל:

חסלת פרשת חיי שרה

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].

7 תהלים צח, ד 8 מגילה יז. 9 שופטים ז, יב 10 בראשית טז, יב

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)

יט וְאֵ֗לֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת֙ יִצְחָ֣ק בֶּן־אַבְרָהָ֔ם אַבְרָהָ֖ם הוֹלִ֥יד אֶת־יִצְחָֽק׃
כ וַיְהִ֣י יִצְחָ֗ק בֶּן־אַרְבָּעִ֤ים שָׁנָה֙ בְּקַחְתּ֣וֹ אֶת־רִבְקָ֣ה בַת־בְּתוּאֵ֣ל
הָאֲרַמִּ֔י מִפַּדַּ֖ן אֲרָ֑ם אֲחוֹת֙ לָבָ֣ן הָאֲרַמִּ֔י לוֹ֙ לְאִשָּׁ֔ה׃ כא וַיֶּעְתַּ֥ר
יִצְחָ֖ק לַיהוָ֑ה לְנֹכַ֣ח אִשְׁתּ֔וֹ כִּ֥י עֲקָרָ֖ה הִ֑וא וַיֵּעָ֤תֶר לוֹ֙ יְהוָ֔ה
וַתַּ֖הַר רִבְקָ֥ה אִשְׁתּֽוֹ׃ כב וַיִּתְרֹֽצֲצ֣וּ הַבָּנִ֔ים בְּקִרְבָּ֑הּ וַתֹּ֙אמֶר֙
אִם־כֵּ֣ן לָמָ֔ה זֶ֖ה אָנֹ֑כִי וַתֵּ֙לֶךְ֙ לִדְרֹ֣שׁ אֶת־יְהוָֽה׃ כג וַיֹּ֨אמֶר יְהוָ֜ה

יט וְאֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת יִצְחָק בַּר אַבְרָהָם אַבְרָהָם
אוֹלִיד יַת יִצְחָק׃ כ וַהֲוָה יִצְחָק בַּר אַרְבְּעִין
שְׁנִין כַּד נְסֵיב יַת רִבְקָה בַּת בְּתוּאֵל אֲרַמָּאָה
מִפַּדַּן אֲרָם אֲחָתֵיהּ דְּלָבָן אֲרַמָּאָה לֵיהּ
לְאִנְתּוּ׃ כא וְצַלִּי יִצְחָק קֳדָם יְיָ לָקֳבֵל אִתְּתֵיהּ
אֲרֵי עֲקָרָה הִיא וְקַבֵּל צְלוֹתֵיהּ יְיָ וְעַדְיַאת
רִבְקָה אִתְּתֵיהּ׃ כב וְדַחֲקִין בְּנָיָא בְּמָעָהָא
וַאֲמַרַת אִם כֵּן לְמָא דְנָן אֲנָא וַאֲזָלַת לְמִתְבַּע
אוּלְפַּן מִן קֳדָם יְיָ׃ כג וַאֲמַר יְיָ לָהּ תְּרֵין

רס"י

(יט) **ואלה תולדות יצחק.** יעקב ועשו כתמורים בפרשה: **אברהם הוליד את יצחק.** (לאחר שקרא הקב"ה שמו מאברם אחר כך הוליד את יצחק. דבר אחר), על ידי שכתב הכתוב יצחק בן אברהם, הוזקק לומר אברהם הוליד את יצחק, לפי שהיו לועגי הדור אומרים מאבימלך נתעברה שרה, שהרי כמה שניה שהיה עם אברהם ולא נתעברה היתמו, מה עשה הקב"ה, לר קלסתר פניו של יצחק דומה לאברהם, והעידו הכל שאברהם הוליד את יצחק, וזהו שכתב כאן יצחק בן אברהם (היה), שהרי עדות יש שאברהם הוליד את יצחק: (כ) **בן ארבעים שנה.** שהרי כשבא אברהם מכר המוריה נתבשר שנולדה רבקה, ויצחק היה בן ל"ז שנה, שהרי בו בפרק מתה שרה, ומשנולד יצחק עד שעקידה שמתה שרה ל"ז שנה, הרי כ' שנה, ועוד כ' שהיה כשנולד יצחק, ועוד קכ"ז כשמתה, שנאמר ויהיו חיי שרה וגו', הרי ליצחק ל"ז שניס, ובו בפרק נולדה רבקה, הרי שהיה רבקה לגיסה ג' שניס, ונאמר: **בת בתואל מפדן ארם אחות לבן.** וכי עדיין לא נכתב שהיא בת בתואל ואחות לבן ומפדן ארם, אלא להגיד שבחה, שהיתה בת רשע ואחות רשע ומקומה מגושי רשע, ולא למדה ממעשיהם:
מפדן ארם. על שם שגשני ארם היו, ארם נהריים ומרס נוצה, קורא אותו פדן, לשון זמר בקר, תרגום, פדן תורין, ויש פותרין פדן ארם כמו שדה ארם, שבלשון ישמעאל קורין לשדה פדן: (כא) **ויעתר לו.** נתפלל ונתפייס ונתפתה לו. ואומר אני, כל לשון עתר, לשון הפלרה ורבוי הוא, וכן ועתר ענן הקטורת[1], מרבית עליית העשן. וכן העתרתם עלי דבריכם[2], וכן ועתרות נשיקות שונא[3], דומות למרובות והכא למשא, תרגיסר"ח בלע"ז: **לנכח אשתו.** זה עומד בזוית זו ומתפלל, וזו עומדת בזוית זו ומתפללת: **ויעתר לו.** לו ולא לה, שאין דומה תפלת צדיק בן צדיק לתפלת צדיק בן רשע[4], לפיכך לו ולא לה: (כב) **ויתרוצצו.** על כרחך המקרא הזה אומר דורשני, שסתם מה היה רגילה זו, וכתב חס כן למה זה תנכי. רבותינו דרשוהו לשון ריצה, כשהיתה עוברת על פתחי תורה של שם ועבר, יעקב רץ ומפרכס לצאת, עוברת על פתחי ע"ז, עשו מפרכס לצאת. דבר אחר, מתרוצצים זה עם זה, ומריבים בנחלת שני עולמות: **ותאמר אם כן.** גדול צער הטבור: **למה זה אנכי.** מתאוה ומתפללת על הריון: **ותלך לדרוש.** לבית מדרשו של שם: **לדרוש את ה'.** שיגיד לה מה

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. 103*ff*; vol. 20, p. 116*ff*)

1 יחזקאל ח, יא 2 שם לה, יג 3 משלי כז, ו 4 יבמות סד.

The Birth of Ya'akov & Eisav

25:19 *And 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. [20] *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).*

[21] *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.*

[22] *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 (**הִיא**), but rather **הִוא**, which can also be read as **הוּא**, 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

How 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. 108*ff*.)

* [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.*]

לָהּ שְׁנֵי גיים [ק׳ גוֹיִם] בִּבְטְנֵךְ וּשְׁנֵי לְאֻמִּים מִמֵּעַיִךְ יִפָּרֵדוּ וּלְאֹם
מִלְאֹם יֶאֱמָץ וְרַב יַעֲבֹד צָעִיר: כד וַיִּמְלְאוּ יָמֶיהָ לָלֶדֶת וְהִנֵּה
תוֹמִם בִּבְטְנָהּ: כה וַיֵּצֵא הָרִאשׁוֹן אַדְמוֹנִי כֻּלּוֹ כְּאַדֶּרֶת שֵׂעָר
וַיִּקְרְאוּ שְׁמוֹ עֵשָׂו: כו וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן יָצָא אָחִיו וְיָדוֹ אֹחֶזֶת בַּעֲקֵב
עֵשָׂו וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב וְיִצְחָק בֶּן־שִׁשִּׁים שָׁנָה בְּלֶדֶת אֹתָם:
כז וַיִּגְדְּלוּ הַנְּעָרִים וַיְהִי עֵשָׂו אִישׁ יֹדֵעַ צַיִד אִישׁ שָׂדֶה וְיַעֲקֹב
אִישׁ תָּם יֹשֵׁב אֹהָלִים: כח וַיֶּאֱהַב יִצְחָק אֶת־עֵשָׂו כִּי־צַיִד בְּפִיו

עַמְמִין בִּמְעַיכִי וְתַרְתֵּין מַלְכָוָן מִמְּעַיכִי
יִתְפְּרְשָׁן וּמַלְכוּ מִמַּלְכוּ יִתְקַף וְרַבָּא
יִשְׁתַּעְבַּד לְזְעִירָא: כד וּשְׁלִימוּ יוֹמָהָא לְמֵילַד
וְהָא תְיוֹמִין בִּמְעָהָא: כה וּנְפַק קַדְמָאָה סְמוֹק
כּוּלֵיהּ כִּגְלָיִם (כִּבְלָן) דְּשִׂעָר וּקְרוֹ שְׁמֵיהּ עֵשָׂו:
כו וּבָתַר כֵּן נְפַק אֲחוּהִי וִידֵיהּ אֲחִידָא בְּעִקְבָּא
דְּעֵשָׂו וּקְרָא שְׁמֵיהּ יַעֲקֹב וְיִצְחָק בַּר שְׁתִּין
שְׁנִין כַּד יְלִידַת יַתְהוֹן: כז וּרְבִיאוּ עוֹלֵימַיָּא
וַהֲוָה עֵשָׂו גְּבַר נַחְשִׁירְכַן גְּבַר נָפֵיק לְחַקְלָא
וְיַעֲקֹב גְּבַר שְׁלִים מְשַׁמֵּשׁ בֵּית אוּלְפָנָא:
כח וּרְחִים יִצְחָק יַת עֵשָׂו אֲרֵי מְצֵידֵיהּ הֲוָה אָכִיל

רס״י

תהא בסופה: (כג) ויאמר ה׳ לה. על ידי שלית, לפס נאמר ברוח הקדש, והוא אמר לה: שני גוים בבטנך. גייס כתיב כמו (כמו) גאיס, אלו אנטונינוס ורבי, שלא פסקו מעל שולחנם לא למון ולא חזרת, לא בימות החמה ולא בימות הגשמים: ושני לאמים. אין לאום אלא מלכות: ממעיך יפרדו. מן המעיס הם נפרדים, זה לרשעו וזה לתומו: מלאם יאמץ. לא יהיו בגדולה, כשזה קם זה נופל, וכן הוא אומר אמלאה החרבה[1], לא נתמלאה עור אלא מחרבנה של ירושלים: (כד) וימלאו ימיה. אלא בתמר כתיב ויהי בעת לדתה. שלא מלאו ימיה, כי לז׳ חדשים ילדתם: והנה תומם. חסר. ובתמר תאומים מלא, לפי שמיכם לזיקים, אבל כאן אחד לזיק ואחד רשע: (כה) אדמוני. סימן הוא שיהא שופך דמים[2]: כלו כאדרת שער. מלא שער כטלית של צמר המלאה שער, פלוקיר"ח בלט"ז: ויקראו שמו עשו. הכל קראו לו כן, לפי שהיה נעשה וגמר בשערו כבן שניס הרבה: (כו) ואחרי כן יצא אחיו וגו׳. שמעתי מדרש אגדה הדורשו לפי פשוטו, בדין היה חוזר בו לעכבו, יעקב נולד מטיפה ראשונה ועשו מן השנייה, לא ולמד משפופרת שפיה קלרה, תן בה שתי חבניס זו תחת זו, הנכנסת ראשונה תלא אחרונה, והנכנסת 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)

1 יחזקאל כו, ב 2 ב״ר סג, ז 3 תנחומא תצא ד

[23] *(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)."*

[24] *The term of her pregnancy was complete, and—look!—there were twins in her womb.*

[25] *The first one came out reddish and completely (covered in hair), like a fur coat of hair. They named him Eisav.* [26] *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 *The 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).*

[28] *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 leDavid: 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.*).

וְרִבְקָה אֹהֶבֶת אֶת־יַעֲקֹב: כט וַיָּזֶד יַעֲקֹב נָזִיד וַיָּבֹא עֵשָׂו מִן־
הַשָּׂדֶה וְהוּא עָיֵף: ל וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו אֶל־יַעֲקֹב הַלְעִיטֵנִי נָא מִן־
הָאָדֹם הָאָדֹם הַזֶּה כִּי עָיֵף אָנֹכִי עַל־כֵּן קָרָא־שְׁמוֹ אֱדוֹם:
לא וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב מִכְרָה כַיּוֹם אֶת־בְּכֹרָתְךָ לִי: לב וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו
הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ לָמוּת וְלָמָּה־זֶּה לִי בְּכֹרָה: לג וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב
הִשָּׁבְעָה לִּי כַּיּוֹם וַיִּשָּׁבַע לוֹ וַיִּמְכֹּר אֶת־בְּכֹרָתוֹ לְיַעֲקֹב:
לד וְיַעֲקֹב נָתַן לְעֵשָׂו לֶחֶם וּנְזִיד עֲדָשִׁים וַיֹּאכַל וַיֵּשְׁתְּ וַיָּקָם
וַיֵּלַךְ וַיִּבֶז עֵשָׂו אֶת־הַבְּכֹרָה: פ כו א וַיְהִי רָעָב בָּאָרֶץ מִלְּבַד
הָרָעָב הָרִאשׁוֹן אֲשֶׁר הָיָה בִּימֵי אַבְרָהָם וַיֵּלֶךְ יִצְחָק
אֶל־אֲבִימֶלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ־פְּלִשְׁתִּים גְּרָרָה: ב וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר
אַל־תֵּרֵד מִצְרַיְמָה שְׁכֹן בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֹמַר אֵלֶיךָ: ג גּוּר בָּאָרֶץ
הַזֹּאת וְאֶהְיֶה עִמְּךָ וַאֲבָרְכֶךָּ כִּי־לְךָ וּלְזַרְעֲךָ אֶתֵּן אֶת־כָּל־

וְרִבְקָה רְחֵמַת אֵת יַעֲקֹב: כט וּבַשֵּׁיל יַעֲקֹב
תַּבְשִׁילָא וַאֲתָא עֵשָׂו מִן חַקְלָא וְהוּא מְשַׁלְהֵי:
ל וַאֲמַר עֵשָׂו לְיַעֲקֹב אַטְעֲמְנִי כְעַן מִן סְמוֹקָא
סְמוֹקָא הָדֵין אֲרֵי מְשַׁלְהֵי אֲנָא עַל כֵּן קְרָא
שְׁמֵיהּ אֱדוֹם: לא וַאֲמַר יַעֲקֹב זַבִּין כְּיוֹם דִּלְהֵן
יָת בְּכוֹרוּתָךְ לִי: לב וַאֲמַר עֵשָׂו הָא אֲנָא אָזֵיל
לְמָמָת וּלְמָא דְנַן לִי בְּכוֹרוּתָא: לג וַאֲמַר יַעֲקֹב
קַיֵּים לִי כְּיוֹם דִּלְהֵן וְקַיֵּים לֵיהּ וְזַבִּין יָת
בְּכוֹרוּתֵיהּ לְיַעֲקֹב: לד וְיַעֲקֹב יְהַב לְעֵשָׂו לְחֵם
וְתַבְשִׁיל דְּטַלּוֹפְחִין וַאֲכַל וּשְׁתִי וְקָם וַאֲזַל וְשָׁט
עֵשָׂו יָת בְּכוֹרוּתָא: א וַהֲוָה כַפְנָא בְּאַרְעָא בַּר
מִכַּפְנָא קַדְמָאָה דִּי הֲוָה בְּיוֹמֵי אַבְרָהָם וַאֲזַל
יִצְחָק לְוָת אֲבִימֶלֶךְ מַלְכָּא דִּפְלִשְׁתָּאֵי לִגְרָר:
ב וְאִתְגְּלִי לֵיהּ יְיָ וַאֲמַר לָא תֵיחוֹת לְמִצְרָיִם
שְׁרֵי בְּאַרְעָא דִּי אֵמַר לָךְ: ג דּוּר בְּאַרְעָא הָדָא
וִיהֵי מֵימְרִי בְסַעֲדָךְ וַאֲבָרְכִנָּךְ אֲרֵי לָךְ וְלִבְנָיְךָ

רס"י

קטן[3]. תבל, כל שלשה ימים הרחשוניס חיו מציד שלוס לכל חדש, וכל שכן שחיו שוחל בתחלה, מג' ועד ז' מציד וחיו שוחל וכו', ברמ"י יען): (לח) **מברה ביום**. כתרגומו כיוס דילהן, כיוס שהוח בכור, כך מכור לי מכירה בכורה: **בברתך**. לפי שהעבודה בבכורות, חמר יעקב חין רשע זה כדחי שיקריב לקב"ה: (לט) **הנה אנבי הולך למות**. (מתנודדת והולכת היח הבכורה, שלח תהח כל עת העבודה בבכורות, כי שבט לוי יטול חותה. ועוד) חמר עשו מה טיבה של עבודה זו, חמר לו כמה חזכרות ועונשין ומיתות תלוין בה, כאותה ששניתו[4], חלו הן שבמיתה, שתויי יין ופרועי רחש, חמר, חני הולך למות על ידה, חס כן מה חפץ לי בה: (לו) **ויבז עשו**. הטיד הכתוב על רשעו שביזה עבודתו של מקום: (ג) **אל תרד מצרימה**. שהיה דעתו לרדת למלריס כמו שירד חבין בימי הרעב, חמר לו חל תרד מלרימה, שחתה טולה

שלו עבר: (כח) **בפיו**. כתרגומו בפיו של יצחק. ומדרשו, בפיו של עשו, שהיה נד חותו ומרמהו בדבריו: (כט) **ויזד**. לשון בישול כתרגומו: **והוא עיף**. ברגיחה[1], כמה דתימח כי טיפה נפשי להורגיס[2]: (ל) **הלעיטני**. חפתח פי ושפוך כרבה לתוכה, כמו ששניתו, יין מוכסין חת הגמל מלעיטין חותו: **מן האדום האדום**. עדשים חדומות, ושותו היוס מת חברהם, שלח ירחה חת עשו בן בנו יושב לתרבות רשע, ושין זו שיבה טובה שהבטיחו הקב"ה, לפיכך קלר הקב"ה כי שניס משמותיו, שילחק מי ק"פ שמה, וזה קע"ה שמה, ובישל יעקב עדשים להבכות חת החבל, ולמה עדשים שדומות לגלגל, שהחבלות גלגל החוזר בעולם. (ועוד מה עדשים שין לכס פה, כך החבל שין לו פה, שחסור לדבר, ולפיכך המנהג להבכות חת החבל בתחלת מחכלו בילים, שהם עגולים ושין לכס פה, כך חבל שין לו פה, כדחמרינן במועד

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. 116*ff*)

1 ב"ר סג, יב 2 ירמי' ד, לא 3 דף כא: 4 סנהדרין כב:

29 *(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).*

30 *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").*

31 *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)."*

32 *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?"*

33 *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.*

34 *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 *There 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.*

2 *God appeared to him, and said, "Do not go down to Egypt! Inhabit the land which I will tell you (about).* 3 *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)

Even 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)

הָאָרֶצֹת הָאֵל וַהֲקִמֹתִי אֶת־הַשְּׁבֻעָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאַבְרָהָם
אָבִיךָ: ד וְהִרְבֵּיתִי אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ כְּכוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנָתַתִּי לְזַרְעֲךָ
אֵת כָּל־הָאֲרָצֹת הָאֵל וְהִתְבָּרֲכוּ בְזַרְעֲךָ כֹּל גּוֹיֵי הָאָרֶץ:
ה עֵקֶב אֲשֶׁר־שָׁמַע אַבְרָהָם בְּקֹלִי וַיִּשְׁמֹר מִשְׁמַרְתִּי מִצוֹתַי
חֻקּוֹתַי וְתוֹרֹתָי: [שני] ו וַיֵּשֶׁב יִצְחָק בִּגְרָר: ז וַיִּשְׁאֲלוּ אַנְשֵׁי
הַמָּקוֹם לְאִשְׁתּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲחֹתִי הִוא כִּי יָרֵא לֵאמֹר אִשְׁתִּי
פֶּן־יַהַרְגֻנִי אַנְשֵׁי הַמָּקוֹם עַל־רִבְקָה כִּי־טוֹבַת מַרְאֶה הִוא:
ח וַיְהִי כִּי אָרְכוּ־לוֹ שָׁם הַיָּמִים וַיַּשְׁקֵף אֲבִימֶלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ פְּלִשְׁתִּים
בְּעַד הַחַלּוֹן וַיַּרְא וְהִנֵּה יִצְחָק מְצַחֵק אֵת רִבְקָה אִשְׁתּוֹ:
ט וַיִּקְרָא אֲבִימֶלֶךְ לְיִצְחָק וַיֹּאמֶר אַךְ הִנֵּה אִשְׁתְּךָ הִוא וְאֵיךְ
אָמַרְתָּ אֲחֹתִי הִוא וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו יִצְחָק כִּי אָמַרְתִּי פֶּן־אָמוּת
עָלֶיהָ: י וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ מַה־זֹּאת עָשִׂיתָ לָּנוּ כִּמְעַט שָׁכַב אַחַד
הָעָם אֶת־אִשְׁתֶּךָ וְהֵבֵאתָ עָלֵינוּ אָשָׁם: יא וַיְצַו אֲבִימֶלֶךְ
אֶת־כָּל־הָעָם לֵאמֹר הַנֹּגֵעַ בָּאִישׁ הַזֶּה וּבְאִשְׁתּוֹ מוֹת יוּמָת:
יב וַיִּזְרַע יִצְחָק בָּאָרֶץ הַהִוא וַיִּמְצָא בַּשָּׁנָה הַהִוא מֵאָה שְׁעָרִים

אֶתֵּן אֵת כָּל אַרְצֹת הָאֵלֶּה וַאֲקַיֵּם אֵת הַשְּׁבֻעָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאַבְרָהָם
אָבִיךָ: ד וְאַסְגִּי אֵת זַרְעֲךָ כְּכוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמָיִם וְאֶתֵּן לְזַרְעֲךָ אֵת כָּל אַרְצֹת
הָאֵלֶּה וְיִתְבָּרְכוּן בִּדְיִל זַרְעֲךָ כָּל עַמְמֵי אַרְעָא:
ה חֲלַף דִּי קַבֵּל אַבְרָהָם לְמֵימְרִי וּנְטַר מַטְרַת
מֵימְרִי פִּקּוּדַי קְיָמַי וְאוֹרָיָתִי: ו וְיָתֵיב יִצְחָק
בִּגְרָר: ז וּשְׁאִילוּ אֱנָשֵׁי אַתְרָא עַל עֵיסַק
אִתְּתֵיהּ וַאֲמַר אֲחָתִי הִיא אֲרֵי דְחֵיל לְמֵימַר
אִתְּתִי דִּלְמָא יְקַטְלוּנַנִי אֱנָשֵׁי אַתְרָא עַל רִבְקָה
אֲרֵי שַׁפִּירַת חֵיזוּ הִיא: ח וַהֲוָה כַּד סְגִיאוּ לֵיהּ
תַּמָּן יוֹמָיָא וְאִסְתְּכִי אֲבִימֶלֶךְ מַלְכָּא
דִּפְלִשְׁתָּאֵי מִן חַרְכָּא וַחֲזָא וְהָא יִצְחָק מְחַיֵּךְ
עִם רִבְקָה אִתְּתֵיהּ: ט וּקְרָא אֲבִימֶלֶךְ לְיִצְחָק
וַאֲמַר בְּרַם הָא אִתְּתָךְ הִיא וְאֵיכְדֵין אֲמַרְתְּ
אֲחָתִי הִיא וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ יִצְחָק אֲרֵי אֲמָרִית
דִּילְמָא אֵימוּת עֲלָהּ: י וַאֲמַר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ מָא
דָא עֲבַדְתְּ לָנָא כְּזֵעִיר פּוֹן שְׁכִיב דְּמֵיחַד
בְּעַמָּא עִם אִתְּתָךְ וְאַיְתֵיתָא עָלָנָא חוֹבָא:
יא וּפַקֵּיד אֲבִימֶלֶךְ יַת כָּל עַמָּא לְמֵימָר דֵּינַזֵּיק
לְגַבְרָא הָדֵין וּלְאִתְּתֵיהּ אִתְקְטָלָא יִתְקְטֵל:
יב וּזְרַע יִצְחָק בְּאַרְעָא הַהִיא וְאַשְׁכַּח בְּשַׁתָּא

כו:ג-יב

תמימה, ואין חולה לארץ כדאי לך: (ג) **האל**. כמו כאלה: (ד) **והתברכו בזרעך**. לפי שאומר לגמו יכא זרעך כזרעו של יצחק, וכן בכל המקרא, וזה לפי לכולן, לך יברך ישראל לאמר ישימך וגו', ולפ לענין הקללה מצינו כן, וכיוצא בהשבע לאלה, שהמקלל שונאו אומר תכא כפלוני, וכן והנחתם שמכם לשבועה לבחירי[1], שהנשבע אומר, תכא כפלוני אם עשיתי כך וכך: (ה) **שמע אברהם בקולי**. כשנסיתי אותו: **וישמור משמרתי**. גזרות להרחקה על אזהרות שבתורה, כגון שניות לעריות[2], ושבות לשבת: **מצותי**. דברים שאילו לא נכתבו ראוין הן להיטעות, כגון גזל ושפיכות דמים: **חקותי**. דברים שיצר הרע ואומות העולם משיבין עליהם, כגון אכילת חזיר ולבישת שעטנז, שאין טעם בדבר אלא גזירת המלך ואקותיו על עבדיו: **ותורתי**. להביא תורה שבעל פה, הלכה למשה מסיני: (ז) **לאשתו**. על אשתו, כמו אמרי לי אחי הוא[3]: (ח) **כי ארכו**. אמר, מעתה אין לי לדאוג, מאחר שלא אנסוהו עד עכשיו, ולא נזהר להיות נשמר: **וישקף אבימלך וגו'**. שראוהו משחק מטתו: (י) **אחד העם**. כמיועד בעם, זה המלך: **והבאת עלינו אשם**. אם שכב, כבר הכאת אשם עלינו: (יב) **בארץ ההוא**. אף על פי שאינה מסובה כארץ ישראל עלמה, כארץ שבעת הגויים[4]: **בשנה ההוא**. אף על פי שאינה כתקנה, שהיתה שנת רעבון[5]: **בארץ ההוא בשנה ההוא**. שניהם למה, לומר שהארץ קשה והשנה קשה: **מאה שערים**. שמדוה כמה

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*

1 ישעי' סה, טו 2 יבמות כא. 3 בראשית כ, יג 4 ב"ר סד, ו 5 שם

to you and to your descendants, and I will uphold the oath that I swore to Avraham, your father. [4] *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.* [5] *(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

[6] *So, Yitzchak settled in Gerar.* [7] *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."*

[8] *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.*

[9] *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.'"

[10] *"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."*

[11] *Avimelech instructed all the people, saying, "Whoever touches this man or his wife will be put to death."*

YITZCHAK PROSPERS

26:12 *Yitzchak 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. 200*ff.*)

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.*"

וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ יְהוָה: [שלישי] יג וַיִּגְדַּל הָאִישׁ וַיֵּלֶךְ הָלוֹךְ וְגָדֵל עַד כִּי־גָדַל מְאֹד: יד וַיְהִי־לוֹ מִקְנֵה־צֹאן וּמִקְנֵה בָקָר וַעֲבֻדָּה רַבָּה וַיְקַנְאוּ אֹתוֹ פְּלִשְׁתִּים: טו וְכָל־הַבְּאֵרֹת אֲשֶׁר חָפְרוּ עַבְדֵי אָבִיו בִּימֵי אַבְרָהָם אָבִיו סִתְמוּם פְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיְמַלְאוּם עָפָר: טז וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ אֶל־יִצְחָק לֵךְ מֵעִמָּנוּ כִּי־עָצַמְתָּ מִמֶּנּוּ מְאֹד: יז וַיֵּלֶךְ מִשָּׁם יִצְחָק וַיִּחַן בְּנַחַל־גְּרָר וַיֵּשֶׁב שָׁם: יח וַיָּשָׁב יִצְחָק וַיַּחְפֹּר | אֶת־בְּאֵרֹת הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר חָפְרוּ בִּימֵי אַבְרָהָם אָבִיו וַיְסַתְּמוּם פְּלִשְׁתִּים אַחֲרֵי מוֹת אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקְרָא לָהֶן שֵׁמוֹת כַּשֵּׁמֹת אֲשֶׁר־קָרָא לָהֶן אָבִיו: יט וַיַּחְפְּרוּ עַבְדֵי־יִצְחָק בַּנָּחַל וַיִּמְצְאוּ־שָׁם בְּאֵר מַיִם חַיִּים: כ וַיָּרִיבוּ רֹעֵי גְרָר עִם־רֹעֵי יִצְחָק לֵאמֹר לָנוּ הַמָּיִם וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם־הַבְּאֵר עֵשֶׂק כִּי הִתְעַשְּׂקוּ עִמּוֹ: כא וַיַּחְפְּרוּ בְּאֵר אַחֶרֶת וַיָּרִיבוּ גַּם־עָלֶיהָ וַיִּקְרָא שִׁטְנָה: כב וַיַּעְתֵּק מִשָּׁם וַיַּחְפֹּר בְּאֵר אַחֶרֶת וְלֹא רָבוּ עָלֶיהָ וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמָהּ רְחֹבוֹת וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי־עַתָּה הִרְחִיב יְהוָה לָנוּ וּפָרִינוּ בָאָרֶץ:

הַהִיא עַל חַד מְאָה בִּדְשַׁעֲרוֹהִי וּבָרְכֵיהּ יְיָ: יג וּרְבָא גַּבְרָא וַאֲזַל אָזֵיל וְרַבֵּי עַד דִּי רְבָא לַחֲדָא: יד וַהֲווֹ לֵיהּ גֵּיתֵי עָנָא וְגֵיתֵי תּוֹרֵי וּפוּלְחָנָא סַגֵּיא וְקַנְיָאוּ בֵיהּ פְּלִשְׁתָּאֵי: טו וְכָל בֵּירִין דִּי חָפְרוּ עַבְדֵי אֲבוּהִי בְּיוֹמֵי אַבְרָהָם אֲבוּהִי טַמּוֹנוּן פְּלִשְׁתָּאֵי וּמְלוֹנוּן עַפְרָא: טז וַאֲמַר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ לְיִצְחָק אֲזֵיל מֵעִמָּנָא אֲרֵי תְקֵפְתָּא מִנָּנָא לַחֲדָא: יז וַאֲזַל מִתַּמָּן יִצְחָק וּשְׁרָא בְנַחֲלָא דִגְרָר וִיתֵיב תַּמָּן: יח וְתָב יִצְחָק וְחַפַּר יַת בֵּירֵי דְמַיָּא דִי חָפְרוּ בְּיוֹמֵי אַבְרָהָם אֲבוּהִי וְטַמּוֹנוּן פְּלִשְׁתָּאֵי בָּתַר דְּמִית אַבְרָהָם וּקְרָא לְהֶן שְׁמָהָן כִּשְׁמָהָן דִּי הֲוָה קָרֵי לְהֶן אֲבוּהִי: יט וַחֲפָרוּ עַבְדֵי יִצְחָק בְּנַחֲלָא וְאַשְׁכָּחוּ תַּמָּן בֵּירָא דְמַיִן נָבְעִין: כ וּנְצוֹ רָעָוָתָא דִגְרָר עִם רָעָוָתָא דְיִצְחָק לְמֵימָר דִּי לָנָא מַיָּא וּקְרָא שְׁמָא דְבֵירָא עֶסְקָא אֲרֵי אִתְעַסְּקוּ עִמֵּיהּ: כא וַחֲפָרוּ בֵּירָא אָחֳרִי וּנְצוֹ אַף עָלָהּ וּקְרָא שְׁמָהּ שִׂטְנָה: כב וְאִסְתַּלַק מִתַּמָּן וַחֲפַר בֵּירָא אָחֳרִי וְלָא נְצוֹ עֲלָהּ וּקְרָא שְׁמָהּ רְחוֹבוֹת וַאֲמַר אֲרֵי כְעַן אַפְתֵּי יְיָ לָנָא וְנִפּוּשׁ (וְיִפְשַׁנָּא)

רס"י

רחויה לעשות, ועשתה על אחת שמדומה, מאה. ורבותינו אומרו, חומד זה למעשרות היה: (יג) **כי גדל מאד**. שהיו חומריס זהב פרדותיו של יצחק, ולא כספו וזהבו של מדימלך[1]: (יד) **ועבדה רבה**. פעולה רבה, כלשון לע"ז חובדויל"ת, עֲבוֹדָה משמע עבודה אחת. עֲבֻדָּה משמע פעולה רבה: (טו) **סתמום פלשתים**. מפני שאומרו תקלה הם לנו מפני הגייסות הבאות עלינו. טמונין פלשתאי, לשון סתימה, ובלשון הכתוב מטמטם את הלב: (יז) **בנחל גרר**. רחוק מן הכעיר: (יח) **וישב ויחפר**. את בארות אשר חפרו בימי אברהם אבינו, ופלשתים סתמום, וקודם שנסע יצחק מגרר, חזר וחפרן: (כ) **עשק**. טרעור: **כי התעשקו עמו**. נתעסקו עמו עליה במריבה וטרטור: (כא) **שטנה**. נושמנ"ט: (כב) **ופרינו בארץ**. תרגומו וניפוש נתרעה:

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

1 ב"ר סד, ז

THIRD READING

13 *The man (Yitzchak) became prosperous, and he grew constantly greater until he had grown very great (even in comparison to Avimelech).* 14 *He had flocks of sheep and cattle and many enterprises, and the Philistines envied him.* 15 *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.*

16 *Avimelech said to Yitzchak, "Go away from us, for you have become much stronger than us."*

17 *Yitzchak went away from there, set up camp in the Gerar valley, and settled there.*

18 *(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.*

19 *(After settling) in the valley, Yitzchak's servants dug, and they found there a well of living waters.* 20 *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.*

21 *They dug another well, and the (shepherds) quarreled about it also, so he named it Sitnah ("harassment").*

22 *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 ("hirchiv") 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. 121*ff; 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.116*ff.*)

[רביעי] כג וַיַּעַל מִשָּׁם בְּאֵר שָׁבַע: כד וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו יְהוָה בַּלַּיְלָה
הַהוּא וַיֹּאמֶר אָנֹכִי אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אָבִיךָ אַל־תִּירָא כִּי־אִתְּךָ
אָנֹכִי וּבֵרַכְתִּיךָ וְהִרְבֵּיתִי אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ בַּעֲבוּר אַבְרָהָם עַבְדִּי:
כה וַיִּבֶן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ וַיִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה וַיֵּט־שָׁם אָהֳלוֹ וַיִּכְרוּ־שָׁם
עַבְדֵי־יִצְחָק בְּאֵר: כו וַאֲבִימֶלֶךְ הָלַךְ אֵלָיו מִגְּרָר וַאֲחֻזַּת
מֵרֵעֵהוּ וּפִיכֹל שַׂר־צְבָאוֹ: כז וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם יִצְחָק מַדּוּעַ בָּאתֶם
אֵלָי וְאַתֶּם שְׂנֵאתֶם אֹתִי וַתְּשַׁלְּחוּנִי מֵאִתְּכֶם: כח וַיֹּאמְרוּ רָאוֹ
רָאִינוּ כִּי־הָיָה יְהוָה | עִמָּךְ וַנֹּאמֶר תְּהִי נָא אָלָה בֵּינוֹתֵינוּ
בֵּינֵינוּ וּבֵינֶךָ וְנִכְרְתָה בְרִית עִמָּךְ: כט אִם־תַּעֲשֶׂה עִמָּנוּ רָעָה
כַּאֲשֶׁר לֹא נְגַעֲנוּךָ וְכַאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂינוּ עִמְּךָ רַק־טוֹב וַנְּשַׁלְּחֲךָ
בְּשָׁלוֹם אַתָּה עַתָּה בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה: [חמישי] ל וַיַּעַשׂ לָהֶם מִשְׁתֶּה
וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּשְׁתּוּ: לא וַיַּשְׁכִּימוּ בַבֹּקֶר וַיִּשָּׁבְעוּ אִישׁ לְאָחִיו וַיְשַׁלְּחֵם
יִצְחָק וַיֵּלְכוּ מֵאִתּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם: לב וַיְהִי | בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וַיָּבֹאוּ עַבְדֵי
יִצְחָק וַיַּגִּדוּ לוֹ עַל־אֹדוֹת הַבְּאֵר אֲשֶׁר חָפָרוּ וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ מָצָאנוּ
מָיִם: לג וַיִּקְרָא אֹתָהּ שִׁבְעָה עַל־כֵּן שֵׁם־הָעִיר בְּאֵר שָׁבַע עַד
הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: ס לד וַיְהִי עֵשָׂו בֶּן־אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה וַיִּקַּח אִשָּׁה
אֶת־יְהוּדִית בַּת־בְּאֵרִי הַחִתִּי וְאֶת־בָּשְׂמַת בַּת־אֵילֹן הַחִתִּי:
לה וַתִּהְיֶיןָ מֹרַת רוּחַ לְיִצְחָק וּלְרִבְקָה: ס כז א וַיְהִי כִּי־זָקֵן

כג וַיַּעַל מִשָּׁם בְּאֵר שָׁבַע: כד וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו יְהוָה בַּלַּיְלָה
הַהוּא וַיֹּאמֶר אָנֹכִי אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אָבִיךָ אַל־תִּירָא כִּי־אִתְּךָ
אָנֹכִי וּבֵרַכְתִּיךָ וְהִרְבֵּיתִי אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ בַּעֲבוּר אַבְרָהָם עַבְדִּי:
כה וַיִּבֶן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ וַיִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה וַיֵּט־שָׁם אָהֳלוֹ וַיִּכְרוּ־שָׁם
עַבְדֵי־יִצְחָק בְּאֵר: כו וַאֲבִימֶלֶךְ הָלַךְ אֵלָיו מִגְּרָר וַאֲחֻזַּת
מֵרֵעֵהוּ וּפִיכֹל שַׂר־צְבָאוֹ: כז וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם יִצְחָק מַדּוּעַ בָּאתֶם
אֵלָי וְאַתֶּם שְׂנֵאתֶם אֹתִי וַתְּשַׁלְּחוּנִי מֵאִתְּכֶם: כח וַיֹּאמְרוּ רָאוֹ
רָאִינוּ כִּי־הָיָה יְהוָה | עִמָּךְ וַנֹּאמֶר תְּהִי נָא אָלָה בֵּינוֹתֵינוּ
בֵּינֵינוּ וּבֵינֶךָ וְנִכְרְתָה בְרִית עִמָּךְ: כט אִם־תַּעֲשֶׂה עִמָּנוּ רָעָה
כַּאֲשֶׁר לֹא נְגַעֲנוּךָ וְכַאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂינוּ עִמְּךָ רַק־טוֹב וַנְּשַׁלְּחֲךָ
בְּשָׁלוֹם אַתָּה עַתָּה בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה: [חמישי] ל וַיַּעַשׂ לָהֶם מִשְׁתֶּה
וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּשְׁתּוּ: לא וַיַּשְׁכִּימוּ בַבֹּקֶר וַיִּשָּׁבְעוּ אִישׁ לְאָחִיו וַיְשַׁלְּחֵם
יִצְחָק וַיֵּלְכוּ מֵאִתּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם: לב וַיְהִי | בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וַיָּבֹאוּ עַבְדֵי
יִצְחָק וַיַּגִּדוּ לוֹ עַל־אֹדוֹת הַבְּאֵר אֲשֶׁר חָפָרוּ וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ מָצָאנוּ
מָיִם: לג וַיִּקְרָא אֹתָהּ שִׁבְעָה עַל־כֵּן שֵׁם־הָעִיר בְּאֵר שָׁבַע עַד
הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: ס לד וַיְהִי עֵשָׂו בֶּן־אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה וַיִּקַּח אִשָּׁה
אֶת־יְהוּדִית בַּת־בְּאֵרִי הַחִתִּי וְאֶת־בָּשְׂמַת בַּת־אֵילֹן הַחִתִּי:
לה וַתִּהְיֶיןָ מֹרַת רוּחַ לְיִצְחָק וּלְרִבְקָה: ס כז א וַיְהִי כִּי־זָקֵן

בְּאַרְעָא: כג וּסְלֵק מִתַּמָּן לִבְאֵר שָׁבַע:
כד וְאִתְגְּלִי לֵיהּ יְיָ בְּלֵילְיָא הַהוּא וַאֲמַר אֲנָא
אֱלָהֵהּ דְּאַבְרָהָם אֲבוּךְ לָא תִדְחַל אֲרֵי בְּסַעֲדָךְ
מֵימְרִי וַאֲבָרְכִנָּךְ וְאַסְגֵּי יַת בְּנָיךְ בְּדִיל
אַבְרָהָם עַבְדִּי: כה וּבְנָא תַמָּן מַדְבְּחָא וְצַלִּי
בִּשְׁמָא דַיְיָ וּפַרְסֵיהּ תַּמָּן לְמַשְׁכְּנֵיהּ וּכְרוֹ תַמָּן
עַבְדֵי יִצְחָק בֵּירָא: כו וַאֲבִימֶלֶךְ אֲזַל לְוָתֵיהּ
מִגְּרָר וְסִיעַת מַרְחֲמוֹהִי וּפִיכוֹל רַב חֵילֵיהּ:
כז וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן יִצְחָק מָא דֵין אֲתֵיתוּן לְוָתִי
וְאַתּוּן סְנֵיתוּן יָתִי וְשַׁלַּחְתּוּנִי מִלְוָתְכוֹן:
כח וַאֲמָרוּ מֶחֱזָא חֲזֵינָא אֲרֵי הֲוָה מֵימְרָא דַיְיָ
בְּסַעֲדָךְ וַאֲמַרְנָא תִּתְקַיֵּם כְּעַן מוֹמָתָא דַּהֲוָה
בֵּין אֲבָהָתָנָא בֵּינָנָא וּבֵינָךְ וְנִגְזַר קְיָם עִמָּךְ:
כט אִם תַּעְבֵּד עִמָּנָא בִּישָׁא כְּמָא דִי לָא
אַנְזִקְנָךְ וּכְמָא דִי עֲבַדְנָא עִמָּךְ לְחוֹד טַב
וְשַׁלְּחְנָךְ בִּשְׁלָם אַתְּ כְּעַן בְּרִיכָא דַיְיָ: ל וַעֲבַד
לְהוֹן מִשְׁתְּיָא וַאֲכָלוּ וּשְׁתִיאוּ: לא וְאַקְדִּימוּ
בְּצַפְרָא וְקַיְּימוּ גְּבַר לַאֲחוּהִי וְשַׁלְּחִינוּן יִצְחָק
וַאֲזָלוּ מִלְוָתֵיהּ בִּשְׁלָם: לב וַהֲוָה בְּיוֹמָא הַהוּא
וַאֲתוֹ עַבְדֵי יִצְחָק וְחַוִּיאוּ לֵיהּ עַל עִיסָק בֵּירָא
דִי חַפָּרוּ וַאֲמָרוּ לֵיהּ אַשְׁכַּחְנָא מָיָא: לג וּקְרָא
יָתָהּ שִׁבְעָה עַל כֵּן שְׁמָא דְקַרְתָּא בְּאֵר שֶׁבַע
עַד יוֹמָא הָדֵין: לד וַהֲוָה עֵשָׂו בַּר אַרְבְּעִין שְׁנִין
וּנְסֵיב אִתְּתָא יַת יְהוּדִית בַּת בְּאֵרִי חִתָּאָה וְיַת
בָּשְׂמַת בַּת אֵילוֹן חִתָּאָה: לה וַהֲוָאָה מְסָרְבָן
וּמַרְגְּנָן עַל מֵימַר יִצְחָק וְרִבְקָה: א וַהֲוָה כַּד

(כו) **ואחזת מרעהו**. כתרגומו וסיעת מרחמוהי סיעת מלוכיו. ויש פותרין מרעהו מ' מיסוד התיבה[1], כמו שלשים מרעים[2] דשמשון, כדי שתהיה תיבת ואחוזת דבוקה, אבל אין דרך לדבר על המלכות כן, סיעת מלוכיו, שאם כן כל סיעת מלוכיו הולך עמו, ולא היה לו אלא סיעה אחת של מלוכיו, לכן יש לפותרו כלשון הרשות. ואל תתמה על תי"ו של אחזת, ואף על פי שהיא תיבה סמוכה, יש דוגמתה במקרא עזרת מלר[3], ושכורת ולא מיין[4]: **אחזת**. לשון קבוצה ואגודה, שנאחזין יחד: (כח) **ראו ראינו**. ראו בחדיך רמיזו דך: **תהי נא אלה בינותינו וגו'**. כתלה שאר בינותיהו מימי חדיך, תהי גם עתה בינינו ובינך: (כט) **לא נגענוך**. כשאמרנו לך לך מעמנו: **אתה**. גם אתה (ס"ח עתה) עשה לנו כמו כן: (לג) **שבעה**. על שם הכריתה: (לד) **בן ארבעים שנה**. עשו היה כמשל לחזיר, שנאמר יכרסמנה חזיר מיער[5], כחזיר הזה, כשהוא שוכב פושט טלפיו לומר ראו שאני טהור, כך הלז גוזלים ומומסים, ומרחיס עלמה כשריס. כל מי שאה היה עשו לד נשים מתחת יד בעליהן, ומענה אותם, כשהיה בן מ', אמר, אבא בן מ' שאה נשא אשה, לף אני כן: (לה) **מורת רוח**. לשון המרת רוח, כמו ממריס הייתם[6], כל מעשיהן היו להכעיס ולעצבון: **ליצחק ולרבקה**. שהיו עובדות

	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)

1 ב"ר סד, ט 2 שופטים יד, יא 3 תהלים ס, יג 4 ישעי' נא, כא 5 תהלים פ, יד 6 דברים ט, כד

FOURTH READING

[23] *He went up from there to Be'er-Sheva.* [24] *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."*

[25] *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 *Avimelech went to him from Gerar with a group of his companions and Pichol, his army-general.* [27] *Yitzchak said to them, "Why have you come to me, if you hate me, and you sent me away from you?"*

[28] *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,* [29] *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

[30] *(Yitzchak) made a feast for them, and they ate and drank.* [31] *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.*

[32] *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."* [33] *He named it Shivah ("oath"). The city is therefore called Be'er-sheva to this very day.*

EISAV MARRIES

[34] *When Eisav was forty years old he married Yehudis, the daughter of Be'airiy the Chitite, and Basmas, the daughter of Ailon the Chitite.* [35] *(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. 26*ff.*), 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)

יִצְחָק וַתִּכְהֶיןָ עֵינָיו מֵרְאֹת וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־עֵשָׂו | בְּנוֹ הַגָּדֹל
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו בְּנִי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הִנֵּנִי: ב וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה־נָא זָקַנְתִּי לֹא
יָדַעְתִּי יוֹם מוֹתִי: ג וְעַתָּה שָׂא־נָא כֵלֶיךָ תֶּלְיְךָ וְקַשְׁתֶּךָ וְצֵא
הַשָּׂדֶה וְצוּדָה לִי צֵידָה [ק׳ צַיִד]: ד וַעֲשֵׂה־לִי מַטְעַמִּים כַּאֲשֶׁר
אָהַבְתִּי וְהָבִיאָה לִי וְאֹכֵלָה בַּעֲבוּר תְּבָרֶכְךָ נַפְשִׁי בְּטֶרֶם
אָמוּת: ה וְרִבְקָה שֹׁמַעַת בְּדַבֵּר יִצְחָק אֶל־עֵשָׂו בְּנוֹ וַיֵּלֶךְ עֵשָׂו
הַשָּׂדֶה לָצוּד צַיִד לְהָבִיא: ו וְרִבְקָה אָמְרָה אֶל־יַעֲקֹב בְּנָהּ
לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה שָׁמַעְתִּי אֶת־אָבִיךָ מְדַבֵּר אֶל־עֵשָׂו אָחִיךָ לֵאמֹר:
ז הָבִיאָה לִי צַיִד וַעֲשֵׂה־לִי מַטְעַמִּים וְאֹכְלָה וַאֲבָרֶכְכָה לִפְנֵי
יְהוָה לִפְנֵי מוֹתִי: ח וְעַתָּה בְנִי שְׁמַע בְּקֹלִי לַאֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוֶּה
אֹתָךְ: ט לֶךְ־נָא אֶל־הַצֹּאן וְקַח־לִי מִשָּׁם שְׁנֵי גְדָיֵי עִזִּים טֹבִים
וְאֶעֱשֶׂה אֹתָם מַטְעַמִּים לְאָבִיךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר אָהֵב: י וְהֵבֵאתָ לְאָבִיךָ
וְאָכַל בַּעֲבוּר אֲשֶׁר יְבָרֶכְךָ לִפְנֵי מוֹתוֹ: יא וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־
רִבְקָה אִמּוֹ הֵן עֵשָׂו אָחִי אִישׁ שָׂעִר וְאָנֹכִי אִישׁ חָלָק: יב אוּלַי

סִיב יִצְחָק וְכָהֲיָא עֵינוֹהִי מִלְּמֶחֱזֵי וּקְרָא יַת
עֵשָׂו בְּרֵיהּ רַבָּא וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ בְּרִי וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ
הָא אֲנָא: ב וַאֲמַר הָא כְעַן סִיבִית לֵית אֲנָא
יָדַע יוֹמָא דְאִימוּתִי: ג וּכְעַן סַב כְּעַן זַיְנָךְ סָיְפָךְ
וְקַשְׁתָּךְ וּפוֹק לְחַקְלָא וְצוּד לִי צֵידָא: ד וַעֲבֵיד
לִי תַּבְשִׁילִין כְּמָא דִי רְחֵימִית וְתָעֵיל לִי
וְאֵיכוֹל בְּדִיל דִּי תְּבָרְכִינָךְ נַפְשִׁי עַד לָא
אֲמוּת: ה וְרִבְקָה שְׁמַעַת כַּד מַלִּיל יִצְחָק עִם
עֵשָׂו בְּרֵיהּ וַאֲזַל עֵשָׂו לְחַקְלָא לְמֵיצַד צֵידָא
לְאַיְתָאָה: ו וְרִבְקָה אֲמָרַת לְיַעֲקֹב בְּרָהּ
לְמֵימַר הָא שְׁמָעִית יַת אֲבוּךְ מְמַלֵּל עִם עֵשָׂו
אָחוּךְ לְמֵימָר: ז אַיְתֵי לִי צֵידָא וַעֲבֵיד לִי
תַּבְשִׁילִין וְאֵיכוֹל וַאֲבָרְכִינָךְ קֳדָם יְיָ קֳדָם
מוֹתִי: ח וּכְעַן בְּרִי קַבֵּיל מִנִּי לְמָא דִי אֲנָא
מְפַקֶּדָא יָתָךְ: ט אֲזֵיל כְּעַן לְוָת עָנָא וְסַב לִי
מִתַּמָּן תְּרֵין גַּדְיֵי (בַר) עִזִּין טָבָן וְאַעְבֵּיד יַתְהוֹן
תַּבְשִׁילִין לַאֲבוּךְ כְּמָא דִי רְחֵים: י וְתֵיתֵי
לַאֲבוּךְ וְייכוֹל בְּדִיל דִּי יְבָרְכִינָךְ קֳדָם מוֹתֵיהּ:
יא וַאֲמַר יַעֲקֹב לְרִבְקָה אִמֵּיהּ הָא עֵשָׂו אָחִי
גְּבַר שַׂעֲרָן וַאֲנָא גְּבַר שְׁעִיעַ: יב מָאִים

רס"י

עבודת מלילים[1]: (ה) **ותבהין**. בעשן של מלו, (שכיו מעשנות ומקטירות לעבודת מלילים). דבר אחר, כשנעקד על גבי המזבח, וכיה אחיו רולה לשחטו, בחותה שעה נפתחו השמים, ורחו מלאכי השרת וכיו בוכים, וירדו דמעותיהם ונפלו על עיניו, לפיכך כהו עיניו. דבר אחר, כדי שיטול יעקב את הברכות: (ג) **לא ידעתי יום מותי**. אמר רבי יהושע בן קרחה, אם מגיע אדם לפרק אחותיו, ידלג חמש שניס לפניהס, וחמש לאחר כן, ויאחז כיה בן קכ"ג, אמר, שמא לפרק אמי אני מגיע, וכיה בת קכ"ז מתה, והריני בן כ' שניס סמוך לפרקה, לפיכך לא ידעתי יום מותי, שמא לפרק אמי שמא לפרק אחת:

(ג) **תליך**. מרכך, שדרך לתלותה: **שא נא**. לשון השאזה, כחותה שאניו[2], אין משחיזין את הסכין אלא על גבי חברתה, חדד סכינך ושחוט יפה שלא תאכילני נבלה[3]: **וצודה לי**. מן הכפקר, ולא מן הגזל: (ה) **לצוד ציד להביא**. מהו להביא, אם לא ימלא ליד, יביא מן הגזל: (ז) **לפני ה׳**. ברשותו, שיסכיס על ידי: (ט) **וקח לי**. משלי הס ואיני גזל, שכך כתב לה יצחק בכתובתה ליטול שני גדיי עזיס **שני גדיי עזים**. וכי שני גדיי עזיס היה מאכלו של יצחק, אלא פסח היה, כאחד הקריב לפסחו, ואחד עשה מטעמים. בפרקי דרבי אליעזר: **באשר אהב**. כי טעם הגדי כטעם הלבי: (יא) **איש שער**. בעל

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 Chitite.

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. 163*ff*.)

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?

1 ב״ר סה, ד 2 ביצה כח. 3 ב״ר סה, יג 4 שם שם יד

Ya'akov Takes Eisav's Blessing

27 Yitzchak 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.

2 "Look, now I have grown old. I don't know when I will die. 3 So now, sharpen your tools, (take) your sword and your bow, and go out to the field to hunt game for me. 4 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."

5 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).

6 Rivkah said to her son Ya'akov, "Look, I heard your father speaking to Eisav your brother, saying, 7 'Bring me game and make me tasty foods to eat, and I will bless you before my death, before God.' 8 Now, my son, listen to my voice, to what I am commanding you: 9 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). 10 You will bring (them) to your father to eat. For (doing this) he will bless you before he dies."

11 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.

*ע"פ לקו"ש חט"ו, ע' 211, הערה 5.

יְמֻשֵּׁנִי אָבִי וְהָיִיתִי בְעֵינָיו כִּמְתַעְתֵּעַ וְהֵבֵאתִי עָלַי קְלָלָה וְלֹא
בְרָכָה: יג וַתַּאמֶר לוֹ אִמּוֹ עָלַי קִלְלָתְךָ בְּנִי אַךְ שְׁמַע בְּקֹלִי וְלֵךְ
קַח־לִי: יד וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּקַּח וַיָּבֵא לְאִמּוֹ וַתַּעַשׂ אִמּוֹ מַטְעַמִּים כַּאֲשֶׁר
אָהֵב אָבִיו: טו וַתִּקַּח רִבְקָה אֶת־בִּגְדֵי עֵשָׂו בְּנָהּ הַגָּדֹל הַחֲמֻדֹת
אֲשֶׁר אִתָּהּ בַּבָּיִת וַתַּלְבֵּשׁ אֶת־יַעֲקֹב בְּנָהּ הַקָּטָן: טז וְאֵת עֹרֹת
גְּדָיֵי הָעִזִּים הִלְבִּישָׁה עַל־יָדָיו וְעַל חֶלְקַת צַוָּארָיו: יז וַתִּתֵּן
אֶת־הַמַּטְעַמִּים וְאֶת־הַלֶּחֶם אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂתָה בְּיַד יַעֲקֹב בְּנָהּ:
יח וַיָּבֹא אֶל־אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִי וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֻּנִי מִי אַתָּה בְּנִי:
יט וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־אָבִיו אָנֹכִי עֵשָׂו בְּכֹרֶךָ עָשִׂיתִי כַּאֲשֶׁר
דִּבַּרְתָּ אֵלָי קוּם־נָא שְׁבָה וְאָכְלָה מִצֵּידִי בַּעֲבוּר תְּבָרֲכַנִי
נַפְשֶׁךָ: כ וַיֹּאמֶר יִצְחָק אֶל־בְּנוֹ מַה־זֶּה מִהַרְתָּ לִמְצֹא בְנִי
וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי הִקְרָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְפָנָי: כא וַיֹּאמֶר יִצְחָק אֶל־יַעֲקֹב
גְּשָׁה־נָּא וַאֲמֻשְׁךָ בְּנִי הַאַתָּה זֶה בְּנִי עֵשָׂו אִם־לֹא: כב וַיִּגַּשׁ

יְמוּשֵׁנִי אַבָּא וְאֶהְיֶה בְעֵינָיו כִּמְתַלְעֵב וְאֶהֱבִי
מַיְתֵי עֲלַי לְוָטִין וְלָא בִרְכָן: יג וַאֲמָרַת לֵיהּ
אִמֵּיהּ עֲלַי אִתְאֲמַר בִּנְבוּאָה דְּלָא יֵיתוּן לְוָטַיָּא
עֲלָךְ בְּרִי בְּרַם קַבֵּיל מִנִּי וְאִזֵיל סַב לִי:
יד וַאֲזַל וּנְסִיב וְאֵיתִי לְאִמֵּיהּ וַעֲבָדַת אִמֵּיהּ
תַּבְשִׁילִין כְּמָא דִּי רְחֵים אֲבוּהִי: טו וּנְסִיבַת
רִבְקָה יַת לְבוּשֵׁי עֵשָׂו בְּרָהּ רַבָּא דַּכְיָתָא דִּי
עִמָּהּ בְּבֵיתָא וְאַלְבִּישַׁת יַת יַעֲקֹב בְּרָהּ זְעִירָא:
טז וְיַת מַשְׁכֵי דְּגַדֵּיֵי בַּר עִזֵּי אַלְבִּישַׁת עַל
יְדוֹהִי וְעַל שְׁעִיעוּת צַוְּרֵיהּ: יז וְיָהֲבַת יַת
תַּבְשִׁילַיָּא וְיַת לַחְמָא דִּי עֲבָדַת בִּידָא דְיַעֲקֹב
בְּרָהּ: יח וְעַל לְוָת אֲבוּהִי וַאֲמַר אַבָּא וַאֲמַר
הָא אֲנָא מָאן אַתְּ בְּרִי: יט וַאֲמַר יַעֲקֹב
לַאֲבוּהִי אֲנָא עֵשָׂו בּוּכְרָךְ עֲבָדִית כְּמָא דִּי
מַלֶּלְתָּא עִמִּי קוּם כְּעַן אִסְתַּחַר וְתִיכוֹל מִצֵּידִי
בְּדִיל דִּי תְּבָרְכִנַנִי נַפְשָׁךְ: כ וַאֲמַר יִצְחָק
לִבְרֵיהּ מָא דֵּין אוֹחֵיתָא לְאַשְׁכָּחָא בְּרִי וַאֲמַר
אֲרֵי זַמִּין יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ קֳדָמָי: כא וַאֲמַר יִצְחָק
לְיַעֲקֹב קָרֵיב כְּעַן וַאֲמוּשִׁינָךְ בְּרִי הַאַתְּ דֵּין
בְּרִי עֵשָׂו אִם לָא: כב וּקְרֵיב יַעֲקֹב לְוָת יִצְחָק

רס"י

טעה: (יב) **ימשני**. כמו ממשם בלהריס[1]: (טו) **החמדות**. הנקיות כתרגומו דכייתא. דבר אחר שחמד מותן מן נמרוד: **אשר אתה בבית**. והלא כמה נשים היו לו, והוא מפקיד אצל אמו, אלא שהיה בקי בטעיסין ומוסדן:
(יט) **אנכי עשו בכרך**. חנכי המביא לך, ועשו הוא בכורך: **עשיתי**. כמו דבריס, כאשר דברת אלי: **שבה**. לשון מיסב על השלחן, לכך מתורגם מסתחר: (כא) **גשה נא ואמשך**. אמר יצחק בלבו, אין דרך עשו להיות שם שמיס

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)

1 דברים כח, כז

(skinned) person. [12] *Maybe my father will feel me, and see that I am an imposter—I will bring upon myself a curse and not a blessing."*

[13] *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."*

[14] *So he went, and took (the goats), and he brought (them) to his mother. His mother made tasty foods, that his father loved.* [15] *Rivkah took her older son Eisav's clean clothing which she had in the house, and she dressed Ya'akov, her younger son.* [16] *She put the goats' skins on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck.* [17] *She gave the tasty foods and the bread which she had made, into the hand of Ya'akov, her son.*

[18] *He came to his father and said, "My father!"*

(Yitzchak) said, "I'm here. Who are you, my son?"

[19] *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."*

[20] *Yitzchak said to his son, "How did you find it so quickly, my son?"*

He said, "Because God, your God, brought it to me."

[21] *(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. 211*ff.*)

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'amorim Melukat*, vol. 4, p. 64, note 14)

יַעֲקֹב אֶל־יִצְחָק אָבִיו וַיְמֻשֵּׁהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר הַקֹּל קוֹל יַעֲקֹב וְהַיָּדַיִם
יְדֵי עֵשָׂו: כג וְלֹא הִכִּירוֹ כִּי־הָיוּ יָדָיו כִּידֵי עֵשָׂו אָחִיו שְׂעֹרֹת
וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ: כד וַיֹּאמֶר אַתָּה זֶה בְּנִי עֵשָׂו וַיֹּאמֶר אָנִי: כה וַיֹּאמֶר
הַגִּשָׁה לִי וְאֹכְלָה מִצֵּיד בְּנִי לְמַעַן תְּבָרֶכְךָ נַפְשִׁי וַיַּגֶּשׁ־לוֹ
וַיֹּאכַל וַיָּבֵא לוֹ יַיִן וַיִּשְׁתְּ: כו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו יִצְחָק אָבִיו גְּשָׁה־נָּא
*וְשָׁקָה־לִּי בְנִי: כז וַיִּגַּשׁ וַיִּשַּׁק־לוֹ וַיָּרַח אֶת־רֵיחַ בְּגָדָיו וַיְבָרֲכֵהוּ
וַיֹּאמֶר רְאֵה רֵיחַ בְּנִי כְּרֵיחַ שָׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר בֵּרַכוֹ יְהוָה: [ששי]
כח וְיִתֶּן־לְךָ הָאֱלֹהִים מִטַּל הַשָּׁמַיִם וּמִשְׁמַנֵּי הָאָרֶץ וְרֹב דָּגָן
וְתִירֹשׁ: כט יַעַבְדוּךָ עַמִּים וישתחו [קכ וְיִשְׁתַּחֲווּ] לְךָ לְאֻמִּים הֱוֵה

אֲבוּהִי וּמְשֵׁשֵׁהּ וַאֲמַר קָלָא קָלֵיהּ דְיַעֲקֹב וִידַיָא
יְדוֹהִי דְעֵשָׂו: כג וְלָא אִשְׁתְּמוֹדְעֵיהּ אֲרֵי הֲווֹ
יְדוֹהִי כִּידֵי עֵשָׂו אֲחוּהִי שְׂעִירָן וּבָרְכֵיהּ:
כד וַאֲמַר אַתְּ דֵּין בְּרִי עֵשָׂו וַאֲמַר אֲנָא: כה וַאֲמַר
קָרֵיב קֳדָמַי וְאֵיכוֹל מִצֵּידָא דִבְרִי בְּדִיל
דִּתְבָרְכִנָּךְ נַפְשִׁי וְקָרֵיב לֵיהּ וַאֲכַל וַאֲיְתִי לֵיהּ
חַמְרָא וּשְׁתִי: כו וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ יִצְחָק אֲבוּהִי קָרֵיב
כְּעַן וּנְשַׁק לִי בְּרִי: כז וּקְרֵיב וּנְשֵׁיק לֵיהּ וַאֲרַח
יַת רֵיחָא דִלְבוּשׁוֹהִי וּבָרְכֵיהּ וַאֲמַר חֲזִי רֵיחָא
דִבְרִי כְּרֵיחַ חַקְלָא דִי בָרְכֵיהּ יְיָ: כח וְיִתֶּן לָךְ
יְיָ מִטַּלָּא דִשְׁמַיָּא וּמִטּוּבָא דְאַרְעָא וּסְגִיאוּת
עִבּוּר וַחֲמָר: כט יִפְלְחוּנָךְ עַמְמִין וְיִשְׁתַּעְבְּדוּן

*ס"א וּשְׁקָה

רש"י

שגור בפיו, וזה אומר כי הקרה ה' אלהיך: (כג) **קול יעקב**. שמדבר בלשון תחנונים, קוס גת, אבל עשו בלשון קנטוריא דבר, יקוס אבי: (כד) **ויאמר אני**. לא אמר אני עשו, אלא אני: (כז) **וירח וגו'**. והלא אין ריח רע יותר מעשו הרשיע, אלא מלמד שנכנסה עמו ריח גן עדן: **בריח שדה אשר ברכו ה'**. שנתן בו ריח טוב, וזה שדה תפוחים, כן דרשו רז"ל: (כח) **ויתן לך**. יתן ויחזור ויתן[1]. ולפי פשוטו מוסב לענין הרחמון, רואה 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 חֲמֻדוֹת, and *Rashi* offers two interpretations: "חֲמֻדוֹת *means "the clean ones," as Onkelos renders,* דַּכְיָתָא (*clean ones*). *Another explanation: the garments that he had coveted* (שֶׁחָמַד) *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

1 ב"ר סו, ג 2 מלכים-א ז, לט

[22] 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!" [23] He did not recognize him because his hands were hairy like his brother Eisav's hands, and he blessed him.

[24] He said, "Are you my son Eisav?"

"I am," he said.

[25] 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.

[26] His father Yitzchak said to him, "Please come closer and kiss me, my son."

[27] (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!"

SIXTH READING

[28] "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. [29] Nations will serve you; kingdoms will bow down to you.

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. 80*ff.; Sichas Shabbos Parshas Toldos* 5724)

גְּבִיר לְאַחֶיךָ וְיִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְךָ בְּנֵי אִמֶּךָ אֹרְרֶיךָ אָרוּר וּמְבָרֲכֶיךָ
בָּרוּךְ: ל וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר כִּלָּה יִצְחָק לְבָרֵךְ אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וַיְהִי אַךְ יָצֹא
יָצָא יַעֲקֹב מֵאֵת פְּנֵי יִצְחָק אָבִיו וְעֵשָׂו אָחִיו בָּא מִצֵּידוֹ:
לא וַיַּעַשׂ גַּם־הוּא מַטְעַמִּים וַיָּבֵא לְאָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר לְאָבִיו יָקֻם אָבִי
וְיֹאכַל מִצֵּיד בְּנוֹ בַּעֲבוּר תְּבָרֲכַנִי נַפְשֶׁךָ: לב וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יִצְחָק
אָבִיו מִי־אַתָּה וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי בִנְךָ בְכֹרְךָ עֵשָׂו: לג וַיֶּחֱרַד יִצְחָק
חֲרָדָה גְּדֹלָה עַד־מְאֹד וַיֹּאמֶר מִי־אֵפוֹא הוּא הַצָּד־צַיִד וַיָּבֵא
לִי וָאֹכַל מִכֹּל בְּטֶרֶם תָּבוֹא וָאֲבָרֲכֵהוּ גַּם־בָּרוּךְ יִהְיֶה:
לד כִּשְׁמֹעַ עֵשָׂו אֶת־דִּבְרֵי אָבִיו וַיִּצְעַק צְעָקָה גְּדֹלָה וּמָרָה
עַד־מְאֹד וַיֹּאמֶר לְאָבִיו בָּרְכֵנִי גַם־אֲנִי אָבִי: לה וַיֹּאמֶר בָּא
אָחִיךָ בְּמִרְמָה וַיִּקַּח בִּרְכָתֶךָ: לו וַיֹּאמֶר הֲכִי קָרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב
וַיַּעְקְבֵנִי זֶה פַּעֲמַיִם אֶת־בְּכֹרָתִי לָקָח וְהִנֵּה עַתָּה לָקַח בִּרְכָתִי
וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלֹא־אָצַלְתָּ לִּי בְּרָכָה: לז וַיַּעַן יִצְחָק וַיֹּאמֶר לְעֵשָׂו הֵן
גְּבִיר שַׂמְתִּיו לָךְ וְאֶת־כָּל־אֶחָיו נָתַתִּי לוֹ לַעֲבָדִים וְדָגָן וְתִירֹשׁ
סְמַכְתִּיו וּלְכָה אֵפוֹא מָה אֶעֱשֶׂה בְנִי: לח וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו אֶל־אָבִיו
הַבְרָכָה אַחַת הִוא־לְךָ אָבִי בָּרְכֵנִי גַם־אֲנִי אָבִי וַיִּשָּׂא עֵשָׂו
קֹלוֹ וַיֵּבְךְּ: לט וַיַּעַן יִצְחָק אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הִנֵּה מִשְׁמַנֵּי הָאָרֶץ

לָךְ מוֹשָׁבֶךָ וּמִטַּל הַשָּׁמַיִם מֵעָל: מ וְעַל־חַרְבְּךָ תִחְיֶה וְאֶת־אָחִיךָ
תַּעֲבֹד וְהָיָה כַּאֲשֶׁר תָּרִיד וּפָרַקְתָּ עֻלּוֹ מֵעַל צַוָּארֶךָ: מא וַיִּשְׂטֹם
עֵשָׂו אֶת־יַעֲקֹב עַל־הַבְּרָכָה אֲשֶׁר בֵּרְכוֹ אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו בְּלִבּוֹ
יִקְרְבוּ יְמֵי אֵבֶל אָבִי וְאַהַרְגָה אֶת־יַעֲקֹב אָחִי: מב וַיֻּגַּד לְרִבְקָה
אֶת־דִּבְרֵי עֵשָׂו בְּנָהּ הַגָּדֹל וַתִּשְׁלַח וַתִּקְרָא לְיַעֲקֹב בְּנָהּ הַצָּעִיר
וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הִנֵּה עֵשָׂו אָחִיךָ מִתְנַחֵם לְךָ לְהָרְגֶךָ: מג וְעַתָּה בְּנִי
שְׁמַע בְּקֹלִי וְקוּם בְּרַח־לְךָ אֶל־לָבָן אָחִי חָרָנָה: מד וְיָשַׁבְתָּ עִמּוֹ
יָמִים אֲחָדִים עַד אֲשֶׁר־תָּשׁוּב חֲמַת אָחִיךָ: מה עַד שׁוּב אַף־אָחִיךָ
מִמְּךָ וְשָׁכַח אֵת אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתָ לוֹ וְשָׁלַחְתִּי וּלְקַחְתִּיךָ מִשָּׁם
לָמָּה אֶשְׁכַּל גַּם־שְׁנֵיכֶם יוֹם אֶחָד: מו וַתֹּאמֶר רִבְקָה אֶל־יִצְחָק
קַצְתִּי בְחַיַּי מִפְּנֵי בְנוֹת חֵת אִם־לֹקֵחַ יַעֲקֹב אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת חֵת
כָּאֵלֶּה מִבְּנוֹת הָאָרֶץ לָמָּה זֶּה לִי חַיִּים: כח וַיִּקְרָא יִצְחָק אֶל־יַעֲקֹב
וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתוֹ וַיְצַוֵּהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לֹא־תִקַּח אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת כְּנָעַן:
כט קוּם לֵךְ פַּדֶּנָה אֲרָם בֵּיתָה בְתוּאֵל אֲבִי אִמֶּךָ וְקַח־לְךָ מִשָּׁם
אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת לָבָן אֲחִי אִמֶּךָ: ל וְאֵל שַׁדַּי יְבָרֵךְ אֹתְךָ וְיַפְרְךָ
וְיַרְבֶּךָ וְהָיִיתָ לִקְהַל עַמִּים: לא וְיִתֶּן־לְךָ אֶת־בִּרְכַּת אַבְרָהָם
לְךָ וּלְזַרְעֲךָ אִתָּךְ לְרִשְׁתְּךָ אֶת־אֶרֶץ מְגֻרֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן אֱלֹהִים
לְאַבְרָהָם: לב וַיִּשְׁלַח יִצְחָק אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וַיֵּלֶךְ פַּדֶּנָה אֲרָם אֶל־לָבָן
בֶּן־בְּתוּאֵל הָאֲרַמִּי אֲחִי רִבְקָה אֵם יַעֲקֹב וְעֵשָׂו: לג וְעֵשָׂו רָאָה
כִּי רָעוֹת בְּנוֹת כְּנָעַן בְּעֵינֵי יִצְחָק אָבִיו: לד וַיֵּלֶךְ עֵשָׂו אֶל־יִשְׁמָעֵאל
וַיִּקַּח אֶת־מָחֲלַת בַּת־יִשְׁמָעֵאל בֶּן־אַבְרָהָם אֲחוֹת נְבָיוֹת עַל־נָשָׁיו
לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה: לה וַיַּעֲקֹב יָצָא מִבְּאֵר שָׁבַע וַיֵּלֶךְ חָרָנָה: לו וַיִּפְגַּע
בַּמָּקוֹם וַיָּלֶן שָׁם כִּי בָא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וַיִּקַּח מֵאַבְנֵי הַמָּקוֹם וַיָּשֶׂם
מְרַאֲשֹׁתָיו וַיִּשְׁכַּב בַּמָּקוֹם הַהוּא: לז וַיַּחֲלֹם וְהִנֵּה סֻלָּם מֻצָּב
אַרְצָה וְרֹאשׁוֹ מַגִּיעַ הַשָּׁמָיְמָה וְהִנֵּה מַלְאֲכֵי אֱלֹהִים עֹלִים וְיֹרְדִים
בּוֹ: לח וְהִנֵּה יְהוָה נִצָּב עָלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם
אָבִיךָ וֵאלֹהֵי יִצְחָק הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה שֹׁכֵב עָלֶיהָ לְךָ אֶתְּנֶנָּה
וּלְזַרְעֶךָ: לט וְהָיָה זַרְעֲךָ כַּעֲפַר הָאָרֶץ וּפָרַצְתָּ יָמָּה וָקֵדְמָה
וְצָפוֹנָה וָנֶגְבָּה וְנִבְרְכוּ בְךָ כֹּל מִשְׁפְּחֹת הָאֲדָמָה וּבְזַרְעֶךָ:
מ וְהִנֵּה אָנֹכִי עִמָּךְ וּשְׁמַרְתִּיךָ בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵךְ וַהֲשִׁבֹתִיךָ אֶל־
הָאֲדָמָה הַזֹּאת כִּי לֹא אֶעֶזָבְךָ עַד אֲשֶׁר אִם־עָשִׂיתִי אֵת אֲשֶׁר־
דִּבַּרְתִּי לָךְ: מא וַיִּיקַץ יַעֲקֹב מִשְּׁנָתוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אָכֵן יֵשׁ יְהוָה בַּמָּקוֹם
הַזֶּה וְאָנֹכִי לֹא יָדָעְתִּי: מב וַיִּירָא וַיֹּאמֶר מָה נּוֹרָא הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה
אֵין זֶה כִּי אִם־בֵּית אֱלֹהִים וְזֶה שַׁעַר הַשָּׁמָיִם: מג וַיַּשְׁכֵּם יַעֲקֹב
בַּבֹּקֶר וַיִּקַּח אֶת־הָאֶבֶן אֲשֶׁר־שָׂם מְרַאֲשֹׁתָיו וַיָּשֶׂם אֹתָהּ מַצֵּבָה
וַיִּצֹק שֶׁמֶן עַל־רֹאשָׁהּ: מד וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שֵׁם־הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא בֵּית־אֵל
וְאוּלָם לוּז שֵׁם הָעִיר לָרִאשֹׁנָה: מה וַיִּדַּר יַעֲקֹב נֶדֶר לֵאמֹר אִם־יִהְיֶה
אֱלֹהִים עִמָּדִי וּשְׁמָרַנִי בַּדֶּרֶךְ הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ וְנָתַן־לִי
לֶחֶם לֶאֱכֹל וּבֶגֶד לִלְבֹּשׁ: מו וְשַׁבְתִּי בְשָׁלוֹם אֶל־בֵּית אָבִי וְהָיָה
יְהוָה לִי לֵאלֹהִים: מז וְהָאֶבֶן הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר־שַׂמְתִּי מַצֵּבָה יִהְיֶה בֵּית
אֱלֹהִים וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר תִּתֶּן־לִי עַשֵּׂר אֲעַשְּׂרֶנּוּ לָךְ: מח וַיִּשָּׂא יַעֲקֹב
רַגְלָיו וַיֵּלֶךְ אַרְצָה בְּנֵי קֶדֶם: מט וַיַּרְא וְהִנֵּה בְאֵר בַּשָּׂדֶה וְהִנֵּה־שָׁם
שְׁלֹשָׁה עֲדָרֵי צֹאן רֹבְצִים עָלֶיהָ כִּי מִן־הַבְּאֵר הַהִוא יַשְׁקוּ הָעֲדָרִים
וְהָאֶבֶן גְּדֹלָה עַל־פִּי הַבְּאֵר: נ וְנֶאֶסְפוּ שָׁמָּה כָּל־הָעֲדָרִים וְגָלְלוּ
אֶת־הָאֶבֶן מֵעַל פִּי הַבְּאֵר וְהִשְׁקוּ אֶת־הַצֹּאן וְהֵשִׁיבוּ אֶת־הָאֶבֶן
עַל־פִּי הַבְּאֵר לִמְקֹמָהּ: נא וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם יַעֲקֹב אֲחַי מֵאַיִן אַתֶּם
וַיֹּאמְרוּ מֵחָרָן אֲנָחְנוּ: נב וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם הֲיְדַעְתֶּם אֶת־לָבָן בֶּן־נָחוֹר
וַיֹּאמְרוּ יָדָעְנוּ: נג וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם הֲשָׁלוֹם לוֹ וַיֹּאמְרוּ שָׁלוֹם וְהִנֵּה
רָחֵל בִּתּוֹ בָּאָה עִם־הַצֹּאן: נד וַיֹּאמֶר הֵן עוֹד הַיּוֹם גָּדוֹל לֹא־עֵת
הֵאָסֹף הַמִּקְנֶה הַשְׁקוּ הַצֹּאן וּלְכוּ רְעוּ: נה וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא נוּכַל עַד
אֲשֶׁר יֵאָסְפוּ כָּל־הָעֲדָרִים וְגָלְלוּ אֶת־הָאֶבֶן מֵעַל פִּי הַבְּאֵר וְהִשְׁקִינוּ
הַצֹּאן: נו עוֹדֶנּוּ מְדַבֵּר עִמָּם וְרָחֵל בָּאָה עִם־הַצֹּאן אֲשֶׁר לְאָבִיהָ כִּי
רֹעָה הִוא: נז וַיְהִי כִּרְאֹת יַעֲקֹב אֶת־רָחֵל בַּת־לָבָן אֲחִי אִמּוֹ וְאֶת־
צֹאן לָבָן אֲחִי אִמּוֹ וַיִּגַּשׁ יַעֲקֹב וַיָּגֶל אֶת־הָאֶבֶן מֵעַל פִּי הַבְּאֵר
וַיַּשְׁקְ אֶת־צֹאן לָבָן אֲחִי אִמּוֹ: נח וַיִּשַּׁק יַעֲקֹב לְרָחֵל וַיִּשָּׂא אֶת־קֹלוֹ
וַיֵּבְךְּ: נט וַיַּגֶּד יַעֲקֹב לְרָחֵל כִּי אֲחִי אָבִיהָ הוּא וְכִי בֶן־רִבְקָה הוּא
וַתָּרָץ וַתַּגֶּד לְאָבִיהָ: ס וַיְהִי כִּשְׁמֹעַ לָבָן אֶת־שֵׁמַע יַעֲקֹב בֶּן־
אֲחֹתוֹ וַיָּרָץ לִקְרָאתוֹ וַיְחַבֵּק לוֹ וַיִּשַּׁק לוֹ וַיְבִאֵהוּ אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ וַיְסַפֵּר
לְלָבָן אֵת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה: סא וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן אֵלָיו אַךְ עֶצֶם
וּבְשָׂרִי אָתָּה וַיֵּשֶׁב עִמּוֹ חֹדֶשׁ יָמִים: סב וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן לְיַעֲקֹב הֲכִי
תַעַבְדֵנִי חִנָּם הַגִּידָה לִּי מַה־מַּשְׂכֻּרְתֶּךָ: סג וּלְלָבָן שְׁתֵּי בָנוֹת שֵׁם
הַגְּדֹלָה לֵאָה וְשֵׁם הַקְּטַנָּה רָחֵל: סד וְעֵינֵי לֵאָה רַכּוֹת וְרָחֵל הָיְתָה
יְפַת־תֹּאַר וְיָפַת מַרְאֶה: סה וַיֶּאֱהַב יַעֲקֹב אֶת־רָחֵל וַיֹּאמֶר אֶעֱבָדְךָ
שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים בְּרָחֵל בִּתְּךָ הַקְּטַנָּה: סו וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן טוֹב תִּתִּי אֹתָהּ לָךְ
מִתִּתִּי אֹתָהּ לְאִישׁ אַחֵר שְׁבָה עִמָּדִי: סז וַיַּעֲבֹד יַעֲקֹב בְּרָחֵל שֶׁבַע
שָׁנִים וַיִּהְיוּ בְעֵינָיו כְּיָמִים אֲחָדִים בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ אֹתָהּ: סח וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב
אֶל־לָבָן הָבָה אֶת־אִשְׁתִּי כִּי מָלְאוּ יָמָי וְאָבוֹאָה אֵלֶיהָ: סט וַיֶּאֱסֹף
לָבָן אֶת־כָּל־אַנְשֵׁי הַמָּקוֹם וַיַּעַשׂ מִשְׁתֶּה: ע וַיְהִי בָעֶרֶב וַיִּקַּח אֶת־
לֵאָה בִתּוֹ וַיָּבֵא אֹתָהּ אֵלָיו וַיָּבֹא אֵלֶיהָ: עא וַיִּתֵּן לָבָן לָהּ אֶת־זִלְפָּה
שִׁפְחָתוֹ לְלֵאָה בִתּוֹ שִׁפְחָה: עב וַיְהִי בַבֹּקֶר וְהִנֵּה הִוא לֵאָה וַיֹּאמֶר
אֶל־לָבָן מַה־זֹּאת עָשִׂיתָ לִּי הֲלֹא בְרָחֵל עָבַדְתִּי עִמָּךְ וְלָמָּה רִמִּיתָנִי:
עג וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן לֹא יֵעָשֶׂה כֵן בִּמְקוֹמֵנוּ לָתֵת הַצָּעִירָה לִפְנֵי הַבְּכִירָה:
עד מַלֵּא שְׁבֻעַ זֹאת וְנִתְּנָה גַם־אֶת־זֹאת בַּעֲבֹדָה אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲבֹד עִמָּדִי
עוֹד שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים אֲחֵרוֹת: עה וַיַּעַשׂ יַעֲקֹב כֵּן וַיְמַלֵּא שְׁבֻעַ זֹאת וַיִּתֶּן־
לוֹ אֶת־רָחֵל בִּתּוֹ לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה: עו וַיִּתֵּן לָבָן לְרָחֵל בִּתּוֹ אֶת־בִּלְהָה
שִׁפְחָתוֹ לָהּ לְשִׁפְחָה: עז וַיָּבֹא גַּם אֶל־רָחֵל וַיֶּאֱהַב גַּם אֶת־רָחֵל
מִלֵּאָה וַיַּעֲבֹד עִמּוֹ עוֹד שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים אֲחֵרוֹת: עח וַיַּרְא יְהוָה כִּי שְׂנוּאָה
לֵאָה וַיִּפְתַּח אֶת־רַחְמָהּ וְרָחֵל עֲקָרָה: עט וַתַּהַר לֵאָה וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן וַתִּקְרָא
שְׁמוֹ רְאוּבֵן כִּי אָמְרָה כִּי־רָאָה יְהוָה בְּעָנְיִי כִּי עַתָּה אֹהֲבַנִי אִישִׁי:
פ וַתַּהַר עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן וַתֹּאמֶר כִּי שָׁמַע יְהוָה כִּי שְׂנוּאָה אָנֹכִי וַיִּתֶּן־
לִי גַּם־אֶת־זֶה וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ שִׁמְעוֹן: פא וַתַּהַר עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן וַתֹּאמֶר
הַפַּעַם יִלָּוֶה אִישִׁי אֵלַי כִּי־יָלַדְתִּי לוֹ שְׁלֹשָׁה בָנִים עַל־כֵּן קָרָא
שְׁמוֹ לֵוִי: פב וַתַּהַר עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן וַתֹּאמֶר הַפַּעַם אוֹדֶה אֶת־יְהוָה
עַל־כֵּן קָרְאָה שְׁמוֹ יְהוּדָה וַתַּעֲמֹד מִלֶּדֶת: פג וַתֵּרֶא רָחֵל כִּי לֹא יָלְדָה
לְיַעֲקֹב וַתְּקַנֵּא רָחֵל בַּאֲחֹתָהּ וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־יַעֲקֹב הָבָה לִי בָנִים וְאִם־
אַיִן מֵתָה אָנֹכִי: פד וַיִּחַר אַף יַעֲקֹב בְּרָחֵל וַיֹּאמֶר הֲתַחַת אֱלֹהִים
אָנֹכִי אֲשֶׁר מָנַע מִמֵּךְ פְּרִי בָטֶן: פה וַתֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה אֲמָתִי בִלְהָה בֹּא
אֵלֶיהָ וְתֵלֶד עַל־בִּרְכַּי וְאִבָּנֶה גַּם־אָנֹכִי מִמֶּנָּה: פו וַתִּתֶּן־לוֹ אֶת־בִּלְהָה
שִׁפְחָתָהּ לְאִשָּׁה וַיָּבֹא אֵלֶיהָ יַעֲקֹב: פז וַתַּהַר בִּלְהָה וַתֵּלֶד לְיַעֲקֹב
בֵּן: פח וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל דָּנַנִי אֱלֹהִים וְגַם שָׁמַע בְּקֹלִי וַיִּתֶּן־לִי בֵּן עַל־כֵּן
קָרְאָה שְׁמוֹ דָּן: פט וַתַּהַר עוֹד בִּלְהָה שִׁפְחַת רָחֵל וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן שֵׁנִי
לְיַעֲקֹב: צ וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל נַפְתּוּלֵי אֱלֹהִים נִפְתַּלְתִּי עִם־אֲחֹתִי גַּם
יָכֹלְתִּי וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ נַפְתָּלִי: צא וַתֵּרֶא לֵאָה כִּי עָמְדָה מִלֶּדֶת וַתִּקַּח
אֶת־זִלְפָּה שִׁפְחָתָהּ וַתִּתֶּן אֹתָהּ לְיַעֲקֹב לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה: צב וַתֹּאמֶר לֵאָה
בָּא גָד וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ גָּד: צג וַתֵּלֶד זִלְפָּה שִׁפְחַת לֵאָה בֵּן שֵׁנִי
לְיַעֲקֹב: צד וַתֹּאמֶר לֵאָה בְּאֻשְׁרִי כִּי אִשְּׁרוּנִי בָנוֹת וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ
אָשֵׁר: צה וַיֵּלֶךְ רְאוּבֵן בִּימֵי קְצִיר־חִטִּים וַיִּמְצָא דוּדָאִים בַּשָּׂדֶה
וַיָּבֵא אֹתָם אֶל־לֵאָה אִמּוֹ וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל אֶל־לֵאָה תְּנִי־נָא לִי מִדּוּדָאֵי
בְנֵךְ: צו וַתֹּאמֶר לָהּ הַמְעַט קָחְתֵּךְ אֶת־אִישִׁי וְלָקַחַת גַּם אֶת־דּוּדָאֵי
בְנִי וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל לָכֵן יִשְׁכַּב עִמָּךְ הַלַּיְלָה תַּחַת דּוּדָאֵי בְנֵךְ: צז וַיָּבֹא
יַעֲקֹב מִן־הַשָּׂדֶה בָּעֶרֶב וַתֵּצֵא לֵאָה לִקְרָאתוֹ וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלַי תָּבוֹא כִּי
שָׂכֹר שְׂכַרְתִּיךָ בְּדוּדָאֵי בְנִי וַיִּשְׁכַּב עִמָּהּ בַּלַּיְלָה הוּא: צח וַיִּשְׁמַע
אֱלֹהִים אֶל־לֵאָה וַתַּהַר וַתֵּלֶד לְיַעֲקֹב בֵּן חֲמִישִׁי: צט וַתֹּאמֶר לֵאָה
נָתַן אֱלֹהִים שְׂכָרִי אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי שִׁפְחָתִי לְאִישִׁי וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ
יִשָּׂשכָר: ק וַתַּהַר עוֹד לֵאָה וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן שִׁשִּׁי לְיַעֲקֹב: קא וַתֹּאמֶר לֵאָה
זְבָדַנִי אֱלֹהִים אֹתִי זֶבֶד טוֹב הַפָּעַם יִזְבְּלֵנִי אִישִׁי כִּי־יָלַדְתִּי לוֹ שִׁשָּׁה
בָנִים וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ זְבוּלֻן: קב וְאַחַר יָלְדָה בַּת וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמָהּ
דִּינָה: קג וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־רָחֵל וַיִּשְׁמַע אֵלֶיהָ אֱלֹהִים וַיִּפְתַּח אֶת־
רַחְמָהּ: קד וַתַּהַר וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן וַתֹּאמֶר אָסַף אֱלֹהִים אֶת־חֶרְפָּתִי: קה וַתִּקְרָא
אֶת־שְׁמוֹ יוֹסֵף לֵאמֹר יֹסֵף יְהוָה לִי בֵּן אַחֵר: קו וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה
רָחֵל אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־לָבָן שַׁלְּחֵנִי וְאֵלְכָה אֶל־מְקוֹמִי
וְאֶל־אַרְצִי: קז תְּנָה אֶת־נָשַׁי וְאֶת־יְלָדַי אֲשֶׁר עָבַדְתִּי אֹתְךָ בָהֶן וְאֵלֵכָה
כִּי אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ אֶת־עֲבֹדָתִי אֲשֶׁר עֲבַדְתִּיךָ: קח וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו לָבָן
אִם־נָא מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ נִחַשְׁתִּי וַיְבָרְכֵנִי יְהוָה בִּגְלָלֶךָ: קט וַיֹּאמֶר
נָקְבָה מַשְׂכָּרְתְּךָ עָלַי וְאֶתֵּנָה: קי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ אֵת אֲשֶׁר
עֲבַדְתִּיךָ וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר־הָיָה מִקְנְךָ אִתִּי: קיא כִּי מְעַט אֲשֶׁר־הָיָה לְךָ לְפָנַי
וַיִּפְרֹץ לָרֹב וַיְבָרֶךְ יְהוָה אֹתְךָ לְרַגְלִי וְעַתָּה מָתַי אֶעֱשֶׂה גַּם־אָנֹכִי
לְבֵיתִי: קיב וַיֹּאמֶר מַה־אֶּתֶּן לָךְ וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב לֹא־תִתֶּן לִי מְאוּמָה
אִם־תַּעֲשֶׂה־לִּי הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה אָשׁוּבָה אֶרְעֶה צֹאנְךָ אֶשְׁמֹר: קיג אֶעֱבָר
בְּכָל־צֹאנְךָ הַיּוֹם הָסֵר מִשָּׁם כָּל־שֶׂה נָקֹד וְטָלוּא וְכָל־שֶׂה עָקֹד בַּכְּשָׂבִים
וְטָלוּא וְנָקֹד בָּעִזִּים וְהָיָה שְׂכָרִי: קיד וְעָנְתָה־בִּי צִדְקָתִי בְּיוֹם מָחָר
כִּי־תָבוֹא עַל־שְׂכָרִי לְפָנֶיךָ כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־אֵינֶנּוּ נָקֹד וְטָלוּא בָּעִזִּים
וְעָקֹד בַּכְּשָׂבִים גָּנוּב הוּא אִתִּי: קטו וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן הֵן לוּ יְהִי כִּדְבָרֶךָ:
קטז וַיָּסַר בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶת־הַתְּיָשִׁים הָעֲקֻדִּים וְהַטְלֻאִים וְאֵת כָּל־
הָעִזִּים הַטְלָאוֹת וְנָקֹד כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־לָבָן בּוֹ וְכָל־עָקֹד בַּכְּשָׂבִים וַיִּתֵּן
בְּיַד בָּנָיו: קיז וַיָּשֶׂם דֶּרֶךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים בֵּינוֹ וּבֵין יַעֲקֹב וְיַעֲקֹב רֹעֶה
אֶת־צֹאן לָבָן הַנּוֹתָרֹת: קיח וַיִּקַּח־לוֹ יַעֲקֹב מַקַּל לִבְנֶה לַח וְשָׁקֵד
וְעַרְמוֹן וַיְפַצֵּל בָּהֶן פְּצָלוֹת לְבָנוֹת מַחְשֹׂף הַלְּבָן אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַמַּקְלוֹת:
קיט וַיַּצֵּג אֶת־הַמַּקְלוֹת אֲשֶׁר פִּצֵּל בָּרְהָטִים בַּשִּׁקָּתוֹת הַמָּיִם אֲשֶׁר
תָּבֹאנָה הַצֹּאן לִנְגֹּד הַצֹּאן וַיֵּחַמְנָה בְּבוֹאָן לָשְׁתּוֹת: קכ וַיֵּחַמוּ הַצֹּאן
אֵלֶיהָ וַתֵּלַדְנָה הַצֹּאן עֲקֻדִּים נְקֻדִּים וּטְלֻאִים: קכא וְהַכְּשָׂבִים הִפְרִיד
יַעֲקֹב וַיִּתֵּן פְּנֵי הַצֹּאן אֶל־עָקֹד וְכָל־חוּם בְּצֹאן לָבָן וַיָּשֶׁת לוֹ עֲדָרִים
לְבַדּוֹ וְלֹא שָׁתָם עַל־צֹאן לָבָן: קכב וְהָיָה בְּכֹל יַחֵם הַצֹּאן הַמְקֻשָּׁרוֹת
וְשָׂם יַעֲקֹב אֶת־הַמַּקְלוֹת לְעֵינֵי הַצֹּאן בָּרְהָטִים וְיַחֵמוּ אֵלֶיהָ בְּמַקְלוֹת:
קכג וּבְהַעְטִיף הַצֹּאן לֹא יָשִׂים וְהָיָה הָעֲקֻדִּים לְלָבָן וְהַקְּשֻׁרִים לְיַעֲקֹב:
קכד וַיִּפְרֹץ הָאִישׁ מְאֹד מְאֹד וַיְהִי־לוֹ צֹאן רַבּוֹת וּשְׁפָחוֹת וְעַבָדִים
וְגְמַלִּים וַחֲמֹרִים: קכה וַיִּשְׁמַע אֶת־דִּבְרֵי בְנֵי־לָבָן לֵאמֹר לָקַח יַעֲקֹב
אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר לְאָבִינוּ וּמֵאֲשֶׁר לְאָבִינוּ עָשָׂה אֶת כָּל־הַכָּבוֹד הַזֶּה:
קכו וַיַּרְא יַעֲקֹב אֶת־פְּנֵי לָבָן וְהִנֵּה אֵינֶנּוּ אִתּוֹ כִּתְמוֹל שִׁלְשׁוֹם:
קכז וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־יַעֲקֹב שׁוּב אֶל־אֶרֶץ אֲבֹתֶיךָ וּלְמוֹלַדְתֶּךָ וְאֶהְיֶה
עִמָּךְ: קכח וַיִּשְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב וַיִּקְרָא לְרָחֵל וְלֵאָה הַשָּׂדֶה אֶל־צֹאנוֹ:
קכט וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶן רֹאֶה אָנֹכִי אֶת־פְּנֵי אֲבִיכֶן כִּי אֵינֶנּוּ אִתִּי כִּתְמוֹל
שִׁלְשׁוֹם וֵאלֹהֵי אָבִי הָיָה עִמָּדִי: קל וְאַתֶּן יְדַעְתֶּן כִּי בְכָל־כֹּחִי עָבַדְתִּי
אֶת־אֲבִיכֶן: קלא וַאֲבִיכֶן הִתֵּל בִּי וְהֶחֱלִף אֶת־מַשְׂכֻּרְתִּי עֲשֶׂרֶת
מֹנִים וְלֹא־נְתָנוֹ אֱלֹהִים לְהָרַע אִתִּי: קלב אִם־כֹּה יֹאמַר נְקֻדִּים יִהְיֶה
שְׂכָרֶךָ וְיָלְדוּ כָל־הַצֹּאן נְקֻדִּים וְאִם־כֹּה יֹאמַר עֲקֻדִּים יִהְיֶה שְׂכָרֶךָ
וְיָלְדוּ כָל־הַצֹּאן עֲקֻדִּים: קלג וַיַּצֵּל אֱלֹהִים אֶת־מִקְנֵה אֲבִיכֶם וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ
לִי: קלד וַיְהִי בְּעֵת יַחֵם הַצֹּאן וָאֶשָּׂא עֵינַי וָאֶרְאֶה בַּחֲלוֹם וְהִנֵּה
הָעֻתְּדִים הָעֹלִים עַל־הַצֹּאן עֲקֻדִּים נְקֻדִּים וּבְרֻדִּים: קלה וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי
מַלְאַךְ הָאֱלֹהִים בַּחֲלוֹם יַעֲקֹב וָאֹמֶר הִנֵּנִי: קלו וַיֹּאמֶר שָׂא נָא עֵינֶיךָ
וּרְאֵה כָּל־הָעֻתְּדִים הָעֹלִים עַל־הַצֹּאן עֲקֻדִּים נְקֻדִּים וּבְרֻדִּים כִּי רָאִיתִי
אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר לָבָן עֹשֶׂה לָךְ: קלז אָנֹכִי הָאֵל בֵּית־אֵל אֲשֶׁר מָשַׁחְתָּ
שָּׁם מַצֵּבָה אֲשֶׁר נָדַרְתָּ לִי שָׁם נֶדֶר עַתָּה קוּם צֵא מִן־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת
וְשׁוּב אֶל־אֶרֶץ מוֹלַדְתֶּךָ: קלח וַתַּעַן רָחֵל וְלֵאָה וַתֹּאמַרְנָה לוֹ הַעוֹד
לָנוּ חֵלֶק וְנַחֲלָה בְּבֵית אָבִינוּ: קלט הֲלוֹא נָכְרִיּוֹת נֶחְשַׁבְנוּ לוֹ כִּי
מְכָרָנוּ וַיֹּאכַל גָּם אָכוֹל אֶת־כַּסְפֵּנוּ: קמ כִּי כָל־הָעשֶׁר אֲשֶׁר הִצִּיל
אֱלֹהִים מֵאָבִינוּ לָנוּ הוּא וְלִבָנֵינוּ וְעַתָּה כֹּל אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֱלֹהִים אֵלֶיךָ
עֲשֵׂה: קמא וַיָּקָם יַעֲקֹב וַיִּשָּׂא אֶת־בָּנָיו וְאֶת־נָשָׁיו עַל־הַגְּמַלִּים:
קמב וַיִּנְהַג אֶת־כָּל־מִקְנֵהוּ וְאֶת כָּל־רְכֻשׁוֹ אֲשֶׁר רָכָשׁ מִקְנֵה קִנְיָנוֹ
אֲשֶׁר רָכַשׁ בְּפַדַּן אֲרָם לָבוֹא אֶל־יִצְחָק אָבִיו אַרְצָה כְּנָעַן: קמג וְלָבָן
הָלַךְ לִגְזֹז אֶת־צֹאנוֹ וַתִּגְנֹב רָחֵל אֶת־הַתְּרָפִים אֲשֶׁר לְאָבִיהָ: קמד וַיִּגְנֹב
יַעֲקֹב אֶת־לֵב לָבָן הָאֲרַמִּי עַל בְּלִי הִגִּיד לוֹ כִּי בֹרֵחַ הוּא: קמה וַיִּבְרַח
הוּא וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ וַיָּקָם וַיַּעֲבֹר אֶת־הַנָּהָר וַיָּשֶׂם אֶת־פָּנָיו הַר הַגִּלְעָד:
קמו וַיֻּגַּד לְלָבָן בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִשִׁי כִּי בָרַח יַעֲקֹב: קמז וַיִּקַּח אֶת־אֶחָיו
עִמּוֹ וַיִּרְדֹּף אַחֲרָיו דֶּרֶךְ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים וַיַּדְבֵּק אֹתוֹ בְּהַר הַגִּלְעָד:
קמח וַיָּבֹא אֱלֹהִים אֶל־לָבָן הָאֲרַמִּי בַּח

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 *Then, 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.* [31] *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."

[32] *His father, Yitzchak, said to him, "Who are you?"*

He said, "I am your son, your firstborn, Eisav."

[33] *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)."*

[34] *When Eisav heard his father's words, he cried extremely loudly and bitterly. He said to his father, "Bless me too, my father!"*

[35] *(Yitzchak) said, "Your brother came ingeniously and took your blessing."*

[36] *(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?"

[37] *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)?"*

[38] *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.*

[39] *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)

According to Kabalistic 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)

יִהְיֶה מוֹשְׁבֶךָ וּמִטַּל הַשָּׁמַיִם מֵעָל: מ וְעַל־חַרְבְּךָ תִחְיֶה
וְאֶת־אָחִיךָ תַּעֲבֹד וְהָיָה כַּאֲשֶׁר תָּרִיד וּפָרַקְתָּ עֻלּוֹ מֵעַל
צַוָּארֶךָ: מא וַיִּשְׂטֹם עֵשָׂו אֶת־יַעֲקֹב עַל־הַבְּרָכָה אֲשֶׁר בֵּרֲכוֹ
אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו בְּלִבּוֹ יִקְרְבוּ יְמֵי אֵבֶל אָבִי וְאַהַרְגָה
אֶת־יַעֲקֹב אָחִי: מב וַיֻּגַּד לְרִבְקָה אֶת־דִּבְרֵי עֵשָׂו בְּנָהּ הַגָּדֹל
וַתִּשְׁלַח וַתִּקְרָא לְיַעֲקֹב בְּנָהּ הַקָּטָן וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הִנֵּה עֵשָׂו
אָחִיךָ מִתְנַחֵם לְךָ לְהָרְגֶךָ: מג וְעַתָּה בְנִי שְׁמַע בְּקֹלִי וְקוּם
בְּרַח־לְךָ אֶל־לָבָן אָחִי חָרָנָה: מד וְיָשַׁבְתָּ עִמּוֹ יָמִים אֲחָדִים עַד
אֲשֶׁר־תָּשׁוּב חֲמַת אָחִיךָ: מה עַד־שׁוּב אַף־אָחִיךָ מִמְּךָ וְשָׁכַח
אֵת אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתָ לּוֹ וְשָׁלַחְתִּי וּלְקַחְתִּיךָ מִשָּׁם לָמָּה אֶשְׁכַּל
גַּם־שְׁנֵיכֶם יוֹם אֶחָד: מו וַתֹּאמֶר רִבְקָה אֶל־יִצְחָק קַצְתִּי בְחַיַּי
מִפְּנֵי בְּנוֹת חֵת אִם־לֹקֵחַ יַעֲקֹב אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת־חֵת כָּאֵלֶּה
מִבְּנוֹת הָאָרֶץ לָמָּה לִי חַיִּים: כח א וַיִּקְרָא יִצְחָק אֶל־יַעֲקֹב
וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתוֹ וַיְצַוֵּהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לֹא־תִקַּח אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת כְּנָעַן:
ב קוּם לֵךְ **פַּדֶּנָה אֲרָם בֵּיתָה בְתוּאֵל אֲבִי אִמֶּךָ וְקַח־לְךָ מִשָּׁם
אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת לָבָן אֲחִי אִמֶּךָ: ג וְאֵל שַׁדַּי יְבָרֵךְ אֹתְךָ וְיַפְרְךָ
וְיַרְבֶּךָ וְהָיִיתָ לִקְהַל עַמִּים: ד וְיִתֶּן־לְךָ אֶת־בִּרְכַת אַבְרָהָם לְךָ
וּלְזַרְעֲךָ אִתָּךְ לְרִשְׁתְּךָ אֶת־אֶרֶץ מְגֻרֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר־נָתַן אֱלֹהִים

מִטּוּבָא דְּאַרְעָא יְהֵי מוֹתְבָךְ וּמִטַּלָּא דִּשְׁמַיָּא
מִלְּעֵילָּא: מ וְעַל חַרְבָּךְ תְּחֵי וְיָת אֲחוּךְ תִּפְלָח
וִיהֵי כַּד יַעֲבְרוּן בְּנוֹהִי עַל פִּתְגָמֵי אוֹרַיְתָא
וְתַעֲדֵי נִיר־יֵהּ מֵעַל צַוָּרָךְ: מא וּנְטַר עֵשָׂו
דְּבָבוּ לְיַעֲקֹב עַל בִּרְכְתָא דִּי בָרְכֵיהּ אֲבוּהִי
וַאֲמַר עֵשָׂו בְּלִבֵּיהּ יְקָרְבוּן יוֹמֵי אֲבֶלָא דְּאַבָּא
וְאֶקְטוֹל יָת יַעֲקֹב אָחִי: מב וְאִתְחַוָּא לְרִבְקָה
יָת פִּתְגָמֵי עֵשָׂו בְּרָהּ רַבָּא וּשְׁלָחַת וּקְרַת
לְיַעֲקֹב בְּרָהּ זְעִירָא וַאֲמָרַת לֵיהּ הָא עֵשָׂו
אֲחוּךְ מִתְנַחֵם לָךְ לְמִקְטְלָךְ: מג וּכְעַן בְּרִי קַבֵּל
מֵנִּי וְקוּם אְזֵיל לָךְ לְוָת לָבָן אָחִי לְחָרָן:
מד וְתֵתֵיב עִמֵּיהּ יוֹמִין וְעִירִין עַד דִּיתוּב
רוּגְזָא דַּאֲחוּךְ: מה עַד דִּיתוּב רוּגְזָא דַּאֲחוּךְ
מִנָּךְ וְיִתְנְשֵׁי יָת דִּי עֲבַדְתָּ לֵיהּ וְאֶשְׁלַח
וְאֶדְבְּרִינָךְ מִתַּמָּן לְמָא אֶתְכַּל אַף תְּרֵויכוֹן
יוֹמָא חָד: מו וַאֲמָרַת רִבְקָה לְיִצְחָק עָקִית
בְּחַיַּי מִן קֳדָם בְּנַת חִתָּאָה אִם נָסֵיב יַעֲקֹב
אִתְּתָא מִבְּנַת חִתָּאָה כְּאִלֵּין מִבְּנַת אַרְעָא
לְמָא לִי חַיִּין: א וּקְרָא יִצְחָק לְיַעֲקֹב וּבָרִיךְ
יָתֵיהּ וּפַקְּדֵיהּ וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ לָא תִסַּב אִתְּתָא
מִבְּנַת כְּנָעַן: ב קוּם אְזֵיל לְפַדַּן אֲרָם לְבֵית
בְּתוּאֵל אֲבוּהָא דְאִמָּךְ וְסַב לָךְ מִתַּמָּן אִתְּתָא
מִבְּנַת לָבָן אֲחוּהָא דְאִמָּךְ: ג וְאֵל שַׁדַּי יְבָרֵךְ
יָתָךְ וְיַפְשִׁינָךְ וְיַסְגִּינָךְ וּתְהֵי לִכְנִשַׁת שִׁבְטִין:
ד וְיִתֶּן לָךְ יָת בִּרְכְתָא דְּאַבְרָהָם לָךְ וּלְבָנָיךְ
עִמָּךְ לְמֵירְתָךְ יָת אַרְעָא תּוֹתָבוּתָךְ דִּי יְהַב יְיָ

*ק' זעירא **בחומש תו"ת מסומן כאן "תרי טעמי", וי"א שכאן שייך מ"ש המנחת שי (במדבר יז, כג) שקריאת המלה אינה מלעיל גמור ולא מלרע גמור אלא בהעמדה מועטת בשני הטעמים.

רס"י

מיטליא"ה של יון[1]: (מ) **ועל חרבך**. כמו בחרבך, יש על שהוא במקום לות ב', כמו עמדתם על חרבכם[2], בחרבכם. על נפתחם[3] נגפתם: **והיה כאשר תריד**. לשון נער, כמו תריד בשיחי[4], כלומר כשיעברו ישראל על התורה, ויהיה לך פתחון פה להטעטר על הברכות שנטל, ופרקת עלו וגו': (מא) **יקרבו ימי אבל אבי**. כמשמעו, שלא אטעה את אחי. ומדרש אגדה לכאן פניס יש: (מב) **ויגד לרבקה**. ברוח הקודש הוגד לה מה שעשו מהרהר בלבו: **מתנחם לך**. נחם על האחוב, לחשוב מחשבה אחרת להתנכר לך ולהרגך. ומדרש אגדה, כבר אתה מת בעיניו, ושתה עליך כוס של תנחומים. ולפי פשוטו, לשון תנחומים, מתנחם הוא על הברכות שבריגתך: (מד) **אחדים**. מועטים: (מה) **למה אשכל**. לאיזה שכולה אניכם. (למד על) הקובר את בניו קרוי שכול. וכן ביעקב אמר כאשר שכלתי שכלתי: **גם שניכם**. אף יקוס עליך ואתה תהרגנו, יעמדו בניו ויהרגון, ורוח הקדש נזרקה בה, ותנבאה שביום אחד ימותו, כמו שמפורש בפרק המקנה לאשתו[5]: (מו) **קצתי בחיי**. מאסתי בחיי: (ג) **פדנה**. כמו לפדן: **ביתה בתואל**. לבית בתואל, כל תיבה שלאחר לתי"ת בתחלתה הטיל לה כ"ף נסופה[6]: (ג) **ואל שדי**. מי שדי בברכותיו למתברכין מפיו, יברך לותך: (ד) **את ברכת אברהם**. שאמר לו ואעשך לגוי גדול.

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

1 ב"ר סז, ו 2 יחזקאל לג, כו 3 שמות ו, כו 4 תהלים נה, ג 5 סוטה יג. 6 יבמות יג:

land, and from the dew of the skies from above. [40] *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 *Eisav 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."* [42] *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.* [43] *Now, my son, listen to my voice! Go and run away to my brother Lavan, in Charan.* [44] *You can live with him for a few days until your brother's anger has calmed down,* [45] *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 *Rivkah 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?"*

28 [1] *Yitzchak called Ya'akov and blessed him. He instructed him, saying to him, "You should not take a wife from the Cana'anite girls.* [2] *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.* [3] *May God Almighty bless you, make you fruitful and multiply, and you will become an assembly of nations.* [4] *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: [שביעי] ה וַיִּשְׁלַח יִצְחָק אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וַיֵּלֶךְ *פַּדֶּנָה אֲרָם אֶל־לָבָן בֶּן־בְּתוּאֵל הָאֲרַמִּי אֲחִי רִבְקָה אֵם יַעֲקֹב וְעֵשָׂו: ו וַיַּרְא עֵשָׂו כִּי־בֵרַךְ יִצְחָק אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וְשִׁלַּח אֹתוֹ *פַּדֶּנָה אֲרָם לָקַחַת־לוֹ מִשָּׁם אִשָּׁה בְּבָרְכוֹ אֹתוֹ וַיְצַו עָלָיו לֵאמֹר לֹא־תִקַּח אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת כְּנָעַן: [מפטיר] ז וַיִּשְׁמַע יַעֲקֹב אֶל־אָבִיו וְאֶל־אִמּוֹ וַיֵּלֶךְ *פַּדֶּנָה אֲרָם: ח וַיַּרְא עֵשָׂו כִּי רָעוֹת בְּנוֹת כְּנָעַן בְּעֵינֵי יִצְחָק אָבִיו: ט וַיֵּלֶךְ עֵשָׂו אֶל־יִשְׁמָעֵאל וַיִּקַּח אֶת־מָחֲלַת | בַּת־יִשְׁמָעֵאל בֶּן־אַבְרָהָם אֲחוֹת נְבָיוֹת עַל־נָשָׁיו לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה: ס ס ס

ק״ו פסוקים. על״ו סימן.

לְאַבְרָהָם: ה וּשְׁלַח יִצְחָק אֶת יַעֲקֹב וַאֲזַל לְפַדַּן אֲרָם לְוָת לָבָן בַּר בְּתוּאֵל אֲרַמָּאָה אֲחוּהָא דְּרִבְקָה אִמֵּיהּ דְּיַעֲקֹב וְעֵשָׂו: ו וַחֲזָא עֵשָׂו אֲרֵי בָרִיךְ יִצְחָק יָת יַעֲקֹב וְשַׁלַּח יָתֵיהּ לְפַדַּן אֲרָם לְמִסַּב לֵיהּ מִתַּמָּן אִתְּתָא כַּד בָּרִיךְ יָתֵיהּ וּפַקֵּיד עֲלוֹהִי לְמֵימַר לָא תִסַּב אִתְּתָא מִבְּנָת כְּנָעַן: ז וְקַבֵּל יַעֲקֹב מִן אֲבוּהִי וּמִן אִמֵּיהּ וַאֲזַל לְפַדַּן אֲרָם: ח וַחֲזָא עֵשָׂו אֲרֵי בִישָׁן בְּנַת כְּנָעַן בְּעֵינֵי יִצְחָק אֲבוּהִי: ט וַאֲזַל עֵשָׂו לְוָת יִשְׁמָעֵאל וּנְסִיב יָת מַחֲלַת בַּת יִשְׁמָעֵאל בַּר אַבְרָהָם אֲחָתֵיהּ דִּנְבָיוֹת עַל נְשׁוֹהִי לֵיהּ לְאִנְתּוּ: ס ס ס

*עיין לעיל פסוק ב׳.

רש״י

ואתברכו בזרעך. יהיו אותן ברכות המיוחדות בשבילך, ממך יצא אותו כהוי ואותו הזרע המבורך: **(ה) אם יעקב ועשו.** היני יודע מה מלמדנו: **(ז) וישמע יעקב.** מחובר לענין של מעלה, וירא עשו כי ברך יצחק וגו' וכי שלח אותו פדנה ארם, וכי שמע יעקב אל אביו והלך פדנה ארם, וכי רעות בנות כנען, והלך גם הוא אל ישמעאל: **(ט) אחות נביות.** ממשמע שנאמר בת ישמעאל היני יודע שהיא אחות נביות, אלא למדנו שמת ישמעאל מעיסה לעשו קודם נשואיה, והשיאה נביות אחיה, ולמדנו שהיה יעקב בחותו הפרק בן ס״ג שניס, שהרי ישמעאל בן ע״ד שניס היה כשנולד יעקב, שי״ד שנה היה גדול ישמעאל מיצחק, ויצחק בן ס׳ שנה בלדת אותם, הרי ע״ד, ושנותיו היו קל״ז, שנאמר ואלה שני חיי ישמעאל וגו', נמצא יעקב כשמת ישמעאל בן ס״ג שניס היה, ולמדנו מכאן שנטען בבית עבר י״ד שנה, ואחר כך הלך לחרן, שהרי לא שהה בבית בבן לפני לידתו של יוסף אלא י״ד שנה, שנאמר עבדתיך י״ד שנה בשתי בנותיך ושש שניס בצאנך, ושכר הצאן משנולד יוסף היה, שנאמר ויהי כאשר ילדה רחל את יוסף וגו', ויוסף בן ל׳ שנה היה כשמלך, ומשם עד שירד יעקב למצריס ט׳ שניס, ז׳ של שובע וב׳ של רעב, ויעקב אמר לפרעה ימי שני מגורי שלשים ומאת שנה, לא ותשוב י״ד שנה שלפני לידת יוסף, ושלשים של יוסף, ותשע משמלך עד שבא יעקב, הרי נ״ג, וכשפירש מאביו היה בן ס״ג, הרי קי״ו, והוא אומר שלשים ומאת שנה, הרי חסריס י״ד שניס, הא למדת, שאחר שקבל הברכות נטמן בבית עבר י״ד שניס. (אבל לא נטען עליהם בזכות התורה, שהרי לא פירש יוסף מאביו אלא כ״ג שנה, דהיינו מי״ז עד ל״ט, כנגד כ״ג שפירש יעקב מאביו ולא כבדו, והם כ׳ שניס בבית לבן, ושתי שניס שהלה בדרך, כדכתיב ויבן לו בית ולמקנהו עשה סכות, ופירשו רז״ל מזה הפסוק שהלה י״ח חדשים בדרך, דבית הוה בימות הגשמים וסכות הוה בימות החמה, ולחשבון הפסוקים שחשבנו לעיל, משפירש מאביו עד שירד למצריס שהיה בן ק״ל שניס, אם תמו מולאים עוד י״ד שניס, אלא ודאי נטמן בבית עבר בהליכתו לבית לבן ללמוד תורה ממנו, ובשביל זכות התורה לא נטען עליהם, ולא פירש יוסף ממנו אלא כ״ג שנה, מדה כנגד מדה, עד כאן מלאתי ברש״י יען): **על נשיו.** כוסיף רשעה על רשעתו[1] שלא גרש את הראשונות: **חסלת פרשת תולדות**

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

1 בדפוסי רש״י הנפוצים ישנה הוספה-הגהה בסוגריים: ר״ל מרשעת על מרשעיות שהיו לו כבר וק״ל. אמנם ראה לקו״ש חל״ה ע׳ 114.

Seventh Reading

[5] *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 Maftir

Eisav 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"; [7] (and he saw that) Ya'akov listened to his father and his mother, and went to Padan-Aram. [8] (So, since) Eisav saw that the daughters of Cana'an were displeasing to his father Yitzchak, [9] 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. 116*ff*.)

The Last Word

Eisav's Marriage to Machalas

In *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. 116*ff*)

parshas Vayeitzei

פרשת ויצא

The Name of the Parsha

Vayeitzei 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?

While 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 וַיֵּצֵא יַעֲקֹב מִבְּאֵר שָׁבַע וַיֵּלֶךְ חָרָנָה: יא וַיִּפְגַּע בַּמָּקוֹם וַיָּלֶן
שָׁם כִּי־בָא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וַיִּקַּח מֵאַבְנֵי הַמָּקוֹם וַיָּשֶׂם מְרַאֲשֹׁתָיו
וַיִּשְׁכַּב בַּמָּקוֹם הַהוּא: יב וַיַּחֲלֹם וְהִנֵּה סֻלָּם מֻצָּב אַרְצָה וְרֹאשׁוֹ
מַגִּיעַ הַשָּׁמָיְמָה וְהִנֵּה מַלְאֲכֵי אֱלֹהִים עֹלִים וְיֹרְדִים בּוֹ: יג וְהִנֵּה

י וּנְפַק יַעֲקֹב מִבְּאֵרָא דְשָׁבַע וַאֲזַל לְחָרָן:
יא וַעֲרַע בְּאַתְרָא וּבָת תַּמָּן אֲרֵי עַל שְׁמְשָׁא
וּנְסִיב מֵאַבְנֵי אַתְרָא וְשַׁוִּי אַסְדּוֹהִי וּשְׁכִיב
בְּאַתְרָא הַהוּא: יב וַחֲלַם וְהָא סוּלְמָא נָעִין
בְּאַרְעָא וְרֵישֵׁיהּ מָטֵי עַד צֵית שְׁמַיָּא וְהָא
מַלְאָכַיָּא דַיְיָ סָלְקִין וְנָחֲתִין בֵּיהּ: יג וְהָא יְקָרָא

רש"י

(י) ויצא יעקב. על ידי שכשביל ערעות בנות כנען בעיני יצחק אביו הלך עשו אל ישמעאל, הפסיק הכתוב בפרשתו של יעקב, וכתיב וירא עשו כי ברך וגו', ומשמר, חזר לענין הראשון: **ויצא.** לא היה לריך לכתוב אלא וילך יעקב חרנה, ולמה הזכיר יליאתו, אלא מגיד שיליאת צדיק מן המקום עושה רושם, שבזמן שהצדיק בעיר, הוא הודה, הוא זיוה, הוא הדרה, ילא משם, פנה הודה, פנה זיוה, פנה הדרה. וכן ותצא מן המקום[1], האמור בנעמי ורות: **וילך חרנה.** יצא ללכת לחרן: **(יא) ויפגע במקום.** לא הזכיר הכתוב בחיזה מקום, אלא במקום הנזכר במקום אחר, הוא הר המוריה, שנאמר בו וירא את המקום מרחוק: **ויפגע.** כמו ופגע ביריחו[2], ופגע בדבשת. ורבותינו פירשו[3] לשון תפלה, כמו ואל תפגע בי[4], ולמדנו שתקן תפלת ערבית, ושנה הכתוב ולא כתב ויתפלל, ללמדך שקפלה לו להרן, כמו שמפורש בפרק גיד הנשה[5]: **כי בא השמש.** היה לו לכתוב ויצא השמש וילן שם, כי בא השמש משמע, שקטרב לו אחה פתאום שלא בעותה כדי שילין שם: **וישם מראשותיו.** עשאן כמין מרזב סביב לראשו, שירא מפני חיות רעות, התחילו מריבות זו את זו, זאת אומרת עלי יניח ליניק את ראשו, וזאת אומרת עלי יניח, מיד עשאן הקב"ה אבן אחת, וזהו שנאמר ויקח את האבן אשר שם מראשותיו: **וישכב במקום ההוא.** לשון מיעוט, בחותו מקום שכב, אבל י"ד שניס שמשם נבנית עבר, לא שכב בלילה, שהיה עוסק בתורה: **(יג) עולים ויורדים.** עולים תחלה ואחר כך יורדים.

