

מחנה ישראל The Structure of

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IN במדבר פרק ב, the תורה describes the structure of מחנה בני ישראל in the שבט Each campd separately, with three שבטים campd on each side of the משכן, making for a total of four מחנות of three שבטים each. Each מחנה was led by one שבט as its ראש דגל, or standard bearer. The fact that the תורה includes thirty-one פסוקים on this subject demonstrates the importance of this topic; each detail must be significant. The four ראשי דגל of ישראל בני מחנה were ראובן, יהודה, אפרים, and דן. Why were these particular שבטים chosen, instead of the other eight?

The reason why ראובן was chosen seems obvious. He was, after all, the בכור of יעקב's sons. The תורה considers the status of בכור very important. However, (ה:א-ב) דברי הימים א, says something striking:

ובני ראובן בכור ישראל כי הוא הבכור ובחללו יצועי אביו נתנה בכרתו לבני יוסף
בן ישראל ולא להתיחש לבכורה. כי יהודה גבר באחיו ולנגיד ממנו והבכרה
ליוסף.

These two פסוקים imply that ראובן's sin with בלהה removed from him the privileges associated with the בכורה: namely leadership and double inheritance. These were taken from him and given to יהודה and יוסף respectively. במדבר טז:יב-יד in עדת קרח on מלכיים raises this issue in his comment that as descendants of ראובן they deserved both the מלוכה given to יהודה שבט and the double portion in ארץ ישראל שבט and אפרים שבט (as will be described below, יוסף שבט and יהודה שבט each had their own מנשה).

In דברי הימים we find "כי יהודה גבר באחיו" as an explanation for his appointment as king. In the time of יעקב there was a constant struggle for leadership between the אחים, the most predominant one between יהודה and ראובן. Both took leadership roles during the episode of מכירת יוסף, each suggesting a different plan for what to do with יוסף. יהודה's plan ultimately prevailed: "ויאמר (בראשית, לז:כו-כו) יהודה אל אחיו... וישמעו אחיו". Later, each attempted to con-

vince *לעקב* to send *בנימין* under his supervision. Each tried to prove his own competence and responsibility, and outdo the other's leadership. In the end, *יעקב* relented to the word of *יהודה*, implicitly acknowledging *יהודה*'s leadership. This position was reinforced when *יהודה* was sent to *יוסף* before the rest of the family: "ואת *יהודה* שלח לפניו אל *יוסף*" (*בראשית*, מ:כח). The *מדרש* explains that *יהודה* went first because the king always goes first (*בראשית* רבה, *פרשה* עה, ד"ה *בזל*). *יהודה* inherited the *מלוכה* due to his superior leadership abilities. It seems reasonable that *יהודה* merited the position of *ראש* *דגל* for the same reason.

The same *פסוקים* in *דברי הימים* help explain why *אפרים*, the son of *יוסף*, was also a *דגל*. *יוסף* was given the *בכורה* in places of *ראובן*. Many *מפרשים* explain that this *בכורה* was manifest in the double portion of land which *יוסף* inherited, when both of his sons, *אפרים* and *מנשה*, each received a portion. This double portion seems consistent with *יוסף*'s partiality toward *יוסף*. *יוסף*'s privileged role also has implications for *יוסף*'s role as leader. The *כתונת פסים* which *יעקב* gave to *יוסף* is, in part, a symbol of royalty. In *שמואל ב*, *יג*:*יח* the *כתונת פסים* is described as a distinctively royal garment. *תמר*, the daughter of *דוד המלך*, wore a *כתונת פסים* *כי כן תלבשן* (*קרי תלבשנה*) *בנות המלך*. *דוד המלך* explains *כלי יקר* "כתנת פסים כי כן תלבשן" (*קרי תלבשנה*) *בנות המלך* (*בראשית*, *ל*:*ג*) that this giving of the cloak to *יוסף* signified the transfer of the leadership from *יוסף* to *ראובן*. In fact, the tension between *יוסף* and his brothers is explicitly related to *יוסף*'s role as king. As the brothers taunted *יוסף*, *יוסף* explains that the double language in this *פסוק* refers to the double portion of inheritance, which the brothers felt should have rightly been given to *ראובן*, the *בכור* of the family.

יוסף received the double portion because he was יעקב's favorite son. Still, why was אפרים treated as בכור of יוסף, even though מנשה was the older of יוסף's sons (as the פסוק indicates [ירמיהו, הוא, "ואפרים בכורי ה'"], יעקב saw through רוח הקדש that אפרים was destined for superiority, so he placed his right hand over אפרים when he gave them the ברכות, even though the right hand is usually reserved for the בכור. As יעקב explained to יוסף ויגדל, "אחי הקטן וגדל, יוסף יעקב As בכור. Thus, it seemed that אפרים was granted the status of ראש ראש because he was the בכור of יוסף.

We have seen that יהודה and אפרים acquired the leadership from ראובן. If so, why did ראובן become a ראש דגל, if his leadership had been taken by others? It seems that ראובן retained some of his status as leader, despite everything. The פסוק makes this explicit, when it describes ראובן as a בכור: "בני ראובן בכור ישראל": בכור. Indeed, the פסוק immediately following ראובן's sin with בלהה — the very sin for which ראובן lost his leadership — still refers to him as "בכור יעקב" (בראשית, א:כ). Despite everything, ראובן retained his status as בכור, as יעקב indicates in his ברכה to ראובן: "ראובן בכרי אתה" (מטג: בראשית). It seems that there are two forms of בכורה. The first is an innate status, which depends entirely on

order of birth. It can never be removed. The second is an acquired status, which grants the person who achieves it benefits and leadership. This status can be gained and lost, just as יהודה lost this aspect of the בכורה and יוסף.

ה' explains that there are three means by which he chooses people who will be particularly close to Him. Either they 1) are chosen from birth, 2) gain the status through their own effort, or 3) they gain that status through an act of ה'. רצון. The first method seems to be the reason why ראובן was chosen to be ראש דגל. It seems that יהודה's role as ראש דגל was acquired through the second technique. אפרים gained his status through the third method. Although chronologically he should have remained the less powerful of the two brothers, ה' chose to give him leadership for reasons which we do not know. Together, ראובן, יהודה, and אפרים represent the three different ways in which ה' chooses people to become close to Him.

The question then arises: why was דן chosen to be the fourth ראש דגל? Is דן somehow intertwined in the transfer of power from ראובן to the other brothers, or is his status completely separate from theirs? The fact that דן was the eldest son of his mother, ולפה, does not adequately answer the question. After all, גד, who was the eldest son of his mother, בלהה, was not chosen. Granted, דן was the בכור of the שפחות. Still, we do not find anywhere in תנ"ך that he is called a בכור of any kind. דן must exhibit some other quality that qualified him to be a leader of עם ישראל.

It seems that it was the quality of גבורה that entitled דן to the role of ראש דגל. גבורה's blessing to the שבטים reflects the quality of גבורה, when it refers to דן as a "גור אריה" (דברים, לג:כב). This is reminiscent of יעקב's blessing to יהודה, יהודה was דגל ראש because he had the strength of a lion. (בראשית, מט:ט) "גור אריה יהודה", כי, (דברי הימים א, ה:ב) דברי הימים, explains that דן, highlighting the similarity between יהודה and דן, explains that דן was appointed ראש דגל because he was also a "גור אריה". Because of their lion-like strength, יהודה and דן were placed at the front and back of the camp, in order to protect the camp. כלי יקר also explains that that while יהודה traveled first and דן traveled last, the two shared equal strength. This is what יעקב meant when he said that דן was "כאחד שבטי ישראל" (בראשית, מט:טז). He was just like יהודה. Similarly, רד"ק explains the words "כאחד שבטי ישראל" to mean that דן could reach the same heights of greatness as the other brothers, even though he was born to a שפחה.

דן was chosen to lead a division of עם ישראל because of the natural result of his being born first. אפרים received this honor because ה' chose to place him a position of leadership. יהודה earned his leadership through personal effort and excellence. The three are interconnected, as both יהודה and אפרים received part of the בכורה of ראובן. דן, on the other hand, did not receive his leadership by taking power from someone else. He fulfilled his own po-

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tential through his own labor, pulling himself from lowliness to greatness with sheer strength. Together these four composed a leadership that was able to successfully guide the nation through the desert. They were able to create an עם ישראל with physical power and spiritual prominence.

Political Theory and משפט המלך

Shuli Taubes

THE STATES תורה, בה אשר ה' אלקיך נתן לך וירשתה וישבתה, כן אמרת אשימה עלי מלך ככל הגוים אשר סביבתי. שום תשים עליך מלך אשר יבחר ה' אלקיך (דברים, יז:טו-טז). This פסוק is followed by an elaborate list of commandments regarding the king. The king must be chosen by God, cannot take too many wives, or gather too many horses, etc.

The word "ואמרת" in this פסוק raises unique problems. If appointing a king were a regular commandment, the verse would have omitted the clause, "ואמרת אשימה עלי מלך ככל הגוים אשר סביבתי." Perhaps, then, there is no commandment to appoint a king. Instead, the פסוק merely predicts what will happen in the future, and regulates how that king should behave once he is appointed. Alternatively, perhaps the פסוק should be considered a classic commandment, in which case there would be a מצוה to appoint a king. In attempting to answer this question, we will inevitably raise the question of what the תורה considers the ideal form of government.

In order to properly deal with these questions, one must first look at the פסוקים in פרק ח, שמואל א, where בני ישראל actually made the aforementioned request for a king: "עתה שימה לנו מלך לשפטנו ככל הגוים" (פסוק ה). Yet, this request is not viewed positively, either by שמואל or by God. "וירע הדבר בעיני" שמואל כאשר אמרו תנה לנו מלך לשפטנו ויתפלל שמואל אל ה'. ויאמר ה' אל שמואל שמע בקול העם לכל אשר יאמרו אליך כי לא אתך מאסו כי אתי מאסו ממלך עליהם." שמואל proceeds as God had commanded, to warn the people about the hardships and burdens of monarchy. This includes a list of actions which the king will take in the future.

ויאמר זה יהיה משפט המלך אשר ימלך עליכם את בניכם יקח ושם לו במרכבתו ובפרשיו ורצו לפני מרכבתו. ולשום לו שרי אלפים ושרי חמשים ולחרש חרישו ולקצר קצירו ולעשות כלי מלחמתו וכלי רכבו. ואת בנותיכם יקח לרקחות ולטבחות ולאפות. ואת שדותיכם ואת כרמיכם וזיתיכם הטובים יקח ונתן לעבדיו. וזרעיכם וכרמיכם יעשר ונתן לסריסיו ולעבדיו. ואת עבדיכם ואת שפחותיכם ואת בחוריכם

הטובים ואת חמוריהם יקח ועשה למלאכתו. צאנכם יעשר ואתם תהיו לו לעבדים. וועקתם ביום ההוא מלפני מלכם אשר בחרתם לכם ולא יענה ה' אתכם ביום ההוא.

Despite the warning, the people insist on the appointment of a king, and, reluctantly, God indeed commands שמואל to appoint a king over them.

If there is a מצוה to appoint a king, then why did both שמואל and ה' consider it a rebellion against ה'? Alternatively, if it is not a מצוה to appoint a king, then why did God acquiesce to the people's request?

The סנהדרין, כ ע"ב in גמרא presents a מחלוקת regarding these questions.

"רבי יהודה אומר: שלש מצות נצטוו ישראל בכניסתן לארץ: להעמיד להם מלך, ולהכרית זרעו של עמלק, ולבנות להם בית הבחירה. רבי נהוראי אומר: לא נאמרה פרשה זו אלא כנגד תרעומתן."

רבי יהודה holds that it is in fact a commandment to appoint a king, while רבי נהוראי believes that there is no מצוה to appoint a king. Rather, the תורה grants permission to appoint a king if the people insist on it.

This מחלוקת is continued in the ראשונים and אחרונים. Dealing with שמואל's negative reaction to the people's request for a king, the מפרשים can be divided into two main categories. The first group argues that the request for a king is inappropriate because a human monarch is not the תורה's ideal. Rather, the תורה reluctantly grants permission to appoint a king due to human weakness. The apparent "commandment" in דברים is simply a רשות, reluctant acquiescence, but not an imperative. Those in the second category hold that there is a מצוה to appoint a king. Yet, while the request for a monarch is good, בני ישראל made their request at the wrong time or with the wrong motivations.

אברבנאל is the most prominent of those who hold that there is no commandment to appoint a king. Serving as the finance minister of Portugal and then Spain during the 1400's, prior to the expulsion, אברבנאל was quite familiar with the function of monarchy, and he suffered personally at the hands of absolute monarchs. אברבנאל explains that שמואל was angry at the people because kingship is a superfluous, indeed dangerous, institution. He says that בני ישראל did not request a king because they felt an immediate political or military need for centralized leadership, but because they wanted to be "ככל הגוים". Indeed, they waited until after the conquest of ישראל was complete, even though it would have been most natural to ask for a king during the military conflict itself. Therefore, both God and שמואל saw

their request as representing a lack of gratitude for the fact that ה' made them militarily successful without a king.

אברבנאל understands the passage in דברים as an anticipation of future Jewish murmurings. Hence, the first פסוק reads, ה' אל הארץ אשר ה', נתן לך וירשתה וישבתה בה ואמרת אשימה עלי מלך ככל הגוים אשר סביבתי". The תורה anticipates that בני ישראל will request a king only after military success — when there is certainly no longer any benefit from a king. בני ישראל posses a sinful desire to be just like the other nations, who suffer under the harsh hand of absolute monarchs.

How then does אברבנאל deal with the next פסוק, which seems to describe an imperative to appoint a king: "שום תשים עליך מלך"? אברבנאל explains that these פסוקים are primarily concerned with limiting the power of a king, should the people mistakenly request one. The rest of the paragraph is the essence of the command. If בני ישראל want to have a king, then it shall not be one whom they shall choose. Rather it shall be one whom God chooses, and he shall not maintain for himself too much power and wealth. There is thus, according to אברבנאל, no commandment to request or appoint a king. It is merely a רשות which the תורה established to deal with human weakness, and it would be far better not to have one.

אברבנאל finds a linguistic parallel to prove his point. He brings the example of the beautiful woman captured in war. He agrees with רש"י (דברים, כא:א) that allowing one to bring home and marry such a woman is merely a concession to human weakness, and is obviously not a commandment. If one desires to have relations with the captured woman, the תורה begrudgingly allows it, but imposes rigid regulations on the relationship. The laws of kings are a similar phenomenon. Appointing a king is not a commandment, but if a king is to be appointed, his power must be restricted by guidelines.

אברבנאל develops five proofs to show that appointing a king is permissible but not obligatory. His first proof is that if appointing a king was a commandment, there would be no need for the תורה to tell us that the people must ask for one. The second proof is the argument that if there is a commandment to appoint a king, why does the תורה tell the people to request a king for the sake of being "like the other nations"? This is, after all, the exact opposite of the commandment in the תורה that the Jews should not emulate the culture of the gentiles around them! Furthermore, he continues, the opening of the passage in דברים points to the fact that it is not a commandment. The first פסוק explains, ה' אל הארץ אשר ה' נתן לך, וירשתה וישבתה בה". This is not a command, but a description of future events. The rest of the פרשה, therefore, is also not a מצוה, but a description. Fourth,

אברבנאל points out an inconsistency in the position of those who argue that monarchy is a מצוה. If there is a מצוה to appoint a king, then this passage really records two מצוות: the first to appoint a king, and the second that that king be chosen by God. Yet, nobody counts this passage as including two מצוות. Finally, אברבנאל's fifth proof comes from שמואל's response to the nation's desire for a king. After שמואל rebuked them for requesting a king, why did the people not respond that they were simply trying to fulfill a מצוה? Evidently, asserts אברבנאל, there is no such מצוה.

This analysis is consistent with אברבנאל's broader political philosophy. אברבנאל believes that the ideal human existence is a-political, like the life of אדם הראשון in Eden. Yet, after the חטא of אדם הראשון, man was forced into groups that require political governance (see אברבנאל's commentary on דור יא, הפלגה, בראשית). אברבנאל understands that the purpose of government is to prevent anarchy and corruption. He views government as an unfortunate but necessary evil. Therefore, he tries to limit the power of any given political leader.

It is not impossible, says אברבנאל, that there could be many temporary leaders (as opposed to one permanent leader) who gather together and vote on policy. Justice and peace are much more likely outcomes of limited and representative government, rather than absolute monarchy. Since the leaders hold their posts temporarily (אברבנאל suggests changing leadership once a year), they would be afraid that the next leaders will expose their corruption and punish them. He says the governing body should also be limited by a constitution. He brings the examples of the kingdoms of Venice, Florence and Geneva, which in his day were representative republics, and were therefore less corrupt societies. (These states were military and political powers at the time.)

אברבנאל further adds (דברים, יז) that even if we would say that monarchy is a good thing for other nations, this is not the case with ישראל. The monarch serves three main functions: 1) military: to save the people from their enemies and fight for land, 2) legislative: to organize conventional law and set out the laws that will govern the nation, and 3) extra-legal punishment: to maintain law and order by punishing criminals who are acquitted on a legal technicality.

These three functions are not needed by the Jewish people, he says, because the Jews have superior institutions to fulfill these functions. The Jewish people do not require a monarch to wage war, as God Himself is their commander-in-chief. Jews do not need a king as a legislator, because God and His תורה are the laws of the Jewish nation. Nor do the Jews need a monarch to administer extra-legal punishment, because this power was granted to the בית דין.

Consequently, אברבנאל prefers the system of שופטים to that of monarchs, because the שופטים are temporary, limited, and chosen by the people (due to their charismatic attraction).¹

The majority of the ראשונים disagree with אברבנאל's approach, arguing that the king is the ideal leader, and that it is a מצוה to appoint one. The major question these מפרשים must deal with is why בני ישראל were rebuked in the days of שמואל. These מפרשים can be divided into two main categories: those who think בני ישראל sinned because they requested a king at the improper time, and those who think that their motivations were improper.

רמב"ן adopts the "poor timing" approach. In his commentary on דברים 17:14, he explains that the command to come before the שופטים and request a king should have been done after ירושה וישיבה in the land. Similar to אברבנאל, רמב"ן understands the phrase "ככל הגוים אשר סביבתי" as a phrase which בני ישראל were not commanded to say. How could God command the Jews to emulate the nations around them? Hence, this expression must not be part of the command, but rather a hint, foreshadowing what will happen in the future (רמב"ן, דברים, ד:כו). That is why the תורה includes the phrase "ואמרת". The תורה predicts what the Jews will ask of שמואל in the future.

Still, רמב"ן brings a literary proof that there is a commandment to appoint a מלך. He argues that the פסוק about a king — "כי תבא אל הארץ... שום" — is parallel to the verse, "כי תבנה בית חדש ועשית מעקב לגגך, תשים עליך מלך" — (דברים, כב:ח). This פסוק is most certainly a מצוה, and a person is obligated to build a fence on his roof. So too, בני ישראל must appoint a king.

Why then were בני ישראל punished in the days of שמואל? רמב"ן, in his commentary on שמות 17:9, states that the request itself was not the sin. Rather, it was the timing. רמב"ן emphasizes the word "לשפטנו" in the people's request. שמואל was still the leader, who had served as נביא and שופט since his youth. The people should not have requested a replacement for שמואל, who was God's messenger to the people as well as their political leader.

It is interesting to note that ספר שופטים emphasizes אין מלך "בימים ההם" (שופטים, יז:ו, כא:כה) בישראל איש הישר בעיניו יעשה. Indeed, this refrain constitutes the very last פסוק of the ספר. This statement sums up the continual cycles in which the Jews sinned, were punished by God, were redeemed by a שופט, only to return again to sin. Perhaps, according to רמב"ן, the proper time to request a king would have been in the down point of that cycle, when there was no leader and the Jews were sinning.

It seems, then, that רמב"ן believes that monarchy is the ideal form of government for the Jews, and that the role of the king is to judge the people and wage their wars.

Like רמב"ן, Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch also believes that the failure of בני ישראל lay in the timing. When the people demanded a king, they said

(שמואל א, ח:כ) "ככל הגוים ושפטנו מלכנו ויצא לפנינו ונלחם את מלחמתנו" Rav Hirsch explains that the word לשפטינו, to judge us, does not refer to internal issues of law and justice, but to foreign and military policy. The proper purpose of the king is not to conquer and capture the land. The king is not an "external" leader. Yet, this is what the Jewish people wanted their king to do. Rav Hirsch explains that "the fault lay in making the election before the proper time. They demanded a king in a time when what was demanded was first to secure establishing the possession of the land and accordingly were demanding it too early in their imagined material interest" (דברים, יז:יד).

The monarchy mandated in דברים, says Rav Hirsch, was only supposed to come about after the land was conquered and settled, as it says י"ז (דברים, יז:יד) תבא אל הארץ אשר ה' אלקיך נתן לך וירשתה וישבת בה ואמרת...". Conquest of the land was dependent on the people's righteousness, and not on politics and military might, as משה stresses throughout the תורה. The requirement of a king is for one purpose only: "to make the nation of Israel into the faithful and dutiful people of God's תורה."

Rav Hirsch also responds to the question that אברבנאל had raised: how could the תורה demand for the people to ask for a king to be אשר "ככל הגוים אשר"? He answers that just as all other nations have a "head of state" who unites all their national forces under one national goal, so too the Jews require a leader to focus all of their energies on a single goal. However, for the nations of the world, the highest goal is the maintenance of great strength and power, while for the Jews the goal is fulfilling God's will in all areas of personal and communal life. This "consists only in the most possible complete realization internally of God's תורה." The Jewish people were not ready for this goal until after they had established themselves by conquering and settling the land. "Only when the whole land had been conquered and divided up and everyone would henceforth see himself on his own acres giving himself up to peaceful, carrying out the lofty mission of a Jewish life, then, similarly to the symbolic unifying point in the מקדש, a concrete bearer of this national unity was to be established in a king."

מנוה and רמב"ן, like רמב"ן and Rav Hirsch, maintain that there is a מנוה to appoint a king. Yet, they focus not on the bad timing at the time of שמואל, but on the people's improper motivation. רמב"ן (פרק א, הלכות מלכים) says that the reason that שמואל was angry was that the people were not asking for a king to fulfill the Divine commandment, but because they were angry at שמואל. שמואל ties this anger at שמואל with an anger at God Himself, quoting the פסוק which says this explicitly: כי לא אתך מאסו כי אתי. "מאסו". Perhaps רמב"ן means that they were upset at שמואל because they really opposed the kind of political structure which God demanded (see on מלכים for a similar suggestion). The people wanted an ordi-

nary ruler who uses conventional methods, and wanted a greater separation of religious issues from material issues than the תורה, as understood by רמב"ם, demands.

In contrast to the people's request, רמב"ם argues that תורה requires a great deal of integration between religion and politics. The reign of the "בימים ההם אין מלך שופטים", as mentioned above, is summed up by the phrase "בימים ההם אין מלך שופטים". It was a time of anarchy and civic unrest. This situation, according to רמב"ם, does not allow the material and political comfort necessary to achieve religious perfection. A king, representing centralized authority, must be established. The תורה, according to רמב"ם (מורה נבוכים), has two overarching goals: 1) תיקון הנפש (2) תיקון הגוף. תיקון הגוף involves teaching people speculative truth, to the extent that they are capable of understanding it. תיקון הגוף involves a well-ordered and stable political community. While תיקון הנפש is more important, תיקון הגוף must naturally take place first. Individuals and communities can only achieve religious-intellectual success after they have achieved social, economic, and political success. The king helps to achieve both of these goals by enforcing תורה law.

ר"ן explains that the sin of בני ישראל was that they requested a king to perform the wrong duties, namely those jobs that the תורה had assigned to the שופטים (דרשות הר"ן, דרשה יא). He explains that the תורה created two parallel systems of governance for the Jewish people. The first is זדק אמתית — the ideal halachic civil law — which is implemented by the שופטים. But, ר"ן says, this system does not always result in a stable political order. Hence, the תורה also insisted on a king, who would have the right and obligation to circumvent the letter of the הלכה, and employ an extra-halakhic legal system that is not as ideal, but is more practical, than the הלכה. The הלכה of the שופטים is concerned with individual rights. No individual is ever mistreated or convicted falsely by the strict standards of halachic judicial procedure. But, the הלכה does not always adequately account for the social and political consequences of its laws. The king steps in to make sure that society runs in a stable and responsible way.

Thus, had the people at the time of שמואל requested a king in order to perform this particular function, it would have been a positive thing. בני ישראל, however, specifically said that they wanted a king "לשופטנו" — to take over the function of the שופט and turn the system into a single-branched monarchy.

The differences between the approaches of רמב"ם and ר"ן are of utmost importance. While ר"ן thinks that two separate systems are created by the תורה to run parallel to one another, רמב"ם believes that all of Jewish government is contained in one system. הלכה already includes, according to רמב"ם, the pragmatic flexibility that enables it to govern society properly. Yet both

agree that the reason that ה' was angry with ישראל בני is that they wanted to replace the institutions of government laid out by God with a human constitution. They tried to redistribute jobs and redefine roles.

נצי"ב has a completely unique approach to this entire topic, which fits neither into the pro-monarchy or anti-monarchy camps. In many ways, נצי"ב's approach is particularly appealing to many of us who were raised in the beneficent bosom of a democratic society, and who are afraid of the potential abuses of a monarchy. While נצי"ב views the פסוקים in דברים רשות (similar to אברבנאל), he does not assume that kingship is inherently a negative thing. He compares the פסוקים about kings in דברים to similar language about eating meat. "כי ירחיב ה' אלקיך את גבולך כאשר דבר לך ואמרת אכלה בשר כי" (דברים, יב:). This פסוק, like the parallel פסוק about kings, is followed by a list of laws which regulate the slaughter and consumption of meat. In this case, the word "ואמרת" is clearly not an imperative. Rather, it means "If you shall say." You may eat, provided that you follow certain restrictions. In the same way, he interprets the phrase "ואמרת" in our פסוק to mean that you may appoint a king, under certain conditions, provided that the king fulfills certain guidelines.

נצי"ב argues that the תורה must leave out an absolute imperative to appoint a king, because the תורה can't, by the very nature of things, describe the objectively ideal political structure (יציב). Different societies at different times have different political needs. For some societies, monarchy may be intolerable; for others it may be indispensable. The תורה does not want to impose a political theory on any group. By definition, decisions about the nature of political authority are always decisions of פקוח נפש, which override any other מצוות. Hence, if there would have been a מצוה to appoint a king, that מצוה would only be mandatory under those conditions when monarchy would be imperative anyway, because it would lead to good government, thereby saving lives. Under circumstances where a king would not lead to good government, considerations of פקוח נפש would override the מצוה. The מצוה would become redundant. The consequences of this argument are far reaching indeed. The תורה wants Jews to govern themselves in whatever way will work effectively in a given place and a given time. The תורה does not, and could not, set out an *a priori* constitution.

The request from שמואל for a king would have been fine had ישראל בני honestly thought that this would be the best leadership for them at that time. Their goals in appointing a king, however, were inappropriate. נצי"ב points out that the same words — "ככל הגוים אשר סביבתי" — describe both the legitimate request for a king in דברים and the sinful request for a king in שמואל. He explains that it is legitimate to request a king in order to centralize leadership, when the people agree that this will be most effective. How-

ever, it is not permitted to appoint a king who will override the משפטים of the תורה and replace them with gentile laws. Similarly, it is not permissible to appoint a king who will feel free, as gentile kings do, to declare war without God's consent (which is provided by a נביא or a שופט).

I would like to offer another interpretation of the פסוקים in שמואל, extending the explanation of נע"ב in directions suggested in a שיעור by Mrs. Mali Brofsky. In the פרק immediately preceding בני ישראל's request for a king, the נביא records that שמואל led בני ישראל to a religious revival. בני ישראל were turning towards ה'. Yet, the beginning of the next פרק indicates that שמואל was old, and that his sons were not following in his ways (חא-ג). בני ישראל were caught in a terrible dilemma. Once שמואל would die they would be cast into the downward spiral of sin and punishment that characterized the period of the שופטים. The people decided that they needed stability and continuity, and therefore they wanted a permanent and dynastic king. Yet, they also understood that this would not be foolproof, because there was still no guarantee that the son of a righteous king would be equally righteous, just as שמואל's children were sinful. Hence, בני ישראל wanted a king "לשפטנו ככל הגוים". They wanted a king who would govern based on his own laws, rather than based on God's laws. בני ישראל wanted to abide by the commandments of a מלך מלכי המלכים and not מלך בשר ודם. They understood that it is much harder to live up to God's standards than it is to live up to human standards. בני ישראל did not want to win or lose a war based on whether or not they were following ה' and His laws. They wanted, like all other nations, to win or lose a war based on their king's military strength and prowess, without paying proper attention to God's demands for His chosen people.

¹ One problem with אברבנאל's theory is that it de-emphasizes the tragic history of the שופטים, in which the people constantly reverted to idolatry, and were then attacked by military enemies. As the final פסוק in ספר שופטים indicates, בימים ההם אין מלך בישראל, איש הישר בעיניו יעשה".

