THE · GUTNICK · EDITION

חמשה חומשי תורה
Chumash

ספר דברים
THE BOOK of DEUTERONOMY

With Rashi's Commentary, Targum Onkelos and Haftoras with a Commentary anthologized from Classic Rabbinic Texts and the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

קול מנחם

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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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Table of Contents

Preface ix

Devarim 1
Va'eschanan 29
Eikev 55
Re'eh 85
Shoftim 125
Ki Seitzei 155
Ki Savo 187
Nitzavim 211
Vayeilech 225
Ha'azinu 237
Vezos Habrachah 257

Haftoras 271

Appendix 303
Bibliography 305

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Preface

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

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

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

Kol Menachem
25th *of Elul* 5768

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פַּשְׁטָא֙ מֻנַּ֣ח זַרְקָא֮ מֻנַּ֣ח סֶגּוֹל֒ מֻנַּ֣ח ׀ מֻנַּ֣ח רְבִ֗יעִי
מַהְפַּ֤ךְ פַּשְׁטָא֙ זָקֵף קָטָ֔ן זָקֵף־גָּד֕וֹל מֵרְכָ֥א טִפְּחָ֖א
מֻנַּ֣ח אֶתְנַחְתָּ֑א פָּזֵ֡ר תְּלִישָׁא־קְטַנָּה֩
תְּלִישָׁא־גְדוֹלָה֠ קַדְמָ֨א וְאַזְלָ֜א אַזְלָא־גֵ֜רֵשׁ גֵּרְשַׁ֞יִם
דַּרְגָּ֧א תְּבִ֛יר יְ֚תִיב פְּסִ֣יק ׀ סוֹף־פָּסֽוּק׃ שַׁלְשֶׁ֓לֶת
קַרְנֵי־פָרָ֟ה מֵרְכָא־כְפוּלָ֦ה יֶ֪רַח־בֶּן־יוֹמ֫וֹ׃

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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.

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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)

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parshas Devarim

פרשת דברים

The Name of the Parsha

"Look at these!" are words that might be exclaimed upon encountering something new or different. Thus, the opening phrase of our *Parsha*, *"**These** are the words which Moshe spoke to all the Jewish people,"* comes to teach us that words of Torah should always be looked upon as something new and exciting—as our Sages said, *"they should be new in your eyes every day"* (see *Rashi* to *Devarim* 26:16).

However, to change the way we think (and act) to the extent that we have genuinely adopted a "new" approach is no less than a miracle. For if the definition of a miracle is an "unprecedented change in nature," then a totally fresh outlook to Torah and Divine service also represents an unprecedented change in *our* nature—a personal miracle.

In order to help us perform this wonder on a daily basis, God gave us the gift of sleep. At first glance, sleep appears to be a total waste of time; for how is the purpose of creation advanced when we are lying in bed? Why did God charge us with a mission to improve and perfect the world, only to "handicap" us with the need to spend a significant portion of each day out of action?

In truth however, God made us need to sleep for a positive reason; for after a night's sleep one feel like a new person who is able to break free from the limitations of yesterday. So, since God wanted the *"words which Moshe spoke to all the Jewish people,"* to be *"new in your eyes every day,"* He built into us a mechanism which makes the miracle of changing our nature a little bit easier.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Devarim* 5750)

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א א אֵלֶּה הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֵבֶר
הַיַּרְדֵּן בַּמִּדְבָּר בָּעֲרָבָה מוֹל סוּף בֵּין־פָּארָן וּבֵין־תֹּפֶל וְלָבָן
וַחֲצֵרֹת וְדִי זָהָב: ב אַחַד עָשָׂר יוֹם מֵחֹרֵב דֶּרֶךְ הַר־שֵׂעִיר עַד

א אִלֵּין פִּתְגָמַיָּא דִּי מַלִּיל מֹשֶׁה עִם כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעִבְרָא דְּיַרְדְּנָא אוֹכַח יָתְהוֹן עַל דְּחַבוּ בְמַדְבְּרָא וְעַל דְּאַרְגִּיזוּ בְּמֵישְׁרָא לָקֳבֵל יַם סוּף בְּפָארָן דְּאִתַּפַּלוּ עַל מַנָּא וּבַחֲצֵרוֹת דְּאַרְגִּיזוּ עַל בִּשְׂרָא וְעַל דַּעֲבַדוּ עֵגֶל דִּדְהַב:

רש"י

(א) **אלה הדברים.** לפי שהן דברי תוכחות ומנה כאן כל המקומות שהכעיסו לפני המקום בהן, לפיכך סתם את הדברים והזכירם ברמז מפני כבודן של ישראל: **אל כל ישראל.** אלו הוכיח מקצתן, היו אלו שבשוק אומרים, אתם הייתם שומעים מבן עמרם ולא השיבותם דבר מכך וכך, אלו היינו שם היינו משיבים אותו, לכך כנסם כולם ואמר להם הרי כולכם כאן כל מי שיש לו תשובה ישיב[1]: **במדבר.** לא במדבר היו אלא בערבות מואב, ומהו במדבר, אלא בשביל מה שהכעיסוהו במדבר שאמרו מי יתן מותנו וגו'[2]: **בערבה.** בשביל הערבה שחטאו בבעל פעור בשטים בערבות מואב: **מול סוף.** על מה שהמרו בים סוף, בבואם לים סוף שאמרו המבלי אין קברים במצרים[3], וכן בנסעם מתוך הים, שנאמר וימרו על ים בים סוף, כדאיתא בערכין[4]: **בין פארן ובין תפל ולבן.** אמר רבי יוחנן חזרנו על כל המקרא ולא מצינו מקום ששמו תופל ולבן, אלא הוכיחן על הדברים שתפלו על המן שהוא לבן, שאמרו ונפשנו קצה בלחם הקלוקל[5], ועל מה שעשו במדבר פארן על ידי המרגלים: **וחצרות.** במחלוקתו של קרח. דבר אחר אמר להם, היה לכם ללמוד ממה שעשיתי למרים בחצרות בשביל לשון הרע, ואתם נדברתם במקום[6]: **ודי זהב.** הוכיחן על העגל שעשו בשביל רוב זהב שהיה להם, שנאמר[7] וכסף הרביתי להם וזהב עשו לבעל[8]: (ב) **אחד עשר יום מחורב.** אמר להם משה ראו מה גרמתם, אין לכם דרך קצרה מחורב לקדש ברנע כדרך הר שעיר ואף הוא מהלך אחד עשר יום, ואתם הלכתם אותו בשלשה ימים, שהרי בעשרים באייר נסעו מחורב שנאמר ויהי בשנה השנית בחדש השני בעשרים בחדש וגו'[9] ובכ"ט בסיון שלחו את המרגלים מקדש ברנע[10], צא מהם שלשים יום שעשו בקברות התאוה, שאכלו הבשר חדש ימים, ושבעה ימים שעשו בחצרות להסגר שם מרים, נמצא בשלשה ימים הלכו כל אותו הדרך, וכל כך היתה שכינה מתלבטת[11] בשבילכם למהר ביאתכם לארץ, ובשביל

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **How does the Book of *Devarim* differ from the previous Books of Moshe?**

Ohr HaChayim: Moshe was not commanded by God to say the Book of *Devarim*. Rather, he said it of his own initiative, as our Sages taught (*Megilah* 31b). Thus, the book begins, "These are the words which *Moshe spoke,*" as if to say that from this point onwards, Moshe did not hear these words directly from God.

Tosfos: They were nevertheless said with Divine Inspiration (ibid).

● **What did Moshe say to the Jewish People? (v. 1)**

Rashi: These are words of rebuke, since all the places where they angered God are listed here. But, out of respect for the Jewish people, Moshe was vague with his words and he only hinted [at their sins, by mentioning the places where the sins occurred, and not the sins themselves]:

"In the desert"—he rebuked them for angering God in the desert when they said, *"If only we had died* [*in Egypt*]*"* (*Shemos* 16:3), etc.

"In the plain"—the sin of *Ba'al-Pe'or* at Shitim, in the plains of Mo'av (*Bamidbar* 25:1-9).

"At the Sea of Reeds"—their rebellion at the Reed Sea (*Shemos* 14:11; *Psalms* 106:7).

"Paran"—what they did in the Desert of Paran through the spies.

"Between Tofel and Lavan"—Rabbi Yochanan said: We have searched the entire Torah, but we have found no place named Tofel or Lavan! However, this means that he rebuked them because of the foolish things they had said (תָּפְלוּ) about the manna, which was white (לָבָן), saying *"We're disgusted by this insubstantial bread"* (*Bamidbar* 21:5).

"Chatzairos"—with the rebellion of Korach. Another explanation: He said to them, "You should have learned from what I did to Miriam at Chatzairos because of slander. But you spoke against God."

"Di-Zahav" (lit., "enough gold")—He rebuked them for the calf they had made as a result of their abundance of gold.

TORAS MENACHEM

Moshe's Subtle Rebuke (v. 1)

Rashi's comments to verse 1 prompt the following questions:

a.) What problem *at the literal level* was troubling *Rashi*, leading him to conclude that the list of locations in verse 1 was a subtle rebuke of the Jewish people?

b.) Why did *Rashi* need to stress, "All the places where they angered God are listed *here*"? Surely it is obvious that *Rashi* is speaking about our verse? *Rashi* could simply have written, "These are words of rebuke, since all the places where they angered God are listed."

c.) *Rashi* writes, that "*all* the places where they angered God are listed here." However, this does not appear to be the case, since the verse does not refer to the rebellions at Marah (*Shemos* 15:24) and Refidim (ibid. 17:2).

The Explanation

a.) *Rashi* was troubled: Why does the verse state, *"These are the words* which Moshe spoke to all the Jewish people on the bank," without even mentioning what Moshe's "words" were?

Rashi concluded that our verse must contain the actual words that Moshe said to the Jewish people. Thus, the list of locations at the end of the verse is not, as it first appears, a description of *where* Moshe said his words, but rather, *they are* Moshe's words themselves.

This leaves us with the question: Why did Moshe list a series of locations to the Jewish people? *Rashi* explains that this was a form of subtle rebuke, in which Moshe admonished the Jewish people for their various past rebellions. But out of respect, he did not rebuke them directly, but indirectly, by mentioning the locations of their various rebellions.

1 ספרי 2 שמות טז, ג 3 שם יד, יא 4 שם. 5 במדבר כא, ה 6 ספרי 7 הושע ב, י 8 ברכות לב. 9 במדבר י, יא 10 תענית כט. 11 לשון 'טורח', ואין להקשות איך שייך לשון 'טורח' בשכינה, כי מפורש בכתוב (בהעלותך י, לו) בענינו 'ובנחה יאמר שובה ה' גו'', ופרש"י שם: 'לשון מרגוע כו'. וראה רש"י יחזקאל יט, יח ד"ה הכבש) (קונטרס [illegible], ע' 1).

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MOSHE'S SUBTLE REBUKE TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE

1 *These are the words (of subtle rebuke) which Moshe spoke to all the Jewish people in (the Plains of Mo'av, on the East) bank of the Jordan. (He mentioned the places where they rebelled against God): "in the wilderness, in the plain(s of Mo'av), at the Sea of Reeds, (in the wilderness) of Paran, between Tofel and Lavan, at Chatzairos and at Di-Zahav*."*

2 *"From Choraiv (where the Torah was given) to Kadaish-Barne'a, (where the spies were sent out), by way of Mount Se'ir (normally) takes eleven days, (but you took just three days, because God was speeding your entry into the Land)."*

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

THE BOOK OF *DEVARIM*

The Book of *Devarim* arose from a different form of prophetic revelation than the previous four Books of Moshe. For unlike the preceding books which were "dictated" directly by God, the Book of *Devarim* was a Divine revelation which Moshe phrased in his own words (see ***Ohr HaChayim & Tosfos***).

At first glance, this would appear to be a disadvantage, for words arranged by God Himself are surely superior to those composed by Moshe. However, in truth, the Book of *Devarim* has its own advantage: *that the words of God reached a higher level of compatibility with the human mind.*

Moshe's contribution to the Book of *Devarim* did not detract from the validity of the work, for *Devarim* remains part of the *Chumash* just as much as the other four books. But having passed through the "interface" of a human mind, the words of this book were fashioned in a manner that other human beings would find easier to absorb. Thus:

- The Book of *Devarim* was said to the generation which was about to enter the Land of Israel, where food would not be provided miraculously, and extensive interaction with the mundane world would be necessary. As a preparation for this, the Jewish people were given the Book of *Devarim*, which contained Godly wisdom that had been brought more "down to earth" by Moshe.
- As a Divinely inspired work of the human mind, the Book of *Devarim* sets the precedent for later prophetic works. It is also a form of precursor for Rabbinic law, which is humanly conceived and yet is an expression of the will of God.
- A *ba'al teshuvah* is one who returned to God through his own initiative, but God assists the *ba'al teshuvah* with Divine revelation to his subconscious soul. This is similar to the way the Book of *Devarim* was said: Consciously it was Moshe's own words, but on a deeper level it was a product of Divine revelation. This similarity between *teshuvah* and the Book of *Devarim* is the inner reason why the book is characterized by "rebuke" (see *Rashi*), a way of helping another to do *teshuvah*.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 4, p. 1087*ff.*; vol. 19, p. 9*ff.*; vol. 36, p. 41*ff.*)

b.) To stress the above point, *Rashi* writes, "All the places where they angered God are listed *here*," i.e. the reader should not think that "the words which Moshe spoke" are recorded elsewhere. Rather, Moshe's words are cited "here" in our verse.

c.) With the phrase, "*He rebuked them for angering God in the desert when they said, 'If only we had died [in Egypt]'* **etc.**," *Rashi* makes clear that he is not referring to one particular rebellion, but rather, to *all* the rebellions in the desert, *beginning* with the complaint in the Desert of Sin, "*If only we had died [in Egypt]*." I.e. *Rashi*'s use of the word "etcetera" indicates that Moshe was alluding here also to the complaints of the Jewish people that followed this one. Therefore, *Rashi* wrote, "*All* the places where they angered God are listed here."

However, this begs the question: If all the desert rebellions had already been indicated by the word "etcetera," then why does *Rashi* continue to specify the complaints about the manna, the sin of the spies and the incident with Korach? Surely these are also "desert rebellions" which were already indicated by the word "etcetera"?

It would seem, therefore, that when *Rashi* refers to the rebellions "in the desert," he does not mean those incidents which occurred *geographically* in the desert, but rather, he is referring to the rebellions which occurred *as a direct consequence of being in the desert*. Thus, while the word "etcetera" alludes to the complaint in Refidim about a lack of water—a problem associated with being in the desert—it does *not* allude to the incidents of the spies, Korach, and the Golden Calf, which were caused by *other* factors.**

One problem that remains with this explanation is that *Rashi's* "etcetera" was written after the verse which describes the Jewish people's

The Last Word

When rebuking the Jewish people here, Moshe did not mention, or even allude to their sins. Rather, in order to maintain their dignity, he merely mentioned *the places* where they had sinned (see *Rashi*). This teaches us how careful we should be not to cause distress to another person. If, on occasion, it proves necessary to rebuke another Jew—even for serious sins, such as the ones which Moshe indicated here—we should nevertheless do so subtly and gently, while at the same time drawing the person close with warmth and love.

(*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Devarim* 5725)

* See *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Devarim* 5725 (*Sichos Kodesh* 5725 vol. 2, pp. 309-311), where it is explained that even according to *Rashi*, "Tofel," "Lavan" and "Di-Zahav" are names of actual places. However, see *Likutei Sichos* vol. 14, p. 1*ff.* for an alternative explanation. ** The complaint in the Desert of Sin was made because they had no food, which was a result of being in the desert. But the complaint about the manna itself ("*our souls are disgusted by this insubstantial bread*") was not a *direct* consequence of desert life, but rather a complaint about the quality of the food which God was giving them. Therefore it was mentioned separately.

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קָדֵשׁ בַּרְנֵעַ: ג וַיְהִי בְּאַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה בְּעַשְׁתֵּי־עָשָׂר חֹדֶשׁ בְּאֶחָד
לַחֹדֶשׁ דִּבֶּר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֹתוֹ
אֲלֵהֶם: ד אַחֲרֵי הַכֹּתוֹ אֵת סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר יוֹשֵׁב
בְּחֶשְׁבּוֹן וְאֵת עוֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן אֲשֶׁר־יוֹשֵׁב בְּעַשְׁתָּרֹת בְּאֶדְרֶעִי:
ה בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן בְּאֶרֶץ מוֹאָב הוֹאִיל מֹשֶׁה בֵּאֵר אֶת־הַתּוֹרָה
הַזֹּאת לֵאמֹר: ו יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ דִּבֶּר אֵלֵינוּ בְּחֹרֵב לֵאמֹר רַב־
לָכֶם שֶׁבֶת בָּהָר הַזֶּה: ז פְּנוּ | וּסְעוּ לָכֶם וּבֹאוּ הַר הָאֱמֹרִי
וְאֶל־כָּל־שְׁכֵנָיו בָּעֲרָבָה בָהָר וּבַשְּׁפֵלָה וּבַנֶּגֶב וּבְחוֹף הַיָּם

ב מַהֲלַךְ חַד עֲשַׂר יוֹמִין מֵחוֹרֵב אוֹרַח
טוּרָא דְשֵׂעִיר עַד רְקַם גֵּיאָה: ג וַהֲוָה
בְּאַרְבְּעִין שְׁנִין בְּחַד עֲשַׂר יַרְחָא בְּחַד לְיַרְחָא
מַלִּיל מֹשֶׁה עִם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּכֹל דִּי פַקֵּיד יְיָ
יָתֵהּ לְוָתְהוֹן: ד בָּתַר דִּמְחָא יָת סִיחוֹן מַלְכָּא
דֶאֱמוֹרָאָה דְּיָתֵיב בְּחֶשְׁבּוֹן וְיָת עוֹג מַלְכָּא
דְמַתְנָן דְּיָתֵיב בְּעַשְׁתְּרָוָת בְּאֶדְרֶעִי: ה בְּעִבְרָא
דְיַרְדְּנָא בְּאַרְעָא דְמוֹאָב שָׁרִי מֹשֶׁה פָּרֵשׁ יָת
אוּלְפַן אוֹרַיְתָא הָדָא לְמֵימָר: ו יְיָ אֱלָהַנָא
מַלִּיל עִמַּנָא בְּחוֹרֵב לְמֵימַר סַגִּי לְכוֹן דִּיתֶבְתּוּן
בְּטוּרָא הָדֵין: ז אִתְפְּנוּ וּטְלוּ לְכוֹן וְעוּלוּ
לְטוּרָא דֶאֱמוֹרָאָה וּלְכָל מְגִירוֹהִי בְּמֵישְׁרָא

רש"י

שקלקלתם הסב אתכם סביבות הר שעיר ארבעים שנה[1]: (ג) **ויהי בארבעים שנה בעשתי עשר חדש באחד לחדש.** מלמד שלא הוכיחן אלא סמוך למיתה. ממי למד, מיעקב שלא הוכיח את בניו אלא סמוך למיתה[2]. אמר, ראובן בני, אני אומר לך מפני מה לא הוכחתיך כל השנים הללו, כדי שלא תניחני ותלך ותדבק בעשו אחי. ומפני ארבעה דברים אין מוכיחין את האדם אלא סמוך למיתה, כדי שלא יהא מוכיחו וחוזר ומוכיחו, ושלא יהא חבירו רואהו ומתבייש ממנו כו' כדאיתא בספרי. וכן יהושע לא הוכיח את ישראל אלא סמוך למיתה, וכן שמואל, שנאמר הנני ענו בי, וכן דוד את שלמה בנו[3]: (ד) **אחרי הכותו.** אמר משה אם אני מוכיחם קודם שיכנסו לקצת הארץ, יאמרו מה לזה עלינו, מה היטיב לנו, אינו בא אלא לקנתר ולמצוא עילה, שאין בו כח להכניסנו לארץ, לפיכך המתין עד שהפיל סיחון ועוג לפניהם והורישם את ארצם ואחר כך הוכיחן[4]: **סיחון וגו' אשר יושב וגו'.** אילו לא היה סיחון קשה והיה שרוי בחשבון, היה קשה, שהמדינה קשה, ואילו היתה עיר אחרת וסיחון שרוי בתוכה, היתה קשה, שהמלך קשה, על אחת כמה וכמה שהמלך קשה והמדינה קשה: **אשר יושב בעשתרות.** המלך קשה והמדינה קשה: **עשתרות.** הוא לשון צוקין וקושי, כמו עשתרות קרנים[5], ועשתרות זה הוא עשתרות קרנים שהיו שם רפאים שהכה אמרפל, שנאמר ויכו את רפאים בעשתרות קרנים[5], ועוג נמלט מהם, והוא שנאמר ויבא הפליט[6], ואומר כי רק עוג מלך הבשן נשאר מיתר הרפאים[7]: **באדרעי.** שם המלכות: (ה) **הואיל.** התחיל כמו הנה נא הואלתי[8]: **באר את התורה.** בשבעים לשון פירשה להם[9]: (ו) **רב לכם שבת.** כפשוטו. ויש מדרש אגדה, הרבה גדולה לכם ושכר[10] על ישיבתכם בהר הזה, עשיתם משכן מנורה וכלים, קבלתם תורה, מניתם לכם סנהדרין, שרי אלפים ושרי מאות: (ז) **פנו וסעו לכם.** זו דרך ערד וחרמה: **ובאו הר האמרי.** כמשמעו: **ואל כל שכניו.** עמון ומואב והר שעיר: **בערבה.** זה מישור של יער: **בהר.** זה הר המלך: **ובשפלה.** זו שפלת דרום: **ובנגב ובחוף הים.** אשקלון ועזה וקסרי וכו' כדאיתא בספרי: **עד הנהר הגדול.** מפני שנזכר עם ארץ ישראל, קוראו גדול. משל הדיוט אומר עבד מלך מלך, הדבק לשחוור וישתחוו לך, קרב לגבי דהינא

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How did Moshe "explain the Torah"? (v. 5)

Rashi: He translated it into seventy languages.

Levush Ha'ohrah: Moshe feared that perhaps not every person understood Hebrew.

Imray Shefer: Moshe anticipated that the Jewish people would be exiled in the future, and he wanted to ensure that they could study Torah in any language that they might come to speak (27:8).

● How were the people living רַב ("a lot") by Mt. Sinai? (v. 6)

Rashi: This is to be interpreted literally [i.e. too much time].

The explanation of the *Midrash Agadah* is: I have given you much (רב) greatness and reward as a result of living at this mountain. You made the Tabernacle, the Menorah, and the [Tabernacle] objects. You received the Torah. You appointed for yourselves a *Sanhedrin* (Supreme Court), leaders over thousands and leaders over hundreds.

TORAS MENACHEM

rebellion in the Desert of Sin (in *Shemos* 16:3). However, the rebellion at Marah (regarding the bitter, undrinkable water) occurred *before* this point, and thus does not appear to be included by *Rashi's* "etcetera," which only alludes to rebellions subsequent to that of the Desert of Sin. So how is the rebellion at Marah alluded to in Moshe's words (in keeping with *Rashi's* statement that "*All* the places where they angered God are listed here")?

Upon closer examination of *Rashi's* choice of words, this question fades away: *Rashi* writes, "All the places where they *angered God* are listed here." But in the Torah's description of the rebellion at Marah, it says, "The people complained to *Moshe*" (*ibid.* 15:24), suggesting that this was not a direct rebellion against God, but rather, against Moshe.

Thus, when listing "All the places where they *angered God*," Moshe did not mention Marah, since Marah was a rebellion against Moshe's own leadership, and not directly against God. So, while Moshe felt it appropriate to admonish the Jewish people for their sins against God, Moshe did not seek to defend his own honor by rebuking the people for rebelling against *him*.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Devarim* 5725)

1 לכאורה רק כ"ט שנה. וראה פרש"י שלח יד, לג. ועצ"ע (לקו"ש חי"ט, ע' 1, הערה 7) 2 ראה שיחת ש"פ דברים תשמ"ו 3 מלכים-א ב, א 4 ספרי 5 בראשית יד, ה 6 שם יג 7 דברים ג, יא
8 בראשית יח, כז 9 תנחומא ב 10 כ"ה בדפוסים שלפנינו. ולכאורה מתאים יותר הנוסח בדפוס ראשון ושני (ובכמה כת"י רש"י שבספריי' ליובאוויטש): "הרבה לכם גדולה ושכר" (לקו"ש חכ"ד ע' 12)

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(However, the Jewish people forfeited this blessing, and were delayed in the desert for forty years, as will now be explained):

[3] *It happened that in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first of the month, Moshe spoke to the children of Israel (shortly before his passing, and rebuked them) about everything that God had commanded him on their behalf.* [4] *(Moshe waited to rebuke them until) after he had (proven his military might by) defeating (the powerful) Sichon, King of the Amorites, who lived in (the powerful city of) Cheshbon, and (the powerful) Og, King of the Bashan, who lived in (the powerful city of) Ashteros (Karnayim), in (the kingdom of) Edre'iy.*

[5] *On the (East) bank of the Jordan, in the land of Mo'av, Moshe began to explain the Torah (translating it into seventy languages), saying:*

[6] *God, our God, spoke to us in Choraiv, saying, "You have been living too much (time) by this mountain.* [7] *Redirect yourselves (towards Arad and Charmah) and travel until you come to the Amorite mountain, and through its neighboring territories (Amon, Mo'av and Mount Se'ir), through the (forested) plain, on the mountain (of the king), through the lowlands (of the South), through (Gaza and Ashkelon)*

TORAS MENACHEM

Leaving Mount Sinai (v. 6)

Rashi's comments to verse 6 prompt the following questions:

a.) What was troubling *Rashi?*

b.) What was lacking with *Rashi's* first interpretation that led him to bring a second one, from the "*Midrash Agadah*"?

c.) In his second interpretation, *Rashi* explains that the Jewish people became great at Mount Sinai, and he cites the examples of building the Tabernacle, receiving the Torah, and appointing leaders. But surely the *unique* type of "greatness" that the Jewish people gained at Mount Sinai was the fact that they heard God speak?

The Explanation

Rashi was troubled why verse 6 states, "You have been living *too much* (רַב) by this mountain," which seems to imply that the length of time that the Jewish people had spent at Mount Sinai was inappropriate, when in truth *every* moment by Mt. Sinai was certainly valuable and essential. Surely the Torah should have written, "You have been living *enough* by this mountain" and not "too much"?

Apparently, our verse cannot be rendered literally. Nevertheless, *Rashi* writes that, despite first appearances, "This is to be interpreted literally," and a simple explanation can be found to solve this problem.

Rashi did not inform us what this "simple explanation" is, since he presumed that the reader could work it out for himself, by looking at the context of the verse and comparing it with one of *Rashi's* earlier comments.

In verse 2, above, Moshe makes a rather cryptic statement: "*From Choraiv (where the Torah was given) to Kadaish-Barne'a, (where the spies were sent out) by way of Mount Se'ir (normally) takes eleven days.*"

Rashi clarifies: "*Moshe was saying to them: 'See what you caused! There is no shorter route from Choraiv to Kadaish-Barne'a than by way of Mount Se'ir, and even that is a journey of eleven days. But you covered it in three days!....The Divine Presence exerted itself to such an extent to hasten your arrival at the land of Cana'an, but because you ruined things, He made you travel around Mount Se'ir for forty years'!*"

In verse 2 itself, Moshe only hinted at this point briefly and subtly. But here in verses 6-8 Moshe spells out in more detail how God's original plan was to bring them immediately into the land without delay.

In this context, the reader will understand why God said, "You have been living *too much* by this mountain," for God was expressing *the sense of urgency* with which He desired the Jewish people to enter the Land of Israel, to the extent that "the Divine Presence *exerted itself* (so to speak) to such an extent to hasten your arrival to the land."

Rashi's Second Interpretation

However, in the final analysis, the term, "living *too much* by this mountain," does suggest that the Jewish people had been doing something wrong in remaining in the same location. This is clearly not the case, since the camp only relocated under direct instructions from God (*see Bamidbar* 9:17-18).

Thus, *Rashi* felt it necessary to bring a second interpretation, from the *Midrash Agadah*, that our verse is to be rendered, "You have become great (רַב) by living at this Mountain."

At first glance, the unique "greatness" that the Jewish people acquired at Mount Sinai was that they heard God speak. However, *Rashi* rejected that this was the "greatness" to which our verse refers, as it does not fit into the context here.

The current passage was supposed to be a message to the Jewish people right before they entered the Land. Therefore, we can presume that the "greatness" mentioned here is something connected with the challenges of living an observant life alongside the other nations that the Jewish people were soon to face. In order to overcome these challenges successfully, the Jewish people needed to internalize the message, "You shall be to Me a kingdom of ministers and *a holy nation*" (*Shemos* 19:6).

Sparks of Chasidus

Translation of the Torah (v. 5)

Why did Moshe bother the Jewish people to listen to the Torah being translated into seventy languages, when surely most of the people were not familiar with the majority of these languages? (See *Rashi* to v. 6)

Moshe did this not for the people's sake, but *for the Torah's sake*. For Moshe's translation broke the barrier between Hebrew and all the other languages, ensuring that the holiness of the Torah remains even when it is translated into another language.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 36, pp. 38-40)

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אֶרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַלְּבָנוֹן עַד־הַנָּהָר הַגָּדֹל נְהַר־פְּרָת: ח רְאֵה
נָתַתִּי לִפְנֵיכֶם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ בֹּאוּ וּרְשׁוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע
יְהוָה לַאֲבֹתֵיכֶם לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב לָתֵת לָהֶם וּלְזַרְעָם
אַחֲרֵיהֶם: ט וָאֹמַר אֲלֵכֶם בָּעֵת הַהִוא לֵאמֹר לֹא־אוּכַל לְבַדִּי
שְׂאֵת אֶתְכֶם: י יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הִרְבָּה אֶתְכֶם וְהִנְּכֶם הַיּוֹם

בְּטוּרָא וּבִשְׁפֵלְתָּא וּבְדָרוֹמָא וּבִסְפַר יַמָּא
אַרְעָא דִכְנַעֲנָאָה וְלִבְנָן עַד נַהֲרָא רַבָּא נַהֲרָא
פְרָת: ח חֲזוֹ דִיהָבִית קֳדָמֵיכוֹן יָת אַרְעָא עוּלוּ
וְאַחֲסִינוּ יָת אַרְעָא דִי קַיֵּים יְיָ לַאֲבָהָתְכוֹן
לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב לְמִתַּן לְהוֹן
וְלִבְנֵיהוֹן בַּתְרֵיהוֹן: ט וַאֲמָרִית לְכוֹן בְּעִדָּנָא
הַהִיא לְמֵימַר לֵית אֲנָא יָכִיל בִּלְחוֹדִי לְסוֹבָרָא
יָתְכוֹן: י יְיָ אֱלָהֲכוֹן אַסְגִּי יָתְכוֹן וְהָא אִיתֵיכוֹן

רש״י

ולידכן: (ח) **ראה נתתי.** בעיניכם אתם רואים, איני אומר לכם מאומד ומשמועה[1]: **באו ורשו.** אין מערער בדבר[2] ואינכם צריכים למלחמה, אלו לא שלחו מרגלים לא היו צריכים לכלי זיין: **לאבתיכם.** למה הזכיר שוב לאברהם ליצחק וליעקב, אלא אברהם כדאי לעצמו, יצחק כדאי לעצמו, יעקב כדאי לעצמו: (ט) **ואמר אליכם בעת ההוא לאמר.** מהו לאמר, אמר להם משה, לא מעצמי אני אומר לכם, אלא מפי הקב"ה: **לא אוכל לבדי וגו'.** אפשר שלא היה משה יכול לדון את ישראל, אדם שהוציאם ממצרים וקרע להם את הים והוריד את המן והגיז את השליו לא היה יכול לדונם, אלא כך אמר להם, ה' אלהיכם הרבה אתכם, הגדיל והרים אתכם על דייניכם, נטל את העונש מכם ונתנו על הדיינין. וכן אמר שלמה כי מי יוכל לשפוט את עמך הכבד הזה[3], אפשר מי שכתוב בו ויחכם מכל האדם[4], אומר מי יוכל לשפוט, אלא כך אמר שלמה אין דייני אומה זו כדייני שאר האומות, שאם דן והורג ומכה וחונק ומטה את דינו וגוזל אין בכך כלום, אני אם חייבתי ממון שלא כדין נפשות אני נתבע, שנאמר[5] וקבע את קובעיהם נפש: (י) **והנכם היום בכוכבי השמים**[6]. וכי ככוכבי השמים היו באותו היום, והלא לא היו אלא ששים רבוא, מהו והנכם היום, הנכם משולים כיום,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **How could the Jewish people "see" that the Land was "in their hands"? (v. 8)**

Rashi: [Moshe was saying]: "You can see this with your own eyes! I am not telling you this out of speculation or from hearsay."

Nachalas Ya'akov: Perhaps Moshe's statement, "You can see this with your own eyes," refers to the defeat of Sichon and Og, which had proven to be easy, despite the fact that they were powerful.

Be'er Basadeh: The solution of *Nachalas Ya'akov* is untenable, since here Moshe is recounting God's words at Mt. Sinai *before* the defeat of Sichon and Og. Rather, *Rashi*'s statement, "You can see this with your own eyes," refers to the fact that God went ahead of the Jewish people to protect them, as is stated in *Devarim* 23:15.

Pane'ach Raza: God cast down the ministering angels of the nations and subjugated them before Moshe, as *Rashi* explains below (v. 8), that no weapons would be required for the conquest.

● **How were the Jewish people to "come and take possession of the Land"? (v. 8)**

Rashi: [God was saying]: "No one will contest the matter, and you will not need to go to war." If they had not sent the spies, [and had trusted God] they would not have needed weapons.

TORAS MENACHEM

Thus, the sound of God speaking, which they could not take with them into the Land, would be of limited assistance to them. Rather, *Rashi* writes, what would assist the Jewish people after they had entered the Land of Israel was: The Tabernacle, which brought the Divine Presence to dwell *with them* in the Land; the *acceptance* of the Torah, i.e. the internalization and practical application of the Torah's values into daily life that they had already achieved; and the appointment of leaders, to ensure that the Torah was observed among the communities of Israel.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 24, p. 12*ff.*)

The Promise of Miraculous Conquest (v. 8)

Verses 8-9 describe God's promise to the Jewish people concerning the conquest of the Land of Israel, which was communicated by Moshe before the incident of the spies.

Rashi explains that God was promising a totally miraculous conquest, without the need for weapons, but this was forfeited by the Jewish people, due to the incident with the spies.

Rashi's comments prompt the following questions:

a.) On the words, "See that I have put the Land before you" (v. 8), *Rashi* comments, *"You can see this with your own eyes!"* I.e. *Rashi* makes it clear that the Torah is not using a metaphor here, but that the verse refers to actual, physical sight. This begs the question: At this point, the Jewish people were still encamped by Mount Sinai (as stated in v. 6), so how would it be possible to *see* the Land of Israel and its conquest with their eyes?

b.) It is *obvious* that if one sees something with one's own eyes, that no further confirmation is required. So why does *Rashi* add, *"I am not telling you this out of speculation or from hearsay"*?

c.) In his second comment to verse 8, *Rashi* writes, *"If they had not sent the spies, they would not have needed weapons."* On what basis did *Rashi* conclude, at the literal level, that no weapons would be required?

The Explanation

In verse 7, the Jewish people are told *the details* concerning *the* conquest of the Land of Israel: *"Redirect yourselves and travel until you*

1 ספרי 2 היינו, שישב בדין בגבולות ארץ ישראל (לקו"ש חכ"ד ע' 6) 3 מלכים-א ג, ט 4 שם ה, יא 5 משלי כב, כג 6 בדפוס שני ובכמה כת"י שבספריית ליובאוויטש הועתק גם 'ככוכבי' בד"ה. אבל בדפוס ראשון דפרש"י ודפוסי רוב הנמצאים ליתא. ונראה כן היתה גירסת הרא"ם (לקו"ש חכ"ט ע' 3, הערה 17).

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in the south and (Caesarea) by the seashore, (conquering) the land of the Cana'anites, and the Levanon, all the way until the great river, the Euphrates River. [8] *See that I have (already) put the Land (into your hands) before you! (All you have to do is) come and take possession of the Land which God swore to Avraham, to Yitzchak, and to Ya'akov, that He would give (the Land to) them and their descendants after them. (Nobody will even oppose you)."*

Rebuke Concerning the Appointment of Judges

1:9 *I said to you at that time—saying (only that which I had been told by God)—"I cannot carry (the burden of judging) you on my own,* [10] *(for) God, your God, has made you great. You are (so great that you are everlasting like the sun which shines during) the day, and like (the moon and) the*

TORAS MENACHEM

come to...the land of the Cana'anites, and the Levanon, all the way until the great river, the Euphrates River." Verse 8 then appears to state the *general* instruction to "*come and take possession of the Land, etc.*"

So *Rashi* was troubled: Why are the Jewish people given the details concerning the conquest of the Land, in verse 7, *before* the general command to conquer it, in verse 8?

Rashi came to the conclusion that verse 8 is not merely an instruction to conquer the Land, but rather, that it is a further description to the Jewish people about *how* they would conquer the land (and the actual command is in verse 7).

Up to this point, the Jewish people were aware that they would eventually conquer the Land from two sources:

a.) They had heard from Moshe while they were still in Egypt, that "*I will bring you...to the land of the Cana'anites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey*" (Shemos 3:17), and "*the people believed*" (ibid. 4:31).

b.) After the miracles which occurred when leaving Egypt, and the splitting of the Reed Sea, where they sang about coming to the Land (ibid. 15:17).

Since the Jewish people were familiar with these two points, *Rashi* concluded that our verse must be confirming the conquest of the Land in an even more powerful manner. Thus *Rashi* stresses: *I am not telling you this out of speculation*—as you may have speculated yourselves after seeing God's miracles when leaving Egypt—*or from something I've heard*—as I communicated to you God's promises while you were still in Egypt. Rather: *You'll see it with your own eyes!*, i.e. the Jewish people will see the proof themselves, with their very eyes, that the conquest of the Land was about to occur.

But what exactly were the Jewish people going to be able to see while still camped at Mount Sinai? And how did *Rashi* conclude that Moshe promised them a totally supernatural conquest?

Rashi did not address either of these points directly, since the matter is self-understood from one of *Rashi's* earlier comments:

In verse 2, above, *Rashi* writes: "*There is no shorter route from Choraiv to Kadaish-Barne'a than by way of Mount Se'ir, and even that is a journey of eleven days. But you covered it in three days!*" (as *Rashi* continues to prove by a series of calculations). So, when reaching our verse—which was said by Moshe *before* the journey from Choraiv to Kadaish-Barne'a (see v. 6)—the reader knows that the Jewish people were about to witness a phenomenal miracle, of completing an eleven-day journey in just three days. Therefore, *Rashi* did not need to explain how the Jewish people would be given visual confirmation of their imminent conquest ("*You'll see it with your own eyes!*"), for the reader knows that the Jewish people were about to witness a miraculous beginning to their journey towards conquering the Land of Israel.

Similarly, *Rashi* did not need to bring any proof for his assertion, "*No one will contest the matter, and you will not need to go to war,*" to the extent that "*they would not have needed weapons,*" for the miraculous beginnings with which the conquest began suggested that the entire process would be totally supernatural.

What Went Wrong?

We can now explain a further difficulty with *Rashi's* comment here:

Rashi writes, "If they had not sent the spies they would not have needed weapons." Now, at first glance, the problem here was not the actual sending of the spies but the fiasco which followed, where the Jewish people lost faith in God's promises after the spies' negative reports. So why did *Rashi* not write, "If it were not for *the sin* of the spies...."?

However, based on the above we can understand why the *sending* of the spies alone was sufficient to forfeit God's promises. For God had promised them (and had begun to show them) a totally supernatural conquest. Thus, as soon as they had *sent out* spies, which is a strategy only required for a *natural* conquest, the Jewish people had *already* demonstrated an open denial of the promise of supernatural conquest.

And this was Moshe's rebuke here to the Jewish people forty years later, as they were about to enter the Land: the importance of absolute trust in God.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, p. 1*ff.*)

The Last Word

Rashi stresses (v. 8) that if the Jewish people had trusted in God, nobody would have contested the Jewish people's rights to the Land of Israel.

Likewise, in our times, when the Jewish people will trust in God, that the Land of Israel belongs unequivocally to them, and are willing to declare this openly to the nations of the world, then, "*No one will contest the matter, and you will not need to go to war.*" In fact, even weapons will prove unnecessary, as *Rashi* writes.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, p. 8)

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ככוכבי השמים לרב: יא יהוה אלהי אבותכם יסף עליכם
ככם אלף פעמים ויברך אתכם כאשר דבר לכם: [שני] יב איכה*
אשא לבדי טרחכם ומשאכם וריבכם: יג הבו לכם אנשים
חכמים ונבנים וידעים לשבטיכם ואשימם בראשיכם:
יד ותענו אתי ותאמרו טוב־הדבר אשר־דברת לעשות:
טו ואקח את־ראשי שבטיכם אנשים חכמים וידעים ואתן
אותם ראשים עליכם שרי אלפים ושרי מאות ושרי חמשים

*אין מנהגנו להפסיק פסוק קודם כדי שלא להתחיל ענין באיכה (ודלא כפי המנהגים ס"ע 31).

יומא דין ככוכבי שמיא לסגי: יא יי אלהא
דאבהתכון יוסף עליכון כותכון אלף זמנין
ויברך יתכון כמא די מליל לכון: יב איכדין
אסובר בלחודי טרחכון ועסקיכון ודינכון:
יג הבו לכון גברין חכימין וסוכלתנין ומדען
לשבטיכון ואמנגון רישין עליכון: יד ואתיבתון
יתי ואמרתון תקין פתגמא די מללתא
למעבד: טו ודברית ית רישי שבטיכון גברין
חכימין ומדען ומניתי יתהון רישין עליכון
רבני אלפין ורבני מאותא ורבני חמשין ורבני

רש"י

קיימים לעולם כחמה וכלבנה וככוכבים[1]: (יא) **יוסף עליכם ככם אלף פעמים.** מהו שוב ויברך אתכם כאשר דבר לכם, אלא אמרו לו משה אתה נותן קצבה לברכתנו, כבר הבטיח הקב"ה את אברהם אשר אם יוכל איש למנות וגו'[2], אמר להם זו משלי היא, אבל הוא יברך אתכם כאשר דבר לכם[1]: (יב) **איכה אשא לבדי.** אם אומר לקבל שכר לא אוכל, זו היא שאמרתי (ס"א שאמרנו) לכם לא מעצמי אני אומר לכם, אלא מפי הקדוש ברוך הוא[1]: **טרחכם.** מלמד שהיו ישראל טרחנין. היה אחד מהם רואה את בעל דינו נוצח בדין, אומר יש לי עדים להביא, יש לי ראיות להביא, מוסיף אני עליכם דיינין[1]: **ומשאכם.** מלמד שהיו אפיקורסין. הקדים משה לצאת, אמרו, מה ראה בן עמרם לצאת, שמא אינו שפוי בתוך ביתו. איחר לצאת, אמרו, מה ראה בן עמרם שלא לצאת, מה אתם סבורים, יושב ויועץ עליכם עצות רעות וחושב עליכם מחשבות (ס"א מזימות ומחשבות): **וריבכם.** מלמד שהיו רוגנים: (יג) **הבו לכם.** הזמינו עצמכם לדבר: **אנשים.** וכי תעלה על דעתך נשים, מה תלמוד לומר אנשים, צדיקים: **חכמים**[3]. כסופים[4]: **נבונים.** מבינים דבר מתוך דבר. זו היא ששאל אריוס את רבי יוסי, מה בין חכמים לנבונים. חכם דומה לשולחני עשיר, כשמביאין לו דינרין לראות רואה, וכשאין מביאין לו יושב ותוהה. נבון דומה לשולחני תגר, כשמביאין לו מעות לראות רואה, וכשאין מביאין לו הוא מחזר ומביא משלו[1]: **וידועים לשבטיכם.** שהם ניכרים לכם, שאם בא לפני מעוטף בטליתו איני יודע מי הוא ומאיזה שבט הוא ואם הגון הוא, אבל אתם מכירין בו, שאתם גדלתם אותו, לכך נאמר וידועים לשבטיכם[1]: **בראשיכם.** ראשים ומכובדים עליכם שתהיו נוהגין בהם כבוד ויראה: **ואשמם.** חסר יו"ד, למד שאשמותיהם של ישראל תלויות בראשי דייניהם, שהיה להם למחות ולכוון אותם לדרך הישרה: (יד) **ותענו אותי וגו'.** החלטתם את הדבר להנאתכם, היה לכם להשיב, רבינו משה ממי נאה ללמוד ממך או מתלמידך, לא ממך שנצטערת עליה. אלא ידעתי מחשבותיכם. הייתם אומרים, עכשיו יתמנו עלינו דיינין הרבה, אם אין מכירנו אנו מביאין לו דורון והוא נושא לנו פנים[1]: **לעשות.** אם הייתי מתעצל, אתם אומרים עשה מהרה: (טו) **ואקח את ראשי שבטיכם.** משכתים בדברים, אשריכם, על מי באתם להתמנות, על בני אברהם יצחק ויעקב, על בני אדם שנקראו אחים ורעים, חלק ונחלה וכל לשון חבה[1]: **אנשים חכמים וידועים.** אבל נבונים לא מצאתי. זו אחת משבע מדות שאמר יתרו למשה, ולא מצא אלא שלשה, אנשים צדיקים, חכמים וידועים[1]: **ראשים עליכם.** שתנהגו בהם כבוד. ראשים במקח, ראשים בממכר, ראשים במשא ומתן, נכנס אחרון ויוצא ראשון[1]: **שרי אלפים.** אחד ממונה על אלף: **שרי מאות.**

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Who are "insightful" men? (v. 13)

Rashi: Those who can deduce one thing from another.

This is what Arius asked Rabbi Yosi: "What is the difference between wise men and insightful men?"

[Rabbi Yosi replied]: "A wise man is like a rich money changer. When people bring him coins to examine, he examines them; when they don't bring him anything, he sits and does nothing."

"An insightful man, however, is like an enterprising money changer. When they bring him coins to examine, he examines them; but when they don't bring him any, he goes out and does [business] with his own [money].

● Why did Moshe not pick any "insightful" men? (v. 15)

Rashi: [He said]: "I couldn't find any insightful men."

TORAS MENACHEM

"Insightful" Judges (v. 13, 15)

In his commentary to verse 13, *Rashi* cites the analogy used by Rabbi Yosi, which explains the distinction between "wise" and "insightful" men.

This presents us with the following problems:

a.) In *Parshas Ki Sisa*, the Torah states, "*See, I have appointed Betzalel the son of Uri the son of Chur...I have filled him with the spirit of God, with wisdom, with insight etc.*" (*Shemos* 31:2-3). *Rashi* comments: "*'Wisdom'—that which a person hears from others, and learns. 'Insight'—Independently derived ideas that are concluded from things that one has been taught.*"

So since *Rashi* has *already* informed us of the meaning of the term "insight," in *Parshas Ki Sisa*, why does he repeat himself *here*?

1 ספרי 2 בראשית יג, טז 3 הגירסא הנכונה ברש"י הוא (ע"פ הספר כאן, וכ"ה ברוב כת"י רש"י שבספריית ליובאוויטש) "אנשים צדיקים כסופים", בהשמטת תיבת "חכמים", או שתיבת "חכמים" צ"ל חלק מד"ה "נבונים": חכמים נבונים.. מה בין וכו'. הרש"י ש"כסופים" הוא פירושו של "אנשים" ולא "חכמים", נאכ"מ. (ע"פ לקו"ש חל"ד ע' 9, הערה 6, ובשולי הגליון שם) 4 ראה פרש"י ויצא לא, ל: "נכספת - חמדת". וכאן הפירוש: אנשים שנכספים אליהם, להיות במחיצתם ולקבל מהם כו' (ע"פ שיחת ש"פ דברים תשמ"ו)

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(individual) stars of the heavens, (so you would be an awesome responsibility to judge even if you were few, all the more so that you are*) many.* [11] *(In fact, in the future,) God, the God of your ancestors, will multiply your number a thousand times. He will bless you as He told you (He would, when He took Avraham outside his tent and showed him the stars).*

SECOND READING [12] *"(If you argue that I should judge you alone, despite the responsibility and risk of punishment, God has forbidden me from doing so. For) how could I bear singlehandedly your (tactical legal) maneuvers (in court, the) burden of your (slander against me), and your disputes (with each other)?* [13] *(So) prepare (righteous), wise and insightful men for yourselves, known among your tribes, and I will appoint them as your leaders."*

[14] *You answered me (disrespectfully) and said, "The thing which you have proposed to do is good (for us)."*

[15] *I selected (and persuaded) wise and well known men from the leaders of your tribes, and I made them leaders over you—leaders of thousands, leaders of hundreds, leaders of fifties, leaders of tens, and police officers over your tribes.*

TORAS MENACHEM

And if *Rashi* feared the reader might have forgotten this explanation, which was studied some time ago, and he felt it necessary to remind the reader, then he should have also reminded us here of the definition of "wisdom."

b.) What is added by the analogy of the two money changers?

c.) Why does *Rashi* quote, "This is what Arius asked Rabbi Yosi"? Of what relevance is this at the literal level?

THE EXPLANATION

In his comment to verse 15, *Rashi* writes that Moshe did not actually appoint any "insightful" men as judges, because he simply was unable to find any.

But this seems to contradict what was stated earlier: It *was* possible to find "insightful men" for the construction of the Tabernacle—as the verse states, "Betzalel and Ohaliav should do (all the work) together with every wisehearted man into whom God had instilled wisdom *and insight*"—so why was Moshe unable to find any insightful men to appoint as judges?**

Obviously, there *were* insightful men among the Jewish people, but the type of insight required to construct the Tabernacle was different from that required to be a judge:

One level of insight is where a person is able to clarify additional details on his own, after being given a general overview. This would have been sufficient for constructing the Tabernacle, since after hearing the general instructions from Moshe, there would have been certain details that the engineers would have had to deduce by themselves.

A judge, however, requires a much deeper level of insight, akin to "lateral thinking." With this talent, a person is not only capable of filling in further details *within* the information transmitted to him by his teacher, but he is able to *reapply* what he has learned in a variety of other situations, and derive innovative, independent conclusions.

In order to clarify this distinction, *Rashi* cited the analogy of the two money changers:

The rich money changer only works with the materials he is given, analogous to a person who can calculate *within* the parameters of the information he is given. However, the enterprising money changer "goes out and does business with his own money"—corresponding to one who is able to extrapolate beyond the context of the information at hand.

Thus, by citing this analogy, *Rashi* has explained to the reader why Moshe was unable to find *any* "insightful" men suitable to be judges, whereas he was able to find insightful individuals to construct the Tabernacle—for the insight required to be a judge is a much *rarer* talent, of truly innovative, independent thinking.

ARIUS CHALLENGES RABBI YOSI

After fully explaining a verse at the literal level, *Rashi* sometimes feared that the highly astute reader might be troubled by a more subtle question. Since problems such as these were only relevant to a small portion of *Rashi's* readership, he did not address these issues directly, but he would often hint to a solution. *Rashi* chose to do this by expressly mentioning the original author of the teaching cited, as if to say: Your subtle question can be answered by bearing in mind who authored this teaching.

In our case, the more astute reader may be left with the following question: If there were no individuals blessed with a sufficient degree of insight that a judge requires, then why did God trouble Moshe to look for

Sparks of Chasidus

When creating the forces of holiness and the forces of impurity, *"God made one opposite the other"* (Ecclesiastes 1:14), i.e. for each holy power, God made a diametrically opposed equivalent.

Arius (see *Rashi*) the Bishop (250-366 C.E.) embodied the wisdom (*chochmah*) of impurity—alluded to by the fact that the word Arius (אריוס) in Hebrew contains within it the letters of the word אור, which means "light," and *"light is chochmah"* (*Zohar* I 30b). Since *chochmah* is the ability to perceive the absolute unity of God, we find that even the *chochmah* of impurity—embodied by Arius—came close to the unity of God. For Arius was a bishop who rejected some aspects of his religion which are incompatible with the unity of God (for which he suffered excommunication).

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

* See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 39, pp. 4-5. **Particularly when we consider that these two series of appointments must have occurred at virtually the same time, since the instruction for both appointments was transmitted by Moshe on the *same day*—the day following *Yom Kippur*. See *Rashi* to *Shemos* 18:13; 30:16; 31:18; 33:11; 35:1. (*Maharik* answers that he found insightful men but they were lacking in other qualities required to be a judge. However, *Rashi* appears to write unequivocally, "I could not find any insightful men.")

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וְשָׂרֵי עֲשָׂרֹת וְשֹׁטְרִים לְשִׁבְטֵיכֶם: טז וָאֲצַוֶּה אֶת־שֹׁפְטֵיכֶם
בָּעֵת הַהִוא לֵאמֹר שָׁמֹעַ בֵּין־אֲחֵיכֶם וּשְׁפַטְתֶּם צֶדֶק בֵּין־אִישׁ
וּבֵין־אָחִיו וּבֵין גֵּרוֹ: יז לֹא־תַכִּירוּ פָנִים בַּמִּשְׁפָּט כַּקָּטֹן כַּגָּדֹל
תִּשְׁמָעוּן לֹא תָגוּרוּ מִפְּנֵי־אִישׁ כִּי הַמִּשְׁפָּט לֵאלֹהִים הוּא
וְהַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר יִקְשֶׁה מִכֶּם תַּקְרִבוּן אֵלַי וּשְׁמַעְתִּיו: יח וָאֲצַוֶּה
אֶתְכֶם בָּעֵת הַהִוא אֵת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשׂוּן: יט וַנִּסַּע
מֵחֹרֵב וַנֵּלֶךְ אֵת כָּל־הַמִּדְבָּר הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא הַהוּא אֲשֶׁר
רְאִיתֶם דֶּרֶךְ הַר הָאֱמֹרִי כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֹתָנוּ וַנָּבֹא
עַד קָדֵשׁ בַּרְנֵעַ: כ וָאֹמַר אֲלֵכֶם בָּאתֶם עַד־הַר הָאֱמֹרִי
אֲשֶׁר־יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ נֹתֵן לָנוּ: כא רְאֵה נָתַן יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְפָנֶיךָ
אֶת־הָאָרֶץ עֲלֵה רֵשׁ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתֶיךָ לָךְ
אַל־תִּירָא וְאַל־תֵּחָת: [שלישי] כב וַתִּקְרְבוּן אֵלַי כֻּלְּכֶם וַתֹּאמְרוּ
נִשְׁלְחָה אֲנָשִׁים לְפָנֵינוּ וְיַחְפְּרוּ־לָנוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְיָשִׁבוּ אֹתָנוּ
דָּבָר אֶת־הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר נַעֲלֶה־בָּהּ וְאֵת הֶעָרִים אֲשֶׁר נָבֹא
אֲלֵיהֶן: כג וַיִּיטַב בְּעֵינַי הַדָּבָר וָאֶקַּח מִכֶּם שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר אֲנָשִׁים
אִישׁ אֶחָד לַשָּׁבֶט: כד וַיִּפְנוּ וַיַּעֲלוּ הָהָרָה וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד־נַחַל אֶשְׁכֹּל
וַיְרַגְּלוּ אֹתָהּ: כה וַיִּקְחוּ בְיָדָם מִפְּרִי הָאָרֶץ וַיּוֹרִדוּ אֵלֵינוּ וַיָּשִׁבוּ
אֹתָנוּ דָבָר וַיֹּאמְרוּ טוֹבָה הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ נֹתֵן לָנוּ:

עשריתא וסרכין לשבטיכון: טז ופקידית ית
דיניכון בעדנא ההיא למימר שמעו
בין אחיכון ותדונון קושטא בין גברא ובין
אחוהי ובין גיורה: יז לא תשתמודעון אפין
בדינא מלי זעירא כרבא תשמעון לא תדחלון
מן קדם גברא ארי דינא דיי הוא ופתגמא די
יקשי מנכון תקרבון לותי ואשמעניה:
יח ופקידית יתכון בעדנא ההיא ית כל
פתגמיא די תעבדון: יט ונטלנא מחורב
והליכנא ית כל מדברא רבא ודחילא ההוא
די חזיתון ארח טורא דאמוראה כמא די
פקיד יי אלהנא יתנא ואתינא עד רקם גיאה:
כ ואמרית לכון אתיתון עד טורא דאמוראה
דיי אלהנא יהב לנא: כא חזי יהב יי אלהך
קדמך ית ארעא סק אחסן כמא די מליל יי
אלהא דאבהתך לך לא תדחל ולא תתבר:
כב וקרבתון לותי כלכון ואמרתון נשלח
גוברין קדמנא ויאללון לנא ית ארעא ויתיבון
יתנא פתגמא ית אורחא די נסק בה וית
קרויא די ניעול להין: כג ושפר בעיני פתגמא
ודברית מנכון תרין עשר גברין גברא חד
לשבטא: כד ואתפניו וסליקו לטורא ואתו עד
נחלא דאתכלא ואלילו יתה: כה ונסיבו
בידיהון מאבא דארעא ואחיתו לנא ואתיבו
יתנא פתגמא ואמרו טבא ארעא דיי אלהנא

רש״י

אחד ממונה על אלף: **ושטרים.** מניתי עליכם לשבטיכם. אלו הכופתין והמכין ברצועה על פי הדיינין[1]: **(טז) ואצוה את שפטיכם.** אמרתי להם הוו מתונים בדין, אם בא דין לפניך פעם אחת שתים ושלש, אל תאמר כבר בא דין זה לפני פעמים הרבה, אלא היו נושאים ונותנים בו[1]: **בעת ההוא.** משמניתים אמרתי להם, אין עכשיו כלשעבר, לשעבר הייתם ברשות עצמכם, עכשיו הרי אתם משועבדים לצבור: **שמוע.** לשון הוה אודנ"ט בלע"ז, כמו זכור[2] ושמור[3]: **ובין גרו.** זה בעל דינו, שאוגר עליו דברים[1]. דבר אחר ובין גרו, אף על עסקי דירה בין חולקין אחים אפילו בין תנור לכירים[4]: **(יז) לא תכירו פנים במשפט.** זה הממונה להושיב הדיינין, שלא יאמר, איש פלוני נאה או גבור, אושיבנו דיין, איש פלוני קרובי, אושיבנו דיין בעיר, והוא אינו בקי בדינין, נמצא מחייב את הזכאי ומזכה את החייב. מעלה אני על מי שמנהו כאילו הכיר פנים בדין[1]: **בקטן בגדול תשמעון.** שיהא חביב עליך דין של פרוטה כדין של מאה מנה, שאם קדם ובא לפניך לא תסלקנו לאחרון[5]. דבר אחר כקטן כגדול תשמעון, כתרגומו, שלא תאמר, זה עני הוא וחבירו עשיר ומצוה לפרנסו, אזכה את העני ונמצא מתפרנס בנקיות. דבר אחר שלא תאמר, היאך אני פוגם כבודו של עשיר זה בשביל דינר, אזכנו עכשיו, וכשיצא לחוץ אומר אני לו, תן לו שאתה חייב לו[1]: **לא תגורו מפני איש.** לא תיראו. דבר אחר לא תגורו, לא תכניס דבריך מפני איש[1]. לשון אוגר בקיץ[6]: **כי המשפט לאלהים הוא.** מה שאתה נוטל מזה שלא כדין, אתה מזקיקני להחזיר לו, נמצא שהטית עלי המשפט: **תקרבון אלי.** על דבר זה נסתלק ממנו משפט בנות צלפחד, וכן שמואל אמר לשאול אנכי הרואה[7], אמר לו הקב"ה, חייך שאני מודיעך שאין אתה

TORAS MENACHEM

In response to this question, *Rashi* writes that the above analogy was taught by Rabbi Yosi, who was blessed with an outstanding degree of insight, as our Sages testified: *"When Rabbi Yosi died, Insight ceased"* "insightful men" in the first place? Surely God knew that there were no sufficiently qualified candidates, and that He was thus commanding Moshe in vain!

1 ספרי 2 שמות כ, ח 3 דברים ה, יב 4 סנהדרין ז: 5 שם ח. 6 משלי י, ה 7 שמואל-א ט, יט

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16 On that occasion, I instructed your judges, saying, "Listen (patiently) to your brothers' (claims, even if you have heard a similar case before), and judge righteously between a man and his brother who disputes him. 17 Do not show favoritism (and appoint judges who are not qualified, who will err) in judgment. You should listen (with equal interest) to (a case involving) a small (amount of money as you do to a case involving) a large amount. Do not fear any man (and show him favoritism, for this is as if one has exacted money from) God, (Who must correct) the judgment (and restore the money to its rightful owner). If a case is too difficult for you, bring it to me, and I will hear it." 18 And, on that occasion, I gave you instructions about all the things you should do (in a monetary case and in a capital case).

Rebuke for the Incident with the Spies

1:19 *We journeyed from Choraiv and went through that entire great and fearful desert (filled with the giant snakes and scorpions) that you saw, towards the Amorite mountain as God, our God, commanded us—and we arrived at Kadaish-Barne'a.*

20 I said to you, "You have arrived at the Amorite mountain, which God, our God, is giving us!"

21 "Look! God, your God, has put the Land (into your hands) before you! (All you have to do is) go and take possession of it, as God, the God of your fathers, has told you! Don't be afraid or demoralized!"

Third Reading

22 But you all approached me (in a rowdy mob) and said, "Let's send men ahead of us who will search out the Land for us and bring us back (a report detailing which language the people use to speak their) word(s), which route we should follow, and which cities we should come to (first, to conquer)."

23 (I claimed that) it seemed like a good idea to me (hoping that this would convince you of the truth of my words, when you would see that I was ready to put them to the test, but you did not retract your demands). So I selected twelve men from (the finest among) you, one man for each tribe. 24 They set off and went up the mountain, until they came to the valley of Eshkol. Then, they spied out (the entire land).

25 They took some of the fruit of the land in their hands and brought it down to us. They brought us back a report and said, "The Land that God, our God, is giving us is good!"

רש"י

רואה. ולימתי הודיעו, כשבא למשוח את דוד וירא את אליאב ויאמר אך נגד ה' משיחו[8], אמר לו הקב"ה, ולא אמרת אנכי הרואה, אל תבט אל מראהו[9]: (יח) **את כל הדברים אשר תעשון.** אלו עשרת הדברים שבין דיני ממונות לדיני נפשות[1]: (יט) **המדבר הגדול והנורא.** שהיו בו נחשים כקורות, ועקרבים כקשתות[1]: (כב) **ותקרבון אלי כלכם.** בערבוביא, ולהלן הוא אומר ותקרבון אלי כל ראשי שבטיכם וזקניכם ותאמרו הן הראנו וגו'[10], אותה קריבה היתה הוגנת, ילדים מכבדים את הזקנים ושלחום לפניהם, וזקנים מכבדים את הראשים ללכת לפניהם, אבל כאן, ותקרבון אלי כולכם, בערבוביא, ילדים דוחפין את הזקנים וזקנים דוחפין את הראשים[1]: **וישבו אתנו דבר.** באיזה לשון הם מדברים[1]: **את הדרך וגו'.** אין דרך שאין בה עקמימות: **ואת הערים אשר נבא אליהן.** תחלה לכבוש: (כג) **וייטב בעיני הדבר.** בעיני ולא בעיני המקום. ואם בעיני משה היה טוב למה אמרה בתוכחות, משל לאדם שאומר לחבירו מכור לי חמורך זה, אמר לו הן. נותנו אתה לי לנסיון, אמר לו הן. בהרים וגבעות, אמר לו הן. כיון שראה שאין מעכבו כלום, אמר הלוקח בלבו, בטוח הוא זה שלא אמצא בו מום. מיד אמר לו, טול מעותיך ואיני מנסהו. מעתה אף אני הודיתי לדבריכם, שמא תחזרו בכם כשתראו שאיני מעכב, ואתם לא חזרתם בכם[1]: **ואקח מכם.** מן הברורים שבכם מן המסולתים שבכם[1]: **שנים עשר אנשים איש אחד לשבט.** מגיד שלא היה שבט לוי עמהם[1]: (כד) **עד נחל אשכל.** מגיד שנקרא על שם סופו[1]: **וירגלו אותה.** מלמד שהלכו בה ארבעה אומנין שתי וערב[1]: (כה) **ויורדו אלינו.** מגיד שארץ ישראל גבוהה מכל הארצות[1]: **ויאמרו טובה הארץ.** מי הם שאמרו טובתה, יהושע וכלב[1]:

TORAS MENACHEM

(*Jerusalem Talmud*, end of Tractate *Sotah*). Therefore, it is understandable that Rabbi Yosi himself would have stressed the need for insightful judges, and that this quality should be sought after to the greatest extent possible.

In addition to Rabbi Yosi's authorship, *Rashi* stressed further that, "*This is what Arius asked* Rabbi Yosi." With these words, *Rashi* was hinting to his readership: "To accuse God of bothering Moshe in vain is not an entirely 'kosher' question, for it was one posed by Arius *the bishop*, to Rabbi Yosi!" Thus, even though Rabbi Yosi did endeavor to answer the question, and it was recorded in the Torah as an eternal teaching, *Rashi* nevertheless stressed to his more astute readership that questions of this nature are better not asked.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, p. 9ff.)

8 שם טז, ו. 9 שם ז. 10 ה, כ.

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כו ולא אביתם לעלת ותמרו את־פי יהוה אלהיכם: כז ותרגנו
באהליכם ותאמרו בשנאת יהוה אתנו הוציאנו מארץ
מצרים לתת אתנו ביד האמרי להשמידנו: כח אנה | אנחנו
עלים אחינו המסו את־לבבנו לאמר עם גדול ורם ממנו
ערים גדלת ובצורת בשמים וגם־בני ענקים ראינו שם:
כט ואמר אלכם לא־תערצון ולא־תיראון מהם: ל יהוה
אלהיכם ההלך לפניכם הוא ילחם לכם ככל אשר עשה
אתכם במצרים לעיניכם: לא ובמדבר אשר ראית אשר
נשאך יהוה אלהיך כאשר ישא־איש את־בנו בכל־הדרך
אשר הלכתם עד־באכם עד־המקום הזה: לב ובדבר הזה
אינכם מאמינם ביהוה אלהיכם: לג ההלך לפניכם בדרך
לתור לכם מקום לחנתכם באש | לילה לראתכם בדרך
אשר תלכו־בה ובענן יומם: לד וישמע יהוה את־קול
דבריכם ויקצף וישבע לאמר: לה אם־יראה איש באנשים
האלה הדור הרע הזה את הארץ הטובה אשר נשבעתי
לתת לאבתיכם: לו זולתי כלב בן־יפנה הוא יראנה ולו־אתן
את־הארץ אשר דרך־בה ולבניו יען אשר מלא אחרי יהוה:

יהב לנא: כו ולא אביתון למסק וסרבתון על מימרא דיי אלהכון: כז ואתרעמתון במשכניכון ואמרתון בדסני יי יתנא אפקנא מארעא דמצרים לממסר יתנא בידא דאמוראה לשיציותנא: כח לאן אנחנא סלקין אחנא תברו ית לבנא למימר עם סני ותקיף מננא קרוין רברבן וכריכן עד צית שמיא ואף בני גבראי חזינא תמן: כט ואמרית לכון לא תתברון ולא תדחלון מנהון: ל יי אלהכון דמדבר קדמיכון הוא יגיח לכון ככל די עבד עמכון במצרים לעיניכון: לא ובמדברא די חזיתא די סוברך יי אלהך כמא די מסובר גבר ית בריה בכל ארחא די הלכתון עד מיתיכון עד אתרא הדין: לב ובפתגמא הדין ליתיכון מהימנין במימרא דיי אלהכון: לג דמדבר קדמיכון בארחא לאתקנאה לכון אתר בית מישרי לאשריותכון בעמודא דאשתא בליליא לאחזיותכון בארחא די תהכון בה ובעמודא דעננא ביממא: לד ושמיע קדם יי ית קל פתגמיכון ורגיז וקים למימר: לה אם יחזי גבר בגבריא האלין דרא בישא הדין ית ארעא טבתא די קימית למתן לאבהתכון: לו אלהין כלב בר יפנה הוא יחזנה וליה אתן ית ארעא די דרך בה ולבנוהי חלף די אשלים בתר דחלתא דיי:

רש"י

(כו) **ותמרו.** לשון התרסה, התרסתם כנגד מאמרו: (כז) **ותרגנו.** לשון הרע, וכן דברי נרגן[1], אדם המוציא דבה: **בשנאת ה' אתנו.** והוא היה אוהב אתכם, אבל אתם שונאים אותו. משל הדיוט אומר, מה דבלבך על רחמך מה דבלביה עלך: **בשנאת ה' אתנו הוציאנו מארץ מצרים.** הוצאתו לשנאה היתה. משל למלך בשר ודם, שהיו לו שני בנים ויש לו שתי שדות אחת של שקיא ואחת של בעל, למי שהוא אוהב נותן של שקיא, ולמי שהוא שונא נותן לו של בעל. ארץ מצרים של שקיא היא, שנילוס עולה ומשקה אותה, וארץ כנען של בעל, והוציאנו ממצרים לתת לנו את ארץ כנען: (כח) **ערים גדולות ובצורות בשמים.** דברו הכתובים לשון הבאי[2]:

(כט) **לא תערצון.** לשון שבירה כתרגומו, ודומה לו בערוץ נחלים לשכון[3], לשבור נחלים: (ל) **ילחם לכם.** בשבילכם: (לא) **ובמדבר אשר ראית.** מוסב על מקרא שלמעלה הימנו, ככל אשר עשה אתכם במצרים, ועשה אף במדבר אשר ראית כי נשאך וגו': **כאשר ישא איש את בנו.** כמו שפירשתי אצל ויסע מלאך האלהים ההולך לפני מחנה ישראל וגו'[4]. משל למהלך בדרך ובנו לפניו, באו לסטים לשבותו וכו': (לב) **ובדבר הזה.** שהוא מבטיחכם להביאכם אל הארץ, אינכם מאמינים בו: (לג) **לראותכם.** כמו להראותכם. וכן לנחותם הדרך[5], וכן לשמיע בקול תודה[6], וכן ללכת לגיד ביזרעאל: (לו) **אשר דרך בה.** חברון, שנאמר ויבא עד חברון[7]:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What was Moshe's response to the claim that God "hated" the Jewish people? (v. 27)**

Rashi: He loved you, but you hated Him, as in the common saying: What is in your heart about your beloved, is in his heart about you.

Be'er Mayim Chayim: In other words, since the Jewish people hated God, they *imagined* that God hated them too.

Nachalas Ya'akov: Thus, the "common saying" ("*What is in your heart etc.*") is not in fact applicable to God, for He loved the Jewish people, even though they hated Him.

Devek Tov: *Rashi* was troubled by the question: What made the Jewish people think that God hated them?

● **Why did the Jewish people speak slanderously *in their tents* and not in public? (v. 27)**

Ramban: When Yehoshua and Calev persisted in urging the people to go to war, the other spies met with the Jewish people in their tents to speak slanderously about the Land.

These meetings were held secretly in the tents in order to hide what was happening from Moshe.

1 משלי יח, ח 2 ספרי, וראה שיחות ש"פ נצבים תשמ"ה סכ"ה-כו. 3 איוב ל, ו 4 שמות יד, יט 5 שם יג, כא 6 תהלים כו, ז 7 במדבר יג, כב

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[26] *But you did not want to go up (to the Land), and you rebelled against the word of God, your God.*
[27] *You spoke slanderously in your tents. You said, "God took us out of the land of Egypt because He hates*
us! (He wishes) to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites and destroy us! [28] *Where shall we go? Our*
brothers have demoralized us, saying, '(We saw) a people larger and taller than ourselves and enormous
cities, fortified up to the heavens. And we have even seen giants there!'"

[29] *I said to you, "Don't (let your spirits) be broken! Don't be afraid of them!* [30] *God—your God, who*
goes ahead of you—will fight on your behalf, just as He did everything (on your behalf) in Egypt, before
your eyes. [31] *And as you have seen how God, your God, has carried you in the desert as a man carries*
his son, throughout your entire journey, until you arrived here. [32] *But you do not believe God, your God*
about this statement (that He promised to bring you to the Land. [33] *Yet you see that God) goes along the*
route ahead of you, to search out a place for you in which to encamp, and (He provides a pillar of) fire
at night, to enable you to see while you travel, and a cloud (of protection) by day!"

[34] *God heard the sound of your comments and became angry. He swore, saying,* [35] *"Not a single man*
from this evil generation will see the good Land, which I swore to give to your forefathers, [36] *except for*
Calev the son of Yefuneh. He will see it, and I will give the land (of Chevron) which he trod upon to him
and his children, because he followed God loyally."

TORAS MENACHEM

The Jewish People's Slander (v. 27)

In verse 27, Moshe rebukes the Jewish people for saying, *"God took us out of the land of Egypt because He hates us!"* *Rashi's* explanation prompts the following questions:

a.) What was troubling *Rashi*? ***Devek Tov*** argues that *Rashi* was troubled why the Jewish people would think that God hated them. However, this is difficult to accept, since the Torah explains the Jewish peoples logic: "God took us out of the land of Egypt because He hates us, *to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites and destroy us!"*

Since the Torah itself explains why the Jewish people thought that God hated them, why did *Rashi* need to explain anything?

b.) ***Be'er Mayim Chayim*** and ***Nachalas Ya'akov*** explain that the Jewish people hated God, so they *imagined* that God hated them too. Thus, *Rashi's* common saying (*"What is in your heart about your beloved, is in his heart about you"*) is not meant literally here, because God did *not* hate the Jewish people as a result of the fact that they hated Him.

However, if this is the case, why did *Rashi* not stress that his analogy was imaginary and not real? Surely *Rashi* should have written, "What is in your heart about your beloved, *you think* is in his heart about you"?

The Explanation

In *Parshas Shelach*, the Torah states explicitly that the spies spoke slanderously about the Land *in public* (see *Bamidbar* 13:32*ff*.). So, on reaching our verse, *Rashi* was troubled why the Torah states, "You spoke slanderously *in your tents*"? *Rashi* concluded that there must have been *two* types of slander spoken here. First, the spies disparaged the Land in public, and clearly the statements made in public had to be based on reality. In private, however, the people were prone to speak a type of slander which was totally untrue (cf. ***Ramban***).

Thus, the slander which was spoken by the Jewish people in their tents was clearly *not* that which is expressed at the *end* of verse 27 (that God would *"deliver us into the hands of the Amorites and destroy us!"*), for this is an argument which did appear to have some basis to it, considering the formidable enemy that lay ahead.

Rather, the slander which they spoke in the tents was clearly limited to just the *first* half of the verse, *"God took us out of the land of Egypt because He hates us!"*—a slanderous claim which has no substance to it at all (as *Rashi* stresses at the beginning of his comment, that in truth, "He loved you"). Nobody could make this claim in public, as it would be quickly refuted.

I.e. *Rashi's* innovation here is that the two statements in verse 27 refer to two different types of slander said on different occasions, in different locations.

In order to stress further the content of Moshe's rebuke here, *Rashi* cited the saying, *"What is in your heart about your beloved, is in his heart about you."* Moshe was stressing that not only did the Jewish people's private slander have no basis, it was in fact the very *opposite* of the truth.

If they recognized the fact that they hated God, they would have no reason to complain about how *He* treated them. Instead, they claimed that they genuinely loved God but they felt that God hated them, *despite* their love for Him. In truth, however, the reverse was true: God loved the Jewish people, but they hated Him.

So Moshe said, *"What is in your heart about your beloved, is in his heart about you,"* i.e. the *very same* complaint that you have about Him, He has about you. You claim that you love Him despite His hatred for you, but in truth, He loves you despite your hatred for Him!

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, p. 17*ff*.)

The Last Word

Even when the Jewish people lost faith in God, to the extent that they felt God hated them, *Rashi* writes that, in truth, "He loved you." This teaches us that however low a person falls spiritually, he should know that God continues to love Him. In fact, the very awareness that God still loves the person, despite his lowly state, provides the person with the inspiration to return to God, so he can begin to reciprocate the love which has always been extended to him.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, p. 23)

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לז גַּם־בִּי הִתְאַנַּף יְהֹוָה בִּגְלַלְכֶם לֵאמֹר גַּם־אַתָּה לֹא־תָבֹא
שָׁם: לח יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בִּן־נוּן הָעֹמֵד לְפָנֶיךָ הוּא יָבֹא שָׁמָּה אֹתוֹ חַזֵּק
כִּי־הוּא יַנְחִלֶנָּה אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל: [רביעי] לט וְטַפְּכֶם אֲשֶׁר אֲמַרְתֶּם
לָבַז יִהְיֶה וּבְנֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדְעוּ הַיּוֹם טוֹב וָרָע הֵמָּה יָבֹאוּ
שָׁמָּה וְלָהֶם אֶתְּנֶנָּה וְהֵם יִירָשׁוּהָ: מ וְאַתֶּם פְּנוּ לָכֶם וּסְעוּ
הַמִּדְבָּרָה דֶּרֶךְ יַם־סוּף: מא וַתַּעֲנוּ | וַתֹּאמְרוּ אֵלַי חָטָאנוּ לַיהֹוָה
אֲנַחְנוּ נַעֲלֶה וְנִלְחַמְנוּ כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּנוּ יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וַתַּחְגְּרוּ
אִישׁ אֶת־כְּלֵי מִלְחַמְתּוֹ וַתָּהִינוּ לַעֲלֹת הָהָרָה: מב וַיֹּאמֶר יְהֹוָה
אֵלַי אֱמֹר לָהֶם לֹא תַעֲלוּ וְלֹא־תִלָּחֲמוּ כִּי אֵינֶנִּי בְּקִרְבְּכֶם וְלֹא
תִּנָּגְפוּ לִפְנֵי אֹיְבֵיכֶם: מג וָאֲדַבֵּר אֲלֵיכֶם וְלֹא שְׁמַעְתֶּם וַתַּמְרוּ
אֶת־פִּי יְהֹוָה וַתָּזִדוּ וַתַּעֲלוּ הָהָרָה: מד וַיֵּצֵא הָאֱמֹרִי הַיֹּשֵׁב
בָּהָר הַהוּא לִקְרַאתְכֶם וַיִּרְדְּפוּ אֶתְכֶם כַּאֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂינָה
הַדְּבֹרִים וַיַּכְּתוּ אֶתְכֶם בְּשֵׂעִיר עַד־חָרְמָה: מה וַתָּשֻׁבוּ וַתִּבְכּוּ
לִפְנֵי יְהֹוָה וְלֹא־שָׁמַע יְהֹוָה בְּקֹלְכֶם וְלֹא הֶאֱזִין אֲלֵיכֶם:
מו וַתֵּשְׁבוּ בְקָדֵשׁ יָמִים רַבִּים כַּיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר יְשַׁבְתֶּם: ב א וַנֵּפֶן

לז אף עלי הוה רגז מן קדם יי בדילכון
למימר אף את לא תיעול לתמן: לח יהושע בר
נון דקאים קדמך הוא יעול לתמן יתיה תקף
ארי הוא יחסננה לישראל: לט וטפלכון די
אמרתון לביזא יהון ובניכון די לא ידעו
יומא דין טב וביש אנון יעלון לתמן ולהון
אתננה ואנון ירתונה: מ ואתון אתפניו לכון
וטולו למדברא ארח ימא דסוף:
מא ואתיבתון ואמרתון לי חבנא קדם יי
אנחנא נסק ונגיח בה קרב ככל די פקדנא יי
אלהנא וזרזתון גבר ית מני קרבה ושריתון
למסק לטורא: מב ואמר יי לי אמר להון לא
תסקון ולא תגיחון קרב ארי לית שכנתי
שריא ביניכון ולא תתברון קדם בעלי
דבביכון: מג ומלילית עמכון ולא קבלתון
וסרבתון על גזרת מימרא דיי וארשעתון
וסלקתון לטורא: מד ונפק אמוראה דיתב
בטורא ההוא לקדמותכון ורדפו יתכון
כמא די נתזן דבריתא ומחו יתכון בשעיר
עד חרמה: מה ותבתון ובכיתון קדם יי ולא
קביל יי צלותכון ולא אצית למליכון:
מו ויתבתון ברקם יומין סגיאין כיומיא די
יתבתון: א ואתפנינא ונטלנא למדברא ארח

רש"י

(לז) התאנף. נתמלא רוגז: **(מ) פנו לכם.** אמרתי להעביר אתכם דרך רוחב ארץ אדום לצד צפון ליכנס לארץ, קלקלתם וגרמתם לכם עכוב: **פנו לכם.** לאחוריכם ותלכו במדבר לצד ים סוף, שהמדבר שהיו הולכים בו לדרומו של הר שעיר, היה מפסיק בין ים סוף להר שעיר, עתה המשכו לצד הים והסבבו את הר שעיר כל דרומו מן המערב למזרח: **(מא) ותהינו.** לשון הננו ועלינו אל המקום[1], זה הלשון שאמרתם, לשון הן, כלומר נזדמנתם: **(מב) לא תעלו.** לא עליה תהא לכם, אלא ירידה: **(מד) כאשר תעשינה הדבורים.** מה הדבורה הזאת כשהיא מכה את האדם מיד מתה, אף הם כשהיו נוגעים בכם מיד מתים: **(מה) ולא שמע ה' בקלכם.** כביכול עשיתם מדת רחמיו כאלו אכזרי: **(מו) ותשבו בקדש ימים רבים.** י"ט שנה, שנאמר כימים אשר ישבתם בשאר המסעות, והם היו ל"ח שנה, י"ט מהם עשו בקדש וי"ט שנה הולכים ומטורפים וחזרו לקדש, כמו שנאמר וינעם במדבר. כך מצאתי

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Was Moshe prevented from entering the Land due to the sin of the spies? (v. 37)

Ramban: No. Moshe was prevented from entering the Land for not sanctifying God's Name at the waters of Merivah (*Bamidbar* 20:12).

The reason why Moshe referred to this detail here is because he wished to list together all those individuals who had been prevented from entering the Land as a punishment.

Moshe also stressed that his own failure to sanctify God's Name at the waters of Merivah had been caused by the Jewish people themselves (*"Because of you, God also became angry with me"*), for the event transpired because of the quarrels of the Jewish people.

The fact that Moshe was not destined to enter the Land also serves as an introduction to the following verse (38), which states that Yehoshua will lead the Jewish people into the Land of Israel.

Ohr haChayim: *Ramban's* explanation, that in verse 37 Moshe is referring to the sin of the waters of Merivah, is unacceptable. For the entire discussion [from verse 22 until the end of the chapter] is about the sin of the spies, so why should verse 37 be an exception? Why would Moshe interrupt the discussion and change the subject for just one verse? *Ramban* suggests that Moshe wished to include together all those individuals who had been prevented from entering the Land as a punishment, but what would be the point of doing that?

Rather, Moshe was punished *for the sin of the spies* by being prevented from entering the Land.

Abarbanel: Why was Moshe punished for the sin of the spies when he did not believe the evil reports of the spies, and he did not doubt God's ability to bring the people into the Land? Because by consenting to the sending of the spies, which God had not commanded, Moshe was responsible for the sin that resulted.

1 במדבר יד, מ

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—37 Because of you, God also became angry with me, saying, "You will not come there (to the Land) either!"—

38 "Yehoshua, the son of Nun, who stands at your side, will go there. Support him, for he will lead the Jewish people to inherit it."

FOURTH READING

39 "(Also,) your small children, about whom you said that they will be taken as captives, and your children, who do not yet know (the difference between) good and evil—they will come there (to the Land) and I will give it to them to inherit."

40 "You, (on the other hand), should turn yourselves around (180 degrees) and journey (back) through the desert, towards the Reed Sea (and then circle the South side of Mount Se'ir)."

41 You responded and said to me, "We've sinned against God! We will go up and we will fight, in accordance with all the instructions of God, our God."

Each of you then equipped yourself with weapons, and you prepared yourselves to go up to the mountain.

42 God said to me, "Say to them, 'Do not go up and do not fight, so you will not be struck down by your enemies, for I am not with you.'"

43 I spoke to you, but you did not listen. You rebelled against God's command. You deliberately (ignored God) and went up to the mountain. 44 The Amorites who lived in the mountain came out towards you and pursued you like bees. They struck you down from Se'ir to Charmah.

45 You came back and wept before God, but God would not accept your prayers. He wouldn't (even) listen to you.

46 You stayed in Kadaish for a long time, as long as you stayed (in all the other desert encampments put together).

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

Nevertheless, since Moshe's error here was unintentional, and the people's sin was intentional, God did not punish Moshe with them.

Rather, when Moshe erred with the waters of Merivah, God punished him by preventing him from entering the Land, though really the punishment was a result of *both* the sin of the spies and the sin of the waters of Merivah.

MALBIM: The only two individuals from the generation that left Egypt to enter the Land of Israel were Calev and Yehoshua. In reference to Calev the Torah states, *"He will see"* the Land (v. 36), whereas in reference to Yehoshua the Torah states, *"He will lead the Jewish people to inherit it"* (v. 38). Thus the reader will be troubled why Yehoshua was given a different role than Calev.

In order to preempt this question, the Torah included verse 37 (which states that Moshe was prevented from entering the Land) as a parenthetical statement, for it clarifies why Yehoshua was given the additional task of leading the Jewish people into the Land.

TORAS MENACHEM

MOSHE'S PUNISHMENT (v. 37)

The commentators discuss at length why Moshe mentioned that he was prevented from entering the Land of Israel in the middle of describing the sin of the spies (v. 37). The Torah states explicitly that this decree was passed upon Moshe due to the sin of the waters of Merivah—which occurred almost forty years later—and *not* the sin of the spies. In fact, *Rashi* makes this point explicitly in his comments to *Bamidbar* 27:13-14, (thus rejecting the argument of ***Abarbanel***, that Moshe's punishment was given as a result of both sins).

Why did *Rashi*, who explains *every* problem that arises at the literal level, fail to address the above question?

THE EXPLANATION

At the literal level, ***Malbim***'s explanation—that verse 37 is a parenthetical statement to explain why Yehoshua was rewarded more than Calev—is consistent with *Rashi*'s approach.*

Rashi did not feel the need to clarify this matter, since the reader is already familiar with the concept that the Torah will on occasion make a parenthetical statement, from a number of previous instances (such as above 1:16-17; *Shemos* 16:35, etc.). Thus, in cases such as these where *Rashi* felt the reader has enough information at hand to work out the solution with simple logic, *Rashi* chose not to "spoon-feed" the reader, but rather to challenge him to work out the solution for himself.**

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 14, p. 8ff.)

*Not *all* of *Malbim*'s statements regarding this matter are compatible with *Rashi* here, for *Malbim* also writes that the decree against Moshe was primarily a result of the sin of the spies, which is inconsistent with *Rashi*, as explained above. ** For *Rashi* was not merely a "commentator," but a teacher who aimed to broaden the minds of his students and train them towards independent study (See *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz 5747*, par. 25; see also sources cited in *Klalei Rashi* (Kehos 1991), page 72, rules 6-7).

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א ונסע המדברה דרך ים־סוף כאשר דבר יהוה אלי ונסב את־
הר־שעיר ימים רבים: ס [חמישי] ב ויאמר יהוה אלי לאמר:
ג רב־לכם סב את־ההר הזה פנו לכם צפנה: ד ואת־העם צו
לאמר אתם עברים בגבול אחיכם בני־עשו הישבים בשעיר
וייראו מכם ונשמרתם מאד: ה אל־תתגרו בם כי לא־אתן
לכם מארצם עד מדרך כף־רגל כי־ירשה לעשו נתתי
את־הר שעיר: ו אכל תשברו מאתם בכסף ואכלתם
וגם־מים תכרו מאתם בכסף ושתיתם: ז כי יהוה אלהיך
ברכך בכל מעשה ידך ידע לכתך את־המדבר הגדל הזה
זה | ארבעים שנה יהוה אלהיך עמך לא חסרת דבר:
ח ונעבר מאת אחינו בני־עשו הישבים בשעיר מדרך הערבה
מאילת ומעצין גבר ס * ונפן ונעבר דרך מדבר מואב:
ט ויאמר יהוה אלי אל־תצר את־מואב ואל־תתגר בם
מלחמה כי לא־אתן לך מארצו ירשה כי לבני־לוט נתתי
את־ער ירשה: י האמים לפנים ישבו בה עם גדול ורב ורם
כענקים: יא רפאים יחשבו אף־הם כענקים והמאבים יקראו
להם אמים: יב ובשעיר ישבו החרים לפנים ובני עשו יירשום
וישמידום מפניהם וישבו תחתם כאשר עשה ישראל לארץ
ירשתו אשר־נתן יהוה להם: יג עתה קמו ועברו לכם

* פסקא באמצע הפסוק.

א ימא דסוף כמא די מליל יי עמי ואקפנא
ית טורא דשעיר יומין סגיאין: ב ואמר יי לי
למימר: ג סגי לכון דאקפתון ית טורא הדין
אתפניו לכון צפונא: ד וית עמא פקד למימר
אתון עברין בתחום אחוכון בני עשו דיתבין
בשעיר וידחלון מנכון ותסתמרון לחדא:
ה לא תתגרון בהון ארי לא אתן לכון
מארעהון עד מדרך פרסת רגלא ארי ירתא
לעשו יהבית ית טורא דשעיר: ו עיבורא
תזבנון מנהון בכספא ותיכלון ואף מיא
תכרון מנהון בכספא ותשתון: ז ארי יי אלהך
ברכך בכל עובד ידך ספק לך צרכך במהכך
למדברא רבא הדין דנן ארבעין שנין מימרא
דיי אלהך בסעדך לא מנעתא (חסרתא) מדעם:
ח ועברנא מקדם אחונא בני עשו דיתבין
בשעיר מארח מישרא מאילת ומעציון גבר
ואתפנינא ועברנא ארח מדברא דמואב:
ט ואמר יי לי לא תצור על מואבאי ולא
תתגרי למעבד עמהון קרב ארי לא אתן לך
מארעה ירתא ארי לבני לוט יהבית
ית לחית ירתא: י אימתני מלקדמין יתיבו בה
עם רב וסגי ותקיף כגבריא: יא גבראי
מתחשבין אף אנון כגבראי ומואבאי קרן
להון אימתני: יב ובשעיר יתיבו חוראי
מלקדמין ובני עשו תרכנון ושיצינון
מקדמיהון ויתיבו באתריהון כמא די עבד
ישראל לארעא ירתתה דיהב יי להון: יג כען
קומו ועברו לכון ית נחלא דזרד ועברנא

רש״י

בסדר עולם[1]: (א) ונפן ונסע המדברה. אילו לא חטאו היו עוברים דרך הר שעיר ליכנס לארץ מן דרומה לצפונה, ובשביל שקלקלו הפכו לצד המדבר שהוא בין ים סוף לדרומו של הר שעיר, והלכו אצל דרומו מן המערב למזרח דרך ים סוף. דרך יציאתן ממצרים שהוא במקצוע דרומית מערבית, משם היו הולכים לצד המזרח: ונסב את הר שעיר. כל דרומו עד ארץ מואב: (ג) פנו לכם צפנה. סובו לכם לרוח מזרחית מן הדרום לצפון, פניכם לצפון, נמצאו הולכין את רוח מזרחית. וזהו שנאמר ויבואו ממזרח שמש לארץ מואב[2]: (ד) ונשמרתם מאד. ומהו השמירה, אל תתגרו בם: (ה) עד מדרך כף רגל. אפילו מדרך כף רגל, כלומר אפילו דריסת הרגל איני מרשה לכם לעבור בארצם שלא ברשות. ומדרש אגדה, עד שיבא יום דריסת כף רגל על הר הזיתים, שנאמר ועמדו רגליו וגו'[3]: ירשה לעשו. מאברהם, עשר אומות נתתי לו, שבעה לכם, וקיני וקנזי וקדמוני הן עמון ומואב ושעיר[4], אחד מהם לעשו והשנים לבני לוט, בשכר שהלך אתו למצרים ושתק על מה שהיו אומרים על אשתו, אחותו היא, עשאו כבנו: (ו) תכרו. לשון מקח, וכן אשר כריתי לי[5], שכן בכרכי הים קורין למכירה כירה[6]: (ז) כי ה' אלהיך ברכך. לפיכך לא תכפו (ס"א תכפרו) את טובתו להראות כאלו אתם עניים, אלא הראו עצמכם עשירים: (ח) ונפן ונעבור. לצד צפון הפכנו פנים להלוך רוח מזרחית: (ט) ואל תתגר וגו'. לא אסר להם על מואב אלא מלחמה, אבל מיראים היו אותם ונראים להם כשהם מזויינים, לפיכך כתיב ויגר מואב מפני העם[7], שהיו שוללים ובוזזים אותם. אבל בבני עמון נאמר ואל תתגר בם[8], שום גרוי, בשכר צניעות אמם שלא פרסמה על אביה כמו שעשתה הבכירה, שקראה שם בנה, מואב[9]: ער. שם המדינה: (י) האמים לפנים וגו'. אתה סבור שזו ארץ רפאים שנתתי לו לאברהם, לפי שהאמים שהם רפאים ישבו בה לפנים, אבל לא זו היא, כי אותם רפאים הורשתי מפני בני לוט והושבתים תחתם: (יא) רפאים יחשבו וגו'. רפאים היו נחשבים אותם אמים, כענקים הנקראים רפאים על שם שכל הרואה אותם ידיו מתרפות: אמים. על שם שאימתם מוטלת על הבריות, וכן ובשעיר ישבו החורים ונתתים לבני עשו: (יב) יירשום. לשון הווה, כלומר נתתי בהם כח שהיו מורישים אותם

1 פ״ט 2 שופטים יא, יח 3 זכריה יד, ד 4 ב״ר מד:כג 5 בראשית נ, ה 6 ר״ה כו. 7 במדבר כב, ג 8 דברים ב, יט 9 ב״ק לח:

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PASSING THE LAND OF EDOM

2 We turned ourselves around (180 degrees) and journeyed into the desert towards the Reed
Sea, as God told me, and we circled (the South side of) Mount Se'ir for a long time.
FIFTH READING [2] God spoke to me, saying, [3] "You have circled this mountain long enough! Turn northward!"
[4] "Instruct the people, saying, 'You are about to pass by the border of your brothers, the children of
Eisav who live in Se'ir, and they will be afraid of you. Be very careful [5] not to provoke them, because I
will not give you any of their land—not even the right of passage (without their permission)—since I have
given Mount Se'ir to Eisav as an inheritance. [6] You can purchase food from them with money, so you
can eat. You can purchase water from them with money, so you can drink. [7] (Don't be afraid to show
them you have money, since you should be proud) that God, your God, has blessed you in everything
that you do while you were wandering through this great desert for the past forty years. God has been
with you, (so) you have lacked nothing.'"

PASSING THE LAND OF MO'AV

2:8 We departed from our brothers, the children of Eisav who lived in Se'ir, by way of the plain
which runs from Eilat and from Etzyon-Gaver, directing ourselves (northward) and traveling
toward the Mo'av Desert.
[9] God said to me, "Do not besiege Mo'av, and do not incite them to war, because I will not give you
any of their land as an inheritance, since I have given (the land of Mo'av, also known as) Ar, to the
children of Lot as an inheritance. [10] Since the Aimim—a great and numerous people, tall like giants—
lived there previously (before the Mo'avites, you might be under the impression that this is the land of
the Refa'im, which I promised to Avraham, since the Aimim are also known as Refa'im. [11] In truth,
however, the Aimim that lived here are a totally different nation to the one promised to Avraham, and)
they are also called Refa'im, because they are giants, but the Mo'avites call them Aimim. [12] (The Mo'avites
drove out the Aimim who lived there previously, and settled in it as their God-given land, just as) the
Chorites originally lived in Se'ir, and the children of Eisav (gradually) drove them out, eliminated them
from their presence, and settled in their place—and just as the Jewish people (will) have done to the land
of their inheritance, which God gave them."

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

At the Covenant of the Parts, Avraham was promised "*the (land of the) Kenites, the Kenizites, the Kadmonites, the Chitites, the Perizites, the Refa'im, the Amorites, the Cana'anites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites*" (*Bereishis* 15:19-21). *Rashi* explains, "*There are ten nations listed here, but He gave them only seven nations. The other three, Edom, Mo'av, and Amon, which are the Kenites, the Kenizites, and the Kadmonites, are destined to be our heritage in the future.*"

Thus, here we read that the Jewish people were forced to circumvent these three lands, because, "*I will not give you any of their land as an inheritance*" (v. 9)—in the current era.

Why will the ownership of these three lands only take place in the future? The *Mitteler Rebbe* explains that the seven lands which the Jewish people already possess correspond to the seven emotional attributes of the soul, and that the three lands which will be acquired in the future correspond to the three intellectual faculties of the soul.

In the current era, God commands us primarily to "conquer" our emotional attributes—to coerce and ultimately transform our "animalistic desires" toward the service of God.

In the future however, when this "conquest" is complete, the main occupation of the Jewish people will be to develop the intellectual bond between man and God—i.e. the three intellectual faculties, represented by the three lands of Edom, Mo'av, and Amon.

Thus, in the last moments of exile, *Chabad Chasidus* has emerged, which brings knowledge of God to the three intellectual faculties of *Chochmah, Binah and Da'as*—a "taste" of what is soon to come.

(Based on a public letter written by the Rebbe on the 3rd day of *Selichos* 5750)

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אֶת־נַחַל זָרֶד וַנַּעֲבֹר אֶת־נַחַל זָרֶד׃ יד וְהַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר־הָלַכְנוּ ׀
מִקָּדֵשׁ בַּרְנֵעַ עַד אֲשֶׁר־עָבַרְנוּ אֶת־נַחַל זֶרֶד שְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁמֹנֶה
שָׁנָה עַד־תֹּם כָּל־הַדּוֹר אַנְשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה מִקֶּרֶב הַמַּחֲנֶה
כַּאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לָהֶם׃ טו וְגַם יַד־יְהוָה הָיְתָה בָּם לְהֻמָּם
מִקֶּרֶב הַמַּחֲנֶה עַד תֻּמָּם׃ טז וַיְהִי כַאֲשֶׁר־תַּמּוּ כָּל־אַנְשֵׁי
הַמִּלְחָמָה לָמוּת מִקֶּרֶב הָעָם׃ ס יז וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר׃
יח אַתָּה עֹבֵר הַיּוֹם אֶת־גְּבוּל מוֹאָב אֶת־עָר׃ יט וְקָרַבְתָּ מוּל
בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן אַל־תְּצֻרֵם וְאַל־תִּתְגָּר בָּם כִּי לֹא־אֶתֵּן מֵאֶרֶץ בְּנֵי־
עַמּוֹן לְךָ יְרֻשָּׁה כִּי לִבְנֵי־לוֹט נְתַתִּיהָ יְרֻשָּׁה׃ כ אֶרֶץ־רְפָאִים
תֵּחָשֵׁב אַף־הִוא רְפָאִים יָשְׁבוּ־בָהּ לְפָנִים וְהָעַמֹּנִים יִקְרְאוּ
לָהֶם זַמְזֻמִּים׃ כא עַם גָּדוֹל וְרַב וָרָם כָּעֲנָקִים וַיַּשְׁמִידֵם יְהוָה
מִפְּנֵיהֶם וַיִּירָשֻׁם וַיֵּשְׁבוּ תַחְתָּם׃ כב כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לִבְנֵי עֵשָׂו
הַיֹּשְׁבִים בְּשֵׂעִיר אֲשֶׁר הִשְׁמִיד אֶת־הַחֹרִי מִפְּנֵיהֶם וַיִּירָשֻׁם
וַיֵּשְׁבוּ תַחְתָּם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה׃ כג וְהָעַוִּים הַיֹּשְׁבִים בַּחֲצֵרִים עַד־
עַזָּה כַּפְתֹּרִים הַיֹּצְאִים מִכַּפְתֹּר הִשְׁמִידֻם וַיֵּשְׁבוּ תַחְתָּם׃
כד קוּמוּ סְּעוּ וְעִבְרוּ אֶת־נַחַל אַרְנֹן רְאֵה נָתַתִּי בְיָדְךָ אֶת־סִיחֹן
מֶלֶךְ־חֶשְׁבּוֹן הָאֱמֹרִי וְאֶת־אַרְצוֹ הָחֵל רָשׁ וְהִתְגָּר בּוֹ מִלְחָמָה׃
כה הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אָחֵל תֵּת פַּחְדְּךָ וְיִרְאָתְךָ עַל־פְּנֵי הָעַמִּים תַּחַת

ית נחלא דזרד: יד ויומיא די הלכנא מרקם
גיאה עד די עברנא ית נחלא דזרד תלתין
ותמני שנין עד דסף כל דרא גוברי מגיחי
קרבא מגו משריתא כמא די קיים יי להון:
טו ואף מחא מן קדם יי הות בהון
לשציותהון מגו משריתא עד דשלימו:
טז והוה כד שלימו כל גוברי מגיחי קרבא
לממת מגו עמא: יז ומליל יי עמי למימר:
יח את עבר יומא דין ית תחום מואב ית
לחיית: יט ותקרב לקבל בני עמון לא תצור
עליהון ולא תתגרי למעבד עמהון קרב ארי
לא אתן מארע בני עמון לך ירתא ארי
לבני לוט יהבתה ירתא: כ ארע גבריא
מתחשבא אף היא גבראי יתיבו בה
מלקדמין ועמונאי קרן להון חושבני: כא עם
רב וסגי ותקיף כגבריא ושיצנון יי מקדמיהון
ותרכנון ויתיבו באתריהון: כב כמא די עבד
לבני עשו דיתבין בשעיר די שיצי ית חוראי
מקדמיהון ותרכנון ויתיבו באתריהון עד
יומא הדין: כג ועואי דיתבין ברפיח עד עזה
קפוטקאי דנפקו מקפוטקיא שיצנון ויתיבו
באתריהון: כד קומו טולו ועברו ית נחלא
דארנון חזי דמסרית בידך ית סיחון מלכא
דחשבון אמוראה וית ארעה שרי לתרכותה
ואתגרי למעבד עמה קרבא: כה יומא הדין
אשרי למתן זעתך ודחלתך על אפי עממיא
די תחות כל שמיא די ישמעון שמעך ויזועון

רש״י

והולכים: (טו) **היתה בם.** למהר ולהומם בתוך ארבעים שנה, שלא יגרמו לבניהם עוד להתעכב במדבר: (טז) **ויהי כאשר תמו וגו'.** (יז) **וידבר ה' אלי וגו'.** אבל משלוח המרגלים עד כאן לא נאמר בפרשה (זו), וידבר, אלא ויאמר, ללמדך, שכל ל"ח שנה שהיו ישראל נזופים, לא נתייחד עמו הדבור בלשון חבה פנים אל פנים וישוב הדעת, ללמדך, שאין השכינה שורה על הנביאים אלא בשביל ישראל: **אנשי המלחמה.** מבן עשרים שנה היוצאים בצבא: (יח) **אתה עובר היום את גבול מואב וגו' וקרבת מול בני עמון** וגו'. מכאן שארץ עמון לצד צפון: (כ) **ארץ רפאים תחשב.** ארץ רפאים נחשבת אף היא לפי שהרפאים ישבו בה לפנים, אבל לא זו היא שנתתי לאברהם: (כג) **והעוים היושבים בחצרים וגו'.** עוים מפלשתים הם, שעמהם הם נחשבים בספר יהושע, שנאמר חמשת סרני פלשתים העזתי והאשדודי והאשקלוני והגתי והעקרוני והעוים[1]. ומפני השבועה שנשבע אברהם לאבימלך[2] לא יכלו ישראל להוציא ארצם מידם, והבאתי עליהם כפתורים והשמידום וישבו תחתם, ועכשיו אתם מותרים לקחתה מידם[3]:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Who are the "Avim"? (v. 23)**

Rashi: The Avim are part of the Philistine people, for they are listed together with them in the Book of Yehoshua, as the verse states, *"The five Philistine lords: The Gazites, the Ashdodites, the Ashkelonites, the Gitites, the Ekronites, and the Avim"* (13:3).

However, because of the oath which Avraham had sworn to Avimelech (Bereishis 21:23-24), the Jewish people were unable to take the land [of the Avim] away from them. So, I brought the Kaftorites against them, and *they* destroyed them and dwelt in their place. Now, you are permitted to take [the land of the Avim] from [the Kaftorites'] possession.

1 יהושע יג, ג 2 בראשית כא, כג 3 חולין ס:

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End of the Generation that Left Egypt

2:13 "Now get moving and cross the Zered Brook!"
So we crossed the Zered Brook. [14] The time from when we left Kadaish-Barne'a until we
crossed the Zered Brook was thirty-eight years, (sufficient time) for the entire generation of
the men among the camp that were eligible for war to die out, as God had sworn to them. [15] (So as not
to delay the entry into the Land of Israel), the hand of God came to eliminate those among the camp
(who did not die naturally during this time), until they were all gone.

Passing the Land of Amon

2:16 Then, when all the men among the people who were eligible for war had all died, [17] God spoke
to me, saying, [18] "Today you are going to cross the border of Mo'av (which is also known as) Ar.
[19] When you come near the Amonites, do not besiege them or incite them, for I will not give you
any of the Amonites' land as an inheritance, since I have given it as an inheritance to the children of Lot."
[20] "(Even though) this is also considered the land of the Refa'im (it is not the land of Refaim that I
promised to Avraham, but rather, its name comes from a different group of) Refa'im that lived there
before (the Amonites), whom the Amonites call Zamzumim. [21] (They were) a great, numerous people,
tall like giants, but God annihilated them before (the Amonites), who drove them out and settled in their
place—[22] just as He did for the children of Eisav, who live in Se'ir, when He destroyed the Chorites from
before them, and (the children of Eisav) drove them out and settled in their place, (where they remain)
to this day. [23] The Avim, who lived in open cities as far as Azah (are descended from the Philistines whom
the Jewish people are forbidden from conquering. However,) the Kaftorites came from Kaftor and
destroyed them, and then settled in their place, (so the Jewish people may now conquer this land, as it
no longer belongs to the Avim)."

The War with Sichon, King of Cheshbon

2:24 "Get moving and travel, and cross the Arnon Brook!" (said God).
"Look, I have delivered Sichon the Amorite, King of Cheshbon, and his land into your hand!
Start driving him out, and provoke him to war! [25] Today I am beginning to make all the

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

For a Jew, interaction with the physical world involves sifting out the sparks of goodness hidden within physicality (known as the process of *birurim*, or "refinement"), without becoming enticed and drawn in by physicality. Our daily interaction with the world is thus a form of "war" against the superficial, profane appearance of the world, in an attempt to "conquer" it for the side of holiness.

Some parts of this world, however, are simply too low to be "conquered" or spiritually refined, since their non-Godly veneer is too thick. Such things should be avoided by a Jew, as there is no chance of a successful conquest.

How then are these parts of the world to be refined?

Rashi teaches us: *"The Jewish people were unable to take the land* [*of the Avim*] *away from them"*—because the Avim were too spiritually debased for the Jewish people to refine—*"So, I brought the Kaftorites against them....Now, you are permitted to take* [*the land of the Avim*] *from* [*the Kaftorites'*] *possession"* (See Classic Questions).

In other words, when the Jewish people follow God's will, the non-*Jewish* world will assist in the task of global spiritual refinement, by preparing parts of the world for a spiritual conquest—parts that the Jewish people cannot elevate directly.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Devarim* 5744)

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כָּל־הַשָּׁמָיִם אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁמְעוּן שִׁמְעֲךָ וְרָגְזוּ וְחָלוּ מִפָּנֶיךָ׃
כו וָאֶשְׁלַח מַלְאָכִים מִמִּדְבַּר קְדֵמוֹת אֶל־סִיחוֹן מֶלֶךְ חֶשְׁבּוֹן
דִּבְרֵי שָׁלוֹם לֵאמֹר׃ כז אֶעְבְּרָה בְאַרְצֶךָ בַּדֶּרֶךְ בַּדֶּרֶךְ אֵלֵךְ לֹא
אָסוּר יָמִין וּשְׂמֹאול׃ כח אֹכֶל בַּכֶּסֶף תַּשְׁבִּרֵנִי וְאָכַלְתִּי וּמַיִם
בַּכֶּסֶף תִּתֶּן־לִי וְשָׁתִיתִי רַק אֶעְבְּרָה בְרַגְלָי׃ כט כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ־לִי
בְּנֵי עֵשָׂו הַיֹּשְׁבִים בְּשֵׂעִיר וְהַמּוֹאָבִים הַיֹּשְׁבִים בְּעָר עַד אֲשֶׁר־
אֶעֱבֹר אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ נֹתֵן לָנוּ׃
ל וְלֹא אָבָה סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ חֶשְׁבּוֹן הַעֲבִרֵנוּ בּוֹ כִּי־הִקְשָׁה יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶת־רוּחוֹ וְאִמֵּץ אֶת־לְבָבוֹ לְמַעַן תִּתּוֹ בְיָדְךָ כַּיּוֹם
הַזֶּה׃ ס (ששי) לא וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי רְאֵה הַחִלֹּתִי תֵּת לְפָנֶיךָ אֶת־
סִיחֹן וְאֶת־אַרְצוֹ הָחֵל רָשׁ לָרֶשֶׁת אֶת־אַרְצוֹ׃ לב וַיֵּצֵא סִיחֹן
לִקְרָאתֵנוּ הוּא וְכָל־עַמּוֹ לַמִּלְחָמָה יָהְצָה׃ לג וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְפָנֵינוּ וַנַּךְ* אֹתוֹ וְאֶת־בנו [ק׳ בָּנָיו] וְאֶת־כָּל־עַמּוֹ׃
לד וַנִּלְכֹּד אֶת־כָּל־עָרָיו בָּעֵת הַהִוא וַנַּחֲרֵם אֶת־כָּל־עִיר מְתִם

*יש גורסים ך׳ רבתי.

ויִדחֲלוּן מִן קֳדָמָךְ: כו ושְׁלַחִית אִזגַּדִּין
מִמַּדְבְּרָא דִּקְדֵמוֹת לְוָת סִיחוֹן מַלְכָּא דְּחֶשְׁבּוֹן
פִּתְגָמֵי שְׁלָמָא לְמֵימָר: כז אֶעְבַּר בְּאַרְעָךְ
בְּאוֹרְחָא בְּאוֹרְחָא אֵזֵיל לָא אֶסְטֵי יַמִּינָא
וּשְׂמָאלָא: כח עִבוּרָא בְּכַסְפָּא תְּזַבֵּן לִי וְאֵיכוֹל
וּמַיָּא בְּכַסְפָּא תִּתֵּן לִי וְאֶשְׁתֵּי לְחוֹד אֶעְבַּר
בְּרַגְלָי: כט כְּמָא דִּי עֲבַדוּ לִי בְּנֵי עֵשָׂו
דְּיָתְבִין בְּשֵׂעִיר וּמוֹאֲבָאֵי דְּיָתְבִין בִּלְחָיַת עַד
דְּאֶעְבַּר יָת יַרְדְּנָא לְאַרְעָא דַּייָ אֱלָהָנָא יָהֵב
לָנָא: ל וְלָא אֲבָא סִיחוֹן מַלְכָּא דְחֶשְׁבּוֹן
לְמִשְׁבְּקַנָא לְמֶעְבַּר בִּתְחוּמֵהּ אֲרֵי אַקְשִׁי יְיָ
אֱלָהָךְ יָת רוּחֵהּ וְתַקִּיף יָת לִבֵּהּ בְּדִיל
לְמִמְסְרֵהּ בִּידָךְ כְּיוֹמָא הָדֵין: לא וַאֲמַר יְיָ לִי
חֲזִי שָׁרֵיתִי לְמִמְסַר קֳדָמָךְ יָת סִיחוֹן וְיָת אַרְעֵהּ
שָׁרִי לְתָרָכוּתֵהּ לְמֵירַת יָת אַרְעֵהּ: לב וּנְפַק
סִיחוֹן לְקַדָּמוּתָנָא הוּא וְכָל עַמֵּהּ לַאֲגָחָא
קְרָבָא לְיָהַץ: לג וּמַסְרֵהּ יְיָ אֱלָהָנָא קֳדָמָנָא
וּמְחֵינָא יָתֵהּ וְיָת בְּנוֹהִי וְיָת כָּל עַמֵּהּ:
לד וּכְבַשְׁנָא יָת כָּל קִרווֹהִי בְּעִדָּנָא הַהִיא
וְגַמַּרְנָא יָת כָּל קִרְוֵי גֻבְרַיָּא וּנְשַׁיָּא וְטַפְלָא

רש״י

(כה) תחת כל השמים. למד[1] שעמדה חמה למשה ביום מלחמת עוג (ס"א סיחון) ונודע הדבר תחת כל השמים: (כו) ממדבר קדמות. אף על פי שלא צוני המקום לקרא לסיחון לשלום, למדתי ממדבר סיני מן התורה שקדמה לעולם. כשבא הקב"ה ליתנה לישראל חזר אותה על עשו וישמעאל, וגלוי לפניו שלא יקבלוה ואף על פי כן פתח להם בשלום, אף אני קדמתי את סיחון בדברי שלום. דבר אחר ממדבר קדמות, ממך למדתי שקדמת לעולם. יכול היית לשלוח ברק אחד ולשרוף את המצריים, אלא שלחתני מן המדבר אל פרעה לאמר שלח את עמי, במתון[2]: (כט) כאשר עשו לי בני עשו. לא לענין לעבור את ארצם אלא לענין מכר אוכל ומים: עד אשר אעבור את הירדן. מוסב על אעברה בארצך: (לא) החלותי תת לפניך. כפה שר של אמוריים של מעלה תחת רגליו של משה והדריכו על צוארו: (לב) ויצא סיחן. לא שלח בשביל עוג לעזור לו, ללמדך שלא היו צריכים זה לזה: (לג) ואת בניו. בנו כתיב, שהיה לו בן גבור כמותו: (לד) מתם. אנשים. בביזת סיחון נאמר בזזנו לנו לשון ביזה, שהיתה חביבה עליהם ובוזזים איש לו, וכשבאו לביזת עוג כבר היו

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

• Why did Moshe send a "peaceful message" to Sichon (in v. 26) when God said to "provoke him to war" ? (v. 24)

Rashi: Even though God had not commanded me to make peace with Sichon, I learned to do so from what happened in the desert of Sinai, with the Torah that preceded the world. When God was about to give the Torah to Israel, He took it to Eisav and Yishma'el. Although it was clear to Him that they would not accept it, nevertheless, He started with them for the sake of peace. So too, I first called to Sichon with words of peace.

Ramban: The Torah states: *"But from these (local) peoples' cities, which God your God, is giving you as an inheritance, you may not allow any soul to live"* (Devarim 20:16), which suggests that one is *not* allowed to make a peace treaty with the nations that occupied the Land. Nevertheless, Moshe would certainly not have transgressed this prohibition, and the fact that he sent a peaceful message here to Sichon indicates that it is a *mitzvah* to offer a peaceful settlement with the nations.

This point is proven from the fact that Yehoshua sent three letters to the Cana'anite nations before entering the Land, one of which offered a peaceful settlement (Devarim Rabah 5:13). Clearly then, it is a *mitzvah* to offer a peaceful settlement even with those nations which God commanded us explicitly to attack.

The only distinction between an obligatory war (where it is a *mitzvah* to conquer) and a non-obligatory war, is that in the former case, if they refuse to make peace it is a *mitzvah* to obliterate them entirely (including the women and children). In the case of a non-obligatory war, however, one should not annihilate the women and children, even if the nation refuses to make peace (Ramban to 20:10. This concurs with the view of Rambam in Laws of Kings, 6:1-5).

Gur Aryeh: The case of Yehoshua's three letters is not a valid proof for *Ramban's* argument that one should attempt to make peace even with a nation which God has commanded us to eradicate. For Yehoshua offered a peace treaty *before* he crossed the Jordan, when the war had not yet begun. (This view is also expressed by *Ra'avad* ibid.)

1 ע״ז כה. תענית כ. 2 תנחומא הקדום (הוספות לפ׳ דברים). יל״ש פ׳ חוקת רמז תשס״ד

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nations under the skies fear and dread you. When they hear of your reputation they will tremble and
shudder because of you."
26 *I sent messengers from the Desert of Kedaimos to Sichon, King of Cheshbon, with a peaceful*
message, saying, 27 *"Allow me to pass through your land. I will only go along the main route. I will not*
veer to the right or the left. 28 *I will pay for food with money so I can eat, and I will pay for water with*
money so I can drink. I will only pass through on foot. 29 *(Similar terms to this were agreed upon) with*
me by the children of Eisav, who live in Se'ir, and the Mo'avites who live in Ar. (I only require to pass
through your land) until I cross the Jordan, to the Land which God, our God, is giving us."
30 *But Sichon, King of Cheshbon, did not wish to let us pass by his (land), for God your God hardened*
his spirit and made his heart obstinate, so that He could give (his land) into our hand, as it is today.
SIXTH READING 31 *God said to me, "Look! I have begun to put (the ministering angel of) Sichon and his land (under)*
you! Start driving him out, so you can inherit his land!"
32 *At Yahtzah, Sichon came out towards us to war. He was with all his people.* 33 *But God, our God,*
gave him over to us. We destroyed him, his sons—(one of whom was as strong as him)—and all his
people. 34 *On that occasion, we conquered all his cities, annihilating (the inhabitants of) each city, the*

TORAS MENACHEM

MOSHE'S PEACEFUL MESSAGE (V. 26)

While it is universally agreed that before initiating a war which was *not* explicitly commanded by God there is an obligation to try to make peace (see *Devarim* 20:10ff.), the question whether one should do so before an *obligatory* war is disputed by the commentators.

Rashi maintains that there is no obligation to make peace, but it is *permitted* to do so. (Thus Moshe attempted to make peace with Sichon here in verse 26, *"even though God had not commanded me."*)

Ramban, however, maintains that there is *always an obligation* to try to make peace before going to war, regardless of whether the war is obligatory or not.

Ramban cites proof from the case of Yehoshua, who attempted to make peace with the Cana'anites before going to war—for the conquest of Cana'an was certainly an obligatory war, requested explicitly by God.

Gur Aryeh argues, in *Rashi's* defense, that Yehoshua offered to make peace before crossing the Jordan. After crossing the Jordan, however, Yehoshua did not attempt to make peace with the enemy, indicating that there is no requirement to do so.

However, at the literal level of Torah interpretation (to which *Rashi* always adheres), there is no indication that crossing the Jordan altered the requirement to eradicate the Cana'anites, and not to make peace with them, in any way.

How then, would *Rashi* respond to the argument of *Ramban*?

THE EXPLANATION

In *Parshas Shoftim*, where the *mitzvah* of making peace with the enemy is recorded, the Torah states, *"When you approach a city to wage war against it, you should (first) make a peaceful proposal to it"* (*Devarim* 20:10). *Rashi* (ibid.), writes, *"The verse is speaking of a non-obligatory war,"* indicating his stance that a "peaceful proposal" is only required in the case of a non-obligatory war.

However, note that the verse stresses, "*When you approach* a city to wage war against it, you should (first) make a peaceful proposal to it." This suggests that, at the literal level, a mandatory peace proposal is only limited to the scenario of a non-obligatory war when one is actually in close proximity of the enemy. From a distance, however, a peace proposal would be permissible even in the case of an obligatory war, even according to *Rashi*.

And this explains why, in our case, Moshe was indeed permitted to propose peace to Sichon, since Moshe did not "*approach* a city to wage war against it," but rather, he merely requested, *"to pass through your land"* (v. 27), without passing near any cities—*"I will only go along the main route. I will not veer to the right or the left"* (ibid.).

MOSHE'S HALACHIC REASONING

Having explained how it was *permissible* for Moshe to propose peace to Sichon, we can now address the question why he *wished* to do so, when no attempt at peace was requested by God.

Rashi writes that Moshe learned from the conduct of God, who first offered the Torah to the other nations, even though He knew they would reject it. So Moshe reasoned that he too should offer a gesture of peace to Sichon, even though he knew that God required the eventual annihilation of Sichon and his people.

In addition to this explanation, the following could be argued from a *halachic* perspective:

Rambam writes: *"The lands which David conquered outside the Land of Cana'an...had an inferior status to the Land of Israel, because he conquered them before he conquered the Land of Israel....If he had seized the entire Land up to its borders and then afterwards conquered the other lands, then everything he conquered would have had the same status as the Land of Israel, in every respect"* (*Laws of Terumos* 1:3).

Thus it could be argued that, likewise in our case, Moshe wished to conquer Cana'an *before* he conquered the lands ruled by Sichon and Og, so that these lands too would have the same *halachic* status as the Land of Israel. Therefore, he first requested merely to "pass through" Sichon's territory, in order that the Land of Cana'an would be conquered first in its entirety, and then the Jewish people would return and conquer the Lands of Sichon and Og.*

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 14, p. 82; *Sefer Hasichos* 5750, vol. 2, p. 546, note 68)

* Of course, this plan failed when Sichon refused to let the Jewish people through his land and *"came out towards us to war"* (v. 32). Nevertheless, it could be argued that the children of Re'uvain and Gad attempted to partially compensate for this failure, by requesting to inhabit the lands of Sichon and Og immediately (*Bamidbar* 32:5). For in this way the connection of these lands to the Jewish people would be emphasized (similar to Moshe's original intention).

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וְהַנָּשִׁים וְהַטָּף לֹא הִשְׁאַרְנוּ שָׂרִיד: לה רַק הַבְּהֵמָה בָּזַזְנוּ לָנוּ
וּשְׁלַל הֶעָרִים אֲשֶׁר לָכָדְנוּ: לו מֵעֲרֹעֵר אֲשֶׁר עַל־שְׂפַת־נַחַל
אַרְנֹן וְהָעִיר אֲשֶׁר בַּנַּחַל וְעַד־הַגִּלְעָד לֹא הָיְתָה קִרְיָה אֲשֶׁר
שָׂגְבָה מִמֶּנּוּ אֶת־הַכֹּל נָתַן יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְפָנֵינוּ: לז רַק אֶל־
אֶרֶץ בְּנֵי־עַמּוֹן לֹא קָרָבְתָּ כָּל־יַד נַחַל יַבֹּק וְעָרֵי הָהָר וְכֹל
אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ: ג א וַנֵּפֶן וַנַּעַל דֶּרֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן וַיֵּצֵא עוֹג
מֶלֶךְ־הַבָּשָׁן לִקְרָאתֵנוּ הוּא וְכָל־עַמּוֹ לַמִּלְחָמָה אֶדְרֶעִי:
ב וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי אַל־תִּירָא אֹתוֹ כִּי בְיָדְךָ נָתַתִּי אֹתוֹ וְאֶת־
כָּל־עַמּוֹ וְאֶת־אַרְצוֹ וְעָשִׂיתָ לּוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ לְסִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ
הָאֱמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר יוֹשֵׁב בְּחֶשְׁבּוֹן: ג וַיִּתֵּן יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּיָדֵנוּ גַּם
אֶת־עוֹג מֶלֶךְ־הַבָּשָׁן וְאֶת־כָּל־עַמּוֹ וַנַּכֵּהוּ עַד־בִּלְתִּי הִשְׁאִיר־
לוֹ שָׂרִיד: ד וַנִּלְכֹּד אֶת־כָּל־עָרָיו בָּעֵת הַהִוא לֹא הָיְתָה קִרְיָה
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־לָקַחְנוּ מֵאִתָּם שִׁשִּׁים עִיר כָּל־חֶבֶל אַרְגֹּב מַמְלֶכֶת
עוֹג בַּבָּשָׁן: ה כָּל־אֵלֶּה עָרִים בְּצֻרֹת חוֹמָה גְבֹהָה דְּלָתַיִם
וּבְרִיחַ לְבַד מֵעָרֵי הַפְּרָזִי הַרְבֵּה מְאֹד: ו וַנַּחֲרֵם אוֹתָם כַּאֲשֶׁר
עָשִׂינוּ לְסִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ חֶשְׁבּוֹן הַחֲרֵם כָּל־עִיר מְתִם הַנָּשִׁים וְהַטָּף:
ז וְכָל־הַבְּהֵמָה וּשְׁלַל הֶעָרִים בַּזּוֹנוּ לָנוּ: ח וַנִּקַּח בָּעֵת הַהִוא
אֶת־הָאָרֶץ מִיַּד שְׁנֵי מַלְכֵי הָאֱמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן מִנַּחַל
אַרְנֹן עַד־הַר חֶרְמוֹן: ט צִידֹנִים יִקְרְאוּ לְחֶרְמוֹן שִׂרְיֹן וְהָאֱמֹרִי
יִקְרְאוּ־לוֹ שְׂנִיר: י כֹּל | עָרֵי הַמִּישֹׁר וְכָל־הַגִּלְעָד וְכָל־הַבָּשָׁן

לא אשארנא משזיב: לה לחוד בעירא בזנא
לנא ועדי קרויא די כבשנא: לו מערער
די על כיף נחלא דארנון וקרתא די בנחלא
ועד גלעד לא הות קרתא די תקיפת מננא ית
כולא מסר יי אלהנא קדמנא: לז לחוד
לארע בני עמון לא קרבתא כל כיף נחלא
יובקא וקרוי טורא וכל די פקיד יי אלהנא:
א ואתפנינא וסלקנא ארח מתנן ונפק עוג
מלכא דמתנן לקדמותנא הוא וכל עמה
לאגחא קרבא אדרעי: ב ואמר יי לי לא
תדחל יתה ארי בידך מסרית יתה
וית כל עמה וית ארעה ותעביד לה
כמא די עבדתא לסיחון מלכא דאמוראה די
יתב בחשבון: ג ומסר יי אלהנא בידנא אף
ית עוג מלכא דמתנן וית כל עמה ומחנוהי
עד דלא אשתאר לה משזיב: ד וכבשנא
ית כל קרווהי בעדנא ההיא לא הות קרתא
די לא נסיבנא מנהון שתין קרוין כל בית פלך
טרכונא מלכותא דעוג במתנן: ה כל אלין
קרוין כריכן מקפן שור רם דילהון דשין
ועברין בר מקרוי פצחיא סגי לחדא:
ו וגמרנא יתהון כמא די עבדנא לסיחון
מלכא דחשבון גמר כל קרוי גובריא נשיא
וטפלא: ז וכל בעירא ועדי קרויא בזנא לנא:
ח ונסיבנא בעדנא ההיא ית ארעא מיד
תרין מלכי אמוראה די בעברא דירדנא
מנחלא דארנון עד טורא דחרמון: ט צידונאי
קרן לחרמון סרין ואמוראי קרן לה טור
תלגא: י כל קרוי מישרא וכל גלעד וכל

רש"י

שבעים ומואסים והיתה בזויה בעיניהם ומקרעין ומשליכין בהמה ובגדים ולא נטלו כי אם כסף וזהב. לכך נאמר בזונו לנו[1], לשון בזיון. כך נדרש בספרי בפרשת וישב ישראל בשטים[2]: (לז) **כל יד נחל יבק.** כל אצל נחל יבוק: **וכל אשר צוה ה' אלהינו.** שלא לכבוש, הניחנו: (א) **ונפן ונעל.** כל צד צפון הוא עלייה: (ב) **אל תירא אתו.** ובסיחון לא הוצרך לומר אל תירא אותו, אלא מתיירא היה משה שלא תעמוד לו זכות ששמש לאברהם שנאמר[3] ויבא הפליט, והוא עוג[4]: (ד) **חבל ארגב.** מתרגמינן בית פלך טרכונא. וראיתי תרגום ירושלמי במגילת אסתר קורא פלטין טרכונין. למדתי חבל ארגוב הפרכיה, היכל מלך, כלומר שהמלכות נקראת על שמה. וכן את הארגוב דמלכים[5], אצל היכל מלך הרגו פקח בן רמליהו לפקחיה, למדתי שכך נקראת שם ההפרכיה: (ה) **מערי הפרזי.** פרוזות ופתוחות בלא חומה, וכן פרזות תשב ירושלים[6]: (ו) **החרם.** לשון הוה, הלוך והכות: (ח) **מיד.** מרשות: (ט) **צידנים יקראו לחרמון וגו'.** ובמקום אחר הוא אומר ועד הר שיאון הוא חרמון[7], הרי לו ארבעה שמות, למה הוצרכו ליכתב, להגיד שבח ארץ ישראל, שהיו ארבעה מלכיות מתפארות בכך, זו אומרת על שמי יקרא, וזו אומרת על שמי יקרא[8]: **שניר.** הוא שלג בלשון אשכנז ובלשון

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What is חֲבֶל אַרְגֹּב ? (v. 4)**

Rashi: "The area of the royal palace," denoting that the area is called after its name.

Talmud: [According to one opinion], the superior oil [for meal-offerings] is from Tekoa [in the southern half of the Land of Israel]. Abba Sha'ul said, "The second best is from Regev [אַרְגֹּב = רָגֶב] in the Transjordan." However, oil from all lands is valid (Menachos 85b).

1 דברים ג, ז 2 במדבר כה, א 3 בראשית יד, יג 4 נדה סא. 5 ב טו, כה 6 זכריה ב, ח 7 דברים ד, מח 8 ספרי

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men, women, and the young children. We left no survivors. [35] *We only plundered the cattle for ourselves, with the spoil of the cities which we had taken.* [36] *(Throughout the entire land) from Aro'air, which is on the edge of the valley of Arnon, and the city in the valley, to Gilad, there was no populated city* too strong for us. God, our God, delivered them all before us.*

[37] *(The) only (places that) you did not approach (were): the Amonite's land, the entire area bordering the River Yabok, the cities of the mountain, and everywhere God, our God, commanded us (not to conquer).*

The War with Og, King of Bashan

3 *We changed direction and went up (northward) toward Bashan. At Edre'iy, Og, the King of Bashan, came out toward us at war. He was with all his people.*

[2] *God said to me, "Do not fear him (even though he has the merit of having helped Avraham**), for I have given him, all his people, and his land into your hands. You will do the same to him as you did to Sichon, King of the Amorites, who lived in Cheshbon."*

[3] *God, our God, also delivered Og, the King of Bashan and all his people into our hands. We struck his (people) down until no survivors remained.* [4] *On that occasion, we conquered all his cities. There was no populated city that we did not take from them: sixty cities, all the area of the royal palace—the (entire) kingdom of Og in Bashan.* [5] *All these cities were fortified with high walls, double doors, and bolts, in addition to a large number of unwalled cities,* [6] *but we destroyed them, just as we did to (the people of) Sichon, King of Cheshbon, annihilating the men, women, and young children of every city.* [7] *We (reluctantly) took all the cattle and the spoils of the cities, as plunder for ourselves (since we already had plenty of plunder from the war with Sichon).*

[8] *On that occasion we took over the land from the two Amorite kings who were on that side of the Jordan, from the Arnon Brook to Mount Chermon* [9]*—the Tzidonites call Chermon, Siryon, and the Amorites call it Senir—* [10] *all the cities of the plain, all of Gilad, and all of Bashan, up to Salchah and*

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

"There Was No Populated City Too Strong" (v. 36)

Chasidic thought explains that even the forces of evil become stronger by virtue of being united together. Thus, we find that the "Generation of Dispersion," who rebelled against God, nevertheless understood the great power in being a totally harmonious community (See *Sparks of Chasidus* to *Bereishis* ch. 11).

Likewise, Sichon and Og were aware of the great spiritual power in communal harmony, which is why they specifically opposed the Jewish people entering the Land of Israel, where they would become a true Jewish community. Sichon and Og knew that their strongest force in opposing the Jewish people at war (from a spiritual perspective) was their own "populated cities," i.e. places of communal harmony. Thus, the Torah stresses, *"There was no populated city too strong for us...there was no populated city that we did not take from them"* (2:36, 3:4), for this represented the dismantling of the spiritual—and consequently the physical—strongholds of Sichon and Og.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 29, p. 1ff.)

"The Area of the Royal Palace" (v. 4)

Abba Sha'ul (in the ***Talmud***) maintained that oil produced in Regev is second best to that produced in Tekoa in the Land of Israel. The first opinion, however, maintained that Regev cannot be called "second best." Since it is outside the Land of Israel it cannot be mentioned together with Tekoa—even to be called "second best." What was the underlying basis of their argument?

The first opinion viewed the holiness of the Land of Israel as being utterly unique, in that it is a Land in which *God caused* His Presence to dwell. To this, there can be no "second best," and all the other lands are equally inferior by comparison. Abba Sh'aul however, maintained that the Transjordan does have *some* of the special sanctity of the Land of Israel, in that it became the eternal inheritance of the children of Gad and Re'uvain (upon their request—see *Bamidbar* 32:5). And this is the inner reason why Regev is called the "royal palace," for it too has a glimmer of the Divine radiance of the Land of Israel.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 24, pp. 22-23)

* ע״פ ׳ערכי הכינויים׳ (מבעל סדר הדורות), מערכת עיר

** He was the "runaway" mentioned in *Bereishis* 14:13 who informed Avraham of Lot's capture. See *Rashi* ibid.

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עד־סלכה ואדרעי ערי ממלכת עוג בבשן: יא כי רק־עוג
מלך הבשן נשאר מיתר הרפאים הנה ערשו ערש* ברזל
הלה הוא ברבת בני עמון תשע אמות ארכה וארבע אמות
רחבה באמת־איש: יב ואת־הארץ הזאת ירשנו בעת ההוא
מערער אשר־על־נחל ארנן וחצי הר־הגלעד ועריו נתתי
לראובני ולגדי: יג ויתר הגלעד וכל־הבשן ממלכת עוג נתתי
לחצי שבט המנשה כל חבל הארגב לכל־הבשן ההוא יקרא
ארץ רפאים: יד יאיר בן־מנשה לקח את־כל־חבל ארגב עד־
גבול הגשורי והמעכתי ויקרא אתם על־שמו את־הבשן
חות יאיר עד היום הזה: [שביעי] טו ולמכיר נתתי את־הגלעד:
טז ולראובני ולגדי נתתי מן־הגלעד ועד־נחל ארנן תוך הנחל
וגבל ועד יבק הנחל גבול בני עמון: יז והערבה והירדן וגבל
מכנרת ועד ים הערבה ים המלח תחת אשדת הפסגה
מזרחה: יח ואצו אתכם בעת ההוא לאמר יהוה אלהיכם נתן
לכם את־הארץ הזאת לרשתה חלוצים תעברו לפני אחיכם
בני־ישראל כל־בני־חיל: יט רק נשיכם וטפכם ומקנכם
ידעתי כי־מקנה רב לכם ישבו בעריכם אשר נתתי לכם:
[מפטיר] כ עד אשר־יניח יהוה | לאחיכם ככם וירשו גם־הם
את־הארץ אשר יהוה אלהיכם נתן להם בעבר הירדן

*יש גורסים ש׳ רבתי.

דמתנן עד סלכה ואדרעי קרוי מלכותא דעוג
במתנן: יא ארי לחוד עוג מלכא דמתנן
אשתאר משאר גבריא הא ערסה ערסא
דפרזלא הלא היא ברבת בני עמון תשע
אמין ארכה וארבע אמין פתיה באמת מלך:
יב וית ארעא הדא ירתנא בעדנא ההיא
מערער די על נחלא דארנן ופלגות טורא
דגלעד וקרווהי יהבית לשבטא דראובן
ולשבטא דגד: יג ושאר גלעד וכל דמתנן
מלכותא דעוג יהבית לפלגות שבטא דמנשה
כל בית פלך טרכונא לכל מתנן ההוא
מתקרי ארע גבריא: יד יאיר בר מנשה נסיב
ית כל בית פלך טרכונא עד תחום גשוראה
ואפקירוס וקרא יתהון על שמה ית מתנן
כפרני יאיר עד יומא הדין: טו ולמכיר יהבית
ית גלעד: טז ולשבטא דראובן ולשבטא דגד
יהבית מן גלעד ועד נחלא דארנן גו נחלא
ותחום ועד יובקא נחלא תחום בני עמון:
יז ומישרא וירדנא ותחומה מגנוסר ועד ימא
דמישרא ימא דמלחא תחות משפך מרמתא
מדינחא: יח ופקידית יתכון בעדנא ההיא
למימר יי אלהכון יהב לכון ית ארעא הדא
למירתה מזרזין תעברון קדם אחיכון בני
ישראל כל מזרזי חילא: יט לחוד נשיכון
וטפלכון ובעירכון ידענא ארי בעיר סגי לכון
יתבון בקרויכון די יהבית לכון: כ עד די יניח
יי לאחיכון כותכון וירתון אף אנון ית ארעא

רש״י

כנען: (יא) מיתר הרפאים. שהרגו אמרפל וחביריו בעשתרות קרנים והוא
פלט מן המלחמה שנאמר[1] ויבא הפליט זהו עוג[2]: באמת איש. באמת עוג:
(יב) ואת הארץ הזאת ירשנו בעת ההוא. האמורה למעלה, מנחל
ארנון ועד הר חרמון: מערער אשר על נחל ארנון. אינו מחובר לראשו
של מקרא אלא לסופו, על נתתי לראובני ולגדי. אבל לענין ירושה עד הר
חרמון היה: (יג) ההוא יקרא ארץ רפאים. היא אותה שנתתי לאברהם:
(טז) תוך הנחל וגבול. כל הנחל ועוד מעבר לשפתו, כלומר עד ועד בכלל
ויותר מכאן: (יז) כנרת. מעבר הירדן המערבי הוא, ונחלת בני גד מעבר
הירדן המזרחי, ונפל בגורלם רוחב הירדן כנגדם, ועוד מעבר שפתו עד
כנרת, וזהו שנאמר והירדן וגבול, הירדן ומעבר לו: (יח) ואצו אתכם. לבני
ראובן וגד היה מדבר: לפני אחיכם. הם היו הולכים לפני ישראל למלחמה,
לפי שהיו גבורים ואויבים נופלים לפניהם, שנאמר וטרף זרוע אף קדקד[3]:

חסלת פרשת אלה הדברים

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

- **Why were the tribes of Re'uvain and Gad told to go ahead of the other Jewish people into battle?** (v. 18)

Rashi: They would go in front of the Jewish people to battle because they were mighty, and the enemies would fall before them, as the verse states, *"He will tear off an arm (of his enemy in one blow, along) with the head"* (Devarim 33:20).

Gur Aryeh: *Rashi* was troubled by the question: Why should the tribes of Re'uvain and Gad be required to lead the battle? It is understandable that they were required to *join* the battle, and not leave the rest of the Jewish people to fight while they relaxed in their newly acquired inheritance of land—but why should they be required to *go first* and put themselves in danger more than the others? *Rashi* answers this question by explaining that the tribes of Re'uvain and Gad went first, "because they were mighty."

1 בראשית יד, יג 2 נדה סא. 3 דברים לג, כ

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Edre'iy, cities of Og's Kingdom in Bashan. 11 For only Og, King of Bashan, remained from the rest of the
Refa'im (that were killed by Amrafel and his colleagues). His bed was a bed of iron, nine cubits long,*
and four cubits wide, according to the cubit of a (giant) man. It is found in the Amonite (city) of Rabah.

The Lands of Re'uvain, Gad & Half the Tribe of Menasheh

3:12 *I gave this land, which we acquired on that occasion—from Aro'air, which is by the Arnon Brook, half*
of Mount Gilad and its cities—to the tribes of Re'uvain and Gad.
13 I gave the remainder of Gilad, and the whole of Bashan—Og's Kingdom—to half the tribe of
Menasheh. (This included) the whole area of the royal palace and all of Bashan, which is called the land
of Refa'im (which God gave to Avraham).
14 Ya'ir, the son of Menasheh, took the whole area of the royal palace until the Geshurite-Ma'achite
border, and named (that part of) Bashan after himself: "Ya'ir's Villages," (a name that remains) to this day.
Seventh Reading *15 I gave Gilad to Machir.*
16 I gave to the tribes of Re'uvain and Gad: from Gilad to the (area of the) Arnon Brook—(including)
the middle of the brook and its bank, right up to the Yabok Brook on the Amonite border—17 the plain,
the (width of the) Jordan and the area (beyond) its bank from Kineres to the Sea of the Plain, the Sea
of Salt, under the waterfalls of Pisgah, eastward.

Instructions For Battle with Cana'an

3:18 *On that occasion, I commanded (the tribes of Re'uvain and Gad) saying:*
"God, your God, has given you this land to take possession of it. (When Israel goes to battle)
those of you who are in the army (should) pass over (the land) armed, in front of your brothers,
the children of Israel, (for you are the mightiest tribe)."
19 "Only your wives, your young children, and your cattle—for I know that you have a lot of cattle—
Maftir *may live in your cities, which I have given you, 20 until God settles your brothers like you. Then they too*
will possess the land which God, your God, is giving them on the other side of the Jordan. (Only) then
may each man return to (settle in) his inherited land, which I have given to you."

TORAS MENACHEM

The Military Leadership of Reu'vain and Gad (v. 18)

Even after the explanation of ***Gur Aryeh***, *Rashi*'s comment to verse 18 presents us with the following problems:

a.) It is commonly accepted that Yehudah (and not Re'uvain or Gad) is the strongest of the tribes. In *Parshas Vayechi*, Yehudah is described as a "lion," which is the strongest of the animals, and Ya'akov promised Yehudah, that, *"Your hand will be on the necks of your enemies"* (Bereisha 49:8).

So how can *Rashi* write here that the tribes of Re'uvain and Gad were required to lead the battle "because they were mighty," and not the tribe of Yehudah?

b.) In *Parshas Matos* (Bamidbar 32:17), *Rashi* writes that the tribes of Re'uvain and Gad were commanded to be "at the head of the invading armies," suggesting they would *join together* with the other tribes' armies at their head. However, here *Rashi* writes that they were required to "go *in front* of the Jewish people to battle," indicating that the *entire armies* of Re'uvain and Gad were to go first, followed by the armies of the other tribes. What caused this change of plan?

The Explanation

a.) To explain the verse, *"Your hand will be on the necks of your enemies"* (Bereishis 49:8), *Rashi* cites the parallel verse, *"And of my enemies, you have given me the back of their necks"* (Sam. II 22:41). This means that the enemy will *"flee, so that I see the back of their necks"* (Metzudas David ibid.). In other words, the unique might of the tribe of Yehudah is that they cause enemies to flee.

However, the conquest of the Land of Israel was an obligatory war in which the Jewish people were commanded, *"You may not allow any soul to live"* (Devarim 20:16, a verse already familiar to the reader from *Rashi* to Vayikra 25:44). So clearly in this case, where the Jewish people were required to *obliterate* the enemy, the ability to cause an enemy to flee was not ideal. Therefore *Rashi* writes that the tribes of Re'uvain and Gad were chosen because "enemies would *fall* before them, as the verse states, *'He will tear off an arm (of his enemy in one blow, along) with the head,'*" i.e. they were effective in *annihilating* the enemy.

b.) If Moshe had led the Jewish people into the Land of Israel, we can presume that he would have enjoyed a totally miraculous victory.

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* See *Bereishis* 14:1*ff.*

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וְשַׁבְתֶּ֗ם אִ֚ישׁ לִֽירֻשָּׁת֔וֹ אֲשֶׁ֖ר נָתַ֥תִּי לָכֶֽם׃ כא וְאֶת־יְהוֹשׁ֣וּעַ
צִוֵּ֔יתִי בָּעֵ֥ת הַהִ֖וא לֵאמֹ֑ר עֵינֶ֣יךָ הָֽרֹאֹ֗ת אֵת֩ כָּל־אֲשֶׁ֨ר עָשָׂ֜ה
יְהוָ֤ה אֱלֹֽהֵיכֶם֙ לִשְׁנֵי֙ הַמְּלָכִ֣ים הָאֵ֔לֶּה כֵּֽן־יַעֲשֶׂ֤ה יְהוָה֙ לְכָל־
הַמַּמְלָכ֔וֹת אֲשֶׁ֥ר אַתָּ֖ה עֹבֵ֥ר שָֽׁמָּה׃ כב לֹ֖א תִּֽירָא֑וּם כִּ֚י יְהוָ֣ה
אֱלֹֽהֵיכֶ֔ם ה֖וּא הַנִּלְחָ֥ם לָכֶֽם׃ ס ס ס

ק"ה פסוקים, מלכי"ה סימן.

דַּייָ אֱלָהֲכוֹן יְהַב לְהוֹן בְּעִבְרָא דְיַרְדְּנָא
וּתְתוּבוּן גְּבַר לִירֻתְּתֵהּ דִּי יְהָבִית לְכוֹן׃
כא וְיָת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ פַּקֵּדִית בְּעִדָּנָא הַהִיא לְמֵימַר
עֵינָיךְ חֲזָאָה יָת כָּל דִּי עֲבַד יְיָ אֱלָהֲכוֹן לִתְרֵין
מַלְכַיָּא הָאִלֵּין כֵּן יַעְבֵּד יְיָ לְכָל מַלְכְוָתָא דִּי
אַתְּ עָבַר לְתַמָּן׃ כב לָא תִדְחֲלוּן מִנְּהוֹן אֲרֵי יְיָ
אֱלָהֲכוֹן מֵימְרֵהּ יָגִיחַ לְכוֹן׃ פ פ פ

Parshas Devarim contains 2 prohibitions

1. Not to appoint a judge who is not learned in the laws of the Torah, even though he is learned in other areas [1:17].
2. A judge should not fear an evil man at a trial [1:17].

TORAS MENACHEM

no different from all the other wars which Moshe fought that were won miraculously. Thus, the fact that Moshe did not merit to enter the Land with the Jewish people, and that they were led instead by Yehoshua, gave rise to the need to conquer the land within the natural order.

When Moshe instructed the tribes of Re'uvain and Gad in *Parshas Matos*, he was still confident that his prayers to enter the Land would eventually be accepted by God (*see Rashi to Bamidbar 27:12*), and that he would lead the Jewish people to a miraculous victory. Therefore he

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21 *I commanded Yehoshua at that time (since he would be leading the battle*), saying, "Your eyes have seen all that God, your God, has done to these two kings. God will do likewise to all the kingdoms through which you will pass."*

22 *(To the tribes of Re'uvain and Gad*, I said,) "Do not fear them, for it is God, your God, Who is fighting for you."*

THE HAFTARAH FOR DEVARIM IS ON PAGE 274.

TORAS MENACHEM

instructed the tribes of Re'uvain and Gad *merely* to be "*at the head* of the invading armies." Their presence was primarily symbolic, since their strength to fight a war within the natural order would not in fact be needed under Moshe's miraculous leadership.

However, when speaking here in our *Parsha*, Moshe had already been told that his prayers to enter the Land had *not* been accepted (as Moshe related below, 3:26), so he was aware that the conquest would have to take place *within* the natural order. Therefore, he instructed the tribes of Re'uvain and Gad to "*go in front of the Jewish people,*" i.e. in front of all of the Jewish people, to utilize their effectiveness to the maximum extent.

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

*ראה שיחות ש״פ דברים תשד״מ.

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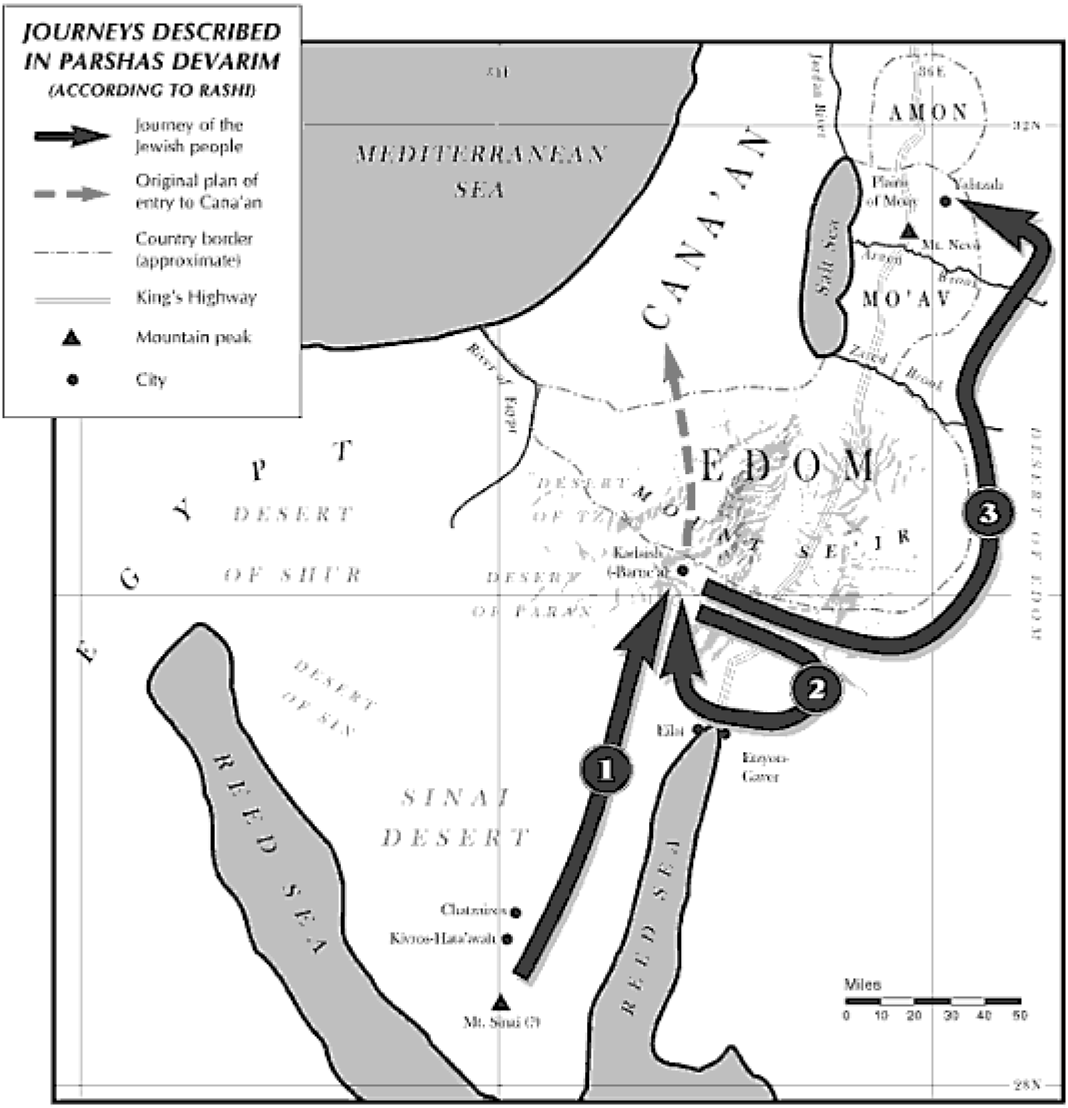

1. Sinai to Kadaish-Barne'a—The Jewish people departed from their encampment at Mount Sinai on 20th Iyar 2449 (*Bamidbar* 10:11-12). They spent 30 days in Kivros Hata'avah (ibid. 11:34), and 7 days in Chatzairos, waiting for Miriam to recover (ibid. 12:15). The final leg of the journey to Kadaish-Barne'a—a distance of 11 days travel—was completed miraculously in just three days, as a sign that God wished to bring the Jewish people into the Land of Israel speedily (*Devarim* 1:2 and *Rashi ibid*).

2. Wandering in the Desert—At this point the original plan was to cross over the remaining part of Mount Se'ir northwards and enter the Land. However, at Kadaish-Barne'a the sin of the spies occurred, and it was decreed that the entire generation would die in the desert (*Devarim* 1:34-35). The people stayed in Kadaish-Barne'a for 19 years (ibid v. 46 and *Rashi*). They then spent another 19 years circuiting the southern part of Mount Se'ir, camping at a series of locations (*Devarim* 2:1; *Bamidbar* 33:19-35), moving gradually eastwards across the entire southern border of Mount Se'ir as far east as Mo'av (*Rashi* to *Devarim* 2:1), before returning via Etzyon Gaver to Kadaish-Barne'a (*Bamidbar* 33:36; *Rashi* to *Devarim* 1:46).

3. Journey to the Plains of Mo'av—At this point, the Jewish people were ready to enter the Land of Israel, since the previous generation had died (*Rashi* to *Bamidbar* 20:22). Moshe requested permission from the King of Edom to pass northwards through the Land of Edom into the Land of Israel, but his request was denied (*Bamidbar* 20:14-21). Thus, they were forced to retrace the steps of their parents along the southern side of Mount Se'ir, heading east (*Rashi* to *Bamidbar* 21:4), circumventing the Land of Edom until they reached Mo'av. They crossed the Zared Brook (*Devarim* 2:13), but the King of Mo'av also refused them passage, so they traveled up the eastern side of Mo'av (*Rashi* to *Bamidbar* 34:3). They crossed the Arnon Brook (*Devarim* 2:24), and defeated Sichon at war in Yahtzah (ibid. 32-33). After defeating Og at war (ibid. 3:1ff.—*not shown on map*), the Jewish people settled in the Plains of Mo'av, where the Book of *Devarim* was said (*Devarim* 1:1 and *Rashi* ibid). [See Appendix]

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parshas Va'eschanan

פרשת ואתחנן

The Name of the Parsha

The word va'eschanan means "I requested," referring to Moshe's requests to enter the Land of Israel: *"I requested from God...Please let me cross over and see the good land that is on the other side of the Jordan"* (3:23-25).

Understandably, Moshe's prayers to enter the Land would have been heartfelt and persistent. In fact, the *Midrash* states that the Torah's use of the unusual term *va'eschanan*, which has the *gematria* (numerical value) of 515, alludes to the fact that Moshe made this petition no less than 515 times! (*Devarim Rabah* 11:10).

Eventually, however, *"God became angry with me... and He did not listen to me. God said to me, 'Enough of your (requests)! Do not speak to Me any more about this matter'"* (v. 26).

Everything in the Torah must convey a practical lesson for our lives. But this account seems merely to convey a historical event. What does it mean for us?

The common perception of this incident is that Moshe's prayers were not accepted by God, and that when God became angry, Moshe stopped his petition. However, we must keep in mind that Moshe was not only praying for himself, but for the entire Jewish people. Had he been the one to lead them into the Land, it would have immediately ushered in the Messianic Age for all time.

Therefore, Moshe could have followed the Talmudic directive, *"Whatever the master of the house tells you, you must do, except [when he tells you to] leave"* (*Pesachim* 86b). When God (the true "Master") told Moshe to stop praying (i.e. to abandon the request for Mashiach, and to "leave" God's presence), he was not required to follow the instructions of his Host, according to Talmudic Law.

So, despite the fact that Moshe was angering God with his persistent prayers, it is highly unlikely that Moshe actually stopped petitioning God, even after God said, *"Do not speak to Me any more about this matter."* For Moshe was not praying for himself, but on behalf of the Jewish people—the generation that he took out of Egypt. And, as a true leader and lover of Israel, Moshe would surely have been willing to put himself at risk (by angering God), to make every possible effort on behalf of his people.

And this is the lesson for us: To continue to pray *for* Mashiach again and again, until we are finally answered!

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Devarim* 5751)

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כג וָאֶתְחַנַּן אֶל־יְהוָה בָּעֵת הַהִוא לֵאמֹר׃ כד אֲדֹנָי יֱהֹוִה* אַתָּה
הַחִלּוֹתָ לְהַרְאוֹת אֶת־עַבְדְּךָ אֶת־גָּדְלְךָ וְאֶת־יָדְךָ הַחֲזָקָה
אֲשֶׁר מִי־אֵל בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲשֶׂה כְמַעֲשֶׂיךָ
וְכִגְבוּרֹתֶךָ׃ כה אֶעְבְּרָה־נָּא וְאֶרְאֶה אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַטּוֹבָה אֲשֶׁר
בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן הָהָר הַטּוֹב הַזֶּה וְהַלְּבָנֹן׃ כו וַיִּתְעַבֵּר יְהוָה בִּי
לְמַעַנְכֶם וְלֹא שָׁמַע אֵלָי וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי רַב־לָךְ אַל־תּוֹסֶף
דַּבֵּר אֵלַי עוֹד בַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה׃ כז עֲלֵה ׀ רֹאשׁ הַפִּסְגָּה וְשָׂא עֵינֶיךָ

*הקריאה אלהים

כג וְצַלֵּיתִי קֳדָם יְיָ בְּעִדָּנָא הַהִיא לְמֵימָר׃
כד יְיָ אֱלֹהִים אַתְּ שָׁרֵיתָא לְאַחֲזָאָה יָת עַבְדָּךְ
יָת רְבוּתָךְ וְיָת יְדָךְ תַּקִּיפְתָא דִּי אַתְּ הוּא
אֱלָהָא דִּשְׁכִינְתָּךְ בִּשְׁמַיָּא מִלְּעֵלָּא וְשַׁלִּיט
בְּאַרְעָא וְלֵית דְּיַעְבֵּד כְּעוֹבָדָךְ וּכְגִבְּרָוָתָךְ׃
כה אֶעְבַּר כְּעַן וְאֶחֱזֵי יָת אַרְעָא טָבְתָא דִּי
בְּעִבְרָא דְיַרְדְּנָא טוּרָא טָבָא הָדֵין וּבֵית
מַקְדְּשָׁא׃ כו וַהֲוָה רְגַז מִן קֳדָם יְיָ עֲלַי
בְּדִילְכוֹן וְלָא קַבֵּיל מִנִּי וַאֲמַר יְיָ לִי סַגִּי לָךְ לָא
תוֹסֵף לְמַלָּלָא קֳדָמַי עוֹד בְּפִתְגָמָא הָדֵין׃
כז סַק לְרֵישׁ רָמְתָא וּזְקוֹף עֵינָךְ לְמַעְרְבָא

רש"י

(כג) ואתחנן. אין חנון בכל מקום אלא לשון מתנת חנם. אף על פי שיש להם לצדיקים לתלות במעשיהם הטובים, אין מבקשים מאת המקום אלא מתנת חנם. לפי שאמר לו וחנותי את אשר אחון[1], אמר לו בלשון ואתחנן. דבר אחר זה אחד מעשרה לשונות שנקראת תפלה, כדאיתא בספרי: בעת ההוא. לאחר שכבשתי ארץ סיחון ועוג, דמיתי שמא הותר הנדר: לאמר. זה אחד משלשה מקומות שאמר משה לפני המקום, איני מניחך עד שתודיעני אם תעשה שאלתי אם לאו: (כד) ה' אלהים. רחום בדין: אתה החלות להראות את עבדך. פתח להיות עומד ומתפלל, אף על פי שנגזרה גזירה. אמר לו ממך למדתי, שאמרת לי ועתה הניחה לי[2], וכי תופס הייתי בך, אלא לפתוח פתח, שבי תלוי להתפלל עליהם, כמו כן הייתי סבור לעשות עכשיו[3]: את גדלך. זו מדת טובך, וכן הוא אומר ועתה יגדל נא כח ה'[4]: ואת ידך. זו ימינך, שהיא פשוטה לכל באי עולם[3]: החזקה. שאתה כובש ברחמים את מדת הדין בחזקה[3]: אשר מי אל וגו'. אינך דומה למלך בשר ודם, שיש לו יועצין וסנקתדרין הממחין בידו כשרוצה לעשות חסד ולעבור על מדותיו, אתה אין מי ימחה בידך אם תמחול לי ותבטל גזירתך[3]. ולפי פשוטו אתה החלות להראות את עבדך מלחמת סיחון ועוג, כדכתיב ראה החלותי תת לפניך[5], הראני מלחמת שלשים ואחד מלכים: (כה) אעברה נא. אין נא אלא לשון בקשה[3]: ההר הטוב הזה. זו ירושלים[3]: והלבנון. זה בית המקדש[6]: (כו) ויתעבר ה'. נתמלא חמה[3]: למענכם. בשבילכם, אתם גרמתם לי. וכן הוא אומר ויקציפו על מי מריבה וירע למשה בעבורם[7]: רב לך. שלא יאמרו

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What type of request does וָאֶתְחַנַּן signify? (v. 23)**

Rashi: וָאֶתְחַנַּן is a derivative of the word חִנּוּן, which always signifies [the request for] an unearned (חִנָּם) gift. Even though the righteous could justify their requests based on their good deeds, [in their humility] they only request "unearned" gifts from God....

Another explanation: This is one of ten terms which denote prayer, listed in *Sifri*.

Midrash: Rabbi Yochanan said, "There are ten terms which can denote prayer, and they are: צְעָקָה, נְאָקָה, רִנָּה, פְּגִיעָה, בִּיצּוּר, קְרִיאָה, נִפּוּל, וּפִלּוּל, וְתַחֲנוּנִים, שַׁוְעָה...."Of all these expressions, Moshe prayed only with the approach of תַּחֲנוּנִים [an appeal to God's grace]. Rabbi Yochanan said, "From here you can learn that no creature has any worth to the Creator, for even Moshe only asked God with an expression that denotes asking for an act of grace.

● **What was God's response? (v. 26)**

Rashi: [Request no more to enter the Land] so that people should not say, "How hard is the Master, and how obstinate and pressing is the disciple!" Another explanation: [God said], "More than this is reserved for you. Much is the goodness that is kept for you [in the World to Come]."

TORAS MENACHEM

Moshe's Requests (v. 23)

Rashi cites two opinions concerning the nature of Moshe's requests to enter the Land of Israel:

a.) That while Moshe could have insisted that God allow him to enter the Land of Israel because of his good deeds, he nevertheless did not do so. Rather, he asked God to allow him to enter the Land as one asks for an unearned gift.

b.) That Moshe prayed to God.

What is the difference between these two explanations? And why did *Rashi need* to bring two explanations?

The Explanation

Scripture states that God is "*merciful to all His creations*" (Psalms 145:9), indicating God's intention to provide for the needs of everything that He created. A Jew has the further merit of being a descendant of the Patriarchs, through whom he has the rights to additional sustenance—as the *Mishnah* states, "*Even if you prepare for them a meal like Shlomo's banquet in his heyday, you will not have discharged your obligation to them, for they are the children of Avraham, Yitschak and Ya'akov*" (Bava Metzia 83a). And by fulfilling God's will, one has yet further rights to sustenance, as the verse states, "*If you pursue (the study of) My laws (in order to) guard My commands and observe them, then I will give you rain at (a convenient) time, the Land will yield its produce etc.*" (Vayikra 26:3-4).

Thus, in a normal situation when a person approaches God in prayer for his needs, *he will be requesting something which he deserves*, according to principles which God Himself has established.*

But even though one is deserving, one is nevertheless required to pray to God, since that which a person deserves according to Torah is not a

* Of course, a person may be extremely wicked and not deserving of any sustenance, in which case he may still pray to God to support him even though he is undeserving. Nevertheless, in the normal scheme of things, a person should deserve God's sustenance, as explained above.

1 שמות לג, יט 2 שם לב, י 3 ספרי 4 במדבר יד, יז 5 דברים ב, לא 6 ראה שיחות ש"פ ואתחנן תשל"ז 7 תהלים קו, לב

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Moshe's Requests to Enter the Land

3:23 *I requested from God, at that time, saying, [24] "God Almighty (Who is merciful in judgment)! You have*
begun to show Your greatness and Your strong hand to Your servant (with our victory over Sichon
and Og)! For who is like God in heaven or on earth who can perform deeds and mighty acts like
You? [25] Please let me cross over and see the good land that is on the other side of the Jordan, this good
mountain (of Jerusalem) and the Levanon (i.e. the Holy Temple)."
[26] But God became angry with me because of you, and He did not listen to me. God said to me,
"Enough of your (requests)! Do not speak to Me any more about this matter. [27] (If you want to see the

Toras Menachem

debt *owed* to him by God. Rather, God *chose* to be merciful to His creations and He chose to give special treatment to the righteous etc. So, even that which a person deserves is ultimately given to him only because of God's kindness. Therefore he should ask (and not demand) for it from God, in prayer.*

Rashi's Two Explanations

With the above in mind, we can now turn to *Rashi's* comments:

At first glance, the use of the unusual term *va'eschanan* in our verse seems to suggest that Moshe was not making a normal prayer or request. Therefore, *Rashi* explains that the term *va'eschanan* does *not* mean prayer at all, but rather that it "*always* signifies [the request for] an unearned gift." I.e. Moshe did not *pray* to enter the Land of Israel, because the concept of prayer would indicate that he felt he deserved to enter (as explained above). Rather, *"even though the righteous could justify their requests based on their good deeds, they only request 'unearned' gifts from God."*

However, this explanation is somewhat problematic at the literal level, because it does not appear to be consistent with other parts of the Torah. For we do *not* find that the righteous *always* request unearned gifts from God, but rather, we do find in a number of instances that they *pray* to God for their needs, as one prays for something that is deserved.

Therefore, *Rashi* brought a second interpretation that *va'eschanan "is one of ten terms which denote prayer,"* i.e. that Moshe actually *prayed* to God (because he felt that he deserved to enter the Land).

But *Rashi* considered this to be only a secondary interpretation, (even though it is more globally consistent) because:

i.) It fails to answer the main question, why our verse used the unusual expression *va'eschanan* for an ordinary prayer.

ii.) At the literal level, it is difficult to accept that Biblical Hebrew, the holy tongue used by God Himself, would have ten different words that mean the same thing.

The View of R' Yochanan in the Midrash

In the ***Midrash***, R' Yochanan appears to offer a third, intermediate opinion. On the one hand, R' Yochanan held, in accordance with *Rashi's* second interpretation, that *va'eschanan* is indeed an expression of prayer, indicating that Moshe felt that he deserved to enter the Land. Nevertheless, R' Yochanan maintained that *outwardly*, Moshe used *"an expression* that denotes asking for an act of grace," rather than demanding that his request be granted based on his merits. This is because Moshe knew that *"no creature has any worth to the Creator,"* i.e. however great a person may be, his deeds are ultimately not needed by God.

According to the *Midrash*, Moshe felt he had many merits, but ultimately he was aware that his merits were not of any real value *to God*. In contrast, *Rashi's* first (and primary) opinion maintained that Moshe did not feel that he deserved to enter the Land, as in his great humility Moshe felt that his merits were of no true worth. Thus, his request to God was not a prayer at all, but rather, "the request of an unearned gift."

God's Response (v. 26)

Based on the above, it appears that *Rashi's* two explanations of God's response (in v. 26), correspond directly to his two interpretations of Moshe's request (in v. 23):

According to the first approach, that Moshe was requesting an "unearned gift," there was no limit to how persistent Moshe could be, since in any case it was not dependent on him being deserving. God therefore responded, *"[Request no more] so that people should not say, 'How hard is the Master, and how obstinate and pressing is the disciple!'"*

However, according to the second approach, that Moshe was asking to be rewarded with entry into the Land due to his *merits*, God replied that his merits would be rewarded, but in another way—*"More than this is reserved for you. Much is the goodness that is kept for you [in the World to Come]."*

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 24, p. 28ff; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Va'eschanan* 5748)

Sparks of Chasidus

"Why did Moshe desire to enter the Land? Did he need to eat its fruit, or enjoy its delights? Moshe said, 'The Jewish people have been commanded to observe many mitzvos which can only be observed in the Land of Israel. I will enter the Land so that all [the mitzvos] will be fulfilled through me" (Sotah 14a).

Moshe knew that the work of his hands was eternal. He knew that if he had led the Jewish people into the Land, the Temple would not have been destroyed and the Jewish people would never have been exiled.

Thus, Moshe did not say, "I will enter the Land so *I* can observe all the *mitzvos*," for his agenda was not a personal one. Rather, he wanted to enter the Land so that "[the *mitzvos*] will be fulfilled *through me*," i.e. that the *mitzvos* observed in the Land of Israel would be a result of Moshe's leadership, and would thus be everlasting, without interruption or exile.

(Based on *Sicha* of the 4th night of *Chol Hamo'ed Succos* 5746)

*A person may wish to be rewarded with more than he deserves, in which case he must pray to God. Nevertheless, the concept of prayer in its normal context refers to a petition to God for one's needs which are deserved by him.

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ימה וצפנה ותימנה ומזרחה וראה בעיניך כי־לא תעבר
את־הירדן הזה: כח וצו את־יהושע וחזקהו ואמצהו כי־הוא
יעבר לפני העם הזה והוא ינחיל אותם את־הארץ אשר
תראה: כט ונשב בגיא מול בית פעור: פ ד א ועתה ישראל
שמע אל־החקים ואל־המשפטים אשר אנכי מלמד אתכם
לעשות למען תחיו ובאתם וירשתם את־הארץ אשר יהוה
אלהי אבתיכם נתן לכם: ב לא תספו על־הדבר אשר אנכי
מצוה אתכם ולא תגרעו ממנו לשמר את־מצות יהוה
אלהיכם אשר אנכי מצוה אתכם: ג עיניכם הראות את
אשר־עשה יהוה בבעל פעור כי כל־האיש אשר הלך אחרי
בעל־פעור השמידו יהוה אלהיך מקרבך: ד ואתם הדבקים
ביהוה אלהיכם חיים כלכם היום: (שני) ה ראה | למדתי אתכם
חקים ומשפטים כאשר צוני יהוה אלהי לעשות כן בקרב
הארץ אשר אתם באים שמה לרשתה: ו ושמרתם ועשיתם
כי הוא חכמתכם ובינתכם לעיני העמים אשר ישמעון את
כל־החקים האלה ואמרו רק עם־חכם ונבון הגוי הגדול
הזה: ז כי מי־גוי גדול אשר־לו אלהים קרבים אליו כיהוה
אלהינו בכל־קראנו אליו: ח ומי גוי גדול אשר־לו חקים
ומשפטים צדיקם ככל התורה הזאת אשר אנכי נתן לפניכם
היום: ט רק השמר לך ושמר נפשך מאד פן־תשכח את־
הדברים אשר־ראו עיניך ופן־יסורו מלבבך כל ימי חייך
והודעתם לבניך ולבני בניך: י יום אשר עמדת לפני יהוה

ולצפונא ולדרומא ולמדינחא וחזי בעינך
ארי לא תעבר ית ירדנא הדין: כח ופקד
ית יהושע ותקפהי ואלמהי ארי הוא יעבר
קדם עמא הדין והוא יחסן יתהון ית ארעא
די תחזי: כט ויתבנא בחילתא לקבל בית פעור:
א וכען ישראל שמע לקימיא ולדיניא די אנא
מאלף יתכון למעבד בדיל דתיחון ותיתון
ותירתון ית ארעא די יי אלהא דאבהתכון
יהב לכון: ב לא תוספון על פתגמא די אנא
מפקד יתכון ולא תמנעון מנה למטר
ית פקודיא דיי אלהכון די אנא מפקד יתכון:
ג עיניכון חזן ית די עבד יי בבעל פעור ארי
כל גברא די אזל בתר בעל פעור שציה יי
אלהך מבינך: ד ואתון דאדבקתון בדחלתא
דיי אלהכון קימין כלכון יומא דין: ה חזו
דאלפית יתכון קימיא ודיניא כמא די פקדני
יי אלהי למעבד כן בגו ארעא די אתון עלין
לתמן למירתה: ו ותטרון ותעבדון ארי היא
חכמתכון וסוכלתנותכון לעיני עממיא די
ישמעון ית כל קימיא האלין ויימרון לחוד
עם חכים וסוכלתן עמא רבא הדין: ז ארי
מן עם רב די לה אלהא קריב לה לקבלא
צלותה בעדן עקתה כיי אלהנא בכל עדן
דאנחנא מצלין קדמוהי: ח ומן עם רב די לה
קימין ודינין קשיטין ככל אוריתא הדא די
אנא יהב קדמיכון יומא דין: ט לחוד אסתמר
לך וטר נפשך לחדא דלמא תנשי ית
פתגמיא די חזו עינך ודלמא יעדון מלבך
כל יומי חייך ותהודענון לבנך ולבני בנך:
י יומא די קמתא קדם יי אלהך בחרב

רש"י

הרב כמה קשה והתלמיד כמה סרבן ומפציר. דבר אחר רב לך, הרבה מזה שמור לך, רב טוב הצפון לך[1]: (כז) **וראה בעיניך.** בקשת ממני ואראה את הארץ הטובה, אני מראה לך את כולה, שנאמר ויראהו ה' את כל הארץ[1]: (כח) **וצו את יהושע.** על הטרחות ועל המשאות ועל המריבות[1]: **וחזקהו ואמצהו.** בדבריך, שלא ירך לבו לומר כשם שנענש רבי עליהם כך סופי ליענש עליהם, מבטיחו אני כי הוא יעבור והוא ינחיל: **כי הוא יעבור.** אם יעבור לפניהם ינחלו, ואם לאו לא ינחלו. וכן אתה מוצא כשעלה מן העם אל העי והוא ישב, ויכו מהם אנשי העי וגו'[2], וכיון שנפל על פניו אמר לו קום לך[3]. קם לך כתיב, אתה הוא העומד במקומך ומשלח את בני למלחמה, למה זה אתה נופל על פניך, לא כך אמרתי למשה רבך אם הוא עובר עוברין, ואם לאו אין עוברין[1]: (כט) **ונשב בגיא וגו'.** ונצמדתם לעבודה זרה ואף על פי כן ועתה ישראל שמע אל החקים והכל מחול לך ואני לא זכיתי לימחל לי[1]: (ב) **לא תספו.** כגון חמש פרשיות בתפילין, חמשת מינין בלולב וחמש ציציות, וכן ולא תגרעו[1]: (ו) **ושמרתם.** זו משנה[1]: **ועשיתם.** כמשמעו: **כי הוא חכמתכם ובינתכם וגו'.** בזאת תחשבו חכמים ונבונים לעיני העמים: (ח) **חקים ומשפטים צדיקם.** הגונים ומקובלים: (ט) **רק השמר לך וגו' פן תשכח את הדברים.** אז כשלא תשכחו אותם ותעשום על אמתתם, תחשבו חכמים ונבונים, ואם תעוותו אותם מתוך שכחה, תחשבו שוטים: (י) **יום אשר עמדת.** מוסב על מקרא שלמעלה ממנו, אשר ראו עיניך, יום אשר עמדת בחורב אשר ראיתם את הקולות ואת הלפידים:

1 ספרי. ונראה קמן בספרי יג, א 2 יהושע ז, ה 3 שם פסוק י

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Land), go up to the top of the hill and lift up your eyes westward, northward, southward and eastward, and see (it from there) with your eyes, for you will not cross this (River) Jordan. [28] Command Yehoshua (about the burdens of leadership). Strengthen him and encourage him (that he will not be punished because of the Jewish people, as you were), because (I assure you that) he will cross over (the Jordan) ahead of the people, and he will bring them to inherit the Land which you will see."

[29] We were living (at that time) in the valley opposite Beis-Pe'or (where you had worshiped idols. Unlike me, you were forgiven by God and He allowed you to enter the Land).

Moshe Reiterates Principles of the Faith

4 *Now Israel, listen to the suprarational commands and to the rational commands which I am teaching you to perform, in order that you may live. Come and possess the Land which God, the God of your forefathers, is giving you.*

[2] Do not add (any additional clauses) to the word(s of Torah law) which I am commanding you, nor take away (any clauses) from it, in order to preserve the commandments of God, your God, which I am commanding you. [3] Your eyes have seen what God did at Ba'al Pe'or, for God, your God, has eliminated every man who went after Ba'al Pe'or from among you, [4] but you—who remain attached to God, your God—are all alive today.*

Second Reading

[5] Look! As God, my God, commanded me, I have taught you suprarational commands and rational commands to observe within the Land which you are going to enter and possess. [6] You should preserve (the laws by studying them) and perform them. For this is your (key to having) wisdom and understanding in the eyes of the nations, who will hear all these laws and say, "Only this great nation is a (truly) wise and understanding people." [7] Which (other) nation is so great that it has a god so close to it, as God our God is (near to us) whenever we call Him? For, whenever we call upon Him (in prayer He answers). [8] And which nation is so great that it has suprarational commands and rational commands which are fair, like all (the laws) in this Torah (of ours), which I am presenting before you today?

[9] Just be careful and keep track of yourself well, so that you do not forget the things that your eyes saw (at Sinai). Do not let these things depart from your heart, all the days of your life. You should inform your children and your children's children about [10] the day you stood before God, your God, at Choraiv

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

"Now Israel, Listen..." (4:1)

If a person hears that his country is ruled by a powerful king who is surrounded by ministers that tremble in his presence, then the person is likely to follow the king's orders. However, an individual who actually *sees* such a powerful king will be affected much more profoundly by the experience than merely hearing about him—for *"seeing is incomparable to hearing"* (*Mechilta, Yisro* 19:9).

Moshe's perception of Godliness was on the level of "seeing." Therefore, he wanted to be the one to lead the Jewish people into the Land of Israel, to lift them to the level of "seeing" Godliness within the Land. Thus he said, "Please let me cross over and *see* the good land" (3:25).

However, God did not grant his request, so Moshe began to address the Jewish people with the words, "Now Israel, *listen*" (4:1). This was because Moshe recognized that he would only be able to inspire the Jewish people towards an awareness of God on the level of "hearing" and not "seeing."

However, with the coming of Mashiach, Moshe's request will be finally granted. For Mashiach will lift the Jewish people to an awareness of God at the level of "seeing"—as the verse states, "I will *show* you wonders" (*Micha* 7:15).

In fact, the Godly experience which Mashiach will show the Jewish people will be even more profound than that which Moshe had in mind. For then we will not only experience a metaphorical "seeing" of spirituality with the "eye" of the intellect. Rather, even our physical bodies will see Godliness—"the glory of God will be revealed and *all flesh* will see together" (*Isaiah* 40:5).

(Based on *Sefer Hama'amorim* 5711-3, pp. 78-9; *ibid.* 5732-3, p. 163ff.)

* See below 13:1.

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אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּחֹרֵב בֶּאֱמֹר יְהֹוָה אֵלַי הַקְהֶל־לִי אֶת־הָעָם וְאַשְׁמִעֵם
אֶת־דְּבָרָי אֲשֶׁר יִלְמְדוּן לְיִרְאָה אֹתִי כָּל־הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר הֵם
חַיִּים עַל־הָאֲדָמָה וְאֶת־בְּנֵיהֶם יְלַמֵּדוּן: יא וַתִּקְרְבוּן וַתַּעַמְדוּן
תַּחַת הָהָר וְהָהָר בֹּעֵר בָּאֵשׁ עַד־לֵב הַשָּׁמַיִם חֹשֶׁךְ עָנָן
וַעֲרָפֶל: יב וַיְדַבֵּר יְהֹוָה אֲלֵיכֶם מִתּוֹךְ הָאֵשׁ קוֹל דְּבָרִים אַתֶּם
שֹׁמְעִים וּתְמוּנָה אֵינְכֶם רֹאִים זוּלָתִי קוֹל: יג וַיַּגֵּד לָכֶם אֶת־
בְּרִיתוֹ אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֶתְכֶם לַעֲשׂוֹת עֲשֶׂרֶת הַדְּבָרִים וַיִּכְתְּבֵם
עַל־שְׁנֵי לֻחוֹת אֲבָנִים: יד וְאֹתִי צִוָּה יְהֹוָה בָּעֵת הַהִוא לְלַמֵּד
אֶתְכֶם חֻקִּים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים לַעֲשֹׂתְכֶם אֹתָם בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם
עֹבְרִים שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ: טו וְנִשְׁמַרְתֶּם מְאֹד לְנַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם כִּי לֹא
רְאִיתֶם כָּל־תְּמוּנָה בְּיוֹם דִּבֶּר יְהֹוָה אֲלֵיכֶם בְּחֹרֵב מִתּוֹךְ
הָאֵשׁ: טז פֶּן־תַּשְׁחִתוּן וַעֲשִׂיתֶם לָכֶם פֶּסֶל תְּמוּנַת כָּל־סָמֶל
תַּבְנִית זָכָר אוֹ נְקֵבָה: יז תַּבְנִית כָּל־בְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר בָּאָרֶץ
תַּבְנִית כָּל־צִפּוֹר כָּנָף אֲשֶׁר תָּעוּף בַּשָּׁמָיִם: יח תַּבְנִית כָּל־
רֹמֵשׂ •בָּאֲדָמָה תַּבְנִית כָּל־דָּגָה אֲשֶׁר־בַּמַּיִם מִתַּחַת לָאָרֶץ:
יט וּפֶן־תִּשָּׂא עֵינֶיךָ הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וְרָאִיתָ אֶת־הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וְאֶת־הַיָּרֵחַ
וְאֶת־הַכּוֹכָבִים כֹּל צְבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנִדַּחְתָּ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתָ לָהֶם
וַעֲבַדְתָּם אֲשֶׁר חָלַק יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֹתָם לְכֹל הָעַמִּים תַּחַת
כָּל־הַשָּׁמָיִם: כ וְאֶתְכֶם לָקַח יְהֹוָה וַיּוֹצִא אֶתְכֶם מִכּוּר הַבַּרְזֶל
מִמִּצְרָיִם לִהְיוֹת לוֹ לְעַם נַחֲלָה כַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה: כא וַיהֹוָה
הִתְאַנַּף־בִּי עַל־דִּבְרֵיכֶם וַיִּשָּׁבַע לְבִלְתִּי עָבְרִי אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן
וּלְבִלְתִּי־בֹא אֶל־הָאָרֶץ הַטּוֹבָה אֲשֶׁר יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לְךָ
נַחֲלָה: כב כִּי אָנֹכִי מֵת בָּאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת אֵינֶנִּי עֹבֵר אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן

•ס״א באדמה

כַּד אֲמַר יְיָ לִי כְּנוֹשׁ קֳדָמַי יָת עַמָּא וְאַשְׁמְעִנּוּן
יָת פִּתְגָמַי דִּי יַלְפוּן לְמִדְחַל קֳדָמַי כָּל יוֹמַיָּא
דִּי אִנּוּן קַיָּמִין עַל אַרְעָא וְיָת בְּנֵיהוֹן יַלְפוּן:
יא וּקְרֵבְתּוּן וְקַמְתּוּן בְּשִׁפּוֹלֵי טוּרָא וְטוּרָא
בָּעֵר בְּאֶשָּׁתָא עַד צֵית שְׁמַיָּא חֲשׁוֹכָא עֲנָנָא
וַאֲמִיטְתָא: יב וּמַלֵּיל יְיָ עִמְּכוֹן מִגּוֹ אֶשָּׁתָא קָל
פִּתְגָמִין אַתּוּן שָׁמְעִין וּדְמוּת לֵיתֵיכוֹן חָזַן
אֱלָהֵן קָלָא: יג וְחַוִּי לְכוֹן יָת קְיָמֵהּ דִּי פַּקִּיד
יָתְכוֹן לְמֶעְבַּד עַשְׂרָא פִּתְגָמִין וּכְתַבְנוּן עַל
תְּרֵין לוּחֵי אַבְנַיָּא: יד וְיָתִי פַּקִּיד יְיָ בְּעִדָּנָא
הַהִיא לְאַלָּפָא יָתְכוֹן קְיָמִין וְדִינִין לְמֶעְבַּדְכוֹן
יָתְהוֹן בְּאַרְעָא דִּי אַתּוּן עָבְרִין לְתַמָּן לְמֵירְתַהּ:
טו וְתִסְתַּמְרוּן לַחֲדָא לְנַפְשָׁתֵיכוֹן אֲרֵי לָא
חֲזֵיתוּן כָּל דְּמוּת בְּיוֹמָא דִּי מַלֵּיל יְיָ עִמְּכוֹן
בְּחֹרֵב מִגּוֹ אֶשָּׁתָא: טז דִּלְמָא תְּחַבְּלוּן
וְתַעְבְּדוּן לְכוֹן צֶלֶם דְּמוּת כָּל צוּרָא דְּמוּת
דְּכַר אוֹ נֻקְבָּא: יז דְּמוּת כָּל בְּעִירָא דִּי
בְּאַרְעָא דְּמוּת כָּל צִפַּר גַּדְפָּא דִּי פָרְחָא בַּאֲוִיר
רְקִיעַ שְׁמַיָּא: יח דְּמוּת כָּל רִחְשָׁא דִּי בְאַרְעָא
דְּמוּת כָּל נוּנֵי דִּי בְמַיָּא מִלְּרַע לְאַרְעָא:
יט וְדִלְמָא תִּזְקוֹף עֵינָךְ לִשְׁמַיָּא וְתֶחֱזֵי יָת
שִׁמְשָׁא וְיָת סִיהֲרָא וְיָת כּוֹכְבַיָּא כֹּל חֵילֵי
שְׁמַיָּא וְתִטְעֵי וְתִסְגּוּד לְהוֹן וְתִפְלְחִנּוּן דִּי זַמִּין
יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ יָתְהוֹן לְכֹל עַמְמַיָּא תְּחוֹת
כָּל שְׁמַיָּא: כ וְיָתְכוֹן קָרֵיב יְיָ לְדַחַלְתֵּהּ וְאַפֵּיק
יָתְכוֹן מִכּוּרָא דְּפַרְזְלָא מִמִּצְרָיִם לְמֶהֱוֵי לֵהּ
לְעַמָּא אַחְסָנָא כְּיוֹמָא הָדֵין: כא וּמִן קֳדָם יְיָ
הֲוָה רְגַז עֲלַי עַל פִּתְגָמֵיכוֹן וְקַיֵּים בְּדִיל דְּלָא
לְמֶעְבַּר יָת יַרְדְּנָא וּבְדִיל דְּלָא לְמֵיעַל
לְאַרְעָא טָבָא דִּי יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ יָהֵב לָךְ אַחְסָנָא:
כב אֲרֵי אֲנָא מָאֵית בְּאַרְעָא הָדָא לֵית אֲנָא
עָבַר יָת יַרְדְּנָא וְאַתּוּן עָבְרִין וְתֵירְתוּן יָת

רש״י

ילמדון. ילפון לעצמם: **ילמדון.** יאלפון לאחרים: **(יד) ואתי צוה ה' בעת ההוא ללמד אתכם.** תורה שבעל פה: **(טז) סמל.** צורה: **(יט) ופן תשא עיניך.** להסתכל בדבר ולתת לב לטעות אחריהם: **אשר חלק וגו' לכל העמים.** להאיר להם. דבר אחר לאלוהות. לא מנען מלטעות אחריהם, אלא החליקם בדברי הבליהם לטרדם מן העולם. וכן הוא אומר כי החליק אליו בעיניו למצוא עונו לשנוא[1]: **(כ) כור.** הוא כלי שמזקקים בו את הזהב: **(כא) התאנף.** נתמלא רוגז: **על דבריכם.** על אודותיכם, על עסקיכם: **(כב) כי אנכי מת וגו' אינני עובר.** מאחר שמת מהיכן יעבור, אלא אף עצמותי

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **How should you "look after yourselves very well" ? (v. 15)**

Rambam: Having a totally healthy body is among the paths of [serving] God, for it is impossible to have understanding or knowledge [of God] when one is sick. Therefore, a person must distance himself from things that harm the body (*Laws of Moral Conduct* 4:1).

1 תהלים לו, ג

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(and saw the flames and the sounds. For) God said to me then: "Assemble the people for Me. I will let
them hear My words, so that they will learn to fear Me all the days that they live on the earth, and so
that they will teach their children (what they heard and saw)." 11 *You approached and stood at the foot*
of the mountain. The mountain was burning with fire up to the heart of the heavens (and there was)
darkness, a cloud, and fog. 12 *God spoke to you from the fire. You were hearing the sound of the words,*
but you did not see any image—only sound.

13 *He told you His covenant, which He commanded you to observe—the Ten Commandments—and*
He wrote them on two stone tablets. 14 *On that occasion, God commanded me to teach you (the Oral*
Torah, which explains the) suprarational commands and rational commands, so that you would observe
them in the Land to which you are (now) entering, to take possession of it.

15 *Look after yourselves very well (and remember) that you did not see any image on the day God*
spoke to you at Choraiv from the fire, 16 *in order that you will not lapse and make a statue for yourselves,*
or an image of any form: the shape of a male or female, 17 *the shape of any animal that is on the earth,*
the shape of any winged bird that flies in the skies, 18 *the shape of anything that crawls on the ground,*
the shape of any fish that is in the waters, beneath the earth. 19 *(Be careful if you) lift up your eyes to the*
skies, and see the sun, the moon, the stars, and all the hosts of the skies—which God, your God has
given (to provide illumination) under the skies for all the nations—not to be drawn astray to bow down
to them and worship them. 20 *God took you and brought you out of the iron melting pot, from Egypt, to*
be His heritage nation, as (you are) today.

21 *God was angry with me, because of you(r actions), and He swore that I would not cross the Jordan*
and that I would not come into the good land that God, your God, is giving you as an inheritance. 22 *For I*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

MEZRITCHER MAGID: A tiny hole in the body causes a big hole in the soul *(Hatamim 7:28)*.

ALTER REBBE'S SHULCHAN ARUCH: One may not strike one's fellow, even if he gives permission, because a person does not have rights over his body at all, whether in relation to hitting it, embarrassing it, causing it any pain, or even withholding food or drink from it—unless this is done as part of the process of *teshuvah*, in which case it is for his benefit, to save his soul....Therefore it is permissible to fast for the sake of *teshuvah* *(Hilchos Nizkei Guf Venefesh, law 4)*.

ZOHAR: The weakness of the body is the strength of the soul (I 180b).

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

"LOOK AFTER YOURSELVES VERY WELL" (v. 15)

- So much of physical health depends on spiritual health. If in olden days emphasis was placed on *'mens sana in corpore sano'* [a sound mind in a healthy body], in our days, it is a matter of general conviction that even a small defect spiritually causes a grievous defect physically; and the healthier the spirit and the greater its preponderance over the physical body—the greater its ability to correct or overcome physical shortcomings; so much so, that in many cases even physical treatments, prescriptions and drugs are considerably more effective if they are accompanied by the patient's strong will and determination to cooperate.

- Note that ***Rambam*** stresses how "having a *totally* healthy body is among the paths of [serving] God," a point emphasized further by the ***Mezritcher Magid*** (see Classic Questions).

- Since physical health depends on spiritual health, a person who becomes ill, God forbid, should search his past deeds to try to identify what shortcoming may have caused the illness. However, this approach should be taken only regarding his own lack of physical health. When one sees that another person is sick, one should not think that this was caused by a spiritual shortcoming, since one is told, *"Do not judge your fellow until you have stood in his place"* (Avos 2:4; see *Tanya*, chap. 30). One's first reaction to a sick person should be, to the contrary, that his sickness may well have been caused by spiritual *health*, as he may have weakened his body through fasting, in the process of doing *teshuvah* (see ***Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch***).

- The statement of the ***Zohar***, that *"the weakness of the body is the strength of the soul,"* does not mean to say that a weakening of the body itself brings about spiritual growth. Rather, the intent of the *Zohar* is that the *desire for* physicality, *for its own sake*, is counterproductive to a person's spiritual growth.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol 6, p. 326; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz* 5739)

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וְאַתֶּם עֹבְרִים וִירִשְׁתֶּם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַטּוֹבָה הַזֹּאת׃ כג הִשָּׁמְרוּ
לָכֶם פֶּן־תִּשְׁכְּחוּ אֶת־בְּרִית יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת עִמָּכֶם
וַעֲשִׂיתֶם לָכֶם פֶּסֶל תְּמוּנַת כֹּל אֲשֶׁר צִוְּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ׃ כד כִּי
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֵשׁ אֹכְלָה הוּא אֵל קַנָּא׃ פ כה כִּי־תוֹלִיד בָּנִים
וּבְנֵי בָנִים וְנוֹשַׁנְתֶּם בָּאָרֶץ וְהִשְׁחַתֶּם וַעֲשִׂיתֶם פֶּסֶל תְּמוּנַת
כֹּל וַעֲשִׂיתֶם הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה־אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְהַכְעִיסוֹ׃ כו הַעִידֹתִי
בָכֶם הַיּוֹם אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ כִּי־אָבֹד תֹּאבֵדוּן מַהֵר
מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ
לֹא־תַאֲרִיכֻן יָמִים עָלֶיהָ כִּי הִשָּׁמֵד תִּשָּׁמֵדוּן׃ כז וְהֵפִיץ יְהוָה
אֶתְכֶם בָּעַמִּים וְנִשְׁאַרְתֶּם מְתֵי מִסְפָּר בַּגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר יְנַהֵג יְהוָה
אֶתְכֶם שָׁמָּה׃ כח וַעֲבַדְתֶּם־שָׁם אֱלֹהִים מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי אָדָם עֵץ
וָאֶבֶן אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִרְאוּן וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּן וְלֹא יֹאכְלוּן וְלֹא יְרִיחֻן׃
כט וּבִקַּשְׁתֶּם מִשָּׁם אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וּמָצָאתָ כִּי תִדְרְשֶׁנּוּ
בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשֶׁךָ׃ ל בַּצַּר לְךָ וּמְצָאוּךָ כֹּל הַדְּבָרִים
הָאֵלֶּה בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים וְשַׁבְתָּ עַד־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְשָׁמַעְתָּ
בְּקֹלוֹ׃ לא כִּי אֵל רַחוּם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא יַרְפְּךָ וְלֹא יַשְׁחִיתֶךָ
וְלֹא יִשְׁכַּח אֶת־בְּרִית אֲבֹתֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לָהֶם׃ לב כִּי
שְׁאַל־נָא לְיָמִים רִאשֹׁנִים אֲשֶׁר־הָיוּ לְפָנֶיךָ לְמִן־הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר
בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים ׀ אָדָם עַל־הָאָרֶץ וּלְמִקְצֵה הַשָּׁמַיִם וְעַד־קְצֵה
הַשָּׁמָיִם הֲנִהְיָה כַּדָּבָר הַגָּדוֹל הַזֶּה אוֹ הֲנִשְׁמַע כָּמֹהוּ׃
לג הֲשָׁמַע* עָם קוֹל אֱלֹהִים מְדַבֵּר מִתּוֹךְ־הָאֵשׁ כַּאֲשֶׁר־שָׁמַעְתָּ
אַתָּה וַיֶּחִי׃ לד אוֹ ׀ הֲנִסָּה אֱלֹהִים לָבוֹא לָקַחַת לוֹ גוֹי מִקֶּרֶב גּוֹי
בְּמַסֹּת בְּאֹתֹת וּבְמוֹפְתִים וּבְמִלְחָמָה וּבְיָד חֲזָקָה וּבִזְרוֹעַ נְטוּיָה
וּבְמוֹרָאִים גְּדֹלִים כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה לָכֶם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם

ארעא טבא הדא: כג אסתמרו לכון דלמא תתנשון ית קימא דיי אלהכון די גזר עמכון ותעבדון לכון צלם דמות כלא די פקדך יי אלהך: כד ארי יי אלהך מימרה אשא אכלא הוא אל קנא: כה ארי תולדון בנין ובני בנין ותתעתקון בארעא ותחבלון ותעבדון צלם דמות כלא ותעבדון דביש קדם יי אלהך לארגזא קדמוהי: כו אסהדית בכון יומא דין ית שמיא וית ארעא ארי מיבד תיבדון בפריע מעל ארעא די אתון עברין ית ירדנא לתמן למירתה לא תורכון יומין עלה ארי אשתצאה תשתצון: כז ויבדר יי יתכון בעממיא ותשתארון עם דמנין בעממיא די ידבר יי יתכון לתמן: כח ותפלחון תמן לעממיא פלחי טעותא עובד ידי אנשא אעא ואבנא די לא חזן ולא שמעין ולא אכלין ולא מריחין: כט ותתבעון מתמן ית דחלתא דיי אלהך ותשכח ארי תבעי מן קדמוהי בכל לבך ובכל נפשך: ל כד יעוק לך וישכחנך כל פתגמיא האלין בסוף יומיא ותתוב לדחלתא דיי אלהך ותקבל למימרה: לא ארי אלהא רחמנא יי אלהך לא ישבקנך ולא יחבלנך ולא יתנשי ית קימא דאבהתך די קיים להון: לב ארי שאל כען ליומיא קדמאי דהוו קדמך למן יומא די ברא יי אדם על ארעא ולמסיפי שמיא ועד סיפי שמיא ההוה כפתגמא רבא הדין או האשתמע כותה: לג השמע עמא קל מימרא דיי ממלל מגו אשתא כמא די שמעת את ויתקים: לד או נסין די עבד יי לאתגלאה למפרק לה עם מגו עם בנסין באתין ובמופתין ובקרבא ובידא תקיפא ובדרעא מרממא ובחזונין רברבין ככל די

* בחומש תורת חיים כאן "יתרי טעמי". וכתב בתורת שי (במדבר יג, כג) שקריאת מלים כגון אלה אינה מעכבת גמור ולא מצינו גמור אלא בהעמדה משעת בעני הטעמים.