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 18:26*ff*). 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" (הֲדַר)—The visible presence of the *tzadik* makes the local inhabitants proud that their town is the place where a great person resides.

"[Guiding] light" (זִו)—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"(הוֹד)—"*Hod*" indicates a stronger beam of light, as in the expression קַרְנֵי הוֹדוֹ שֶׁל מֹשֶׁה ("*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*

1 רות א, ז 2 יהושע טז, ז 3 ברכות כו: 4 ירמי' ז, טז 5 חולין צא:

Ya'akov's Journey

28:10 *Ya'akov left Be'er Sheva, and went (towards) Charan.*

[11] *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.*

[12] *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. 119*ff*.)

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

Ya'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

According 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. 88*ff*)

יְהוָה נִצָּב עָלָיו וַיֹּאמַר אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אָבִיךָ וֵאלֹהֵי
יִצְחָק הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה שֹׁכֵב עָלֶיהָ לְךָ אֶתְּנֶנָּה וּלְזַרְעֶךָ:
יד וְהָיָה זַרְעֲךָ כַּעֲפַר הָאָרֶץ וּפָרַצְתָּ יָמָּה וָקֵדְמָה וְצָפֹנָה וָנֶגְבָּה
וְנִבְרְכוּ בְךָ כָּל־מִשְׁפְּחֹת הָאֲדָמָה וּבְזַרְעֶךָ: טו וְהִנֵּה אָנֹכִי עִמָּךְ
וּשְׁמַרְתִּיךָ בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־תֵּלֵךְ וַהֲשִׁבֹתִיךָ אֶל־הָאֲדָמָה הַזֹּאת כִּי
לֹא אֶעֱזָבְךָ עַד אֲשֶׁר אִם־עָשִׂיתִי אֵת אֲשֶׁר־דִּבַּרְתִּי לָךְ:

דַּיָּ מְעַתַּד עִלָּוֹהִי וַאֲמַר אֲנָא יְיָ אֱלָהֵהּ
דְּאַבְרָהָם אֲבוּךְ וֵאלָהֵהּ דְּיִצְחָק אַרְעָא דִּי אַתְּ
שָׁרֵי עֲלָהּ לָךְ אֶתְּנִינָהּ וְלִבְנָיְךְ: יד וִיהוֹן בְּנָיְךְ
סַגִּיאִין כְּעַפְרָא דְּאַרְעָא וְתִתְקֻף לְמַעְרָבָא
וּלְמַדִּינְחָא וּלְצִפּוּנָא וּלְדָרוֹמָא וְיִתְבָּרְכוּן
בְּדִילָךְ כָּל זַרְעֲיַת אַרְעָא וּבְדִיל בְּנָיְךְ: טו וְהָא
מֵימְרִי בְּסַעֲדָךְ וְאֶטַּרְנָךְ בְּכָל אֲתַר דִּי תְהָךְ
וַאֲתֵיבִינָךְ לְאַרְעָא הָדָא אֲרֵי לָא אֶשְׁבְּקִנָּךְ עַד

רס"י

מלאכים שליווהו בחוץ יוצאים חוצה לארץ ועלו לרקיע, וירדו מלאכי חוצה לארץ לווהו: (יג) **נצב עליו**. לשמרו: **ואלהי יצחק**. אף על פי שלא מלינו בארץ שייחד הקב"ה שמו על הצדיקים בחייהם לכתוב אלהי פלוני, משום שנאמר כן בקדושיו לא יחמין, כאן ייחד שמו על יצחק, לפי שבכו עיניו, וכלות נפשו, והרי הוא כמת, ויצר הרע פסק ממנו[1]: **שכב עליה**. קיפל הקב"ה כל ארץ ישראל תחתיו, רמז לו שתהא נוחה ליכבש לבניו[2] (כדי לחזור מקומו של אדם)[3]: (יד) **ופרצת**. וחזקת, כמו וכן יפרוץ[4]: (טו) **אנכי עמך**. לפי שהיה ירא מעשו ומלבן: **עד אשר אם עשיתי**. אם משמש בלשון כי: **דברתי לך**. לגרמך ועליך, מה שהבטחתיו לאברהם על זרעו, לך הבטחתיו ולא לעשו, שלא אמרתי לו כי יצחק יקרא לך זרע, אלא כי

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 leDavid: *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. 152*ff*.)

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*?

1 תנחומא תולדות ז 2 חולין צא: 3 בדפוס א' דרש"י, ובכל כת"י רש"י שבספריית ליובאוויטש (לבד א'), ליתא תיבות אלו 4 שמות א, יב

13 *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.*
14 *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."*

15 *"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)

Ufaratzta—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

The 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. 134*ff.*)

טז וַיִּקַץ יַעֲקֹב מִשְּׁנָתוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אָכֵן יֵשׁ יְהוָה בַּמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה וְאָנֹכִי
לֹא יָדָעְתִּי: יז וַיִּירָא וַיֹּאמַר מַה־נּוֹרָא הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה אֵין זֶה כִּי
אִם־בֵּית אֱלֹהִים וְזֶה שַׁעַר הַשָּׁמָיִם: יח וַיַּשְׁכֵּם יַעֲקֹב בַּבֹּקֶר
וַיִּקַּח אֶת־הָאֶבֶן אֲשֶׁר־שָׂם מְרַאֲשֹׁתָיו וַיָּשֶׂם אֹתָהּ מַצֵּבָה וַיִּצֹק
שֶׁמֶן עַל־רֹאשָׁהּ: יט וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שֵׁם־הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא בֵּית־אֵל
וְאוּלָם לוּז שֵׁם־הָעִיר לָרִאשֹׁנָה: כ וַיִּדַּר יַעֲקֹב נֶדֶר לֵאמֹר
אִם־יִהְיֶה אֱלֹהִים עִמָּדִי וּשְׁמָרַנִי בַּדֶּרֶךְ הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ
וְנָתַן־לִי לֶחֶם לֶאֱכֹל וּבֶגֶד לִלְבֹּשׁ: כא וְשַׁבְתִּי בְשָׁלוֹם אֶל־בֵּית
אָבִי וְהָיָה יְהוָה לִי לֵאלֹהִים: כב וְהָאֶבֶן הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר־שַׂמְתִּי
מַצֵּבָה יִהְיֶה בֵּית אֱלֹהִים וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר תִּתֶּן־לִי עַשֵּׂר אֲעַשְּׂרֶנּוּ לָךְ:

טז דִּי אַעֲבִיד יַת דִּי מַלֵּלִית לָךְ: טז וְאִתְעַר יַעֲקֹב
מִשְׁנָתֵיהּ וַאֲמַר בְּקוּשְׁטָא אִית יְקָרָא דַיְיָ שָׁרֵי
בְּאַתְרָא הָדֵין וַאֲנָא לָא חֲוִיתִי יְדָע: יז וּדְחֵיל
וַאֲמַר מָא דְּחִילוּ אַתְרָא הָדֵין לֵית דֵּין אֶלָּא
הֵדְיוֹט אֱלָהִין אֲתַר דְּרַעֲוָא בֵּיהּ מִן קֳדָם יְיָ
וְדֵין תְּרַע קֳבֵל שְׁמַיָּא: יח וְאַקְדִּים יַעֲקֹב
בְּצַפְרָא וּנְסִיב יַת אַבְנָא דִּי שַׁוִּי אָסָדוֹהִי וְשַׁוִּי
יָתָהּ קָמָא וַאֲרִיק מִשְׁחָא עַל רֵישָׁהּ: יט וּקְרָא
יַת שְׁמָא דַּאֲתַרָא הַהוּא בֵּית אֵל וּבְרַם לוּז
שְׁמָא דְּקַרְתָּא בְּקַדְמֵיתָא: כ וְקַיֵּם יַעֲקֹב קְיָם
לְמֵימָר אִם יְהֵי מֵימְרָא דַיְיָ בְּסַעֲדִי וְיִטְרִינַנִי
בְּאָרְחָא הָדָא דִּי אֲנָא אָזֵיל וְיִתֵּן לִי לַחְמָא
לְמֵיכַל וּכְסוּ לְמִלְבָּשׁ: כא וְאֵיתוּב בְּשְׁלָם
לְבֵית אַבָּא וְיְהֵי מֵימְרָא דַיְיָ לִי לֶאֱלָהּ:
כב וְאַבְנָא הָדָא דִּי שַׁוִּיתִי קָמָא תְּהֵי בֵּיתָא דְּאֱלָהִי פְּלַח
עֲלָהּ קֳדָם יְיָ וְכָל דִּי תִתֶּן לִי חַד מִן עַשְׂרָא

רש"י

ויצחק, ולא כל יצחק, וכן כל לי, ולך, ולו, ולכם, כסמוכים אצל דבור, משמשים לשון על, וזכ יוכיח, שברי עם יעקב לא דבר קודם לכן: (טז) **ואנכי לא ידעתי.** שמא ידעתי, לא ישנתי במקום קדוש כזה: (יז) **כי אם בית אלהים.** אמר רבי אלעזר בשם רבי יוסי בן זמרת, בסולם הזה עומד בשבר שבע, ומלמע שיפועו מגיע כנגד בית המקדש, שבאר שבע עומד בדרומה של יהודה, וירושלים בצפונה, בנגוד שבין יהודה ובנימין, ובית אל היה בצפון של נחלת בנימין, בנגוד שבין בנימין ובין בני יוסף, נמלא סולם שרגליו בבאר שבע ורחשו בבית אל, מגיע אמלע שיפועו נגד ירושלים, וכלפי שאמרו רבותינו, שאמר הקב"ה, לדיק זה בא לבית מלוני ויפטר בלא ליגה. ועוד אמרו, יעקב קראו לירושלים בית אל, וזו לוז היא ולא ירושלים, ומהיכן למדו לומר כן, אומר אני שבעקר הר המוריה ובא לכאן, וזו היא קפילת הארץ האמורה בשחיטת חולין[1] שבא בית המקדש לקראתו עד בית אל, וזהו ויפגע במקום. ואם תאמר וכשעבר יעקב על בית המקדש מדוע לא עכבו שם, תיכו לא יהיה לבית להתפלל במקום שהתפללו אבותיו, ומן השמים יעכבוהו, תיכו עד חרן אזל, כדאמרינן בפרק גיד הנשה[2] וקרא מוכיח וילך חרנה, כי מטא לחרן אמר, אפשר שעברתי על מקום שהתפללו אבותי ולא התפללתי בו. יהב דעתיה למהדר, וחזר עד בית אל, וקפלה לו האדץ. (בית 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 leDavid: 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*."

1 חולין צא: 2 שם 3 תהלים לז, כה 4 בראשית יז, ז

16 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)!"

17 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)."

18 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. 19 He named the place Beis-Ail, but Luz was originally the name of the city.

20 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, 21 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— 22 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. 129*ff*.)

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)

[שני] **כט** א וַיִּשָּׂא יַעֲקֹב רַגְלָיו וַיֵּלֶךְ אַרְצָה בְנֵי־קֶדֶם:
ב וַיַּרְא וְהִנֵּה בְאֵר בַּשָּׂדֶה וְהִנֵּה־שָׁם שְׁלֹשָׁה עֲדְרֵי־צֹאן
רֹבְצִים עָלֶיהָ כִּי מִן־הַבְּאֵר הַהִוא יַשְׁקוּ הָעֲדָרִים וְהָאֶבֶן גְּדֹלָה
עַל־פִּי הַבְּאֵר: ג וְנֶאֶסְפוּ־שָׁמָּה כָּל־הָעֲדָרִים וְגָלְלוּ אֶת־הָאֶבֶן
מֵעַל ׀ פִּי הַבְּאֵר וְהִשְׁקוּ אֶת־הַצֹּאן וְהֵשִׁיבוּ אֶת־הָאֶבֶן עַל־פִּי
הַבְּאֵר לִמְקֹמָהּ: ד וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם יַעֲקֹב אַחַי מֵאַיִן אַתֶּם וַיֹּאמְרוּ
מֵחָרָן אֲנָחְנוּ: ה וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם הֲיְדַעְתֶּם אֶת־לָבָן בֶּן־נָחוֹר
וַיֹּאמְרוּ יָדָעְנוּ: ו וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם הֲשָׁלוֹם לוֹ וַיֹּאמְרוּ שָׁלוֹם וְהִנֵּה
רָחֵל בִּתּוֹ בָּאָה עִם־הַצֹּאן: ז וַיֹּאמֶר הֵן עוֹד הַיּוֹם גָּדוֹל
לֹא־עֵת הֵאָסֵף הַמִּקְנֶה הַשְׁקוּ הַצֹּאן וּלְכוּ רְעוּ: ח וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא
נוּכַל עַד אֲשֶׁר יֵאָסְפוּ כָּל־הָעֲדָרִים וְגָלֲלוּ אֶת־הָאֶבֶן מֵעַל פִּי
הַבְּאֵר וְהִשְׁקִינוּ הַצֹּאן: ט עוֹדֶנּוּ מְדַבֵּר עִמָּם וְרָחֵל | בָּאָה
עִם־הַצֹּאן אֲשֶׁר לְאָבִיהָ כִּי רֹעָה הִוא: י וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר רָאָה
יַעֲקֹב אֶת־רָחֵל בַּת־לָבָן אֲחִי אִמּוֹ וְאֶת־צֹאן לָבָן אֲחִי אִמּוֹ
וַיִּגַּשׁ יַעֲקֹב וַיָּגֶל אֶת־הָאֶבֶן מֵעַל ׀ פִּי הַבְּאֵר וַיַּשְׁקְ אֶת־צֹאן לָבָן
אֲחִי אִמּוֹ: יא וַיִּשַּׁק יַעֲקֹב לְרָחֵל וַיִּשָּׂא אֶת־קֹלוֹ וַיֵּבְךְּ: יב וַיַּגֶּד
יַעֲקֹב לְרָחֵל כִּי אֲחִי אָבִיהָ הוּא וְכִי בֶן־רִבְקָה הוּא וַתָּרָץ
וַתַּגֶּד לְאָבִיהָ: יג וַיְהִי ׀ כִּשְׁמֹעַ לָבָן אֶת־שֵׁמַע | יַעֲקֹב בֶּן־אֲחֹתוֹ
וַיָּרָץ לִקְרָאתוֹ וַיְחַבֵּק־לוֹ וַיְנַשֵּׁק־לוֹ וַיְבִיאֵהוּ אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ וַיְסַפֵּר
לְלָבָן אֵת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה: יד וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לָבָן אַךְ עַצְמִי

אַפְרְשִׁינֵיהּ קֶדָמָךְ: א וּנְטַל יַעֲקֹב רַגְלֹהִי וַאֲזַל
לַאֲרַע בְּנֵי מַדִּינְחָא: ב וַחֲזָא וְהָא בֵּירָא
בְּחַקְלָא וְהָא תַמָּן תְּלָתָא עֲדָרִין דְּעָאן רְבִיעִין
עֲלָהּ אֲרֵי מִן בֵּירָא הַהִיא מַשְׁקִן עֲדָרַיָּא
וְאַבְנָא רַבְתָּא עַל פּוּמָא דְבֵירָא: ג וּמִתְכְּנְשִׁין
לְתַמָּן כָּל עֲדָרַיָּא וּמְגַנְדְּרִין יַת אַבְנָא מֵעַל
פּוּמָא דְבֵירָא וּמַשְׁקִין יַת עָנָא וּמְתִיבִין יַת
אַבְנָא עַל פּוּמָא דְבֵירָא לְאַתְרָהּ: ד וַאֲמַר
לְהוֹן יַעֲקֹב אֲחַי מְנָן אַתּוּן וַאֲמָרוּ מֵחָרָן
אֲנָחְנָא: ה וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן הַיְדַעְתּוּן יַת לָבָן בַּר
נָחוֹר וַאֲמָרוּ יְדַעְנָן: ו וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן
הַשְׁלָם לֵיהּ וַאֲמָרוּ שְׁלָם וְהָא רָחֵל בְּרַתֵּיהּ
אָתְיָא עִם עָנָא: ז וַאֲמַר הָא עוֹד יוֹמָא סַגִּי
לָא עִדַּן לְמִכְנַשׁ בְּעִיר אַשְׁקוּ עָנָא וְאִזִלוּ
רְעוּ: ח וַאֲמָרוּ לָא נִכּוֹל עַד דִּי יִתְכַּנְּשׁוּן כָּל
עֲדָרַיָּא וְיִנַּגְּדְרוּן יַת אַבְנָא מֵעַל פּוּמָא דְבֵירָא
וְנַשְׁקֵי עָנָא: ט עַד דְּהוּא מְמַלֵּל עִמְּהוֹן וְרָחֵל
אָתַת עִם עָנָא דִּי לְאֲבוּהָא אֲרֵי רָעְיָתָא הִיא:
י וַהֲוָה כַּד חָזָא יַעֲקֹב יַת רָחֵל בַּת לָבָן אֲחוּהָ
דְּאִמֵּיהּ וְיַת עָנָא דְּלָבָן אֲחוּהָ דְּאִמֵּיהּ וּקְרִיב
יַעֲקֹב וְנַגַּד יַת אַבְנָא מֵעַל פּוּמָא דְבֵירָא
וְאַשְׁקִי יַת עָנָא דְּלָבָן אֲחוּהָ דְּאִמֵּיהּ:
יא וּנְשַׁק יַעֲקֹב לְרָחֵל וַאֲרִים יַת קָלֵיהּ וּבְכָא:
יב וְחַוִי יַעֲקֹב לְרָחֵל אֲרֵי בַּר אֲחַת אֲבוּהָא הוּא
וַאֲרֵי בַּר רִבְקָה הוּא וּרְהָטַת וְחַוְיָאַת לַאֲבוּהָא:
יג וַהֲוָה כַּד שְׁמַע לָבָן יַת שְׁמַע יַעֲקֹב בַּר
אֲחָתֵיהּ וּרְהַט לְקַדָּמוּתֵיהּ וְנַפֵּיק לֵיהּ וְנַשֵּׁיק
לֵיהּ וְאַעֲלֵיהּ לְבֵיתֵיהּ וְאִשְׁתָּעִי לְלָבָן יַת כָּל
פִּתְגָמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין: יד וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ לָבָן בְּרַם

רס"י

וכן עשה בשובו מפדן ארם, כשאמר לו קוס עליה בית אל[1] מה נאמר שם, ויצב יעקב מצבה וגו' ויסך עליה נסך[2]: (ה) **וישא יעקב רגליו**. משנתבשר בשורה טובה, שהובטח בשמירה, נשא את לבו את רגליו ונעשה קל ללכת. כך מפורש בבראשית רבה[3]: (ב) **ישקו העדרים**. משקים הרועים את העדרים, והמקרא דבר בלשון קלרה: (ג) **ונאספו**. רגיליס היו להאסף, לפי שהיתה האבן גדולה: **וגללו**. וגוללין ותרגומו ומגנדרין. כל לשון כווב, משתנה לדבר בלשון עתיד ובלשון עבר, לפי שכל דבר הכווב תמיד, כבר היה ועתיד להיות: **והשיבו**. תרגומו ומתיבין: (ו) **באה עם הצאן**. בטעם בתל"ף, ותרגומו אתיא. ורחל בתה. בטעם למעלה בצי"ת, ותרגומו אתת. כרשתון לשון עושה והבני לשון עשתה: (ז) **הן עוד היום גדול**. לפי שרואה אותם רובצים, כסבור שרוצים לאסוף המקנה הביתה ולא ירעו עוד, אמר להם, הן עוד היום גדול, כלומר אם שכירי יום אתם, לא שלמתם פעולת היום, ואם הבהמות שלכם, אף על פי כן לא עת האסף המקנה וגו'[4]: (ח) **לא נוכל**. להשקות לפי שהאבן גדולה: **וגללו**. זה מתורגם ויגנדרון, לפי שהוא לשון עתיד: (י) **ויגש יעקב ויגל**. כמי שמעדיר את הפקק מעל פי הנוחית, להודיעך שכחו גדול[5]: (יא) **ויבך**. לפי שלפה ברוח הקודש שהיתה נכנסת עמו לקבורה. דבר אחר, לפי שצא בידים ריקניות, אמר, אליעזר עבד אבי אבא, היו בידיו נזמים ומלידים ומגדנות, ואני אין בידי כלום. לפי שרדף אליפז בן עשו במצות אביו אחריו להורגו, והשיגו, ולפי שגדל אליפז בחיקו של יעקב, משך ידו, אמר לו מה אעשה לציווי של אבא, אמר לו יעקב טול מה שבידי, והעני חשוב כמת: (יב) **כי אחי אביה הוא**. קרוב לאביה, כמו מנשה אחיס אחמנו[6]. ומדרשו, אם לרמאות הוא בא, גם אני אחיו ברמאות, ואם אדם כשר הוא, גם אני בן רבקה אחותו הכשרה: **ותגד לאביה**. לפי שאמה אמרה, לא היה לה להגיד אלא לו[7]: (יג) **וירץ לקראתו**. כסבור ממון הוא טעון, שכרי עבד הביא בא לכאן בעשרה גמלים טעונים[8]: **ויחבק**. כשלא ראה עמו כלום, אמר, שמא זהובים הביא ואם בחיקו[9]: **וינשק לו**. אמר, שמא מרגליות הביא ואם בפיו[10]: **ויספר ללבן**. שלא בא אלא מתוך חונס אחיו, ושנטלו ממונו ממנו: (יד) **אך עצמי ובשרי**. מעתה אין לי לאספך הביתה, הואיל ואין בידך

1 בראשית לה, א 2 שם יד 3 ע, ח 4 ב"ר ע, יא 5 שם יב 6 בראשית יג, ח 7 ב"ר ע, יג 8 שם 9 שם 10 שם

Ya'akov Meets Rochel by the Well

29 Second Reading

Ya'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.

2 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. 3 (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.

4 Ya'akov said to them, "Where are you from, my brothers?"

They said, "We're from Charan."

5 He said to them, "Do you know Lavan, the (grand)son of Nachor?"

They said, "We know (him)."

6 He said to them, "Is he well?"

They said, "He's fine. Here is his daughter Rochel, coming with the sheep."

7 (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."

8 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."

9 While he was still talking with them, Rochel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess. 10 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.

11 Ya'akov kissed Rochel. (He perceived prophetically that she would not be buried with him so) he wept loudly.

12 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 Then, 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). 14 Lavan said to him, "(Since you have no money I should really turn

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

The 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)

וּבְשָׂרִי אָתָּה וַיֵּשֶׁב עִמּוֹ חֹדֶשׁ יָמִים: טו וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן לְיַעֲקֹב
הֲכִי־אָחִי אַתָּה וַעֲבַדְתַּנִי חִנָּם הַגִּידָה לִּי מַה־מַּשְׂכֻּרְתֶּךָ:
טז וּלְלָבָן שְׁתֵּי בָנוֹת שֵׁם הַגְּדֹלָה לֵאָה וְשֵׁם הַקְּטַנָּה רָחֵל:
יז וְעֵינֵי לֵאָה רַכּוֹת וְרָחֵל הָיְתָה יְפַת־תֹּאַר וִיפַת מַרְאֶה: [שלישי]
יח וַיֶּאֱהַב יַעֲקֹב אֶת־רָחֵל וַיֹּאמֶר אֶעֱבָדְךָ שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים בְּרָחֵל
בִּתְּךָ הַקְּטַנָּה: יט וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן טוֹב תִּתִּי אֹתָהּ לָךְ מִתִּתִּי אֹתָהּ
לְאִישׁ אַחֵר שְׁבָה עִמָּדִי: כ וַיַּעֲבֹד יַעֲקֹב בְּרָחֵל שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים
וַיִּהְיוּ בְעֵינָיו כְּיָמִים אֲחָדִים בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ אֹתָהּ: כא וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב
אֶל־לָבָן הָבָה אֶת־אִשְׁתִּי כִּי מָלְאוּ יָמָי וְאָבוֹאָה אֵלֶיהָ:
כב וַיֶּאֱסֹף לָבָן אֶת־כָּל־אַנְשֵׁי הַמָּקוֹם וַיַּעַשׂ מִשְׁתֶּה: כג וַיְהִי
בָּעֶרֶב וַיִּקַּח אֶת־לֵאָה בִתּוֹ וַיָּבֵא אֹתָהּ אֵלָיו וַיָּבֹא אֵלֶיהָ:
כד וַיִּתֵּן לָבָן לָהּ אֶת־זִלְפָּה שִׁפְחָתוֹ לְלֵאָה בִתּוֹ שִׁפְחָה: כה וַיְהִי

קְרִיבִי וּבְסִרִי אָתְּ וַיִּתֵּיב עִמֵּיהּ יַרְחַ יוֹמִין:
טו וַאֲמַר לָבָן לְיַעֲקֹב הֲמִדְּאָחִי אַתְּ וְתִפְלְחַנַּנִי
מַגָּן חֲוִי לִי מָה אַגְרָךְ: טז וּלְלָבָן תַּרְתֵּין בְּנָן שׁוּם
רַבְּתָא לֵאָה וְשׁוּם זְעֻרְתָּא רָחֵל: יז וְעֵינֵי לֵאָה
יָאֲנָן וְרָחֵל הֲוָת שַׁפִּירָא בְרֵיוָא וְיָאֲיָא בְּחֶזְוָא:
יח וּרְחֵים יַעֲקֹב יַת רָחֵל וַאֲמַר אֶפְלְחִינָךְ שְׁבַע
שְׁנִין בְּרָחֵל בְּרַתָּךְ זְעֻרְתָּא: יט וַאֲמַר לָבָן טַב
דְּאֶתֵּן יָתָהּ לָךְ מִדְּאֶתֵּן יָתָהּ לִגְבַר אָחֳרָן תִּיב
עִמִּי: כ וּפְלַח יַעֲקֹב בְּרָחֵל שְׁבַע שְׁנִין וַהֲווֹ
בְּעֵינוֹהִי כְּיוֹמִין זְעִירִין כַּד רְחִים יָתָהּ:
כא וַאֲמַר יַעֲקֹב לְלָבָן הַב יַת אִתְתִּי אֲרֵי שְׁלִימוּ
יוֹמַי פּוּלְחָנִי וְאֵיעוֹל לְוָתָהּ: כב וְכַנַּשׁ לָבָן יַת
כָּל אֱנָשֵׁי אַתְרָא וַעֲבַד מִשְׁתְּיָא: כג וַהֲוָה
בְרַמְשָׁא וּדְבַר יַת לֵאָה בְרַתֵּיהּ וְאָעִיל יָתָהּ
לְוָתֵיהּ וְעַל לְוָתָהּ: כד וִיהַב לָבָן לָהּ יַת
זִלְפָּה אַמְתֵּיהּ לְלֵאָה בְרַתֵּהּ לְאַמְהוּ: כה וַהֲוָה
בְּצַפְרָא וְהָא הִיא לֵאָה וַאֲמַר לְלָבָן מָא דָּא

כלוס, חלף מפני קורבה מטפל בך חדש ימים, וכן עשה, ואף זו לא לחנם, שכיח רועה נאמן: (טו) **הכי אחי אתה**. לשון תימה, וכי בשביל שאחי אתה תעבדני חנם: **ועבדתני**. כמו ותעבדני, וכן כל תיבה שהוא לשון עבר, הוסיף וי"ו בראשה, היא הופכת התיבה להבא: (יז) **רכות**. שכיחה שבורה לעלות בגורלו של עשו ובכתה, שהיו הכל אומרים, שני בניה לרבקה ושתי בנות ללבן, הגדולה לגדול והקטנה לקטן[1]: **תאר**. הוא צורת הפרצוף, לשון יתארהו בשרד[2], קופח"ס בלע"ז : **מראה**. הוא זיו הקלסתר: (יח) **אעבדך שבע שנים**. הם ימים אחדים שאמרה לו אמו וישבת עמו ימים אחדים[3], ותדע שכן הוא, שהרי כתיב ויהיו בעיניו כימים אחדים: **ברחל בתך הקטנה**. כל הסימנים הללו למה, לפי שהיה יודע בו שהוא רמאי, אמר לו אעבדך ברחל, ושמע תאמר רחל אחרת מן השוק, תלמוד לומר בתך, ושמע תאמר אחליף ללאה שהיא רכת ועקרת שהיה רחל, תלמוד לומר הקטנה, ואף על פי כן לא הועיל, שהרי רמהו: (כה) **מלאו ימי**. שאמרה לו אמי. ועוד מלאו ימי, שהרי אני בת פ"ד שנה, ואימתי תעמיד י"ב שבטים, וזהו שנאמר ותגומר חליה, והלא קל

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 (דרוש ראשון, בשם מהר"ש יפה).

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

1 בבא בתרא קכג. 2 ישעי' מד, יג 3 ב"ר ע, יז

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).

[15] *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!"*

[16] *Lavan had two daughters, the older one was called Leah, and the younger one was called Rochel.* [17] *Leah's eyes were tender, and Rochel had beautiful (facial) features and a beautiful complexion.*

THIRD READING

[18] *Ya'akov loved Rochel, so he said, "I will work for you seven years for Rochel, your younger daughter."*

[19] *Lavan said, "It's better for me to give her to you than for me to give her to another man. Stay with me."* [20] *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 *Ya'akov said to Lavan, "Give me my wife, for my time is up, and let me come to her (and establish the future generations)."*

[22] *Lavan gathered all the local people, and he made a feast.* [23] *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.* [24] *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)

Rochel 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.

בַּבֹּקֶר וְהִנֵּה־הִוא לֵאָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־לָבָן מַה־זֹּאת עָשִׂיתָ לִּי הֲלֹא בְרָחֵל עָבַדְתִּי עִמָּךְ וְלָמָּה רִמִּיתָנִי: כו וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן לֹא־ יֵעָשֶׂה כֵן בִּמְקוֹמֵנוּ לָתֵת הַצְּעִירָה לִפְנֵי הַבְּכִירָה: כז מַלֵּא שְׁבֻעַ זֹאת וְנִתְּנָה לְךָ גַּם־אֶת־זֹאת בַּעֲבֹדָה אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲבֹד עִמָּדִי עוֹד שֶׁבַע־שָׁנִים אֲחֵרוֹת: כח וַיַּעַשׂ יַעֲקֹב כֵּן וַיְמַלֵּא שְׁבֻעַ זֹאת וַיִּתֶּן־לוֹ אֶת־רָחֵל בִּתּוֹ לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה: כט וַיִּתֵּן לָבָן לְרָחֵל בִּתּוֹ אֶת־בִּלְהָה שִׁפְחָתוֹ לָהּ לְשִׁפְחָה: ל וַיָּבֹא גַּם אֶל־רָחֵל וַיֶּאֱהַב גַּם־אֶת־רָחֵל מִלֵּאָה וַיַּעֲבֹד עִמּוֹ עוֹד שֶׁבַע־שָׁנִים אֲחֵרוֹת: לא וַיַּרְא יְהוָה כִּי־שְׂנוּאָה לֵאָה וַיִּפְתַּח אֶת־רַחְמָהּ וְרָחֵל עֲקָרָה: לב וַתַּהַר לֵאָה וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ רְאוּבֵן כִּי אָמְרָה כִּי־רָאָה יְהוָה בְּעָנְיִי כִּי עַתָּה יֶאֱהָבֵנִי אִישִׁי: לג וַתַּהַר עוֹד

עֲבַדְתָּ לִּי הַלָּא בְרָחֵל פִּלָּחִית עִמָּךְ וּלְמָא שַׁקַּרְתָּ בִּי: כו וַאֲמַר לָבָן לָא מִתְעֲבִיד כֵּן בְּאַתְרָנָא לְמִתַּן זְעֵרְתָּא קֳדָם רַבְּתָא: כז אַשְׁלֵים שְׁבוּעָתָא דְּדָא וְנִתַּן לָךְ אַף יַת דָּא בְּפוּלְחָנָא דִּי תִפְלַח עִמִּי עוֹד שְׁבַע שְׁנִין אָחֳרָנִין: כח וַעֲבַד יַעֲקֹב כֵּן וְאַשְׁלֵים שְׁבוּעָתָא דְּדָא וִיהַב לֵיהּ יַת רָחֵל בְּרַתֵּיהּ לֵיהּ לְאִנְתּוּ: כט וִיהַב לָבָן לְרָחֵל בְּרַתֵּיהּ יַת בִּלְהָה אַמְתֵּיהּ לָהּ לְאַמְהוּ: ל וְעַל אַף לְוָת רָחֵל וּרְחִים אַף יַת רָחֵל מִלֵּאָה וּפְלַח עִמֵּיהּ עוֹד שְׁבַע שְׁנִין אָחֳרָנִין: לא וַחֲזָא יְיָ אֲרֵי שְׂנִיאַתָא לֵאָה וִיהַב לָהּ עִדּוּי וְרָחֵל עַקָּרָא: לב וְעִדְּיאַת לֵאָה וְיָלִידַת בַּר וּקְרַת שְׁמֵיהּ רְאוּבֵן אֲרֵי אֲמַרַת אֲרֵי גְלֵי קֳדָם יְיָ עֲלְבוֹנִי אֲרֵי כְעַן יְרַחֲמַנְנִי בַּעֲלִי: לג וְעִדְּיאַת עוֹד וְיָלִידַת בַּר

לע"י

שנקלים חיינו חומר כן, חלח לכוליד תולדות חמר כך: (כה) **ויהי בבקר והנה הוא לאה.** חצל גלולה לח היתה לאה, לפי שמסר יעקב סימנים לרחל, וכשראתה רחל שמכניסין לו לאה, חמרה, עכשיו תכלם חחותי, עמדה ומסרה לה חותן סימנים[1]: (כז) **מלא שבע זאת.** דבוק הוא, שכרי נקוד בחטף, שבוע של זאת, וכן ז' ימי המשתה, בגמ' ירושלמית במועד קטן. ות"ח לומר שבוע ממש, שאם כן היה לריך ליוקד הש"ן בפת"ח, ועוד שאבוע לשון זכר, שכתיב שבעה שבועות תספר לך, לפיכך אין משמע שבוע אלא שבעה, שטויל"ח בלע"ז: **ונתנה לך.** לשון רבים, כמו נרדה ונבלה, ונשרפה, אף זה לשון רבים ונתן ונתנה וגו': **גם את זאת.** מיד לאחר שבעת ימי המשתה ותעבוד לאחר נשואיה: (ל) **עוד שבע שנים אחרות.** אחרות הקשין לראשונות, מה ראשונות בחמונה[2] אף האחרונות בחמונה, ואף על פי שברמאות בא עליו: (לב) **ותקרא שמו ראובן.** רבותינו פירשו[3], אמרה, ראו

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—of keeping the Torah before it was given—to avoid hurting the feelings of Rochel, 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)

1 מגילה יג: 2 ב"ר ע, כ 3 ברכות ז:

25 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 Rochel? Why have you deceived me?"

26 Lavan said, "In our neighborhood, we don't do such a thing, to give the younger one before the firstborn. 27 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)."

*28 Ya'akov did just that. He completed the week (of feasting for) this (newlywed), and (Lavan) gave his daughter Rochel to him as a wife. 29 Lavan gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rochel as a maid. 30 (Ya'akov) came to Rochel too. He also loved Rochel, rather than Leah.**

He worked with (Lavan) for another seven years.

YA'AKOV BUILDS HIS FAMILY

29:31 *God saw that Leah was hated, so He opened her womb. Rochel was barren.*

32 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'aNyiy), 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 LEDAVID: 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 Rochel 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. 141*ff; 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 Rochel—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:

*ע"פ פ' רשב"ם. ראה לקו"ש ח"י, ע' 95, הערה 25.

וַתַּ֣הַר ע֗וֹד וַתֵּ֤לֶד בֵּן֙ וַתֹּ֔אמֶר כִּֽי־שָׁמַ֥ע יְהוָ֖ה כִּֽי־שְׂנוּאָ֣ה אָנֹ֑כִי וַיִּתֶּן־לִ֥י גַּם־אֶת־זֶ֖ה וַתִּקְרָ֥א שְׁמ֖וֹ שִׁמְעֽוֹן׃ לד וַתַּ֣הַר ע֗וֹד וַתֵּ֤לֶד בֵּן֙ וַתֹּ֔אמֶר עַתָּ֥ה הַפַּ֖עַם יִלָּוֶ֣ה אִישִׁ֑י אֵלַ֕י כִּֽי־יָלַ֥דְתִּי לֹ֖ו שְׁלֹ֣שָׁה בָנִ֑ים עַל־כֵּ֥ן קָרָֽא־שְׁמ֖וֹ לֵוִֽי׃ לה וַתַּ֣הַר ע֗וֹד וַתֵּ֤לֶד בֵּן֙ וַתֹּ֔אמֶר הַפַּ֥עַם אוֹדֶ֖ה אֶת־יְהוָ֑ה עַל־כֵּ֣ן קָרְאָ֔ה שְׁמ֖וֹ יְהוּדָ֑ה וַתַּעֲמֹ֖ד מִלֶּֽדֶת׃ ל א וַתֵּ֣רֶא רָחֵ֔ל כִּ֥י לֹא־יָלְדָ֖ה לְיַעֲקֹ֑ב וַתְּקַנֵּ֣א רָחֵ֔ל בַּאֲחֹתָ֖הּ וַתֹּ֣אמֶר אֶל־יַעֲקֹ֔ב הָבָ֥ה־לִ֖י בָּנִ֑ים וְאִם־אַ֖יִן מֵתָ֥ה אָנֹֽכִי׃ ב וַיִּֽחַר־אַ֥ף יַעֲקֹ֛ב בְּרָחֵ֖ל וַיֹּ֣אמֶר הֲתַחַ֣ת אֱלֹהִ֔ים אָנֹ֑כִי אֲשֶׁר־מָנַ֥ע מִמֵּ֖ךְ פְּרִי־בָֽטֶן׃ ג וַתֹּ֣אמֶר הִנֵּ֤ה אֲמָתִי֙ בִלְהָ֔ה בֹּ֥א אֵלֶ֖יהָ וְתֵלֵ֣ד עַל־בִּרְכַּ֑י וְאִבָּנֶ֥ה גַם־אָנֹכִ֖י מִמֶּֽנָּה׃ ד וַתִּתֶּן־לֹ֥ו אֶת־בִּלְהָ֛ה שִׁפְחָתָ֖הּ לְאִשָּׁ֑ה וַיָּבֹ֥א אֵלֶ֖יהָ יַעֲקֹֽב׃ ה וַתַּ֣הַר בִּלְהָ֔ה וַתֵּ֥לֶד לְיַעֲקֹ֖ב בֵּֽן׃ ו וַתֹּ֣אמֶר רָחֵ֔ל דָּנַ֥נִי אֱלֹהִ֖ים וְגַם֙ שָׁמַ֣ע בְּקֹלִ֔י

וַאֲמָרַת אֱרֵי שְׁמִיעַ קֳדָם יְיָ אֲרֵי שְׁנִיאָתָא אֲנָא וִיהַב לִי אַף יַת דֵּין וּקְרַת שְׁמֵיהּ שִׁמְעוֹן׃ לד וְעַדְיַאת עוֹד וְיַלִּידַת בַּר וַאֲמָרַת הָדָא זִמְנָא יִתְחַבַּר לִי בַּעֲלִי אֲרֵי יַלִּידִית לֵיהּ תְּלָתָא בְנִין עַל כֵּן קְרָא שְׁמֵיהּ לֵוִי׃ לה וְעַדְיַאת עוֹד וְיַלִּידַת בַּר וַאֲמָרַת הָדָא זִמְנָא אוֹדֵה קֳדָם יְיָ עַל כֵּן קְרַת שְׁמֵיהּ יְהוּדָה וְקָמַת מִלְּמֵילַד׃ א וַחֲזַת רָחֵל אֲרֵי לָא יַלִּידַת לְיַעֲקֹב וְקַנְּיָאַת רָחֵל בַּאֲחָתָהּ וַאֲמָרַת לְיַעֲקֹב הַב לִי בְנִין וְאִם לָא מִיתָא אֲנָא׃ ב וּתְקֵיף רוּגְזָא דְיַעֲקֹב בְּרָחֵל וַאֲמַר הָא מִנִּי אַתְּ בְּעָיָא הֲלָא מִן קֳדָם יְיָ תִּבְעִין דִּי מְנַע מִנִּיךְ וְלָדָא דְמִעִין׃ ג וַאֲמָרַת הָא אַמְתִי בִלְהָה עוּל לְוָתָהּ וְתֵלִיד וַאֲנָא אֶתְבְּנֵי אַף אֲנָא מִנָּהּ׃ ד וְיָהֲבַת לֵיהּ יַת בִּלְהָה אַמְתָהּ לְאִנְתּוּ וְעַל לְוָתָהּ יַעֲקֹב׃ ה וְעַדְיַאת בִּלְהָה וְיַלִּידַת לְיַעֲקֹב בָּר׃ ו וַאֲמָרַת רָחֵל דִּנַנִי יְיָ וְאַף קַבֵּיל צְלוֹתִי וְיָהַב לִי בַּר עַל

לס"ו

מה בין בני לבן חמי, שמכר הבכורה ליעקב, וזה לא מכרה ליוסף, ולא ערער עליו, ולא עוד שלא ערער עליו, אלא שבקש להוציאו מן הכור: (לד) **הפעם ילוה אישי.** לפי שהחמכות נגיחות היו ויודעות שי"ב שבטים יוצאים מיעקב, ודי נשים ישא, חמרה, מעתה אין לו פתחון פה עלי, שהרי נטלתי כל חלקי בבניו: **על כן.** כל מי שנאמר בו על כן, מרובה בחוכלוסין, חוץ מלוי, שהחרון היה מכלה בהם[1]: **קרא שמו לוי.** בכולם כתיב ותקרא, (שהיא קראה), וזה כתב בו קרא, ויש מדרש אגדה בחלה הדברים הבא, שאלא הקב"ה גבריאל והביאו לפניו, וקרא לו שם זה, ונתן לו כ"ד מתנות בהורה, ועל שם שלושו במתנות קראו לוי: (לה) **הפעם אודה.** שנטלתי יותר מחלקי מעתה יש לי להודות: (ה) **ותקנא רחל באחתה.** קנאה בזעשיו הרשיע, חמרה, אלולי שנדקה ממני לא זכתה לבנים[2]: **הבה לי.** וכי כך עשה חניך לחמך, והלא התפלל עליה: **מתה אנכי.** מכאן למי שאין לו בנים שחשוב כמת[3]: (ג) **התחת.** וכי במקומו הני: **אשר מנע ממך.** את חומרת שחעשה כחבא, הני היני כחבא, חבא לא היו לו בנים, הני יש לי בנים, ממך מנע ולא ממני: (ג) **על ברכי.** כתרגומו ואגא חרבי: **ואבנה גם אנכי.** מכו גם, חמרה לו, זקוק חבריכם היו לו בנים מהגר, ואגר מתניו כנגד שרה. חמר לה, זקנתי הכניסה לרחה לביתה, חמרה לו שם הדבר הזה מעכב, הנה חמתי: **ואבנה גם אנכי ממנה.** כשרה: (ו) **דנני אלהים.** דנני ושיבני וזכני[4]:

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. 92*ff.*)

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"?

1 ב"ר עא, ד 2 שם ו 3 שם 4 שם ז

33 *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.*

34 *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.*

35 *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 1 *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."*

2 *Ya'akov became angry with Rochel. He said, "Am I in place of God, who has withheld the fruit of the womb from you?"*

3 *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."*

4 *So she gave him Bilhah, her maid, for a wife, and Ya'akov came to her.*

5 *Bilhah became pregnant, and she gave birth to a son for Ya'akov.* 6 *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 (לְוָוּהוּ) 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 Eisav, her older son"* (27:42), and *Rashi* comments, *"She was told by Divine Inspiration what Eisav 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.)

וַיִּתֶּן־לִי בֵּן עַל־כֵּן קָרְאָה שְׁמוֹ דָּן: ז וַתַּהַר עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֵּלְהָה
שִׁפְחַת רָחֵל בֵּן שֵׁנִי לְיַעֲקֹב: ח וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל נַפְתּוּלֵי אֱלֹהִים |
נִפְתַּלְתִּי עִם־אֲחֹתִי גַּם־יָכֹלְתִּי וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ נַפְתָּלִי: ט וַתֵּרֶא
לֵאָה כִּי עָמְדָה מִלֶּדֶת וַתִּקַּח אֶת־זִלְפָּה שִׁפְחָתָהּ וַתִּתֵּן אֹתָהּ
לְיַעֲקֹב לְאִשָּׁה: י וַתֵּלֶד זִלְפָּה שִׁפְחַת לֵאָה לְיַעֲקֹב בֵּן:
יא וַתֹּאמֶר לֵאָה בגד [ק' בָּא גָּד] וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ גָּד: יב וַתֵּלֶד
זִלְפָּה שִׁפְחַת לֵאָה בֵּן שֵׁנִי לְיַעֲקֹב: יג וַתֹּאמֶר לֵאָה בְּאָשְׁרִי כִּי
אִשְּׁרוּנִי בָּנוֹת וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ אָשֵׁר: [רביעי] יד וַיֵּלֶךְ רְאוּבֵן
בִּימֵי קְצִיר־חִטִּים וַיִּמְצָא דוּדָאִים בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיָּבֵא אֹתָם אֶל־לֵאָה
אִמּוֹ וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל אֶל־לֵאָה תְּנִי־נָא לִי מִדּוּדָאֵי בְנֵךְ: טו וַתֹּאמֶר לָהּ הַמְעַט קַחְתֵּךְ אֶת־אִישִׁי וְלָקַחַת גַּם אֶת־דּוּדָאֵי
בְנִי וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל לָכֵן יִשְׁכַּב עִמָּךְ הַלַּיְלָה תַּחַת דּוּדָאֵי בְנֵךְ: טז וַיָּבֹא יַעֲקֹב מִן־הַשָּׂדֶה בָּעֶרֶב וַתֵּצֵא לֵאָה לִקְרָאתוֹ וַתֹּאמֶר
אֵלַי תָּבוֹא כִּי שָׂכֹר שְׂכַרְתִּיךְ בְּדוּדָאֵי בְנִי וַיִּשְׁכַּב עִמָּהּ בַּלַּיְלָה
הוּא: יז וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶל־לֵאָה וַתַּהַר וַתֵּלֶד לְיַעֲקֹב בֵּן
חֲמִישִׁי: יח וַתֹּאמֶר לֵאָה נָתַן אֱלֹהִים שְׂכָרִי אֲשֶׁר־נָתַתִּי
שִׁפְחָתִי לְאִישִׁי וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ יִשָּׂשכָר: יט *וַתַּהַר עוֹד לֵאָה וַתֵּלֶד
בֵּן־שִׁשִּׁי לְיַעֲקֹב: כ וַתֹּאמֶר לֵאָה זְבָדַנִי אֱלֹהִים | אֹתִי זֶבֶד טוֹב
הַפַּעַם יִזְבְּלֵנִי אִישִׁי כִּי־יָלַדְתִּי לוֹ שִׁשָּׁה בָנִים וַתִּקְרָא
אֶת־שְׁמוֹ זְבֻלוּן: כא וְאַחַר יָלְדָה בַּת וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמָהּ דִּינָה:
כב וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־רָחֵל וַיִּשְׁמַע אֵלֶיהָ אֱלֹהִים וַיִּפְתַּח אֶת־

כֵּן קָרְאַת שְׁמֵיהּ דָּן: ז וְעַדְיָאַת עוֹד וִילִידַת
בִּלְהָה אַמְתָּא דְּרָחֵל בַּר תִּנְיָן לְיַעֲקֹב:
ח וַאֲמָרַת רָחֵל קְבֵל יְיָ בָּעוּתִי בְּאִתְחַנָּוּתַי
בְּצִלּוֹתִי חֲמֵידִית דְּיְהֵי לִי וְלָד כַּאֲחָתִי אַף
אִתְיְהִיב לִי וּקְרַת שְׁמֵיהּ נַפְתָּלִי: ט וַחֲזַת לֵאָה
אֲרֵי קָמַת מִלְּמֵילַד וּדְבָרַת יַת זִלְפָּה אַמְתָהּ
וְיָהֲבַת יָתָהּ לְיַעֲקֹב לְאִנְתּוּ: י וִילִידַת זִלְפָּה
אַמְתָּא דְּלֵאָה לְיַעֲקֹב בָּר: יא וַאֲמָרַת לֵאָה
אַתָּא גָּד וּקְרַת יַת שְׁמֵיהּ גָּד: יב וִילִידַת זִלְפָּה
אַמְתָּא דְּלֵאָה בַּר תִּנְיָן לְיַעֲקֹב: יג וַאֲמָרַת
לֵאָה תּוּשְׁבַּחְתָּא חָוַת לִי אֲרֵי בְּכֵן יְשַׁבְּחוּנַנִי
נְשַׁיָּא וּקְרַת יַת שְׁמֵיהּ אָשֵׁר: יד וַאֲזַל רְאוּבֵן
בְּיוֹמֵי חֲצַד חִטִּין וְאַשְׁכַּח יַבְרוּחִין בְּחַקְלָא
וְאַיְתִי יָתְהוֹן לְלֵאָה אִמֵּיהּ וַאֲמָרַת רָחֵל לְלֵאָה
הָבִי כְעַן לִי מַיְבְרוּחֵי דִּבְרִיךְ: טו וַאֲמָרַת לָהּ
הַזְעֵיר דִּדְבָרְתְּ יַת בַּעֲלִי וְתִפְּבִין (וּלְמִסַּב) אַף
יַת יַבְרוּחֵי דִּבְרִי וַאֲמָרַת רָחֵל בְּכֵן יִשְׁכּוֹב
עִמָּךְ בְּלֵילְיָא חֲלַף יַבְרוּחֵי דִּבְרִיךְ: טז וַאֲתָא
יַעֲקֹב מִן חַקְלָא בְּרַמְשָׁא וּנְפַקַת לֵאָה לְקַדָּמוּתֵיהּ
וַאֲמָרַת לְוָתִי תֵּיעוֹל אֲרֵי מֵיגַר אֲגַרְתִּיךְ
בְּיַבְרוּחֵי דִּבְרִי וּשְׁכִיב עִמֵּהּ בְּלֵילְיָא הוּא:
יז וְקַבֵּיל יְיָ צְלוֹתָהּ דְּלֵאָה וְעַדְיָאַת וִילִידַת
לְיַעֲקֹב בַּר חֲמִשָׁאי: יח וַאֲמָרַת לֵאָה יְהַב יְיָ
אַגְרִי דִּיהַבִית אַמְתִי לְבַעֲלִי וּקְרַת שְׁמֵיהּ
יִשָּׂשכָר: יט וְעַדְיָאַת עוֹד לֵאָה וִילִידַת בַּר
שְׁתִיתָאי לְיַעֲקֹב: כ וַאֲמָרַת לֵאָה יְהַב יְיָ יָתִי
לִי חֻלַק טַב הָדָא זִמְנָא יְהֵי מְדוֹרֵהּ דְּבַעֲלִי
לְוָתִי אֲרֵי יְלִידִית לֵיהּ שִׁתָּא בְנִין וּקְרַת יַת
שְׁמֵיהּ זְבוּלוֹן: כא וּבְתַר כֵּן יְלִידַת בְּרַתָּא
וּקְרַת יַת שְׁמָהּ דִּינָה: כב וְעַל דּוּכְרָנָא

*ס"א וַתַּהַר עוֹד לֵאָה

רס"י

(ח) **נפתולי אלהים**. מנחס בן סרוק פירשו במחברת למיד פתיל, חבורים מאת המקום, ונתחברתי עם אחותי לזכות לבנים. ואני מפרשו לשון עקש ופתלתול, ונתעקשתי ופתלתי פירות ונפתולים הרבה למקום, להיות שוה לאחותי: **גם יכלתי**. הסכים על ידי. ואונקלוס תרגם לשון תפלה. נפתולי אלהים נפתלתי, כמה בקשות התפידות לפניו ונתקבלתי ונתעתרתי כאחותי: **נפתלתי**. נתקבלה תפלתי. ומדרשי אגדה יש רבים בלשון נוטריקון: (י) **ותלד זלפה**. בכולן נאמר הריון, חוץ מזלפה, לפי שהיתה בחורה מכולן ותימוקת בשנים, ואין הריון ניכר בה, וכדי לרמות ליעקב נתנה לבן ללאה, שלא יבין שמכניסין לו את לאה, שכך מנהגן, ליתן שפחה הגדולה לגדולה והקטנה לקטנה: (יא) **בא גד**. בא מזל טוב, כמו גד גדי וסנוק לא[1], ודומה לו הטורכים לגד שלחן[2]. ומדרש אגדה, שנולד מהול כמו גדו חילנא[3], ולא ידעתי על מה נכתב תיבה אחת. דבר אחר למה נקראת תיבה אחת בגד, כמו בגדת בי כשבאת אל שפחתי, כאיש שבגד באשת נעוריו: (יד) **בימי קציר**

(ח) **נפתולי אלהים**. מנחם בן סרוק פירשו במחברת למיד פתיל, חבורים מאת המקום, ונתחברתי עם אחותי לזכות לבנים. ואני מפרשו לשון עקש ופתלתול, ונתעקשתי ופתלתי פירות ונפתולים הרבה למקום, להיות שוה לאחותי: **גם יכלתי**. הסכים על ידי. ואונקלוס תרגם לשון תפלה. נפתולי אלהים נפתלתי, כמה בקשות התפידות לפניו ונתקבלתי ונתעתרתי כאחותי: **נפתלתי**. נתקבלה תפלתי. ומדרשי אגדה יש רבים בלשון נוטריקון: (י) **ותלד זלפה**. בכולן נאמר הריון, חוץ מזלפה, לפי שהיתה בחורה מכולן ותימוקת בשנים, ואין הריון ניכר בה, וכדי לרמות ליעקב נתנה לבן ללאה, שלא יבין שמכניסין לו את לאה, שכך מנהגן, ליתן שפחה הגדולה לגדולה והקטנה לקטנה: (יא) **בא גד**. בא מזל טוב, כמו גד גדי וסנוק לא[1], ודומה לו הטורכים לגד שלחן[2]. ומדרש אגדה, שנולד מהול כמו גדו חילנא[3], ולא ידעתי על מה נכתב תיבה אחת. דבר אחר למה נקראת תיבה אחת בגד, כמו בגדת בי כשבאת אל שפחתי, כאיש שבגד באשת נעוריו: (יד) **בימי קציר חטים**. לכגיד שבאן של שבטים, שעת הקציר היה, ולא פשט ידו בגזל להביא חטים ושעורים, אלא דבר להפקר שאין אדם מקפיד בו: **דודאים**. סיגלי טעם הוא, ובלשון ישמעאל יסמי"ן[4]: (טו) **ולקחת גם את דודאי בני**. בתמיה, ולעשות עוד זאת, ליקח גם את דודאי בני, ותרגומו ולמיסב: **לכן ישכב עמך הלילה**. שלי היתה שכיבת לילה זו, ואני נותנה לך תחת דודאי בנך. ולפי שזלזלה במשכב הצדיק, לא זכתה להקבר עמו[5]: (טז) **שכר שכרתיך**. נתתי לרחל שכרה: **בלילה הוא**. הקב"ה סייע, שלא מסר יעשכר[6]: (יז) **וישמע אלהים אל לאה**. שהיתה מתאוה ומחזרת להרבות שבטים: (כ) **זבד טוב**. כתרגומו: **יזבלני**. לשון בית זבול, כורכריי"ש בלע"ז, בית מדור, מעתה לא תהא עיקר דירתו אלא עמי, שיש לי בנים כנגד כל נשיו: (כא) **דינה**. רבותינו[7], שדנה לאה דין בעצמה, אם זה זכר, לא תהא רחל אחותי כאחת השפחות, והתפללה עליו ונהפך לנקבה: (כב) **ויזכור אלהים את רחל**. זכר לה שמסרה סימניה לאחותה[8], ושהיתה מעירה שלא תעלה בגורלו של עשו,

1 שבת ז: 2 ישעי' סה, יא 3 דניאל ד, יא 4 סנהדרין צט: 5 ב"ר עב, ג 6 נדה לא. 7 ברכות ס. 8 ב"ר עג, ד

me (DANani, and acquitted me). He has also listened to my voice and given me a son." Therefore she named him Dan.

7 Rochel's maid Bilhah became pregnant again and gave birth to a second son for Ya'akov. 8 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.

9 When Leah saw that she had stopped having children, she took her maid Zilpah and gave her to Ya'akov for a wife. 10 Leah's maid Zilpah gave birth to a son for Ya'akov.

11 Leah said, "Good fortune (GAD) has come," and she named him Gad.

12 Leah's maid Zilpah gave birth to a second son for Ya'akov 13 Leah said, "I am praised (ASHRiy), because women (now) praise me," so she named him Asher.

FOURTH READING

14 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."

15 "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."

16 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.

17 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. 18 Leah said, "God has given (me) my reward (SeCHARiy) because I have given my maid to my husband," and she named him Yissachar.

19 Leah became pregnant again, and she gave birth to a sixth son for Ya'akov. 20 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.

21 Afterwards, she gave birth to a daughter, and she named her Dinah.

22 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

Our 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. 96*ff*)

רַחֲמָהּ׃ כג וַתַּהַר וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן וַתֹּאמֶר אָסַף אֱלֹהִים אֶת־חֶרְפָּתִי׃
כד וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ יוֹסֵף לֵאמֹר יֹסֵף יְהוָה לִי בֵּן אַחֵר׃ כה וַיְהִי
כַּאֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה רָחֵל אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־לָבָן שַׁלְּחֵנִי
וְאֵלְכָה אֶל־מְקוֹמִי וְלְאַרְצִי׃ כו תְּנָה אֶת־נָשַׁי וְאֶת־יְלָדַי אֲשֶׁר
עָבַדְתִּי אֹתְךָ בָּהֶן וְאֵלֵכָה כִּי אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ אֶת־עֲבֹדָתִי אֲשֶׁר
עֲבַדְתִּיךָ׃ כז וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו לָבָן אִם־נָא מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ
נִחַשְׁתִּי וַיְבָרְכֵנִי יְהוָה בִּגְלָלֶךָ׃ [חמישי] כח וַיֹּאמֶר נָקְבָה שְׂכָרְךָ
עָלַי וְאֶתֵּנָה׃ כט וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ אֵת אֲשֶׁר עֲבַדְתִּיךָ
וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר־הָיָה מִקְנְךָ אִתִּי׃ ל כִּי מְעַט אֲשֶׁר־הָיָה לְךָ לְפָנַי
וַיִּפְרֹץ לָרֹב וַיְבָרֶךְ יְהוָה אֹתְךָ לְרַגְלִי וְעַתָּה מָתַי אֶעֱשֶׂה
גַּם־אָנֹכִי לְבֵיתִי׃ לא וַיֹּאמֶר מָה אֶתֶּן־לָךְ וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב
לֹא־תִתֶּן־לִי מְאוּמָה אִם־תַּעֲשֶׂה־לִּי הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה אָשׁוּבָה
אֶרְעֶה צֹאנְךָ אֶשְׁמֹר׃ לב אֶעֱבֹר בְּכָל־צֹאנְךָ הַיּוֹם הָסֵר מִשָּׁם
כָּל־שֶׂה | נָקֹד וְטָלוּא וְכָל־שֶׂה־חוּם בַּכְּשָׂבִים וְטָלוּא וְנָקֹד
בָּעִזִּים וְהָיָה שְׂכָרִי׃ לג וְעָנְתָה־בִּי צִדְקָתִי בְּיוֹם מָחָר כִּי־תָבוֹא
עַל־שְׂכָרִי לְפָנֶיךָ כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־אֵינֶנּוּ נָקֹד וְטָלוּא בָּעִזִּים וְחוּם
בַּכְּשָׂבִים גָּנוּב הוּא אִתִּי׃ לד וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן הֵן לוּ יְהִי כִדְבָרֶךָ׃
לה וַיָּסַר בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶת־הַתְּיָשִׁים הָעֲקֻדִּים וְהַטְּלָאִים וְאֵת
כָּל־הָעִזִּים הַנְּקֻדּוֹת וְהַטְּלָאֹת כָּל אֲשֶׁר־לָבָן בּוֹ וְכָל־חוּם

דְּרָחֵל קֶדֶם יְיָ וְקַבֵּל צְלוֹתָהּ יְיָ וִיהַב לָהּ עִדּוּי׃
כג וְעִדְּיָאַת וִילִידַת בַּר וַאֲמָרַת כְּנַשׁ יְיָ יַת
חִסּוּדִי׃ כד וּקְרַת יַת שְׁמֵיהּ יוֹסֵף לְמֵימָר יוֹסֵף
יְיָ לִי בַּר אָחֳרָן׃ כה וַהֲוָה כַּד יְלִידַת רָחֵל יַת
יוֹסֵף וַאֲמַר יַעֲקֹב לְלָבָן שַׁלְּחַנִי וְאֵיהַךְ לְאַתְרִי
וּלְאַרְעִי׃ כו הַב יַת נְשַׁי וְיַת בְּנֵי דִּי פָלְחִית
יָתָךְ בְּהוֹן וְאֵיזֵיל אֲרֵי אַתְּ יָדַעְתְּ יַת פּוּלְחָנִי דִּי
פָלְחִתָּךְ׃ כז וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ לָבָן אִם כְּעַן אַשְׁכָּחִית
רַחֲמִין בְּעֵינָיךְ נִסֵּיתִי וּבָרְכַנִי יְיָ בְּדִילָךְ׃
כח וַאֲמַר פָּרֵישׁ אַגְרָךְ עֲלַי וְאֶתֵּן׃ כט וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ
אַתְּ יָדַעְתְּ יַת דִּי פַלְחִתָּךְ וְיַת דִּי הֲוָה בְּעִירָךְ
עִמִּי׃ ל אֲרֵי זְעִיר דִּי הֲוָה לָךְ קֳדָמַי וּתְקֵיף
לְמַסְגֵּי וּבָרִיךְ יְיָ יָתָךְ בְּדִילִי וּכְעַן אֵימָתַי אֵעְבֵּד
אַף אֲנָא לְבֵיתִי׃ לא וַאֲמַר מָה אֶתֶּן לָךְ וַאֲמַר
יַעֲקֹב לָא תִתֶּן לִי מִדַּעַם אִם תַּעְבֵּיד לִי
פִּתְגָמָא הָדֵין אֵיתוּב אֶרְעֵי עָנָךְ אֶטַּר׃
לב אֶעְבַּר בְּכָל עָנָךְ יוֹמָא דֵין אַעְדֵּי מִתַּמָּן כָּל
אִמַּר נְמוּר וּרְקוּעַ וְכָל אִמַּר שְׁחוּם בְּאִמְּרַיָּא
וּרְקוּעַ וּנְמוּר בְּעִזָּיָא וְיהֵי אַגְרִי׃ לג וְתִסְהַד בִּי
זְכוּתִי בְּיוֹם דְּמֶחָר אֲרֵי תֵּיעוֹל עַל אַגְרִי
קֳדָמָךְ כֹּל דִּי לֵיתוֹהִי נְמוּר וּרְקוּעַ בְּעִזָּיָא
וּשְׁחוּם בְּאִמְּרַיָּא גְּנוּבָא הוּא עִמִּי׃ לד וַאֲמַר
לָבָן בְּרַם לְוַי יְהֵי כְּפִתְגָמָךְ׃ לה וְאַעְדֵּי בְּיוֹמָא
הַהוּא יַת תְּיָשַׁיָּא רְגוֹלַיָּא וּרְקוּעַיָּא וְיַת כָּל
עִזָּיָא נְמוּרְתָא וּרְקוּעָתָא כָּל דִּי חִוַּר בֵּיהּ וְכָל

רס"י

שמע יגרשנה יעקב לפי שהיו לה בניס, ואף עשו הרשע כך עלה בלבו כשנשמע שהיו לה בניס. הוא שייסד הפייט, המדמון כבט שלש חלה לבה לקחתה לו ונתבהלה: (כג) **אסף**. ככניסה במקום שלש תרתה, וכן אסף חרפתנו[1], ולש יאסף הביתה[2], אספו גרגרתם[3], וירחך לש יאסף[4], לש יומר: **חרפתי**. שהייתי לחרפה שהיו עקרה, והיו חומרים עלי שהעלה לחלקו של עשו הרשע. ומגדה, כל זמן שהיה לאשה בן, היו לה כמי לתלות סרחונה, משיש לה בן תולה בו, מי שבר כלי זה, בנך, מי אכל תאניס אלו, בנך: (כד) **יסף ה׳ לי בן אחר**. יודעת היתה בנבואה, שהיו יעקב עתיד להעמיד שלש עניס עשר שבטיס, חמרה, יהי רצון שאותו שהוא עתיד להעמיד, יהא ממני, לכך לש התפללה שלש על בן אחר: (כה) **כאשר ילדה רחל את יוסף**. משנולד שהיו של עשו, שנאמר והיה בית יעקב אש ובית יוסף להבה ובית עשו לקש[5], אש בלש להבה חיו שולט למרחוק, משנולד יוסף, בטח יעקב בהקב"ה ורלה לשוב: (כו) **תנה את נשי וגו׳**. חיו רולה לומת כי אש ברשות: (כז) **נחשתי**. מנחש הייתי, נסיתי בנחוש שלי שעל ידך בתה לי ברכה. כשבתה לכאן לש היו לי בניס, שנאמר והבה רחל בתו בתה עם הלאן, חפשר יש לו בניס והוא שולח בתו חלל הרועים, ועכשיו היה לו בניס, שנאמר וישמע את דברי בני לבן: (כח) **נקבה שכרך**. כתרגומו פרים תגרך:

(כט) **ואת אשר היה מקנך אתי**. אש חשבון מיעוט מקנך שבא לידי מתחלה כמה היו: (ל) **לרגלי**. עם רגלי, בשביל ביתה בתה חלק הברכה[6], כמו הטה חשר ברגליך[7]. לעס חשר ברגלי[8]. הכתיס עמי: **גם אנכי לביתי**. לגורך ביתי, עכשיו אין עושין לגרכי חלה בני, ולריך (לי) להיות עושה גם אני עמהם לסמכן, וזהו גס: (לב) **נקד**. מנומר בחברורות דקות כמו נקודות, פונטר"ש בלע"ז: **טלוא**. לשון טלאים, חברורות רחבות: **חום**. שחוס דומה לאדום רוס"ו בלע"ז, לשון משנה, שממתית ומשלמת לבנה, לענין התבואה: **והיה שברי**. שיולדו מכאן ולהבא נקודים וטלואים בעזים ושחומים בכשבים יהיו שלי, ואותן שיגנן עכשיו, הפרש מהם והפקידם בידך בניך, שלא תאמר לי על המולדים מעתה, הלו היו שם מתחלה, ושוב, שלא תאמר לי, על ידי הזכריס שהן נקודים וטלואים, תלמוד לומר ובית יעקב דוגמתן מכאן ואילך: (לג) **וענתה בי וגו׳**. שם תחשדני שאני גוטל משלך כלום, תעמד בי לחקתי, כי תבוא לחקתי ותעיד על שכרי לפניך, שלא תמלא בעדרי כי שם נקודים וטלואים, וכל שתמלא בהן שאינו נקוד או טלוא או חום, בידוע שגנבתיו לך, ובגניבה הוא שרוי אללי: (לד) **הן**. לשון קבלת הדבריס: **לו יהי כדברך**. הלואי שתתפוץ בכך: (לה) **ויסר**. לבן ביום ההוא וגו׳: **התישים**. עזיס זכריס: **כל אשר לבן בו**. כל אשר היתה בו

1 ישעי׳ ד, א 2 שמות ט, יט 3 יואל ד, טו 4 ישעי׳ ס, כ 5 עובדי׳ א, יח 6 ב״ר עג, ח 7 שמות יא, ח 8 שופטים ח, ה

[23] *She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She said, "God has concealed (aSaF) my disgrace."* [24] *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 *Then, 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.* [26] *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

[27] *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."* [28] *He said, "Specify (what is to be) your wage from me, and I will give (it)."*

[29] *(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.* [30] *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?"*

[31] *(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): [32] *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).* [33] *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)."*

[34] *"Agreed!" said Lavan. "(I) only (hope) it will be as you say (and you won't change your mind)!"*

[35] *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. 136*ff.*)

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.).

בַּכְּשָׂבִים וַיִּתֵּן בְּיַד־בָּנָיו: לו וַיָּשֶׂם דֶּרֶךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים בֵּינוֹ וּבֵין
יַעֲקֹב וְיַעֲקֹב רֹעֶה אֶת־צֹאן לָבָן הַנּוֹתָרֹת: לז וַיִּקַּח־לוֹ יַעֲקֹב
מַקַּל לִבְנֶה לַח וְלוּז וְעַרְמוֹן וַיְפַצֵּל בָּהֶן פְּצָלוֹת לְבָנוֹת מַחְשֹׂף
הַלְּבָן אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַמַּקְלוֹת: לח וַיַּצֵּג אֶת־הַמַּקְלוֹת אֲשֶׁר פִּצֵּל
בָּרְהָטִים בְּשִׁקְתוֹת הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר תָּבֹאן הַצֹּאן לִשְׁתּוֹת לְנֹכַח
הַצֹּאן וַיֵּחַמְנָה בְּבֹאָן לִשְׁתּוֹת: לט וַיֵּחַמּוּ הַצֹּאן אֶל־הַמַּקְלוֹת
וַתֵּלַדְןָ הַצֹּאן עֲקֻדִּים נְקֻדִּים וּטְלָאִים: מ וְהַכְּשָׂבִים הִפְרִיד
יַעֲקֹב וַיִּתֵּן פְּנֵי הַצֹּאן אֶל־עָקֹד וְכָל־חוּם בְּצֹאן לָבָן וַיָּשֶׁת לוֹ
עֲדָרִים לְבַדּוֹ וְלֹא שָׁתָם עַל־צֹאן לָבָן: מא וְהָיָה בְּכָל־יַחֵם
הַצֹּאן הַמְקֻשָּׁרוֹת וְשָׂם יַעֲקֹב אֶת־הַמַּקְלוֹת לְעֵינֵי הַצֹּאן
בָּרְהָטִים לְיַחֲמֵנָה בַּמַּקְלוֹת: מב וּבְהַעֲטִיף* הַצֹּאן לֹא יָשִׂים וְהָיָה
הָעֲטֻפִים לְלָבָן וְהַקְּשָׁרִים לְיַעֲקֹב: מג וַיִּפְרֹץ הָאִישׁ מְאֹד מְאֹד
וַיְהִי־לוֹ צֹאן רַבּוֹת וּשְׁפָחוֹת וַעֲבָדִים וּגְמַלִּים וַחֲמֹרִים:

שְׁחוּם בְּאִמְרָיָא וְיהַב בְּיַד בְּנוֹהִי: לו וְשַׁוִּי
מַהַלַךְ תְּלָתָא יוֹמִין בֵּינוֹהִי וּבֵין יַעֲקֹב וְיַעֲקֹב
רָעֵי יַת עָנָא דְּלָבָן דְּאִשְׁתָּאֲרָן: לז וּנְסֵיב לֵיהּ
יַעֲקֹב חוּטְרִין דִּלְבָן רַטִּיבִין דְּהִלּוּז וְדִדְלוּף
וְקַלִּיף בְּהֶן קְלִפִּין חִוָּרִין קִלּוּף חִוָּר דִּי עַל
חוּטְרַיָּא: לח וּדְעַיִן יַת חוּטְרַיָּא דִּי קַלִּיף
בְּרְהָטַיָּא אֲתַר בֵּית שַׁקְיָא דְּמַיָּא אֲתַר דִּי אָתְיָן
עָנָא לְמִשְׁתֵּי לְקֳבֵלֵיהוֹן דְּעָנָא וּמִתְיַחֲמָן
בְּמֵיתֵיהוֹן לְמִשְׁתֵּי: לט וְאִתְיַחֲמָא עָנָא לְחוּטְרַיָּא
וְיָלְדָן עָנָא רְגוֹלִין נְמוֹרִין וּרְקוֹעִין: מ וְאִמְרַיָּא
אַפְרֵישׁ יַעֲקֹב וְיהַב בְּרֵישׁ עָנָא כָּל דְּרִגּוֹל וְכָל
דִּשְׁחוּם בְּעָנָא דְּלָבָן וְשַׁוִּי לֵיהּ עָדְרִין
בִּלְחוֹדוֹהִי וְלָא עָרֵיבִינוּן עִם עָנָא דְּלָבָן:
מא וַהֲוָה בְּכָל עִדָּן דְּמִתְיַחֲמָן עָנָא מְבַכְּרָיָא
וְשַׁוִּי יַעֲקֹב יַת חוּטְרַיָּא לְעֵינֵי עָנָא בִּרְהָטַיָּא
לְיַחֲמוּתְהוֹן בְּחוּטְרַיָּא: מב וּבְלַקֵּישׁוּת עָנָא לָא
מְשַׁוִּי וַהֲוָן לַקֵּישַׁיָּא לְלָבָן וּבַכִּירַיָּא לְיַעֲקֹב:
מג וּתְקֵיף גַּבְרָא לַחֲדָא לַחֲדָא וַהֲווֹ לֵיהּ עָאן

*יש גורסים ף׳ רבתי

רס״י

מדרגורות לצנות: **ויתן**. לבן ביד בניו: (לו) **הנותרות**. הרעועות שבכן, החולות והעקרות שאינן מלא שיריס, חותם מסר לו: (לז) **מקל לבנה**. עץ הוא, ושמו לבנה, כמו דתימא, תחת אלון ולבנה[1], ואומר אני הוא שקורין טרימנ"ל שהוא לבן: **לח**. כשהוא רטוב: **ולוז**. ועוד לקח מקל לוז, עץ שגדלין בו מגוזים דקים, קולדר"י בלע"ז: **וערמון**. קשטניי"ר בלע"ז: **פצלות**. קילופים קילופים, שהיה עושהו מגומר: **מחשף הלבן**. גלוי לובן של מקל. כשהיה קולפו, היה נראה וגלה לובן שלו במקום הקילוף: (לח) **ויצג**. תרגומו ודעין, לשון תחיבה ונעילה הוא בלשון מרמית, והרבה יש בגמ' דלה ושלפה, דן ביה מידי. דלה כמו דעלה, חלש שמקלר את לשונו: **ברהטים**. במרזבות המיס בצריכות העשויות בארץ להשקות שם הצאן: **אשר תבאן וגו'**. ברהטים אשר תצאן הצאן לשתות, שם הגיע המקלות לנכח הצאן: **ויחמנה וגו'**. כשהמה רואה את המקלות והיה נרתעת לאחוריה, והזכר רובעה, ויולדת כיוצא בו[2]. רבי הושעיה

מזמר, כמיס נעשין זרע במעיהן ולא היו לריכות לזכר, וזכו ויחמנה וגו': (לט) **אל המקלות**. אל מראות המקלות: **עקודים**. מצוינים במקום עקידתן, כמ קרסולי ידיהן ורגליהן: (מ) **והכשבים הפריד יעקב**. הגולדיס עקודים נקודיס, כצדיל והפריד לעלמן, ועשה אותן עדר עדר לבדו, והוליך אותו העדר העקוד לפני הצאן, ופני הצאן הכולכות מחריכה לופות אליהס, וזכו שצאמר ויתן פני הצאן אל עקוד, שהיו פני הצאן אל העקודים, ואל כל חוס שאינו בצאן לבן: **וישת לו עדרים**. כמו שפירשתי: (מא) **המקשרות**. כתרגומו הבכירות, ואין לו עד במקרא. ומנחס חברו עס אחיתופל בקושריס[3]. ויכי הקשר אינן אותן המתקשרות יחד למכר עבורן: (מב) **ובהעטיף**. לשון איחור, כתרגומו ובלקשות. ומנחס חברו עס המחלוות והמעטפות[4], לשון עטיפת כסות, כלומר מתעטפות בעורן וצמרן, ואינן מתאוות להתיחס על ידי הזכריס: (מג) **צאן רבות**. פרות ורבות יותר משאר לאן[5]: **ושפחות ועבדים**. מוכר הוא בדמיס

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 הושע ד, יג 2 ב״ר עג, י 3 שמואל-ב טו, לא 4 ישעי׳ ג, כב 5 אוצ״ל: משאר צאן **ושפחות** (שיחת יו״ד כסלו תש״מ).

and he gave (them) into the hands of his sons. [36] *He set three days' journey between himself and Ya'akov, and Ya'akov tended (the dregs of) Lavan's remaining flocks.*

[37] *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.* [38] *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.* [39] *The flocks became stimulated (and mated on seeing) the rods, and the flocks bore ringed, patched, and striped (young).*

[40] *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.*

[41] *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.* [42] *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.*

[43] *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. 252*ff*.)

לא א וַיִּשְׁמַע אֶת־דִּבְרֵי בְנֵי־לָבָן לֵאמֹר לָקַח יַעֲקֹב אֵת כָּל־
אֲשֶׁר לְאָבִינוּ וּמֵאֲשֶׁר לְאָבִינוּ עָשָׂה אֵת כָּל־הַכָּבֹד הַזֶּה:
ב וַיַּרְא יַעֲקֹב אֶת־פְּנֵי לָבָן וְהִנֵּה אֵינֶנּוּ עִמּוֹ כִּתְמוֹל שִׁלְשׁוֹם:
ג וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־יַעֲקֹב שׁוּב אֶל־אֶרֶץ אֲבוֹתֶיךָ וּלְמוֹלַדְתֶּךָ
וְאֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ: ד וַיִּשְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב וַיִּקְרָא לְרָחֵל וּלְלֵאָה הַשָּׂדֶה
אֶל־צֹאנוֹ: ה וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶן רֹאֶה אָנֹכִי אֶת־פְּנֵי אֲבִיכֶן כִּי־אֵינֶנּוּ
אֵלַי כִּתְמוֹל שִׁלְשֹׁם וֵאלֹהֵי אָבִי הָיָה עִמָּדִי: ו וְאַתֶּנָּה יְדַעְתֶּן כִּי
בְכָל־כֹּחִי עָבַדְתִּי אֶת־אֲבִיכֶן: ז וַאֲבִיכֶן הֵתַל בִּי וְהֶחֱלִף
אֶת־מַשְׂכֻּרְתִּי עֲשֶׂרֶת מֹנִים וְלֹא־נְתָנוֹ אֱלֹהִים לְהָרַע עִמָּדִי:
ח אִם־כֹּה יֹאמַר נְקֻדִּים יִהְיֶה שְׂכָרֶךָ וְיָלְדוּ כָל־הַצֹּאן נְקֻדִּים
וְאִם־כֹּה יֹאמַר עֲקֻדִּים יִהְיֶה שְׂכָרֶךָ וְיָלְדוּ כָל־הַצֹּאן עֲקֻדִּים:
ט וַיַּצֵּל אֱלֹהִים אֶת־מִקְנֵה אֲבִיכֶם וַיִּתֶּן־לִי: י וַיְהִי בְּעֵת יַחֵם
הַצֹּאן וָאֶשָּׂא עֵינַי וָאֵרֶא בַּחֲלוֹם וְהִנֵּה הָעַתֻּדִים הָעֹלִים
עַל־הַצֹּאן עֲקֻדִּים נְקֻדִּים וּבְרֻדִּים: יא וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי מַלְאַךְ
הָאֱלֹהִים בַּחֲלוֹם יַעֲקֹב וָאֹמַר הִנֵּנִי: יב וַיֹּאמֶר שָׂא־נָא עֵינֶיךָ
וּרְאֵה כָּל־הָעַתֻּדִים הָעֹלִים עַל־הַצֹּאן עֲקֻדִּים נְקֻדִּים וּבְרֻדִּים
כִּי רָאִיתִי אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר לָבָן עֹשֶׂה לָךְ: יג אָנֹכִי הָאֵל בֵּית־אֵל

סַגְיָאן וְאַמְתָן וְעַבְדִין וְגַמְלִין וַחֲמָרִין: א וּשְׁמַע
יַת פִּתְגָמֵי בְנֵי לָבָן לְמֵימָר נְסִיב יַעֲקֹב יַת כָּל
דִּי לַאֲבוּנָא וּמִדִּי לַאֲבוּנָא קְנָא יַת כָּל נִכְסַיָּא
הָאִלֵּין: ב וַחֲזָא יַעֲקֹב יַת סְבַר אַפֵּי לָבָן וְהָא
לֵיתוֹהִי עִמֵּיהּ כְּמֵאתְמַלֵּי וּמִדְּקַמּוֹהִי: ג וַאֲמַר
יְיָ לְיַעֲקֹב תּוּב לַאֲרַע אֲבָהָתָךְ וּלְיַלְּדוּתָךְ וְיהֵי
מֵימְרִי בְּסַעֲדָךְ: ד וּשְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב וּקְרָא לְרָחֵל
וּלְלֵאָה לְחַקְלָא לְוָת עָנֵיהּ: ה וַאֲמַר לְהֶן חָזֵי
אֲנָא יַת סְבַר אַפֵּי אֲבוּכֶן אֲרֵי לֵיתוֹהִי עִמַּי
כְּמֵאתְמַלֵּי וּמִדְּקַמּוֹהִי וֵאלָהָהּ דְּאַבָּא הֲוָה
בְּסַעֲדִי: ו וְאַתּוּן יְדַעְתּוּן אֲרֵי בְּכָל חֵילִי
פָּלְחִית יַת אֲבוּכֶן: ז וַאֲבוּכֶן שַׁקַּר בִּי וְאַשְׁנִי יַת
אַגְרִי עֲשַׂר זִמְנִין וְלָא שַׁבְקֵיהּ יְיָ לְאַבָּאשָׁא
עִמִּי: ח אִם כְּדֵין הֲוָה אָמַר נְמוּרִין יְהֵא אַגְרָךְ
וְיָלְדָן כָּל עָנָא נְמוּרִין וְאִם כְּדֵין הֲוָה אָמַר
רְגוֹלִין יְהֵא אַגְרָךְ וְיָלְדָן כָּל עָנָא רְגוֹלִין:
ט וְאַפְרֵישׁ יְיָ מָן בְּעִירָא דַּאֲבוּכֶן וְיַהַב לִי: י וַהֲוָה
בְּעִדָּן דְּאִתְיַחֲמָא עָנָא וּזְקָפִית עֵינַי וַחֲזֵית
בְּחֶלְמָא וְהָא תַּיְשַׁיָּא דְּסָלְקִין עַל עָנָא רְגוֹלִין
נְמוּרִין וּפַצִּיחִין: יא וַאֲמַר לִי מַלְאֲכָא דְיָ
בְּחֶלְמָא יַעֲקֹב וַאֲמָרִית הָא אֲנָא: יב וַאֲמַר
זְקוֹף כְּעַן עֵינָיךְ וַחֲזֵי כָּל תַּיְשַׁיָּא דְּסָלְקִין עַל
עָנָא רְגוֹלִין נְמוּרִין וּפַצִּיחִין אֲרֵי גְלֵי קֳדָמַי
יַת כָּל דִּי לָבָן עָבֵיד לָךְ: יג אֲנָא אֱלָהָא

רס"י

יקריס, ולוקח לו כל חלקו: (ו) **עשה**. כגם, כמו ויעש חיל ויך את עמלק[1]: (ג) **שוב אל ארץ אבותיך**. ומס תהיה עמך, אבל בעודך מחובר לעמת, אי אפשר להשרות שכינתי עליך: (ד) **ויקרא לרחל וללאה**. לרחל תחלה ואחר כך ללאה, שהיא היתה עקרת הבית, שבשבילה נזדווג יעקב עם לבן, ואף בניה של לאה מודים בדבר, שהרי בועז ובית דינו משבט יהודה הומריס, כרחל וכלאה אשר בנו שתיהן וגו', הקדימו רחל ללאה: (ז) **עשרת מנים**. אין מוניס פחות מעשרה: **מנים**. לשון סכום כלל האמצעון, וכן עשיריות, למדנו שהחליף תגלו מאה פעמים: (י) **והנה העתודים**. אף על פי שהבדילם לבן כולם שלא יתעברו הלאן דוגמתן, היו המלאכים מביאין חותן מעדר המסור ביד בני לבן, לעדר שביד יעקב[2]: **וברדים**. תרגומו ופליחין, פיים"ר בלע"ז, חוט של לבן מקוף את גופו סביב, וחברזות שלו פתוחה ומפולשת מזו אל זו, (ס"ח מזן אל זן), ואין לי להביא עד מן המקרא: (יג) **האל בית אל**. כמו אל בית אל,

1 שמואל-א יד, מח 2 ב"ר עג, יד

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 Then, 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." [2] Ya'akov saw Lavan's face, and—look!—it was not (friendly) towards him like yesterday and the day before.

[3] God said to Ya'akov, "Return to the Land of your forefathers, to your birthplace, and I will be with you."

[4] So Ya'akov sent (a message) and called Rochel and Leah to the field, to his flocks. [5] 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. [6] You know that I served your father with all my might. [7] Your father mocked me and changed my wages a hundred times, but God did not permit him to harm me. [8] 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. [9] God took away your father's livestock and gave it to me. [10] 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."

[11] "In the dream, an angel of God said to me, 'Ya'akov!'"

"I said, 'Here I am.'"

[12] "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. [13] 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. 32*ff*).

● **Were the animals born naturally or miraculously (v. 10)?**

Ralbag: Ya'akov's technique of rods (above 30:37*ff*.) 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 בְּרֻדִּים? (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 טְלֻאִים).

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 בְּרֻדִּים, 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 טְלֻאִים variety mentioned above (v. 32*ff*.).

Rashi however rejected this interpretation and learned instead that בְּרֻדִּים 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 30:37*ff*.). ***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 (בְּרֻדִּים) 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 בְּרֻדִּים was a new type of animal, heralding the new era of supernatural success for Ya'akov.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 131*ff*.)

אֲשֶׁר מָשַׁחְתָּ שָׁם מַצֵּבָה אֲשֶׁר נָדַרְתָּ לִּי שָׁם נֶדֶר עַתָּה קוּם צֵא מִן־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת וְשׁוּב אֶל־אֶרֶץ מוֹלַדְתֶּךָ׃ יד וַתַּעַן רָחֵל וְלֵאָה וַתֹּאמַרְנָה לוֹ הַעוֹד לָנוּ חֵלֶק וְנַחֲלָה בְּבֵית אָבִינוּ׃ טו הֲלוֹא נָכְרִיּוֹת נֶחְשַׁבְנוּ לוֹ כִּי מְכָרָנוּ וַיֹּאכַל גַּם־אָכוֹל אֶת־כַּסְפֵּנוּ׃ טז כִּי כָל־הָעֹשֶׁר אֲשֶׁר הִצִּיל אֱלֹהִים מֵאָבִינוּ לָנוּ הוּא וּלְבָנֵינוּ וְעַתָּה כֹּל אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֱלֹהִים אֵלֶיךָ עֲשֵׂה׃ [ששי] יז וַיָּקָם יַעֲקֹב וַיִּשָּׂא אֶת־בָּנָיו וְאֶת־נָשָׁיו עַל־הַגְּמַלִּים׃ יח וַיִּנְהַג אֶת־כָּל־מִקְנֵהוּ וְאֶת־כָּל־רְכֻשׁוֹ אֲשֶׁר רָכָשׁ מִקְנֵה קִנְיָנוֹ אֲשֶׁר רָכַשׁ בְּפַדַּן אֲרָם לָבוֹא אֶל־יִצְחָק אָבִיו אַרְצָה כְּנָעַן׃ יט וְלָבָן הָלַךְ לִגֹּז אֶת־צֹאנוֹ וַתִּגְנֹב רָחֵל אֶת־הַתְּרָפִים אֲשֶׁר לְאָבִיהָ׃ כ וַיִּגְנֹב יַעֲקֹב אֶת־לֵב לָבָן הָאֲרַמִּי עַל־בְּלִי הִגִּיד לוֹ כִּי בֹרֵחַ הוּא׃ כא וַיִּבְרַח הוּא וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ וַיָּקָם וַיַּעֲבֹר אֶת־הַנָּהָר וַיָּשֶׂם אֶת־פָּנָיו הַר הַגִּלְעָד׃ כב וַיֻּגַּד לְלָבָן בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי כִּי בָרַח יַעֲקֹב׃ כג וַיִּקַּח אֶת־אֶחָיו עִמּוֹ וַיִּרְדֹּף אַחֲרָיו דֶּרֶךְ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים וַיַּדְבֵּק אֹתוֹ בְּהַר הַגִּלְעָד׃ כד וַיָּבֹא אֱלֹהִים אֶל־לָבָן הָאֲרַמִּי בַּחֲלֹם הַלָּיְלָה וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הִשָּׁמֶר לְךָ

הִאתְגַּלֵּיתִי עָלָךְ בְּבֵית אֵל דִּי מְשַׁחְתָּא תַמָּן קָמָא דִּי קַיֵּמְתָּא קֳדָמַי תַּמָּן כְּעַן קוּם פּוּק מִן אַרְעָא הָדָא וְתוּב לַאֲרַע יַלָּדוּתָךְ׃ יד וַאֲתִיבַת רָחֵל וְלֵאָה וַאֲמַרוּ לֵיהּ הַעוֹד כְּעַן לָנָא חֻלָּק וְאַחֲסָנָא בְּבֵית אֲבוּנָא׃ טו הֲלָא נוּכְרָאִין אִתְחֲשַׁבְנָא לֵיהּ אֲרֵי זַבְּנָנָא וַאֲכַל אַף מֵיכַל יַת כַּסְפָּנָא׃ טז אֲרֵי כָל עוּתְרָא דִּי אַפְרִישׁ יְיָ מֵאֲבוּנָא דִּילָנָא הוּא וְלִבְנָנָא וּכְעַן כֹּל דִּי אֲמַר יְיָ לָךְ עֲבִיד׃ יז וְקָם יַעֲקֹב וּנְטַל יַת בְּנוֹהִי וְיַת נְשׁוֹהִי עַל גַּמַלַיָּא׃ יח וּדְבַר יַת כָּל גֵּיתוֹהִי וְיַת כָּל קִנְיָנֵיהּ דִּי קְנָא גֵּיתֵי קִנְיָנֵיהּ דִּי קְנָא בְּפַדַּן אֲרָם לְמֵיתֵי לְוַת יִצְחָק אֲבוּהִי לְאַרְעָא דִּכְנָעַן׃ יט וְלָבָן אֲזַל לְמִגַּז יַת עָנֵיהּ וּגְסִיבַת רָחֵל יַת צַלְמָנַיָּא דִּי לַאֲבוּהָא׃ כ וְכַסִּי יַעֲקֹב מִן לָבָן אֲרַמָּאָה עַל דְּלָא חַוִּי לֵיהּ אֲרֵי אָזֵיל הוּא׃ כא וַאֲזַל הוּא וְכָל דִּי לֵיהּ וְקָם וַעֲבַר יַת פְּרָת וְשַׁוִּי יַת אַפּוֹהִי לְטוּרָא דְּגִלְעָד׃ כב וְאִתְחַוָּא לְלָבָן בְּיוֹמָא תְלִיתָאָה אֲרֵי אֲזַל יַעֲקֹב׃ כג וּדְבַר יַת אֲחוֹהִי עִמֵּיהּ וּרְדַף בַּתְרוֹהִי מַהֲלַךְ שַׁבְעָא יוֹמִין וְאַדְבֵּיק יָתֵיהּ בְּטוּרָא דְּגִלְעָד׃ כד וַאֲתָא מֵימַר מִן קֳדָם יְיָ לְוַת לָבָן אֲרַמָּאָה בְּחֶלְמָא דְּלֵילְיָא וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ אִסְתַּמַּר לָךְ דִּלְמָא תְּמַלֵּל עִם יַעֲקֹב מִטַּב עַד

לא:יג-כד

הכ"ף יתירה, ודרך המקראות לדבר כן, כמו כי אתם בחים את האדם כנען[1]: **משחת שם.** לשון רבוי וגדולה כשמשח למלכות, כך ויצק שמן על ראשה להיות משוחה למזבח: **אשר נדרת לי.** ולריך אתה לשלמו, שאמרת יהיה בית אלהים, שתקריב שם קרבנות: (יד) **העוד לנו.** למה נעכב על ידך מלשוב, כלום אנו מיחלות לירש מנכסי אבינו כלום בין הזכריס: (טו) **הלא נכריות נחשבנו לו.** אפילו בשעה שדרך בני אדם לתת נדוניא לבנותיו בשעת שמחין, ואנו עמנו כנכריות כי מכרנו לך (שעבדת אותו בנו י"ד שנה ולא נתנו לך אלא) בשכר הפעולה: **את כספנו.** שעכב דמי שכר פעולתך: (טז) **כי כל העשר.** כי זה משמש בלשון אלא. כלומר משל אבינו אין לנו כלום, אלא מה שהציל הקב"ה מאבינו, שנאמר ויצל את מקנינו: **הציל.** לשון הפריס, וכן כל לשון הצלה שבמקרא לשון הפרשה, שמפריסו מן הרעה ומן האויב: (יז) **את בניו ואת נשיו.** הקדים זכריס לנקבות, ועשו הקדים נקבות לזכריס, שנאמר ויקח עשו את נשיו ואת בניו וגו'[2]: (יח) **מקנה קנינו.** מה שקנה מלאמו, עבדיס ושפחות וגמלים וחמוריס: (יט) **לגזוז את צאנו.** שאתן ביד בניו דרך שלשת ימיס בינו ובין יעקב: **ותגנב רחל את התרפים.** להפריע את אביה מעבודת אלילים ותכוונה[3]: (כב) **ביום השלישי.** שהרי דרך שלשת ימיס היה ביניהס: (כג) **את אחיו.** קרובין: **דרך שבעת ימים.** כל אותן ג' ימיס שהלך המגיד להגיד ללבן הלך יעקב לדרכו, ומלא יעקב

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."

1 במדבר לד, ב 2 בראשית לו, ו 3 ב"ר עד, ה

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.'"

[14] *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)* [15] *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!* [16] *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

[17] *Ya'akov got moving. He lifted up his sons and his wives onto the camels,* [18] *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.*

[19] *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).*

[20] *Ya'akov duped Lavan the Aramean by not telling him that he was running away.* [21] *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 *On the third day, Lavan was informed that Ya'akov had fled.* [23] *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.*

[24] *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. 141*ff.; Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeitzei* 5742)

פֶּן־תְּדַבֵּר עִם־יַעֲקֹב מִטּוֹב עַד־רָע: כה וַיַּשֵּׂג לָבָן אֶת־יַעֲקֹב
וְיַעֲקֹב תָּקַע אֶת־אָהֳלוֹ בָּהָר וְלָבָן תָּקַע אֶת־אֶחָיו בְּהַר
הַגִּלְעָד: כו וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן לְיַעֲקֹב מֶה עָשִׂיתָ וַתִּגְנֹב אֶת־לִבִּי
וַתְּנַהֵג אֶת־בְּנֹתַי כִּשְׁבֻיוֹת חָרֶב: כז לָמָּה נַחְבֵּאתָ לִבְרֹחַ וַתִּגְנֹב
אֹתִי וְלֹא־הִגַּדְתָּ לִי וָאֲשַׁלְּחֲךָ בְּשִׂמְחָה וּבְשִׁרִים בְּתֹף וּבְכִנּוֹר:
כח וְלֹא נְטַשְׁתַּנִי לְנַשֵּׁק לְבָנַי וְלִבְנֹתָי עַתָּה הִסְכַּלְתָּ עָשׂוֹ:
כט יֶשׁ־לְאֵל יָדִי לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּכֶם רָע וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבִיכֶם אֶמֶשׁ | אָמַר
אֵלַי לֵאמֹר הִשָּׁמֶר לְךָ מְדַבֵּר עִם־יַעֲקֹב מִטּוֹב עַד־רָע:
ל וְעַתָּה הָלֹךְ הָלַכְתָּ כִּי־נִכְסֹף נִכְסַפְתָּה לְבֵית אָבִיךָ לָמָּה
גָנַבְתָּ אֶת־אֱלֹהָי: לא וַיַּעַן יַעֲקֹב וַיֹּאמֶר לְלָבָן כִּי יָרֵאתִי כִּי
אָמַרְתִּי פֶּן־תִּגְזֹל אֶת־בְּנוֹתֶיךָ מֵעִמִּי: לב עִם אֲשֶׁר תִּמְצָא
אֶת־אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא יִחְיֶה נֶגֶד אַחֵינוּ הַכֶּר־לְךָ מָה עִמָּדִי וְקַח־לָךְ
וְלֹא־יָדַע יַעֲקֹב כִּי רָחֵל גְּנָבָתַם: לג וַיָּבֹא לָבָן בְּאֹהֶל־יַעֲקֹב |
וּבְאֹהֶל לֵאָה וּבְאֹהֶל שְׁתֵּי הָאֲמָהֹת וְלֹא מָצָא וַיֵּצֵא מֵאֹהֶל
לֵאָה וַיָּבֹא בְּאֹהֶל רָחֵל: לד וְרָחֵל לָקְחָה אֶת־הַתְּרָפִים וַתְּשִׂמֵם
בְּכַר הַגָּמָל וַתֵּשֶׁב עֲלֵיהֶם וַיְמַשֵּׁשׁ לָבָן אֶת־כָּל־הָאֹהֶל וְלֹא
מָצָא: לה וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־אָבִיהָ אַל־יִחַר בְּעֵינֵי אֲדֹנִי כִּי לוֹא אוּכַל
לָקוּם מִפָּנֶיךָ כִּי־דֶרֶךְ נָשִׁים לִי וַיְחַפֵּשׂ וְלֹא מָצָא אֶת־
הַתְּרָפִים: לו וַיִּחַר לְיַעֲקֹב וַיְרֶב בְּלָבָן וַיַּעַן יַעֲקֹב וַיֹּאמֶר
לְלָבָן מַה־פִּשְׁעִי מַה חַטָּאתִי כִּי דָלַקְתָּ אַחֲרָי: לז כִּי־מִשַּׁשְׁתָּ
אֶת־כָּל־כֵּלַי מַה־מָּצָאתָ מִכֹּל כְּלֵי־בֵיתֶךָ שִׂים כֹּה נֶגֶד אַחַי
וְאַחֶיךָ וְיוֹכִיחוּ בֵּין שְׁנֵינוּ: לח זֶה עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה אָנֹכִי עִמָּךְ
רְחֵלֶיךָ וְעִזֶּיךָ לֹא שִׁכֵּלוּ וְאֵילֵי צֹאנְךָ לֹא אָכָלְתִּי: לט טְרֵפָה

בִּישׂ: כה וְאַדְבִּיק לָבָן אֵת יַעֲקֹב וְיַעֲקֹב פָּרַס
אֵת מַשְׁכְּנִיהּ בְּטוּרָא וְלָבָן אַשְׁרֵי אֵת אֲחוֹהִי
בְּטוּרָא דְגִלְעָד: כו וַאֲמַר לָבָן לְיַעֲקֹב מָא
עֲבַדְתְּ וְכַסִּיתָא מִנִּי וּדְבַרְתְּ אֵת בְּנָתַי כְּשִׁבְיַת
חַרְבָּא: כז לְמָא אִטְמַרְתָּא לְמֵיזַל וְכַסִּיתָא מִנִּי
וְלָא חַוִּיתָא לִי וְאֶשַׁלָּחִתָּךְ פּוֹן בְּחֶדְוָא וּבְתֻשְׁבְּחָן
בְּתֻפִּין וּבְכִנָּרִין: כח וְלָא שְׁבַקְתַּנִי לְנַשָּׁקָא
לִבְנַי וְלִבְנָתַי כְּעַן אַסְכָּלְתָּא לְמֶעֱבַד: כט אִית
חֵילָא בִּידִי לְמֶעֱבַד עִמְכוֹן בִּישׁ וֵאלָהָא
דַאֲבוּכוֹן בְּרַמְשָׁא אֲמַר לִי לְמֵימָר אִסְתַּמַר לָךְ
מִלְמַלָּלָא עִם יַעֲקֹב מִטַּב עַד בִּישׁ: ל וּכְעַן
מֵיזַל אֲזַלְתָּ אֲרֵי חַמָּדָא חַמַּדְתָּא לְבֵית אֲבוּךְ
לְמָא נְסֵיבְתָּא יַת דַּחֲלָתִי: לא וַאֲתֵיב יַעֲקֹב
וַאֲמַר לְלָבָן אֲרֵי דְחֵילִית אֲרֵי אֲמָרִית דִּילְמָא
תָּגֵיס יַת בְּנָתָךְ מִנִּי: לב (אֲתַר) עִם דִּי תַשְׁכַּח יַת
דַּחֲלָתָךְ לָא יִתְקַיֶּם קֳדָם אֲחָנָא אִשְׁתְּמוֹדַע
לָךְ מָא דְעִמִּי וְסַב לָךְ וְלָא יְדַע יַעֲקֹב אֲרֵי
רָחֵל נְסֵיבַתְהוֹן: לג וְעַל לָבָן בְּמַשְׁכְּנָא
דְיַעֲקֹב וּבְמַשְׁכְּנָא דְלֵאָה וּבְמַשְׁכְּנָא דְתַרְתֵּין
לְחֵינָתָא וְלָא אַשְׁכַּח וּנְפַק מִמַּשְׁכְּנָא דְלֵאָה
וְעַל בְּמַשְׁכְּנָא דְרָחֵל: לד וְרָחֵל נְסֵיבַת יַת
צַלְמָנַיָּא וְשַׁוִּיתִינוּן בַּעֲבִיטָא דְגַמְלָא וְיָתְבַת
עֲלֵיהוֹן וּמַשֵּׁשׁ לָבָן יַת כָּל מַשְׁכְּנָא וְלָא
אַשְׁכַּח: לה וַאֲמָרַת לַאֲבוּהָא לָא יִתְקוֹף בְּעֵינֵי
רִבּוֹנִי אֲרֵי לָא אֵיכוֹל לְמֵיקָם מִן קֳדָמָךְ אֲרֵי
אוֹרַח נְשִׁין לִי וּבְלֵשׁ וְלָא אַשְׁכַּח יַת צַלְמָנַיָּא:
לו וּתְקֵיף לְיַעֲקֹב וּנְצָא עִם לָבָן וַאֲתֵיב יַעֲקֹב
וַאֲמַר לְלָבָן מָא חוֹבִי מָא סוּרְחָנִי אֲרֵי רְדַפְתָּא
בַּתְרָי: לז אֲרֵי מְשַׁשְׁתָּ יַת כָּל מָנֵי מָא
אַשְׁכַּחְתָּא מִכָּל מָנֵי בֵיתָךְ שַׁוֵּי הָכָא קֳדָם אַחַי
וְאַחָיךְ וְיוֹכְיחוּן בֵּין תַּרְוָנָא: לח דְּנָן עֶשְׂרִין שְׁנִין
אֲנָא עִמָּךְ רְחֵלָיךְ וְעִזָּיךְ לָא אַתְכִּילוּ וְדִכְרֵי
עָנָךְ לָא אֲכָלִית: לט דִּתְבִירָא לָא אַיְתִיתִי לְוָתָךְ

רחוק מלגן שסה ימים, ובשביעי כשיגו לגן, למדנו שכל מה שהלך יעקב בשבעה ימים, הלך לגן ביום אחד, (שנאמר וירדוף אחריו דרך שבעת ימים, ולא נאמר וירדוף אחריו שבעת ימים): (כד) **מטוב עד רע.** כל טובתן של רשעים רעה היא אצל הצדיקים[1]: (כו) **כשביות חרב.** כל חיל הבא למלחמה קרוי חרב: (כז) **ותגנב אתי.** גנבת את דעתי: (כט) **יש לאל ידי.** יש בח וחיל בידי לעשות עמכם רע. וכל אל שהוא לשון קדש, על שם עזוז ורוב חויס הוא: (ל) **נכספתה.** חמדת, וכרשב יש במקרא ככספר וגם בלתה נפשי[2], למעשה ידיך תכסוף[3]: (לא) **כי יראתי וגו'.** כשיצו על ראשון ראשון, שנאמר ותגנב את גנותי וגו': (לב) **לא יחיה.** ומשותה קללה מתה רחל בדרך[4]: **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 מז 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)."

[25] *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.*

[26] *Lavan said to to Ya'akov, "What have you done? You duped me, and led away my daughters like prisoners of war!* [27] *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!* [28] *You didn't allow me to kiss my sons and daughters. You have now acted foolishly."*

[29] *"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.'*

[30] *"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?"*

[31] *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.'"*

[32] *"(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.*

[33] *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).*

[34] *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).*

[35] *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.*

[36] *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?* [37] *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)."*

[38] *"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.* [39] *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. 260*ff*.)

*ראה שיחת ש"פ ויצא תשמ"ו, סל"ה ואילך.