מיכל בת שאול

Tanya Zauderer

מיכל WAS THE younger daughter of שאול. The series of stories in her life reveals her as a bold and self-confident woman. Treated by others as a political pawn, she attempted to take her fate into her own hands, which led both to her successes and her failures.

A brief overview of the events in which she took part reveals a great deal about her personality. The first reference to מיכל in נ"ך indicates that she loved דוד, who was hated by her father, שאול. שאול saw this as an opportunity to get rid of דוד, so he offered מיכל to דוד in exchange for one hundred foreskins of פלישתים, thinking that דוד would be killed in the process of acquiring them. דוד, though, brought back two hundred foreskins, and שאול gave מיכל to דוד as a wife. Over time, שאול came to hate דוד even more. He ordered guards to דוד's house at night, so that דוד could be killed in the morning. מיכל let דוד out of the window, placed a dummy in his bed, and told שאול's guards that he was sick. When שאול discovered the deception, מיכל said that דוד threatened to kill her if she did not help him escape. Later, שאול took מיכל from דוד, and gave her to פלטי בן ליש as a wife, although she was still wed to דוד. דוד eventually got her back as part of a peace treaty with איש בשת בן שאול.

מיכל appears next when דוד brings the ארון ה' back to דוד. Through the window, מיכל saw דוד dancing with the ארון ה', and she hated him in her heart. She rebuked דוד for dancing wildly with the common people in a manner she felt unbecoming to a king. דוד rebuked her, saying that he was dancing before ה'. As a punishment, מיכל had no children until the day she died.

Throughout these events, her strength of character stands out. Despite the fact that she was constantly manipulated by others, she took action and was not afraid to stand up for what she believed in. Unfortunately, her strong opinions and bold actions led to her sin and her childlessness. מיכל never hesitated to state her opinion. She was bold in the face of kings, standing up to her father and דוד. She reprimanded שאול for hating דוד, and

stood up to him by helping דוד escape. She provided an unconvincing alibi when דוד escaped, as if to emphasize that she was not concerned with lying to her father. She stood up to דוד when he brought the ארון to ירושלים, rebuking him for acting immodestly. Yet, in this incident, for the first time מיכל was punished for standing up to someone.

מיכל's strength of character is even more surprising, given that she was constantly used as a political pawn, both by her father and דוד. Her father thought that offering מיכל to דוד would be a good way of getting rid of him. Furthermore, there is evidence that דוד did not marry מיכל because he loved her, but rather because she was שאול. The פסוקים indicate twice that מיכל loved דוד (כח, יח:א, יח:ב). However, there is no parallel statement that דוד loved מיכל, while דוד's love for יהונתן, in contrast, is explicit (א, יח:א). Furthermore, דוד made no attempt to bring מיכל back from פלטי, at least until it fit into his broader political concerns and the treaty he negotiated (שמואל ב, ג:ד). It seems that מיכל and יהונתן's intense love for דוד was part of God's cure for שאול's equally intense hatred for דוד. After all, ה' always makes the cure before the misfortune.

In various places, חז"ל also emphasize מיכל's independent personality, placing particular emphasis on her spiritual boldness. According to the גמרא (עירובין, נו ע"א), תפילין wore מיכל, תפילין wore מיכל. The חכמים did not protest because they knew that she was on a high spiritual level. מיכל rose the ladder of awe and fear of God, until she felt a need to wear תפילין. חז"ל said that whenever people saw מיכל, their whole bodies would tremble in fear (טו ע"ב). מיכל was very charismatic and had the strength to rule over people, and used this strength to help establish בית דוד. According to מדרש שוחר טוב (נז:ג-ד), מיכל was called בית דוד, meaning calf, because she loved דוד more than she loved her father, שאול. A calf does not want a yoke around its neck, so too מיכל didn't want the yoke of her father, preferring to help דוד.

What, then, went wrong? What led to מיכל's sin and downfall? At the beginning מיכל was drawn to דוד's spirituality, but since she was separated from him for so long, she never had the opportunity to grow with him. They remained distant. When מיכל saw דוד dancing with the ארון, she saw only what appeared in front of her, and not the inner spiritual act. She never broke entirely free of her father's political calculations and manipulations. She cared about outer appearances and how others would view דוד.

מיכל say that דוד's clothing and behavior did not look ענוה. In שמואל ב, their sleeves covered half the palm of the hand, and when דוד was dancing his palms were uncovered. In her father's house, עניעות was very important, and they never showed a heel or thumb. Therefore, מיכל thought that דוד's clothing was too revealing. (ד:כ). במדבר רבה, ב:ד, (ירושלמי סנהדרין, ב:ד, במדבר רבה, ד:כ). She did not see that דוד was not like שאול. דוד was dancing before ה', and not

for the benefit of other people. דוד, like מיכל, was equally unafraid to stand up for what he believed in, and he criticized מיכל. מיכל was a great person who was expected not to sin. When she did sin, her punishment was severe, and she was doomed to future childlessness. There is an aspect of מידה כנגד מידה in this punishment. מיכל represented the link that could have led to unity between דוד and שאול. Her sin, her distance from דוד, prevented the birth of the child that might have served as a more permanent link between the two בתי מלוכה.

מלכת אסתר's successes and failures can be compared to those of מיכל. They both took initiative to help others. Yet, where מיכל focused on the individuals around her, אסתר was more concerned with all of ישראל. עם ישראל, like מיכל, came from בית שאול, and acquired from there her צניעות. אסתר used her bold initiative to save the Jewish people, just as מיכל's initiative saved דוד. Like מיכל, אסתר was used as a political pawn. Where שאול gave מיכל to דוד for his own personal needs, אסתר told אסתר to go to מלך אחשוורוש for the good of the Jewish people. אסתר also stood up for herself. She refused all the perfumes and fancy trimmings offered to the other young women, for she felt these were inappropriate to her modest personality. Initially, she boldly refused מרדכי's request to go to the king, because she thought she would be killed. Yet, once she realized what was at stake, she equally boldly defied אסתר's prohibition against coming to the king without being asked. אסתר recognized the role of ה' in everything she did, and used what she had to serve Him. She arranged a fast before going before the king for precisely that reason. She knew that ה', not man, controls events. She did not worry what others would think of her, yet was cautious in dealing with the king so as not to put herself and the Jewish people in danger. Perhaps this explains אסתר's success and מיכל's downfall. Where אסתר placed God and the good of the Jewish people in the forefront of her mind, מיכל's concerns were often more personal and petty. מיכל and אסתר are similar in many aspects. Yet, the strong-headedness of בית שאול lead to מיכל's failure, whereas אסתר used similar characteristics to bring herself up and save the Jewish people.

עץ הדעת ועץ החיים

Ora Bayewitz

”בראשית, א:א). In a world focused on man, in a Bible dedicated to the development of humanity, it is easy to forget that “in the beginning” man did not exist. It was only later that, “ויברא אלקים את האדם בעלם אלקים ברא אתו זכר ונקבה ברא אתם,” Through God’s instruction and decree, man was placed at the forefront of the ecosystem.

ויברך אתם אלקים ויאמר להם אלקים פרו ורבו ומלאו את הארץ וכבשה ורדו
בדגת הים ובעוף השמים ובכל חיה הרמשת על הארץ. ויאמר אלקים הנה נתתי
לכם את כל עשב זרע זרע אשר על פני כל הארץ ואת כל העץ אשר בו פרי עץ
זרע זרע לכם יהיה לאכלה. (א:כח-כט)

Man was provided with a variety of tastes, smells, and sights, in גן עדן. God implanted in this world the knowledge of continued life and that of good and evil. (ב:ט) “ועץ החיים בתוך הגן ועץ הדעת טוב ורע.” Yet, to maintain this world, and his dominion over it, man needed to maintain a connection with God, the ultimate Creator and Ruler. Man’s relationship with God was solidified, and restrictions were placed on man in paradise. “ומעץ הדעת טוב. (ב:יז) ורע לא תאכל ממנו כי ביום אכלך ממנו מות תמות” In this paper, I hope to contrast the themes of “עץ הדעת” and “עץ החיים”, focusing on what each tree represents, according to a number of different מפרשים.

When we read the first two chapters of בראשית and attempt to understand man’s existence prior to consuming from the “עץ הדעת”, basic questions ring clear. Why was the “עץ הדעת” prohibited from consumption, while the “עץ החיים” had no such prohibition until man’s sin (ג:כב)? What is the connection between the “עץ הדעת” and the “עץ החיים”? In order to address these fundamental questions, proper definitions of “good,” “evil,” and “life,” must be established, and two further questions must be answered: What change occurred in man upon eating from the “עץ הדעת”, and what was man’s relationship with the “עץ הדעת”?

Nechama Leibowitz, in her essay, "Tree of Knowledge," suggests an approach to these issues.¹ She views these unique topics as requiring the distinctive approach of allegory. "Some of our commentators and authorities reject the allegorizing of the Biblical narrative as dangerous, others enthusiastically embrace this approach and there are those who take the middle way. But even those who tend to reject it or reduce their employment of it to the minimum admit that it is the allegorical, hidden meaning of the story of the Garden of Eden and the tree of knowledge that we must seek." It is perhaps for this reason, the need to employ allegory, that רש"י, who was not allegorically oriented, refrains from addressing these topics.

In order to understand the story, to become enlightened with deeper meanings, a philosophical and allegorical approach is necessary. אברבנאל and עקדת יצחק, philosophical commentators of the 1400s, deal with these questions. Yet, in order to properly understand their approaches, we must also examine the classic commentators רמב"ן and אבן עזרא.

In his attempt to explain the power of the "עץ הדעת", אבן עזרא identifies the immediate effect of the tree upon man. ויתפקחנה עיני שניהם וידעו כי "עץ הדעת" (ג:א) represents sexual awakening. Adam's first act, after covering his nakedness, was a move to experience a sexual relationship with חוה. ויהאדם ידע את חוה אשתו ותר ותרלד את. חוה. By eating from the "עץ הדעת", man became sexually sensitive. He experienced sexual desires and became ashamed of his nakedness, recognizing its potential to fulfill these temptations. אבן עזרא explains the "עץ החיים" as a tree that, through its ingestion, allows man to live a longer, but not endless, existence. Yet, once אדם had eaten from the "עץ הדעת", he was no longer entitled to live a longer existence in Eden, and the "עץ החיים" also became prohibited.

Without mentioning his name, the רמב"ן cites אבן עזרא's view. He later provides his own explanation. As a newly created being, man operated according to his nature. Much as a flower, a bird, or sheep proceed without questioning their respective roles, man simply existed. Adam needed to change his location, so he walked. Adam's feet became weak, so he slowed his body to a stop, and sat down on a nearby rock. Adam's body required sustenance, so he consumed, unselfconsciously eating whatever provided the necessary nutrients to survive. Adam was required to procreate, so he fulfilled the commandment, using the proper organs. His actions and motives were devoid of emotion and impulse, lacking intense love or venomous hatred.

Eating from the tree effected a change in man's desires; he now had the ability to form opinions and determine that which he desired as "good", and that which he rejected as "bad." Adam's eyes were opened; he realized his nakedness, and he was ashamed. He understood that his organs, sexual

or otherwise, could be used as his desires dictated. Now, when he needed to change location, he stopped and questioned, "Am I going to enjoy this new place or will I have a better time staying here?" When his body grew tired, after a long and difficult day he thought, "Perhaps I will stay up late, enjoying the sweet fragrances of the field." After consuming vast quantities of delicacies and savory foods, man continued to eat because his palate desired additional tastes.

After studying אבן עזרא and אברבנאל, רמב"ן accepts אבן עזרא's approach, viewing the "עץ הדעת" as a tree that implanted sexual desires within man. In this case, "knowledge" refers to sexual relations, as the term often does in תנ"ך. אברבנאל vehemently rejects רמב"ן's reading — that man was void of all desire and simply behaved according to nature, without exercising desire and its corollary, choice. This explanation, claims אברבנאל, strips man of his complex nature — part spiritual and part physical. It leaves man as a wholly spiritual being, much as an angel, without control over his physical capacities. If this were the case, אברבנאל questions, why would God impart the prohibition of eating from the "עץ הדעת" to a being who lacks the facilities to comply with this commandment, to a being who merely behaves in accordance with his nature?

According to אברבנאל, man, in fact, did have the ability to choose, to desire, to become fulfilled, in his garden of paradise. The trees in the garden were described as "עץ נחמד למראה וטוב למאכל" (ב:ט). Adam was given the gift of food, luscious and fulfilling, without limit or effort. He was given a dwelling of intense beauty, to bask unrestrained in its splendor. And Adam also had an "עץ החיים" in the midst of the garden. This tree, which Adam could eat from, provided medicine for any possible disease or discomfort that he might encounter.

In short, Adam had all of his physical and spiritual needs provided for effortlessly in the Garden. Adam's world was complete. He knew desire and felt fulfilled. Adam had no reason to look beyond Eden because he lived in perfection, in paradise. This existence facilitated a direct relationship with God and His חסד. Each moment that God allowed man to breathe, eat, and enjoy his perfect world, was a direct gift, complete חסד. The placement of the "עץ החיים" in the middle of the garden was representative of this idea. Had Adam chosen to eat from the "עץ החיים" rather than the "עץ הדעת", he would not have conquered death. The "עץ החיים" provided continual solutions, such as medication to ailment, but did not remove ailment from the world. This perfect world was a world in which man was constantly living the "עץ החיים" in his constant interaction with God's glory and kindness.

In this world, God placed limitations, but not complete prohibition. Adam was free to use the "עץ הדעת" in permitted venues. He could enjoy its

exquisite beauty, could touch its pleasant texture. He was even permitted to feel its fruits, but he could not eat from the tree. So too, man's sexual relationship with woman was condoned and even encouraged, but had its share of limitations. Adam had the ability to enjoy a redeemed sexual relationship with חוה, through behaving in accordance with his spiritual nature in a world in which material concerns were effortlessly provided, so that man would be free to focus on spiritual issues. In this world, there existed restriction to prevent man from becoming subsumed in the material, physical pleasure which went beyond man's basic needs. By ingesting the fruit, Adam symbolically fell and became conquered by his physical desires. He desired to "know" woman in an unredeemed way, in order to fulfill his animalistic desires. The relationship became unredeemed and obscene. God created such a tree, with the potential for good if used in appropriate ways (viewing and feeling) and the potential for bad (eating). The tree's potential was part and parcel of man's exercise of free choice: man could choose to continue the spiritually charged relationship, experiencing God's חסד, or choose to reject the "עץ החיים" and become submerged in his animalistic and material nature.

While אברבנאל was reading the "עץ הדעת" as relaying a message against material indulgence, עקדת יצחק, also a Spanish philosopher, understood the famous story in a different vein, focusing on man's relationship with knowledge. עקדת יצחק illustrates man's possible interaction with knowledge, represented by the tree, in three possible ways: one of complete foolishness, one that is correct and beneficial, or one that is confused and dangerous. To have a relationship of complete foolishness means to refrain from touching the tree. Such a relationship is barbaric — it places man in the category of the animals, who have no ability to think, to learn, to interact. Conversely, a proper relationship with knowledge involves touching it, setting up camp near it, and enjoying its sweet fragrance. This is a relationship to the tree that is conducive to true and proper knowledge. By taking these steps, man places himself in a position to experience and learn the tree's wisdom, to ultimately learn the lesson of "good" and "bad" in the proper fashion. Yet, man may fail to recognize the beautiful result of appropriately experiencing the tree: the heights in wisdom he can achieve through its ambiance, texture, and scent. He may attempt an alternative mechanism to achieve this wisdom: consumption. This man does not understand the true meaning behind the "עץ הדעת" — the fact that he has every tool to understand "good" and "bad." His only limitation is against over-indulgence, swallowing and digesting the fruit. Such a relationship places man in the camp of absolute dependence on the tree for instant gratification of his intellectual curiosity, which is a dangerous approach.

עקדת ינחק concretizes the danger through a parable. A sick individual goes to a doctor for treatment. To cure the ailment, the doctor presents the patient with a drugged apple, whose function is to be smelled. The doctor warns the patient against eating the apple, for fear of severe danger. In this parable, there exists a sharp distinction between properly using the fragrant apple, resulting in life, or improperly using the apple, resulting in extreme danger. The patient who eats the apple clearly does not understand the illness or its remedy. He hears that the apple is “good” and therefore uses it in the most intense way, digestion, in the hope that it will effect the most extreme positive change. He does not wish to endure the gradual process of sniffing the apple, with the distant endpoint of cure. Such behavior is reminiscent, as עקדת ינחק explains, of אכילה גסה, over-indulgent eating. This individual enjoys eating, but does not understand its limit. Eating is necessary; it is “good.” The glutton therefore consumes and consumes without thought. The over-indulgent eater does not appreciate that a redeemed life is one with restraint. He becomes dependent on that continual process of eating.

Eating from the “עץ הדעת” expressed a desire to retreat into an intellectual life free of effort. Man did not want to attempt the difficult and gradual process of learning about God and His goodness. He refused to accept limits on what and how he could know. Adam did not want to understand God through the mechanisms of the tree that would lead to this end. Rather, Adam wanted to retreat into the simplicity of what seemed to him as “good.” He wanted simple and quick answers to objective “good” and “bad.” So he over-indulged and ate the fruit, making the choice to search for answers to the questions about God’s world in ways that God did not intend.

Yet, עקדת ינחק asserts that even after אדם’s sin the possibility still exists to recreate this spiritual bond with God, to have a personal Eden based on life. To achieve this “עץ החיים” existence, one must learn how to properly approach the other “trees”, or knowledge, in the world. The “trees,” which are “pleasant to see,” represent knowledge of nature. The “trees” which are “good to eat,” express the natural enjoyment that man gets from working the land to produce food, or his pleasure in creating works of the hand. If Adam is able to recognize that personal fulfillment and beauty in nature both come from the חסד of God, than he can enter into a relationship with God based on חסד — the special divine providence.

To explain the restriction of eating from “עץ הדעת” ינחק continues his focus on knowledge. The tree exhibits the potential for “good” use of knowledge and “bad” use of knowledge. The “עץ הדעת” represents in-depth philosophical knowledge, with all of its dangers. To use such knowledge

properly, one must use it to push away those who deny God as Creator, those who materialize God's existence, and those who say there is more than one God. Improper use of philosophical knowledge is using such analysis to deny God's existence, divine providence, prophecy, or the giving of the Torah. One must approach the acquisition of knowledge with discretion. It must be used appropriately: to touch it, smell it, taste it. But one must not become engrossed in it, thinking that knowledge is everything.

Four hundred years after אברבנאל and עקדת יצחק argued over the philosophical symbolism of the "עץ הדעת", Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch explained the significance of the tree's name, "knowledge of good and bad." This name was given to indicate the result of eating from the tree, "man would decide how he wished to recognize what was good or bad."

According to Rav Hirsch, the very commandment not to eat the tree provides man a window into the knowledge of "good" and "bad." In order to understand the meaning of "good" and "bad," one must, "call that good, which God stamps as being good, and bad, which He declares as such." By complying with this condition, Rav Hirsch explains, the earth will "be able to form a paradise for us." The existence of the "עץ הדעת" taught the lesson of how to lead a proper life in the garden. The definition of "good" and "bad" are not subjective, at the whims of man's desires. "The tree ... [which] was endowed with every attraction for taste, for the imagination, sight, and reasoning judgment, all one's senses declared it "good," that it should be eaten, and yet God had forbidden it to be eaten, was accordingly designed 'bad' for Man." To lead an appropriate lifestyle in Eden, to have continued interactions with God, man must accept God's objective definitions of "good" and "bad."

Man could not take a superficial approach to "goodness", an approach which leaves his desires unredeemed. Whether these desires take the form of materialism or intellectual pursuit, Adam must understand that "goodness" involves limitations and restrictions. Whether the allegory is understood in אברבנאל's perspective or in that of עקדת יצחק, God is teaching this lesson by placing man into a situation of abundant gifts, connected with limitations, in order to achieve God's level of "goodness" in His world of paradise.

¹ Nehama Leibowitz, "Tree of Knowledge," *Studies in Bereshit (Genesis)*, Jerusalem, 1972, pp. 17–27.

The Eternal Leaders: A Comparison of the Personalities of דוד and אליהו

Leora Cohn

THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF HISTORY, the Jewish people have continually dreamed of משיח when once again בני ישראל will be lead by דוד המלך and the descendants of אליהו הנביא. These two leaders have surprisingly different personalities. Both דוד and אליהו were motivated by a deep interest in the physical and spiritual welfare of ישראל. Yet, their styles of leadership were diametrically opposed. דוד and אליהו each served a unique role, which was indispensable at the time, and which are both necessary components of משיח.

The initial appearances of דוד and אליהו

Our first introduction to אליהו הנביא reads: וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֵיָּהוּ הַתְּשֻׁבִי מִתְּשֻׁבֵי גִלְעָד אֶל אַחֲבָב חִי הִ' אֱלֹקֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר עֲמַדְתִּי לִפְנֵיו אִם יִהְיֶה הַשָּׁנִים הָאֵלֶּה טַל וּמָטָר כִּי אִם לֹפִי דְּבָרִי (מלכים א, יז:א). אליהו appeared suddenly. We are told nothing about his family, or past history. After such a concise introduction, אליהו immediately became active, instituting a drought in the land. The only thing we know of his identity is his name: אליהו, which means, ה' is my God. This was the essence of אליהו. Everything that אליהו did was caused by his intense connection to and identification with ה'.

Contrasting אליהו's first appearance to that of דוד emphasizes how little we are told concerning אליהו. דוד is first introduced in טז א, שְׁמוּאֵל, when שְׁמוּאֵל goes to בית ישי to anoint a new king instead of שְׁמוּאֵל הנביא. Before we are even introduced to דוד, we hear about his father, his place of residence (בית לחם), and his seven older brothers (among whom שְׁמוּאֵל assumed was the משיח). Finally דוד is introduced, described as "הַקָּטָן וְהַנָּעִם בְּצֶאֱן" (שְׁמוּאֵל א, טז:א). דוד is described in a natural setting, which enables us to identify with him and his position in the family. Additionally, before דוד is revealed as the משיח, the נביא describes his physical appearance as יָפֶה עֵינָיו וְטוֹב (אדם א, טז:א).

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These personal details of דוד's life before he became a מלך grant us a more complete picture of דוד's personality. We are able to appreciate his existence as an individual, and not simply as מלך ישראל. Indeed the people of his time were also able to identify with דוד's personality. Even after דוד received "רוח ה'" (שמואל א, טז:יג), the people were able to appreciate his entire personality, both the spiritual and physical. As "אחד מהנערים" describes דוד: "דוד ואיש מלחמה ונבון דבר ואיש תאר וה' דוד" (שמואל א, טז:יח). The people recognized his spiritual nature. Yet, they also realized that he was one of the people. They were able to relate to him as a person — as a son, as a member of the community of בית לחם, as a warrior, as a נבון, and an איש תאר.

As דוד's position in the nation became more glorious, he still maintained a very real and human persona. דוד's rise to מלוכה was gradual. Unlike אליהו, who was already in a position of power at his first appearance, דוד worked to become established as a מלך ישראל. There are numerous פרקים recounting the struggle between שאול and דוד, as דוד slowly took over the מלוכה. These struggles provided an opportunity for דוד to slowly mature into the quintessential מלך ישראל.

In פרק י"ז, דוד proved his strength by killing גלית. While דוד's victory against גלית was obviously a נס, still it is common and normal that a king gains power by saving his people from an enemy. בני ישראל were naturally drawn to the leader who had saved them from גלית.

In פרק י"ח an additional aspect of דוד's character is revealed. The פסוק "ונפש יהונתן נקשרה בנפש דוד: יהונתן ודוד" (שמואל א, יח:א) and "ויאהבהו יהונתן כנפשו" (שמואל א, יח:א) records the human friendship of דוד. Friendship is a deep emotional bond that every human being feels. Any reader of תנ"ך can relate to the bond which דוד experienced.

Not only does a reader of תנ"ך feel a personal connection to דוד, but the people themselves came to relate to דוד on a personal level. "וכל ישראל" (שמואל א, יח:טז) gained the love and loyalty of the people by being one of them. דוד was connected with the people as he gradually established his מלוכה. He fought together with the people against the פלשתים, thereby gaining their loyalty and respect. דוד himself felt like one of the nation when he said "אבי בישראל" (שמואל א, יח:יח). דוד did not deem himself worthy of marrying שאול's daughter, considering himself like anyone else in ישראל.

After דוד established himself as a מלך, he remained a very real and approachable figure. In particular, his sins make it easier for us to identify with him. We, like דוד, fall and sin, yet we can take strength from the courage of דוד as he overcame obstacles and performed תשובה של אמת. We can

identify with the fall of דוד when he sinned with שבע בבת; feel his sorrow when אבשלום, his own son, rebelled against him; connect to the emotions he expressed in ספר תהילים.

In contrast to the approachable personality of דוד, אלהיו was aloof. אלהיו simply appeared. We know nothing about any relationship he might have to ישראל, as even his שבע was not mentioned. He was certainly not one of the people. On the contrary; he established himself as a dominating force above them. אלהיו's entire personality was characterized by his 'דברי לה' קנאות. אלהיו himself even admitted to his distance from the people when he declared, (מלכים א, יח:כב) "ויאמר אלהיו אל העם אני נותרתי נביא לה' לבדי", אלהיו was a singular defender of ה', performing decisive actions to prove ה's presence.

אלהיו of מידה: The קנאות

אלהיו's sudden appearance in יז is related to his מלכים א, יז appearance was precipitated by an unparalleled level of חטא in ישראל. The leaders at that time were אחאב and his wicked queen, איזבל. The נביא describes their sins as follows: "ויוסף אחאב לעשות להכעיס את ה' אלקי ישראל מכל מלכי ישראל" (מלכים א, טז:לג) אשר היו לפניו "להכעיס אחאב". אלהיו's חטאים were motivated by a desire to "The end of פרק טז describes the rampant עבודה זרה which infested all of ישראל. אלהיו saw how כלל ישראל was disgracing ה' and, as a קנאי לה', he was compelled to act.

The גמרא elaborates on אלהיו's desire to defend ה'. The גמרא links the last חטא described in פרק טז to אלהיו's appearance in יז. The last פרק describes the sinful rebuilding of the city of יריחו. "בנימו בנה חילא. יריחו" בית האלי את יריחה באבירים בכרו יסדה ובשגיב צעירו העיב דלתיה כדבר ה' אשר דבר ביד "The גמרא (סנהדרין, קיג ע"א) inserts a conversation between this act and אלהיו's sudden appearance in פרק יז, when אלהיו brought a drought. The גמרא says:

א"ל אלהיו אין אמר ליה השתא לווטתא דמשה לא קא מקיימא דכתיב "וסרתם ועבדתם וגו'" וכתוב "וחרה אף ה' בכם ועצר את השמים וגו'" והוא גברא אוקים ליה עבודת כוכבים על כל תלם ותלם ולא שביק ליה מיטרא דמיזל מיסגד ליה לווטתא דיהושע תלמידיה מקיימא מיד "ויאמר אלהיו התשבי מתושבי גלעד חי ה' אלקי ישראל אם יהיה טל ומטר וגו'" בעי רחמי והבו ליה אקלידא דמטרא וקם ואזל

This גמרא notes the significance of the fulfillment of the curse of יהושע "ארור האיש לפני ה' אשר יקום ובנה את העיר יהושע. בנין יריחו" with regard to אלהיו. This exact לשון is used (יהושע, ו:כו) הזאת את יריחו בבכרו ייסדנה ובצעירו יניב דלתיה

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to describe the punishment of חיאל, who had rebuilt the city at the time of אליהו. After observing that the curse of יהושע was fulfilled, אליהו insisted that the curse of משה in the תורה also be fulfilled. He insisted that it would be proper if there would also be an עזירת גשמים as punishment for the עבודה זרה of בני ישראל. Immediately, אליהו appeared and swore, "אם יהיה טל ומטר..." (מלכים א', יז:א). The גמרא demonstrates that אליהו's sole intention in bringing the drought was to defend the honor of ה'.

Not only did אליהו act on behalf of ה', but he acted out of a sincere concern for the future of ישראל. עם ישראל brought the drought as an act of תשובה in order to arouse the people to do תשובה. Had בני ישראל not done תשובה, they would have been subjected to the עונש that ה' promised: המלך:

אם שוב תשבון אתם ובניכם מאחרי ולא תשמרו את מצותי חקתי אשר נתתי לפניכם והלכתם ועבדתם אלהים אחרים והשתחיתם להם. והכרתי את ישראל מעל פני האדמה אשר נתתי להם ואת הבית אשר הקדשתי לשמי אשלח מעל פני ה' יהיה ישראל למשל ולשנינה בכל העמים (מלכים א', ט:ו-ז)

If אליהו had not aroused the people to do תשובה they would have fallen to the doom of "והכרתי את ישראל מעל פני האדמה", a point of no return. אליהו was compelled to act out of a love for ישראל עם to ensure the future of כלל ישראל.

In this way, אליהו was very similar to the other famous קנאי פנחס, whose act of קנאות was precipitated by similar motives. These similarities motivate us to say that "פינחס זה אליהו" (יליש תורה, תשעא). Like אליהו, פנחס observed חטאי ישראל and felt compelled to act as a דובר ה'.