רש"י

אינם עוברין[1]: (כג) תמונת כל. תמונה כל דבר: אשר צוך ה'. אשר נצוך שלא לעשות: (כד) אל קנא. מקנא לנקום אנפרמינ"ט בלע"ז, מתחרה על רוגזו להפרע מעכו"ם: (כה) ונושנתם. רמז להם שיגלו ממנה לסוף שמונה מאות וחמשים ושתים שנה, כמנין ונושנתם. והוא הקדים והגלם לסוף שמונה מאות וחמשים והקדים שתי שנים לונושנתם, כדי שלא יתקיים בהם כי אבד תאבדון[2], וזהו שנאמר וישקוד ה' על הרעה ויביאה עלינו כי צדיק ה' אלהינו[3], צדקה עשה עמנו שמהר להביאה שתי שנים לפני זמנה[4]: (כו) העידותי בכם. הנני מזמינם להיות עדים שהתריתי בכם: (כח) ועבדתם שם אלהים. כתרגומו. משאתם עובדים לעובדיהם, כאלו אתם עובדים להם: (לא) לא ירפך. מלהחזיק בך בידיו. ולשון לא ירפך לשון לא יפעיל הוא, לא יתן לך רפיון, לא יפריד אותך ממנו. וכן אחזתיו ולא ארפנו[5], שלא נקד ארפנו. כל לשון רפיון מוסב על לשון מפעיל ומתפעל, כמו

1 ספרי 2 דברים ד, כו 3 דניאל ט, יד 4 סנהדרין לח. וראה שיחת ש"פ ואתחנן תשמ"א 5 שה"ש ג, ד

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will die in this land (and even my bones) will not cross the Jordan. You, however, will cross, and you will
take possession of this good land.

23 *Be careful not to forget the covenant of God, your God, which He made with you, and make for*
yourselves a statue, an image of anything, which God, your God, has commanded you (not to make).
24 *For God, your God, is a consuming fire, a jealous God (Who settles His score against idol-worshipers).*

25 *If you have children and grandchildren, and you grow old in the Land, and you lapse and make an*
idol, an image of anything, and (thereby) do evil in the eyes of God, your God, to provoke His anger,
26 *I call the skies and the earth to be witnesses against you today, that you will be eliminated speedily*
from the Land which you will (soon be) crossing the Jordan to take possession of. You will not live a long
time upon it, for you will be utterly destroyed. 27 *God will scatter you among the nations, and you will*
remain few in number among the nations where God will lead you. 28 *(Through being subjugated to idol-*
worshippers) there (it will be as if) you are worshiping (their) gods—man's handiwork, wood and stone,
that neither sees, hears, eats, nor smells.

29 *From there you will seek God, your God, and you will find Him—if you seek Him with all your*
heart and with all your soul. 30 *At the end of days when you are in distress, and all these things (have)*
happened to you, then you will return to God, your God, and obey Him. 31 *For God, your God, is a*
merciful God. He will not loosen (His connection with) you or destroy you. He will not forget the
covenant of your fathers, which He swore to them.

32 *(If you want proof of this*) inquire now about the earliest times that were before you, from the day*
that God created man on the earth! (Inquire from the creatures that are found) from one extremity of the
skies to the other extremity of the skies! Was there ever such a great thing, or even a rumor like it, 33 *that*
a people should hear God's voice speaking out of the midst of the fire, as you heard, and survive?
34 *Or has any deity performed miracles, coming to a nation and taking it for himself out from another*
nation, with proofs (of true power), signs (of God's direct involvement), wondrous (plagues), with a war
(fought by God Himself), a strong hand, an outstretched arm, and with awesome acts—like everything
that God, your God, did for you in Egypt, before your eyes?

*עפ"י פי' הספורנו

רש"י

הרפה לה'[6], תן לה ריוח, הרף ממני[7], התרפה ממני: (לב) **לימים ראשונים.** על ימים ראשונים: **ולמקצה השמים.** וגם שאל לכל הברואים אשר מקצה אל קצה זהו פשוטו. ומדרשו מלמד על קומתו של אדם שהיתה מן הארץ עד השמים והוא השיעור עצמו אשר מקצה אל קצה[8]: **הנהיה כדבר הגדול הזה.** ומהו הדבר הגדול, השמע עם וגו': (לד) **הנסה אלהים.** הכי עשה נסים שום אלוה לבא לקחת לו גוי וגו'. כל ההי"ן הללו תמיהות הן, לכך נקודות הן בחטף פת"ח, הנהיה, הנשמע, הנסה, השמע: **במסות.** על ידי נסיונות הודיעם גבורותיו, כגון התפאר עלי[9], אם תוכל לעשות כן, הרי זה נסיון: **באותות.** בסימנין להאמין שהוא שלוחו של מקום, כגון מה זה בידך: **ובמופתים.** הם נפלאות, שהביא עליהם מכות מופלאות: **ובמלחמה.** בים,

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

"FROM THERE YOU WILL SEEK GOD YOUR GOD, AND YOU WILL FIND HIM" (v. 29)

Chasidic thought teaches that in order for any entity to exist at *all*, God must renew it *continually*, by enlivening it with a spark of His own Existence. Without being connected to God—the True Existence—the entity is unable to exist. Thus, even the forces of evil must contain a Godly spark that enables them to exist.

But why, then, is it possible for the forces of evil to conceal this presence of Godliness within them? The answer is: To make possible the amazing elevation that can be reached through *teshuvah*. When a person has regressed to a very low spiritual state, the Torah teaches us that *"from there* (i.e. from amid the forces of evil) *you will seek God."* This teaches us that the Godly revelation which a person reaches through *teshuvah* is disproportionate to the effort involved, like "finding" a previously hidden treasure, as the verse states, "and you will *find* Him."

(Based on *Ma'amer s.v. Ani Ledodi, Shabbos Parshas Re'eh* 5747)

6 מלכים ב ד, כז 7 דברים ט, יד 8 חגיגה יב, א 9 שמות ח, ה

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בְּמִצְרַיִם לְעֵינֶיךָ: לה אַתָּה הָרְאֵתָ לָדַעַת כִּי יְהוָה הוּא
הָאֱלֹהִים אֵין עוֹד מִלְּבַדּוֹ: לו מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם הִשְׁמִיעֲךָ אֶת־קֹלוֹ
לְיַסְּרֶךָּ וְעַל־הָאָרֶץ הֶרְאֲךָ אֶת־אִשּׁוֹ הַגְּדוֹלָה וּדְבָרָיו שָׁמַעְתָּ
מִתּוֹךְ הָאֵשׁ: לז וְתַחַת כִּי אָהַב אֶת־אֲבֹתֶיךָ וַיִּבְחַר בְּזַרְעוֹ
אַחֲרָיו וַיּוֹצִאֲךָ בְּפָנָיו בְּכֹחוֹ הַגָּדֹל מִמִּצְרָיִם: לח לְהוֹרִישׁ גּוֹיִם
גְּדֹלִים וַעֲצֻמִים מִמְּךָ מִפָּנֶיךָ לַהֲבִיאֲךָ לָתֶת־לְךָ אֶת־אַרְצָם
נַחֲלָה כַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה: לט וְיָדַעְתָּ הַיּוֹם וַהֲשֵׁבֹתָ אֶל־לְבָבֶךָ כִּי יְהוָה
הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים בַּשָּׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וְעַל־הָאָרֶץ מִתָּחַת אֵין עוֹד:
מ וְשָׁמַרְתָּ אֶת־חֻקָּיו וְאֶת־מִצְוֺתָיו אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר
יִיטַב לְךָ וּלְבָנֶיךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ וּלְמַעַן תַּאֲרִיךְ יָמִים עַל־הָאֲדָמָה
אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לְךָ כָּל־הַיָּמִים: פ [שלישי] מא אָז יַבְדִּיל
מֹשֶׁה שָׁלֹשׁ עָרִים בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן מִזְרְחָה שָׁמֶשׁ: מב לָנֻס שָׁמָּה
רוֹצֵחַ אֲשֶׁר יִרְצַח אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ בִּבְלִי־דַעַת וְהוּא לֹא־שֹׂנֵא לוֹ
מִתְּמֹל שִׁלְשֹׁם וְנָס אֶל־אַחַת מִן־הֶעָרִים הָאֵל וָחָי: מג אֶת־
בֶּצֶר בַּמִּדְבָּר בְּאֶרֶץ הַמִּישֹׁר לָראוּבֵנִי וְאֶת־רָאמֹת בַּגִּלְעָד

עבד לכון יי אלהכון במצרים לעיניך: לה את אתחזיתא למדע ארי יי הוא אלהים לית עוד בר מנה: לו מן שמיא אשמעך ית קל מימרה לאלפותך ועל ארעא אחזיך ית אשתה רבתא ופתגמוהי שמעת מגו אשתא: לז וחלף ארי רחים ית אבהתך ואתרעי בבנוהי בתרוהי ואפקך במימרה בחילה רבא ממצרים: לח לתרכא עממין רברבין ותקיפין מנך מן קדמך לאעלותך למתן לך ית ארעהון אחסנא כיומא הדין: לט ותדע יומא דין ותתיב ללבך ארי יי הוא אלהא דשכינתה בשמיא מלעלא ושליט על ארעא מלרע לית עוד: מ ותטר ית קימוהי וית פקודוהי די אנא מפקדך יומא דין די ייטב לך ולבנך בתרך ובדיל דתוריך יומין על ארעא די יי אלהך יהב לך כל יומיא: מא בכן יפרש משה תלת קרוין בעברא דירדנא מדנח שמשא: מב למערוק לתמן קטולא די יקטול ית חברה בלא מנדעה והוא לא סני לה מאתמלי ומדקמוהי ויערוק לחד מן קרויא האלין ויתקים: מג ית בצר במדברא בארעא מישרא לשבטא דראובן

רש״י

שנאמר כי ה' נלחם להם: (לה) הראת. כתרגומו אתחזיתא. כשנתן הקב"ה את התורה פתח להם שבעה רקיעים, וכשם שקרע את העליונים כך קרע את התחתונים, וראו שהוא יחידי, לכך נאמר אתה הראת לדעת[1]: (לז) ותחת כי אהב. וכל זה תחת אשר אהב: ויוצאך בפניו. כאדם המנהיג בנו לפניו שנאמר[2] ויסע מלאך האלהים ההולך וגו' וילך מאחריהם[3]. דבר אחר ויוציאך בפניו, בפני אבותיו, כמו שנאמר נגד אבותם עשה פלא[4]. ואל תתמה על שהזכירם בלשון יחיד, שהרי כתבם בלשון יחיד ויבחר בזרעו אחריו: (לח) ממך מפניך. סרסהו ודרשהו, להוריש מפניך גוים גדולים ועצומים ממך: כיום הזה. כאשר אתה רואה היום: (מא) אז יבדיל. נתן לב להיות חרד לדבר שיבדילם. ואף על פי שאינן קולטות עד שיבדלו אותן שבארץ כנען, אמר משה מצוה שאפשר לקיימה אקיימנה[5]: בעבר הירדן מזרחה שמש. במזרחו של ירדן: מזרחה שמש. לפי שהוא דבוק נקודה רי"ש בחטף, מזרח

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Why did Moshe separate three Cities of Refuge?** (v. 41)

Rashi: Fearfully, Moshe set his heart to the matter of setting them aside. Even though they were not to serve as Cities of Refuge until those of the land of Cana'an would be set aside, Moshe said, "Since it is possible to do a *mitzvah*, I will do it."

Rambam: The three [cities] in the Transjordan did not serve as a haven until the three in the land of Cana'an were set aside.

Why then did [Moshe] set them aside? He said, "Since a *mitzvah* has come to my hand, I will do it" (*Laws of a Murderer and the Protection of Life* 8:3).

TORAS MENACHEM

Moshe's Three Cities (v. 41)

The Cities of Refuge only became a haven for accidental murderers upon the Jewish people's entry into the Land of Cana'an (as *Rashi* stresses here; see *Bamidbar* 35:10). Thus, so long as Moshe was hopeful that he would enter the Land, there was no need for him to begin setting aside these cities, as he would have expected to fulfill this *mitzvah* only when it would become relevant—i.e. after entering the Land of Cana'an.

At the beginning of our *Parsha*, however, Moshe was told, *"You will not cross this (River) Jordan"* (3:27), which meant that Moshe would not be able to carry out the *mitzvah* of setting aside Cities of Refuge at its proper time. Notwithstanding this setback, the Torah informs us that Moshe set aside three cities—as *Rashi* and ***Rambam*** explain, that this may have appeared premature, but it was a form of participation in the *mitzvah* which would later come into force.

1 יש שציינו את המקור לפרש"י זה בפסיקתא רבתי פ' מ"ח ומדרש שוח"ט על פסוק "שמעני", אבל שם נזכר רק הענין ד"פתיחת הרקיעים" בכללות (ולא הפרטים דקריעת העליונים והתחתונים) והראי' "שהוא יחידי". אמנם במדרש הובא בעקידה (פרשתנו, סוף שער פח) ובדברים רבה הוצאת ליברמן מכת"י (ירושלים תש"ו) על הפסוק שמע ישראל, גם ענינים אלו נמצאים (ע"פ לקו"ש חכ"ד ע' 36, הערה 7).
2 שמות יד, יט 3 מכילתא 4 תהלים עח, יב 5 מכות י.

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35 (When the Torah was given) you were shown (the seven heavens), in order (for you) to know that God is God. There is none other besides Him. 36 From the skies, He let you hear His voice, to educate you. He showed you His great fire upon the earth, and you heard His words from the fire.

37 (He did all of this) because He loved your forefathers, and He chose their children after them. He brought you out of Egypt (like a father who leads his son) ahead of him, with His great strength. 38 (His intention was) to clear nations that are greater and stronger than you out of your way, so as to bring you and give you their land as an inheritance—as (you see He is doing) today.

39 Today, you should know and take to your heart, that God is God in heavens above, and on the earth below. There is no other. 40 You should observe His suprarational commands and His (other) commandments, which I am commanding you today, so that He will be good to you and your children after you. Then you will remain for a long time in the land that God, your God, is giving you eternally.

SEPARATION OF CITIES OF REFUGE IN TRANSJORDAN

4:41 THIRD READING

At that time, Moshe separated three cities on the (east) side of the Jordan where the sun rises, 42 so that (at a later time, when the cities would become active) a murderer might flee there. (If a person) murders his fellow unintentionally, provided he did not hate him yesterday or the day before, he may flee to one of these cities and live:

43 Betzer in the desert, in the flatlands of (the tribe of) Re'uvain.

TORAS MENACHEM

Nevertheless, *Rashi* stresses that Moshe did so "fearfully," since:

a.) The *mitzvah* of setting aside the cities had not yet begun, so Moshe feared that his actions were premature; and,

b.) This *mitzvah* might be *intrinsically* connected with entering the Land of Cana'an, and since God had decreed that Moshe was not permitted to enter the Land, Moshe feared that this *mitzvah* was not meant for him to observe.

However, we are still left with the question: What did Moshe accomplish by performing a *mitzvah* before its time?

THE EXPLANATION

Moshe's early separation of Cities of Refuge in the Transjordan could be approached in one of two ways:

a.) It was merely a *non-halachic* preparation for the *mitzvah* which was to be performed at a later date; or,

Sparks of Chasidus

"THERE IS NONE OTHER BESIDES HIM"* (v. 35)

"In truth, even the creations do not exist as entities in their own right, as it appears to our eyes. We perceive it that way because we do not see Godly energy. However, from the perspective of the Godly energy which enlivens us, our existence is totally nullified into absolute nothingness, like a ray of light inside the globe of the sun.... Thus it follows that there is no existence at all outside that of God."

(*Derech Mitzvosecha, Mitzvas Achdus Hashem* ch. 3)

"Even in the current period immediately preceding the true and complete redemption, the way a Jew acts in day-to-day life should resemble life as it will be during the actual Messianic Era.

"One of the most fundamental aspects of the future era is that there will be the fullest expression of the verse, *'You were shown (the heavens), in order (for you) to know that God is God. There is none other besides Him.'* I.e. it will be revealed throughout the entire world that *'there is none other besides Him'*—that there is no existence other than God."

"It is this kind of feeling which is required too in one's daily lives now: A person should feel literally, in every part of his life, that *"there is none other besides Him."* In other words, not only should one's worldly pursuits be done *for the sake* of a Godly purpose—i.e. that one feels the dichotomy between the 'worldly' and the 'Godly,' but that one nevertheless dedicates his worldly activities to a higher purpose. Rather, *one should feel the Godly identity of the worldly matters themselves*. Consequently, he will not even become aware of any existence other than that of God, since he feels that *'there is none other besides Him.'*"

(Freely translated from *Sichas Simchas Torah* 5752)

* Concerning the difference between the two statements *"There is none other besides Him"* (v. 35) and *"There is no other"* (v. 39)—see *Likutei Sichos* vol. 4, pp. 1334-5; ibid. vol. 25, p. 202, *note* 84, and sources cited *loc cit*; *Sefer Hasichos* 5752, vol. 2, p. 349, note 46.

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לַגָּדִי וְאֶת־גּוֹלָן בַּבָּשָׁן לַמְנַשִּׁי: מד וְזֹאת הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר־שָׂם
מֹשֶׁה לִפְנֵי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: מה אֵלֶּה הָעֵדֹת וְהַחֻקִּים וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים
אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּצֵאתָם מִמִּצְרָיִם: מו בְּעֵבֶר
הַיַּרְדֵּן בַּגַּיְא מוּל בֵּית פְּעוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר
יוֹשֵׁב בְּחֶשְׁבּוֹן אֲשֶׁר הִכָּה מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּצֵאתָם
מִמִּצְרָיִם: מז וַיִּירְשׁוּ אֶת־אַרְצוֹ וְאֶת־אֶרֶץ | עוֹג מֶלֶךְ־הַבָּשָׁן
שְׁנֵי מַלְכֵי הָאֱמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן מִזְרַח שָׁמֶשׁ: מח מֵעֲרֹעֵר
אֲשֶׁר עַל־שְׂפַת־נַחַל אַרְנֹן וְעַד־הַר שִׂיאֹן הוּא חֶרְמוֹן: מט וְכָל־
הָעֲרָבָה עֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן מִזְרָחָה וְעַד יָם הָעֲרָבָה תַּחַת אַשְׁדֹּת
הַפִּסְגָּה: פ (רביעי) ה א וַיִּקְרָא מֹשֶׁה אֶל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר
אֲלֵהֶם שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַחֻקִּים וְאֶת־הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי
דֹּבֵר בְּאָזְנֵיכֶם הַיּוֹם וּלְמַדְתֶּם אֹתָם וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם לַעֲשֹׂתָם: ב יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ כָּרַת עִמָּנוּ בְּרִית בְּחֹרֵב: ג לֹא אֶת־אֲבֹתֵינוּ כָּרַת יְהוָה
אֶת־הַבְּרִית הַזֹּאת כִּי אִתָּנוּ אֲנַחְנוּ אֵלֶּה פֹה הַיּוֹם כֻּלָּנוּ חַיִּים:
ד פָּנִים | בְּפָנִים דִּבֶּר יְהוָה עִמָּכֶם בָּהָר מִתּוֹךְ הָאֵשׁ: ה אָנֹכִי
עֹמֵד בֵּין־יְהוָה וּבֵינֵיכֶם בָּעֵת הַהִוא לְהַגִּיד לָכֶם אֶת־דְּבַר
יְהוָה כִּי יְרֵאתֶם מִפְּנֵי הָאֵשׁ וְלֹא־עֲלִיתֶם בָּהָר לֵאמֹר: ס
ו *אָנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית
עֲבָדִים: ז לֹא־יִהְיֶה לְךָ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים עַל־פָּנָי: ח לֹא־תַעֲשֶׂה
לְךָ פֶסֶל כָּל־תְּמוּנָה אֲשֶׁר בַּשָּׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וַאֲשֶׁר בָּאָרֶץ

וְיָת רָאמוֹת בְּגִלְעָד לְשִׁבְטָא דְגָד וְיָת גּוֹלָן
בְּמַתְנָן לְשִׁבְטָא דִמְנַשֶּׁה: מד וְדָא אוֹרַיְתָא
דִּי סַדַּר מֹשֶׁה קֳדָם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: מה אִלֵּין
סָהֲדָוָתָא וּקְיָמַיָּא וְדִינַיָּא דִּי מַלִּיל מֹשֶׁה
עִם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִפַּקְהוֹן מִמִּצְרָיִם:
מו בְּעִבְרָא דְיַרְדְּנָא בְּחֵילְתָא לָקֳבֵל בֵּית פְּעוֹר
בְּאַרְעָא דְסִיחוֹן מַלְכָּא דֶאֱמוֹרָאָה דִּי יָתֵב
בְּחֶשְׁבּוֹן דִּי מְחָא מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִפַּקְהוֹן
מִמִּצְרָיִם: מז וִירִיתוּ יָת אַרְעֵהּ וְיָת אַרְעָא
דְעוֹג מַלְכָּא דְמַתְנָן תְּרֵין מַלְכֵי אֱמוֹרָאָה דִּי
בְּעִבְרָא דְיַרְדְּנָא מַדְנַח שִׁמְשָׁא: מח מֵעֲרֹעֵר
דִּי עַל כֵּיף נַחְלָא דְאַרְנוֹן וְעַד טוּרָא דְשִׂיאוֹן
הוּא חֶרְמוֹן: מט וְכָל מֵישְׁרָא עִבְרָא דְיַרְדְּנָא
לְמַדִּינְחָא וְעַד יַמָּא דְמֵישְׁרָא תְּחוֹת מַשְׁפַּךְ
מְרָמָתָא: א וּקְרָא מֹשֶׁה לְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל וַאֲמַר
לְהוֹן שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יָת קְיָמַיָּא וְיָת דִּינַיָּא
דִּי אֲנָא מְמַלֵּל קֳדָמֵיכוֹן יוֹמָא דֵין וְתִילְפוּן
יָתְהוֹן וְתִטְּרוּן לְמֶעְבַּדְהוֹן: ב יְיָ אֱלָהַנָא גְּזַר
עִמַּנָא קְיָם בְּחוֹרֵב: ג לָא עִם אֲבָהָתַנָא גְּזַר יְיָ
יָת קְיָמָא הָדָא אֱלָהֵן עִמַּנָא אֲנַחְנָא אִלֵּין הָכָא
יוֹמָא דֵין כֻּלַּנָא קַיָּמִין: ד מַמְלַל עִם מַמְלַל
מַלִּיל יְיָ עִמְּכוֹן בְּטוּרָא מִגּוֹ אֶשָּׁתָא: ה אֲנָא
הֲוֵיתִי קָאֵם בֵּין מֵימְרָא דַייָ וּבֵינֵיכוֹן בְּעִדָּנָא
הַהִיא לְחַוָּאָה לְכוֹן יָת פִּתְגָּמָא דַייָ אֲרֵי
דְחֶלְתּוּן מִקֳּדָם אֶשָּׁתָא וְלָא סְלֶקְתּוּן בְּטוּרָא
לְמֵימַר: ו אֲנָא יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ דִּי אַפֵּקְתָּךְ מֵאַרְעָא
דְמִצְרָיִם מִבֵּית עַבְדוּתָא: ז לָא יְהֵי לָךְ אֱלָה
אָחֳרָן בַּר מִנִּי: ח לָא תַעֲבֵיד לָךְ צֵילַם כָּל
דְּמוּת דִּי בִשְׁמַיָּא מִלְּעֵלָּא וְדִי בְאַרְעָא מִלְּרַע

* בצבור קורין בטעם העליון תמצא בסוף הספר

רש"י

של פנים, מקום זריחת השמש: (מד) וזאת התורה. זו שהוא עתיד לסדר אחר פרשה זו: (מה) אלה העדות וגו' אשר דבר. הם הם אשר דבר בצאתם ממצרים, חזר ושנאה להם בערבות מואב: (מז) אשר בעבר הירדן. שהוא במזרח, שהעבר השני היה במערב: (ג) לא את אבתינו. בלבד כרת ה' וגו', כי אתנו: (ד) פנים בפנים. אמר ר' ברכיה כך אמר משה אל תאמרו אני מטעה אתכם על לא דבר, כדרך שהסרסור עושה בין המוכר ללוקח, הרי המוכר עצמו מדבר עמכם: (ה) לאמר. מוסב על דבר ה' עמכם בהר מתוך האש, לאמר אנכי ה' וגו', ואנכי עומד בין ה' וביניכם: (ז) על פני. בכל מקום אשר אני שם, וזהו כל העולם. דבר אחר כל זמן שאני קיים. עשרת הדברות כבר פירשתים:

TORAS MENACHEM

b.) Moshe performed the actual halachic *designation* of these cities. The cities were then "activated" as *functional* Cities of Refuge when the *mitzvah* became applicable, when the other cities were designated in the Land of Cana'an.*

A practical difference between these two approaches would be whether the Transjordanian cities would have to be *re-designated* (by Yehoshua) after the three cities had been designated in the Land of Cana'an. According to the first approach 'a,' Moshe's designation was not *halachically effective*, so the cities would indeed have to be redesignated; but according to approach 'b' this had already taken place.

It appears that *Rashi* and *Rambam* differ over this matter:

Rashi stresses that Moshe said, "*Since it is possible to do a mitzvah*, I will do it," suggesting that Moshe actually observed the *mitzvah* (*halachic requirement*) of separating the cities—i.e. approach 'b' above.

* Or, perhaps it could be argued that when the three cities were designated in the Land of Cana'an, the three Transjordanian cities *retroactively* attained the status of fullyfledged Cities of Refuge since the time when Moshe designated them (See *Tzafnas Pane'ach al Hatorah* to 3:25).

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– *Ramos in Gilad, which belongs to (the tribe of) Gad.*
– *Golan in the Bashan which belongs to (the tribe of) Menashe.*

Review of the Laws of the Torah

4:44 *The following is the law which Moshe put before the children of Israel. [45] These are the (same) testimonies, suprarational commands and rational commands which Moshe told the children of Israel when they went out of Egypt, [46] (and he repeated them now, while they were) on the (east) side of the Jordan area (in the plains of Mo'av), in the valley opposite Beis-Pe'or. (It was) the land of Sichon, King of the Amorites, who lived in Cheshbon, whom Moshe and the children of Israel defeated, after they left Egypt. [47] They took possession of his land, and the land of Og, King of Bashan—the two Amorite kings, who were on the (east) side of the Jordan, where the sun rises—[48] from Aro'air, which is on the edge of the valley of Arnon, to Mount Siyon, which is (Mount) Chermon, [49] and all the plain across the Jordan eastward as far as the Sea of the Plain, under the waterfalls of Pisgah.*

Repetition of the Ten Commandments

5 *Moshe called all Israel and said to them:*
Fourth Reading *Listen, Israel, to the suprarational commands and rational commands which I am speaking in your ears today! Learn them, and be careful to observe them!*

[2] God our God made a covenant with us in Chorraiv. [3] God did not make this covenant (only) with our ancestors, but with us, all of us who are here alive today. [4] At the mountain, God spoke with you from the fire face to face. [5] On that occasion, I stood between God and you, to tell you the word of God, since you were afraid of the fire, and you did not go up on the mountain.

(God spoke to you,) saying:

- *[6] "I am God, (the) God (of every one*) of you, Who took you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."*
- *[7] "You shall not (possess an idol) of other deities (so long as I exist). [8] You shall not make for yourself a sculptured image or any picture of that which is in the heavens above, which is on the*

TORAS MENACHEM

Rambam however, writes that Moshe only said, "Since a *mitzvah* has come to my hand, I will do it." This suggests that it was not in fact possible to observe the *mitzvah* itself, and it is only that "the *mitzvah* has come *to my hand,*" i.e. Moshe could participate in some way with the *mitzvah*, but that his action had no significance from a *halachic* point of view.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 39, p. 14*ff.*)

The Last Word

The two approaches concerning Moshe's involvement in the designation of Cities of Refuge (see *Toras Menachem*) could be explained from a spiritual perspective, as follows:

The view of *Rambam*, that Moshe had no *halachic* involvement in this *mitzvah*, teaches us that Moshe was on such a high spiritual level, that even accidental sin (for which Cities of Refuge are built) was not compatible with his standing.

The view of *Rashi*, that Moshe did perform part of this *mitzvah*, comes to teach us that even though Moshe was, of course, well beyond the very notion of inadvertent sin, he nevertheless *"set his heart to the matter,"* for the sake of the Jewish people. Being a true leader, he catered to the needs of the people, even if this required him to "fearfully" extend himself to a spiritual domain which was beneath his own standing.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 39, pp. 20-21)

* אנקין כ׳ יחיד. ראה פסיקתא דר״כ פ׳ בחודש השביעי בסופו. תנחומא (באבער) יתרו יג. יל״ש רמז רפו. וראה גם פסיקתא רבתי פ׳ כא.

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מִתַּחַת וַאֲשֶׁר בַּמַּיִם מִתַּחַת לָאָרֶץ׃ ט לֹא־תִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לָהֶם וְלֹא
תָעָבְדֵם כִּי אָנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֵל קַנָּא פֹּקֵד עֲוֺן אָבוֹת עַל־
בָּנִים וְעַל־שִׁלֵּשִׁים וְעַל־רִבֵּעִים לְשֹׂנְאָי׃ י וְעֹשֶׂה חֶסֶד לַאֲלָפִים
לְאֹהֲבַי וּלְשֹׁמְרֵי מצותו (ק׳ מִצְוֺתָי)׃ ס יא לֹא תִשָּׂא אֶת־שֵׁם־
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לַשָּׁוְא כִּי לֹא יְנַקֶּה יְהוָה אֵת אֲשֶׁר־יִשָּׂא אֶת־
שְׁמוֹ לַשָּׁוְא׃ ס יב שָׁמוֹר אֶת־יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוְּךָ
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ׃ יג שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲבֹד וְעָשִׂיתָ כָּל־מְלַאכְתֶּךָ׃
יד וְיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבָּת לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא־תַעֲשֶׂה כָל־מְלָאכָה
אַתָּה | וּבִנְךָ־וּבִתֶּךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ־וַאֲמָתֶךָ וְשׁוֹרְךָ וַחֲמֹרְךָ וְכָל־
בְּהֶמְתֶּךָ וְגֵרְךָ אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ לְמַעַן יָנוּחַ עַבְדְּךָ וַאֲמָתְךָ כָּמוֹךָ׃
טו וְזָכַרְתָּ כִּי עֶבֶד הָיִיתָ בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וַיֹּצִאֲךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
מִשָּׁם בְּיָד חֲזָקָה וּבִזְרֹעַ נְטוּיָה עַל־כֵּן צִוְּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת׃ ס טז כַּבֵּד אֶת־אָבִיךָ וְאֶת־אִמֶּךָ
כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוְּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְמַעַן | יַאֲרִיכֻן יָמֶיךָ וּלְמַעַן יִיטַב לָךְ
עַל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ׃ ס יז לֹא תִרְצָח ס
וְלֹא תִנְאָף ס וְלֹא תִגְנֹב ס וְלֹא־תַעֲנֶה בְרֵעֲךָ עֵד שָׁוְא׃ ס
יח וְלֹא תַחְמֹד אֵשֶׁת רֵעֶךָ ס וְלֹא תִתְאַוֶּה בֵּית רֵעֶךָ שָׂדֵהוּ
וְעַבְדּוֹ וַאֲמָתוֹ שׁוֹרוֹ וַחֲמֹרוֹ וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר לְרֵעֶךָ׃ ס [חמישי] יט אֶת־
הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה דִּבֶּר יְהוָה אֶל־כָּל־קְהַלְכֶם בָּהָר מִתּוֹךְ הָאֵשׁ
הֶעָנָן וְהָעֲרָפֶל קוֹל גָּדוֹל וְלֹא יָסָף וַיִּכְתְּבֵם עַל־שְׁנֵי לֻחֹת

ודי במיא מלרע לארעא: ט לא תסגוד להון
ולא תפלחנון ארי אנא יי אלהך אל קנא
מסער חובי אבהן על בנין מרדין על דר
תליתי ועל דר רביעי לסנאי כד משלמין
בניא למחטי בתר אבהתהון: י ועבד טיבו
לאלפי דרין לרחמי ולנטרי פקודי: יא לא
תיסי ית שמא דיי אלהך למגנא ארי לא יזכי
יי ית די יימי בשמה לשקרא: יב טר ית יומא
דשבתא לקדשותה כמא די פקדך יי אלהך:
יג שתא יומין תפלח ותעביד כל עבידתך:
יד ויומא שביעאה שבתא קדם יי אלהך לא
תעביד כל עבידא את וברך וברתך ועבדך
ואמתך ותורך וחמרך וכל בעירך וגיורך די
בקרויך בדיל די ינוח עבדך ואמתך כותך:
טו ותדכר ארי עבדא הויתא בארעא
דמצרים ואפקך יי אלהך מתמן בידא תקיפא
ובדרעא מרממא על כן פקדך יי אלהך למעבד
ית יומא דשבתא: טז יקר ית אבוך וית אמך
כמא די פקדך יי אלהך בדיל דיורכון יומיך
ובדיל דייטב לך על ארעא דיי אלהך יהב
לך: יז לא תקטול נפש: ולא תגוף: ולא תגנוב
(נפשא): ולא תסהד בחברך סהדותא
דשקרא: יח ולא תחמד אתת חברך ולא
תרוג בית חברך חקלה ועבדה ואמתה תורה
וחמרה וכל די לחברך: יט ית פתגמיא האלין
מליל יי עם כל קהלכון בטורא מגו אשתא
עננא ואמיטתא קל רב ולא פסק וכתבינון

רש״י

(יב) שמור. ובראשונות הוא אומר זכור, שניהם בדבור אחד ובתיבה אחת נאמרו ובשמיעה אחת נשמעו[1]: כאשר צוך. קודם מתן תורה במרה[2]: (טו) וזכרת כי עבד היית וגו׳. על מנת כן פדאך שתהיה לו עבד ותשמור מצותיו: (טז) כאשר צוך. אף על כבוד אב ואם נצטוו במרה, שנאמר[3] שם שם לו חוק ומשפט[4]: (יז) ולא תנאף. אין לשון ניאוף אלא באשת איש: (יח) ולא תתאוה. לא תירוג, אף הוא לשון חמדה, כמו נחמד למראה[5], דמתרגמינן דמרגג למחזי: (יט) ולא יסף. מתרגמינן ולא פסק (לפי שמדת בו״ד אינו יכול לדבר כל דבריו בנשימה אחת וצריך להפסיק, ומדת הקב״ה אינו כן, לא

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

"A Great Voice, Which Did Not Stop" (v. 19)

Our Sages learned from this verse that the voice of God, at the giving of the Torah, had no echo (*Shemos Rabah ch. 28*). An echo is caused when soundwaves encounter a hard substance that cannot absorb the sound, causing it to be deflected. Thus we would expect there to have been an echo at the giving of the Torah, especially since it was a "great voice" which would bring a great echo. In truth, however, God gave the Torah in a manner that *it was absorbed even into our physical makeup*—and thus there was no substance from which to deflect, so there was no echo to be heard.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 4, p. 1092ff.)

1 מכילתא. 2 שבועות כ: 3 שמות טו, כה 4 סנהדרין נו: 5 בראשית ב, ט

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earth below, or which is in the water beneath the earth. [9] *You shall not bow down before them nor worship them, for I, God, your God, am a God Who is zealous (to exact punishment), Who visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the sons, upon the third and the fourth generation of those who (continue in their fathers' ways to) hate Me.* [10] *But I act kindly to those who love Me and to those who keep My commandments for two thousand generations."*

- [11] *"You shall not take the name of God, your God, in vain, for God will not absolve anyone who takes His name in vain."*
- [12] *"Guard the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as God commanded you (at Marah, before the giving of the Torah).* [13] *Six days may you work and perform all your labor,* [14] *but the seventh day is a Sabbath to God, your God. You shall perform no labor, neither you, your son, your daughter, your manservant, your maidservant, your ox, your donkey, nor all your (other) animals, and your convert who is within your gates, so that your manservant and maidservant may rest like you.* [15] *You should remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and that God, your God, took you out from there with a strong hand and an outstretched arm (in order that you serve Him). Therefore, God, your God, has commanded you to make the Sabbath day."*
- [16] *"Honor your father and your mother, as God commanded you (at Marah), in order that your days will be lengthened on the land that God, your God, is giving you."*
- [17] *"You shall not murder."*
- *"You shall not commit adultery."*
- *"You shall not steal (people, i.e. kidnap)."*
- *"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."*
- [18] *"You shall not covet your neighbor's wife. You shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, his manservant, his maidservant, his ox, his donkey, or whatever belongs to your neighbor."*

AFTERMATH OF THE REVELATION AT SINAI

5:19 FIFTH READING *God spoke these words to your entire assembly at the mountain from the fire, the cloud, and the fog, with a great voice, which did not stop (for breath). He inscribed them on two stone tablets and gave them to me.*

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

THE REPETITION OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Chasidic teachings elaborate upon God's purpose in creating the world—that there should be a fusion of spirit and matter. Since God created the world in a manner that it is predominantly material, our task—generally speaking—is to infuse it with a higher purpose, and to reveal the inner, spiritual core which pulsates within every one of God's creations.

There is, however, a danger in "overdosing" the world with *too much* spirit, beyond that which it can comfortably absorb. We must never forget that the goal is a *unity* of matter and spirit, where the physical world is "at home" with its Creator. We must invigorate and inspire our world, and not burn or blind it with a light that is too intense.

From where do we derive the strength and the sensitivity to achieve this difficult balance?

The answer is: from the two accounts of the Ten Commandments written in the Torah. The first account (in *Parshas Yisro*) where God's voice shattered the heavens and the earth, gives us the ability to break through the barriers between spiritual and physical, and infuse the mundane world with Divinity. The repetition of the Ten Commandments, here in *Parshas Va'eschanan*, was said by Moshe, and was thus articulated in more *human terms*. This gives us the strength to bring Divine revelation to the world harmoniously, respecting the limitations that exist and yet gradually inspiring the world to overcome its limitations and become a "home for God below."

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Yisro 5752*)

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אֲבָנִים וַיִּתְּנֵם אֵלָי: כ וַיְהִי כְּשָׁמְעֲכֶם אֶת־הַקּוֹל מִתּוֹךְ הַחֹשֶׁךְ
וְהָהָר בֹּעֵר בָּאֵשׁ וַתִּקְרְבוּן אֵלַי כָּל־רָאשֵׁי שִׁבְטֵיכֶם וְזִקְנֵיכֶם:
כא וַתֹּאמְרוּ הֵן הֶרְאָנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶת־כְּבֹדוֹ וְאֶת־גָּדְלוֹ
וְאֶת־קֹלוֹ שָׁמַעְנוּ מִתּוֹךְ הָאֵשׁ הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה רָאִינוּ כִּי־יְדַבֵּר
אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם וָחָי: כב וְעַתָּה לָמָּה נָמוּת כִּי תֹאכְלֵנוּ הָאֵשׁ
הַגְּדֹלָה הַזֹּאת אִם־יֹסְפִים | אֲנַחְנוּ לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶת־קוֹל יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ עוֹד וָמָתְנוּ: כג כִּי מִי כָל־בָּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַע קוֹל אֱלֹהִים
חַיִּים מְדַבֵּר מִתּוֹךְ־הָאֵשׁ כָּמֹנוּ וַיֶּחִי: כד קְרַב אַתָּה וּשְׁמָע אֵת
כָּל־אֲשֶׁר יֹאמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַתְּ | תְּדַבֵּר אֵלֵינוּ אֵת
כָּל־אֲשֶׁר יְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֵלֶיךָ וְשָׁמַעְנוּ וְעָשִׂינוּ: כה וַיִּשְׁמַע
יְהוָה אֶת־קוֹל דִּבְרֵיכֶם בְּדַבֶּרְכֶם אֵלָי וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי
שָׁמַעְתִּי אֶת־קוֹל דִּבְרֵי הָעָם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר דִּבְּרוּ אֵלֶיךָ הֵיטִיבוּ
כָּל־אֲשֶׁר דִּבֵּרוּ: כו מִי־יִתֵּן וְהָיָה לְבָבָם זֶה לָהֶם לְיִרְאָה אֹתִי
וְלִשְׁמֹר אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹתַי כָּל־הַיָּמִים לְמַעַן יִיטַב לָהֶם וְלִבְנֵיהֶם
לְעֹלָם: כז לֵךְ אֱמֹר לָהֶם שׁוּבוּ לָכֶם לְאָהֳלֵיכֶם: כח וְאַתָּה פֹּה
עֲמֹד עִמָּדִי וַאֲדַבְּרָה אֵלֶיךָ אֵת כָּל־הַמִּצְוָה וְהַחֻקִּים
וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר תְּלַמְּדֵם וְעָשׂוּ בָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן לָהֶם
לְרִשְׁתָּהּ: כט וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם לַעֲשׂוֹת כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם
אֶתְכֶם לֹא תָסֻרוּ יָמִין וּשְׂמֹאל: ל בְּכָל־הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֶתְכֶם תֵּלֵכוּ לְמַעַן תִּחְיוּן וְטוֹב לָכֶם וְהַאֲרַכְתֶּם
יָמִים בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר תִּירָשׁוּן: ו א וְזֹאת הַמִּצְוָה הַחֻקִּים
וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם לְלַמֵּד אֶתְכֶם לַעֲשׂוֹת
בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ: ב לְמַעַן תִּירָא
אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לִשְׁמֹר אֶת־כָּל־חֻקֹּתָיו וּמִצְוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי
מְצַוֶּךָּ אַתָּה וּבִנְךָ וּבֶן־בִּנְךָ כֹּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ וּלְמַעַן יַאֲרִכֻן יָמֶיךָ:
ג וְשָׁמַעְתָּ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְשָׁמַרְתָּ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֲשֶׁר יִיטַב לְךָ וַאֲשֶׁר
תִּרְבּוּן מְאֹד כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתֶיךָ לָךְ אֶרֶץ זָבַת
חָלָב וּדְבָשׁ: פ [ששי] ד שְׁמַע* יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה | אֶחָד*:

* ע' רבתי * ד' רבתי

על תרין לוחי אבניא ויהבנון לי: כ והוה
כד שמעכון ית קלא מגו חשוכא וטורא בער
באשתא וקרבתון לותי כל רישי שבטיכון
וסביכון: כא ואמרתון הא אחזינא יי אלהנא
ית יקרה וית רבותה וית קל מימרה שמענא
מגו אשתא יומא הדין חזינא ארי ימלל יי עם
אנשא ומתקים: כב וכען למא נמות ארי
תיכלננא אשתא רבתא הדא אם מוספין
אנחנא למשמע ית קל מימרא דיי אלהנא
עוד ומיתין אנחנא: כג ארי מן כל בשרא די
שמע קל מימרא דיי קימא ממלל מגו
אשתא כותנא ואתקים: כד קרב את ושמע
ית כל די יימר יי אלהנא ואת תמלל עמנא
ית כל די ימלל יי אלהנא עמך ונקבל ונעביד:
כה ושמיע קדם יי ית קל פתגמיכון
במללותכון עמי ואמר יי לי שמיע קדמי
ית קל פתגמי עמא הדין די מלילו עמך
אתקינו כל די מלילו: כו לוי די יהי לבא הדין
להון למדחל קדמי ולמטר ית כל פקודי כל
יומיא בדיל דייטב להון ולבניהון לעלם:
כז איזל אמר להון תובו לכון למשכניכון:
כח ואת הכא קום קדמי ואמלל עמך ית כל
תפקדתא וקימיא ודיניא די תלפנון ויעבדון
בארעא די אנא יהב להון למירתה:
כט ותטרון למעבד כמא די פקיד יי אלהכון
יתכון לא תסטון ימינא ושמאלא: ל בכל
ארחא די פקיד יי אלהכון יתכון תהכון בדיל
דתיחון וייטב לכון ותורכון יומין בארעא די
תירתון: א ודא תפקדתא קימיא ודיניא די
פקיד יי אלהכון לאלפא יתכון למעבד
בארעא די אתון עברין לתמן למירתה:
ב בדיל דתדחל קדם יי אלהך למטר ית כל
קימוהי ופקודוהי די אנא מפקדך את וברך
ובר ברך כל יומי חייך ובדיל דיורכון יומיך:
ג ותקבל ישראל ותטר למעבד די ייטב לך
ודי תסגון לחדא כמא די מליל יי אלהא
דאבהתך לך ארעא עבדא חלב ודבש: ד שמע

רש"י

היה פוסק, ומפני שלא היה מוסיף) כי קולו חזק וקיים לעולם. דבר אחר ולא יסף, לא הוסיף להראות באותו פומבי: (כד) ואת תדבר אלינו. התשתם את כחי כנקבה, שנצטערתי עליכם, ורפיתם את ידי כי ראיתי שאינכם חרדים להתקרב אליו מאהבה. וכי לא היה יפה לכם ללמוד מפי הגבורה ולא ללמוד ממני: (ד) ה' אלהינו ה' אחד. ה' שהוא אלהינו עתה ולא אלהי האומות עובדי אלילים, הוא עתיד להיות ה' אחד, שנאמר כי אז

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[20] Then, when you heard the voice from the darkness, and the mountain was burning with fire, all the heads of your tribes and your elders approached me [21] and said, "Look! God, our God, has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we heard His voice from the fire. We saw today that God speaks with man, and (yet) he can still live. [22] But why should we now die? For if we continue to hear the voice of God our God any longer this great fire will consume us and we will die! [23] What (mortal of) flesh (and blood) has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the fire, as we have, and lived? [24] You should approach (God) and listen to everything that God, our God says, and then you can tell us everything that God, our God, tells you. We will listen and obey."

[25] God heard what you said when you spoke to me. God said to me, "I have heard what the people said when they spoke to you. Everything that they said to you is good. [26] If only their hearts would remain like this, fearing Me and keeping all My commandments eternally, so that things would be good for them and their children forever! [27] Go and say to them, 'Return to your tents.' [28] You, however, must remain here with Me, and I will tell you the entire body of commandments, the suprarational commands and the rational commands, which you will teach them, so that they can observe them in the Land which I am giving them to possess."

[29] Be careful about observing them, as God, your God, has commanded you. Do not deviate to the right or to the left. [30] Follow along the complete path which God, your God, has commanded you, so that you will live and prosper, and your days will be lengthened in the land that you will possess.

6 *[1] This is the body of commandments, the suprarational commands and the rational commands, that God, your God, commanded (me) to teach you, to be performed in the land which you are about to enter and possess.[2] (This is) so that you should fear God, your God, and keep all His suprarational commands and His commandments that I am commanding you, all the days of your life—(both) you, your son, and your son's son—in order that your days be lengthened. [3] You should listen, Israel, and be careful to do what is good for you, so that you will increase greatly, just as God, the God of your fathers told you (that He would give you) a land flowing with milk and honey.*

FIRST PARAGRAPH OF THE SHEMA

SIXTH READING

• *[4] Hear, O Israel! (Right now) God is our God (and the nations have their own gods, but in the future all will realize that) God is one.*

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

"HEAR, O ISRAEL, GOD IS OUR GOD, GOD IS ONE" (V. 4)

"Man possesses two apparently contradictory elements, no less incompatible than the incompatibility of matter and spirit, the counterpart of which in the physical world is matter and energy. I refer to the Divine soul and animal soul, or, on a lower level, the *yetzer tov* [impulse to righteousness] and *yetzer hara* [impulse to evil]. But this incompatibility is evident only in the infantile stage of progress in Divine service, comparable to the plurality of elements and forces which were presumed to exist in physical nature. But just as the appreciation of the underlying unity of Nature grew with the advancement of science, so does perfection in the Divine service lead to the realization of the essential unity in human nature, to the point where the *yetzer tov* and *yetzer hara* become one, through the transformation of the *yetzer hara* by and into the *yetzer tov*, for otherwise, of course, there can be no unity and harmony, since all that is holy, positive, and creative could never make peace and be subservient to the unholy, negative and destructive. And in this attained unity the Jew proclaims, 'Hear, O Israel, God [is] our God, God is one.'"

"This is also what our Sages meant when they succinctly said—as they often compress far-reaching ideas into a few concise words—that the words 'And you shall love God, your God, with all your heart (*levavecha*),' which immediately follow *Shema Yisra'el*, mean: with both your *yetzarim*, with the *yetzer hara*, as with the *yetzer tov*.

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe on 28 Adar 5721)

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ה וְאָהַבְתָּ אֵת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל־
מְאֹדֶךָ: ו וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם עַל־
לְבָבֶךָ: ז וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם לְבָנֶיךָ וְדִבַּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתֶךָ וּבְלֶכְתְּךָ
בַדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשָׁכְבְּךָ וּבְקוּמֶךָ: ח וּקְשַׁרְתָּם לְאוֹת עַל־יָדֶךָ וְהָיוּ

יִשְׂרָאֵל יְיָ אֱלָהַנָא יְיָ חָד: ה וְתִרְחַם
יָת יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ בְּכָל לִבָּךְ וּבְכָל נַפְשָׁךְ וּבְכָל
נִכְסָךְ: ו וִיהוֹן פִּתְגָמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין דִּי אֲנָא מְפַקֵּיד
יוֹמָא דֵין עַל לִבָּךְ: ז וּתְתַנֵּינוּן לִבְנָךְ וּתְמַלֵּל
בְּהוֹן בְּמִתְבָךְ בְּבֵיתָךְ וּבְמֵהָכָךְ בְּאוֹרְחָא
וּבְמִשְׁכְּבָךְ וּבְמִקְמָךְ: ח וְתִקְטְרִנּוּן לְאָת עַל

רש״י

להפוך אל עמים שפה ברורה לקרוא כולם בשם ה'[1], ונאמר ביום ההוא יהיה ה' אחד ושמו אחד[2]: (ה) **ואהבת.** עשה דבריו מאהבה, אינו דומה עושה מאהבה לעושה מיראה. העושה אצל רבו מיראה, כשהוא מטריח עליו מניחו והולך לו[3]: **בכל לבבך.** בשני יצריך. דבר אחר בכל לבבך, שלא יהיה לבך חלוק על המקום[3]: **ובכל נפשך.** אפילו הוא נוטל את נפשך[3]: **ובכל מאדך.** בכל ממונך. יש לך אדם שממונו חביב עליו מגופו, לכך נאמר ובכל מאדך. דבר אחר ובכל מאדך, בכל מדה ומדה שמודד לך, בין במדה טובה בין במדת פורענות, וכן דוד הוא אומר כוס ישועות אשא וגו'[4] צרה ויגון אמצא וגו'[5]: (ו) **והיו הדברים וגו'.** ומהו האהבה והיו הדברים האלה, שמתוך כך אתה מכיר בהקב"ה ומדבק בדרכיו[3]: **אשר אנכי מצוך היום.** לא יהיו בעיניך כדיוטגמא ישנה שאין אדם סופנה, אלא כחדשה שהכל רצין לקראתה. דיוטגמא מלות המלך הבאה במכתב[3]: (ז) **ושננתם.** לשון חדוד הוא, שיהיו מחודדים בפיך, שאם ישאלך אדם דבר לא תהא צריך לגמגם בו, אלא אמור לו מיד[3]: **לבניך.** אלו התלמידים. מצינו בכל מקום שהתלמידים קרוים בנים, שנאמר בנים אתם לה' אלהיכם[6], ואומר בני הנביאים אשר בבית אל[7], וכן בחזקיהו שלמד תורה לכל ישראל וקראם בנים שנאמר בני עתה אל תשלו[8]. וכשם שהתלמידים קרוים בנים, שנאמר בנים אתם לה' אלהיכם[6], כך הרב קרוי אב, שנאמר[9] אבי אבי רכב ישראל וגו'[3]: **ודברת בם.** שלא יהא עיקר דבורך אלא בם. עשם עיקר ואל תעשם טפל[3]: **ובשכבך**[10]. יכול אפילו שכב בחצי היום, תלמוד לומר ובקומך. יכול אפילו עמד בחצי הלילה, תלמוד לומר בשבתך בביתך ובלכתך בדרך. דרך ארץ דברה תורה, זמן שכיבה וזמן קימה[3]: (ח) **וקשרתם לאות על ידך.** אלו תפילין שבזרוע: **והיו לטטפת בין עיניך.** אלו תפילין שבראש. ועל שם מנין פרשיותיהם נקראו טטפת, טט בכתפי שתים, פת

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Who are "your sons"? (v. 7)**

Rashi: These are your students. We find universally that students are termed "sons."

Sifsei Chachamim: The requirement to teach one's son has already been mentioned above: *"(This is) so that you fear God, your God, and keep all His suprarational commands and His commandments that I am commanding you, all the days of your life—(both) you, your son, and your son's son"* (6:2). Our verse appears to be an unnecessary repetition of the requirement to teach one's son. Therefore, *Rashi* concluded that it refers to students.

TORAS MENACHEM

Your Sons—Your Students (v. 7)

Rashi expounds verse 7 non-literally, explaining that the requirement to teach "your sons" actually refers to "your students."

Sifsei Chachamim explains that *Rashi* was troubled as to why the Torah instructs us to teach our sons here in verse 7, when this precept was already taught in verse 2 above: *"(This is) so that you fear God, your God, and keep all His suprarational commands and His commandments that I am commanding you, all the days of your life—(both) you, your son, and your son's son."*

However this explanation is difficult to accept since verse 2 appears to be referring, not to a requirement resting upon the father towards his son, but rather, to an obligation resting on the children themselves. Furthermore, the verse does not refer to teaching Torah, but rather, the observance of *mitzvos* in general.

Thus, it would appear that *Rashi* was troubled by a different problem, arising from one of his earlier comments, in *Parshas Vayechi*:

On the verse, *"I will separate them from Ya'akov, and I will scatter them throughout Israel"* (49:7), *Rashi* writes: *"There are no paupers, scribes, or teachers of children except from the tribe of Shimon, so that they should be scattered."*

Now, if our verse here in *Parshas Va'eschanan* were taken literally—that a father is obligated to teach his own child Torah and he may not delegate this responsibility to another—then "teachers of children" would only be required for orphans, or for one whose father is totally ignorant and is unable to teach him. Clearly, these are minority cases, so the reader will be troubled: Why does the Torah indicate that an *entire tribe* will be devoted to teaching children (and to be scribes) when the need for teachers is so rare?

In fact, even disregarding the above, a child who is learning *Chumash* for the first time—for whom *Rashi* wrote his commentary—would be troubled by our verse, since he will be aware that both he and his friends are not taught exclusively by their fathers.

Thus, in response to these problems *Rashi* explained: *"These are your students. We find universally that students are termed 'sons.'"*

(Based on *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 9, p. 33ff.)

1 צפניה ג, ט 2 זכריה יד, ט 3 ספרי 4 תהלים קטז, יג 5 שם ג 6 דברים יד, א 7 מלכים-ב ב, ג 8 דברי הימים-ב כט, יא 9 מלכים-ב שם יב 10 אין רש"י מפרש שהכוונה לקריאת שמע כי זהו דבר הפשוט אפילו לבן חמש (למקרא), וגם למד כבר מצות ק"ש בפרש"י בלק כג,כד (ע"פ לקו"ש חי"ט ע' 49)

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- 5 *Love God, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might.*
6 *(I.e.) these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be upon your heart.*
- 7 *Teach them thoroughly to your (students, who are like your) sons. Speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the way.*
- *(Recite the Shema) when you lie down (at night) and when you get up (in the morning).*
- 8 *Bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be "totafos" (tefilin) between your eyes.*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What will be "a sign upon your hand" ? (v. 8)

RASHI: These are the *tefilin* of the arm.

● What will be "*totafos*" between your eyes ? (v. 8)

RASHI: These are the *tefilin* of the head. They are called טֹטָפֹת because of the number of scrolls [contained within them]: טַט in Coptic means "two" and פַּת in Phrygian means "two" [making a total of four].

RAMBAN: The *mitzvah* of *tefilin* has already been stated in *Parshas Bo* (Shemos 13:9). It is repeated here to stress that one must "*bind* them," i.e. that *tefilin* must be secured tightly with a knot.

TORAS MENACHEM

THE HEAD AND ARM TEFILIN (v. 8)

In *Parshas Bo*, where the *mitzvah* of *tefilin* is mentioned for the first time, *Rashi* explains: "*they are called* טֹטָפֹת *because they have four compartments—*טַט *in Coptic means 'two' and* פַּת *in Phrygian means 'two'*" (Shemos 13:16).

Why does *Rashi* stress in *Parshas Bo* that the term *totafos* alludes to the number of *compartments*; whereas here, in *Parshas Va'eschanan*, *Rashi* writes, "They are called טֹטָפֹת because of the number of *scrolls* [contained within them]"?*

THE EXPLANATION

The context in which *tefilin* is mentioned in *Parshas Bo* is different to that mentioned in *Parshas Va'eschanan*:

In *Parshas Bo*, the Torah states, "*It* (singular) *should be for a sign upon your arm and totafos between your eyes.*" The use of the singular here indicates that the *tefilin* are to be donned as a sign to commemorate a single event, the Exodus from Egypt, which is the context of the discussion in *Parshas Bo*.

Thus the word "*totafos*" (alluding to the number "four") in *Parshas Bo* could not refer to the number of *passages* inside the *tefilin*, since only *two* of the four passages written inside the *tefilin*** mention the Exodus from Egypt.***

Thus *Rashi* concluded that, "They are called טֹטָפֹת because they have four *compartments*," i.e. having many compartments is an essential feature of the *tefilin* that magnifies the "sign" by which the Exodus is remembered.****

However, here in *Parshas Va'eschanan*, the *tefilin* are mentioned in a different context. The Torah states, "*Bind them* (plural) *as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be totafos between your eyes.*"

To what is the Torah referring, by the use of the plural ("them")?

Clearly this is a reference to verse 6, "*these words*, which I am commanding you today, should be upon your heart," i.e. with the *mitzvah of tefilin*, the Torah is instructing us to bind "*these words*," the scriptural passages, upon our head and arm (adjacent to the heart). Therefore, *Rashi* wrote here that the term *totafos* alludes to "the number of *scrolls*" which contain these scriptural passages.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 9, p. 49ff.)

The Last Word

"LOVE GOD..." (v. 5-6)

"One of the best-known portions of the Torah, which Jews recite daily, both morning and evening, is the portion of *Shema*, in which the Torah tells us to love God "*with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might*" (v. 5). The Hebrew word *m'odecha* that is generally translated as "your might," also conveys the meaning of *mida*—"measure" or "dimension," as our Sages explain. This means that a Jew has to love God regardless of the kind of "deal" he thinks is meted out to him by Divine Providence. And this profound love has to express itself, as the text indicates there, in terms of studying the Torah and observing its *mitzvos*, particularly the *mitzvos* of *tefilin* and *mezuzah* which are mentioned specifically, since *tefilin* symbolizes all the *mitzvos*. Moreover, inasmuch as *tefilin* is put on the left hand facing the heart, the seat of the emotions, and on the head facing the brain, the seat of the intellect, it symbolizes that the totality of a Jew, both emotionally and intellectually, has to be involved in the service of God and the fulfillment of the mitzvos."

"In other words, whatever happens in a Jew's life, it must not in any way affect this love and devotion to God, or his everyday life and conduct in accordance with the Torah and *mitzvos*. (Needless to note, the *mitzvah* of reciting the *Shema* daily is not reserved for exceptional Jews, but is for each and every Jew.)"

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe)

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* Both the head and arm *tefilin* contain the same four scriptural passages. In the head *tefilin* these four passages are written on four different scrolls which are housed in four different compartments. In the arm *tefilin* the four passages are written on a single scroll which is housed in a single compartment. ***Shemos* 13:1-10 and *ibid.* 11-17 mention the Exodus; *Devarim* 6:4-9 and *ibid.* 11:13-21 do not. ***Furthermore, if the verse in *Parshas Bo* did stipulate a requirement for four passages, then it would turn out that the Jewish people could not fulfill the *mitzvah of tefilin* until forty years later, when the two passages in the Book of *Devarim* were given; and, from a literal reading of *Parshas Bo*, it appears that the Jewish people were being given a mitzvah that was to be performed immediately. ****Thus, according to this interpretation of *Rashi*, two compartments remained empty for the first forty years of the observance of this *mitzvah*.

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לְטֹטָפֹת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ: ט וּכְתַבְתָּם עַל־מְזֻזוֹת בֵּיתֶךָ וּבִשְׁעָרֶיךָ: ס
י וְהָיָה כִּי־יְבִיאֲךָ | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע
לַאֲבֹתֶיךָ לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב לָתֶת לָךְ עָרִים גְּדֹלֹת
וְטֹבֹת אֲשֶׁר לֹא־בָנִיתָ: יא וּבָתִּים מְלֵאִים כָּל־טוּב אֲשֶׁר לֹא־
מִלֵּאתָ וּבֹרֹת חֲצוּבִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־חָצַבְתָּ כְּרָמִים וְזֵיתִים אֲשֶׁר
לֹא־נָטָעְתָּ וְאָכַלְתָּ וְשָׂבָעְתָּ: יב הִשָּׁמֶר לְךָ פֶּן־תִּשְׁכַּח אֶת־יְהוָה
אֲשֶׁר הוֹצִיאֲךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים: יג אֶת־יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ תִּירָא וְאֹתוֹ תַעֲבֹד וּבִשְׁמוֹ תִּשָּׁבֵעַ: יד לֹא תֵלְכוּן אַחֲרֵי
אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים מֵאֱלֹהֵי הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבוֹתֵיכֶם: טו כִּי אֵל
קַנָּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּקִרְבֶּךָ פֶּן־יֶחֱרֶה אַף־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בָּךְ
וְהִשְׁמִידְךָ מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה: ס טז לֹא תְנַסּוּ אֶת־יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם כַּאֲשֶׁר נִסִּיתֶם בַּמַּסָּה: יז שָׁמוֹר תִּשְׁמְרוּן אֶת־מִצְוֹת
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְעֵדֹתָיו וְחֻקָּיו אֲשֶׁר צִוָּךְ: יח וְעָשִׂיתָ הַיָּשָׁר
וְהַטּוֹב בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה לְמַעַן יִיטַב לָךְ וּבָאתָ וְיָרַשְׁתָּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ
הַטֹּבָה אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לַאֲבֹתֶיךָ: יט לַהֲדֹף אֶת־כָּל־אֹיְבֶיךָ

יְדָךְ וִיהוֹן לִתְפִלִּין בֵּין עֵינָךְ: ט וְתִכְתְּבִנּוּן עַל
מְזוּזִין וְתִקְבְּעִנּוּן בְּסִפֵּי בֵיתָךְ וּבְתַרְעָךְ: י וִיהֵי
אֲרֵי יָעֵלִנָּךְ יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ לְאַרְעָא דִּי קַיֵּים
לַאֲבָהָתָךְ לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב לְמִתַּן לָךְ
קִרְוִין רַבְרְבָן וְטָבָן דִּי לָא בְנֵיתָא: יא וּבָתִּין
מְלַן כָּל טוּב דִּי לָא מַלֵּיתָא וְגֻבִּין פְּסִילָן דִּי לָא
פְסַלְתָּא כַּרְמִין וְזֵיתִין דִּי לָא נְצַבְתָּא וְתֵיכוֹל
וְתִשְׂבָּע: יב אִסְתְּמַר לָךְ דִּלְמָא תִנְשֵׁי יָת
(דַּחְלְתָא ד)יְיָ דִּי אַפְּקָךְ מֵאַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם
מִבֵּית עַבְדוּתָא: יג יָת יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ תִּדְחַל
וְקֳדָמוֹהִי תִפְלַח וּבִשְׁמֵהּ תְּקַיֵּם: יד לָא תְהָכוּן
בָּתַר טַעֲוַת עַמְמַיָּא מִטַּעֲוַת עַמְמַיָּא דִּי
בְּסַחֲרָנֵיכוֹן: טו אֲרֵי אֵל קַנָּא יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ שְׁכִנְתֵּהּ
בֵּינָךְ דִּלְמָא יִתְקַף רֻגְזָא דַּייָ אֱלָהָךְ בָּךְ וִישֵׁיצֵךְ
מֵעַל אַפֵּי אַרְעָא: טז לָא תְנַסּוֹן קֳדָם יְיָ
אֱלָהֲכוֹן כְּמָא דִּי נַסִּיתוּן בְּנִסֵּיתָא: יז מִטַּר
תִּטְּרוּן יָת פִּקּוֹדַיָּא דַּייָ אֱלָהֲכוֹן וְסָהֲדְוָתֵהּ
וּקְיָמוֹהִי דִּי פַקְּדָךְ: יח וְתַעֲבֵד דְּכָשַׁר וּדְתָקֵן
קֳדָם יְיָ בְּדִיל דְּיֵיטַב לָךְ וְתֵיעוֹל וְתֵירַת יָת
אַרְעָא טָבְתָא דִּי קַיֵּים יְיָ לַאֲבָהָתָךְ:
יט לְמִתְבַּר יָת כָּל בַּעֲלֵי דְבָבָךְ מִקֳּדָמָךְ

רש״י

באפריקי פתים[1]: (ט) **מזוזת ביתך.** מזזת כתיב, שאין צריך אלא אחת: **ובשעריך.** לרבות שערי חצרות ושערי מדינות ושערי עיירות[2]: (יא) **חצובים.** לפי שהיו מקום טרשין וסלעים נופל בו לשון חציבה: (יב) **מבית עבדים.** כתרגומו מבית עבדותא, ממקום שהייתם שם עבדים: (יג) **ובשמו תשבע.** אם יש בך כל המדות הללו, שאתה ירא את שמו ועובד אותו, אז בשמו תשבע, שמתוך שאתה ירא את שמו תהא זהיר בשבועתך, ואם לאו לא תשבע: (יד) **מאלהי העמים אשר סביבותיכם.** הוא הדין לרחוקים, אלא לפי שאתה רואה את סביבותיך תועים אחריהם, הוצרך להזהיר עליהם ביותר: (טז) **במסה.** כשיצאו ממצרים שנסוהו במים, שנאמר היש ה' בקרבנו[3]: (יח) **הישר והטוב.** זו פשרה, לפנים משורת

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What is the importance of *mezuzah*?** (v. 9)

Rambam: Every person is obligated to be extremely cautious about *mezuzah* since it is a universally binding obligation. Then, every time that a person enters or leaves he will encounter the Unity of God, the holy Name of God....Our Sages said that any person who wears *tefilin* on his head and arm, has *tzitzis* on his garment, and has a *mezuzah* on his door, is assured that he will not sin...." (End of Laws of Mezuzah).

TORAS MENACHEM

The Mezuzah (v. 9)

How are we to understand the following:

a.) Why does ***Rambam*** write here that, "Every person is obligated to be extremely cautious about *mezuzah*," and not "...cautious about *the mitzvah of mezuzah*"? Indeed at the end of his *Laws of Tzitzis, Rambam* is particular to write, "A person should always be careful with the *mitzvah* of *tzitzis*."

b.) The promise that "any person who wears *tefilin* on his head and arm, has *tzitzis* on his garment, and a *mezuzah* on his door, is assured that he will not sin," was taken by *Rambam* directly from the *Talmud* in Tractate *Menachos* (43b). However, the *Talmud* quotes an additional verse to prove this point: "*a threefold cord is not quickly broken*" (Ecclesiastes 4:12). Why did *Rambam* omit this verse?

c.) In *Rambam's* Halachic Code, the *Mishneh Torah*, the *Laws of Tefilin* precede the *Laws of Mezuzah*, and the *Laws of Tzitzis* follow later. Since the above assurance is the combined effect of *all three mitzvos*, why did *Rambam* not cite it after completing *all three* sets of laws, at the end of the *Laws of Tzitzis* (or, at the first opportunity—the *Laws of Tefilin*)?

1 סנהדרין ד: 2 יומא יא. 3 שמות יז, ז

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- 9 *Write them on the doorposts of your house and upon your (public) gates.*

WARNING NOT TO FORGET GOD

6:10 *When God, your God, will bring you to the Land He swore to your fathers—Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov—that He would give you, (you will find) great and good cities that you did not build,* 11 *houses full of all good things that you did not fill (them with), reservoirs (in the rock) that you did not carve out, vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant—and you will eat and be satisfied.* 12 *But beware not to forget God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.**

13 *You should fear God, your God, worship Him, and (only on this condition may you) swear by His Name.*

14 *Do not go after other gods, the gods of the nations who are around you,* 15 *so that the anger of God, your God, does not become kindled against you, leading Him to destroy you off the face of the earth. For God, your God Who is among you, is a jealous God.*

- 16 *Do not test God, your God, as you tested Him in Masah.*

17 *You should always be careful to observe the commands of God, your God, His testimonies and His suprarational commands, which He has commanded you.* 18 *You shall do what is proper and good in the eyes of God, in order that you prosper, and so that you will come and possess the good land which God swore to your forefathers,* 19 *driving out all your enemies from before you, as God has said.*

TORAS MENACHEM

THE EXPLANATION

There are two quite distinct *halachic* obligations concerning the *mezuzah*. First, there is the requirement to *affix* a *mezuzah* to any appropriate doorpost on one's property.

A second, entirely different obligation that one fulfills with the *mezuzah*, is not the consequence of an effect which the person has on the *mezuzah* (its affixment), but rather, an effect that the *mezuzah* has on him. Namely, that when the person passes in or out of a door upon which a *mezuzah* is affixed, the person becomes aroused to think about God whose holy Name is written inside.

It is this second aspect which *Rambam* is speaking of here at the end of *Hilchos Mezuzah*, as he states: "Every time that a person enters or leaves *he will encounter* the Unity of God, the Holy Name of God." Therefore, it would be incorrect to refer to this aspect of *mezuzah* as the "***mitzvah*** of *mezuzah*," since, technically speaking, the *mitzvah* of *mezuzah* is its *affixment*, and here we are speaking of the *effect* of the *mezuzah* on the person. So *Rambam* writes that one should be "extremely cautious about *mezuzah*" without any reference to it being a "*mitzvah*" at all.

Nevertheless, he writes that "a person is *obligated* to be extremely cautious about *mezuzah*," stressing that there is indeed a *halachic obligation* here for a person to make himself aware of the content of the *mezuzah* as he enters or leaves a room, allowing himself to be affected by it (see *Taz* to *Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh De'ah*, beg. ch. 285).

Based on the above we can now answer the other two questions posed earlier ('b' and 'c'):

Rambam mentioned the assurance against sinning (through observing the precepts of *tefilin, mezuzah* and *tzitzis*) specifically in his *Laws of Mezuzah* for, of these three precepts, *mezuzah* makes the most powerful contribution to the assurance. This is because the effect that *tefilin* and *tzitzis* have of reminding a person about God (thus deterring him from sin) are *secondary* effects of these *mitzvos*, whereas in the case of *mezuzah*, it is the *mezuzah object itself* that arouses an awareness of God:

In the case of *tefilin*, *Rambam* writes: "*The holiness of tefilin is great, and so long as a person has tefilin on his head and his arm, he will be humble and God-fearing*" (*Laws of Tefilin* 4:25). I.e. it is not "encountering" the actual *tefilin* itself that deters a person from sin, but rather the *holiness* which the *tefilin* emanates (a secondary effect).

Likewise in the case of *tzitzis*, it is not "encountering" the tzitzis object itself that deters a person from sin, but rather, seeing the *tzitzis* (merely) *reminds* a person of the fact (by various *allusions***) that "*the Torah equated it to all the mitzvos*" (end of *Laws of Tzitzis*). And this will lead a person not to sin.

However, in the case of *mezuzah*, it is the *mezuzah itself* that affects a person, and not merely the holiness it emanates or the message it projects (which are secondary qualities). And that is why *Rambam* chose to stress the assurance against sinning specifically in his *Laws of Mezuzah*.

For this same reason, *Rambam* also omitted the *Talmud's* reference to the verse, "*a threefold cord is not quickly broken.*" For this verse stresses that the three *mitzvos* protect a person *collectively*, with each *mitzvah* having a *similar effect*; and the verse also indicates that it is the *mitzvos themselves* that provide the protection. So, since *Rambam* did not rule in favor of *any* of these points, he omitted the verse from the *Laws of Mezuzah*.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 29, p. 61*ff*.)

* According to *Ramban*, this is one of the 613 *mitzvos* of the Torah (see his glosses to *Sefer Hamitzvos* of *Rambam*). See also *Sefer Hamitzvos of the Tzemach Tzedek* (*Derech Mitzvosecha*) page 45b. **For example: a.) A person ties knots to remind him of things, so too the *tzitzis* are knotted to remind a person of the *mitzvos* (*Tur, Orach Chaim* 24); b.) The Hebrew word *tzitzis* has the *gematria* (numerical value) of 600, which when added to its 5 knots and 8 strings alludes to the 613 Biblical *mitzvos* (*Rashi* to *Menachos* 43b); c.) The *techailes* (blue coloring) in the *tzitzis* reminds a person of the sea, which resembles, the sky, which reminds a person of the Throne of Glory (*Menachos* ibid.)

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מפניך כאשר דבר יהוה: ס כ כי־ישאלך בנך מחר לאמר מה
העדת והחקים והמשפטים אשר צוה יהוה אלהינו אתכם:
כא ואמרת לבנך עבדים היינו לפרעה במצרים ויציאנו יהוה
ממצרים ביד חזקה: כב ויתן יהוה אותת ומפתים גדלים
ורעים | במצרים בפרעה ובכל־ביתו לעינינו: כג ואותנו
הוציא משם למען הביא אתנו לתת לנו את־הארץ אשר
נשבע לאבתינו: כד ויצונו יהוה לעשות את־כל־החקים
האלה ליראה את־יהוה אלהינו לטוב לנו כל־הימים לחיתנו
כהיום הזה: כה וצדקה תהיה־לנו כי־נשמר לעשות את־כל־
המצוה הזאת לפני יהוה אלהינו כאשר צונו: ס [שביעי] ז א כי
יביאך יהוה אלהיך אל־הארץ אשר־אתה בא־שמה
לרשתה ונשל גוים־רבים | מפניך החתי והגרגשי והאמרי
והכנעני והפרזי והחוי והיבוסי שבעה גוים רבים ועצומים
ממך: ב ונתנם יהוה אלהיך לפניך והכיתם החרם תחרים
אתם לא־תכרת להם ברית ולא תחנם: ג ולא תתחתן בם
בתך לא־תתן לבנו ובתו לא־תקח לבנך: ד כי־יסיר את־בנך
מאחרי ועבדו אלהים אחרים וחרה אף־יהוה בכם והשמידך
מהר: ה כי אם־כה תעשו להם מזבחתיהם תתצו ומצבתם

כמא די מליל יי: כ ארי ישאלנך ברך מחר
למימר מא סהדותא וקימיא ודיניא די פקיד
יי אלהנא יתכון: כא ותימר לברך עבדין
הוינא לפרעה במצרים ואפקנא יי ממצרים
בידא תקיפא: כב ויהב יי אתין ומופתין
רברבין ובישין במצרים בפרעה ובכל אנש
ביתה לעיננא: כג ויתנא אפק מתמן בדיל
לאעלא יתנא למתן לנא ית ארעא די קיים
לאבהתנא: כד ופקדנא יי למעבד ית כל
קימיא האלין למדחל ית יי אלהנא לטב לנא
כל יומיא לקימותנא כיומא הדין: כה וזכותא
תהי לנא ארי נטר למעבד ית כל תפקדתא
הדא קדם יי אלהנא כמא די פקדנא: א ארי
יעלנך יי אלהך לארעא די את עלל לתמן
למירתה ויתרך עממין סגיאין מן קדמך
חתאי וגרגשאי ואמוראי וכנענאי ופרזאי
וחואי ויבוסאי שבעא עממין סגיאין ותקיפין
מנך: ב וימסרנון יי אלהך קדמך ותמחנון
גמרא תגמר יתהון לא תגזר להון קים ולא
תרחם עליהון: ג ולא תתחתן בהון ברתך לא
תתן לברה וברתה לא תסב לברך: ד ארי
יטעין ית ברך מבתר פלחני ויפלחון לטעות
עממיא ויתקף רוגזא דיי בכון וישצנך בפריע:
ה ארי אם כדין תעבדון להון אגוריהון
תתרעון וקמתהון תתברון ואשריהון

רש״י

כדין: (יט) באשר דבר. והיכן דבר, והמותי את כל העם וגו'[1]: (כ) כי ישאלך בנך מחר. יש מחר שהוא אחר זמן[2]: (א) ונשל. לשון השלכה והתזה, וכן ונשל הברזל[3]: (ג) לא תחנם. לא תתן להם חן. אסור לו לאדם לומר כמה נאה כותי זה. דבר אחר אל תתן להם חניה בארץ[4]: (ד) כי יסיר את בנך מאחרי. בנו של כותי כשישא את בתך, יסיר את בנך אשר תלד לו בתך מאחרי. למדנו שבן בתך הבא מן הכותי קרוי בנך, אבל בן בנך הבא מן הכותית אינו קרוי בנך אלא בנה, שהרי לא נאמר על בתו לא תקח כי תסיר את בנך מאחרי, אלא כי יסיר את בנך וגו'[5]: (ה) מזבחתיהם. של בנין: מצבותם. אבן אחת:

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

"You Must Not Intermarry With Them" (v. 3)

For a Jewish person to marry a non-Jew is one of the greatest calamities, and not only from the religious viewpoint. Nor is it entirely a personal matter affecting the person involved, for it concerns the whole Jewish people, and there are few transgressions which affect the whole Jewish people as an intermarriage, God forbid. It is a transgression also against one's elementary honesty, for it is exceedingly unfair to the other party, from the viewpoint of each, and it is also unfair to the respective good friends, who wish to see their near and dear one lastingly happy, and not otherwise.

It has often been pointed out that marriage in general, even between two persons of similar backgrounds, entails a certain risk as to eventual adjustment and compatibility. Even if the two had been acquainted for some time, it is not a sure criterion as to what the relationship will be when the acquaintance is turned into a marriage,

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REMEMBERING THE EXODUS

6:20 *In the future, when your son asks you, saying, "What are the testimonies, the suprarational commands, and the rational commands, which God our God has commanded you?"*
[21] You should say to your son, "We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and God took us out of Egypt with a strong hand. [22] God enacted great and terrifying signs and wonders upon Egypt, Pharaoh, and his entire household, before our eyes. [23] He brought us out of there, in order that He might bring us to the Land which He swore to our fathers, and give it to us. [24] God commanded us to perform all these suprarational commands, to fear God, our God, so (He could) give us good all the time, and keep us alive, as (we are) today. [25] It is a merit for us that we are careful to observe all these commandments before God, our God, as He has commanded us."

ENTERING THE LAND

7 SEVENTH READING *When God, your God, brings you into the Land which you are going to enter and possess, He will drive away many nations from before you: the Chitites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Cana'anites, the Perizites, the Chivites, and the Jebusites—seven nations more numerous and powerful than you.*

- *[2] God, your God, will deliver them to you, and you will defeat them. You must destroy them completely. Do not make a treaty with them. Do not admire them (in any way).*
- *[3] You must not intermarry with them. You must not give your daughter to their sons, and you must not take their daughters for your son. [4] For (one of their sons) will turn away your (grand)son from following Me, and they will worship other gods. Then God's anger will be kindled against you, and He will quickly destroy you.*

[5] This is what you should do to them: You should demolish their altars, smash their monuments, cut

TORAS MENACHEM

where the two will be thrown together under one roof for 24 hours a day, day after day, and week after week, etc. But when the backgrounds are entirely different, and where this difference dates back for scores of generations, and is consequently of a deep and lasting quality—the chances of adjustment and compatibility are so negligible as to be nonexistent. Especially, where the difference is of a definitely antagonistic and hostile nature, as has been evidenced by the pogroms and persecutions of Jews in every land where Jews sojourned in the past 2,000 years. Moreover, modern science has recognized the hereditary nature of character traits, particularly deep-rooted ones over generations.

Thus, if one is honest—in the plain sense of the word—one would not wish to drag another party into an alliance which is doomed from the start. And if one truly loves the other, and not in a selfish way, one would certainly not wish to involve the other in such a misfortune, and would readily forgo the prospect of immediate and short-lived pleasure in order to spare the other the inevitable result. Otherwise, the professed love is nothing but selfish and egoistic.

Should there be children from such a union, there is the added consideration of the tragedy of the children having to witness constant friction, and worse, between their parents, which is bound to follow in the natural course of events.

There is no need to elaborate on this very painful subject.

Needless to say, I am aware of the "argument" that the percentage of intermarriage is a considerable one and many of them seem to last. But it is surely unnecessary to point out that married people try to put on the appearance of a "happy" marriage, being ashamed to confess failure, and to reveal the friction and indignities, etc., suffered at home. In an intermarriage the sense of shame is even greater, knowing that many friends had warned them against it, and they had maintained that their marriage would be different. But as a matter of fact and statistics, the percentage of separations and divorces are incomparably greater in intermarriages than in non-intermarriages.

In the vast majority of cases, those who enter into an intermarriage are emotionally involved. Were they themselves to be asked about others contemplating such a step, they would counsel against taking a step which would commit the two people to possible lifelong misery. Indeed, they would consider it irresponsible to take such a step in an emotional state of mind.

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe*)

* See also *Likutei Sichos* vol. 24, p. 376.

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תְּשַׁבֵּרוּ וַאֲשֵׁירֵהֶם תְּגַדֵּעוּן וּפְסִילֵיהֶם תִּשְׂרְפוּן בָּאֵשׁ: ו כִּי עַם
קָדוֹשׁ אַתָּה לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּךָ בָּחַר | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לִהְיוֹת לוֹ
לְעַם סְגֻלָּה מִכֹּל הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה: ז לֹא מֵרֻבְּכֶם
מִכָּל־הָעַמִּים חָשַׁק יְהוָה בָּכֶם וַיִּבְחַר בָּכֶם כִּי־אַתֶּם הַמְעַט
מִכָּל־הָעַמִּים: ח כִּי מֵאַהֲבַת יְהוָה אֶתְכֶם וּמִשָּׁמְרוֹ אֶת־
הַשְּׁבֻעָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לַאֲבֹתֵיכֶם הוֹצִיא יְהוָה אֶתְכֶם בְּיָד
חֲזָקָה וַיִּפְדְּךָ מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים מִיַּד פַּרְעֹה מֶלֶךְ־מִצְרָיִם: [מפטיר]
ט וְיָדַעְתָּ כִּי־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים הָאֵל הַנֶּאֱמָן שֹׁמֵר
הַבְּרִית וְהַחֶסֶד לְאֹהֲבָיו וּלְשֹׁמְרֵי מצותו [ק׳ מִצְוֹתָיו] לְאֶלֶף דּוֹר:
י וּמְשַׁלֵּם לְשֹׂנְאָיו אֶל־פָּנָיו לְהַאֲבִידוֹ לֹא יְאַחֵר לְשֹׂנְאוֹ אֶל־
פָּנָיו יְשַׁלֶּם־לוֹ: יא וְשָׁמַרְתָּ אֶת־הַמִּצְוָה וְאֶת־הַחֻקִּים וְאֶת־
הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם לַעֲשׂוֹתָם: פ פ פ

קי״ח פסוקים, עזיא״ל סימן.

תְּקוֹצְצוּן וְצַלְמֵי טַעֲוָתְהוֹן תּוֹקְדוּן בְּנוּרָא:
ו אֲרֵי עַם קַדִּישׁ אַתְּ קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ בָּךְ
אִתְרְעֵי יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ לְמֶהֱוֵי לֵהּ לְעַם חַבִּיב מִכֹּל
עַמְמַיָּא דִּי עַל אַפֵּי אַרְעָא: ז לָא מִדְּסַגִּיאִין
אַתּוּן מִכָּל עַמְמַיָּא צְבִי יְיָ בְּכוֹן וְאִתְרְעֵי בְּכוֹן
אֲרֵי אַתּוּן זְעֵירִין מִכָּל עַמְמַיָּא: ח אֲרֵי מִדְּרָחֵם
יְיָ יָתְכוֹן וּמִדְּנָטַר יָת קְיָמָא דִּי קַיֵּים
לַאֲבָהָתְכוֹן אַפֵּק יְיָ יָתְכוֹן בִּידָא תַקִּיפָא
וּפָרְקָךְ מִבֵּית עַבְדוּתָא מִידָא דְּפַרְעֹה מַלְכָּא
דְּמִצְרָיִם: ט וְתִדַּע אֲרֵי יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ הוּא אֱלֹהִים
אֱלָהָא מְהֵימְנָא נָטַר קְיָמָא וְחִסְדָּא לְרָחֲמוֹהִי
וּלְנָטְרֵי פִּקּוֹדוֹהִי לְאַלְפֵי דָּרִין: י וּמְשַׁלֵּם
לְסָנְאוֹהִי מִבֵּן דִּי אִנּוּן עָבְדִין קֳדָמוֹהִי בְּחַיֵּיהוֹן
לְאוֹבָדֵיהוֹן לָא מְאַחַר עוֹבַד טָב לְסָנְאוֹהִי מִבֵּן
דִּי אִנּוּן עָבְדִין קֳדָמוֹהִי בְּחַיֵּיהוֹן מְשַׁלֵּם לְהוֹן:
יא וְתִטַּר יָת תַּפְקֶדְתָּא וְיָת קְיָמַיָּא וְיָת דִּינַיָּא
דִּי אֲנָא מְפַקֵּד לָךְ יוֹמָא דֵין לְמֶעְבְּדְהוֹן: פ פ פ

רש״י

ואשירהם. אילנות שעובדין אותן[1]: **ופסיליהם.** צלמים: **(ז) לא מרבכם.** כפשוטו. ומדרשו, לפי שאין אתם מגדילים עצמכם כשאני משפיע לכם טובה לפיכך חשקתי בכם[2]: **כי אתם המעט.** הממעטין עצמכם, כגון אברהם, שאמר ואנכי עפר ואפר[3], וכגון משה ואהרן שאמרו ונחנו מה[4], לא כנבוכדנצר שאמר אדמה לעליון[5], וסנחריב שאמר מי בכל אלהי הארצות[6], וחירם שאמר מושב אלהים ישבתי[7]: **כי אתם המעט.** הרי כי משמש בלשון דהא: **(ח) כי מאהבת ה'.** הרי כי משמש בלשון אלא. לא מרובכם חשק ה' בכם, אלא מאהבת ה' אתכם: **ומשמרו את השבועה.** מחמת שמרו את השבועה: **(ט) לאלף דור.** ולהלן הוא אומר לאלפים[8], כאן שהוא סמוך אצל לשומרי מצותיו, העושין מיראה, הוא אומר לאלף, ולהלן שהוא סמוך אצל לאוהביו, העושין מאהבה, שהשכר יותר גדול, הוא אומר לאלפים[9]: **לאוהביו.** אלו העושין מאהבה: **ולשומרי מצותיו.** אלו העושין מיראה: **(י) ומשלם לשנאיו אל פניו.** בחייו משלם לו גמולו הטוב כדי להאבידו מן העולם הבא: **(יא) היום לעשותם.** ולמחר לעולם הבא ליטול שכרם[10]:

חסלת פרשת ואתחנן

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How does God pay a person who hates Him "to his face"? (v. 10)

Rashi: He rewards him in his lifetime for the good [he has done], so as to cause him to perish from the World to Come.

● Why does the verse stress that we should observe the *mitzvos* "today"? (v. 11)

Rashi: For "tomorrow," in the World to Come, you will take the reward [for observing] them.

Be'er Mayim Chayim: *Rashi's* comments to verses 10 and 11 are connected. In verse 10, *Rashi* explains that God pays the wicked in this world for any good they have done, so as to keep them from the World to Come. Then, in verse 11, *Rashi* stresses that in the case of the righteous, the opposite is true: God does not give them their main reward in this world, so as to give them a full reward in the World to Come.

Sefer Hazikaron: This is consistent with the *Talmudic* principle that "the reward for *mitzvos* is not given in this world" (*Kidushin 39b*).

TORAS MENACHEM

Rewards in This World and the Next (v. 10-11)

In his commentary to verse 11, *Rashi* explains that in the World to Come, "you will take the reward," for observing the *mitzvos*.

Be'er Mayim Chayim and ***Sefer Hazikaron*** explain that *Rashi's* comment here is a continuation of his explanation to the previous verse. In verse 10, *Rashi* writes that God rewards the wicked *in this world* for any good they may have done, so as to ensure they do not have any reward in the World to Come. In the next verse *Rashi* continues that the *reverse* is true for the righteous. God does *not* reward them in this world, so as to save their reward for the World to Come.

1 ע״ז מח. 2 חולין פט. 3 בראשית יח, כז 4 שמות טז, ז 5 ישעיה יד, יד 6 שם לו, כ 7 יחזקאל כח, ב 8 דברים ה, י 9 סוטה לא. 10 עירובין כב. ע״ז ג.

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down their idolatrous trees, and burn their statues in fire. [6] *For you are a holy people to God, your God.*
God, your God, has chosen you from all the peoples upon the face of the earth to be His treasured
people. [7] *God did not desire you and choose you because you are more numerous than all the other*
nations, for you are (in fact) the smallest of all the nations. [8] *Rather, God took you out with a strong hand*
and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh, the King of Egypt, because of
God's love for you, and because He is keeping the oath that He swore to your forefathers.

MAFTIR [9] *You should know that God, your God, is the Almighty God, the faithful God, Who upholds the*
covenant and (rewards acts of) kindness to those who (observe) His (commands out of) love and (those
who) keep His commandments (out of fear) for a thousand generations. [10] *He causes (each of) those who*
hate Him to perish (in the World to Come) by paying (him fully in this world) to his face (for any good
that he has done). He will not delay (payment to) the one who hates Him. He will repay him to his face.

[11] *You should keep the body of commandments, the suprarational commands and the rational*
commands, which I am commanding you to observe today.

THE HAFTARAH FOR VA'ESCHANAN IS ON PAGE 276

TORAS MENACHEM

However, at the literal level it is difficult to accept that there is no reward in this world for the observance of mitzvos, since we find numerous verses promising rewards for the observance of the *mitzvos* (including the *very next verse*, at the beginning of *Parshas Eikev*).

How then, is this to be reconciled with *Rashi*'s statement that only "'*tomorrow,' in the World to Come, you will take the reward [for observing] them*"?

THE EXPLANATION

The key emphasis of *Rashi*'s comment to verse 11 is that "'tomorrow,' in the World to Come, you will *take* the reward [for observing] them."

I.e. in contrast to this world, where reward is merely *received* for observing the *mitzvos*, in the future the reward will be ***taken***. In other words, a person does indeed "receive" reward for observing mitzvos in this world, but in the World to Come, the manner in which a person will obtain his rewards will change—he will "take" them.

The disadvantage of having to "receive" a payment is that, even when a reward is owing, the recipient is at the mercy of his debtor. Thus, it is feasible that the payment may be delayed due to a secondary reason, and the recipient simply has to wait until he is paid.

If however, he has the ability to "take" what is owed to him, then there need be no delay, since he can help himself.

Based on the above we can now explain the flow of logic between verses 10 and 11, according to *Rashi*:

In verse 10 we first learn that God pays the wicked in this world: "*He causes (each of) those who hate Him to perish (in the next world) by paying (him fully in this world) to his face (for any good that he has done).*" The verse then continues that this payment will not be delayed: "*He will not delay (payment to) the one who hates Him. He will repay him to his face.*"

From here the reader will understand that the wicked are always paid in this world; but that the reward to the righteous is sometimes delayed. The following verse therefore adds, "to observe today"—that "tomorrow, in the World to Come, you will *take* the reward [for observing] them." I.e. the notion of a person's reward being delayed is a phenomenon unique to this world, as in this world we merely "receive" our reward. However, in the World to Come, "you will *take* the reward," without any delay at all.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 29, p. 41*ff.*)

Sparks of Chasidus

There are two ways of understanding the mechanism by which rewards are given for observing the *mitzvos*:

a.) That the reward comes "naturally," i.e. God created the world in such a manner that the observance of a *mitzvah* will automatically open spiritual channels which will bring the person reward.

b.) That the reward comes "miraculously," i.e. the *mitzvah* and its reward are not in a "cause and effect" relationship. Rather, the reward must be generated independently—rather like rewards from one human being to another, which are awarded willingly (and not automatically).

The first approach ('a') is the method by which we receive rewards in the current era. Since they come "automatically," they are simply "received" by their recipients (see *Toras Menachem*).

However, the rewards of the future era will not be a natural consequence of our deeds, but rather, like a separate "miracle" that is generated by God. Thus, since the process of reward is an *additional* activity by God, it will require an additional act from ourselves, that of "*taking*" the reward (see *Rashi*).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 29, pp. 46-7)

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Parshas Va'eschanan contains 8 positive *mitzvos* and 4 prohibitions

1. Not to desire what belongs to a fellow Jew [5:18].
2. [To believe in] the unity of God [6:4].
3. To love God [6:5].
4. To study Torah [6:7].
5. To recite the *Shema* every morning and evening [6:7].
6. To tie *tefilin* on the arm [6:8].
7. To place *tefilin* on the head [6:8].
8. To affix a *mezuzah* on the doorpost of our houses [6:9].
9. Not to test a true prophet unreasonably [6:16].
10. To kill the seven nations that occupied the Land of Israel [7:2].
11. Not to have positive feelings for idol-worshipers [7:2].
12. Not to marry non-Jews [7:3].

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parshas Eikev

פרשת עקב

The Name of the Parsha

The word *Eikev* literally means "because" or "as a result of," as in the opening verse of our *Parsha: "As a result of your listening to these laws...."*

A further meaning of the word *Eikev* is "heel." In the context of our verse, this has two implications:

a.) That we should be careful in observing even the relatively "minor" commandments, which we might be tempted to "trample with one's heels" (*Rashi* ibid.).

b.) Our Sages referred to the period immediately preceding the coming of Mashiach as "the 'heel' of Mashiach." Thus, explained the *Tzemach Tzedek*, our verse alludes to the pre-Messianic period when the Jewish people will eventually "listen to these laws" and return to God (*Ohr Hatorah*).

What is the connection between these two interpretations?

The absence of the Holy Temple clearly has a detrimental effect on the spiritual "health" of the Jewish people. In Temple times, the spiritual core of Judaism was easily accessible, and people found it simple to maintain an inspired and meaningful connection to their Creator. In times of exile, however, it is a struggle merely to sustain a basic observance of the *mitzvos*, never mind attaining a spiritual appreciation of them.

Nevertheless, there is actually a unique *advantage* to our relatively "uninspired" exile-Judaism which the spiritually nourished people of the Temple era did not possess. For ultimately, it is *we* who demonstrate true commitment to Jewish values, for we remain dedicated to God *despite* the fact that we are not easily inspired to love Him and fear Him. We do not see God, or feel God, for our generation is merely the "heel" of spiritual sensitivity. But that is also our advantage: We serve God, independent of our own feelings of inspiration—and that is the hallmark of *genuine* commitment.

Thus, having reached "the 'heel' of Mashiach," we no longer wish to "trample" upon the minor commandments; for the distinction between "minor" and "major" is only significant *for those who appreciate and understand the true worth of the mitzvos,* like the Jews of the Temple era.

Our greatness, however, is our simple faith. Our unsophisticated approach to Judaism connects us to the very core of God's Essence, which is simple and devoid of any multiplicity at all.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 9, p. 71ff.)

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יב וְהָיָה ׀ עֵקֶב תִּשְׁמְעוּן אֵת הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים הָאֵלֶּה וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם
וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם וְשָׁמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְךָ אֶת־הַבְּרִית וְאֶת־
הַחֶסֶד אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לַאֲבֹתֶיךָ: יג וַאֲהֵבְךָ וּבֵרַכְךָ וְהִרְבֶּךָ וּבֵרַךְ
פְּרִי־בִטְנְךָ וּפְרִי־אַדְמָתֶךָ דְּגָנְךָ וְתִירֹשְׁךָ וְיִצְהָרֶךָ שְׁגַר־אֲלָפֶיךָ
וְעַשְׁתְּרֹת צֹאנֶךָ עַל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּע לַאֲבֹתֶיךָ לָתֶת לָךְ:
יד בָּרוּךְ תִּהְיֶה מִכָּל־הָעַמִּים לֹא־יִהְיֶה בְךָ עָקָר וַעֲקָרָה
וּבִבְהֶמְתֶּךָ: טו וְהֵסִיר יְהוָה מִמְּךָ כָּל־חֹלִי וְכָל־מַדְוֵי מִצְרַיִם
הָרָעִים אֲשֶׁר יָדַעְתָּ לֹא יְשִׂימָם בָּךְ וּנְתָנָם בְּכָל־שֹׂנְאֶיךָ:
טז וְאָכַלְתָּ אֶת־כָּל־הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ לֹא־
תָחוֹס עֵינְךָ עֲלֵיהֶם וְלֹא תַעֲבֹד אֶת־אֱלֹהֵיהֶם כִּי־מוֹקֵשׁ הוּא
לָךְ: ס יז כִּי תֹאמַר בִּלְבָבְךָ רַבִּים הַגּוֹיִם הָאֵלֶּה מִמֶּנִּי אֵיכָה
אוּכַל לְהוֹרִישָׁם: יח לֹא תִירָא מֵהֶם זָכֹר תִּזְכֹּר אֵת אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְפַרְעֹה וּלְכָל־מִצְרָיִם: יט הַמַּסֹּת הַגְּדֹלֹת אֲשֶׁר־
רָאוּ עֵינֶיךָ וְהָאֹתֹת וְהַמֹּפְתִים וְהַיָּד הַחֲזָקָה וְהַזְּרֹעַ הַנְּטוּיָה
אֲשֶׁר הוֹצִאֲךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כֵּן־יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְכָל־
הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה יָרֵא מִפְּנֵיהֶם: כ וְגַם אֶת־הַצִּרְעָה יְשַׁלַּח
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בָּם עַד־אֲבֹד הַנִּשְׁאָרִים וְהַנִּסְתָּרִים מִפָּנֶיךָ:
כא לֹא תַעֲרֹץ מִפְּנֵיהֶם כִּי־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּקִרְבֶּךָ אֵל גָּדוֹל
וְנוֹרָא: כב וְנָשַׁל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶת־הַגּוֹיִם הָאֵל מִפָּנֶיךָ מְעַט
מְעָט לֹא תוּכַל כַּלֹּתָם מַהֵר פֶּן־תִּרְבֶּה עָלֶיךָ חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה:
כג וּנְתָנָם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְפָנֶיךָ וְהָמָם מְהוּמָה גְדֹלָה עַד
הִשָּׁמְדָם: כד וְנָתַן מַלְכֵיהֶם בְּיָדֶךָ וְהַאֲבַדְתָּ אֶת־שְׁמָם מִתַּחַת
הַשָּׁמָיִם לֹא־יִתְיַצֵּב אִישׁ בְּפָנֶיךָ עַד הִשְׁמִדְךָ אֹתָם: כה פְּסִילֵי

יב ויהי חלף די תקבלון ית דיניא האלין
ותטרון ותעבדון יתהון ויטר יי אלהך לך ית
קימא וית חסדא די קיים לאבהתך:
יג וירחמנך ויברכנך ויסגנך ויברך ולדא
דמעך ואבא דארעך עבורך וחמרך ומשחך
בקרי תוריך ועדרי ענך על ארעא די קיים
לאבהתך למתן לך: יד בריך תהי מכל
עממיא לא יהא בך עקר ועקרא ובבעירך:
טו ויעדי יי מנך כל מרעין וכל מכתשי
מצרים בישיא די ידעת לא ישוונון בך ויתנגון
בכל סנאיך: טז ותגמר ית כל עממיא די יי
אלהך יהב לך לא תחוס עינך עליהון ולא
תפלח ית טעותהון ארי לתקלא הוא לך:
יז דלמא תימר בלבך סגיאין עממיא האלין
מני אכדין אכול לתרכותהון: יח לא תדחל
מנהון מדכר תדכר ית די עבד יי אלהך
לפרעה ולכל מצרים: יט נסין רברבין
די חזאה עיניך ואתיא ומופתיא וידא תקיפתא
ודרעא מרממא די אפקך יי אלהך כן יעבד יי
אלהך לכל עממיא די את דחל מקדמיהון:
כ ואף ית ערעיתא יגרי יי אלהך בהון עד
דיבדון דאשתארו ודאטמרו מקדמך: כא לא
תתבר מקדמיהון ארי יי אלהך שכנתה בינך
אלהא רבא ודחילא: כב ויתרך יי אלהך ית
עממיא האלין מקדמך זעיר זעיר לא תכול
לשציותהון בפריע דלמא תסגי עלך חיות ברא:
כג וימסרנון יי אלהך קדמך וישגשנון שגוש
רב עד דישתצון: כד וימסר מלכיהון בידך
ותובד ית שמהון מתחות שמיא לא יתעתד
אנש (מ)קדמך עד דישתצי (דתשיצי) יתהון:
כה צלמי טעותהון תוקדון בנורא לא תחמד

רש"י

(יב) והיה עקב תשמעון. אם המצות קלות שאדם דש בעקביו תשמעון: ושמר ה' וגו'. ישמור לך הבטחתו: (יג) שגר אלפיך. ולדי בקרך, שהנקבה משגרת ממעיה: ועשתרות צאנך. מנחם פירש אבירי בשן[1], מבחר הצאן. כמו עשתרות קרנים[2], לשון חוזק. ואונקלוס תרגם ועדרי ענך. ורבותינו אמרו[3] למה נקרא שמם עשתרות שמעשירות את בעליהן: (יד) עקר. שאינו מוליד: (יז) כי תאמר בלבבך. על כרחך לשון דילמא הוא, שמא תאמר בלבבך מפני שהם רבים לא אוכל להורישם, אל תאמר כן, לא תירא מהם. ולא יתכן לפרשו באחת משאר לשונות של כי, שיפול עליו סוף לא תירא מהם:

(יט) המסות. נסיונות: והאותות. כגון ויהי לנחש[4], והיו לדם ביבשת[5]: והמופתים. המכות המופלאות: והיד החזקה. זה הדבר: והזרוע הנטויה. זו החרב של מכת בכורות: (כ) הצרעה. מין שרץ העוף, שהיתה זורקת בהם מרה ומסרסתן ומסמאה את עיניהם בכל מקום שהיו נסתרים שם[6]: (כב) פן תרבה עליך חית השדה. והלא אם עושין רצונו של מקום אין מתיראין מן החיה, שנאמר וחית השדה השלמה לך[7], אלא גלוי היה לפניו שעתידין לחטוא: (כג) והמם. נקוד קמ"ץ כולו, לפי שאין מ"ם אחרונה מן היסוד, והרי הוא כמו והם אותם. אבל והמם גלגל עגלתו[8], כולו יסוד, לפיכך

1 תהלים כב, יג 2 בראשית יד, ה 3 חולין פד: 4 שמות ד, ג 5 שם ט 6 סוטה לו. 7 איוב ה, כג 8 ישעיה כח, כח

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REWARDS FOR OBSERVING THE MITZVOS

7:12 *And what will happen is, as a result of your listening to (even the most neglected of) these laws, and your care in their observance, God, your God, will keep (His promise) to you: the covenant and the kindness that He swore to your fathers. [13] He will love you, bless you and multiply you. He will bless the fruit of your womb, the fruit of your soil, your grain, your wine, your oil, your cattle's offspring and the best of your flocks, in the Land which He swore to your forefathers to give to you. [14] You will be blessed above all nations. There will be no sterile male or barren female among you or among your cattle. [15] God will keep every sickness away from you. He will not give you any of the diseases of Egypt which you experienced, (rather), He will give them to all your enemies.*

[16] You should annihilate all the nations which God, your God, delivers to you. Do not let your eye pity them, and do not worship their gods, for this is a tempting trap for you.

NOT TO FEAR THE NATIONS

7:17 *You might say to yourself, "These nations are more numerous than us! How will we be able to drive them out?" [18] Do not fear them! You should always remember what God, your God, did to Pharaoh and to the whole of Egypt: [19] the great proofs (of true power) that your eyes saw, the signs (of God's direct involvement), the wondrous (plagues), the mighty hand (of God that brought disease to Egyptian cattle), and the outstretched arm (that killed the firstborn), with which God, your God, brought you out. God, your God, will do likewise to all the nations whom you fear. [20] God, your God, will also send hornet swarms upon them, until the survivors and those who hide from you are destroyed.*

[21] Do not be demoralized by them, because God, your God—a great and awesome God—is among you. [22] Little by little God, your God, will drive away those nations from before you. You will not be able to destroy them quickly, for then there might be too many wild animals for you to contend with.

[23] God, your God, will deliver them to you, and He will drive them crazy until they are destroyed. [24] He will deliver their kings into your hand, and you will eradicate their names from beneath the skies. Nobody will stand up against you, until you have destroyed them.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the Torah use the term *Eikev*, which can also mean "heel"? (v. 12)

RASHI: [The verse is suggesting]: If you will heed the minor commandments which a person tends to trample with his heels, [then "God will keep (His promise) to you"].

MIDRASH: David said, "Master of the Universe! I do not fear the important precepts of the Torah, because they are [obviously] important. Rather, I fear the minor precepts, perhaps I was lax with them because they are minor, and you said: Be careful with a minor precept just like an important one."

Thus the verse says: *"In keeping them there is great reward (עֵקֶב רָב)"* (Psalms 19:12). And it is also written, *"Oh how great (רַב) is your goodness, which you have laid up for those who fear you"* (Ibid. 31:20). This refers to the reward for observing "minor" precepts (Tanchuma, Eikev 1).

TORAS MENACHEM

THE REWARD FOR OBSERVING "MINOR" PRECEPTS (v. 12)

The ***Midrash*** appears to suggest that observing the "minor" precepts of Judaism brings an even greater reward than that which is bestowed for observing the "important" precepts.

How is this to be reconciled with the principle, that "Be careful with a minor *mitzvah* as with a major one, *for you do not know the reward given for the mitzvos*" (Avos 2:1)?

THE EXPLANATION

The reward for *mitzvos* is of two kinds:

a.) The reward for the very nature of the precept performed, where the relative importance of the various *mitzvos* is not accounted for; and

b.) A special reward dependent upon specific conditions, *i.e.*, the nature of the person performing the precept, the kind of performance, and the circumstances of time and place involved.

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אֱלֹהֵיהֶם תִּשְׂרְפוּן בָּאֵשׁ לֹא־תַחְמֹד כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב עֲלֵיהֶם וְלָקַחְתָּ
לָךְ פֶּן תִּוָּקֵשׁ בּוֹ כִּי תוֹעֲבַת יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ הוּא: כו וְלֹא־תָבִיא
תוֹעֵבָה אֶל־בֵּיתֶךָ וְהָיִיתָ חֵרֶם כָּמֹהוּ שַׁקֵּץ | תְּשַׁקְּצֶנּוּ וְתַעֵב |
תְּתַעֲבֶנּוּ כִּי־חֵרֶם הוּא: פ ח א כָּל־הַמִּצְוָה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ
הַיּוֹם תִּשְׁמְרוּן לַעֲשׂוֹת לְמַעַן תִּחְיוּן וּרְבִיתֶם וּבָאתֶם וִירִשְׁתֶּם
אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּע יְהֹוָה לַאֲבֹתֵיכֶם: ב וְזָכַרְתָּ אֶת־כָּל־
הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר הוֹלִיכֲךָ יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ זֶה אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה בַּמִּדְבָּר
לְמַעַן עַנֹּתְךָ לְנַסֹּתְךָ לָדַעַת אֶת־אֲשֶׁר בִּלְבָבְךָ הֲתִשְׁמֹר מצותו
[ק׳ מִצְוֹתָיו] אִם־לֹא: ג וַיְעַנְּךָ וַיַּרְעִבֶךָ וַיַּאֲכִלְךָ אֶת־הַמָּן אֲשֶׁר

כַּסְפָּא וְדַהֲבָא דִּי עֲלֵיהוֹן וְתִסַּב לָךְ דִּלְמָא
תִּתְּקַל בֵּהּ אֲרֵי מְרַחֲקָא דַּייָ אֱלָהָךְ הוּא:
כו וְלָא תָעֵל דִּמְרַחַק לְבֵיתָךְ וּתְהֵי חֶרְמָא
כְּוָתֵהּ שַׁקָּצָא תְשַׁקְּצִנֵּהּ וְרַחָקָא תְרַחֲקִנֵּהּ אֲרֵי
חֶרְמָא הוּא: א כָּל תַּפְקֶדְתָּא דִּי אֲנָא מְפַקֶּדָךְ
יוֹמָא דֵין תִּטְּרוּן לְמֶעְבַּד בְּדִיל דְּתֵיחוֹן וְתִסְגּוֹן
וְתֵיתוֹן וְתֵירְתוּן יָת אַרְעָא דִּי קַיֵּים יְיָ
לַאֲבָהָתְכוֹן: ב וְתִדְכַּר יָת כָּל אָרְחָא דִּי דַבְּרָךְ
יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ דְּנַן אַרְבְּעִין שְׁנִין בְּמַדְבְּרָא בְּדִיל
לְעַנָּיוּתָךְ לְנַסָּיוּתָךְ לְמִדַּע יָת דִּי בְלִבָּךְ הֲתִטַּר
פִּקּוֹדוֹהִי אִם לָא: ג וְעַנְּיָךְ וְאַכְפְּנָךְ וְאוֹכְלָךְ יָת
מַנָּא דִּי לָא יְדַעְתָּא וְלָא יְדַעוּ אֲבָהָתָךְ בְּדִיל

רש״י

חציו קמ״ץ וחציו פת״ח, כמאמר פעל על שלש אותיות: (א) כל המצוה. כפשוטו. ומדרש אגדה[1] אם התחלת במצוה גמור אותה, שאינה נקראת המצוה אלא על שם הגומרה, שנאמר ואת עצמות יוסף אשר העלו בני ישראל ממצרים קברו בשכם[2], והלא משה לבדו נתעסק בהם להעלותם, אלא לפי שלא הספיק לגומרה וגמרוה ישראל, נקראת על שמם: (ב) התשמור מצותיו. שלא תנסהו ולא תהרהר אחריו[3]:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What is meant by "all the commandment(s)" ? (v. 1)**

Rashi: The term "all the commandment(s)" is to be taken literally.

[Another interpretation:] According to the *Midrash Agadah* [the verse is teaching]: If you have started a *mitzvah*, finish it, because only the one who completes it is credited with [the *mitzvah*]. As the verse states, *"And they buried the bones of Yosef, which the Jewish people had brought up from Egypt, in Shechem"* (Joshua 24:32). Was it not the case that Moshe *alone* took care of this [*mitzvah* of taking the bones, and not the Jewish people]?

However, since he did not complete it, it is accredited to the Jewish people, who did complete it.

Bartenura: *Rashi* was troubled why the Torah states כָּל הַמִּצְוָה (literally: "all the commandment," in the *singular*), rather than כָּל הַמִּצְוֹת, ("all the commandments" in the plural).

Rashi answers that the verse can be interpreted literally—that the Torah uses the singular when it really means the plural—but since this is somewhat difficult to accept, *Rashi* adds an explanation from the *Midrash Agadah*. This explains how the term "all the commandment" can be taken literally, [i.e. one must fulfill a *mitzvah* in its entirety to receive credit for it.]

Chizkuni: The term כָּל הַמִּצְוָה (literally: "all the commandment") is written in the singular because it refers to the previously mentioned command (7:25) not to covet idols.

TORAS MENACHEM

To illustrate point 'b':

Two people buy the same kind of *esrog*, pay the same amount of money, and make the same blessing. But one of them could less afford to pay the price. This person is performing the *mitzvah* at greater sacrifice. He is deserving of greater reward.

Or take the case of a heavy smoker who stops smoking before *Shabbos* and abstains from smoking throughout *Shabbos*. He is deserving of a greater reward than one who is less addicted to smoking.

Or the case of a "self-made" man, who never had occasion to take orders from *anybody*, and grew up with the idea of exceptional self-reliance. When such a person puts his own strong will aside and accepts the guidance and leadership of a spiritual leader in Israel, he is deserving of a greater reward than the person who has been brought up since childhood in the spirit of self-abrogation and submission to the wishes and guidance of the Rabbi.

Likewise, keeping even the "minor" precepts is in a way, a greater test of our devotion to the Torah, and therefore brings a greater reward.

(Based on a letter written by the Rebbe, dated August 26, 1948)

"All The Commandment(s)" (v. 1)

Rashi's comments to verse 1 prompt the following questions:

a.) What was troubling *Rashi*? **Bartenura** writes that *Rashi* was troubled as to why the Torah used the expression כָּל הַמִּצְוָה ("all the commandment") in the singular, rather than the more appropriate כָּל הַמִּצְוֹת ("all the commandments") in the plural.

However, it is difficult to accept that this is what prompted *Rashi*'s comment here, for in previous cases where the Torah used the expression כָּל הַמִּצְוָה (in the singular), such as 5:28 and 6:25 above, *Rashi* did not comment on the fact. So apparently, the use of the singular in such instances did not trouble *Rashi*.

1 תנחומא עקב ו 2 יהושע כד, לב 3 ראה שיחת ש״פ עקב תשד״מ

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Eradication of Idolatry

25 *You should burn the statues of their gods in fire.*

- *Do not covet the silver or gold that is on them and take it for yourself, so that you are not tempted (to idolatry) by it, for it is an abomination to God, your God.*
- 26 *Do not bring any abominable (idol) into your house, for then you will become liable to destruction, like it.*

You should utterly detest it, and utterly abhor it, for it is something to be destroyed.

Remembering The Forty Years in the Desert

8 *You should safeguard the observance of all the commandment(s) that I am commanding you today, so that you will live, multiply, and come to possess the Land that God swore to your forefathers.* 2 *You should remember the entire path along which God, your God, led you these forty years in the desert, in order to afflict you. It was to test you, to find out what is in your heart: Would you keep His commandments (without questioning Him) or not?* 3 *He afflicted you and let you go*

TORAS MENACHEM

b.) Why did *Rashi* bring two interpretations?

c.) Why did *Rashi* reject the interpretation of **Chizkuni** that our verse refers specifically to the preceding command, not to covet the gold and silver of idols? This would properly explain why the Torah used the singular ("all the commandment"), for we would in fact be speaking of one single precept.

The Explanation

At the time when Moshe said this *Parsha* to the Jewish people, as they were about to enter the Land of Israel, the prohibition against coveting idols was not yet practically relevant. For it is only *after "He will deliver their kings into your hand"* (7:24), that it would become possible to *"covet the silver or gold that is on them and take it for yourself"* (7:25).

On the other hand, our verse clearly refers to *mitzvos* that could be performed *before* the entry into the Land of Israel: "You should safeguard the observance of all the commandment(s) that I am commanding you today, so that you will live, multiply, *and come to possess the Land that God swore to your forefathers.*"

Therefore, *Rashi* rejected the interpretation of *Chizkuni*, that our verse refers to not coveting the idols of the non-Jewish nations (mentioned in 7:25 above), since, at the literal level, our verse must be speaking of a *mitzvah* (or *mitzvos*) that was (or were) possible for the Jewish people to observe while they were still in the desert, *before* entering the Land.

Thus, *Rashi* was faced with a problem: It was only possible to observe all the 613 *mitzvos* of the Torah after the Jewish people had entered the Land, since many of the commandments depend on being in the Holy Land. So why does the Torah stress here, "You should safeguard the observance of *all* the commandment(s) that I am commanding you today, so that you will live, multiply, *and come to possess the Land*"? How could the Jewish people be told to keep *all* the *mitzvos in order* that they should enter the Land, when they could not possibly keep *all* the *mitzvos* until *after* they had already conquered it?

In answer to this question, *Rashi* brings *two* solutions:

"The term 'all the commandment(s)' is to be taken literally," i.e. notwithstanding the above problem, the verse could still be understood literally. Moshe was telling the people that they should safeguard "all the commandments" that they were in a position to observe *at that time*, and this would guarantee them a successful conquest of the Land.

However, since this interpretation is clearly not ideal (as the verse seems to suggest that they should observe all the commandments literally), *Rashi* cited a second interpretation:

"If you have started a mitzvah, finish it, because only the one who completes it is credited with [the mitzvah]."

In other words, the Torah's use of the somewhat unusual term here, כָּל הַמִּצְוָה, is suggestive of the *Midrashic* teaching that the one who completes a *mitzvah* is credited with having performed the whole *mitzvah* (for כָּל הַמִּצְוָה could be translated "the whole *mitzvah*").

Thus, Moshe was telling the Jewish people that even though *mitzvos* had been performed over the last forty years, there was a special significance to the *mitzvos* that the Jewish people were performing at that precise point. For these last few deeds would complete the entire body of commandments which the Jewish people had been performing in the desert, and in the merit of this "completion," they would *"live, multiply, and come to possess the Land that God swore to your forefathers."*

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 94*ff.*)

The Last Word

The lesson that one who completes a *mitzvah* is credited with it (see *Rashi*), is particularly apt for our generation. For according to all the signs which were given by our Sages, we are presently in the last generation of exile, which will become the first generation of redemption. Thus, it is greatly encouraging to know that, despite the fact that the Torah study and observance of *mitzvos* in previous generations greatly surpassed that of our more humble efforts, nevertheless, *one who completes a mitzvah is credited with it.* Mashiach will come in the merit of *our* mitzvos, which are performed in the last moments of exile.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, pp. 104-5)

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לא־ידעת ולא ידעון אבתיך למען הודיעך כי לא על־הלחם
לבדו יחיה האדם כי על־כל־מוצא פי־יהוה יחיה האדם:
ד שמלתך לא בלתה מעליך ורגלך לא בצקה זה ארבעים
שנה: ה וידעת עם־לבבך כי כאשר ייסר איש את־בנו יהוה
אלהיך מיסרך: ו ושמרת את־מצות יהוה אלהיך ללכת
בדרכיו וליראה אתו: ז כי יהוה אלהיך מביאך אל־ארץ
טובה ארץ נחלי מים עינת ותהמת יצאים בבקעה ובהר:
ח ארץ חטה ושערה וגפן ותאנה ורמון ארץ־זית שמן ודבש:
ט ארץ אשר לא במסכנת תאכל־בה לחם לא־תחסר כל בה
ארץ אשר אבניה ברזל ומהרריה תחצב נחשת: י ואכלת
ושבעת וברכת את־יהוה אלהיך על־הארץ הטבה אשר
נתן־לך: [שני] יא השמר לך פן־תשכח את־יהוה אלהיך
לבלתי שמר מצותיו ומשפטיו וחקתיו אשר אנכי מצוך
היום: יב פן־תאכל ושבעת ובתים טבים תבנה וישבת:
יג ובקרך וצאנך ירבין וכסף וזהב ירבה־לך וכל אשר־לך
ירבה: יד ורם לבבך ושכחת את־יהוה אלהיך המוציאך
מארץ מצרים מבית עבדים: טו המוליכך במדבר | הגדל
והנורא נחש | שרף ועקרב וצמאון אשר אין־מים המוציא
לך מים מצור החלמיש: טז המאכלך מן במדבר אשר
לא־ידעון אבתיך למען ענתך ולמען נסתך להיטבך

לאורעיתך ארי לא על לחמא בלחודוהי
מתקים אנשא ארי על כל אפקות מימרא דיי
יתקים אנשא: ד כסותך לא בליאת מנך
ומסנך לא יחפו דנן ארבעין שנין: ה ותדע
עם לבך ארי כמא די מאלף גברא ית ברה
יי אלהך מאלף לך: ו ותטר ית פקודיא דיי
אלהך למהך בארחן דתקנן קדמוהי ולמדחל
יתה: ז ארי יי אלהך מעלך לארעא טבתא
ארעא נגדא נחלין דמיין מבועי עינן
ותהומין נפקין בבקען ובטורין: ח ארעא חטין
וסערין וגופנין ותאנין ורמונין ארעא דזיתהא
עבדין משחא והיא עבדא דבש: ט ארעא די
לא בעצורין תיכול בה לחמא לא תחסר
כל מדעם בה ארעא די אבנהא פרזלא
ומטורהא תפסול נחשא: י ותיכול ותשבע
ותברך ית יי אלהך על ארעא טבתא דיהב
לך: יא אסתמר לך דלמא תתנשי ית דחלתא
דיי אלהך בדיל דלא למטר פקודוהי ודינוהי
וקימוהי די אנא מפקדך יומא דין: יב דלמא
תיכול ותשבע ובתין שפירין תבני ותיתב:
יג ותורך ועאנך יסגון וכספא ודהבא יסגא לך
וכל די לך יסגא: יד וירים לבך ותנשי ית
דחלתא דיי אלהך די אפקך מארעא דמצרים
מבית עבדותא: טו דדברך במדברא רבא
ודחילא אתר חיון קלן ועקרבין ובית צחונא
אתר די לית מיא דאפק לך מיא מטנרא
תקיפא: טז דאוכלך מנא במדברא די
לא ידעון אבהתך בדיל לענויתך ובדיל

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

"That Great and Awesome Desert..." (v. 15)

Wandering through the desert before entering the Land of Israel—*"that great and awesome desert, where there were snakes, serpents and scorpions, and thirst but no water"*—is comparable to the current exile, which precedes the final redemption. This spiritual "desert" has the following properties:

"Great"—A person's spiritual decline begins when he thinks that the "desert" is "great," i.e. that the secular world around him is large and powerful.

"Awesome desert"—This leads him to think that the secular world is so overpowering that it leaves no room for Jewish values.

"Where there were snakes"—The hot venom of the snake represents heat and enthusiasm in worldly matters.

"Serpents"—This leads to a state where a person's enthusiasm for Torah and *mitzvos* is totally "burned" away, alluded to by the Hebrew term for serpent (שָׂרָף) which literally means "burnt."

"Scorpions"—The cold poison of the scorpion alludes to a subsequent state of total coldness and apathy in spiritual matters.

"And thirst but no water"—The person is ultimately so far removed that even when his soul thirsts for Judaism, he does not realize what he needs.

To eliminate all these symptoms, we need to address the initial cause: A Jew should be proud of the greatness of the Torah, and not the apparent "greatness" of his non-Jewish, secular surroundings.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 2, p. 371ff.)

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hungry. He fed you with manna, which you had never experienced, nor had your fathers experienced, to make you realize that man does not live by bread alone, but rather, that man lives from all the utterances of God's mouth. [4] *For these (past) forty years, your clothing (was kept miraculously and) did not become worn (with age) upon you, (and you always had shoes, so) your feet did not become swollen.*

[5] *You should know in your heart that just as a person reprimands his son, so too God, your God, will reprimand you.* [6] *You should keep the commandments of God your God, to go in His ways, and to fear Him.* [7] *For God your God is bringing you to a good land, a land with streams of water, of springs and underground water that flows into valleys and mountains,* [8] *a land of wheat, barley, vines, figs and pomegranates, a land of oil-(producing) olives and honey,* [9] *a land in which you will eat bread without poverty (and) you will lack nothing in it, a land whose stones are (rich in) iron, and from whose mountains you will quarry copper.*

- [10] *You will eat and be satisfied. You must (then) bless God, your God, for the good land He has given you.*

NOT TO TAKE THE CREDIT FOR PROSPERITY

8:11 SECOND READING

Be careful not to forget God, your God, failing to keep His commandments, rational commands and suprarational commands, which I am commanding you today.* [12] *You might then eat and be satisfied, build good houses and live in them,* [13] *as your herds and your flocks will increase, your silver and gold accumulate, and everything that you have prospers.* [14] *As your heart becomes arrogant you (might) forget God, your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage,* [15] *Who led you through that great and awesome desert, where there were snakes, serpents and scorpions, and thirst but no water; Who brought you water out of solid rock;* [16] *Who fed you with manna in the desert, which your forefathers never experienced, in order to afflict you and test you—though it*

רש"י

(ד) שמלתך לא בלתה. ענני כבוד היו שפים בכסותם ומגהצים אותם כמין כלים מגוהצים, ואף קטניהם כמו שהיו גדלים היה גדל לבושן עמהם, כלבוש הזה של חומט שגדל עמו[1]: לא בצקה. לא נפחה כבצק, כדרך הולכי יחף שרגליהם נפוחות: (ח) זית שמן. זיתים העושים שמן:

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

"HE FED YOU WITH MANNA" (v. 3)

The *manna* failed to provide satisfaction, and it actually left people hungry. *Chasidic* thought explains that this was because, being a food permeated with spirituality, *manna* gave people a taste of the infinite. When consuming a finite food, such as "bread from the earth," a person will eventually become satisfied, since it is impossible to develop an infinite appetite for a limited taste. *Manna*, on the other hand, cultivated a person's inner appetite for spirituality which can never be satisfied.

Eating the *manna* was thus an appropriate preparation for entering the Land, where the Jewish people would be challenged by various constraints—be they the trials of poverty, or (more preferably) the trials of wealth. Because our physical desires limit us; our spiritual desires—like those developed by the *manna*—liberate us.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 4, p. 1098ff.)

"YOU WILL EAT AND... BLESS GOD" (v. 10)

Why was the text of *Grace After Meals*, which was composed by Moshe, incorporated into the text that we use today (see *Brachos* 48b), when Moshe was thanking God for *manna*—bread from heaven—whereas we thank God for "bread from the earth"?

In truth however, Moshe's words are applicable now as well, because it is not the physical efforts of working the land *alone* that causes the land to yield produce. Rather, man's efforts merely create a "vehicle" into which God places His blessings, and it is the Divine blessing which provides us with sustenance. Therefore, even the food which grows from the ground is in fact "food from heaven," so it is indeed appropriate—even nowadays—to thank God for our nourishment with a text which was composed in praise of "bread from heaven."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 16, pp. 178-9)

* According to *Smag*, this is one of the 613 *mitzvos*. See *Hisvaduyos* 5747, vol. 4, p. 204, note 85.

1 [illegible]

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באחריתך: יז ואמרת בלבבך כחי ועצם ידי עשה לי את־
החיל הזה: יח וזכרת את־יהוה אלהיך כי הוא הנתן לך כח
לעשות חיל למען הקים את־בריתו אשר־נשבע לאבתיך
כיום הזה: פ יט והיה אם־שכח תשכח את־יהוה אלהיך
והלכת אחרי אלהים אחרים ועבדתם והשתחוית להם
העדתי בכם היום כי אבד תאבדון: כ כגוים אשר יהוה
מאביד מפניכם כן תאבדון עקב לא תשמעון בקול יהוה
אלהיכם: פ ט א שמע ישראל אתה עבר היום את־הירדן
לבא לרשת גוים גדלים ועצמים ממך ערים גדלת ובצרת
בשמים: ב עם־גדול ורם בני ענקים אשר אתה ידעת ואתה
שמעת מי יתיצב לפני בני ענק: ג וידעת היום כי יהוה
אלהיך הוא־העבר לפניך אש אכלה הוא ישמידם והוא
יכניעם לפניך והורשתם והאבדתם מהר כאשר דבר יהוה
לך: [שלישי] ד אל־תאמר בלבבך בהדף יהוה אלהיך אתם ׀
מלפניך לאמר בצדקתי הביאני יהוה לרשת את־הארץ
הזאת וברשעת הגוים האלה יהוה מורישם מפניך: ה לא
בצדקתך ובישר לבבך אתה בא לרשת את־ארצם כי
ברשעת ׀ הגוים האלה יהוה אלהיך מורישם מפניך ולמען
הקים את־הדבר אשר נשבע יהוה לאבתיך לאברהם ליצחק
וליעקב: ו וידעת כי לא בצדקתך יהוה אלהיך נתן לך
את־הארץ הטובה הזאת לרשתה כי עם־קשה־ערף אתה:
ז זכר אל־תשכח את אשר־הקצפת את־יהוה אלהיך
במדבר למן־היום אשר־יצאת ׀ מארץ מצרים עד־באכם
עד־המקום הזה ממרים הייתם עם־יהוה: ח ובחרב הקצפתם
את־יהוה ויתאנף יהוה בכם להשמיד אתכם: ט בעלתי
ההרה לקחת לוחת האבנים לוחת הברית אשר־כרת יהוה
עמכם ואשב בהר ארבעים יום וארבעים לילה לחם לא

לנסיותך לאוטבא לך בסופך: יז ותימר בלבך
חילי ותקוף ידי קנו לי ית נכסיא האלין:
יח ותדכר ית יי אלהך ארי הוא יהב לך
עצה למקני נכסין בדיל לקימא ית קימה די
קיים לאבהתך כיומא הדין: יט ויהי אם
מנשאה תנשי ית דחלתא דיי אלהך ותהך
בתר טעות עממיא ותפלחנון ותסגוד להון
אסהדית בכון יומא דין ארי מיבד תיבדון:
כ כעממיא די יי מוביד מקדמיכון כן תיבדון
חלף דלא קבלתון במימרא דיי אלהכון:
א שמע ישראל את עבר יומא דין ית ירדנא
למעל למירת עממין רברבין ותקיפין מנך
קרוין רברבן וכריכן עד צית שמיא: ב עם
רב ותקיף בני גבריא די את ידעת ואת
שמעת מן יכול למיקם קדם בני גבריא:
ג ותדע יומא דין ארי יי אלהך הוא יעבר
קדמך מימרה אשא אכלא הוא ישיצנון והוא
יתרכנון (יתברנון) קדמך ותתרכנון ותובדנון
בפריע כמא די מליל יי לך: ד לא תימר בלבך
בדיתבר יי אלהך יתהון מקדמך למימר
בזכותי אעלני יי למירת ית ארעא הדא
ובחובי עממיא האלין יי מתרך להון מקדמך:
ה לא בזכותך ובקשיטות לבך את עליל
למירת ית ארעהון ארי בחובי עממיא האלין
יי אלהך מתרכהון מקדמך ובדיל לאקמא ית
פתגמא די קיים יי לאבהתך לאברהם ליצחק
וליעקב: ו ותדע ארי לא בזכותך יי אלהך
יהב לך ית ארעא טבתא הדא למירתה ארי
עם קשי קדל את: ז הוי דכיר לא תנשי ית
די ארגזתא קדם יי אלהך במדברא
למן יומא די נפקתא מארעא דמצרים עד
מיתיכון עד אתרא הדין מסרבין הויתון קדם
יי: ח ובחורב ארגזתון קדם יי והוה רגז מן
קדם יי בכון לשיצאה יתכון: ט במסקי לטורא
למסב לוחי אבניא לוחי קימא די גזר יי
עמכון ויתבית בטורא ארבעין יממין וארבעין
לילון לחמא לא אכלית ומיא לא אשתיתי:

רש"י

(א) גדולים ועצומים ממך. אתה עצום, והם עצומים ממך: (ד) אל תאמר בלבבך. צדקתי ורשעת הגוים גרמו: (ה) לא בצדקתך וגו' אתה בא לרשת וגו' כי ברשעת הגוים. הרי כי משמש בלשון אלא: (ט) ואשב בהר. אין ישיבה אלא לשון עכבה[1]: (יא) לחת. לחת כתיב, ששתיהם שוות:

1 מגילה כא.

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was for your benefit in the end— [17] *and you will say in your heart, "My own ability and the strength of my own hand has accumulated this wealth for me!"* [18] *Then you must remember God, your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to make wealth, in order to establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, to this day.*

[19] *What will happen is, if you forget God, your God and follow other gods, and worship them, and prostrate yourself before them, I testify to you today, that you will be destroyed again and again.* [20] *You will be destroyed just like the nations that God (is now going to) destroy before you, since you did not listen to the calling of God, your God.*

Not to Be Self-Righteous

9 *Hear, O Israel! Today, you are about to cross the Jordan to come and take control of nations that are (even) greater and stronger than you, great cities fortified up to the skies,* [2] *a great and tall people, the children of giants, whom you know and (about whom) you have heard (it said), "Who can stand against the children of a giant?"* [3] *You should know today, that God, your God Who is passing (into the Land) before you is a consuming fire. He will destroy them, and He will subjugate them before you. You will evict them and destroy them quickly, just as God said to you.*

Third Reading

[4] *When God, your God, has driven them from before you, do not say in your heart, "God has brought me to possess this land because of my righteousness," and God (also) drove them out from before you because of the wickedness of these nations.* [5] *It is not because of your righteousness or the integrity of your heart that you are coming to possess their land, but rather, it is because of the wickedness of these nations (alone) that God, your God is driving them out from before you. (It is also) in order to keep the word which God swore to your fathers, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov.* [6] *You must realize that God, your God, is not giving you this land as a possession because of your righteousness, for you are a stiff-necked people.*

Remembering The Golden Calf

9:7 *Remember—do not forget—how you angered God, your God, in the desert. From the day that you went out of the land of Egypt, until you came to this place, you have been rebels against God.* [8] *At Chorav, you angered God, and God was furious with you and wanted to destroy you:*

[9] *When* I went up the mountain to receive the stone Tablets—the Tablets of the testimony which God made with you—I was delayed on the mountain for forty days and forty nights. I did not eat bread or*

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

"My Own Ability...Has Accumulated this Wealth For Me!" (8:17)

Society teaches our children that: *"My own ability and the strength of my own hand has accumulated this wealth for me!"* A child is led to believe that, being a clever boy, he should use his brain to obtain whatever he desires. If he desires his friend's sandwich, he will steal it. And, being clever, he is unafraid of the authorities, for he will devise a way of concealing his theft. No one can tell him what to do!

One effective way to correct the present situation is to institute a "moment of silence" in every public school, devoted to thinking about God, at the beginning of the school day, before studies begin. This will help a student to utilize his studies for worthy purposes, for justice and righteousness. He will then act both on his own behalf and for the public good, and he will come to understand that the public benefit outweighs his personal benefit.

(Based on *Sichas* 12 Tamuz 5744)

* Concerning the following see *Shemos* 31:18ff.

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אָכַלְתִּי וּמַיִם לֹא שָׁתִיתִי׃ י וַיִּתֵּן יְהֹוָה אֵלַי אֶת־שְׁנֵי לוּחֹת
הָאֲבָנִים כְּתֻבִים בְּאֶצְבַּע אֱלֹהִים וַעֲלֵיהֶם כְּכָל־הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר
דִּבֶּר יְהֹוָה עִמָּכֶם בָּהָר מִתּוֹךְ הָאֵשׁ בְּיוֹם הַקָּהָל׃ יא וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ
אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְאַרְבָּעִים לָיְלָה נָתַן יְהֹוָה אֵלַי אֶת־שְׁנֵי לֻחֹת
הָאֲבָנִים לֻחוֹת הַבְּרִית׃ יב וַיֹּאמֶר יְהֹוָה אֵלַי קוּם רֵד מַהֵר מִזֶּה
כִּי שִׁחֵת עַמְּךָ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתָ מִמִּצְרָיִם סָרוּ מַהֵר מִן־הַדֶּרֶךְ
אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִם עָשׂוּ לָהֶם מַסֵּכָה׃ יג וַיֹּאמֶר יְהֹוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר
רָאִיתִי אֶת־הָעָם הַזֶּה וְהִנֵּה עַם־קְשֵׁה־עֹרֶף הוּא׃ יד הֶרֶף
מִמֶּנִּי וְאַשְׁמִידֵם וְאֶמְחֶה אֶת־שְׁמָם מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמָיִם וְאֶעֱשֶׂה
אוֹתְךָ לְגוֹי־עָצוּם וָרָב מִמֶּנּוּ׃ טו וָאֵפֶן וָאֵרֵד מִן־הָהָר וְהָהָר
בֹּעֵר בָּאֵשׁ וּשְׁנֵי לוּחֹת הַבְּרִית עַל שְׁתֵּי יָדָי׃ טז וָאֵרֶא וְהִנֵּה
חֲטָאתֶם לַיהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם עֲשִׂיתֶם לָכֶם עֵגֶל מַסֵּכָה סַרְתֶּם
מַהֵר מִן־הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה יְהֹוָה אֶתְכֶם׃ יז וָאֶתְפֹּשׂ בִּשְׁנֵי
הַלֻּחֹת וָאַשְׁלִכֵם מֵעַל שְׁתֵּי יָדָי וָאֲשַׁבְּרֵם לְעֵינֵיכֶם׃ יח וָאֶתְנַפַּל
לִפְנֵי יְהֹוָה כָּרִאשֹׁנָה אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְאַרְבָּעִים לַיְלָה לֶחֶם לֹא
אָכַלְתִּי וּמַיִם לֹא שָׁתִיתִי עַל כָּל־חַטַּאתְכֶם אֲשֶׁר חֲטָאתֶם
לַעֲשׂוֹת הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהֹוָה לְהַכְעִיסוֹ׃ יט כִּי יָגֹרְתִּי מִפְּנֵי הָאַף
וְהַחֵמָה אֲשֶׁר קָצַף יְהֹוָה עֲלֵיכֶם לְהַשְׁמִיד אֶתְכֶם וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהֹוָה

י ויהב יי לי ית תרין לוחי אבניא כתיבין
באצבעא דיי ועליהון ככל פתגמיא די מליל
יי עמכון בטורא מגו אשתא ביומא דקהלא:
יא והוה מסוף ארבעין יממין וארבעין לילון
יהב יי לי ית תרין לוחי אבניא לוחי קימא:
יב ואמר יי לי קום חות בפריע מכא ארי
חביל עמך די אפקתא ממצרים סטו בפריע
מן ארחא די פקדתנון עבדו להון מתכא:
יג ואמר יי לי למימר גלי קדמי ית עמא הדין
והא עם קשי קדל הוא: יד אנח בעותך
מקדמי ואשיצנון ואמחי ית שמהון מתחות
שמיא ואעבד יתך לעם תקיף וסגי מנהון:
טו ואתפניתי ונחתית מן טורא וטורא בער
באשתא ותרין לוחי קימא על תרתין ידי:
טז וחזיתי והא חבתון קדם יי אלהכון
עבדתון לכון עגל מתכא סטיתון בפריע מן
ארחא די פקיד יי יתכון: יז ואחדית בתרין
לוחיא ורמיתנון מעל תרתין ידי ותברתנון
לעיניכון: יח ואשתטחית קדם יי כקדמיתא
ארבעין יממין וארבעין לילון לחמא לא
אכלית ומיא לא אשתיתי על כל חוביכון די
חבתון למעבד דביש קדם יי לארגזא
קדמוהי: יט ארי דחלית מקדם רגזא וחימתא
די רגז יי עליכון לשיצאה יתכון וקביל יי

רש"י

(יח) ואתנפל לפני ה' כראשונה ארבעים יום. שנאמר[1] ועתה אעלה אל ה' אולי אכפרה. באותה עלייה נתעכבתי ארבעים יום, נמצאו כלים בכ"ט באב, שהוא עלה בשמונה עשר בתמוז בו ביום נתרצה הקדוש ברוך הוא לישראל ואמר לו למשה פסל לך שני לוחות[2], עשה עוד ארבעים יום, נמצאו כלים ביום הכפורים. בו ביום נתרצה הקב"ה לישראל בשמחה ואמר לו למשה סלחתי כדברך, לכך הוקבע למחילה ולסליחה. ומנין שנתרצה ברצון שלם, שנאמר בארבעים של לוחות אחרונות, ואנכי עמדתי בהר כימים הראשונים[3], מה הראשונים ברצון אף האחרונים ברצון, אמור מעתה אמצעיים

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

• Why did Moshe "take hold" of the Tablets if he was already holding them? (v. 17)

Ohr HaChayim: Until Moshe saw that the Jewish people had sinned, the Tablets hovered in the air above his hands ("*upon my two hands*"—v. 15). When he witnessed their sin, the Tablets lost their holiness, and he had to take hold of them and support them.

Midrash: The Tablets were a total of six *tefachim* (handbreadths) long. Moshe was holding two *tefachim* and God was holding two *tefachim* at the other end, leaving two *tefachim* unsupported. Moshe strengthened his grip, grabbed the Tablets and broke them....

Thus God said to Moshe, "It was *you* who broke them" (*Tanchuma* 11).

• Why did Moshe break the Tablets? (v. 17)

Midrash: What can this be compared to? To a nobleman who wished to marry a woman through an agent. The agent went and found that the woman had been promiscuous with another man. What did the agent—who was totally innocent—do? He took the marriage document that was given to him by the nobleman, and tore it up. He said, "It is better that this woman be judged as a single woman and not as a married woman!" And this is precisely what Moshe did. When he saw what the Jewish people had done, he took the Tablets and broke them, [so he could argue] that if the Jewish people had seen the punishment for idol worship [written there], they would not have sinned (*Shemos Rabah* 43:1).

1 שמות לב, ל. 2 שם לד, א. 3 דברים י, י.

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drink water. 10 *God gave me two stone Tablets, written with the finger of God. On them were all the words*
that God said to you on the mountain, from the fire, on the Day of Assembly.

11 *What happened was, at the end of the forty days and forty nights, when God gave me the two stone*
Tablets, the Tablets of the testimony, 12 *God said to me, "Get moving, and go down quickly from here,*
for your people, whom you have brought out of Egypt, have become corrupt. They have rapidly
abandoned the way which I commanded them. They have made themselves a molten statue!"

13 *God then spoke to me, saying, "I have observed this people and—look!—they are a stiff-necked*
people (who do not like being rebuked). 14 *Leave Me, and I will destroy them. I will obliterate their name*
from beneath the skies, and I will make you into a mightier and more numerous nation than them."

15 *I turned and came down from the mountain. The mountain was burning with fire and the two*
Tablets of the testimony were upon my two hands. 16 *Then I saw—look!—you had sinned against God,*
your God, you had made yourselves a molten calf. You had rapidly abandoned the way which God had
commanded you. 17 *So, I took hold of the two Tablets, cast them out of my two hands, and shattered*
them before your eyes.

18 *I prayed to God about all your sins that you had committed—doing evil in the eyes of God to anger*
Him—for forty days and forty nights (on the mountain), as before. I did not eat bread or drink water.
19 *For I was frightened of the anger and fury with which God had shown His discontent with you, wanting*
to destroy you, but God listened to me also on that occasion.

TORAS MENACHEM

To Whom Did the Tablets Belong? (v. 17)

In addition to the solutions of ***Ohr haChayim*** and the ***Midrash***, the reason why Moshe needed to "take hold" of the Tablets can be understood by first addressing the following question:

Presumably, the Tablets were public property, since they were given to Moshe in order to be placed into the Ark (which belonged to the public), together with all the other parts of the Tabernacle (see *Rosh Hashanah* 7a; *Yoma* 35b). This begs the question: How could Moshe break the Tablets if they did not belong to him. Surely, Moshe was vandalizing public property!

Did the Tablets Have any Value?

At first glance, we might argue that the Tablets were in fact worthless, since in the desert, stone has no market value, as houses are not built there. Therefore, Moshe was not guilty of causing any damage, since the Tablets were of no real value.

However this solution is clearly unacceptable, because:

a.) Even if they are not used for building, stones do have *some* value, e.g. they can be used as simple furniture (cf. *Shemos* 17:12).

b.) According to our Sages, the first Tablets were made of sapphire, which is tremendously valuable (*Tanchuma, Ki Sisa* 26).

c.) In any case, since the first Tablets were formed by God Himself, they obviously had immense value.

"Damage" for the Public Good

Another possible approach to explain why Moshe was not guilty of damaging public property would be to argue that breaking the Tablets was actually for the public *benefit*. For, as the ***Midrash*** explains, Moshe broke the Tablets so as to reduce the punishment for which the Jewish people would be liable, due to worshiping the calf. Thus, it is only logical that the public would wish its own property to be damaged, for the sake of a public benefit.

Alternatively, we might argue that the public did not enjoy normal rights of ownership over the Tablets, since no person was allowed to use them or benefit from them in any way. Thus, in breaking the Tablets Moshe was not denying the public any *privileges* of ownership.

However, both of the above arguments fail to take into account that the breaking of the Tablets ultimately appears to have been an act of *theft*. For even if we accept the argument that Moshe did not *damage* public property because he acted for the sake of the public good, or that he did not deny the public any privileges of ownership, we are nevertheless left with the problem that the unauthorized use (or abuse) of another's property is theft. And, in the case of theft, the law is that one may not steal another person's object, *even if it is for the owner's benefit* (e.g. one intends to replace it with a superior item—See *Shulchan Aruch, Choshen Mishpat* 359:2); and likewise, one may not steal another's property even if the owner does not enjoy any privileges of ownership (See *Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim, Kuntres Acharon* 435:2).*

Furthermore, the argument that the Jewish people had no privileges of ownership of the Tablets is simply not true, since the Tablets were given "to instruct" the Jewish people (*Shemos* 24:12), and Divine instruction is surely a tremendous privilege indeed.

Joint Ownership of the Tablets?

Clearly, the Tablets were not public property, otherwise Moshe would have had no right to break them.

Perhaps then it could be argued that they were in fact *private* property in which each member of the Jewish people had their own share. This notion would appear to be supported by the teaching that when saying the Ten Commandments, God addressed the Jewish people in the singular, rather than the plural, since He was speaking to every single Jew directly and personally (*Pesikta deRab Kahana, end of Parsha hachodesh hashlishi; Tanchuma (Buber) Yisro par.* 17). Thus, the Tablets themselves, which contained the Ten Commandments, likewise belonged to each and every Jew individually.

* The distinction between *damage* and *theft* is that damage means reducing the value of another person's property, whereas *theft* is unlawful possession or use. Thus, one could be exempt from charges of *damage* if he could argue that he acted in the owner's best interests, whereas the mere use of another's property represents a transgression in itself, regardless of whether the owner benefits or not.

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אלי גם בפעם ההוא: כ ובאהרן התאנף יהוה מאד להשמידו
ואתפלל גם־בעד אהרן בעת ההוא: כא ואת־חטאתכם
אשר־עשיתם את־העגל לקחתי ואשרף אתו | באש ואכת
אתו טחון היטב עד אשר־דק לעפר ואשלך את־עפרו אל־
הנחל הירד מן־ההר: כב ובתבערה ובמסה ובקברת התאוה
מקצפים הייתם את־יהוה: כג ובשלח יהוה אתכם מקדש
ברנע לאמר עלו ורשו את־הארץ אשר נתתי לכם ותמרו
את־פי יהוה אלהיכם ולא האמנתם לו ולא שמעתם בקלו:
כד ממרים הייתם עם־יהוה מיום דעתי אתכם: כה ואתנפל
לפני יהוה את ארבעים היום ואת־ארבעים הלילה אשר
התנפלתי כי־אמר יהוה להשמיד אתכם: כו ואתפלל אל־
יהוה ואמר אדני יהוה* אל־תשחת עמך ונחלתך אשר פדית
בגדלך אשר־הוצאת ממצרים ביד חזקה: כז זכר לעבדיך
לאברהם ליצחק וליעקב אל־תפן אל־קשי העם הזה
ואל־רשעו ואל־חטאתו: כח פן־יאמרו הארץ אשר הוצאתנו
משם מבלי יכלת יהוה להביאם אל־הארץ אשר־דבר להם
ומשנאתו אותם הוציאם להמתם במדבר: כט והם עמך
ונחלתך אשר הוצאת בכחך הגדל ובזרעך הנטויה: פ [רביעי]
י א בעת ההוא אמר יהוה אלי פסל־לך שני־לוחת אבנים
כראשנים ועלה אלי ההרה ועשית לך ארון עץ: ב ואכתב
על־הלחת את־הדברים אשר היו על־הלחת הראשנים
אשר שברת ושמתם בארון: ג ואעש ארון עצי שטים ואפסל

*הקריאה אלהים

צלותי אף בזמנא ההיא: כ ועל אהרן הוה
רגז מן קדם יי לחדא לשציותה וצליתי אף
על אהרן בעדנא ההיא: כא וית חובתכון די
עבדתון ית עגלא נסיבית ואוקידית יתה
בנורא ושפית יתה בשופינא יאות עד די הוה
דקיק לעפרא ורמית ית עפרה לנחלא דנחית
מן טורא: כב ובדלקתא ובנסיתא ובקברי
דמשאלי מרגזין הויתון קדם יי: כג וכד שלח
יי יתכון מרקם גיאה למימר סקו ואחסינו
ית ארעא די יהבית לכון וסרבתון על גזרת
מימרא דיי אלהכון ולא הימנתון לה ולא
קבלתון למימרה: כד מסרבין הויתון קדם יי
מיומא דידעית יתכון: כה ואשתטחית קדם יי
ית ארבעין יממין וית ארבעין לילון די
אשתטחית ארי אמר יי לשיצאה יתכון:
כו וצליתי קדם יי ואמרית יי אלהים לא
תחבל עמך ואחסנתך די פרקתא בתקפך
די אפקתא ממצרים בידא תקיפא: כז אדכר
לעבדיך לאברהם ליצחק וליעקב לא תתפני
לקשיות עמא הדין ולחוביהון ולחטאיהון:
כח דלמא יימרון דירי ארעא די אפקתנא
מתמן מדלית יוכלא דיי לאעלותהון לארעא
די מליל להון ומדסני יתהון אפקינון
לקטלותהון במדברא: כט ואנון עמך
ואחסנתך די אפקתא בחילך רבא ובדרעך
מרממא: א בעדנא ההיא אמר יי לי פסל לך
תרין לוחי אבניא כקדמאי וסק לקדמי לטורא
ותעבד לך ארונא דאעא: ב ואכתוב על
לוחיא ית פתגמיא די הוו על לוחיא קדמאי
די תברתא ותשוינון בארונא: ג ועבדית
ארונא דאעי שטין ופסלית תרין לוחי אבניא

רש"י

היו בכעס[1]: (כ) ובאהרן התאנף ה'. לפי ששמע לכם: להשמידו. זה כלוי בנים. וכן הוא אומר[2] ואשמיד פריו ממעל[3]: ואתפלל גם בעד אהרן. והועילה תפלתי לכפר מחצה, ומתו שנים ונשארו השנים: (כא) טחון. לשון הווה, כמו הלוך[4] וכלוה מולאנ"ט בלע"ז: (כה) ואתנפל וגו'. אלו הן ארבעים האמורים למעלה, וכפלן כאן, לפי שכתוב כאן סדר תפלתו, שנאמר ה' אלהים אל תשחת עמך וגו': (א) בעת ההוא. לסוף ארבעים יום נתרצה לי ואמר לי פסל לך, ואחר כך ועשית ארון, ואני עשיתי ארון תחלה[5], שכשאבוא ולוחות בידי היכן אתנם. ולא זה הוא הארון שעשה בצלאל, שהרי משכן לא

TORAS MENACHEM

This opens a new argument in defense of Moshe's breaking of the Tablets. For, according to Torah law, the prohibition of theft only applies where the item stolen is worth more than a *prutah* (small coin). In our case, however, each person's individual share in the Tablets would surely have been negligible, so it could not be said that Moshe was *guilty* of theft, since in breaking the Tablets he did not misappropriate a *prutah* from *any* single person.

However, in the final analysis, this argument is untenable, because:

a.) According to the view (cited above) that the Tablets *were* made of sapphire, it is likely that there *was* at least a *prutah* of value for *every* Jewish person.

b.) In any case, the Torah forbids a person to steal *even less* than a *prutah*. It is only that the laws of *restitution* apply only if a *prutah* or more was stolen (*Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, beginning of Laws of Robbery and Theft*).

1 סדר עולם פ"י 2 עמוס ב, ט 3 [illegible] 4 בראשית יב, ט 5 תנחומא

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[20] God was very angry with Aharon (whom you misled) and wanted to destroy his (children). So I prayed for Aharon too on that occasion (but only two of his children were saved).

[21] I took your sinful object which you had made—the calf—and I burned it in fire. I crushed it, grinding it well, until it was fine dust, and I cast its dust into the brook that descends from the mountain.

— [22] (Since then) you (also) provoked God's anger at Tavairah, at Massah**, and at Kivros-Hata'avah***. [23] (Furthermore), when God sent you from Kadesh Barne'a, saying, "Go up and possess the Land I have given you," you defied the word of God, your God, and you did not believe Him, nor did you obey Him****. [24] You have been rebels against God since the day I became acquainted with you! —*

[25] So I prayed before God. I prayed for forty days and forty nights, because God said He would destroy you. [26] In my prayers to God I said, "God Almighty! Do not destroy Your people, Your inheritance which in Your greatness You have redeemed and brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand! [27] Remember Your servants, Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov! Do not react to this people's stubbornness, to their wickedness or to their sin, [28] so that the nation from which you brought us out won't say, 'Because of God's inability to bring them to the Land which He told them about, and because of His hatred toward them, He took them out to slaughter them in the desert.' [29] They are Your people and Your inheritance, which You brought out with Your great strength and with Your outstretched arm!"

The Second Tablets

10
Fourth Reading

*At that time***** (after forty days), God (forgave the Jewish people, and) said to me, "Carve for yourself two stone Tablets like the first ones, and come up to Me onto the mountain. And make for yourself a wooden ark. [2] On the Tablets I will write the words that were on the first Tablets, which you broke, and you should place them into the ark."*

[3] I made an ark of acacia wood. I carved two stone Tablets, like the first ones, and I went up the

Toras Menachem

The Explanation

It would seem therefore that the first Tablets must have been Moshe's private property, otherwise he would have had no right to break them. In fact, this appears to be stated explicitly in scripture: "When He had finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, *He gave Moshe* the two Tablets of the testimony" (*Shemos* 31:18), on which the *Talmud* comments (*Nedarim* 38a) that God gave them to Moshe "as a gift."[1]

Thus these Tablets must have been an exception to the general principle that all parts of the Tabernacle had to be public property,[2] a point stressed by the fact that the Tablets were given several months before the construction of the Tabernacle, indicating their existence as an independent entity.

Nevertheless, when Moshe received the Tablets from God as a personal gift to him, he intended to give them to the Jewish people, as an act of generosity (see *Nedarim* ibid.). But when Moshe saw the Jewish people worshiping the calf, he changed his mind and decided to break them instead. However, since Moshe had *intended* to give the Tablets to the Jewish people, he feared that his *outright* ownership of the Tablets (and the accompanying right to break them) had become somewhat confused. So, before breaking the Tablets, Moshe "took hold" of them once again, in order to establish his ownership of them unequivocally.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, p. 51*ff.*)

The Last Word

Moshe "took hold of the two Tablets" (v. 17), acquiring them as his personal property, before he cast them out of his hands and broke them. For, being a true leader and lover of Israel, Moshe wanted to take sole responsibility for the breaking of the Tablets, without incriminating the Jewish people at all.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, p. 56)

**Bamidbar* 11:1-3. ***Shemos* 17:1-7. ****Bamidbar* 11:4-34. ****See above 1:19*ff.* *****Concerning the following see *Shemos* 34:1-4.

1. The *Talmud* actually stresses that God gave Moshe the "words of Torah" as a gift. However, this included the Tablets themselves, on which the words of Torah were written, as the verse itself stresses, "*He gave Moshe the two Tablets* of testimony." This point is further stressed in a number of places in scripture. See *Shemos*, 24:12, *Devarim* 5:19, ibid. 9:9-11.

2. In the case of the second Tablets we indeed find a view that they belonged to Moshe in their entirety (*Tanchuma*, Eikev 9), though there are dissenting opinions that only the waste chippings belonged to Moshe (*Nedarim* 38a, *Tanchuma* ibid; Jerusalem Talmud, *Shekalim* 5:2; *Shemos Rabah* 46:2). The innovation here is that according to *all* opinions the first Tablets belonged to Moshe, in their entirety.

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שְׁנֵי־לֻחֹת אֲבָנִים כָּרִאשֹׁנִים וָאַעַל הָהָרָה וּשְׁנֵי הַלֻּחֹת בְּיָדִי׃
ד וַיִּכְתֹּב עַל־הַלֻּחֹת כַּמִּכְתָּב הָרִאשׁוֹן אֵת עֲשֶׂרֶת הַדְּבָרִים
אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה אֲלֵיכֶם בָּהָר מִתּוֹךְ הָאֵשׁ בְּיוֹם הַקָּהָל וַיִּתְּנֵם
יְהוָה אֵלָי׃ ה וָאֵפֶן וָאֵרֵד מִן־הָהָר וָאָשִׂם אֶת־הַלֻּחֹת בָּאָרוֹן
אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי וַיִּהְיוּ שָׁם כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוַּנִי יְהוָה׃ ו וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל נָסְעוּ
מִבְּאֵרֹת בְּנֵי־יַעֲקָן מוֹסֵרָה שָׁם מֵת אַהֲרֹן וַיִּקָּבֵר שָׁם וַיְכַהֵן
אֶלְעָזָר בְּנוֹ תַּחְתָּיו׃ ז מִשָּׁם נָסְעוּ הַגֻּדְגֹּדָה וּמִן־הַגֻּדְגֹּדָה
יָטְבָתָה אֶרֶץ נַחֲלֵי מָיִם׃ ח בָּעֵת הַהִוא הִבְדִּיל יְהוָה אֶת־שֵׁבֶט

כקדמאי וסליקית לטורא ותרין לוחיא בידי׃
ד וכתב על לוחיא ככתבא קדמאה ית
עשרא פתגמיא די מליל יי עמכון בטורא מגו
אשתא ביומא דקהלא ויהבנון יי לי׃
ה ואתפניתי ונחתית מן טורא ושויתי
ית לוחיא בארונא די עבדית והוו תמן
כמא די פקדני יי׃ ו ובני ישראל נטלו
מבארות בני יעקן למוסרה תמן מית אהרן
ואתקבר תמן ושמש אלעזר בריה תחותוהי׃
ז מתמן נטלו לגדגוד ומן גדגוד ליטבת ארעא
נגדא נחלין דמיין׃ ח בעדנא ההיא אפרש יי

רש"י

נתעסקו בו עד לאחר יום הכפורים, כי כרדתו מן ההר גזר להם על מלאכת המשכן, ובצלאל עשה משכן תחלה ואחר כך ארון וכלים, נמצא זה ארון אחר היה. והוא שהיה יוצא עמהם למלחמה, ואותו שעשה בצלאל לא יצא למלחמה אלא בימי עלי, ונענשו עליו ונשבה[1]: (ו) ובני ישראל נסעו מבארות בני יעקן מוסרה. מה ענין זה לכאן. ועוד, וכי מבארות בני יעקן נסעו למוסרה, והלא ממוסרות באו לבני יעקן, שנאמר ויסעו ממוסרות וגו'[2]. ועוד, שם מת אהרן, והלא בהר ההר מת, צא וחשוב ותמצא שמונה מסעות ממוסרה להר ההר, אלא אף זו מן התוכחה, ועוד שעיתם זאת כשמת אהרן בהר ההר לסוף ארבעים שנה ונסתלקו ענני כבוד, יראתם לכם ממלחמת מלך ערד ונתתם ראש לחזור למצרים, וחזרתם לאחוריכם שמונה מסעות עד בני יעקן ומשם למוסרה, שם נלחמו בכם בני לוי והרגו מכם ואתם מהם, עד שהחזירו אתכם לדרך חזרתכם[3], ומשם חזרתם הגדגדה הוא חור הגדגד: (ז) ומן הגדגדה וגו'[4]. ובמוסרה עשיתם אבל כבד על מיתתו של אהרן שגרמה לכם זאת, ונדמה לכם כאלו מת שם. וסמך מסע תוכחה זו לשבירת הלוחות, לומר שקשה מיתתן של צדיקים לפני הקב"ה, כיום שנשתברו בו הלוחות[5]. ולהודיעך שהוקשה לו מה שאמרו נתנה ראש לפרוש ממנו, כיום שעשו בו את העגל: (ח) בעת ההוא הבדיל ה' וגו'. מוסב לענין הראשון: בעת ההוא. בשנה הראשונה לצאתכם ממצרים ועשיתם העגל ובני לוי לא

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why is Aharon's passing—which occurred forty years after the breaking of the Tablets—mentioned here? (v. 6)

Rashi: Moshe juxtaposed this rebuke [about Aharon's passing] with the breaking of the Tablets to indicate that the death of the righteous is as difficult for God as the day the Tablets were broken.

Divrei David: The *Talmud* states, *"No righteous man departs from this world before another like him is created, as the verse states, 'The sun goes up and then the sun goes down'"* (Ecclesiastes 1:5; Yoma 38a). This is stressed by the Torah here, that after *"Aharon died,"* immediately, *"Elazar his son was appointed as priest in his place."* Since Aharon was replaced by another righteous person, one would think that this minimizes the tragedy of his passing for the Jewish people.

Therefore, *Rashi* stresses that this does not soften the blow and *"the death of the righteous is as difficult for God, as the day the Tablets were broken."* For just as the breaking of the first Tablets remained a tragedy even after they were replaced by the second Tablets, so too, the passing of a righteous person is particularly tragic, even though God replaces him with another righteous person.

TORAS MENACHEM

Aharon's Passing (v. 6)

In his comment to verse 6, *Rashi* explains the reason why *"Moshe juxtaposed this rebuke [about Aharon's passing] with the breaking of the Tablets."*

But why, then, is the mention of Aharon's passing recorded here, amid the description of how the *second* Tablets were given, and not immediately after the breaking of the first Tablets?

The Explanation

The Torah records the passing of Aharon here, within the discussion of the second Tablets, because it *only* became clear that the breaking of the first Tablets was a *genuine* tragedy when the second Tablets were given. Until that point, there was a hope that the second Tablets would have been a perfect replacement for the first Tablets, which would have minimized the earlier tragedy. The second Tablets, however, proved to be *inferior* to the first Tablets, since the first Tablets *were* made *entirely* by God, whereas the second Tablets were made by Moshe, and only written by God. Thus, only when the second Tablets were given did it become evident that the loss incurred through the breaking of the first Tablets was irreparable.

Consequently, the Torah chose to teach, "the death of the righteous is as difficult for God, as the day the Tablets were broken," here within the account of the second Tablets, for likewise, the genuine tragedy of Aharon's passing only became apparent when *"Elazar his son was appointed as priest in his place,"* since Elazar could not fully replace his father, who was a much greater person than himself [cf. ***Divrei David***].

1 ירושלמי שקלים פ"ו ה"א 2 במדבר לג, לא 3 ירושלמי סוטה פ"א ה"י 4 לכאורה יש טעות על היבחור-העצערי כאן, ואין זה ד"ה חדש אלא המשך מד"ה הקודם (וכבר נשען), וכ"ה בדפוס שני וברש"י סדר ובלשון רש"י בראב"ן כאן. ובמשמות צ"ב כן, שהרי אא"כ שרש"י יחוק ("ונדמה לכם כאלו מת שם") בד"ה השני, שאכתי ("שם מת אהרן וכו'") בד"ה הקודם!! (ע"פ לקו"ש חי"ד, ע' 30) 5 ויק"ר כ, יב 6 במדבר יד, ד

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mountain with the two Tablets in my hand. 4 He wrote on the Tablets the same thing that was written on
the first ones: the Ten Commandments, which God said to you on the mountain, from the fire, on the
Day of Assembly. God then gave them to me.

5 I turned around and came down from the mountain. I placed the Tablets in the ark which I had
made, and they remained there, as God had commanded me.

REBELLION IN THE DESERT

— 6 (Later on you did another sin which, in my eyes, was as bad as the Golden Calf. It was when
forty years later) Aharon died (in Hor Hahar) and he was buried there, and Elazar his son was appointed
as priest in his place. (A rebellious group from) the children of Israel (arose, planning to lead the Jewish
people back to Egypt). They journeyed (backwards from Hor Hahar, where Aharon died,) through the
wells of Benay Ya'akan to Mosairah (at which point a group of Levites, who were chasing them, caught
up with them and defeated them. After mourning Aharon's death while they were still) there (in
Mosairah), 7 they journeyed from there (and returned to the camp at Hor Hahar, first passing) Gudgod,
and from Gudgod to Yatvasah, an area with flowing brooks. —

TORAS MENACHEM

THE UNIQUENESS OF AHARON'S PASSING

One further problem with *Rashi's* comment is why the Torah chose to teach us that "the death of the righteous is as difficult for God *etc.*," for the first time *here*, in connection with the passing of Aharon? The student of scripture has already learned about the passing of a number of righteous individuals (the Patriarchs, the fathers of the tribes, *etc.*), and yet it is *only* with Aharon's passing, forty years after the Exodus, that we are taught for the first time why the passing of a righteous man is so tragic!

THE EXPLANATION

In *Parshas Bereishis*, the Torah informs us that the ten generations between Adam and Noach lived extraordinarily long lives, but God then became angry with man and decreed that a normal lifespan would be 120 years (*Bereishis* 6:3).

The fact that we that find the subsequent generations between Noach and Avraham also enjoyed lengthy lifespans, is due to the continued, but diminishing impact of the earlier generations. Thus, in the days of Avraham, the average lifespan decreased to around 120 years (see *Rashi*, *Bereishis* 17:17).

Still, we find that all of the Patriarchs lived much longer than 120 years*, but this is hardly inconsistent with the rest of their lives which were filled with numerous miraculous occurrences, (and even Yishma'el lived a long life of 137 years (*Bereishis* 25:17), in the merit of Avraham and Yitzchak, and through their blessings). Similarly we find that Levi, Kehos and Amram lived well in excess of 120 years (see *Shemos* 6:16, 18, 20), but again, this is not surprising when we consider their exceptional merits.

The *first*** righteous person to be recorded in the Torah as having passed away at the "normal" age of around 120 years is Aharon***. Therefore the Torah hints *here* that, "the death of the righteous is as difficult for God as the day the Tablets were broken." For in the case of those righteous individuals who lived more than a normal lifespan, it is obvious that their passing is particularly tragic, since having broken free from God's decree of a 120-year lifespan, we would have expected them to live on indefinitely.**** In normal cases, however, we might think that passing away at around 120 years is not especially tragic, as this is the age at which God had decreed man was to pass away. Thus, since Aharon was the first such "normal" case, it would appear at first glance that the tragedy was not as great as in the case of the Patriarchs, *etc.* Therefore, the Torah teaches us *here* that "the death of the righteous—*at whatever age*—is as difficult for God, as the day the Tablets were broken."

However, this begs the question: If God Himself decreed that a person should pass away at 120 years, then why is it that the death of the righteous is as *difficult for God* as the breaking of the Tablets? Surely God should not be pained by something which He Himself orchestrates?

To answer this question, *Rashi* stresses, "The death of the righteous is as difficult for God, as *the day* the Tablets were broken." In other words, while the *passing* of the righteous person was indeed decreed by God, the fact that it occurred on *this* particular day indicates that it is a "difficult" day for God.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Eikev* 5730 & 5745)

Sparks of Chasidus

Why is a *tzadik* (righteous person) compared to the Tablets (see *Rashi*)?

The writing on the Tablets represented the "soul" of the Tablets, and the Tablets themselves, their "body." The fact that the Ten Commandments were *engraved* into the Tablets, and not merely written onto them, means that the words and the Tablets ("soul" and "body") became one single, indivisible entity.

Likewise in the case of a *tzadik*, it is not merely that his soul interacts with his body, but that the *tzadik's* physical life is totally at peace with his soul such that *"the life of the tzadik is not a physical life, but a spiritual life"* (*Igeres Hakodesh* 27).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 14, pp. 32-34)

* Avraham lived 175 years (*Bereishis* 25:7), Yitzchak 180 years (ibid. 35:28), and Ya'akov 147 years (ibid. 47:28). **Miriam's death is recorded before Aharon's, but the Torah does not mention her age explicitly. ***Of course, it is not a question why Aharon and Moshe *did* pass away at the age of (or around) 120 years, since this was God's decree upon all mankind. The question is only regarding those individuals who lived to well over 120 years after the decree had been passed, as explained above. ****cf. *Toras Menachem* to 32:48, below.

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הַלֵּוִי לָשֵׂאת אֶת־אֲרוֹן בְּרִית־יְהוָה לַעֲמֹד לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לְשָׁרְתוֹ
וּלְבָרֵךְ בִּשְׁמוֹ עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: ט עַל־כֵּן לֹא־הָיָה לְלֵוִי חֵלֶק
וְנַחֲלָה עִם־אֶחָיו יְהוָה הוּא נַחֲלָתוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
לוֹ: י וְאָנֹכִי עָמַדְתִּי בָהָר כַּיָּמִים הָרִאשֹׁנִים אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם
וְאַרְבָּעִים לַיְלָה וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה אֵלַי גַּם בַּפַּעַם הַהִוא לֹא־אָבָה

יָת שִׁבְטָא דְלֵוִי לְמִטַּל יָת אֲרוֹן קְיָמָא דַייָ
לִמְקָם קֳדָם יְיָ לְשַׁמָּשׁוּתֵהּ וּלְבָרָכָא בִּשְׁמֵהּ עַד
יוֹמָא הָדֵין: ט עַל כֵּן לָא הֲוָה לְלֵוִי חֲלָק
וְאַחֲסָנָא עִם אֲחוֹהִי מַתְּנָן דִּיהַב לֵהּ יְיָ אִנּוּן
אַחֲסַנְתֵּהּ כְּמָא דִי מַלִּיל יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ לֵהּ: י וַאֲנָא
הֲוֵיתִי קָאֵם בְּטוּרָא כְּיוֹמִין קַדְמָאִין אַרְבְּעִין
יְמָמִין וְאַרְבְּעִין לֵילָוָן וְקַבֵּיל יְיָ צְלוֹתִי אַף

רש"י

שם, הבדילם המקום מכם. וסמך מקרא זה לחזרת בני יעקן, לומר שאף בזו לא טעו בני לוי, אלא עמדו באמונתם: **לשאת את ארון.** הלוים: **לעמוד לפני ה' לשרתו ולברך בשמו.** הכהנים, והוא נשיאת כפים[1]: **(ט) על כן לא היה ללוי חלק.** לפי שהובדלו לעבודת מזבח ואינן פנויין לחרוש ולזרוע: **ה' הוא נחלתו.** נוטל פרס מזומן מבית המלך: **(י) ואנכי עמדתי בהר.** לקבל הלוחות האחרונות. ולפי שלא פירש למעלה כמה עמד בהר בעליה אחרונה זו, חזר והתחיל בה: **כימים הראשונים.** של לוחות הראשונות, מה הם ברצון אף אלו ברצון. אבל האמצעיים שעמדתי שם

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Why did the tribe of Levi not receive a portion of the Land?** (v. 8-9)

Rashi: Because they were singled out for the service of the altar, and therefore were not free to plow and sow.

Rambam: Why did the tribe of Levi not merit part of the Land of Israel or its plunder?

Because they were singled out to work for God and serve as His ministers, and to teach the public about His morally upright ways and fair laws—as the verse states, *"They will teach your laws to Ya'akov and your Torah to Israel"* (Devarim 33:10). Therefore, they were separated from worldly matters: They do not join the army as the rest of the Jewish people, they do not inherit, and they cannot acquire things for themselves by a physical act. They are the army of God....

But this is not exclusive to the tribe of Levi. Rather, any type of person from among all the inhabitants of the world, whose spirit inspires him, and he resolves in his mind to set himself apart [from worldly pursuits], to stand before God and serve as His minister, to work for Him, and to know God; who [then acts upon his resolution and he] goes in a morally upright manner—following his inherent, God-given disposition, and he discards* all the numerous concerns that people are normally preoccupied with—then he will attain the holiness of the Holy of Holies, and God will be his portion and his inheritance for all eternity. Even in this world, he will merit to receive his material needs, in a similar manner to the priests and Levites, as we see that David [who was not from the tribe of Levi] said (Psalms 16:5), *'God is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup. You support my lot!'* (Rambam, end of Laws of the Sabbatical and Jubilee Years).

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

"God Separated the Tribe of Levi" (v. 8)

Rambam appears to contradict himself (See Classic Questions). First he writes that the tribe of Levi was "*singled* out to work for God and serve as His ministers," suggesting that this role is exclusive to the tribe of Levi. But then he continues, "This is *not* exclusive to the tribe of Levi," and it is achievable by "any type of person, from among all the inhabitants of the world"?

Rambam's point, however, is that the tribe of Levi was appointed *from above* by God to be His ministers, and was blessed with the *natural* ability to do so. The Torah, however, grants the power to any individual person who wishes to avail himself or herself of the challenge, to become a true servant and minister of God, by making the effort (*from below*) to be "morally upright," despite social pressures in the opposite direction.

Rambam also stresses:

- This is achievable by "any type of person from among *all the inhabitants of the world*," which clearly includes non-Jews.
- That any person who dedicates himself or herself properly to God "will attain the holiness *of the Holy of Holies*," i.e. the exalted spiritual greatness of the High Priest (for only the High Priest is permitted to enter the Holy of Holies).
- Clearly, however, *Rambam's* assertion is that such a person achieves an equivalent *spiritual* greatness, but that he or she would not have the actual legal status of a Levite or priest.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Emor* 5749 & *Korach* 5750, and *Sichas Acharon Shel Pesach* 5750; *Likutei Sichos* vol. 8, p. 325**)

* Literally "he casts the yoke off his neck." See *Sichas 12 Tamuz* 5724, section 9.

** See also *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim-Vayeilech* 5744, *Eikev & Ki Seitzei* 5751.

1 ערכין יא, א.

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Appointment of the Tribe of Levi*

10:8 *At that time (after the sin of the Golden Calf), God separated the tribe of Levi (who did not*
participate in the sin), to carry the Ark of the testimony of God. (He separated the priests) to
stand before God and serve Him, and to (make the priestly) blessing in His Name, which
continues to this day. [9] (Since they were set aside for holy service, and would not have time for
agriculture) therefore, a (priest, who is from the tribe of) Levi, has no portion or inheritance (in the Land)
with his brothers. His inheritance (comes directly from) God('s house), as God, your God told him.

Moshe's Third Period on the Mountain

10:10 *I remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights (when I went to receive the second Tablets,*
and God was appeased) like the first (period of forty) days (when I was on the mountain), for God
listened to me also at that time and God did not wish to destroy you.

Classic Questions

● **Why did Moshe remain on the mountain for forty days and forty nights? (v. 10)**

Rashi: To receive the second Tablets.

Targum Yonason: Moshe prayed for forty days and nights. God accepted his prayers that the Jewish people should not be destroyed.

● **How was the third forty-day period "like the first (period of forty) days"? (v. 10)**

Rashi: Just as those days were with [God's] goodwill, so were these with [God's] goodwill. But the middle [forty-day period], when I stood there to pray for you, was amid [God's] anger.

Toras Menachem

What Did Moshe Do for Forty Days? (v. 10)

Moshe ascended Mount Sinai a total of three times. Initially, he went up for forty days and nights to receive the first Tablets (above 9:9-11), and then, after breaking the Tablets, Moshe ascended the mountain for a second time, when he prayed for the Jewish people to be forgiven (ibid. v. 18-19, 25-29).

Forty days later, God informed Moshe that the Jewish people were forgiven (10:1 and *Rashi* ibid.). He then instructed Moshe to carve out two replacement Tablets, and bring them back up the mountain (Moshe's third ascent), following which God inscribed the Ten Commandments onto them (ibid. v. 2-4). Finally, we read that Moshe came down from the mountain with the two Tablets (v. 5).

One detail omitted from this account is how long Moshe's third stay on the mountain lasted. Therefore, after digressing to discuss various other matters (in verses 6-9), the Torah returns here in verse 10 to inform us that Moshe's third stay on the mountain also lasted forty days and nights.

However, this begs the question: Why was Moshe required to stay forty days and nights on the third occasion? The first occasion clearly required a lengthy stay, since Moshe was taught the entire Torah; and the second occasion required forty days and nights of intense prayer to secure God's forgiveness for the Jewish people. But why were forty days and nights required merely for God to inscribe the Ten Commandments on the two Tablets? After all, even a human being would not need to take so long to engrave 620 letters onto two stones!

Targum Yonason explains that during Moshe's third stay he prayed for the Jewish people not to be destroyed, which would also explain why a long stay was required. However, *Rashi* clearly rejected this interpretation, since:

a.) He mentions only that Moshe's third trip was "to receive the second Tablets," and not to seek forgiveness.

b.) *Rashi* writes, "Just as those days were with [God's] goodwill, so were these with [God's] goodwill," indicating that no appeasement was required during Moshe's third stay.

So what is the reason, according to *Rashi*, that forty days and nights were required?**

The Explanation

Verse 10 stresses, "I remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights *like the first (period of forty) days* (when I was on the mountain)," i.e. that Moshe's first and third periods on the mountain *were the same in*

Sparks of Chasidus

When the first Tablets were given, the Jewish people were on the level of *tzadikim* (righteous), whereas when the second Tablets were given, they were on the even higher level of *ba'alei teshuvah* (penitents). Thus, it follows that God's "goodwill" (see *Rashi*) when Moshe received the second Tablets, was even greater than His goodwill at the time the first Tablets were given.

(Based on *Sichas Rosh Chodesh Elul* 5742)

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* See below 18:1-6. ** One cannot argue that the forty days and nights were required to give Moshe the Torah "as a gift" for a second time, since God's initial "gift" (see *Rashi* to *Shemos* 31:18) was presumably taken away when Moshe was "brought down from his exalted position" after the sin of the Golden Calf (see *Rashi* ibid. 32:7)—for why would forty days be required to give a gift? In fact, it could be argued that it is due to this problem that *Rashi* found it necessary to bring a second interpretation in his commentary to *Shemos* 31:18.

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יְהוָה הַשְׁחִיתֶךָ: יא וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי קוּם לֵךְ לְמַסַּע לִפְנֵי הָעָם
וְיָבֹאוּ וְיִירְשׁוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לַאֲבֹתָם לָתֵת לָהֶם:
פ (חמישי) יב וְעַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל מָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ שֹׁאֵל מֵעִמָּךְ כִּי
אִם־לְיִרְאָה אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לָלֶכֶת בְּכָל־דְּרָכָיו וּלְאַהֲבָה
אֹתוֹ וְלַעֲבֹד אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשֶׁךָ:
יג לִשְׁמֹר אֶת־מִצְוֹת יְהוָה וְאֶת־חֻקֹּתָיו אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם
לְטוֹב לָךְ: יד הֵן לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ הַשָּׁמַיִם וּשְׁמֵי הַשָּׁמָיִם הָאָרֶץ
וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־בָּהּ: טו רַק בַּאֲבֹתֶיךָ חָשַׁק יְהוָה לְאַהֲבָה אוֹתָם
וַיִּבְחַר בְּזַרְעָם אַחֲרֵיהֶם בָּכֶם מִכָּל־הָעַמִּים כַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה:
טז וּמַלְתֶּם אֵת עָרְלַת לְבַבְכֶם וְעָרְפְּכֶם לֹא תַקְשׁוּ עוֹד: יז כִּי
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הוּא אֱלֹהֵי הָאֱלֹהִים וַאֲדֹנֵי הָאֲדֹנִים הָאֵל
הַגָּדֹל הַגִּבֹּר וְהַנּוֹרָא אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִשָּׂא פָנִים וְלֹא יִקַּח שֹׁחַד:
יח עֹשֶׂה מִשְׁפַּט יָתוֹם וְאַלְמָנָה וְאֹהֵב גֵּר לָתֶת לוֹ לֶחֶם וְשִׂמְלָה:
יט וַאֲהַבְתֶּם אֶת־הַגֵּר כִּי־גֵרִים הֱיִיתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: כ אֶת־

בְּזִמְנָא הַהוּא לָא אֲבָא יְיָ לְחַבָּלוּתָךְ: יא וַאֲמַר
יְיָ לִי קוּם אִיזֵיל לְמִטַּל קֳדָם עַמָּא וְיֵעֲלוּן וְיֵירְתוּן
יָת אַרְעָא דִּי קַיֵּמִית לַאֲבָהַתְהוֹן לְמִתַּן לְהוֹן:
יב וּכְעַן יִשְׂרָאֵל מָא יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ תָּבַע מִנָּךְ אֱלָהֵן
לְמִדְחַל קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ לִמְהָךְ בְּכָל אָרְחָן
דְּתָקְנָן קֳדָמוֹהִי וּלְמִרְחַם יָתֵהּ וּלְמִפְלַח קֳדָם יְיָ
אֱלָהָךְ בְּכָל לִבָּךְ וּבְכָל נַפְשָׁךְ: יג לְמִטַּר יָת
פִּקּוֹדַיָּא דַּייָ וְיָת קְיָמוֹהִי דַּאֲנָא מְפַקֵּדָךְ
יוֹמָא דֵין (לְ)דְיִיטַב לָךְ: יד הָא דַּייָ אֱלָהָךְ שְׁמַיָּא
וּשְׁמֵי שְׁמַיָּא אַרְעָא וְכָל דִּי בַהּ: טו לְחוֹד
בַּאֲבָהָתָךְ צְבִי יְיָ לְמִרְחַם יָתְהוֹן וְאִתְרְעִי
בִּבְנֵיהוֹן בָּתְרֵיהוֹן בְּכוֹן מִכָּל עַמְמַיָּא כְּיוֹמָא
הָדֵין: טז וְתַעְדּוּן יָת טַפְשׁוּת לִבְּכוֹן וְקָדָלְכוֹן
לָא תַקְשׁוּן עוֹד: יז אֲרֵי יְיָ אֱלָהֲכוֹן הוּא אֱלָהָא
דַּיָּנִין וּמָרֵי מַלְכִין אֱלָהָא רַבָּא גִּבָּרָא וּדְחִילָא
דִּי לֵית קֳדָמוֹהִי מַסַּב אַפִּין וְאַף לָא לְקַבָּלָא
שׁוֹחֲדָא: יח עָבֵד דִּין יַתַּם וְאַרְמְלָא וְרָחֵם
גִּיּוֹרָא לְמִתַּן לֵהּ מְזוֹנָא וּכְסוּ: יט וְתִרְחֲמוּן יָת
גִּיּוֹרָא אֲרֵי דַיָּרִין הֲוֵיתוּן בְּאַרְעָא דְמִצְרָיִם:
כ יָת יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ תִּדְחַל וּקְדָמוֹהִי תִּפְלַח

רש״י

להתפלל עליכם היו בכעס[1]: (יא) ויאמר ה' אלי וגו'. אף על פי שסרתם מאחריו וטעיתם בעגל, אמר לי לך נחה את העם[2]: (יב) ועתה ישראל. אף על פי שעשיתם כל זאת, עודנו רחמיו וחבתו עליכם, ומכל מה שחטאתם לפניו אינו שואל מכם כי אם ליראה וגו'[3]: כי אם ליראה וגו'. רבותינו דרשו מכאן הכל בידי שמים חוץ מיראת שמים[4]: (יג) לשמור את מצות ה'. ואף היא לא חנם, אלא לטוב לך, שתקבלו שכר: (יד) הן לה' אלהיך. הכל, ואף על פי כן רק באבותיך חשק ה' מן הכל: (טו) בכם. כמו שאתם (רואים אתכם) היום מכל העמים כיום הזה: (טז) ערלת לבבכם. אוטם לבבכם וכיסויו: (יז) ואדני האדנים. לא יוכל שום אדון להציל אתכם מידו: לא ישא פנים. אם תפרקו עולו: ולא יקח שחד. לפייסו בממון[5]: (יח) עשה משפט יתום ואלמנה. הרי גבורה, ואצל גבורתו אתה מוצא ענותנותו[6]: ואהב גר לתת לו לחם ושמלה. ודבר חשוב הוא זה, שכל עצמו של יעקב אבינו על זה התפלל, ונתן לי לחם לאכול ובגד ללבוש[7]: (יט) כי גרים הייתם. מום שבך אל תאמר לחברך[8]: (כ) את ה' אלהיך תירא. ותעבוד לו ותדבק

TORAS MENACHEM

So how can *Rashi* write that the entire forty days and nights of Moshe's third stay on the mountain were *"with [God's] goodwill,"* when God only became reconciled with the Jewish people when Moshe *came down* from the mountain?

In truth, however, God had completely forgiven the Jewish people for the sin of the Golden Calf after Moshe's second stay on the mountain, and the third stay was genuinely *"with [God's] goodwill."* A further accomplishment which occurred on *Yom Kippur* was that "God was *joyfully* reconciled with the Jewish people." I.e. when Moshe finally presented the Tablets to the Jewish people, bequeathing them the Torah for all eternity, it was a particularly joyous time for God. For joy comes after passing over a hurdle; and since the relationship between the Jewish people and God had been in jeopardy, the moment when all obstacles had been overcome and the Jewish people finally received the Torah was a true moment of joy for the Almighty.

virtually every respect. Rashi explains: "Just as those days were with [God's] goodwill, so were these with [God's] goodwill," i.e. that God was not angry with the Jewish people *at all* during the last forty days.

Consequently, *Rashi* did not need to explain why forty days were required to receive the second Tablets, since he had already stressed that the second Tablets were received in *equally positive circumstances* to the first Tablets. And if Moshe were to have stayed any less than forty days, he would not have reached as high a spiritual level as the first time, and the second Tablets would have been received in an inferior manner. Therefore, forty days and nights were required for Moshe's third stay too.

However, this explanation presents us with another problem. Above, *Rashi* explained that it was only when Moshe came down from the mountain *after* his third stay, on *Yom Kippur*, that, *"on that very day God was joyfully reconciled with the Jewish people....Therefore it was designated as a time of pardon and forgiveness"* (Rashi to 9:18, above).

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Eikev* 5733)

1 סדר עולם פ״ו 2 שמות לב, לד 3 בכמה דפוסים נשמטו תיבות אלו ("כי אם ליראה וגו'") בטעות. (שיחת ש״פ עקב תשל״ו) 4 ברכות לג: 5 ראה לקו״ש חכ״ד ע׳ 73 ואילך 6 מגילה לא. פסיקתא זוטא, ילקוט שמעוני רמז תתנ״ו 7 בראשית כח, כ. וראה בראשית רבה ע, ה 8 בבא מציעא נט, ב

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11 God said to me, "Get going! Lead the people in their journeys to come and take possession of the
land I promised their forefathers to give them."

Moshe Encourages the People to Serve God

10:12 Fifth Reading *Now, O Israel, (even though you sinned) what does God, your God, demand of you? (Because*
He still has compassion on you and He still loves you, He does not punish you, but asks you)
only to fear God, your God, to follow all His ways, to love Him, to serve God, your God, with
all your heart and with all your soul,
13 and to keep the commandments of God and His suprarational
commands, which I command you today—(and even this) is for your own benefit (because you will
receive reward).

14 God, your God, (has the choice of everything in) the lower and upper skies, the earth and all that
is on it.
15 But God desired only to love your forefathers, and He chose their descendants after them —
(i.e.) you—out of all nations, (a choice which) remains until today.

16 You should "circumcise" the "foreskin" of your heart (which blocks you from serving God), and
you should stop being stiff-necked.
17 For God, your God, is God of gods and the Master of masters, the
great, mighty and awesome God, who does not show favor and will not accept a bribe.
18 (Yet) He (is
sensitive) to enact judgment for the orphan and widow. And he loves the convert and gives him bread
and clothing.

- *19 You should love the convert, because you were aliens in the land of Egypt.*

Classic Questions

● How could God possibly "accept a bribe" ? (v. 17)

Midrash: It is written in Your Torah, *"Do not accept a bribe"* (Shemos 23:8)...but You do accept bribes, as the verse states, *"He will take a bribe from a wicked man's bosom* [*to turn the roads of justice*]*"* (Proverbs 17:23)? What is the "bribe" that God accepts? He accepts *teshuvah* (repentance) and good deeds from the wicked in this world. God says to the Jewish people, "My children! So long as the gates of *teshuvah* are open, I will accept bribes in this world. But when I sit in judgment in the World to Come, I will not accept bribes, as the verse states (ibid. 6:35), *'He will not regard any ransom'"* (Yalkut Shimoni, Psalms, Remez 670).

Toras Menachem

"Bribing" God (v. 17)

Taking bribes is an explicit prohibition of the Torah (*Shemos* 23:8; *Devarim* 16:19), because it may cause a judge to make a ruling which is not in accordance with the law. So how could any person possibly think that God might take bribes, to the extent that the Torah needs to inform us here in verse 17 that, in fact, He does not?

Furthermore, our verse appears to contradict the statement in Proverbs that *"He will take a bribe from a wicked man's bosom, to turn the roads of justice"* (17:23). *Rashi* (ibid.) comments, "The Holy One, blessed be He, accepts words of humility and appeasement from the bosom of the wicked [i.e. in secret, between Him and them,] to overturn His verdict from evil to good."

The ***Midrash*** explains further that the "bribes" which God takes are the *teshuvah* and good deeds of the wicked who return to Him.

In this respect, we can understand that the verse, *"God...will not accept a bribe,"* must be speaking of *mitzvos* in general, which are *not* sufficient to "bribe" God to annul one of His decrees. *Teshuvah*, on the other hand, *is* capable of doing just that, so the verse in Proverbs states, "He *will* take a bribe from a wicked man's bosom," if He is bribed with *teshuvah*.

It nevertheless remains to be understood why the Torah compares *teshuvah* to bribery, which is a *perversion* of justice?

The Explanation

Rambam describes the process of *teshuvah* as follows:

"The following are part of [*going on*] *the path of teshuvah: The repenter should cry out persistently to God with tears and supplications. He should give charity to the extent of his ability, and he should distance himself as much as possible from the matter with which he sinned. He should change his name, as if to say, 'I am a different person. I am not the same person who did those things.' He should change all of his actions for the better to follow an upright path. He should exile himself* [*from his hometown*]*, since exile atones for sins, and it causes one to be submissive, humble and meek"* (Laws of Teshuvah 2:4).

All these steps need to be carried out if a person wishes to be forgiven for his sins *completely*. Nevertheless, the basic principle of *teshuvah* is very simple indeed, as the *Alter Rebbe* writes:

"The commandment of teshuvah, as required by the Torah, is simply the [*resolution of*] *abandonment of the sin"* (Igeres Hateshuvah, ch. 1).

I.e. the mere resolution in a person's mind not to perform the sin again is sufficient to fulfill "the commandment of *teshuvah*, as required by the Torah."

Thus, even before a person has carried out the entire process mentioned by *Rambam* above, he is considered to have repented.

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יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ תִּירָא אֹתוֹ תַעֲבֹד וּבוֹ תִדְבָּק וּבִשְׁמוֹ תִּשָּׁבֵעַ:
כא הוּא תְהִלָּתְךָ וְהוּא אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה אִתְּךָ אֶת־הַגְּדֹלֹת
וְאֶת־הַנּוֹרָאֹת הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר רָאוּ עֵינֶיךָ: כב בְּשִׁבְעִים נֶפֶשׁ יָרְדוּ
אֲבֹתֶיךָ מִצְרָיְמָה וְעַתָּה שָׂמְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כְּכוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם
לָרֹב: יא א וְאָהַבְתָּ אֵת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְשָׁמַרְתָּ מִשְׁמַרְתּוֹ
וְחֻקֹּתָיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו וּמִצְוֹתָיו כָּל־הַיָּמִים: ב וִידַעְתֶּם הַיּוֹם כִּי ׀ לֹא
אֶת־בְּנֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדְעוּ וַאֲשֶׁר לֹא־רָאוּ אֶת־מוּסַר יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֶת־גָּדְלוֹ אֶת־יָדוֹ הַחֲזָקָה וּזְרֹעוֹ הַנְּטוּיָה: ג וְאֶת־
אֹתֹתָיו וְאֶת־מַעֲשָׂיו אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה בְּתוֹךְ מִצְרָיִם לְפַרְעֹה מֶלֶךְ־
מִצְרַיִם וּלְכָל־אַרְצוֹ: ד וַאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְחֵיל מִצְרַיִם לְסוּסָיו
וּלְרִכְבּוֹ אֲשֶׁר הֵצִיף אֶת־מֵי יַם־סוּף עַל־פְּנֵיהֶם בְּרָדְפָם
אַחֲרֵיכֶם וַיְאַבְּדֵם יְהוָה עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: ה וַאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לָכֶם
בַּמִּדְבָּר עַד־בֹּאֲכֶם עַד־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה: ו וַאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְדָתָן
וְלַאֲבִירָם בְּנֵי אֱלִיאָב בֶּן־רְאוּבֵן אֲשֶׁר פָּצְתָה הָאָרֶץ אֶת־פִּיהָ
וַתִּבְלָעֵם וְאֶת־בָּתֵּיהֶם וְאֶת־אָהֳלֵיהֶם וְאֵת כָּל־הַיְקוּם אֲשֶׁר

ולרחלתה תקרב ובשמה תקים: כא הוא
תושבחתך והוא אלהך דעבד עמך ית
רברבתא וית חסינתא האלין די חזו עינך:
כב בשבעין נפשן נחתו אבהתך למצרים
וכען שויך יי אלהך ככוכבי שמיא לסגי:
א ותרחם ית יי אלהך ותטר מטרת מימרה
וקימוהי ודינוהי ופקודוהי כל יומיא:
ב ותדעון יומא דין ארי לא ית בניכון די
לא ידעו ודי לא חזו ית אולפנא דיי אלהכון
ית רבותה ית ידה תקיפא ודרעה מרממא:
ג וית אתותיה וית עובדוהי די עבד בגו
מצרים לפרעה מלכא דמצרים ולכל ארעה:
ד ודי עבד למשרית מצרים לסוסותיה
ולרתכוהי די אטיף ית מי ימא דסוף
על אפיהון במרדפהון בתריכון ואובדנון יי
עד יומא הדין: ה ודי עבד לכון במדברא עד
מיתיכון עד אתרא הדין: ו ודי עבד לדתן
ולאבירם בני אליאב בר ראובן די פתחת
ארעא ית פומה ובלעתנון וית אנש בתיהון
וית משכניהון וית כל יקומא די עמהון בגו

רש״י

בו, ולאחר שיהיו בך כל המדות הללו אז בשמו תשבע[1]: (ב) **וידעתם היום.** תנו לב לדעת ולהבין ולקבל תוכחתי: **כי לא את בניכם.** אני מדבר שיוכלו לומר אנו לא ידענו ולא ראינו בכל זה: (ו) **בקרב כל ישראל.** כל מקום שהיה אחד מהם בורח, הארץ נבקעת מתחתיו ובולעתו, אלו דברי רבי יהודה. אמר לו רבי נחמיה, והלא כבר נאמר ופתחה הארץ את פיה[2], ולא פיותיה. אמר לו, ומה אני מקיים בקרב כל ישראל. אמר לו שנעשית הארץ מדרון כמשפך, וכל מקום שהיה אחד מהם, היה מתגלגל ובא עד מקום הבקיעה[3]: **ואת כל היקום אשר ברגליהם.** זה ממונו של אדם שמעמידו

TORAS MENACHEM

What, then, is the need to "cry out persistently to God with tears and supplications," and, "change all of his actions for the better *etc.*," if he has *already* fulfilled "the commandment of *teshuvah* as required by the Torah" by abandoning the sin?

This is because the moment he resolves to abandon the sin represents the mere "conception" of his *teshuvah*, but his new identity has not yet been "born." From the moment of "conception" a lengthy process must occur, during which the person cries out to God persistently for forgiveness, gives large amounts of charity and changes his entire lifestyle for the better. Only at that point is the person "born" as a *tzadik* (righteous person).

Thus, "the commandment of *teshuvah* as required by the Torah," (which the *Alter Rebbe* speaks of), which occurs in an instant, forms the core and the foundation from which the person's *teshuvah* grows—in a similar way to the moment of conception of a child, which forms the basis for the nine months of development which follow. And it is this process of development which is described in the above passage of *Rambam*.

A further distinction between the "conception" and the "birth" of the repenting Jew is the difference between how God perceives the person, and how *he* perceives himself.

From the person's perspective (and likewise, the perspective of a Jewish court), he cannot be considered free of sin until all of its effects, both on himself and his environment, are eradicated. Thus, it is not until he is "born" as a *tzadik* that he can be confident that his sin is atoned for.

However, from God's perspective, as soon as the person resolves in his mind not to sin again, the seed of a potential *tzadik* is sown, and the key part of his repentance has already taken place. From this point on, it is *only* a matter of time until the genuine emotions that have surfaced will materialize into the changes of lifestyle that will eradicate the sin.