לֹא־הֵבֵאתִי אֵלֶיךָ אָנֹכִי אֲחַטָּנָּה מִיָּדִי תְּבַקְשֶׁנָּה גְּנֻבְתִּי יוֹם
וּגְנֻבְתִּי לָיְלָה: מ הָיִיתִי בַיּוֹם אֲכָלַנִי חֹרֶב וְקֶרַח בַּלָּיְלָה וַתִּדַּד
שְׁנָתִי מֵעֵינָי: מא זֶה־לִּי עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה בְּבֵיתֶךָ עֲבַדְתִּיךָ
אַרְבַּע־עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה בִּשְׁתֵּי בְנֹתֶיךָ וְשֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים בְּצֹאנֶךָ וַתַּחֲלֵף
אֶת־מַשְׂכֻּרְתִּי עֲשֶׂרֶת מֹנִים: מב לוּלֵי אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם
וּפַחַד יִצְחָק הָיָה לִי כִּי עַתָּה רֵיקָם שִׁלַּחְתָּנִי אֶת־עָנְיִי
וְאֶת־יְגִיעַ כַּפַּי רָאָה אֱלֹהִים וַיּוֹכַח אָמֶשׁ: [שביעי] מג וַיַּעַן לָבָן
וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־יַעֲקֹב הַבָּנוֹת בְּנֹתַי וְהַבָּנִים בָּנַי וְהַצֹּאן צֹאנִי וְכֹל
אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה רֹאֶה לִי־הוּא וְלִבְנֹתַי מָה־אֶעֱשֶׂה לָאֵלֶּה הַיּוֹם אוֹ
לִבְנֵיהֶן אֲשֶׁר יָלָדוּ: מד וְעַתָּה לְכָה נִכְרְתָה בְרִית אֲנִי וָאָתָּה
וְהָיָה לְעֵד בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ: מה וַיִּקַּח יַעֲקֹב אֶבֶן וַיְרִימֵהָ מַצֵּבָה:
מו וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב לְאֶחָיו לִקְטוּ אֲבָנִים וַיִּקְחוּ אֲבָנִים וַיַּעֲשׂוּ־גָל
וַיֹּאכְלוּ שָׁם עַל־הַגָּל: מז וַיִּקְרָא־לוֹ לָבָן יְגַר שָׂהֲדוּתָא וְיַעֲקֹב
קָרָא לוֹ גַּלְעֵד: מח וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן הַגַּל הַזֶּה עֵד בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ הַיּוֹם
עַל־כֵּן קָרָא־שְׁמוֹ גַּלְעֵד: מט וְהַמִּצְפָּה אֲשֶׁר אָמַר יִצֶף יְהוָה
בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ כִּי נִסָּתֵר אִישׁ מֵרֵעֵהוּ: נ אִם־תְּעַנֶּה אֶת־בְּנֹתַי
וְאִם־תִּקַּח נָשִׁים עַל־בְּנֹתַי אֵין אִישׁ עִמָּנוּ רְאֵה אֱלֹהִים עֵד
בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ: נא וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן לְיַעֲקֹב הִנֵּה | הַגַּל הַזֶּה וְהִנֵּה
הַמַּצֵּבָה אֲשֶׁר יָרִיתִי בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ: נב עֵד הַגַּל הַזֶּה וְעֵדָה
הַמַּצֵּבָה אִם־אָנִי לֹא־אֶעֱבָר אֵלֶיךָ אֶת־הַגַּל הַזֶּה וְאִם־אַתָּה
לֹא־תַעֲבֹר אֵלַי אֶת־הַגַּל הַזֶּה וְאֶת־הַמַּצֵּבָה הַזֹּאת לְרָעָה:
נג אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם וֵאלֹהֵי נָחוֹר יִשְׁפְּטוּ בֵינֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵי אֲבִיהֶם
וַיִּשָּׁבַע יַעֲקֹב בְּפַחַד אָבִיו יִצְחָק: נד וַיִּזְבַּח יַעֲקֹב זֶבַח בָּהָר
וַיִּקְרָא לְאֶחָיו לֶאֱכֹל לָחֶם וַיֹּאכְלוּ לֶחֶם וַיָּלִינוּ בָּהָר: נה וְלָבָן
הִשְׁכִּים בַּבֹּקֶר וַיְנַשֵּׁק לְבָנָיו וְלִבְנֹתָיו וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיָּשָׁב
לָבָן לִמְקֹמוֹ: א וְיַעֲקֹב הָלַךְ לְדַרְכּוֹ וַיִּפְגְּעוּ־בוֹ מַלְאֲכֵי אֱלֹהִים:
ב וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב כַּאֲשֶׁר רָאָם מַחֲנֵה אֱלֹהִים זֶה וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם־
הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא מָחֳנָיִם: ג וַיִּשְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב מַלְאָכִים לְפָנָיו אֶל־עֵשָׂו
אָחִיו אַרְצָה שֵׂעִיר שְׂדֵה אֱדוֹם: ד וַיְצַו אֹתָם לֵאמֹר כֹּה תֹאמְרוּן
לַאדֹנִי לְעֵשָׂו כֹּה אָמַר עַבְדְּךָ יַעֲקֹב עִם־לָבָן גַּרְתִּי וָאֵחַר עַד־
עָתָּה: ה וַיְהִי־לִי שׁוֹר וַחֲמוֹר צֹאן וְעֶבֶד וְשִׁפְחָה וָאֶשְׁלְחָה
לְהַגִּיד לַאדֹנִי לִמְצֹא חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ: ו וַיָּשֻׁבוּ הַמַּלְאָכִים אֶל־יַעֲקֹב
לֵאמֹר בָּאנוּ אֶל־אָחִיךָ אֶל־עֵשָׂו וְגַם הֹלֵךְ לִקְרָאתֶךָ וְאַרְבַּע
מֵאוֹת אִישׁ עִמּוֹ: ז וַיִּירָא יַעֲקֹב מְאֹד וַיֵּצֶר לוֹ וַיַּחַץ אֶת־הָעָם
אֲשֶׁר־אִתּוֹ וְאֶת־הַצֹּאן וְהַבָּקָר וְהַגְּמַלִּים לִשְׁנֵי מַחֲנוֹת: ח וַיֹּאמֶר
אִם־יָבוֹא עֵשָׂו אֶל־הַמַּחֲנֶה הָאַחַת וְהִכָּהוּ וְהָיָה הַמַּחֲנֶה הַנִּשְׁאָר
לִפְלֵיטָה: ט וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי אַבְרָהָם וֵאלֹהֵי אָבִי יִצְחָק
יְהוָה הָאֹמֵר אֵלַי שׁוּב לְאַרְצְךָ וּלְמוֹלַדְתְּךָ וְאֵיטִיבָה עִמָּךְ: י קָטֹנְתִּי
מִכֹּל הַחֲסָדִים וּמִכָּל־הָאֱמֶת אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ אֶת־עַבְדֶּךָ כִּי בְמַקְלִי
עָבַרְתִּי אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה וְעַתָּה הָיִיתִי לִשְׁנֵי מַחֲנוֹת: יא הַצִּילֵנִי נָא
מִיַּד אָחִי מִיַּד עֵשָׂו כִּי יָרֵא אָנֹכִי אֹתוֹ פֶּן יָבוֹא וְהִכַּנִי אֵם עַל־
בָּנִים: יב וְאַתָּה אָמַרְתָּ הֵיטֵב אֵיטִיב עִמָּךְ וְשַׂמְתִּי אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ כְּחוֹל
הַיָּם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִסָּפֵר מֵרֹב: יג וַיָּלֶן שָׁם בַּלַּיְלָה הַהוּא וַיִּקַּח מִן־
הַבָּא בְיָדוֹ מִנְחָה לְעֵשָׂו אָחִיו: יד עִזִּים מָאתַיִם וּתְיָשִׁים עֶשְׂרִים
רְחֵלִים מָאתַיִם וְאֵילִים עֶשְׂרִים: טו גְּמַלִּים מֵינִיקוֹת וּבְנֵיהֶן שְׁלֹשִׁים
פָּרוֹת אַרְבָּעִים וּפָרִים עֲשָׂרָה אֲתֹנֹת עֶשְׂרִים וְעָיִרִם עֲשָׂרָה:
טז וַיִּתֵּן בְּיַד עֲבָדָיו עֵדֶר עֵדֶר לְבַדּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־עֲבָדָיו עִבְרוּ לְפָנַי
וְרֶוַח תָּשִׂימוּ בֵּין עֵדֶר וּבֵין עֵדֶר: יז וַיְצַו אֶת־הָרִאשׁוֹן לֵאמֹר כִּי
יִפְגָּשְׁךָ עֵשָׂו אָחִי וְשָׁאֲלֵךָ לֵאמֹר לְמִי־אַתָּה וְאָנָה תֵלֵךְ וּלְמִי
אֵלֶּה לְפָנֶיךָ: יח וְאָמַרְתָּ לְעַבְדְּךָ לְיַעֲקֹב מִנְחָה הִוא שְׁלוּחָה
לַאדֹנִי לְעֵשָׂו וְהִנֵּה גַם־הוּא אַחֲרֵינוּ: יט וַיְצַו גַּם אֶת־הַשֵּׁנִי גַּם
אֶת־הַשְּׁלִשִׁי גַּם אֶת־כָּל־הַהֹלְכִים אַחֲרֵי הָעֲדָרִים לֵאמֹר כַּדָּבָר
הַזֶּה תְּדַבְּרוּן אֶל־עֵשָׂו בְּמֹצַאֲכֶם אֹתוֹ: כ וַאֲמַרְתֶּם גַּם הִנֵּה עַבְדְּךָ
יַעֲקֹב אַחֲרֵינוּ כִּי אָמַר אֲכַפְּרָה פָנָיו בַּמִּנְחָה הַהֹלֶכֶת לְפָנַי וְאַחֲרֵי
כֵן אֶרְאֶה פָנָיו אוּלַי יִשָּׂא פָנָי: כא וַתַּעֲבֹר הַמִּנְחָה עַל־פָּנָיו וְהוּא
לָן בַּלַּיְלָה הַהוּא בַּמַּחֲנֶה: כב וַיַּשְׁכֵּם בַּלַּיְלָה הוּא וַיִּקַּח אֶת־שְׁתֵּי
נָשָׁיו וְאֶת־שְׁתֵּי שִׁפְחֹתָיו וְאֶת־אַחַד עָשָׂר יְלָדָיו וַיַּעֲבֹר אֵת מַעְבַר
יַבֹּק: כג וַיִּקָּחֵם וַיַּעֲבִרֵם אֶת־הַנָּחַל וַיַּעֲבֵר אֶת אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ: כד וַיִּוָּתֵר
יַעֲקֹב לְבַדּוֹ וַיֵּאָבֵק אִישׁ עִמּוֹ עַד עֲלוֹת הַשָּׁחַר: כה וַיַּרְא כִּי לֹא
יָכֹל לוֹ וַיִּגַּע בְּכַף יְרֵכוֹ וַתֵּקַע כַּף־יֶרֶךְ יַעֲקֹב בְּהֵאָבְקוֹ עִמּוֹ: כו וַיֹּאמֶר
שַׁלְּחֵנִי כִּי עָלָה הַשָּׁחַר וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אֲשַׁלֵּחֲךָ כִּי אִם־בֵּרַכְתָּנִי:
כז וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו מַה־שְּׁמֶךָ וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב: כח וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא־יַעֲקֹב יֵאָמֵר
עוֹד שִׁמְךָ כִּי אִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי שָׂרִיתָ עִם־אֱלֹהִים וְעִם־אֲנָשִׁים
וַתּוּכָל: כט וַיִּשְׁאַל יַעֲקֹב וַיֹּאמֶר הַגִּידָה נָּא שְׁמֶךָ וַיֹּאמֶר לָמָּה זֶּה
תִּשְׁאַל לִשְׁמִי וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתוֹ שָׁם: ל וַיִּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב שֵׁם־הַמָּקוֹם פְּנִיאֵל
כִּי־רָאִיתִי אֱלֹהִים פָּנִים אֶל־פָּנִים וַתִּנָּצֵל נַפְשִׁי: לא וַיִּזְרַח־לוֹ
הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ כַּאֲשֶׁר עָבַר אֶת־פְּנוּאֵל וְהוּא צֹלֵעַ עַל־יְרֵכוֹ: לב עַל־כֵּן
לֹא־יֹאכְלוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־גִּיד הַנָּשֶׁה אֲשֶׁר עַל־כַּף הַיָּרֵךְ עַד
הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה כִּי נָגַע בְּכַף־יֶרֶךְ יַעֲקֹב בְּגִיד הַנָּשֶׁה: לג וַיִּשָּׂא יַעֲקֹב
עֵינָיו וַיַּרְא וְהִנֵּה עֵשָׂו בָּא וְעִמּוֹ אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת אִישׁ וַיַּחַץ אֶת־
הַיְלָדִים עַל־לֵאָה וְעַל־רָחֵל וְעַל שְׁתֵּי הַשִּׁפָחוֹת: לד וַיָּשֶׂם אֶת־
הַשִּׁפָחוֹת וְאֶת־יַלְדֵיהֶן רִאשֹׁנָה וְאֶת־לֵאָה וְיַלְדֶיהָ אַחֲרֹנִים וְאֶת־
רָחֵל וְאֶת־יוֹסֵף אַחֲרֹנִים: לה וְהוּא עָבַר לִפְנֵיהֶם וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אַרְצָה
שֶׁבַע פְּעָמִים עַד גִּשְׁתּוֹ עַד אָחִיו: לו וַיָּרָץ עֵשָׂו לִקְרָאתוֹ וַיְחַבְּקֵהוּ
וַיִּפֹּל עַל־צַוָּארָו וַיִּשָּׁקֵהוּ וַיִּבְכּוּ: לז וַיִּשָּׂא אֶת־עֵינָיו וַיַּרְא אֶת־
הַנָּשִׁים וְאֶת־הַיְלָדִים וַיֹּאמֶר מִי־אֵלֶּה לָּךְ וַיֹּאמֶר הַיְלָדִים אֲשֶׁר
חָנַן אֱלֹהִים אֶת־עַבְדֶּךָ: לח וַתִּגַּשְׁנָה הַשְּׁפָחוֹת הֵנָּה וְיַלְדֵיהֶן וַתִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶיןָ:
לט וַתִּגַּשׁ גַּם־לֵאָה וְיַלְדֶיהָ וַתִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶיןָ וְאַחַר נִגַּשׁ יוֹסֵף וְרָחֵל
וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ: מ וַיֹּאמֶר מִי לְךָ כָּל־הַמַּחֲנֶה הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר פָּגָשְׁתִּי וַיֹּאמֶר
לִמְצֹא חֵן בְּעֵינֵי אֲדֹנִי: מא וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו יֶשׁ־לִי רָב אָחִי יְהִי לְךָ אֲשֶׁר־
לָךְ: מב וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אַל־נָא אִם־נָא מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ וְלָקַחְתָּ
מִנְחָתִי מִיָּדִי כִּי־עַל־כֵּן רָאִיתִי פָנֶיךָ כִּרְאֵת פְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים וַתִּרְצֵנִי:
מג קַח־נָא אֶת־בִּרְכָתִי אֲשֶׁר הוּבָא לָךְ כִּי חַנַּנִי אֱלֹהִים וְכִי יֶשׁ־לִי כֹּל
וַיִּפְצַר־בּוֹ וַיִּקָּח: מד וַיֹּאמֶר נִסְעָה וְנֵלֵכָה וְאֵלְכָה לְנֶגְדֶּךָ: מה וַיֹּאמֶר
אֵלָיו אֲדֹנִי יֹדֵעַ כִּי הַיְלָדִים רַכִּים וְהַצֹּאן וְהַבָּקָר עָלוֹת עָלָי וְדָפְקוּ
אֹתָם יוֹם אֶחָד וָמֵתוּ כָּל־הַצֹּאן: מו יַעֲבָר־נָא אֲדֹנִי לִפְנֵי עַבְדּוֹ וְאָנִי
אֶתְנָהֲלָה לְאִטִּי לְרֶגֶל הַמְּלָאכָה אֲשֶׁר לְפָנַי וְלְרֶגֶל הַיְלָדִים עַד אֲשֶׁר
אָבוֹא אֶל־אֲדֹנִי שֵׂעִירָה: מז וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו אַצִּיגָה נָּא עִמְּךָ מִן־הָעָם
אֲשֶׁר אִתִּי וַיֹּאמֶר לָמָּה זֶּה אֶמְצָא חֵן בְּעֵינֵי אֲדֹנִי: מח וַיָּשָׁב בַּיּוֹם
הַהוּא עֵשָׂו לְדַרְכּוֹ שֵׂעִירָה: מט וְיַעֲקֹב נָסַע סֻכֹּתָה וַיִּבֶן־לוֹ בָּיִת
וְלִמְקְנֵהוּ עָשָׂה סֻכֹּת עַל־כֵּן קָרָא שֵׁם־הַמָּקוֹם סֻכּוֹת: נ וַיָּבֹא יַעֲקֹב
שָׁלֵם עִיר שְׁכֶם אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן בְּבֹאוֹ מִפַּדַּן אֲרָם וַיִּחַן אֶת־פְּנֵי
הָעִיר: נא וַיִּקֶן אֶת־חֶלְקַת הַשָּׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר נָטָה שָׁם אָהֳלוֹ מִיַּד בְּנֵי־חֲמוֹר
אֲבִי שְׁכֶם בְּמֵאָה קְשִׂיטָה: נב וַיַּצֵּב שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ וַיִּקְרָא לוֹ אֵל אֱלֹהֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל: א וַתֵּצֵא דִינָה בַּת־לֵאָה אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה לְיַעֲקֹב לִרְאוֹת בִּבְנוֹת
הָאָרֶץ: ב וַיַּרְא אֹתָהּ שְׁכֶם בֶּן־חֲמוֹר הַחִוִּי נְשִׂיא הָאָרֶץ וַיִּקַּח אֹתָהּ
וַיִּשְׁכַּב אֹתָהּ וַיְעַנֶּהָ: ג וַתִּדְבַּק נַפְשׁוֹ בְּדִינָה בַּת־יַעֲקֹב וַיֶּאֱהַב אֶת־
הַנַּעֲרָ וַיְדַבֵּר עַל־לֵב הַנַּעֲרָ: ד וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁכֶם אֶל־חֲמוֹר אָבִיו לֵאמֹר
קַח־לִי אֶת־הַיַּלְדָּה הַזֹּאת לְאִשָּׁה: ה וְיַעֲקֹב שָׁמַע כִּי טִמֵּא אֶת־דִּינָה
בִּתּוֹ וּבָנָיו הָיוּ אֶת־מִקְנֵהוּ בַּשָּׂדֶה וְהֶחֱרִשׁ יַעֲקֹב עַד־בֹּאָם: ו וַיֵּצֵא
חֲמוֹר אֲבִי שְׁכֶם אֶל־יַעֲקֹב לְדַבֵּר אִתּוֹ: ז וּבְנֵי יַעֲקֹב בָּאוּ מִן־הַשָּׂדֶה
כְּשָׁמְעָם וַיִּתְעַצְּבוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיִּחַר לָהֶם מְאֹד כִּי נְבָלָה עָשָׂה בְיִשְׂרָאֵל
לִשְׁכַּב אֶת־בַּת־יַעֲקֹב וְכֵן לֹא יֵעָשֶׂה: ח וַיְדַבֵּר חֲמוֹר אִתָּם לֵאמֹר
שְׁכֶם בְּנִי חָשְׁקָה נַפְשׁוֹ בְּבִתְּכֶם תְּנוּ־נָא אֹתָהּ לּוֹ לְאִשָּׁה: ט וְהִתְחַתְּנוּ
אֹתָנוּ בְּנֹתֵיכֶם תִּתְּנוּ־לָנוּ וְאֶת־בְּנֹתֵינוּ תִּקְחוּ לָכֶם: י וְאִתָּנוּ תֵּשֵׁבוּ
וְהָאָרֶץ תִּהְיֶה לִפְנֵיכֶם שְׁבוּ וְסַחֲרוּהָ וְהֵאָחֲזוּ בָהּ: יא וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁכֶם
אֶל־אָבִיהָ וְאֶל־אַחֶיהָ אֶמְצָא חֵן בְּעֵינֵיכֶם וַאֲשֶׁר תֹּאמְרוּ אֵלַי אֶתֵּן:
יב הַרְבּוּ עָלַי מְאֹד מֹהַר וְנָתֹן וְאֶתְּנָה כַּאֲשֶׁר תֹּאמְרוּ אֵלַי וּתְנוּ־לִי
אֶת־הַנַּעֲרָ לְאִשָּׁה: יג וַיַּעֲנוּ בְנֵי־יַעֲקֹב אֶת־שְׁכֶם וְאֶת־חֲמוֹר אָבִיו
בְּמִרְמָה וַיְדַבֵּרוּ אֲשֶׁר טִמֵּא אֶת־דִּינָה אֲחֹתָם: יד וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֲלֵהֶם לֹא
נוּכַל לַעֲשׂוֹת הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה לָתֵת אֶת־אֲחֹתֵנוּ לְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ עָרְלָה כִּי
חֶרְפָּה הִוא לָנוּ: טו אַךְ־זֹאת נֵאוֹת לָכֶם אִם־תִּהְיוּ כָמֹנוּ לְהִמּוֹל לָכֶם כָּל־
זָכָר: טז וְנָתַנּוּ אֶת־בְּנֹתֵינוּ לָכֶם וְאֶת־בְּנֹתֵיכֶם נִקַּח־לָנוּ וְיָשַׁבְנוּ אִתְּכֶם
וְהָיִינוּ לְעַם אֶחָד: יז וְאִם־לֹא תִשְׁמְעוּ אֵלֵינוּ לְהִמּוֹל וְלָקַחְנוּ אֶת־
בִּתֵּנוּ וְהָלָכְנוּ: יח וַיִּיטְבוּ דִבְרֵיהֶם בְּעֵינֵי חֲמוֹר וּבְעֵינֵי שְׁכֶם בֶּן־
חֲמוֹר: יט וְלֹא־אֵחַר הַנַּעַר לַעֲשׂוֹת הַדָּבָר כִּי חָפֵץ בְּבַת־יַעֲקֹב וְהוּא
נִכְבָּד מִכֹּל בֵּית אָבִיו: כ וַיָּבֹא חֲמוֹר וְשְׁכֶם בְּנוֹ אֶל־שַׁעַר עִירָם
וַיְדַבְּרוּ אֶל־אַנְשֵׁי עִירָם לֵאמֹר: כא הָאֲנָשִׁים הָאֵלֶּה שְׁלֵמִים הֵם אִתָּנוּ
וְיֵשְׁבוּ בָאָרֶץ וְיִסְחֲרוּ אֹתָהּ וְהָאָרֶץ הִנֵּה רַחֲבַת־יָדַיִם לִפְנֵיהֶם אֶת־
בְּנֹתָם נִקַּח־לָנוּ לְנָשִׁים וְאֶת־בְּנֹתֵינוּ נִתֵּן לָהֶם: כב אַךְ־בְּזֹאת יֵאוֹתוּ
לָנוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים לָשֶׁבֶת אִתָּנוּ לִהְיוֹת לְעַם אֶחָד בְּהִמּוֹל לָנוּ כָּל־זָכוּר
כַּאֲשֶׁר הֵם נְמֹלִים: כג מִקְנֵהֶם וְקִנְיָנָם וְכָל־בְּהֶמְתָּם הֲלוֹא לָנוּ הֵם
אַךְ נֵאוֹתָה לָהֶם וְיֵשְׁבוּ אִתָּנוּ: כד וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶל־חֲמוֹר וְאֶל־שְׁכֶם בְּנוֹ
כָּל־יֹצְאֵי שַׁעַר עִירוֹ וַיִּמֹּלוּ כָּל־זָכָר כָּל־יֹצְאֵי שַׁעַר עִירוֹ: כה וַיְהִי
בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִשִׁי בִּהְיֹתָם כֹּאֲבִים וַיִּקְחוּ שְׁנֵי־בְנֵי יַעֲקֹב שִׁמְעוֹן וְלֵוִי
אֲחֵי דִינָה אִישׁ חַרְבּוֹ וַיָּבֹאוּ עַל־הָעִיר בֶּטַח וַיַּהַרְגוּ כָּל־זָכָר: כו וְאֶת־
חֲמוֹר וְאֶת־שְׁכֶם בְּנוֹ הָרְגוּ לְפִי־חָרֶב וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־דִּינָה מִבֵּית שְׁכֶם
וַיֵּצֵאוּ: כז בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב בָּאוּ עַל־הַחֲלָלִים וַיָּבֹזּוּ הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר טִמְּאוּ
אֲחוֹתָם: כח אֶת־צֹאנָם וְאֶת־בְּקָרָם וְאֶת־חֲמֹרֵיהֶם וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר־בָּעִיר
וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר בַּשָּׂדֶה לָקָחוּ: כט וְאֶת־כָּל־חֵילָם וְאֶת־כָּל־טַפָּם וְאֶת־
נְשֵׁיהֶם שָׁבוּ וַיָּבֹזּוּ וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר בַּבָּיִת: ל וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־שִׁמְעוֹן
וְאֶל־לֵוִי עֲכַרְתֶּם אֹתִי לְהַבְאִישֵׁנִי בְּיוֹשֵׁב הָאָרֶץ בַּכְּנַעֲנִי וּבַפְּרִזִּי
וַאֲנִי מְתֵי מִסְפָּר וְנֶאֶסְפוּ עָלַי וְהִכּוּנִי וְנִשְׁמַדְתִּי אֲנִי וּבֵיתִי: לא וַיֹּאמְרוּ
הַכְזוֹנָה יַעֲשֶׂה אֶת־אֲחוֹתֵנוּ: לה א וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־יַעֲקֹב קוּם עֲלֵה
בֵית־אֵל וְשֶׁב־שָׁם וַעֲשֵׂה־שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לָאֵל הַנִּרְאֶה אֵלֶיךָ בְּבָרְחֲךָ
מִפְּנֵי עֵשָׂו אָחִיךָ: ב וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ וְאֶל כָּל־אֲשֶׁר עִמּוֹ הָסִירוּ
אֶת־אֱלֹהֵי הַנֵּכָר אֲשֶׁר בְּתוֹכְכֶם וְהִטַּהֲרוּ וְהַחֲלִיפוּ שִׂמְלֹתֵיכֶם: ג וְנָקוּמָה
וְנַעֲלֶה בֵּית־אֵל וְאֶעֱשֶׂה־שָּׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לָאֵל הָעֹנֶה אֹתִי בְּיוֹם צָרָתִי
וַיְהִי עִמָּדִי בַּדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר הָלָכְתִּי: ד וַיִּתְּנוּ אֶל־יַעֲקֹב אֶת כָּל־אֱלֹהֵי
הַנֵּכָר אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדָם וְאֶת־הַנְּזָמִים אֲשֶׁר בְּאָזְנֵיהֶם וַיִּטְמֹן אֹתָם יַעֲקֹב
תַּחַת הָאֵלָה אֲשֶׁר עִם־שְׁכֶם: ה וַיִּסָּעוּ וַתְּהִי חִתַּת אֱלֹהִים עַל הֶעָרִים
אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבוֹתֵיהֶם וְלֹא רָדְפוּ אַחֲרֵי בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב: ו וַיָּבֹא יַעֲקֹב לוּזָה
אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן הִוא בֵּית־אֵל הוּא וְכָל־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר עִמּוֹ: ז וַיִּבֶן שָׁם
מִזְבֵּחַ וַיִּקְרָא לַמָּקוֹם אֵל בֵּית־אֵל כִּי שָׁם נִגְלוּ אֵלָיו הָאֱלֹהִים בְּבָרְחוֹ
מִפְּנֵי אָחִיו: ח וַתָּמָת דְּבֹרָה מֵינֶקֶת רִבְקָה וַתִּקָּבֵר מִתַּחַת לְבֵית־אֵל
תַּחַת הָאַלּוֹן וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ אַלּוֹן בָּכוּת: ט וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶל־יַעֲקֹב עוֹד
בְּבֹאוֹ מִפַּדַּן אֲרָם וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתוֹ: י וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֱלֹהִים שִׁמְךָ יַעֲקֹב לֹא
יִקָּרֵא שִׁמְךָ עוֹד יַעֲקֹב כִּי אִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל יִהְיֶה שְׁמֶךָ וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ
יִשְׂרָאֵל: יא וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֱלֹהִים אֲנִי אֵל שַׁדָּי פְּרֵה וּרְבֵה גּוֹי וּקְהַל גּוֹיִם
יִהְיֶה מִמֶּךָּ וּמְלָכִים מֵחֲלָצֶיךָ יֵצֵאוּ: יב וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְאַבְרָהָם
וּלְיִצְחָק לְךָ אֶתְּנֶנָּה וּלְזַרְעֲךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ אֶתֵּן אֶת־הָאָרֶץ: יג וַיַּעַל מֵעָלָיו
אֱלֹהִים בִּמְקוֹם אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אִתּוֹ: יד וַיַּצֵּב יַעֲקֹב מַצֵּבָה בִּמְקוֹם אֲשֶׁר
דִּבֶּר אִתּוֹ אֹתוֹ מַצֶּבֶת אֶבֶן וַיַּסֵּךְ עָלֶיהָ נֶסֶךְ וַיִּצֹק עָלֶיהָ שָׁמֶן: טו וַיִּקְרָא
יַעֲקֹב אֶת־שֵׁם־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר־שָׁם אִתּוֹ אֱלֹהִים בֵּית־אֵל: טז וַיִּסְעוּ
מִבֵּית אֵל וַיְהִי־עוֹד כִּבְרַת־הָאָרֶץ לָבוֹא אֶפְרָתָה וַתֵּלֶד רָחֵל וַתְּקַשׁ
בְּלִדְתָּהּ: יז וַיְהִי בְּהַקְשֹׁתָהּ בְּלִדְתָּהּ וַתֹּאמֶר לָהּ הַמְיַלֶּדֶת אַל־תִּירְאִי
כִּי־גַם־זֶה לָךְ בֵּן: יח וַיְהִי בְּצֵאת נַפְשָׁהּ כִּי מֵתָה וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ בֶּן־
אוֹנִי וְאָבִיו קָרָא לוֹ בִנְיָמִין: יט וַתָּמָת רָחֵל וַתִּקָּבֵר בְּדֶרֶךְ אֶפְרָת הִוא
בֵּית לָחֶם: כ וַיַּצֵּב יַעֲקֹב מַצֵּבָה עַל־קְבֻרָתָהּ הִוא מַצֶּבֶת קְבֻרַת רָחֵל
עַד הַיּוֹם: כא וַיִּסַּע יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֵּט אָהֳלָה מִמִּגְדַּל עֵדֶר: כב וַיְהִי בִּשְׁכֹּן
יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּאָרֶץ הַהִוא וַיֵּלֶךְ רְאוּבֵן וַיִּשְׁכַּב אֶת־בִּלְהָה פִּילֶגֶשׁ אָבִיו
וַיִּשְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּהְיוּ בְנֵי יַעֲקֹב שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר: כג בְּנֵי לֵאָה בְּכֹר יַעֲקֹב
רְאוּבֵן וְשִׁמְעוֹן וְלֵוִי וִיהוּדָה וְיִשָּׂשכָר וּזְבוּלֻן: כד בְּנֵי רָחֵל יוֹסֵף וּבִנְיָמִן:
כה וּבְנֵי בִלְהָה שִׁפְחַת רָחֵל דָּן וְנַפְתָּלִי: כו וּבְנֵי זִלְפָּה שִׁפְחַת לֵאָה גָּד
וְאָשֵׁר אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב אֲשֶׁר יֻלַּד־לוֹ בְּפַדַּן אֲרָם: כז וַיָּבֹא יַעֲקֹב אֶל־
יִצְחָק אָבִיו מַמְרֵא קִרְיַת הָאַרְבַּע הִוא חֶבְרוֹן אֲשֶׁר גָּר־שָׁם אַבְרָהָם
וְיִצְחָק: כח וַיִּהְיוּ יְמֵי יִצְחָק מְאַת שָׁנָה וּשְׁמֹנִים שָׁנָה: כט וַיִּגְוַע יִצְחָק
וַיָּמָת וַיֵּאָסֶף אֶל־עַמָּיו זָקֵן וְשָׂבֵעַ יָמִים וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֹתוֹ עֵשָׂו וְיַעֲקֹב בָּנָיו:
לו א וְאֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת עֵשָׂו הוּא אֱדוֹם: ב עֵשָׂו לָקַח אֶת־נָשָׁיו מִבְּנוֹת כְּנָעַן
אָדָה בַּת־אֵילוֹן הַחִתִּי וְאָהֳלִיבָמָה בַּת־עֲנָה בַּת־צִבְעוֹן הַחִוִּי: ג וְאֶת־
בָּשְׂמַת בַּת־יִשְׁמָעֵאל אֲחוֹת נְבָיוֹת: ד וַתֵּלֶד אָדָה לְעֵשָׂו אֶת־אֱלִיפַז
וּבָשְׂמַת יָלְדָה אֶת־רְעוּאֵל: ה וְאָהֳלִיבָמָה יָלְדָה אֶת־יעוּשׁ וְאֶת־יַעְלָם
וְאֶת־קֹרַח אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי עֵשָׂו אֲשֶׁר נִוְּלַד־לוֹ בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: ו וַיִּקַּח עֵשָׂו
אֶת־נָשָׁיו וְאֶת־בָּנָיו וְאֶת־בְּנֹתָיו וְאֵת כָּל־נַפְשׁוֹת בֵּיתוֹ וְאֶת־מִקְנֵהוּ
וְאֶת־כָּל־בְּהֶמְתּוֹ וְאֵת כָּל־קִנְיָנוֹ אֲשֶׁר רָכַשׁ בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־
אֶרֶץ מִפְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב אָחִיו: ז כִּי־הָיָה רְכוּשָׁם רָב מִשֶּׁבֶת יַחְדָּו וְלֹא יָכְלָה
אֶרֶץ מְגוּרֵיהֶם לָשֵׂאת אוֹתָם מִפְּנֵי מִקְנֵיהֶם: ח וַיֵּשֶׁב עֵשָׂו בְּהַר שֵׂעִיר
עֵשָׂו הוּא אֱדוֹם: ט וְאֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת עֵשָׂו אֲבִי אֱדֹמִים בְּהַר שֵׂעִיר: י אֵלֶּה
שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי־עֵשָׂו אֱלִיפַז בֶּן־אָדָה אֵשֶׁת עֵשָׂו רְעוּאֵל בֶּן־בָּשְׂמַת אֵשֶׁת
עֵשָ

(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."

40 *"(Where) I was by day, the heat consumed me. At night there was frost, and my eyes were deprived of sleep."*

41 *"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.* 42 *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

Lavan 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?"

44 *"Now come! Let's make a pact—you and I. And may (God) be a witness between me and you."*

45 *Ya'akov took a stone and set it up as a monument.*

46 *Ya'akov said to his (sons), "Gather stones!"*

They took stones and made a pile, and they ate there by the pile. 47 *Lavan called it Yegar-Sahadusa ("the pile is a witness," in Aramaic). Ya'akov called it Gal-Aid (the same in its Hebrew translation).*

48 *Lavan said, "This pile is a witness between me and you today"—it was therefore named Gal-Aid.* 49 *(It is also known as) Mitzpah ("watch"), because he said, "May God watch me and you when we are hidden from each other.* 50 *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."*

51 *Lavan said to Ya'akov, "Here is the pile and here is the monument which I have set up between me and you.* 52 *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.* 53 *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)

וַיִּשְׁבַּע יַעֲקֹב בְּפַחַד אָבִיו יִצְחָק: נד וַיִּזְבַּח יַעֲקֹב זֶבַח בָּהָר וַיִּקְרָא לְאֶחָיו לֶאֱכָל־לֶחֶם וַיֹּאכְלוּ לֶחֶם וַיָּלִינוּ בָּהָר: [מפטיר] לב א וַיַּשְׁכֵּם לָבָן בַּבֹּקֶר וַיְנַשֵּׁק לְבָנָיו וְלִבְנוֹתָיו וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיָּשָׁב לָבָן לִמְקֹמוֹ: ב וְיַעֲקֹב הָלַךְ לְדַרְכּוֹ וַיִּפְגְּעוּ־בוֹ מַלְאֲכֵי אֱלֹהִים: ג וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב כַּאֲשֶׁר רָאָם מַחֲנֵה אֱלֹהִים זֶה וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם־הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא מַחֲנָיִם: פ פ פ

יִדּוֹנוּן בֵּינָנָא אֱלָהָא דַּאֲבוּהוֹן וְקַיִּים יַעֲקֹב בִּדְדָחֵיל לֵיהּ אֲבוּהִי יִצְחָק: נד וּנְכִיס יַעֲקֹב נִכְסָתָא בְּטוּרָא וּקְרָא לַאֲחוֹהִי לְמֵיכַל לַחְמָא וַאֲכָלוּ לַחְמָא וּבָתוּ בְּטוּרָא: א וְאַקְדֵּים לָבָן בְּצַפְרָא וְנַשֵּׁיק לִבְנוֹהִי וְלִבְנָתֵיהּ וּבָרִיךְ יָתְהוֹן וַאֲזַל וְתָב לָבָן לְאַתְרֵיהּ: ב וְיַעֲקֹב אֲזַל לְאָרְחֵיהּ וַעֲרָעוּ בֵיהּ מַלְאָכַיָּא דַיְיָ: ג וַאֲמַר יַעֲקֹב כַּד חֲזָנוּן מַשְׁרְיָתָא מִן קֳדָם יְיָ דֵּין וּקְרָא שְׁמָא דְאַתְרָא הַהוּא מַחֲנָיִם: פ פ פ

קמ״ח פסוקים, חלק״י. מחני״ם סימן.

רס״י

אברהם. קדש: **ואלהי נחור.** חול: **אלהי אביהם.** חול: **(נד) ויזבח יעקב זבח.** שחט בכמות למשתה: **לאחיו.** לאוכליו שעשו לבן: **לאכל לחם.** כל דבר מאכל קרוי לחם, כמו עבד לחם רב[1], נשחיתה עץ בלחמו[2]: **(ג) ויפגעו בו מלאכי אלהים.** מלאכים של ארץ ישראל באו לקראתו, ללוותו לארץ: **(ג) מחנים.** שתי מחנות, של חוצה לארץ שבאו עמו עד כאן. ושל ארץ ישראל שבאו לקראתו[3]: **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?

1 דניאל ה, א 2 ירמי' יא, יט 3 ב"ר עה, י. תנחומא וישלח ג

Ya'akov swore by the (One whom) his father Yitzchak feared.

[54] *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

[1] *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 *Ya'akov went on his way, and angels of God (from the Land of Israel) encountered him (to escort him to the land).* [3] *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. 150*ff.*)

parshas Vayishlach

פרשת וישלח

The Name of the Parsha

Vayishlach 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.

These 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 וַיִּשְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב מַלְאָכִים לְפָנָיו אֶל־עֵשָׂו אָחִיו אַרְצָה שֵׂעִיר
שְׂדֵה אֱדוֹם: ה וַיְצַו אֹתָם לֵאמֹר כֹּה תֹאמְרוּן לַאדֹנִי לְעֵשָׂו כֹּה
אָמַר עַבְדְּךָ יַעֲקֹב עִם־לָבָן גַּרְתִּי וָאֵחַר עַד־עָתָּה: ו וַיְהִי־לִי
שׁוֹר וַחֲמוֹר צֹאן וְעֶבֶד וְשִׁפְחָה וָאֶשְׁלְחָה לְהַגִּיד לַאדֹנִי
לִמְצֹא־חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ: ז וַיָּשֻׁבוּ הַמַּלְאָכִים אֶל־יַעֲקֹב לֵאמֹר בָּאנוּ
אֶל־אָחִיךָ אֶל־עֵשָׂו וְגַם הֹלֵךְ לִקְרָאתְךָ וְאַרְבַּע־מֵאוֹת אִישׁ
עִמּוֹ: ח וַיִּירָא יַעֲקֹב מְאֹד וַיֵּצֶר לוֹ וַיַּחַץ אֶת־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר־אִתּוֹ
וְאֶת־הַצֹּאן וְאֶת־הַבָּקָר וְהַגְּמַלִּים לִשְׁנֵי מַחֲנוֹת: ט וַיֹּאמֶר

ד וישלח יעקב מלאכים לפניו אל עשו אחיו 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 למצא חן בעיניך: ז וישבו המלאכים אל יעקב לאמר באנו אל אחיך אל עשו וגם הלך לקראתך וארבע מאות איש עמו: ח וירא יעקב מאד ויצר לו ויחץ את העם אשר אתו
ואת הצאן ואת הבקר והגמלים לשני מחנות: ט ויאמר

ד וישלח יעקב מלאכים לפניו אל עשו אחיו 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 למצא חן בעיניך: ז וישבו המלאכים אל יעקב לאמר באנו אל אחיך אל עשו וגם הלך לקראתך וארבע מאות איש עמו: ח וירא יעקב מאד ויצר לו ויחץ את העם אשר אתו
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ואת הצאן ואת הבקר והגמלים לשני מחנות: ט ויאמר

רש"י

(ד) **וישלח יעקב מלאכים.** מלאכים ממש[1]: **ארצה שעיר.** לארץ שעיר, כל זו אינה לא מן השמים ולא מן הארץ: **שור וחמור.** דרך ארץ לומר על שוריס הרבה שור, אדם אומר לחבירו, בגילה קרא התרגגול, ואינו אומר קרקו התרגגוליס: **ואשלחה להגיד לאדני.** להודיע שאני בא לילך: **למצא חן בעיניך.** שאני שלם עמך ומבקש מהבתך: (ז) **באנו אל אחיך אל עשו.** שהיית אומר אחי הוא, אבל הוא נוהג עמך כעשו הרשע, עודנו בשנאתו[2]: (ח) **וירא ויצר.** ויירא שמא יהרג, ויצר לו, אם יהרוג הוא את אחריס[3]:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What kind of messengers (מַלְאָכִים) 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 **מַלְאָכִים** 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 **מַלְאֲכֵי אֱלֹקִים** ("angels *of God*"), in contrast to our verse where they are plain **מַלְאָכִים** ("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.

1 ב"ר עה, ד 2 שם ז 3 שם עו, ז

Ya'akov Prepares to Confront Eisav

32:4 *Ya'akov sent angels ahead of him to his brother Eisav, to the Land of Se'ir, to the fields of Edom.* [5] *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.* [6] *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).'"*

[7] *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!"*

[8] *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. 389*ff.*)

Sparks of Chasidus

Between 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

Rashi 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.

This 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. 392*ff.*; vol. 10, p. 101)

אִם־יָבוֹא עֵשָׂו אֶל־הַמַּחֲנֶה הָאַחַת וְהִכֵּהוּ וְהָיָה הַמַּחֲנֶה
הַנִּשְׁאָר לִפְלֵיטָה: י וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי אַבְרָהָם וֵאלֹהֵי
אָבִי יִצְחָק יְהוָה הָאֹמֵר אֵלַי שׁוּב לְאַרְצְךָ וּלְמוֹלַדְתְּךָ וְאֵיטִיבָה
עִמָּךְ: יא קָטֹנְתִּי מִכֹּל הַחֲסָדִים וּמִכָּל־הָאֱמֶת אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ
אֶת־עַבְדֶּךָ כִּי בְמַקְלִי עָבַרְתִּי אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה וְעַתָּה הָיִיתִי
לִשְׁנֵי מַחֲנוֹת: יב הַצִּילֵנִי נָא מִיַּד אָחִי מִיַּד עֵשָׂו כִּי־יָרֵא אָנֹכִי
אֹתוֹ פֶּן־יָבוֹא וְהִכַּנִי אֵם עַל־בָּנִים: יג וְאַתָּה אָמַרְתָּ הֵיטֵב
אֵיטִיב עִמָּךְ וְשַׂמְתִּי אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ כְּחוֹל הַיָּם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִסָּפֵר
מֵרֹב: [שני] יד וַיָּלֶן שָׁם בַּלַּיְלָה הַהוּא וַיִּקַּח מִן־הַבָּא בְיָדוֹ מִנְחָה

וְיִמְחִינָה וּתְהֵי מַשְׁרִיתָא דְתִשְׁתָאַר לְשֵׁיזָבָא:
י וַאֲמַר יַעֲקֹב אֱלָהֵה דְאַבָּא אַבְרָהָם וֵאלָהֵה
דְאַבָּא יִצְחָק יְיָ דִי אֲמַר לִי תּוּב לְאַרְעָךְ
וּלְיַלָּדוּתָךְ וְאוֹטֵיב עִמָּךְ: יא זְעֵירָן זְכוּתִי מִכָּל
חִסְדִּין וּמִכָּל טַבְוָן דִי עֲבַדְתְּ עִם עַבְדָּךְ אֲרֵי
יְחִידִי עֲבָרִית יַת יַרְדְּנָא הָדֵין וּכְעַן הֲוֵיתִי
לְתַרְתֵּין מַשְׁרְיָן: יב שֵׁיזְבְנִי כְּעַן מִידָּא דְאָחִי
מִידָּא דְעֵשָׂו אֲרֵי דָחֵיל אֲנָא מִנֵּיהּ דִּלְמָא יֵיתֵי
וְיִמְחִינָנִי אִמָּא עַל בְּנָיָא: יג וְאַתְּ אֲמַרְתְּ
אוֹטָבָא אוֹטֵיב עִמָּךְ וַאֲשַׁוֵּי יַת בְּנָיִךְ סַגִּיאִין
כְּחָלָא דְיַמָּא דִי לָא יִתְמְנוּן מִסְפַּר: יד וּבָת
תַּמָּן בְּלֵילְיָא הַהוּא וּנְסֵיב מִן דְּאָתֵי בִּידֵיהּ

רס"י

(ט) **המחנה האחת והכהו.** מחנה משמש לשון זכר ולשון נקבה. מס תמנה עלי מחנה[1], כרי לשון נקבה. כמחנה הזה[2], לשון זכר. וכן יש שאר דבריס משמשים לשון זכר ולשון נקבה, כשמש יצא על הארץ[3], מקנה כשמיס מועלו[4], כרי לשון זכר, כשמש זרחה על כמיס[5] כרי לשון נקבה. וכן רוח, וכגה רוח גדולה בהר[6], כרי לשון נקבה. ויגע בארבע פנות הבית[7], כרי לשון זכר. ורוח גדולה וחזק מפרק כריס[8], כרי לשון זכר ולשון נקבה. וכן חם, וחש יאחר מאת כי[9], לשון נקבה. חם לוכט[10], לשון זכר: **והיה המחנה הנשאר לפליטה.** על כרחו, כי חלחס עמו. כתקין עלמו לשלשה דבריס, לדורון, לתפלה, ולמלחמה. לדורון, ותעבור המנחה על פניו. לתפלה, חלחי חבי חברהס. למלחמה, והיה כמחנה הנשאר לפליטה: (י) **ואלהי אבי יצחק.** ולהלן הוא חומר ופחד יצחק, ועוד, מהו שחזר והזכיר שס כמיומד, היה לו לכתוב כחומר חלי שוב לארלך וגו'. חלח כך חמר יעקב לפני הקב"ה, שתי הבטחות הבטחתני, אחת בלאחי מבית חבי מבאר שבע, שחמרת לי אני כי חלהי חברהס חבין וחלהי יצחק, ושס חמרת לי ושמרתיך בכל אשר תלך. ובבית לבן חמרת לי שוב אל ארץ חבותיך ולמולדתך ואהיה עמך, ושס נגלית אלי בשס כמיומד לבבו, שנאמר ויאמר כי אל יעקב שוב אל ארץ אבותיך וגו', בשתי הבטחות האלו אני בא לפניך: (יא) **קטנתי מכל החסדים.** נתמעטו זכיותי על ידי החסדים וכאמת שעשית עמי, לכך אני ירא שמא משבטחתני נתלכלכתי בחטא, ויגרום לי להמסר ביד עשו[11]: **ומכל האמת.** אמתת דבריך, שעמרת לי כל כהבטחות שהבטחתני: **כי במקלי.** לא היה עמי לא כסף ולא זהב ולא מקנה, אלא מקלי לבדו. ומדרש אגדה, נתן מקלו בירדן ונעקד כירדן: (יב) **מיד אחי מיד עשו.** מיד אחי, שאין נוהג עמי כאח אלא כעשו הרשע: (יג) **היטב איטיב.** היטב בזכותך, איטיב בזכות אבותיך[12]: **ושמתי את זרעך כחול הים.** והיכן אמר לו כן, והלא לא אמר לו אלא והיה זרעך כעפר הארץ[13]. אלא שאמר לו, כי לא אעזבך עד אשר אם עשיתי את אשר דברתי לך[14], ולאברהם אמר הרבה את זרעך ככוכבי השמים והחול אשר על שפת היס: (יד) **הבא בידו.** ברשותו, וכן ויקח את כל אשר מידו[15]. ומדרש אגדה מן הבא בידו, אבנים טובות ומרגליות, שאדם יר בצרור ונושא בידו. דבר אחר מן

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 became soiled by sin and it will cause me to be delivered into Eisav's hand.

1 תהלים כו, ג 2 בראשית לג, ח 3 שם יט, כג 4 תהלים יט, ז 5 מלכים-ב ג, כב 6 איוב א, יט 7 שם 8 מלכים-א יט, יא 9 במדבר טז, לה 10 תהלים קד, ד 11 שבת לב.

[9] He said, "If Eisav comes to one camp and strikes it down, (then I will fight with him), so the remaining camp will survive."

[10] 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,' [11] (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. [12] 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. [13] 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.'"

SECOND READING

[14] He slept there that night.

(As a further preparation) he took a gift from his possessions for his brother Eisav: [15] 200 female goats,

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 became 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 חֵטְא 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. 396*ff.*)

12 ב"ר עו, ז 13 בראשית כח, יד 14 שם טו 15 במדבר כא, כו

לְעֵשָׂו אָחִיו: טו עִזִּים מָאתַיִם וּתְיָשִׁים עֶשְׂרִים רְחֵלִים מָאתַיִם
וְאֵילִים עֶשְׂרִים: טז גְּמַלִּים מֵינִיקוֹת וּבְנֵיהֶם שְׁלֹשִׁים פָּרוֹת
אַרְבָּעִים וּפָרִים עֲשָׂרָה אֲתֹנֹת עֶשְׂרִים וַעְיָרִם עֲשָׂרָה: יז וַיִּתֵּן
בְּיַד־עֲבָדָיו עֵדֶר עֵדֶר לְבַדּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־עֲבָדָיו עִבְרוּ לְפָנַי
וְרָוַח תָּשִׂימוּ בֵּין עֵדֶר וּבֵין עֵדֶר: יח וַיְצַו אֶת־הָרִאשׁוֹן לֵאמֹר
כִּי יִפְגָּשְׁךָ עֵשָׂו אָחִי וּשְׁאָלְךָ לֵאמֹר לְמִי־אַתָּה וְאָנָה תֵלֵךְ
וּלְמִי אֵלֶּה לְפָנֶיךָ: יט וְאָמַרְתָּ לְעַבְדְּךָ לְיַעֲקֹב מִנְחָה הִוא
שְׁלוּחָה לַאדֹנִי לְעֵשָׂו וְהִנֵּה גַם־הוּא אַחֲרֵינוּ: כ וַיְצַו גַּם
אֶת־הַשֵּׁנִי גַּם אֶת־הַשְּׁלִישִׁי גַּם אֶת־כָּל־הַהֹלְכִים אַחֲרֵי
הָעֲדָרִים לֵאמֹר כַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה תְּדַבְּרוּן אֶל־עֵשָׂו בְּמֹצַאֲכֶם אֹתוֹ:
כא וַאֲמַרְתֶּם גַּם הִנֵּה עַבְדְּךָ יַעֲקֹב אַחֲרֵינוּ כִּי־אָמַר אֲכַפְּרָה
פָּנָיו בַּמִּנְחָה הַהֹלֶכֶת לְפָנָי וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן אֶרְאֶה פָּנָיו אוּלַי יִשָּׂא
פָנָי: כב וַתַּעֲבֹר הַמִּנְחָה עַל־פָּנָיו וְהוּא לָן בַּלַּיְלָה־הַהוּא
בַּמַּחֲנֶה: כג וַיָּקָם | בַּלַּיְלָה הוּא וַיִּקַּח אֶת־שְׁתֵּי נָשָׁיו וְאֶת־שְׁתֵּי
שִׁפְחֹתָיו וְאֶת־אַחַד עָשָׂר יְלָדָיו וַיַּעֲבֹר אֵת מַעֲבַר יַבֹּק:
כד וַיִּקָּחֵם וַיַּעֲבִרֵם אֶת־הַנָּחַל וַיַּעֲבֵר אֶת־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ: כה וַיִּוָּתֵר

תִּקְרוּבְתָּא לְעֵשָׂו אֲחוּהִי: טו עִזֵי מָאתַן
וּתְיָשַׁיָּא עֶשְׂרִין רְחֵילִין מָאתָן וְדִכְרִין עֲשָׂרִין:
טז גַּמְלֵי מֵינְקָתָא וּבְנֵיהוֹן תְּלָתִין תּוֹרָתָא
אַרְבְּעִין וְתוֹרֵי עֲשָׂרָא אַתְנָן עֲשָׂרִין וְעִירֵי
עֲשָׂרָא: יז וְיַהַב בִּידָא דְעַבְדּוֹהִי עֶדְרָא עֶדְרָא
בִּלְחוֹדוֹהִי וַאֲמַר לְעַבְדּוֹהִי עִבְרוּ קֳדָמַי וְרַוְחָא
תְּשַׁוּוּן בֵּין עֶדְרָא וּבֵין עֶדְרָא: יח וּפַקֵּיד יַת
קַדְמָאָה לְמֵימַר אֲרֵי יְעַרְעָנָךְ עֵשָׂו אָחִי
וְיִשְׁאֲלִנָּךְ לְמֵימַר לְמָן אַתְּ וּלְאָן אַתְּ אָזֵיל
וּדְמַאן אִלֵּין קֳדָמָךְ: יט וְתֵימַר דְּעַבְדָּךְ
דְיַעֲקֹב תִּקְרוּבְתָּא הִיא דִּמְשַׁלְחָא לְרִבּוֹנִי
לְעֵשָׂו וְהָא אַף הוּא אָתֵי בַּתְרָנָא: כ וּפַקֵּיד אַף
יַת תִּנְיָנָא אַף יַת תְּלִיתָאָה אַף יַת כָּל דְּאָזְלִין
בָּתַר עֶדְרַיָּא לְמֵימַר כְּפִתְגָמָא הָדֵין תְּמַלְלוּן
עִם עֵשָׂו כַּד תִּשְׁכְּחוּן יָתֵיהּ: כא וְתֵימְרוּן אַף
הָא עַבְדָּךְ יַעֲקֹב אָתֵי בַּתְרָנָא אֲרֵי אֲמַר
אַנְחֵינֵיהּ לְרוּגְזֵיהּ בְּתִקְרוּבְתָּא דְאָזְלָא קֳדָמַי
וּבָתַר כֵּן אֶחֱזֵי אַפּוֹהִי מָאִים יִסַּב אַפָּי:
כב וַעֲבָרַת תִּקְרוּבְתָּא עַל אַפּוֹהִי וְהוּא בָּת
בְּלֵילְיָא הַהוּא בְּמַשְׁרְיָתָא: כג וְקָם בְּלֵילְיָא
הוּא וּדְבַר יַת תַּרְתֵּין נְשׁוֹהִי וְיַת תַּרְתֵּין
לְחֵינָתֵיהּ וְיַת חַד עֲשַׂר בְּנוֹהִי וַעֲבַר יַת מַעֲבַר
יוּבְקָא: כד וּדְבָרִינוּן וְאַעְבָּרִינוּן יַת נַחְלָא
וְאַעְבַּר יַת דִּילֵיהּ: כה וְאִשְׁתָּאַר יַעֲקֹב

לט"ו

תאכל, מי שולחך, ותרגומו דמאן חת: **ולמי אלה לפניך**. ומלה שלפניך של מי הם, למי המנחה הזאת שלוחה למ"ד מסמסת ברחם כתיבה במקום של, כמו וכל אשר תאכל רוחה לי הוש[3], שלי הוש, לכי בארץ ומלואה[4], של כי: (יט) **ואמרת לעבדך ליעקב**. על רשעון רשעון ועל אחרון אחרון, שששלח למי תאכל, לעבדך ליעקב חני, ותרגומו דעבדך דיעקב, ושששלח ולמי תלך לפניך, מנחה היא שלוחה וגו': **והנה גם הוא**. יעקב: (כא) **אכפרה פניו**. מצטל רוגזו, וכן וכופר בריחכם את מות[5], לא תוכלו כפרכ[6]. ורחה בעיני, שכל כפרה שאינו עון וחטא ואינו פיוס, כולן לשון קנוח והעברה הן, ולשון חרמי הוא, והרבה בגמרא וכפר ידיה, בעי לכפורי ידיה בכהוא גברא, וגם בלשון המקרא נקראים המזרקים של קדש כפורי זהב, על שם שהכהן מקנח ידיו בהן בשעת המזרק: (כב) **על פניו**. כמו לפניו, וכן חמס ושוד ישמע בה על פני תמיד[7], וכן המכעיסים אותי על פני[8], ומדרש אגדה על פניו, אף הוא שרוי בכעס שהיה צריך לכל זה[9]: (כג) **ואת אחד עשר ילדיו**. ודיוק היכן היתה, נתנה בתיבה ונעל בפיה, שלא יתן בה עין עיניו, ולכך נענש יעקב שמנעה מאחיו, שמא תחזירנו למוטב, ונפלה ביד שכם[10]: **יבק**. שם הנהר: (כד) **את אשר לו**. הבהמה והמטלטלים, עשה עמו כגשר, גוטל מכאן ומניח כאן: (כה) **ויותר**

הבא בידו, מן החולין, שגטל מעשר, כמה דתת חמר עשר תעשרנו לך, והדר לקח מנחה: (טו) **עזים מאתים ותישים עשרים**. מאתים עזים לריכות עשריס תיישים, וכן כולם, הזכריס כדי לזרך הנקבות. ובגרשים רבה[1] דורש מכאן לעושה החמורה בתורה, הטיילים בכל יום, הפועלים שתים בשבת, החמריס אחת בשבת, הגמלים אחת לשלשים יום, הספינים אחת לשנה חדשים, ואיני יודע לכוין המדרש הזה בכוון. אך נראה בעיני שלמדנו מכאן, שאין העושה שוה בכל אדם, אלא לפי טורח המוטל עליו, שמליאו כאן שמסר לכל איש עשר עזים, וכן לכל איל, לפי שהם פנויים ממלאכה, דרכן להרבות תשמיש לעשר עשר נקבות, ובהמה משתעברה אינה מקבלת זכר, ופריס שעוסקין במלאכה, לא מסר לזכר אלא ארבע נקבות, ולחמור שהולך בדרך רחוקה, שתי נקבות לזכר. ולגמלים שהולכים דרך יותר רחוקה, נקבה אחת לזכר: (טז) **גמלים מיניקות ובניהם שלשים**. ובניהם עמהם. ומדרש אגדה[2] ובניהם, בגילויהם, זכר כנגד נקבה, ולפי שלנוע בתשמיש, לא פרסמו הכתוב: **ועירים**. חמוריס זכריס: (יז) **עדר עדר לבדו**. כל מין ומין לעלמו: **עברו לפני**. דרך יום או פחות, ומני אתוה מחריכס: **ורוח תשימו**. עדר לפני חברו מלא עין, כדי להשגיח עיני של אותו רשע, ולתוהו על רבוי הדורון: (יח) **למי אתה**. של מי

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

1 עו, ז 2 ב"ר שם 3 בראשית לא, מג 4 תהלים כד, א 5 ישעי' כח, יח 6 שם מז, יא 7 ירמי' ו, ז 8 ישעי' סה, ג 9 עו, ח 10 ב"ר עח, ג

20 male goats, 200 ewes and 20 rams, [16] 30 nursing camels with their young, 40 cows, 10 bulls, 20 female donkeys and 10 male donkeys. [17] 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)."

[18] 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?' [19] 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.'"

[20] 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. [21] 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."

[22] So the gift passed on ahead of him, and he slept that night in the camp.

[23] (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. [24] 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* (הֵכִין) for the encounter with Eisav by adding in activities and in mental focus, but rather, he *adjusted* (הִתְקִין) 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 became 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 there *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)

יַעֲקֹב לְבַדּוֹ וַיֵּאָבֵק אִישׁ עִמּוֹ עַד עֲלוֹת הַשָּׁחַר: כו וַיַּרְא כִּי לֹא
יָכֹל לוֹ וַיִּגַּע בְּכַף־יְרֵכוֹ וַתֵּקַע כַּף־יֶרֶךְ יַעֲקֹב בְּהֵאָבְקוֹ עִמּוֹ:
כז וַיֹּאמֶר שַׁלְּחֵנִי כִּי עָלָה הַשָּׁחַר וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אֲשַׁלֵּחֲךָ כִּי
אִם־בֵּרַכְתָּנִי: כח וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו מַה־שְּׁמֶךָ וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב: כט וַיֹּאמֶר
לֹא יַעֲקֹב יֵאָמֵר עוֹד שִׁמְךָ כִּי אִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי־שָׂרִיתָ
עִם־אֱלֹהִים וְעִם־אֲנָשִׁים וַתּוּכָל: ל וַיִּשְׁאַל יַעֲקֹב וַיֹּאמֶר
הַגִּידָה־נָּא שְׁמֶךָ וַיֹּאמֶר לָמָּה זֶּה תִּשְׁאַל לִשְׁמִי וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתוֹ
שָׁם: [שלישי] לא וַיִּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם פְּנִיאֵל כִּי־רָאִיתִי
אֱלֹהִים פָּנִים אֶל־פָּנִים וַתִּנָּצֵל נַפְשִׁי: לב וַיִּזְרַח־לוֹ הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ
כַּאֲשֶׁר עָבַר אֶת־פְּנוּאֵל וְהוּא צֹלֵעַ עַל־יְרֵכוֹ: לג עַל־כֵּן
לֹא־יֹאכְלוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־גִּיד הַנָּשֶׁה אֲשֶׁר עַל־כַּף הַיָּרֵךְ
עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה כִּי נָגַע בְּכַף־יֶרֶךְ יַעֲקֹב בְּגִיד הַנָּשֶׁה:

בַּלְחוֹדוֹהִי וְאִשְׁתַּדַּל גַּבְרָא עִמֵּיהּ עַד דְּסָלִיק
צַפְרָא: כו וַחֲזָא אֲרֵי לָא יָכִיל לֵיהּ וּקְרֵיב
בְּפֻתֵּי יַרְכֵּיהּ וְזָע פֻּתֵּי יַרְכָּא דְיַעֲקֹב
בְּאִשְׁתַּדָּלוּתֵיהּ עִמֵּיהּ: כז וַאֲמַר שַׁלְחַנִי אֲרֵי
סְלִיק צַפְרָא וַאֲמַר לָא אֲשַׁלְחִינָךְ אֱלָהֵין
בָּרְכְתָנִי: כח וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ מָא שְׁמָךְ וַאֲמַר
יַעֲקֹב: כט וַאֲמַר לָא יַעֲקֹב יִתְאֲמַר עוֹד שְׁמָךְ
אֱלָהִין יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲרֵי רַבְרְבַת קֻדָּם יְיָ וְעִם
גּוּבְרַיָּא וְיָכְלְתָּא: ל וּשְׁאֵיל יַעֲקֹב וַאֲמַר חַוִּי
כְּעַן שְׁמָךְ וַאֲמַר לְמָא דְנַן אַתְּ שָׁאֵיל לִשְׁמִי
וּבָרִיךְ יָתֵיהּ תַּמָּן: לא וּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב שְׁמָא
דְאַתְרָא פְּנִיאֵל אֲרֵי חֲזִיתִי מַלְאָכָא דַיְיָ אַפִּין
בְּאַפִּין וְאִשְׁתֵּיזְבַת נַפְשִׁי: לב וּדְנַח לֵיהּ שִׁמְשָׁא
כַּד עָבַר יַת פְּנוּאֵל וְהוּא מַטְלַע עַל יַרְכֵּיהּ:
לג עַל כֵּן לָא יֵיכְלוּן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יַת גִּידָא דְנַשְׁיָא
דִי עַל פֻּתֵּי יַרְכָּא עַד יוֹמָא הָדֵין אֲרֵי קְרֵיב

רס"י

יעקב. סכח פכיס קטניס וחזר עליהס[1]: **ויאבק איש.** מנחס פירס ויתעפר חיס, מלשון מבק, שהיו מעלים עפר ברגליהס על ידי נעטופ. ולי נרחה שהוא לשון ויתקשר, ולשון חרמי הוא, כתר דחביקו ביה, ומבק ליה מיבק לשון עיבה, שכן דרך ניס שמתעלמים להפיל חיס את רעהו, שחובקו וחופקו בזרועותיו, ופירשו רז"ל שהוא שרו של עשו[2]: **(כו) ויגע בכף יריכו.** קולית הירך בתקוע בקלבוסת קרוי כף, על שם שהכשר שעליה כמין כף של קדירה: **ותקע.** נתקעקע ממקוס חברתה, ודומה לו פן תקע נפשי ממך[3], לשון הסרה, ובמשנה לקעקע בילתן, לשרש שרשיהן: **(כז) כי עלה השחר.** וגריך אני לומר שירה ביוס[4]: **ברכתני.** הודה לי על הברכות שברכני אבי, שעשו מערער עליהס: **(כט) לא יעקב.** לח יאמר עוד שהברכות נאו לך בעקבה ורמיה, כי אס בשרה וגלוי פניס, וסופך שהקב"ה נגלה עליך בבית אל ומחליף שמך, ושם הוא מברכך, ואני אס אהיה ואודה לך עליהן, וזהו שכתוב ויש אל מלאך ויוכל בכה ויתחנן לו[5], בכה כמלאך ויתחנן לו, ומה נתחנן לו, בית אל ימצאנו ושם ידבר עמנו, כמתן לי עד שידבר עמנו שם, ולא רצה יעקב, ועל כרחו הודה לו עליהן, וזהו ויברך אותו שם, שהיה מתחנן להמתין לו ולא רצה: **ועם אנשים.** עשו ולבן: **ותוכל.** לכסס: **(ל) למה זה תשאל.** אין לנו אס קבוע, משתנין שמותיהן[6], (ככל) לפי מלות עבודת השליחות שהיו משתלחים: **(לב) ויזרח לו השמש.** לשון בני אדם הוא, כשהגיעו למקוס פלוני האיר להס השחר, זהו פשוטו. ומדרש אגדה ויזרח לו, לגרמו, לרפאות את נלעטו, כמה דתימא שמש לדקה ומרפא בכנפיה[7], ואותן שעות שמיהרה לשקוע בשבילו כשילא מבאר שבע, מיהרה לזרוח בשבילו: **והוא צולע.** היה צולע כשזרחה השמש: **(לג) גיד הנשה.** ולמה נקרא שמו גיד הנשה, לפי שנשה ממקומו ועלה, והוא לשון קפילה, וכן נשתה גבורתס[8], וכן כי נשני אלהים את כל עמלי[9]: **(על כף הירך.** פולפ"ח בלע"ז כל בשר גבוה וחלול

1 חולין צא. 2 ב"ר עז, ג 3 ירמי' ו, ח 4 ב"ר עח, א. חולין צא: 5 הושע יב, ה 6 ב"ר עח, ה 7 מלאכי ג, כ 8 ירמי' נא, ל 9 בראשית מא, נא

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 Cana'an—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 פְּנִיאֵל and פְּנוּאֵל 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 *Ya'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. [26] *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.*

[27] *(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."

[28] *(The angel) said to him, "What is your name?"*

"Ya'akov," he said.

[29] *"(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.)"*

[30] *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 [31] *Ya'akov named the place Peniy'ail ("God's face"), "because I saw God face to face, and my soul was saved."*

[32] *When he passed Penu'ail, the sun rose for him, and he was limping on his thigh.*

- [33] *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: [=אֵל (אֶל) פָּנָיו] "His (Ya'akov's) face (has seen) God."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 137*ff.*)

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)

לג א וַיִּשָּׂא יַעֲקֹב עֵינָיו וַיַּרְא וְהִנֵּה עֵשָׂו בָּא וְעִמּוֹ אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת
אִישׁ וַיַּחַץ אֶת־הַיְלָדִים עַל־לֵאָה וְעַל־רָחֵל וְעַל שְׁתֵּי
הַשְּׁפָחוֹת: ב וַיָּשֶׂם אֶת־הַשְּׁפָחוֹת וְאֶת־יַלְדֵיהֶן רִאשֹׁנָה
וְאֶת־לֵאָה וְיַלְדֶיהָ אַחֲרֹנִים וְאֶת־רָחֵל וְאֶת־יוֹסֵף אַחֲרֹנִים:
ג וְהוּא עָבַר לִפְנֵיהֶם וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אַרְצָה שֶׁבַע פְּעָמִים עַד־גִּשְׁתּוֹ
עַד־אָחִיו: ד וַיָּרָץ עֵשָׂו לִקְרָאתוֹ וַיְחַבְּקֵהוּ וַיִּפֹּל עַל־צַוָּארָו*
**וַיִּשָּׁקֵהוּ וַיִּבְכּוּ: ה וַיִּשָּׂא אֶת־עֵינָיו וַיַּרְא אֶת־הַנָּשִׁים
וְאֶת־הַיְלָדִים וַיֹּאמֶר מִי־אֵלֶּה לָךְ וַיֹּאמֶר הַיְלָדִים אֲשֶׁר־חָנַן
אֱלֹהִים אֶת־עַבְדֶּךָ: [רביעי] ו וַתִּגַּשְׁן הַשְּׁפָחוֹת הֵנָּה וְיַלְדֵיהֶן
וַתִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶיןָ: ז וַתִּגַּשׁ גַּם־לֵאָה וְיַלְדֶיהָ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ וְאַחַר נִגַּשׁ
יוֹסֵף וְרָחֵל וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ: ח וַיֹּאמֶר מִי לְךָ כָּל־הַמַּחֲנֶה הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר
פָּגָשְׁתִּי וַיֹּאמֶר לִמְצֹא־חֵן בְּעֵינֵי אֲדֹנִי: ט וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו יֶשׁ־לִי רָב
אָחִי יְהִי לְךָ אֲשֶׁר־לָךְ: י וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אַל־נָא אִם־נָא מָצָאתִי
בְּפִתֵּי יַרְכָא דְיַעֲקֹב בְּגִידָא דְנַשְׁיָא: א וְזָקַף
יַעֲקֹב עֵינוֹהִי וַחֲזָא וְהָא עֵשָׂו אָתֵי וְעִמֵּיהּ
אַרְבַּע מְאָה גַּבְרָא וּפַלֵּיג יַת בְּנָיָא עַל לֵאָה
וְעַל רָחֵל וְעַל תַּרְתֵּין לְחֵינָתָא: ב וְשַׁוִּי יַת
לְחֵינָתָא וְיַת בְּנֵיהֶן קֳדָמָאִין וְיָת לֵאָה וּבְנָהָא
בַּתְרָאִין וְיָת רָחֵל וְיָת יוֹסֵף בַּתְרָאִין: ג וְהוּא
עָבַר קֳדָמֵיהוֹן וּסְגִיד עַל אַרְעָא שְׁבַע זִמְנִין
עַד מִקְרְבֵיהּ עַד (לְוָת) אֲחוּהִי: ד וּרְהַט עֵשָׂו
לְקַדָּמוּתֵיהּ וְנַפֵּיהּ וּנְפַל עַל צַוְּרֵיהּ וְנַשְּׁקֵיהּ
וּבְכוֹ: ה וּזְקַף יַת עֵינוֹהִי וַחֲזָא יַת נְשָׁיָא וְיַת
בְּנָיָא וַאֲמַר מַאן אִלֵּין לָךְ וַאֲמַר בְּנָיָא דִי חָם
יְיָ יַת עַבְדָּךְ: ו וּקְרִיבָא לְחֵינָתָא אִנּוּן וּבְנֵיהֶן
וּסְגִידָא: ז וּקְרִיבַת אַף לֵאָה וּבְנָהָא וּסְגִידוּ
וּבָתַר כֵּן קְרִיב יוֹסֵף וְרָחֵל וּסְגִידוּ: ח וַאֲמַר
מָאן לָךְ כָּל מַשְׁרִיתָא הָדָא דִי עָרָעִית וַאֲמַר
לְאַשְׁכָּחָא רַחֲמִין בְּעֵינֵי רִבּוֹנִי: ט וַאֲמַר עֵשָׂו
אִית לִי סַגִּי אָחִי אֲצַלַּח בְּדִילָךְ: י וַאֲמַר יַעֲקֹב
בְּבָעוּ אִם כְּעַן אַשְׁכַּחִית רַחֲמִין בְּעֵינָיךְ
וּתְקַבֵּיל תְּקָרוּבְתִּי מִן יְדִי אֲרֵי עַל כֵּן חֲזֵיתִינוּן

*צואריו קרי **נקוד על וישקהו

רש"י

כל המחנה. מי כל המחנה אשר פגשתי שהוא שלך, כלומר למה הוא לך. ופשוטו של מקרא על מוליכי המנחה. ומדרשו, כתות של מלאכים פגע, שהיו דוחפין לותו ואת מנחתו, ואומרים לכאן, של מי אתם, והם אומרים לכאן של עשו, והן אומרים הכי הכו, ואלו אומרים הניחו, גנו של יצחק הוא, ולא היו מצניחים עליו. בן גנו של אברהם הוא, ולא היו מצניחים עליו. אחיו של יעקב הוא, אומרים להם אם כן מצלנו אחס: (ט) **יהי לך אשר לך.** כאן הודה לו על הברכות[4]: (י) **אל נא.** אל נא תאמר לי כן: **אם נא מצאתי חן בעיניך ולקחת מנחתי מידי כי על כן ראיתי פניך וגו'.** כי כדאי והגון לך שתקבל מנחתי, על אשר ראיתי פניך, והן חסונין לי כראיית פני המלאך, שרציתי שר שלך, ועוד על שנתרצית למחול לי על סורחני. ולמה הזכיר לו ועגול קרוי כף, כמו עד שתתמרך הכף, בסימני בגרות): (ג) **ואת לאה וילדיה אחרונים.** אחרון אחרון חביב: (ג) **עבר לפניהם.** אמר, אם יבא לותו רשע להלחם, ילחם בי תחלה: (ד) **ויחבקהו.** נתגלגלו רחמיו כשראהו משתחוה כל השתחוואות הללו: **וישקהו.** נקוד עליו, יש חולקין בדבר הזה בברייתא דספרי[1], יש שדרשו נקודה זו, לומר שלא נשקו בכל לבו[2]. אמר רבי שמעון בן יוחאי, הלכה היא, בידוע שעשו שונא ליעקב, אלא שנכמרו רחמיו בשעה שנשקו בכל לבו[3]: (ה) **מי אלה לך.** מי אלה להיות שלך: (ז) **נגש יוסף ורחל.** בכלן בחמכות נגשות לפני הבנים, אבל ברחל, יוסף נגש לפניה, אמר, אמי יפת תואר, שמא יתלה בה עיניו לותו רשע, לעמוד כנגדה ולעכבנו מלהסתכל בה, מכאן זכה יוסף לברכת עלי עין: (ח) **מי לך**

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 וַיִּשָּׁקֵהוּ ("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).

1 ספרי בהעלותך סט 2 ב"ר עח, ט 3 שם 4 ב"ר עח, יא

Ya'akov Confronts Eisav

33 Ya'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. [2] 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).

[3] He went ahead of them (to protect them) and prostrated himself (progressively) on the ground seven times, until he approached his brother. [4] (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.

[5] (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."

Fourth Reading

[6] The maids approached (Eisav, both) they and their children, and they prostrated themselves. [7] Leah and her children approached and prostrated themselves, and afterwards, Yosef and Rochel approached and prostrated themselves.

[8] (Eisav) said, "What was your (idea of) this whole entourage that I met?"

"To find favor in my master's eyes," said Ya'akov.

[9] Eisav said, "I have plenty (more than I need). My brother, you can keep what is yours."

[10] 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."

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 וַיִּשָּׁקֵהוּ ("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* וַיִּשָּׁקֵהוּ ('*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."

חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ וְלָקַחְתָּ מִנְחָתִי מִיָּדִי כִּי עַל־כֵּן רָאִיתִי פָנֶיךָ כִּרְאֹת פְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים וַתִּרְצֵנִי: יא קַח־נָא אֶת־בִּרְכָתִי אֲשֶׁר הֻבָאת לָךְ כִּי־חַנַנִי אֱלֹהִים וְכִי יֶשׁ־לִי־כֹל וַיִּפְצַר־בּוֹ וַיִּקָּח: יב וַיֹּאמֶר נִסְעָה וְנֵלֵכָה וְאֵלְכָה לְנֶגְדֶּךָ: יג וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲדֹנִי יֹדֵעַ כִּי־הַיְלָדִים רַכִּים וְהַצֹּאן וְהַבָּקָר עָלוֹת עָלָי וּדְפָקוּם יוֹם אֶחָד וָמֵתוּ כָּל־הַצֹּאן: יד יַעֲבָר־נָא אֲדֹנִי לִפְנֵי עַבְדּוֹ וַאֲנִי אֶתְנַהֲלָה לְאִטִּי לְרֶגֶל הַמְּלָאכָה אֲשֶׁר־לְפָנַי וּלְרֶגֶל הַיְלָדִים עַד אֲשֶׁר־אָבֹא אֶל־אֲדֹנִי שֵׂעִירָה: טו וַיֹּאמֶר אַצִּיגָה־נָּא עִמְּךָ מִן־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר אִתִּי וַיֹּאמֶר לָמָּה זֶּה אֶמְצָא־חֵן בְּעֵינֵי אֲדֹנִי:

לְאַפֵּךְ כְּחֵיזוּ אַפֵּי רַבְרְבַיָּא וְאִתְרְעֵית לִי: יא קַבֵּל בְּעַן יַת תִּקְרוּבְתִּי דְּאִיתּוֹתִיאַת לָךְ אֲרֵי רַחִים עָלַי (קֳדָם) יְיָ וַאֲרֵי אִית לִי כּוֹלָא וְאִתְקֵיף בֵּיהּ וְקַבֵּיל: יב וַאֲמַר טוֹל וּנְהָךְ וְאֵיהַךְ לְקִבְלָךְ: יג וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ רִבּוֹנִי יָדַע אֲרֵי יָנְקַיָּא רַכִּיכִין וְעָנָא וְתוֹרֵי מֵינְקָתָא עָלַי וְאִם יִדְחוֹקִינוּן יוֹמָא חַד וְימוּתוּן כָּל עָנָא: יד יְעִבַּר כְּעַן רִבּוֹנִי קֳדָם עַבְדֵּיהּ וַאֲנָא אֶדַבַּר בְּנִיחַ לְרֶגֶל עוֹבַדְתָּא דִּי קֳדָמַי וּלְרֶגֶל יָנְקַיָּא עַד דִּי אֵיתֵי לְוָת רִבּוֹנִי לְשֵׂעִיר: טו וַאֲמַר עֲשׂוֹ אֶשְׁבּוֹק כְּעַן עִמָּךְ מִן עַמָּא דִּי עִמִּי וַאֲמַר לְמָא

רס"י

רחיית המלאך, כדי שיתיירא כימנו, ויאמר, רואה מלאכים ונילול, חיני יכול לו מעתה: **ותרצני**. נתפייסת לי. וכן כל רצון שבמקרא לשון פיוס, תפיזומנ"ט בלע"ז, כי לא לרצון יהיה לכם[1], הקרבנות בחות לפיים ולרצון, וכן שפתי לדיק ידעון רצון[2], יודעים לפיים ולרצות: (יא) **ברכתי**. מנחתי, מנחה זו הבאה על רחיית פניס, ולפרקים תיגה בחה חלה לשחיתת שלוס, וכל ברכה שהיא לרחיית פניס, כגון ויברך יעקב חת פרעה, עשו חתי ברכה[3], דסנחריב. וכן לשחול לו לשלוס ולברכו[4], דתועי מלך חמת, כולס לשון ברכת שלוס הן, שקורין בלע"ז שלודח"ר, חף זו ברכתי, מו"ן שלו"ד: **אשר הובאת לך**. לח טרחת בה, ותני יגעתי להגיעה עד שבחה לידך[5]: **חנני**. גו"ן רחשונה מוהגשת, לפי שהיח משמשת במקום שתי וויי"ן, שהיה לו לומר חנניי, שתין חנן בלח שתי וויי"ן, והשלישית לשימוש, כמו עשני, זבדני: **יש לי כל**. כל ספוקי, ועשו דבר בלשון גחוה, יש לי רב, יותר ויותר מכדי לרכי: (יב) **נסעה**. כמו שמעה, שלחה, שהוח כמו שמע, שלח, חף כחן נסעה כמו נסע, והגו"ן יסוד בתיבה, ותרגוס של חונקלוס טול ונלך, עשו חמר ניסעה נסע מכחן ונלך: **ואלכה לנגדך**. בשוה לך, טובה זו חעשה לך, שתחריך ימי

מהלכתי ללכת לחט כחשר חתה נריך, וזהו לנגדך, בשוה לך: (יג) **עלות עלי**. הנחן והבקר שהן עלות, מוטלות עלי לנהלן לחט. **עלות**. מגדלות עוללין, לשון עולל ויונק[6], טול ימיס[7], שתי פרות עלות[8], בלע"ז חנפיטי"ם: **ודפקום יום אחד**. (ושם ידפקום יוס חחד) ליגעם בדרך בחרוזה, ומתו כל הנחן: **ודפקום**. כמו קול דודי דופק[9], נוקש בדלת: (יד) **יעבר נא אדני**. חל תתריך ימי הליכתך, עבור כפי דרכך, וחף חם תתרחק: **אתנהלה**. חתנהל, כ"ח יתירה, כמו חרדה, תשמעה: **לאטי**. לחט שלי, לשון נחת הכוולכים לחט[10], לחט לי לנעך[11]. לחטי, הלמ"ד מן היסוד ויהיה משמשת, חתנהל נחת שלי: **לרגל המלאכה**. לפי זורך הליכת רגלי המלחכה המוטלת עלי להולין: **ולרגל הילדים**. לפי רגליהם שהם יכולים לילך: **עד אשר אבא אל אדני שעירה**. הרחיב לו הדרך, שלח היה דעתו ללכת חלח עד סוכות, חמר, חס דעתו לעשות לי רעה, ימתין עד בואי חצלו, והוח לח הלך, ואימתי ילך, בימי המשיח[12], שנחמר ועלו מושיעים בהר ציון לשפוט חת הר עשו[13]. ומדרשי חגדה יש לפרשה זו רבינו: (טו) **ויאמר למה זה**. תעשה לי טובה זו שתיני לריך לה: **אמצא חן בעיני אדני**. ולח תשלם לי עתה שום גמול:

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. 144*ff.*)

1 ויקרא כב, כ 2 משלי י, לב 3 מל'-ב יח, לא 4 שמ'-ב ח, י 5 ב'ר עח, יב 6 איכה ב, יא 7 ישע' סה, כ 8 שמ'-א ו, י 9 שה"ש ה, ב 10 ישע' ח, ו 11 שמ'-ב יח, ה 12 ב'ר עח, יד 13 עובדי' א, כא

(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. [11] *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.

[12] *(Eisav) said, "Set off and we'll go (together). I will go alongside you (as slowly as you want)."*

[13] *(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.* [14] *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."*

[15] *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)

טז וַיָּשָׁב בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא עֵשָׂו לְדַרְכּוֹ שֵׂעִירָה: יז וְיַעֲקֹב נָסַע סֻכֹּתָה
וַיִּבֶן לוֹ בָּיִת וּלְמִקְנֵהוּ עָשָׂה סֻכֹּת עַל־כֵּן קָרָא שֵׁם־הַמָּקוֹם
סֻכּוֹת: ס יח וַיָּבֹא יַעֲקֹב שָׁלֵם עִיר שְׁכֶם אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן
בְּבֹאוֹ מִפַּדַּן אֲרָם וַיִּחַן אֶת־פְּנֵי הָעִיר: יט וַיִּקֶן אֶת־חֶלְקַת
הַשָּׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר נָטָה־שָּׁם אָהֳלֹו מִיַּד בְּנֵי־חֲמֹור אֲבִי שְׁכֶם בְּמֵאָה
קְשִׂיטָה: כ וַיַּצֵּב־שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ וַיִּקְרָא־לֹו אֵל אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ס

טז דְּנַן אֶשְׁכַּח רַחֲמִין בְּעֵינֵי רִבּוֹנִי: טז וְתָב בְּיוֹמָא
הַהוּא עֵשָׂו לְאָרְחֵיהּ לְשֵׂעִיר: יז וְיַעֲקֹב נְטַל
לְסוּכּוֹת וּבְנָא לֵיהּ בֵּיתָא וְלִבְעִירֵהּ עֲבַד מְטַלְלָן
עַל כֵּן קָרָא שְׁמָא דְאַתְרָא סוּכּוֹת: יח וַאֲתָא
יַעֲקֹב שְׁלִים קַרְתָּא דִּשְׁכֶם דִּי בְּאַרְעָא
דִּכְנַעַן בְּמֵיתֹהִי מִפַּדַּן אֲרָם וּשְׁרָא לָקֳבֵל אַפֵּי
קַרְתָּא: יט וּזְבַן יַת אַחֲסָנַת חַקְלָא דִּי פַרְסֵיהּ
תַּמָּן לְמַשְׁכְּנֵיהּ מִידָא דִּבְנֵי חֲמוֹר אֲבוּהִי
דִּשְׁכֶם בְּמְאָה חוּרְפָן: כ וַאֲקֵים תַּמָּן מַדְבְּחָא

רס"י

(טז) וישב ביום ההוא עשו לדרכו. עשו לבדו, ודי מאות איש שהלכו עמו נשמטו ממלוי אחד אחד[1], והיכן פירש להם הקב"ה בימי דוד, שנאמר כי אם מרבע מאות איש נער אשר רכבו על הגמלים[2]: **(יז) ויבן לו בית.** שהכה שם י"ח חדש, קין וחורף וקין, סכות קין, בית חורף, סכות קין: **(יח) שלם.** שלם בגופו, שנתרפא מצלעתו. שלם בממונו, שלא חסר כלום מכל אותו דורון. שלם בתורתו[3], שלא שכח תלמודו בבית לבן: **עיר שכם.** כמו לעיר, וכמוהו עד בואנה בית לחם[4]: **בבאו מפדן ארם.** כאדם האומר לחבירו, יפה פלוני מבין שיני חריות ובא שלם, אף כאן ויבא שלם מפדן ארם, מלבן ומעשו שנזדווגו לו בדרך: **(יט) קשיטה.** מעה. אמר רבי יפושע סלע, מתחלקים לכמה טעמים, ואני ליישב פשוטו של מקרא בחתי: עקיבא, כשהלכתי לכרכי כיס היו קורין למעה, קשיטה. (ותרגומו חורפן טובים, חריפים בכל מקום, כגון עובר לסוחר): **(כ) ויקרא לו אל אלהי ישראל.** לפי שהמזבח קרוי על שם אלהי ישראל, אף על פי שהיה הקב"ה עמו והגילו, קרא שם המזבח על שם הגס, להיות שבחו של מקום נזכר בקריאת השם, כלומר, מי שהוא אל, הוא הקב"ה, הוא לאלהים לי, שממי ישראל, וכן מליעו במעה, ויקרא שמו כי נסי[5], לפי שהמזבח קרוי כי', אף על פי הגס קרא שם המזבח, להזכיר שבחו של הקדוש ברוך הוא, כי הוא נסי. ורבותינו דרשו[6], שהקדוש ברוך הוא קראו ליעקב אל, ודברי תורה כפטיש יפוצץ סלע, מתחלקים לכמה טעמים, ואני ליישב פשוטו של מקרא בחתי:

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. 154*ff.*)

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.*

1 ב"ר עח, טו 2 שמואל ל, יז 3 שבת לג: 4 רות א, יט 5 שמות יז, טו 6 מגילה יח.

[16] *On that day, Eisav went back to Se'ir, his usual hang-out, (alone).*

[17] *Ya'akov traveled to Sukos and built himself a house. He made huts ("sukos") for his cattle—therefore he named the place Sukos.*

[18] *(After 18 months) on his way from Padan-Aram, Ya'akov came to the city of Shechem—which is in the land of Cana'an—whole (in health, wealth and Torah knowledge), and he encamped in front of the city.* [19] *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.* [20] *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. 143*ff*.)

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. 173*ff*.)

[חמישי] לד א וַתֵּצֵא דִינָה בַּת־לֵאָה אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה לְיַעֲקֹב לִרְאוֹת
בִּבְנוֹת הָאָרֶץ: ב וַיַּרְא אֹתָהּ שְׁכֶם בֶּן־חֲמוֹר הַחִוִּי נְשִׂיא הָאָרֶץ
וַיִּקַּח אֹתָהּ וַיִּשְׁכַּב אֹתָהּ וַיְעַנֶּהָ: ג וַתִּדְבַּק נַפְשׁוֹ בְּדִינָה
בַּת־יַעֲקֹב וַיֶּאֱהַב אֶת־הַנַּעֲרָ* וַיְדַבֵּר עַל־לֵב הַנַּעֲרָ*: ד וַיֹּאמֶר
שְׁכֶם אֶל־חֲמוֹר אָבִיו לֵאמֹר קַח־לִי אֶת־הַיַּלְדָּה הַזֹּאת
לְאִשָּׁה: ה וְיַעֲקֹב שָׁמַע כִּי טִמֵּא אֶת־דִּינָה בִתּוֹ וּבָנָיו הָיוּ
אֶת־מִקְנֵהוּ בַּשָּׂדֶה וְהֶחֱרִשׁ יַעֲקֹב עַד־בֹּאָם: ו וַיֵּצֵא חֲמוֹר
אֲבִי־שְׁכֶם אֶל־יַעֲקֹב לְדַבֵּר אִתּוֹ: ז וּבְנֵי יַעֲקֹב בָּאוּ מִן־הַשָּׂדֶה
כְּשָׁמְעָם וַיִּתְעַצְּבוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיִּחַר לָהֶם מְאֹד כִּי נְבָלָה עָשָׂה
בְיִשְׂרָאֵל לִשְׁכַּב אֶת־בַּת־יַעֲקֹב וְכֵן לֹא יֵעָשֶׂה: ח וַיְדַבֵּר חֲמוֹר
אִתָּם לֵאמֹר שְׁכֶם בְּנִי חָשְׁקָה נַפְשׁוֹ בְּבִתְּכֶם תְּנוּ נָא אֹתָהּ לוֹ
לְאִשָּׁה: ט וְהִתְחַתְּנוּ אֹתָנוּ בְּנֹתֵיכֶם תִּתְּנוּ־לָנוּ וְאֶת־בְּנֹתֵינוּ
תִּקְחוּ לָכֶם: י וְאִתָּנוּ תֵּשֵׁבוּ וְהָאָרֶץ תִּהְיֶה לִפְנֵיכֶם שְׁבוּ
וְסִחָרוּהָ וְהֵאָחֲזוּ בָהּ: יא וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁכֶם אֶל־אָבִיהָ וְאֶל־אַחֶיהָ
אֶמְצָא־חֵן בְּעֵינֵיכֶם וַאֲשֶׁר תֹּאמְרוּ אֵלַי אֶתֵּן: יב הַרְבּוּ עָלַי
מְאֹד מֹהַר וּמַתָּן וְאֶתְּנָה כַּאֲשֶׁר תֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָי וּתְנוּ־לִי
אֶת־הַנַּעֲרָ* לְאִשָּׁה: יג וַיַּעֲנוּ בְנֵי־יַעֲקֹב אֶת־שְׁכֶם וְאֶת־חֲמוֹר
אָבִיו בְּמִרְמָה וַיְדַבֵּרוּ אֲשֶׁר טִמֵּא אֶת דִּינָה אֲחֹתָם: יד וַיֹּאמְרוּ
אֲלֵיהֶם לֹא נוּכַל לַעֲשׂוֹת הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה לָתֵת אֶת־אֲחֹתֵנוּ לְאִישׁ
אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ עָרְלָה כִּי־חֶרְפָּה הִוא לָנוּ: טו אַךְ־בְּזֹאת נֵאוֹת לָכֶם

וּפְלַח עֲלוֹהִי קֻדָּם אֵל אֱלָהָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל:
א וּנְפָקַת דִּינָה בַּת לֵאָה דִּי יְלִידַת לְיַעֲקֹב
לְמֶחֱזֵי בִּבְנַת אַרְעָא: ב וַחֲזָא יָתַהּ שְׁכֶם בַּר
חֲמוֹר חִוָּאָה רַבָּא דְאַרְעָא וּדְבַר יָתַהּ וּשְׁכִיב
יָתַהּ וְעַנְיַהּ: ג וְאִתְרְעִיאַת נַפְשֵׁיהּ בְּדִינָה בַּת
יַעֲקֹב וּרְחֵים יַת עוּלֶמְתָּא וּמַלֵּיל עַל לִבָּא
דְעוּלֶמְתָּא: ד וַאֲמַר שְׁכֶם לַחֲמוֹר אֲבוּהִי
לְמֵימָר סַב לִי יַת עוּלֶמְתָּא הָדָא לְאִנְתּוּ:
ה וְיַעֲקֹב שְׁמַע אֲרֵי סָאִיב יַת דִּינָה בְּרַתֵּיהּ
וּבְנוֹהִי הֲווֹ עִם גֵּיתוֹהִי בְּחַקְלָא
וּשְׁתֵיק יַעֲקֹב עַד מֵיתֵיהוֹן: ו וּנְפַק חֲמוֹר
אֲבוּהִי דִּשְׁכֶם לְוָת יַעֲקֹב לְמַלָּלָא עִמֵּיהּ: ז וּבְנֵי
יַעֲקֹב עָלוּ מִן חַקְלָא כַּד שְׁמָעוּ וְאִתְנְסִיבוּ
גּוּבְרַיָּא וּתְקִיף לְהוֹן לַחֲדָא אֲרֵי קָלָנָא עֲבַד
בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִשְׁכַּב עִם בַּת יַעֲקֹב וְכֵן לָא כְּשַׁר
לְאִתְעֲבָדָא: ח וּמַלִּיל חֲמוֹר עִמְּהוֹן לְמֵימָר
שְׁכֶם בְּרִי אִתְרְעִיאַת נַפְשֵׁיהּ בִּבְרַתְכוֹן הָבוּ
כְעַן יָתַהּ לֵיהּ לְאִנְתּוּ: ט וְתִתְחַתְּנוּן בָּנָא
בְּנָתֵיכוֹן תִּתְּנוּן לָנָא וְיַת בְּנָתָנָא תִּסְבּוּן לְכוֹן:
י וְעִמָּנָא תֵּיתְבוּן וְאַרְעָא תְּהֵי קֳדָמֵיכוֹן תִּיבוּ
וַעֲבִידוּ בָהּ סְחוֹרְתָא וְאַחֲסִינוּ בָּהּ: יא וַאֲמַר
שְׁכֶם לַאֲבוּהָא וּלְאַחָהָא אַשְׁכַּח רַחֲמִין
בְּעֵינֵיכוֹן וְדִי תֵימְרוּן לִי אֶתַּן: יב אַסְגּוּ עֲלַי
לַחֲדָא מוֹהֲרִין וּמַתְּנָן וְאֶתַּן כְּמָא דִי תֵימְרוּן לִי
וְהָבוּ לִי יַת עוּלֶמְתָּא לְאִנְתּוּ: יג וַאֲתִיבוּ בְנֵי
יַעֲקֹב יַת שְׁכֶם וְיַת חֲמוֹר אֲבוּהִי בְּחָכְמְתָא
וּמַלִּילוּ דִי סַאֵב יַת דִּינָה אֲחַתְהוֹן: יד וַאֲמָרוּ
לְהוֹן לָא נְכוֹל לְמֶעְבַּד פִּתְגָמָא הָדֵין לְמִתַּן
יַת אֲחָתָנָא לִגְבַר דִּי לֵיהּ עָרְלְתָא אֲרֵי חִסּוּדָא
הִיא לָנָא: טו בְּרַם בְּדָא נִתְפֵּס לְכוֹן אִם תְּהוֹן

*הנערה קרי

לש"י

(ה) **בת לאה.** ולא בת יעקב. ללמד על שם יוחסה נקראת בת לאה, שהיא היתה יפת עינים היתה, שנאמר ותהי לאה רכות עינים[1], (ועליה משלו המשל כאמה כצאנה): (ג) **וישכב אותה.** כדרכה: **ויענה.** שלא כדרכה[2]: (ג) **על לב הנערה.** דבריס המתייפיס על הלב, רמי מדיך בחלקת שדה קטנה כמה ממון בזבז, מני מסיאך ותקנה העיר וכל שדותיה: (ז) **וכן לא יעשה.** לעמות שכתובות, שהאומות גדרו עצמן מן העריות על ידי המבול[3]: (ח) **חשקה.** חפצה: (יב) **מהר.** כתובה[4]: (יג) **במרמה.** בחכמה: **אשר טמא.** הכתוב מוסר שלא היתה ראויה, שהרי טמא את דינה אחותם[5]: (יד) **חרפה הוא.** שמן הפסול הוא מגלגו, הבא לתרף חברו הוא אומר לו, ערל אתה, או בן ערל. חרפה בכל מקום, גדוף: (טו) **נאות לכם.** נתרצה לכם, לשון

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. 168*ff.*)

1 ב"ר פ, א 2 יומא עז: 3 ב"ר פ, ו 4 שם ז 5 ב"ר פ, ח

Dinah & Shechem

34 Fifth Reading

Dinah—Leah's daughter, whom she had borne to Ya'akov—went out to observe the daughters of the Land. [2] Shechem—the son of Chamor the Chivite, prince of the land—saw her. He took her, lay with her, and violated her.

[3] 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).

[4] Shechem spoke to his father, Chamor, saying, "Take this girl for me as a wife."

[5] 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).

[6] Chamor, Shechem's father, went off to Ya'akov to speak with him.

[7] 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).

[8] Chamor spoke with them, saying, "My son Shechem's soul yearns for your daughter. Please give her to him for a wife. [9] (Your whole family can) marry with us: give your daughters to us, and take our daughters for yourselves. [10] Live with us! The land will be (free) before you. Settle (in it), do business in it and buy property in it."

[11] Shechem said to (Dinah's) father and to her brothers, "May I find favor in your eyes. Whatever you tell me I will give! [12] Impose upon me a large dowry and gifts and I'll give whatever you ask me. (Just) give me the girl for a wife."

[13] 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. [14] 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."

[15] "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."

אִם תִּהְיוּ כָּמֹנוּ לְהִמֹּל לָכֶם כָּל־זָכָר: טז וְנָתַנּוּ אֶת־בְּנֹתֵינוּ לָכֶם
וְאֶת־בְּנֹתֵיכֶם נִקַּח־לָנוּ וְיָשַׁבְנוּ אִתְּכֶם וְהָיִינוּ לְעַם אֶחָד:
יז וְאִם־לֹא תִשְׁמְעוּ אֵלֵינוּ לְהִמּוֹל וְלָקַחְנוּ אֶת־בִּתֵּנוּ וְהָלָכְנוּ:
יח וַיִּיטְבוּ דִבְרֵיהֶם בְּעֵינֵי חֲמוֹר וּבְעֵינֵי שְׁכֶם בֶּן־חֲמוֹר:
יט וְלֹא־אֵחַר הַנַּעַר לַעֲשׂוֹת הַדָּבָר כִּי חָפֵץ בְּבַת־יַעֲקֹב וְהוּא
נִכְבָּד מִכֹּל בֵּית אָבִיו: כ וַיָּבֹא חֲמוֹר וּשְׁכֶם בְּנוֹ אֶל־שַׁעַר עִירָם
וַיְדַבְּרוּ אֶל־אַנְשֵׁי עִירָם לֵאמֹר: כא הָאֲנָשִׁים הָאֵלֶּה שְׁלֵמִים
הֵם אִתָּנוּ וְיֵשְׁבוּ בָאָרֶץ וְיִסְחֲרוּ אֹתָהּ וְהָאָרֶץ הִנֵּה רַחַבַת־יָדַיִם
לִפְנֵיהֶם אֶת־בְּנֹתָם נִקַּח־לָנוּ לְנָשִׁים וְאֶת־בְּנֹתֵינוּ נִתֵּן לָהֶם:
כב אַךְ־בְּזֹאת יֵאֹתוּ לָנוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים לָשֶׁבֶת אִתָּנוּ לִהְיוֹת לְעַם
אֶחָד בְּהִמּוֹל לָנוּ כָּל־זָכָר כַּאֲשֶׁר הֵם נִמֹּלִים: כג מִקְנֵהֶם וְקִנְיָנָם
וְכָל־בְּהֶמְתָּם הֲלוֹא לָנוּ הֵם אַךְ נֵאוֹתָה לָהֶם וְיֵשְׁבוּ אִתָּנוּ:
כד וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶל־חֲמוֹר וְאֶל־שְׁכֶם בְּנוֹ כָּל־יֹצְאֵי שַׁעַר עִירוֹ
וַיִּמֹּלוּ כָּל־זָכָר כָּל־יֹצְאֵי שַׁעַר עִירוֹ: כה וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי
בִּהְיוֹתָם כְּאֲבִים וַיִּקְחוּ שְׁנֵי־בְנֵי־יַעֲקֹב שִׁמְעוֹן וְלֵוִי אֲחֵי דִינָה
אִישׁ חַרְבּוֹ וַיָּבֹאוּ עַל־הָעִיר בֶּטַח וַיַּהַרְגוּ כָּל־זָכָר: כו וְאֶת־

כְּוָתָנָא לְמִגְזַר לְכוֹן כָּל דְּכוּרָא: טז וְנִתֵּן יַת
בְּנָתָנָא לְכוֹן וְיַת בְּנָתֵיכוֹן נִסַּב לָנָא וְנֵיתֵיב
עִמְכוֹן וּנְהֵי לְעַמָּא חָד: יז וְאִם לָא תְקַבְּלוּן
מִנָּנָא לְמִגְזַר וּנְדַבַּר יַת בְּרַתָּנָא וְנֵיזֵיל:
יח וּשְׁפָרוּ פִּתְגָמֵיהוֹן בְּעֵינֵי חֲמוֹר וּבְעֵינֵי שְׁכֶם
בַּר חֲמוֹר: יט וְלָא אוֹחַר עוּלֵימָא לְמֶעְבַּד
פִּתְגָמָא אֲרֵי אִתְרְעִי בְּבַת יַעֲקֹב וְהוּא יַקִּיר
מִכֹּל בֵּית אֲבוּהִי: כ וַאֲתָא חֲמוֹר וּשְׁכֶם בְּרֵיהּ
לְתָרַע קִרְתְּהוֹן וּמַלִּילוּ עִם אֱנָשֵׁי קִרְתְּהוֹן
לְמֵימָר: כא גּוּבְרַיָּא דָּאִלֵּין שַׁלְמִין אִנּוּן עִמָּנָא
וְיֵתְבוּן בְּאַרְעָא וְיִתְּגְרוּן בָּהּ סְחוֹרְתָא וְאַרְעָא
הָא פְּתָיוּת יְדִין קֳדָמֵיהוֹן יַת בְּנָתְהוֹן נִסַּב
לָנָא לְנִשִּׁין וְיַת בְּנָתָנָא נִתֵּן לְהוֹן: כב בְּרַם
בְּדָא יִתְפְּסוּן לָנָא גְּבַרַיָּא לְמִתַּב עִמָּנָא לְמֶהֱוֵי
לְעַמָּא חָד בְּמִגְזַר לָנָא כָּל דְּכוּרָא כְּמָא דִּי
אִנּוּן גְּזִירִין: כג גֵּיתֵיהוֹן וְקִנְיָנְהוֹן וְכָל
בְּעִירְהוֹן הֲלָא דִילָנָא אִנּוּן בְּרַם נִתְפֻּס לְהוֹן
וְיֵתְבוּן עִמָּנָא: כד וְקַבִּילוּ מִן חֲמוֹר וּמִן שְׁכֶם
בְּרֵיהּ כָּל נָפְקֵי תְּרַע קִרְתֵּיהּ וּגְזָרוּ כָּל דְּכוּרָא
כָּל נָפְקֵי תְּרַע קִרְתֵּיהּ: כה וַהֲוָה בְּיוֹמָא
תְּלִיתָאָה כַּד תְּקִיפוּ עֲלֵיהוֹן כֵּיבֵיהוֹן וּנְסִיבוּ
תְּרֵין בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב שִׁמְעוֹן וְלֵוִי אֲחֵי דִינָה גְּבַר
חַרְבֵּיהּ וְעָלוּ עַל קִרְתָּא דְּיָתְבָא לְרָחָצָן
וּקְטָלוּ כָּל דְּכוּרָא: כו וְיַת חֲמוֹר וְיַת שְׁכֶם

לד״י

ויאותו[1] (ככתיב בכתיב): **להמול**. לכאורה נמול, היינו לשון לפעול, אלא לשון להפעיל: (טז) **ונתנו**. וי"ן שניה מוסגרת, לפי שהיא משמשת במקום שתי וויי"ן, ונתנו: **ואת בנתיכם נקח לנו**. אתה מוצא בתנחי שאמר חמור ליעקב ובתשובת בני יעקב לחמור, שתלו כתשובות בבני יעקב, ליקח בנות שכם את אחיהן לכם, ובנותיכם יתנו לכם לפי דעתם, דכתיב ונתנו את בנותינו, לפי דעתנו, ואת בנותיכם נקח לנו, ככל אשר נחפוץ, 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

1 מלכים־ב יב, ט 2 ב״ר פ, י

circumcised. [16] Then we will give you our daughters, and we will take your daughters for ourselves. We will live with you and become one people."

[17] *"But if you do not listen to us, to be circumcised, we will take our daughter and go."*

[18] *Chamor and Shechem, Chamor's son, were pleased with their words. [19] 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.*

[20] *Chamor and his son Shechem came to the gate of their city, and they spoke to the people of their city, saying, [21] "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."*

[22] *"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."*

[23] *"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."*

[24] *All the residents of his city listened to Chamor and his son Shechem, and every male that lived in his city became circumcised.*

[25] *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. 150*ff; 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)

חֲמוֹר וְאֶת־שְׁכֶם בְּנוֹ הָרְגוּ לְפִי־חָרֶב וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־דִּינָה מִבֵּית שְׁכֶם וַיֵּצֵאוּ: כז בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב בָּאוּ עַל־הַחֲלָלִים וַיָּבֹזּוּ הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר טִמְּאוּ אֲחוֹתָם: כח אֶת־צֹאנָם וְאֶת־בְּקָרָם וְאֶת־חֲמֹרֵיהֶם וְאֶת אֲשֶׁר־בָּעִיר וְאֶת־אֲשֶׁר בַּשָּׂדֶה לָקָחוּ: כט וְאֶת־כָּל־חֵילָם וְאֶת־כָּל־טַפָּם וְאֶת־נְשֵׁיהֶם שָׁבוּ וַיָּבֹזּוּ וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר בַּבָּיִת: ל וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־שִׁמְעוֹן וְאֶל־לֵוִי עֲכַרְתֶּם אֹתִי לְהַבְאִישֵׁנִי

בְּיֹשֵׁב הַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַפְּרִזִּי וַאֲנִי מְתֵי מִסְפָּר וְנֶאֶסְפוּ עָלַי וְהִכּוּנִי וְנִשְׁמַדְתִּי אֲנִי וּבֵיתִי: לא וַיֹּאמְרוּ הֲכְזוֹנָה יַעֲשֶׂה אֶת־אֲחוֹתֵנוּ:

רס"י

חמור[1]: **(כז) על החללים.** לפעמ׳ כתגלגל, וכן תרגם מונקלוס לחלפא קטוליה: **(כט) חילם.** ממונם, וכן עשה לי את כחיל הזה[2], ויפרעה עושה חיל[3], ועזרו לאחריס חילס[4]: **שבו.** לשון שביה, לפיכך נטעמו מלרע: **(ל) עברתם.** לשון מיס עכוריס[5], אין דעתי נוחה מהן, ומגדה, נעולה

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Why was Ya'akov angry with Shimon and Levi? (v. 30)**

RASHI: עֲכַרְתֶּם 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 Cana'anites 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 Cana'anites 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.]

1 ב"ר פ, י 2 דברים ח, יז 3 במדבר כד, יח 4 תהלים מט, יא 5 ברכות כה:

[26] They killed Chamor and his son Shechem with a sword. They took Dinah out of Shechem's house and left.

[27] Ya'akov's sons came (to strip) the corpses (of their possessions). They plundered the city that had defiled their sister: [28] They took their flocks, their cattle, their donkeys—whatever was in the city and whatever was in the field. [29] They captured and plundered all their wealth, all their infants, their wives and everything that was in the house.

[30] 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 Cana'anites 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

On 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* 25:11*ff*)—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).

בְּיֹשֵׁב הָאָרֶץ בַּכְּנַעֲנִי וּבַפְּרִזִּי וַאֲנִי מְתֵי מִסְפָּר וְנֶאֶסְפוּ עָלַי וְהִכּוּנִי וְנִשְׁמַדְתִּי אֲנִי וּבֵיתִי: לא וַיֹּאמְרוּ *הַכְזוֹנָה יֵעָשֶׂה אֶת־אֲחוֹתֵנוּ: פ לה א וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־יַעֲקֹב קוּם עֲלֵה בֵית־אֵל וְשֶׁב־שָׁם וַעֲשֵׂה־שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לָאֵל הַנִּרְאָה אֵלֶיךָ בְּבָרְחֲךָ מִפְּנֵי עֵשָׂו אָחִיךָ: ב וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ וְאֶל כָּל־אֲשֶׁר עִמּוֹ הָסִרוּ אֶת־אֱלֹהֵי הַנֵּכָר אֲשֶׁר בְּתֹכְכֶם וְהִטַּהֲרוּ וְהַחֲלִיפוּ שִׂמְלֹתֵיכֶם: ג וְנָקוּמָה וְנַעֲלֶה בֵּית־אֵל וְאֶעֱשֶׂה־שָּׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לָאֵל הָעֹנֶה אֹתִי בְּיוֹם צָרָתִי וַיְהִי עִמָּדִי בַּדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר הָלָכְתִּי: ד וַיִּתְּנוּ אֶל־יַעֲקֹב אֵת כָּל־אֱלֹהֵי הַנֵּכָר אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדָם וְאֶת־הַנְּזָמִים אֲשֶׁר בְּאָזְנֵיהֶם וַיִּטְמֹן אֹתָם יַעֲקֹב תַּחַת הָאֵלָה אֲשֶׁר עִם־שְׁכֶם: ה וַיִּסָּעוּ וַיְהִי | חִתַּת אֱלֹהִים עַל־הֶעָרִים אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבוֹתֵיהֶם וְלֹא רָדְפוּ אַחֲרֵי בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב: ו וַיָּבֹא יַעֲקֹב לוּזָה אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן הִוא בֵּית־אֵל הִוא וְכָל־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר־עִמּוֹ: ז וַיִּבֶן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ וַיִּקְרָא לַמָּקוֹם אֵל בֵּית־אֵל כִּי שָׁם נִגְלוּ אֵלָיו הָאֱלֹהִים בְּבָרְחוֹ מִפְּנֵי אָחִיו: ח וַתָּמָת דְּבֹרָה מֵינֶקֶת רִבְקָה וַתִּקָּבֵר מִתַּחַת לְבֵית־אֵל תַּחַת הָאַלּוֹן וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ אַלּוֹן בָּכוּת: פ ט וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶל־יַעֲקֹב עוֹד בְּבֹאוֹ מִפַּדַּן אֲרָם

הִמְנָן וַיִּתְכַּנְּשׁוּן עֲלַי וַיְמְחוּנַנִי וְאֶשְׁתֵּיצֵי אֲנָא וֶאֱנַשׁ בֵּיתִי: לא וַאֲמָרוּ הַכְנִפְקַת בָּרָא יַעֲבִיד יַת אֲחָתָנָא: א וַאֲמַר יְיָ לְיַעֲקֹב קוּם סַק לְבֵית אֵל וְתִיב תַּמָּן וַעֲבֵד תַּמָּן מַדְבְּחָא לַאלָהָא דְּאִתְגְּלִי לָךְ בְּמֵיעַרְקָךְ מִן קֳדָם עֵשָׂו אָחוּךְ: ב וַאֲמַר יַעֲקֹב לְאֶנַשׁ בֵּיתֵיהּ וּלְכָל דִּי עִמֵּיהּ אַעְדּוּ יַת טָעוֹת עַמְמַיָּא דִּי בֵינֵיכוֹן וְאִדַּכּוֹ וְשַׁנּוֹ כְּסוּתְכוֹן: ג וּנְקוּם וְנִסַּק לְבֵית אֵל וַאֲעֵבִיד תַּמָּן מַדְבְּחָא לֵאלָהָא דְּקַבֵּיל צְלוֹתִי בְּיוֹמָא דְּעַקְתִי וַהֲוָה מֵימְרֵיהּ בְּסַעֲדִי בְּאָרְחָא דִּי אָזַלִית: ד וְיָהֲבוּ לְיַעֲקֹב יַת כָּל טָעוֹת עַמְמַיָּא דִּי בִידֵיהוֹן וְיַת קָדָשַׁיָּא דִּי בְאוּדְנֵיהוֹן וְטַמַּר יַתְהוֹן יַעֲקֹב תְּחוֹת בּוּטְמָא דִּי עִם שְׁכֶם: ה וּנְטָלוּ וַהֲוַת דַּחֲלָא מִן קֳדָם יְיָ עַל עַמְמַיָּא דִּי בְּקִרְוֵי סַחֲרָנֵיהוֹן וְלָא רְדָפוּ בָּתַר בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב: ו וַאֲתָא יַעֲקֹב לְלוּז דִּי בְאַרְעָא דִּכְנַעַן הִיא בֵּית אֵל הוּא וְכָל עַמָּא דִּי עִמֵּיהּ: ז וּבְנָא תַּמָּן מַדְבְּחָא וּקְרָא לְאַתְרָא אֵל בֵּית אֵל אֲרֵי תַּמָּן אִתְגְּלִי לֵיהּ יְיָ בְּמֵעַרְקֵיהּ מִן קֳדָם אַחוּהִי: ח וּמִיתַת דְּבוֹרָה מֵנִקְתָּא דְּרִבְקָה וְאִתְקְבָרַת מִלְרַע לְבֵית אֵל בְּשִׁפּוֹלֵי מֵישְׁרָא וּקְרָא שְׁמֵיהּ מֵישַׁר בְּכִיתָא: ט וְאִתְגְּלִי יְיָ לְיַעֲקֹב עוֹד בְּמֵיתוֹהִי מִפַּדָּן אֲרָם וּבָרִיךְ יָתֵיהּ:

*יש גורסים ז׳ רבתי

רש״י

כיתה כחנית, ועכרתם חותכ[1]. מסורת היתה ביד כנעניים שיפלו ביד בני יעקב, ולא שהיו חומריס עד שאר תפרה ונחלת את הארץ, לפיכך היו שותקין: **מתי מספר**. מנפיש מועטיס: (לא) **הכזונה**. כפקר: **את אחותנו**. ית אחתנא: (א) **קום עלה**. לפי שאחרית בדרך[2], נעשתה וצא לך זאת מבתוך: (ג) **הנבר**. שיש בידכס משלל של שכס: **והטהרו**. מעבודת גלוליס: **והחליפו שמלותיכם**. שמא יש בידכס כסות של עבודת גלוליס: (ד) **האלה**. מין אילן סרק: **עם שכם**. אלא שכס: (ה) **חתת**. פחד: (ז) **אל בית אל**. לקב"ה בבית אל, גילוי שכינתו בבית אל. יש תיבה חסרה בי"ת כמשמעת בראשה, כמו הגה הוא בית מכיר בן עמיאל[3], כמו בבית מכיר, בית מדין[4], כמו בבית מדין: **נגלו אליו האלהים**. במקומות הרבה יש שם אלהות ומדות בלשון רבים, כמו אדני יוסף, אם בעליו עמו, ולא נאמר בעלו, וכן אלהות שהוא לשון שופט ומרות נזכר בלשון רבים, אבל אחד מכל שאר השמות לא תמצא בלשון רבים: (ח) **ותמת דבורה**. מה ענין דבורה לבית יעקב, אלא לפי שאמרה רבקה ליעקב ושלחתי ולקחתיך משם, שלחה דבורה אלו לפדן ארם לומר לו שמת, ומתה בדרך, מדברי רבי משה הדרשן למדתיה: **מתחת לבית אל**. הטיר יוצאת בהר, ונקברה ברגלי ההר: **תחת האלון**. בשפולי מישרא, שהיה מישור מלמעלה בשפוע ההר, והקבורה מלמטה, ומישור של בית אל היו קורין לו אלון. ואגדה[5], שתבשר שם בחבל שני, שהוגד לו על אמו שמתה. ואלון בלשון יווני (אבל) [אחר], ולפיכך (ולפי ש)הטעימו את יוסף מותה, שלא יקללו הבריות הכרם שיצא ממנו עשו, אף הכתוב לא פרסמה: (ט) **עוד**.

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

1 ב״ר פ, יב 2 תנחומא וישלח ח 3 שמואל־ב ט, ד 4 בראשית כד, כג 5 ב״ר פא, ה

only a few (men). They can gather against me and attack me, and then I and my household will be destroyed!"

31 *(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 *God 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."*

2 *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).* 3 *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."*

4 *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.*

5 *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.*

6 *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.* 7 *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.*

8 *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.*

9 *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*.

If 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. 150*ff.;* ibid. p. 403 *ff.)*

וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתוֹ: ט וַיֹּאמֶר־לוֹ אֱלֹהִים שִׁמְךָ יַעֲקֹב לֹא־יִקָּרֵא שִׁמְךָ
עוֹד יַעֲקֹב כִּי אִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל יִהְיֶה שְׁמֶךָ וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ
יִשְׂרָאֵל: י וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֱלֹהִים אֲנִי אֵל שַׁדָּי פְּרֵה וּרְבֵה גּוֹי
וּקְהַל גּוֹיִם יִהְיֶה מִמֶּךָּ וּמְלָכִים מֵחֲלָצֶיךָ יֵצֵאוּ: [ששי] יב וְאֶת־
הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְאַבְרָהָם וּלְיִצְחָק לְךָ אֶתְּנֶנָּה וּלְזַרְעֲךָ
אַחֲרֶיךָ אֶתֵּן אֶת־הָאָרֶץ: יג וַיַּעַל מֵעָלָיו אֱלֹהִים בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־
דִּבֶּר אִתּוֹ: יד וַיַּצֵּב יַעֲקֹב מַצֵּבָה בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר אִתּוֹ
מַצֶּבֶת אֶבֶן וַיַּסֵּךְ עָלֶיהָ נֶסֶךְ וַיִּצֹק עָלֶיהָ שָׁמֶן: טו וַיִּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב
אֶת־שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אִתּוֹ שָׁם אֱלֹהִים בֵּית־אֵל:
טז וַיִּסְעוּ מִבֵּית אֵל וַיְהִי־עוֹד כִּבְרַת־הָאָרֶץ לָבוֹא אֶפְרָתָה
וַתֵּלֶד רָחֵל וַתְּקַשׁ בְּלִדְתָּהּ: יז וַיְהִי בְּהַקְשֹׁתָהּ בְּלִדְתָּהּ וַתֹּאמֶר
לָהּ הַמְיַלֶּדֶת אַל־תִּירְאִי כִּי־גַם־זֶה לָךְ בֵּן: יח וַיְהִי בְּצֵאת
נַפְשָׁהּ כִּי מֵתָה וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ בֶּן־אוֹנִי וְאָבִיו קָרָא־לוֹ בִנְיָמִין:
יט וַתָּמָת רָחֵל וַתִּקָּבֵר בְּדֶרֶךְ אֶפְרָתָה הִוא בֵּית לָחֶם: כ וַיַּצֵּב
יַעֲקֹב מַצֵּבָה עַל־קְבֻרָתָהּ הִוא מַצֶּבֶת קְבֻרַת־רָחֵל עַד־הַיּוֹם:
כא וַיִּסַּע יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֵּט אָהֳלָה מֵהָלְאָה לְמִגְדַּל־עֵדֶר: כב וַיְהִי
בְּשָׁכֵן יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּאָרֶץ הַהִוא וַיֵּלֶךְ רְאוּבֵן וַיִּשְׁכַּב אֶת־בִּלְהָה
פִּילֶגֶשׁ אָבִיו וַיִּשְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל *פ וַיִּהְיוּ בְּנֵי־יַעֲקֹב שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר:

י וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ לָא שְׁמָךְ יַעֲקֹב לָא יִתְקְרֵי שְׁמָךְ
עוֹד יַעֲקֹב אֱלָהֵין יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהֵי שְׁמָךְ וּקְרָא יַת
שְׁמֵיהּ יִשְׂרָאֵל: יא וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ יְיָ אֲנָא אֵל שַׁדַּי
פּוּשׁ וּסְגִי עַם וְכֻנְשַׁת שִׁבְטִין יְהוֹן מִנָּךְ וּמַלְכִין
דְּשַׁלִּיטִין בְּעַמְמַיָּא מִנָּךְ יִפְּקוּן: יב וְיַת אַרְעָא
דִּי יְהָבִית לְאַבְרָהָם וּלְיִצְחָק לָךְ אֶתְּתִנִּינַהּ
וְלִבְנָיךְ בַּתְרָךְ אֶתֵּן יַת אַרְעָא: יג וְאִסְתַּלַּק
מֵעִלָּווֹהִי יְקָרָא דַיְיָ בְּאַתְרָא דִּי מַלֵּיל עִמֵּיהּ:
יד וַאֲקִים יַעֲקֹב קָמְתָא בְּאַתְרָא דִּי מַלֵּיל
עִמֵּיהּ קָמַת אַבְנָא וְנַסֵּךְ עֲלָהּ נִסּוּכִין וְאָרִיק
עֲלָהּ מִשְׁחָא: טו וּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב יַת שְׁמָא דְאַתְרָא
דִּי מַלֵּיל עִמֵּיהּ תַּמָּן יְיָ בֵּית אֵל: טז וּנְטָלוּ
מִבֵּית אֵל וַהֲוָה עוֹד כְּרוּב אַרְעָא לְמֵיעַל
לְאֶפְרָת וְיַלִּידַת רָחֵל וְקַשְׁיָאת בְּמַיְלָדָהּ:
יז וַהֲוָה בְּקַשְׁיוּתָהּ בְּמַיְלָדָהּ וַאֲמָרַת לָהּ חַיְתָא
לָא תִדְחֲלִין אֲרֵי אַף דֵּין לִיךְ בָּר: יח וַהֲוָה
בְּמִפַּק נַפְשָׁהּ אֲרֵי מִיתַת וּקְרַת שְׁמֵיהּ בַּר דְּוָי
וַאֲבוּהִי קְרָא לֵיהּ בִּנְיָמִין: יט וּמִיתַת רָחֵל
וְאִתְקְבָרַת בְּאוֹרַח אֶפְרָת הִיא בֵּית לָחֶם:
כ וַאֲקִים יַעֲקֹב קָמְתָא עַל קֻבּוּרְתָּהּ הִיא קָמַת
קֻבּוּרְתָּא דְרָחֵל עַד יוֹמָא דֵין: כא וּנְטַל
יִשְׂרָאֵל וּפַרְסֵיהּ לְמַשְׁכְּנֵיהּ מֵהָלְאָה לְמִגְדְּלָא
דְעֵדֶר: כב וַהֲוָה כַּד שְׁרָא יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאַרְעָא
הַהִיא וַאֲזַל רְאוּבֵן וּשְׁכִיב עִם בִּלְהָה לְחֵינָתָא
דַאֲבוּהִי וּשְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל וַהֲווֹ בְנֵי יַעֲקֹב תְּרֵי

*פסקא באמצע פסוק

לט"י

פעם שני במקום הזה, אחד בלכתו ואחד בשובו: **ויברך אתו**. ברכת אבלים[1]:
(י) **לא יקרא שמך עוד יעקב**. לשון אדם הבא במארב ועקבה, אלא לשון
שר וגדיד: (יא) **אני אל שדי**. שאני כדאי לברך, שהברכות שלי: **פרה ורבה**.
על שם שעדיין לא נולד בנימין, ואף על פי שכבר נתעברה ממנו: **גוי**. בנימין:
גויים. מנשה ואפרים[2], שעתידים ללמת מיוסף, והם במנין השבטים:
ומלכים. שאול ואיש בשת[3], שהיו משבט בנימין שעדיין לא נולד (ופסוק זה
דרשו מבנך כשהלוך איש בושתו, ואף השבטים דרשוהו וקרבו בנימין, דכתיב
איש ממנו לא יתן את אחיו לבנימין למשא[4], וחזרו ואמרו, אלמלא היה עולה
מן השבטים, לא היה הקב"ה אומר ליעקב ומלכים מחלציך יצאו): **גוי וקהל
גויים**. (שגויס) עתידים הניו ליעשות כמיני הגויים, שהם ע' לאומות, וכן כל
הסנהדרין שבעים. דבר אחר, שעתידים הניו להקריב בשעת חיסור הבמות
כגויס בימי חלקיהו (דברי"ב יח): (יג) **במקום אשר דבר אתו**. שיני יודע,
מה מלמדנו: (טז) **כברת הארץ**. מנחס פירש לשון כביר, רבוי מהלך רב.
ואגדה[5], בזמן שהארץ חגולה ומוקפת כהברה, שהניר מצוי, והמסתיו עבר,
והשדך עדיין לא נח. ואין זה פשוטו של מקרא, שהרי בנעמן מצינו, וילך
מאתו כברת ארץ[6], ואומר שני שהוא שם מדת קרקע, כמו מהלך פרסה או
יותר, כמו שאתה אומר למד כרס, חלקת שדה, כך במהלך אדם נותן שם מדה
(קרקע כמו מהלך מיל) כברת ארץ: (יז) **כי גם זה**. נוסף לך על יוסף.
ורבותינו דרשו, שם כל שבט נולדה תאומה, ועם בנימין נולדה תאומה
יתירה: (יח) **בן אוני**. בן לערי: **בנימין**. נרשה בעיני, לפי שהוא לבדו נולד
בארץ כנען, שהיא בנגב כשאדם בא מארם נהריים, כמו שנאמר בנגב בארץ
כנען, כלומר ונסוע הנגבה: **בנימין**. בן ימין, לשון לפון ויימין אתה ברחתס[7],
לפיכך הוא מלמ. (דבר אחר בניימין, בן ימים, שנולד לעת זקנתו, ונכתב בניי"ן
כמו לקץ הימין[8]): (כב) **בשכן ישראל בארץ ההיא**. עד שלא בא לחברון
אצל יצחק, לרעותו כל אלה: **וישכב**. מתוך שנלבל משכבו, מעלה עליו הכתוב
כאילו שכבה. ולמה נלבל וחבל יוסף, שכשמתה רחל, נטל יעקב מטתו שהיתה
נתונה תדיר בחלל רחל, ונתן בחלל אהליס, ונתנה בחלל בלהה, בא ראובן
ותבע עלבון אמו, אמר, אם בחות אמי היתה ערה לאמי, שפחת בחות אמי
תהא ערה לאמי, לכך בלבל[9]: **ויהיו בני יעקב שנים עשר**. מתחיל לענין
ראשון, משנולד בניימין נשלמה המטה, ומעתה ראוים להמנות, ומנאן.

1 ב"ר פא, ה 2 שם פד, ד 3 שם 4 שופטים כא, א 5 ב"ר פב, ז 6 מלכים־ב ה, יט 7 תהלים פט, יג 8 דניאל יב, יג 9 שבת נה:

blessed him. [10] 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.

[11] 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

[12] "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."

[13] God('s glory) ascended from him, in the place where He had spoken with him. [14] 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.

[15] Ya'akov named the place where God had spoken with him Beis-Ail.

BINYAMIN IS BORN / ROCHEL PASSES AWAY

35:16 *They journeyed from Beis-Ail, and there was still considerable distance to come to Efras (when) Rochel went into labor. Her labor was difficult.*

[17] 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."

[18] 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 Cana'an).

[19] Rochel died. She was buried on the road to Efras, which is Beis-Lechem. [20] 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 *Yisra'el journeyed, and he pitched his tent at some distance past the Tower of Aider.*

[22] 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. 795*ff*.)

"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)

כג בְּנֵי לֵאָה בְּכֹר יַעֲקֹב רְאוּבֵן וְשִׁמְעוֹן וְלֵוִי וִיהוּדָה וְיִשָּׂשכָר
וּזְבֻלוּן: כד בְּנֵי רָחֵל יוֹסֵף וּבִנְיָמִן: כה וּבְנֵי בִלְהָה שִׁפְחַת רָחֵל דָּן
וְנַפְתָּלִי: כו וּבְנֵי זִלְפָּה שִׁפְחַת לֵאָה גָּד וְאָשֵׁר אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב
אֲשֶׁר יֻלַּד־לוֹ בְּפַדַּן אָרָם: כז וַיָּבֹא יַעֲקֹב אֶל־יִצְחָק אָבִיו מַמְרֵא
קִרְיַת הָאַרְבַּע הִוא חֶבְרוֹן אֲשֶׁר־גָּר־שָׁם אַבְרָהָם וְיִצְחָק:
כח וַיִּהְיוּ יְמֵי יִצְחָק מְאַת שָׁנָה וּשְׁמֹנִים שָׁנָה: כט וַיִּגְוַע יִצְחָק
וַיָּמָת וַיֵּאָסֶף אֶל־עַמָּיו זָקֵן וּשְׂבַע יָמִים וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֹתוֹ עֵשָׂו
וְיַעֲקֹב בָּנָיו: פ לו א וְאֵלֶּה תֹּלְדוֹת עֵשָׂו הוּא אֱדוֹם: ב עֵשָׂו
לָקַח אֶת־נָשָׁיו מִבְּנוֹת כְּנָעַן אֶת־עָדָה בַּת־אֵילוֹן הַחִתִּי
וְאֶת־אָהֳלִיבָמָה בַּת־עֲנָה בַּת־צִבְעוֹן הַחִוִּי: ג וְאֶת־בָּשְׂמַת
בַּת־יִשְׁמָעֵאל אֲחוֹת נְבָיוֹת: ד וַתֵּלֶד עָדָה לְעֵשָׂו אֶת־אֱלִיפָז
וּבָשְׂמַת יָלְדָה אֶת־רְעוּאֵל: ה וְאָהֳלִיבָמָה יָלְדָה אֶת־יעיש [ק׳ יְעוּשׁ]

כג בְּנֵי לֵאָה בְּכוֹר יַעֲקֹב רְאוּבֵן וְשִׁמְעוֹן וְלֵוִי וִיהוּדָה וְיִשָּׂשכָר
וּזְבוּלֻן: כד בְּנֵי רָחֵל יוֹסֵף וּבִנְיָמִן: כה וּבְנֵי בִלְהָה שִׁפְחַת רָחֵל דָּן
וְנַפְתָּלִי: כו וּבְנֵי זִלְפָּה שִׁפְחַת לֵאָה גָּד וְאָשֵׁר אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב
אֲשֶׁר יֻלַּד־לוֹ בְּפַדַּן אֲרָם: כז וַיָּבֹא יַעֲקֹב אֶל־יִצְחָק אָבִיו מַמְרֵא
קִרְיַת הָאַרְבַּע הִוא חֶבְרוֹן אֲשֶׁר־גָּר־שָׁם אַבְרָהָם וְיִצְחָק:
כח וַיִּהְיוּ יְמֵי יִצְחָק מְאַת שָׁנָה וּשְׁמֹנִים שָׁנָה: כט וַיִּגְוַע יִצְחָק
וַיָּמָת וַיֵּאָסֶף אֶל־עַמָּיו זָקֵן וּשְׂבַע יָמִים וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֹתוֹ עֵשָׂו
וְיַעֲקֹב בָּנָיו: פ לו א וְאֵלֶּה תֹּלְדוֹת עֵשָׂו הוּא אֱדוֹם: ב עֵשָׂו
לָקַח אֶת־נָשָׁיו מִבְּנוֹת כְּנַעַן אֶת־עָדָה בַּת־אֵילוֹן הַחִתִּי
וְאֶת־אָהֳלִיבָמָה בַּת־עֲנָה בַּת־צִבְעוֹן הַחִוִּי: ג וְאֶת־בָּשְׂמַת
בַּת־יִשְׁמָעֵאל אֲחוֹת נְבָיוֹת: ד וַתֵּלֶד עָדָה לְעֵשָׂו אֶת־אֱלִיפַז
וּבָשְׂמַת יָלְדָה אֶת־רְעוּאֵל: ה וְאָהֳלִיבָמָה יָלְדָה אֶת־יעוש [ק׳ יְעוּשׁ]

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 גד ואשר אלה בני יעקב אשר ילד־לו בפדן ארם: כז ויבא יעקב אל־יצחק אביו ממרא קריית הארבע הוא חברון אשר־גר־שם אברהם ויצחק: כח ויהיו ימי יצחק מאת שנה ושמנים שנה: כט ויגוע יצחק וימת ויאסף אל־עמיו זקן ושבע ימים ויקברו אתו עשו ויעקב בניו: פ לו א ואלה תולדות 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־אליפז ובשמת ילדה את־רעואל: ה ואהליבמה ילדה את־יעיש

רס״י

ורבותינו דרשו, ללמדנו בא, שכולן שוין וכולן נדיקים, שלא חטא רחובן: (כג) **בכור יעקב.** אפילו בשעת הקלקלה קראו בכור: **בכור יעקב.** בכור לגחלה, בכור לעבודה בכור למנין, ולא נתנה בכורה ליוסף אלא לענין השבטים, שנאמר לשני שבטים: (כז) **ממרא.** שם המיסור: **קריית הארבע.** שם העיר. ממרא קריית הארבע, אינו מיסור של קריית ארבע. ואם תאמר היכן לו לכתוב ממרא הקריית ארבע, כן דרך המקרא בכל דבר שאמו כפול, כגון זה, וכגון בית לחם יהודה עזר, בית אל, שם הוגלך לכטיל בן כ״ח, נותנה ברחם התיבה השניה, בית הלחמי[1], בעפרת בני העזרי[2], נגה חיאל בית המלוי[3]: (כט) **ויגוע יצחק.** אין מוקדם ומאוחר בתורה, מכירתו של יוסף קדמה למיתתו של יצחק י״ב שנה, שהרי כשנולד יעקב היה יצחק בן ס׳ שנה, שנאמר ויצחק בן ששים שנה וגו׳, ויצחק מת בשנת ק״ך ליעקב, שם תולדת ששים מק״פ שנה, נשארו ק״כ, ויוסף נמכר בן י״ז שנה, ואותה שנה שנת מאה ושמונה ליעקב, הילד, בן ששים ושלש נתברך, ותרגע עשרה שנה נשתן בצית עבר, הרי שבעים ושבע, ותרגע עשרה עבד בשנה, ונשוף תרגע עשרה נולד יוסף, שנאמר ויהי כאשר ילדה רחל את יוסף וגו׳, הרי תשעים ואחת, וי״ז עד שלא נמכר יוסף, הרי מאה ושמונה. (עוד מפורש מן המקרא, משנמכר יוסף עד שבא יעקב מלרימה כ״ג שנה, שנאמר ויוסף בן שלשים שנה וגו׳, וז׳ שניס שובע ושנתיס רעב, הרי כ״ג, וכתיב ימי שני מגורי שלשים ומאת שנה, נמלא יעקב במכירתו ק״ח): (ג) **עדה בת אילון.** היא בשמת בת אילון, ונקראת בשמת על שם שהיתה מקטרת בשמיס לעבודת אלילים: **אהליבמה.** היא יהודית, והוא כינה שמה יהודית, לומר, שהיא כופרת בעבודת אלילים כדי להטעות את אביו: **בת ענה בת צבעון.** אף בת ענה לא בת לבעון, ענה בנו של לבעון, שנאמר ואלה בני לבעון ואיה וענה, מלמד שבא לבעון על כלתו אשת ענה, ויצאת אהליבמה מבין שניהם, והודיעך הכתוב שכולן בני ממזרות היו: (ג) **בשמת בת ישמעאל.** ולהלן קורא לה מחלת, מליו בחגדת מדרש ספר שמואל[4], ג׳ מוחלין להן עוונותיהם, גר שנתגייר, והטולה לגדולה, והנושא אשה, ולמד הטעם מכאן, לכך נקראת מחלת, שמחלו עוונותיה: **אחות נביות.** על שם שהוא הסיאה לו משמת ישמעאל, נקראת על שמו: (ה) **ואהליבמה ילדה וגו׳.** קרא זה ממזר היה, ובן אליפז היה, שבא על אשת אביו אל, אהליבמה אשת עשו, שהרי הוא מנוי

רס״י

ורבותינו דרשו, ללמדנו בא, שכולן שוין וכולן נדיקים, שלא חטא רחובן: (כג) **בכור יעקב.** אפילו בשעת הקלקלה קראו בכור: **בכור יעקב.** בכור לגחלה, בכור לעבודה בכור למנין, ולא נתנה בכורה ליוסף אלא לענין השבטים, שנאמר לשני שבטים: (כז) **ממרא.** שם המיסור: **קריית הארבע.** שם העיר. ממרא קריית הארבע, אינו מיסור של קריית ארבע. ואם תאמר היכן לו לכתוב ממרא הקריית ארבע, כן דרך המקרא בכל דבר שאמו כפול, כגון זה, וכגון בית לחם יהודה עזר, בית אל, שם הוגלך לכטיל בן כ״ח, נותנה ברחם התיבה השניה, בית הלחמי[1], בעפרת בני העזרי[2], נגה חיאל בית המלוי[3]: (כט) **ויגוע יצחק.** אין מוקדם ומאוחר בתורה, מכירתו של יוסף קדמה למיתתו של יצחק י״ב שנה, שהרי כשנולד יעקב היה יצחק בן ס׳ שנה, שנאמר ויצחק בן ששים שנה וגו׳, ויצחק מת בשנת ק״ך ליעקב, שם תולדת ששים מק״פ שנה, נשארו ק״כ, ויוסף נמכר בן י״ז שנה, ואותה שנה שנת מאה ושמונה ליעקב, הילד, בן ששים ושלש נתברך, ותרגע עשרה שנה נשתן בצית עבר, הרי שבעים ושבע, ותרגע עשרה עבד בשנה, ונשוף תרגע עשרה נולד 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 Rochel 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].