וירא פינחס בן אלעזר בן אהרן הכהן ויקם מתוך העדה ויקח רמח בידו. ויבא אחר איש ישראל אל הקבה וידקר את שניהם את איש ישראל ואת האשה אל קבתה ותעצר המגפה מעל בני ישראל (במדבר, כה:ז-ח).

By defending בני ישראל's action was, ultimately, a bold defense of ה'. By defending God's honor, פנחס saved בני ישראל from the plague which ה' had brought. In this way פנחס and אליהו are similar. Their zealotry was caused by a desire to uphold the honor of ה', and by a sense of concern for the wellbeing of בני ישראל.

This character trait of zealotry, which guided אליהו's action, had an important function in determining the future of כלל ישראל. If אליהו had not acted decisively, then בני ישראל would have suffered even worse consequences. Yet, אליהו could not lead בני ישראל permanently. The approachable character

of דוד makes for a more successful leader. דוד refrained from daring acts of zealotry. For example, דוד did not kill אבשלום and שאול, who were מורד in the kingdom and should have been killed, because דוד realized that killing them would create an uproar in כלל ישראל.

Physical Appearances

An additional point of comparison between אליהו and דוד is their physical descriptions, which reflect their contrasting personalities.

אֱלֹהִים's physical description first appears in מַלְכִּים ב, א:ח, shortly after his שְׂמִים to עֲלִיה. This physical description comes late in אֱלֹהִים's career, after his promise of drought, after his demonstration at הַר הַכְּרֶמֶל, and after he resurrected the young child. In contrast, דָּוִד's physical description appears before he began his career as a leader (שְׁמוּאֵל א, טז:יב). This contrast is consistent with אֱלֹהִים's nature as a spiritual being. His physical appearance is unimportant to his character. דָּוִד, however, has a very human personality; a physical description enhances the approachable image of his personality.

This point becomes even more clear when we compare the physical descriptions. מלכים"איש בעל שער ואזור עור אזור במתניו" (ב, א:ח). His hair was long and unkempt, as he paid little attention to it. He was already wearing his belt, ready to react immediately to any spiritual task that would arise. Indeed, it is because of this purely spiritual image that אחיה immediately recognized him as "אליהו התשבי" (מלכים ב, א:ח).

The description of דוד is the exact opposite. דוד is described as an "אדמוני עם יפה עינים וטוב ראי" (שמואל א, טז:יב). דוד had a pleasant and congenial appearance. In fact, since דוד's appearance was so indiscreet and unremarkable, שמואל doubted if he is indeed the king, as he possessed no striking or distinguishing features. ה' had to tell שמואל "כי זה הוא" (שמואל א, טז:יב) "קום משחחו כי זה הוא", שמואל doubted if he is indeed the king, as he possessed no striking or distinguishing features. דוד's physical description matches his role as a leader who was close to the common person.

A Deeper look into the Spirituality of אליהו

Another contrast between **אלהיו** and **דוד** is the way in which they led **בני ישראל** to recognize **ה'**. **דוד** taught the people about **ה'**'s power by killing **גלית**. Right before **דוד** defeated **גלית** he said, **וידעו כל הארץ כי** **"היום הזה יסגרך ה' בידים..."** (שמואל א, יז:מו) **יש אלקים לישראל"**

מלכים) 'ה' הוא האלקים" אליהו, in contrast, helped the nation realize that "ה' הוא האלקים" (א, יח:לט) through drastic and unpleasant measures. אליהו punished the nation with a drought in order to facilitate their gathering at הר הכרמל, where he proved that indeed "ה' הוא האלקים". This is the דרך of a zealot.

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Yet it is important to realize that the drought was motivated by אליהו's desire to act for the good of ישראל, because this punishment could ultimately prevent their banishment into גלות. Perhaps this is why the story of the widow whose son was saved by אליהו appears following אליהו's declaration of a drought. During his stay with the widow, the פסוקים portray אליהו as a רחמן who sustained the widow by granting her an endless supply of oil and flour. This reflects אליהו's sincere motivations; even in bringing a drought upon ישראל בני, his goal was to bring life. In fact, אליהו's prayer when he resurrected the widow's son indicates his ultimate concerns. "ויקרא אל ה' ויאמר. (מלכים א, יז:כ) ה' אלקי הגם על האלמנה אשר אני מתגורר עמה הרעות להמית את בנה". What אליהו, as an איש אלקים, really wanted is resurrection, both for the woman's son and also for the nation.

Additionally, this story demonstrates the extent to which אליהו's entire essence was miraculous and spiritual. When the אלמנה complained of lack of food, אליהו remedied this problem through a miracle (מלכים א, יז:כ). Indeed אליהו performed the ultimate miracle when he revived the son of the אלמנה.

The story of the אלמנה is followed by the pinnacle of אליהו's success as a zealot: the events at הר הכרמל, which end when all those present proclaim belief in the one God. At הר הכרמל, בני ישראל came to the realization that "ה' הוא האלקים" (מלכים א, יח:לט), and chose ה' over the בעל. אליהו then tried to make the people act on this acceptance, by instructing the nation to capture and kill the הנביא הבעל in order to remind them of the salvation which took place in נחל קישון at the time of דבורה (שופטים ד). After her salvation, דבורה sang a song of thanks to ה' in which she declared her full allegiance to ה'. By reminding the nation of this, אליהו hoped to ensure that the experience at הר הכרמל and the proclamation of "ה' הוא האלקים" would leave a lasting impression on the nation.

It is interesting to note that we mimic this proclamation of ה' הוא האלקים every year on יום כיפור. After fasting and praying for an entire day, we too strive to relive some of הר הכרמל by proclaiming "ה' הוא האלקים". It is our hope that this will also have a lasting impression, and that we will be able to draw inspiration from it throughout the following year.

During the demonstration at הר הכרמל, the image of fire played a prevalent role. When אליהו drenched the פר with water (מלכים א, יח:לד), the fire still burnt it. Indeed, the fire soaked up all the water. אליהו also used fire in other contexts. For example, אליהו sent a fire that consumed the messengers of אחזיהו (מלכים ב, ב:יא), and אליהו ascended to שמים in a fire (מלכים ב, א:יב-יד). אליהו's use of fire is consistent with his fiery spirituality. Fire, by its ephemeral nature, evokes an image of something which converts the physical into

spiritual, just as fire consecrates a קרבן and makes it into an עולה to ה'. Water, on the other hand, descends from the heavens to nourish the earth. It brings spirituality into the physical. At הר כרמל, אלהיו brought down a fire which consumed even all the water that surrounded the קרבן. אלהיו expressed his relationship with ה' through fire, and not water. He was a zealot who could only fathom pure spirituality.

This is, in part, why אלהיו could not be the eternal leader and was replaced by אלישע. In fact, אלהיו's zealous style is not fit for permanent leadership. His success at הר כרמל was only momentary. איזבל immediately hunted down אלהיו to kill him (מלכים א, יט:ב). This proves that אלהיו's actions at הר כרמל did not cause total religious reform, as איזבל still possessed the authority to hunt down נביאים.

After this failure, אלהיו traveled to the desert, abandoning his mission to improve ישראל. ככל ישראל, אלהיו, like משה, went to סיני. There are many similarities between אלהיו's and משה's experiences in חורב/סיני. אלהיו stayed in חורב for four days (מלכים א, יט:ח), reminiscent of משה's stay of forty days on הר כרמל. Both אלהיו and משה received a התגלות at חורב (מלכים א, יט:יד). These similarities only serve to highlight the very different roles played by אלהיו and משה. משה received his שליחות at חורב as a leader of ישראל. אלהיו arrived at חורב as failed leader. He was unable to permanently raise בני ישראל to higher spiritual levels. It is at this point that ה' asked אלהיו "מה לך פה: אלהיו declared that (מלכים א, יט:י) "קנא קנאתי לה", answered, "קנא קנאתי לה", אלהיו revealed Himself to ה'. ה' showed that He is not in fire, noise, or storm, but in דקה. ה' does not only rule through zealotness, but in softer ways as well. Yet, following God's revelation in the still voice, אלהיו repeated his previous declaration, (מלכים א, יט:יד) "קנא קנאתי לה", אלהיו, it seems, was only able to lead with zealotness, which is why ה', at this point, stripped אלהיו of his leadership, commanding him to appoint אלישע.

אלהיו, in his work, מקדש מלך, views אלהיו's life as an ongoing educational process.¹ ה' sent אלהיו to the אשה אלמנה in order to show him that he must lead also with other מידות besides zealotness. In sending אלהיו to the אשה אלמנה, ה' was showing him the drastic results of the drought he declared — widows and orphans were starving because of his zealotness. Still, אלהיו did not bring rain until ה' commanded him to do so (מלכים א, יח:א). Again, as we have noted, אלהיו also failed to learn the lesson of the דקה. אלהיו could only approach ה' through zealotness. Therefore he was destined to ascend to heaven in a fire, as אלהיו could only live a pure spiritual existence.

Yet, we should not view אלהיו's leadership as a complete failure, for he brought the nation to accept ה' and declare "ה' הוא האלוקים". This declaration saved בני ישראל from exile, and served a very important function. דוד was also

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extremely successful, as he brought the nation to the spiritual level of preparedness for המקדש. In fact, both דוד and אליהו are blessed with the expression דוד אלקי and אליהו אלקי (מלכים ב, כ:ב; כ:ב) This phrase, which is otherwise used to describe only the אבות, is reserved for the ultimate leaders of בני ישראל. It is clear, therefore, that both אליהו and דוד performed important functions. דוד was a successful leader because he related to בני ישראל on a practical level; he served as a realistic example in everyday life. דוד's mode of leadership brought בני ישראל to the spiritual state of being, capable and ready to build the המקדש. אליהו's style of leadership provided בני ישראל with an intense, even if short-lived, moment of religious inspiration. Both styles of leadership are necessary, which is perhaps why אליהו הנביא and מלכות דוד are the critical pair which will lead בני ישראל in the days of משיח.

¹ יגאל אריאל, מקדש מלך, חיספין, 1994.

פנחס's Zealousness

Ariela Adler

THE STORY of פנחס's zealousness (כה:א-יג) raises many questions. How could משה not know what to do? Why was פנחס not a simple murderer? What is the nature of the reward of כהונה that פנחס received? Wasn't he already a כהן? The answers to these questions are deeply interrelated. Various מפרשים answer these questions differently.

The תורה begins by placing these events in historical context. The first פסוק reads, "ויחל העם לזנות אל בנות מואב". The fact that the women in question came from מואב implies a connection to the previous פרשה, in which בלעם tried to curse ישראל בני ישראל for the benefit of מואב. A later פסוק makes explicit that בלעם had hatched this plan to bring a plague upon בני ישראל (במדבר, בני ישראל עם ישראל learned the hard way that he could not curse בני ישראל on his own). The only way to bring harm to בני ישראל was to cause them to bring it upon themselves.

כה:כב) במדבר רבה emphasizes that the relationship with the women of מואב was a first step toward idolatrous worship of בעל פעור. According to the מדרש, one of the זכויות of the Jews in מצרים was the fact that the Jews had no involvement with עריות. They did not violate this sin until they arrived in שטחים. That is why the פסוק says, "וישב ישראל בשטים ויחל העם לזנות", שטים. The men were so attracted to the women that they were willing to do עבודה זרה as a means to get closer to the women. רש"י explains that a woman would take out the image of פער and tell the man to bow down to it. רש"י, based on the מדרש, explains that the women would have the Jewish men uncover themselves and relieve themselves in front of the עבודה זרה as a way of serving it (כה:ב-ג). This angered ה' so much that he sent a מגפה (the מגפה is only mentioned later, in ט). At this point, משה was instructed to take the פסוק) בעל פער and hang the people who had been worshipping ראשי העם (ד). Usually the execution for עבודה זרה is stoning, but in this case the criminals were hanged, so that everyone would see and understand the severity of the sin. Hence the requirement to hang them "נגד השמש" (פסוק ד), so that

they would be visible to all. R. Hirsch adds that although not everyone was sinning, they were all responsible to try and stop it from continuing (כה:ד, (ד"ה ויאמר).

When זמרי took כזבי in front of the אהל מעד, no one, including משה, knew what to do. זמרי had brought her to משה because he wanted to "ask" if she was אסור or מותר. The מדרש (במדבר רבה, כ:כד) explains that זמרי was taunting משה by saying, "If she is אסור to me, than why is your מדינית wife permitted to you?" משה was so shocked that he forgot the הלכה and was unable to respond. Perhaps this explains why the people were crying (פסוק ו). They were crying because no one, including משה, understood what to do. Alternatively, אבן עזר explains that they were crying and praying that things should work out properly. חזקוני, in contrast, relates the tears to משה's command to kill the sinners. They were crying over the fact that they had been commanded to kill their relatives. At this point משה returned to himself, and explained that it was in fact permissible for משה to marry the מדינית woman because they had been married before תורה. His wife had in fact "converted" together with the rest of the nation.

In this context, the words "וירא פנחס" are understood by many מפרשים to mean that פנחס remembered the הלכה of פוגעים בו. קנאים פוגעים בו explains that פנחס went to משה and said "I learned from you that when one is performing זנות with an ארמי, then the law of פוגעים בו applies." משה responded, "Since you remembered the הלכה, you should be the one to carry it out." פנחס picked up the spear and killed the two sinners. As he speared the two of them, the מנפה stopped, but only after 24,000 people had already died. Rav Hirsch (במדבר, כה:ו, ד"ה ארבעה) notes that at the time of the עגל only 3,000 people died. There it was only a local sin of a "metaphysical" nature. But here they had become involved in the entire culture of זנות and עבודה זרה.

קנאים פוגעים בו summarizes the conditions under which the law of פוגעים בו applies (הלכות איסורי ביאה, יב:ד). The sinner must be killed during his performance of the sin. If the קנאי kills the sinners after they complete their act, than it is a simple murder. בית דין could not be asked if it is permitted to kill them, and if they were to be asked they could not permit the act. Furthermore, if the sinner kills the קנאי in self defense, he is not חייב.

"מתוך פסוק" explains the פסוק which says that פנחס emerged to do the act רש"י. The עדה refers to the סנהדרין, who were discussing what should be done about the situation. This raises a question. If the סנהדרין were discussing the issue, then why was פנחס permitted to act as a קנאי? יהודה נחשוני? הגות, in יהודה נחשוני? קנאי, answers these difficulties (pp. 673-674). Although פנחס approached משה, he never specifically asked if he could kill the sinners. The act of קנאות is prohibited once the קנאי asks permission. Asking implies that

the קנאי was acting in a clear mind, instead of out of the passionate zealotry of the moment.

(פ"ט:ה"ז)ירושלמי סנהדרין says that פנחס did not act following the will of the חכמים. חכמים explains that the חכמים were concerned only with the letter of the law. The actual הלכה says that קנאים (plural) can kill the sinner, but it does not say that a single קנאי could do so. The חכמים were worried that if all the conditions were not properly met, זמרי's relatives would be permitted to kill פנחס. Another possible explanation is that לכתחילה it was not a good thing to carry out פוגעים בו. Therefore, the חכמים were unhappy. However, בדיעבד, once the act was performed, ה' considered it praiseworthy. That was why (יב:ד) הלכות איסור ביאה רמב"ם writes "אם פגעו בו" instead of "יש לפגוע בו".

משה himself was unable to carry out the act of killing the sinners. As משה explains, זמרי had been taunting משה about his מדינית wife. Had משה been the קנאי who killed זמרי, people might think that he did so because of his personal emotional involvement in the case. Furthermore, משה could not carry out the act of פוגעים בו because he was considered the בית דין גדול of those times. Since the קנאי could not ask for permission from בית דין to perform the act, משה himself could not kill the sinners.

Still this does not explain why part of פנחס's reward is, ולזרעו "והיתה לו וזרעו" (פסוק יג). After all, פנחס was already a כהן, as פסוק ז says, "כהן פנחס". פניחס בן אלעזר בן אהרן הכהן explains that אהרן was given the כהונה for himself and for all future generations. פנחס was alive at the time of that promise, and he was, therefore, not a future generation. In contrast, אבן עזרא explains that פנחס was rewarded by being made a כהן גדול, because a גדול atones for the whole עם just as פנחס did by killing the two sinners.

To summarize, פנחס did what he should have done. In doing so, he taught all of ישראל כלל very important lessons about the eagerness one should have when doing something for ה'.

עשו and יצחק: A Story of Father and Son

Devorah Wolf

THE STORY OF the ברכות of עשו and יעקב provides us with a glimpse into one of תנ"ך's most famous and most mysterious families. Rich and complex, this pivotal episode elucidates aspects of its characters' personalities and raises many questions. Why did רבקה feel she needed to trick her husband into giving the ברכה to יעקב? How could יעקב, the quintessential איש תם and איש אמת, go along with such a scheme? How does the character of עשו fit into the story? What did יצחק think of עשו and what were his intentions in blessing him? In this article, we will focus on the last of these questions. Using the commentaries רש"י and רד"ק, we will analyze יצחק's interaction with עשו in order to understand יצחק's opinion of his eldest son, and how that led to the ברכה he wanted to give him.

Our story is found in פרשת תולדות, the beginning of which speaks of the births of יעקב and עשו. רבקה and יצחק to עשו. Merely one פסוק after their births, we already are told "ויגדלו הנערים ויהי עשו איש ידע ציד איש שדה ויעקב איש תם יושב" (בראשית, כה:כז). As both רש"י and רד"ק point out, once they reached the age of maturity, it became evident that they would lead different lifestyles. רש"י focuses on the idea that the pre-existing personality differences only became visible in adulthood. רד"ק explains that they only started preferring different things once they became adults. Also, we can see a difference emerging in what the two מפרשים think of עשו's character; רש"י explicitly says עשו worshipped זרה עבודה זרה and was deceitful, while רד"ק points to עשו's worldly characteristics and rash behavior. Commenting on a later פסוק, רד"ק describes עשו this way: "לא היה איש הגון וטוב" — "He was not an upright, good person" (רד"ק, כז:ד, ד"ה "ועשה").

The next פסוק will begin to tell us how יצחק saw עשו's character: "ויאהב עשו" (עשו loved יצחק). יצחק loved עשו for this peculiar reason of "כי ציד בפיו" (his mouth). Simply, he loved him because עשו was a hunter and brought his father food. Read this way, the word "פיו" (his mouth) refers to יצחק's mouth; עשו put the food in יצחק's mouth. But, as רש"י points out, we can understand "פיו" to mean עשו's mouth. According to the מדרש in

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מעשׂו used to ask his father questions such as how to take מַעֲשֵׂר on straw and salt, both items from which one need not take מַעֲשֵׂר. Skillfully crafting his words, he pretended to be unusually exacting in his performance of מַעֲשֵׂר, and tricked his father into thinking as much. Read this way, יעקב loved עשו because עשו had עֵיד, or the ability to deceive his father through his words, in his mouth. רשׁ"י explains that יעקב was utterly fooled by his cunning eldest child.

רד"ק, however, takes a different approach. His comment on the word "אין צריך לאמר כי יעקב היה אוהב, כי יותר ויותר היה אוהב יעקב" is as follows: משהיה אוהב את עשו. This does not mean that יעקב loved עשו more than יעקב, as we had assumed; he actually loved יעקב more than עשו! The פסוק only tells us of his love for עשו because without the specification, we might have thought יעקב did not love him. רד"ק further comments that פסוק כח is not in chronological order. עשו's love for עשו, based on עשו's providing food for him, only occurred much later, after יעקב grew old and in need of his son's special care. When יעקב was blind and no longer capable of running household events, עשו was able to win his affection by hunting fabulous delicacies for him, despite יעקב's clear awareness of עשו's reckless personality. This is not to say that עשו was trying to trick יעקב; יעקב was doing a genuine act of כִּיבוּד אב. However, he only helped יעקב when the latter was weak and helpless. רד"ק refers here to the beginning of פרק כז. The פסוקים speak of an aging, blind יעקב, who suddenly feels an urgent need to bless his children.

ויהי כי זקן יעקב ותכחין עיניו מראת ויקרא את עשו בנו הגדל ויאמר אליו בני ויאמר אליו הנני. ויאמר הנה נא זקנתי לא ידעתי יום מותי. ועתה שא נא כליך תליך וקשתך וצא השדה וצודה לי ציד. ועשה לי מטעמים כאשר אהבתי והביאה לי ואכלה בעבור תברכך נפשי בטרם אמות.

רד"ק explains that יעקב went prematurely blind; he was not actually about to die, but he thought he was because of the blindness. This explains the hurried nature of יעקב's request. We can also understand why he asked עשו to hunt to facilitate the בִּרְכָה. This עֵיד is what generated יעקב's love for עשו. עשו wanted to be reminded of the qualities he loved most about עשו when blessing him, and therefore requested the food.

רשׁ"י's explanation that עשו's strategy involved trickery hints at the trickery that is about to follow. רבקה, who overheard all this and found it unacceptable, enlisted יעקב in a plan to trick יעקב into blessing his youngest son instead of his oldest. A reluctant יעקב agreed, and the two of them prepared food for יעקב while יעקב donned his brother's hunting clothes and hairy animal skins to simulate his brother's appearance. He appeared before

his father, posing as עשו, and a rather curious dialogue ensued between father and son. יח-כה read as follows:

ויבא אל אביו ויאמר אבי ויאמר הנני מי אתה בני. ויאמר יעקב אל אביו אנכי עשו בכרך עשיתי כאשר דברת אלי קום נא שבה ואכלה מציד בני בעבור תברכני נפשך. ויאמר יצחק אל בנו מה זה מהרת למצא בני ויאמר כי הקרה ה' אלקיך לפני. ויאמר יצחק אל יעקב גשה נא ואמשך בני האתה זה בני עשו אם לא. ויגש יעקב אל יצחק אביו וימשהו ויאמר הקל קול יעקב והידיים ידי עשו. ולא הכירו כי היו ידיו כידי עשו אחיו שערת ויברכהו. ויאמר אתה זה בני עשו ויאמר אני. ויאמר הגשה לי ואכלה מציד בני למען תברכך נפשי ויגש לו ויאכל ויבא לו יין וישת.

עשו seems suspicious that the person standing before him is not עשו. Did יצחק really think he was blessing עשו? If so, how was he convinced? If עשו was not positive עשו was standing before him, why did he give the ברכה anyway, with the risk that it would fall on the wrong son? We will again look at רש"י and רד"ק to give us two different perspectives.

What provoked יצחק's suspicion? רד"ק points to יעקב's voice itself. רש"י disagrees, explaining that it was the manner in which יעקב spoke which was unusual (עשו and יעקב, רש"י suggest that according to מפרשי רש"י). יעקב's voice alone was not enough to make יצחק suspicious). רש"י said two things that shocked his father according to רש"י: "כי הקרה ה' אלקיך לפני" and "קום נא שבה". רש"י explains that the former was unusual because עשו did not often mention God's name. The latter was strange because it was spoken with soft, entreating language, seemingly uncharacteristic of עשו. This raises a glaring question within רש"י. רש"י had told us before that יצחק had been totally fooled by עשו. עשו was thoroughly convinced of עשו's righteousness, which is why he wanted to give him this ברכה to begin with. If so, why would עשו speaking softly and mentioning God's name be unusual? Why would such expressions arouse his father's suspicion?

We may now turn to מהר"ל's commentary on רש"י, the גור אריה. He explains that יצחק's suspicion actually reflected his high opinion of עשו. גור אריה cites רמב"ן's theory and then offers his own. רמב"ן explains that עשו was an איש שדה, and would not mention God's name because he was not in the proper state to do so; he was טמא and his mind was on his hunting, disallowing proper כוונה. עשו's refraining from mentioning God's name in this context would therefore actually show his יראת שמים. גור אריה further posits that עשו's nature was to serve God out of יראה, as opposed to אהבה, and one who has heightened fear of God will, out of awe and reverence, not mention His name freely. יצחק respected this type of עבודת ה', since he himself also served

ה' with a great deal of יראה. However, יצחק knew this was not the case with יעקב, who characteristically served God with abundant אהבה, and was likely to mention Him in his regular conversations. Therefore, hearing his son speaking God's name jolted יצחק. Similarly, the expression "קום נא שבה", spoken with "לשון תחנונים", aroused יצחק's suspicion for a positive reason. גור אריה explains that יצחק saw יעקב as a soft-spoken person, and עשו as a bold personality. When he heard לשון תחנונים from עשו, or who he thought was עשו, he couldn't believe it, not because עשו always spoke brazenly and disrespectfully, but because עשו spoke like a leader, boldly and strongly. Now, when יצחק heard him speaking softly, he worried: where is my leader-son? Where is the עשו whose strength renders him capable of boldly leading a nation?

With גור אריה's explanations, we can now view יצחק's suspicion as a manifestation of his love for עשו, of his knowledge of his son's character and good qualities. Now we must figure out why, with all this suspicion, יצחק gave the ברכה anyway.

יצחק takes us through יצחק's complicated calculation process. יצחק, according to רש"י, thought עשו had an impeccable character, and יצחק was not sure which son was standing before him. In his mind there were now two proofs that it was יעקב: "אין שם שמים שגור בפיו" (יעקב) and "לשון תחנונים" — "קום נא שבה" and "כי הקרה ה'". But there were also two proofs that it was עשו. The "כב ע"ב" ראש השנה גמרא states the following principle: "כל מילתא דעבידא לאגלויי, לא משקרי בה אינשי". According to this principle, people will not lie when the truth will surely be found out, because they, in turn, will be revealed as liars. יצחק reasoned that if יעקב has gone through all this trouble to trick him and was actually posing as עשו, he would know that he would eventually be found out. עשו was sure to return, and as soon as he did, יעקב would be exposed. יעקב, being the איש אמת that he was, would certainly not want to be proven a liar, especially not in front of his father. Therefore, thought יצחק, it was unlikely that יעקב would go so far to trick him, knowing the truth would be revealed. יצחק's other proof is more clearly seen in the text: his son's hands were hairy, unmistakably עשו's.

גור אריה balances these proofs as follows. יצחק compared עשו's mentioning of God's name with the principle that people who will be found out do not lie. Both acts were unusual. Nevertheless, both were possible; one can change his mode of speech and one can lie even when doing so is unwise. These two proofs therefore cancelled each other out in יצחק's mind. He was now left with another unusual verbal expression weighted against a physical sign. Like before, it is unusual but possible to change one's mode of speech. However, to change one's physical appearance, to grow hair on one's formerly smooth skin, is virtually impossible.

According to this explanation, we can read פסוק כג as the resolution of יצחק's doubt. "ולא הכירו כי היו ידיו עשו אחיו שערות ויברכהו". The hands convinced him. Similarly, יצחק's utterance in פסוק כד must be read as a statement: "אתה זה בני עשו", i.e. you are my son. עשו רש"י, with the help of גור אריה, neatly resolves our questions and shows us precisely how יצחק was convinced he was speaking to עשו.

Recall that רד"ק focuses on יעקב's actual voice, not his manner of speaking, as the cause for יצחק's suspicion. רד"ק also concludes that the hairy hands convinced יצחק that עשו was the son standing before him. However, רד"ק reads פסוק כד differently than רש"י; it's a question, says רד"ק, despite the fact that it lacks the grammatical "השאלה" "האם אתה בני עשו?" — are you my son עשו? If יצחק was not sure which person stood before him, why did יצחק bestow this ברכה? רד"ק answers that יצחק only checked the identity of his son as much as he did to spare עשו's feelings should יצחק end up mistakenly blessing יעקב. יעקב was his beloved son. Therefore, says רד"ק, it would not be so terrible if יעקב received this ברכה instead of עשו. However, it would be terrible if עשו were made to feel that his father had been part of the trickery, as if יצחק had never really wanted to bless him. After all, יצחק loved עשו and intended this ברכה for him for a reason. Still, it seems that according to רד"ק, this ברכה was not as important as we thought.

An earlier comment by רד"ק strengthens this point. We noted before that רד"ק referred to עשו as "לא הגון וטוב" — not an upright, good person. This is in fact the reason, according to רד"ק, that יצחק needed to bless עשו at all. ברכה. On his own, he was not worthy of a ברכה. On the other hand, says רד"ק, יעקב did not need a ברכה, nor did יצחק intend to give him one. יצחק knew both that יעקב would receive the ברכה of אברהם to be the father of the chosen nation in the promised land, and that he would receive it from God Himself. יצחק was aware that neither he nor his father אברהם received that special ברכה from their respective fathers. Each received it directly from God, as would יעקב. But עשו needed a different kind of ברכה in order to succeed.

We see, therefore, that according to רד"ק this was not the ברכה that would determine which son would continue the line of God's chosen nation. This was another ברכה entirely, one similar to the various ברכות fathers in תנ"ך gave their children, based on potential and life opportunities. This ברכה, as recorded in כח-כט, contains two elements: leadership and prosperity. It contains no mention of the two promises God bestowed upon אברהם and יצחק: a special nation and a special land. Recall that according to רד"ק, יצחק knew exactly what type of person עשו was; he knew that this ברכה was necessary for עשו's future. Perhaps יצחק was trying to help עשו use his

outwardly-focused talents positively. Maybe יצחק envisioned a partnership between the two brothers, with יעקב the “chosen one” and עשו in some position of material or political leadership. In any case, יצחק was not intending for this ברכה to “choose” עשו; he simply wanted to give עשו a chance. But that chance was very important, and יצחק certainly hadn’t given up on עשו. It would still be terrible if עשו ended up feeling the whole thing had been a setup.