Thus, *from God's perspective*, as soon as the sinner resolves in his mind *not* to sin again, God forgives him.* But this forgiveness is to a certain extent "unjust," as the person has not yet completed the process of *teshuvah* and therefore, according to the letter of the law, he should not yet be forgiven. Nevertheless, as explained above, since the seed of his

* I.e. the *person* is forgiven because God perceives how the initial phases of remorse will eventually blossom into full repentance. The effects of the *sin itself* on the world cannot be atoned for, however, until a complete *teshuvah* is carried out. For further discussion of this distinction, see *Toras Menachem* to *Vayikra* 16:20-22.

1 תמורה ג. תנחומא ויקרא ז 2 במדבר טז, לב
3 במדבר רבה יח, יג. תנחומא (באבער) קרח הוספה ו.
ילקוט שמעוני קרח, רמז תשנ״ב

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- 20 *You must fear God, your God.*
- *You must serve Him.*
- *You must cleave to Him.*
- *(If you do all the above, then you may) swear by His Name.*

21 *He is your praise and He is your God, Who did these great and awesome things for you, which your eyes have seen.* 22 *Your forefathers went down to Egypt with seventy souls, and now God, your God, has made you as numerous as the stars of the skies.*

MIRACLES WITNESSED BY THE JEWISH PEOPLE

11 *So you should love God, your God, keep what He has entrusted to you: His suprarational commands, His rational commands, and His commandments, for all time.*
2 *You should now realize, (by focusing your heart to take my rebuke), that (I am) not (speaking) with your children, who (could claim that they) did not know and did not see God, your God, reprimand (us).*
— (They did not see) His greatness, His mighty hand, His outstretched arm, 3 *His signs (of Divine Providence), and His deeds, which He performed within Egypt, to Pharaoh, King of Egypt and to his entire land.* 4 *And what He did to Egypt's army, to its horses and chariots, how He swamped the waters of the Reed Sea upon them when they pursued you. God destroyed them (and they cease to exist) to this day.* 5 *(They did not see) what He did for you in the desert, until you arrived at this place,* 6 *and what He did to Dasan and Aviram, sons of Eliav, Re'uvain's son, when the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up: them, their households, their tents, and all the possessions (that kept them on) their feet, in the presence of all Israel —*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

- **How were Dasan and Aviram swallowed up? (v. 6)**

RASHI: "Wherever one of them fled, the earth split under him and swallowed him up"—these are the words of Rabbi Yehudah.

Rabbi Nechemiah said to him: But is it not written above, "the earth opened its *mouth*" (*Bamidbar* 16:32), and not, "its *mouths*" [suggesting that the earth opened up in only one place]?

[Rabbi Yehudah] said to him: How, then, does one explain [the emphasis that this occurred]: "In the presence of all Israel," [suggesting that the earth opened up throughout the Jewish camp]?

[Rabbi Nechemiah] replied to him: The earth began to slope like a funnel, and wherever one of them would be, he rolled down until he reached the place where the earth was split.

TORAS MENACHEM

repentance (which is the basis of the entire *teshuvah* process) has been sown, from God's perspective he is forgiven.

And it is this scenario which the Torah depicts as "bribery": The *teshuvah* of the person is sufficient to "bribe" God to forgive him, even though he does not yet deserve to be forgiven.

Nevertheless, in the final analysis, God is not committing a "forbidden act," as *in truth* (from God's perspective) the person *has* changed for the better internally, and it is only a matter of time before this change manifests itself fully.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, pp. 59*ff.*)

RABBI YEHUDAH & RABBI NECHEMIAH (RASHI V. 6)

In his commentary to verse 6, *Rashi* cites a dispute between Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Nechemiah concerning the manner in which Dasan and Aviram were swallowed up by the ground.

At first glance, Rabbi Nechemiah's criticism of Rabbi Yehudah's argument seems to be valid, indicating that the interpretation of our verse, at the literal level, follows Rabbi Nechemiah.

However, if *Rashi* did indeed maintain that our verse is to be interpreted in accordance with Rabbi Nechemiah, and not Rabbi Yehudah, then he would have just cited Rabbi Nechemiah's opinion *alone*. For *Rashi's* commentary is aimed at explaining the literal meaning of scripture as concisely as possible, so if Rabbi Yehudah's opinion were not valid at the literal level, *Rashi* would simply have omitted it. Rather, it appears that *Rashi* found both interpretations acceptable.

However, this leaves us with the following questions:

a.) Why did *Rashi* deem it necessary to bring two interpretations?

b.) Why did *Rashi* cite the names of the Sages who authored these interpretations—Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Nechemiah? Of what relevance is this to understanding the verse at the literal level?

c.) According to *Rashi*, Rabbi Yehudah said, "*Wherever one of them fled*, the earth split under him and swallowed him up." However, this detail (of Dasan and Aviram fleeing) is not mentioned in any of the source texts from which *Rashi* may have cited this teaching (*Bamidbar Rabah* 18:13; *Tanchuma Buber*, addendum to *Korach* 4; *Yalkut Shimoni*, *Korach*, *Remez* 752). What led *Rashi* to conclude that this was indeed Rabbi Yehudah's intention?

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בְּרַגְלֵיהֶם בְּקֶרֶב כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל: ז כִּי עֵינֵיכֶם הָרֹאֹת אֶת
כָּל־מַעֲשֵׂה יְהוָה הַגָּדֹל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה: ח וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת־כָּל־
הַמִּצְוָה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם לְמַעַן תֶּחֶזְקוּ וּבָאתֶם וִירִשְׁתֶּם
אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ: ט וּלְמַעַן
תַּאֲרִיכוּ יָמִים עַל־הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לַאֲבֹתֵיכֶם לָתֵת
לָהֶם וּלְזַרְעָם אֶרֶץ זָבַת חָלָב וּדְבָשׁ: ס [ששי] י כִּי הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר
אַתָּה בָא־שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ לֹא כְאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם הִוא אֲשֶׁר יְצָאתֶם
מִשָּׁם אֲשֶׁר תִּזְרַע אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ וְהִשְׁקִיתָ בְרַגְלְךָ כְּגַן הַיָּרָק:
יא וְהָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ אֶרֶץ הָרִים
וּבְקָעֹת לִמְטַר הַשָּׁמַיִם תִּשְׁתֶּה־מָּיִם: יב אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ דֹּרֵשׁ אֹתָהּ תָּמִיד עֵינֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בָּהּ *מֵרֵשִׁית

* חסר א׳.

כל ישראל: ז ארי עיניכון חזאה ית כל
עובדא דיי רבא די עבד: ח ותטרון ית כל
תפקדתא די אנא מפקדך יומא דין בדיל
דתתקפון ותעלון ותירתון ית ארעא די אתון
עברין לתמן למירתה: ט ובדיל דתורכון יומין
על ארעא די קיים יי לאבהתכון למתן להון
ולבניהון ארעא עבדא חלב ודבש: י ארי
ארעא די את עליל לתמן למירתה לא
כארעא דמצרים היא די נפקתון מתמן די
תזרע ית זרעך ומשקת לה ברגלך כגנת
ירקא: יא וארעא די אתון עברין לתמן
למירתה ארע טורין ובקען למטר שמיא
תשתי מיא: יב ארעא דיי אלהך תבע יתה
תדירא עיני יי אלהך בה מרישא דשתא ועד

רש"י

על רגליו[1]: (ז) **כי עיניכם הרואות.** מוסב על מקרא האמור למעלה[2], כי לא את בניכם אשר לא ידעו וגו' כי אם עמכם אשר עיניכם הרואות וגו': (י) **לא כארץ מצרים הוא.** אלא טובה הימנה. ונאמרה הבטחה זו לישראל ביציאתם ממצרים, שהיו אומרים שמא לא נבוא אל ארץ טובה ויפה כזו. יכול בגנותה הכתוב מדבר, וכך אמר להם, לא כארץ מצרים היא, אלא רעה הימנה, תלמוד לומר וחברון שבע שנים נבנתה וגו'[3], אדם אחד בנאן, ואת בנה צוען למצרים בנו, וחברון לכנען. דרך ארץ אדם בונה את הנאה ואחר כך בונה את הכעור (ס"א הגרוע), שפסולתו של ראשון הוא נותן בשני, ובכל מקום הטפל קודם, הא למדת שחברון יפה מצוען, ומצרים משובחת מכל הארצות, שנאמר כגן ה' כארץ מצרים[4], וצוען שבח מצרים היא, שהיתה מקום מלכות, שכן הוא אומר כי היו בצוען שריו[5], וחברון פסולתה של ארץ ישראל, לכך הקצוה לקבורת מתים, ואף על פי כן היא יפה מצוען[6]. ובכתובות[7] דרשו בענין אחר, אפשר אדם בונה בית לבנו הקטן ואחר כך לבנו הגדול, אלא שמבונה על אחד משבעה בצוען: **אשר יצאתם משם.** אפילו ארץ רעמסס אשר ישבתם בה והיא במיטב ארץ מצרים, שנאמר במיטב הארץ וגו'[8], אף היא אינה כארץ ישראל[9]: **והשקית ברגלך.** ארץ מצרים היתה צריכה להביא מים מנילוס ברגלך ולהשקותה, וצריך אתה לנדד משנתך ולעמול, והנמוך שותה ולא הגבוה, ואתה מעלה המים מן הנמוך לגבוה. אבל זו למטר השמים תשתה מים, אתה ישן על מטתך, והקב"ה משקה נמוך וגבוה, גלוי ושאינו גלוי, כאחת[9]: **כגן הירק.** שאין די לו בגשמים ומשקין אותו ברגל ובכתף: (יא) **ארץ הרים ובקעות.** משובח ההר מן המישור, שהמישור, בבית כור אתה זורע כור, אבל ההר בית כור ממנו חמשת כורין, ארבע מארבע שפועיו, ואחד בראשו[9]: **ובקעות.** הן מישור: (יב) **אשר ה' אלהיך דורש אותה.** והלא כל הארצות הוא דורש, שנאמר להמטיר על ארץ לא איש[10], אלא כביכול אינו דורש אלא אותה, ועל ידי אותה דרישה שדורשה דורש את כל הארצות עמה[9]: **תמיד עיני ה' אלהיך בה.** לראות מה היא צריכה ולחדש בה גזרות, פעמים לטובה פעמים לרעה כו', כדאיתא בראש השנה[11]: **מרשית השנה.** מראש השנה נידון מה יהא בסופה[12]:

TORAS MENACHEM

The Explanation

Rashi was troubled by the following problem:

In the desert, each tribe camped seperately (see *Bamidbar* 2:1ff.). Dasan and Aviram would have resided in the camp of the tribe of Re'uvain, to which they belonged (*ibid.* 16:1). Thus, when reading in our verse that Dasan and Aviram were swallowed up, *"in the presence of all Israel,"* *Rashi* was troubled: How could *all Israel* have witnessed something that occurred in just one camp, the camp of Re'uvain?

To answer this question, *Rashi* cites the teaching of Rabbi Yehudah, that, *"Wherever one of them fled, the earth split under him and swallowed him up."* I.e. when the earth began to split under the feet of Dasan and Aviram in the camp of Re'uvain, they fled, running throughout *all the camps*, as they were chased by an expanding hole in the ground which ultimately swallowed them up. Thus, by the time they were consumed, all of the Jewish people had witnessed the miracle.

(Consequently *Rashi* found it necessary to stress, that *"Wherever one of them fled,* the earth split under him and swallowed him up"—even though this detail is not stated explicitly in the source texts—since this clarifies how "all Israel" witnessed this miracle.)

Nevertheless, this interpretation is somewhat flawed, as Rabbi Nechemiah pointed out: *"But is it not written above, 'the earth opened its mouth'* (*Bamidbar* 16:32), *and not, 'its mouths,'"* suggesting that the earth opened up at only one place?

Thus, *Rashi* cited a second interpretation, from Rabbi Nechemiah: *"The earth began to slope like a funnel, and wherever one of them would be, he rolled down until he reached the place where the earth was split."*

1 פסחים קיח. 2 פסוק ב 3 במדבר יג, כב 4 בראשית יג, י 5 ישעי' ל, ד 6 ספרי. ילקו"ש רמז תתנ"ט 7 קיב. 8 בראשית מז, יא 9 ספרי 10 איוב לח, כו 11 יז: 12 שם ח.

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[7] But your eyes did see all the great acts of God, which He performed. [8] Therefore, you should keep all the commandments that I am commanding you today, so that:

- *You will be strong to come and take possession of the Land, that you are crossing over to acquire.*
- *[9] And in order that you may prolong your days on the land that God swore to give to your forefathers—to them and to their descendants—a land flowing with milk and honey.*

QUALITIES OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL

11:10 SIXTH READING

For the land to which you are coming to take possession of is not (bad) like the land of Egypt, out of which you came, where you would plant your seed and (then have to) water (it by carrying buckets from the Nile) by foot, like (looking after) a vegetable garden. [11] (No!) The land which you are (soon) crossing over to acquire, is a land of (arable) mountains and plains, and it is watered by rains from the skies, [12] a land which God, your God, cares about. The eyes of God Almighty are continually upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.

TORAS MENACHEM

This explains how there could have been just one opening in the earth, and yet the miracle was witnessed by the entire camp.

However, Rabbi Nechemiah's solution also has a drawback, since our verse appears to imply that all the Jewish people actually witnessed *the earth* open its mouth; whereas according to Rabbi Nechemiah's interpretation, most people would only have seen the "funnel."

Thus *Rashi* cited both opinions, of Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Nechemiah, as each have their own respective advantages and disadvantages.

THE CRUX OF THE ARGUMENT

What underlying difference of approach led Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Nechemiah to their conclusions?

Rabbi Yehudah took the approach that problems which arise in the *context* of a verse (among its adjacent verses) are the most important. Rabbi Nechemiah, on the other hand, prioritized problems that arise *within* a verse.

Thus, in our case, Rabbi Yehudah learned that the earth opened up throughout the entire camp, enabling all Israel to see the miracle, as this fits better in the context of our verse within a passage that lists various miracles that were witnessed by the entire Jewish people (v. 2-7). The drawback of this interpretation, that it renders the word "mouth" difficult to interpret *within* the verse itself, was of more concern to Rabbi Nechemiah. Therefore, Rabbi Nechemiah offered an alternative interpretation which solves this difficulty, but loses the contextual superiority of Rabbi Yehudah's interpretation.

In fact, these two approaches are commensurate with the respective lifestyles of these two Sages. For while they were both poor, Rabbi Nechemiah suffered from a much greater degree of poverty than Rabbi Yehudah.* Thus, it turns out that the "broader" approach to Torah study which looks at the *overall* context of a verse was—by Divine Providence—exemplified by the Sage who, comparatively speaking, had a "broader" and more comfortable lifestyle.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Eikev* 5726**)

The Last Word

"THE EYES OF GOD ALMIGHTY ARE CONTINUALLY UPON IT..." (V. 12)

"Many Jews, including *frum* [observant] Jews, naturally tend to see all the good qualities of *Eretz Yisrael*, which is indeed 'a desirable and good land' (Text of Grace after Meals). However, one often overlooks the essential thing about *Eretz Yisrael*, which is that all its physical beauty is as nothing in comparison to its essential nature—that of being the Holy Land, a land of which the Torah says that '*the eyes of God Almighty are continually upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.*' This essential nature of *Eretz Yisrael* should inspire in everyone a tremendous sense of reverence, which should be expressed in increased efforts to bring one's everyday conduct into accord with the holiness of *Eretz Yisrael*. The impact must be strong enough to be of a lasting nature, so that a visit to the Holy Land should have a permanent effect on one's whole outlook and the resulting daily conduct.

"However, if a visit to *Eretz Yisrael* is confined to sightseeing and the taking of photographs and slides of the beautiful places and the landscape, etc., then *Eretz Yisrael* becomes no more than a tourist attraction, one land among many. Such a visit contributes little to the real future and destiny of *Eretz Yisrael*, of which we say in our prayers, 'Because of our sins we have been exiled from our land' (Text of Additional Prayer for Festivals). The immediate conclusion should be, therefore, to eliminate all those causes which have deprived us of *Eretz Yisrael*, and to strengthen all those factors which will firmly and permanently restore *Eretz Yisrael* to us."

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe in 5729 [1969])

* See the original *Sicha* (*Sichos Kodesh* 5726, pp. 583-4) where this assertion is substantiated with proofs from the Talmud. **For an explanation why the Torah mentions here only Dasan and Aviram and not Korach himself, nor his sons, nor the 250 leaders who were with him, See *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Re'eh* 5726 (ibid., pp. 590-91)

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הַשָּׁנָה וְעַד אַחֲרִית שָׁנָה: ס
יג וְהָיָה אִם־שָׁמֹעַ תִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶל־מִצְוֺתַי אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם לְאַהֲבָה אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּלְעָבְדוֹ בְּכָל־לְבַבְכֶם וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁכֶם:
יד וְנָתַתִּי מְטַר־אַרְצְכֶם בְּעִתּוֹ יוֹרֶה וּמַלְקוֹשׁ וְאָסַפְתָּ דְגָנֶךָ וְתִירֹשְׁךָ וְיִצְהָרֶךָ:
טו וְנָתַתִּי עֵשֶׂב בְּשָׂדְךָ לִבְהֶמְתֶּךָ וְאָכַלְתָּ וְשָׂבָעְתָּ:
טז הִשָּׁמְרוּ לָכֶם פֶּן־יִפְתֶּה לְבַבְכֶם וְסַרְתֶּם וַעֲבַדְתֶּם אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים

סוֹפָא דְשַׁתָּא:
יג וִיהֵי אִם קַבָּלָא תְקַבְּלוּן לְפִקּוֹדַי דִּי אֲנָא מְפַקֵּד יָתְכוֹן יוֹמָא דֵין לְמִרְחַם יָת יְיָ אֱלָהֲכוֹן וּלְמִפְלַח קֳדָמוֹהִי בְּכָל לִבְּכוֹן וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁכוֹן:
יד וְאֶתֵּן מְטַר אַרְעֲכוֹן בְּעִדָּנֵהּ בַּכִּיר וְלַקִּישׁ וְתִכְנוֹשׁ עֲבוּרָךְ וַחֲמָרָךְ וּמִשְׁחָךְ:
טו וְאֶתֵּן עִשְׂבָּא בְּחַקְלָךְ לִבְעִירָךְ וְתֵיכוֹל וְתִשְׂבַּע:
טז אִסְתַּמְּרוּ לְכוֹן דִּלְמָא יִטְעֵי לִבְּכוֹן וְתִסְטוּן וְתִפְלְחוּן לְטָעֲוַת עַמְמַיָּא

רש"י

(יג) והיה אם שמוע. והיה מוסב על האמור למעלה, למטר השמים תשתה מים: **והיה אם שמוע תשמעו.** אם תשמע בישן תשמע בחדש[1]. וכן והיה אם שכוח תשכח[2], אם התחלת לשכוח סופך שתשכח כולה, שכן כתיב במגלה אם תעזבני יום יומים אעזבך[3]: **מצוה אתכם היום.** שיהיו עליכם חדשים, כאלו שמעתם בו ביום[4]: **לאהבה את ה'.** שלא תאמר הרי אני לומד בשביל שאהיה עשיר, בשביל שאקרא רב, בשביל שאקבל שכר. אלא כל מה שתעשו עשו מאהבה, וסוף הכבוד לבא[5]: **ולעבדו בכל לבבכם.** עבודה שהיא בלב. וזו היא תפלה, שהתפלה קרויה עבודה, שנאמר אלהך די אנת פלח ליה בתדירא[6], וכי יש פולחן בבבל, אלא על שהיה מתפלל, שנאמר וכוין פתיחן ליה וגו'[7]. וכן בדוד הוא אומר[8] תכון תפלתי קטרת לפניך[9]: **בכל לבבכם ובכל נפשכם.** והלא כבר הזהיר בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך, אלא, אזהרה ליחיד אזהרה לצבור[10]: **(יד) ונתתי מטר ארצכם.** עשיתם מה שעליכם, אף אני אעשה מה שעלי: **בעתו.** בלילות שלא יטריחו אתכם. דבר אחר בעתו, בלילי שבתות שהכל מצויין בבתיהם[10]: **יורה.** היא רביעה הנופלת לאחר הזריעה שמרוה את הארץ ואת הזרעים[10]: **ומלקוש.** רביעה היורדת סמוך לקציר למלאות התבואה בקשיה. ולשון מלקוש, דבר המאוחר. כדמתרגמינן והיה העטופים ללבן[11], לקשיא. דבר אחר לכך נקראת מלקוש, שיורדת על המלילות ועל הקשין[12]: **ואספת דגנך.** אתה תאספנו אל הבית ולא אויביך. כענין שנאמר[13] אם אתן את דגנך וגו' כי מאספיו יאכלוהו, ולא כענין שנאמר[14] והיה אם זרע ישראל וגו'[14]: **(טו) ונתתי עשב בשדך.** שלא תצטרך להוליכה למדבריות. דבר אחר שתהיה גוזז תבואתך כל ימות הגשמים ומשליך לפני בהמתך, ואתה מונע ידך ממנה שלשים יום קודם לקציר ואינה פוחתת מדגנה[10]: **ואכלת ושבעת.** הרי זו ברכה אחרת, שתהא ברכה מצויה בפת בתוך המעים. ואכלת ושבעת: **(טז) השמרו לכם.** כיון שתהיו אוכלים ושבעים, השמרו לכם שלא תבעטו, שאין אדם מורד בהקב"ה אלא מתוך שביעה, שנאמר[15] פן תאכל ושבעת ובקרך וצאנך ירביון, מה הוא אומר אחריו, ורם לבבך ושכחת[16]: **וסרתם.** לפרוש מן התורה, ומתוך כך ועבדתם אלהים אחרים. שכיון שאדם פורש מן התורה הולך ומדבק בעבודה זרה. וכן דוד הוא אמר, כי גרשוני היום מהסתפח בנחלת ה' לאמר לך עבוד וגו'[17], ומי אמר לו כן, אלא כיון שאני מגורש מלעסוק בתורה, הריני קרוב לעבוד אלהים אחרים: **אלהים אחרים.** שהם

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What is unique about God's promise, "I will grant...rains of your land at their proper time"? (v. 14)

Rashi: [God says:] "You have done what is incumbent upon you, so I will do what is incumbent upon Me."

Mizrachi: *Rashi* was troubled by the question: Why does the Torah stress the reward for keeping *mitzvos* here more than in other places? For example, in *Parshas Bechukosai* the Torah states simply, *"I will give you rain (at a convenient) time"* (Vayikra 26:4), without entering into details, whereas here the Torah specifies many additional blessings in verses 14-15.

Rashi answers that God is saying, *"You have done what is incumbent upon you, so I will do what is incumbent upon Me."* I.e. since the Jewish people have done *everything* that God could possibly have wanted, therefore God will respond with every possible blessing that they may need.

TORAS MENACHEM

The Blessings of Rain (v. 14)

In the second paragraph of the *Shema*, the Torah promises *"rains in their proper time,"* if, *"you always listen to My commandments that I am commanding you etc."* (v. 13-14).

Mizrachi comments that the promise of rain here is more substantial than the similar promise at the beginning of *Parshas Bechukosai*, since the Torah specifies here that there will be *"early and late rains...grain, wine, and oil...grass in your field for your livestock...you will be satisfied."*

Thus, according to *Mizrachi*, *Rashi* is explaining the unique quality of the blessings recorded here: "You have done what is incumbent upon you, so I will do what is incumbent upon Me," as if to say: "Since you have fulfilled what is required of you *in every detail*, likewise I will reward you *in every detail*."

However, *Mizrachi*'s argument—that the blessings here are *superior* to the blessings in *Parshas Bechukosai*—is difficult to accept. Since *Parshas Bechukosai* mentions the *supernatural* promise that "non-fruit bearing trees will bear fruit," which clearly exceeds any of the *natural* blessings offered here.

What, then, is the meaning of *Rashi*'s comment?

1 יומא מ, ב 2 דברים ה, יט 3 ספרי. וראה שיחת ש"פ עקב תשמ"ו 4 ספרי (יא, כב) 5 נדרים סב. יקו"ש רמז תתע"ג 6 דניאל ו, י"ז 7 שם י"א 8 תהלים קמא, ב 9 ראה שיחת ש"פ עקב תשמ"ו 10 ספרי 11 בראשית ל, מב 12 תענית ו: יקו"ש רמז תתס"ב 13 ישעי' סב, ח 14 שופטים ו, ג 15 דברים ח, יב 16 שם י"ד 17 ש"א כו, יט

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SECOND PARAGRAPH OF THE SHEMA

11:13 *What will happen is:*
—If you always listen to My commandments that I am commanding you, (regarding them as if you heard them) today.

- *(And you keep them, not for personal gain, but rather out of) love for God, your God.*
- *And you serve Him (in prayer)*
- *(And, as a community, you serve Him) with all your heart and with all your soul.*

14 *Then I will grant the early and late rains of your land at their proper time, and you—(not your enemies)—will gather in your grain, wine, and oil.* 15 *I will provide grass in your field for your livestock (so you do not have to take them to pasture at a distance. When) you will eat, you will be satisfied.*

16 *(But when you are in a state of satisfaction) beware not to let your heart be lured away (from the Torah, causing you to) go astray and worship other (strange) gods, and prostrate yourselves before them.*

TORAS MENACHEM

THE EXPLANATION

In *Parshas Bechukosai*, the Torah stresses "I will give you rain" (literally, "I will give your rains"), indicating that the blessing is being bestowed *to the Jewish people*. In contrast, the Torah states here, "I will grant the... rains of *your land*," indicating that the blessing is being bestowed to the land itself.

The practical distinction between these two approaches is that if the rain is bestowed according to the Jewish people's merits, then they will receive the rain that they deserve, regardless of whether or not this is possible within the natural order. But if the rain is bestowed *to the land* (as in our *Parsha*) then it will come according to the limitations of nature.

The reader will thus be troubled: Why is the Torah offering here a *natural reward* for keeping the *mitzvos* that is *inferior* to the *supernatural reward* which has already been promised in *Parshas Bechukosai?*

Rashi answers: "*You have done what is incumbent upon you, so I will do what is incumbent upon Me.*" The reason why an inferior reward is offered is because the Torah speaks here of a person who *only* did what was incumbent upon him, and no more. Therefore God responds in a similar fashion ("*I will do what is incumbent upon Me*"), blessing the Jewish people for their observance of the *mitzvos*, but without "extending" Himself to do so in a supernatural fashion.

By contrast, *Parshas Bechukosai* speaks of a person who "*toils* in the study of Torah" and the observance of *mitzvos* (*Rashi, Vayikra* 26:3), beyond his natural tendencies and abilities. Consequently, God responds to such a person (not merely with "what is incumbent upon Me," but) with blessings that break through the limitations of nature.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 19, p. 115*ff.*)

Sparks of Chasidus

THE SECOND PARAGRAPH OF THE SHEMA

While the second paragraph of the *Shema* appears to be little more than a repetition of the first paragraph (above 6:4-9), with various additions and changes, *Chasidic* thought explains that the two paragraphs are fundamentally different.

The first paragraph of the *Shema* is speaking from the realm where Godliness is *visibly* present. (Thus it is found in *Parshas Va'eschanan*, where Moshe requested, "*Please let me cross over and* **see** *the good land*"—3:25). The second paragraph, however, speaks to a Jew who is devoid of open Godly revelation from Above; (thus it is found in *Parshas Eikev*, which means "heel," a particularly "uninspired" part of the human body).

Consequently:

- The first paragraph speaks of loving God (not only "*with all your heart and with all your soul,*" but) "*with all your might*" (6:5), alluding to an unlimited form of love, which is granted to a person by revelation from Above. In the second paragraph however, one is commanded to serve God only "*with all your heart and with all your soul,*" since no further Divine assistance is available.
- At the level of the first paragraph, where Godliness is revealed, a person will fulfill the *mitzvos* naturally, without needing to be warned of the consequences of non-observance. In the second paragraph, however, where Godly revelation is absent, it is necessary to mention punishments (v. 16-17).
- Despite the apparent superiority of the first paragraph (Godly revelation), there is nevertheless an advantage to the second paragraph of the *Shema*. For the second paragraph represents the *universal relevance* of Torah to every time and circumstance, even when Godly revelation is absent. Thus, *Rashi* stresses here that Torah is relevant not only to those capable of studying it, but also: "*As soon as the child knows how to speak, teach him Torah*" (*Rashi* to v. 19).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 9, p. 79*ff.*)

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וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתֶם לָהֶם: יז וְחָרָה אַף־יְהוָה בָּכֶם וְעָצַר אֶת־
הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה מָטָר וְהָאֲדָמָה לֹא תִתֵּן אֶת־יְבוּלָהּ
וַאֲבַדְתֶּם מְהֵרָה מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ הַטֹּבָה אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה נֹתֵן לָכֶם:
יח וְשַׂמְתֶּם אֶת־דְּבָרַי אֵלֶּה עַל־לְבַבְכֶם וְעַל־נַפְשְׁכֶם וּקְשַׁרְתֶּם
אֹתָם לְאוֹת עַל־יֶדְכֶם וְהָיוּ לְטוֹטָפֹת בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם: יט וְלִמַּדְתֶּם
אֹתָם אֶת־בְּנֵיכֶם לְדַבֵּר בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתֶךָ וּבְלֶכְתְּךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ

וְתִסְגְּדוּן לְהוֹן: יז וְיִתְקוֹף רֻגְזָא דַייָ בְּכוֹן וְיֵחוֹד
יָת שְׁמַיָּא וְלָא יְהֵי מִטְרָא וְאַרְעָא לָא תִתֵּן יָת
עֲלַלְתַּהּ וְתֵיבְדוּן בִּפְרִיעַ מֵעַל אַרְעָא טָבְתָא
דַּייָ יָהֵב לְכוֹן: יח וּתְשַׁוּוֹן יָת פִּתְגָמַי אִלֵּין עַל
לִבְּכוֹן וְעַל נַפְשְׁכוֹן וְתִקְטְרוּן יָתְהוֹן לְאָת עַל
יְדְכוֹן וִיהוֹן לִתְפִלִּין בֵּין עֵינֵיכוֹן: יט וְתַלְפוּן
יָתְהוֹן יָת בְּנֵיכוֹן לְמַלָּלָא בְהוֹן בְּמִתְּבָךְ
בְּבֵיתָךְ וּבְמֶהֱכָךְ בְּאָרְחָא וּבְמִשְׁכְּבָךְ וּבִמְקִימָךְ:

רש"י

אחרים לעובדיהם, עוסק אליו ואינו עונהו, נמצא עשוי לו כנכרי[1]: (יז) את יבולה. אף מה שאתה מוביל לה, כענין שנאמר[2] זרעתם הרבה והבא מעט[1]: ואבדתם מהרה. על כל שאר היסורין אגלה אתכם מן האדמה, שגרמה לכם לחטוא. משל למלך ששלח בנו לבית המשתה, והיה יושב ומפקידו אל תאכל יותר מצרכך שתבא נקי לביתך, ולא השגיח הבן ההוא, אכל ושתה יותר מצרכו והקיא וטנף את כל בני המסיבה. נטלוהו בידיו וברגליו וזרקוהו אחורי פלטרין[1]: מהרה. איני נותן לכם ארכה. ואם תאמרו והלא נתנה ארכה לדור המבול, שנאמר והיו ימיו מאה ועשרים שנה[3], דור המבול לא היה להם ממי ללמוד ואתם יש לכם ממי ללמוד[1]: (יח) ושמתם את דברי. אף לאחר שתגלו היו מצויינים במצות, הניחו תפילין, עשו מזוזות, כדי שלא יהיו לכם חדשים כשתחזרו. וכן הוא אומר הציבי לך ציונים[4]: (יט) לדבר בם. משעה שהבן יודע לדבר, למדהו תורה צוה לנו משה[5], שיהא זה למוד דבורו. מכאן אמרו, כשהתינוק מתחיל לדבר אביו מסיח עמו בלשון הקדש ומלמדו תורה, ואם לא עשה כן הרי הוא כאלו קוברו, שנאמר ולמדתם אותם את בניכם לדבר בם וגו'[1]:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Are the *mitzvos* of *tefilin* and *mezuzah* obligatory at all times? (v. 18)

Rashi: Even after you go into exile, make yourselves distinctive with My commandments: Put on *tefilin* and make *mezuzos*, so that they will not be new [and unfamiliar] to you when you return—as the verse states, *"Set up markers for yourself"* (Jeremiah 31:20).

Mizrachi: *Rashi* was troubled why the observance of these *mitzvos* is mentioned immediately after the threat of exile in verse 17.

Gur Aryeh: How can *Rashi* claim that this verse is required to teach us that the *mitzvos* of *tefilin* and *mezuzah* apply "even after you go into exile," when these are *personal* obligations which are not dependent on living in the Land of Israel?

The answer is, that during the exile one might think that the Jewish people would indeed be exempt from *tefilin* and *mezuzah*. The worries of the exile would exempt a person from *tefilin*, which require total concentration; and, as a wandering nation, the Jewish people would not purchase any property which would obligate them in *mezuzah*.

This verse teaches us that during exile a person should clear his mind of worry to ensure that he is obligated in *tefilin*, and purchase a house so that he will be obligated in *mezuzah*.

TORAS MENACHEM

Observing the Mitzvos While in Exile (v. 18)

Rashi's comment to verse 18 prompts the following questions:

a.) What was troubling *Rashi*?

b.) *Tefilin* and *mezuzah* are not *mitzvos* that are dependent on residing in the Land of Israel, so why does the verse need to tell us that even after being exiled, the Jewish people are still obligated in *tefilin* and *mezuzah* [as ***Gur Aryeh*** asks]?

c.) In addition to *tefilin* (v. 18) and *mezuzah* (v. 20), the current passage also mentions (between the above two verses) the *mitzvah* of teaching one's child Torah (v. 19). Why did *Rashi* mention only *tefilin* and *mezuzah*, and omit the *mitzvah* of teaching Torah?

The Explanation

a.) At first glance, it would appear that *Rashi* was troubled by the question: Why does the Torah repeat the *mitzvos* of *tefilin* and *mezuzah* here when they have already been commanded in the first paragraph of the *Shema* (6:8-9)?

However, if this problem *alone* was troubling *Rashi* he could have explained the repetition more simply, in a similar fashion to his comment on verse 13 above: *"Has scripture not already stated 'with all your heart and with all your soul'* (Devarim 6:5)*? That was addressed to the individual, and this is addressed to the community."*

Likewise, in our case, if *Rashi* was troubled by repetition alone, he could have answered that the *mitzvos* are repeated here as a warning to the community.

Therefore, it would appear that, *in addition* to the repetition, *Rashi* was troubled why the *mitzvos* of *tefilin* and *mezuzah* were written here immediately after the threat of exile [as ***Mizrachi*** writes].

Rashi thus answers, "Even after you go into exile, make yourselves distinctive with My commandments," for this explains *both*, i.) The repetition of the *mitzvos* here; and ii.) The juxtaposition to the threat of exile.

b.) The reason why (at the literal level) we might imagine that *tefilin* and *mezuzah* would not be obligatory outside the Land of Israel is because: When introducing the first paragraph of the *Shema* (where the *mitzvos* of *tefilin* and *mezuzah* are commanded), the Torah states, "This is the body of commandments, the suprarational commands and the rational commands, that God, your God, commanded (me) to teach you,

1 ספרי. 2 חגי א, ו. 3 בראשית ו, ג. 4 ירמיה לא, כ. 5 דברים לג, ד

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17 *Then the anger of God will be kindled against you! He will close up the skies, and there will be no rain. The ground will not yield its produce, and you will perish quickly from the good land that God is giving you.*

18 *(Even after you go into exile) you should (continue to) place these words of Mine upon your heart and upon your soul. You should bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they should be "totafos" between your eyes.* 19 *(From infancy) you should teach these (words) to your sons to (be accustomed to) speak of them, when you sit in your house and when you walk on the way, when you lie down (at night)*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Is a woman obligated in Torah study? (v. 19)

TALMUD: How do we know that a woman is not obligated to teach herself Torah?

Because the verse states וְלִמַּדְתֶּם ("you should teach") [which is identical to the word] וּלְמַדְתֶּם ("you should study"—*Devarim* 5:1) [with different vocalization. From here we equate teaching with studying, indicating that] one whom others are commanded to teach is commanded to teach oneself, but one whom others are not commanded to teach, is not commanded to teach oneself.

And from where do we know that there is no obligation to teach a woman? From the verse: "You should teach these (words) *to your sons,*" which excludes teaching "your daughters" (*Kidushin* 29b).

ALTER REBBE'S SHULCHAN ARUCH: Women are required to recite the blessings made on Torah study, for they are obligated to study the *mitzvos* which are incumbent upon them, in order to know how to perform them, and in order to [know how to] refrain from all the prohibitions [of the Torah] which they are warned against transgressing to the same extent as men (*Orach Chaim* 47:10, from *Sefer Ha'agur,* ch. 2).

TORAS MENACHEM

to be performed in the Land which you are about *to enter and possess*" (6:1). This might lead a person to think that the *mitzvos* of *tefilin* and *mezuzah* are only obligatory when the Jewish people possess the Land of Israel, but that when they are exiled, the obligation ceases. Therefore, our verse is required to confirm, "*Even after you go into exile...put on tefilin and make mezuzos.*"

c.) As for the question why *Rashi* did not mention the continued requirement of Torah study during exile, there are a number of possible explanations:

i.) The Torah is a guide as to how to observe the *mitzvos.* Thus, the continued requirement to observe the *mitzvos* in exile *logically includes* a requirement to study the Torah.

ii.) If the requirement to study Torah did indeed apply only in the Land of Israel, then it would not be productive to continue studying Torah in exile, so that the Torah "will not be new [and unfamiliar] to you when you return." For human nature is such that new subject matter actually *enhances* study, since people generally find repetition and review tedious. So if there was no obligation to study Torah outside the Land of Israel it might be better to *stop* studying while in exile, so that upon returning to the Land, the Torah could be studied with fresh excitement.

In the case of practical *mitzvos,* however, such as *tefilin* and *mezuzah,* observance actually becomes easier by continued practice, without interruption.

iii.) The requirement to study Torah that is recorded here is *not* a repetition of the *mitzvah* written in the first paragraph of the *Shema.* For, the first paragraph teaches the requirement to teach our *students* (*Rashi* to 6:7), whereas here we are commanded to teach our *children* (*Rashi* to v. 19).

Thus, the fear that a person might think that teaching Torah does not apply outside the Diaspora does not apply in this case, as this fear only applies to *mitzvos* taught in the first paragraph of the *Shema* (which is introduced with the words "This is the body of commandments...to be performed *in the land*"). The requirement to teach our children, however, was *not* taught in the first paragraph, and is thus being learned here for the first time. So there would be no reason to suspect that we would be exempt from teaching our children Torah outside the land, and consequently, *Rashi* omitted this case.

(Based on *Sichos Shabbos Parshas Re'eh* 5729;
Likutei Sichos vol. 9, p. 80, notes 6 & 9)

A WOMAN'S REQUIREMENT TO STUDY TORAH (v. 19)

Concerning the applicability of the *mitzvah* of Torah study to women, we find a seemingly paradoxical statement in Jewish Law:

On one hand, it is clearly ruled that a woman is not obligated in the *mitzvah* of Torah study*, based on the ***Talmud.***

It is thus difficult to understand, on the other hand, why Jewish Law mandates that women *should* make the morning blessings on the study of Torah.

Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch explains (based on the commentary of *Sefer Ha'agur*) that a woman makes these blessings, despite her exemption from the *mitzvah* of Torah study, because women "*are obligated to study about the mitzvos which are incumbent upon them.*"

However:

a.) According to this logic, the study incumbent upon women is not a *mitzvah* in itself, but *a means to an end.* I.e. her study is not "Torah study" in its own right, but rather, a *preparatory phase* of her observance; being that a woman is required to observe many *mitzvos,* and refrain from prohibitions. The blessings on Torah study, however, are to thank God for the requirement of study *for its own sake.***

b.) According to the above logic, once a woman knows all the laws applicable to her, she no longer has a requirement to study Torah. So how can the *Alter Rebbe* write *unequivocally,* "Women are required to

* See also *Rambam, Laws of Torah Study* 1:1; ibid. 13; *Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh De'ah* 246:6; *Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, Laws of Torah Study* 1:14.

**It would appear that she could recite the first blessing on Torah study ("*Blessed are You...who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us about the words of Torah*"), since a woman is indeed "commanded" to study the laws applicable to her. The question concerns the second blessing recited daily ("*Blessed are You...who has chosen us from among all the nations and given us His Torah. Blessed are you God Who gives the Torah*") for a woman was not "given" the privilege of Torah study as a *mitzvah* in its own right. (See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 14, p. 150, note at foot of the page; ibid. p. 39, note 29).

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ובשכבך ובקומך: כ וכתבתם על־מזוזות ביתך ובשעריך:
כא למען ירבו ימיכם וימי בניכם על האדמה אשר נשבע
יהוה לאבתיכם לתת להם כימי השמים על־הארץ: ס
[שביעי ומפטיר] כב כי אם־שמר תשמרון את־כל־המצוה הזאת
אשר אנכי מצוה אתכם לעשתה לאהבה את־יהוה אלהיכם
ללכת בכל־דרכיו ולדבקה־בו: כג והוריש יהוה את־כל־
הגוים האלה מלפניכם וירשתם גוים גדלים ועצמים מכם:
כד כל־המקום אשר תדרך כף־רגלכם בו לכם יהיה מן־
המדבר והלבנון מן־הנהר נהר־פרת ועד הים האחרון יהיה
גבלכם: כה לא־יתיצב איש בפניכם פחדכם ומוראכם יתן ׀
יהוה אלהיכם על־פני כל־הארץ אשר תדרכו־בה כאשר
דבר לכם: ס ס ס

קי״א פסוקים, אי״ק סימן. יעל״א סימן.

כ ותכתבנון על מזוזין ותקבענון בספי ביתך
ובתרעיך: כא בדיל דיסגון יומיכון ויומי
בניכון על ארעא די קיים יי לאבהתכון למתן
להון כיומי שמיא על ארעא: כב ארי אם
מטר תטרון ית כל תפקדתא הדא די אנא
מפקד יתכון למעבדה למרחם ית יי אלהכון
למהך בכל ארחן דתקנן קדמוהי ולאתקרבא
לדחלתה: כג ויתרך יי ית כל עממיא האלין
מקדמיכון ותירתון עממין רברבין ותקיפין
מנכון: כד כל אתרא די תדרוך פרסת רגלכון
בה דלכון יהי מן מדברא ולבנן מן נהרא
נהרא פרת ועד ימא מערבא יהי תחומכון:
כה לא יתעתד אנש קדמיכון דחלתכון
ואימתכון יתן יי אלהכון על אפי כל ארעא די
תדרכון בה כמא די מליל לכון: פ פ פ

רש״י

(כא) **למען ירבו ימיכם וימי בניכם.** אם עשיתם כן ירבו, ואם לאו לא ירבו, שדברי תורה נדרשין מכלל לאו הן, ומכלל הן לאו[1]: **לתת להם.** לתת לכם אין כתיב כאן, אלא לתת להם, מכאן מצינו למדים תחיית המתים מן התורה[1]: (כב) **שמור תשמרון.** אזהרת שמירות הרבה לאזהר בתלמודו שלא ישתכח[1]: **ללכת בכל דרכיו.** הוא רחום ואתה תהא רחום, הוא גומל חסדים ואתה גמול חסדים[1]: **ולדבקה בו.** אפשר לומר כן, והלא אש אוכלה הוא, אלא הדבק בתלמידים ובחכמים ומעלה אני עליך כאלו נדבקת בו[1]: (כג) **והוריש ה'.** עשיתם מה שעליכם, אף אני אעשה מה שעלי: **ועצמים מכם.** אתם גבורים, והם גבורים מכם, שאם לא שישראל גבורים, מה השבח הוא שמשבח את האמוריים לומר ועצומים מכם, אלא אתם גבורים משאר האומות והם גבורים מכם: (כה) **לא יתיצב איש וגו'.** אין לי אלא איש, אומה ומשפחה ואשה בכשפיה מנין, תלמוד לומר לא יתיצב מכל מקום. אם כן מה תלמוד לומר איש, אפילו כעוג מלך הבשן[1]: **פחדכם ומוראכם.** והלא פחד הוא מורא, אלא פחדכם על הקרובים ומוראכם על הרחוקים: **פחד.** לשון בעיתת פתאום: **מורא.** לשון דאגה מימים רבים[2]: **כאשר דבר לכם.** והיכן דבר, את[3] אימתי אשלח לפניך וגו'[3]: **חסלת פרשת עקב**

TORAS MENACHEM

recite the blessings made on Torah study," without qualifying precisely when this obligation applies?

The Explanation

The *Mishnah* teaches: "*A sacrifice can be invalidated* [*through an error*] *in any one of the four procedures: 'slaughtering', 'receiving'* [*the blood in a sacred vessel*]*, 'conveying'* [*it to the Altar*] *and 'throwing'* [*it onto the Altar*]."

"*Rabbi Shimon permits a sacrifice* [*if the error occurs*] *during 'conveying,' for he used to say: 'It is impossible to offer a sacrifice without slaughter, receiving and throwing; but it is possible to offer one without conveying. For one could slaughter right next to the Altar and throw* [*the blood from there*]*'*" (*Zevachim* 13a).

Rabbi Shimon's logic is that "conveying" the blood is not a full-fledged service in its own right, but merely a "means to an end." Therefore, an error in this procedure would not render the sacrifice invalid, since it is a procedure which could have been dispensed with.

What, then, is the reason why the first opinion in the *mishnah* maintains that a sacrifice *is* invalidated by an error during "conveying," if the entire process of conveying is not really necessary?

The *Rogatchover Ga'on* writes that this teaches us a profound principle of Jewish law: That when *halachah* requires a procedure to take place, even if it appears to be no more than a means to an end, *it becomes an end in itself.*

Thus, in the above case, even though "conveying" the blood is not an "end" in itself (as is evidenced from the fact that it could be dispensed with), nevertheless, when the need for it arises, it becomes a full-fledged service in its own right, which can invalidate the entire sacrifice if performed incorrectly (see *Tzafnas Pane'ach al Hatorah*, *Bamidbar* 33:2 and sources cited loc. cit; *Tzafnas Paneach leMoreh Nevuchim* 1:72*).

* For the philosophical implications of this stance, and its connection with the *Ba'al Shem Tov's* conception of Divine Providence, see *Sicha* of the second day of *Shavuos* 5728, ch. 8 (*Sichos Kodesh* 5728, vol 2, p. 180ff.)

1 ספרי 2 ראה שיחת ש״פ עקב תשכ״ה
3 שמות כג, כז

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and when you get up (in the morning). [20] *You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and upon*
your (public) gates. [21] *(All this is) in order that your days and your children's days will be prolonged upon*
the land which God swore to your forefathers to give them, so long as the skies will be above the earth.

MITZVOS: KEY TO CONQUEST OF THE LAND

11:22 SEVENTH READING & MAFTIR *For if you will always be careful to keep these commandments which I am commanding you to*
keep, to love God, your God, to follow all His ways, and to cleave to Him, [23] *then God will drive*
out all these nations from before you, and you will take over nations that are greater and stronger
than you. [24] *Every place upon which the soles of your feet will tread will be yours. Your boundary will*
be from the desert and the Lebanon, and from the river, the Euphrates River, until the western sea.
[25] *No man will stand before you. God your God will cast the fear and dread of you upon all the land*
where you will tread, just as He said to you.

THE HAFTARAH FOR EIKEV IS ON PAGE 278

TORAS MENACHEM

A similar argument could be offered in our case:

Initially, the need for a woman to study Torah arose, not as an exercise in Torah study *per se*, but a necessary step towards observing the *mitzvos* in which she is obligated. However, *when halachah requires an activity to take place, even if it appears to be no more than a means to an end, it becomes an end in itself.* Therefore, the fact that Jewish Law now requires her to study Torah, (even though the need for her study arose initially as a "means to an end"), signifies that the Torah study of a woman has *become* a means of serving God in its own right; an "end" in itself.

Consequently, she is required to make the blessings on the Torah *every* morning, since whenever she studies, it is indeed an act of Torah study* through which she serves God, and not merely a preparatory phase towards the observance of a *mitzvah* at a later time. Likewise, even if a woman has already mastered the laws pertaining to all the *mitzvos* incumbent upon her, she still makes the blessings on Torah study, since her Torah study has value in its own right.

A TALMUDIC PRECEDENT

The above ruling, that a woman makes the blessings on the Torah since her Torah study has independent value, appears to be based on the *Talmudic* teaching, "*Even a non-Jew who busies himself with Torah study* (i.e. those parts which pertain to the seven Noachide laws), *is like a High Priest*" (*Bava Kama* 38a).

Tosfos (*ibid.*) connects this with the verse which describes Torah as being "*more precious than pearls* (פְּנִינִים)," on which the *Talmud* expounds, that the Torah is "more precious" than "*the High Priest who enters the innermost sanctum* (לִפְנַי וְלִפְנִים)" (*Sotah* 4b).**

From here we see that even though a non-Jew is not obligated in the *mitzvah* of Torah study for its own sake***, and he is required to study the Torah only as a means to an end (to know how to observe the Noachide Laws), nevertheless, through this exercise he can appreciate the unique and precious qualities of the Torah. Thus, his Torah study becomes spiritually uplifting in its own right.

And certainly if this is true for a non-Jew (to whom the Torah was not given), then a Jewish woman can certainly appreciate that the Torah is "*more precious than pearls*," and enjoy its study as a spiritually uplifting method of serving God.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 14, p. 37*ff.*)

The Last Word

While in times gone by, women and girls were not taught Torah at all (see *Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, Hilchos Talmud Torah* 1:13), nowadays it is not only *permissible* to teach women even the deepest parts of the Torah, but it is an absolute *necessity* to do so. For, in the modern world, women are no longer confined to the home and they are highly exposed to the "marketplace" of secular ideas. Thus, if the policy of not teaching women Torah at an advanced level is upheld, the result will be that a girl's sophisticated worldly knowledge—which is likely to harbor many ideas that are antithetical to Torah—will be insubstantially compensated for by her rudimentary Torah knowledge.

Furthermore, it goes without saying that Chasidic teachings should be taught to women and girls, as this provides a person with the tools to "*know the God of your father, and serve Him with a perfect heart*" (*Chronicles* I 28:9), in which their obligation is identical to men and boys.

(Based on *Sichos Kodesh* 5741 vol. 2, p. 809ff.; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Emor* 5750)

* Nevertheless, she does not fulfill the ***mitzvah*** of Torah study, since she is not commanded *directly* to study Torah. Rather, her obligation to study stems indirectly from her obligation to observe the *mitzvos*. However, she may still make the blessing, "*Blessed are You...who has given* ***us*** *His Torah*," since women were indeed given the privilege of Torah study (indirectly), as an obligation which stems out of the *mitzvos* in which they are obligated. The woman is also enjoined to support her husband and sons in Torah study (See *Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, Hilchos Talmud Torah* 1:13), even though she can study Torah herself, since a man's (direct) obligation—and the accompanying merit—is greater, and thus by supporting them she shares some of this greater merit. ** For an explanation of this teaching, see *Likutei Sichos* vol 14, p. 44, note 57; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Naso* 5730. ***Indeed, if not related to the Noachide Laws, he is prohibited to study Torah (*Sanhedrin* 59a).

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Parshas Eikev *contains 6 positive mitzvos & 2 prohibitions*

1. Not to derive benefit from the ornamentation of an idol [7:25].
2. Not to possess an object of idol-worship or to derive benefit from it [7:26].
3. To bless God after eating bread [8:10].
4. To love converts [10:19].
5. To fear God [10:20].
6. To pray to God [10:20].
7. To associate with and attach oneself to Torah scholars [10:20].
8. To swear by God's Name when taking an oath [10:20].

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parshas Re'eh

פרשת ראה

The Name of the Parsha

Re'eh means *"See!"* as in the opening verse of our *Parsha*: *"See! I am giving to you today a blessing and a curse."*

What, exactly, is the Torah demanding, in asking us to "see" God's blessings and curses?

Broadly speaking, a person's observance of the precepts of Judaism could fall into one of three categories:

a.) *Plain obedience.* At this level, a person is willing to observe the *mitzvos* because he is aware of a Higher Authority. However, his observance is not inspired by an understanding or appreciation of the Torah; he simply "accepts the yoke of heaven."

b.) *Intellectual appreciation.* A higher level is where a person not only observes the precepts of the Torah out of deference to a Higher Authority, but he also has an intellectual appreciation of the importance of observing the *mitzvos*, and he understands the rewards that *mitzvah*-observance brings.

However, even this person has not yet reached perfection. For intellectual conviction alone—while immensely powerful—still leaves room to explore other avenues, so it does not represent an *absolute* commitment.

Thus, the highest level of *mitzvah* observance is:

c.) *Vision.* At this level, one does not merely *appreciate* the value of keeping the Torah's precepts, one *sees* it. I.e. the necessity and positive results of observing the *mitzvos* become as clear and self-evident as seeing a physical object with one's eyes.

And it is this third level which our *Parsha* commands—and spiritually empowers—every Jew to reach, with the words: *"See!* I am giving to you today a blessing and a curse."

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Re'eh* 5743)

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כו רְאֵה אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן לִפְנֵיכֶם הַיּוֹם בְּרָכָה וּקְלָלָה: כז אֶת־הַבְּרָכָה
אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶל־מִצְוֹת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה
אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם: כח וְהַקְּלָלָה אִם־לֹא תִשְׁמְעוּ אֶל־מִצְוֹת יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְסַרְתֶּם מִן־הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם
לָלֶכֶת אַחֲרֵי אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יְדַעְתֶּם: ס כט וְהָיָה כִּי
יְבִיאֲךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה בָא־שָׁמָּה
לְרִשְׁתָּהּ וְנָתַתָּה אֶת־הַבְּרָכָה עַל־הַר גְּרִזִים וְאֶת־הַקְּלָלָה
עַל־הַר עֵיבָל: ל הֲלֹא־הֵמָּה בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן אַחֲרֵי דֶּרֶךְ מְבוֹא
הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ בְּאֶרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִי הַיֹּשֵׁב בָּעֲרָבָה מוּל הַגִּלְגָּל אֵצֶל אֵלוֹנֵי
מֹרֶה: לא כִּי אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן לָבֹא לָרֶשֶׁת אֶת־הָאָרֶץ

כו חֲזוֹ דִּי אֲנָא יָהֵב קֳדָמֵיכוֹן יוֹמָא דֵין בִּרְכָן
וּלְוָטִין: כז יָת בִּרְכָן דִּי תְקַבְּלוּן לְפִקּוֹדַיָּא דַּייָ
אֱלָהָכוֹן דִּי אֲנָא מְפַקֵּד יָתְכוֹן יוֹמָא דֵין:
כח וּלְוָטַיָּא אִם לָא תְקַבְּלוּן לְפִקּוֹדַיָּא דַּייָ
אֱלָהָכוֹן וְתִסְטוּן מִן אָרְחָא דִּי אֲנָא מְפַקֵּד
יָתְכוֹן יוֹמָא דֵין לִמְהָךְ בָּתַר טָעֲוַת עַמְמַיָּא דִּי
לָא יְדַעְתּוּן: כט וִיהֵי אֲרֵי יַעֲלִנָּךְ יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ
לְאַרְעָא דִּי אַתְּ עָלֵל לְתַמָּן לְמֵירְתַהּ וְתִתֵּן יָת
מְבָרְכַיָּא עַל טוּרָא דִגְרִזִּים וְיָת מְלַטְטַיָּא עַל
טוּרָא דְעֵיבָל: ל הֲלָא אִנּוּן בְּעִבְרָא דְיַרְדְּנָא
אֲחוֹרֵי אֹרַח מַעְלְנֵי שִׁמְשָׁא בְּאֲרַע כְּנַעֲנָאָה
דְּיָתֵב בְּמֵישְׁרָא לָקֳבֵל גִּלְגְּלָא בִּסְטַר מֵישְׁרֵי
מוֹרֶה: לא אֲרֵי אַתּוּן עָבְרִין יָת יַרְדְּנָא לְמֵעַל

רש"י

(כו) ראה אנכי נותן. ברכה וקללה. האמורות בהר גריזים ובהר עיבל: **(כז) את הברכה.** על מנת אשר תשמעו: **(כח) מן הדרך אשר אנכי מצוה אתכם היום ללכת וגו'.** הא למדת שכל העובד עבודה זרה הרי הוא סר מכל הדרך שנצטוו ישראל. מכאן אמרו כל המודה בעבודה זרה ככופר בכל התורה כולה[1]: **(כט) ונתתה את הברכה.** כתרגומו ית מברכיא, את המברכים: **על הר גרזים.** כלפי הר גרזים הופכין פניהם ופתחו בברכה, ברוך האיש אשר לא יעשה פסל ומסכה וגו'. כל הארורים שבפרשה[2] אמרו תחלה בלשון ברוך, ואחר כך הפכו פניהם כלפי הר עיבל ופתחו בקללה: **(ל) הלא המה.** נתן להם סימן[3]: **אחרי.** אחרי העברת הירדן הרבה והלאה למרחוק, וזהו לשון אחרי. כל מקום שנאמר אחרי, מופלג הוא[4]: **דרך מבוא השמש.** להלן מן הירדן לצד מערב. וטעם המקרא מוכיח שהם שני דברים, שנקודו בשני טעמים, אחרי נקוד בפשטא, ודרך נקוד במהפך והוא נגוע, ואם היה אחרי דרך דבור אחד, היה נקוד אחרי במשרת בשופר הפוך, ודרך בפשטא ורפה: **מול הגלגל.** רחוק מן הגלגל[5]: **אלוני מורה.** הוא שכם, שנאמר[6] עד מקום שכם עד אלון מורה[7]: **(לא) כי אתם עוברים את הירדן וגו'.** נסים של ירדן יהיו סימן בידכם

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What is the blessing and curse mentioned here? (v. 26)

Rashi: Those [blessings and curses] which were said at Mount Gerizim and Mount Aival (See 27:15-26 below).

Mizrachi: At first glance, the "blessing and curse" mentioned in our verse were given here, as the verse stresses, "I am giving to you *today* a blessing and curse."

Rashi informs us, however, that the "blessing and curse" were not actually given here, but rather, that this refers to the later event detailed in *Parshas Ki Savo*, where blessings and curses were recited at Mount Gerizim and Mount Aival.

Thus, when our verse states that the "blessing and curse" were given "today," it does not mean that the blessings and curses were actually given here in *Parshas Re'eh*. Rather, the verse is to be understood: "See! I am giving to you today *the precise sequence of blessings and curses which are later to be given at Mount Gerizim and Mount Aival*." (This sequence is then described in verses 29-30.)

If you still argue that perhaps the blessings and curses were indeed said by Moshe here, and that they were merely repeated at Mount Gerizim and Mount Aival—two responses could be given:

a.) It is unreasonable to suggest that the blessings and curses would have been repeated in such a short time of less than two months.

b.) The Torah makes no reference to Moshe issuing any specific blessings or curses here, and in *Parshas Ki Savo*, no indication is given that the blessings and curses are merely being repeated.

● What does בְּרָכָה וּקְלָלָה mean? (v. 26)

Onkelos: "A blessing and a Curse."

Targum Yonason: "A blessing and its substitute." (See "*Sparks*")

TORAS MENACHEM

"A Blessing and a Curse" (v. 26)

Upon reading the opening of our *Parsha*, *Rashi* was troubled why the verse states, "I am giving to you today a blessing and a curse," when we do not find that any blessings or curses are given here at all.

Rashi answers that the blessings and curses were indeed *given* by God to the Jewish people here in *Parshas Re'eh*, but that they were not actually "*said* [until a later date] at Mount Gerizim and Mount Aival." At first glance it is somewhat perplexing that God should give a blessing and a curse here, when they were not actually uttered until a later date. However, *Rashi* felt that it was unnecessary to discuss this point, since the reader will already be familiar with the idea that precepts can be given well before they become applicable, as we find for example in the case of

1 ספרי 2 דברים כז, טו 3 ראה שיחת ש"פ ראה תשל"ו 4 ב"ר מד, ה 5 סוטה לג: 6 בראשית יב, ו 7 שם

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A BLESSING AND A CURSE

11:26 *See! I am giving to you today a blessing and a curse.*
— [27] The blessing (is being given) on the basis that you will listen to the commandments of God, your God, which I am commanding you today. [28] And the curse (will come) if you do not listen to the commandments of God, your God, and go astray from the way I am commanding you today, to follow other gods, which are unacquainted to you—*

*[29] What will happen is, when God, your God, will bring you to the Land which you are going to come and take possession of, you should place (the people who will recite) the blessing (facing) towards Mount Gerizim, and (when they recite) the curse (they should turn so that they face) towards Mount Aival.***

[30] (These mountains) are to be found well beyond the other side of the Jordan, (to the west) where the sun sets, in the land of the Cana'anites, who dwell in the plain, far from Gilgal, near (Shechem in) the plains of Moreh.

[31] When you cross the Jordan (you will see miracles that will be a sign for you that you are going) to come and take possession of the Land which God, your God, is giving you. You will take possession of

TORAS MENACHEM

the many *mitzvos* that are dependent upon living in the Land of Israel, which were *given* well before the Jewish people entered the Land.

In the final analysis, we see that *Rashi* explains how our verse can be understood *literally*: "I am giving to you *today* a blessing and a curse," since the blessings and curses were indeed *given* to the Jewish people at this point.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Re'eh* 5748)

The Last Word

"A BLESSING AND A CURSE..." (v. 26)

The Almighty did not want the soul to eat "bread of shame," (i.e. sustenance given gratuitously, without having been earned by the recipient); He therefore made it possible for man to serve Him in a meaningful way with toil of body and soul. Through our endeavors in *avoda* [service of God] we are Divinely enabled to earn all manner of goodness....

The difficulties, trials, and tests of life are themselves the means by which we are to attain our ultimate objective—that the soul achieve the lofty spiritual level it once possessed before it descended into the body: *"The soul that you have given me is pure"* (Text of Morning Prayer). The purpose of life is for the soul to regain that level of original "purity" and even transcend it—for one hour of *teshuvah* [repentance] and good deeds in this world is worth more than all the lifetime of the spiritual World to Come.

So you see that life's trials, tragedies and difficulties actually bring us closer to our goal, our *raison d'etre*; they are part of the divine system of toil and endeavor enabling us, finite mortals, to reach the highest levels of rewards and goodness—which can only be earned by meaningful "labor" and effort. It follows that one must not allow the difficulties of life's trials (or even one's failure from time to time) to overcome the double joy of being God's children and of having received His promise, *"Your people are all righteous"* (Isaiah 60:21).

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe)

Sparks of Chasidus

How could God, who is the very essence of good, issue a curse (v. 26)? Are we not taught, *"No evil thing is issued from Above"* (Bereishis Rabah 51:3)?

In truth, however, God does not issue curses at all, and only blessings are "issued from Above." The problem lies "below," in our ability to receive God's blessings. If a person is not a fitting receptacle for the goodness which God bestows upon him, he will simply be unable to accommodate God's blessings. The result will be that after its downward path through the spiritual worlds, the blessing is received in a way that appears, to our human eyes, as a curse (See Shaloh, Re'eh 374b).

At least that is how it appears in the spiritually dampened moments of exile. Thus ***Onkelos***, who authored his work amid the Babylonian exile, interpreted the word קְלָלָה as "curse" (See Classic Questions). However, ***Targum Yonason*** wrote his commentary in the Land of Israel during Temple times, when even the average person could easily appreciate that *"no evil thing is issued from Above."* Thus, he rendered קְלָלָה as "substitute" (חילופא), indicating that God Himself only issues blessings, but that His blessings may later become "substituted" by something else.

And this also explains why, in the Messianic Era, we will not only *forgive* God for the sufferings of exile, but we will *thank* Him (see Isaiah 12:1), for then it will be evident how even God's "curses" were in fact blessings in disguise.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 133ff.; vol. 4, p. 1091)

* See *Rashi* here, explained in *Likutei Sichos* vol. 14, pp. 119-120. ** See 27:15-26 below.

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אֲשֶׁר־יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם נֹתֵן לָכֶם וִירִשְׁתֶּם אֹתָהּ וִישַׁבְתֶּם־בָּהּ:
לב וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם לַעֲשׂוֹת אֵת כָּל־הַחֻקִּים וְאֶת־הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר
אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן לִפְנֵיכֶם הַיּוֹם: יב א אֵלֶּה הַחֻקִּים וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר
תִּשְׁמְרוּן לַעֲשׂוֹת בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתֶיךָ לְךָ
לְרִשְׁתָּהּ כָּל־הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר־אַתֶּם חַיִּים עַל־הָאֲדָמָה: ב אַבֵּד
תְּאַבְּדוּן אֶת־כָּל־הַמְּקֹמוֹת אֲשֶׁר עָבְדוּ־שָׁם הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם
יֹרְשִׁים אֹתָם אֶת־אֱלֹהֵיהֶם עַל־הֶהָרִים הָרָמִים וְעַל־הַגְּבָעוֹת
וְתַחַת כָּל־עֵץ רַעֲנָן: ג וְנִתַּצְתֶּם אֶת־מִזְבְּחֹתָם וְשִׁבַּרְתֶּם אֶת־
מַצֵּבֹתָם וַאֲשֵׁרֵיהֶם תִּשְׂרְפוּן בָּאֵשׁ וּפְסִילֵי אֱלֹהֵיהֶם תְּגַדֵּעוּן
וְאִבַּדְתֶּם אֶת־שְׁמָם מִן־הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא: ד לֹא־תַעֲשׂוּן כֵּן לַיהֹוָה
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: ה כִּי אִם־אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם
מִכָּל־שִׁבְטֵיכֶם לָשׂוּם אֶת־שְׁמוֹ שָׁם לְשִׁכְנוֹ תִדְרְשׁוּ וּבָאתָ
שָׁמָּה: ו וַהֲבֵאתֶם שָׁמָּה עֹלֹתֵיכֶם וְזִבְחֵיכֶם וְאֵת מַעְשְׂרֹתֵיכֶם
וְאֵת תְּרוּמַת יֶדְכֶם וְנִדְרֵיכֶם וְנִדְבֹתֵיכֶם וּבְכֹרֹת בְּקַרְכֶם
וְצֹאנְכֶם: ז וַאֲכַלְתֶּם־שָׁם לִפְנֵי יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּשְׂמַחְתֶּם בְּכֹל
מִשְׁלַח יֶדְכֶם אַתֶּם וּבָתֵּיכֶם אֲשֶׁר בֵּרַכְךָ יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ: ח לֹא
תַעֲשׂוּן כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר אֲנַחְנוּ עֹשִׂים פֹּה הַיּוֹם אִישׁ כָּל־הַיָּשָׁר
בְּעֵינָיו: ט כִּי לֹא־בָאתֶם עַד־עָתָּה אֶל־הַמְּנוּחָה וְאֶל־הַנַּחֲלָה
אֲשֶׁר־יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ: י וַעֲבַרְתֶּם אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן וִישַׁבְתֶּם
בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מַנְחִיל אֶתְכֶם וְהֵנִיחַ לָכֶם מִכָּל־

למירת ית ארעא דיי אלהכון יהב לכון
ותירתון יתה ותיתבון בה: לב ותטרון
למעבד ית כל קימיא וית דיניא די אנא יהב
קדמיכון יומא דין: א אלין קימיא ודיניא די
תטרון למעבד בארעא דיהב יי אלהא
דאבהתך לך למירתה כל יומיא די אתון
קימין על ארעא: ב אבדא תאבדון ית כל
אתריא די פלחו תמן עממיא די אתון ירתין
יתהון ית טעותהון על טוריא רמיא ועל
רמתא ותחות כל אילן עבוף: ג ותתרעון ית
אגוריהון ותתברון ית קמתהון ואשיריהון
תוקדון בנורא וצלמי טעותהון תקוצצון
ותובדון ית שמהון מן אתרא ההוא: ד לא
תעבדון כן קדם יי אלהכון: ה אלהן לאתרא
די יתרעי יי אלהכון מכל שבטיכון לאשראה
שכנתה תמן לבית שכנתה תתבעון ותיתון
לתמן: ו ותיתון לתמן עלותיכון ונכסת
קודשיכון וית מעשרתיכון וית אפרשות
ידכון ונדריכון ונדבתיכון ובכורי תורכון
וענכון: ז ותיכלון תמן קדם יי אלהכון
ותחדון בכל אושטות ידכון אתון ואנש
בתיכון די ברכך יי אלהך: ח לא תעבדון
ככל די אנחנא עבדין הכא יומא דין גבר כל
מן דכשר קדמוהי: ט ארי לא אתיתון עד
כען לבית ניחא ולאחסנא דיי אלהך יהב לך:
י ותעברון ית ירדנא ותיתבון בארעא דיי
אלהכון מחסן יתכון ויניח לכון מכל בעלי
דבביכון מסחור סחור ותיתבון לרחצן:

רש"י

שתבואו ותירשו את הארץ[1]: (ב) **אבד תאבדון.** אבד ואחר כך תאבדון, מכאן לעוקר עבודה זרה שצריך לשרש אחריה[1]: **את כל המקומות אשר עבדו שם וגו'.** ומה תאבדון מהם, את אלהיהם אשר על ההרים[1]: (ג) **מזבח.** של אבנים הרבה: **מצבה.** של אבן אחת, והוא בימוס שמזכיר במשנה[2], אבן שהיא מתפלחת לבימוס: **אשרה.** אילן הנעבד: **ואבדתם את שמם.** לכנות להם שם לגנאי, בית גליא קורין לה בית כריא, עין כל עין קוץ[3]: (ד) **לא תעשון כן.** להקטיר לשמים בכל מקום, כי אם במקום אשר יבחר. דבר אחר ונתצתם את מזבחותם ואבדתם את שמם לא תעשון כן, אזהרה למוחק את השם ולנותץ אבן מן המזבח או מן העזרה. אמר רבי ישמעאל וכי תעלה על דעתך שישראל נותצין את המזבחות, אלא שלא תעשו כמעשיהם, ויגרמו עונותיכם למקדש אבותיכם שיחרב[4]: (ה) **לשכנו תדרשו.** זה משכן שילה[1]: (ו) **זבחיכם.** שלמים של חובה: **מעשרתיכם.** מעשר בהמה ומעשר שני לאכול לפנים מן החומה[1]: **תרומת ידכם.** אלו הבכורים, שנאמר בהם ולקח הכהן הטנא מידך[5]: **ובכורות בקרכם.** נותנם לכהן ויקריבם שם: (ז) **אשר ברכך ה'.** לפי הברכה הבא: (ח) **לא תעשון ככל אשר אנחנו עשים וגו'.** מוסב למעלה על כי אתם עוברים את הירדן וגו' כשתעברו את הירדן מיד מותרים אתם להקריב בבמה, כל ארבע עשרה שנה של כבוש וחלוק, ובבמה לא תקריבו כל מה שאתם מקריבים פה היום במשכן, שהוא עמכם ונמשח והוא כשר להקריב בו חטאות ואשמות נדרים ונדבות, אבל בבמה אין קרב אלא הנידר והנידב. וזהו איש כל הישר בעיניו, נדרים ונדבות שאתם מתנדבים על ידי שישר בעיניכם להביאם ולא על ידי חובה, אותם תקריבו בבמה[1]: (ט) **כי לא באתם.** כל אותן ארבע עשרה שנה: **עד עתה.** כמו עדיין[1]: **אל המנוחה.** זו שילה: **הנחלה.** זו ירושלים: (י) **ועברתם את הירדן וישבתם בארץ.** שתחלקוה, ויהא כל אחד מכיר את חלקו ואת שבטו: **והניח לכם.** לאחר כבוש וחלוק ומנוחה מן הגוים אשר הניח ה' לנסות בם את ישראל[6]. ואין זאת אלא בימי דוד, אז:

1 ספרי 2 ע"ז מז: 3 שם מו. וראה לקו"ש חי"ט ע' 94 ואילך 4 ספרי. וראה שיחת ש"פ ראה תשל"ו 5 דברים כו, ד 6 שופטים ג, א

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it and settle in it. [31] *So be careful about observing all the suprarational commands and rational commands that I am presenting before you today.*

Mitzvos to be Observed Upon Entering the Land

12 *These are the suprarational commands and rational commands that you should be careful to perform in the Land which God, the God of your fathers, is giving you as a possession for all the days that you live on the earth:*

- [2] *From all the places where the nations—that you will take over—performed acts of worship, upon the high mountains, the hills, and under every lush tree, you should progressively destroy their gods (until nothing remains of them).* [3] *You should demolish their altars, smash their monuments, burn their idolatrous trees with fire, cut down the graven images of their gods, and spoil the names (of their gods with ridicule, ensuring they have no respect) from that place.*

The Uniqueness of Shiloh & Jerusalem

12:4 *You should not do any (act of sacrificial worship) to God, your God,* [5] *other than at the site where God, your God, will choose, to place His Name there, from amongst all your tribes. You should seek out His dwelling (place in the Tabernacle at Shiloh) and come there.* [6] *You should bring there your burnt-offerings, and your (obligatory peace-)offerings, your tithes, (your first fruits—which are) lifted from your hand (by the priests)—your vows, your pledges, and the firstborn of your cattle and of your sheep (which are to be given to the priests.* [7] *It is) there that you should eat (your sacrifices) before God, your God. Then you and your households will rejoice in all the work of your hands. (You should bring offerings according to the means with) which God, your God, blesses you.*

[8] *(When you cross the Jordan, for the first fourteen years, before the Tabernacle at Shiloh is established) you should not (erect private altars to) carry out all the (obligatory sacrifices) that we are currently offering (in the Tabernacle. At that time, private altars will be permitted only for) all (the voluntary sacrifices) which each man sees fit (to offer.* [9] *Obligatory sacrifices will be prohibited at that time), for you will not yet have come to the resting place (at Shiloh) or to the eternal abode (in Jerusalem), which God, your God, is giving you.*

[10] *You should cross the Jordan, (apportion) the Land that God, your God, is giving you as an inheritance (and) settle in it. Then, (after the conquest and apportionment), He will give you rest from*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● To which "chosen site" do verses 4-7 refer?

Rashi: The Tabernacle at Shiloh* (*Rashi* to v. 5; according to *Gur Aryeh*).

Kli Yakar: How could the Torah possibly suggest that Shiloh is God's chosen location, when we know that the site of the Temple in Jerusalem has always been revered as God's chosen place? Avraham carried out the *Akeida* there, and we even find that Adam offered his sacrifice there. So how could Shiloh be described as "the site where God, your God, will choose"?

Rather, I maintain that every reference to God's chosen site here refers to the site of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

TORAS MENACHEM

God's Choice of Shiloh & Jerusalem (v. 4ff.)

In contrast to the Tabernacle in the desert, which wandered from place to place, the Tabernacle at Shiloh was a *permanent* structure fashioned from stone. Thus, at Shiloh, the Divine Presence which dwelt in the Tabernacle became associated with a *particular location* for the first time. So Shiloh is referred to by the Torah—according to *Rashi*—as God's "chosen site."

* When the Jewish people entered the Land of Israel in 2488, they erected a Tabernacle at Gilgal, which stood for fourteen years, until they had conquered and divided the Land. Then they built the Tabernacle at Shiloh, a stone structure with an animal-skin roof which stood for 369 years, until 2871. They then constructed a Tabernacle at Nov, which stood until Shmuel the prophet died in 2882. This was followed by another Tabernacle in Givon, which stood until the construction of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem in 2928.

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אֹיְבֵיכֶם מִסָּבִיב וִישַׁבְתֶּם־בֶּטַח: [שני] יא וְהָיָה הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־
יִבְחַר יְהוָֹה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בּוֹ לְשַׁכֵּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם שָׁמָּה תָבִיאוּ אֵת
כָּל־אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם עוֹלֹתֵיכֶם וְזִבְחֵיכֶם מַעְשְׂרֹתֵיכֶם
וּתְרֻמַת יֶדְכֶם וְכֹל מִבְחַר נִדְרֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר תִּדְּרוּ לַיהוָֹה:
יב וּשְׂמַחְתֶּם לִפְנֵי יְהוָֹה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אַתֶּם וּבְנֵיכֶם וּבְנֹתֵיכֶם
וְעַבְדֵיכֶם וְאַמְהֹתֵיכֶם וְהַלֵּוִי אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁעֲרֵיכֶם כִּי אֵין לוֹ חֵלֶק
וְנַחֲלָה אִתְּכֶם: יג הִשָּׁמֶר לְךָ פֶּן־תַּעֲלֶה עֹלֹתֶיךָ בְּכָל־מָקוֹם
אֲשֶׁר תִּרְאֶה: יד כִּי אִם־בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְהוָֹה בְּאַחַד
שְׁבָטֶיךָ שָׁם תַּעֲלֶה עֹלֹתֶיךָ וְשָׁם תַּעֲשֶׂה כֹּל אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוֶּךָּ:
טו רַק בְּכָל־אַוַּת נַפְשְׁךָ תִּזְבַּח | וְאָכַלְתָּ בָשָׂר כְּבִרְכַּת יְהוָֹה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן־לְךָ בְּכָל־שְׁעָרֶיךָ הַטָּמֵא וְהַטָּהוֹר יֹאכְלֶנּוּ
כַּצְּבִי וְכָאַיָּל: טז רַק הַדָּם לֹא תֹאכֵלוּ עַל־הָאָרֶץ תִּשְׁפְּכֶנּוּ
כַּמָּיִם: יז לֹא־תוּכַל לֶאֱכֹל בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ מַעְשַׂר דְּגָנְךָ וְתִירֹשְׁךָ
וְיִצְהָרֶךָ וּבְכֹרֹת בְּקָרְךָ וְצֹאנֶךָ וְכָל־נְדָרֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר תִּדֹּר וְנִדְבֹתֶיךָ

יא ויהי אתרא די יתרעי יי אלהכון ביה
לאשראה שכנתיה תמן לתמן תיתון ית כל
די אנא מפקד יתכון עלותיכון ונכסת
קודשיכון מעשרתיכון ואפרשות ידכון וכל
שפר נדריכון די תדרון קדם יי: יב ותחדון
קדם יי אלהכון אתון ובניכון ובנתיכון
ועבדיכון ואמהתיכון וליואה די בקרויכון ארי
לית ליה חלק ואחסנא עמכון: יג אסתמר לך
דלמא תסק עלותך בכל אתרא די תחזי:
יד אלהן באתרא די יתרעי יי בחד מן
שבטיך תמן תסק עלותך ותמן תעביד כל די
אנא מפקדך: טו לחוד בכל רעות נפשך
תכוס ותיכול בשרא כברכתא דיי אלהך די
יהב לך בכל קרויך מסאבא ודכיא ייכלניה
כבשר טביא ואילא: טז לחוד דמא לא
תיכלון על ארעא תשדניה כמיא: יז לית לך
רשו למיכל בקרויך מעשר עבורך וחמרך
ומשחך ובכורי תורך וענך וכל נדריך די תדר

רש״י

(יא) והיה המקום וגו׳. בנו לכם בית הבחירה בירושלים. וכן הוא אומר בדוד ויהי כי ישב המלך בביתו, וה׳ הניח לו מכל אויביו מסביב, ויאמר המלך אל נתן הנביא ראה נא אנכי יושב בבית ארזים, וארון ה׳ יושב בתוך היריעה[1]: שמה תביאו וגו׳. למעלה אמור לענין שילה וכאן אמור לענין ירושלים, ולכך חלקם הכתוב, ליתן היתר בין זו לזו, משחרבה שילה ובאו לנוב, וחרבה נוב ובאו לגבעון, היו הבמות מותרות, עד שבאו לירושלים[2]: מבחר נדריכם. מלמד שיביאו מן המובחר[3]: (יג) השמר לך. ליתן לא תעשה על הדבר: בכל מקום אשר תראה. אשר יעלה בלבך, אבל אתה מקריב על פי נביא, כגון אליהו בהר הכרמל[3]: (יד) באחד שבטיך. בחלקו של בנימין. ולמעלה הוא אומר מכל שבטיכם[4]. הא כיצד, כשקנה דוד את הגורן מארונה היבוסי גבה הזהב מכל השבטים, ומכל מקום הגורן בחלקו של בנימין היה[3]: (טו) רק בכל אות נפשך. במה הכתוב מדבר, אם בבשר תאוה לאכול בלא הקרבת אימורים, הרי הוא אומר במקום אחר כי ירחיב ה׳ אלהיך את גבולך וגו׳ ואמרת אוכלה בשר וגו׳[5], במה זה מדבר, בקדשים שנפל בהם מום, שיפדו ויאכלו בכל מקום. יכול יפדו על מום עובר, תלמוד לומר רק[3]: תזבח ואכלת. אין לך בהם היתר גיזה וחלב, אלא אכילה על ידי זביחה: הטמא והטהור. לפי שבאו מכח קדשים, שנאמר בהם והבשר אשר יגע בכל טמא לא יאכל[6], הוצרך להתיר בו, שטמא וטהור אוכלין בקערה אחת: כצבי וכאיל. שאין קרבן בא מהם[3]: כצבי וכאיל. לפוטרן מן הזרוע והלחיים והקיבה: (טז) רק הדם לא תאכלו. אף על פי שאמרתי שאין לך בו זריקת דם במזבח, לא תאכלנו: תשפכנו במים. לומר לך שאין צריך כסוי. דבר אחר הרי הוא כמים להכשיר את הזרעים[3]: (יז) לא תוכל. בא הכתוב ליתן לא תעשה על הדבר: לא תוכל. רבי יהושע בן קרחה אומר יכול אתה, אבל אינך רשאי, כיוצא בו ואת היבוסי יושבי ירושלים לא יכלו בני יהודה להורישם[7], יכולים היו, אלא שאינן רשאין, לפי שכרת להם אברהם ברית כשלקח מהם מערת המכפלה. ולא יבוסים היו אלא חתיים היו, אלא על שם העיר שנקראת יבוס. כך מפורש בפרקי דרבי אליעזר[8]. והוא שנאמר[9] כי אם הסירך העורים והפסחים, צלמים שכתבו עליהם את השבועה: ובבורות

TORAS MENACHEM

This, however, begs the question: Why do we find that the term, God's "chosen house" (בֵּית הַבְּחִירָה) is used only in reference to the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, and not the Tabernacle at Shiloh, if Shiloh is *also* God's "chosen site"?

The Explanation

There are two possible ways of understanding the concept that God "chose" a particular place to be the exclusive location where sacrifices are offered:

a.) That the emphasis is primarily on the negative: He does *not* want sacrifices to be offered in *any* place *other* than this; or

b.) That he *positively* desires this site, (and inevitably this precludes the use of any other site).

It could be argued that this is the distinction between God's choice of Shiloh, and His choice of Jerusalem:

When introducing the prohibition of offering a sacrifice outside Shiloh, the Torah stresses the *negative* (precluding other sites) *before* the positive

1 ש״ב ז, א. 2 זבחים קיב. 3 ספרי 4 פסוק ה 5 פסוק כ 6 ויקרא ז, יט 7 יהושע טו, סג 8 פדר״א 9 ש״ב ה, ו

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Second Reading

all your enemies surrounding you, and you will dwell securely. [11] *Then (you will build the Holy Temple) in the place in which God, your God, will choose to make His Name rest there.*

- *(Only) there should you bring everything that I am commanding you: your burnt-offerings, your (obligatory peace-)offerings, your tithes, (your first fruits—which are) lifted from your hand (by the priests)—and all your vow-offerings which you will vow to God (from your) choicest (quality produce).*
- [12] *You should rejoice before God, your God: you, your sons, daughters, servants and maidservants, and the Levite who lives in your town, for he has no portion or inheritance with you.*
- [13] *Be careful not to offer up your burnt-offerings in any place you see (fit to do so.* [14] *This must be done) only in the place God will choose in (the territory of) one of your tribes. (Only) there may you offer up your burnt-offerings, and there you should do everything that I am commanding you.*
- [15] *(If a blemish develops in a holy offering and you) desire with all your soul (to eat its meat):*
  - *You may slaughter (it in any place) and eat (its) meat in all your cities, for God, your God, is giving it to you as a blessing, (but you may not make use of its fleece or milk).*
  - *(You may) only (redeem it and slaughter it if it is a permanent blemish that will not heal).*
  - *(Even though the animal was originally a holy offering which may not become ritually impure, after it has been redeemed) a ritually impure person and a ritually pure person may eat it (together on the same plate).*
  - *(The foreleg, jaw and end-stomach do not need to be given to the priest), as if (you were slaughtering) a deer, or a gazelle.*
  - [16] *Even though (the blood of this animal is exempt from being thrown on the Altar) you may not eat the blood. You should spill it on the ground like water (and you do not have to cover it).*
- [17] *You may not eat (the following) within your (own) cities: your grain, wine, or oil tithes, the firstborn of your cattle or of your sheep, any of your vow-offerings that you will vow, your pledge-offerings, or (your first fruits—which are) lifted from your hand (by the priests).* [18] *Rather,*

TORAS MENACHEM

(exclusivity of Shiloh): "[4] *You should not do any (act of sacrificial worship) to God, your God,* [5] *other than at the site where God, your God, will choose, to place His Name there.*" This indicates that God's intent in "choosing" Shiloh was primarily for the sake of excluding other locations, and not because God had an intrinsic "desire" that His sacrifices should be offered at Shiloh in particular.

However, in the case of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, the Torah stresses the superiority of the site itself first: "*Then (you will build the Holy Temple) in the place in which God, your God, will choose to make His Name rest there*" (v. 11), before outlining the prohibition of offering elsewhere, "*(Only) there should you bring everything that I am commanding you*" (ibid.). This indicates that God *positively* desired Jerusalem as a place of sacrificial worship, not as a means to an end. The prohibition of offering a sacrifice in any other location thus follows as a secondary logical necessity.

And it is for this reason that only the Holy Temple in Jerusalem can truly be called God's "Chosen House."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 24, p. 79ff.)

Sparks of Chasidus

The Torah mentions only *"the place which God, your God, will choose,"* without making any explicit reference that this refers to Jerusalem. This hints to the fact that God "chooses" every place in which a Jew makes his personal "offering" of prayer to his Maker. For this reason, when a Jew prays he faces in the direction of Jerusalem, because spiritually speaking he is found in Jerusalem—*"the place which God, your God, will choose"*—at that very moment.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 2, pp. 617-9)

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וּתְרוּמַת יָדֶךָ: יח כִּי אִם־לִפְנֵי יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ תֹּאכְלֶנּוּ בַּמָּקוֹם
אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בּוֹ אַתָּה וּבִנְךָ וּבִתֶּךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ וַאֲמָתֶךָ
וְהַלֵּוִי אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ וְשָׂמַחְתָּ לִפְנֵי יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכֹל מִשְׁלַח
יָדֶךָ: יט הִשָּׁמֶר לְךָ פֶּן־תַּעֲזֹב אֶת־הַלֵּוִי כָּל־יָמֶיךָ עַל־אַדְמָתֶךָ:
ס כ כִּי־יַרְחִיב יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶת־גְּבֻלְךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר־לָךְ
וְאָמַרְתָּ אֹכְלָה בָשָׂר כִּי־תְאַוֶּה נַפְשְׁךָ לֶאֱכֹל בָּשָׂר בְּכָל־אַוַּת
נַפְשְׁךָ תֹּאכַל בָּשָׂר: כא כִּי־יִרְחַק מִמְּךָ הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר
יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לָשׂוּם שְׁמוֹ שָׁם וְזָבַחְתָּ מִבְּקָרְךָ וּמִצֹּאנְךָ אֲשֶׁר
נָתַן יְהֹוָה לְךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִךָ וְאָכַלְתָּ בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ בְּכֹל אַוַּת נַפְשֶׁךָ:
כב אַךְ כַּאֲשֶׁר יֵאָכֵל אֶת־הַצְּבִי וְאֶת־הָאַיָּל כֵּן תֹּאכְלֶנּוּ הַטָּמֵא
וְהַטָּהוֹר יַחְדָּו יֹאכְלֶנּוּ: כג רַק חֲזַק לְבִלְתִּי אֲכֹל הַדָּם כִּי הַדָּם

וְנִדְבָתָיךְ וְאַפְרָשׁוּת יְדָךְ: יח אֱלָהֵן קֳדָם יְיָ
אֱלָהָךְ תֵּיכְלִנֵּהּ בְּאַתְרָא דִּי יִתְרְעֵי יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ
בֵּהּ אַתְּ וּבְרָךְ וּבְרַתָּךְ וְעַבְדָּךְ וְאַמְתָךְ וְלֵוָאָה
דִּי בְּקִרְוָיךְ וְתֶחְדֵּי קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ בְּכֹל
אוֹשָׁטוּת יְדָךְ: יט אִסְתְּמַר לָךְ דִּלְמָא תִשְׁבּוֹק
יָת לֵוָאָה כָּל יוֹמָיךְ עַל אַרְעָךְ: כ אֲרֵי יַפְתֵּי יְיָ
אֱלָהָךְ יָת תְּחוּמָךְ כְּמָא דִּי מַלִּיל לָךְ וְתֵימַר
אֵיכוֹל בִּשְׂרָא אֲרֵי תִתְרְעֵי נַפְשָׁךְ לְמֵיכַל
בִּשְׂרָא בְּכָל רְעוּת נַפְשָׁךְ תֵּיכוֹל בִּשְׂרָא:
כא אֲרֵי יִתְרַחַק מִנָּךְ אַתְרָא דִּי יִתְרְעֵי יְיָ
אֱלָהָךְ לְאַשְׁרָאָה שְׁכִנְתֵּהּ תַּמָּן וְתִכּוֹס מִתּוֹרָךְ
וּמֵעָנָךְ דִּי יְהַב יְיָ לָךְ כְּמָא דִּי פַקֵּדְתָּךְ וְתֵיכוֹל
בְּקִרְוָיךְ בְּכָל רְעוּת נַפְשָׁךְ: כב בְּרַם כְּמָא דִּי
מִתְאֲכִיל בְּשַׂר טַבְיָא וְאַיְלָא כֵּן תֵּיכְלִנֵּהּ
מְסָאֲבָא וְדַכְיָא כַּחְדָא יֵיכְלִנֵּהּ: כג לְחוֹד תְּקַף

רש״י

בקרך. האמור לכהנים: **ותרומת ידך.** אלו הבכורים: **(יח) לפני ה'.** לפנים מן החומה: **והלוי אשר בשעריך.** אם אין לך ליתן לו חלקו, כגון מעשר ראשון, תן לו מעשר עני. אין לך מעשר עני, הזמינהו על שלמיך: **(יט) השמר לך.** ליתן לא תעשה על הדבר: **על אדמתך.** אבל בגולה אינך מוזהר עליו יותר מעניי ישראל: **(כ) כי ירחיב וגו'.** למדה תורה דרך ארץ, שלא יתאוה אדם לאכול בשר, אלא מתוך רחבת ידים ועושר: **בכל אות נפשך וגו'.** אבל במדבר נאסר להם בשר חולין, אלא אם כן מקדישה ומקריבה שלמים[1]: **(כא) כי ירחק ממך המקום.** ולא תוכל לבוא ולעשות שלמים בכל יום כמו עכשיו שהמשכן הולך עמכם: **וזבחת וגו' כאשר צויתך.** למדנו שיש צווי בזביחה היאך ישחוט, והן הלכות שחיטה שנאמרו למשה בסיני[2]: **(כב) אך כאשר יאכל את הצבי וגו'.** אינך מוזהר לאכלן בטהרה. אי מה צבי ואיל חלבן מותר, אף חולין חלבן מותר, תלמוד לומר אך[3]: **(כג) רק חזק לבלתי אכל הדם.** ממה שנאמר חזק אתה למד שהיו שטופים בדם לאכלו, לפיכך הוצרך לומר חזק, דברי רבי יהודה. רבי שמעון בן עזאי אומר, לא בא הכתוב אלא להזהירך וללמדך עד כמה אתה צריך להתחזק במצות, אם הדם, שהוא קל להשמר ממנו, שאין אדם מתאוה לו, הוצרך לחזקך באזהרתו, קל וחומר

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why is the requirement of ritual slaughter mentioned here, shortly before entering the Land? (v. 21)

Talmud: Rabbi Yishma'el says: "Originally, it was prohibited to eat non-sacrificial meat. When they entered the Land of Israel, non-sacrificial meat was permitted to them." Rabbi Akiva says: "Originally, they were permitted to eat meat from an animal that was not ritually slaughtered. When they entered the Land, non-ritually slaughtered meat became forbidden to them" (*Chulin* 16b-17a).

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

When a Jewish person eats food and it subsequently becomes incorporated into his body, the food becomes "elevated" from its prior state—be it animal, vegetable or mineral—and it attains the special holiness of a Jewish person. In the case of meat, which is a material luxury, this spiritual elevation is more difficult, so the special procedure of *shechitah* (ritual slaughter) is required.

Thus, the precept of (non-sacrificial) *shechitah* was only given to the Jewish people as they entered the Land of Israel. For in the desert, they were removed from worldly matters, but upon entering the Land, the Jewish people were charged with the mission to interact with, and spiritually elevate, the material world.

Both Rabbi Yishma'el and Rabbi Akiva (in the *Talmud*, see Classic Questions) agreed with the above reasoning—that "elevation" of non-sacrificial meat was spiritually "irrelevant" to the unworldly mode of Divine service in the desert. Where they differed was regarding the practical implication of this spiritual "irrelevance":

Rabbi Yishma'el maintained that God would not have empowered the Jewish people to do something which is spiritually "irrelevant." Therefore, he maintained that non-sacrificial meat was forbidden.

But Rabbi Akiva maintained that, since eating meat was spiritually "irrelevant" to the Jewish people, the Torah would not have legislated any rules regarding its consumption. Thus it could be eaten freely.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 4, p. 1108ff.)

1 ספרי. 2 חולין כח. 3 בכורות טו.

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you should eat them before God, your God, in (Jerusalem, which is) the place God, your God, will choose. You (should eat them along with) your son, daughter, servant, maidservant, and the Levite who lives in your town, and you should rejoice before God, your God, in all the work of your hands.

- 19 *Be careful not to abandon the Levite, all your days upon your Land.*

CONSUMPTION OF NON-SACRIFICIAL MEAT

- 20 *When God, your God, extends your boundary, as He said to you, and you say, "I want to eat meat," because your soul desires to eat meat, then you may eat as much meat as your soul desires.* 21 *If the place where God, your God, chooses to put His Name is far from you (so you cannot bring peace-offerings every day), you may (eat) from your cattle and sheep, which God has given you, (provided that you first) slaughter (them, as) I have commanded you (in the Oral Law). Then, you may eat (meat) in your (own) cities, as much as your soul desires.*
- 22 *You may eat them just as a deer or a gazelle is eaten, (i.e.) a ritually impure person may eat together with a ritually pure person. However, (unlike in the case of a deer or a gazelle, their sacrificial fats are not permitted).*
- 23 *However, be strong not to eat the blood, for the blood is the soul, and you may not eat the soul with the flesh.*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why must one be "*strong* not to eat the blood"? (v. 23)

RASHI: "From the statement 'be strong,' you can infer that [the Jewish people] used to eat blood excessively. Therefore, the Torah found it necessary to say, 'be strong'"—these are the words of Rabbi Yehudah.

Rabbi Shimon ben Azzai says: "This statement comes only to caution you and to teach you the extent to which you should strengthen your observance of the *mitzvos*. For if the Torah needed to 'strengthen' you to observe the prohibition of eating blood—which is easy to guard oneself against, because a person has no desire for it—then how much more so [must one strengthen oneself to observe] all other commandments!"

RASHBAM: Blood becomes absorbed into all the organs of the body. Therefore, the Torah warns us to be especially careful not to eat it.

BACHAYE: Eating blood strengthens the body. Therefore, the Torah promises that a person will be strong even if he does not eat blood.

TORAS MENACHEM

"BE STRONG!" (v. 23)

In his comments to verse 23, *Rashi* explains why the Torah chose to stress, "*Be strong* not to eat the blood," rather than stating simply, "Do not eat the blood." However, *Rashi's* comments prompt the following questions:

a.) Why did *Rashi* cite two explanations, and not deem one sufficient?

b.) Why did *Rashi* cite the authors of these comments, Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Shimon ben Azzai, in contrast to his usual practice not to provide references?

THE EXPLANATION

The prohibition against eating blood does not appear for the first time here, in *Parshas Re'eh*. (Indeed, *Rambam* (*Sefer Hamitzvos, Shoresh 9*) maintains that this prohibition is mentioned no less than seven times in the Torah!) So *Rashi* was troubled: Why does the Torah stress *here* the additional need to be "strong" not to eat blood, rather than in one of the previous instances when the prohibition is mentioned? And since the Jewish people learned the practice of eating blood *in Egypt* (see *Rambam* cited in *Classic Questions to Vayikra 17:10-12*), why is the prohibition emphasized here again, *forty years* after the Jewish people left Egypt?

This led *Rashi* to conclude that even here, some forty years later, the Jewish people still "*used to eat blood excessively*," and, "*therefore, the Torah found it necessary to say, 'be strong,'*" here in *Parshas Re'eh*.

Nevertheless, *Rashi* was not satisfied with this answer alone, because:

a.) It still does not explain why the Torah failed to stress the need to "be strong" when mentioning the prohibition of blood on the first occasion (the primary source for this prohibition).

b.) It is unreasonable to suggest that the Jewish people ignored repeated warnings against eating blood, and that they still "used to eat blood *excessively*," after forty years.

c.) Furthermore, at this point, the generation that left Egypt had already died. So why should their children, who were not directly influenced by Egyptian culture, have such a strong desire to eat blood and ignore God's repeated warnings not to do so?

Due to these difficulties, *Rashi* brought an additional explanation, the teaching of Rabbi Shimon ben Azzai, that the Jewish people were not actually eating blood at this point at all, and, "*This statement comes only to caution you and to teach you the extent to which you should strengthen your observance of the mitzvos.*"

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הוּא הַנָּפֶשׁ וְלֹא־תֹאכַל הַנֶּפֶשׁ עִם־הַבָּשָׂר: כד לֹא תֹּאכְלֶנּוּ
עַל־הָאָרֶץ תִּשְׁפְּכֶנּוּ כַּמָּיִם: כה לֹא תֹּאכְלֶנּוּ לְמַעַן יִיטַב לְךָ
וּלְבָנֶיךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ כִּי־תַעֲשֶׂה הַיָּשָׁר בְּעֵינֵי יְהֹוָה: כו רַק קָדָשֶׁיךָ
אֲשֶׁר־יִהְיוּ לְךָ וּנְדָרֶיךָ תִּשָּׂא וּבָאתָ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר
יְהֹוָה: כז וְעָשִׂיתָ עֹלֹתֶיךָ הַבָּשָׂר וְהַדָּם עַל־מִזְבַּח יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
וְדַם־זְבָחֶיךָ יִשָּׁפֵךְ עַל־מִזְבַּח יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְהַבָּשָׂר תֹּאכֵל:
כח שְׁמֹר וְשָׁמַעְתָּ אֵת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוֶּךָּ
לְמַעַן יִיטַב לְךָ וּלְבָנֶיךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ עַד־עוֹלָם כִּי תַעֲשֶׂה הַטּוֹב
וְהַיָּשָׁר בְּעֵינֵי יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ: ס [שלישי] כט כִּי־יַכְרִית יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
אֶת־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה בָא־שָׁמָּה לָרֶשֶׁת אוֹתָם מִפָּנֶיךָ וְיָרַשְׁתָּ
אֹתָם וְיָשַׁבְתָּ בְּאַרְצָם: ל הִשָּׁמֶר לְךָ פֶּן־תִּנָּקֵשׁ אַחֲרֵיהֶם אַחֲרֵי
הִשָּׁמְדָם מִפָּנֶיךָ וּפֶן־תִּדְרֹשׁ לֵאלֹהֵיהֶם לֵאמֹר אֵיכָה יַעַבְדוּ

בְּדִיל דְּלָא לְמֵיכַל דְּמָא אֲרֵי דְמָא הוּא נַפְשָׁא
וְלָא תֵיכוּל נַפְשָׁא עִם בִּשְׂרָא: כד לָא תֵיכְלִנֵּהּ
עַל אַרְעָא תִּשְׁדְּנֵהּ כְּמַיָּא: כה לָא תֵיכְלִנֵּהּ
בְּדִיל דְּיֵיטַב לָךְ וְלִבְנָיךְ בָּתְרָךְ אֲרֵי תַעְבֵּד
דְּכָשַׁר קֳדָם יְיָ: כו לְחוֹד מַעְשַׂר קוּדְשָׁיךְ דִּיהוֹן
לָךְ וְנִדְרָיךְ תִּטּוֹל וְתֵיתֵי לְאַתְרָא דִּי יִתְרְעֵי יְיָ:
כז וְתַעְבֵּד עֲלָוָתָךְ בִּשְׂרָא וְדְמָא עַל מַדְבְּחָא
דַּיְיָ אֱלָהָךְ וְדַם נִכְסַת קוּדְשָׁיךְ יִשְׁתְּפֵךְ עַל
מַדְבְּחָא דַּיְיָ אֱלָהָךְ וּבִשְׂרָא תֵיכוּל: כח טַר
וּתְקַבֵּל יָת פִּתְגָּמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין דִּי אֲנָא מְפַקֵּדָךְ
בְּדִיל דְּיֵיטַב לָךְ וְלִבְנָיךְ בָּתְרָךְ עַד עָלַם אֲרֵי
תַעְבֵּד דְּתָקֵן וּדְכָשַׁר קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ: כט אֲרֵי
יְשֵׁיצֵי יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ יָת עַמְמַיָּא דִּי אַתְּ עָלֵל לְתַמָּן
לְתָרָכָא (לְמֵירַת) יַתְהוֹן מִקֳּדָמָךְ וְתֵירַת יַתְהוֹן
וְתֵיתֵב בְּאַרְעֲהוֹן: ל אִסְתַּמַּר לָךְ דִּלְמָא תִתְקַל
בָּתְרֵיהוֹן בָּתַר דְּיִשְׁתֵּיצוּן מִקֳּדָמָךְ וְדִלְמָא

רש"י

נאמר מצות[1]: ולא תאכל הנפש עם הבשר. אזהרה לאבר מן החי: (כד) לא תאכלנו. אזהרה לדם התמצית[2]: (כה) לא תאכלנו. אזהרה לדם האיברים: למען ייטב לך וגו'. צא ולמד מתן שכרן של מצות, אם הדם שנפשו של אדם קצה ממנו, הפורש ממנו זוכה לו ולבניו אחריו, קל וחומר לגזל ועריות שנפשו של אדם מתאוה להם[3]: (כו) רק קדשיך. אף על פי שאתה מותר לשחוט חולין, לא התרתי לך לשחוט את הקדשים ולאכלן בשעריך בלא הקרבה, אלא הביאם לבית הבחירה: (כז) ועשית עלתיך. אם עולות הם, תן הבשר והדם על גבי המזבח, ואם זבחי שלמים הם, דם זבחיך ישפך על המזבח תחלה ואחר כך והבשר תאכל. ועוד דרשו רבותינו, רק קדשיך, בא ללמד על הקדשים שבחוצה לארץ וללמד על התמורות ועל ולדות קדשים שיקריבו[4]: (כח) שמור. זו משנה שאתה צריך לשמרה בבטנך שלא תשכח. כענין שנאמר כי נעים כי תשמרם בבטנך, ואם שנית אפשר שתשמע ותקיים, הא כל שאינו בכלל משנה אינו בכלל מעשה[1]: את כל הדברים. שתהא חביבה עליך מצוה קלה כמצוה חמורה: הטוב. בעיני השמים: והישר. בעיני אדם[1]: (ל) פן תנקש. אונקלוס תרגם לשון מוקש. ואני אומר שלא חש לדקדק בלשון, שלא מצינו נו"ן בלשון יוקש ואפילו ליסוד הנופל ממנו, אבל בלשון טירוף וקשקוש מצינו נו"ן, וארכבתה דא לדא נקשן[5]. ואף זה אני אומר, פן תנקש אחריהם, פן תטרף אחריהם להיות כרוך אחר מעשיהם, וכן ינקש נושה לכל אשר לו[6], מקלל את הרשע להיות עליו נושים רבים ויהיו מחזרין ומנקשין אחר ממונו: אחרי השמדם מפניך. אחר שתראה שאשמידם מפניך, יש לך לתת לב מפני מה נשמדו אלו, מפני מעשים מקולקלים שבידיהם, אף אתה לא תעשה כן שלא יבואו אחרים וישמידוך[1]: איכה יעבדו. לפי שלא ענש על עבודת אלילים אלא על זביחה וקטור ונסוך והשתחואה, כמו שכתוב[7] בלתי לה' לבדו, דברים הנעשים לגבוה, בא ולמדך כאן, שאם דרכה של עבודת

TORAS MENACHEM

However, *Rashi* cited this only as a secondary explanation, since it has an even greater drawback than Rabbi Yehudah's interpretation. For, at the literal level, it is difficult to accept that the very *specific* command to, "*be strong not to eat the blood*," is actually a *universal* principle that applies to all the *mitzvos* of the Torah.

Furthermore, the fact that the prohibition against eating blood is mentioned here in a passage which speaks about the "desire" to eat meat (see v. 20-21) suggests that the Jewish people did *desire* to eat blood—contrary to what Rabbi Shimon ben Azzai suggests.

Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Shimon ben Azzai

In order to indicate to the more advanced student why these two divergent opinions arose, *Rashi* cited their respective authors: Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Shimon ben Azzai.

In contrast to some Rabbinic opinions that allow a "loose" rendering of scripture, where clauses and conditions may be extrapolated beyond the precise case in which they are recorded, Rabbi Yehudah maintained that "*the words of scripture are to be interpreted exactly as they are written*." (*Pesachim* 21b). Consequently, we can appreciate why, in our case, Rabbi Yehudah rejected Rabbi Shimon ben Azzai's extrapolation of the clause "be strong" to apply to *all* the *mitzvos* of the Torah.

Rabbi Shimon ben Azzai, on the other hand, was famous for teaching, "*Run to perform an easy mitzvah*" (*Avos* 4:2). So we can appreciate why Rabbi Shimon ben Azzai was sympathetic to an interpretation of our verse which stressed how the prohibition of blood is an "*easy mitzvah*" ("because a person has no desire for it") and how nevertheless the Torah highlights its importance ("*be strong* not to eat the blood").

Furthermore, Rabbi Shimon ben Azzai used to say, "*One mitzvah leads to another*" (*ibid.*), which explains why he taught, in our case, that additional care with the prohibition of eating blood would lead to additional care in the case of other *mitzvos* too.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 14, p. 45*ff.*)

1 ספרי 2 כריתות ד: 3 מכות כג: 4 בכורות יד: 5 דניאל ה, ו 6 תהלים קט, יא 7 שמות כב, יט

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- [24] *You may not eat (the blood which trickles out of an animal). Spill it on the ground, like water.* [25] *You should not eat (the blood within internal organs), for your own benefit, and for your children after you, because you will be doing what is proper in the eyes of God.*
- [26] *(Although I have permitted you to sacrifice non-sacred animals), however, your holy offerings and voluntary offerings which you will have should be carried and brought to (the Holy Temple), the place that God will choose.* [27] *(If they are) burnt-offerings, the meat and the blood should go upon the Altar of God, your God. (If they are peace-)offerings, their blood should be poured upon the Altar of God, your God, and you should eat the meat.*

[28] *Safeguard and listen to all these words that I am commanding you, which are for your benefit and that of your children after you, for all time, because (God benefits you) when you have done what is good in the eyes of God, your God, and proper (in the eyes of man).*

THIRD READING

[29] *When God, your God will cut off the nations (from the Land) where you are (soon) to come and drive them out from before you, and you (succeed) in driving them out, and settle in their Land,* [30] *be careful not to be lured into following (their ways, especially) after (you witness how) they have been*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How does one "safeguard all these words"? (v. 28)

RASHI: This refers to study of the law, which you must guard in your heart*, so that it should not be forgotten, as the verse states: *"For it is pleasant that you guard them in your heart"* (Proverbs. 22:18).

● Why does the verse stress the need to safeguard "all these words"? (v. 28)

RASHI: This means that a minor *mitzvah* should be as precious to you as a major one.

TORAS MENACHEM

SAFEGUARDING THE TORAH (v. 28)

At first glance, verse 28 appears to be a straightforward reminder to safeguard all the *mitzvos*. Why did *Rashi* find it necessary to make any comment at all on this verse?

Furthermore:

a.) Why did *Rashi* need to cite a scriptural source to prove that Torah is forgotten if it is not studied? Surely, even the child studying *Chumash* for the first time understands this fact, without the need for proof?

The Last Word

"BE CAREFUL NOT TO BE LURED TO FOLLOW (THEIR WAYS)" (v. 30)

Finding themselves a small minority and encountering certain difficulties, which are largely unavoidable in all cases of resettlement, some parents had the mistaken notion, which they injected also into their children, that the way to overcome these difficulties is to become quickly assimilated with the new environment, by discarding the heritage of their forefathers and abandoning the Jewish way of life. Finding the ensuing process somewhat distasteful, as such a course is bound to be full of spiritual conflict, some parents were resolved that their children would be spared the conflict altogether. In order to justify their desertion and appease their injured conscience, it was necessary for them to devise some rationale, and they deluded themselves, and deluded their children, by the claim that in their new surroundings the Jewish way of life, with the observance of the Torah and *Mitzvos* did not fit. They looked for, and therefore also "found," faults with the true Jewish way of life, while in their non Jewish environment everything seemed to them only good and attractive.

By this attitude the said parents hoped to assure their children's existence and survival in the new environment. But what kind of existence is it, if everything spiritual and holy is traded for the material? What kind of survival is it, if it means the sacrifice of the soul for the amenities of the body?

Moreover, in their retreat from *Yiddishkeit*, they turned what they thought was an "escape to freedom" into an escape to servitude, pathetically trying to imitate the non Jewish environment, failing to see that such imitation, by its caricature and inferiority complex, can only call forth mockery and derision, and can only offend the sensibilities of those whose respect and acceptance they are so desperately trying to win....

The dire consequences of this utterly false approach were that thousands upon thousands of Jews have been removed from their fountain of life, from their fellow Jews and from their true faith....

It is one of the vital tasks of our time to exert all possible effort to awaken in the young generation, as also in those who are advanced in years but still immature in deeper understanding, a fuller appreciation of the true Jewish values, of Torah-true *Yiddishkeit*, a full and genuine *Yiddishkeit;* not of that which goes under a false label of misrepresented, compromised, or watered-down "Judaism," whatever the trademark. Together with this appreciation will come the realization that only true *Yiddishkeit* can guarantee the existence of the individual, of each and every Jew, at any time, in any place, and under any circumstances....

(Excerpt from a public letter written by the Rebbe on 11 *Nissan* 5717)

* Literally "in your innards." See *Rashi* to *Proverbs* ibid.

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הגוים האלה את־אלהיהם ואעשה־כן גם־אני: לא לא־
תעשה כן ליהוה אלהיך כי כל־תועבת יהוה אשר שנא
עשו לאלהיהם כי גם את־בניהם ואת־בנתיהם ישרפו באש
לאלהיהם: יג א את כל־הדבר אשר אנכי מצוה אתכם אתו
תשמרו לעשות לא־תסף עליו ולא תגרע ממנו: פ ב כי־יקום

תתבע לטעותהון למימר איכדין פלחין עממיא האלין ית טעותהון ואעבד כן אף אנא: לא לא תעבד כן קדם יי אלהך ארי כל דמרחק קדם יי די סני עבדו לטעותהון ארי אף ית בניהון וית בנתיהון יוקדין בנורא לטעותהון: א ית כל פתגמא די אנא מפקיד יתכון יתיה תטרון למעבד לא תוספון עלוהי ולא תמנעון מנה: ב ארי יקום בינך נביא או

רש"י

אלילים לעבדה בדבר אחר, כגון פוער לפעור, וזורק אבן למרקוליס, זו היא עבודתה וחייב. אבל זבוח וקטור וניסוך והשתחואה, אפילו שלא כדרכה חייב[1]: (לא) כי גם את בניהם. גם, לרבות את אבותיהם ואמותיהם, אמר ר' עקיבא אני ראיתי נכרי שכפתו לאביו לפני כלבו ואכלו[2]: (א) את כל הדבר. קלה כחמורה: תשמרו לעשות. ליתן לא תעשה על עשה האמורים בפרשה. שכל השמר לשון לא תעשה הוא, אלא שאין לוקין על השמר של עשה[3]: לא תסף עליו. חמשה טוטפות בתפילין, חמשה מינין בלולב, ארבע ברכות בברכת כהנים[2]:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **"They *also* burned their sons and daughters in fire to their gods" Isn't the word "also" superfluous? (v. 31)**

Rashi: The word "also" (גם) alludes to their fathers and mothers [whom they burned also]. Rabbi Akiva said, "I saw a heathen who bound his father before his dog [which he worshiped as a god], which then devoured him."

TORAS MENACHEM

b.) *Rashi* writes that our verse teaches us, *"A minor mitzvah should be as precious to you as a major one."* But the distinction between a "minor" and "major" *mitzvah* does not appear to be indicated by our verse at all, nor is there any mention of *mitzvos* being "precious" to a person. What is *Rashi*'s basis for this comment, at the literal level?

The Explanation

When the reader reaches our verse, he will immediately be struck by the following question: The Torah has stressed the need to safeguard and observe its precepts on *numerous* occasions, so what is being added here with the words, *"Safeguard and listen to all these words that I am commanding you"*?

Rashi explains: *"This refers to study of the law."* At first glance, *Rashi* is referring to Torah study in general, which helps a person safeguard the observance of *mitzvos*. But, if this is indeed the case, then we have not answered our question: What is being added here that the reader did not already know?

Therefore, it appears that *Rashi* is not referring to the general requirement to study all parts of the Torah, but rather, to the need to study the laws recorded in *this chapter*, in particular:

Chapter 12 begins: "These are the suprarational commands and rational commands that you should be careful to perform *in the Land which God, the God of your fathers, is giving you."* I.e. we are introduced here to a series of *mitzvos* which only become incumbent on the Jewish people upon entering the Land of Israel: Destroying the idols found in the Land (v 2-3), to offer sacrifices only in Shiloh, and later, in Jerusalem (v. 4-19), and to bring *terumah*, agricultural gifts, etc. (v. 11).

Thus, when we read here at the conclusion of the chapter, "Safeguard and listen to all *these words* that I am commanding you," the verse is referring specifically to the extra effort that is required to safeguard the *mitzvos* recorded *in this chapter*. And this, adds *Rashi*, is to be done through Torah study.

Why does the observance of these *mitzvos* require an extra effort?

Rashi answers this question by citing a verse, *"For it is pleasant that you guard them in your heart."* I.e. since these *mitzvos* are connected with something especially "pleasant" to, and cherished by, the Jewish people (entering into the Land of Israel) their study and observance will need to be guarded with extra special care and devotion.

The result, continues *Rashi*, is that, *"A minor mitzvah should be as precious to you as a major one"* i.e. since these *mitzvos* are especially precious to the Jewish people, they will keep them with extra care.

Rashi mentions that this applies both to a "minor *mitzvah*" and "a major one," since we find both of these cases in the current chapter. At the opening of the chapter we are commanded to *"progressively destroy their gods,"* i.e. the elimination of idolatry, one of the Ten Commandments, which is a "major" *mitzvah*. And near the end of the chapter we read of the prohibition against eating blood which is, as *Rashi* comments, *"easy to guard oneself against, because a person has no desire for it."*

Thus, when our verse stresses, "Safeguard and listen to *all these words* that I am commanding you," this means the words of the current chapter, and *Rashi* notes that this includes both *"a minor mitzvah,"* and *"a major one."*

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Re'eh* 5742)

Rabbi Akiva's Testimony (v. 31)

In his comment to verse 31, *Rashi* explains the significance of the superfluous word "also," which indicates that the idolatrous nations not only sacrificed their sons and daughters to their gods, but that they offered their fathers and mothers too.

Rashi then adds: *"Rabbi Akiva said, 'I saw a heathen who bound his father before his dog, which then devoured him.'"*

What is the purpose of this addition? What does it add to our understanding of the verse at the literal level?

1 סנהדרין ס: 2 ספרי 3 מכות יג:

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destroyed from before you (for their degenerate behavior). Be careful not to inquire about their gods, saying, "How did these nations serve their gods? I will do likewise!"

31 *Do not do this to God, your God. For they worshiped their gods with all the abominable methods which God hates. They also burned their sons and daughters in fire to their gods.*

PRESERVING THE PRECEPTS OF THE TORAH

13 *Be careful to observe everything which I am commanding you (no matter how trivial it may seem):*

- *Do not add to it.*
- *Do not detract from it.*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How might one add to the Torah? (v. 1)

RASHI: *Tefilin* with five "*totafos*," five species for the *lulav*, or four blessings for the priestly blessing.

RAMBAN: *Rashi* limits the prohibition of adding to the Torah to adding a detail *within* a given *mitzvah*. However, in my opinion, the prohibition also forbids adding an entirely new *mitzvah* (4:2).

TORAS MENACHEM

At first glance, we might argue that *Rashi* added Rabbi Akiva's testimony because he feared that the reader might simply not believe that any person could possibly sacrifice their father or mother to their god. However, it is difficult to accept that this was *Rashi's* reasoning, for why would the reader find the notion of sacrificing parents any less credible than the sacrificing of children? Yet *Rashi* did not deem it necessary to prove that heathen people sacrificed their children (which could have been proven from scripture—see Kings II 16:3).

Why, then, did *Rashi* cite Rabbi Akiva's testimony?

THE EXPLANATION

The concept of idol-worship has been mentioned in the Torah on numerous occasions prior to this point, including the idea that a person might use his child as a tool of idol-worship. Here, however, is the first instance where we learn that heathens would utilize even their parents in acts of idol-worship. Thus, the reader will be troubled: Why did the Torah only inform us of this important detail here, in *Parshas Re'eh*, and not on one of the earlier occasions when idol-worship was mentioned?

And why was this detail not mentioned explicitly in the Torah, but rather by means of adding the superfluous word "also"?

To answer these questions, *Rashi* cites the testimony of Rabbi Akiva: *"I saw a heathen who bound his father before his dog, which then devoured him."* This indicates that such a practice must have been very rare indeed, and that even Rabbi Akiva (who traveled extensively throughout the world) only witnessed this once.

Thus, being a highly unusual practice, the reader will appreciate why the Torah never mentioned it up to this point, and only alluded to it here by the inclusion of a superfluous word.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Re'eh* 5735)

"DO NOT ADD TO IT" (v. 1)

Rashi explains that the prohibition, *"Do not add to it,"* refers to adding details *within* one of the *mitzvos* of the Torah, such as *"Tefilin with five 'totafos,'"* rather than four, etc. This prompts the following questions:

a.) Why did *Rashi* reject the more simple explanation [of ***Ramban***] that the Torah comes here to prohibit a person from adding an additional *mitzvah* (and not merely a detail *within* a particular *mitzvah*)? Surely, it is a much more likely scenario that a person may, due to additional piety, want to add extra *precepts* to the Torah? The notion of corrupting one of the existing *mitzvos* by adding additional *details* seems much more remote.

b.) Why did *Rashi* bring *three* examples: *tefilin*, *lulav* and the priestly blessing?

c.) In *Parshas Va'eschanan*, on the words, *"Do not add to the word(s of Torah law)"* (4:2), *Rashi* comments, *"For example, tefilin with five scriptural passages, five species for the lulav, or five tzitzis."* Yet here, in *Parshas Re'eh*, *Rashi* omits the example of *tzitzis*, swapping it instead for the priestly blessing. Furthermore, in *Parshas Va'eschanan*, *Rashi* writes, *"tefilin with five scriptural passages,"* whereas here he alters this to read, *"tefilin with five 'totafos.'"* What are the reasons for these changes?

THE EXPLANATION

Let us begin by addressing *Rashi's* comments in *Parshas Va'eschanan*, and then we will proceed to clarify his explanation here, in *Parshas Re'eh*:

Rashi could not accept that the prohibition against adding to the Torah means that it is forbidden to add an additional *mitzvah*, because *Rashi*

The Last Word

Why does the Torah state first, *"Do not add to it,"* and only afterwards, *"Do not detract from it"* (13:1)? Surely, detracting from the Torah is the more serious crime, and should have been stated first?

The *yetzer hara* (evil inclination) knows that if it will tell a pious person to "detract from the Torah," the person will simply not listen. Therefore, the *yetzer* deceptively encourages a person to "add" to Judaism, in the hope that this will begin to corrupt the person, eventually leading him to "detract" from observance. So, the Torah warns us of the *yetzer's* ploy, by warning us first of all not to add to the Torah.

(Based on *Sicha* of the third of Tamuz 5742)

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בְּקִרְבְּךָ֙ נָבִ֔יא א֖וֹ חֹלֵ֣ם חֲל֑וֹם וְנָתַ֥ן אֵלֶ֛יךָ א֖וֹת א֥וֹ מוֹפֵֽת׃ ג וּבָ֤א
הָאוֹת֙ וְהַמּוֹפֵ֔ת אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּ֥ר אֵלֶ֖יךָ לֵאמֹ֑ר נֵֽלְכָ֞ה אַחֲרֵ֨י אֱלֹהִ֧ים
אֲחֵרִ֛ים אֲשֶׁ֥ר לֹא־יְדַעְתָּ֖ם וְנָֽעָבְדֵֽם׃ ד לֹ֣א תִשְׁמַ֗ע אֶל־דִּבְרֵי֙
הַנָּבִ֣יא הַה֔וּא א֛וֹ אֶל־חוֹלֵ֥ם הַחֲל֖וֹם הַה֑וּא כִּ֣י מְנַסֶּ֞ה יְהוָ֤ה
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם֙ אֶתְכֶ֔ם לָדַ֗עַת הֲיִשְׁכֶ֤ם אֹֽהֲבִים֙ אֶת־יְהוָ֣ה אֱלֹֽהֵיכֶ֔ם
בְּכָל־לְבַבְכֶ֖ם וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁכֶֽם׃ ה אַחֲרֵ֨י יְהוָ֧ה אֱלֹהֵיכֶ֛ם תֵּלֵ֖כוּ
וְאֹת֣וֹ תִירָ֑אוּ וְאֶת־מִצְוֺתָ֤יו תִּשְׁמֹ֙רוּ֙ וּבְקֹל֣וֹ תִשְׁמָ֔עוּ וְאֹת֥וֹ

חָלֵם חֶלְמָא וְיִתֵּן לָךְ אָת אוֹ מוֹפְתָא: ג וְיֵיתֵי
אָתָא וּמוֹפְתָא דִּי מַלִּיל עִמָּךְ לְמֵימַר נְהָךְ
בָּתַר טַעֲוַת עַמְמַיָּא דִּי לָא יְדַעְתּוּן וְנִפְלְחִנּוּן:
ד לָא תְקַבֵּל לְפִתְגָּמֵי נְבִיָּא הַהוּא אוֹ לְחָלֵם
חֶלְמָא הַהוּא אֲרֵי מְנַסֵּי יְיָ אֱלָהֲכוֹן יָתְכוֹן
לְמִדַּע הַאִיתֵיכוֹן רָחֲמִין יָת יְיָ אֱלָהֲכוֹן בְּכָל
לִבְּכוֹן וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁכוֹן: ה בָּתַר דַּחַלְתָּא דַּיְיָ
אֱלָהֲכוֹן תְּהָכוּן וְיָתֵהּ תִּדְחֲלוּן וְיָת פִּקּוֹדוֹהִי
תִּטְּרוּן וּלְמֵימְרֵהּ תְּקַבְּלוּן וְקֳדָמוֹהִי תִּפְלְחוּן

רש"י

(ב) ונתן אליך אות. בשמים, כענין שנאמר בגדעון ועשית לי אות[1], ואומר יהי נא חורב אל הגזה וגו'[2]: או מופת. בארץ (ס"א ונתן אליך אות. בשמים, דכתיב והיו לאותות ולמועדים[3]: או מופת. בארץ, דכתיב אם טל יהיה על הגזה לבדה ועל כל הארץ חרב[4]) אף על פי כן לא תשמע לו. ואם תאמר מפני מה נותן לו הקב"ה ממשלה לעשות אות, כי מנסה ה' אלהיכם אתכם: (ה) ואת מצותיו תשמרו. תורת משה[5]: ובקולו תשמעו. בקול

TORAS MENACHEM

wrote his commentary primarily for the child who is studying *Chumash* for the first time, and:

a.) The child knows that the Sages *did* add additional *mitzvos*, such as the observance of Purim and Chanukah.*

b.) *Rashi* stated previously (*Bereishis* 26:5) that Avraham observed *"precautionary measures on top of the prohibitions in the Torah, such as the prohibition to marry 'second-degree' relations and the Rabbinic prohibitions concerning Shabbos."* From this the reader will already be familiar with the idea that one may—and indeed should—add precautionary measures "on top of" the Torah's precepts.

Therefore, *Rashi* concluded that our verse does not refer to an additional *mitzvah*, but to an addition *within* one of the *mitzvos* of the Torah.

Two Types of Addition

An added detail within a *mitzvah* could be either *relevant* or *irrelevant* to the overall theme of the *mitzvah*.

If we were simply told not to add details to a *mitzvah*, without being informed whether this refers to a prohibition against "irrelevant" or "relevant" details, we would presume that it is only forbidden to add irrelevant details and not relevant details. Thus, when the Torah prohibits adding details to a *mitzvah* for the first time, in *Parshas Va'eschanan*, the reader will presume that it is only forbidden to add "irrelevant" details within a *mitzvah*, because it makes sense that we should not introduce "alien" features into the *mitzvos*. However, we would not have any basis to assert that the Torah forbids the addition of details which are *relevant* to the theme of the *mitzvah*.

To illustrate this point, *Rashi* in *Parshas Va'eschanan* cites three examples of additions to a *mitzvah* which are *irrelevant* to the theme of the *mitzvah*:

"Tefilin with five scriptural passages"—There are only four passages in the Torah which mention *tefilin*. Thus, if a fifth passage was added, it would contain no mention of *tefilin* and would thus be "irrelevant."

"Five species for the lulav"—The Torah specifies only four species which cause a person to *"rejoice before God, your God, for a period of seven days"* (*Vayikra* 23:40). Thus, adding another one will not cause further joy, so it would be irrelevant to the theme of the *mitzvah*.

"Five tzitzis"—In *Parshas Shelach*, *Rashi* writes: *"On the four corners—but not on a garment with three, or with five. This corresponds to the four expressions of redemption which were stated in Egypt (Shemos 6:6-7): 'I will take you out...I will save you...I will redeem you...I will take you'"* (*Rashi* to *Bamidbar* 15:41). Since there are only "four expressions of redemption," adding a fifth *tzitzis* would be irrelevant to the *mitzvah*.

Rashi's Comment in Parshas Re'eh

In our *Parsha*, the Torah repeats the prohibition against adding details to a *mitzvah*, *"Do not add to it." Rashi* understood that this is an additional prohibition against adding even a thematically *relevant* detail to a *mitzvah*—and he cited three examples of such an addition:

Tefilin with five 'totafos'—Earlier, *Rashi* explained that *"totafos"* refers to the *compartments* of the *tefilin* (*Rashi* to *Shemos* 13:16). The significance of the compartments is that, being externally visible, *"whoever sees them tied between the eyes will remember the miracle and speak about it"* (ibid.). Thus, adding compartments (*"totafos"*) to the *tefilin* would indeed be thematically relevant to the *mitzvah*, since it would magnify their impact when people would see them.

Five kinds for the lulav—Here, *Rashi* points out that even if we found a species that causes joy (and is therefore thematically relevant to the *mitzvah*), it would still be forbidden.

Four blessings for the priestly blessing—*Rashi* could not bring the example of *tzitzis* here, as there is no way of making a thematically relevant addition to this *mitzvah*. Rather, he cites the example of *"four blessings for priestly blessing,"* since there are numerous blessings in the Torah which could be added here. And clearly any such blessing would be a thematically relevant addition.

* Many commentators maintain that the verse in *Parshas Va'eschanan* does prohibit adding an extra *mitzvah*, and they explain why the additional *mitzvos* added by the Sages are not a contradiction. Nevertheless, these solutions are halachic in nature, and thus could not be employed here by *Rashi*, who limited his commentary to the interpretation of scripture at the *literal* level.

1 שופטים ו, יז 2 שם לט 3 בראשית א, יד 4 שופטים ו, לז 5 ספרי

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THE FALSE PROPHET

- 2 *If a prophet will arise from among you, or a person who has a vision in his dream, and he indicates to you a sign (in the heavens) or a miracle (upon the earth),* 3 *and then the sign or the miracle which he told you happens, (and he) says, "Let's go after other gods which are unacquainted to you, and let's worship them!"* 4 *You should not listen to the words of that prophet, or to the person, who had a vision in his dream, for God, your God, is testing you, to know whether you do in fact love God, your God, with all your heart and with all your soul.*

5 *You should follow (only) God, your God, and fear Him. (You should) keep His commandments (that were given through Moshe), listen to His voice (through genuine prophets), worship Him (in the Holy Temple), and adhere to His (ways of kindness).*

TORAS MENACHEM

WHY THREE EXAMPLES?

While all the *mitzvos* of the Torah were received by Moshe directly from God, the Torah may record a command in one of three ways:

a.) *Moshe's words alone.* A command given through Moshe, without specific mention that the command was issued by God.

b.) *The words of God and Moshe.* The verse mentions explicitly that God told Moshe to transmit this instruction to the Jewish people.

c.) *God's words alone.* A command whose details we know from a record of God's private conversation with Moshe.

Generally speaking, God's words in the Torah are briefer than those of Moshe. Therefore, one might argue that in the case of a *mitzvah* which we learn from Moshe's words, we cannot add any details, because Moshe would have explained all the details thoroughly. But, we might argue, God *did* leave room for additions, since His words were so brief.

On the other hand, we could take the opposite point of view, that God's words are absolutely precise and cannot be added to in any way; whereas Moshe's words do not enjoy the same degree of precision, and additions could be made.

In order to refute both of these arguments, *Rashi* cited three examples of prohibited additions: *Tefilin*, which is given over in Moshe's words (see *Devarim* 6:6; *ibid.* 11:13); *Lulav*—which stresses the words of God and Moshe (*Vayikra* 23:33); and the priestly blessing, which was said privately by God to Moshe (*Bamidbar* 6:22).

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Re'eh* 5729; *Likutei Sichos* vol. 9, p. 53, note 24)

The Last Word

"GOD IS TESTING YOU, TO KNOW WHETHER YOU DO IN FACT LOVE GOD" (V. 4)

- "One of the basic teachings of the Torah is that God does not expect of a human being anything which is beyond the human capacity to carry out. This is quite understandable, for even a human being, who is very far from absolute perfection, would not expect of a tool that he has fashioned any more than he has put into it. Certainly God, the Creator of man, knows man's capacities. From this, it immediately follows that when a Jew faces any kind of a test of faith, it is certain that he has been given the capacity to overcome it. And the more difficult the test, the greater are the individual's capacities. The reason that an individual is tested is not because God wants to know how he will acquit himself, but in order that this person be afforded the opportunity to realize his potential, even that which is unknown to him. And when one's potential capacities are released and activated, they become part and parcel of his or her arsenal, to be used for personal as well as communal benefit."
- "The stronger one's faith in God remains even under adverse circumstances, the sooner it will become clear it was all a matter of a test. But this faith should not be merely a matter of lip service, but must have the full force of conviction."
- "Some Jews are born with greater natural capacities, and consequently they are faced with greater challenges and trials. Others are born with lesser capacities, and therefore the challenges and trials that God presents to them are also lesser, in keeping with their strength....If you truly have great trials, this in itself is proof that you possess a great capacity and strength to overcome them."
- "If anyone may think that he or she should not be afraid to be exposed to a test or trial, suffice it to mention that our Sages of blessed memory who knew well human nature, strongly cautioned against such over-confidence. Indeed, every Jew, even a *Tzadik* [righteous person] who has spent scores of years in learning and practicing the Torah and *mitzvos*, also begins the day, like any other Jew, with the prayer at the beginning of the morning prayer: "Bring me not into the hands of temptation." Moreover, our Sages point out that when King David, God's anointed, in a moment of great spiritual elation said, "Test me, oh God, and try me," it brought him into trouble.
- "When it is seen Above, that one is strong in one's faith in God, and one rises in the general observance of Torah and *mitzvos*... the test is nullified and there is an increase in blessing, salvation and success."

(Excerpts from letters written by the Rebbe on various occasions)

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תַּעֲבֹ֖דוּ וּב֥וֹ תִדְבָּקֽוּן׃ ו וְהַנָּבִ֨יא הַה֜וּא א֣וֹ חֹלֵם֩ הַחֲל֨וֹם הַה֜וּא
יוּמָ֗ת כִּ֣י דִבֶּר־סָ֠רָה עַל־יְהֹוָ֨ה אֱלֹהֵיכֶ֜ם הַמּוֹצִ֥יא אֶתְכֶ֣ם ׀
מֵאֶ֣רֶץ מִצְרַ֗יִם וְהַפֹּֽדְךָ֙ מִבֵּ֣ית עֲבָדִ֔ים לְהַדִּֽיחֲךָ֙ מִן־הַדֶּ֔רֶךְ אֲשֶׁ֧ר
צִוְּךָ֛ יְהֹוָ֥ה אֱלֹהֶ֖יךָ לָלֶ֣כֶת בָּ֑הּ וּבִעַרְתָּ֥ הָרָ֖ע מִקִּרְבֶּֽךָ׃ ס ז כִּ֣י
יְסִֽיתְךָ֡ אָחִ֣יךָ בֶן־אִ֠מֶּךָ אֽוֹ־בִנְךָ֨ אֽוֹ־בִתְּךָ֜ א֣וֹ ׀ אֵ֣שֶׁת חֵיקֶ֗ךָ א֧וֹ
רֵֽעֲךָ֛ אֲשֶׁ֥ר כְּנַפְשְׁךָ֖ בַּסֵּ֣תֶר לֵאמֹ֑ר נֵֽלְכָ֗ה וְנַֽעַבְדָה֙ אֱלֹהִ֣ים
אֲחֵרִ֔ים אֲשֶׁר֙ לֹ֣א יָדַ֔עְתָּ אַתָּ֖ה וַאֲבֹתֶֽיךָ׃ ח מֵאֱלֹהֵ֣י הָֽעַמִּ֗ים אֲשֶׁר֙
סְבִיבֹ֣תֵיכֶ֔ם הַקְּרֹבִ֣ים אֵלֶ֔יךָ א֖וֹ הָרְחֹקִ֣ים מִמֶּ֑ךָּ מִקְצֵ֥ה הָאָ֖רֶץ
וְעַד־קְצֵ֥ה הָאָֽרֶץ׃ ט לֹא־תֹאבֶ֣ה ל֔וֹ וְלֹ֥א תִשְׁמַ֖ע אֵלָ֑יו וְלֹא־
תָח֤וֹס עֵֽינְךָ֙ עָלָ֔יו וְלֹֽא־תַחְמֹ֥ל וְלֹא־תְכַסֶּ֖ה עָלָֽיו׃ י כִּ֤י הָרֹג֙
תַּֽהַרְגֶ֔נּוּ יָֽדְךָ֛ תִּֽהְיֶה־בּ֥וֹ בָרִֽאשׁוֹנָ֖ה לַהֲמִית֑וֹ וְיַ֥ד כָּל־הָעָ֖ם
בָּאַחֲרֹנָֽה׃ יא וּסְקַלְתּ֥וֹ בָאֲבָנִ֖ים וָמֵ֑ת כִּ֣י בִקֵּ֗שׁ לְהַדִּֽיחֲךָ֙ מֵעַל֙
יְהֹוָ֣ה אֱלֹהֶ֔יךָ הַמּוֹצִיאֲךָ֛ מֵאֶ֥רֶץ מִצְרַ֖יִם מִבֵּ֥ית עֲבָדִֽים׃ יב וְכָל־
יִשְׂרָאֵ֕ל יִשְׁמְע֖וּ וְיִרָא֑וּן וְלֹא־יוֹסִ֣פוּ לַעֲשׂ֗וֹת כַּדָּבָ֥ר הָרָ֛ע הַזֶּ֖ה
בְּקִרְבֶּֽךָ׃ ס יג כִּֽי־תִשְׁמַ֞ע בְּאַחַ֣ת עָרֶ֗יךָ אֲשֶׁר֩ יְהֹוָ֨ה אֱלֹהֶ֜יךָ נֹתֵ֥ן
לְךָ֛ לָשֶׁ֥בֶת שָׁ֖ם לֵאמֹֽר׃ יד יָֽצְא֞וּ אֲנָשִׁ֤ים בְּנֵֽי־בְלִיַּ֙עַל֙ מִקִּרְבֶּ֔ךָ

וּבְדַחְלְתֵהּ תִּתְקָרְבוּן: ו וּנְבִיָּא הַהוּא אוֹ חָלֵם
חֶלְמָא הַהוּא יִתְקְטִיל אֲרֵי מַלִּיל סְטָיָא עַל יְיָ
אֱלָהֲכוֹן דִּי אַפֵּק יָתְכוֹן מֵאַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם
וּדְפָרְקָךְ מִבֵּית עַבְדוּתָא לְאַטְעָיוּתָךְ מִן אָרְחָא
דִּי פַּקְדָךְ יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ לִמְהָךְ בַּהּ וּתְפַלֵּי
עָבֵד דְּבִישׁ מִבֵּינָךְ: ז אֲרֵי יְמַלְכִנָּךְ אֲחוּךְ בַּר
אִמָּךְ אוֹ בְרָךְ אוֹ בְרַתָּךְ אוֹ אִתַּת קְיָמָךְ אוֹ
חַבְרָךְ דִּי כְנַפְשָׁךְ בְּסִתְרָא לְמֵימַר נֵהָךְ וְנִפְלַח
לְטַעֲוַת עַמְמַיָּא דִּי לָא יְדַעְתְּ אַתְּ וַאֲבָהָתָךְ:
ח מִטַּעֲוַת עַמְמַיָּא דִּי בִסְחָרָנֵיכוֹן דְּקָרִיבִין לָךְ
אוֹ דִּרְחִיקִין מִנָּךְ מִסְּיָפֵי אַרְעָא וְעַד סְיָפֵי
אַרְעָא: ט לָא תֵיבֵי לֵהּ וְלָא תְקַבֵּל מִנֵּהּ וְלָא
תְחוּס עֵינָךְ עֲלוֹהִי וְלָא תְרַחֵם וְלָא תְכַסֵּי
עֲלוֹהִי: י אֲרֵי מִקְטַל תִּקְטְלִנֵּהּ יְדָךְ תְּהֵי בֵהּ
בְּקַדְמֵיתָא לְמִקְטְלֵהּ וִידָא דְכָל עַמָּא
בְּבַתְרֵיתָא: יא וְתִרְגְּמִנֵּהּ בְּאַבְנַיָּא וִימוּת אֲרֵי
בְעָא לְאַטְעָיוּתָךְ מִדַּחַלְתָּא דַיְיָ אֱלָהָךְ דִּי
אַפְּקָךְ מֵאַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עַבְדוּתָא:
יב וְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁמְעוּן וְיִדְחֲלוּן וְלָא יוֹסְפוּן
לְמֶעְבַּד כְּפִתְגָמָא בִישָׁא הָדֵין בֵּינָךְ: יג אֲרֵי
תִשְׁמַע בְּחָדָא מִקִּרְוָיךְ דִּי יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ יָהֵב לָךְ
לְמִתַּב תַּמָּן לְמֵימַר: יד נְפַקוּ גֻבְרִין בְּנֵי רִשְׁעָא

רש"י

הנביאים: **ואתו תעבודו.** במקדשו: **ובו תדבקון.** הדבק בדרכיו. גמול חסדים, קבור מתים, בקר חולים, כמו שעשה הקב"ה[1]: **(ו) סרה.** דבר המוסר מן העולם שלא היה ולא נברא ולא צויתיו לדבר כן, דישטורנ"א בלע"ז: **והפדך מבית עבדים.** אפילו אין לו עליך אלא שפדאך, דיו[2]: **(ז) כי יסיתך.** אין הסתה אלא גרוי, שנאמר אם ה' הסיתך בי[3], אמיבור"ט בלע"ז, שמסיתו לעשות כן[2]: **אחיך.** מאב: **או[4] בן אמך.** מאם: **חיקך.** השוכבת בחיקך ומחוקה בך אפיקע"ט בלע"ז, וכן ומחיק האדן[5], מיסוד התקוע באדן: **אשר כנפשך.** זה אביך[2]. פירש לך הכתוב את החביבין לך, קל וחומר לאחרים: **בסתר.** דבר הכתוב בהווה, שאין דברי מסית אלא בסתר. וכן הוא אומר בנשף בערב יום באישון לילה ואפלה[6]: **אשר לא ידעת אתה ואבותיך.** דבר זה גנאי גדול הוא לך, שאף האומות אין מניחין מה שמסרו להם אבותיהם, וזהו אומר לך עזוב מה שמסרו לך אבותיך[2]: **(ח) הקרובים אליך או הרחוקים.** למה פרט קרובים ורחוקים, אלא כך אמר הכתוב, מטיבן של קרובים אתה למד טיבן של רחוקים, כשם שאין ממש בקרובים כך אין ממש ברחוקים[2]: **מקצה הארץ.** זו חמה ולבנה וצבא השמים שהן מהלכין מסוף העולם ועד סופו: **(ט) לא תאבה לו.** לא תהא תאב לו. לא תאהבנו. לפי שנאמר ואהבת לרעך כמוך, את זה לא תאהב[2]: **ולא תשמע אליו.** בהתחננו על נפשו למחול לו, לפי שנאמר עזוב תעזוב עמו[7], לזה לא תעזוב[2]: **ולא תחוס עינך עליו.** לפי שנאמר לא תעמוד על דם רעך[8], על זה לא תחוס[2]: **ולא תחמול.** לא תהפוך בזכותו: **ולא תכסה עליו.** אם אתה יודע לו חובה אינך רשאי לשתוק[2]: **(י) כי הרג תהרגנו.** (אם יצא מבית דין זכאי, החזירהו לחובה) יצא מבית דין חייב, אל תחזירהו לזכות[2]: **ידך תהיה בו בראשונה.** מצוה ביד הניסת להמיתו. לא מת בידו, ימות ביד אחרים, שנאמר ויד כל העם וגו': **(יג) לשבת שם.** פרט לירושלים שלא ניתנה לדירה[9]: **כי תשמע וגו' לאמר.** אומרים כן, ילאו וגו': **(יד) בני בליעל.** בלי עול. שפרקו עולו של מקום[2]: **אנשים.** ולא נשים[2]:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

• Why is incitement described as being "in secret"? (v. 7)

Rashi: The Torah speaks of that which usually occurs, since an inciter speaks in secret.

• Why are several family members listed here? (v. 7)

Rashi: Scripture specifies those who are dear to you, and how much more so does this apply to others!

1 סוטה יד. וראה לקו"ש חי"ד ע' 53 2 ספרי 3 ש"א כו, יט 4 [illegible] "אחיך מאב או בן אמך, מאם" (ע"פ לקו"ש חי"ט ע' 148, הערה 2) 5 יחזקאל טז, יד 6 משלי ז, ט 7 שמות כג, ה 8 ויקרא יט, טז 9 ספרי. וראה שיחת ש"פ ראה תשמ"ה.

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- [6] *That prophet, or that person who had a vision in his dream should be put to death because he spoke falsehood about God, your God—who brought you out of the land of Egypt, who redeemed you from the house of bondage—to lead you astray from the path in which God, your God, commanded you to go. (By killing him) you will eliminate the evil from your midst.*

INCITEMENT TO IDOL WORSHIP

- [7] *If you are incited in secret by your (paternal) brother, (or) your mother's son, your son or your daughter, your wife who is one with you, your friend, (or your father) who is as (dear to you) as yourself, and are told, "Let us go and worship other gods!"—(gods) which are unacquainted to you and your ancestors,* [8] *from among the gods of the peoples around you, (whether) near to you or far from you, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth:*
  - [9] *You should not feel affection for him.*
  - *You should not listen to him (when he pleads forgiveness for his life).*
  - *You should not pity him (if he is in a life-threatening situation).*
  - *You should not have mercy upon him (to turn justice in his favor).*
  - *You should not withhold evidence (that may lead to) his (conviction).*
  - [10] *Rather, you should (try his case) repeatedly (until he is sentenced) to be killed.*
  - *(The victim's) own hand should be the first against him, to put him to death, and afterwards the hands of all the people.*
  - [11] *You should pelt him with stones until he dies, because he sought to lead you astray from God, your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*

[12] *All Israel should hear (of it) and be afraid, so they should no longer do such an evil thing in your midst.*

A CITY OF IDOL WORSHIPERS

- [13] *If, in one of your cities which God, your God, is giving you as a place to live, you hear a report,* [14] *"Reckless men, from among you, have gone and led the inhabitants of their city astray, saying, 'Let's go and worship other gods, which are unacquainted to you!'":*

TORAS MENACHEM

THE INCITER (v. 7)

When describing those who might incite a person to idol-worship, the Torah cites a series of close relatives. *Rashi* explains, "*Scripture specifies those who are dear to you, and how much more so does this apply to others!*"

Since the list appears to be comprehensive, why are the cases of mother and sister omitted?

THE EXPLANATION

On numerous occasions, *Rashi* repeats the principle, "the Torah speaks of that which usually occurs." (See *Rashi* to *Shemos* 21:28; 22:17, 21, 30. This principle is also cited by *Rashi* here, see *Classic Questions*.)

Thus when describing the "typical" victim of incitement to idol worship, the Torah depicts here an adult male, with a wife and children, since the very young are unlikely to have the intellectual maturity to see anything tempting in idol worship, and the very old are not easily influenced by new ideas.

A married person is strongly influenced by his wife and children, with whom he lives on a daily basis and has a strong emotional bond. This close relationship between a man and his wife and children renders him susceptible to their influence.

Outside the home, a man's outlook tends to be influenced by his father and brothers even after he has married and has a family. Therefore they are also included by our verse as likely inciters.

However, after a man is married, his mother and sisters do not tend to be major contributors to his outlook and philosophy. And since he no longer lives under the same roof with them, it is also unlikely that the closeness of their relationship will be strong enough to sway him to idol worship. Therefore, the verse omitted the case of mother and sister, since "the Torah speaks of that which usually occurs."

(Based on *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 148ff.)

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וַיַּדִּיחוּ אֶת־יֹשְׁבֵי עִירָם לֵאמֹר נֵלְכָה וְנַעַבְדָה אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יְדַעְתֶּם׃ טו וְדָרַשְׁתָּ וְחָקַרְתָּ וְשָׁאַלְתָּ הֵיטֵב וְהִנֵּה
אֱמֶת נָכוֹן הַדָּבָר נֶעֶשְׂתָה הַתּוֹעֵבָה הַזֹּאת בְּקִרְבֶּךָ׃ טז הַכֵּה
תַכֶּה אֶת־יֹשְׁבֵי הָעִיר הַהִוא לְפִי־חָרֶב הַחֲרֵם אֹתָהּ
וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־בָּהּ וְאֶת־בְּהֶמְתָּהּ לְפִי־חָרֶב׃ יז וְאֶת־כָּל־
שְׁלָלָהּ תִּקְבֹּץ אֶל־תּוֹךְ רְחֹבָהּ וְשָׂרַפְתָּ בָאֵשׁ אֶת־הָעִיר
וְאֶת־כָּל־שְׁלָלָהּ כָּלִיל לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְהָיְתָה תֵּל עוֹלָם לֹא
תִבָּנֶה עוֹד׃ יח וְלֹא־יִדְבַּק בְּיָדְךָ מְאוּמָה מִן־הַחֵרֶם לְמַעַן יָשׁוּב
יְהוָה מֵחֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ וְנָתַן־לְךָ רַחֲמִים וְרִחַמְךָ וְהִרְבֶּךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר
נִשְׁבַּע לַאֲבֹתֶיךָ׃ יט כִּי תִשְׁמַע בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לִשְׁמֹר
אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם לַעֲשׂוֹת הַיָּשָׁר בְּעֵינֵי

מִבֵּינָךְ וְאַטְעִיוּ יָת יָתְבֵי קַרְתְּהוֹן לְמֵימַר נְהָךְ
וְנִפְלַח לְטַעֲוַת עַמְמַיָּא דִּי לָא יְדַעְתּוּן׃
טו וְתִתְבַּע וְתִבְדּוֹק וְתִשְׁאַל יָאוּת וְהָא קוּשְׁטָא
כֵּוַן פִּתְגָמָא אִתְעֲבִידָא תּוֹעֶבְתָּא הָדָא בֵּינָךְ׃
טז מִמְחָא תִמְחֵי יָת יָתְבֵי קַרְתָּא הַהִיא
לְפִתְגָם דְּחָרֶב גַּמַּר יָתַהּ וְיָת כָּל דִּי בַהּ וְיָת
בְּעִירַהּ לְפִתְגָם דְּחָרֶב׃ יז וְיָת כָּל עֲדָאַהּ תִּכְנוֹשׁ
לְגוֹ פְּתָיַהּ וְתוֹקִיד בְּנוּרָא יָת קַרְתָּא וְיָת
כָּל עֲדָאַהּ גְּמִיר קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ וּתְהֵי תֵּל חָרִיב
לְעָלַם לָא תִתְבְּנֵי עוֹד׃ יח וְלָא יִדְבַּק בִּידָךְ
מִדְּעַם מִן חֶרְמָא בְּדִיל דִּיתוּב יְיָ מִתְּקוֹף רָגְזֵהּ
וְיִתֵּן לָךְ רַחֲמִין וִירַחֵם עֲלָךְ וְיַסְגִּנָּךְ כְּמָא דִּי
קַיֵּים לַאֲבָהָתָךְ׃ יט אֲרֵי תְקַבֵּל לְמֵימְרָא דַּייָ
אֱלָהָךְ לְמִטַּר יָת כָּל פִּקּוֹדוֹהִי דִּי אֲנָא מְפַקֵּדָךְ
יוֹמָא דֵין לְמֶעְבַּד דְּכָשַׁר קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ׃

רש״י

ישבי עירם. ולא יושבי עיר אחרת. מכאן אמרו אין נעשית עיר הנדחת עד שידיחוה אנשים, ועד שיהיו מדיחיה מתוכה[1]: (טו) **ודרשת וחקרת ושאלת היטב.** מכאן למדו שבע חקירות מרבוי המקרא. כאן יש שלש, דרישה וחקירה והיטב. ושאלת, אינו מן המנין, וממנו למדו בדיקות. ובמקום אחר הוא אומר ודרשו השופטים היטב.[2] ועוד במקום אחר הוא אומר ודרשת היטב[3]. ולמדו היטב היטב לגזירה שוה, ליתן האמור של זה בזה: (טז) **הכה תכה.** אם אינך יכול להמיתם במיתה הכתובה בהם, המיתם באחרת[4]: (יז) **לה׳ אלהיך.** לשמו ובשבילו: (יח) **למען ישוב ה׳ מחרון אפו.** שכל זמן שעבודה זרה

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **After the witnesses have been examined** (v. 15) **what is done before executing the inhabitants of the city?** (v. 16)

Rambam: Two Torah scholars are sent to the city to warn them and to encourage them to do *teshuvah* (repent). If they do *teshuvah*, then all is well and good. But if they persist in their foolishness...then if the idol worshipers are found to be in a minority, they are stoned and the rest of the city is saved. If they are found to be a majority...then all the inhabitants of the city are killed by the sword, including children and women (*Laws of Idol Worship* 4:6).

Ra'avad: *Teshuvah* cannot help [to annul the court's sentence] after a person has already been warned, and committed a sin (ibid.).

Kesef Mishneh: In response to *Ra'avad's* criticism of *Rambam*: The general warning of the Torah scholars to the inhabitants of the city is not a full-fledged *halachic* warning, since it was not administered to each person individually. Therefore, the city can still be exonerated through *teshuvah* even after being "warned" by the Torah scholars.

Tzafnas Pane'ach: When *Rambam* writes that the city is exonerated through *teshuvah*, he does not mean to say that no punishment is administered at all. Rather, he means that the *city* is exonerated from being judged as a "city of idol-worshipers," but that the individual idol-worshipers would nevertheless be punished by stoning (*Tzafnas Pane'ach al HaTorah, Bereishis* 18:21).

TORAS MENACHEM

The City of Idol Worshipers (v. 13-19)

Ra'avad criticized ***Rambam****'s* opinion that a city of idol-worshipers is exonerated if they do *teshuvah*, since the ruling of a *Beis Din* (Jewish Court) cannot be reversed even if the convicted person repents after his sentence has been passed.

Both ***Kesef Mishneh*** and ***Tzafnas Pane'ach*** defend *Rambam's* ruling, but with different solutions. *Kesef Mishneh* argues that in this case the sentence can be reversed, since the inhabitants of the city were not given a full-fledged *halachic* warning. On the other hand, *Tzafnas Pane'ach* suggests that the *teshuvah* does not annul the punishment *entirely*, but rather that, it exonerates the "public crime" of a *city* of idol-worshipers, and replaces it instead with the "private crime," of personal idol worship.

However, both these solutions do not appear to address *Ra'avad's* main contention here. The primary reason why a court's sentence cannot be reversed through repentance is because there is no way that a court can evaluate whether or not *teshuvah* has actually taken place, since *teshuvah* is an internal/emotional conviction *of the heart* (see *Sha'alos Uteshuvos Noda BiYehudah, Orach Chaim, Mahadurah Kama*, responsum 35). So why is the case of a city of idol-worshipers an exception to this rule?

1 סנהדרין קיא: 2 דברים יט, יח 3 שם יז, ד 4 ספרי

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- 15 *You should interrogate, probe, and question (the witnesses) thoroughly.*

If indeed the matter is confirmed to be true, that this abomination has occurred in your midst:

- 16 *(If possible) you should kill the inhabitants of that city by sword, (but otherwise just) kill (them by any means). Wipe out (the city) together with all that is in it, (killing) its livestock by sword.*
- 17 *You should gather all its spoil into its main square, and burn the city with all its spoil completely with fire, for (the sake of) God, your God. It should remain a heap of destruction forever, never to be rebuilt.*
- 18 *Nothing that is doomed to destruction should remain in your hands.*

(The city must be destroyed) in order for God's anger to cease, and (only then) will He have mercy on you. (When) He will have mercy on you He will cause you to multiply, as He swore to your forefathers.

19 *So you should listen to the voice of God your God, and keep all His commandments which I am commanding you today, so as to do that which is proper in the eyes of God, your God.*

TORAS MENACHEM

THE EXPLANATION

In order to resolve this problem, let us first pose another question:

The *Talmud* states that if a person commits an act which involves two different transgressions, rendering him liable for the death penalty twice over, and each punishment requires him to be executed by a different method, then we administer the more severe form of execution (*Sanhedrin* 81b; *Rambam, Laws of Sanhedrin* 14:4).

Now, an ordinary individual who worships idols is liable for death by stoning, whereas the punishment for a person who merely lives in a city of idol worshipers is decapitation by the sword (*Sanhedrin* 111b). Of these two punishments, death by stoning is the more severe.

So an inhabitant of a convicted city of idol-worshipers who worships idols, appears to be liable for the death penalty *twice over*: stoning for his personal idol worship, and decapitation for being a citizen of a city of idol worshipers. Why then is he not administered the more severe of these two punishments, that of stoning?

Or, to put it more graphically: A city of idol worshipers is only sentenced to execution by the sword if the *majority* of its inhabitants worship idols. Otherwise, the minority of idol-worshipers are executed by stoning, and the rest are not punished at all (see *Rambam* cited in *Classic Questions*). Now, picture the scenario where a city is one person short of a majority of idol worshipers, and one individual then proceeds to worships idols. He has now *reduced* the sentence of *all those* who were liable for stoning, and replaced it with the less severe sentence of death by the sword! How could this be the case?

In fact, however, he has not "reduced" the sentence at all. What has happened, is that the idol-worshipers have ceased to exist as *individuals*, and have now merged identities to become a *community* of idol worshipers. Thus, it is not the case that they are guilty of a private crime (personal idol worship) *and* a public crime (being a citizen of a city of idol worshipers). Rather, their new identity as a community of idol-worshipers has *replaced* their prior identity as private idol-worshipers. Therefore, they are only liable for *one* punishment: death by the sword.

(This also explains why all members of the city—even those who did not worship idols (v. 16)—are punished by death, and even their possessions are burned (v. 17), since the judgment is upon the entire community as a *single unit*.)

If the inhabitants of the city were then to do *teshuvah*, a very unusual phenomenon would occur. If we bear in mind that the "community of idol-worshipers" only became united as a single unit through their sins, then if the sins are wiped away through *teshuvah*, the cohesive force (of sin) that is responsible for forming the community's very identity will no longer be present, and the "community" will cease to exist. Consequently, the death sentence on the community is annulled (not through a legal technicality, exemption or immunity, but rather) because the convicted party—the *community of idol-worshipers*—*no longer exists*.

Thus we have not violated the principle that a court's sentence cannot be reversed through repentance, since it is not the case here that the sentence of the convicted party was *legally* reversed. Rather, the case was simply "thrown out of court," since the convicted party was no longer to be found.

RAMBAM'S SOURCE

Based on the above, we can answer a problem concerning *Rambam's* source for the ruling that (through *teshuvah*) a city of idol-worshipers is exonerated. According to *Tzafnas Pane'ach* (ibid.), *Rambam's* source was from the case of Sodom, which God promised not to destroy if its inhabitants would repent (see *Onkelos* to *Bereishis* 18:21), because Sodom had the status of a "city of idol worshipers."

This begs the question: There is a principle that "we cannot derive a law from events before the giving of the Torah" (*Jerusalem Talmud, Mo'ed Katan* 3:5, cited in *Tosfos, Mo'ed Katan* 20a). So how can *Tzafnas Pane'ach* assert that *Rambam's* source is from the destruction of Sodom, an event that occurred before the Torah was given?

However, based on the above, we can appreciate that what *Rambam* derived from the case of Sodom was not a point of Jewish *Law*, but rather, the definition of what constitutes a community—when it comes into existence and when it is dissolved. (The law governing such a community is then derived from our *Parsha*, which was said after the giving of the Torah).

And certainly, the events recorded before the giving of the Torah can act as a source text for factual information, such as the definition of what constitutes a "community"—just as Rambam rules in our case.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 9, p. 106ff.)

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יְהוָֹה אֱלֹהֶיךָ׃ ס (רביעי) יד א בָּנִים אַתֶּם לַיהוָֹה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם לֹא
תִתְגֹּדְדוּ וְלֹא־תָשִׂימוּ קָרְחָה בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם לָמֵת׃ ב כִּי עַם קָדוֹשׁ
אַתָּה לַיהוָֹה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וּבְךָ בָּחַר יְהוָֹה לִהְיוֹת לוֹ לְעַם סְגֻלָּה
מִכֹּל הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה׃ ס ג לֹא תֹאכַל כָּל־
תּוֹעֵבָה׃ ד זֹאת הַבְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר תֹּאכֵלוּ שׁוֹר שֵׂה כְשָׂבִים וְשֵׂה
עִזִּים׃ ה אַיָּל וּצְבִי וְיַחְמוּר וְאַקּוֹ וְדִישֹׁן וּתְאוֹ וָזָמֶר׃ ו וְכָל־
בְּהֵמָה מַפְרֶסֶת פַּרְסָה וְשֹׁסַעַת שֶׁסַע שְׁתֵּי פְרָסוֹת מַעֲלַת גֵּרָה
בַּבְּהֵמָה אֹתָהּ תֹּאכֵלוּ׃ ז אַךְ אֶת־זֶה לֹא תֹאכְלוּ מִמַּעֲלֵי הַגֵּרָה
וּמִמַּפְרִיסֵי הַפַּרְסָה הַשְּׁסוּעָה אֶת־הַגָּמָל וְאֶת־הָאַרְנֶבֶת
וְאֶת־הַשָּׁפָן כִּי־מַעֲלֵה גֵרָה הֵמָּה וּפַרְסָה לֹא הִפְרִיסוּ טְמֵאִים
הֵם לָכֶם׃ ח וְאֶת־הַחֲזִיר כִּי־מַפְרִיס פַּרְסָה הוּא וְלֹא גֵרָה טָמֵא
הוּא לָכֶם מִבְּשָׂרָם לֹא תֹאכֵלוּ וּבְנִבְלָתָם לֹא תִגָּעוּ׃ ס

א בנין אתון קדם יי אלהכון לא תתחממון
ולא תשוון מרט בין עיניכון על מית: ב ארי
עם קדיש את קדם יי אלהך ובך אתרעי יי
למהוי לה לעם חביב מכל עממיא די
על אפי ארעא: ג לא תיכול כל דמרחק:
ד דין בעירא דתיכלון תורין אמרין דרחלין
וגדין דעזין: ה אילא וטביא ויחמורא ויעלא
ורימא ותורבלא ודיצא: ו וכל בעירא
דסדיקא פרסתא ומטלפא טלפין תרתין
פרסתא מסקא פשרא בבעירא יתה תיכלון:
ז ברם ית דין לא תיכלון ממסקי פשרא
וממסדיקי פרסתא מטלפי טלפיא ית גמלא
וית ארנבא וית טפזא ארי מסקי פשרא אנון
ופרסתהון לא סדיקא מסאבין אנון לכון:
ח וית חזירא ארי מסדיק פרסתא הוא ולא
פשר מסאב הוא לכון מבסרהון לא תיכלון

רש"י

בעולם, אחרון אף בעולם[1]: (א) לא תתגודדו. לא תתנו גדידה ושרט בבשרכם על מת כדרך שהאמוריים עושין[1], לפי שאתם בניו של מקום ואתם ראוין להיות נאים ולא גדודים ומקורחים: בין עיניכם. אצל הפדחת. ובמקום אחר הוא אומר לא יקרחו קרחה בראשם[2], לעשות כל הראש כבין העינים[1]: (ב) כי עם קדוש אתה. קדושת עצמך מאבותיך. ועוד, ובך בחר ה'[3]: (ג) כל תועבה. כל שתעבתי לך, כגון צרם אוזן בכור כדי לשוחטו במדינה, הרי דבר שתעבתי לך כל מום לא יהיה בו, וכאן ולמד כאן שלא ישחט ויאכל על אותו המום. בשר בחלב הרי דבר שתעבתי לך, והזהיר כאן על אכילתו[4]: (ד) זאת הבהמה וגו': (ה) איל וצבי ויחמור. למדנו שהחיה בכלל בהמה ולמדנו שבהמה וחיה טמאה מרובה מן הטהורה, שבכל מקום פורט את

המועט: ואקו. מתורגם יעלא, יעלי סלע הוא אשטנבו"ק: ותאו. תורבלא, שור היער. בעלא יער בלשון ארמי: (ו) מפרסת. סדוקה כתרגומו: פרסה. פלאנט"ה: ושסעת. חלוקה בשתי צפרנים, שיש סדוקה ואינה חלוקה בצפרנים וזו שמלה: בבהמה. משמע מה שנמצא בבהמה אכול, מכאן אמרו שהשליל ניתר בשחיטת אמו[5]: (ז) השסועה. בריה היא שיש לה שני גבין ושני שדראות[6]. אמרו רבותינו למה נשנו, בבהמות מפני השסועה, ובעופות מפני הראה, שלא נאמרו בתורת כהנים[7]: (ח) ובנבלתם לא תגעו. רבותינו פירשו, ברגל. שאדם חייב לטהר את עצמו ברגל. יכול יהיו מוזהרים בכל השנה, תלמוד לומר אמור אל הכהנים וגו'[8], ומה טומאת המת חמורה, כהנים מוזהרים ואין ישראל מוזהרים, טומאת נבלה קלה לא כל שכן[9]:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● To which "abomination" does verse 3 refer?

Rashi: Anything that I have declared to be an abomination to you. [E.g.] if one made a cut in the ear of a firstborn [animal], in order to [be permitted to] slaughter it in the country, [outside the Temple]. This is something that I have declared as an abomination for you—*"It should not have any blemish in it"* (Vayikra 22:21). Here scripture teaches that one may not slaughter [the firstborn] and eat it because of that [deliberately made] blemish. [Another example is] if one cooked meat in milk, which is a thing that I have declared as an abomination to you. Here scripture warns against eating it.

TORAS MENACHEM

"You May Not Eat Any Abomination" (v. 3)

Verse 3 prohibits the consumption of "any abomination." Rashi gives two examples: i.) a firstborn animal which was intentionally mutilated in order to avoid slaughtering it in the Holy Temple. ii.) Cooked milk and meat. This prompts the following questions:

a.) Why did *Rashi* need to offer examples here of an "abomination" which is forbidden to eat? The reader is already familiar with many forbidden foods which the Torah refers to as an abomination—such as forbidden fat, blood, *pigul* and *nosar*—so why is any comment from *Rashi* needed here?

b.) When citing an example of an abominable food, why did *Rashi* pick the *unusual case* of a mutilated firstborn animal, which only applies to those who own flocks that produce an unblemished firstborn male, in seeming defiance of the principle that *"the Torah speaks of that which usually occurs"* (above 13:7)?

1 ספרי. 2 ויקרא כא, א. 3 ראה שיחת ש"פ ראה תשכ"ו. 4 חולין קיד:. 5 שם סט:. 6 שם ס:. 7 שם סג:. 8 ויקרא כא, א. 9 ר"ה טז:.

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THE HOLINESS OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE

14
FOURTH READING

- [1] *You may not gash yourselves or make any baldness between your eyes (as a sign of mourning) for the dead (as the Amorites do, because) you are children of God, your God (and thus your appearance should be pleasant).*

[2] *For you are a(n inherently) holy people to God, your God, and (furthermore), God has chosen you to be a treasured people for Him, out of all the nations that are upon the earth.*

LAWS OF FORBIDDEN FOODS*

- [3] *You may not eat any abomination.*
- [4] *These are the animals that you may eat:*
  - *ox, sheep, goat,* [5] *gazelle, deer, and yachmor, ibex, antelope, buffalo, and giraffe.*
- [6] *You may eat any animal which has a split hoof which is completely split into two hooves, if it chews the cud; (and you may eat the fetus) inside the animal (once the animal is slaughtered).*
- [7] *But, among those that chew the cud and those that have a cloven hoof, you may not eat these:*
  - *The dromedary, the camel, the hare, and the hyrax, because they chew the cud, but do not have split hooves. They are impure for you.*
  - [8] *The pig, because it has a split hoof, but does not chew the cud. It is impure for you.*
  - *You may not eat their flesh. (When it comes to a festival, you must make yourself ritually pure to come to the Temple, so then) you may not touch their carcasses (which would render you impure).*

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

"YOU ARE CHILDREN OF GOD" (v. 1)

All creation is derived from "the word of God" which brings matter into being and sustains it every instant continuously. However, the parallel Godly force of contraction and concealment obscures the Divine creative force; as a result, all one can see is the external form of the physical. Service of God, aided by the simple belief that *"there is nothing aside from Him,"* mandates an honest effort by each of us to "bring to the surface" the Godliness inherent in everything in our lives, and to remove as much as possible the mask of physical externality obscuring the inner Godliness.

The same applies to each individual; his inner "essence" is Godliness. *"You are the children of God your God."* It is explained in the *Tanya* (ch. 2) that just as the child is drawn from the mind of his father, so is the soul of every Jew drawn from the Almighty's wisdom and thought (which is synonymous with His Essence, for He and His Wisdom are one). The essential being of each and every Jew...is Godliness.

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe)

c.) Eating milk cooked in meat is *already* prohibited by the verse, *"Do not cook a tender young animal in its mother's milk,"* which *"is written in three places in the Torah: One for the prohibition of eating meat with milk, one for the prohibition of deriving any benefit from meat with milk, and one for the prohibition of cooking meat with milk"* (Rashi to Shemos 23:19).

What then is added by our verse?

THE EXPLANATION

When the verse states, *"You may not eat any abomination,"* without specifying any further details, it appears that the Torah is referring to an abomination with which the reader is already familiar. However, this begs the question: If the reader is already aware that a certain thing is an "abomination," then surely he *already knows* not to eat it? Why does the Torah need to tell us, "You may *not eat any abomination*"?

Rashi answers that this refers to "anything that I have declared to be an abomination *to you*." I.e. this verse is referring to eating something which *in itself* has not yet been forbidden by the Torah, and it has only become forbidden *to the person* due to something "abominable" which that person has done—it is "an abomination *to you.*"

In other words, the Torah can prohibit the consumption of a food substance in one of two ways: a.) By rendering the *food itself* an intrinsically abominable and forbidden substance; or b.) By prohibiting *the person* from eating this food, for whatever reason.

Rashi explains that our verse is speaking of the latter case, where a food that is intrinsically permitted became prohibited because of something a person did—it became an abomination, not in itself, but *"to you."*

* See *Vayikra*, chap. 11.

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ט אֶת־זֶה תֹּאכְלוּ מִכֹּל אֲשֶׁר בַּמָּיִם כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ סְנַפִּיר
וְקַשְׂקֶשֶׂת תֹּאכֵלוּ: י וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר אֵין־לוֹ סְנַפִּיר וְקַשְׂקֶשֶׂת לֹא
תֹאכֵלוּ טָמֵא הוּא לָכֶם: ס יא כָּל־צִפּוֹר טְהֹרָה תֹּאכֵלוּ: יב וְזֶה
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תֹאכְלוּ מֵהֶם הַנֶּשֶׁר וְהַפֶּרֶס וְהָעָזְנִיָּה: יג וְהָרָאָה
וְאֶת־הָאַיָּה וְהַדַּיָּה לְמִינָהּ: יד וְאֵת כָּל־עֹרֵב לְמִינוֹ: טו וְאֵת בַּת
הַיַּעֲנָה וְאֶת־הַתַּחְמָס וְאֶת־הַשָּׁחַף וְאֶת־הַנֵּץ לְמִינֵהוּ: טז אֶת־
הַכּוֹס וְאֶת־הַיַּנְשׁוּף וְהַתִּנְשָׁמֶת: יז וְהַקָּאָת וְאֶת־הָרָחָמָה וְאֶת־
הַשָּׁלָךְ: יח וְהַחֲסִידָה וְהָאֲנָפָה לְמִינָהּ וְהַדּוּכִיפַת וְהָעֲטַלֵּף:
יט וְכֹל שֶׁרֶץ הָעוֹף טָמֵא הוּא לָכֶם לֹא יֵאָכֵלוּ: כ כָּל־עוֹף טָהוֹר
תֹּאכֵלוּ: כא לֹא תֹאכְלוּ כָל־נְבֵלָה לַגֵּר אֲשֶׁר־בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ תִּתְּנֶנָּה
וַאֲכָלָהּ אוֹ מָכֹר לְנָכְרִי כִּי עַם קָדוֹשׁ אַתָּה לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא־
תְבַשֵּׁל גְּדִי בַּחֲלֵב אִמּוֹ: פ [חמישי] כב עַשֵּׂר תְּעַשֵּׂר אֵת כָּל־
תְּבוּאַת זַרְעֶךָ הַיֹּצֵא הַשָּׂדֶה שָׁנָה שָׁנָה: כג וְאָכַלְתָּ לִפְנֵי | יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר לְשַׁכֵּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם מַעְשַׂר דְּגָנְךָ
תִּירֹשְׁךָ וְיִצְהָרֶךָ וּבְכֹרֹת בְּקָרְךָ וְצֹאנֶךָ לְמַעַן תִּלְמַד לְיִרְאָה

וּבְנִבְלַתְהוֹן לָא תִקְרְבוּן: ט יָת דֵּין תֵּיכְלוּן
מִכֹּל דִּי בְמַיָּא כֹּל דִּי לֵהּ צִיצִין וְקַלְפִין תֵּיכְלוּן:
י וְכֹל דִּי לֵית לֵהּ צִיצִין וְקַלְפִין לָא תֵיכְלוּן
מְסָאַב הוּא לְכוֹן: יא כָּל צִפַּר דַּכְיָא תֵּיכְלוּן:
יב וְדֵין דִּי לָא תֵיכְלוּן מִנְּהוֹן נִשְׁרָא וְעַר
וְעַזְיָא: יג וּבַת כַּנְפָא וְטָרְפִיתָא וְדַיְתָא לִזְנַהּ:
יד וְיָת כָּל עוּרְבָא לִזְנֵיהּ: טו וְיָת בַּת נַעֲמִיתָא
וְצִיצָא וְצִפַּר שַׁחְפָּא וְנַצָּא לִזְנוֹהִי: טז וְקַרְיָא
וְקִפּוֹפָא וּבוּתָא: יז וְקָאתָא וִירַקְרְקָא וְשָׁלֵינוּנָא:
יח וְחַוָּרִיתָא וְאִבּוּ לִזְנַהּ וְנַגַּר טוּרָא וַעֲטַלֵּפָא:
יט וְכֹל רִחְשָׁא דְעוֹפָא מְסָאַב הוּא לְכוֹן לָא
יִתְאַכְלוּן: כ כָּל עוֹפָא דְּכֵי תֵּיכְלוּן: כא לָא
תֵיכְלוּן כָּל נְבִילָא לְתוֹתַב עָרֵל דִּי בְקִרְוָיךְ
תִּתְּנִנַּהּ וְיֵיכְלִנַּהּ אוֹ תְזַבְּנִנַּהּ לְבַר עַמְמִין אֲרֵי
עַם קַדִּישׁ אַתְּ קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ לָא תֵיכוֹל בְּשַׂר
בַּחֲלָב: כב עַשָּׂרָא תְּעַשַּׂר יָת כָּל עֲלָלַת זַרְעָךְ
דְּיָפוֹק חַקְלָא שַׁתָּא בְשַׁתָּא: כג וְתֵיכוֹל קֳדָם יְיָ
אֱלָהָךְ דִּי בְאַתְרָא דִּי יִתְרְעֵי לְאַשְׁרָאָה
שְׁכִנְתֵּהּ תַּמָּן מַעְשַׂר עֲבוּרָךְ חַמְרָךְ וּמִשְׁחָךְ
וּבְכוֹרֵי תוֹרָךְ וְעָנָךְ בְּדִיל דְּתֵילַף לְמִדְחַל קֳדָם

רש"י

(יא) כל צפור טהורה תאכלו. להתיר משולחת שבמצורע[1]: **(יב) וזה אשר לא תאכלו מהם.** לאסור את השחוטה: **(יג) והראה ואת האיה וגו'.** היא ראה היא איה היא דיה. ולמה נקרא שמה ראה, שרואה ביותר. ולמה הזהיר בכל שמותיה, שלא ליתן פתחון פה לבעל דין לחלוק, שלא יהא האוסרה קורא אותה ראה, והבא להתיר אומר, זו דיה שמה או איה שמה, וזו לא אסר הכתוב. ובעופות פרט לך הטמאים, ללמד שבעופות הטהורים מרובים על הטמאים, לפיכך פרט את המועט[2]: **(טו) והתנשמת.** קלב"א שורי"ץ: **(יז) שלך.** השולה דגים מן הים[2]: **(יח) דוכיפת.** הוא תרנגול הבר ובלע"ז הרופ"א וכרבלתו כפולה[2]: **(יט) שרץ העוף.** הם הנמוכים הרוחשים על הארץ, כגון זבובין וצרעים ונגבים טמאים, הם קרויים שרץ: **(כ) כל עוף טהור תאכלו.** ולא את הטמא. בא ליתן עשה על לא תעשה. וכן בבהמה, אותה תאכלו[3] ולא בהמה טמאה, לאו הבא מכלל עשה עשה, לעבור עליהם בעשה ולא תעשה[1]: **(כא) לגר אשר בשעריך.** גר תושב שקבל עליו שלא לעבוד עבודה זרה ואוכל נבלות: **כי עם קדוש אתה לה'.** קדש את עצמך במותר לך. דברים המותרים ואחרים נוהגים בהם איסור, אל תתירם בפניהם: **לא תבשל גדי.** שלשה פעמים. פרט לחיה ולעופות ולבהמה טמאה: **לא תבשל גדי וגו':** **(כב) עשר תעשר.** מה ענין זה אצל זה, אמר להם הקב"ה לישראל, לא תגרמו לי לבשל גדיים של תבואה עד שהן במעי אמותיהן, שאם אין אתם מעשרים מעשרות כראוי, כשהיא סמוך להתבשל אני מוציא רוח קדים והיא משדפתן. שנאמר ושדפה לפני קמה[4], וכן לענין בכורים[3]: **שנה שנה.** מכאן שאין מעשרין מן החדש על הישן[1]: **(כג) ואכלת וגו'.** זה מעשר שני. שכבר למדנו ליתן מעשר ראשון ללוים, שנאמר כי תקחו

TORAS MENACHEM

To illustrate what this means, *Rashi* brings the unusual example of a person who mutilated a firstborn animal so as to avoid taking it to Jerusalem. Torah law normally permits the consumption of a firstborn animal which became blemished naturally, but in this case, since the person has committed a deceptive and abominable act, our verse prohibits *him* alone from eating the animal.

Rashi's Second Example

Rashi then cited a second example to teach us an *even* greater innovation of our verse:

Up to this point we have understood that a food substance can either be intrinsically forbidden (as in most cases), or alternatively, the Torah can decree against a person not to eat a particular food due to his actions (as in our verse).

Now, we might think that if a food is *already* intrinsically forbidden, then there would be no point in the Torah adding a prohibition on the person (even if he did something abominable with it), since the food is intrinsically abominable in *any* case.

Therefore, *Rashi* adds a further example which indicates that this is not

1 ספרי 2 חולין סג: 3 [illegible] 4 מ"ב יט, כו 5 ראה שיחת מוצש"ק ראה [illegible].

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- [9] *Among all (the creatures) that are in the water, you may eat these:*
  - *You may eat any (of) those (creatures) in the water that have fins and scales.* [10] *But you must not eat any that do not have fins and scales. They are impure for you.*
- [11] *You may eat every bird from a ritually pure species (even the one which is sent off after the ritual purification of a tzara'as sufferer.*)*
- [12] *Among (birds), you may not eat the following:*
  - *The griffon vulture, the bearded vulture, the osprey,* [13] *the buzzard, the kite and the buzzard family,* [14] *the entire raven family,* [15] *the ostrich, the tachmas, the gull, the hawk family,* [16] *the kos-owl, the yanshuf-owl, the barn owl,* [17] *the ka'as-owl, the roller, the cormorant,* [18] *the stork, the heron family, the hoopoe and the bat.*
- [19] *Every flying insect is impure for you. They may not be eaten.*
- [20] *You may eat any ritually pure species of clean fowl.*
- [21] *You may not eat any carcass. You can give it to the (non-Jewish resident) alien who is in your cities, and he may eat it, or you can sell it to a non-Jew.*
- *You are a holy people to God, your God, so (you should abstain even from things that are permitted).*
- *Do not cook a tender young animal in its mother's milk.*

The Second Tithe

FIFTH READING

- [22] *You should always take the (second) tithe from all the produce of the seed crop that the field produces.*
- *(Do not separate tithes for this) year from (last) year('s produce).*
- [23] *You should eat the (second) tithes of your grain, your wine, and your oil—and the firstborn of your cattle and of your sheep—before God, your God, in (Jerusalem), the place where He will choose to make His Name rest. (Do this) in order that you will learn to fear God, your God, for all time.*

TORAS MENACHEM

the case and that the Torah can prohibit a food-substance simultaneously for both reasons:

"[*Another example is*] *if one cooked meat in milk, which is a thing that I have declared as an abomination to you. Here scripture warns against eating it.*"

Meat cooked in milk is intrinsically forbidden as an abomination by the Torah, regardless of who cooked it. Our verse adds that if a person cooks meat in milk *himself*, then (*in addition* to the existing, intrinsic prohibition against eating this food substance) the Torah adds a further prohibition upon *the person* who did the abominable *act* of cooking this food, from eating it.

And from the negative, we can learn the positive: That God allowed the Jewish people to eat only the most spiritually refined food, since "*you are a holy people to God, your God, and God has chosen you to be a treasured people for Him, out of all the nations that are upon the earth*" (v. 2).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 29, p. 88*ff*.)

The Last Word

"ASSER T'ASSER" (v. 22)

There is the Divine Promise: *Asser t'asser* (v. 22)...as explained by our Sages of blessed memory (*Ta'anis* 9a), that through giving tithes and *Tzedakah* [charity], a person will not only not reduce what he has, but, on the contrary, it will be greatly increased, to the degree of riches. And although the *Mitzvos* in general (including *Tzedakah*) must be fulfilled not for the sake of reward, but because God, the Creator and Master of the world, commanded them, nevertheless God has given the assurance of a generous reward (*Asser t'asser*), both materially and spiritually.

(Excerpt from public letter of 6th Tishrei 5733—Free Translation)

* See *Vayikra* 14:7.

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אֶת־יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כָּל־הַיָּמִים: כד וְכִי־יִרְבֶּה מִמְּךָ הַדֶּרֶךְ כִּי לֹא
תוּכַל שְׂאֵתוֹ כִּי־יִרְחַק מִמְּךָ הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
לָשׂוּם שְׁמוֹ שָׁם כִּי יְבָרֶכְךָ יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ: כה וְנָתַתָּה בַּכָּסֶף
וְצַרְתָּ הַכֶּסֶף בְּיָדְךָ וְהָלַכְתָּ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהֹוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ בּוֹ: כו וְנָתַתָּה הַכֶּסֶף בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־תְּאַוֶּה נַפְשְׁךָ בַּבָּקָר
וּבַצֹּאן וּבַיַּיִן וּבַשֵּׁכָר וּבְכֹל אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁאָלְךָ נַפְשֶׁךָ וְאָכַלְתָּ שָּׁם
לִפְנֵי יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְשָׂמַחְתָּ אַתָּה וּבֵיתֶךָ: כז וְהַלֵּוִי אֲשֶׁר־
בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ לֹא תַעַזְבֶנּוּ כִּי אֵין לוֹ חֵלֶק וְנַחֲלָה עִמָּךְ: ס כח מִקְצֵה ׀
שָׁלֹשׁ שָׁנִים תּוֹצִיא אֶת־כָּל־מַעְשַׂר תְּבוּאָתְךָ בַּשָּׁנָה הַהִוא
וְהִנַּחְתָּ בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ: כט וּבָא הַלֵּוִי כִּי אֵין־לוֹ חֵלֶק וְנַחֲלָה עִמָּךְ
וְהַגֵּר וְהַיָּתוֹם וְהָאַלְמָנָה אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ וְאָכְלוּ וְשָׂבֵעוּ לְמַעַן
יְבָרֶכְךָ יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־מַעֲשֵׂה יָדְךָ אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה: ס

יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ כָּל יוֹמַיָּא: כד וַאֲרֵי יִסְגֵּי מִנָּךְ אָרְחָא
אֲרֵי לָא תִכּוּל לְמִטְּלֵהּ אֲרֵי יִתְרַחַק מִנָּךְ
אַתְרָא דִּי יִתְרְעֵי יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ לְאַשְׁרָאָה שְׁכִנְתֵּהּ
תַּמָּן אֲרֵי יְבָרְכִנָּךְ יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ: כה וְתִתֵּן בְּכַסְפָּא
וּתְצוּר כַּסְפָּא בִּידָךְ וּתְהָךְ לְאַתְרָא דִּי יִתְרְעֵי
יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ בֵּהּ: כו וְתִתֵּן כַּסְפָּא בְּכֹל דִּי יִתְרְעֵי
נַפְשָׁךְ בְּתוֹרֵי וּבְעָנָא וּבַחֲמַר חֲדַת וְעַתִּיק
וּבְכֹל דִּי תִשְׁאֲלִנָּךְ נַפְשָׁךְ וְתֵיכוּל תַּמָּן קֳדָם יְיָ
אֱלָהָךְ וְתֶחְדֵּי אַתְּ וֶאֱנָשׁ בֵּיתָךְ: כז וְלֵוָאָה
דִּי בְקִרְוָיךְ לָא תִרְחֲקִנֵּהּ אֲרֵי לֵית לֵהּ חֳלָק
וְאַחֲסָנָא עִמָּךְ: כח מִסּוֹף תְּלָת שְׁנִין תַּפֵּק
יָת כָּל מַעְשַׂר עֲלַלְתָּךְ בְּשַׁתָּא הַהִיא וְתִצְנַע
בְּקִרְוָיךְ: כט וְיֵיתֵי לֵוָאָה אֲרֵי לֵית לֵהּ חֳלָק
וְאַחֲסָנָא עִמָּךְ וְגִיּוֹרָא וְיִתַּמָּא וְאַרְמַלְתָּא דִּי
בְקִרְוָיךְ וְיֵיכְלוּן וְיִשְׂבְּעוּן בְּדִיל דִּי יְבָרְכִנָּךְ יְיָ

רש״י

מאת בני ישראל וגו'[1], ונתן להם רשות לאכלו בכל מקום, שנאמר ואכלתם אותו בכל מקום, על כרחך זה מעשר אחר הוא: (כד) כי יברכך. שתהא התבואה מרובה לשאת: (כו) בכל אשר תאוה נפשך. כלל: בבקר ובצאן וביין ובשכר. פרט: ובכל אשר תשאלך נפשך. חזר וכלל. מה הפרט מפורש ולד ולדות הארץ וראוי למאכל אדם וכו'[2]: (כז) והלוי וגו' לא תעזבנו. מליתן לו מעשר ראשון: כי אין לו חלק ונחלה עמך. יצאו לקט שכחה ופאה והפקר, שאף הוא יש לו חלק עמך בהן כמוך, ואינן חייבין במעשר[3]: (כח) מקצה שלש שנים. בא ולמד שאם השהה מעשרותיו של שנה ראשונה ושנייה לשנה, שיבערם מן הבית בשלישית: (כט) ובא הלוי. ויטול מעשר ראשון: והגר והיתום. ויטלו מעשר שני, שהוא של עני של שנה זו, ולא תאכלנו אתה בירושלים כדרך שנזקקת לאכול מעשר שני של שתי שנים: ואכלו ושבעו. תן להם כדי שביעה. מכאן אמרו אין פוחתין לעני בגורן

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What happens if a person exchanges his second tithe for money, and spends it on food *outside* Jerusalem? (v. 24-26)

Rambam: If second tithe is exchanged for money, and that money is used to buy fruits, they may not be exchanged back for money while one is still distant [from Jerusalem]...*rather*, the fruits themselves must be taken to Jerusalem and eaten there. This is an instance where we treat fruits bought with money exchanged for the second tithe *more stringently* [since they cannot be exchanged] than the second tithe itself, [which *can* be exchanged] (*Laws of Second Tithe* 7:1-2).

Shitah Mekubetzes: The Torah permitted a person to exchange his second tithe for money so as not to burden him with a heavy load on his journey to Jerusalem: *"If the journey is great for you...[and] you are unable to carry it, then you should exchange it for money"* (v. 24-25). Thus, if a person purchases fruits with this money before reaching Jerusalem, he indicates that the burden of carrying them does not bother him. Therefore, the Torah does not permit him to exchange them again (*Zevachim* 49a).

Tosfos: The second tithe may be exchanged for money at a distance from Jerusalem, in order to use that money to purchase produce in Jerusalem. But if the person used the money to buy fruits outside Jerusalem, he may not exchange them again for money, just as fruits bought *within* Jerusalem may not be exchanged once again for money (*ibid., s.v. veharai ma'aser*).

TORAS MENACHEM

Exchanging the Second Tithe For Money (v. 24-26)

After a person has separated the second tithe from his crops, he is required to take it to Jerusalem, and eat it there (v. 23). Since the produce may be quite heavy, and he may have some distance to travel, the Torah gives him the option to exchange the second tithe for money at home, take the money to Jerusalem, and use that money to purchase produce in Jerusalem (v. 24-26).

Rambam discusses the question of what happens if the person uses that money to purchase produce *before* he reaches Jerusalem. In such a case, *"they may not be exchanged back for money while one is still distant [from Jerusalem]...rather, the fruits themselves must be taken to Jerusalem, and eaten there."*

Why may an exchange not be carried out for a second time? ***Shitah Mekubetzes*** explains that through using the exchange money, "he ind-

1 במדבר יח, כו. 2 עירובין כז: ראה שיחות ש"פ ראה תשנ"ג.

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- 24 *If the journey is great for you, because the place which God, your God, will choose to make His Name rest there, is too far from you and God has blessed you (with so much produce) that you are unable to carry it,* 25 *then you should exchange it for money, bind up the money in your hand, and you should go to the place that God, your God, will choose.* 26 *You should use the money to buy whatever your soul desires—cattle, sheep, wine or beer, or whatever your soul desires—and you should eat there before God, your God, and you should rejoice, (both) you and your household.*
- 27 *Do not abandon the Levite who lives in your town (by failing to give him the first tithe), for he has no portion or inheritance with you.*

Disposal of Undistributed Tithes & Tithe for the Poor

- 28 *At the end of three years, you should take out all the (undistributed first and second) tithes from your crop, (before the end) of that year, and put it in a public place.*
- 29 *The Levite (will come and take the first tithe) because he has no portion or inheritance with you.*
- *(That year you will not separate the second tithe and take it to Jerusalem. Instead, you will give the poor man's tithe, so that the destitute) converts, orphans, and widows, who are in your cities, will come and eat. (You must give them enough to) be satisfied.*

(Do this) in order that God, your God, will bless you in all the work of your hand that you will do.

TORAS MENACHEM

icates that the burden of carrying them does not bother him. Therefore, the Torah does not permit him to exchange them again."

Tosfos offers a different explanation: "If the person used the money to buy fruits *outside* Jerusalem, he may not exchange them again for money, just as fruits bought *within* Jerusalem may not be exchanged once again for money."

Rambam himself offers a further insight into this law: "This is an instance where we treat fruits bought with money exchanged for the second tithe more stringently than the second tithe itself."

What is *Rambam* adding with this statement?

And did *Rambam* accept the logic of *Shitah Mekubetzes?* Or that of *Tosfos?* Or did he have a different reasoning?

The Explanation

The Torah's "permission" to exchange the second tithe for money could be interpreted in three different ways:

a.) It is a *dispensation* for those who are unable to bring their actual second tithe fruits to Jerusalem, due to the burden of the load and the distance involved. However, the preferable way to observe this *mitzvah* is by carrying the produce itself to Jerusalem.

b.) It is not a dispensation at all. Rather, redeeming the second tithe produce for money, and using that money to purchase produce in Jerusalem, is an *equally acceptable* way of eating the second tithe in Jerusalem, as transporting the actual second tithe fruits themselves.

c.) Exchanging one's second tithe for money is not merely a (totally acceptable) means of eating the second tithe in Jerusalem, but rather, it is an *independent precept in its own right,* which a person who lives outside Jerusalem may perform. When a person later takes the exchange money to Jerusalem to buy produce and eats it there, his eating is *distinct* from the precept of exchanging the second tithe for money.

Shitah Mekubetzes adopted the first approach ('a') that exchanging the second tithe for money is a *dispensation* granted to a person to relieve him of a burden. Consequently, "if a person purchases fruits with this money before reaching Jerusalem, he indicates that the burden of carrying them does not bother him," i.e. he has shown that he does not need the dispensation, and, that "therefore, the Torah does not permit him to exchange them again."

Sparks of Chasidus

It is true, that man and his deeds are finite, and that God is the source of holiness and infinitude. But nevertheless, we are taught that, "He desires the work *of your hands*" (Job 14:15), i.e. the ultimate purpose of creation is that holiness and goodness should be brought into the world *via man's efforts,* and not by God alone.

This principle is hinted to in the concept of the second tithe, and its exchange for money (see verses 24-26 & *Classic Questions*):

When the second tithe is separated, *God* confers holiness on the produce (and it must be eaten in Jerusalem).

However, when a person exchanges the second tithe into money, and then exchanges the money back into produce, it is *the person's* act which renders the produce holy.

Rambam comments: *"We treat fruits bought with money exchanged for the second tithe more stringently than the second tithe itself"*—i.e. man's actions (*"fruits bought with money"*) are cherished by God most, and are thus more central to the purpose of creation (more *"stringent"*) than something made holy by God alone (*"the second tithe itself."*)

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, p. 80)

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[ששי] טו א מִקֵּץ שֶׁבַע־שָׁנִים תַּעֲשֶׂה שְׁמִטָּה׃ ב וְזֶה דְּבַר
הַשְּׁמִטָּה שָׁמוֹט כָּל־בַּעַל מַשֵּׁה יָדוֹ אֲשֶׁר יַשֶּׁה בְּרֵעֵהוּ
לֹא־יִגֹּשׂ אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ וְאֶת־אָחִיו כִּי־קָרָא שְׁמִטָּה לַיהוָה׃ ג אֶת־
הַנָּכְרִי תִּגֹּשׂ וַאֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה לְךָ אֶת־אָחִיךָ תַּשְׁמֵט יָדֶךָ׃ ד אֶפֶס כִּי
לֹא יִהְיֶה־בְּךָ אֶבְיוֹן כִּי־בָרֵךְ יְבָרֶכְךָ יְהוָה בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן־לְךָ נַחֲלָה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ׃ ה רַק אִם־שָׁמוֹעַ תִּשְׁמַע בְּקוֹל
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לִשְׁמֹר לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־כָּל־הַמִּצְוָה הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר
אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם׃ ו כִּי־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בֵּרַכְךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר־לָךְ
וְהַעֲבַטְתָּ גּוֹיִם רַבִּים וְאַתָּה לֹא תַעֲבֹט וּמָשַׁלְתָּ בְּגוֹיִם רַבִּים
וּבְךָ לֹא יִמְשֹׁלוּ׃ ס ז כִּי־יִהְיֶה בְךָ אֶבְיוֹן מֵאַחַד אַחֶיךָ בְּאַחַד
שְׁעָרֶיךָ בְּאַרְצְךָ אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ לֹא תְאַמֵּץ
אֶת־לְבָבְךָ וְלֹא תִקְפֹּץ אֶת־יָדְךָ מֵאָחִיךָ הָאֶבְיוֹן׃ ח כִּי־פָתֹחַ
תִּפְתַּח אֶת־יָדְךָ לוֹ וְהַעֲבֵט תַּעֲבִיטֶנּוּ דֵּי מַחְסֹרוֹ אֲשֶׁר יֶחְסַר

אלהך בכל עובדי ידך די תעבד: א מסוף
שבע שנין תעבד שמטתא: ב ודין פתגם
שמטתא דתשמיט כל גבר מרי רשו די ירשי
בחבריה לא יתבע מן חבריה ומן אחוהי ארי
קרא שמטתא קדם יי: ג מן בר עממין
תתבע ודי יהי לך עם אחוך תשמיט ידך:
ד לחוד ארי לא יהי בך מסכנא ארי ברכא
יברכנך יי בארעא די יי אלהך יהב לך
אחסנא למירתה: ה לחוד אם קבלא תקבל
למימרא דיי אלהך למטר למעבד ית כל
תפקדתא הדא די אנא מפקדך יומא דין:
ו ארי יי אלהך ברכך כמא די מליל לך
ותוזיף לעממין סגיאין ואת לא תזוף ותשלוט
בעממין סגיאין ובך לא ישלטון: ז ארי יהי בך
מסכנא חד מאחיך בחדא מקרויך בארעך דיי
אלהך יהב לך לא תתקיף ית לבך ולא תקפוץ
ית ידך מאחוך מסכנא: ח אלא (ארי) מפתח
תפתח ית ידך לה ואוזפא תוזפנה כמסת

רש"י

וכו'[1]. ואתה הולך לירושלים כמעשר של שנה ראשונה ושנייה שבשבוע, ומתודה בערתי הקדש מן הבית[2] כמו שמפורש בכי תכלה לעשר[3]: (א) **מקץ שבע שנים.** יכול שבע שנים לכל מלוה ומלוה, תלמוד לומר קרבה שנת השבע[4]. ואם אתה אומר שבע שנים לכל מלוה ומלוה למנותה כל אחד ואחד, היאך היא קרבה, הא למדת שבע שנים למנין השמיטות[1]: (ב) **שמוט כל בעל משה ידו.** שמוט את ידו של כל בעל משה[4*]: (ד) **אפס כי לא יהיה בך אביון.** ולהלן הוא אומר כי לא יחדל אביון[5], אלא בזמן שאתם עושים רצונו של מקום, אביונים באחרים ולא בכם, וכשאין אתם עושים רצונו של מקום אביונים בכם. אביון דל מעני, ולשון אביון שהוא תאב לכל דבר[6]: (ה) **רק אם שמוע תשמע.** אז לא יהיה בך אביון: **שמוע תשמע.** שמע קמעא משמיעין אותו הרבה[1]: (ו) **באשר דבר לך.** והיכן דבר, ברוך אתה בעיר: **והעבטת.** כל לשון הלואה כשנופל על המלוה, נופל בלשון מפעיל. כגון והלוית, והעבטת. ואם היה אומר ועבטת היה נופל על הלוה, כמו ולוית: **והעבטת גוים.** יכול שתהא לוה מזה ומלוה לזה, תלמוד לומר ואתה לא תעבוט[1]: **ומשלת בגוים רבים.** יכול גוים אחרים מושלים עליך, תלמוד לומר ובך לא ימשולו[1]: (ז) **כי יהיה בך אביון.** התאב תאב קודם: **מאחד אחיך.** אחיך מאביך, קודם לאחיך מאמך[1]: **שעריך.** עניי עירך קודמים לעניי עיר אחרת[1]: **לא תאמץ.** יש לך אדם שמצטער אם יתן אם לא יתן, לכך נאמר לא תאמץ. יש לך אדם שפושט את ידו וקופצה, לכך נאמר ולא תקפוץ[1]: **מאחיך האביון.** אם לא תתן לו, סופך להיות אחיו של אביון[1]: (ח) **פתח תפתח.** אפילו כמה פעמים[1]: **כי פתח תפתח.** הרי כי משמש בלשון אלא: **והעבט תעביטנו.** אם לא רצה במתנה, תן לו בהלואה: **די מחסורו.** ואי אתה מצווה להעשירו[1]: **אשר יחסר לו.** אפילו סוס לרכוב

TORAS MENACHEM

Tosfos adopted the second approach ('b'), that the exchange of second tithe produce into money is an *equally acceptable substitute* for taking the second tithe produce itself. But, on the other hand, *Tosfos* maintained that exchanging the second tithe into money is (not a precept in its own right, but) only a means to an end, to "relocate" the produce to Jerusalem.