1 שמואל־א טז, א 2 שופטים ו, כד 3 מלכים־א טז, ד 4 פי״ז

Ya'akov's Descendants

35:22 (cont.) *Ya'akov now had twelve sons (after Binyamin's birth):*
23 *Leah's sons: Reu'vain—Ya'akov's firstborn—Shimon, Levi, Yehudah, Yissachar, and Zevulun.*
24 *Rochel's sons: Yosef and Binyamin.*
25 *Rochel's maid Bilhah's sons: Dan and Naftali.*
26 *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 *Ya'akov came to his father Yitzchak, at (the plain of) Mamre in Kiryas-Arba, which is Chevron, where Avraham and Yitzchak lived.*
28 *Yitzchak lived a total of one hundred and eighty years.* 29 *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 *These are the descendants of Eisav, who is (also called) Edom:*
2 *Eisav took his wives from the Cana'anite girls:*
Adah (also known as Basmas) daughter of Ailon the Chitite;
Ahalivamah (also known as Yehudis), daughter of Anah and daughter of Tzivon the Chivite;
3 *and Basmas (also known as Machalas), sister of Nevayos, daughter of Yishma'el,*
4 *Adah gave birth to Elifaz for Eisav, and Basmas gave birth to Re'uel.* 5 *Ahalivamah 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)

וְאֶת־יַעְלָם וְאֶת־קֹרַח אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי עֵשָׂו אֲשֶׁר יֻלְּדוּ־לוֹ
בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: ו וַיִּקַּח עֵשָׂו אֶת־נָשָׁיו וְאֶת־בָּנָיו וְאֶת־בְּנֹתָיו
וְאֶת־כָּל־נַפְשׁוֹת בֵּיתוֹ וְאֶת־מִקְנֵהוּ וְאֶת־כָּל־בְּהֶמְתּוֹ וְאֵת
כָּל־קִנְיָנוֹ אֲשֶׁר רָכַשׁ בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־אֶרֶץ מִפְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב
אָחִיו: ז כִּי־הָיָה רְכוּשָׁם רָב מִשֶּׁבֶת יַחְדָּו וְלֹא יָכְלָה אֶרֶץ
מְגוּרֵיהֶם לָשֵׂאת אֹתָם מִפְּנֵי מִקְנֵיהֶם: ח וַיֵּשֶׁב עֵשָׂו בְּהַר שֵׂעִיר
עֵשָׂו הוּא אֱדוֹם: ט וְאֵלֶּה תֹּלְדוֹת עֵשָׂו אֲבִי אֱדוֹם בְּהַר שֵׂעִיר:
י אֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי־עֵשָׂו אֱלִיפַז בֶּן־עָדָה אֵשֶׁת עֵשָׂו רְעוּאֵל
בֶּן־בָּשְׂמַת אֵשֶׁת עֵשָׂו: יא וַיִּהְיוּ בְּנֵי אֱלִיפָז תֵּימָן אוֹמָר צְפוֹ
וְגַעְתָּם וּקְנַז: יב וְתִמְנַע | הָיְתָה פִילֶגֶשׁ לֶאֱלִיפַז בֶּן־עֵשָׂו וַתֵּלֶד
לֶאֱלִיפַז אֶת־עֲמָלֵק אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי עָדָה אֵשֶׁת עֵשָׂו: יג וְאֵלֶּה בְּנֵי
רְעוּאֵל נַחַת וָזֶרַח שַׁמָּה וּמִזָּה אֵלֶּה הָיוּ בְּנֵי בָּשְׂמַת אֵשֶׁת
עֵשָׂו: יד וְאֵלֶּה הָיוּ בְּנֵי אָהֳלִיבָמָה בַת־עֲנָה בַּת־צִבְעוֹן אֵשֶׁת
עֵשָׂו וַתֵּלֶד לְעֵשָׂו אֶת־יעיש [ק' יְעוּשׁ] וְאֶת־יַעְלָם וְאֶת־קֹרַח:
טו אֵלֶּה אַלּוּפֵי בְנֵי־עֵשָׂו בְּנֵי אֱלִיפַז בְּכוֹר עֵשָׂו אַלּוּף תֵּימָן
אַלּוּף אוֹמָר אַלּוּף צְפוֹ אַלּוּף קְנַז: טז אַלּוּף־קֹרַח אַלּוּף גַּעְתָּם
אַלּוּף עֲמָלֵק אֵלֶּה אַלּוּפֵי אֱלִיפַז בְּאֶרֶץ אֱדוֹם אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי עָדָה:
יז וְאֵלֶּה בְּנֵי רְעוּאֵל בֶּן־עֵשָׂו אַלּוּף נַחַת אַלּוּף זֶרַח אַלּוּף שַׁמָּה
אַלּוּף מִזָּה אֵלֶּה אַלּוּפֵי רְעוּאֵל בְּאֶרֶץ אֱדוֹם אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי בָּשְׂמַת

יַעְלָם וְיֵת קֹרַח אִלֵּין בְּנֵי עֵשָׂו דִּי אִתְיְלִידוּ
לֵיהּ בְּאַרְעָא דִכְנָעַן: ו וּדְבַר עֵשָׂו יַת נְשׁוֹהִי
וְיַת בְּנוֹהִי וְיַת בְּנָתֵיהּ וְיַת כָּל נַפְשַׁת בֵּיתֵיהּ
וְיַת גֵּיתוֹהִי וְיַת כָּל בְּעִירֵיהּ וְיַת כָּל קִנְיָנֵיהּ דִּי
קְנָא בְּאַרְעָא דִכְנָעַן וַאֲזַל לְאַרְעָא אֲחָרֵי מִן
קֳדָם יַעֲקֹב אֲחוּהִי: ז אֲרֵי הֲוָה קִנְיָנְהוֹן סַגִּי
מִלְמִתַּב כַּחֲדָא וְלָא יְכִילַת אַרַע תּוֹתָבוּתְהוֹן
לְסוֹבָרָא יַתְהוֹן מִן קֳדָם גֵּיתֵיהוֹן: ח וְיתֵיב
עֵשָׂו בְּטוּרָא דְשֵׂעִיר עֵשָׂו הוּא אֱדוֹם: ט וְאִלֵּין
תּוֹלְדַת עֵשָׂו אֲבוּהוֹן דֶּאֱדוֹמָאֵי בְּטוּרָא
דְשֵׂעִיר: י אִלֵּין שְׁמָהַת בְּנֵי עֵשָׂו אֱלִיפַז בַּר
עָדָה אִתַּת עֵשָׂו רְעוּאֵל בַּר בָּשְׂמַת אִתַּת
עֵשָׂו: יא וַהֲווֹ בְּנֵי אֱלִיפַז תֵּימָן אוֹמָר צְפוֹ
וְגַעְתָּם וּקְנַז: יב וְתִמְנַע הֲוַת לְחֵינָתָא לֶאֱלִיפַז
בַּר עֵשָׂו וְיָלִידַת לֶאֱלִיפַז יַת עֲמָלֵק אִלֵּין בְּנֵי
עָדָה אִתַּת עֵשָׂו: יג וְאִלֵּין בְּנֵי רְעוּאֵל נַחַת
וְזֶרַח שַׁמָּה וּמִזָּה אִלֵּין הֲווֹ בְּנֵי בָּשְׂמַת אִתַּת
עֵשָׂו: יד וְאִלֵּין הֲווֹ בְּנֵי אָהֳלִיבָמָה בַת־עֲנָה בַּת צִבְעוֹן אִתַּת עֵשָׂו וְיָלִידַת לְעֵשָׂו יַת יְעוּשׁ
וְיַת יַעְלָם וְיַת קֹרַח: טו אִלֵּין רַבְרְבֵי בְנֵי עֵשָׂו
בְּנֵי אֱלִיפַז בּוּכְרָא דְעֵשָׂו רַבָּא תֵּימָן רַבָּא
אוֹמָר רַבָּא צְפוֹ רַבָּא קְנַז: טו רַבָּא קֹרַח רַבָּא
גַּעְתָּם רַבָּא עֲמָלֵק אִלֵּין רַבְרְבֵי אֱלִיפַז
בְּאַרְעָא דֶאֱדוֹם אִלֵּין בְּנֵי עָדָה: יז וְאִלֵּין בְּנֵי
רְעוּאֵל בַּר עֵשָׂו רַבָּא נַחַת רַבָּא זֶרַח רַבָּא
שַׁמָּה רַבָּא מִזָּה אִלֵּין רַבְרְבֵי רְעוּאֵל בְּאַרְעָא
דֶאֱדוֹם אִלֵּין בְּנֵי בָּשְׂמַת אִתַּת עֵשָׂו:

רס"י

עם אלופי אליפז בסוף הענין[1]: (ו) **וילך אל ארץ**. לגור בחסר ימלא: (ז) **ולא יכלה ארץ מגוריהם**. להספיק מרעה לבהמות שלהם. ומדרש אגדה[2] מפני יעקב אחיו, מפני שטר חוב של גזירת כי גר יהיה זרעך, כמוטל על זרעו של יצחק, אמר, אלך לי מכאן, אין לי חלק לא במתנה שנתנה לו בארץ כנען, ולא בפרעון השטר, ומפני הכושר שמכר בכורתו: (ט) **ואלה**. התולדות שהולידו בניו עכשיו משהלך לשעיר: (יב) **ותמנע היתה פילגש**. להודיע גדולתו של אברהם כמה היו תאבים לידבק בזרעו, תמנע זו בת אלופים היתה, שנאמר ואחות לוטן תמנע, ולוטן מאלופי יושבי שעיר היה, מן החוריס שיצאו מהם לפנים, אמרה, חיני זוכה להשפח לך, כלומי ואהיה פילגש. ודבדני היתה מונה אותה בבניו של אליפז, מלמד שבא על אשתו של שעיר וילדה תמנע מביניהם, וכשגדלה נעשית פילגשו, וזהו ואחות לוטן תמנע, ולא מנאה עם בני שעיר, שהיתה אחותו מן האם ולא מן האב: (טו) **אלה אלופי בני עשו**.

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.

1 ב"ר פב, יב 2 שם יג

6 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, 7 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). 8 So Eisav settled in Mount Se'ir. Eisav is (also known as) Edom.

9 These are the descendants of Eisav, the father of the Edom(ites), on Mount Se'ir:

10 These are the names of Eisav's sons: Elifaz, son of Eisav's wife Adah, Re'uel, son of Eisav's wife Basmas. 11 The children of Elifaz were Taiman, Omar, Tzefo, Gatam, and Kenaz. 12 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.

13 These are the children of Re'uel: Nachas, Zerach, Shamah, and Mizah. They are the children of Basmas, the wife of Eisav.

14 These are the children of Ahalivamah, daughter of Anah and daughter of Tzivon, Eisav's wife: She gave birth to Ye'ush, Yalam, and Korach for Eisav.

15 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), 16 (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!

אֲשֶׁת עֵשָׂו: יח וְאֵלֶּה בְּנֵי אָהֳלִיבָמָה אֵשֶׁת עֵשָׂו אַלּוּף יְעוּשׁ
אַלּוּף יַעְלָם אַלּוּף קֹרַח אֵלֶּה אַלּוּפֵי אָהֳלִיבָמָה בַּת־עֲנָה אֵשֶׁת
עֵשָׂו: יט אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי־עֵשָׂו וְאֵלֶּה אַלּוּפֵיהֶם הוּא אֱדוֹם: ס
[שביעי] כ אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי־שֵׂעִיר הַחֹרִי יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ לוֹטָן וְשׁוֹבָל
וְצִבְעוֹן וַעֲנָה: כא וְדִישׁוֹן וְאֵצֶר וְדִישָׁן אֵלֶּה אַלּוּפֵי הַחֹרִי בְּנֵי
שֵׂעִיר בְּאֶרֶץ אֱדוֹם: כב וַיִּהְיוּ בְנֵי־לוֹטָן חֹרִי וְהֵימָם וַאֲחוֹת לוֹטָן
תִּמְנָע: כג וְאֵלֶּה בְּנֵי שׁוֹבָל עַלְוָן וּמָנַחַת וְעֵיבָל שְׁפוֹ וְאוֹנָם:
כד וְאֵלֶּה בְּנֵי־צִבְעוֹן וְאַיָּה וַעֲנָה הוּא עֲנָה אֲשֶׁר מָצָא אֶת־
הַיֵּמִם בַּמִּדְבָּר בְּרָעֹתָו אֶת־הַחֲמֹרִים לְצִבְעוֹן אָבִיו: כה וְאֵלֶּה
בְּנֵי־עֲנָה דִּישׁוֹן וְאָהֳלִיבָמָה בַּת־עֲנָה: כו וְאֵלֶּה בְּנֵי דִישָׁן חֶמְדָּן
וְאֶשְׁבָּן וְיִתְרָן וּכְרָן: כז אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי־אֵצֶר בִּלְהָן וְזַעֲוָן וַעֲקָן:
כח אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי־דִישָׁן עוּץ וַאֲרָן: כט אֵלֶּה אַלּוּפֵי הַחֹרִי אַלּוּף לוֹטָן
אַלּוּף שׁוֹבָל אַלּוּף צִבְעוֹן אַלּוּף עֲנָה: ל אַלּוּף דִּישׁוֹן אַלּוּף אֵצֶר
אַלּוּף דִּישָׁן אֵלֶּה אַלּוּפֵי הַחֹרִי לְאַלֻּפֵיהֶם בְּאֶרֶץ שֵׂעִיר: פ
לא וְאֵלֶּה הַמְּלָכִים אֲשֶׁר מָלְכוּ בְּאֶרֶץ אֱדוֹם לִפְנֵי מְלָךְ־מֶלֶךְ
לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: לב וַיִּמְלֹךְ בֶּאֱדוֹם בֶּלַע בֶּן־בְּעוֹר וְשֵׁם עִירֹו

יח וְאֵלֶּה בְּנֵי אָהֳלִיבָמָה אִתַּת עֵשָׂו רַבָּא יְעוּשׁ
רַבָּא יַעְלָם רַבָּא קֹרַח אִלֵּין רַבְרְבֵי אָהֳלִיבָמָה
בַּת עֲנָה אִתַּת עֵשָׂו: יט אִלֵּין בְּנֵי עֵשָׂו וְאִלֵּין
רַבְרְבָנֵיהוֹן הוּא אֱדוֹם: כ אִלֵּין בְּנֵי שֵׂעִיר
חוֹרָאָה יָתְבֵי אַרְעָא לוֹטָן וְשׁוֹבָל וְצִבְעוֹן
וַעֲנָה: כא וְדִישׁוֹן וְאֵצֶר וְדִישָׁן אִלֵּין רַבְרְבֵי
חוֹרָאֵי בְּנֵי שֵׂעִיר בְּאַרְעָא דֶּאֱדוֹם: כב וַהֲווֹ בְּנֵי
לוֹטָן חוֹרִי וְהֵימָם וַאֲחָתֵיהּ דִּלוֹטָן תִּמְנָע:
כג וְאִלֵּין בְּנֵי שׁוֹבָל עַלְוָן וּמָנַחַת וְעֵיבָל שְׁפוֹ
וְאוֹנָם: כד וְאִלֵּין בְּנֵי צִבְעוֹן וְאַיָּה וַעֲנָה הוּא
עֲנָה דְּי אַשְׁכַּח יָת גִּבָּרַיָּא בְּמַדְבְּרָא כַּד הֲוָה
רָעֵי יָת חֲמָרַיָּא לְצִבְעוֹן אֲבוּהִי: כה וְאִלֵּין בְּנֵי
עֲנָה דִּישׁוֹן וְאָהֳלִיבָמָה בַּת עֲנָה: כו וְאִלֵּין בְּנֵי
דִישָׁן חֶמְדָּן וְאֶשְׁבָּן וְיִתְרָן וּכְרָן: כז אִלֵּין בְּנֵי
אֵצֶר בִּלְהָן וְזַעֲוָן וַעֲקָן: כח אִלֵּין בְּנֵי דִישָׁן עוּץ
וַאֲרָן: כט אִלֵּין רַבְרְבֵי חוֹרָאֵי רַבָּא לוֹטָן רַבָּא
שׁוֹבָל רַבָּא צִבְעוֹן רַבָּא עֲנָה: ל רַבָּא דִּישׁוֹן
רַבָּא אֵצֶר רַבָּא דִּישָׁן אִלֵּין רַבְרְבֵי חוֹרָאֵי
לְרַבְרְבָנֵיהוֹן בְּאַרְעָא דְּשֵׂעִיר: לא וְאִלֵּין
מַלְכַיָּא דִּי מְלָכוּ בְּאַרְעָא דֶּאֱדוֹם קֳדָם דִּי
מְלַךְ מַלְכָּא לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: לב וּמְלַךְ בֶּאֱדוֹם

רס"י

רשב"ם מספחות: (כ) **יושבי הארץ**. שהיו יושבים קודם שבא עשו לשם. וכדותימו[1] דרשו שהיו בקיאין ביסודה של ארץ, מלא קנה זה לזיתים, מלא קנה זה לגפנים, שהיו טועמין ויודעין אי זו נטיעה רעויה לה: (כד) **ואיה ענה**. וי"ו יתירה, והוא כמו היה וענה, וכרכה יש במקרא, תת וקדם ונצח מרמס[2], גרדם ורכב וסוס[3]: **הוא ענה**. כלומר למעלה שהוא אחיו של צבעון, וכמו הוא קורא אותו בנו, מלמד שבא לצבעון על אמו והוליד את ענה: **את**

הימם. פרדיס. כרגיע חמור על סוס נקבה וילדה פרד, והוא היה ממזר והביא פסולין לעולם. ולמה נקרא שמם ימים, שמימתן מוטלת על הבריות, דאמר רבי חנינא, מימי לא שאלני אדם על מכת פרדה לבנה, ואיכ[4]. (והלא קא חזינן דאיכ, אל תקרי ואיכ אלא ואיתכ, כי כמכה לא תתרפא לעולם. ברש"י ישן). ולא הוזקק לכתוב לנו משפחות האחרי, אלא מפני תמנע, ולהודיע גדולת מרדכי כמו שפירשתי למעלה: (לא) **ואלה המלכים וגו'**.

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 to 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.

1 שבת פה. 2 דניאל ח, יג 3 תהלים עו, ז 4 חולין ז:

17 *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 Basmas, Eisav's wife.*

18 *These are (the family heads from) the children of Ahalivamah, 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 Ahalivamah, daughter of Anah, Eisav's wife.*

19 *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

These are the children of Se'ir the Chorite, the inhabitants of the land (before Eisav arrived there): Lotan, Shoval, Tzivon, Anah, 21 *Dishon, Aitzer, and Dishan. (All) these are the (family) heads of the Chorites, Se'ir's children, in the land of Edom.*

22 *The children of Lotan were Chori and Heimam. The sister of Lotan was Timna.*

23 *These are the children of Shoval: Alvan, Manachas, Aival, Shefo and Onam.*

24 *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.*

25 *These are the children of Anah: Dishon and Ahalivamah, the daughter of Anah.*

26 *These are the children of Dishon: Chemdan, Eshban, Yisran, and Keran.*

27 *These are the children of Aitzer: Bilhan, Za'avan, and Akan.*

28 *These are the children of Dishan: Utz and Aran.*

29 *These are the (family) chiefs of the Chorites: (the) head (of the) Lotan (family, the) head (of the) Shoval (family, the) head (of the) Tzivon (family, the) head (of the) Anah (family),* 30 *(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)" (דַּרְכּוֹ), and not his land (אַרְצוֹ). 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. 109*ff.*)

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.)

דִּנְהָבָה: לג וַיָּמָת בָּלַע וַיִּמְלֹךְ תַּחְתָּיו יוֹבָב בֶּן־זֶרַח מִבָּצְרָה:
לד וַיָּמָת יוֹבָב וַיִּמְלֹךְ תַּחְתָּיו חֻשָׁם מֵאֶרֶץ הַתֵּימָנִי: לה וַיָּמָת
חֻשָׁם וַיִּמְלֹךְ תַּחְתָּיו הֲדַד בֶּן־בְּדַד הַמַּכֶּה אֶת־מִדְיָן בִּשְׂדֵה
מוֹאָב וְשֵׁם עִירוֹ עֲוִית: לו וַיָּמָת הֲדַד וַיִּמְלֹךְ תַּחְתָּיו שַׂמְלָה
מִמַּשְׂרֵקָה: לז וַיָּמָת שַׂמְלָה וַיִּמְלֹךְ תַּחְתָּיו שָׁאוּל מֵרְחֹבוֹת
הַנָּהָר: לח וַיָּמָת שָׁאוּל וַיִּמְלֹךְ תַּחְתָּיו בַּעַל חָנָן בֶּן־עַכְבּוֹר:
לט וַיָּמָת בַּעַל חָנָן בֶּן־עַכְבּוֹר וַיִּמְלֹךְ תַּחְתָּיו הֲדַר וְשֵׁם עִירוֹ
פָּעוּ וְשֵׁם אִשְׁתּוֹ מְהֵיטַבְאֵל בַּת־מַטְרֵד בַּת מֵי זָהָב: [מפטיר]
מ וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת אַלּוּפֵי עֵשָׂו לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָם לִמְקֹמֹתָם בִּשְׁמֹתָם
אַלּוּף תִּמְנָע אַלּוּף עַלְוָה אַלּוּף יְתֵת: מא אַלּוּף אָהֳלִיבָמָה אַלּוּף
אֵלָה אַלּוּף פִּינֹן: מב אַלּוּף קְנַז אַלּוּף תֵּימָן אַלּוּף מִבְצָר:
מג אַלּוּף מַגְדִּיאֵל אַלּוּף עִירָם אֵלֶּה | אַלּוּפֵי אֱדוֹם לְמוֹשְׁבֹתָם
בְּאֶרֶץ אֲחֻזָּתָם הוּא עֵשָׂו אֲבִי אֱדוֹם: פ פ פ

בָּלַע בַּר בְּעוֹר וְשׁוּם קַרְתֵּיהּ דִּנְהָבָה: לג וּמִית
בָּלַע וּמְלַךְ תְּחוֹתוֹהִי יוֹבָב בַּר זֶרַח מִבָּצְרָה:
לד וּמִית יוֹבָב וּמְלַךְ תְּחוֹתוֹהִי חֻשָׁם מַאַרְעָא
דָּרוֹמָא: לה וּמִית חֻשָׁם וּמְלַךְ תְּחוֹתוֹהִי הֲדַד
בַּר בְּדַד דְּקָטֵיל יַת מִדְיָנָאֵי בְּחַקְלָא דְמוֹאָב
וְשׁוּם קַרְתֵּיהּ עֲוִית: לו וּמִית הֲדָד וּמְלַךְ
תְּחוֹתוֹהִי שַׂמְלָה מִמַּשְׂרֵקָה: לז וּמִית שַׂמְלָה
וּמְלַךְ תְּחוֹתוֹהִי שָׁאוּל מֵרְחוֹבֵי דְּעַל פְּרָת:
לח וּמִית שָׁאוּל וּמְלַךְ תְּחוֹתוֹהִי בַּעַל חָנָן בַּר
עַכְבּוֹר: לט וּמִית בַּעַל חָנָן בַּר עַכְבּוֹר וּמְלַךְ
תְּחוֹתוֹהִי הֲדַר וְשׁוּם קַרְתֵּיהּ פָּעוּ וְשׁוּם
אִתְּתֵיהּ מְהֵיטַבְאֵל בַּת מַטְרֵד בַּת מְצָרַף
דַּהֲבָא: מ וְאִלֵּין שְׁמָהַת רַבְרְבֵי עֵשָׂו
לְזַרְעֲיָתְהוֹן לְאַתְרֵיהוֹן בִּשְׁמָהַתְהוֹן רַבָּא
תִּמְנָע רַבָּא עַלְוָה רַבָּא יְתֵת: מא רַבָּא
אָהֳלִיבָמָה רַבָּא אֵלָה רַבָּא פִּינוֹן: מב רַבָּא קְנַז
רַבָּא תֵּימָן רַבָּא מִבְצָר: מג רַבָּא מַגְדִּיאֵל
רַבָּא עִירָם אִלֵּין רַבְרְבֵי אֱדוֹם לְמוֹתְבָנֵיהוֹן
בַּאֲרַע אַחֲסַנְתְּהוֹן הוּא עֵשָׂו אֲבוּהוֹן דֶּאֱדוֹמָאֵי:
פ פ פ

קנ"ד פסוקים, קליט"ה סימן.

רס"י

שמנה היו, וכנגדן כעמיד יעקב, ודיטל מלכות עשו בימיהם, ואלו הן, שאול, ואיש בשת, דוד ושלמה, רחבעם, אביה, אסא, יהושפט. ובימי יורם נמו כתיב, בימיו פשע אדום מתחת יד יהודה ויימליכו עליהם מלך[1], ובימי שאול כתיב הין מלך באדום נגד מלך: (לג) **יובב בן זרח מבצרה.** בגלה מערי מואב היא, שנאמר ועל קריות ועל בצרה וגו'[2]. ולפי שהעמידה מלך לאדום עתידה לנקות עמהם, שנאמר כי זבח לה' בבצרה[3]: (לה) **המכה את מדין בשדה מואב.** שבא מדין על מואב למלחמה, והלך מלך אדום לעזור את מואב, ומכאן אתו למדיה, שהיו מדין ומואב מריבים זה עם זה, ובימי בלעם עמדו שלוח להתקשר על ישראל: (לד) **בת מי זהב.** מהו זהב, עשיר היה, ואין זהב אשוב בעיניו לכלום: (מ) **ואלה שמות אלופי עשו.** שנקראו על שם מדינותיהם לאחר שמת הדר, ופסקה מהם מלכות, והרשעניים הנזכרים למעלה הם שמות תולדותם, וכן מפורש בדברי הימים[4] וימת הדד ויהיו אלופי אדום אלוף תמנע וגו': (מג) **מגדיאל.** היה רומי: **חסלת פרשת וישלח**

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 Edom (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,

1 מלכים־ב ח, כ 2 ירמיה מח, כד 3 ישעיה לד, ו 4 ד"ה א א, נא

THE KINGS OF EDOM

36:31 *These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the children of Israel:* [32] *Bela, son of Be'or reigned in Edom, and the name of his city was Dinhavah.*

[33] *Bela died, and Yovav, son of Zerach of Batzrah, reigned in his place.*

[34] *Yovav died, and Chusham from the land of the Temanites reigned in his place.*

[35] *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.*

[36] *Hadad died, and Samlah of Masraikah reigned in his place.*

[37] *Samlah died, and Sha'ul of Rechovos on the River (Euphrates) reigned in his place.*

[38] *Sha'ul died, and Ba'al Chanan, son of Achbor, reigned in his place.*

[39] *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 [40] *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), [41] *(the) head (of the) Ahalivamah (area, the) head (of the) Ailah (area, the) head (of the) Pinon (area),* [42] *(the) head (of the) Kenaz (area, the) head (of the) Taiman (area, the) head (of the) Mivtzar (area),* [43] *(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, *Mizrachi'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 Yitchak'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

At 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*"?

In 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.

And 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. 176*ff.*)

לז א וַיֵּשֶׁב יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ מְגוּרֵי אָבִיו בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: ב אֵלֶּה | תֹּלְדוֹת יַעֲקֹב יוֹסֵף בֶּן־שְׁבַע־עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה הָיָה רֹעֶה אֶת־אֶחָיו בַּצֹּאן וְהוּא נַעַר אֶת־בְּנֵי בִלְהָה וְאֶת־בְּנֵי זִלְפָּה נְשֵׁי אָבִיו וַיָּבֵא יוֹסֵף אֶת־דִּבָּתָם רָעָה אֶל־אֲבִיהֶם: ג וְיִשְׂרָאֵל אָהַב

א וַיִּתֵּיב יַעֲקֹב בַּאֲרַע תוֹתָבוּת אֲבוּהִי בְּאַרְעָא דִכְנָעַן: ב אִלֵּין תּוּלְדַת יַעֲקֹב יוֹסֵף בַּר שְׁבַע עַשְׂרֵי שְׁנִין הֲוָה רָעֵי עִם אֲחוֹהִי בְּעָנָא וְהוּא מְרַבֵּי עִם בְּנֵי בִלְהָה וְעִם בְּנֵי זִלְפָּה נְשֵׁי אֲבוּהִי וַאֲיְתֵי יוֹסֵף יַת דִּבְּהוֹן בִּישָׁא לְוָת אֲבוּהוֹן: ג וְיִשְׂרָאֵל רְחֵים יַת יוֹסֵף מִכָּל בְּנוֹהִי אֲרֵי בַר

רש"י

(ה) **וישב יעקב** וגו'. מאחר שכתב לך ישובי עשו ותולדותיו בדרך קצרה, שלא היו ספונים ומצויים לפרש היאך נתייצבו, וסדר מלחמותיהם היך הוריגו את האמורי, פירש לך ישובי יעקב ותולדותיו בדרך מרוכה, כל גלגולי סבתם, לפי שכל הצובים לפני המקום להאריך בכתב, וכן אתה מוצא בעשרה דורות שמאדם ועד נח, פלוני הוליד פלוני, וכשבא לנח האריך בו, וכן בעשרה דורות שמנח ועד אברהם קצר בכתב, ומשהגיע אצל אברהם האריך בו. משל למרגלית שנפלה בין החול, אדם ממשמש בחול וכובדו בכברה עד שמוצא את המרגליות, ומשמלאה, הוא משליך את הצרורות מידו ונוטל המרגלית. (דבר אחר) **וישב יעקב**, הפשתני הזה, נכנסו גמליו טעונים פשתן, הפחמי תמה, הגה יכנס כל הפשתן הזה, היה פיקח אחד משיב לו, ניצון אחד יוצא ממפוח שלך שמורף את כולו, כך יעקב, רואה כל האלופים הכתובים למעלה, תמה ואומר, מי יכול לכבוש את כולן, מה כתיב למטה, אלה תולדות יעקב יוסף, וכתיב והיה בית יעקב אש ובית יוסף להבה ובית עשו לקש, ניצון יוצא מיוסף שמכלה ואורף את כולם. ברע"י יצן): (ג) **אלה תולדות יעקב**. ואלה של תולדות יעקב, אלה יצובים וגלגוליהם, עד שבאו לכלל ייצוב. סבב רחמונא, יוסף בן שבע עשרה וגו', על ידי זה נתגלגלו וירדו למצרים. זהו אחר יצוב

פשוטו של מקרא, להיות דבר דבור על מופניו. ומדרש אגדה דורש, תלה הכתוב תולדות יעקב ביוסף, מפני כמה דברים, אחת, שכל עצמו של יעקב לא עבד אלא בשביל בניו, ואביהם זיו מיקצין של יוסף דומה לו, וכל מה שאירע ליעקב אירע ליוסף, זה נמשטם וזה נמשטם, זה אחיו מבקשים להרגו וזה אחיו מבקשים להרגו, וכן כתיב בברחשית רבה[1]. ועוד מדרש זו, ויאב, ביקש יעקב ליאב בשלוה, קפץ עליו רוגזו של יוסף, לדיקים מבקשים ליאב בשלוה, אומר הקב"ה, לא דיין לצדיקים מה שמתוקן להם לעולם הבא, אלא שמבקשים ליאב בשלוה בעולם הזה: **והוא נער**. שהיה עושה מעשה נערות, מתקן בשערו, ממשמש בעיניו, כדי שיהיה נראה יפה: **את בני בלהה**. כלומר, ורגיל אצל בני בלהה, לפי שהיו אחיו מבזין אותן, והוא מקרבן: **את דבתם רעה**. כל רעה שהיה רואה באחיו בני לאה, היה מגיד לאביו, שהיו אוכלין אבר מן החי, ומזלזלין בבני השפחות לקרותן עבדים, והשודים על העריות. ובשלשתן לקה. על אבר מן החי, וישחטו שעיר עזים במכירתו, ועל אכילתו חי ועל דבה שספר עליהם שקורין לאחיהם עבדים, לעבד נמכר יוסף. ועל העריות שספר עליהם, ותשת אשת אדוניו וגו': **דבתם**. כל לשון דבה פרלי"ז בלע"ז. כל מה שהיה יכול לדבר בהם רעה, היה מספר: **דבה**. לשון

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the Torah stress that Ya'akov "settled"? (v. 1)

Rashi: The following was expounded by the *Midrash* on the word וַיֵּשֶׁב ("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.

1 פד, 1

Yosef Angers His Brothers

37 Ya'akov settled in the Land which his father inhabited, the Land of Cana'an.
2 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*.

אֶת־יוֹסֵף֙ מִכָּל־בָּנָ֔יו כִּי־בֶן־זְקֻנִ֥ים הֽוּא־לֽוֹ וְעָשָׂ֥ה לֽוֹ כְּתֹנֶ֖ת
פַּסִּֽים: ד וַיִּרְא֤וּ אֶחָיו֙ כִּֽי־אֹת֣וֹ אָהַ֔ב אֲבִיהֶ֖ם מִכָּל־אֶחָ֑יו וַיִּשְׂנְא֣וּ
אֹת֗וֹ וְלֹ֥א יָכְל֛וּ דַּבְּר֥וֹ לְשָׁלֽוֹם: ה וַיַּחֲלֹ֣ם יוֹסֵ֔ף חֲלוֹ֖ם וַיַּגֶּ֣ד לְאֶחָ֑יו
וַיּוֹסִ֣פוּ עוֹד֮ שְׂנֹ֣א אֹתוֹ֒: ו וַיֹּ֣אמֶר אֲלֵיהֶ֗ם שִׁמְעוּ־נָ֛א הַחֲלוֹם֥ הַזֶּ֖ה
אֲשֶׁ֥ר חָלָֽמְתִּי: ז וְהִנֵּ֗ה אֲנַ֤חְנוּ מְאַלְּמִים֙ אֲלֻמִ֔ים בְּת֖וֹךְ הַשָּׂדֶ֑ה
וְהִנֵּ֤ה קָמָה֙ אֲלֻמָּתִ֔י וְגַם־נִצָּבָ֖ה וְהִנֵּ֣ה תְסֻבֶּ֔ינָה אֲלֻמֹּתֵיכֶ֑ם
וַתִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶ֣ינָה לַאֲלֻמָּתִֽי: ח וַיֹּאמְר֣וּ לוֹ֮ אֶחָיו֒ הֲמָלֹ֨ךְ תִּמְלֹ֤ךְ עָלֵ֙ינוּ֙
אִם־מָשׁ֣וֹל תִּמְשֹׁ֣ל בָּ֔נוּ וַיּוֹסִ֣פוּ עוֹד֮ שְׂנֹ֣א אֹתוֹ֒ עַל־חֲלֹמֹתָ֖יו
וְעַל־דְּבָרָֽיו: ט וַיַּחֲלֹ֤ם עוֹד֙ חֲל֣וֹם אַחֵ֔ר וַיְסַפֵּ֥ר אֹת֖וֹ לְאֶחָ֑יו
וַיֹּ֗אמֶר הִנֵּ֤ה חָלַ֙מְתִּי֙ חֲל֣וֹם ע֔וֹד וְהִנֵּ֣ה הַשֶּׁ֗מֶשׁ וְהַיָּרֵ֛חַ וְאַחַ֥ד
עָשָׂ֖ר כּוֹכָבִ֑ים מִשְׁתַּחֲוִ֖ים לִֽי: י וַיְסַפֵּ֥ר אֶל־אָבִ֛יו וְאֶל־אֶחָ֖יו

חַכִּ֣ים הוּא֮ לֵיהּ֒ וַעֲבַ֣ד לֵיהּ֮ כִּתּוֹנָ֣א דְּפַסֵּ֒י: ד וַחֲזוֹ֙ אֲחוֹהִ֣י אֲרֵ֔י יָתֵ֥יהּ רְחִ֖ים אֲבוּהוֹן֑ מִכָּל֙
אֲחוֹהִ֣י וּסְנוֹ֔ יָתֵ֥יהּ וְלָ֖א צָבֶ֣ן לְמַלָּלָ֑א עִמֵּ֖יהּ
לִשְׁלָֽם: ה וַחֲלַ֥ם יוֹסֵ֖ף חֶלְמָ֑א וְחַוִ֖י לַאֲחוֹהִֽי
וְאוֹסִ֥יפוּ עוֹד֙ סְנוֹ֣ יָתֵ֔יהּ: ו וַאֲמַ֣ר לְהוֹן֮ שְׁמָעוּ֒
כְּעַן֙ חֶלְמָ֣א הָדֵ֔ין דִּ֥י חַלֵּמִ֖ית: ז וְהָ֣א אֲנַ֔חְנָא
מְאַסְּרִ֥ין אֱסָרִ֖ין בְּגוֹ֣ חַקְלָ֑א וְהָ֣א קָמַ֤ת אֱסָרְתִּי֙
וְאַף֙ אִזְדְּקָפַ֣ת וְהָ֔א מְסַתַּחֲרָ֥ן אֱסָרְתְּכוֹן֙ וְסָגְד֣ן
לֶאֱסָרְתִּ֑י: ח וַאֲמַ֣רוּ לֵיהּ֮ אֲחוֹהִי֒ הֲמַלְּכוּ֙ אַתְּ
מְדַמֵּ֣י לְמִמְלַךְ֔ עֲלָ֖נָא אוֹ֣ שׁוּלְטָ֑ן אַתְּ֙ סָבִ֣יר
לְמִשְׁלַ֣ט בָּ֔נָא וְאוֹסִ֥יפוּ עוֹד֙ סְנוֹ֣ יָתֵ֔יהּ עַל֙
חֶלְמוֹהִ֣י וְעַל֙ פִּתְגָמוֹהִ֔י: ט וַחֲלַ֥ם עוֹד֙ חֶלְמָ֣א
אָחֳרָ֔נָא וְאִשְׁתְּעִ֥י יָתֵ֖יהּ לַאֲחוֹהִ֑י וַאֲמַ֗ר הָ֣א
חַלֵּמִ֣ית חֶלְמָ֣א עוֹד֮ וְהָ֣א שִׁמְשָׁ֣א וְסִיהֲרָ֣א וְחַ֔ד
עֲשַׂ֖ר כּוֹכְבַ֑יָּא סָגְדִ֥ין לִֽי: י וְאִשְׁתְּעִ֥י לַאֲבוּהִ֖י

רס"י

דוכד שפתי ישנים[1]: (ג) **בן זקונים.** שנולד לו לעת זקנתו. ותונקלוס תרגם, בר חכים הוא ליה, כל מה שלמד משם ועבר מסר לו. דבר אחר, שהיה זיו מיקונין שלו דומה לו: **פסים.** לשון כלי מלת[2], כמו כרפס ותכלת, וכמו כתונת הפסים דתמר ותמנון. ומדרש אגדה על שם לרוחיו, שנמכר לפוטיפר וללוחריס ולישמעאלים ולמדיניים: (ד) **ולא יכלו דברו לשלום.** מתוך

גנותם למדנו שבחם, שלא דברו אחת בפה ואחת בלב: **דברו.** לדבר עמו: (ז) **מאלמים אלומים.** כתרגומו מאסרין אסרין, עמרין, וכן נושא אלומותיו[3], וכמוהו בלשון משנה והאלומות נוטל ומכריז: **קמה אלומתי.** נזקפה: **וגם נצבה.** לעמוד על עמדה בזקיפה: (ח) **ועל דבריו.** על דבשם רעה שהיה מביא לאביהם: (י) **ויספר אל אביו ואל אחיו.** לאחר שספר

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Why is Yosef called a בֶּן זְקֻנִים? (v. 3)**

RASHI: Because he was born to [Ya'akov] in his old age (**לְעֵת זְקֻנָתוֹ**).

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 (**זיו איקונין**) 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 Cana'an 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)

1 שיר השירים ז, י 2 שבת י: 3 תהלים קכו, ו

[3] 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. [4] 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.

[5] Yosef had a dream and told his brothers about it, and they hated him even more. [6] (This is what) he said to them: "Please listen to this dream, which I have dreamed! [7] 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."

[8] 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).

[9] (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. 805*ff*.)

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*.

וַיִּגְעַר־בּוֹ אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מָה הַחֲלוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר חָלָמְתָּ הֲבוֹא נָבוֹא אֲנִי וְאִמְּךָ וְאַחֶיךָ לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְךָ אָרְצָה: יא וַיְקַנְאוּ־בוֹ אֶחָיו וְאָבִיו שָׁמַר אֶת־הַדָּבָר: [שני] יב וַיֵּלְכוּ אֶחָיו לִרְעוֹת *אֶת־צֹאן אֲבִיהֶם בִּשְׁכֶם: יג וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יוֹסֵף הֲלוֹא אַחֶיךָ רֹעִים בִּשְׁכֶם לְכָה וְאֶשְׁלָחֲךָ אֲלֵיהֶם וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הִנֵּנִי: יד וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לֶךְ־נָא רְאֵה אֶת־שְׁלוֹם אַחֶיךָ וְאֶת־שְׁלוֹם הַצֹּאן וַהֲשִׁבֵנִי דָּבָר וַיִּשְׁלָחֵהוּ מֵעֵמֶק חֶבְרוֹן וַיָּבֹא שְׁכֶמָה: טו וַיִּמְצָאֵהוּ אִישׁ וְהִנֵּה תֹעֶה בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיִּשְׁאָלֵהוּ הָאִישׁ לֵאמֹר מַה־תְּבַקֵּשׁ: טז וַיֹּאמֶר אֶת־אַחַי אָנֹכִי מְבַקֵּשׁ הַגִּידָה־נָּא לִי אֵיפֹה הֵם רֹעִים: יז וַיֹּאמֶר הָאִישׁ נָסְעוּ מִזֶּה כִּי שָׁמַעְתִּי אֹמְרִים נֵלְכָה דֹתָיְנָה וַיֵּלֶךְ יוֹסֵף אַחַר אֶחָיו וַיִּמְצָאֵם בְּדֹתָן: יח וַיִּרְאוּ אֹתוֹ

וְלַאֲחוֹהִי וּנְזַף בֵּיהּ אֲבוּהִי וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ מָה חֶלְמָא הָדֵין דִּי חֲלֵימְתָּא הֲמֵיתָא נֵיתֵי אֲנָא וְאִמָּךְ וְאַחָיִךְ לְמִסְגּוּד לָךְ עַל אַרְעָא: יא וְקַנִּיאוּ בֵּיהּ אֲחוֹהִי וַאֲבוּהִי נְטַר יַת פִּתְגָמָא: יב וַאֲזָלוּ אֲחוֹהִי לְמִרְעֵי יַת עָנָא דַּאֲבוּהוֹן בִּשְׁכֶם: יג וַאֲמַר יִשְׂרָאֵל לְיוֹסֵף הֲלָא אַחָיִךְ רָעָן בִּשְׁכֶם אִיתָא וְאֶשְׁלְחִינָךְ לְוָתְהוֹן וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ הָא אֲנָא: יד וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ אֵזֵיל כְּעַן חֲזֵי יַת שְׁלָם אַחָיִךְ וְיַת שְׁלָם עָנָא וַאֲתֵיבְנִי פִּתְגָמָא וְשַׁלְחֵיהּ מִמֵּישַׁר חֶבְרוֹן וַאֲתָא לִשְׁכֶם: טו וְאַשְׁכְּחֵיהּ גַּבְרָא וְהָא תָעֵי בְּחַקְלָא וְשַׁאֲלֵיהּ גַּבְרָא לְמֵימַר מָה אַתְּ בָּעֵי: טז וַאֲמַר יַת אַחַי אֲנָא בָּעֵי חַוִּי כְעַן לִי הֵיכָן אִנּוּן רָעָן: יז וַאֲמַר גַּבְרָא נְטָלוּ מִכָּא אֲרֵי שְׁמָעִית דְּאָמְרִין נֵיזֵיל לְדוֹתָן וַאֲזַל יוֹסֵף בָּתַר אֲחוֹהִי וְאַשְׁכְּחִינוּן בְּדוֹתָן: יח וַחֲזוֹ יָתֵיהּ

*נקוד על את

רס"י

מותו לאחיו, חזר וספרו לאביו בפניהם: **ויגער בו.** לפי שהיה מטיל שנאה עליו: **הבוא נבוא.** והלא אמך כבר מתה, והוא לא היה יודע שהדברים מגיעין לבלהה, שגדלתו כאמו[1]. ורבותינו למדו מכאן, שאין חלום בלא דברים בטלים, ויעקב נתכוון לכוונה הדבר מלב גויו, שלא יקנאוהו, לכך אמר לו הבוא נבוא וגו', כשם שאי אפשר באמך, כך השאר הוא בטל: **(יא) שמר את הדבר.** היה ממתין ומצפה מתי יבוא, וכן שומר אמונים[2], וכן לא תשמור על חטאתי[3], לא תמתין: **(יג) לרעות. את צאן.** נקוד על את, שלא הלכו אלא לרעות את עצמן[4]: **(יג) הנני.** לשון ענוה וזריזות, נזדרז למצות אביו,

ואף על פי שהיה יודע באחיו שנוטרין אותו: **(יד) מעמק חברון.** והלא חברון בהר, שנאמר ויעלו בנגב ויבא עד חברון[5], אלא מעלה עמוקה של אותו לדיק הקבור בחברון, לקיים מה שנאמר לאברהם בין הבתרים, כי[6] גר יהיה זרעך[7]: **ויבא שכמה.** מקום מוכן לפורעניות, שם קלקלו השבטים, שם ענו את דינה, שם נחלקה מלכות בית דוד, שנאמר וילך רחבעם שכמה[8]: **(טו) וימצאהו איש.** זה גבריאל[9] שנאמר והאיש גבריאל[10]: **(יז) נסעו מזה.** הסיעו עצמן מן האחוה: **נלכה דותינה.** לבקש לך נכלי דתות שימיתוך בהם. ולפי פשוטו, שם מקום הוא, ומין מקרא יוצא מידי פשוטו:

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)

1 ב"ר פד, יא 2 ישעיה כו, ב 3 איוב יד, טז 4 ב"ר פד, יג 5 במדבר יג, כב 6 בראשית טו, יג 7 סוטה יא. 8 מלכים־א יב, א 9 תנחומא וישב ב 10 דניאל ט, יא

[10] *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)?"* [11] *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

His brothers went to pasture their father's flocks in Shechem. [13] *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).

[14] *(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.

[15] *(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?"*

[16] *(Yosef) said, "I am looking for my brothers. Please tell me where they are pasturing?"*

[17] *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 (דֹּתָיְנָה)" = "They went to seek legal pretexts (נִכְלֵי 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

Why did Ya'akov wait expectantly for Yosef's dream to materalize? (*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. 160*ff.*)

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?

מֵרָחֹק וּבְטֶרֶם יִקְרַב אֲלֵיהֶם וַיִּתְנַכְּלוּ אֹתוֹ לַהֲמִיתוֹ: יט וַיֹּאמְרוּ
אִישׁ אֶל־אָחִיו הִנֵּה בַּעַל הַחֲלֹמוֹת הַלָּזֶה בָּא: כ וְעַתָּה | לְכוּ
וְנַהַרְגֵהוּ וְנַשְׁלִכֵהוּ בְּאַחַד הַבֹּרוֹת וְאָמַרְנוּ חַיָּה רָעָה אֲכָלָתְהוּ
וְנִרְאֶה מַה־יִּהְיוּ חֲלֹמֹתָיו: כא וַיִּשְׁמַע רְאוּבֵן וַיַּצִּלֵהוּ מִיָּדָם
וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא נַכֶּנּוּ נָפֶשׁ: כב וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם | רְאוּבֵן אַל־
תִּשְׁפְּכוּ־דָם הַשְׁלִיכוּ אֹתוֹ אֶל־הַבּוֹר הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר בַּמִּדְבָּר
וְיָד אַל־תִּשְׁלְחוּ־בוֹ לְמַעַן הַצִּיל אֹתוֹ מִיָּדָם לַהֲשִׁיבוֹ

לְמִקְטְלֵיהּ: יט וַאֲמָרוּ גְּבַר לַאֲחוּהִי הָא מָרֵי
חֶלְמַיָּא דֵּיכִי אֲתָא: כ וּכְעַן אִיתוּ וְנִקְטְלִינֵיהּ
וְנִרְמִינֵיהּ בְּחַד מִן גּוּבַיָּא וְנֵימַר חַיְתָא בִּישְׁתָּא
אֲכַלְתֵּיהּ וְנֶחֱזֵי מָה יְהוֹן בְּסוֹף חֶלְמוֹהִי:
כא וּשְׁמַע רְאוּבֵן וְשֵׁיזְבֵיהּ מִידֵיהוֹן וַאֲמַר לָא
נַקְטְלִינֵיהּ נַפְשׁ: כב וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן רְאוּבֵן לָא
תוֹשְׁדוּן דְּמָא רְמוֹ יָתֵיהּ לְגוּבָּא הָדֵין דִּי
בְּמַדְבְּרָא וִידָא לָא תוֹשְׁטוּן בֵּיהּ בְּדִיל לְשֵׁיזָבָא
יָתֵיהּ מִידֵיהוֹן לַאֲתָבוּתֵיהּ לְוָת אֲבוּהִי:

רס"י

(יח) **ויתנכלו.** נתמלאו נכלים וערמומיות: **אתו.** כמו אתו, עמו, כלומר מה יהיו חלומותיו, גראה דבר מי יקום, או שלכם או שלי. ומי חפשר שיאמרו כח וגראה מה יהיו חלומותיו, שמכיון שיהרגוהו בטלו חלומותיו: (כא) **לא נכנו נפש.** מכת נפש, זו היא מיתה: (כב) **למען הציל אתו.** רוח הקדש

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"* (נמוק"י ס"פ בן סורר, 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. 169*ff.*)

So Yosef went after his brothers, and he found them in Dosan. [18] *They saw him from a distance, and before he came near them they plotted against him to put him to death.* [19] *They said to each other, "Look! That dreamer is coming.* [20] *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!"

[21] *When Re'uvain heard (their plan) he saved (Yosef) from their hands. He said, "Let's not give him a lethal blow."*

[22] *"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 HACHAYIM: 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).

אֶל־אָבִיו: [שלישי] כג וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר־בָּא יוֹסֵף אֶל־אֶחָיו וַיַּפְשִׁיטוּ
אֶת־יוֹסֵף אֶת־כָּתָּנְתּוֹ אֶת־כְּתֹנֶת הַפַּסִּים אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו:
כד וַיִּקָּחֻהוּ וַיַּשְׁלִכוּ אֹתוֹ הַבֹּרָה וְהַבּוֹר רֵק אֵין בּוֹ מָיִם:
כה וַיֵּשְׁבוּ לֶאֱכָל־לָחֶם וַיִּשְׂאוּ עֵינֵיהֶם וַיִּרְאוּ וְהִנֵּה אֹרְחַת
יִשְׁמְעֵאלִים בָּאָה מִגִּלְעָד וּגְמַלֵּיהֶם נֹשְׂאִים נְכֹאת וּצְרִי וָלֹט
הוֹלְכִים לְהוֹרִיד מִצְרָיְמָה: כו וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוּדָה אֶל־אֶחָיו מַה־
בֶּצַע כִּי נַהֲרֹג אֶת־אָחִינוּ וְכִסִּינוּ אֶת־דָּמוֹ: כז לְכוּ וְנִמְכְּרֶנּוּ
לַיִּשְׁמְעֵאלִים וְיָדֵנוּ אַל־תְּהִי־בוֹ כִּי־אָחִינוּ בְשָׂרֵנוּ הוּא וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ
אֶחָיו: כח וַיַּעַבְרוּ אֲנָשִׁים מְדָנִים סֹחֲרִים וַיִּמְשְׁכוּ וַיַּעֲלוּ אֶת־
יוֹסֵף מִן־הַבּוֹר וַיִּמְכְּרוּ אֶת־יוֹסֵף לַיִּשְׁמְעֵאלִים בְּעֶשְׂרִים כֶּסֶף
וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶת־יוֹסֵף מִצְרָיְמָה: כט וַיָּשָׁב רְאוּבֵן אֶל־הַבּוֹר וְהִנֵּה
אֵין־יוֹסֵף בַּבּוֹר וַיִּקְרַע אֶת־בְּגָדָיו: ל וַיָּשָׁב אֶל־אֶחָיו וַיֹּאמַר
הַיֶּלֶד אֵינֶנּוּ וַאֲנִי אָנָה אֲנִי־בָא: לא וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־כְּתֹנֶת יוֹסֵף

כג וַהֲוָה כַּד אֲתָא יוֹסֵף לְוָת אֲחוֹהִי וְאַשְׁלָחוּ יַת
יוֹסֵף יַת כְּתוֹנֵיהּ יַת כְּתוֹנָא דְפַסֵּי דִּי עֲלוֹהִי:
כד וְנָסְבוּהִי וּרְמוֹ יָתֵיהּ לְגוּבָא וְגוּבָא רֵיקָא
לֵית בֵּיהּ מַיָּא: כה וְאַסְחָרוּ לְמֵיכַל לַחְמָא
וְזָקְפוּ עֵינֵיהוֹן וַחֲזוֹ וְהָא שְׁיָרַת עֲרָבָאֵי אָתְיָא
מִגַּלְעָד וּגְמַלֵּיהוֹן טְעִינִין שְׁעַף וְקִטָּף וּלְטוֹם
אָזְלִין לַאֲחָתָא לְמִצְרָיִם: כו וַאֲמַר יְהוּדָה
לַאֲחוֹהִי מָה מָמוֹן נִתְהֲנִי לָנָא אֲרֵי נִקְטוֹל יַת
אֲחוּנָא וּנְכַסֵּי עַל דְּמֵיהּ: כז אֵיתוּ וְנִזְבְּנִנֵּיהּ
לַעֲרָבָאֵי וִידָנָא לָא תְהֵי בֵּיהּ אֲרֵי אֲחוּנָא
בִּסְרָנָא הוּא וְקַבִּילוּ מִנֵּיהּ אֲחוֹהִי: כח וַעֲבָרוּ
גַּבְרֵי מִדְיָנָאֵי תַּגָּרֵי וּנְגִידוּ וַאֲסִיקוּ יַת יוֹסֵף מִן
גּוּבָא וְזַבִּינוּ יַת יוֹסֵף לַעֲרָבָאֵי בְּעַסְרִין כְּסַף
וַאֲיתְיאוּ יַת יוֹסֵף לְמִצְרָיִם: כט וְתָב רְאוּבֵן
לְגוּבָא וְהָא לֵית יוֹסֵף בְּגוּבָא וּבְזַע יַת
לְבוּשׁוֹהִי: ל וְתָב לְוָת אֲחוֹהִי וַאֲמַר עוּלֵימָא
לֵיתוֹהִי וַאֲנָא לְאָן אֲנָא אָתֵי: לא וּנְסִיבוּ יַת
כְּתוֹנָא דְיוֹסֵף וּנְכִיסוּ צְפִיר בַּר עִזֵּי וּטְבָלוּ יַת

רס"י

כעיזה על רחובן שלא חמר זאת אלא להגיל אותו, שיצא הוא ויעלנו משם, חמר, אני בכור וגדול שבכולן, לא יתלה הסרחון אלא בי: (כג) **את כתנתו.** זה תלוק: **את כתנת הפסים.** הוא שהוסיף לו אביו יותר על אחיו[1]: (כד) **והבור רק אין בו מים.** ממשע שנאמר והבור רק, יכול יודע שאין בו מים, מה תלמוד לומר אין בו מים. מים אין בו, אבל נחשים ועקרבים יש בו[2]: (כה) **ארחת.** כתרגומו שיירת, על שם הולכי ארח: **וגמליהם נשאים וגו'.** למה פרשם הכתוב את משאם, להודיע מתן שכרן של לדיקים, שאין דרכן של ערביים לשאת אלא נפט ועטרן שריחן רע, ולזה נזדמנו בשמים, שאף יוצא מריח רע: **נכאת.** כל כנוסי בשמים הרבה קרוי נכאת, וכן וירח את כל בית נכאתו[3], מרקחת בשמיו. ותונקלוס תרגם לשון שעוה: **וצרי.** שרף הנוטף מעלי הקטף והוא נטף הנמנה עם סמני הקטורת: **ולט.** לוטיתא שמו בלשון משנה, ורבותינו פירשו שרש שעב ושמו משטרולוזיא"ה, במ' נדה[4]: (כו) **מה בצע.** מה ממון, כתרגומו: **וכסינו את דמו.** ונעלים את מיתתו: (כז) **וישמעו.** וקבילו מיניה, וכל שמיעה שהיא קבלת דבריה, לשון זה, ולשון וישמע יעקב אל אביו, ונשמע ונשמע, מתורגם ונקבל, וכל שהוא שמיעת האוזן, לשון וישמעו את קול ה' אלהים מתהלך בגן, ורבקה שומעת, וישמע ישראל, שמעתי את תלונות, כולן מתורגם ושמעו, ושמעת, ושמע, שמיע קדמי: (כח) **ויעברו אנשים מדינים.** זו היא שיירא אחרת, והודיעך הכתוב, שמכר פעמים הרבה: **וימשכו.** בני יעקב את יוסף מן הבור וימכרוהו לישמעאלים, והישמעאלים למדינים, והמדינים למלריס: (כט) **וישב ראובן.** ומבקירתו לא היה שם, שהגיע יומו לילך ולשמש את אביו. דבר אחר, עסוק היה בשקו ובתעניתו על שבלבל יצועי אביו: (ל) **אנה אני בא.** לגה אחרת

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 from 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 (*chasid*): 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)

1 ב"ר פד, טז 2 ב"ר שם. 3 מלכים־ב כ, יג 4 דף ח.

THIRD READING

23 *Then, when Yosef came to his brothers, they stripped Yosef of his tunic, and the fine woolen robe which he had on.* 24 *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).

25 *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.*

26 *Yehudah said to his brothers, "What (profit) will we gain if we kill our brother and hide his blood(y death)?* 27 *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).*

28 *(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.

29 *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.* 30 *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 Reu'vain 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)

וַיִּשְׁחֲטוּ שְׂעִיר עִזִּים וַיִּטְבְּלוּ אֶת־הַכְּתֹנֶת בַּדָּם: לב וַיְשַׁלְּחוּ
אֶת־כְּתֹנֶת הַפַּסִּים וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶל־אֲבִיהֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ זֹאת מָצָאנוּ
הַכֶּר־נָא הַכְּתֹנֶת בִּנְךָ הִוא אִם־לֹא: לג וַיַּכִּירָהּ וַיֹּאמֶר כְּתֹנֶת
בְּנִי חַיָּה רָעָה אֲכָלָתְהוּ טָרֹף טֹרַף יוֹסֵף: לד וַיִּקְרַע יַעֲקֹב
שִׂמְלֹתָיו וַיָּשֶׂם שַׂק בְּמָתְנָיו וַיִּתְאַבֵּל עַל־בְּנוֹ יָמִים רַבִּים:
לה וַיָּקֻמוּ כָל־בָּנָיו וְכָל־בְּנֹתָיו לְנַחֲמוֹ וַיְמָאֵן לְהִתְנַחֵם וַיֹּאמֶר
כִּי־אֵרֵד אֶל־בְּנִי אָבֵל שְׁאֹלָה וַיֵּבְךְּ אֹתוֹ אָבִיו: לו וְהַמְדָנִים
מָכְרוּ אֹתוֹ אֶל־מִצְרַיִם לְפוֹטִיפַר סְרִיס פַּרְעֹה שַׂר הַטַּבָּחִים: פ

כִּתוֹנָא בִּדְמָא: לב וְשַׁלָּחוּ יַת כִּתוֹנָא דְפַסֵּי
וְאַיְתִיאוּ לְוָת אֲבוּהוֹן וַאֲמָרוּ דָּא אַשְׁכַּחְנָא
אִשְׁתְּמוֹדַע בְּעַן הֲכִתוֹנָא דִבְרָךְ הִיא אִם לָא:
לג וְאִשְׁתְּמוֹדָעָהּ וַאֲמַר כִּתוֹנָא דִבְרִי חַיְתָא
בִּישְׁתָּא אֲכָלְתֵּיהּ מְקַטֵּל קְטִיל יוֹסֵף: לד וּבְזַע
יַעֲקֹב לְבוּשׁוֹהִי וְאָסַר שַׁקָּא בְּחַרְצֵיהּ וְאִתְאַבַּל
עַל בְּרֵיהּ יוֹמִין סַגִּיאִין: לה וְקָמוּ כָל בְּנוֹהִי
וְכָל בְּנָתֵיהּ לְנַחֲמוּתֵיהּ וְסָרֵיב לְקַבָּלָא
תַּנְחוּמִין וַאֲמַר אֲרֵי אֵיחוֹת עַל (לְוָת) בְּרִי כַּד
אֲבֵילָא לִשְׁאוֹל וּבְכָא יָתֵיהּ אֲבוּהִי: לו וּמִדְיָנָאֵי
זַבִּינוּ יָתֵיהּ לְמִצְרָיִם לְפוֹטִיפַר רַבָּא

רש"י

מלערו של חצף: (לא) **שעיר עזים**. דמו דומה לשל חדס: **הכתנת**. זה שמה, וכשהיה דבוקה לתיבה תחרת, כגון כתנת יוסף, כתנת פסים, כתנת בד, וקוד כתנת: (לג) **ויאמר כתנת בני**. היה זו: **חיה רעה אכלתהו**. נגנבה בו רוח הקדש[1], סופו שתתגרה בו חמת פוטיפר. ולמה לא גלה לו הקב"ה, לפי שהחרימו וקללו את כל מי שיגלה, ושתפו להקב"ה עמהם[2], אבל ינחק היה יודע שהוא חי, אמר, היאך אגלה, והקב"ה חיוו רוצה לגלות לו: (לד) **ימים**

רבים. כ"ב שנה, משפירש ממנו עד שירד יעקב למצרים, שנאמר יוסף בן שבע עשרה שנה וגו', ובן שלשים שנה היה בעמדו לפני פרעה, ושבע שני השובע ושנתים הרעב כשבא יעקב למצרים, הרי כ"ב שנה, כנגד כ"ב שנה שלא קיים יעקב כבוד אב ואם, כי שנה שהיה בבית לבן, וד' שנה בדרך בשובו מבית לבן, שנה וחצי בסכות ושנה חדשים בבית אל[3]. וזהו שאמר ללבן זה לי עשרים שנה בביתיך, לי הן, עלי הן, וסופי ללקות כנגדן: (לה) **וכל בנתיו**.

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?

1 ב"ר פד, יט 2 תנחומא וישב ב 3 מגילה טז:

31 *They took Yosef's robe, slaughtered a young goat, and dipped the robe into the blood.* 32 *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."*

33 *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!"*

34 *Ya'akov tore his garments, and tied sackcloth around his waist. He mourned many days for his son.*

35 *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.

36 *The Midianites sold (Yosef) to Egypt, to Potifar, Pharaoh's officer, chief of the butchers.*

רס"י

רבי יהודה אומר, אחיות תאומות נולדו עם כל שבט ושבט, ונשתוס. רבי נחמיה אומר, כנעניות היו, אלא מהו וכל בנותיו, שאין אדם נמנע מלקרות לאחיו בנו ולכלתו בתו: **וימאן להתנחם**. אין אדם מקבל תנחומין על החי[4], וסבור שמת, שעל המת נגזרה גזירה שישתכח מן הלב, ולא על החי: **ארד אל בני**. כמו על בני וכרבה אל משמשין בלשון על, אל שאול ואל בית הדמיס[5], אל הלקח חרון המלכיס, ואל (מות) חמיה ואיסה[6]: **אבל שאלה**. כפשוטו לשון קבר הוא, בתבלי אקבר ולא אתנחם כל ימי. ומדרשו, גיהנם, סימן זה היה מסור בידי מפי הגבורה, אם לא ימות אחד מבני בחיי, מוצטח אני שאיני רואה גיהנם: **ויבך אתו אביו**. ילחק היה בוכה מפני צרתו של יעקב, אבל לא היה מתאבל שהיה יודע שהוא חי: **(לו) הטבחים**. שוחטי

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,

4 ב"ר פד, כא 5 שמואל־ב כא, א 6 שם־א ד, כא

[רביעי] **לח** א וַיְהִי֙ בָּעֵ֣ת הַהִ֔וא וַיֵּ֣רֶד יְהוּדָ֔ה מֵאֵ֖ת אֶחָ֑יו וַיֵּ֗ט
עַד־אִ֛ישׁ עֲדֻלָּמִ֖י וּשְׁמ֥וֹ חִירָֽה׃ ב וַיַּ֣רְא־שָׁ֔ם יְהוּדָ֕ה בַּת־אִ֖ישׁ
כְּנַעֲנִ֑י וּשְׁמ֥וֹ שׁ֛וּעַ וַיִּקָּחֶ֥הָ וַיָּבֹ֖א אֵלֶֽיהָ׃ ג וַתַּ֣הַר וַתֵּ֔לֶד בֵּ֖ן וַיִּקְרָ֥א
אֶת־שְׁמ֖וֹ עֵֽר׃ ד וַתַּ֥הַר עֹ֛וד וַתֵּ֥לֶד בֵּ֖ן וַתִּקְרָ֣א אֶת־שְׁמ֑וֹ אוֹנָֽן׃
ה וַתֹּ֣סֶף עוֹד֮ וַתֵּ֣לֶד בֵּן֒ וַתִּקְרָ֣א אֶת־שְׁמ֔וֹ שֵׁלָ֑ה וְהָיָ֥ה בְכְזִ֖יב
בְּלִדְתָּ֥הּ אֹתֽוֹ׃ ו וַיִּקַּ֤ח יְהוּדָה֙ אִשָּׁ֣ה לְעֵ֣ר בְּכֹר֔וֹ וּשְׁמָ֖הּ תָּמָֽר׃
ז וַיְהִ֥י עֵ֛ר בְּכֹ֥ר יְהוּדָ֖ה רַ֣ע בְּעֵינֵ֑י יְהוָ֔ה וַיְמִתֵ֖הוּ יְהוָֽה׃ ח וַיֹּ֤אמֶר
יְהוּדָה֙ לְאוֹנָ֔ן בֹּ֖א אֶל־אֵ֣שֶׁת אָחִ֑יךָ וְיַבֵּ֥ם אֹתָ֛הּ וְהָקֵ֥ם זֶ֖רַע
לְאָחִֽיךָ׃ ט וַיֵּ֣דַע אוֹנָ֔ן כִּ֥י לֹ֛א לֹ֥ו יִהְיֶ֖ה הַזָּ֑רַע וְהָיָ֗ה אִם־בָּ֤א
אֶל־אֵשֶׁת֙ אָחִ֔יו וְשִׁחֵ֥ת אַ֖רְצָה לְבִלְתִּ֥י נְתָן־זֶ֖רַע לְאָחִֽיו׃ י וַיֵּ֣רַע
בְּעֵינֵ֣י יְהוָ֔ה אֲשֶׁ֥ר עָשָׂ֖ה וַיָּ֥מֶת גַּם־אֹתֽוֹ׃ יא וַיֹּ֤אמֶר יְהוּדָה֙ לְתָמָ֣ר
כַּלָּתֹ֔ו שְׁבִ֥י אַלְמָנָ֖ה בֵּ֣ית־אָבִ֑יךְ עַד־יִגְדַּ֤ל שֵׁלָה֙ בְּנִ֣י כִּי֔ אָמַ֕ר
פֶּן־יָמ֥וּת גַּם־ה֖וּא כְּאֶחָ֑יו וַתֵּ֣לֶךְ תָּמָ֔ר וַתֵּ֖שֶׁב בֵּ֥ית אָבִֽיהָ׃
יב וַיִּרְבּ֣וּ הַיָּמִ֔ים וַתָּ֖מָת בַּת־שׁ֣וּעַ אֵֽשֶׁת־יְהוּדָ֑ה וַיִּנָּ֣חֶם יְהוּדָ֔ה
וַיַּ֣עַל עַל־גֹּזְזֵ֔י צֹאנ֖וֹ ה֣וּא וְחִירָ֥ה רֵעֵ֛הוּ הָעֲדֻלָּמִ֖י תִּמְנָתָֽה׃
יג וַיֻּגַּ֥ד לְתָמָ֖ר לֵאמֹ֑ר הִנֵּ֥ה חָמִ֛יךְ עֹלֶ֥ה תִּמְנָ֖תָה לָגֹ֥ז צֹאנֹֽו׃
יד וַתָּ֣סַר בִּגְדֵ֤י אַלְמְנוּתָהּ֙ מֵעָלֶ֔יהָ וַתְּכַ֥ס בַּצָּעִ֖יף וַתִּתְעַלָּ֑ף וַתֵּ֣שֶׁב
בְּפֶ֤תַח עֵינַ֙יִם֙ אֲשֶׁ֣ר עַל־דֶּ֣רֶךְ תִּמְנָ֔תָה כִּ֥י רָאָ֖תָה כִּי־גָדַ֣ל שֵׁלָ֑ה

דְּפַרְעֹ֔ה רַ֖ב קָטוֹלְיָֽא׃ א וַהֲוָה֙ בְּעִדָּנָ֣א הַהִ֔יא
וּנְחַ֖ת יְהוּדָ֑ה מִלְּוָ֣ת אֲחוֹהִ֔י וּסְטָ֖א עַד־גַּבְרָ֥א
עֲדֻלְּמָאָ֖ה וּשְׁמֵ֥יהּ חִירָֽה׃ ב וַחֲזָ֣א תַמָּ֔ן יְהוּדָ֕ה
בַּת־גְּבַ֥ר תַּגְרָ֖א וּשְׁמֵ֣יהּ שׁ֑וּעַ וְנָסְבַ֥הּ וְעַל־
לְוָתָֽהּ׃ ג וְעַדְיַ֣את וְיָלְדַ֔ת בַּ֖ר וּקְרָ֥א יַת־שְׁמֵֽיהּ
עֵֽר׃ ד וְעַדְיַ֣את עֹ֔וד וְיָלְדַ֖ת בַּ֑ר וּקְרַ֥ת יַת־
שְׁמֵ֖יהּ אוֹנָֽן׃ ה וְאוֹסִיפַ֥ת עוֹד֙ וְיָלְדַ֣ת בַּ֔ר וּקְרַ֥ת
יַת־שְׁמֵ֖יהּ שֵׁלָ֑ה וַהֲוָ֣ה בִכְזִ֔יב כַּד֙ יְלִידַ֣ת יָתֵֽיהּ׃
ו וּנְסֵ֤יב יְהוּדָה֙ אִתְּתָ֣א לְעֵ֔ר בּוּכְרֵ֖יהּ וּשְׁמַ֣הּ
תָּמָֽר׃ ז וַהֲוָה֙ עֵ֣ר בּוּכְרָ֔א דִּיהוּדָ֖ה בִּישׁ֣ קֳדָ֑ם יְיָ֗
וַאֲמִיתֵ֖יהּ יְיָ׃ ח וַאֲמַ֤ר יְהוּדָה֙ לְאוֹנָ֔ן עוּל֙ לְוַ֣ת
אִתַּ֣ת אֲחוּךְ֮ וְיַבֵּ֣ם יָתָהּ֒ וַאֲקֵ֥ים זַרְעָ֖א לַאֲחוּךְ׃
ט וְיָדַ֣ע אוֹנָ֔ן אֲרֵ֥י לָ֛א עַל֥ שְׁמֵ֖יהּ מִתְקְרֵ֣י זַרְעָ֑א
וַהֲוָה֙ כַּד֙ עָלַ֣יל לְוַ֣ת אִתַּ֣ת אֲחוּהִ֔י וּמְחַבֵּ֖יל
אַרְחֵ֣יהּ עַל֥ אַרְעָ֛א בְּדִיל֥ דְּלָ֖א לְקַיָּמָ֥א זַרְעָ֖א
לַאֲחוּהִֽי׃ י וּבְאֵ֣ישׁ קֳדָ֔ם יְיָ֖ דִּ֣י עֲבַ֑ד וַאֲמִ֥ית אַף־
יָתֵֽיהּ׃ יא וַאֲמַ֤ר יְהוּדָה֙ לְתָמָ֣ר כַּלְתֵּ֔יהּ תֵּיבִ֕י
אַרְמְלָ֖א בֵּ֣ית אֲבוּךְ֑ עַד֩ דִּֽירְבֵּ֨י שֵׁלָ֜ה בְּרִ֣י אֲרֵ֗י
אֲמַ֤ר דִּלְמָא֙ יְמ֣וּת אַף־הוּא֔ כַּאֲחוֹהִ֖י וַאֲזַ֣לַת
תָּמָ֑ר וְיָתִ֖יבַת בֵּ֥ית אֲבוּהָֽ׃ יב וְסַגִּ֖יאוּ יוֹמַ֑יָּא
וּמִיתַ֣ת בַּת־שׁ֔וּעַ אִתַּ֖ת יְהוּדָ֑ה וְאִתְנַחֵ֖ם יְהוּדָֽה
וּסְלִ֣יק עַל֮ גָּזְזֵי֒ עָנֵ֣יהּ ה֔וּא וְחִירָ֥ה רַחֲמֵ֖יהּ
עֲדֻלְּמָאָ֑ה לְתִמְנָֽת׃ יג וְאִתְחַוָּ֥א לְתָמָ֖ר לְמֵימָ֣ר הָ֑א
חֲמוּתֵ֕ךְ סָלִ֣יק לְתִמְנָ֔ת לְמִגַּ֖ז עָנֵ֥יהּ׃ יד וַאֲעַדְיַ֣את
לְבוּשֵׁ֔י אַרְמְלוּתָ֖הּ מִנַּ֑הּ וְאִתְכַּסְיַ֣את בְּעִיפָּ֔א
וְאִתַּקָּנַ֖ת וְיָתִ֣בַת בְּפָרְשׁ֣וּת עֵינִ֔ין דִּ֥י עַל־
אוֹרַ֖ח תִּמְנָ֑ת אֲרֵ֣י חֲזַ֔ת אֲרֵ֥י רְבָ֖א שֵׁלָֽה

רס"ו

זרע. כדאן יקרא על שם כמ"ש: (ט) **ושחת ארצה.** דש מכפניס וזורה מבחוץ[3]: (יא) **כי אמר וגו'.** כלומר, דומה היה לומה בקש, שלא היה בדעתו להשיאה לו: **כי אמר פן ימות.** מוחזקת היא זו שימותו מנשיה[4]: (יג) **ויעל על גוזזי צאנו.** ויעל תמנתה לעמוד על גוזזי לאנו: (יג) **עלה תמנתה.** ובשמעון הוא מומר וירד שמעון וגו' תמנתה[5], בשפוע הכר היתה יושבת, עולין לה מבאן ויורדין לה מבאן: (יד) **ותתעלף.** כשהתה פניה שלא יכיר בה: **ותשב בפתח עינים.** בפתיחת עיניס, בפרשת דרכים שעל דרך תמנתה. ורבותינו דרשו, בפתחו של אברהם אבינו, שכל עיניס מלפנות לרשותו[6]: **כי ראתה כי גדל שלה וגו'.** לפיכך בפקידה עלמה אלא יכודה, שהיתה מתאוה להעמיד ממנו

בהמות המלך: (ח) **ויהי בעת ההוא.** למה נסמכה פרשה זו לכאן והפסיק בפרשתו של יוסף, ללמד, שהורידוהו אחיו מגדולתו כשראו בנרת אביהם, אמרו, אתה אמרת למכרו, אנו אמרת להשיבו, הריני שומעים לך: **ויט.** אחת אחיו: **עד איש עדלמי.** נשתתף עמו: (ג) **כנעני.** תגרן[1]: (ה) **והיה בכזיב.** שם המקום, ואומר אני, על שם שפשקה מלדת נקרא כזיב, לשון היו תהיה לי כמו אכזב, אשר לא יכזבו מימיו, דאש לא כן מה שא להודיענו. ובגרשתית רבה[2] ראיתי, ותקרא שמו שלה וגו' פסקה: (ז) **רע בעיני ה'.** כרעתו של אונן, משחית זרעו, שנאמר באונן ויאמר גם אותו, כמיתתו של ער מיתתו של אונן. ולמה היה ער משחית זרעו כדי שלא תתעבר ויכאיב 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. 129*ff.*)

1 ב"ר פה, ד 2 שם 3 שם פה, ה 4 יבמות סד: 5 שופטים יד, א 6 סוטה י.

Yehudah & Tamar

38 Fourth Reading

It 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. [2] *There, Yehudah saw the daughter of a businessman, named Shua, and he married her and came to her.*

[3] *She conceived and gave birth to a son, and he named him Air.*

[4] *She conceived again and gave birth to a son, and she named him Onan.*

[5] *She bore another son yet again, and she named him Shailah. (Yehudah) was in Keziv when she gave birth to him.*

[6] *Yehudah took a wife named Tamar for Air, his firstborn.*

[7] *Air, Yehudah's firstborn, was evil in the eyes of God, and God made him die.* [8] *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)."*

[9] *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).*

[10] *What he did was evil in the eyes of God, and He made him die too.*

[11] *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.*

[12] *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.* [13] *(Someone) reported to Tamar, saying, "Look, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep."*

[14] *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

Rashi 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.

However, 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)

וְהוּא לֹא־נִתְּנָה לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה: טו וַיִּרְאֶהָ יְהוּדָה וַיַּחְשְׁבֶהָ לְזוֹנָה כִּי כִסְּתָה פָּנֶיהָ: טז וַיֵּט אֵלֶיהָ אֶל־הַדֶּרֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר הָבָה־נָּא אָבוֹא אֵלַיִךְ כִּי לֹא יָדַע כִּי כַלָּתוֹ הִוא וַתֹּאמֶר מַה־תִּתֶּן־לִי כִּי תָבוֹא אֵלָי: יז וַיֹּאמֶר אָנֹכִי אֲשַׁלַּח גְּדִי־עִזִּים מִן־הַצֹּאן וַתֹּאמֶר אִם־תִּתֵּן עֵרָבוֹן עַד שָׁלְחֵךְ: יח וַיֹּאמֶר מָה הָעֵרָבוֹן אֲשֶׁר אֶתֶּן־לָךְ וַתֹּאמֶר חֹתָמְךָ וּפְתִילֶךָ וּמַטְּךָ אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדֶךָ וַיִּתֶּן־לָהּ וַיָּבֹא אֵלֶיהָ וַתַּהַר לוֹ: יט וַתָּקָם וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתָּסַר צְעִיפָהּ מֵעָלֶיהָ וַתִּלְבַּשׁ בִּגְדֵי אַלְמְנוּתָהּ: כ וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוּדָה אֶת־גְּדִי הָעִזִּים בְּיַד רֵעֵהוּ הָעֲדֻלָּמִי לָקַחַת הָעֵרָבוֹן מִיַּד הָאִשָּׁה וְלֹא מְצָאָהּ: כא וַיִּשְׁאַל אֶת־אַנְשֵׁי מְקֹמָהּ לֵאמֹר אַיֵּה הַקְּדֵשָׁה הִוא בָּעֵינַיִם עַל־הַדָּרֶךְ וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא־הָיְתָה בָזֶה קְדֵשָׁה: כב וַיָּשָׁב אֶל־יְהוּדָה וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא מְצָאתִיהָ וְגַם אַנְשֵׁי הַמָּקוֹם אָמְרוּ לֹא־הָיְתָה בָזֶה קְדֵשָׁה: כג וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוּדָה תִּקַּח־לָהּ פֶּן נִהְיֶה לָבוּז הִנֵּה שָׁלַחְתִּי הַגְּדִי הַזֶּה וְאַתָּה לֹא מְצָאתָהּ: כד | וַיְהִי כְּמִשְׁלֹשׁ חֳדָשִׁים וַיֻּגַּד לִיהוּדָה לֵאמֹר זָנְתָה תָּמָר כַּלָּתֶךָ וְגַם הִנֵּה הָרָה לִזְנוּנִים וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוּדָה הוֹצִיאוּהָ וְתִשָּׂרֵף: כה הִוא מוּצֵאת וְהִיא שָׁלְחָה

וְהִיא לָא אִתְיְהִיבַת לֵיהּ לְאִנְתּוּ: טו וַחֲזָאָהּ יְהוּדָה וְחַשְׁבָהּ כְּנָפְקַת בָּרָא אֲרֵי כַסְיַאת אַפָּהָא: טו וּסְטָא לְוָתָהּ לְאָרְחָא וַאֲמַר הָבִי כְעַן אֵיעוֹל לְוָתִיךְ אֲרֵי לָא יְדַע אֲרֵי כַלְתֵּיהּ הִיא וַאֲמַרַת מָה תִּתֵּן לִי אֲרֵי תֵּיעוֹל לְוָתִי: יז וַאֲמַר אֲנָא אֶשַׁלַּח גַּדְיָא בַר עִזֵּי מִן עָנָא וַאֲמָרַת אִם תִּתֵּן מַשְׁכּוֹנָא עַד דְּתִשְׁלַח: יח וַאֲמַר מָא מַשְׁכּוֹנָא דִּי אֶתֵּן לָךְ וַאֲמָרַת עִזְקָתָךְ וְשׁוֹשְׁפָּךְ וְחוּטָרָךְ דִּי בִידָךְ וִיהַב לָהּ וְעַל לְוָתָהּ וְעַדְיַאת לֵיהּ: יט וְקָמַת וַאֲזָלַת וְאַעְדְיַאת עֵיפָהּ מִנָּהּ וּלְבִישַׁת לְבוּשֵׁי אַרְמְלוּתָהּ: כ וְשַׁדַּר יְהוּדָה יַת גַּדְיָא בַר עִזֵּי בְּיַד רַחֲמֵיהּ עֲדֻלָּמָאָה לְמֵיסַב מַשְׁכּוֹנָא מִידָּא דְאִתְּתָא וְלָא אַשְׁכְּחָהּ: כא וּשְׁאֵיל יַת אֲנָשֵׁי אַתְרָהּ לְמֵימָר אָן מְקַדְּשְׁתָּא הִיא בְעֵינִין עַל אָרְחָא וַאֲמָרוּ לֵית הָכָא מְקַדְּשְׁתָּא: כב וְתָב לְוַת יְהוּדָה וַאֲמַר לָא אַשְׁכְּחִיתָהּ וְאַף אֲנָשֵׁי אַתְרָא אֲמָרוּ לֵית הָכָא מְקַדְּשְׁתָּא: כג וַאֲמַר יְהוּדָה תִּסַּב לָהּ דִּלְמָא נְהֵי לְחוֹד הָא שַׁדַּרִית גַּדְיָא הָדֵין וְאַתְּ לָא אַשְׁכַּחְתָּהּ: כד וַהֲוָה כִּתְלָתוּת יַרְחַיָּא וְאִתְחַוָּא לִיהוּדָה לְמֵימַר זַנְיַאת תָּמָר כַּלְתָּךְ וְאַף הָא מְעַדְיָא מִזְּנוּתָא וַאֲמַר יְהוּדָה אַפְּקוּהָא וְתִתּוֹקַד: כה הִיא מִתַּפְּקָא וְהִיא

גניס: (טו) ויחשבה לזונה. לפי שיושבת בפרשת דרכים: **כי כסתה פניה.** ולא יכול לרחוקה ולכבילה. ומדרש רבותינו כי כסתה פניה, כשכיסתה בציון חמיה כיתה נעוצה לפיכך לא חשדה: **(טז) ויט אליה אל הדרך.** מדרך שכיסה בה, נטה אל הדרך אשר היא בה, ובלשון לע"ז דשטורני"ר: **הבה נא.** הכיני עצמך ודעתך לכך. כל לשון הבה בלשון הזמנה הוא, חוץ ממקום שיש לתרגמו בלשון נתינה, ואף אותן של הזמנה קרובים ללשון נתינה הם: **(יז) ערבון.** משכון: **(יח) חתמך ופתילך.** עזקתך ושושיפך. טבעת שאתה חותם בה, ושלשלת שאתה מתכשר בה: **ותהר לו.** גבוריס כיולא בו, לדיקוס כיולא בו: **(כא) הקדשה.** מקודשת ומזומנת לזנות: **(כג) תקח לה.** יכיר שלא אתיהיבת ליה לאנתו: טו **ואחזאה.** יהודה וחשבה כנפקת בָּרָא אֲרֵי כַסְיַאת אַפָּהָא: טו וּסְטָא לְוָתָהּ לְאָרְחָא וַאֲמַר הָבִי כְעַן אֵיעוֹל לְוָתִיךְ אֲרֵי לָא יְדַע אֲרֵי כַלְתֵּיהּ הִיא וַאֲמַרַת מָה תִּתֵּן לִי אֲרֵי תֵּיעוֹל לְוָתִי: יז וַאֲמַר אֲנָא אֶשַׁלַּח גַּדְיָא בַר עִזֵּי מִן עָנָא וַאֲמָרַת אִם תִּתֵּן מַשְׁכּוֹנָא עַד דְּתִשְׁלַח: יח וַאֲמַר מָא מַשְׁכּוֹנָא דִּי אֶתֵּן לָךְ וַאֲמָרַת עִזְקָתָךְ וְשׁוֹשְׁפָּךְ וְחוּטָרָךְ דִּי בִידָךְ וִיהַב לָהּ וְעַל לְוָתָהּ וְעַדְיַאת לֵיהּ: יט וְקָמַת וַאֲזָלַת וְאַעְדְיַאת עֵיפָהּ מִנָּהּ וּלְבִישַׁת לְבוּשֵׁי אַרְמְלוּתָהּ: כ וְשַׁדַּר יְהוּדָה יַת גַּדְיָא בַר עִזֵּי בְּיַד רַחֲמֵיהּ עֲדֻלָּמָאָה לְמֵיסַב מַשְׁכּוֹנָא מִידָּא דְאִתְּתָא וְלָא אַשְׁכְּחָהּ: כא וּשְׁאֵיל יַת אֲנָשֵׁי אַתְרָהּ לְמֵימָר אָן מְקַדְּשְׁתָּא הִיא בְעֵינִין עַל אָרְחָא וַאֲמָרוּ לֵית הָכָא מְקַדְּשְׁתָּא: כב וְתָב לְוַת יְהוּדָה וַאֲמַר לָא אַשְׁכְּחִיתָהּ וְאַף אֲנָשֵׁי אַתְרָא אֲמָרוּ לֵית הָכָא מְקַדְּשְׁתָּא: כג וַאֲמַר יְהוּדָה תִּסַּב לָהּ דִּלְמָא נְהֵי לְחוֹד הָא שַׁדַּרִית גַּדְיָא הָדֵין וְאַתְּ לָא אַשְׁכַּחְתָּהּ: כד וַהֲוָה כִּתְלָתוּת יַרְחַיָּא וְאִתְחַוָּא לִיהוּדָה לְמֵימַר זַנְיַאת תָּמָר כַּלְתָּךְ וְאַף הָא מְעַדְיָא מִזְּנוּתָא וַאֲמַר יְהוּדָה אַפְּקוּהָא וְתִתּוֹקַד: כה הִיא מִתַּפְּקָא וְהִיא

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.

1 ב"ר פה, ט 2 נדה ח: 3 אסתר ט, יט

15 *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.* 16 *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?"

17 *He said, "I will send a young goat from the herd."*

"(Only) if you give me some collateral until you send it," she said.

18 *"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).

19 *She got up and went off. She removed her scarf, and put on her widow's clothing.* 20 *Yehudah sent the young goat through his Adulamite friend to take the collateral from the woman's hand, but he did not find her.* 21 *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."

22 *He returned to Yehudah, and he said, "I have not found her, and the people of the place also said, 'No harlot was here.'"*

23 *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."*

24 *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).

אֶל־חָמִיהָ לֵאמֹר לְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־אֵלֶּה לּוֹ אָנֹכִי הָרָה וַתֹּאמֶר
הַכֶּר־נָא לְמִי הַחֹתָמֶת וְהַפְּתִילִים וְהַמַּטֶּה הָאֵלֶּה: כו וַיַּכֶּר
יְהוּדָה וַיֹּאמֶר צָדְקָה מִמֶּנִּי כִּי־עַל־כֵּן לֹא־נְתַתִּיהָ לְשֵׁלָה בְנִי
וְלֹא־יָסַף עוֹד לְדַעְתָּהּ: כז וַיְהִי בְּעֵת לִדְתָּהּ וְהִנֵּה תְאוֹמִים
בְּבִטְנָהּ: כח וַיְהִי בְלִדְתָּהּ וַיִּתֵּן־יָד וַתִּקַּח הַמְיַלֶּדֶת וַתִּקְשֹׁר
עַל־יָדוֹ שָׁנִי לֵאמֹר זֶה יָצָא רִאשֹׁנָה: כט וַיְהִי | כְּמֵשִׁיב יָדוֹ וְהִנֵּה
יָצָא אָחִיו וַתֹּאמֶר מַה־פָּרַצְתָּ עָלֶיךָ פָּרֶץ וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ פָּרֶץ:
ל וְאַחַר יָצָא אָחִיו אֲשֶׁר עַל־יָדוֹ הַשָּׁנִי וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ זָרַח: ס

שִׁלָּחַת לְוַת חֲמוּתָא לְמֵימַר לְגַבַּר דִּי אִלֵּין
דִּילֵיהּ מַנְיָא אֲנָא מְעַדְיָא וַאֲמָרַת אִשְׁתְּמוֹדַע
כְּעַן לְמָן עִזְקָתָא וְשׁוֹשַׁפָּא וְחוּטְרָא הָאִלֵּין:
כו וְאִשְׁתְּמוֹדַע יְהוּדָה וַאֲמַר זַכָּאָה מִנִּי מְעַדְיָא
אֲרֵי עַל כֵּן לָא יְהַבְתָּהּ לְשֵׁלָה בְּרִי וְלָא אוֹסִיף
עוֹד לְמִדְּעָהּ: כז וַהֲוָה בְּעִדַּן מֵילְדָהּ וְהָא
תְּיוֹמִין בִּמְעָהָא: כח וַהֲוָה בְּמֵילְדָהּ וְיַהַב יְדָא
וּנְסִיבַת חַיְתָא וּקְטָרַת עַל יְדֵיהּ זְהוֹרִיתָא
לְמֵימַר דֵּין נְפַק קַדְמָאָה: כט וַהֲוָה כַּד אֲתֵיב
יְדֵיהּ וְהָא נְפַק אֲחוּהִי וַאֲמָרַת מָא תְקוֹף סַנִּי
עֲלָךְ לְמִתְקָף וּקְרָא שְׁמֵיהּ פָּרֶץ: ל וּבָתַר כֵּן
נְפַק אֲחוּהִי דִּי עַל יְדֵיהּ זְהוֹרִיתָא וּקְרָא

רש"י

פניו, ולומר ממך אני מעוברת, אלא לאיש אשר אלה לו, אמרה, אם יודה מעצמו, יודה, ואם לאו, יסרפוני ואל אלבין פניו. מכאן אמרו, טוב לו להמסר שיפילוהו לכבשן האש ואל ילבין פני חבירו ברבים: **הכר נא**. אין נא אלא לשון בקשה, ככר נא בוראך, ואל תחמד שלש נפשות: (כו) **צדקה**. בדברים: **ממני**. היא מעוברת. ורז"ל דרשו, שילתה בת קול ואמרה, ממני ומאתי ילאו הדברים, לפי שהיתה נוטה בצנעה חמיה, גזרתי שילאו ממנה מלכים, ומשבט יהודה גזרתי להעמיד מלכים בישראל: **כי על כן לא נתתיה**. כי בדין עשתה, על אשר לא נתתיה לשלה בני: **ולא יסף עוד**. יש מומרים לא הוסיף, ויש מומרים לא פסק, (וחבירו גבי אלמד ומידד, ולא יספו, ומתרגמינן ולא פסקו): (כז) **בעת לדתה**. וכרבקה הוא אומר וימלאו ימיה ללדת, להלן למלאים וכאן לחסרים: **והנה תאומים**. מלא, ולהלן תומים חסר, לפי שהאחד רשע, אבל אלו שניהם צדיקים: (כח) **ויתן יד**. כולית האחד ידו לחוץ, ולאחר שקשרה על ידו השני, החזירה: (כט) **פרצת**. חזקת עליך חוזק: (ל) **אשר על ידו השני**. אלבש ידות כתובות כאן, כנגד אלבש הרמיס שמעל עכן שילח ממנו. ויש מומרים כנגד אלבש דבריס שלקח אלדת, שגער, ושני התיכות כסף של מאתים שקלים, ולשון זכר[1]: **ויקרא שמו זרח**.

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" (הֻפְקֶר). 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.

1 ב"ר פה, יד * ראה לקו"ש ח"ה ע' 192, הערה 54.

[25] *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?"*

[26] *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 *Then, when she was giving birth—look!—there were twins in her womb.*

[28] *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."* [29] *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.

[30] *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. 185*ff*.)

Sparks of Chasidus

According 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 הַגָּדֵר**), 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 הוּרַד מִצְרַיְמָה וַיִּקְנֵהוּ פּוֹטִיפַר סְרִיס פַּרְעֹה שַׂר הַטַּבָּחִים אִישׁ מִצְרִי מִיַּד הַיִּשְׁמְעֵאלִים אֲשֶׁר הוֹרִדֻהוּ שָׁמָּה: ב וַיְהִי יְהוָה אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיְהִי אִישׁ מַצְלִיחַ וַיְהִי בְּבֵית אֲדֹנָיו הַמִּצְרִי: ג וַיַּרְא אֲדֹנָיו כִּי יְהוָה אִתּוֹ וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר־הוּא עֹשֶׂה יְהוָה מַצְלִיחַ בְּיָדוֹ: ד וַיִּמְצָא יוֹסֵף חֵן בְּעֵינָיו וַיְשָׁרֶת אֹתוֹ וַיַּפְקִדֵהוּ עַל־בֵּיתוֹ וְכָל־יֶשׁ־לוֹ נָתַן בְּיָדוֹ: ה וַיְהִי מֵאָז הִפְקִיד אֹתוֹ בְּבֵיתוֹ וְעַל כָּל־אֲשֶׁר יֶשׁ־לוֹ וַיְבָרֶךְ יְהוָה אֶת־בֵּית הַמִּצְרִי בִּגְלַל יוֹסֵף וַיְהִי בִּרְכַּת יְהוָה בְּכָל־אֲשֶׁר יֶשׁ־לוֹ בַּבַּיִת וּבַשָּׂדֶה: ו וַיַּעֲזֹב כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ בְּיַד־יוֹסֵף וְלֹא־יָדַע אִתּוֹ מְאוּמָה כִּי אִם־הַלֶּחֶם אֲשֶׁר־הוּא אוֹכֵל וַיְהִי יוֹסֵף יְפֵה־תֹאַר וִיפֵה מַרְאֶה: [ששי] ז וַיְהִי אַחַר הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַתִּשָּׂא אֵשֶׁת־אֲדֹנָיו אֶת־עֵינֶיהָ אֶל־יוֹסֵף וַתֹּאמֶר שִׁכְבָה עִמִּי: ח וַיְמָאֵן | וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־אֵשֶׁת אֲדֹנָיו הֵן אֲדֹנִי לֹא־יָדַע אִתִּי מַה־בַּבָּיִת וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר־יֶשׁ־לוֹ נָתַן בְּיָדִי: ט אֵינֶנּוּ גָדוֹל בַּבַּיִת הַזֶּה מִמֶּנִּי וְלֹא־חָשַׂךְ מִמֶּנִּי מְאוּמָה כִּי אִם־אוֹתָךְ בַּאֲשֶׁר אַתְּ־אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֵיךְ אֶעֱשֶׂה הָרָעָה הַגְּדֹלָה הַזֹּאת וְחָטָאתִי לֵאלֹהִים: י וַיְהִי כְּדַבְּרָהּ אֶל־יוֹסֵף יוֹם | יוֹם וְלֹא־שָׁמַע אֵלֶיהָ לִשְׁכַּב אֶצְלָהּ לִהְיוֹת עִמָּהּ: יא וַיְהִי כְּהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וַיָּבֹא הַבַּיְתָה לַעֲשׂוֹת

שְׁמֵיהּ זָרַח: א וְיוֹסֵף אִתְּחַת לְמִצְרָיִם וּזְבָנֵיהּ פּוֹטִיפַר רַבָּא דְּפַרְעֹה רַב קָטוֹלַיָּא גַּבְרָא מִצְרָאָה מֵידָא דַּעֲרָבָאֵי דִּי אַחֲתוֹהִי לְתַמָּן: ב וַהֲוָה מֵימְרָא דַּיָּי בְּסַעֲדֵיהּ דְּיוֹסֵף וַהֲוָה גְּבַר מַצְלָח וַהֲוָה בְּבֵית רִבּוֹנֵיהּ מִצְרָאָה: ג וַחֲזָא רִבּוֹנֵיהּ אֲרֵי מֵימְרָא דַּיָּי בְּסַעֲדֵיהּ וְכָל דִּי הוּא עָבֵד יְיָ מַצְלַח בִּידֵיהּ: ד וְאַשְׁכַּח יוֹסֵף רַחֲמִין בְּעֵינוֹהִי וְשַׁמֵּשׁ יָתֵיהּ וּמַנֵּיהּ עַל בֵּיתֵיהּ וְכָל דְּאִית לֵיהּ מְסַר בִּידֵיהּ: ה וַהֲוָה מֵעִדַּן דְּמַנֵּי יָתֵיהּ בְּבֵיתֵיהּ וְעַל כָּל דִּי אִית לֵיהּ וּבָרִיךְ יְיָ יַת בֵּית מִצְרָאָה בְּדִיל יוֹסֵף וַהֲוָה בִּרְכְתָא דַּיָּי בְּכָל דִּי אִית לֵיהּ בְּבֵיתָא וּבְחַקְלָא: ו וּשְׁבַק כָּל דִּי לֵיהּ בִּידָא דְיוֹסֵף וְלָא יְדַע עִמֵּיהּ מִדַּעַם אֱלָהִין לַחְמָא דִּי הוּא אָכִיל וַהֲוָה יוֹסֵף שַׁפִּיר בְּרֵיוָא וְיָאֵי בְּחֶזְוָא: ז וַהֲוָה בָּתַר פִּתְגָמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין וּזְקָפַת אִתַּת רִבּוֹנֵיהּ יַת עֵינָהָא לְיוֹסֵף וַאֲמָרַת שְׁכוּב עִמִּי: ח וְסָרֵיב וַאֲמַר לְאִתַּת רִבּוֹנֵיהּ הָא רִבּוֹנִי לָא יְדַע עִמִּי מָא דִּבְבֵיתָא וְכָל דִּי אִית לֵיהּ מְסַר בִּידִי: ט לֵיתוֹהִי רַב בְּבֵיתָא הָדֵין מִנִּי וְלָא מְנַע מִנִּי מִדַּעַם אֱלָהִין יָתָךְ בְּדִיל דְּאַתְּ אִתַּתֵיהּ וְאֵיכְדִין אַעְבֵּיד בִּשְׁתָּא רַבְּתָא הָדָא וְאֵיחוֹב קֳדָם יְיָ: י וַהֲוָה כַּד מַלִּילַת עִם יוֹסֵף יוֹם יוֹם וְלָא קַבֵּל מִנַּהּ לְמִשְׁכַּב לְוָתַהּ לְמֶהֱוֵי עִמָּהּ: יא וַהֲוָה כְּיוֹמָא הָדֵין וְעַל לְבֵיתָא לְמִבְדַּק בְּכִתְבֵי חוּשְׁבְּנֵיהּ וְלֵית אֱנַשׁ מֵאֱנָשֵׁי בֵּיתָא תַּמָּן

לט״י

על שם זריחת מרחית השני: (ה) **ויוסף הורד**. חוזר לענין ראשון, אלא שהפסיק בו כדי לסמוך ירידתו של יהודה למכירתו של יוסף, לומר לך שבשביל הוריודו מגדולתו. ועוד, כדי לסמוך מעשה תמר אל פוטיפר למעשה תמר, לומר לך, מה זו לשם שמים אף זו לשם שמים, שראתה בהנטרולוגין שלה שעתידה להעמיד בניס ממנו, ואינה יודעת אם ממנה אם מבתה: (ג) **כי ה' אתו**. שם שמים שגור בפיו: (ד) **וכל יש לו**. כרי לשון קלר, חסר חשבון: (ו) **ולא ידע אתו מאומה**. לא היה נותן לבו לכלום: **כי אם הלחם**. היא אשתו, אלא שדבר בלשון נקייה: **ויהי יוסף יפה תאר**.

כיון שראתה עלמו מושל, התחיל אוכל ושותה ומשחק בשערו, אמר הקב"ה, אביך מתאבל ואתה משחק בשערך, אני מגרה בך את הדוב. מיד: (ז) **ותשא אשת אדוניו וגו'**. כל מקום שנאמר אחר, סמוך: (ט) **וחטאתי לאלהים**. בני נח נצטוו על העריות: (י) **לשכב אצלה**. לפילו בלא תשמיש: **להיות עמה**. לטולם הבא: (יא) **ויהי כהיום הזה**. כלומר, ויהי כאחר הגיע יום מיומד, יום לאוק, יום היד שלהם, שהלכו כולם לבית עבודת אלילים, אמרה, אין לי יום הגון להזקק ליוסף כהיום הזה, אמרה להם, חולה אני ואיני יכולה ליהך: **לעשות מלאכתו**. רב ושמואל, אד אמר מלאכתו ממש, ואד

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

Yosef 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.

[2] God was with Yosef, and he became a successful person (while) he was in the house of his Egyptian master. [3] His master saw that (the Name of) God was (always) on his (lips), and that whatever he put his hand to, God made successful. [4] 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.

[5] 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. [6] 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

[7] Then, after these words (of God), his master's wife cast her eyes on Yosef, and she said, "Sleep with me!"

[8] 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. [9] 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?"

[10] 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.

[11] 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 Yitzchak 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)

מְלַאכְתּוֹ וְאֵין אִישׁ מֵאַנְשֵׁי הַבַּיִת שָׁם בַּבָּיִת: יב וַתִּתְפְּשֵׂהוּ בִּבְגָדוֹ לֵאמֹר שִׁכְבָה עִמִּי וַיַּעֲזֹב בִּגְדוֹ בְּיָדָהּ וַיָּנָס וַיֵּצֵא הַחוּצָה: יג וַיְהִי כִּרְאוֹתָהּ כִּי־עָזַב בִּגְדוֹ בְּיָדָהּ וַיָּנָס הַחוּצָה: יד וַתִּקְרָא לְאַנְשֵׁי בֵיתָהּ וַתֹּאמֶר לָהֶם לֵאמֹר רְאוּ הֵבִיא לָנוּ אִישׁ עִבְרִי לְצַחֵק בָּנוּ בָּא אֵלַי לִשְׁכַּב עִמִּי וָאֶקְרָא בְקוֹל גָּדוֹל: טו וַיְהִי כְּשָׁמְעוֹ כִּי־הֲרִימֹתִי קוֹלִי וָאֶקְרָא וַיַּעֲזֹב בִּגְדוֹ אֶצְלִי וַיָּנָס וַיֵּצֵא הַחוּצָה: טז וַתַּנַּח בִּגְדוֹ אֶצְלָהּ עַד־בּוֹא אֲדֹנָיו אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ: יז וַתְּדַבֵּר אֵלָיו כַּדִּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה לֵאמֹר בָּא אֵלַי הָעֶבֶד הָעִבְרִי אֲשֶׁר־הֵבֵאתָ לָּנוּ לְצַחֵק בִּי: יח וַיְהִי כַּהֲרִימִי קוֹלִי וָאֶקְרָא וַיַּעֲזֹב בִּגְדוֹ אֶצְלִי וַיָּנָס הַחוּצָה: יט וַיְהִי כְּשָׁמַע אֲדֹנָיו אֶת־דִּבְרֵי אִשְׁתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר דִּבְּרָה אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר כַּדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה עָשָׂה לִי עַבְדֶּךָ וַיִּחַר אַפּוֹ: כ וַיִּקַּח אֲדֹנֵי יוֹסֵף אֹתוֹ וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ אֶל־בֵּית הַסֹּהַר מְקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־אסורי [ק׳ אֲסִירֵי] הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲסוּרִים וַיְהִי־שָׁם בְּבֵית הַסֹּהַר: כא וַיְהִי יְהוָה אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיֵּט אֵלָיו חֶסֶד וַיִּתֵּן חִנּוֹ בְּעֵינֵי שַׂר בֵּית־הַסֹּהַר: כב וַיִּתֵּן שַׂר בֵּית־הַסֹּהַר בְּיַד־יוֹסֵף אֵת כָּל־הָאֲסִירִם אֲשֶׁר בְּבֵית הַסֹּהַר וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר עֹשִׂים שָׁם הוּא הָיָה עֹשֶׂה: כג אֵין | שַׂר בֵּית־הַסֹּהַר רֹאֶה אֶת־כָּל־מְאוּמָה בְּיָדוֹ בַּאֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אִתּוֹ וַאֲשֶׁר־הוּא עֹשֶׂה יְהוָה מַצְלִיחַ: פ [שביעי] מ א וַיְהִי אַחַר הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה חָטְאוּ מַשְׁקֵה מֶלֶךְ־מִצְרַיִם וְהָאֹפֶה לַאדֹנֵיהֶם לְמֶלֶךְ מִצְרָיִם: ב וַיִּקְצֹף פַּרְעֹה עַל שְׁנֵי סָרִיסָיו עַל שַׂר הַמַּשְׁקִים וְעַל

בְּבֵיתָא: יב וַאֲחַדְתֵּיהּ בִּלְבוּשֵׁיהּ לְמֵימַר שְׁכוּב עִמִּי וְשַׁבְקֵיהּ לִלְבוּשֵׁיהּ בִּידָהּ וַעֲרַק וּנְפַק לְשׁוּקָא: יג וַהֲוָה כַּד חֲזַת אֲרֵי שַׁבְקֵיהּ לִלְבוּשֵׁיהּ בִּידָהּ וַעֲרַק לְשׁוּקָא: יד וּקְרַת לְאֶנָשֵׁי בֵיתָהּ וַאֲמַרַת לְהוֹן לְמֵימַר חֲזוֹ אַיְתִי לָנָא גַּבְרָא עִבְרָאָה לְחַיָּכָא בָנָא עַל לְוָתִי לְמִשְׁכַּב עִמִּי וּקְרֵית בְּקָלָא רָמָא: טו וַהֲוָה כַּד שְׁמַע אֲרֵי אֲרֵימִית קָלִי וּקְרֵית וְשַׁבְקֵיהּ לִלְבוּשֵׁיהּ לְוָתִי וַעֲרַק וּנְפַק לְשׁוּקָא: טז וְאַחְתְּתֵיהּ לִלְבוּשֵׁיהּ לְוָתָהּ עַד דְּעַל רִבּוֹנֵיהּ לְבֵיתֵיהּ: יז וּמַלֵּילַת עִמֵּיהּ כְּפִתְגָמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין לְמֵימַר עַל לְוָתִי עַבְדָּא עִבְרָאָה דִּי אַיְתֵיתָא לָנָא לְחַיָּכָא בִּי: יח וַהֲוָה כַּד אֲרֵימִית קָלִי וּקְרֵית וְשַׁבְקֵיהּ לִלְבוּשֵׁיהּ לְוָתִי וַעֲרַק לְשׁוּקָא: יט וַהֲוָה כַּד שְׁמַע רִבּוֹנֵיהּ יַת פִּתְגָמֵי אִתְּתֵיהּ דִּי מַלֵּילַת עִמֵּיהּ לְמֵימַר כְּפִתְגָמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין עֲבַד לִי עַבְדָּךְ וּתְקִיף רָגְזֵיהּ: כ וּדְבַר רִבּוֹנֵיהּ דְּיוֹסֵף יָתֵיהּ וְיַהֲבֵיהּ בְּבֵית אֲסִירֵי אַתְרָא דִּי אֲסִירֵי מַלְכָּא אֲסִירִין וַהֲוָה תַמָּן בְּבֵית אֲסִירֵי: כא וַהֲוָה מֵימְרָא דַיְיָ בְּסַעֲדֵיהּ דְּיוֹסֵף וּנְגַד לֵיהּ חִסְדָּא וְיַהֲבֵיהּ לְרַחֲמִין בְּעֵינֵי רַב בֵּית אֲסִירֵי: כב וְיַהֲב רַב בֵּית אֲסִירֵי בִּידָא דְיוֹסֵף יַת כָּל אֲסִירַיָּא דִּי בְּבֵית אֲסִירֵי וְיַת כָּל דִּי עָבְדִין תַּמָּן בְּמֵימְרֵיהּ הֲוָה מִתְעֲבִיד: כג לֵית רַב בֵּית אֲסִירֵי חָזֵי יַת כָּל סָרְחָן בִּידֵיהּ בְּדִי מֵימְרָא דַיְיָ בְּסַעֲדֵיהּ וְדִי הוּא עָבֵד יְיָ מַצְלָח: א וַהֲוָה בָּתַר פִּתְגָמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין סָרְחוּ שָׁקְיָא דְמַלְכָּא דְמִצְרַיִם וְנַחְתּוֹמָא לְרִבּוֹנֵיהוֹן לְמַלְכָּא דְמִצְרָיִם: ב וּרְגַז פַּרְעֹה עַל תְּרֵין

לט״ו

חמר לעצות נרכיו עמה, אלא שנראית לו דמות דיוקנו של אביו וכו׳, כדאיתא במסכת סוטה: (יד) **ראו הביא לנו**. כרי זה לשון קללה, כדניח גנו, ולא פירש מי הביאו, ועל בעלה אומרת כן: **עברי**. מעבר הנהר, מצד בניו של עבר[1]: (טז) **אדניו**. של יוסף: (יז) **בא אלי**. לנחק בי, העבד העברי אשר הבאת לנו: (יט) **ויהי כשמוע אדניו וגו׳**. בשעת תשמיש אמרה לו כן, וזהו שאמרה, כדברים האלה עשה לי עבדך, עניני תשמיש כאלה: (כא) **ויט**

אליו חסד. שהיה מקובל לכל רואיו, לשון כלה נאה וחסודה שבמשנה: (כב) **הוא היה עושה**. כתרגומו, במימריה הוה מתעביד: (כג) **באשר ה׳ אתו**. בשביל שה׳ אתו: (א) **אחר הדברים האלה**. לפי שהרגילה אותה אלו, ועל ידיכם: **חטאו**. זה נמלא זבוב בפיילי פוטיפרין שלו, וזה נמלא לרוב בגלוסקין שלו: **והאופה**. את

TORAS MENACHEM

Even after the above explanation, we are still left with the question why Potifar'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?

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.

1 ב״ר מב, ז

none of the members of the house were there in the house (since they had all gone to the temple of idolatry). [12] *She grabbed him by his clothes, saying, "Sleep with me!"*

Yosef dashed off and went outside, leaving his clothes in her hand.

[13] *Then, when she saw that he had left his clothes in her hand and had dashed outside,* [14] *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,* [15] *and so when he heard that I raised my voice and screamed, he left his clothes with me, and dashed off outside."*

[16] *She left his clothes beside her, until (Yosef's) master came home.* [17] *Then she told him the same thing, saying, "The Hebrew slave that you brought us came to me to deprave me.* [18] *And then, when I raised my voice and screamed, he left his clothes with me, and dashed off outside."*

[19] *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.* [20] *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, [21] *God was with Yosef, and He granted him a favor(able image), and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison's warden.* [22] *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).* [23] *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

Then, 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. [2] *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

From 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)

שַׂר הָאוֹפִים: ג וַיִּתֵּן אֹתָם בְּמִשְׁמַר בֵּית שַׂר הַטַּבָּחִים אֶל־בֵּית הַסֹּהַר מְקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יוֹסֵף אָסוּר שָׁם: ד וַיִּפְקֹד שַׂר הַטַּבָּחִים אֶת־יוֹסֵף אִתָּם וַיְשָׁרֶת אֹתָם וַיִּהְיוּ יָמִים בְּמִשְׁמָר: ה וַיַּחַלְמוּ חֲלוֹם שְׁנֵיהֶם אִישׁ חֲלֹמוֹ בְּלַיְלָה אֶחָד אִישׁ כְּפִתְרוֹן חֲלֹמוֹ הַמַּשְׁקֶה וְהָאֹפֶה אֲשֶׁר לְמֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר אֲסוּרִים בְּבֵית הַסֹּהַר: ו וַיָּבֹא אֲלֵיהֶם יוֹסֵף בַּבֹּקֶר וַיַּרְא אֹתָם וְהִנָּם זֹעֲפִים: ז וַיִּשְׁאַל אֶת־סְרִיסֵי פַרְעֹה אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ בְּמִשְׁמַר בֵּית אֲדֹנָיו לֵאמֹר מַדּוּעַ פְּנֵיכֶם רָעִים הַיּוֹם: ח וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו חֲלוֹם חָלַמְנוּ וּפֹתֵר אֵין אֹתוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם יוֹסֵף הֲלוֹא לֵאלֹהִים פִּתְרֹנִים סַפְּרוּ־נָא לִי: ט וַיְסַפֵּר שַׂר־הַמַּשְׁקִים אֶת־חֲלֹמוֹ לְיוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ בַּחֲלוֹמִי וְהִנֵּה־גֶפֶן לְפָנָי: י וּבַגֶּפֶן שְׁלֹשָׁה שָׂרִיגִם וְהִוא כְּפֹרַחַת עָלְתָה נִצָּהּ הִבְשִׁילוּ אַשְׁכְּלֹתֶיהָ עֲנָבִים: יא וְכוֹס פַּרְעֹה בְּיָדִי וָאֶקַּח אֶת־הָעֲנָבִים וָאֶשְׁחַט אֹתָם אֶל־כּוֹס פַּרְעֹה וָאֶתֵּן אֶת־הַכּוֹס עַל־כַּף פַּרְעֹה: יב וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יוֹסֵף זֶה פִּתְרֹנוֹ שְׁלֹשֶׁת הַשָּׂרִגִים שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים הֵם: יג בְּעוֹד | שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים יִשָּׂא פַרְעֹה אֶת־רֹאשֶׁךָ וַהֲשִׁיבְךָ עַל־כַּנֶּךָ וְנָתַתָּ כוֹס־פַּרְעֹה בְּיָדוֹ כַּמִּשְׁפָּט הָרִאשׁוֹן אֲשֶׁר הָיִיתָ מַשְׁקֵהוּ: יד כִּי אִם־זְכַרְתַּנִי אִתְּךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר יִיטַב לָךְ וְעָשִׂיתָ־נָּא עִמָּדִי חָסֶד וְהִזְכַּרְתַּנִי אֶל־פַּרְעֹה וְהוֹצֵאתַנִי מִן־הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה: טו כִּי־גָנֹב גֻּנַּבְתִּי מֵאֶרֶץ הָעִבְרִים וְגַם־פֹּה לֹא־עָשִׂיתִי מְאוּמָה כִּי־שָׂמוּ אֹתִי בַּבּוֹר: טז וַיַּרְא שַׂר־הָאֹפִים כִּי טוֹב פָּתָר וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־יוֹסֵף אַף־אֲנִי בַּחֲלוֹמִי וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה סַלֵּי חֹרִי עַל־רֹאשִׁי: יז וּבַסַּל הָעֶלְיוֹן

רַבְרְבָנוֹהִי עַל רַב שָׁקֵי וְעַל רַב נַחְתּוֹמֵי: ג וְיַהַב יַתְהוֹן בְּמַטְרָא בֵּית רַב קְטוֹלָיָא לְבֵית אֲסִירֵי אַתְרָא דִּי יוֹסֵף אֲסִיר תַּמָּן: ד וּמַנִּי רַב קְטוֹלָיָא יַת יוֹסֵף עִמְּהוֹן וְשַׁמֵּשׁ יַתְהוֹן וַהֲווֹ יוֹמִין בְּמַטְרָא: ה וַחֲלָמוּ חֶלְמָא תַּרְוֵיהוֹן גְּבַר חֶלְמֵיהּ בְּלֵילְיָא חַד גְּבַר כְּפוּשְׁרַן חֶלְמֵיהּ שָׁקְיָא וְנַחְתּוֹמָא דִּי לְמַלְכָּא דְמִצְרַיִם דִּי אֲסִירִין בְּבֵית אֲסִירֵי: ו וַאֲתָא לְוָתְהוֹן יוֹסֵף בְּצַפְרָא וַחֲזָא יַתְהוֹן וְהָא אִנּוּן נְסִיסִין: ז וּשְׁאֵיל יַת רַבְרְבֵי פַרְעֹה דִּי עִמֵּיהּ בְּמַטְרָא בֵּית רְבוּנֵיהּ לְמֵימַר מָא דֵּין אַפֵּיכוֹן בִּישִׁין יוֹמָא דֵין: ח וַאֲמָרוּ לֵיהּ חֶלְמָא חֲלֵמְנָא וּפָשַׁר לֵית לֵיהּ וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן יוֹסֵף הֲלָא מִן קֳדָם יְיָ פּוּשְׁרָן חֶלְמַיָּא אִשְׁתָּעוּ כְעַן לִי: ט וְאִשְׁתָּעִי רַב שָׁקֵי יַת חֶלְמֵיהּ לְיוֹסֵף וַאֲמַר בְּחֶלְמִי וְהָא גוּפְנָא קֳדָמָי: י וּבְגוּפְנָא תְּלָתָא שִׁבְשִׁין וְהִיא כַּד אַפְרַחַת אַפֵּיקַת לַבְלְבִין וַאֲנִיצַת נִץ בַּשְׁלוּ אַתְכְּלָתְהָא עִנְבִין: יא וְכָסָא דְפַרְעֹה בִּידִי וּנְסֵיבִית יַת עִנְבָיָא וְעַצָרִית יַתְהוֹן לְכָסָא דְפַרְעֹה וְיָהֲבִית יַת כָּסָא עַל יְדָא דְפַרְעֹה: יב וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ יוֹסֵף דֵּין פּוּשְׁרָנֵיהּ תְּלָתָא שִׁבְשִׁין תְּלָתָא יוֹמִין אִנּוּן: יג בְּסוֹף תְּלָתָא יוֹמִין יַדְכַּרְנָךְ פַּרְעֹה יַת רֵישָׁךְ וְיָתֵיבִנָּךְ עַל שְׁמוּשָׁךְ וְתִתֵּן כָּסָא דְפַרְעֹה בִּידֵיהּ כְּהַלְכְתָא קַדְמָאָה דִּי הֲוֵיתָא מַשְׁקֵי לֵיהּ: יד אֱלָהֵין תִּדְכְּרִינַנִּי עִמָּךְ כַּד ייֵיטַב לָךְ וְתַעְבֵּיד כְּעַן עִמִּי טִיבוּ וְתִדְכַּר עֲלַי קֳדָם פַּרְעֹה וְתַפְּקִינַנִּי מִן בֵּית אֲסִירָא הָדֵין: טו אֲרֵי מִגְנַב גְּנֵבְנָא מֵאַרַע עִבְרָאֵי וְאַף הָכָא לָא עֲבָדִית מִדְּעַם אֲרֵי שַׁוִּיאוּ יָתִי בְּבֵית אֲסִירֵי: טז וַחֲזָא רַב נַחְתּוֹמֵי אֲרֵי יָאוּת פְּשָׁר וַאֲמַר לְיוֹסֵף אַף אֲנָא בְּחֶלְמִי וְהָא תְּלָתָא סַלִּין דְּחִירוּ עַל רֵישִׁי: יז וּבְסַלָּא עִלָּאָה מִכֹּל

רש"י

פת כמלך, ומין לשון תפייה תלמ בפת, ובלע"ז פיסטו"ר: (ד) **ויפקד שר הטבחים** וגו'. להיות מתס: **ויהיו ימים במשמר**. סגיס עשר חדש: (ה) **ויחלמו חלום שניהם**. ויחלמו סגיסם חלום, זכו פשוטו. ומדרשו, כל אחד חלם חלום סגיסם, שחלם את חלומו ופתרון חבירו, וזה שנאמר וירא סר המשקים כי טוב פתר: **איש כפתרון חלומו**. כל אחד חלם חלום הדומה לפתרון הנתיד לבא עליהם: (ו) **זעפים**. עגמים, כמו סר וזעף[1], זעף כי חשך[2]: (י) **שריגים**. זמורות מרוכות שקורין וידי"ן: **והיא כפרחה**. דומה לפורחת והיא כפורחת, נדמה לי בחלומי כאלו היא פורחת, ואחר כפרח עלתה נצה ונעשה סמדר, משפיופי"ר בלע"ז, ואחר כך הבשילו, והיא כד הבשילו אתכלתה ענבין: (יא) **וכוס פרעה בידי**. סליט על גריס קלופיס חורין חורין, ובמקומנו יש הרבה, ודרך מוכרי פת בסנין שקורין חובלי"ם, לתחב בחוטן

מפרחת מפיקת לבלבין, עד כאן תרגום של פורחת. ען גדול מפרח, כדכתיב ובוסר גומל יהיה נלה[3], וכתיב ויוצץ פרח, והדר ויצץ ציץ[4]: (יז) **ואשחט**. כתרגומו ועלירית, והרבה יש בלשון משנה: (יח) **שלשת ימים הם**. סימן הוא לך לשלשת ימים. ויש מדרשי אגדה הרבה[5]: (יג) **ישא פרעה את ראשך**. לשון חשבון, כשיפקוד שאר עבדיו לשרת לפניו בסעודה, יזכה אותך עמהם: **בנך**. בסיס שלך ומושבך: (יד) **כי אם זכרתני אתך**. אשר אם זכרתני אתך, מאחר שייטב לך בפתרוני: **ועשית נא עמדי חסד**. יען גם אלך לשון בקשה: (טז) **סלי חורי**. סליט של גריס קלופיס חורין חורין,

1 מלכים־א כ, ד 2 מיכה ז, ט 3 ישעיה יח, ה 4 במדבר יז, כד 5 חולין צב.

chief butler and the chief baker, [3] and he placed them into the custody of the chief butcher's house, in the prison where Yosef was held. [4] The chief butcher assigned Yosef (to be) with them, and he attended to them. They were in custody for (many) days, (a whole year).