Presumably this ברכה was intended to “choose” עשו according to רש”י. The painstaking way יצחק tried to determine which son stood before him, as well as the drastic way he reacted upon עשו’s return, imply that יצחק saw this ברכה as precursor to the special ברכה God would give the leader of the nation. The ברכה says “ויתן לך אלקים” — יצחק, could of course only bless his son that God should bless him; still, the text of the חומש implies that this ברכה was quite serious and רש”י does not indicate that we should assume otherwise.

A look at the end of this story will further clarify this point. After יצחק blessed יעקב, thinking he was עשו, עשו returned, bearing the meat he had hunted and prepared for his aging father. פסוק לג tells us יצחק’s response: “ויחרד יצחק חרדה גדלה עד מאד ויאמר מי אפוא הוא הצד ציד ויבא לי ואכל מכל בטרם תבוא” — יצחק was shocked and flustered by what has happened. יצחק cites a מדרש to explain this חרדה: truly trembling, יצחק saw גיהנום opening up beneath עשו. Perhaps גיהנום here implies that יצחק became aware of the horrible consequences that would have ensued had עשו received this ברכה and been the one to lead the nation. It is interesting that the מדרש offers a visual reaction, since יצחק had gone blind. Perhaps it would like to hint that יצחק’s blindness of perception was shattered, and he now saw both his mistake and a very real image of disaster. Whatever the intent of this חרדה according to this explanation was real and intense, highlighting יצחק’s authentic shock at realizing his mistake. The words “גם ברוך יהיה” at the end of the פסוק, as רש”י explains, mean that יצחק now gave his full support to יעקב as receiver of this ברכה. יצחק came to realize that יעקב was the rightful owner of this ברכה all along. יצחק said, I had been tricked, but יעקב acted “במרמה” — “בחכמה” (פסוק לה), wisely, as רש”י translates. Although it is unclear what exactly made יצחק realize he had been wrong all along, we can assume that יצחק had some kind of insight at this time. Perhaps it was this vision of גיהנום, inspired by עשו, which contrasted to the ריח of עדן that had filled the room when יעקב entered (רש”י comments that עשו’s garments, when worn by יעקב, emitted the sweet fragrance of the Garden, whereas normally they stank of animal decay). Whatever the cause, יצחק now recognized that יעקב was, and had always been, the one who must receive this ברכה and be

the father of God's special nation. He had been thoroughly deceived about עשו's character, and was now justifiably shaken by the comprehension of his decades-long misconception.

יצחק's explanation of יצחק's reaction follows the theme identified before. Concerned more with עשו's feelings than with the possibility of יעקב mistakenly receiving this ברכה, and not entirely sure which son he blessed, יצחק was not all that stunned to learn he had actually blessed יעקב. He was not shaking and trembling with shock, says רד"ק; he simply made it appear that way. יצחק put on a great show of חרדה before עשו so the latter would not think the former had intentionally tricked him. רד"ק explains "גם ברוך יהיה" as follows: "אחר שברכתיו עתה אני מקיים לו הברכה כי ידעתי כי בני היה". Similar to רש"י, this explanation points to יצחק's full retrospective support of יעקב as receiver of this ברכה. The peculiar addendum "כי בני היה" is certainly mysterious; of course יעקב was his son — עשו was his son as well. Surely nobody doubts יעקב's claim as יצחק's descendant. Perhaps "בני היה" is trying to tell us something about what יצחק wanted for his children. This ברכה was intended for עשו. It was supposed to help עשו develop his leadership qualities positively, perhaps even to lead the two brothers in a partnership. יצחק came to realize that there could be no partnership. The nation had to be led in all capacities by one man and one man only, the chosen one, the "true son" of אברהם and יצחק. עשו could not have the future his father had hoped for. It was a sad realization, rather than the utter shock described by רש"י.

יצחק had hopes for עשו, and although he was ultimately mistaken, his treatment of this ברכה shows us the love and compassion he had for his eldest son. Perhaps he had been tricked, perhaps not, but his strength as a father lies in the fact that he never gave up on עשו. Only when he realized that things could not be as he had hoped, did יצחק recognize the potential, and the need, for בני ישראל to come from and be led by only one of his sons. This son would contain within his character all the spiritual and physical leadership qualities necessary for the nation; everything would come from him. And יעקב אבינו would certainly go on to become a paradigm of the all-encompassing nature of the Jewish Nation. But we should not forget about עשו, and the father who wanted great things for him.

The Personalities of רות and אסתר

Tamara Gal

BOTH מגילת אסתר AND מגילת רות hold a common theme: צניעות. The heroines of both מגילות displayed the מידה of צניעות extensively, despite some very trying circumstances and the corrupt eras in which each lived.

רות, a convert from מואב, lived in a corrupt time. The reason the word שופטים is in plural in the first פסוק of מגילת רות is to show that the judges were judged by the people, and, in turn, the judges judged the people corruptly. מגילת רות takes place in the period between the entrance of בני ישראל into ארץ ישראל in 2488 and the destruction of בית ראשון in 2988. The destruction of בית ראשון was caused because no ברכה was made on the תורה. תאוה, desire, destroyed the first מקדש, בית ראשון, which eventually led to עבודה זרה and גילוי עריות, and גילוי עריות, which eventually led to עבודה זרה and גילוי עריות, and גילוי עריות, which eventually led to עבודה זרה and גילוי עריות. All this teaches the evil of the time period. Despite this, רות, a convert, overcame the temptations of the sinful era and maintained an extremely high level of צניעות.

אסתר, living during פרס ומדי, also lived in a corrupt era. The first word of the מגילה is "וייהי" – "and it was". רש"י says that this is a reference to the evil of the period. אחשורוש was wicked from beginning to end, and only became a ruler because he married into royalty (קניזר אלשיך). His wife, ושתי, made her slaves work on שבת and prance around naked while they worked. From here we see "מידה כנגד מידה", for when ושתי was called to appear at the משתה, she was told to come "בכתר מלכות", with her crown only. From here we see that the king and queen were so corrupt, and represented the opposite of the צניעות of מידה. If the leadership of שושן was so evil, then no doubt so many of the people were corrupt as well. אסתר lived in such a shameful time, yet she displayed the utmost צניעות in all her actions.

In מגילת רות (ב:ה) רות asked "למי הנערה הזאת?". What about רות made בועז take notice? רש"י comments that רות was not only צנועה, but she was also smart, for בועז saw that she took two grains and not three. רות bent down to pick up these grains in a very צנועה manner; she bent her knees gracefully, for she wanted to maintain modesty so that people would not watch her.

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This is just one example of רות being צנועה with her body language and movement.

רות went down to the גורן and did as her mother-in-law, נעמי, had told her. Though נעמי had told רות to first dress herself up and then go to the גורן, רש"י tells us that רות reversed the order. First she went to the גורן and then she got dressed. רות did not want to walk through the streets dressed inappropriately. This shows us that רות was careful to maintain צניעות also regarding dress and physical appearance.

A few פסוקים later בועז woke up to see a woman lying next to him. He asked רות "מי את?" and רות answered "כי גאל אתה" — spread your wings, for you are the redeemer. רש"י comments that when רות said to בועז "ופרשת כנפך," she meant "spread out the corner of your garment and spread out your wings," meaning "marry me." רבה compares the indiscreet way אשת פוטיפר grabbed יוסף's clothing and said "sleep with me," to the way רות beautifully said "spread your wings". This demonstrates how רות was צנועה not only in body language, movement, dress, and physical appearance, but in speech as well (גט, תורה תמימה, רות).

In מגילת אסתר we see that all the other young women went willingly to the king. Yet, in reference to אסתר it says "ותלקח" (אסתר, ב:טז) meaning that she was taken to אכשורוש against her will. Instead of running to the king like the rest of the women, אסתר was not at all eager to go to him. אסתר's hesitancy teaches that she, like רות, was צנועה regarding body language and movement. אסתר went willingly to the king only once, when it was absolutely necessary for the salvation of ישראל.

During the "competition" to be a new queen, the women were given whatever they desired (אסתר, ב:ג). Yet, אסתר requested nothing from the servants (ב:טז), except what הני, the king's keeper of the women, insisted. אסתר, it seems, did not want the fancy oils and creams that might make her stand out. This demonstrates אסתר's מידה of צניעות in the way she dressed.

At the end of פרק ב' מרדכי, פרק ב' overheard בגתן and תרש, two of the king's guards, plotting to harm אחשורוש. מרדכי told this to אסתר, who then reported it to the king in the name of מרדכי. Upon hearing this, the king marked it down in his ספר דברי הימים, including the fact that it was מרדכי who overheard this information. אסתר did not want to gain for herself credit that she did not deserve. Not only does this show מידה of צניעות in regard to speech, but this teaches us the lesson that one should always report statements in the name of the person who said them (as it says in פרקי אבות,

אסתר and רות found themselves in situations which were intrinsically not עניעות: אסתר, as candidate in the bizarre beauty contest, and רות as the lone woman in the all-male גורן. They were not passive figures. Each took bold initiative that was critical in the positive conclusion of the stories. אסתר even maintained עניעות in her role as queen of a world empire. Each woman, in her own way, maintained the highest level of עניעות at the very same time as she was required to take bold initiative in difficult and uncomfortable circumstances. אסתר saved בני ישראל from destruction, and רות developed the line of מלכות, which will ultimately bring משיח. From אסתר and רות, we can learn that being ענועה is not just one aspect of ourselves, but has to do with our every action, thought, and word, no matter how trying the conditions. Every Jew should strive to reach the levels of אסתר and רות, for then our מעשים will show that we are truly following in the ways of these עדיקות.

This article is based on a distinction that I learned from Mrs. Chaya Elias, who distinguished between three levels of עניעות: 1) body language and movement, 2) dress code and physical appearance, and 3) speech.

A Comparison of אליהו to יונה

Beth Pollack

ONE OF THE MOST magnificent aspects of תנ"ך is our ability to meet the powerful characters who helped shape the destiny of our nation. From our אבות and the ניסיונות that they overcame, to the fiery נביאים who suffered every indignity and persecution to relay God's message, we find ourselves captivated and almost mystified by the powerful lives they led. However, these "larger than life" personas were also burdened with human frailties, which תנ"ך does not hesitate to portray. In the end, these personalities help teach us lessons not only about these magnificent characters, but also about ourselves.

אליהו and יונה are two of the נביאים who are easiest to relate to. Even more fascinating than the closeness we can feel to these נביאים and the difficulties that they faced in trying to carry out the word of God, are their amazing similarities. In the following analysis of these two נביאים, I wish to not only unfurl these parallels, but also offer a possible reason for this uncanny connection.

Both נביאים lived in a time when בני ישראל were straying far from ה' דרך. During אליהו's time, בני ישראל were devoted to the בעל that אחאב and his wife, איזבל, had introduced to the nation, and in יונה's time בני ישראל were on a downward path that would ultimately lead them to exile at the hands of אשור. In fact, the ספרי says that one of the reasons why יונה ran away from his נבואה, was that he knew that אשור (נינוה was a city of אשור) would send בני ישראל into exile in the future, and he didn't want to be the one to tell them to do תשובה. He hoped that נינוה would not do תשובה, would be destroyed, and would be unable to harm בני ישראל.

Also, both נביאים were persecuted by בני ישראל. During אליהו's time, אחאב commanded that all the נביאים of ה' be killed. ילקוט שמעוני indicates that יונה was treated as a שקר after he prophesied that נינוה would be destroyed. When the people subsequently did תשובה, and were not destroyed, they thought that he was a שקר. (They did not realize that a negative נבואה can always be recalled. יונה was, of course, אמת.)

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Neither בני ישראל was popular among בני ישראל. Yet, both went on to do the jobs that they were meant to do. הר' on הוראת שעה, אליהו, in his celebrated הכרמל, brought בני ישראל back to believing in ה'. Similarly, when יונה finally transmitted his נבואה to נינוה, the city subsequently did תשובה. Yet, oddly, after their successful prophecies, both immediately ran off to an unpopulated area. There, both found solace under a tree, and both asked ה' to take their lives from them. Both were very frustrated and confused by רחמים ה' on people whom they felt were deserving of severe punishment. Because of this, ה' used a משל to teach them both a magnificent lesson about the רחמים of ה'.

[illegible]

קנא קנאתי לה' אלקי צבאות כי עזבו בריתך בני ישראל את מזבחתך הרסו ואת נביאיך הרגו בחרב ואותר אני לבדי ויבקשו את נפשי לקחתה

I have acted with great zeal for God, God of legions, for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant; they have razed Your altars and have killed your prophets by the sword, so I alone have remained and they now seek to take my life.

פסוקים interprets this *פסוק* as an intimation that ה' should take vengeance on בני ישראל. It is a desperate attempt to comprehend why ה' had not punished the wayward people, who were seeking to destroy ה'’s most devoted agent. In the next few *פסוקים*, we read that אליוהו was ordered to stand on הר חורב. On the mountain, a powerful wind passed and אליוהו was told that ה' was not in the wind. Then an earthquake came and אליוהו was told that ה' was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire and אליוהו was told that ה' was not in the fire. Then, after all these tremendous manifestations of the power of nature and ה'’s hand, a still, thin sound (*קול דממה דקה*) passed. It was then that אליוהו humbled himself, and wrapped himself in his mantle. ה' was trying to teach אליוהו that He has tremendous power to do whatever He wants and cause whatever destruction He wills. Still, He does

not always use it, and prefers to patiently wait for sinners to repent. Such was this episode in the life of אליהו, and the lesson that he learned.

In ספר יונה of פרק ד', we read that יונה ran away to the desert after ה' had mercy on פסוק ג'. נינוה ends with the פסוק,

וירא האלקים את מעשיהם כי שבו מדרכם הרעה וינחם האלקים על הרעה אשר
דבר לעשות להם ולא עשה

And God saw their deeds, that they repented from their evil way; and
God relented concerning the evil he had said he would bring upon
them, and did not do it.

פרק ד' begins:

וירע אל יונה רעה גדולה ויחר לו. ויתפלל אל ה' ויאמר אנה ה' הלוא זה דברי עד
היותי על אדמתי על כן קדמתי לברח תרשישה כי ידעתי כי אתה קל חנון ורחום
ארך אפים ורב חסד ונחם על הרעה

And it displeased Yona greatly and angered him. He prayed to God
and said, "Please God, was this not my contention when I was still on
my own soil? Because of this I had hastened to flee to Tarshish for I
knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abun-
dant in kindness, and relent from doing harm."

יונה then requested that ה' take his life from him. In response, God created a small קיקיון (רש"י says this is a very leafy and shady tree) under which יונה took shelter. God then designated a worm to attack it and cause it to wither until it died. Once this happened יונה became very hot, and once again requested to die because he was so aggravated over the death of his קיקיון. God then responded with a lesson about רחמים י-יא. פסוקים:

ויאמר ה' אתה חסת על הקיקיון אשר לא עמלת בו ולא גדלתו שבן לילה היה ובן
לילה אבד. ואני לא אחוס על נינוה העיר הגדולה אשר יש בה הרבה משתים
עשרה רבו אדם אשר לא ידע בין ימינו לשמאלו ובהמה רבה

God said, "You took pity on the gourd plant for which you did not
labor, you did not make grow; it lived one night and perished after one
night. And I shall not take pity upon Ninveh the great city, in which
there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do
not know their right hand from their left and many animals as well?"

Such was the powerful lesson that ה' taught יונה.

We have identified a number of parallels between the two figures. Both lived under similar circumstances, both were persecuted, both lived at

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a time when בני ישראל were deviating from the proper path, both succeeded in their נבואה, and both ended up confused by מידה's of mercy. What is the reason for the similarities?

In תנ"ך, we often see parallels between fathers and sons. Fathers and sons often share the same character traits and experiences. (For instance, אברהם and יצחק had many similar experiences. יעקב tricked his father, and יעקב's children tricked him later in his life.) Is it possible that אליהו was יונה's "father" in some way?

There is a כלל נביא שנתפרש שמו ונתפרש שם אביו נביא בן נביא הוא, "Every prophet whose name is mentioned with his father's name attached to it, is a נביא whose father was also a נביא" (ויקרא רבה, פרשה ו). יונה is introduced to us as "יונה בן אמיתי", which raises the question of who the נביא named יונה was? In פרק יז, מלכים א, we read that ה' sent אליהו to stay with a widow who sustained him while he was in hiding from אחאב. While he was there, "ויהי חליו חזק מאד עד אשר פסוק יז. לא נותרה בו נשמה" "His illness became very serious until there was no more breath left in him." The woman became angered and said to אליהו,

מה לי ולך איש האלקים באת אלי להזכיר את עוני ולהמית את בני.
What is there between me and you, O man of God, that you have come to me to call attention to my sins and cause my son to die?!

עתה זה, אליהו then resurrected the dead boy. The woman said to him, "I know now that you are a man of God and that God spoke truth through your mouth." In Rav Bachrach's ספר on יונה, he develops the idea that because of this, אליהו was referred to thereafter as אמיתי, from the word "אמת".¹ Who exactly was this boy in the story? רש"י says that this boy was none other than יונה. So, in a way, אליהו became a "spiritual father" to יונה because he gave him life. Rav Bachrach explains that יונה became a student of אליהו. After אליהו's death, while worship of the בעל was still popular amongst בני ישראל, יונה became a student of אלישע. While he was a student of אלישע, he was the one who was sent to anoint king יהוא (מלכים ב, ט:ד) "הנער הנער הנביא" on the words of רש"י. According to רש"י, he was the one who ultimately got rid of the בעל. In a way, יונה helped fulfill the תפקיד of his "spiritual father" after אליהו had died.

This is the key to our mystery. I believe that יונה learned so much from אליהו, that he later acquired some of אליהו's character traits. יונה saw so much of אליהו's anger and frustration about those sinners who were not punished for their wayward actions. This can explain not only why the two נביאים had similar feelings and circumstances, but also why יונה did not want to try to

help תשובה do יונה. תשובה thought that they really needed to be punished for their actions. He had witnessed his “father’s” frustration, and did not wish to go through it himself. Ultimately, יונה also needed to learn a similar lesson to that of his “father”.

And thus, our mystery is solved. However, as in many instances in תנ”ך, while we can learn a lot about these magnificent characters, it is essential that we also internalize the lessons ourselves. We can never reach the levels of the men of God like אליהו and יונה, but we see through their stories that they also had human frailties, despite their greatness. Even they did not fully understand the ways of God, and even they struggled with frustrations such as why bad people are not always punished. But we must see from this that we are not meant to understand all of God’s ways, and it is acceptable to be frustrated sometimes. However, after that frustration, we must take solace in the fact that God is there — He is with us, and He is patient. Thank God that He is, because we are far from perfect and need much mercy too. We must be open and patient, just as He is, always listening for that still, thin, sound in our lives that passes us all in different ways.

¹ יהושוע בכרד, יונה בן אמייתי ואליהו, ישראל, תשנ”ד

Ambiguities in ספר בראשית

Talia Wiesen

THROUGHOUT ספר בראשית, a variety of pronouns are used to describe people, places, and events. These pronouns are often ambiguous, lacking a clear subject, which allows for multiple interpretations of a given פסוק. Different מפרשים have different approaches to dealing with these ambiguities, and their approaches reflect their general approach to פרשנות throughout תנ"ך. Here we will focus on examples from ספר בראשית.

רד"ק

1) רד"ק's general approach focuses on the context of the ambiguous word. For example, in א:כו it says, "וַיַּעַשׂ אֱדָם בְּעֶלְמֹו כְּדִמוּתֵינוּ". It is unclear who the subject of this פסוק is. אלוקים is the sole subject, yet there is a plural verb, הַיַּעַשׂ. רד"ק explains that the plural language of הַיַּעַשׂ refers to ה' and the יסודות, the elements from which the world was formed. The יסודות will form the physical body into which God will impart a spiritual being. Therefore, this man will be created in both the image of God as well as that of the יסודות, creating a necessity for a plural subject of הַיַּעַשׂ and בְּעֶלְמֹו.

ויאמר reaches this conclusion by evaluating the subject of each פרק throughout ספר בראשית. This sheds light on the subject in this specific פסוק. Because the subject of this פסוק is plural, unlike in the other פסוקים, רד"ק concludes that this ויאמר אלוקים is collective, and directed toward all the different subjects in the פרק, namely the יסודות.

2) רד"ק explains that this is a book of counting, a list of the genealogy of human history. This book of counting begins with אדם and proceeds with שֵׁת, excluding קין and הבל because neither one left children who would create a family of their own. Mankind would continue through שֵׁת.

רד"ק draws this conclusion from context: the prior פסוקים, which deal with the birth of שֵׁת, and the subsequent פסוקים, which list only the

genealogy of שם. רד"ק concludes that "זה ספר תולדת האדם" refers to this listing of the genealogy of early man.

- 3) In context there are four possible subjects for this sentence, including תרח, לוט, שרי, אברם. It remains unclear who ויצאו refers to and who אתם refers to. רד"ק explains that this whole יציאה was dependent on אברם and his wife, שרי. Therefore, the other individuals present, namely תרח and לוט and any servants who went along, were merely followers on the journey. אתם refers to אברם and שרי, while ויצאו refers to תרח and לוט. רד"ק looks towards the preceding פסוקים to evaluate the subjects of the ambiguous words. God's command of לך לך from ויצאו אתם comes immediately following the words "מאור כשדים". Therefore, concludes רד"ק, the leaders of the mission are אברם and שרי, with תרח and לוט playing secondary roles in the trip.

- 4) In יקרא, we see that יעקב makes two commands to his brothers: "פסוק נד) ויקרא לאחיו לאכל לחם" and "פסוק מו) יעקב לאחיו לקטו אבנים".

Is יעקב calling to the same people in both פסוקים, or does יעקב refer to a different subject in the two cases? רד"ק explains that אחיו in both פסוקים refers to the same group of people, namely יעקב's family as well as לבן and his people. רד"ק again argues from context. In this פרשה and יעקב, פרשה are in the process of making a ברית, a peace agreement. Therefore they are all residing together in harmony and are considered אחים.

- 5) As יעקב is making his return to ארץ ישראל to meet עשו, the פסוק explains, "לכ:ג) וישלח יעקב מלאכים לפניו".

It is unclear whether these מלאכים are angels or human messengers. רד"ק interprets them as actual people from יעקב's camp. The following פסוקים, in which יעקב gives instructions to these messengers, is a proof for this interpretation, because only humans would require directions from יעקב before setting out on an unknown assignment.

These examples indicate that רד"ק has a specific approach to dealing with ambiguities in the text. He looks at the context of the general story line to explain the specific details.

רש"י

רש"י takes several different approaches when explaining ambiguities in the text. These varying approaches can be placed in three distinct categories: the use of a מדרש, the use of סמיכות פרשיות to clarify a פסוק, and an explanation based on פשט. רש"י, more than רד"ק, seems particularly interested in what moral lesson can be learned from the interpretation.

- 1) Above we saw רד"ק's explanation of the פסוק, "נעשה אדם בצלמנו כדמותנו" (א:כו). As noted, it is unclear who, other than God, is involved in the creation of man. רש"י cites a מדרש that says "ענותותו של הקב"ה למדו מכאן" (בראשית רבה, ח:ז). We learn the humility of God because before creating man, the ultimate creation which may cause jealousy among the angels, He consulted with His court of angels so they too would feel a part in this important creation. The מדרש continues and says, "לא נמנע הכתוב מללמד, דרך ארץ ומדת ענוה. שיהא הגדול נמלך ונוטל רשות מן הקטן" God put His own honor aside, and made the honor of the angels His primary concern.
- 2) In יא:ז, we have another example where God is the sole subject, but speaks in plural. During the incident of מגדל בבל, God says, "הבה נרדה ונבלה, שם שפתם". רש"י cites a מדרש which says, "בבית דינו נמלך מענותותו היתירה" (נח:יח). As in our last example, God put His honor aside and consulted His heavenly court before taking any drastic measures in punishing the דור הפלגה.
- 3) Before destroying סדום, God exclaimed, "ואראה הכעקתה הבאה אלי, ארדה נא ואראה הכעקתה הבאה אלי" (יח:כא). What is the scream that is coming to God, and who is screaming? Furthermore, why is the scream in feminine, ascribing the scream to a woman? רש"י cites גמרא סנהדרין (קט, ע"ב) that says these cries that came up to God were those of a young girl who was murdered brutally by the people of סדום for giving food to the poor. God says "ארדה". He Himself is planning to descend from His heavenly perch to observe the situation in this corrupt city and to evaluate whether they are in fact involved in such actions.
When רש"י brings a מדרש to explain an ambiguity in the text, it often contains a valuable lesson that one can glean from it. In these examples, רש"י teaches us important lessons about humility.
- 4) אברהם begins a conversation with God in ט:ז. רש"י explains this verse based on a broader principle: "אחר הדברים האלה" (בראשית רבה, ט:ז). Each time the word אחר appears in the text, it means following the immediately prior event. The event that occurred prior to this discussion is the war that אברהם and the five kings fought against the four kings. Hence, רש"י explains, God spoke to אברהם reassuring him that, despite the recent military victory, his rewards and merits were not completely consumed. He will be protected during the remainder of his life. רש"י, therefore, states that God's appearance to אברהם occurred immediately following the war.

When faced with a word such as אלה or אחר רש"י often associates it with the פרשה or event directly preceding the ambiguous word.

- 5) Unlike רד"ק, we see that רש"י says that the term "אחיו" in לא:מו and in לא:נד refers to different people. The term אחיו in לא:מו — refers to יעקב לאחיו לקטו — refers to בניו, his sons. In לא:נד, he explains that it refers to "אהביו שעם לבן".

Why the different interpretations of the same word, אחיו? It seems that when רש"י approaches ambiguities in the middle of a פרשה from a פשט perspective, he looks at the immediate פשט of the פסוק and, if necessary, he will also look at preceding and succeeding פסוקים. Therefore, in לא:מו, when the אחים are being sent to gather stones, רש"י explains אחיו as בניו, because when one needs work done sons are often the called upon for help. In לא:נד, however, when the אחים are being called to gather for a festive meal following the peace agreement, it is explained as אהביו שעם לבן, because subsequent to the agreement they all lived in peace together.

אבן עזרא

אבן עזרא is extremely literal and practical in his explanation of ambiguous terms. He looks at each פסוק and examines it as an individual entity to decipher the simplest meaning of the ambiguous words.

- 1) אלה תולדות השמים והארץ בהבראם, פרק ב:ד. Context does not provide an obvious explanation of which תולדות פסוק refers to. אבן עזרא posits that these are some kind of beings that developed out of the sky and earth, and which were given by God the power to bring forth other creatures. Here he takes the term תולדות in a literal sense, that which was born from the heaven and earth.
- 2) This literalist orientation is clear from another example. During the discussion between יעקב and לבן about יעקב's salary, the פסוק explains, ויתן (ל:לח-לו) ביד בניו... וישם. Someone gave sheep to someone's sons. Following the simplest possible explanation, אבן עזרא explains that לבן gave the animals to יעקב's sons.
- 3) As we asked before, when יעקב sent מלאכים to עשו — עשו מלאכים — it is not clear if these are messengers or angels. According to אבן עזרא, "אלה המלאכים הם מעבדיו, עזרא". These were simply workers in יעקב's camp who were worthy of carrying out this important mission. Again, we see אבן עזרא's emphasis on the simplest, most down-to-earth פשט.

A close analysis of these three מפרשים highlights the basic differences in their approach to ambiguities in the text of תנ"ך. They can be placed on a spectrum, which will measure the importance of the immediate or broader

context of the ambiguous term. רד"ק is at one end of the spectrum, because he looks primarily at the overall context when deciphering the meanings of ambiguities, while de-emphasizing the immediate context of the פסוק. רש"י can be placed next on this gradient, because in most cases his explanation stems from an analysis of the individual פסוק. Unlike רד"ק whose first propensity is to analyze the overall context, רש"י turns to the immediately adjoining פסוקים for his interpretation of the ambiguity. Last on this spectrum would be עזרא. He is the most literal and practical of these מפרשים. He makes use of the simplest reading of the immediate פסוק when explaining difficulties and ambiguities in the text.

Though they may seem insignificant in the text, and no different than any other difficulty, ambiguities are vital to the text. They open the story to various interpretations, each one yielding a different lesson or insight into the lives of the characters. רמב"ן, in his introduction to his פרוש on the תורה, says that each letter and word in the תורה was selected for a specific purpose. One must keep this idea at the forefront of his or her mind when reading the תורה and attempting to deal with the various ambiguities in the text. This is what keeps תורה alive and applicable to all Jews in the past, present, and future.