Thus, according to *Tosfos*, there is a single "process of exchange," which takes place in two phases: i.) Exchanging the second tithe for money (*v.* 25), and, ii.) "*Use the money to buy whatever your soul desires*" (*v.* 26), i.e. exchanging the money back into produce. Once the person has bought the produce, the whole process of "exchange" as described by the Torah is complete, and no further exchanges are allowed. Thus, "fruits bought *within* Jerusalem may not be exchanged once again for money," and likewise, the same law applies to fruits bought *outside* Jerusalem.

Rambam, however, took the third approach ('c'), that exchanging the second tithe for money is an independent precept in its own right. Therefore, *Rambam* could not accept *Tosfos's* argument that exchanging the money *back* into fruits completes the "process of exchange," because, according to *Rambam*, the initial exchange of the second tithe into money is an independent process *in its own right*, which is not "completed" by a further act.

To clarify this point *Rambam* writes: "*This is an instance where we treat fruits bought with money exchanged for the second tithe more stringently than the second tithe itself.*" For this stringency is in regard to the first precept—the exchange of produce for money, which can be done only with the second tithe itself. It is for this reason that *Rambam* adds this statement: By pointing out that there is a stringency in regard to the exchange of produce for money, he clarifies that it is not merely a "means to an end," but an independent precept.

(Based on *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 34, p. 75*ff.*)

1 ספרי 2 דברים כו, יג 3 שם יב 4 זהו בפסוק ט 4* בכמה דפוסים נוסף כאן רש"י זה: (ג) את הנכרי תגוש. זו מצות עשה: 5 פסוק יא 6 ויק"ר לד, ז

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15

SIXTH READING

- [1] *At the end of (the) seven-year (cycle) you must annul (all loans).* [2] *These are the terms of the annulment: Every creditor should release from his hand the debt which he can claim from his fellow. He may not demand payment from his friend or his brother, because the time of God's annulment has arrived.*
- [3] *You should demand payment from a gentile (who owes you money), but your hand should release whatever (claim) you have against your (Jewish) brother.*

[4] *(So long as you perform the mitzvos), there will no longer be any destitute people among you, for God will bless you repeatedly in the Land God, your God, is giving you as an inheritance and a possession.* [5] *However, (this is only) if you listen to the voice of God, your God, and are careful to observe every commandment, which I am commanding you today.* [6] *For God, your God, has blessed you, as He has told you: You will lend to many nations, and you will not borrow. You will rule over many nations, and they will not rule over you.*

CHARITY & LOANS TO THE POOR

- [7] *If there will be a destitute person—(especially) from among one of your (own paternal) brothers, (or from) one (of the residents) in your (own) town—in the Land that God, your God, is giving you, you must not harden your heart or shut your hand from your destitute brother.* [8] *Rather, you must repeatedly open your hand to him, and give him (charity—and if he will not take a gift, then) give him a loan—sufficient to fulfill his requirements that he is lacking.*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How many times should you "open your hand"? (v. 8)

RASHI: Even many times.

MIDRASH: *"In the morning sow your seed and in the evening do not withhold your hand, for you do not know which will succeed—this one, or that one, or whether both of them will be equally good"* (Ecclesiastes 11:6). Rabbi Yehoshua says: "If a poor man comes to you in the morning, give to him. [If he comes again] in the evening, give to him. For you do not know on account of which one God will inscribe you for—this one, or that one; or if both are 'equally good'" (Bereishis Rabah 61:3).

TORAS MENACHEM

"YOU MUST REPEATEDLY OPEN YOUR HAND" (v. 8)

On the verse, *"You must repeatedly open your hand to him"* (v. 8), *Rashi* comments: "even many times."

However on the similar verse below, *"You must give him repeatedly"* (v. 10), *Rashi* writes (not "many times" but) *"even a hundred times."*

What is the reason for this change?

THE EXPLANATION

The purpose of giving *tzedakah* (charity), could be viewed from two perspectives:

a.) *The goodwill of the giver*—That the person who gives the charity must overcome the emotional and psychological barriers that might prevent him from giving, and that he should give the money willingly.

b.) *The benefit to the recipient*—That the recipient should receive funds.

(A practical ramification between these approaches would be the question whether a person fulfills the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah* in a case where the recipient refuses to accept the donation. If we accept that the main

The Last Word

"YOU MUST ANNUL (ALL LOANS)" (v. 1)

When Hillel the Elder saw that people refrained from lending to the poor for fear of their debts being remitted by the Sabbatical year, he innovated the transfer of debts to the court, which may collect them despite the Sabbatical year (called *pruzbul*).

Since the requirement to annul one's loans is still in force, even in the diaspora, it is highly recommended for every person to make a *pruzbul* at the end of the sixth year of the Sabbatical cycle*, on the eve of *Rosh Hashanah*. This can be done simply by declaring in front of three people: *"I hereby transfer to you all debts that are owed to me so that I may collect them whenever I wish."*

(See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 24, p. 316*ff* and sources cited loc. cit)

* See *Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, Laws of Loans*, 35-6. Some also have the custom to make a further *pruzbul* at the end of the seventh year on the eve of *Rosh Hashanah*, in order to satisfy all *halachic* opinions. (This was the Rebbe's practice on *Erev Rosh Hashanah* 5748—See *Shvach Hamoadim* by Rabbi S. Hurwitz (1992) p. 10, note 11.)

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לוֹ׃ ט הִשָּׁמֶר לְךָ פֶּן־יִהְיֶה דָבָר עִם־לְבָבְךָ בְלִיַּעַל לֵאמֹר
קָרְבָה שְׁנַת־הַשֶּׁבַע שְׁנַת הַשְּׁמִטָּה וְרָעָה עֵינְךָ בְּאָחִיךָ הָאֶבְיוֹן
וְלֹא תִתֵּן לוֹ וְקָרָא עָלֶיךָ אֶל־יְהוָה וְהָיָה בְךָ חֵטְא׃ י נָתוֹן תִּתֵּן
לוֹ וְלֹא־יֵרַע לְבָבְךָ בְּתִתְּךָ לוֹ כִּי בִּגְלַל ׀ הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה יְבָרֶכְךָ
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־מַעֲשֶׂךָ וּבְכֹל מִשְׁלַח יָדֶךָ׃ יא כִּי לֹא־יֶחְדַּל
אֶבְיוֹן מִקֶּרֶב הָאָרֶץ עַל־כֵּן אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ לֵאמֹר פָּתֹחַ תִּפְתַּח
אֶת־יָדְךָ לְאָחִיךָ לַעֲנִיֶּךָ וּלְאֶבְיֹנְךָ בְּאַרְצֶךָ׃ ס יב כִּי־יִמָּכֵר לְךָ
אָחִיךָ הָעִבְרִי אוֹ הָעִבְרִיָּה וַעֲבָדְךָ שֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים וּבַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִת
תְּשַׁלְּחֶנּוּ חָפְשִׁי מֵעִמָּךְ׃ יג וְכִי־תְשַׁלְּחֶנּוּ חָפְשִׁי מֵעִמָּךְ לֹא

חסרונה דיתחסיר לה: ט אסתמר לך דלמא יהי
פתגם עם לבך ברשע למימר קריבא שתא
שביעתא שתא דשמטתא ותבאיש עינך
באחוך מסכנא ולא תתן לה ויקרי עלך קדם
יי ויהי בך חובא: י מתן תתן לה ולא יבאיש
לבך במתנך לה ארי בדיל פתגמא הדין
יברכנך יי אלהך בכל עובדך ובכל אושטות
ידך: יא ארי לא יפסוק מסכנא מגו ארעא על
כן אנא מפקדך למימר מפתח תפתח ית ידך
לאחוך לענך ולמסכנך בארעך: יב ארי
יזדבן לך אחוך בר ישראל או בת ישראל
ויפלחנך שית שנין ובשתא שביעתא
תפטרנה בר חורין מעמך: יג וארי תפטרנה

רש"י

עליו ועבד לרוץ לפניו: לו. זו אשה. וכן הוא אומר אעשה לו עזר כנגדו[1]: (ט) וקרא עליך. יכול מצוה, תלמוד לומר ולא יקרא: והיה בך חטא. מכל מקום, אפילו לא יקרא. אם כן למה נאמר וקרא עליך, ממהר אני ליפרע על ידי הקורא יותר ממי שאינו קורא[2]: (י) נתון תתן לו. אפילו מאה פעמים: לו. בינו ובינך[2]: כי בגלל הדבר. אפילו אמרת ליתן, אתה נוטל שכר האמירה עם שכר המעשה[2]: (יא) על כן. מפני כן: לאמר. עצה לטובתך אני משיאך: לאחיך לעניך. לאיזה אח, לעני: לעניך. ביו"ד אחד, לשון עני אחד הוא. אבל עניך בשני יודי"ן, שני עניים: (יב) כי ימכר לך. על ידי אחרים, שמכרוהו בית דין בגנבתו הכתוב מדבר[3]. והרי כבר נאמר כי תקנה עבד עברי[4], ובמכרוהו בית דין הכתוב מדבר[5]. אלא מפני שני דברים שנתחדשו כאן. אחד שכתוב או העבריה, אף היא תצא בשש. ולא שמכרוה בית דין, שאין האשה נמכרת בגנבתה, שנאמר[6] בגנבתו ולא בגנבתה[7], אלא בקטנה שמכרה

TORAS MENACHEM

(The fact that the Torah stresses *first* (v. 7-8) the importance of goodwill on the part of the giver, implies that, at the literal level, this is the most important element of the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah*.*** However, since from these verses alone a person might be given the impression that goodwill *alone* is sufficient, the Torah also stresses that, "*You should give him*"—that one must actually *give* the money too).

Based on the above, we can explain the subtle difference between *Rashi's* comments to verses 8 and 10:

In verse 8, where the Torah is stressing the goodwill of the giver, ("*you must not harden your heart or shut your hand...open your hand*"), we are not speaking about *the quantity* of the gift, but the transformation of the giver. Therefore, *Rashi* did not write here, "even a hundred times," as this would give the mistaken impression that verse 8 is stressing the quantity of the donation. Rather, the requirement to "*repeatedly* open your hand to him," writes *Rashi*, means that one should overcome one's internal barriers "even many times," if necessary.

However in verse 10, where the main stress is upon the benefit to the recipient, *Rashi* emphasizes the importance of the *quantity* of one's donations: "even a hundred times."

(Based on *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 34, p. 82ff.)

emphasis is that the recipient should actually *receive* the money, then clearly the person has not fulfilled the *mitzvah*.* But if the main emphasis is the goodwill of the giver, then perhaps it could be argued that the *mitzvah* was carried out.**

A further practical ramification would also appear to be the reverse case: where the recipient received funds, but there was no intended act of giving at all, e.g. if a person unwittingly dropped money on the floor, and it was found by a poor person.)

At the literal level, the Torah appears to stress *both* these elements.

First we read: "*If there will be a destitute person...you must not harden your heart or shut your hand....Rather, you must repeatedly open your hand to him*" (v. 7-8). Here the Torah stresses primarily the goodwill of the giver, and his need to overcome internal barriers ("*you must not harden your heart...your hand....*").

However in verses 9-10, the Torah stresses the second aspect discussed above, the actual transfer of funds to the poor man: "Be careful that a reckless thought should not enter your heart...and you look begrudgingly upon your destitute brother and *do not give him....(Rather) you should give him repeatedly.*"

* This concurs with the view that our Sages did not institute a blessing on the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah* because if the recipient refused the donation, the blessing would have been made in vain (*Rashba, Sha'alos Uteshuvos*, 1:18; *Avudraham, Laws of Blessings Performed on Mitzvos*). **See *Beis Hillel* to *Yoreh De'ah* ch. 248 (cited by *Yad Avraham* ibid.), who rules that the *mitzvah* is fulfilled even if the poor person refuses to accept the donation. ***In contrast, it would appear that *Rambam* perceived the second aspect, the actual transfer of funds, to be primary, since: a.) He rules that the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah* is valid even if it is carried out begrudgingly (*Laws of Gifts to the Poor* 10:14); b.) When *Rambam* initially defines the *mitzvah of tzedakah*, he makes no mention of the goodwill of the giver, and stresses only that the *mitzvah* is "to give charity to the poor, *according to the needs of the poor*." (ibid. 7:1). In fact, even when he later discusses the importance of goodwill, he describes this as one of the "virtues" of giving *tzedakah*, as opposed to an intrinsic element of the *mitzvah* itself. A practical ramification between the views of *Rashi* and *Rambam* would appear to be that, according to *Rambam*, the priority is to meet the poor person's requirements, even if this will cause one to give begrudgingly, whereas, according to *Rashi*, it is preferable to give less than the poor person requires, if this will enable one to give willingly. (However, this matter requires further clarification). [See also "*The Rich Go to Heaven*," by Eli M. Shear & Chaim Miller (Jason Aronson 1998), ch. 2].

1 בראשית ב, יח 2 ספרי 3 קידושין יז: 4 שמות כא, ב 5 מכילתא 6 שמות כב, ב 7 סוטה כג:

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- 9 *Be careful that a reckless thought should not enter your heart, saying, "The seventh year, the year of cancellation (of loans) is approaching," and you look begrudgingly upon your destitute brother and do not give him—then he might cry out against you to God, and it will be an (even more serious) sin for you.* 10 *(Rather) you should give to him repeatedly, and your heart should not feel bad when you give to him. For God, your God, will bless all your work and everything you do, as a result of (the promises you made to the poor and the money you gave to them).* 11 *There will never cease to be destitute people within the Land, and therefore I am commanding you, as follows: you should repeatedly open your hand to your poor brother and to your destitute (resident) in your Land.*

GIFTS TO JEWISH SLAVES UPON THEIR RELEASE

- 12 *If one of your brethren—a Hebrew man or woman—is sold to you (by the courts), he should work for you for six years, and in the seventh year you should send him away, free from you.*

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

THE UNIQUE QUALITY OF *TZEDAKAH*

"By giving tzedakah a person's mind and heart become refined one thousand times" (Torah Ohr, Bereishis 1b)

Our Sages praised the greatness of *tzedakah* considerably, equating it with all the other *mitzvos* together (Bava Basra 9a). Throughout the Jerusalem Talmud, charity is called simply "the Commandment," since that used to be the normal way to refer to *tzedakah*—because charity is the most important of the practical *mitzvos*, and surpasses them all.

For the purpose of all the [*mitzvos*] is simply to elevate one's vitalizing soul [which animates the physical body] to God, since it is this vitalizing soul alone that is responsible for performing them... and you will find no other *mitzvah* in which the vitalizing soul is elevated to the same extent as in the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah*.

For, in the case of all other *mitzvos* [which require action from just one part of the body] only one aspect of the vitalizing soul becomes involved, and even this one faculty is only involved in the *mitzvah* at the moment when the *mitzvah* is being performed. However, in the case of *tzedakah*, a man gives away "the toil of his hands," and certainly all the faculties of his vitalizing soul were immersed in doing his manual work, or other business through which he earned this money. So when he gives it to charity, it turns out that his entire vitalizing soul is elevated to God.

And even one who does not earn a living from his "toil", could nevertheless have used this money that he gave to *tzedakah* to buy life-sustaining necessities for his vitalizing soul, so [in giving *tzedakah*] he is actually giving his soul's life to God.

Therefore, our Sages said that [*tzedakah*] brings the redemption nearer (ibid. 10a). For one act of charity brings about the elevation of so much of the vitalizing soul. The elevation of so many of its faculties and characteristics would not have been achieved through the observance of [even] numerous practical *mitzvos*.

(Free translation of Tanya, chapter 37)

MATERIAL & SPIRITUAL *TZEDAKAH*

Every Jew should be an "animator of living" (Yoma 71a)—to instill vitality into living Jews, and do so in a way that not merely adds more vitality (quantitatively), but also new life (qualitatively), as when breathing life into an inanimate object....

Inasmuch as the essential thing is the deed, the capacity of "animating the living" must express itself in concrete terms, beginning with the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah* [charity]—for *tzedakah* is in effect an act of life-giving, by sustaining the life of the poor man and his family.

In *tzedakah* itself there is the ordinary aspect, namely, sustaining the life of the needy person, and also a higher level, that of resuscitation, as it were, when the poor man is in a desperate situation, not knowing *"whence shall my help come?"* (Psalms 121:1), and the benefactor helps him graciously, cheerfully, and wholeheartedly, which is in the category of instilling new life into the one who had despaired of hope.

And from material *tzedakah* to spiritual *tzedakah*, especially bearing in mind that, as is well known, every physical thing has its spiritual root and source from which it evolves and derives its existence and vitality (Likutei Torah, Shelach, s.v. Inyan Hanesachim).

Spiritual *tzedakah*, in the sense of "animating the living," is exemplified in the teacher-disciple relationship, as our Sages say, *"He who teaches his friend's son Torah is deemed as if he had given birth to him"* (Sanhedrin 19b), and "disciples" is synonymous with natural "children" (Rashi to 6:7, above).

Here "disciples" is not meant in terms of years, but includes also one who is mature in years but a disciple in the acquisition of his knowledge of Torah and *mitzvos*.

The *mitzvah* of spiritual *tzedakah* makes it the duty of every Jew, man or woman, to work for the creation of opportunities for all Jews—young and old—to learn Torah and fulfill its *mitzvos*.

Through the practices of *tzedakah* materially and (even more so) spiritually—and *tzedakah* is typical of all the *mitzvos*—a Jew becomes an "animator of living" in actual fact.

(Excerpt from public letter of "Days of Selichos," 5736—Free Translation)

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תשלחנו ריקם: יד העניק תעניק לו מצאנך ומגרנך ומיקבך
אשר ברכך יהוה אלהיך תתן־לו: טו וזכרת כי עבד היית
בארץ מצרים ויפדך יהוה אלהיך על־כן אנכי מצוך
את־הדבר הזה היום: טז והיה כי־יאמר אליך לא אצא
מעמך כי אהבך ואת־ביתך כי־טוב לו עמך: יז ולקחת
את־המרצע ונתתה באזנו ובדלת והיה לך עבד עולם ואף
לאמתך תעשה־כן: יח לא־יקשה בעינך בשלחך אתו חפשי
מעמך כי משנה שכר שכיר עבדך שש שנים וברכך יהוה
אלהיך בכל אשר תעשה: פ [שביעי] יט כל־הבכור אשר יולד
בבקרך ובצאנך הזכר תקדיש ליהוה אלהיך לא תעבד

בר חורין מעמך לא תפטרנה ריקנין:
יד אפרשא תפרש לה מענך ומאדרך
וממעצרתך די יברכנך יי אלהך תתן לה:
טו ותדכר ארי עבדא הויתא בארעא
דמצרים ופרקך יי אלהך על כן אנא מפקדך
ית פתגמא הדין יומא דין: טז ויהי ארי יימר
לך לא אפוק מעמך ארי רחמך וית אנש
ביתך ארי טב לה עמך: יז ותסב ית מרצעא
ותתן באודנה ובדשא ויהי לך עבד פלח
לעלם ואף לאמתך תעבד כן: יח לא יקשי
בעינך במפטרך יתה בר חורין מעמך ארי
על חד תרין באגר אגירא פלחך שית שנין
ויברכנך יי אלהך בכל די תעבד: יט כל
בוכרא די יתיליד בתורך ובענך דוכרין
תקדיש קדם יי אלהך לא תפלח בבוכרא

רש"י

אביה, ולמד כאן שאם יצאו שש שנים קודם שתביא סימנין תצא. ועוד הוסיף כאן הענק תעניק: **(יד) העניק תעניק.** לשון עדי בגובה ובמראית העין, דבר שיהא ניכר שהטיבות לו. ויש מפרשים לשון המענה של צוארו: **מצאנך ומגרנך ומיקבך.** יכול אין לי אלא אלו בלבד, תלמוד לומר אשר ברכך, מכל מה שברכך בוראך. ולמה נאמרו אלו, מה אלו מיוחדים שהם בכלל ברכה אף כל שהוא בכלל ברכה, יצאו פרדות[1]. ולמדו רבותינו במסכת קידושין[2] בגזירה שוה כמה נותן לו מכל מין ומין: **(טו) וזכרת כי עבד היית.** והענקתי ושניתי לך מביזת מצרים וביזת הים, אף אתה הענק ושנה לו[3]: **(יז) עבד עולם.** יכול כמשמעו, תלמוד לומר ושבתם איש אל אחזתו ואיש אל משפחתו תשובו[4], הא למדת שאין זה, אלא עולמו של יובל[5]: **ואף לאמתך תעשה כן.** הענק לה. יכול אף לרציעה השוה הכתוב אותה, תלמוד לומר ואם אמור יאמר העבד[6], עבד נרצע, ואין אמה נרצעת[5]: **(יח) כי משנה שכר שכיר.** מכאן אמרו עבד עברי עובד בין ביום ובין בלילה. וזהו כפלים שבעבודת שכירי יום. ומהו עבודתו בלילה, רבו מוסר לו שפחה כנענית והוולדות לאדון[7]: **(יט) כל הבכור וגו' תקדיש.** ובמקום אחר הוא אומר לא יקדיש[8], שנאמר אך בכור אשר יבכר לה' וגו'[8], הא כיצד, אינו מקדישו לקרבן אחר, וכאן למד שמצוה לומר הרי אתה קדוש לבכורה. דבר אחר אי אפשר לומר תקדיש שהכבר נאמר לא יקדיש, ואי אפשר לומר לא יקדיש שהרי כבר נאמר תקדיש, הא כיצד, מקדישו אתה הקדש עלוי, ונותן להקדש כפי טובת הנאה שבו[9]: **לא תעבוד בבכור שורך ולא תגוז וגו'.** אף החלוק למדו רבותינו[10] שאסור,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● To whom is one obligated to give severance gifts? (v. 14)

Talmud: "When a slave who sold himself [into slavery] goes free, he is not given severance gifts. But when a slave who was sold by the courts goes free, he is given severance gifts."

Rabbi Elazar says: "Both of them are given severance gifts."

What is the rationale of the first opinion, that a slave who sells himself is not given severance gifts? The Torah states, "[If one of your brethren...*is sold to you (by the courts)*...when you send him away] you should give *him* many gifts" (v. 12-14). This suggest that you should give only to "him" [who was sold by the courts], and not to one who sells himself.

The other opinion [Rabbi Elazar] interprets the word "him" as meaning "him and not his heirs" (*Kidushin* 14b-15a).

Rambam: One who sells himself is not given severance gifts. One who is sold by the courts is given severance gifts (*Laws of Slaves* 3:12).

● When is the *mitzvah* of giving severance gifts in force?

Sefer Hachinuch: Only in Temple times, because the laws of Hebrew slaves are only practiced when the Jubilee year is observed. Nevertheless, even today, *"Let the wise man hear and increase in learning"* (*Proverbs* 1:5)—if one hires a Jewish person who serves for a long period of time, or even a short period, he should be given gifts when he leaves him (*Mitzvah* 483).

Minchas Chinuch: *Sefer Hachinuch* argues that, even today, a person should give severance gifts to one's employees out of a sense of decency. However, according to the first view in the *Talmud*, severance gifts are surely not given for reasons of decency, since decency would dictate that *all* of a person's staff should be given severance gifts, and the first view of the Talmud is *selective* in who should receive the gifts.

Since *Rambam* rules in favor of the first opinion in the *Talmud* (that the gifts are given selectively), it turns out that, according to *Rambam*, there is no basis to give severance gifts today.

However, in the final analysis, this is somewhat difficult to accept, since the *Sefer Hachinuch* rarely deviates from a ruling of *Rambam*, without stating so explicitly.

● Are severance gifts a type of earnings?

Pnei Yehoshua: Yes (*Kidushin* 16b, *s.v. ve'iy iysa*).

Shach: No. The gifts are a form of charity (*Choshen Mishpat* 86:3).

1 ספרי. 2 דף יז. 3 ספרי. וראה קדש"ש תכ"ד ע' 87 ואילך. 4 ויקרא כה, י 5 מכילתא כא, ו 6 שמות כא, ה 7 קידושין טו. 8 ויקרא כז, כו 9 ערכין כט. 10 חולין קלז.

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- 13 *When you send him away, free from you, you should not let him go empty-handed.*
- 14 *You should give him many gifts from your flock, your threshing floor, or from your wine vat, (or) you should give him from whatever God, your God, has blessed you with.*

15 *Remember that you were slaves in the land of Egypt, and that God, your God, redeemed you. Therefore, I am commanding you today to do this thing.*

- 16 *In the event that he says to you, "I will not leave you," because he loves you and your household, since it suits him to be with you,* 17 *then you should take a pointed tool and put it through his ear and into the door, and he will then be a servant to you permanently (until the Jubilee year).*
- *You should give the same (adornment of gifts) to a maidservant.*

18 *Let it not seem difficult in your eyes when you send him away free from you, for he has served you (day and night) for six years, twice as many (hours) as a salaried worker (who only works by day). God, your God, will bless you in all that you do.*

Sanctity of Firstborn Animals

Seventh Reading

- 19 *You must sanctify every firstborn male, from your cattle or your flock, to God, your God (by declaring it sacred as a firstborn).*
- *You must not work the firstborn of your ox, or shear the firstborn of your flock (or vice-versa).*

Toras Menachem

Severance Gifts in the Current Era (v. 14)

According to the first opinion in the ***Talmud***, severance gifts are not given to a person who sells himself into slavery. The legal dynamics of this ruling could be understood in one of two ways:

a.) Logic dictates that there is no necessity to give severance gifts. The Torah prescribes that severance gifts should be given *only* to a slave sold by the courts. A person who sells himself into slavery is therefore not eligible for severance gifts; or

b.) In principle, *all* slaves should receive severance gifts, but the Torah made a specific *exception* in the case of the person who sells himself into slavery, and disqualified him from receiving them.

A practical difference between these two approaches (to this first opinion in the *Talmud*) is whether the concept of severance gifts of slaves in the Temple era could act as a moral basis on which to recommend severance gifts today:

According to the first approach ('a'), the Torah *only* teaches us one isolated case that is eligible for severance gifts (that of a slave sold by the courts). Thus, we have no basis on which to extend the principle to other cases. However, according to the second approach ('b'), the concept of severance pay applies in principle *to all* cases (and it is only that the Torah made a special exception in the case of the slave who sells himself). Consequently, it could be argued that the principle is relevant today too.

Rambam rules in accordance with the first opinion of the *Talmud*. Therefore, if we can ascertain whether *Rambam* adopted approach 'a' or approach 'b,' we could clarify whether ***Rambam*** would concur with the view (of ***Sefer Hachinuch***) that severance gifts are given even today.

The Last Word

- It would be wise to heed the advice of ***Sefer Hachinuch*** (see *Classic Questions*) that, even today, a person should offer severance gifts to a Jewish employee that is dismissed. This would apply even if he or she is dismissed due to unsatisfactory work.
- Generally speaking, the lesson from the *mitzvah* of severance gifts is that people should be given more than what is appropriate for them to receive. For example, a teacher should attempt to give his students, not only simplified ideas that the students are naturally capable of understanding, but the teacher should also try and convey some of *his own* deeper understanding of the subject matter. This will stimulate the student's growth such that he may eventually attain the knowledge and level of his teacher.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 19, pp. 155-6)

Sparks of Chasidus

"God Will Bless You in All That You Do" (v. 18)

The Torah view is clear: It rules that *"one should not rely on a miracle"* (*Jerusalem Talmud, Yoma* 1:4), but at the same time it requires every Jew to be permeated with complete faith that God acts through nature, and also "above" nature. This is also the plain meaning of the *posuk* [verse]: *"And God, your God, will bless you in all that you do"* (v. 18). It is necessary to *do* (not rely on miracles), yet ultimately the blessing comes from God. To think otherwise would also be contradictory to the three daily *tefilos* [prayers]. The blessings of *Shemoneh Esrei* [the standing prayer] are clearly based on the conviction that God can interfere with nature, e.g., heal the sick and bless the crops, etc., even where the natural factors are unfavorable.

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe)

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בִּבְכֹר שׁוֹרֶךָ וְלֹא תָגֹז בְּכוֹר צֹאנֶךָ: כ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
תֹאכְלֶנּוּ שָׁנָה בְשָׁנָה בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְהוָה אַתָּה וּבֵיתֶךָ:
כא וְכִי־יִהְיֶה בוֹ מוּם פִּסֵּחַ אוֹ עִוֵּר כֹּל מוּם רָע לֹא תִזְבָּחֶנּוּ
לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ: כב בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ תֹּאכְלֶנּוּ הַטָּמֵא וְהַטָּהוֹר יַחְדָּו
כַּצְּבִי וְכָאַיָּל: כג רַק אֶת־דָּמוֹ לֹא תֹאכֵל עַל־הָאָרֶץ תִּשְׁפְּכֶנּוּ
כַּמָּיִם: פ טז א שָׁמוֹר אֶת־חֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב וְעָשִׂיתָ פֶּסַח לַיהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ כִּי בְּחֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב הוֹצִיאֲךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִמִּצְרַיִם
לָיְלָה: ב וְזָבַחְתָּ פֶּסַח לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ צֹאן וּבָקָר בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר
יִבְחַר יְהוָה לְשַׁכֵּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם: ג לֹא־תֹאכַל עָלָיו חָמֵץ שִׁבְעַת
יָמִים תֹּאכַל־עָלָיו מַצּוֹת לֶחֶם עֹנִי כִּי בְחִפָּזוֹן יָצָאתָ מֵאֶרֶץ
מִצְרַיִם לְמַעַן תִּזְכֹּר אֶת־יוֹם צֵאתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם כֹּל יְמֵי

דתורך ולא תגוז בוכרא דענך: כ קדם יי
אלהך תיכלנה שתא בשתא באתרא די
יתרעי יי את ואנש ביתך: כא וארי יהי בה
מומא חגיר או עויר כל מום ביש לא תכסנה
קדם יי אלהך: כב בקרויך תיכלנה מסאבא
ודכיא כחדא כבסר טביא ואילא: כג לחוד ית
דמה לא תיכול על ארעא תשדנה כמיא:
א טר ית ירחא דאביבא ותעבד פסחא קדם
יי אלהך ארי בירחא דאביבא אפקך יי אלהך
ממצרים ועבד לך נסין בליליא: ב ותכוס
פסחא קדם יי אלהך מן בני ענא ונכסת
קודשיא מן תורי באתרא די יתרעי יי
לאשראה שכנתה תמן: ג לא תיכול עלוהי
חמיע שבעא יומין תיכול עלוהי פטיר לחם
עני ארי בבהילו נפקתא מארעא דמצרים
בדיל דתדכר ית יום מפקך מארעא

רש"י

אלא שהדבר הכתוב בהווה: (כ) לפני ה' אלהיך תאכלנו. לכהן הוא אומר, שכבר מצינו שהוא ממתנות כהונה אחד תם ואחד בעל מום, שנאמר[1] ובשרם יהיה לך וגו'[2]: שנה בשנה. מכאן שאין משהין אותו יותר על שנתו. יכול יהא פסול משעברה שנתו, כבר הוקש למעשר, שנאמר[3] ואכלת לפני ה' אלהיך מעשר דגנך תירושך ויצהרך ובכורות בקרך וצאנך, מה מעשר שני אינו נפסל משנה לחברתה, אף בכור אינו נפסל, אלא שמצוה תוך שנתו: שנה בשנה. אם שחטו בסוף שנתו אוכלו אותו היום ויום אחד משנה אחרת. למד שנאכל לשני ימים ולילה אחד[4]: (כא) מום. כלל. פסח או עור. פרט. כל מום רע. חזר וכלל. מה הפרט מפורש מום הגלוי ואינו חוזר, אף כל מום שבגלוי ואינו חוזר[5]: (כג) רק את דמו לא תאכל. שלא תאמר הואיל וכולו היתר הנאה מכלל איסור הוא, שהרי קדוש ונשחט בחוץ בלא פדיון ונאכל, יכול יהא אף הדם מותר, תלמוד לומר רק את דמו לא תאכל: (א) שמור את חדש האביב. מקודם בואו שמור, שיהא ראוי לאביב להקריב בו את מנחת העומר, ואם לאו, עבר את השנה: ממצרים לילה. והלא ביום יצאו, שנאמר[6] ממחרת הפסח יצאו בני ישראל וגו', אלא לפי שבלילה נתן להם פרעה רשות לצאת, שנאמר[7] ויקרא למשה ולאהרן לילה וגו'[8]: (ב) וזבחת פסח לה' אלהיך צאן. שנאמר מן הכבשים ומן העזים תקחו: ובקר. תזבח לחגיגה[5]. שאם נמנו על הפסח חבורה מרובה מביאים עמו חגיגה כדי שיהא נאכל על השובע[9], ועוד למדו רבותינו דברים הרבה מפסוק זה: (ג) לחם עני. לחם שמזכיר את העוני שנתענו במצרים[5]: כי בחפזון יצאת. ולא הספיק בצק להחמיץ וזה יהיה לך לזכרון. והחפזון לא שלך היה אלא של מצרים, שכן הוא אומר[10] ותחזק מצרים על העם וגו': למען תזכור. על ידי

TORAS MENACHEM

The Legal Basis of Severance Gifts

The legal basis on which severance gifts are granted could be understood in one of two ways:

1.) It is a type of *earnings* awarded to the worker as a bonus on his departure [as ***Pnei Yehoshua*** writes], over and above what he earned; or

2.) The severance gifts are given as a *charitable donation* (as ***Shach*** rules) and a display of kindness.

It could be argued that these two views are commensurate with the two approaches ('a' and 'b') above:

Approach 'a' understands that, in principle, nobody deserves to be given severance gifts. This corresponds to view '1,' that the gifts are given as a type of earnings, since a person cannot be said to deserve "earnings" *after* he has already been fully paid for his work. The Torah therefore teaches us, as an exception, that a slave sold by the courts is given gifts.

On the other hand, approach 'b' maintains that, on the contrary, everybody really deserves severance gifts. This corresponds to view '2', that severance gifts are a type of charity, and charity should be given to everyone. It is only that the Torah made a special exclusion in the case of a person who sells himself into slavery.

In his *Sefer Hamitzvos*, *Rambam* codifies the precept of severance gifts (not among the laws of slavery, but rather,) immediately adjacent to the *mitzvah* of giving charity (commands 195 & 196; prohibitions 222 & 223), which suggests that *Rambam* perceived severance gifts as a type of charity.

Thus, *Rambam* would have sympathized with approach 'b' (that, being a type of charity, everybody deserves severance gifts) which means that—according to the above logic—the precept of severance gifts is a model which can be extended, by the dictates of decency, to apply to all employees even today.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 153*ff.*)

1 במדבר יח, יח 2 בכורות כח. 3 דברים יד, כג 4 בכורות כו: 5 ספרי 6 במדבר לג, ג 7 שמות יב, לא 8 ספרי. וראה שיחת ש"פ ראה תש"מ. 9 פסחים סט. 10 שמות יב, לג

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- [20] *In the same year (it is born) you should (give it to the priest who will) eat it before God, your God, in the place God will choose. You, (the priest, should eat it) with your household.*
- [21] *If there is any blemish in it, whether it is lame, blind, or has any defective blemish, you should not offer it to God, your God:*
    - [22] *You may eat it within your (own) cities.*
    - *(Even though the animal was originally a holy offering, after it has been redeemed) a ritually impure person and a ritually pure person may eat it (together on the same plate).*
    - *(The foreleg, jaw and end-stomach do not need to be given to the priest,) as if (you were slaughtering) a deer, or a gazelle.*
    - [23] *Only, you may not eat its blood. You should spill it on the ground like water (and you do not have to cover it).*

PESACH

16

- [1] *Ensure that the month of (Nissan occurs in) springtime—(by declaring a leap-year if necessary, so that the produce will have ripened by Nissan, allowing the Omer offering to be brought)—and offer the Pesach sacrifice (then) to God, your God. For in the month of springtime, God, your God, brought you out of Egypt, at night.*
- [2] *You must slaughter the Pesach offering to God, your God, (from the) flock, and (the festival sacrifices from the) cattle, in the place where God will choose to place His Name.*
- [3] *You may not eat leaven with it. (Rather,) because of it, eat matzos for seven days. (This is) a bread (which reminds you of) affliction since you went out of the land of Egypt in haste (and did*

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

"YOU WENT OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT IN HASTE" (V. 3)

One of the important details of the exodus from Egypt is the haste with which the exodus took place. When the hour of liberation struck, the Jewish people left Egypt at once, losing not a moment, or, as our Sages express it—not even a wink of an eye (*Mechilta, Shemos* 12:41-2). They add, moreover, that if the Jewish people had tarried and missed that auspicious moment, the opportunity for liberation would have been lost forever.

This seems incomprehensible, for it was already after the ten plagues, which had prompted the Egyptians to virtually expel the Jews from their land. The situation was thus "well in hand." Why, then, was the haste of the moment so important? And how is one to understand the statement of our Sages that if that moment had been missed, the whole liberation would have been in jeopardy?

The explanation is as follows: When the end of the road of exile is reached, and the moment of liberation from the "abomination of Egypt" arises, the opportunity must be seized at once. There must be no tarrying, even for an instant–not even for "the wink of an eye."

The danger of forfeiting the opportunity lay not in the possibility of the Egyptians changing their minds, but in the possibility that some Jews might change their minds, being loath to leave their accustomed way of life in Egypt, to go out into the desert to receive the Torah.

The practical lesson for every Jew, man or woman, young or old, is that the exodus from Egypt, as it is to be experienced in day-to-day life, is the personal release from subservience to the dictates of the body and the animal in man. It is the release from the passions and habits within, as well as from the materialistic environment without....As at the time of the first liberation, true freedom is conditioned upon the acceptance of the Torah and *mitzvos*.

This call for freedom never ceases. The exodus from Egypt must be achieved every day; each day the opportunity beckons anew....

May God grant that every Jew and Jewess seize the extraordinary opportunity of the present moment, to achieve self-liberation and to help others in the same direction. And may they be liberated from all manner of bondage, internal and external, and above all, liberation from the most dismal bondage of all—the idea of "Let's be like the rest."

May they return to the way of the Torah and *mitzvos* in the fullest measure, and thus merit the fulfillment of the promise: When the Jewish people return, they are redeemed at once, with the true and complete redemption through our righteous Mashiach.

(Excerpt from a public letter written by the Rebbe on 11 *Nissan* 5723)

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חַיֶּיךָ׃ ד וְלֹא־יֵרָאֶה לְךָ שְׂאֹר בְּכָל־גְּבֻלְךָ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים
וְלֹא־יָלִין מִן־הַבָּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר תִּזְבַּח בָּעֶרֶב בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן לַבֹּקֶר׃
ה לֹא תוּכַל לִזְבֹּחַ אֶת־הַפָּסַח בְּאַחַד שְׁעָרֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ׃ ו כִּי אִם־אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשַׁכֵּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם תִּזְבַּח אֶת־הַפֶּסַח בָּעָרֶב כְּבוֹא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ
מוֹעֵד צֵאתְךָ מִמִּצְרָיִם׃ ז וּבִשַּׁלְתָּ וְאָכַלְתָּ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בּוֹ וּפָנִיתָ בַבֹּקֶר וְהָלַכְתָּ לְאֹהָלֶיךָ׃ ח שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים
תֹּאכַל מַצּוֹת וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי עֲצֶרֶת לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה
מְלָאכָה׃ ס ט שִׁבְעָה שָׁבֻעֹת תִּסְפָּר־לָךְ מֵהָחֵל חֶרְמֵשׁ בַּקָּמָה
תָּחֵל לִסְפֹּר שִׁבְעָה שָׁבֻעוֹת׃ י וְעָשִׂיתָ חַג שָׁבֻעוֹת לַיהוָה

דְמִצְרַיִם כָּל יוֹמֵי חַיָּיךְ: ד וְלָא יִתַּחְזֵי לָךְ חֲמִיר
בְּכָל תְּחוּמָךְ שִׁבְעָא יוֹמִין וְלָא יְבִית מִן בִּסְרָא
דִי תִכּוֹס בְּרַמְשָׁא בְּיוֹמָא קַדְמָאָה לְצַפְרָא:
ה לֵית לָךְ רְשׁוּ לְמִכּוֹס יָת פִּסְחָא בַּחֲדָא
מִקִּרְוָיךְ דַּייָ אֱלָהָךְ יָהֵב לָךְ: ו אֱלָהֵן לְאַתְרָא
דִי יִתְרְעֵי יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ לְאַשְׁרָאָה שְׁכִנְתֵּהּ תַּמָּן
תִּכּוֹס יָת פִּסְחָא בְּרַמְשָׁא כְּמֵעַל שִׁמְשָׁא זְמַן
מִפְּקָךְ מִמִּצְרָיִם: ז וּתְבַשֵּׁל וְתֵיכוֹל בְּאַתְרָא דִי
יִתְרְעֵי יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ בֵּהּ וְתִתְפְּנֵי בְצַפְרָא וּתְהָךְ
לְקִרְוָךְ: ח שִׁתָּא יוֹמִין תֵּיכוֹל פַּטִּירָא וּבְיוֹמָא
שְׁבִיעָאָה כְּנִשׁ קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ לָא תַעְבֵּד
עֲבִידָא: ט שִׁבְעָא שָׁבוּעִין תִּמְנֵי לָךְ מִדִּשָׁרְיוּת
מַגְּלָא בַּחֲצַד עֻמְרָא דַאֲרָמוּתָא תִּשְׁרֵי לְמִמְנֵי
שִׁבְעָא שָׁבוּעִין: י וְתַעְבֵּד חַגָּא דְשָׁבוּעַיָּא קֳדָם

רש"י

אכילת הפסח והמצה, את יום צאתך: (ד) **ולא ילין מן הבשר אשר תזבח בערב ביום הראשון לבקר.** אזהרה למותיר בפסח דורות, לפי שלא נאמר אלא בפסח מצרים, ויום ראשון האמור כאן הוא י"ד בניסן, כמה דאת אמר[1] אך ביום הראשון תשביתו שאור מבתיכם. ולפי שנסתלק הכתוב מענינו של פסח והתחיל לדבר בחקות שבעת ימים, כגון שבעת ימים תאכל עליו מצות ולא יראה לך שאור בכל גבולך, הוצרך לפרש באיזו זביחה הוא מזהיר, שאם כתב ולא ילין מן הבשר אשר תזבח בערב לבקר, הייתי אומר שלמים הנשחטים כל שבעה כולן בבל תותירו ואינן נאכלין אלא ליום ולילה, לכך כתב בערב ביום הראשון. דבר אחר בחגיגת י"ד הכתוב מדבר, ולמד עליה שנאכלת לשני ימים. והראשון האמור כאן, ביום טוב הראשון הכתוב מדבר. וכן משמעות המקרא, בשר חגיגה אשר תזבח בערב, לא ילין ביום טוב הראשון עד בקרו של שני, אבל נאכלת היא בארבעה עשר ובחמשה עשר, וכן היא שנויה במסכת פסחים[2]: (ו) **בערב כבוא השמש מועד צאתך ממצרים.** הרי שלשה זמנים חלוקים; בערב משש שעות ולמעלה זבחהו, וכבוא השמש תאכלהו, ומועד צאתך, אתה שורפהו. כלומר, נעשה נותר ויצא לבית השרפה[3]: (ז) **ובשלת.** זהו צלי אש, שאף הוא קרוי בשול[4]: **ופנית בבקר.** לבקרו של שני, מלמד שטעון לינה ליל מוצאי יום טוב[3]: (ח) **ששת ימים תאכל מצות.** ובמקום אחר הוא אומר שבעת ימים[5], שבעה מן הישן וששה מן החדש[3]. דבר אחר למד על אכילת מצה בשביעי, שאינה חובה, ומכאן אתה למד לששת ימים. שהרי שביעי בכלל היה ויצא מן הכלל ללמד, שאין אכילת מצה בו חובה אלא רשות, ולא ללמד על עצמו יצא אלא ללמד על הכלל כולו יצא, מה שביעי רשות אף כולם רשות, חוץ מלילה הראשון שהכתוב קבעו חובה, שנאמר[6] בערב תאכלו מצות[7]: **עצרת לה' אלהיך.** עצור עצמך מן המלאכה. דבר אחר כנופיא של מאכל ומשתה, לשון נעצרה נא אותך: (ט) **מהחל חרמש בקמה.**

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

The Pesach Offering (v. 2-7)

The liberation from Egypt was not merely the liberation of numerous individuals; it was the liberation of a People.

Accordingly, one would have expected that the *Korban Pesach* [Pesach Offering] would emphasize the "nation" motif, the idea of community. Actually the approach and instruction was exactly the reverse.

True, all the "congregation" was enjoined to offer the *Korban Pesach*, but the instructions were explicit: each home had to have its own *Korban Pesach*; each Jew was individually singled out and counted for the purpose of sharing in it; each one had to be confined to his particular home or company for the duration of the *Korban Pesach* repast.

Herein the Torah teaches us that the way to accomplishment, even if it is intended for the community as a whole, and even if it concerns the very "liberation" of the community, must nevertheless begin with concentration on the self, and on the members of one's family and immediate circle, even though the call must necessarily go out to the whole community.

Moreover, attention should be directed not towards general considerations and all-embracing resolutions, but towards applying the main concern and energy in the realization, in the daily life, of the various "small" duties. For it is precisely this approach that will eventually bring the deliverance of the individual as well as of the community as a whole.

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe)

1 שמות יב, מו 2 דף עא. 3 ספרי 4 מכילתא 5 שמות יב, טו 6 שם יח 7 פסחים קכ.

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not have time for the bread to rise. Eat the matzah) in order to remember all the days of your life, the day when you went out of the land of Egypt.

- [4] *No leaven may be seen with you within all your borders for seven days.*
- *You may not leave over any of the flesh that you slaughtered on the preceding day, in the afternoon, (uneaten) until the morning.*
- [5] *You may not slaughter the Pesach offering in any of your cities, which God, your God, is giving you,* [6] *except in the place which God, your God, will choose to place His Name. You should slaughter the Pesach offering there, in the afternoon (after the sixth hour).*
- *(You must eat it after) the sun comes down, (and you must burn any meat that is left uneaten past) the precise time that you went out of Egypt.*
- [7] *You should cook it (by roasting) and eat it in (Jerusalem), the place which God, your God, will choose.*
- *(You must stay in Jerusalem the night following the festival) and in the morning you may depart and go to your homes.*
- [8] *For you should eat matzos six days, and on the seventh day there should be a holiday to God, your God, when you may not do any manual work.*

COUNTING THE OMER & SHAVUOS

- [9] *Count for yourself seven weeks. From when the sickle is first put to the standing crop (and the Omer is reaped), you should begin to count seven weeks.*
- [10] *And you should make the festival of Shavuos to God, your God. Offer as many gift-offerings (and invite as many guests) as you can afford, according to how God, your God, blesses you.*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the Torah not tell us to rejoice on Pesach (v. 1-8), as it does on Shavuos (v. 11) & Succos (v. 14-15)?

TZROR HAMOR: When the Jewish people came out of Egypt, on Pesach, the Torah had not yet been given. Therefore, the Torah does not stress the concept of rejoicing. Furthermore, the Jewish people did not see the Egyptians drown until the seventh day of their departure, and it was only at this point that they rejoiced.

BA'AL HATURIM: On Pesach, the crops have not yet been harvested, so the Torah does not mention rejoicing at all.

On Shavuos, the harvest has taken place, but the grapes have not yet been made into wine, so rejoicing is mentioned just once (v. 11).

But by Succos, all the harvest is ready to eat, so the Torah mentions rejoicing twice (v. 14 & v. 15).

YERE'IM: According to the *Talmud,* the Torah equates the laws of all three festivals together (Shavuos 10a). Thus, the fact that the Torah states explicitly that rejoicing is required on Shavuos and Succos provides us with the legal basis for a requirement to rejoice on Pesach (ch. 227).

TORAS MENACHEM

REJOICING ON PESACH (v. 1-8)

Rashi does not suggest any of the explanations offered by the commentators as to why the Torah does not command us explicitly to rejoice on the festival of Pesach.

However, since *Rashi* explains *every* difficulty that arises at the literal level, we can presume that *Rashi* was silent here, as he wanted the reader to work the answer out for himself, with simple logic and knowledge of *Rashi's* earlier comments. So what is *Rashi's* "explanation" of this matter?

A further question concerns the Torah's statement in verse 12, at the end of the section of Shavuos: *"Remember that you were slaves in Egypt."* Since remembering the slavery in Egypt is the key motif of the festival of Pesach, why does the Torah state, "You should remember that you were slaves in Egypt," in connection with Shavuos and *not* Pesach?

THE EXPLANATION

On the verse, *"When you take the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain"* (Shemos 3:12), *Rashi* writes, *"As for what you asked: 'What merit do the Jewish people have that they should go out of Egypt?' I have a very good reason to bring them out, for they are going to receive the Torah on this mountain, three months after they go out of Egypt."*

From here the reader will already be aware that the Exodus from Egypt and the giving of the Torah are *two phases of a single process,* because God took the Jewish people out of Egypt *in order* to receive the Torah.

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אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִסַּת נִדְבַת יָדְךָ אֲשֶׁר תִּתֵּן כַּאֲשֶׁר יְבָרֶכְךָ יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ: יא וְשָׂמַחְתָּ לִפְנֵי | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אַתָּה וּבִנְךָ וּבִתֶּךָ
וְעַבְדְּךָ וַאֲמָתֶךָ וְהַלֵּוִי אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ וְהַגֵּר וְהַיָּתוֹם וְהָאַלְמָנָה
אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבֶּךָ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשַׁכֵּן שְׁמוֹ
שָׁם: יב וְזָכַרְתָּ כִּי־עֶבֶד הָיִיתָ בְּמִצְרָיִם וְשָׁמַרְתָּ וְעָשִׂיתָ
אֶת־הַחֻקִּים הָאֵלֶּה: פ [מפטיר] יג חַג הַסֻּכֹּת תַּעֲשֶׂה לְךָ שִׁבְעַת
יָמִים בְּאָסְפְּךָ מִגָּרְנְךָ וּמִיִּקְבֶךָ: יד וְשָׂמַחְתָּ בְּחַגֶּךָ אַתָּה וּבִנְךָ
וּבִתֶּךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ וַאֲמָתֶךָ וְהַלֵּוִי וְהַגֵּר וְהַיָּתוֹם וְהָאַלְמָנָה אֲשֶׁר
בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ: טו שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תָּחֹג לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בַּמָּקוֹם
אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְהוָה כִּי יְבָרֶכְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכֹל תְּבוּאָתְךָ
וּבְכֹל מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ וְהָיִיתָ אַךְ שָׂמֵחַ: טז שָׁלוֹשׁ פְּעָמִים | בַּשָּׁנָה
יֵרָאֶה° כָל־זְכוּרְךָ אֶת־פְּנֵי | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחָר

°ס"א יֵרָאֶה כָּל־זְכוּרְךָ

יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ מִסַּת נִדְבַת יְדָךְ דִּי תִתֵּן כְּמָא דִי
יְבָרְכִנָּךְ יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ: יא וְתֶחְדֵּי קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ
אַתְּ וּבְרָךְ וּבְרַתָּךְ וְעַבְדָּךְ וְאַמְתָךְ וְלֵוָאָה דִי
בְקִרְוָיךְ וְגִיּוֹרָא וְיַתְמָא וְאַרְמַלְתָא דִּי בֵינָךְ
בְּאַתְרָא דִּי יִתְרְעֵי יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ לְאַשְׁרָאָה
שְׁכִנְתֵּהּ תַּמָּן: יב וְתִדְכַּר אֲרֵי עַבְדָּא הֲוֵיתָא
בְמִצְרָיִם וְתִטַּר וְתַעְבֵּד יָת קְיָמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין:
יג חַגָּא דִמְטַלַּיָא תַּעְבֵּד לָךְ שִׁבְעָא יוֹמִין
בְּמִכְנְשָׁךְ מֵאִדְּרָךְ וּמִמַּעְצַרְתָּךְ: יד וְתֶחְדֵּי
בְּחַגָּךְ אַתְּ וּבְרָךְ וּבְרַתָּךְ וְעַבְדָּךְ וְאַמְתָךְ וְלֵוָאָה
וְגִיּוֹרָא וְיַתְמָא וְאַרְמַלְתָא דִּי בְקִרְוָיךְ: טו שִׁבְעָא
יוֹמִין תֵּחוֹג קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ בְּאַתְרָא דִּי יִתְרְעֵי
יְיָ אֲרֵי יְבָרְכִנָּךְ יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ בְּכֹל עֲלַלְתָּךְ וּבְכֹל
עוֹבָדֵי יְדָיךְ וּתְהֵי בְּרַם חָדֵי: טז תְּלָת זִמְנִין
בְּשַׁתָּא יִתַּחְזוֹן כָּל דְּכוּרָךְ קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ
בְּאַתְרָא דִּי יִתְרְעֵי בְּחַגָּא דְפַטִּירַיָּא וּבְחַגָּא

רש"י

משנקצר העומר שהוא ראשית הקציר: (י) מסת נדבת ידך. די נדבת ידך, הכל לפי הברכה, הבא שלמי שמחה, וקרא קרואים לאכול: (יא) והלוי והגר והיתום והאלמנה. ארבעה שלי כנגד ארבעה שלך, בנך ובתך ועבדך ואמתך, אם אתה משמח את שלי, אני משמח את שלך: (יב) וזכרת כי עבד היית וגו'. על מנת כן פדיתיך, שתשמור ותעשה את החוקים האלה: (יג) באספך. בזמן האסיף שאתה מכניס לבית פירות הקיץ. דבר אחר באספך מגרנך ומיקבך, למד שמסככין את הסוכה בפסולת גורן ויקב[1]: (טו) והיית אך שמח. לפי פשוטו אין זה לשון צווי אלא לשון הבטחה, ולפי תלמודו למדו מכאן לרבות לילי יום טוב האחרון לשמחה[2]: (טז) ולא יראה את פני ה' ריקם. אלא הבא עולות ראייה ושלמי חגיגה:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How should one rejoice on a festival (v. 14)?

Rambam: Throughout the seven days of Pesach, the eight days of the festival [of Succos] and the other festival days...a person is obligated to be happy and of cheerful spirit, both he and his wife, his family, and all those who share his company, as the verse states, *"Rejoice on your festival"* (v. 14).

Despite the fact that the rejoicing mentioned in the verse refers to the peace-offering, as we explained in the *Laws of Festival Offerings*, nevertheless, included within that requirement to rejoice [with the peace-offering] is also the requirement for the person to rejoice himself, along with his children and family, making each person happy in a way that is suitable for them.

How is this carried out?

Children are given roasted grains, nuts and sweets. Women are bought new clothes and jewelry, according to the person's financial ability.

Men should eat meat and drink wine, for rejoicing can only be achieved with meat and wine (*Laws of Festivals* 6:17-18).

Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch: Throughout the seven days of Pesach, the eight days of the festival [of Succos] and the festival of *Atzeres* [Shavuos], a person is obligated to be happy and of cheerful spirit, both he and his wife, his family, and all those who share his company. This rejoicing is a Biblical requirement, as the verse states, *"Rejoice on your festival—you, your son, your daughter etc."* (v. 14).

TORAS MENACHEM

Thus, the reader will not be surprised here that the Torah only tells us to "rejoice before God, your God," and to "remember that *you* were slaves in Egypt," in connection with Shavuos, and not Pesach. For it is obvious that these commands apply to *both* Pesach and Shavuos, and that the Torah needed only to mention these concepts once—at the end of the passage dealing with *both* festivals—since the reader already knows that Pesach and Shavuos celebrate two phases of a single process.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Re'eh* 5733)

Rejoicing on a Festival (v. 14)

Verse 14 states: *"Rejoice on your festival—you, your son, your daughter, etc."* One detail that is not clear in this verse, is what exactly the term "festival" refers to: Does it refer specifically to the "festival offering," i.e. the special peace-offering which was sacrificed in honor of the festival? Or, does it refer to the festival *in general*, suggesting that a person should carry out all sorts of activities that will bring him to a mood of rejoicing?

1 ר"ה יג. 2 סוכה מח. וראה שיחת ש"פ ראה תשמ"ז.

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- 11 *And you should rejoice before God, your God—you, your son, your daughter, your servant, your maidservant, the Levite who lives in your town, the convert, the orphan, and the widow among you—in the place which God, your God, will choose to place His Name there.*

12 *Remember that you were slaves in Egypt, and (that I took you out in order that) you should be careful to perform these statutes.*

SUCCOS

MAFTIR
- 13 *When you gather in (the produce) from your threshing floor and your wine vat, make for yourself the festival of Succos, for a seven day period,*
- 14 *Rejoice on your festival—you, your son, your daughter, your servant, your maidservant, the Levite, the convert, the orphan, and the widow who lives in your town.*
- 15 *Celebrate the festival to God, your God, for seven days in the place which God will choose, because God, your God, will bless all your produce and all the work of your hands, and you will only be happy.*

PILGRIMAGE TO JERUSALEM

- 16 *Every male among you must appear before God, your God, three times in the year, in the place He will choose: on the festival of Matzos, on the festival of Shavuos, and on the festival of Succos.*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

How is this rejoicing carried out?

Children are given roasted grains and nuts. Women are bought new clothes and jewelry, according to the person's financial ability. As for men, at the time when the Holy Temple stood they would eat the meat of the peace-offering in order to rejoice. Now, that the Temple does not stand we are only able to fulfill our obligation through drinking wine—as the verse states, *"wine satisfies the heart of man"* (Psalms 104:15)—since in the current era there is no legal requirement to eat meat, as we no longer have the peace-offering. Nevertheless, if one does eat meat on the festival one still performs a *mitzvah* since, after all, we are told to rejoice on the festival, and since we are unable to rejoice through the main method, through eating the meat of the peace-offering, we therefore use other methods of rejoicing (*Orach Chaim* 529:6-7).

TORAS MENACHEM

Two approaches could be taken:

a.) When the Torah uses the words *"rejoice on your festival,"* it is referring specifically to the spiritual joy of bringing and sacrificing the peace-offering. The requirement to rejoice with physical pleasures is secondary, and thus was not referred to by the Torah directly, to indicate its lesser importance.

This appears to be the view of ***Rambam*** who stresses, *"The rejoicing mentioned in the verse refers to the peace-offering."* Thus it is only *"included within that requirement...the requirement for the person to rejoice himself, along with his children and family, making each person happy in a way that is suitable for them."*

Consequently, according to *Rambam*, when the peace-offering cannot be brought (in the current era), we are unable to carry out the *primary mitzvah* of rejoicing on a festival *at all*. Nevertheless, the secondary (physical) aspect can be carried out even now, and it does not suffer from the destruction of the Temple.

b.) Alternatively, it could be argued that when the Torah uses the phrase *"rejoice on your festival,"* it is referring *generally* to *all* the rejoicing that is carried out during the period of the festival. Thus, there are not two separate requirements here (spiritual and physical), but one single obligation to rejoice. This appears to be the view of the ***Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch***, which makes no mention that verse 14 is speaking about the peace-offering in particular, indicating that, in his view, the

The Last Word

"REJOICE ON YOUR FESTIVAL!" (v. 14)

The Festival of *Succos*, *Shemini Atzeres* and *Simchas Torah*, which are the Season of our Rejoicing, are not intended to bring true joy and inspiration only during these days, and when they are over they are forgotten. But their purpose and intent is that the Jew should draw from them stores of joy and inspiration to last him throughout the year and every day of the year. The nature of such joy and inspiration, being connected with the Torah and *mitzvos*, is such that it truly permeates one's whole being and is the wellspring of a harmonious and happy Jewish life.

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe on 25th of Tishrei, 5721)

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בְּחַ֧ג הַמַּצּ֛וֹת וּבְחַ֥ג הַשָּׁבֻע֖וֹת וּבְחַ֣ג הַסֻּכּ֑וֹת וְלֹ֧א יֵרָאֶ֛ה אֶת־פְּנֵ֥י
יְהֹוָ֖ה רֵיקָֽם: יז אִ֖ישׁ כְּמַתְּנַ֣ת יָד֑וֹ כְּבִרְכַּ֛ת יְהֹוָ֥ה אֱלֹהֶ֖יךָ אֲשֶׁ֥ר
נָֽתַן־לָֽךְ: ס ס ס

דְשָׁבוּעַיָּא וּבְחַגָּא דִמְטַלַּיָּא וְלָא יִתַּחֲזוֹן קֳדָם יְיָ
רֵיקָנִין: יז גְּבַר כְּמַתְּנַת יְדֵהּ כְּבִרְכְּתָא דַייָ
אֱלָהָךְ דִּי יְהַב לָךְ: פ פ פ

קב"ו פסוקים, פליא"ה סימן.

רש"י

(יז) איש במתנת ידו. מי שיש לו אוכלין הרבה ונכסים מרובין יביא עולות מרובות ושלמים מרובים[1]: חסלת פרשת ראה

TORAS MENACHEM

requirement is that of *general rejoicing*. Therefore, he suggests that being of "cheerful spirit, both he and his wife, his family," is part of the Biblical requirement *mentioned in the verse* ("This rejoicing is a Biblical requirement, *as the verse states*, 'Rejoice on your festival'").

According to this view we *are* able to carry out the *mitzvah* of rejoicing on a festival as it is specified in the Torah even in the current era, after the destruction of the Temple. The only drawback is that the most effective method of carrying out the *mitzvah* (the peace-offering) is not available, but we are still able to use all the other methods (such as eating meat, etc.), which achieve the same effect, but to a lesser degree.

Contemporary Connection to The Peace-Offering

A further innovation that arises from this stance of the *Alter Rebbe* is that even in the current era, when we eat meat on a festival, *we are observing a mitzvah which is actually connected with the sacrifices*:

According to *Rambam*, the sacrificial part of the *mitzvah* (the primary element) and the physical rejoicing are totally separate. Therefore, in the current era, when the former element has ceased, there is no practical connection between our rejoicing and the sacrifice itself.

However, according to the *Alter Rebbe*, who perceived the spiritual and physical dimensions as one single precept, it turns out that even today, when we eat meat on *Yom Tov*, we perform an act which is *halachically* connected with the *mitzvah* of eating the peace-offering.

Nevertheless, both views agree that:

1.) We can observe at least some aspects of the *Biblical* requirement to rejoice on *Yom Tov*, even in the current era.

2.) This occurs on some level when men eat meat and drink wine, when women wear new clothes, and when children are given candies.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 33, p. 62ff.)

1 ספרי

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- *He may not appear before God empty-handed (without animals for the festival offerings).* 17 *Each man (must bring sufficient animals to feed the people) that he supports, according to the blessing of God, your God, which He has given you.*

HAFTARAHS: RE'EH (& EREV ROSH CHODESH)—P. 281. ROSH CHODESH—P. 299.

Maftir: Rosh Chodesh—p. 302.

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

Every Jewish person possesses both a Godly soul, which yearns to be close to its Creator, and an Animal Soul, which is the source of physical desires. Both ***Rambam*** and the ***Alter Rebbe*** (see Classic Questions) agree that in order to be complete, rejoicing on a festival must involve not only the Godly soul but the Animal Soul too. Where they disagree is to *what extent* the Animal Soul is to be involved:

Rambam understood that rejoicing through the peace-offering (i.e. with the Godly soul) is primary, whereas eating meat and buying new clothes (to please the Animal Soul) is secondary (see *Toras Menachem*). This is because *Rambam* perceived the Animal Soul as an *obstacle* in Divine service, which needs to be "appeased" with food and clothes, to prevent it from disturbing the true rejoicing of the Godly Soul.

On the other hand, the *Alter Rebbe* maintained that the spiritual and physical celebrations take equal priority, for he perceived that the Animal Soul is not an obstacle, but a *tool* in the service of God. Thus, on a festival, the Animal Soul itself also rejoices equally in its Creator, by means of things which the Animal Soul can appreciate—meat, wine, clothes and candies.

In fact, the difference of opinion between *Rambam* and the *Alter Rebbe* reflects their conflicting viewpoints about the future era:

Rambam maintained that, eventually, in the ultimate stage of existence (the World to Come) there will be nothing physical, for the most perfect form of existence is a soul *without* a body (*Laws of Teshuvah* 8:2). Consequently, he understood that on a festival, the main emphasis should be the rejoicing of the (Godly) soul, whereas the Animal Soul and body take second place.

The *Alter Rebbe*, however, ruled (in favor of *Ramban's* opinion in *Sha'ar Hagemul*) that the climax of spiritual perfection in the World to Come is existence as souls *within* bodies (*Likutei Torah, Tzav* 15b). Therefore, on a festival he perceived it to be *equally* important to rejoice with both the Godly and Animal Souls.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos*, vol. 33, pp. 69-70)

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Parshas Re'eh contains 17 positive *mitzvos* and 38 prohibitions

1. To destroy places of idol-worship [12:2].
2. Not to erase holy writings, the written Names of God, or destroy places of worship which bear His Name [12:4].
3. To bring all obligatory offerings and voluntary offerings which a person has vowed, at the first pilgrim festival that occurs after the person's vow [12:5-6].
4. Not to sacrifice offerings outside the Temple [12:13].
5. To sacrifice all offerings in the Temple, and not anywhere outside it [12:4].
6. To redeem animals consecrated for offerings which have become blemished [12:15].
7. Not to eat the Second Tithe of grain outside Jerusalem [12:17].
8. Not to consume the Second Tithe of wine outside Jerusalem [12:17].
9. Not to consume the Second Tithe of oil outside Jerusalem [12:17].
10. Not to eat an unblemished firstborn animal outside Jerusalem [12:17]
11. Not to eat the meat of a sin-offering or a guilt-offering outside the Temple [12:17].
12. Not to eat the meat of a burnt-offering [12:17].
13. Not to eat the meat of offerings of lesser holiness before their blood is sprinkled on the Altar [12:17].
14. The priests should not eat first-fruits before they are placed down in the Temple Courtyard [12:17].
15. Not to neglect the Levites by failing to give them their due gifts, especially at the time of a festival [12:19].
16. To ritually slaughter an animal before eating its meat [12:21].
17. Not to eat a limb taken from a living animal [12:23].
18. To bring an animal offering that one is obligated to offer to the Temple, even from the Diaspora [12:26].
19. Not to add to the mitzvos of the Torah [13:1].
20. Not to detract from any of the mitzvos of the Torah [13:1].
21. Not to listen to anyone prophesying in the name of an idol [13:4].
22. Not to have affection for an inciter to idol-worship [13:9].
23. Not to lessen our hatred for an inciter to idol-worship [13:9].
24. Not to rescue an inciter to idol-worship from death [12:9].
25. A person who is incited should not speak in favor of an inciter to idol-worship [13:9].
26. A person who is incited should not refrain from criticizing an inciter to idol-worship [13:9].
27. Not to incite a Jew towards idol-worship [13:12].
28. To examine witnesses thoroughly [13:15].
29. To burn a city which has strayed and worshiped idols, together with all its contents [13:17].
30. Not to rebuild a city which has strayed and worshiped idols to its former condition [13:17].
31. Not to derive any benefit from the wealth of a city which has strayed and worshiped idols [13:17].
32. Not to gash oneself like idol-worshipers do [14:1].
33. Not to uproot the hair of the head in grief over the dead [14:1].
34. Not to eat holy animal offerings that became disqualified [14:3].
35. To examine the signs of a bird to see if it is kosher [14:11].
36. Not to eat non-kosher locusts, or any winged insects [14:19].
37. Not to eat the meat of any domestic or wild animal that died by itself [14:21].
38. The Second Tithe [14:22].
39. The Tithe for the Poor, given instead of the Second Tithe in the third year [14:28].
40. Not to demand payment of a loan over which the Sabbatical year has passed [15:2].
41. To collect full payment for a loan made to a non-Jew [15:3].
42. To relinquish debts owed in the Sabbatical Year [15:3].
43. Not to refrain from supporting a poor person and giving him what he needs [15:7].
44. To give charity [15:8].
45. Not to refrain from lending money to the poor because the Sabbatical Year will cancel the loan [15:9].
46. Not to send away a Hebrew slave empty-handed when he goes free [15:13].
47. To give a severance gift to a Hebrew slave when he goes free [15:14].
48. Not to work an animal which has been consecrated as an offering [15:19].
49. Not to shear an animal which has been consecrated as an offering [15:19].
50. Not to eat chametz (leavened bread) after midday on the day before Pesach (Passover) [16:3].
51. Not to leave over any flesh of the festival offering, slaughtered on the fourteenth day of Nisan, until the third day [16:4].
52. Not to offer up a Pesach offering on a private altar [16:5].
53. To rejoice on the pilgrim festivals [16:14].
54. To appear at the Temple on the pilgrim festivals [16:16].
55. Not to go up to Jerusalem for a pilgrimage festival without an animal offering [16:16].

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parshas Shoftim

פרשת שופטים

The Name of the Parsha

At the beginning of our *Parsha* there is a command to "appoint judges (*shoftim*) and police officers (*shotrim*) for yourself."

The *Midrash* stresses the need for *both* of these roles: "*Without the policeman, there is no judge. For if the court finds a person guilty, once he leaves* [the courtroom,] *the judge is powerless unless the policeman takes control*" (Tanchuma, Shoftim, 2).

Why then is the *Parsha* simply called "Judges," without any reference to the police, if "*without the policeman, there is no judge*"?

In his prophecy of the Messianic Era, Isaiah mentions judges, but not police: "*I will restore your judges as they were at first, and your advisers as they were in the beginning*" (Isaiah 1:26). This is because the Messianic Era will witness the disappearance of evil and selfishness (see Zechariah 13:2), so there will be no need for policemen who *force* people to be righteous. However, there will remain a requirement for judges who will pass laws, study Torah, and provide practical direction to the Jewish people in matters of Torah and its commandments.

Thus, in truth, policemen are secondary assistants to the judges. Only in a case where the judge is incapable of enforcing justice, must one resort to policemen, who work with the "stick and the whip," forcing the guilty party to accept the judge's decision.

Therefore, our *Parsha* is simply entitled "Judges," as the appointment of policemen is not a *separate* commandment, but a *subcategory within* the command to appoint judges. Policemen are not an *intrinsic* legal necessity, and in a time when people are respectful, such as the Messianic Era, they will be rendered redundant.

However, since all aspects of Torah are eternal, there will be a role for police even after the Redemption, only then it will be a positive one—to announce and make public the affairs of the Judges and to assist the people in fulfilling the directives of the courts.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shoftim* 5751)

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יח שֹׁפְטִ֣ים וְשֹׁטְרִ֗ים תִּֽתֶּן־לְךָ֙ בְּכָל־שְׁעָרֶ֔יךָ אֲשֶׁ֨ר יְהוָ֧ה אֱלֹהֶ֛יךָ
נֹתֵ֥ן לְךָ֖ לִשְׁבָטֶ֑יךָ וְשָׁפְט֥וּ אֶת־הָעָ֖ם מִשְׁפַּט־צֶֽדֶק: יט לֹא־תַטֶּ֣ה
מִשְׁפָּ֔ט לֹ֥א תַכִּ֖יר פָּנִ֑ים וְלֹא־תִקַּ֣ח שֹׁ֔חַד כִּ֣י הַשֹּׁ֗חַד יְעַוֵּר֙ עֵינֵ֣י
חֲכָמִ֔ים וִֽיסַלֵּ֖ף דִּבְרֵ֥י צַדִּיקִֽם: כ צֶ֥דֶק צֶ֖דֶק תִּרְדֹּ֑ף לְמַ֤עַן תִּֽחְיֶה֙
וְיָרַשְׁתָּ֣ אֶת־הָאָ֔רֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָ֥ה אֱלֹהֶ֖יךָ נֹתֵ֥ן לָֽךְ: ס כא לֹֽא־תִטַּ֥ע

יח דַּיָּנִין וּפוּרְעָנִין תְּמַנֵּי לָךְ בְּכָל קִרְוָיךְ דַּי יְיָ
אֱלָהָךְ יָהֵב לָךְ לְשִׁבְטָיךְ וִידוּנוּן יָת עַמָּא דִּין
דִּקְשׁוֹט: יט לָא תַצְלֵי דִּין לָא תִשְׁתְּמוֹדַע אַפִּין
וְלָא תְקַבֵּל שׁוֹחֲדָא אֲרֵי שׁוֹחֲדָא מְעַוַּר עֵינֵי
חַכִּימִין וּמְקַלְקֵל פִּתְגָּמִין תְּרִיצִין: כ קוּשְׁטָא
קוּשְׁטָא תְּהֵי רָדֵיף בְּדִיל דְּתֵיחֵי וְתֵירַת יָת
אַרְעָא דַּייָ אֱלָהָךְ יָהֵב לָךְ: כא לָא תִצּוֹב לָךְ

רש"י

(יח) שופטים ושוטרים. שופטים, דיינים הפוסקים את הדין: ושוטרים.[1] הרודין את העם אחר מצותן, שמכין וכופתין[2] במקל וברצועה עד שיקבל עליו את דין השופט[3]: בבל שעריך. בכל עיר ועיר[4]: לשבטיך. מוסב על תתן לך, שופטים ושוטרים תתן לך לשבטיך בכל שעריך אשר ה' אלהיך נותן לך: לשבטיך. מלמד שמושיבין דיינין לכל שבט ושבט ובכל עיר ועיר[5]: ושפטו את העם וגו'. מנה דיינין מומחים וצדיקים לשפוט צדק[4]: (יט) לא תטה משפט. כמשמעו: ולא תכיר פנים. אף בשעת הטענות. אזהרה לדיין שלא יהא רך לזה וקשה לזה, אחד עומד ואחד יושב. לפי שכשרואה שהדיין מכבד את חבירו מסתתמין טענותיו: ולא תקח שחד. אפילו לשפוט צדק[4]: כי השחד יעור. משקבל שחד ממנו אי אפשר שלא יטה את לבו אצלו להפוך בזכותו[6]: דברי צדיקים. דברים המצודקים, משפטי אמת: (כ) צדק צדק תרדוף. הלך אחר בית דין יפה[5]: למען תחיה וירשת. כדאי הוא מנוי הדיינין הכשרים להחיות את ישראל ולהושיבן על אדמתן[4]: (כא) לא תטע לך אשרה. לחייבו עליה משעת נטיעתה, ואפילו לא עבדה עובר בלא תעשה

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What is the difference between judges (שֹׁפְטִים) and police officers (שֹׁטְרִים)? (v. 18)**

Rashi: שֹׁפְטִים are judges who decide the law, and שֹׁטְרִים are those who impose authority over the people in accordance with the judges' decision. They strike and bind people with sticks and whips, until they accept the judges' ruling.

Gur Aryeh: *Rashi* wished to explain why the Torah mentions the need for police officers. Therefore he stressed that judges "decide the law," as if to say, "they decide the law *and nothing more than that.*" Consequently, police are required to enforce the law.

Bartenura: Why did *Rashi* need to explain the words "judges" and "police officers," when their meaning is straightforward?

Because in *Parshas Devarim,* the Torah states that Moshe appointed, *"police officers over your tribes"* (1:15), but no mention is made of judges. Therefore, one might think that if no judges are to be found, one should simply appoint police, without judges.

To counteract this notion the Torah stresses here that *both* judges and police officers are needed, as *Rashi* clarifies that the police officers serve only to enforce the rulings of the judges. Thus, if there were to be no judges, there would be no police either.

● **How must judges be placed "in all your gates"? (v. 18)**

Rashi: "In all your gates," means in every city.

Shach al HaTorah: The term "gates" here alludes to the "gates" of the body: the two eyes, the two ears, the nose, the mouth, etc. The verse teaches us that a person should place "judges" and "police" over all his bodily "gates" to ensure that only positive and kosher influences enter his body.

TORAS MENACHEM

Judges and Police-officers (v. 18)

Why did *Rashi* deem it necessary to define the terms "judges" and "police officers"?

Gur Aryeh writes that *Rashi* wished to stress the unique role of police officers in law-enforcement, so he contrasted this with the role of judges, who merely "decide the law" without implementing it at all.

However, this is somewhat difficult to accept, because:

i.) If *Rashi merely* wished to inform us of the role of police officers, he could have done just that, without touching upon the issue of judges.

ii.) In his commentary to *Parshas Devarim, Rashi* has *already* explained the role of police officers as implementers of the law: *"I appointed police officers over you, for your tribes. These are the ones who bind a person and strike him with a whip, at the judges' order"* (Rashi to 1:15 above).

So why did *Rashi* need to clarify the role of police officers *again* here?

Bartenura argues that the Torah's innovation here is that police would be useless in the absence of judges, a point we would not have automatically deduced from *Parshas Devarim,* which does not mention judges.

However, this is difficult to accept, because *Parshas Devarim does* mention the appointment of judges: "I selected *wise and well known men* from the leaders of your tribes, and *I made them leaders over you"* (ibid.).

We are thus left with the question: What is the need for *Rashi's* comment here, when the meaning of "judges" is obvious, and the meaning of "police officers" has *already* been explained by *Rashi* in *Parshas Devarim?*

The Explanation

The process of law enforcement by the police contains two elements: a.) The *execution* of the law, i.e. ensuring that the appropriate punishments are administered; and b.) Deterring people from crime by

1 בדפוסי רש"י הנפוצים תיבת "ושוטרים" היא באותיות גדולות - ד"ה חדש. אבל לכאורה הוא סה"ד, והד"ה שבפרש"י הוא "שופטים ושוטרים", ואח"כ מפרש החילוק בינהם - "שופטים דיינים כו' ושוטרים הרודין כו'" (לקו"ש חל"ד ע' 98, הערה 1) 2 בדפוס א' וב' ובכל כתי' שבספריית ליובאוויטש, ליתא תיבות אלו. וכן ליתא בדרש"י שהועתק בסמ"ג עשין צז בתחילתו. אבל בדפוסי רש"י הנפוצים הוא כבפנים, וגירסא זו היתה לפני הבאר מים חיים ונחלת יעקב, וכן משמע בגו"א (לקו"ש שם, הערה 11). 3 תנחומא ב 4 ספרי 5 סנהדרין לב: 6 כתובות קה:

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APPOINTMENT OF JUDGES & POLICE

16:18
- [18] *You should appoint judges and police officers for yourself—for each of your tribes—in all your (city) gates that God, your God, is giving you.*
- *(Appoint expert judges so that) they should judge the people correctly.*
- [19] *Do not pervert justice, do not show favoritism, and do not take a bribe (even to judge correctly), for bribery blinds the eyes of the wise and perverts legitimate words.*
- [20] *Pursue justice, (by seeking a high quality court of) justice.*

(In the merit of appointing judges) you will live and settle upon the land God, your God, is giving you.

TORAS MENACHEM

the active promotion of the law, i.e. applying pressure to a person to encourage him to act in accordance with the law.

In *Parshas Devarim*, *Rashi* is discussing the former case, administering punishments required by law. Therefore *Rashi* stresses the role of police as "the ones who bind a person and strike him with a whip, *at the judges' order.*" In our *Parsha*, however, *Rashi* is discussing the second element of law enforcement, the active *promotion* of the law: "police officers are those who *impose authority over the people*...until *they accept* the judges' ruling." Note that *Rashi* does not write that they are doing this "at the judges' order," since we are speaking here of how the police encourage the people to be law abiding, and not the direct implementation and execution of legally required punishments.*

THE BASIS OF RASHI'S TWO COMMENTS

What led *Rashi* to his respective conclusions in these two instances?

Two explanations could be offered:

1.) In *Parshas Balak*, Moshe instructed the "judges of Israel" to kill those who had worshiped the idol *Ba'al Pe'or* (Bamidbar 25:5). Here we see that, at the literal level, a judge is not one who merely decides the law, but he can be involved in administering the punishment too.

The Last Word

"BRIBERY BLINDS THE EYES OF THE WISE" (v. 19)

The *Yetzer-hara* [Evil Inclination] is an expert in his trade, an extraordinary specialist, particularly when he injects a most effective "bribe"—the person's natural self-love.

One of the accuser's tricks is to delude a person into thinking that he is unavoidably prevented from performing a *mitzvah*, bolstering this delusion by various arguments and "proofs," giving no respite.

And since a person tends to be partial to himself, and it is very difficult to be objective in a matter concerning his own self, a person must always be aware that what seems to him a case of being a victim of circumstances, is not necessarily so in actual fact.

Therefore, in order to clarify his true position, he must turn to a person** who is beyond such bribery and corruption...one who is permeated by the spirit of the Torah of Truth, and truth brooks no compromise.

For only such a person can evaluate the situation and determine whether it is indeed a case of unavoidable constraint, or delusions stemming from the *Yetzer-hara*....

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe in the "*Days of Teshuvah*" 5732)

Sparks of Chasidus

"APPOINT JUDGES...IN ALL YOUR GATES" (v. 18)

A city gate is its opening, so the Torah is requesting here that even the incomprehensible and seemingly unacceptable rulings of the judges should penetrate "your gates," that they should enter into your way of thinking. In other words, when a person learns a new Torah directive, it should penetrate all his faculties until he feels that it is good advice.

In light of the explanation of ***Shach al Hatorah*** (that "your gates" represent the organs which form the interface between a person and his environment), *"You should appoint judges...in your gates,"* means that the senses (one's "gates") should be controlled by judgment from the Godly soul.

As the *Alter Rebbe* writes in *Tanya* (ch. 13): *"The evil inclination is no more than, for example, a judge or advocate who offers his legal opinion, but nevertheless...it is challenged by the second 'judge,' which is the Godly Soul....The final verdict follows the ultimate arbitrator, God Himself, who assists the good inclination...by means of a Godly revelation to the Godly Soul, so that it may gain the upper hand...."*

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shoftim* 5751)

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* Based on this distinction, we can also explain a number of further subtle differences between *Rashi's* two comments: a.) In our *Parsha*, *Rashi* writes, "they strike and bind [people]," mentioning the less aggressive method (striking) first, because when implementing a *deterrent*, one begins with softer methods and then progresses to harsher ones. In *Parshas Devarim*, however, where the issue is executing a prescribed punishment of the court, *Rashi* writes the order in which the punishment of lashes is administered—they "bind a person and strike him." b.) In *Parshas Devarim*, *Rashi* mentions striking "with a whip," as this is one of the specific prescribed punishments of the court. However, in our *Parsha*, which speaks of the police promoting the law, a variety of methods may be used, including even "sticks" if necessary. **In 5746 (1986) the Rebbe instituted a campaign for every Jewish person to appoint a "mentor" (in accordance with the *Mishnah's* directive to "provide for yourself a teacher"—*Avos* 1:6) who could guide a person so as not to be influenced by the "bribery of self-love." See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 29, pp. 246-8; *Sichas Purim* 5747, ch. 32-4; see also sources cited in *Sha'arey Limud Hachasidus* (by Rabbi M. Golomb, *Kehot Publication Society* 5754) pp. 17-8.

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לך אשרה כל־עץ אצל מזבח יהוה אלהיך אשר תעשה־לך:
כב ולא־תקים לך מצבה אשר שנא יהוה אלהיך: ס יז א לא־
תזבח ליהוה אלהיך שור ושה אשר יהיה בו מום כל דבר
רע כי תועבת יהוה אלהיך הוא: ס ב כי־ימצא בקרבך באחד
שעריך אשר־יהוה אלהיך נתן לך איש או־אשה אשר
יעשה את־הרע בעיני יהוה־אלהיך לעבר בריתו: ג וילך
ויעבד אלהים אחרים וישתחו להם ולשמש | או לירח או
לכל־צבא השמים אשר לא־צויתי: ד והגד־לך ושמעת
ודרשת היטב והנה אמת נכון הדבר נעשתה התועבה הזאת
בישראל: ה והוצאת את־האיש ההוא או את־האשה ההוא
אשר עשו את־הדבר הרע* הזה אל־שעריך את־האיש או
את־האשה וסקלתם באבנים ומתו: ו על־פי | שנים עדים או

*ס״א הָרַע

אשרת כל אילן בסטר מדבחא דיי אלהך די
תעבד לך: כב ולא תקים לך קמא די סני יי
אלהך: א לא תכוס קדם יי אלהך תור ואמר
די יהי בה מומא כל מדעם ביש ארי מרחק
קדם יי אלהך הוא: ב ארי ישתכח בינך בחדא
מקרויך דיי אלהך יהב לך גבר או אתתא
די יעבד ית דביש קדם יי אלהך למעבר על
קימה: ג ואזל ופלח לטעות עממיא וסגיד להון
ולשמשא או לסיהרא או לכל חילי שמיא
די לא פקדית: ד ויתחוי לך ותשמע ותתבע
יאות והא קושטא כון פתגמא אתעבידת
תועבתא הדא בישראל: ה ותפק ית גברא
ההוא או ית אתתא ההיא די עבדו ית
פתגמא בישא הדין לתרע בית דינך (לקרויך)
ית גברא או ית אתתא ותרגמנון באבניא
וימותון: ו על מימר תרין סהדין או תלתא

רש״י

על נטיעתה: **לא תטע לך אשרה כל עץ אצל מזבח ה' אלהיך.** אזהרה לנוטע אילן ולבונה בית בהר הבית[1]: (כב) **ולא תקים לך מצבה.** מצבת אבן אחת, להקריב עליה אפילו לשמים[1]: **אשר שנא.** מזבח אבנים ומזבח אדמה צוה לעשות, ואת זו שנא כי חק היתה לכנענים. ואף על פי שהיתה אהובה לו בימי האבות עכשיו שנאה, מאחר שעשאוה אלו חק לעבודה זרה: (א) **לא תזבח וגו' כל דבר רע.** אזהרה למפגל בקדשים על ידי דבור רע[1]. ועוד נדרשו בו שאר דרשות בשחיטת קדשים[2]: (ב) **לעבר בריתו.** אשר כרת ה' אתכם שלא לעבוד אלילים: (ג) **אשר לא צויתי.** לעבדם[3]: (ד) **נכון.** מכוון העדות: (ה) **והוצאת את האיש ההוא וגו' אל שעריך וגו'.** המתרגם אל שעריך, לתרע בית דינך, טועה, שכן שנינו אל שעריך זה שער שעבד בו, או אינו אלא שער שנדון בו, נאמר שעריך למטה ונאמר שעריך למעלה, מה שעריך האמור למעלה שער שעבד בו אף שעריך האמור למטה שער שעבד בו. ותרגומו לקרויך: (ו) **שנים עדים או שלשה.** אם מתקיימת עדות בשנים למה פרט לך בשלשה, להקיש שלשה לשנים, מה שנים עדות אחת, אף שלשה

TORAS MENACHEM

Thus in our *Parsha*, where the Torah refers explicitly to "judges," *Rashi* could not describe the police as having *exclusive* rights to the execution of punishments, as this was a role shared by the judges. Consequently, *Rashi* wrote that the police provide *additional* help to the judges, to enforce the law.

In *Parshas Devarim*, however, the Torah does not refer explicitly to judges (but to "wise and well known men"), so *Rashi* did not have the above limitation. Thus, he was able to describe the police officers as the exclusive administers of justice, thus making a clearer distinction between the judges and police.

2.) At the literal level, there is a distinction between details cited in the course of a *narrative*, and instructions that are issued as a direct *command*. In the case of a narrative, there is no basis (at the literal level) to presume anything more than is implied by the narrative. But in the case of a *command*, which has a specific goal, one might logically include any detail that is necessary for the achievement of that goal.

Thus, when we read of the appointment of judges as a *narrative* in *Parshas Devarim*, *Rashi* was unable to suggest more than a minimal role for the police officers (as those who execute judgments of the court, and no more), since the Torah gives no indication of any additional role.

However, here in our *Parsha* where we read of the *command* to appoint police officers, *Rashi* was able to expand the role of the police to include the more general task of law-enforcement and promotion of the law.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, pp. 98ff.; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shoftim* 5748)

The Last Word

At the literal level of Torah interpretation, a judge is not merely one who *decides* Torah law, but he also shares the responsibility of *enforcing* the law (see *Toras Menachem*).

This teaches us that genuine Torah study is not merely the accumulation of knowledge, but *"the purpose of wisdom is teshuvah and good deeds"* (*Brachos* 17a). Thus, if a person's Torah study does not lead him to increase in good deeds, it proves that something was lacking in the *Torah study itself*.

That is why we are promised that in the future era, *"I will restore your judges"* (Isaiah 1:26), without any need for police—for then *everybody's* Torah study will be of such a quality that it will *automatically* engender *"teshuvah and good deeds."*

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, pp. 104-5)

1 ספרי. 2 זבחים לו: 3 מגילה ט:

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PROHIBITED STRUCTURES & OFFERINGS

- [21] *You should not (even) plant for yourself an idolatrous tree (let alone worship it).*
- *(You should not plant) any tree (or build any house on the Temple Mount) near the Altar of God, your God, which you will make for yourself.*
- [22] *You should not set up for yourself a monument (consisting of a single stone), which God, your God hates.*

17
- [1] *You should not offer to God, your God, an ox or a sheep that has in it a blemish, or (one that is slaughtered with) any incorrect statement (of intention), for that is an abomination to God, your God.*

PUNISHMENT FOR IDOL WORSHIP

17:2 *If there is found among you—in one of your cities which God, your God is giving you—a man or woman who does what is evil in the eyes of God, your God, and violates His covenant, [3] by going and worshiping other gods—or the sun, the moon, or any heavenly body which I have not commanded (you to worship)—and he prostrated himself before them. [4] Then when you are informed (by witnesses), and you hear (the case), investigating (them) thoroughly, you see that the(ir) statements (of testimony) are consistent and true, and that this abomination has occurred in Israel:*

- [5] *You should bring that man or that woman who has committed this evil thing, outside the (city) gates, and you should pelt them—the man or the woman—with stones, and they should die.*
- [6] *The one liable to death should be put to death only by the testimony of two witnesses, or three witnesses. He should not be put to death by the testimony of one witness.*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Is a person executed if he admits guilt? (v. 6)

RAMBAM: It is a scriptural decree that the court does not execute a person or administer lashes to him as a result of his own admission, but only *"by the testimony of two witnesses"* (Laws of Sanhedrin 18:6).

RADVAZ: This "scriptural decree" is somewhat rational, because a person's soul does not belong to him, but to God, as the verse states, *"all souls are Mine"* (Ezekiel 18:4). Thus a person's admission will not help to cause damage to something that is not his....A person's money, however, does belong to him. Therefore, [in monetary cases] we rule that a defendant's admission is equivalent to the testimony of a hundred witnesses (Gittin 40b) ....Nevertheless, I agree that this is a decree of God which we cannot fully fathom (Laws of Sanhedrin ibid.).

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

Radvaz writes that a person is not executed as a result of his own admission, *"because a person's soul does not belong to him, but to God"* (see Classic Questions).

But surely, a person's money *also* belongs to God, as the verse states, *"The earth and everything in it belongs to God"* (Psalms 24:1), and, *"'Silver is Mine and gold is Mine,' says God,"* (Haggai 2:8). So why is there a difference between a person's admission in criminal and financial cases?

A person's soul is not his own possession, but rather, an article of value that was *deposited* with him by God for safekeeping. But in the case of money, while it is true that the Creator does maintain the ultimate rights of ownership over *"the earth and everything in it"*; nevertheless, He does allow a person to possess his own property—*"He gave the earth to man"* (Psalms 115:16).

And while this is fundamentally a "decree of God," nevertheless, it is "somewhat rational": For while everything ultimately belongs to God, there exists from *man's perspective* a difference between the soul, which is *obviously* sacred, and money, which does not *openly* reveal God's presence. Consequently, the Torah allowed us to acquire that which *appears* to be ownerless because its True Owner remains hidden; but we were not granted the right to possess something which *clearly* belongs to an existing Owner.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, p. 106ff.)

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שלשה עדים יומת המת לא יומת על־פי עד אחד: ז יד
העדים תהיה־בו בראשנה להמיתו ויד כל־העם באחרנה
ובערת הרע מקרבך: פ ח כי יפלא ממך דבר למשפט בין־
דם | לדם בין־דין לדין ובין נגע לנגע דברי ריבת בשעריך
וקמת ועלית אל־המקום אשר יבחר יהוה אלהיך בו: ט ובאת
אל־הכהנים הלוים ואל־השפט אשר יהיה בימים ההם
ודרשת והגידו לך את דבר המשפט: י ועשית על־פי הדבר
אשר יגידו לך מן־המקום ההוא אשר יבחר יהוה ושמרת
לעשות ככל אשר יורוך: יא על־פי התורה אשר יורוך ועל־
המשפט אשר־יאמרו לך תעשה לא תסור מן־הדבר אשר־
יגידו לך ימין ושמאל: יב והאיש אשר־יעשה בזדון לבלתי
שמע אל־הכהן העמד לשרת שם את־יהוה אלהיך או
אל־השפט ומת האיש ההוא ובערת הרע מישראל: יג וכל־

סהדין יתקטיל דחיב קטול לא יתקטיל על
מימר סהיד חד: ז ידא דסהדיא תהי בה
בקדמיתא למקטלה וידא דכל עמא
בבתריתא ותפלי עבד דביש מבינך: ח ארי
יתכסי מנך פתגמא לדינא בין דמא לדמא
בין דינא לדינא ובין מכתש סגירו
למכתש סגירו פתגמי פלגתי* דינא בקרויך
ותקום ותסק לאתרא די יתרעי יי אלהך בה:
ט ותיתי לות כהניא לואי ולות דינא די יהי
ביומיא האנון ותתבע ויחוון לך ית פתגמא
דדינא: י ותעבד על מימר פתגמא די יחוון
לך מן אתרא ההוא די יתרעי יי ותטר
למעבד ככל די ילפנך: יא על מימר אוריתא
די ילפנך ועל דינא די ימרון לך תעבד לא
תסטי מן פתגמא די יחוון לך ימינא
ושמאלא: יב וגבר די יעבד ברשע בדיל דלא
לקבלא מן כהנא דקאם לשמשא תמן קדם יי
אלהך או מן דינא ויתקטיל גברא ההוא
ותפלי עבד דביש מישראל: יג וכל עמא

רש"י

מכל המקומות[1]: (ט) **הכהנים הלוים.** הכהנים שיצאו משבט לוי: **ואל השופט אשר יהיה בימים ההם.** ואפילו אינו כשאר שופטים שהיו לפניו אתה צריך לשמוע לו. אין לך אלא שופט שבימיך[4]: (יא) **ימין ושמאל.** אפילו אומר לך על ימין שהוא שמאל ועל שמאל שהוא ימין, וכל שכן כשאומר לך על ימין ימין ועל שמאל שמאל: (יג) **וכל העם ישמעו.** מכאן שממתינים לו עד

עדות אחת, ואין נעשין זוממין עד שיזומו כולם[1]: (ח) **כי יפלא.** כל הפלאה לשון הבדלה ופרישה, שהדבר נבדל ומכוסה ממך: **בין דם לדם.** בין דם טמא לדם טהור[2]: **בין דין לדין.** בין דין זכאי לדין חייב: **בין נגע לנגע.** בין נגע טמא לנגע טהור[3]: **דברי ריבות.** שיהיו חכמי העיר חולקים בדבר, זה מטמא וזה מטהר זה מחייב וזה מזכה: **וקמת ועלית.** מלמד שבית המקדש גבוה

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Surely it is self-evident that one can only consult the judges who "exist at that time"? (v. 9)**

Rashi: Even if they are not like the other judges who preceded them, you must listen to them, for you have only the judges of your time.

Talmud: The judge in each generation is like Shmuel in his generation...and like Moshe in his generation (*Rosh Hashanah* 20b).

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

"You Should Come to...The Judges Who Exist at That Time" (v. 9)

It is axiomatic to Chasidic thought that the completeness of the redemption is *"dependent on our actions and effort to serve God throughout the period of Exile, since the reward for a commandment is [the result] of the commandment itself"* (Tanya, chap. 37). Everything that is bestowed from Heaven is carefully meted out according to the actions which elicit it, and therefore a person's actions must be somewhat similar to the desired result.

Thus, in order to reach and relate to the Messianic Era when *"I will return your Judges as they were at first, and your advisors like they were in the beginning"* (Isaiah 1:26), a Jew has to incorporate this dimension in his life *now*. Judaism must have for him two dimensions: "Judges"—submission to the directives of Torah (even if they are not logically understood), and "Advisors"—the internalization and appreciation of these directives, (as he understands and appreciates receiving good advice).

This preparation has been achieved throughout history, by following the "Judges" and "Advisors" of the generation. Therefore, we are taught: *"You should come to...the judges that exist at that time. You should question them, and they will tell you words of judgment"* (v. 9).

(Excerpt from *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shoftim* 5751—Free Translation)

1 מכות ה: 2 נדה יט. 3 ספרי 4 ר"ה כה: *בכמה דפוסים 'פלגתא'. וכן הובא בפי' נתינה לגר (מהר"נ אדלר). וכן הוא בחומש עזרה לגר. אבל בספר כתר תורה הנק' תאג' (ירושלים תרנ"ה), ועוד הוא 'פלוגתי' (קו"ש חכ"ד ע' 154 בשוה"ג)

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- [7] *The hands of the witnesses should be against him first to put him to death, and afterwards the hands of all the people—and you will eliminate this evil from among you.*

AUTHORITY OF THE HIGH COURT

17:8 *If a point of law eludes you(r local court)—be it the distinction between (pure) blood and (impure) blood, between a verdict (of innocence) and a verdict (of guilt), or between a (pure) lesion and an (impure) lesion, (resulting in) conflicting rulings (among the sages) in your city:*

- *You should make the journey up to (the Holy Temple), the place that God, your God, will choose.* [9] *You should come to the priests, (who are from) the (tribe) of Levites, and to the judges who exist at that time. You should question them, and they will tell you words of judgment.*
- [10] *You must obey the words that they will tell you—from the place God will choose. You should carefully obey everything they instruct you.* [11] *You should act in accordance with the teachings that they instruct you, and according to the judgments they issue to you.*
- *You must not divert from the words they tell you, (even if they tell you that) right (is left) and left (is right).*
- [12] *(If) any man intentionally disobeys and fails to listen to the priest who is standing and officiating there before God, your God, or to the judge, that man must die. Thus you will eliminate this evil from Israel.*
- [13] *(They should wait until the next festival to execute him, so that) all the people will hear (of it) and be afraid, so they will no longer disobey intentionally.*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How does one fulfill the command not to "divert" from the words of the Sages? (v. 11)

RAMBAM: There are additional *mitzvos* which were introduced after the giving of the Torah, that were fixed [as Jewish law] by the Prophets and the Sages, and they were adopted by the entire Jewish people, such as reading the *Megilah*, the *Chanukah* lights, the fast of *Tisha b'Av*, the principle of the *Eruv*, and the washing of the hands etc. All of these *mitzvos* that were introduced at a later date are obligatory for us to accept and observe, as the verse states: *"You must not divert from the words, etc."* (Introduction to *Mishneh Torah*).

TORAS MENACHEM

THE NATURE OF RABBINIC LAW (v. 11)

The above statement of ***Rambam*** presents the following problem:

It is generally accepted that there are *seven* Rabbinic *mitzvos*, namely: 1. Washing of the hands (before eating bread), 2. The laws of *Eruv*, 3. Recital of *Brachos* (blessings), 4. Lighting *Shabbos* candles, 5. Reading the *Megilah*, 6. *Chanukah* lights, 7. Reciting *Hallel* (see *Sefer Hachinuch* end of listing of *mitzvos*; *Shaloh* 316a; *Toras Olah* of the *Rema* 3:38).

Of course, there are literally thousands of other Rabbinic laws, but all those apart from the above are *extensions* or *enhancements* of Torah law. The above seven *mitzvos* are unique among the vast body of Rabbinic law in that they are: 1.) *Mitzvos* in their own right, that require a blessing beforehand. 2.) They are all positive commands (and not prohibitions). 3.) They are not an extension of existing Torah law. Thus, the common consensus is that there are just seven Rabbinic "*mitzvos*," and many thousands of additional Rabbinic enactments and decrees that serve to protect Torah law.

However, *Rambam* makes no mention here of the fact that there are *seven* Rabbinic *mitzvos*. Furthermore, of the five *mitzvos* that he does mention, one of them—the fast of *Tisha b'Av*—is not generally considered to be one of the seven Rabbinic *mitzvos*, for it is not a positive command, and it is not a *mitzvah* on which a blessing is made.

Why did *Rambam* not enumerate the Rabbinic *mitzvos* here, in his introduction to the *Mishneh Torah*, in the same way as he listed the 613 *mitzvos* of the Torah? And why did he disregard the common consensus that there are seven Rabbinic *mitzvos*?

THE EXPLANATION

The number of Biblical *mitzvos* is an absolute, fixed sum. There are precisely 613 *mitzvos*, and it is categorically forbidden to add any further *mitzvos*, or annul any of the existing laws (as *Rambam* writes in his *Laws of Foundations of the Torah*, chap. 9).

However, according to the principles of Jewish law, Rabbinic *mitzvos* are not limited to any particular number, because the Sages are permitted to add *mitzvos*, enactments and decrees as they see fit. As time passes and new problems arise, they are charged with the task of adding further laws or, under certain circumstances, modifying or abolishing previously existing law. So, by its very nature, Rabbinic law is dynamic and constantly evolving with the times.

Of course, nowadays the Rabbis do not have sufficient authority to modify the existing Rabbinic law, so the number of Rabbinic *mitzvos* and decrees has become static. But this is purely a technical limitation. In essence, however, the body of Rabbinic law may be modified, provided there are Rabbis of sufficient authority (and in the Messianic era, we are

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הָעָם יִשְׁמְעוּ וְיִרָאוּ וְלֹא יְזִידוּן עוֹד: ס (שני) יד כִּי־תָבֹא אֶל־
הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ וִירִשְׁתָּהּ וְיָשַׁבְתָּה בָּהּ
וְאָמַרְתָּ אָשִׂימָה עָלַי מֶלֶךְ כְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבֹתָי: טו שׂוֹם
תָּשִׂים עָלֶיךָ מֶלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בּוֹ מִקֶּרֶב אַחֶיךָ
תָּשִׂים עָלֶיךָ מֶלֶךְ לֹא תוּכַל לָתֵת עָלֶיךָ אִישׁ נָכְרִי אֲשֶׁר לֹא־
אָחִיךָ הוּא: טז רַק לֹא־יַרְבֶּה־לּוֹ סוּסִים וְלֹא־יָשִׁיב אֶת־הָעָם
מִצְרַיְמָה לְמַעַן הַרְבּוֹת סוּס וַיהוָה אָמַר לָכֶם לֹא תֹסִפוּן
לָשׁוּב בַּדֶּרֶךְ הַזֶּה עוֹד: יז וְלֹא יַרְבֶּה־לּוֹ נָשִׁים וְלֹא יָסוּר לְבָבוֹ
וְכֶסֶף וְזָהָב לֹא יַרְבֶּה־לּוֹ מְאֹד: יח וְהָיָה כְשִׁבְתּוֹ עַל כִּסֵּא
מַמְלַכְתּוֹ וְכָתַב לוֹ אֶת־מִשְׁנֵה הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת עַל־סֵפֶר מִלִּפְנֵי
הַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם: יט וְהָיְתָה עִמּוֹ וְקָרָא בוֹ כָּל־יְמֵי חַיָּיו לְמַעַן
יִלְמַד לְיִרְאָה אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו לִשְׁמֹר אֶת־כָּל־דִּבְרֵי הַתּוֹרָה
הַזֹּאת וְאֶת־הַחֻקִּים הָאֵלֶּה לַעֲשֹׂתָם: כ לְבִלְתִּי רוּם־לְבָבוֹ
מֵאֶחָיו וּלְבִלְתִּי סוּר מִן־הַמִּצְוָה יָמִין וּשְׂמֹאול לְמַעַן יַאֲרִיךְ
יָמִים עַל־מַמְלַכְתּוֹ הוּא וּבָנָיו בְּקֶרֶב יִשְׂרָאֵל: ס

ישמעון וידחלון ולא ירשיעון עוד: יד ארי
תעול לארעא דיי אלהך יהב לך ותירתה
ותיתב בה ותימר אמני עלי מלכא ככל
עממיא די בסחרני: טו מנאה תמני עלך
מלכא די יתרעי יי אלהך בה מגו אחיך תמני
עלך מלכא לית לך רשו למנאה עלך גבר
נוכרי די לא אחוך הוא: טז לחוד לא יסגי
לה סוסון ולא יתיב ית עמא למצרים בדיל
לאסגאה (לה) סוסון ויי אמר לכון לא תוספון
למתוב בארחא הדא עוד: יז ולא יסגי לה נשין
ולא יסטי לבה וכספא ודהבא לא יסגי לה
לחדא: יח ויהי כמתבה על כרסי מלכותה
ויכתוב לה ית פתשגן אוריתא הדא על
ספרא מן קדם כהניא לואי: יט ותהי עמה
ויהי קרי בה כל יומי חיוהי בדיל דילף למדחל
קדם יי אלהה למטר ית כל פתגמי אוריתא
אוריתא הדא וית קימיא האלין למעבדהון:
כ בדיל דלא ירים לבה מאחוהי ובדיל דלא
יסטי מן תפקדתא ימינא ושמאלא בדיל דיוריך
יומין על מלכותה הוא ובנוהי בגו ישראל:

רש"י

הרגל וממיתין אותו ברגל[1]: (טז) לא ירבה לו סוסים. אלא כדי מרכבתו, שלא ישיב את העם מצרימה, שהסוסים באים משם. כמה שנאמר בשלמה, ותעלה ותצא מרכבה ממצרים בשש מאות כסף וסוס בחמשים ומאה[2]: (יז) ולא ירבה לו נשים. אלא שמונה עשרה, שמצינו שהיו לו לדוד שש נשים, ונאמר לו[3] ואם מעט ואוסיפה לך כהנה וכהנה[4]: וכסף וזהב לא ירבה לו מאד. אלא כדי ליתן לאכסניא (ס"א לאפסניא)[5]: (יח) והיה כשבתו. אם עשה כן כדאי הוא שתתקיים מלכותו: את משנה התורה. שתי ספרי תורה. אחת שהיא מונחת בבית גנזיו ואחת שנכנסת ויוצאת עמו[6]. ואונקלוס תרגם פתשגן, פתר משנה לשון שנון ודבור: (יט) דברי התורה. כמשמעו: (כ) ולבלתי סור מן המצוה. אפילו מצוה קלה של נביא: למען יאריך ימים. מכלל הן אתה שומע לאו. וכן מצינו בשאול שאמר לו שמואל שבעת ימים תוחל עד בואי אליך להעלות עולה וגו'[7] וכתיב ויוחל שבעת ימים[8] ולא שמר הבטחתו לשמור כל היום, ולא הספיק להעלות העולה עד שבא שמואל ואמר לו נסכלת לאשר לא שמרת וגו' ועתה ממלכתך לא תקום[9]. הא למדת, שבשביל מצוה קלה של נביא נענש: הוא ובניו. מגיד שאם

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What does "he and his sons" teach us? (v. 20)**

Rashi: It teaches that if his son is worthy of becoming king, he is given preference over another person.

Rambam: Once a king is anointed, he and his descendants are granted the monarchy forever, since the monarchy is transferred by means of inheritance....Not only the monarchy, but all other positions of authority and appointments in Israel are transferred to the children and grandchildren forever, provided the son's wisdom and fear of God equal that of the father.

Once David was anointed, he earned the rights to the "Crown of Kingship." Thus, the monarchy belongs to him and his male descendants forever....However, this right was only transferred to his righteous descendants....Nevertheless, God promised him that the monarchy would never cease from his descendants...." *(Laws of Kings 1:7)*.

TORAS MENACHEM

promised that such a situation will return). Thus, from a conceptual point of view, Rabbinic law constantly remains flexible and dynamic.

For this reason, *Rambam* omitted any specific mention of the number of *mitzvos* when he introduced the concept of Rabbinic law in his *Mishneh Torah*, for he wished to stress that *Rabbinic* law is *essentially* dynamic in nature, and it is not limited to a specific number of *mitzvos* (unlike Biblical law).

Rabbinic Law Today

Furthermore, it could be argued that, even today, new Rabbinic precepts may be introduced, even before the *Sanhedrin* is re-convened.

Rambam writes in his introduction to the *Mishneh Torah*: *"All of that which is written in the Babylonian Talmud is legally binding on the whole Jewish people...since the entire content of the Talmud was agreed upon universally by the Jewish people."*

1 סנהדרין מט. 2 מ"א י, כט 3 שמואל-ב יב, ח 4 סנהדרין כא. 5 שם כא: 6 שם 7 שמואל-א י, ח 8 שם יג, ח 9 שם יג, יג

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Appointment of a King

17:14 Second Reading

When you come to the land God, your God, is giving you, and you take possession of it and settle in it, you will (eventually) say, "I will set a king over myself, like all the nations around me":

- *15 You should always set a king over you, one whom God, your God, chooses.*
- *The king that you appoint over yourselves must be from among your (Jewish) brothers.*
- *You may not appoint a gentile over yourselves, one who is not your brother.*
- *16 However, he may not acquire many horses for himself (more than he needs for his chariot).*
- *(This is) so that he will not bring the people back to Egypt, in order to get more horses, for God said to you: "You should never return on that road again!"*
- *17 He should not take too many wives for himself, so his heart will not be led astray.*
- *He should not acquire an abundance of silver and gold for himself.*
- *18 After he is already sitting upon his royal throne, he should write two copies of this Torah scroll for himself, in the presence of the priests, the sons of Levi.*
- *19 (One copy should be placed in his treasury, and the other) should remain with him, and he should read from it all the days of his life, so that he may learn to fear God, his God, to carefully guard the observance of all the words of this Torah, and its suprarational commands. 20 (This is) so that his heart will not be arrogant over his brothers, and he will not veer away from (even) the (smallest) commandment, either to the right or to the left, in order that he will reign for a long time over his kingdom—he and his sons—among Israel.*

Toras Menachem

Now, there are many Rabbinic laws in the *Talmud* which were introduced after the *Sanhedrin* ceased to function, and yet, *Rambam* writes that they are legally binding on the basis that these laws were "agreed upon universally by the Jewish people."

Therefore, it would seem that, according to *Rambam*, any enactment or custom which becomes universally accepted among the entire Jewish people actually acquires the full legal status of a Rabbinic *mitzvah*, even in the current era.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 29, p. 104*ff*.)

Inheritance of the Monarchy (v. 20)

From ***Rambam***'s words in the above law, the distinction between an ordinary Jewish king and one who is descended from King David is not immediately obvious. Both types of monarchy seem to be passed via inheritance (provided that the son is a worthy candidate), so why does *Rambam* write a *separate law* in reference to King David, *repeating* the same idea? And what does he mean with the words, *"Once David was anointed, he earned the rights to the 'Crown of Kingship'"*?

The Explanation

There are two different ways of understanding the concept of a king:

a.) He is a monarch by virtue of his *task* of ruling the nation and carrying out the duties appointed to him; or

b.) The king is *naturally engendered* with the qualities of kingship. Such a person is inherently "cut out" for the job.

When *Rambam* writes that King David *"earned the rights to the 'Crown of Kingship'...for him and his male descendants forever...,"* he is not recording a Divine promise, but rather, he is defining the quality of Davidic Kingship. Namely, that King David and his descendants are not merely *functioning* as kings, but they are *essentially* ingrained with the qualities of nobility and illustriousness that a king must possess. It is thus guaranteed that monarchy will not cease from King David's descendants (not only due to the Divine promise, but) as a *natural consequence* of the fact that they are *born* with the attributes of sovereignty. Non-Davidic rulers must *acquire* the necessary talents that are needed to be a king, but in the house of David, they possess them *naturally*.

Sparks of Chasidus

"The king is the heart of the entire congregation of Israel"

(*Rambam, Laws of Kings* 3:6)

The heart has no role unto itself, and it merely serves the rest of the body. It moves constantly, as its entire purpose is the service of the other limbs.

In contrast, the brain is "distant" from the rest of the body. It is the coordinator of all the energetic activity which occurs in the body, but it itself remains somewhat aloof. Therefore, it does not move (like the body), illustrating its quality of aloofness.

For this reason, a king is compared specifically to the heart, since he is totally devoted to the people and involved with their needs.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 165*ff*.)

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[שלישי] יח א לֹא־יִהְיֶה לַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם כָּל־שֵׁבֶט לֵוִי חֵלֶק וְנַחֲלָה
עִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל אִשֵּׁי יְהוָה וְנַחֲלָתוֹ יֹאכֵלוּן׃ ב וְנַחֲלָה לֹא־יִהְיֶה־לּוֹ
בְּקֶרֶב אֶחָיו יְהוָה הוּא נַחֲלָתוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר־לוֹ׃ ס ג וְזֶה יִהְיֶה
מִשְׁפַּט הַכֹּהֲנִים מֵאֵת הָעָם מֵאֵת זֹבְחֵי הַזֶּבַח אִם־שׁוֹר אִם־
שֶׂה וְנָתַן לַכֹּהֵן הַזְּרֹעַ וְהַלְּחָיַיִם וְהַקֵּבָה׃ ד רֵאשִׁית דְּגָנְךָ
תִּירֹשְׁךָ וְיִצְהָרֶךָ וְרֵאשִׁית גֵּז צֹאנְךָ תִּתֶּן־לּוֹ׃ ה כִּי בוֹ בָּחַר
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִכָּל־שְׁבָטֶיךָ לַעֲמֹד לְשָׁרֵת בְּשֵׁם־יְהוָה הוּא
וּבָנָיו כָּל־הַיָּמִים׃ ס [רביעי] ו וְכִי־יָבֹא הַלֵּוִי מֵאַחַד שְׁעָרֶיךָ
מִכָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר־הוּא גָּר שָׁם וּבָא בְּכָל־אַוַּת נַפְשׁוֹ אֶל־
הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְהוָה׃ ז וְשֵׁרֵת בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו כְּכָל־

א לָא יְהֵי לְכָהֲנַיָּא לֵוָאֵי כָּל שִׁבְטָא דְלֵוִי חֳלָק
וְאַחְסָנָא עִם יִשְׂרָאֵל קֻרְבָּנַיָּא דַיְיָ וְאַחְסָנְתֵהּ
יֵיכְלוּן׃ ב וְאַחְסָנָא לָא יְהֵי לֵהּ בְּגוֹ אֲחוֹהִי
מַתְּנָן דִּיהַב לֵהּ יְיָ אִנּוּן אַחְסָנְתֵהּ כְּמָא דִי
מַלִּיל לֵהּ׃ ג וְדֵין יְהֵא דַּחֲזֵי לְכָהֲנַיָּא מִן עַמָּא
מִן נָכְסֵי נִכְסְתָא אִם תּוֹר אִם אִמַּר וְיִתֵּן
לְכָהֲנָא דְּרָעָא וְלוֹעָא וְקֵבְתָא׃ ד רֵישׁ עֲבוּרָךְ
חַמְרָךְ וּמִשְׁחָךְ וְרֵישׁ גִּזָּא דְעָנָךְ תִּתֵּן לֵהּ׃
ה אֲרֵי בֵהּ אִתְרְעֵי יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ מִכָּל שִׁבְטָיךְ
לְמֵקָם לְשַׁמָּשָׁא בִּשְׁמָא דַיְיָ הוּא וּבְנוֹהִי כָּל
יוֹמַיָּא׃ ו וַאֲרֵי יֵיתֵי לֵוָאָה מִחֲדָא מִקִּרְוָיךְ מִכָּל
יִשְׂרָאֵל דִּי הוּא דָר תַּמָּן וְיֵיתֵי בְּכָל רְעוּת
נַפְשֵׁהּ לְאַתְרָא דִי יִתְרְעֵי יְיָ׃ ז וִישַׁמֵּשׁ בִּשְׁמָא

רש״י

בנו הגון למלכות הוא קודם לכל אדם: (א) כל שבט לוי. בין התמימין בין בעלי מומין[1]: חלק. בביזה: ונחלה. בארץ: אשי ה'. קדשי המקדש (ס"א קדשי הקדשים): ונחלתו. אלו קדשי הגבול תרומות ומעשרות. אכל: (ב) נחלה. גמורה לא יהיה לו בקרב אחיו. ובספרי דרשו, ונחלה לא יהיה לו. זו נחלת שאר. בקרב אחיו. זו נחלת חמשה. ואיני יודע מה היא. ונראה לי שארץ כנען שמעבר הירדן ואילך נקראת ארץ חמשה עממין, ושל סיחון ועוג, שני עממין אמורי וכנעני. ונחלת שאר לרבות קיני וקנזי וקדמוני. וכן דורש בפרשת מתנות שנאמרו לאהרן על כן לא היה ללוי וגו'[2] להזהיר על קיני וקנזי וקדמוני. שוב מצאתי בדברי רבי קלונימוס הכי גרסינן בספרי ונחלה לא יהיה לו אלו נחלת חמשה. בקרב אחיו אלו נחלת שבעה. נחלת חמשה שבטים ונחלת שבעה שבטים. ומתוך שמשה ויהושע לא חלקו נחלה אלא לחמשה שבטים בלבד, שכן משה הנחיל לראובן וגד וחצי שבט מנשה, ויהושע הנחיל ליהודה ולאפרים ולחצי שבט מנשה, ושבעה האחרים נטלו מאליהן אחרי מות יהושע, מתוך כך הזכיר חמשה לבד ושבעה לבד: כאשר דבר לו. בארצם לא תנחל וגו' אני חלקך[3]: (ג) מאת העם. ולא מאת הכהנים[1]: אם שור אם שה. פרט לחיה: הזרוע. מן הפרק של ארכובה עד כף של יד שקורין אשפל"ד[4]: והלחיים. עם הלשון. דורשי רשומות היו אומרים, זרוע, תחת יד, שנאמר[5] ויקח רומח בידו. לחיים, תחת תפלה, שנאמר[6] ויעמוד פינחס ויפלל: והקבה. תחת האשה אל קבתה[7]: (ד) ראשית דגנך. זו תרומה, ולא פירש בה שיעור, אבל רבותינו נתנו בה שיעור, עין יפה אחד מארבעים, עין רעה אחד מששים, בינונית אחד מחמשים. וסמכו על המקרא שלא לפחות מאחד מששים[8], שנאמר וששיתם האיפה מחומר השעורים[9] ששית האיפה, חצי סאה. כשאתה נותן חצי סאה לכור, הרי אחד מששים, שהכור שלשים סאין: וראשית גז צאנך. כשאתה גוזז צאנך בכל שנה תן ממנה ראשית לכהן. ולא פירש בה שיעור. ורבותינו נתנו בה שיעור אחד מששים. וכמה צאן חייבת בראשית הגז, חמש רחלות, שנאמר וחמש צאן עשויות[10]. רבי עקיבא אומר ראשית גז שתים, וגז צאנך ארבעה, תתן לו הרי חמשה[1]: (ה) לעמוד לשרת. מכאן שאין שירות אלא מעומד: (ו) וכי יבא הלוי. יכול בבן לוי ודאי הכתוב מדבר, תלמוד לומר ושרת, יצאו לוים שאין ראוין לשירות[1]: ובא בכל אות נפשו וגו'. (ז) ושרת. למד על הכהן שבא ומקריב קרבנות נדבתו או חובתו ואפילו במשמר שאינו שלו. דבר אחר עוד למד על הכהנים הבאים לרגל שמקריבין במשמר ועובדין בקרבנות הבאות מחמת הרגל, כגון מוספי

TORAS MENACHEM

This affects the way that monarchy is inherited. In non-Davidic lines, the son of a king inherits *precedence* to the throne, i.e. he is given the first opportunity to attempt to acquire the skills that are needed to be a king and make a success of the monarchy.

But with a child descended from King David there is no need to prove this point, as the suitability for kingship is a fact of birth. Thus, sovereignty is inherited automatically, forever. (Of course, it is only the *potential* for these royal qualities that is inherited. They must be nurtured and brought to expression in order for the son to be fit to rule. Thus *Rambam* stresses that "this right was only transferred to his righteous descendants.")

King David and King Shlomo

Based on the above, we can explain the account in Kings (I 1:1-48), that Shlomo was anointed as king in the lifetime of King David. At first glance, this seems 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); and in general, there is the rule that *"two kings cannot use the same crown"* (Chullin 60b). So, how are we to explain the fact that Shlomo was anointed as king in the lifetime of his father?

Based on the above, we can understand that in the case of ordinary (non-Davidic) kings, the monarchy merely represents the seat of power (not a natural 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 king has the final authority.

However, a king from the House of David possesses the "Crown of Kingship," as an inherent, personal quality. Therefore, the concept of kingship could be revealed in two people at the same time, even though only one of them is the practical ruling authority.

1 ספרי 2 דברים י, ט 3 במדבר יח, כ 4 חולין קלד. 5 במדבר כה, ז 6 תהלים קו, ל 7 במדבר שם ח 8 תרומות פ"ד מ"ג 9 יחזקאל מה, יג 10 שמואל-א כה, יח

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RIGHTS OF THE PRIESTS & LEVITES

18

THIRD READING

- 1 *The priests (who are from) the (tribe of) Levites shall have no portion (from the spoils of war).*
- *Nor (shall they have any) inheritance (of the land) with the (rest of) the Jewish people.*
- *(This applies to) all (the priests who are from) the tribe of Levi (regardless of whether they are fit to serve in the Temple, or not).*
- *(Rather, the priest and Levite) will eat God's fire-offerings (terumah and tithes) that He bequeathed (to them).*
- 2 *But (the priest) will have no (territorial) inheritance among his brothers. God is his inheritance, as He told (Aharon).*

3 *These are the priests' rights from the people:*

- *When any ox or sheep is slaughtered, the priest should be given the foreleg, the jaw (with the tongue), and the end-stomach.*
- 4 *You should give him (terumah, which is) the first portion of your grain, your wine, and your oil.*
- *You should give him the first (shearings) of the fleece of your sheep.*

5 *For God, your God, has chosen him out of all your tribes, to stand and serve in the Name of God—he and his sons—for all time.*

FOURTH READING

- 6 *If a (priest, a member of the) Levite (tribe), comes from any one of your cities throughout Israel where he lives, he may come whenever his soul desires, to the place God will choose,* 7 *and he may minister in the Name of God, his God, just like all his (priestly) brothers, (from) the (tribe of) Levites, who stand there before God.*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● "The priests, the Levites...all the tribe of Levi" refers to whom? (v. 1)

RASHI: "The priests, the Levites" means the priests, who are members of the tribe of Levi (*Rashi* to 17:9, above). "All the tribe of Levi" means all *the priests* of the tribe of Levi, regardless of whether they are fit to serve in the Temple or not.

RAMBAM: The entire tribe of Levi is prohibited from inheriting part of the land of Cana'an, and they are also prohibited from taking a portion of the spoils of war, as the verse states: *"The priests, the Levites, all the tribe of Levi, shall have no portion nor inheritance"* (*Laws of the Sabbatical and Jubilee Years* 13:10).

● Who is the "Levite" that "may minister in the Name of God" in verses 6-7?

RASHI: With the words, *"If a Levite comes,"* one might think that scripture is referring to an actual Levite [and not a priest]. To teach us otherwise the verse states, *"and he may minister"* (v. 7), which excludes Levites, who are not eligible to minister in the Temple.

RAMBAM: The verse states, *"and he may minister in the Name of God, his God, just like all his brothers, the Levites"* (v. 7).

Which service is *"in the Name of God"*?

It is the singing [of the Levites] (*Laws of Temple Apparatus* 3:2).

TORAS MENACHEM

The anointing of Shlomo in his father's lifetime was a process which catalyzed the fruition of Shlomo's inherent kingly qualities, so that his ingrained nobility should no longer remain latent and should be revealed in the form of actual sovereignty. Therefore, after the anointing had taken place, he could now be termed a king (despite the fact that he was not ruler), as the anointing had already brought out his royal attributes from "potential" to "actual."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 97ff.)

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN PRIESTS & LEVITES (v. 1-8)

According to *Rashi*, the current passage refers primarily to priests, and not Levites. When the Torah states, "the priests, the Levites" (v. 1) it means, "*the priests*, who are members of the tribe of Levi." Similarly, *Rashi* writes that verse 6, which mentions "a Levite," actually refers to a priest. On the other hand, ***Rambam*** maintains that these verses *do* refer to Levites.

What is the underlying basis of this dispute?

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אֶחָיו הַלְוִיִּם הָעֹמְדִים שָׁם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה: ח חֵלֶק כְּחֵלֶק יֹאכֵלוּ
לְבַד מִמְכָּרָיו עַל־הָאָבוֹת: ס ט כִּי אַתָּה בָּא אֶל־הָאָרֶץ
אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ לֹא־תִלְמַד לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּתוֹעֲבֹת
הַגּוֹיִם הָהֵם: י לֹא־יִמָּצֵא בְךָ מַעֲבִיר בְּנוֹ־וּבִתּוֹ בָּאֵשׁ קֹסֵם
קְסָמִים מְעוֹנֵן וּמְנַחֵשׁ וּמְכַשֵּׁף: יא וְחֹבֵר חָבֶר וְשֹׁאֵל אוֹב וְיִדְּעֹנִי
וְדֹרֵשׁ אֶל־הַמֵּתִים: יב כִּי־תוֹעֲבַת יְהוָה כָּל־עֹשֵׂה אֵלֶּה וּבִגְלַל
הַתּוֹעֵבֹת הָאֵלֶּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מוֹרִישׁ אוֹתָם מִפָּנֶיךָ: יג תָּמִים
תִּהְיֶה עִם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ: [חמישי] יד כִּי | הַגּוֹיִם הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה

דיי אלהיה ככל אחוהי ליואי דמשמשין תמן
בצלו קדם יי: ח חלק כחלק ייכלון בר
ממטרתא דייתי בשבתא כבן אתקינו
אבהתא: ט ארי את עליל לארעא דיי אלהך
יהב לך לא תילף למעבד כטעות עממיא
האנון: י לא ישתכח בך מעבר בריה וברתיה
בנורא קסם קוסמין מענן ומנחש וחרש:
יא ורטין רטן ושאל בדין ודכורו ותבע מן
מתיא: יב ארי מרחק (קדם) יי כל דעבד אלין
ובדיל תועבתא האלין יי אלהך מתרך יתהון
מקדמך: יג שלים תהי בדחלתא דיי אלהך:
יד ארי עממיא האלין די את ירת יתהון מן

רש"י

הרגל, ואף על פי שאין המשמר שלהם: (ח) **חלק כחלק יאכלו.** מלמד
שחולקין בעורות ובבשר שעירי חטאות. יכול אף בדברים הבאים שלא מחמת
הרגל, כגון תמידין ומוספי שבת ונדרים ונדבות, תלמוד לומר לבד ממכריו
על האבות, חוץ ממה שמכרו האבות בימי דוד ושמואל, שנקבעו המשמרות
ומכרו זה לזה, טול אתה שבתך ואני אטול שבתי[1]: (ט) **לא תלמד לעשות.**
אבל אתה למד להבין ולהורות, כלומר להבין מעשיהם כמה הם מקולקלים,
ולהורות לבניך לא תעשה כך וכך, שזה הוא חוק העכו"ם: (י) **מעביר בנו
ובתו באש.** היא עבודת המולך. עושה מדורות אש מכאן ומכאן ומעבירו
בין שתיהם[2]: **קוסם קסמים.** איזהו קוסם, האוחז את מקלו ואומר אם אלך

אם לא אלך. וכן הוא אומר[3], עמי בעצו ישאל ומקלו יגיד לו[4]: **מעונן.** רבי
עקיבא אומר אלו נותני עונות, שאומרים עונה פלונית יפה להתחיל. וחכמים
אומרים אלו אוחזי העינים[4]: **מנחש.** פתו נפלה מפיו, צבי הפסיקו בדרך,
מקלו נפל מידו[4]: (יא) **וחובר חבר.** שמלקט נחשים או עקרבים או שאר חיות
למקום אחד[4]: **ושאל אוב.** זה מכשפות ששמו פיתום ומדבר משחיו ומעלה
את המת בבית השחי שלו[4]: **וידעני.** מכניס עצם חיה ששמה ידוע, לתוך פיו,
ומדבר העצם על ידי מכשפות[4]: **ודורש אל המתים.** כגון המעלה בזכורתו
והנשאל בגלגלתא[4]: (יב) **כל עושה אלה.** עושה כל אלה לא נאמר אלא כל
עושה אחת, אפילו אחת מהן[5]: (יג) **תמים תהיה עם ה' אלהיך.** התהלך

TORAS MENACHEM

The Contention Between Rashi and Rambam

At the literal level, scripture appears to stress the first approach (that the priests and Levites are two independent classes). First we read of the selection of priests in *Parshas Tetzaveh*: *"You should draw Aharon your brother close to you together with his sons, (separating them) from the children of Israel, to serve Me as priests"* (Shemos 28:1), and it is only much later that the Levites are appointed (see Bamidbar 3:6).

This suggests that, at the literal level (followed by *Rashi*), the entire tribe of Levi was not separated as ministers of God. Rather, the priests alone were selected, and the Levites were added later, as their assistants.

However, *Rambam* writes, *"All the descendants of Levi were separated to serve in the Temple....The priests were separated out from among the Levites for the task of offering sacrifices"* (Laws of Temple Apparatus 3:1, 4:1), which indicates that *Rambam* follows the second approach described above.

Based on this, we can now explain why *Rashi* and *Rambam* took different approaches to the current passage:

Verse 1 seems to *equate* the status of priests and Levites: *"The priests, the Levites, all the tribe of Levi, shall have no portion or inheritance."* This "equality" fits *Rambam's* view, since he understood, *"All the descendants of Levi were separated to serve in the Temple,"* so priests and Levites are essentially members of the same class.

But *Rashi* perceived the priests as being the only true ministers of God (and Levites as being a supplementary group added at a later time), so he could not explain that our verse was "equating" priests and Levites. Consequently, *Rashi* explained that the verse is speaking of priest *alone*:

The Explanation

There are two ways of understanding the distinction between priests and Levites:

a.) *Priests and Levites are two independent classes.*

God separated the priests from the rest of the Jewish people to perform a specific task in His service, and likewise, He separated the Levites for their function. Each has their own unique status which is totally independent of the other.

b.) *Priests and Levites are different levels within the same class structure.*

God first separated the *entire* tribe of Levi from the rest of the Jewish people as an elite group which would be entirely devoted to His service. Then, from among the Levites themselves, He selected a further, super-elite group of priests, for an even higher level of service.

A difference that arises from these approaches is whether or not Levites are considered to be full-time ministers of God. If we adopted the first approach, that priests and Levites are totally separate classes, then it follows that Levites are not direct ministers of God, because it was the priests—and the priests alone—who were separated by God to perform His services in the Temple. Then, in order to provide *assistance* to the priests, God made a second, totally separate class of helpers, the Levites. However, if we adopted the second approach (that the entire tribe of Levi were separated first, and then an upper sub-class of priests were formed from among the Levites), then it turns out that all the Levites *are actually* ministers of God, since when God made that first separation, he was distinguishing the *entire tribe of Levi* as His personal servants, or ministers.

1 ספרי 2 סנהדרין סד: 3 הושע ד, יב 4 סנהדרין סה: 5 שם עמוד א'

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- [8] *They should eat equal portions (of the hides and meat of the festival offerings), except for (the tamid offering, the additional offering of Shabbos and voluntary offerings, for which the priests) were (divided into "watches," whose rights were) sold by their ancestors.*

PROHIBITIONS AGAINST FORTUNE-TELLING

18:9 *When you come to the land God, your God, is giving you, you must not learn to do the abominable practices of those nations.* [10] *There must not be found anyone among you who:*

- *Passes his son or daughter (between two) fires (to Molech),**
- *Practices stick divination,*
- *Acts on the basis of fortuitous times,**
- *Divines (on the basis of strange occurrences),**
- *Practices sorcery,**
- [11] *Divines with animals,*
- *Turns to (the sorcery) of Ov or Yidoni,**
- *(Raises and) consults with (spirits of) the dead.*

[12] *For whoever does these things is an abomination to God, and it is because of these abominations that God, your God is driving out these (nations) before you.*

- [13] *(Do not probe into the future, but) be simple-hearted with God, your God.*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How is one to be תָּמִים with God? (v. 13)

RASHI: Walk with Him simple-heartedly (בתמימות) and look forward to what He has in store. Do not probe the future, but rather accept whatever happens to you simple-heartedly. Then, you will be with Him and His inheritance.

RAMBAN: The word תָּמִים means "perfect."

Thus, after the Torah warns us not to follow those who predict the future in verses 10-11, we are then told to be perfect in our faith that the future is in God's hands, rather than seeking fortune-tellers who are not always correct.

TORAS MENACHEM

"the priests, the Levites means the priests, who are members of the tribe of Levi."

Likewise in verses 6-7, *Rashi* could not accept that a "Levite" could "minister in the Name of God," because he understood that Levites are only assistants to the priests, and not ministers. Therefore, *Rashi* wrote that the "Levite" of verse 6 is in fact a priest.

However, *Rambam* did not share this objection, as he understood, *"All the descendants of Levi were separated to serve in the Temple."* Therefore, he took verse 6 at face value, that a Levite may indeed "minister in the Name of God," through singing in the Holy Temple.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 28, p. 115*ff.*)

"BE SIMPLE-HEARTED" (v. 13)

The word תָּמִים has appeared on numerous occasions in the Torah up to this point, and its translation is always "perfect." For example we find in numerous instances that the Torah requires a sacrifice to be תָּמִים, which means perfect and without blemish (for example: *Vayikra* 1:3, 10; 3:1, 9; 4:3, 23; 5:15, 18, 25). Furthermore, we also find that the word תָּמִים suggests a perfection of character: Noach is described as a תָּמִים, one who was perfect in his dedication to God (*Bereishis* 6:9), and Avraham was told by God, *"Come close to Me in worship and be perfect* (תָּמִים)*,"* (ibid. 17:1).

Why, then, did *Rashi* veer from this interpretation in our verse (which is suggested by ***Ramban***), and write instead that תָּמִים means, "Walk with Him *simple-heartedly*"?

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi could not accept that the meaning of תָּמִים in verse 13 is "perfect," as it is inconsistent with the context of the verse:

In verses 9-12 we read of various prohibitions of fortune-telling and divining. The Torah then concludes by saying that *instead* of doing "these abominations" (v. 12), we should be תָּמִים with God. So being תָּמִים is clearly a *specific* response to the desire to do *these particular sins* ("these abominations"). Thus, *Rashi* could not accept that תָּמִים means "perfect"

* *Passes his son or daughter (between two) fires*—see *Vayikra* 18:21; *acts on the basis of fortuitous times* — ibid. 19:26; *divines (on the basis of strange occurrences)*—ibid; *practices sorcery*—see *Shemos* 22:17; *one who turns to (the sorcery) of Ov or Yidoni*—see *Vayikra* 19:31.

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יורש אותם אל־מעננים ואל־קסמים ישמעו ואתה לא כן
נתן לך יהוה אלהיך: טו נביא מקרבך מאחיך כמני יקים לך
יהוה אלהיך אליו תשמעון: טז ככל אשר־שאלת מעם יהוה
אלהיך בחרב ביום הקהל לאמר לא אסף לשמע את־קול
יהוה אלהי ואת־האש הגדלה הזאת לא־אראה עוד ולא
אמות: יז ויאמר יהוה אלי היטיבו אשר דברו: יח נביא אקים
להם מקרב אחיהם כמוך ונתתי דברי בפיו ודבר אליהם את
כל־אשר אצונו: יט והיה האיש אשר לא־ישמע אל־דברי
אשר ידבר בשמי אנכי אדרש מעמו: כ אך הנביא אשר יזיד

מעננַיא ומן קסמַיא שמעין ואת לא כן יהב
לך יי אלהך: טו נביא מבינך מאחיך כותי
יקים לך יי אלהך מנה תקבלון: טז ככל די
שאלתא מקדם יי אלהך בחרב ביומא
דקהלא למימר לא אוסף למשמע ית קל
מימרא דיי אלהי וית אשתא רבתא הדא לא
אחזי עוד ולא אמות: יז ואמר יי לי אוטיבו די
מלילו: יח נביא אקים להון מגו אחיהון כותך
ואתן פתגמי נבואתי בפומה וימלל עמהון ית
כל די אפקדנה: יט ויהי גברא די לא יקבל
לפתגמי די ימלל בשמי מימרי יתבע מנה:
כ ברם נביא די ירשע למללא פתגמא בשמי

רש"י

עמו בתמימות ותצפה לו ולא תחקור אחר העתידות, אלא כל מה שיבא עליך קבל בתמימות ואז¹ תהיה עמו ולחלקו²: (יד) לא כן נתן לך. הקב"ה לשמוע אל מעוננים ואל קוסמים שהרי השרה שכינה על הנביאים ואורים ותומים: (טו) מקרבך מאחיך כמוני. כמו שאני מקרבך מאחיך יקים לך

TORAS MENACHEM

in this case, because "perfection" is a *general* term applying to all *mitzvos*, and not those specifically connected with fortune-telling.*

Therefore, *Rashi* argued that in this case תמים means (not "perfection" but) "simple-heartedness." This translation of the word is similar to the Torah's description of Ya'akov as a תם (*Bereishis* 25:27), meaning a simple, honest person—*"one who is not knowledgeable...whose mouth speaks what is in his heart, and who is not skillful in deceiving others"* (*Rashi* ibid.).

Thus, the Torah is commanding us here: a.) Not to seek knowledge of the future (verses 9-12); but instead b.) To enjoy a complete sense of security in the faith and conviction that the future is safely in God's hands (v. 13): *"Walk with Him simple-heartedly and look forward to what He has in store. Do not probe the future, but rather accept whatever happens to you simple-heartedly."*

Could Fortune-Telling Actually Work?

An interesting distinction that arises from the different approaches of *Rashi* and *Ramban* is the reason why the Torah forbade fortune-telling.

Ramban argues that the Torah forbade fortune-telling because only God knows the future, so the words of the fortune-tellers *cannot be true*. Thus, we should be perfect in our faith in God, and not rely on fortune-tellers.

However, *Rashi* argued that the Torah does not allow fortune-telling because a Jew should be "simple-hearted" and not even *attempt* to forecast future events. Thus, according to *Rashi*, it could be that some of the methods of fortune-telling mentioned here in the Torah would be effective. The reason why we may not utilize them is because God finds this kind of activity "abominable" (v. 9, 12).

Is Prophecy Not a Form of "Fortune-Telling"?

An apparent problem with *Rashi's* approach is that it appears to apply equally to prophecy:

According to *Ramban*, who saw fortune-telling as being false and unreliable, it makes sense why God gave us prophecy as a reliable alternative.

Sparks of Chasidus

Torah & Prophecy

Torah is superior to *prophecy* in that:

- Torah teaches the ultimate purpose of existence. Prophecy is a "means to an end," to encourage people to observe the Torah.
- The Torah is constantly evolving and expanding through the innovative Torah ideas of the Jewish people. However, *"a prophet may not make any innovations of his own,"* in the prophecy that he receives (*Laws of Foundations of the Torah* 9:1).

However, *prophecy* is superior to *Torah* in that:

- The Torah is inherently an incomprehensible Godly wisdom (although it has been expressed in human terms). The prophet speaks to the people in a language to which they directly relate, so its immediate impact is greater.
- What a Torah scholar perceives in the spiritual realms through the Torah will not necessarily materialize in the physical world. However, what a prophet predicts will definitely come true, in the literal sense.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 182ff.; vol. 34, pp. 116ff.; *"Short Ma'amarim" of the Alter Rebbe*, p. 355)

* It appears that ***Ramban*** was also sensitive to this problem, and thus he argued that the Torah is demanding here, not a general perfection in all areas, but a *specific* perfection—one's faith that the future is in God's hands alone. However, such an interpretation was unsatisfactory to *Rashi*, since *at the literal level* "perfection" (when used in an *unqualified* sense, as in our verse) is general in scope, and the Torah would thus appear to be saying, "Do not do these 10 prohibitions, but rather, be perfect and keep all the 613 mitzvos"!

1 בדפוס א' וב' ובכתי"י חסר תיבה זו, אבל כ"ה בשאר הדפוסים שראיתי. וראה רא"ם ובאר שים חי"ם (על פרש"י) כאן (לקו"ש חי"ד, ע' 64, הערה 4). 2 ספרי

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True & False Prophecy

18:14 Fifth Reading

While* these nations, which you are about to take possession of, listen to diviners of fortuitous times and stick diviners, in your case however, God your God has not given you things like these, (but rather, genuine prophets and the Urim v'Tumim).

- 15 *God, your God, will establish a prophet like me, from among you, from your brothers, and you must listen to him.*

16 *This is what you asked from God, your God, at Chorciu, on the Day of Assembly, saying, "I don't want to hear the voice of God, my God any more, or see this great fire, so that I will not die!"*

17 *God said to me, "They have spoken well!* 18 *I will establish for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. I will put My words into his mouth, and he will tell them everything that I command him.*
19 *And then, if anybody does not listen to My words that he speaks in My name, I will punish him (with death from heaven)."*

Classic Questions

● How does a person become a prophet? (v. 15)

Talmud: God only allows His presence to rest on a person who is strong, wealthy, wise and humble. All of these requirements are derived from Moshe" (*Nedarim* 38a).

Rambam: It is one of the principles of faith to know that God communicates to man via prophecy. In order to receive prophecy a person must be extremely wise, a master of his emotions, and unperturbed by his evil inclination in worldly matters. He must constantly control his evil inclination with his mind, and he must have an extremely broad and fine mind (*Laws of Foundations of the Torah*, 7:1).

Kesef Mishneh: Why did *Rambam* omit the requirements of strength, wealth and humility mentioned by the *Talmud*?

Rambam understood this passage of *Talmud* to be speaking about prophecy on a *permanent basis*, which requires these three additional criteria. However, here in the *Mishneh Torah*, *Rambam* was describing the qualities required for prophecy on a *temporary basis*, and for this, strength, wealth and humility are not required.

Turei Even: *Rambam* was forced to reject the requirements of strength and wealth for a prophet, on the basis that we find that many of the prophets in history were neither wealthy nor strong.

Toras Menachem

But *Rashi* deemed the *very notion* of looking into the future as undesirable, because a person should be "simple-hearted" and accept whatever God has in store for him. This seems to contradict the fact that God does indeed send prophets to warn the Jewish people of future events. Similarly, how does *Rashi* reconcile the practice of seeking a solution from the High Priest's breastplate** with the requirement to "accept whatever happens to you simple-heartedly"?

Rashi answers this question by stressing: "Do not probe (תְּחַקּוֹר) the future," i.e. the Torah prohibits a person from making *intensive* efforts to investigate the future thoroughly (cf. 13:15 above, where this term is used to describe the thorough cross-examination given to witnesses in court). However, the Torah does permit a person to consult a prophet (or the High Priest's breastplate), when there is a good reason to do so, but not as a means to probe extensively into one's destiny. In this way, a person can use some knowledge of the future to assist his service of God, but still maintain a spirit of "simple-heartedness," innocence and trust in God's benevolent Providence.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 14, p. 64*ff*.)

A Prophet's Qualifications (v. 15)

Kesef Mishneh asks why ***Rambam*** omitted the requirement, mentioned in the ***Talmud***, that a prophet must be "strong, wealthy...and humble."

Kesef Mishneh answers that *Rambam* is speaking of a person who becomes a prophet temporarily, whereas the *Talmud* is listing the criteria required to become a prophet on a permanent basis.

However, this answer is difficult to understand, since:

a.) Why should the *spiritual* qualities of wisdom and self-control be required for a *lower* level of (temporary) prophecy; and yet to achieve a *higher* level of (permanent) prophecy, the more *physical* qualities of wealth and strength are needed?

b.) How could we accept the notion that *Rambam* limits himself to a discussion of temporary prophecy, *omitting* the phenomenon of permanent prophecy? Especially, when we consider that most instances of prophecy described in the Torah are of the permanent kind.

Turei Even suggests that *Rambam* was forced to reject some of the *Talmud's* criteria, since we find that many of the prophets in history were neither wealthy nor strong.

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* See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 14, p. 68.

** Raised letters upon the gems of the High Priest's breastplate which answered questions (See *Rashi* to *Shemos* 28:30; *Rambam*, *Laws of Temple Apparatus* 10:11-12).

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לדבר דבר בשמי את אשר לא־צויתיו לדבר ואשר ידבר
בשם אלהים אחרים ומת הנביא ההוא: כא וכי תאמר בלבבך
איכה נדע את־הדבר אשר לא־דברו יהוה: כב אשר ידבר
הנביא בשם יהוה ולא־יהיה הדבר ולא יבא הוא הדבר
אשר לא־דברו יהוה בזדון דברו הנביא לא תגור ממנו: ס
יט א כי־יכרית יהוה אלהיך את־הגוים אשר יהוה אלהיך
נתן לך את־ארצם וירשתם וישבת בעריהם ובבתיהם:
ב שלוש ערים תבדיל לך בתוך ארצך אשר יהוה אלהיך נתן
לך לרשתה: ג תכין לך הדרך ושלשת את־גבול ארצך אשר
ינחילך יהוה אלהיך והיה לנוס שמה כל־רצח: ד וזה דבר
הרצח אשר־ינוס שמה וחי אשר יכה את־רעהו בבלי־דעת
והוא לא־שנא לו מתמל שלשם: ה ואשר יבא את־רעהו

ית די לא פקדתה למללא ודי ימלל בשום
טעות עממיא ויתקטיל נביא ההוא: כא וארי
תימר בלבך איכדין נדע ית פתגמא די
לא מלליה יי: כב די ימלל נביא בשמא דיי
ולא יהי פתגמא ולא יתקים הוא פתגמא די
לא מלליה יי ברשע מלליה נביא לא תדחל
מנה: א ארי ישיצי יי אלהך ית עממיא די יי
אלהך יהב לך ית ארעהון ותירתנון ותיתב
בקרויהון ובבתיהון: ב תלת קרוין תפרש לך
בגו ארעך די יי אלהך יהב לך למירתה:
ג תתקן לך ארחא ותתלת ית תחום ארעך
די יחסננך יי אלהך ויהי למערוק לתמן כל
קטולא: ד ודין פתגם קטולא דיערוק לתמן
ויתקים די יקטול ית חברה בלא מנדעה
והוא לא סני ליה מאתמלי ומדקמוהי: ה ודי
יעול עם חברה בחורשא למקץ אעין ויתמריג

רש"י

תחתי, וכן מנבא לנביא: (כ) **אשר לא צויתיו לדבר.** אבל צויתי לחבירו[1]: **ואשר ידבר בשם אלהים אחרים.** אפילו כיון את ההלכה, לאסור את האסור ולהתיר את המותר[1]: **ומת.** בחנק. שלשה מיתתן בידי אדם, המתנבא מה שלא שמע, ומה שלא נאמר לו ונאמר לחבירו, והמתנבא בשם עבודת אלילים. אבל הכובש את נבואתו והעובר על דברי נביא והעובר על דברי עצמו מיתתן בידי שמים, שנאמר[2] אנכי אדרוש מעמו[1]: (כא) **וכי תאמר בלבבך.** עתידים אתם לומר, כשיבא חנניה בן עזור ומתנבא הנה כלי בית ה' מושבים מבבלה עתה מהרה[3], וירמיהו עומד וצווח על העמודים ועל הים ועל יתר הכלים שלא גלו עם יכניה, שהם יובאו[4] עם גלות צדקיהו[5]: (כב) **אשר ידבר הנביא.** ויאמר דבר זה עתיד לבוא עליכם, ותראו שלא יבא, הוא הדבר אשר לא דברו ה' והרוג אותו. ואם תאמר זו במתנבא על העתידות, הרי שבא ואמר עשו כך וכך ומפי הקב"ה אני אומר, כבר נצטוו שאם בא להדיחך מאחת מכל המצות לא תשמע לו[6], אלא אם כן מומחה הוא לך שהוא צדיק גמור, כגון אליהו בהר הכרמל שהקריב בבמה בשעת איסור הבמות כדי לגדור את ישראל, הכל לפי צורך השעה וסייג הפרצה, לכך נאמר[7] אליו תשמעון: **לא תגור ממנו.** לא תמנע עצמך מללמד עליו חובה[5] ולא תירא ליענש עליו: (ג) **תכין לך הדרך.** מקלט מקלט היה כתוב על פרשת דרכים[8]: **ושלשת את גבול ארצך.** שיהא מתחלת הגבול עד העיר הראשונה של עיר מקלט,

TORAS MENACHEM

However, this still does not explain why *Rambam* omitted the requirement of humility.

The Explanation

At first glance, we might have presumed that *Rambam's* intention here when codifying this law, was to list *all* of the qualities that a prophet requires.

But, at the very outset, *Rambam* makes clear that this was not his intention. He writes, "*It is one of the principles of faith to know* that God communicates to man via prophecy...", i.e. *Rambam* is codifying here *only* those details which are required knowledge for *every Jew*, as part of the principles of faith. He is not making a comprehensive list of all the criteria required for a budding prophet, but rather, the facts about prophecy that every person needs to know.

Rambam understood that there are two elements to the prophetic process:

a.) Factors which *establish* the phenomenon of prophecy. In order to receive prophecy, a person must have an *extremely* refined and pure intellect. Then God's prophecy is revealed and enclothed within the prophet's mind, thereby uniting him with God.

b.) There must be *no disqualifying factors*. If a person is weak, poor or lacking in humility, despite the fact that he possesses an appropriate mind for prophecy, he is disqualified on other grounds.

When *Rambam* came to codify the facts which *every person* must know in order to understand the "*principle of faith*" known as prophecy, he only listed the factors which *establish* the phenomenon of prophecy, as these details are crucial to an understanding of the concept. The disqualifying factors, which render a person unfit to be a prophet, are irrelevant to *Rambam's* discussion here.

So, in the final analysis, it is not humility that makes a person *into* a prophet. A trace of arrogance would disqualify an otherwise suitable

1 סנהדרין פט. 2 פסוק יח 3 ירמיה כח, טו 4 שם יט-כב 5 ספרי 6 דברים יג, ד 7 לעיל פסוק טו 8 מכות י:

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- [20] *But if a prophet intentionally utters a word in My Name, which I did not command him to say, or he speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet must be (put to) death.*

[21] *If you will say to yourself, "How will we know if a declaration was not said by God?" (The answer is):*

- [22] *If the prophet (claims to) speak in the name of God, and the thing does not occur and (you see that it will) never come about, then it is a declaration which God did not say. The prophet has spoken it (to deceive you) intentionally. Do not be afraid of him.*

Cities of Refuge

19 *When God, your God, cuts off the nations, whose land God, your God, is giving you, and you inherit them, and settle in their cities and in their houses:*

- [2] *You should separate three cities for yourself within your land, which God, your God, is giving you as a possession.*

- [3] *Prepare (signs to indicate) for yourself the route (to these cities), and (position the) three (cities so that they) are equally spaced across the expanse of your land, which God, your God, is giving you as an inheritance. They will be (available) for every (accidental) murderer to flee there.*

[4] *These are the terms upon which the murderer may flee there in order to live:*

- *Whoever gives a (fatal) blow to his fellow unintentionally, provided he did not hate him yesterday or the day before;* [5] *or if a man goes with his fellow into the forest to chop wood, and his hand*

TORAS MENACHEM

prophet, since arrogance acts as a barrier between man and God. Similarly, a lack of health or wealth are mere disqualifying factors, as a prophet must represent the highest level of humanity, even in the physical sense.* But the single, primary quality that makes prophecy possible is purity of mind alone.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 23, p. 82ff.)

Sparks of Chasidus

THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF CITIES OF REFUGE (19:1-3)

Any sin shares qualities with murder itself, since the abuse of energy for the purposes of evil is like the spilling of blood (*Likutei Torah, Bamidbar* 13c). However, a sin is only like *accidental* murder, since the true intention of every Jew is, as Rambam testifies, *"To fulfill all the commandments and to avoid any sins"* (*Laws of Divorce*, ch. 2). Furthermore, the act of sin is considered to have been done *"unintentionally,"* (v. 4) for *"a person does not commit a sin unless he is possessed by a spirit of folly"* (*Sotah* 3a).

The atonement for this is to study Torah, which is analogous to the escape to a city of refuge—because, *"the words of Torah protect"* (*Makos* 10a). In other words, just as a city of refuge is a haven to protect accidental murderers from "avengers of the blood," (relatives of the deceased who seek revenge), so too, Torah is a refuge from one's personal "avenger of the blood," the evil inclination (*Bava Basra* 16a).

Furthermore, Torah study is effective in achieving atonement for the "spilled blood," since one's energies become re-devoted to holiness and Torah, which is described as the "Torah of life."

However, in the Messianic Era, the Cities of Refuge will fulfill a different purpose altogether:

Despite the perfect global refinement which will occur in the future, the first stage of the Messianic Era will not witness a total elimination of evil, since the *possibility* of evil occurring will still remain. (Only afterwards, in the period of resurrection, will God completely eliminate the existence of evil from the world, when *"I will cause the spirit of impurity to depart the earth,"* *Zechariah* 13:2).

Consequently, Cities of Refuge will be required as a mechanism to eliminate even the possibility of sin, which will exist as a result of the residual evil within the world (similar to the state of the world *before* Adam's sin, when there was no actual evil—just the potential for sin).

This prevention of the *possibility* of evil will be achieved by the introduction of a *new type* of city of refuge, the three new cities (v. 9)—which allude to a new dimension of mystical knowledge which will provide protection against even the possibility of evil.

(Based on *Sicha* of the 2nd Day of Shavuos 5751)

* In addition, strength and wealth are qualities that bring about people's respect, and will thus cause the prophet's words to be held in esteem (*Drashos HaRan*).

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ביער לחטב עצים ונדחה ידו בגרזן לכרת העץ ונשל הברזל
מן־העץ ומצא את־רעהו ומת הוא ינוס אל־אחת
הערים־האלה וחי: ו פן־ירדף גאל הדם אחרי הרצח כי יחם
לבבו והשיגו כי־ירבה הדרך והכהו נפש ולו אין משפט־
מות כי לא שנא הוא לו מתמול שלשום: ז על־כן אנכי
מצוך לאמר שלש ערים תבדיל לך: ח ואם־ירחיב יהוה
אלהיך את־גבלך כאשר נשבע לאבתיך ונתן לך את־כל־
הארץ אשר דבר לתת לאבתיך: ט כי־תשמר את־כל־
המצוה הזאת לעשתה אשר אנכי מצוך היום לאהבה את־
יהוה אלהיך וללכת בדרכיו כל־הימים ויספת לך עוד שלש
ערים על השלש האלה: י ולא ישפך דם* נקי בקרב ארצך
אשר יהוה אלהיך נתן לך נחלה והיה עליך דמים: פ יא וכי־
יהיה איש שנא לרעהו וארב לו וקם עליו והכהו נפש ומת
ונס אל־אחת הערים האל: יב ושלחו זקני עירו ולקחו אתו
משם ונתנו אתו ביד גאל הדם ומת: יג לא־תחוס עינך עליו

*ס"א דם

ידה בפרזלא למקץ אעין וישתלף פרזלא מן
אעא וישכח ית חברה וימות הוא יערוק
לחדא מן קרויא האלין ויתקים: ו דלמא
ירדוף גאל דמא בתר קטולא ארי יחם לבה
וידבקנה ארי תסגי ארחא ויקטלנה נפש ולה
לית חובת דין דקטול ארי לא סני הוא לה
מאתמלי ומדקמוהי: ז על כן אנא מפקדך
למימר תלת קרוין תפרש לך: ח ואם יפתי יי
אלהך ית תחומך כמא די קיים לאבהתך
ויתן לך ית כל ארעא די מליל למתן
לאבהתך: ט ארי תטר ית כל תפקדתא
הדא למעבדה די אנא מפקדך יומא דין
למרחם ית יי אלהך ולמהך בארחן דתקנן
קדמוהי כל יומיא ותוסף לך עוד תלת קרוין
על תלת אלין: י ולא ישתפיך דם זכי בגו
ארעך די יי אלהך יהב לך אחסנא ויהי עלך
חובת דין דקטול: יא וארי יהי גבר סני
לחברה ויכמן לה ויקום עלוהי וימחנה נפש
וימות ויערוק לחדא מן קרויא האלין:
יב וישלחון סבי קרתה וידברון יתה מתמן
ויתנון יתה ביד גאל דמא וימות: יג לא תחוס

רש"י

כשיעור מהלך שיש ממנה עד השניה. וכן משניה לשלישית. וכן מן השלישית עד הגבול השני של ארץ ישראל[1]: (ה) ונדחה ידו. כשבא להפיל הגרזן על העץ, ותרגומו ותתמריג ידיה, לשון ונשמטה ידו להפיל מכת הגרזן על העץ. כי שמטו הבקר[2] תרגם יונתן ארי מרגוהי תוריא: ונשל הברזל מן העץ. יש מרבותינו אומרים נשמט הברזל מקתו, ויש מהם אומרים שישל הברזל נתיכה מן העץ המתבקע, והיא ניתזה והרגה[3]: (ו) פן ירדוף גואל הדם. לכך אני אומר להכין לך דרך, וערי מקלט רבים: (ח) ואם ירחיב. כאשר נשבע לתת לך ארץ קיני וקנזי וקדמוני[1]: (ט) ויספת לך עוד שלש. הרי תשע. שלש שבעבר הירדן ושלש שבארץ כנען ושלש לעתיד לבא: (יא) וכי יהיה איש שונא לרעהו. על ידי שנאתו הוא בא לידי וארב לו. מכאן אמרו עבר אדם על מצוה קלה סופו לעבור על מצוה חמורה. לפי שעבר על לא תשנא[4], סופו לבא לידי שפיכות דמים. לכך נאמר כי יהיה איש שונא לרעהו וגו', שהיה לו לכתוב וכי יקום איש וארב לרעהו והכהו נפש[5]: (יג) לא תחוס עינך. שלא תאמר הראשון כבר נהרג, למה אנו הורגים את זה

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Does the Torah suggest that the victim of an accidental murder *should* have his blood avenged? (v. 6)

Sifri: It is a *mitzvah* for the avenger of the blood to chase and kill the accidental murderer.

Rambam: If he [the accidental murderer] intentionally leaves the city of refuge he is allowing his own death, for the avenger of the blood is permitted to kill him" (*Laws of a Murderer and the Protection of Life* 5:10).

● When will the three further cities be added? (v. 8-10)

Rambam: In the days of King Mashiach, three additional [Cities of Refuge] will be added (ibid. 8:10).

Minchas Chinuch: This is a scriptural decree. Logically there will not be a need for Cities of Refuge in the future, as then there will be only peace, truth and good (*mitzvah* 520).

Alshich: The cities might be used to provide refuge for acts committed before the Redemption.

TORAS MENACHEM

Cities of Refuge in the Future (v. 8-10)

The Torah promises: "*When God, your God, will expand your borders...and He gives you the entire land....You should add for yourself three more cities, in addition to these three, so that innocent blood will not be shed within your land which God, your God, is giving you for an inheritance, and you will be responsible for his blood*" (v. 8-10).

But why should there be a need for Cities of Refuge in the Messianic Era *at all?* Surely, in that time, there will not be any murder, neither by Jew nor gentile, as the verse promises, "*One nation will not lift a sword at another*" (Isaiah 2:4)? True, the main function of these cities is to act as a refuge for *accidental* murderers, but even accidental murder will not occur in the future, as we are promised that evil will be eliminated.

1 ספרי. 2 שמואל-ב כג, כא. 3 מכות ז, א. 4 ויקרא יט, יז.

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swings with the ax to cut down the tree, and the iron flies off the handle, and it happens (to hit) his fellow, and he dies—he should flee to one of these cities in order to live.

- 6 *(I instructed you to signpost these cities clearly and place them at equal distances) in case an avenger of the blood pursues the killer, while his heart is hot, and he (manages) to catch up with him, because of the long road, and he strikes him to death. (For) being that (the murderer) had not hated (the victim) yesterday or the day before, he did not deserve (to be punished) with death.* 7 *Therefore, I am commanding you, saying, "You should separate three cities for yourself."*

8 *When God, your God, will expand your borders, as He swore to your forefathers, and He gives you the entire land which He told your forefathers He would give,* 9 *as a result of your safeguarding and observing all these commandments which I am commanding you today—to love God, your God, and to walk in His ways for all time:*

- *You should add for yourself three more cities, in addition to these three,* 10 *so that innocent blood will not be shed within your land which God, your God, is giving you for an inheritance, and you will be responsible for his blood.*

11 *However, if a man hates his fellow, lies in wait for him, rises up against him, and issues him a fatal blow and he dies, and then (the murderer) flees to one of these cities:*

- 12 *The elders of his city should send (representatives) and take him from there, and allow him to die at the hands of the avenger of the blood.*
- 13 *Do not have pity on him. You should eliminate from Israel (one who sheds) innocent blood, and you will benefit from it.*

TORAS MENACHEM

Minchas Chinuch argues that this is a suprarational decree of scripture, but this explanation is difficult to accept since a "scriptural decree" would be written *without any rationale*. In our case, however, the Torah *does* give the reason for the three new cities: "*so that innocent blood will not be shed within your land which God, your God, is giving you for an inheritance*" (v. 10).

We could argue, as ***Alshich*** suggests, that the cities will function as a refuge for accidental murders that took place *prior to the redemption*, in the time of exile. And since these murderers might well be spread over an extended geographical area when the redemption begins, there will be a need for a large number of Cities of Refuge.

However, this only explains how there could be an accidental murderer. The problem still remains: how could there be a *vengeful relative*? Once evil desires cease to exist, the desire for revenge should also disappear, so there appears to be no purpose in providing Cities of Refuge in the future.

According to ***Sifri***, this problem does not arise, since *Sifri* maintains that it is a *command* of the Torah to avenge the blood of the deceased. The relative's motivation is then not revenge, but rather the desire to perform a *mitzvah*, which will certainly exist in the future.

Rambam, however, did not accept this argument, because he maintained that the relative's vengeance is only an *option*, not an *obligation* (see *Classic Questions*). Therefore, in an era when there will be no jealousy and "the whole world will be occupied with the knowledge of God," why should one man seek vengeance from another when there is no *mitzvah* to do so, even if it is permitted?

We might argue that the cities will exist in the future for a spiritual purpose, merely as an atonement, but that there will be no need for refuge from avengers of the blood. However, this cannot be the case, since the Torah clearly states that the cities will exist to avoid *actual* spilling of blood (v. 10).

Furthermore, if the cities were only sites of atonement and did not provide actual havens of escape, then there would be no need for *additional* cities to make the escape route shorter.

THE EXPLANATION

When the Torah presents the possibility of avenging the blood of the deceased, it is not providing an outlet for man's vicious nature. If the accidental murderer did not deserve the death penalty, the Torah would not permit his execution. Rather, the concept of "avenging the blood" provides a method by which the *Torah itself* exacts the death penalty.

In other words, the death penalty can be administered in one of three ways: a.) Capital punishment which is carried out by the court, with witnesses and a prior warning of the defendant; or b.) In certain cases, the Torah prescribes a punishment of "death at the hands of Heaven"; or c.) In our case, the death penalty of an accidental murderer is prescribed not by a court, or by Heaven, but by the relatives—similar to the case of Pinchas, who was not directly commanded to kill Zimri, but nevertheless, fulfilled God's will by doing so (see *Rashi, Bamidbar* 25:7).

Therefore, even according to *Rambam*, who rules that avenging the blood is optional, the "vengeance" has a logic within the Torah system (of atonement), and is not mere personal vengeance. The relative's act is therefore not incompatible with the Messianic Era, and creates the need for Cities of Refuge to protect those who killed accidentally before Mashiach arrived.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 24, p. 107*ff.*)

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וּבִעַרְתָּ דַם־הַנָּקִי מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל וְטוֹב לָךְ: ס [ששי] יד לֹא תַסִּיג גְּבוּל
רֵעֲךָ אֲשֶׁר גָּבְלוּ רִאשֹׁנִים בְּנַחֲלָתְךָ אֲשֶׁר תִּנְחַל בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לְךָ לְרִשְׁתָּהּ: ס טו לֹא־יָקוּם עֵד אֶחָד בְּאִישׁ
לְכָל־עָוֹן וּלְכָל־חַטָּאת בְּכָל־חֵטְא אֲשֶׁר יֶחֱטָא עַל־פִּי ׀ שְׁנֵי
עֵדִים אוֹ עַל־פִּי שְׁלֹשָׁה־עֵדִים יָקוּם דָּבָר: טז כִּי־יָקוּם עֵד־
חָמָס בְּאִישׁ לַעֲנוֹת בּוֹ סָרָה: יז וְעָמְדוּ שְׁנֵי־הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־
לָהֶם הָרִיב לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לִפְנֵי הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַשֹּׁפְטִים אֲשֶׁר יִהְיוּ
בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם: יח וְדָרְשׁוּ הַשֹּׁפְטִים הֵיטֵב וְהִנֵּה עֵד־שֶׁקֶר הָעֵד
שֶׁקֶר עָנָה בְאָחִיו: יט וַעֲשִׂיתֶם לוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר זָמַם לַעֲשׂוֹת לְאָחִיו
וּבִעַרְתָּ הָרָע מִקִּרְבֶּךָ: כ וְהַנִּשְׁאָרִים יִשְׁמְעוּ וְיִרָאוּ וְלֹא־יֹסִפוּ

עינך עלוהי ותפלי אשדי דם זכי מישראל
וייטב לך: יד לא תשני תחומא דחברך די
תחימו קדמאי באחסנתך די תחסין בארעא
די יי אלהך יהב לך למירתה: טו לא יקום
סהיד חד בגבר לכל עוין ולכל חובין בכל
חטא די יחטי על מימר תרין סהדין או על
מימר תלתא סהדין יתקים פתגמא: טז ארי
יקום סהיד שקר בגבר לאסהדא ביה סטיא:
יז ויקומון תרין גוברין די להון דינא קדם יי
קדם כהניא ודיניא די יהון ביומיא האנון:
יח ויתבעון דיניא יאות והא סהיד שקר
סהדא שקרא אסהד באחוהי: יט ותעבדון לה
כמא די חשיב למעבד לאחוהי ותפלי עבד
דביש מבינך: כ ודישתארון ישמעון וידחלון
ולא יוספון למעבד עוד כפתגמא בישא הדין

רש"י

ומגלגלו שני ישראלים הרוגים[1]: (יד) לא תסיג גבול. לשון נסוגו אחור[2], שמחזיר סימן חלוקת הקרקע לאחור לתוך שדה חבירו למען הרחיב את שלו. והלא כבר נאמר לא תגזול[3], מה תלמוד לומר לא תסיג, למד על העוקר תחום חבירו שעובר בשני לאוין. יכול אף בחוצה לארץ, תלמוד לומר בנחלתך אשר תנחל וגו', בארץ ישראל עובר בשני לאוין, בחוצה לארץ אינו עובר אלא משום לא תגזול[1]: (טו) עד אחד. זה בנה אב כל עד שבתורה שנים, אלא אם כן פרט לך בו אחד[4]: לכל עון ולכל חטאת. להיות חבירו נענש על עדותו, לא עונש גוף ולא עונש ממון, אבל קם הוא לשבועה. אמר לחבירו תן לי מנה שהלויתיך אמר לו אין לך בידי כלום ועד אחד מעידו שיש לו, חייב להשבע לו[1]: על פי שני עדים. ולא שיכתבו עדותם באגרת וישלחו לבית דין, ולא שיעמוד תורגמן בין העדים ובין הדיינים: (טז) לענות בו סרה. דבר שאינו, שמוסר העד הזה מכל העדות הזאת, כיצד, שאמרו להם והלא עמנו הייתם אותו היום במקום פלוני[5]: (יז) ועמדו שני האנשים. בעדים הכתוב מדבר, ולמד שאין עדות בנשים, ולמד שצריכין להעיד עדותן מעומד[6]: אשר להם הריב. אלו בעלי הדין[1]: לפני ה'. יהיו, דומה להם כאילו עומדין לפני המקום, שנאמר בקרב אלהים ישפוט[7]: אשר יהיו בימים ההם. יפתח בדורו כשמואל בדורו, צריך אתה לנהוג בו כבוד[8]: (יח) והנה עד שקר. כל מקום שנאמר עד, בשנים הכתוב מדבר[1]: ודרשו השופטים היטב. על פי המזימין אותם, שבודקים וחוקרים את הבאים להזימם בדרישה ובחקירה[1]: (יט) כאשר זמם. ולא כאשר עשה. מכאן אמרו, הרגו, אין נהרגין[9]: לעשות לאחיו. מה תלמוד לומר לאחיו, למד על זוממי בת כהן נשואה שאינן בשריפה, אלא כמיתת הבועל שהוא בחנק, שנאמר היא באש תשרף[10] היא ולא בועלה. לכך נאמר כאן לאחיו, כאשר זמם לעשות לאחיו, ולא כאשר זמם לעשות לאחותו. אבל בכל שאר מיתות השוה הכתוב אשה לאיש, וזוממי אשה נהרגין כזוממי איש. כגון שהעידוה שהרגה את הנפש, שחללה את השבת, נהרגין במיתתה. שלא מיעט כאן אחותו אלא במקום שיש לקיים בכן הזמה במיתת הבועל[1]: (כ) ישמעו ויראו. מכאן שצריכין הכרזה, איש פלוני ופלוני נהרגין על שהוזמו בבית

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Is the testimony of a single witness ever accepted? (v. 15)

Rambam: A judgment is never issued based on the testimony of a single witness, neither in cases of financial law nor in cases of capital punishment, as the verse states: *"A single witness cannot incriminate another person for any sin or for any type of fraud"* (v. 15). Oral tradition teaches that [a single witness] is sufficient to obligate another to take an oath. The Torah accepts the testimony of one witness in two instances: In the case of a *sotah*, so she does not drink the bitter waters (see *Bamidbar* ch. 5); and in the case of a calf whose neck is broken (below ch. 21), to prevent its neck from being broken (*Laws of Witnesses* 5:1-2).

TORAS MENACHEM

The Single Witness (v. 15)

The reason *why* the Torah considers the testimony of a single witness to be invalid could be understood in one of two ways:

a.) Because the testimony of two witnesses is in a different class altogether from that of one witness—it is of a completely different *quality*; or b.) One witness provides testimony of the same quality as two witnesses, but there is simply not enough of it; i.e. a lack of *quantity*.

These two approaches would also differ in their understanding why a single witness is sufficient to obligate a person to take an oath, but not to make him pay money (see ***Rambam***). Take, for example, the case where a single witness testifies that X owes Y money, but X denies the claim. Since there is only one witness, the law is that X does not have to pay Y, but he does have to swear an oath that he does not owe Y any money.

Now, if we will accept that a single witness cannot incriminate a person due to a *qualitative* deficiency in his testimony, then it turns out that the witness did not manage to establish that X owes any money to Y, since a single witness's testimony is not of sufficient quality to incur *any* financial obligation upon another person. All the witness has managed to achieve is the lesser obligation of an oath for X, as for this, the lesser quality of a single witness's testimony is sufficient.

1 ספרי. 2 ישעי' מב, יז 3 ויקרא יט, יג 4 סוטה לא: 5 מכות ה. 6 שבועות ל. 7 תהלים פב, א 8 ר"ה כה: 9 מכות ה: 10 ויקרא כא, ט

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TERRITORIAL FRAUD & LAWS RELATING TO WITNESSES

SIXTH READING

- [14] *You should not move back your neighbor's boundary (marker) that the initial (settlers) will fix as borders in your inherited (land), which you will inherit in the land that God, your God, is giving you as a possession.*
- [15] *A single witness cannot incriminate another person for any sin (for which a person is liable for lashes or death) or for any type of fraud. An allegation must be confirmed by the verbal testimony of two witnesses, or three witnesses.*

[16] *If a false witness attempts to incriminate a person (who has given testimony in court), by claiming that he was not present (to witness the act that he testified he had seen):*

- [17] *The two men should stand before God, before the priests and the judges who will exist in those days, together with (the litigants) who have the (original) dispute.*
- [18] *The judges should cross-examine him thoroughly, and if the witness is (proven to be) a false witness who has testified falsely against his brother,* [19] *then you should do to him as he plotted to do to his brother. You will thus eliminate this evil from among you.*
- [20] *(The court should announce the verdict publicly so that) those who remain will hear (what happened) and be afraid, and they will never commit any such evil thing in your midst again.*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the Torah stress, "You should do to him as he *plotted* to do to his brother"? (v. 19)

RASHI: [Do to him] as *he plotted*, but not *as he did*. From here our Sages derived that if they [the false witnesses] already caused the death of the defendant [by their false testimony, and are only exposed afterwards], they are not put to death.

RAMBAN: If, by Divine providence, the witnesses were found to be false *before* the defendant was executed, it proves that the defendant was genuinely innocent, so the witnesses deserve death for trying to kill an innocent person.

If however, by Divine Providence, the witnesses were only found to be false *after* the defendant's execution, then in truth the defendant must have been guilty. For God would certainly not have allowed the *Sanhedrin* to issue the death penalty unnecessarily. The false witnesses are therefore not punished.

● How will "those that remain hear and be afraid"? (v. 20)

RASHI: From here we derive the law that a public announcement is required: "Mr. X and Mr. Y are executed for having been discovered by the court to be false witnesses."

TORAS MENACHEM

On the other hand, if we were to understand that the single witness is only disqualified on the basis of a *quantitative* deficiency (that there is not *enough* evidence), then it turns out that a single witness *can* incriminate another person, but not to a sufficient degree that the Torah deems the matter to have been fully resolved. Thus, the single witness has, to a certain extent, made X *liable to* pay Y the money, and X is required to swear an oath to exempt himself from payment.

(Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shemos 5747)

THE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF FALSE WITNESSES (v. 20)

The crime of giving false testimony is deemed to be so serious by the Torah that not only are the false witnesses punished, but their crime has to be publicized by the court, so that *"those who remain will hear and be afraid, and they will never commit any such evil thing in your midst again."*

At first glance, making an effective public announcement appears to be a logistical impossibility. For how could the court effectively publicize this crime to *every* single Jew, in *every* Jewish community? In the days when the *Sanhedrin* was in existence, it was only viable to send messengers to larger communities and synagogues; so how could one be sure that all the people who were actually contemplating giving false testimony *"will hear and be afraid"*?

THE EXPLANATION

Ramban explains that when the Jewish Court comes to a verdict, it does so under special Divine Providence that ensures that the punishment

Sparks of Chasidus

The Torah considers false testimony to be a heinous crime, because God refers to the Jewish people as "My witnesses" (Isaiah 43:10), indicating that the *very existence* of the Jewish people "testifies" to the existence of God. As the *Talmud* explains, *"The Name of Heaven should become loved through you...people will say...'so-and-so studied Torah and look how fine are his ways, how correct his deeds are!'"* (Yoma 86b). By bearing false witness, the person therefore contravenes the purpose of his existence.

(Based on Likutei Sichos vol. 27, p. 258)

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לַעֲשׂוֹת עוֹד כַּדָּבָר הָרָע הַזֶּה בְּקִרְבֶּךָ: כא וְלֹא תָחוֹס עֵינֶךָ
נֶפֶשׁ בְּנֶפֶשׁ עַיִן בְּעַיִן שֵׁן בְּשֵׁן יָד בְּיָד רֶגֶל בְּרָגֶל: ס
כ א כִּי־תֵצֵא לַמִּלְחָמָה עַל־אֹיְבֶךָ וְרָאִיתָ סוּס וָרֶכֶב עַם רַב
מִמְּךָ לֹא תִירָא מֵהֶם כִּי־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ עִמָּךְ הַמַּעַלְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ
מִצְרָיִם: ב וְהָיָה כְּקָרָבְכֶם אֶל־הַמִּלְחָמָה וְנִגַּשׁ הַכֹּהֵן וְדִבֶּר
אֶל־הָעָם: ג וְאָמַר אֲלֵהֶם שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל אַתֶּם קְרֵבִים הַיּוֹם
לַמִּלְחָמָה עַל־אֹיְבֵיכֶם אַל־יֵרַךְ לְבַבְכֶם אַל־תִּירְאוּ וְאַל־
תַּחְפְּזוּ וְאַל־תַּעַרְצוּ מִפְּנֵיהֶם: ד כִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הַהֹלֵךְ
עִמָּכֶם לְהִלָּחֵם לָכֶם עִם־אֹיְבֵיכֶם לְהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶתְכֶם: ה וְדִבְּרוּ
הַשֹּׁטְרִים אֶל־הָעָם לֵאמֹר מִי־הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה בַיִת־חָדָשׁ
וְלֹא חֲנָכוֹ יֵלֵךְ וְיָשֹׁב לְבֵיתוֹ פֶּן־יָמוּת בַּמִּלְחָמָה וְאִישׁ אַחֵר
יַחְנְכֶנּוּ: ו וּמִי־הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר נָטַע כֶּרֶם וְלֹא חִלְּלוֹ יֵלֵךְ וְיָשֹׁב
לְבֵיתוֹ פֶּן־יָמוּת בַּמִּלְחָמָה וְאִישׁ אַחֵר יְחַלְּלֶנּוּ: ז וּמִי־הָאִישׁ
אֲשֶׁר אֵרַשׂ אִשָּׁה וְלֹא לְקָחָהּ יֵלֵךְ וְיָשֹׁב לְבֵיתוֹ פֶּן־יָמוּת
בַּמִּלְחָמָה וְאִישׁ אַחֵר יִקָּחֶנָּה: ח וְיָסְפוּ הַשֹּׁטְרִים לְדַבֵּר
אֶל־הָעָם וְאָמְרוּ מִי־הָאִישׁ הַיָּרֵא וְרַךְ הַלֵּבָב יֵלֵךְ וְיָשֹׁב לְבֵיתוֹ
וְלֹא יִמַּס אֶת־לְבַב אֶחָיו כִּלְבָבוֹ: ט וְהָיָה כְּכַלֹּת הַשֹּׁטְרִים

בינך: כא ולא תחוס עינך נפשא חלף נפשא
עינא חלף עינא שנא חלף שנא ידא חלף ידא
רגלא חלף רגלא: א ארי תפוק לאגחא קרבא
על בעלי דבבך ותחזי סוסון ורתכין עם סגי
מנך לא תדחל מנהון ארי יי אלהך מימרה
בסעדך דאסקך מארעא דמצרים: ב ויהי
כמקרבכון לאגחא קרבא ויתקריב כהנא
וימלל עם עמא: ג ויימר להון שמע ישראל
אתון קריבין יומא דין לאגחא קרבא על
בעלי דבביכון לא יזוע לבבכון לא תדחלון
ולא תתבהתון ולא תתברון מקדמיהון:
ד ארי יי אלהכון דמדבר קדמיכון לאגחא
לכון קרב עם בעלי דבביכון למפרק יתכון:
ה וימללון סרכיא קדם (עם) עמא למימר
מן גברא די בנא ביתא חדתא ולא חנכה
יהך ויתוב לביתה דלמא ימות באגחא
קרבא וגבר אחרן יחנכנה: ו ומן גברא די
נציב כרמא ולא אחלה יהך ויתוב לביתה
דלמא ימות באגחא קרבא וגבר אחרן
יחלנה: ז ומן גברא די ארס איתתא ולא
נסבה יהך ויתוב לביתה דלמא ימות באגחא
קרבא וגבר אחרן יסבנה: ח ויוספון סרכיא
למללא עם עמא ויימרון מן גברא דדחיל
ותביר לבא יהך ויתוב לביתה ולא יתבר ית
לבא דאחוהי כלבה: ט ויהי כד ישצון סרכיא

רש"י

דין[1]: (כא) **עין בעין.** ממון, וכן שן בשן וגו'[2]: (א) **כי תצא למלחמה.** סמך הכתוב יציאת מלחמה לכאן, לומר לך, שאין מחוסר אבר יוצא למלחמה. דבר אחר לומר לך, אם עשית משפט צדק אתה מובטח שאם תצא למלחמה אתה נוצח. וכן דוד הוא אומר[3] עשיתי משפט וצדק בל תניחני לעושקי[4]: **על אויבך.** יהיו בעיניך כאויבים, אל תרחם עליהם כי לא ירחמו עליך: **סוס ורכב.** בעיני כולם כסוס אחד, וכן הוא אומר והכית את מדין כאיש אחד[5]. וכן הוא אומר[6] כי בא סוס פרעה: **עם רב ממך.** בעיניך הוא רב, אבל בעיני אינו רב: (ב) **בקרבכם אל המלחמה.** סמוך לצאתכם מן הספר מגבול ארצכם[2]: **ונגש הכהן.** המשוח לכך, והוא הנקרא משוח מלחמה[7]: **ודבר אל העם.** בלשון הקדש[7]: (ג) **שמע ישראל.** אפילו אין בכם זכות אלא קריאת שמע בלבד, כדאי אתם שיושיע אתכם: **על אויביכם.** אין אלו אחיכם, שאם תפלו בידם אינם מרחמים עליכם, אין זו כמלחמת יהודה עם ישראל, שנאמר ויקומו האנשים אשר נקבו בשמות ויחזיקו בשביה, וכל מערומיהם הלבישו מן השלל וילבישום וינעילום ויאכילום וישקום ויסכום וינהלום בחמורים לכל כושל, ויביאום יריחו עיר התמרים אצל אחיהם, וישובו שומרון[8], אלא על אויביכם אתם הולכים, לפיכך התחזקו למלחמה: **אל ירך לבבכם אל תיראו ואל תחפזו ואל תערצו.** ארבע אזהרות כנגד ארבעה דברים שמלכי האומות עושים. מגיפים בתריסיהם כדי להקישן זה לזה כדי להשמיע קול שיתפחדו אלו שכנגדם וינוסו, ורומסים בסוסיהם ומצהילין אותם להשמיע קול שעטת פרסות סוסיהם, וצווחין בקולם, ותוקעין בשופרות ומיני משמיעי קול: **אל ירך לבבכם.** מצהלות סוסים: **אל תיראו.** מהגפת התריסין: **ואל תחפזו.** מקול הקרנות: **ואל תערצו.** מקול הצווחה[2]: (ד) **כי ה' אלהיכם וגו'.** הם באים בנצחונו של בשר ודם ואתם באים בנצחונו של מקום. פלשתים באו בנצחונו של גלית, מה היה סופו, נפל ונפלו עמו[7]: **ההלך עמכם.** זה מחנה הארון[7]: (ה) **ולא חנכו.** לא דר בו. חנוך לשון התחלה: **ואיש אחר יחנכנו.** ודבר של עגמת נפש הוא זה: (ו) **ולא חללו.** לא פדאו בשנה הרביעית, שהפירות טעונין לאכלן בירושלים או לחללן בדמים ולאכול הדמים בירושלים: (ז) **פן ימות במלחמה.** ישוב פן ימות, שאם לא ישמע לדברי הכהן כדאי הוא שימות: (ח) **ויספו השוטרים.** למה נאמר כאן ויספו, מוסיפין זה על דברי הכהן, שהכהן מדבר ומשמיע מן שמע ישראל עד להושיע אתכם, ומי האיש ושני ושלישי כהן מדבר ושוטר משמיע, וזה שוטר מדבר ושוטר משמיע[9]: **הירא ורך הלבב.** רבי עקיבא אומר כמשמעו, שאינו יכול לעמוד בקשרי המלחמה ולראות חרב שלופה. רבי יוסי הגלילי אומר הירא מעבירות שבידו, ולכך תלתה לו תורה לחזור על בית וכרם ואשה לכסות על החוזרים בשביל עבירות שבידם, שלא יבינו שהם בעלי עבירה, והרואהו חוזר אומר שמא בנה בית או נטע כרם או ארס

1 סנהדרין פט. 2 ספרי 3 תהלים קיט, קכא 4 תנחומא י 5 שופטים ו, טז 6 שמות טו, יט 7 סוטה מב. 8 דה"ב כח, טו 9 סוטה מג.

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- [21] *You should not have pity (on the false witness). He must (pay with his) life for (attempting to end a) life. (Or he must pay the value of) an eye for (a false testimony about) an eye, (the value of) a tooth for (false testimony about) a tooth, (the value of) a hand for (false testimony about) a hand, (and the value of) a foot for (false testimony about) a foot.*

Preparation for a War

20
- [1] *If you go out to war* against your enemies, and see a horse and chariot, a people (which appears to be) more numerous than you—you should not be afraid of them! For God is with you, your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt.*
- [2] *Then, when you (have left your land and) are close to the battle, the (specially anointed) priest should approach and speak to the people (in Hebrew).* [3] *He should say to them:*

"Hear, O Israel! Today you are coming close to the battle against your enemies. Do not let your hearts become faint (from the noise of their horses)! Do not be afraid (when they bang their shields together)! Do not panic (when they sound their trumpets), and do not be terrified of them (when you hear them shout)! [4] *For (the Holy Ark of) God, your God, is going with you, to fight your enemies for you, (and) to save you!"*

[5] *Then the officers should speak to the people and say:*

"Is there any man who has built a new house and did not begin to live in it? Let him go back home, in case he dies at war and another man will begin to live in it!

[6] *"Is there any man who has planted a vineyard, and has not yet rendered it fit for ordinary use?** Let him go back home, in case he dies at war, and another man will render it fit for use!*

[7] *"Is there any man who has betrothed a woman and has not yet taken her? Let him go back home, in case he dies at war, and another man will take her!"*

[8] *The officers should speak to the people further and say:*

"Is there any man who is fearful or fainthearted? Let him go back home, so he will not cause his brothers' hearts to melt, like his heart (has melted)!"

Classic Questions

● What does "fearful" and "fainthearted" mean? (v. 8)

Rashi: Rabbi Akiva says: "This is to be taken literally, that he cannot stand at the front line of battle and look upon a drawn sword."

Rabbi Yosi Hagalili says: "It means one who is afraid [to go to war] because of his sins. Therefore, the Torah gives a person the pretext of returning home because of his house, vineyard, or wife (v. 5-7), so as to cover up for those who return because of their sins. For nobody will know that they are sinners, and anybody seeing such a person would say, 'Perhaps he has built a house, or planted a vineyard, or betrothed a woman.'"

Toras Menachem

will be just. Thus, even if the witnesses in a case were found to be false after the defendant had been executed, we can be sure that the defendant was in fact guilty, for God would not have "allowed" a person to be wrongly executed. (And thus, in such a case, the false witnesses are not punished, since, in spite of their intentions, they incriminated a guilty man).

Based on *Ramban's* argument of special Divine Providence for the High Court, one could argue that this Providence extends to the public announcement of convicted false witnesses too. Even though it would be logistically impossible for the announcement to reach every Jewish person, the special Divine Providence on all matters of the court will ensure that the announcement will reach those who are *actually* contemplating a false testimony—and then, *"they will never commit any such evil thing in your midst again."*

(Based on *Sichas Purim Katan* 5746)

2 The "Fearful or Fainthearted" (v. 8)

At the literal level, the meaning of "fearful" and "fainthearted" is self-understood. It is also obvious that any member of the army who is *"fearful or fainthearted"* should *"go back home,"* in order that he not *"cause his brother's hearts to melt, like his heart (has melted)"* (v. 8). So why did *Rashi* need to make any comment at all on this verse?

**Sifri* and the *Talmud* (Sotah 44b) both maintain that this passage refers exclusively to a non-obligatory war. However, *Rashi's* silence here suggests that, at the literal level, the Torah is speaking here of any type of war, be it obligatory or non-obligatory (see *Likutei Sichos* vol. 14, p. 80 note 18). **See *Vayikra* 19:24-25.

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לְדַבֵּר אֶל־הָעָם וּפָקְדוּ שָׂרֵי צְבָאוֹת בְּרֹאשׁ הָעָם: ס [שביעי]
י כִּי־תִקְרַב אֶל־עִיר לְהִלָּחֵם עָלֶיהָ וְקָרָאתָ אֵלֶיהָ לְשָׁלוֹם:
יא וְהָיָה אִם־שָׁלוֹם תַּעַנְךָ וּפָתְחָה לָךְ וְהָיָה כָּל־הָעָם הַנִּמְצָא־
בָהּ יִהְיוּ לְךָ לָמַס וַעֲבָדוּךָ: יב וְאִם־לֹא תַשְׁלִים עִמָּךְ וְעָשְׂתָה
עִמְּךָ מִלְחָמָה וְצַרְתָּ עָלֶיהָ: יג וּנְתָנָהּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּיָדֶךָ וְהִכִּיתָ
אֶת־כָּל־זְכוּרָהּ לְפִי־חָרֶב: יד רַק הַנָּשִׁים וְהַטַּף וְהַבְּהֵמָה וְכֹל
אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה בָעִיר כָּל־שְׁלָלָהּ תָּבֹז לָךְ וְאָכַלְתָּ אֶת־שְׁלַל אֹיְבֶיךָ
אֲשֶׁר נָתַן יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לָךְ: טו כֵּן תַּעֲשֶׂה לְכָל־הֶעָרִים
הָרְחֹקֹת מִמְּךָ מְאֹד אֲשֶׁר לֹא־מֵעָרֵי הַגּוֹיִם־הָאֵלֶּה הֵנָּה: טז רַק
מֵעָרֵי הָעַמִּים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לְךָ נַחֲלָה לֹא
תְחַיֶּה כָּל־נְשָׁמָה: יז כִּי־הַחֲרֵם תַּחֲרִימֵם הַחִתִּי וְהָאֱמֹרִי
הַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַפְּרִזִּי הַחִוִּי וְהַיְבוּסִי כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוְּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ:
יח לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יְלַמְּדוּ אֶתְכֶם לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּכֹל תּוֹעֲבֹתָם אֲשֶׁר
עָשׂוּ לֵאלֹהֵיהֶם וַחֲטָאתֶם לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: ס יט כִּי־תָצוּר
אֶל־עִיר יָמִים רַבִּים לְהִלָּחֵם עָלֶיהָ לְתָפְשָׂהּ לֹא־תַשְׁחִית

למללא עם עמא וימנון רבני חילא בריש
עמא: י ארי תקרב לקרתא לאגחא (קרבא)
עלה ותקרי לה מלין דשלם: יא ויהי אם
שלם תענינך ותפתח לך ויהי כל עמא
דישתכח בה יהון לך מסקי מסין ויפלחנך:
יב ואם לא תשלים עמך ותעביד עמך קרב
ותצור עלה: יג וימסרנה יי אלהך בידך
ותמחי ית כל דכורה לפתגם דחרב: יד לחוד
נשיא וטפלא ובעירא וכל די יהי בקרתא כל
עדאה תבוז לך ותיכול ית עדאה דסנאך די
יהב יי אלהך לך: טו כן תעביד לכל קרויא די
רחיקין מנך לחדא די לא מקרוי עממיא
האלין אנון: טז לחוד מקרוי עממיא האלין די
יי אלהך יהב לך אחסנא לא תקים כל
נשמתא: יז ארי גמרא תגמרנון חתאי ואמוראי
כנענאי ופרזאי חואי ויבוסאי כמא די
פקדך יי אלהך: יח בדיל די לא ילפון
יתכון למעבד ככל תועבתהון די עבדו
לטעותהון ותחובון קדם יי אלהכון: יט ארי
תצור לקרתא יומין סגיאין לאגחא (קרבא)
עלה למכבשה לא תחבל ית אילנה לארמא

רש"י

אחרי'[1]: (ט) שרי צבאות. שמעמידין זקפין, מלפניהם ומלאחריהם וכשילין של ברזל בידיהם וכל מי שרוצה לחזור הרשות בידו לקפח את שוקיו. זקפין, בני אדם עומדים בקצה המערכה לזקוף את הנופלים ולחזקם בדברים, שובו אל המלחמה ולא תנוסו, שתחלת נפילה ניסה[1]: (י) כי תקרב אל עיר. במלחמת הרשות הכתוב מדבר, כמו שמפורש בענין, כן תעשה לכל הערים הרחוקות וגו'[2]: (יא) כל העם הנמצא בה. אפילו אתה מוצא בה משבעה אומות שנצטוית להחרימם, אתה רשאי לקיימם: למס ועבדוך. עד שיקבלו עליהם מסים ושעבוד[2]: (יב) ואם לא תשלים עמך ועשתה עמך מלחמה. הכתוב מבשרך שאם לא תשלים עמך, סופה להלחם בך אם תניחנה ותלך: וצרת עליה. אף להרעיבה ולהצמיאה ולהמיתה מיתת תחלואים[2]: (יג) ונתנה ה' אלהיך בידך. אם עשית כל האמור בענין, סוף שה' נותנה בידך[2]: (יד) והטף. אף טף של זכרים. ומה אני מקיים והכית את כל זכורה, בגדולים[2]: (יז) כאשר צוך. לרבות את הגרגשי[2]: (יח) למען אשר לא ילמדו. הא אם עשו תשובה והתגיירו, אתה רשאי לקבלם[2]: (יט) ימים. שנים: רבים. שלשה. מכאן אמרו, אין צרין על עיירות של נכרים פחות משלשה ימים קודם לשבת. ולמד שפותח בשלום שנים או שלשה ימים. וכן

TORAS MENACHEM

The Explanation

At the literal level, the fear that a member of the army will not have the courage to fight, thus weakening the morale of the group, is an extremely serious concern. So *Rashi* was troubled: Why is this concern recorded *last*, after the exemptions for those who built houses, planted vineyards or betrothed a woman (v. 5-7), when this concern is the most serious of all? Surely, the announcement, *"Is there any man who is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go back home,"* should have been made immediately after the priest's words of encouragement in verses 3-4: *"Do not let your hearts become faint. Do not panic....For (the Holy Ark of) God, your God, is going with you, to fight your enemies for you, (and) to save you"*?

To answer this question, *Rashi* offered two explanations:

Rabbi Akiva says: *"This is to be taken literally, that he cannot stand at the front line of battle and look upon a drawn sword."* I.e. this was not only an exemption for those members of the army who felt fainthearted *at that moment*, but rather, it was also for those who would be struck by terror *later*—"at the front line of battle," or after seeing, "a drawn sword." Since this was a case that would only arise much later, when the army reached the front line, it was mentioned last.

However, *Rashi* was not satisfied with this answer alone, because leaving this warning until last would not have made *any practical* difference, since the army did not travel until all the announcements had been made. Thus, by leaving the warning about being fainthearted at the

1 סוטה מד. 2 ספרי.