[5] 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.

[6] Yosef came to them in the morning. He saw them and—look!—they were depressed. [7] 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?"

[8] 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)."

[9] The chief butler told his dream to Yosef. He said to him, "In my dream—look!—a vine was before me. [10] On the vine were three tendrils. It seemed to be blossoming, and its buds came out. (Then) its clusters ripened into grapes."

[11] "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."

[12] Yosef said to him, "This is its interpretation: the three tendrils are three days. [13] 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."

[14] "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. [15] 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."

[16] 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. [17] 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)

מִכֹּל מַאֲכַל פַּרְעֹה מַעֲשֵׂה אֹפֶה וְהָעוֹף אֹכֵל אֹתָם מִן־הַסַּל
מֵעַל רֹאשִׁי: יח וַיַּעַן יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר זֶה פִּתְרֹנוֹ שְׁלֹשֶׁת הַסַּלִּים
שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים הֵם: יט בְּעוֹד | שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים יִשָּׂא פַרְעֹה אֶת־
רֹאשְׁךָ מֵעָלֶיךָ וְתָלָה אוֹתְךָ עַל־עֵץ וְאָכַל הָעוֹף אֶת־בְּשָׂרְךָ
מֵעָלֶיךָ: [מפטיר] כ וַיְהִי | בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי יוֹם הֻלֶּדֶת אֶת־פַּרְעֹה
וַיַּעַשׂ מִשְׁתֶּה לְכָל־עֲבָדָיו וַיִּשָּׂא אֶת־רֹאשׁ | שַׂר הַמַּשְׁקִים
וְאֶת־רֹאשׁ שַׂר הָאֹפִים בְּתוֹךְ עֲבָדָיו: כא וַיָּשֶׁב אֶת־שַׂר
הַמַּשְׁקִים עַל־מַשְׁקֵהוּ וַיִּתֵּן הַכּוֹס עַל־כַּף פַּרְעֹה: כב וְאֶת שַׂר
הָאֹפִים תָּלָה כַּאֲשֶׁר פָּתַר לָהֶם יוֹסֵף: כג וְלֹא־זָכַר שַׂר־
הַמַּשְׁקִים אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיִּשְׁכָּחֵהוּ: פ פ פ

מֵיכַל פַּרְעֹה עוֹבַד נַחְתּוֹם וְעוֹפָא אָכֵיל
יַתְהוֹן מִן סַלָּא מֵעִלַּוֵי רֵישִׁי: יח וַאֲתֵיב יוֹסֵף
וַאֲמַר דֵּין פּוּשְׁרָנֵיהּ תְּלָתָא סַלִּין תְּלָתָא יוֹמִין
אִנּוּן: יט בְּסוֹף תְּלָתָא יוֹמִין יַעֲדֵי פַּרְעֹה יַת
רֵישָׁךְ מִנָּךְ וְיִצְלוֹב יָתָךְ עַל צְלִיבָא וְייכוֹל
עוֹפָא יַת בִּשְׂרָךְ מִנָּךְ: כ וַהֲוָה בְּיוֹמָא תְּלִיתָאָה
יוֹמָא בֵּית וַלְדָא דְּפַרְעֹה וַעֲבַד מִשְׁתְּיָא לְכָל
עַבְדּוֹהִי וְאִדְכַּר יַת רֵישׁ רַב שָׁקֵי וְיַת רֵישׁ רַב
נַחְתּוֹמֵי בְּגוֹ עַבְדּוֹהִי: כא וַאֲתֵיב יַת רַב שָׁקֵי עַל
שַׁקְיוּתֵיהּ וִיהַב כָּסָּא עַל יְדָא דְּפַרְעֹה: כב וְיַת
רַב נַחְתּוֹמֵי צְלָב כְּמָא דִי פָשַׁר לְהוֹן יוֹסֵף:
כג וְלָא דְכִיר רַב שָׁקֵי יַת יוֹסֵף וְאַנְשֵׁיהּ: פ פ פ

קי״ב פסוקים, יב״ק סימן.

רס״י

סליס: (כ) **יום הלדת את פרעה.** יוס ליזתו, וקורין לו יוס גיומסיא. ולמון הולדת, לפי שמין הולד נולד חלש על ידי מחריס, שמחיה מילדת מת המשה, ועל כן המיה נקראת מילדת, וכן ומולדותיך ביום הולדת אותך[1], וכן מחרי הוכמם את הנגע[2], שכיבוסו על ידי מחריס: **וישא את ראש וגו׳.** מנאם עס שמר עבדיו, שהיה מוכה המערתיס שיערתו לו בסעודתו, וזכר את חלו בתוכם, כמו שמו את רחש, לשון מנין: (כג) **ולא זכר שר המשקים.** בו ביום: **וישכחהו.** לאחר מכאן, מפני שחלה בו יוסף לזכרו, הוזקק להיות חסור עוד שתי שניס, שנאמר מקרי הגבר אשר שם כי מבטחו ולא פנה אל רהביס[3], ולא בטח על מלריס הקרויס רהב:

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

1 יחזקאל טז, ד 2 ויקרא יג, נה 3 תהלים מ, ה

of all Pharaoh's foods, made by a baker, and the birds were eating them from the basket on top of my head."

[18] *Yosef replied and said, "This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days.* [19] *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 [20] *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.* [21] *He restored the chief butler to his (position as) butler, and (the butler) placed the cup on Pharaoh's palm.* [22] *And, just as Yosef had predicted, he hanged the chief baker.*

[23] *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* (יְמִים = יְמִין). The *Zohar* (I 62b) notes that this Aramaic word, יְמִין, is identical to the Hebrew word יָמִין, 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 הַיָּמִין ("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)

מא א וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים וּפַרְעֹה חֹלֵם וְהִנֵּה עֹמֵד עַל־
הַיְאֹר: ב וְהִנֵּה מִן־הַיְאֹר עֹלֹת שֶׁבַע פָּרוֹת יְפוֹת מַרְאֶה
וּבְרִיאֹת בָּשָׂר וַתִּרְעֶינָה בָּאָחוּ: ג וְהִנֵּה שֶׁבַע פָּרוֹת אֲחֵרוֹת
עֹלוֹת אַחֲרֵיהֶן מִן־הַיְאֹר רָעוֹת מַרְאֶה וְדַקּוֹת בָּשָׂר וַתַּעֲמֹדְנָה
אֵצֶל הַפָּרוֹת עַל־שְׂפַת הַיְאֹר: ד וַתֹּאכַלְנָה הַפָּרוֹת רָעוֹת
הַמַּרְאֶה וְדַקֹּת הַבָּשָׂר אֶת שֶׁבַע הַפָּרוֹת יְפֹת הַמַּרְאֶה
וְהַבְּרִיאֹת וַיִּיקַץ פַּרְעֹה: ה וַיִּישָׁן וַיַּחֲלֹם שֵׁנִית וְהִנֵּה | שֶׁבַע
שִׁבֳּלִים עֹלוֹת בְּקָנֶה אֶחָד בְּרִיאוֹת וְטֹבוֹת: ו וְהִנֵּה שֶׁבַע
שִׁבֳּלִים דַּקּוֹת וּשְׁדוּפֹת קָדִים צֹמְחוֹת אַחֲרֵיהֶן: ז וַתִּבְלַעְנָה
הַשִּׁבֳּלִים הַדַּקּוֹת אֶת שֶׁבַע הַשִּׁבֳּלִים הַבְּרִיאוֹת וְהַמְלֵאוֹת
וַיִּיקַץ פַּרְעֹה וְהִנֵּה חֲלוֹם: ח וַיְהִי בַבֹּקֶר וַתִּפָּעֶם רוּחוֹ וַיִּשְׁלַח
וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־כָּל־חַרְטֻמֵּי מִצְרַיִם וְאֶת־כָּל־חֲכָמֶיהָ וַיְסַפֵּר פַּרְעֹה
לָהֶם אֶת־חֲלֹמוֹ וְאֵין־פּוֹתֵר אוֹתָם לְפַרְעֹה: ט וַיְדַבֵּר שַׂר

א וַהֲוָה מִסּוֹף תַּרְתֵּין שְׁנִין וּפַרְעֹה חָלֵם וְהָא
קָאֵם עַל נַהֲרָא: ב וְהָא מִן נַהֲרָא סָלְקָן שְׁבַע
תּוֹרָן שַׁפִּירָן לְמֶחֱזֵי וּפַטִּימָן בְּשַׂר וְרָעָיָן
בַּאֲחָוָא: ג וְהָא שְׁבַע תּוֹרָן אָחֳרָנָיָן סָלְקָן
בַּתְרֵיהֶן מִן נַהֲרָא בִּישָׁן לְמֶחֱזֵי וַחֲסִירָן בְּשַׂר
וְקָמָא לְקִבְלֵיהֶן דְּתוֹרָתָא עַל כֵּיף נַהֲרָא:
ד וַאֲכָלָן תּוֹרָתָא בִּישָׁן לְמֶחֱזֵי וַחֲסִירָן בְּשַׂר
יָת שְׁבַע תּוֹרָתָא שַׁפִּירָן לְמֶחֱזֵי וּפַטִּימָתָא
וְאִתְעַר פַּרְעֹה: ה וּדְמַךְ וַחֲלַם תִּנְיָנוּת וְהָא
שְׁבַע שִׁבְּלִין סָלְקִין בְּקָנְיָא חַד פַּטִּימָן וְטָבָן:
ו וְהָא שְׁבַע שִׁבְּלִין לָקָן וּשְׁקִיפָן קְדוּם צָמְחָן
בַּתְרֵיהֶן: ז וּבְלָעָא שִׁבְּלַיָּא לָקְיָתָא יָת שְׁבַע
שִׁבְּלַיָּא פַּטִּימָתָא וּמְלְיָתָא וְאִתְעַר פַּרְעֹה וְהָא
חֶלְמָא: ח וַהֲוָה בְצַפְרָא וּמְטַרְפָא רוּחֵיהּ וּשְׁלַח
וּקְרָא יַת כָּל חָרְשֵׁי מִצְרַיִם וְיַת כָּל חַכִּימָהָא
וְאִשְׁתָּעִי פַּרְעֹה לְהוֹן יַת חֶלְמֵיהּ וְלֵית דְּפָשַׁר
יַתְהוֹן לְפַרְעֹה: ט וּמַלֵּיל רַב שָׁקֵי עִם פַּרְעֹה

לש"י

(ח) **ויהי מקץ**. כתרגומו מסוף, וכל לשון קץ, סוף הוא: **על היאור**. כל שאר נהרות אינם קרויים יאוריס, חוץ מנילוס, מפני שכל הארץ עשויין יאוריס יאוריס בידי אדם, ונילוס עולה בתוכם ומשקה אותם, לפי שאין גשמים יורדין במצרים תדיר כשאר ארצות: (ב) **יפות מראה**. סימן הוא לימי השובע, שהבריות נראות יפות זו לזו, שאין עין בריה נרה בחברתה: **באחו**. בגמ, מריס"ק בלע"ז, כמו יגעו באחו: (ג) **ודקות בשר**. טינג"י בלע"ז, לשון דק: (ד) **ותאכלנה**. טומיד"ל בלע"ז: שאכלה כל שאכלה השובע נשכחת בימי הרעב: (ה) **בקנה אחד**. טומיד"ל בלע"ז: **בריאות**. שיי"ם בלע"ז: (ו) **ושדופות**. הלויי"דם בלע"ז. ושקיפן קדוס, חבוטות, לשון משקוף, כחבוט תמיד על ידי הדלת כמכה עליו: **קדים**. רוח מזרחית, שקורין בים"ח: (ז) **הבריאות**. שיי"ם בלע"ז[1]: **והנה חלום**. וכאה נשלם חלום שלם לפניו וכולרך לפותריס: (ח) **ותפעם רוחו**. ומטרפא רוחיה, מקשקשת בתוכו כפעמון, ובגובדנלר הוא חומר ותתפעם רוחו[2], לפי שהיו שם שתי פעימות, שכחת החלום וכעלמת פתרונו[3]: **חרטמי**. כגחריס בטימי מתיס, שמושלים בעלמות. (טימי הן עלמות בלשון חרמי, ובמשנה בית שהוא מלא טמיע, מלא עלמות); **ואין פותר אותם לפרעה**. פותריס היו אותם, אבל לא לפרעה, שלא היה קונן

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.

1 ראה שיחת ש"פ מקץ תשמ"ח 2 דניאל ב, א 3 ב"ר פט, ה

Yosef Interprets Pharaoh's Dreams

41 *At the end of two years, it happened that Pharaoh was dreaming, and—look!—he was standing by the Nile.* [2] *Then, from the Nile—look!—there were seven nice-looking, well-built cows coming up, and they pastured in the marshland.* [3] *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.* [4] *Then, the ugly-looking, thin cows devoured the seven nice-looking, well-built cows, and Pharaoh woke up.*

[5] *He fell asleep and dreamed again, and—look!—seven healthy and good ears of grain were growing on one stalk.* [6] *And—look!—seven thin ears of grain, parched by the east wind, were growing up after them.* [7] *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).

[8] *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. 819*ff*.)

הַמַּשְׁקִים אֶת־פַּרְעֹה לֵאמֹר אֶת־חַטָּאַי אֲנִי מַזְכִּיר הַיּוֹם:
ט פַּרְעֹה קָצַף עַל־עֲבָדָיו וַיִּתֵּן אֹתִי בְּמִשְׁמַר בֵּית שַׂר הַטַּבָּחִים
אֹתִי וְאֶת שַׂר הָאֹפִים: יא וַנַּחַלְמָה חֲלוֹם בְּלַיְלָה אֶחָד אֲנִי וְהוּא
אִישׁ כְּפִתְרוֹן חֲלֹמוֹ חָלָמְנוּ: יב וְשָׁם אִתָּנוּ נַעַר עִבְרִי עֶבֶד לְשַׂר
הַטַּבָּחִים וַנְּסַפֶּר־לוֹ וַיִּפְתָּר־לָנוּ אֶת־חֲלֹמֹתֵינוּ אִישׁ כַּחֲלֹמוֹ
פָּתָר: יג וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר פָּתַר־לָנוּ כֵּן הָיָה אֹתִי הֵשִׁיב עַל־כַּנִּי
וְאֹתוֹ תָלָה: יד וַיִּשְׁלַח פַּרְעֹה וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיְרִיצֻהוּ
מִן־הַבּוֹר וַיְגַלַּח וַיְחַלֵּף שִׂמְלֹתָיו וַיָּבֹא אֶל־פַּרְעֹה: [שני] טו וַיֹּאמֶר
פַּרְעֹה אֶל־יוֹסֵף חֲלוֹם חָלַמְתִּי וּפֹתֵר אֵין אֹתוֹ וַאֲנִי שָׁמַעְתִּי
עָלֶיךָ לֵאמֹר תִּשְׁמַע חֲלוֹם לִפְתֹּר אֹתוֹ: טז וַיַּעַן יוֹסֵף
אֶת־פַּרְעֹה לֵאמֹר בִּלְעָדָי אֱלֹהִים יַעֲנֶה אֶת־שְׁלוֹם פַּרְעֹה:
יז וַיְדַבֵּר פַּרְעֹה אֶל־יוֹסֵף בַּחֲלֹמִי הִנְנִי עֹמֵד עַל־שְׂפַת הַיְאֹר:
יח וְהִנֵּה מִן־הַיְאֹר עֹלֹת שֶׁבַע פָּרוֹת בְּרִיאוֹת בָּשָׂר וִיפֹת תֹּאַר
וַתִּרְעֶינָה בָּאָחוּ: יט וְהִנֵּה שֶׁבַע־פָּרוֹת אֲחֵרוֹת עֹלוֹת אַחֲרֵיהֶן
דַּלּוֹת וְרָעוֹת תֹּאַר מְאֹד וְרַקּוֹת בָּשָׂר לֹא־רָאִיתִי כָהֵנָּה
בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לָרֹעַ: כ וַתֹּאכַלְנָה הַפָּרוֹת הָרַקּוֹת וְהָרָעוֹת
אֶת שֶׁבַע הַפָּרוֹת הָרִאשֹׁנוֹת הַבְּרִיאֹת: כא וַתָּבֹאנָה אֶל־קִרְבֶּנָה
וְלֹא נוֹדַע כִּי־בָאוּ אֶל־קִרְבֶּנָה וּמַרְאֵיהֶן רַע כַּאֲשֶׁר בַּתְּחִלָּה
וָאִיקָץ: כב וָאֵרֶא בַּחֲלֹמִי וְהִנֵּה | שֶׁבַע שִׁבֳּלִים עֹלֹת בְּקָנֶה אֶחָד
מְלֵאוֹת וְטֹבוֹת: כג וְהִנֵּה שֶׁבַע שִׁבֳּלִים צְנֻמוֹת דַּקּוֹת שְׁדָפוֹת
קָדִים צֹמְחוֹת אַחֲרֵיהֶם: כד וַתִּבְלַעְנָה הַשִּׁבֳּלִים הַדַּקֹּת אֶת
שֶׁבַע הַשִּׁבֳּלִים הַטֹּבוֹת וָאֹמַר אֶל־הַחַרְטֻמִּים וְאֵין מַגִּיד לִי:

לְמֵימָר יַת סָרְחָנִי אֲנָא מַדְכַּר יוֹמָא דֵין:
י פַּרְעֹה רְגַז עַל עַבְדּוֹהִי וְיַהַב יָתִי בְּמַטְרַת בֵּית
רַב קָטוֹלַיָּא יָתִי וְיָת רַב נַחְתּוֹמֵי: יא וַחֲלֵמְנָא
חֶלְמָא בְּלֵילְיָא חַד אֲנָא וְהוּא גְּבַר כְּפוּשְׁרַן
חֶלְמֵיהּ חֲלֵמְנָא: יב וְתַמָּן עִמָּנָא עוּלֵם עִבְרָאָה
עַבְדָּא לְרַב קָטוֹלַיָּא וְאִשְׁתָּעִינָא לֵיהּ וּפָשַׁר
לָנָא יַת חֶלְמָנָא גְּבַר כְּחֶלְמֵיהּ פָּשָׁר: יג וַהֲוָה
כְּמָא דִי פָשַׁר לָנָא כֵּן הֲוָה יָתִי אֲתִיב עַל
שְׁמוּשִׁי וְיָתֵיהּ צְלָב: יד וּשְׁלַח פַּרְעֹה וּקְרָא יַת
יוֹסֵף וַאַרְהִיטוּהִי מִן בֵּית אֲסִירֵי וְסַפַּר וְשַׁנִּי
כְסוּתֵיהּ וְעַל לְוָת פַּרְעֹה: טו וַאֲמַר פַּרְעֹה
לְיוֹסֵף חֶלְמָא חֲלֵימִית וּפָשַׁר לֵית לֵיהּ וַאֲנָא
שְׁמִעִית עֲלָךְ לְמֵימַר דְּאַתְּ שָׁמַע חֶלְמָא
לְמִפְשַׁר יָתֵיהּ: טז וַאֲתֵיב יוֹסֵף יַת פַּרְעֹה
לְמֵימַר בַּר מִן חָכְמָתִי אֱלָהִין מִן קֳדָם יְיָ
יִתוֹתַב יַת שְׁלָמָא דְפַרְעֹה: יז וּמַלֵּיל פַּרְעֹה עִם
יוֹסֵף בְּחֶלְמִי הָא אֲנָא קָאֵים עַל כֵּיף נַהֲרָא:
יח וְהָא מִן נַהֲרָא סָלְקָן שְׁבַע תּוֹרָן פַּטִּימָן בְּשַׂר
וְשַׁפִּירָן לְמֶחֱזֵי וְרָעַיָן בַּאֲחָוָא: יט וְהָא שְׁבַע
תּוֹרָן אָחֳרָנִין סָלְקָן בַּתְרֵיהֶן חַסְיָן וּבִישָׁן
לְמֶחֱזֵי לַחֲדָא וַחֲסִירָן בְּשַׂר לָא חֲזֵיתִי כְוָתְהֶן
בְּכָל אַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם לְבִישׁוּ: כ וַאֲכָלָן תּוֹרָתָא
חַסְיָתָא וּבִישָׁתָא יַת שְׁבַע תּוֹרָתָא קַדְמָיָתָא
פַּטִּימָתָא: כא וַעֲלָא לְמֵעֱהֶן וְלָא אִתְיְדַע אֲרֵי
עֲלוּ לְמֵעֱהֶן וּמֶחֱזֵיהֶן בִּישׁ כַּד בְּקַדְמֵיתָא
וְאִתְעָרִית: כב וַחֲזֵית בְּחֶלְמִי וְהָא שְׁבַע שׁוּבְלִין
סָלְקָן בְּקַנְיָא חַד מָלְיָן וְטָבָן: כג וְהָא שְׁבַע
שׁוּבְלִין נָצָן לָקְיָן שְׁקִיפָן קִדּוּם צָמְחָן
בַּתְרֵיהֶן: כד וּבְלָעָא שׁוּבָלַיָּא לָקְיָתָא יַת שְׁבַע
שׁוּבָלַיָּא טָבָתָא וַאֲמָרִית לְחָרָשַׁיָּא וְלֵית דְּמְחַוֵי

לס"י

מי שעליו לעשות כס סותמים את הדבר: (יד) **מן הבור**. מן בית הסוהר, שהוא עשוי כמין גומא, וכן כל בור שבמקרא לשון גומא, ואף אם אין בו מים קרוי בור, פוס"י בלע"ז: **ויגלח**. מפני כבוד המלכות: (טו) **תשמע חלום לפתור אתו**. תאזין ותבין חלום לפתור אותו: **תשמע**. לשון הבנה וכאזנה, כמו שומע יוסף, תאר לא תשמע לשונו, תגטימדר"ח בלע"ז[2]: (טז) **בלעדי**. אין החכמה מסלי, אלא אלהים יענה, יתן עניה בפי לשלום פרעה: (יט) **דלות**. כחוטות, כמו מדוע אתה ככה דל[3] דלמון: **ורקות בשר**. כל לשון רקות שבמקרא, חסרי בשר, ובלע"ז בלוט"ש: (כג) **צנמות**. לשון אחרי סלע, כרי הן כעין בלי לחלות, וקשות כסלע. ותרגומו גלן לקין,

1 ב"ר פט, ו 2 שם פט, ט 3 שמואל יג, ד

9 *The chief butler spoke to Pharaoh, saying, "I (have to) mention my wrongdoings today!* 10 *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,* 11 *we both dreamed a dream on the same night. Each person had a dream (that clearly depicted) his destiny.*

12 *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.*

13 *Then, things happened just as he had interpreted for us: (Pharaoh) restored me to my position, and he hanged (the chief baker)."*

14 *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.

SECOND READING

15 *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."*

16 *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)."*

17 *Pharaoh said to Yosef, "In my dream—look!—I was standing on the bank of the Nile.* 18 *Then—look!—seven well-built, nice looking cows were coming up from the Nile, and they pastured in the marshland.* 19 *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."*

20 *"Then, the thin, ugly cows devoured the first seven healthy cows.* 21 *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."*

22 *"I saw in (another of) my dream(s): Look!—seven ears of healthy and good grain were growing on one stalk.* 23 *And—look!—seven thin ears of dehydrated grain, parched by the east wind, were growing up after them.* 24 *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 פשט, הוספת "לאמר" מורה על בירור גמור ודיוק (ראה רמב"ן שמות ו, יו"ד) - לקו"ש חי"ל ע' 315.

כה וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל־פַּרְעֹה חֲלוֹם פַּרְעֹה אֶחָד הוּא אֵת אֲשֶׁר
הָאֱלֹהִים עֹשֶׂה הִגִּיד לְפַרְעֹה: כו שֶׁבַע פָּרֹת הַטֹּבֹת שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים
הֵנָּה וְשֶׁבַע הַשִּׁבֳּלִים הַטֹּבֹת שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים הֵנָּה *חֲלוֹם אֶחָד הוּא:
כז וְשֶׁבַע הַפָּרוֹת הָרַקּוֹת וְהָרָעֹת הָעֹלֹת אַחֲרֵיהֶן שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים
הֵנָּה וְשֶׁבַע הַשִּׁבֳּלִים הָרֵקוֹת שְׁדֻפוֹת הַקָּדִים יִהְיוּ שֶׁבַע שְׁנֵי
רָעָב: כח הוּא הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי אֶל־פַּרְעֹה אֲשֶׁר הָאֱלֹהִים
עֹשֶׂה הֶרְאָה אֶת־פַּרְעֹה: כט הִנֵּה שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים בָּאוֹת שָׂבָע גָּדוֹל
בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: ל וְקָמוּ שֶׁבַע שְׁנֵי רָעָב אַחֲרֵיהֶן וְנִשְׁכַּח
כָּל־הַשָּׂבָע בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וְכִלָּה הָרָעָב אֶת־הָאָרֶץ:
לא וְלֹא־יִוָּדַע הַשָּׂבָע בָּאָרֶץ מִפְּנֵי הָרָעָב הַהוּא אַחֲרֵי־כֵן
כִּי־כָבֵד הוּא מְאֹד: לב וְעַל הִשָּׁנוֹת הַחֲלוֹם אֶל־פַּרְעֹה פַּעֲמָיִם
כִּי־נָכוֹן הַדָּבָר מֵעִם הָאֱלֹהִים וּמְמַהֵר הָאֱלֹהִים לַעֲשֹׂתוֹ:
לג וְעַתָּה יֵרֶא פַּרְעֹה אִישׁ נָבוֹן וְחָכָם וְישִׁיתֵהוּ עַל־אֶרֶץ
מִצְרָיִם: לד יַעֲשֶׂה פַרְעֹה וְיַפְקֵד פְּקִדִים עַל־הָאָרֶץ וְחִמֵּשׁ
אֶת־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּשֶׁבַע שְׁנֵי הַשָּׂבָע: לה וְיִקְבְּצוּ אֶת־כָּל־אֹכֶל
הַשָּׁנִים הַטֹּבוֹת הַבָּאֹת הָאֵלֶּה וְיִצְבְּרוּ־בָר תַּחַת יַד־פַּרְעֹה
אֹכֶל בֶּעָרִים וְשָׁמָרוּ: לו וְהָיָה הָאֹכֶל לְפִקָּדוֹן לָאָרֶץ לְשֶׁבַע שְׁנֵי
הָרָעָב אֲשֶׁר תִּהְיֶיןָ בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם וְלֹא־תִכָּרֵת הָאָרֶץ בָּרָעָב:

*ס״א חֲלוֹם אֶחָד הוּא

לי: כה וַאֲמַר יוֹסֵף לְפַרְעֹה חֶלְמָא דְּפַרְעֹה חַד
הוּא יַת דִּי יְיָ עָתִיד לְמֶעֱבַד חַוִּי לְפַרְעֹה:
כו שְׁבַע תּוֹרָתָא טָבָתָא שְׁבַע שְׁנִין אִנּוּן וּשְׁבַע
שׁוּבְלַיָּא טָבָתָא שְׁבַע שְׁנִין אִנּוּן חֶלְמָא חַד
הוּא: כז וּשְׁבַע תּוֹרָתָא חֲסִיכָתָא וּבִישָׁתָא
דְּסָלְקָן בַּתְרֵיהֶן שְׁבַע שְׁנִין אִנּוּן וּשְׁבַע
שׁוּבְלַיָּא לֵקְיָתָא דְּשִׁקִיפָן קֳדוּם יֶהֱוֵין שְׁבַע שְׁנֵי
כַפְנָא: כח הוּא פִּתְגָמָא דִּי מַלֵּילִית עִם פַּרְעֹה
דִּי יְיָ עָתִיד לְמֶעֱבַד אַחֲזִי לְפַרְעֹה: כט הָא
שְׁבַע שְׁנִין אָתְיָן שׂבְעָא רַבָּא בְּכָל אַרְעָא
דְּמִצְרָיִם: ל וְיקוּמוּן שְׁבַע שְׁנֵי כַפְנָא בַּתְרֵיהֶן
וְיִתְנְשֵׁי כָל שׂבְעָא בְּאַרְעָא דְּמִצְרָיִם וְיֵשֵׁיצֵי
כַפְנָא יַת עַמָּא דְּאַרְעָא: לא וְלָא יִתְיְדַע
שׂבְעָא בְּאַרְעָא מִן קֳדָם כַּפְנָא הַהוּא דְּיֵהֵי
בָּתַר כֵּן אֲרֵי תַקִּיף הוּא לַחֲדָא: לב וְעַל
דְּאִתַּנְיֵ חֶלְמָא לְפַרְעֹה תַּרְתֵּין זִמְנִין אֲרֵי תַקִּין
פִּתְגָמָא מִן קֳדָם יְיָ וּמוֹחֵי יְיָ לְמֶעְבְּדֵיהּ: לג וּכְעַן
יֶחֱזֵי פַּרְעֹה גְּבַר סוּכְלְתָן וְחַכִּים וְיַמַּנְיֵהּ
עַל אַרְעָא דְּמִצְרָיִם: לד יַעֲבֵיד פַּרְעֹה וְיַמַּנֵּי
מְהֵימְנִין עַל אַרְעָא וְיָזֵרז יַת אַרְעָא דְּמִצְרָיִם
בְּשִׁבְעַ שְׁנֵי שׂבְעָא: לה וְיִכְנְשׁוּן יַת כָּל עִיבּוּר
שְׁנַיָּא טָבָן דְּאָתְיָן הָאִלֵּין וְיִצְבְּרוּ־בָר תְּחוֹת יַד (מְהֵימְנֵי) פַּרְעֹה עִבּוּרָא בְּקִרְוָיָא
וְיִטְרוּן: לו וִיהֵי עִבּוּרָא גְנִיז לְ(עַמָּא דְ)אַרְעָא
לְשִׁבְעַ שְׁנֵי כַפְנָא דִּי תְהֶוְיָן בְּאַרְעָא דְּמִצְרָיִם

נון, אין כאן אלא כאן, לפי שמתרוקנו מן הזרע: (כו) **שבע שנים ושבע שנים**. כולן אינן אלא שבע, ומשר נשנה החלום פעמים, לפי שהדבר מזומן, כמו שפירש לו בסוף, ועל השנות החלום וגו'. בשבע שניס הטובות נאמר הגיד לפרעה, לפי שהיה סמוך. ובשבע שני רעב נאמר הראה את פרעה, לפי שהיה הדבר מופלג ורחוק נופל בו לשון מראה: (ל) **ונשכח כל השבע**. כוח פתרון הבליעה: (לא) **ולא יודע השבע**. כוח פתרון ולא נודע כי בא אל קרבנה: (לב) **נכון**. מזומן: (לד) **וחמש**. כתרגומו ויזרז, וכן וחמושים: (לה) **את כל אכל**. סס דבר הוא, לפיכך טעמו בא"ף ונקוד בפתח קטן, ואוכל שהוא פועל, כגון כי כל אוכל חלב, טעמו למטה בכ' ונקוד קמץ קטן: **תחת יד פרעה**. ברשותו ובאוצרותיו: (לו) **והיה האכל**. כלבור, כאשר

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.

25 Yosef said to Pharaoh, "Pharaoh's (two) dream(s) have a single (meaning). God has told Pharaoh what He is (planning) to do: 26 The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears of grain are (the same) seven years—it's one dream. 27 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.

28 "It is as I have told Pharaoh. God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do!

29 "Look!—seven years of great abundance are coming throughout the entire land of Egypt. 30 (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. 31 (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.

32 "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.

33 "And now, Pharaoh should select a person who is understanding and wise, and appoint him over the land of Egypt. 34 Pharaoh should enact that he appoint officials over the land, and prepare the land of Egypt during the seven years of abundance. 35 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. 36 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. 339*ff*.)

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.

לז וַיִּיטַב הַדָּבָר בְּעֵינֵי פַרְעֹה וּבְעֵינֵי כָּל־עֲבָדָיו: לח וַיֹּאמֶר
פַּרְעֹה אֶל־עֲבָדָיו הֲנִמְצָא כָזֶה אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים בּוֹ:
[שלישי] לט וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה אֶל־יוֹסֵף אַחֲרֵי הוֹדִיעַ אֱלֹהִים אוֹתְךָ
אֶת־כָּל־זֹאת אֵין־נָבוֹן וְחָכָם כָּמוֹךָ: מ אַתָּה תִּהְיֶה עַל־בֵּיתִי
וְעַל־פִּיךָ יִשַּׁק כָּל־עַמִּי רַק הַכִּסֵּא אֶגְדַּל מִמֶּךָּ: מא וַיֹּאמֶר
פַּרְעֹה אֶל־יוֹסֵף רְאֵה נָתַתִּי אֹתְךָ עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם:
מב וַיָּסַר פַּרְעֹה אֶת־טַבַּעְתּוֹ מֵעַל יָדוֹ וַיִּתֵּן אֹתָהּ עַל־יַד יוֹסֵף
וַיַּלְבֵּשׁ אֹתוֹ בִּגְדֵי־שֵׁשׁ וַיָּשֶׂם רְבִד הַזָּהָב עַל־צַוָּארוֹ: מג וַיַּרְכֶּב
אֹתוֹ בְּמִרְכֶּבֶת הַמִּשְׁנֶה אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ וַיִּקְרְאוּ לְפָנָיו אַבְרֵךְ וְנָתוֹן
אֹתוֹ עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: מד וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה אֶל־יוֹסֵף אֲנִי
פַרְעֹה וּבִלְעָדֶיךָ לֹא־יָרִים אִישׁ אֶת־יָדוֹ וְאֶת־רַגְלוֹ בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ
מִצְרָיִם: מה וַיִּקְרָא פַרְעֹה שֵׁם־יוֹסֵף צָפְנַת פַּעְנֵחַ וַיִּתֶּן־לוֹ
אֶת־אָסְנַת בַּת־פּוֹטִי פֶרַע כֹּהֵן אֹן לְאִשָּׁה וַיֵּצֵא יוֹסֵף עַל־אֶרֶץ
מִצְרָיִם: מו וְיוֹסֵף בֶּן־שְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה בְּעָמְדוֹ לִפְנֵי פַּרְעֹה
מֶלֶךְ־מִצְרָיִם וַיֵּצֵא יוֹסֵף מִלִּפְנֵי פַרְעֹה וַיַּעֲבֹר בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ

וְלָא יִשְׁתֵּיצֵי עַמָּא דְאַרְעָא בְּכַפְנָא: לז וּשְׁפַר
פִּתְגָמָא בְּעֵינֵי פַּרְעֹה וּבְעֵינֵי כָּל עַבְדּוֹהִי:
לח וַאֲמַר פַּרְעֹה לְעַבְדּוֹהִי הֲנַשְׁכַּח כְּדֵין גְּבַר דֵּי
רוּחַ נְבוּאָה מִן קֳדָם יְיָ בֵּיהּ: לט וַאֲמַר פַּרְעֹה
לְיוֹסֵף בָּתַר דְּאוֹדַע יְיָ יָתָךְ יַת כָּל דָּא לֵית
סוּכְלְתָן וְחַכִּים כְּוָתָךְ: מ אַתְּ תְּהֵי מְמַנָּא עַל
בֵּיתִי וְעַל מֵימְרָךְ יִתְזַן כָּל עַמִּי לְחוֹד כָּרְסֵי
מַלְכוּתָא דֵּין אֶהֵי יַקִּיר מִנָּךְ: מא וַאֲמַר
פַּרְעֹה לְיוֹסֵף חֲזִי דְמַנֵּיתִי יָתָךְ עַל כָּל אַרְעָא
דְמִצְרָיִם: מב וַאֲעַדִּי פַּרְעֹה יַת עִזְקְתֵיהּ מֵעַל
יְדֵיהּ וְיָהַב יָתָהּ עַל יְדָא דְיוֹסֵף וַאַלְבֵּשׁ יָתֵיהּ
לְבוּשִׁין דְּבוּץ וְשַׁוִּי מָנִיכָא דְדַהֲבָא עַל
צַוְרֵיהּ: מג וְאַרְכֵּב יָתֵיהּ בִּרְתְבָא תִּנְיָתָא דִּי
לֵיהּ וְאַכְרִיזוּ קֳדָמוֹהִי דֵּין אַבָּא לְמַלְכָּא וּמַנִּי
יָתֵיהּ עַל כָּל אַרְעָא דְמִצְרָיִם: מד וַאֲמַר
פַּרְעֹה לְיוֹסֵף אֲנָא פַרְעֹה וּבַר מִמֵּימְרָךְ לָא
יְרִים גְּבַר יַת יְדֵיהּ לְמֵיחַד זַיִן וְיַת רַגְלֵיהּ
לְמִרְכַּב עַל כָּל אַרְעָא דְמִצְרָיִם: מה וּקְרָא פַּרְעֹה שׁוּם יוֹסֵף גַּבְרָא דְמַטְמְרָן
גַּלְיָן לֵיהּ וְיָהַב לֵיהּ יַת אָסְנַת בַּת פּוֹטִי פֶּרַע
רַבָּא דְאוֹן לְאִנְתּוּ וּנְפַק יוֹסֵף (שַׁלִּיט) עַל אַרְעָא
דְמִצְרָיִם: מו וְיוֹסֵף בַּר תְּלָתִין שְׁנִין כַּד קָם

פקדון כגנוז לקיוס המרן: (לח) **הנמצא כזה**. כגשכח כדין, חס גלך ונבקשנו כגמלא כמוהו. כגמלא לשון תמיהה, וכן כל ה"ח כמשמש ברחש תיבה ונקודה בחטף פתח: (לט) **אין נבון וחכם כמוך**. לבקש חיש נבון וחכם שממרת, לא נמלא חיש כמוך: (מ) **ישק**. יתזן, יתפרנס. כל לרכי עמי יהיו נעשים על ידך, כמו ובן משק ביתי[1], וכמו נשקו בר[2], גרגישו"ן בלע"ז: רק **הכסא**. שיהיו קורין לי מלך: **בסא**. לשון של המלוכה, כמו ויגדל את כסאו מכסא מדוני כמלך: (מא) **נתתי אתך**. מניתי יתך, ואף על פי כן לשון נתינה כוא, כמו ולתתך עליון. בין לגדולה בין לשפלות נופל לשון נתינה עליו, כמו נתתי אתכם נבזים ושפלים[3]: (מב) **ויסר פרעה את טבעתו**. נתינת טבעת כמלך, כוא אות למי שמושכ לו, להיות שני לו לגדולה: **בגדי שש**. דבר חשיבות כוא במלרים: **רביד**. ענק, ועל שכוא לצוף בטבעות קרוי רביד. וכן רבדתי ערשי[4], רלפתי ערשי מרלפות. בלשון משנה מוקף רובדין של חבן. על כרובד שבעזרה, והיא רלפה: (מג) **במרכבת המשנה**. השניה למרכבתו, כמהלכת אחל שלו: **אברך**. כתרגומו דין אחא למלכא, רך בלשון חרמי מלך, בהשותפין[5] לא ריכא ולא בר ריכא. ובדברי חגדה[6] דרש ר' יהודה, אברך זה יוסף, שהוא אב בחכמה ורך בשניס, אמר לו בן דורמסקית, עד מתי אתה מעוות עלינו את הכתובים אין אברך אלא לשון ברכים, שהכל היו נכנסין לפניו ויושלין תחת ידו, כענין שנאמר ונתון לותו וגו': (מד) **אני פרעה**. שים יכולת בידי לגזור גזרה על מלכותי, ואני גוזר שלא יניס איש את ידו: **ובלעדיך**. שלא ברשותך. דבר אחר אני פרעה, אני אהיה מלך, ובלעדיך וגו', וזהו דומית רק הכסא: **את ידו ואת רגלו**. כתרגומו: (מה) **צפנת פענח**. מפרש הלשונות, ואין לפענח דמיון במקרא: **פוטי פרע**. הוא פוטיפר, ונקרא

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)

1 בראשית טו, ב 2 תהלים ב, יב 3 מלאכי ב, ט 4 משלי ז, טז 5 בבא בתרא ד. 6 ספרי, דברים סוף פ"א

Yosef is Appointed as Ruler of Egypt

41:37 *The matter pleased Pharaoh and all his servants.*

[38] *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

[39] *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.* [40] *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."*

[41] *Pharaoh said to Yosef, "See, I have appointed you over the entire land of Egypt!"*

[42] *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.* [43] *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.*

[44] *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."*

[45] *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.*

[46] *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

מִצְרָיִם: מז וַתַּעַשׂ הָאָרֶץ בְּשֶׁבַע שְׁנֵי הַשָּׂבָע לְקֻמָצִים:
מח וַיִּקְבֹּץ אֶת־כָּל־אֹכֶל | שֶׁבַע הַשָּׁנִים אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
וַיִּתֵּן־אֹכֶל בֶּעָרִים אֹכֶל שְׂדֵה־הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבֹתֶיהָ נָתַן
בְּתוֹכָהּ: מט וַיִּצְבֹּר יוֹסֵף בָּר כְּחוֹל הַיָּם הַרְבֵּה מְאֹד עַד
כִּי־חָדַל לִסְפֹּר כִּי־אֵין מִסְפָּר: נ וּלְיוֹסֵף יֻלַּד שְׁנֵי בָנִים בְּטֶרֶם
תָּבוֹא שְׁנַת הָרָעָב אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה־לּוֹ אָסְנַת בַּת־פּוֹטִי פֶרַע כֹּהֵן
אֹן: נא וַיִּקְרָא יוֹסֵף אֶת־שֵׁם הַבְּכוֹר מְנַשֶּׁה כִּי־נַשַּׁנִי אֱלֹהִים
אֶת־כָּל־עֲמָלִי וְאֵת כָּל־בֵּית אָבִי: נב וְאֵת שֵׁם הַשֵּׁנִי קָרָא
אֶפְרַיִם כִּי־הִפְרַנִי אֱלֹהִים בְּאֶרֶץ עָנְיִי: [רביעי] נג וַתִּכְלֶינָה שֶׁבַע

קָדָם פַּרְעֹה מַלְכָּא דְמִצְרַיִם וּנְפַק יוֹסֵף מִן קֳדָם
פַּרְעֹה וַעֲבַר (שלישי) בְּכָל אַרְעָא דְמִצְרָיִם:
מז וּכְנָשׁוּ דָיְרֵי אַרְעָא בִּשְׁבַע שְׁנֵי שִׂבְעָא עִבּוּרָא
לְאוֹצָרִין: מח וּכְנַשׁ יַת כָּל עִבּוּר שִׂבְעַ שְׁנִין
דִּי הֲווֹ בְּאַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם וְיָהַב עִבּוּרָא
בְּקִרְוָיָא עִבּוּר חַקַל קִרְתָּא דִי בְסַחֲרָנָהָא יְהַב
בָּגָוֵהּ: מט וּכְנַשׁ יוֹסֵף עִבּוּרָא כְּחָלָא דְיַמָּא סַגִּי
לַחֲדָא עַד דִי פְסַק לְמִמְנֵי אֲרֵי לֵית מְנָיָן:
נ וּלְיוֹסֵף אִתְיְלִיד תְּרֵין בְּנִין עַד לָא עַלַת
שַׁתָּא דְכַפְנָא דִּילִידַת לֵיהּ אָסְנַת בַּת
פּוֹטִי פֶרַע רַבָּא דְאוֹן: נא וּקְרָא יוֹסֵף יַת שׁוּם
בּוּכְרָא מְנַשֶּׁה אֲרֵי אַנְשַׁנַנִי יְיָ יַת כָּל עֲמָלִי וְיַת
כָּל בֵּית אַבָּא: נב וְיַת שׁוּם תִּנְיָנָא קְרָא
אֶפְרַיִם אֲרֵי אַפְּשַׁנַנִי יְיָ בַּאֲרַע שִׁעְבּוּדִי:
נג וּשְׁלִימָא שִׁבְעַ שְׁנֵי שִׂבְעָא דִי הֲוָה בְּאַרְעָא

רש"י

פוטי פרע על שמסתרס מאליו, לפי שחמד את יוסף למשכב זכור[1]: (מז) **ותעש הארץ**. כתרגומו, ואין הלשון נעקר מלשון עשייה: **לקמצים**. קומץ על קומץ, יד על יד היו מוגריס: (מח) **אכל שדה העיר אשר סביבותיה נתן בתוכה**. שכל מרץ ומרץ מעמדת פירותיה ונותנין

בתבואה מעפר המקום, ומעמיד את התבואה מלירקב: (מט) **עד כי חדל לספור**. עד כי חדל לו הסופר לספור, והרי זה מקרא קצר: **כי אין מספר**. לפי שאין מספר והרי כי משמע בלשון דכתי: (נ) **בטרם תבוא שנת הרעב**. מכאן שאסור לאדם לשמש מטתו בשני רעבון[2]:

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*").

1 סוטה יג: 2 תענית יא.

The Seven Years of Abundance

41:47 *In the seven years of abundance, (the inhabitants of) the land gradually made collections (of grain).* 48 *(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).*

49 *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 *Two 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.* 51 *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."* 52 *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

Soil 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.

שְׁנֵי הַשָּׂבָע אֲשֶׁר הָיָה בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: נד וַתְּחִלֶּינָה שֶׁבַע שְׁנֵי
הָרָעָב לָבוֹא כַּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר יוֹסֵף וַיְהִי רָעָב בְּכָל־הָאֲרָצוֹת
וּבְכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם הָיָה לָחֶם: נה וַתִּרְעַב כָּל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם
וַיִּצְעַק הָעָם אֶל־פַּרְעֹה לַלָּחֶם וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה לְכָל־מִצְרַיִם לְכוּ
אֶל־יוֹסֵף אֲשֶׁר־יֹאמַר לָכֶם תַּעֲשׂוּ: נו וְהָרָעָב הָיָה עַל כָּל־פְּנֵי
הָאָרֶץ וַיִּפְתַּח יוֹסֵף אֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר בָּהֶם וַיִּשְׁבֹּר לְמִצְרַיִם וַיֶּחֱזַק
הָרָעָב בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: נז וְכָל־הָאָרֶץ בָּאוּ מִצְרַיְמָה לִשְׁבֹּר

דְּמִצְרָיִם: נד וּשְׂרִיאָה שְׁבַע שְׁנֵי כַּפְנָא לְמֵיעַל
כְּמָא דִי אֲמַר יוֹסֵף וַהֲוָה כַּפְנָא בְּכָל אַרְעָתָא
וּבְכָל אַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם הֲוָה לַחְמָא: נה וּכְפָנַת
כָּל אַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם וּצְוַה עַמָּא קֳדָם פַּרְעֹה עַל
לַחְמָא וַאֲמַר פַּרְעֹה לְכָל מִצְרָאֵי אִזִילוּ לְוָת
יוֹסֵף דִּי יֵימַר לְכוֹן תַּעְבְּדוּן: נו וְכַפְנָא הֲוָה עַל
כָּל אַפֵּי אַרְעָא וּפְתַח יוֹסֵף יַת כָּל אוֹצָרַיָּא דִי
בְהוֹן עִבּוּרָא וְזַבִּין לְמִצְרָיִם וּתְקֵיף כַּפְנָא
בְּאַרְעָא דְמִצְרָיִם: נז וְכָל דָּיְרֵי אַרְעָא עָלוּ
לְמִצְרַיִם לְמִזְבַּן עִבּוּרָא מִן יוֹסֵף אֲרֵי תְקֵיף

רס"י

(נה) **ותרעב כל ארץ מצרים.** שכרקיבה תבואתם שאגרו, חוץ משל יוסף[1]: **אשר יאמר לכם תעשו.** לפי שהיה יוסף חומר לכם שימולו, וכשבאו אצל פרעה ואומריס כך הוא חומר לנו, אמר להם למה לא נזכרתם בר, והלא הכריז לכם שבני הרעב בחיס, אמרו לו אספנו הרבה והרקיבה, אמר להם אם כן כל אשר יאמר לכם תעשו, הרי גזר על התבואה והרקיבה, מה אם יגזור עלינו ונמות: (נו) **על כל פני הארץ.** מי היה פני האדמה, אלו המצריס[2]: **את כל אשר בהם.** כתרגומו די בהון עיבורא: **וישבר למצרים.** שבר לשון מכר ולשון קנין הוא, כאן משמש לשון מכר. שברו לנו מעט אוכל, לשון קנין. ואל תאמר חינו כי אם בתבואה, שאף ציין וחלב מצינו, ולהו שברו בלא כסף ובלא מחיר יין וחלב[3]: (נז) **וכל הארץ באו**

[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" (חֶרְפָּה), 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.

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."

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

1 ב"ר צא, ה 2 שם 3 ישעיה נה, א

Onset of the Famine

41:53 Fourth Reading

When the seven years of plenty that were in the land of Egypt were finished, [54] 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. [55] (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."

[56] 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.

[57] 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. 192*ff.*)

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. 136*ff.*)

אֶל־יוֹסֵף כִּי־חָזַק הָרָעָב בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ: **מב** א וַיַּרְא יַעֲקֹב כִּי יֶשׁ־שֶׁבֶר בְּמִצְרָיִם וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב לְבָנָיו לָמָּה תִתְרָאוּ: ב וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה שָׁמַעְתִּי כִּי יֶשׁ־שֶׁבֶר בְּמִצְרָיִם רְדוּ־שָׁמָּה וְשִׁבְרוּ־לָנוּ מִשָּׁם וְנִחְיֶה וְלֹא נָמוּת: ג וַיֵּרְדוּ אֲחֵי־יוֹסֵף עֲשָׂרָה לִשְׁבֹּר בָּר מִמִּצְרָיִם: ד וְאֶת־בִּנְיָמִין אֲחִי יוֹסֵף לֹא־שָׁלַח יַעֲקֹב אֶת־אֶחָיו כִּי אָמַר פֶּן־יִקְרָאֶנּוּ אָסוֹן: ה וַיָּבֹאוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לִשְׁבֹּר בְּתוֹךְ

כַּנְּפָנָא בְּכָל אַרְעָא: א וְחָזָא יַעֲקֹב אֲרֵי אִית עִבּוּר מִזְדַּבַּן בְּמִצְרָיִם וַאֲמַר יַעֲקֹב לִבְנוֹהִי לְמָא תִתְחֲזוּן: ב וַאֲמַר הָא שְׁמָעִית (אָמְרִין) אֲרֵי אִית עִבּוּר מִזְדַּבַּן בְּמִצְרָיִם חוּתוּ וְזִבּוּנוּ לָנָא מִתַּמָּן וְנֵיחֵי וְלָא נְמוּת: ג וּנְחָתוּ אֲחֵי יוֹסֵף עַשְׂרָא לְמִזְבַּן עִבּוּרָא מִמִּצְרָיִם: ד וְיָת בִּנְיָמִין אֲחוּהִי דְיוֹסֵף לָא שְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב עִם אֲחוֹהִי אֲרֵי אֲמַר דִּלְמָא יְעָרְעִנֵּיהּ מֵוָתָא: ה וַאֲתוֹ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִזְבַּן עִבּוּרָא בְּגוֹ עָלְיָא אֲרֵי הֲוָה

רש"י

מצרימה. אל יוסף לשבור. ואם תדרשהו כסדרו, היה צריך לכתוב לשבור מן יוסף: (ה) וירא יעקב כי יש שבר במצרים. ומהיכן ראה, והלא לא ראה אלא שמע, שנאמר הנה שמעתי וגו', ומהו וירא, ראה בהסתכלות של קדש שעדיין יש לו שבר במצרים, ולא היתה נבואה ממש להודיעו בפירוש שזה יוסף: למה תתראו. למה תרפו עצמכם בפני בני ישמעאל ובני עשו כאלו אתם שבעים, כי בזאתה שעה עדיין היה להם תבואה[1]. (ולי נראה כפשוטו למה תתרפו, למה יהו ככל מסתכלין בכם, ומתמיהים בכם שאין אתם מבקשים לכם חוכל בטרם שיכלה מה שבידכם). ומפי מחריס שמעתי שהוא

לשון כחישה, למה תהיו כחושים ברעב. ודומה לו ומרוה גם הוא יורה[2]: (ג) רדו שמה. ולא אמר לכו, רמז למאתים ועשר שניס שנשתעבדו למצריס כמנין רד"ו: (ג) וירדו אחי יוסף. ולא כתב בני יעקב, מלמד שהיו מתחרטים במכירתו, ונתנו לבם להתנכל עמו בחשוב, ולפדותו בכל ממון שיפסקו עליהם: עשרה. מה תלמוד לומר, והלא כתיב ואת בנימין אחי יוסף לא שלח, אלא לעניו החשוב היו חלוקין לעשרה, שלא היתה מהבת כולם ושנאת כולם שוה לו, אבל לעניו לשבור בר, כלם לב אחד להם[3]: (ד) פן יקראנו אסון. ובצית לא יקראנו אסון, אמר רבי אליעזר בן יעקב, מכאן

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 Cana'an 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 Cana'an 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 Cana'an.

Rather, the simple reason why Ya'akov was not concerned about his sons showing off to the people of Cana'an 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 Cana'an 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 Cana'an 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 Cana'an, 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.

1 תענית י: 2 משלי יא, כה 3 בב"ר צא, ב

The Brothers Appear Before Yosef

42 Ya'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)?"

2 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."

3 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). 4 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 Cana'an 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 Cana'an, 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. 190*ff.*)

הַבָּאִים כִּי־הָיָה הָרָעָב בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: ו וְיוֹסֵף הוּא הַשַּׁלִּיט
עַל־הָאָרֶץ הוּא הַמַּשְׁבִּיר לְכָל־עַם הָאָרֶץ וַיָּבֹאוּ אֲחֵי יוֹסֵף
וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ־לוֹ אַפַּיִם אָרְצָה: ז וַיַּרְא יוֹסֵף אֶת־אֶחָיו וַיַּכִּרֵם
וַיִּתְנַכֵּר אֲלֵיהֶם וַיְדַבֵּר אִתָּם קָשׁוֹת וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם מֵאַיִן בָּאתֶם
וַיֹּאמְרוּ מֵאֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן לִשְׁבָּר־אֹכֶל: ח וַיַּכֵּר יוֹסֵף אֶת־אֶחָיו וְהֵם
לֹא הִכָּרֻהוּ: ט וַיִּזְכֹּר יוֹסֵף אֶת הַחֲלֹמוֹת אֲשֶׁר חָלַם לָהֶם
וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם מְרַגְּלִים אַתֶּם לִרְאוֹת אֶת־עֶרְוַת הָאָרֶץ בָּאתֶם:
י וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו לֹא אֲדֹנִי וַעֲבָדֶיךָ בָּאוּ לִשְׁבָּר־אֹכֶל: יא כֻּלָּנוּ בְּנֵי
אִישׁ־אֶחָד נֶאֱמָנִו כֵּנִים אֲנַחְנוּ לֹא־הָיוּ עֲבָדֶיךָ מְרַגְּלִים:
יב וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם לֹא כִּי־עֶרְוַת הָאָרֶץ בָּאתֶם לִרְאוֹת: יג וַיֹּאמְרוּ
שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר עֲבָדֶיךָ אַחִים | אֲנַחְנוּ בְּנֵי אִישׁ־אֶחָד בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן
וְהִנֵּה הַקָּטֹן אֶת־אָבִינוּ הַיּוֹם וְהָאֶחָד אֵינֶנּוּ: יד וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם
יוֹסֵף הוּא אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי אֲלֵכֶם לֵאמֹר מְרַגְּלִים אַתֶּם: טו בְּזֹאת
תִּבָּחֲנוּ חֵי פַּרְעֹה אִם־תֵּצְאוּ מִזֶּה כִּי אִם־בְּבוֹא אֲחִיכֶם הַקָּטֹן
הֵנָּה: טז שִׁלְחוּ מִכֶּם אֶחָד וְיִקַּח אֶת־אֲחִיכֶם וְאַתֶּם הֵאָסְרוּ

כַּפְּנָא בְּאַרְעָא דִכְנָעַן: ו וְיוֹסֵף הוּא דְשַׁלִּיט עַל
אַרְעָא הוּא דְזַבִּין עִבּוּרָא לְכָל עַמָּא דְאַרְעָא
וַאֲתוֹ אֲחֵי יוֹסֵף וּסְגִידוּ לֵיהּ עַל אַפַּיָּא עַל
אַרְעָא: ז וַחֲזָא יוֹסֵף יָת אֲחוֹהִי וְאִשְׁתְּמוֹדָעִינוּן
וְחַשֵּׁיב מַה דְּמַלֵּיל לְהוֹן וּמַלֵּיל עִמְּהוֹן
קַשְׁיָן וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן מָנָן אֲתֵיתוּן וַאֲמָרוּ מֵאַרְעָא
דִכְנָעַן לְמִזְבַּן עִבּוּרָא: ח וְאִשְׁתְּמוֹדַע יוֹסֵף יָת
אֲחוֹהִי וְאִנּוּן לָא אִשְׁתְּמוֹדָעִיהּ: ט וּדְכִיר יוֹסֵף
יָת חֶלְמַיָּא דִּי חֶלִים לְהוֹן וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן
מְאַלְּלִין אַתּוּן לְמֶחֱזֵי יָת בְּדָקָא דְאַרְעָא אֲתֵיתוּן:
י וַאֲמָרוּ לֵיהּ לָא רִבּוֹנִי וְעַבְדָּךְ עָלוּ לְמִזְבַּן
עִבּוּרָא: יא כּוּלָּנָא בְּנֵי גַבְרָא חַד נָחְנָא כֵּינָנֵי
אֲנַחְנָא לָא הֲווֹ עַבְדָּךְ אַלֵּילֵי: יב וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן
לָא אֲרֵי בְּדָקָא דְאַרְעָא אֲתֵיתוּן לְמֶחֱזֵי:
יג וַאֲמָרוּ תְּרֵין עֲשַׂר עַבְדָּךְ אַחִין אֲנַחְנָא בְּנֵי
גַבְרָא חַד בְּאַרְעָא דִכְנָעַן וְהָא זְעֵירָא עִם
אֲבוּנָא יוֹמָא דֵין וְחַד לֵיתוֹהִי: יד וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן
יוֹסֵף הוּא דִּי מַלֵּילִית עִמְּכוֹן לְמֵימָר מְאַלֵּילֵי
אַתּוּן: טו בְּדָא תִּתְבַּחֲנוּן חֵי פַּרְעֹה אִם תִּפְקוּן
מִכָּא אֱלָהֵין בְּמֵיתֵי אֲחוּכוֹן זְעֵירָא הָכָא:
טז שְׁלָחוּ מִנָּכוֹן חַד וְיִדַּבַּר יָת אֲחוּכוֹן וְאַתּוּן
הִתְאַסְּרוּן וְיִתְבַּחֲנוּן פִּתְגָמֵיכוֹן הַקְשׁוֹט אַתּוּן

רס"י

מקרא: **(י) לא אדני.** לא תאמר כן, שכרי עבדיך באו לשבר אוכל[7]: **(יא) כלנו בני איש אחד נחנו.** נלענ"ד שכם רוח הקדש וכללותו עמכם, שאף הוא בן מציכם: **כנים.** ממחייש כמו כן דכרת[8], כן נמות ללמד דוברות[9]. ועברתו לא כן בדיו[10]: **(יב) כי ערות הארץ באתם לראות.** שכרי נכנסתם בעשרה שערי העיר, למה לא נכנסתם בשער אחד[11]: **(יג) ויאמרו שנים עשר עבדיך וגו'.** ובשביל אותו אחד שאינגו, נתפזרנו בעיר לבקשו: **(יד) הוא אשר דברתי.** כדבר אשר דברתי שאתם מרגלים, הוא האמת והנכון, זכו לפי פשוטו. ומדרשו, אמר להם, ואלו מלאתם אותו ויפסקו עליכם ממון הרבה, תפדוהו. אמרו לו כן. אמר להם, ואם יאמרו לכם שלא יחזירוהו בשום ממון מה תעשו, אמרו לכך בחנו, להכירו או ליהרג, אמר להם הוא אשר דברתי אליכם, להכרוג בני העיר בחתם, מנחש אני בגביע שלי, שאניס מכם המחיבו כרך גדול של שכם: **(טו) חי פרעה.** אם יחיה פרעה: **אם תצאו**

שכשתן מקטרג בשעת הסכנה[1]: **(ט) בתוך הבאים.** מטמינין עצמן שלא יכירוס, לפי שהוא להם מציכם שלא יתרחו כולם בפתח אחד, אלא שיכנס כל אחד בפתחו, כדי שלא תשלוט בהם עין הרע שכולם נאים וכולם גבוריס: **(ו) וישתחוו לו אפים.** נשתטחו לו על פניהם, וכן כל השתחוואה שבתורה ידיס ורגליס הוא[2]: **(ז) ויתנכר אליהם.** נעשה להם כנכרי בדבריס לדבר קשות[3]: **(ח) ויכר יוסף וגו'.** לפי שהניחם תתומי זקן[4]: **והם לא הכירוהו.** שילא מאלמן בלא תתימת זקן. ומדרש אגדה ויכר יוסף את אחיו, כשמסרו בידו הכיר שהם אחיו וריחם עליהם, והם לא הכירוהו כשנפל בידם לנהוג בו אחוה: **(ט) אשר חלם להם.** עליהם, וידע שנתקיימו, שכרי השתחוו לו: **ערות הארץ.** גלוי המרן, מהיכן היא נוחה ליכנס. כמו את מקורה הערה[5], וכמו ערוס ועריה[6]. וכן כל ערוה שבמקרא לשון גילוי. ותרגם אונקלוס בדקא דארעא, כמו בדק הבית, רעוע הבית, אבל 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"ר צא, ט 2 שבועות טו: 3 ב"ר צא, ז 4 ב"מ לט: 5 ויקרא כ, יח 6 יחזקאל טז, ז 7 בכתב-יד: "והרי 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"בחור-הזעצער" השמיט תיבות אלו בטעות - שיחת ש"פ מקץ תשמ"ו. 8 שמות י, כט 9 במדבר כז, ז 10 ישעיה טז, ו 11 ב"ר צא, ו

[5] *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.*

[6] *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.*

[7] *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."

[8] *Yosef recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him (because they hadn't seen him with a beard).* [9] *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)!"*

[10] *"No, my master," they said to him, "your servants have come to buy food.* [11] *We are all sons of one man. We are (telling the) truth. Your servants were never spies."*

[12] *"No!" he said to them. "You have come to see the land's weak points!"*

[13] *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)."*

[14] *Yosef said to them, "When I said to you, 'You are spies' I was (correct).* [15] *The following will be your test: By Pharaoh's life, you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here.* [16] *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)

וְיִבָּחֲנוּ דִּבְרֵיכֶם הַאֱמֶת אִתְּכֶם וְאִם־לֹא חֵי פַּרְעֹה כִּי מְרַגְּלִים
אַתֶּם: יז וַיֶּאֱסֹף אֹתָם אֶל־מִשְׁמָר שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים: יח וַיֹּאמֶר
אֲלֵהֶם יוֹסֵף בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי זֹאת עֲשׂוּ וִחְיוּ אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים אֲנִי
יָרֵא: [חמישי] יט אִם־כֵּנִים אַתֶּם אֲחִיכֶם אֶחָד יֵאָסֵר בְּבֵית
מִשְׁמַרְכֶם וְאַתֶּם לְכוּ הָבִיאוּ שֶׁבֶר רַעֲבוֹן בָּתֵּיכֶם: כ וְאֶת־
אֲחִיכֶם הַקָּטֹן תָּבִיאוּ אֵלָי וְיֵאָמְנוּ דִבְרֵיכֶם וְלֹא תָמֻתוּ
וַיַּעֲשׂוּ־כֵן: כא וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל־אָחִיו אֲבָל אֲשֵׁמִים | אֲנַחְנוּ
עַל־אָחִינוּ אֲשֶׁר רָאִינוּ צָרַת נַפְשׁוֹ בְּהִתְחַנְנוֹ אֵלֵינוּ וְלֹא
שָׁמָעְנוּ עַל־כֵּן בָּאָה אֵלֵינוּ הַצָּרָה הַזֹּאת: כב וַיַּעַן רְאוּבֵן אֹתָם
לֵאמֹר הֲלוֹא אָמַרְתִּי אֲלֵיכֶם | לֵאמֹר אַל־תֶּחֱטְאוּ בַיֶּלֶד וְלֹא
שְׁמַעְתֶּם וְגַם־דָּמוֹ הִנֵּה נִדְרָשׁ: כג וְהֵם לֹא יָדְעוּ כִּי שֹׁמֵעַ יוֹסֵף
כִּי הַמֵּלִיץ בֵּינֹתָם: כד וַיִּסֹּב מֵעֲלֵיהֶם וַיֵּבְךְּ וַיָּשָׁב אֲלֵהֶם וַיְדַבֵּר
אֲלֵהֶם וַיִּקַּח מֵאִתָּם אֶת־שִׁמְעוֹן וַיֶּאֱסֹר אֹתוֹ לְעֵינֵיהֶם: כה וַיְצַו

אָמְרִין וְאִם לָא חֵי פַּרְעֹה אֲרֵי מְאַלִּילֵי אַתּוּן:
יז וּכְנַשׁ יַתְהוֹן לְבֵית מַטְרָא תְּלָתָא יוֹמִין:
יח וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן יוֹסֵף בְּיוֹמָא תְּלִיתָאָה דָּא עֲבִידוּ
וְאִתְקַיְּמוּ מִן קֳדָם יְיָ אֲנָא דָחֵיל: יט אִם כֵּינָי
אַתּוּן אֲחוּכוֹן חַד יִתְאַסַּר בְּבֵית מַטַּרְתְּכוֹן
וְאַתּוּן אֲזִילוּ אוֹבִילוּ עִבּוּרָא דְּחַסִּיר בָּתֵּיכוֹן:
כ וְיָת אֲחוּכוֹן זְעֵירָא תַּיְתוּן לְוָתִי וְיִתְהֵימְנוּן
פִּתְגָמֵיכוֹן וְלָא תְמוּתוּן וַעֲבָדוּ כֵן: כא וַאֲמָרוּ
גְּבַר לַאֲחוּהִי בְּקוּשְׁטָא חַיָּבִין אֲנַחְנָא עַל
אֲחוּנָא דִּי חֲזֵינָא עָקַת נַפְשֵׁיהּ כַּד חֲוָה מִתְחַנֵּן
לָנָא וְלָא קַבֵּילְנָא מִנֵּיהּ עַל כֵּן אֲתַת לָנָא
עָקְתָא הָדָא: כב וַאֲתֵיב רְאוּבֵן יַתְהוֹן לְמֵימַר
הֲלָא אֲמָרִית לְכוֹן לְמֵימַר לָא תְחוֹבוּן
בְּעוּלֵימָא וְלָא קַבֵּלְתּוּן וְאַף דְּמֵיהּ הָא
מִתְבְּעֵי: כג וְאִנּוּן לָא יָדְעִין אֲרֵי שְׁמִיעַ יוֹסֵף
אֲרֵי מְתוּרְגְּמָן הֲוָה בֵּינֵיהוֹן: כד וְאִסְתַּחַר
מִלְּוָתְהוֹן וּבְכָא וְתָב לְוָתְהוֹן וּמַלֵּיל עִמְּהוֹן
וּדְבַר מִלְּוָתְהוֹן יַת שִׁמְעוֹן וַאֲסַר יָתֵיהּ
לְעֵינֵיהוֹן: כה וּפַקֵּיד יוֹסֵף וּמְלוֹ יַת מָנֵיהוֹן

לע"י

מזה. מן המקום הזה: **(טז) האמת אתכם.** אם אמת אתכם. לפיכך כ"ף נקוד פתח, שהוא כמו בלשון תימה, ואם לא תציאוהו חי פרעה כי מרגלים אתם: **(יז) משמר.** בית המאסורים: **(יט) בבית משמרכם.** שאתם מאסורים בו עכשיו: **ואתם לכו הביאו.** אל בית מאסרכם: **שבר רעבון בתיכם.** מה שקניתם לרעבון אנשי בתיכם: **(כ) ויאמנו דבריכם.** יתאמתו ויתקיימו, כמו אמן יאמן[1], וכמו יאמן נא דבריך[2]: **(כא) אבל.** כתרגומו בקושטא. וראיתי בגרמאנייז רבה[3] ליישנא דרומאה הוא, אבל בלרש: **באה אלינו.** טעמו בצי"ת, לפי שהוא בלשון עבר, שכבר באה. ותרגומו אתת לנא: **(כב) וגם דמו.** אתין

וגמין רבויין, דמו וגם דם הזקן: **(כג) והם לא ידעו כי שומע יוסף.** מדין לשונם, ובפניו היו מדברים כן: **כי המליץ בינותם.** כי כשהיו מדברים עמו היה המלין ביניהם, כיודע לשון עברי ולשון מצרי, והיה מלין דבריהם ליוסף, ודברי יוסף לכם, לכך היו סבורים שאין יוסף מכיר בלשון עברי: **המליץ.** זה מנשה הוא: **(כד) ויסב מעליהם.** נתרחק מעליהם, שלא ירשהו בוכה: **ויבך.** לפי שמע שהיו מתחרטין: **את שמעון.** הוא בשליחו לבור, הוא שאמר נלוי הוא לפני המלומות הלזה הא. דבר אחר, נתכוון יוסף להפרידו מלוי, שמא יתיעצו שניהם להרוג אותו: **ויאסר אתו לעיניהם.** לא

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*.

1 במדבר ה, כב 2 מלכים־א ח, כז 3 צא, ח

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!"

[17] *He put them in prison for three days.*

[18] *On the third day, Yosef said to them, "If you do as I say you will live. I fear the Almighty."*

Fifth Reading

[19] *"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.* [20] *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 *They 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."*

[22] *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!"*

[23] *They did not know that Yosef understood (their language), for the interpreter was between them.*

[24] *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

The 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)

יוֹסֵף וַיְמַלְאוּ אֶת־כְּלֵיהֶם בָּר וְלָהָשִׁיב כַּסְפֵּיהֶם אִישׁ אֶל־שַׂקּוֹ
וְלָתֵת לָהֶם צֵדָה לַדָּרֶךְ וַיַּעַשׂ לָהֶם כֵּן: כו וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֶת־שִׁבְרָם
עַל־חֲמֹרֵיהֶם וַיֵּלְכוּ מִשָּׁם: כז וַיִּפְתַּח הָאֶחָד אֶת־שַׂקּוֹ לָתֵת
מִסְפּוֹא לַחֲמֹרוֹ בַּמָּלוֹן וַיַּרְא אֶת־כַּסְפּוֹ וְהִנֵּה־הוּא בְּפִי
אַמְתַּחְתּוֹ: כח וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־אֶחָיו הוּשַׁב כַּסְפִּי וְגַם הִנֵּה
בְאַמְתַּחְתִּי וַיֵּצֵא לִבָּם וַיֶּחֶרְדוּ אִישׁ אֶל־אָחִיו לֵאמֹר מַה־זֹּאת
עָשָׂה אֱלֹהִים לָנוּ: כט וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־יַעֲקֹב אֲבִיהֶם אַרְצָה כְּנָעַן
וַיַּגִּידוּ לוֹ אֵת כָּל־הַקֹּרֹת אֹתָם לֵאמֹר: ל דִּבֶּר הָאִישׁ אֲדֹנֵי
הָאָרֶץ אִתָּנוּ קָשׁוֹת וַיִּתֵּן אֹתָנוּ כִּמְרַגְּלִים אֶת־הָאָרֶץ:
לא וַנֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו כֵּנִים אֲנָחְנוּ לֹא הָיִינוּ מְרַגְּלִים: לב שְׁנֵים־עָשָׂר
אֲנַחְנוּ אַחִים בְּנֵי אָבִינוּ הָאֶחָד אֵינֶנּוּ וְהַקָּטֹן הַיּוֹם אֶת־אָבִינוּ
בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: לג וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֵינוּ הָאִישׁ אֲדֹנֵי הָאָרֶץ בְּזֹאת אֵדַע
כִּי כֵנִים אַתֶּם אֲחֵיכֶם הָאֶחָד הַנִּיחוּ אִתִּי וְאֶת־רַעֲבוֹן בָּתֵּיכֶם
קְחוּ וָלֵכוּ: לד וְהָבִיאוּ אֶת־אֲחִיכֶם הַקָּטֹן אֵלָי וְאֵדְעָה כִּי לֹא
מְרַגְּלִים אַתֶּם כִּי כֵנִים אַתֶּם אֶת־אֲחִיכֶם אֶתֵּן לָכֶם
וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ תִּסְחָרוּ: לה וַיְהִי הֵם מְרִיקִים שַׂקֵּיהֶם וְהִנֵּה־אִישׁ
צְרוֹר־כַּסְפּוֹ בְּשַׂקּוֹ וַיִּרְאוּ אֶת־צְרֹרוֹת כַּסְפֵּיהֶם הֵמָּה וַאֲבִיהֶם
וַיִּירָאוּ: לו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם יַעֲקֹב אֲבִיהֶם אֹתִי שִׁכַּלְתֶּם יוֹסֵף
אֵינֶנּוּ וְשִׁמְעוֹן אֵינֶנּוּ וְאֶת־בִּנְיָמִן תִּקָּחוּ עָלַי הָיוּ כֻלָּנָה:
לז וַיֹּאמֶר רְאוּבֵן אֶל־אָבִיו לֵאמֹר אֶת־שְׁנֵי בָנַי תָּמִית אִם־לֹא
אֲבִיאֶנּוּ אֵלֶיךָ תְּנָה אֹתוֹ עַל־יָדִי וַאֲנִי אֲשִׁיבֶנּוּ אֵלֶיךָ: לח וַיֹּאמֶר

עִבּוּרָא וְלַאֲתָבָא כַּסְפֵּיהוֹן גְּבַר לְסַקֵּיהּ וּלְמִתַּן
לְהוֹן זָוָדִין לְאָרְחָא וַעֲבַד לְהוֹן כֵּן: כו וּנְטָלוּ
יַת עִבּוּרֵהוֹן עַל חֲמָרֵיהוֹן וַאֲזָלוּ מִתַּמָּן:
כז וּפְתַח חַד יַת סַקֵּיהּ לְמִתַּן כִּיסְתָּא לַחֲמָרֵיהּ
בְּבֵית מָבְתָא וַחֲזָא יַת כַּסְפֵּיהּ וְהָא הוּא בְּפוּם
טוֹעֲנֵיהּ: כח וַאֲמַר לַאֲחוֹהִי אִתּוֹתַב כַּסְפִּי וְאַף
הָא בְּטוֹעֲנִי וּפַקַּע מַדַּע לִבְּהוֹן וּתְוָהוּ גְּבַר
לַאֲחוּהִי לְמֵימַר מָה דָּא עֲבַד יְיָ לָנָא: כט וַאֲתוֹ
לְוָת יַעֲקֹב אֲבוּהוֹן לְאַרְעָא דִּכְנָעַן וְחַוִּיאוּ לֵיהּ
יַת כָּל דְּעָרְעָן יַתְהוֹן לְמֵימָר: ל מַלִּיל גַּבְרָא
רִבּוֹנָא דְּאַרְעָא עִמָּנָא קַשְׁיָן וְיַהֲב יָתָנָא
כְּמְאַלְּלֵי יַת אַרְעָא: לא וַאֲמַרְנָא לֵיהּ כֵּיְנֵי
אֲנַחְנָא לָא הֲוֵינָא מְאַלְּלֵי: לב תְּרֵין עֲשַׂר
אֲנַחְנָא אַחִין בְּנֵי אֲבוּנָא חַד לֵיתוֹהִי וּזְעֵירָא
יוֹמָא דֵּין עִם אֲבוּנָא בְּאַרְעָא דִּכְנָעַן: לג וַאֲמַר
לָנָא גַּבְרָא רִבּוֹנָא דְּאַרְעָא בְּדָא אִדַּע אֲרֵי
כֵּיְנֵי אַתּוּן אֲחוּכוֹן חַד שְׁבוּקוּ לְוָתִי וְיַת
עִבּוּרָא דְּחַסִּיר בְּבָתֵּיכוֹן סִיבוּ וְאִזִּילוּ:
לד וְאֵיתוֹ יַת אֲחוּכוֹן זְעֵירָא לְוָתִי וְאִדַּע אֲרֵי
לָא מְאַלְּלֵי אַתּוּן אֲרֵי כֵּיְנֵי אַתּוּן יַת אֲחוּכוֹן
אֶתֵּן לְכוֹן וְיַת אַרְעָא תַּעְבְּדוּן בַּהּ סָחוֹרְתָא:
לה וַהֲוָה אִנּוּן מְרִיקִין סַקֵּיהוֹן וְהָא גַּבְרָא
צְרִיר כַּסְפֵּיהּ בְּסַקֵּיהּ וַחֲזוֹ יַת צָרְרֵי כַסְפֵּיהוֹן
אִנּוּן וַאֲבוּהוֹן וּדְחִילוּ: לו וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן יַעֲקֹב
אֲבוּהוֹן יָתִי אַתְכֻּלְתּוּן יוֹסֵף לֵיתוֹהִי וְשִׁמְעוֹן
לָא הֲוָה הָכָא (לֵיתוֹהִי) וְיַת בִּנְיָמִן תְּדַבְּרוּן
עֲלַי הֲווֹ כֻלְּהוֹן: לז וַאֲמַר רְאוּבֵן לַאֲבוּהִי
לְמֵימַר יַת תְּרֵין בְּנַי תְּמִית אִם לָא
אַיְתֵינֵיהּ לָךְ הַב יָתֵיהּ עַל יְדִי וַאֲנָא
אֲתֵיבִינֵיהּ לָךְ: לח וַאֲמַר לָא יֵחוֹת בְּרִי עִמְּכוֹן

רש"י

מסרו מלא לעיניכם, וכיון שיצאו, כוונתו והכניסו[1]: (כז) **ויפתח האחד.** כוח לוי שנאמר מצמעון בן זוגו: **במלון.** במקום שלנו בגליל: **אמתחתו.** כוח שק: (כח) **וגם הנה באמתחתי.** גס הכסף בו עס כתגוחה: **מה זאת עשה אלהים לנו.** להכיאנו לידי עלילה זו, שלא כוצא שלא להתעולל עלינו: (לד) **ואת הארץ תסחרו.** תסובבו. וכל לשון סוחריס וסחורה על שם שמחזירים וסובבים לחר פרקמטיא: (לה) **צרור כספו.** קשר כספו: (לו) **אתי שכלתם.** מלמד שחשבן שמא כרגוהו או מכרוהו כיוסף: **שכלתם.** כל מי שגניו מבודיס

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. 198*ff.*)

1 ב"ר צא, ז

[25] 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. [26] They loaded their grain onto their donkeys, and departed.

[27] 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. [28] 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 *They came to Ya'akov their father, in the land of Cana'an, and they told him everything that had happened to them: They said, [30] "The man, the chief of the land, spoke to us harshly. He accused us of spying on the land. [31] We said to him, 'We are honest! We were never spies. [32] 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.' [33] 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. [34] 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.'"*

[35] 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.

[36] 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!"

[37] 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

לֹא־יֵרֵד בְּנִי עִמָּכֶם כִּי־אָחִיו מֵת וְהוּא לְבַדּוֹ נִשְׁאָר וּקְרָאָהוּ
אָסוֹן בַּדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר תֵּלְכוּ־בָהּ וְהוֹרַדְתֶּם אֶת־שֵׂיבָתִי בְּיָגוֹן
שְׁאוֹלָה: מג א וְהָרָעָב כָּבֵד בָּאָרֶץ: ב וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר כִּלּוּ לֶאֱכֹל
אֶת־הַשֶּׁבֶר אֲשֶׁר הֵבִיאוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם אֲבִיהֶם שֻׁבוּ
שִׁבְרוּ־לָנוּ מְעַט־אֹכֶל: ג וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו יְהוּדָה לֵאמֹר הָעֵד הֵעִד
בָּנוּ הָאִישׁ לֵאמֹר לֹא־תִרְאוּ פָּנַי בִּלְתִּי אֲחִיכֶם אִתְּכֶם:
ד אִם־יֶשְׁךָ מְשַׁלֵּחַ אֶת־אָחִינוּ אִתָּנוּ נֵרְדָה וְנִשְׁבְּרָה לְךָ אֹכֶל:
ה וְאִם־אֵינְךָ מְשַׁלֵּחַ לֹא נֵרֵד כִּי־הָאִישׁ אָמַר אֵלֵינוּ לֹא־תִרְאוּ
פָּנַי בִּלְתִּי אֲחִיכֶם אִתְּכֶם: ו וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל לָמָּה הֲרֵעֹתֶם לִי
לְהַגִּיד לָאִישׁ הַעוֹד לָכֶם אָח: ז וַיֹּאמְרוּ שָׁאוֹל שָׁאַל־הָאִישׁ לָנוּ
וּלְמוֹלַדְתֵּנוּ לֵאמֹר הַעוֹד אֲבִיכֶם חַי הֲיֵשׁ לָכֶם אָח וַנַּגֶּד־לוֹ
עַל־פִּי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה הֲיָדוֹעַ נֵדַע כִּי יֹאמַר הוֹרִידוּ
אֶת־אֲחִיכֶם: ח וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוּדָה אֶל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אָבִיו שִׁלְחָה הַנַּעַר
אִתִּי וְנָקוּמָה וְנֵלֵכָה וְנִחְיֶה וְלֹא נָמוּת גַּם־אֲנַחְנוּ גַּם־אַתָּה
גַּם־טַפֵּנוּ: ט אָנֹכִי אֶעֶרְבֶנּוּ מִיָּדִי תְּבַקְשֶׁנּוּ אִם־לֹא הֲבִיאֹתִיו

אֲבִי אֲחוּהִי מִית וְהוּא בִלְחוֹדוֹהִי אִשְׁתָּאַר
וְיַעַרְעִינֵיהּ מוֹתָא בְּאָרְחָא דִּי תֶהָכוּן בָּהּ
וְתַחֲתוּן יַת שֵׂיבְתִּי בְּדָוּנָא לִשְׁאוֹל: א וְכַפְנָא
תַּקִּיף בְּאַרְעָא: ב וַהֲוָה כַּד סַפִּיקוּ (שֵׁצִיאוּ)
לְמֵיכַל יַת עִבּוּרָא דִּי אַיְתִיאוּ מִמִּצְרָיִם וַאֲמַר
לְהוֹן אֲבוּהוֹן תּוּבוּ זְבוּנוּ לָנָא זְעִיר עִבּוּרָא:
ג וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ יְהוּדָה לְמֵימָר אִסְתָּהֲדָא אִסְתְּהִיד
בָּנָא גַּבְרָא לְמֵימַר לָא תֶחֱזוֹן אַפַּי אֱלָהֵין כַּד
אֲחוּכוֹן עִמְּכוֹן: ד אִם אִיתָךְ מְשַׁלַּח יַת אֲחוּנָא
עִמָּנָא נֵיחוֹת וְנִזְבֵּן לָךְ עִבּוּרָא: ה וְאִם לֵיתָךְ
מְשַׁלַּח לָא נֵיחוֹת אֲרֵי גַּבְרָא אֲמַר לָנָא לָא
תֶחֱזוֹן אַפַּי אֱלָהֵין כַּד אֲחוּכוֹן עִמְּכוֹן: ו וַאֲמַר
יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמָא אַבְאֶשְׁתּוּן לִי לְחַוָּאָה לְגַבְרָא
הַעַד כְּעַן לְכוֹן אָחָא: ז וַאֲמָרוּ מִשְׁאַל שְׁאֵיל
גַּבְרָא לָנָא וּלְיַלְדוּתָנָא לְמֵימַר הַעַד כְּעַן
אֲבוּכוֹן קַיָּם הַאִית לְכוֹן אָחָא וְחַוֵינָא לֵיהּ עַל
מֵימַר פִּתְגָמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין הֲמַדַּע נְהַוֵינָא יָדְעִין
אֲרֵי יֵימַר אוֹחִיתוּ יַת אֲחוּכוֹן: ח וַאֲמַר יְהוּדָה
לְיִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבוּהִי שְׁלַח עוּלֵימָא עִמִּי וְנְקוּם
וְנֵיזֵיל וְנֵיחֵי וְלָא נְמוּת אַף אֲנַחְנָא אַף אַתְּ אַף
טַפְלָנָא: ט אֲנָא מְעָרַבְנָא בֵּיהּ מִן יְדִי תְּבַעֵינֵיהּ
אִם לָא אֵיתִינֵיהּ לָךְ וַאֲקֵימִינֵיהּ קֳדָמָךְ וְאֶהֱי

קרוי שכול: (לח) **לא ירד בני עמכם**. לח קבל דבריו של רחובן, אמר, כבור שוטה הוא זה. הוא חושר להמית בניו, וכי בניו הם ולח בני[1]: (ג) **כאשר כלו לאכול**. יהודה אמר לכם המתינו לזקן עד שתאכלו פת מן הבית: **כאשר כלו**. כד שליאו (והמתרגם כד ספיקו, טועה, כאשר כלו הגמליס לשתות, מתורגם כד ספיקו, כששתו די ספוקם הוא גמר שתייתם. אבל זה כאשר כלו לאכול, כאשר תם האוכל הוא, ומתרגמינן כד שיליאו): (ג) **העד העיד**. לשון התראה, שסתם התראה מתרה בו בפני עדים. וכן העידותי בכם[2], רד העד בעם[3]: **לא תראו פני בלתי אחיכם אתכם**. לח תרחוני בלח מחיכם אתכם. ומונקלוס תרגם מלהין כד מחוכון עמכון, ייצב הדבר על מופנו, ולח דקדק לתרגם אחר לשון המקרח: (ז) **לנו ולמולדתנו**. למשפחותינו. ומדרשו, אפילו עניני (ני"ח עני) עריסותינו גלה לנו: **ונגד לו**. שים לנו אב ואח: **על פי הדברים האלה**. על פי שאלותיו אשר שאל, הוזקקנו להגיד: **כי יאמר**. אשר יאמר, כי משמש בלשון אם, ואם משמש בלשון אשר, הרי זה שמוש אחד מאחרע לשונות שמשמש כי, והוא אי, שהרי כי זה כמו אם, כמו עד אם דברתי דברי: (ח) **ונחיה**. נלמלה בו רוח הקדש, על ידי הליכה זו תמי רוחך, שנאמר ותחי רוח יעקב אביהם: **ולא נמות**. ברעב, בניתין ספק יתפש ספק לא יתפש, ואנו כלנו מתים ברעב אם לא נלך, מוטב שנהיה את הספק

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)

1 ב"ר צא, ט 2 דברים ל, יט 3 שמות יט, כא

38 *(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 *The famine in the land was severe. 2 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."*

3 Yehudah spoke to him, saying, "The man repeatedly warned us, saying, 'You will not see my face if your brother is not with you.'"

4 "If you send our brother with us, we'll go down and buy food for you. 5 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.'"

6 Yisra'el said, "Why have you harmed me, by telling the man that you have another brother?"

7 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'?"

8 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. 9 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. 213*ff.*)

אֵלֶיךָ וְהַצַּגְתִּיו לְפָנֶיךָ וְחָטָאתִי לְךָ כָּל־הַיָּמִים: י כִּי לוּלֵא הִתְמַהְמָהְנוּ כִּי־עַתָּה שַׁבְנוּ זֶה פַּעֲמָיִם: יא וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבִיהֶם אִם־כֵּן | אֵפוֹא זֹאת עֲשׂוּ קְחוּ מִזִּמְרַת הָאָרֶץ בִּכְלֵיכֶם וְהוֹרִידוּ לָאִישׁ מִנְחָה מְעַט צֳרִי וּמְעַט דְּבַשׁ נְכֹאת וָלֹט בָּטְנִים וּשְׁקֵדִים: יב וְכֶסֶף מִשְׁנֶה קְחוּ בְיֶדְכֶם וְאֶת־הַכֶּסֶף הַמּוּשָׁב בְּפִי אַמְתְּחֹתֵיכֶם תָּשִׁיבוּ בְיֶדְכֶם אוּלַי מִשְׁגֶּה הוּא: יג וְאֶת־אֲחִיכֶם קָחוּ וְקוּמוּ שׁוּבוּ אֶל־הָאִישׁ: יד וְאֵל שַׁדַּי יִתֵּן לָכֶם רַחֲמִים לִפְנֵי הָאִישׁ וְשִׁלַּח לָכֶם אֶת־אֲחִיכֶם אַחֵר וְאֶת־בִּנְיָמִין וַאֲנִי כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁכֹלְתִּי שָׁכָלְתִּי: טו וַיִּקְחוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה הַזֹּאת וּמִשְׁנֶה־כֶּסֶף לָקְחוּ בְיָדָם וְאֶת־בִּנְיָמִן וַיָּקֻמוּ וַיֵּרְדוּ מִצְרַיִם וַיַּעַמְדוּ לִפְנֵי יוֹסֵף: [ששי] טז וַיַּרְא יוֹסֵף אִתָּם אֶת־בִּנְיָמִן וַיֹּאמֶר לַאֲשֶׁר עַל־בֵּיתוֹ הָבֵא אֶת־הָאֲנָשִׁים הַבַּיְתָה וּטְבֹחַ טֶבַח וְהָכֵן כִּי אִתִּי יֹאכְלוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים בַּצָּהֳרָיִם: יז וַיַּעַשׂ הָאִישׁ כַּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר יוֹסֵף וַיָּבֵא הָאִישׁ אֶת־הָאֲנָשִׁים בֵּיתָה יוֹסֵף: יח וַיִּירְאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים כִּי הוּבְאוּ בֵּית יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמְרוּ עַל־דְּבַר הַכֶּסֶף הַשָּׁב בְּאַמְתְּחֹתֵינוּ בַּתְּחִלָּה אֲנַחְנוּ מוּבָאִים לְהִתְגֹּלֵל עָלֵינוּ וּלְהִתְנַפֵּל עָלֵינוּ וְלָקַחַת אֹתָנוּ לַעֲבָדִים וְאֶת־חֲמֹרֵינוּ: יט וַיִּגְּשׁוּ אֶל־הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר עַל־בֵּית יוֹסֵף וַיְדַבְּרוּ

חָטֵי לְךָ כָּל יוֹמָיָא: י אֲרֵי אִלּוֹלָפוֹן בְּדָא אִתְעַכָּבְנָא אֲרֵי כְּעַן תַּבְנָא דְּנָן תְּרֵתֵין זִמְנִין: יא וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבוּהוֹן אִם כֵּן הָכָא (הוא) דָּא עֲבִידוּ סִיבוּ מִדְּמִשַּׁבַּח בְּאַרְעָא בְּמָנֵיכוֹן וְאוֹחֵיתוּ לְגַבְרָא תְּקָרוּבְתָּא זְעֵיר קֻטֶף וּזְעֵיר דְּבַשׁ שְׁעָף וּלְטוֹם בָּטְנִין וְשִׁגְדִּין: יב וְכַסְפָּא עַל חַד תְּרֵין סִיבוּ בְּיָדְכוֹן וַית כַּסְפָּא דְּאִתּוֹתַב בְּפוּם טוֹעֲנֵיכוֹן תְּתִיבוּן בְּיֶדְכוֹן מָאִים שָׁלוּ הוּא: יג וַית אֲחוּכוֹן דְּבָרוּ וְקוּמוּ תּוּבוּ לְוַת גַּבְרָא: יד וְאֵל שַׁדַּי יִתֵּן לְכוֹן רַחֲמִין קֳדָם גַּבְרָא וְיִפְטַר לְכוֹן יַת אֲחוּכוֹן אָחֳרָנָא וְיַת בִּנְיָמִין וַאֲנָא כְּמָא דְּאִתְכְּלִית תְּכִלִית: טו וּנְסִיבוּ גוּבְרַיָּא יַת תְּקָרוּבְתָּא הָדָא וְעַל חַד תְּרֵין כַּסְפָּא נְסִיבוּ בִּידֵיהוֹן וּדְבָרוּ יַת בִּנְיָמִן וְקָמוּ וּנְחָתוּ לְמִצְרַיִם וְקָמוּ קֳדָם יוֹסֵף: טז וַחֲזָא יוֹסֵף עִמְּהוֹן יַת בִּנְיָמִן וַאֲמַר לְדִי מְמַנָּא עַל בֵּיתֵהּ אָעֵיל יַת גּוּבְרַיָּא לְבֵיתָא וּנְכוֹס נְכִסְתָּא וְאִתְקֵין אֲרֵי עִמִּי יֵיכְלוּן גֻּבְרַיָּא בְּשֵׁירוּתָא: יז וַעֲבַד גַּבְרָא כְּמָא דִּי אֲמַר יוֹסֵף וְאָעֵיל גַּבְרָא יָת גּוּבְרַיָּא לְבֵית יוֹסֵף: יח וּדְחִילוּ גֻּבְרַיָּא אֲרֵי אִתַּעֲלוּ לְבֵית יוֹסֵף וַאֲמָרוּ עַל עִיסַק כַּסְפָּא דְּאִתּוֹתַב בְּטוֹעֲנָנָא בְּקַדְמֵיתָא אֲנַחְנָא מְתַעֲלִין לְאִתְרַבְרָבָא עֲלָנָא וּלְאִסְתַּקָּפָא עֲלָנָא וּלְמִקְנֵי יָתָנָא לְעַבְדִּין וּלְמִדְבַּר יַת חֲמָרָנָא: יט וּקְרִיבוּ לְוַת גַּבְרָא דִּי מְמַנָּא עַל בֵּית יוֹסֵף

לש"י

ותפוס את הודאי: (ט) **והצגתיו לפניך**. שלא תביאנו לידך מת כי אם חי: **וחטאתי לך כל הימים**. לעולם הבא: (י) **לולא התמהמהנו**. על ידך, כבר היינו שניו עם שמעון, ולא נעטרת כל הימים הללו: (יא) **אפוא**. כל לשון חפוש לשון יתר הוא, לתקן כמלא בלשון עברי, אם כן חזדקק לעשות שתשלחנו עמכם, לריך אני לחזור ולבקש חיה פה תקנה ועלה להשיבכם, ותומר אני זאת עשו: **מזמרת הארץ**. מתורגם מדמשבח בחרעא, שהכל מזמרים עליו כשהוא בא לעולם: **נבאת**. שעוט. ברחשית רבה[1]: **בטנים**. לא ידעתי מה הם, ובפירוש ר' ב' של רבי מכיר רחיתי, פוסטלינ"ס, ודומה לי שהם לפרסקין: (יב) **וכסף משנה**. פי שניס כראשון: **קחו בידכם**. לשבור תוכל, שמא הוקר השער: **אולי משגה הוא**. שמא הממונה על הבית שכחו שוגג: (יד) **ואל שדי**. מעתה תיוכם חסריס כלום אלא תפלה, כריני מתפלל עליכם: **ואל שדי**[2]. שדי בנתינת רחמיו, וכדי היכולת בידו ליתן, יתן לכם רחמים, זהו פשוטו. ומדרשו, מי שאמר לעולם די, יאמר די לצרותי, שלא שקטתי מעשורי, לרת לבן, לרת עשו, לרת רחל, לרת דינה, לרת יוסף, לרת שמעון, לרת בנימין: **ושלח לכם**. ויפטר לכון כתרגומו, יפטרנו מאסוריו, לשון לחפשי ישלחנו, ואינו נופל בתרגום לשון וישלח, שהרי לשם כת הולכים אלנו: **את אחיכם**. זה שמעון: **אחר**. רוח הקודש נזדקק בו[3], לרדות יוסף: **ואני**. עד שובכם אהיה שכול מספק: **כאשר שכלתי**. מיוסף ומשמעון: **שכלתי**. מבנימין: (טו) **ואת בנימין**. מתרגמינן ודברו ית בנימין, לפי שאין לקיחת הכסף ולקיחת האחים שוה בלשון אומרי, בדבר הנקח ביד מתרגמינן ונסיבו, ובדבר הנקח בהנהגת דבריס מתרגמינן ודבר: (טז) **וטבוח טבח והכן**. כמו ועטבוה טבח ולהכן, ואין טבוח לשון צווי, שהיה לו לומר וטבח: **בצהרים**. זה מתורגם בצירותא, שהוא לשון סעודה ראשונה בלשון אומרי ובלע"ז דיזנ"ר, ויש הרבה בגמרא, שהם לכלבא שירותיה. בלא אכולא שירותא[4]. אבל כל תרגום של לחריס טיכרת: (יח) **ויראו האנשים**. כתוב הוא בשני יודי"ן, ותרגומו ודחילו: **כי הובאו בית יוסף**. ואין דרך שאר הבאים לשבור בר לעון בבית יוסף כי אם בפונדקאות שבעיר. ויירחו שאין זה אלא לאספס על משמר: **אנחנו מובאים**. אל תוך הבית הזה: **להתגולל**. להיות מתגלגלת עלינו עלילת הכסף, ולהיותה נופלת עלינו. ואונקלוס שתרגם ולאסתקפא עלנא, הוא לשון להתעולל, כדמתרגמינן עלילות דבריס,

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 ב"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."

10 *"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)."*

11 *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.* 12 *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."*

13 *"Take your brother, get going, and return to the man.* 14 *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 *The 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

16 *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."*

17 *The man did as Yosef had said. The man brought the men into Yosef's house.*

18 *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."*

19 *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

Why 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)

אֵלָיו פֶּתַח הַבָּיִת: כ וַיֹּאמְרוּ בִּי אֲדֹנִי יָרֹד יָרַדְנוּ בַּתְּחִלָּה
לִשְׁבָּר־אֹכֶל: כא וַיְהִי כִּי־בָאנוּ אֶל־הַמָּלוֹן וַנִּפְתְּחָה
אֶת־אַמְתְּחֹתֵינוּ וְהִנֵּה כֶסֶף־אִישׁ בְּפִי אַמְתַּחְתּוֹ כַּסְפֵּנוּ
בִּמְשְׁקָלוֹ וַנָּשֶׁב אֹתוֹ בְיָדֵנוּ: כב וְכֶסֶף אַחֵר הוֹרַדְנוּ בְיָדֵנוּ
לִשְׁבָּר־אֹכֶל לֹא יָדַעְנוּ מִי־שָׂם כַּסְפֵּנוּ בְּאַמְתְּחֹתֵינוּ: כג וַיֹּאמֶר
שָׁלוֹם לָכֶם אַל־תִּירָאוּ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבִיכֶם נָתַן לָכֶם
מַטְמוֹן בְּאַמְתְּחֹתֵיכֶם כַּסְפְּכֶם בָּא אֵלָי וַיּוֹצֵא אֲלֵהֶם
אֶת־שִׁמְעוֹן: כד וַיָּבֵא הָאִישׁ אֶת־הָאֲנָשִׁים בֵּיתָה יוֹסֵף
וַיִּתֵּן־מַיִם וַיִּרְחֲצוּ רַגְלֵיהֶם וַיִּתֵּן מִסְפּוֹא לַחֲמֹרֵיהֶם: כה וַיָּכִינוּ
אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה עַד־בּוֹא יוֹסֵף בַּצָּהֳרַיִם כִּי שָׁמְעוּ כִּי־שָׁם יֹאכְלוּ
לָחֶם: כו וַיָּבֹא יוֹסֵף הַבַּיְתָה וַיָּבִיאוּ לוֹ אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה אֲשֶׁר־בְּיָדָם
הַבַּיְתָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ־לוֹ אָרְצָה: כז וַיִּשְׁאַל לָהֶם לְשָׁלוֹם וַיֹּאמֶר
הֲשָׁלוֹם אֲבִיכֶם הַזָּקֵן אֲשֶׁר אֲמַרְתֶּם הַעוֹדֶנּוּ חָי: כח וַיֹּאמְרוּ
שָׁלוֹם לְעַבְדְּךָ לְאָבִינוּ עוֹדֶנּוּ חָי וַיִּקְּדוּ וישתחו [ק׳ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ]:
כט וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיַּרְא אֶת־בִּנְיָמִין אָחִיו בֶּן־אִמּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר הֲזֶה
אֲחִיכֶם הַקָּטֹן אֲשֶׁר אֲמַרְתֶּם אֵלָי וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יָחְנְךָ בְּנִי:
[שביעי] ל וַיְמַהֵר יוֹסֵף כִּי־נִכְמְרוּ רַחֲמָיו אֶל־אָחִיו וַיְבַקֵּשׁ לִבְכּוֹת
וַיָּבֹא הַחַדְרָה וַיֵּבְךְּ שָׁמָּה: לא וַיִּרְחַץ פָּנָיו וַיֵּצֵא וַיִּתְאַפַּק וַיֹּאמֶר
שִׂימוּ לָחֶם: לב וַיָּשִׂימוּ לוֹ לְבַדּוֹ וְלָהֶם לְבַדָּם וְלַמִּצְרִים
הָאֹכְלִים אִתּוֹ לְבַדָּם כִּי לֹא יוּכְלוּן הַמִּצְרִים לֶאֱכָל אֶת־
הָעִבְרִים לֶחֶם כִּי־תוֹעֵבָה הִוא לְמִצְרָיִם: לג וַיֵּשְׁבוּ לְפָנָיו

*א׳ דגושה

ומַלִּילוּ עַמֵּיהּ בִּתְרַע בֵּיתָא: כ וַאֲמָרוּ בְּעָו
רִבּוֹנִי מֵיחַת נְחֵתְנָא בְּקַדְמֵיתָא לְמִזְבַּן עִבּוּרָא:
כא וַהֲוָה כַּד אֲתֵינָא לְבֵית מָבְתָא וּפְתַחְנָא יַת
טוֹעֲנָנָא וְהָא כְסַף גְּבַר בְּפוּם טוֹעֲנֵיהּ כַּסְפָּנָא
בְּמַתְקָלֵיהּ וַאֲתֵיבְנָא יָתֵיהּ בִּידָנָא: כב וְכַסְפָּא
אָחֳרָנָא אוֹחֵיתְנָא בִּידָנָא לְמִזְבַּן עִבּוּרָא לָא
יְדַעְנָא מָן שַׁוִּי כַסְפָּנָא בְּטוֹעֲנָנָא: כג וַאֲמַר
שְׁלָם לְכוֹן לָא תִדְחֲלוּן אֱלָהְכוֹן וֵאלָהָא
דַּאֲבוּכוֹן יְהַב לְכוֹן סִימָא בְּטוֹעֲנֵיכוֹן כַּסְפְּכוֹן
אֲתָא לְוָתִי וְאַפֵּיק לְוָתְהוֹן יַת שִׁמְעוֹן: כד וְאָעֵיל
גַּבְרָא יַת גּוּבְרַיָּא לְבֵית יוֹסֵף וְיַהַב מַיָּא
וְאַסְחוֹ רַגְלֵיהוֹן וְיַהַב כְּסְתָא לַחֲמָרֵיהוֹן:
כה וְאַתְקִינוּ יַת תְּקָרוּבְתָּא עַד דְּעַל יוֹסֵף
בְּשֵׁירוּתָא אֲרֵי שְׁמָעוּ אֲרֵי תַמָּן יֵיכְלוּן לַחְמָא:
כו וְעַל יוֹסֵף לְבֵיתָא וְאַיְתִיאוּ לֵיהּ יַת
תְּקָרוּבְתָּא דִּי בִידֵיהוֹן לְבֵיתָא וּסְגִידוּ לֵיהּ עַל
אַרְעָא: כז וּשְׁאֵיל לְהוֹן לְשָׁלָם וַאֲמַר הֲשָׁלָם
לַאֲבוּכוֹן סָבָא דִּי אֲמַרְתּוּן הַעַד כְּעַן קַיָּם:
כח וַאֲמָרוּ שְׁלָם לְעַבְדָּךְ לַאֲבוּנָא עַד כְּעַן קַיָּם
וּכְרָעוּ וּסְגִידוּ: כט וּזְקַף עֵינוֹהִי וַחֲזָא יַת
בִּנְיָמִין אֲחוּהִי בַּר אִמֵּיהּ וַאֲמַר הֲדֵין אֲחוּכוֹן
זְעִירָא דִּי אֲמַרְתּוּן לִי וַאֲמַר מָן קֳדָם יְיָ
יְתְרַחֵם עֲלָךְ בְּרִי: ל וְאוֹחִי יוֹסֵף אֲרֵי אִתְגּוֹלְלוּ
רַחֲמוֹהִי עַל אֲחוּהִי וּבְעָא לְמִבְכֵּי וְעַל
לְאִדְרוֹן בֵּית מִשְׁכְּבָא וּבְכָא תַמָּן: לא וְאַסְחֵי
אַפּוֹהִי וּנְפַק וְאִתְחַסַּן וַאֲמַר שַׁוּוֹ לַחְמָא:
לב וְשַׁוִּיאוּ לֵיהּ בִּלְחוֹדוֹהִי וּלְהוֹן בִּלְחוֹדֵיהוֹן
וּלְמִצְרָאֵי דְּאָכְלִין עִמֵּיהּ בִּלְחוֹדֵיהוֹן אֲרֵי לָא
יָכְלִין מִצְרָאֵי לְמֵיכַל עִם עִבְרָאֵי לַחְמָא אֲרֵי
בְּעִירָא דְמִצְרָאֵי דַּחֲלִין לֵיהּ עִבְרָאֵי אָכְלִין:
לג וְאִסְתָּרוּ קֳדָמוֹהִי רַבָּא כְּרַבְיוּתֵיהּ וּזְעִירָא

תסקופי מלין. ולא תרגמו אחר לשון המקרא. ולהתגולל שתרגם לאתרברבא, הוא לשון גלת הזכב[1], וכלב גלתה כעלתה[2], שהוא לשון מלכות: (כ) **בי אדוני.** לשון בעיא ותחנוניס, הוא בלשון תרמי דייק דייק[3]: **ירד ירדנו.** ירידה הוא לנו, רגילים הייגו לפרנס אחרים, עכשיו אנו לריכים לך[4]: (כג) **אלהיכם.** בזכותכם, ואם אין זכותכם כדאי, אלהי אביכם, בזכות אביכם נתן לכם מטמון: (כד) **ויבא האיש.** כשאמר אחר כשאמר, לפי שהיו דוחפים אותו חון, עד שהכניו אליו פתח הבית, ומשאמר לכם שלום לכם, נמשכו ואמו אחריו: (כה) **ויבינו.** הזמינו, עטרוהו בכליס נאים: (כו) **הביתה.** מפרוזדור לטרקלין: (כח) **ויקדו וישתחוו.** על שאלת שלום. קידה כפיפת קדקד, כשתאמר משתטח לארץ: (כט) **אלהים יחנך בני.** בשאר שבטים שמעט חניכה, אתר חנן אלהים את עבדך, וכיומין עדיין לא נולד, לכך ברכו יוסף בחניכה: (ל) **כי נכמרו רחמיו.** שאלו יש לך את אחיך,

1 קהלת יב, ו 2 נחום ב, ח 3 יומא סט: 4 ב״ר צב, ד 5 לו: 6 בבא מציעא עד. 7 פסחים נח. 8 איוב יב, כא 9 שם מא, ז

entrance. [20] "Please sir," they said, "we originally came down to purchase food. [21] 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. [22] We brought down more money with us to purchase food. We don't know who put our money (back) into our sacks."

[23] 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.

[24] The man brought the (brothers) into Yosef's house. He gave (them) water, and they washed their feet. He gave fodder to their donkeys. [25] They prepared the gift (in beautiful containers) before Yosef came for lunch, for they heard that they would be dining there.

[26] 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.

[27] He inquired about their welfare. Then he asked them, "Is your elderly father, whom you mentioned, well? Is he still alive?"

[28] 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).

[29] (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.

SEVENTH READING

[30] (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.

[31] He washed his face and came out. He restrained himself and said, "Put out the food."

[32] 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,

הַבְּכֹר כִּבְכֹרָתוֹ וְהַצָּעִיר כְּצְעָרָתוֹ וַיִּתְמְהוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים אִישׁ אֶל־
רֵעֵהוּ: לד וַיִּשָּׂא מַשְׂאֹת מֵאֵת פָּנָיו אֲלֵהֶם וַתֵּרֶב מַשְׂאַת בִּנְיָמִן
מִמַּשְׂאֹת כֻּלָּם חָמֵשׁ יָדוֹת וַיִּשְׁתּוּ וַיִּשְׁכְּרוּ עִמּוֹ: מד א וַיְצַו
אֶת־אֲשֶׁר עַל־בֵּיתוֹ לֵאמֹר מַלֵּא אֶת־אַמְתְּחֹת הָאֲנָשִׁים אֹכֶל
כַּאֲשֶׁר יוּכְלוּן שְׂאֵת וְשִׂים כֶּסֶף־אִישׁ בְּפִי אַמְתַּחְתּוֹ: ב וְאֶת־
גְּבִיעִי גְּבִיעַ הַכֶּסֶף תָּשִׂים בְּפִי אַמְתַּחַת הַקָּטֹן וְאֵת כֶּסֶף שִׁבְרוֹ
וַיַּעַשׂ כִּדְבַר יוֹסֵף אֲשֶׁר דִּבֵּר: ג הַבֹּקֶר אוֹר וְהָאֲנָשִׁים שֻׁלְּחוּ
הֵמָּה וַחֲמֹרֵיהֶם: ד הֵם יָצְאוּ אֶת־הָעִיר לֹא הַרְחִיקוּ וְיוֹסֵף אָמַר
לַאֲשֶׁר עַל־בֵּיתוֹ קוּם רְדֹף אַחֲרֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים וְהִשַּׂגְתָּם וְאָמַרְתָּ
אֲלֵהֶם לָמָּה שִׁלַּמְתֶּם רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה: ה הֲלוֹא זֶה אֲשֶׁר
יִשְׁתֶּה אֲדֹנִי בּוֹ וְהוּא נַחֵשׁ יְנַחֵשׁ בּוֹ הֲרֵעֹתֶם אֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂיתֶם:
ו וַיַּשֵּׂג וַיְדַבֵּר אֲלֵהֶם אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה: ז וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו
לָמָּה יְדַבֵּר אֲדֹנִי כַּדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה חָלִילָה לַעֲבָדֶיךָ מֵעֲשׂוֹת
כַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה: ח הֵן כֶּסֶף אֲשֶׁר מָצָאנוּ בְּפִי אַמְתְּחֹתֵינוּ הֱשִׁיבֹנוּ
אֵלֶיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וְאֵיךְ נִגְנֹב מִבֵּית אֲדֹנֶיךָ כֶּסֶף אוֹ זָהָב:
ט אֲשֶׁר יִמָּצֵא אִתּוֹ מֵעֲבָדֶיךָ וָמֵת וְגַם־אֲנַחְנוּ נִהְיֶה לַאדֹנִי
לַעֲבָדִים: י וַיֹּאמֶר גַּם־עַתָּה כִּדְבָרֵיכֶם כֵּן־הוּא אֲשֶׁר יִמָּצֵא

כְּזֹעֲירוּתֵיהּ וּתְמָהוּ גֶּבְרַיָּא גְּבַר לְחַבְרֵיהּ: לד וּנְטַל חֲלָקִין מִן קֳדָמוֹהִי לְקֳדָמֵיהוֹן וּסְנֵי חֲלָקָא דִּבְנְיָמִין מֵחֲלָקֵי דְכָלְהוֹן חַמְשָׁא חֲלָקִין וּשְׁתִיאוּ וְרַוְיָאוּ עִמֵּיהּ: א וּפַקֵּיד יַת דְּמִמַּנָּא עַל בֵּיתֵיהּ לְמֵימַר מַלִּי יַת טוֹעֲנֵי גֶּבְרַיָּא עִבּוּרָא כְּמָא דִּי יָכְלִין לְמַטְלֵי וְשַׁוִּי כְּסַף גְּבַר בְּפוּם טוֹעֲנֵיהּ: ב וְיָת כַּלִּידִי כַּלִּידָא דְכַסְפָּא תְּשַׁוֵּי בְּפוּם טוֹעֲנָא דִזְעֵירָא וְיָת כְּסַף זְבִינוֹהִי וַעֲבַד כְּפִתְגָמָא דְיוֹסֵף דִּי מַלִּיל: ג צַפְרָא נְהַר וְגוּבְרַיָּא אִתְפַּטָּרוּ אִנּוּן וַחֲמָרֵיהוֹן: ד אִנּוּן נְפָקוּ מִן קַרְתָּא לָא אַרְחִיקוּ וְיוֹסֵף אֲמַר לְדִי מְמַנָּא עַל בֵּיתֵיהּ קוּם רְדֹף בָּתַר גּוּבְרַיָּא וְתִדְבְּקִנּוּן וְתֵימַר לְהוֹן לְמָא שְׁלֵמְתּוּן בִּשְׁתָּא חֲלַף טַבְתָּא: ה הֲלָא דֵין דִּי שָׁתֵי רִבּוֹנִי בֵּיהּ וְהוּא בָּדָקָא מְבַדַּק בֵּיהּ אַבְאֶשְׁתּוּן דִּי עֲבַדְתּוּן: ו וְאַדְבֵּיקִנּוּן וּמַלִּיל עִמְּהוֹן יַת פִּתְגָמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין: ז וַאֲמָרוּ לֵיהּ לְמָא יְמַלֵּיל רִבּוֹנִי כְּפִתְגָמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין חַס לְעַבָדָיךְ מִלְּמֶעְבַּד כְּפִתְגָמָא הָדֵין: ח הָא כַסְפָּא דִּי אַשְׁכַּחְנָא בְּפוּם טוֹעֲנָנָא אֲתֵיבְנוֹהִי לָךְ מֵאַרְעָא דִכְנָעַן וְאֵיכְדֵין נִגְנוֹב מִבֵּית רִבּוֹנָךְ מָנִין דִּכְסַף אוֹ מָנִין דִּדְהָב: ט דִּי יִשְׁתְּכַח עִמַּיהּ מֵעַבָדָיךְ יִתְקְטֵיל וְאַף אֲנַחְנָא נְהֵי לְרִבּוֹנִי לְעַבְדִּין: י וַאֲמַר אַף כְּעַן כְּפִתְגָמֵיכוֹן כֵּן הוּא דִּי יִשְׁתְּכַח

רס"י

יין, ומותו כיוס שתו[1]: **(ג) גביע.** כוס מרוך, וקורין לו מדריג"ס: **(ז) חלילה לעבדיך.** חולין הוא לנו, לשון גנאי. ותרגום חס לעבדיך, חס מאת הקב"ה יהי עלינו מעשות זאת, והרבה ים בגמרא חס ושלום: **(ח) הן כסף אשר מצאנו.** זה אחד מעשרה קל וחומר כאמוריס בתורה. וכולן מנויין בברייתא דרבנן[2]: **(י) גם עתה כדבריכם.** אף זו מן הדין אמת, כדבריכם כן הוא,

(לג) **הבכור כבכרתו.** מכה בגדיע וקורת, רחובן שמעון לוי יהודה יששכר וזבולון בני אם אחת, הסבו כסדר הזה שהוא סדר תולדותיכם, וכן כולם, כיון שהגיע לבנימין, אמר, זה אין לו אם ואני אין לי אם, יפה אגלה: **(לד) משאות.** מנות: **חמש ידות.** חלקו עם אחיו, ומשאת יוסף ומסגת, ומנשה ואפריים: **וישכרו אמו.** ומיום שמכרוהו לא שתו יין ולא הוה שתה

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. 348*ff.*)

1 ב"ר צב, ה 2 צב, ז

33 *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. 34 *(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 *He 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.* 2 *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.*

3 *When it became light the (next) morning, the men were sent (on their way), both they and their donkeys.* 4 *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)?* 5 *This is none other than the (goblet) which my master drinks from. He (also) divines with it regularly. What you have done is evil!'"*

6 *(The supervisor) overtook them, and he said these words to them.*

7 *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!* 8 *Look, (if) we (even) returned to you the money we found in the top of our sacks (all the way) from the land of Cana'an, how could we (possibly) steal silver or gold from your master's house?* 9 *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)."*

10 *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 Cana'an, 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.