Personalities in משלי ספר

Julie Brown

IN עבד ה' is חכמה שלמה המלך, ספר משלי reiticates that man needs חכמה. The second פסוק indicates that the main purpose of ספר משלי is "לדעת חכמה" (משלי א:ב). Similarly, later פסוקים indicate that the goal of the ספר is להקשיב (משלי ב:ב). לחכמה אונד" describes different personalities who are defined by their relationship with חכמה. These personalities include the פתי, כסיל, ערל, נרגן, and ערום. Their respective attitude towards חכמה creates specific obstacles and challenges.

The פתי lacks חכמה. The פסוק indicates that "פתי יאמין לכל דבר" (משלי יד:טו). The commentary states that the פתי is young and lacks experience. His naivete leaves him vulnerable and open to influence. משלי explains "ערום ראה רעה ויסתר, ופתיים עברו ונענשו" (משלי כב:ג). The ערום is singular, while the "פתיים" is in plural. דעת מקרא explains that there are always many פתיים, since they act as a group and make decisions based on social pressure. The פתי follows the crowd, never taking the initiative to think for himself. Therefore, "פתי יחכם לץ" (משלי כא:יא). When the פתי sees that the לץ's way of life reaps punishment, only then will he gain an understanding that he has followed the wrong path.

The כסיל is equated with a fool. His words are many but the content is scarce. Indeed, it is better to be poor than "מעקש שפתיו והוא כסיל" (משלי יט:א). דעת מקרא explains that this involves opening one's mouth and confirming oneself to be a fool. קהלת writes that fools speak a lot, "כסיל ברב דברים" (קהלת ה:ב). A כסיל speaks a great deal, but his words contain little substance. Consequently, "באזני כסיל אל תדבר כי יבוז לשכל מליך" (משלי כג:ט). A כסיל will immediately reject words of a חכם who tries to teach or rebuke him. So, as the "כשם שמצוה על אדם לומר דבר הנשמע, כך מצוה על אדם שלא יגמרא יבמות, סה ע"ב" (משלי כג:ט). There is little point trying to teach the כסיל, since he will never listen. The כסיל does not want to focus on the purpose of life, because he is not prepared to face the consequences of understanding life's true meaning. The כסיל may understand that there is such a thing as חכמה, yet he will reject it because of his foolishness and תאוות. His capacity for

חכמה may exist, yet his weak personality leaves him unwilling to take advantage of it. The כסיל in many ways has attributes similar to those of a child. He thinks that he is the expert on everything; he speaks whatever passes through his mind; he does not want to be rebuked or told what to do; and his decisions are based on his immediate wants and desires. The כסיל's downfall is that he never broke out of this juvenile mentality.

The אויל is similar to the כסיל in that he also has the hypothetical ability to gain חכמה, but rejects it. The difference between them is that the אויל lacks בה' אמונה, while the כסיל is motivated by foolishness and temporal desires. The אויל is a skeptic as opposed to a fool. In ירמיהו ד:כב, God explains that "כי אויל עמי אותי לא ידעו". He who does not recognize ה' is referred to as an אויל. Similarly, דוד writes "אולים מדרך פשעם" (תהילים, קז:יז). People are אולים because they sin, and someone who sins does not grasp that ה' and His commandments are true חכמה. The אויל tries to deny the truth and make all those around him agree with his rationalizations. He, similar to the כסיל, is always talking, but the אויל is having debates to justify his mode of thinking, as opposed to the כסיל who talks just to pass time. אויל יצפנו דעת ופי אויל "חכמים יעפנו דעת ופי אויל". — "The wise conceal their knowledge (because they have nothing to prove), but the אויל brings ruin near." The אויל is constantly starting arguments and inciting fights, because this is his only weapon. Similarly, in כג:ג, משלי, כג:ג — "כבוד לאיש שבת מריב, וכל אויל יתגלע", משלי, כג:ג — "A man shows his honor in holding back from quarrels, but the skeptic reveals himself in it." The אויל does not fully accept that everything comes from ה', which creates frustration, since he has no answer for why things are the way they are. He will never be satisfied intellectually, because the only true answer comes through אמונה. Ultimately, his frustration and consequent fury bring about his demise: "כי לאויל יהרג כעש" — "Anger will kill the skeptic" (איוב, ה:ב).

Another personality described is a נרגן, a complainer. He is like the אויל, because his downfall comes from the anger which derives from a lack of understanding. He does not reject the notion of God. Yet, he does not use his knowledge of ה' to help him through his troubles. He is so steeped in self-pity that he convinces himself that ה' created man to endure a terrible life. "באין נרגן ישרק מדון" — (משלי, כו:כ) — "When there is no complainer, strife is silenced." דעת מקרא explains that the נרגן instigates dispute, because he finds fault in everything. Similarly, "דברי נרגן כמתלהמים" (משלי, יח:ח) — "The words of a complainer are like blows," because his words create a negative atmosphere around him. He creates animosity toward everyone, isolating himself from his fellow Jews. The נרגן's skewed view on life derives from his inability to apply חכמה to his personal situation, which makes him incapable of living peacefully among ישראל כלל.

The עצל is unique in that he understands the importance of חכמה, but he does not obtain it because of his lack of motivation or stamina. עד מתי "על שדה איש עצל" (משלי, ו:ט) עצל תשכב, מתי תקום משנתך. The עצל is inactive and totally unproductive. He lets himself waste time, not appreciating the limited moments he has to do מעוות. He never finishes a project to its end. "I passed by the field of a lazy man... it was covered with thorns, nettles covered its surface and the stone wall was broken down." The עצל lacks the self-discipline to accomplish something of significance. His field lays in ruin because he lacks the willpower to work it. The עצל invents imaginary dangers in order to validate his inactive approach on life. "אמר עצל שחל בדרך, ארי בין הרחבות" (משלי, כו:יג). He invents a threat — a lion waiting on the path — so that he can convince himself that laying in bed is his only option. His laziness prevents him from contemplating ה', because he has no desire to arrive at the conclusion that he should be an עבד ה' who has a responsibility to work hard in that role.

On the other end of the spectrum is the ערום, who is not at all lazy. He uses all his energy and intellectual faculties to manipulate חכמה to his selfish needs. The ערום is described as גן עדן in נחש because he was deceitful, and tricked חוה into eating from the tree. עץ הדעת מקרא explains that in חוה the expression "לשון ערומים" (טו:ה) is a criticism. People did not say what they thought. They would hide bad thoughts behind kind words. "The ערום sees evil and hides." — (משלי, כב:ג) "ערום ראה רעה ויסתר." This shows that the ערום thinks ahead. He is aware of the consequences and plans accordingly. The ערום does not avoid wrong out of strong moral convictions or אמונה בה'. Rather, he acts cleverly and cunningly in order to avoid the troubles that could result from his crooked actions. He is the antithesis of the purpose of חכמה. He uses חכמה, but ignores the fact that it is a gift from ה' and a tool that should be used for good rather than trickery.

The לץ, like the ערום, possesses חכמה, but uses it incorrectly. The first פסוק in לץ praises the man who, "במושב לצים לא ישב". The לץ is a scorner. He mocks חכמה and convinces those around him to be lax with ה'. The לץ breaks down the morals and discipline of others with mockery. "One who chastises a scorner acquires shame for himself." — (סר לץ לקח לו קלון). This is because a לץ refuses to listen to anyone. He is stubborn and closed-minded when it comes to rebuke, and will merely brush away a person's advice with a witty comment. His sarcasm gains him short-term approval from others, but diminishes the value of genuine חכמה in their eyes. "לץ היין" explains משלי, כ:א. A לץ and wine are similar, for they both lead one to ignore their שכל, following their הרע and יצר תאוות instead.

Each one of these personalities is affected by the way he admits חכמה into his life. Whether he vehemently rejects it, ignores it, or embraces it on his own terms, his relationship with חכמה negatively affects his life. In truth, "משלי, א:ז) "יראת ה' ראשית דעת" Without חכמה, יראת ה' will come to nothing. רצון ה' is a prerequisite to the kind of learning that leads to fulfilling חכמה. חכמה without יראת ה' will make man skeptical of anything he cannot understand, which can lead to חטא. חכמה means much more than understanding abstract ideas. Rather, חכמה has a behavioral aspect. It involves incorporating ה' and תורה into our lives. Man is not equipped with the capabilities to decipher everything he learns. This is why שלמה warns us, "בטח אל ה' בכל לבך, אל תשען" ואל בניתך (משלי, ג:ה). In the final analysis, ה' wisdom determines right from wrong, not merely what mortal humans have derived from חכמה.

deputy's משה or כהן גדול: אהרון?

Lauren Lew

אהרון is one of the most enigmatic personalities in the תורה. We are introduced to him as a helper to his younger brother משה. However, once he became the כהן גדול, it became clear that there was a lot more to his character. This special status meant not only that he was in charge of the spiritual state of the people, but also that his descendants would be the holiest group of Jews, who would spend their time serving ה' on behalf of the people in the בית המקדש.

How did אהרון come to deserve such a role? In addition, how can this position of leadership be reconciled with his function as secondary leader of בני ישראל, subservient to his younger brother משה? The aim of this study is to examine the mission he was given by ה', thereby clarifying his character and role. A prophet's first prophetic experience, when he is handed his Divine mission, can be called his "הקדשה" (initiation). Much about a prophet's character and objectives can be learned from studying this episode in his life. An investigation into the manifestation of אהרון's role and the way it progresses after his הקדשות will help explain the real essence and greatness of אהרון.

Unlike most נביאים, אהרון had two (very brief) הקדשות, and surprisingly, the first one was not spoken to him directly. Rather, ה' spoke to אהרון's brother, משה. This is the only time in תנ"ך that a sibling received a הקדשה for his brother. Indeed the only other instance of an indirect הקדשה is that of שמשון, whose parents received נבואה before his birth. Yet in אהרון's case, אהרון was alive at the time of the הקדשה, and was in fact the older of the two brothers.

There are also other questions regarding the הקדשה of אהרון. אהרון is the last member of his family to be spoken of in the תורה. אהרון is introduced into the story almost as an afterthought, after משה voiced his hesitancy about having to approach פרעה alone (שמות, ד:יד). ה' responded by trying to comfort משה: "הלא אהרן אחיך הלוי" משה: "שמעתי, ד:יד). Furthermore, ה' told משה that אהרון would greet him with שמחה בלב: "וראה ושמח בלבו" שמחה: "שמחה בלב". Why did משה need to

Indeed, this פסוק encapsulates the partnership formed by משה and אהרן. אהרן was the man of action, who would represent משה before פרעה, as is seen in the words "ודבר הוא לך." His main purpose initially was to act as a source of strength for his brother, who seemed much less at ease with his new role. משה, in contrast, was the man of God, the one with whom God would always speak. As the פסוק explicitly states, אהרן would be subservient to him in this regard, as משה would relate the word of ה' אהרן, who, in turn, would have to obey משה רמב"ן. משה supports this when he emphasizes that אהרן kissed משה, but משה did not reciprocate (ד:כז). (שמות, ד:כז). משה's kiss was a manifestation of his new respect and honor for his new leader.

The הקדשות emphasize the importance of the partnership. Each brother had his role, and their mission required both of them. The הקדשות accentuate the three-way partnership between משה, אהרן, and ה'. The first פסוק after the הקדשה reflects the importance of the partnership: "וידבר אהרן את כל הדברים: אשר דבר ה' אל משה" (שמות, ד:ד) וישמעו".

אהרן's personality

משה, unlike אהרן, retained these character traits throughout his life. אהרן, did not question God's commands. For example, when משה relayed God's command to the כהנים (descendants of אהרן), they implemented it immediately: "ומפתח אהל מועד לא תצאו פן תמותו כי שמן משחת ה' עליכם ויעשו כדבר משה" (ויקרא, יז). Of obedience was so strong that it was adopted by his children. Even when אהרן was given the task of lighting the מנורה — an עבודה that is so important that it might be intimidating to אהרן — he showed no qualms, doubts, or even technical questions. As the פסוק says, "ויעש כן" (במדבר, ח:ג) אהרן".

Furthermore, we see that אהרן was a man of action, the one who was commanded to orchestrate the first plague (שמות, ח:א), in addition to his role as spokesman for משה. However, it is important to note that despite his role as spokesperson, אהרן also understood when to be silent. The most profound example of this follows the death of his two sons (ויקרא, ד). The פסוק describes אהרן's reaction to their deaths: "וידם אהרן". Most fathers would have been crying out in grief, or at least trying to defend the action of their sons. Yet אהרן remained mute because he knew there was no appropriate answer or plea. His sons had done wrong, and he mourned them deeply. This astounding degree of self-control epitomizes אהרן's calculated and sensitive way of knowing when to keep silent. The first פסוק following this incident perhaps reflects אהרן's reward for his silent self-control. The פסוק reads, "וידבר פסוק"

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"This is quite unusual, as the Divine command is normally given from ה' to משה or from ה' to both משה and אהרן. Arguably, אהרן merits to receive a צווי from ה' directly as a reward for his silence.

אהרן's personality also contains another striking trait, namely his love for the entire ישראל. His compassion and overriding love for the people, despite their sinful actions, is seen in the rebellion of קורח. משה instructed אהרן to stop the plague by bringing a קרבן. אהרן did so immediately. Not only did he carry out the instruction precisely, but the פסוק emphasizes that he ran to do it, "וירץ אל תוך הקהל" (במדבר, יז:יב). He was driven not only by obedience, but by a deep-seated compassion and love for ישראל. Whereas, in the aftermath of his sons' death, he calculated his response rather than acting on impulse, here, when he had the chance to save Jews, he spontaneously ran as soon as משה gave him the command.

It is therefore not at all surprising that משה's initial reaction to קורח's rebellion was "ואהרן מה הוא" (במדבר, טז:יב). משה seems to be asking, how could anyone bear such jealousy and hatred against someone who loves ישראל so deeply and thoroughly? משה interprets משה's question slightly differently, although his interpretation still reflects the same principle. According to his interpretation, משה was asking why קורח was disguising his complaint against the whole of בני לוי by complaining against אהרן. אהרן could not possibly be complaining about himself, because his pure motives and love were too apparent.

This examination of the מידות of אהרן can help explain a very conspicuous פסוק immediately after the crossing of the ים סוף. When מרים took musical instruments and led the women in a song, she was described as "מרים" (שמות, טז:יב). Why does the פסוק describe her in this instance as אהרן's sister? Arguably, her behavior here was characteristic of her brother. This song denotes a certain spontaneity, an outpouring of gratitude to ה' with great שמחה and love, and a self-confidence in leading the other women in song. We have seen that אהרן's behavior involves love, שמחה, and leadership.

A unique partnership

The partnership between משה and אהרן that was outlined in the הקדשה becomes even more important later in the תורה. אהרן first appears in a reassuring role. Throughout the rest of the תורה, אהרן's support often helped משה when he wavered or hesitated in leadership.

We know that משה was uncertain about going to פרעה (שמות, ו:יב). The juxtaposition of this פרשה with "וידבר ה' אל משה ואל אהרן" magnifies the importance of משה and אהרן working together. When משה and אהרן worked

together, God's will could be fulfilled and משה's leadership role could be properly secured. For example, when בני ישראל complained about not having food, both משה and אהרן told the nation that the מן was coming (שמות טז:). משה turned to his brother for support at times of crisis. Similarly, when עמלק attacked the Jews, משה did not go alone. Rather עזר משה ואהרן ויחזקו את משה ואהרן (שמות יז:). הגבעה

As demonstrated in the הקדשה, משה remained superior to אהרן in this partnership. Yet, they each had a slightly different role. משה is described as an "אלהים לפרעה", while "אהרן אחיד יהיה נביאך" (שמות זב:). משה was the intermediary between the word of God and the people. He was the transmitter, the people's person, while משה was the איש האלקים, the man who was so close to God that it was more difficult for him to relate to the people.

However there is one instance where משה and his children were to be subservient to אהרן. Before משה informed the לויים about their task, He commanded משה to "הקרב את מטה לוי והעמדת אתו לפני אהרן הכהן ושרתו אתו" (שמות יג:). משה had a specific command to serve אהרן. Perhaps אהרן's reward for his faithfulness was that he received his own status as the כהן in the משכן.

משה and אהרן adhered to their roles and cooperated with each other. After the תורה explained the roles of each brother — משה as the "אלהים" and אהרן as the נביא — the פסוק immediately explains "וישלח" (שמות יג:). Salvation from מצרים would come when they each perform their task properly. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that משה appears when the team is united, "וידא כבוד ה'" (שמות יג:). ויקרא, "ויבא משה ואהרן אל אהל מועד... וידא כבוד ה'" (שמות יג:).

Yet we should not lose sight of the differences between their personalities. The תורה oscillates between focusing on them as individuals and as a team. In particular, there are some occasions where we see a dichotomy between their two personalities. The rebellion of קורח is one such example. He rebelled against both of them: "ויקהלו על משה ועל אהרן" (שמות יז:). Yet, they responded differently. משה responded by falling on his face in prayer and distress, "וישמע משה ויפל על פניו", demonstrating his overwhelming grief at the sin of the people and the distress they may cause his brother. This is exemplary of his reaction at any time when בני ישראל sinned, and reflects משה's closeness to God and his shock at the fact that the people would sin in such a way. אהרן's conspicuous silence here is also very characteristic of his personality. When dealing with an unpleasant situation, he was always calm and calculated in his pursuit of שלום, a quality that he held in such great esteem due to his אהבת ישראל. אהרן was silent because he understood the level of the people, and was not nearly as shocked as משה was. Neither approach was wrong. משה needed to be focused on being איש ה', while אהרן needed to focus on being איש שלום, in order to form the balanced partnership

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which was so necessary.

There is only one instance where אהרן lost his focus, when he and מרים spoke הרע לשון about משה (א:יב). This incident broke the pattern of obedience which began in the הקדשה. Here, we see אהרן's human weakness. Shortly thereafter, ה' reminded אהרן and מרים that they were not at the same level as משה. משה was capable of speaking to God at any time, while מרים and אהרן were not. This scolding may hint that the source of אהרן's and מרים's sin may have been a desire to be like משה. אהרן needed to be reminded that משה was the אִישׁ ה', and that he is the man of the people. If he were to take on the same role as משה, their team would not function effectively. "בִּי אֲדֹנִי אֵל נָא תִשָּׁת עֵלַי: תְּשׁוּבָה" אהרן learned his lesson and did immediate תשובה. (במדבר, יב:יא) חטאת אשר נואלנו ואשר חטאנו" אהרן humbled himself for the sake of מרים. Hence the פרק ends with אהרן reinstated, and content with his role as אִישׁ שלום.

The importance of אהרן's role is reflected in the priestly blessing (במדבר, ו:כב-כו). The blessing of אהרן was the bridge between ה' and the people, which hints at אהרן's task of connecting with the people. This contrasts with משה, who was elevated to such a level of intimacy with ה' that it was harder for him to relate to the people. אהרן's job to light the מנורה strengthens this idea further. His purpose was to bring the light of God down to the people.

ה' recognized אהרן's invaluable contribution to the partnership. When אהרן, משה and אהרן, (שמות, יב) קרבן פסח gave the laws of פסח, whereas He generally spoke only to משה. משה and אהרן had approached פרעה as a team, and together had saved בני ישראל from Egypt. Therefore the laws of the celebration of that salvation were given to both members of the team. Once the subject of פסח has been dealt with, ה' word once again begins to appear only to משה.

Visits to פרעה

A close examination of the commands given to the brothers regarding the מכות reveals a progression and evolution in their relationship. When משה and אהרן first went to פרעה, אהרן did the miracle with the מטה. Furthermore, אהרן initiated the first three plagues by using the מטה. Hence, משה was specifically told that he must tell אהרן about the plagues, "אמור אל אהרן" (שמות, ז:יט, ח:א, ח:יב). This reflects the status of their partnership at the time. משה was still not comfortable with his position as leader, and needed אהרן to take a very active role.

However ה' commanded the fourth plague directly to משה, "השכם בבקר, משה" (שמות, ח:יט), with absolutely no mention of אהרן or his "ואמרת"

participation. This marks a new stage. After having benefited from אהרן's assistance, משה was now able to take action himself. אהרן's modesty and self-sacrifice become evident. אהרן was not interested in self-elevation. He sacrificed his own leadership role to help משה become the leader.

פרעה also understood that משה and אהרן were an inseparable team, yet he may not have understood the intricacies of their relationship. For example, פרעה called "אל משה ואהרן" (ח:כא). Yet, there is no mention of אהרן in the response, which reads "ויאמר משה". Once again in ט:כז, פרעה appealed to both the brothers ("ויקרא למשה ולאהרן"). Yet, אהרן's absence is conspicuous in the response: "ויאמר אליו משה". Similarly, in ו:ט-י, משה spoke to פרעה, and פרעה answered both brothers. Throughout their negotiations, פרעה viewed משה and אהרן as one entity and appealed to both of them. When פרעה was finally prepared to admit his folly and repent, he called both brothers (שמות, י:טז).¹

A paragon of perfection?

In light of the above, how can we explain אהרן's involvement in the sin of the golden calf? How could he facilitate an act so antithetical to Judaism? How does this fit into the picture of אהרן that has been portrayed until this point? A closer look at how the תורה views his involvement in this episode will help clarify how he became a part of such an act, and how serious his involvement was. He clearly did not join with the people out of a desire to worship idolatry. Rather this was his mistaken reaction to *their* request for an idol.

It seems that he did not deal with the problem in the best possible way. Beside אהרן's role in facilitating the construction of the calf at nearly every step, משה explicitly accused אהרן of having brought great sin onto the people, "הבאת עליו חטאה גדולה" (שמות, לב:כא). Indeed, אהרן was the one who demanded that the people bring their jewelry, while up to that point they had done nothing but complain.

To understand how אהרן could have been involved in such an episode it is necessary to recall אהרן's interaction with the people in general. As mentioned above, אהרן was very close to the people. It is therefore no surprise that אהרן approached him when they decided they wanted to make an idol. אהרן was so involved in the concerns of the nation that it was difficult for him to act against the people. This is reflected in משה's rebuke of אהרן (שמות, לב:כא) "מה עשה לך העם הזה כי הבאת עליו חטאה גדולה": אהרן of אהרן. The first clause attributes the majority of blame to the people, suggesting that they were the ones who persisted until אהרן conceded. However, the second clause accuses אהרן of being the one who caused such a grave sin to occur. This

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expression reflects the interdependence of אהרן and the people. It was so difficult for אהרן to prevent the sin because of their mutual relationship and dependence.

A similar expression appears when משה returned with the second tablets. אהרן is grouped together with the people, rather than together with משה. (שמות, לד:ל) "וירא אהרן וכל בני ישראל את משה": משה was the lone and pure man of God, while אהרן was the man of the people. This trait, which had been critical to אהרן's successes, brought about his failing during the sin of the calf. This distinction between the two brothers originated in their childhood. אהרן grew up together with בני ישראל; משה grew up in the palace of פרעה, close to royalty but far from the people.

The incident of the עגל הזהב indicates that the partnership was necessary for both brothers. Just as משה had needed his brother when he went to פרעה, אהרן also needed משה. With משה on סיני, אהרן was forced to be the sole leader. His weaknesses were exposed to a greater degree. Without משה's support, אהרן's love of the people got the better of him.

אהרן's death

The story of אהרן's death (במדבר, כ:כב) matches his הקדשות and his life. The most striking aspect of his death is its simplicity, which parallels the simple love he portrayed towards משה in his הקדשה. He is referred to at this point as "אהרן" without the title. הכהן. He died without his title, but only with his essence. He earned the title, כהן, but his essence was simple. אהרן went about his pursuit of שלום in a quiet way, and he never demanded any special status. Similarly, when he died, his clothing were referred to simply as בגדים rather than בגדי כהונה. (That they were the כהונה is clear from the fact that they were passed down to the next גדול בנו: "כהן גדול בנו": כהן גדול בנו). In contrast, when משה died, many more details are given (דברים, לד). Regarding אהרן, we are not told his age or the like, because the narrative of his death is as simple as possible, paralleling the simple and pure love and compassion he felt towards each member of בני ישראל. This is emphasized in חז"ל's description of אהרן's clothing at the time of his death. אהרן's material clothing was insignificant, because אהרן was clothed in the שכניה itself (לקוט שמעוני, פרשת צו, תקטו). The תורה further emphasizes the dignity and simplicity of אהרן's death when משה reassured about his own death by telling him it would be like his brother אהרן אחיד: "גם אתה כאשר נאסף אהרן אחיד". (במדבר, כג:ג)

It is particularly significant that after אהרן died, משה descended from the mountain together with אלעזר, which evokes images of a new גדול כהן emerging. However, אלעזר is not described here as אהרן, even though this

is the way the תורה regularly describes him. אלעזר must learn how to thrive independently as a כהן גדול. A parent's and child's true success comes when the child becomes successful independently, when he or she can use his or her individual style and personality to continue in the ways of his or her parents.

There are several very powerful מדרשים which describe the death of the כהן גדול. The מדרש is troubled by the fact that משה was commanded to take his brother onto the mountain. Why did ה' not take אהרן himself? The מדרש emphasizes the triangular relationship between ה', משה, and אהרן. ה' asked משה to reveal to אהרן that it was time for his death, because He did not want to have to do it Himself. In addition, the מדרש emphasizes the different characters of the two brothers. The same מדרש says that משה turned to אהרן at the time of his death and said, "אהרן my brother, when מרים died, we both buried her, and now you are dying and אלעזר and I will bury you. But when I die, who will bury me?" Suddenly, the immensely difficult role of being איש ה' surfaces. משה was the one who would die alone, without children or loved ones supporting him. His legacy was not his immediate family, but the eternal תורה and the entire Jewish people. Near his death, the מדרש echoes the inherent loneliness of משה's role. Yet the מדרש continues. "ה' said to him, 'I will bury you', and then the שכינה came down and kissed him." משה was buried by ה' Himself, the epitome of איש ה' died embodying what he had stood for in his life, the איש שלום, with his loved ones and his inheritor next to him.

However, the most telling sign of אהרן's greatness came after his death when we hear of how he was mourned. "ויבכו את אהרן שלשים יום כל בית ישראל." (כט פסוק). This is the only time in תנ"ך that we are told that the entire nation not only mourned, but also cried for thirty whole days. אהרן's quiet love for the people and his pursuit of שלום come to the fore. Though he pursued no honor in his life, happy with his role as second to משה, he ultimately received the honor.

אהרן's essence

אהרן's overriding characteristic is his אהבה: love of both ה' and his fellow Jew. כהונה could be given only to someone who had an overwhelming love for every Jew, as the כהן גדול had to represent them before God, offer sacrifices for them, and achieve atonement on their behalf. The משנה ברורה records the הלכה that a כהן must leave the synagogue rather than bless the עיבור, if he feels any antipathy towards even one individual in the congregation (אורח חיים, קכח). אהרן's greatness was that he felt sympathy and compassion towards the entire nation. He was the ideal candidate for the role of כהן גדול,

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since the מידה of אהבה was embedded within his very being.

In conclusion, אהרן's enigmatic portrayal is centered around one attribute: his אהבה. His inauguration, position of leadership, triumphs, pitfalls, and death all revolved around his passionate love and intense bond to his nation. Perhaps this explains the advice of הלל: "Be amongst the disciples of אהרן, loving peace, pursuing peace, loving people and bringing them closer to תורה" (אבות, א:יב).

¹ The only time פרעה called משה alone was during the plague of darkness. Perhaps during this time of darkness, פרעה's clarity of perception was also obscured. Hence, he failed to see the silent but fundamentally important partner, אהרן.

May a בן חוץ לארץ do מלאכה for a בן ארץ ישראל on ארץ ישראל in יום טוב שני?

Riva Preil

UPON ARRIVING in MMY, many of us were faced with a new question in הלכה. Living temporarily in ארץ ישראל, most MMY students followed the majority opinion, and continued observing two days of יום טוב. The rest of the country, however, kept only one day of יום טוב. Therefore, the question arose — can a בן חוץ לארץ who is observing מלאכה for a בן ארץ ישראל perform a מלאכה for himself? On the one hand, it isn't יום טוב for the Israeli, and he can do any מלאכה he desires. On the other hand, the person for whom he would be performing the act is still observing יום טוב, and it would be prohibited for him to perform the מלאכה for himself. This issue has been addressed by the פוסקים, and there are three different ways of approaching the case.

מהריק"ש The Lenient Position of

The first approach is that of מהריק"ש (כלל ד) מובא בשו"ת גינת ורדים, חלק א"ח, כלל ד) (סימן ט"ו), who concludes that not only would it be permitted for the בן חוץ לארץ to derive benefit from the actions of the בן ארץ ישראל, but the person observing יום טוב שני would even be allowed to ask the בן ארץ ישראל to go out of his way to perform a מלאכה for him.

He draws this conclusion based on a גמרא about רשבי"א's reading of a גמרא about תחום שבת. The גמרא (שבת קנא ע"א) says that it would be מותר for Reuven to ask Shimon to guard Reuven's fruit, which is located outside of Reuven's תחום שבת, but within Shimon's תחום שבת. רשבי"א (אמר ד"ה אמר) quotes a תוספות which takes this logic one step further. He says that a Jew, Reuven, who has already accepted שבת early on Friday afternoon, is allowed to ask his friend, Shimon, (who has not yet accepted שבת) to do a מלאכה for his benefit. Since it is מותר for Shimon to do the מלאכה, therefore Reuven is allowed to ask Shimon to do the מלאכה for him, even though Reuven could not do the מלאכה for himself.