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[9] *Then, when the officials finish speaking to the people, they should appoint disciplinary officers for the troops at (both) ends of the people, (to ensure that nobody flees).*

MAKING A PEACEFUL PROPOSAL*

SEVENTH READING

[10] *If you approach a city to wage (a non-obligatory) war against it:*

- *You should (first) make a peaceful proposal to it.*

[11] *What will then happen is:*

- *If it responds to you peacefully, and it opens (its gates) up to you, then all the people found in it should give you a (monetary) tribute, and serve you.*
- [12] *But if it does not make peace with you, it will (eventually) wage war against you. So you should besiege it,* [13] *and God, your God, will (eventually) deliver it into your hands.*
- *You should strike down all its males by the sword,* [14] *but you may take for yourself the women, the children, the livestock, and everything that is in the city, all its spoils. You should eat the spoils of your enemies, which God, your God, has given you.*

[15] *That is what you should do to all the cities that are very far from you, which are not among the cities of these (local) nations.*

[16] *But from these (local) peoples' cities, which God, your God, is giving you as an inheritance:*

- *You may not allow any soul to live**.* [17] *Rather, you should utterly destroy them—the Chitites, the Amorites, the Cana'anites, and the Perizites, the Chivites, and the Jebusites—as God, your God, has commanded you,* [18] *so that they will not teach you to copy all their abominable acts that they have performed for their gods, causing you to sin against God, your God.*

[19] *If you besiege a city for many days in order to wage (a non-obligatory) war against it, to capture it:*

- *You should not destroy its trees by wielding an ax against them. You may eat from them, but you may not cut them down.*

TORAS MENACHEM

front line until the end, nothing was really achieved, as the army was no closer to the front line at the end of the announcements than they were at the beginning.

Consequently, *Rashi* felt the need to offer an alternative interpretation: *Rabbi Yosi Hagalili says: "It means one who is afraid [to go to war] because of his sins."*

The advantage of this interpretation is that it explains why there was a *practical* advantage to leaving this announcement until last:

"Therefore, the Torah gives a person the pretext of returning home because of his house, vineyard, or wife (earlier in verses 5-7), *so as to cover up for those who return because of their sins. For nobody will know that they are sinners, since anybody seeing such a person [leaving] would say, 'Perhaps he has built a house, or planted a vineyard, or betrothed a woman.'"****

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 9, p. 121*ff*)

Sparks of Chasidus

Why did Rabbi Akiva reject the notion that a person may exempt himself from the army since he is "afraid because of his sins"? (See Classic Questions & Toras Menachem)

Because Rabbi Akiva *"consistently judged the Jewish people favorably"* (*Rashi* to *Sanhedrin* 110b). Therefore, he felt that the very fact that a person is "afraid because of his sins" was a sign that the person truly regretted sinning, and thus (even if he had not yet changed his behavior, he) had already started the *teshuvah* (repentance) process—sufficiently at least, to ensure that God would not punish him for his sins during battle.

Thus having started to do *teshuvah*, a person would have nothing to fear from his former sins.

(*Likutei Sichos* vol. 9, pp. 128-9)

*See *Toras Menachem* to 2:26 above. **See *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Bo 5747* (*Hisvaduyos 5747*, vol. 2, pp. 369-70, 376-7. ***Even R' Yosi Hagalili would have to accept that a person who could not stand in the front line or could not look at a drawn sword would also be exempted from the army. However, according to R' Yosi Hagalili, this could be inferred from the priests warning not to be afraid (v. 3), and did not need to be stated explicitly.

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אֶת־עֵצָהּ לִנְדֹּחַ עָלָיו גַּרְזֶן כִּי מִמֶּנּוּ תֹאכֵל וְאֹתוֹ לֹא תִכְרֹת כִּי
הָאָדָם עֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה לָבֹא מִפָּנֶיךָ בַּמָּצוֹר: כ רַק עֵץ אֲשֶׁר־תֵּדַע
כִּי לֹא־עֵץ מַאֲכָל הוּא אֹתוֹ תַשְׁחִית וְכָרָתָּ וּבָנִיתָ מָצוֹר עַל־
הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר־הִוא עֹשָׂה עִמְּךָ מִלְחָמָה עַד רִדְתָּהּ: פ כא א כִּי־
יִמָּצֵא חָלָל *בָּאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר יְהוָֹה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לְךָ לְרִשְׁתָּהּ נֹפֵל
בַּשָּׂדֶה לֹא נוֹדַע מִי הִכָּהוּ: ב וְיָצְאוּ זְקֵנֶיךָ וְשֹׁפְטֶיךָ וּמָדְדוּ
אֶל־הֶעָרִים אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבֹת הֶחָלָל: ג וְהָיָה הָעִיר הַקְּרֹבָה אֶל־
הֶחָלָל וְלָקְחוּ זִקְנֵי הָעִיר הַהִוא עֶגְלַת בָּקָר אֲשֶׁר לֹא־עֻבַּד בָּהּ
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־מָשְׁכָה בְּעֹל: ד וְהוֹרִדוּ זִקְנֵי הָעִיר הַהִוא אֶת־
הָעֶגְלָה אֶל־נַחַל אֵיתָן אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יֵעָבֵד בּוֹ וְלֹא יִזָּרֵעַ וְעָרְפוּ־

*ס״א בְּאֲדָמָה

עֲלוֹהִי גַּרְזְנָא אֲרֵי מִנֵּהּ תֵּיכוֹל וְיָתֵהּ לָא תְקוּץ
אֲרֵי לָא כֶאֱנָשָׁא אִילָן חַקְלָא לְמֵעַל מִקֳּדָמָךְ
בִּצְיָרָא: כ לְחוֹד אִילָן דְּתִדַּע אֲרֵי לָא אִילָן
דְּמֵיכַל הוּא יָתֵהּ תְּחַבֵּל וּתְקוּץ וְתִבְנֵי
כַּרְקוֹמִין עַל קַרְתָּא דִּי הִיא עָבְדָא עִמָּךְ קְרָבָא
עַד דְּתִתְכַּבְּשַׁהּ: א אֲרֵי יִשְׁתְּכַח קְטִילָא בְּאַרְעָא
דִּי יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ יָהֵב לָךְ לְמֵירְתַהּ רְמֵי בְּחַקְלָא
לָא אִתְיְדַע מַן קַטְלֵהּ: ב וְיִפְּקוּן סָבָךְ וְדַיָּנָךְ
וְיִמְשְׁחוּן לְקִרְוַיָּא דִּי סַחֲרָנוּת קְטִילָא: ג וּתְהֵי
קַרְתָּא דְּקָרִיבָא לִקְטִילָא וְיִדְבְּרוּן סָבֵי קַרְתָּא
הַהִיא עֶגְלַת תּוֹרֵי דִּי לָא אִתְפְּלַח בַּהּ דִּי
לָא נְגִידַת בְּנִיר: ד וְיַחֲתוּן סָבֵי קַרְתָּא הַהִיא
יָת עֶגְלְתָא לְנַחְלָא בַּיְּר דִּי לָא אִתְפְּלַח בֵּהּ
וְלָא יִזְדְּרַע וְיִנְקְפוּן תַּמָּן יָת עֶגְלְתָא בְּנַחְלָא:

רש״י

הוא אומר[1] וישב דוד בצקלג ימים שנים, ובמלחמת הרשות הכתוב מדבר[2]: **כי האדם עץ השדה.** הרי כי משמש בלשון דלמא, שמא האדם עץ השדה להכנס בתוך המצור מפניך להתייסר ביסורי רעב וצמא כאנשי העיר, למה תשחיתנו: **(כ) עד רדתה.** לשון רדוי, שתהא כפופה לך: **(ב) ויצאו זקניך.** מיוחדים שבזקניך, אלו סנהדרי גדולה[3]: **ומדדו.** ממקום שהחלל שוכב[4]: **אל הערים אשר סביבות החלל.** לכל צד לידע איזו קרובה: **(ד) אל נחל איתן.** קשה שלא נעבד[4]: **וערפו.** קוצץ ערפה בקופיץ. אמר הקב״ה תבא עגלה בת שנתה שלא עשתה פירות, ותערף במקום שאינו עושה פירות,

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● In what respect is man compared to a tree? (v. 19)

Talmud: If a Torah scholar is respectable, one may "eat" [=study Torah] from him and one should not "cut" [=shun] him. But if he is not, one should "destroy" [= keep away from] him and "cut him down" [=shun him]" (*Ta'anis* 7a).

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

"Is The Tree of the Field a Man...?" (v. 19)

What is the connection between man and a tree? (See *Talmud*)

The unique quality of a tree, which no animal possesses, is that it is firmly and deeply rooted in its source of life and energy, the ground. And due to this firm rooting, the tree grows taller and stronger than any member of the Animal Kingdom.

Thus, the "tree" within man is that part of his make-up which is: a.) the most deep-rooted in the soul; and consequently, b.) it is the most powerful. And this is: *his character and emotions*.

While at first glance, the intellect would appear to be a man's most expressive and "personal" faculty, Chasidic thought teaches that one's emotions and character are in fact more deep-rooted in the soul. For this reason our emotions tend to be powerful and uncompromising, like a tall tree, because their deep "roots" unleash the inner wellsprings of the soul directly into the conscious arena.

Intellect, on the other hand, has no fixed roots (rather like members of the Animal Kingdom which are not fixed to one particular place). So we are able to be intellectually involved in all sorts of matters with which we have no personal connection, since the intellect is not so deeply rooted in the soul that it will passionately "take offense" to something which runs contrary to a person's make-up.

Likewise, changing one's *mind* is relatively easy, whereas changing one's *personality*—from miserly to generous, or from evil to good—is no easier than uprooting a tree and planting it somewhere else.

Nevertheless, the Torah wishes us to do exactly that: to change our character and emotional traits for the good. In this way we bring perfection to even the innermost aspects of the soul, where the "roots" of our emotions reach.

And it is in this vein that the *Talmud* warns us only to study Torah from "a *respectable* Torah scholar" i.e. one whose knowledge "bore fruit" in the form of good deeds and fine character. For a person should seek a teacher who has both intellectual *and* emotional refinement, who will provide a living example of how to cultivate his "arborous" side.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 24, p. 115ff.)

1 שמואל-ב א, א 2 ספרי 3 סוטה מד: 4 שם מה:

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—(For why should you need to destroy it?) Is the tree of the field a man, that you should include it in the siege (and destroy it)? —

- [20] *However, if you know it is a (type of) tree which is not a fruit tree, you may destroy it by cutting it down. (Use it to) build a barricade against the city that is waging war with you, until it is conquered.*

UNSOLVED MURDER

21 *If a murder victim is found lying in the field in the land which God, your God, is giving you as a possession, (and) it is not known who killed him:*

- [2] *Your senior judges should go out (from the Sanhedrin), and they should measure (the distance from where the corpse is lying) to the cities around the corpse (in each direction).*

[3] *What will happen is, that (from) the city closest to the corpse:*

- *The elders of that city should take a female calf which has never been used for work, one that has never drawn a yoke.*
- [4] *The elders of that city should bring the calf down to a rock-hard valley, which was never tilled or sown, and there in the valley, they should break the (back of the) calf's neck.*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why is the distance to the nearby cities measured? (v. 2)

RASHI: In order to find out which is the nearest.

MIZRACHI: *Rashi* is teaching us that measuring is not an absolute requirement, but rather a means to locate the nearest city. Thus, in a case where the corpse was found near one city, and it was obvious that this city was the closest, no measurement is required.

RAMBAM: Even if the corpse is found adjacent to a city such that it is clear that this city is the closest, it is nevertheless a *mitzvah* to measure (*Laws of a Murderer and the Protection of Life* 9:1).

● How is the calf's neck broken, and why? (v. 4)

RASHI: He breaks its neck with a hatchet. God says: "A calf which is in its first year, which has not yielded any fruit, should come and be decapitated in a place that does not yield fruit (see v. 4), to atone for the murder of this man, whom they did not allow to yield fruit."

RAMBAM: The city that is nearest to the victim brings the calf, and in most cases the murderer comes from that place....Generally speaking, the investigation, the procession of the elders, the measuring and the taking of the calf, become the subject of much talk, and by making the event public the murderer might be discovered....Furthermore, since the place where the neck of the calf is broken may never be cultivated or sown, the owner of the land will not cease in his investigations until he identifies the murderer, in order that the calf not be killed and his land not become forbidden to him forever (*Guide for the Perplexed* 3:40).

RAMBAN: This *mitzvah*, together with the scapegoat of Yom Kippur and the Red Heifer, are suprarational decrees of scripture.

● Where is the calf's neck broken? (v. 4)

RASHI: In a hard valley (נַחַל אֵיתָן) that was never tilled.

RAMBAM: נַחַל אֵיתָן means a river that flows strongly (ibid. 2).

TORAS MENACHEM

THE DECAPITATED CALF (21:1-9)

Rashi's commentary was written *exclusively* to explain the literal meaning of scripture, as *Rashi* himself declared, "I am coming *only* to explain the literal meaning of scripture" (*Rashi* to *Bereishis* 3:8). It is not *Rashi's* declared intention to explain the *reasons* behind all the *mitzvos* and how these themes take expression in the various procedures which any given *mitzvah* entails.

Why then did *Rashi* elaborate upon the reasons for the *mitzvah* of breaking a calf's neck?

A further peculiarity in *Rashi's* comment is his use of the unusual expression, "*God says*": Why did *Rashi* need to stress here that the rationale for breaking a calf's neck was said by God? Surely, here is not the place to emphasize the basic tenet that the *mitzvos* were given directly by God?

THE EXPLANATION

Verse 8 states that the purpose of breaking the calf's neck is to "*atone for Your people Israel, whom You have redeemed, O God!*" In all cases up to this point when the Torah has required an animal's life to be sacrificed in order to achieve atonement, there has *always* been a requirement for the animal to be offered: a.) by a priest; b.) in the Holy Temple*; and c.) via the specialized procedure of ritual slaughter and sprinkling the animal's blood on the altar, etc.

* An exception to this rule appears to be the scapegoat of *Yom Kippur* whose life is sacrificed by casting it off a mountain in the desert (see *Vayikra* 16:21). However, it could be argued that in this case atonement is actually achieved *in the Temple itself* when the High Priest "places" all the sins of the Jewish people upon it (ibid. 10), and recites the confession (ibid. v. 21), and the scapegoat is only cast into the desert to "dispose" of the sins which it is "carrying." The Red Heifer, which is sacrificed outside the Jewish Camp (*Bamidbar* 19:3), is of course *not* brought for purposes of atonement at the *literal* level, but rather, to ritually purify a person so that he may enter the Temple; (although according to the *Midrashic* interpretation of R' Moshe Hadarshan—cited by *Rashi* to *Vayikra* ibid. 22—the Red Heifer does atone).

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שָׁם אֶת־הָעֶגְלָה בַּנָּחַל: ה וְנִגְּשׁוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּנֵי לֵוִי כִּי בָם בָּחַר
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשָׁרְתוֹ וּלְבָרֵךְ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה וְעַל־פִּיהֶם יִהְיֶה
כָּל־רִיב וְכָל־נָגַע: ו וְכֹל זִקְנֵי הָעִיר הַהִוא הַקְּרֹבִים אֶל־הֶחָלָל
יִרְחֲצוּ אֶת־יְדֵיהֶם עַל־הָעֶגְלָה הָעֲרוּפָה בַנָּחַל: [מפטיר] ז וְעָנוּ
וְאָמְרוּ יָדֵינוּ לֹא שפכה [ק׳ שָׁפְכוּ] אֶת־הַדָּם הַזֶּה וְעֵינֵינוּ לֹא
רָאוּ: ח כַּפֵּר לְעַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר־פָּדִיתָ יְהוָה וְאַל־תִּתֵּן דָּם
נָקִי בְּקֶרֶב עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְנִכַּפֵּר לָהֶם הַדָּם: ט וְאַתָּה תְּבַעֵר
הַדָּם הַנָּקִי מִקִּרְבֶּךָ כִּי־תַעֲשֶׂה הַיָּשָׁר בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה: ס ס ס

צ"ז פסוקים, סלו"א סימן.

ח וְיִתְקָרְבוּן כָּהֲנַיָּא בְּנֵי לֵוִי אֲרֵי בְהוֹן אִתְרְעֵי
יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ לְשַׁמָּשׁוּתֵהּ וּלְבָרָכָא בִּשְׁמָא דַייָ וְעַל
מֵימְרְהוֹן יְהֵי כָּל דִּין וְכָל מַכְתַּשׁ סְגִירוּ: ו וְכֹל
סָבֵי קַרְתָּא הַהִיא דְּקְרִיבִין לְקְטִילָא יַסְחוּן יָת
יְדֵיהוֹן עַל עֶגְלְתָא דִּנְקִיפְתָא בְנַחְלָא: ז וְיָתִיבוּן
וְיֵימְרוּן יְדָנָא לָא אֲשַׁדוּ יָת דְּמָא הָדֵין וְעֵינָנָא
לָא חֲזָאָה: ח כַּהֲנַיָּא יֵימְרוּן כַּפַּר לְעַמָּךְ
יִשְׂרָאֵל דִּי פְרַקְתָּא יְיָ וְלָא תִתֵּן חוֹבַת דַּם זַכַּי
בְּגוֹ עַמָּךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִתְכַּפַּר לְהוֹן עַל דְּמָא:
ט וְאַתְּ תְּפַלֵּי אָשְׁדֵי דַּם זַכַּי מִבֵּינָךְ אֲרֵי תַעְבֵּד
דְּכָשַׁר קֳדָם יְיָ: ס ס ס

רש"י

לכפר על הריגתו של זה שלא הניחוהו לעשות פירות[1]: (ז) **ידינו לא שפכה.** וכי עלתה על לב שזקני בית דין שופכי דמים הם, אלא לא ראינוהו ופטרנוהו בלא מזונות ובלא לויה[2]. והכהנים אומרים כפר לעמך ישראל: (ח) **ונכפר להם הדם.** הכתוב מבשרם שמשעשו כן יכופר להם העון[1]: (ט) **ואתה תבער.** מגיד שאם נמצא ההורג אחר שנתערפה העגלה הרי זה יהרג, והוא הישר בעיני ה'[3]: **חסלת פרשת שופטים**

TORAS MENACHEM

So when *Rashi* read that a calf's life is sacrificed in order to *atone* for an unsolved murder, *outside* the Temple by a *non-priest breaking its neck*, *Rashi* was troubled: Surely this runs contrary to the procedure followed by all animal sacrifices that secure atonement?

Rashi came to the conclusion that the Torah is introducing us here to a totally unprecedented form of animal sacrifice. Therefore he began, "God says...," as if to say that in this passage we are hearing something *new* from the Almighty which we have not heard before.

Three Types of Atonement

In order to appreciate *Rashi's* assertion here—that the novel procedure of this *mitzvah* indicates a totally different type of atonement—we first need to examine some of the explanations given for breaking a calf's neck (see *Classic Questions* on previous page):

Rambam writes that the unusual procedure of the delegation of elders serves to publicize the unsolved murder, thereby assisting the process of discovering the perpetrator of the crime.

According to ***Ramban***, there is simply no reason for this *mitzvah*. It is a suprarational decree of scripture.*

Rashi, however, did offer a *logical* explanation: *"A calf which is in its first year, which has not yielded any fruit, should come and be decapitated in a place that does not yield fruit, to atone for the murder of this man, whom they did not allow to yield fruit."*

It could be argued that the underlying basis of the differing opinions of *Rambam* and *Ramban* revolves around the question of which *element of the murder* is atoned for by breaking the calf's neck—the *agent*, the *act*, or the *effect* of the sin:

Rambam maintained that the *mitzvah* atones for the *agents* of the sin, in this case the people of the nearest city, who became associated with this crime. Consequently, *Rambam* emphasized that the matter becomes publicized through the involvement of the city's elders, who do everything within their power to help find the perpetrator of the crime, and this atones for the apparent connection between the city and the crime.

Ramban, however, understood that this *mitzvah* atones for the *act* of murder itself, like an animal sacrifice which atones for a sinful act. Consequently, *Ramban* perceived the *mitzvah* of breaking a calf's neck as being in the same category as the scapegoat of *Yom Kippur*, which defies logic.

Rashi took the third approach, that this *mitzvah* atones for the *effect* of the sin, i.e. the fact that the premature death of the victim has prevented him from "yielding fruit." Therefore: *"A calf which is in its first year, which has not yielded any fruit, should come and be decapitated in a place that does not yield fruit."*

Consequently, "God says," this is a totally unprecedented type of sacrifice, since all other animal sacrifices atone for the *agent* or *act* of a sin, whereas this one atones for its *effect*.

Practical Ramifications

The above distinction between the opinions of *Rashi*, *Rambam* and *Ramban* has the following practical ramifications:

1 סוטה מו. 2 שם מה: 3 כתובות לז:

* This is also the view expressed by *Ramban* in his *Mishneh Torah* (end of *Laws of Misappropriation*). The above cited explanation of *Rambam* is found in his *Guide for the Perplexed* (3:40).

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MAFTIR

- 5 *The priests, the sons of Levi, should then draw near—for God, your God, has chosen them to serve Him, to issue blessings in the Name of God, and to pass judgment on every controversy and lesion.*
- 6 *All the elders of that city, which is closest to the corpse, should wash their hands over the calf that was decapitated in the valley.* 7 *They should announce and proclaim, "Our hands did not (do anything that might have indirectly caused) this bloodshed, nor did our eyes see (this crime)."*
- 8 *(The priests then say): "Atone for Your people Israel, whom You have redeemed, O God! Do not place (the liability of) innocent blood among your people, Israel."*

The blood will thus be atoned for them.

- 9 *(If the murderer is later found) you should (execute him and) eliminate the (shedding of) innocent blood from among you, and you will thus do what is proper in the eyes of God.*

THE HAFTARAH FOR SHOFTIM IS ON PAGE 282.

TORAS MENACHEM

a.) *Measuring the distance from the corpse.*

According to *Rashi* (as explained by ***Mizrachi***—See Classic Questions to v. 2 above) the requirement to measure the distance from the corpse to its surrounding cities is purely a practical one, in order to ascertain which city is the closest. Therefore, in a case where it is obvious which city was the closest, no measuring would be required.

Rambam, however, maintained that the requirement of measuring is a Biblical requirement which cannot be dispensed with.

Again, this appears to be a reflection of the underlying difference between the views of *Rambam* and *Rashi*, whether this *mitzvah* serves primarily to atone for the *agent* of the crime or its *effect*:

According to *Rambam*, the *mitzvah* atones primarily for the *agent* of the crime (the people of the nearest city), by publicizing the crime to the greatest extent possible. Therefore, since the measuring of the corpse would add to this publicity, it cannot be dispensed with.

(Similarly, we would presume that according to *Ramban*, who perceived the *mitzvah* to be a suprarational decree of scripture, none of its details could be dispensed with).

However, according to *Rashi*, the key emphasis here is the atonement of the loss of life suffered by the victim (*effect*). Consequently, the measuring is not a crucial component of the atonement, and could be dispensed with if there was no logical need for it.

b.) *The location of the mitzvah.*

According to *Rambam*, the calf's neck is to be broken in a fertile valley that contains a river, whereas *Rashi* maintained that the location should be a hard, non-fertile valley that was never tilled (see Classic Questions to v. 4).

At first glance *Rambam* and *Rashi* are merely arguing over the translation of a scriptural term (נַחַל אֵיתָן). However, based on the above explanation, it appears that their respective interpretations reflect their overall understanding of the atonement achieved via this *mitzvah*:

Rambam maintained that the main emphasis here was the atonement of the local city, which was achieved by doing everything possible to find the murderer. *Rambam* adds (see Classic Questions ibid.) that these attempts were further enhanced by the efforts of the owner of the land where the *mitzvah* takes place, who would be most eager to identify the murderer so that the calf's neck would not be broken and his land would not be outlawed. Consequently, *Rambam* understood that the breaking of the neck took place on *extremely fertile* land, which explains why the owner would be so eager to ensure that his land not become prohibited.

But *Rashi*, who stressed the negative theme of this *mitzvah* (*"A calf... which has not yielded any fruit, should come and be decapitated...to atone for the murder of this man, whom they did not allow to yield fruit"*) likewise stressed the negative connotation of the location: *"a place that does not yield fruit."* And this new concept (of offering a sacrifice in an inferior location, in contrast to all other sacrifices which were offered in the choicest of locations), was yet a further expression of *Rashi*'s innovative stance here, that this *mitzvah* provided a new method of atonement for the Jewish people.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 24, p. 121*ff.*)

The Last Word

The appointment of "judges and police" mentioned at the beginning of our *Parsha* is intended to prevent undesirable events from occurring, such as the case of a "corpse found in the field," mentioned here at the end of the *Parsha*. If such an event does occur—even though it occurs in a field, beyond the boundary of their city—it is the "judges" of that city who must perform the service necessary to bring about atonement.

From here we learn that every Jew must take responsibility for his brethren who are lost spiritually "in the fields." Even the great leaders and judges must go out of the city, into the field, in order to share the beauty of Judaism with others.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shoftim* 5749; *Likutei Sichos* vol. 24, p. 131)

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Parshas Shoftim *contains 14 mitzvos and 27 prohibitions*

1. To appoint judges and officers in every Jewish community [16:18].
2. Not to plant a tree by the Altar [16:21].
3. Not to erect an idolatrous pillar [16:22].
4. Not to offer a blemished animal, even if it is a temporary blemish [17:1].
5. To listen to the Jewish Supreme Court in every generation [17:10].
6. Not to disobey the word of the Jewish Supreme Court [17:11].
7. To appoint a Jewish king [17:15].
8. Not to appoint a Jewish king who is not a native Israelite [17:15].
9. A king should not amass horses beyond his needs [17:16].
10. Not to live in the land of Egypt [17:16].
11. A king should not have too many wives [17:17].
12. A king should not amass excessive gold and silver [17:17].
13. A king should write a Torah scroll, in addition to the one which every Jew is required to write [17:18].
14. The Levites should not inherit land in the Land of Israel [18:1].
15. The Levites should not share of the booty during the conquest of the Land [18:1].
16. To give the shoulder, jaw and end-stomach of an animal-offering to the priest [18:3].
17. To separate *terumah* (the priest's portion) from produce [18:4].
18. To give the first shearing of the fleece to the priests [18:4].
19. Priests should work at the Temple in watches, and at festival times they should work in unison [18:6].
20. Not to practice divination [18:10].
21. Not to practice sorcery [18:10].
22. Not to use charms [18:10-11].
23. Not to consult a medium [18:10-11].
24. Not to consult a yidoni (wizard) [18:10-11].
25. Not to seek contact with the dead [18:10-11].
26. To listen to every prophet in the generation, provided he does not add or detract from the Torah [18:15].
27. Not to issue false prophecy [18:20].
28. Not to issue prophecy in the name of an idol [18:20].
29. Not to refrain from putting a false prophet to death, and not be afraid of him [18:22].
30. To prepare six Cities of Refuge [19:3, 6].
31. Not to have mercy on a person who inflicts mortal injury, in a capital trial [19:13, 21].
32. Not to falsely adjust one's boundary [19:14].
33. Not to pass judgment on the word of just one witness [19:15].
34. To do to false, scheming witnesses as they intended to do to their victim through their testimony [19:19].
35. Not to be afraid of an enemy in battle [20:3; 7:21].
36. To anoint a priest for war [20:5-7].
37. To act in an optional war according to the rules of the Torah [20:10ff.].
38. Not to allow any of the seven nations that inhabited the Land of Israel to live [20:16].
39. Not to destroy fruit-bearing trees during a siege, nor cause purposeless destruction [20:19].
40. To break the neck of the calf in a riverbed [21:1].
41. Not to plow or sow in the riverbed where the calf's neck was broken [21:4].

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parshas Ki Seitzei

פרשת כי תצא

The Name of the Parsha

Although the ideal of peace is so prominent in the Torah, God designed and created the world in such a way that it leaves man subject to an almost constant inner strife, having to wage relentless battle with his evil inclination.

In fact, the *Zohar* (III 188b) points out that the Hebrew word for bread—*lechem*—is derived from the same root that denotes "war." This symbolizes the concept of the continuous struggle between the base and sublime natures of man, whether he eats his bread as a glutton, in the manner an animal eats its food, or on a higher level—to keep the body healthy in order to be able to do what is good and right in accordance with the Will of the Creator.

One source of inspiration to help a person succeed in overcoming these challenges, is to reflect upon the source of his soul. Our Sages taught that Jewish souls actually preceded the rest of creation (*Bereishis Rabah* 1:4), and were even "consulted" by God when the "decision" was being made whether or not to create the world—and the souls gave their full consent (*Rus Rabah* 2:1). Thus, from the elevated vantage point of the soul in its primary source, *every* aspect of this world was seen as conducive to serving God, for otherwise the soul would not have consented to its creation. At that moment, the soul appreciated how things that we perceive now as a negative influence or an "enemy" (because they attempt to deter us from observing God's Will) are in truth an *aid* to Divine Service—for they enable us to serve God out of our own *free choice*, rather than as mere robots. Therefore, even the creation of our "enemies" had the soul's full consent.

A soul never forgets. Even after it comes down into a body, facing the ongoing struggle between the base and the sublime, the soul retains an unbreakable inner strength and imperviousness to anything that may deter it from its mission.

And this is the message of our *Parsha: "If you go out (Ki Seitzei) to war"*—when the soul "goes out" of its heavenly setting into a body, to fight a war between the material and the spiritual, it never loses sight of the fact that *every* obstacle is surmountable. Through meditating upon this point, we can always be "*upon* your enemies," i.e. *transcending* every material "adversary," and sanctifying this physical world with goodness and spirituality.

(Based on *Sichos* of 10th Elul and *Shabbos Parshas Ki Seitzei* 5751; Letter of 26th *Teves* 5742)

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י כִּֽי־תֵצֵ֥א לַמִּלְחָמָ֖ה עַל־אֹיְבֶ֑יךָ וּנְתָנ֞וֹ יְהֹוָ֧ה אֱלֹהֶ֛יךָ בְּיָדֶ֖ךָ
וְשָׁבִ֥יתָ שִׁבְיֽוֹ: יא וְרָאִ֙יתָ֙ בַּשִּׁבְיָ֔ה אֵ֖שֶׁת יְפַת־תֹּ֑אַר וְחָשַׁקְתָּ֣ בָ֔הּ
וְלָקַחְתָּ֥ לְךָ֖ לְאִשָּֽׁה: יב וַהֲבֵאתָ֖הּ אֶל־תּ֣וֹךְ בֵּיתֶ֑ךָ וְגִלְּחָה֙ אֶת־
רֹאשָׁ֔הּ וְעָשְׂתָ֖ה אֶת־צִפָּרְנֶֽיהָ: יג וְהֵסִ֩ירָה֩ אֶת־שִׂמְלַ֨ת שִׁבְיָ֜הּ
מֵעָלֶ֗יהָ וְיָֽשְׁבָה֙ בְּבֵיתֶ֔ךָ וּבָכְתָ֛ה אֶת־אָבִ֥יהָ וְאֶת־אִמָּ֖הּ יֶ֣רַח
יָמִ֑ים וְאַ֨חַר כֵּ֜ן תָּב֤וֹא אֵלֶ֙יהָ֙ וּבְעַלְתָּ֔הּ וְהָיְתָ֥ה לְךָ֖ לְאִשָּֽׁה:
יד וְהָיָ֞ה אִם־לֹ֧א חָפַ֣צְתָּ בָּ֗הּ וְשִׁלַּחְתָּהּ֙ לְנַפְשָׁ֔הּ וּמָכֹ֥ר לֹא־
תִמְכְּרֶ֖נָּה בַּכָּ֑סֶף לֹא־תִתְעַמֵּ֣ר בָּ֔הּ תַּ֖חַת אֲשֶׁ֥ר עִנִּיתָֽהּ: ס

י אֲרֵי תִפּוֹק לְאַגָּחָא קְרָבָא עַל בַּעֲלֵי דְבָבָךְ
וְיִמְסְרִנּוּן יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ בִּידָךְ וְתִשְׁבֵּי שִׁבְיְהוֹן:
יא וְתֶחֱזֵי בְּשִׁבְיָא אִתְּתָא שַׁפִּירַת חֵזוּ וְתִתְרְעֵי
בַהּ וְתִסְּבַהּ לָךְ לְאִנְתּוּ: יב וְתַעֲלִנַּהּ לְגוֹ בֵיתָךְ
וּתְגַלַּח יָת רֵישַׁהּ וּתְרַבֵּי יָת טוּפְרָנַהָא:
יג וְתַעְדֵּי יָת כְּסוּת שִׁבְיַהּ מִנַּהּ וְתִתֵּב בְּבֵיתָךְ
וְתִבְכֵּי יָת אֲבוּהָא וְיָת אִמַּהּ יְרַח יוֹמִין וּבָתַר
כֵּן תֵּיעוֹל לְוָתַהּ וְתִבְעֲלִנַּהּ וּתְהֵי לָךְ לְאִנְתּוּ:
יד וִיהֵי אִם לָא תִתְרְעֵי בַהּ וְתִפְטְרִנַּהּ לְנַפְשַׁהּ
וְזַבָּנָא לָא תְזַבְּנִנַּהּ בְּכַסְפָּא לָא תִתַּגַּר בַּהּ חֲלָף

רש״י

(י) **כי תצא למלחמה.** במלחמת הרשות הכתוב מדבר[1], שבמלחמת ארץ ישראל אין לומר ושבית שביו, שהרי כבר נאמר לא תחיה כל נשמה[2]: **ושבית שביו.**[3] לרבות כנענים שבתוכה ואף על פי שהם משבעה אומות: (יא) **ולקחת לך לאשה.** לא דברה תורה אלא כנגד יצר הרע. שאם אין הקב״ה מתירה ישאנה באיסור. אבל אם נשאה, סופו להיות שונאה, שנאמר אחריו כי תהיין לאיש וגו׳, וסופו להוליד ממנה בן סורר ומורה, לכך נסמכו פרשיות הללו[4]: **אשת.** אפילו אשת איש[5]: (יב) **ועשתה את צפרניה.** תגדלם כדי שתתנוול: (יג) **והסירה את שמלת שביה.** לפי שהם נאים, שהגוים בנותיהם מתקשטות במלחמה בשביל לזנות אחרים עמהם: **וישבה בביתך.** בבית שמשתמש בו, נכנס ונתקל בה, יוצא ונתקל בה, רואה בבכייתה, רואה בנוולה, כדי שתתגנה עליו: **ובכתה את אביה.** כל כך למה, כדי שתהא בת ישראל שמחה וזו עצבה, בת ישראל מתקשטת וזו

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What kind of war does verse 10 refer to?

Rashi: The verse here is referring to a non-obligatory war, for in reference to the [obligatory] war of conquering the Land of Israel, the Torah would not stress, *"and you seize their captives,"* for it has already stated [regarding the Land's inhabitants], *"you may not allow any soul to live"* (*Devarim* 20:16). The term **וְשָׁבִיתָ שִׁבְיוֹ** (*"and you seize their captives"*) thus comes to permit [the capture of] Cana'anites who are part of [a nation being fought through a non-obligatory war], even though they are from the seven nations [that inhabit the Land].

Rambam: A king may not wage other wars before obligatory wars. What constitutes an obligatory war? A war against the seven nations [who occupied the Land of Cana'an], the war against Amalek, or a war fought in defense against an enemy that attacks Israel. Afterwards [when the obligatory wars have been won], he may wage a non-obligatory war, which is a war fought with other nations in order to expand the borders of Israel, and to magnify its greatness and reputation (*Laws of Kings* 5:1).

TORAS MENACHEM

"If You Go Out To War"? (v. 10)

Rashi writes that verse 10, which introduces the laws of female captives of war, refers to "a non-obligatory war," *i.e.* a war which is not required by Jewish law, but one that was fought to expand the borders of Israel.

Rashi proves this from the fact that our verse mentions the taking of captives (*"and you seize their captives"*), which surely would not arise in the case of an obligatory war, in which none of the enemy *may* be left alive, as the Torah commands, *"you may not allow any soul to live"* (*Devarim* 20:16).

However, *Rashi's* assertion seems to be problematic for a number of reasons:

a.) The command not to "allow any soul to live," refers to the conquest of the Land of Israel. However there is a *type of obligatory war* where it is *not* a *mitzvah* to annihilate the enemy completely, and that is a war fought in defense against an enemy that attacks Israel (see ***Rambam***). In such a war, it *would* be permissible to take captives*, so how can *Rashi* prove that our verse "is referring to a non-obligatory war," merely because it mentions the taking of captives?

b.) At the literal level, our verse does not actually refer to the taking of captives from the *enemy* population, but rather, the seizure of those whom the enemy captured in a previous war ("and you seize *their* captives"). Thus, it appears that our verse could indeed be referring to a war against the seven nations that inhabited the Land of Cana'an, because even though the seven nations themselves must be obliterated in their entirety (*"you may not allow any soul to live"*), people from *other* nations who were held captive by the seven nations would not have to be killed. So how can *Rashi* prove that our verse is referring to a non-obligatory war from the words *"and you seize their captives"*?

* While there is an obligation in Jewish law for an individual to kill any person who seeks his life (see *Rashi* to *Shemos* 22:1), which would mean that there would be a requirement to totally *obliterate* any attacking enemy, nevertheless, this would presumably not apply to the women and children of the enemy nation, who are not actively fighting (see *Likutei Sichos* vol. 14, p. 88, note 16).

1 ספרי 2 לעיל כ, טז 3 התיבות "ושבית שביו" הם מדברי רש"י עצמו, ולא תיבות שמעתיק מהכתוב. אלא, שהציבור-המעתיקי' טעה והדפיסן באותיות גדולות כמו דבור המתחיל (שיחת ש"פ כי תצא תשמ"ח) 4 תנחומא א 5 קידושין כא:

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FEMALE CAPTIVES OF WAR

21:10 *If you go out to (wage a non-obligatory) war upon your enemies, and God, your God, delivers them into your hand, and you seize their captives,* [11] *and you see among the captives a beautiful woman, and you desire her:*

- *You may take her for yourself as a wife (even if she is married).*
- [12] *You should bring her into your home. She should shave her head and let her nails grow (to make her repulsive),* [13] *and she should remove from herself the (attractive) clothing in which she was captured.*
- *She should stay in your house (so you see her at her worst), and weep for her father and her mother for a full month.*
- *After that, you may come to her and be intimate with her, and she will be your wife.*
- [14] *What will happen is, if you do not desire her, then you should send her away to do as she wishes. But you should not sell her for money, or keep her as a slave, because you have afflicted her.*

TORAS MENACHEM

c.) Besides the fact that *Rashi* appears to have no conclusive proof that our verse refers to a non-obligatory war, it appears much more likely—at the literal level—that our verse would be speaking of an obligatory war. For, at the point in time when this passage was taught by Moshe, the Jewish people were about to fight the *obligatory* wars required to conquer the Land of Israel. So it is more logical that Moshe would be addressing a matter of immediate relevance to the Jewish people, rather than discussing the laws of a non-obligatory war, which would not be possible until many years later (see ***Rambam***).

THE EXPLANATION

Verse 10 stresses, "If you *go out* to war," referring to a situation where the Jewish people are settled in their homeland, and "go *out*" of that land for the purpose of conquering other nations. It could not refer to the Jewish people's situation at that time, in the desert, which is not an inhabited land from which one "goes *out*" to war.

Therefore*, *Rashi* concluded, *"The verse here is referring to a non-obligatory war."*

[Consequently, when *Rashi* continues to explain, *"In reference to the [obligatory] war of conquering the Land of Israel, the Torah would not stress, 'and you seize their captives,' etc." Rashi* is not bringing a *proof* that our verse is speaking of a non-obligatory war—for the proof is from the *verse itself* ("If you *go out* to war"). Rather, *Rashi* is merely indicating that the Torah chose to stress the idea of taking captives here in the case of a non-obligatory war, where it is *most common*. There would, however, be *some instances* where captives could be taken even in an obligatory war against the seven nations, as explained above.]

However, this leaves us with another problem, that the words, *"and you seize their captives"* now seem to be superfluous. For it is *obvious* that we are speaking of a case when captives are taken, from the following verse, *"and you see among the captives...."*

[Beforehand we did not have this question, since we presumed that the words "and you seize their captives" were needed as *proof* that our verse speaks of a non-obligatory war. Now, however, that it has been established that the proof is from the words, "if you *go out*," the words, "*you seize their captives*," appear to be redundant.]

Therefore, *Rashi* continues to explain that the extra words, "and you seize their captives," come to permit the capture of Cana'anites who are themselves captives of the nation that is being conquered during this non-obligatory war, even though they are from the seven nations which we are normally obligated to obliterate.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Ki Seitzei 5748*)

Sparks of Chasidus

"SHE SHOULD WEEP...FOR A FULL MONTH" (v. 13)

Parshas *Ki Seitzei* is always read during the month of Elul, which is a time of *teshuvah* (repentance), when a person makes a spiritual stock-taking of the year that has passed, and resolves to come closer to God in the year to come.

The *Arizal* (Rabbi Yitzchak Luria, 1534-1572) taught that this month of repentance is alluded to in our *Parsha*:

The "beautiful woman" of verse 11 alludes to the soul. Her capture from the enemy (v. 10-11) alludes to the release of the soul from the desires of the body (the "enemy"), at the outset of the month of Elul.

And then, *"She should...weep,"* i.e. return to God out of a spirit of remorse and contrition, *"for a full month"*—for the entire month of Elul.

(*Likutei Torah* of the *Arizal*, cited in *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Re'eh 5746*)

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* We could not prove that our verse is speaking of a non-obligatory war on the basis of the verse, "*If* you go out to war," suggesting that such a war might not necessarily occur—because the term "If" could be referring to the second half of the verse, "you seize their captives," i.e., if (when you go out to war) you seize their captives.

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טו כִּי־תִהְיֶיןָ לְאִישׁ שְׁתֵּי נָשִׁים הָאַחַת אֲהוּבָה וְהָאַחַת שְׂנוּאָה
וְיָלְדוּ־לוֹ בָנִים הָאֲהוּבָה וְהַשְּׂנוּאָה וְהָיָה הַבֵּן הַבְּכֹר לַשְּׂנִיאָה:
טז וְהָיָה בְּיוֹם הַנְחִילוֹ אֶת־בָּנָיו אֵת אֲשֶׁר־יִהְיֶה לוֹ לֹא יוּכַל
לְבַכֵּר אֶת־בֶּן־הָאֲהוּבָה עַל־פְּנֵי בֶן־הַשְּׂנוּאָה הַבְּכֹר: יז כִּי
אֶת־הַבְּכֹר בֶּן־הַשְּׂנוּאָה יַכִּיר לָתֶת לוֹ פִּי שְׁנַיִם בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־
יִמָּצֵא לוֹ כִּי־הוּא רֵאשִׁית אֹנוֹ לוֹ מִשְׁפַּט הַבְּכֹרָה: ס יח כִּי־
יִהְיֶה לְאִישׁ בֵּן סוֹרֵר וּמוֹרֶה אֵינֶנּוּ שֹׁמֵעַ בְּקוֹל אָבִיו וּבְקוֹל
אִמּוֹ וְיִסְּרוּ אֹתוֹ וְלֹא יִשְׁמַע אֲלֵיהֶם: יט וְתָפְשׂוּ בוֹ אָבִיו וְאִמּוֹ
וְהוֹצִיאוּ אֹתוֹ אֶל־זִקְנֵי עִירוֹ וְאֶל־שַׁעַר מְקֹמוֹ: כ וְאָמְרוּ אֶל־
זִקְנֵי עִירוֹ בְּנֵנוּ זֶה סוֹרֵר וּמֹרֶה אֵינֶנּוּ שֹׁמֵעַ בְּקֹלֵנוּ זוֹלֵל וְסֹבֵא:
כא וּרְגָמֻהוּ כָּל־אַנְשֵׁי עִירוֹ בָאֲבָנִים וָמֵת וּבִעַרְתָּ הָרָע מִקִּרְבֶּךָ
וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁמְעוּ וְיִרָאוּ: ס [שני] כב וְכִי־יִהְיֶה בְאִישׁ חֵטְא
מִשְׁפַּט־מָוֶת וְהוּמָת וְתָלִיתָ אֹתוֹ עַל־עֵץ: כג לֹא־תָלִין נִבְלָתוֹ
עַל־הָעֵץ כִּי־קָבוֹר תִּקְבְּרֶנּוּ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא כִּי־קִלְלַת אֱלֹהִים

די עניתה: טו ארי תהוין לגבר תרתין נשין
חדא רחימתא וחדא שניאתא וילידן לה בנין
רחימתא ושניאתא ויהי ברא בוכרא
לשניאתא: טז ויהי ביומא דיחסן לבנוהי ית
די יהי לה לית לה רשו לבכרא ית בר
רחימתא על אפי בר שניאתא בוכרא: יז ארי
ית בוכרא בר שניאתא יפרש למתן לה
תרתין חלקין בכל די ישתכח לה ארי הוא
ריש תקפה לה חזיא בכירותא: יח ארי יהי
לגבר בר סטי ומרי ליתוהי מקבל למימר
אבוהי ולמימר אמה ומלפין יתה ולא יקבל
מנהון: יט ויחדון בה אבוהי ואמה ויפקון יתה
לקדם סבי קרתה ולתרע בית דין אתרה:
כ ויימרון לסבי קרתה ברנא דין סטי ומרי
ליתוהי מקבל למימרנא זלל בסר וסבי חמר:
כא ויתרגמנה כל גברי (אנשי) קרתה באבניא
וימות ותפלי עבד דביש מבינך וכל ישראל
ישמעון וידחלון: כב וארי יהי בגבר חובת
דין דקטול ויתקטיל ותצלוב יתה על צליבא:
כג לא תבית נבלתה על צליבא ארי מקבר

רש"י

מתנוולת: (יד) והיה אם לא חפצת בה. הכתוב מבשרך שסופך לשנאותה[1]: לא תתעמר בה. לא תשתמש בה. בלשון פרסי קורין לעבדות ושימוש, עימרא. מיסודו של רבי משה הדרשן למדתי כן: (יז) פי שנים. כנגד שני אחים[1]: בכל אשר ימצא לו. מכאן שאין הבכור נוטל פי שנים בראוי לבא לאחר מיתת האב, כבמוחזק: (יח) סורר. סר מן הדרך: ומורה. ממרה בדברי אביו, לשון ממרים: ויסרו אותו. מתרין בו בפני שלשה ומלקין אותו[2]. בן סורר ומורה אינו חייב, עד שיגנוב ויאכל תרטימר בשר וישתה חצי לוג יין. שנאמר זולל וסובא, ונאמר[3] אל תהי בסובאי יין בזוללי בשר למו[4]. ובן סורר ומורה נהרג על שם סופו, הגיעה תורה לסוף דעתו, סוף שמכלה ממון אביו ומבקש לימודו ואינו מוצא, ועומד בפרשת דרכים ומלסטם את הבריות, אמרה תורה ימות זכאי ואל ימות חייב: (כא) וכל ישראל ישמעו ויראו. מכאן שצריך הכרזה בבית דין, פלוני נסקל על שהיה בן סורר ומורה[5]: (כב) וכי יהיה באיש חטא משפט מות. סמיכות הפרשיות מגיד, שאם חסים עליו אביו ואמו, סוף שיצא לתרבות רעה ויעבור עבירות ויתחייב מיתה בבית דין[6]: ותלית אותו על עץ. רבותינו אמרו, כל הנסקלין, נתלין, שנאמר כי קללת אלהים תלוי. והמברך ה', בסקילה[7]: (כג) כי קללת אלהים תלוי. זלזולו של מלך הוא, שאדם עשוי בדמות דיוקנו וישראל הם בניו. משל לשני אחים תאומים שהיו דומין זה לזה, אחד נעשה מלך, ואחד נתפס

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

"If a Man Commits a Sin...You Should Hang Him on a Gallows" (v. 22)

The *Arizal* (Rabbi Yitzchak Luria, 1534-1572) used the above verse to eulogize *Ramak* (Rabbi Moshe Cordovero, 1522-1570):

וְכִי יִהְיֶה בְאִישׁ חֵטְא מִשְׁפַּט מָוֶת וְהוּמָת—Literally, this means, *"when a man has a sin for which he is sentenced to death and he is put to death."* However since the word חֵטְא ("sin") can also mean "deficiency," the *Arizal* rendered: *"When a man is lacking any cause to be sentenced to death, then why is he put to death?*

וְתָלִיתָ אֹתוֹ עַל עֵץ—Literally this means, *"you should hang him on the gallows."* However, the term "hang" (וְתָלִיתָ) can also be translated as "blame." Thus the *Arizal* explained, when a person devoid of sin, such as *Ramak*, passes away: *"you should blame it on the* עֵץ," i.e. not on his own sins, which are lacking, but to the tree of knowledge (עֵץ הַדַּעַת), which caused death to be decreed upon the world.

In other words, the passing of such a saintly person is devoid of any negative cause at all. In such a case, it is simply that God willed that death should occur in the world so that the righteous could enjoy the spiritual elevation that occurs when passing from one world to another.

(See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 24, p. 132ff.)

1 ספרי. 2 [illegible] 3 משלי כג, כ. 4 סנהדרין ע. 5 שם סט. 6 תנחומא א 7 סנהדרין מו.

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RIGHTS OF A FIRSTBORN SON

21:15 *If a man has two wives, one whom he loves and the other whom he hates, and both the one whom he loves and the one whom he hates bear him sons, and the firstborn son is from the one whom he hates,* [16] *what will happen is:*

- *On the day (the father) bequeaths his property to his sons, he will not be able to give the son of the one whom he loves birthright precedence over the son of the one whom he hates, the firstborn son.*
- [17] *Rather, he must acknowledge the firstborn, the son of the one whom he hates, and give him a double share in all that he possesses, because he was (conceived) in his prime. He has the firstborn rights.*

THE REBELLIOUS SON

21:18 *If a man has a deviant and rebellious son, who (steals, eats meat and drinks wine excessively and) does not listen to his father or mother's voice—and when they reprimand him (legally) he does not listen to them:*

- [19] *His father and his mother should take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city, to the gates (of justice) in his locality.*
- [20] *They should say to the elders of his city, "This son of ours is deviant and rebellious! He does not listen to our voice! He is a binger and a boozer!"*
- [21] *All the people of his city should pelt him to death with stones, and you will eliminate the evil from among you.*
- *(The court should publicize what has happened so that) all Israel will hear (what happened) and be afraid.*

HANGING & BURIAL

SECOND READING

- [22] *If a man commits a sin for which he is sentenced to death (by stoning), and he is put to death, you should hang him on a gallows (afterwards).*
- [23] *You should not leave his body on the gallows overnight.*

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

THE RIGHTS OF THE FIRSTBORN (V. 15-17)

The *Midrash* teaches that God's initial choice to the appointment of priesthood, to serve as His ministers in the Holy Temple, were the firstborn. But when the firstborn sinned with the Golden Calf, God instead chose His priests from among the tribe of Levites who did not worship the calf (*Bamidbar Rabah* 6:2).

Thus, the *Tzemach Tzedek* (the third Lubavitcher Rebbe, 1789-1866) concluded that in the Messianic Era, when any remnant of the sin of the Golden Calf will finally be eradicated, the rights of priesthood will return to the firstborn (*Ohr haTorah, Mikeitz* p. 344a).

And this, explains the *Tzemach Tzedek*, is consistent with the kabalistic principle that in the future era, the "feminine" aspects of spirituality will transcend the "masculine aspects," for then the firstborn (from the *mother's* womb) will become greater than the Levites (whose identity is determined by the *father*).

However, the *Arizal* (Rabbi Yitzchak Luria, 1534-1572) differed on this matter, writing: *"Those who are currently Levites will be the priests in the future era"* (*Likutei Torah*, cited in *Tanya* ch. 50).

Thus, what will actually happen remains yet to be clarified....

(Based on Sichas Erev Shabbos Parshas Ki Seitzei 5751, note 16; 20th Av, note 37)

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תְּלוּי וְלֹא תְטַמֵּא אֶת־אַדְמָתְךָ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לְךָ
נַחֲלָה: ס כב א לֹא־תִרְאֶה אֶת־שׁוֹר אָחִיךָ אוֹ אֶת־שֵׂיוֹ
נִדָּחִים וְהִתְעַלַּמְתָּ מֵהֶם הָשֵׁב תְּשִׁיבֵם לְאָחִיךָ: ב וְאִם־לֹא
קָרוֹב אָחִיךָ אֵלֶיךָ וְלֹא יְדַעְתּוֹ וַאֲסַפְתּוֹ אֶל־תּוֹךְ בֵּיתֶךָ וְהָיָה
עִמְּךָ עַד דְּרֹשׁ אָחִיךָ אֹתוֹ וַהֲשֵׁבֹתוֹ לוֹ: ג וְכֵן תַּעֲשֶׂה לַחֲמֹרוֹ
וְכֵן תַּעֲשֶׂה לְשִׂמְלָתוֹ וְכֵן תַּעֲשֶׂה לְכָל־אֲבֵדַת אָחִיךָ אֲשֶׁר־
תֹּאבַד מִמֶּנּוּ וּמְצָאתָהּ לֹא תוּכַל לְהִתְעַלֵּם: ס ד לֹא־תִרְאֶה
אֶת־חֲמוֹר אָחִיךָ אוֹ שׁוֹרוֹ נֹפְלִים בַּדֶּרֶךְ וְהִתְעַלַּמְתָּ מֵהֶם הָקֵם
תָּקִים עִמּוֹ: ס ה לֹא־יִהְיֶה כְלִי־גֶבֶר עַל־אִשָּׁה וְלֹא־יִלְבַּשׁ גֶּבֶר
שִׂמְלַת אִשָּׁה כִּי תוֹעֲבַת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כָּל־עֹשֵׂה אֵלֶּה: פ
ו כִּי יִקָּרֵא *קַן־צִפּוֹר | לְפָנֶיךָ בַּדֶּרֶךְ בְּכָל־עֵץ | אוֹ עַל־הָאָרֶץ
אֶפְרֹחִים אוֹ בֵיצִים וְהָאֵם רֹבֶצֶת עַל־הָאֶפְרֹחִים אוֹ עַל־
הַבֵּיצִים לֹא־תִקַּח הָאֵם עַל־הַבָּנִים: ז שַׁלֵּחַ תְּשַׁלַּח אֶת־הָאֵם
וְאֶת־הַבָּנִים תִּקַּח־לָךְ לְמַעַן יִיטַב לָךְ וְהַאֲרַכְתָּ יָמִים: ס [שלישי]

* יש גורסים קן רפוי

תקברנה ביומא ההוא ארי על דחב קדם יי אצטלב ולא תסאב ית ארעך די יי אלהך יהב לך אחסנא: א לא תחזי ית תורא דאחוך או ית אמרה דטען ותתכבש מנהון אתבא תתיבנון לאחוך: ב ואם לא קריב אחוך לותך ולא ידעת לה ותכנשנה לגו ביתך ויהי עמך עד דיתבע אחוך יתה ותתיבנה לה: ג וכן תעבד לחמרה וכן תעבד לכסותה וכן תעבד לכל אבדת אחוך די תיבד מנה ותשכחנה לית לך רשו לאתכסאה: ד לא תחזי ית חמרא דאחוך או תורה רמן בארחא ותתכבש מנהון אקמא תקים עמה: ה לא יהי תקון זין דגבר על אתתא ולא יתקן גבר בתקוני אתתא ארי מרחק קדם יי אלהך כל עבד אלין: ו ארי יערע קנא דצפרא קדמך בארחא בכל אילן או על ארעא אפרוחין או ביעין ואמא רביעא על אפרוחין או על ביעין לא תסב אמא על בניא: ז שלחא תשלח ית אמא וית בניא תסב לך בדיל דייטב לך

רש״י

לנסקילה ונתלה, כל הרואה אותו אומר המלך תלוי. כל קללה שבמקרא לשון הקל ובזיון, כמו והוא קללני קללה נמרצת[1]: (א) **והתעלמת.** כובש עינו כאלו אינו רואהו: **לא תראה והתעלמת.** לא תראה אותו שתתעלם ממנו, זהו פשוטו. ורבותינו אמרו, פעמים שאתה מתעלם וכו'[2]: (ב) **עד דרש אחיך.** וכי תעלה על דעתך שיתננו לו קודם שידרשנו, אלא דרשהו שלא יהא רמאי[2]: **והשבתו לו.** שתהא בו השבה, שלא יאכל בביתך כדי דמיו ותתבעם ממנו. מכאן אמרו, כל דבר שעושה ואוכל יעשה ויאכל, ושאינו עושה ואוכל, ימכר[3]: (ג) **לא תוכל להתעלם.** לכבוש עינך כאלו אינך רואה אותו: (ד) **הקם תקים.** זו טעינה. להטעין משאוי שנפל מעליו[4]: **עמו.** עם בעליו, אבל אם הלך וישב לו, ואמר לו הואיל ועליך מצוה אם רצית לטעון טעון, פטור[4]: (ה) **לא יהיה כלי גבר על אשה.** שתהא דומה לאיש כדי שתלך בין האנשים, שאין זו אלא לשם ניאוף[5]: **ולא ילבש גבר שמלת אשה.** לילך ולישב בין הנשים. דבר אחר שלא ישיר שער הערוה ושער של בית השחי[5]: **כי תועבת.** לא אסרה תורה אלא לבוש המביא לידי תועבה[5]: (ו) **כי יקרא.** פרט למזומן[2]: **לא תקח האם.** בעודה על בניה: (ז) **למען ייטב לך.** אם מצוה קלה שאין בה חסרון כיס, אמרה תורה למען ייטב לך והארכת ימים, קל וחומר למתן שכרן של

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

"An Article of Men's Clothing May not be Worn by a Woman" (v. 5)

The goal of the "Women's Liberation" movement appears to be based on noble values: that a woman should not be given an inferior role to a man, for she too was created in the "image of God" (Bereishis 9:6), no less than man. In truth, however, "women's lib" has brought about the *degradation* of women, by demeaning the unique talents and worth of women, suggesting that the only worthwhile choice is to act like someone else.

This is highlighted by the Torah's commandment, *"An article of men's clothing may not be worn by a woman,"* (and vice-versa). The significance of this concept extends well beyond the appropriateness of garments and clothing. The Torah is teaching us that a woman cannot utilize her unique potential and enjoy the true satisfaction which that brings, by trying to be like a man.

A woman has the privileged task of imbuing her home with a truly Jewish atmosphere, and she alone has unique talents for rearing a family, thereby perpetuating the existence of the Jewish people.

After a woman has finished this task, there is no harm in her pursuing a career (amid the air of modesty, which is the hallmark of a Jewish woman). But her true pride and joy is surely not to be found by "liberating" herself from the talents unique to womanhood.

Femininity is not, God forbid, a weakness that needs to be "overcome," but a Divine distinction to be nurtured and cherished.

(Based on *Sicha* of 6th Tishrei 5745)

1 סנהדרין מו, ב. 2 ספרי. 3 בבא מציעא כח: 4 שם לב: 5 נזיר נט.

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- *Rather, you should bury him on that very day, for a hanging (corpse) is offensive to God (who created man in His image). Then you will not defile your land, which God, your God, is giving you as an inheritance.*

Care for Another's Property

22
- *[1] You should not watch your brother's ox or sheep straying, and turn a blind eye. You should return them to your brother.*
- *[2] But if your brother is not near to you, or if you do not know him, you should bring it into your house and it should remain with you until your brother seeks it out. (If he proves to be the genuine owner) you should return it to him.*
- *[3] You should do the same with his donkey, you should do the same with his clothes, and you should do the same with any lost property of your brother which he has lost and you have found. You should not turn a blind eye to it.*
- *[4] You should not watch your brother's donkey or his ox fallen (under its load) on the road and turn a blind eye to him.*
- *(Rather,) you should pick up (the load) with him.*

Cross-Dressing

- *[5] An article of men's clothing may not be worn by a woman,*
- *A man may not wear an article of women's clothing.*

For whoever does these (things) is an abomination to God, your God.

Sending Away the Mother Bird

22:6 *If you encounter a bird's nest in the street—on any tree, or on the ground—containing chicks or eggs, and the mother is sitting upon the chicks or upon the eggs:*
- *You should not take the mother from upon the young.*
- *[7] You should always send away the mother, and then you may take the young for yourself.*

(This will be) for your own benefit, and you will live a long time.

Classic Questions

When may the mother bird not be taken? (v. 6)

Rashi: While she is on her young.

What happens if the mother comes back? (v. 6)

Talmud: Even if the mother bird comes back four or five times before the young have been taken, one must send her away (*Chullin* 141a).

Why does the Torah promise that "you will live a long time" specifically in connection with this *mitzvah*? (v. 7)

Rashi: If in the case of such an easy commandment, which involves no financial loss, the Torah states, *"(This will be) for your own benefit and you will live a long time"*—then how much more will one be rewarded for *mitzvos* that are more difficult [to observe].

Toras Menachem

A Very Easy Mitzvah (v. 6-7)

Rashi writes (in his commentary to verse 7) that sending away the mother bird is a *very easy mitzvah* to perform, and it incurs no financial loss. However, this appears to be problematic, because:

a.) *Rashi* suggests that in sending away the mother bird *no* financial loss is incurred at all. But surely the value of the mother bird itself is lost? (In fact, the *Mishnah* states explicitly (*Chullin* 142a) that a small financial loss is incurred).

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ח כִּי תִבְנֶה בַּיִת חָדָשׁ וְעָשִׂיתָ מַעֲקֶה לְגַגֶּךָ וְלֹא־תָשִׂים דָּמִים
בְּבֵיתֶךָ כִּי־יִפֹּל הַנֹּפֵל מִמֶּנּוּ: ט לֹא־תִזְרַע כַּרְמְךָ כִּלְאָיִם פֶּן־
תִּקְדַּשׁ הַמְלֵאָה הַזֶּרַע אֲשֶׁר תִּזְרָע וּתְבוּאַת הַכָּרֶם: ס י לֹא־
תַחֲרֹשׁ בְּשׁוֹר־וּבַחֲמֹר יַחְדָּו: יא לֹא תִלְבַּשׁ שַׁעַטְנֵז צֶמֶר
וּפִשְׁתִּים יַחְדָּו: ס יב גְּדִלִים תַּעֲשֶׂה־לָּךְ עַל־אַרְבַּע כַּנְפוֹת

וְתוֹרִיךְ יוֹמִין: ח אֲרֵי תִבְנֵי בֵּיתָא חַדְתָּא
וְתַעְבֵּד תִּיקָא לְאִגָּרָךְ וְלָא תְשַׁוֵּי חוֹבַת דִּין
דִּקְטוֹל בְּבֵיתָךְ אֲרֵי יִפֵּל דְּנָפֵל מִנֵּהּ: ט לָא
תִזְרַע כַּרְמָךְ עֵרוּבִין דִּלְמָא תִסְתְּאַב דִּמְעַת
זַרְעָא דִּי תִזְרַע וַעֲלָלַת כַּרְמָא: י לָא תִרְדֵּי
בְּתוֹרָא וּבִחְמָרָא כַּחְדָא: יא לָא תִלְבַּשׁ
שַׁעַטְנֵזָא עֲמַר וְכִתָּן מְחַבַּר כַּחְדָא:
יב כְּרוּסְפְּדִין תַּעְבֵּד לָךְ עַל אַרְבַּע כַּנְפֵי

רש״י

מצות חמורות[1]: (ח) כי תבנה בית חדש. אם קיימת מצות שלוח הקן סופך לבנות בית חדש ותקיים מצות מעקה, שמצוה גוררת מצוה, ותגיע לכרם ושדה ולבגדים נאים. לכך נסמכו פרשיות הללו[2]: מעקה. גדר סביב לגג, ואונקלוס תרגם תיקא, כעין תיק שמשמר מה שבתוכו: כי יפול הנופל. ראוי זה ליפול ואף על פי כן לא תתגלגל מיתתו על ידך, שמגלגלין זכות על ידי זכאי וחובה על ידי חייב[3]: (ט) כלאים. חטה ושעורה וחרצן במפולת יד[4]: פן תקדש. כתרגומו תסתאב, כל דבר הנתעב על האדם, בין לשבח כגון הקדש, בין לגנאי כגון איסור, נופל בו לשון קדש, כמו אל תגש בי כי קדשתיך[4]: המלאה. זה מילוי ותוספת שהזרע מוסיף: (י) לא תחרוש בשור ובחמור. הוא הדין לכל שני מינים שבעולם, והוא הדין להנהיג יחד קשורים זוגים בהולכת שום משא[1]: (יא) שעטנז. לשון עירוב. ורבותינו פירשו שוע טווי ונוז[1]: (יב) גדלים תעשה לך. אף מן הכלאים. לכך סמכן הכתוב[5]:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Why does the *mitzvah* of guardrails follow after the *mitzvah* of sending away the mother bird? (v. 8)**

Rashi: If you have fulfilled the *mitzvah* of sending away the mother bird, you will eventually build a new house and fulfill the *mitzvah* of constructing a guardrail, because one *mitzvah* leads to another. You will then come to possess a vineyard (v. 9), a field (v. 10), and fine clothes (v. 11). Therefore, these passages are juxtaposed.

TORAS MENACHEM

b.) How can *Rashi* maintain that sending away the mother bird is an example of one of the easiest of the *mitzvos* of the Torah, when ultimately some form of physical effort is required? Surely a *mitzvah* such as the recital of the *Shema*, which involves merely the uttering of words, is easier than the *act* of sending away the mother bird?

A further issue here concerns *Rashi's* explanation (v. 8) as to why the *mitzvah* of sending away the mother bird is followed in the Torah by the *mitzvos* of i.) constructing guardrails (v. 8), ii.) not mixing seeds in one's vineyard (v. 9), iii.) not plowing a field with two different types of animals (v. 10), and iv.) not wearing garments made of wool and linen (v. 11)—because *"one mitzvah leads to another"* (see Classic Questions to v. 8). For, while *Rashi* does indeed stress that the ***mitzvah*** of sending away the mother bird will lead to the ***mitzvah*** of constructing a guardrail, he then continues: "You will then come to possess a vineyard, a field, and fine clothes." Why did *Rashi* not connect these acquisitions with the *mitzvos* they entail: the *mitzvah* of not planting mixed seeds, the *mitzvah* of avoiding mixed plowing and the *mitzvah* of avoiding *shatnez?*

The Explanation

a.) The ***Talmud*** maintained that it is a *mitzvah* to send the mother bird away *repeatedly*, if necessary, in order that she not see her young being taken away (see *Classic Questions* to v. 6, above). *Rashi*, however, who limited himself to a literal interpretation of scripture, rejected this idea. For the Torah states explicitly: "You should not take the mother *from upon the young*," indicating that this prohibition only applies as long as the mother is upon her young.

Thus, according to *Rashi*, when the mother bird returns—as is extremely likely—it would be permissible to take the mother bird too, for at that point she would not be on her young.

(Even if one wishes to argue that according to *Rashi* this *mitzvah* is intended to prevent a person from being cruel [and that therefore the bird would have to be sent away repeatedly], *Rashi* would maintain that the main cruelty is taking the young from a mother *while she is roosting on them*—and this is what the Torah wishes to avoid here.)

And this explains quite simply why *Rashi* wrote that this *mitzvah* involves no financial loss at all, because after sending away the mother bird and taking the chicks, the person would still be able to take the mother bird as well, when she returns a short while later.

b.) At the literal level, this *mitzvah* is easier than reciting the *Shema*. Reciting the *Shema* can sometimes be difficult to carry out, *e.g.* when one is busy with another matter and the time for *Shema* is passing. In contrast, sending away the mother bird is *always* related to what one is doing at that moment, namely, collecting birds and eggs. Therefore, this *mitzvah* is even easier than reciting the *Shema*, as it is not only simple and effortless to perform and incurs no financial loss, but furthermore, it always comes at a convenient time.

c.) In addition to the physical rewards that, generally speaking, every *mitzvah* brings, there is also the spiritual "reward" that "one *mitzvah* leads to another." However, at the literal level, it is only logical that one *mitzvah* would lead to another *if both the mitzvos are similar in nature*.

The *mitzvah* of sending away the mother bird is clearly similar to the *mitzvah* of erecting guardrails, since: i.) They are both *mitzvos* associated with the acquisition of property (new birds and new houses). ii.) Both *mitzvos* are aimed at saving another creature from pain.

Thus, *Rashi* writes (in his commentary to verse 8) that the *mitzvah* of sending away the mother bird not only brings the *physical reward* that "you will eventually build a new house," but in addition, it brings the *spiritual reward* of the *mitzvah* of constructing a guardrail.

However, the *mitzvah* of sending away the mother bird is not similar to the laws of planting mixed seeds, plowing with different types of animals or wearing *shatnez*. Therefore, *Rashi* could not suggest that a person

1 ספרי. 2 תנחומא א. 3 ברכות כב. 4 ישעיה סה, ה 5 יבמות ד.

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CONSTRUCTING GUARDRAILS

THIRD READING

- [8] *When you build a new house, you must make a guardrail for your roof.*
- *Do not allow blood (to be spilled) in your house, when one (who is destined) to fall, falls from (your unprotected roof).*

FORBIDDEN MIXTURES

- [9] *You may not sow your vineyard with a mixture of seeds, for then the (seeds') growth and even the seed that you planted together with the (fruit) yield of the vineyard will become forbidden.*
- [10] *You may not plow with an ox and a donkey together.*
- [11] *You may not wear shatnez, (which is) wool and linen together.*
- [12] *You should make yourself twisted threads (tzitzis), on the four corners of your garment with which you cover yourself, (even from a mixture of wool and linen).*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why may one not plow with an ox and a donkey? (v. 10)

RAMBAN: Because it would lead to the further prohibition of crossbreeding species (*Vayikra* 19:19). For the farmer will house the ox and the donkey together, and they will breed with each other.

● To what extent may wool and linen not be mixed? (v. 11)

RASHI: If wool and linen are combed together, *and* spun into thread *and* woven together into cloth, then it is Biblically forbidden [to wear a garment that is made from this cloth] (as quoted in *Tur, Yoreh De'ah* ch. 300).

RABEINU TAM: Woolen thread and linen thread that were prepared separately will become Biblically prohibited if they are woven together as one cloth (*Tosfos* ibid.).

RAMBAM: When wool and linen are bound together in any way whatsoever, the product is prohibited by the Torah (*Laws of Forbidden Mixtures* 10:2).

TORAS MENACHEM

would come to observe these *mitzvos* as a result of sending away the mother bird. Nevertheless, the fact that the Torah placed these precepts alongside the others did indicate to *Rashi* that they are connected in terms of *physical* reward: *"If you have fulfilled the mitzvah of sending away the mother bird...you will then come to possess a vineyard, a field, and fine clothes."*

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 9, p. 133ff.)

FORBIDDEN MIXTURES (v. 9-11)

The three prohibited mixtures mentioned in verses 9-11 share a similar theme, but a key distinction between them concerns the *extent* of the mixture. With the mixing of seeds (v. 9), the result is a new entity of a single, forbidden crop, which grows together and becomes harvested together as one. However, in the case of plowing with an ox and a donkey together (v. 10), no actual mixing results, for after the plowing is complete, the ox remains an ox and the donkey, a donkey.

We may therefore ask the question: Which of these two types of mixtures does the prohibition of *shatnez* (v. 11) most resemble?

Perhaps we could argue that this was the source of contention between ***Rashi*** and ***Rabeinu Tam***. *Rashi* understood that *shatnez* most resembled the prohibition of mixed seeds, where two crops merge into one. Therefore, he wrote that, in order for a garment to become *shatnez*, the fibers must be totally mixed as one through all the stages: combing, spinning and weaving.

However, *Rabeinu Tam* understood that *shatnez* resembles the prohibition of plowing with an ox and a donkey together, where the two elements retain their individual identity. Therefore, he ruled that woolen thread and linen thread that were prepared separately will become Biblically prohibited if they are woven together as one cloth.

Rabeinu Tam's reasoning appears to be the more obvious of the two, since the Torah actually places the prohibition of *shatnez* (v. 11) *directly after* the prohibition of plowing with an ox and donkey together (v. 10), suggesting that they are linked. Furthermore, these two verses constitute one single paragraph in the Hebrew text of the Torah, which stresses their connection further; whereas the prohibition of sowing mixed seeds (v. 9) is recorded separately, in the previous paragraph, suggesting that it is of a different nature.

Sparks of Chasidus

"MAKE A GUARDRAIL FOR YOUR ROOF" (v. 8)

A roof, being the highest part of any structure, alludes to the ego, which gives a person an elevated impression of himself. Thus, in order to prevent a person from "falling off his roof," by allowing his feelings of swollen self-esteem to degenerate into selfishness, we are warned to *"make a guardrail for your roof"*—to carefully control and temper the ego with "guardrails"!

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 24, p. 140)

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כְּסוּתְךָ אֲשֶׁר תְּכַסֶּה־בָּהּ: ס יג כִּי־יִקַּח אִישׁ אִשָּׁה וּבָא אֵלֶיהָ
וּשְׂנֵאָהּ: יד וְשָׂם לָהּ עֲלִילֹת דְּבָרִים וְהוֹצִא עָלֶיהָ שֵׁם רָע
וְאָמַר אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה הַזֹּאת לָקַחְתִּי וָאֶקְרַב אֵלֶיהָ וְלֹא־מָצָאתִי
לָהּ בְּתוּלִים: טו וְלָקַח אֲבִי הַנַּעֲרָ* וְאִמָּהּ וְהוֹצִיאוּ אֶת־בְּתוּלֵי
הַנַּעֲרָ* אֶל־זִקְנֵי הָעִיר הַשָּׁעְרָה: טז וְאָמַר אֲבִי הַנַּעֲרָ* אֶל־
הַזְּקֵנִים אֶת־בִּתִּי נָתַתִּי לָאִישׁ הַזֶּה לְאִשָּׁה וַיִּשְׂנָאֶהָ: יז וְהִנֵּה־
הוּא שָׂם עֲלִילֹת דְּבָרִים לֵאמֹר לֹא־מָצָאתִי לְבִתְּךָ בְּתוּלִים
וְאֵלֶּה בְּתוּלֵי בִתִּי וּפָרְשׂוּ הַשִּׂמְלָה לִפְנֵי זִקְנֵי הָעִיר: יח וְלָקְחוּ
זִקְנֵי הָעִיר־הַהִוא אֶת־הָאִישׁ וְיִסְּרוּ אֹתוֹ: יט וְעָנְשׁוּ אֹתוֹ מֵאָה
כֶסֶף וְנָתְנוּ לַאֲבִי הַנַּעֲרָה כִּי הוֹצִיא שֵׁם רָע עַל בְּתוּלַת
יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלוֹ־תִהְיֶה לְאִשָּׁה לֹא־יוּכַל לְשַׁלְּחָהּ כָּל־יָמָיו: ס
כ וְאִם־אֱמֶת הָיָה הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה לֹא־נִמְצְאוּ בְתוּלִים לַנַּעֲרָ**:
כא וְהוֹצִיאוּ אֶת־הַנַּעֲרָ* אֶל־פֶּתַח בֵּית־אָבִיהָ וּסְקָלוּהָ אַנְשֵׁי
עִירָהּ בָּאֲבָנִים וָמֵתָה כִּי־עָשְׂתָה נְבָלָה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל לִזְנוֹת בֵּית

*קרי הנערה **קרי לנערה

כסותך די תכסי בה: יג ארי יסב גבר אתתא
ויעול לותה ויסננה: יד וישוי לה תסקופי מלין
ויפק עלה שום ביש ויימר ית אתתא הדא
נסיבית ועלית לותה ולא אשכחית לה בתולין:
טו ויסב אבוהא דעולמתא ואמה ויפקון ית
בתולי עולמתא לקדם סבי קרתא לתרע
בית דין אתרא: טז ויימר אבוהא דעולמתא
לסביא ית ברתי יהבית לגברא הדין לאנתו
וסנאה: יז והא הוא שוי תסקופי מלין למימר
לא אשכחית לברתך בתולין ואלין בתולי ברתי
ויפרסון שושפא קדם סבי קרתא: יח וידברון
סבי קרתא ההיא ית גברא וילקון יתה:
יט ויגבון מנה מאה סלעין דכסף ויתנון
לאבוהא דעולמתא ארי אפק שום ביש על
בתולתא דישראל ולה תהי לאנתו לית לה
רשו למפטרה כל יומוהי: כ ואם קושטא הוה
פתגמא הדין לא אשתכחו בתולין לעולמתא:
כא ויפקון ית עולמתא לתרע בית אבוהא
וירגמנה אנשי קרתה באבניא ותמות ארי
עבדת קלנא בישראל לזנאה בית אבוהא
ותפלי עבד דביש מבינך: כב ארי ישתכח

רש"י

(יג) ובא אליה ושנאה. סופו: **(יד) ושם לה עלילות דברים.** עבירה גוררת עבירה, עבר על לא תשנא[1] סופו לבא לידי לשון הרע[2]: **את האשה הזאת.** מכאן שאין אומר דבר אלא בפני בעל דין[2]: **(טו) אבי הנערה ואמה.** מי שגדלו גידולים הרעים יתבזו עליה: **(טז) ואמר אבי הנערה.** מלמד שאין רשות לאשה לדבר בפני האיש[2]: **(יז) ופרשו השמלה.** הרי זה משל, מחוורין הדברים כשמלה[3]: **(יח) ויסרו אותו.** מלקות[3]: **(כ) ואם אמת היה הדבר.** בעדים והתראה שזנתה לאחר אירוסין[3]: **(כא) אל פתח בית אביה.** ראו גידולים שגדלתם[4]: **לזנות בית אביה.** כמו בבית אביה: **וסקלוה אנשי**

TORAS MENACHEM

was prohibited. *Rashi* followed the reasoning of ***Ramban***, that the Torah prohibited plowing with an ox and donkey together because it would lead to the further prohibition of crossbreeding species (*Vayikra* 19:19). Therefore, when *Rashi* saw that the Torah placed the two prohibitions of

Rashi, however, agreed that the inclusion of the two prohibitions (*shatnez* and plowing with an ox and donkey) in one paragraph suggests that they are of a similar nature. However, where he differed with *Rabeinu Tam* was in his understanding of *why* plowing with two different animals

	WOOL AND LINEN FIBERS COMBED TOGETHER	WOOL AND LINEN FIBERS SPUN TOGETHER	WOOL AND LINEN THREAD WOVEN TOGETHER	IS IT *SHATNEZ*, ACCORDING TO *RASHI*?	IS IT *SHATNEZ*, ACCORDING TO *RABEINU TAM*?	IS IT *SHATNEZ*, ACCORDING TO *RAMBAM*?
CASE 1	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
CASE 2	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓
CASE 3	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
CASE 4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

1 ויקרא יט, יז 2 ספרי 3 כתובות מו: 4 שם מה.

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DEFAMATION OF A MARRIED WOMAN

22:13 *If a man takes a wife, is intimate with her and hates her, [14] and he makes scandalous accusations against her and defames her name, saying, "I took this woman, and when I came to her, I did not find proof of her virginity." [15] Then the girl's father and her mother should take proof of the girl's virginity, and bring it out to the elders of the city, at the gate(s of justice):*

- *[16] The girl's father should say to the elders, "I gave my daughter to this man as a wife, and he hated her. [17] He has now made scandalous accusations, saying, 'I did not find proof of your daughter's virginity.' But here is the evidence of my daughter's virginity!"*
- *(If the facts are as clear) before the elders of the city, (like a) garment (which is) spread out:*
    - *[18] The elders of the city should take the man and reprimand him (with lashes).*
    - *[19] They should fine him one hundred silver (shekels), because he defamed the name of a Jewish virgin, and give it to the girl's father.*
    - *She must remain as his wife. He may not send her away all the days of his life.*
- *[20] But if these words (of the husband) were true, and it was proven that the girl was not a virgin (and she had committed adultery after she was betrothed):*
    - *[21] They should take the girl out to the entrance of her father's house, and the people of her city should pelt her to death with stones—because she did a disgraceful act in Israel, committing adultery (in) her father's house—and you will eliminate the evil from among you.*

TORAS MENACHEM

shatnez and plowing with two different animals side by side in the same paragraph, he concluded that all forbidden mixtures are fundamentally based on the same idea—making a new entity from the mixture. And just as the Torah prohibits plowing with two species together, for fear they will merge into a new entity (through cross-breeding), so too, we are prohibited to wear a garment of wool and linen fibers that have merged into a new entity, *i.e.* bound together during *all three* processes of combing, spinning and weaving.

THE VIEW OF RAMBAM

Rambam ruled that if wool and linen are combined in any way, the result is *shatnez*. For example, if wool and linen raw fibers were only combed together (and not spun or woven) and then pressed into felt, it would be *shatnez* according to *Rambam*.

Thus, *Rambam* took a position which partially accepted the arguments of both *Rashi* and *Rabeinu Tam*. *Rashi* held that *shatnez* is the creation of a new entity, and that therefore the prohibition applies only when the wool and linen are combined at *all* stages of the process (combing, spinning and weaving). *Rabeinu Tam* prohibited only the act of combining wool and linen *after* they have been processed (combed, *etc.*) separately. *Rambam* (like *Rashi*) defined *shatnez* as a combination even in the formative stages, but deemed one act of combination sufficient (like *Rabeinu Tam*).*

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, p. 123*ff.*)

Sparks of Chasidus

"I GAVE MY DAUGHTER TO THIS MAN..." (v. 16)

Our Sages learned from the verse, *"I gave my daughter to this man"* (v. 16), that a father may betroth his daughter to a man while she is still a child (*Kidushin* 3b).

According to Chasidic teachings, the concept of marriage between a man and woman on earth is a physical manifestation of the union between God and the Jewish people.

The fact that a father may betroth his daughter while she is a child teaches us the power of God's love for the Jewish people, that He wishes to "betroth" us with an eternal spiritual bond, even though we are but a "child" compared to Him.

Why was this concept recorded here, amid the laws of defamation? Defamation is an allusion to exile, as we find that the spies brought about the first "exile" through defaming the Land of Israel. So the Torah recorded the law of child betrothal here, to teach us that even amid the darkest moments of exile, God remains loyally betrothed to the Jewish people—and from this love the Redemption will blossom.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Ki Seitzei* 5745)

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* *Rambam* shared the outlook of *Rashi* and *Rabeinu Tam*, that the prohibition of *shatnez* is learned from the "adjacent" prohibition of plowing with mixed species together. But, due to the fact that *Rambam* understood the latter prohibition differently, he therefore made a dissenting ruling with regard to *shatnez*. In his *Laws of Forbidden Mixtures* (9:2), *Rambam* writes, "*It is permitted to place two different species in one enclosed area, and if one sees them mating, one is not required to separate them*," *i.e.* he saw no problem with the *outcome* of breeding two species together. Thus, it is not the creation of a new entity which *Rambam* perceived as problematic, but rather the *act* (alone) of causing two different species to mate. From this, he came to a similar conclusion about *shatnez*: that the Torah prohibits wearing a garment that has undergone *any* act of mixing wool and linen together (be it during the combing, spinning or weaving), even if they have not been completely combined into a new entity.

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אביה ובערת הרע מקרבך: ס כב כי־ימצא איש שכב | עם־
אשה בעלת־בעל ומתו גם־שניהם האיש השכב עם־האשה
והאשה ובערת הרע מישראל: ס כג כי יהיה נער* בתולה
מארשה לאיש ומצאה איש בעיר ושכב עמה: כד והוצאתם
את־שניהם אל־שער | העיר ההוא וסקלתם אתם באבנים
ומתו את־הנער* על־דבר אשר לא־צעקה בעיר ואת־האיש
על־דבר אשר־ענה את־אשת רעהו ובערת הרע מקרבך: ס
כה ואם־בשדה ימצא האיש את־הנער* המארשה והחזיק־
בה האיש ושכב עמה ומת האיש אשר־שכב עמה לבדו:
כו ולנער* לא־תעשה דבר אין לנער* חטא מות כי כאשר יקום
איש על־רעהו ורצחו נפש כן הדבר הזה: כז כי בשדה
מצאה צעקה הנער* המארשה ואין מושיע לה: ס כח כי־
ימצא איש נער* בתולה אשר לא־ארשה ותפשה ושכב עמה
ונמצאו: כט ונתן האיש השכב עמה לאבי הנער* חמשים כסף
ולו־תהיה לאשה תחת אשר ענה לא־יוכל שלחה כל־ימיו:
ס כג א לא־יקח איש את־אשת אביו ולא יגלה כנף אביו: ס
ב לא־יבא פצוע־דכא** וכרות שפכה בקהל יהוה: ס ג לא־
יבא ממזר בקהל יהוה גם דור עשירי לא־יבא לו בקהל
יהוה: ס ד לא־יבא עמוני ומואבי בקהל יהוה גם דור עשירי
לא־יבא להם בקהל יהוה עד־עולם: ה על־דבר אשר לא־
קדמו אתכם בלחם ובמים בדרך בצאתכם ממצרים ואשר

גבר דשכיב עם איתתא אתת גבר ויתקטלון
אף תרויהון גברא דשכיב עם איתתא ואיתתא
ותפלי עבד דביש מישראל: כג ארי תהי
עולימתא בתולתא דמארסא לגבר וישכחנה
גבר בקרתא וישכוב עמה: כד ותפקון ית
תרויהון לתרע קרתא ההיא ותרגמון יתהון
באבניא וימותון ית עולימתא על עסק די
לא צוחת בקרתא וית גברא על עסק דעני
ית איתת חברה ותפלי עבד דביש מבינך:
כה ואם בחקלא ישכח גבר ית עולימתא
דמארסא ויתקף בה גברא וישכוב עמה
ויתקטיל גברא דשכיב עמה בלחודוהי:
כו ולעולימתא לא תעביד מדעם לית
לעולימתא חובת דין דקטול ארי כמא דיקום
גברא על חברה ויקטלנה נפש כן פתגמא
הדין: כז ארי בחקלא אשכחה צוחת
עולימתא דמארסא ולית דפריק לה: כח ארי
ישכח גבר עולימתא בתולתא די לא מארסא
ויחדנה וישכוב עמה וישתכחון: כט ויתן
גברא דישכוב עמה לאבוהא דעולימתא
חמשין סלעין דכסף ולה תהי לאנתו חלף די
ענייה לית לה רשו למפטרה כל יומוהי:
א לא יסב גבר ית איתת אבוהי ולא יגלי
כנפא דאבוהי: ב לא ידכי דפסיק ודמתבל
למעל בקהלא דיי: ג לא ידכי ממזרא למעל
בקהלא דיי אף דרא עשיראה לא ידכי לה
למעל בקהלא דיי: ד לא ידכון עמונאי
ומואבאי למעל בקהלא דיי אף דרא
עשיראה לא ידכי להון למעל בקהלא דיי
עד עלם: ה על עסק די לא ערעו יתכון
בלחמא ובמיא בארחא במפקכון ממצרים
ודי אגר עלך ית בלעם בר בעור מפתור

*קרי נערה *הנערה *לנערה *לנערה **לתועלת הקוראים נראה להזכיר בכאן פסק הדין של רבנו הזקן, בעל התניא - פסק במסורת דוודה - והשרש - פסק בהלכה ותורה - לכתוב פצוע דכא באל"ף בסופו, וכמו שהובא בשו"ת פארית יהודא סי' פ"ו לאחד רבנו הזקן (ונקבצו הדיעות בזה בס' משנת אברהם סי' ל"ב). ושמעתי מכ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע אשר בהיותו לפני המלחמה העולמית הראשונה בעיר ווארשא, ראה שם הס"ת שקבלה בידם שכתבה מהר"ש מווארקה וכתוב שם כו', וכן ראה ג"כ בס"ת בפראג שע"פ הקבלה בידם מזמן דור שהגיהה עזרא הסופר, גם באוצר הספרים וכת"י של מר שזן [בלונדון] ומצאתי שם כתבי יד עתיקים (תנ"ך דוכתו של הרשב"א, תנ"ך בכת"י של תלמיד הרשב"א בעל המחבר ס' מגדל עוז, חומש ותרגום שנכתב לפני אלף ומאה שנה, חומש תנ"ך שנכתב לפני חמש מאות שנה, וכן תנ"ך שנכתב בערך חמש מאות שנה, וכן כת"י חומש ותנ"ך ג"כ מתקופה ההיא (ראה לקו"ש חכ"ד ע' 454) ובכולם כתוב דכא באל"ף, ולא מצאתי, אלא שבכת"י תנ"ך של המחבר מגדל עוז הרי כתוב דכה בה"א ובעל הספר מגדל עוז מחק בעצמו וכתב ותיקן כ"ה באל"ף (לקו"ש חכ"ט ע' 444. וראה גם בשו"ת דברי נחמיה דף ... הובא בהוספות לשו"ע אדה"ז זו"ק ח"ה עמ' 1898, וקצות השולחן, בבדי-השולחן סי' ...).

רש"י

עירה, במעמד כל אנשי עירה: (כב) ומתו גם שניהם. להוציא מעשה חדודים[1] שאין האשה נהנית מהם: גם. לרבות הבאים מאחריהם (ס"א מאחוריהם). דבר אחר גם שניהם לרבות את הולד, שאם היתה מעוברת אין ממתינין לה עד שתלד[2]: (כג) ומצאה איש בעיר. לפיכך שכב עמה, פרצה קוראה, לגנב הא אלו ישבה בביתה לא אירע לה[1]: (כו) כי כאשר יקום וגו'. לפי פשוטו זהו משמעו, כי אנוסה היא ובחזקה עמד עליה כאדם העומד על חברו להרגו. ורבותינו דרשו בו הרי זה בא ללמד ונמצא למד וכו': (א) לא יקח. אין לו בה ליקוחין ואין קידושין תופסין בה[3]: ולא יגלה כנף אביו. שומרת יבם של אביו הראויה לאביו. והרי כבר הוזהר עליה משום ערות אחי אביך[4], אלא לעבור על זו בשני לאוין[5], ולסמוך לה לא יבא ממזר, ללמד שאין ממזר אלא מחייבי כריתות וקל וחומר מחייבי מיתות בית דין, שאין בעריות מיתת בית דין שאין בה כרת[6]: (ב) פצוע דכה[6*]. שנפצעו או שנדכאו ביצים שלו[7]: וכרות שפכה. שנכרת הגיד ושוב אינו יורה קלוח זרע אלא שופך ושותת ואינו מוליד[7]: (ג) לא יבא ממזר בקהל ה'. לא ישא ישראלית[8]: (ד) לא יבא עמוני. לא ישא ישראלית[8]: (ה) על

1 ספרי. 2 ערכין ז. 3 קידושין סח. 4 ויקרא יח, יד. 5 יבמות ד. 6 שם מט. 6* כ"ה בדפוסים שלנו. אבל בכמה חומשים המדויקים גרסו 'דכאי' באל"ף. 7 שם עה: 8 שם עז.

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Violations of Intimacy

- *[22] If a man is found lying with a married woman, both of them must die—the man lying with the woman and the woman. Thus you will eliminate the evil from Israel.*
- *[23] If there is a virgin girl betrothed to a man, and (another) man finds her (lurking) in the city, and lies with her, [24] you should take them both out to the gate of that city, and you should pelt them both to death with stones—the girl, because she did not cry out in the city, and the man, because he violated his fellow's wife. Thus you will eliminate the evil from Israel.*
- *[25] But if a man finds the betrothed girl in a field, and the man overpowers her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her should die. [26] To the girl, you should do nothing. The girl did not commit a sin deserving of death, for in this case (the girl was forcibly coerced) like a man who assaults his fellow and murders him, [27] and since he found her in a field, there was nobody to save the betrothed girl when she cried out.*
- *[28] If a man finds a virgin girl who was not betrothed, takes hold of her and lies with her, and they are found:*
    - *[29] The man who lay with her must give fifty (shekels of) silver to the girl's father, because he violated her.*
    - *She must become his wife.*
    - *He may not send her away all the days of his life.*

Prohibited Marriages

23

- *[1] A man may not marry his father's wife.*
- *One may not uncover the clothing of (a woman destined for) his father (in Levirate marriage).*
- *[2] (A man) with damaged testicles or whose phallus is severed, may not (marry a Jewish woman and) enter the congregation of God.*
- *[3] A mamzer* may not (marry a Jewish woman and) enter the congregation of God. Even his tenth generation may not enter the congregation of God.*
- *[4] An Amonite or Mo'abite may not (convert and marry a Jewish woman and) enter the congregation of God. Even their tenth generation may not enter the congregation of God, [5] because of the (persuasive) talk (of the Mo'abite women that led you to sin**, and because)*

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

Surgical intervention for the treatment of an enlarged prostate gland, the lowering of an undescended testicle into the scrotum or scrotal hernia often involves explicit scriptural prohibitions against severing and disconnecting seminal organs (v. 2), even though alternative techniques may be permissible, without reservation. In any of these areas it is thus crucial that a Rabbi who is qualified to rule in these matters be consulted.

If there were surgeons who would be willing to testify publicly that they had successfully carried out prostate surgery without disconnecting the spermatic ducts, this would almost certainly influence other surgeons to do likewise. Publicity of this kind is worthwhile even if the possible results are limited.

(Based on *Sefer Haminhagim* p. 84)

*A person born of an adulterous or incestuous union (but not one born simply out of wedlock). **See *Bamidbar* 25:1-2.

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שָׂכַר עָלֶיךָ אֶת־בִּלְעָם בֶּן־בְּעוֹר מִפְּתוֹר אֲרַם נַהֲרַיִם לְקַלְלֶךָּ׃
ו וְלֹא־אָבָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶל־בִּלְעָם וַיַּהֲפֹךְ יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְּךָ אֶת־הַקְּלָלָה לִבְרָכָה כִּי אֲהֵבְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ׃
ז לֹא־תִדְרֹשׁ שְׁלֹמָם וְטֹבָתָם כָּל־יָמֶיךָ לְעוֹלָם׃ ס (רביעי) ח לֹא־
תְתַעֵב אֲדֹמִי כִּי אָחִיךָ הוּא לֹא־תְתַעֵב מִצְרִי כִּי־גֵר הָיִיתָ
בְאַרְצוֹ׃ ט בָּנִים אֲשֶׁר־יִוָּלְדוּ לָהֶם דּוֹר שְׁלִישִׁי יָבֹא לָהֶם בִּקְהַל
יְהוָה׃ ס י כִּי־תֵצֵא מַחֲנֶה עַל־אֹיְבֶיךָ וְנִשְׁמַרְתָּ מִכֹּל דָּבָר רָע׃
יא כִּי־יִהְיֶה בְךָ אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִהְיֶה טָהוֹר מִקְּרֵה־לָיְלָה וְיָצָא
אֶל־מִחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה לֹא יָבֹא אֶל־תּוֹךְ הַמַּחֲנֶה׃ יב וְהָיָה לִפְנוֹת־
עֶרֶב יִרְחַץ בַּמָּיִם וּכְבֹא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ יָבֹא אֶל־תּוֹךְ הַמַּחֲנֶה׃ יג וְיָד
תִּהְיֶה לְךָ מִחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה וְיָצָאתָ שָּׁמָּה חוּץ׃ יד וְיָתֵד תִּהְיֶה לְךָ

אֲרַם דִּי עַל פְּרָת לְלָטָיוּתָךְ׃ ו וְלָא אֲבָא יְיָ
אֱלָהָךְ לְקַבָּלָא מִן בִּלְעָם וַהֲפַךְ יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ לָךְ
יָת לְוָטִין לְבִרְכָן אֲרֵי רַחְמָךְ יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ׃
ז לָא תִתְבַּע שְׁלָמְהוֹן וְטָבַתְהוֹן כָּל יוֹמָךְ
לְעָלַם׃ ח לָא תְרַחֵק אֱדוֹמָאָה אֲרֵי אֲחוּךְ הוּא
לָא תְרַחֵק מִצְרָאָה אֲרֵי דַּיָּר הֲוֵיתָא בְּאַרְעֵהּ׃
ט בְּנִין דִּי יִתְיְלִידוּ לְהוֹן דָּרָא תְלִיתָאָה יִדְכּוּן
לְהוֹן לְמֵעַל בִּקְהָלָא דַייָ׃ י אֲרֵי תִפּוֹק
מַשְׁרִיתָא עַל בַּעֲלֵי דְבָבָךְ וְתִסְתַּמַּר מִכֹּל
מִדַּעַם בִּישׁ׃ יא אֲרֵי יְהֵי בָךְ גְּבַר דִּי לָא יְהֵי
דְּכֵי מִקְּרֵה לֵילְיָא וְיִפּוֹק לְמִבָּרָא לְמַשְׁרִיתָא
לָא יֵיעוֹל לְגוֹ מַשְׁרִיתָא׃ יב וִיהֵי לְמִפְנֵי רַמְשָׁא
יַסְחֵי בְּמַיָּא וּכְמֵעַל שִׁמְשָׁא יֵיעוֹל לְגוֹ
מַשְׁרִיתָא׃ יג וַאֲתַר מְתַקַּן יְהֵי לָךְ מִבָּרָא
לְמַשְׁרִיתָא וְתִפּוֹק תַּמָּן לְבָרָא׃ יד וְסִכְּתָא תְּהֵי
לָךְ עַל זֵינָךְ וִיהֵי בְּמִפְּקָךְ לְבָרָא וְתַחְפַּר בַּהּ

רש״י

דבר. על העצה שיעצו אתכם להחטיאכם[1]: **בדרך.** כשהייתם בטירוף[1]: **(ז) לא תדרוש שלומם.** מכלל שנאמר[2] עמך ישב בקרבך יכול אף זה כן, תלמוד לומר לא תדרוש שלומם: **(ח) לא תתעב אדומי.** לגמרי ואף על פי שראוי לך לתעבו שיצא בחרב לקראתך: **לא תתעב מצרי.** מכל וכל אף על פי שזרקו זכוריכם ליאור. מה טעם, שהיו לכם אכסניא בשעת הדחק, לפיכך: **(ט) בנים אשר יולדו להם דור שלישי.** ושאר אומות מותרין מיד. הא למדת שהמחטיא לאדם קשה לו מן ההורגו, שההורגו הורגו בעולם הזה, והמחטיאו מוציאו מן העולם הזה ומן העולם הבא, לפיכך אדום שקדמם בחרב לא נתעב ובן מצרים שטבעום, ואלו שהחטיאום נתעבו[1]: **(י) כי תצא וגו' ונשמרת.** שהשטן מקטרג בשעת הסכנה[3]: **(יא) מקרה לילה.** דבר הכתוב בהווה[1]: **ויצא אל מחוץ למחנה.** זו מצות עשה: **לא יבא אל תוך המחנה.** זו מצות לא תעשה. ואסור ליכנס למחנה לויה, וכל שכן למחנה שכינה[1]: **(יב) והיה לפנות ערב.** סמוך להערב שמשו יטבול, שאינו טהור בלא הערב שמש[1]: **(יג) ויד תהיה לך.** כתרגומו, כמו איש על ידו[4]:

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

"When You Go Out As A Camp..." (v. 10)

What makes servicemen particularly receptive to the basic approach of Torah-true Judaism is, first of all, the very basic principle on which the military depends, namely obedience and discipline in the execution of an order by his commanding officer. Even though in civilian life a private may be superior to his C.O., the order must be executed promptly, whether or not the soldier understands its significance. This, of course, corresponds to the principle of *na'aseh v'nishma*, the condition on which Jews accepted the Torah and *mitzvos* from the Supreme Commander, the Giver of the Torah and *mitzvos*.

A further basic point in military life is the fact that a soldier cannot argue that his personal conduct and whether or not he obeys an order is his private affair, and he is prepared to suffer the consequences, etc. Whether he realizes it or not, his conduct may have implications for his entire unit and all the military. In case of an emergency or war, the personal conduct of a single soldier could very seriously affect his platoon and brigade and division and the entire military operation, the whole army and country. Thus it is not just a question of one soldier's personal moral attitude; it is of vital importance to the whole army, sometimes even in time of peace.

Applying the analogy to Jewish life, it becomes quite evident how vitally important is every Jew's commitment to Torah and *mitzvos* in his personal life and in spreading *Yiddishkeit* to the fullest extent of his influence. It may be added that the Jewish people live in a state of emergency, what with the general atmosphere of trends and ideas which are inimical to the Torah way, and a Jew having to fight to overcome all and sundry alien forces which tend to undermine his spiritual, hence also physical, existence.

In other words, every Jew must consider himself a "soldier" in God's Army (*Tzivos Hashem*) and be on a constant alert to spread the light of the Torah and *mitzvos*, until the time when *"God's Glory will be revealed, and all flesh shall see"* (Isaiah 40:5), and *"all the earth will be full of the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea"* (Ibid. 11:9)—which will come to pass with the appearance of Mashiach Tzidkeinu, may he come speedily in our time.

(Excerpt from a letter of the Rebbe dated 24 Adar, 5737)

1 ספרי 2 פסוק יז 3 ירושלמי שבת פ"ב ה"ו 4 במדבר ב, יז

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they did not greet you with bread and water on the road when you were (exhausted after) leaving Egypt, and because (the people of Mo'av) hired Bilam—the son of Be'or, from Pesor in Aram Naharayim—against you, to curse you. [6] *But God, your God, did not want to listen to Bilam, and God, your God, transformed the curse into a blessing for you, because God, your God, loves you.*

- [7] *You must never seek peace or anything good with them all your days.*

FOURTH READING

- [8] *You should not (completely) despise an Edomite, for he is your brother, and you should not (completely) despise an Egyptian, for you were residents in his land.* [9] *Children who are born to them in the third generation may (convert and marry a Jewish woman and) enter the congregation of God.*

SANCTITY OF THE CAMP

[10] *When you go out as a camp against your enemies, you should be careful to avoid anything evil (because, at a time of danger, prosecutions of the Heavenly Court are more severe).*

- [11] *If there is a man among you who is ritually impure, (e.g.) due to a nocturnal emission:*
  - *He should go outside the camp.*
  - *He should not come within the (Levite) camp.*
  - [12] *Then, towards evening he should immerse in (mikvah) water, and when the sun sets, he may come into the camp.*
- [13] *You should have a designated place outside (the cloud surrounding) the camp, so that you can go out there (to use it as a toilet).*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Does the prohibition of marrying an Amonite, Moabite, Edomite or Egyptian convert apply nowadays? (v. 4-9)

RAMBAM: When King Sancheriv, King of Assyria, rose to power, he confused the identity of all the nations and mixed them together, exiling them from their homelands. Those "Egyptians" who now inhabit Egypt are different people, and likewise the "Edomites" in the area of Edom.

Now that these four forbidden nations have become mixed with all the other nations of the world from whom it is permissible to marry their converts, every convert has become permitted. This is because when one of them separates himself out from the others by converting, we presume that he belongs to the majority* [of permitted nations].

Thus, nowadays, wherever a convert converts, regardless of whether he is an Edomite, Egyptian, Amonite, Moabite, Kushite, or of another nationality, whether male or female—that person is permitted to "enter the congregation" immediately (*Laws of Forbidden Relations* 12:25).

LEVUSH: Certainly a minority of the original Egyptian nation remained in Egypt. Thus while they are *clearly stationed in their original place* we cannot apply the principle that the identity of the minority is nullified.* However, when an individual converts and *separates himself out* from them* we can presume that he is from the majority of permitted nations, and thus is fit to marry a Jew upon conversion (*Even Ha'ezer* ch. 4).

TORAS MENACHEM

THE EGYPTIAN CONVERT (v. 9)

Rambam rules that, nowadays, it is permissible to marry an Egyptian convert and that one does not have to wait for "*children who are born to them in the third generation*" (v. 9), because "*when one of them singles himself out from the others by converting, we presume that he belongs to the majority* [*of permitted nations*]."

Here *Rambam* has applied the *Talmudic* principle that *kol d'parish m'ruba parish*—"anything that becomes separated from a mixture is considered to have come from the majority of the mixture" (see note). Thus, even though a remnant of the original Egyptian nation still remains in Egypt (as ***Levush*** writes), nevertheless, when one person is separated from this population, we can presume that he belongs to the majority (of non-Egyptians).

*This discussion involves a number of Talmudic principles that are employed to resolve cases of uncertainty that arise when non-distinguishable items are mixed together. The most straightforward rule is that of following the majority (*rov*), based on which the *Talmud* concludes in many instances that *kol d'parish m'ruba parish*—"*anything that becomes separated from a mixture is considered to have come from the majority of the mixture.*" However, there are many exceptions to this rule, where we do not follow the majority, such as when the item is clearly identifiable, or when the item has the status of "an item of importance" (see *Tosfos* to *Chulin* 95a, s.v. *slayka*; ibid. *Zevachim* 73b, s.v. *aileh*). The exception under discussion here is, *kol kavua k'mechtsah al mechtsah dami*, which means: "*items that were clearly stationed within their original mixture are of an indeterminate status,*"

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עַל־אֲזֵנֶךָ וְהָיָה בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ חוּץ וְחָפַרְתָּה בָהּ וְשַׁבְתָּ וְכִסִּיתָ
אֶת־צֵאָתֶךָ: טו כִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִתְהַלֵּךְ | בְּקֶרֶב מַחֲנֶךָ
לְהַצִּילְךָ וְלָתֵת אֹיְבֶיךָ לְפָנֶיךָ וְהָיָה מַחֲנֶיךָ קָדוֹשׁ וְלֹא־יִרְאֶה
בְךָ עֶרְוַת דָּבָר וְשָׁב מֵאַחֲרֶיךָ: ס טז לֹא־תַסְגִּיר עֶבֶד אֶל־אֲדֹנָיו
אֲשֶׁר־יִנָּצֵל אֵלֶיךָ מֵעִם אֲדֹנָיו: יז עִמְּךָ יֵשֵׁב בְּקִרְבְּךָ בַּמָּקוֹם
אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר בְּאַחַד שְׁעָרֶיךָ בַּטּוֹב לוֹ לֹא תּוֹנֶנּוּ: ס יח לֹא־תִהְיֶה
קְדֵשָׁה מִבְּנוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה קָדֵשׁ מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: יט לֹא־
תָבִיא אֶתְנַן זוֹנָה וּמְחִיר כֶּלֶב בֵּית יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְכָל־נֶדֶר כִּי
תוֹעֲבַת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ גַּם־שְׁנֵיהֶם: ס כ לֹא־תַשִּׁיךְ לְאָחִיךָ נֶשֶׁךְ

וְתִתּוּב וּתְכַסֵּי יָת מַפְּקָתָךְ: טו אֲרֵי יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ
שְׁכִנְתֵּהּ מְהַלְּכָא בְּגוֹ מַשְׁרִיתָךְ לְשֵׁיזָבוּתָךְ
וּלְמִמְסַר בַּעֲלֵי דְבָבָךְ קֳדָמָךְ וּתְהֵי מַשְׁרִיתָךְ
קַדִּישָׁא וְלָא יִתְחֲזֵי בָךְ עֲבֵירַת פִּתְגָּם וִיתוּב
מֵימְרֵהּ מִלְּאוֹטָבָא לָךְ: טז לָא תִמְסַר
עֲבַד עַמְמִין לִיד רִבּוֹנֵהּ דְּיִשְׁתֵּיזֵב לְוָתָךְ מִלְּוָת
רִבּוֹנֵהּ: יז עִמָּךְ יְתֵב בֵּינָךְ בְּאַתְרָא דִּי יִתְרְעֵי
בְּחַד מִן קִרְוָיךְ בִּדְיֵיטַב לֵהּ לָא תּוֹנְנֵהּ:
יח לָא תְהֵי אִתְּתָא מִבְּנַת יִשְׂרָאֵל לִגְבַר עֲבַד
וְלָא יִסַּב גַּבְרָא מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אִתְּתָא אַמְתָא:
יט לָא תַעֵל אֲגַר זָנִיתָא וְחוּלְפַן כַּלְבָּא לְבֵית
מַקְדְּשָׁא דַּיְיָ אֱלָהָךְ לְכָל נִדְרָא אֲרֵי מְרַחַק
קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ אַף תַּרְוֵיהוֹן: כ לָא תְרַבֵּי
לְאָחוּךְ רִבִּית כְּסַף רִבִּית עֲבוּר רִבִּית

רש"י

מחוץ למחנה. חוץ למחנה: (יד) **על אזנך.** לבד משאר כלי תשמישך: **אזנך.** כמו כלי זיינך: (טו) **ולא יראה בך.** הקב"ה ערות דבר: (טז) **לא תסגיר עבד.** כתרגומו. דבר אחר אפילו עבד כנעני של ישראל שברח מחוצה לארץ לארץ ישראל[1]: (יח) **לא תהיה קדשה.** מופקרת, מקודשת ומזומנת לזנות: **ולא יהיה קדש.** מזומן למשכב זכור[2]. ואונקלוס תרגם לא תהא איתתא מבנת ישראל לגבר עבדא, שאף זו מופקרת לבעילת זנות היא, מאחר שאין קדושין תופסין לו בה, שהרי הוקשו לחמור, שנאמר שבו לכם פה עם החמור[3], עם הדומה לחמור[4]. ולא יסב גברא מבני ישראל אתתא אמתא, שאף הוא נעשה קדש על ידה, שכל בעילותיו בעילות זנות, שאין קדושין תופסין לו בה: (יט) **אתנן זונה.** נתן לה טלה באתננה פסול להקרבה[5]: **ומחיר כלב.** החליף שה בכלב: **גם שניהם.** לרבות שינוייהם, כגון חטים ועשאן סלת[6]: (כ) **לא תשיך.** אזהרה ללוה שלא יתן רבית למלוה, ואחר כך אזהרה למלוה את

TORAS MENACHEM

At first glance however, there appears to be a problem with this argument:

The principle that an item is "considered to have come from the majority of the mixture" can only be employed when that item becomes separated from the *mixture*. However, before it is separated, we apply the rule that *kol kavua k'mechtsah al mechtsah dami* ("items which are clearly stationed within their original mixture are of an indeterminate status.")

Thus, *Rambam's* dispensation to marry a first-generation Egyptian convert would only appear to be valid *outside Egypt, after* the individual became *separated* from the mixed population of "real" Egyptians and others. For as long as the convert remains in the Land of Egypt he is "clearly stationed within the original mixture" and is thus "of an indeterminate status." Why then did *Rambam* not state explicitly that his dispensation applies only *outside* Egypt?**

We might argue that *Rambam* maintained that the tiny number of Egyptians remaining somewhere in Egypt are outweighed by the majority. But this is not the case, since *Rambam* rules that the prohibition against a *Jew living* in Egypt is still in force in the present age (see *Laws of Kings* 5:7). And since *Rambam* understood that living in Egypt is prohibited due to the negative influence of the Egyptian people ("*so we do not learn from their deeds,*" *Sefer Hamitzvos*, prohibition 46), it follows that he considered even the minority of original Egyptian people that exist today in Egypt as being sufficient to keep this prohibition in force.

From this we see that *Rambam did* accept the argument that when the minority of original Egyptians are stationed within their "original mixture" (i.e. in Egypt), their effect is *not* outweighed by the majority of non-Egyptians.***

This appears to further strengthen our previous question: Why did *Rambam* not rule that a convert from Egypt may not marry a Jew while the former is still found in Egypt ("clearly stationed" in his "original mixture")?

The Explanation

Rambam stresses that it is permissible to marry an Egyptian convert in the present age because when "one of them separates himself out from the others *by converting*, we presume that he belongs to the majority [of permitted nations]."

(*Zevachim* ibid.). The term, "kavua," is literally translated as "firmly established" and usually refers to an item after it was taken from its original location. If the item was "*kavua*," we do not follow the general principle of majority rule. For further discussion of this subject see *Sha'arei Yosher, Sha'ar Dalet*; *Ait Sofer* (by Rabbi Eliezer Zusman Sofer, 1888-92), *Sugyos Hashas, Klal Kavua*. See also *Sichos Shabbos Parshas Bo* 5751, note 42. (*Editor's note*) **cf. *Yevamos* 16b, *Rashi* s.v. *bedechta dekeviyi*. ***Furthermore, logically speaking, the minority of original Egyptians would not be insignificant, since: a.) The prohibition is motivated by the debased *quality* of the Egyptians' deeds, and not their *quantity*. b.) The debased activities of the original Egyptians are not out of character from the rest of the population—they are merely debased to a greater degree. Thus it is likely that even a small number of Egyptians would succeed in pushing an *already* debased population to further extremes.

1 גיטין מה. 2 סנהדרין נד: 3 בראשית כב, ה 4 קידושין סח. 5 ספרי 6 תמורה ל:

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- [14] *In addition to your weapons, you should keep a shovel. Then, when you sit down outside (to relieve yourself), you should (first) dig a hole with it, and then you may sit down, (and afterwards) cover your excrement.*

[15] *Since God, your God, is accompanying your camp, to save you and to place your enemies before you, your camp should be holy. Then He will not see any immorality in you and turn away from you.*

Providing Refuge for Fleeing Slaves

- [16] *You should not hand over a slave to his master if he seeks refuge with you (in the Land of Israel) from his master.* [17] *He should (be allowed to) reside among you wherever he chooses, in one of your cities where it is good for him.*
- *You should not oppress him.*

Modesty

- [18] *No Jewish girl may be promiscuous.*
- *No Jewish man may be promiscuous.*
- [19] *You should not bring an (animal that was used to) pay a harlot, (even if) it was exchanged for a dog, to the House of God, your God, to fulfill any (sacrificial) vow, because both (the animal and anything it is exchanged for) are an abomination to God, your God.*

Toras Menachem

At first glance, this emphasis that the separation is "by converting" is difficult to understand. For even if a resident of Egypt singled himself out merely by leaving the geographical boundaries of Egypt he would cease to have any association with the original Egyptian nation, since *kol d'parish m'ruba parish*—"anything that becomes separated from a mixture is considered to have come from the majority of the mixture." Why, then, did *Rambam* stress that "one of them separates himself out from the others *by converting*"?

However, it could be argued that with this phrase, *Rambam* is addressing our above-mentioned question. *Rambam* is teaching us that the "separation" occurs, not via a geographic relocation, but rather, via a change in *halachic* status—by conversion itself. The resident of Egypt who converts to Judaism ceases to be part of the mixed population of Egypt, since the *conversion* "separates" him from the mixture. Therefore, we can safely apply the principle that *kol d'parish m'ruba parish*—"anything that becomes *separated* from a mixture is considered to have come from the majority of the mixture." And since the majority of the inhabitants of modern-day Egypt are not members of the original Egyptian nation, therefore, "*that person is permitted to convert and 'enter the congregation' immediately.*"

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 171*ff.*)

The Last Word

"Your Camp Should Be Holy..." (v. 15)

Holiness, purity and modesty are the foundations of the indwelling of the Divine Presence among Jews in general, and within every Jew, man and woman, in particular.

The sanctity of the "camp," the Jewish home, and of Jewish conduct, is clearly emphasized in the Torah: "*Your camp*—at home and outside the home—*should be holy. Then He will not see any immorality in you, and turn away from you*" (v. 15).

Our Sages explain that modesty and holiness must be observed in every aspect of Jewish life, including speech and thought, and certainly in dress and general conduct.

In this area, especially, as in certain other areas of Jewish life, the Jewish woman and daughter set the tone and standard, as experience has shown. Our Sages often stressed that the future and happiness of children is largely tied in with the modest conduct of the mother (See *Yoma* 47a; *Zohar* 126a).

(Free translation of Letter to Women's Convention, *Lag b'Omer* 5730)

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כֶּסֶף נֶשֶׁךְ אֹכֶל נֶשֶׁךְ כָּל־דָּבָר אֲשֶׁר יִשָּׁךְ: כא לַנָּכְרִי תַשִּׁיךְ
וּלְאָחִיךָ לֹא תַשִּׁיךְ לְמַעַן יְבָרֶכְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכֹל מִשְׁלַח
יָדֶךָ עַל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה בָא־שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ: ס כב כִּי־תִדֹּר
נֶדֶר לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא תְאַחֵר לְשַׁלְּמוֹ כִּי־דָרֹשׁ יִדְרְשֶׁנּוּ יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ מֵעִמָּךְ וְהָיָה בְךָ חֵטְא: כג וְכִי תֶחְדַּל לִנְדֹּר לֹא־יִהְיֶה
בְךָ חֵטְא: כד מוֹצָא שְׂפָתֶיךָ תִּשְׁמֹר וְעָשִׂיתָ כַּאֲשֶׁר נָדַרְתָּ
לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נְדָבָה אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ בְּפִיךָ: ס [חמישי] כה כִּי תָבֹא
בְּכֶרֶם רֵעֶךָ וְאָכַלְתָּ עֲנָבִים כְּנַפְשְׁךָ שָׂבְעֶךָ וְאֶל־כֶּלְיְךָ לֹא
תִתֵּן: ס כו כִּי תָבֹא בְּקָמַת רֵעֶךָ וְקָטַפְתָּ מְלִילֹת בְּיָדֶךָ וְחֶרְמֵשׁ

כל מדעם דמתרבי: כא לבר עממין תרבי
ולאחוך לא תרבי בדיל דיברכנך יי אלהך
בכל אושטות ידך על ארעא די את עלל
לתמן למירתה: כב ארי תדר נדר קדם יי
אלהך לא תאחר לשלמותה ארי מתבע
יתבעגה יי אלהך מנך ויהי בך חובא:
כג ואָרי תתמנע מלמדר לא יהי בך חובא:
כד אפקות ספותך תטר ותעביד כמא די
נדרתא קדם יי אלהך נדבתא די מללתא
בפומך: כה ארי תתגר בכרמא דחברך
ותיכול ענבין כנפשך שבעך ולמאנך לא
תתן: כו ארי תתגר בקמתא דחברך ותקטוף
דמלין בידך ומגלא לא תרים על קמתא

רש"י

כספך לא תתן לו בנשך[1]: (כא) **לנכרי תשיך.** ולא לאחיך. לאו הבא מכלל עשה, עשה, לעבור עליו בשני לאוין ועשה[2]: (כב) **לא תאחר לשלמו.** שלשה רגלים. ולמדוהו רבותינו מן המקרא[3]: (כד) **מוצא שפתיך תשמר.** ליתן עשה על לא תעשה: (כה) **כי תבא בכרם רעך.** בפועל הכתוב מדבר[4]: **ואל כליך לא תתן.** מכאן שלא דברה תורה אלא בשעת הבציר, בזמן שאתה נותן לכליו של בעל הבית, אבל אם בא לעדור ולקשקש, אינו אוכל: **כנפשך.** כמה שתרצה: **שבעך.** ולא אכילה גסה[5]: (כו) **כי תבא בקמת רעך.** אף זו בפועל הכתוב מדבר[5]:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Should one charge interest to a gentile? (v. 21)**

Rambam: It is a positive command to charge a gentile interest, as the verse states, *"You should charge a gentile interest"* (v. 21). We have received by oral tradition that this is a positive command (*Laws of Lending and Borrowing* 5:1).

● **To whom are verses 25-26 addressed?**

Rashi: To an employee.

Jerusalem Talmud: The verse states, *"When you come in your fellow's vineyard,"* which you might think refers to any person. Therefore the Torah clarifies, "You may not put any into *your* container," indicating that you are putting some into your *fellow's* container. So who does this refer to? An employee (*Ma'aseros* 2:4).

Babylonian Talmud: This verse mentions "coming" (*"When you come into your fellow's vineyard"*), and it is written below (24:15), *"do not let the sun set* (literally *"come"*) *upon him."* [The use of the same term in both places teaches us that]: Just as there the verse is speaking of an employee, so too here the verse is speaking of an employee (*Bava Metzia* 87b).

Rambam: The Torah states, *"When you come into your fellow's vineyard....When you come into your fellow's standing grain."* Oral tradition teaches us that scripture is referring specifically to an employee. For if he was not hired as an employee, how could he be allowed to come into his fellow's vineyard or standing grain without permission? Rather, the verse means: When you come *with the permission of the owner to work*, you may eat (*Laws of Employment* 12:1).

TORAS MENACHEM

Charging Interest (v. 20-21)

What is the logic behind ***Rambam***'s ruling that it is a *mitzvah* to charge interest to a non-Jew? We can appreciate that it might be *permissible* to do so, since it is commonplace among non-Jews to charge interest. But why should it be a positive *command*?

In principle, however, the Torah would *require* us to charge interest to *any* borrower, Jew or gentile. Being that it is an ethical, universally accepted practice to charge interest, failing to do so would be considered an unnecessary *wastage* of funds, which is *prohibited* by the Torah (see *Rambam, Laws of Kings* 6:8ff.).

It is only that in the case of a Jewish person, the Torah makes an *exception* to this rule and instructs: *"You may not cause your brother to pay interest"* (v. 20).

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev* 5747)

The Employee's Rights to Food (v. 25-26)

The *Rogatchover Ga'on* taught that many laws of the Torah can be identified as a function of either the *agent*, *the action* or the *result* of what is being carried out, and that this distinction can often take expression in various practical ramifications. In this light, there are three ways of approaching the principle recorded in verses 25 and 26, that an employee is entitled to eat some of the crops which he is harvesting, while at work:

a.) The *result* of the work is that, having harvested the crops, the employer *rewards* the employee. Thus, the fact that the employee is permitted to eat from the crops while at work could be perceived as a type of bonus payment given to the employee as a *result* of his work (in addition to his main payment for services rendered).

b.) Alternatively, permission to eat from the crops could be perceived as a function of the *action* of work itself, regardless of what that work actually

1 ויקרא כה, לז 2 בבא מציעא ע: 3 ראש השנה ד: 4 בבא מציעא פז: 5 שם פז:

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INTEREST

- 20 *You may not cause your brother to pay interest—interest on money, interest on food or interest on any other item for which interest may be taken.*
- 21 *You should charge a gentile interest, but to your brother you may not pay interest, in order that God, your God, will bless all the work of your hands upon the land which you are coming to take possession.*

FULFILLING PLEDGES

- 22 *When you make a vow to God, your God, you should not delay in paying it (beyond three festivals), since God, your God, will be sure to exact it from you, and you will have sinned.*
- 23 *It is not considered sinful for you to refrain from making vows.*
- 24 *Be careful to carry out what is uttered by your lips—whatever you have pledged to God, your God, as a donation, which you have spoken with your mouth.*

AN EMPLOYEE'S RIGHTS

FIFTH READING

- 25 *When you come (to work during the harvest season) in your fellow's vineyard, you may eat as many grapes as you desire until you are satisfied, but you may not put any into your container.*
- 26 *When you come (to work) in your fellow's (field of) standing grain, you may pluck ears with your hand (to eat them), but you may not lift a sickle on your fellow's standing grain.*

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

Grapes are an expensive commodity, whereas grain is relatively cheap. Thus, after reading that a person may eat his employer's grapes (in v. 25) it is *obvious* that he would be allowed to eat his employer's less valuable grain (v. 26). Surely then, the Torah should have stated the more obvious case first?

The distinction between grapes and grain is that the former is a sweet and tasty food eaten for pleasure, whereas the grain is eaten as a necessary, staple food.

A person who serves God in the manner of "grain" is one who sees the *mitzvos* as a necessary chore, and fulfills the minimum requirement out of a sense of obligation. On the other hand, one who serves God in the manner of "grapes" sees the observance of *mitzvos* as a delight and a pleasure.

Thus, when our Supernal "Employer," provides us with comfortable "working conditions" in this world so we can perform the task of observing His *mitzvos*, it is *more obvious* that He will provide for those who work in His "vineyard," serving Him with the joy and delight characterized by grapes. Thus, being that this is the more obvious case, the Torah recorded it first.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, pp. 133-4)

accomplishes, i.e. the fact that the employee is working and toiling for his employer, gives him the right to eat from the crops *as a part of* what the Torah deems to be fair.

c.) A third approach would be to see this law as a privilege of the *agent* of the work, the employee himself. In other words, the Torah granted the right to every employee that he may eat from the crops of his employer, as an inalienable right that is not directly work-related (similar to the gifts granted by Torah to poor people).

It could be argued that these were the three approaches of the ***Jerusalem Talmud***, ***Babylonian Talmud***, and ***Rambam***. Each of these texts came to the same conclusion, that verses 25 and 26 refer to an employee, but they reached this conclusion from different sources. This choice of sources reflects their underlying view whether the law is a function of the *agent*, the *action* or the *result* of the work:

a.) The *Jerusalem Talmud* understood that the law is a function of the *result* of the work (the work done). This is reflected in the *Jerusalem Talmud*'s choice of source, which speaks of the *actual harvest* gathered by the employee, i.e. what is being put into the container.

b.) The *Babylonian Talmud* understood that the law is a function of toil exerted in the *action* of the work. Thus, the *Babylonian Talmud*'s source is a verse which stresses the significant *efforts* of the employee: "You must give him his wage on the day it is due, and not let the sun set upon him, for he is poor, and *he endangers his life (to work for you).*"

c.) *Rambam* understood that the law is a function of the *agent* of the work (the employee), i.e. that we are speaking here of an employee's inherent right that is not directly connected with his work. Therefore

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לֹא תָנִיף עַל קָמַת רֵעֶךָ: ס כד א כִּי־יִקַּח אִישׁ אִשָּׁה וּבְעָלָהּ
וְהָיָה אִם־לֹא תִמְצָא־חֵן בְּעֵינָיו כִּי־מָצָא בָהּ עֶרְוַת דָּבָר
וְכָתַב לָהּ סֵפֶר כְּרִיתֻת וְנָתַן בְּיָדָהּ וְשִׁלְּחָהּ מִבֵּיתוֹ: ב וְיָצְאָה
מִבֵּיתוֹ וְהָלְכָה וְהָיְתָה לְאִישׁ־אַחֵר: ג וּשְׂנֵאָהּ הָאִישׁ הָאַחֲרוֹן
וְכָתַב לָהּ סֵפֶר כְּרִיתֻת וְנָתַן בְּיָדָהּ וְשִׁלְּחָהּ מִבֵּיתוֹ אוֹ כִי יָמוּת
הָאִישׁ הָאַחֲרוֹן אֲשֶׁר־לְקָחָהּ לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה: ד לֹא־יוּכַל בַּעְלָהּ
הָרִאשׁוֹן אֲשֶׁר־שִׁלְּחָהּ לָשׁוּב לְקַחְתָּהּ לִהְיוֹת לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה אַחֲרֵי
אֲשֶׁר הֻטַּמָּאָה כִּי־תוֹעֵבָה הִוא לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וְלֹא תַחֲטִיא
אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לְךָ נַחֲלָה: ס (ששי) ה כִּי־יִקַּח
אִישׁ אִשָּׁה חֲדָשָׁה לֹא יֵצֵא בַּצָּבָא וְלֹא־יַעֲבֹר עָלָיו לְכָל־דָּבָר
נָקִי יִהְיֶה לְבֵיתוֹ שָׁנָה אֶחָת וְשִׂמַּח אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר־לָקָח:
ו לֹא־יַחֲבֹל רֵחַיִם וָרָכֶב כִּי־נֶפֶשׁ הוּא חֹבֵל: ס ז כִּי־יִמָּצֵא אִישׁ

דחברך: א ארי יסב גבר אתתא ויבעלנה ויהי
אם לא תשכח רחמין בעינוהי ארי אשכח
בה עברת פתגם ויכתוב לה גט פטורין ויהב
(ויתן) בידה ויפטרנה מביתה: ב ותפוק מביתה
ותהך ותהי לגבר אחרן: ג ויסנינה גברא
בתראה ויכתוב לה גט פטורין ויהב (ויתן)
בידה ויפטרנה מביתה או ארי ימות גברא
בתראה דנסבה לה לאנתו: ד לית לה רשו
לבעלה קדמאה די פטרה למתוב למסבה
למהוי לה לאנתו בתר די אסתאבת ארי
מרחקא היא קדם יי ולא תחיב ית ארעא די יי
אלהך יהב לך אחסנא: ה ארי יסב גבר אתתא
חדתא לא יפוק בחילא ולא יעבר עלוהי לכל
מדעם פני יהי לביתה שתא חדא ויחדי ית
אתתה די נסב: ו לא יסב משכונא ריחיא ורכבא
ארי בהון מתעבד מזון לכל נפש: ז ארי ישתכח
גבר גנב נפשא מאחוהי מבני ישראל ויתגר

רש״י

(א) כי מצא בה ערות דבר. מצוה עליו לגרשה שלא תמצא חן בעיניו[1]. (ס״א מצוה שלא תמצא חן בעיניו): (ב) לאיש אחר. אין זה בן זוגו של ראשון, הוא הוציא רשעה מתוך ביתו וזה הכניסה[1]: (ג) ושנאה האיש האחרון. הכתוב מבשרו שסופו לשנאתה, ואם לאו קוברתו, שנאמר או כי ימות[2]: (ד) אחרי אשר הטמאה. לרבות סוטה שנסתרה[3]: (ה) אשה חדשה. שהיא חדשה לו ואפילו אלמנה, פרט למחזיר גרושתו[3]: ולא יעבור עליו. דבר הצבא: לכל דבר. שהוא צורך הצבא, לא לספק מים ומזון ולא לתקן דרכים, אבל החוזרים מעורכי המלחמה על פי כהן, כגון בנה בית ולא חנכו או ארס אשה ולא לקחה, מספיקין מים ומזון ומתקנין את הדרכים[4]: יהיה לביתו. אף בשביל ביתו, אם בנה בית וחנכו ואם נטע כרם וחללו, אינו זז מביתו בשביל צרכי המלחמה: לביתו. זה ביתו: יהיה. לרבות את כרמו: ושמח. ישמח את אשתו. ותרגומו ויחדי ית אתתיה. והמתרגם ויחדי עם אתתיה, טועה הוא, שאין זה תרגום של ושמח אלא של ושמח: (ו) רחים. היא התחתונה: ורכב. היא העליונה: לא יחבול. אם בא למשכנו על חובו בבית דין, לא ימשכנו בדברים שעושים בהן אוכל נפש[5]: (ז) כי ימצא. בעדים

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What constitutes grounds for divorce? (v. 1)

Talmud: The School of Shammai says: "A man may not divorce his wife unless he discovers something immoral about her, as the verse states, *'because he has found something immoral about her.'*"

The School of Hillel says: "[He may divorce her] even if she spoils his food, as the verse [could be rendered]: *"because he has found* [*something*] *immoral* [*or another*] *thing about her."*

Rabbi Akiva says: "[He may divorce her] even if he finds another one who is more attractive, as the verse states, *'and it happens that she does not find favor in his eyes'"* (Gitin 90a. See Sparks of Chasidus).

TORAS MENACHEM

Rambam derived the law from the words, *"When you come into your fellow's vineyard,"* which describe the employee himself merely "coming into" the vineyard, and not actually working. (Though, in practice, he is obviously not permitted to start eating until work has begun).

A Contractual or Religious Duty?

A further distinction that arises out of the above discussion is whether the employer's requirement to permit his employee to eat from his crops is a *contractual* duty or a purely *religious* one:

According to the approach (of the *Jerusalem Talmud*,) that the law is a *function of the result* of the work and is thus a type of additional *payment* to the employee, it follows that this "payment" is part of the *contractual obligation* of the employer.

According to the approach (of *Rambam*) that we are speaking of an inherent right of the employee (the *agent*) which is non-work related, it follows that the employer is not paying a personal debt to the employee, but rather, granting him a God-given right to eat while at work. Thus, we are speaking here of a *religious* duty. (Indeed, *Rambam* states explicitly that the employee is eating *"something granted from Heaven,"* ibid. 14).

According to the approach (of the *Babylonian Talmud*) that the law is a function of the *action* of the work, there appears to be room for both interpretations—as the *Talmud* itself asks: *"Does he eat his own food, or is he eating food from Heaven?"* For, perhaps the food that he is allowed to eat comes as a reward for his labor. Or it could be argued that we are speaking here of a gift directly *from God* to every hard-working employee.

(Based on *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 34, p. 129ff.)

1 גיטין צ. 2 ספרי. 3 סוטה יח. 4 שם מד. 5 בבא מציעא קטו.

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DIVORCE

24 *If a man takes a wife and is intimate with her, and it happens that she does not find favor in his eyes because he has found something immoral about her:*

- *He must write a bill of divorce for her, place it into her hand, and send her away from his house.*
- 2 *If she leaves his house and goes and marries another man,* 3 *and the latter husband hates her and writes her a bill of divorce, places it into her hand and sends her away from his house; or if the latter husband who took her as a wife dies—*4 *her first husband, who had sent her away, may not take her again as his wife, since she was defiled (to him), for that is an abomination before God, and you should not bring sin to the land God, your God, is giving you as an inheritance.*

NEWLYWEDS

SIXTH READING

- 5 *When a man takes a wife who is new (to him), he must not go out (to war) in the army, and no (military) duty may be imposed upon him.*
- *He must remain free for his (own) house for one year and make his wife whom he has taken happy.*

DEBT COLLECTION

- 6 *One may not take (things used to prepare food, such as) a lower or upper millstone, as security (for a loan), because that is taking a life-(sustaining entity) as security.*

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

BECOMING "DIVORCED" FROM ONE'S MISSION IN LIFE...AND "MARRYING" A NEW ONE (v. 1)

The place and circumstances in which a person finds himself are guided by Divine Providence, and in the vast majority of cases a person finds himself in an environment which is perfectly suited to his mission in life (*shlichus*). So, even when things become difficult, he should be loath to "divorce" himself from his current mission and become "married" to a new path in life.

Even in a case where a person does wish to do so, he must have sufficient grounds for "divorce"—and in this matter, there is a dispute among the Sages (see *Classic Questions*):

The School of Shammai maintained that, even if a person is facing seemingly insurmountable difficulties in his mission, he is forbidden to divorce himself from it unless *"he discovers something immoral about her,"* i.e. there is a *halachically* valid reason why he cannot continue. For only at this point can it be proven unequivocally that the soul's current mission has to be changed for another.

However, the School of Hillel maintained that a person may become divorced, *"even if she spoils his food."* I.e. if a person finds that his mission is not being successfully carried out that and even his prior spiritual achievements are being spoiled, then he may seek a "divorce" and seek out a new mission.

Rabbi Akiva maintained that a man may seek divorce *"even if he finds another one who is more attractive,"* i.e. even if there are no real shortcomings to his current situation, but *"she does not find favor in his eyes"*—he has lost enthusiasm in his current *shlichus* and has spotted another path which he prefers—then he may change.

The final ruling in Jewish law favors the opinion of the School of Hillel (*Shulchan Aruch, Even Ha'ezer* 119:3). However, this only means that *according to the letter of the law* a person could be justified in some cases to seek a new path in life. Nevertheless, our Sages taught, *"Whenever a person divorces his first wife, even the altar sheds tears"* (Gitin 90b), and even in a case where a person is *halachically obliged* to divorce his wife (even according to the School of Shammai), he should not hurry to do so (*Chelkas Mechokaik* 119:2).

If a person truly desires, even in the face of tremendous difficulties, he can uphold the view of the School of Shammai. Even if he has lost enthusiasm in his *shlichus* and he is not successful, and furthermore, if his Torah study and care in the observance of *mitzvah* enhancements has decreased—he should know that this is nothing but a test from above, and that God is with him to help him succeed.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 3, p. 1121*ff.*; *Sicha of 20th Av 5719*)

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גֹּנֵב נֶפֶשׁ מֵאֶחָיו מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהִתְעַמֶּר־בּוֹ וּמְכָרוֹ וּמֵת הַגַּנָּב
הַהוּא וּבִעַרְתָּ הָרָע מִקִּרְבֶּךָ׃ ס ח הִשָּׁמֶר בְּנֶגַע־הַצָּרַעַת לִשְׁמֹר
מְאֹד וְלַעֲשׂוֹת כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־יוֹרוּ אֶתְכֶם הַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם כַּאֲשֶׁר
צִוִּיתִם תִּשְׁמְרוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת׃ ט זָכוֹר אֵת אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
לְמִרְיָם בַּדֶּרֶךְ בְּצֵאתְכֶם מִמִּצְרָיִם׃ ס י כִּי־תַשֶּׁה בְרֵעֲךָ מַשַּׁאת
מְאוּמָה לֹא־תָבֹא אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ לַעֲבֹט עֲבֹטוֹ׃ יא בַּחוּץ תַּעֲמֹד
וְהָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה נֹשֶׁה בוֹ יוֹצִיא אֵלֶיךָ אֶת־הַעֲבוֹט הַחוּצָה׃
יב וְאִם־אִישׁ עָנִי הוּא לֹא תִשְׁכַּב בַּעֲבֹטוֹ׃ יג הָשֵׁב תָּשִׁיב לוֹ
אֶת־הַעֲבוֹט כְּבוֹא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וְשָׁכַב בְּשַׂלְמָתוֹ וּבֵרְכֶךָּ וּלְךָ תִּהְיֶה
צְדָקָה לִפְנֵי יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ׃ ס [שביעי] יד לֹא־תַעֲשֹׁק שָׂכִיר עָנִי
וְאֶבְיוֹן מֵאַחֶיךָ אוֹ מִגֵּרְךָ אֲשֶׁר בְּאַרְצְךָ בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ׃ טו בְּיוֹמוֹ תִתֵּן
שְׂכָרוֹ וְלֹא־תָבוֹא עָלָיו הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ כִּי עָנִי הוּא וְאֵלָיו הוּא נֹשֵׂא
אֶת־נַפְשׁוֹ וְלֹא־יִקְרָא עָלֶיךָ אֶל־יְהֹוָה וְהָיָה בְךָ חֵטְא׃ ס
טז לֹא־יוּמְתוּ אָבוֹת עַל־בָּנִים וּבָנִים לֹא־יוּמְתוּ עַל־אָבוֹת אִישׁ
בְּחֶטְאוֹ יוּמָתוּ׃ ס יז לֹא תַטֶּה מִשְׁפַּט גֵּר יָתוֹם וְלֹא תַחֲבֹל בֶּגֶד
אַלְמָנָה׃ יח וְזָכַרְתָּ כִּי עֶבֶד הָיִיתָ בְּמִצְרַיִם וַיִּפְדְּךָ יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ

בה ויזבנגה ויתקטיל גנבא ההוא ותפלי עבד דביש מבינך: ח אסתמר במכתש סגירו למטר לחדא ולמעבד בכל די ילפון יתכון כהניא לואי כמא די פקדתנון תטרון למעבד: ט הוי דכיר ית די עבד יי אלהך למרים בארחא במפקכון ממצרים: י ארי תרשי בחברך רשו מדעם לא תעול לביתה למסב משכונה: יא בברא תקום וגברא די את רשי בה יפק לותך ית משכונא לברא: יב ואם גבר מסכן הוא לא תשכוב במשכונה: יג אתבא תתיב לה משכונא כמעל שמשא וישכוב בכסותה ויברכנך ולך תהי זכותא קדם יי אלהך: יד לא תעשוק אגירא ענא ומסכנא מאחיך או מגיורך די בארעך בקרוך: טו ביומה תתן אגרה ולא תעול עלוהי שמשא ארי ענא הוא ולה הוא מסר ית נפשה ולא יקרי עלך קדם יי ויהי בך חובא: טז לא ימותון אבהן על פום בנין ובנין לא ימותון על פום אבהן אנש בחובה ימותון: יז לא תצלי דין גיורא ויתמא ולא תסב משכונא לבוש ארמלא: יח ותהוי דכיר ארי עבדא הויתא במצרים ופרקך יי אלהך מתמן

רש״י

והתראה[1]. וכן כל כי ימצא שבתורה: והתעמר בו. אינו חייב עד שישתמש בו[1]: (ח) השמר בנגע הצרעת. שלא תתלוש סימני טומאה, ולא תקוץ את הבהרת[2]: בכל אשר יורו אתכם. אם להסגיר אם להחליט אם לטהר: (ט) זכור את אשר עשה ה' אלהיך למרים. אם באת להזהר שלא תלקה בצרעת, אל תספר לשון הרע. זכור העשוי למרים שדברה באחיה ולקתה בנגעים[1]: (י) כי תשה ברעך. תחוב בחברך: משאת מאומה. חוב של כלום: (יב) לא תשכב בעבוטו. לא תשכב ועבוטו אצלך[1]: (יג) כבוא השמש. אם כסות לילה הוא, ואם כסות יום החזירהו בבקר, וכבר כתוב בואלה המשפטים[3] עד בא השמש תשיבנו לו, כל היום תשיבנו לו ובבוא השמש תקחנו[4]: וברכך. ואם אינו מברכך, מכל מקום ולך תהיה צדקה: (יד) לא תעשק שכיר. והלא כבר כתוב, אלא לעבור על האביון בשני לאוין, לא תעשוק שכר שכיר שהוא עני ואביון, ועל העשיר כבר הוזהר לא תעשוק את רעך[5]: אביון. התאב לכל דבר: מגרך. זה גר צדק[1]: בשעריך. זה גר תושב האוכל נבלות[1]: אשר בארצך. לרבות שכר בהמה וכלים[1]: (טו) ואליו הוא נושא את נפשו. אל השכר הזה הוא נושא את נפשו למות, עלה בכבש ונתלה באילן[6]: והיה בך חטא. מכל מקום, אלא שממהרין ליפרע על ידי הקורא[1]: (טז) לא יומתו אבות על בנים. בעדות בנים. ואם תאמר בעון בנים, כבר נאמר איש בחטאו יומתו, אבל מי שאינו איש מת בעון אביו, והקטנים מתים בעון אבותם בידי שמים[1]: (יז) לא תטה משפט גר יתום. ועל העשיר כבר הוזהר לא תטה משפט[7], ושנה בעני לעבור עליו בשני לאוין, לפי שנקל להטות משפט עני יותר משל עשיר, לכך הזהיר ושנה עליו: ולא תחבול. שלא כשעת הלואה: (יח) וזכרת. על מנת כן פדיתיך לשמור חקותי

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

The Torah warns, *"You may not take a widow's garment as security"* (v. 17), even in reference to a widow who is *wealthy* (*Sefer Hamitzvos* prohibition 241). Now, it could be the case that the lender does not intend to pain the widow at all by taking her garment as security, and since she is wealthy it is extremely unlikely that she will become upset. Furthermore, by failing to take any security, the lender is actually endangering his own assets. Nevertheless, he *"may not take a widow's garment as security,"* for there is a *remote possibility* that, for a widow, this may be a distressing experience.

From this we can learn that even in a situation where: a.) It appears unlikely that somebody will be hurt by one's actions; b.) There is no intention to hurt another's feelings; and c.) One suffers a personal loss—nevertheless, there remains an obligation to *"love your fellow like (you love) yourself."*

(Based on *Sicha* of 5th night of Chanukah 5747)

1 ספרי. 2 מכות כב. 3 שמות כב, כה 4 בבא מציעא קיד: 5 ויקרא יט, יג 6 בבא מציעא קיב. 7 דברים טז, יט

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KIDNAPPING A JEWISH PERSON

- [7] *If a man is witnessed kidnapping any person from among his brothers, the children of Israel, and then he treats him as a slave and sells him—that kidnapper must die, and you will eliminate the evil from among you.*

CAUTION WITH TZARA'AS LESIONS*

- [8] *Be careful (not to interfere with) tzara'as lesions, and be very cautious about carrying out all the instructions of the priests, (who are from the tribe of) the Levites. Be careful to observe what I have commanded them.*
- [9] *Remember what God, your God, did to Miriam on your journey out of Egypt.*

SECURITY FOR LOANS

- [10] *When you hold any sort of debt against your fellow, you may not enter his home to take any of his property as security.* [11] *You must stand outside, and the man to whom you are lending should bring the security to you, outside.*
- [12] *If he is a poor man, you may not go to sleep while holding his security.* [13] *You must return the security to him by sunset, so that he can go to sleep in his garment, and he will bless you. (Even if he does not bless you), it will be considered as a righteous act for you, before God, your God.*

PAYING WAGES ON TIME**

SEVENTH READING

- [14] *You must not withhold the wages of a poor or destitute hired worker, (regardless of whether he is) one of your brothers, one of your converts in your land, (or a resident alien) within your cities.* [15] *You must give him his wage on the day it is due, and not let the sun set upon him, for he is poor, and he endangers his life (to work for you). Do not cause him to cry out to God against you, for then (the punishment for) this sin will be upon you (more quickly).*

TESTIMONY OF RELATIVES

- [16] *Fathers may not be put to death by (the testimony) of sons, nor may sons be put to death by (the testimony) of fathers. A man should be put to death (only) for his own sin.*

THE CONVERT, WIDOW AND ORPHAN

- [17] *You must not pervert the judgment of a convert or an orphan,*
- *You may not (come and) take a widow's garment as security (for a pre-existing loan).*

[18] *Remember that you were once a slave in Egypt, and that God, your God, redeemed you from there (to observe his laws, even if they cause you to lose money). Therefore, I am commanding you to do this thing.*

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* See *Vayikra* ch 12ff. ** See *Vayikra* 19:13 and *Sparks of Chasidus*, ibid.

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מִשָּׁם עַל־כֵּן אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה: ס יט כִּי
תִקְצֹר קְצִירְךָ בְשָׂדֶךָ וְשָׁכַחְתָּ עֹמֶר בַּשָּׂדֶה לֹא תָשׁוּב לְקַחְתּוֹ
לַגֵּר לַיָּתוֹם וְלָאַלְמָנָה יִהְיֶה לְמַעַן יְבָרֶכְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכֹל
מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ: ס כ כִּי תַחְבֹּט זֵיתְךָ לֹא תְפַאֵר אַחֲרֶיךָ לַגֵּר
לַיָּתוֹם וְלָאַלְמָנָה יִהְיֶה: כא כִּי תִבְצֹר כַּרְמְךָ לֹא תְעוֹלֵל אַחֲרֶיךָ
לַגֵּר לַיָּתוֹם וְלָאַלְמָנָה יִהְיֶה: כב וְזָכַרְתָּ כִּי־עֶבֶד הָיִיתָ בְּאֶרֶץ
מִצְרָיִם עַל־כֵּן אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה: ס
כה א כִּי־יִהְיֶה רִיב בֵּין אֲנָשִׁים וְנִגְּשׁוּ אֶל־הַמִּשְׁפָּט וּשְׁפָטוּם
וְהִצְדִּיקוּ אֶת־הַצַּדִּיק וְהִרְשִׁיעוּ אֶת־הָרָשָׁע: ב וְהָיָה אִם־בִּן
הַכּוֹת הָרָשָׁע וְהִפִּילוֹ הַשֹּׁפֵט וְהִכָּהוּ לְפָנָיו כְּדֵי רִשְׁעָתוֹ
בְּמִסְפָּר: ג אַרְבָּעִים יַכֶּנּוּ לֹא יֹסִיף פֶּן־יֹסִיף לְהַכֹּתוֹ עַל־אֵלֶּה

עַל כֵּן אֲנָא מְפַקֵּיד לָךְ לְמֶעְבַּד יָת פִּתְגָּמָא הָדֵין:
יט אֲרֵי תֶחְצוֹד חֲצָדָךְ בְּחַקְלָךְ וְתִנְשֵׁי עֻמְרָא
בְּחַקְלָא לָא תְתוּב לְמִסְּבֵהּ לְגִיּוֹרָא לְיִתַּמָּא
וּלְאַרְמְלָא יְהֵי בְּדִיל דִּיבָרְכִנָּךְ יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ בְּכֹל
עוֹבָדֵי יְדָךְ: כ אֲרֵי תַחְבּוֹט זֵיתָךְ לָא תְפַלֵּי
בָּתְרָךְ לְגִיּוֹרָא לְיִתַּמָּא וּלְאַרְמְלָא יְהֵי: כא אֲרֵי
תִקְטוֹף כַּרְמָךְ לָא תְעַלֵּל בָּתְרָךְ לְגִיּוֹרָא
לְיִתַּמָּא וּלְאַרְמְלָא יְהֵי: כב וְתִדְכַּר אֲרֵי עַבְדָּא
הֲוֵיתָא בְּאַרְעָא דְמִצְרָיִם עַל כֵּן אֲנָא מְפַקֵּיד לָךְ
לְמֶעְבַּד יָת פִּתְגָּמָא הָדֵין: א אֲרֵי יְהֵי דִין בֵּין
גּוּבְרַיָּא וְיִתְקָרְבוּן לְדִינָא וִידוּנִנּוּן וִיזַכּוּן יָת
זַכָּאָה וִיחַיְּבוּן יָת חַיָּבָא: ב וִיהֵי אִם בַּר חַיָּבָא
לְאַלְקָאָה חַיָּבָא וְיִרְמְנֵהּ דַּיָּנָא וְיַלְקְנֵהּ קֳדָמוֹהִי
כְּמִסַּת חוֹבְתֵהּ בְּמִנְיָן: ג אַרְבְּעִין יַלְקְנֵהּ לָא
יוֹסֵף דִּלְמָא יוֹסֵף לְאַלְקְיוּתֵהּ עַל אִלֵּין מַחָא

רש"י

אפילו יש חסרון כיס בדבר: **(יט) ושכחת עומר.** ולא גדיש[1]. מכאן אמרו עומר שיש בו סאתים ושכחו אינו שכחה[2]: **בשדה.** לרבות שכחת קמה ששכח מקצתה מלקצור[1]: **לא תשוב לקחתו.** מכאן אמרו, שלאחריו שכחה, שלפניו אינו שכחה, שאינו בבל תשוב[3]: **למען יברכך.** ואף על פי שבאת לידו שלא במתכוין, קל וחומר לעושה במתכוין. אמור מעתה, נפלה סלע מידו ומצאה עני ונתפרנס בה הרי הוא מתברך עליה[1]: **(כ) לא תפאר.** לא תטול תפארתו ממנו. מכאן שמניחין פאה לאילן[4]: **אחריך.** זו שכחה[5]: **(כא) לא תעולל.** אם מצאת בו עוללות לא תקחנה. ואיזו היא עוללת, כל שאין לה לא כתף ולא נטף. יש לה אחד מהם הרי הוא לבעל הבית[5]. וראיתי בגמרא ירושלמית[6] איזו היא כתף, פסיגין זה על גב זה. נטף, אלו התלויות בשדרה ויורדות: **(א) כי יהיה ריב.** סופם להיות נגשים אל המשפט. אמור מעתה אין שלום יוצא מתוך מריבה, מי גרם ללוט לפרוש מן הצדיק, הוי אומר זו מריבה[1]: **והרשיעו את הרשע.** יכול כל המתחייבין בדין לוקין, תלמוד לומר והיה אם בן הכות הרשע, פעמים לוקה ופעמים אינו לוקה. ומי הוא הלוקה, למוד מן הענין, לא תחסום שור בדישו, לאו שלא נתק לעשה: **(ב) והפילו השופט.** מלמד שאין מלקין אותו לא עומד ולא יושב אלא מוטה[7]: **לפניו כדי רשעתו.** ולאחריו כדי שתים. מכאן אמרו, מלקין אותו שתי ידות מלאחריו ושליש מלפניו[7]: **במספר.** ואינו נקוד במספר, למד שהוא דבוק, לומר במספר ארבעים ולא ארבעים שלמים, אלא מנין שהוא סוכם ומשלים לארבעים, והן ארבעים חסר אחת[7]: **(ג) לא יוסיף.** מכאן אזהרה למכה את חברו[8]: **ונקלה**

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

- **Does God give blessings for unintentional *mitzvos*? (v. 19)**

Rashi: If someone dropped a coin, and a poor man found it and was sustained by it, then he [who lost the coin] will be blessed on its account.

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

"When You Forget A Bundle..." (v. 19)

Why should a person be blessed for performing a *mitzvah* if he *unwittingly*—and even *unwillingly*—drops money on the floor, which is later found by a poor person? (see *Rashi* to v. 19)

Chasidic thought explains that every Jew, regardless of his status and station, is essentially willing to do all that he is commanded to do by our Torah. The fact that he might sometimes be influenced to do otherwise is because his conscious state can be affected by external pressures that induce states of mind and even behavior which is contrary to his essential nature (cf. *Rambam, Laws of Divorce* 2:20).

Therefore, if he performs a *mitzvah* which was not consciously intended, it is nevertheless an act that is consistent with his inner, subconscious desire. In fact, what has actually occurred here is that his subconscious mind has been able to influence his actions directly, without passing through the conscious state.

So, if a person drops money which is later found by a poor person, he has done an action which is commensurate with his true, inner desire to serve God, and therefore he is blessed because of it.

(Based on *Sefer Hama'amarim Melukat* vol. 5, p. 50)

1 ספרי 2 פאה פ"ו מ"ו 3 שם מ"ד 4 חולין קלא. 5 פאה פ"ז מ"ד 6 ירושלמי פאה פ"ז ה"ג 7 מכות כב: 8 סנהדרין פה.

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- [19] *When you reap your harvest in your field and forget a (single) bundle (behind you) in the field, you may not go back to take it.*
- *It must be left for the convert, the orphan, and the widow, so that God, your God, will bless you in everything you do.*
- [20] *When you beat your olive tree (to shake off the olives), do not remove (all of) its best produce. This should remain for the convert, the orphan and the widow.*
- [21] *When you pick the grapes of your vineyard, do not harvest the young grapes. They should remain for the convert, the orphan and the widow.*

[22] *Remember that you were once a slave in the land of Egypt. Therefore, I am commanding you to do this thing.*

Administering Lashes

25 *If there is a quarrel between (two) men, who come to court to be judged, the innocent one will be acquitted and the guilty one will be condemned.*

- [2] *If the guilty person (from a court case) is liable for lashes, the judge should make him bend over, and flog him with (one third of) the (total) number (of thirty-nine lashes) he deserves on his front (and two thirds on his back).*
- [3] *He should flog him with (almost) forty (lashes), but he must not give more, for if he gives him a lot more lashes than this, your brother will be degraded before your eyes.*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does the Torah need to explain the reason why two people might go to court? (25:1)

RASHI: "If there is a quarrel," they will eventually go to court. We learn from this that a quarrel will not end in peace. What caused Lot to leave the righteous [Avraham]? It was a quarrel (See *Bereishis* 13:7-12).

GUR ARYEH: *Rashi* was troubled that the words, *"If there is a quarrel,"* are superfluous. The Torah could have simply stated, "If two men come to court to be judged...." *Rashi* answers that the words "If there is a quarrel" teach us that when a quarrel arises, "they will eventually go to court."

At first glance, this is difficult to understand, for what is objectionable about going to court to solve a dispute? Surely this is more preferable than continuing to quarrel? It seems that *Rashi* means to say that they will eventually quarrel so much that the only solution will be to go to court.

MASKIL LEDAVID: Surely going to court is a method of "ending in peace" and not the opposite?

Rather, *Rashi's* intention here is that when the case comes to court, it will escalate from a verbal dispute to the extent that one of the parties receives lashes, as the section continues (v. 2), *"If the guilty person is liable for lashes."*

● Is it not *obvious* that "the innocent one will be acquitted and the guilty one will be condemned"? (25:1)

SIFRI: Rabbi Shimon says: "*'The innocent one will be acquitted and the guilty one will be condemned.'* This teaches us that one should attempt to acquit a person."

SIFRI DEBAY RAV: Rabbi Shimon reached his conclusion from the fact that the verse stresses *first*, *"The innocent one will be acquitted,"* and only afterwards, *"the guilty one will be condemned."*

TORAS MENACHEM

THE QUARREL (v. 1)

On the words, *"If there is a quarrel between (two) men"* (v. 1), *Rashi* comments, *"they will eventually go to court. We learn from this that a quarrel will not end in peace."*

At first glance this appears to be difficult to understand, as ***Gur Aryeh*** and ***Maskil LeDavid*** ask, for going to court is surely the most effective way of ending *any* quarrel in peace?

Gur Aryeh answers that *Rashi's* statement, *"they will eventually go to court,"* means that they will eventually quarrel so much that the only solution will be to go to court. However, *Rashi's* statement, "They will eventually go to court," seems to imply that going to *court itself* is the undesirable outcome here, and that this is worse than the quarrel itself.

Maskil LeDavid explains that *Rashi* means to say that going to court will lead to an escalation in the intensity of the quarrel, to the point of necessitating lashes. However, it is very difficult to accept that this was *Rashi's* intention here, as he makes no reference *at all* to such a possible outcome. All *Rashi* says is, "They will eventually go to court."

So we are left with the question: What is undesirable about going to court?

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מכה רבה ונקלה אחיך לעיניך: ד לא־תחסם שור בדישו: ס
ה כי־ישבו אחים יחדו ומת אחד מהם ובן אין־לו לא־תהיה
אשת־המת החוצה לאיש זר יבמה יבא עליה ולקחה *לו
לאשה ויבמה: ו והיה הבכור אשר תלד יקום על־שם אחיו
המת ולא־ימחה שמו מישראל: ז ואם־לא יחפץ האיש
לקחת את־יבמתו ועלתה יבמתו השערה אל־הזקנים
ואמרה מאן יבמי להקים לאחיו שם בישראל לא אבה יבמי:
ח וקראו־לו זקני־עירו ודברו אליו ועמד ואמר לא חפצתי
לקחתה: ט ונגשה יבמתו אליו לעיני הזקנים וחלצה נעלו

*ס״א לו לאשה

רבא ויקל אחוך לעינך: ד לא תחוד פום
תורא בדישה: ה ארי יתבון אחין כחדא וימות
חד מנהון וּבַר לית לה לא תהי אתת מיתנא
לברא לגבר חלוני יבמה יעול עלה ויסבה
לה לאנתו ויבמה: ו ויהי בוכרא די תליד
יקום על שמא דאחוהי מיתנא ולא יתמחי
שמה מישראל: ז ואם לא יצבי גברא למסב
ית יבמתה ותסק יבמתה לתרע בית דינא
לקדם סביא ותימר לא צבי יבמי לאקמא
לאחוהי שמא בישראל לא אבי ליבמותי:
ח ויקרון לה סבי קרתה וימללון עמה ויקום
ויימר לא רעינא למסבה: ט ותתקרב יבמתה
לותה לקדם סביא ותשרי סינה מעל רגלה

רש״י

אחיך. כל היום קורהו רשע ומשלקה קרוי אחיך[1]: (ד) **לא תחסם שור בדישו.** דיבר הכתוב בהווה, והוא הדין לכל בהמה חיה ועוף העושים במלאכה שהיא בדבר מאכל. אם כן למה נאמר שור, להוציא את האדם[2]: **בדישו.** יכול יחסמנו מבחוץ, תלמוד לומר לא תחסום שור מכל מקום, ולמה נאמר דיש, לומר לך מה דיש מיוחד דבר שלא נגמרה מלאכתו (למעשר ולחלה) וגדולו מן הארץ, אף כל כיוצא בו, יצא החולב והמגבן והמחבץ שאין גדולו מן הארץ, יצא הלש והמקטף שנגמרה מלאכתו לחלה, יצא הבודל בתמרים ובגרוגרות שנגמרה מלאכתן למעשר[2]: (ה) **כי ישבו אחים יחדו.** שהיתה להם ישיבה אחת בעולם, פרט לאשת אחיו שלא היה בעולמו[1]: **יחדו.** המיוחדים בנחלה, פרט לאחיו מן האם: **ובן אין לו.** עיין עליו בן או בת, או בן הבן, או בת הבן, (או בן הבת), או בת הבת: (ו) **והיה הבכור.** גדול האחים הוא מייבם אותה[1]: **אשר תלד.** פרט לאילונית שאינה יולדת: **יקום על שם אחיו.** זה שייבם את אשתו יטול נחלת המת בנכסי אביו[1]: **ולא ימחה שמו.** פרט לאשת סריס ששמו מחוי[1]: (ז) **השערה.** כתרגומו לתרע בית דינא: (ח) **ועמד.** בעמידה: **ואמר.** בלשון

TORAS MENACHEM

A further problem with this verse concerns the statement, *"The innocent one will be acquitted and the guilty one will be condemned."* Surely these words are superfluous, and if so, why does *Rashi* not explain their significance, as he does in the case of *all* apparently superfluous phrases of scripture?

Rabbi Shimon in the ***Sifri*** (as clarified by ***Sifri debay Rav***) explains that these words teach us that the court must always attempt to acquit a person before they incriminate them. However, at the literal level, this answer is difficult to accept, because the verse appears to be referring to *two* separate people: *"the innocent one* will be acquitted and *the guilty one* will be condemned."

Presumably *Rashi* felt that the reader could work this matter out for himself with simple logic and a knowledge of *Rashi's* prior comments. What, then, is the explanation of this matter, at the literal level?

The Explanation

In addition to the fact that the words, *"If there is a quarrel between two men,"* appear to be superfluous (as *Gur Aryeh* writes), *Rashi* was troubled in particular why the Torah chose to use the word "quarrel" (רִיב). For normally, when two disputants go to court, the matter is referred to as a (דָּבָר) ("claim" or "case" cf. *Shemos* 18:16, 19, 22, 26). The use of the term "quarrel" generally refers to a personal dispute which does *not* reach court,* as in: *"A quarrel erupted between the herdsmen of Avram's cattle (who rebuked) the herdsmen of Lot's cattle"* (*Bereishis* 13:7), *"The shepherds of Gerar argued* (וַיָּרִיבוּ) *with Yitzchak's shepherds"* (Ibid. 26:20), and, *"If two men quarrel, and one strikes the other"* (*Shemos* 21:18).

So, *Rashi* was troubled: Since our verse speaks of a dispute which came to court, the verse should have said, "If two men bring their *case* to court."

Rashi answered that if their intention is to quarrel, then "they will eventually go to court," but that all that will happen is "the innocent one will be acquitted and the guilty one will be condemned." However, this will not help bring peace, since the disputants are not interested in resolving their dispute, but rather, in fighting with each other. Thus, *"We learn from this that a quarrel will not end in peace,"* because the initial intention of the disputants was not to seek peace, but to quarrel with each other. Thus, even when the court passes its judgment, the situation will not be alleviated, and the two disputants will continue to quarrel.

It follows from this that, according to *Rashi*, our verse is teaching an important law. If two disputants come to court and it appears *obvious* to the judges that either one or both of the men are not really interested in resolving their dispute, the court may be tempted not to judge the case. They might think it preferable to penalize one or both of the contentious parties, and perhaps in this manner the quarrel will finally end.

To contradict this notion, the Torah teaches us: "If there is a quarrel between (two) men who come to court to be judged, *the innocent one will be acquitted and the guilty one will be condemned."* Even if the court sees that a legal ruling will not bring two disputants to peace, it is nevertheless the duty of the court to decide the law and make the path of justice known for all those who wish to avail themselves of it.

(Based on *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 24, p. 152ff.)

* However, the Torah does use the term ריב in reference to court cases too. See: *Shemos* 23:2, 3, 6. *Devarim* 17:8; 19:17; 21:5.

1 ספרי 2 בבא מציעא פט.

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- [4] *Do not muzzle an ox (or another animal) while it is threshing (or doing other agricultural work).*

LEVIRATE MARRIAGE

25:5 *If brothers (from the same father) live together (in the world at the same time) and one of them dies having no child (or grandchild):*

  - *The wife of the deceased may not marry outside (the family) to a strange man. Her husband's brother must come to her, taking her as a wife for himself in Levirate marriage.*

- [6] *What should happen is that the eldest brother (will perform the Levirate marriage with her), provided she can bear (children), standing in the place of his deceased brother, so that his name should not be lost from Israel.*

[7] *But if the man does not wish to take his brother's wife:*

- *The brother's wife should go up to the gates (of justice), to the elders, and say: "My brother-in-law has refused to perpetuate his brother's name in Israel. He does not wish to perform a Levirate marriage with me."*
- [8] *The elders of his city should call him and speak to him. He should stand up and say (in Hebrew), "I do not wish to take her."*
- [9] *His brother's wife should approach him, in the presence of the elders, and remove his shoe from*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What if a muzzled animal threshes *unintentionally* ? (v. 4)

ALTER REBBE'S SHULCHAN ARUCH: A person does not transgress the prohibition of "Do not muzzle," if he muzzles his cows when taking a shortcut over grain, even though the grain is inevitably threshed, because this is not his intention. The same applies in other such cases. (דיני שאלה ושכירות וחסימה, סעיף כ)

● Is it preferable for a person to perform Levirate marriage (v. 5-6) or to exempt himself by *chalitza*? (v. 7-10)

RAMBAM: The *mitzvah* of Levirate marriage takes precedence over the *mitzvah* of *chalitzah* (*Laws of Levirate Marriage and Chalitzah* 1:2).

REMA: We do not permit a Levirate marriage unless it is clear that both parties are doing so for the sake of the *mitzvah* (*Even Ha'ezer* 165:1).

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

"DO NOT MUZZLE AN OX..." (v. 4)

The ***Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch*** rules that a person does not transgress the prohibition of muzzling an ox while threshing unless he does so intentionally—and that, *"the same applies in other such cases"* (see *Classic Questions*), i.e. in the case of other *prohibitions*. However, regarding *positive mitzvos*, the consensus of most authorities is that a lack of intention does *not* render the *mitzvah* invalid.

At first glance, we would think that the opposite would be the case. A positive mitzvah causes a total change of status, sanctifying a physical object that was previously devoid of holiness; but a transgression merely distances an *already* mundane object further from being holy. Why is intention necessary for the apparently easier task?

In truth, however, it could be argued that intention is crucial for *all* commands. In the case of a positive *mitzvah* though, the fact that a person praised God upon awakening, at the beginning of the day*, serves as a general "intention" for all the *mitzvos* throughout the day.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 4, p. 1127ff.)

LEVIRATE MARRIAGE VS. *CHALITZAH* (v. 5-10)

Generally speaking, the view of Sefardic Rabbinical authorities (such as ***Rambam***—See *Classic Questions*) is to favor the process of Levirate marriage (v. 5-6), rather than the exemption process of *chalitzah* (v. 7-10). On the other hand, we find that the vast majority of Ashkenazic authorities (such as ***Rema***) strongly advocate *chalitzah*.

This difference of opinion is a reflection of the different degrees of exile in which the Sefardic and Ashkenazic Jews have found themselves during history. Sefardic Jews have generally lived in countries which allowed Jews to practice the *mitzvos* amid a state of relative prosperity. Ashkenazic Jews however, have faced a much more bitter exile where poverty and persecution have been a fact of day-to-day life. Thus, due to the financial burdens of supporting a family, Ashkenazic Rabbis did not deem it wise for a person to carry out Levirate marriage unless he was absolutely committed to doing so. In Sefardic communities, this limitation was unnecessary.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Tazria-Metzorah* 5747)

* By saying the prayer *Modeh Ani*. However, even one who does not do so still has a subconscious positive intent which suffices to validate the positive *mitzvos* that he or she performs. See *Sparks of Chasidus* to v. 19 above.

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מֵעַל רַגְלוֹ וְיָרְקָה בְּפָנָיו וְעָנְתָה וְאָמְרָה כָּכָה יֵעָשֶׂה לָאִישׁ
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִבְנֶה אֶת־בֵּית אָחִיו: י וְנִקְרָא שְׁמוֹ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל בֵּית
חֲלוּץ הַנָּעַל: ס יא כִּי־יִנָּצוּ אֲנָשִׁים יַחְדָּו אִישׁ וְאָחִיו וְקָרְבָה
אֵשֶׁת הָאֶחָד לְהַצִּיל אֶת־אִישָׁהּ מִיַּד מַכֵּהוּ וְשָׁלְחָה יָדָהּ
וְהֶחֱזִיקָה בִּמְבֻשָׁיו: יב וְקַצֹּתָה אֶת־כַּפָּהּ לֹא תָחוֹס עֵינֶךָ: ס
יג לֹא־יִהְיֶה לְךָ בְּכִיסְךָ אֶבֶן וָאָבֶן גְּדוֹלָה וּקְטַנָּה: יד לֹא־יִהְיֶה
לְךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ אֵיפָה וְאֵיפָה גְּדוֹלָה וּקְטַנָּה: טו אֶבֶן שְׁלֵמָה וָצֶדֶק
יִהְיֶה־לָּךְ אֵיפָה שְׁלֵמָה וָצֶדֶק יִהְיֶה־לָּךְ לְמַעַן יַאֲרִיכוּ יָמֶיךָ עַל
הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ: טז כִּי תוֹעֲבַת יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ כָּל־עֹשֵׂה אֵלֶּה כֹּל עֹשֵׂה עָוֶל: פ [מפטיר] יז זָכוֹר אֵת
אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה לְךָ עֲמָלֵק בַּדֶּרֶךְ בְּצֵאתְכֶם מִמִּצְרָיִם: יח אֲשֶׁר
קָרְךָ בַּדֶּרֶךְ וַיְזַנֵּב בְּךָ כָּל־הַנֶּחֱשָׁלִים אַחֲרֶיךָ וְאַתָּה עָיֵף וְיָגֵעַ

וְתָרוֹק בְּאַנְפּוֹהִי וְתָתֵיב וְתֵימַר כְּדֵין יִתְעֲבֵיד
לִגְבַר דִּי לָא יִבְנֵי יָת בֵּיתָא דַאֲחוּהִי: י וְיִתְקְרֵי
שְׁמֵהּ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל בֵּית שְׁרֵי סֵינָא: יא אֲרֵי יִנְּצוּן
גּוּבְרִין כַּחֲדָא גְּבַר וַאֲחוּהִי וְתִתְקְרַב אִתַּת חַד
לְשֵׁיזָבָא יָת בַּעְלַהּ מִיַּד מָחוֹהִי וְתוֹשֵׁיט יְדַהּ
וְתַתְקֵיף בְּבֵית בַּהְתְּתֵהּ: יב וְתִקְּצוּן יָת יְדַהּ לָא
תְחוּס עֵינָךְ: יג לָא יְהֵי לָךְ בְּכִיסָךְ מַתְקַל
וּמַתְקַל רַבְּתָא וּזְעֵרְתָא: יד לָא יְהֵי לָךְ בְּבֵיתָךְ
מְכִילָא וּמְכִילָא רַבְּתָא וּזְעֵרְתָא: טו מַתְקָלִין
שַׁלְמִין דִּקְשׁוֹט יְהוֹן לָךְ מְכִילָן שַׁלְמִין דִּקְשׁוֹט
יְהוֹן לָךְ בְּדִיל דְּיוֹרְכוּן יוֹמָךְ עַל אַרְעָא דַּייָ
אֱלָהָךְ יָהֵב לָךְ: טז אֲרֵי מְרַחַק קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ
כָּל עָבֵד אִלֵּין כֹּל עָבֵד שְׁקַר: יז הֱוֵי דְּכִיר יָת
דִּי עֲבַד לָךְ עֲמָלֵק בְּאָרְחָא בְּמִפַּקְכוֹן
מִמִּצְרָיִם: יח דִּי עֲרָעָךְ בְּאָרְחָא וְקַטֵּיל בָּךְ כָּל
דַּהֲווֹ מִתְאַחֲרִין בַּתְרָךְ וְאַתְּ מְשַׁלְהֵי וְלָאֵי וְלָא

רש״י

הקודש, ואף היא דבריה בלשון הקודש[1]: (ט) **וירקה בפניו.** על גבי קרקע[1]: **אשר לא יבנה.** מכאן למי שחלץ שלא יחזור וייבם, דלא כתיב אשר לא בנה, אלא אשר לא יבנה, כיון שלא בנה שוב לא יבנה[2]: (י) **ונקרא שמו וגו׳.** מצוה על כל העומדים שם לומר חלוץ הנעל[3]: (יא) **כי ינצו אנשים.** סופן לבא לידי מכות, כמו שנאמר מיד מכהו. אין שלום יוצא מתוך ידי מצותא[4]: (יב) **וקצותה את כפה.** ממון דמי בשתו. הכל לפי המבייש והמתבייש[5]. או אינו אלא ידה ממש, נאמר כאן לא תחוס, ונאמר להלן בעדים זוממין לא תחוס[6], מה להלן ממון, אף כאן ממון[4]: (יג) **גדולה וקטנה.** גדולה שמכחשת את הקטנה, שלא יהא נוטל בגדולה ומחזיר בקטנה[4]: (יד) **לא יהיה לך.** אם עשית כן לא יהיה לך כלום[4]: **אבן ואבן.** משקלות: (טו) **אבן שלמה וצדק יהיה לך.** אם עשית כן יהיה לך הרבה[4]: (יז) **זכור את אשר עשה לך.** אם שקרת במדות ובמשקלות הוי דואג מגרוי האויב, שנאמר מאזני מרמה תועבת ה׳[7], וכתיב בתריה[8] בא זדון ויבא קלון[9]: (יח) **אשר קרך בדרך.** לשון מקרה. דבר אחר לשון קרי וטומאה, שהיה מטמאן במשכב זכור[10]. דבר אחר לשון קור וחום, צננך והפשירך מרתיחתך, שהיו כל האומות יראים להלחם בכם ובא זה והתחיל והראה מקום לאחרים. משל לאמבטי רותחת שאין כל בריה יכולה לירד בתוכה, בא בן בליעל אחד קפץ וירד לתוכה. אף על פי שנכוה, הקרה אותה בפני אחרים[10]: **ויזנב בך.** מכת זנב, חותך מילות וזורק כלפי מעלה[11]: **כל הנחשלים אחריך.** חסרי כח מחמת חטאם, שהיה הענן פולטן[11]: **ואתה עיף ויגע.** עיף בצמא, דכתיב[12] ויצמא שם העם למים, וכתיב אחריו[13] ויבא עמלק[11]: **ויגע.**

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

"Remember What Amalek Did To You..." (v. 17)

Amalek's unprovoked and stealthy attack was calculated to shake their [the Jewish people's] belief in God and dampen their enthusiasm for His Torah and *mitzvos*.

Haman, a direct descendant of Amalek, was driven by hatred of the Jews, because *"their laws were different from those of any other people,"* as the *Megilah* states (Esther 3:8). Likewise did all subsequent Amalekites and Hamans of all ages hate the Jews.

But "Amalek"—in a wider sense—represents all obstacles and hindrances which a Jew encounters on his, or her, way to receive and observe the Torah and *mitzvos* with enthusiasm and joy in the everyday life....

Why should a Jew be confronted with such trials and difficulties? The answer is, that every Jew has been given the necessary powers to overcome all such "Amalekites," and he is expected to use them, in order to demonstrate to himself and others that nothing will deter him, nor dampen his fervor, in the observance of the Torah and *mitzvos* in accordance with God's Will.

And once he recognizes that whatever difficulty he encounters is really a test of his faith in God, and resolves firmly to meet the challenge, he will soon see that no "Amalek" of any kind is a match for the Divine powers of the Jewish soul.

Indeed, far from being insurmountable obstructions, they turn out to be helpers and catalysts for ever greater achievements, having been instrumental in mobilizing those inner powers which would have otherwise remained dormant.

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe on *Rosh Chodesh Adar* II, 5738)

1 יבמות קו: 2 שם י. 3 שם קו: 4 ספרי 5 בבא קמא צא: 6 דברים יט, יג 7 משלי יא, א 8 שם ב 9 תנחומא ח 10 שם ח 11 שם י 12 שמות יז, ג 13 שם ח

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his foot. She should spit before him (on the ground). She should respond to him, and say (in Hebrew), "That is what should be done to the man who will not build his brother's household!"

- 10 *His name in Israel will be called, "The household of the one whose shoe was removed."*

PENALTY FOR EMBARRASSMENT

- 11 *If (two) men, a man and his brother, are fighting together, and the wife of one of them comes close to rescue her husband from his assailant, and she stretches forth her hand and grabs hold of (the assailant's) private parts,* 12 *you should decide* (an appropriate penalty for her, for the embarrassment that she caused with) her hand. You should not look (upon her with) pity.*

CORRECT WEIGHTS AND MEASURES**

- 13 *You must not keep in your pocket (two apparently identical) weights (and yet) one is a bigger weight and one is smaller.*
- 14 *You must not keep in your house (two apparently identical) dry-measures, (and yet) one is a bigger dry-measure and one is smaller.*
- 15 *You must have (only) perfect and correct weights, perfect and correct dry-measures, in order that your days will be prolonged on the land which God, your God, is giving you.*

16 *For anybody who does these things—anybody who acts dishonestly (with weights and measures)—is an abomination to God, your God .*

REMEMBERING AMALEK

MAFTIR
- 17 *Remember what Amalek did to you on your journey out of Egypt,* 18 *how they surprised you on the road and cut off all the weak people at your rear, when you were parched and weary (from the journey), and they did not fear (retribution from) God (for hurting you).*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How often does one have to remember "what Amalek did to you"? (v. 17)

RAMBAM: It is a positive command to constantly remember their evil deeds and ambush, to arouse hatred for them, as the verse states, "*Remember what Amalek did to you*" (v.17). According to Oral Tradition we are taught: "*'Remember'—with your mouths; 'Do not forget'* (v. 19)*—in your hearts,*" for it is forbidden to forget the hatred we have for them (*Laws of Kings* 5:5).

SEFER HACHINUCH: It is sufficient for us to remember the matter once a year, or once in two or three years....If a person never mentioned it with his mouth once in his entire life, then he has transgressed (*Mitzvah* 603).

MINCHAS CHINUCH: Thus, according to the *Sefer Hachinuch*, it appears that mentioning what Amalek did once in a lifetime suffices.

SHALOH: It is a great *mitzvah* to say this passage (v. 17-19) every day to fulfill the *mitzvah* to "remember" (*Torah Shebiksav, Parshas Ki Seitzei*).

TORAS MENACHEM

THE OBLIGATION TO REMEMBER AMALEK (v. 17)

We find a range of opinions concerning how often the *mitzvah* of remembering Amalek needs to be carried out. ***Sefer Hachinuch*** argues that once a year, or even once in a lifetime would suffice. ***Shaloh*** recommends the verbal remembering of Amalek daily, and ***Rambam*** states that the *mitzvah* is incumbent "constantly."

In order to minimize the dispute, the following could be argued:

a.) Even according to *Sefer Hachinuch*, if one chose to remember Amalek verbally on a daily basis, one would perform a *mitzvah* daily.

b.) Furthermore, it could be argued that, according to all opinions, whenever one remembers Amalek, it has the status of a *halachically* "ongoing activity"*** until the next occasion that one performs this *mitzvah*.

*[Literally "cut (וְקַצֹּתָה) her hand." However, *Rashi* explains this to mean a process of evaluation. (וְקַצֹּתָה) is thus related to the term קִצּוּב דָּמִים, meaning the "evaluation of funds.") Thus we have translated the term here as "you should decide," since the verb "to decide" in English also means "to cut off," from the Latin *decidere*. (A "decision" is thus the "cutting off" point of an evaluation process, which appears to be *Rashi's* intention here.)] ** See *Classic Questions* and *Toras Menachem* to *Vayikra* 19:35-36. ***See *Mefa'ane'ach Tzefunos* (Kasher, 1976), chapter 5.

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וְלֹא יָרֵא אֱלֹהִים: יט וְהָיָה בְּהָנִיחַ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ | לְךָ מִכָּל־
אֹיְבֶיךָ מִסָּבִיב בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה־אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לְךָ נַחֲלָה
לְרִשְׁתָּהּ תִּמְחֶה אֶת־זֵכֶר* עֲמָלֵק מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמָיִם לֹא תִּשְׁכָּח:

פ פ פ

ק״י פסוקים, על״י סימן.

דְחִיל מִן קֳדָם יְיָ: יט וִיהֵי כַּד יְנִיחַ יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ לָךְ
מִכָּל בַּעֲלֵי דְבָבָךְ מִסְּחוֹר סְחוֹר בְּאַרְעָא דִּי
יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ יָהֵב לָךְ אַחֲסָנָא לְמֵירְתַהּ תִּמְחֵי יָת
דּוּכְרָנָא דַעֲמָלֵק מִתְּחוֹת שְׁמַיָּא לָא תִתְנְשֵׁי:

פ פ פ

* קוראים זֵכֶר (בצירי), ואחר-כך זֶכֶר (בסגול) הן בשביעי והן במפטיר (ספר-המנהגים עמ' 13, וגם עמ' 72)

רש״י

בדרך[1]: ולא ירא. עמלק, אלהים, מלהרע לך[2]: (יט) תמחה את זכר עמלק. מאיש ועד אשה מעולל ועד יונק משור ועד שה[3], שלא יהא שם עמלק נזכר אפילו על הבהמה, לומר בהמה זו משל עמלק היתה[4]: חסלת פרשת תצא

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How does one "erase any reminder of Amalek" (v. 19)?

Rashi: Eliminate both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, so that the name of Amalek should never again be mentioned, even regarding an animal, e.g. "This animal was from Amalek."

Rambam: This *mitzvah* is incumbent on the community as a whole, not on every person individually (*Sefer Hamitzvos*, end of positive commands).

● What is the connection between the command to "remember what Amalek did" (v. 17) and "erase any reminder of Amalek" (v. 19)?

Rambam: It is a positive command to remember what Amalek did to us... at all times, and to verbally arouse people to fight them (*Sefer Hamitzvos*, positive command 189).

TORAS MENACHEM

However, this seems to present us with a problem when we compare the *mitzvah* of remembering Amalek (v. 17) with the *mitzvah* of erasing any reminder of Amalek (v. 19, see *Classic Questions*). In the present age, it is not possible to perform the *mitzvah* of erasing any reminder of Amalek because:

a.) This *mitzvah* is only incumbent when all the Jewish people are living in the Land of Israel, in a state of peace. As the verse states explicitly: *"When God, your God, gives you relief from all your surrounding enemies, in the land which God, your God, is giving to you...you must erase any reminder of Amalek"* (v. 19).

b.) Even if this were to be the case, the precise identity of the various nations (including Amalek) has become confused due to intermixing (see *Classic Questions* to 23:4-9, above). So it is impossible to eradicate Amalek nowadays, since it cannot be determined which people are actually descendants of the original nation of Amalek.

This begs the question: ***Rambam*** writes that the reason we are required to "remember what Amalek did," is "to verbally arouse people to fight them," i.e. in order to perform the *mitzvah* of eradicating Amalek. So, if we are no longer able to carry out the *mitzvah* of "eradicating," why is the *mitzvah* of "remembering" still required, (especially in light of the above explanation that remembering is required *constantly*)?

Of course, we could argue that since we impatiently await the arrival of Mashiach *every* day, there is a need to prepare for the elimination of Amalek, which may become relevant at any moment. But surely though, there must be some significance to this *mitzvah* today, even before the coming of Mashiach?

The Explanation

The *mitzvah* of remembering Amalek clearly has a broader scope than being just a direct preparation for the war to eradicate Amalek, since:

a.) If "remembering" was merely required to "verbally arouse people to fight them," the two processes of "remembering" and "eradicating" would constitute one single *mitzvah*. As we find in the case of the other nations which the Jewish people are obligated to eradicate (the seven nations of Cana'an—see 20:16 above), that one single *mitzvah* includes both the "arousal" to fight, and the fighting itself.

b.) While the requirement of eradicating Amalek is a *mitzvah* incumbent on the community as a whole, the *mitzvah* of remembering the deeds of

1 תנחומא י 2 ספרי 3 שמואל-א טו, ג 4 פסיקתא זוטא

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- 19 *Consequently, when God, your God, gives you relief from all your surrounding enemies, in the land which God, your God is giving to you as an inheritance to keep as a possession—you must (destroy every man, woman, child and animal belonging to Amalek, so that you) erase any reminder of Amalek from beneath the skies.*
- *Do not forget (what they did to you)!*

THE HAFTARAH FOR KI SEITZEI IS ON PAGE 284.

TORAS MENACHEM

Amalek is an obligation that rests on the individual. This indicates that remembering Amalek has a broad implication for all Jewish people, beyond the specific war effort to eradicate Amalek.

The reason why the *mitzvah* of remembering Amalek is of such universal significance is related to the specific threat which Amalek poses to the Jewish people:

We are commanded to totally obliterate any reminder of Amalek, because they are a nation whose outlook is *antithetical* to the practice of Judaism. Of course, the Torah identifies numerous nations that harbored heretical views, but the specific threat of Amalekite ideology is considered to be far more dangerous, because it is a *subtle* threat which does not appear, at first glance, to be true heresy. For this reason, the Torah feared that even a person who is a genuine believer in all the principles of our faith, and who meticulously observes all the *mitzvos*, may nevertheless be corrupted by the ideology of Amalek.

Therefore, the Torah required a greater level of vigilance, to ensure that Amalek does not influence us. We must constantly be aware of and "remember" the threat posed by the Amalekite ideology, and eliminate any member of the nation which attempts to perpetuate it.

What, precisely, is the subtle evil of Amalek which is so dangerous?

Our Sages explained: *"He knows his Master, and yet intentionally rebels against Him."* In other words, we are not speaking here of a heretical belief which denies the existence of God (for Amalek "knows his Master"). If Amalek simply denied the existence of God, or advocated idol-worship, any believing Jew would find the matter easy to reject. It is precisely because the Amalekite philosophy *recognizes* the existence of God ("knows his Master") that it poses a danger for a Jewish person, who may easily become sympathetic to this outlook, eventually leading him to rebel against God, Heaven forbid.

Of course, this is unlikely to happen overnight, for Amalek does not "attack" by immediately telling a Jew to stop observing the *mitzvos*. The threat of Amalek lies in more subtle attempts to "disconnect" a person's knowledge from his practical observance. For example, Amalek might initially tell a person not to become excited about observing the *mitzvos**, or to believe in God in general, but not with absolute certainty**. Thus, the fact that this "voice" is generally condoning the observance of *mitzvos* and belief in God could fool a person into thinking that it is "kosher." In truth, however, such thoughts represent one of the biggest threats that an observant Jew might face.

Based on the above, we can understand why there are two separate *mitzvos* to "remember" and "eliminate" Amalek:

Due to its seemingly acceptable "front," extra vigilance is required to ensure that a person does not sympathize with the Amalekite ideology in any way whatsoever. Thus, while in the case of other evil nations, the *mitzvah* to destroy them logically includes the requirement to arouse hatred for them, in the case of Amalek, the Torah deemed it necessary to make a special issue about arousing hatred for them, by designating this task as a separate *mitzvah*.

The practical offshoot of this is that, even though the command to "remember" Amalek only arose out of a need to eliminate them, nevertheless, even in a time when it is not *possible* to eliminate the actual nation of Amalek (such as in the present age), it still remains relevant to eliminate any sympathy for their ideology—and this is achieved today by the *mitzvah* of "remembering" Amalek.***

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 221; vol. 21, p. 191*ff.*)

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*This is alluded to by verse 18, *"how they surprised you* (קָרְךָ) *on the road,"* since the word קָרְךָ is derived from the word קְרִירוּת, meaning "coolness." Thus the verse could be read, "they cooled you," *i.e.* they cooled your enthusiasm. Furthermore, Amalek's initial attack upon the Jewish people was just before the giving of the Torah when practical *mitzvos* were introduced, which stresses how their ideology is aimed at combatting *practical* observance. **Alluded to by the fact that the Hebrew word *Amalek* has the same numerical equivalent (*gematria*) as the word *safek*, which means "doubt." ***For this reason, a special Torah reading was introduced, connected with this *mitzvah* (*Parshas Zachor*), since Torah has the ability to cleanse the soul from undesirable or heretical ideologies.

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Parshas Ki Seitzei contains 27 positive mitzvos and 47 prohibitions

1. The law of a beautiful woman taken captive at war [21:11].
2. Not to sell a beautiful woman taken captive at war [21:14].
3. Not to make a beautiful woman taken captive at war work as a slave after one has been conjugally intimate with her [21:14].
4. To hang a person after his execution when it is required [21:22].
5. Not to leave a person who was hung overnight on the gallows, and not to leave a dead man overnight in his house, unless it is for his honor [21:23].
6. To bury a person put to death by court sentence, or any other deceased person, the same day that he dies [21:23].
7. To return lost property to its owner [22:1].
8. Not to turn a blind eye to a lost object [22:3].
9. Not to leave a fellow-man's animal lying under its burden [22:4].
10. To help lift up a heavy load for a Jew [22:4].
11. A woman should not wear men's clothing [22:5].
12. A man should not wear women's clothing [22:5].
13. Not to take the mother-bird while its eggs or young are in the nest [22:6].
14. To send away the mother-bird from its nest, when taking its eggs or young [22:7].
15. To build a parapet around a dangerous roof or pit [22:8].
16. Not to leave a dangerous roof or pit without a parapet [22:8].
17. Not to sow a mixture of seeds in a vineyard in the Land of Israel [22:9].
18. Not to eat the produce of mixed seeds grown in a vineyard in the Land of Israel [22:9].
19. Not to work with two kinds of animals together [22:10].
20. Not to wear cloth of wool and linen [22:11].
21. The mitzvah of kidushin (betrothing a woman) [22:13].
22. A man who spreads an evil report that his wife was immoral is to remain with her permanently [22:19].
23. A man who spreads an evil report that his wife was immoral may not divorce his wife [22:19].
24. The court should stone a person who is sentenced to stoning [22:24].
25. Not to punish a person who was forced to transgress [22:26].
26. A rapist must marry his victim [22:29].
27. A rapist may not divorce his victim [22:29].
28. A sterilized man may not marry a Jewish girl [23:3].
29. A bastard from an adulterous or incestuous union should not marry a Jewish girl [23:4].
30. A person from the nations of Amon or Mo 'av may not marry a Jewish girl [23:6].
31. Not to make peace with the nations of Amon or Mo'av before a war [23:7].
32. A descendant of Eisav may not marry a Jewish person even after he has converted to Judaism, nor may his child [23:9].
33. An Egyptian may not marry a Jewish person even after he has converted to Judaism, nor may his child [23:8].
34. A ritually impure person may not enter the camp of the Levites (the Temple Mount) [23:11].
35. To prepare a lavatory outside the camp, when at war [23:13].
36. To prepare a shovel for each person in the army, so he can cover his excrement [23:14].
37. Not to return a slave who fled from his master in the Diaspora to the Land of Israel [23:16].
38. Not to oppress a slave who flees from his master in the Diaspora to the Land of Israel [23:18].
39. Not to be conjugally intimate with a woman out of wedlock [23:11].
40. Not to bring the wage of a harlot or the exchange-price of a dog as an offering in the Temple [23:19].
41. Not to borrow at interest from a Jew [23:20].
42. To charge a non-Jew interest [23:21].
43. Not to delay a vow to make an offering, or to delay the offering of a consecrated animal for three festivals [23:22].
44. To fulfill one's vows and oaths [23:24].
45. To permit a hired worker to eat certain types of produce while he is under hire [23:25].
46. A hired worker should not take more produce from his employer than he is allowed [23:25].
47. A hired worker should not eat from his employer's crops during his actual work [23:26].
48. One who wishes to divorce his wife must do so with a get (bill of divorce) [24:1].
49. A divorced man may not take back his ex-wife after she has married and divorced again, or widowed [24:4].
50. A bridegroom may not part from his wife during the first year of marriage [24:5].
51. A bridegroom must remain with his wife during the first year of marriage [24:5].
52. Not to pawn any objects with which sustaining food is prepared [24:6].
53. Not to pluck out signs of tzara'as [24:8].
54. Not to take an object in pledge from a debtor by force [24:10].
55. Not to withhold a pledged object from its owner when he needs it [24:12].
56. To return a pledged object to its owner when he needs it [24:13].
57. To pay the earnings of a hired worker on the day that he earned them [24:15].
58. A person may not give testimony of a close relative at trial [24:16].
59. Not to pervert justice in the case of a convert or an orphan [24:17].
60. Not to take anything in pledge from a widow [24:17].
61. To leave forgotten sheaves for the poor [24:19].
62. Not to take a forgotten sheaf of grain or forgotten fruit [24:19].
63. To administer lashes to a person who transgresses certain prohibitions [25:2].
64. Not to give additional lashes, or hit any Jew [25:3].
65. Not to muzzle a domestic animal during its work [25:4].
66. A childless widow should not marry any person other than her late husband's brother [25:5].
67. A childless widow should marry her late husband's brother (Levirate marriage) [25:5].
68. The mitzvah of chalitzah (releasing a woman from the obligation of Levirate marriage) [25:9].
69. To save a person pursued by a killer, by attacking the killer [25:12].
70. Not to have mercy on a pursuing killer [25:12].
71. Not to keep inaccurate scales or weights, even if they are not used [25:13].
72. To remember what Amalek did to the Jewish people when they came out of Egypt [25:17].
73. To eradicate the descendants of Amalek [25:19].
74. Not to forget what Amalek did to the Jewish people when they came out of Egypt [25:19].

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parshas Ki Savo

פרשת כי תבוא

The Name of the Parsha

Ki Savo means "when you enter," as in the verse, *"When you enter the land which God...is giving you."*

At which point, according to Torah, does "entering" occur? Do we say that as soon as a person puts his hand in a room he has "entered" it? Or does he have to put most of his body inside? Or can he only be said to have "entered" when his whole body is in the room?

Similarly, at which point has a nation considered to have entered a land? When the first few people arrive? Or do they all have to arrive and settle before we can say they have truly entered?

The *Talmud* answers: *"Partial entry is not considered entry"* (*Chullin* 33b). Likewise, *Rashi* explains at the beginning of our *Parsha* that, "when you enter the land" refers to the time when *"they conquered the land and divided it."*

This teaches us a powerful lesson in daily life: *that we should "enter" ourselves totally and wholeheartedly into everything that we do for God.*

When a person becomes fully immersed in what he is doing, there is not merely a *quantitative* improvement in his actions (*how much* he is involved), but a *qualitative* change, which radically affects the manner in which he is involved.

In order to reach a state of total immersion ("entering"), a person must temporarily relinquish any other cares or concerns, and dedicate himself unrestrainedly to the matter at hand with utter devotion and concentration. He must surrender himself and not allow any personal bias to interfere with the purity of this act.

In other words, even though a person has many "layers" through which he interfaces with the world and copes with day-to-day life, it is possible for him to "peel away" these layers and forge a direct soul-connection with what he is doing. If he succeeds in doing so, then he and the activity will become one *indistinguishable* entity.

By way of illustration: when the soul enters the body to bring it to life, there is a total "entering," such that soul and body become one. Now, the body is alive too. It is not merely *enlivened* by the soul; it has actually become *alive* itself, because the soul has entered the body *totally*, such that the soul and body are truly one.

And that is the lesson from *Parshas Ki Savo:* We should "enter" into every *mitzvah* that we perform, and every act with which we serve God. Then our observance of Judaism will become *alive*—literally.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, pp. 245-7; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Ki Savo* 5733)

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כו א וְהָיָה כִּי־תָבוֹא אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לְךָ
נַחֲלָה וִירִשְׁתָּהּ וְיָשַׁבְתָּ בָּהּ: ב וְלָקַחְתָּ מֵרֵאשִׁית | כָּל־פְּרִי
הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר תָּבִיא מֵאַרְצְךָ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ
וְשַׂמְתָּ בַטֶּנֶא וְהָלַכְתָּ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
לְשַׁכֵּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם: ג וּבָאתָ אֶל־הַכֹּהֵן אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם
וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו הִגַּדְתִּי הַיּוֹם לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כִּי־בָאתִי אֶל־הָאָרֶץ
אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לַאֲבֹתֵינוּ לָתֶת לָנוּ: ד וְלָקַח הַכֹּהֵן הַטֶּנֶא

א וִיהֵי אֲרֵי תֵיעוֹל לְאַרְעָא דַּי יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ יָהֵב
לָךְ אַחְסָנָא וְתֵירְתַהּ וְתֵיתֵּב בַּהּ: ב וְתִסַּב
מֵרֵישׁ כָּל אִבָּא דְאַרְעָא דִּי תָעֵל מֵאַרְעָךְ דִּי יְיָ
אֱלָהָךְ יָהֵב לָךְ וּתְשַׁוֵּי בְסַלָּא וּתְהָךְ לְאַתְרָא
דִּי יִתְרְעֵי יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ לְאַשְׁרָאָה שְׁכִנְתֵּהּ תַּמָּן:
ג וְתֵיתֵי לְוָת כָּהֲנָא דִּי יְהֵי בְּיוֹמַיָּא הָאִנּוּן
וְתֵימַר לֵהּ חַוֵּיתִי יוֹמָא דֵין קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ אֲרֵי
עַלִּית לְאַרְעָא דִּי קַיֵּים יְיָ לַאֲבָהָתַנָא לְמִתַּן
לַנָא: ד וְיִסַּב כָּהֲנָא סַלָּא מִידָךְ וְיַצְנְעִנֵּהּ קֳדָם

רש״י

(א) והיה כי תבוא. וירשתה וישבת בה. מגיד שלא נתחייבו בבכורים עד שכבשו את הארץ וחלקוה[1]: **(ב) מראשית.** ולא כל ראשית, שאין כל הפירות חייבין בבכורים אלא שבעת המינין בלבד. נאמר כאן ארץ, ונאמר להלן[2] ארץ חטה ושעורה וגו', מה להלן משבעת המינים שנשתבחה בהם ארץ ישראל, אף כאן שבח ארץ ישראל שהם שבעה מינין[3]: **זית שמן.** זית אגורי שמשמנו אגור בתוכו[4]: **ודבש.** הוא דבש תמרים[3]: **מראשית.** אדם יורד לתוך שדהו ורואה תאנה שבכרה, כורך עליה גמי לסימן ואומר הרי זו בכורים[6]: **(ג) אשר יהיה בימים ההם.** אין לך אלא כהן שבימיך, כמו שהוא[5]: **ואמרת אליו.** שאינך כפוי טובה[5]: **הגדתי היום.** פעם אחת בשנה ולא שתי פעמים[5]: **(ד) ולקח הכהן הטנא מידך.** להניף אותו. כהן מניח ידו תחת יד הבעלים ומניף[7]:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● When were firstfruits first brought? (v. 1-2)

Rashi: The words, *"What will happen is, when you enter...you should take possession of it and settle in it,"* teach us that they were not obligated to bring firstfruits until they conquered the land and divided it.