אַתּוֹ יִהְיֶה־לִּי עָבֶד וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ נְקִיִּם: יא וַיְמַהֲרוּ וַיּוֹרִדוּ אִישׁ
אֶת־אַמְתַּחְתּוֹ אָרְצָה וַיִּפְתְּחוּ אִישׁ אַמְתַּחְתּוֹ: יב וַיְחַפֵּשׂ בַּגָּדוֹל
הֵחֵל וּבַקָּטֹן כִּלָּה וַיִּמָּצֵא הַגָּבִיעַ בְּאַמְתַּחַת בִּנְיָמִן: יג וַיִּקְרְעוּ
שִׂמְלֹתָם וַיַּעֲמֹס אִישׁ עַל־חֲמֹרוֹ וַיָּשֻׁבוּ הָעִירָה: יד וַיָּבֹא יְהוּדָה
וְאֶחָיו בֵּיתָה יוֹסֵף וְהוּא עוֹדֶנּוּ שָׁם וַיִּפְּלוּ לְפָנָיו אָרְצָה: [מפטיר]
טו וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם יוֹסֵף מָה־הַמַּעֲשֶׂה הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂיתֶם הֲלוֹא
יְדַעְתֶּם כִּי־נַחֵשׁ יְנַחֵשׁ אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר כָּמֹנִי: טז וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוּדָה מַה־
נֹּאמַר לַאדֹנִי מַה־נְּדַבֵּר וּמַה־נִּצְטַדָּק הָאֱלֹהִים מָצָא אֶת־עֲוֹן
עֲבָדֶיךָ הִנֶּנּוּ עֲבָדִים לַאדֹנִי גַּם־אֲנַחְנוּ גַּם אֲשֶׁר־נִמְצָא הַגָּבִיעַ
בְּיָדוֹ: יז וַיֹּאמֶר חָלִילָה לִּי מֵעֲשׂוֹת זֹאת הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר נִמְצָא
הַגָּבִיעַ בְּיָדוֹ הוּא יִהְיֶה־לִּי עָבֶד וְאַתֶּם עֲלוּ לְשָׁלוֹם אֶל־
אֲבִיכֶם: ס ס ס

קמ"ו פסוקים, יחזקיה"ו. אמצי"ה סימן. ותיבות אלפים כ"ה.

עִמִּיהּ יְהֵא לִי עַבְדָּא וְאַתּוּן תְּהוֹן זַכָּאִין:
יא וְאוֹחִיאוּ וְאוֹחִיתוּ גְּבַר יַת טוּעֲנֵיהּ לְאַרְעָא
וּפְתָחוּ גְּבַר טוּעֲנֵיהּ: יב וּבְלַשׁ בְּרַבָּא שָׁרִי
וּבְזְעֵירָא שֵׁיצִי וְאִשְׁתְּכַח כַּלִּיבָא בְּטוּעֲנָא
דְּבִנְיָמִן: יג וּבְזָעוּ לְבוּשֵׁיהוֹן וּרְמוֹ גְּבַר עַל
חֲמָרֵיהּ וְתָבוּ לְקַרְתָּא: יד וְעַל יְהוּדָה וַאֲחוֹהִי
לְבֵית יוֹסֵף וְהוּא עַד כְּעַן תַּמָּן וּנְפָלוּ קֳדָמוֹהִי
לְאַרְעָא: טו וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן יוֹסֵף מָא עוֹבָדָא הָדֵין
דִּי עֲבַדְתּוּן הֲלָא יְדַעְתּוּן אֲרֵי בָדָקָא מְבַדֵּק
גַּבְרָא דִּי כְוָתִי: טז וַאֲמַר יְהוּדָה מָה נֵימַר
לְרִבּוֹנִי מָה נְמַלֵּיל וּמָה נְזַכֵּי מִן קֳדָם יְיָ
אִשְׁתְּכַח יַת חוֹבָא דְעַבְדָּךְ הָא אֲנַחְנָא עַבְדִּין
לְרִבּוֹנִי אַף אֲנַחְנָא אַף דְּאִשְׁתְּכַח כַּלִּיבָא
בִּידֵיהּ: יז וַאֲמַר חַס לִי מִלְּמֶעְבַּד דָּא גַּבְרָא דִּי
אִשְׁתְּכַח כַּלִּיבָא בִּידֵיהּ הוּא יְהֵי לִי עַבְדָּא
וְאַתּוּן סָקוּ לְשַׁלָּם לְוָת אֲבוּכוֹן: ס ס ס

רס"י

שכולכם חייבים כדבר, עשרה שנמצאת גניבה ביד אחד מכם כולם נתפשים. אבל אני אעשה לכם לפניס משורת הדין, אשר ימצא אתו יהיה לי עבד: **(יג) בגדול החל.** שלא ירגישו שהיה יודע היכן הוא: **(יג) ויעמס איש על חמורו.** בעלי זרוע היו, ולא הוציאו לסייע זה את זה לטעון: **וישובו העירה.** מטרפולין היתה, והוא חומר בעירה, העיר כל שהוא, שלא שלח היתה חשובה בעיניהם שלא כעיר גיונות של עשרה בני אדם לעגין המלחמה: **(יד) עודנו שם.** שהיה ממתין להם: **(טו) הלא ידעתם כי נחש ינחש וגו'.** שלא ידעתם כי איש חשוב כמוני יודע לנחש, ולדעת מדעת ומסברת ובינה כי אתם גנבתם הגביע: **(טז) האלהים מצא.** יודעים הוא שלא סרחנו, אבל מאת המקום נהיתה להביא

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?

1 קהלת יב, ה 2 דניאל ז, ח 3 מיכה ו, טז 4 ישעיה נט, טו 5 איוב יב, יז 6 שמות ט, יז 7 ירמיה יח, טו

the one with whom (the goblet) is found shall be my slave. (The rest of) you will be cleared."

[11] *They hurried and each one lowered his sack to the ground and opened his sack.* [12] *(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.*

[13] *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 *Yehudah 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 [15] *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)?"*

[16] *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."*

[17] *(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)

יח וַיִּגַּשׁ אֵלָיו יְהוּדָה וַיֹּאמֶר בִּי אֲדֹנִי יְדַבֶּר־נָא עַבְדְּךָ דָבָר
בְּאָזְנֵי אֲדֹנִי וְאַל־יִחַר אַפְּךָ בְּעַבְדֶּךָ כִּי כָמוֹךָ כְּפַרְעֹה: יט אֲדֹנִי
שָׁאַל אֶת־עֲבָדָיו לֵאמֹר הֲיֵשׁ־לָכֶם אָב אוֹ־אָח: כ וַנֹּאמֶר
אֶל־אֲדֹנִי יֶשׁ־לָנוּ אָב זָקֵן וְיֶלֶד זְקֻנִים קָטָן וְאָחִיו מֵת וַיִּוָּתֵר
הוּא לְבַדּוֹ לְאִמּוֹ וְאָבִיו אֲהֵבוֹ: כא וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־עֲבָדֶיךָ הוֹרִדֻהוּ
אֵלָי וְאָשִׂימָה עֵינִי עָלָיו: כב וַנֹּאמֶר אֶל־אֲדֹנִי לֹא־יוּכַל הַנַּעַר
לַעֲזֹב אֶת־אָבִיו וְעָזַב אֶת־אָבִיו וָמֵת: כג וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־עֲבָדֶיךָ
אִם־לֹא יֵרֵד אֲחִיכֶם הַקָּטָן אִתְּכֶם לֹא תֹסִפוּן לִרְאוֹת פָּנָי:
כד וַיְהִי כִּי עָלִינוּ אֶל־עַבְדְּךָ אָבִי וַנַּגֶּד־לוֹ אֶת דִּבְרֵי אֲדֹנִי:
כה וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִינוּ שֻׁבוּ שִׁבְרוּ־לָנוּ מְעַט־אֹכֶל: כו וַנֹּאמֶר לֹא
נוּכַל לָרֶדֶת אִם־יֵשׁ אָחִינוּ הַקָּטָן אִתָּנוּ וְיָרַדְנוּ כִּי־לֹא נוּכַל
לִרְאוֹת פְּנֵי הָאִישׁ וְאָחִינוּ הַקָּטָן אֵינֶנּוּ אִתָּנוּ: כז וַיֹּאמֶר עַבְדְּךָ
אָבִי אֵלֵינוּ אַתֶּם יְדַעְתֶּם כִּי שְׁנַיִם יָלְדָה־לִּי אִשְׁתִּי: כח וַיֵּצֵא
הָאֶחָד מֵאִתִּי וָאֹמַר אַךְ טָרֹף טֹרָף וְלֹא רְאִיתִיו עַד־הֵנָּה:
כט וּלְקַחְתֶּם גַּם־אֶת־זֶה מֵעִם פָּנַי וְקָרָהוּ אָסוֹן וְהוֹרַדְתֶּם
אֶת־שֵׂיבָתִי בְּרָעָה שְׁאֹלָה: ל וְעַתָּה כְּבֹאִי אֶל־עַבְדְּךָ אָבִי

יח וְקָרֵיב לְוָתֵיהּ יְהוּדָה וַאֲמַר בְּבָעוּ רִבּוֹנִי
יְמַלֵּיל כְּעַן עַבְדָּךְ פִּתְגָמָא קֳדָם רִבּוֹנִי וְלָא
יִתְקַף רוּגְזָךְ בְּעַבְדָּךְ אֲרֵי כְפַרְעֹה כֵּן אָתְּ:
יט רִבּוֹנִי שְׁאֵיל יַת עַבְדּוֹהִי לְמֵימַר הַאִית לְכוֹן
אַבָּא אוֹ אָחָא: כ וַאֲמַרְנָא לְרִבּוֹנִי אִית לָנָא
אַבָּא סָבָא וּבַר סִיבְתִין זְעֵיר וַאֲחוּהִי מִית
וְאִשְׁתְּאַר הוּא בִּלְחוֹדוֹהִי לְאִמֵּיהּ וַאֲבוּהִי
רְחִים לֵיהּ: כא וַאֲמַרְתְּ לְעַבְדָּךְ אֲחָתוֹהִי לְוָתִי
וַאֲשַׁוֵּי עֵינִי עֲלוֹהִי: כב וַאֲמַרְנָא לְרִבּוֹנִי לָא
יִכּוֹל עוּלֵימָא לְמִשְׁבַּק יַת אֲבוּהִי וְאִם יִשְׁבּוֹק
יַת אֲבוּהִי וּמִית: כג וַאֲמַרְתְּ לְעַבְדָּךְ אִם לָא
יֵחוֹת אֲחוּכוֹן זְעֵירָא עִמְּכוֹן לָא תּוֹסְפוּן לְמֶחֱזֵי
אַפָּי: כד וַהֲוָא כַּד סְלֵיקְנָא לְוָת עַבְדָּךְ אַבָּא
וְחַוֵּינָא לֵיהּ יַת פִּתְגָמֵי רִבּוֹנִי: כה וַאֲמַר
אֲבוּנָא תּוּבוּ זְבוּנוּ לָנָא זְעֵיר עִבּוּרָא:
כו וַאֲמַרְנָא לָא נְכוֹל לְמֵיחַת אִם אִית אֲחוּנָא
זְעֵירָא עִמָּנָא וְנֵיחוֹת אֲרֵי לָא נְכוֹל לְמֶחֱזֵי
אַפֵּי גַּבְרָא וַאֲחוּנָא זְעֵירָא לֵיתוֹהִי עִמָּנָא:
כז וַאֲמַר עַבְדָּךְ אַבָּא לָנָא אַתּוּן יְדַעְתּוּן אֲרֵי
תַּרֵין יְלִידַת לִי אִתְּתִי: כח וּנְפַק חַד מִלְוָתִי
וַאֲמָרִית בְּרַם מְקַטֵּל קְטִיל וְלָא חֲזִיתֵיהּ עַד
כְּעָן: כט וְתַדְבְּרוּן אַף יַת דֵּין מִן קֳדָמַי
וְיַעֲרְעִינֵיהּ מוֹתָא וְתַחֲתוּן יַת שֵׂיבְתִּי בְּבִישְׁתָּא
לִשְׁאוֹל: ל וּכְעַן כְּמֵיתִי לְוָת עַבְדָּךְ אַבָּא

לש"י

(יח) **ויגש אליו. דבר באזני אדני.** יכנסו דברי באזניך[1]: **ואל יחר אפך.** מכאן אתה למד שדבר אליו קשות: **כי כמוך כפרעה.** חשוב אתה בעיני כמלך, זה פשוטו. ומדרשו[2], סופך לגלות עליו בגרעת, כמו שלקה פרעה על ידי זקנתי שרה, על לילה אחת שעשכה. דבר אחר, מה פרעה גוזר ואינו מקייים, מבטיח ואינו עושה, אף אתה כן. וכי זו היא שימת עין, שאמרת לשוא עיך עליו. דבר אחר כי כמוך כפרעה, אם תקניטני, אהרוג אותך ואת אדונך[3]: (יט) **אדני שאל את עבדיו.** מתחלה בעלילה בחת עליהם, למה היה לך לשאול כל אלה, בתך היינו מבקשים, או אחותנו אתה מבקש, ואף על פי כן ונאמר אל תדוני, לא כאחינו ממך דבר[4]: (כ) **ואחיו מת.** מפני הירושה היה מוציא דבר שקר מפיו, אמר, אם אומר לו שהוא קייס, יאמר כבירושה אלי: **לבדו לאמו.** מאותו האם אין לו עוד אח: (כא) **ועזב את אביו ומת.** אם יעזוב את אביו, דואגים אנו שמא ימות בדרך, שהרי אמו בדרך מתה: (כט) **וקרהו אסון.** שהשטן מקטרג בשעת הסכנה[5]: **והורדתם את שיבתי וגו'.** עכשיו כשהוא אצלי, אני מתנחם בו על אמו ועל אחיו, ואם

1 ב"ר צג, ו 2 שם 3 שם 4 שם ח 5 שם צא, ט

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 *Then 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).*

19 *"(From the very first instance,) my master interrogated his servants (accusingly), saying, 'Have you a father or a brother?'*

20 *"(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.'*

21 *"You said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me, so I can see him for myself.'*

22 *"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).'*

23 *"You said to your servants, 'If your youngest brother doesn't come down with you, you'll never see my face again!'*

24 *"Then, when we went up to your servant, my father, and we told him the words of my master,* 25 *our father said, 'Go back and buy us a bit of food.'*

26 *"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.'*

27 *"Your servant, my father, said to us, 'You know that my wife (Rochel) bore me two (children).* 28 *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.* 29 *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.'*

30 *"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

It 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.

It 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)

*"כפל הלשון מורה, בדרך כלל, על דבר החוזר ונשנה פעם ועוד פעם" - ספר התוועדויות תשמ"ו ח"א ע' 655.

וְהַנַּעַר אֵינֶנּוּ אִתָּנוּ וְנַפְשׁוֹ קְשׁוּרָה בְּנַפְשׁוֹ: [שני] לא וְהָיָה כִּרְאוֹתוֹ
כִּי־אֵין הַנַּעַר וָמֵת וְהוֹרִידוּ עֲבָדֶיךָ אֶת־שֵׂיבַת עַבְדְּךָ אָבִינוּ
בְּיָגוֹן שְׁאוֹלָה: לב כִּי עַבְדְּךָ עָרַב אֶת־הַנַּעַר מֵעִם אָבִי לֵאמֹר
אִם־לֹא אֲבִיאֶנּוּ אֵלֶיךָ וְחָטָאתִי לְאָבִי כָּל־הַיָּמִים: לג וְעַתָּה
יֵשֶׁב־נָא עַבְדְּךָ תַּחַת הַנַּעַר עֶבֶד לַאדֹנִי וְהַנַּעַר יַעַל עִם־אֶחָיו:
לד כִּי־אֵיךְ אֶעֱלֶה אֶל־אָבִי וְהַנַּעַר אֵינֶנּוּ אִתִּי פֶּן אֶרְאֶה בָּרָע
אֲשֶׁר יִמְצָא אֶת־אָבִי: מה א וְלֹא־יָכֹל יוֹסֵף לְהִתְאַפֵּק לְכֹל
הַנִּצָּבִים עָלָיו וַיִּקְרָא הוֹצִיאוּ כָל־אִישׁ מֵעָלָי וְלֹא־עָמַד אִישׁ
אִתּוֹ בְּהִתְוַדַּע יוֹסֵף אֶל־אֶחָיו: ב וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־קֹלוֹ בִּבְכִי וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ
מִצְרַיִם וַיִּשְׁמַע בֵּית פַּרְעֹה: ג וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל־אֶחָיו אֲנִי יוֹסֵף
הַעוֹד אָבִי חָי וְלֹא־יָכְלוּ אֶחָיו לַעֲנוֹת אֹתוֹ כִּי נִבְהֲלוּ מִפָּנָיו:
ד וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל־אֶחָיו גְּשׁוּ־נָא אֵלַי וַיִּגָּשׁוּ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי יוֹסֵף
אֲחִיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־מְכַרְתֶּם אֹתִי מִצְרָיְמָה: ה וְעַתָּה | אַל־תֵּעָצְבוּ
וְאַל־יִחַר בְּעֵינֵיכֶם כִּי־מְכַרְתֶּם אֹתִי הֵנָּה כִּי לְמִחְיָה שְׁלָחַנִי
אֱלֹהִים לִפְנֵיכֶם: ו כִּי־זֶה שְׁנָתַיִם הָרָעָב בְּקֶרֶב הָאָרֶץ וְעוֹד

וְעוֹלִימָא לֵיתוֹהִי עִמָּנָא וְנַפְשֵׁיהּ חֲבִיבָא לֵיהּ
כְּנַפְשֵׁיהּ: לא וִיהֵי כַּד יֶחֱזֵי אֲרֵי לֵית עוֹלִימָא
וִימוּת וְיַחֲתוּן עַבְדָּךְ יַת שֵׂיבַת עַבְדָּךְ אֲבוּנָא
בִּדְווֹנָא לִשְׁאוֹל: לב אֲרֵי עַבְדָּךְ מְעָרַב
בְּעוֹלִימָא מִן אַבָּא לְמֵימָר אִם לָא אַיְתִינֵיהּ
לְוָתָךְ וְאֶהֵי חָטֵי לְאַבָּא כָּל יוֹמַיָּא: לג וּכְעַן יֵתֵב
כְּעַן עַבְדָּךְ חֵלַף עוֹלִימָא עַבְדָּא לְרִבּוֹנִי
וְעוֹלִימָא יְסַק עִם אֲחוֹהִי: לד אֲרֵי אֵיכְדֵין אֶסַּק
לְוָת אַבָּא וְעוֹלִימָא לֵיתוֹהִי עִמִּי דִּלְמָא אֶחֱזֵי
בְּבִישׁוּ דִּי יִשְׁתְּכַח יַת אַבָּא: א וְלָא יְכִיל
יוֹסֵף לְאִתְחַמָּנָא לְכֹל דְּקָיְמִין עֲלָווֹהִי וּקְרָא
אַפֵּיקוּ כָל אֱנָשׁ מֵעֲלָוַי וְלָא קָם אֱנָשׁ עִמֵּיהּ כַּד
אִתְיְדַע יוֹסֵף לְוָת אֲחוֹהִי: ב וְיָהַב יַת קָלֵיהּ
בִּבְכִיתָא וּשְׁמָעוּ מִצְרָיִם וּשְׁמַע אֱנָשׁ
בֵּית פַּרְעֹה: ג וַאֲמַר יוֹסֵף לַאֲחוֹהִי אֲנָא יוֹסֵף
הַעַד כְּעַן אַבָּא קַיָּם וְלָא יְכִילוּ אֲחוֹהִי
לַאֲתָבָא יָתֵיהּ פִּתְגָם אֲרֵי אִתְבְּהִילוּ מִן
קֳדָמוֹהִי: ד וַאֲמַר יוֹסֵף לַאֲחוֹהִי קָרִיבוּ כְּעַן
לְוָתִי וּקְרִיבוּ וַאֲמַר אֲנָא יוֹסֵף אֲחוּכוֹן דִּי
זַבֶּנְתּוּן יָתִי לְמִצְרָיִם: ה וּכְעַן לָא תִתְנַסּוּן
וְלָא יִתְקַף בְּעֵינֵיכוֹן אֲרֵי זַבֶּנְתּוּן יָתִי הָכָא
אֲרֵי לְקַיָּמָא שַׁלְחַנִי יְיָ קֳדָמֵיכוֹן: ו אֲרֵי דְנַן

רס"י

ימות זכ, דומה עלי שמשמען מתו ביום אחד: (לא) **והיה כראותו כי אין הנער ומת.** מביו מלרימו: (לב) **כי עבדך ערב את הנער.** ומס תמלר למה מני נכנס לתגר יותר משאר מחי. כס כולס מבמון, ומני מתקשרתי בקשר חזק להיות מעודה בני עולמות: (לג) **ישב נא עבדך** וגו'. לכל דבר מני מעולה ממנו, לגבורה ולמלחמה ולשמש: (ה) **ולא יכול יוסף להתאפק לכל הנצבים.** לח היה יכול לסבול שיהיו מלרים נוגעים עליו

ומומעין שאחיו מתביישין בהודעה לכס: (ג) **וישמע בית פרעה.** ביתו של פרעה, כלומר עבדיו ובני ביתו. ואין זה לשון בית ממש, אלא כמו בית ישראל. בית יהודה, מיבמ"דה בלע"ז: (ג) **נבהלו מפניו.** מפני הבושה: (ד) **גשו נא אלי.** רואה אותם נסוגים לאחור, אמר, עכשיו אחי נכלמים, קרא להם בלשון רכה ותחנוגים וכראה להם שהוא מהול[1]: (כ) **למחיה.** להיות לכם למחיה: (ו) **כי זה שנתים הרעב.** עברו משני הרעב:

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. 216*ff.*)

1 ב"ר צג, ז

Second Reading

soul is attached to (the boy's) soul, [31] 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.

[32] "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.' [33] 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. [34] 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 *Yosef 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.*

[2] He wept so loudly, that the Egyptians (who had been sent out) heard. (Soon, the whole of) Pharaoh's household heard (about it).*

[3] 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.

[4] (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. [5] 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 [6] 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 Yehonason: 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

We 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*

*ע"פ פ' הרד"ק.

חָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים אֲשֶׁר אֵין־חָרִישׁ וְקָצִיר: ז וַיְשַׁלְּחֵנִי אֱלֹהִים
לִפְנֵיכֶם לָשׂוּם לָכֶם שְׁאֵרִית בָּאָרֶץ וּלְהַחֲיוֹת לָכֶם לִפְלֵיטָה
גְּדֹלָה: [שלישי] ח וְעַתָּה לֹא־אַתֶּם שְׁלַחְתֶּם אֹתִי הֵנָּה כִּי
הָאֱלֹהִים וַיְשִׂימֵנִי לְאָב לְפַרְעֹה וּלְאָדוֹן לְכָל־בֵּיתוֹ וּמֹשֵׁל
בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: ט מַהֲרוּ וַעֲלוּ אֶל־אָבִי וַאֲמַרְתֶּם אֵלָיו כֹּה
אָמַר בִּנְךָ יוֹסֵף שָׂמַנִי אֱלֹהִים לְאָדוֹן לְכָל־מִצְרָיִם רְדָה אֵלַי
אַל־תַּעֲמֹד: י וְיָשַׁבְתָּ בְּאֶרֶץ־גֹּשֶׁן וְהָיִיתָ קָרוֹב אֵלַי אַתָּה וּבָנֶיךָ
וּבְנֵי בָנֶיךָ וְצֹאנְךָ וּבְקָרְךָ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־לָךְ: יא וְכִלְכַּלְתִּי אֹתְךָ שָׁם
כִּי־עוֹד חָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים רָעָב פֶּן־תִּוָּרֵשׁ אַתָּה וּבֵיתְךָ וְכָל־
אֲשֶׁר־לָךְ: יב וְהִנֵּה עֵינֵיכֶם רֹאוֹת וְעֵינֵי אָחִי בִנְיָמִין כִּי־פִי
הַמְדַבֵּר אֲלֵיכֶם: יג וְהִגַּדְתֶּם לְאָבִי אֶת־כָּל־כְּבוֹדִי בְּמִצְרַיִם
וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר רְאִיתֶם וּמִהַרְתֶּם וְהוֹרַדְתֶּם אֶת־אָבִי הֵנָּה:
יד וַיִּפֹּל עַל־צַוְּארֵי בִנְיָמִן־אָחִיו וַיֵּבְךְּ וּבִנְיָמִן בָּכָה עַל־צַוָּארָיו:
טו וַיְנַשֵּׁק לְכָל־אֶחָיו וַיֵּבְךְּ עֲלֵהֶם וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן דִּבְּרוּ אֶחָיו אִתּוֹ:
טז וְהַקֹּל נִשְׁמַע בֵּית פַּרְע�ֹה לֵאמֹר בָּאוּ אֲחֵי יוֹסֵף וַיִּיטַב בְּעֵינֵי
פַרְעֹה וּבְעֵינֵי עֲבָדָיו: יז וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה אֶל־יוֹסֵף אֱמֹר אֶל־אַחֶיךָ
זֹאת עֲשׂוּ טַעֲנוּ אֶת־בְּעִירְכֶם וּלְכוּ־בֹאוּ אַרְצָה כְּנָעַן: יח וּקְחוּ
אֶת־אֲבִיכֶם וְאֶת־בָּתֵּיכֶם וּבֹאוּ אֵלָי וְאֶתְּנָה לָכֶם אֶת־טוּב

תַּרְתֵּין שְׁנִין כַּפְנָא בְּגוֹ אַרְעָא וְעוֹד חַמֵּשׁ שְׁנִין
דִּי לֵית זְרוֹעָא וַחֲצָדָא: ז וְשַׁלְחַנִי יְיָ קֳדָמֵיכוֹן
לְשַׁוָּאָה לְכוֹן שְׁאָרָא בְּאַרְעָא וּלְקַיָּמָא לְכוֹן
לְשֵׁיזָבָא רַבְּתָא: ח וּכְעַן לָא אַתּוּן שְׁלַחְתּוּן
יָתִי הָכָא אֱלָהֵין מִן קֳדָם יְיָ וְשַׁוַּינִי לְאַבָּא
לְפַרְעֹה וּלְרִבּוֹן לְכָל אֱנָשׁ בֵּיתֵיהּ וְשַׁלִּיט בְּכָל
אַרְעָא דְמִצְרָיִם: ט אוֹחוּ וְסָקוּ לְוָת אַבָּא
וְתֵימְרוּן לֵיהּ כִּדְנָן אֲמַר בְּרָךְ יוֹסֵף שַׁוַּינִי יְיָ
לְרִבּוֹן לְכָל מִצְרָיִם חוּת לְוָתִי לָא תִתְעַכַּב:
י וְתֵיתֵב בְּאַרְעָא דְגֹשֶׁן וּתְהֵי קָרִיב לִי אַתְּ
וּבְנָיךְ וּבְנֵי בְנָיךְ וְעָנָךְ וְתוֹרָךְ וְכָל דִּי לָךְ: יא וַאֲזוֹן
יָתָךְ תַּמָּן אֲרֵי עוֹד חַמֵּשׁ שְׁנִין כַּפְנָא הֵלְמָא
תִתְמַסְכַּן אַתְּ וֶאֱנָשׁ בֵּיתָךְ וְכָל דִּי לָךְ: יב וְהָא
עֵינֵיכוֹן חָזָן וְעֵינֵי אָחִי בִנְיָמִין אֲרֵי כְלִישָׁנְכוֹן
אֲנָא מְמַלֵּיל עִמְּכוֹן: יג וּתְחַוּוּן לְאַבָּא יַת כָּל
יְקָרִי בְּמִצְרַיִם וְיַת כָּל דִּי חֲזֵיתוּן וְתוֹחוּן
וְתַחֲתוּן יַת אַבָּא הָכָא: יד וּנְפַל עַל צִוְרֵי
בִנְיָמִין אֲחוּהִי וּבְכָא וּבִנְיָמִין בְּכָא עַל
צִוְרֵיהּ: טו וְנַשֵּׁיק לְכָל אֲחוֹהִי וּבְכָא עֲלֵיהוֹן
וּבָתַר כֵּן מַלִּילוּ אֲחוֹהִי עִמֵּיהּ: טז וְקָלָא אִשְׁתְּמַע
בֵּית פַּרְעֹה לְמֵימַר אֲתוֹ אֲחֵי יוֹסֵף וּשְׁפַר בְּעֵינֵי
פַרְעֹה וּבְעֵינֵי עַבְדּוֹהִי: יז וַאֲמַר פַּרְעֹה לְיוֹסֵף
אֱמַר לַאֲחָיךְ דָּא עֲבִידוּ טְעוּנוּ יַת בְּעִירְכוֹן
וְאִזִילוּ אוֹבִילוּ לְאַרְעָא דִכְנָעַן: יח וּדְבָרוּ
יַת אֲבוּכוֹן וְיַת אֱנָשׁ בָּתֵּיכוֹן וְאֵתוֹ לְוָתִי
וְאֶתֵּן לְכוֹן יַת טוּב אַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם וְתֵיכְלוּן

רש"י

(ח) **לאב.** לחבר ולפטרון: (ט) **ועלו אל אבי.** ארץ ישראל גבוה מכל המדינות: (יח) **פן תורש.** דלמא תתמסכן, לשון מורים ומעשיר: (יג) **והנה עיניכם רואות.** ככבודי, ושאני מחיכם, שאני מכול ככם. ועוד, כי פי המדבר מליכם בלשון הקדש[1]: **ועיני אחי בנימין.** כשהוא את כולם יחד, לומר, שכשם שאין לי שאחר על בנימין אחי, שכרי לא היה כאחרים, כך אין בלבי שאחר עליכם: (יד) **ויפל על צוארי בנימין אחיו ויבך.** על שני מקדשות שעתידין להיות בחלקו של בנימין וסופן ליחרב[2]: **ובנימין בכה על צואריו.** על משכן שילה שעתיד להיות בחלקו של יוסף וסופו ליחרב: (טו) **וינשק.** כוסיף בנשיקה, מנשק וכולך. דיבייט"ר בלע"ז. **ואחרי כן.** מאחר שרחמו דוכה ולבו שלם עמהם: **דברו אחיו אתו.** שמתחלה היו בושים ממנו: (טז) **והקול נשמע בית פרעה.** כמו בבית פרעה, וזכו לשון בית ממש: (יז) **טענו את בעירכם.** תבואה: (יח) **את טוב ארץ מצרים.** ארץ גושן. ניכח ואיזו יודע מה ניכח, סופה

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.

1 בב"ר שם י 2 מגילה טז:

harvesting for another five years. [7] 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

[8] "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."

[9] "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! [10] 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. [11] 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."'"

[12] "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)."

[13] "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."

[14] (Yosef) fell on his brother Binyamin's neck and cried, and Binyamin cried on his neck. [15] 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 *The news was heard in Pharaoh's house: (People were) saying, "Yosef's brothers have come!" (The news) pleased Pharaoh and his servants.*

[17] 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. [18] 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 re-united with his son.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 15, p. 387*ff.*)

The Last Word

Why 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)

*ע"פ פ' המלבי"ם.

אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וְאִכְלוּ אֶת־חֵלֶב הָאָרֶץ: יט וְאַתָּה צֻוֵּיתָה זֹאת עֲשׂוּ קְחוּ־לָכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם עֲגָלוֹת לְטַפְּכֶם וְלִנְשֵׁיכֶם וּנְשָׂאתֶם אֶת־אֲבִיכֶם וּבָאתֶם: כ וְעֵינְכֶם אַל־תָּחֹס עַל־כְּלֵיכֶם כִּי־טוּב כָּל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לָכֶם הִוא: כא וַיַּעֲשׂוּ־כֵן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם יוֹסֵף עֲגָלוֹת עַל־פִּי פַּרְעֹה וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם צֵדָה לַדָּרֶךְ: כב לְכֻלָּם נָתַן לָאִישׁ חֲלִפוֹת שְׂמָלֹת וּלְבִנְיָמִן נָתַן שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת כֶּסֶף וְחָמֵשׁ חֲלִפֹת שְׂמָלֹת: כג וּלְאָבִיו שָׁלַח כְּזֹאת עֲשָׂרָה חֲמֹרִים נֹשְׂאִים מִטּוּב מִצְרַיִם וְעֶשֶׂר אֲתֹנֹת נֹשְׂאֹת בָּר וָלֶחֶם וּמָזוֹן לְאָבִיו לַדָּרֶךְ: כד וַיְשַׁלַּח אֶת־אֶחָיו וַיֵּלֵכוּ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם אַל־תִּרְגְּזוּ בַּדָּרֶךְ: כה וַיַּעֲלוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן אֶל־יַעֲקֹב אֲבִיהֶם: כו וַיַּגִּדוּ לוֹ לֵאמֹר עוֹד יוֹסֵף חַי וְכִי־הוּא מֹשֵׁל בְּכָל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם וַיָּפָג לִבּוֹ כִּי לֹא־הֶאֱמִין לָהֶם: כז וַיְדַבְּרוּ אֵלָיו אֵת כָּל־דִּבְרֵי יוֹסֵף אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֲלֵהֶם וַיַּרְא אֶת־הָעֲגָלוֹת אֲשֶׁר־שָׁלַח יוֹסֵף לָשֵׂאת אֹתוֹ וַתְּחִי רוּחַ יַעֲקֹב אֲבִיהֶם: [רביעי] כח וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל רַב עוֹד־יוֹסֵף בְּנִי חַי אֵלְכָה וְאֶרְאֶנּוּ בְטֶרֶם אָמוּת: מו א וַיִּסַּע יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ וַיָּבֹא

יַת טוּבָא דְאַרְעָא: יט וְאַתְּ מְפַקָּדָא דָּא עֲבִידוּ סִיבוּ לְכוֹן מֵאַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם עֶגְלָן לְטַפְּלֵיכוֹן וְלִנְשֵׁיכוֹן וְתִטְלוֹן יַת אֲבוּכוֹן וְתֵיתוֹן: כ וְעֵינְכוֹן לָא תְחוּס עַל מָנֵיכוֹן אֲרֵי טוּב כָּל אַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם דִּילְכוֹן הוּא: כא וַעֲבָדוּ כֵּן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיָהַב לְהוֹן יוֹסֵף עֶגְלָן עַל מֵימְרָא דְּפַרְעֹה וְיָהַב לְהוֹן זְוָדִין לְאָרְחָא: כב לְכֻלְּהוֹן יְהַב לִגְבַר אִצְטְלָנִין דִּלְבוּשָׁא וּלְבִנְיָמִין יְהַב תְּלַת מְאָה סְלְעִין דְּכַסְפָּא וְחַמְשָׁא אִצְטְלָנִין דִּלְבוּשִׁין: כג וְלַאֲבוּהִי שְׁלַח כְּדָא עַשְׂרָא חֲמָרִין טָעְנִין מִטּוּבָא דְמִצְרַיִם וַעֲשַׂר אַתָּנָן טָעְנָן עִבּוּר וּלְחֵם וּזְוָדִין לַאֲבוּהִי לְאָרְחָא: כד וּשְׁלַח יַת אֲחוֹהִי וַאֲזָלוּ וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן לָא תִתְנַצְּחוּן בְּאָרְחָא: כה וְסָלִיקוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם וַאֲתוֹ לְאַרְעָא דִכְנַעַן לְוָת יַעֲקֹב אֲבוּהוֹן: כו וְחַוִיאוּ לֵיהּ לְמֵימַר עַד כְּעַן יוֹסֵף קַיָּם וַאֲרֵי הוּא שַׁלִּיט בְּכָל אַרְעָא דְמִצְרָיִם וַהֲוָה מְלָּא פָּיְנָן עַל לִבֵּיהּ אֲרֵי לָא הֵימִין לְהוֹן: כז וּמַלִּילוּ עִמֵּיהּ יַת כָּל פִּתְגָמֵי יוֹסֵף דִּי מַלִּיל עִמְּהוֹן וַחֲזָא יַת עֶגְלָתָא דִּשְׁלַח יוֹסֵף לְמִטַּל יָתֵיהּ וּשְׁרַת רוּחַ נְבוּאָה לְוָת יַעֲקֹב אֲבוּהוֹן: כח וַאֲמַר יִשְׂרָאֵל סַגִּי לִי חֲדָוָא עַד כְּעַן יוֹסֵף בְּרִי קַיָּם אֵיזֵיל וְאֶחֱזִינֵיהּ עַד לָא אֵימוּת: א וּנְטַל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכָל דִּי לֵיהּ וְאָתָא לִבְאֵר שָׁבַע וְדַבַּח

לעשותם כמצולה שמין בה דגים: **חלב הארץ**. כל חלב לשון מיטב הוא: (יט) **ואתה צויתה**. מפי לומר לכם: **זאת עשו**. כך אמר לכם שברשותי הוא: (כג) **שלח בזאת**. כחשבון הזה, ומכו החשבון, עשרה חמורים וגו': **מטוב מצרים**. מלמו בגמרא ששלח לו יין ישן, שדעת זקנים נוחה כיממו. ומדרש אגדה, גריסין של פול: **בר ולחם**. כתרגומו: **ומזון**. ליפתן: (כד) **אל תרגזו בדרך**. אל תתעסקו בדבר הלכה, שלא תרגז עליכם הדרך. דבר אחר אל תפסיעו פסיעה גסה, והתכנסו בחמה לעיר. ולפי פשוטו של מקרא יש לומר, לפי שהיו נכלמים, היה דואג שמא יריבו בדרך על דבר מכירתו, לתמוהה זה עס זה ולומר, על ידך נמכר, אתה ספרת לשון הרע עליו, וגרמת לנו לשנאתו: (כו) **וכי הוא מושל**. ומשר הוא מושל: **ויפג לבו**. נחלף לבו וכלך מלהאמין, לא היה לבו פונה אל הדברים, לשון מפיגין טעמן בלשון משנה, וכמו מאין הפוגות[1], וריחו לא נמר[2], מתרגמינן ורייחיה לא פג: (כז) **את כל דברי יוסף**. סימן מסר להם, דמה היה עוסק בשפירש ממנו, בפרשת עגלה ערופה, זהו שנאמר וירא את העגלות אשר שלח יוסף, ולא נאמר אשר שלח פרעה: **ותחי רוח יעקב**. שרתה עליו שכינה שפירשה ממנו: (כח) **רב עוד**. רב לי עוד שמחה ומדוכ, כוחיל וטוד יוסף בני חי:

רש"י

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 Cana'an 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.

1 איכה ג, מט 2 ירמיה מח, יא

19 *(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.* 20 *Don't worry about (bringing) your belongings, because the best of all the land of Egypt is (now) yours.'"*

21 *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.* 22 *He gave each one of them a set of clothes, and he gave Binyamin three hundred silver pieces and five sets of clothes.* 23 *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.*

24 *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)."*

25 *So they went up from Egypt, and came to the land of Cana'an, to their father, Ya'akov.* 26 *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.*

27 *(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.*

FOURTH READING

28 *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!"*

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.

בְּאֵרָה שָׁבַע וַיִּזְבַּח זְבָחִים לֵאלֹהֵי אָבִיו יִצְחָק: ב וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים |
לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמַרְאֹת הַלָּיְלָה וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב | יַעֲקֹב וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּנִי:
ג וַיֹּאמֶר אָנֹכִי הָאֵל אֱלֹהֵי אָבִיךָ אַל־תִּירָא מֵרְדָה מִצְרַיְמָה
כִּי־לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל אֲשִׂימְךָ שָׁם: ד אָנֹכִי אֵרֵד עִמְּךָ מִצְרַיְמָה וְאָנֹכִי
אַעַלְךָ גַּם־עָל�ֹה וְיוֹסֵף יָשִׁית יָדוֹ עַל־עֵינֶיךָ: ה וַיָּקָם יַעֲקֹב
מִבְּאֵר שָׁבַע וַיִּשְׂאוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־יַעֲקֹב אֲבִיהֶם וְאֶת־טַפָּם
וְאֶת־נְשֵׁיהֶם בָּעֲגָלוֹת אֲשֶׁר־שָׁלַח פַּרְעֹה לָשֵׂאת אֹתוֹ: ו וַיִּקְחוּ
אֶת־מִקְנֵיהֶם וְאֶת־רְכוּשָׁם אֲשֶׁר רָכְשׁוּ בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וַיָּבֹאוּ
מִצְרַיְמָה יַעֲקֹב וְכָל־זַרְעוֹ אִתּוֹ: ז בָּנָיו וּבְנֵי בָנָיו אִתּוֹ בְּנֹתָיו
וּבְנוֹת בָּנָיו וְכָל־זַרְעוֹ הֵבִיא אִתּוֹ מִצְרַיְמָה: ס [חמישי] ח וְאֵלֶּה

הִבְחִין לֵאלֹהֵי דַּאֲבוּהִי יִצְחָק: ב וַאֲמַר יְיָ
לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּחֶזְוֵי דְּלֵילְיָא וַאֲמַר יַעֲקֹב יַעֲקֹב
וַאֲמַר הָא אֲנָא: ג וַאֲמַר אֲנָא אֵל אֱלָהָא
דַּאֲבוּךְ לָא תִדְחַל מִלְּמֵיחַת לְמִצְרַיִם אֲרֵי
לְעַם סַגִּי אֲשַׁוִּינָךְ תַּמָּן: ד אֲנָא אֵיחוֹת עִמָּךְ
לְמִצְרַיִם וַאֲנָא אַסֵּקִינָךְ אַף אַסָּקָא וְיוֹסֵף יְשַׁוֵּי
יְדוֹהִי עַל עֵינָיךְ: ה וְקָם יַעֲקֹב מִבְּאֵר שָׁבַע
וּנְטָלוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יַת יַעֲקֹב אֲבוּהוֹן וְיַת
טַפְלְהוֹן וְיַת נְשֵׁיהוֹן בְּעֶגְלָתָא דִּי שְׁלַח פַּרְעֹה
לְמִטַּל יָתֵיהּ: ו וּדְבָרוּ יַת גֵּיתֵיהוֹן וְיַת קִנְיָנְהוֹן
דִּי קְנוֹ בְּאַרְעָא דִכְנַעַן וַאֲתוֹ לְמִצְרַיִם יַעֲקֹב
וְכָל בְּנוֹהִי עִמֵּיהּ: ז בְּנוֹהִי וּבְנֵי בְנוֹהִי עִמֵּיהּ
בְּנָתֵיהּ וּבְנַת בְּנוֹהִי וְכָל זַרְעֵיהּ אַיְתִי עִמֵּיהּ
לְמִצְרָיִם: ח וְאִלֵּין שְׁמָהַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל דְּעָלוּ

רש"י

(ו) **בארה שבע.** כמו לנאר שבע, כ"ף בסוף תיבה במקום למ"ד בתחלתה: **לאלהי אביו יצחק.** חייב אדם בכבוד אביו יותר מבכבוד זקנו לפיכך תלה יצחק ולא באברהם: (ב) **יעקב יעקב.** לשון חיבה: (ג) **אל תירא מרדה מצרימה.** לפי שהיה מגר על שנזקק לגלות לחוצה לארץ: (ד) **ואנכי אעלך.** הבטיחו להיות נקבר בארץ: (ו) **אשר רכשו בארץ כנען.** אבל מה ברכש בפדן ארם נתן הכל לעשו, בשביל חלקו במערת המכפלה, אמר, נכסי חוצה לארץ חינן כדאי לי, וזכו אשר כריתי לי, בעמיד לו לבורין של זהב וכסף כמין כרי, ואמר לו טול את חלוי: (ז) **ובנות בניו.** סרח בת אשר ויוכבד בת לוי:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Why was Ya'akov afraid (v. 3)**

Rashi: The fact that he was forced to go outside the Land of Israel pained him.

Chizkuni: Ya'akov was saying, "Now that I'm going down to Egypt, it must be that God's words to my grandfather are soon to be fulfilled and my children will be enslaved and persecuted in a foreign land." God replied, "Do not be afraid of going down to Egypt. For, just as I warned him about what was going to happen, I am coming to you with a promise: While the days of slavery and persecution may be approaching, we are also approaching the time when the blessing that I gave to your grandfather will be fulfilled, *"I will make you into a great nation"* (12:2).

Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer: When Ya'akov heard that Yosef was alive, he thought to himself, "How could I leave the Land of my ancestors, the Land in which I was born and the Land in which God resides, and go to a land whose inhabitants do not fear God?"

TORAS MENACHEM

something which would have caused him particular pleasure: "he sent him aged wine *which is enjoyed by old people in particular."*

One problem with this interpretation is that the verse states that Yosef sent "the best produce of Egypt," and there appears to be no evidence to suggest that Egypt was famed for great, vintage wines. In fact, *Rashi* stated earlier that Egypt was famed for pulses and *not* trees or shrubs (13:10).

Therefore, *Rashi* stressed here that this explanation is from "the *Talmud"*—a predominantly legal text—for it explains Yosef's gift more from a legal perspective (his requirement to honor his father), rather than offering a precise translation of the verse itself.

Due to this shortcoming, *Rashi* offered a second interpretation: "He sent split beans." This fits much better with the wording of the verse (*"the best produce of Egypt"*), since it falls into the category of "pulses" for which Egypt was famed, as explained above.

However, this leaves us with the question: Why did Yosef send Ya'akov this type of food in particular?

Thus, in the final analysis we see that *Rashi* brought two interpretations, as the problem with each one is complemented by the other.

The Message of Split Beans

Yosef did not send split beans for Ya'akov *to eat*, for Ya'akov was scheduled to come to Egypt without delay, so one would imagine that he sent this item in particular as some sort of message to his father. Consequently, *Rashi* stresses that the concept of Yosef sending split beans is found in the *Midrash*, for the *Midrash* is a text which deals primarily with allusions and allegory in scripture.

What was Yosef's allusion within the split bean?

Yosef was concerned that when Ya'akov would discover that his son was alive, Ya'akov would immediately realize that the brothers had sold Yosef to Egypt as a slave, and fabricated the story of his disappearance. Clearly, this would trouble Ya'akov very much.

Therefore Yosef sent a gift of *split* beans. This was a hint to Ya'akov that, just as the split bean is only considered a special delicacy when it is split, similarly Yosef had succeeded by Divine Providence specifically when they were split apart.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 10, p. 151*ff.*)

Ya'akov Travels to Egypt with His Family

46 Yisra'el traveled with all his possessions, and he arrived at Be'er-Sheva. He slaughtered sacrifices to the God of his father Yitzchak.

2 In a nighttime vision, God spoke to Yisra'el. He said, "Ya'akov, Ya'akov!"

"Here I am!" (Ya'akov) said.

3 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. 4 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*)."

5 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. 6 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. 7 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)

*ע"פ פ' החזקוני.

שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל הַבָּאִים מִצְרַיְמָה יַעֲקֹב וּבָנָיו בְּכֹר יַעֲקֹב
רְאוּבֵן׃ ט וּבְנֵי רְאוּבֵן חֲנוֹךְ וּפַלּוּא וְחֶצְרֹן וְכַרְמִי׃ י וּבְנֵי שִׁמְעוֹן
יְמוּאֵל וְיָמִין וְאֹהַד וְיָכִין וְצֹחַר וְשָׁאוּל בֶּן־הַכְּנַעֲנִית׃ יא וּבְנֵי לֵוִי
גֵּרְשׁוֹן קְהָת וּמְרָרִי׃ יב וּבְנֵי יְהוּדָה עֵר וְאוֹנָן וְשֵׁלָה וָפֶרֶץ וָזָרַח
וַיָּמָת עֵר וְאוֹנָן בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וַיִּהְיוּ בְּנֵי־פֶרֶץ חֶצְרֹן וְחָמוּל׃
יג וּבְנֵי יִשָּׂשכָר תּוֹלָע וּפֻוָּה וְיוֹב וְשִׁמְרֹן׃ יד וּבְנֵי זְבֻלוּן סֶרֶד
וְאֵלוֹן וְיַחְלְאֵל׃ טו אֵלֶּה | בְּנֵי לֵאָה אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה לְיַעֲקֹב בְּפַדַּן
אֲרָם וְאֶת דִּינָה בִתּוֹ כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ בָּנָיו וּבְנוֹתָיו שְׁלֹשִׁים וְשָׁלֹשׁ׃
טז וּבְנֵי גָד צִפְיוֹן וְחַגִּי שׁוּנִי וְאֶצְבֹּן עֵרִי וַאֲרוֹדִי וְאַרְאֵלִי׃ יז וּבְנֵי
אָשֵׁר יִמְנָה וְיִשְׁוָה וְיִשְׁוִי וּבְרִיעָה וְשֶׂרַח אֲחֹתָם וּבְנֵי בְרִיעָה
חֶבֶר וּמַלְכִּיאֵל׃ יח אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי זִלְפָּה אֲשֶׁר־נָתַן לָבָן לְלֵאָה בִתּוֹ
וַתֵּלֶד אֶת־אֵלֶּה לְיַעֲקֹב שֵׁשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה נָפֶשׁ׃ יט בְּנֵי רָחֵל אֵשֶׁת
יַעֲקֹב יוֹסֵף וּבִנְיָמִן׃ כ וַיִּוָּלֶד לְיוֹסֵף בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר
יָלְדָה־לּוֹ אָסְנַת בַּת־פּוֹטִי פֶרַע כֹּהֵן אֹן אֶת־מְנַשֶּׁה
וְאֶת־אֶפְרָיִם׃ כא וּבְנֵי בִנְיָמִן בֶּלַע וָבֶכֶר וְאַשְׁבֵּל גֵּרָא וְנַעֲמָן
אֵחִי וָרֹאשׁ מֻפִּים וְחֻפִּים וָאָרְדּ׃ כב אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי רָחֵל אֲשֶׁר יָלַד
לְיַעֲקֹב כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ אַרְבָּעָה עָשָׂר׃ כג וּבְנֵי־דָן חֻשִׁים׃ כד וּבְנֵי
נַפְתָּלִי יַחְצְאֵל וְגוּנִי וְיֵצֶר וְשִׁלֵּם׃ כה אֵלֶּה בְּנֵי בִלְהָה אֲשֶׁר־נָתַן
לָבָן לְרָחֵל בִּתּוֹ וַתֵּלֶד אֶת־אֵלֶּה לְיַעֲקֹב כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ שִׁבְעָה׃
כו כָּל־הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַבָּאָה לְיַעֲקֹב מִצְרַיְמָה יֹצְאֵי יְרֵכוֹ מִלְּבַד נְשֵׁי
בְנֵי־יַעֲקֹב כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ שִׁשִּׁים וָשֵׁשׁ׃ כז וּבְנֵי יוֹסֵף אֲשֶׁר־יֻלַּד־לוֹ
בְּמִצְרַיִם נֶפֶשׁ שְׁנָיִם כָּל־הַנֶּפֶשׁ לְבֵית־יַעֲקֹב הַבָּאָה מִצְרַיְמָה

לְמִצְרַיִם יַעֲקֹב וּבְנוֹהִי בּוּכְרָא דְיַעֲקֹב רְאוּבֵן׃
ט וּבְנֵי רְאוּבֵן חֲנוֹךְ וּפַלּוּא וְחֶצְרוֹן וְכַרְמִי׃
י וּבְנֵי שִׁמְעוֹן יְמוּאֵל וְיָמִין וְאֹהַד וְיָכִין וְצֹחַר
וְשָׁאוּל בַּר כְּנַעֲנִיתָא׃ יא וּבְנֵי לֵוִי גֵּרְשׁוֹן קְהָת
וּמְרָרִי׃ יב וּבְנֵי יְהוּדָה עֵר וְאוֹנָן וְשֵׁלָה וָפֶרֶץ
וָזָרַח וּמִית עֵר וְאוֹנָן בְּאַרְעָא דְכְנַעַן וַהֲווֹ בְנֵי
פָּרֶץ חֶצְרוֹן וְחָמוּל׃ יג וּבְנֵי יִשָּׂשכָר תּוֹלָע
וּפֻוָּה וְיוֹב וְשִׁמְרוֹן׃ יד וּבְנֵי זְבוּלוֹן סָרֶד וְאֵלוֹן
וְיַחְלְאֵל׃ טו אִלֵּין בְּנֵי לֵאָה דְיַלֶּדֶת לְיַעֲקֹב
בְּפַדַּן אֲרָם וְיַת דִּינָה בְרַתֵּיהּ כָּל נַפְשָׁא בְּנוֹהִי
וּבְנָתֵיהּ תְּלָתִין וּתְלָת׃ טז וּבְנֵי גָד צִפְיוֹן וְחַגִּי
שׁוּנִי וְאֶצְבּוֹן עֵרִי וַאֲרוֹדִי וְאַרְאֵלִי׃ יז וּבְנֵי
אָשֵׁר יִמְנָה וְיִשְׁוָה וְיִשְׁוִי וּבְרִיעָה וְשֶׂרַח
אֲחַתְהוֹן וּבְנֵי בְרִיעָה חֶבֶר וּמַלְכִּיאֵל׃ יח אִלֵּין
בְּנֵי זִלְפָּה דִיהַב לָבָן לְלֵאָה בְרַתֵּיהּ וְיָלֶדֶת
יַת אִלֵּין לְיַעֲקֹב שֵׁית עֲשְׂרֵה נַפְשָׁא׃ יט בְּנֵי רָחֵל
אִתַּת יַעֲקֹב יוֹסֵף וּבִנְיָמִן׃ כ וְאִתְיְלִידוּ לְיוֹסֵף
בְּאַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם דְּיָלֶדֶת לֵיהּ אָסְנַת בַּת
פּוֹטִי פָּרַע רַבָּא דְאוֹן יַת מְנַשֶּׁה וְיַת אֶפְרָיִם׃
כא וּבְנֵי בִנְיָמִן בֶּלַע וָבֶכֶר וְאַשְׁבֵּל גֶּרָא וְנַעֲמָן
אֲחִי וָרֹאשׁ מוּפִּים וְחוּפִּים וָאָרְדּ׃ כב אִלֵּין בְּנֵי
רָחֵל דִּי אִתְיְלִידוּ לְיַעֲקֹב כָּל נַפְשָׁא אַרְבְּעָה
עָשָׂר׃ כג וּבְנֵי דָן חוּשִׁים׃ כד וּבְנֵי נַפְתָּלִי
יַחְצִאֵל וְגוּנִי וְיֵצֶר וְשַׁלֻּם׃ כה אִלֵּין בְּנֵי בִלְהָה
דְיָהַב לָבָן לְרָחֵל בְּרַתֵּיהּ וְיָלֶדֶת יַת אִלֵּין
לְיַעֲקֹב כָּל נַפְשָׁא שִׁבְעָה׃ כו כָּל נַפְשָׁא
דְעָלָא לְיַעֲקֹב לְמִצְרַיִם נָפְקֵי יַרְכֵּהּ בַּר מִנְּשֵׁי
בְנֵי יַעֲקֹב כָּל נַפְשָׁתָא שִׁתִּין וְשִׁית׃ כז וּבְנֵי
יוֹסֵף דִּי אִתְיְלִידוּ לֵיהּ בְּמִצְרַיִם נַפְשָׁתָא
תְּרֵין כָּל נַפְשָׁתָא לְבֵית יַעֲקֹב דְּעָלוּ

לט״ו

(ח) **הבאים מצרימה**. על סמ הסעה קורא להם הכתוב בחיים. ואין לתמוה על מאי לא כתב מאי בהו: (י) **בן הכנענית**. בן דינה שנבעלה לכנעני. כשהרגו את שכם, לא היתה דינה רוצה לצאת עד שנשבע לה שמעון שישמה[1]: (טו) **אלה בני לאה ואת דינה בתו**. כזכריס תלה בלאה ובנקבות תלה ביעקב, ללמדך, שאם מזרעת תחלה יולדת זכר, חיים מזריע תחלה יולדת נקבה: **שלשים ושלש**. ובפרטן לי אחת מועלת אלא ל״ג, אלא זו יוכבד שנולדה בין החומות בכניסתן לעיר, שנאמר אשר ילדה לוי בין החומות במצרים, לידתה במצרים ואין כורתה במצרים: (יז) **בני רחל אשת יעקב**. ובכולן לא נאמר בהן אשת, אלא שהיתה עיקרו של בית: (כו) **כל הנפש הבאה ליעקב**. שיצאו מארץ כנען לבא למצרים, ואין הכאה זו לשון עבר, אלא לשון הווה, כמו בערב היא באה[2], וכמו והנה רחל בתו באה עם הצאן, לפיכך טעמו למטה בתל״ף, לפי שכשיצאו לבוא מארץ כנען, לא היו אלא ששים ושש. והשני, כל הנפש לבית יעקב הבאה מצרימה שבעים, הוא לשון עבר, לפיכך טעמו למעלה בצי״ת, לפי שמשמעו שם היו שבעים, שמצאו שם יוסף ושני בניו, ומתוספים להם יוכבד בין החומות. ולדברי האומר תחומות נולדו עם השבעים, נריכים אנו לומר שמתו לפני ירידתן למצרים, שהרי לא נמנו כאן. מלאתי בויקרא רבה[3] עשו שם נפשות היו לו, והכתוב קורא להן נפשות בידו לשון רבים, לפי שהיו עומדין להלוות הרבה. יעקב שבעים היו

1 ב״ר פ, יא 2 אסתר ב, יד 3 ד 1,3

The Seventy Souls that Descended to Egypt

46:8 Fifth Reading

These 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'uvain. [9] *Re'uvain's sons were Chanoch, Palu, Chetzron and Carmi.* [10] *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)*

[11] *Levi's sons were Gershon, Kehas, and Merari.*

[12] *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.*

[13] *Yissachar's sons were Tola, Puvah, Yov, and Shimron.*

[14] *Zevulun's sons were Sered, Ailon, and Yachle'ail.*

[15] *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.*

[16] *Gad's sons were Tzifyon, Chagi, Shuni, and Etzbon, Airi, Arodi, and Areli.*

[17] *Asher's sons were Yimnah, Yishvah, Yishvi, and Briyah, and their sister was Serach. Briyah's sons were Chever and Malkiel.*

[18] *The above were (from) the sons of Zilpah, whom Lavan gave to his daughter Leah. She bore these sixteen souls to Ya'akov.*

[19] *The sons of Rochel, Ya'akov's (main) wife, were Yosef and Binyamin.* [20] *In the land of Egypt, Yosef fathered Menasheh and Efrayim, whom Asnas—the daughter of Poti-Fera, the governor of Oin—bore to him.*

[21] *The sons of Binyamin were Bela, Becher, Ashbail, Gaira, Na'aman, Aichi, Rosh, Mupim, Chupim, and Ard.*

[22] *The above were (from) the sons of Rochel, who were born to Ya'akov, a total of fourteen souls.*

[23] *Dan's sons were Chushim.*

[24] *Naftali's sons were Yachtze'ail, Guniy, Yaitzer, and Shilaim.*

[25] *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.*

[26] *The total number of people coming to Egypt with Ya'akov, his offspring, excluding Ya'akov's sons' wives was sixty-six souls.* [27] *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. 229*ff.*)

Sparks of Chasidus

The "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. 218*ff.*)

שִׁבְעִים: ס [ששי] כח וְאֶת־יְהוּדָה שָׁלַח לְפָנָיו אֶל־יוֹסֵף לְהוֹרֹת לְפָנָיו גֹּשְׁנָה וַיָּבֹאוּ אַרְצָה גֹּשֶׁן: כט וַיֶּאְסֹר יוֹסֵף מֶרְכַּבְתּוֹ וַיַּעַל לִקְרַאת־יִשְׂרָאֵל אָבִיו גֹּשְׁנָה וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו וַיִּפֹּל עַל־צַוָּארָיו וַיֵּבְךְּ עַל־צַוָּארָיו עוֹד: ל וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יוֹסֵף אָמוּתָה הַפָּעַם אַחֲרֵי רְאוֹתִי אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ כִּי עוֹדְךָ חָי: לא וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל־אֶחָיו וְאֶל־בֵּית אָבִיו אֶעֱלֶה וְאַגִּידָה לְפַרְע�ֹה וְאֹמְרָה אֵלָיו אַחַי וּבֵית־אָבִי אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרֶץ־כְּנַעַן בָּאוּ אֵלָי: לב וְהָאֲנָשִׁים רֹעֵי צֹאן כִּי־אַנְשֵׁי מִקְנֶה הָיוּ וְצֹאנָם וּבְקָרָם וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם הֵבִיאוּ: לג וְהָיָה כִּי־יִקְרָא לָכֶם פַּרְעֹה וְאָמַר מַה־מַּעֲשֵׂיכֶם: לד וַאֲמַרְתֶּם אַנְשֵׁי מִקְנֶה הָיוּ עֲבָדֶיךָ מִנְּעוּרֵינוּ וְעַד־עַתָּה גַּם־אֲנַחְנוּ גַּם־אֲבֹתֵינוּ בַּעֲבוּר תֵּשְׁבוּ בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן כִּי־תוֹעֲבַת מִצְרַיִם כָּל־רֹעֵה צֹאן: מז א וַיָּבֹא יוֹסֵף וַיַּגֶּד לְפַרְעֹה וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִי וְאַחַי וְצֹאנָם וּבְקָרָם וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם בָּאוּ מֵאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וְהִנָּם בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן: ב וּמִקְצֵה אֶחָיו לָקַח חֲמִשָּׁה אֲנָשִׁים וַיַּצִּגֵם לִפְנֵי פַרְעֹה: ג וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה אֶל־אֶחָיו מַה־מַּעֲשֵׂיכֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ

לְמִצְרַיִם שִׁבְעִים: כח וְיֶת יְהוּדָה שְׁלַח קֳדָמוֹהִי לְוַת יוֹסֵף לְפַנָּאָה קֳדָמוֹהִי לְגֹשֶׁן וַאֲתוֹ לְאַרְעָא דְּגֹשֶׁן: כט וְטַכֵּיס יוֹסֵף רְתִכּוֹהִי וּסְלִיק לְקֳדָמוּת יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבוּהִי לְגֹשֶׁן וְאִתְגְּלִי לֵיהּ וּנְפַל עַל צַוְרֵיהּ וּבְכָא עַל צַוְרֵיהּ עוֹד: ל וַאֲמַר יִשְׂרָאֵל לְיוֹסֵף אִלּוּ אֲנָא מָאִית זִמְנָא הָדָא מְנַחֵם אֲנָא בָּתַר דַּחֲזֵיתִי יַת אַפָּיךְ אֲרֵי עַד כְּעַן אַתְּ קַיָּם: לא וַאֲמַר יוֹסֵף לַאֲחוֹהִי וּלְבֵית אֲבוּהִי אֶסַּק וַאֲחַוֵּי לְפַרְעֹה וְאֵימַר לֵיהּ אַחַי וּבֵית אַבָּא דִּי בְאַרְעָא דִּכְנַעַן אֲתוֹ לְוָתִי: לב וְגוּבְרַיָּא רָעֵי עָנָא אֲרֵי גוּבְרֵי מָרֵי גֵּיתֵי הֲווֹ וְעָנְהוֹן וְתוֹרְהוֹן וְכָל דִּי לְהוֹן אַיְתְיאוּ: לג וְיהֵי אֲרֵי יִקְרֵי לְכוֹן פַּרְעֹה וְיֵימַר מָה עוֹבְדֵיכוֹן: לד וְתֵימְרוּן גּוּבְרֵי מָרֵי גֵּיתֵי הֲווֹ עַבְדָּךְ מֵעוּלֶמָנָא וְעַד כְּעַן אַף אֲנַחְנָא אַף אֲבָהָתָנָא בְּדִיל דְּתֵיתְבוּן בְּאַרְעָא דְּגֹשֶׁן אֲרֵי מְרַחֲקִין מִצְרָאֵי כָּל רָעֵי עָנָא: א וַאֲתָא יוֹסֵף וְחַוִּי לְפַרְעֹה וַאֲמַר אַבָּא וְאַחַי וְעָנְהוֹן וְתוֹרְהוֹן וְכָל דִּי לְהוֹן אַתּוֹ מֵאַרְעָא דִּכְנַעַן וְהָא אִנּוּן בְּאַרְעָא דְּגֹשֶׁן: ב וּמִקְצַת מִן אֲחוֹהִי דְּבַר חֲמִשָּׁה גוּבְרִין וְאַקֵּימִינוּן קֳדָם פַּרְעֹה: ג וַאֲמַר פַּרְעֹה לַאֲחוֹהִי

רש"י

פעם אחת: (לח) **ואמרה אליו אחי וגו'**. ועוד אומר לו וכאנשים רועי צאן וגו': (לד) **בעבור תשבו בארץ גשן**. וכיון לריכה לכם, שכיון ארץ מרעה, וכשתאמרו לו שאין אתם בקיאין במלאכה אחרת, ירחיקכם מעליו ויושיבכם שם: **כי תועבת מצרים וגו'**. לפי שהם להם אלהות: (ג) **ומקצה אחיו**. מן הפחותים שבהם לגבורה, שאין נראים גבוריס, שאם יראה אותם גבוריס, יעשה אותם אנשי מלחמתו. ואלה הם, ראובן, שמעון, לוי, יששכר, ובנימין. אותן שלא בפל משה שמותם בשברכם. אבל שמות הגבוריס בפל. וזאת ליהודה ויאמר שמע ה' קול יהודה, ולגד אמר ברוך מרחיב גד. ולנפתלי אמר נפתלי. ולדן אמר דן. וכן לזבולון, וכן לאשר. זהו לשון ברחשית רבה[2] שהיה אגדת ארץ ישראל, אבל בגמרא בבלית שלנו מלינו, שאותם שבפל משה שמותם הם החלשים, ואותן שהיה לפני פרעה, ויהודה שהוכפל שמו, לא

לו, וכשהוד קורא אותן נפש, לפי שהיו עובדים לאל אחד: (כח) **להורות לפניו**. כתרגומו, לפנות לו מקום ולהורות היאך יתיישב שם: **לפניו**. קודם שיגיע לשם. ומדרש אגדה להורות לפניו, לתקן לו בית תלמוד שמשם תלא הוראה: (כט) **ויאסר יוסף מרכבתו**. הוא עלמו אסר את הסוסים למרכבה, להזדרז לכבוד אביו: **וירא אליו**. יוסף נראה אל אביו: **ויבך על צואריו עוד**. לשון הרבות בכיה, וכן כי לא על איש ישים עוד[1], לשון רבוי הוא, אינו שם עליו עילות ומספות על חטאיו, אף כאן הרבה והוסיף בבכי יותר על הראשון, אבל יעקב לא נפל על צואבי יוסף ולא נשקו, ואמרו רבותינו, שהיה קורא את שמע: (ל) **אמותה הפעם**. פשוטו כתרגומו. ומדרשו, סבור הייתי למות שתי מיתות. בעולם הזה ולעולם הבא, שנסתלקה ממני שכינה, והייתי אומר שיתבעני 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,

1 איוב לד, כג 2 צה, ד

Ya'akov is Reunited with Yosef

46:28 Sixth Reading

He sent Yehudah ahead of him to Yosef, to direct him to Goshen, and they came to the land of Goshen.

[29] 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.

[30] 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!"

[31] 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.' [32] (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.' [33] So if Pharaoh summons you and asks you, 'What is your occupation?' [34] 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 *Yosef 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."*

[2] (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).

[3] 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] *Vezos 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 Vezos 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

According 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. 95*ff*.)

אֶל־פַּרְעֹה רֹעֶה צֹאן עֲבָדֶיךָ גַּם־אֲנַחְנוּ גַּם־אֲבוֹתֵינוּ: ד וַיֹּאמְרוּ
אֶל־פַּרְעֹה לָגוּר בָּאָרֶץ בָּאנוּ כִּי־אֵין מִרְעֶה לַצֹּאן אֲשֶׁר
לַעֲבָדֶיךָ כִּי־כָבֵד הָרָעָב בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וְעַתָּה יֵשְׁבוּ־נָא עֲבָדֶיךָ
בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן: ה וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה אֶל־יוֹסֵף לֵאמֹר אָבִיךָ וְאַחֶיךָ בָּאוּ
אֵלֶיךָ: ו אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְפָנֶיךָ הִוא בְּמֵיטַב הָאָרֶץ הוֹשֵׁב
אֶת־אָבִיךָ וְאֶת־אַחֶיךָ יֵשְׁבוּ בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן וְאִם־יָדַעְתָּ וְיֶשׁ־בָּם
אַנְשֵׁי־חַיִל וְשַׂמְתָּם שָׂרֵי מִקְנֶה עַל־אֲשֶׁר־לִי: ז וַיָּבֵא יוֹסֵף
אֶת־יַעֲקֹב אָבִיו וַיַּעֲמִדֵהוּ לִפְנֵי פַרְעֹה וַיְבָרֶךְ יַעֲקֹב אֶת־פַּרְעֹה:
ח וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה אֶל־יַעֲקֹב כַּמָּה יְמֵי שְׁנֵי חַיֶּיךָ: ט וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב
אֶל־פַּרְעֹה יְמֵי שְׁנֵי מְגוּרַי שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמְאַת שָׁנָה מְעַט וְרָעִים
הָיוּ יְמֵי שְׁנֵי חַיַּי וְלֹא הִשִּׂיגוּ אֶת־יְמֵי שְׁנֵי חַיֵּי אֲבֹתַי בִּימֵי
מְגוּרֵיהֶם: י וַיְבָרֶךְ יַעֲקֹב אֶת־פַּרְעֹה וַיֵּצֵא מִלִּפְנֵי פַרְעֹה:
[שביעי] יא וְיוֹשֶׁב יוֹסֵף אֶת־אָבִיו וְאֶת־אֶחָיו וַיִּתֶּן לָהֶם אֲחֻזָּה
בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּמֵיטַב הָאָרֶץ בְּאֶרֶץ רַעְמְסֵס כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה
פַרְעֹה: יב וַיְכַלְכֵּל יוֹסֵף אֶת־אָבִיו וְאֶת־אֶחָיו וְאֵת כָּל־בֵּית

מָה עֹבָדֵיכוֹן וַאֲמָרוּ לְפַרְעֹה רָעֵי עָנָא עַבְדָךְ
אַף אֲנַחְנָא אַף אֲבָהָתָנָא: ד וַאֲמָרוּ לְפַרְעֹה
לְאִתוֹתָבָא בְּאַרְעָא אֲתֵינָא אֲרֵי לֵית רַעְיָא
לְעָנָא דִּי לְעַבְדָךְ אֲרֵי תַקִּיף כַּפְנָא בְּאַרְעָא
דִכְנָעַן וּכְעַן יֵתְבוּן כְּעַן עַבְדָךְ בְּאַרְעָא דְגֹשֶׁן:
ה וַאֲמַר פַּרְעֹה לְיוֹסֵף לְמֵימָר אֲבוּךְ וְאָחָךְ
אֲתוֹ לְוָתָךְ: ו אַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם קֳדָמָךְ הִיא
בְּרֵשַׁפִּיר בְּאַרְעָא אוֹתֵיב יַת אֲבוּךְ יַת אָחָיךְ
יֵתְבוּן בְּאַרְעָא דְגֹשֶׁן וְאִם יְדַעְתְּ וְאִית בְּהוֹן
גּוּבְרִין דְּחַיְלָא וְתִמַנְיִנוּן רַבָּנֵי גֵיתַי עַל דִּי לִי:
ז וְאַיְתִי יוֹסֵף יַת יַעֲקֹב אֲבוּהִי וַאֲקֵמִינֵיהּ קֳדָם
פַּרְעֹה וּבָרִיךְ יַעֲקֹב יַת פַּרְעֹה: ח וַאֲמַר פַּרְעֹה
לְיַעֲקֹב כַּמָּה יוֹמֵי שְׁנֵי חַיָּיךְ: ט וַאֲמַר יַעֲקֹב
לְפַרְעֹה יוֹמֵי שְׁנֵי תוֹתָבוּתִי מְאָה וּתְלָתִין שְׁנִין
זְעִירִין וּבִישִׁין הֲווֹ יוֹמֵי שְׁנֵי חַיַי וְלָא אַדְבִּיקוּ
יַת יוֹמֵי שְׁנֵי חַיֵי אֲבָהָתַי בְּיוֹמֵי תוֹתָבוּתְהוֹן:
י וּבָרִיךְ יַעֲקֹב יַת פַּרְעֹה וּנְפַק מִן קֳדָם פַּרְעֹה:
יא וְאוֹתֵיב יוֹסֵף יַת אֲבוּהִי וְיַת אֲחוֹהִי וְיָהַב
לְהוֹן אַחֲסָנָא בְּאַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם בְּרֵשַׁפִּיר
בְּאַרְעָא בַּאֲרַע רַעְמְסֵס כְּמָא דִי פַקֵּיד פַּרְעֹה:
יב וְזָן יוֹסֵף יַת אֲבוּהִי וְיַת אֲחוֹהִי וְיַת כָּל בֵּית

רס"י

(י) **ויברך יעקב.** כדרך כל הנפטרים מלפני שריס, מברכים אותם ומוטלים רשות. ומה ברכה ברכו, שיעלה גילום לרגליו, לפי שמין מרן מלריס שותה מי גשמים, חלף גילום עולה ומשקה, ומברכתו של יעקב ואילך, היה פרעה בא חל גילום, והוא עולה לקראתו ומשקה את המרן[2]: (יא) **רעמסס.** מארן גושן היא: (יב) **לפי הטף.** לפי הלריך לכל בני ביתם:

כוכפל משום חלשות, חלף טעם יש בדבר, כדאיתא בבבא קמא[1]. ובברייתא דספרי שנינו בזוחת הברכה כמו בגמרא שלנו: (ו) **אנשי חיל.** בקיאין בחומנתן לרעות צאן: **על אשר לי.** על צאן שלי: (ז) **ויברך יעקב.** היא שחילת שלום, כדרך כל הברחים לפני המלכים לפרקים שלודי"ר בלע"ז: (ט) **שני מגורי.** ימי גרותי, כל ימי הייתי גר בארץ: **ולא השיגו.** בטובה:

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 (34:25*ff.*), 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,

1 דף צב 2 תנחומא ישן, נשא כו

They said to Pharaoh, "Your servants are shepherds, both we and our forefathers." [4] 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."

[5] Pharaoh spoke to Yosef, saying, "Your father and your brothers have come to you. [6] 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)."

[7] Yosef brought Ya'akov his father and stood him before Pharaoh, and Ya'akov greeted Pharaoh.

[8] Pharaoh said to Ya'akov, "How many years have you been alive?"

*[9] 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)."**

[10] Ya'akov blessed Pharaoh (that the Nile should irrigate the land) and he left Pharaoh's presence.

SEVENTH READING

[11] 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.

*[12] 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).***

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. 391*ff*)

*ראה התוועדויות תשמ"ו, ח"ב ע' 364, בהערה. **ע"פ שיחת ש"פ ויגש תנש"א, הערה 47.

אָבִיו לֶחֶם לְפִי הַטָּף: יג וְלֶחֶם אֵין בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ כִּי־כָבֵד הָרָעָב
מְאֹד וַתֵּלַהּ אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וְאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן מִפְּנֵי הָרָעָב: יד וַיְלַקֶּט
יוֹסֵף אֶת־כָּל־הַכֶּסֶף הַנִּמְצָא בְּאֶרֶץ־מִצְרַיִם וּבְאֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן
בַּשֶּׁבֶר אֲשֶׁר־הֵם שֹׁבְרִים וַיָּבֵא יוֹסֵף אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף בֵּיתָה פַּרְעֹה:
טו וַיִּתֹּם הַכֶּסֶף מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וּמֵאֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן וַיָּבֹאוּ כָל־מִצְרַיִם
אֶל־יוֹסֵף לֵאמֹר הָבָה־לָנוּ לֶחֶם וְלָמָּה נָמוּת נֶגְדֶּךָ כִּי אָפֵס
כָּסֶף: טז וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף הָבוּ מִקְנֵיכֶם וְאֶתְּנָה לָכֶם בְּמִקְנֵיכֶם
אִם־אָפֵס כָּסֶף: יז וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶת־מִקְנֵיהֶם אֶל־יוֹסֵף וַיִּתֶּן לָהֶם
יוֹסֵף לֶחֶם בַּסּוּסִים וּבְמִקְנֵה הַצֹּאן וּבְמִקְנֵה הַבָּקָר וּבַחֲמֹרִים
וַיְנַהֲלֵם בַּלֶּחֶם בְּכָל־מִקְנֵהֶם בַּשָּׁנָה הַהִוא: יח וַתִּתֹּם הַשָּׁנָה
הַהִוא וַיָּבֹאוּ אֵלָיו בַּשָּׁנָה הַשֵּׁנִית וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ לֹא־נְכַחֵד מֵאֲדֹנִי
כִּי אִם־תַּם הַכֶּסֶף וּמִקְנֵה הַבְּהֵמָה אֶל־אֲדֹנִי לֹא נִשְׁאַר לִפְנֵי
אֲדֹנִי בִּלְתִּי אִם־גְּוִיָּתֵנוּ וְאַדְמָתֵנוּ: יט לָמָּה נָמוּת לְעֵינֶיךָ
גַּם־אֲנַחְנוּ גַּם־אַדְמָתֵנוּ קְנֵה־אֹתָנוּ וְאֶת־אַדְמָתֵנוּ בַּלֶּחֶם וְנִהְיֶה
אֲנַחְנוּ וְאַדְמָתֵנוּ עֲבָדִים לְפַרְע�ֹה וְתֶן־זֶרַע וְנִחְיֶה וְלֹא נָמוּת
וְהָאֲדָמָה לֹא תֵשָׁם: כ וַיִּקֶן יוֹסֵף אֶת־כָּל־אַדְמַת מִצְרַיִם
לְפַרְעֹה כִּי־מָכְרוּ מִצְרַיִם אִישׁ שָׂדֵהוּ כִּי־חָזַק עֲלֵהֶם הָרָעָב
וַתְּהִי הָאָרֶץ לְפַרְעֹה: כא וְאֶת־הָעָם הֶעֱבִיר אֹתוֹ לֶעָרִים
מִקְצֵה גְּבוּל־מִצְרַיִם וְעַד־קָצֵהוּ: כב רַק אַדְמַת הַכֹּהֲנִים לֹא
קָנָה כִּי חֹק לַכֹּהֲנִים מֵאֵת פַּרְעֹה וְאָכְלוּ אֶת־חָקָם אֲשֶׁר נָתַן
לָהֶם פַּרְעֹה עַל־כֵּן לֹא מָכְרוּ אֶת־אַדְמָתָם: כג וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף
אֶל־הָעָם הֵן קָנִיתִי אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם וְאֶת־אַדְמַתְכֶם לְפַרְעֹה

אֲבוּהִי לַחְמָא לְפוּם טַפְלָא: יג וְלַחְמָא לֵית
בְּכָל אַרְעָא אֲרֵי תַקִּיף כַּפְנָא לַחֲדָא וְאִשְׁתַּלְהֵי
עַמָּא דְאַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם וַעֲמָא דְאַרְעָא דִכְנַעַן
מִן קֳדָם כַּפְנָא: יד וְלַקִּיט יוֹסֵף יַת כָּל כַּסְפָּא
דְאִשְׁתְּכַח בְּאַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם וּבְאַרְעָא דִכְנַעַן
בְּעִבּוּרָא דִי אִנּוּן זָבְנִין וַאֲיְתִי יוֹסֵף יַת כַּסְפָּא
לְבֵית פַּרְעֹה: טו וּשְׁלִים כַּסְפָּא מֵאַרְעָא
דְמִצְרַיִם וּמֵאַרְעָא דִכְנַעַן וַאֲתוֹ כָל מִצְרָאֵי
לְוָת יוֹסֵף לְמֵימַר הַב לָנָא לַחְמָא וּלְמָא נְמוּת
לְקִבְלָךְ אֲרֵי שְׁלִים כַּסְפָּא: טז וַאֲמַר יוֹסֵף הָבוּ
גֵּיתֵיכוֹן וְאֶתֵּן לְכוֹן בְּגֵיתֵיכוֹן אִם שְׁלִים כַּסְפָּא:
יז וְאַיְתִיו יַת גֵּיתֵיהוֹן לְוָת יוֹסֵף וְיָהַב לְהוֹן יוֹסֵף
לַחְמָא בְּסוּסָוָתָא וּבְגֵיתֵי עָנָא וּבְגֵיתֵי תּוֹרֵי
וּבַחֲמָרֵי וְזָנִינוּן בְּלַחְמָא בְּכָל גֵּיתֵיהוֹן בְּשַׁתָּא
הַהִיא: יח וּשְׁלִימַת שַׁתָּא הַהִיא וַאֲתוֹ לְוָתֵיהּ
בְּשַׁתָּא תִנְיְתָא וַאֲמָרוּ לֵיהּ לָא נְכַסֵּי מִן רִבּוֹנִי
אֲלָהֵין שְׁלִים כַּסְפָּא וְגֵיתֵי בְעִירָא לְוָת רִבּוֹנִי לָא
אִשְׁתְּאַר קֳדָם רִבּוֹנִי אֲלָהֵין גְּוִיתָנָא וְאַרְעָנָא:
יט לְמָה נְמוּת לְעֵינָיךְ אַף אֲנַחְנָא אַף אַרְעָנָא
קְנֵי יָתָנָא וְיַת אַרְעָנָא בְּלַחְמָא וּנְהֵי אֲנַחְנָא
וְאַרְעָנָא עַבְדִין לְפַרְעֹה וְהַב בַּר זְרַע וְנֵיחֵי
וְלָא נְמוּת וְאַרְעָא לָא תְבוּר: כ וּקְנָא יוֹסֵף יַת
כָּל אַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם לְפַרְעֹה אֲרֵי זַבִּינוּ מִצְרָיִם
גְּבַר חַקְלֵיהּ אֲרֵי תְקֵיף עֲלֵיהוֹן כַּפְנָא וַהֲוַת
אַרְעָא לְפַרְעֹה: כא וְיַת עַמָּא אַעְבַּר יָתֵיהּ
מִקְּרֵי לִקְרֵי מִסְפֵּי תְּחוּם מִצְרַיִם וְעַד סוֹפֵיהּ:
כב לְחוֹד אַרְעָא דְכוּמָרַיָּא לָא קְנָא אֲרֵי
חֻלָּקָא לְכוּמָרַיָּא מִן קֳדָם פַּרְעֹה וְאָכְלִין יַת
חֻלָּקְהוֹן דִּי יְהַב לְהוֹן פַּרְעֹה עַל כֵּן לָא זַבִּינוּ
יַת אַרְעֲהוֹן: כג וַאֲמַר יוֹסֵף לְעַמָּא הָא קְנֵיתִי
יַתְכוֹן יוֹמָא דֵין וְיַת אַרְעֲכוֹן לְפַרְעֹה הָא לְכוֹן

רס"י

(יג) **ולחם אין בכל הארץ**. חוזר לענין הרעזון, לתחלת ענין הרעב: **ותלה**. כמו ותלאה, לשון עייפות כתרגומו, ודומה לו כמתלהלה כיורד זקיס[1]: (יד) **בשבר אשר הם שוברים**. מותנין לו את הכסף: (טו) **אפס**. כתרגומו שליס: (יז) **וינהלם**. כמו ויוכלם, ודומה לו ולא מנהל לה[2], על מי ממוחות ינהלוני[3]: (יח) **בשנה השנית**. שניה לשני הרעב: **כי אם תם הכסף וגו'**. כי אסר תם הכסף והמקנה, וכן הכל על יד תדוני: **בלתי אם גויתנו**. כמו אם לא גויתנו: (יט) **ותן זרע**. לזרוע האדמה, ואף על פי שאמר יוסף ועוד חמש שניס אשר אין חריש וקציר, מכיון שצא יעקב למלריס, צאה ברכה לרגליו, והתחילו לזרוע וכלה הרעב, וכן שניו בתוספתא דסוטה[4]: **לא תשם**. לא תהא שממה. לא תבור, לשון שדה בור, שניו חרוש: (כ) **ותהי הארץ לפרעה**. קנויה לו: (כא) **ואת העם העביר**. יוסף, מעיר לעיר, לזכרון שאין לכס עוד חלק בארץ, וכוושיב של עיר זו בחברתה. ולא כולרך לכתוב לכתוב זאת, אלא להודיעך שבאו של יוסף, שאתכוין לכסיר חרפה מעל אחיו, שלא יהיו קורין אותס גוליס[5]: **מקצה גבול מצרים וגו'**. כן עשה לכל העריס אשר במלכות מלריס, מקלה גבולה ועד קלה גבולה: (כב) **הכהנים**. הכוומריס, כל לשון כהן, משרת לאלהות הוא, הון מאותן שהס לשון גדולה, כמו כהן מדין, כהן און: **חוק לכהנים**. חק,

1 משלי כו, יח 2 ישעיה נא, יח 3 תהלים כג, ג 4 י', ח 5 חולין ס:

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 *There 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.* 14 *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.*

15 *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?"*

16 *Yosef said, "If the money has run out, give (me) your livestock, and I will give you (food in return) for your livestock."* 17 *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.*

18 *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.* 19 *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."*

20 *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.*

21 *(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).* 22 *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.*

23 *Yosef said to the people, "Since I have now bought you and your land for Pharaoh—look!—here*

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

Yosef'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.

From 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. 98*ff.*)

*ע"פ פ' הבכור שור.

הֵא־לָכֶם זֶרַע וּזְרַעְתֶּם אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה: כד וְהָיָה בַּתְּבוּאֹת
וְנָתַתֶּם חֲמִישִׁית לְפַרְעֹה וְאַרְבַּע הַיָּדֹת יִהְיֶה לָכֶם לְזֶרַע
הַשָּׂדֶה וְלַאֲכָלְכֶם וְלַאֲשֶׁר בְּבָתֵּיכֶם וְלֶאֱכֹל לְטַפְּכֶם: [מפטיר]
כה וַיֹּאמְרוּ הֶחֱיִתָנוּ נִמְצָא־חֵן בְּעֵינֵי אֲדֹנִי וְהָיֵינוּ עֲבָדִים
לְפַרְעֹה: כו וַיָּשֶׂם אֹתָהּ יוֹסֵף לְחֹק עַד־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה עַל־אַדְמַת
מִצְרַיִם לְפַרְעֹה לַחֹמֶשׁ רַק אַדְמַת הַכֹּהֲנִים לְבַדָּם לֹא הָיְתָה
לְפַרְעֹה: כז וַיֵּשֶׁב יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן וַיֵּאָחֲזוּ בָהּ
וַיִּפְרְצוּ וַיִּרְבּוּ מְאֹד: בס״ת אין כאן פיסקא כי אם ריוח אות אחת:

ק״ו פסוקים, יהללא״ל סימן.

בַּר זַרְעָא וְתִזְרְעוּן יַת אַרְעָא: כד וִיהֵי בְּאָעוֹלֵי
עֲלַלְתָּא וְתִתְּנוּן חַד מִן חַמְשָׁא לְפַרְעֹה וְאַרְבַּע
חֶלָקִין יְהוֹן לְכוֹן לְבַר זְרַע חַקְלָא וּלְמֵיכַלְכוֹן
וְלֶאֱנַשׁ בָּתֵּיכוֹן וּלְמֵיכַל לְטַפְּלְכוֹן: כה וַאֲמָרוּ
קַיֵּמְתָּנָא נִשְׁכַּח רַחֲמִין בְּעֵינֵי רִבּוֹנִי וּנְהֵי
עַבְדִּין לְפַרְעֹה: כו וְשַׁוִּי יָתָהּ יוֹסֵף לְגְזֵירָא עַד
יוֹמָא הָדֵין עַל אַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם דִּיהוֹן יָהֲבִין
חַד מִן חַמְשָׁא לְפַרְעֹה לְחוֹד אַרְעָא דְכוּמָרַיָּא
בִּלְחוֹדֵיהוֹן לָא הֲוַת לְפַרְעֹה: כז וְיָתִיב יִשְׂרָאֵל
בְּאַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם בְּאַרְעָא דְגֹשֶׁן וְאַחֲסִינוּ בָהּ
וּנְפִישׁוּ וּסְגִיאוּ לַחֲדָא:

רס״ו

כך וכך לחם ליוסף: **(כג) הא.** כמו הנה, כמו וגם מי הוא דרכך נרחם נתתי[1]: **(כד) לזרע השדה.** שנכל שנה: **ולאשר בבתיכם.** ולאכול העבדים והשפחות אשר בביתיכם: **טפכם.** בניהם קטניהם: **(כה) נמצא חן.** לעשות לנו זאת כמו שאמרת: **והיינו עבדים לפרעה.** להעלות לו המס הזה בכל שנה, לחק שלא יעבור: **(כז) וישב ישראל בארץ מצרים.** ויכין, במרן גשן שהיא מארץ מצריים: **ויאחזו בה.** לשון אחוזה[2]: **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 בָהּ which means "they acquired property in it."

Midrash: וַיֵּאָחֲזוּ בָהּ means that the land grasped them, like a person who is grabbed against his will (מדרש תדשא פי״ז).

1 יחזקאל טז, מג 2 כ״ה ברוב הדפוסים. ובכמה דפוסים (כנראה בטעות): לשון אחיזה. ובדפוס ראשון ושני (וכן בכמה כת״י) ליתא ד״ה זה.

is grain-seed for you. Sow the farmland. [24] *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 [25] *"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)."*

[26] *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.*

[27] *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

Rashi 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

Vayechi 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*!

What 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.

The *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. 427*ff*.)

כח וַיְחִי יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם שְׁבַע עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה וַיְהִי יְמֵי־יַעֲקֹב שְׁנֵי חַיָּיו שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים וְאַרְבָּעִים וּמְאַת שָׁנָה: כט וַיִּקְרְבוּ יְמֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל לָמוּת וַיִּקְרָא | לִבְנוֹ לְיוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִם־נָא מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ שִׂים־נָא יָדְךָ תַּחַת יְרֵכִי וְעָשִׂיתָ עִמָּדִי חֶסֶד

כח וַיְחִי יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם שְׁבַע עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה וַיְהִי יְמֵי־יַעֲקֹב שְׁנֵי חַיָּיו שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים וְאַרְבָּעִים וּמְאַת שָׁנָה: כט וַיִּקְרְבוּ יְמֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל לָמוּת וַיִּקְרָא לִבְנוֹ לְיוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִם־נָא מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ שִׂים־נָא יָדְךָ תַּחַת יְרֵכִי וְעָשִׂיתָ עִמָּדִי חֶסֶד

רס"י

(כח) ויחי יעקב. למה פרשה זו סתומה, לפי שכיון שנפטר יעקב אבינו, נסתמו עיניהם ולבם של ישראל מצרת השעבוד, שהתחילו לשעבדם. דבר אחר, שבקש לגלות את הקץ לבניו, ונסתם ממנו[1]. בב"ר[2]: **(כט) ויקרבו ימי ישראל למות.** למי שנאמר בו קריבה למות, לא הגיע לימי אבותיו[3], [ילמח מי ק"פ ויעקב קמ"ן, בדוד נאמר קריבה, אבל מי ת' שניס[4] והוא מי ע']: **ויקרא לבנו ליוסף.** למי שהיה יכולת בידו לעשות[5]: **שים נא ידך. והשבע: חסד ואמת.**

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 הערה 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 *Ya'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.*

29 *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. 422*ff.*)

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 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)

The Last Word

"The Eyes...of the Jewish people were Closed" (*Rashi* v. 28)

In 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)

וְאֶֽמֶּת אַל־נָ֣א תִקְבְּרֵ֔נִי בְּמִצְרָֽיִם׃ ל וְשָׁכַ֥בְתִּי עִם־אֲבֹתַ֖י
וּנְשָׂאתַ֣נִי מִמִּצְרַ֑יִם וּקְבַרְתָּ֖נִי בְּקִבְרָתָ֣ם וַיֹּאמַ֔ר אָנֹכִ֖י אֶעְשֶׂ֥ה
כִדְבָרֶֽךָ׃ לא וַיֹּ֖אמֶר הִשָּׁבְעָ֣ה לִּ֑י וַיִּשָּׁבַ֣ע לוֹ֔ וַיִּשְׁתַּ֥חוּ יִשְׂרָאֵ֖ל
עַל־רֹ֥אשׁ הַמִּטָּֽה׃ פ מח א וַיְהִ֗י אַחֲרֵי֙ הַדְּבָרִ֣ים הָאֵ֔לֶּה וַיֹּ֥אמֶר
לְיוֹסֵ֖ף הִנֵּ֣ה אָבִ֑יךָ חֹלֶ֔ה וַיִּקַּ֞ח אֶת־שְׁנֵ֧י בָנָ֛יו עִמּ֖וֹ אֶת־מְנַשֶּׁ֥ה
וְאֶת־אֶפְרָֽיִם׃ ב וַיַּגֶּד֙ לְיַעֲקֹ֔ב וַיֹּאמֶר֙ הִנֵּ֣ה בִנְךָ֣ יוֹסֵ֔ף בָּ֖א אֵלֶ֑יךָ
וַיִּתְחַזֵּ֥ק יִשְׂרָאֵ֖ל וַיֵּ֥שֶׁב עַל־הַמִּטָּֽה׃ ג וַיֹּ֥אמֶר יַעֲקֹ֛ב אֶל־יוֹסֵ֖ף אֵ֣ל
שַׁדַּ֣י נִרְאָה־אֵלַ֤י בְּלוּז֙ בְּאֶ֣רֶץ כְּנָ֔עַן וַיְבָ֥רֶךְ אֹתִֽי׃ ד וַיֹּ֣אמֶר אֵלַ֗י
הִנְנִ֤י מַפְרְךָ֙ וְהִרְבִּיתִ֔ךָ וּנְתַתִּ֖יךָ לִקְהַ֣ל עַמִּ֑ים וְנָֽתַתִּי֙ אֶת־הָאָ֣רֶץ
הַזֹּ֔את לְזַרְעֲךָ֥ אַחֲרֶ֖יךָ אֲחֻזַּ֥ת עוֹלָֽם׃ ה וְעַתָּ֞ה שְׁנֵֽי־בָנֶ֣יךָ
הַנּֽוֹלָדִ֤ים לְךָ֙ בְּאֶ֣רֶץ מִצְרַ֔יִם עַד־בֹּאִ֥י אֵלֶ֖יךָ מִצְרַ֣יְמָה לִ֑י הֵ֥ם

תִּקְבְּרִינַנִי בְּמִצְרָיִם׃ ל וְאֶשְׁכְּבוּ עִם אֲבֹתָי וְתִטְּלִינַנִי מִמִּצְרַיִם וְתִקְבְּרִינַנִי בִּקְבוּרָתָן וַאֲמַר אֶנָא אַעְבֵּיד כְּפִתְגָמָךְ׃ לא וַאֲמַר קַיֵּם לִי וְקַיֵּם לֵיהּ וּסְגִיד יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל רֵישׁ עַרְסָא׃ א וַהֲוָה בָּתַר פִּתְגָמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין וַאֲמַר לְיוֹסֵף הָא אֲבוּךְ שְׁכִיב מְרַע וּדְבַר יַת תְּרֵין בְּנוֹהִי עִמֵּיהּ יַת מְנַשֶּׁה וְיַת אֶפְרָיִם׃ ב וְחַוִּי לְיַעֲקֹב וַאֲמַר הָא בְרָךְ יוֹסֵף אָתֵי לְוָתָךְ וְאִתַּקַּף יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיָתֵיב עַל עַרְסָא׃ ג וַאֲמַר יַעֲקֹב לְיוֹסֵף אֵל שַׁדַּי אִתְגְּלִי לִי בְּלוּז בְּאַרְעָא דִכְנָעַן וּבָרִיךְ יָתִי׃ ד וַאֲמַר לִי הָא אֲנָא מַפִּישׁ לָךְ וְאַסְגְּנָךְ וְאֶתְּנִנָּךְ לְכִנְשַׁת שִׁבְטִין וְאֶתֵּן יַת אַרְעָא הָדָא לִבְנָיךְ בַּתְרָךְ אַחֲסָנַת עָלַם׃ ה וּכְעַן תְּרֵין בְּנָיךְ דִּי אִתְיְלִידוּ לָךְ בְּאַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם עַד מֵיתִי לְוָתָךְ לְמִצְרַיִם דִּילִי אִנּוּן אֶפְרַיִם וּמְנַשֶּׁה כִּרְאוּבֵן

רש"י

חסד שעושין עם המתים הוא חסד של אמת, שהיו מצפה לתגלוח גמול: **אל נא תקברני במצרים.** סופה להיות עפרה כניס (ומרחשין תחת גופי) ושחין מתי חולה לארץ חייס חלח בצער גלגול מחילות, ושלח יעשוני מלריס עבודת חלילים[1]: (ל) **ושכבתי עם אבותי.** וי"ו זו מחוסר למעלה לתחלת המקרח, סיס נח ידך תחת ירכי ושתבע לי, ואני סופי לשכב עם חבותי, ואתה תשחני ממלריס. ואין לומר ושכבתי עם חבותי השכיבני עם חבותי בממערה, שהרי כתיב אחריו ונשחתני ממלריס וקברתני בקבורתם, ועוד, מלינו בכל מקום לשון שכיבה עם חבותיו היה הגויעה, ולח הקבורה, כמו ויישכב דוד עם חבותיו, ואחר כך ויקבר בעיר דוד[2]: (לא) **וישתחו ישראל.** תעלה בעידניה סגיד ליה: **על ראש המטה.** כפך עלמו לגד השכינה, מכאן חמרו[3], שהשכינה למעלה מרחשותיו של חולה. דבר אחר על רחש המטה, על שהיתה מטתו שלימה ולח היה בה רשע, שהרי יוסף מלך היה, ועוד שנשבה לבין הגויס, והרי הוח עומד בנדקו: (ח) **ויאמר ליוסף.** אחד מן המגידים, והרי זה מקרח קלר. ויש חומרים אפריס היה רגיל לפני יעקב בתלמוד, וכשחלה יעקב בחרן גוזן, הלך אפריס אלל חביו למלריס להגיד לו: **ויקח את שני בניו עמו.** כדי שיברכם יעקב לפני מותו: (ג) **ויגד.** המגיד ליעקב, ולח פירש מי, והרבה מקרחות קלרי לשון: **ויתחזק ישראל.** אמר, אף על פי שחוח בני, מלך הוח, אחלק לו כבוד, מכאן שחולקין כבוד למלכות. וכן משה חלק כבוד למלכות, וירדו כל עבדיך אלה אלי[4], וכן אליהו, ויעמס מתניו וגו'[5]: (ד) **ונתתיך לקהל עמים.** בשרני שעתידים ללאת ממני עוד קהל ועמים, ואף על פי שאמר לי גוי וקהל גוים, גוי אמר לי על בניימין, קהל גוים, כרי שניס לבד מבניימין, ועוד לא נולד לי בן, למדני שעתיד אחד משבטי ליהלק, ועתה אותה מתנה אני נותן לך: (ה) **הנולדים לך עד בואי אליך.** לפני בואי אליך, כלומר שנולדו משפרשת ממני עד שבאתי אלליך: **לי הם.** בחשבון

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.

1 ב"ר צו, ה. 2 מלכים ב, י 3 שבת יב: 4 שמות יא, ח 5 מלכים־א יח, מו

will do for me true kindness: please don't let me be buried in Egypt. [30] *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).

[31] *(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 *Then, after these words (had been exchanged between Ya'akov and Yosef*, 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).*

[2] *(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).

[3] *Ya'akov said to Yosef, "God Almighty appeared to me in Luz, in the land of Cana'an, and He blessed me.* [4] *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.'"*

[5] *"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. 211*ff.*)

Sparks of Chasidus

The 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)

*ע"פ לקו"ש חל"ה ע' 165, הערה 22.

אֶפְרַ֖יִם וּמְנַשֶּׁ֑ה כִּרְאוּבֵ֥ן וְשִׁמְעוֹן֙ יִֽהְיוּ־לִֽי׃ ו וּמוֹלַדְתְּךָ֛ אֲשֶׁר־
הוֹלַ֥דְתָּ אַחֲרֵיהֶ֖ם לְךָ֣ יִהְיוּ֑ עַ֚ל שֵׁ֣ם אֲחֵיהֶ֔ם יִקָּרְא֖וּ בְּנַחֲלָתָֽם׃
ז וַאֲנִ֗י | בְּבֹאִי֙ מִפַּדָּ֔ן מֵ֥תָה עָלַ֖י רָחֵ֑ל בְּאֶ֣רֶץ כְּנַ֗עַן בַּדֶּ֙רֶךְ֙ בְּע֣וֹד
כִּבְרַת־אֶ֔רֶץ לָבֹ֖א אֶפְרָ֑תָה וָאֶקְבְּרֶ֣הָ שָּׁ֔ם בְּדֶ֖רֶךְ אֶפְרָ֑ת הִ֖וא
בֵּ֥ית לָֽחֶם׃ ח וַיַּ֣רְא יִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל אֶת־בְּנֵ֖י יוֹסֵ֑ף וַיֹּ֕אמֶר מִי־אֵ֖לֶּה׃
ט וַיֹּ֥אמֶר יוֹסֵ֖ף אֶל־אָבִ֑יו בָּנַ֣י הֵ֔ם אֲשֶׁר־נָתַ֥ן לִ֖י אֱלֹהִ֣ים בָּזֶ֔ה

וְשִׁמְעוֹן יְהוֹן קָדָמַי׃ ו וּבְנָיִךְ דִּי תוֹלִיד בַּתְרֵיהוֹן
דִּילָךְ יְהוֹן עַל שׁוּם אֲחוּהוֹן יִתְקְרוּן
בְּאַחֲסַנְתְּהוֹן׃ ז וַאֲנָא בְּמֵיתִי מִפַּדָּן מִיתַת עֲלַי
רָחֵל בְּאַרְעָא דִּכְנַעַן בְּאָרְחָא בְּעוֹד כְּרוּב
אַרְעָא לְמֵיעַל לְאֶפְרָת וּקְבָרְתָּהּ תַּמָּן בְּאוֹרַח
אֶפְרָת הִיא בֵּית לָחֶם׃ ח וַחֲזָא יִשְׂרָאֵל יַת בְּנֵי
יוֹסֵף וַאֲמַר מַן אִלֵּין׃ ט וַאֲמַר יוֹסֵף לַאֲבוּהִי
בְּנַי אִנּוּן דִּי יְהַב לִי יְיָ הָכָא וַאֲמַר קָרֵיבִינוּן

רס"י

שאר בני הס, ליטול חלק בארץ חיש כנגדו: (ו) **ומולדתך וגו'**. אס תוליד עוד, לא יהיו במנין בני, אלא בתוך שבטי אפריס ומנשה יהיו נכללים, ולא יהא להס שס בשבטים לענין הנחלה. ואף על פי שנתחלקה הארץ למנין גולגלותם, כדכתיב לרב תרבו נחלתו, וכל חיש ואיש נטל בשוה חוץ מן הנכוריס, מכל מקוס לא נקראו שבטים אלא אלו, [להטיל גורל הארץ, למנין שמות השבטים, ועשיה לכל שבט ושבט, ודגליס לזה ולזה]: (ז) **ואני בבואי מפדן וגו'**. ואף על פי שאני מטריח עליך להוליכני לקבר בארץ כנען, ולא כך עשיתי לאמך, שהרי מתה סמוך לבית לחס: **בברת ארץ**. מדת ארץ, והס חלפיס אמה, כמדת תחוס שבת, כדברי ר' משה הדרשן, ולא תאמר שעכשו עלי גשמיס מלהוליכה ולקברה בחברון, עת הגרייד היה, שהארץ חלולה ומנוקבת ככברה: **ואקברה שם**. לא הולכתיה אפילו לבית לחס

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 Cana'an, 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 Cana'an...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

1 ירמיה לא, יד

will be mine, like Re'uvain and Shimon. [6] *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."*

[7] *"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 Cana'an, 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)."*

[8] *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)?"*

[9] *(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."

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)

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. 236*ff*.)

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.

וַיֹּאמֶר קָחֶם־נָא אֵלַי וַאֲבָרֲכֵם: [שני] י וְעֵינֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כָּבְדוּ מִזֹּקֶן
לֹא יוּכַל לִרְאוֹת וַיַּגֶּשׁ אֹתָם אֵלָיו וַיִּשַּׁק לָהֶם וַיְחַבֵּק לָהֶם:
יא וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יוֹסֵף רְאֹה פָנֶיךָ לֹא פִלָּלְתִּי וְהִנֵּה הֶרְאָה
אֹתִי אֱלֹהִים גַּם אֶת־זַרְעֶךָ: יב וַיּוֹצֵא יוֹסֵף אֹתָם מֵעִם בִּרְכָּיו
וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ לְאַפָּיו אָרְצָה: יג וַיִּקַּח יוֹסֵף אֶת־שְׁנֵיהֶם אֶת־אֶפְרַיִם
בִּימִינוֹ מִשְׂמְאל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת־מְנַשֶּׁה בִּשְׂמֹאלוֹ מִימִין יִשְׂרָאֵל
וַיַּגֶּשׁ אֵלָיו: יד וַיִּשְׁלַח יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־יְמִינוֹ וַיָּשֶׁת עַל־רֹאשׁ
אֶפְרַיִם וְהוּא הַצָּעִיר וְאֶת־שְׂמֹאלוֹ עַל־רֹאשׁ מְנַשֶּׁה שִׂכֵּל
אֶת־יָדָיו כִּי מְנַשֶּׁה הַבְּכוֹר: טו וַיְבָרֶךְ אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמַר
הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר הִתְהַלְּכוּ אֲבֹתַי לְפָנָיו אַבְרָהָם וְיִצְחָק הָאֱלֹהִים
הָרֹעֶה אֹתִי מֵעוֹדִי עַד־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: טז הַמַּלְאָךְ הַגֹּאֵל אֹתִי
מִכָּל־רָע יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־הַנְּעָרִים וְיִקָּרֵא בָהֶם שְׁמִי וְשֵׁם אֲבֹתַי
אַבְרָהָם וְיִצְחָק וְיִדְגּוּ לָרֹב בְּקֶרֶב הָאָרֶץ: [שלישי] יז וַיַּרְא יוֹסֵף
כִּי־יָשִׁית אָבִיו יַד־יְמִינוֹ עַל־רֹאשׁ אֶפְרַיִם וַיֵּרַע בְּעֵינָיו וַיִּתְמֹךְ
יַד־אָבִיו לְהָסִיר אֹתָהּ מֵעַל רֹאשׁ־אֶפְרַיִם עַל־רֹאשׁ מְנַשֶּׁה:
יח וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל־אָבִיו לֹא־כֵן אָבִי כִּי־זֶה הַבְּכֹר שִׂים יְמִינְךָ
עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ: יט וַיְמָאֵן אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר יָדַעְתִּי בְנִי יָדַעְתִּי גַּם־הוּא
יִהְיֶה־לְּעָם* וְגַם־הוּא יִגְדָּל וְאוּלָם אָחִיו הַקָּטֹן יִגְדַּל מִמֶּנּוּ

*לפי מנחת שי הל' רפה

וְזַרְעוֹ יִהְיֶה מְלֹא־הַגּוֹיִם: כ וַיְבָרְכֵם בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר בְּךָ יְבָרֵךְ
יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר יְשִׂמְךָ אֱלֹהִים כְּאֶפְרַיִם וְכִמְנַשֶּׁה וַיָּשֶׂם אֶת־אֶפְרַיִם
לִפְנֵי מְנַשֶּׁה: כא וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יוֹסֵף הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי מֵת וְהָיָה
אֱלֹהִים עִמָּכֶם וְהֵשִׁיב אֶתְכֶם אֶל־אֶרֶץ אֲבֹתֵיכֶם: כב וַאֲנִי נָתַתִּי
לְךָ שְׁכֶם אַחַד עַל־אַחֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר לָקַחְתִּי מִיַּד הָאֱמֹרִי בְּחַרְבִּי
וּבְקַשְׁתִּי:

פרשת ויחי

מט א וַיִּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב אֶל־בָּנָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הֵאָסְפוּ וְאַגִּידָה לָכֶם אֵת
אֲשֶׁר־יִקְרָא אֶתְכֶם בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים: ב הִקָּבְצוּ וְשִׁמְעוּ בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב
וְשִׁמְעוּ אֶל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבִיכֶם: ג רְאוּבֵן בְּכֹרִי אַתָּה כֹּחִי וְרֵאשִׁית
אוֹנִי יֶתֶר שְׂאֵת וְיֶתֶר עָז: ד פַּחַז כַּמַּיִם אַל־תּוֹתַר כִּי עָלִיתָ מִשְׁכְּבֵי
אָבִיךָ אָז חִלַּלְתָּ יְצוּעִי עָלָה: ה שִׁמְעוֹן וְלֵוִי אַחִים כְּלֵי חָמָס
מְכֵרֹתֵיהֶם: ו בְּסֹדָם אַל־תָּבֹא נַפְשִׁי בִּקְהָלָם אַל־תֵּחַד כְּבֹדִי כִּי
בְאַפָּם הָרְגוּ אִישׁ וּבִרְצֹנָם עִקְּרוּ שׁוֹר: ז אָרוּר אַפָּם כִּי עָז וְעֶבְרָתָם
כִּי קָשָׁתָה אֲחַלְּקֵם בְּיַעֲקֹב וַאֲפִיצֵם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל: ח יְהוּדָה אַתָּה
יוֹדוּךָ אַחֶיךָ יָדְךָ בְּעֹרֶף אֹיְבֶיךָ יִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְךָ בְּנֵי אָבִיךָ: ט גּוּר
אַרְיֵה יְהוּדָה מִטֶּרֶף בְּנִי עָלִיתָ כָּרַע רָבַץ כְּאַרְיֵה וּכְלָבִיא מִי
יְקִימֶנּוּ: י לֹא־יָסוּר שֵׁבֶט מִיהוּדָה וּמְחֹקֵק מִבֵּין רַגְלָיו עַד כִּי־יָבֹא
שִׁילֹה וְלוֹ יִקְּהַת עַמִּים: יא אֹסְרִי לַגֶּפֶן עִירֹה וְלַשֹּׂרֵקָה בְּנִי אֲתֹנוֹ
כִּבֶּס בַּיַּיִן לְבֻשׁוֹ וּבְדַם עֲנָבִים סוּתֹה: יב חַכְלִילִי עֵינַיִם מִיָּיִן
וּלְבֶן שִׁנַּיִם מֵחָלָב: יג זְבוּלֻן לְחוֹף יַמִּים יִשְׁכֹּן וְהוּא לְחוֹף אֳנִיֹּת
וְיַרְכָתוֹ עַל־צִידֹן: יד יִשָּׂשכָר חֲמֹר גָּרֶם רֹבֵץ בֵּין הַמִּשְׁפְּתָיִם:
טו וַיַּרְא מְנֻחָה כִּי טוֹב וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ כִּי נָעְמָה וַיֵּט שִׁכְמוֹ לִסְבֹּל
וַיְהִי לְמַס עֹבֵד: טז דָּן יָדִין עַמּוֹ כְּאַחַד שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: יז יְהִי־דָן
נָחָשׁ עֲלֵי־דֶרֶךְ שְׁפִיפֹן עֲלֵי־אֹרַח הַנֹּשֵׁךְ עִקְבֵי־סוּס וַיִּפֹּל רֹכְבוֹ
אָחוֹר: יח לִישׁוּעָתְךָ קִוִּיתִי יְהוָה: יט גָּד גְּדוּד יְגוּדֶנּוּ וְהוּא יָגֻד עָקֵב:
כ מֵאָשֵׁר שְׁמֵנָה לַחְמוֹ וְהוּא יִתֵּן מַעֲדַנֵּי מֶלֶךְ: כא נַפְתָּלִי אַיָּלָה
שְׁלֻחָה הַנֹּתֵן אִמְרֵי־שָׁפֶר: כב בֵּן פֹּרָת יוֹסֵף בֵּן פֹּרָת עֲלֵי עָיִן בָּנוֹת
צָעֲדָה עָלָי שׁוּר: כג וַיְמָרֻרֻהוּ וַיָּרֹבּוּ וַיִּשְׂטְמֻהוּ בַּעֲלֵי חִצִּים:
כד וַתֵּשֶׁב בְּאֵיתָן קַשְׁתּוֹ וַיָּפֹזּוּ זְרֹעֵי יָדָיו מִידֵי אֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב מִשָּׁם
רֹעֶה אֶבֶן יִשְׂרָאֵל: כה מֵאֵל אָבִיךָ וְיַעְזְרֶךָּ וְאֵת שַׁדַּי וִיבָרְכֶךָּ
בִּרְכֹת שָׁמַיִם מֵעָל בִּרְכֹת תְּהוֹם רֹבֶצֶת תָּחַת בִּרְכֹת שָׁדַיִם וָרָחַם:
כו בִּרְכֹת אָבִיךָ גָּבְרוּ עַל־בִּרְכֹת הוֹרַי עַד תַּאֲוַת גִּבְעֹת עוֹלָם תִּהְיֶיןָ
לְרֹאשׁ יוֹסֵף וְלִקָּדְקֹד נְזִיר אֶחָיו: כז בִּנְיָמִין זְאֵב יִטְרָף בַּבֹּקֶר יֹאכַל
עַד וְלָעֶרֶב יְחַלֵּק שָׁלָל: כח כָּל־אֵלֶּה שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר
וְזֹאת אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר לָהֶם אֲבִיהֶם וַיְבָרֶךְ אוֹתָם אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר כְּבִרְכָתוֹ
בֵּרַךְ אֹתָם: כט וַיְצַו אוֹתָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם אֲנִי נֶאֱסָף אֶל־עַמִּי קִבְּרוּ
אֹתִי אֶל־אֲבֹתָי אֶל־הַמְּעָרָה אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׂדֵה עֶפְרֹן הַחִתִּי: ל בַּמְּעָרָה
אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׂדֵה הַמַּכְפֵּלָה אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי מַמְרֵא בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן אֲשֶׁר
קָנָה אַבְרָהָם אֶת־הַשָּׂדֶה מֵאֵת עֶפְרֹן הַחִתִּי לַאֲחֻזַּת־קָבֶר: לא שָׁמָּה
קָבְרוּ אֶת־אַבְרָהָם וְאֶת־שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ שָׁמָּה קָבְרוּ אֶת־יִצְחָק וְאֶת־
רִבְקָה אִשְׁתּוֹ וְשָׁמָּה קָבַרְתִּי אֶת־לֵאָה: לב מִקְנֵה הַשָּׂדֶה וְהַמְּעָרָה
אֲשֶׁר בּוֹ מֵאֵת בְּנֵי־חֵת: לג וַיְכַל יַעֲקֹב לְצַוֹּת אֶת־בָּנָיו וַיֶּאֱסֹף רַגְלָיו
אֶל־הַמִּטָּה וַיִּגְוַע וַיֵּאָסֶף אֶל־עַמָּיו:

נ א וַיִּפֹּל יוֹסֵף עַל־פְּנֵי אָבִיו וַיֵּבְךְּ עָלָיו וַיִּשַּׁק לוֹ: ב וַיְצַו יוֹסֵף
אֶת־עֲבָדָיו אֶת־הָרֹפְאִים אֶת־אָבִיו וַיַּחַנְטוּ הָרֹפְאִים אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל:
ג וַיִּמְלְאוּ לוֹ אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם כִּי כֵן יִמְלְאוּ יְמֵי הַחֲנֻטִים וַיִּבְכּוּ אֹתוֹ
מִצְרַיִם שִׁבְעִים יוֹם: ד וַיַּעַבְרוּ יְמֵי בְכִיתוֹ וַיְדַבֵּר יוֹסֵף אֶל־בֵּית
פַּרְעֹה לֵאמֹר אִם־נָא מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֵיכֶם דַּבְּרוּ־נָא בְּאָזְנֵי פַרְעֹה
לֵאמֹר: ה אָבִי הִשְׁבִּיעַנִי לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי מֵת בְּקִבְרִי אֲשֶׁר כָּרִיתִי
לִי בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן שָׁמָּה תִּקְבְּרֵנִי וְעַתָּה אֶעֱלֶה־נָּא וְאֶקְבְּרָה אֶת־אָבִי
וְאָשׁוּבָה: ו וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה עֲלֵה וְקְבֹר אֶת־אָבִיךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר הִשְׁבִּיעֶךָ:
ז וַיַּעַל יוֹסֵף לִקְבֹּר אֶת־אָבִיו וַיַּעֲלוּ אִתּוֹ כָּל־עַבְדֵי פַרְעֹה זִקְנֵי
בֵיתוֹ וְכֹל זִקְנֵי אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: ח וְכֹל בֵּית יוֹסֵף וְאֶחָיו וּבֵית אָבִיו
רַק טַפָּם וְצֹאנָם וּבְקָרָם עָזְבוּ בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן: ט וַיַּעַל עִמּוֹ גַּם־רֶכֶב גַּם־
פָּרָשִׁים וַיְהִי הַמַּחֲנֶה כָּבֵד מְאֹד: י וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד־גֹּרֶן הָאָטָד אֲשֶׁר
בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן וַיִּסְפְּדוּ שָׁם מִסְפֵּד גָּדוֹל וְכָבֵד עַד מְאֹד וַיַּעַשׂ לְאָבִיו
אֵבֶל שִׁבְעַת יָמִים: יא וַיַּרְא יוֹשֵׁב הָאָרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִי אֶת־הָאֵבֶל בְּגֹרֶן
הָאָטָד וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵבֶל כָּבֵד זֶה לְמִצְרָיִם עַל־כֵּן קָרָא שְׁמָהּ אָבֵל
מִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן: יב וַיַּעֲשׂוּ בָנָיו לוֹ כֵּן כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּם:
יג וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֹתוֹ בָנָיו אַרְצָה כְּנָעַן וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֹתוֹ בִּמְעָרַת שְׂדֵה הַמַּכְפֵּלָה
אֲשֶׁר קָנָה אַבְרָהָם אֶת־הַשָּׂדֶה לַאֲחֻזַּת־קֶבֶר מֵאֵת עֶפְרֹן הַחִתִּי
עַל־פְּנֵי מַמְרֵא: יד וַיָּשָׁב יוֹסֵף מִצְרַיְמָה הוּא וְאֶחָיו וְכָל־הָעֹלִים אִתּוֹ
לִקְבֹּר אֶת־אָבִיו אַחֲרֵי קָבְרוֹ אֶת־אָבִיו: טו וַיִּרְאוּ אֲחֵי יוֹסֵף כִּי מֵת
אֲבִיהֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוּ יִשְׂטְמֵנוּ יוֹסֵף וְהָשֵׁב יָשִׁיב לָנוּ אֵת כָּל־הָרָעָה
אֲשֶׁר גָּמַלְנוּ אֹתוֹ: טז וַיְצַוּוּ אֶל־יוֹסֵף לֵאמֹר אָבִיךָ צִוָּה לִפְנֵי מוֹתוֹ
לֵאמֹר: יז כֹּה תֹאמְרוּן לְיוֹסֵף אָנָּא שָׂא נָא פֶּשַׁע אַחֶיךָ וְחַטָּאתָם כִּי
רָעָה גְמָלוּךָ וְעַתָּה שָׂא נָא לְפֶשַׁע עַבְדֵי אֱלֹהֵי אָבִיךָ וַיֵּבְךְּ יוֹסֵף
בְּדַבְּרָם אֵלָיו: יח וְגַם אֶחָיו הָלְכוּ וַיִּפְּלוּ לְפָנָיו וַיֹּאמְרוּ הִנֶּנּוּ לְךָ
לַעֲבָדִים: יט וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם יוֹסֵף אַל־תִּירָאוּ כִּי הֲתַחַת אֱלֹהִים אָנִי:
כ וְאַתֶּם חֲשַׁבְתֶּם עָלַי רָעָה אֱלֹהִים חֲשָׁבָהּ לְטֹבָה לְמַעַן עֲשֹׂה כַּיּוֹם
הַזֶּה לְהַחֲיוֹת עַם רָב: כא וְעַתָּה אַל־תִּירָאוּ אָנֹכִי אֲכַלְכֵּל אֶתְכֶם
וְאֶת־טַפְּכֶם וַיְנַחֵם אוֹתָם וַיְדַבֵּר עַל־לִבָּם: כב וַיֵּשֶׁב יוֹסֵף בְּמִצְרַיִם
הוּא וּבֵית אָבִיו וַיְחִי יוֹסֵף מֵאָה וָעֶשֶׂר שָׁנִים: כג וַיַּרְא יוֹסֵף לְאֶפְרַיִם
בְּנֵי שִׁלֵּשִׁים גַּם בְּנֵי מָכִיר בֶּן־מְנַשֶּׁה יֻלְּדוּ עַל־בִּרְכֵּי יוֹסֵף: כד וַיֹּאמֶר
יוֹסֵף אֶל־אֶחָיו אָנֹכִי מֵת וֵאלֹהִים פָּקֹד יִפְקֹד אֶתְכֶם וְהֶעֱלָה אֶתְכֶם
מִן־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב:
כה וַיַּשְׁבַּע יוֹסֵף אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר פָּקֹד יִפְקֹד אֱלֹהִים אֶתְכֶם
וְהַעֲלִתֶם אֶת־עַצְמֹתַי מִזֶּה: כו וַיָּמָת יוֹסֵף בֶּן־מֵאָה וָעֶשֶׂר שָׁנִים
וַיַּחַנְטוּ אֹתוֹ וַיִּישֶׂם בָּאָרוֹן בְּמִצְרָיִם:

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.