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(שבת, סד ע"ב מדפי הרי"ף, ד"ה ומדאמר) ר"ן, however, disagrees. He doesn't believe that we can apply the reasoning behind the שבת case to the case of the person who accepted שבת early. ר"ן (at least according to the way בית יוסף understands him) believes that we only allow Shimon to perform the מלאכה for Reuven in a case where Reuven could have been allowed to perform the מלאכה for himself under slightly different circumstances. This holds true only for the תחום case, which is why the גמרא allows Shimon to perform the act for Reuven. Had there been houses in between Reuven and Shimon's property, the תחום would have been extended, thus allowing Reuven to guard his own fruit. Therefore, Reuven can ask Shimon to guard the fruit for him. However, with regards to the case of תוספת שבת, ר"ן believes that it is impossible to create such a "had been" scenario. Once Reuven accepted שבת, he would not be allowed to perform any מלאכה at all, and therefore, Shimon cannot do any מלאכה for him.

However, רשב"א (אורח חיים, רס"ג, ד"ה כתב הר"ן) בית יוסף, and asks the obvious question against ר"ן. It seems that ר"ן's standard would also apply to the תוספת שבת case. In other words, had circumstances been slightly different, had Reuven not accepted שבת early, he could have done the מלאכה for himself.¹ Therefore, by the ר"ן's own logic, a person who has already accepted שבת early can ask a friend to do the מלאכה for him. Both שולחן ערוך (שם, ס"ק ל) מגן אברהם (אורח חיים, רס"ג, יז) conclude that someone who accepted שבת early may ask another Jew to do מלאכה for him. Based on this discussion, מהריק"ש concludes that יום טוב שני is exactly like accepting שבת early. Not only would the בן ארץ ישראל be allowed to perform מלאכות for the בן חוץ לארץ, but the בן חוץ לארץ could even explicitly ask the בן ארץ ישראל to do so.

Rav Moshe Feinstein (אגרות משה, או"ח ג:עג) disagrees with this conclusion. He says, based on ר"ן's reading of בית יוסף, that the only reason we allow the person who accepted שבת early to do מלאכה is because he could have not accepted שבת early, and would have been permitted to do the מלאכה himself. But, says Rav Moshe, this logic does not apply to יום טוב שני. We cannot say, "Had he come to live in ארץ ישראל he would not keep two days of יום טוב" because that is not a realistic possibility. Circumstances, such as his livelihood in חוץ לארץ, for example, generally force the individual to return to the Diaspora. Therefore, it would not be intellectually honest to invent a hypothetical scenario such that the person himself could do the מלאכה.

גינת ורדים of חומרא The

The second תשובה regarding this case, in שו"ת גינת ורדים (שם), compares this situation to a similar one discussed by תוספות regarding תבשילין.

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The גמרא in ע"ב, as interpreted by רש"י, says that if an individual forgot to designate the עירוב תבשילין two possibilities exist as to his relationship to his uncooked food. The first possibility is that הוא נאסר וקמחו — meaning, it would be אסור both for him to cook for himself as well as for others to cook for him with his own flour. However, if he gives his flour as a gift to others, they would be permitted to cook for him using the flour. In other words, the flour is completely off limits until its ownership is transferred. The second possibility is that הוא נאסר ואין קמחו נאסר — it would be אסור for him to cook for himself, however the flour is not prohibited, and others would be allowed to cook for him using the flour, even without acquiring it as a gift.

However, תוספות (ביצה, יז ע"ב, ד"ה אי אמרת) do not accept רש"י's understanding of the גמרא. תוספות claim that נאסר וקמחו cannot mean that a transfer of ownership permits the flour, because, how can a mere transfer of property rid the flour of the inherent איסור which pertains to the flour? In addition to this, ask תוספות, since it would be אסור for him to cook for himself, how can others possibly do something for him which he is prohibited from doing for himself? תוספות assume, in asking these questions, that if it is אסור for someone to perform a מלאכה for himself on שבת or יום טוב, then it would also be אסור to have others perform the מלאכה for him. Therefore, they find it simply impossible to understand the גמרא through רש"י's understanding. Instead, תוספות suggest an alternative understanding. If הוא נאסר וקמחו, then not only is it אסור for him to cook, but it would even be אסור for anyone else to cook with his flour! Even if he were to give the flour to his friend as a present, his friend would not be permitted at all to cook using the flour, even for personal benefit. Indeed, say תוספות, the קנין would be completely ineffective. The second possibility, הוא נאסר ואין קמחו נאסר, means, according to תוספות, that it is אסור for him to cook for himself or for others to cook for him using his flour. However, the flour is not אסור in and of itself, and if he were to transfer the ownership of the flour to his friend, then the transfer would be valid, and the new owner could cook with the flour for personal benefit. However, the friend would only be permitted to use the flour for himself, and cooking for the original owner would always be prohibited. The reason for this, as mentioned earlier, is because תוספות believe that when something is אסור for a certain person, then it would also be prohibited for others to perform that action for him. Therefore, the flour could never be used for the original person's benefit. At most, the קנין would permit the friend to cook with the flour for his own personal benefit.

The ramifications of this תוספות to our case, as the גינת ורדים concludes, would be that the בן ארץ ישראל would not be allowed to perform מלאכה for the בן חו"ל observing יום טוב שני. Just as the flour could never be used to

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benefit the person who forgot to make the עירוב תבשילין, so too it would be בן ארץ ישראל for the מלאכה performed by the אסור for the חוץ לארץ בן חוץ לארץ. Also, the בן חוץ לארץ, even בדיעבד, יום טוב שני on would obviously not be allowed to ask the בן ארץ ישראל to go out of his way and perform a מלאכה for him.

tries to bring proof that בית יוסף agrees with תוספות's principle. מהר"ם (אורח חיים, תרכ"ד, ד"ה וחסידים ואנשי מעשה) בית יוסף. (חלק ד, סימן עד) מרוטנברג, who discusses the uncommon practice of observing יום כיפור for two days (just as we keep two days of other חגים). When the first day of יום כיפור would fall out on a Thursday and the second day (for those who kept it) would be on a Friday, it would be forbidden for them to cook food on Friday for themselves to eat on שבת.

Furthermore, מהר"ם מרוטנברג says that it would even be אסור for others to intentionally cook extra food for them. The only case where the two-day observer would be permitted to eat from his fellow Jew's food would be if that Jew cooked food on Friday without the intention of benefiting the observer of the second day of יום כיפור. One might conclude from this passage that בית יוסף agrees with תוספות (i.e. that it is אסור to have others perform a מלאכה for your benefit that you can not do for yourself). Indeed, בית יוסף cites this as proof that בית יוסף would agree that a בן חוץ לארץ may not gain benefit from a מלאכה done for him by a בן ארץ ישראל.

However, it is not clear that בית יוסף actually agrees with the blanket חומרה of תוספות. First, בית יוסף discusses the case of two days of יום כיפור in the הלכה in the שולחן ערוך, but does not cite the הלכה in the הלכה למעשה. Furthermore, regarding the issue of עירוב תבשילין itself, בית יוסף follows רש"י's reading of the גמרא, against תוספות (ס"כ), (ש"ע, אורח חיים, תקכ"ז, ס"כ). One who did not make an עירוב תבשילין may have another person cook for him, even though we hold נאסר וקמחו נאסר, provided that he gives the food as a gift to the neighbor. Hence, it is difficult for בית יוסף to bring גינת ורדים as a proof that we should follow תוספות's major חומרה.

Rav Moshe Feinstein's Middle Position

After his criticism of the argument of מהריק"ש, Rav Moshe suggests an alternative way of understanding the whole issue (שם). According to Rav Moshe, the very nature of יום טוב שני is really מנהג המקום. In fact, the practice of יום טוב שני is no longer related to ספק about which day is really יום טוב. Rather, Diaspora Jews simply maintain the מנהג that their ancestors maintained when there was a ספק about the day. Jews who live in the Diaspora must follow their general practice of keeping two days of יום טוב, even when

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they are temporarily in ארץ ישראל. Consequently, says Rav Moshe, בני חוץ, ארץ ישראל should behave on יום טוב שני in the same way that they would behave if they would have been in ארץ ישראל. In חוץ לארץ, Jews do not generally ask others to do מלאכה for them on either day of יום טוב (except, under very restricted circumstances, non-Jews). So too, on יום טוב שני in ארץ ישראל, the בן חוץ לארץ should act as if he is in ארץ ישראל and not ask anybody to do מלאכה for him.

There seem to be two conclusions that can be derived from this פסק. First, the בן חוץ לארץ would be permitted to ask the בן ארץ ישראל to do מלאכה under the same kinds of circumstances where אמירה לנוכרי would be permitted in ארץ ישראל. Second, it would follow that the בן חוץ לארץ could derive benefit from a מלאכה that was done by a בן ארץ ישראל who had not been asked to do so. For example, if the בן ארץ ישראל cooked something, even if the בן ארץ ישראל took initiative to cook for the בן חוץ לארץ, then the בן חוץ לארץ would be allowed to benefit from this מלאכה. There is no איסור of deriving pleasure from the actions of the בן ארץ ישראל, and it would only be אסור for the בן חוץ לארץ to ask him to specifically go out of his way and cook extra for him.

¹ This question against ר"ן seems so strong that דרישה suggest an alternative reading of the passage in ר"ן. When ר"ן says that "had there been houses in between, then he [Reuven] could have guarded [the fruit] himself," he does not mean, as בית יוסף explains, that Reuven could have done the מלאכה under different circumstances. Rather, ר"ן means that Reuven did not ask Shimon to do a מלאכה, because Shimon did not have to cross a תחום שבת in order to watch the fruit. Reuven could also watch his own fruit had he not had to cross the תחום שבת.

המפיל

Naomi Gerszberg

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם המפיל חבלי שינה על עיני ותנומה על עפעפי. ויהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלקי ואלקי אבותי שתשכיבני לשלום ותעמידני לשלום ואל יבהלוני רעיוני וחלומות רעים והרהורים רעים. ותהא מטתי שלימה לפניך והאר עיני פן אישן המות כי אתה המאיר לאישון בת עין. ברוך אתה ה' המאיר לעולם כלו בכבודו.

'Blessed are You, Hashem our God, King of the Universe, who casts the bonds of sleep upon my eyes and slumber upon my eyelids. May it be Your Will, Hashem, my God and God of my forefathers, that you lay me down to sleep in peace and raise me erect in peace. May my ideas, bad dreams, and bad notions not confound me; may my bed be perfect before You, and may You illuminate my eyes lest I die in sleep, for it is You who illuminates the pupil of the eye. Blessed are You, Hashem, who illuminates the entire world with His glory.'

Jews are commanded to serve God with all our heart and soul. In order for one to reach this level of observance, one must be aware of ה' presence at all times, forever feeling a sense of יראה and awe. The necessity to be aware of God at all times motivates us to say תפילות just before we go to sleep and as soon as we wake up. In fact, this may help explain why reciting קריאת שמע על המטה is one of the first מצוות that Jewish parents teach their children. Even if the children do not understand the meaning of the prayer, reciting קריאת שמע instills in them the concept of being aware of ה' both day and night.

Sleep is the bridge between life and death. By saying שמע at night we are taking the day's last opportunity to thank ה' and beseech Him to watch over us as we walk the fine line between חיים and מוות. המפיל, a prayer said just before we go to sleep, is a blessing which thanks ה' for sleep and also asks Him for protection from death. We are grateful that He bestows sleep upon us, because sleep rejuvenates us and allows us to function, but we are also

scared of the physical and spiritual dangers that we may encounter while we sleep.

A similar idea is expressed in the blessing that we say early in the morning: "המעביר שינה מעיני ותנומה מעפעפי". These two prayers are similar, in that they both relate to the notion of sleep, and request from God that He provide us the strength and ability to continue studying תורה, performing מצוות, and fulfilling His will. Both prayers precede תורה learning. Both underscore the idea that תורה and מצוות are the essence of our being and should be the paramount force from the beginning to the end of the day. Another similarity between these two prayers is that both are written in the first person singular. Each is a personal בקשה to ה' to grant us the opportunity to be an עבד ה', engrossed in תורה. Yet, there are differences between the two prayers, with המפיל emphasizing themes associated with sleep and night, while המעביר emphasizes things associated with the upcoming day. For example, in המפיל we say: "המפיל חבלי שינה על עיני ותנומה על עפעפי", which emphasizes the sleep which is to come over the individual. In שחרית we say: "המעביר שינה מעיני ותנומה מעפעפי", emphasizing the end of sleep and the day to come. In שחרית we first thank ה' for ending our sleep, then start our day of תורה learning and practice. In תפילה we ask ה' to provide us with a safe sleep so that we can then embark upon a new day of תורה.

Each word of the prayer of המפיל carries extraordinary significance and meaning. According to Rabbi Dr. Eli Munk, in his book *The World of Prayer*¹, the phrase "שתשכיבני לשלום ותעמידני לשלום ואל יבהלוני רעיוני" is asking for protection from worldly problems. He explains that man is seeking protection from defiling and humiliating "accidents of the night" which overcome man in sleep. The "רעיוני" are dangers which menace our peace of mind so much that they cause us physical discomfort, such as bad dreams which wake us or cause sleepless nights. Rabbi Munk suggests that if we are engulfed in תורה as we yield to sleep we will be in the most pure mood and state of mind, which will protect us from these dangers of the night. Also, by taking part in תורה until we go to sleep, God will be more inclined to raise us up again in the morning, "ותעמידנו לשלום". This is why שמע is juxtaposed with המפיל. By ending our day with תורה we ensure ourselves a greater chance that ה' will carry us through the night soundly to see another day of תורה learning.

The תפילה emphasizes the themes of darkness and the fear of the uncertain night. Only ה' can save us from these fears. Take, for example, the expression "והאר עיני פן אישן המות", which originally comes from תהילים יג, א, פרק which speaks of an individual who feels abandoned and forgotten by ה'. He begs from ה' that He "האירה עיני פן אישן המות". At night also, when we can't

easily see the dangers that may come to us, we may feel lonely and abandoned. We must understand that only the light of ה' can save us from those dangers. Furthermore, the use of the term "האר" indicates that we hope to wake up not merely to a new day, but to a new day guided by ה'. Without awareness of God and His protection, we have little hope of being saved.

In the first line of the תפילה, we ask God to lower the "חבלי שינה על עיניי." We often think that when we fall asleep at night it is a mere biological function. Perhaps we fall asleep because we are tired, while at other times we lay awake because of noise or distraction. We may forget that ה' is in control of our sleep patterns. He intervenes in our lives at all times. When we cannot fall asleep we must recognize that God is telling us something. Maybe He is allocating time for us to reflect on our day, so that we can discover, and do תשובה for, a חטא that we did (God forbid). ה' may be keeping us awake so we can ponder more תורה and discover a חידוש.

A few lines later we say, "ותהא מטתי שלימה לפניך." Perhaps we can explain this expression based on a בראשית in רש"י. The פסוק says, "ויושבתו ישראל, בראשית רש"י. בראשית, מזל:א) על ראש המטה" meaning that all his offspring were pure and steadfast. Perhaps in the תפלה as well, the "perfect bed" is a reference to one's offspring. ה' may grant us another day if He understands that the future generations which we will bring into the world will be "perfect" and righteous. We remind ה' that our lives may have value for the future of ישראל. We ask ה' to allow us to live another day in order to instill more values and מצוות in the future of ישראל.

In addition, the המפיל emphasizes the themes of עינים and אור. Each term appears three times, emphasizing the light which we need in order to see our direction clearly, but which is missing at night. By asking ה' to "enlighten my eyes," the individual admits that he is not capable of lighting his own way, particularly at night. Furthermore, "אור" is a euphemism for תורה (as in the expression "תורה אור" from משלי, ו:כג). The תורה is ה' messenger to enlighten our eyes. ספר עולת תמיד takes this further.² The תפילה says: "כי אתה עולת תמיד" — "For You illuminate the pupil of the eye." — המאיר לאישון בת עין" explains that this phrase expresses the idea that God can enlighten even the blackest part of our eyes. Even at night, when we are lost and do not see any direction, when we are caught in dark worlds such as nightmares, God is still able to shed light on our lives. The blessing both starts and ends with images of עינים. It begins with the phrase "חבלי שינה על עיניי", it concludes with the phrase "המאיר לאישון בת עין". This sets up a literary parallel between the beginning and end of the prayer, indicating that God and His directions will guide us from the beginning to end of the day. We conclude the prayer and the day with devotion to ה' because He is the only one who can genu-

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inely move us and the world from darkness to light, from night to day.

May we be worthy of laying down to sleep and waking up to many days of dedication to תורה, to ה', and to His מצוות.

¹ Rabbi Dr. Eli Munk, *The World of Prayer*, (New York, 1961), pp. 224-225.

² הרב שמואל מרדכי הומינר, ספר עולת תמיד, ירושלים, תש"ן, עמ' רל"ה.

According to רמב"ם and Rav Hirsch טעמי המצוות

Tamar Pruzansky

THERE IS a classic debate among Jewish philosophers about the extent to which we can understand the reasons underlying the מצוות. Can we understand? Should we make the effort to do so? What role do the reasons play in our obligation to observe the מצוות?

Both רמב"ם and Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch discuss this issue. Each scholar probes this question, and they arrive at two markedly different approaches. Both agree that a person cannot observe the מצוות because he understands or accepts the reasoning; the reason to perform the מצוות is because ה' commanded us to observe them. But they substantially diverge about the background of the מצוות, and the mentality of the one who performs them. Do we observe מצוות only because ה' commanded them, or do we also observe מצוות because of the inherent value and benefit of the מצוות themselves?

רמב"ם understands that man's highest goal is the pursuit of knowledge of God, and therefore he perceives מצוות as more intellectually grounded. Man, he writes, serves God through מצוות because knowledge of God creates recognition of God's transcendent greatness. Although ה' is ultimately unknowable, man begins his quest for knowledge of ה' through observance of the מצוות. Fulfilling the commandments contributes to that quest because man must first be virtuous before he can properly become knowledgeable. מצוות work to perfect one's character and ensure one's physical well being. מצוות, therefore, are part of the search for God, the beginning of a journey to knowledge of ה', which remains the final (albeit unattainable) goal.

According to R. Hirsch, מצוות are an end unto themselves, simply the expression of loyalty to the Master by His faithful servants. We are obligated to do the מצוות because God commanded them; that is the duty of the servant.

There is a difference, however, between the basic obligation to do the מצוות and the reasons for the מצוות. In Volume III, chapter 26 of the מורה

מצוות explains that some people do not seek any reasons for the מצוות. They prefer to believe that מצוות are simply the will of ה'; further inquiry is not relevant. Others maintain that every commandment and prohibition is based upon the infinite wisdom of God, and therefore must have some utility (benefit or purpose). רמב"ם, however, holds "that all the laws have a cause, though we ignore the causes for some of them and we do not know the manner in which they conform to wisdom."¹ In other words, although every מצוה has a cause or purpose, humans do not necessarily understand it. Some מצוות are classified as חוקים, which are מצוות that have a useful purpose "but it is hidden from us either because of the incapacity of our intellects or the deficiency of our knowledge" (*Guide*, 2:26, p. 507).

רמב"ם describes the פרה אדומה as the quintessential "חקת התורה" (במדבר, יט:ב). Clearly there is a meaning to the מצוה in general — but we will never be able to understand why the פרה אדומה has to be red, or a heifer, or how it conveys purity on those who are sprinkled with its ashes. But our inability to understand all the particulars implies no limitation on ה', or on our obligation to fulfill the מצוות.

What would be the value in having מצוות whose ultimate meaning is beyond our comprehension? רמב"ם explains this based on the verse, "כי לא חזיל דרשה" (דברים, לב:מו), and the חזיל of דרשה, that "if it appears vain it is because of you."² Perhaps, says רמב"ם, some מצוות were hidden from us so that we would not trivialize any of them or undermine their performance by commingling the מצוה and the reason — as שלמה המלך did, and therefore sinned (*Guide*, 3:26, p. 507-508).

R. Hirsch defines חוקים as "statutes, declarations of justice towards subordinate creatures by reason of the obedience due to God; that is justice towards Earth, plants and animals, or if they have become assimilated to your own person, then, justice towards your own property, toward your own body and soul and spirit."³ R. Hirsch believes that חוקים need to be special secrets that man actively obeys to uplift himself and nature, not just "rules of health inculcating sound feelings or protecting against passing aberrations." R. Hirsch attempts to explain the purposes of even the חוקים, as there cannot be a מצוה which does not have some beneficial idea. ה' is not capricious; every מצוה, even its details, are tools by which we serve Him and become better people.

רמב"ם recognizes מצוות whose utility is apparent to all, and which lie on the opposite end of the spectrum from חוקים. These are called משפטים. R. Hirsch defines משפטים as "Statements concerning justice toward creatures similar and equal to yourself, by reason of this resemblance and equality; that is of justice towards human beings" (*Nineteen Letters*, p. 75). רמב"ם says these generally are מצוות that govern human relations, and can bring about

a harmonious, just society. R. Hirsch clearly explains the value and purpose of משפטים, as those מצוות which will perfect a human being and make him a better servant of God.

רמב"ם certainly agrees that one should "seek in all the laws an end that is useful in regard to being," (*Guide*, 3:26, p. 508) since every מצוה has utility. Yet, he says, one should not search for any meaning in the details of the מצוה. רמב"ם even goes so far as to say that "those who imagine that a cause may be found for suchlike things are as far from the truth as those who imagine that generalities of a commandment are not designed with a view to some real utility" (*Guide*, 3:26, p. 509). One should not ask why this מצוה requires the offering of seven lambs instead of eight or twenty. God chose one number or detail for inscrutable reasons. If indeed the מצוה required eight lambs, we would have the very same question: why eight and not seven?

Such an approach is anathema to R. Hirsch. R. Hirsch maintains that despite רמב"ם's greatness, his approach in discounting any meaning in the details of the מצוות, and generally רמב"ם's elevation of knowledge of God as the primary goal of Jewish life, led over time to Jews performing them by rote or abandoning the observance of מצוות. After all, if the knowledge of ה' is the goal, and one attains knowledge of ה', then why continue performing the מצוות? What motivation would rational man have for performing מצוות that he did not and could not understand?

R. Hirsch said that some people, including רמב"ם, attempted to understand the מצוות not by analyzing the מצוות themselves, but by adopting a foreign, alien viewpoint (like Greek philosophy) and imposing that structure of thought on the מצוות. They judged the מצוות based on an external standard, and thereby molded the מצוות to fit their needs. R. Hirsch in his *Nineteen Letters* says,

His [רמב"ם's] own intellectual tendency was Arabic-Greek and so was his conception of the purpose of life. He entered Judaism from without, bringing with him views of whose truth he had convinced himself from extraneous sources... [Other] people took up their standpoint outside Judaism, and sought to draw Judaism over to their positions. They conceived *a priori* opinions as to what the *Mitzvot* might be, without troubling themselves as to the real nature of *Mitzvot* in all their ramifications. What was the consequence? The natural result of such a mode of thinking was that men who believed themselves the possessors of the knowledge which the commandments had been designed to teach, thought themselves now absolved from the fulfillment of the commandments, which were, after all, only guides to that knowledge (*Nineteen Letters*, pp. 119-121).

Beyond R. Hirsch's מחלוקת with רמב"ם, he is also referring to the Reform movement of his time, which misinterpreted רמב"ם's words and used them to support their abandonment of מצוות as the unique character of Jewish life. R. Hirsch, throughout his book *Horeb*, as well as his commentary on the תורה, expended great energy in explaining the symbolic meaning of every מצוה, and how the particulars of every מצוה flowed naturally from its general purpose. In addition to this, R. Hirsch said that if the details of מצוות were unimportant, there would not have been so much emphasis placed upon them. Regarding קרבנות, he says, "How absurd is it, then, to fill three or four folios with investigations concerning the manner of offering sacrifice, which parts thereof may be used, the persons who may officiate, and the times which they can be offered!" (*Nineteen Letters*, p. 125).

The dispute between רמב"ם and R. Hirsch can be seen most vividly in their differing explanations for the laws of קרבנות. R. Hirsch comments that the common translation of קרבן as sacrifice does not capture the essence of the word. קרבן means "offering", whose root is קרב, meaning "coming near, approaching".⁴ A קרבן is the means by which we come closer to God and elevate ourselves. R. Hirsch says that once a person reaches that level through קרבנות, he can achieve true happiness and closeness to God.

רמב"ם understands קרבנות much more practically, even providing a historical explanation. He says that the whole institution of קרבנות exists in order to wean us away from idolatry. Since it was customary for pagans to sacrifice animals in serving their idols, the תורה feared that the Jews would succumb to the same pagan instinct. So ה' instituted a system of קרבנות within a specific framework — how, what, where, when — with limitations and detailed instructions. This way we would serve ה' through קרבנות and not be tempted to serve other gods.⁵

Through all the controversy, debates, and criticism of רמב"ם, R. Hirsch still finds room to praise him for his outstanding achievements. In his *Nineteen Letters*, Rav Hirsch explains that,

The age gave birth to a man, a mind who, simultaneously brought up in the environment of uncomprehended Judaism and Arabic science, was compelled to reconcile in his own manner the conflict which raged within in his own breast, and who, by proclaiming it to the world, became the guide of all in whom the same conflict existed. To this great man, and to him alone, do we owe the preservation of the practical Judaism down to our own day. Because he sought to reconcile Judaism with the difficulties which confronted it from without, instead of developing it creatively from within, he is responsible for all the good which blesses the heritage of modern

Judaism as well as for all the evil which afflicts it (*Nineteen Letters*, p. 119).

It is important to note that R. Hirsch derives רמב"ם's philosophical framework primarily from the מורה נבוכים, and less from the יד החזקה. In the יד החזקה, certainly, רמב"ם pays close attention to the details of הלכה, and reveals less Greek philosophical thought than in the מורה נבוכים. Indeed, at the end of most of the books of the יד החזקה, רמב"ם summarizes the particular area with a reference to the underlying reasoning of the מצוות. This may seem like an internal contradiction within רמב"ם's writings, however, the יד החזקה was written for a less philosophically educated audience, whereas the מורה נבוכים was written for the more philosophically sophisticated. If R. Hirsch had judged רמב"ם's approach based solely on his writings in the יד החזקה, he might have reacted less harshly to רמב"ם and his views.

In a sense, perhaps this highlights the dangers involved in merging the halachic and the philosophical, and in blending the מצוה with the reasoning. R. Hirsch sees that the great failing of his time is those Jews who abandoned the "letter" of the law because they assumed they had — and only required — the 'spirit' of the law. R. Hirsch makes clear: without the spirit, the letter is dry and lifeless, but without the letter, the מצוה is already dead. According to Rav Hirsch, the true and faithful servant of ה' infuses the letter of the law — his observance of every detail — with the spirit that animates it. This perfects him, and connects him to the מצוה's divine source. That is the תורה's mandate to every Jew, and that is our obligation.

¹ *The Guide of the Perplexed*, Translated by Shlomo Pines, Chicago and London, 1963, 3:26, p. 507.

² ירושלמי כתובות, לג:ג.

³ Rabbi S.R. Hirsch, *Nineteen Letters*, Translated by Bernard Drachman, Jerusalem and New York, 1969, p. 75.

⁴ In his commentary on אב:א, ויקרא. *The Pentateuch Translated and Explained by Samson Raphael Hirsch* Gateshead, 1982, pp. 6-7.

⁵ This point was raised by my father, Rabbi Steven Pruzansky.

רמב"ם-השגחה פרטית

Malka Adatto

THE CONCEPT OF Divine providence is one that is interpreted differently by almost everyone. Rav Eliyahu Dessler, in his book מכתב מאליהו (נס"ס, Vol 1 p. 178), maintains that there is no distinction between nature and miracles. Everything that occurs in this world is a result of God's will: every blade of grass, every animal, every individual is constantly being watched over by Him. The apparent regularity of the event is what makes us mistakenly distinguish miracles from nature. Yet, there are other philosophers who maintain that God created the world and then abandoned it, never interfering with its function. The רמב"ם's view of השגחה פרטית, Divine intervention or providence, is often misinterpreted as fitting into either of the two aforementioned extremes. However, after much careful investigation of the seemingly contradictory passages throughout his works, the רמב"ם's complex theory becomes clear.

By definition, השגחה is miraculous. It is not necessarily a miracle that openly contradicts the laws of nature, but more commonly a slight manipulation of nature to the benefit of the individual. God created the world יש מאין — there was nothing and He created something to fill this nothingness ("השקפה ראשונה" ב:ג, "השקפה ראשונה"). As God preceded the world and created it, He can interfere with it at any point in time. All creations are subject to the laws of nature that God established. However, since God instituted the system, He has the ability to supercede any law He desires at any point in time. The question that must still be examined is whether God exercises His ability to interfere in the world and dictate certain occurrences within the world that He created. Simply stated, does God play any active role in a person's life?

If there would be a change in anything created by a person, it would imply that there was an imperfection in the creation. For example, if a person built a chair to sit on with three legs that were placed in three of the four corners of the seat, it would not serve its purpose as a chair. The person sitting in it would not be properly supported and would probably tip over.