Sifri: [The obligation to bring firstfruits] began immediately on entering the land.

Malbim: How can *Sifri* argue that the obligation to bring firstfruits began immediately upon entering the Land of Israel, when the verse states explicitly that "you should take possession of it and settle in it," *before* bringing firstfruits? Rather, *Sifri's* intention here is that the *mitzvah* of firstfruits became obligatory immediately after conquering the land and dividing it. This is in contrast to the *mitzvah* of eliminating Amalek, recorded at the end of the previous *Parsha*, which did not become obligatory immediately after conquering the land and dividing it, but only later, *"when God your God gives you relief from all your surrounding enemies"* (25:19).

● What is the reason why firstfruits are brought ? (v. 3)

Rashi: [To show] that you are not ungrateful [to God].

TORAS MENACHEM

When Did The *Mitzvah* of Firstfruits Begin? (v. 1)

Rashi explains that the *mitzvah* of offering firstfruits did not become obligatory until the Jewish people had fully conquered and settled in the Land of Israel, a process which actually took fourteen years.

Sifri, however, is of the opinion that the obligation to bring firstfruits became obligatory immediately upon entering the Land of Israel.

One problem with the view of *Sifri* is that it appears to contradict that which is stated explicitly in verse 1, that the *mitzvah* of firstfruits *only* applies after the Jewish people "*take possession*" of the land "*and settle in it*"—as ***Malbim*** points out.

Malbim explains that *Sifri*'s intention was not that the *mitzvah* became obligatory immediately upon entering the land, but rather, immediately upon settling in it. This is not indicated, however, in the wording of the *Sifri*.

The Explanation

The Torah stipulates that firstfruits are *only* to be brought after *"you enter the land...take possession of it and settle in it"* (v. 1). *Rashi* understood that, like the vast majority of *mitzvos* connected with entering the Land of Israel, this *mitzvah* would only become obligatory after the entire land was conquered and settled by the Jewish people as a whole.

Sifri, however, understood that the above verse is speaking to the *individual*, i.e. when you *personally* enter the land, you have an obligation to bring firstfruits *immediately* upon settling on your own private property. Thus, you do not have to wait until the *entire* land has been conquered and settled.

At first glance, however, this does not fully solve our problem. For even according to *Sifri*, a person only brings firstfruits upon acquiring his *own* piece of land (when he can speak of the land "which you, God, have *given to me*," v. 10), and the allocation of land only began after the conquest was complete, seven years after the Jewish people entered the Land of Israel. Thus, even according to *Sifri* it appears that the obligation to bring firstfruits did not begin immediately, but rather after seven years.

It could be argued though, that according to *Sifri*, it did in fact become obligatory for a person to bring firstfruits *immediately* upon entering the land, but until the person actually owned land, he was legally *exempt*

1 קידושין לז: 2 דברים ח, ח 3 מנחות פד: 4 ברכות לט. 5 ספרי 6 ביכורים פ״ג מ״א 7 סוכה מז:

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Conquest and Settlement of the Land

26

- [1] *What will happen is, when you enter the land which God, your God, is giving you as an inheritance, you should take possession of it and settle in it.**

Firstfruits

- [2] *Then (when the land is fully settled) you should take some of the first (to ripen) from every fruit of the ground, which you gather in from your land, that God, your God, is giving you.*
- *You should put it into a basket and go to the place which God, your God, will choose to make His Name rest there.*
- [3] *You should come to the priest who is present in (your times, whatever caliber he may be), and say to him:*

  "I am declaring today to God, your God, that I have come to the land which God swore to our fathers to give us."
- [4] *The priest will take the basket from your hand (and wave it together with you). He will then place it before the Altar of God, your God.*

TORAS MENACHEM

from doing so.** According to *Rashi*, however, the obligation to offer firstfruits did not *commence* until the Jewish people as a whole had entered, conquered and settled the entire land.

The Rationale of Rashi and Sifri

At first glance, *Rashi's* opinion also appears to be difficult to appreciate. *Rashi* himself writes that firstfruits are brought so as not to appear "ungrateful" to God (v. 3), so surely when a person has fruits growing from his own land, he should make an offering to God immediately, as *Sifri* argues? According to *Rashi*, a person who was one of the first to settle in the land would be enjoying fruits from his field for *seven years* before thanking God!

In truth, however, there are different approaches to expressing our gratitude to God, each having their own unique advantage. For example, according to Jewish custom, as soon as a person wakes in the morning he recites the prayer *Modeh Ani* as an expression of gratitude to God, while he is still in bed, even before his hands have been washed. Later in the

The Last Word

"You Should Put Them Into a Basket" (v. 2)

Firstfruits represent the Jewish souls, as the *Midrash* teaches that the Divine Thought to create Jewish souls *"preceded everything"* (*Bereishis Rabah* 1:4). In this respect, Jewish souls are "first" and cherished in a way similar to firstfruits.

When the soul is in Heaven, before it enters a body, it enjoys an intense, ecstatic relationship with God. Nevertheless, the soul is sent down to earth in a body which conceals its relationship with God. This is not without profit since, through this descent, the soul is able to carry out a mission in the physical world, which can eventually result in an even more intense relationship with God. For God's innermost "desire" is for His *mitzvos* to be carried out specifically in the physical world.

This is the lesson from the requirement of firstfruits being placed in a basket. Although the fruits are the finest and first of the crop, they cannot achieve perfection without a basket. Likewise, the Jewish soul, which is God's highest priority, cannot achieve perfection without coming down into a physical body, in a world of concealment and temptation, because it is precisely through that descent that an even greater ascent is achieved.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 29, p. 150*ff.*)

** Thus according to *Sifri*, the children of Yisro (who were allotted the "pastures of Jericho" by Moshe himself, *prior* to entering the land—see *Sifri*, quoted in *Rashi* to *Bamidbar* 10:32) *would* have offered firstfruits *immediately* upon entering the Land, for Jericho was conquered instantly, without the need to fight. Clearly though, these first fruits would have been: a.) On a private altar, which was permitted at this time since the Tabernacle at Shiloh—and certainly the Temple itself—had not yet been constructed. b.) From wheat or barley, to avoid the prohibition of *orlah* (prohibited fruits from the first three years of planting). Or alternatively, from orchards and vineyards planted by the previous inhabitants of the land, which were not subject to the prohibition of *orlah* (see *Devarim* 6:11; *Mishnah, Orlah* 1:2). At first glance, since the children of Yisro were converts they would not have been able to recite the declaration upon bringing firstfruits, "since he [the convert] cannot say (v. 3): "[I have come to the land which God swore] *to our fathers* [to give us]" (*Rashi* to v. 11). However, in this case, it could be argued that the children of Yisro would have indeed made the declaration, since their father Yisro converted before the Land of Israel was conquered. (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, pp. 149-50; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Ki Savo* 5744).

* בפשוטו של מקרא (שיטת רש"י) כיבוש וחזקה הארץ בכתוב כאן אינם (רק) תנאי במצות בכורים, אלא ציור בפ"ע על כיבוש וחזקה, "וירשתה וישבת בה". ולכן לא נזקק רש"י לתרץ מדוע הוצרך הכתוב להקדים האריכות ע"ד ביאת וכיבוש הארץ, (דלכאורה הו"ל להזכיר רק ישיבת הארץ, ומובן מעצמה שהיינו לאחר ביאה וכיבוש) - ע"פ לקו"ש חל"ד ע' 147. ראה גם שיחת ש"פ כי תבוא תשד"מ, ותשמ"ד.

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מִיָּדֶךָ וְהִנִּיחוֹ לִפְנֵי מִזְבַּח יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ: ה וְעָנִיתָ וְאָמַרְתָּ לִפְנֵי ׀
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲרַמִּי אֹבֵד אָבִי וַיֵּרֶד מִצְרַיְמָה וַיָּגָר שָׁם בִּמְתֵי
מְעָט וַיְהִי־שָׁם לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל עָצוּם וָרָב: ו וַיָּרֵעוּ אֹתָנוּ הַמִּצְרִים
וַיְעַנּוּנוּ וַיִּתְּנוּ עָלֵינוּ עֲבֹדָה קָשָׁה: ז וַנִּצְעַק אֶל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי
אֲבֹתֵינוּ וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה אֶת־קֹלֵנוּ וַיַּרְא אֶת־עָנְיֵנוּ וְאֶת־עֲמָלֵנוּ
וְאֶת־לַחֲצֵנוּ: ח וַיּוֹצִאֵנוּ יְהוָה מִמִּצְרַיִם בְּיָד חֲזָקָה וּבִזְרֹעַ נְטוּיָה
וּבְמֹרָא גָּדֹל וּבְאֹתוֹת וּבְמֹפְתִים: ט וַיְבִאֵנוּ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה
וַיִּתֶּן־לָנוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת אֶרֶץ זָבַת חָלָב וּדְבָשׁ: י וְעַתָּה
הִנֵּה הֵבֵאתִי אֶת־רֵאשִׁית פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר־נָתַתָּה לִּי יְהוָה
וְהִנַּחְתּוֹ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתָ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ:
יא וְשָׂמַחְתָּ בְכָל־הַטּוֹב אֲשֶׁר נָתַן־לְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וּלְבֵיתֶךָ אַתָּה
וְהַלֵּוִי וְהַגֵּר אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבֶּךָ: ס [שני] יב כִּי תְכַלֶּה לַעְשֵׂר אֶת־כָּל־

מַדְבְּחָא דַּייָ אֱלָהָךְ: ה וְתָתֵיב וְתֵימַר קֳדָם יְיָ
אֱלָהָךְ לָבָן אֲרַמָּאָה בְּעָא לְאוֹבָדָא יָת אַבָּא
וּנְחַת לְמִצְרַיִם וְדָר תַּמָּן בְּעַם זְעֵר וַהֲוָה תַמָּן
לְעַם רַב תַּקִּיף וְסַגִּי: ו וְאַבְאִישׁוּ לָנָא מִצְרָיִם
וְעַנְּיָנָא וִיהַבוּ עֲלָנָא פֻּלְחָנָא קַשְׁיָא: ז וְצַלֵּינָא
קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָא דַּאֲבָהָתַנָא וְקַבֵּיל יְיָ צְלוֹתַנָא
וּגְלֵי קֳדָמוֹהִי עַמְלָנָא וְלֵאוּתַנָא וְדוּחֲקָנָא:
ח וְאַפְּקָנָא יְיָ מִמִּצְרַיִם בִּידָא תַקִּיפָא וּבִדְרָעָא
מְרַמְמָא וּבְחֶזְוָנָא רַבָּא וּבְאָתִין וּבְמוֹפְתִין:
ט וְאַיְתְיָנָא לְאַתְרָא הָדֵין וִיהַב לָנָא יָת אַרְעָא
הָדָא אַרְעָא עָבְדָא חֲלָב וּדְבָשׁ: י וּכְעַן הָא
אַיְתֵיתִי יָת רֵישׁ אִבָּא דְּאַרְעָא דִּיהַבְתְּ לִי יְיָ
וְתַצְנְעִנֵּהּ קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ וְתִסְגּוּד קֳדָם יְיָ
אֱלָהָךְ: יא וְתֶחְדֵּי בְּכָל טָבְתָא דִּי יְהַב לָךְ יְיָ
אֱלָהָךְ וְלֶאֱנָשׁ בֵּיתָךְ אַתְּ וְלֵוָאָה וְגִיּוֹרָא דִּי
בֵּינָךְ: יב אֲרֵי תְשֵׁיצֵי לְעַשָּׂרָא יָת כָּל מַעְשַׂר

רש"י

(ה) **וענית.** לשון הרמת קול[1]: **ארמי אבד אבי.** מזכיר חסדי המקום. ארמי אובד אבי, לבן בקש לעקור את הכל, כשרדף אחר יעקב. ובשביל שחשב לעשות, חשב לו המקום כאלו עשה, שאומות העולם עובדי אלילים חושב להם הקב"ה מחשבה כמעשה[2]: **וירד מצרימה.** ועוד אחרים באו עלינו לכלותנו, שאחרי זאת ירד יעקב למצרים: **במתי מעט.** בשבעים נפש[3]: (ט) **אל המקום הזה.** זה בית המקדש[3]: **ויתן לנו את הארץ.** כמשמעו: (י) **והנחתו.** מגיד שנוטלו אחר הנחת (ס"א הנפת) הכהן ואוחזו בידו כשהוא קורא, וחוזר ומניף: (יא) **ושמחת בכל הטוב.** מכאן אמרו אין קורין מקרא בכורים אלא בזמן שמחה מעצרת ועד החג, שאדם מלקט תבואתו ופירותיו ויינו ושמנו, אבל מהחג והילך מביא ואינו קורא[4]: **אתה והלוי.** אף הלוי חייב בבכורים אם נטעו בתוך עריהם: **והגר אשר בקרבך.** מביא ואינו קורא, שאינו יכול לומר לאבותינו[5]: (יב) **כי תכלה לעשר את כל מעשר תבואתך בשנה השלישית.** כשתגמור להפריש מעשרות של שנה השלישית, קבע זמן הביעור והוידוי בערב הפסח של שנה הרביעית, שנאמר מקצה שלש שנים תוציא וגו'[6]. נאמר כאן מקץ, ונאמר להלן מקץ שבע שנים[7] לענין הקהל, מה להלן רגל אף כאן רגל, אי מה להלן חג הסוכות אף כאן חג הסוכות, תלמוד

TORAS MENACHEM

day, he will pray more at length to God, at which time he will obviously be in a more fit state of mind to praise his Creator.

Nevertheless, each of these types of praise possesses a unique advantage: His recital of the *Modeh Ani* prayer in the morning is immediate and spontaneous, demonstrating a deep-rooted commitment to serving God, to the extent that the very first thing a person does upon awakening is to recite a prayer. On the other hand, his praises to God later in the day are more meaningful, because they arise from a fuller and more conscious appreciation of God's kindness.

Sifri perceived the firstfruits to be a form of thanksgiving to God of the former type (comparable to *Modeh Ani*), where a person offers fruits to God *immediately* on acquiring his field.

Rashi, however, understood that the firstfruits *are* a form of praise which comes after a person *fully* appreciates the fact that God *gave* the Land of Israel to the Jewish people (comparable to one's prayers later in the day that arise from a fuller appreciation of God's kindness). So until the point has been reached where every Jewish person has received his portion in the land, one's praise to God cannot be complete—for how can one Jew rejoice in receiving his portion when another Jew is still lacking? Thus, *Rashi* maintained that firstfruits are *only* brought after "they conquered the land and divided it."

When Rashi & Sifri Would Agree

It could be argued that the positions of *Rashi* and *Sifri* are not mutually exclusive. For while the conquest and division of the Land of Israel did actually take fourteen years, if the sin of the spies had not occurred, it would have happened instantaneously (for the spies themselves would have conquered the land—see *Rashi* to *Bamidbar* 21:32). Thus, in such an instance, firstfruits would have been brought *immediately* upon entering the land, even according to *Rashi*.

And this will indeed occur with the true and complete Redemption, when not only will the conquest of all the ten promised lands be instantaneous, but the fruits will grow instantly too, as the verse states, *"the plowman will meet the reaper, and the treader of grapes the one who carries the seed"* (*Amos* 9:13). Thus, at that time, both *Rashi* and *Sifri* will concur that firstfruits are to be brought immediately.

(Based on *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 34, pp. 145*ff.*; vol. 9, pp. 155-6; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Ki Savo* 5744; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Va'eschanan* 5751)

1 סוטה לב: 2 קידושין מ. 3 ספרי 4 פסחים לו: 5 ביכורים פ"א מ"ו 6 דברים יד, כח 7 שם לא, י.

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- 5 *You should (hold the basket and) say out loud before God, your God:*

  "(Lavan the) Aramean (wanted to) destroy my father (Ya'akov. And his sorrows did not stop there, because) he went down to Egypt and lived there in a small (family) group (of seventy souls). But he became a great, powerful, and populous nation there. 6 *The Egyptians treated us cruelly and afflicted us, and they imposed hard labor on us.*

  7 *"We cried out to God, God of our fathers, and God heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression.* 8 *God brought us out from Egypt with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm, with great awe, and with signs and wonders.*

  9 *"He brought us to this site (of the Holy Temple), and He gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.*

  10 *"I have now brought here the first fruit of the ground which you, God, have given to me."*

- *You should (wave the basket once again, and) place it before God, your God.*
- *Then prostrate yourself before God, your God.*
- 11 *Then you will rejoice with all the good that God, your God, has granted you and your household—(both) you, the Levite, and the convert who is among you.*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What is the connection between Ya'akov's difficulties with Lavan and the bringing of firstfruits? (v. 5)

RASHI: One mentions the kindness of the Omnipresent [by stating]: *"(Lavan the) Aramean (wanted to) destroy my father."*

TORAH TEMIMAH: One brings firstfruits to thank God for His kindness in giving the Land of Israel to the Jewish people. Normally, a nation can only acquire a land when they themselves are settled, and in a position of strength. The Jewish people, however, were lacking any strength at all, spending all their time wandering from place to place, and yet thanks to God's kindness, they managed to take possession of the Land of Israel miraculously. For this reason, when a person brings firstfruits to the Temple, he describes how from the moment Ya'akov left his father's house, Ya'akov was unsettled and in a position of strategic weakness which continued throughout the Egyptian exile. And nevertheless, God's kindness ensured that the Jewish people came to possess the land, despite all odds.

TORAS MENACHEM

THE DECLARATION UPON BRINGING FIRSTFRUITS (v. 5-10)

In addition to the *mitzvah* of bringing firstfruits to the Temple, there is a further *mitzvah* to make a verbal declaration (v. 5-10) in which "one mentions the kindness of the Omnipresent," as *Rashi* writes.

However, one detail which *Rashi* does not explain is why this declaration only mentions two events in the history of the Jewish people: Lavan's attempt to "destroy" Ya'akov, and the Egyptian exile.

Why, for example, does the declaration omit major occurrences such as the salvation of Ya'akov from Eisav, the splitting of the Reed Sea, the miracles of the war with Amalek, the *manna*, and the supply of water in the desert, *etc.*?

Torah Temimah explains that the two events mentioned in the declaration, bring to light how the Jewish people managed to acquire a homeland despite the fact that they were strategically weak, being a people wandering from place to place.

However, this only magnifies the question why the declaration fails to mention Ya'akov's fleeing from Eisav, which was the initial cause of Ya'akov's wandering. Also, it would have been appropriate to mention how the Jewish people were wandering in the desert for forty years.

Since this is a matter which is difficult to understand at the literal level, *Rashi* should surely have addressed this matter. We can only presume that *Rashi* felt that the reader could discern the matter for himself with simple logic, from one of *Rashi's* earlier comments.

THE EXPLANATION

The declaration made on bringing firstfruits to the Holy Temple, thanking God for His kindness, must clearly be connected with the firstfruits themselves. I.e. we mention only acts of kindness of God which *resemble* the kindness that led to the bringing of firstfruits.

The Jewish people were only obligated to bring firstfruits after the Land of Israel had been divided among the Tribes (see *Rashi* to v. 1, above). Consequently, this *mitzvah* is not merely a thanksgiving for acquiring the actual land, but for its *complete settlement*, since only at that point could one truly *"rejoice with all the good"* (v. 11).

Consequently, the salvation of Ya'akov from Eisav and the splitting of the Reed Sea are not directly relevant here, since these events occurred while on a journey, and not at a time of settlement. Similarly, the miracles that occurred to our ancestors in the desert, such as the war with Amalek and the *manna*, were not associated with a fixed place.

Thus, the only events mentioned in the declaration are times when God helped the Jewish people while they were settled: a.) the salvation of Ya'akov from Lavan, since Ya'akov lived with Lavan for twenty years, and, b.) the period in Egypt, which lasted 210 years, since these were both times when our ancestors benefitted from acts of God's kindness during long-term settlements. And this resembles God's kindness in helping a person to be settled in his homeland, and bring firstfruits.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 14, p. 93ff.)

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מַעְשַׂר תְּבוּאָתְךָ בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁלִישִׁת שְׁנַת הַמַּעֲשֵׂר וְנָתַתָּה לַלֵּוִי
לַגֵּר לַיָּתוֹם וְלָאַלְמָנָה וְאָכְלוּ בִשְׁעָרֶיךָ וְשָׂבֵעוּ׃ יג וְאָמַרְתָּ לִפְנֵי
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בִּעַרְתִּי הַקֹּדֶשׁ מִן־הַבַּיִת וְגַם נְתַתִּיו לַלֵּוִי וְלַגֵּר
לַיָּתוֹם וְלָאַלְמָנָה כְּכָל־מִצְוָתְךָ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתָנִי לֹא־עָבַרְתִּי
מִמִּצְוֺתֶיךָ וְלֹא שָׁכָחְתִּי׃ יד לֹא־אָכַלְתִּי בְאֹנִי מִמֶּנּוּ וְלֹא־בִעַרְתִּי
מִמֶּנּוּ בְּטָמֵא וְלֹא־נָתַתִּי מִמֶּנּוּ לְמֵת שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהָי
עָשִׂיתִי כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתָנִי׃ טו *הַשְׁקִיפָה מִמְּעוֹן קָדְשְׁךָ מִן
הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמְּךָ אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֵת הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר
נָתַתָּה לָנוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לַאֲבֹתֵינוּ אֶרֶץ זָבַת חָלָב וּדְבָשׁ׃ ס

עללתך בשתא תליתאה שנת מעשרא ותתן
ללואה לגיורא ליתמא ולארמלא וייכלון
בקרויך וישבעון: יג ותימר קדם יי אלהך
פליתי קודש מעשרא מן ביתא ואף יהבתה
ללואה ולגיורא ליתמא ולארמלא ככל פקודך
די פקדתני לא עברית מפקודיך ולא
אתנשיתי: יד לא אכלית באבלי מנה ולא
פליתי מנה בדמסאב ולא יהבית מנה למית
קבלית למימרא דיי אלהי עבדית ככל די
פקדתני: טו אסתכי ממדור קודשך מן שמיא
וברך ית עמך ית ישראל וית ארעא די יהבת
לנא כמא די קימתא לאבהתנא ארעא עבדא

* מנהג הקוראים בתורה להגביה את קולם בפסוק זה.

רש"י

לומר כי תכלה לעשר מעשרות של שנה השלישית, רגל שהמעשרות כלין בו, וזהו פסח, שהרבה אילנות יש שנלקטין אחר הסוכות, נמצאו מעשרות של שלישית כלין בפסח של רביעית, וכל מי ששהה מעשרותיו הצריכו הכתוב לבערו מן הבית[1]: **שנת המעשר.** שנה שאין נוהג בה אלא מעשר אחד משני מעשרות שנהגו בשתי שנים שלפניה, שהשנה ראשונה ושניה של שמיטה נוהג בה מעשר ראשון, כמו שנאמר כי תקחו מאת בני ישראל את המעשר[2], ומעשר שני, שנאמר ואכלת לפני ה' אלהיך מעשר דגנך תירושך ויצהרך[3], הרי שני מעשרות, ובא ולמדך כאן בשנה השלישית שאין נוהג מאותן שני מעשרות אלא האחד ואיזה, זה מעשר ראשון. ותחת מעשר שני יתן מעשר עני, שנאמר כאן ונתת ללוי, את אשר לו, הרי מעשר ראשון. לגר ליתום ולאלמנה, זה מעשר עני[1]: **ואכלו בשעריך ושבעו.** תן להם כדי שבען. מכאן אמרו אין פוחתין לעני בגורן פחות מחצי קב חטים וכו'[1]: **(יג) ואמרת לפני ה' אלהיך.** התודה שנתת מעשרותיך[1]: **בערתי הקדש מן הבית.** זה מעשר שני ונטע רבעי, ולמדך שאם שהה מעשרותיו של שתי שנים ולא העלם לירושלים, צריך להעלותם עכשיו: **וגם נתתיו ללוי.** זה מעשר ראשון[1]. וגם, לרבות תרומה ובכורים[4]: **ולגר ליתום ולאלמנה.** זה מעשר עני: **ככל מצותך.** נתתים כסדרן ולא הקדמתי תרומה לבכורים, ולא מעשר לתרומה, ולא שני לראשון, שהתרומה קרויה ראשית, שהיא ראשונה משנעשה דגן, וכתיב מלאתך ודמעך לא תאחר[5], לא תשנה את הסדר: **לא עברתי ממצותיך.** לא הפרשתי ממין על שאינו מינו, ומן החדש על הישן (ולא מן התלוש על המחובר, ולא מן המחובר על התלוש): **ולא שכחתי.** מלברכך על הפרשת מעשרות[1]: **(יד) לא אכלתי באני ממנו.** מכאן שאסור לאונן[1]: **ולא בערתי ממנו בטמא.** בין שאני טמא והוא טהור, בין שאני טהור והוא טמא[1]. והיכן הוזהר על כך, לא תוכל לאכול בשעריך[6], זו אכילה טומאה, כמו שנאמר בפסולי המוקדשים בשעריך תאכלנו הטמא והטהור וגו'[7], אבל זה לא תוכל לאכול דרך אכילת שעריך האמור במקום אחר[8]: **ולא נתתי ממנו למת.** לעשות לו ארון ותכריכין[9]: **שמעתי בקול ה' אלהי.** הביאותיו לבית הבחירה: **עשיתי ככל אשר צויתני.** שמחתי ושימחתי בו: **(טו) השקיפה ממעון קדשך.** עשינו מה שגזרת עלינו, עשה אתה מה שעליך לעשות, שאמרת אם בחקתי תלכו ונתתי גשמיכם בעתם[10]: **אשר נתתה לנו כאשר נשבעת לאבותינו.** לתת לנו וקיימת,

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

"Look Down From Your Holy Abode in Heaven, and Bless Your People Israel" (v. 15)

Why does the verse use the repetitive phrase, "bless *Your people Israel*"? Surely "Your people" and "Israel" are one and the same? And why are "Your people" mentioned before "Israel"?

"Israel" refers to Torah scholars, and *"Your people"* to ordinary Jews, who observe the *mitzvos* loyally. In the *Talmud*, a debate is recorded whether Torah study or *mitzvah* observance is greater, and the conclusion is: *"Torah study is greater, since it leads to practical observance"* (Kidushin 40b), i.e. even according to the opinion that Torah study is superior, this is only because it leads to practical observance. Consequently, our verse places "Your people," the observant Jew, before "Israel," the scholar, to emphasize that, overall, observance is more important.

However, while the *Talmud* appears to stress that practical observance is more important, it nevertheless employs the expression, "Torah is greater." So why are "Your people" placed before "Israel," suggesting that observance is *unequivocally* superior?

The answer lies in a comment of the Jerusalem Talmud on our verse: *"Come and behold the greatness of those who observe the mitzvos! For every time the term 'look down' is mentioned in the Torah, it refers to a curse, but here it refers to a blessing"* (Ma'aser Sheni 5:5), i.e. the unique quality of practical observance is brought to light by the fact that it transforms curses into blessings. And since this is the message conveyed by our verse, "Your people" are placed first.

(Based on *Sefer Hama'amarim Melukat* vol. 4, pp. 371-2)

1 ספרי. 2 במדבר יח, כו. 3 דברים יד, כג. 4 ירושלמי מעשר שני פ"ה ה"ה 5 שמות כב, כח 6 דברים יב, יז 7 שם טו, כב 8 יבמות עג: 9 מע"ש פ"ה מי"ב 10 ויקרא כו, ג.

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THE TITHE DECLARATION

26:12 SECOND READING *When you have reached (Erev Pesach of the fourth year of the tithing cycle, which is) the end (of the period when you may) separate all the tithes of your produce for the third year—the year when (only) the (first) tithe (is separated which) you give to the Levite. (And instead of separating the second tithe, which is eaten in Jerusalem, you shall separate the tithe for the poor, which you shall give) to the convert, the orphan, and the widow, so that they can eat to their satisfaction in your cities—*

• 13 *Then you say before God, your God, (the following declaration):*

"I have removed the holy (second tithe and fourth-year fruits) from the house.*

"I have also (separated terumah and firstfruits).

"(I have) given (the first tithe) to the Levite.

"(I have given the tithe for the poor to) the convert, the orphan, and the widow.

"(I did all this) in accordance with Your command which You have commanded me (about the precise order of separation).

"I have not transgressed Your commands (about cross-separation).

"I have not forgotten (to bless You).

14 *"I did not eat any (second tithe) while I was in a state of mourning.*

"I did not consume any of it while in a state of ritual impurity.

"I did not give any of it (for making a coffin or shrouds) for the dead.

"I listened to the voice of God, my God, (and brought these offerings to the Temple).

"I did everything that You commanded me. (I rejoiced and brought joy to others).

15 *"(We have done what is incumbent upon us. Now do what you promised and) look down from Your holy abode in heaven, and bless Your people Israel and the land which You have given to us—as (You fulfilled the oath that) You swore to our fathers (and gave us) a land flowing with milk and honey."*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

• When is the tithe declaration to be made? (v. 12)

RASHI: When you finish separating the tithes of the third year [i.e. in the fourth year of the seven-year cycle].

RAMBAM: At the time of *minchah* (afternoon service) on the *Yom Tov* of the last day of *Pesach* of the fourth year....The declaration may only be made during the day (*Laws of the Second Tithe* 11:3-4).

• Are women obligated to make the tithe declaration?

SEFER HACHINUCH: Only males are obligated (*mitzvah* 607).

MINCHAS CHINUCH: *Sefer Hachinuch* ruled that women are exempt from making a tithe declaration, because: a.) They were not given a portion in the Land of Israel, so they cannot say the words "the Land which you have given to us" (v. 15). And, b.) Women are exempt from *mitzvos* that are bound to a specific time.

R' ELIYAHU OF LONDON: Women are obligated in this *mitzvah*. Even though they were not given a portion of the land, they can inherit land like the daughters of *Tzlafchad*. Therefore they can say the words, "the Land which you have given to us" (*Piskei R' Eliyahu Mikodesh leMa'aser Sheni*).

TORAS MENACHEM

THE TITHE DECLARATION—A WOMAN'S OBLIGATION

Sefer Hachinuch and ***R' Eliyahu of London*** dispute whether women are obligated to make the tithe declaration (v. 12-15).

Rambam does not mention this issue, from which it appears that *Rambam* maintained that women *are* obligated to make the declaration, for otherwise he would have mentioned their exemption explicitly (as he did in the case of the firstfruits declaration—*Laws of Firstfruits* 4:2).

However, this leaves us with the problem posed by ***Minchas Chinuch***. Since *Rambam* states explicitly that the tithe declaration is a *mitzvah* bound to a specific time ("*minchah on the Yom Tov of the last day of Pesach*"), surely women should be exempt?

* See *Vayikra* 19:24; 27:30.

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(שלישי) טו הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מְצַוְּךָ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־הַחֻקִּים
הָאֵלֶּה וְאֶת־הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים וְשָׁמַרְתָּ וְעָשִׂיתָ אוֹתָם בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ
וּבְכָל־נַפְשֶׁךָ: יז אֶת־יְהוָה הֶאֱמַרְתָּ הַיּוֹם לִהְיוֹת לְךָ לֵאלֹהִים
וְלָלֶכֶת בִּדְרָכָיו וְלִשְׁמֹר חֻקָּיו וּמִצְוֹתָיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו וְלִשְׁמֹעַ בְּקֹלוֹ:
יח וַיהוָה הֶאֱמִירְךָ הַיּוֹם לִהְיוֹת לוֹ לְעַם סְגֻלָּה כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר־לָךְ
וְלִשְׁמֹר כָּל־מִצְוֹתָיו: יט וּלְתִתְּךָ עֶלְיוֹן עַל כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר
עָשָׂה לִתְהִלָּה וּלְשֵׁם וּלְתִפְאָרֶת וְלִהְיֹתְךָ עַם־קָדֹשׁ לַיהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֵּר: פ (רביעי) כז א וַיְצַו מֹשֶׁה וְזִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
אֶת־הָעָם לֵאמֹר שָׁמֹר אֶת־כָּל־הַמִּצְוָה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה
אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם: ב וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר תַּעַבְרוּ אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן אֶל־
הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ וַהֲקֵמֹתָ לְךָ אֲבָנִים גְּדֹלוֹת
וְשַׂדְתָּ אֹתָם בַּשִּׂיד: ג וְכָתַבְתָּ עֲלֵיהֶן אֶת־כָּל־דִּבְרֵי הַתּוֹרָה
הַזֹּאת בְּעָבְרֶךָ לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר תָּבֹא אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה

חֲלַב וּדְבָשׁ: טו יוֹמָא הָדֵין יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ מְפַקֵּד
לְמֶעְבַּד יָת קְיָמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין וְיָת דִּינַיָּא וְתִטַּר
וְתַעְבֵּיד יָתְהוֹן בְּכָל לִבָּךְ וּבְכָל נַפְשָׁךְ: יז יָת יְיָ
חֲטַבְתָּא יוֹמָא דֵין לְמֶהֱוֵי לָךְ לֶאֱלָהּ וּלְמֵהַךְ
בְּאָרְחָן דְּתָקְנָן קֳדָמוֹהִי וּלְמִטַּר קְיָמוֹהִי
וּפִקּוֹדוֹהִי וְדִינוֹהִי וּלְקַבָּלָא בְּמֵימְרֵהּ: יח וַייָ
חַטְבָךְ יוֹמָא דֵין לְמֶהֱוֵי לֵהּ לְעַם חֲבִיב
כְּמָא דִּי מַלֵּיל לָךְ וּלְמִטַּר כָּל פִּקּוֹדוֹהִי:
יט וּלְמִתְּנָךְ עִלָּאָה עַל כָּל עַמְמַיָּא דִּי עֲבַד
לְתוּשְׁבְּחָא וּלְשׁוּם וְלִרְבוּ וּלְמֶהֱוָךְ עַם קַדִּישׁ
קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ כְּמָא דִּי מַלֵּיל: א וּפַקֵּיד מֹשֶׁה
וְסָבֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יָת עַמָּא לְמֵימַר טַר יָת כָּל
תַּפְקֶדְתָּא דִּי אֲנָא מְפַקֵּד יָתְכוֹן יוֹמָא דֵין:
ב וִיהֵי בְּיוֹמָא דִּי תִּעְבְּרוּן יָת יַרְדְּנָא לְאַרְעָא
דַּייָ אֱלָהָךְ יָהֵב לָךְ וּתְקֵים לָךְ אַבְנִין רַבְרְבִין
וּתְסוּד יָתְהוֹן בְּסִידָא: ג וְתִכְתּוֹב עֲלֵיהוֹן יָת כָּל
פִּתְגָּמֵי אוֹרָיְתָא הָדָא בְּמֶעְבְּרָךְ בְּדִיל דִּי תֵיעוֹל

רש״י

ארץ זבת חלב ודבש: (טז) היום הזה ה' אלהיך מצוך. בכל יום יהיו בעיניך חדשים, כאלו בו ביום נצטוית עליהם[1]: ושמרת ועשית אותם. בת קול מברכתו, הבאת בכורים היום, תשנה לשנה הבאה: (יז) האמרת והאמירך. אין להם עד מוכיח במקרא, ולי נראה שהוא לשון הפרשה והבדלה, הבדלתיו לך מאלהי הנכר להיות לך לאלהים, והוא הפרישך אליו מעמי הארץ להיות לו לעם סגולה, ומצאתי להם עד והוא לשון תפארת, כמו יתאמרו כל פועלי און[2]: (יח) כאשר דבר לך. והייתם לי סגולה[3]: (יט) ולהיותך עם קדוש כאשר דבר. והייתם לי קדושים[4]: (א) שמור את כל המצוה. לשון הווה גרדנ"ט בלע"ז: (ב) והקמות לך. בירדן ואחר כך תוציאו משם אחרות ותבנו מהן מזבח בהר עיבל, נמצאת אתה אומר ג' מיני אבנים היו, שנים עשר בירדן

TORAS MENACHEM

The Explanation

If a *mitzvah* is not observed at a particular time, it could be for one of two reasons:

a.) There is no obligation in Jewish law to *observe* the *mitzvah* at this precise time.

b.) In principle, one would observe the *mitzvah* at this time, but it is impossible to perform it for some other reason.

The former category, 'a,' represents a true "time-bound" *mitzvah*, from which women are exempt. The latter case 'b', however, is not a *mitzvah* that is bound to a particular time, but rather, a *mitzvah* which *applies at all times*, and is not observed at certain times due to practical considerations. Thus, women would be obligated in this type of *mitzvah*.

In our case, it could perhaps be argued that the *mitzvah* of making a declaration at the end of the tithing season falls into the latter category. For the Torah simply instructs us to make a declaration when tithing is complete. The fact that this occurs at a particular time of the year is due to the fact that, until then, there are simply no crops to tithe (because of the *natural phenomenon* of seasons which regulate the agricultural cycle), and not because the Torah made this *mitzvah* obligatory at this time in particular. Therefore, *Rambam* was of the opinion that women are obligated to make a tithe declaration, just like men.

At first glance, however, there seems to be a further difficulty here. For in addition to the fact that the tithe declaration is made, *"At the time of minchah (afternoon service) on the Yom Tov of the last day of Pesach,"* (which is a circumstantial limitation and not a true limitation of time, as explained above), *Rambam* also writes, *"The declaration may only be made during the day."* Apparently, the requirement to perform this *mitzvah* during the day is a pure limitation of time that did not arise due to *any* circumstantial factor. So why does this not render a woman exempt from this *mitzvah*?

In truth, however, the limitation that this *mitzvah* may only be performed during the day is not considered to be a "limitation of time" which is sufficient to render a woman exempt. We see this explicitly from the case of sacrifices which *"may only be offered during the day"* (*Rambam, Laws of Sacrificial Procedure* 4:1), and yet we do not find that women are exempt from personal sacrifices due to this time limitation. (Only in the case of festival sacrifices, which are limited to a specific time of the year, are women exempt.)

The above brings to light even further the importance of women in so many areas of Judaism, which is all the more stressed in our generation immediately prior to the redemption, which will come "in the merit of the righteous women of the generation" (*Yalkut Shimoni, Rus, remez* 606).

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Kedoshim* 5749, note 87, and *hashlamos* ibid.)

1 תנחומא א 2 תהלים צד, ד 3 שמות יט, ה. ראה לקו"ש חכ"ד ע' 157 ואילך. 4 ויקרא כ, כו

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CONCLUSION OF MOSHE'S ADDRESS

THIRD READING

16 (It should always appear in your eyes that) today God, your God, is commanding you to fulfill these
suprarational commands and rational commands (for the first time). Be careful to observe them, with
all your heart and all your soul.

17 (It should always appear in your eyes that) today you have selected God (from all the foreign gods),
to be your God (for the first time)—to go in His ways, and to observe His suprarational commands, His
(other) commandments and His rational commands, and to listen to His voice.

18 And (it should always appear in your eyes that) today God has selected you (from all the nations
of the earth) to be His treasured people (for the first time)—as He told you—and to observe all His
commandments, 19 and to make you elite above all the nations that He made, in acclaim, renown and
splendor, being that you are a holy people to God, your God, as He said.

INSTRUCTIONS UPON CROSSING THE JORDAN

27

FOURTH READING

Moshe and the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying, "You are to be keeping all of
the commandment(s) that I am commanding you today!"
2 "What will happen is, on the day that you cross the Jordan to the land God, your God, is
giving you, you should set up (at the Jordan) huge stones for yourself, and plaster them with lime. 3 When
you cross over, you should write on them all the words of this Torah, so that you may come into the land
which God, your God, is giving you a land flowing with milk and honey, as God, the God of your
forefathers, has told you.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How is God commanding you "today"? (v. 16)

RASHI: [This means:] Every day they shall be new in your eyes, as though you have been commanded them today.

● What do the words הָאֱמַרְתָּ and הֶאֱמִירְךָ mean? (v. 17-18)

RASHI: There is no conclusive proof in scripture as to what הָאֱמַרְתָּ and הֶאֱמִירְךָ mean, and it appears to me that they mean "separation" and "distinction." [The meaning here is:] You have separated God for yourself from all the foreign gods to be your God, and He distinguished you for Himself from all the nations on earth to be His treasured people.

[Alternatively] these words could be understood as being similar to the term for "glory" (תִּפְאֶרֶת), as in the verse *"all workers of violence glorify themselves* (יִתְאַמְּרוּ)*"* (Psalms 94:4).

IBN EZRA: הָאֱמַרְתָּ means "exalted." Rabbi Yehudah Halevi Hasefardi understood it as meaning "speech": *"Today, you have caused God to say that He is your God....And today God has caused you to say that you are His treasured people."*

TORAS MENACHEM

RASHI & IBN EZRA (v. 17-18)

Why did *Rashi* reject the simple interpretation cited by ***Ibn Ezra*** that הָאֱמַרְתָּ and הֶאֱמִירְךָ are from the Hebrew word אֲמִירָה meaning "speech," and opt instead for an interpretation that "has no conclusive proof in scripture"?

THE EXPLANATION

In his commentary to verse 16, *Rashi* explains that the word "today" comes to stress, *"Every day they shall be new in your eyes, as though you have been commanded them today."* Thus, when verses 17 and 18 continue to stress something which is happening "today," *Rashi* understood that the subject here must be something that happens *every* day. Since there may be times, God forbid, that the Jewish people do not follow God's Will, *Rashi* could not accept the (second) interpretation of *Ibn Ezra* that our actions cause God to happily affirm that he is the God of the Jewish people *every single* day. Similarly, it is difficult to accept that God would glorify (*Rashi's* second explanation) or exalt (*Ibn Ezra's* first explanation) the Jewish people on a daily basis, for the same reason. Therefore, *Rashi* accepted that the primary interpretation here is that God *separates* the Jewish people on a daily basis, even though this interpretation "has no conclusive proof in scripture," because the context of this verse dictates such an interpretation. For even when the Jewish people do not follow His Will, God forbid, they still remain distinct *as His people every day* (even if God is not openly proud at that particular time).

Nevertheless, since this is an unprecedented interpretation, *Rashi* deemed it necessary to offer a secondary interpretation which has some scriptural basis: that God is *glorifying* the Jewish people daily. Of course, this will leave us with the above question—how are we causing God to glorify His people when we are not acting in accordance with His Will? So since this is a less acceptable explanation at the literal level, *Rashi* left it as his secondary interpretation.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 9, p. 162ff.)

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אֱלֹהֶיךָ | נֹתֵן לְךָ אֶרֶץ זָבַת חָלָב וּדְבַשׁ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵי־אֲבֹתֶיךָ לָךְ: ד וְהָיָה בְּעָבְרְכֶם אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן תָּקִימוּ אֶת־
הָאֲבָנִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם בְּהַר עֵיבָל
וְשַׂדְתָּ אוֹתָם בַּשִּׂיד: ה וּבָנִיתָ שָּׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִזְבַּח
אֲבָנִים לֹא־תָנִיף עֲלֵיהֶם בַּרְזֶל: ו אֲבָנִים שְׁלֵמוֹת תִּבְנֶה אֶת־
מִזְבַּח יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְהַעֲלִיתָ עָלָיו עוֹלֹת לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ:
ז וְזָבַחְתָּ שְׁלָמִים וְאָכַלְתָּ שָּׁם וְשָׂמַחְתָּ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ:
ח וְכָתַבְתָּ עַל־הָאֲבָנִים אֶת־כָּל־דִּבְרֵי הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת בַּאֵר
הֵיטֵב: ס ט וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה וְהַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם אֶל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל
לֵאמֹר הַסְכֵּת | וּשְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה נִהְיֵיתָ לְעָם לַיהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ: י וְשָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת־א מִצְוֺתוֹ
וְאֶת־חֻקָּיו אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם: ס (חמישי) יא וַיְצַו מֹשֶׁה
אֶת־הָעָם בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר: יב אֵלֶּה יַעַמְדוּ לְבָרֵךְ אֶת־הָעָם
עַל־הַר גְּרִזִּים בְּעָבְרְכֶם אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן שִׁמְעוֹן וְלֵוִי וִיהוּדָה
וְיִשָּׂשכָר וְיוֹסֵף וּבִנְיָמִן: יג וְאֵלֶּה יַעַמְדוּ עַל־הַקְּלָלָה בְּהַר עֵיבָל
רְאוּבֵן גָּד וְאָשֵׁר וּזְבוּלֻן דָּן וְנַפְתָּלִי: יד וְעָנוּ הַלְוִיִּם וְאָמְרוּ אֶל־
כָּל־אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל קוֹל רָם: ס טו אָרוּר הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה פֶסֶל
וּמַסֵּכָה תּוֹעֲבַת יְהוָה מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי חָרָשׁ וְשָׂם בַּסָּתֶר וְעָנוּ
כָל־הָעָם וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן: ס טז אָרוּר מַקְלֶה אָבִיו וְאִמּוֹ וְאָמַר
כָּל־הָעָם אָמֵן: ס יז אָרוּר מַסִּיג גְּבוּל רֵעֵהוּ וְאָמַר כָּל־הָעָם
אָמֵן: ס יח אָרוּר מַשְׁגֶּה עִוֵּר בַּדָּרֶךְ וְאָמַר כָּל־הָעָם אָמֵן: ס

א מצותו קרי

לְאַרְעָא דַּייָ אֱלָהָךְ יָהֵב לָךְ אַרְעָא עָבְדָא חֲלַב
וּדְבַשׁ כְּמָא דִּי מַלִּיל יְיָ אֱלָהָא דַּאֲבָהָתָךְ לָךְ:
ד וִיהֵי בְּמִעְבַּרְכוֹן יָת יַרְדְּנָא תְּקִימוּן יָת
אַבְנַיָּא הָאִלֵּין דִּי אֲנָא מְפַקֵּד יָתְכוֹן יוֹמָא דֵּין
בְּטוּרָא דְעֵיבָל וְתִסּוּד יָתְהוֹן בְּסִידָא: ה וְתִבְנֵי
תַּמָּן מַדְבְּחָא קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ מַדְבַּח אַבְנִין
לָא תְרִים עֲלֵיהוֹן פַּרְזְלָא: ו אַבְנִין שַׁלְמִין
תִּבְנֵי יָת מַדְבְּחָא דַּייָ אֱלָהָךְ וְתַסֵּק עֲלוֹהִי
עֲלָוָן קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ: ז וְתִכּוֹס נִכְסַת קוּדְשִׁין
וְתֵיכוֹל תַּמָּן וְתֶחְדֵּי קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ: ח וְתִכְתּוֹב
עַל אַבְנַיָּא יָת כָּל פִּתְגָמֵי אוֹרָיְתָא הָדָא פָּרֵשׁ
יָאוּת: ט וּמַלִּיל מֹשֶׁה וְכָהֲנַיָּא לֵוָאֵי לְכָל
יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמֵימַר אֲצֵית וּשְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יוֹמָא
הָדֵין הֲוֵיתָא לְעַמָּא קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ: י וּתְקַבֵּל
לְמֵימְרָא דַּייָ אֱלָהָךְ וְתַעְבֵּד יָת פִּקּוֹדוֹהִי וְיָת
קְיָמוֹהִי דִּי אֲנָא מְפַקֵּיד יוֹמָא דֵּין: יא וּפַקֵּיד
מֹשֶׁה יָת עַמָּא בְּיוֹמָא הַהוּא לְמֵימָר: יב אִלֵּין
יְקוּמוּן לְבָרָכָא יָת עַמָּא עַל טוּרָא דִגְרִזִּים
בְּמִעְבַּרְכוֹן יָת יַרְדְּנָא שִׁמְעוֹן וְלֵוִי וִיהוּדָה
וְיִשָּׂשכָר וְיוֹסֵף וּבִנְיָמִין: יג וְאִלֵּין יְקוּמוּן עַל
לְוָטַיָּא בְּטוּרָא דְעֵיבָל רְאוּבֵן גָּד וְאָשֵׁר וּזְבוּלֻן
דָּן וְנַפְתָּלִי: יד וְיָתִיבוּן לֵוָאֵי וְיֵימְרוּן לְכָל אֱנָשׁ
יִשְׂרָאֵל קָלָא רָמָא: טו לִיט גַּבְרָא דִּי יַעְבֵּיד
צְלֵם וּמַתְּכָא מְרַחְקָא קֳדָם יְיָ עוֹבָד יְדֵי אֻמָּן
וִישַׁוֵּי בְּסִתְרָא וְיָתִיבוּן כָּל עַמָּא וְיֵימְרוּן אָמֵן:
טז לִיט דִּיקַלֵּי אֲבוּהִי וְאִמֵּיהּ וְיֵימַר כָּל עַמָּא
אָמֵן: יז לִיט דִּישַׁנֵּי תְּחוּמָא דְחַבְרֵהּ וְיֵימַר כָּל
עַמָּא אָמֵן: יח לִיט דְּיַטְעֵי עַוִּירָא בְּאָרְחָא

רש"י

וכנגדן בגלגל וכנגדן בהר עיבל, כדאיתא במסכת סוטה[1]: **(ח) באר היטב.** בשבעים לשון[2]: **(ט) הסכת.** כתרגומו: **היום הזה נהיית לעם.** בכל יום יהיו בעיניך כאילו היום באת עמו בברית[3]: **(יב) לברך את העם.** כדאיתא במסכת סוטה[2] ששה שבטים עלו לראש הר גריזים, וששה לראש הר עיבל והכהנים והלוים והארון למטה באמצע, הפכו לוים פניהם כלפי הר גריזים ופתחו בברכה, ברוך האיש אשר לא יעשה פסל ומסכה וגו', ואלו ואלו עונין אמן. חזרו והפכו פניהם כלפי הר עיבל ופתחו בקללה ואומרים, ארור האיש אשר יעשה פסל וגו', וכן כולם, עד ארור אשר לא יקים: **(טז) מקלה אביו.** מזלזל, לשון ונקלה אחיך[4]: **(יז) מסיג גבול.** מחזירו לאחוריו וגונב את הקרקע לשון והוסג אחור[5]: **(יח) משגה עור.** הסומא בדבר ומשיאו עצה רעה:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Why are eleven curses mentioned here?** (v. 15-25)

Rashi: I saw in the treatise of Rabbi Moshe Hadarshan that there are eleven curses here, corresponding to eleven of the [twelve] tribes. But in connection with Shimon, [Moshe] did not write "Cursed be the man...," because he did not have it in his heart to bless him before his passing, when he blessed the other tribes. Therefore, he did not wish to curse him (*Rashi* to v. 24).

Rashbam: The sins listed here are things done in private. Two sins—idol worship (v. 15) and hurting one's fellow (v. 24)—are sometimes done in public too, so in these cases the Torah adds: "...in secret."

1 לה: 2 שם לב. 3 ראה שיחות ש"פ כי תבוא תשמ"ו ותשמ"ח. 4 דברים כה, ג 6 ישעי' נט, יד

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[4] "Then, when you cross the Jordan, you should set up (a further set of) these stones, which I am commanding you about today, on Mount Aival, and you should plaster them with lime. [5] You should build there an Altar to God your God, (by making these stones into) an Altar of stones. You should not use any iron (tool) on them. [6] You should build the Altar of God, your God, out of whole stones, and you should offer up burnt-offerings on it to God, your God. [7] You should slaughter peace-offerings, and eat there, rejoicing before God, your God. [8] You should write upon the stones all the words of this Torah, very clearly (rendered into seventy languages)."

[9] Moshe and the priests (from the tribe of) Levi spoke to all of Israel, saying, "Pay attention and listen, O Israel! (It should always be in your eyes as if) today, you have become a people to God, your God (for the first time). [10] Listen to the voice of God, your God. Perform His commandments and His supra-rational commands, which I am commanding you today."

Blessings & Curses At Mount Gerizim & Mount Aival

27:11 FIFTH READING *Moshe commanded the people on that day, saying, [12] "When you cross the Jordan, the following should stand on Mount Gerizim (where the priests and Levites will face) to bless the people: Shimon, Levi, Yehudah, Yissachar, Yosef, and Binyamin. [13] The following should stand on Mount Aival (where the priests and Levites will face) for the curse: Re'uvain, Gad, Asher, Zevulun, Dan, and Naftali.*

[14] The Levites should speak up, saying to every Jewish person, in a loud voice:

[15] "Cursed be the man who makes a graven or molten image—an abomination to God—the handiwork of a craftsman, and sets it up in secret!" Then all the people should respond, and say, "Amen!"

[16] "Cursed be the one who disgraces his father and mother!" Then all the people should say, "Amen!"

[17] "Cursed be the one who moves his neighbor's landmark!" Then all the people should say, "Amen!"

[18] "Cursed be the one who misdirects the path of a person who is blind (to a certain matter)! Then all the people should say, "Amen!"

TORAS MENACHEM

The Eleven Curses (v. 15-25)

What is the reason why these eleven specific sins in verses 15-25 were singled out to be the subject of the curses? The vast majority of the topics chosen here are not of a general nature, which begs the question why they were singled out in particular?

Since *Rashi* does not appear to address this question, which requires explanation at the literal level, we can presume that *Rashi* felt that the reader could work the matter out for himself with simple logic and knowledge of *Rashi's* previous comments.

The Explanation

Rashi explains that the eleven curses listed here correspond to eleven of the twelve tribes (with the exclusion of Shimon). At first glance, *Rashi* appears to be indicating only why the *number* eleven was chosen, and not offering any explanation about the *content* of the curses.

In fact, however, *Rashi* is also indicating the solution to our above problem: The reason why these eleven sins were picked is because each sin has a connection with one of the tribes. *Rashi* did not explain the matter any further, since he has already provided sufficient information in his prior comments:

- *"Cursed be the man who makes a graven or molten image..."* (v. 15). Which tribe is associated in particular with idol worship? In *Parshas Lech Lecha*, on the verse, *"Avraham...pursued them as far as Dan"* (Bereishis 14:14), *Rashi* writes: *"There he became weak, seeing prophetically that his children were destined to erect a [golden] calf there."* Thus the tribe of Dan is associated with "a graven or molten image."
- *"Cursed be the one who disgraces his father and mother!"* (v. 16). In *Parshas Ki Seitzei* the reader learned of the rebellious son who disgraces his parents by being *"a binger and a boozer"* (Devarim 21:20), indicating that the child's rebellion arose from physical luxuries. Which tribe was blessed with the greatest abundance of luxuries? *"From Asher('s land) will come rich food, and he will provide royal delicacies."* (Bereishis 49:20). Therefore the tribe of Asher needed to be warned especially about honoring parents.
- *"Cursed be the one who moves his neighbor's landmark!"* (v. 17). Who would be suspected of moving landmarks? One who is frequently found at the borders. Thus, this is a warning addressed to the tribe of Yissachar, who were *"(Like a donkey that journeys day and night,) resting (temporarily) between the city borders,"* (ibid. 49:14).
- *Cursed be the one who misdirects the path of a person who is blind (to a certain matter)!* (v. 18). In *Parshas Pinchas*, *Rashi* relates that there was a plot by a group of seven families to return to Egypt. Of these seven, five families belonged to the tribe of Binyamin (Rashi

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יט אָרוּר מַטֶּה מִשְׁפַּט גֵּר־יָתוֹם וְאַלְמָנָה וְאָמַר כָּל־הָעָם אָמֵן:
כ אָרוּר שֹׁכֵב עִם־אֵשֶׁת אָבִיו כִּי גִלָּה כְּנַף אָבִיו וְאָמַר כָּל־
הָעָם אָמֵן: ס כא אָרוּר שֹׁכֵב עִם־כָּל־בְּהֵמָה וְאָמַר כָּל־הָעָם
אָמֵן: ס כב אָרוּר שֹׁכֵב עִם־אֲחֹתוֹ בַּת־אָבִיו אוֹ בַת־אִמּוֹ וְאָמַר
כָּל־הָעָם אָמֵן: ס כג אָרוּר שֹׁכֵב עִם־חֹתַנְתּוֹ וְאָמַר כָּל־הָעָם
אָמֵן: ס כד אָרוּר מַכֵּה רֵעֵהוּ בַּסָּתֶר וְאָמַר כָּל־הָעָם אָמֵן: ס
כה אָרוּר לֹקֵחַ שֹׁחַד לְהַכּוֹת נֶפֶשׁ *דָּם נָקִי וְאָמַר כָּל־הָעָם אָמֵן:
ס כו אָרוּר אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָקִים אֶת־דִּבְרֵי הַתּוֹרָה־הַזֹּאת לַעֲשׂוֹת
אוֹתָם וְאָמַר כָּל־הָעָם אָמֵן: פ כח א וְהָיָה אִם־שָׁמוֹעַ תִּשְׁמַע
בְּקוֹל יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לִשְׁמֹר לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר
אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם וּנְתָנְךָ יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ עֶלְיוֹן עַל כָּל־גּוֹיֵי
הָאָרֶץ: ב וּבָאוּ עָלֶיךָ כָּל־הַבְּרָכוֹת הָאֵלֶּה וְהִשִּׂיגֻךָ כִּי תִשְׁמַע
בְּקוֹל יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ: ג בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה בָּעִיר וּבָרוּךְ אַתָּה בַּשָּׂדֶה:
ד בָּרוּךְ פְּרִי־בִטְנְךָ וּפְרִי אַדְמָתְךָ וּפְרִי בְהֶמְתֶּךָ שְׁגַר אֲלָפֶיךָ
וְעַשְׁתְּרוֹת צֹאנֶךָ: ה בָּרוּךְ טַנְאֲךָ וּמִשְׁאַרְתֶּךָ: ו בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה
בְּבֹאֶךָ וּבָרוּךְ אַתָּה בְּצֵאתֶךָ: [ששי] ** ז יִתֵּן יְהֹוָה אֶת־אֹיְבֶיךָ

*ס״א דָם   ** לששי עולה הבעל קורא, ומעצמו – בלא קריאה בשמו, ומברך לפני ולאחרי.

וייטר כל עמא אמן: יט ליט דיצלי דין
דיר יתמא וארמלא וייטר כל עמא אמן:
כ ליט דישכוב עם אתת אבוהי ארי גלי
כנפא דאבוהי וייטר כל עמא אמן: כא ליט
דישכוב עם כל בעירא וייטר כל עמא אמן:
כב ליט דישכוב עם אחתה בת אבוהי או בת
אמה וייטר כל עמא אמן: כג ליט דישכוב
עם חמותה וייטר כל עמא אמן: כד ליט
דימחי לחבריה בסתרא וייטר כל עמא אמן:
כה ליט די יקבל שוחדא למקטל נפש דם זכי
וייטר כל עמא אמן: כו ליט די לא יקים ית
פתגמי אוריתא הדא למעבד יתהון וייטר כל
עמא אמן: א ויהי אם קבלא תקבל למימרא
דיי אלהך למטר למעבד ית כל פקודוהי די
אנא מפקדך יומא דין ויתנגך יי אלהך עלי
על כל עממי ארעא: ב וייתון עלך כל
ברכתא האלין וידבקנך ארי תקבל למימרא
דיי אלהך: ג בריך את בקרתא ובריך את
בחקלא: ד בריך ולדא דמעך ואבא דארעך
וולדא דבעירך בקרי תוריך ועדרי ענך:
ה בריך סלך ואצותך: ו בריך את במעלך
ובריך את במפקך: ז יתן יי ית בעלי דבבך
דקימין עלך תבירין קדמך בארחא חד יפקון

רש״י

(כד) מכה רעהו בסתר. על לשון הרע הוא אומר[1]. ראיתי ביסודו של רבי משה הדרשן, י״א ארורים יש כאן כנגד י״א שבטים, וכנגד שמעון לא כתב ארור לפי שלא היה בלבו לברכו לפני מותו כשברך משה השבטים, לכך לא רצה לקללו: (כו) אשר לא יקים. כאן כלל את כל התורה כולה וקבלוה עליהם באלה ובשבועה: (ד) שגר אלפיך. ולדות בקרך שהבהמה משגרת ממעיה: ועשתרות צאנך. כתרגומו. ורבותינו אמרו למה נקרא שמם עשתרות שמעשירות את בעליהן[2] ומחזיקות אותם כעשתרות הללו שהן סלעים חזקים: (ה) ברוך טנאך. פירותיך. דבר אחר טנאך, דבר לח שאתה מסנן בסלים[3]: ומשארתך. דבר יבש שנשאר בכלי ואינו זב[3]: (ו) ברוך אתה בבאך וברוך אתה בצאתך. שתהא יציאתך מן העולם בלא חטא כביאתך לעולם[4]:

TORAS MENACHEM

to *Bamidbar* 26:13). Here we see that the tribe of Binyamin in particular needed to be warned about misleading others.

❖ *"Cursed be the one who perverts the judgment of the convert, the orphan, or the widow!"* (v. 19). This is addressed to the tribe of Yehudah, who provided the vast majority of judges for the Jewish people.

❖ *"Cursed be the one who lies with his father's wife, uncovering the robe of his father!"* (v. 20). This is addressed to the tribe of Re'uvain, who sinned by moving his father's bed: *"You interfered with your father's bed"* (*Bereishis* 49:4).

❖ *"Cursed be the one who lies with any animal!"* (v. 21). This is addressed to the tribe who possessed a large number of animals. This could be either Re'uvain or Gad (see *Bamidbar* 32:1), and since the previous curse was addressed to the tribe of Re'uvain, it follows that this one corresponds to the tribe of Gad.

❖ *"Cursed be the one who lies with his sister...."* (v. 22). This is addressed to the tribe of Naftali, as indicated by the verse said upon Naftali's birth, *"I have become connected with my sister"* (*Rashi, Bereishis* 30:8).

❖ *"Cursed be the one who lies with his mother-in-law!"* (v. 23). This is addressed to the tribe of Yosef, since the wife of Potifar (who later became Yosef's mother-in-law) attempted to lie with him (*Bereishis* 39:7ff.; ibid 41:45 and *Rashi*).

❖ *"Cursed be the one who hurts his fellow (by maligning him) in secret!"* (v. 24). This refers to the sin of Shimon and Levi, who misused their powers of speech (see *Bereishis* 49:5). And since *Rashi* writes that there is no curse corresponding to Shimon, it follows that this must be addressed to the tribe of Levi.

1 פדר״א פנ״ג.   2 חולין פד: 3 ראה שיחת ש״פ כי תבוא תשד״מ.   4 ב״מ קז.

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19 *"Cursed be the one who perverts the judgment of the convert, the orphan, or the widow!" Then all the people should say, "Amen!"*

20 *"Cursed be the one who lies with his father's wife, uncovering the robe of his father!" Then all the people should say, "Amen!"*

21 *"Cursed be the one who lies with any animal!" Then all the people should say, "Amen!"*

22 *"Cursed be the one who lies with his sister, his father's daughter or his mother's daughter!" Then all the people should say, "Amen!"*

23 *"Cursed be the one who lies with his mother-in-law!" Then all the people should say, "Amen!"*

24 *"Cursed be the one who hurts his fellow (by maligning him) in secret!" Then all the people should say, "Amen!"*

25 *"Cursed be the one who takes a bribe to put an innocent person to death!" Then all the people should say, "Amen!"*

26 *"Cursed be the one who does not uphold the words of this Torah and observe them!" Then all the people should say, "Amen!"*

Blessings for Observing the Mitzvos

28 *What will happen is, if you always listen to the voice of God, your God, and are careful to observe all His commandments which I am commanding you today, then God, your God, will make you an elite (nation), above all the nations of the earth.* 2 *All the following blessings will come upon you and overtake you, if you listen to the voice of God, your God:*

3 *You will be blessed in the city, and blessed in the field.* 4 *The fruit of your womb, the fruit of your soil, the fruit of your livestock, the offspring of your cattle, and the flocks of your sheep will be blessed.*

5 *Your fruits and your dough will be blessed.* 6 *(Just as) you were blessed (and without sin) when you arrived (in this world, so too), you will be blessed (and without sin) when you depart.*

Toras Menachem

❖ *"Cursed be the one who takes a bribe to put an innocent person to death!"* (v. 25). Such an act is most likely to be done by a businessman. Thus this is addressed to the tribe of Zevulun, who were businessmen (See *Rashi* to *Bereishis* 49:13).

Here we see, once again, how *Rashi's* commentary is a comprehensive study of scripture at the literal level, which is neither lacking in necessary information, nor superfluous in any detail.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Ki Savo* 5733)

The Last Word

Blessings For Observing the Mitzvos (28:1-14)

"In order to receive God's blessings it is necessary to prepare 'receptacles.' It would have been impossible for us to know the receptacles, but for God's mercy and infinite kindness, having given us the Torah and having revealed to us that Torah and *mitzvos* are the proper receptacles for us to receive His blessings...."

"The daily life and conduct in accordance with the will of God, namely in accordance with the Jewish way of Torah and *mitzvos*, in addition to being a must for its own sake, is also the channel to receive God's blessings in all needs. Therefore, every additional effort in this direction is bound to bring additional Divine blessings, and there is always room for advancement in all matters of goodness and holiness, Torah and *mitzvos*, which are infinite, being derived from, and connected with, the Infinite."

"Every Jew, man or woman, young or old, must always have complete faith in God, Whose benevolent Providence extends to everyone individually, and our Sages have taught us, *'Everything that the Merciful One does is for the good'* (*Brachos* 60a). Of course, a human being cannot always understand the ways of God, but nevertheless he should be unshaken in his trust in God, and this very faith is in itself a channel and vessel to receive God's blessings, as all matters connected with the Torah and *mitzvos* experienced in the daily life."

(Excerpts from letters written by the Rebbe on 4th of *Shevat*, 5713, 16th of *Adar* I, 5738, and 5th of *Iyar*, 5721)

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הַקָּמִים עָלֶיךָ נִגָּפִים לְפָנֶיךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ אֶחָד יֵצְאוּ אֵלֶיךָ וּבְשִׁבְעָה
דְרָכִים יָנוּסוּ לְפָנֶיךָ׃ ח יְצַו יְהוָה אִתְּךָ אֶת־הַבְּרָכָה בַּאֲסָמֶיךָ
וּבְכֹל מִשְׁלַח יָדֶךָ וּבֵרַכְךָ בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ׃
ט יְקִימְךָ יְהוָה לוֹ לְעַם קָדוֹשׁ כַּאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע־לָךְ כִּי תִשְׁמֹר
אֶת־מִצְוֹת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְהָלַכְתָּ בִּדְרָכָיו׃ י וְרָאוּ כָּל־עַמֵּי
הָאָרֶץ כִּי שֵׁם יְהוָה נִקְרָא עָלֶיךָ וְיָרְאוּ מִמֶּךָּ׃ יא וְהוֹתִרְךָ יְהוָה
לְטוֹבָה בִּפְרִי בִטְנְךָ וּבִפְרִי בְהֶמְתְּךָ וּבִפְרִי אַדְמָתֶךָ עַל
הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לַאֲבֹתֶיךָ לָתֶת לָךְ׃ יב יִפְתַּח יְהוָה ׀
לְךָ אֶת־אוֹצָרוֹ הַטּוֹב אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם לָתֵת מְטַר־אַרְצְךָ בְּעִתּוֹ
וּלְבָרֵךְ אֵת כָּל־מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶךָ וְהִלְוִיתָ גּוֹיִם רַבִּים וְאַתָּה לֹא
תִלְוֶה׃ יג וּנְתָנְךָ יְהוָה לְרֹאשׁ וְלֹא לְזָנָב וְהָיִיתָ רַק לְמַעְלָה וְלֹא
תִהְיֶה לְמָטָּה כִּי־תִשְׁמַע אֶל־מִצְוֹת ׀ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי
מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם לִשְׁמֹר וְלַעֲשׂוֹת׃ יד וְלֹא תָסוּר מִכָּל־הַדְּבָרִים
אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם יָמִין וּשְׂמֹאול לָלֶכֶת אַחֲרֵי
אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים לְעָבְדָם׃ פ * טו וְהָיָה אִם־לֹא תִשְׁמַע בְּקוֹל יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ לִשְׁמֹר לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹתָיו וְחֻקֹּתָיו אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי
מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם וּבָאוּ עָלֶיךָ כָּל־הַקְּלָלוֹת הָאֵלֶּה וְהִשִּׂיגוּךָ׃ טז אָרוּר
אַתָּה בָּעִיר וְאָרוּר אַתָּה בַּשָּׂדֶה׃ יז אָרוּר טַנְאֲךָ וּמִשְׁאַרְתֶּךָ׃
יח אָרוּר פְּרִי־בִטְנְךָ וּפְרִי אַדְמָתֶךָ שְׁגַר אֲלָפֶיךָ וְעַשְׁתְּרֹת
צֹאנֶךָ׃ יט אָרוּר אַתָּה בְּבֹאֶךָ וְאָרוּר אַתָּה בְּצֵאתֶךָ׃ כ יְשַׁלַּח
יְהוָה ׀ בְּךָ אֶת־הַמְּאֵרָה אֶת־הַמְּהוּמָה וְאֶת־הַמִּגְעֶרֶת בְּכָל־
מִשְׁלַח יָדְךָ אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה עַד הִשָּׁמֶדְךָ וְעַד־אֲבָדְךָ מַהֵר מִפְּנֵי
רֹעַ מַעֲלָלֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר עֲזַבְתָּנִי׃ כא יַדְבֵּק יְהוָה בְּךָ אֶת־הַדָּבֶר עַד
כַּלֹּתוֹ אֹתְךָ מֵעַל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה בָא־שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ׃
כב יַכְּכָה יְהוָה בַּשַּׁחֶפֶת וּבַקַּדַּחַת וּבַדַּלֶּקֶת וּבַחַרְחֻר וּבַחֶרֶב
וּבַשִּׁדָּפוֹן וּבַיֵּרָקוֹן וּרְדָפוּךָ עַד אָבְדֶךָ׃ כג וְהָיוּ שָׁמֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר

*קוראים את פסוקי התוכחה בקול נמוך, אך באופן שישמע הקהל היטב את הקריאה

לותך ובשבעא ארחן יערקון מקדמך: ח יפקד
יי עמך ית ברכתא באוצרך ובכל אושטות
ידך ויברכנך בארעא דיי אלהך יהב לך:
ט יקימנך יי לה לעם קדיש כמא די קיים לך
ארי תטר ית פקודיא דיי אלהך ותהך
בארחן דתקנן קדמוהי: י ויחזון כל עממי
ארעא ארי שמא דיי אתקרי עלך וידחלון
מנך: יא ויותרנך יי לטבא בולדא דמעך
ובולדא דבעירך ובאבא דארעך על ארעא
די קיים יי לאבהתך למתן לך: יב יפתח יי
לך ית אוצרה טבא ית שמיא למתן מטר
ארעך בעדנה ולברכא ית כל עובדי ידך
ותוזיף לעממין סגיאין ואת לא תזוף:
יג ויתננך יי לתקיף ולא לחלש ותהי ברם
לעלא ולא תהי לתחתא ארי תקבל לפקודיא
דיי אלהך די אנא מפקדך יומא דין למטר
ולמעבד: יד ולא תסטון מכל פתגמיא די אנא
מפקד יתכון יומא דין ימינא ושמאלא למהך
בתר טעות עממיא למפלחנון: טו ויהי אם
לא תקבל במימרא דיי אלהך למטר למעבד
ית כל פקודוהי וקימוהי די אנא מפקדך יומא
דין וייתון עלך כל לוטיא האלין וידבקנך:
טז ליט את בקרתא וליט את בחקלא: יז ליט
סלך ואצותך: יח ליט ולדא דמעך ואבא
דארעך בקרי תוריך ועדרי ענך: יט ליט את
במעלך וליט את במפקך: כ יגרי יי בך ית
מארתא וית שגושיא וית מזופיתא בכל
אושטות ידך די תעביד עד דתשתיצי ועד
דתיבד בפריע מן קדם בישות עובדיך
דשבקתא דחלתי: כא ידבק יי בך ית מותא
עד דישיצי יתך מעל ארעא די את עלל
לתמן למירתה: כב ימחנך יי בשחפתא
ובקדחתא ובדלקתא ובחרחורא ובחרבא
ובשדפונא ובירקונא וירדפנך עד דתיבד:
כג ויהון שמיא די עלוי רישך חסינין כנחשא

רש"י

(ז) **ובשבעה דרכים ינוסו לפניך.** כן דרך הנבהלים לברוח להיות מתפזרין לכל צד: (כ) **המארה.** חסרון כמו צרעת ממארת[1]: **המהומה.** שגוש קול בהלות: (כב) **בשחפת.** שבשרו נשחף ונפוח: **ובקדחת.** לשון כי אש קדחה באפי[2], והיא אש של חולי מלוו"ש בלע"ז שהיא חמה מאד: **ובדלקת.** חמה יותר מקדחת, ומיני חלאים הם: **ובחרחר.** חולי המחממו תוך הגוף וצמא תמיד למים ובלע"ז אשטרימנ"ט, לשון ועצמי חרה מני חרב[3], נחר מפוח מאש[4]: **ובחרב.** יביא עליך גייסות: **שדפון וירקון.** מכות תבואה שבשדות: **שדפון.** רוח קדים אשלי"ד בלע"ז: **ירקון.** יובש ופני התבואה מכסיפין ונהפכין לירקון קמ"ח בלע"ז: **עד אבדך.** תרגום עד דתיבד, כלומר עד אבוד אותך, שתכלה מאליך: (כג) **והיו שמיך אשר על ראשך נחשת.** קללות הללו

1 ויקרא יג, נא 2 דברים לב, כב 3 איוב ל, ל 4 ירמיה ו, כט

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SIXTH READING

[7] God will cause your enemies who rise up against you to be beaten before you. They will come out against you in one direction, and flee from you (in a panic) in seven directions.

[8] God will direct (His) blessing to be with you in your granaries, and with everything to which you put your hand. He will bless you in the land which God, your God, is giving you.

[9] God will establish you as His holy people, as He swore to you, if you observe the commandments of God, your God, and walk in His ways. [10] Then all the nations of the earth will see that the Name of God is upon you, and they will fear you.

[11] God will grant you a good surplus in the fruit of your womb, the fruit of your livestock, and the fruit of your soil, on the land which God swore to your forefathers to give you. [12] God will open up for you His good treasury, the skies, to give your land its rain in the (right) time, and to bless everything you put your hand to. You will lend to many nations, but you will not (need to) borrow.

[13] God will put you at the head, and not at the tail. You will be only at the top, and not at the bottom.

(All this is) if you listen to the commandments of God, your God, which I am commanding you today, being careful to observe (them). [14] You must not deviate, right or left, from all of the words I am commanding you today, to follow other gods and worship them.

CONSEQUENCES OF FAILING TO OBSERVE THE MITZVOS

28:15 *What will happen is, if you do not listen to God, your God, to be careful to observe all His commandments and suprarational commands which I am commanding you this day, then the following curses will come upon you and overtake you:*

[16] You will be cursed in the city, and cursed in the field. [17] Your fruits and your dough will be cursed. [18] The fruit of your womb, the fruit of your soil, and the fruit of your livestock—those born from your cattle and the flock of your sheep—will be cursed. [19] You will be cursed when you arrive, and cursed when you depart.

[20] God will send you shortages, confusion, and turmoil in everything you put your hand to, until you are destroyed and quickly vanish, because of your evil deeds in forsaking Me. [21] God will make a plague cleave to you until it has consumed you from upon the land of which you are coming to take possession. [22] God will strike you with inflammation, illnesses, burning fevers, unquenchable thirst, with the sword (of invading armies), with blasting and withering (of the crops), and this will pursue you until you perish.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

- **How does one "walk in His ways"? (v. 9)**

RAMBAM: We are commanded to emulate the Almighty as much as possible, as the verse states *"walk in his ways"*.... Just as God is referred to [in scripture] as being gracious, likewise you are to be gracious. Just as He is referred to as being compassionate, likewise you are to be compassionate. Just as He is referred to as being benevolent, likewise you are to be benevolent (*Sefer Hamitzvos*, positive command 8).

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

What does the *mitzvah* of "walking in His ways" (v. 9) teach us that we do not *already* know from the requirement to *"love your fellow as (you love) yourself"* (*Vayikra* 19:18)?

Rambam explains that the key focus here is that "we are commanded to *emulate the Almighty* as much as possible." I.e. when we act in a manner of graciousness, compassion or benevolence, it should not be merely out of an ethical imperative, or for the general benefit of society, but rather, in an attempt to resemble God—"*Just* as God is referred to as being...*likewise* you are to be...."

Practically speaking, this will ensure that a person will not allow himself to become emotionally "carried away" to an extreme. For in attempting to emulate God, one will always be conscious of the need to balance one's attributes—like God, whose qualities of kindness and severity are in perfect harmony.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, p. 153ff.)

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עַל־רֹאשְׁךָ נְחֹשֶׁת וְהָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־תַּחְתֶּיךָ בַּרְזֶל: כד יִתֵּן יְהוָה
אֶת־מְטַר אַרְצְךָ אָבָק וְעָפָר מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם יֵרֵד עָלֶיךָ עַד
הִשָּׁמְדָךְ: כה יִתֶּנְךָ יְהוָה ׀ נִגָּף לִפְנֵי אֹיְבֶיךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ אֶחָד תֵּצֵא
אֵלָיו וּבְשִׁבְעָה דְרָכִים תָּנוּס לְפָנָיו וְהָיִיתָ לְזַעֲוָה לְכֹל
מַמְלְכוֹת הָאָרֶץ: כו וְהָיְתָה נִבְלָתְךָ לְמַאֲכָל לְכָל־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם
וּלְבֶהֱמַת הָאָרֶץ וְאֵין מַחֲרִיד: כז יַכְּכָה יְהוָה בִּשְׁחִין מִצְרַיִם
ובעפלים [ק׳ וּבַטְּחֹרִים] וּבַגָּרָב וּבֶחָרֶס אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תוּכַל לְהֵרָפֵא:
כח יַכְּכָה יְהוָה בְּשִׁגָּעוֹן וּבְעִוָּרוֹן וּבְתִמְהוֹן לֵבָב: כט וְהָיִיתָ
מְמַשֵּׁשׁ בַּצָּהֳרַיִם כַּאֲשֶׁר יְמַשֵּׁשׁ הָעִוֵּר בָּאֲפֵלָה וְלֹא תַצְלִיחַ
אֶת־דְּרָכֶיךָ וְהָיִיתָ אַךְ עָשׁוּק וְגָזוּל כָּל־הַיָּמִים וְאֵין מוֹשִׁיעַ:
ל אִשָּׁה תְאָרֵשׂ וְאִישׁ אַחֵר ישגלנה [ק׳ יִשְׁכָּבֶנָּה] בַּיִת תִּבְנֶה
וְלֹא־תֵשֵׁב בּוֹ כֶּרֶם תִּטַּע וְלֹא תְחַלְּלֶנּוּ: לא שׁוֹרְךָ טָבוּחַ לְעֵינֶיךָ
וְלֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ חֲמֹרְךָ גָּזוּל מִלְּפָנֶיךָ וְלֹא יָשׁוּב לָךְ צֹאנְךָ
נְתֻנוֹת לְאֹיְבֶיךָ וְאֵין לְךָ מוֹשִׁיעַ: לב בָּנֶיךָ וּבְנֹתֶיךָ נְתֻנִים לְעַם
אַחֵר וְעֵינֶיךָ רֹאוֹת וְכָלוֹת אֲלֵיהֶם כָּל־הַיּוֹם וְאֵין לְאֵל יָדֶךָ:
לג פְּרִי אַדְמָתְךָ וְכָל־יְגִיעֲךָ יֹאכַל עַם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדָעְתָּ וְהָיִיתָ
רַק עָשׁוּק וְרָצוּץ כָּל־הַיָּמִים: לד וְהָיִיתָ מְשֻׁגָּע מִמַּרְאֵה עֵינֶיךָ
אֲשֶׁר תִּרְאֶה: לה יַכְּכָה יְהוָה בִּשְׁחִין רָע עַל־הַבִּרְכַּיִם וְעַל־
הַשֹּׁקַיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תוּכַל לְהֵרָפֵא מִכַּף רַגְלְךָ וְעַד קָדְקֳדֶךָ:
לו יוֹלֵךְ יְהוָה אֹתְךָ וְאֶת־מַלְכְּךָ אֲשֶׁר תָּקִים עָלֶיךָ אֶל־גּוֹי אֲשֶׁר
לֹא־יָדַעְתָּ אַתָּה וַאֲבֹתֶיךָ וְעָבַדְתָּ שָּׁם אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים עֵץ
וָאָבֶן: לז וְהָיִיתָ לְשַׁמָּה לְמָשָׁל וְלִשְׁנִינָה בְּכֹל הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר־
יְנַהֶגְךָ יְהוָה שָׁמָּה: לח זֶרַע רַב תּוֹצִיא הַשָּׂדֶה וּמְעַט תֶּאֱסֹף כִּי
יַחְסְלֶנּוּ הָאַרְבֶּה: לט כְּרָמִים תִּטַּע וְעָבָדְתָּ וְיַיִן לֹא־תִשְׁתֶּה וְלֹא

טְלָלְהוֹן מִטְרָא וְאַרְעָא דִּי תְחוֹתָךְ תַּקִּיפָא כְּפַרְזְלָא מִלְּמֶעְבַּד פֵּירִין: כד יִתֵּן יְיָ יָת מְטַר אַרְעָךְ אַבְקָא וְעַפְרָא מִן שְׁמַיָּא יֵחוֹת עֲלָךְ עַד דְּתִשְׁתֵּיצֵי: כה יִתְּנִנָּךְ יְיָ תְּבִיר קֳדָם סַנְאָיךְ בְּאָרְחָא חֲדָא תִּפּוֹק לְוָתֵהּ וּבְשִׁבְעָא אָרְחָן תֶּעְרוֹק מִקֳּדָמוֹהִי וּתְהֵי לְזִיעַ לְכֹל מַלְכְּוָת אַרְעָא: כו וּתְהֵי נְבִלְתָּךְ מְשַׁגְרָא לְמֵיכַל לְכָל עוֹפָא דִּשְׁמַיָּא וּלְבְעִירַת אַרְעָא וְלֵית דִּמְנִיד: כז יִמְחִנָּךְ יְיָ בְּשִׁחְנָא דְּמִצְרַיִם וּבִטְחוֹרִין וּבִגְרָבָא וּבַחֲרִים יַבִּישׁ דִּי לָא תִכּוּל לְאִתַּסָּאָה: כח יִמְחִנָּךְ יְיָ בְּשַׁפְשׁוּתָא וּבְסַמְיוּתָא וּבְשִׁעֲמָמוּת לִבָּא: כט וּתְהֵי מְמַשֵּׁשׁ בְּטִיהֲרָא כְּמָא דִּימַשֵּׁשׁ סַמְיָא בְּקִבְלָא וְלָא תַצְלַח יָת אָרְחָתָךְ וּתְהֵי בְּרַם עֲשִׁיק וַאֲנִיס כָּל יוֹמַיָּא וְלֵית דְּפָרִיק: ל אִתְּתָא תֵירוֹס וּגְבַר אָחֳרָן יִשְׁכְּבִנַּהּ בֵּיתָא תִבְנֵי וְלָא תִיתֵּב בֵּהּ כַּרְמָא תִצּוֹב וְלָא תַחֲלְנֵהּ: לא תּוֹרָךְ יְהֵי נְכִיס לְעֵינָיךְ וְלָא תֵיכוֹל מִנֵּהּ חֲמָרָךְ יְהֵי אָנִיס מִקֳּדָמָךְ וְלָא יְתוּב לָךְ עָנָךְ מְסִירִין לְבַעֲלֵי דְבָבָךְ וְלֵית לָךְ פָּרִיק: לב בְּנָיךְ וּבְנָתָךְ מְסִירִין לְעַמָּא אָחֳרָן וְעֵינָיךְ חָזְיָן וְיִסּוֹפָן בְּגִלְלְהוֹן כָּל יוֹמָא וְלֵית חֵילָא בִּידָךְ: לג אִבָּא דְאַרְעָךְ וְכָל לֵאוּתָךְ יֵיכוֹל עַמָּא דִּי לָא יְדַעְתָּ וּתְהֵי בְּרַם עֲשִׁיק וּרְעִיעַ כָּל יוֹמַיָּא: לד וּתְהֵי מִשְׁתַּטֵּי מֵחֵזוּ עֵינָיךְ דִּי תֶחֱזֵי: לה יִמְחִנָּךְ יְיָ בְּשִׁחְנָא בִּישָׁא עַל רְכוּבַיָּא וְעַל שָׁקַיָּא דִּי לָא תִכּוּל לְאִתַּסָּאָה מִפַּרְסַת רַגְלָךְ וְעַד מוֹחָךְ: לו יַגְלֵי יְיָ יָתָךְ וְיָת מַלְכָּךְ דִּי תְקֵים עֲלָךְ לְעַם דִּי לָא יְדַעְתְּ אַתְּ וַאֲבָהָתָךְ וְתִפְלַח תַּמָּן לְעַמְמַיָּא פָּלְחֵי טַעֲוָתָא אָעָא וְאַבְנָא: לז וּתְהֵי לְצָדוּ לְמַתַל וּלְשׁוּעֵי בְּכֹל עַמְמַיָּא דִּי יְדַבְּרִנָּךְ יְיָ לְתַמָּן: לח בַּר זְרַע סַגִּי תַּפֵּק לְחַקְלָא וּזְעֵר תִּכְנוֹשׁ אֲרֵי יְחַסְּלִנֵּהּ גּוֹבָא: לט כַּרְמִין תִּצּוֹב וְתִפְלַח וְחַמְרָא לָא תִשְׁתֵּי

רש"י

משה מפי עצמו אמרן, ושבהר סיני מפי הקב"ה אמרן כמשמעו[1], וכן נאמר ואם לא תשמעו לי[2], ואם תלכו עמי קרי[3] וכאן הוא אומר לקול ה' אלהיך[4], ידבק ה' בך[5], יככה ה'[6]. הקל משה בקללותיו לאמרן בלשון יחיד וגם כן בקללה זו הקל שבראשונות הוא אומר את שמיכם כברזל ואת ארצכם כנחושה[7], שלא יהיו השמים מזיעין כדרך שאין הברזל מזיע, ומתוך כך יהא חורב בעולם, והארץ תהא מזיעה כדרך שהנחשת מזיע, והיא מרקבת פירותיה, וכאן הוא אומר שמיך נחשת וארצך ברזל, שיהיו שמים מזיעין, אף על פי שלא יריקו מטר, מכל מקום לא יהיה חורב של אבדון בעולם, והארץ לא תהא מזיעה כדרך שאין הברזל מזיע, ואין הפירות מרקיבין. ומכל מקום קללה היא, בין שהיא כנחשת בין שהיא כברזל, לא תוציא פירות, וכן השמים לא יריקו מטר: (כד) **מטר ארצך אבק ועפר.** זיקא דבתר מטרא[8], מטר יורד ולא כל צרכו ואין בו כדי להרבין את העפר, והרוח באה ומעלה את האבק ומכסה את עשב הזרעים שהן לחים מן המים, ונדבק בהם ונעשה טיט ומתיבש ומרקיבין: (כה) **לזעוה.** לאימה ולזיע, שיזועו כל שומעי מכותיך ממך ויאמרו אוי לנו

1 מגילה לא: 2 ויקרא כו, יד 3 שם שם כא 4 דברים כח, טו 5 שם כא 6 שם כב 7 ויקרא כו, יט 8 תענית ג:

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*23 Your skies above you will (not rain, but merely exude moisture like) copper, and the earth below you
(will be dry like) iron. 24 God will make the rain of your land (insufficient, causing the wind that follows
to blow) dust and dirt (onto your sprouting crops). It will come down upon you from the skies until you
are destroyed. 25 God will cause you to be struck down before your enemy. You will come out against
them in one direction, but you will flee from them (in panic) in seven directions. You will become a
(cause of) dread to all the kingdoms on earth (when they hear what has happened to you). 26 Your
corpses will be food for every bird of the skies and for the beasts of the earth, and no one will frighten
them (away). 27 God will strike you with the boils of Egypt, with hemorrhoids, with oozing sores, and with
dry lesions, from which you will not be able to be cured. 28 God will strike you with insanity, with
blindness, and with bewilderment. 29 You will grope around at midday, as the blind man gropes in the
dark, and you will be unsuccessful in your ways. You will be nothing but oppressed and robbed all the
time, and no one will save you. 30 You will betroth a woman, but another man will lie with her. You will
build a house, but you will not live in it. You will plant a vineyard, but you will not render it fit (for use).
31 Your ox will be slaughtered before your eyes, but you will not eat from it. Your donkey will be robbed
right in front of you, and it will never come back to you. Your flocks will be given over to your enemies,
and you will have no savior. 32 Your sons and daughters will be given over to another people, and your
eyes will see (what happened), and yearn for them all day long, but you will be powerless. 33 The fruit
of your soil and all your hard work will be eaten up by a people unknown to you. You will be nothing
but wronged and downtrodden all the time. 34 You will go insane from the things that your eyes will see.
35 God will strike you on the knees and on the legs with severe boils from which you will not be able to
be cured, (spreading out) from the sole of your foot to the top of your head. 36 God will lead you, and
your king whom you will have appointed over you, to a nation unknown to you or your fathers, and
there you will serve other gods of wood and stone. 37 Among all the nations to whom God will lead you,
you will become a (source of) astonishment, an example (of persecution), and a topic of discussion.
38 You will take a lot of seed out to the field, but you will gather in little, for the locusts will consume it.
39 You will plant vineyards and work them, but you will neither drink their wine, nor gather their grapes,*

רש"י

שלא יהא עליו כדרך שהא על הגו: **(כז) בשחין מצרים.** רע היה מאד, לח מבפנים ויבש מבחוץ, כדאיתא בבכורות[9]: **גרב.** שחין לח: **חרס.** שחין יבש כחרס: **(כח) ובתמהון לבב.** אוטם הלב אשטורדיסו"ן בלע"ז: **(כט) עשוק.** בכל מעשיך יהיה ערעור: **(ל) ישגלנה.** לשון שגל, פלגש, והכתוב כנהו לשבח ישכבנה ותקון סופרים הוא זה: **תחללנו.** בשנה הרביעית לאכול פריו: **(לב) וכלות אליהם.** מצפות אליהם שישובו ואינם שבים. כל תוחלת שאינה באה קרויה כליון עינים: **(לז) לשמה.** אשטורדיסו"ן כל הרואה אותך ישום עליך: **למשל.** כשתבא מכה רעה על אדם, יאמרו זו דומה למכת פלוני: **ולשנינה.** לשון ושננתם[10], ידברו בך, וכן תרגומו ולשועי, לשון ספור, ואשתעי: **(לח) יחסלנו.** יכלנו, ועל שם כך נקרא חסיל, שמכלה את הכל:

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

The admonition here in *Parshas Ki Savo* contains ninety eight curses, whereas the admonition in *Parshas Bechukosai* contains half that amount, forty nine curses.

The inner reason for this distinction lies in the fact that the curses of the admonition are not intended as mere punishments, but rather as "blessings in disguise," which spiritually purge and refine a person, making him a fitting receptacle for even greater blessings from God.

The admonition of *Parshas Bechukosai*, which is read before *Shavuos*, is a spiritual preparation which enables a person to embrace the giving of the Torah anew, which occurs every *Shavuos*. The admonition of our *Parsha*, which is read shortly before *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*, prepares us for the High Holidays.

This is the inner reason why there are more curses here in *Parshas Ki Savo*—for on *Shavuos*, when the Jewish people receive the Torah, they are on the level of *tzadikim* (righteous people). But on *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*, where the key emphasis is on *man's effort* to return to God, we reach the level of *ba'alei teshuvah* (penitents). And since the *ba'al teshuvah* is so much higher than the *tzadik*, many more curses ("blessings in disguise") are read in this *Parsha* so as to provide the greater spiritual preparation required to reach this sublime level.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 2, pp. 392-3)

9 מא. 10 דברים ו,ז

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תֶאֱגֹר כִּי תֹאכְלֶנּוּ הַתֹּלָעַת: מ זֵיתִים יִהְיוּ לְךָ בְּכָל־גְּבוּלֶךָ
וְשֶׁמֶן לֹא תָסוּךְ כִּי יִשַּׁל זֵיתֶךָ: מא בָּנִים וּבָנוֹת תּוֹלִיד וְלֹא־יִהְיוּ
לָךְ כִּי יֵלְכוּ בַּשֶּׁבִי: מב כָּל־עֵצְךָ וּפְרִי אַדְמָתֶךָ יְיָרֵשׁ הַצְּלָצַל:
מג הַגֵּר אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבְּךָ יַעֲלֶה עָלֶיךָ מַעְלָה מָּעְלָה וְאַתָּה תֵרֵד
מַטָּה מָּטָּה: מד הוּא יַלְוְךָ וְאַתָּה לֹא תַלְוֶנּוּ הוּא יִהְיֶה לְרֹאשׁ
וְאַתָּה תִּהְיֶה לְזָנָב: מה וּבָאוּ עָלֶיךָ כָּל־הַקְּלָלוֹת הָאֵלֶּה וּרְדָפוּךָ
וְהִשִּׂיגוּךָ עַד הִשָּׁמְדָךְ כִּי־לֹא שָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
לִשְׁמֹר מִצְוֹתָיו וְחֻקֹּתָיו אֲשֶׁר צִוָּךְ: מו וְהָיוּ בְךָ לְאוֹת וּלְמוֹפֵת
וּבְזַרְעֲךָ עַד־עוֹלָם: מז תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר לֹא־עָבַדְתָּ אֶת־יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּשִׂמְחָה וּבְטוּב לֵבָב מֵרֹב כֹּל: מח וְעָבַדְתָּ אֶת־אֹיְבֶיךָ
אֲשֶׁר יְשַׁלְּחֶנּוּ יְהוָה בָּךְ בְּרָעָב וּבְצָמָא וּבְעֵירֹם וּבְחֹסֶר כֹּל
וְנָתַן עֹל בַּרְזֶל עַל־צַוָּארֶךָ עַד הִשְׁמִידוֹ אֹתָךְ: מט יִשָּׂא יְהוָה
עָלֶיךָ גּוֹי מֵרָחֹק מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ כַּאֲשֶׁר יִדְאֶה הַנָּשֶׁר גּוֹי אֲשֶׁר
לֹא־תִשְׁמַע לְשֹׁנוֹ: נ גּוֹי עַז פָּנִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִשָּׂא פָנִים לְזָקֵן
וְנַעַר לֹא יָחֹן: נא וְאָכַל פְּרִי בְהֶמְתְּךָ וּפְרִי־אַדְמָתְךָ עַד הִשָּׁמְדָךְ
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יַשְׁאִיר לְךָ דָּגָן תִּירוֹשׁ וְיִצְהָר שְׁגַר אֲלָפֶיךָ וְעַשְׁתְּרֹת
צֹאנֶךָ עַד הַאֲבִידוֹ אֹתָךְ: נב וְהֵצַר לְךָ בְּכָל־שְׁעָרֶיךָ עַד רֶדֶת
חֹמֹתֶיךָ הַגְּבֹהֹת וְהַבְּצֻרוֹת אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה בֹּטֵחַ בָּהֵן בְּכָל־אַרְצֶךָ
וְהֵצַר לְךָ בְּכָל־שְׁעָרֶיךָ בְּכָל־אַרְצְךָ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
לָךְ: נג וְאָכַלְתָּ פְרִי־בִטְנְךָ בְּשַׂר בָּנֶיךָ וּבְנֹתֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן־לְךָ
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּמָצוֹר וּבְמָצוֹק אֲשֶׁר־יָצִיק לְךָ אֹיְבֶךָ: נד הָאִישׁ
הָרַךְ בְּךָ וְהֶעָנֹג מְאֹד תֵּרַע עֵינוֹ בְאָחִיו וּבְאֵשֶׁת חֵיקוֹ וּבְיֶתֶר
בָּנָיו אֲשֶׁר יוֹתִיר: נה מִתֵּת ׀ לְאַחַד מֵהֶם מִבְּשַׂר בָּנָיו אֲשֶׁר
יֹאכֵל מִבְּלִי הִשְׁאִיר־לוֹ כֹּל בְּמָצוֹר וּבְמָצוֹק אֲשֶׁר יָצִיק לְךָ

וְלָא תִכְנוֹשׁ אֲרֵי תֵיכְלִנֵּהּ תּוֹלַעְתָּא: מ זֵיתִין
יְהוֹן לָךְ בְּכָל תְּחוּמָךְ וּמִשְׁחָא לָא תְסוּךְ אֲרֵי
יִתְרוֹן זֵיתָךְ: מא בְּנִין וּבְנָן תּוֹלִיד וְלָא יְהוֹן לָךְ
אֲרֵי יְהָכוּן בְּשִׁבְיָא: מב כָּל אִילָנָךְ וְאִבָּא
דְאַרְעָךְ יְחַסְּנִנֵּהּ סַקָּאָה: מג תּוֹתָב עָרֵל דִּי
בֵינָךְ יְהֵי סָלִיק עֵיל מִנָּךְ לְעֵלָּא לְעֵלָּא וְאַתְּ
תְּהֵי נָחֵת לְתַחְתָּא לְתַחְתָּא: מד הוּא יוֹזְפִנָּךְ
וְאַתְּ לָא תוֹזְפִנֵּהּ הוּא יְהֵי לְתַקִּיף וְאַתְּ תְּהֵי
לְחַלָּשׁ: מה וְיֵיתוֹן עֲלָךְ כָּל לְוָטַיָּא הָאִלֵּין
וְיִרְדְּפֻנָּךְ וְיִדְבְּקֻנָּךְ עַד דְּתִשְׁתֵּיצֵי אֲרֵי לָא
קַבֶּלְתָּא לְמֵימְרָא דַּייָ אֱלָהָךְ לְמִטַּר פִּקּוֹדוֹהִי
וּקְיָמוֹהִי דִּי פַקְּדָךְ: מו וִיהוֹן בָּךְ לְאָת וּלְמוֹפֵת
וּבִבְנָיךְ עַד עָלְמָא: מז חֲלָף דִּי לָא פְלַחְתָּא קֳדָם
יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ בְּחֶדְוָא וּבְשַׁפִּירוּת לִבָּא מִסְּגֵי כֹלָּא:
מח וְתִפְלַח יָת בַּעֲלֵי דְבָבָךְ דִּי יְגָרֵינֻהּ יְיָ בָּךְ
בְּכַפְנָא וּבְצַחוּתָא וּבְעַרְטִלָּיוּתָא וּבַחֲסִירוּת
כֹּלָּא וְיִתֵּן נִיר פַּרְזְלָא עַל צַוְּרָךְ עַד
דִּישֵׁיצֵי יָתָךְ: מט יַיְתֵי יְיָ עֲלָךְ עַם מֵרָחִיק
מִסְּיָפֵי אַרְעָא כְּמָא דִי מִשְׁתְּדֵי נִשְׁרָא עַמָּא דִּי
לָא תִשְׁמַע לִישָּׁנֵהּ: נ עַם תַּקִּיף אַפִּין דִּי
לָא יִסַּב אַפִּין לְסָבָא וְעַל יַנְקָא לָא מְרַחֵם:
נא וְיֵיכוֹל וַלְדָּא דִבְעִירָךְ וְאִבָּא דְאַרְעָךְ עַד
דְּתִשְׁתֵּיצֵי דִּי לָא יַשְׁאַר לָךְ עִבוּרָא חַמְרָא
וּמִשְׁחָא בַּקְרֵי תוֹרָיךְ וְעֶדְרֵי עָנָךְ עַד דְּיוֹבֵד
יָתָךְ: נב וְיָעִיק לָךְ בְּכָל קִרְוָיךְ עַד דְּיִכְבּוֹשׁ
שׁוּרָיךְ רָמַיָּא וּכְרִיכַיָּא דִּי אַתְּ רָחִיץ לְאִשְׁתֵּזָבָא
בְּהוֹן בְּכָל אַרְעָךְ וְיָעִיק לָךְ בְּכָל קִרְוָיךְ בְּכָל
אַרְעָךְ דִּי יְהַב יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ לָךְ: נג וְתֵיכוֹל וַלְדָּא
דִמְעָךְ בְּשַׂר בְּנָיךְ וּבְנָתָךְ דִּי יְהַב לָךְ יְיָ
אֱלָהָךְ בִּצְיָרָא וּבְעָקְתָא דִּיעִיק לָךְ סָנְאָךְ:
נד גַּבְרָא דְּרַכִּיךְ בָּךְ וּדְמְפַנַּק לַחֲדָא תִּבְאַשׁ
עֵינֵהּ בַּאֲחוּהִי וּבְאִתַּת קְיָמֵהּ וּבִשְׁאָר בְּנוֹהִי דִּי
יַשְׁאַר: נה מִלְּמִתַּן לְחַד מִנְּהוֹן מִבְּשַׂר בְּנוֹהִי
דִּי יֵיכוֹל מִדְּלָא אִשְׁתְּאַר לֵהּ כֹּלָּא בִּצְיָרָא

רש"י

(מ) **כי ישל.** ישיר פירותיו, לשון ונשל הברזל[1]: (מב) **יירש הצלצל.** יעשנו הארבה רש מן הפרי: **יירש.** יעני: **צלצל.** מין ארבה. ואי אפשר לפרש יירש לשון ירושה, שאם כן היה לו לכתוב יירש, ולא לשון הורשה וגירושין, שאם כן היה לו לכתוב יוריש: (מז) **מרב כל.** בעוד שהיה לך כל טוב: (מט) **כאשר ידאה הנשר.** פתאום ודרך מלחמה ויקלו סוסיו: **לא תשמע לשונו.** לא תכיר לשונו, וכן תשמע חלום לפתור אותו[2]. וכן כי שומע יוסף[3] אינטינדר"י בלע"ז: (נב) **עד רדת חמותיך.** לשון רדוי וכבוש: (נג) **ואכלת פרי בטנך בשר בניך וגו' במצור.** מחמת שיהיו צרין על העיר ויהיה שם מצוק עקת רעבון: (נד) **הרך בך והענג.** הוא הרך הוא הענוג, לשון פינוק, ומהתענג ומרך מוכית עליהם שניהם אחד, אף על פי שהוא מפונק ודעתו קצה בדבר מאוס, ימתק לו לרעבונו בשר בניו ובנותיו, עד כי תרע עינו בבניו הנותרים מתת לאחד מהם מבשר בניו אחיהם אשר יאכל. דבר אחר הרך בך, הרחמני

1 דברים יט, ה 2 בראשית מא, טו 3 שם מב, כג

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because the worms will devour them. [40] You will have olive trees throughout all your borders, but you will not anoint with their oil, because your olive trees will shed (their fruit). [41] You will bear sons and daughters, but they will not be yours, because they will go into captivity. [42] The locusts will deplete all your trees and all the fruit of your soil. [43] The foreigner who is among you will arise above you, higher and higher, while you will descend lower and lower. [44] He will lend to you, but you will not lend to him. He will be at the head, while you will be at the tail.

[45] All these curses will befall you, pursuing you, overtaking you until they destroy you because you did not listen to God, your God, and observe His commandments and suprarational commands which He commanded you. [46] They will be as a sign and a wonder, upon you and your children forever, [47] because you did not serve God, your God, with joy and with gladness of heart, when (you had an) abundance of everything.

[48] Therefore, you will serve your enemies, whom God will send against you, amid hunger, thirst, nakedness and total destitution. He will place an iron yoke on your neck, until He has destroyed you. [49] God will bring upon you a nation from afar, from the end of the earth, (suddenly) as the eagle swoops down—a nation whose language you will not recognize, [50] an arrogant nation, which will not respect the elderly, or be kind to the young. [51] They will devour the fruit of your livestock and the fruit of your soil, destroying you. They will not leave over anything for you from the grain, the wine, the oil, the offspring of your cattle or the flocks of your sheep, until they destroy you. [52] They will besiege you in all your cities, until your tall and fortified walls in which you trust are conquered, throughout your entire land. They will besiege you in all your cities throughout your entire land, which God, your God, has given you. [53] During the siege and the distress which your enemies will bring upon you, (you will be so hungry that) you will eat the fruit of your womb, the flesh of your sons and daughters, whom God, your God, has given you. [54] The most sensitive and squeamish man among you (will be so hungry for his own children's flesh that he) will be selfish to his own brother, his darling wife and the rest of his children whom he has allowed to remain [55] (refusing) to give any one of them of his children's flesh that he is eating. For not a thing will remain for him in the siege and distress which your enemies will bring upon you, in all your cities.

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

"BECAUSE YOU DID NOT SERVE GOD, YOUR GOD, WITH JOY AND WITH GLADNESS OF HEART" (v. 47)

Simchah (joy) breaks through all barriers. This is also the unique quality of Mashiach, who is a descendant of Peretz, and is referred to as "the one who breaks through (*haporetz*)."

I therefore offer the following suggestion and request: *that we increase in joy with the intent of actually bringing Mashiach and the true and complete Redemption.*

Throughout the years of exile, the Jewish people have longed for the Redemption and prayed for it sincerely every day. In earlier generations, the main emphasis of the *Chasidic* movement was on spreading the wellsprings of *Chasidus* outward and not (so strongly) on the goal of this process, that of bringing Mashiach. It was known that the object of these endeavors was to bring Mashiach, and from time to time this goal was spoken about, but this point was not the focus of attention.

After the Previous Rebbe issued the call, "Immediately to *teshuvah*, immediately to Redemption," the emphasis has been placed on actually bringing Mashiach, to the extent that every phase of our efforts in our Divine service (including the efforts to spread the wellsprings of *Chasidus*) need to be permeated consciously with the goal to bring Mashiach. For this is the mission of our generation: to actually bring the Redemption.

Many decades have passed since the time of the Previous Rebbe's announcement, and the tumultuous activities which arose from it to bring Mashiach. Nevertheless, Mashiach has not yet come.

There is no way to explain this. Our Sages stated, "All the appointed times for Mashiach's coming have already passed." And surely, there is not a single Jew who has not had several thoughts of *teshuvah*.

What is there left to do?

In reply, I am suggesting, as above, that the approach that is required is the expression of joy for the sake of bringing Mashiach.

Joy breaks through barriers, including the barriers of exile, and joy has a unique potential to bring about the Redemption.

This joy will surely lead to the ultimate joy, the rejoicing of the Redemption, when *"our mouths will be filled with joy"* (Psalms 126:2).

(Excerpted from *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Ki Seitzei* 5748—Free Translation)

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איבך בכל־שעריך: נו הרכה בך והענגה אשר לא־נסתה
כף־רגלה הצג על־הארץ מהתענג ומרך תרע עינה באיש
חיקה ובבנה ובבתה: נז ובשליתה היוצת* | מבין רגליה
ובבניה אשר תלד כי־תאכלם בחסר־כל בסתר במצור
ובמצוק אשר יציק לך איבך בשעריך: נח אם־לא תשמר
לעשות את־כל־דברי התורה הזאת הכתבים בספר הזה
**ליראה את־השם ***הנכבד והנורא הזה את יהוה אלהיך:
נט והפלא יהוה את־מכתך ואת מכות זרעך מכות גדלת
ונאמנות וחלים רעים ונאמנים: ס והשיב בך את כל־מדוה
מצרים אשר יגרת מפניהם ודבקו בך: סא גם כל־חלי
וכל־מכה אשר לא כתוב בספר התורה הזאת יעלם יהוה
עליך עד השמדך: סב ונשארתם במתי מעט תחת אשר
הייתם ככוכבי השמים לרב כי־לא שמעת בקול יהוה
אלהיך: סג והיה כאשר־שש יהוה עליכם להיטיב אתכם
ולהרבות אתכם כן ישיש יהוה עליכם להאביד אתכם
ולהשמיד אתכם ונסחתם מעל האדמה אשר־אתה
בא־שמה לרשתה: סד והפיצך יהוה בכל־העמים מקצה
הארץ ועד־קצה הארץ ועבדת שם אלהים אחרים אשר
לא־ידעת אתה ואבתיך עץ ואבן: סה ובגוים ההם לא תרגיע
ולא־יהיה מנוח לכף־רגלך ונתן יהוה לך שם לב רגז וכליון
עינים ודאבון נפש: סו והיו חייך תלאים לך מנגד ופחדת
לילה ויומם ולא תאמין בחייך: סז בבקר תאמר מי־יתן ערב
ובערב תאמר מי־יתן בקר מפחד לבבך אשר תפחד
וממראה עיניך אשר תראה: סח והשיבך יהוה | מצרים
באניות בדרך אשר אמרתי לך לא־תסיף עוד לראתה

ובעקתא די יעיק לך סנאך בכל קרויך:
נו דרכיכא בך ודמפנקא די לא נסיאת
פרסת רגלה לאתתא על ארעא ממפנקו
ומרכיכו תבאש עינה בגבר קימה ובברה
ובברתה: נז ובזער בנהא דיפקון מנה
ובבנהא די תליד ארי תיכלנון בחסירות
כלא בסתרא בצירא ובעקתא די יעיק לך
סנאך בקרויך: נח אם לא תטר למעבד ית
כל פתגמי אוריתא הדא דכתיבין בספרא
הדין למדחל ית שמא יקירא ודחילא הדין
ית יי אלהך: נט ויפרש יי ית מחתך וית מחת
בניך מחן רברבן ומהימנן ומרעין בישין
ומהימנין: ס ויתיב בך ית כל מכתשי מצרים
די דחלתא מקדמיהון וידבקון בך: סא אף כל
מרע וכל מחא די לא כתיבין בספרא
דאוריתא הדא ייתינון יי עלך עד דתשתצי:
סב ותשתארון בעם זער חלף די הויתון
ככוכבי שמיא למסגי ארי לא קבלתא
למימרא דיי אלהך: סג ויהי כמא דחדי יי
עליכון לאוטבא יתכון ולאסגאה יתכון כן
יחדי יי עליכון לאובדא יתכון ולשיצאה יתכון
ותטלטלון מעל ארעא דאת עלל לתמן
למירתה: סד ויבדרנך יי בכל עממיא מסיפי
ארעא ועד סיפי ארעא ותפלח תמן לעממיא
פלחי טעותא די לא ידעת את ואבהתך
אעא ואבנא: סה ובעממיא האנון לא תנוח
ולא יהא מנח לפרסת רגלך ויתן יי לך תמן
לב דחיל וחשכת עינין ומפחן נפש: סו ויהון
חייך תלן לך מקבל ותהי תוה ליליא ויממא
ולא תהימין בחייך: סז בצפרא תימר מן יתן
רמשא וברמשא תימר מן יתן צפרא
מתוהות לבך די תהי תוה ומחזו עינך די
תהי חזי: סח ויתיבנך יי מצרים בספינן
בארחא די אמרית לך לא תוסף עוד למחזיה

*חסר א׳ **מכאן עד סוף הפסוק יש לומר בקול רם (קיצור ש״ע עח, ג) ***ס״א הנכבד

רש״י

ורך הלבב, מרוב רעבונותם, יתאכזרו ולא יתנו מבשר בניהם השחוטים לבניהם הנותרים: (נו) תרע עינה באיש חיקה ובבנה ובבתה. הגדולים: (נז) ובשליתה. בניה הקטנים. בכולן תהא עינה צרה כשתאכל את האחד מליתן לאשר אצלה מן הבשר: (נט) והפלא ה׳ את מכתך. מופלאות ומובדלות משאר מכות: ונאמנות. ליסרך לקיים שליחותן: (ס) אשר יגרת מפניהם. מפני המכות, כשהיו ישראל רואים מכות משונות הבאות על מצרים היו יראים מהם שלא יבואו גם עליהם, תדע שכן כתיב והיה אם שמוע וגו׳ כל המחלה אשר שמתי במצרים לא אשים עליך[1], אין מיראין את האדם אלא בדבר שהוא יגור ממנו: (סא) יעלם. לשון עלייה: (סב) ונשארתם במתי מעט תחת וגו׳. מועטין חלוף מרובין: (סג) כן ישיש ה׳. את אויביכם עליכם להאביד וגו׳: ונסחתם. לשון עקירה, וכן בית גאים יסח ה׳[2]: (סד) ועבדת שם אלהים אחרים. כתרגומו, לא עבודת אלהות ממש, אלא מעלים מס וגולגליות לכומרי עבודה אלילים: (סה) לא תרגיע. לא תנוח, כמו וזאת המרגעה[3]: לב רגז. לב חרד, כתרגומו דחיל, כמו שאול מתחת רגזה

1 שמות טו, כו 2 משלי טו, כה 3 ישעי׳ כח, יב

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56 *(Even) the most sensitive and squeamish woman among you, who had never dared to place her foot
*upon the ground because of (her) sensitivity and squeamishness, will begrudge (giving flesh to) her
darling husband, her (adult) sons and daughters, 57 *the infants who came from between her legs, and her
*own children whom she will bear—for she will (slaughter them and) eat them in secret, in destitution,
amid the siege and distress which your enemies will inflict upon you in your cities.

58 *If you are not careful to observe all the words of this Torah, which are written in this scroll, to fear
this glorious and awesome name of God, your God, 59 *then God will distinguish your plagues and your
children's plagues, (to be) powerful and effective plagues, with sicknesses that are nasty and effective.
60 *He will bring back upon you all the diseases of Egypt which you were terrified of (when you saw the
Egyptians suffer from them), and they will cling to you. 61 *God will also bring upon you every disease
and plague that is not written in this Torah scroll, to destroy you.

62 *You will remain few in number, instead of being as numerous as the stars of the heavens as you
once were, because you did not listen to God, your God. 63 *Then, just as God rejoiced over you to do
*good for you and to increase you, God will likewise make (your enemies) rejoice over you, annihilating
*you and destroying you. You will be uprooted from the land of which you are now entering to take
possession. 64 *God will scatter you among all the nations, from one end of the earth to the other, and
*there you(r taxes) will (be used to) serve other gods unknown to you or your fathers, (gods of) wood and
stone. 65 *You will not be at ease among those nations, nor will your foot find rest. There, God will give
you a trembling heart, dashed hopes, and a suffering soul. 66 *Your life will hang in suspense before you.
You will be frightened night and day, and you will not be certain of your life. 67 *(Things will constantly
*get worse, so) in the morning, you will say, "If only it were (yesterday) evening!" and in the evening, you
*will say, "If only it were (this) morning!"—because of the fear in your heart which you will experience
and because of the things that you will see. 68 *God will return you to Egypt (in captivity) in ships, through
*the route about which I had said to you, "You will never see it again." There, you will offer yourselves
for sale to your enemies as slaves and handmaids, but there will be no buyer.

רש״י

לך[4], שמעו עמים ירגזון[5], מוסדות השמים ירגזו[6]: **וכליון עינים.** מצפה לישועה ולא תבא: **(סו) חייך תלואים לך.** על הספק, כל ספק קרוי תלוי, שמא אמות היום בחרב הבאה עלינו. ורבותינו דרשו, זה הלוקח תבואה מן השוק: **ולא תאמין בחייך.** זה הסומך על הפלטר: **(סז) בבקר תאמר מי יתן ערב.** ויהיה הערב של אמש[7]: **ובערב תאמר מי יתן בקר.** של שחרית, שהצרות מתחזקות תמיד וכל שעה מרובה קללתה משלפניה: **(סח) באניות.**

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

The ultimate purpose of the admonition is to lead the Jewish people to *teshuvah* (repentance; return). This is alluded to in the concluding curse, "God will *return you* to Egypt" (v. 68). To explain the unique quality of *teshuvah*, the verse continues:

There, you will offer yourselves for sale to your enemies—Through observing the *mitzvos*, we can only sanctify and spiritually elevate those parts of the physical world which the Torah permits us to interact with. In contrast, the *ba'al teshuvah* (penitent) elevates all his prior *forbidden* interactions with the physical world, and his "intentional sins are transformed to *merits*" (Yoma 86b). This is alluded to by the verse: "*there* (i.e. in the realms of the forbidden) *you will offer yourselves for sale* to (i.e. spiritually elevate) *your enemies* (i.e. the forbidden entities that the *ba'al teshuvah* had interactions with).

As slaves and handmaids—In addition to elevating the parts of the physical world which he came into contact with, the *ba'al teshuvah* also enjoys a substantial spiritual elevation *himself*, as a result of conquering his strong desires. Being a master of self-control, the *ba'al teshuvah* is compared to a "slave," who does not initially find his allotted tasks easy, but does them nonetheless with utmost dedication.

But there will be no buyer—*Rashi* explains: "*Because they will decree death and expiration upon you,*" i.e. the *ba'al teshuvah* manages to "kill" his obsession with the pleasures of the world, and instead he yearns to "expire"—to become free from the shackles of physical existence and become one with God.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 239ff.)

4 עס יד, ט. 5 שמות טו, יד. 6 שמואל-ב כב, ח. 7 סוטה מט.

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סח וְהִתְמַכַּרְתֶּם שָׁם לְאֹיְבֶיךָ לַעֲבָדִים וְלִשְׁפָחוֹת וְאֵין קֹנֶה׃ ס
סט **אֵלֶּה דִבְרֵי הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה לִכְרֹת אֶת־
בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאֶרֶץ מוֹאָב מִלְּבַד הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר־כָּרַת אִתָּם
בְּחֹרֵב׃ פ [שביעי] כט א וַיִּקְרָא מֹשֶׁה אֶל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר
אֲלֵהֶם אַתֶּם רְאִיתֶם אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה לְעֵינֵיכֶם
בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְפַרְעֹה וּלְכָל־עֲבָדָיו וּלְכָל־אַרְצוֹ׃ ב הַמַּסּוֹת
הַגְּדֹלֹת אֲשֶׁר רָאוּ עֵינֶיךָ הָאֹתֹת וְהַמֹּפְתִים הַגְּדֹלִים הָהֵם׃
ג וְלֹא־נָתַן יְהוָה לָכֶם לֵב לָדַעַת וְעֵינַיִם לִרְאוֹת וְאָזְנַיִם לִשְׁמֹעַ
עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה׃ ד וָאוֹלֵךְ אֶתְכֶם אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה בַּמִּדְבָּר לֹא־בָלוּ
שַׂלְמֹתֵיכֶם מֵעֲלֵיכֶם וְנַעַלְךָ לֹא־בָלְתָה מֵעַל רַגְלֶךָ׃ ה לֶחֶם לֹא
אֲכַלְתֶּם וְיַיִן וְשֵׁכָר לֹא שְׁתִיתֶם לְמַעַן תֵּדְעוּ כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם׃ [מפטיר] ו וַתָּבֹאוּ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה וַיֵּצֵא סִיחֹן
מֶלֶךְ־חֶשְׁבּוֹן וְעוֹג מֶלֶךְ־הַבָּשָׁן לִקְרָאתֵנוּ לַמִּלְחָמָה וַנַּכֵּם׃
ז וַנִּקַּח אֶת־אַרְצָם וַנִּתְּנָהּ לְנַחֲלָה לָרֻאוּבֵנִי וְלַגָּדִי וְלַחֲצִי שֵׁבֶט
הַמְנַשִּׁי׃ ח וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת־דִּבְרֵי הַבְּרִית הַזֹּאת וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם
לְמַעַן תַּשְׂכִּילוּ אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשׂוּן׃ פ פ פ

קכ"ב פסוקים, לעבדי"ו סימן.

ותזדבנון תמן לבעלי דבבך לעבדין ולאמהן
ולית דקני: סט אלין פתגמי קימא די פקיד
יי ית משה למגזר עם בני ישראל בארעא
דמואב בר מקימא די גזר עמהון בחורב:
א וקרא משה לכל ישראל ואמר להון אתון
חזיתון ית כל די עבד יי לעיניכון בארעא
דמצרים לפרעה ולכל עבדוהי ולכל ארעה:
ב נסי רברביא די חזאה עינך אתיא
ומופתיא רברביא האנון: ג ולא יהב יי לכון
לבא למדע ועינין למחזי ואודנין למשמע עד
יומא הדין: ד ודברית יתכון ארבעין שנין
במדברא לא בליאת כסותכון מנכון ומסנך
לא עדו (בלו) מעל רגלך: ה לחמא לא אכלתון
וחמר חדת ועתיק לא שתיתון בדיל דתדעון
ארי אנא יי אלהכון: ו ואתיתון לאתרא הדין
ונפק סיחן מלכא דחשבון ועוג מלכא דמתנן
לקדמותנא לאגחא קרבא ומחונון: ז ונסיבנא
ית ארעהון ויהבנה לאחסנא לשבטא דראובן
ולשבטא דגד ולפלגות שבטא דמנשה:
ח ותטרון ית פתגמי קימא הדא ותעבדון
יתהון בדיל דתצלחון ית כל די תעבדון:
פ פ פ

* יש גורסים כי רבתי. **כאן חוזרים לקרוא בקול רגיל

רש"י

בספינות בשביה: **והתמכרתם שם לאיביך.** אתם מבקשים להיות נמכרים להם לעבדים ולשפחות: **ואין קנה.** כי יגזרו עליך הרג וכליון: **והתמכרתם.** בלע"ז אישפורוונדרי"ץ ווי"ש. ולא יתכן לפרש והתמכרתם בלשון ונמכרתם על ידי מוכרים אחרים, מפני שנאמר אחריו ואין קונה: **(סט) לכרת את בני ישראל.** שיקבלו עליהם את התורה באלה ובשבועה: **מלבד הברית.** קללות שבתורת כהנים שנאמרו בסיני: **(ג) ולא נתן ה' לכם לב לדעת.** להכיר את חסדי הקב"ה ולהדבק בו: **עד היום הזה.** שמעתי שאותו היום שנתן משה ספר התורה לבני לוי, כמו שכתוב ויתנה אל הכהנים בני לוי[1], באו כל ישראל לפני משה ואמרו לו, משה רבינו אף אנו עמדנו בסיני וקבלנו את התורה וניתנה לנו, ומה אתה משליט את בני שבטך עליה, ויאמרו לנו יום מחר לא לכם נתנה, לנו נתנה. ושמח משה על הדבר, ועל זאת אמר להם היום הזה נהיית לעם וגו'[2], היום הזה הבנתי שאתם דבקים וחפצים במקום: **(ו) ותבאו אל המקום הזה.** עתה אתם רואים עצמכם בגדולה ובכבוד, אל תבעטו במקום ואל ירום לבבכם, ושמרתם את דברי הברית הזאת. דבר אחר ולא נתן ה' לכם לב לדעת, שאין אדם עומד על סוף דעתו של רבו וחכמת משנתו עד ארבעים שנה[3], ולפיכך לא הקפיד עליכם המקום עד היום הזה, אבל מכאן ואילך יקפיד. ולפיכך: **(ח) ושמרתם את דברי הברית הזאת וגו':** **חסלת פרשת כי תבוא**

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What extra understanding was added on "this day"?** (v. 3)

Rashi: No person can appreciate the depths of his teacher's mind or the profundity of his teachings before forty years. Thus, the Omnipresent was not strict with you until this day, but from now on, He will be strict with you. Therefore, *"guard the words of this covenant...."* (v. 8; *Rashi* to v. 6).

1 דברים לא, ט 2 שם כז, ט 3 ע"ז ה:

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69 *These are the words of the covenant, which God commanded Moshe to make with the children of*
Israel in the land of Mo'av, besides the covenant of (curses) which He made with them in Chorav.*

MOSHE'S FINAL ADDRESS

29 *Moshe called all of Israel and said to them, "You have seen all that God did before your*
SEVENTH READING *eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, to all his servants, and to all his land,* 2 *the great tests*
(of faith) which your eyes saw and those great signs (of God's direct involvement) and
wondrous (plagues).

3 *Until this day, God has not yet given you a heart to recognize (His true kindness), eyes to see (it) or*
ears to hear (it). 4 *I led you through the desert for forty years, but your garments did not wear out from*
your (using them), nor did your shoes wear out from (being used by) your feet. 5 *You did not eat bread,*
nor drink new wine or old wine, in order that you would know that I am God, your God.

MAFTIR 6 *When you arrived at this place, Sichon, the King of Cheshbon, and Og, the King of Bashan, came*
out towards us in battle, and we annihilated them. 7 *We took their land, and we gave it as an inheritance*
to the tribes of Re'uvain and Gad, and to half the tribe of Menasheh.

8 *(Since you have witnessed God's greatness), guard the words of this covenant and observe them, in*
order that you succeed in everything that you do.

THE HAFTARAH FOR KI SAVO IS ON PAGE 286.

TORAS MENACHEM

UNDERSTANDING ONE'S TEACHER (v. 3)

Rashi writes that in the current passage, Moshe was telling the Jewish people that now they should be especially careful to "*guard the words of this covenant and observe them*" (v. 8), because, "*No person can fathom the depths of his teacher's mind or the profundity of his teachings before forty years. Thus, the Omnipresent was not strict with you until this day, but from now on, He will be strict with you.*"

However, this begs the question:

The "words of this covenant" refers to the *entire* body of Torah and *mitzvos*, which includes *mitzvos* that were only communicated by Moshe at *the end* of his forty-year leadership. So surely God should only have been "strict" with the Jewish people in those areas in which they had been given a *full* forty years to internalize, and not with *all* "the words of this covenant"?

Another fundamental difficulty here is how a *fixed* time could be given to the process of fathoming one's teacher's mind and the profundity of his teachings. Surely a bright student will take less time to understand his teacher's wisdom, and a weak student will take more time?

THE EXPLANATION

When a student learns Torah from his teacher, he is being educated at two levels: a.) He learns specific teachings, i.e. laws, subjects and passages. b.) He learns how to think, i.e. how to conceptualize and analyze the subject matter.

The rate at which one fully understands the specific teachings ('a') will vary significantly from person to person, depending on the aptitude of each individual student. But with regard to learning how to think like one's teacher does, if the teacher is truly of a superior intellectual caliber to his students, then his intellectual approach will not be quickly internalized, even by his most adept students.

Nevertheless, God fashioned the human mind** in such a manner that after prolonged exposure even this is absorbed by the students. For since all a teacher's ideas are, ultimately, a direct expression of his genius, it follows that through absorbing his teacher's ideas a student is gradually and indirectly absorbing his teacher's way of thinking too. But since this occurs via a process of passive "absorption" (rather than through critical analysis) it is simply a matter of time (rather than aptitude) until this point is reached. Therefore, "*No person* can appreciate either the depths of his teacher's mind or the profundity of his teachings before forty years," if his teacher is truly of a different intellectual caliber to his students.

Nevertheless, once a person has internalized his teacher's way of thinking (after forty years), he is able to see all his teacher's teachings in the same light—even those teachings which have been studied over the latter part of the past forty years.*** Therefore, Moshe told the Jewish people that, since they had now reached the fortieth year of having "witnessed God's greatness," their minds understood things from God's perspective, so to speak. This enabled them to understand even those things they had witnessed in the recent past.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, pp. 163-5)

* I.e. the curses in *Parshas Bechukosai—Vayikra 26:14ff.* **Thus the verse stresses: "Until this day, *God has not yet given you...*" (v. 3). ***From this it would appear that those who were children at the beginning of Moshe's leadership, or those that were born afterwards, did not appreciate the depths of Moshe's mind even at this point, since they had not been his students for forty years. However, it could be argued that as long as one person had come to truly appreciate Moshe's genius (and of course, there were many more than that), he would be able to impart that appreciation to others (*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Bo 5749, note 23*).

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Parshas Ki Savo contains 3 positive *mitzvos* and 3 prohibitions

1. To recite a declaration when bringing firstfruits to the Temple [26:5].
2. To recite a declaration when bringing tithes to the Temple [26:13].
3. Not to eat the Second Tithe while in a state of mourning [26:14].
4. Not to eat the Second Tithe while in a state of ritual impurity [26:14].
5. Not to spend the money for which the Second Tithe was exchanged on anything other than food or drink [26:14].
6. To emulate the good attributes of God [28:9].

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parshas Nitzavim

פרשת נצבים

The Name of the Parsha

The *Parsha* begins with the declaration: *"You are standing firmly (nitzavim) today, all of you together, before God, your God—the heads of your tribes...to your water-drawers—in order to bring you into the covenant of God, your God...."*

At first glance, this declaration appears to contain a contradiction: It begins by saying, "You are standing firmly...*all of you together*" (without distinction); yet, it proceeds immediately to divide them into various and separate categories. Besides, what is the purpose of enumerating the various classes of Jews, from the highest to the lowest, after they had already been all included in the general term "all of you" (כּוּלְּכֶם).

But—herein precisely is to be found a basic "rule," namely, that both go together: (a) "all of you", *meaning all* as one, and (b) at the same time, however, each individual, man or woman, has his or her specific task and mission, each one according to his or her status and station in life.

Yet, the question begs to be asked: Since such a division is necessary, indeed such an extreme diversity—from "your heads" down to your "water-drawer"—how can they be so completely unified and merged to become "all as one"?

The answer is: "You are standing firmly this day, all of you—*before God, your God.*" The Hebrew verb נִצָּבִים is stronger than עֹמְדִים, and means a firm stand, being deeply conscious of standing in the presence of God, Who is *"your God"*—your strength and your whole essence. In this—all Jews are equal, and this is what makes them all—one....

And the Torah goes on to explain: "All of you together" are divided into "the heads of your tribes"...down to your "water-drawer," and each of them, with his *distinct* capacity (and his *special* endeavors) is brought into the covenant with God. Each individual endeavor, whether by one who belongs in the category of your heads and acts like a head, or in the category of water-drawer and acts as such, is an expression of the total covenant of all of you with God, your God. Each one has his special Divine assignment according to his status and station in life, and in this way—when each and every one carries out his assignment—the complete unity of the Jewish people—all as one—is achieved.

(Excerpt from public letter written "In the Days of *Selichos*" 5731)

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ט אַתֶּם נִצָּבִים הַיּוֹם כֻּלְּכֶם לִפְנֵי יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם רָאשֵׁיכֶם
שִׁבְטֵיכֶם זִקְנֵיכֶם וְשֹׁטְרֵיכֶם כֹּל אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל: י טַפְּכֶם נְשֵׁיכֶם
וְגֵרְךָ אֲשֶׁר בְּקֶרֶב מַחֲנֶיךָ מֵחֹטֵב עֵצֶיךָ עַד שֹׁאֵב מֵימֶיךָ:
יא לְעָבְרְךָ בִּבְרִית יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וּבְאָלָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
כֹּרֵת עִמְּךָ הַיּוֹם: (שני) יב לְמַעַן הָקִים־אֹתְךָ הַיּוֹם | לוֹ לְעָם וְהוּא
יִהְיֶה־לְּךָ לֵאלֹהִים כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר־לָךְ וְכַאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לַאֲבֹתֶיךָ
לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב: יג וְלֹא אִתְּכֶם לְבַדְּכֶם אָנֹכִי כֹּרֵת
אֶת־הַבְּרִית הַזֹּאת וְאֶת־הָאָלָה הַזֹּאת: יד כִּי אֶת־אֲשֶׁר יֶשְׁנוֹ
פֹּה עִמָּנוּ עֹמֵד הַיּוֹם לִפְנֵי יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר אֵינֶנּוּ פֹּה

ט אַתּוּן קָיְמִין יוֹמָא דֵין כֻּלְּכוֹן קֳדָם יְיָ
אֱלָהֲכוֹן רֵישֵׁיכוֹן שִׁבְטֵיכוֹן סָבֵיכוֹן וְסָרְכֵיכוֹן
כֹּל אֱנָשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל: י טַפְלְכוֹן נְשֵׁיכוֹן וְגִיּוֹרָךְ דִּי
בְּגוֹ מַשְׁרִיתָךְ מִלָּקֵט אָעָךְ עַד מְלֵי מַיָּךְ:
יא לְאַעָלוּתָךְ בִּקְיָמָא דַּייָ אֱלָהָךְ וּבְמוֹמָתֵהּ דִּי
יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ גָּזַר עִמָּךְ יוֹמָא דֵין: יב בְּדִיל לַאֲקָמָא
יָתָךְ יוֹמָא דֵין קֳדָמוֹהִי לְעַמָּא וְהוּא יְהֵי לָךְ
לֶאֱלָהּ כְּמָא דִּי מַלִּיל לָךְ וּכְמָא דִּי קַיֵּים
לַאֲבָהָתָךְ לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב: יג וְלָא
עִמְּכוֹן בִּלְחוֹדֵיכוֹן אֲנָא גָּזַר יָת קְיָמָא הָדָא וְיָת
מוֹמָתָא הָדָא: יד אֲרֵי יָת מַן דְּאִיתוֹהִי הָכָא
עִמָּנָא קָאֵם יוֹמָא דֵין קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָנָא וְיָת

רש"י

(ט) אתם נצבים[1]. מלמד שכנס משה לפני הקב"ה ביום מותו להכניסם בברית: ראשיכם שבטיכם. ראשיכם לשבטיכם: זקניכם ושטריכם. החשוב חשוב קודם ואחר כך כל איש ישראל: (י) מחטב עציך. מלמד שבאו כנענים להתגייר בימי משה, כדרך שבאו גבעונים בימי יהושע, וזהו האמור בגבעונים ויעשו גם המה בערמה[2], ונתנם משה חוטבי עצים ושואבי מים[3]: (יא) לעברך. להיותך עובר בברית. ולא יתכן לפרשו כמו להעבירך, אלא כמו לעשותכם אותם[4]: לעברך בברית. דרך העברה, כך היו כורתי בריתות עושין מחיצה מכאן ומחיצה מכאן ועוברים בינתים, כמו שנאמר העגל אשר כרתו לשנים ויעברו בין בתריו[5]: (יב) למען הקים אותך היום לו לעם. כל כך הוא נכנס לטרוח למען קיים אתכם לפניו לעם: והוא יהיה לך לאלהים. לפי שדבר לך ונשבע לאבותיך שלא להחליף את זרעם באומה אחרת, לכך הוא אוסר אתכם בשבועות הללו, שלא תקניטוהו אחר שהוא אינו יכול להבדל מכם. עד כאן פירשתי לפי פשוטו של פרשה. ומדרש אגדה למה נסמכה פרשת אתם נצבים לקללות, לפי ששמעו ישראל מאה קללות חסר שתים, חוץ ממ"ט שבתורת כהנים, הוריקו פניהם ואמרו מי יוכל לעמוד באלו, התחיל משה לפייסם אתם נצבים היום, הרבה הכעסתם למקום ולא עשה אתכם כליה והרי אתם קיימין לפניו[6]: היום. כיום הזה שהוא קיים והוא מאפיל ומאיר, כך האיר לכם וכן עתיד להאיר לכם, והקללות והיסורין מקיימין אתכם ומציבין אתכם לפניו. ואף הפרשה שלמעלה מזו פיוסין הם, אתם ראיתם את כל וגו'. דבר אחר אתם נצבים, לפי שהיו ישראל הולכין מפרנס לפרנס ממשה ליהושע, לפיכך עשה אותם מצבה כדי לזרזם, וכן עשה יהושע[7], וכן שמואל, התיצבו ואשפטה אתכם[8], כשיצאו מידו ונכנסו לידו של שאול: (יד) ואת אשר איננו

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Why were the people "standing firmly today"? (v. 9)**

Rashi: This teaches us that on the day he died, Moshe assembled the Jewish people before God, to bring them into a covenant.

The *Midrashic* explanation is as follows. Why is *Parshas Nitzavim* juxtaposed with the admonition [the curses in *Parshas Ki Savo*]? Because when the Jewish people heard these ninety eight curses, besides the forty nine curses in the Book of Leviticus (26:14-39), their faces turned pale, and they said, "Who could withstand all these?" So Moshe began to appease them, saying: *"You are standing firmly today"*—You have angered God many times, but He has not destroyed you. And you see that you continue to exist before Him, *"today"*—just as this day exists....

Another explanation of *"You are standing firmly"*: Since the Jewish people were now passing from leader to leader, from Moshe to Yehoshua, Moshe brought them to a standing assembly, in order to encourage them.... (*Rashi to v. 9 & v. 12*).

TORAS MENACHEM

"Standing Firmly Today" (v. 9)

To explain the words *"You are standing firmly today"* (v. 9), *Rashi* cites three different interpretations. This begs the following questions:

a.) *Rashi*'s commentary was written *exclusively* to explain difficulties with scripture *at the literal level*, as *Rashi* himself writes: "I come *only* to explain the literal meaning of scripture" (*Rashi to Bereishis 3:8*). What problem was troubling *Rashi* here, at the literal level?

b.) When *Rashi* gives more than one interpretation, it is because he does not find any of the interpretations totally satisfactory as they remain alone, and by offering several solutions, the shortcomings of one interpretation are compensated for by another.

In our case, we need to explain the difficulties posed by each one of *Rashi's* three interpretations, and how they are solved by the other two interpretations?

c.) The sequence of *Rashi's* interpretations is also arranged with precision. The first interpretation is the most appropriate *overall* at the literal level, followed by the second and then the third interpretation. How is this to be explained in our case?

Rashi's Problems

The opening of our *Parsha* prompts the following questions:

a.) *Why do words of introduction appear in the middle of a speech? Parshas Nitzavim* opens *in the middle* of a speech which Moshe began at

1 בכמה דפוסים נעתקו בפירש"י רק התיבות "אתם נצבים" — בדפוס ראשון (בסיום פרשת תבוא) א': "פרשת אתם נצבים (וכו"פ מתחיל) היום אלמד כו'", בדפוס שני נעתק בתחלת פירש"י "אתם נצבים היום [illegible]" "אתם נצבים היום" (לקו"ש ח"ט ע' 258 הערה 1). 2 יהושע ט, ד 3 יבמות שם. 4 דברים ד, יד 5 ירמי' לד, יח 6 תנחומא 7 יהושע כג, א 8 ש"א יב, ז

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THE ETERNAL COVENANT WITH GOD

29:9 You are standing firmly today, all of you together, before God, your God—the heads of your
tribes, your elders, your police officers (standing in front of) every Jewish person: 10 *your young*
children, your women, and the converts within your camp (who were assigned positions
ranging) from your woodcutters to your water-drawers— 11 *in order to bring you into the covenant of*
God, your God, and His oath which God, your God, is making with you today.

SECOND READING 12 *(This is) in order to establish you today as His people, that He will be your God, as He told you,*
and as He swore to your forefathers, to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov (that He would never swap you
for another nation).

13 *I am not only making this covenant and this oath with you,* 14 *but with (both) those standing here*
with us today before God our God, and with those (in future generations) who are not here with us today.

TORAS MENACHEM

the end of *Parshas Ki Savo*: *"Moshe called all of Israel and said to them, 'You have seen all that God did before your eyes, etc.'"* (29:1). After this introduction, follow another seven verses where Moshe describes God's kindness over the previous forty years, until reaching our verse, *"You are standing firmly today, all of you together, before God, your God."*

This begs the question: Our verse sounds like part of the *introduction* to Moshe's speech. Why did Moshe decide to stress that "you are standing firmly today, etc." in the *middle* of his speech?

b.) *Why did Moshe say these words on the day of his passing?*

The verse stresses, "You are standing firmly *today*," which refers to the day of Moshe's passing. What is the relevance of this point, at the literal level?

c.) *Why were these not Moshe's very last words?*

On the one hand, the verse stresses that this passage was said on the day of his passing*; yet, on the other hand, these were by no means Moshe's last words, for several chapters of Moshe's "last speech" follow after this. So, if it is significant that these words were said on Moshe's very last day, why were they not chosen as his very last words?

d.) *Why did Moshe speak to the children too?*

The Torah does not usually imply that the public gatherings made by Moshe included children. Why did this gathering include *"your young children"* (v. 10)?

e.) *Why does the verse use the unusual term* נִצָּבִים *("standing firmly")?*

The common word in scripture for standing is עוֹמְדִים. Why did verse 9 employ the more unusual term נִצָּבִים, which means standing *firmly*?

RASHI'S FIRST SOLUTION

Rashi's first solution solves the first four of these problems:

a.) *Rashi* stresses: *"Moshe assembled the Jewish people* before God, *to bring them into a covenant,"* i.e. the reason why Moshe assembled the Jewish people at the end of *Parshas Ki Savo* was not merely to convey the eight verses at the end of that *Parsha*, but it was *primarily* to "enter them into a covenant," with the words of *our Parsha*. The eight verses at the end of *Parshas Ki Savo* are thus a form of introduction, before reaching the main topic of Moshe's speech which is found here. So in v. 9, Moshe stressed, *"You are standing firmly today, all of you together before God your God, etc."* because he was coming to the primary content of his speech, for which he gathered the people in the first place.

b.) Moshe waited until the day of his passing to make this covenantal declaration, so that it would be as close as possible to the time when the Jewish people would enter the Land of Israel, when the covenant would actually begin (as *Rashi* writes below, v. 28).

c.) Nevertheless, since these words would not be *immediately* relevant in any case for a number of days, until the Jewish people actually entered the land, there was no need for these to be Moshe's very last words.

d.) Since Moshe was entering the Jewish people into a covenant for all future generations, the children were included too.

However, *Rashi*'s first solution leaves problem 'e' (why the word *nitzavim* is used) unanswered. In fact "standing firmly" appears to be an inappropriate word, since the Jewish people would surely have been in a state of *submission* at the thought of entering the covenant, and not standing *firmly*?

RASHI'S SECOND AND THIRD SOLUTIONS

Therefore *Rashi* cited a second solution, which addresses problem 'e' directly: *"When the Jewish people heard these ninety eight curses... their*

Sparks of Chasidus

"YOU ARE STANDING FIRMLY..." (v. 9)

"You stand firmly today, all of you together, before God, Your God." Jews must stand firm and unshakable, though they are "the smallest among all the nations."

This can be only when they are bound and united together—*"All of you."*

How is it possible to form a true and enduring union of different individuals with different ideas, different interests, and different aspirations?

The answer is: *"Before God, your God."* The union of all Jews is possible because, as a matter of fact, they are already united by virtue of their souls, the Divine soul, which is actually a part of God above, and which is found in every Jew without exception. And the profound reflection that you stand "Before God", who is "Your God"—your strength and your life—must bring forth and actualize the union of one Jew with another, and of the individual with the community of our people, in the fullest measure.

(Excerpt from public letter written on *Erev Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim* 5721)

* See *Gur Aryeh* here for an explanation as to why this must be the case, at the literal level.

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עִמָּנוּ הַיּוֹם: [שלישי] טו כִּי־אַתֶּם יְדַעְתֶּם אֵת אֲשֶׁר־יָשַׁבְנוּ בְּאֶרֶץ
מִצְרָיִם וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר־עָבַרְנוּ בְּקֶרֶב הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר עֲבַרְתֶּם:
טז וַתִּרְאוּ אֶת־שִׁקּוּצֵיהֶם וְאֵת גִּלֻּלֵיהֶם עֵץ וָאֶבֶן כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב
אֲשֶׁר עִמָּהֶם: יז פֶּן־יֵשׁ בָּכֶם אִישׁ אוֹ־אִשָּׁה אוֹ מִשְׁפָּחָה
אוֹ־שֵׁבֶט אֲשֶׁר לְבָבוֹ פֹנֶה הַיּוֹם מֵעִם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ לָלֶכֶת
לַעֲבֹד אֶת־אֱלֹהֵי הַגּוֹיִם הָהֵם פֶּן־יֵשׁ בָּכֶם שֹׁרֶשׁ פֹּרֶה רֹאשׁ
וְלַעֲנָה: יח וְהָיָה בְּשָׁמְעוֹ אֶת־דִּבְרֵי הָאָלָה הַזֹּאת וְהִתְבָּרֵךְ
בִּלְבָבוֹ לֵאמֹר שָׁלוֹם יִהְיֶה־לִּי כִּי בִּשְׁרִרוּת לִבִּי אֵלֵךְ לְמַעַן
סְפוֹת הָרָוָה אֶת־הַצְּמֵאָה: יט לֹא־יֹאבֶה יְהוָה סְלֹחַ לוֹ כִּי אָז
יֶעְשַׁן אַף־יְהוָה וְקִנְאָתוֹ בָּאִישׁ הַהוּא וְרָבְצָה בּוֹ כָּל־הָאָלָה
הַכְּתוּבָה בַּסֵּפֶר הַזֶּה וּמָחָה יְהוָה אֶת־שְׁמוֹ מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמָיִם:
כ וְהִבְדִּילוֹ יְהוָה לְרָעָה מִכֹּל שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּכֹל אָלוֹת הַבְּרִית
הַכְּתוּבָה בְּסֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה הַזֶּה: כא וְאָמַר הַדּוֹר הָאַחֲרוֹן בְּנֵיכֶם
אֲשֶׁר יָקוּמוּ מֵאַחֲרֵיכֶם וְהַנָּכְרִי אֲשֶׁר יָבֹא מֵאֶרֶץ רְחוֹקָה וְרָאוּ
אֶת־מַכּוֹת הָאָרֶץ הַהִוא וְאֶת־תַּחֲלֻאֶיהָ אֲשֶׁר־חִלָּה יְהוָה בָּהּ:
כב גָּפְרִית וָמֶלַח שְׂרֵפָה כָל־אַרְצָהּ לֹא תִזָּרַע וְלֹא תַצְמִחַ
וְלֹא־יַעֲלֶה בָהּ כָּל־עֵשֶׂב כְּמַהְפֵּכַת סְדֹם וַעֲמֹרָה אַדְמָה
וצביים [ק' וּצְבוֹיִם] אֲשֶׁר הָפַךְ יְהוָה בְּאַפּוֹ וּבַחֲמָתוֹ: כג וְאָמְרוּ
כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם עַל־מֶה עָשָׂה יְהוָה כָּכָה לָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת מֶה חֳרִי
הָאַף הַגָּדוֹל הַזֶּה: כד וְאָמְרוּ עַל אֲשֶׁר עָזְבוּ אֶת־בְּרִית יְהוָה

די ליתוהי הכא עמנא יומא דין: טו ארי אתון ידעתון ית דיתבנא בארעא דמצרים וית די עברנא בגו עממיא די עברתון: טז וחזיתון ית שקוציהון וית טעותהון אעא ואבנא כספא ודהבא די עמהון: יז דלמא אית בכון גבר או אתתא או זרעית או שבטא די לבה פני יומא דין מדחלתא דיי אלהנא למהך למפלח ית טעות עממיא האנון דלמא אית בכון גבר מהרהר חטאין או זדון: יח ויהי במשמעה ית פתגמי מומתא הדא ויחשב בלבה למימר שלמא יהי לי ארי בהרהור לבי אנא אזל בדיל לאוספא לה חטאי שלותא על זדנותא: יט לא ייבי יי למשבק לה ארי בכן יתקף רגזא דיי וחמתה בגברא ההוא וידבקון בה כל לוטיא דכתיבין בספרא הדין וימחי יי ית שמה מתחות שמיא: כ ויפרשנה יי לבישא מכל שבטיא דישראל ככל לוטי קימא דכתיבין בספרא דאוריתא הדין: כא ויימר דרא בתראה בניכון די יקומון מבתריכון ובר עממין דייתי מארעא רחיקא ויחזון ית מחתא דארעא ההיא וית מרעהא די אמרע יי בה: כב גפריתא ומלחא יקידת כל ארעה לא תזדרע ולא תצמח ולא יסק בה כל עסבא כמהפכתא דסדם ועמרה אדמה וצביים די הפך יי ברגזה ובחמתה: כג ויימרון כל עממיא על מא עבד יי כדין לארעא הדא מא תקוף רגזא רבא הדין: כד ויימרון על דשבקו

רש"י

פה. ואף עם דורות העתידים להיות[1]: (טו) כי אתם ידעתם וגו' ותראו את שקוציהם. לפי שראיתם האומות עובדי אלילים ושמא הסית לב אחד מכם אותו ללכת אחריהם: (טז) ותראו את שקוציהם. על שם שהם מאוסים כשקצים: גלליהם. שמסריחים ומאוסים כגלל: עץ ואבן. אותן של עצים ושל אבנים ראיתם בגלוי, לפי שאין העובדי אלילים יראים שמא יגנבו, אבל של כסף וזהב עמהם בחדרי משכיתם הם, לפי שהם יראים שמא יגנבו[1]: (יז) פן יש בכם וגו'. לפיכך אני צריך להשביעכם: פן יש בכם. שמא יש בכם: אשר לבבו פנה היום. מלקבל עליו הברית: שרש פרה ראש ולענה. שרש מגדל עשב מר כגידין, שהם מרים, כלומר מפרה ומרבה רשע בקרבכם: (יח) והתברך בלבבו. לשון ברכה, יחשוב בלבו ברכת שלום לעצמו לאמר, לא יבואוני קללות הללו, אך שלום יהיה לי: והתברך. בנדיר"א שוי"א בלע"ז, כמו והתגלח[2] והתפלל[3]: בשררות לבי אלך. במראית לבי, כמו אשורנו ולא קרוב[4], כלומר מה שלבי רואה לעשות: למען ספות הרוה. לפי שאוסיף לו פורענות על מה שעשה עד הנה בשוגג והייתי מעביר עליהם, וגורם שאצרף עם המזיד ואפרע ממנו הכל. וכן תרגם אונקלוס בדיל לאוספא ליה חטאי שלותא על זדנותא, שאוסיף לו אני השגגות על הזדונות: הרוה. שוגג, שהוא עושה כאדם שכור שעושה שלא מדעת: הצמאה. שהוא עושה מדעת ובתאוה: (יט) יעשן אף ה'. על ידי כעס הגוף מתחמם והעשן יוצא מן האף, וכן עלה עשן באפו[5], ואף על פי שאין זו לפני המקום, הכתוב משמיע את האוזן כדרך שהיא רגילה ויכולה לשמוע, כפי דרך הארץ: וקנאתו. לשון חמה אנפרמנ"ט אחיזת לבישת נקמה, ואינו מעביר על המדה: (כ) הכתובה בספר התורה הזה. ולמעלה הוא אומר בספר התורה הזאת[6], גם כל חלי וכל מכה וגו', הזאת לשון נקבה מוסב על התורה, הזה לשון זכר מוסב על הספר, ועל ידי פיסוק הטעמים הן נחלקים לשתי לשונות, בפרשת הקללות הטפחא נתונה תחת בספר, והתורה הזאת דבוקים זה לזה, לכך אמר הזאת, וכאן הטפחה נתונה תחת התורה, נמצא ספר

1 תנחומא 2 ויקרא יג, לג 3 מלכים-א ח, לג 4 במדבר כד, יז 5 שמואל-ב כב, ט 6 דברים כח, סא

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THIRD READING

15 *For you know how we lived in the land of Egypt, and how we went among the nations, (and) as
you went on your way, 16 you saw their disgusting and repugnant (idols of) wood and stone (in their
streets, and their idols of) silver and gold which were (hidden in their houses) with them. 17 So perhaps
there is among you a man, a woman, a family, or a tribe, whose heart is straying today from God our
God, (and does not want to enter into the covenant with Him, but would rather) go and worship the gods
of those nations. Perhaps there is among you (a person growing in wickedness like) a root that is
sprouting (bitter herbs, like) hemlock and wormwood, 18 such that when he hears the words of this oath,
(he will think that they do not apply to him) and he will convince himself in his heart, saying, "I will be
okay, even if I follow my heart's desires." (To such a person) I will add (to the punishment for his sins
which were done inadvertently, as if) in a drunken stupor, (a further punishment for his sins done
intentionally, out of a conscious) thirsting. 19 God will not be willing to forgive him! Rather, God's fury
and His zeal will then fume against that man, and the entire curse written in this book will come down
upon him, and God will obliterate his name from beneath the skies. 20 God will single him out him from
all the tribes of Israel for severe treatment, according to all the curses of the covenant, written in this Book
of the Torah.*

21 *The later generation— your descendants, who will come after you, along with the foreigner who
comes from a distant land—will say upon seeing the plagues of that land and the diseases with which
God afflicted it: 22 Sulfur and salt have burned up their entire land! It cannot be sown. It is infertile, and
not even grass will sprout upon it. It is like the overturning of Sodom, Amorah, Admah and Tzevoyim,
(the cities) which God overturned in His fury and rage. 23 All the nations will say, "Why did God do such
a thing to this land? What caused this great rage of fury? 24 Then they will say, "It is because they*

TORAS MENACHEM

faces turned pale...so Moshe began to appease them, saying, 'You are standing firmly today.'"

According to this interpretation, the Torah's use of the term "standing *firmly*" is understood, since Moshe's intention was to re-establish the strength of the Jewish people after they were emotionally debilitated from hearing the curses: *"You have angered God many times, but He has not destroyed you. And you see that you continue to exist before Him."*

Problems 'b' & 'c' are also answered according to this explanation. Because here the word "today" refers, not to the day of Moshe's passing, but rather, it is interpreted non-literally: *"you see that you continue to exist before Him "today"—just as this day exists."**

However, the drawback of this interpretation is that it does not solve problems 'a' or 'd.'

a.) Why was Moshe's attempt to console the Jewish people after the curses made *in the middle* of his speech? Surely this should have been done *immediately* after the curses were said?

d.) The curses describe the result of failing to observe the *mitzvos*. This is clearly not directly relevant to children, who are not obligated to observe the *mitzvos*. Thus, according to *Rashi's* second solution we are left with the question why Moshe gathered the children too.

Due to these problems, *Rashi* cited a third solution: *"the Jewish people were now passing from leader to leader, from Moshe to Yehoshua, therefore Moshe brought them to a standing assembly, in order to encourage them."*

This explains:

a. & b.) Why Moshe said these words on the day he passed away, and why he did not say them at the very beginning of his last day (in *Parshas Ki Savo*), so the words would be nearer to his actual passing.

d.) Why Moshe addressed the children, for they too were "passing from leader to leader."

e.) Why the Torah uses the word נִצָּבִים ("standing firmly") because: *"Moshe brought them to a standing assembly* (מַצָּבָה)," and the purpose of this was *"in order to encourage them"* to accept Yehoshua's leadership wholeheartedly.

However, we are left with one problem:

c.) Since these words were meant as a transition into the leadership of Yehoshua, surely they should have been Moshe's *very last* words?

THE SEQUENCE OF RASHI'S SOLUTIONS

Why does *Rashi* write this explanation last, when it seems to have fewer problems than the previous one? Because, in the final analysis, *Rashi's* second solution preserves a thematic continuity between *Parshas Ki Savo* and *Parshas Nitzavim* (which the third solution does not) and in this respect it resembles *Rashi's* first, primary interpretation. Therefore, of the second and third solutions, *Rashi* deemed the second interpretation to be more acceptable, at the literal level.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 258ff.)

* According to the second interpretation, *Rashi* was forced to explain the word "today" non-literally (i.e. that it does not refer to the day of Moshe's passing) for the following reason: Even if Moshe's words of consolation here were not said immediately after the curses, they clearly must have been said soon after the curses. Thus, if the current passage was said on the day of Moshe's passing, it would follow that the curses too were said on, or shortly before, that day. This is difficult to accept at the literal level, since: The curses were intended to inspire the Jewish people to strengthen their observance of the *mitzvos*, so why should this be left until the last day of Moshe's life? Furthermore, it is highly unlikely that Moshe would have rebuked the Jewish people on his last day. (In fact, we find that he *blessed* them on his last day).

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אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתָם אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת עִמָּם בְּהוֹצִיאוֹ אֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם:
כה וַיֵּלְכוּ וַיַּעַבְדוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר
לֹא־יְדָעוּם וְלֹא חָלַק לָהֶם: כו וַיִּחַר־אַף יְהֹוָה בָּאָרֶץ הַהִוא
לְהָבִיא עָלֶיהָ אֶת־כָּל־הַקְּלָלָה הַכְּתוּבָה בַּסֵּפֶר הַזֶּה: כז וַיִּתְּשֵׁם
יְהֹוָה מֵעַל אַדְמָתָם בְּאַף וּבְחֵמָה וּבְקֶצֶף גָּדוֹל *וַיַּשְׁלִכֵם
אֶל־אֶרֶץ אַחֶרֶת כַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה: כח הַנִּסְתָּרֹת לַיהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וְהַנִּגְלֹת **לָנוּ וּלְבָנֵינוּ עַד־עוֹלָם לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־כָּל־דִּבְרֵי הַתּוֹרָה
הַזֹּאת: ס [רביעי] [שני כשהן מחוברין] ל א וְהָיָה כִי־יָבֹאוּ עָלֶיךָ
כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה הַבְּרָכָה וְהַקְּלָלָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְפָנֶיךָ
וַהֲשֵׁבֹתָ אֶל־לְבָבֶךָ בְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר הִדִּיחֲךָ יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
שָׁמָּה: ב וְשַׁבְתָּ עַד־יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְשָׁמַעְתָּ בְקֹלוֹ כְּכֹל
אֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם אַתָּה וּבָנֶיךָ בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשֶׁךָ:
ג וְשָׁב יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶת־שְׁבוּתְךָ וְרִחֲמֶךָ וְשָׁב וְקִבֶּצְךָ מִכָּל־

*ל' רבתי **אחת עשרה נקודות, על לנו ולבנינו וע' של עד.

יָת קְיָמָא דַייָ אֱלָהָא דַאֲבָהָתְהוֹן דִּי גְזַר עִמְּהוֹן
בְּאַפָּקוּתֵהּ יָתְהוֹן מֵאַרְעָא דְמִצְרָיִם: כה וַאֲזַלוּ
וּפְלַחוּ לְטַעֲוַת עַמְמַיָּא וּסְגִידוּ לְהוֹן דַּחֲלָן
דִּי לָא יְדַעֻנּוּן וְלָא אוֹטִיבָא לְהוֹן: כו וּתְקֵף
רוּגְזָא דַייָ בְּאַרְעָא הַהִיא לְאַיְתָאָה עֲלַהּ יָת כָּל
לְוָטַיָּא דִּכְתִיבִין בְּסִפְרָא הָדֵין: כז וְטַלְטְלִנּוּן יְיָ
מֵעַל אַרְעֲהוֹן בִּרְגַז וּבְחֵמָא וּבִתְקוֹף רְגַז
וְאַגְלִנּוּן לַאֲרַע אָחֳרִי כְּיוֹמָא הָדֵין:
כח דְּמִטַּמְּרָן קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהַנָא וּדְגַלְיָן לָנָא
וְלִבְנָנָא עַד עָלְמָא לְמֶעְבַּד יָת כָּל פִּתְגָמֵי
אוֹרָיְתָא הָדָא: א וִיהֵי אֲרֵי יֵיתוּן עֲלָךְ כָּל
פִּתְגָמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין בִּרְכָן וּלְוָטִין דִּי יְהָבִית קֳדָמָךְ
וּתְתוּב לְלִבָּךְ בְּכָל עַמְמַיָּא דִּי אַגְלְיָךְ יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ
לְתַמָּן: ב וּתְתוּב לְדַחַלְתָּא דַייָ אֱלָהָךְ וּתְקַבֵּל
לְמֵימְרֵהּ כְּכֹל דִּי אֲנָא מְפַקְּדָךְ יוֹמָא דֵין אַתְּ
וּבְנָיךְ בְּכָל לִבָּךְ וּבְכָל נַפְשָׁךְ: ג וִיתוּב יְיָ
אֱלָהָךְ יָת שְׁבִי גָלְוָתָךְ וִירַחֵם עֲלָךְ וִיתוּב
וִיכַנְּשִׁנָּךְ מִכָּל עַמְמַיָּא דִּי בַדְּרָךְ יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ

רש"י

התורה דבוקים זה לזה, לפיכך לשון זכר נופל אחריו, שהלשון נופל על הספר: (כה) **לא ידעום.** לא ידעו בהם גבורת אלהות: **ולא חלק להם.** לא נתנם לחלקם. ואונקלוס תרגם ולא אוטיבא להון, לא הטיבו להם שום טובה, ולשון לא חלק אותו אלוה שבחרו להם, לא חלק להם שום נחלה ושום חלק: (כז) **ויתשם ה'.** כתרגומו וטלטלינון, וכן הנני נותשם מעל אדמתם[1]: (כח) **הנסתרות לה' אלהינו.** ואם תאמרו מה בידינו לעשות, אתה מעניש את הרבים על הרהורי היחיד, שנאמר פן יש בכם איש וגו', ואחר כך וראו את מכות הארץ ההיא, והלא אין אדם יודע מטמונותיו של חבירו, אין אני מעניש אתכם על הנסתרות, שהן לה' אלהינו והוא יפרע מאותו יחיד, אבל הנגלות, לנו ולבנינו לבער הרע מקרבנו, ואם לא נעשה דין בהם יענשו את הרבים. נקוד על לנו ולבנינו, לדרוש, שאף על הנגלות לא ענש את הרבים עד שעברו את הירדן, משקבלו עליהם את השבועה בהר גרזים ובהר עיבל ונעשו ערבים זה לזה: (ג) **ושב ה' אלהיך את שבותך.** היה לו לכתוב והשיב את שבותך, רבותינו למדו מכאן כביכול שהשכינה שרויה עם ישראל בצרת

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why would God's blessings lead a person to *return* to Him? Surely this is caused by the curses? (30:1)

OHR HACHAYIM: So long as the Jewish people had not sinned, they did not attribute the blessings in their lives to their observance of the *mitzvos*, and they only began to recognize the source of their blessings after they sinned and were punished. Thus, in order to return to God, a person had to contemplate both "the blessing *and* the curse which I have set before you."

TORAS MENACHEM

Blessings that Lead to *Teshuvah* (v. 1)

Ohr HaChayim addresses the question why a person needs to take to heart both "*the blessing and* the curse which I have set before you," in order to return to God. Surely it is the curses alone that inspire a person to *teshuvah*? How can the *blessings* lead him to *teshuvah*?

Since this appears to be a question at the literal level, why does *Rashi* not address it?

The Explanation

The current passage describes the feelings of distress that lead to profound remorse and *teshuvah*, "*with all your heart and with all your soul*." (v. 2). Logically speaking, a more profound *teshuvah* will arise if the cause—the feeling of distress—is more intense, and this will result in the *teshuvah* reaching deeper into the depths of the heart and the soul.

When is a person most distressed? "When *all these* things come upon you...*the blessing and* the curse" (v. 1), i.e. when a person first has blessings, and then he loses them, the feeling of pain is more profound than if he would never have had the blessings in the first place. Thus, in order to return to God, "*with all your heart and with all your soul*," it is necessary that "*all these things come upon you...the blessing and the curse*."

Rashi did not feel it necessary to clarify this point, because:

1 ירמי' יב, יד

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*abandoned the covenant of God, the God of their fathers, which He made with them when He took them
out of the land of Egypt, [25] For they went and served other gods, prostrating themselves to them—gods
which they knew were devoid (of Divine power), and which He had not apportioned to them. [26] God's
fury raged against that land, bringing upon it the entire curse written in this book. [27] God uprooted them
from upon their land, with fury, anger and great wrath, and He cast them to another land, (where they
are) to this day."*

*[28] (If you will say, "Since this punishment will come on us even if an individual is harboring thoughts
of idolatry, what hope is there for us?" My response is:) the hidden things (in a person's mind) are for
God, our God, (to deal with privately), but the revealed things (where people's sins are known) are for
us and for our children forever (to deal with, and enact justice), to fulfill all the words of this Torah.*

INGATHERING OF THE EXILES

30 *What will happen is, when all these things come upon you (while you are) among all the
nations where God, your God, has banished you—the blessing and the curse which I have
set before you—you will take it to your heart, [2] and you will return to God, your God, with
all your heart and with all your soul. You will listen to His voice, to everything that I am commanding
you today, you and your children. [3] Then, God, your God, will return your captives (from exile), and
He will have mercy upon you. He will gather you again from all the nations, where God, your God, had
dispersed you.*

FOURTH READING (2ND WHEN JOINED)

TORAS MENACHEM

a.) It is an observable fact of human nature which should not have to be explained.

b.) The reader is already familiar with this concept from *Rashi* in *Parshas Re'eh*. Concerning the amount of charity that a person is required to give, *Rashi* writes, "*You are not required to make him wealthy* (*Rashi* to 15:8). Nevertheless, one is required to give a person "*what he is lacking—even a horse to ride on and a servant to run before him*" (ibid.), if the person had become accustomed to such a lifestyle. Clearly then, the reader will already have understood that, at the literal level, losing one's previous blessings is a very painful matter to such an extent that restoring a man to his previously luxurious lifestyle is considered charity.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 14, p. 118*ff.*)

The Last Word

"HE WILL GATHER YOU AGAIN FROM ALL THE NATIONS" (V. 3)

The true test of events, to see if they herald the *Geulah* [redemption] or not, is to see whether there has been an essential change in the causes which have brought about the *Galus* [exile] in the first place, namely, a new tendency in the direction of stronger adherence to the Torah and *Mitzvos*....It has been amply explained in the Written and Oral Torah that the *Geulah* will come through the *Melech Hamoshiach* (Messianic King), and as the *Rambam* also declares....

"*And when a king of the House of David will arrive, dedicated to the study of the Torah and observance of the Mitzvos like his father David, according to the Torah Shebiksav* [written law] *and Shebeal-Peh* [oral law], *and he will compel all the Jewish people to walk in it and strengthen its fences, and he will fight the wars of God, he is assumed to be the Moshiach.* (Note that this is not yet a certain sign of the *Geulah*, for all this can still take place in a state of *Galus*. However) *If he did so and has succeeded* (in the above matters, namely having won all battles and impelled all the Jewish people to study the Torah and to mend its fences, we are still not sure and require a further sign, namely), *and built the Beis Hamikdosh* [*Holy Temple*] *in its place* (clearly in the holy city of Jerusalem, indicating that there would be a large Jewish population in that city, yet we are still not certain of the end of the *Galus*, so a further factor must be fulfilled, namely), *and he gathers in the dispersed ones of Israel—then he is certainly the Moshiach....* (*Laws of Kings*, 11:4).

It is clear from the above *Psak Din* [ruling] of the *Rambam* that before there can be a *Kibbutz Galuyos* [ingathering of the exiles] and the rebuilding of the *Beis Hamikdash* in its place, there has to be a full and complete return to the Torah and *Mitzvos* while Jews are still in the *Galus*, and it is this that is the prelude and preparation for the *Geulah*....

May God grant that each and all of us in the midst of all Israel, should be inspired with true Heavenly inspiration to walk in the way of the Torah and to mend its fences, for it is this that will prepare the way for Moshiach to implement all the conditions necessary to bring about the truly full and complete *Geulah*.

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe on 21st Menachem Av, 5728)

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הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר הֱפִיצְךָ יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ שָׁמָּה: ד אִם־יִהְיֶה נִדַּחֲךָ
בִּקְצֵה הַשָּׁמָיִם מִשָּׁם יְקַבֶּצְךָ יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וּמִשָּׁם יִקָּחֶךָ:
ה וֶהֱבִיאֲךָ יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יָרְשׁוּ אֲבֹתֶיךָ
וִירִשְׁתָּהּ וְהֵיטִבְךָ וְהִרְבְּךָ מֵאֲבֹתֶיךָ: ו וּמָל יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶת־
לְבָבְךָ וְאֶת־לְבַב זַרְעֶךָ לְאַהֲבָה אֶת־יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ
וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁךָ לְמַעַן חַיֶּיךָ: (חמישי) (שלישי כשהן מחוברין) ז וְנָתַן יְהֹוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֵת כָּל־הָאָלוֹת הָאֵלֶּה עַל־אֹיְבֶיךָ וְעַל־שֹׂנְאֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר
רְדָפוּךָ: ח וְאַתָּה תָשׁוּב וְשָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקוֹל יְהֹוָה וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת־כָּל־
מִצְוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם: ט וְהוֹתִירְךָ יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכֹל ׀
מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶךָ בִּפְרִי בִטְנְךָ וּבִפְרִי בְהֶמְתְּךָ וּבִפְרִי אַדְמָתְךָ

לְתַמָּן: ד אִם יְהֵי גָּלוּתָךְ בִּסְיָפֵי שְׁמַיָּא מִתַּמָּן
יְכַנְּשִׁנָּךְ יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ וּמִתַּמָּן יְקָרְבִנָּךְ: ה וְיַעֲלִנָּךְ יְיָ
אֱלָהָךְ לְאַרְעָא דִּירִיתוּ אֲבָהָתָךְ וְתֵירְתַהּ
וְיוֹטַב לָךְ וְיַסְגֵּינָךְ מֵאֲבָהָתָךְ: ו וְיֵעְדֵּי יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ
יָת טַפְשׁוּת לִבָּךְ וְיָת טַפְשׁוּת לִבָּא דִבְנָיךְ
לְמִרְחַם יָת יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ בְּכָל לִבָּךְ וּבְכָל נַפְשָׁךְ
בְּדִיל חַיָּיךְ: ז וְיִתֵּן יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ יָת כָּל לְוָטַיָּא
הָאִלֵּין עַל בַּעֲלֵי דְבָבָךְ וְעַל סָנְאָךְ דִּי רְדָפוּךְ:
ח וְאַתְּ תְּתוּב וּתְקַבֵּל בְּמֵימְרָא דַּיְיָ וְתַעְבֵּד
יָת כָּל פִּקּוֹדוֹהִי דִּי אֲנָא מְפַקֵּד לָךְ יוֹמָא דֵין:
ט וְיוֹתְרִנָּךְ יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ בְּכָל עוֹבָדֵי יְדָךְ בִּוְלְדָא
דִמְעָךְ וּבִוְלְדָא דִבְעִירָךְ וּבְאִבָּא דְאַרְעָךְ לְטָבָא

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **What does it mean that "God will circumcise your heart"? (v. 6)**

Onkelos: He will remove the foolishness from your heart.

Kli Yakar: God will enable the Jewish people to serve Him, not only out of fear, but out of love, as the verse stresses, "God, your God, will circumcise your heart and the heart of your children, *(enabling you) to love God, your God, with all your heart and with all your soul.*" Since one can only serve God out of love and joy when not threatened by one's enemies, the Torah continues: "*God, your God, will place all these curses upon your enemies and upon those that hate you, who have pursued you*" (v. 7).

Ramban: In the future era, to which this verse refers, God will totally eliminate the existence of impurity and evil, and consequently, the evil inclination will cease to exist. This is the meaning of the statement, "God will circumcise your heart."

● **Why does verse 8 state, "You will return to...God," when verse 2 *already* stated, "You will return to God"?**

Tzror Hamor: The first *teshuvah*, in verse 2, is not a complete *teshuvah*, because it is inspired by the difficult circumstances of pain and suffering. Thus, in verse 8 the Jewish people do *teshuvah* again, for God's sake, and not merely to relieve their suffering.

Kli Yakar: The expression "You will return to God," in verse 8, does not refer to actual *teshuvah*, since the previous verses already described how the Jewish people will return to God. Rather, verse 8 indicates the Jewish people will reach a state of *teshuvah* which they are doing completely on their own, without having to rely on any of the merits of their forefathers.

Ohr HaChayim: What is the need for the Jewish people's hearts to be "circumcised" in verse 6, *after* they have already done *teshuvah*, in verse 2? And why does verse 8 repeat that the Jewish people will do *teshuvah* again?

There are three phases to the Jewish people's *teshuvah* described here:

a.) "*You will return to God your God, with all your heart and with all your soul. You will listen to His voice*" (v. 2). This refers to Torah study ("*His voice*"), which is the beginning of *teshuvah*.

b.) "*God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your children, (enabling you) to love God,*" (v. 6), i.e. they will stop transgressing the prohibitions of the Torah.

c.) *You will return and listen to the voice of God, and fulfill all His commandments,*" (v. 8), i.e. they will observe all the positive commands too ("all His commandments").

TORAS MENACHEM

"Circumcising" the Heart (v. 6)

What does it mean to "circumcise" a heart? If the verse spoke of "circumcising" the *foreskin* of the heart (as written above 10:16), we would understand that this refers to the removal of undesirable qualities that had crept into a person's emotional make-up, which "block" a person's heart from loving and fearing God (see *Rashi* ibid.). But our verse does not mention circumcising the "foreskin" of the heart, but rather, the heart *itself*. What does this mean, and why does *Rashi* not clarify this matter?

The question why *Rashi* is silent here is strengthened by the fact that **Onkelos**, whose translation of the Torah into Aramaic also aims to explain scripture at the literal level, *does* deal with the matter. *Onkelos* explains that the "circumcision" referred to here is to "remove the *foolishness* from your heart."

Since *Rashi* explains *every* difficulty that arises at the literal level, we can presume that *Rashi* did not address this matter since he felt that the reader would be able to clarify the matter for himself with simple logic and a knowledge of *Rashi*'s prior comments.

The Explanation

When addressing any problem, the answers that are offered might be of varying quality: a poor answer, an acceptable answer or even an excellent

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4 *Even if your exiles will be (on mountains reaching*) the extremities of the skies, God, your God,*
will gather you from there, and He will take you from there.
5 *God, your God, will bring you to the land which your forefathers possessed, and you will take*
possession of it. He will be good to you, and He will make you more numerous than your forefathers.

FIFTH READING (3RD WHEN JOINED)

6 *God, your God, will "circumcise" your heart and the heart of your children, (enabling you) to love*
God your God with all your heart and with all your soul, for the sake of your life.
7 *God, your God, will place all these curses upon your enemies and upon those who hate you, who*
have pursued you. 8 *You will return and listen to the voice of God, and fulfill all His commandments,*
which I am commanding you today. 9 *God, your God, will give you prosperity in all the work of your*
hands, the fruit of your womb, the fruit of your livestock, and the fruit of your soil—for God will, once

TORAS MENACHEM

answer. However, the best answer of all is to prove that the question itself was unfounded.

In our case: Not only is it of no concern as to why our verse omits "circumcising *the foreskin* of the heart"; on the contrary, if the verse *had* mentioned "circumcising *the foreskin* of the heart," *then* we would have a legitimate question. For our verse is referring to the Jewish people *after* "*you will return to God, your God, with all your heart and with all your soul*" (v. 2), i.e. after the Jewish people have repented and subsequently *eradicated* their rebellious traits ("foreskin") from their hearts (cf. question of ***Ohr HaChayim***).

On the other hand, when the Torah speaks on earlier occasions about the "foreskin" of the heart, this refers to traits which *obstruct* a person from serving God, *concealing* a person's love and fear of God (*Rashi* to 10:16, above), and cause a person to "*treat My (commands) offhandedly*" (see *Vayikra* 26:21, and ibid. 40).

Thus, if our verse had stated that "God will circumcise *the foreskin* of your heart," then we would have a legitimate question: Why is it necessary to remove a person's emotional barriers to Divine service, after they have already been removed (in v. 2), through *teshuvah*?

Clearly, our verse refers to a further, much higher level of emotional attachment to God that occurs *after* a person has *already* done *teshuvah*; an attachment that leads a person "*to love God, your God, with all your heart and with all your soul.*"

Sparks of Chasidus

Ba'al *Haturim* writes that the first letters of the words אֶת לְבָבְךָ וְאֶת לְבַב ("[*God will circumcise*] *your heart and the heart of* [*your children*]"—v. 6) spells אֱלוּל, the final month of the Jewish year during which one rises early in the morning to recite *selichos* (penitential prayers). From this it follows that according to *Ba'al Haturim*, the predominant theme of the month of *Elul* is *teshuvah*.

However, according to *Chasidic* thought, the predominant theme of Elul is *love*—how God projects His deep-rooted love for the Jewish people which they, in turn, reciprocate (*Likutei Torah, Re'eh* 32b). This is stressed by the conclusion of the above-mentioned verse, "God your God will circumcise your heart... to *love God your God with all your heart and with all your soul*"

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 29, p. 170)

However, this leaves us with the following questions:

a.) If we are only speaking here of a *higher level* of love of God, why does the verse use a negative expression, "circumcise," which suggests the removal of something undesirable?

b.) Why does the verse state that this refinement will be brought about by God ("*God* will circumcise your heart"—see ***Ramban***), and not through further efforts by man?

THE BROADER CONTEXT OF VERSE 6

In order to answer these questions, we need to examine the broader context of verse 6, which is the climax of a long sequence of events that began earlier in chapter 29, verse 15. There, Moshe began to warn the Jewish people of the dire consequence of their actions if they choose to sin, a description that continues to the end of the chapter. Chapter 30 then opens with the promise that the Jewish people will eventually return to God, Who will gather in the exiles.

On closer examination, Moshe's warning (in chapter 29) is divided into two distinct sections: a.) The *causes* which lead a person to sin (verses 15-18); and b.) The *consequences* when a person sins (verses 18-27).

From this it follows that even after the Jewish people eventually do *teshuvah*, uprooting their sins and the consequences that these sins bring, there needs to be a *further* stage of refinement, to uproot the *causes* which led the person on a path towards sin in the first place.

What, precisely, are these causes? The Torah explains, "*You saw* their disgusting and repugnant (idols of) wood and stone....So perhaps there is among you a man...whose heart is *straying* today from God our God" (29:16-17), i.e. we are dealing here with a case of "*the eye sees and the heart desires*" (*Rashi* to *Bamidbar* 15:39), and this causes the heart to "stray."

Therefore, even after the Jewish people have done *teshuvah* and uprooted all their sins (described here in chapter 30:1-2), they are then required to eliminate the *cause* of sin—the problem that if "the eye sees, the heart desires."

But surely, this is a fact of human nature? It does not appear to be within the ability of the average person to refine himself to the extent that he will not desire what he sees.

Therefore, the Torah continues, in verse 6, "God will circumcise your heart," i.e. after the person has done *teshuvah* with all his heart and all his soul and returned to God, (thus removing the "foreskin" of his heart), God will reciprocate and circumcise the person's heart *itself*—changing man's *innate* nature to desire what he sees (by severing this automatic connection between the eyes and the heart), thus enabling the person to serve God with a total purity of spirit.**

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 29, p. 167*ff*.; *Sichos Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim* 5743)

* See *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim* 5745. **Verse 6 is thus the climax of the entire sequence of events that began in chapter 29, verse 15. Therefore, at the literal level, we can presume that in verses 7-9, the Torah is merely recapping to explain in further detail the general statement in verse 5 that "God will be good to you."

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לְטוֹבָה כִּי | יָשׁוּב יְהוָה לָשׂוּשׂ עָלֶיךָ לְטוֹב כַּאֲשֶׁר־שָׂשׂ עַל־
אֲבֹתֶיךָ: י כִּי תִשְׁמַע בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לִשְׁמֹר מִצְוֹתָיו
וְחֻקֹּתָיו הַכְּתוּבָה בְּסֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה הַזֶּה כִּי תָשׁוּב אֶל־יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשֶׁךָ: ס (ששי) יא כִּי הַמִּצְוָה הַזֹּאת
אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם לֹא־נִפְלֵאת הִוא מִמְּךָ וְלֹא־רְחֹקָה
הִוא: יב לֹא בַשָּׁמַיִם הִוא לֵאמֹר מִי יַעֲלֶה־לָּנוּ הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וְיִקָּחֶהָ
לָּנוּ וְיַשְׁמִעֵנוּ אֹתָהּ וְנַעֲשֶׂנָּה: יג וְלֹא־מֵעֵבֶר לַיָּם הִוא לֵאמֹר מִי
יַעֲבָר־לָנוּ אֶל־עֵבֶר הַיָּם וְיִקָּחֶהָ לָּנוּ וְיַשְׁמִעֵנוּ אֹתָהּ וְנַעֲשֶׂנָּה:
יד כִּי־קָרוֹב אֵלֶיךָ הַדָּבָר מְאֹד בְּפִיךָ וּבִלְבָבְךָ לַעֲשֹׂתוֹ: ס

אֲרֵי יְתוּב יְיָ לְמֶחְדֵי עֲלָךְ לְטַב כְּמָא דִי חֲדִי
עַל אֲבָהָתָךְ: י אֲרֵי תְקַבֵּל בְּמֵימְרָא דַיְיָ אֱלָהָךְ
לְמִטַּר פִּקּוֹדוֹהִי וּקְיָמוֹהִי דִּכְתִיבִין בְּסִפְרָא
דְאוֹרַיְתָא הָדֵין אֲרֵי תְתוּב קֳדָם יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ
בְּכָל לִבָּךְ וּבְכָל נַפְשָׁךְ: יא אֲרֵי תַפְקֶדְתָּא הָדָא
דִי אֲנָא מְפַקֵּדָךְ יוֹמָא דֵין לָא מְפָרְשָׁא הִיא
מִנָּךְ וְלָא רְחִיקָא הִיא: יב לָא בִשְׁמַיָּא הִיא
לְמֵימַר מַן יִסַּק לָנָא לִשְׁמַיָּא וְיִסְּבַהּ לָנָא
וְיַשְׁמְעִנַּנָא יָתַהּ וְנַעְבְּדִנַּהּ: יג וְלָא מֵעִבְרָא
לְיַמָּא הִיא לְמֵימַר מַן יִעְבַּר לָנָא לְעִבְרָא
דְיַמָּא וְיִסְּבַהּ לָנָא וְיַשְׁמְעִנַּנָא יָתַהּ וְנַעְבְּדִנַּהּ:
יד אֲרֵי קָרִיב לָךְ פִּתְגָּמָא לַחְדָא בְּפוּמָּךְ

רש״י

גלותם, וכשנגאלין הכתיב גאולה לעצמו, שהוא ישוב עמהם. ועוד יש לומר, שגדול יום קבוץ גליות ובקושי, כאלו הוא עצמו צריך להיות אוחז בידיו ממש איש איש ממקומו, כענין שנאמר ואתם תלקטו לאחד אחד בני ישראל[1], ואף בגליות שאר האומות מצינו כן, ושבתי את שבות מצרים[2]:

(יא) לא נפלאת היא ממך. לא מכוסה היא ממך, כמו שנאמר כי יפלא[3] אחרי יתכסי, ותרד פלאים[4], ותרד במטמוניות, מכוסה חבושה בטמון: (יב) לא בשמים היא. שאלו היתה בשמים היית צריך לעלות אחריה וללמדה[5]: (יד) כי קרוב אליך. התורה נתנה לכם בכתב ובעל פה:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What does it mean that the Torah is not in שָּׁמַיִם? (v. 12)

Rashi: It is not in the skies*, for if it were in the skies, you would have to climb up after it [in order] to learn it.

Rambam: It is clearly explained in the Torah that its commandments are eternal and cannot be changed....The verse, *"It is not in Heaven,"* teaches us that it is no longer the prerogative of any prophet to introduce a new part of the Torah (*Laws of Foundations of the Torah* 9:1).

● Will new parts of Torah ever be revealed by God?

Rashi: We have a promise from Him that He will once again appear to us and reveal the secrets of its reasons and concealed facts (commentary to *Song of Songs* 1:2).

Midrash: How will the [Leviathan fish and the giant beast (*Shor Habor*)] be slaughtered? The beast will gore the fish with its horns, and tear it up, and the Leviathan will slaughter the beast with its fin. The Sages say: How could that be a kosher form of slaughter? Are we not taught in the *Mishnah*, *"Any person may slaughter, and any [hard, smooth] substance may be used for slaughter; and slaughter may be done at any time; except a sickle, saw, teeth, or nails are prohibited since they are not smooth and cause tearing"* (Chullin 15b)?

R' Avin bar Kahana says: "A new Torah will emerge from Me. New laws will emerge from Me!" says God (*Vayikra Rabah* 13:3).

Yalkut Shimoni: In the future, God will sit...and expound a new Torah which will be given through Mashiach (*Isaiah remez* 429).

Rambam: The king who will arise from the seed of David (Mashiach), will be a greater genius than Shlomo, and a great prophet approaching the greatness of Moshe. Therefore, he will teach all humanity, and show them the way of God (*Laws of Teshuvah* 9:2).

TORAS MENACHEM

The Immutability of the Torah (v. 12)

The ***Midrash*** and ***Yalkut Shimoni*** describe the "new Torah" that is destined to be given by Mashiach in the future. ***Rambam*** appears to hint to this point, by stating that Mashiach "will be a greater genius than Shlomo, and a great prophet...*therefore* he will teach all humanity," i.e. since he will be a "great prophet," therefore the "new" Torah will be revealed through him, and he will teach all humanity.

How is this to be reconciled with the fundamental principle, which *Rambam* himself writes, that the Torah *"is not in Heaven,"* and, *"it is no longer the prerogative of a prophet to introduce a new part of Torah"*?

The Explanation

Our Sages taught: *"Every insight that an advanced student was destined to innovate, was already given to Moshe at Sinai"* (*Megilah* 19b). At first glance, this appears to be a contradiction: On the one hand, the insight is termed a genuine "innovation," implying that it has never existed before, and yet, "it was *already* given to Moshe at Sinai"?

However, the explanation is that at the "Giving of the Torah," Moshe was given the *principles* through which we may innovate new laws through *"suggesting the logic behind laws, analyzing them with questions and refutations, delving deeply into the rationale behind and the reasons*

* See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34 pp. 170-1, that according to *Rashi* שָׁמַיִם is to be translated "skies."

1 ישעיה כז, יב 2 יחזקאל כט, יד 3 דברים יז, ח 4 איכה א, ט 5 עירובין נה.

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again, rejoice over you, being good (to you), as He rejoiced over (being good to) your fathers. [10] *For then you will listen to the voice of God your God, to observe His commandments and His suprarational commands written in this Torah scroll, (and) you will then return to God your God, with all your heart and with all your soul.*

CLOSENESS OF THE TORAH

30:11 SIXTH READING *For this (body of) commandment(s) which I am commanding you this day, is not concealed from you, nor is it far away.* [12] *It is not in the skies, that you should say, "Who will go up to the skies for us and take it for us, to tell it to us, so that we can keep it?"* [13] *Nor is it across the sea, that you should say, "Who will cross the other side of the sea for us and fetch it for us, to tell it to us, so that we can keep it?"* [14] *Rather, this thing is very near to you, in your mouth and in your heart, to observe it.*

TORAS MENACHEM

given for the laws, understanding one thing from another" (*Laws of Torah Study of the Alter Rebbe* 2:2; see *Shemos Rabah* 41:6). Therefore, when an "advanced student" toils to find an undiscovered insight which is consistent with the principles of analysis, it can be rightly termed (according to the rules of Torah) as *his* innovation. Nevertheless, since this "insight" was derived through the application of the pre-existing principles given to Moshe at Sinai, he has merely identified a concept that was present, but remained as yet undiscovered.

A similar process could be argued for the introduction of the "new Torah," in the Messianic Era. At Sinai, the entire Torah was given (which was a "one-time" event, never to occur again), including all the secrets of the "new Torah" which will be revealed by Mashiach. All of this was included, hidden within the Torah of Moshe.

But there is a fundamental difference between the innovative insights of "advanced students," throughout history, and the impending "new Torah":

Since the innovations of today are discovered via human intellect, (which is limited), it follows, that even before they are found, these insights were hidden within the Torah in a way that is possible for man to discover (by novel application of the pre-existing principles).

However, the ingenuity necessary to discover the "new Torah" is so profound that it is beyond mortal imagination. Therefore, God Himself will have to demonstrate its presence, (hence, "a new Torah will emerge *from Me*"), since these insights are so well hidden that it is impossible for any human mind to find them. With the advent of the Messianic Era, they will be "revealed" by God in the form of "innovative Torah thoughts," ideas that are incomparably more profound than our present Torah—as the Sages said, *"The Torah that a person learns in this world is empty compared to the Torah of Mashiach"* (*Koheles Rabah* 11:7).

According to this approach, it is clear that the "new Torah" revealed by Mashiach is, in fact, *part of the pre-existing Torah* given to Moshe at Sinai, which has "no possibility of change and "*is not in Heaven.*" Even though the ideas which will be revealed by God (*"from Me"*) are so deep that no man could possibly discover them, nevertheless, they will be brought down into a comprehensible form. Consequently, it is stressed that, "A new Torah will *emerge* from Me," i.e. it will depart the Heavenly realm and come into *earthly terms*.

The route by which the new Torah will escape its heavenly garb and come into human comprehension is via Mashiach himself. *Rambam* stresses that the Mashiach is *both* a "*great prophet*" and "a greater *genius*...than Shlomo...*therefore* he will teach all humanity." This indicates that "New Torah" will first be revealed to him in the form of prophecy and then, through his great genius, Mashiach will be capable of articulating these complex ideas in a way that makes them accessible to the normal human intellect, so that "*he will teach all humanity.*"

The reason why Godly revelation of new legislature will not be a breach of the tenet that the Torah "*is not in heaven,*" is because Mashiach (being a greater genius than Shlomo) will explain the new innovations to the newly reconvened High Court in Jerusalem in a *rational* way that *meets their approval* (according to the existing principles and logic of Torah). This will then become fixed as Jewish Law, since the High Court Judges are "*the bastion of Oral Law and the pillar of guidance. From them, comes the Law for the entire Jewish People*" (*Rambam, Laws of Rebellious Individuals* 1:1).

In this manner, the "new Torah" will become like "*laws learned through tradition...laws learned through the intellectual application of one of the principles of Torah exposition, and it will appear in their eyes that this is indeed the case*" (ibid. 2).

(Based on *Sicha* of second day of *Shavuos* 5751)

Sparks of Chasidus

"THIS THING IS VERY NEAR TO YOU..." (v. 14)

At first glance, the statement that "this thing is very near to you...*in your heart,*" appears to be contrary to our experience (and yet the Torah is eternally relevant), that it is simply not a "very near thing" to transform one's heart's desires from wanting worldly pleasures to a sincere love of God.

However, the words "to observe it" [at the end of the verse qualify what is written at the beginning of the verse]: that we are speaking here merely of a love which is sufficient to bring about the *practical observance* of the commandments...even if it is not palpable in his heart, like a burning fire.

And this is indeed "very near" and easy for any person who has a brain inside his skull, since a person's mind is under his control, and he is free to think about whatever he pleases, on any subject. So when he will use it to think about the greatness of God, he will inevitably generate—in his mind, at least—a love of God, [sufficient to make a person want] to cleave to Him through the performance of His commandments and the study of His Torah.

(Excerpt from *Tanya*, chapter 17—Free Translation)

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[שביעי ומפטיר] [רביעי בשהן מחוברין] טו רְאֵה נָתַתִּי לְפָנֶיךָ הַיּוֹם אֶת־
הַחַיִּים וְאֶת־הַטּוֹב וְאֶת־הַמָּוֶת וְאֶת־הָרָע: טז אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ
הַיּוֹם לְאַהֲבָה אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לָלֶכֶת בִּדְרָכָיו וְלִשְׁמֹר
מִצְוֺתָיו וְחֻקֹּתָיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו וְחָיִיתָ וְרָבִיתָ וּבֵרַכְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה בָא־שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ: יז וְאִם־יִפְנֶה לְבָבְךָ
וְלֹא תִשְׁמָע וְנִדַּחְתָּ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתָ לֵאלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וַעֲבַדְתָּם:
יח הִגַּדְתִּי לָכֶם הַיּוֹם כִּי אָבֹד תֹּאבֵדוּן לֹא־תַאֲרִיכֻן יָמִים
עַל־הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עֹבֵר אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן לָבוֹא שָׁמָּה
לְרִשְׁתָּהּ: יט הַעִדֹתִי בָכֶם הַיּוֹם אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ
הַחַיִּים וְהַמָּוֶת נָתַתִּי לְפָנֶיךָ הַבְּרָכָה וְהַקְּלָלָה וּבָחַרְתָּ בַּחַיִּים
לְמַעַן תִּחְיֶה אַתָּה וְזַרְעֶךָ: כ לְאַהֲבָה אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לִשְׁמֹעַ
בְּקֹלוֹ וּלְדָבְקָה־בוֹ כִּי הוּא חַיֶּיךָ וְאֹרֶךְ יָמֶיךָ לָשֶׁבֶת עַל־
הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לַאֲבֹתֶיךָ לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב
לָתֵת לָהֶם: פ פ פ

מ׳ פסוקים, לבב״ו סימן.

וּבְלִבָּךְ לְמֶעְבְּדַהּ: טו חֲזִי דִּיהָבִית קֳדָמָךְ
יוֹמָא דֵין יָת חַיֵּי וְיָת טָבְתָא וְיָת מוֹתָא וְיָת
בִּישָׁא: טז דִּי אֲנָא מְפַקֵּד לָךְ יוֹמָא דֵין לְמִרְחַם
יָת יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ לִמְהָךְ בְּאָרְחָן דְּתָקְנָן קֳדָמוֹהִי
וּלְמִטַּר פִּקּוֹדוֹהִי וּקְיָמוֹהִי וְדִינוֹהִי וְתֵיחֵי וְתִסְגֵּי
וִיבָרְכִנָּךְ יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ בְּאַרְעָא דִּי אַתְּ עָלֵל לְתַמָּן
לְמֵירְתַהּ: יז וְאִם יִפְנֵי לִבָּךְ וְלָא תְקַבֵּל וְתִטְעֵי
וְתִסְגּוּד לְטַעֲוַת עַמְמַיָּא וְתִפְלְחִנּוּן: יח חַוֵּיתִי
לְכוֹן יוֹמָא דֵין אֲרֵי מֵיבַד תֵּיבְדוּן לָא תוֹרְכוּן
יוֹמִין עַל אַרְעָא דִּי אַתְּ עָבַר יָת יַרְדְּנָא לְמֵעַל
לְתַמָּן לְמֵירְתַהּ: יט אַסְהֵדִית בְּכוֹן יוֹמָא דֵין
יָת שְׁמַיָּא וְיָת אַרְעָא חַיֵּי וּמוֹתָא יְהָבִית
קֳדָמָךְ בִּרְכָן וּלְוָטִין וְתִתְרְעֵי בְחַיֵּי בְּדִיל דְּתֵיחֵי
אַתְּ וּבְנָךְ: כ לְמִרְחַם יָת יְיָ אֱלָהָךְ לְקַבָּלָא
לְמֵימְרֵהּ וּלְאִתְקָרְבָא לְדַחַלְתֵּהּ אֲרֵי הוּא חַיָּיךְ
וְאוֹרְכוּת יוֹמָיךְ לְמִתַּב עַל אַרְעָא דִּי קַיֵּים יְיָ
לַאֲבָהָתָךְ לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב לְמִתַּן
לְהוֹן: פ פ פ

רש״י

(טו) את החיים ואת הטוב. זה תלוי בזה, אם תעשה טוב הרי לך חיים, ואם תעשה רע הרי לך המות. והכתוב מפרש והולך היאך: (טז) אשר אנכי מצוך היום לאהבה. הרי הטוב, ובו תלוי: וחיית ורבית. הרי החיים: (יז) ואם יפנה לבבך. הרי הרע: (יח) כי אבד תאבדון. הרי המות: (יט) העדתי בכם היום את השמים ואת הארץ. שהם קיימים לעולם וכאשר תקרה אתכם הרעה יהיו עדים שאני התריתי בכם בכל זאת. דבר אחר העידותי בכם היום את השמים וגו', אמר להם הקב"ה לישראל, הסתכלו בשמים שבראתי לשמש אתכם, שמא שנו את מדתם שמא לא עלה גלגל חמה מן המזרח והאיר לכל העולם, כענין שנאמר וזרח השמש ובא השמש[1], הסתכלו בארץ שבראתי לשמש אתכם, שמא שנתה מדתה, שמא זרעתם אותה ולא צמחה, או שמא זרעתם חטים והעלתה שעורים, ומה אלו שנעשו לא לשכר ולא להפסד אם זוכין אין מקבלין שכר ואם חוטאין אין מקבלין פורענות, לא שנו את מדתם, אתם שאם זכיתם תקבלו שכר ואם חטאתם תקבלו פורענות, על אחת כמה וכמה[2]: ובחרת בחיים. אני מורה לכם שתבחרו בחלק החיים, כאדם האומר לבנו בחר לך חלק יפה בנחלתי ומעמידו על חלק היפה ואומר לו את זה ברור לך, ועל זה נאמר ה' מנת חלקי וכוסי אתה תומיך גורלי[3], הנחת ידי על גורל הטוב לומר את זה קח לך:

חסלת פרשת נצבים

1 קהלת א,ה 2 ספרי 3 תהלים טז, ה

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CHOOSING GOOD

30:15 SEVENTH READING & MAFTIR (4TH WHEN JOINED) *See! I have given you today (a choice of) life and good, or death and evil!* 16 *For I am commanding you today to love God, your God, to walk in His ways, and to observe His commandments, His supprarational commands, and His rational commands, so that you will live and prosper. God, your God, will then bless you in the land of which you are coming to take possession.*

17 *But if your heart strays and you do not listen, and you turn away and prostrate yourself to other gods and serve them,* 18 *I am declaring to you today, that you will definitely perish! You will not live a long time on the land, of which you are crossing via the Jordan to come and take possession.*

19 *I am calling upon the heaven and the earth (which are eternal) as witnesses against you! I have set before you (a choice of) life or death, blessing or curse. Choose life! Then you and your children will live,* 20 *to love God, your God, to listen to His voice, and to cleave to Him—for He is your life and the length of your days—to live on the land which God swore to your fathers to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov, to give to them.*

THE HAFTARAH FOR NITZAVIM IS ON PAGE 288.