1 הושע יא, ג 2 ישעיה מז, ג

רס"ו

הקודש: **ויאמר קחם נא אלי ואברכם.** זהו שאמר הכתוב, ומנכי תרגלתי לאפרים קחם על זרועותיו[1]. תרגלתי רוחי ביעקב בשביל אפרים, עד שלקחן על זרועותיו: (יח) **לא פללתי.** לא מלאני לבי לחשוב מחשבה שאראה פניך עוד. פללתי, לשון מחשבה, כמו הכיהי עלה עשי פלילה[2]: (יג) **ויוצא יוסף אתם.** לאחר שנשקם, הוליאם יוסף מעם ברכיו, כדי ליתנם זה ליומין וזה לשמאל, לסמוך ידיו עליהם ולברכם: **וישתחו לאפיו.** כשחזר לאחוריו מלפני חזיו: (יג) **את אפרים בימינו משמאל ישראל.** הנח לקראת חברו, ימינו כנגד שמאל חברו, וכיון שהוא הכתר מיומן לברכה: (יד) **שכל את ידיו.** כתרגומו מחכמינון, שהשכל וחכמה השכיל את ידיו לכך, ומדעת, כי יודע היה כי מנשה הבכור, ואף על פי כן לא את ימינו עליו: (טז) **המלאך הגואל אותי.** מלאך הרגיל להשתלח אלי בלילה, כעין שנאמר ויאמר אלי מלאך האלהים בחלום יעקב וגו' אנכי האל בית אל: **יברך את הנערים.** מנשה ואפרים: **וידגו.** כדגים הללו שפריס ורבים ואין עין הרע שולטת בהם: (יז) **ויתמך יד אביו.** הרימה מעל ראש בנו ותמכה בידו: (יט) **ידעתי בני ידעתי.** שהוא הכתור: **גם הוא יהיה לעם וגו'.** שעתיד גדעון ללאת ממנו, שהקב"ה עושה גם על ידו: **ואולם אחיו הקטן יגדל ממנו.** שעתיד יהושע

(When the Divine spirit returned, Ya'akov) said, "Bring them near to me, and I'll bless them."

SECOND READING

[10] *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.* [11] *Yisra'el said to Yosef, "I didn't (even) expect to see your face, and—look!—God has shown me your children too!"*

[12] *(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.* [13] *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.*

[14] *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.*

[15] *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!* [16] *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

[17] *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.* [18] *Yosef said to his father, "Father, that's not right! This one is the firstborn. Put your right hand on his head!"*

[19] *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. 241*ff*.)

Sparks of Chasidus

"THIS ONE IS THE FIRSTBORN..." (V. 18)

Menasheh 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)

וְזַרְעוֹ יִהְיֶה מְלֹא־הַגּוֹיִם: כ וַיְבָרְכֵם בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר בְּךָ
יְבָרֵךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר יְשִׂמְךָ אֱלֹהִים כְּאֶפְרַיִם וְכִמְנַשֶּׁה וַיָּשֶׂם
אֶת־אֶפְרַיִם לִפְנֵי מְנַשֶּׁה: כא וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יוֹסֵף הִנֵּה
אָנֹכִי מֵת וְהָיָה אֱלֹהִים עִמָּכֶם וְהֵשִׁיב אֶתְכֶם אֶל־אֶרֶץ
אֲבֹתֵיכֶם: כב וַאֲנִי נָתַתִּי לְךָ שְׁכֶם אַחַד עַל־אַחֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר לָקַחְתִּי
מִיַּד הָאֱמֹרִי בְּחַרְבִּי וּבְקַשְׁתִּי: פ [רביעי] מט א וַיִּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב
אֶל־בָּנָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הֵאָסְפוּ וְאַגִּידָה לָכֶם אֵת אֲשֶׁר־יִקְרָא אֶתְכֶם
בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים: ב הִקָּבְצוּ וְשִׁמְעוּ בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב וְשִׁמְעוּ
אֶל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבִיכֶם: ג רְאוּבֵן בְּכֹרִי אַתָּה כֹּחִי וְרֵאשִׁית אוֹנִי
יֶתֶר שְׂאֵת וְיֶתֶר עָז: ד פַּחַז כַּמַּיִם אַל־תּוֹתַר כִּי עָלִיתָ מִשְׁכְּבֵי

בְּעַמְמַיָּא: כ וּבָרְכִינוּן בְּיוֹמָא הַהוּא לְמֵימַר בָּךְ
יְבָרֵךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמֵימַר יְשַׁוִּינָךְ יְיָ כְּאֶפְרַיִם
וְכִמְנַשֶּׁה וְשַׁוִּי יַת אֶפְרַיִם קֳדָם מְנַשֶּׁה:
כא וַאֲמַר יִשְׂרָאֵל לְיוֹסֵף הָא אֲנָא מָאִית וְיֵהֵא
מֵימְרָא דַיְיָ בְּסַעֲדְכוֹן וְיָתֵיב יַתְכוֹן לְאַרְעָא
דַּאֲבָהַתְכוֹן: כב וַאֲנָא יְהָבִית לָךְ חֻלָּק חַד
יַתִּיר עַל אַחָיְכִךְ דִּי נְסֵיבִית מִידָא דֶּאֱמוֹרָאָה
בְּצְלוֹתִי וּבְבָעוּתִי: א וּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב לְבָנוֹהִי
וַאֲמַר אִתְכַּנְּשׁוּ וַאֲחַוִי לְכוֹן יַת דִּי יֵעָרַע יַתְכוֹן
בְּסוֹף יוֹמַיָּא: ב אִתְכַּנְּשׁוּ וּשְׁמָעוּ בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב
וְקַבִּילוּ אוּלְפָן מִן יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבוּכוֹן: ג רְאוּבֵן
בּוּכְרִי אַתְּ חֵילִי וְרֵישׁ תָּקְפִּי לָךְ הֲוָה חָזֵי
לְמִסַּב תְּלָתָא חֻלָקִין בְּבֵירוּתָא כְּהוּנְתָא
וּמַלְכוּתָא: ד עַל דַּאֲזַלְתָּא לָקֳבֵל אַפָּךְ הָא
כְּמַיָּא בְּרַם לָא אַהֲנֵיתָא חֻלָּק יַתִּיר לָא תִסַּב
אֲרֵי סְלֵיקְתָּא בֵּית מִשְׁכְּבֵי אֲבוּךְ בְּכֵן

רס"ו

לנאת ממנו, שיגחיל את הארץ וילמד תורה לישראל: **וזרעו יהיה מלא הגוים**. כל העולם יתמלא נצחת שמעו, כשיעמיד חמה בגבעון וירח בעמק חילון: (כ) **בך יברך ישראל**. הכתוב לברך את בניו, יברכם בברכתם, ויאמר שים לבנו ישימך אלהים כאפרים וכמנשה: **וישם את אפרים**. בברכתו לפני מנשה, להקדימו בדגלים ובחנוכת הנשיאים: (כב) **ואני נתתי לך**. לפי שאתה טורח להתעסק בקבורתי, וגם אני נתתי לך חלק שתקבר בה, ואיזו, זו שכם, שנאמר ואת עצמות יוסף אשר העלו בני ישראל ממצרים קברו בשכם: **שכם אחד על אחיך**. שכם ממש, היא תהיה לך חלק אחד יתירה על אחיך: **בחרבי ובקשתי**. כשהרגו שמעון ולוי את אנשי שכם, ונתכנסו כל סביבותיהם להזדווג להם, וחגר יעקב כלי מלחמה כנגדן. דבר אחר שכם אחד, הוא הכתוב, שיעלו בניו שני חלקים, ושכם לשון חלק הוא, כתרגומו, והרכבה יש לו דומים במקרא, כי תשיחמו שכם[1], תשית שונאי לפני לחלקים, לחלקה שכם[2], דרך ירמו שכמה[3] היא חלקו, לעבדו שכם אחד[4]: **אשר לקחתי מיד האמורי**. מיד עשו, שעשה מעשה אמורי. דבר אחר, שהיה לו לחזיו בחלומי פיו: **בחרבי ובקשתי**. היא תכמתו ותפלתו: (ה) **ואגידה לכם**. בקש לגלות את הקץ ונסתלקה ממנו שכינה, והתחיל לומר דבריס אחריס[5]: (ג) **וראשית אוני**. היא טפה ראשונה שלו, שלח רחם קרי מימיו[6]: **אוני**. כוחי, כמו מלחתי חון לי[7], מרוב חויסי[8]. ולחין חויסי[9]: **יתר שאת**. רחוי היית להיות יתר על אחיך בכהונה, לשון נשיאות כפיס: **ויתר עז**. במלכות, כמו ויתן עז למלכו[10]. ומי גרס לך להפסיד כל אלה: (ד) **פחז כמים**. הפחז והבהלה אשר מהרת להרחות בעסק, כמיס הללו הממהרים למרוחתס. לכך: **אל תותר**. אל תרבה ליטול כל היתרות הללו שהיו רחויות לך. ומהו הפחז אשר פחזת: **כי עלית משכבי אביך אז חללת**. חותו שס שעלה על יעועי, והיא השכינה שהיה דרכה להיות עולה על יעועי: **פחז**. שס דבר הוא, לפיכך

לנאת ממנו, שיגחיל את הארץ וילמד תורה לישראל: **וזרעו יהיה מלא הגוים**. כל העולם יתמלא נצחת שמעו, כשיעמיד חמה בגבעון וירח בעמק חילון: (כ) **בך יברך ישראל**. הכתוב לברך את בניו, יברכם בברכתם, ויאמר שים לבנו ישימך אלהים כאפרים וכמנשה: **וישם את אפרים**. בברכתו לפני מנשה, להקדימו בדגלים ובחנוכת הנשיאים: (כב) **ואני נתתי לך**. לפי שאתה טורח להתעסק בקבורתי, וגם אני נתתי לך חלק שתקבר בה, ואיזו, זו שכם, שנאמר ואת עצמות יוסף אשר העלו בני ישראל ממצרים קברו בשכם: **שכם אחד על אחיך**. שכם ממש, היא תהיה לך חלק אחד יתירה על אחיך: **בחרבי ובקשתי**. כשהרגו שמעון ולוי את אנשי שכם, ונתכנסו כל סביבותיהם להזדווג להם, וחגר יעקב כלי מלחמה כנגדן. דבר אחר שכם אחד, הוא הכתוב, שיעלו בניו שני חלקים, ושכם לשון חלק הוא, כתרגומו, והרכבה יש לו דומים במקרא, כי תשיחמו שכם[1], תשית שונאי לפני לחלקים, לחלקה שכם[2], דרך ירמו שכמה[3] היא חלקו, לעבדו שכם אחד[4]: **אשר לקחתי מיד האמורי**. מיד עשו, שעשה מעשה אמורי. דבר אחר, שהיה לו לחזיו בחלומי פיו: **בחרבי ובקשתי**. היא תכמתו ותפלתו: (ה) **ואגידה לכם**. בקש לגלות את הקץ ונסתלקה ממנו שכינה, והתחיל לומר דבריס אחריס[5]: (ג) **וראשית אוני**. היא טפה ראשונה שלו, שלח רחם קרי מימיו[6]: **אוני**. כוחי, כמו מלחתי חון לי[7], מרוב חויסי[8]. ולחין חויסי[9]: **יתר שאת**. רחוי היית להיות יתר על אחיך בכהונה, לשון נשיאות כפיס: **ויתר עז**. במלכות, כמו ויתן עז למלכו[10]. ומי גרס לך להפסיד כל אלה: (ד) **פחז כמים**. הפחז והבהלה אשר מהרת להרחות בעסק, כמיס הללו הממהרים למרוחתס. לכך: **אל תותר**. אל תרבה ליטול כל היתרות הללו שהיו רחויות לך. ומהו הפחז אשר פחזת: **כי עלית משכבי אביך אז חללת**. חותו שס שעלה על יעועי, והיא השכינה שהיה דרכה להיות עולה על יעועי: **פחז**. שס דבר הוא, לפיכך

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)

1 תהלים כא, יג 2 שם ס, ז 3 הושע ו, ט 4 צפניה ג, ט 5 ב"ר צח, ב 6 ב"ר שם ד 7 הושע יב, ט 8 ישעיה מ, כו 9 שם כט 10 שמואל־א ב, י

[20] *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).*

[21] *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.* [22] *(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 Fourth Reading

Ya'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).

[2] *(He said,) "Sons of Ya'akov, gather round and listen. Listen to Yisra'el, your father!*

[3] *"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.* [4] *(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

Surely, 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.)

אָבִיךָ אָז חִלַּלְתָּ יְצוּעִי עָלָה: פ ה שִׁמְעוֹן וְלֵוִי אַחִים כְּלֵי חָמָס מְכֵרֹתֵיהֶם: ו בְּסֹדָם אַל־תָּבֹא נַפְשִׁי בִּקְהָלָם אַל־תֵּחַד כְּבֹדִי כִּי בְאַפָּם הָרְגוּ אִישׁ וּבִרְצֹנָם עִקְּרוּ־שׁוֹר: ז אָרוּר אַפָּם כִּי עָז וְעֶבְרָתָם כִּי קָשָׁתָה אֲחַלְּקֵם בְּיַעֲקֹב וַאֲפִיצֵם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל: פ ח *יְהוּדָה אַתָּה יוֹדוּךָ אַחֶיךָ יָדְךָ בְּעֹרֶף אֹיְבֶיךָ יִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְךָ בְּנֵי אָבִיךָ: ט גּוּר אַרְיֵה יְהוּדָה מִטֶּרֶף בְּנִי עָלִיתָ כָּרַע רָבַץ כְּאַרְיֵה

*יהודה בראש עמוד בס"ת. בי"ה שמ"ו סימן.

אַחֵילְתָּא לְשַׁוּוֵי בְּרֵי סְלֵיקְתָּא: ה שִׁמְעוֹן וְלֵוִי אַחִין גַּבְרִין גְּבָרִין בַּאֲרַע תּוֹתָבוּתְהוֹן עֲבָדוּ גְּבוּרָא: ו בְּרָזְהוֹן לָא הֲוַת נַפְשִׁי בְּאִתְכַּנְּשֵׁיהוֹן לְמִהַךְ לָא נְחָתִית מִן יְקָרִי אֲרֵי בְרָגְזֵהוֹן קְטָלוּ קְטוֹל וּבִרְעוּתְהוֹן תַּרָעוּ שׁוּר סַנְאָה: ז לִיט רָגְזֵהוֹן אֲרֵי תַקִּיף וְחֵמַתְהוֹן אֲרֵי קַשְׁיָא אֲפַלְגִינוּן בְּיַעֲקֹב וַאֲבַדְרִינוּן בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל: ח יְהוּדָה אַתְּ אוֹדֵיתָא וְלָא בְהֵיתָתָא בָּךְ יוֹדוּן אַחָיךְ יָדָךְ תִּתְקֵיף עַל בַּעֲלֵי דְבָבָךְ יִתְבַּדְּרוּן סַנְאָךְ יְהוֹן מְחַזְּרִין קְדָל קֳדָמָךְ וִיהוֹן מְקַדְּמִין לְמִשְׁאַל בִּשְׁלָמָךְ בְּנֵי אֲבוּךְ: ט שִׁלְטוֹן יְהֵי בְשֵׁירוּיָא וּבְסוֹפָא יִתְרַבָּא מַלְכָּא מִדְּבֵית יְהוּדָה אֲרֵי מִדִּין קְטָלָא בְּרֵי נַפְשָׁךְ סְלֵיקְתָּא יְנוּחַ

רס"ו

טעמו למעלה, וכולו נקוד פת"ח, ואלו כיה לשון עבר, כיה נקוד חלינ קמ"ץ וחלינ פת"ח, וטעמו למטה: **יצועי**. לשון משכב, על שם שמציעים תחתו על ידי לבדין וסדינין, והרבה דומים לו, אם זכרתיך על יצועי[1], אם תעלה על ערש יצועי[2]: (ה) **שמעון ולוי אחים**. בעלה אחת, על שכם ועל יוסף, ויאמרו איש על אחיו וגו' ועתה לכו ונהרגהו. מי כם, אם תאמר רחובן או יהודה, הרי לא הסכימו בהריגתו, אם תאמר בני השפחות, הרי לא היתה שנאתן שלימה, שנאמר והוא נער את בני בלהה ואת בני זלפה וגו', ישעכר וזבולון לא היו מדברים בפני אחיהם הגדולים מהם, על כרחך שמעון ולוי הם שקראם אחיהם: **כלי חמס**. לומנות זו של רציחה חמס הוא בידכם, מברכת עשו היא, זו לומנות שלו היא, ואתם חמסתם לותה בימיו: **מכרתיהם**. לשון כלי זיין. הסייף בלשון יווני מכי"ר[3]. דבר אחר מכרתיהם, בארץ מגוריהם נהגו עלמן בכלי חמס, כמו מכורותיך ומולדותיך[4], וזה תרגום של מוקלוס: (ו) **בסדם אל תבא נפשי**. זה מעשה זמרי, כשנתקבלו שבטו של שמעון להביא את המדיינית לפני משה, ואמרו לו זו מסורה לו מותרת, אם תאמר מסורה, בת יתרו מי התירה לך, אל יזכר שמי בדבר, שנאמר זמרי בן סלוא נשיא בית אב לשמעוני, ולא כתב בן יעקב[5]: **בקהלם**. כשיקהיל קרח שהוא משבטו של לוי, את כל העדה על משה ועל אהרן: **אל תחד כבודי**. אם אל יתיחד עמהם שמי, שנאמר בן קרח בן יצהר בן קהת בן לוי, ולא נאמר בן יעקב, אבל בדברי הימים[6], כשנתייחסו בני קרח על הדוכן, נאמר בן קרח בן יצהר בן קהת בן לוי בן ישראל: **אל תחד כבודי**. כבוד לשון זכר הוא, ועל כרחך אתה לריך לפרש כמדבר אל הכבוד, ואומר אתה כבודי אל תתיחד עמהם, כמו לא תחד אתם בקבורה[7]: **כי באפם הרגו איש**. אלו חמור ואנשי שכם, ואינן משובין כולם אלא כאיש אחד, וכן הוא אומר בגדעון, והכית את מדין כאיש אחד[8]. וכן במלריס סוס ורוכבו רמה בים, זהו מדרשו. ופשוטו, אנשים הרבה קורא איש, כל אחד לעלמו, בחפץ הרגו כל איש שכעסו עליו, וכן וילמד לטרוף טרף אדם אכל[9]: **וברצונם עקרו שור**. רלו לעקור את יוסף שנקרא שור, שנאמר בכור שורו הדר לו. עקרו מהשריסו"ר בלט"ף, לשון את סוסיהם תעקר[10]: (ז) **ארור אפם כי עז**. אפילו בשעת תוכחה לא קלל אלא את אפם, וזהו שאמר בלעם מה אקוב לא קבה אל: **אחלקם ביעקב**. אפרידם זה מזה, שלא יהא לוי במנין השבטים, והרי הם חלוקים. דבר אחר, אין לך ענייס וסופרים ומלמדי תינוקות אלא משמעון, כדי שיהיו נפוליס. ושבטו של לוי עשאו מחזר על הגרנות לתרומות ולמעשרות, נתן לו תפוליו דרך כבוד: (ח) **יהודה אתה יודוך אחיך**. לפי שהוכיח את הראשונים בקנטורים, התחיל יהודה לשוג לאחוריו[11] [שלא יוכיחנו על מעשה תמר], וקראו יעקב בדברי רלוי, יהודה לא אתה כמותם: **ידך בערף איביך**. בימי דוד, ואויבי אתה לי עורף[12]: **בני אביך**. על שם שהיו מנשים הרבה, לא אמר בני אמך, כדרך שאמר יאמר (ט) **גור אריה**. על דוד נתנבא בתחלה, גור, בהיות שהול מלך עליהם אתה המוליא והמביא את ישראל[13], ולבסוף אריה, כשהמליכוהו עליהם. וזהו שתרגם הוקלוס שלטון יהא בשרויא, בתחלתו: **מטרף**. ממה שחשדתיך בטרוף טורף יוסף חיה רעה אכלתהו, וזהו יהודה שנמשל לאריה: **בני עלית**. סלקת את עלמך ואמרת מה בלע וגו'. וכן בהריגת תמר שהודה ולקה ממני, לפיכך כרע רבץ וגו', בימי שלמה חיה

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.

1 תהלים סג, ז 2 שם קלב, ג 3 תנחומא ויחי, ט 4 יחזקאל טז, ג 5 ב"ר צט, ו 6 א ו, כב 7 ישעיה יד, כ 8 שופטים ו, טז 9 יחזקאל יט, ג 10 יהושע יא, י 11 ב"ר צח, ה
12 שמואל־ב כב, מא 13 שם ה, ב

privileged. (For) then, you desecrated (the Divine Presence which) rested above my bed.

[5] *"Shimon and Levi are (the) brothers (who plotted against Shechem and against Yosef too. Their murderous use of) weapons has been stolen (from Eisav).*

[6] *"(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). [7] *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)."*

[8] *(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.* [9] *(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. 439*ff.*)

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)

וּכְלָבִיא מִי יְקִימֶנּוּ׃ י לֹא־יָסוּר שֵׁבֶט מִיהוּדָה וּמְחֹקֵק מִבֵּין
רַגְלָיו עַד כִּי־יָבֹא שִׁילֹה וְלוֹ יִקְּהַת עַמִּים׃ יא אֹסְרִי לַגֶּפֶן
עירה [קכ עִירֹה] וְלַשֹּׂרֵקָה בְּנִי אֲתֹנוֹ כִּבֵּס בַּיַּיִן לְבֻשׁוֹ וּבְדַם־עֲנָבִים
סותה [קכ סוּתֹה]׃ יב חַכְלִילִי עֵינַיִם מִיָּיִן וּלְבֶן־שִׁנַּיִם מֵחָלָב׃ פ
יג זְבוּלֻן לְחוֹף יַמִּים יִשְׁכֹּן וְהוּא לְחוֹף אֳנִיֹּת וְיַרְכָתוֹ עַל־צִידֹן׃ פ
יד יִשָּׂשכָר חֲמֹר גָּרֶם רֹבֵץ בֵּין הַמִּשְׁפְּתָיִם׃ טו וַיַּרְא מְנֻחָה כִּי
טוֹב וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ כִּי נָעֳמָה וַיֵּט שִׁכְמוֹ לִסְבֹּל וַיְהִי לְמַס־עֹבֵד׃ ס
טז דָּן יָדִין עַמּוֹ כְּאַחַד שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל׃ יז יְהִי־דָן נָחָשׁ עֲלֵי־דֶרֶךְ
שְׁפִיפֹן עֲלֵי־אֹרַח הַנֹּשֵׁךְ עִקְבֵי־סוּס וַיִּפֹּל רֹכְבוֹ אָחוֹר׃
יח לִישׁוּעָתְךָ קִוִּיתִי יְהוָה׃ ס [חמישי] יט גָּד גְּדוּד יְגוּדֶנּוּ וְהוּא יָגֻד
יְשֻׁרֵי בְתִקּוֹף כְּאַרְיֵא וּכְלֵיתָא וְלֵית מַלְכוּ
דִּתְזַעְזְעִינֵיהּ׃ כ לָא יַעֲדֵי עֲבִיד שָׁלְטָן מִדְּבֵית
יְהוּדָה וְסַפְרָא מִבְּנֵי בְנוֹהִי עַד עָלְמָא
עַד דְּיֵיתֵי מְשִׁיחָא דְּדִילֵיהּ הִיא מַלְכוּתָא וְלֵיהּ
יִשְׁתַּמְּעוּן עַמְמַיָּא׃ כא יַסְחַר יִשְׂרָאֵל לְקָרְתֵּיהּ
עַמָּא יִבְנוּן הֵיכְלֵיהּ יְהוֹן צַדִּיקַיָּא סְחוֹר סְחוֹר
לֵיהּ וְעָבְדֵי אוֹרַיְתָא בְּאוּלְפַן עַמֵּיהּ יְהֵי אַרְגְּוָן
טַב לְבוּשׁוֹהִי בְּסוּתֵיהּ מְלָא מֵילָא צְבַע זְהוֹרִי
וְצִבְעוֹנִין׃ כב יְסַמְּקוּן טוּרוֹהִי בְּכַרְמוֹהִי יְטוּפוּן
נַעֲוֹוהִי בַּחֲמַר יְחִוְּרָן בְּקָעָתֵיהּ בְּעִבּוּר וּבְעֲדָרֵי
עָנָא׃ כג זְבוּלֵן עַל סְפַר יַמַּיָּא יִשְׁרֵי וְהוּא
יְכַבֵּשׁ מְחוֹזִין בְּסִפְיָנָן וְטוּב יַמָּא יֵיכוֹל
וּתְחוּמֵיהּ יְהֵי מָטֵי עַל צִידוֹן׃ כד יִשָּׂשכָר עַתִּיר
בְּנִכְסִין וְאַחֲסָנָתֵיהּ בֵּין תְּחוּמַיָּא׃ כה וַחֲזָא
חוּלָקָא אֲרֵי טַב וְיָת אַרְעָא אֲרֵי מְעַבְּדָא פֵּירִין
וְיִכְבֹּשׁ מְחוֹזֵי עַמְמַיָּא וְיִשְׁצֵי יָת דַּיָּרֵיהוֹן
וּדְאִשְׁתַּאֲרוּן בְּהוֹן יְהוֹן לֵיהּ פָּלְחִין וּמַפְקֵי
מִסִּין׃ כו מְדַבֵּית דָּן יְתְבְּחַר וְיקוּם גַּבְרָא בְּיוֹמוֹהִי יְתְפְּרֵיק עַמֵּיהּ וּבְשֻׁנּוֹהִי יְנוּחוּן כַּחֲדָא שִׁבְטַיָּא דְיִשְׂרָאֵל׃ כז יְהֵי נַבְרָא דְיִתְבְּחַר וְיקוּם מְדַבֵּית דָּן
אֵימָתֵיהּ תִּתְרְמֵי עַל עַמְמַיָּא וּמְחָתֵיהּ תִּתְקְרֵיף בְּפַלְשָׁתָאֵי בְּחֵילֵי חוּרְמָן יִשְׁרֵי עַל אַרְחָא וּכְפִתְנָא יְכַמּוֹן עַל שְׁבִילָא יְקַטֵּיל גְּבָרֵי מַשְׁרִיַת
פְּלִשְׁתָּאֵי פָּרָשִׁין עִם רַגְלָאִין יְעַקֵּר סוּפָן וּרְתֵכִין וּיְמַגֵּר רוֹכְבֵיהוֹן לַאֲחוֹרָא׃ כח לְפוּרְקָנָךְ סַבָּרִית יְיָ׃ כט מְדַבֵּית גָּד מַשְׁרִיַת מְזַיְּנִין כַּד יַעַבְרוּן יַת

תחת גפנו וגו'[1]: **(י) לא יסור שבט מיהודה.** מדוד ואילך לא היו רשעי גליות שבשבל[2], שרודים את העם בשבט, שממונים על פי המלכות: **ומחקק מבין רגליו.** תלמידים, אלו נשיאי ארץ ישראל: **עד כי יבא שילה.** מלך המשיח שהמלוכה שלו. וכן תרגומו מוקלוס. ומדרש אגדה, שילו, שי לו שנאמר יוביל שי למורא[3]: **ולו יקהת עמים.** מסיפת העמים, שכיו"ד עיקר היא ביסוד, כמו יפעתך[4], ופעמים שנופלת ממנו, וכמה אותיות משמשות בלשון זה, והם נקראים עיקר וסופל, כגון נו"ן של נוגף, ושל נוסך, ולמ"ך שבאחותי בחזיכם[5], ובשבחת חרב[6], (והוא לשון חרב ופי' חיתת חרב והוא לשון זיין) ואסוף שמן[7]. אף זה יקבת עמים, מסיפת העמים, שנאמר אליו גויס ידרוסו[8], ודומה לו עין תלעג לאב ותבוז ליקבת אם[9], לקבון קמטים שבפניה מפני זקנתה, וכגמרא דיתבי ומקבו אקבתא בשוקי דנהרדעא [דפומבדיתא], בסכת יצמות[10], ויכול היה לומר קהיית עמים: **(יא) אסרי לגפן עירה.** נתנבא על ארץ יהודה שתהא מושכת יין כמעיין, היש יהודה יאסור לגפן עיר אחד, ויטענו מגפן אחת, ומשורק אחד בן אתון אחד: **שרקה.** זמורה מרוכה, קורייי"ש בלע"ז: **כבס ביין.** כל זה לשון רבוי יין: **סותה.** לשון מין בגד הוא, ואין לו דמיון בארקא: **אסרי.** כמו אוסר דוגמתו מקימי מעפר דל[11], היושבי בשמיים[12], וכן בני אתונו בעניין זה. ואונקלוס תרגם במלך המשיח. גפן היא ישראל, עירה זו ירושלים, שורקה אלו ישראל, ואתי נטעתיך שורק[13]. בני אתונו. יצחנו היכליה, לשון שער בתיתון בספר יחזקאל[14], ועוד תרגמו בפניו אחריה. גפן אלו נזיקים, בני אתונו עבדי אורייתא בשולפן, על שם רוכבי אתונות לחורות. כבס ביין, יהא ארגוון טב לבושוהי, שלבושו דומה ליין, ונצבועין הוא לשון סותה, שהשבה לובשתן, ומסיתה בהן את הזכר ליתן עיניו בה. ואף רבותינו פירשו בגמרא, לשון הסתת שכרות, בסכת כתובות[15], ועל היין, שמא תאמר אינו מרוב, תלמוד לומר סותה: **(יב) חכלילי.** לשון חודש, כתרגומו, וכן למי חכלילות עיניים[16], שכן דרך שותי יין עיניהם מאדימין: **מחלב.** מרוב חלב, שיהא בהרטו מרעה טוב לעדרי צאן. וכן פירוש המקרא, חדוש עיניים יהא מרוב יין, ולבן שיניים יהא מרוב חלב. ולפי תרגומו עיניים לי כריים שמשם נופיס למרחוק. ועוד תרגמו בפניים מחריס, לשון מעיות וקילוח היקבים, נעוותי, יקבים שלו, ולשון אחרי הוא כמס' עבודת כוכבים[17], נעוה מרתחו. יחוורן בקעתיה תרגם שניים, לשון שני הסלעים: **(יג) זבלון לחוף ימים.** על חוף ימים תהיה ארצו. חוף, כתרגומו ספר, מרק"ח בלע"ז, והוא יהיה מצוי תדיר על חוף לחיות, במקום הגמל, שחיות מצויות שם פרקמטיא, שהיה זבלון עוסק בפרקמטיא, וממליח מזון לשבט יששכר, והם עוסקים בתורה, הוא שאמר משה שמח זבלון בצאתך ויששכר באהליך[18], זבלון יושב בפרקמטיא, ויששכר עוסק בתורה בהליכון[19]: **וירכתו על צידן.** סוף גבולו יהיה סמוך לצידון. ירכתו, סופו, כמו ולירכתי המשכן: **(יד) יששכר חמור גרם.** חמור בעל עלמות, סובל עול תורה כחמור חזק שמטעינין אותו משא כפול: **רבץ בין המשפתים.** כחמור המכלך ביום ובלילה ואין לו ליכה בבית, וכשהוא רובץ לנוח, רובץ בין התחומין בתחומי העיירות שמוליך שם פרקמטיא: **(טו) וירא מנוחה כי טוב.** ראה לחלקו ארץ מבורכת וטובה להוליך פירות: **ויט שכמו לסבל.** עול תורה: **ויהי:** לכל אחיו ישראל: **למס עבד.** לפסוק להם הוראות של תורה וסדרי עבורין, שנאמר ומצני יששכר יודעי בינה לעתים לדעת מה יעשה ישראל ראשיהם מאתים[20]. מאתים ראשי סנהדראות העמיד, וכל אחיהם על פיהם: **ויט שכמו.** בשפיל שכמו, כמו ויט שמים והטו חזיכם. ואונקלוס תרגם בפניים אחריים, ויט שכמו לסבול מלאכות, ולכתוב מחוזות, שהם יושבים על הספר, ויהיה כתוב כנגד אחיהו למס עובד: **(טז) דן ידין עמו.** יקום ונקמת עמו מפלשתים, כמו כי ידין ה' עמו: **כאחד שבטי ישראל.** כל ישראל יהיו כאחד עמו, ואת כולם ידין, ועל שמשון נגח נגוחה זו. ועוד יש לפרש כאחד שבטי ישראל, כמיוחד שבשבטים, הוא דוד שבא מיהודה: **(יז) שפיפן.** הוא נחש, ואומר אני שקראו כן על שם שהוא נופף כמו ואתה תשופנו עקב[21]: **הנושך עקבי סוס.** כך דרכו של נחש. ודמהו לנחש הנושך עקבי סוס. ויפל רכבו אחור. שלא נגע בו, ודומהו מליונו בשמשון, וילפת וגו' את שני עמודי התוך וגו'[22], ושטל הגג מתו. ואונקלוס תרגם כחיוי חורמן, שם מין נחש שאין רפואה לנשיכתו, והוא

1 מלכים־א ה, ה 2 סנהדרין ה. 3 תהלים עו, יב 4 יחזקאל כח, ז 5 איוב יג, ז 6 יחזקאל כא, כ 7 מלכים־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: 16משלי כג, כט 17 עד: 18דברים 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 כו, 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

[10] *"(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.*

[11] *"(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.* [12] *(People will be) red-eyed from wine and white-toothed from (the abundance of) milk.*

[13] *"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.*

[14] *"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).*

[15] *"(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).*

[16] *"Dan will enact vengeance for his people (against the Philistines) and the tribes of Israel will be as one (with him.* [17] *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).* [18] *(But when Shimshon will be overcome by his enemies, he will say) 'I hope for your salvation O God!'*

Fifth Reading

[19] *"(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).*

רס"י

נפעוי, וקרוי חורמן על שם שעושה הכל חרס. וכפיתגם, כמו פתן. יכמון, יתרוצ: (יח) **לישועתך קויתי ה'**. מתנבא שיעקרו פלשתים את עיניו, וסופו לומר זכרני נא וחזקני נא אך הפעם[23]: (יט) **גד גדוד יגודנו**. כולם לשון גדוד כס, וכך חברו מנחם. ואם תאמר אין גדוד בלא שני דלתיין, יש לומר גדוד שם דבר לריך שני דלתיין, שכן דרך תיבה בת שתי חותיות להכפל בסופה, ואין יסודה אלא שתי חותיות, וכן אמר כלפור לגוד[24], מגזרת ושבעתי

גדודים[25], שם נפל שדוד[26], מגזרת ישוד לכריס, אף יגוד יגודנו וגדוד מגזרה אחת הס, וכשהוא מדבר בלשון יפעל, אינו כפול, כמו יגוד, יגוד, ירוס, ישוד, ישוב, וכשהוא מתפעל או מפעיל אחריס, הוא כפול, כמו יתגודד, יתגודד, יתרומס, יתבולל, יתעודד. ובלשון מפעיל יתוס ואלמנה יעודד[27], לשובב יעקב אליו[28], משובב נתיבות[29]. אף יגודנו האמור כאן אין לשון שיפעילוהו אחריס, אלא כמו יגוד הימנו, כמו בני יגאוני[30], יגאו ממני. גד גדוד יגודנו. גדודים

Sparks of Chasidus

"Zevulun 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)

עָקֹב: ס כ מֵאָשֵׁר שְׁמָנָה לַחְמוֹ וְהוּא יִתֵּן מַעֲדַנֵּי־מֶלֶךְ: ס
כא נַפְתָּלִי אַיָּלָה שְׁלֻחָה הַנֹּתֵן אִמְרֵי־שָׁפֶר: ס כב בֵּן פֹּרָת יוֹסֵף
בֵּן פֹּרָת עֲלֵי־עָיִן בָּנוֹת צָעֲדָה עָלֵי־שׁוּר: כג וַיְמָרְרֻהוּ וָרֹבּוּ
וַיִּשְׂטְמֻהוּ בַּעֲלֵי חִצִּים: כד וַתֵּשֶׁב בְּאֵיתָן קַשְׁתּוֹ וַיָּפֻזוּ זְרֹעֵי יָדָיו
מִידֵי אֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב מִשָּׁם רֹעֶה אֶבֶן יִשְׂרָאֵל: כה מֵאֵל אָבִיךָ
וְיַעְזְרֶךָּ וְאֵת שַׁדַּי וִיבָרְכֶךָּ בִּרְכֹת שָׁמַיִם מֵעָל בִּרְכֹת תְּהוֹם
רֹבֶצֶת תָּחַת בִּרְכֹת שָׁדַיִם וָרָחַם: כו בִּרְכֹת אָבִיךָ גָּבְרוּ
עַל־בִּרְכֹת הוֹרַי עַד־תַּאֲוַת גִּבְעֹת עוֹלָם תִּהְיֶיןָ לְרֹאשׁ יוֹסֵף
וּלְקָדְקֹד נְזִיר אֶחָיו: פ [ששי] כז בִּנְיָמִין זְאֵב יִטְרָף בַּבֹּקֶר יֹאכַל עַד
וְלָעֶרֶב יְחַלֵּק שָׁלָל: כח כָּל־אֵלֶּה שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר

יַרְדְּנָא קֳדָם אֲחֵיהוֹן לִקְרָבָא וּבְנִכְסִין סַגִּיאִין
יְתוּבוּן לְאַרְעָהוֹן: כ דְּאָשֵׁר טָבָא אַרְעֵיהּ וְהוּא
מְרַבְיָא בְּתַפְנוּקֵי מַלְכִין: כא נַפְתָּלִי בְּאַרְעָא
טָבָא יִתְרְמֵי עַדְבֵיהּ וְאַחֲסָנְתֵּיהּ תְּהֵי מַעְבְּדָא
פֵּירִין יְהוֹן מוֹדִין וּמְבָרְכִין עֲלַיְהוֹן: כב בְּרִי
דְיוֹסֵף יוֹסֵף בְּרִי דְיִתְבָּרַךְ כְּנוֹפֶן דְּנָצִיב עַל
עֵינָא דְמַיָּא תְּרֵין שִׁבְטִין יִפְּקוּן מִבְּנוֹהִי יְקַבְּלוּן
חוּלָקָא וְאַחֲסָנְתָּא: כג וְאִתְמָרְרוּ יָתֵיהּ
וְנַקְמוּהִי וְאָעִיקוּ לֵיהּ גּוּבְרִין גִּבָּרִין בַּעֲלֵי
פַּלְגוּתָא: כד וְתָבַת בְּהוֹן נְבִיאוּתֵיהּ עַל דְּקַיָּם
אוֹרַיְתָא בְּסִתְרָא וְשַׁוִּי בְּתוּקְפָא רוּחֲצָנֵיהּ בְּכֵן
יִתְרְמָא דְהַב עַל דְּרָעוֹהִי וְאַחֲסִין מַלְכוּתָא
וּתְקֵיף דָּא חֲוַת לֵיהּ מִן קֳדָם אֵל תַּקִּיפָא
דְיַעֲקֹב דִּי בְמֵימְרֵיהּ זָן אֲבָהָן וּבְנִין זַרְעָא
דְיִשְׂרָאֵל: כה מֵימַר אֱלָהָא דַּאֲבוּךְ יְהֵי
בְסַעֲדָךְ וְיֵת שַׁדַּי וִיבָרְכִינָךְ בִּרְכָן הַנָּחָתָן
מִטַּלָּא דִשְׁמַיָּא מִלְעֵילָּא בִּרְכָן דְּנָגְדָן מִמַּעֲמַקֵּי
אַרְעָא מִלָּרָע בִּרְכָתָא דַּאֲבוּךְ וּדְאִמָּךְ: כו בִּרְכָתָא דַּאֲבוּךְ יְתוֹסְפוּן עַל בִּרְכָתָא דִּי לִי בְּרִיכוּ אֲבָהָתַי דַּהֲמִידוּ לְהֶן רַבְרְבָיָא דְמִן עָלְמָא יֶהֱוֹן כָּל
אִלֵּין לְרֵישָׁא דְיוֹסֵף וּלְגַבְרָא פָּרִישָׁא דַּאֲחוֹהִי: כז בִּנְיָמִין בְּאַרְעֵיהּ תִּשְׁרֵי שְׁכִינְתָא וּבְאַחֲסָנְתֵּיהּ יִתְבְּנֵי מַקְדְּשָׁא בְּצַפְרָא וּבְמַנָיָא יְהוֹן מְקָרְבִין
כַּהֲנַיָּא קָרְבָּנָיָא וּבְעַדַּן רַמְשָׁא יְהוֹן מְפַלְּגִין מוֹתַר חוּלְקְהוֹן מִשְּׁאַר קָרְשַׁיָּא: כח כָּל אִלֵּין שִׁבְטַיָּא דְיִשְׂרָאֵל תְּרֵין עֲשַׂר וְדָא דִּי מַלִּיל לְהוֹן

רס"י

יגודו כימנו, שיעברו כירדן עם אחיהם למלחמה כל חלוץ עד שיכבשו הארץ: **והוא יגד עקב**. כל גדודיו יהודו על עקבם לנחלתם שלקחו בעבר הירדן, ולא יפקד מהם איש: **עקב**. בדרכן ובמסילותם שהלכו יהודו, כמו ועקבותיך לא נודעו[1], וכן בעקבי הלמן[2], בלשון לע"ז תרגיל"ם: **(כ) מאשר שמנה לחמו**. מחלק הבא מחלקו של אשר יהא שמן, שיהיו זיתים מרובים בחלקו, והוא מושך שמן כמעיין. וכן ברכו משה וטובל בשמן רגלו, כמו שעגינו בתמחות[3], פעם אחת כורכו מגבי לודקיא לשמן וכו': **(כא) אילה שלחה**. זו בקעת גיומסר, שהיא קלה לבעל פירותיה, כאילה זו שהיא קלה לרוץ. אילה שלוחה, אילה משולחת לרוץ: **הנותן אמרי שפר**. כתרגומו. דבר אחר, על מלחמת סיסרא נתנבא, ולקחת עמך עשרת אלפים איש מבני נפתלי וגו'[4], והלכו עם זבולון, וכן נאמר עם לשון שלום, בעמק שולם ברגליו. הנותן אמרי שפר. על ידם שרו דבורה וברק שירה. ורבותינו דרשוהו על יום קבורת יעקב, כשערער עשו על המערה, במסכת סוטה[5]. ותרגומו יתרמי עדביה, יפול חבלו, והוא יודה על חלקו לאמריס נאים ושבח: **(כב) בן פרת**. בן חן, והוא לשון אמרי, אפריון נמטייה לרבי שמעון, בסוף בבא מציעא[6]: **בן פרת עלי עין**. חנו נטוי על העין הרואה אותו: **בנות צעדה עלי שור**. בנות מצריס היו צועדות על החומה להסתכל ביפיו, ובנות הרבה לעדה כל אחת ואחת במקום שתוכל לראותו משם. **(ד"ח)**. עלי שור. על רחייתו, כמו משורנו ולא קרוב[7]. ומדרשי אגדה יש רבים, וזה נוטה ליישב המקרא: **פרת**. תי"ו שבו הוא תקון הלשון, כמו על דברת בני האדם[8]: **שור**. כמו לשור. עלי שור. בשביל לשור. ותרגום של אונקלוס בנות לעדה עלי שור, תרין שבטין יפקון מבנוהי וכו', וכתב בנות משה, על שם בנות מנשה, בנות צלפחד, שנטלו חלק בשני עברי הירדן. בני דיסגי יוסף, פורת לשון פריה ורביה. ויש מדרשי אגדה בו המתישבים על הלשון, בשעה שעמו לקראת יעקב, בכולן קדמו האמהות ללכת לפני ביתם להשתחוות, וברחל כתיב גבי יוסף ורחל וישתחוו. אמר יוסף, רשע הזה עיונו רחב, שמא יתן עיונו באמי, ילא לפניה ושרבב קומתו לכשותה, והוא שברכו אביו בן פורת, הגדלת עגמך יוסף עלי עין של עגו, לפיכך זכית לגדולה: **בנות צעדה עלי שור**. להסתכל בך בלשתך על מלריס. ועוד דרשוהו לעניין שלא ישלוט בזרעו עין הרע. ולא כשברך מגשה ואפריס, ברכם כדגים שאין עין הרע שולטת בהם: **(כג) וימררהו ורבו**. וימררוהו אחיו, וימררוהו פוטיפר ואשתו לאסרו, לשון וימררו את חייהם: **ורבו**. נעשו לו אחיו מגבי ריב, ואין הלשון הזה לשון פעלו, שאם כן היה לו ליקד וָרָבוּ כמו המה מי מריבה אשר רבו וגו', ולא אם לשון רביית חלים הוא, כן היה לו להקד, ואינו אלא לשון פועלו, כמו שמו שמיס[9], שהוא לשון הושמו, וכן רמו מעט, שהוא לשון הורמו, אלא שלשון הורמו והושמו על ידי אחריס, ולשון שמו, רמו, רבו, מלויים הם, מזוממים את עלמם, נתרוממו מעלמם, נעשו אגבי ריב. וכן דומו יושבי אי, כמו נדמו. וכן תרגם אונקלוס ונקמוהי: **בעלי חצים**. שלשונם כחן, ותרגומו מרי פלגותא, לשון ותכי המאלה, אותן שהיו רואים לחלוק עמו נאלה: **(כד) ותשב באיתן קשתו**. נתיישבה בחוזק: קשתו. חזקו: **ויפזו זרעי ידיו**. זו היא נתינת טבעת על ידו, לשון זהב מופז. זאת היתה לו מידי הקב"ה שהוא אביר יעקב, ומשם עלה להיות רועה אבן ישראל, עקרן של ישראל, לשון אבן הראשה, לשון מלכות. ואונקלוס אף הוא כך תרגמו. ותשב בהון נביותיה, החלומות אשר חלם להם. על דקיים אורייתא בסתרת, תוספת הוא ולא מלשון עברי שבמקרא. ושוי בתוקפא רוחצניה, תרגום של באיתן קשתו. וכך לשון התרגום על העברי, ותשב נבואתו, בשביל שאיתנו של הקב"ה היתה לו לקשת ולמבטח, בכן יתרמא דהב על דרעותי, לכך ויפזו זרועי ידיו, לשון פז: **אבן ישראל**. לשון ווטריקון, אף ובן אבהן ובניין, יעקב ובניו: **(כה) מאל אביך**. היתה לך זאת, והוא יעזרך: **ואת שדי**. ועם הקב"ה היה לבך בשלא שמעת לדברי אמותיך, והוא יברכך: **ברכת שדים ורחם**. ברכתה דאבא ודאמא. כלומר יתברכו המולידים והיולדות, שיהיו הזכרים מזריעין טיפה כראוייה להריון, והנקבות לא יאבדו את רחם שלהן להפיל עובריהן: **שדים**. יהא ייהא מתרגמינן מיתמדאי יאתדי, אף שדיים כאן על שם שהזרע יורה כאן:

1 תהלים עז, כ 2 שיר השירים א, ח 3 פה: 4 שופטים ד, ו 5 יג. 6 קיט. 7 במדבר כד, יז 8 קהלת ג, יח 9 ירמיה ב, יב 10 לעיל כח, יד 11 שם יג, יד-טו 12 שם כו, ג
13 ישעיה נח, 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

[20] *"From Asher('s land) will come rich food, and he will provide royal delicacies.*

[21] *"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.*

[22] *"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. [23] His brothers) made him bitter, quarreled with him and hated him. (They were) men (with tongues) like arrows. [24] 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'akou, and from there (he rose) to royalty (and was) the provider of Israel.*

[25] *"(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).*

[26] *"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

[27] *"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)."*

רס"י

(כו) **ברכת אביך גברו וגו'**. הברכות שברכני הקב"ה גברו והלכו על הברכות שבירך את הורי: **עד תאות גבעת עולם**. לפי שהברכות שלי גברו עד סוף גבולי גבעות עולם, שנתן לי ברכה פרוצה בלי מצרים, מגעת עד די קנות העולם, שנאמר ופרצת ימה וקדמה וגו'[10], מה שלא אמר לאברהם אבינו וליצחק. לאברהם אמר לו שם נא עיניך וראה וגו' כי את כל הארץ אשר אתה רואה לך אתננה[11], ולא הרחיבו אלא ארץ ישראל בלבד. ליצחק אמר לו כי לך ולזרעך אתן את כל הארצות האל והקימותי את השבועה וגו'[12], זכו שאמר יעשיר והאכלתיך נחלת יעקב אביך[13], ולא אמר נחלת אברהם: **תאות**. תאמול"ין, כך חברו מנחם בן סרוק: **הורי**. לשון הריון, שהורוני במעי אמי, כמו הורה גבר[14]: **עד תאות**. עד קנות, כמו והתאוית לכם לגבול קדמה[15], תתאו לבא חמת[16]: **תהיין**. כולם לרחם יוסף: **נזיר אחיו**. פריש"א דאחורי, שנבדל מאחיו, כמו ויזרו מקדשי בני ישראל. נזורו אחור. ורבותינו דרשו ותשב באיתן קשתו, על כביש יצרו בחשת אחוריו, וקורטו קשת על שם שהזרע יורה כחץ. ויפזו זרועי ידיו. כמו ויפוצו, שילח הזרע מבין אצבעות ידיו. **מידי אביר יעקב**. שנראתה לו דמות דיוקנו של אביו וכו', כדאיתא בסוטה[17]. ואונקלוס תרגם תחות עולם, לשון תחום וחמדה, וגבעות עולם לשון מלוקי ארץ, (ושם הברכות) שחמדתן אמו וחזקיקתו לקבלם: (כז) **בנימין זאב יטרף**. זאב הוא אשר יטרף. נצח על שיהיו עתידין להיות חטפנין, וחטפתם לכם חיש אשחו[18], בפלגש בגבעה. ונצח על שאול שיהיה נולד בחויבו סביב, שנאמר ושאול לכד המלוכה וגו' וילחם במואב ובאדום וגו' ובכל אשר יפנה ירשיע[19]: **בבקר יאכל עד**. לשון זיזה ושלל, כמתורגם עדאכה. ועוד יש לו דומה בלשון עברית, חז חולק עד שלל[20]. ועל שאול הוא אומר, שעמד בתחלת בוקרן (ס"ת פריחתן) וזריחתן של ישראל: **ולערב יחלק שלל**. לפ משתשקע שמשן של ישראל, על ידי נבוכדנצר שיגלם לבבל: יחלק שלל. מרדכי ואסתר שכסו מבניימין, יחלקו את שלל המן, שנאמר היה בית המן נתתי לאסתר. ואונקלוס תרגם על שלל הכהנים בקדשי המקדש:

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)

וְזֹאת אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר לָהֶם אֲבִיהֶם וַיְבָרֶךְ אוֹתָם אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר
כְּבִרְכָתוֹ בֵּרַךְ אֹתָם: כט וַיְצַו אוֹתָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם אֲנִי נֶאֱסָף
אֶל־עַמִּי קִבְרוּ אֹתִי אֶל־אֲבֹתָי אֶל־הַמְּעָרָה אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׂדֵה
עֶפְרֹן הַחִתִּי: ל בַּמְּעָרָה אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׂדֵה הַמַּכְפֵּלָה אֲשֶׁר־עַל־פְּנֵי
מַמְרֵא בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן אֲשֶׁר קָנָה אַבְרָהָם אֶת־הַשָּׂדֶה מֵאֵת
עֶפְרֹן הַחִתִּי לַאֲחֻזַּת־קָבֶר: לא שָׁמָּה קָבְרוּ אֶת־אַבְרָהָם וְאֶת
שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ שָׁמָּה קָבְרוּ אֶת־יִצְחָק וְאֶת רִבְקָה אִשְׁתּוֹ וְשָׁמָּה
קָבַרְתִּי אֶת־לֵאָה: לב מִקְנֵה הַשָּׂדֶה וְהַמְּעָרָה אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ מֵאֵת
בְּנֵי־חֵת: לג וַיְכַל יַעֲקֹב לְצַוֹּת אֶת־בָּנָיו וַיֶּאֱסֹף רַגְלָיו
אֶל־הַמִּטָּה וַיִּגְוַע וַיֵּאָסֶף אֶל־עַמָּיו: נ א וַיִּפֹּל יוֹסֵף עַל־פְּנֵי

אֲבִיהוֹן וּבְרִיךְ יַתְהוֹן גְּבַר דִּי כִבְרְכָתֵיהּ
בָּרִיךְ יַתְהוֹן: כט וּפַקֵּיד יַתְהוֹן וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן
אֲנָא מִתְכְּנֵישׁ לְעַמִּי קִבְרוּ יָתִי לְוַת אֲבָהָתַי
בְּמְעַרְתָּא דִּי בַחֲקַל עֶפְרוֹן חִתָּאָה: ל בִּמְעַרְתָּא
דִּי בַחֲקַל כֶּפֶלְתָּא דִּי עַל אַפֵּי מַמְרֵא
בְּאַרְעָא דִּכְנָעַן דִּי זְבַן אַבְרָהָם יָת חַקְלָא
מִן עֶפְרוֹן חִתָּאָה לְאַחֲסָנַת קְבוּרָא: לא תַּמָּן
קְבָרוּ יָת אַבְרָהָם וְיָת שָׂרָה אִתְּתֵיהּ תַּמָּן
קְבָרוּ יָת יִצְחָק וְיָת רִבְקָה אִתְּתֵיהּ וְתַמָּן
קְבָרִית יָת לֵאָה: לב זְבִינֵי חַקְלָא וּמְעַרְתָּא דִּי
בֵיהּ מִן בְּנֵי חִתָּאָה: לג וְשֵׁיצִי יַעֲקֹב לְפַקָּדָא
יָת בְּנוֹהִי וּכְנַשׁ רַגְלוֹהִי לְעַרְסָא וְאִתְנְגִיד
וְאִתְכְּנֵישׁ לְעַמֵּיהּ: א וּנְפַל יוֹסֵף עַל אַפֵּי

לס"ו

(כח) וזאת אשר דבר להם אביהם ויברך אותם. והלא יש מכאן שלא ברכם אלא קנטרן, אלא כך פירושו, וזאת אשר דבר להם אביהם מה שנאמר בענין. יכול שלא ברך לרחובן שמעון ולוי, תלמוד לומר ויברך אותם, כולם במשמע: **איש אשר כברכתו.** ברכה הטעונה לבא על כל אחד ואחד: **ברך אתם.** היה לו לומר אלא איש אשר כברכתו ברך אותו, מה תלמוד לומר ברך אותם, לפי שנתן ליהודה גבורת מרי, ולבנימין חטיפתו של זאב, ולנפתלי קלותו של

חילהּ, יכול שלא כללן כולם בכל הברכות, תלמוד לומר ברך אותם: **(כט) נאסף אל עמי.** על שם שמכניסין הנפשות אל מקום גניזתן, שיש מאיפה בלשון עברי שהיא לשון הכנסה, כגון ואין איש מאסף אותם הביתה[1], ואספתו אל תוך ביתך[2], באספכם את תבואת הארץ[3], הכנסתם לבית מפני הגשמים. באספכם את מעשיכם. וכל מאיפה האמורה במיתה אף היא לשון הכנסה: **אל אבתי.** עם אבותי: **(לג) ויאסף רגליו.** הכניס רגליו: **ויגוע ויאסף.** ומיתה לא נאמרה בו,

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

1 שופטים יט, טו 2 דברים כב, ב 3 ויקרא כג, לט

28 *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 *He 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, 30 in the cave that's in the field of Machpeilah, facing Mamre in the land of Cana'an—the field which Avraham bought from Efron the Chitite as a burial plot. 31 They buried Avraham and his wife Sarah there, they buried Yitzchak and his wife Rivkah there, and I buried Leah there. 32 The purchase of the field, and its cave, from the sons of Cheis (still stands)."*

33 *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*.

But, this begs the question: Surely Avraham and Yitzchak were also very great individuals. Why does the Torah state that they "died"?

The Last Word

After 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. 290*ff.*)

Sparks of Chasidus

God 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. 223*ff.*)

אָבִיו וַיֵּבְךְּ עָלָיו וַיִּשַּׁק־לוֹ: ב וַיְצַו יוֹסֵף אֶת־עֲבָדָיו אֶת־
הָרֹפְאִים לַחֲנֹט אֶת־אָבִיו וַיַּחַנְטוּ הָרֹפְאִים אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל:
ג וַיִּמְלְאוּ־לוֹ אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם כִּי כֵן יִמְלְאוּ יְמֵי הַחֲנָטִים וַיִּבְכּוּ
אֹתוֹ מִצְרַיִם שִׁבְעִים יוֹם: ד וַיַּעַבְרוּ יְמֵי בְכִיתוֹ וַיְדַבֵּר יוֹסֵף
אֶל־בֵּית פַּרְע�ֹה לֵאמֹר אִם־נָא מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֵיכֶם דַּבְּרוּ־נָא
בְּאָזְנֵי פַרְעֹה לֵאמֹר: ה אָבִי הִשְׁבִּיעַנִי לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי מֵת
בְּקִבְרִי אֲשֶׁר כָּרִיתִי לִי בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן שָׁמָּה תִקְבְּרֵנִי וְעַתָּה
אֶעֱלֶה־נָּא וְאֶקְבְּרָה אֶת־אָבִי וְאָשׁוּבָה: ו וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה עֲלֵה
וּקְבֹר אֶת־אָבִיךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר הִשְׁבִּיעֶךָ: ז וַיַּעַל יוֹסֵף לִקְבֹּר אֶת־אָבִיו
וַיַּעֲלוּ אִתּוֹ כָּל־עַבְדֵי פַרְעֹה זִקְנֵי בֵיתוֹ וְכֹל זִקְנֵי אֶרֶץ־מִצְרָיִם:
ח וְכֹל בֵּית יוֹסֵף וְאֶחָיו וּבֵית אָבִיו רַק טַפָּם וְצֹאנָם וּבְקָרָם
עָזְבוּ בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן: ט וַיַּעַל עִמּוֹ גַּם־רֶכֶב גַּם־פָּרָשִׁים וַיְהִי
הַמַּחֲנֶה כָּבֵד מְאֹד: י וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד־גֹּרֶן הָאָטָד אֲשֶׁר בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן
וַיִּסְפְּדוּ־שָׁם מִסְפֵּד גָּדוֹל וְכָבֵד מְאֹד וַיַּעַשׂ לְאָבִיו אֵבֶל שִׁבְעַת
יָמִים: יא וַיַּרְא יוֹשֵׁב הָאָרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִי אֶת־הָאֵבֶל בְּגֹרֶן הָאָטָד
וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵבֶל־כָּבֵד זֶה לְמִצְרָיִם עַל־כֵּן קָרָא שְׁמָהּ אָבֵל
מִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן: יב וַיַּעֲשׂוּ בָנָיו לוֹ כֵּן כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּם:
יג וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֹתוֹ בָּנָיו אַרְצָה כְּנַעַן וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֹתוֹ בִּמְעָרַת שְׂדֵה

אֲבוּהִי וּבְכָא עֲלוֹהִי וְנַשֵּׁיק לֵיהּ: ב וּפַקֵּיד יוֹסֵף
יַת עַבְדּוֹהִי יַת אַסָוָתָא לְמֶחֱנַט יַת אֲבוּהִי
וַחֲנִיטוּ אַסָוָתָא יַת יִשְׂרָאֵל: ג וּשְׁלִימוּ לֵיהּ
אַרְבְּעִין יוֹמִין אֲרֵי כֵּן שְׁלִימוּ יוֹמֵי חֲנִיטָיָא
וּבְכוֹ יָתֵיהּ מִצְרָאֵי שַׁבְעִין יוֹמִין: ד וַעֲבָרוּ יוֹמֵי
בְּכִיתֵיהּ וּמַלִּיל יוֹסֵף עִם בֵּית פַּרְעֹה לְמֵימָר
אִם כְּעַן אַשְׁכַּחִית רַחֲמִין בְּעֵינֵיכוֹן מַלִּילוּ כְעַן
קֳדָם פַּרְעֹה לְמֵימָר: ה אַבָּא קַיֵּם עָלַי לְמֵימַר
הָא אֲנָא מָאית בְּקִבְרִי דְּאַתְקֵינִית לִי
בְּאַרְעָא דִכְנַעַן תַּמָּן תִּקְבְּרִינַנִי וּכְעַן אֶסַק כְּעַן
וְאֶקְבַּר יַת אַבָּא וְאֵיתוּב: ו וַאֲמַר פַּרְעֹה סַק
וּקְבוֹר יַת אֲבוּהִי כְּמָא דְקַיֵּים עָלָךְ: ז וּסְלִיק
יוֹסֵף לְמִקְבַּר יַת אֲבוּהִי וּסְלִיקוּ עִמֵּיהּ כָּל
עַבְדֵי פַרְעֹה סָבֵי בֵיתֵיהּ וְכָל סָבֵי אַרְעָא
דְמִצְרָיִם: ח וְכָל בֵּית יוֹסֵף וַאֲחוֹהִי וּבֵית
אֲבוּהִי לְחוֹד טַפְלְהוֹן וְעָנְהוֹן וְתוֹרֵיהוֹן שְׁבָקוּ
בְּאַרְעָא דְגֹשֶׁן: ט וּסְלִיקוּ עִמֵּיהּ אַף רְתִכִין אַף
פָּרָשִׁין וַהֲוָה מַשְׁרִיתָא סַגִּיאָה לַחֲדָא: י וַאֲתוֹ
עַד בֵּית אִידְרֵי דְאָטָד דִּי בְּעִבְרָא דְיַרְדְּנָא
וּסְפָדוּ תַּמָּן מִסְפֵּד רַב וְתַקִּיף לַחֲדָא וַעֲבַד
לַאֲבוּהִי אֶבְלָא שַׁבְעָא יוֹמִין: יא וַחֲזָא יָתִיב
אַרְעָא כְּנַעֲנָאָה יַת אֶבְלָא בְּבֵית אִידְרֵי דְאָטָד
וַאֲמָרוּ אֶבֶל תַּקִּיף דֵּין לְמִצְרָאֵי עַל כֵּן קְרָא
שְׁמָהּ אָבֵל מִצְרַיִם דִּי בְּעִבְרָא דְיַרְדְּנָא:
יב וַעֲבָדוּ בְנוֹהִי לֵיהּ כֵּן כְּמָא דִי פַקֵּידִינוּן:
יג וּנְטָלוּ יָתֵיהּ בְּנוֹהִי לְאַרְעָא דְכְנַעַן וּקְבָרוּ

רס"י

ואמרו רז"ל יעקב אבינו לא מת[1]: (ב) **לחנט את אביו.** ענין מרקחת בשמים הוא: (ג) **וימלאו לו.** השלימו לו ימי חניטתו עד שמלאו לו ארבעים יום: **ויבכו אותו וגו'.** ארבעים לחניטה ושלשים לבכיה, לפי שצפה להם ברכה לרגלו, שכלה הרעב וכיו מי גילוס מתברכין: (ה) **אשר כריתי לי.** כפשוטו, כמו כי יכרה איש[2]. ומדרשו[3], עוד מתייצב על הלשון כמו חסר קניתי, אמר רבי עקיבא[4] כשהלכתי לכרכי היס היו קורין למכירה כירה. ועוד מדרשו לשון כרי, דגור, שנטל יעקב כל כסף וזהב שהביא מבית לבן, ועשה חותו כרי, ואמר לעשו, טול זה בשביל חלקך במערה: (ו) **כאשר השביעך.** והא לא בשביל השבועה לא הייתי מניחך, אבל ירא לומר עבור על השבועה, שלא יאמר אם כן אעבור על השבועה שנשבעתי לך, שלא תגלה על לשון הקודש שהיו מכיר עודף על שבעים לשון, ואתה חיוך מכיר בו, כדאיתא במסכת סוטה[5]: (י) **גרן האטד.** מוקף חדדין היה. ורבותינו דרשו[6] על שם המאורע, שבאו כל מלכי כנען ונפלו במלחמה, וכיון שראו כתרו של יוסף תלוי בארונו של יעקב, עמדו כולן ותלו בו כתריהם, והקיפוהו כתריס כגורן המוקף סייג של קוצים: (יב) **כאשר צום.** מהו אשר צום. מהו **וישאו אתו בניו.** ולא בני בניו, שכך הוא, אל ישא מטתי לא חיים מלרי ולא חחד מבניכם שכם מבנות כנען, אלא אתם, וקבע להם מקום, ג' למזרח, וכן לאחרנו רוחות, וכסדרן למסע מחנה של דגליס נקבעו כאן. לוי לא ישא, שהוא עתיד

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)

1 תענית ה: 2 שמות כא, לג 3 סוטה יג. 4 ר"ה כו. 5 לו: 6 סוטה יג.

Ya'akov's Burial

50 Yosef fell on his father's face, wept over him and kissed him.

2 Yosef commanded his staff of physicians to embalm his father, and the physicians embalmed Yisra'el (with spices). 3 After forty days—which is how long embalming takes—the Egyptians mourned him for (a further thirty days, totaling) seventy days.

4 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, 5 (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."

6 "Go and bury your father," Pharaoh said, "as he had you swear."

7 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, 8 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. 9 Chariots and horsemen also went along, so the entourage was very large.

10 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. 11 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").

12 (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). 13 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,

הַמַּכְפֵּלָה אֲשֶׁר קָנָה אַבְרָהָם אֶת־הַשָּׂדֶה לַאֲחֻזַּת־קֶבֶר מֵאֵת עֶפְרֹן הַחִתִּי עַל־פְּנֵי מַמְרֵא: יד וַיָּשָׁב יוֹסֵף מִצְרַיְמָה הוּא וְאֶחָיו וְכָל־הָעֹלִים אִתּוֹ לִקְבֹּר אֶת־אָבִיו אַחֲרֵי קָבְרוֹ אֶת־אָבִיו: טו וַיִּרְאוּ אֲחֵי־יוֹסֵף כִּי־מֵת אֲבִיהֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוּ יִשְׂטְמֵנוּ יוֹסֵף וְהָשֵׁב יָשִׁיב לָנוּ אֶת כָּל־הָרָעָה אֲשֶׁר גָּמַלְנוּ אֹתוֹ: טז וַיְצַוּוּ אֶל־יוֹסֵף לֵאמֹר אָבִיךָ צִוָּה לִפְנֵי מוֹתוֹ לֵאמֹר: יז כֹּה־תֹאמְרוּ לְיוֹסֵף אָנָּא שָׂא ׀ נָא פֶּשַׁע אַחֶיךָ וְחַטָּאתָם כִּי־רָעָה גְמָלוּךָ וְעַתָּה שָׂא נָא לְפֶשַׁע עַבְדֵי אֱלֹהֵי אָבִיךָ וַיֵּבְךְּ יוֹסֵף בְּדַבְּרָם אֵלָיו: יח וַיֵּלְכוּ גַּם־אֶחָיו וַיִּפְּלוּ לְפָנָיו וַיֹּאמְרוּ הִנֶּנּוּ לְךָ לַעֲבָדִים: יט וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם יוֹסֵף אַל־תִּירָאוּ כִּי הֲתַחַת אֱלֹהִים אָנִי:

יָתֵיהּ בִּמְעָרַת חֲקַל כָּפֶלְתָּא דִּי זְבַן אַבְרָהָם יַת חַקְלָא לְאַחֲסָנַת קְבוּרָא מִן עֶפְרוֹן חִתָּאָה עַל אַפֵּי מַמְרֵא: יד וְתָב יוֹסֵף לְמִצְרַיִם הוּא וַאֲחוֹהִי וְכָל דִּסְלִיקוּ עִמֵּיהּ לְמִקְבַּר יַת אֲבוּהִי בָּתַר דִּי קְבַר יַת אֲבוּהִי: טו וַחֲזוֹ אֲחֵי יוֹסֵף אֲרֵי מִית אֲבוּהוֹן וַאֲמָרוּ הֵלְמָא יְסַר לָנָא דְּכְבוּ יוֹסֵף וַאֲתָבָא יָתִיב לָנָא יַת כָּל בִּישְׁתָּא דִּי גְמַלְנָא יָתֵיהּ: טז וּפַקִּידוּ לְוָת יוֹסֵף לְמֵימָר אֲבוּךְ פַּקֵּיד קֳדָם מוֹתֵיהּ לְמֵימָר: יז כְּדֵין תֵּימְרוּן לְיוֹסֵף בְּבָעוּ שְׁבוֹק כְּעַן לְחוֹבֵי אַחָיךְ וְלַחֲטָאֵיהוֹן אֲרֵי בִישְׁתָּא גְמָלוּךְ וּכְעַן שְׁבוֹק כְּעַן לְחוֹבָא עַבְדֵי אֱלָהָא דַּאֲבוּךְ וּבְכָא יוֹסֵף בְּמַלָּלוּתְהוֹן עִמֵּהּ: יח וַאֲזָלוּ אַף אֲחוֹהִי וּנְפָלוּ קֳדָמוֹהִי וַאֲמָרוּ הָא אֲנַחְנָא לָךְ לְעַבְדִין: יט וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן יוֹסֵף לָא תְדְחֲלוּן אֲרֵי דַּחֲלָא יְיָ

לע"י

לשחת את האדון. ויוסף לא ישת, שהוא מלך. מגשה ומפריס יהיו תחתיכם, וזכו חיים על דגלו בחותת, בחות שמסר לכם תביכם ליסף מטתו: (יד) **הוא ואחיו וכל העולים אתו.** בחזרתן כאן הקדיש אחיו למלריס העולים אתו, ובהליכתן הקדיש מלריס לאחיו, שנאמר ויעלו אתו כל עבדי פרעה וגו' ואחר כך כל בית יוסף ואחיו, אלא לפי שרואו כבוד שעשו מלכי כנען, שתלו כתריכם בחרוטו של יעקב, ונהגו בכם כבוד: (טו) **וירא אחי יוסף כי מת אביהם.** מהו וירלו, הכירו בחיתתו אלל יוסף, שהיו רגילים לסעוד על שולחנו של יוסף, והיה מקרבן בשביל כבוד אביו, ומשמת יעקב לא קרבן: **לו ישטמנו.** שמא ישטמנו. לו מתחלק לעניים הרבה, יש לו משמש בלשון בקשה ולשון הלואי, כגון לו יהיה כדברך, לו שמעני, ולו הושלנו, לו מתנו. ויש לו משמש בלשון חס ושלי, כגון לו חכמו, לו הקשבת למלותי, ולו אלכי שוקל על כפי. ויש לו משמש בלשון שמח, לו ישטמנו, ואין לו עוד דומה במקרא, והוא לשון חולי, כמו חולי לא תלך בהשבה אחרי, לשון שמח הוא. ויש חולי לשון בקשה, כגון חולי ירחה כי בעניי, חולי יציב כי חולתי, כרי הוא כמו לו יהי כדברך. ויש חולי לשון חס, חולי יש ממשים לדיקים: (טז) **ויצוו אל יוסף.** כמו וילוס אל בני ישראל, לוה למשה ולאהרן להיות שלוחים אל בני ישראל, אף זה, וילוו אל שלוחם, להיות שליח אל יוסף לומר לו כן. ואת מי לוו, את בני בלהה, שהיו רגילין אללו, שנאמר והוא נער את בני בלהה: **אביך צוה.** שימו בדבר מפני השלום, כי לא לוה יעקב כן, שלא נחשד יוסף בעיניו[1]: **(יז) שא נא לפשע עבדי אלהי אביך.** אם תביך את שלוחיו קייס, ואם עבדיו[2]: **(יח) וילכו גם אחיו.** מוסף על השליחות: **(יט) כי התחת אלהים אני.** שמא במקומו אני, בתמיה, אם כייתי רוצה להרע

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?

1 יבמות סה: 2 תנ"ב שמות, ב.

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.

[14] *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 *Yosef'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."* [16] *So they (fabricated a plan and) instructed (messengers to go) to Yosef and say, "Your father instructed us before his death, saying,* [17] *'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.

[18] *(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!"*

[19] *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. 235*ff*)

The Last Word

Yosef'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)

כ וְאַתֶּם חֲשַׁבְתֶּם עָלַי רָעָה אֱלֹהִים חָשְׁבָה לְטֹבָה לְמַעַן עֲשֹׂה
כַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה לְהַחֲיֹת עַם־רָב: [שביעי] כא וְעַתָּה אַל־תִּירָאוּ אָנֹכִי
אֲכַלְכֵּל אֶתְכֶם וְאֶת־טַפְּכֶם וַיְנַחֵם אוֹתָם וַיְדַבֵּר עַל־לִבָּם:
כב וַיֵּשֶׁב יוֹסֵף בְּמִצְרַיִם הוּא וּבֵית אָבִיו וַיְחִי יוֹסֵף מֵאָה וָעֶשֶׂר
שָׁנִים: [מפטיר] כג וַיַּרְא יוֹסֵף לְאֶפְרַיִם בְּנֵי שִׁלֵּשִׁים* גַּם בְּנֵי מָכִיר
בֶּן־מְנַשֶּׁה יֻלְּדוּ עַל־בִּרְכֵּי יוֹסֵף: כד וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל־אֶחָיו אָנֹכִי
מֵת וֵאלֹהִים פָּקֹד יִפְקֹד אֶתְכֶם וְהֶעֱלָה אֶתְכֶם מִן־הָאָרֶץ
הַזֹּאת אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וְלְיַעֲקֹב:
כה וַיַּשְׁבַּע יוֹסֵף אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר פָּקֹד יִפְקֹד אֱלֹהִים
אֶתְכֶם וְהַעֲלִתֶם אֶת־עַצְמֹתַי מִזֶּה: כו וַיָּמָת יוֹסֵף בֶּן־מֵאָה
וָעֶשֶׂר שָׁנִים וַיַּחַנְטוּ אֹתוֹ וַיִּישֶׂם בָּאָרוֹן בְּמִצְרָיִם:

אֲנָא: כ וְאַתּוּן חֲשַׁבְתּוּן עֲלַי בִּישָׁא מִן קֳדָם יְיָ
אִתְחֲשִׁיבַת לְטָבָא בְּדִיל לְמֶעְבַּד כְּיוֹמָא הָדֵין
לְקַיָּמָא עַם סַגִּי: כא וּכְעַן לָא תִדְחֲלוּן אֲנָא
אֵיזוֹן יַתְכוֹן וְיָת טַפְלְכוֹן וְנַחֵם יַתְהוֹן וּמַלִּיל
תַּנְחוּמִין עַל לִבְּהוֹן: כב וִיתֵיב יוֹסֵף בְּמִצְרַיִם
הוּא וּבֵית אֲבוּהִי וְחַיָּא יוֹסֵף מְאָה וְעַשַׂר שְׁנִין:
כג וַחֲזָא יוֹסֵף לְאֶפְרַיִם בְּנִין תְּלִיתָאִין אַף בְּנֵי
מָכִיר בַּר מְנַשֶּׁה אִתְיְלִידוּ וְרַבִּי יוֹסֵף:
כד וַאֲמַר יוֹסֵף לַאֲחוֹהִי אֲנָא מָאֵית וְיָ מְדַכַּר
דְּכִיר יַתְכוֹן וְיַסֵּק יַתְכוֹן מִן אַרְעָא הָדָא
לְאַרְעָא דִּי קַיֵּים לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב:
כה וְאוֹמֵי יוֹסֵף יַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמֵימָר מְדַכַּר
דְּכִיר יְיָ יַתְכוֹן וְתַסְּקוּן יַת גַּרְמַי מִכָּא: כו וּמִית
יוֹסֵף בַּר מְאָה וַעֲשַׂר שְׁנִין וַחֲנָטוּ יָתֵיהּ
וְשָׁמוּהִי בַּאֲרוֹנָא בְּמִצְרָיִם: חזק

חֲזַק חֲזַק וְנִתְחַזֵּק

פ״ה פסוקים. פ״ה אל פה סימן.

סכום פסוקי דספר בראשית אלף וחמש מאות ושלשים 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 ם׳ רבתי

רס״י

לכם כלום מני יכול, והלא אתם כולכם חשבתם עלי רעה והקב״ה חשבה לטובה, וכיוצא מני לנדי יכול להרע לכם: (כא) **ואדבר על לבם**. דבריס המתקבלים על הלב, עד שלא ירדתם לכאן, היו מרגיזים עלי שמני עבד, ועל ידיכם נודע שמני בן חורין, ומני הורג אתכם מה הבריות תומרות, כת של גמורים רשה, ונשתבח בכם, ואמר אחי כם ובנסוף הרג אותם, יש לך אח שהורג את אחיו[1]. דבר אחר[2], עשרה נרות לא יכלו לכבות נר אחד וכו׳:

(כג) **על ברכי יוסף**. כתרגומו. גדלן בין ברכיו:

חסלת פרשת ויחי.

1 תנ״ב שמות, ב 2 מגילה טז:

[20] *"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

[21] *"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

Yosef lived in Egypt—both he and his father's household—and Yosef lived a hundred and ten years. [23] *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.*

[24] *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."*

[25] *Yosef made the children of Yisra'el swear, saying, "God will surely remember you, and you should (then) take my bones out of here."*

[26] *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*

Why 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"*?

However 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. 474*ff.* See also *Chikrai Minhagim* by Rabbi Eliyahu Yochanan Gurary (*Oholei Shem, Lubavitch* 5759), p. 126*ff.*).

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.

THE CONCEPT OF DIVINE SERVICE	The Purpose of Creation	BEREISHIS	PURPOSE: The world was created for the Jewish people and the Torah.
		NOACH	PLEASURE: Noach = *Nachas Ruach*, the pleasure which Divine Service brings to God
	The Requirement of Divine Service	LECH LECHA	DESCENT OF THE SOUL: The soul "goes out" from heaven to carry out its mission.
		VAYEIRA	REVELATION: The soul needs additional help from God in order to succeed in its mission
		CHAYEI SARAH	SPIRITUAL SATURATION: Full expression of the soul's faculties, just as Sarah's life was perfect.
	Its method	TOLDOS	PRACTICAL APPLICATION: The soul's rich faculties must be expressed in good deeds (*toldos*).
DIVINE SERVICE IN ACTION		VAYEITZEI	TRANSFORMATION: One "goes out" into the world to transform its negative elements into good.
		VAYISHLACH	COMPLETE TRANSFORMATION: Even the lowest levels of the world (Eisav) are transformed.
THE REWARDS (CONSEQUENCES) OF DIVINE SERVICE		VAYEISHEV	HARMONY: After the world has been refined, Divine Service is "settled" and peaceful.
		MIKEITZ	CLIMAX: The "end," where spirituality and physicality are totally harmonized.
		VAYIGASH	UNIFICATION: The Jew binds to ("approaches") God in total oneness.
		VAYECHI	ETERNAL LIFE: All the Jewish people come back to life, with the revival of the dead.

Haftaros

הפטרות

The person who was called up for *Maftir* says the following before reading the *Haftarah*:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר
בִּנְבִיאִים טוֹבִים וְרָצָה בְדִבְרֵיהֶם הַנֶּאֱמָרִים
בֶּאֱמֶת בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה הַבּוֹחֵר בַּתּוֹרָה וּבְמֹשֶׁה
עַבְדּוֹ וּבְיִשְׂרָאֵל עַמּוֹ וּבִנְבִיאֵי הָאֱמֶת וָצֶדֶק:

After the *Haftarah* the following blessings are recited:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, צוּר כָּל
הָעוֹלָמִים, צַדִּיק בְּכָל הַדּוֹרוֹת, הָאֵל הַנֶּאֱמָן
הָאוֹמֵר וְעוֹשֶׂה, הַמְדַבֵּר וּמְקַיֵּם, שֶׁכָּל דְּבָרָיו אֱמֶת וָצֶדֶק:

נֶאֱמָן אַתָּה הוּא יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, וְנֶאֱמָנִים דְּבָרֶיךָ, וְדָבָר
אֶחָד מִדְּבָרֶיךָ אָחוֹר לֹא יָשׁוּב רֵיקָם, כִּי אֵל
מֶלֶךְ נֶאֱמָן וְרַחֲמָן אָתָּה. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, הָאֵל הַנֶּאֱמָן
בְּכָל דְּבָרָיו:

רַחֵם עַל צִיּוֹן כִּי הִיא בֵּית חַיֵּינוּ, וְלַעֲלוּבַת נֶפֶשׁ
תּוֹשִׁיעַ וּתְשַׂמַּח בִּמְהֵרָה בְיָמֵינוּ. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ,
מְשַׂמֵּחַ צִיּוֹן בְּבָנֶיהָ:

שַׂמְּחֵנוּ, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, בְּאֵלִיָּהוּ הַנָּבִיא עַבְדֶּךָ, וּבְמַלְכוּת
בֵּית דָּוִד מְשִׁיחֶךָ, בִּמְהֵרָה יָבֹא וְיָגֵל לִבֵּנוּ,
עַל כִּסְאוֹ לֹא יֵשֵׁב זָר, וְלֹא יִנְחֲלוּ עוֹד אֲחֵרִים אֶת
כְּבוֹדוֹ, כִּי בְשֵׁם קָדְשְׁךָ נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לּוֹ, שֶׁלֹּא יִכְבֶּה נֵרוֹ
לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, מָגֵן דָּוִד:

On fast days end here. On *Shabbos* (including *Shabbos Chol HaMo'ed*) continue°:

עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוֹדָה וְעַל הַנְּבִיאִים וְעַל יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה, שֶׁנָּתַתָּ לָנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ לִקְדֻשָּׁה וְלִמְנוּחָה, לְכָבוֹד וּלְתִפְאָרֶת:

עַל הַכֹּל, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים לָךְ וּמְבָרְכִים אוֹתָךְ, יִתְבָּרֵךְ שִׁמְךָ בְּפִי כָּל חַי תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, 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 הָעֲבוֹדָה וְעַל הַנְּבִיאִים (On *Shabbos*—וְעַל יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה) וְעַל יוֹם

Pesach	*Shavuos*	*Succos*	*Shemini Atzeres / Simchas Torah*
חַג הַמַּצּוֹת	חַג הַשָּׁבוּעוֹת	חַג הַסֻּכּוֹת	שְׁמִינִי עֲצֶרֶת הַחַג

הַזֶּה, וְעַל־יוֹם טוֹב מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה, שֶׁנָּתַתָּ לָנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ (On *Shabbos*—לִקְדֻשָּׁה וְלִמְנוּחָה) לְשָׂשׂוֹן וּלְשִׂמְחָה, לְכָבוֹד וּלְתִפְאָרֶת. עַל הַכֹּל, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים לָךְ וּמְבָרְכִים אוֹתָךְ, יִתְבָּרֵךְ שִׁמְךָ בְּפִי כָּל חַי תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, מְקַדֵּשׁ (On *Shabbos*—הַשַּׁבָּת וְ)יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהַזְּמַנִּים:

°On *Rosh Hashanah* continue here:

עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוֹדָה וְעַל הַנְּבִיאִים (On *Shabbos*—וְעַל יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה) וְעַל יוֹם הַזִּכָּרוֹן הַזֶּה, וְעַל־יוֹם טוֹב מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה, שֶׁנָּתַתָּ לָנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ (On *Shabbos*—לִקְדֻשָּׁה וְלִמְנוּחָה) לְכָבוֹד וּלְתִפְאָרֶת. עַל הַכֹּל, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים לָךְ, וּמְבָרְכִים אוֹתָךְ, יִתְבָּרֵךְ שִׁמְךָ בְּפִי כָּל חַי תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד, וּתְבָרְךָ מַלְכֵּנוּ אֱמֶת וְקַיָּם לָעַד. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, מֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ, מְקַדֵּשׁ (On *Shabbos*—הַשַּׁבָּת וְ)יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיוֹם הַזִּכָּרוֹן:

°On *Yom Kippur* continue here:

עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוֹדָה וְעַל הַנְּבִיאִים (On *Shabbos*—וְעַל יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה) וְעַל יוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים הַזֶּה, וְעַל־יוֹם סְלִיחַת הֶעָוֹן הַזֶּה, וְעַל יוֹם מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה, שֶׁנָּתַתָּ לָנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ (On *Shabbos*—לִקְדֻשָּׁה וְלִמְנוּחָה) לִסְלִיחָה וְלִמְחִילָה וּלְכַפָּרָה, לְכָבוֹד וּלְתִפְאָרֶת. עַל הַכֹּל יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים לָךְ וּמְבָרְכִים אוֹתָךְ, יִתְבָּרֵךְ שִׁמְךָ בְּפִי כָּל חַי תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד, וּתְבָרְךָ מַלְכֵּנוּ אֱמֶת וְקַיָּם לָעַד. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, מֶלֶךְ מוֹחֵל וְסוֹלֵחַ לַעֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ, וְלַעֲוֹנוֹת עַמּוֹ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, וּמַעֲבִיר אַשְׁמוֹתֵינוּ בְּכָל שָׁנָה וְשָׁנָה, מֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ, מְקַדֵּשׁ (On *Shabbos*—הַשַּׁבָּת וְ)יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים:

Bereishis / בראשית

(Isaiah 42:5 – 43:10)

מב ה כֹּה־אָמַר הָאֵל | יְהוָה בּוֹרֵא הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנוֹטֵיהֶם
רֹקַע הָאָרֶץ וְצֶאֱצָאֶיהָ נֹתֵן נְשָׁמָה לָעָם עָלֶיהָ וְרוּחַ
לַהֹלְכִים בָּהּ: ו אֲנִי יְהוָה קְרָאתִיךָ בְצֶדֶק וְאַחֲזֵק
בְּיָדֶךָ וְאֶצָּרְךָ וְאֶתֶּנְךָ לִבְרִית עָם לְאוֹר גּוֹיִם: ז לִפְקֹחַ
עֵינַיִם עִוְרוֹת לְהוֹצִיא מִמַּסְגֵּר אַסִּיר מִבֵּית כֶּלֶא
יֹשְׁבֵי חֹשֶׁךְ: ח אֲנִי יְהוָה הוּא שְׁמִי וּכְבוֹדִי לְאַחֵר
לֹא־אֶתֵּן וּתְהִלָּתִי לַפְּסִילִים: ט הָרִאשֹׁנוֹת הִנֵּה־בָאוּ
וַחֲדָשׁוֹת אֲנִי מַגִּיד בְּטֶרֶם תִּצְמַחְנָה אַשְׁמִיעַ אֶתְכֶם:
י שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חָדָשׁ תְּהִלָּתוֹ מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ
יוֹרְדֵי הַיָּם וּמְלֹאוֹ אִיִּים וְיֹשְׁבֵיהֶם: יא יִשְׂאוּ מִדְבָּר
וְעָרָיו חַצֵּרִים תֵּשֵׁב קֵדָר יָרֹנּוּ יֹשְׁבֵי סֶלַע מֵרֹאשׁ
הָרִים יְצִוָּחוּ: יב יָשִׂימוּ לַיהוָה כָּבוֹד וּתְהִלָּתוֹ בָּאִיִּים
יַגִּידוּ: יג יְהוָה כַּגִּבּוֹר יֵצֵא כְּאִישׁ מִלְחָמוֹת יָעִיר
קִנְאָה יָרִיעַ אַף־יַצְרִיחַ עַל־אוֹיְבָיו יִתְגַּבָּר:
יד הֶחֱשֵׁיתִי מֵעוֹלָם אַהֲרִישׁ אֶתְאַפֵּק כַּיּוֹלֵדָה אֶפְעֶה
אֶשֹּׁם וְאֶשְׁאַף יָחַד: טו אַחֲרִיב הָרִים וּגְבָעוֹת

42:5 *This 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

[6] *"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),* [7] *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

[8] *"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."*

[9] *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:*

[10] *(When the Final Redemption comes, they will) sing a new song to God, and His praise (will be heard) from 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.* [11] *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.* [12] *(With their mouths) they will ascribe glory to God, and they will tell of His praises in the islands.*

Song of the Final Redemption

[13] *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).*

[14] *(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.* [15] *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. וּכְבוֹדִי לְאַחֵר 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).

וְכָל־עֶשְׁבָּם אוֹבִישׁ וְשַׂמְתִּי נְהָרוֹת לָאִיִּים וַאֲגַמִּים
אוֹבִישׁ: טז וְהוֹלַכְתִּי עִוְרִים בְּדֶרֶךְ לֹא יָדָעוּ בִּנְתִיבוֹת
לֹא־יְדָעוּ אַדְרִיכֵם אָשִׂים מַחְשָׁךְ לִפְנֵיהֶם לָאוֹר
וּמַעֲקַשִּׁים לְמִישׁוֹר אֵלֶּה הַדְּבָרִים עֲשִׂיתִם וְלֹא
עֲזַבְתִּים: יז נָסֹגוּ אָחוֹר יֵבֹשׁוּ בֹּשֶׁת הַבֹּטְחִים בַּפֶּסֶל
הָאֹמְרִים לְמַסֵּכָה אַתֶּם אֱלֹהֵינוּ: יח הַחֵרְשִׁים שִׁמְעוּ
וְהָעִוְרִים הַבִּיטוּ לִרְאוֹת: יט מִי עִוֵּר כִּי אִם־עַבְדִּי
וְחֵרֵשׁ כְּמַלְאָכִי אֶשְׁלָח מִי עִוֵּר כִּמְשֻׁלָּם וְעִוֵּר כְּעֶבֶד
יְהוָֹה: כ רָאוֹת [ראית כ"ז] רַבּוֹת וְלֹא תִשְׁמֹר פָּקוֹחַ
אָזְנַיִם וְלֹא יִשְׁמָע: כא יְהוָֹה חָפֵץ לְמַעַן צִדְקוֹ יַגְדִּיל
תּוֹרָה וְיַאְדִּיר:

and desolate) islands, and I will dry up their bodies of water."

Jewish People are led home by God

[16] *"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)."*

[17] *"(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

[18] *"(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!* [19] *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?* [20] *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'.* [21] *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:

כב וְהוּא עַם־בָּזוּז וְשָׁסוּי הָפַח בַּחוּרִים כֻּלָּם וּבְבָתֵּי
כְלָאִים הָחְבָּאוּ הָיוּ לָבַז וְאֵין מַצִּיל מִשִּׁסָּה וְאֵין־
אֹמֵר הָשֵׁב: כג מִי בָכֶם יַאֲזִין זֹאת יַקְשֵׁב וְיִשְׁמַע
לְאָחוֹר: כד מִי־נָתַן לְמִשִּׁסָּה [למשוסה כ"ז] יַעֲקֹב
וְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְבֹזְזִים הֲלוֹא יְהוָֹה זּוּ חָטָאנוּ לוֹ
וְלֹא־אָבוּ בְדַרְכָיו הָלוֹךְ וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ בְּתוֹרָתוֹ:
כה וַיִּשְׁפֹּךְ עָלָיו חֲמָה אַפּוֹ וְעֻזּוֹ מִלְחָמָה וַתְּלַהֲטֵהוּ
מִסָּבִיב וְלֹא יָדָע וַתִּבְעַר־בּוֹ וְלֹא־יָשִׂים עַל־לֵב:

Sad state of the Jews in Exile

[22] *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)."*

[23] *Who among you will pay attention to this, listen, and hear from now on (what will establish him in the end)?* [24] *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,* [25] *so He poured out (His) anger, His wrath and the might of war upon them. It blazed around*

21. יַגְדִּיל תּוֹרָה וְיַאְדִּיר—*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).

מג א וְעַתָּה כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה בֹּרַאֲךָ יַעֲקֹב וְיֹצֶרְךָ
יִשְׂרָאֵל אַל־תִּירָא כִּי גְאַלְתִּיךָ קָרָאתִי בְשִׁמְךָ לִי־
אָתָּה: ב כִּי־תַעֲבֹר בַּמַּיִם אִתְּךָ אָנִי וּבַנְּהָרוֹת לֹא
יִשְׁטְפוּךָ כִּי־תֵלֵךְ בְּמוֹ־אֵשׁ לֹא תִכָּוֶה וְלֶהָבָה לֹא
תִבְעַר־בָּךְ: ג כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל
מוֹשִׁיעֶךָ נָתַתִּי כָפְרְךָ מִצְרַיִם כּוּשׁ וּסְבָא תַּחְתֶּיךָ:
ד מֵאֲשֶׁר יָקַרְתָּ בְעֵינַי נִכְבַּדְתָּ וַאֲנִי אֲהַבְתִּיךָ וְאֶתֵּן
אָדָם תַּחְתֶּיךָ וּלְאֻמִּים תַּחַת נַפְשֶׁךָ: ה אַל־תִּירָא
כִּי אִתְּךָ־אָנִי מִמִּזְרָח אָבִיא זַרְעֶךָ וּמִמַּעֲרָב אֲקַבְּצֶךָּ:
ו אֹמַר לַצָּפוֹן תְּנִי וּלְתֵימָן אַל־תִּכְלָאִי הָבִיאִי בָנַי
מֵרָחוֹק וּבְנוֹתַי מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ: ז כֹּל הַנִּקְרָא בִשְׁמִי
וְלִכְבוֹדִי בְּרָאתִיו יְצַרְתִּיו אַף־עֲשִׂיתִיו: ח הוֹצִיא
עַם־עִוֵּר וְעֵינַיִם יֵשׁ וְחֵרְשִׁים וְאָזְנַיִם לָמוֹ:
ט כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם נִקְבְּצוּ יַחְדָּו וְיֵאָסְפוּ לְאֻמִּים מִי בָהֶם
יַגִּיד זֹאת וְרִאשֹׁנוֹת יַשְׁמִיעֻנוּ יִתְּנוּ עֵדֵיהֶם וְיִצְדָּקוּ
וְיִשְׁמְעוּ וְיֹאמְרוּ אֱמֶת: י אַתֶּם עֵדַי נְאֻם־יְהוָה וְעַבְדִּי
אֲשֶׁר בָּחָרְתִּי לְמַעַן תֵּדְעוּ וְתַאֲמִינוּ לִי וְתָבִינוּ
כִּי־אֲנִי הוּא לְפָנַי לֹא־נוֹצַר 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).

Promise of redemption

43:1 *(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.* 2 *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,* 3 *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?* 4 *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.*

5 *Do not fear, for I am with you. I will bring your children from the east and gather you from the west.* 6 *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,* 7 *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),* 8 *free the (exiled) people—who are blind though they have eyes, and deaf though they have ears.*

God's witnesses

9 *(Even if) all the nations gathered together and all the 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.*

10 *"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. בֹּרַאֲךָ יַעֲקֹב וְיֹצֶרְךָ 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. ...מִמִּזְרָח אָבִיא זַרְעֶךָ—*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 עֵדַי—*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 (*Hisvaduyos* 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, Vayeitizei* 21a; *Likutei Torah, Balak* 70b.

NOACH / נח

(Isaiah 54:1 - 55:5)

נד א רָנִּי עֲקָרָה לֹא יָלָדָה פִּצְחִי רִנָּה וְצַהֲלִי לֹא־
חָלָה כִּי־רַבִּים בְּנֵי־שׁוֹמֵמָה מִבְּנֵי בְעוּלָה אָמַר יְהוָה:
ב הַרְחִיבִי | מְקוֹם אָהֳלֵךְ וִירִיעוֹת מִשְׁכְּנוֹתַיִךְ יַטּוּ
אַל־תַּחְשֹׂכִי הַאֲרִיכִי מֵיתָרַיִךְ וִיתֵדֹתַיִךְ חַזֵּקִי:
ג כִּי־יָמִין וּשְׂמֹאול תִּפְרֹצִי וְזַרְעֵךְ גּוֹיִם יִירָשׁ וְעָרִים
נְשַׁמּוֹת יוֹשִׁיבוּ: ד אַל־תִּירְאִי כִּי־לֹא תֵבוֹשִׁי
וְאַל־תִּכָּלְמִי כִּי לֹא תַחְפִּירִי כִּי בֹשֶׁת עֲלוּמַיִךְ
תִּשְׁכָּחִי וְחֶרְפַּת אַלְמְנוּתַיִךְ לֹא תִזְכְּרִי־עוֹד: ה כִּי
בְעֹלַיִךְ עֹשַׂיִךְ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ וְגֹאֲלֵךְ קְדוֹשׁ
יִשְׂרָאֵל אֱלֹהֵי כָל־הָאָרֶץ יִקָּרָא: ו כִּי־כְאִשָּׁה עֲזוּבָה
וַעֲצוּבַת רוּחַ קְרָאָךְ יְהוָה וְאֵשֶׁת נְעוּרִים כִּי תִמָּאֵס
אָמַר אֱלֹהָיִךְ: ז בְּרֶגַע קָטֹן עֲזַבְתִּיךְ וּבְרַחֲמִים גְּדֹלִים
אֲקַבְּצֵךְ: ח בְּשֶׁצֶף קֶצֶף הִסְתַּרְתִּי פָנַי רֶגַע מִמֵּךְ

Jerusalem in the times of Redemption

54:1 Says 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)."*

2 *"(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).* 3 *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

4 *"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).* 5 *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)?"*

6 *"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.* 7 *"(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.* 8 *(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.*

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 בְעֹלַיִךְ עֹשַׂיִךְ—*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 transforms 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).

וּבְחֶסֶד עוֹלָם רִחַמְתִּיךְ אָמַר גֹּאֲלֵךְ יְהוָה: ט כִּי־מֵי נֹחַ זֹאת לִי אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי מֵעֲבֹר מֵי־נֹחַ עוֹד עַל־הָאָרֶץ כֵּן נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי מִקְצֹף עָלַיִךְ וּמִגְּעָר־בָּךְ: י כִּי הֶהָרִים יָמוּשׁוּ וְהַגְּבָעוֹת תְּמוּטֶינָה וְחַסְדִּי מֵאִתֵּךְ לֹא־יָמוּשׁ וּבְרִית שְׁלוֹמִי לֹא תָמוּט אָמַר מְרַחֲמֵךְ יְהוָה:

[9] *"This (anger) was for Me like the 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.*

[10] *"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.*

Waters of Noach

Chabad and Sefardic communities conclude here. Ashkenazic communites continue:

יא עֲנִיָּה סוּעָרָה לֹא נֻחָמָה הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי מַרְבִּיץ בַּפּוּךְ אֲבָנַיִךְ וְיסַדְתִּיךְ בַּסַּפִּירִים: יב וְשַׂמְתִּי כַדְכֹד שִׁמְשֹׁתַיִךְ וּשְׁעָרַיִךְ לְאַבְנֵי אֶקְדָּח וְכָל־גְּבוּלֵךְ לְאַבְנֵי־חֵפֶץ: יג וְכָל־בָּנַיִךְ לִמּוּדֵי יְהוָה וְרַב שְׁלוֹם בָּנָיִךְ: יד בְּצְדָקָה תִּכּוֹנָנִי רַחֲקִי מֵעֹשֶׁק כִּי־לֹא תִירָאִי וּמִמְּחִתָּה כִּי לֹא־תִקְרַב אֵלָיִךְ: טו הֵן גּוֹר יָגוּר אֶפֶס מֵאוֹתִי מִי־גָר אִתָּךְ עָלַיִךְ יִפּוֹל: טז הִנֵּה [הן כ׳] אָנֹכִי בָּרָאתִי חָרָשׁ נֹפֵחַ בְּאֵשׁ פֶּחָם וּמוֹצִיא כְלִי לְמַעֲשֵׂהוּ וְאָנֹכִי בָּרָאתִי מַשְׁחִית לְחַבֵּל: יז כָּל־כְּלִי יוּצַר עָלַיִךְ לֹא יִצְלָח וְכָל־לָשׁוֹן תָּקוּם־אִתָּךְ לַמִּשְׁפָּט תַּרְשִׁיעִי זֹאת נַחֲלַת עַבְדֵי יְהוָה וְצִדְקָתָם מֵאִתִּי נְאֻם־יְהוָה:

נה א הוֹי כָּל־צָמֵא לְכוּ לַמַּיִם וַאֲשֶׁר אֵין־לוֹ כֶּסֶף לְכוּ שִׁבְרוּ וֶאֱכֹלוּ וּלְכוּ שִׁבְרוּ בְלוֹא־כֶסֶף וּבְלוֹא מְחִיר יַיִן וְחָלָב: ב לָמָּה תִשְׁקְלוּ־כֶסֶף בְּלוֹא־לֶחֶם וִיגִיעֲכֶם בְּלוֹא לְשָׂבְעָה שִׁמְעוּ שָׁמוֹעַ אֵלַי וְאִכְלוּ־טוֹב וְתִתְעַנַּג בַּדֶּשֶׁן נַפְשְׁכֶם: ג הַטּוּ אָזְנְכֶם וּלְכוּ אֵלַי שִׁמְעוּ וּתְחִי נַפְשְׁכֶם וְאֶכְרְתָה לָכֶם בְּרִית עוֹלָם

[54:11] *"(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.* [12] *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.*

[13] *"All your children will be (extremely wise, as if they were) disciples of God, and your children will have much peace.*

[14] *"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.* [15] *Indeed, people will fear no one but Me. Whoever attacks you will fall into your power.* [16] *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).* [17] *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.*

[55:1] *"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)!* [2] *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'!*

[3] *Incline your ears and come to Me (to hear my words)! Listen, and you will (merit to) live (again, with the revival of the*

Jerusalem filled with gems

Torah knowledge

No fear from enemies

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9. מֵי נֹחַ—*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. וְשַׂמְתִּי כַדְכֹד שִׁמְשֹׁתַיִךְ—*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).

חַסְדֵי דָוִד הַנֶּאֱמָנִים: ד הֵן עֵד לְאוּמִּים נְתַתִּיו נָגִיד
וּמְצַוֵּה לְאֻמִּים: ה הֵן גּוֹי לֹא־תֵדַע תִּקְרָא וְגוֹי
לֹא־יְדָעוּךָ אֵלֶיךָ יָרוּצוּ לְמַעַן יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְלִקְדוֹשׁ
יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי פֵאֲרֶךָ:

Eternal covenant with Mashiach

dead)! I will make an eternal covenant with you, as enduring as (My) loyalty to David. [4] *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.* [5] *(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."*

LECH LECHA / לך לך

(Isaiah 40:27 – 41:16)

מ כז לָמָּה תֹאמַר יַעֲקֹב וּתְדַבֵּר יִשְׂרָאֵל נִסְתְּרָה
דַרְכִּי מֵיְהוָה וּמֵאֱלֹהַי מִשְׁפָּטִי יַעֲבוֹר: כח הֲלוֹא יָדַעְתָּ
אִם־לֹא שָׁמַעְתָּ אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם | יְהוָה בּוֹרֵא קְצוֹת
הָאָרֶץ לֹא יִיעַף וְלֹא יִיגָע אֵין חֵקֶר לִתְבוּנָתוֹ: כט נֹתֵן
לַיָּעֵף כֹּחַ וּלְאֵין אוֹנִים עָצְמָה יַרְבֶּה: ל וְיִיעֲפוּ נְעָרִים
וְיִגָּעוּ וּבַחוּרִים כָּשׁוֹל יִכָּשֵׁלוּ: לא וְקוֵי יְהוָה יַחֲלִיפוּ
כֹחַ יַעֲלוּ אֵבֶר כַּנְּשָׁרִים יָרוּצוּ וְלֹא יִיגָעוּ יֵלְכוּ וְלֹא
יִיעָפוּ: **מא** א הַחֲרִישׁוּ אֵלַי אִיִּים וּלְאֻמִּים יַחֲלִיפוּ
כֹחַ יִגְּשׁוּ אָז יְדַבֵּרוּ יַחְדָּו לַמִּשְׁפָּט נִקְרָבָה: ב מִי
הֵעִיר מִמִּזְרָח צֶדֶק יִקְרָאֵהוּ לְרַגְלוֹ יִתֵּן לְפָנָיו גּוֹיִם
וּמְלָכִים יַרְדֶּה יִתֵּן כֶּעָפָר חַרְבּוֹ כְּקַשׁ נִדָּף קַשְׁתּוֹ:
ג יִרְדְּפֵם יַעֲבֹר שָׁלוֹם אֹרַח בְּרַגְלָיו לֹא יָבוֹא:

God will strengthen the weary

40:27 *Ya'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"?*

[28] *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).*

[29] *(The time will come when) He gives strength to the weary (people of Israel), and increases power to those without strength.* [30] *(The nations of the world who are now strong like) young men, will become tired and weary, and (their) young bachelors will repeatedly stumble.* [31] *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.*

41:1 *(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).*

[2] *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.* [3] *He pursued them, and passed through in peace,*

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).

ד מִי־פָעַל וְעָשָׂה קֹרֵא הַדֹּרוֹת מֵרֹאשׁ אֲנִי יְהוָה
רִאשׁוֹן וְאֶת־אַחֲרֹנִים אֲנִי־הוּא: ה רָאוּ אִיִּים וְיִירָאוּ
קְצוֹת הָאָרֶץ יֶחֱרָדוּ קָרְבוּ וַיֶּאֱתָיוּן: ו אִישׁ אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ
יַעְזֹרוּ וּלְאָחִיו יֹאמַר חֲזָק: ז וַיְחַזֵּק חָרָשׁ אֶת־צוֹרֵף
מַחֲלִיק פַּטִּישׁ אֶת־הוֹלֶם פָּעַם אֹמֵר לַדֶּבֶק טוֹב הוּא
וַיְחַזְּקֵהוּ בְמַסְמְרִים לֹא יִמּוֹט: ח וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל עַבְדִּי
יַעֲקֹב אֲשֶׁר בְּחַרְתִּיךָ זֶרַע אַבְרָהָם אֹהֲבִי: ט אֲשֶׁר
הֶחֱזַקְתִּיךָ מִקְצוֹת הָאָרֶץ וּמֵאֲצִילֶיהָ קְרָאתִיךָ וָאֹמַר
לְךָ עַבְדִּי־אַתָּה בְּחַרְתִּיךָ וְלֹא מְאַסְתִּיךָ: י אַל־תִּירָא
כִּי עִמְּךָ־אָנִי אַל־תִּשְׁתָּע כִּי־אֲנִי אֱלֹהֶיךָ אִמַּצְתִּיךָ
אַף־עֲזַרְתִּיךָ אַף־תְּמַכְתִּיךָ בִּימִין צִדְקִי: יא הֵן יֵבֹשׁוּ
וְיִכָּלְמוּ כָּל הַנֶּחֱרִים בָּךְ יִהְיוּ כְאַיִן וְיֹאבְדוּ אַנְשֵׁי
רִיבֶךָ: יב תְּבַקְשֵׁם וְלֹא תִמְצָאֵם אַנְשֵׁי מַצֻּתֶךָ יִהְיוּ
כְאַיִן וּכְאֶפֶס אַנְשֵׁי מִלְחַמְתֶּךָ: יג כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
מַחֲזִיק יְמִינֶךָ הָאֹמֵר לְךָ אַל־תִּירָא אֲנִי עֲזַרְתִּיךָ:
יד אַל־תִּירְאִי תּוֹלַעַת יַעֲקֹב מְתֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲנִי
עֲזַרְתִּיךְ נְאֻם־יְהוָה וְגֹאֲלֵךְ קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל: טו הִנֵּה
שַׂמְתִּיךְ לְמוֹרַג חָרוּץ חָדָשׁ בַּעַל פִּיפִיּוֹת תָּדוֹשׁ
הָרִים וְתָדֵק וּגְבָעוֹת כַּמֹּץ תָּשִׂים: טז תְּזָרֵם וְרוּחַ
תִּשָּׂאֵם וּסְעָרָה תָּפִיץ אוֹתָם וְאַתָּה תָּגִיל בַּיהוָה
בִּקְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּתְהַלָּלוּ:

(though it was) a path where his feet had never tread.

God orchestrated Avraham's victories

[4] *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).*

[5] *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).*

[6] *(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!)"* [7] *(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

[8] *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).* [9] *(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

[10] *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.*

[11] *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.* [12] *(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.* [13] *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).* [14] *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

[15] *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.* [16] *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.*

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8. אַבְרָהָם אֹהֲבִי—*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 / וירא

(Kings II 4:1–37)

ד א וְאִשָּׁה אַחַת מִנְּשֵׁי בְנֵי־הַנְּבִיאִים צָעֲקָה
אֶל־אֱלִישָׁע לֵאמֹר עַבְדְּךָ אִישִׁי מֵת וְאַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ כִּי
עַבְדְּךָ הָיָה יָרֵא אֶת־יְהוָה וְהַנֹּשֶׁה בָּא לָקַחַת
אֶת־שְׁנֵי יְלָדַי לוֹ לַעֲבָדִים: ב וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֶיהָ אֱלִישָׁע
מָה אֶעֱשֶׂה־לָּךְ הַגִּידִי לִי מַה־יֶּשׁ־לָךְ [ולכי כ'] בַּבָּיִת
וַתֹּאמֶר אֵין לְשִׁפְחָתְךָ כֹל בַּבַּיִת כִּי אִם־אָסוּךְ שָׁמֶן:
ג וַיֹּאמֶר לְכִי שַׁאֲלִי־לָךְ כֵּלִים מִן־הַחוּץ מֵאֵת כָּל־
שְׁכֵנָיִךְ [שכניכי כ'] כֵּלִים רֵקִים אַל־תַּמְעִיטִי: ד וּבָאת
וְסָגַרְתְּ הַדֶּלֶת בַּעֲדֵךְ וּבְעַד־בָּנַיִךְ וְיָצַקְתְּ עַל
כָּל־הַכֵּלִים הָאֵלֶּה וְהַמָּלֵא תַּסִּיעִי: ה וַתֵּלֶךְ מֵאִתּוֹ
וַתִּסְגֹּר הַדֶּלֶת בַּעֲדָהּ וּבְעַד בָּנֶיהָ הֵם מַגִּישִׁים אֵלֶיהָ
וְהִיא מוֹצָקֶת [מיצקת כ'] : ו וַיְהִי | כִּמְלֹאת הַכֵּלִים
וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־בְּנָהּ הַגִּישָׁה אֵלַי עוֹד כֶּלִי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֶיהָ
אֵין עוֹד כֶּלִי וַיַּעֲמֹד הַשָּׁמֶן: ז וַתָּבֹא וַתַּגֶּד לְאִישׁ
הָאֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר לְכִי מִכְרִי אֶת־הַשֶּׁמֶן וְשַׁלְּמִי אֶת־
נִשְׁיֵךְ [נשיכי כ'] וְאַתְּ וּבָנַיִךְ [ובניכי כ'] תִּחְיֵי בַּנּוֹתָר: ח וַיְהִי
הַיּוֹם וַיַּעֲבֹר אֱלִישָׁע אֶל־שׁוּנֵם וְשָׁם אִשָּׁה גְדוֹלָה
וַתַּחֲזֶק־בּוֹ לֶאֱכָל־לָחֶם וַיְהִי מִדֵּי עָבְרוֹ יָסֻר שָׁמָּה
לֶאֱכָל־לָחֶם: ט וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־אִישָׁהּ הִנֵּה־נָא יָדַעְתִּי
כִּי אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים קָדוֹשׁ הוּא עֹבֵר עָלֵינוּ תָּמִיד:

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!"

[2] 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)."

[3] 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. [4] 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

[5] 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. [6] 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).

[7] 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

[8] 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.

[9] 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

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 אַחַת מִנְּשֵׁי בְנֵי הַנְּבִיאִים צָעֲקָה 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).

נַעֲשֶׂה־נָּא עֲלִיַּת־קִיר קְטַנָּה וְנָשִׂים לוֹ שָׁם מִטָּה
וְשֻׁלְחָן וְכִסֵּא וּמְנוֹרָה וְהָיָה בְּבֹאוֹ אֵלֵינוּ יָסוּר שָׁמָּה:
יא וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם וַיָּבֹא שָׁמָּה וַיָּסַר אֶל־הָעֲלִיָּה
וַיִּשְׁכַּב־שָׁמָּה: יב וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־גֵּיחֲזִי נַעֲרוֹ קְרָא
לַשּׁוּנַמִּית הַזֹּאת וַיִּקְרָא־לָהּ וַתַּעֲמֹד לְפָנָיו: יג וַיֹּאמֶר
לוֹ אֱמָר־נָא אֵלֶיהָ הִנֵּה חָרַדְתְּ | אֵלֵינוּ
אֶת־כָּל־הַחֲרָדָה הַזֹּאת מֶה לַעֲשׂוֹת לָךְ הֲיֵשׁ
לְדַבֵּר־לָךְ אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ אוֹ אֶל־שַׂר הַצָּבָא וַתֹּאמֶר
בְּתוֹךְ עַמִּי אָנֹכִי יוֹשָׁבֶת: יד וַיֹּאמֶר וּמֶה לַעֲשׂוֹת לָהּ
וַיֹּאמֶר גֵּיחֲזִי אֲבָל בֵּן אֵין־לָהּ וְאִישָׁהּ זָקֵן: טו וַיֹּאמֶר
קְרָא־לָהּ וַיִּקְרָא־לָהּ וַתַּעֲמֹד בַּפָּתַח: טז וַיֹּאמֶר
לַמּוֹעֵד הַזֶּה כָּעֵת חַיָּה אַתְּ [אתי כ'] חֹבָקֶת בֵּן וַתֹּאמֶר
אַל־אֲדֹנִי אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים אַל־תְּכַזֵּב בְּשִׁפְחָתֶךָ:
יז וַתַּהַר הָאִשָּׁה וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן לַמּוֹעֵד הַזֶּה כָּעֵת חַיָּה
אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר אֵלֶיהָ אֱלִישָׁע: יח וַיִּגְדַּל הַיֶּלֶד וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם
וַיֵּצֵא אֶל־אָבִיו אֶל־הַקֹּצְרִים: יט וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־אָבִיו
רֹאשִׁי | רֹאשִׁי וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הַנַּעַר שָׂאֵהוּ אֶל־אִמּוֹ:
כ וַיִּשָּׂאֵהוּ וַיְבִיאֵהוּ אֶל־אִמּוֹ וַיֵּשֶׁב עַל־בִּרְכֶּיהָ
עַד־הַצָּהֳרַיִם וַיָּמֹת: כא וַתַּעַל וַתַּשְׁכִּבֵהוּ עַל־מִטַּת
אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים וַתִּסְגֹּר בַּעֲדוֹ וַתֵּצֵא: כב וַתִּקְרָא
אֶל־אִישָׁהּ וַתֹּאמֶר שִׁלְחָה נָּא לִי אֶחָד מִן־הַנְּעָרִים
וְאַחַת הָאֲתֹנוֹת וְאָרוּצָה עַד־אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים
וְאָשׁוּבָה: כג וַיֹּאמֶר מַדּוּעַ אַתְּ [אתי כ'] הֹלֶכֶת [הלכתי כ']
אֵלָיו הַיּוֹם לֹא־חֹדֶשׁ וְלֹא שַׁבָּת וַתֹּאמֶר שָׁלוֹם:

he live in the same quarters as us). [10] *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)."*

[11] *(After they built the room in the attic) the day (came) when (Elisha) arrived there. He stayed in the attic and slept there.*

[12] *He said to Geichazi, his servant, "Call this Shunamite woman (over here)." He called her and she stood before him.*

[13] *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."

[14] *(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)."

[15] *"Call her," (Elisha) said. (Geichazi) called her and she stood (modestly) at the doorway.*

[16] *(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)."

[17] *The woman became pregnant and gave birth to a boy, at the (earliest possible) time, just as Elisha said.*

Child dies suddenly

[18] *The child grew up. One day, he went out to his father (who was supervising the reaping of) the harvests,* [19] *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."

[20] *(The lad) carried him and brought him to his mother. (The child) sat on her knees until midday, and he died.* [21] *She went upstairs and laid him down on the bed of the Godly man, closed (the door) behind him and left.* [22] *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."*

[23] *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:

כד וַתַּחְבֹּשׁ הָאָתוֹן וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־נַעֲרָהּ נְהַג וָלֵךְ
אַל־תַּעֲצָר־לִי לִרְכֹּב כִּי אִם־אָמַרְתִּי לָךְ: כה וַתֵּלֶךְ

[24] *She saddled the donkey and said to her lad, "Get going! Don't go slowly because of me, unless I tell you."*

[25] *She traveled and came to the Godly man at Mount*

וַתָּבֹוא אֶל־אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים אֶל־הָהָר הַכַּרְמֶל וַיְהִי כִּרְאוֹת אִישׁ־הָאֱלֹהִים אֹתָהּ מִנֶּגֶד וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־גֵּיחֲזִי נַעֲרוֹ הִנֵּה הַשּׁוּנַמִּית הַלָּזְוֹ: כו עַתָּה רֻוץ־נָא לִקְרָאתָהּ וֱאָמַרְ־לָהּ הֲשָׁלֹום לָךְ הֲשָׁלֹום לְאִישֵׁךְ הֲשָׁלֹום לַיֶּלֶד וַתֹּאמֶר שָׁלֹום: כז וַתָּבֹא אֶל־אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים אֶל־הָהָר וַתַּחֲזֵק בִּרַגְלָיו וַיִּגַּשׁ גֵּיחֲזִי לְהָדְפָהּ וַיֹּאמֶרְ אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים הַרְפֵּה־לָהּ כִּי־נַפְשָׁהּ מָרָה־לָּהּ וַיהוָה הֶעְלִים מִמֶּנִּי וְלֹא הִגִּיד לִי: כח וַתֹּאמֶר הֲשָׁאַלְתִּי בֵן מֵאֵת אֲדֹנִי הֲלֹא אָמַרְתִּי לֹא תַשְׁלֶה אֹתִי: כט וַיֹּאמֶר לְגֵיחֲזִי חֲגֹר מָתְנֶיךָ וְקַח מִשְׁעַנְתִּי בְיָדְךָ וָלֵךְ כִּי־תִמְצָא אִישׁ לֹא תְבָרְכֶנּוּ וְכִי־יְבָרֶכְךָ אִישׁ לֹא תַעֲנֶנּוּ וְשַׂמְתָּ מִשְׁעַנְתִּי עַל־פְּנֵי הַנָּעַר: ל וַתֹּאמֶרְ אֵם הַנַּעַר חַי־יְהוָה וְחֵי־נַפְשְׁךָ אִם־אֶעֱזָבֶךָּ וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ אַחֲרֶיהָ: לא וְגֵחֲזִי עָבַר לִפְנֵיהֶם וַיָּשֶׂם אֶת־הַמִּשְׁעֶנֶת עַל־פְּנֵי הַנַּעַר וְאֵין קֹול וְאֵין קָשֶׁב וַיָּשָׁב לִקְרָאתוֹ וַיַּגֶּד־לוֹ לֵאמֹר לֹא הֵקִיץ הַנָּעַר: לב וַיָּבֹא אֱלִישָׁע הַבַּיְתָה וְהִנֵּה הַנַּעַר מֵת מֻשְׁכָּב עַל־מִטָּתוֹ: לג וַיָּבֹא וַיִּסְגֹּר הַדֶּלֶת בְּעַד שְׁנֵיהֶם וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל אֶל־יְהוָה: לד וַיַּעַל וַיִּשְׁכַּב עַל־הַיֶּלֶד וַיָּשֶׂם פִּיו עַל־פִּיו וְעֵינָיו עַל־עֵינָיו וְכַפָּיו עַל־כַּפָּיו וכפו כ׳ וַיִּגְהַר עָלָיו וַיִּחַם בְּשַׂר הַיָּלֶד: לה וַיָּשָׁב וַיֵּלֶךְ בַּבַּיִת אַחַת הֵנָּה וְאַחַת הֵנָּה וַיַּעַל וַיִּגְהַר עָלָיו וַיְזֹרֶר הַנַּעַר עַד־שֶׁבַע פְּעָמִים וַיִּפְקַח הַנַּעַר אֶת־עֵינָיו: לו וַיִּקְרָא אֶל־גֵּיחֲזִי וַיֹּאמֶר קְרָא אֶל־הַשֻּׁנַמִּית הַזֹּאת וַיִּקְרָאֶהָ וַתָּבֹוא אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר שְׂאִי בִנֵךְ: לז וַתָּבֹא וַתִּפֹּל עַל־רַגְלָיו וַתִּשְׁתַּחוּ אָרְצָה וַתִּשָּׂא אֶת־בְּנָהּ וַתֵּצֵא:

Carmel. When the Godly man saw her from afar, he said to Geichazi, his servant, "The Shunamite (woman) is here! [26] 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).