The craftsman would have to add a fourth leg on the fourth corner of the chair, or change the placement of the other three legs, to support the person, allowing the chair to serve its function. The fact that the chair needed to be "adjusted" implies that it was created imperfectly. However this is not the case with God's creations.

אבל מעשי ה' הואיל והם בתכלית השלמות ולא תתכן תוספת בהן ולא חסרון מהם, הרי הם קיימים כפי שהם בהחלט.

But, the actions of God, since they are the end of perfection, it is not possible to have any addition to them or to take something away, they certainly exist like they are (שם, ב:כח).

Anything that God created was perfect and had a purpose. Anything that would temporarily change in the future was not a result of an imperfection but rather a miracle. Rav Yosef Kapach, one of the most authoritative scholars of רמב"ם, explains that the purpose of such miracles is to demonstrate God's superior control over everything. When people would see God perform a miracle, they would "fear God and know that everything is in His hand and ability to do as He wishes" (שם, ב:כח, הערה 20). This shows how the miracles that occurred, both openly and subtly, displayed something about God's omnipotent control over this world.

There is a משנה in פרקי אבות that seems to contradict the theory of miracles just presented.

עשרה דברים נבראו בערב שבת בין השמשות ואלו הן: פי הארץ, פי הבאר, פי האתון, והקשת, והמן, והמטה, והשמיר, הכתב, והמכתב, והלוחות. ויש אומרים אף המזקין וקבורתו של משה, ואלו של אברהם אבינו. ויש אומרים אף צבת בצבת עשויה.

Ten things were created on the eve of Shabbat, at twilight. They are: The mouth of the earth, the mouth of the well, the mouth of the donkey, the rainbow, the manna, the staff, the *shamir* worm, the script, the inscription, and the tablets. Some say also the destructive spirits, Moshe's grave and that of our forefather Abraham. And some say also tongs which are made with tongs (פרקי אבות, ה:ה).

משנה רמב"ם has an ostensibly radical interpretation of this משנה. He explains that חז"ל were trying to relay a specific concept to the Jews through this משנה. God created nature. Everything that would later unfold involving each specific creation was built into its very nature during the six days of creation. For example, God anticipated that there would be a time in the future when the Jews would be trapped by water and would therefore need to cross through the water on dry land. Therefore, He created within the nature of

water the ability for it to temporarily contradict its own nature. Usually, water flows based on the laws of gravity. However, at this moment, it would flow in a counter-gravitational flow. The ten things specified in this משנה were not the only miracles that were created during Creation, but rather the only ten things created during the *בין השמשות* on Friday afternoon.

This view seems to leave no room for any "unplanned" miracles to unfold, because all miracles were built into nature. However, in the מורה הנבוכים, רמב"ם discusses this same idea, quoting this opinion in חז"ל, but arrives at a different conclusion about the nature of miracles. רמב"ם says that חז"ל explained that everything was put into nature during Creation, just like he himself explained in אבות פרקי. However, in addition to citing the position of חז"ל, he also adds two further ideas. First, he distinguishes between nature and miracles. There are certain things that were built into nature, but then there are also נסים. Rav Kapach points out that רמב"ם needs to reiterate and stress this point in this discussion, ויאמרו שטבען, "שלא יבואו להכחיש את הניסים ויאמרו שטבען, — של דבר להשתנות" — "So that they won't come to deny miracles and say that it was the nature of the thing to change" (הערה 5). רמב"ם's comments in אבות and his comments in הנבוכים seem to contradict each other. רמב"ם explains that miracles were not a part of nature. The changes in nature were not natural consequences but rather God's intervention. He quotes the opinion of חז"ל, but he disagrees with the simple interpretation of their concept.

רמב"ם's second addition in מורה הנבוכים is an explanation of why חז"ל were compelled to claim that everything was part of nature. He explains that חז"ל did this to help the less sophisticated philosophical minds. It is difficult to understand how there could be an initial will of God and then, at a later point, there could be a seemingly different will. This implies a fallacy in God's knowledge and an imperfection in the creations. For if God knew everything, then all later alterations surely should have been anticipated and subsequently implanted into nature.

שחכמים ז"ל כבר אמרו בניסים דברים תמוהים מאד תמצאהו מפורש בבראשית רבא ובמדרש קהלת, ואותו הענין הוא שהם סוברים כי הניסים הם גם ממה שטבע מבחינה מסויימת, והוא, כי הם אמרו כי כאשר ברא ה' את המציאות הזו וטבעה כפי הטבעים הללו שם באותם הטבעים שיתחדש בהם כל מה שנתחדש מן הניסים בזמן חדושם, ומופתי הנביא אם הודיעו ה' את הזמן אשר יקרא בו למה שיקרא ואז יופעל אותו הדבר כפי שניתן בטבעו מעקרו כאשר הוטבע. וזה אם הוא שאתה רואה הרי הוא מורה על גדולת האומר, ושהוקשה לו קושי רב שיתנה טבע אחר מעשה בראשית, או שיהא רצון אחר אחרי שהונח לך.

Our Sages, however, said very strange things as regards to miracles; they are found in *Bereishit Rabba*, and in *Midrash Koheleth*, namely,

that the miracles are to some extent also natural; for they say, when God created the Universe with its present physical properties, He made it part of these properties, that they should produce certain miracles at certain times, and the sign of a prophet consisted in the fact that God told him to declare when a certain thing will take place, but the thing itself was effected according to the fixed laws of nature. If this is really the meaning of the passage referred to, it testifies to the greatness of the author, and shows that he held it to be impossible that there should be a change in the laws of nature, or a change in the will of God after they have once been established (שם, ב:כט).

חז"ל expressed their position in this way so that people would not develop faulty ideas about God's knowledge. חז"ל said that everything was built into nature to reconcile two problems. Firstly, they wanted to explain to people that there is a system that governs everything that God set in place during the six days of Creation, otherwise known as nature. The second problem it solved was the inability to explain God's knowledge in terms that people could understand. חז"ל explains in the משנה תורה (הלכות תשובה), משנה תורה — a book where the philosophical sections are presented in summary form for the masses — that no one can ever understand how God can know everything. Yet, at the same time, free will is not diminished. Since it is incomprehensible to the refined human mind how such a phenomenon can exist, חז"ל could not convey this concept to the masses. The פרקי משל in אבות helps explain complex ideas to the masses. Instead of going through a philosophical dissertation in אבות, פרקי חז"ל explained miracles in terms that the masses could relate to, in an attempt to avoid arriving at terrible misconceptions of God and His knowledge.

In order to properly summarize these ideas, חז"ל says:

וסוברים אנו כי המציאות הזו היא נצחית לעד כפי הטבע הזה אשר רצהו יתעלה, ולא ישתנה דבר ממנו מאומה כלל זולתי בפרטים על דרך המופת, ואף על פי שיש בידו היכולת לשנותו כולו, או להעדירו, או להעדיד איזה טבע שירצה מטבעיו... לא ישתנה בו טבע, זולתי במה שירצה מן הפרטים... זוהי השקפתנו ויסוד תורתנו.

For we believe that this universe remains perpetually with the same properties with which the Creator has endowed it, and that none of these will ever be changed except by way of miracle in some individual instances, although the Creator has the power to change the whole universe, to annihilate it, or to remove any of its properties. Its nature will not change, except in some instances regarding a few details. This is our opinion and the basis for our religion (מורה הנבוכים, ב:כט).

He clearly reemphasizes that there is nature and there are miracles, two separate things. Rav Kapach also deems it necessary to stress this point. שם, ב:לב, הערה) — "Listen, miracles are not nature" (שם, ב:לב, הערה) — "שם לב, הנס הוא לא טבע" (41).

Once it has been established that God performs miracles in this world, one must understand the conditions under which an individual warrants such events to occur in his favor. As was previously stated, השגחה פרטית is by definition something outside the realm of what should normally occur to a person within nature. It does not necessarily need to be a contradiction of nature, but rather a form of Divine protection. One does not always recognize that this is not nature, because God performs miracles through nature.

There is a common misconception amongst many people. They maintain that the bad things that happen to a person are a result of God's causing them to happen. However, they are often really a result of man's free choice (שם, ג:יב). For example, if a person smokes two packs of cigarettes every day for thirty years, how can he attribute his premature death at the age of 46 to God? The lung cancer was a natural outcome of his choice to smoke. One who does not understand nature and perceives himself as immortal has no valid claim against God. Such a person is solely subject to nature and does not merit Divine intervention.

השגה, one's understanding, and השגחה, Divine protection. According to רמב"ם, true understanding means to understand "טבע המציאות וחוקי התורה וידעו תכליתם" — "the nature of existence and the statutes of the Torah and to know their purposes" (שם, ג:יב). One must investigate the way the world works and the systems through which man is controlled. Once a person has reached a high enough level of perfection in his understanding of how these systems work, he merits השגחה.

One of the purposes of מצוות is to help a person correct his personality (חלק הקדמה לפרק חלק). One must be constantly working on himself and his emotions. When a person's emotions are flawed, he cannot perceive reality and correctly investigate the fundamental truths (מורה הנבוכים, ג:א). There is a direct correlation between how perfect an individual is and his ability to understand the foundations of the world. God created a system of law to help us control ourselves. Included in the Torah are also stories, which teach us lessons of how to properly act in order to achieve our ultimate goal. משה recognized God, and thus he got השגחה. משה investigated the truths and in turn became the most perfected individual to ever exist. Therefore, one's level of perfection determines his level of Divine protection.

In another place, however, רמב"ם seems to contradict this theory of השגחה. He contends that humans are the only species that receive השגחה. Animals do not get any form of individual intervention, nor do plants or vegetation. He continues by saying that everything that happens to a person is an expression of השגחה through reward and punishment (שם, ג'יז). If the only people who get השגחה פרטית are those who have reached a certain level in their intellectual pursuit, then how can the רמב"ם maintain that everyone gets השגחה through reward and punishment? Furthermore, in the next chapter, רמב"ם returns to his theory that providence depends on knowledge.

שכל אחד מאישי בני אדם אשר השיג... תהיה ההשגחה בו יותר בהכרח... ותהיה השגחתו בחסידים ובצדיקים כפי חסידותם וצדיקתם

The greater the share is which a person has obtained of this Divine influence... the greater must also be the effect of Divine Providence upon him... it [Divine providence] varies in the case of pious and good men according to their piety and uprightness (שם, ג'יח).

Here רמב"ם clearly states that השגחה is not equal for everyone, but is greater for the perfected individual.

In order to reconcile this apparent contradiction, one must first examine how reward and punishment in this world works and how that system therefore extends to every individual, in contrast with the type of השגחה that only צדיקים get. In פרק יז, חלק ג, we see that רמב"ם takes the position that the positive and negative events in an individual's life are guided by a scheme of Divine recompense. Yet, in פרק יח, he states that the degree of providence in a person's life is a function of the person's spiritual perfection.

Although רמב"ם believes that each of us experiences justice, this is not always the result of God's intervention. The level of intervention or providence is a function of our spiritual perfection. However, ה' also administers justice through exposing us to our natural fate. The outcome is that justice is served. Sometimes the justice is a result of God's interference, as in the case of the righteous. Sometimes justice is the result of nature.

This idea explains the contradiction by redefining שכר ועונש, reward and punishment, with respect to השגחה. When the רמב"ם is discussing שכר ועונש he continuously discusses the notion of justice. Justice is something that extends to everyone. However it is not necessarily a result of a manipulation of the laws of nature. Sometimes שכר ועונש is a result of God's intervention. Often, however, it is a result of our decisions and their natural consequences, as השגחה, Divine providence, only occurs to those who have achieved a certain level of perfection.

The concept of *נבואה* begs mentioning in its relationship to *השגחה*. רמב"ם addresses *נבואה* in many places, and is strikingly consistent about his views. He explains that prophecy can only occur to a person who is on a certain spiritual level. Since prophecy is one of the most fundamental expressions of *השגחה*, its connection to perfection is necessary. Therefore, רמב"ם maintains that people like *הגר*, who were not in a perfected state, were not prophets (שם, ב:מב).

רמב"ם explains in *משנה תורה* that a prophet reaches a certain level and then waits for God to give him prophecy (פי"ה"א-ו). However, משה's prophecy was qualitatively different in several ways. One of the biggest distinctions is that all other prophets received prophecy whenever God wanted them to have it. משה, on the other hand, received prophecy whenever *he* wanted. This statement requires explanation. How can משה get *נבואה* whenever he wanted, if the prophecy is an expression of *השגחה*? רלב"ג says that there are two ways a prophet merits prophecy. One way is when he is the leader of the nation. God needs to relay a message to the people. Therefore, He relays it through the most perfected individuals, even though on their own merit they may have not received prophecy. The second reason that a person may receive prophecy is due to his own personal level of perfection. He himself deserves such a high form of *השגחה* (על פירוש על השגחה, א:א).

The remarks of רלב"ג about the nature of *נבואה* can extend to the words of רמב"ם as well. This explains the differences between the prophecy of משה and the other prophets throughout history. משה received prophecy for both reasons. He got *נבואה* as a result of his position as the leader of the Jewish people. He also received *נבואה* because of his own personal perfection. All other *נביאים* only got prophecy because they were leaders of the Jews. Therefore when רמב"ם says that משה could receive prophecy whenever he wanted, he is describing משה's personal level of perfection.

The last concept that must be addressed is the purpose of prayer. It is difficult to claim that God will suddenly change His will just because a person asks for money, health, or to destroy heresy. This would imply that God temporarily forgot something, and that this person is reminding God. Thus, the institution of *תפילה* must be for the purpose of achieving a different goal; it cannot be that prayer is used for manipulating God.

When a person prays, he is performing a type of introspection. He is essentially examining his character so that he will hopefully merit a higher level of *השגחה* and his requests will subsequently be answered through *השגחה*. רמב"ם phrases this idea in terms of *מטרה ראשונה* and *שנייה*. He explains that the "first purpose" is a specific type of commandment that will "establish in our

intellect true philosophies" (מורה הנבוכים, ג'לג). רמב"ם maintains that prayer will enable one to achieve this goal. A person's false perception of reality prevents him from properly achieving השגחה that prevents a person from achieving a higher level of השגחה (שם, ג'יא). Prayer is a method through which one can better his perception of reality by understanding what is *really* needed in the world. It is a system through which one reviews the way the world works, thereby impacting on one's emotions so that the person will function properly and merit providence. This approach explains why one would ask for personal requests. If one is healthy then he can be constantly working towards his ultimate goal. If one has money then he can take the energy that would have been used towards making a living and spend it on learning.

However, why would one ask for someone else's health or sustenance? How does that help him achieve his ultimate goal and raise his own personal level of השגחה? Before the world existed there was nothing to challenge God's supremacy and majesty. When God created the world, there were beings who could now "contest" God's prevalence. In an ideal world, everyone would investigate and draw proper conclusions about God. God is ultimately glorified by human recognition. When one prays, he phrases his requests in such a way that if God were to grant his request then He will be more glorified in the world. If a person prays for health, sustenance and knowledge for others, he is expressing the notion that through these things people will better be able to properly investigate God. There needs to be a capital city, ירושלים עיר הקודש. There needs to be תשובה so that people can successfully change their incorrect ways. When one asks of God to grant other people these things, he is asking that the world have the opportunity to move towards a more perfected state. The more perfected the world, the higher level of השגחה there will be. Therefore, prayer on all levels is to better the individual and the world.

In conclusion, רמב"ם's view of השגחה requires much analysis. Everyone starts out as subjects of nature. Everything that occurs is a consequence of one's בחירה. At a certain point of perfection, the natural consequence is השגחה. However, the actual expression of השגחה is an intervention and manipulation of the laws of nature for the benefit of the perfected individual.

A Closer Look: עין הרע

Elana Krul

IN בראשית כא:יד, it says:

וישכם אברהם בבקר ויקח לחם וחמת מים ויתן אל הגר שם על שכמה ואת הילד וישלחה ותלך ותתע במדבר באר שבע.

”אף הילד שם על שכמה, שהכניסה בו שרה עין הרע, ואחזתו: פסוק רש”י comments on this פסוק says: חמה ולא יכול לילך ברגליו” It seems that שרה had inflicted with an evil eye. He became sick and was unable to walk on his own.

Later on, in מב:ה, בראשית, the פסוק discusses the descent of the שבטים. The פסוק says: ”ויבאו בני ישראל לשבר בתוך הבאים כי היה הרעב בארץ כנען” מפרשים. The פסוק says: ”ויעקב רש”י wonders why the תורה emphasizes that they arrived amidst the others who were coming to buy food in Egypt. He explains that יעקב had commanded the brothers to mingle amongst the others, and to enter the city separately from one another, so that an עין הרע could not have any affect on them.

We see from these two accounts that not only did our forefathers give credence to the dangers of עין הרע, but they also acted upon it. While יעקב feared that his sons may be harmed by עין הרע, it seems that שרה had actually used עין רע to harm יצחק.

The מהר”ל in פרק א, נתיב עין טוב, explains the concept of עין הרע and how it operates. He distinguishes between a לב טוב and an עין הרע. A person with a לב טוב desires to bring benefit to others. Conversely, someone with an עין הרע wishes that others be deprived of all good. The בעל עין טוב is a person who is not satisfied until he sees that others receive and appreciate all the good. In contrast, a עין צר is one who has a “narrow eye.” This person receives his powers to affect others because he has a ”כח רוחני רע ביותר”, an exceedingly evil spiritual power. מהר”ל explains that this power can affect the elements out of which the world is constructed. When the elements become imbalanced, people’s this-worldly experiences change for the worse.

עין הרע says that the dangers of עין הרע are so severe that a person can even be held accountable for causing the death of another through עין הרע.

explains: (פרק טז) אבות דרבי נתן

עין הרע כיצד? מלמד שכשם שאדם רואה את ביתו, כך יהא רואה ביתו של חבירו. וכשם שאדם שלא רוצה להוציא שם רע על אשתו ובניו, כך יהא אדם רוצה שלא להוציא שם רע על אשת חבירו ועל בניו של חבירו. דבר אחר, עין הרע כיצד? שלא תהא עינו של אדם צרה במשנתו של חבירו. מעשה באחד שהיתה עינו צרה במשנתו של חבירו, אתקדרו חייו ונפטר והלך לו.

The principle that comes from this מדרש is that one must have the same attitude toward one's own loved ones and property as toward those of others. As in the statement of מהר"ל, the consequences of not having this attitude can be fatal.

We see an idea similar to this in גמרא סנהדרין (צג ע"א). The גמרא asks about the fate of האש, חננאל, מישאל, ועזריה. They were saved from the האש, but are not mentioned after that. רב explains that "בעין הרע מתו". רש"י clarifies that everyone would look at them, wondering how they had been saved. From this it follows that in order to prevent עין הרע, it is necessary to avoid standing out and to prevent people from feeling jealous of you. The גמרא emphasizes, therefore, that one method to avoid עין הרע is to avoid situations in which one person might become jealous of another's success. בבא "אסור לאדם שיעמד על שדה חבירו בשעה שעומדות, שלא יפסדנו בעין הרע" (ב ע"ב) cites the הלכה that, in order to avoid other people's jealousy and a consequent עין הרע, a father and son should not receive consecutive עליות לתורה. Similarly, reports that a father and son should not receive consecutive עליות לתורה, in order to avoid other people's jealousy and a consequent עין הרע. רש"י also emphasizes this idea. In לג: explains why משה went up to סיני by himself. Had someone gone with משה, there would be danger that that person would become jealous of משה, and place an עין הרע on him. רש"י indicates that צניעות is the best prevention for עין הרע, for a modest attitude prevents jealousy.

If a person should find himself in a situation where he is concerned that he might already be on the receiving end of an עין הרע there are other solutions. (כ ע"א) גמרא ברכות says that someone scared of an עין הרע should say, "אנא מורעא דיוסף קא אתינא דלא שלטה ביה עינא בישא". According to this גמרא, descendents of יוסף are immunized from the powers of עין הרע. The גמרא learns this from יעקב's statement, "בן פורת יוסף בן פורת עלי עין". (בראשית, מט:כב). חז"ל explain that עלי עין means that יוסף is above the eye, and is not influenced by עין הרע. However, it is puzzling that יעקב did not bless all of his children to be above the evil eye. Why did יעקב feel that יוסף needed this blessing more than his eleven brothers?

If we look at the life and personality of יוסף, we see that he had a disposition towards עין הרע. In his youth, יעקב gave יוסף the כתונת פסים, which יוסף flaunted in front of his brothers. The cloak was a special gift from יעקב, which represented his unique love for יוסף. Because of this, his brothers became envious of him. יוסף also told his brothers about his dreams, in which he had become a ruler over his brothers. This aggravated his brothers so much that they eventually threw him into the pit. Once he had been taken to מצרים, he was so beautiful that he caught the attention of אשת פוטיפר, needed extra protection from עין הרע, because he had so many extraordinary talents and gifts that made other jealous of him, and made him particularly prone to עין הרע.

Rav Chaim Friedlander, in his work שפתי חיים (p. 197), explains that עין הרע understood that the brothers could kill יוסף with this power of עין הרע. Therefore, he suggested throwing him into the pit, where the brothers could not see him or cast עין הרע on him. עין הרע knew that this would appease his brothers, because they assumed that יוסף would be killed by snakes and scorpions in the pit. עין הרע hoped that the scorpions and snakes, which are directly subject to the will of ה', would not harm יוסף.

Rav Friedlander asks, how it is possible that if ה' has already decreed a person's fate another person can change that with עין הרע? He answers that, "עין הרע הוא כח מיוחד שהטביע הקב"ה בבני אדם להזיק לזולת ע"י מחשבה ורצון, שבתנאים מסוימים כח המחשבה הוא כה חזק שיכול להוציא את הרצון מהכוח אל הפועל". He explains where this כוח emanates from. ה' has the ability to create with His will alone. His desires automatically and immediately become reality. ה' engrained in mankind a bit of this כוח הרצון. In some cases, our own desires can be translated into reality. Our desire to harm another person can be so strong that ה' will enact it. Yet, the desires of the other person to protect himself or others also have power, and the רצון to avoid the trouble can also affect reality. In cases such as these, the deciding factor is whose כוח הרצון is stronger — the person who wishes to give עין הרע to another person, or the person who would have received עין הרע. Consequently, says Rav Friedlander, if a person makes others jealous of him, he has played a part in his own downfall. By arousing feelings of jealousy in others, he incites their כוח הרצון for bad.

There are many מנהגים designed to protect people from עין הרע. These מנהגים reflect the attempt to avoid flaunting talents, beauty, or wealth. In Europe, many families would not sit for a family portrait because of the fear of עין הרע. עין הרע says that preventing עין הרע is the reason you break a glass at a wedding, in addition to the element of זכר לחורבן. Breaking the glass dispels the perfect happiness, so that the guests should not become jealous of

the happily married couple and give them an עין הרע. In אגרות משה, Rav Moshe Feinstein discusses the רמ"א, who says that two sisters should not get married at the same time (פ"ט, ד, אה"ע). Rav Moshe explains that even though רמ"א did not provide his reason, it is logical to assume that it is because of עין הרע. Rav Moshe was also presented with a situation in which two grandmothers had the same name (ג, כו, אה"ע, משה, אה"ע). If one grandmother died, may a newborn girl be named after the deceased grandmother? Rav Moshe answered that one should refrain from naming the newborn after the deceased grandmother, to avoid עין הרע for the living grandmother. He further explains that, בדברים, כי להקפיד הרבה אין לחוש אבל אין להקפיד הרבה כי בדברים, "Concerning the matter of (פסחים, קי) כאלו הכלל מאן דלא קפיד לא קפדין בהדיה" עין הרע, one should feel and consider it, but not be overly concerned with it. The principle is that if you are not overly concerned with it, it will not be overly concerned with you". Rav Moshe, apparently, acknowledges that עין הרע exists, but he tells us not to place too much importance on its dangers. The more one emphasizes the powers of עין הרע, according to the גמרא in פסחים, the more one is susceptible to it.

רבי יהושע אומר עין הרע ויצר הרע ושנאת הבריות: it says, פרקי אבות, ב"ד. In his commentary on this משנה רבנו יונה, משנה רבנו יונה explains why this evil power is called עין הרע. He explains that it is through the eye, the sense of vision, that man realizes what others have, and becomes jealous. It is interesting to note that רבי יהושע placed עין הרע at the beginning of the list of things that drive a man from this world. Perhaps רבי יהושע considers עין הרע more dangerous than the יצר הרע itself.

רמב"ם also comments on this משנה, though he is less interested in the power that עין הרע has over others. Instead, he emphasizes the way עין הרע affects the jealous person himself. רמב"ם explains that desire is a bitter, black sickness. A strong, ongoing desire for an abundance of money will bring a person to hate whatever his eyes see. This character trait removes the person from the world, because in order to cure himself the person should dwell alone in a desert, forest, or any uninhabited area. This is not merely מידת אדם. Rather, it is absolutely necessary for the עין הרע. If he does not learn to control his jealousy and desires, he will become ill and eventually die.

There seems to be consensus that the root of עין הרע is in jealousy. The best way to avoid receiving עין הרע is to act modestly and refrain from flaunting wealth and talent. A good way to avoid becoming jealous of others is to understand that everything comes from ה'. He provides for all of us what we need, so there is no reason to be jealous of others.

At the Edges of the Law: An analysis of הערמה and לפנים משורת הדין

Shira Bloch

WITHIN PRACTICALLY every area of הלכה, there are legitimate halachic options which lie between the poles of extreme קולא and extreme חומרא. At the edges of this spectrum lie two categories of הלכה: הערמה and לפנים משורת הדין. הערמה lies at the edge of the lenient end of the spectrum. Literally the term means “trickery,” and it refers to finding loopholes in the law. By performing a הערמה, a person is not simply holding by a more lenient standard. He is circumventing the הלכה, changing the conditions of the situation so that the usual requirements do not apply. לפנים משורת הדין lies at the stringent end. This term refers to behavior which is beyond the call of duty. This approach is more than a חומרא; it is a way of adding to a law and observing it to a stricter standard than anything the law actually requires, according to any opinion.

הערמה

As the term itself implies, הערמה is not לכתחילה, the most ideal halachic practice. All things being equal, it is not a proper option. For a הערמה to be either permissible or required, the situation must be extraordinary in a way that justifies it.

The (שבת, קי ע”ב) גמרא discusses the case of a barrel of wine on a roof which breaks on שבת. It is forbidden for the owner to place a vessel near the roof to catch the dripping liquid. This is a גזירה דרבנן, because of the concern that one might come to carry the vessel through a רשות הרבים, which would constitute הוצאה הונאה. However, the owner is permitted to place the vessel if guests will be visiting him, so that he can serve the wine to them. Furthermore, the owner may invite guests and then bring a vessel to collect the wine, but he may not save the wine first and invite the guests afterward. According to one opinion, it is forbidden to perform a הערמה: to invite as a

pretense guests who have already eaten, and who will therefore not drink the wine. Another opinion in the גמרא allows this type of הערכה.

The גמרא compares this case to another מחלוקת, concerning an animal and its child which fall into a pit on יום טוב. Normally, it is forbidden to pull an animal out of a pit on יום טוב. However, if the animal is to be brought as a קרבן, then it is permitted. In this case, one animal may be pulled out of the pit to be offered as a קרבן, but the same pretext cannot be used for the second animal, due to the prohibition of slaughtering an animal and its young on the same day (ויקרא, כב:כט). According to one opinion, one animal should be pulled out and sacrificed, and the second animal should be provided for inside the pit to ensure that it does not die. According to another opinion, one may perform a הערכה by pulling out one animal, *not* slaughtering it, then pulling out the second animal under the same pretext — in case it is more suitable for sacrifice than the first. Whichever animal the owner chooses can then be offered as a קרבן.¹

The גמרא concludes that the two cases are not necessarily parallel. The opinion which permits a הערכה in one case might not permit it in the other case, and vice versa. In the case of the spilled wine, הערכה may be permitted because there is no other way to prevent financial loss. This consideration does not apply to the animal case, because one can care for the second animal without actually pulling it out of the pit. Alternatively, הערכה may be permitted in the case of the animals because of צער בעלי חיים, a consideration which is not applicable to the wine case.

The גמרא here suggests two conditions which may permit a הערכה: financial loss and צער בעלי חיים. Yet, it is interesting to note that in each of the cases, the גמרא assumes that a lesser הערכה is permitted. In the wine case, the מחלוקת relates to the type of guests who may be invited — those who will drink the wine or those who won't. But everyone permits the inviting of guests who will drink, even though the guests are only invited to provide an excuse to save the wine. Similarly, in the second case, both opinions agree that the first animal may be pulled out of a pit to be used as a קרבן in order to save it from the dangers in the pit, even though that was not the original intention. Perhaps the consideration in each of these cases is הפסד מון, financial loss which will result unless a הערכה is used.