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

"LOOK, I HAVE GIVEN YOU (A CHOICE)...CHOOSE LIFE!" (v. 15, 19)

How can man have free will if God already knows beforehand what he is going to do? The answer to this is simple enough, as can be seen on the basis of two illustrations:

1. Suppose there is a human being who can foretell what will happen to a person in the future. This does not mean that this knowledge deprives that person from acting freely as before. It only means that the knowledge of the forecaster is such, that he knows how the person will choose to act freely and of his own volition. Similarly, God's knowledge of human actions is such that it does not deprive humans of their free choice; it only means that God knows how the person will choose to act in a certain situation. To formulate this in scientific terms, we can say that the opposite of free choice is not pre-knowledge but compulsion, for there is such knowledge which does not entail compulsion at all, for example, knowledge of the past.

2. Every believer in God, and not only Jews, believes that for God, the past, present and future are all the same, since He is above time and space. Just as in the case of human affairs, the fact that Mr. X knows all that happened to Mr. Y in the past, did not affect Mr. Y's actions in the past. So God's knowledge of the future, which is the same as His knowledge of the past, does not affect the free choice of human action.

From the simple solution to the above question, you can draw an analogy in regard to all similar questions and be sure that there is an answer to them, and very often a simple one. But the proper Jewish way is to fulfill the Torah and *mitzvos* without question, and then to try and find out anything that you wish to find out about the Torah and *mitzvos*, but not, God forbid, to make human understanding a prerequisite condition for the performance of God's commandments.

(Excerpt from a letter written by the Rebbe on 25th *Adar* 5721)

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parshas Vayeilech

פרשת וילך

The Name of the Parsha

R' *Sa'adia Ga'on* writes that *Nitzavim* and *Vayeilech* actually constitute one single *Parsha*, and it is only that in some years the *Parsha* is *split* into two (as opposed to other instances, where two separate *Parshiyos* will be *combined* together). Thus, even when *Vayeilech* is read separately, we can derive a lesson from the reading of *Nitzavim* and *Vayeilech* together.

At first glance, the two terms *Nitzavim* and *Vayeilech* appear to be diametrically opposed. *Nitzavim* means "standing firmly" in the same position, whereas *Vayeilech*, which means "he went," indicates movement. So what is the lesson to be learned from *combining* together "standing firmly" and "moving," a feat which does not appear to be at all possible?

Standing firmly represents stability, reliability and strength. A king, for example, remains stationary on his throne, and those who wish to see him must come from afar. *Moving*, on the other hand, is a sign of growth and expansion.

Thus, the combination of simultaneously "standing firmly" and "moving" (*Nitzavim-Vayeilech*) represents: *the ability to grow without compromising one's prior position of strength.*

Some practical examples: When a person grows in his knowledge of Torah, there is a danger that his newly found sophistication may negatively affect his prior quality of simple faith and dedication. The lesson of our *Parsha* is the need to *retain* one's strong foundation of simple faith—which is "reliable" under all circumstances, even when the intellect fails—and not allow it to become tarnished by one's understanding.

Another example concerns the wealthy businessman who enjoys substantial growth in his financial affairs. Such a person may be tempted to feel that this growth came as a result of his good judgment and business acumen; so when somebody asks him for a donation to charity, he may think to himself, "*I* earned this money through *my* business skills and hard work, so why should I give it away?" Of course, the less successful business-man does not have this "problem," and he regularly prays that if only God would bless him with riches, he would gladly give much of it to charity....

The lesson here is obvious: Our challenge is to harmonize *Nitzavim* with *Vayeilech*—the stability of simple faith, together with constant growth and expansion.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim-Vayeilech* 5742; *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p, 298)

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לא א וילך משה וידבר את־הדברים האלה אל־כל־ישראל:
ב ויאמר אלהם בן־מאה ועשרים שנה אנכי היום לא־אוכל
עוד לצאת ולבוא ויהוה אמר אלי לא תעבר את־הירדן
הזה: ג יהוה אלהיך הוא | עבר לפניך הוא־ישמיד את־הגוים
האלה מלפניך וירשתם יהושע הוא עבר לפניך כאשר דבר
יהוה: [שני] ד ועשה יהוה להם כאשר עשה לסיחון ולעוג
מלכי האמרי ולארצם אשר השמיד אתם: ה ונתנם יהוה
לפניכם ועשיתם להם ככל־המצוה אשר צויתי אתכם:
ו חזקו ואמצו אל־תיראו ואל־תערצו מפניהם כי | יהוה
אלהיך הוא ההלך עמך לא ירפך ולא יעזבך: ס [שלישי] [חמישי
כשהן מחוברין] ז ויקרא משה ליהושע ויאמר אליו לעיני כל־
ישראל חזק ואמץ כי אתה תבוא את־העם הזה אל־הארץ

א ואזל משה ומליל ית פתגמיא האלין עם כל ישראל: ב ואמר להון בר מאה ועשרין שנין אנא יומא דין לית אנא יכיל עוד למפק ולמעל ויי אמר לי לא תעבר ית ירדנא הדין: ג יי אלהך מימרה יעבר קדמך הוא ישיצי ית עממיא האלין מקדמך ותירתנון יהושע הוא עבר קדמך כמא די מליל יי: ד ויעבד יי להון כמא די עבד לסיחון ולעוג מלכי אמוראה ולארעהון די שיצי יתהון: ה וימסרנון יי קדמיכון ותעבדון להון ככל תפקדתא די פקדית יתכון: ו תקיפו ואלימו לא תדחלון ולא תתברון מקדמיהון ארי יי אלהך הוא דמדבר קדמך לא ישבקנך ולא ירחקנך: ז וקרא משה ליהושע ואמר לה לעיני כל ישראל תקף ואלים ארי את תעול עם עמא הדין לארעא די קיים יי לאבהתהון למתן להון ואת

רש"י

(א) וילך משה וגו'.[1] (ב) לא אוכל עוד לצאת ולבא. יכול שתשש כחו, תלמוד לומר לא כהתה עינו ולא נס לחה[2]. אלא מהו לא אוכל, איני רשאי, שנטלה ממני הרשות וניתנה ליהושע: וה' אמר אלי. זהו פירוש לא אוכל עוד לצאת ולבא, לפי שה' אמר אלי: אנכי היום. היום מלאו ימי ושנותי, ביום זה נולדתי וביום זה אמות[3]. דבר אחר, לצאת ולבא בדברי תורה, מלמד שנסתמו ממנו מסורות ומעינות החכמה[3]: (ו) לא ירפך. לא יתן לך רפיון להיות נעזב ממנו: (ז) כי אתה תבוא את העם הזה. תרגו' את תיעול עם עמא הדין. משה אמר ליהושע, זקנים שבדור יהיו עמך, הכל לפי דעתן ועצתן, אבל הקדוש ברוך הוא אמר ליהושע, כי אתה תביא את בני ישראל אל הארץ אשר נשבעתי להם[4],

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **"Moshe went.." (v. 1). Where did he go?**

Ibn Ezra: He went to the camp of each tribe individually.

Targum Yonason: He went to the House of Study.

Ramban: When Moshe finished relating *Parshas Nitzavim*, the people would have gone home, because this gathering was made in order to bring the Jewish people into a covenant with God (*"You are standing firmly today, all of you together...in order to bring you into the covenant of God, your God,"* 29:9-11), so when the covenant had been established, the gathering would have fulfilled its purpose and consequently dispersed. Our verse continues to explain that, afterwards, Moshe left the Levite camp and went over to the Israelite camp, like a person who wishes to depart from his friend, and comes to ask permission from him.

Kli Yakar: Moshe went quickly throughout the entire Jewish camp to prove that his leadership was not ending because he was physically weak, but rather, because he had not been permitted by God to continue.

Ohr HaChayim: Before a person passes away, his spirit leaves him. The verse is thus teaching us that "the spirit of Moshe went."

Ba'al Haturim: "Moshe went" to Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov, who are mentioned in the previous verse, to inform them that God was fulfilling His promise to bring the Jewish people to the Land.

TORAS MENACHEM

Where Did Moshe Go? (v. 1)

At the literal level, it appears to be unclear where "Moshe went" in verse 1.

Ibn Ezra suggests that Moshe went to the camp of each tribe individually. However, this does not appear to be a *literal* interpretation, since:

a.) Each tribe was of a very different character. For example, the tribe of Yissachar were Torah scholars, the tribe of Zevulun were business people, and the tribe of Levi were priests and ministers. So if Moshe had gone separately to each camp and spoken to them individually, he would have addressed them each in a different manner that befitted the character of that particular tribe (even if the general content of his words was the same). The fact that the verse stresses that Moshe spoke *"the following words to all Israel"* suggests that he spoke to them as a group, and not as individual tribes.

b.) The entire camp measured 3 *parsa* by 3 *parsa* (*See Rashi to Bamidbar* 21:35, 10:25, 33:39), which would mean that in order to visit each tribe individually Moshe would need to have walked 12 *parsa*.* This is difficult

* Equivalent to 46,000 meters or 28.6 miles.

1 ראה שיחת ש"פ וילך תשמ"ט 2 דברים לד, ז 3 סוטה יג: 4 פסוק כג

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THE APPOINTMENT OF YEHOSHUA

31 *Moshe went, and he spoke the following words to all Israel. [2] He said to them, "Today I am
one hundred and twenty years old. I am no longer (permitted by God) to lead (you) out (to
war*) and bring (you) back (safely again, even though I am physically capable of doing so,
because) God said to me, "You may not cross this (River) Jordan."*

*[3] It is God, your God, Who will take you across the Jordan. He will destroy these nations before you
so that you will take possession of their (lands. And) it is Yehoshua who will lead you across, as God has
SECOND READING said. [4] God will do to them what He did to the Amorite kings, Sichon and Og, and to their land when
He destroyed them. [5] God will deliver them to you, and you should do to them in accordance with all
the commandment(s) that I have instructed you.*

*[6] Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or dismayed because of them! For God, your God, is
the One Who is going with you. He will not loosen (his hold on) you and forsake you!"*

THIRD READING (5TH WHEN JOINED) *[7] Moshe called Yehoshua and said to him in the presence of all Israel, "Be strong and courageous!
For you will come with this people to the land which God swore to their fathers to give them, and you*

TORAS MENACHEM

to accept at the literal level, since: 1) An average person can walk only 10 *parsa* a day (*Pesachim* 94a). 2) On this day—the last of his life—Moshe did many other things too, as detailed in *Parshiyos Nitzavim, Vayeilech, Ha'azinu* and *Vezos Habrachah*, which would not have left him time to do a lot of walking.

According to ***Targum Yonason*** Moshe went to the house of study and all the Jewish people were gathered there.

However, gathering the entire Jewish nation would, practically speaking, be an extremely difficult task, and if such a major undertaking would have occurred we would expect some mention of it (at the literal level). In fact, we find later on in the *Parsha*, that the gathering of just the elders and leaders of Israel required a special request from Moshe: *"Gather to me all the elders of your tribes and your officers"* (v. 28).

So what is the explanation, at the literal level, where "Moshe went," and how he was able to address "all of Israel" at once? And why did *Rashi* not explain this matter?

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi's did not address this issue directly, as he felt the reader would be capable of deducing it for himself from one of *Rashi*'s earlier comments.

In *Parshas Beha'aloscha* the Torah describes that when the Levites were inaugurated into service, Moshe was commanded to gather the entire congregation of Israel in order that they all rest their hands on the Levites (*Bamidbar* 8:9-10). *Rashi* explains the reason for this instruction: *"Since the Levites were being given as an atonement offering in their* [i.e. *the congregation's***] *stead, let them come and stand by their offerings* [i.e. *the Levites*] *and rest their hands upon them."*

From here the reader will have learned a rule, that when a communal sacrifice is offered, the entire community needs to be present.***

Thus, we can presume that, at the literal level, when "Moshe went, and he spoke the following words to all Israel," he did not need to make a special gathering since he would have found "all Israel" *already* gathered together when one of the communal sacrifices was offered.

Sparks of Chasidus

At first glance, the transfer of leadership from Moshe to Yehoshua represented a weakening of the strength of the Jewish people, as our Sages taught: *"Moshe's face was like that of the sun. Yehoshua's face was like that of the moon"* (*Bava Basra* 75a). If the Jewish people had merited to enter the Land of Israel under Moshe's leadership, the conquest would have been instant and miraculous. Under Yehoshua, however, the Jewish people were required to conquer the land within the confines of nature, with the tremendous courage and self-sacrifice which that involves.

Nevertheless, *Chasidic* thought explains that this was not in fact a disadvantage, but to the contrary, it was for the overall good. The purpose of creation is to make, *"a home for God in the lowest realms,"* i.e. by human effort within an everyday setting. Miracles are generally counterproductive to this goal, as they serve to *impose* spirituality on the world, rather than letting the "lowest realms" develop a spiritual sensitivity *for themselves*.

So, ultimately, the non-miraculous entry into the land via Yehoshua fulfilled the purpose of Creation to a greater extent.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 9, p.56ff.)

* See *Rashi* to *Bamidbar* 27:17; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeilech* 5726. **[Originally, it was intended that ministers of God be appointed from the firstborn of the entire congregation. However, when the firstborn participated in the sin of the Golden Calf, this privilege was passed to the tribe of Levi. Thus here, the tribe of Levi was acting as an "atonement sacrifice" for the rest of Israel.] ***Later, in the times of *Shmuel* and King David, the system of *Anshei Ma'amad* was introduced, where a group *representing* the entire Jewish people was present at the communal sacrifices (see *Ta'anis* 26a). However, it would be difficult to accept, at the literal level, that this practice had already been introduced here, because: a.) *Rashi* makes no mention of it; and, b.) *Above*, in *Parshas Re'eh*, the reader learned that non-sacrificial meat only became permitted upon entering the Land of Israel, because at that point in time it was no longer convenient for every person who desired to eat meat to come to the Temple (12:21 and *Rashi*). From this it appears that the *Anshei Ma'amad* system was likewise only introduced after entering the Land, when it became difficult for everybody to be present at communal offerings. At this point, however, while still in the desert, there was no need for this dispensation, (and *"it is preferable for a person to perform a mitzvah in person, rather than via an agent"* *Kidushin* 41a).

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אשר נשבע יהוה לאבתם לתת להם ואתה תנחילנה אותם:
ח ויהוה הוא | ההלך לפניך הוא יהיה עמך לא ירפך ולא
יעזבך לא תירא ולא תחת: ט ויכתב משה את־התורה הזאת
ויתנה אל־הכהנים בני לוי הנשאים את־ארון ברית יהוה
ואל־כל־זקני ישראל: [רביעי] י ויצו משה אותם לאמר מקץ |
שבע שנים במעד שנת השמטה בחג הסכות: יא בבוא
כל־ישראל לראות את־פני יהוה אלהיך במקום אשר יבחר
תקרא את־התורה הזאת נגד כל־ישראל באזניהם: יב הקהל
את־העם האנשים והנשים והטף וגרך אשר בשעריך למען
ישמעו ולמען ילמדו ויראו את־יהוה אלהיכם ושמרו
לעשות את־כל־דברי התורה הזאת: יג ובניהם אשר לא־
ידעו ישמעו ולמדו ליראה את־יהוה אלהיכם כל־הימים
אשר אתם חיים על־האדמה אשר אתם עברים את־הירדן

תחסננה יתהון: ח ויי הוא דמדבר קדמך
מימרה יהי בסעדך לא ישבקנך ולא ירחקנך
לא תדחל ולא תתבר: ט וכתב משה ית
אוריתא הדא ויהבה לכהניא בני לוי דנטלין
ית ארון קימא דיי ולכל סבי ישראל: י ופקיד
משה יתהון למימר מסוף שבע שנין בזמן
שתא דשמטתא בחגא דמטליא: יא במיתי
כל ישראל לאתחזאה קדם יי אלהך באתרא
די יתרעי תקרי ית אוריתא הדא קדם כל
ישראל ותשמעון: יב כנוש ית עמא גובריא
ונשיא וטפלא וגיורך די בקרויך בדיל
דישמעון ובדיל דילפון (נ״א דילפון) וידחלון
מקדם יי אלהכון ויטרון למעבד ית כל
פתגמי אוריתא הדא: יג ובניהון די לא ידעון
ישמעון ויילפון (נ״א ויילפון) למדחל ית יי
אלהכון כל יומיא די אתון קימין על ארעא
די אתון עברין ית ירדנא לתמן למירתה:

רש״י

תביא על כרחם, הכל תלוי בך, טול מקל והך על קדקדן. דבר אחד לדור, ולא שני דברים לדור[1]: (ט) ויכתוב משה וגו' ויתנה. כשנגמרה כולה, נתנה לבני שבטו: (י) מקץ שבע שנים. בשנה ראשונה של שמטה, שהיא שנה שמינית[2]. ולמה קורא אותה שנת השמטה, שעדיין שביעית נוהגת בה, בקציר של שביעית היוצא למוצאי שביעית[3]: (יא) תקרא את התורה הזאת. המלך היה קורא מתחלת אלה הדברים, כדאיתא במסכת סוטה, על בימה של עץ שהיו עושין בעזרה: (יב) האנשים. ללמוד: והנשים. לשמוע: והטף. למה באו, לתת שכר למביאיהם[4]:

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why are men, women and children required to be present at the *Hakhel* gathering (v. 12)?

Talmud (Tractate Chagigah): Men come "to learn" and women come "to hear." Why do children come? In order to reward those who bring them along (*Chagigah 3a*).

Maharsha: Verse 13 states *explicitly* the reason why children are brought to the *Hakhel* gathering: *"Their children, who do not understand, will hear and learn to fear God, your God."* Why then does the *Talmud* offer a different reason, *"In order to reward those who bring them along"*?

The answer is that verses 12 and 13 are speaking of different types of children. Verse 13 refers to a child who has reached the age when his education has begun, and thus his father has an obligation to bring him to the gathering, to educate him. Verse 12, however, refers to very small children ("minors").

Talmud (Tractate Kidushin): Children are obligated [in the *mitzvah* of *Hakhel*] (*Kidushin 34b*).

TORAS MENACHEM

But this begs the question: Why did Moshe instruct, later in the *Parsha*, to *"gather to me all the elders of your tribes and your officers"* (v. 28), when he could have addressed them during one of the communal sacrifices, without having to make a special gathering?

There is, however, a clear distinction between these two cases. Moshe gathered *the elders and leaders* in order to fulfill *God's instruction* to teach them the Song of *Ha'azinu* (v. 19). And, for this, it was only appropriate to have a gathering specifically for that purpose, so as not to fulfill the Divine command *ad hoc*, while the Jewish people had gathered for *another* reason.

In the opening of our *Parsha*, however, where Moshe chose to offer words of encouragement to the Jewish people *of his own volition*, and not as a direct command from God, Moshe did not want to bother the Jewish people to make a special gathering. Rather, he addressed them when they had gathered in any case, to offer a communal sacrifice.

(Based on *Sichas Motzei Shabbos Parshas Vayeilech* 5739)

Assembling All The People (v. 12-13)

The explanations of *Hakhel* in the *Talmud* (*see Classic Questions*) present us with a number of difficulties:

1 סנהדרין ח. 2 סוטה מא. 3 ר״ה יב: 4 חגיגה ג.

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will apportion it to them as an inheritance. [8] *It is God Who will lead you forward. He will be with you. He will not loosen (His hold on) you and forsake you. Do not be afraid or dismayed."*

[9] *Then Moshe wrote down this (entire) Torah, and gave it to the priests, (on behalf of) the descendants of Levi, who carry the Ark of God's covenant, and to all the elders of the Jewish people (on behalf of the Jewish people).*

THE MITZVAH OF HAKHEL

31:10 FOURTH READING

Moshe commanded them, saying: "At the end of seven years (in the year following) the sabbatical year, during the festival on the holiday of Succos, [11] *when all Israel comes to appear before God, your God, in the place that He will choose:*

- *(The king) should read this Torah before all of Israel, in their ears.*
- [12] *Assemble the people—the men, the women, and the minors, and the convert in your cities—in order that they will hear, and in order that they will learn and fear God, your God, and be careful to observe all the words of this Torah.* [13] *Their children, who do not understand, will hear and learn to fear God, your God, all the days that you live on the land, of which you are crossing the Jordan to take possession.*

TORAS MENACHEM

1.) Tractate *Chagigah* states that the role of children in *Hakhel* is "to reward those who bring them along," implying that the children themselves have no real part in the *mitzvah*. Tractate *Kidushin*, however, states explicitly that "children are obligated."

2.) What prompted Tractate *Chagigah* to explain that "*men come 'to learn,' and women come 'to hear,'*" when this is stated *explicitly* in v. 12: "*Assemble the people—the men, the women...in order that they will hear, and in order that they will learn*"?

3.) The statement in Tractate *Kidushin* that, "children are obligated," is also difficult to understand, since we do not find anywhere in the Torah that children before *bar-mitzvah* or *bas-mitzvah* are obligated in *mitzvos*.

Maharsha explains that verses 12 and 13 are addressed to two different types of children: Verse 12 refers to very small children ("minors") who are too young to begin their education, and the only reason that they are brought is "*to reward those who bring them along.*" On the other hand, verse 13 refers to children who are mature enough to be educated, and thus they will "*learn to fear God.*" This appears to resolve the apparent contradiction between the two tractates, whether children are obligated or not (question '1'), since Tractate *Chagigah* (which states that children are not obligated) could be speaking of younger children, and Tractate *Kidushin* (which states that children are obligated), about older children.

However, this is somewhat difficult to accept, since the question remains: How can *a child* be obligated, even if he is older?*

The Last Word

"(THE KING) SHOULD READ THIS TORAH..." (v. 11)

The Torah was given to us in order that it permeate and vitalize each and every Jew without exception—man, woman, child and stranger—so thoroughly, and to such an extent and degree, that one's entire being, in all its aspects, senses and feelings, will become a "Torah and *mitzvos* being."

And in order to attain this end, most deeply and fully, the Torah was read on that occasion by the king, whose awe-inspiring quality filled the audience with an overwhelming sense of awe and subservience, to the extent of complete *bitul*—self-effacement....

It is the duty of everyone who is a "king," a leader, in his circle—the spiritual leader in his congregation, the teacher in his classroom, the father in his family—to raise the voice of the Torah and *mitzvos*, forcefully and earnestly, so that it produces a profound impression and an abiding influence in the audience.... an influence that should be translated into daily life, into conduct governed by the Torah and *mitzvos*, with fear of Heaven, and, at the same time, with gladness of heart.

(Excerpt from a public letter written in the Days of *Selichos*, 5726)

Sparks of Chasidus

Hakhel is a rare case where the Torah specifies that even small children are obligated to observe a Biblical command. For *Hakhel* is a *mitzvah* which arouses and strengthens the inner faith of a Jew—and in this area, men, women and children are equal.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 369)

*Even Maharsha's distinction is in itself difficult to accept. One is only required to educate a child in those *mitzvos* in which he will later become obligated as an adult. Thus, according to *Maharsha*, verse 13, which speaks of an older child, would not obligate a father to bring a child who was, for example, blind or mentally handicapped, since there is no requirement to educate a child in a *mitzvah* which he would not be required to observe as an adult. However, verse 12 require *all* minors (below the age of education) to be brought to the *Hakhel* gathering, since at this age the child is not being brought for the purposes of education but "*in order to reward those who bring them along.*" Thus, according to *Maharsha's* interpretation, we would come to the bizarre conclusion that a blind or mentally handicapped child would be brought to a *Hakhel* gathering *before* reaching the age of education, but *not* afterwards!

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שמה לרשתה: פ [חמישי] [ששי כשהן מחוברין] יד ויאמר יהוה אל־
משה הן קרבו ימיך למות קרא את־יהושע והתיצבו באהל
מועד ואצונו וילך משה ויהושע ויתיצבו באהל מועד:
טו וירא יהוה באהל בעמוד ענן ויעמד עמוד הענן על־פתח
האהל: טז ויאמר יהוה אל־משה הנך שכב עם־אבתיך וקם
העם הזה וזנה | אחרי | אלהי נכר־הארץ אשר הוא בא־
שמה בקרבו ועזבני והפר את־בריתי אשר כרתי אתו:
יז וחרה אפי בו ביום־ההוא ועזבתים והסתרתי פני מהם
והיה לאכל ומצאהו רעות רבות וצרות ואמר ביום ההוא
הלא על כי־אין אלהי בקרבי מצאוני הרעות האלה: יח ואנכי
הסתר אסתיר פני ביום ההוא על כל־הרעה אשר עשה כי
פנה אל־אלהים אחרים: יט ועתה כתבו לכם את־השירה
הזאת ולמדה את־בני־ישראל שימה בפיהם למען תהיה־לי
השירה הזאת לעד בבני ישראל: [ששי] [שביעי כשהן מחוברין] כ כי־
אביאנו אל־האדמה | אשר־נשבעתי לאבתיו זבת חלב
ודבש ואכל ושבע ודשן ופנה אל־אלהים אחרים ועבדום

יד ואמר יי למשה הא קריבו יומיך לממת קרא
ית יהושע ואתעתדו במשכן זמנא ואפקדניה
ואזל משה ויהושע ואתעתדו במשכן זמנא:
טו ואתגלי יי במשכנא בעמודא דעננא וקם
עמודא דעננא על תרע משכנא: טז ואמר יי
למשה הא את שכב עם אבהתך ויקום עמא
הדין ויטעי בתר טעות עממי ארעא די הוא
עליל לתמן ביניהון וישבקון דחלתי וישנון ית
קימי די גזרית עמהון: יז ויתקוף רגזי בהון
בעדנא ההיא וארחקנון ואסלק שכנתי מנהון
ויהון לבזא ויערען יתהון בישן סגיאן ועקן
ויימר בעדנא ההיא הלא מדלית שכינת
אלהי ביני ערעוני בישתא האלין: יח ואנא
סלקא אסלק שכנתי מנהון ביומא ההוא על
כל בישתא די עבדו ארי אתפניו לטעות
עממיא: יט וכען כתיבו לכון ית תשבחתא
הדא ואלפה לבני ישראל שויה בפומהון
בדיל דתהי קדמי תשבחתא הדא לסהיד
בבני ישראל: כ ארי אעלנון לארעא די
קימית לאבהתהון עבדא חלב ודבש וייכלון
ויסבעון ויתפנקון ויתפנון בתר טעות עממיא
ויפלחנון וירגזון קדמי וישנון ית קימי:

רש"י

(יד) ואצונו. ואזרזנו: (טז) נכר הארץ. גויי הארץ: (יח) והסתרתי פני. כמו שאינו רואה בצרתם: (יט) את השירה הזאת. האזינו השמים עד וכפר אדמתו עמו:

TORAS MENACHEM

The Explanation

There are two legal dimensions to the *mitzvah* of *Hakhel*: a.) the obligation resting on the king; and b.) the obligation resting on the people:

a.) The basic requirement of *Hakhel*, as it is recorded in the Torah, is an obligation *upon the king* to "*assemble the people*." The people themselves, on the other hand, have *no direct* command to attend the gathering, and they do so merely in order to enable the king to fulfill his own, personal obligation. In other words, since the observance of *any mitzvah* involves taking an "entity" and doing a certain act with it, the king needs an "entity" that he can inspire to "*learn and fear*," in order to fulfill his *mitzvah*—and the people are that entity.

b.) As a result of their central role in the assembly, the people themselves are *indirectly* obligated too. This could be compared to the *mitzvah* of having children, which, according to Jewish Law, rests upon the man and not the woman. But since it is clearly impossible for a man to father children on his own, it follows that his wife also shares the obligation of having children *indirectly* (*Ran* to *Kidushin* beg. chap. 2). Likewise in our case, it is impossible for a king to discharge his obligation of gathering and inspiring the people without their co-operation, so it follows that they share the obligation too, indirectly.*

Based on this distinction we can now explain the apparent contradiction between Tractates *Kidushin* and *Chagigah*:

The king's *direct* obligation ('a') requires him to gather the *entire* nation, including the children. This is the meaning of the statement in Tractate *Kidushin* that "children are obligated," because in terms of constituting an "entity" with which the king can perform his *mitzvah* (and thus sharing the obligation *indirectly*), children are equal to adults.

But when we speak of the obligation resting *on the people* ('b'), which is a personal obligation, the question arises, "*Why do minors come?*" They cannot be personally obligated in *mitzvos*, and they are too young to be inspired to "*learn and fear God*."

In response to this question, Tractate *Chagigah* explains that yes, it is true that when we speak of the personal obligation resting on the people themselves, children cannot be obligated; but even then, they are not just part of an "entity" with which the king fulfills his *mitzvah*, but furthermore, they are brought "*in order to reward those who bring them along*."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 363*ff*.)

*With the *mitzvah* of *Hakhel* there is more sharing of obligation than with the *mitzvah* of having children. For in the case of *Hakhel* it is *intrinsic to the mitzvah itself* that the people become inspired, as the Torah stresses, "Assemble the people...*in order that they will learn and fear God, your God etc.*" So the people do not merely share the obligation with the king by virtue of a practical technicality—that he could not do the *mitzvah* without them—but rather, because the very *purpose* of this *mitzvah* is to inspire the people.

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Moshe is Informed of the Events After his Passing

31:14 Fifth Reading (6th when joined) *God said to Moshe, "The time is now approaching for you to die. Call Yehoshua and stand in the Tent of Meeting, and I will encourage him."*
Moshe and Yehoshua went, and stood in the Tent of Meeting. 15 *God appeared in the Tent, in a pillar of cloud, and the pillar of cloud stood at the entrance to the Tent.*

16 *God said to Moshe, "You are soon to lie with your fathers. This nation will rise up and desire to follow the gods of the people of the land into which they are coming. They will forsake Me and violate My covenant which I made with them.* 17 *On that day, I will become very angry with them. I will forsake them and hide My face from them, (appearing as if I do not see their distress). They will be consumed, and many misfortunes and traumas will happen to them. On that day, they will say, 'Is it surely because our God is no longer among us, that these evils have befallen us.'* 18 *I will surely hide My face on that day, because of all the evil they have committed, when they turned to other gods."*

God's Testimony for the Future

• 19 *"Now, write for yourselves this song (in Parshas Ha'azinu), and teach it to the Children of Israel."*

"Place it into their mouths, so that this song will be for Me as a witness to the children of Israel."

Sixth Reading (7th when joined) 20 *"When I bring them to the land which I have sworn to their forefathers, a land flowing with milk and honey, they will eat, be satisfied, and become fat. Then they will turn to other gods and serve them, angering Me and violating My covenant.*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

• What law is derived from verse 19?

RAMBAM: It is a positive command for every Jewish man to write a Torah scroll for himself, as the verse states, *"Now, write for yourselves this song,"* meaning to say, "write for yourselves a Torah which contains this song," for a Torah is invalid if it consists of separate scrolls.... If a person writes one with his own hand, it is as if he received it from Mount Sinai (*Laws of a Torah Scroll* 7:1).

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

The Final Two Mitzvos of the Torah

Parshas Vayeilech contains two *mitzvos*: 1.) *Hakhel*—Gathering the entire people in Jerusalem after the Sabbatical year to hear the King read from the Torah (v. 10-13). And, 2.) The *mitzvah* of writing a Torah scroll (*v. 19—see Classic Questions*).

What is the significance of the fact that these are the last two *mitzvos* recorded in the Torah, both transmitted by Moshe on the day of his passing?

As long as the Jewish people were in the desert, memories of the experience at Sinai remained fresh. Even those members of the next generation who had not seen the giving of the Torah with their eyes, had nevertheless grown up in a spiritual oasis where the effects of Sinai were still palpable.

But at this junction in time, the Jewish people were leaving that oasis and embarking on the formidable challenge of living a life dominated by earning one's physical needs—and this was to be without the leadership of Moshe. To help overcome these hurdles, the Jewish people were given two *mitzvos* whose purpose was to enable them to recreate the experience of Sinai in their new setting.

Thus *Rambam* writes that, at a *Hakhel* gathering: "They must prepare their hearts and alert their ears to listen with dread and awe and with trembling joy, *like the day it was given on Sinai...as though the Torah was being commanded to him now, and he was hearing it from the mouth of the Almighty*, for the king is an agent to make the words of God heard" (*Laws of Festival Offerings* 3:6).

However, this only recreates the experience of being commanded by God *as a nation* to observe the *mitzvos*. In order to re-enact the experience of being given the Torah *personally* by God *to study*, a further *mitzvah* was given—to write a Torah scroll. For when: *"a person writes one with his own hand, it is as if he received it from Mount Sinai"* (see *Classic Questions*).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, p. 189ff.)

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וְנִאֲצוּנִי וְהֵפֵר אֶת־בְּרִיתִי: כא וְהָיָה כִּי־תִמְצֶאןָ אֹתוֹ רָעוֹת
רַבּוֹת וְצָרוֹת וְעָנְתָה הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת לְפָנָיו לְעֵד כִּי לֹא תִשָּׁכַח
מִפִּי זַרְעוֹ כִּי יָדַעְתִּי אֶת־יִצְרוֹ אֲשֶׁר הוּא עֹשֶׂה הַיּוֹם בְּטֶרֶם
אֲבִיאֶנּוּ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבָּעְתִּי: כב וַיִּכְתֹּב מֹשֶׁה אֶת־
הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וַיְלַמְּדָהּ אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: כג וַיְצַו
אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בִּן־נוּן וַיֹּאמֶר חֲזַק וֶאֱמָץ כִּי אַתָּה תָּבִיא אֶת־בְּנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לָהֶם וְאָנֹכִי אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ:
כד וַיְהִי | כְּכַלּוֹת מֹשֶׁה לִכְתֹּב אֶת־דִּבְרֵי הַתּוֹרָה־הַזֹּאת עַל־
סֵפֶר עַד תֻּמָּם: (שביעי) כה וַיְצַו מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם נֹשְׂאֵי אֲרוֹן
בְּרִית־יְהוָה לֵאמֹר: כו לָקֹחַ אֵת סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה הַזֶּה וְשַׂמְתֶּם
אֹתוֹ מִצַּד אֲרוֹן בְּרִית־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְהָיָה־שָׁם בְּךָ לְעֵד:
כז כִּי אָנֹכִי יָדַעְתִּי אֶת־מֶרְיְךָ וְאֶת־עָרְפְּךָ הַקָּשֶׁה הֵן בְּעוֹדֶנִּי חַי
עִמָּכֶם הַיּוֹם מַמְרִים הֱיִתֶם עִם־יְהוָה וְאַף כִּי־אַחֲרֵי מוֹתִי:

כא ויהי ארי יערען יתה בישן סגיאן ועקן
ותתב תשבחתא הדא קדמוהי לסהיד ארי
לא תתנשי מפום בניהון ארי גלי קדמי ית
יצרהון די אנון עבדין יומא דין עד לא
אעלנון לארעא די קיימית: כב וכתב משה ית
תשבחתא הדא ביומא ההוא ואלפנה לבני
ישראל: כג ופקיד ית יהושע בר נון ואמר
תקף ואלים ארי את תעל ית בני ישראל
לארעא די קיימית להון ומימרי יהי בסעדך:
כד והוה כד שיצי משה למכתב ית פתגמי
אוריתא הדא על ספרא עד דשלימו:
כה ופקיד משה ית לואי נטלי ארון קימא דיי
למימר: כו סיבו ית ספרא דאוריתא הדין
ותשוון יתה מסטר ארונא קימא דיי אלהכון
ויהי תמן בך לסהיד: כז ארי אנא ידענא
ית סרבנותך וית קדלך דקשיא הא
בעד אנא קים עמכון יומא דין מסרבין
הויתון קדם יי ואף ארי בתר דאמותי:

רש"י

(כ) ונאצוני. והכעיסוני, וכן כל נאוץ לשון כעס: (כא) וענתה השירה הזאת לפניו לעד. שהתריתי בו בתוכה על כל המוצאות אותו: כי לא תשכח מפי זרעו. הרי זו הבטחה לישראל, שאין תורה משתכחת מזרעם לגמרי[1]: (כג) ויצו את יהושע בן נון. מוסב למעלה כלפי שכינה, כמו שמפורש אל הארץ אשר נשבעתי להם: (כו) לקח. כמו זכור[2], שמור[3], הלוך[4]: מצד ארון ברית ה'. נחלקו בו חכמי ישראל בבבא בתרא[5], יש מהם אומרים

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Where was the Torah scroll placed?** (v. 26)

Rashi: In [Tractate] *Bava Basra*, the Sages of Israel were divided over this matter. Some maintained that there was a shelf protruding from the Ark, where it was put. Others maintained that it was put next to the tablets, inside the Ark.

TORAS MENACHEM

Moshe's Torah Scroll (v. 26)

Rashi cites two views of "the Sages of Israel" concerning where the Torah scroll that Moshe wrote was placed: i.) On a shelf protruding from the Ark; or ii.) Inside the Ark.

This prompts the following questions:

a.) Since *Rashi's* commentary is devoted exclusively to explaining scripture at the *literal level*, how could he accept the notion that the Torah was placed *inside* the Ark, when the Torah states unambiguously that it was placed "*beside the Ark*"?

b.) *Rashi's* first interpretation is also difficult to accept at the literal level, since the detailed description of the Ark's design in *Parshas Terumah* makes no mention of "*a shelf protruding from the Ark*," on which a Torah scroll could be placed. Why did *Rashi* not conclude more simply that the Torah was kept next to the Ark, without the Ark having a special feature to accommodate it?

The Explanation

While verse 26 states clearly that Moshe's Torah scroll was to be placed *beside the Ark*, the verse does not state explicitly whether the Torah was required to remain in this place at *all times*, even when the Ark was in transit.

However, from the context of the verse, it is quite clear that the Torah was required to remain next to the Ark during transit, because:

a.) Verse 26 was an instruction given to "the Levites, *who carried* the Ark of God's Covenant" (v. 25).

b.) In a much broader context, the verse is part of Moshe's instructions to Yehoshua in preparation for their imminent entrance into the Land of Israel. They were going to begin traveling very soon, and during this time, the Tabernacle would have to be *dismantled*. So if we were to accept that the command in our verse (to place Moshe's Torah next to the Ark) only applied when the Tabernacle was erected, then it would turn out that

1 שבת קלח: 2 שמות כ, ח 3 דברים ה, יב 4 בראשית ח, ה 5 יד:

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21 "What will happen is, when numerous misfortunes and traumas will happen to them, this song (which warns them of the consequences of their actions) will speak out to them as a witness, for it will not be forgotten from the mouths of their children; for I know their inclination that they (are planning) to do today, (even) before I bring them into the land which I swore (to give them)."

22 On that day, Moshe wrote down this song, and taught it to the children of Israel.

23 (God) commanded Yehoshua, the son of Nun, and said:

"Be strong and courageous! For you will bring the children of Israel to the land that I have sworn to them, and I will be with you."

Moshe's Torah Scroll is Placed With the Ark

31:24 SEVENTH READING *Then, when Moshe finished writing the words of this Torah, until its very end, in a scroll,*
25 Moshe commanded the Levites, who carried the Ark of God's Covenant, saying:
26 "Take this Torah scroll and place it beside the Ark of the Covenant of God ,your God, and it
will be there as a witness. 27 For I know your rebellious spirit and your stubbornness. Look!—even while
I am alive with you today you have been rebels against God, surely (you will be) after my death (too)!"

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

Is a teacher forced to dilute his understanding of a subject in order to transmit it to his students? Or, is it possible for the teacher to take an idea *as he understands it* and "reconstruct" that very concept in class, so that it retains the same level of brilliance and profundity that it possessed within his own mind?

Or, to phrase it differently: The teacher sees the *general* perspective of an idea, but he can only communicate it through a series of *details*. Is it possible for a teacher to infuse those details with the same energy and vision which the general idea possesses? Or will the student inevitably be left with a series of disjointed details which he cannot "re-assemble" to capture the general perspective that existed in the teacher's mind?

This question was disputed between "the Sages of Israel" (see *Rashi*): The Tablets *inside* the Ark contained the Ten Commandments which represent the laws of the Torah *in general*. Moshe's Torah scroll (v. 24), contained the laws of the Torah specified *in detail*.

Moshe's Torah scroll had to be placed "*beside* the Ark" (v. 26), indicating that the details should always be "close to" and representative of the general perspective. But how close?

One view maintained that the Torah was kept on a shelf *outside* the Ark, but *connected* to it, i.e. that the details will never truly represent the general perspective (they are "outside"), but that they will be loyal and "connected to" it.

A second view, however, maintained that the Torah scroll was placed inside the Ark—i.e. that a very talented teacher *is* capable of communicating ideas in a way that they retain the same brilliance and profundity that existed in the teacher's own mind.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 9, pp. 202-3)

Moshe's instructions here did not apply to the immediate future, and were therefore out of context with the rest of his words to Yehoshua, which did concern the immediate future.

c.) In any case, the verse stresses that the Torah was placed "as a witness," which would presumably apply at all times.

This requirement for the Torah scroll to be with the Ark at all times, presented *Rashi* with a problem: The Ark was protected with no less than three coverings while in transit (*Bamidbar* 4:5-6), so how could Moshe's Torah scroll remain "beside the Ark" when the coverings intervened?

To solve this problem, *Rashi* offered two solutions (from "*the Sages of Israel*"):

That the Ark had a shelf protruding from it, on which the Torah scroll was placed; and clearly, the coverings must have been placed over the Ark and its shelf (and scroll).

As for the fact that this shelf was not mentioned in *Parshas Terumah*, we could argue that since the command to "*take this Torah scroll and place it beside the Ark of the Covenant*" was surely an instruction which Moshe had heard from God, it follows that the requirement to make the shelf is derived *from this verse itself*—as a logical extension of the requirement to keep the Torah scroll next to the Ark at all times.

However, in the final analysis it is difficult to accept that at this time, some forty years after the Ark was made, a shelf was suddenly added. Therefore *Rashi* cited a second interpretation, that the Torah scroll was placed *inside* the Ark.

However, this too is difficult to accept, because the verse states that the Torah scroll was placed "*beside* the Ark" and not *in* the Ark.

Thus *Rashi* was forced to bring two interpretations, since each is problematic at the literal level.

Ultimately, *Rashi* was equally dissatisfied with both interpretations, so he prefaced his explanation with the phrase: "the Sages of Israel were divided over this matter," as if to say: "neither of these interpretations are preferable at the literal level, and they differ only according to the personal approaches of the Sages."

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 9, p. 196*ff*.)

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[מפטיר] כח הַקְהִילוּ אֵלַי אֶת־כָּל־זִקְנֵי שִׁבְטֵיכֶם וְשֹׁטְרֵיכֶם
וַאֲדַבְּרָה בְאָזְנֵיהֶם אֵת הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה ·וְאָעִידָה בָּם
אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ: כט כִּי יָדַעְתִּי אַחֲרֵי מוֹתִי כִּי־הַשְׁחֵת
תַּשְׁחִתוּן וְסַרְתֶּם מִן־הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי אֶתְכֶם וְקָרָאת אֶתְכֶם
הָרָעָה בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים כִּי־תַעֲשׂוּ אֶת־הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָֹה
לְהַכְעִיסוֹ בְּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיכֶם: ל וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה בְּאָזְנֵי כָּל־קְהַל
יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־דִּבְרֵי הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת עַד תֻּמָּם: פ פ פ

כח כְּנוּשׁוּ לְוָתִי יָת כָּל סָבֵי שִׁבְטֵיכוֹן
וְסָרְכֵיכוֹן וַאֲמַלֵּל קֳדָמֵיהוֹן יָת פִּתְגָּמַיָּא הָאִלֵּין
וְאַסְהֵד בְּהוֹן יָת שְׁמַיָּא וְיָת אַרְעָא: כט אֲרֵי
יְדַעְנָא בָּתַר דְּאֵמוּת אֲרֵי חַבָּלָא תְחַבְּלוּן
וְתִסְטוּן מִן אָרְחָא דִּי פַקֵּדִית יָתְכוֹן וּתְעָרַע
יָתְכוֹן בִּשְׁתָּא בְּסוֹף יוֹמַיָּא אֲרֵי תַעְבְּדוּן יָת
דְּבִישׁ קֳדָם יְיָ לְאַרְגָּזָא קֳדָמוֹהִי בְּעוֹבָדֵי יְדֵיכוֹן:
ל וּמַלֵּיל מֹשֶׁה קֳדָם כָּל קְהָלָא דְיִשְׂרָאֵל יָת
פִּתְגָּמֵי תֻשְׁבַּחְתָּא הָדָא עַד דִּשְׁלִימוּ: פ פ פ

ע׳ פסוקים**, אדני״ה סימן.

*ואעידה בראש עמוד בסימן ב״יה שמ״ו סימן. **זהו המספר של נצבים וילך יחד. (ראה לקו״ש חי״ט ע׳ 298, הערה 3)

רש״י

דף היה בולט מן הארון מבחוץ ושם היה מונח ויש אומרים מלך כלוחות היה מונח בתוך הארון: (כח) הקהילו אלי. ולא תקעו אותו היום בחצוצרות להקהיל את הקהל, לפי שנאמר עשה לך[1], ולא השליט יהושע עליהם. ואף בחייו נגנזו קודם יום מותו (ס״א ביום מותו), לקיים מה שנאמר[2] ואין שלטון ביום המות[3]: ואעידה בם את השמים ואת הארץ. ואם תאמר הרי כבר העיד למעלה העידותי בכם היום וגו׳[4], התם לישראל אמר, אבל לשמים ולארץ לא אמר, ועכשיו בא לומר האזינו השמים וגו׳: (כט) אחרי מותי כי השחת תשחתון. והרי כל ימי יהושע לא השחיתו, שנאמר ויעבדו העם את ה׳ כל ימי יהושע[5], מכאן שתלמידו של אדם חביב עליו כגופו, שכל זמן שיהושע חי היה נראה למשה כאלו הוא חי[6]: חסלת פרשת וילך

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Why were the elders and police officers picked for this gathering?** (v. 28)

Abarbanel: Because they were the leaders of the people, who listened to Moshe's words on behalf of the people.

TORAS MENACHEM

The Presence of Police Officers (v. 28)

In Verse 28, Moshe requested a gathering of the elders, to whom he would transmit the Song of *Ha'azinu* on behalf of the Jewish people.

However, with this gathering we find a totally unprecedented detail, that in addition to the elders of the Jewish people, Moshe also requested the police officers to be present. Since the role of the police officers is simply to *enforce* the law, what was the need for their presence here, when Moshe was *transmitting* the Torah?

The Explanation

The purpose of this gathering was an attempt to avert the spiritual decline of the Jewish people after Moshe's passing, as verse 29 continues: *"I know that long after my (disciple Yehoshua's) death you will surely become corrupted (with idol worship), and depart from the way which I commanded you. Misfortune will inevitably come upon you in the end, etc."*

At first glance, these efforts to avert spiritual decline would appear to have been totally futile, according to Moshe's *own admission*, as he exclaimed in verse 27: *"even while I am alive with you today you have been rebels against God, surely (you will be) after my death (too)!"* How could Moshe possibly expect the Jewish people to listen to the elders, if they had not listened properly to Moshe himself?

To address this problem, Moshe added police officers to the gathering, thereby setting a precedent: that whenever the elders would gather in the future to transmit the Torah's commands to the people, they would do so in the presence of the police officers. In this way, the elders' declarations would be taken more seriously by the people, since the threat of law-enforcement would be real and obvious.

Of course, this had not been done in the past, but on the day of his passing, Moshe understood that it would be required in the future, at least as a deterrent.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeilech* 5746)

1 במדבר י, ב. 2 קהלת ח, ח. 3 תנחומא, בהעלותך י. ראה לקו״ש חכ״ד ע׳ 216 ואילך. 4 דברים ד, כו. שם ל, יט. 5 שופטים ב, ז. 6 ראה שיחת ש״פ וילך תשכ״ז

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GATHERING OF THE ELDERS TO HEAR THE SONG OF HA'AZINU

31:28 *"Gather to me all the elders of your tribes and your police officers, and I will speak these words (of the song of Ha'azinu) into their ears. I will call upon the heavens and the earth as witnesses against them,*
MAFTIR
[29] for I know that long after my (disciple Yehoshua's) death you will surely become corrupted (with idol worship**), and depart from the way which I commanded you. Misfortune will inevitably come upon you in the end, because you did evil in the eyes of God, to provoke His anger through your actions."*

[30] Then Moshe spoke the words of the following song, into the ears of the entire assembly of Israel, until their completion.

HAFTARAHS: NITZAVIM-VAYEILECH—P. 288. SHABBOS SHUVAH—P. 290.

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

Parshas Vayeilech is read on the *Shabbos* preceding *Yom Kippur* (in years when it is read separately), whereas *Parshas Nitzavim* is always read on the *Shabbos* before *Rosh Hashanah*.

The High Holidays are a time of Jewish unity, when we stand before God as one. Nevertheless, there is a subtle, but significant difference between the unity of *Rosh Hashanah* and the unity of *Yom Kippur*, which takes expression in the two *Parshiyos* which are connected with these dates: *Nitzavim* and *Vayeilech*.

Rosh Hashanah is a time of unity of all Jewish *souls*, as they exist *in their spiritual source*. *Yom Kippur*, on the other hand, represents the unity of the Jewish souls even as they exist down below, in physical bodies.

Thus, on *Rosh Hashanah* we do not make confessions to God or openly mention our sins, for this holy day stresses the soul as it is in its source, where it *transcends* the concept of sin. On the other hand, on *Rosh Hashanah* we do eat food—an experience which each person enjoys in a *different* way, indicating that the unity and equality among the souls that occurs on *Rosh Hashanah* is not experienced by the body.

True unity comes about when there is a potential for differences and divisiveness (due to the body), and yet we nevertheless come together—and this occurs on *Yom Kippur*. Thus, the theme of *Yom Kippur* is atonement for sins, for this stresses how our physical existence lends the possibility for sin (and hence divisiveness), but how we are nevertheless cleansed from sin, and come together as one. Likewise, even in our physical lives we stand united and equal on *Yom Kippur*, for each person equally denies himself or herself any food or drink at all.

Thus, *Parshas Nitzavim*, which is always read before *Rosh Hashanah*, stresses the unity of the Jewish souls: *"You are standing firmly today, all of you together, before God, your God"*—i.e. the reason why "you are all together" is because we are speaking here of the Jewish souls as they exist *"before God, your God,"* in their source.

Parshas Vayeilech, however, which is connected with *Yom Kippur*, stresses the unity of the Jewish people as they exist down here in this world, on their own level. Thus the *Parsha* begins, *"Moshe went, and he spoke the following words to all Israel,"* i.e. Moshe "went" from his exalted spiritual standing and lowered himself to the level at which "all Israel" found themselves.

And similarly here, at the end of the *Parsha*, the Torah stresses the same theme again: *"Then Moshe spoke the words of the following song, into the ears of the entire assembly of Israel, until their completion"* (v. 30). Literally, the words, "until their completion" refer to the end of "the words of *the song*." However, *Chasidic* thought explains that "*their* completion" also refers to the "completion" and spiritual perfection *of the Jewish people*. Thus, the verse is informing us that Moshe did not only address the souls of the Jewish people, but he uplifted "the entire assembly of Israel" until their bodies and souls *together* reached "completion" and perfection, here in this world.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 298ff.)

*כל מקום שנאמר אחרי מופלג הוא - רש״י, דברים יא, ל. (ע״פ שיחת ש״פ וילך תשכ״ו)

**פי׳ תיבת ״השחתה״ היינו מה שעושה הדבר משחת ומקולקל לגמרי באופן שאינו לתועלת, וע״ד מ״ש ״לא תשחית את עצה״ (דברים כ, יט), וזהו הענין דעבודה זרה. (שם)

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Parsas Vayeilech *contains 2 positive mitzvos*

1. To assemble the entire people to hear the Torah being read, after the Sabbatical year [31:12].

2. Every Jew should write a Torah scroll for himself [31:19].

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parshas Ha'azinu

פרשת האזינו

The Name of the Parsha

Parshas *Ha'azinu* begins with the words, *"Listen, O heavens, for I will speak! Let the earth hear the words of my mouth!"* The *Midrash* explains that Moshe was "close to the heavens," so he told them to "listen"—a term which suggests a closeness between speaker and listener. But since he was "distant from the earth," he told it to "hear," from afar (*Sifri*, beginning of *Ha'azinu*).

A fundamental principle of *Chasidic* thought is that every Jew has a spark of Moshe within his soul, which enables him to attain, to some small extent, the spiritual greatness of Moshe (*Tanya* ch. 42). Thus, it is practically relevant to all of us, to some degree, to appreciate that spiritual matters are more important than physical things—to be "close to the heavens and distant from the earth."

At first glance, however, this appears to be somewhat absurd. How is it possible for an ordinary person, who lives a normal, bodily existence, to feel "close to the heavens and distant from the earth"?

Furthermore, are we not taught that the ultimate purpose of creation is to be found here *on earth* by making a "home for God *below*" (*Tanchuma, Naso* 16)? What is to be gained, then, from feeling "distant from the earth"?

There is a very big difference between *acquiring* a new talent and *uncovering* an existing one. *Acquiring* a talent involves learning totally new skills, that are alien to one's existing personality traits. And even after the person has fully mastered the skill, it will always remain as an *acquired* trait.

On the other hand, if a person has an *intrinsic* talent in a certain area from the time he was born, when he uncovers that talent it will be: a.) much easier to learn than acquiring a new one, and, b.) after he has perfected this "new" skill, it will be a statement of *who he really is*, rather than something he has tried to become.

The Jewish soul is "*literally* a part of God Above" (*Tanya* ch. 2). So, for a Jew, the feeling of being "close to the heavens" is not something that needs to be acquired, but merely uncovered. Thus, in some way, it is relatively easy and *natural* for us to feel "close to the heavens and distant from the earth," because our souls, which sustain our very lives, are truly "distant from the earth."

But nevertheless, after being born into a body, we are firmly rooted in this world too, enabling us to bring our natural affinity with "the heavens" down to the earth—thus making "a home for God below."

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Ha'azinu* 5750)

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לב א האזינו השמים ואדברה ותשמע הארץ אמרי־פי:
ב יערף כמטר לקחי תזל כטל אמרתי כשעירם עלי־דשא
וכרביבים עלי־עשב: ג כי שם יהוה אקרא הבו גדל
לאלהינו: ד *הצור תמים פעלו כי כל־דרכיו משפט אל

*יש גורסים צ' רבתי

א אציתו שמיא ואמליל ותשמע ארעא אמרי פומי: ב יבסם כמטרא אלפני יתקבל כטלא מימרי כרוחי מטרא דנשבין על דתאה וכרסיסי מלקושא די על עסבא: ג ארי בשמא דיי אנא מצלי הבו רבותא קדם אלהנא: ד תקיפא דשלמין עובדוהי ארי כל אורחתיה דינא אלהא מהימנא

רש"י

(א) האזינו השמים. שאני מתרה בהם בישראל ותהיו אתם עדים בדבר שכך אמרתי להם שאתם תהיו עדים, וכן ותשמע הארץ. ולמה העיד בהם שמים וארץ, אמר משה אני בשר ודם למחר אני מת, אם יאמרו ישראל לא קבלנו עלינו הברית מי בא ומכחישם, לפיכך העיד בהם שמים וארץ, עדים שהם קיימים לעולם. ועוד, שאם יזכו, יבואו העדים ויתנו שכרם, הגפן תתן פריה, והארץ תתן יבולה, והשמים יתנו טלם[1]. ואם יתחייבו, תהיה בהם יד העדים תחלה, ועצר את השמים ולא יהיה מטר והאדמה לא תתן את יבולה, ואחר כך ואבדתם מהרה[2] על ידי האומות[3]: (ב) יערף כמטר לקחי. זו היא העדות שתעידו שאני אומר בפניכם תורה שנתתי לישראל שהיא חיים לעולם כמטר הזה שהוא חיים לעולם, כאשר יערפו השמים טל ומטר[3]: יערף. לשון יטיף וכן ירעפון דשן[4], יערפו טל[5]: תזל כטל. שהכל שמחים בו, לפי שהמטר יש בו עצבים לבריות (ס"א יש עצבים בו), כגון הולכי דרכים ומי שהיה בורו מלא יין[3]: כשעירם. לשון רוח סערה[6], כתרגומו כרוחי מטרא. מה הרוחות הללו מחזיקים את העשבים ומגדלין אותם, אף דברי תורה מגדלין את לומדיהן[3]: וכרביבים. טיפי מטר. ונראה לי על שם שיורה כחץ נקרא רביב, כמה דאת אמר רובה קשת[7]: דשא. ארברי"ן, עטיפת הארץ מכוסה בירק: עשב. קלח אחד קרוי עשב, וכל מין ומין לעצמו קרוי עשב: (ג) כי שם ה' אקרא. הרי כי משמש בלשון כאשר, כמו כי תבאו אל הארץ, כשאקרא ואזכיר שם ה' אתם הבו גודל לאלהינו[8] וברכו שמו[9]. מכאן אמרו שעונין ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו אחר ברכה שבמקדש[10]: (ד) הצור תמים

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **How does one "ascribe greatness to our God"? (v. 3)**

Rashi: "*When I call out the Name of God*"—When I call out and mention God's Name, you should "*ascribe greatness to our God*"—and bless His Name. From here, they derived that after a blessing recited in the Temple, one responds: "Blessed be the Name of His glorious Kingdom!" [and not "Amen"].

Sifri: From where do we derive that one must answer "Amen" after a blessing is made? From the words, "*ascribe greatness to our God.*"

Gur Aryeh: The verse cannot refer to answering "Amen," since Amen is is not a phrase with which one praises the greatness of God, and the verse stresses: "*ascribe greatness* to our God."

TORAS MENACHEM

Ascribing Greatness To God (v. 3)

What forced *Rashi* to conclude that, at the literal level, the words "ascribe greatness to our God," refer to responding, "Blessed be the Name of His glorious Kingdom!" after a blessing recited *in the Holy Temple?* Why did *Rashi* reject the apparently more straightforward and simple explanation of ***Sifri*** that the verse is referring to the answering of "Amen" when *any* blessing is recited?

Gur Aryeh argues that the words "*ascribe greatness* to our God" could not be referring to the response of "Amen," which is not a description of greatness.

However, this still does not explain why, at the literal level, Moshe would now be telling the Jewish people a law about blessings in the Holy Temple, which appears to be entirely out of context here, in *Parshas Ha'azinu.*

The Explanation

In *Parshas Ha'azinu*, Moshe was addressing the Jewish people on the very last day of his life, after leading them for some forty years in the desert.

So, on reaching our verse, *Rashi* was troubled: Why is Moshe teaching the Jewish people *now* such a *basic* principle: "*When I call out and mention God's Name, you should ascribe greatness to our God and bless His Name*"? Moshe had mentioned God's Name on numerous occasions before this point, so why would he be teaching them how to respond *now?*

Due to this question, *Rashi* understood that our verse cannot be referring to an ordinary response made when hearing God's Name (such as reciting "Amen," as *Sifri* suggests), but rather, that it must be referring to a more special and unusual response.

From an earlier comment of *Rashi*, the reader will already be familiar with the concept that God's Name was pronounced in a special manner in the Holy Temple: "*permission was only granted to mention the Explicit Name in the place where the Divine Presence comes, which is in the Temple in Jerusalem*" (*Rashi to Shemos* 20:21).

So, since we have a precedent here (at the literal level) for an unusual manner in which God's Name may be mentioned, *Rashi* concluded that our verse must be referring to the principle that: "*After a blessing recited in the Temple, one responds, 'Blessed be the Name of His glorious Kingdom!'*"

And this also explains why Moshe made this statement at the end of his life, for it was only at this point that the Jewish people were poised to enter the Land of Israel and build the "Temple in Jerusalem," where this law would become relevant, for the first time.

(*Based on Sichas Shabbos Parshas Ha'azinu 5742*)

1 זכרי' ח, יב 2 דברים יא, יז 3 ספרי 4 תהלים סה, יב 5 דברים לג, כח 6 שם קמח, ח 7 בראשית כא, כ 8 התיבות "הבו גודל לאלקינו" אינם פירושו של רש"י כ"א העתקת הפסוק, וצריכים להיות באותיות גדולות. ונפק"מ מהוראה בנוסחת השאלה הדוע מעתיק רש"י רק התחלת הפסוק בלבד ("כי שם ה' אקרא") אע"פ שמפרש את כל הפסוק (ע"פ שיחת ש"פ האזינו תשמ"ב). 9 יומא לז. 10 תענית טז:

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THE SONG OF HA'AZINU

32 [1] *Listen, O heavens (and be my witness), for I will speak!*
Let the earth hear (and witness) the (following) words of my mouth!
[2] *Let my (Torah) teaching drip like rain (and give life to the world).*
Let my words flow like dew;
Like storm winds (that bring rain) on vegetation (to make them grow),
And like raindrops on grass.
[3] *When I call out (and mention) the Name of God,*
(Respond and) ascribe greatness to our God.
[4] *(Though He is powerful, like a) rock,*
His acts (of retribution) are perfect(ly balanced),
For all His ways are just;

TORAS MENACHEM

The Last Word

THE SONG OF HA'AZINU

The *Maharal of Prague* and the *Mezritcher Maggid* stressed the importance of reciting the Song of *Ha'azinu* and knowing it by heart (with its cantillation notes), for it purifies the mind and heart, and leads to longevity and success in business affairs. Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch added: "If businessmen realized what benefit this would actually bring, they would be more careful about doing it!" (*Memoirs* ch. 29; *Sefer Hasichos* 5701, p. 56; ibid. 5696, p. 149).

This general relevance of the Song of *Ha'azinu* is stressed further by the fact that:

- The Song of *Ha'azinu* was chanted by the Levites *throughout* the year in the Holy Temple, when the additional offering of *Shabbos* was brought (*Rosh Hashanah* 31a).
- The *mitzvah* of writing a *complete* Torah scroll is derived from the verse, "write for yourselves *this song*" (*Devarim* 31:19; See *Rambam* cited in *Classic Questions* ibid.), alluding to the fact that the Song of *Ha'azinu* is connected with the *entire* Torah.
- *Ha'azinu* is the last *Parsha* of the Torah that is read on *Shabbos* (since *Parshas Vezos Habrachah* is read on *Simchas Torah*, which never occurs on *Shabbos*). Thus *Ha'azinu* is, effectively, the "conclusion" of the *Shabbos* Torah-reading cycle, which stresses its connection to the entire Torah.
- At the literal level, the Song was said with the intention that "you will command your children to be careful to observe *all the words of this Torah*" (v. 46).
- *Parshas Ha'azinu* spans the whole of chapter 32 (לב) of the Book of *Devarim*. This alludes to the fact that *Ha'azinu* is connected to the whole Torah, for the Torah begins with the letter ב, and ends with the letter ל.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Ha'azinu* 5735, 5741 & 5747)

Sparks of Chasidus

"LET MY TEACHING DRIP LIKE RAIN..." (V. 2)

In the song of *Ha'azinu*, Torah is described as both "rain" and "dew" (v. 2). Physically speaking, rain and dew are both sources of nourishment, but the causes which bring them about differ significantly. Rain is formed from water which is lost to the atmosphere as vapor from the earth, then condenses and precipitates back—as the verse states: *"a mist ascended from the earth, and then soaked the entire surface of the ground"* (*Bereishis* 2:6). The precipitation of rain is thus *dependent* on prior evaporation from the earth.

Dew, by contrast, "never ceases" (*Ta'anis* 3b), and appears spontaneously, regardless of the amount of water which is being evaporated from the earth.

Rain thus represents the influx of Godliness which is bestowed from above, in *direct response* to the *efforts* of Man (on earth). Dew, on the other hand, alludes to that which God bestows *unconditionally*, disproportionately to man's efforts.

So, since "rain" and "dew" in this verse both refer to Torah, it follows that "rain" represents the parts of Torah which are dependent on the degree of effort on the part of man to master them—namely, the extensive *legal* discussions of the Torah. The comparatively effortless "dew" alludes to the *mystical* parts of the Torah, which transcend the limitation of the human mind, since they "flow" directly from their Divine source (as the verse states, *"Let my words flow like dew"*).

Consequently, we find it is the "dew" of Torah with which God will ultimately revive the dead (and not the "rain"), since *"all Jews"* will enjoy resurrection and *"have a portion in the world to come"* (*Sanhedrin* 90a). And clearly, something that is bestowed upon *all* Jews, regardless of their spiritual standing, must be given from Above, like dew, regardless of the efforts made to elicit it.

(Based on *Sefer Hama'amarim Melukat* vol. 1, p. 458ff.)

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אֱמוּנָה וְאֵין עָוֶל צַדִּיק וְיָשָׁר הוּא: ה שִׁחֵת לוֹ לֹא בָּנָיו מוּמָם
דּוֹר עִקֵּשׁ וּפְתַלְתֹּל: ו הַ*לַיהוָה תִּגְמְלוּ־זֹאת עַם נָבָל וְלֹא חָכָם
הֲלוֹא־הוּא אָבִיךָ קָּנֶךָ הוּא עָשְׂךָ וַיְכֹנְנֶךָ: [שני] ז זְכֹר יְמוֹת עוֹלָם
בִּינוּ שְׁנוֹת דֹּר־וָדֹר שְׁאַל אָבִיךָ וְיַגֵּדְךָ זְקֵנֶיךָ וְיֹאמְרוּ לָךְ:
ח בְּהַנְחֵל עֶלְיוֹן גּוֹיִם בְּהַפְרִידוֹ בְּנֵי אָדָם יַצֵּב גְּבֻלֹת עַמִּים

דִּמִן קֳדָמוֹהִי עַוְלָה לָא נָפֵק דְּמִן קֳדָם זַכִּי וְקַשִּׁיט הוּא: ה חֲבִילוּ לְהוֹן לָא לֵהּ בְּנַיָּא דִּי פְלַחוּ לְטַעֲוָתָא דָּרָא דְּאַשְׁנִיו עוֹבָדוֹהִי וְאִשְׁתַּנִּיו: ו הָא קֳדָם יְיָ אַתּוּן גָּמְלִין דָּא עַמָּא דְּקַבִּילוּ אוֹרַיְתָא וְלָא חַכִּימוּ הֲלָא הוּא אֲבוּךְ וְאַתְּ דִּילֵהּ הוּא עַבְדָךְ וְאַתְקְנָךְ: ז אִדְכַּר יוֹמִין דְּמִן עָלְמָא אִסְתַּכַּל בִּשְׁנֵי דָר וְדָר שְׁאַל אֲבוּךְ וִיחַוֵּי לָךְ סָבָךְ וְיֵימְרוּן לָךְ: ח בְּאַחְסָנָא עִלָּאָה עַמְמַיָּא בְּפָרָשׁוּתֵהּ בְּנֵי אֱנָשָׁא קַיֵּם תְּחוּמֵי עַמְמַיָּא

*ה' רבתי והיא תיבה לעצמה (לענין הטיבה). אבל לענין הקריאה קורין הה"א בנפרד והלמ"ד בשבא נח, ואח"כ שם הוי' כרגיל. עיין מנחת שי

רש"י

פעלו. אף על פי שהוא חזק, כשמביא פורענות על עוברי רצונו, לא בשטף הוא מביא, כי אם בדין כי תמים פעלו: אל אמונה. לשלם לצדיקים צדקתם לעולם הבא. ואף על פי שמאחר את תגמולם, סופו לאמן את דבריו: ואין עול. אף לרשעים משלם שכר צדקתם בעולם הזה: צדיק וישר הוא. הכל מצדיקים עליהם את דינו, וכך ראוי וישר להם. צדיק מפי הבריות. וישר הוא וראוי להצדיקו: (ה) שחת לו וגו'. כתרגומו חבילו להון ולא ליה: בניו מומם. בניו היו והשחתה שהשחיתו היא מומם: בניו מומם. מומם של בניו היה ולא מומו: דור עקש. עקום ומעוקל, כמו ואת הישרה יעקשו[1], ובלשון משנה חולדה שפיה עקומות ועקושות[2]: ופתלתל. אנטורטיליי"ש כפתיל הזה שגודלין אותו ומקיפין אותו סביבות הגדיל. פתלתל מן התיבות הכפולות, כמו ירקרק, אדמדם[3], סחרחר[4], סגלגל: (ו) הלה' תגמלו זאת. לשון תימה, וכי לפניו אתם מעליבין, שיש בידו להפרע מכם ושהטיב לכם בכל הטובות[5]: עם נבל. ששכחו את העשוי להם: ולא חכם. להבין את הנולדות שיש בידו להיטיב ולהרע[5]: הלא הוא אביך קנך. שקנאך, שקננך בקן הסלעים ובארץ חזקה, שתקנך בכל מיני תקנה: הוא עשך. אומה באומות: ויכננך. אחרי כן בכל מיני בסיס וכן. מכם כהנים מכם נביאים ומכם מלכים, כרך שהכל תלוי בו[5]: (ז) זכר ימות עולם. מה עשה בראשונים שהכעיסו לפניו: בינו שנות דר ודר. דור אנוש שהציף עליהם מי אוקיינוס ודור המבול ששטפם. דבר אחר לא נתתם לבבכם על שעבר, בינו שנות דור ודור, להכיר להבא שיש בידו להיטיב לכם ולהנחיל לכם ימות המשיח והעולם הבא: שאל אביך. אלו הנביאים שנקראים אבות, כמו שנאמר באליהו אבי אבי רכב ישראל[6]: זקניך. אלו החכמים[5]: ויאמרו לך. הראשונות: (ח) בהנחל עליון גוים. כשהנחיל הקדוש ברוך הוא למכעיסיו את חלקם הציפם ושטפם[5]: בהפרידו בני אדם. כשהפיץ דור הפלגה היה בידו להעבירם מן העולם

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● How does one "Remember the days gone by, [and] reflect upon the years of one generation and another"? (v. 7)

Rashi: *"Remember the days gone by"*—what God did to past generations who provoked Him to anger. *"Reflect upon the years of one generation and another"*—the generation of Enosh, upon whom He inundated the waters of the *Okyanus* [Ocean], and the generation of the Flood, whom He washed away.

Another explanation is: If you did not [*"remember the days gone by"* and] set your attention to the past, then, *"reflect upon the years of one generation and another"*—to recognize the future, that He has the power to bestow good upon you and to give you the days of the Mashiach and the World to Come as an inheritance. *"Ask your father"*—these are the prophets, who are called "fathers," as Scripture states regarding Eliyahu, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel!" (Kings II 2:12). *"Your elders"*—these are the sages.

TORAS MENACHEM

"Days Gone By..." (v. 7)

Rashi's comments to verse 7 prompt the following questions:

a.) What forced *Rashi* to conclude that, at the literal level, *"one generation and another,"* refers *specifically* to the generation of Enosh and the generation of the Flood, rather than to previous wicked generations *in general?*

b.) Why did *Rashi* bring a second interpretation, that *"one generation and another," refers to "the days of the Mashiach and the World to Come"*?

c.) Why did *Rashi* reject the simple meaning of "fathers" and "elders," and write instead that they refer to "prophets" and "sages"?

The Explanation

In *Parshas Vayeilech*, the song of *Ha'azinu* is given a lengthy introduction, stressing the unique quality of this song: *"Now, write for yourselves this song...so that this song will be for Me as a witness to the children of Israel...this song will speak out to them as a witness, for it will not be forgotten from the mouths of their children"* (Devarim 31:19, 21).

The Torah then relates how a special gathering was made for this purpose: *"Gather to me all the elders of your tribes and your police officers, and I will speak these words (of the song of Ha'azinu) into their ears....Then Moshe spoke the words of the following song into the ears of the entire assembly of Israel, until their completion"* (ibid. 28, 30).

From this elaborate introduction, the reader will have understood that the song of *Ha'azinu* contains a unique message, which had not been heard up to this point; a message that would protect the integrity of the Jewish people for future generations.

Thus, on reaching our verse, the reader will immediately be struck by the fact that this verse appears to be nothing more than the repetition of an old message. Moshe had warned the Jewish people on numerous occasions previously, especially in the Book of *Devarim*, that they should remember the wicked deeds of the previous generations and the punishments that resulted. For example: *"Your eyes have seen what God did at Ba'al Pe'or, for God, your God, has eliminated every man who went after Ba'al Pe'or from among you,"* (Devarim 4:3). *"What He did to Egypt's army, to its horses and chariots, how He swamped the waters of*

1 מיכה ג, ט 2 חולין נו. 3 ויקרא יג, מט 4 תהלים לח, יא 5 ספרי 6 מלכים-ב ב, יב

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God is faithful (to reward his righteous ones),
(He even rewards the wicked) without injustice;
(All acknowledge that) He is righteous and upright (in judgment).
5 *Corruption (is theirs), not His!*
It is His children's defect,
A crooked and twisted generation!
6 *Is this how you repay God,*
You disgraceful, unwise people?
Is He not your Father, your Master?
He has made you (a special nation),
And established you (to be self-sufficient).
SECOND READING
7 *Remember the days gone by (when God punished the wicked).*
Reflect upon the years of one generation and another.
Ask your father, and he will tell you (about days gone by),
(Ask) your elders, and they will inform you (what the early generations did).
8 *When the Supernal One gave nations their lot (with the Flood),*
When He separated the sons of man (after the Tower of Bavel),
He (allowed them to exist by) establishing (seventy) distinct nations,

TORAS MENACHEM

the Reed Sea upon them when they pursued you....What He did to Dasan and Aviram, sons of Eliav, Re'uvain's son, when the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up." (Ibid. 11:4-6).

So *Rashi* was troubled: After a lengthy introduction about the unprecedented qualities of the song of *Ha'azinu*, the command to "remember days gone by," appears to be nothing new at all.

Rashi concluded that the innovative quality of our verse is that it represents a warning to the Jewish people of unprecedented severity. In the past, when contemplating the consequences of disobeying God, the Jewish people had been reminded by Moshe about the punishments received by those who worshiped Ba'al Pe'or, by the Egyptian people and by Dasan and Aviram, *etc.* But here, they were informed of *incomparably more severe* punishments:

"The generation of Enosh, whom He inundated with the waters of the Okyanus"—lived in close proximity to the garden of Eden, since the nations were only scattered after the Tower of Bavel was built (see *Bereishis* 11:9). Yet we find that God chose to punish them with a flood from the waters of the *Okyanus*, "the largest of all oceans" (*Rashi* to *Bereishis* 1:9), which was clearly a tremendous distance from the garden of Eden. This indicates what a major cataclysmic event this punishment must have been.

So by referring to the generation of Enosh, and certainly "the generation of the Flood," Moshe was giving a warning that was incomparably more ominous than anything he had said in the past.

RASHI'S SECOND INTERPRETATION

Rashi was not entirely satisfied with the above solution (that Moshe was speaking of global punishments to *entire generations*), because the Torah stresses that the Song of *Ha'azinu* was addressed to each person *individually*—*"into the ears of the entire assembly"* (*Devarim* 31:30). So *Rashi* looked for another explanation which explained how Moshe was talking to each member of the Jewish community, on a personal level: *"If you have not set your attention to the past, then, 'reflect upon the years of one generation and another'—to recognize the future, that He has the*

The Last Word

The Torah teaches a person to *"ask your father"* about *"one generation and another"* (v. 7), i.e. about *"the days of the Mashiach and the World to Come"* (*Rashi* ibid., see *Classic Questions*), and, *"he will tell you."* Here we see that a father should educate his child about the concept of Mashiach, and not leave the child to "pick up" knowledge of the matter by himself.

Even though the concept of Mashiach is a lofty one, with immense mystical significance which can only be fully appreciated by an adult, nevertheless, it remains one of the *principles* of our faith which needs to be taught to children even at a young age.

Obviously, the educational approach will be different in the case of children than with adults. For example, with a child we might stress the fact that with the coming of Mashiach *"delicacies will be as plentiful as dust"* (*Rambam*, end of *Laws of Kings*), as this is something which the child can relate to easily (and it is, of course, totally true). Naturally, when the child matures, so will his perception of Mashiach, but we cannot wait for children to grow up before teaching them about a major principle of our faith. Rather, when still very young, a child should be taught to cry out earnestly and enthusiastically: "We want Mashiach now!"

(Based on *Sichas Motzoi Shabbos Parshas Ha'azinu* 5739; *Terumah* 5741)

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לְמִסְפַּר בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ט כִּי חֵלֶק יְהוָה עַמּוֹ יַעֲקֹב חֶבֶל נַחֲלָתוֹ:
י יִמְצָאֵהוּ בְּאֶרֶץ מִדְבָּר וּבְתֹהוּ יְלֵל יְשִׁמֹן יְסֹבְבֶנְהוּ יְבוֹנְנֵהוּ
יִצְּרֶנְהוּ כְּאִישׁוֹן עֵינוֹ: יא כְּנֶשֶׁר יָעִיר קִנּוֹ עַל־גּוֹזָלָיו יְרַחֵף
יִפְרֹשׂ כְּנָפָיו יִקָּחֵהוּ יִשָּׂאֵהוּ עַל־אֶבְרָתוֹ: יב יְהוָה בָּדָד יַנְחֶנּוּ
וְאֵין עִמּוֹ אֵל נֵכָר: [שלישי] יג יַרְכִּבֵהוּ עַל־בָּמֳתֵי* אָרֶץ וַיֹּאכַל
תְּנוּבֹת שָׂדָי וַיֵּנִקֵהוּ דְבַשׁ מִסֶּלַע וְשֶׁמֶן מֵחַלְמִישׁ צוּר: יד חֶמְאַת
בָּקָר וַחֲלֵב צֹאן עִם־חֵלֶב כָּרִים וְאֵילִים בְּנֵי־בָשָׁן וְעַתּוּדִים
עִם־חֵלֶב כִּלְיוֹת חִטָּה וְדַם־עֵנָב תִּשְׁתֶּה־חָמֶר: טו וַיִּשְׁמַן יְשֻׁרוּן
וַיִּבְעָט שָׁמַנְתָּ עָבִיתָ כָּשִׂיתָ וַיִּטֹּשׁ אֱלוֹהַ עָשָׂהוּ וַיְנַבֵּל צוּר

*יתיר ו'

למנין בני ישראל: ט ארי חולקא דיי עמה יעקב עדב אחסנתה: י ספיק צרכיהון בארעא מדברא ובית צחונא אתר די לית מיא אשרינון סחור סחור לשכינתה אלפנון פתגמי אוריתא נטרנון כבבת עיניהון: יא כנשרא דמחיש לקנה על בנוהי מתחופף פריס גדפוהי מקבלהון מנטלהון על תקוף אברוהי: יב יי בלחודוהי עתיד לאשריותהון בעלמא דהוא עתיד לאתחדתא ולא יתקים קדמוהי פלחן טעון: יג אשרינון על תקפי ארעא ואוכלנון בזת סנאיהון ויהב להון בזת שליטי קרוין ונכסי יתבי כרכין תקיפין: יד יהב להון בזת מלכיהון ושליטיהון עם עותר רברביהון ותקיפיהון עמא דארעהון ואחסנתהון עם בזת חיליהון ומשריתהון ודם גבריהון יתשד כמיא: טו ועתר ישראל ובעט אצלח תקוף קנא נכסין ושבק

רש"י

ולא הסב כן, אלא יצב גבולות עמים, קיימם ולא אבדם: **למספר בני ישראל.** בשביל מספר בני ישראל שעתידים לצאת מבני שם, ולמספר שבעים נפש של בני ישראל שירדו למצרים, הציב גבולות עמים שבעים לשון: (ט) **כי חלק ה' עמו.** למה כל זאת, לפי שהיה חלקו כבוש ביניהם ועתיד לצאת. ומי הוא חלקו, עמו. ומי הוא עמו: **יעקב חבל נחלתו.** והוא השלישי באבות, המשולש בשלש זכיות, זכות אבי אביו וזכות אביו וזכותו, הרי שלשה, כחבל הזה שהוא עשוי בשלשה גדילים והוא ובניו היו לו לנחלה, ולא ישמעאל בן אברהם, ולא עשו בנו של יצחק[1]: (י) **ימצאהו בארץ מדבר.** אותם מצא לו נאמנים בארץ מדבר, שקבלו עליהם תורתו ומלכותו ועולו מה שלא עשו ישמעאל ועשו, שנאמר[2] וזרח משעיר למו הופיע מהר פארן[3]: **ובתהו ילל ישימון.** ארץ ציה ושממה מקום יללת תנינים ובנות יענה, אף שם נמשכו אחר האמונה, ולא אמרו למשה האיך נצא למדברות מקום ציה ושממון, כענין שנאמר לכתך אחרי במדבר[4]: **יסבבנהו.** שם סבבם והקיפם בעננים וסבבם בדגלים לארבע רוחות וסבבם בתחתית ההר, שכפאו עליהם כגיגית[5]: **יבוננהו.** שם בתורה ובינה[5]: **יצרנהו.** מנחש שרף ועקרב ומן האומות[5]: **כאישון עינו.** הוא השחור שבעין, שהמאור יוצא הימנו. ואונקלוס תרגם ימלאכו יספיקכו כל צרכו במדבר, כמו ומצא להם[6], לא ימצא לנו ההר[7]. יסבבנהו. אשרינון סחור סחור לשכינתיה, אוהל מועד באמצע וארבעה דגלים לארבע רוחות: (יא) **כנשר יעיר קנו.** נהגם ברחמים ובחמלה כנשר הזה רחמני על בניו ואינו נכנס לקנו פתאום עד שהוא מקשקש ומטרף על בניו בכנפיו בין אילן לאילן בין שוכה לחברתה, כדי שיעורו בניו, ויהא בהם כח לקבלו: **יעיר קנו.** יעורר בניו: **על גוזליו ירחף.** אינו מכביד עצמו עליהם אלא מחופף, נוגע ואינו נוגע, אף הקב"ה שדי לא מצאנוהו שגיא כח[8], כשבא ליתן תורה לא נגלה עליהם מרוח אחת אלא מארבע רוחות, שנאמר ה' מסיני בא וזרח משעיר למו הופיע מהר פארן ואתה מרבבות קודש[9], אלוה מתימן יבא[10] זו רוח רביעית[11]: **יפרוש כנפיו יקחהו.** כשבא ליטלן ממקום למקום אינו נוטלן ברגליו כשאר עופות, לפי ששאר עופות יראים מן הנשר, שהוא מגביה לעוף ופורח עליהם, לפיכך נושאן ברגליו מפני הנשר, אבל הנשר אינו ירא אלא מן החץ לפיכך נושאן על כנפיו. אומר מוטב שיכנס החץ בי ולא יכנס בבני, אף הקב"ה ואשא אתכם על כנפי נשרים[12], כשנסעו מצרים אחריהם והשיגום (חונים) על הים היו זורקים בהם חצים ואבני בליסטראות, מיד ויסע מלאך האלהים וגו' ויבא בין מחנה מצרים וגו'[13]: (יב) **ה' בדד ינחנו.** ה' בדד ובטח נהגם במדבר: **ואין עמו אל נכר.** לא היה כח באחד מכל אלהי הגוים להראות כחו ולהלחם עמהם. ורבותינו דרשוהו על העתיד, וכן תרגם אונקלוס. ואני אומר דברי תוכחה הם, להעיד השמים והארץ והאזינה לכם לעד שסופן לבגוד, ולא יזכרו הראשונות שעשה להם ולא הנולדות שהוא עתיד לעשות להם, לפיכך צריך ליישב הדבר לכאן ולכאן. וכל הענין מוסב על זכור ימות עולם בינו שנות דור ודור, כן עשה להם וכן עתיד לעשות, כל זה היה להם לזכור: (יג) **ירכבהו על במתי ארץ.** כל המקרא כתרגומו[14]: **ירכבהו וגו'.** על שם שארץ ישראל גבוה מכל הארצות[15]: **ויאכל תנובת שדי.** אלו פירות ארץ ישראל שקלים לנוב ולהתבשל מכל פירות הארצות[15]: **וינקהו דבש מסלע.** מעשה באחד שאמר לבנו בסיכני הבא לי קציעות מן החבית. הלך ומצא הדבש צף על פיה. אמר לו זו של דבש היא. אמר לו השקע ידך לתוכה ואתה מעלה קציעות מתוכה[15]: **ושמן מחלמיש צור.** אלו זיתים של גוש חלב[16]: **במותי ארץ.** לשון גבוה: **שדי.** לשון שדה: **חלמיש צור.** תקפו וחזקו של סלע. כשאינו דבוק לתיבה שלאחריו נקוד חַלָּמִישׁ, וכשהוא דבוק נקוד חַלְמִישׁ: (יד) **חמאת בקר וחלב צאן.** זה היה בימי שלמה, שנאמר[16] עשרה בקר בריאים ועשרים בקר רעי ומאה צאן[17]: **עם חלב כרים.** זה היה בימי עשרת השבטים, שנאמר ואוכלים כרים מצאן[17]: **חלב כליות חטה.** זה היה בימי שלמה, שנאמר ויהי לחם שלמה וגו'[18]: **ודם ענב תשתה חמר.** בימי עשרת השבטים, השותים במזרקי יין[19]: **חמאת בקר.** הוא שומן הנקלט מעל גבי החלב: **וחלב צאן.** חָלָב של צאן, וכשהוא דבוק נקוד חֲלֵב כמו בחלב אמו[20]: **כרים.** כבשים: **ואילים.** כמשמעו: **בני בשן.** שמנים היו: **כליות חטה.** חטים שמנים כחלב כליות וגסין ככוליא: **ודם ענב.** תהיה שותה טוב (נ"א ענב) ומוטעם יין חשוב: **חמר.** יין בלשון ארמי: **חמר.** אין זה שם דבר, אלא לשון משובח בטעם ויי"ן בלע"ז. ועוד יש לפרש שני מקראות הללו אחר תרגום של אונקלוס אשרינון על תוקפי ארעא וגו': (טו) **עבית.** לשון עובי: **כשית.** כמו כסית, לשון כי כסה פניו בחלבו, כאדם ששמן מבפנים וכסליו נכפלים מבחוץ, וכן הוא אומר ויעש פימה עלי כסל: **כשית.** יש לשון קל בלשון כסוי, כמו וכוסה קלון ערום[21], ואם כתב כסית דגוש היה נשמע כסית את אחרים,

1 ראה שיחות ש"פ האזינו תשכ"ט ותשמ"ח. 2 דברים לג, ב 3 ראה לקו"ש חל"ד ע' 206 ואילך 4 ירמי' ב, ב 5 ראה שיחות ש"פ האזינו תשנ"ו 6 במדבר יא, כב 7 יהושע יז, טז
8 איוב לז, כג. 9 דברים לג, ב 10 חבקוק ג, ג 11 ספרי 12 שמות יט, ד 13 שם יד, יט 14 לכאורה פירוש התרגום **שונה לגמרי** מפירוש רש"י, שתרגום אנקלוס מפרש שפסוק זה קאי
על עצם הכיבוש דארץ ישראל, ואילו רש"י מפרש דקאי על **פירות** א"י וי"ל שכאשר רש"י כותב "כתרגומו" סתם (ואינו מעתיק את פירושו של אונקלוס) אין כוונתו **לפירוש** הנקרא "תרגומו" כי אם

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(For the sake of) the children of Israel (who would later arise),
(And) number (seventy souls).
9 *(He saved all the nations) because of God's portion, His people, (hidden among them),*
Ya'akov (and his sons were) His inheritance,
(For Ya'akov's merit was threefold, like the strands of) a rope
10 *He found them (faithful to Him, accepting the Torah) in a desert land,*
(Following Moshe) into a desolate, howling wasteland.
He encompassed them (with clouds),
And bestowed understanding upon them (through the Torah);
He protected them (from snakes and scorpions) like the pupil of His eye.
11 *(He guided them with compassion) like an eagle (that) wakens its nest (gently),*
Hovering over its young (without touching them);
It spreads its wings, taking them,
Carrying them (safely) on its upper side.
12 *God alone guided them,*
And there was no strange god (able to attack) them.

THIRD READING

13 *He settled them on (the Land of Israel), the peak of the earth,*
So they could eat (its fast-growing) produce of the field.
He let them suck honey from (its figs, which grow) from a rock(y, hard crust),
And oil from the (olives that grow at the) hard, rock(y ground of Gush Chalav).
14 *The cream of cattle and the milk of sheep,*
With the fat of lambs,
Fattened rams from Bashan and he-goats,
With fat kernels of wheat.
You will drink the blood of grapes, delicious (wine).
15 *But Yeshurun became fat and rebelled;*
You grew fat, rotund and obese;
(Israel) forsook the God Who made them,
And disgraced the Rock of their salvation.

TORAS MENACHEM

power to bestow good upon you and to give you the days of the Mashiach and the World to Come as an inheritance."

According to this interpretation we see clearly that each individual was addressed personally, as Moshe was referring to each person's individually earned "inheritance" in the future.

However, according to this interpretation, we are left with the question: How would "your father" or "your elders" possibly be able to describe the Messianic Era which they know very little about? Therefore, *Rashi* explained that (according to this interpretation) the term "fathers" and "elders" refer to "prophets" and "sages," who would clearly be knowledgeable about future events, and they would be able to "tell you" about *"the days of the Mashiach and the World to Come."*

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Ha'azinu* 5748)

Sparks of Chasidus

"GOD'S PORTION, HIS PEOPLE" (V. 9)

The *Ba'al Shem Tov* taught: *"The quality of 'essence' is such that as soon as one grasps a tiny part of the essence, one grasps the whole of it."* Thus it follows, that since all Jews (*"His people"*) have a Godly soul which is *"literally, a portion of God above,"* (Tanya ch. 2)—"God's portion"—then even when that soul undergoes the long journey downwards to this world, it remains inseparably bound with the Essence of God.

(Based on *Sefer Hama'amarim* 5735 p. 243)

לתרגומה של התיבה כמו שמתרגמים תיבה זו ל״בן חמש למקרא״ בבל לשון [illegible] (ע״פ שיחות ש״פ האזינו תשמ״ו). 13 ראה שיחת ש״פ האזינו תשל״ד. 14 מלכים-א ה, ג 17 עמוס ו, ד 18 מלכים-א [illegible] 19 עמוס ו, ו 20 דברים יז, כא 21 יחזקאל ח, טז

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יְשֻׁעָתוֹ: טז יַקְנִאֻהוּ בְּזָרִים בְּתוֹעֵבֹת יַכְעִיסֻהוּ: יז יִזְבְּחוּ לַשֵּׁדִים
לֹא *אֱלֹהַ אֱלֹהִים לֹא יְדָעוּם חֲדָשִׁים מִקָּרֹב בָּאוּ לֹא שְׂעָרוּם
אֲבֹתֵיכֶם: יח צוּר יְלָדְךָ תֶּשִׁי** וַתִּשְׁכַּח אֵל מְחֹלְלֶךָ: (רביעי) יט וַיַּרְא
יְהוָה וַיִּנְאָץ מִכַּעַס בָּנָיו וּבְנֹתָיו: כ וַיֹּאמֶר אַסְתִּירָה פָנַי מֵהֶם
אֶרְאֶה מָה אַחֲרִיתָם כִּי דוֹר תַּהְפֻּכֹת הֵמָּה בָּנִים לֹא־אֵמֻן בָּם:
כא הֵם קִנְאוּנִי בְלֹא־אֵל* כִּעֲסוּנִי בְּהַבְלֵיהֶם וַאֲנִי אַקְנִיאֵם
בְּלֹא־עָם בְּגוֹי נָבָל אַכְעִיסֵם: כב כִּי־אֵשׁ קָדְחָה בְאַפִּי וַתִּיקַד
עַד־שְׁאוֹל תַּחְתִּית וַתֹּאכַל אֶרֶץ וִיבֻלָהּ וַתְּלַהֵט מוֹסְדֵי הָרִים:
כג אַסְפֶּה עָלֵימוֹ רָעוֹת חִצַּי אֲכַלֶּה־בָּם: כד מְזֵי רָעָב וּלְחֻמֵי
רֶשֶׁף וְקֶטֶב מְרִירִי וְשֶׁן־בְּהֵמֹת אֲשַׁלַּח־בָּם עִם־חֲמַת זֹחֲלֵי
עָפָר: כה מִחוּץ תְּשַׁכֶּל־חֶרֶב וּמֵחֲדָרִים אֵימָה גַּם־בָּחוּר גַּם־
בְּתוּלָה יוֹנֵק עִם־אִישׁ שֵׂיבָה: כו אָמַרְתִּי אַפְאֵיהֶם אַשְׁבִּיתָה

* קמץ בז"ק ** י' זעירא

פלחן אלהא דעבדה וארגז קדם תקיפא
דפרקיה: טז אקניאו קדמוהי בפלחן טעון
בתועבתא ארגיזו קדמוהי: יז דבחו לשדין
דלית בהון צרוך דחלן דלא ידעון חדתן
די מקריב אתעבידא לא אתעסקו בהון
אבהתכון: יח דחלא תקיפא דבראך
אתנשיתא שבקתא פלחן אלהא דעבדך:
יט וגלי קדם יי ותקף רגזה מדארגיזו קדמוהי
בנין ובנן: כ ואמר אסלק שכנתי מנהון גלי
קדמי מא יהי בסופיהון ארי דרא דאשניו
אנון בניא דלית בהון הימנו: כא אנון אקניאו
קדמי בלא דחלא ארגיזו קדמי בפלחן טעון
ואנא אקנינון בלא עם בעמא טפשא ארגזנון:
כב ארי קדום תקיף כאשא נפק מקדמי ברגז
ושיצי עד שאול ארעית ואסיף ארעא
ועללתה ושיצית עד סיפי טוריא: כג אסף
עליהון בישן מכתשי אשיצי בהון: כד נפיחי
כפן ואכולי עוף וכתישי רוחין בישן
ושן חיות ברא אגרי בהון עם חמת תניניא
דזחלין בעפרא: כה מברא תתכל חרבא
ומתוניא חרגת מותא אף עולימיהון
אף עולמתהון ינקיהון עם אנש סביהון:
כו אמרית יחול רגזי עליהון ואשיצנון

רש"י

כמו כי כסה פניו[1]: **וינבל צור ישעתו.** גנהו וביזהו, כמו שנאמר אחוריהם אל היכל ה' וגו'[2], אין נבול גדול מזה: (טז) **יקנאהו.** הבעירו חמתו וקנאתו: **בתועבות.** במעשים תעובים, כגון משכב זכור וכשפים, שנאמר בהם תועבה: (יז) **לא אלה.** כתרגומו דלית בהון צרוך, אלו היה בהם צורך לא היתה קנאה כפולה כמו עכשיו: **חדשים מקרוב באו.** אפילו האומות לא היו רגילים בהם. נכרי שהיה רואה אותם, היה אומר זה צלם יהודי: **לא שערום אבותיכם.** לא יראו מהם, לא עמדה שערתם מפניהם. דרך שערות האדם לעמוד מחמת יראה, כך נדרש בספרי. ויש לפרש עוד שערום לשון ושעירים ירקדו שם[3], שעירים הם שדים. לא עשו אבותיכם שעירים הללו: (יח) **תשי.** תשכח. ורבותינו דרשו, כשבא להיטיב לכם אתם מכעיסין לפניו ומתישים כחו מלהיטיב לכם: **אל מחללך.** מוציאך מרחם, לשון יחולל אילות[4], חיל כיולדה[5]: (כ) **מה אחריתם.** מה תעלה בהם בסופם: **כי דור תהפוכות המה.** מהפכין רצוני לכעס: **לא אמן בם.** אין גדולי נכרים בהם, כי הוריתים דרך טובה וסרו ממנה: **אמן.** לשון ויהי אומן, נודריטור"ה בלע"ז. דבר אחר אמון לשון אמונה, כתרגומו. אמרו בסיני נעשה ונשמע, ולשעה קלה בטלו הבטחתם ועשו העגל: (כא) **קנאוני.** הבעירו חמתי: **בלא אל.** בדבר שאינו אלוה: **בלא עם.** באומה שאין לה שם, שנאמר הן ארץ כשדים זה העם לא היה[6], ובעשו הוא אומר בזוי אתה מאד[7]: **בגוי נבל אכעיסם.** אלו המינים, וכן הוא אומר אמר נבל בלבו אין אלהים[8]: (כב) **קדחה.** בערה: **ותיקד.** בכם עד היסוד: **ותאכל ארץ ויבלה.** ארצכם ויבולה: **ותלהט.** ירושלים המיוסדת על ההרים, שנאמר ירושלים הרים סביב לה[9]: (כג) **אספה עלימו רעות.** אחביר רעה על רעה, לשון ספו שנה על שנה[10], ספות הרוה[11], עולותיכם ספו על זבחיכם[12]. דבר אחר אספה אכלה, כמו פן תספה[13]: **חצי אכלה בם.** כל חצי אשלים בהם. וקללה זו לפי הפורענות לברכה היא, חצי כלים והם אינם כלים: (כד) **מזי רעב.** אונקלוס תרגם, נפיחי כפן, ואין לי עד מוכיח עליו. ומשמו של רבי משה הדרשן מטולושא שמעתי שעירי רעב, אדם כחוש מגדל שער על בשרו: **מזי.** לשון ארמי שער מזיא, דהוה מהפך במזיה[14]: **ולחמי רשף.** השדים נלחמו בהם,

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

Seder Hadoros relates that *Ramban* once confronted his former student, named Avner, and asked him why he had strayed from the path of observant Judaism. Avner replied that *Ramban* had once taught that "everything is to be found in the Song of *Ha'azinu*," and Avner found the idea so utterly preposterous that it led him to lose faith. When *Ramban* stated that he still held by his assertion, Avner challenged him, "If so, where is my name to be found in the song"? *Ramban* turned to the wall, praying to God, and it soon occurred to him that the third letter of each word in verse 26 spelled Avner's name: אָמַרְתִּי אַפְאֵיהֶם אַשְׁבִּיתָה מֵאֱנוֹשׁ זִכְרָם (ר' אַבְנֵר). On hearing this, Avner repented and mended his ways.

Even though Avner had strayed far from the path of observance, his name was nevertheless recorded in the Torah with his title, ***Reb*** Avner, referring to his status as a fully observant Jew, *after* he had returned—for this was indeed his *true* essence.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Ha'azinu* 5742)

1 איוב טו, כז 2 יחזקאל ח, טז 3 ישעי' יג, כא 4 תהלים כט, ט 5 שם מח, ז 6 ישעי' כג, יג 7 עובדי' א, ב 8 תהלים יד, א 9 שם קכה, ב *9 ראה שיחת ש"פ האזינו תשמ"ו 10 ישעי' כט, א
11 דברים כט, יח 12 ירמי' ז, כא 13 בראשית יט, טו 14 מגילה יח.

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16 *They made him furious with alien (worship);*
They made Him angry with abominable acts.
17 *They sacrificed to demons, which have no power,*
Deities with which they were not acquainted,
New (idols) that just arrived (and were not even known by idolaters themselves),
Which your fathers did not fear.
18 *You forgot the Rock Who gave birth to you;*
You forgot the God Who delivered you (from the womb).

FOURTH READING

19 *God saw this and became angry,*
Provoked by His sons and daughters.
20 *He said: I will hide My face from them;*
I will see what their end will be.
For they are a generation that changes (My goodwill into anger);
Children that have no (signs of My good) upbringing.
21 *They have made Me furious with something that is not a god,*
Provoked My anger with their nonsense.
So I will make them furious by a nation devoid (of a name),
I will provoke their anger with a vile (heretical) nation.
22 *For a fire burned in My nostrils,*
And it will blaze (in you) to the lowest depths (of your foundations).
It will consume (your) land and its produce,
Setting aflame (Jerusalem which is), founded upon mountains.
23 *I will heap misfortunes upon them.*
I will use up My arrows on them.
24 *They will sprout hair from famine, be attacked by flying (demons),*
And be cut down by (the Demon) Meriri.
I will send animal's teeth upon them,
With the venom of those (snakes) that slither in the dust.
25 *From outside (the city), the sword (of invading armies) will bereave (them),*
And terror (will destroy) the chambers (of the heart),
(Of even) young men and maidens,
Suckling babes with old men.
26 *I said (in My heart) that I would scatter them,*
Causing their memory to cease from mankind.

רש״י

שנאמר ובני רשף יגביהו עוף[15], והם שדים: **וקטב מרירי.** וכריתות שד ששמו מרירי[16]. קטב. כריתה, כמו אהי קטבך שאול[17]: **ושן בהמות.** מעשה היה והיו הרחלים נושכין וממיתין: **חמת זוחלי עפר.** ארס נחשים המהלכים על גחונם על העפר, כמים הזוחלים על הארץ. זחילה לשון מרוצת המים על העפר, וכן כל מרוצת דבר המשפשף על העפר והולך: **(כה) מחוץ תשכל חרב.** מחוץ לעיר תשכלם חרב גייסות: **ומחדרים אימה.** כשבורח ונמלט מן החרב חדרי לבו נוקפים עליו מחמת אימה והוא מת והולך בה. דבר אחר, ומחדרים אימה, שבבית תהיה אימת דבר, כמו שנאמר כי עלה מות בחלונינו[18], וכן תרגם אונקלוס. דבר אחר, מחוץ תשכל חרב, על מה שעשו בחוצות, שנאמר ומספר חוצות ירושלים שמתם מזבחות לבושת[19]: **ומחדרים אימה.** על מה שעשו בחדרי חדרים, שנאמר אשר זקני ישראל עושים איש בחדרי משכיתו[20]: **(כו) אמרתי אפאיהם.** אמרתי בלבי אשלה

15 איוב ה, ז 16 פסחים קיא: 17 הושע יג, יד 18 ירמי׳ ט, כ 19 שם יא, יג 20 יחזקאל ח, יב

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מֵאֱנוֹשׁ זִכְרָם: כז לוּלֵי כַּעַס אוֹיֵב אָגוּר פֶּן־יְנַכְּרוּ צָרֵימוֹ פֶּן
יֹאמְרוּ יָדֵנוּ רָמָה וְלֹא יְהוָה פָּעַל כָּל־זֹאת: כח כִּי־גוֹי אֹבַד
עֵצוֹת הֵמָּה וְאֵין בָּהֶם תְּבוּנָה: [חמישי] כט לוּ חָכְמוּ יַשְׂכִּילוּ זֹאת
יָבִינוּ לְאַחֲרִיתָם: ל אֵיכָה יִרְדֹּף אֶחָד אֶלֶף וּשְׁנַיִם יָנִיסוּ רְבָבָה
אִם־לֹא כִּי־צוּרָם מְכָרָם וַיהוָה הִסְגִּירָם: לא כִּי לֹא כְצוּרֵנוּ
צוּרָם וְאֹיְבֵינוּ פְּלִילִים: לב כִּי־מִגֶּפֶן סְדֹם גַּפְנָם וּמִשַּׁדְמֹת
עֲמֹרָה עֲנָבֵמוֹ עִנְּבֵי־רוֹשׁ אַשְׁכְּלֹת מְרֹרֹת לָמוֹ: לג חֲמַת תַּנִּינִם
יֵינָם וְרֹאשׁ פְּתָנִים אַכְזָר: לד הֲלֹא־הוּא כָּמֻס עִמָּדִי חָתֻם
בְּאוֹצְרֹתָי: לה לִי נָקָם וְשִׁלֵּם לְעֵת תָּמוּט רַגְלָם כִּי קָרוֹב יוֹם
אֵידָם וְחָשׁ עֲתִדֹת לָמוֹ: לו כִּי־יָדִין יְהוָה עַמּוֹ וְעַל־עֲבָדָיו

אבטל מבני אנשא דוכרניהון: כז אלולפון
רוגזא דסנאה כניש דלמא יתרברבון בעלי
דבבא דלמא ייסרון ידנא תקיפת לנא ולא
מן קדם יי הות כל דא: כח ארי עם מאבדי
עיצה אנון ולית בהון סוכלתנו: כט אלו
חכימו אסתכלו בדא סברו מא יהי בסופיהון:
ל איכדין ירדוף חד אלפא ותרין יעירקון
לרבותא אלהן (ארי) תקיפהון מסרנון ויי
אשלמנון: לא ארי לא כתקפנא תקפהון
ובעלי דבבנא הוו דיננא: לב ארי כפורענות
עמא דסדום פורענותהון ולקותהון כעם
עמורה מחתהון בישין כרישי חוין ותשלמת
עובדיהון כמרירתהון: לג הא כמרת תניניא
כס פורענותהון וכריש פתני חוין אכזראין:
לד הלא כל עובדיהון גלן קדמי גניזין
ליום דינא באוצרי: לה קדמי פורענותא ואנא
אשלם לעדן דיגלון מארעהון ארי קריב יום
תברהון ומבע דעתיד להון: לו ארי ידין יי

רש"י

אותם. ויש לפרש אפאיהם אשית פאה לכעליכם מעלי הפקר. ודוגמתו מלינו בעזרא ותתן להם ארץ ממלכות ועממים ותחלקם לפאה[1], להפקר. וכן חברו מנחם. ויש פותרים אותו כתרגומו יחול רוגזי עליהון, ולא יתכן, שאם כן היה לו לכתוב אאפאיהם אחת לשמוש ואחת ליסוד, כמו אאזרך[2], אאמצכם במו פי[3], והאל"ף התיבה אינה ראויה בו כלל. ואונקלוס תרגם אחר לשון הברייתא הפנויה בספרי החולקת תיבה זו לשלש תיבות אמרתי אף אי הם, אמרתי בלבי אתנם כאלו אינם, שיאמרו רואיהם עליהם איה הם: (כז) לולי כעס אויב אגור. אם לא שכעס האויב כנוס עליהם להשחית ואם יוכל להם וישחיתם יתלה הגדולה בו ובאלהיו ולא יתלה הגדולה בי, וזהו שנאמר פן ינכרו צרימו, יכנרו הדבר לתלות גבורתי בנכרי, שאין הגדולה שלו: פן יאמרו ידנו רמה וגו'. כי אותו גוי אובד עצות המה: (כח) ואין בהם תבונה. שאלו היו חכמים ישכילו זאת, איכה ירדוף וגו': (כט) יבינו לאחריתם. יתנו לב להתבונן לסוף פורענותם של ישראל: (ל) איכה ירדף אחד. ממנו אלף מישראל: אם לא כי צורם מכרם וה' הסגירם. מסרם ומסרם בידנו. דילגר"ר בלע"ז: (לא) כי לא כצורנו צורם. כל זה היה להם לאויבים להבין שהשם הסגירם ולא להם ולאלהיהם הנצחון, שהרי עד הנה לא יכלו כלום אלהיהם כנגד צורנו, כי לא כסלענו סלעם. כל צור שבמקרא לשון סלע: ואויבינו פלילים. ועכשיו אויבינו שופטים אותנו, שהרי צורנו מכרנו להם (ס"א הרי שצורנו מכרנו להם): (לב) כי מגפן סדום גפנם. מוסב למעלה. אמרתי בלבי אפאיהם ואשבית זכרם, לפי שמעשיהם מעשה סדום ועמורה: שדמות. שדה תבואה, כמו ושדמות לא עשה אוכל, בשדמות קדרון[4]: ענבי רוש. עשב מר: אשכלת מררת למו. משקה מר ראוי להם, לפי מעשיהם פורענותם. וכן תרגם אונקלוס ותושלמת עובדיהון כמרירותהון: (לג) חמת תנינים יינם. כתרגומו הא כמרת תניניא כס פורענותהון, הנה כמרירות נחשים כוס משתה פורענותם: וראש פתנים. כוסם, שהוא אכזר לנשוך. אויב אכזרי יבא ויפרע מהם: (לד) הלא הוא כמוס עמדי. כתרגומו כסבורים הם שנשכחתי מעשיהם, כולם גנוזים ושמורים לפני: הלא הוא. פרי גפנם ותבואת שדמותם כמוס עמדי: (לה) לי נקם ושלם. עמי נכון ומזומן פורענות נקם וישלם להם כמעשיהם הנקם ישלם להם גמולם. ויש מפרשים ושלם שם דבר, כמו ושלום, והוא מגזרת והדבר אין בהם[5], כמו והדבור. ואימתי אשלם להם. לעת תמוט רגלם. כשתתום זכות אבותם שהן סומכין עליו: כי קרוב יום אידם. כשארצה להביא עליהם יום אידם קרוב ומזומן לפני להביא על ידי שלוחים הרבה: וחש עתדות למו. ומהר יבואו העתידות להם: וחש. כמו ימהר יחישה[6]. עד כאן העיד עליהם משה דברי תוכחה לשוב השירה הזאת לעד כשתבא עליהם הפורענות. ידעו שאני הודעתים מראש. מכאן ואילך העיד עליהם דברי תנחומין שיבואו עליהם ככלות הפורענות ככל אשר אמר למעלה[7] והיה כי יבואו עליך כל הדברים האלה הברכה והקללה וגו' ושב ה' אלהיך את שבותך וגו': (לו) כי ידין ה'.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Is the ratio of one member of the enemy chasing one thousand of Israel a fair punishment? (v. 30)**

Tosfos: When speaking of God's "measure of retribution" (the enemy chasing away the Jewish people), there is a ratio of 1:1000, "*How can one (of us) pursue a thousand (of Israel).*" Yet, when speaking of God's corresponding "measure of benevolence," the Torah states (in *Parshas Bechukosai*), "*Five of you will be able to chase away a hundred*" (Vayikra 26:8), a ratio of just 1:20. How is this to be reconciled with the principle that "God's measure of benevolence *always* exceeds His measure of retribution"?

In truth, however, one cannot compare these two cases. For the verse in *Parshas Bechukosai* is referring to the *annihilation* of the enemy, "Five of you will be able to chase away a hundred....*They will fall by the sword before you*" (ibid.), whereas the verse here is speaking only of *chasing* away the enemy. Thus, it would be unreasonable to compare the two cases (*Sotah* 11a).

Maskil leDavid: Alternatively, one could argue that the verse in *Parshas Bechukosai* is referring to five of the *weakest* members of the Jewish army, chasing away a hundred members of the enemy, as *Rashi* writes there explicitly. Whereas here, the verse is speaking of one of the strongest members of the enemy army.

1 [illegible] 2 [illegible] ה 3 איוב טו, ח 4 מלכים-ב כג, ד 5 ירמי' ה, יג 6 ישעי' ה, יט 7 דברים ל, א

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27 *If it were not for the enemy's anger heaped up (against them),*
Lest their adversaries misconstrue (their power) to a foreign (power);
Lest they claim, 'Our hand was triumphant!'
And, 'It was not God who did all of this!'
28 *For (the enemy of Israel) is a nation devoid of good advice,*
And they have no understanding (to see that their victory would come from God).

FIFTH READING

29 *If they were wise, they would understand this;*
they would reflect upon (Israel's) demise.
30 *(They would have thought): How can one (of us) pursue a thousand (of Israel),*
And two put ten thousand to flight,
Unless their Rock has sold them out,
And God has delivered them (into our hands)?
31 *For their rock is not (a true power) like our Rock.*
(If) our enemies judge (and defeat us it is because our Rock has decreed so).
32 *(God says: I wish to scatter Israel) because their vine is of the vine of Sodom,*
and of the (grain) fields of Amorah;
Their grapes are grapes of bitterness,
They (deserve) clusters (with) bitter juice.
33 *Their (cup of punishing) wine (will be like) the bitter venom of serpents,*
and the cruel poison of cobras.
34 *Is not (the evidence of all their wicked actions) stored away with Me,*
Sealed up in My treasuries?
35 *Within Me vengeance is (prepared), and it will repay,*
At the moment their foothold (of merit of their fathers) falters.
(As soon as I decide to punish them) the day of their reckoning (will be) close,
And what is destined for them will happen quickly."
36 *When God will judge His people (and bring these sufferings upon them),*
He will (then) change His mind about His servants,

TORAS MENACHEM

ONE VERSUS A THOUSAND (V. 30)

Tosfos notes verse 30 appears to contradict the principle, "God's measure of benevolence always exceeds His measure of retribution." For here, when the Jewish people are being punished, we see that they are defeated by the enemy in a ratio of 1:1000; whereas in *Parshas Bechukosai*, where "God's measure of benevolence" is described, the ratio is just 1:20.

While the concept that "God's measure of benevolence always exceeds His measure of retribution," is not mentioned by *Rashi* in his commentary to the Torah, it is nevertheless an easily understood principle which even a child might come to unaided. Why, then, did *Rashi* not address *Tosfos'* question, seeing that *Rashi's* wrote his commentary to address *every* difficulty that arises at the literal level?

Tosfos answers that it is not fair to compare the two verses, here and in *Parshas Bechukosai*, since the former is speaking of one army *chasing* another, whereas the latter discusses one army *destroying* another.

However this still does not appear to fully clarify the matter at the literal level, for it only leaves us with a further question: Is it a greater accomplishment to kill a few soldiers, or to chase away a larger number? Since *Rashi* does not attempt to clarify this matter, we can presume that he did not accept the solution of *Tosfos*.

Another solution [offered by ***Maskil leDavid***] is that the differing ratios arise from the fact that our verse speaks of strong soldiers, whereas the verse in *Parshas Bechukosai* speaks of weak soldiers. However this again leaves us with a similar unresolved question: Is it a greater accomplishment for weak soldiers to defeat a small army, or for strong soldiers to defeat a larger army?

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi did not address this issue, as he deemed it to be self-evident from the verse itself. The verse states, "(They would have thought): How can one (of us) pursue a thousand (of Israel), and two put ten thousand to flight, *unless their Rock has sold them out, and God has delivered them*

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יִתְנֶחָם כִּי יִרְאֶה כִּי־אָזְלַת יָד וְאֶפֶס עָצוּר וְעָזוּב: לז וְאָמַר אֵי
אֱלֹהֵימוֹ צוּר חָסָיוּ בוֹ: לח אֲשֶׁר חֵלֶב זְבָחֵימוֹ יֹאכֵלוּ יִשְׁתּוּ יֵין
נְסִיכָם יָקוּמוּ וְיַעְזְרֻכֶם יְהִי עֲלֵיכֶם סִתְרָה: לט רְאוּ | עַתָּה כִּי
אֲנִי אֲנִי הוּא וְאֵין אֱלֹהִים עִמָּדִי אֲנִי אָמִית וַאֲחַיֶּה מָחַצְתִּי
וַאֲנִי אֶרְפָּא וְאֵין מִיָּדִי מַצִּיל: (ששי) מ כִּי־אֶשָּׂא אֶל־שָׁמַיִם יָדִי
וְאָמַרְתִּי חַי אָנֹכִי לְעֹלָם: מא אִם־שַׁנּוֹתִי בְּרַק חַרְבִּי וְתֹאחֵז

דִינָא דְעַמֵהּ וּפוּרְעֲנוּת עַבְדוֹהִי צַדִיקַיָא
יִתְפְּרַע אֲרֵי גְלֵי קֳדָמוֹהִי דִבְעִדָן דְיִתְתְּקֵף
עֲלֵיהוֹן מְחַת סַנְאָה יְהוֹן מְטַלְטְלִין וּשְׁבִיקִין:
לז וְיֵימַר אָן דַחַלְתְּהוֹן תַּקִיפָא דַהֲווֹ רְחִיצִין
בֵּהּ: לח דִי תְרַב נִכְסַתְהוֹן הֲווֹ אָכְלִין שָׁתַן
חֲמַר נִסְכֵּיהוֹן יְקוּמוּן כְּעַן וִיסַעֲדוּנְכוֹן יְהוֹן
עֲלֵיכוֹן מְגַן: לט חֲזוֹ כְעַן אֲרֵי אֲנָא אֲנָא הוּא
וְלֵית אֱלָהּ בַּר מִנִי אֲנָא מְמִית וּמְחַיֵי מְחֵיתָא
וְאַף מַסֵינָא וְלֵית מִן יְדִי מְשֵׁיזִיב: מ אֲרֵי
אַתְקֵינִית בִּשְׁמַיָא בֵּית שְׁכִנְתִּי וַאֲמָרִית קַיָם
אֲנָא לְעָלְמִין: מא אִם עַל חַד תְּרֵין כְּחֵיזוּ

רש״י

עמו. כשישפוט אותם ביסורין הללו האמורות עליהם, כמו כי בם ידין עמים[1]. כי זה אינו משמש בלשון דהא, לתת טעם לדברים של מעלה, אלא לשון תחלת דבור, כמו כי תבואו אל הארץ[2], כשיבואו עליהם משפטים הללו ויתנחם הקב"ה על עבדיו לשוב ולרחם עליהם: **יתנחם.** לשון הפך מחשבה להטיב או להרע: **כי יראה כי אזלת יד.** כשיראה כי יד האויב הולכת וחוזקת מאד עליהם ואפס בהם עצור ועזוב: **עצור.** נושע על ידי עוצר ומושל שיעצור בהם: **עזוב.** על ידי עזוב. עוצר הוא המושל העוצר בעם שלא ילכו מפוזרים בצאתם לצבא על האויב. בלשון לע"ז מיינטינדו"ר. עזוב, הוא הנושע במעצור המושל. עזוב, מחוזק, כמו ויעזבו את ירושלים עד החומה[3], איך לא עזבה עיר תהלה[4]. עוצר מיינטנדו"ר. עזוב אינפורטיי"ר: **(לז) ואמר.** הקב"ה עליהם: **אי אלהימו.** עבודת אלילים שעבדו: **צור חסיו בו.** הסלע שהיו מתכסין בו מפני החמה והצנה, כלומר שהיו בטוחין בו להגן עליהם מן הרעה: **(לח) אשר חלב זבחימו.** היו אותן אלהות אוכלים שהיו מקריבין לפניהם ושותין יין נסיכם: **יהי עליכם סתרה.** אותו הצור יהיה לכם מחסה ומסתור: **(לט) ראו עתה.** הבינו מן הפורענות שהבאתי עליכם ואין לכם מושיע ומן התשועה שאושיעכם ואין מוחה בידי: **אני אני הוא.** אני להשפיל ואני להרים: **ואין אלהים עמדי.** עומד כנגדי למחות: **עמדי.** דוגמתי וכמוני: **ואין מידי מציל.** הפושעים בי: **(מ) כי אשא אל שמים ידי.** כי בחרון אפי אשא ידי אל עצמי בשבועה: **ואמרתי חי אנכי.** לשון שבועה הוא (כמו חי אני נאם ה' אם לא כאשר דברתם באזני[5] אף כאן) אני נשבע חי אנכי: **(מא) אם שנותי ברק חרבי.** אם אשנן את להב חרבי, כמו למען היות לה ברק פלגור"ר: **ותאחז במשפט ידי.** להניח מדת רחמים באויבי שהרעו לכם, אשר אני קצפתי מעט והמה עזרו לרעה[6].

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why does "I injure and I heal" come *after* "I cause death and I bring to life" ? (v. 39)

Talmud: Rava noted an inconsistency between two statements. The verse states, *"I cause death and I bring to life,"* and then it states, *"I injure and I heal."* If He can bring to life, does it not go without saying that He can heal?

Rather, God is saying: To the *same* person that I bring death, I will bring life, just as I heal the *same* person that I injure. [Likewise,] our Sages taught: When the verse states, *"I cause death and I bring to life,"* you might think that it is speaking of the natural phenomenon that one person dies and *another* comes to life. Therefore, the verse states, *"I strike and I injure,"* to teach you that just as one person is injured and then healed, so too, this *same* person who dies, is brought to life. From here we have a proof from the Torah that the dead will be revived.

Another interpretation: First, I will bring to life those that I caused to die [and the injuries that they had when they died, will temporarily persist]. Then I will heal the injuries that I caused (*Pesachim* 68a).

TORAS MENACHEM

(Into our hands)?" I.e. we are not speaking here about a simple war between Israel and its enemies, but rather, a case where the enemy was attacking Israel *through God's direct intervention.*

At the literal level, the principle that, "God's measure of benevolence always exceeds His measure of retribution," only applies in a case where Israel is fighting its enemies without the direct intervention of God. Then we would argue that the Jewish people do not deserve to be punished at war for their sins (1:1000) to a greater degree than they are rewarded at war for their merits (1:20).

However, in an exceptional case where *"their Rock has sold them out, and God has delivered them,"* the above logic clearly does not apply.

In fact, when God intervenes, not even one soldier is required to secure a defeat of even a thousand soldiers, as we find in the case of the Egyptian army, which numbered many thousands and yet drowned at sea, without the need to be fought at all.

Thus, the fact that even one soldier is required here is an expression of God's kindness, because in truth, not even that one is required.

However, in *Parshas Bechukosai*, the Torah is speaking of the usual scenario, where God does not make any direct intervention. And in such a case we are promised, *"If you pursue (the study of) My laws (in order to) guard My commands and observe them....Five of you will be able to chase away a hundred....They will fall by the sword before you."*

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Ha'azinu 5733*)

"I Cause Death and I Bring to Life" (v. 39)

The ***Talmud*** raises the question as to why the Torah states *"I injure and I heal,"* which would seem to be an obvious fact, having just read, *"I cause death and I bring to life."*

At first glance this appears to be a question at the literal level. Why then does *Rashi* not address it?

1 איוב לו, לא 2 ויקרא כג, י 3 נחמיה ג, ח 4 ירמיה מט, כה 5 במדבר יד, כח 6 זכריה א, טו

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When He sees that the power (of the enemy) is increasing,
And no one (among Israel has a source of) salvation or help.
37 *Then He will say: Where is their deity (that they worshiped),*
The rock in which they trusted?
38 *Which ate the fat of their sacrifices,*
And drank the wine of their libations?
Let them stand up and help you!
Let them be your shelter!
39 *See now that it is Me! I am the One!*
There is no god (to stand against) Me.
I cause death and I bring to life.
I injure and I heal.
And no one can rescue from My Hand (those who sin against Me)!
SIXTH READING
40 *For (when the Jewish people repent, I will turn My anger upon the nations!*)*
I (will) raise up My Hand to (Myself in) heaven,
And say: Just as I live forever,
41 *(I swear that) when I sharpen the blade of My sword,*
And My hand grasps judgment (to punish the enemies of Israel),

TORAS MENACHEM

THE EXPLANATION

Rashi did not find it necessary to address the *Talmud's* question here, as with a knowledge of *Rashi's* prior comments, the matter can be worked out with simple logic.

In *Parshas Mishpatim*, the Torah states, *"If two men quarrel, and one strikes the other...he must (pay all) his medical (fees)."* (*Shemos* 21:18-19, according to *Rashi*). From here the reader will have gathered that, at the literal level of scriptural interpretation, God does not heal the sick directly, but rather, through the agency of a doctor.

Thus our verse, "I injure and I heal," is not superfluous, for it teaches us a new piece of information: that, in some cases, God heals an injury *directly*, without the intervention of a doctor.

And the distinction between these two cases is made clear by scripture. When the injury is caused *by man* (*"two men quarrel, and one strikes the other"*), then the cure comes (from God, but) via the agency of man, i.e. a doctor.

But when the injury is caused by God (*"I injure"*), as a punishment for sin, then the cure also comes directly from God (*"I heal"*).

PROOF FOR THE REVIVAL OF THE DEAD

In clarifying *Rashi's* approach here, we appear to have created another problem. For in rejecting the *Talmud's* interpretation, we also appear to have rejected the *Talmud's* conclusion, *"From here we have a proof from the Torah that the dead will be revived."*

Is it now the case that, at the literal level of scriptural interpretation (adhered to by *Rashi*,) our verse does *not* provide proof that the dead will ultimately be revived?

In truth, however, at the literal level, our verse *must* be speaking of the death and subsequent life of the *same* person, for otherwise the verse would not be teaching the reader anything new. The reader already knows that God created the heavens and the earth (*Bereishis* 1:1), and that *"there is none other besides Him,"* (*Devarim* 4:35), so if the verse *"I bring to life,"* simply means that God causes new people to be born in this world, then the verse is not teaching the reader something that he did not know already. Clearly then, the verse, *"I cause death and I bring to life,"* must be referring to the same person, who first dies and then comes back to life.

So, in the final analysis we do indeed *"have a proof from the Torah,"* at the literal level, *"that the dead will be revived."*

But we are now left with a further problem. For having proved that it is *self-evident*, at the literal level, that our verse refers to the revival of the dead, why did the *Talmud* need to devise an elaborate proof for this point?

The answer lies in the fact that the *Talmud* was written for a readership which was familiar with Talmudic teachings, whereas *Rashi's* commentary was written for those who were beginning their studies. Thus, the *Talmud* found it necessary to *prove* that our verse indicates that the dead will be revived, despite the fact that the matter appears to be obvious at the literal

* At first glance, verse 40 represents a sudden change of topic which appears to be out of context with the verses that precede it. For the previous verses describe the sins of the *Jewish people*, whereas from verse 40, the topic switches to describe God's punishment of the *nations* who harmed Israel. Furthermore, the two passages are connected by the word כִּי (meaning "for," or "because") at the beginning of verse 40, suggesting that the reason why God will punish the nations is *because* the Jewish people will sin! *Rashi* addresses this matter by explaining that the use of the word כִּי here suggests: *"For in My anger, I will raise up My hand to Myself, making an oath."* Where do we see God's anger being mentioned? In *Parshas Nitzavim it is written that* when the Jewish people will repent, *"God will place all these curses upon your enemies"* (*Devarim* 30:7), which includes the curse that *"I will become very angry with them"* (ibid. 31:17). Thus, according to *Rashi* the verse is suggesting that *after* the Jewish people repent, God will *redirect* His anger towards the nations (Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Ha'azinu* 5736).

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במשפט ידי אשיב נקם לצרי ולמשנאי אשלם: מב אשכיר
חצי מדם וחרבי תאכל בשר מדם חלל ושביה מראש
פרעות אויב: מג הרנינו גוים עמו כי דם־עבדיו יקום ונקם
ישיב לצריו וכפר אדמתו עמו: פ (שביעי) מד ויבא משה וידבר
את־כל־דברי השירה־הזאת באזני העם הוא והושע בן־נון:

ברקא מסוף שמיא ועד סוף שמיא התגלי
חרבי ותתקף בדינא ידי אתיב פורענותא
לסנאי ולבעלי דבבי אשלם: מב אררי גירי
מדמא וחרבי תקטול בעממיא מדם קטילן
ושבין לאעדאה כתרין מריש סנאה
ובעל דבבא: מג שבחו עממיא עמה ארי
פורענות עבדוהי צדיקיא יתפרע ופורענות
יתיב לסנאוהי ויכפר על ארעה ועל עמה:
מד ואתא משה ומליל ית כל פתגמי

רש"י

דבר אחר ותאחז ידי את מדת המשפט להחזיק בה ולנקום נקם: **אשיב נקם וגו'.** למדו רבותינו בהגדה מתוך לשון המקרא שאמר ותאחז במשפט ידי, לא כמדת בשר ודם מדת הקב"ה, מדת בשר ודם זורק חץ ואינו יכול להשיבו, והקב"ה זורק חציו ויש בידו להשיבן, כאלו אוחזן בידו, שהרי ברק הוא חצו, שנאמר כאן ברק חרבי ותאחז במשפט ידי, והמשפט הזה לשון פורענות הוא בלע"ז יושטיצ"א: (מב) **אשכיר חצי מדם.** האויב: **וחרבי תאכל בשר.** בשרם: **מדם חלל ושביה.** זאת תהיה להם מעון דם חללי (ס"א חללי דם) ישראל ושביה ששבו מהם: **מראש פרעות אויב.** משפט תחלת פרצות האויב, כי כשהקב"ה נפרע מן האומות פוקד עליהם עונם ועונות אבותיהם מראשית פרצה שפרצו בישראל: (מג) **הרנינו גוים עמו.** לאותו הזמן ישבחו האומות את ישראל ראו מה שבחה של אומה זו שדבקו בהקב"ה בכל התלאות שעברו עליהם ולא עזבוהו, יודעים היו בטובו ובשבחו: **כי דם עבדיו יקום.** שפיכות דמיהם כמשמעו: **ונקם ישיב לצריו.** על הגזל ועל החמס, כענין שנאמר מצרים לשממה תהיה ואדום למדבר שממה תהיה מחמס בני יהודה, ואומר מחמס אחיך יעקב וגו'[1]: **וכפר אדמתו עמו.** ויפייס אדמתו ועמו על הצרות שעברו עליהם ושעשה להם האויב: **וכפר.** לשון רצוי ופיוס, כמו אכפרה פניו[2] אנחינה לרוגזיה: **וכפר אדמתו.** ומה היא אדמתו עמו. כשעמו מתנחמים ארצו מתנחמת, וכן הוא אומר רצית ה' ארצך[3], במה רצית ארצך, שבת שבות יעקב. בפנים אחרים היא נדרשת בספרי, ונחלקו בה ר' יהודה ור' נחמיה. ר' יהודה דורש כולה כנגד ישראל, ור' נחמיה דורש כולה כנגד האומות. רבי יהודה דורשה כלפי ישראל אמרתי אפאיהם, כמו שפירשתי עד ולא ה' פעל כל זאת. כי גוי אובד עצות המה אבדו תורתי שהיא להם עצה נכונה. ואין בהם תבונה להתבונן איכה ירדוף אחד מן האומות אלף מהם אם לא כי צורם מכרם, כי לא כצורנו צורם, הכל כמו שפירשתי עד תכליתו. ור' נחמיה דורשה כלפי האומות כי גוי אבד עצות המה, כמו שפירשתי תחלה עד ואויבינו פלילים: (לב) **כי מגפן סדום גפנם.** של אומות: **ומשדמות עמורה וגו'.** ולא ישימו לבם לתלות הגדולה בי: **ענבמו ענבי רוש.** הוא שאמר לולי כעס אויב אגור על ישראל להרשיעם ולהמרירם, לפיכך אשכלות מרורות למו להלעיטם אותם על מה שעשו לבני: (לג) **חמת תנינם יינם.** מוכן להשקותם על מה שעשו להם: (לד) **כמוס עמדי.** אותו הכוס, שנאמר כי כוס ביד ה' וגו'[4]: (לה) **לעת תמוט רגלם.** כענין שנאמר תרמסנה רגל[5]: (לו) **כי ידין ה' עמו.** בלשון זה משמע כי ידין בלשון דהא, ואין ידין לשון יסורין, אלא כמו כי יריב את ריבם מיד עושקיהם: **כי יראה כי אזלת יד וגו'.** (לז) **ואמר אי אלהימו.** האויב יאמר אי אלהימו של ישראל, כמו שאמר טיטוס הרשע כשגדר את הפרכת[6], כענין שנאמר ותרא אויבתי ותכסה בושה האומרה אלי איו ה' אלהיך[7]: (לט) **ראו עתה כי אני וגו'.** אז יגלה הקב"ה ישועתו ויאמר ראו עתה כי אני אני הוא מאתי באת עליכם הרעה ומאתי תבא עליכם הטובה: **ואין מידי מציל.** מי שיציל אתכם מן הרעה אשר אביא עליכם: (מ) **כי אשא אל שמים ידי.** כמו כי נשאתי, תמיד אני משרה מקום שכינתי בשמים, כתרגומו אפילו חלש למעלה וגבור למטה, אימת העליון על התחתון, וכל שכן שגבור למעלה וחלש מלמטה: **ידי.** מקום שכינתי, כמו איש על ידו[8], והיה בידי להפרע מכם, אבל אמרתי חי אנכי לעולם, איני ממהר לפרוע, לפי שיש לי שהות בדבר, כי אני חי לעולם, ובדורות אחרונים אני נפרע מהם והיכולת בידי להפרע מן המתים ומן החיים. מלך בשר ודם שהוא הולך למות ממהר נקמתו להפרע בחייו, כי שמא ימות הוא או אויבו ונמצא שלא ראה נקמתו ממנו, אבל אני חי לעולם ואם ימותו הם ואיני נפרע בחייהם, אפרע במותם: (מא) **אם שנותי ברק חרבי.** הרבה אם יש שאינם תלויין, כשאשנן ברק חרבי ותאחז במשפט ידי וכו', כמו שפירשתי למעלה: (מד) **הוא והושע בן נון.** שבת[9]

TORAS MENACHEM

Therefore, the *Talmud* was forced to contradict this notion and show (through an elaborate proof) that, to the contrary, our verse *does* provide support for the revival of the dead.

However, *Rashi* presumed that his readership would not yet be familiar with the *Talmudic* teaching, "*There are three keys in God's hand etc.*," so *Rashi* did not need to prove that our verse could have any other meaning than its literal interpretation—that the same person to whom "I cause death, I will bring to life."

Thus, in the final analysis, "*We have a proof from the Torah that the dead will be revived*," both at the literal level of scripture, and according to Talmudic logic.

level, because there is another *Talmudic* teaching that might lead a person to think otherwise.

The *Talmud* states, "*There are three keys in God's hand that He will not place into the hand of any agent. And they are: the key to rain, the key to bearing children, and the key to revive the dead*" (*Ta'anis* 2a). Thus, the student of the *Talmud* might come to the conclusion that our verse comes to extend this teaching to the causes of death and continued life—that rather than handing these matters to an agent, God says, "*I* cause death and *I* bring to life," directly. Consequently, if our verse has already been used to provide proof that God does these directly without an agent, then it can no longer be used to prove another point, that the revival of the dead has a basis in the Torah.

(Based on *Sichos Shabbos Parshas Ha'azinu* 5740)

1 עובדי' א, י 2 בראשית לב, כא 3 תהלים פה, ב 4 שם עה, ט 5 ישעי' כו, ו 6 גיטין נו: 7 מיכה ז, י 8 במדבר ב, יז 9 לכאורה אין אפ"ל שהי' יום השבת והוי (במשנ"ת) ביום מותו גמר לכתוב הס"ת (כידוע השקו"ט גם ע"ד ההלכה עד"ז). ואולי הי' כתוב ברש"י "שי' של דיוגי", והכוונה "שררה" או "שלטון" של דיוגי, על שניהם, והמעתיק שלא הבין כוונת רש"י ב"ש" פיענחו כבש"ס (סוטה יג:) - "שבת" (ע"פ לקו"ש חכ"ט ע' 198 הערה 21, ע"ש).

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I will bring vengeance upon (them, for they are) My enemies (too).
I will repay those who hate Me.
42 *I will make My arrows drunk with (enemy) blood,*
And My sword will consume (their) flesh;
On account of the blood of the slain (of Israel) and the captives (seized),
From (even) the first attacks of the enemy.
43 *(At that time) the nations will sing praises for His people!*
When (they see how) He will avenge the blood of His servants (that they spilled),
Inflict revenge upon His enemies (for the robberies and losses they caused),
And appease His land (and) His people (for their distress).

SEVENTH READING 44 *Moshe came and spoke all the words of this song into the ears of the people, he and Hoshe'a the son of Nun.*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why will the nations praise Israel? (v. 43)

RASHI: At that time, the nations will praise Israel, saying: "See how praiseworthy this nation is, that they remained attached to God throughout all the hardships that they suffered and they did not forsake Him!

● Why are both Moshe and Yehoshua mentioned? (v. 44)

RASHI: It was a rulership of two pairs, [two leaders each with their own spokesman through whom they lectured. For complete] authority had been taken from one and given to [be shared with] the other. Moshe appointed a spokesman for Yehoshua, for Yehoshua to lecture in Moshe's lifetime, so that the Jewish people would not say, "During your teacher's lifetime you did not dare to raise your head!"

Why does Scripture here call him [here, with his prior name] "Hoshe'a"? To indicate that Yehoshua did not become arrogant, for although he was given high status, he humbled himself to be as he was at the beginning [when he was still called Hoshe'a].

TORAS MENACHEM

THE NATIONS' PRAISE OF ISRAEL (v. 43)

Verse 43 states that the nations will praise the Jewish people when they witness how God avenges those who harmed "His servants." *Rashi* adds that the content of this praise will be how *"they remained attached to God throughout all the hardships that they suffered and they did not forsake Him!"*

At first glance, however, *Rashi*'s words seem to have no basis at the literal level. Where is there an indication *in the verse itself* that the nations will praise Israel because "they remained attached to God *throughout all the hardships that they suffered, etc.*"?

THE EXPLANATION

On reading that the nations will "sing praises" for the Jewish people, *Rashi* was troubled by an apparent inconsistency between this verse and an earlier statement made in the song of *Ha'azinu*. In verse 6, Moshe said, *"Is this how you repay God, you disgraceful, unwise people? Is He not your Father, your Master? He has made you (a special nation), and established you (to be self-sufficient)."* Consequently, upon reading in our verse that the nations will praise the Jewish people, *Rashi* was troubled: How is it possible that the nations will *praise* the Jewish people when *Moshe himself* spoke in the most unflattering terms about Israel?

Clearly, *Rashi* concluded, the two verses must be speaking of two very different times. Therefore *Rashi* wrote, *"At that time,* the nations will praise Israel," indicating that Moshe was speaking here of distant, future events.

What could possibly bring about this transformation, from a "disgraceful, unwise people," to one that even the nations of the world will praise?

Rashi concluded that this must be the effect of the Jewish people's remarkable stamina to withstand a long and difficult exile, i.e. *"that they remained attached to God throughout all the hardships that they suffered, and they did not forsake Him!"*

(Based on *Sichos Shabbos Parshas Ha'azinu* 5741)

MOSHE & YEHOSHUA (v. 44)

Rashi's self-declared task is to explain the literal meaning of scripture, and not to cite *Talmudic* and *Midrashic* teachings which are not connected with a verse at the literal level. But in his commentary to verse 44, he cites no less than *three* apparently non-literal teachings of the Sages: a.) About the "rulership of two pairs," from the *Talmud* (*Sotah* 13b); b.) The appointment of Yehoshua's "spokesman" (*Sifri*, near beginning of *Vayeilech*); and, c.) The reason why our verse uses the name Hoshe'a, and not Yehoshua (*Sifri* to this verse). Why are these three teachings necessary to understand our verse at the literal level?

A further problem here, is that our verse is not the first occasion that the Torah refers to the joint role of Moshe and Yehoshua on the last day of Moshe's life. In *Parshas Vayeilech*, the Torah also states: *"Moshe and Yehoshua went, and stood in the Tent of Meeting"* (31:14). Furthermore, at the very beginning of *Parshas Vayeilech*, Moshe also touched on this matter, when he said *"I am no longer (permitted by God) to lead (you)"* (ibid. v. 2). So why did *Rashi* not address this issue of the joint leadership when the matter first arose, rather than here?

THE EXPLANATION

Even though Moshe declared at the beginning of *Parshas Vayeilech* that his leadership was ending, he immediately clarified that this was because *"God said to me, 'You may not cross this (River) Jordan,'"* (ibid.), suggesting that his leadership was actually going to continue *until the Jewish people had crossed the Jordan.* So from *Parshas Vayeilech*, there is no proof, at the literal level, that Yehoshua had *yet* been given any leadership position at all.

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מה וַיְכַל מֹשֶׁה לְדַבֵּר אֶת־כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֶל־כָּל־
יִשְׂרָאֵל׃ מו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם שִׂימוּ לְבַבְכֶם לְכָל־הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר
אָנֹכִי מֵעִיד בָּכֶם הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר תְּצַוֻּם אֶת־בְּנֵיכֶם לִשְׁמֹר לַעֲשׂוֹת
אֶת־כָּל־דִּבְרֵי הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת׃ מז כִּי לֹא־דָבָר רֵק הוּא מִכֶּם
כִּי־הוּא חַיֵּיכֶם וּבַדָּבָר הַזֶּה תַּאֲרִיכוּ יָמִים עַל־הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר
אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ׃ פ [מפטיר] מח וַיְדַבֵּר
יְהֹוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בְּעֶצֶם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה לֵאמֹר׃ מט עֲלֵה אֶל־הַר
הָעֲבָרִים הַזֶּה הַר־נְבוֹ אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרֶץ מוֹאָב אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי יְרֵחוֹ
וּרְאֵה אֶת־אֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי נֹתֵן לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לַאֲחֻזָּה׃
נ וּמֻת בָּהָר אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עֹלֶה שָׁמָּה וְהֵאָסֵף אֶל־עַמֶּיךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר־
מֵת אַהֲרֹן אָחִיךָ בְּהֹר הָהָר וַיֵּאָסֶף אֶל־עַמָּיו׃ נא עַל אֲשֶׁר

תֻּשְׁבַּחְתָּא הָדָא קֳדָם עַמָּא הוּא וְהוֹשֵׁעַ בַּר
נוּן: מה וְשֵׁיצִי מֹשֶׁה לְמַלָּלָא יָת כָּל פִּתְגָּמַיָּא
הָאִלֵּין עִם כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל: מו וַאֲמַר לְהוֹן שַׁוּוּ
לִבְּכוֹן לְכָל פִּתְגָּמַיָּא דִּי אֲנָא מַסְהֵד בְּכוֹן
יוֹמָא דֵין דִּי תְפַקְּדוּן יָת בְּנֵיכוֹן לְמִטַּר
לְמֶעְבַּד יָת כָּל פִּתְגָּמֵי אוֹרַיְתָא הָדָא: מז אֲרֵי
לָא פִתְגָּם רֵיקָא הוּא מִנְּכוֹן אֲרֵי הוּא חַיֵּיכוֹן
וּבְפִתְגָּמָא הָדֵין תּוֹרְכוּן יוֹמִין עַל אַרְעָא דִּי
אַתּוּן עָבְרִין יָת יַרְדְּנָא לְתַמָּן לְמֵירְתַהּ:
מח וּמַלִּיל יְיָ עִם מֹשֶׁה בִּכְרַן יוֹמָא הָדֵין
לְמֵימָר: מט סַק לְטוּרָא דַעֲבָרָאֵי הָדֵין טוּרָא
דִנְבוֹ דִּי בְּאַרְעָא דְמוֹאָב דִּי עַל אַפֵּי יְרֵחוֹ וַחֲזִי
יָת אַרְעָא דִכְנַעַן דִּי אֲנָא יָהֵב לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
לְאַחְסָנָא: נ וּמוּת בְּטוּרָא דִּי אַתְּ סָלֵק לְתַמָּן
וְאִתְכְּנֵשׁ לְעַמָּךְ כְּמָא דְמִית אַהֲרֹן אֲחוּךְ
בְּהוֹר טוּרָא וְאִתְכְּנֵישׁ לְעַמֵּהּ: נא עַל דִּי

רש"י

של דיוצי היתה, נטלה רשות מזה וניתנה לזה[1], העמיד לו משה מתורגמן ליהושע, שיהא דורש בחייו, כדי שלא יאמרו ישראל בחיי רבך לא היה לך להרים ראש[2]. ולמה קוראו כאן הושע, לומר שלא זחה דעתו עליו, שאף על פי שנתנה לו גדולה, השפיל עצמו כאשר מתחלתו[2]: **(מו) שימו לבבכם.** צריך אדם שיהיו עיניו ולבו ואזניו מכוונים לדברי תורה, וכן הוא אומר בן אדם ראה בעיניך ובאזניך שמע ושים לבך וגו'[3], הרי דברים קל וחומר, ומה תבנית הבית שהוא נראה לעינים ונמדד בקנה צריך אדם שיהיו עיניו ואזניו ולבו מכוונים להבין, דברי תורה שהן כהררין התלויין בשערה על אחת כמה וכמה[2]: **(מז) כי לא דבר רק הוא מכם.** לא לחנם אתם יגעים בה, כי הרבה שכר תלוי בה, כי הוא חייכם. דבר אחר אין לך דבר ריקן בתורה שאם תדרשנו שאין בו מתן שכר, תדע לך שכן אמרו ואחות לוטן תמנע[4], ותמנע היתה פלגש וגו'[5], לפי שאמרה איני כדאי להיות לו לאשה הלואי ואהיה פילגשו, וכל כך למה, להודיע שבחו של אברהם שהיו שלטונים ומלכים מתאוים להדבק בזרעו[2]: **(מח) וידבר ה' אל משה בעצם היום הזה.** בשלשה מקומות[6] נאמר בעצם היום הזה, נאמר בנח בעצם היום הזה בא נח וגו'[7], במראית אורו של יום, לפי שהיו בני דורו אומרים בכך וכך אם אנו מרגישין בו אין אנו מניחין אותו ליכנס בתיבה, ולא עוד אלא אנו נוטלין כשילין וקרדומות ומבקעין את התיבה. אמר הקב"ה הריני מכניסו בחצי היום, וכל מי שיש בידו כח למחות יבא וימחה. במצרים נאמר בעצם היום הזה הוציא ה'[8], לפי שהיו מצרים אומרים בכך וכך אם אנו מרגישין בהם אין אנו מניחים אותם לצאת, ולא עוד אלא אנו נוטלין סייפות וכלי זיין והורגין בהם. אמר הקב"ה הריני מוציאן בחצי היום וכל מי שיש בו כח למחות יבא וימחה. אף כאן במיתתו של משה נאמר בעצם היום הזה, לפי שהיו ישראל אומרים בכך וכך אם אנו מרגישין בו אין אנו מניחין אותו, אדם שהוציאנו ממצרים וקרע לנו את הים והוריד לנו את המן והגיז לנו את השליו והעלה לנו את הבאר ונתן לנו את התורה אין אנו מניחין אותו. אמר הקב"ה הריני מכניסו בחצי היום וכו'[2]: **(נ) כאשר מת אהרן אחיך.** באותה מיתה שראית וחמדת אותה, שהפשיט משה את אהרן בגד ראשון

TORAS MENACHEM

Likewise, the fact that "*Moshe and Yehoshua went, and stood in the Tent of Meeting*" (31:14), does not prove that Yehoshua had begun a new leadership position, for at the literal level, they were merely following orders from God: "*Call Yehoshua and stand in the Tent of Meeting*" (Ibid.).

It is only upon reading in our verse, "*Moshe came and spoke all the words of this song into the ears of the people, he and Hoshe'a the son of Nun,*" that we have clear proof of Yehoshua actually beginning a leadership role *alongside* Moshe.

Therefore *Rashi* explained, "*It was a rulership of two pairs...Moshe appointed a spokesman for Yehoshua,*" for addressing the people by means of a spokesman was the privilege of the leader of the Jewish people, a role which Moshe and Yehoshua now shared.

However, this begs the question: Usually, a new leader begins office only after the passing of the previous leader. Why should Yehoshua's leadership have started *before* Moshe passed away?

To explain this, *Rashi* continues: "*So that the Jewish people would not say, 'During your teacher's lifetime you did not dare to raise your head!'*"

But the question then arises: if the whole purpose of this transfer of power is to "raise the head," of Yehoshua, why then is he called by his prior name, Hoshe'a? *Rashi* answers: "*To indicate that Yehoshua did not become arrogant, for although he was given high status, he humbled himself as he was at the beginning*"—a powerful lesson for all those who are appointed to positions of authority.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 29, p. 195*ff.*)

1 סוטה יג: 2 ספרי 3 יחזקאל מ, ד 4 בראשית לו, כב 5 שם יב 6 מעין באברהם (לך יז, כג) "ויקח גו' בעצם היום הזה" ופרש"י "לא נתיירא כו'" — אינו שייך לנדו"ד, שהרי שם המדובר בנזירת מהרי"ן) אברהם ("ביום שנצטוה כו' ולא נתירא כו'"), משא"כ בנדו"ד ד"בעצם גו'" הוא מפנות הקב"ה לאמירה ד"אין אנו מניחין כו'". וראה בארוכה מפרשי רש"י כאן. — וי"ל שזהו שמפרש רש"י המובן: ג' מקומות — לפשטי הנ"ל. וראה בארוכה שיחות ש"פ האזינו תשמ"א (לקו"ש חי"ט ע' 339, הערה 2). 7 שם ז, יג 8 שמות יב, נא

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MOSHE'S CONCLUDING WORDS

32:45 *When Moshe finished speaking all these words to all of Israel, [46] he said to them, "Turn your hearts to all of the words which I am bearing witness for you today, so that you will command your children to be careful to observe all the words of this Torah. [47] For it is not an empty thing for you (for which you will not be rewarded). Rather, it is your life! Through this thing, you will lengthen your days upon the land of which you are crossing over the Jordan, to take possession."*

MOSHE IS TOLD TO ASCEND MOUNT NEVO

32:48 MAFTIR *God spoke to Moshe on that very day, saying, [49] "Climb up the Avarite mountains here, (at) Mount Nevo—which is in the land of Mo'av that is facing Jericho—and see the Land of Cana'an, which I am giving to the children of Israel as a possession. [50] Then die on the mountain upon which you are climbing and be gathered to your people, just as your brother Aharon*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Aren't the words *"on that very day"* superfluous? (v. 48)

RASHI: Scripture uses the phrase "on that very day," in three places [that have the same implication]:

[1.] Concerning Noach it is written, *"On that very day...Noach came into [the Ark]...."* (Bereishis 7:13), indicating that daylight was shining [when he came in]. For the people of his generation were saying, "We swear that we will not allow him to enter the Ark if we notice him! Furthermore, we will take axes [to hold back Noach] and sledgehammers to smash the ark!"

But God said, "I will have him enter in broad daylight! If anybody's hand is able to resist, let him come and resist!"

[2.] Concerning Egypt it is written, *"[It happened] on that very day that God took [the children of Israel] out [of the land of Egypt]"* (Shemos 12:51). For the Egyptians were saying, "We swear that we will not allow them to leave if we notice them! Furthermore, we will take swords and weapons [of self-defense], and kill them [if need be]!"

But God said: "I will bring them out in broad daylight! If anyone is able to resist, let him come and resist!"

[3.] Likewise here, concerning Moshe's death, it is written, *"on that very day."* For the Jewish people were saying, "We swear, that if we notice Moshe [is going to die], we will not let him! He is the man who brought us out of Egypt! He split the Reed Sea for us! He brought the *manna* down for us! He made flocks of quails fly over to us! He brought up the well for us! And he gave us the Torah! We will not let him [die]!"

But God said, "I will take him in broad daylight!"

TORAS MENACHEM

MOSHE'S PASSING ON THE MOUNTAIN (v. 48)

Rashi's comments to verse 48 prompt the following questions:

a.) *Rashi* writes, *"The Jewish people were saying, 'We swear, that if we notice Moshe [is going to die], we will not let him!'"* At first glance, this appears to be utterly absurd. Life and death is something that is in the hands of God and cannot be decided by man. How could the Jewish people possibly "not let" Moshe die?

b.) Is it really necessary to know that, "Scripture uses the phrase, 'on that very day,' *in three places, etc.*"? Why was it not sufficient for *Rashi* to explain *our verse alone?*

c.) *Rashi* does not explain why Noach's contemporaries wished to stop him from entering the Ark, nor does he explain why the Egyptians did not want the Jewish people to leave Egypt, because the reason is obvious. So *why* did *Rashi* explain that the Jewish people did not want Moshe to die because *"he is the man who brought us out of Egypt! etc."*? Surely this is obvious too?

THE EXPLANATION

In our verse, the phrase "on that very day" appears to be superfluous. Since no word in the Torah can be devoid of meaning, *Rashi* searched for a teaching that would explain why the Torah used this extra phrase.

Rashi concluded that the words "on that very day" allude to the *Midrashic* teaching that *"God said, 'I will take him in broad daylight!'"* in response to the efforts of the Jewish people to avert Moshe's death.

However, at the literal level, this account is difficult to accept. For we are speaking here of the generation that entered the Land of Israel, who—unlike their parents—did not rebel against God and *"remained attached to God, your God"* (Devarim 4:4). So why would a righteous generation attempt to defy God's explicit wish that Moshe die at this time?

Sparks of Chasidus

When the Jewish people sought to annul the decree against Moshe's passing, God did *not* reply, "If anyone is able to resist, let him come and resist!" (see *Classic Questions*). The inner reason for this is because if the Jewish people had actually resisted, they would have *indeed* reversed the Divine decree against Moshe's passing. For when the Jewish community is united, they have the power to nullify a Divine decree, even after the decree is sealed (See Rosh Hashanah 18a).

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 346)

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מְעַלְתֶּם בִּי בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמֵי־מְרִיבַת קָדֵשׁ מִדְבַּר־צִן
עַל אֲשֶׁר לֹא־קִדַּשְׁתֶּם אוֹתִי בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: נב כִּי מִנֶּגֶד
תִּרְאֶה אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְשָׁמָּה לֹא תָבוֹא אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־אֲנִי נֹתֵן
לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: פ פ פ

שְׁקַרְתּוּן בְּמֵימְרִי בְּגוֹ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמֵי מַצּוּת
רְקַם מַדְבְּרָא דְצִן עַל דִּי לָא קַדֶּשְׁתּוּן יָתִי בְּגוֹ
בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: נב אֲרֵי מִקֳּבֵל תֶּחֱזֵי יָת אַרְעָא
וּלְתַמָּן לָא תֵעוֹל לְאַרְעָא דִּי אֲנָא יָהֵב לִבְנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל: פ פ פ

נ"ב פסוקים, בל"ב סימן.

רש"י

והלבישו לאלעזר וכן שני וכן שלישי וראה בנו בכבודו. אמר לו משה אהרן אחי עלה למטה, ועלה. פשוט ידיך, ופשט. פשוט רגליך, ופשט. עצום עיניך, ועצם. קמוץ פיך, וקמץ, והלך לו. אמר משה אשרי מי שמת במיתה זו[1]: (נא) על אשר מעלתם בי. גרמתם למעול בי: על אשר לא קדשתם אותי. גרמתם לי שלא אתקדש, אמרתי לכם ודברתם אל הסלע[2] והם הכוהו והוצרכו להכותו פעמים, ואילו דברו עמו ונתן מימיו בלא הכאה היה מתקדש שם שמים, שהיו ישראל אומרים ומה הסלע הזה שאינו נשכר ולא נפרענות אם זכה אין לו מתן שכר ואם חטא אינו לוקה כך מקיים מצות בוראו אנו לא כל שכן: (נב) כי מנגד. מרחוק: תראה וגו'. כי אם לא תראנה עכשיו לא תראנה עוד בחייך: ושמה לא תבוא. וידעתי כי חביבה היא לך על כן אני אומר לך עלה וראה: חסלת פרשת האזינו

TORAS MENACHEM

In order to answer this question, *Rashi* cited the fact that, "Scripture uses the phrase, 'on that very day,' *in three places....*" For by demonstrating that this phrase *consistently* has the connotation of a rebellion against God, *Rashi* strengthens his assertion that this too is the meaning of the phrase here.

How, indeed, did the Jewish people intend to rebel against God and avert Moshe's death? *Rashi* stresses that this case is, *"likewise here..."* i.e., similar in nature to the previous two cases that he cited, about Noach and the Egyptian people. Both these two cases involved a rebellious group which plotted to prevent the *relocation* of another party: Noach's contemporaries wished to stop him from relocating into the Ark, and the Egyptian people planned to stop the Jewish people from leaving Egypt.

So, *"likewise here,"* it follows that the Jewish people wished to avert Moshe's death by *preventing him from relocating to another place*, namely, to Mount Nevo. For God had said, "Climb up the Avarite mountains here, (at) Mount Nevo....*Then die on the mountain*" (v. 49-50), indicating that Moshe's death was to be the result of a Divine decree (not from natural causes), which would occur *after* ascending the mountain. So the people figured: If Moshe does not "climb up Mount Nevo," then the decree will not take effect, and he will not die.

1 ספרי 2 במדבר כ, ח

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died on the double mountain and was gathered to his people. [51] *For, in the presence of the children of Israel, you (caused people to) betray Me at the waters of Merivas-Kadaish, in the desert of Tzin, for you did not (allow) My (Name) to be sanctified in the presence of the children of Israel.* [52] *While you will see the land from afar, you will not come there, to the land I am giving to the children of Israel.*

HAFTARAHS: HA'AZINU—P. 293. SHABBOS SHUVAH—P. 290.

TORAS MENACHEM

However, the question still remains: How could a righteous generation of Jewish people attempt to *defy* God's Will and prevent Moshe from dying by Divine decree?

The Jewish People's Argument

If a person helps you, there is a Torah obligation not to be ungrateful to that person. We see this, at the literal level, from the example of first-fruits which must be taken to the Temple from one's portion of the Land of Israel. "[*To show*] *that you are not ungrateful* [*to God*]" (*Rashi* to *Devarim* 26:3).

Moshe had helped the Jewish people in so many ways: "*He is the man who brought us out of Egypt! He split the Reed Sea for us! He brought the manna down for us! He made flocks of quails fly over to us! He brought up the well for us! And he gave us the Torah!*" So the Jewish people had a Torah *obligation* to show gratitude to Moshe, and help him, in any way possible. Thus, when Moshe faced a decree of death, the Jewish people were *obliged* to help Moshe, by restraining him from going on the mountain where the decree was to be enacted.

So there were two conflicting obligations here: On the one hand, Moshe was required by the Torah to ascend the mountain. But, on the other hand, the Jewish people were required by the Torah to ensure that Moshe did not ascend the mountain!

In the final analysis the Jewish people decided that their obligation superseded that of Moshe's, for the following reason:

The Torah states, "God spoke *to Moshe* on that very day, saying... 'Climb up...Mount Nevo....Then die on the mountain,'" indicating that the requirement to ascend the mountain was incumbent on Moshe *alone*. As far as the Jewish people were concerned, they had one single obligation resting upon them which they were required to carry out: to save Moshe. Even though this would, in turn, prevent Moshe from carrying out *his* obligation, this would nevertheless not be considered a *transgression* on Moshe's part, but rather, Moshe would be *exempt* due to circumstances beyond his control (*cf. Devarim* 22:26 and *Rashi* ibid.). And this, reasoned the Jewish people, would be less of a problem than failing to discharge their own Torah obligation to save Moshe, which constituted circumstances *within* their control.

Furthermore, the very fact that God had put it within the control of the Jewish people to nullify the decree was taken as a hint by them from God that they should do everything in their power to keep Moshe alive.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 19, p. 339*ff*.)

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parshas Vezos Habrachah

פרשת וזאת הברכה

The Name of the Parsha

Parshas Vezos Habracha (*"And this is the blessing"*) is the concluding *Parsha* of the entire Torah. It is not read on *Shabbos*, but on the festival of *Simchas Torah*. This has the following significance:

- The Torah begins with *Parshas Bereishis* (*"In the beginning"*), which teaches us the general principle that *"God created the world for the sake of the Torah which is called, 'the beginning of His way,'"* (Rashi to *Bereishis* 1:1). The subsequent *parshiyos* continue to discuss various *details* concerning how the Torah's plan is to be enacted, but on reaching the end of the Torah we return again to the *general* theme and purpose of the Torah: *"This is the blessing,"* i.e. that God's blessings are brought into the world via the observance of Torah.

- The blessings mentioned here by Moshe in this *Parsha* are considerably greater than any of the blessings given earlier in the Torah, such as those given by *Yitzchak* and *Ya'akov*. And yet, in contrast to all the other *Parshiyos* of the Torah, this *Parsha* is not read amid the spiritually uplifting atmosphere of *Shabbos*, but on a *weekday*. (And while it is a *festival* day, it is nevertheless of a lower sanctity than *Shabbos*, as evidenced by the fact that many acts that are forbidden on *Shabbos* are permitted on a festival). So with *Parshas Vezos Habrachah* we witness two extremes: It is the *Parsha* which contains the *most* blessings, and yet it is read on a day which is of *lesser* holiness. This indicates that the blessings read here are very powerful, for the ability to penetrate through to a lower sphere (a weekday, as opposed to *Shabbos*) indicates that the blessings come from a *higher source*.

- Furthermore, the *Parsha* is called, *"And this is (vezos) the blessing,"* indicating that we are speaking here about blessings whose benefits are visible and apparent, to the extent that one can actually *"point to it with one's finger"* (cf. Rashi to Shemos 15:2), and say, *"This is the blessing!"*

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Balak* 5740, *Sicha of 6th of Tishrei* 5734 and *Sicha of 6th night of Succos* 5742)

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לג א וְזֹאת הַבְּרָכָה אֲשֶׁר בֵּרַךְ מֹשֶׁה אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־בְּנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל לִפְנֵי מוֹתוֹ: ב וַיֹּאמַר יְהוָה מִסִּינַי בָּא וְזָרַח מִשֵּׂעִיר לָמוֹ
הוֹפִיעַ מֵהַר פָּארָן וְאָתָה מֵרִבְבֹת קֹדֶשׁ מִימִינוֹ *אֵשְׁדָּת לָמוֹ:
ג אַף חֹבֵב עַמִּים כָּל־קְדֹשָׁיו בְּיָדֶךָ וְהֵם תֻּכּוּ לְרַגְלֶךָ יִשָּׂא
מִדַּבְּרֹתֶיךָ: ד תּוֹרָה צִוָּה־לָנוּ מֹשֶׁה מוֹרָשָׁה קְהִלַּת יַעֲקֹב:
ה וַיְהִי בִישֻׁרוּן מֶלֶךְ בְּהִתְאַסֵּף רָאשֵׁי עָם יַחַד שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
ו יְחִי רְאוּבֵן וְאַל־יָמֹת וִיהִי מְתָיו מִסְפָּר: ס ז וְזֹאת לִיהוּדָה
וַיֹּאמַר שְׁמַע יְהוָה קוֹל יְהוּדָה וְאֶל־עַמּוֹ תְּבִיאֶנּוּ יָדָיו רָב לוֹ
וְעֵזֶר מִצָּרָיו תִּהְיֶה: פ (שני) ח וּלְלֵוִי אָמַר תֻּמֶּיךָ וְאוּרֶיךָ לְאִישׁ
חֲסִידֶךָ אֲשֶׁר נִסִּיתוֹ בְּמַסָּה תְּרִיבֵהוּ עַל־מֵי מְרִיבָה: ט הָאֹמֵר
לְאָבִיו וּלְאִמּוֹ לֹא רְאִיתִיו וְאֶת־אֶחָיו לֹא הִכִּיר וְאֶת־בָּנוֹ** לֹא

*קרי אש דת **קרי בניו

א ודא ברכתא די בריך משה נביא דיי ית
בני ישראל קדם מותה: ב ואמר יי מסיני
אתגלי וזהור יקרה משעיר אתחזי לנא
אתגלי בגבורתה בטורא דפארן ועמה רבבת
קדישין כתב ימינה מגו אשתא אוריתא
יהב לנא: ג אף חביבינון לשבטיא כל
קדישוהי בית ישראל בגבורא אפקנון
ממצרים ואנון מדברין תחות ענגך נטלין
על מימרך: ד אוריתא יהב לנא משה מסרה
ירתא לכנשת יעקב: ה והוה בישראל מלכא
באתכנשות רישי עמא כחדא שבטיא
דישראל: ו יחי ראובן לחיי עלמא ומותא
תנינא לא ימות ויקבלון בנוהי אחסנתהון
במנינהון: ז ודא ליהודה ואמר קבל יי צלותה
דיהודה במפקה לקרבא (ולאנתא קרבא)
ולעמה תתיבנה לשלם ידוהי יעבדן לה
פורענותא מסנאוהי וסעיד מבעלי דבבוהי
הוי לה: ח וללוי אמר תומיא ואוריא
אלבשתא לגבר דאשתכח חסידא קדמך די
נסיתוהי בנסתא והוה שלים בחנתוהי
על מי מצותא ואשתכח מהימן: ט דרחים על
אבוהי ועל אמה לא רחם כד חבו מן דינא
ואפי אחוהי ובנוהי לא נסיב ארי נטרו

רש"י

(א) וזאת הברכה. לפני מותו. סמוך למיתתו[1] שאם לא עכשיו אימתי: (ב) ויאמר ה' מסיני בא. פתח תחלה בשבחו של מקום ואחר כך פתח בצרכיהם של ישראל[1]. ובשבח שפתח בו יש בו הזכרת זכות לישראל וכל זה דרך ריצוי הוא, כלומר כדאי הם אלו שתחול עליהם ברכה: מסיני בא. יצא לקראתם כשבאו להתיצב בתחתית ההר כחתן היוצא להקביל פני כלה, שנאמר לקראת האלהים[2], למדנו שיצא כנגדם[3]: וזרח משעיר למו. שפתח לבני עשו שיקבלו את התורה ולא רצו: הופיע. להם: מהר פארן. שהלך שם ופתח לבני ישמעאל שיקבלוה, ולא רצו[4]: ואתה. לישראל: מרבבת קדש. ועמו מקצת רבבות מלאכי קדש, ולא כולם ולא רובם, ולא כדרך בשר ודם שמראה כל כבוד עשרו ותפארתו ביום חופתו[1]: אש דת. שהיתה כתובה מאז לפניו באש שחורה על גב אש לבנה[5], נתן להם בלוחות כתב יד ימינו. דבר אחר אש דת כתרגומו, שנתנה להם מתוך האש: (ג) אף חבב עמים. גם חבה יתירה חבב את השבטים. כל אחד ואחד קרוי עם, שהרי בנימין לבדו היה עתיד להולד כשאמר הקב"ה ליעקב[6] גוי וקהל גוים יהיה ממך[7]: כל קדשיו בידך. נפשות הצדיקים גנוזות אתו, כענין שנאמר והיתה נפש אדוני צרורה בצרור החיים את ה' אלהיך[8]: והם תכו לרגלך. והם ראויים לכך, שהרי תכו עצמן לתוך תחתית ההר לרגלך בסיני. תכו לשון פועלו, הותוכו לתוך מרגלותיך: ישא מדברתיך. נשאו עליהם עול תורתך: מדברתיך. המ"ם בו קרוב ליסוד, כמו וישמע את הקול מדבר אליו[9], ואשמע קול מדבר אלי[10], כמו מתדבר אלי, אף זה מדברותיך מה שהיית מדבר להשמיעני לאמר להם. מישפו"ר פלידורל"ש בלע"ז. ואונקלוס תרגם שהיו נוסעים על פי דבורך, והמ"ם בו שמוש משמשת לשון מן. דבר אחר אף חבב עמים אף בשעת חבתם של אומות העולם שהראית להם פנים שוחקות ומסרת את ישראל בידם: כל קדשיו בידך. כל צדיקיהם וטוביהם דבקו בך ולא משו מאחריך ואתה שומרם[11]: והם תכו לרגלך. והם מתמצעים ומתכנסים לתחת צלך: ישא מדברתיך. מקבלים גזרותיך ודתותיך בשמחה. ואלה דבריהם: (ד) תורה. אשר צוה לנו משה מורשה היא לקהלת יעקב, אחזנוה ולא נעזבנה[12]: (ה) ויהי. הקב"ה: בישרון מלך. תמיד עול מלכותו עליהם: בהתאסף. בכל התאסף ראשי מספר אסיפתם: ראשי. כמו כי תשא את ראש[13] ראויין אלו שאברכם. דבר אחר בהתאסף בהתאספם יחד באגודה אחת ושלום ביניהם הוא מלכם, ולא כשיש מחלוקת ביניהם[1]: (ו) יחי ראובן. בעולם הזה: ואל ימות. לעולם הבא, שלא יזכר לו מעשה בלהה[1]: ויהי מתיו מספר. נמנין במנין שאר אחיו, דוגמא היא זו כענין שנאמר וישכב את בלהה ויהיו בני יעקב שנים עשר[14], שלא יצא מן המנין: (ז) וזאת ליהודה. סמך יהודה לראובן, מפני ששניהם הודו על קלקול שבידם, שנאמר אשר חכמים יגידו וגו' להם לבדם וגו' ולא עבר זר בתוכם[15]. ועוד פירשו רבותינו, שכל ארבעים שנה שהיו ישראל במדבר היו עצמות יהודה מתגלגלים בארון מפני נדוי שקבל עליו, שנאמר[16] וחטאתי לאבי כל הימים, אמר משה מי גרם לראובן שיודה יהודה וכו'[17]: שמע ה' קול יהודה. תפלת דוד ושלמה ואסא מפני הכושים, ויהושפט מפני העמונים, וחזקיה מפני סנחריב: ואל עמו תביאנו. לשלום מפני המלחמה (ס"א מן המלחמה): ידיו רב לו. יריבו ריבו וינקמו נקמתו: ועזר מצריו תהיה. על יהושפט התפלל על מלחמת רמות גלעד, ויזעק יהושפט וה' עזרו[18]. דבר אחר שמע ה' קול יהודה כאן רמז ברכה לשמעון מתוך ברכותיו של יהודה, ואף כשחלקו ארץ ישראל נטל שמעון מתוך גורלו של יהודה שנאמר מחבל בני יהודה נחלת בני שמעון[19]. (ומפני מה לא ייחד לו ברכה בפני עצמו, שהיה בלבו עליו על מה שעשה בשטים, כן כתוב באגדת תהלים): (ח) וללוי אמר. ועל לוי אמר: תמיך ואוריך. כלפי שכינה הוא מדבר: אשר נסיתו במסה. שלא נתלוננו עם שאר המלינים: תריבהו וגו'. כתרגומו. דבר אחר תריבהו על מי מריבה נסתקפת לו לבוא בעלילה, אם משה אמר שמעו נא המורים[20], אהרן ומרים מה עשו[1]: (ט) האומר לאביו ולאמו לא ראיתיו. כשחטאו בעגל ואמרתי מי לה' אלי[21], נאספו אלי כל בני לוי וצויתים להרוג את אבי אמו והוא מישראל, או את אחיו מאמו, או את בן בתו, וכן עשו. ואי אפשר לפרש אביו

1 ספרי 2 שמות יט, יז 3 מכילתא יט, יז 4 עבודה זרה ב: 5 תנחומא, בראשית א 6 בראשית לה, יא 7 בראשית רבה פב, ד 8 שמואל-א כה, כט 9 במדבר ז, פט 10 יחזקאל ב, ב
11 בבא בתרא ח. 12 ראה קונטרס הכ"ש עי' 229 ואילך 13 שמות ל, יב 14 בראשית לה, כב 15 איוב טו, יח-יט 16 בראשית מג, ט 17 סוטה ז: 18 דברי הימים-ב יח, לא 19 יהושע יט, ט
20 במדבר כ, י 21 שמות לב, כו

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MOSHE'S FINAL BLESSINGS

33 *And this is the blessing which Moshe, a man of God, gave to the children of Israel, (shortly) before his death.*

2 He (first) said (words of praise about God): "God came (out) from Sinai (to meet the Jewish people), and He shined His glory to them (after coming) from Se'ir, (where the children of Eisav had declined to accept the Torah). He appeared (to them after coming) from Mount Paran (where the children of Yishma'el had declined to accept the Torah). He came (to the Jewish people along) with some of the holy myriads. (Then He gave) them a fiery Law, (written with) His right Hand.

3 He also showed affection for the (tribes, who are all) nations (unto themselves). All the holy (souls of the righteous) are in Your hand (a privilege which they deserve), for they let themselves be placed at Your feet (at Mount Sinai), bearing (the yoke of) Your utterances (and decrees with joy).

4 The Torah (which) Moshe commanded us is an inheritance for the congregation of Ya'akov, (which will never be abandoned).

5 Whenever the people gathered as a numerous group, with the tribes of Israel together, (they always accepted God's rulership), so He was King in Yeshurun (and He wished to bless them).

MOSHE BLESSES THE TRIBES

33:6 *"May Re'uvain live (in this world), and (when he reaches the World to Come, may he) not "die" (because of the incident with Bilhah*). May his people be counted in the (official) number (of the tribes, and not be punished for his sin by being excluded)."*

7 The following was (said) about Yehudah. He said, "Listen, God, to Yehudah's voice (when he prays to You), and bring him (in peace) to his people (back from war). May his hands do battle for him (successfully), and may You be a help against his enemies."

SECOND READING *8 About Levi he said: "(God!) Your Tumim and Urim belong to Your pious man, (Levi), who (remained faithful when) you tested him at Massah, (and when) you tried him at the waters of Merivah.*
9 He said about his (non-Levite grand-)father (from) his mother('s side, who was guilty of perpetrating the sin of the Golden Calf), 'I do not see him (as my grandfather any more),' neither did he recognize

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

"WHENEVER THE PEOPLE GATHERED...THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL TOGETHER" (v. 5)

Verse 5 speaks of Jewish *unity* (*achdus*), "the tribes of Israel *together*," a level which is in fact *higher* than Jewish brotherly love (*ahavas yisra'el*). For even when you fulfill the command to *"love your fellow like (you love) yourself"* (*Vayikra* 19:18), there nevertheless remains two separate entities: "your fellow" and "yourself." But when *achdus* is achieved, all Jewish people come together as one *single entity* ("the tribes of Israel *together*").

Nevertheless, the Torah did not mandate an explicit command that the Jewish people reach the state of *achdus*, because *achdus* is a direct consequence and an *inevitable progression* from loving one's fellow as one loves oneself. In fact, these two stages are indicated by the *Alter Rebbe* in *Tanya* (ch. 32). First he writes that one should love every Jew *individually* by virtue of the souls they all possess, since, *"Who knows their greatness and exaltedness in their root and source in the living God?"* And then, one progresses to appreciate how all Jews are *united* as one single entity, since *"they all have one Father."*

This theme of Jewish unity is especially stressed on *Simchas Torah*, when this *Parsha* is read, a time when all Jews express their connection to Torah, not through study (in which everyone is on a different level), but rather, by dancing with their *feet*, in which all Jews are equal.

(Based on *Sicha* of the night of *Simchas Torah* 5743)

* See *Bereishis* 35:22 and *Rashi* ibid.

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יָדָע כִּי שָׁמְרוּ אִמְרָתֶךָ וּבְרִיתְךָ יִנְצֹרוּ: י יוֹרוּ מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לְיַעֲקֹב
וְתוֹרָתְךָ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל יָשִׂימוּ קְטוֹרָה בְּאַפֶּךָ וְכָלִיל עַל־מִזְבְּחֶךָ:
יא בָּרֵךְ יְהוָה חֵילוֹ וּפֹעַל יָדָיו תִּרְצֶה מְחַץ מָתְנַיִם קָמָיו
וּמְשַׂנְאָיו מִן־יְקוּמוּן: ס יב לְבִנְיָמִן אָמַר יְדִיד יְהוָה יִשְׁכֹּן לָבֶטַח
עָלָיו חֹפֵף עָלָיו כָּל־הַיּוֹם וּבֵין כְּתֵפָיו שָׁכֵן: ס (שלישי) יג וּלְיוֹסֵף
אָמַר מְבֹרֶכֶת יְהוָה אַרְצוֹ מִמֶּגֶד שָׁמַיִם מִטָּל וּמִתְּהוֹם רֹבֶצֶת
תָּחַת: יד וּמִמֶּגֶד תְּבוּאֹת שָׁמֶשׁ וּמִמֶּגֶד גֶּרֶשׁ יְרָחִים: טו וּמֵרֹאשׁ
הַרְרֵי־קֶדֶם וּמִמֶּגֶד גִּבְעוֹת עוֹלָם: טז וּמִמֶּגֶד אֶרֶץ וּמְלֹאָהּ וּרְצוֹן
שֹׁכְנִי סְנֶה תָּבוֹאתָה לְרֹאשׁ יוֹסֵף וּלְקָדְקֹד נְזִיר אֶחָיו: יז בְּכוֹר
שׁוֹרוֹ הָדָר לוֹ וְקַרְנֵי רְאֵם קַרְנָיו בָּהֶם עַמִּים יְנַגַּח יַחְדָּו אַפְסֵי־
אָרֶץ וְהֵם רִבְבוֹת אֶפְרַיִם וְהֵם אַלְפֵי מְנַשֶּׁה: ס (רביעי) יח וְלִזְבוּלֻן
אָמַר שְׂמַח זְבוּלֻן בְּצֵאתֶךָ וְיִשָּׂשכָר בְּאֹהָלֶיךָ: יט עַמִּים

מטרת מימרך וקימך לא אשניו: י כשרין אלין דילפון דינך ליעקב ואוריתך לישראל ישוון קטורת בוסמין קדמך וגמיר לרעוא על מדבחך: יא ברך יי נכסוהי וקורבן ידוהי תקבל ברעוא תבר חרצא דסנאוהי ודבעלי דבבוהי דלא יקומון: יב לבנימן אמר רחימא דיי ישרי לרחצן עלוהי יהי מגן עלוהי כל יומא ובארעה תשרי שכינתא: יג וליוסף אמר מברכא מן קדם יי ארעה עבדא מגדנין מטלא דשמיא מלעלא וממבועי עינון ותהומין דנגדן ממעמקי ארעא מלרע: יד ועבדא מגדנין ועללן מיבול שמשא ועבדא מגדנין מריש ירח בירח: טו ומריש טוריא בכיריא ומטוב רמן דלא פסקן: טז ומטוב ארעא ומלאה רעי לה דשכינתה בשמיא ועל משה אתגלי באסנא ייתין כל אלין לרישא דיוסף גברא פרישא דאחוהי: יז רבא דבנוהי זיוא לה וגבורן דאתעבידא לה מקדם תקפא ורומא דילה בגבורתה עממיא יקטל כחדא עד סיפי ארעא ואנון רבותא דבית אפרים ואנון אלפיא דבית מנשה: יח ולזבולן אמר חדי זבולן במפקך לאגחא קרבא על בעלי דבבך ויששכר במהכך למעבד זמני מועדיא

רש"י

ממש ואחיו מאביו וכן בניו ממש, שהרי לוים הם ומשבט לוי לא חטא אחד מהם שנאמר[1] כל בני לוי[1]: **כי שמרו אמרתך.** לא יהיה לך אלהים אחרים[2]: **ובריתך ינצרו.** ברית מילה[2], שאותם שנולדו במדבר של ישראל לא מלו את בניהם והם היו מולין ומלין את בניהם (ס"א אותם שנולדו במדבר שישראל לא מלו את בניהם והם היו מולין): **(י) יורו משפטיך.** ראויין אלו לכך: **וכליל.** עולה[3]: **(יא) מחץ מתנים קמיו.** מחץ קמיו מכת מתנים, כענין שנאמר ומתניהם תמיד המעד, ועל המעוררין על הכהונה אמר כן. דבר אחר ראה שעתידין חשמונאי ובניו להלחם עם היונים והתפלל עליהם לפי שהיו מועטים י"ב בני חשמונאי ואלעזר כנגד כמה רבבות, לכך נאמר ברך ה' חילו ופועל ידיו תרצה: **ומשנאיו מן יקומון.** מחץ קמיו ומשנאיו מהיות להם תקומה: **(יב) לבנימן אמר.** לפי שברכת לוי בעבודת הקרבנות ושל בנימין בבנין בית המקדש בחלקו סמכן זה לזה וסמך יוסף אחריו, שאף הוא משכן שילה היה בנוי בחלקו, שנאמר וימאס באהל יוסף וגו'[4]. ולפי שבית עולמים חביב משילה לכך הקדים בנימין ליוסף: **חפף עליו.** מכסה אותו ומגין עליו: **כל היום.** לעולם משנבחרה ירושלים לא שרתה שכינה במקום אחר: **ובין כתפיו שכן.** בגובה ארצו היה בית המקדש בנוי אלא שנמוך עשרים ושלש אמה מעין עיטם[5] ושם היה דעתו של דוד לבנותו, כדאיתא בשחיטת קדשים[6] אמרי נחתי ביה פורתא משום דכתיב ובין כתפיו שכן אין לך נאה בשור יותר מכתפיו: **(יג) מברכת ה' ארצו.** שלא היתה בנחלת השבטים ארץ מלאה כל טוב כארצו של יוסף[2]: **ממגד.** לשון עדנים ומתק: **ומתהום.** שהתהום עולה ומלחלח אותה מלמטה אתה מוצא בכל השבטים ברכתו של משה מעין ברכתו של יעקב: **(יד) (ד"א) וממגד תבואת שמש.** שהיתה ארצו פתוחה לחמה וממתקת הפירות[2]: **גרש ירחים.** יש פירות שהלבנה מבשלתן ואלו הן קשואין ודלועין. דבר אחר גרש ירחים. שהארץ מגרשת ומוציאה מחדש לחדש: **(טו) ומראש הררי קדם.** ומבורכת מראשית בשול הפירות שהרריה מקדימין לבכר בשול פירותיהם. דבר אחר

מגיד שקדמה בריאתן לשאר הרים[2]: **גבעות עולם.** גבעות העושות פירות לעולם ואינן פוסקות מעוצר הגשמים: **(טז) ורצון שכני סנה.** כמו שוכן סנה ותהא ארצו מבורכת מרצונו ונחת רוחו של הקב"ה הנגלה עלי תחלה בסנה: **רצון.** נחת רוח ופיוס וכן כל רצון שבמקרא: **תבואתה.** ברכה זו לראש יוסף: **נזיר אחיו.** שהופרש מאחיו במכירתו: **(יז) בכור שורו.** יש בכור שהוא לשון גדולה ומלכות, שנאמר אף אני בכור אתנהו[7], וכן בני בכורי ישראל[8]: **בכור.** מלך היוצא ממנו והוא יהושע: **שורו.** שכחו קשה כשור לכבוש כמה מלכים: **הדר לו.** נתון לו שנאמר ונתתה מהודך עליו: **וקרני ראם קרניו.** שור כחו קשה ואין קרניו נאות, אבל ראם קרניו נאות, ואין כחו קשה, נתן ליהושע כחו של שור ויופי קרני ראם[2]: **אפסי ארץ.** שלשים ואחד מלכים אפשר שכולם מארץ ישראל היו אלא אין לך כל מלך ושלטון שלא קנה לו פלטרין ואחוזה בארץ ישראל, שחשובה לכולם היא, שנאמר נחלת צבי צבאות גוים[9]: **והם רבבות אפרים.** אותם המנוגחים הם הרבבות שהרג יהושע, שבא מאפרים: **והם אלפי מנשה.** הם האלפים שהרג גדעון במדין, שנאמר וזבח וצלמונע בקרקר וגו'[10]: **(יח) ולזבולן אמר.** אלו חמשה שבטים שבירך באחרונה זבולן גד דן נפתלי ואשר כפל שמותיהם לחזקם ולהגבירם, לפי שהיו חלשים שבכל השבטים, הם הם שהוליך יוסף לפני פרעה, שנאמר ומקצה אחיו לקח חמשה אנשים[11], לפי שנראים חלשים ולא ישים אותם לו שרי מלחמתו[12]: **שמח זבולן בצאתך ויששכר באהליך.** זבולן ויששכר עשו שותפות, זבולן לחוף ימים ישכון[12*] ויוצא לפרקמטיא בספינות ומשתכר, ונותן לתוך פיו של יששכר והם יושבים ועוסקים בתורה, לפיכך הקדים זבולן ליששכר שתורתו של יששכר על ידי זבולן היתה[13]: **שמח זבולן בצאתך.** הצלח בצאתך לסחורה: **ויששכר.** הצלח בישיבת אהליך לתורה לישב ולעבר שנים ולקבוע חדשים, כמו שנאמר ומבני יששכר יודעי בינה לעתים ראשיהם מאתים[14] ראשי סנהדראות היו עוסקים בכך[15]. ועל פי קביעות עתיהם ועבוריהם: **(יט) עמים.** של שבטי ישראל:

1 שמות לב, כו 2 ספרי 3 יומא סו. 4 תהלים עח, סז 5 יומא לא. 6 זבחים נד: 7 תהלים פט, כח 8 שמות ד, כב 9 ירמי' ג, יט 10 שופטים ח, י 11 בראשית מז, ב 12 בבא קמא צב.
*12 בראשית מט, יג 13 בראשית רבה צט, ט 14 דברי הימים-א יב, לג 15 בראשית רבה עב, ה

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his (guilty, non-Levite half-)brothers, nor did he know his (guilty non-Levite grand-)children, (and he loyally followed God's orders to kill them. But none of the Levites were guilty), because they kept Your word (never worshiping idols) and kept Your covenant (of circumcision, when others lapsed). [10] *They will teach Your laws to Ya'akov, and Your Torah to Israel (because they are fit to do so). They will place incense before You, and burnt-offerings upon Your Altar.* [11] *May God bless him with his possessions, and may You favor the work of his hands. May You smash the loins of his foes and his enemies, so that they will never recover."*

[12] *About Binyamin he said, "May God's beloved dwell securely with Him, (when the Holy Temple will be built in Binyamin's portion. May the Divine presence) cover him (and protect him) forever, and dwell among (the high places of Binyamin's territory, which are likened to) his shoulders."*

THIRD READING

[13] *About Yosef he said: "May his land be blessed by God, with delicacies (nourished by rains) from the skies, from dew, and (from underground waters that rise) from the depths that lie below.* [14] *(May it be blessed with) the delicacies of produce (sweetened by) the sun, and with delicacies from crops (ripened) by moon(light.* [15] *May it be blessed) with crops (that ripen) early (on its) mountains, and with delicacies from its hills, all year round.* [16] *(May it be blessed) with the abundant delicacies of the (low)lands, through the goodwill (of God, who was first revealed to Me) dwelling in the thornbush. May (all this) come upon Yosef's head, upon the crown of the one (who was) separated from his brothers (when they sold him.* [17] *Yehoshua, a descendant of Yosef, is like) his firstborn ox (for he is to be a powerful king, and) glory will be (given to) him. His horns are (beautiful like the) horns of an oryx. With them, he will gore (thirty-one) nations together, (as far as) the ends of the Land (of Israel). These (nations will number) tens of thousands (all killed by Yehoshua, a descendant) of Efrayim, (besides) the thousands (to be killed in Midian by Gideon, a descendent) of Menasheh."*

FOURTH READING

[18] *About Zevulun he said: "Succeed, Zevulun, when you go out (to work), and Yissachar, in your tents (of Torah, where you will establish the calendar.* [19] *Then, when the festivals arrive), they will call (all the*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

- **Why is Zevulun mentioned before Yissachar ? (v. 18)**

RASHI: Zevulun and Yissachar entered into a partnership: *"Zevulun will live by the sea coast"* (Bereishis 49:13), and go out in ships to trade. He would make a profit and feed Yissachar's mouth, while they would sit and occupy themselves with Torah. Therefore, Moshe mentioned Zevulun before Yissachar [even though the latter was older], because Yissachar's Torah was supported by Zevulun.

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

The purpose of Creation, according to the *Midrash* (Tanchuma Naso 16), is that man should make, *"a home for God below,"* in this physical world. While the fulltime Torah scholar (Yissachar) achieves this goal through his devoted study and observance of *mitzvos*, he nevertheless remains somewhat withdrawn from interaction with the world, and consequently, he only transforms a relatively small part of this world into "a home for God." On the other hand, the businessman (Zevulun) sanctifies his entire working environment, through observing the laws of business ethics, being attuned to acts of Divine providence that he witnesses, and donating generously to charity. Thus, the Torah mentions Zevulun before Yissachar (see Classic Questions), because Zevulun furthers the goal of Creation to a greater extent. (In fact, this is the inner reason why God made the world in such a manner that most Jews are businessmen, and not Torah scholars).

At first glance, however, this appears to be difficult to accept. For the approach of Zevulun is a *temporary* one which will cease after the coming of Mashiach, when all Jews will become Torah scholars. How then could it be suggested that the purpose of Creation is furthered to a greater extent by Zevulun?

The answer is that a true "home for God below" can only be made amid the Torah and the Jewish people, which are *eternal*. The businessman makes a "home for God below" to a greater extent, not due to his involvement with the physical world *per se*, but due to the effect that this involvement has on his soul. For when the businessman learns Torah, devotes himself to *mitzvos* and lengthy prayer, and retains his Jewish values in the alien environment of the workplace, he reveals the powers of his soul to a greater extent. And this makes his bond with God, down here in this world, eternal and lasting under *all* circumstances.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 30, p. 134ff.)

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הַר־יִקְרָאוּ שָׁם יִזְבְּחוּ זִבְחֵי־צֶדֶק כִּי שֶׁפַע יַמִּים יִינָקוּ וּשְׂפֻנֵי
טְמוּנֵי חוֹל: ס כ וּלְגָד אָמַר בָּרוּךְ מַרְחִיב גָּד כְּלָבִיא שָׁכֵן וְטָרַף
זְרוֹעַ אַף־קָדְקֹד: כא וַיַּרְא רֵאשִׁית לוֹ כִּי־שָׁם חֶלְקַת מְחֹקֵק
סָפוּן *וַיֵּתֵא רָאשֵׁי עָם צִדְקַת יְהוָה עָשָׂה וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו
עִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל: ס (חמישי) כב וּלְדָן אָמַר דָּן גּוּר אַרְיֵה יְזַנֵּק
מִן־הַבָּשָׁן: כג וּלְנַפְתָּלִי אָמַר נַפְתָּלִי שְׂבַע רָצוֹן וּמָלֵא בִּרְכַּת
יְהוָה יָם וְדָרוֹם יְרָשָׁה: ס כד וּלְאָשֵׁר אָמַר בָּרוּךְ מִבָּנִים אָשֵׁר
יְהִי רְצוּי אֶחָיו וְטֹבֵל בַּשֶּׁמֶן רַגְלוֹ: כה בַּרְזֶל וּנְחֹשֶׁת מִנְעָלֶךָ
וּכְיָמֶיךָ דָּבְאֶךָ: כו אֵין כָּאֵל יְשֻׁרוּן רֹכֵב שָׁמַיִם בְּעֶזְרֶךָ וּבְגַאֲוָתוֹ
שְׁחָקִים: (ששי) כז מְעֹנָה אֱלֹהֵי קֶדֶם וּמִתַּחַת זְרֹעֹת עוֹלָם וַיְגָרֶשׁ
מִפָּנֶיךָ אוֹיֵב וַיֹּאמֶר הַשְׁמֵד: כח וַיִּשְׁכֹּן יִשְׂרָאֵל בֶּטַח בָּדָד עֵין

*ס"א וַיֵּתָא

בירושלם: יט שבטיא דישראל לטור בית מקדשא יתכנשון תמן יכסון נכסת קודשין לרעוא ארי נכסי עממיא ייכלון וסימא דטמירא בחלא מתגליא להון: כ ולגד אמר בריך דאפתי לגד כליתא שרי ויקטול שלטונין עם מלכין: כא ואתקבל בקדמיתא דילה ארי תמן באחסנתה משה ספרא רבא דישראל קביר והוא נפק ועל בריש עמא זכון קדם יי עבד ודינוהי עם ישראל: כב ולדן אמר דן תקיף כגור אריון ארעה שתיא מן נחליא דנגדן מן מתנן: כג ולנפתלי אמר נפתלי שבע רעוא ומלי ברכן מן קדם יי מערב ים גנוסר ודרומא יירת: כד ולאשר אמר בריך מברכת בניא אשר יהי רעוא לאחוהי ויתרבי בתפנוקי מלכין: כה תקיף כפרזלא ונחשא מותבך וכיומי עולימותך תקפך: כו לית אלה כאלהא דישראל דשכנתה בשמיא בסעדך ותקפה בשמי שמיא: כז מדור אלהא די מלקדמין בממריה אתעביד עלמא ותריך מקדמך סנאה ואמר שיצי: כח ושרא ישראל

רש"י

הר יקראו. גוים המוריה יאספו כל אסיפה על ידי קריאה היא ושם יזבחו ברגלים זבחי צדק: **כי שפע ימים יינקו.** יששכר וזבולן ויהא להם פנאי לעסוק בתורה: **ושפני טמוני חול.** כסויי טמוני חול טרית וחלזון וזכוכית לבנה היוצאים מן הים ומן החול ובחלקו של יששכר וזבולן היה, כמו שאמרו במסכת מגילה[1] זבולן עם חרף נפשו למות[2] משום דנפתלי על מרומי שדה[2], שהיה מתרעם זבולן על חלקו לאמר נתת שדות וכרמים וכו': **ושפני.** לשון כסוי, כמו שנאמר ויספון את הבית[3], וספון בארז[4], ותרגומו ומטלל בכיורי (ס"א בכסוי) ארזא. דבר אחר עמים הר יקראו על ידי פרקמטיא של זבולן, תגרי אומות העולם באים אל ארצו, והוא עומד על הספר והם אומרים הואיל ונצטערנו עד כאן נלך עד ירושלים ונראה מה יראתה של אומה זו ומה מעשיה, והם רואים כל ישראל עובדים לאלוה אחד ואוכלים מאכל אחד לפי שהגוים אלוהות של זה לא כאלוהות של זה, ומאכלו של זה לא כמאכלו של זה, והם אומרים אין אומה כשרה כזו ומתגיירין שם, שנאמר שם יזבחו זבחי צדק[5]: **כי שפע ימים יינקו.** זבולן ויששכר הים נותן להם ממון בשפע: (כ) **ברוך מרחיב גד.** מלמד שהיה תחומו של גד מרחיב והולך כלפי מזרח[5]: **כלביא שכן.** לפי שהיה סמוך לספר לפיכך נמשל כאריות שכל הסמוכים לספר צריכים להיות גבורים[5]: **וטרף זרוע אף קדקד.** הרוגיהן היו ניכרין, חותכים הראש עם הזרוע במכה אחת: (כא) **וירא ראשית לו.** ראה ליטול לו חלק בארץ סיחון ועוג, שהיא ראשית כבוש הארץ: **כי שם חלקת מחקק.** כי ידע אשר שם בנחלתו חלקת שדה קבורת מחוקק והוא משה[6]: **ספון.** אותה חלקה ספונה וטמונה מכל בריה, שנאמר ולא ידע איש את קבורתו[7]: **ויתא.** גד: **ראשי עם.** הם היו הולכים לפני החלוץ בכבוש הארץ לפי שהיו גבורים, וכן הוא אומר ואתם תעברו חלוצים לפני אחיכם וגו'[8]: **צדקת ה' עשה.** שהאמינו דבריהם ושמרו הבטחתם לעבור את הירדן עד שכבשו וחלקו. דבר אחר ויתא משה ראשי עם. צדקת ה' עשה. על משה אמור[5]: (כב) **דן גור אריה.** אף הוא היה סמוך לספר לפיכך מושלו באריות[5]: **יזנק מן הבשן.** כתרגומו שהיה הירדן יוצא מחלקו ממערת פמייאס והיא לשם שהיא בחלקו של דן, שנאמר[9] ויקראו ללשם דן[10] וזינוקו וקילוחו מן הבשן. דבר אחר מה זינוק זה יוצא ממקום אחד ונחלק לשני מקומות, כך שבטו של דן נטלו חלק בשני מקומות. תחלה נטלו בצפונית מערבית עקרון וסביבותיה, ולא ספקו להם ובאו ונלחמו עם לשם שהיא פמייאס והיא בצפונית מזרחית, שהרי הירדן יוצא ממערת פמייאס והוא במזרחה של ארץ ישראל ובא מהצפון לדרום וכלה בקצה ים המלח, שהוא במזרח יהודה, שנטל בדרומה של ארץ ישראל, כמו שמפורש בספר יהושע, והוא שנאמר ויצא גבול בני דן מהם ויעלו בני דן וילחמו עם לשם וגו'[11], יצא גבולם מכל אותו הרוח שהתחילו לנחול בו[5]: (כג) **שבע רצון.** שהיתה ארצו שבעה כל רצון יושביה: **ים ודרום ירשה.** ים כנרת נפלה בחלקו ונטל מלא חבל חרם בדרומה לפרוס חרמים ומכמורות[12]: **ירשה.** לשון צווי, כמו עלה רש[13], והטעם שלמעלה ברי"ש מוכיח, כמו ירש, ידע, לקח, שמע, כשמוסיף בו ה"א יהיה הטעם למעלה שמעה, ידעה, סלחה, לקחה אף כאן ירשה לשון צווי. ובמסורת הגדולה מצינו באלפא ביתא לשון צווי דטעמיהון מלעיל: (כד) **ברוך מבנים אשר.** ראיתי בספרי אין לך בכל השבטים שנתברך בבנים כאשר, ואיני יודע כיצד: **יהי רצוי אחיו.** שהיה מתרצה לאחיו בשמן אנפיקינון וקפלאות והם מרצין לו בתבואה. דבר אחר יהי רצוי אחיו שהיו בנותיו נאות והוא שנאמר הוא אבי ברזית[14], שהיו בנותיו נשואות לכהנים גדולים המשוחים בשמן זית[15]: **וטובל בשמן רגלו.** שהיתה ארצו מושכת שמן כמעין. ומעשה שנצרכו אנשי לודקיא לשמן מנו להם פולמוסטוס אחד וכו', כדאיתא במנחות[16]: (כה) **ברזל ונחשת מנעלך.** עכשיו הוא מדבר נגד כל ישראל, שהיו גבוריהם יושבים בערי הספר ונועלים אותה שלא יוכלו האויבים ליכנס בה כאלו היא סגורה במנעולים ובריחים של ברזל ונחשת. דבר אחר ברזל ונחשת מנעלך ארצכם נעולה בהרים שחוצבין מהם ברזל ונחשת, וארצו של אשר היתה מנעולה של ארץ ישראל[5]: **וכימיך דבאך.** וכימים שהם טובים לך, שהן ימי תחלתך ימי נעוריך כן יהיו ימי זקנתך, שהם דואבים זבים ומתמוטטים. דבר אחר וכימיך דבאך וכימיך שהם טובים לך כמנין ימיך, כל הימים אשר אתם עושים רצונו של מקום, יהיו דבאך שכל הארצות יהיו דואבות כסף וזהב לארץ ישראל, שהיא מבורכת בפירות, וכל הארצות מתפרנסות הימנה וממציאות לה כספם

1 דף ו. 2 שופטים ה, יח 3 מלכים-א ו, ט 4 שם ז, ג 5 ספרי 6 סוטה יג: 7 דברים לד, ו 8 דברים ג, יח 9 יהושע יט, מז 10 בכורות נה. 11 יהושע יט, מז 12 ב"ק פא: 13 דברים א, כא 14 דברי הימים-א ז, לא 15 בראשית רבה עא, י 16 דף פה:

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Jewish) people to mount (Moriah, and) there, they will slaughter offerings of righteousness. For (Zevulun —and Yissachar, whom they support)—will be nourished by the abundance of the seas, and by the valuable things hidden in the sand."