[27] 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."

[28] She said "Was it I who asked for a son from my master? Didn't I say, 'Don't mislead me'?"

[29] 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)."

[30] 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.

[31] 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

[32] When Elisha arrived at the house, the boy was dead, lying on his bed. [33] He came inside and closed the door behind both of them, and prayed to God. [34] 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.

[35] 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.

[36] (Elisha) called to Geichazi, and said, "Call the Shunamite woman!" He called her. When she came to him, he said, "Pick up your child!"

[37] She fell down at his feet and prostrated herself. Then she gathered up her son and left.

35. וַיִּפְקַח הַנַּעַר 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 was to 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 וַיְכַסֻּהוּ בַּבְּגָדִים
וְלֹא יִחַם לוֹ: ב וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ עֲבָדָיו יְבַקְשׁוּ לַאדֹנִי
הַמֶּלֶךְ נַעֲרָה בְתוּלָה וְעָמְדָה לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וּתְהִי־לוֹ
סֹכֶנֶת וְשָׁכְבָה בְחֵיקֶךָ וְחַם לַאדֹנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ: ג וַיְבַקְשׁוּ
נַעֲרָה יָפָה בְּכָל גְּבוּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּמְצְאוּ אֶת־אֲבִישַׁג
הַשּׁוּנַמִּית וַיָּבִאוּ אֹתָהּ לַמֶּלֶךְ: ד וְהַנַּעֲרָה יָפָה
עַד־מְאֹד וַתְּהִי לַמֶּלֶךְ סֹכֶנֶת וַתְּשָׁרְתֵהוּ וְהַמֶּלֶךְ לֹא
יְדָעָהּ: ה וַאֲדֹנִיָּה בֶן־חַגִּית מִתְנַשֵּׂא לֵאמֹר אֲנִי
אֶמְלֹךְ וַיַּעַשׂ לוֹ רֶכֶב וּפָרָשִׁים וַחֲמִשִּׁים אִישׁ רָצִים
לְפָנָיו: ו וְלֹא־עֲצָבוֹ אָבִיו מִיָּמָיו לֵאמֹר מַדּוּעַ כָּכָה
עָשִׂיתָ וְגַם־הוּא טוֹב־תֹּאַר מְאֹד וְאֹתוֹ יָלְדָה אַחֲרֵי
אַבְשָׁלוֹם: ז וַיְהִי דְבָרָיו עִם יוֹאָב בֶּן־צְרוּיָה וְעִם
אֶבְיָתָר הַכֹּהֵן וַיַּעְזְרוּ אַחֲרֵי אֲדֹנִיָּה: ח וְצָדוֹק הַכֹּהֵן
וּבְנָיָהוּ בֶן־יְהוֹיָדָע וְנָתָן הַנָּבִיא וְשִׁמְעִי וְרֵעִי
וְהַגִּבֹּרִים אֲשֶׁר לְדָוִד לֹא הָיוּ עִם־אֲדֹנִיָּהוּ: ט וַיִּזְבַּח
אֲדֹנִיָּהוּ צֹאן וּבָקָר וּמְרִיא עִם אֶבֶן הַזֹּחֶלֶת
אֲשֶׁר־אֵצֶל עֵין רֹגֵל וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־כָּל־אֶחָיו בְּנֵי
הַמֶּלֶךְ וּלְכָל־אַנְשֵׁי יְהוּדָה עַבְדֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ: י וְאֶת־נָתָן
הַנָּבִיא וּבְנָיָהוּ וְאֶת־הַגִּבֹּרִים וְאֶת־שְׁלֹמֹה אָחִיו 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

[2] 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."

[3] They looked for a beautiful girl throughout the entire territory of Israel. They found Avishag the Shunamite and brought her before the King. [4] 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).

Adoniyahu presumes succession

[5] (Meanwhile), Adoniyah, 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. [6] (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 Adoniyah the eldest). [7] He consulted with Yo'av ben Tzeruyah, and Evyasar the priest. They supported Adoniyah (because they knew that they were disliked by David). [8] 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).

[9] 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. [10] 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."

קָרָא: א וַיֹּאמֶר נָתָן אֶל־בַּת־שֶׁבַע אֵם־שְׁלֹמֹה
לֵאמֹר הֲלוֹא שָׁמַעַתְּ כִּי מָלַךְ אֲדֹנִיָּהוּ בֶן־חַגִּית
וַאֲדֹנֵינוּ דָּוִד לֹא יָדָע: ב וְעַתָּה לְכִי אִיעָצֵךְ נָא עֵצָה
וּמַלְטִי אֶת־נַפְשֵׁךְ וְאֶת־נֶפֶשׁ בִּנֵךְ שְׁלֹמֹה: ג לְכִי
וּבְאִי | אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד וְאָמַרְתְּ אֵלָיו הֲלֹא־אַתָּה
אֲדֹנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לַאֲמָתְךָ לֵאמֹר כִּי־שְׁלֹמֹה בְּנֵךְ
יִמְלֹךְ אַחֲרַי וְהוּא יֵשֵׁב עַל־כִּסְאִי וּמַדּוּעַ מָלַךְ
אֲדֹנִיָּהוּ: ד הִנֵּה עוֹדֵךְ מְדַבֶּרֶת שָׁם עִם־הַמֶּלֶךְ וַאֲנִי
אָבוֹא אַחֲרַיִךְ וּמִלֵּאתִי אֶת־דְּבָרָיִךְ: ה וַתָּבֹא
בַת־שֶׁבַע אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ הַחַדְרָה וְהַמֶּלֶךְ זָקֵן מְאֹד
וַאֲבִישַׁג הַשּׁוּנַמִּית מְשָׁרֶת אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ: ו וַתִּקֹּד
בַּת־שֶׁבַע וַתִּשְׁתַּחוּ לַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ מַה־לָּךְ:
ז וַתֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֲדֹנִי אַתָּה נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ בַּיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
לַאֲמָתֶךָ כִּי־שְׁלֹמֹה בְּנֵךְ יִמְלֹךְ אַחֲרַי וְהוּא יֵשֵׁב
עַל־כִּסְאִי: ח וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה אֲדֹנִיָּה מָלָךְ וְעַתָּה אֲדֹנִי
הַמֶּלֶךְ לֹא יָדָעְתָּ: ט וַיִּזְבַּח שׁוֹר וּמְרִיא־וְצֹאן לָרֹב
וַיִּקְרָא לְכָל־בְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וּלְאֶבְיָתָר הַכֹּהֵן וּלְיוֹאָב שַׂר
הַצָּבָא וּלְשְׁלֹמֹה עַבְדְּךָ לֹא קָרָא: י וְאַתָּה אֲדֹנִי
הַמֶּלֶךְ עֵינֵי כָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל עָלֶיךָ לְהַגִּיד לָהֶם מִי יֵשֵׁב
עַל־כִּסֵּא אֲדֹנִי־הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲרָיו: יא וְהָיָה כְּשָׁכְבַ
אֲדֹנִי־הַמֶּלֶךְ עִם־אֲבֹתָיו וְהָיִיתִי אֲנִי וּבְנִי שְׁלֹמֹה
חַטָּאִים: יב וְהִנֵּה עוֹדֶנָּה מְדַבֶּרֶת עִם־הַמֶּלֶךְ וְנָתָן
הַנָּבִיא בָּא: יג וַיַּגִּידוּ לַמֶּלֶךְ לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה נָתָן הַנָּבִיא
וַיָּבֹא לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ לַמֶּלֶךְ עַל־אַפָּיו אָרְצָה:
יד וַיֹּאמֶר נָתָן אֲדֹנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ אַתָּה אָמַרְתָּ אֲדֹנִיָּהוּ
יִמְלֹךְ אַחֲרַי וְהוּא יֵשֵׁב עַל־כִּסְאִי: טו כִּי | יָרַד הַיּוֹם
וַיִּזְבַּח שׁוֹר וּמְרִיא־וְצֹאן לָרֹב וַיִּקְרָא לְכָל־בְּנֵי
הַמֶּלֶךְ וּלְשָׂרֵי הַצָּבָא וּלְאֶבְיָתָר הַכֹּהֵן וְהִנָּם אֹכְלִים

Nasan plots with Bas-Sheva

[11] *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).* [12] *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)."*

[13] *"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?'"*

[14] *"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

[15] *Bas-Sheva came to the King, into his bedroom. The King was very old and Avishag the Shunamite was serving the King.* [16] *Bas-Sheva bowed down and prostrated herself before the King. "What do you want?" the King said.*

[17] *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.'* [18] *But now—look!—Adoniyahu has become King, and you—my master the King—did not know.* [19] *(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.* [20] *(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.* [21] *(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

[22] *Then, while she was still talking to the King, Nasan the prophet arrived (in the King's quarters).* [24] *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.*

[24] *Nasan said, "My master the King! (Did) you say, 'Adoniyahu should reign after me and he will sit on my throne'?* [25] *Because today he went down and sacrificed many cattle, fattened oxen and sheep, and he invited all*

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. 97*ff*).

וְשֹׁתִים לְפָנָיו וַיֹּאמְרוּ יְחִי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲדֹנִיָּהוּ: כו וְלִי
אֲנִי־עַבְדֶּךָ וּלְצָדֹק הַכֹּהֵן וְלִבְנָיָהוּ בֶּן־יְהוֹיָדָע
וְלִשְׁלֹמֹה עַבְדְּךָ לֹא קָרָא: כז אִם מֵאֵת אֲדֹנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ
נִהְיָה הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה וְלֹא הוֹדַעְתָּ אֶת־עַבְדֶּךָ [עבדיך כ׳]
מִי יֵשֵׁב עַל־כִּסֵּא אֲדֹנִי־הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲרָיו: כח וַיַּעַן
הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד וַיֹּאמֶר קִרְאוּ־לִי לְבַת־שָׁבַע וַתָּבֹא לִפְנֵי
הַמֶּלֶךְ וַתַּעֲמֹד לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ: כט וַיִּשָּׁבַע הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר
חַי־יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר־פָּדָה אֶת־נַפְשִׁי מִכָּל־צָרָה: ל כִּי
כַּאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לָךְ בַּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר
כִּי־שְׁלֹמֹה בְנֵךְ יִמְלֹךְ אַחֲרַי וְהוּא יֵשֵׁב עַל־כִּסְאִי
תַּחְתָּי כִּי כֵן אֶעֱשֶׂה הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: לא וַתִּקֹּד בַּת־שֶׁבַע
אַפַּיִם אָרְצָה וַתִּשְׁתַּחוּ לַמֶּלֶךְ וַתֹּאמֶר יְחִי אֲדֹנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ
דָּוִד לְעֹלָם:

the King's sons, the army generals and Evyasar 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!' [26] And he did not invite me, Tzadok the priest, Benayahu son of Yehoyadah, nor Shlomo, your servant. [27] 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."

David reaffirms his promise

[28] King David replied and said, "Call Bas-Sheva for me." She came before the King and stood before the King. [29] The King took an oath, saying "By the life of God who has delivered my soul from all suffering! [30] 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)!"

[31] Bas-Sheva bowed with her face to the ground and prostrated herself to the King. She said "May my master King David live forever!"

Toldos / תולדות

(Malachi 1:1 – 2:7)

א א מַשָּׂא דְּבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּיַד מַלְאָכִי:
ב אָהַבְתִּי אֶתְכֶם אָמַר יְהוָה וַאֲמַרְתֶּם בַּמָּה אֲהַבְתָּנוּ
הֲלוֹא־אָח עֵשָׂו לְיַעֲקֹב נְאֻם־יְהוָה וָאֹהַב אֶת־יַעֲקֹב:
ג וְאֶת־עֵשָׂו שָׂנֵאתִי וָאָשִׂים אֶת־הָרָיו שְׁמָמָה וְאֶת־

God's preference for Israel over Eisav

1:1 *The prophecy—the word of God—to Israel, (transmitted) by Malachi (is as follows):*

[2] "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, [3] 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 אֲדֹנִי 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

נַחֲלָתוֹ לְתַנּוֹת מִדְבָּר: ד כִּי־תֹאמַר אֱדוֹם רֻשַּׁשְנוּ
וְנָשׁוּב וְנִבְנֶה חֳרָבוֹת כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת הֵמָּה
יִבְנוּ וַאֲנִי אֶהֱרוֹס וְקָרְאוּ לָהֶם גְּבוּל רִשְׁעָה וְהָעָם
אֲשֶׁר־זָעַם יְהוָה עַד־עוֹלָם: ה וְעֵינֵיכֶם תִּרְאֶינָה
וְאַתֶּם תֹּאמְרוּ יִגְדַּל יְהוָה מֵעַל לִגְבוּל יִשְׂרָאֵל: ו בֵּן
יְכַבֵּד אָב וְעֶבֶד אֲדֹנָיו וְאִם־אָב אָנִי אַיֵּה כְבוֹדִי
וְאִם־אֲדוֹנִים אָנִי אַיֵּה מוֹרָאִי אָמַר | יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
לָכֶם הַכֹּהֲנִים בּוֹזֵי שְׁמִי וַאֲמַרְתֶּם בַּמֶּה בָזִינוּ
אֶת־שְׁמֶךָ: ז מַגִּישִׁים עַל־מִזְבְּחִי לֶחֶם מְגֹאָל
וַאֲמַרְתֶּם בַּמֶּה גֵּאַלְנוּךָ בֶּאֱמָרְכֶם שֻׁלְחַן יְהוָה נִבְזֶה
הוּא: ח וְכִי־תַגִּשׁוּן עִוֵּר לִזְבֹּחַ אֵין רָע וְכִי תַגִּישׁוּ
פִּסֵּחַ וְחֹלֶה אֵין רָע הַקְרִיבֵהוּ נָא לְפֶחָתֶךָ הֲיִרְצְךָ אוֹ
הֲיִשָּׂא פָנֶיךָ אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת: ט וְעַתָּה חַלּוּ־נָא
פְּנֵי־אֵל וְיָחְנֵנוּ מִיֶּדְכֶם הָיְתָה זֹּאת הֲיִשָּׂא מִכֶּם פָּנִים
אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת: י מִי גַם־בָּכֶם וְיִסְגֹּר דְּלָתַיִם
וְלֹא־תָאִירוּ מִזְבְּחִי חִנָּם אֵין־לִי חֵפֶץ בָּכֶם אָמַר
יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וּמִנְחָה לֹא־אֶרְצֶה מִיֶּדְכֶם: יא כִּי
מִמִּזְרַח־שֶׁמֶשׁ וְעַד־מְבוֹאוֹ גָּדוֹל שְׁמִי בַגּוֹיִם
וּבְכָל־מָקוֹם מֻקְטָר מֻגָּשׁ לִשְׁמִי וּמִנְחָה טְהוֹרָה
כִּי־גָדוֹל שְׁמִי בַגּוֹיִם אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת: יב וְאַתֶּם
מְחַלְּלִים אוֹתוֹ בֶּאֱמָרְכֶם שֻׁלְחַן אֲדֹנָי מְגֹאָל הוּא
וְנִיבוֹ נִבְזֶה אָכְלוֹ: יג וַאֲמַרְתֶּם הִנֵּה מַתְּלָאָה

[4] *"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.* [5] *(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

[6] *"(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?'* [7] *(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).'* [8] *(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."* [9] *"(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.*

[10] *"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

[11] *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.* [12] *"But you are profaning it when you say, 'the table of God is despicable,' and by saying (that) its food is repulsive.*

[13] *(When you bring a lean, skinny animal) you say, 'This is so burdensome!' (pretending that you are tired from carrying such*

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curses, due to negligence in sacrificial procedure (2:1-3), which has betrayed the true, exalted nature of the priesthood (4-7).

1:2 אֲהַבְתִּי אֶתְכֶם אָמַר יְהוָה—*"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).

2-3 הֲלוֹא אָח עֵשָׂו לְיַעֲקֹב וְאֹהַב אֶת יַעֲקֹב וְאֶת עֵשָׂו שָׂנֵאתִי—*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).

וְהִפַּחְתֶּם אוֹתוֹ אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וַהֲבֵאתֶם גָּזוּל
וְאֶת־הַפִּסֵּחַ וְאֶת־הַחוֹלָה וַהֲבֵאתֶם אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה
הַאֶרְצֶה אוֹתָהּ מִיֶּדְכֶם אָמַר יְהוָה: יד וְאָרוּר נוֹכֵל
וְיֵשׁ בְּעֶדְרוֹ זָכָר וְנֹדֵר וְזֹבֵחַ מָשְׁחָת לַאדֹנָי כִּי מֶלֶךְ
גָּדוֹל אָנִי אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וּשְׁמִי נוֹרָא בַגּוֹיִם:
ב א וְעַתָּה אֲלֵיכֶם הַמִּצְוָה הַזֹּאת הַכֹּהֲנִים:
ב אִם־לֹא תִשְׁמָעוּ וְאִם־לֹא תָשִׂימוּ עַל־לֵב לָתֵת
כָּבוֹד לִשְׁמִי אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וְשִׁלַּחְתִּי בָכֶם
אֶת־הַמְּאֵרָה וְאָרוֹתִי אֶת־בִּרְכוֹתֵיכֶם וְגַם אֲרוֹתִיהָ
כִּי אֵינְכֶם שָׂמִים עַל־לֵב: ג הִנְנִי גֹעֵר לָכֶם
אֶת־הַזֶּרַע וְזֵרִיתִי פֶרֶשׁ עַל־פְּנֵיכֶם פֶּרֶשׁ חַגֵּיכֶם
וְנָשָׂא אֶתְכֶם אֵלָיו: ד וִידַעְתֶּם כִּי שִׁלַּחְתִּי אֲלֵיכֶם
אֶת הַמִּצְוָה הַזֹּאת לִהְיוֹת בְּרִיתִי אֶת־לֵוִי אָמַר
יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת: ה בְּרִיתִי | הָיְתָה אִתּוֹ הַחַיִּים וְהַשָּׁלוֹם
וָאֶתְּנֵם־לוֹ מוֹרָא וַיִּירָאֵנִי וּמִפְּנֵי שְׁמִי נִחַת הוּא:
ו תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת הָיְתָה בְּפִיהוּ וְעַוְלָה לֹא־נִמְצָא
בִּשְׂפָתָיו בְּשָׁלוֹם וּבְמִישׁוֹר הָלַךְ אִתִּי וְרַבִּים הֵשִׁיב
מֵעָוֹן: ז כִּי־שִׂפְתֵי כֹהֵן יִשְׁמְרוּ־דַעַת וְתוֹרָה יְבַקְשׁוּ
מִפִּיהוּ כִּי מַלְאַךְ יְהוָה־צְבָאוֹת הוּא:

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

14 "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."

Priestly blessings become curses

2:1 "And now, this commandment (not to accept a poor sacrifice, is given) to you, the priests. 2 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). 3 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.

Special qualities of the priests

4 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. 5 "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. 6 The Torah of truth was (being taught) by his 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. 7 (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 ז וְעַמִּי תְלוּאִים לִמְשׁוּבָתִי וְאֶל־עַל יִקְרָאֻהוּ יַחַד
לֹא יְרוֹמֵם: ח אֵיךְ אֶתְּנְךָ אֶפְרַיִם אֲמַגֶּנְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵיךְ

Reluctance to repent

11:7 "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!"

God's mercy

8 "(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

אֶתְּנֵךְ כְּאַדְמָה אֲשִׂימֵךְ כִּצְבֹאִים נֶהְפַּךְ עָלַי לִבִּי יַחַד
נִכְמְרוּ נִחוּמָי: ט לֹא אֶעֱשֶׂה חֲרוֹן אַפִּי לֹא אָשׁוּב
לְשַׁחֵת אֶפְרַיִם כִּי אֵל אָנֹכִי וְלֹא־אִישׁ בְּקִרְבְּךָ קָדוֹשׁ
וְלֹא אָבוֹא בְּעִיר: י אַחֲרֵי יְהוָה יֵלֵכוּ כְּאַרְיֵה יִשְׁאָג
כִּי־הוּא יִשְׁאַג וְיֶחֶרְדוּ בָנִים מִיָּם: יא יֶחֶרְדוּ כְצִפּוֹר
מִמִּצְרַיִם וּכְיוֹנָה מֵאֶרֶץ אַשּׁוּר וְהוֹשַׁבְתִּים
עַל־בָּתֵּיהֶם נְאֻם־יְהוָה: יב א סְבָבֻנִי בְכַחַשׁ
אֶפְרַיִם וּבְמִרְמָה בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וִיהוּדָה עֹד רָד
עִם־אֵל וְעִם־קְדוֹשִׁים נֶאֱמָן: ב אֶפְרַיִם רֹעֶה רוּחַ
וְרֹדֵף קָדִים כָּל־הַיּוֹם כָּזָב וְשֹׁד יַרְבֶּה וּבְרִית
עִם־אַשּׁוּר יִכְרֹתוּ וְשֶׁמֶן לְמִצְרַיִם יוּבָל: ג וְרִיב
לַיהוָה עִם־יְהוּדָה וְלִפְקֹד עַל־יַעֲקֹב כִּדְרָכָיו
כְּמַעֲלָלָיו יָשִׁיב לוֹ: ד בַּבֶּטֶן עָקַב אֶת־אָחִיו וּבְאוֹנוֹ
שָׂרָה אֶת־אֱלֹהִים: ה וַיָּשַׂר אֶל־מַלְאָךְ וַיּוּכָל בָּכָה
וַיִּתְחַנֶּן־לוֹ בֵּית־אֵל יִמְצָאֵנוּ וְשָׁם יְדַבֵּר עִמָּנוּ:
ו וַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הַצְּבָאוֹת יְהוָה זִכְרוֹ: ז וְאַתָּה בֵּאלֹהֶיךָ
תָּשׁוּב חֶסֶד וּמִשְׁפָּט שְׁמֹר וְקַוֵּה אֶל־אֱלֹהֶיךָ תָּמִיד:
ח כְּנַעַן בְּיָדוֹ מֹאזְנֵי מִרְמָה לַעֲשֹׁק אָהֵב: ט וַיֹּאמֶר

with you) My heart has turned inside Me (to be kind to you. All) My (attributes of) mercy have been aroused all at once. [9] *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

[10] *“(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.* [11] *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

[12:1] *(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).* [2] *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).*

[3] *(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

[4] *(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.* [5] *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?)*

[6] *God, is the (omnipotent) God of (all the) hosts! (Almighty) God is His Name!* [7] *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).*

[8] *(But you are like) a merchant (who) has deceitful scales in his hand, who loves to oppress others (rather than acting kindly and justly).* [9] *Efrayim said, “Surely (the reason that) I have become wealthy (is because) I have found strength for myself (and*

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 Vayeitzei*.

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 כְּנַעַן בְּיָדוֹ מֹאזְנֵי מִרְמָה—*(You are like) a merchant (who) has deceitful scales in his hand.* The “deceitful merchant” is an analogy for

אֶפְרַ֗יִם אַךְ֙ עָשַׁ֣רְתִּי מָצָ֔אתִי אוֹן֙ לִ֔י כָּל־יְגִיעַ֔י לֹ֥א יִמְצְאוּ־לִ֖י עָוֹ֑ן אֲשֶׁר־חָֽטְא׃ יג וְאָנֹכִ֣י יְהוָ֔ה אֱלֹהֶ֖יךָ מֵאֶ֣רֶץ מִצְרָ֑יִם עֹ֚ד אוֹשִׁיבְךָ֣ בָּאֳהָלִ֔ים כִּימֵ֖י מוֹעֵֽד׃ יד וְדִבַּ֥רְתִּי עַל־הַנְּבִיאִ֖ים וְאָנֹכִ֣י חָז֑וֹן הִרְבֵּ֥יתִי וּבְיַד הַנְּבִיאִ֖ים אֲדַמֶּֽה׃ טו אִם־גִּלְעָ֤ד אָוֶן֙ אַךְ־שָׁ֣וְא הָיוּ֔ בַּגִּלְגָּ֖ל שֹׁרִ֣ים זִבֵּ֑חוּ גַּ֚ם מִזְבְּחוֹתָ֔ם כְּגַלִּ֖ים עַל תַּלְמֵ֥י שָׂדָֽי׃

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)."

[10] *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.* [11] *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).* [12] *If a misfortune befell Gilad it was (not by chance, but) because they were false. In Gilgal 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:

יג וַיִּבְרַ֥ח יַעֲקֹ֖ב שְׂדֵ֣ה אֲרָ֑ם וַיַּעֲבֹ֤ד יִשְׂרָאֵל֙ בְּאִשָּׁ֔ה וּבְאִשָּׁ֖ה שָׁמָֽר׃ יד וּבְנָבִ֥יא הֶעֱלָ֛ה יְהוָ֖ה אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵ֑ל מִמִּצְרַ֔יִם וּבְנָבִ֖יא נִשְׁמָֽר׃

Ya'akov's flight to Aram

[13] *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).* [14] *By means of a prophet God brought Israel up from Egypt, and through a prophet they were guarded (on the way).*

Chabad communities conclude here. Ashkenazic communities continue:

טו הִכְעִ֥יסוּ אֶפְרַ֖יִם תַּמְרוּרִ֑ים וְדָמָ֥יו עָלָ֛יו יִטּ֖וֹשׁ וְחֶרְפָּת֥וֹ יָשִׁ֖יב לוֹ֥ אֲדֹנָֽיו׃ יג א כְּדַבֵּ֥ר אֶפְרַ֖יִם רְתֵ֣ת נָשָׂ֑א הוּא֙ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל וַיֶּאְשַׁ֖ם בַּבַּ֥עַל וַיָּמֹֽת׃ ב וְעַתָּ֥ה | יוֹסִ֖פוּ לַחֲטֹ֑א וַיַּעֲשׂ֨וּ לָהֶ֤ם מַסֵּכָה֙ מִכַּסְפָּ֔ם כִּתְבוּנָ֖ם עֲצַבִּ֣ים מַעֲשֵׂ֣ה חָרָשִׁ֔ים כֻּלָּ֥ה לָהֶ֖ם הֵ֣ם אֹמְרִ֑ים זֹבְחֵ֥י אָדָ֛ם עֲגָלִ֖ים יִשָּׁקוּֽן׃ ג לָכֵ֣ן יִהְיוּ֮ כַּעֲנַ֣ן בֹּ֒קֶר֒ וְכַטַּ֣ל מַשְׁכִּ֔ים הֹלֵ֖ךְ כְּמֹ֣ץ יְסוּעָ֑ר מִגֹּ֙רֶן֙ וּכְעָשָׁ֔ן מֵאֲרֻבָּֽה׃ ד וְאָנֹכִ֣י יְהוָ֔ה אֱלֹהֶ֖יךָ מֵאֶ֣רֶץ מִצְרָ֑יִם וֵאלֹהִ֗ים זוּלָתִ֙י לֹ֣א תֵדָ֔ע וּמוֹשִׁ֥יעַ אַ֖יִן בִּלְתִּֽי׃ ה אֲנִ֣י יְדַעְתִּ֔יךָ בַּמִּדְבָּ֖ר בְּאֶ֥רֶץ תַּלְאֻבֽוֹת׃

Further rebuke

[15] *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).*

[13:1] *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 worshiping the deity) Ba'al, he died.* [2] *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.)*

[3] *Therefore, they will be (destroyed) like the morning cloud (which departs swiftly), and they will disappear early like the dew; like chaff blown away from the threshing floor, like smoke from the chimney.* [4] *(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.* [5] *I took care of you in the wilderness, in a thirsty land (so you deserve destruction for abandoning Me).*

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the soul how it is found below in this world, enclothed 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:

כְּמַרְעִיתָם וַיִּשְׂבָּעוּ שָׂבְעוּ וַיָּרָם לִבָּם עַל־כֵּן
שְׁכֵחוּנִי: ז וָאֱהִי לָהֶם כְּמוֹ־שָׁחַל כְּנָמֵר עַל־דֶּרֶךְ
אָשׁוּר: ח אֶפְגְּשֵׁם כְּדֹב שַׁכּוּל וְאֶקְרַע סְגוֹר לִבָּם
וְאֹכְלֵם שָׁם כְּלָבִיא חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה תְּבַקְּעֵם:
ט שִׁחֶתְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי־בִי בְעֶזְרֶךָ: י אֱהִי מַלְכְּךָ אֱפוֹא
וְיוֹשִׁיעֲךָ בְּכָל־עָרֶיךָ וְשֹׁפְטֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתָּ תְּנָה־
לִּי מֶלֶךְ וְשָׂרִים: יא אֶתֶּן־לְךָ מֶלֶךְ בְּאַפִּי וְאֶקַּח
בְּעֶבְרָתִי: יב צָרוּר עֲוֹן אֶפְרָיִם צְפוּנָה חַטָּאתוֹ:
יג חֶבְלֵי יוֹלֵדָה יָבֹאוּ לוֹ הוּא־בֵן לֹא חָכָם כִּי־עֵת
לֹא־יַעֲמֹד בְּמִשְׁבַּר בָּנִים: יד מִיַּד שְׁאוֹל אֶפְדֵּם
מִמָּוֶת אֶגְאָלֵם אֱהִי דְבָרֶיךָ מָוֶת אֱהִי קָטָבְךָ
שְׁאוֹל נֹחַם יִסָּתֵר מֵעֵינָי: טו כִּי הוּא בֵּין אַחִים
יַפְרִיא יָבוֹא קָדִים רוּחַ יְהוָה מִמִּדְבָּר עֹלֶה וְיֵבוֹשׁ
מְקוֹרוֹ וְיֶחֱרַב מַעְיָנוֹ הוּא יְשִׁסֶּה אוֹצַר כָּל־כְּלִי
חֶמְדָּה: יד א תֶּאְשַׁם שֹׁמְרוֹן כִּי מָרְתָה בֵּאלֹהֶיהָ
בַּחֶרֶב יִפֹּלוּ עֹלְלֵיהֶם יְרֻטָּשׁוּ וְהָרִיּוֹתָיו יְבֻקָּעוּ:
ב שׁוּבָה יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כִּי כָשַׁלְתָּ
בַּעֲוֹנֶךָ: ג קְחוּ עִמָּכֶם דְּבָרִים וְשׁוּבוּ אֶל־יְהוָה אִמְרוּ
אֵלָיו כָּל־תִּשָּׂא עָוֹן וְקַח־טוֹב וּנְשַׁלְּמָה פָרִים
שְׂפָתֵינוּ: ד אַשּׁוּר | לֹא יוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ עַל־סוּס לֹא נִרְכָּב
וְלֹא־נֹאמַר עוֹד אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ אֲשֶׁר־בְּךָ
יְרֻחַם יָתוֹם: ה אֶרְפָּא מְשׁוּבָתָם אֹהֲבֵם נְדָבָה כִּי שָׁב
אַפִּי מִמֶּנּוּ: ו אֶהְיֶה כַטַּל לְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִפְרַח כַּשּׁוֹשַׁנָּה
וְיַךְ שָׁרָשָׁיו כַּלְּבָנוֹן: ז יֵלְכוּ יוֹנְקוֹתָיו וִיהִי כַזַּיִת הוֹדוֹ
וְרֵיחַ לוֹ כַּלְּבָנוֹן: ח יָשֻׁבוּ יֹשְׁבֵי בְצִלּוֹ יְחַיּוּ דָגָן וְיִפְרְחוּ
כַּגָּפֶן זִכְרוֹ כְּיֵין לְבָנוֹן: ט אֶפְרַיִם מַה־לִּי עוֹד
לָעֲצַבִּים אֲנִי עָנִיתִי וַאֲשׁוּרֶנּוּ אֲנִי כִּבְרוֹשׁ רַעֲנָן מִמֶּנִּי

Israel's self-satisfaction and sins

[6] *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.* [7] *(Therefore) I have become like a lion to them, like a leopard lurking by the road (for its prey).* [8] *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.* [9] *Israel! You harmed yourself (by ignoring Me when) I was your Helper.* [10] *(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!"* [11] *In My anger I gave you a king, but I took him away in My wrath (because your request was not appropriate).*

[12] *(I have not forgotten) Efrayim's sin! (It is) is bound up (well); his transgression is stored away.* [13] *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).* [14] *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.*

[15] *(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.* [14:1] *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

[2] *Israel, return to God your God, for you have stumbled on account of your sins.* [3] *(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.*

[4] *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)."* [5] *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.* [6] *(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.* [7] *His young leaves will spread out, he will be beautiful like an olive tree, and he will have the aroma of Lebanon.*

[8] *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.* [9] *(When) Efrayim asks, "What do I need idolaters*

פְּרִיךְ נִמְצָא׃ ׀ מִי חָכָם֙ וְיָבֵ֣ן אֵ֔לֶּה נָבוֹן֙ וְיֵדָעֵ֔ם
כִּֽי־יְשָׁרִ֖ים דַּרְכֵ֣י יְהוָ֑ה וְצַדִּקִ֙ים֙ יֵלְכ֣וּ בָ֔ם וּפֹשְׁעִ֖ים
יִכָּשְׁל֥וּ בָֽם׃

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.

[10] *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 א חֲזוֹן עֹבַדְיָ֔ה כֹּֽה־אָמַ֥ר אֲדֹנָ֖י יֱהוִ֑ה לֶֽאֱד֔וֹם
שְׁמוּעָ֥ה שָׁמַ֙עְנוּ֙ מֵאֵ֣ת יְהוָ֔ה וְצִ֥יר בַּגּוֹיִ֖ם שֻׁלָּ֑ח קוּמוּ
וְנָקוּמָ֥ה עָלֶ֖יהָ לַמִּלְחָמָֽה׃ ב הִנֵּ֥ה קָטֹ֛ן נְתַתִּ֖יךָ בַּגּוֹיִ֑ם
בָּזוּי֙ אַתָּ֣ה מְאֹֽד׃ ג זְדוֹן֙ לִבְּךָ֣ הִשִּׁיאֶ֔ךָ שֹׁכְנִ֖י
בְּחַגְוֵ֣י סֶ֑לַע מְר֣וֹם שִׁבְתּ֔וֹ אֹמֵ֥ר בִּלְבּ֖וֹ מִי֙ יוֹרִדֵ֔נִי
אָֽרֶץ׃ ד אִם־תַּגְבִּ֤יהַ כַּנֶּ֙שֶׁר֙ וְאִם־בֵּ֣ין כּוֹכָבִ֔ים שִׂ֖ים
קִנֶּ֑ךָ מִשָּׁ֥ם אוֹרִֽידְךָ֖ נְאֻם־יְהוָֽה׃ ה אִם־גַּנָּבִ֤ים בָּֽאוּ־לָךְ֙
אִם־שׁוֹדְדֵ֣י לַ֔יְלָה אֵ֥יךְ נִדְמֵ֖יתָה הֲלוֹא֙ יִגְנְבוּ֙ דַּיָּ֔ם
אִם־בֹּצְרִ֥ים בָּֽאוּ־לָ֖ךְ הֲלוֹא֙ יַשְׁאִ֣ירוּ עֹלְלֹ֔ות׃ ו אֵ֥יךְ
נֶחְפְּשׂ֖וּ עֵשָׂ֑ו נִבְעֲו֖ מַצְפֻּנָֽיו׃ ז עַד־הַגְּבוּל֙ שִׁלְּח֣וּךָ כָּל־
אַנְשֵׁ֣י בְרִיתֶ֔ךָ הִשִּׁיאֻ֖וךָ יָכְל֣וּ לְךָ֑ אַנְשֵׁ֥י שְׁלֻמֶּ֛ךָ לַחְמְךָ֥

1:1 *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

[2] *"Look, (initially) I made you small among the nations (and) you were greatly despised.* [3] *(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?'* [4] *(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.*

[5] *"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)."*

No help from her allies

[6] *"How have (the houses of) Eisav been searched (and all their belongings removed? How) have his hidden places been sought out?* [7] *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*

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).

יָשִׂימוּ מָזוֹר תַּחְתֶּיךָ אֵין תְּבוּנָה בּוֹ׃ ח הֲלוֹא בַיּוֹם
הַהוּא נְאֻם יְהוָה וְהַאֲבַדְתִּי חֲכָמִים מֵאֱדוֹם וּתְבוּנָה
מֵהַר עֵשָׂו׃ ט וְחַתּוּ גִבּוֹרַיִךְ תֵּימָן לְמַעַן יִכָּרֵת־אִישׁ
מֵהַר עֵשָׂו מִקָּטֶל׃ י מֵחֲמַס אָחִיךָ יַעֲקֹב תְּכַסְּךָ בוּשָׁה
וְנִכְרַתָּ לְעוֹלָם׃ יא בְּיוֹם עָמְדְךָ מִנֶּגֶד בְּיוֹם שְׁבוֹת
זָרִים חֵילוֹ וְנָכְרִים בָּאוּ שְׁעָרָיו [שערו כ'] וְעַל־יְרוּשָׁלַם
יַדּוּ גוֹרָל גַּם־אַתָּה כְּאַחַד מֵהֶם׃ יב וְאַל־תֵּרֶא
בְיוֹם־אָחִיךָ בְּיוֹם נָכְרוֹ וְאַל־תִּשְׂמַח לִבְנֵי־יְהוּדָה
בְּיוֹם אָבְדָם וְאַל־תַּגְדֵּל פִּיךָ בְּיוֹם צָרָה׃ יג אַל־תָּבוֹא
בְשַׁעַר־עַמִּי בְּיוֹם אֵידָם אַל־תֵּרֶא גַם־אַתָּה בְרָעָתוֹ
בְּיוֹם אֵידוֹ וְאַל־תִּשְׁלַחְנָה בְחֵילוֹ בְּיוֹם אֵידוֹ׃
יד וְאַל־תַּעֲמֹד עַל־הַפֶּרֶק לְהַכְרִית אֶת־פְּלִיטָיו
וְאַל־תַּסְגֵּר שְׂרִידָיו בְּיוֹם צָרָה׃ טו כִּי־קָרוֹב
יוֹם־יְהוָה עַל־כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ יֵעָשֶׂה לָּךְ
גְּמֻלְךָ יָשׁוּב בְּרֹאשֶׁךָ׃ טז כִּי כַּאֲשֶׁר שְׁתִיתֶם עַל־הַר
קָדְשִׁי יִשְׁתּוּ כָל־הַגּוֹיִם תָּמִיד וְשָׁתוּ וְלָעוּ וְהָיוּ כְּלוֹא
הָיוּ׃ יז וּבְהַר צִיּוֹן תִּהְיֶה פְלֵיטָה וְהָיָה קֹדֶשׁ וְיָרְשׁוּ
בֵּית יַעֲקֹב אֶת מוֹרָשֵׁיהֶם׃ יח וְהָיָה בֵית־יַעֲקֹב אֵשׁ
וּבֵית יוֹסֵף לֶהָבָה וּבֵית עֵשָׂו לְקַשׁ וְדָלְקוּ בָהֶם
וַאֲכָלוּם וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה שָׂרִיד לְבֵית עֵשָׂו כִּי יְהוָה דִּבֵּר׃
יט וְיָרְשׁוּ הַנֶּגֶב אֶת־הַר עֵשָׂו וְהַשְּׁפֵלָה אֶת־פְּלִשְׁתִּים

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)."* [9] *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.*

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 בֵית יַעֲקֹב אֵשׁ...וּבֵית עֵשָׂו לְקַשׁ—*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

וְיָרְשׁוּ אֶת־שְׂדֵה אֶפְרַיִם וְאֶת שְׂדֵה שֹׁמְרוֹן וּבִנְיָמִן
אֶת־הַגִּלְעָד: כ וְגָלַת הַחֵל־הַזֶּה לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
אֲשֶׁר־כְּנַעֲנִים עַד־צָרְפַת וְגָלַת יְרוּשָׁלַם אֲשֶׁר
בִּסְפָרַד יִרְשׁוּ אֶת עָרֵי הַנֶּגֶב: כא וְעָלוּ מוֹשִׁעִים בְּהַר
צִיּוֹן לִשְׁפֹּט אֶת־הַר עֵשָׂו וְהָיְתָה לַיהוָה הַמְּלוּכָה:

[20] *The exiled army of the Children of Israel, (who lived) with the Cana'anites until Tzorfas, and the exiles of Yerushalayim until Seforad, will inherit the cities of the south (i.e. Edom).* [21] *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

ויֵשֶׁב / Vayeishev

(Amos 2:6 – 3:8)

If *Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev* coincides with Chanukah, the *Haftarah* of Chanukah (I) is read, on page 398.

ב כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה עַל־שְׁלֹשָׁה פִּשְׁעֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְעַל־אַרְבָּעָה לֹא אֲשִׁיבֶנּוּ עַל־מִכְרָם בַּכֶּסֶף צַדִּיק
וְאֶבְיוֹן בַּעֲבוּר נַעֲלָיִם: ז הַשֹּׁאֲפִים עַל־עֲפַר־אֶרֶץ
בְּרֹאשׁ דַּלִּים וְדֶרֶךְ עֲנָוִים יַטּוּ וְאִישׁ וְאָבִיו יֵלְכוּ
אֶל־הַנַּעֲרָה לְמַעַן חַלֵּל אֶת־שֵׁם קָדְשִׁי: ח וְעַל־
בְּגָדִים חֲבֻלִים יַטּוּ אֵצֶל כָּל־מִזְבֵּחַ וְיֵין
עֲנוּשִׁים יִשְׁתּוּ בֵּית אֱלֹהֵיהֶם: ט וְאָנֹכִי הִשְׁמַדְתִּי
אֶת־הָאֱמֹרִי מִפְּנֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר כְּגֹבַהּ אֲרָזִים גָּבְהּוֹ וְחָסֹן
הוּא כָּאַלוֹנִים וָאַשְׁמִיד פִּרְיוֹ מִמַּעַל וְשָׁרָשָׁיו מִתָּחַת:
י וְאָנֹכִי הֶעֱלֵיתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וָאוֹלֵךְ אֶתְכֶם
בַּמִּדְבָּר אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה לָרֶשֶׁת אֶת־אֶרֶץ הָאֱמֹרִי:

2:6 *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.* [7] *(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.* [8] *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

[9] *"I destroyed before them (even the nations that do 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."*

[10] *"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. וְעָלוּ מוֹשִׁעִים בְּהַר צִיּוֹן לִשְׁפֹּט אֶת הַר עֵשָׂו וְהָיְתָה לַיהוָה הַמְּלוּכָה—*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).

יא וְאָקִים מִבְּנֵיכֶם לִנְבִיאִים וּמִבַּחוּרֵיכֶם לִנְזִרִים
הַאַף אֵין־זֹאת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל נְאֻם־יְהוָה: יב וַתַּשְׁקוּ
אֶת־הַנְּזִרִים יַיִן וְעַל־הַנְּבִיאִים צִוִּיתֶם לֵאמֹר לֹא
תִנָּבְאוּ: יג הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי מֵעִיק תַּחְתֵּיכֶם כַּאֲשֶׁר תָּעִיק
הָעֲגָלָה הַמְלֵאָה לָהּ עָמִיר: יד וְאָבַד מָנוֹס מִקָּל וְחָזָק
לֹא־יְאַמֵּץ כֹּחוֹ וְגִבּוֹר לֹא־יְמַלֵּט נַפְשׁוֹ: טו וְתֹפֵשׂ
הַקֶּשֶׁת לֹא יַעֲמֹד וְקַל בְּרַגְלָיו לֹא יְמַלֵּט וְרֹכֵב הַסּוּס
לֹא יְמַלֵּט נַפְשׁוֹ: טז וְאַמִּיץ לִבּוֹ בַּגִּבּוֹרִים עָרוֹם יָנוּס
בַּיּוֹם־הַהוּא נְאֻם־יְהוָה: ג א שִׁמְעוּ אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה
אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה עֲלֵיכֶם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל כָּל־
הַמִּשְׁפָּחָה אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלֵיתִי מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֵאמֹר:
ב רַק אֶתְכֶם יָדַעְתִּי מִכֹּל מִשְׁפְּחוֹת הָאֲדָמָה עַל־כֵּן
אֶפְקֹד עֲלֵיכֶם אֶת כָּל־עֲוֹנֹתֵיכֶם: ג הֵיֵלְכוּ שְׁנַיִם
יַחְדָּו בִּלְתִּי אִם־נוֹעָדוּ: ד הֲיִשְׁאַג אַרְיֵה בַּיַּעַר וְטֶרֶף
אֵין לוֹ הֲיִתֵּן כְּפִיר קוֹלוֹ מִמְּעֹנָתוֹ בִּלְתִּי אִם־לָכָד:
ה הֲתִפֹּל צִפּוֹר עַל־פַּח הָאָרֶץ וּמוֹקֵשׁ אֵין לָהּ
הֲיַעֲלֶה־פַּח מִן־הָאֲדָמָה וְלָכוֹד לֹא יִלְכֹּד: ו אִם־
יִתָּקַע שׁוֹפָר בְּעִיר וְעָם לֹא יֶחֱרָדוּ אִם־תִּהְיֶה
רָעָה בְּעִיר וַיהוָה לֹא עָשָׂה: ז כִּי לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה אֲדֹנָי
יֱהוִה דָּבָר כִּי אִם־גָּלָה סוֹדוֹ אֶל־עֲבָדָיו הַנְּבִיאִים:
ח אַרְיֵה שָׁאָג מִי לֹא יִירָא אֲדֹנָי יֱהוִה דִּבֶּר מִי
לֹא יִנָּבֵא:

God always sends prophets

(and provided all your needs so you could come and) possess the Land of the Emorites. [11] *(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.* [12] *"But you persuaded the Nazirites to drink wine and commanded the prophets, 'Do not prophesize.'*

Punishment looms

[13] *"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.* [14] *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.* [15] *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).* [16] *On that day, even the most courageous of the warriors will run away disarmed (so he can run faster)," says God.*

[3:1] *"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.* [2] *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

[3] *Do two people walk together without having arranged it (beforehand)?* [4] *Does a lion roar in the forest (and find) no prey? Does a lion cub cry out from its den without having trapped anything?* [5] *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?* [6] *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?* [7] *For Almighty God does not do anything without (first) revealing His secret to His servants, the prophets.* [8] *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?*

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. הֲיִשְׁאַג אַרְיֵה בַּיַּעַר—*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 יִתָּקַע שׁוֹפָר בְּעִיר וְעָם לֹא יֶחֱרָדוּ—*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 טו וַיִּקַץ שְׁלֹמֹה וְהִנֵּה חֲלוֹם וַיָּבֹוא יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם וַיַּעֲמֹד |
לִפְנֵי | אֲרוֹן בְּרִית־אֲדֹנָי וַיַּעַל עֹלוֹת וַיַּעַשׂ שְׁלָמִים
וַיַּעַשׂ מִשְׁתֶּה לְכָל־עֲבָדָיו: טז אָז תָּבֹאנָה שְׁתַּיִם
נָשִׁים זֹנוֹת אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ וַתַּעֲמֹדְנָה לְפָנָיו: יז וַתֹּאמֶר
הָאִשָּׁה הָאַחַת בִּי אֲדֹנִי אֲנִי וְהָאִשָּׁה הַזֹּאת יֹשֶׁבֶת
בְּבַיִת אֶחָד וָאֵלֵד עִמָּהּ בַּבָּיִת: יח וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי
לְלִדְתִּי וַתֵּלֶד גַּם־הָאִשָּׁה הַזֹּאת וַאֲנַחְנוּ יַחְדָּו אֵין־זָר
אִתָּנוּ בַּבַּיִת זוּלָתִי שְׁתַּיִם־אֲנַחְנוּ בַּבָּיִת: יט וַיָּמָת
בֶּן־הָאִשָּׁה הַזֹּאת לָיְלָה אֲשֶׁר שָׁכְבָה עָלָיו: כ וַתָּקָם
בְּתוֹךְ הַלַּיְלָה וַתִּקַּח אֶת־בְּנִי מֵאֶצְלִי וַאֲמָתְךָ יְשֵׁנָה
וַתַּשְׁכִּיבֵהוּ בְּחֵיקָהּ וְאֶת־בְּנָהּ הַמֵּת הִשְׁכִּיבָה בְחֵיקִי:
כא וָאָקָם בַּבֹּקֶר לְהֵינִיק אֶת־בְּנִי וְהִנֵּה־מֵת וָאֶתְבּוֹנֵן
אֵלָיו בַּבֹּקֶר וְהִנֵּה לֹא־הָיָה בְנִי אֲשֶׁר יָלָדְתִּי: כב וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה הָאַחֶרֶת לֹא כִי בְנִי הַחַי וּבִנֵךְ
הַמֵּת וְזֹאת אֹמֶרֶת לֹא כִי בִנֵךְ הַמֵּת וּבְנִי הֶחָי
וַתְּדַבֵּרְנָה לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ: כג וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ זֹאת אֹמֶרֶת
זֶה־בְּנִי הַחַי וּבִנֵךְ הַמֵּת וְזֹאת אֹמֶרֶת לֹא כִי בִנֵךְ
הַמֵּת וּבְנִי הֶחָי: כד וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ קְחוּ לִי־חָרֶב וַיָּבִאוּ
הַחֶרֶב לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ: כה וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ גִּזְרוּ אֶת־הַיֶּלֶד
הַחַי לִשְׁנָיִם וּתְנוּ אֶת־הַחֲצִי לְאַחַת וְאֶת־הַחֲצִי

3:15 *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.*

The case of the two harlots

16 *Then two harlots came to the king and stood before him.* 17 *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,* 18 *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."*

19 *"This woman's son then died during the night because she laid upon him (and crushed him).* 20 *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."*

21 *"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."*

22 *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.*

Shlomo's ploy

23 *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."*

24 *So the king said, "Bring me a sword," and they brought a sword before the king.* 25 *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).

לְאֶחָת: כו וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר־בְּנָהּ הַחַי אֶל־
הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּי־נִכְמְרוּ רַחֲמֶיהָ עַל־בְּנָהּ וַתֹּאמֶר | בִּי
אֲדֹנִי תְּנוּ־לָהּ אֶת־הַיָּלוּד הַחַי וְהָמֵת אַל־תְּמִיתֻהוּ
וְזֹאת אֹמֶרֶת גַּם־לִי גַּם־לָךְ לֹא יִהְיֶה גְּזֹרוּ: כז וַיַּעַן
הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר תְּנוּ־לָהּ אֶת־הַיָּלוּד הַחַי וְהָמֵת לֹא
תְמִיתֻהוּ הִיא אִמּוֹ: כח וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ כָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־
הַמִּשְׁפָּט אֲשֶׁר שָׁפַט הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּרְאוּ מִפְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ
כִּי רָאוּ כִּי־חָכְמַת אֱלֹהִים בְּקִרְבּוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט:
ד א וַיְהִי הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה מֶלֶךְ עַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Identity of the true mother is established

the living child in two and give half to one (woman) and the other half to the other (woman).

[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. [4:1] Then King Shlomo reigned over all Israel (for all the people willingly accepted his sovereignty).

VAYIGASH / ויגש

(Ezekiel 37:15 – 28)

לז טו וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר: טז וְאַתָּה בֶן־אָדָם
קַח־לְךָ עֵץ אֶחָד וּכְתֹב עָלָיו לִיהוּדָה וְלִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
חֲבֵרָיו [חברו כ׳] וּלְקַח עֵץ אֶחָד וּכְתוֹב עָלָיו לְיוֹסֵף עֵץ
אֶפְרַיִם וְכָל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲבֵרָיו [חברו כ׳] : יז וְקָרַב
אֹתָם אֶחָד אֶל־אֶחָד לְךָ לְעֵץ אֶחָד וְהָיוּ לַאֲחָדִים
בְּיָדֶךָ: יח וַאֲשֶׁר יֹאמְרוּ אֵלֶיךָ בְּנֵי עַמְּךָ לֵאמֹר
הֲלוֹא־תַגִּיד לָנוּ מָה־אֵלֶּה לָךְ: יט דַּבֵּר אֲלֵהֶם
כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יֱהוִה הִנֵּה אֲנִי לֹקֵחַ אֶת־עֵץ יוֹסֵף
אֲשֶׁר בְּיַד־אֶפְרַיִם וְשִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲבֵרָיו [חברו כ׳]
וְנָתַתִּי אוֹתָם עָלָיו אֶת־עֵץ יְהוּדָה וַעֲשִׂיתִם לְעֵץ
אֶחָד וְהָיוּ אֶחָד בְּיָדִי: כ וְהָיוּ הָעֵצִים אֲשֶׁר־תִּכְתָּב
עֲלֵיהֶם בְּיָדֶךָ לְעֵינֵיהֶם: כא וְדַבֵּר אֲלֵיהֶם כֹּה־אָמַר
אֲדֹנָי יֱהוִה הִנֵּה אֲנִי לֹקֵחַ אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִבֵּין
הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר הָלְכוּ־שָׁם וְקִבַּצְתִּי אֹתָם מִסָּבִיב

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.

25. גְּזֹרוּ אֶת הַיֶּלֶד הַחַי לִשְׁנַיִם—*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

וְהֵבֵאתִי אוֹתָם אֶל־אַדְמָתָם: כב וְעָשִׂיתִי אֹתָם לְגוֹי
אֶחָד בָּאָרֶץ בְּהָרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמֶלֶךְ אֶחָד יִהְיֶה לְכֻלָּם
לְמֶלֶךְ וְלֹא יִהְיוּ־ [יהיה כ׳] עוֹד לִשְׁנֵי גוֹיִם וְלֹא יֵחָצוּ
עוֹד לִשְׁתֵּי מַמְלָכוֹת עוֹד: כג וְלֹא יִטַּמְּאוּ עוֹד
בְּגִלּוּלֵיהֶם וּבְשִׁקּוּצֵיהֶם וּבְכֹל פִּשְׁעֵיהֶם וְהוֹשַׁעְתִּי
אוֹתָם מִכֹּל מוֹשְׁבֹתֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר חָטְאוּ בָהֶם וְטִהַרְתִּי
אוֹתָם וְהָיוּ־לִי לְעָם וַאֲנִי אֶהְיֶה לָהֶם לֵאלֹהִים:
כד וְעַבְדִּי דָוִד מֶלֶךְ עֲלֵיהֶם וְרוֹעֶה אֶחָד יִהְיֶה לְכֻלָּם
וּבְמִשְׁפָּטַי יֵלֵכוּ וְחֻקֹּתַי יִשְׁמְרוּ וְעָשׂוּ אוֹתָם: כה וְיָשְׁבוּ
עַל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְעַבְדִּי לְיַעֲקֹב אֲשֶׁר
יָשְׁבוּ־בָהּ אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם וְיָשְׁבוּ עָלֶיהָ הֵמָּה וּבְנֵיהֶם וּבְנֵי
בְנֵיהֶם עַד־עוֹלָם וְדָוִד עַבְדִּי נָשִׂיא לָהֶם לְעוֹלָם:
כו וְכָרַתִּי לָהֶם בְּרִית שָׁלוֹם בְּרִית עוֹלָם יִהְיֶה אוֹתָם
וְנָתַתִּים וְהִרְבֵּיתִי אוֹתָם וְנָתַתִּי אֶת־מִקְדָּשִׁי בְּתוֹכָם
לְעוֹלָם: כז וְהָיָה מִשְׁכָּנִי עֲלֵיהֶם וְהָיִיתִי לָהֶם
לֵאלֹהִים וְהֵמָּה יִהְיוּ־לִי לְעָם: כח וְיָדְעוּ הַגּוֹיִם כִּי
אֲנִי יְהוָה מְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּהְיוֹת מִקְדָּשִׁי
בְּתוֹכָם לְעוֹלָם:

[22] *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.* [23] *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).”*

Fusion of the two kingdoms

[24] *“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.* [25] *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

[26] *“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.* [27] *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

[28] *“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 א וַיִּקְרְבוּ יְמֵי־דָוִד לָמוּת וַיְצַו אֶת־שְׁלֹמֹה בְנוֹ
לֵאמֹר: ב אָנֹכִי הֹלֵךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ וְחָזַקְתָּ וְהָיִיתָ
לְאִישׁ: ג וְשָׁמַרְתָּ אֶת־מִשְׁמֶרֶת | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לָלֶכֶת
בִּדְרָכָיו לִשְׁמֹר חֻקָּתָיו מִצְוֹתָיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו וְעֵדְוֹתָיו*

*pronounced *“aidvosav”*

2:1 *The time of David’s death drew near. He instructed his son Shlomo, saying,* [2] *“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).* [3] *Look after the things that God, your God (said to) safeguard, so as to follow His ways*

King David’s last wishes

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. וְדָוִד עַבְדִּי נָשִׂיא לָהֶם 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.

כַּכָּתוּב בְּתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה לְמַעַן תַּשְׂכִּיל אֶת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר
תַּעֲשֶׂה וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר תִּפְנֶה שָּׁם: ד לְמַעַן יָקִים
יְהוָה אֶת־דְּבָרוֹ אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר עָלַי לֵאמֹר אִם־יִשְׁמְרוּ
בָנֶיךָ אֶת־דַּרְכָּם לָלֶכֶת לְפָנַי בֶּאֱמֶת בְּכָל־לְבָבָם
וּבְכָל־נַפְשָׁם לֵאמֹר לֹא־יִכָּרֵת לְךָ אִישׁ מֵעַל כִּסֵּא
יִשְׂרָאֵל: ה וְגַם אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ אֵת אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה לִי יוֹאָב
בֶּן־צְרוּיָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לִשְׁנֵי־שָׂרֵי צִבְאוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל
לְאַבְנֵר בֶּן־נֵר וְלַעֲמָשָׂא בֶן־יֶתֶר וַיַּהַרְגֵם וַיָּשֶׂם
דְּמֵי־מִלְחָמָה בְּשָׁלֹם וַיִּתֵּן דְּמֵי מִלְחָמָה בַּחֲגֹרָתוֹ
אֲשֶׁר בְּמָתְנָיו וּבְנַעֲלוֹ אֲשֶׁר בְּרַגְלָיו: ו וְעָשִׂיתָ
כְּחָכְמָתֶךָ וְלֹא־תוֹרֵד שֵׂיבָתוֹ בְּשָׁלֹם שְׁאוֹל: ז וְלִבְנֵי
בַרְזִלַּי הַגִּלְעָדִי תַּעֲשֶׂה־חֶסֶד וְהָיוּ בְּאֹכְלֵי שֻׁלְחָנֶךָ
כִּי־כֵן קָרְבוּ אֵלַי בְּבָרְחִי מִפְּנֵי אַבְשָׁלוֹם אָחִיךָ:
ח וְהִנֵּה עִמְּךָ שִׁמְעִי בֶן־גֵּרָא בֶּן־הַיְמִינִי מִבַּחֻרִים
וְהוּא קִלַּלַנִי קְלָלָה נִמְרֶצֶת בְּיוֹם לֶכְתִּי מַחֲנָיִם
וְהוּא־יָרַד לִקְרָאתִי הַיַּרְדֵּן וָאֶשָּׁבַע לוֹ בַיהוָה לֵאמֹר
אִם־אֲמִיתְךָ בֶּחָרֶב: ט וְעַתָּה אַל־תְּנַקֵּהוּ כִּי אִישׁ
חָכָם אָתָּה וְיָדַעְתָּ אֵת אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה־לּוֹ וְהוֹרַדְתָּ
אֶת־שֵׂיבָתוֹ בְּדָם שְׁאוֹל: י וַיִּשְׁכַּב דָּוִד עִם־אֲבֹתָיו
וַיִּקָּבֵר בְּעִיר דָּוִד: יא וְהַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר מָלַךְ דָּוִד
עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה בְּחֶבְרוֹן מָלַךְ שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים
וּבִירוּשָׁלַם מָלַךְ שְׁלֹשִׁים וְשָׁלֹשׁ שָׁנִים: יב וּשְׁלֹמֹה
יָשַׁב עַל־כִּסֵּא דָּוִד אָבִיו וַתִּכֹּן מַלְכֻתוֹ מְאֹד:

(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. [4] *(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.'"*

Spiritual advice

Political advice

[5] *"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.* [6] *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).*

[7] *"Act kindly to the sons of Barzilay 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."*

[8] *"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).* [9] *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

[10] *David then lay with his fathers, and he was buried in the City of David.* [11] *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.*

[12] *Shlomo then sat on the throne of his father, David, and his sovereignty was firmly established.*

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 יח וַיֹּאמֶר־לוֹ יְהוֹנָתָן מָחָר חֹדֶשׁ וְנִפְקַדְתָּ כִּי יִפָּקֵד
מוֹשָׁבֶךָ: יט וְשִׁלַּשְׁתָּ תֵּרֵד מְאֹד וּבָאתָ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם
אֲשֶׁר־נִסְתַּרְתָּ שָּׁם בְּיוֹם הַמַּעֲשֶׂה וְיָשַׁבְתָּ אֵצֶל
הָאֶבֶן הָאָזֶל: כ וַאֲנִי שְׁלֹשֶׁת הַחִצִּים צִדָּה אוֹרֶה
לְשַׁלַּח־לִי לְמַטָּרָה: כא וְהִנֵּה אֶשְׁלַח אֶת־הַנַּעַר לֵךְ
מְצָא אֶת־הַחִצִּים אִם־אָמֹר אֹמַר לַנַּעַר הִנֵּה
הַחִצִּים | מִמְּךָ וָהֵנָּה קָחֶנּוּ | וָבֹאָה כִּי־שָׁלוֹם לְךָ וְאֵין
דָּבָר חַי־יְהוָה: כב וְאִם־כֹּה אֹמַר לָעֶלֶם הִנֵּה הַחִצִּים
מִמְּךָ וָהָלְאָה לֵךְ כִּי שִׁלַּחֲךָ יְהוָה: כג וְהַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר
דִּבַּרְנוּ אֲנִי וָאַתָּה הִנֵּה יְהוָה בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ עַד־עוֹלָם:
כד וַיִּסָּתֵר דָּוִד בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיְהִי הַחֹדֶשׁ וַיֵּשֶׁב הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל־
[על כ׳] הַלֶּחֶם לֶאֱכוֹל: כה וַיֵּשֶׁב הַמֶּלֶךְ עַל־מוֹשָׁבוֹ כְּפַעַם |
בְּפַעַם אֶל־מוֹשַׁב הַקִּיר וַיָּקָם יְהוֹנָתָן וַיֵּשֶׁב אַבְנֵר
מִצַּד שָׁאוּל וַיִּפָּקֵד מְקוֹם דָּוִד: כו וְלֹא־דִבֶּר שָׁאוּל
מְאוּמָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא כִּי אָמַר מִקְרֶה הוּא בִּלְתִּי
טָהוֹר הוּא כִּי־לֹא טָהוֹר: כז וַיְהִי מִמָּחֳרַת הַחֹדֶשׁ
הַשֵּׁנִי וַיִּפָּקֵד מְקוֹם דָּוִד וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁאוּל אֶל־יְהוֹנָתָן
בְּנוֹ מַדּוּעַ לֹא־בָא בֶן־יִשַׁי גַּם־תְּמוֹל גַּם־הַיּוֹם
אֶל־הַלָּחֶם: כח וַיַּעַן יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת־שָׁאוּל נִשְׁאֹל נִשְׁאַל
דָּוִד מֵעִמָּדִי עַד־בֵּית לָחֶם: כט וַיֹּאמֶר שַׁלְּחֵנִי נָא כִּי

20:18 Yonasan said to (David), "Tomorrow is the (first of the) new month. You shall be missed, because your seat will be empty. 19 For three (days) you should go down (and hide yourself) well. Come to the place where you hid on the day of the incident (when the King swore to me not to kill you), and sit by the traveler's (marker) stone.

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 (*Hisvaduyos* 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,

זֶּבַח מִשְׁפָּחָה לָּנוּ בָּעִיר וְהוּא צִוָּה־לִי אָחִי וְעַתָּה
אִם־מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ אִמָּלְטָה נָּא וְאֶרְאֶה
אֶת־אֶחָי עַל־כֵּן לֹא־בָא אֶל־שֻׁלְחַן הַמֶּלֶךְ:
ל וַיִּחַר־אַף שָׁאוּל בְּיהוֹנָתָן וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ בֶּן־נַעֲוַת
הַמַּרְדּוּת הֲלוֹא יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־בוֹחֵר אַתָּה לְבֶן־יִשַׁי
לְבָשְׁתְּךָ וּלְבֹשֶׁת עֶרְוַת אִמֶּךָ: לא כִּי כָל־הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר
בֶּן־יִשַׁי חַי עַל־הָאֲדָמָה לֹא תִכּוֹן אַתָּה וּמַלְכוּתֶךָ
וְעַתָּה שְׁלַח וְקַח אֹתוֹ אֵלַי כִּי בֶן־מָוֶת הוּא: לב וַיַּעַן
יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת־שָׁאוּל אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו לָמָּה יוּמַת מֶה
עָשָׂה: לג וַיָּטֶל שָׁאוּל אֶת־הַחֲנִית עָלָיו לְהַכֹּתוֹ וַיֵּדַע
יְהוֹנָתָן כִּי־כָלָה הִיא מֵעִם אָבִיו לְהָמִית אֶת־דָּוִד:
לד וַיָּקָם יְהוֹנָתָן מֵעִם הַשֻּׁלְחָן בְּחָרִי־אָף וְלֹא־אָכַל
בְּיוֹם־הַחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי לֶחֶם כִּי נֶעְצַב אֶל־דָּוִד כִּי
הִכְלְמוֹ אָבִיו: לה וַיְהִי בַבֹּקֶר וַיֵּצֵא יְהוֹנָתָן הַשָּׂדֶה
לְמוֹעֵד דָּוִד וְנַעַר קָטֹן עִמּוֹ: לו וַיֹּאמֶר לְנַעֲרוֹ רֻץ
מְצָא־נָא אֶת־הַחִצִּים אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מוֹרֶה הַנַּעַר רָץ
וְהוּא־יָרָה הַחֵצִי לְהַעֲבִרוֹ: לז וַיָּבֹא הַנַּעַר עַד־מְקוֹם
הַחֵצִי אֲשֶׁר יָרָה יְהוֹנָתָן וַיִּקְרָא יְהוֹנָתָן אַחֲרֵי הַנַּעַר
וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלוֹא הַחֵצִי מִמְּךָ וָהָלְאָה: לח וַיִּקְרָא יְהוֹנָתָן
אַחֲרֵי הַנַּעַר מְהֵרָה חוּשָׁה אַל־תַּעֲמֹד וַיְלַקֵּט נַעַר
יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת־הַחִצִּים [והחצי כ'] וַיָּבֹא אֶל־אֲדֹנָיו: לט וְהַנַּעַר
לֹא־יָדַע מְאוּמָה אַךְ יְהוֹנָתָן וְדָוִד יָדְעוּ אֶת־הַדָּבָר:
מ וַיִּתֵּן יְהוֹנָתָן אֶת־כֵּלָיו אֶל־הַנַּעַר אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר
לוֹ לֵךְ הָבֵיא הָעִיר: מא הַנַּעַר בָּא וְדָוִד קָם מֵאֵצֶל
הַנֶּגֶב וַיִּפֹּל לְאַפָּיו אַרְצָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ שָׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים
וַיִּשְּׁקוּ | אִישׁ אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ וַיִּבְכּוּ אִישׁ אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ

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

[30] *Sha'ul became furious with Yonasan, and he said to him, "You are the son of a sinful and rebellious woman! Do I not know that you have chosen the son of Yishai (for the monarchy) to your own shame, and to the shame of your mother's nakedness (for the fact that you prefer that my enemy will lead people to suspect that you are not my son)?* [31] *For as long as the son of Yishai lives on the earth, you shall not be established, nor your Kingdom. Now (since you sent him away) send (for him) and fetch him to me, for he deserves death."*

[32] *Yonasan answered Sha'ul, his father, and said to him, "Why should he be killed? What has he done?"*

[33] *Sha'ul raised a spear to strike him. Yonasan realized that his father was determined to slay David.*

[34] *Yonasan rose from the table in fierce anger. He ate no food on the second day of the new moon, for he was upset for David, and his father had put him to shame (by insulting and threatening him).*

[35] *In the morning, that Yonasan went out to the field to the appointed place (he had arranged) with David, and a young lad was with him.* [36] *He said to his lad, "Run! Find now the arrows which I shoot." As the lad ran (for the first arrow), he shot an arrow beyond him.*

Yonasan gives the sign

[37] *When the lad came to the place of the (first) arrow which Yonasan had shot, Yonasan called out after the lad and said, "Isn't the (last) arrow beyond you?"*

[38] *Yonasan called out after the lad, "Go quickly! Hurry (after the second arrow). Don't stay (by the first)!"*

Yonasan's lad gathered up (both) the arrows, and came to his master. [39] *The lad knew nothing (about the sign). Only Yonasan and David knew the matter.*

[40] *Yonasan gave his bow and arrows to his lad, and said to him,"Go and carry them to the city."* [41] *As soon as the lad had gone (towards the city), David (understood that it was safe and) stood up from near the south (side of the stone). He fell on his face to the ground, and prostrated himself three times. They kissed*

swearing an oath "*between my descendants and your descendants forever*'" (41-42).

21. הַחִצִּים מִמְּךָ וגו'—*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־דָּוִד הִגְדִּיל: מב וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹנָתָן לְדָוִד לֵךְ לְשָׁלוֹם
אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְנוּ שְׁנֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה לֵאמֹר יְהוָה
יִהְיֶה | בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ וּבֵין זַרְעִי וּבֵין זַרְעֲךָ עַד־עוֹלָם:

one another, and wept with one another, until David (wept) greatly (more than Yonasan).

Yonasan gives the sign

[42] *Yonasan said to David, "Go in peace, as both of us have sworn in the name of God, saying, 'God be (a witness) between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants forever.'"*

שבת ראש חודש / Shabbos Rosh Chodesh

(Isaiah 66:1-24, ibid. 23)

The *Maftir* reading for *Shabbos Rosh Chodesh* is on page 403. (*Bamidbar* 28:9-15).

סו א כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּסְאִי וְהָאָרֶץ הֲדֹם
רַגְלָי אֵי־זֶה בַּיִת אֲשֶׁר תִּבְנוּ־לִי וְאֵי־זֶה מָקוֹם
מְנוּחָתִי: ב וְאֶת־כָּל־אֵלֶּה יָדִי עָשָׂתָה וַיִּהְיוּ כָל־אֵלֶּה
נְאֻם־יְהוָה וְאֶל־זֶה אַבִּיט אֶל־עָנִי וּנְכֵה־רוּחַ וְחָרֵד
עַל־דְּבָרִי: ג שׁוֹחֵט הַשּׁוֹר מַכֵּה־אִישׁ זוֹבֵחַ הַשֶּׂה
עֹרֵף כֶּלֶב מַעֲלֵה מִנְחָה דַּם־חֲזִיר מַזְכִּיר לְבֹנָה
מְבָרֵךְ אָוֶן גַּם־הֵמָּה בָּחֲרוּ בִּדְרָכֵיהֶם וּבְשִׁקּוּצֵיהֶם
נַפְשָׁם חָפֵצָה: ד גַּם־אֲנִי אֶבְחַר בְּתַעֲלֻלֵיהֶם
וּמְגוּרֹתָם אָבִיא לָהֶם יַעַן קָרָאתִי וְאֵין עוֹנֶה דִּבַּרְתִּי
וְלֹא שָׁמֵעוּ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ הָרַע בְּעֵינַי וּבַאֲשֶׁר לֹא־חָפַצְתִּי
בָּחָרוּ: ה שִׁמְעוּ דְבַר־יְהוָה הַחֲרֵדִים אֶל־דְּבָרוֹ אָמְרוּ
אֲחֵיכֶם שֹׂנְאֵיכֶם מְנַדֵּיכֶם לְמַעַן שְׁמִי יִכְבַּד יְהוָה

God is everywhere

66:1 *This is what God said: "The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool, (so) what house could you build (worthy) for Me, and what place (is worthy for) My (Presence to) rest? [2] My hand has made all these things (Heaven and earth), and (therefore) all these things came into being," says God. "But (even though I am so exalted), to this I will pay attention: to he who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at My word. [3] "However, he who kills an ox (offering his sacrifice without trembling at My word) it is as if he slew a man. He who sacrifices a lamb (without trembling), is as if he cut off a dog's neck. He who offers a meal-offering (without trembling), is as if he offered swine's blood. He who burns incense (without trembling), is as if he blessed an idol. He who offers up frankincense (without trembling) is as if he offered an inappropriate gift. They have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations. [4] So too I will choose to mock them, and will bring their fears upon them, because when I called (to them through the prophets), none answered. When I spoke, they did not listen. They did evil before My eyes, and chose what I did not desire."*

God hates insincere service

[5] *"Hear the word of God, you who tremble at His word! Your (wicked) brothers who hate you and who ostracize you say, '(I*

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-worshipers 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 הֲדֹם רַגְלָי—*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

וְנִרְאֶה בְשִׂמְחַתְכֶם וְהֵם יֵבֹשׁוּ: ו קוֹל שָׁאוֹן מֵעִיר
קוֹל מֵהֵיכָל קוֹל יְהוָה מְשַׁלֵּם גְּמוּל לְאֹיְבָיו: ז בְּטֶרֶם
תָּחִיל יָלְדָה בְּטֶרֶם יָבוֹא חֶבֶל לָהּ וְהִמְלִיטָה זָכָר:
ח מִי־שָׁמַע כָּזֹאת מִי רָאָה כָּאֵלֶּה הֲיוּחַל אֶרֶץ בְּיוֹם
אֶחָד אִם־יִוָּלֵד גּוֹי פַּעַם אֶחָת כִּי־חָלָה גַם־יָלְדָה
צִיּוֹן אֶת־בָּנֶיהָ: ט הַאֲנִי אַשְׁבִּיר וְלֹא אוֹלִיד יֹאמַר
יְהוָה אִם־אֲנִי הַמּוֹלִיד וְעָצַרְתִּי אָמַר אֱלֹהָיִךְ:
י שִׂמְחוּ אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם וְגִילוּ בָהּ כָּל־אֹהֲבֶיהָ שִׂישׂוּ
אִתָּהּ מָשׂוֹשׂ כָּל־הַמִּתְאַבְּלִים עָלֶיהָ: יא לְמַעַן תִּינְקוּ
וּשְׂבַעְתֶּם מִשַּׁד תַּנְחֻמֶיהָ לְמַעַן תָּמְצוּ וְהִתְעַנַּגְתֶּם
מִזִּיז כְּבוֹדָהּ: יב כִּי־כֹה | אָמַר יְהוָה הִנְנִי נֹטֶה־אֵלֶיהָ
כְּנָהָר שָׁלוֹם וּכְנַחַל שוֹטֵף כְּבוֹד גּוֹיִם וִינַקְתֶּם
עַל־צַד תִּנָּשֵׂאוּ וְעַל־בִּרְכַּיִם תְּשָׁעֲשָׁעוּ: יג כְּאִישׁ
אֲשֶׁר אִמּוֹ תְנַחֲמֶנּוּ כֵּן אָנֹכִי אֲנַחֶמְכֶם וּבִירוּשָׁלַם
תְּנֻחָמוּ: יד וּרְאִיתֶם וְשָׂשׂ לִבְּכֶם וְעַצְמוֹתֵיכֶם כַּדֶּשֶׁא
תִּפְרַחְנָה וְנוֹדְעָה יַד־יְהוָה אֶת־עֲבָדָיו וְזָעַם
אֶת־אֹיְבָיו: טו כִּי־הִנֵּה יְהוָה בָּאֵשׁ יָבוֹא וְכַסּוּפָה
מַרְכְּבֹתָיו לְהָשִׁיב בְּחֵמָה אַפּוֹ וְגַעֲרָתוֹ בְּלַהֲבֵי־אֵשׁ:
טז כִּי בָאֵשׁ יְהוָה נִשְׁפָּט וּבְחַרְבּוֹ אֶת־כָּל־בָּשָׂר וְרַבּוּ
חַלְלֵי יְהוָה: יז הַמִּתְקַדְּשִׁים וְהַמִּטַּהֲרִים אֶל־הַגַּנּוֹת
אַחַר אַחַת (אחד כ׳) בַּתָּוֶךְ אֹכְלֵי בְשַׂר הַחֲזִיר וְהַשֶּׁקֶץ
וְהָעַכְבָּר יַחְדָּו יָסָפּוּ נְאֻם־יְהוָה: יח וְאָנֹכִי מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם
וּמַחְשְׁבֹתֵיהֶם בָּאָה לְקַבֵּץ אֶת־כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם וְהַלְּשֹׁנוֹת
וּבָאוּ וְרָאוּ אֶת־כְּבוֹדִי: יט וְשַׂמְתִּי בָהֶם אוֹת וְשִׁלַּחְתִּי
מֵהֶם | פְּלֵיטִים אֶל־הַגּוֹיִם תַּרְשִׁישׁ פּוּל וְלוּד מֹשְׁכֵי

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. [6] *(Then there will be) a voice of rumbling from the city (of Tziyon), a voice from the Temple, the voice of God rendering recompense to his enemies (Gog and Magog)."*

Tziyon will have no labor pains

[7] *"Before she (Tziyon) feels labor pains she will give birth. Before her labor pain will come, she will be delivered a son.* [8] *Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such a thing? Has a land gone through its labor in one day? Has a nation been born all at once, for Tziyon labored and gave birth to her children?* [9] *Shall I bring to the birthstool, and not cause her to give birth?" says God. "Shall I, who cause birth, hold back?" says your God.*

Jerusalem will rejoice

[10] *"Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all you who love her (to see her rebuilt). Rejoice for joy with her, all you who mourn for her (in her destruction),* [11] *so that you may (be rewarded to) nurse, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations. That you may drink deeply, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.* [12] *For this is what God says: 'Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the wealth of the nations (will rush to her) like a flowing stream. (You who mourned for her) shall (be rewarded) to draw (effortlessly from) the wealth of the nations. You shall be (honored by the nations, like a baby who is) carried on (its mother's) sides, and dandled on her knees.* [13] *Like one whom his mother comforts, so will I comfort you, and you shall be comforted in Jerusalem (for your suffering).* [14] *When you see (Jerusalem rebuilt), your heart will rejoice, and (the health of) your bones will (be strengthened) like flourishing grass. The (mighty) Hand of God will be known to His servants, and His anger toward His enemies.*

Gog and Magog destroyed

[15] *For, behold, God will come with fire (to destroy the armies of Gog and Magog), and with His chariots like a storm to repay (His enemies) with fury. His rebuke (will be) with flames of fire.* [16] *For by fire God will execute judgment, and by His sword upon all flesh. The slain by God will be many."*

[17] *"Those who prepare and purify themselves (to go) to the gardens (of idolatry, one group) after another (to worship the idol) in the center (of the garden); those who eat swine's flesh, abominable creatures, and mice—they will all perish together," says God.* [18] *"I (know) their works and their thoughts. (The time) has come, that I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see My glory.* [19] *I will scar them, but from them I will let survivors escape to the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, the archers, to Tuval, and Yavan, to far off islands, that have not heard My fame, nor have they seen My glory. They shall*

Nations will return

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*

קֶשֶׁת תֶּבַל וְיוָן הָאִיִּים הָרְחֹקִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־שָׁמְעוּ
אֶת־שִׁמְעִי וְלֹא־רָאוּ אֶת־כְּבוֹדִי וְהִגִּידוּ אֶת־כְּבוֹדִי
בַּגּוֹיִם: כ וְהֵבִיאוּ אֶת־כָּל־אֲחֵיכֶם מִכָּל־הַגּוֹיִם |
מִנְחָה | לַיהוָה בַּסּוּסִים וּבָרֶכֶב וּבַצַּבִּים וּבַפְּרָדִים
וּבִכְרָכֹרוֹת עַל הַר קָדְשִׁי יְרוּשָׁלַם אָמַר יְהוָה
כַּאֲשֶׁר יָבִיאוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה בִּכְלִי טָהוֹר
בֵּית יְהוָה: כא וְגַם־מֵהֶם אֶקַּח לַכֹּהֲנִים לַלְוִיִּם אָמַר
יְהוָה: כב כִּי כַאֲשֶׁר הַשָּׁמַיִם הֶחָדָשִׁים וְהָאָרֶץ
הַחֲדָשָׁה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה עֹמְדִים לְפָנַי נְאֻם־יְהוָה כֵּן
יַעֲמֹד זַרְעֲכֶם וְשִׁמְכֶם: כג וְהָיָה מִדֵּי־חֹדֶשׁ בְּחָדְשׁוֹ
וּמִדֵּי שַׁבָּת בְּשַׁבַּתּוֹ יָבוֹא כָל־בָּשָׂר לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְפָנַי
אָמַר יְהוָה: כד וְיָצְאוּ וְרָאוּ בְּפִגְרֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים הַפֹּשְׁעִים
בִּי כִּי תוֹלַעְתָּם לֹא תָמוּת וְאִשָּׁם לֹא תִכְבֶּה וְהָיוּ
דֵרָאוֹן לְכָל־בָּשָׂר: כה וְהָיָה מִדֵּי־חֹדֶשׁ בְּחָדְשׁוֹ וּמִדֵּי
שַׁבָּת בְּשַׁבַּתּוֹ יָבוֹא כָל־בָּשָׂר לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְפָנַי
אָמַר יְהוָה:

declare My glory among the nations. [20] *They will (then) bring all your brothers from all nations as an offering to God, on horses, in chariots, in covered wagons, on mules and with songs and dances to My holy mountain in Jerusalem," says God, "just as (respectfully as) the people of Israel bring an offering in a pure utensil to the House of God.*

New priests

[21] *From them too I will take to be priests and Levites (even though they will have forgotten their lineage)," says God.* [22] *"For just as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make (in those days), shall remain before Me, says God, so shall your descendants and your name remain (forever)."*

Worship on every new month

[23] *"It will then be, that every (first of the) new month, and every Shabbos, all mankind shall come to worship before Me (in the holy Temple)," says God.* [24] *The (non-Jews) shall go out (of Jerusalem, to the valley of Yehoshafat), and look upon the corpses of the men (of Gog and Magog) who have rebelled against Me, for the worms (that eat them) will not die, and the fire (that burns them) shall not be extinguished. They shall be a (symbol of) disgrace to all mankind."*

[23] *"It will then be, that every (first of the) new month, and every Shabbos, all flesh shall come to worship before Me," says God.*

If Sunday is also *Rosh Chodesh*, Chabad communities add (I Samuel 20:18,42):

יח וַיֹּאמֶר־לוֹ יְהוֹנָתָן מָחָר חֹדֶשׁ וְנִפְקַדְתָּ כִּי יִפָּקֵד
מוֹשָׁבֶךָ: מב וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹנָתָן לְדָוִד לֵךְ לְשָׁלוֹם אֲשֶׁר
נִשְׁבַּעְנוּ שְׁנֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה לֵאמֹר יְהוָה יִהְיֶה |
בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ וּבֵין זַרְעִי וּבֵין זַרְעֶךָ עַד־עוֹלָם:

[20:18] *Yonasan said to (David), "Tomorrow is the (first of the) new month. You shall be missed, because your seat will be empty.*

[42] *Yonasan said to David, "Go in peace, as both of us have sworn in the name of God, saying, 'God be (a witness) between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants forever.'"*

CHANUKAH (FIRST SHABBOS) / שבת חנוכה (א)

(Zechariah 2:14 – 4:7)

The *Maftir* readings for *Shabbos Chanukah* I are on page 403-4.

ב יד רָנִּי וְשִׂמְחִי בַּת־צִיּוֹן כִּי הִנְנִי־בָא וְשָׁכַנְתִּי
בְתוֹכֵךְ נְאֻם־יְהוָה: טו וְנִלְווּ גוֹיִם רַבִּים אֶל־יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם

[2:14] *"Sing and rejoice, daughter of Tziyon, for I am coming (to Jerusalem) and I will dwell in your midst," says God.* [15] *"Many nations will attach 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).

הַהֽוּא וְהָיוּ לִי לְעָם וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְתוֹכֵךְ וְיָדַעַתְּ כִּי־יְהוָה
צְבָאוֹת שְׁלָחַנִי אֵלָיִךְ: טז וְנָחַל יְהוָה אֶת־יְהוּדָה
חֶלְקוֹ עַל אַדְמַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ וּבָחַר עוֹד בִּירוּשָׁלִָם: יז הַס
כָּל־בָּשָׂר מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה כִּי נֵעוֹר מִמְּעוֹן קָדְשׁוֹ:
ג א וַיַּרְאֵנִי אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל עֹמֵד לִפְנֵי
מַלְאַךְ יְהוָה וְהַשָּׂטָן עֹמֵד עַל־יְמִינוֹ לְשִׂטְנוֹ: ב וַיֹּאמֶר
יְהוָה אֶל־הַשָּׂטָן יִגְעַר יְהוָה בְּךָ הַשָּׂטָן וְיִגְעַר יְהוָה
בְּךָ הַבֹּחֵר בִּירוּשָׁלִָם הֲלוֹא זֶה אוּד מֻצָּל מֵאֵשׁ:
ג וִיהוֹשֻׁעַ הָיָה לָבֻשׁ בְּגָדִים צוֹאִים וְעֹמֵד לִפְנֵי
הַמַּלְאָךְ: ד וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָעֹמְדִים לְפָנָיו לֵאמֹר
הָסִירוּ הַבְּגָדִים הַצֹּאִים מֵעָלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו רְאֵה
הֶעֱבַרְתִּי מֵעָלֶיךָ עֲוֹנֶךָ וְהַלְבֵּשׁ אֹתְךָ מַחֲלָצוֹת:
ה וָאֹמַר יָשִׂימוּ צָנִיף טָהוֹר עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ וַיָּשִׂימוּ הַצָּנִיף
הַטָּהוֹר עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ וַיַּלְבִּשֻׁהוּ בְּגָדִים וּמַלְאַךְ יְהוָה
עֹמֵד: ו וַיָּעַד מַלְאַךְ יְהוָה בִּיהוֹשֻׁעַ לֵאמֹר:
ז כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אִם־בִּדְרָכַי תֵּלֵךְ וְאִם
אֶת־מִשְׁמַרְתִּי תִשְׁמֹר וְגַם־אַתָּה תָּדִין אֶת־בֵּיתִי

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

[16] *God will let Yehudah take possession of his position in the Holy Land (never to be exiled again), and (God) will once again choose Yerushalayim (to have His Shechinah dwell there).* [17] *Be silent before God (all you nations! Never again speak badly of the Jewish people), for (then) He will be roused from His holy abode (to exact retribution on the nations).*

The First Vision: High Priest in "Soiled Garments"

3:1 *(In the prophetic vision) He then showed me Yehoshua the High Priest standing before God's angel, with Satan standing at (Yehoshua's) right to incriminate him (for failing to rebuke his children when they married non-Jewish women).*

[2] *(An angel of) God said to Satan, "God will reprimand you, O Satan! He Who chooses Yerushalayim will reprimand you! Why, this (Yehoshua was miraculously saved like) a brand rescued from fire (so how can you prosecute him)?"*

[3] *Now, Yehoshua was wearing 'soiled clothes' (i.e. sins) while standing before the angel.* [4] *(The angel) spoke up loudly and said to (the other angels) standing before him, "Remove the 'soiled clothes' (i.e. the non-Jewish women) from his (sons)!"*

He said to him, "See, I have taken away your (past) sins from you and (when your current sins will cease you will see that) I am clothing you in beautiful clothes (i.e merits)."

[5] *Then I (prayed for Yehoshua), saying, "Let them place a pure (priestly) turban on his head (signifying that his descendants would inherit the priesthood." My prayer was immediately answered) and they put the pure turban on his head and clothed him in garments, while God's angel stood by.*

The Future

[6] *(Afterwards,) God's angel warned Yehoshua, saying,* [7] *"This is what the God of hosts said: 'If you(r children will) walk in My paths and keep the things (I told them) to keep, then you(r children) will (be appointed) to take charge of My house*

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 הֲלוֹא זֶה אוּד מֻצָּל 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 תִּשְׁמֹר אֶת־חֲצֵרִי וְנָתַתִּי לְךָ מַהְלְכִים בֵּין
הָעֹמְדִים הָאֵלֶּה: ח שְׁמַע־נָּא יְהוֹשֻׁעַ | הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל
אַתָּה וְרֵעֶיךָ הַיֹּשְׁבִים לְפָנֶיךָ כִּי־אַנְשֵׁי מוֹפֵת הֵמָּה
כִּי־הִנְנִי מֵבִיא אֶת־עַבְדִּי צֶמַח: ט כִּי | הִנֵּה הָאֶבֶן
אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לִפְנֵי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ עַל־אֶבֶן אַחַת שִׁבְעָה
עֵינָיִם הִנְנִי מְפַתֵּחַ פִּתֻּחָהּ נְאֻם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וּמַשְׁתִּי
אֶת־עֲוֹן הָאָרֶץ־הַהִיא בְּיוֹם אֶחָד: י בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא נְאֻם
יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת תִּקְרְאוּ אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ אֶל־תַּחַת גֶּפֶן
וְאֶל־תַּחַת תְּאֵנָה: ד א וַיָּשָׁב הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי
וַיְעִירֵנִי כְּאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־יֵעוֹר מִשְּׁנָתוֹ: ב וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי מָה
אַתָּה רֹאֶה וָאֹמַר [ויאמר כ׳] רָאִיתִי | וְהִנֵּה מְנוֹרַת זָהָב
כֻּלָּהּ וְגֻלָּהּ עַל־רֹאשָׁהּ וְשִׁבְעָה נֵרֹתֶיהָ עָלֶיהָ שִׁבְעָה
וְשִׁבְעָה מוּצָקוֹת לַנֵּרוֹת אֲשֶׁר עַל־רֹאשָׁהּ: ג וּשְׁנַיִם
זֵיתִים עָלֶיהָ אֶחָד מִימִין הַגֻּלָּה וְאֶחָד עַל־שְׂמֹאלָהּ:
ד וָאַעַן וָאֹמַר אֶל־הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי לֵאמֹר מָה־אֵלֶּה
אֲדֹנִי: ה וַיַּעַן הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי הֲלוֹא
יָדַעְתָּ מָה־הֵמָּה אֵלֶּה וָאֹמַר לֹא אֲדֹנִי: ו וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר
אֵלַי לֵאמֹר זֶה דְּבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־זְרֻבָּבֶל לֵאמֹר לֹא
בְחַיִל וְלֹא בְכֹחַ כִּי אִם־בְּרוּחִי אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת:
ז מִי־אַתָּה הַר־הַגָּדוֹל לִפְנֵי זְרֻבָּבֶל לְמִישׁוֹר וְהוֹצִיא
אֶת־הָאֶבֶן הָרֹאשָׁה תְּשֻׁאוֹת חֵן חֵן 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).'

[8] *Now listen Yehoshua, the High Priest! You and also your companions (who were saved from a fiery furnace) who sit before you, for they are people (worthy) of miracles. Look! I will bring My servant Tzemach (i.e. Mashiach).'"*

[9] *"Here is the (foundation) stone (of the Third Temple) that I will place before Yehoshua('s descendant, the High Priest, for him to place. There will be) seven eyes (guarding) a single stone (of the Temple, from Above). I will (participate in the construction of the Temple by) engraving inscriptions (on its stones)," says the God of hosts, "and I will remove the sin of that land in one day.*
[10] *On that day," says the God of hosts, "you will invite each other to come and (take shade) under the vines and under the fig trees (to enjoy the bountiful goodness which will then be)."*

Second vision: the Menorah

[4:1] *Then, the angel that spoke with me returned and roused me, like a man woken from his sleep.*
[2] *"What do you see (in your prophetic vision)?" he asked me.*

I said, "I see a Menorah made entirely of gold, with a bowl on its top (containing oil). It has seven lamps, and each (of these lamps) that are on its top has seven pipes (to carry the oil from the bowl). [3] *Near it are two olive (trees), one to the right of the bowl and one to its left."*

[4] *Then I spoke up and asked the angel that spoke with me, "My master, what are these (alluding to)?"*
[5] *"Don't you know what they are?" replied the angel that spoke with me.*

"No, my master!" I said.

Mashiach's power

[6] *Then he answered me as follows, "This is the word of God about (Mashiach, a descendant of) Zerubavel: 'Not by (his) might, nor by (his) power (will the nations become subservient to Mashiach), but rather (it will be effortless, like the kindling of a Menorah,) through My spirit (by which I will subdue the nations),' says the God of hosts.*
[7] *'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!"'"*

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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 לְךָ מַהְלְכִים בֵּין הָעֹמְדִים 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):

א כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּסְאִי וְהָאָרֶץ הֲדֹם רַגְלָי
אֵי־זֶה בַּיִת אֲשֶׁר תִּבְנוּ־לִי וְאֵי־זֶה מָקוֹם מְנוּחָתִי:
כג וְהָיָה מִדֵּי־חֹדֶשׁ בְּחָדְשׁוֹ וּמִדֵּי שַׁבָּת בְּשַׁבַּתּוֹ יָבוֹא
כָל־בָּשָׂר לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְפָנַי אָמַר יְהוָה: כד וְיָצְאוּ
וְרָאוּ בְּפִגְרֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים הַפֹּשְׁעִים בִּי כִּי תוֹלַעְתָּם לֹא
תָמוּת וְאִשָּׁם לֹא תִכְבֶּה וְהָיוּ דֵרָאוֹן לְכָל־בָּשָׂר:
כג וְהָיָה מִדֵּי־חֹדֶשׁ בְּחָדְשׁוֹ וּמִדֵּי שַׁבָּת בְּשַׁבַּתּוֹ יָבוֹא
כָל־בָּשָׂר לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְפָנַי אָמַר יְהוָה:

יח וַיֹּאמֶר־לוֹ יְהוֹנָתָן מָחָר חֹדֶשׁ וְנִפְקַדְתָּ כִּי יִפָּקֵד
מוֹשָׁבֶךָ: מב וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹנָתָן לְדָוִד לֵךְ לְשָׁלוֹם אֲשֶׁר
נִשְׁבַּעְנוּ שְׁנֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה לֵאמֹר יְהוָה יִהְיֶה |
בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ וּבֵין זַרְעִי וּבֵין זַרְעֲךָ עַד־עוֹלָם:

66:1 This is what God said: "The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool, (so) what house could you build (worthy) for Me, and what place (is worthy for) My (Presence to) rest? 23 *"It will then be, that every (first of the) new month, and every Shabbos, all mankind shall come to worship before Me (in the holy Temple)," says God.* 24 *The (non-Jews) shall go out (of Jerusalem, to the valley of Yehoshafat), and look upon the corpses of the men (of Gog and Magog) who have rebelled against Me, for the worms (that eat them) will not die, and the fire (that burns them) shall not be extinguished. They shall be a (symbol of) disgrace to all mankind.* 23 *It will then be, that every (first of the) new month, and every Shabbos, all flesh shall come to worship before Me," says God.*

20:18 Yonasan said to (David), "Tomorrow is the (first of the) new month. You shall be missed, because your seat will be empty. 42 *Yonasan said to David, "Go in peace, as both of us have sworn in the name of God, saying, 'God be (a witness) between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants forever.'"*

CHANUKAH (SECOND SHABBOS) / שבת חנוכה (ב)

(Kings I 7:40 – 50)

The *Maftir* reading for *Shabbos Chanukah* II is on page 404.

ז מ וַיַּעַשׂ חִירוֹם אֶת־הַכִּיֹּרוֹת וְאֶת־הַיָּעִים וְאֶת־
הַמִּזְרָקוֹת וַיְכַל חִירָם לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־כָּל־הַמְּלָאכָה
אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה בֵּית יְהוָה: מא עַמֻּדִים
שְׁנַיִם וְגֻלֹּת הַכֹּתָרֹת אֲשֶׁר־עַל־רֹאשׁ הָעַמֻּדִים

7:40 Chirom 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 *41 (The) two columns, the two bowls of the spheres which were on top of the columns, and the two nets to*

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 חִירוֹם וַיַּעַשׂ—*Chirom then made etc.* At first glance, the *Haftarah's* connection with Chanukah appears to be superficial. Only a

*See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 187*ff.*

שְׁתַּיִם וְהַשְּׂבָכוֹת שְׁתַּיִם לְכַסּוֹת אֶת־שְׁתֵּי גֻּלֹּת
הַכְּתָרֹת אֲשֶׁר עַל־רֹאשׁ הָעַמּוּדִים: מג וְאֶת־הָרִמֹּנִים
אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת לִשְׁתֵּי הַשְּׂבָכוֹת שְׁנֵי־טוּרִים רִמֹּנִים
לַשְּׂבָכָה הָאֶחָת לְכַסּוֹת אֶת־שְׁתֵּי גֻּלֹּת הַכְּתָרֹת
אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הָעַמּוּדִים: מד וְאֶת־הַמְּכֹנוֹת עָשָׂר
וְאֶת־הַכִּיֹּרֹת עֲשָׂרֵה עַל־הַמְּכֹנוֹת: מה וְאֶת־הַיָּם
הָאֶחָד וְאֶת־הַבָּקָר שְׁנֵים־עָשָׂר תַּחַת הַיָּם:
מו וְאֶת־הַסִּירוֹת וְאֶת־הַיָּעִים וְאֶת־הַמִּזְרָקוֹת וְאֵת
כָּל־הַכֵּלִים הָאֵלֶּה [האהל כ"] אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה חִירָם לַמֶּלֶךְ
שְׁלֹמֹה בֵּית יְהוָה נְחֹשֶׁת מְמֹרָט: מז בְּכִכַּר הַיַּרְדֵּן
יְצָקָם הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּמַעֲבֵה הָאֲדָמָה בֵּין סֻכּוֹת וּבֵין צָרְתָן:
מח וַיַּנַּח שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת־כָּל־הַכֵּלִים מֵרֹב מְאֹד מְאֹד לֹא
נֶחְקַר מִשְׁקַל הַנְּחֹשֶׁת: מט וַיַּעַשׂ שְׁלֹמֹה אֵת
כָּל־הַכֵּלִים אֲשֶׁר בֵּית יְהוָה אֵת מִזְבַּח הַזָּהָב
וְאֶת־הַשֻּׁלְחָן אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו לֶחֶם הַפָּנִים זָהָב:
נ וְאֶת־הַמְּנֹרוֹת חָמֵשׁ מִיָּמִין וְחָמֵשׁ מִשְּׂמֹאול לִפְנֵי
הַדְּבִיר זָהָב סָגוּר וְהַפֶּרַח וְהַנֵּרֹת וְהַמֶּלְקָחַיִם זָהָב:
נא וְהַסִּפּוֹת וְהַמְזַמְּרוֹת וְהַמִּזְרָקוֹת וְהַכַּפּוֹת וְהַמַּחְתּוֹת
זָהָב סָגוּר וְהַפֹּתוֹת לְדַלְתוֹת הַבַּיִת הַפְּנִימִי לְקֹדֶשׁ
הַקָּדָשִׁים לְדַלְתֵי הַבַּיִת לַהֵיכָל זָהָב:

cover the two bowls of the spheres which were on top of the columns,

[42] *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.*

[43] *The ten bases, and the ten basins (set) upon the bases.*

[44] *The one vat, with the twelve (copper) oxen under the vat.* — The vat

[45] *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. [46] *The King had them cast in earthen molds in the plain of the Jordan, between Sukos and Tzarsan.*

[47] *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

[48] *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, [49] *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;* [50] *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 *Haftarahs* of Chanukah (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 25, p. 424*ff.*).

Maftir for Shabbos Rosh Chodesh / מפטיר לשבת ראש חדש

(Bamidbar 28:9-15)

ט וּבְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת שְׁנֵי־כְבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה תְּמִימִם וּשְׁנֵי עֶשְׂרֹנִים סֹלֶת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה בַּשָּׁמֶן וְנִסְכּוֹ: י עֹלַת שַׁבַּת בְּשַׁבַּתּוֹ עַל־עֹלַת הַתָּמִיד וְנִסְכָּהּ: פ יא וּבְרָאשֵׁי חָדְשֵׁיכֶם תַּקְרִיבוּ עֹלָה לַיהוָה פָּרִים בְּנֵי־בָקָר שְׁנָיִם וְאַיִל אֶחָד כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה שִׁבְעָה תְּמִימִם: יב וּשְׁלֹשָׁה עֶשְׂרֹנִים סֹלֶת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה בַּשָּׁמֶן לַפָּר הָאֶחָד וּשְׁנֵי עֶשְׂרֹנִים סֹלֶת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה בַּשֶּׁמֶן לָאַיִל הָאֶחָד: יג וְעִשָּׂרוֹן עִשָּׂרוֹן סֹלֶת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה בַּשֶּׁמֶן לַכֶּבֶשׂ הָאֶחָד עֹלָה רֵיחַ נִיחֹחַ אִשֶּׁה לַיהוָה: יד וְנִסְכֵּיהֶם חֲצִי הַהִין יִהְיֶה לַפָּר וּשְׁלִישִׁת הַהִין לָאַיִל וּרְבִיעִת הַהִין לַכֶּבֶשׂ יַיִן זֹאת עֹלַת חֹדֶשׁ בְּחָדְשׁוֹ לְחָדְשֵׁי הַשָּׁנָה: טו וּשְׂעִיר עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת לַיהוָה עַל־עֹלַת הַתָּמִיד יֵעָשֶׂה וְנִסְכּוֹ: ס

Haftarah is on page 396.

Maftir for Shabbos Chanukah / מפטיר לשבת חנוכה

(Bamidbar 6:22 - 7:89)

first day of Chanukah

Some communities have the custom to begin here.

כב וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: כג דַּבֵּר אֶל־אַהֲרֹן וְאֶל־בָּנָיו לֵאמֹר כֹּה תְבָרֲכוּ אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אָמוֹר לָהֶם: ס כד יְבָרֶכְךָ יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ: ס כה יָאֵר יְהוָה | פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וִיחֻנֶּךָּ: ס כו יִשָּׂא יְהוָה | פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיָשֵׂם לְךָ שָׁלוֹם: ס כז וְשָׂמוּ אֶת־שְׁמִי עַל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַאֲנִי אֲבָרֲכֵם: ס

In many communities, including Chabad, the custom is to begin here.

ז א וַיְהִי בְיוֹם כַּלּוֹת מֹשֶׁה לְהָקִים אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן וַיִּמְשַׁח אֹתוֹ וַיְקַדֵּשׁ אֹתוֹ | וְאֶת־כָּל־כֵּלָיו וְאֶת־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְאֶת־כָּל־כֵּלָיו וַיִּמְשָׁחֵם וַיְקַדֵּשׁ אֹתָם: ב וַיַּקְרִיבוּ נְשִׂיאֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל רָאשֵׁי בֵית אֲבֹתָם הֵם נְשִׂיאֵי הַמַּטֹּת הֵם הָעֹמְדִים עַל־הַפְּקֻדִים: ג וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶת־קָרְבָּנָם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה שֵׁשׁ־עֶגְלֹת צָב וּשְׁנֵי עָשָׂר בָּקָר עֲגָלָה עַל־שְׁנֵי הַנְּשִׂאִים וְשׁוֹר לְאֶחָד וַיַּקְרִיבוּ אוֹתָם לִפְנֵי הַמִּשְׁכָּן: ד וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: ה קַח מֵאִתָּם וְהָיוּ לַעֲבֹד אֶת־עֲבֹדַת אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְנָתַתָּה אוֹתָם אֶל־הַלְוִיִּם אִישׁ כְּפִי עֲבֻדָּתוֹ: ו וַיִּקַּח מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הָעֲגָלֹת וְאֶת־הַבָּקָר וַיִּתֵּן אוֹתָם אֶל־הַלְוִיִּם: ז אֵת | שְׁתֵּי הָעֲגָלוֹת וְאֵת אַרְבַּעַת הַבָּקָר נָתַן לִבְנֵי גֵרְשׁוֹן כְּפִי עֲבֻדָּתָם: ח וְאֵת | אַרְבַּע הָעֲגָלֹת וְאֵת שְׁמֹנַת הַבָּקָר נָתַן לִבְנֵי מְרָרִי כְּפִי עֲבֻדָּתָם בְּיַד אִיתָמָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן: ט וְלִבְנֵי קְהָת לֹא נָתָן כִּי־עֲבֹדַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ עֲלֵהֶם בַּכָּתֵף יִשָּׂאוּ: י וַיַּקְרִיבוּ הַנְּשִׂאִים אֶת חֲנֻכַּת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ בְּיוֹם הִמָּשַׁח אֹתוֹ וַיַּקְרִיבוּ הַנְּשִׂיאִם אֶת־קָרְבָּנָם לִפְנֵי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ: יא וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה נָשִׂיא אֶחָד לַיּוֹם נָשִׂיא אֶחָד לַיּוֹם יַקְרִיבוּ אֶת־קָרְבָּנָם לַחֲנֻכַּת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ: יב וַיְהִי הַמַּקְרִיב בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן אֶת־קָרְבָּנוֹ נַחְשׁוֹן בֶּן־עַמִּינָדָב לְמַטֵּה יְהוּדָה: יג וְקָרְבָּנוֹ קַעֲרַת־כֶּסֶף אַחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מִזְרָק אֶחָד כֶּסֶף שִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְׁנֵיהֶם | מְלֵאִים סֹלֶת בְּלוּלָה בַּשֶּׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: יד כַּף אַחַת עֲשָׂרָה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קְטֹרֶת: טו פַּר אֶחָד בֶּן־בָּקָר אַיִל אֶחָד כֶּבֶשׂ־אֶחָד בֶּן־שְׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה: טז שְׂעִיר־עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת: יז וּלְזֶבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים בָּקָר שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עַתּוּדִים חֲמִשָּׁה כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קָרְבַּן נַחְשׁוֹן בֶּן־עַמִּינָדָב: פ

Second day of Chanukah

יח בַּיּוֹם הַשֵּׁנִי הִקְרִיב נְתַנְאֵל בֶּן־צוּעָר נְשִׂיא יִשָּׂשכָר: יט הִקְרִב אֶת־קָרְבָּנוֹ קַעֲרַת־כֶּסֶף אַחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מִזְרָק אֶחָד כֶּסֶף שִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְׁנֵיהֶם | מְלֵאִים סֹלֶת בְּלוּלָה בַּשֶּׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: כ כַּף אַחַת עֲשָׂרָה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קְטֹרֶת: כא פַּר אֶחָד בֶּן־בָּקָר אַיִל אֶחָד כֶּבֶשׂ־אֶחָד בֶּן־שְׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה: כב שְׂעִיר־עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת: כג וּלְזֶבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים בָּקָר שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עַתּוּדִים חֲמִשָּׁה כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קָרְבַּן נְתַנְאֵל בֶּן־צוּעָר: פ

Third day of Chanukah

כד בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי נָשִׂיא לִבְנֵי זְבוּלֻן אֱלִיאָב בֶּן־חֵלֹן: כה קָרְבָּנוֹ קַעֲרַת־כֶּסֶף אַחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מִזְרָק אֶחָד כֶּסֶף שִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְׁנֵיהֶם | מְלֵאִים סֹלֶת בְּלוּלָה בַּשֶּׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: כו כַּף אַחַת עֲשָׂרָה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קְטֹרֶת: כז פַּר אֶחָד בֶּן־בָּקָר אַיִל אֶחָד כֶּבֶשׂ־אֶחָד בֶּן־שְׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה:

כח שְׂעִיר־עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת: כט וְלִזְבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים בָּקָר שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עַתֻּדִים חֲמִשָּׁה כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קָרְבַּן אֱלִיאָב בֶּן־חֵלֹן: פ

Fourth day of Chanukah

ל בַּיּוֹם הָרְבִיעִי נָשִׂיא לִבְנֵי רְאוּבֵן אֱלִיצוּר בֶּן־שְׁדֵיאוּר: לא קָרְבָּנוֹ קַעֲרַת־כֶּסֶף אַחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מִזְרָק אֶחָד כֶּסֶף שִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְׁנֵיהֶם | מְלֵאִים סֹלֶת בְּלוּלָה בַשֶּׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: לב כַּף אַחַת עֲשָׂרָה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קְטֹרֶת: לג פַּר אֶחָד בֶּן־בָּקָר אַיִל אֶחָד כֶּבֶשׂ־אֶחָד בֶּן־שְׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה: לד שְׂעִיר־עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת: לה וְלִזְבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים בָּקָר שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עַתֻּדִים חֲמִשָּׁה כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קָרְבַּן אֱלִיצוּר בֶּן־שְׁדֵיאוּר: 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 וּבְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת שְׁנֵי־כְבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה תְּמִימִם וּשְׁנֵי עֶשְׂרֹנִים סֹלֶת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה בַשֶּׁמֶן וְנִסְכּוֹ: י עֹלַת שַׁבַּת בְּשַׁבַּתּוֹ עַל־עֹלַת הַתָּמִיד וְנִסְכָּהּ: פ יא וּבְרָאשֵׁי חָדְשֵׁיכֶם תַּקְרִיבוּ עֹלָה לַיהוָה פָּרִים בְּנֵי־בָקָר שְׁנָיִם וְאַיִל אֶחָד כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה שִׁבְעָה תְּמִימִם: יב וּשְׁלֹשָׁה עֶשְׂרֹנִים סֹלֶת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה בַשֶּׁמֶן לַפָּר הָאֶחָד וּשְׁנֵי עֶשְׂרֹנִים סֹלֶת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה בַשֶּׁמֶן לָאַיִל הָאֶחָד: יג וְעִשָּׂרוֹן עִשָּׂרוֹן סֹלֶת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה בַשֶּׁמֶן לַכֶּבֶשׂ הָאֶחָד עֹלָה רֵיחַ נִיחֹחַ אִשֶּׁה לַיהוָה: יד וְנִסְכֵּיהֶם חֲצִי הַהִין יִהְיֶה לַפָּר וּשְׁלִישִׁת הַהִין לָאַיִל וּרְבִיעִת הַהִין לַכֶּבֶשׂ יַיִן זֹאת עֹלַת חֹדֶשׁ בְּחָדְשׁוֹ לְחָדְשֵׁי הַשָּׁנָה: טו וּשְׂעִיר עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת לַיהוָה עַל־עֹלַת הַתָּמִיד יֵעָשֶׂה וְנִסְכּוֹ: ס

From the third Torah, we read the following Maftir.

מב בַּיּוֹם הַשִּׁשִּׁי נָשִׂיא לִבְנֵי גָד אֶלְיָסָף בֶּן־דְּעוּאֵל: מג קָרְבָּנוֹ קַעֲרַת־כֶּסֶף אַחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מִזְרָק אֶחָד כֶּסֶף שִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְׁנֵיהֶם | מְלֵאִים סֹלֶת בְּלוּלָה בַשֶּׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: מד כַּף אַחַת עֲשָׂרָה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קְטֹרֶת: מה פַּר אֶחָד בֶּן־בָּקָר אַיִל אֶחָד כֶּבֶשׂ־אֶחָד בֶּן־שְׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה: מו שְׂעִיר־עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת: מז וְלִזְבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים בָּקָר שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עַתֻּדִים חֲמִשָּׁה כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קָרְבַּן אֶלְיָסָף בֶּן־דְּעוּאֵל: פ

Seventh day of Chanukah

פ מח בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי נָשִׂיא לִבְנֵי אֶפְרַיִם אֱלִישָׁמָע בֶּן־עַמִּיהוּד: מט קָרְבָּנוֹ קַעֲרַת־כֶּסֶף אַחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מִזְרָק אֶחָד כֶּסֶף שִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְׁנֵיהֶם | מְלֵאִים סֹלֶת בְּלוּלָה בַשֶּׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: נ כַּף אַחַת עֲשָׂרָה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קְטֹרֶת: נא פַּר אֶחָד בֶּן־בָּקָר אַיִל אֶחָד כֶּבֶשׂ־אֶחָד בֶּן־שְׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה: נב שְׂעִיר־עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת: נג וְלִזְבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים בָּקָר שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עַתֻּדִים חֲמִשָּׁה כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קָרְבַּן אֱלִישָׁמָע בֶּן־עַמִּיהוּד: פ

Eighth day of Chanukah

נד בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי נָשִׂיא לִבְנֵי מְנַשֶּׁה גַּמְלִיאֵל בֶּן־פְּדָהצוּר: נה קָרְבָּנוֹ קַעֲרַת־כֶּסֶף אַחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מִזְרָק אֶחָד כֶּסֶף שִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְׁנֵיהֶם | מְלֵאִים סֹלֶת בְּלוּלָה בַשֶּׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: נו כַּף אַחַת עֲשָׂרָה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קְטֹרֶת: נז פַּר אֶחָד בֶּן־בָּקָר אַיִל אֶחָד כֶּבֶשׂ־אֶחָד בֶּן־שְׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה: נח שְׂעִיר־עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת: נט וְלִזְבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים בָּקָר שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עַתֻּדִים חֲמִשָּׁה כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קָרְבַּן גַּמְלִיאֵל בֶּן־פְּדָהצוּר: פ ס בַּיּוֹם הַתְּשִׁעִי נָשִׂיא לִבְנֵי בִנְיָמִן אֲבִידָן בֶּן־גִּדְעֹנִי: סא קָרְבָּנוֹ קַעֲרַת־כֶּסֶף אַחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מִזְרָק אֶחָד כֶּסֶף שִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְׁנֵיהֶם | מְלֵאִים סֹלֶת בְּלוּלָה בַשֶּׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: סב כַּף אַחַת עֲשָׂרָה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קְטֹרֶת: סג פַּר אֶחָד בֶּן־בָּקָר אַיִל אֶחָד כֶּבֶשׂ־אֶחָד בֶּן־שְׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה: סד שְׂעִיר־עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת: סה וְלִזְבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים בָּקָר שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עַתֻּדִים חֲמִשָּׁה כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קָרְבַּן אֲבִידָן בֶּן־גִּדְעֹנִי: פ סו בַּיּוֹם הָעֲשִׂירִי נָשִׂיא לִבְנֵי דָן אֲחִיעֶזֶר בֶּן־עַמִּישַׁדָּי: סז קָרְבָּנוֹ קַעֲרַת־כֶּסֶף אַחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מִזְרָק אֶחָד כֶּסֶף שִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְׁנֵיהֶם | מְלֵאִים סֹלֶת בְּלוּלָה בַשֶּׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: סח כַּף אַחַת עֲשָׂרָה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קְטֹרֶת: סט פַּר אֶחָד בֶּן־בָּקָר אַיִל אֶחָד כֶּבֶשׂ־אֶחָד בֶּן־שְׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה: ע שְׂעִיר־עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת: עא וְלִזְבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים בָּקָר שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עַתֻּדִים חֲמִשָּׁה כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קָרְבַּן אֲחִיעֶזֶר בֶּן־עַמִּישַׁדָּי: פ עב בְּיוֹם עַשְׂתֵּי עָשָׂר יוֹם נָשִׂיא לִבְנֵי אָשֵׁר פַּגְעִיאֵל בֶּן־עָכְרָן: עג קָרְבָּנוֹ קַעֲרַת־כֶּסֶף אַחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מִזְרָק אֶחָד כֶּסֶף שִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְׁנֵיהֶם | מְלֵאִים

סֹלֶת בְּלוּלָה בַּשֶּׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: עד כַּף אַחַת עֲשָׂרָה זָהָב מְלֵאָה
קְטֹרֶת: עה פַּר אֶחָד בֶּן־בָּקָר אַיִל אֶחָד כֶּבֶשׂ־אֶחָד בֶּן־שְׁנָתוֹ
לְעֹלָה: עו שְׂעִיר־עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת: עז וּלְזֶבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים בָּקָר
שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עַתֻּדִים חֲמִשָּׁה כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה
זֶה קָרְבַּן פַּגְעִיאֵל בֶּן־עָכְרָן: פ עח בְּיוֹם שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר יוֹם נָשִׂיא
לִבְנֵי נַפְתָּלִי אֲחִירַע בֶּן־עֵינָן: עט קָרְבָּנוֹ קַעֲרַת־כֶּסֶף אַחַת
שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מִזְרָק אֶחָד כֶּסֶף שִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל
הַקֹּדֶשׁ שְׁנֵיהֶם | מְלֵאִים סֹלֶת בְּלוּלָה בַּשֶּׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה: פ כַּף
אַחַת עֲשָׂרָה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קְטֹרֶת: פא פַּר אֶחָד בֶּן־בָּקָר אַיִל
אֶחָד כֶּבֶשׂ־אֶחָד בֶּן־שְׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה: פב שְׂעִיר־עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת:
פג וּלְזֶבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים בָּקָר שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עַתֻּדִים חֲמִשָּׁה
כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קָרְבַּן אֲחִירַע בֶּן־עֵינָן: פ (שביעי)
פד זֹאת | חֲנֻכַּת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ בְּיוֹם הִמָּשַׁח אֹתוֹ מֵאֵת נְשִׂיאֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
קַעֲרֹת כֶּסֶף שְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה מִזְרְקֵי־כֶסֶף שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר כַּפּוֹת זָהָב
שְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה: פה שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה הַקְּעָרָה הָאַחַת כֶּסֶף וְשִׁבְעִים
הַמִּזְרָק הָאֶחָד כֶּסֶף הַכֵּלִים אַלְפַּיִם וְאַרְבַּע־מֵאוֹת בְּשֶׁקֶל
הַקֹּדֶשׁ: פו כַּפּוֹת זָהָב שְׁתֵּים־עֶשְׂרֵה מְלֵאוֹת קְטֹרֶת עֲשָׂרָה
עֲשָׂרָה הַכַּף בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ כָּל־זְהַב הַכַּפּוֹת עֶשְׂרִים וּמֵאָה:
[מפטיר] פז כָּל־הַבָּקָר לָעֹלָה שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר פָּרִים אֵילִם שְׁנֵים־עָשָׂר
כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר וּמִנְחָתָם וּשְׂעִירֵי עִזִּים שְׁנֵים
עָשָׂר לְחַטָּאת: פח וְכֹל בְּקַר | זֶבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים עֶשְׂרִים וְאַרְבָּעָה
פָּרִים אֵילִם שִׁשִּׁים עַתֻּדִים שִׁשִּׁים כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה שִׁשִּׁים
זֹאת חֲנֻכַּת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אַחֲרֵי הִמָּשַׁח אֹתוֹ: פט וּבְבֹא מֹשֶׁה
אֶל־אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לְדַבֵּר אִתּוֹ וַיִּשְׁמַע אֶת־הַקּוֹל מִדַּבֵּר אֵלָיו
מֵעַל הַכַּפֹּרֶת אֲשֶׁר עַל־אֲרֹן הָעֵדֻת מִבֵּין שְׁנֵי הַכְּרֻבִים וַיְדַבֵּר
אֵלָיו: פ פ פ

Haftarahs: *Shabbos Chanukah* I—page 398. *Shabbos Chanukah* II—page 401.

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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.

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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 Chezkiyah 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*.

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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 Kabalist 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, Kabalist of 16th century Safed. Student of R' Yosef Caro. Author of numerous works, including *Pardes Rimonim,* a classic work which explains fundamental concepts of Kabalah.

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'amorim 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, Kabalist, 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 Kabalistic 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 Kabalah, 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

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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**

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ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

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תהיינה נשמותיהם צרורות בצרור החיים

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תהיינה נשמותיהם צרורות בצרור החיים



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מוקדש

לחיזוק התקשרות

לכבוד קדושת אדוננו מורנו ורבנו

נשיא דורנו