20 *About Gad he said: "Blessed is He Who grants an expanding (territory) to Gad, who lives (in a territorial stronghold) like a lion. He will tear off an arm (of his enemy in one blow, along) with the head.*
21 *He saw (fit to take) the first portion (of the land that was conquered) for himself (in the territory of Sichon and Og), because there the (burial) plot of (Moshe) the lawgiver is hidden. (Gad) came (out to war) at the head of the people (even after he had acquired his own portion), doing what was right for God, and what is lawful with Israel."*

FIFTH READING

22 *About Dan he said: "Dan is a young lion (for he, too, has a territorial stronghold. His land drinks from a) stream that runs from Bashan."*

23 *About Naftali he said: "Naftali('s land brings) satisfaction (to its inhabitants) and is filled with God's blessing. Take possession of (part of) the south of the (Kineret) Sea (to spread your fishing nets)."*

24 *About Asher he said: "May Asher be blessed with sons. He will be pleasing to his brothers (through producing special oils), and he will (have so much) oil (that he will be able to) immerse his foot."*

MOSHE BLESSES ALL ISRAEL

33:25 *"May your locks (on your border towns) be (strong like) iron and copper. May the days of your old age be like the days of your youth.*
26 *"Yeshurun, there is none like God! (God), Who rides the heavens is at your assistance! (He rides) the heavens in His majesty!"*

CHASAN TORAH (6TH READING)

27 *"(The heavens) are the abode for God, Who precedes all. The mighty ones of the world are found (only) below. He expelled the enemy from before you, and said, 'Destroy!'* 28 *Israel will live safely and (it*

רש"י

והכנס לשקונג"ש. הכסף והזהב כלה מהם, שהן מזיבות אותם לארצכם[5]:
(כו) אין כאל ישרון. דע לך ישורון שאין כאל בכל אלהי העמים ולא כצורך צורם: רכב שמים. הוא אותו אלוה שבעזרך ובגאותו הוא רוכב שחקים:
(כז) מענה אלהי קדם. למעון הם השחקים לאלהי קדם, שקדם לכל אלהים ויכלל לו שחקים לשבתו ומעונתו, ומתחת מעונתו כל בעלי זרוע שוכנים: זרעת עולם. סיחון ועוג ומלכי כנען, שהיו תקפו וגבורתו של עולם, לפיכך על כרחם יהרדו ויזועו וכחם חלש מפניו. לעולם אימת הגבוה על הנמוך, והוא שכינה והגבורה שלו בעזרך: ויגרש מפניך אויב. ואמר לך השמד אותם: מענה. כל תיבה שצריכה למ"ד בתחלתה הטיל לה ה"א בסופה[17]:
(כח) בטח בדד. כל יחיד ויחיד איש תחת גפנו ותחת תאנתו מפוזרין ואין צריכים להתאסף ולישב יחד מפני האויב: עין יעקב. כמו ועינו כעין הבדולח[18], כעין הברכה שברכם יעקב, לא כבדד שאמר ירמיה בדד ישבתי[19],

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● What did Moshe promise in verse 28? Was it fulfilled?

TALMUD: Moshe, our teacher, decreed four decrees on the Jewish people, and then four prophets came and annulled them.

[One of the decrees was that] Moshe said: *"Israel will live safely and alone, like Ya'akov"* (v. 28)—as if to say: "When will the Jewish people live safely? When they will be righteous like Ya'akov."

Amos came and annulled this decree, as the verse states: *"Please refrain! How will Ya'akov survive [for he is small]?"* (Amos 7:5)—as if to say: "Who could be as righteous as Ya'akov? Such people are very small in number!"

And the verse continues (ibid. 6): *"God changed His mind about this...,"* [and canceled the decree]. (Makos 24a, according to Rivan).

TORAS MENACHEM

MOSHE'S DECREE (v. 28)

The ***Talmud's*** statement, that verse 28 was a decree of Moshe which was later annulled by Amos, prompts the following questions:

a.) How could Amos annul Moshe's decree, when according to Jewish law, a decree can only be annulled by a *Beis Din* (court of law) and not by a prophet? (see Rambam, Laws of Rebellious Individuals 2:2)

b.) Furthermore, a decree may only be annulled by a *Beis Din* which is "greater than the first in size *and wisdom*" (ibid). So how could Moshe's decree be annulled at all, since Moshe was the greatest sage of all?

THE EXPLANATION

In order to answer these problems, let us first pose another question. The Talmud states, *"Moshe was a lover of the Jewish people,"* (Menachos 65a).

17 יבמות יג: 18 במדבר יא, ז 19 ירמי' טו, יז

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יַעֲקֹב אֶל־אֶרֶץ דָּגָן וְתִירוֹשׁ אַף־שָׁמָיו יַעַרְפוּ־טָל׃ כט *אַשְׁרֶיךָ
יִשְׂרָאֵל מִי כָמוֹךָ עַם נוֹשַׁע בַּיהוָה מָגֵן עֶזְרֶךָ וַאֲשֶׁר־חֶרֶב
גַּאֲוָתֶךָ וְיִכָּחֲשׁוּ אֹיְבֶיךָ לָךְ וְאַתָּה עַל־בָּמוֹתֵימוֹ תִדְרֹךְ׃ ס
[שביעי] לד א וַיַּעַל מֹשֶׁה מֵעַרְבֹת מוֹאָב אֶל־הַר נְבוֹ רֹאשׁ
הַפִּסְגָּה אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי יְרֵחוֹ וַיַּרְאֵהוּ יְהוָה אֶת־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ
אֶת־הַגִּלְעָד עַד־דָּן׃ ב וְאֵת כָּל־נַפְתָּלִי וְאֶת־אֶרֶץ אֶפְרַיִם
וּמְנַשֶּׁה וְאֵת כָּל־אֶרֶץ יְהוּדָה עַד הַיָּם הָאַחֲרוֹן׃ ג וְאֶת־הַנֶּגֶב
וְאֶת־הַכִּכָּר בִּקְעַת יְרֵחוֹ עִיר הַתְּמָרִים עַד־צֹעַר׃ ד וַיֹּאמֶר
יְהוָה אֵלָיו זֹאת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק
וּלְיַעֲקֹב לֵאמֹר לְזַרְעֲךָ אֶתְּנֶנָּה הֶרְאִיתִיךָ בְעֵינֶיךָ וְשָׁמָּה לֹא

*יש נוהגים א׳ רבתי

לרחצן בלחודוהי כעין ברכתא דברכנון
יעקב אבוהון לארעא עבדא עבור וחמר
אף שמיא דעלויהון ישמשנון בטלא: כט טובך
ישראל לית דכותך עמא פורקנה (דפורקנה)
(מן) קדם יי תקיף בסעדך ודמן קדמוהי
נצחן גברותך ויכדבון סנאיך לך ואת
על פריקת צורי מלכיהון תדרוך: א וסליק
משה ממישריא דמואב לטורא דנבו ריש
רמתא די על אפי ירחו ואחזיה יי ית כל
ארעא ית גלעד עד דן: ב וית כל נפתלי וית
ארעא דאפרים ומנשה וית כל ארעא
דיהודה עד ימא מערבא: ג וית דרומא וית
מישרא בקעתא דירחו קרתא דדקליא עד
צער: ד ואמר יי לה דא ארעא די קיימית
לאברהם ליצחק וליעקב למימר לבניך

רש״י

אלא כעין הבטחה שהבטיחם יעקב והיה אלהים עמכם והשיב אתכם אל ארץ אבותיכם[1]: יערפו. יטיפו: אף שמיו יערפו טל. אף ברכתו של יצחק נוספת על ברכתו של יעקב ויתן לך האלהים מטל השמים וגו': (כט) אשריך ישראל. לאחר שפרט להם הברכות אמר להם מה לי לפרוט לכם, כלל דבר, הכל שלכם: אשריך ישראל מי כמוך. תשועתך בה' אשר הוא מגן עזרך (ואשר הוא) חרב גאותך: ויכחשו איביך לך. כגון הגבעונים שאמרו מארץ רחוקה באו עבדיך וגו'[2]: ואתה על במותימו תדרוך. כענין שנאמר שימו את רגליכם על צוארי המלכים האלה[3]: (א) מערבות מואב אל הר נבו. כמה מעלות היו ופסען משה בפסיעה אחת[4]: את כל הארץ. הראהו את כל ארץ ישראל בשלותה והמציקין העתידים להיות מציקין לה[5]: עד דן. הראהו בני דן עובדים עבודה זרה שנאמר ויקימו להם בני דן את הפסל[6], והראהו שמשון שעתיד לצאת ממנו למושיע: (ב) ואת כל נפתלי. הראהו ארצו בשלותה וחורבנה, והראהו דבורה וברק מקדש נפתלי נלחמים עם סיסרא וחיילותיו[5]: ואת ארץ אפרים ומנשה. הראהו ארצם בשלותה ובחורבנה והראהו יהושע נלחם עם מלכי כנען שבא מאפרים, וגדעון שבא ממנשה נלחם עם מדין ועמלק[5]: ואת כל ארץ יהודה. בשלותה ובחורבנה והראהו מלכות בית דוד ונצחונם[5]: עד הים האחרון. ארץ המערב בשלותה ובחורבנה. דבר אחר אל תקרי הים האחרון אלא היום האחרון, הראהו הקב"ה כל המאורעות שעתידין ליארע לישראל עד שיחיו המתים[5]: (ג) ואת הנגב. ארץ הדרום. דבר אחר מערת המכפלה, שנאמר ויעלו בנגב ויבא עד חברון[7]: ואת הככר. הראהו שלמה יוצק כלי בית המקדש, שנאמר בככר הירדן יצקם המלך במעבה האדמה[8]: (ד) לאמר לזרעך אתננה הראיתיך. כדי שתלך ותאמר לאברהם ליצחק וליעקב שבועה שנשבע לכם הקב"ה קיימה, וזהו לאמר, לכך הראיתיה לך, אבל גזרה היא מלפני ששמה לא תעבור,

TORAS MENACHEM

So why would Moshe possibly enact a decree that the Jewish people will only continue to live safely and exist if "they will be righteous *like Ya'akov*"? Surely this is an extremely harsh decree to make, which is not befitting for the "lover" and savior of Israel?

In truth, however, this decree *was* an expression of Moshe's love for the Jewish people, because it was aimed at spiritually *assisting* them. Moshe reasoned that when a decree of Torah is made, the world is *compelled* to comply with the decree because the Torah is the blueprint of the world from which it was created. This remarkable concept is brought to light by a passage of the *Jerusalem Talmud* (*Kesubos* 1:2), which describes how a ruling of a Jewish court can actually bring about *physical* changes in a person's body.*

So by decreeing that the Jewish people would have to be as righteous as Ya'akov in order to survive, Moshe was actually helping the people to be righteous, with the force of a Torah decree.

However, this begs the question: If this decree was for the Jewish people's benefit, then why—and how—did Amos annul the decree?

Furthermore, why was the decree annulled on the basis that people as righteous as Ya'akov are "very small in number"? Surely this is not a strong enough argument to annul the decree, for according to Amos' logic, the Jewish people could indeed continue to exist, only they would be small in number?

The answer to these questions can be understood by further analyzing the grounds for annulling a decree in Jewish law. The above-cited

* One of the roles of the Jewish Supreme Court (*Sanhedrin*) is to establish if a given year will be a leap year, which has an additional month (to correlate it with the solar year). A possible scenario that can arise as a result of this is that a person might celebrate his birthday, and only afterwards the *Sanhedrin* declares that an additional month is to be added, causing his birthday to be moved back a month. He will thus now regress to his earlier age, celebrating his birthday again the following month(!) This has an astonishing ramification concerning a small child whose ability to regenerate certain tissues ends at the end of the third year of the child's life. What will happen, then, if the *Sanhedrin* declares a leap year after the child's birthday, rendering the child to be less than three full years? Answers the *Jerusalem Talmud*: the ability to regenerate the tissues will return! Here we have a graphic example that a Torah decree brings about a physical change in the world.

1 בראשית כז, כח 2 יהושע ט, ט 3 שם י, כד 4 סוטה יג: 5 ספרי 6 שופטים יח, ל 7 במדבר יג, כב 8 מלכים-א ז, מו

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will be safe for each person to live) alone—as Ya'akov (blessed them)—in a land of grain and wine, with
skies that drip dew, (as Yitzchak blessed them).
29 *Fortunate are you, O Israel! Who is like you, O people saved by God, the Shield Who helps you,*
your majestic Sword! Your enemies will lie to you, but you will trample upon their exalted ones."

MOSHE'S PASSING

34 *Moshe went up from the plains of Mo'av to Mount Nevo, (to the) top of the summit facing*
(7TH READING IN LAND OF ISRAEL ON SHABBOS) *Jericho. God showed him the Land (and visions of what was to happen there in the future):*
(The events at) the Gilead as far as Dan, 2 *all (the land of) Naftali, the land of Efrayim and*
Menasheh, all the land of Yehudah until the western sea, 3 *the Negev, and the plain, (including) the valley*
of Jericho, and the city of palm trees as far as Tzoar. 4 *God said to him, "This is the Land I swore to*
Avraham, to Yitzchak, and to Ya'akov, saying, 'I will give it to your offspring.' I have let you see it with
your eyes, but you should not cross over there."

TORAS MENACHEM

principle that a decree may only be annulled by a *Beis Din* which is "greater than the first in size and wisdom," only applies to a decree which, "*became universally accepted by the Jewish people*" (*Rambam* ibid.). However if, "*they made a decree, and they believed that it had become universally accepted by the Jewish people, and this state of affairs continued for many years, but after a long period, another Beis Din was established which conducted a survey among the entire Jewish people and discovered that the decree had never been universally accepted—then they may annul the decree, even if they are less in number and wisdom than the first Beis Din*" (ibid. 2:7).

Likewise in our case, Amos annulled Moshe's decree because he "discovered that the decree had not been universally accepted." He indicated this by arguing, "Who could be as righteous as Ya'akov? *Such people are very small in number!*"

(In a typical case, the non-acceptance of a decree would be verified by a survey of the court; whereas in Amos' case, he verified the matter using his powers of prophecy.)

The reason why it was Amos in particular who annulled the decree, can be understood from another of Amos' prophecies: "*For three sins (I could forgive) Israel, but for four sins I will not forgive*" (*Amos* 2:6). The *Talmud* explains: "*If a person sins once, he is forgiven; twice, he is forgiven; three times, he is forgiven—but the fourth time, he is not forgiven*" (*Yoma* 86b).

Now, clearly, Amos' statement here refers to the *Heavenly court*, for an earthly court would not pardon a person even for one violation of the law, never mind three. His prophecy therefore confirmed that sins were indeed being committed, and he realized that Moshe's "decree," that everyone should be as righteous as Ya'akov, "had not been universally accepted."

Moshe's original intention in making the decree was to lift the Jewish people to the level where they would always be connected to God by not sinning in the first place, and would thus not need to be forgiven for their sins. But when Amos saw that Moshe's "decree" had simply not been accepted, he annulled it.

In the final analysis, Moshe's enactment of the decree and Amos's annulment of it were actually in the best interests of the Jewish people, because:

a.) Amos did not annul the *positive effects* of Moshe's decree, but only the *limitations* that it imposed. The fact that Moshe said in the Torah that the Jewish people "will be righteous like Ya'akov" gives us the strength, even today, to refrain from sin, because all Moshe's words and actions are eternal. Amos only waived the *limitation* of Moshe's decree, that the Jewish people cannot continue to exist if they sin even once.

b.) Moshe's decree only allowed the Jewish people to exist as *tzadikim* (pious individuals). Amos, however, made it possible for the Jewish people to exist as *ba'alei teshuvah* (penitents). And since *ba'alei teshuvah* are spiritually superior to *tzadikim*—to the extent that, "*even complete tzadikim cannot stand in the place of ba'alei teshuvah*" (*Brachos* 34b)—it turns out the Amos acted in the best interests of the Jewish people.

(Based on *Sichas Yud-Tes Kislev* 5728)

Sparks of Chasidus

"MOSHE WENT UP...TO MOUNT NEVO" (v. 1)

Our Sages taught: "*The world was created with fifty gates of understanding, and they were all given to Moshe except for the fiftieth, as the verse states* (*Psalms* 8:6), *'You have made him slightly less than the angels,'*" (*Rosh Hashanah* 21b).

The *Mezritcher Maggid* added that, on the very last day of his life, Moshe was granted access to the elusive "fiftieth gate." This is hinted to by the verse, "*Moshe went up...to Mount Nevo,*" since the word נְבוֹ (Nevo) can be read נ׳ בּוֹ meaning, "the fiftieth is in him" (see *Likutei Torah*, *Bamidbar* 12a).

According to Chasidic teachings, every Jew possesses a spark of Moshe within his or her soul. So the fact that Moshe reached the fiftieth gate of understanding is of practical relevance to us, since our own spark of "Moshe" gives us the power to experience the fiftieth gate too.

And while Moshe had to wait until the last day of his life to reach this level, we do not. For Moshe paved the way which now remains open to all Jews who choose to avail themselves of it immediately, in their lifetimes.

(Based on *Sicha* of 3rd night of *Succos* 5744; *Sefer Hasichos* 5749, vol. 2, p. 756)

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תַּעֲבֹר: ה וַיָּמָת שָׁם מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד־יְהוָה בְּאֶרֶץ מוֹאָב עַל־פִּי
יְהוָה: ו וַיִּקְבֹּר אֹתוֹ בַגַּי בְּאֶרֶץ מוֹאָב מוּל בֵּית פְּעוֹר וְלֹא־יָדַע
אִישׁ אֶת־קְבֻרָתוֹ עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: ז וּמֹשֶׁה בֶּן־מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים
שָׁנָה בְּמֹתוֹ לֹא־כָהֲתָה עֵינוֹ וְלֹא־נָס לֵחֹה: ח וַיִּבְכּוּ בְנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־מֹשֶׁה בְּעַרְבֹת מוֹאָב שְׁלֹשִׁים יוֹם וַיִּתְּמוּ יְמֵי בְכִי
אֵבֶל מֹשֶׁה: ט וִיהוֹשֻׁעַ בִּן־נוּן מָלֵא רוּחַ חָכְמָה כִּי־סָמַךְ מֹשֶׁה
אֶת־יָדָיו עָלָיו וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֵלָיו בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּעֲשׂוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה
יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: י וְלֹא־קָם נָבִיא עוֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל כְּמֹשֶׁה אֲשֶׁר
יְדָעוֹ יְהוָה פָּנִים אֶל־פָּנִים: יא לְכָל־הָאֹתֹת וְהַמּוֹפְתִים אֲשֶׁר

אִתְנַנֵהּ אַחֲזִיתָךְ בְּעֵינָךְ וּלְתַמָּן לָא תִעְבַר:
ה וּמִית תַּמָּן מֹשֶׁה עַבְדָּא דַיְיָ בְּאַרְעָא דְמוֹאָב
עַל מֵימְרָא דַיְיָ: ו וּקְבַר יָתֵהּ בְּחֵילְתָא בְּאַרְעָא
דְמוֹאָב לָקֳבֵל בֵּית פְּעוֹר וְלָא יְדַע אֱנַשׁ יָת
קְבוּרְתֵהּ עַד יוֹמָא הָדֵין: ז וּמֹשֶׁה בַּר מְאָה
וְעַשְׂרִין שְׁנִין כַּד מִית לָא כְהַת עֵינוֹהִי
וְלָא שְׁנָא זִיו יְקָרָא דְאַפּוֹהִי: ח וּבְכוֹ בְנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל יָת מֹשֶׁה בְּמֵישְׁרַיָּא דְמוֹאָב תְּלָתִין יוֹמִין
וּשְׁלִימוּ יוֹמֵי בְכִיתָא אֶבְלָא דְמֹשֶׁה: ט וִיהוֹשֻׁעַ
בַּר נוּן מְלֵי (אִתְמְלִי) רוּחַ חָכְמְתָא אֲרֵי סְמַךְ
מֹשֶׁה יָת יְדוֹהִי עֲלוֹהִי וְקַבִּילוּ מִנֵּהּ בְּנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל וַעֲבַדוּ כְּמָא דִי פַקֵּיד יְיָ יָת מֹשֶׁה:
י וְלָא קָם נְבִיָּא עוֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל כְּמֹשֶׁה דִּי

רש"י

שאילו כך היתה מקיימן עד שתראה אותם נטועים וקבועים בה ותלך ותגיד להם: (ה) וימת שם משה. אפשר משה מת וכתב וימת שם משה, אלא עד כאן כתב משה, מכאן ואילך כתב יהושע. ר' מאיר אומר אפשר ספר התורה חסר כלום, והוא אומר לקוח את ספר התורה הזה[1], אלא הקב"ה אומר ומשה כותב בדמע[2]: על פי ה'. בנשיקה[3]: (ו) ויקבר אותו. הקב"ה בכבודו[4]. רבי ישמעאל אומר הוא קבר את עצמו, וזהו אחד משלשה אתין שהיה רבי ישמעאל דורש כן. כיוצא בו ביום מלאת ימי נזרו יביא אותו[5], הוא מביא את עצמו. כיוצא בו והשיאו אותם עון אשמה[6], וכי אחרים משיאים אותם, אלא הם משיאים את עצמם[7]: מול בית פעור. קברו היה מוכן שם מששת ימי בראשית לכפר על מעשה פעור[8], וזה אחד מן הדברים שנבראו בערב שבת בין השמשות[9]: (ז) לא כהתה עינו. אף משמת: ולא נס לחה. לחלוחית שבו לא שלט בו רקבון ולא נהפך תואר פניו: (ח) בני ישראל. הזכרים, אבל באהרן מתוך שהיה רודף שלום ונותן שלום בין איש לרעהו ובין אשה לבעלה נאמר כל בית ישראל[10], זכרים ונקבות[11]: (י) אשר ידעו

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● **Who wrote the words "Moshe...died there"? (v. 5)**

Rashi: Is it possible that Moshe died, and then wrote, "Moshe... died there"? Rather, Moshe wrote up to this point, and Yehoshua wrote from here on.

Rabbi Meir says: "Is it possible that the Torah Scroll [which Moshe gave to the Levites] would be lacking something? The verse states [before Moshe's passing], *"Take this Torah Scroll"* (*Devarim* 31:26). Rather, God said this section, and Moshe wrote it with tears.

Ivun Ya'akov: Moshe was not crying because of the thought that he was about to die, but rather, because he was being denied the opportunity to observe the *mitzvos* which can only be carried out in the Land of Israel (*Kesubos* 103b).

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

Rashi explains (in his second interpretation) *how* it is possible that Moshe could have written the words, *"Moshe..died there,"* but he does not explain the *purpose* of this disheartening event. Why did God command Moshe to write about his own passing?

It could be argued, however, that Moshe actually wrote these words with tears of *determination* and *optimism*. Moshe was not poetically depicting his own death amid a spirit of resignation and surrender, as it may at first seem. Rather, he was using these last moments in a further, practical attempt to avert the looming decree of his death, by motivating the Jewish people to beseech God on his behalf. For Moshe knew that when the Jewish people would read of his death written down in black and white, it would provoke an uproar. The people would surely respond: *"We will not allow this to happen! We will pray, beg and demand from God that Moshe lead us into the Land!"* and the decree would thus be annulled.

But this begs the question: Surely, when something is written in the Torah it *must* happen? So by writing "Moshe...died there," Moshe appears to have been guaranteeing his own death.

In truth, however, Moshe's "death" could have occurred in many different ways, and not necessarily in the literal sense. For example, the *Zohar* teaches, *"One who falls to a lower spiritual level is called 'dead'"* (*Zohar* III 135b). We even find that a spiritual migration to a *higher* plane is also sometimes referred to as "death" or "departure" (*Mikdash Melech* to *Zohar* III 158a). So Moshe hoped that the prayers of the Jewish people would transform the decree of his actual death, to a spiritual equivalent.

The Jewish people did not merit for this to occur at *that time*. But when Moshe does return, with the revival of the dead, the words, *"Moshe died there,"* will then adopt their spiritual meaning *alone*.

(Based on *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Vayeilech* 5749)

1 דברים לא, כו 2 בבא בתרא טו. 3 שם יז. 4 סוטה יד. 5 במדבר ו, יג 6 ויקרא כב, טז 7 ספרי, במדבר ו, קכד 8 סוטה יד. 9 אבות פרק ה"ו 10 במדבר כ, כט 11 פדר"א פי"ז

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5 *Moshe, the servant of God, died there, in the land of Mo'av, by (a kiss from) the mouth of God.*
6 *(God) buried him in the valley, in the land of Mo'av, opposite Bais-Pe'or. No person knows the place of his burial, to this day.*

7 *Moshe was one hundred and twenty years old when he died. His eye never dimmed, nor did moisture leave his (body, even after he died).*

8 *The men of Israel wept for Moshe in the plains of Mo'av for thirty days, and then the days of weeping over the mourning for Moshe came to an end.*

9 *Yehoshua, the son of Nun was filled with a spirit of wisdom, because Moshe had laid his hands upon him. The children of Israel obeyed him, and they did as God had commanded Moshe.*

10 *No other prophet ever arose in Israel like Moshe, whom God knew face to face,* 11 *as manifested by all the signs and wonders, which God had sent him to perform in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and all*

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

● Why did only the "men of Israel," and not the entire house of Israel, mourn Moshe's passing? (v. 8)

PANE'ACH RAZA: When Aharon died, Moshe's intense mourning inspired the whole of the Jewish people to mourn too. However, when Moshe passed away, there was no person as great as Moshe to inspire all the people to mourn, so only the men participated.

RASHI: [Here Moshe was only mourned by some of] the males. But concerning Aharon, the Torah states, "The entire house of Israel" [wept for him] (*Bamidbar* 20:29), meaning both males and females, because he used to pursue peace and bring peace between a man and his fellow, and between a woman and her husband.

AVOS D'RABBI NASAN: When Aharon was walking in the street and met a wicked person, Aharon would greet him. The next day, when the man wanted to commit a sin, he would say, "Dear me! How will I lift up my eyes afterwards and look at my friend [Aharon]? I am ashamed, because he greeted me." In this way, the man would refrain from sinning.

Likewise, when two people quarreled Aharon went and sat down with one of them and said to him, "My son! Do you know what your friend is saying? His heart is in a turmoil and he is tearing his clothes saying, 'Dear me! How can I lift up my eyes and look at my friend? I am ashamed because I have wronged him.'" [Aharon] would then sit with him until he had dispelled the grudge from his heart.

Then Aharon would go and sit with the other one, and say to him, "Do you know what your friend is saying? His heart is in a turmoil and he is tearing his clothes saying, 'Dear me! How can I lift up my eyes and look at my friend? I am ashamed because I have wronged him.'" [Aharon] would then sit with him until he had dispelled the grudge from his heart. When the two of them would then meet, they hugged and kissed each other (*Avos d'Rabbi Nasan* 12:3).

TORAS MENACHEM

THE PUBLIC MOURNING OF MOSHE'S PASSING (V. 8)

In his commentary to verse 8, *Rashi* explains a subtle distinction between the Torah's description of Aharon's passing, and that of Moshe's passing. In the former case, the Torah states that Aharon was mourned by "the *entire* house of Israel," a phrase which clearly refers to men women (and even the children—see *Zohar* III 183a). In Moshe's case however, an open display of mourning only occurred with "the men of Israel," indicating that: i.) The women were not involved at all; and ii.) Only some of the men participated (since the verse does not stress that "*all* the men of Israel" mourned).

Rashi explains that Aharon's passing grieved the Jewish people to a greater extent, *"because he used to pursue peace and bring peace between a man and his fellow, and between a woman and her husband."*

This prompts the following questions:

a.) Since the current passage relates the passing of Moshe, we would expect the Torah to stress Moshe's greatness. Why then did *Rashi* choose an interpretation which indicates Aharon's superiority over Moshe, rather than one which indicates the greatness of Moshe, such as the explanation of ***Pane'ach Raza***?

b.) How could we possibly accept the notion that Moshe did *not "pursue peace and bring peace between a man and his fellow, and between a woman and her husband"*? Does the *Talmud* not testify that *"Moshe was a lover of the Jewish people"* (*Menachos* 65a)?

THE EXPLANATION

Our Sages taught that Moshe personified the quality of truth (*Shemos Rabah* 5:10; *Sanhedrin* 111a). Therefore, while Moshe would certainly have made great efforts to *"pursue peace and bring peace,"* during his lifetime, he found himself unable to go to the same lengths as Aharon in the pursuit of peace. For Aharon followed the principle, *"It is permissible to modify the facts for the sake of peace"* (*Yevamos* 65b), and thus he would bring quarreling parties together by saying that the opposing party really wished to make peace (as described in ***Avos d'Rabbi Nasan***).

Moshe, however, was unable to do so—not because he disagreed with the principle that "it is permissible to modify," since, after all, this was part of the Torah which Moshe himself had taught the Jewish people. Rather, Moshe could simply not utilize this "permission" to "modify the facts" even "for the sake of peace," since he embodied the attribute of truth.

Nevertheless, on the last day of his life, Moshe was able to reflect on his life's work (something he would have been far too busy to do before), and at this point, he came to attain the additional advantage of Aharon's approach which succeeded in reaching more people than Moshe.

Therefore, in an act of true *ahavas yisra'el* (love of one's fellow), Moshe recorded the events of his own passing in a way that brought to light Aharon's greatness, which Moshe only attained at this point in his life.

(Based on *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 24, p. 253ff.)

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שְׁלָחוֹ֙ יְהוָ֔ה לַעֲשׂ֖וֹת בְּאֶ֣רֶץ מִצְרָ֑יִם לְפַרְעֹ֥ה וּלְכָל־עֲבָדָ֖יו וּלְכָל־אַרְצֽוֹ׃ יב וּלְכֹל֙ הַיָּ֣ד הַחֲזָקָ֔ה וּלְכֹ֖ל הַמּוֹרָ֣א הַגָּד֑וֹל אֲשֶׁר֙ עָשָׂ֣ה מֹשֶׁ֔ה לְעֵינֵ֖י כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵֽל׃

אִתְגְּלִי לֵהּ יְיָ אַפִּין בְּאַפִּין: יא לְכָל אָתַיָּא וּמוֹפְתַיָּא דִּי שַׁלְחֵהּ יְיָ לְמֶעְבַּד בְּאַרְעָא דְמִצְרַיִם לְפַרְעֹה וּלְכָל עַבְדוֹהִי וּלְכָל אַרְעֵהּ: יב וּלְכֹל יְדָא תַקִּיפְתָּא וּלְכֹל חֶזְוָנָא רַבָּא דִּי עֲבַד מֹשֶׁה לְעֵינֵי כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל: חזק

חֲזַק חֲזַק וְנִתְחַזֵּק

מ"א פסוקים. גאוא"ל סימן. אלי סימן.

סכום פסוקים של ספר דברים תשע מאות וחמישים וחמשה הנ"ץ סימן. וחציו ועשית על פי הדבר אשר יגידו לך. ופרשיותיו י"א, אסרו ח"ג בעבותים סימן. וסדריו כ"ז, יפיח אמונה יגי"ד צדק סימן. ופרקיו ל"ד, אודה ה' בכל לב"ב סימן. מנין הפתוחות ל"ד. והסתומות קכ"ד. סך הכל קנ"ח פרשיות, וכסא כבוד ינחיל"ם סימן.

סדרי תורה נ"ד, למען יזמרך כבוד ולא ידו"ם סימן. מנין הפרשיות הפתוחות של כל התורה ר"ץ, יבא דודי לגנו ויאכל פר"י מגדיו סימן. והסתומות שע"ט, או אסרה אסר על נפשה בשבע"ה סימן. נמצאו מנין כל הפרשיות פתוחות וסתומות תרס"ט, לא תחסר כל בה סימן.

סכום הפסוקים של כל התורה ה' אלפים תתמ"ה, ואור החמ"ה יהיה שבעתיים סימן. וחציו וישם עליו את החשן ויתן אל החשן את האורים ואת התומים.

מנין תיבות של כל התורה ע"ט אלף ותתקע"ו, עט סופר מהיר יפיפית מבני אדם סימן. מנין אותיות של כל התורה ד"ש אלף ותת"ה, וסימנו ארצה בו ואאבדה אמר ה' גדול יהיה כבוד הבית הזה האחרון מן הראשון. שיבנה במהרה בימינו אמן כן יהי רצון.

רש"י

ה' פנים אל פנים. שהיה לבו גס בו ומדבר אליו בכל עת שרוצה, כענין שנאמר ועתה אעלה אל ה'[1], עמדו ואשמעה מה יצוה ה' לכם[2]: (יב) ולכל היד החזקה. שקבל את התורה בלוחות בידיו: ולכל המורא הגדול. נסים וגבורות שבמדבר הגדול והנורא[3]: לעיני כל ישראל. שנשאו לבו לשבור הלוחות לעיניהם, שנאמר ואשברם לעיניכם[4], והסכימה דעת הקב"ה לדעתו, שנאמר אשר שברת[5], יישר כחך ששברת[6]:

חסלת פרשת וזאת הברכה

1 שמות לב, ל 2 במדבר ט, ח 3 ספרי 4 דברים ט, יז 5 שמות לד, א 6 שבת פז.

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his servants, and to all his land, 12 *and all the strength (he needed to receive the Torah with his) hand, and all the (miracles that occurred in the) great, awe(some, wilderness), which Moshe performed before the eyes of all Israel.*

The congregation*, followed by the reader, proclaim:

Be strong! Be strong! And may we be strengthened!

THE HAFTARAH FOR VEZOS HABRACHAH (SIMCHAS TORAH) IS ON PAGE 295.

CLASSIC QUESTIONS

• What did Moshe perform "before the eyes of all Israel"? (v. 12)

RASHI: His heart inspired him to smash the Tablets before their eyes, as the verse states, "I shattered them before your eyes" (*Devarim* 9:17). God gave His approval...[saying] "Well done that you broke them!"

TORAS MENACHEM

Sparks of Chasidus

THE CONCLUSION OF THE TORAH

How can *Rashi* conclude his commentary to the entire Torah with a reference to Moshe's breaking of the Tablets, in contradiction, it would seem, to the principle of always ending on a positive note? (see *Brachos* 31a; *Rashi* to end of Lamentations)

Furthermore, if the Jewish people were not fit to receive the Tablets, having sinned with the Golden Calf, why did Moshe need to *destroy* them? Surely, it would have been preferable to put the Tablets aside, protecting these precious items that were fashioned by the Almighty, until the time came when the Jewish people were fit to receive them?

In truth, however, the breaking of the Tablets brings to light Moshe's greatness as a true leader of Israel.

Rashi explains (in his commentary to *Shemos* 34:1**), that Moshe's breaking of the Tablets was like tearing up a contract, to ensure that the Jewish people would not be in "breach of contract" for worshiping the calf.

So the breaking of the Tablets brings to light Moshe's true dedication as a protector and defender of the Jewish people, that when faced with a dilemma between saving the holy Tablets of Torah fashioned by God, and saving the Jewish people from being liable for breach of contract, he chose the latter.

However, this has not fully solved our problem. For while we have explained that the Torah does indeed end on a positive note *for the Jewish people* and their faithful shepherd Moshe, it reflects negatively on the *Torah itself*. For when faced with a choice between protecting the Torah and protecting the Jewish people, Moshe chose *not* to protect the Torah!

The answer to this problem is clarified by the following *Midrash:*

"There are two things in the world and I love them totally with all my heart: the Torah and the Jewish people. But I do not know which comes first?'"

"People say that the Torah comes first...but since the Torah states, "Command the children of Israel. Speak to the children of Israel," I say that the Jewish people come first'" (*Tanna debey Eliyahu Rabah* ch. 14).

So when Moshe broke the Tablets he was making a very similar statement, that, "*the Jewish people come first.*" And this is indeed a fitting conclusion for the Torah, for having completed the Torah we should come to the realization that the purpose of the Torah is to bring the greatness of the Jewish people to light.

(Based on *Likutei Sichos* vol. 34, p. 217)

*According to *Chabad* custom, the person called to the Torah also recites *chazak chazak venischazeik*, in contrast to those authorities who deem this to be an interruption before the blessing which is said after reading the Torah (*Sefer Haminhagim*, p. 31; See *Likutei Sichos* vol. 24, p. 411; ibid. vol. 25, p. 474ff. See also *Chikrei Minhagim* by Rabbi Eliyahu Yochanan Gurary (*Oholei Shem, Lubavitch* 5759), p. 126ff.). **Cited above in *Classic Questions* to *Devarim* 9:17, from *Rashi's* source text, the *Midrash*.

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THE TEN COMMANDMENTS WITH NOTES USED BY THE READER FOR PUBLIC TORAH READING

אָנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית
עֲבָדִים לֹא יִהְיֶה לְךָ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים עַל־פָּנָי לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה־לְךָ
פֶסֶל ׀ כָּל־תְּמוּנָה אֲשֶׁר בַּשָּׁמַיִם ׀ מִמַּעַל וַאֲשֶׁר בָּאָרֶץ מִתָּחַת
וַאֲשֶׁר בַּמַּיִם ׀ מִתַּחַת לָאָרֶץ לֹא־תִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לָהֶם וְלֹא תָעָבְדֵם
כִּי אָנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֵל קַנָּא פֹּקֵד עֲוֺן אָבוֹת עַל־בָּנִים
וְעַל־שִׁלֵּשִׁים וְעַל־רִבֵּעִים לְשֹׂנְאָי וְעֹשֶׂה חֶסֶד לַאֲלָפִים לְאֹהֲבַי
וּלְשֹׁמְרֵי מצותו (קרי מִצְוֺתָי) : ס לֹא תִשָּׂא אֶת־שֵׁם־יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ לַשָּׁוְא כִּי לֹא יְנַקֶּה יְהוָה אֵת אֲשֶׁר־יִשָּׂא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ
לַשָּׁוְא: ס שָׁמוֹר אֶת־יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוְּךָ ׀ יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲבֹד וְעָשִׂיתָ כָּל־מְלַאכְתֶּךָ וְיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי
שַׁבָּת ׀ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה כָל־מְלָאכָה אַתָּה וּבִנְךָ־
וּבִתֶּךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ־וַאֲמָתֶךָ וְשׁוֹרְךָ וַחֲמֹרְךָ וְכָל־בְּהֶמְתֶּךָ וְגֵרְךָ אֲשֶׁר
בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ לְמַעַן יָנוּחַ עַבְדְּךָ וַאֲמָתְךָ כָּמוֹךָ וְזָכַרְתָּ כִּי־עֶבֶד הָיִיתָ ׀
בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וַיֹּצִאֲךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִשָּׁם בְּיָד חֲזָקָה וּבִזְרֹעַ
נְטוּיָה עַל־כֵּן צִוְּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת: ס
כַּבֵּד אֶת־אָבִיךָ וְאֶת־אִמֶּךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוְּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְמַעַן ׀
יַאֲרִיכֻן יָמֶיךָ וּלְמַעַן יִיטַב לָךְ עַל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
נֹתֵן לָךְ: ס לֹא תִרְצָח: ס וְלֹא תִנְאָף: ס וְלֹא תִגְנֹב: ס
וְלֹא־תַעֲנֶה בְרֵעֲךָ עֵד שָׁוְא: ס וְלֹא תַחְמֹד אֵשֶׁת רֵעֶךָ ס
וְלֹא תִתְאַוֶּה בֵּית רֵעֶךָ שָׂדֵהוּ וְעַבְדּוֹ וַאֲמָתוֹ שׁוֹרוֹ וַחֲמֹרוֹ וְכֹל
אֲשֶׁר לְרֵעֶךָ: ס

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Haftaros

הפטרות

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The person who was called up for *Maftir* says the following before reading the *Haftarah*:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בִּנְבִיאִים טוֹבִים וְרָצָה בְדִבְרֵיהֶם הַנֶּאֱמָרִים בֶּאֱמֶת בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהֹוָה 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 וְעֹשֶׂה, 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 וְתְשַׂמַּח 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:

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On fast days end here. On *Shabbos* (including *Shabbos Chol HaMo'ed*) continue°:

עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוֹדָה וְעַל הַנְּבִיאִים וְעַל יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה, שֶׁנָּתַתָּ לָּנוּ 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

Shemini Atzeres / Simchas Torah	*Succos*	*Shavuos*	*Pesach*
שְׁמִינִי עֲצֶרֶת הַחַג	חַג הַסֻּכּוֹת	חַג הַשָּׁבוּעוֹת	חַג הַמַּצּוֹת

הַזֶּה, וְעַל יוֹם טוֹב מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה, שֶׁנָּתַתָּ לָּנוּ 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 לָּנוּ 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, וּדְבָרְךָ 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 לָּנוּ 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, וּדְבָרְךָ 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:

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Devarim / דברים

(Isaiah 1:1-27)

א א חֲזוֹן יְשַׁעְיָהוּ בֶן־אָמוֹץ אֲשֶׁר חָזָה עַל־יְהוּדָה
וִירוּשָׁלָם בִּימֵי עֻזִּיָּהוּ יוֹתָם אָחָז יְחִזְקִיָּהוּ מַלְכֵי
יְהוּדָה: ב שִׁמְעוּ שָׁמַיִם וְהַאֲזִינִי אֶרֶץ כִּי יְהוָה דִּבֵּר
בָּנִים גִּדַּלְתִּי וְרוֹמַמְתִּי וְהֵם פָּשְׁעוּ בִי: ג יָדַע שׁוֹר
קֹנֵהוּ וַחֲמוֹר אֵבוּס בְּעָלָיו יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יָדַע עַמִּי לֹא
הִתְבּוֹנָן: ד הוֹי | גּוֹי חֹטֵא עַם כֶּבֶד עָוֺן זֶרַע מְרֵעִים
בָּנִים מַשְׁחִיתִים עָזְבוּ אֶת־יְהוָה נִאֲצוּ אֶת־קְדוֹשׁ
יִשְׂרָאֵל נָזֹרוּ אָחוֹר: ה עַל מֶה תֻכּוּ עוֹד תּוֹסִיפוּ סָרָה
כָּל־רֹאשׁ לָחֳלִי וְכָל־לֵבָב דַּוָּי: ו מִכַּף־רֶגֶל וְעַד־
רֹאשׁ אֵין־בּוֹ מְתֹם פֶּצַע וְחַבּוּרָה וּמַכָּה טְרִיָּה
לֹא־זֹרוּ וְלֹא חֻבָּשׁוּ וְלֹא רֻכְּכָה בַּשָּׁמֶן: ז אַרְצְכֶם
שְׁמָמָה עָרֵיכֶם שְׂרֻפוֹת אֵשׁ אַדְמַתְכֶם לְנֶגְדְּכֶם זָרִים
אֹכְלִים אֹתָהּ וּשְׁמָמָה כְּמַהְפֵּכַת זָרִים: ח וְנוֹתְרָה
בַת־צִיּוֹן כְּסֻכָּה בְכָרֶם כִּמְלוּנָה בְמִקְשָׁה כְּעִיר
נְצוּרָה: ט לוּלֵי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת הוֹתִיר לָנוּ שָׂרִיד
כִּמְעָט כִּסְדֹם הָיִינוּ לַעֲמֹרָה דָּמִינוּ: י שִׁמְעוּ דְבַר־
יְהוָה קְצִינֵי סְדֹם הַאֲזִינוּ תּוֹרַת אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַם עֲמֹרָה:

1:1 *(This is) the prophetic vision of Yeshayahu son of Amotz.*

(The following) was prophesied about Yehudah and Jerusalem in the days of Uziyahu, Yosam, Achaz, and Chiskiyahu, Kings of Yehudah.

2 *Hear, O heavens, and listen, O earth, for (it is) God (and not I who) has spoken (these words):*

Rebellious people

"I have reared and raised (my) children, (the Jewish people, above all the nations), and they have rebelled against Me! 3 (Even) an ox recognizes its owner and a donkey its master's trough, (but) Israel does not (want to) know (me)! My people (whom I have helped) do not try to understand (what is good for them)!"

Judgments

4 *Oh you sinful nation! A people (who were once holy and are now) heavy with sin! (Holy) offspring (who became) wicked! Corrupt children! They have abandoned God, disgraced the Holy One of Israel, and separated themselves (from Him)! 5 Why do you (allow yourselves to commit the same sins repeatedly, continuing to) turn astray and be stricken again and again? (From being stricken so many times) every head is heavy and every heart is pained. 6 From the sole of the feet to the head nothing is sound—(only) wounds, bruises, and open sores, untreated, unbandaged, not softened with oil, (yet you continue to sin, and incur yet more lashes).*

7 *(Therefore) your land is waste, your cities burned down. Strangers eat your farmland before you(r eyes). It is desolate, as if destroyed by foreign (enemies, from afar). 8 (The city of) Tziyon is left (uninhabited) like a(n obsolete) hut in a vineyard, like a(n abandoned) night-hut in a cucumber field, like a besieged city. 9 If the God of Hosts had not left us a small remnant (in His kindness), we would be (destroyed) like Sodom and like Amorah!*

10 *Hear God's Word, you (who resemble the) nobles of Sodom! Listen to the teachings of our God, you (who resemble the) people of Amorah!*

Haftarah of Parshas Devarim

This is the third of three *"Haftaros of punishment"* which are read between the 17th of *Tamuz* and the 9th of *Av*, when we mourn the destruction of the Holy Temple. The *Haftarah* is taken from the opening of the Book of Yeshayah (Isaiah), though it is unclear whether this was in fact his first prophecy.

At first glance, the harsh tone of Yeshayah's words—the most condemning of all three *"Haftaros of Punishment"*—is difficult to understand in the light of the *Talmud's* statement that *"Yeshayah speaks entirely of consolation"* (*Bava Basra* 14b). *Maharsha* answers, *"This is not meant literally, that the entire book of Yeshayah is consolation, as we find many prophecies of destruction there. Rather, the overwhelming majority of the book is consolatory."*

However, according to Kabalistic teachings, the *Talmud's* statement could, in fact, be taken literally. *Kehilas Ya'akov* writes that Yeshayah did not speak words of pure *gevurah* (harshness; judgments), but rather, *chesed shb'gevurah* (sweetened judgments), and this spiritually empowered the Jewish people to bring the redemption, which will come through sweetening the judgments of exile. Therefore, it could truly be said that "Yeshayah speaks *entirely* of consolation," for even his words of criticism are charged and sweetened with redemptive undercurrents (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 18, p. 344, note 22).

After the *Haftarah's* opening words which introduce Yeshayah as a prophet (1:1), he laments the sinfulness and rebelliousness of the Jewish people and their consequent punishments (2-9). He rebukes them for insincere confession when bringing sacrifices (10-15), because God desires ethical behavior and repentance (16-20). In his final lament, the

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יא לָמָּה לִּי רֹב־זִבְחֵיכֶם יֹאמַר יְהֹוָה שָׂבַעְתִּי עֹלוֹת
אֵילִים וְחֵלֶב מְרִיאִים וְדַם פָּרִים וּכְבָשִׂים וְעַתּוּדִים
לֹא חָפָצְתִּי: יב כִּי תָבֹאוּ לֵרָאוֹת פָּנָי מִי־בִקֵּשׁ זֹאת
מִיֶּדְכֶם רְמֹס חֲצֵרָי: יג לֹא תוֹסִיפוּ הָבִיא מִנְחַת־שָׁוְא
קְטֹרֶת תּוֹעֵבָה הִיא לִי חֹדֶשׁ וְשַׁבָּת קְרֹא מִקְרָא
לֹא־אוּכַל אָוֶן וַעֲצָרָה: יד חָדְשֵׁיכֶם וּמוֹעֲדֵיכֶם שָׂנְאָה
נַפְשִׁי הָיוּ עָלַי לָטֹרַח נִלְאֵיתִי נְשֹׂא: טו וּבְפָרִשְׂכֶם
כַּפֵּיכֶם אַעְלִים עֵינַי מִכֶּם גַּם כִּי־תַרְבּוּ תְפִלָּה אֵינֶנִּי
שֹׁמֵעַ יְדֵיכֶם דָּמִים מָלֵאוּ: טז רַחֲצוּ הִזַּכּוּ הָסִירוּ רֹעַ
מַעַלְלֵיכֶם מִנֶּגֶד עֵינָי חִדְלוּ הָרֵעַ: יז לִמְדוּ הֵיטֵב
דִּרְשׁוּ מִשְׁפָּט אַשְּׁרוּ חָמוֹץ שִׁפְטוּ יָתוֹם רִיבוּ
אַלְמָנָה: יח לְכוּ־נָא וְנִוָּכְחָה יֹאמַר יְהֹוָה אִם־יִהְיוּ
חֲטָאֵיכֶם כַּשָּׁנִים כַּשֶּׁלֶג יַלְבִּינוּ אִם־יַאְדִּימוּ כַתּוֹלָע
כַּצֶּמֶר יִהְיוּ: יט אִם־תֹּאבוּ וּשְׁמַעְתֶּם טוּב הָאָרֶץ
תֹּאכֵלוּ: כ וְאִם־תְּמָאֲנוּ וּמְרִיתֶם חֶרֶב תְּאֻכְּלוּ כִּי פִּי
יְהֹוָה דִּבֵּר: כא אֵיכָה הָיְתָה לְזוֹנָה קִרְיָה נֶאֱמָנָה
מְלֵאֲתִי מִשְׁפָּט צֶדֶק יָלִין בָּהּ וְעַתָּה מְרַצְּחִים:
כב כַּסְפֵּךְ הָיָה לְסִיגִים סָבְאֵךְ מָהוּל בַּמָּיִם: כג שָׂרַיִךְ
סוֹרְרִים וְחַבְרֵי גַּנָּבִים כֻּלּוֹ אֹהֵב שֹׁחַד וְרֹדֵף
שַׁלְמֹנִים יָתוֹם לֹא יִשְׁפֹּטוּ וְרִיב אַלְמָנָה לֹא־יָבוֹא
אֲלֵיהֶם: כד לָכֵן נְאֻם הָאָדוֹן יְהֹוָה צְבָאוֹת אֲבִיר

[11] *"Why do I need all your numerous sacrifices (when your accompanying confessions are insincere)?" says God. "I had enough of your burnt-offering rams and fattened cattle, and I do not desire the blood of cattle, sheep, and goats (since they do not bring you to repent).*

Insincere confession

[12] *When you appear before Me (at a festival, I will say), 'Who asked you to do this, trampling My (Temple) courtyards?'* [13] *Do not bring anymore meal offerings (for they will be) in vain, (for the three-finger fistful that) is burned (on the Altar) is offensive to Me! (When) groups of you (bring the sacrifices of Rosh) Chodesh, Shabbos, and festivals I cannot bear the falsehood (in your hearts)!* [14] *I hate your (Rosh) Chodesh and festival (offerings). They are (like) a burden to Me, and I cannot bear them!* [15] *When you spread your hands (in prayer), I will turn My eyes away from you. As much as you pray, I will not listen, (because) your hands are full of blood!"*

Need for repentance

[16] *"Cleanse and purify yourselves (by repenting). Remove your evil deeds from My sight, and refrain from doing evil.* [17] *Learn (to do) good, seek justice, and support the oppressed. Demand justice for the orphan and plead the cause of the widow!"*

[18] *"Come, now, and let us clarify (who has offended whom)," says God. "If your sins are like scarlet thread (and you return to Me), they will become white like snow. If they are as red as crimson, they will become like wool."*

[19] *"If you desire to listen, you will eat the best of the land.* [20] *But if you refuse and rebel, you will be eaten by the sword," for God has spoken.*

Decadence of Jerusalem

[21] *How the (faithful) city (of Jerusalem) has become (unfaithful like) a harlot! (Once) it was full of justice, and righteousness was always there, but now (it has become a city of) murderers!* [22] *(In your business dealings) your silver has become dross and your strong drinks diluted with water.* [23] *Your rulers are corrupt and are friendly with thieves. They all love bribes and run after favors. They do not judge the orphan, and the widow's case does not reach them.*

[24] *Therefore, the Master of Israel, the God of Hosts says: "Oh! I will appease Myself (of anger against) My rivals and take*

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prophet grieves over the corrupt state of Jerusalem (21-25), and envisions a future time of restoration (26-27).

1. חֲזוֹן יְשַׁעְיָהוּ—*The prophetic vision of Yeshayahu.* The Shabbos when this *Haftarah* is read is commonly known as *Shabbos Chazon* ("Shabbos of the prophetic vision"), after the opening words of the *Haftarah.* Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev taught a further significance to this term, that on this day, "Everybody is shown a distant vision of the future Temple." And, even though most people do not claim to actually see this vision, it nevertheless is felt by the more sublime, subconscious levels of each person's soul which subsequently influence the conscious mind.

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak explained the purpose of this vision with a parable: *A father had a valuable garment made for his son, but the son was irresponsible, and soon the garment was ripped into pieces. So the father had a second garment made for his son, but the son also allowed it to be ripped. When the father prepared a third garment he did not give it to his son to wear, but instead he showed it to him from time to time, telling him that if he would behave himself the garment would be his to wear.*

Likewise, the vision which we experience on *Shabbos Chazon* is intended to arouse a desire for the Third Temple to be built, a feeling which will inevitably lead a person to be more careful in the observance of *mitzvos* (*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Devarim* 5749, note 3).

2. שִׁמְעוּ שָׁמַיִם וְהַאֲזִינִי אֶרֶץ—*Hear, O heavens, and listen, O earth.* Moshe used the opposite expression to Yeshayah. Instead of saying, "*Hear, O heavens, and listen, O earth,*" he declared, "*Listen, O heavens...Let the earth hear*" (*Devarim* 32:1). The *Midrash* explains that Moshe was "close to the heavens," so he told them to "listen"—a term which suggests a closeness between speaker and listener. But since

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יִשְׂרָאֵל הוֹי אֶנָּחֵם מִצָּרַי וְאִנָּקְמָה מֵאוֹיְבָי׃
כה וְאָשִׁיבָה יָדִי עָלַיִךְ וְאֶצְרֹף כַּבֹּר סִגָּיִךְ וְאָסִירָה
כָּל־בְּדִילָיִךְ׃ כו וְאָשִׁיבָה שֹׁפְטַיִךְ כְּבָרִאשֹׁנָה וְיֹעֲצַיִךְ
כְּבַתְּחִלָּה אַחֲרֵי־כֵן יִקָּרֵא לָךְ עִיר הַצֶּדֶק קִרְיָה
נֶאֱמָנָה׃ כז צִיּוֹן בְּמִשְׁפָּט תִּפָּדֶה וְשָׁבֶיהָ בִּצְדָקָה׃

revenge on My enemies! [25] *I will pass My hand over you (to strike you with one blow after another). I will smelt your impurities as (if cleaning them) with soap, and I will remove all your (impurities) of tin."*

Restoration

[26] *"I will restore your judges (to be righteous) as they were at first, and your advisers as they were in the beginning. Afterwards you will be called 'city of righteousness—faithful city.'"*

[27] *(The city of) Tziyon will be redeemed through (the observance of) law, and those who return there (will come) due to (their acts of) righteousness.*

VA'ESCHANAN / ואתחנן

(Isaiah 40:1-26)

מ א נַחֲמוּ נַחֲמוּ עַמִּי יֹאמַר אֱלֹהֵיכֶם׃ ב דַּבְּרוּ עַל־
לֵב יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם וְקִרְאוּ אֵלֶיהָ כִּי מָלְאָה צְבָאָהּ כִּי נִרְצָה
עֲוֺנָהּ כִּי לָקְחָה מִיַּד יְהוָה כִּפְלַיִם בְּכָל־חַטֹּאתֶיהָ׃
ג קוֹל קוֹרֵא בַּמִּדְבָּר פַּנּוּ דֶּרֶךְ יְהוָה יַשְּׁרוּ בָּעֲרָבָה
מְסִלָּה לֵאלֹהֵינוּ׃ ד כָּל־גֶּיא יִנָּשֵׂא וְכָל־הַר וְגִבְעָה
יִשְׁפָּלוּ וְהָיָה הֶעָקֹב לְמִישׁוֹר וְהָרְכָסִים לְבִקְעָה׃
ה וְנִגְלָה כְּבוֹד יְהוָה וְרָאוּ כָל־בָּשָׂר יַחְדָּו כִּי פִּי יְהוָה
דִּבֵּר׃ ו קוֹל אֹמֵר קְרָא וְאָמַר מָה אֶקְרָא כָּל־הַבָּשָׂר
חָצִיר וְכָל־חַסְדּוֹ כְּצִיץ הַשָּׂדֶה׃ ז יָבֵשׁ חָצִיר נָבֵל

Prophecy of Redemption

40:1 *God will say (to the prophets), "Comfort, oh comfort My people!* [2] *Speak (in a way that will enter the) heart of Jerusalem and announce to her that her period (of exile) has been fulfilled and that her sins have been forgiven, for she has (already) been punished for all her sins twice by God (with two exiles)."*

[3] *(It is as if) a voice is calling out: "Clear a path in the desert for God (to return the exiles)! Make a straight road in the wilderness for our God (to go ahead of them)!* [4] *Every valley will be raised. Every mountain and hill will be lowered. The crooked (paths) will be made straight, and the high places will become a plain."*

[5] *Then God's Glory will be revealed and all flesh will see together that God has spoken (words of comfort).*

[6] *A voice says (to the prophet): "Announce (in public)!"*

"What shall I announce?" (asks the prophet).

Enemies will wither like grass

("Announce the following," says the voice), "All the people (who will come with Gog to Jerusalem to war will wither like) grass. Even their good (people will wither) like the flowers of the field, [7] *(for) grass withers and flowers fade when God's breath*

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he was "distant from the earth," he told it to "hear," from afar. Yeshayah, however, told the earth to "listen," since he was "closer to the earth, and more distant from the heavens" (*Sifri*, beginning of *Parshas Ha'azinu*).

Being closer to the heavens, Moshe was able to take the Torah from its supernal source and act as a channel for it to be brought below. Yeshayah, on the other hand, worked in the opposite direction. Being closer to earth, he was able to address the real issues in people's lives, lifting them out of their difficulties so as to progress to a higher spiritual level. So both prophets aimed to spiritualize, but Moshe "delivered" spirituality in the form of mystical revelation, whereas Yeshayah cajoled and challenged the people to become more spiritual themselves (*Likutei Sichos* vol 2, p. 415*ff*).

27. צִיּוֹן בְּמִשְׁפָּט תִּפָּדֶה וְשָׁבֶיהָ בִּצְדָקָה—*(The city of) Tziyon will be redeemed through (the observance of) law, and those who return there (will come) due to (their acts of) righteousness.* The last verses of the *Haftarah* describe two phases of restoration: 1.) First, in verses 25-26, we read of the correction and *transformation* of evil: *"I will smelt your impurities as (if cleaning them) with soap, and I will remove all your (impurities) of tin. I will restore your judges (to be righteous) as they were at first, and your advisers as they were in the beginning."* 2.) Verse 27 then concludes by stressing the observance of good deeds *alone*: "*(the observance of) law,*" and "*(acts of) righteousness.*"

The message here appears to be that pure good (verse 27) is a spiritual progression from—and thus superior to—the transformation of evil into good (verses 25-26), a conclusion which seems to fly in the face of the traditional understanding that the *ba'al teshuvah* (penitent) is greater than the *tzadik* (naturally pious person). And are we not taught that there is a superiority to "light" which comes from a setting of spiritual "darkness" (cf. Ecclesiastes 2:13)?

In truth, however, there is a *development* of spiritual intensity here. *Initially*, there is a superior quality to "light which comes from a setting of

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צִיץ כִּי רוּחַ יְהֹוָה נָשְׁבָה בּוֹ אָכֵן חָצִיר הָעָם: ח יָבֵשׁ
חָצִיר נָבֵל צִיץ וּדְבַר אֱלֹהֵינוּ יָקוּם לְעוֹלָם: ט עַל
הַר־גָּבֹהַ עֲלִי־לָךְ מְבַשֶּׂרֶת צִיּוֹן הָרִימִי בַכֹּחַ קוֹלֵךְ
מְבַשֶּׂרֶת יְרוּשָׁלָם הָרִימִי אַל־תִּירָאִי אִמְרִי לְעָרֵי
יְהוּדָה הִנֵּה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: י הִנֵּה אֲדֹנָי יֱהֹוִה בְּחָזָק יָבוֹא
וּזְרֹעוֹ מֹשְׁלָה לוֹ הִנֵּה שְׂכָרוֹ אִתּוֹ וּפְעֻלָּתוֹ לְפָנָיו:
יא כְּרֹעֶה עֶדְרוֹ יִרְעֶה בִּזְרֹעוֹ יְקַבֵּץ טְלָאִים וּבְחֵיקוֹ
יִשָּׂא עָלוֹת יְנַהֵל: יב מִי־מָדַד בְּשָׁעֳלוֹ מַיִם וְשָׁמַיִם
בַּזֶּרֶת תִּכֵּן וְכָל בַּשָּׁלִשׁ עֲפַר הָאָרֶץ וְשָׁקַל בַּפֶּלֶס
הָרִים וּגְבָעוֹת בְּמֹאזְנָיִם: יג מִי־תִכֵּן אֶת־רוּחַ יְהֹוָה
וְאִישׁ עֲצָתוֹ יוֹדִיעֶנּוּ: יד אֶת־מִי נוֹעָץ וַיְבִינֵהוּ
וַיְלַמְּדֵהוּ בְּאֹרַח מִשְׁפָּט וַיְלַמְּדֵהוּ דַעַת וְדֶרֶךְ
תְּבוּנוֹת יוֹדִיעֶנּוּ: טו הֵן גּוֹיִם כְּמַר מִדְּלִי וּכְשַׁחַק
מֹאזְנַיִם נֶחְשָׁבוּ הֵן אִיִּים כַּדַּק יִטּוֹל: טז וּלְבָנוֹן אֵין דֵּי
בָּעֵר וְחַיָּתוֹ אֵין דֵּי עוֹלָה: יז כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם כְּאַיִן נֶגְדּוֹ
מֵאֶפֶס וָתֹהוּ נֶחְשְׁבוּ־לוֹ: יח וְאֶל־מִי תְּדַמְּיוּן אֵל
וּמַה־דְּמוּת תַּעַרְכוּ־לוֹ: יט הַפֶּסֶל נָסַךְ חָרָשׁ וְצֹרֵף

blows over it. Indeed, the people (of Gog will be like) grass! [8] *(They are like) grass (that) withers and flowers (that fade), but the word of our God will endure forever!"*

Prophets announce Redemption

[9] *(You prophets) who bring news (of redemption) to Tziyon, go up on a high mountain (so your voices can be heard from afar! You prophets) who bring news (of redemption) to Jerusalem, raise your voice powerfully! Raise it, do not be afraid (that somebody will deny it)! Declare to the cities of Yehudah, "God is coming (to redeem you)!"* [10] *Look! God Almighty is coming with power, and His arm will rule for Him (without any help). His reward (for every person) is (ready) with Him! His payment (for good deeds) is (ready) before Him!* [11] *(God will lead you out of exile) like a shepherd pasturing his flock, who gathers the lambs with His arm (and not his stick) and carries them in his bosom, leading the nurslings carefully.*

Omniscience of God

[12] *Who (is like God, Who knows the depth of) the waters (as if) He measured (them) with His fist, and (He knows the length of) the skies (as if) He measured them with a ruler? (He knows) the amount of earth on the ground (as if) He measured it. (He knows) the weight of the mountains and the hills (as if He had used) a scale and a balance.* [13] *Who (could) influence God's will (to accord with his own will)? What man is His advisor that informs Him?* [14] *Whom did He consult and who taught Him? Who instructed Him in the way of justice, taught Him knowledge, or guided Him in the path of wisdom?*

Omnipotence of God

[15] *The (strength of the) nations is like a drop (which runs down the back of) a bucket (and becomes) bitter (from the mold on the bucket. They are) like (moldy) dust on a (copper) balance (which can easily be blown away). He casts away the islands as if (they were) dust, (so surely He can save the Jewish people from the nations?* [16] *All the wood of) Lebanon is not enough to burn (on His Altar), and its animals do not provide sufficient burnt offerings (before Him).* [17] *All the nations are like nothing to him. He considers them void and empty.*

[18] *To whom can you compare God? What image is of any value compared to Him?* [19] *(Could you possibly compare Him to) idols cast by a smith and plated with gold by a goldsmith, with cast silver chains (to pull it along, because it cannot move on*

darkness," but once the light has "learned" and "acquired" this advantage from the darkness, it can then progress on its own to unprecedented levels of pure holiness (light) that vastly transcend the spiritual illumination of *teshuvah* and correction. In other words, becoming a *ba'al teshuvah* is not the highest level of spiritual achievement in itself; rather it is a springboard to becoming an even greater *tzadik* than would have been possible without the *teshuvah* process (*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Devarim* 5748).

HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS VA'ESCHANAN

This is the first of a series of "Seven *Haftaros* of Comfort" which are read between the ninth of *Av* and *Rosh Hashanah*. The *Shabbos* when this *Haftarah* is read is commonly known as *Shabbos Nachamu* ("*Shabbos* of Comfort"). 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, and to the ruins of Jerusalem.

The *Haftarah* opens with a message of comfort and images of redemption (40:1-5). We read how the enemies of Jerusalem will ultimately wither like grass (6-8), and how the prophets will herald redemption from the mountaintops (9-11). The latter section of the *Haftarah* praises the greatness of God, His omnipotence and the fallacy of idol-worship (12-26).

1. נַחֲמוּ נַחֲמוּ עַמִּי—*Comfort, oh comfort My people!* Noting the obvious repetition in this verse, the *Midrash* explains that the prophet was offering a double measure of comfort here, *"for the First Temple and for the Second Temple"* (*Eichah Rabah* end of ch. 1; *Yalkut Shimoni, Yeshayah, remez* 445).

Here we see a connection to the *Parsha*. (Strictly speaking, the "Seven *Haftaros* of Comfort" are not directly connected to the *Parshiyos* when they are read (see *Orach Chaim* 428), but *Shaloh* writes that, by Divine Providence, a connection will always be evident). *Parshas Va'eschanan* takes its name from Moshe's petition to God to enter the Land of Israel

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בַּזָּהָב יְרַקְּעֶנּוּ וּרְתֻקוֹת כֶּסֶף צוֹרֵף׃ כ הַמְסֻכָּן תְּרוּמָה
עֵץ לֹא־יִרְקַב יִבְחָר חָרָשׁ חָכָם יְבַקֶּשׁ־לוֹ לְהָכִין
פֶּסֶל לֹא יִמּוֹט׃ כא הֲלוֹא תֵדְעוּ הֲלוֹא תִשְׁמָעוּ הֲלוֹא
הֻגַּד מֵרֹאשׁ לָכֶם הֲלוֹא הֲבִינֹתֶם מוֹסְדוֹת הָאָרֶץ׃
כב הַיֹּשֵׁב עַל־חוּג הָאָרֶץ וְיֹשְׁבֶיהָ כַּחֲגָבִים הַנּוֹטֶה
כַדֹּק שָׁמַיִם וַיִּמְתָּחֵם כָּאֹהֶל לָשָׁבֶת׃ כג הַנּוֹתֵן רוֹזְנִים
לְאָיִן שֹׁפְטֵי אֶרֶץ כַּתֹּהוּ עָשָׂה׃ כד אַף בַּל־נִטָּעוּ אַף
בַּל־זֹרָעוּ אַף בַּל־שֹׁרֵשׁ בָּאָרֶץ גִּזְעָם וְגַם־נָשַׁף בָּהֶם
וַיִּבָשׁוּ וּסְעָרָה כַּקַּשׁ תִּשָּׂאֵם׃ כה וְאֶל־מִי תְדַמְּיוּנִי
וְאֶשְׁוֶה יֹאמַר קָדוֹשׁ׃ כו שְׂאוּ־מָרוֹם עֵינֵיכֶם וּרְאוּ
מִי־בָרָא אֵלֶּה הַמּוֹצִיא בְמִסְפָּר צְבָאָם לְכֻלָּם בְּשֵׁם
יִקְרָא מֵרֹב אוֹנִים וְאַמִּיץ כֹּחַ אִישׁ לֹא נֶעְדָּר׃

its own). [20] *A poor person sets aside (large amounts of money for his idol, as if he were rich). He (pays a) professional to choose a wood which will not rot, and he seeks an expert to prepare an idol which will not fall apart (and shame him for worshipping it).*

Divine Providence

[21] *Don't you know (who the Master of the world is by working it out by yourself)? Haven't you heard (from somebody else that worked it out)? Haven't you been told (about God) from ancient tradition? Haven't you understood that the earth (is not resting on any) foundations (for it is a globe surrounded by sky, so God must be decreeing it to stand)?*

[22] *(God) sits above the skies that encompass the earth, and those who live on it seem like grasshoppers. He stretches out the skies like a sheet and spreads them like a tent for dwelling.* [23] *He makes princes into nothing and turns rulers of the land to worthlessness.* [24] *(They are as if) they were never planted or never sown, (as if) they never even took root in the earth. (Even) by blowing at them (with an ordinary breath) they dry up, and the storm carries them away like straw (blowing in the wind).*

God is unique

[25] *"So to whom can you liken Me? To whom can you compare Me?" asks the Holy One.* [26] *Lift up your eyes to the heavens and see who created these (stars)! He brings out their hosts by number, calling each (star) by name. Because of His great might and tremendous strength, not one (star) is lost (because He made them exist permanently).*

EIKEV / עקב

(Isaiah 49:14 – 51:3)

מט יד וַתֹּאמֶר צִיּוֹן עֲזָבַנִי יְהוָה וַאדֹנָי שְׁכֵחָנִי׃
טו הֲתִשְׁכַּח אִשָּׁה עוּלָהּ מֵרַחֵם בֶּן־בִּטְנָהּ גַּם־אֵלֶּה
תִשְׁכַּחְנָה וְאָנֹכִי לֹא אֶשְׁכָּחֵךְ׃ טז הֵן עַל־כַּפַּיִם
חַקֹּתִיךְ חוֹמֹתַיִךְ נֶגְדִּי תָּמִיד׃ יז מִהֲרוּ בָּנָיִךְ מְהָרְסַיִךְ

God will not abandon Tziyon

49:14 *Tziyon will (want to) say, "God has abandoned me! My God has forgotten me."* [15] *(But this cannot be the case, for) could a woman forget her baby, or not have compassion on the child of her womb? (Even if it is conceivable that) she would forget (her children, nevertheless), I will not forget you!* [16] *Indeed, (My memory of you is so vivid, it is as if) I have engraved you on My palms, and your (ruined) walls are always (a reminder) before Me (that I must rebuild them.* [17] *In fact it is) your children (and not I, who) quickly (forgot about their land! It was the wicked ones) that came from you, (and not I) who destroyed you and laid waste to you, (O Tziyon).*

and, as *Megaleh Amukos* writes (par. 185), if this request had been granted, the Jews would never have gone into exile because Moshe's conquest would have been eternal. This parallels the theme of "double comfort" in the *Haftarah*, since the only consolation for the destruction of the first two Temples will be the rebuilding of the Third Temple, which will be eternal (*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Va'eschanan* 5748).

HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS EIKEV

This is the second of a series of "Seven *Haftaros* of Comfort" which are read between the ninth of *Av* and *Rosh Hashanah*. 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 consolation to Tziyon (Zion) that she will not be abandoned, and promises of restoration (49:14-21). In a second declaration, God reaffirms the ingathering of the exiles and punishment of the nations with more vivid imagery (22-26). In the following chapter, the mood shifts from consolation to criticism. Exile ("divorce") has come, not due to a weakness on God's part, but because of Israel's sins (50:1-3). On a personal note, the prophet declares his own loyalty to God, and his determination to deliver God's word regardless of

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וּמַחֲרִבַ֫יִךְ מִמֵּךְ יֵצֵאוּ: יח שְׂאִי־סָבִיב עֵינַיִךְ וּרְאִי כֻּלָּם
נִקְבְּצוּ בָֽאוּ־לָךְ חַי־אָנִי נְאֻם־יְהֹוָה כִּי כֻלָּם כַּעֲדִי
תִלְבָּשִׁי וּתְקַשְּׁרִים כַּכַּלָּה: יט כִּי חָרְבֹתַיִךְ וְשֹׁמְמֹתַיִךְ
וְאֶרֶץ הֲרִסֻתֵךְ כִּי עַתָּה תֵּצְרִי מִיּוֹשֵׁב וְרָחֲקוּ
מְבַלְּעָיִךְ: כ עוֹד יֹאמְרוּ בְאָזְנַיִךְ בְּנֵי שִׁכֻּלָיִךְ צַר־לִי
הַמָּקוֹם גְּשָׁה־לִּי וְאֵשֵׁבָה: כא וְאָמַרְתְּ בִּלְבָבֵךְ מִי
יָלַד־לִי אֶת־אֵלֶּה וַאֲנִי שְׁכוּלָה וְגַלְמוּדָה גֹּלָה ׀
וְסוּרָה וְאֵלֶּה מִי גִדֵּל הֵן אֲנִי נִשְׁאַרְתִּי לְבַדִּי אֵלֶּה
אֵיפֹה הֵם: כב כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהֹוִה הִנֵּה אֶשָּׂא
אֶל־גּוֹיִם יָדִי וְאֶל־עַמִּים אָרִים נִסִּי וְהֵבִיאוּ בָנַיִךְ
בְּחֹצֶן וּבְנֹתַיִךְ עַל־כָּתֵף תִּנָּשֶׂאנָה: כג וְהָיוּ מְלָכִים
אֹמְנַיִךְ וְשָׂרוֹתֵיהֶם מֵינִיקֹתַיִךְ אַפַּיִם אֶרֶץ יִשְׁתַּחֲווּ־
לָךְ וַעֲפַר רַגְלַיִךְ יְלַחֵכוּ וְיָדַעַתְּ כִּי־אֲנִי יְהֹוָה אֲשֶׁר
לֹא־יֵבֹשׁוּ קֹוָי: כד הֲיֻקַּח מִגִּבּוֹר מַלְקוֹחַ וְאִם־שְׁבִי
צַדִּיק יִמָּלֵט: כה כִּי־כֹה ׀ אָמַר יְהֹוָה גַּם־שְׁבִי גִבּוֹר
יֻקָּח וּמַלְקוֹחַ עָרִיץ יִמָּלֵט וְאֶת־יְרִיבֵךְ אָנֹכִי אָרִיב
וְאֶת־בָּנַיִךְ אָנֹכִי אוֹשִׁיעַ: כו וְהַאֲכַלְתִּי אֶת־מוֹנַיִךְ
אֶת־בְּשָׂרָם וְכֶעָסִיס דָּמָם יִשְׁכָּרוּן וְיָדְעוּ כָל־בָּשָׂר
כִּי אֲנִי יְהֹוָה מוֹשִׁיעֵךְ וְגֹאֲלֵךְ אֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב: נ א כֹּה ׀
אָמַר יְהֹוָה אֵי זֶה סֵפֶר כְּרִיתוּת אִמְּכֶם אֲשֶׁר
שִׁלַּחְתִּיהָ אוֹ מִי מִנּוֹשַׁי אֲשֶׁר־מָכַרְתִּי אֶתְכֶם לוֹ הֵן
בַּעֲוֺנֹתֵיכֶם נִמְכַּרְתֶּם וּבְפִשְׁעֵיכֶם שֻׁלְּחָה אִמְּכֶם:

[18] *Lift up your eyes and see (how your children) have all gathered and come to you. "As I live," says God, "you will (be proud of) them all like (one who) wears jewels, and you will tie them to yourself like silk adornments of a bride."*

Ingathering of the exiles

[19] *For your (worries about your) ruins, desolate places, and destroyed land (will end, as your land) will now be swarming with inhabitants, and your destroyers will be distant from you.* [20] *Your ears (will hear) that your children (from whom you thought you were) bereaved are saying (to each other): "This place is too crowded for me. Make room for me to settle (too)!"*

[21] *Then you will say in your heart, "Who gave birth to (all) these (people) for me? I was bereft and alone (for so long, with my children) exiled and wandering (from me). Who raised them? For I was by myself—where have these (people come from)?"*

[22] *This is what God Almighty says: "Look! I will lift up My hand to the nations and hoist My banner to the peoples (to arouse their hearts). They will bring your sons in their corners (of their garments) and carry your daughters on their shoulders."*

[23] *"Kings will be your child-minders and their princesses your wetnurses. They will bow down to you and lick the dust of your feet, and you will know that I am God (Who is all-powerful, so) that those who trust in Me will not be ashamed."*

Enemies punished

[24] *Can spoil be taken away from the mighty (Eisav)? Or captives saved from (Ya'akov) the righteous?* [25] *But God says: "Captives can be freed from the mighty and spoil taken back from tyrants, for I will fight your enemies and save your children.* [26] *I will feed the flesh of those who verbally abused you (to wild animals), and (birds) will become drunk on their blood as if it were wine. Then All flesh will know that I am God, your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Ya'akov!"*

[50:1] *God says, "What is (the reason for) the bill of divorce with which I sent away your mother, (the congregation of Israel)? To which of My creditors did I sell you (to pay back My loan)? You were sold because of your sins, and your mother was sent away because of your transgressions, (so all this will end when you repent).*

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any opposition (4-9). The only solution, therefore, is to listen to the prophet and trust in God (10-11). The conclusion of the *Haftarah*, from yet another chapter, sees the tone return to conciliation. The Jewish people are advised to find hope in the story of Avraham and Sarah, that God will soon comfort all the ruins of Tziyon (51:1-3).

49:14. וַתֹּאמֶר צִיּוֹן עֲזָבַנִי ה'—*Tziyon will (want to) say, "God has abandoned me!* Chasidic thought describes a two-phase interaction that forms the basis of man's relationship with God. Initially, there must be an "arousal from Above." God must spark an interest in the relationship and send messages that He desires the person to respond. But while these revelations are both inspiring and effective, they do not form a true relationship with God, which must come from within the person himself. The "response from below" ensures that God's initial "arousal" does not evaporate, but instead becomes a source of real, lasting inspiration.

These two phases are represented by *Parshiyos Va'eschanan* and *Eikev*, which are read in the wake of *Tisha b'Av* (the destruction of the Temple), when our relationship with God needs to be rebuilt once again. *Va'eschanan* means an "unearned gift" (*Rashi*), signifying God's initial "arousal from Above" which comes "free of charge," without any effort from man. But this only penetrates a person superficially, and it must be followed by *Eikev* ("heel"), i.e. a self-motivated effort to building the relationship that permeates the person's entire being, down to his heels.

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ב מַדּוּעַ בָּאתִי וְאֵין אִישׁ קָרָאתִי וְאֵין עוֹנֶה הֲקָצוֹר קָצְרָה יָדִי מִפְּדוּת וְאִם־אֵין־בִּי כֹחַ לְהַצִּיל הֵן בְּגַעֲרָתִי אַחֲרִיב יָם אָשִׂים נְהָרוֹת מִדְבָּר תִּבְאַשׁ דְּגָתָם מֵאֵין מַיִם וְתָמֹת בַּצָּמָא׃ ג אַלְבִּישׁ שָׁמַיִם קַדְרוּת וְשַׂק אָשִׂים כְּסוּתָם׃ ד אֲדֹנָי יֱהֹוִה נָתַן לִי לְשׁוֹן לִמּוּדִים לָדַעַת לָעוּת אֶת־יָעֵף דָּבָר יָעִיר ׀ בַּבֹּקֶר בַּבֹּקֶר יָעִיר לִי אֹזֶן לִשְׁמֹעַ כַּלִּמּוּדִים׃ ה אֲדֹנָי יֱהֹוִה פָּתַח־לִי אֹזֶן וְאָנֹכִי לֹא מָרִיתִי אָחוֹר לֹא נְסוּגֹתִי׃ ו גֵּוִי נָתַתִּי לְמַכִּים וּלְחָיַי לְמֹרְטִים פָּנַי לֹא הִסְתַּרְתִּי מִכְּלִמּוֹת וָרֹק׃ ז וַאדֹנָי יֱהֹוִה יַעֲזָר־לִי עַל־כֵּן לֹא נִכְלָמְתִּי עַל־כֵּן שַׂמְתִּי פָנַי כַּחַלָּמִישׁ וָאֵדַע כִּי־לֹא אֵבוֹשׁ׃ ח קָרוֹב מַצְדִּיקִי מִי־יָרִיב אִתִּי נַעַמְדָה יָּחַד מִי־בַעַל מִשְׁפָּטִי יִגַּשׁ אֵלָי׃ ט הֵן אֲדֹנָי יֱהֹוִה יַעֲזָר־לִי מִי־הוּא יַרְשִׁיעֵנִי הֵן כֻּלָּם כַּבֶּגֶד יִבְלוּ עָשׁ יֹאכְלֵם׃ י מִי בָכֶם יְרֵא יְהֹוָה שֹׁמֵעַ בְּקוֹל עַבְדּוֹ אֲשֶׁר ׀ הָלַךְ חֲשֵׁכִים וְאֵין נֹגַהּ לוֹ יִבְטַח בְּשֵׁם יְהֹוָה וְיִשָּׁעֵן בֵּאלֹהָיו׃ יא הֵן כֻּלְּכֶם קֹדְחֵי אֵשׁ מְאַזְּרֵי זִיקוֹת לְכוּ ׀ בְּאוּר אֶשְׁכֶם וּבְזִיקוֹת בִּעַרְתֶּם מִיָּדִי הָיְתָה־זֹּאת לָכֶם לְמַעֲצֵבָה תִּשְׁכָּבוּן׃ **נא** א שִׁמְעוּ אֵלַי רֹדְפֵי צֶדֶק מְבַקְשֵׁי יְהֹוָה הַבִּיטוּ אֶל־צוּר חֻצַּבְתֶּם וְאֶל־מַקֶּבֶת בּוֹר נֻקַּרְתֶּם׃ ב הַבִּיטוּ אֶל־אַבְרָהָם אֲבִיכֶם וְאֶל־שָׂרָה תְּחוֹלֶלְכֶם כִּי־אֶחָד קְרָאתִיו וַאֲבָרְכֵהוּ וְאַרְבֵּהוּ׃ ג כִּי־נִחַם יְהֹוָה צִיּוֹן נִחַם כָּל־חָרְבֹתֶיהָ וַיָּשֶׂם מִדְבָּרָהּ כְּעֵדֶן וְעַרְבָתָהּ כְּגַן־יְהֹוָה שָׂשׂוֹן וְשִׂמְחָה יִמָּצֵא בָהּ תּוֹדָה וְקוֹל זִמְרָה׃

God complains

[2] *"Why was no one there when I came (to you), no one to answer when I called? Is My hand too short to redeem? Do I lack strength to save? Indeed, I can dry up a sea (of idol worshippers) with My roar and make the rivers (of them) into a desert, so their fish stink from lack of water and die of thirst.* [3] *I (can) clothe the heavens in darkness and cover them with sackcloth."*

Yeshayah's statement

[4] *(The prophet says): God Almighty has given me a tongue for teaching, so I should know how to (teach those who) thirst for (God's) word, (the right thing) at the right time. He wakes (me) every morning and rouses my ears (to hear prophecy), so I will be able to listen like a disciple.*

[5] *God Almighty opened my ears, and I did not hold myself back or retreat.* [6] *(Even if there was a fear that I would be hurt, I went nonetheless and) I gave over my body to floggers and my cheeks to those who tore out my hair. I did not hide my face from (the fear of) insult and spitting.* [7] *(Despite all odds), God Almighty helped me and so I was not ashamed. (I saw God was helping me) so I have made my face like hard rock (that would deflect any insult), and I know that I will not be ashamed.*

[8] *(God, Who is) my defender is near (to me)! So who wants to fight me? (God and I) will stand together! Whoever (wishes to be) my adversary, let him approach me!* [9] *Indeed, God Almighty will help me, so who could declare me guilty? (My opponents) will all be worn out like old clothing and consumed by moths.*

Listen to the prophet

[10] *Who among you fears God and listens to the voice of His servant (the prophet)? Even he who walked in darkness (of suffering), without (any) light (of hope for salvation), should trust in God's Name (that salvation will indeed come) and rely on his God.* [11] *But in truth (nearly) all of you cause the fire (of God's anger) to blaze and fan the flames. (Consequently), you will walk in the light of your fire and the flame you lit (being punished accordingly)! This (is no accident! It) has come to you from My hand, so that (when) you lie down (to die you will have had only) sadness.*

Lesson of Avraham

[51:1] *Listen to Me, you who pursue justice and seek God! Look to (Avraham), the rock from which you were hewn and to (Sarah), the quarry from which you were dug.* [2] *Look to your father Avraham, and to Sarah, who gave birth to you. For he was alone (without any family) when I called him, but I blessed him and caused him to multiply, (and likewise, I will make the Jewish people, who are now a minority, multiply greatly).*

[3] *For God will comfort Tziyon, (He will) comfort all her ruins. He will make her wilderness like Eden and her desert like God's garden. Joy and gladness will be found there, thanksgiving and the sound of music.*

The two phases are also reflected in the *Haftaros*. Initially, in the *Haftarah of Parshas Va'eschanan*, it is *God* Who arouses the Jewish people: "God will say (to the prophets), 'Comfort, oh comfort My people!'" But then, in the *Haftarah* of *Parshas Eikev*, it is the *people* that cry out to God ("God has abandoned me! My God has forgotten me"), because they are struggling with the second, more difficult phase of internalizing their relationship with God so that it integrates smoothly with their real personalities and their real lives (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 9, p. 76*ff*).

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Re'eh / ראה

(Isaiah 54:11 – 55:5)

יא עֲנִיָּה סֹעֲרָה לֹא נֻחָמָה הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי מַרְבִּיץ
בַּפּוּךְ אֲבָנַיִךְ וִיסַדְתִּיךְ בַּסַּפִּירִים: יב וְשַׂמְתִּי כַּדְכֹד
שִׁמְשֹׁתַיִךְ וּשְׁעָרַיִךְ לְאַבְנֵי אֶקְדָּח וְכָל־גְּבוּלֵךְ
לְאַבְנֵי־חֵפֶץ: יג וְכָל־בָּנַיִךְ לִמּוּדֵי יְהוָה וְרַב שְׁלוֹם
בָּנָיִךְ: יד בִּצְדָקָה 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 כָּסֶף
לְכוּ שִׁבְרוּ וֶאֱכֹלוּ וּלְכוּ שִׁבְרוּ בְּלוֹא־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
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 פֵאֲרָךְ:

Jerusalem filled with gems

[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 windowpanes from emeralds, your gates from carbuncle stones, and (the floor-stones of) all your borders (will become) desirable gems.*

Torah knowledge

[13] *"All your children will be (extremely wise, as if they were) disciples of God, and your children will have much peace.*

No fear from enemies

[14] *"Through (your) righteousness you will be fit (for all this). You will distance yourself from crooks 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] *"Come! 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!*

Eternal covenant with Mashiach

[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 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.*

Haftarah of Parshas Re'eh

This is the third of a series of "Seven *Haftaros* of Comfort" which are read between the ninth of *Av* and *Rosh Hashanah*. 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* describes the magnificent rebuilding of Jerusalem (54:11-12), and the peace which will then prevail (13-17). In the following chapter, the people are urged to study Torah, and not secular wisdom (55:1-3), and are promised an everlasting covenant (3-5).

12. וְשַׂמְתִּי כַּדְכֹד 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).

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If Sunday is *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 יְהֹוָה לֵאמֹר יְהֹוָה יִהְיֶה ׀
בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ וּבֵין זַרְעִי וּבֵין זַרְעֲךָ עַד־עוֹלָם:

20:18 *Yonasan said to him (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.'"*

SHOFTIM / שופטים

(Isaiah 51:12 –52:12)

נא יב אָנֹכִי אָנֹכִי הוּא מְנַחֶמְכֶם מִי־אַתְּ וַתִּירְאִי
מֵאֱנוֹשׁ יָמוּת וּמִבֶּן־אָדָם חָצִיר יִנָּתֵן: יג וַתִּשְׁכַּח
יְהֹוָה עֹשֶׂךָ נוֹטֶה שָׁמַיִם וְיֹסֵד אָרֶץ וַתְּפַחֵד תָּמִיד
כָּל־הַיּוֹם מִפְּנֵי חֲמַת הַמֵּצִיק כַּאֲשֶׁר כּוֹנֵן לְהַשְׁחִית
וְאַיֵּה חֲמַת הַמֵּצִיק: יד מִהַר צֹעֶה לְהִפָּתֵחַ וְלֹא־
יָמוּת לַשַּׁחַת וְלֹא יֶחְסַר לַחְמוֹ: טו וְאָנֹכִי יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
רֹגַע הַיָּם וַיֶּהֱמוּ גַּלָּיו יְהֹוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ: טז וָאָשִׂים
דְּבָרַי בְּפִיךָ וּבְצֵל יָדִי כִּסִּיתִיךָ לִנְטֹעַ שָׁמַיִם
וְלִיסֹד אָרֶץ וְלֵאמֹר לְצִיּוֹן עַמִּי־אָתָּה: יז הִתְעוֹרְרִי
הִתְעוֹרְרִי קוּמִי יְרוּשָׁלַםִ אֲשֶׁר שָׁתִית מִיַּד יְהֹוָה
אֶת־כּוֹס חֲמָתוֹ אֶת־קֻבַּעַת כּוֹס הַתַּרְעֵלָה שָׁתִית
מָצִית: יח אֵין־מְנַהֵל לָהּ מִכָּל־בָּנִים יָלָדָה וְאֵין
מַחֲזִיק בְּיָדָהּ מִכָּל־בָּנִים גִּדֵּלָה: יט שְׁתַּיִם הֵנָּה
קֹרְאֹתַיִךְ מִי יָנוּד לָךְ הַשֹּׁד וְהַשֶּׁבֶר וְהָרָעָב וְהַחֶרֶב
מִי אֲנַחֲמֵךְ: כ בָּנַיִךְ עֻלְּפוּ שָׁכְבוּ בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל־חוּצוֹת
כְּתוֹא מִכְמָר הַמְלֵאִים חֲמַת־יְהֹוָה גַּעֲרַת אֱלֹהָיִךְ:

51:12 *It is I, yes I, Who comforts you. Why do you, (who have so many merits), fear mortal man, human beings who are put (into the world) like grass?* 13 *You have forgotten (the influence of) God, Who made you, Who stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth. You are constantly afraid, all day, from the anger of the enemy that is preparing to destroy you. But where is the enemy's anger?*

Do not fear mortals

14 *The wanderer (in exile) will be freed quickly. (Even while in exile) He did not die and he was not destroyed, and his bread did not fail.*

15 *For I am God your God, Who calms the sea (if He wants, or makes) its waves roar. His name is the God of Hosts.*

16 *I have put My Words (of Torah) into your mouth and (in the Torah's merit, I) sheltered you with the shadow of My hand (from the enemy), planting (you in your land like the stars) of the skies, and establishing you (to be as widespread as) the earth. (All the nations) will say to Tziyon: "(God is saying to you), You are My people!"*

17 *Wake up! Wake up! Rise, O Jerusalem, you who have been drinking (until now) the cup of wrath from God's hand (to cleanse your sins)! You drank and sucked, the cup of poison, to the dregs (so there are no punishments left for you).* 18 *Of all the children to whom she gave birth, there is no one to guide her, no one to hold her hand from all the children she raised.* 19 *Double (suffering) has happened to you, but who will (even) nod (his head to comfort) you (when everybody is your enemy? (From the double suffering of) robbery and starvation, famine and the sword, who will be able to comfort you?* 20 *Your children have*

Jerusalem rebuilt

HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS SHOFTIM

This is the fourth of a series of "Seven *Haftaros* of Comfort" which are read between the ninth of *Av* and *Rosh Hashanah*. 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.

As the *Haftarah* opens, God announces Himself as the comforter of the Jewish people and urges them not to fear the enemies who are just mortal men (51:12-16). God urges Jerusalem to "rise" from her pitiful state, because all the suffering has now come to an end (17-22). In a second awakening call, Jerusalem is told to prepare for imminent redemption, because God hates the exile when His Name "is *disgraced*

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כא לָכֵן שִׁמְעִי־נָא זֹאת עֲנִיָּה וּשְׁכֻרַת וְלֹא מִיָּיִן:
כב כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנַיִךְ יְהֹוָה וֵאלֹהַיִךְ יָרִיב עַמּוֹ הִנֵּה
לָקַחְתִּי מִיָּדֵךְ אֶת־כּוֹס הַתַּרְעֵלָה אֶת־קֻבַּעַת כּוֹס
חֲמָתִי לֹא־תוֹסִיפִי לִשְׁתּוֹתָהּ עוֹד: כג וְשַׂמְתִּיהָ בְּיַד־
מוֹגַיִךְ אֲשֶׁר־אָמְרוּ לְנַפְשֵׁךְ שְׁחִי וְנַעֲבֹרָה וַתָּשִׂימִי
כָאָרֶץ גֵּוֵךְ וְכַחוּץ לַעֹבְרִים: נב א עוּרִי עוּרִי לִבְשִׁי
עֻזֵּךְ צִיּוֹן לִבְשִׁי | בִּגְדֵי תִפְאַרְתֵּךְ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר
הַקֹּדֶשׁ כִּי לֹא יוֹסִיף יָבֹא־בָךְ עוֹד עָרֵל וְטָמֵא:
ב הִתְנַעֲרִי מֵעָפָר קוּמִי שְׁבִי יְרוּשָׁלָיִם הִתְפַּתְּחִי
(התפתחו כ׳) מוֹסְרֵי צַוָּארֵךְ שְׁבִיָּה בַּת־צִיּוֹן: ג כִּי־כֹה
אָמַר יְהֹוָה חִנָּם נִמְכַּרְתֶּם וְלֹא בְכֶסֶף תִּגָּאֵלוּ: ד כִּי
כֹה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יֱהֹוִה מִצְרַיִם יָרַד־עַמִּי בָרִאשֹׁנָה
לָגוּר שָׁם וְאַשּׁוּר בְּאֶפֶס עֲשָׁקוֹ: ה וְעַתָּה־מַה (מי כ׳)
לִּי־פֹה נְאֻם־יְהֹוָה כִּי־לֻקַּח עַמִּי חִנָּם מֹשְׁלָיו (משלו כ׳)
יְהֵילִילוּ נְאֻם־יְהֹוָה וְתָמִיד כָּל־הַיּוֹם שְׁמִי מִנֹּאָץ:
ו לָכֵן יֵדַע עַמִּי שְׁמִי לָכֵן בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא כִּי־אֲנִי־הוּא
הַמְדַבֵּר הִנֵּנִי: ז מַה־נָּאווּ עַל־הֶהָרִים רַגְלֵי מְבַשֵּׂר
מַשְׁמִיעַ שָׁלוֹם מְבַשֵּׂר טוֹב מַשְׁמִיעַ יְשׁוּעָה אֹמֵר
לְצִיּוֹן מָלַךְ אֱלֹהָיִךְ: ח קוֹל צֹפַיִךְ נָשְׂאוּ קוֹל יַחְדָּו
יְרַנֵּנוּ כִּי עַיִן בְּעַיִן יִרְאוּ בְּשׁוּב יְהֹוָה צִיּוֹן: ט פִּצְחוּ
רַנְּנוּ יַחְדָּו חָרְבוֹת יְרוּשָׁלָיִם כִּי־נִחַם יְהֹוָה עַמּוֹ גָּאַל
יְרוּשָׁלָיִם: י חָשַׂף יְהֹוָה אֶת־זְרוֹעַ קָדְשׁוֹ לְעֵינֵי כָּל־

passed out (from the lack of food and drink). They lie (unburied) at the head of every street, like a bison (caught) in a trap, filled with (the effects of) God's fury, the rebuke of your God.

21 Therefore, hear this, O afflicted one, who is (like a) drunk (from suffering), and not from wine! 22 This is what your Master, your Almighty God, Who fights for His people, says: "I have taken the cup of poison from your hand and the dregs from the cup of My wrath. You will never drink from it again. 23 I will place it in the hands of your persecutors, who said to you: 'Bow down, and we will walk over you, and make your body like the ground, like the street for passersby.'"

52 1 Wake up (from your slumber of suffering)! Wake up! Clothe yourself with your strength (of old), Tziyon! Put on your beautiful clothes, O Jerusalem, holy city, for the uncircumcised and unclean will no longer enter you (to rule over you)! 2 Jerusalem, shake off the dust (of mourning)! Arise and sit (on your throne)! Release the bonds from your neck, O daughter of Tziyon, captured (in Babylon)! 3 For this is what God says: "You were sold for nothing, so you will be redeemed without payment."

Exile pains God

4 This is what God Almighty says: "My people originally went down to Egypt long ago to live there temporarily, and (Sancheriv, King of) Assyria oppressed them for no reason. 5 So why should I (leave my people in exile) here now?" says God. "For My people were taken captive free of charge, and its oppressors are boasting (of their success)," says God. "My Name is disgraced constantly, all day!

6 Therefore, (when) My people (are redeemed they) will recognise My Name. Therefore, on that day, (they will know) that I, Who promised (redemption), am here (having fulfilled My word)!"

Day of redemption

7 How beautiful (it will be when) the feet of one who announces (the redemption goes up) upon the mountains (to make his voice heard from afar), announcing peace, announcing good, (and) announcing salvation! He will declare to Tziyon: "Your God is King (over the whole world!" 8 Your (town) watchmen, (who announce visitors with their) voices, will raise their voices together and sing, for God's return to Tziyon will be seen eye to eye! 9 Burst forth in song together, O ruins of Jerusalem, for God has comforted His people and redeemed Jerusalem (from the control of idolaters). 10 God has bared His holy arm before the eyes of all the nations (when He punished the enemy). All

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constantly, all day" (52:1-5). The day of redemption is then depicted, with universal recognition of God amid song and rejoicing (6-10). The conclusion of the *Haftarah* backtracks to the time preceding redemption, as the Jewish people are urged to leave the exile without delay (11-12).

51:12. אָנֹכִי אָנֹכִי הוּא מְנַחֶמְכֶם—*It is I, yes I, Who comforts you.* The opening of the *Haftarah* is connected with both the beginning and end of the *Parsha*. The *Parsha* begins with the instruction to appoint judges that issue rulings of law, and the *Haftarah* likewise alludes to the significance of law by employing the unusual term *Anochi* ("I") which is associated with the beginning of the Ten Commandments, the basis of all Jewish law. The repetition of the term here, "*Anochi Anochi,*" alludes to the Written and Oral law with which the judges guide the people.

A further connotation of this repetition is the theme of *teshuvah* (repentance; return). At the giving of the Torah, the word *Anochi* was said only once, so its repetition here hints to the superior level of *ba'alei teshuvah* (see commentary to *Haftarah* of *Parshas Ki Sisa* at end, page 1420). Here we see a connection with the conclusion of the *Parsha* which stresses the idea of atonement and *teshuvah*: *"Atone for Your people Israel, whom You have redeemed, O God!"* (*Sichos Shabbos Parshas Shoftim* 5750 and 5748).

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הַגּוֹיִם וְרָאוּ כָּל־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ אֵת יְשׁוּעַת אֱלֹהֵינוּ׃
יא סוּרוּ סוּרוּ צְאוּ מִשָּׁם טָמֵא אַל־תִּגָּעוּ צְאוּ מִתּוֹכָהּ
הִבָּרוּ נֹשְׂאֵי כְּלֵי יְהוָֹה׃ יב כִּי לֹא בְחִפָּזוֹן תֵּצֵאוּ
וּבִמְנוּסָה לֹא תֵלֵכוּן כִּי־הֹלֵךְ לִפְנֵיכֶם יְהוָֹה
וּמְאַסִּפְכֶם אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל׃

(those who live at) the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

[11] *Go out! Go out! Leave that place (of exile quickly)! Do not touch anything unclean! Go out from (the city of your exile)! Keep pure, you who carry God's weapons (the Torah and its mitzvos)!* [12] *But you will not leave too quickly (in a panic) or depart in flight, since God is going before you, and the God of Israel is your rear guard.*

End of exile

Ki Seitzei / כי תצא

(Isaiah 54:1-10)

נד א רָנִּי עֲקָרָה לֹא יָלָדָה פִּצְחִי רִנָּה וְצַהֲלִי לֹא־
חָלָה כִּי־רַבִּים בְּנֵי־שׁוֹמֵמָה מִבְּנֵי בְעוּלָה אָמַר יְהוָֹה׃
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
בֹעֲלַיִךְ עֹשַׂיִךְ יְהוָֹה צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ וְגֹאֲלֵךְ קְדוֹשׁ

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)."*

Jerusalem in the times of Redemption

[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."*

[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)*

Promise to never bring another exile

52:12. כִּי לֹא בְחִפָּזוֹן תֵּצֵאוּ—*But you will not leave too quickly.* The comfortable pace of the future redemption described in this verse is in contrast to the panic of the Egyptian redemption, when *"the people fled"* (*Shemos* 14:5).

According to Chasidic thought, the collective *mitzvah*-acts and good deeds of history have gradually refined the physical fabric of the world such that when the Divine revelation of the redemption emerges, the world itself will be compatible and comfortable with that revelation. Therefore, the redemption will not be a cause of panic. But when the Exodus from Egypt took place, *"the evil in the [animal] souls of Israel was still strong"* (*Tanya*, ch. 31), and therefore they had to flee from the evil and impurity of Egypt.

In other words, the Exodus from Egypt occurred *despite* the world, but the revelations of the future redemption will be effective *with* the world (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 16, p. 125).

Haftarah of Parshas Ki Seitzei

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 בֹעֲלַיִךְ עֹשַׂיִךְ—*Your Husband, who made you.* Our Sages taught: *"A woman [before marriage] is unfinished, and she enters into the*

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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.

Waters of Noach

[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.

יִשְׂרָאֵל אֱלֹהֵי כָל־הָאָרֶץ יִקָּרֵא׃ ו כִּֽי־כְאִשָּׁה עֲזוּבָה
וַעֲצוּבַת רוּחַ קְרָאָךְ יְהֹוָה וְאֵשֶׁת נְעוּרִים כִּי תִמָּאֵס
אָמַר אֱלֹהָיִךְ׃ ז בְּרֶגַע קָטֹן עֲזַבְתִּיךְ וּבְרַחֲמִים גְּדֹלִים
אֲקַבְּצֵךְ׃ ח בְּשֶׁצֶף קֶצֶף הִסְתַּרְתִּי פָנַי רֶגַע מִמֵּךְ
וּבְחֶסֶד עוֹלָם רִחַמְתִּיךְ אָמַר גֹּאֲלֵךְ יְהֹוָה׃ ט כִּי־מֵי
נֹחַ זֹאת לִי אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי מֵעֲבֹר מֵי־נֹחַ עוֹד
עַל־הָאָרֶץ כֵּן נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי מִקְּצֹף עָלַיִךְ וּמִגְּעָר־בָּךְ׃
י כִּי הֶהָרִים יָמוּשׁוּ וְהַגְּבָעוֹת תְּמוּטֶינָה וְחַסְדִּי
מֵאִתֵּךְ לֹא־יָמוּשׁ וּבְרִית שְׁלוֹמִי לֹא תָמוּט אָמַר
מְרַחֲמֵךְ יְהֹוָה׃

If *Shabbos Parshas Ki Seitzei* occurs on the 14th of *Elul*, Chabad communities add the following section.

Jerusalem filled with gems

[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.

Torah knowledge

[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

No fear from enemies

יא עֲנִיָּה סֹעֲרָה לֹא נֻחָמָה הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי מַרְבִּיץ
בַּפּוּךְ אֲבָנַיִךְ וִיסַדְתִּיךְ בַּסַּפִּירִים׃ יב וְשַׂמְתִּי כַּדְכֹד
שִׁמְשֹׁתַיִךְ וּשְׁעָרַיִךְ לְאַבְנֵי אֶקְדָּח וְכָל־גְּבוּלֵךְ
לְאַבְנֵי־חֵפֶץ׃ יג וְכָל־בָּנַיִךְ לִמּוּדֵי יְהֹוָה וְרַב שְׁלוֹם
בָּנָיִךְ׃ יד בִּצְדָקָה 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

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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).

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 כַּדְכֹד 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).

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וְאָנֹכִי בָּרָאתִי מַשְׁחִית לְחַבֵּל׃ יז כָּל־כְּלִי יוּצַר עָלַיִךְ
לֹא יִצְלָח וְכָל־לָשׁוֹן תָּקוּם־אִתָּךְ לַמִּשְׁפָּט תַּרְשִׁיעִי
זֹאת נַחֲלַת עַבְדֵי יְהֹוָה וְצִדְקָתָם מֵאִתִּי נְאֻם־יְהֹוָה׃
נה א הוֹי כָּל־צָמֵא לְכוּ לַמַּיִם וַאֲשֶׁר אֵין־לוֹ כָּסֶף
לְכוּ שִׁבְרוּ וֶאֱכֹלוּ וּלְכוּ שִׁבְרוּ בְּלוֹא־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
חַסְדֵי דָוִד הַנֶּאֱמָנִים׃ ד הֵן עֵד לְאוּמִּים נְתַתִּיו נָגִיד
וּמְצַוֵּה לְאֻמִּים׃ ה הֵן גּוֹי לֹא־תֵדַע תִּקְרָא וְגוֹי
לֹא־יְדָעוּךָ אֵלֶיךָ יָרוּצוּ לְמַעַן יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהַיִךְ וְלִקְדוֹשׁ
יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי פֵאֲרָךְ׃

(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'!*

Eternal covenant with Mashiach

[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 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."*

Ki Savo / כי תבוא

(Isaiah 60:1-22)

ס א קוּמִי אוֹרִי כִּי בָא אוֹרֵךְ וּכְבוֹד יְהֹוָה עָלַיִךְ זָרָח׃
ב כִּי־הִנֵּה הַחֹשֶׁךְ יְכַסֶּה־אֶרֶץ וַעֲרָפֶל לְאֻמִּים וְעָלַיִךְ
יִזְרַח יְהֹוָה וּכְבוֹדוֹ עָלַיִךְ יֵרָאֶה׃ ג וְהָלְכוּ גוֹיִם לְאוֹרֵךְ
וּמְלָכִים לְנֹגַהּ זַרְחֵךְ׃ ד שְׂאִי־סָבִיב עֵינַיִךְ וּרְאִי כֻּלָּם
נִקְבְּצוּ בָאוּ־לָךְ בָּנַיִךְ מֵרָחוֹק יָבֹאוּ וּבְנֹתַיִךְ עַל־צַד

Light of redemption

[60:1] *Arise, shine (and rejoice, O Jerusalem)! For your light has arrived, and God's Glory has shone upon you.* [2] *Darkness (and suffering) will cover the earth and thick clouds (will cover) the nations, but God will shine (the light of salvation) on you, and His Glory will be seen on you.* [3] *Nations will follow your (guiding) light, and kings your shining brilliance.*

[4] *(Jerusalem,) raise your eyes! Look around and see*

Haftarah of Parshas Savo

This is the sixth of a series of "Seven *Haftaros* of Comfort" which are read between the Ninth of *Av* and *Rosh Hashanah*. 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 in a wondrous, redemptive mood. A new light is shining on Jerusalem and the exiles are returning (60:1-9). The city is fully restored with the finest wood and precious metals, its gates are opened and a new era of prosperity begins (10-18). Divine light is the only source of illumination (19-20), and the expanding nation is completely righteous (21-22).

60:1. קומי אורי כי בא אורך—*Arise, shine (and rejoice, O Jerusalem)! For your light has arrived.* According to the *Midrash*, this verse refers to the spiritual illumination offered by Mashiach: *"When King Mashiach comes, he will stand on the roof of the Temple, and proclaim to the Jewish people. He will say, 'The time of your redemption has arrived! And if you do not believe, see my light which I have shone upon you,' as the verse states, 'Arise, shine! For your light has arrived, and God's Glory has shone upon you.'"* (*Yalkut Shimoni, Yeshayah, remez* 499).

The reference here to the roof of the Temple is noteworthy, for, ironically, it is an area of the Temple that is unconsecrated (*Rambam, Laws of the Chosen House*, 6:7). Why does Mashiach choose to make his declaration from a non-sacred part of the Temple?

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תֵּאָמַנָה: ה אָז תִּרְאִי וְנָהַרְתְּ וּפָחַד וְרָחַב לְבָבֵךְ כִּי־
יֵהָפֵךְ עָלַיִךְ הֲמוֹן יָם חֵיל גּוֹיִם יָבֹאוּ לָךְ: ו שִׁפְעַת
גְּמַלִּים תְּכַסֵּךְ בִּכְרֵי מִדְיָן וְעֵיפָה כֻּלָּם מִשְּׁבָא יָבֹאוּ
זָהָב וּלְבוֹנָה יִשָּׂאוּ וּתְהִלֹּת יְהוָה יְבַשֵּׂרוּ: ז כָּל־צֹאן
קֵדָר יִקָּבְצוּ לָךְ אֵילֵי נְבָיוֹת יְשָׁרְתוּנֶךְ יַעֲלוּ עַל־רָצוֹן
מִזְבְּחִי וּבֵית תִּפְאַרְתִּי אֲפָאֵר: ח מִי־אֵלֶּה כָּעָב
תְּעוּפֶינָה וְכַיּוֹנִים אֶל־אֲרֻבֹּתֵיהֶם: ט כִּי־לִי | אִיִּים
יְקַוּוּ וָאֳנִיּוֹת תַּרְשִׁישׁ בָּרִאשֹׁנָה לְהָבִיא בָנַיִךְ מֵרָחוֹק
כַּסְפָּם וּזְהָבָם אִתָּם לְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהַיִךְ וְלִקְדוֹשׁ
יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי פֵאֲרָךְ: י וּבָנוּ בְנֵי־נֵכָר חֹמֹתַיִךְ וּמַלְכֵיהֶם
יְשָׁרְתוּנֶךְ כִּי בְקִצְפִּי הִכִּיתִיךְ וּבִרְצוֹנִי רִחַמְתִּיךְ:
יא וּפִתְּחוּ שְׁעָרַיִךְ תָּמִיד יוֹמָם וָלַיְלָה לֹא יִסָּגֵרוּ
לְהָבִיא אֵלַיִךְ חֵיל גּוֹיִם וּמַלְכֵיהֶם נְהוּגִים: יב כִּי־הַגּוֹי
וְהַמַּמְלָכָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יַעַבְדוּךְ יֹאבֵדוּ וְהַגּוֹיִם חָרֹב
יֶחֱרָבוּ: יג כְּבוֹד הַלְּבָנוֹן אֵלַיִךְ יָבוֹא בְּרוֹשׁ תִּדְהָר
וּתְאַשּׁוּר יַחְדָּו לְפָאֵר מְקוֹם מִקְדָּשִׁי וּמְקוֹם רַגְלַי
אֲכַבֵּד: יד וְהָלְכוּ אֵלַיִךְ שְׁחוֹחַ בְּנֵי מְעַנַּיִךְ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ
עַל־כַּפּוֹת רַגְלַיִךְ כָּל־מְנַאֲצָיִךְ וְקָרְאוּ לָךְ עִיר יְהוָה
צִיּוֹן קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל: טו תַּחַת הֱיוֹתֵךְ עֲזוּבָה וּשְׂנוּאָה
וְאֵין עוֹבֵר וְשַׂמְתִּיךְ לִגְאוֹן עוֹלָם מְשׂוֹשׂ דּוֹר וָדוֹר:
טז וְיָנַקְתְּ חֲלֵב גּוֹיִם וְשֹׁד מְלָכִים תִּינָקִי וְיָדַעַתְּ כִּי אֲנִי

how everybody has gathered together and are coming to you! Your sons will come from afar, and your daughters will be reared (by kings). [5] *When you see this, you will glow (with joy). Your heart will throb and swell, for the many (possessions) of the (people who live in) the west will be turned over to you, and the wealth of nations will come to you.* [6] *You will be covered by hordes of camels, young camels from Midian and Aifah (brought as gifts).*

Prosperity

They will all come from Sheba, carrying (gifts to God of) gold and incense and they will declare God's praises. [7] *All the sheep of Kedar will be gathered up (and brought) to you, and the rams of Nevayos will serve all your needs. They will be accepted favorably on My altar, and I will glorify the House of My splendor (by causing the nations to come with gifts of gold and silver).*

[8] *(People will ask:) Who are these (exiled people that are returning so quickly) like soaring clouds, and like doves to their coop-windows?* [9] *For (the people of) the islands are gathering with the ships (which cross the Sea of) Tarshish in the lead, to bring your sons from afar, along with their silver and gold (as a gift for God. All this will happen) for the sake of the Name of God your God, the Holy One of Israel, Who glorifies you.*

Ingathering of exiles

[10] *Foreigners will rebuild (the) walls (of your cities), and their kings will serve you. For I struck you in My anger, but in My grace I had mercy on you.* [11] *Your gates will always be open; they will not close day or night, so the wealth of nations may be brought in to you, with their kings in procession.* [12] *For whatever nation or kingdom does not serve you will perish, and those people will be utterly destroyed.*

Wood for the Temple

[13] *The glorious (trees) of Lebanon will be brought to you together—cypresses, fir, and box trees—to glorify the site of My sanctuary. I will (use them to) honor the site of My "footrest," (the Holy Temple).*

[14] *The children of your oppressors will come to you stooped, and all those who disgraced you will prostrate themselves at the soles of your feet. They will call you "Tziyon, City of God, the Holy One of Israel."* [15] *Instead of being abandoned and hated, with no one passing through, I will make you an eternal prodigy, a joy for all generations.* [16] *You will suckle the milk of nations and nurse from the breast of kings.*

Then you will know that I am God your Savior, your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Ya'akov.

The *Midrash* alludes to the fact that Mashiach is a Jewish leader who lives with the Jewish people in exile, outside the Land of Israel, and that therefore he announces the imminence of redemption from the Diaspora, an "unconsecrated" location (*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sarah* 5751, *note* 108).

9. כַּסְפָּם וּזְהָבָם אִתָּם—*Along with their silver and gold.* The unique accomplishment of the final redemption is that everything will be freed. Nothing will remain "lost" in exile, and nothing will be left behind. Even those who are "lost" or those who are "outcasts" will be redeemed. The redemption will be true and complete in quantity and quality in all areas, from the most all-encompassing of principles, to the most minute of details. Each and every Jew, *"with our youth and with our elders...with our sons and with our daughters"* (*Shemos* 10:9), will be redeemed, including their allotted portion of the world, *"along with their silver and gold,"* and all their activities and possessions from exile. The redemption will free each and every person (including non-Jews) and all their worldly affairs, and each individual will be preserved with all his effects.

All (positive) things in exile will remain and continue; only the state of exile will cease to exist. The concealment which masks the true and inner identity of the world will be eliminated, including the subjugation to nature and physicality, which is a result of the concealment.

As *Rambam* rules, *"Do not think that in the Messianic Era any aspect*

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יְהֹוָה מוֹשִׁיעֵךְ וְגֹאֲלֵךְ אֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב: יז תַּחַת הַנְּחֹשֶׁת
אָבִיא זָהָב וְתַחַת הַבַּרְזֶל אָבִיא כֶסֶף וְתַחַת הָעֵצִים
נְחֹשֶׁת וְתַחַת הָאֲבָנִים בַּרְזֶל וְשַׂמְתִּי פְקֻדָּתֵךְ שָׁלוֹם
וְנֹגְשַׂיִךְ צְדָקָה: יח לֹא־יִשָּׁמַע עוֹד חָמָס בְּאַרְצֵךְ שֹׁד
וָשֶׁבֶר בִּגְבוּלָיִךְ וְקָרָאת יְשׁוּעָה חוֹמֹתַיִךְ וּשְׁעָרַיִךְ
תְּהִלָּה: יט לֹא־יִהְיֶה־לָּךְ עוֹד הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לְאוֹר יוֹמָם
וּלְנֹגַהּ הַיָּרֵחַ לֹא־יָאִיר לָךְ וְהָיָה־לָךְ יְהֹוָה לְאוֹר
עוֹלָם וֵאלֹהַיִךְ לְתִפְאַרְתֵּךְ: כ לֹא־יָבוֹא עוֹד שִׁמְשֵׁךְ
וִירֵחֵךְ לֹא יֵאָסֵף כִּי יְהֹוָה יִהְיֶה־לָּךְ לְאוֹר עוֹלָם
וְשָׁלְמוּ יְמֵי אֶבְלֵךְ: כא וְעַמֵּךְ כֻּלָּם צַדִּיקִים לְעוֹלָם
יִירְשׁוּ אָרֶץ נֵצֶר מַטָּעַי (מטעו כ׳) מַעֲשֵׂה יָדַי
לְהִתְפָּאֵר: כב הַקָּטֹן יִהְיֶה לָאֶלֶף וְהַצָּעִיר לְגוֹי עָצוּם
אֲנִי יְהֹוָה בְּעִתָּהּ אֲחִישֶׁנָּה:

[17] *In the place of the bronze (which the nations took from you), I will bring gold, and in the place of the iron I will bring silver. In the place of the wood (I will bring) bronze, and in the place of the stone (I will bring) iron. (In the place of) your (aggressive, tax-collecting) government, I will make (a) peace(ful, friendly one), and (in the place of) your debt-collectors, (I will place people that come to perform) justice.* [18] *Corruption will no longer be heard of in your land, nor robbery and ruin in your borders. You will call your walls "Salvation (of God)," and your gates "Glory (of God)."*

End of corruption

[19] *You will no longer need the sun for daylight nor the moon to shine at night. God will always be your light, and your God will be your glory.* [20] *Your sun will never set and your moon will not be eclipsed (by another nation), for God will always be your light (and source of power). Your days of mourning will come to an end.*

God will be your light

[21] *Your people will all be righteous (since the wicked will have perished). They will inherit the land forever, (never to be exiled again). They are the shoot I planted, My handiwork in which I take pride.* [22] *The smallest (tribe) will become a thousand (times the size), and the youngest (tribe), a mighty nation. (Since) I am (the all-powerful) God, I will hasten (the smallest tribe to expand) in the time (of the redemption)!*

People will be righteous

NITZAVIM (& NITZAVIM-VAYEILECH) / נצבים (נצבים–וילך)

(Isaiah 61:10 - 63:9)

סא · שׂוֹשׂ אָשִׂישׂ בַּיהֹוָה תָּגֵל נַפְשִׁי בֵּאלֹהַי כִּי
הִלְבִּישַׁנִי בִּגְדֵי־יֶשַׁע מְעִיל צְדָקָה יְעָטָנִי כֶּחָתָן יְכַהֵן
פְּאֵר וְכַכַּלָּה תַּעְדֶּה כֵלֶיהָ: יא כִּי כָאָרֶץ תּוֹצִיא
צִמְחָהּ וּכְגַנָּה זֵרוּעֶיהָ תַצְמִיחַ כֵּן | אֲדֹנָי יֱהֹוִה יַצְמִיחַ

[61:10] *I will rejoice greatly in God('s salvation). My soul will be glad with my God, for He has clothed me in garments of salvation and wrapped me in a robe of righteousness; like a bridegroom who wears majestic clothing, and a bride who adorns herself with her jewelry.* [11] *For just like the earth brings forth its growth, and a garden makes its seeds grow, so too will God*

Joy of redemption

of world order will become nullified or that there will be an innovation in the act of creation. Rather, the world will continue according to its normal order" (*Laws of Kings* 12:1; *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Acharei-Kedoshim* 5751).

Haftarah of Parshas Nitzavim

This is the last in a series of "Seven *Haftaros* of Comfort" which are read between the ninth of *Av* and *Rosh Hashanah*. 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. This *Haftarah* is always read on the *Shabbos* preceding *Rosh Hashanah*.

As the *Haftarah* opens, Tziyon (Zion) rejoices in her redemption, as God clothes her in "garments of salvation" (61:10-11). God promises to protect Tziyon and she will consequently be known by more positive names than in the past (62:1-7). God then reinforces His words with an oath (8-9). In a tone of exultation, the prophet declares that the roads should be smoothed for the ingathering of the Jewish people, because God is now going to pay His "wages" to the Jewish people and redeem them (10-12). In the following chapter, the prophet depicts God as wearing bloodstained garments after wreaking vengeance on the wicked nations (63:1-6). The *Haftarah* concludes by praising God's kindness, His love for Israel, and His sympathy for their distress (7-9).

61:10. שׂוֹשׂ אָשִׂישׂ בַּה׳ תָּגֵל נַפְשִׁי בֵּאלֹהַי—*I will rejoice greatly in God('s salvation). My soul will be glad with my God.* The distinction between *rejoicing* and being *glad* is that rejoicing is expressed outwardly

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צְדָקָה וּתְהִלָּה נֶגֶד כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם׃ סב א לְמַעַן צִיּוֹן לֹא
אֶחֱשֶׁה וּלְמַעַן יְרוּשָׁלִַם לֹא אֶשְׁקוֹט עַד־יֵצֵא כַנֹּגַהּ
צִדְקָהּ וִישׁוּעָתָהּ כְּלַפִּיד יִבְעָר׃ ב וְרָאוּ גוֹיִם צִדְקֵךְ
וְכָל־מְלָכִים כְּבוֹדֵךְ וְקֹרָא לָךְ שֵׁם חָדָשׁ אֲשֶׁר פִּי
יְהוָה יִקֳּבֶנּוּ׃ ג וְהָיִית עֲטֶרֶת תִּפְאֶרֶת בְּיַד־יְהוָה
וּצְנִיף (וצנוף כ׳) מְלוּכָה בְּכַף־אֱלֹהָיִךְ׃ ד לֹא־יֵאָמֵר לָךְ
עוֹד עֲזוּבָה וּלְאַרְצֵךְ לֹא־יֵאָמֵר עוֹד שְׁמָמָה כִּי לָךְ
יִקָּרֵא חֶפְצִי־בָהּ וּלְאַרְצֵךְ בְּעוּלָה כִּי־חָפֵץ יְהוָה בָּךְ
וְאַרְצֵךְ תִּבָּעֵל׃ ה כִּי־יִבְעַל בָּחוּר בְּתוּלָה יִבְעָלוּךְ
בָּנָיִךְ וּמְשׂוֹשׂ חָתָן עַל־כַּלָּה יָשִׂישׂ עָלַיִךְ אֱלֹהָיִךְ׃
ו עַל־חוֹמֹתַיִךְ יְרוּשָׁלִַם הִפְקַדְתִּי שֹׁמְרִים כָּל־הַיּוֹם
וְכָל־הַלַּיְלָה תָּמִיד לֹא יֶחֱשׁוּ הַמַּזְכִּרִים אֶת־יְהוָה
אַל־דֳּמִי לָכֶם׃ ז וְאַל־תִּתְּנוּ דֳמִי לוֹ עַד־יְכוֹנֵן וְעַד־
יָשִׂים אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלִַם תְּהִלָּה בָּאָרֶץ׃ ח נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה
בִּימִינוֹ וּבִזְרוֹעַ עֻזּוֹ אִם־אֶתֵּן אֶת־דְּגָנֵךְ עוֹד מַאֲכָל
לְאֹיְבַיִךְ וְאִם־יִשְׁתּוּ בְנֵי־נֵכָר תִּירוֹשֵׁךְ אֲשֶׁר יָגַעַתְּ
בּוֹ׃ ט כִּי מְאַסְפָיו יֹאכְלֻהוּ וְהִלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה וּמְקַבְּצָיו
יִשְׁתֻּהוּ בְּחַצְרוֹת קָדְשִׁי׃ י עִבְרוּ עִבְרוּ בַּשְּׁעָרִים פַּנּוּ
דֶּרֶךְ הָעָם סֹלּוּ סֹלּוּ הַמְסִלָּה סַקְּלוּ מֵאֶבֶן הָרִימוּ נֵס
עַל־הָעַמִּים׃ יא הִנֵּה יְהוָה הִשְׁמִיעַ אֶל־קְצֵה הָאָרֶץ
אִמְרוּ לְבַת־צִיּוֹן הִנֵּה יִשְׁעֵךְ בָּא הִנֵּה שְׂכָרוֹ אִתּוֹ
וּפְעֻלָּתוֹ לְפָנָיו׃ יב וְקָרְאוּ לָהֶם עַם־הַקֹּדֶשׁ גְּאוּלֵי
יְהוָה וְלָךְ יִקָּרֵא דְרוּשָׁה עִיר לֹא נֶעֱזָבָה׃ סג א מִי־

Almighty cause the righteousness and praise (of Israel) to sprout before all the nations.

God will protect Tziyon

62:1 For Tziyon's sake I will not be silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be still, until her righteousness emerges like shining light, and her salvation like a burning torch. 2 Nations will see (the) righteousness (which I will do for you), and all the kings, your glory. You will be called a new name, pronounced by the Mouth of God.

3 You will be (protected like) a crown of beauty in God's hand, a royal coronet in the palm of your God. 4 You will no longer be called "Abandoned (by God)," and your land will no longer be called "Desolation." Rather, you will be called "I desire her" and your land "inhabited," for God will desire you, and your land will be inhabited. 5 As a young man (marries a) maiden and settles (with her), so will your children settle you, and your God will rejoice over you as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride. 6 Over your walls, Jerusalem, I have appointed (the stones as) watchmen. They will never be silent (from crying and mourning), day or night. (Do not be silent,) you (stones) who speak of God! 7 Do not let Him be idle (and free from complaint) until He restores Jerusalem and establishes it in glory amid the earth!

God's oath

8 God has sworn by His right hand and His mighty arm: "I will never again give your grain as food to your enemies or let foreigners drink the wine for which you labored. 9 Rather, those who harvest (the grain) will eat it and praise God (in thanks), and those who gathered (the grapes) will drink (wine) in (their homes, in) My holy courts (of Jerusalem)."

Roads smoothed for redemption

10 Go through the gates (you nations), go through (the gates of your cities, in order to) raise (and smooth) the road for the people. Clear away stones (that obstruct the way). Raise a banner for the nations (telling them to bring the Jewish people home).

11 Look! God has proclaimed to the ends of the earth: "Say to the daughter of Tziyon: Your salvation is coming! Look! His reward (which is due to the Jewish people) is with Him, and His wages (which he owes to the Jewish people are ready) before Him!" 12 They will be called a holy people, God's redeemed. You, (Tziyon), will be called "sought after, a city not forsaken."

63:1 (When God wreaks vengeance on Edom, people will say), "Who is this coming from Edom, from Batzrah, with (blood)-

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whereas being glad is only felt inwardly because one's joy is tempered by other concerns or fears, as the verse states, "*Be glad in times of trepidation*" (Psalms 2:11).

"I will rejoice greatly" thus alludes to the joy of the festival of Succos, which is expressed outwardly, whereas, "*My soul will be glad with my God*" refers to the more restrained joy of the High Holidays which are festivals in their own right, but are tempered by the trepidation of judgment (*Likutei Torah, Nitzavim* 47a).

This, however, begs the question: Why does the verse mention rejoicing (*Succos*) *before* gladness (*Rosh Hashanah*), when these festivals occur in the reverse order? And why is this *Haftarah*, which opens with the theme of outward joy, read on the *Shabbos* before *Rosh Hashanah* and not the *Shabbos* before *Succos*?

The answer is that *Rosh Hashanah* itself is associated with *both* an element of outward rejoicing and a sensation of restrained joy, one preceding the other. First, on the eve of *Rosh Hashanah* there is a feeling of joy, in anticipation of celebrating the holy day, and this can be expressed outwardly because the time of judgment has not yet begun (see *Tur, Orach Chaim* 581). This is then followed by the more restrained feeling of "gladness" on *Rosh Hashanah* itself. Thus the verse reads, "*I*

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זֶה | בָּא מֵאֱדוֹם חֲמוּץ בְּגָדִים מִבָּצְרָה זֶה הָדוּר
בִּלְבוּשׁוֹ צֹעֶה בְּרֹב כֹּחוֹ אֲנִי מְדַבֵּר בִּצְדָקָה רַב
לְהוֹשִׁיעַ: ב מַדּוּעַ אָדֹם לִלְבוּשֶׁךָ וּבְגָדֶיךָ כְּדֹרֵךְ בְּגַת:
ג פּוּרָה | דָּרַכְתִּי לְבַדִּי וּמֵעַמִּים אֵין־אִישׁ אִתִּי
וְאֶדְרְכֵם בְּאַפִּי וְאֶרְמְסֵם בַּחֲמָתִי וְיֵז נִצְחָם עַל־בְּגָדַי
וְכָל־מַלְבּוּשַׁי אֶגְאָלְתִּי: ד כִּי יוֹם נָקָם בְּלִבִּי וּשְׁנַת
גְּאוּלַי בָּאָה: ה וְאַבִּיט וְאֵין עֹזֵר וְאֶשְׁתּוֹמֵם וְאֵין סוֹמֵךְ
וַתּוֹשַׁע לִי זְרֹעִי וַחֲמָתִי הִיא סְמָכָתְנִי: ו וְאָבוּס עַמִּים
בְּאַפִּי וַאֲשַׁכְּרֵם בַּחֲמָתִי וְאוֹרִיד לָאָרֶץ נִצְחָם: ז חַסְדֵי
יְהוָה | אַזְכִּיר תְּהִלֹּת יְהוָה כְּעַל כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־גְּמָלָנוּ
יְהוָה וְרַב־טוּב לְבֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר־גְּמָלָם כְּרַחֲמָיו
וּכְרֹב חֲסָדָיו: ח וַיֹּאמֶר אַךְ־עַמִּי הֵמָּה בָּנִים לֹא
יְשַׁקֵּרוּ וַיְהִי לָהֶם לְמוֹשִׁיעַ: ט בְּכָל־צָרָתָם | לוֹ (ולא כ׳)
צָר וּמַלְאַךְ פָּנָיו הוֹשִׁיעָם בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ וּבְחֶמְלָתוֹ הוּא
גְאָלָם וַיְנַטְּלֵם וַיְנַשְּׂאֵם כָּל־יְמֵי עוֹלָם:

stained clothing? This one (who used to be) dressed
majestically and ordered (people) from place to place
with his great power!"
(Says God), "It is I, Who say (and fulfill My promises
of) justice (for the Jewish people and I Who am) mighty
to save."
2 *(People will say), "Why is your clothing red, and your*
garments like (those of) one who treads in a winepress?"
3 *(Says God), "I trod the winepress (of blood in My*
righteousness) alone, (not in the merit of the Jewish
people). Not one person from the nations was (able to
stand against) Me. I trod them in My anger and trampled
them in My rage. The (blood of their) strength splashed
on My garments and stained all My clothing."
4 *"For I have (been) planning a day of vengeance*
(against the nations for a long time), and the year of
redemption (for My people) has (now) come. 5 *I looked*
around (for a merit with which the Jewish people might
be redeemed), but there was no (merit) to help. I was
amazed that there was no (merit) to be of help (in
redeeming them). So My arm wrought (their) salvation
for Me (and not their own merit), and My anger (against
the nations) supported Me (in wreaking vengeance upon
them). 6 *I trampled peoples in My wrath and made them*
drunk with (the cup of) My rage. I cast (the blood of)
their strength down to the ground."

God avenges the wicked nations

7 *(The prophet says, "Israel) will relate God's kind deeds and His praise for everything He has done for us —all the good He*
has granted to the House of Israel in His mercy and great kindness." 8 *(When God took them out of Egypt), He said, "Indeed,*
they (alone) are My people, children who were not unfaithful (and did not forsake Me)," and He became their Savior.
9 *All their sufferings caused Him pain and the angel (who stands) before Him saved them. (Likewise), out of His love and*
mercy He redeemed them. He will bear them and carry them forever.

God's love for Israel

SHABBOS SHUVAH / שבת שובה

(Hosea 14:2-10; Joel 2:11-27; Micah 7:18-20)

יד 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

14:2 *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

Return to God

will rejoice greatly in God—on Erev Rosh Hashanah—My soul will be glad with my God—on Rosh Hashanah itself. (*Sichas Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim-Vayeilech* 5735, par. 2).

HAFTARAH OF SHABBOS SHUVAH

The *Shabbos* preceding *Yom Kippur* (the Day of Atonement) is known as *Shabbos Shuvah* (*Shabbos* of Return), after its special *Haftarah* that stresses the need for repentance by man, and God's forgiveness.

According to Chasidic thought, this *Shabbos* spiritually elevates and "mends" every *Shabbos* of the past year (*Sefer Hama'amarim Melukat* vol. 1, p. 345). Of all times in the year, the "Ten Days" between *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* are the most opportune for *teshuvah* (*Rambam, Laws of Teshuvah* 2:6), and among these days themselves, *Shabbos Shuvah* is the pinnacle (*Sicha of Shabbos Shuvah* 5749).

It is customary that men, women and children come to the synagogue on this day, because the theme of *teshuvah* is of universal relevance

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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 יֹנְקוֹתָיו וִיהִי כַזַּיִת הוֹדוֹ
וְרֵיחַ לוֹ כַּלְּבָנוֹן: ח יָשֻׁבוּ יֹשְׁבֵי בְצִלּוֹ יְחַיּוּ דָגָן וְיִפְרְחוּ
כַגָּפֶן זִכְרוֹ כְּיֵין לְבָנוֹן: ט אֶפְרַיִם מַה־לִּי עוֹד
לָעֲצַבִּים אֲנִי עָנִיתִי וַאֲשׁוּרֶנּוּ אֲנִי כִּבְרוֹשׁ רַעֲנָן מִמֶּנִּי
פֶּרְיְךָ נִמְצָא: י מִי חָכָם וְיָבֵן אֵלֶּה נָבוֹן וְיֵדָעֵם
כִּי־יְשָׁרִים דַּרְכֵי יְהֹוָה וְצַדִּקִים יֵלְכוּ בָם וּפֹשְׁעִים
יִכָּשְׁלוּ בָם:

future). Let (the confession) of our lips be in place of (the sacrificing of) bullocks."

Trust in God alone

[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 (which sustains life), and they will blossom like the vine. Their fame will be like that of the wine of Lebanon.*

Heed the prophet's words

[9] *(When) Efrayim asks, "What do I need idolaters 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.*

Chabad and Sefardic communities omit the following (Yoel 2:11-27) and continue below:

יא וַיהֹוָה נָתַן קוֹלוֹ לִפְנֵי חֵילוֹ כִּי רַב מְאֹד מַחֲנֵהוּ
כִּי עָצוּם עֹשֵׂה דְבָרוֹ כִּי־גָדוֹל יוֹם־יְהֹוָה וְנוֹרָא מְאֹד
וּמִי יְכִילֶנּוּ: יב וְגַם־עַתָּה נְאֻם־יְהֹוָה שֻׁבוּ עָדַי
בְּכָל־לְבַבְכֶם וּבְצוֹם וּבִבְכִי וּבְמִסְפֵּד: יג וְקִרְעוּ
לְבַבְכֶם וְאַל־בִּגְדֵיכֶם וְשׁוּבוּ אֶל־יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם כִּי־
חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם הוּא אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חֶסֶד וְנִחָם
עַל־הָרָעָה: יד מִי יוֹדֵעַ יָשׁוּב וְנִחָם וְהִשְׁאִיר אַחֲרָיו
בְּרָכָה מִנְחָה וָנֶסֶךְ לַיהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: טו תִּקְעוּ שׁוֹפָר
בְּצִיּוֹן קַדְּשׁוּ־צוֹם קִרְאוּ עֲצָרָה: טז אִסְפוּ־עָם קַדְּשׁוּ
קָהָל קִבְצוּ זְקֵנִים אִסְפוּ עוֹלָלִים וְיֹנְקֵי שָׁדָיִם יֵצֵא

Day of destruction looms

[2:11] *God makes His voice heard (through the prophets) before His army (of locusts arrive). His camp is extremely large, and those who carry out His Word (on a mission of destruction) are awesome. The day of (destruction from) God is great and very formidable. Who could endure it?*

Call for repentance

[12] *Yet even now—says God—return to Me with all your heart, with fasting, weeping and lamenting.* [13] *Rend your hearts, not your garments, and return to God your God. For He is merciful and compassionate, slow to anger, very kind and renounces bad (decrees).* [14] *Let anyone who knows (what sin he has done) repent and regret. Then, (when the locusts come) they will (not destroy, but rather) leave behind a blessing (from which to bring) a meal-offering and a wine libation to God your God.*

Public fast

[15] *Sound the shofar in Tziyon (to awaken the people to repent), announce a fast, call an assembly.* [16] *Gather the people, instruct the congregation (to fast), bring together the elders, gather the children and the nursing babies. The groom*

(ibid.). Nevertheless, one must be careful not to let a child be called to *Maftir* and read the *Haftarah* on this *Shabbos*—which is permissible during the rest of the year, though not practiced by *Chabad*—since a child cannot fully appreciate the concept of *teshuvah* (*Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch* 284:8, *Likutei Sichos* vol. 14, p. 144).

In the opening passage of the *Haftarah*, the prophet Hoshea (7th century B.C.E.) urges the people to sincere verbal confession (14:2-3) and to trust in God (4). God will then forgive Israel and love them forever (5-9). The passage concludes with a plea to take the prophet's words to heart (10). In the following section, from Yoel (read only by Ashkenazim),

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חָתָן מֵחֶדְרוֹ וְכַלָּה מֵחֻפָּתָהּ: יז בֵּין הָאוּלָם וְלַמִּזְבֵּחַ
יִבְכּוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים מְשָׁרְתֵי יְהוָה וְיֹאמְרוּ חוּסָה יְהוָה
עַל־עַמֶּךָ וְאַל־תִּתֵּן נַחֲלָתְךָ לְחֶרְפָּה לִמְשָׁל־בָּם
גּוֹיִם לָמָּה יֹאמְרוּ בָעַמִּים אַיֵּה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם: יח וַיְקַנֵּא
יְהוָה לְאַרְצוֹ וַיַּחְמֹל עַל־עַמּוֹ: יט וַיַּעַן יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר
לְעַמּוֹ הִנְנִי שֹׁלֵחַ לָכֶם אֶת־הַדָּגָן וְהַתִּירוֹשׁ וְהַיִּצְהָר
וּשְׂבַעְתֶּם אֹתוֹ וְלֹא־אֶתֵּן אֶתְכֶם עוֹד חֶרְפָּה בַּגּוֹיִם:
כ וְאֶת־הַצְּפוֹנִי אַרְחִיק מֵעֲלֵיכֶם וְהִדַּחְתִּיו אֶל־אֶרֶץ
צִיָּה וּשְׁמָמָה אֶת־פָּנָיו אֶל־הַיָּם הַקַּדְמֹנִי וְסֹפוֹ
אֶל־הַיָּם הָאַחֲרוֹן וְעָלָה בָאְשׁוֹ וְתַעַל צַחֲנָתוֹ כִּי
הִגְדִּיל לַעֲשׂוֹת: כא אַל־תִּירְאִי אֲדָמָה גִּילִי וּשְׂמָחִי
כִּי־הִגְדִּיל יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת: כב אַל־תִּירְאוּ בַּהֲמוֹת
שָׂדַי כִּי דָשְׁאוּ נְאוֹת מִדְבָּר כִּי־עֵץ נָשָׂא פִרְיוֹ תְּאֵנָה
וָגֶפֶן נָתְנוּ חֵילָם: כג וּבְנֵי צִיּוֹן גִּילוּ וְשִׂמְחוּ בַּיהוָה
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם כִּי־נָתַן לָכֶם אֶת־הַמּוֹרֶה לִצְדָקָה וַיּוֹרֶד
לָכֶם גֶּשֶׁם מוֹרֶה וּמַלְקוֹשׁ בָּרִאשׁוֹן: כד וּמָלְאוּ
הַגֳּרָנוֹת בָּר וְהֵשִׁיקוּ הַיְקָבִים תִּירוֹשׁ וְיִצְהָר:
כה וְשִׁלַּמְתִּי לָכֶם אֶת־הַשָּׁנִים אֲשֶׁר אָכַל הָאַרְבֶּה
הַיֶּלֶק וְהֶחָסִיל וְהַגָּזָם חֵילִי הַגָּדוֹל אֲשֶׁר שִׁלַּחְתִּי
בָּכֶם: כו וַאֲכַלְתֶּם אָכוֹל וְשָׂבוֹעַ וְהִלַּלְתֶּם אֶת־שֵׁם
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה עִמָּכֶם לְהַפְלִיא
וְלֹא־יֵבֹשׁוּ עַמִּי לְעוֹלָם: כז וִידַעְתֶּם כִּי בְקֶרֶב
יִשְׂרָאֵל אָנִי וַאֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְאֵין עוֹד וְלֹא־יֵבֹשׁוּ
עַמִּי לְעוֹלָם:

should leave his room and the bride her chupah (to participate; they should not rejoice).

[17] Let the priests, the ministers of God, cry out between the Hall and the Altar. Let them say, "God! Have pity on Your people! Do not allow Your inheritance, (Your people,) to be shamed by letting nations rule over them (when they come to beg for food after the locusts destroy everything they have). Why should the nations say, 'Where is their God?'"

God will give sustenance

[18] Then, (when you repent) God will become jealous for His Land and have pity on His people. [19] God will respond and say to His people, "(From now on), I will send you grain, wine and oil, and it will satisfy you. I will no longer let you be shamed among the nations. [20] I will distance from you the (locusts that come form the) north and drive them to (their death in) a barren and desolate land. (I will send) the first (locusts that come) to the (Salt) Sea in the east, and the last (locusts) to the Western Sea. The stench (of the dead locusts) will go up and its odor will rise, for there were many locusts (ready) to do (harm).

Promise of safety

[21] Do not be afraid, Land (of Israel, that the locusts may return. Rather), be glad and rejoice, because God (has decided from now on to do) many great things. [22] Do not be afraid of the animals of the field (that pasture may be lacking), because the pastures in the wilderness have sprouted. (Even) trees (which need much more rain than pasture) have borne their fruit, and the fig tree and vine have produced their yield.

Prosperity

[23] Rejoice and be happy with God your God, children of Tziyon, because He has given you the early rain as charity (and not according to what you deserve). He caused the early and late rain to fall in the first (part of the season). [24] The granaries will be filled with grain and the vats will ring (with the noise of flowing) wine and oil. [25] I will repay you for (your losses in) the years that were consumed by the (different species of locust) arbeh, yelek, chasil and gazam, My mighty army which I sent against you. [26] Then, you will eat and be satisfied, and praise the Name of God your God, Who performed such wondrous acts. My people will never be shamed again (by being forced to live in other lands due to lack of food). [27] Then you will know that I am in Israel's midst, that I am God your God, and there is no other. My people will never be shamed again.

All communities conclude here (Micah 7:18-20):

ז יח מִי־אֵל כָּמוֹךָ נֹשֵׂא עָוֺן וְעֹבֵר עַל־פֶּשַׁע
לִשְׁאֵרִית נַחֲלָתוֹ לֹא־הֶחֱזִיק לָעַד אַפּוֹ כִּי־חָפֵץ

[7:18] Who is like You, O God, forgiving iniquity and overlooking transgression for those who remain of His heritage (after the birth pangs of Mashiach? Even when

the prophet inspires the people towards repentance in order to avert an imminent day of locust destruction (2:11-14). A public fast is declared, and the priests are advised to cry out to God (15-17). In response, God will bring ample sustenance and safety from the enemy,

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God forgives

He does become angry) He does not maintain His anger forever, because He is a lover of kindness. [19] He will (once again) have mercy on us. He will grasp our iniquities (preventing them from being held against us), and cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. [20] Give (to us the fulfillment of the) true (words that You spoke) to Ya'akov, (and the words of) lovingkindness (you spoke) to Avraham, which you promised our fathers long ago (at the Akeida).

חֶסֶד הוּא: יט יָשׁוּב יְרַחֲמֵנוּ יִכְבֹּשׁ עֲוֺנֹתֵינוּ וְתַשְׁלִיךְ
בִּמְצֻלוֹת יָם כָּל־חַטֹּאותָם: כ תִּתֵּן אֱמֶת לְיַעֲקֹב חֶסֶד
לְאַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לַאֲבֹתֵינוּ מִימֵי קֶדֶם:

HA'AZINU / האזינו

(II Samuel 22:1-51)

If *Parshas Ha'azinu* occurs between *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* the *Haftarah* of *Shabbos Shuvah* is read (page 290).

22:1 Then David chanted the words of this song to God (in his old age) on the day God saved him from all of his enemies and from Sha'ul. [2] He said:

God helps during difficult times

God is my Rock and my Fortress, Who saves me. [3] God! My Rock in Whom I trust! My shield! My saving power! My support and my refuge! My savior! Save me from (men of) corruption! [4] (When) I call out God's praises I am saved from my enemies.

[5] When the pains of death engulfed me, and the sicknesses brought by treacherous men frightened me; [6] when the pains of the grave surrounded me, and the snares of death came before me; [7] when I am pained (by all these things), I call on God! I call out to my God! He hears my voice from His Temple, and my plea reaches His ears.

[8] The earth shook and trembled, the foundations of heaven shuddered; they shake because He is angry. [9] Smoke rises in His nostrils, fire from His mouth devours (those that rise against Him when) live coals

כב א וַיְדַבֵּר דָּוִד לַיהוָה אֶת־דִּבְרֵי הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת
בְּיוֹם הִצִּיל יְהוָה אֹתוֹ מִכַּף כָּל־אֹיְבָיו וּמִכַּף שָׁאוּל:
ב וַיֹּאמַר יְהוָה סַלְעִי וּמְצֻדָתִי וּמְפַלְטִי־לִי: ג אֱלֹהֵי
צוּרִי אֶחֱסֶה־בּוֹ מָגִנִּי וְקֶרֶן יִשְׁעִי מִשְׂגַּבִּי וּמְנוּסִי
מֹשִׁעִי מֵחָמָס תֹּשִׁעֵנִי: ד מְהֻלָּל אֶקְרָא יְהוָה וּמֵאֹיְבַי
אִוָּשֵׁעַ: ה כִּי אֲפָפֻנִי מִשְׁבְּרֵי־מָוֶת נַחֲלֵי בְלִיַּעַל
יְבַעֲתֻנִי: ו חֶבְלֵי שְׁאוֹל סַבֻּנִי קִדְּמֻנִי מֹקְשֵׁי־מָוֶת:
ז בַּצַּר־לִי אֶקְרָא יְהוָה וְאֶל־אֱלֹהַי אֶקְרָא וַיִּשְׁמַע
מֵהֵיכָלוֹ קוֹלִי וְשַׁוְעָתִי בְּאָזְנָיו: ח וַיִּתְגָּעַשׁ [ותגעש כ']
וַתִּרְעַשׁ הָאָרֶץ מוֹסְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם יִרְגָּזוּ וַיִּתְגָּעֲשׁוּ
כִּי־חָרָה לוֹ: ט עָלָה עָשָׁן בְּאַפּוֹ וְאֵשׁ מִפִּיו תֹּאכֵל

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and a spirit of joy will consequently prevail (18-27). A final passage from Michah, read by all communities, stresses God's attributes of forgiveness, kindness and compassion.

HAFTARAH OF PARSHAS HA'AZINU

This *Haftarah* relates the Song of David, similar to the Song of *Ha'azinu* sung by Moshe in the *Parsha*. The *Haftarah* is also read on the seventh day of Pesach.

The *Tzemach Tzedek* once asked why the Song of Devorah is not read on the seventh day of Pesach, which commemorates the splitting of the Reed Sea, since the women rejoiced more than the men when the sea split. (In fact, this is the reason why the Song of Devorah was chosen as the *Haftarah* for *Parshas Beshalach*, which recounts the splitting of the Reed Sea, rather than the Song of David—see commentary to the *Haftarah* of *Parshas Beshalach*).

The *Tzemach Tzedek* answered: "On the seventh day of Pesach, the *Haftarah* is the Song of David because on the seventh and final days of Pesach there is a revelation of Mashiach, who is a descendant of David. Thus, it is to honor Mashiach that we recite the Song of David" (*Sefer Hasichos* 5698, p. 283). The Song of David thus alludes to the "Tenth Song" that will be chanted with the coming of Mashiach (*Likkutei Sichos* vol. 37, p. 111).

The Song was recited by David in his old age in gratitude to God, Who "*saved him from all of his enemies and from Sha'ul*" (22:1). David praises God as a "rock" and personal savior Who responded in times of emergency (2-7), and God's methods of deliverance are depicted with rich imagery (8-20). David then attests to his own loyalty to God (21-24) and hopes for just reward (25-28). The theme of personal gratitude is then redeveloped, as David depicts God's involvement in his victories at length (29-46). In his closing words, David reiterates and intensifies His

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גֶּחָלִים בָּעֲרוּ מִמֶּנּוּ: י וַיֵּט שָׁמַיִם וַיֵּרַד וַעֲרָפֶל תַּחַת
רַגְלָיו: יא וַיִּרְכַּב עַל־כְּרוּב וַיָּעֹף וַיֵּרָא עַל־כַּנְפֵי־רוּחַ:
יב וַיָּשֶׁת חֹשֶׁךְ סְבִיבֹתָיו סֻכּוֹת חַשְׁרַת־מַיִם עָבֵי
שְׁחָקִים: יג מִנֹּגַהּ נֶגְדּוֹ בָּעֲרוּ גַּחֲלֵי־אֵשׁ: יד יַרְעֵם
מִן־שָׁמַיִם יְהֹוָה וְעֶלְיוֹן יִתֵּן קוֹלוֹ: טו וַיִּשְׁלַח חִצִּים
וַיְפִיצֵם בָּרָק וַיָּהֹם (ויהמם כ׳) : טז וַיֵּרָאוּ אֲפִקֵי יָם יִגָּלוּ
מֹסְדוֹת תֵּבֵל בְּגַעֲרַת יְהֹוָה מִנִּשְׁמַת רוּחַ אַפּוֹ:
יז יִשְׁלַח מִמָּרוֹם יִקָּחֵנִי יַמְשֵׁנִי מִמַּיִם רַבִּים: יח יַצִּילֵנִי
מֵאֹיְבִי עָז מִשֹּׂנְאַי כִּי אָמְצוּ מִמֶּנִּי: יט יְקַדְּמֻנִי בְּיוֹם
אֵידִי וַיְהִי יְהֹוָה מִשְׁעָן לִי: כ וַיֵּצֵא לַמֶּרְחָב אֹתִי
יְחַלְּצֵנִי כִּי־חָפֵץ בִּי: כא יִגְמְלֵנִי יְהֹוָה כְּצִדְקָתִי כְּבֹר
יָדַי יָשִׁיב לִי: כב כִּי שָׁמַרְתִּי דַּרְכֵי יְהֹוָה וְלֹא רָשַׁעְתִּי
מֵאֱלֹהָי: כג כִּי כָל־מִשְׁפָּטָו (משפטיו כ׳) לְנֶגְדִּי וְחֻקֹּתָיו
לֹא־אָסוּר מִמֶּנָּה: כד וָאֶהְיֶה תָמִים לוֹ וָאֶשְׁתַּמְּרָה
מֵעֲוֺנִי: כה וַיָּשֶׁב יְהֹוָה לִי כְּצִדְקָתִי כְּבֹרִי לְנֶגֶד עֵינָיו:
כו עִם־חָסִיד תִּתְחַסָּד עִם־גְּבוֹר תָּמִים תִּתַּמָּם:
כז עִם־נָבָר תִּתָּבָר וְעִם־עִקֵּשׁ תִּתַּפָּל: כח וְאֶת־עַם
עָנִי תּוֹשִׁיעַ וְעֵינֶיךָ עַל־רָמִים תַּשְׁפִּיל: כט כִּי־אַתָּה
נֵירִי יְהֹוָה וַיהֹוָה יַגִּיהַּ חָשְׁכִּי: ל כִּי בְכָה אָרוּץ גְּדוּד
בֵּאלֹהַי אֲדַלֶּג־שׁוּר: לא הָאֵל תָּמִים דַּרְכּוֹ אִמְרַת
יְהֹוָה צְרוּפָה מָגֵן הוּא לְכֹל הַחֹסִים בּוֹ: לב כִּי מִי־אֵל
מִבַּלְעֲדֵי יְהֹוָה וּמִי צוּר מִבַּלְעֲדֵי אֱלֹהֵינוּ: לג הָאֵל
מָעוּזִּי חָיִל וַיַּתֵּר תָּמִים דַּרְכִּי (דרכו כ׳) : לד מְשַׁוֶּה רַגְלַי
(רגליו כ׳) כָּאַיָּלוֹת וְעַל־בָּמוֹתַי יַעֲמִדֵנִי: לה מְלַמֵּד יָדַי
לַמִּלְחָמָה וְנִחַת קֶשֶׁת־נְחוּשָׁה זְרֹעֹתָי: לו וַתִּתֶּן־לִי
מָגֵן יִשְׁעֶךָ וַעֲנֹתְךָ תַּרְבֵּנִי: לז תַּרְחִיב צַעֲדִי תַּחְתֵּנִי

God's fantastic assistance

blaze forth from Him (to consume them). 10 He bent the heavens and descended (to reach the enemy), with a thick cloud under His feet (with which to punish them). 11 He mounted a cherub and flew off. He appeared on the wings of the wind. 12 He surrounded Himself with a canopy of darkness (ready to punish the enemy), from clouds of water bound together (under the) heavens. 13 From the brightness before Him (which he shone to save me) blazed fiery coals (against those who stood against me). 14 God thundered from heaven. The Supreme One sent forth His voice. 15 He shot arrows and scattered (the enemy. He sent) lightning and he confused them. 16 With God's roar and the blast of His nostrils, the depths of the sea were visible and (the earth split), revealing the world's foundations.

17 He sent (His salvation) from on high and took me. He drew me from deep waters. 18 He saved me from my powerful enemy, from those who hated me, when they were stronger than me. 19 They took advantage of me (by attacking me) on the day of my calamity, but God was a support for me. 20 He brought me out to a wide place. He delivered me (from the straits), because He wants me.

David's righteousness

21 May God reward me according to my righteousness. May He repay me according to the purity of my hands. 22 For I have kept God's ways, and I have not acted wickedly before my God. 23 For all His laws are (in my mind) before me, and I have not turned away from (any one) of His suprarational commands. 24 I was wholehearted with Him, and I guarded myself from my sin. 25 So may God pay me according to my righteousness, according to my purity in His eyes. 26 With the kind man You deal kindly, with the wholehearted man, wholeheartedly, 27 with the pure, in purity, with the crooked, You act with guile. 28 You save a humble nation but You look down on the haughty.

29 You are my lamp, O God! God lights my darkness! 30 For with you(r help) I can run through a troop (of the enemy). With my God I can jump on a wall (to conquer cities). 31 God's Way (of justice) is perfect. God's Word is refined, He is a shield to all who trust in Him. 32 For who has any power (against) God (to stop Him carrying out His word)? Who is a rock but our God? 33 God is my strength and power. He springs me onto my path of perfection. 34 He makes my legs straight like a doe's, He stands me on the high places. 35 He teaches my hands to fight, (and he gives) my arms (the strength) to break a copper bow. 36 You grant me the shield of Your protection, and Your humility (in caring for me) made me (powerful like) a large number (of people). 37 You

David's strength comes from God

praises (47-48), promises to publicize God's acts among the nations (50), and prays that God should continue to bestow kindness on his descendants forever (51).

34. מְשַׁוֶּה רַגְלַי כָּאַיָּלוֹת—*He makes my legs straight like a doe's.* Rashi explains, "*The legs of the female deer (doe) are straighter than the male's.*" According to Chasidic thought, the legs represent "*that which supports the entire body, with the head which stands over them, and they bring a person to his desired destination. Just as this is the case physically, so too it is true spiritually...Faith is referred to as 'legs' since it upholds and sustains the head, namely the intellect, which meditates upon the*

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have broadened my step, so my feet have not slipped. [38] I pursue my enemies and destroy them, not turning back until I annihilate them. [39] I annihilate them and strike them so they rise no more, and they fall beneath my feet. [40] You gird me with strength for battle, and cause my attackers to fall before me. [41] You made my enemies and foes turn around before me, but I (still chased them and) destroyed them. [42] They turned (for help), but there was no one to save them. (They turned) to God, but He did not answer.

[43] I ground them like dust of the earth, I pulverized and crushed them like the mud of the streets. [44] You saved me from the enemy (from among) my own people, You protected me (from them all until I became) the head of nations, (and now even) a people unfamiliar to me serves me. [45] Foreigners (desperately) lie to me (out of fear, but) because of what they heard about me, they listened to me. [46] Foreigners wither, and become lame from their confinement (that I decree on them).

[47] God lives! May my Rock be blessed! My exalted God is the Rock of my salvation. [48] The God, Who avenges on my behalf, Who subdues nations before me, [49] Who saves me from my enemies, Who lifts me above my attackers, Who rescues me from corrupt men!

David will publicize God's kindness

[50] Therefore, (for these acts of kindness) I will thank God (and publicize His acts) among the nations and sing to Your Name. [51] He granted His king great victories, and He has acted kindly to His anointed one. (As he did) to David, (so may He do) to his descendants forever!

וְלֹא מָעֲדוּ קַרְסֻלָּי׃ לח אֶרְדְּפָה אֹיְבַי וָאַשְׁמִידֵם וְלֹא
אָשׁוּב עַד־כַּלּוֹתָם׃ לט וָאֲכַלֵּם וָאֶמְחָצֵם וְלֹא יְקוּמוּן
וַיִּפְּלוּ תַּחַת רַגְלָי׃ מ וַתַּזְרֵנִי חַיִל לַמִּלְחָמָה תַּכְרִיעַ
קָמַי תַּחְתֵּנִי׃ מא וְאֹיְבַי תַּתָּה לִּי עֹרֶף מְשַׂנְאַי
וָאַצְמִיתֵם׃ מב יִשְׁעוּ וְאֵין מֹשִׁיעַ אֶל־יְהֹוָה וְלֹא עָנָם׃
מג וְאֶשְׁחָקֵם כַּעֲפַר־אֶרֶץ כְּטִיט־חוּצוֹת אֲדִקֵּם
אֶרְקָעֵם׃ מד וַתְּפַלְּטֵנִי מֵרִיבֵי עַמִּי תִּשְׁמְרֵנִי לְרֹאשׁ
גּוֹיִם עַם לֹא־יָדַעְתִּי יַעַבְדֻנִי׃ מה בְּנֵי נֵכָר יִתְכַּחֲשׁוּ־
לִי לִשְׁמוֹעַ אֹזֶן יִשָּׁמְעוּ לִי׃ מו בְּנֵי נֵכָר יִבֹּלוּ וְיַחְגְּרוּ
מִמִּסְגְּרוֹתָם׃ מז חַי־יְהֹוָה וּבָרוּךְ צוּרִי וְיָרֻם אֱלֹהֵי
צוּר יִשְׁעִי׃ מח הָאֵל הַנֹּתֵן נְקָמֹת לִי וּמוֹרִיד עַמִּים
תַּחְתֵּנִי׃ מט וּמוֹצִיאִי מֵאֹיְבָי וּמִקָּמַי תְּרוֹמְמֵנִי מֵאִישׁ
חֲמָסִים תַּצִּילֵנִי׃ נ עַל־כֵּן אוֹדְךָ יְהֹוָה בַּגּוֹיִם וּלְשִׁמְךָ
אֲזַמֵּר׃ נא מִגְדּוֹל [מגדיל כ׳] יְשׁוּעוֹת מַלְכּוֹ וְעֹשֶׂה־חֶסֶד
לִמְשִׁיחוֹ לְדָוִד וּלְזַרְעוֹ עַד־עוֹלָם׃

Vezos Habrachah / וזאת הברכה (שמחת תורה)

(Joshua 1:1-18)

[1:1] It was after the death of Moshe, God's servant, that God said to Moshe's attendant, Yehoshua son of Nun:

God appoints Yehoshua

[2] "My servant Moshe is dead. Now, set off and cross this (river) Jordan now—both you and this entire people—to the land which I am giving the children of Israel. [3] I will give you every place on which the soles of

א א וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי מוֹת מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד יְהֹוָה וַיֹּאמֶר יְהֹוָה
אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בִּן־נוּן מְשָׁרֵת מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר׃ ב מֹשֶׁה
עַבְדִּי מֵת וְעַתָּה קוּם עֲבֹר אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה אַתָּה
וְכָל־הָעָם הַזֶּה אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן לָהֶם
לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל׃ ג כָּל־מָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר תִּדְרֹךְ כַּף־רַגְלְכֶם

greatness of God" (*Tanya, Igeres Hakodesh* ch. 1). By suggesting that the female deer has "straighter" legs, the verse points to the fact that women are generally endowed with a greater measure of faith in God than men. (For example, we find that the women did not wish to contribute their jewelry for the construction of the Golden Calf.) Thus, with these words, David praised God for giving him the superior quality of faith usually possessed only by women (*Ohr Hatorah, Nach* vol. 2, p. 927).

Haftarah of Simchas Torah

This *Haftarah* mentions the passing of Moshe, which is related in the Torah portion for *Simchas Torah*. It is also a direct continuation of the Five Books of Moshe which are completed on this day (for a further explanation see *Sichah* of the night of *Simchas Torah* 5747, par. 39). The *Haftarah* opens with God's communication to Yehoshua after Moshe's

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בּוֹ לָכֶם נְתַתִּיו כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי אֶל־מֹשֶׁה: ד מֵהַמִּדְבָּר
וְהַלְּבָנוֹן הַזֶּה וְעַד־הַנָּהָר הַגָּדוֹל נְהַר־פְּרָת כֹּל אֶרֶץ
הַחִתִּים וְעַד־הַיָּם הַגָּדוֹל מְבוֹא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ יִהְיֶה
גְּבוּלְכֶם: ה לֹא־יִתְיַצֵּב אִישׁ לְפָנֶיךָ כֹּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ
כַּאֲשֶׁר הָיִיתִי עִם־מֹשֶׁה אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ לֹא אַרְפְּךָ וְלֹא
אֶעֶזְבֶךָּ: ו חֲזַק וֶאֱמָץ כִּי אַתָּה תַּנְחִיל אֶת־הָעָם הַזֶּה
אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לַאֲבוֹתָם לָתֵת לָהֶם:
ז רַק חֲזַק וֶאֱמַץ מְאֹד לִשְׁמֹר לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּכָל־הַתּוֹרָה
אֲשֶׁר צִוְּךָ מֹשֶׁה עַבְדִּי אַל־תָּסוּר מִמֶּנּוּ יָמִין
וּשְׂמֹאול לְמַעַן תַּשְׂכִּיל בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵךְ: ח לֹא־יָמוּשׁ
סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה הַזֶּה מִפִּיךָ וְהָגִיתָ בּוֹ יוֹמָם וָלַיְלָה
לְמַעַן תִּשְׁמֹר לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּכָל־הַכָּתוּב בּוֹ כִּי־אָז
תַּצְלִיחַ אֶת־דְּרָכֶךָ וְאָז תַּשְׂכִּיל: ט הֲלוֹא צִוִּיתִיךָ חֲזַק
וֶאֱמָץ אַל־תַּעֲרֹץ וְאַל־תֵּחָת כִּי עִמְּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵךְ:

your feet tread, as I said to Moshe: 4 "Your borders will be from the desert and Lebanon here, to the Great River, the Euphrates River—all the land of the Chitites, to the Great Sea to the direction where the sun sets.

5 "No one will stand against you all the days of your life. I will be with you, as I was with Moshe. I will not weaken (My support of) you and I will not abandon you.

6 "Be strong and firm, for you will bring this people to take possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.

Keep the Torah

7 "But you must be very strong and firm to be careful to observe the entire Torah which My servant Moshe commanded you. Do not turn aside from it to the right or the left, so that you succeed wherever you go. 8 This book of the Torah must not depart from your mouth. You must pore over it day and night, so you will be careful to observe everything written in it. (Only) then will you prosper in (all) your ways and be successful. 9 Have I not commanded you: Be strong and firm! Do not be anxious or afraid, for God your God is with you wherever you go."

Prepare for war

Sefardic communities conclude here. Chabad and Ashkenazic communities continue:

י וַיְצַו יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶת־שֹׁטְרֵי הָעָם לֵאמֹר:
יא עִבְרוּ | בְּקֶרֶב הַמַּחֲנֶה וְצַוּוּ אֶת־הָעָם
לֵאמֹר הָכִינוּ לָכֶם צֵידָה כִּי בְּעוֹד | שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים
אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה לָבוֹא לָרֶשֶׁת אֶת־
הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם נֹתֵן לָכֶם לְרִשְׁתָּהּ:
יב וְלָרֻאוּבֵנִי וְלַגָּדִי וְלַחֲצִי שֵׁבֶט הַמְנַשֶּׁה אָמַר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ
לֵאמֹר: יג זָכוֹר אֶת־הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֶתְכֶם מֹשֶׁה
עֶבֶד־יְהוָה לֵאמֹר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מֵנִיחַ לָכֶם וְנָתַן

10 Yehoshua then commanded the officers of the people: 11 "Go through the camp and instruct the people, saying, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves, for in another three days you will cross this Jordan (river) to enter and take possession of the land which God your God is giving you as an inheritance.'"

Promise of Re'uvain, Gad and Menasheh

12 Yehoshua then told the tribes of Re'uvain, Gad and half the tribe of Menasheh, saying: 13 "Remember the words which Moshe, God's servant, commanded you, saying: 'God your God is granting you a place to settle, and He has given you land on this (side of the Jordan).'

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passing, instructing him to lead the conquest of the Land (1:1-4). God promises to assist Yehoshua, encourages him to be "strong and firm," and warns him that he must observe the Torah (5-9). Yehoshua immediately instructs the people to prepare for war (10-11). He reminds the tribes of Re'uvain and Gad and the half-tribe of Menasheh of their promise to lead the battle before returning to settle in the Transjordan (12-15), and they wholeheartedly consent (16-18).

8. וְהָגִיתָ בּוֹ יוֹמָם וָלַיְלָה—*You must pore over it day and night.* "Technically speaking, a person can fulfill his obligation to study Torah by allocating specific times, thus satisfying the requirement to *"pore over it day and night,"* by allocating specific times in the day and the night when he will learn and memorize well at least those ideas that have practical relevance, which is a universal obligation. This includes the parts of the Code of Jewish Law which *every* person needs to know himself—which do not require further Rabbinical clarification—and the study of non-legal *Midrashim* or texts of ethical refinement that are based on the wisdom of our Sages" (*Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, Laws of Torah Study* 3:4).

Every *mitzvah* has a *preferable* standard to which it should be observed (*lechatchilah*), and a *minimal standard* which is acceptable *only* under extenuating circumstances (*b'dieved*).

The preferable way of observing the *mitzvah* to study Torah is to follow the verse literally and *"pore over it day and night,"* i.e. all day and all night. The notion of merely allocating a time during the day and a time at night, mentioned here in the *Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch*, is a dispensation for those who are only capable of fulfilling a minimal

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לָכֶם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת׃ יד נְשֵׁיכֶם טַפְּכֶם וּמִקְנֵיכֶם
יֵשְׁבוּ בָּאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָכֶם מֹשֶׁה בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן
וְאַתֶּם תַּעַבְרוּ חֲמֻשִׁים לִפְנֵי אֲחֵיכֶם כֹּל גִּבּוֹרֵי הַחַיִל
וַעֲזַרְתֶּם אוֹתָם׃ טו עַד אֲשֶׁר־יָנִיחַ יְהוָה ׀ לַאֲחֵיכֶם
כָּכֶם וְיָרְשׁוּ גַם־הֵמָּה אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם נֹתֵן לָהֶם וְשַׁבְתֶּם לְאֶרֶץ יְרֻשַּׁתְכֶם
וִירִשְׁתֶּם אוֹתָהּ אֲשֶׁר ׀ נָתַן לָכֶם מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד יְהוָה
בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן מִזְרַח הַשָּׁמֶשׁ׃ טז וַיַּעֲנוּ אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ
לֵאמֹר כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־צִוִּיתָנוּ נַעֲשֶׂה וְאֶל־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר
תִּשְׁלָחֵנוּ נֵלֵךְ׃ יז כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־שָׁמַעְנוּ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה כֵּן
נִשְׁמַע אֵלֶיךָ רַק יִהְיֶה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ עִמָּךְ כַּאֲשֶׁר
הָיָה עִם־מֹשֶׁה׃ יח כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־יַמְרֶה אֶת־פִּיךָ
וְלֹא־יִשְׁמַע אֶת־דְּבָרֶיךָ לְכֹל אֲשֶׁר־תְּצַוֶּנּוּ יוּמָת רַק
חֲזַק וֶאֱמָץ׃

14 *Your wives, children, and flocks can settle in this land which Moshe has assigned you across the Jordan (from the Land of Israel), but all of you—all your mighty warriors—must pass armed ahead of your brothers and help them,* 15 *until God grants your brothers a place to settle as you (have), and they take possession of the land which God your God has given them. Then you will return to the land of your inheritance which Moshe, God's servant, gave you on the east side of the Jordan, where the sun (rises), and take possession of it."*

16 *They answered Yehoshua: "Everything you have commanded us, we will do, and wherever you send us, we will go!* 17 *Just as we listen to everything Moshe (said), so will we listen to you, so long as God your God is with you, as He was with Moshe.* 18 *Any man who rebels against you and does not listen to your words concerning anything you command us will be put to death. Just be strong and firm (to punish them, and do not forgo your honor)!"*

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

The Plan

20:18 *Yonasan said to (David), "Tomorrow is the (first of the) new month. You shall be missed, because your seat will be empty.* 19 *For three (days) you should go down (and hide yourself) well. Come to the place where you hid on the day of the incident (when the King swore to me not to kill you), and sit by the traveler's (marker) stone.*

20 *"I will shoot three arrows to the side, as though I shot at a target.* 21 *Then, I will send a lad (saying to him), 'Go, find the arrows.' If I say to the lad, 'look!—the arrows*

obligation, for Torah study is, in essence, a *continual* obligation (*Likutei Sichos* vol. 14, p. 21, note 6).

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

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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 וָאָתָּה 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
זֶבַח מִשְׁפָּחָה לָנוּ 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 בִּיהוֹנָתָן וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ בֶּן־נַעֲוַת
הַמַּרְדּוּת הֲלוֹא יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־בֹחֵר 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 בָּחֳרִי־אָף וְלֹא־אָכַל

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."*

David goes into hiding

24 *David hid himself in the field. When the (first of the new) month came, the King sat down to eat the meal.* 25 *The King sat at his seat, as usual, on a seat by the wall. Yonasan stood up so that Avner could sit at Sha'ul's side. David's place was empty.* 26 *Nevertheless Sha'ul said nothing on that day, for he thought, "(He had) a (nocturnal) accident. He is not ritually pure. (He didn't come because) he has not been ritually purified."*

27 *It came to pass on the next day, which was the second day of the month, that David's place was empty. Sha'ul said to Yonasan his son, "Why didn't the son of Yishai come to the meal, neither yesterday, nor today?"*

28 *Yonasan answered Sha'ul, "David asked me permission to go to Beis Lechem.* 29 *He said, 'Please let me go, because our family (is offering) sacrifice(s today) in the city and my (oldest) brother (Eliav) has instructed me (to be there). Now, if I have found favor in your eyes, please excuse me (from the King's duties) to see my brothers.' Therefore he has not come to the King's table."*

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*

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phrases to his servant (20:18-23). Initially, the king appears indifferent to David's absence (24-28), but on the second day he becomes furious with Yonasan and states that David "deserves death" (29-34). So, the next morning, Yonasan goes out to the field and communicates their pre-arranged sign by shooting arrows, and sends his servant home (35-40). David then comes out of hiding, and they part amid tears, swearing an oath *"between my descendants and your descendants forever"* (41-42).

21. 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

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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 one another, and wept with one another, until David (wept) greatly (more than Yonasan).*

Yonasan and David part

42 *Yonasan said to David, "Go in peace, as both of us have sworn in the name of God, saying, 'God be (a witness) between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants forever.'"*

בְּיוֹם־הַחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי לֶחֶם כִּי נֶעְצַב אֶל־דָּוִד כִּי
הִכְלִמוֹ אָבִיו: לה וַיְהִי בַבֹּקֶר וַיֵּצֵא יְהוֹנָתָן הַשָּׂדֶה
לְמוֹעֵד דָּוִד וְנַעַר קָטֹן עִמּוֹ: לו וַיֹּאמֶר לְנַעֲרוֹ רֻץ
מְצָא־נָא אֶת־הַחִצִּים אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי 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 (החצי 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
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:

SHABBOS ROSH CHODESH / שבת ראש חודש

(Isaiah 66:1-24, ibid. 23)

The *Maftir* reading for *Shabbos Rosh Chodesh* is on page 302. (*Bamidbar* 28:9-15)

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*

סו א כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּסְאִי וְהָאָרֶץ הֲדֹם
רַגְלָי אֵי־זֶה בַיִת אֲשֶׁר תִּבְנוּ־לִי וְאֵי־זֶה מָקוֹם

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exile. But do not be afraid to continue this work, "*because God has sent you*" (*Hisvaduyos* ibid.).

HAFTARAH OF SHABBOS ROSH CHODESH

This *Haftarah* mentions the sacrificial worship that will occur every new month (*Rosh Chodesh*) after the ingathering of the exiles. The *Haftarah* was addressed by the prophet Yeshayah (Isaiah) to the Jewish people in Babylon after the exile, at the end of the 6th century B.C.E.

The *Haftarah* opens with God's proclamation of omnipresence and the insufficiency of one House to contain Him (66:1). God will turn His attention to those that fear Him (2), and all types of insincere worship are abhorred by Him (3-4). Those who fear God will ultimately be joyous, but those who hate and ostracize God's servants will be chastised by a "*voice from the Temple*" (5-6). Tziyon's (Zion's) deliverance is compared to that of a mother who gives birth without pain (7-9), and the rejoicing at Jerusalem's rebuilding is depicted (10-14). All enemies and idol-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

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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 בְּדַרְכֵיהֶם 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 דְּבַר־יְהוָה הַחֲרֵדִים אֶל־דְּבָרוֹ אָמְרוּ
אֲחֵיכֶם שֹׂנְאֵיכֶם מְנַדֵּיכֶם לְמַעַן שְׁמִי יִכְבַּד יְהוָה
וְנִרְאֶה בְשִׂמְחַתְכֶם וְהֵם יֵבֹשׁוּ: ו קוֹל שָׁאוֹן מֵעִיר
קוֹל מֵהֵיכָל קוֹל יְהוָה מְשַׁלֵּם גְּמוּל לְאֹיְבָיו: ז בְּטֶרֶם
תָּחִיל יָלָדָה בְּטֶרֶם יָבוֹא חֵבֶל לָהּ וְהִמְלִיטָה זָכָר:
ח מִי־שָׁמַע כָּזֹאת מִי רָאָה כָּאֵלֶּה הֲיוּחַל אֶרֶץ בְּיוֹם
אֶחָד אִם־יִוָּלֵד גּוֹי פַּעַם אֶחָת כִּי־חָלָה גַּם־יָלְדָה
צִיּוֹן אֶת־בָּנֶיהָ: ט הַאֲנִי אַשְׁבִּיר וְלֹא אוֹלִיד יֹאמַר
יְהוָה אִם־אֲנִי הַמּוֹלִיד וְעָצַרְתִּי אָמַר אֱלֹהָיִךְ:
י שִׂמְחוּ אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלִַם וְגִילוּ בָהּ כָּל־אֹהֲבֶיהָ שִׂישׂוּ
אִתָּהּ מָשׂוֹשׂ כָּל־הַמִּתְאַבְּלִים עָלֶיהָ: יא לְמַעַן תִּינְקוּ
וּשְׂבַעְתֶּם מִשֹּׁד תַּנְחֻמֶיהָ לְמַעַן תָּמֹצּוּ וְהִתְעַנַּגְתֶּם
מִזִּיז כְּבוֹדָהּ: יב כִּי־כֹה | אָמַר יְהוָה הִנְנִי נֹטֶה־אֵלֶיהָ
כְּנָהָר שָׁלוֹם וּכְנַחַל שׁוֹטֵף כְּבוֹד גּוֹיִם וִינַקְתֶּם
עַל־צַד תִּנָּשֵׂאוּ וְעַל־בִּרְכַּיִם תְּשָׁעֳשָׁעוּ: יג כְּאִישׁ
אֲשֶׁר אִמּוֹ תְּנַחֲמֶנּוּ כֵּן אָנֹכִי אֲנַחֶמְכֶם וּבִירוּשָׁלִַם

(is worthy for) My (Presence to) rest? 2 My hand has made all these things (Heaven and earth), and (therefore) all these things came into being," says God. "But (even though I am so exalted), to this I will pay attention: to he who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at My word. 3 "However, he who kills an ox (offering his sacrifice without trembling at My word) it is as if he slew a man. He who sacrifices a lamb (without trembling), is as if he cut off a dog's neck. He who offers a meal-offering (without trembling), is as if he offered swine's blood. He who burns incense (without trembling), is as if he blessed an idol. He who offers up frankincense (without trembling) is as if he offered an inappropriate gift. They have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations. 4 So too I will choose to mock them, and will bring their fears upon them, because when I called (to them through the prophets), none answered. When I spoke, they did not listen. They did evil before My eyes, and chose what I did not desire."

God hates insincere service

5 "Hear the word of God, you who tremble at His word! Your (wicked) brothers who hate you and who ostracize you say, '(I am so great that) God is glorified because of my name!' (But in truth) we shall see your joy and they shall be shamed. 6 (Then there will be) a voice of rumbling from the city (of Tziyon), a voice from the Temple, the voice of God rendering recompense to his enemies (Gog and Magog)."

Enemies will be judged

7 "Before she (Tziyon) feels labor pains she will give birth. Before her labor pain will come, she will be delivered a son. 8 Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such a thing? Has a land gone through its labor in one day? Has a nation been born all at once, for Tziyon labored and gave birth to her children? 9 Shall I bring to the birthstool, and not cause her to give birth?" says God. "Shall I, who cause birth, hold back?" says your God.

Tziyon will have no labor pains

10 "Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all you who love her (to see her rebuilt). Rejoice for joy with her, all you who mourn for her (in her destruction), 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 will rejoice

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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 essence is through humility, simplicity and sincere dedication.

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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*

Nations will return

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 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)."*

[23] *"It will then be, that every (first of the) new month, and every Shabbos, all mankind shall come to worship*

Worship on every new month

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*

תְּנֻחָמוּ: יד וּרְאִיתֶם וְשָׂשׂ לִבְּכֶם וְעַצְמוֹתֵיכֶם כַּדֶּשֶׁא
תִפְרַחְנָה וְנוֹדְעָה יַד־יְהֹוָה אֶת־עֲבָדָיו וְזָעַם
אֶת־אֹיְבָיו: טו כִּי־הִנֵּה יְהֹוָה בָּאֵשׁ יָבוֹא וְכַסּוּפָה
מַרְכְּבֹתָיו לְהָשִׁיב בְּחֵמָה אַפּוֹ וְגַעֲרָתוֹ בְּלַהֲבֵי־אֵשׁ:
טז כִּי בָאֵשׁ יְהֹוָה נִשְׁפָּט וּבְחַרְבּוֹ אֶת־כָּל־בָּשָׂר וְרַבּוּ
חַלְלֵי יְהֹוָה: יז הַמִּתְקַדְּשִׁים וְהַמִּטַּהֲרִים אֶל־הַגַּנּוֹת
אַחַר אַחַת (אחד כ׳) בַּתָּוֶךְ אֹכְלֵי בְּשַׂר הַחֲזִיר וְהַשֶּׁקֶץ
וְהָעַכְבָּר יַחְדָּו יָסֻפוּ נְאֻם־יְהֹוָה: 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
קֶשֶׁת תֻּבַל וְיָוָן הָאִיִּים הָרְחֹקִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־שָׁמְעוּ
אֶת־שִׁמְעִי וְלֹא־רָאוּ אֶת־כְּבוֹדִי וְהִגִּידוּ אֶת־כְּבוֹדִי
בַּגּוֹיִם: כ וְהֵבִיאוּ אֶת־כָּל־אֲחֵיכֶם מִכָּל־הַגּוֹיִם |
מִנְחָה | לַיהֹוָה בַּסּוּסִים וּבָרֶכֶב וּבַצַּבִּים וּבַפְּרָדִים
וּבַכִּרְכָּרוֹת עַל הַר קָדְשִׁי יְרוּשָׁלִַם אָמַר יְהֹוָה
כַּאֲשֶׁר יָבִיאוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה בִּכְלִי טָהוֹר
בֵּית יְהֹוָה: כא וְגַם־מֵהֶם אֶקַּח לַכֹּהֲנִים לַלְוִיִּם אָמַר
יְהֹוָה: כב כִּי כַאֲשֶׁר הַשָּׁמַיִם הַחֲדָשִׁים וְהָאָרֶץ
הַחֲדָשָׁה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה עֹמְדִים לְפָנַי נְאֻם־יְהֹוָה כֵּן
יַעֲמֹד זַרְעֲכֶם וְשִׁמְכֶם: כג וְהָיָה מִדֵּי־חֹדֶשׁ בְּחָדְשׁוֹ
וּמִדֵּי שַׁבָּת בְּשַׁבַּתּוֹ יָבוֹא כָל־בָּשָׂר לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְפָנַי
אָמַר יְהֹוָה: כד וְיָצְאוּ וְרָאוּ בְּפִגְרֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים הַפֹּשְׁעִים

These three levels of the soul are alluded to in the opening of the *Haftarah*. "The heavens" and "earth" allude to Torah and *mitzvos* respectively (because Torah was given from Heaven, and the *mitzvos* are performed with physical objects here on earth), i.e. things which are observed in everyday life with the normal faculties of the soul found in the body. The "house" mentioned by the verse alludes to the soul powers which encompass the body, just as a house encompasses a person. While these powers are indeed impressive, scripture nevertheless bemoans their insufficiency ("*What house could you build (worthy) for Me?*"), because the most profound form of Divine service comes from the essence of the soul. And this essence is reached through humility: "*To this I will pay attention: to he who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at My word*" (v. 2). This explanation adds further significance to the reading of this passage on *Rosh Chodesh* (new moon). For just as the disappearance of the moon and its re-emergence as a miniscule point is the key to its later growth, likewise it is the path of humility and self-renunciation which reaches the essence of the soul, bringing the person to a genuine spiritual rebirth (*Sefer Hama'amarim Melukat* vol. 3, p. 133).

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כִּי תוֹלַעְתָּם לֹא תָמוּת וְאִשָּׁם לֹא תִכְבֶּה וְהָיוּ
דֵרָאוֹן לְכָל־בָּשָׂר: כג וְהָיָה מִדֵּי־חֹדֶשׁ בְּחָדְשׁוֹ וּמִדֵּי
שַׁבָּת בְּשַׁבַּתּוֹ יָבוֹא כָל־בָּשָׂר לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֺת לְפָנַי
אָמַר יְהוָה:

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 זַרְעֲךָ עַד־עוֹלָם:

[20:18] *Yonasan said to (David), "Tomorrow is the (first of the) new month. You shall be missed, because your seat will be empty.*

[42] *Yonasan said to David, "Go in peace, as both of us have sworn in the name of God, saying, 'God be (a witness) between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants forever.'"*

MAFTIR FOR SHABBOS ROSH CHODESH / מפטיר לשבת ראש חדש

(Bamidbar 28:9-15)

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 שְׁנַיִם 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 וְעִשָּׂרֹן עִשָּׂרוֹן סֹלֶת מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה
בַשֶּׁמֶן לַכֶּבֶשׂ הָאֶחָד עֹלָה רֵיחַ נִיחֹחַ אִשֶּׁה לַיהוָה: יד וְנִסְכֵּיהֶם
חֲצִי הַהִין יִהְיֶה לַפָּר וּשְׁלִישִׁת הַהִין לָאַיִל וּרְבִיעִת הַהִין
לַכֶּבֶשׂ יָיִן זֹאת עֹלַת חֹדֶשׁ בְּחָדְשׁוֹ לְחָדְשֵׁי הַשָּׁנָה: טו וּשְׂעִיר
עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחַטָּאת לַיהוָה עַל־עֹלַת הַתָּמִיד יֵעָשֶׂה וְנִסְכּוֹ: ס

Haftarah is on page 299.

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Appendix

הוספה

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Appendix: The Location of Kadaish-Barne'a

(See illustration on page 28).

In *Parshas Masei*, where the Torah describes the borders of the Land of Cana'an, Kadaish-Barne'a is listed as one of the towns along the southern border of Cana'an (*Bamidbar* 34:4). Thus when we read, at the opening of the Book of *Devarim*, that the Jewish people traveled from Mount Sinai to Kadaish-Barne'a (*Devarim* 1:2, 19), one would presume that the Torah refers to the previously mentioned town bearing this name, located on the southern border of the Land of Cana'an.

However, several statements of *Rashi* indicate that this is not the case, and that the Kadaish-Barne'a referred to here is in fact to the south of the Land of *Edom* and therefore far south of Cana'an:

a.) Earlier, in *Parshas Masei*, *Rashi* writes: "Three lands lie south of the Land of Israel, *each adjoining the other* - part of Egypt, the entire land of Edom, and the entire land of Mo'av. The land of Egypt is in the southwestern corner... The land of Edom adjoins it from the east, and the land of Mo'av adjoins the land of Edom at the southeastern corner [of the Land of Israel]" (*Rashi* to Bamidbar 34:3).

Since the three lands to the south of the Land of Israel were adjoining each other, it follows that there was no access to the southern border of Cana'an, other than passing through the land of Edom. At the literal level, it is not feasible that the entire Jewish camp would have passed through the Land of Edom without being challenged, so we can presume that they must have stopped south of Edom.

Thus, in *Parshas Devarim*, *Rashi* did not have to inform the reader that Kadaish-Barne'a, where the Jewish people camped, was not the town on the southern border of Cana'an bearing that name, since it is self-understood (at the literal level) that the Jewish people would not have been able to pass through Edom without being granted permission, or being challenged at battle.

b.) While in Kadaish-Barne'a, the sin of the spies occurred (*Devarim* 1:19*ff*), and the entry into the Land of Israel was postponed until the next generation. *Rashi* writes, "I thought [previously] to let you pass *through the breadth of the land of Edom northward*, to enter the Land, but you sinned and caused a delay for yourselves" (*Rashi* to v. 40 *ibid.*). Clearly, "Kadaish-Barne'a," where the Jewish people were located, was not on the southern border of the Land of Cana'an, but to the south of Edom (Mount Se'ir).

c.) At the end of the 38 years of wandering in the Desert the Jewish people finally reached a place called "Kadaish" (*Bamidbar* 33:36) which is to the south of Edom. At this point, Moshe requested rights of passage from the King of Edom, to pass northwards through Edom into Cana'an (*ibid.* 20:14*ff*). While some commentators argue that this is a different location than the "Kadaish-Barne'a" from where the spies were sent (see *Ramban* to *Bamidbar* 20:1), *Rashi* stresses that, "for nineteen years they were continually wandering about, and they *returned* to Kadaish" (*Rashi* to Devarim 1:46). I.e. the "Kadaish" at the *south of Edom* where the Jewish people ended up after wandering in the desert, is the *very same place* from where the spies had been sent out.

In conclusion we see that, according to *Rashi:*

i.) The Kadaish-Barne'a referred to at the beginning of the Book of Devarim is not the town on the southern border of the Land of Cana'an. (Incidentally, this appears to be the view of *Rambam* in *Moreh Nevuchim* III:50). This is because the Jewish people could not have reached the southern border of Cana'an without passing through enemy territory of Edom which bordered the southern border of Cana'an. *Rashi* did not need to clarify this point at the beginning of the Book of *Devarim* as it is self-evident from his description of the borders in *Bamidbar* 34:3.

ii.) The town to the south of Edom from which the Jewish people sent the spies was the same town to which they returned after wandering in the desert.

iii.) This town is referred to in the Torah both by the names of "Kadaish-Barne'a" and "Kadaish."

Another point that remains to be clarified is: What forced *Rashi* to conclude, at the literal level, that the Land of Edom spanned the *entire* southern border of Cana'an, from Egypt to Mo'av? Surely it would be simpler to conclude, at the literal level, that there was some direct access point to the southern border of Cana'an, without having to pass through another land, and thus it is feasible that the Jewish people did indeed reach Kadaish-Barne'a on the southern border of Cana'an. With this approach, *Rashi* would have avoided the slightly difficult conclusion (argued above), that the Torah sometimes refers to the same place by different names ("Kadaish-Barne'a" and "Kadaish").

Perhaps it could be argued that *Rashi* rejected the notion that there was an access point to the south of the Land of Cana'an without passing through Edom, for then we would be left with the question: Why did Moshe ask Edom for the right of passage through his land (*Bamidbar* 20:14*ff*), if there was a direct access point to Cana'an *without* passing through Edom? Clearly, at the literal level, there was no route into the south of Cana'an other than passing through Edom.

Therefore, *Rashi* concluded that the "Kadaish-Barne'a" referred to at the beginning of *Devarim* must be synonymous with the town of "Kadaish" on the southern border of Edom.

As for the fact that we are left with the difficulty that the Torah refers to the same place with two slightly different names, it could be argued that:

i.) They are not different names, but rather, one is an abbreviated form of the other.*

ii.) This is a problem that applies *equally* to the interpretation that Kadaish-Barne'a (at the beginning of *Devarim*) is the town at the southern border of Cana'an, since the Torah states, in reference to *this* location, "*You stayed in Kadaish for a long time*" (*Devarim* 1:46). Here we see that the names Kadaish and Kadaish-Barne'a are used interchangeably according to all interpretations. (*Editor's note*)

* cf. Masah u'Merivah (*Shemos* 17:7) which is also referred to as just "Masah" (Devarim 6:16).

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Matnos Kehunah — Commentary on *Midrash Rabbah* by Rabbi Yissachar Ber HaKohen (c.1520-1590), a student of the *Rama*.

Mechilta — Halachic *Midrash* of the Tannaic period to the Book of Exodus.

Megaleh Amukos — 252 explanations of Moshe's Prayer in *Parshas Vaeschanan* and 1000 explanations on the small alef in the first word of *Vayikra*, according to Kabbalah, by R' Noson Noteh Shapiro. First printed in Cracow in 1637.

Megilas Esther — Scholarly commentary to *Sefer haMitzvos* defending the *Rambam* against attacks from the *Ramban*, by Rabbi Yitzchok Lioven. First published in Venice in 1591.

Me'or Einayim — Chasidic commentary to the Torah by Rabbi Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl (1730-1797), a student of the *Baal Shem Tov* and the *Maggid of Mezritch*. First published in Slavita, 1798.

Meiri — Extensive Commentary to the Talmud by R' Menachem HaMeiri (c. 1249-c. 1306).

Metzudos — Commentary to the Prophets and Writings, consisting of two parts, *Metzudas Tziyon*, which explains the meaning of individual words, and *Metzudos David*, a running commentary to the text. Initial manuscripts of the commentary were authored by Rabbi David Altschuler, and published shortly before his passing in 1753. The commentary was edited and completed by his son, Rabbi Yechiel Hillel, and published in 1780. The commentary has attained great popularity for being concise and comprehensive.

Midrash — Aggadic and Halachic teachings of the Talmudic period arranged according to the verses of the Torah.

Midrash Hagadol — Midrashic anthology arranged by R' David al-Adeni of South Arabia (13th century). Many Midrashic teachings which were lost throughout the course of time have been preserved in this work. First printed in 1967 in Jerusalem.

Midrash Lekach Tov — (also known as *Pesikta Zutrasa*). Midrashic anthology arranged by R' Toviah Hagadol (1036-1108) of Greece and Bulgaria.

Midrash Rabah — A major collection of homilies and commentaries on the Torah, ascribed to R' Oshiah Rabah (c. 3rd century), perhaps assembled during the early Geonic period. First printed in Constantinople 1512.

Mikdash Melech — Commentary to the *Zohar* culled from the works of R. Chaim Vital, R. Avraham Azulai, and their students R. Yaakov Pinto, R. Yeshaya Cohen and R. Moshe Zacutto.

Minchah Belulah — Commentary to the Torah by R' Avraham Menachem Rapaport (c. 1540-1604), Italian Torah scholar, doctor and grammarian.

Minchas Chinuch — Scholarly supercommentary to *Sefer haChinuch* by Rabbi Yosef Babad (1800-1875), Rabbi of Tarnipol, Poland.

Mishnah — Fundamental collection of the legal pronouncements and discussion of the *Tanna'im*, edited by Rabbi Yehuda haNassi early in the third century. The *Mishnah* is the basic text of the Oral Law.

Mishneh Torah — 14-volume halachic code by *Rambam* (Maimonides) encompassing all the laws found in the Talmud.

Mitteler Rebbe — Rabbi Dov Ber Schneuri (1773-1827), son of Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi; second Lubavitcher Rebbe.

Mizrachi — Exhaustive supercommentary to Rashi's commentary on the Torah by Rabbi Eliyahu Mizrachi (1450-1525) of Constantinople, Chief Rabbi of the Turkish Empire.

Moreh Nevuchim — "Guide for the Perplexed" by Maimonides.

Moshav Zekeinim — Anthology of comments of about 130 different sources, the majority of whom are Tosafists of France and Germany, circa. 1100-1300. First printed in 1959.

Nachalas Ya'akov — Supercommentary to Rashi's commentary on the Torah by Rabbi Ya'akov Yekl Solnick. First published in Cracow in 1642.

Nimukei Yosef — Halachic commentary on *Sefer Hahalachos* (of the *Rif*), by R' Yosef Chaviva of Spain (14-15th centuries).

Noda Biyehudah — Halachic Responsa of Rabbi Ezekiel Landau, (1713-1793) Chief Rabbi of Prague.

Ohr haChayim — Commentary on the Torah by Talmudic and 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.

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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*.

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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

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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.

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זכרונו לברכה

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