Another גמרא (שבת, קלט) discusses a strainer set up on יום טוב to remove the sediment from wine. Normally it is forbidden to set up the strainer on יום טוב, because this is considered דחול עובדין. Yet, if the strainer was already set up it is permitted to strain wine with it. The גמרא explains that it is permissible to set up the strainer for another purpose on יום טוב, i.e. to place pomegranates in it. If someone needs to strain wine, he may perform a הערכה

by setting up the strainer and first placing pomegranates in it, making it appear as though this was his intention in setting up the strainer, and only then straining the wine. The גמרא compares this to a discussion about brewing beer on חול המועד. This is permitted as long as the beer is needed during the festival. Someone who has beer at home may perform a הערמה, by brewing some fresh beer and drinking from it, pretending that the new beer was really necessary for the חג. The גמרא asks: why is no pretense required in the beer case? The גמרא answers that the pomegranate and beer cases differ in an important respect, namely how the situation appears to others. In the case of brewing beer, the observer does not know that the person already has beer at home. As far as the observer is concerned, this is the only beer he has, and his actions are perfectly מותר. However in the case of the strainer, if one immediately strains wine in it, even if he claims that it was really set up for pomegranates, the observer recognizes immediately that the real purpose was to strain wine. The person must first validate his claim by actually putting pomegranates in the strainer, so that the observer will not recognize the הערמה. Here the consideration allowing the הערמה is the fact that it is not obvious. The way something appears to others is important. Even if the act itself is fundamentally permissible, it is not allowed unless the הערמה can be hidden.²

Another גמרא compares the הערמה with an intentional sin (זי ע"ב). שבת י"ז ט"ז falls on שבת ערב שבת it is forbidden to cook food on יום טוב (unless one makes an עירוב תבשילין). One may cook on יום טוב for that day, and if there is food left over, he can eat it on שבת. If he intentionally cooks on יום טוב for שבת, he has committed a sin, but the food is permitted. However, one may not perform a הערמה by intentionally cooking too much on יום טוב so that there will be leftovers, or by inviting guests as an excuse to cook more food. If he does this, the food is prohibited. The גמרא explains the הערמה by saying that, "שאיני הערמה דאחמירו בה רבנן טפי ממויד", חומר by saying that, "שאיני הערמה" — "the הערמה is different, as the חכמים were stricter with it than with an intentional sin." רש"י explains this harsh statement. An intentional sin looks like a sin. Others are unlikely to imitate that sin, and the sinner is more likely to recognize the sin and do תשובה. The הערמה, on the other hand, appears legitimate. Hence, others may imitate the behavior, and the sinner may not be as quick to repent. Because the effects of the הערמה are ultimately worse than those of a חטא, the חכמים treated it more stringently.³ Hence, the הערמה is prohibited under conditions where the act may cause a ripple effect by setting an example which leads others to sin.

A similar idea appears in a גמרא (קלט ע"ב) which describes two questionable acts which were performed by ב"ר חיון. He once placed a

garlic peel in a hole in a barrel on שבת, which appeared to be a prohibition of מתקן. However, רב הונא ב"ר חיון claimed that he merely wanted to store the garlic there. On another occasion he went to sleep in a small boat next to the field of a non-Jew, even though sailing is prohibited on שבת. He knew that the owner would push the boat across the water to his own field, which would allow רב הונא ב"ר חיון to guard his fruit on the other side of the river. Yet, he claimed that his only intention was to go to sleep. The גמרא claims that רב הונא ב"ר חיון did nothing wrong, for two reasons: Firstly, in both cases, even without a הערמה he would only be violating an איסור דרבנן. Secondly, as he was a תלמיד חכם, there was no reason to be strict and forbid these acts. A תלמיד will not come to make a mistake and perform these sins לכתחילה, without a הערמה.

It seems that the דרבנן factor on its own is not enough to justify הערמה, because both the cases of the wine on שבת and the animals in the pit deal with איסורים דרבנן. If דרבנן was enough on its own to permit הערמה, then those cases would be permitted without reference to the financial loss or צער בעלי חיים.

In summary, we have seen several conditions under which הערמה may be justified:

- If there is a good reason for it, such as צער בעלי חיים.
- If there is no other way to avoid financial loss.
- If the trickery is not obvious, and could not mislead people.
- If the actor will not come to sin in the future because of the הערמה.
- If the איסור avoided is only דרבנן, this is a mitigating factor, though it is not sufficient on its own.

Despite these considerations, we should not assume that הערמה, in the instances in which it is allowed, is always an improper way to behave. Often הערמה is the recommended approach under certain conditions. It seems that הערמה — while not an ideal in terms of attitude to הלכה or standards of תורה observance — is the best way to deal with certain extraordinary situations, where other considerations impact upon the הלכה.

All the cases we have considered so far deal with איסור והיתר. In terms of financial law, הערמה takes on a different meaning. It refers to loopholes found in the law to save someone money or to avoid some sort of payment. For example, רמב"ם mentions הערמה in reference to אחריות נכסים. The notion of אחריות means that if A sells a field to B, and A owes C money, C can claim payment from B and A must pay B back. Now, אחריות נכסים applies to cases where the property is sold, but not if it is given as a gift. Hence, if A claims to have given the property to B as a gift, we do not believe A. We assume that it is a הערמה, that A was simply trying to remove C's rights to the field.

To avoid this הערכה we treat the gift as a sale, thereby disallowing A to remove C's rights (הלכות שכנים, יג"ב). In these cases, הערכה is a way of circumventing something which should not be circumvented. It is an attempt to find a technical loophole and ignore the moral problem. Were the הערכה to be accepted, it might possibly satisfy all the legal requirements, but it would not satisfy the moral spirit of the הלכה.

לפני משורת הדין

לפני משורת הדין is a positive phenomenon. We should always be eager to go above and beyond the call of duty, volunteering to do something extra לשם לפני משורת הדין. הלכה לפני משורת הדין can be seen as an ethic beyond הלכה. הלכה לפני משורת הדין means that ethical considerations prevent someone from taking everything that he can according to the letter of the law. It includes doing something decent or moral, even when one is technically פטור from it. In these cases, לפני משורת הדין is not a part of the law. It involves looking beyond the technical details of the הלכה to the spirit behind the law. הלכה can be approached very literally, demanding that one only looks to fulfill a set of technical obligations. לפני משורת הדין describes an attitude wherein one sees הלכה in its moral and spiritual context, and enhances it accordingly.

Yet, we may be mistaken if we assume that לפני משורת הדין is merely an option. In fact, the גמרא says that לפני משורת הדין can be an obligation (בבא מע"א, ל ע"ב). The גמרא quotes the פסוק, which says: "והודעת להם את הדרך" (שמות, יח:כ). It explains that the words "אשר יעשון" לפני משורת הדין, which might appear redundant, actually refer to the time only judged according to the strict letter of the תורה and did not judge לפני משורת הדין. This seems to indicate that לפני משורת הדין is more than an optional extra. It is so essential that the existence of ישראל עם is jeopardized if it is not followed!

On the other hand, there are sources which indicate that לפני משורת הדין is not an obligation. The גמרא tells us that ר' פפא and another man stopped their meal early so that they could join in a זימון with his son, who had already finished eating (ברכות, מה ע"ב). Normally, two people do not have to stop their meal because one wants to make a זימון. The גמרא goes out of its way to say that ר' פפא was acting לפני משורת הדין. This suggests that לפני משורת הדין is an optional extra. It is a nice way to behave, but it is not compulsory.

A similar approach to לפני משורת הדין appears in financial law. ר' פפא bought land from someone, who had only sold it because he desperately

needed the money. By the end of the transaction process the seller no longer needed the money, so ר' פפא returned the land, even though it was legally his (כתובות, זו ע"ב). The גמרא explains that this was a case of הפנים משורת הדין. Similarly, ר' חייא, who worked as a money changer, once gave a woman a refund because he had made a mistake in the exchange, even though he was not required to do so (בבא קמא, צט ע"ב). Here too this behavior is described as הפנים משורת הדין.

There are many other examples where הפנים משורת הדין seems to be an optional practice. For example, if one returns a lost object that, technically, he is not obligated to return, he has acted הפנים משורת הדין (בבא מציעא, כד). Similarly, רמב"ם says that someone who wishes to act הפנים משורת הדין will return a lost object, or help someone else load or unload an animal, even if he is exempt (הלכות גזילה ואבידה, יא:יז. הלכות רוצח, יג:ד).

Perhaps the difference between the sources which see הפנים משורת הדין as obligatory and those that see it as optional can be explained by distinguishing between different people. רמב"ם outlines the behavior which results in הפנים משורת הדין. After listing a number of מידות, he says: "הכל לפי גדלו של חכם", indicating that the greater the person, the more הפנים משורת הדין becomes an obligation.⁴ This idea is consistent with the גמרא above which blames the destruction of ירושלים on the judges, who did not act הפנים משורת הדין. It is also consistent with a גמרא that states that ר' מאיר, would tell others that they can be מיקל, while he himself would act לחומרא (שבת, קלד ע"א). This does not reflect an inconsistency on the part of ר' מאיר. Rather, ר' מאיר understood that behavior which is appropriate for common people may not be proper for חכמים תלמידי חכמים.

In any case, we should not confuse הפנים משורת הדין with חומרא. While הפנים משורת הדין is clearly positive, there are times when חו"ל criticize the acceptance of extreme חומרות (though, of course, חומרא is also a potentially very positive thing). For example, the גמרא states that ר' יוסי ב"ר חנינא once laughed at a חומרא of ר' חייא, which he thought was completely unnecessary (עירובין, מז ע"ב-מח ע"ב). Similarly, ר' הונא was of the opinion that it is forbidden to kill a wasp on שבת, despite the fact that a wasp was considered quite dangerous. His son רבא disagreed. When someone tried to argue with רבא, telling him that the spirit of the חסידים is not happy with someone who kills snakes and scorpions on שבת, רבא retorted that the spirit of the חכמים is not happy with those חסידים! (שבת, קכא ע"ב).

These two stories indicate that not all חומרות are a good thing, especially, as in the case of the wasp, where they might lead to נפשות. In these cases the issue is not הפנים משורת הדין, which is always positive, if not

mandatory. The גמרא here is opposing the concept of senseless חומרא, of creating unnecessary restrictions in the quest for piety. Often לפנים משורת הדין, due to its character as a מידת חסידות, is mistakenly associated with this חומרא, by people who imagine that imposing extra חומרות automatically increases righteousness. A ridiculous חומרא is not לפנים משורת הדין, but only disguised as such.

The מדרש relates that the reason חוה sinned by eating from the עץ (בראשית רבה, יט:ג) מחמיר was because she initially tried to be too טוב ורע. Whereas ה' only commanded them "לא תאכל ממנו" (בראשית, כ:ג), חוה added a new prohibition, "ולא תגע בו" (בראשית, ג:ג). According to the מדרש, the snake pushed her against the tree, demonstrating that she would not die if she touched it. Because the two prohibitions had become equated in her mind, חוה believed the snake when it told her that just as she did not die from touching the tree, she also would not die from eating its fruit. This is an example of the statement in the גמרא: "כל המוסיף גורע" (סנהדרין, כט ע"א).

If (and certain kinds of) חומרא are good, and unnecessary חומרא is bad, how does one know where to draw the line? A good guideline is provided in the above מדרש: מן העיקר, יותר מן הגדר את הגדר יתיר מן העיקר, מדרש. שלא יפול ויקצץ הנטיעות. One should not emphasize the fence around the law more than the law itself. The fence may fall, and pull up the roots of the plants which the fence was protecting. One must differentiate between something extra which serves to enhance the הלכה, and a ridiculous חומרא which is disproportionate to the law it serves.

Conclusion

הערמה and לפנים משורת הדין lie at opposite ends of the halachic spectrum. הערמה, which lies at the lenient end of the spectrum, has certain negative connotations. לפנים משורת הדין, at the strict end of the spectrum, is seen as positive. A person ought to approach תורה and מצוות with an attitude of לפנים משורת הדין, trying to fulfill the highest standard in the practice of the law. The approach underlying הערמה is less desirable, where one looks for loopholes to get out of difficult situations. In a sense, however, the two notions function on similar principles. They both stand at the extremes of the halachic system, finding solutions to difficult problems at the edge of the limits of the law.

¹ The ירושלמי does not even require one of the animals to be sacrificed eventually. It is enough for them to be pulled out of the pit on the basis that they *might* be sacrificed.

² This argument is also mentioned in the above גמרא in ביצה to explain why one opinion

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might permit a הערמה in the case of the two animals but not in the case of the spilled wine.

³ This is not the actual הלכה. This statement is only brought to show how מחמיר the law is according to one opinion. However, we can probably assume that the concerns regarding הערמה and חטא במזיד are common to all opinions.

⁴ Even here, as we will discuss below, there are extremes that are inappropriate. רמב"ם restricts the גדול whose behavior is to reflect קידוש ה' "ולא ישתומם": "והוא שלא יתרחק הרבה ולא ישתומם". As כסף משנה explains, he should be sure not take these מידות to such an extreme that he appears abnormal.

The Halachic and Hashkafic Implications of Destroying עמלק

Avigayil Rosen

ONE OF THE MOST ethically disturbing commandments in the תורה is the command to wipe out the nation of עמלק (דברים, כה:יט). To our 21st century mindset, this command sounds almost barbaric and sub-human, for a number of reasons. First, this command seems like pure genocide. Especially after Hitler's recent systematic attempt at murdering all of the Jews, the idea of wiping out an entire nation — men, women and children — cannot be borne. (שמואל, א ט:ג) עמלק to destroy the animals of שואל even tells שמואל. How can animals be tainted by this nation enough to make them worthy of death? They have no בחירה חופשית. Second, modern people are uncomfortable with the idea of linear or genetic transmission of evil. Why should later generations be punished for the sins of their forefathers? Third, the פסוקים do not explain what was so bad about עמלק relative to other nations that attacked Jews throughout history. We know that עמלק's ancestor and namesake was a grandson of עשו (בראשית, כו:יב), and ה' commands Jews not even to fight against the other nations that descended from עשו (דברים, ב:ה).

To help answer these questions, we should examine closely the פסוקים which describe the war with עמלק and the מצוה to wipe them out. We should examine how the classical מפרשים understand these issues. We will discover that עמלק is both a biological nation and the representation of the ideas of חילול ה' and pure evil. The biological nation of עמלק no longer exists as an identifiable group, but the Jews' eternal battle against חילול ה' continues.

ויבא עמלק וילחם עם ישראל ברפידים. ויאמר משה אל יהושע בחר לנו אנשים וצא להלחם בעמלק מחר אנכי נצב על ראש הגבעה ומטה האלקים בידך. ויעש יהושע כאשר אמר לו משה להלחם בעמלק ומשה אהרן וחור עלו ראש הגבעה. והיה כאשר ירים משה ידו וגבר ישראל וכאשר יניח ידו וגבר עמלק. וידי משה כבדים ויקחו אבן וישימו תחתיו וישב עליה ואהרן וחור תמכו בידיו מזה אחד

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ומזה אחד ויהי ידיו אמונה עד בא השמש. ויחלש יהושע את עמלק ואת עמו לפי חרב. ויאמר ה' אל משה כתב זאת זכרון בספר ושם באוני יהושע כי מחה אמה את זכר עמלק מתחת השמים. ויבן משה מזבח ויקרא שמו ה' נסי. ויאמר כי יד על כס יה מלחמה לה' בעמלק מדר דר (שמות, יז:ח-טז).

משה's hands are emphasized greatly, and are mentioned six times in this short passage. Furthermore, his hands are described by the adjective אמונה. How can משה's hands have "faith"? The גיח: ראש השנה in משנה explains that it wasn't משה's hands that had faith. Rather משה's hands pointed towards the sky, which would direct בני ישראל's attention heavenwards, and remind them that victory against עמלק could only come through ה'. Despite the fact that משה sent יהושע to fight this war, clearly משה also had his "hands" in the battle, and his hands functioned supernaturally. There is a unique aspect of אמונה in this war, as if there is something personal between ה' and עמלק.

רש"י supports the notion that the war with עמלק transcends the physical. He explains that the word כסא is written without the א because ה' throne is incomplete until עמלק is completely destroyed (יז:ח). Similarly, the word רפידים means, רפו ידיהם מן התורה, עמלק was only able to attack us because we were weak in תורה at that time (פרשת בשלח, ילקוט שמעוני פרשת בשלח, רמז כסא).

In דברים, we have the more familiar account of the war with עמלק, which is read as פרשת זכור.

זכור את אשר עשה לך עמלק בדרך בצאתכם ממצרים. אשר קרך בדרך ויזנב בך כל הנחשלים אחריך ואתה עיף ויגע ולא ירא אלוקים. והיה בהניח ה' אלקיך לך מכל איביך מסביב בארץ אשר ה' אלקיך נתן לך נחלה לרשתה תמחה את זכר עמלק מתחת השמים לא תשכח (כה:יז-יט).

This passage, which contains the positive commandment to wipe out עמלק, is juxtaposed with the מצוה to have honest weights and measures. This contrasts with the deceitful and tricky picture painted here of עמלק; they sneaked up from the back and attacked us when we were down.

When comparing these two accounts, Nechama Leibowitz asks a number of questions. Why are we commanded to attack them, if it is God's עמלק? Also, the two accounts of the war with עמלק paint very different pictures. The first account paints the picture of a proud victorious battle, which is recorded in ה' Book of Wars. The second account portrays בני ישראל as weak and tired and no mention is made of the

victory. Also, why is the command to wipe out עמלק included only in the account in דברים? In addition, why is עמלק portrayed as "ולא ירא אלוהים" if no other nation is so condemned?¹

Prof. Leibowitz answers these questions by distinguishing between the purpose of the two accounts. שמות contains the facts of the battle, and דברים contains a moral analysis of עמלק. עמלק points to their wanton aggression against a weak and defenseless nation, which was not bothering them. She also cites רש"י, who explains the nature of עמלק's aggression, by shedding some new light on the words "אשר קרך בדרך." He brings a parable of a hot bath. No one wants to touch the hot bath, because he would burn himself. But if one fool comes into the bath, he cools down the bath for everyone else, even though he is burnt. So too, when בני ישראל left מצרים they were indestructible — no one was willing to attack them. But when עמלק started the war with us, some of the aura wore off. Up until this point, "תפל עליהם, בני ישראל" the nations of the world were so scared of בני ישראל (שמות, טו:טז) אימתה ופחדו and ה', and they realized that ה' must be true. The hand of ה' had been shown to the nation, but עמלק's attitude of total disrespect and obstinate denial of ה', caused the world, according to Prof. Leibowitz, to "return to its former rut, to its idols of gold and silver, its faith in mortal power and brute force." The nations of the world were ready to recognize the truth of ה's dominion, but עמלק prevented this from becoming a reality. This reasoning helps to explain why ה' would want to destroy עמלק. ה' goes to drastic measures to prevent חלול ה'.

עמלק אברבנאל also addresses the theme of חלול ה' in explaining חלול ה'. He says (שמואל, א:טו) that there are three reasons that one nation would attack another: 1) to save their own land, 2) to take the other nation's land, and 3) to embarrass the other nation, not necessarily because of anything that the other nation did. עמלק's war on בני ישראל falls under the last category. He further explains that there are two ulterior motives for עמלק's attack. 1) They wanted to prove that they could defeat the nation for whom God had just shown the whole world His dominion. עמלק emphasizes the חלול ה' theme again. 2) They were בני עשו, and they knew about the ברכות which were originally for עשו but were given to יעקב. They understood that they have the power of the sword over בני ישראל when we are sinning. They were concerned that this may be their last chance; once The Jews enter ארץ ישראל, their chance will be lost. Both explanations focus on the inflated egos of עמלק. עמלק quotes רלב"ג who further expands on this theme. He says that משה sent out יהושע to fight עמלק to embarrass them.

עמלק אברבנאל continues the theme of חלול ה' in explaining the פסוק "מלחמה, פסוק" לה' בעמלק מדור דור. The permanent war with עמלק stems from the fact that the "כס קה", God's throne and honor, is not complete before the destruction

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of עמלק. Therefore, "ושנים באוני יהושע", it was necessary for this מצוה to be passed on to the next generation of leadership.

Rav Dessler also emphasizes the aspect of חלול ה' עמלק stands against everything represented by ה'.² "ה' would be prepared to fight against the purpose of creation throughout all generations....out of hatred for truth and love for falsehood for its own sake." According to Rav Dessler, עמלק is a nation that is counterproductive to the function of the whole world. Any nation that would fight for the side of falsehood because they hate truth is in essence denying ה'.

But all this still doesn't seem like justification for genocide. Why should their inflated ego and/or their חלול ה' warrant such a decree against עמלק? To understand more we will look into what חז"ל and the other ראשונים say about עמלק.

The גמרא, ספר החינוך, and רמב"ם seem to make the problem worse. The גמרא סנהדרין (כ' ע"ב) teaches us that upon entering ארץ ישראל the Jews were commanded to do three מצוות: 1) appoint a king, 2) wipe out the seed of עמלק, and 3) build the המקדש. Destroying עמלק is so important that ה' is מוחל on His dwelling place among us. Wiping out עמלק must come first (הלכות מלכים א:ה). מלכים א:ה compounds this by stating that the first thing a king should do is fight מלחמת מצוה עמלק, which includes מלחמת מצוה עמלק. ספר החינוך (תר"ד) quantifies this מצוה: the מצוה applies not only to the whole ציבור ישראל in ארץ ישראל, but to every Jewish male who finds someone from עמלק. If he doesn't kill the עמלקי, he has failed to fulfill this מצוה עשה. This dichotomy is confusing, because even if we could prove that someone was from עמלק, most countries in which we live have laws against murder. It would be difficult for each Jewish individual to randomly wipe out members of עמלק.

There are, however, a number of sources that work to spiritualize the מצוה, making it less implementable in real life. הגהות מימניות makes a דיוק from the words "והיה בהניח ה' אלוך לך מכל איבד מסביב בארץ" — that the מצוה of wiping out עמלק only applies in the days of משיח, after we come back to ארץ ישראל and we are at peace. In this case we understand that perhaps this מצוה is not meant to be performed in our context right now.

Rav Soloveitchik also suggests something similar to הגהות מימניות.³ The Rav sees עמלק as a *force* embodied by the enemies of the Jews throughout the generations, a kind of man-Satan. Throughout Jewish history we hoped that these enemies of ours would turn away from evil, but sadly this hope was usually in vain. This evil force can only be obliterated in the days of משיח, because this man-Satan attacks us in every generation: עומדים דור ודור שבכל דור עליו ללכותנו.

It's not clear if the Rav is saying that there will be a war against all the different man-Satan's in the time of משיח or that the man-Satan will cease to

be an entity on his own. But it's clear that the Rav is referring to an ideological nation, not a biological one. Anyone who says, "Let's go wipe the Jews off the face of this planet," has ideologically joined the nation עמלק. The man-Satan is the enemy of everyone, but the brunt of his hatred is directed towards the Jews. No matter what excuse the ideological עמלק uses for their anti-Semitic acts throughout the years — be it political, religious, or economic — these are all just excuses. Their hatred of the Jews is imbedded in the man-Satan, and is not really affected by our actions.

רמב"ם (פ"ו) הלכות מלכים seems to provide support for Rav Soloveitchik's theory. He states "אבל בשבע עממין ובעמלק שלא השלימו אין מניחים מהם נשמה" עמלק says that we wipe out עמלק when they don't make peace, implying that we do not wipe them out when they *do* try to make peace. This provides support for the view of the Rav — by trying for peace they are excluding themselves from the ideological nation of עמלק, and no longer fall under the category of עמלק! תמחה את זכר עמלק!

The Rav¹⁷ comments on this רמב"ם and says that we only accept עמלק if they agree to accept the מצוות upon themselves. The כסף משנה takes this one step farther. If members of עמלק agree to accept the בני נח שבע מצוות בני נח, they move out of the category of עמלק and become regular בני נח. This all seems to directly support the Rav's idea of the ideological nature of עמלק.

"בני בנים של המן גיטין (נ"א עמ' ב) quotes the גמרא in הלכה adds חזון איש. עמלק from גרים indicates that we accept ברק" that the principle of accepting גרים from עמלק only applies when the Jews are not at war with עמלק, because during war we suspect them of trickery. הגיוני goes on to say that we don't know which nation is עמלק today, but we know that they still exist as a spiritual principle, as the פסוק says, "מלחמה לה' מלחמה דור".⁴

Yet, this picture of עמלק as an ideological group contradicts the simple פשט in the תנ"ך. In תנ"ך, עמלק is clearly a biological nation. The גמרא (ברכות,) discusses a גר from the nation of עמון coming to the בית מדרש, and asking if he could be accepted as a member of בני ישראל. רבן גמליאל said no and ר' יהושע said yes. רבן גמליאל quoted the verse, "לֹא יָבֹא עִמּוֹנִי וּמֹאבִי בִּקְהָל ה'!" ר' יהושע responded that both עמון and מואב are no longer in their original states anymore. "כבר עלה סנחריב מלך אשור ובלבל את כל האומות." In other words, the nations of old are no longer what they once were. The nations referred to in תנ"ך were all spread around by סנחריב, and can no longer be identified as such.

It seems, then, that in the עמלק תנ"ך was a biological nation, which possessed all the qualities that we discussed above. After דוד and שאול defeated them, they ceased to be as important because they became smaller and weaker. They still retained their עמלקי traits, as the example of המן proves.

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When בני ישראל came and mixed up the nations, the old enemies of בני ישראל faded into the abyss of assimilation and time. But the ideological ideals of עמלק, of pure evil, do not assimilate. They are as sharp now as they were at the first attack of עמלק at רפידים! עמלק has been a spiritual legacy of all the enemies of the Jews throughout the years of our history in גלות! The Rav calls עמלק an ideological nation because the idea of עמלק has long outlasted the biological nation. We may no longer be obligated in the concrete genocide of a biological עמלק nation, but we are obligated to dedicating our lives to thwarting the ideological proponents of pure evil.

עמלק is a nation that epitomizes evil in the most concentrated way possible. They are the antithesis of בני ישראל. Whereas we are אור לגויים, עמלק embodies lack of faith in ה' and rejection of all good. אם ירצה ה', in the times of משיח we will be able to destroy once and for all the scourge of עמלק, and במהרה בימינו אמן, כסא הכבוד ה' will finally be complete.

¹ *Studies in Sefer Devarim* "Remember עמלק" p. 250.

² *Strive for Truth*, Vol. I, p. 182.

³ רב י.ד. סולובייצ'יק, "משמעותו המטפיסית של חג פורים," *דברי השקפה*, עמ' 183.

⁴ רב מירסקי, "קבלת גרים מעמלק," *הגיוני הלכה*, כרך א' עמ' 233.

”אל תטש תורת אמך”: The Role and Function of מנהג המקום

Zahava Lerner

מנהג המקום is a subcategory of the much wider category of מנהג אדם. חיי אדם, in איסור מדברי סופרים מנהג he transgresses the מנהג, כלל קכו writes that if one violates a מנהג, “אל תטש תורת אמך” (משלי, א:ח). Rav Moshe Feinstein (סימן ק), אבן העזר חלק ד, סימן ק, adds that he may also transgress two other prohibitions: “לא תתגדוד” (דף קע (פסחים, נ ע”ב) “אל ישנה אדם מפני המחלוקת” and (יבמות, יג ע”ב).

אדם distinguishes between four types of מנהגים, and the methods by which one can stop practicing each type of מנהג. First, a matter which is in principle מותר, but nevertheless, some have a practice not to do it. (Those who follow the practice realize that it is not really אסור in a technical sense.) This kind of מנהג can be stopped without נדרים. Second, a מנהג which is maintained for reasons of חסידות ופרישות. A person requires נדרים to change this kind of מנהג. Third, a מנהג that is established סג, as a fence to prohibit violation of a real איסור. If an entire community accepts a מנהג of this kind, then התרת נדרים can only be performed by the whole community. The individual on his own may not do התרת נדרים. The individual can only abandon the practice if he permanently leaves the community that maintains the מנהג. The fourth and final type of מנהג is one that is grounded in הלכה. This is a case where there is a מחלוקת הפוסקים over a matter of הלכה, and a certain locality maintains that it is אסור. If the community accepted the practice because they thought that that is the proper הלכה, then the community does not have the authority to change the older פסק even through התרת נדרים. However, if the community maintained the practice because they saw it as a מידת חסידות, then they may do התרת נדרים. We see, then, that מנהג המקום is an important aspect of the wider category of מנהג.

מנהג המקום and משנה discuss the issue of גמרא in ע”א-ע”ב. The משנה states:

מקום שנהגו לעשות מלאכה בערבי פסחים עד חצות עושין. מקום שנהגו לא לעשות אין עושין. ההולך ממקום שעושין למקום שאין עושין, או ממקום שאין עושין למקום שעושין, נותנין עליו חומרי מקום שיצא משם וחומרי מקום שהלך לשם. ואל ישנה אדם מפני המחלוקת.

This ערב פסח discusses the מנהגים of different cities on מלאכה. While some cities would do מלאכה up until חצות, other cities would not do any מלאכה the entire day. The משנה describes a person who travels to another עיר before פסח, and finds himself in a city with a different מנהג than the city from which he comes. In this case a person should maintain the stringent practices, both of the new city and his old home town.

The משנה then adds, "ואל ישנה אדם מפני המחלוקת". The גמרא discusses what exactly the statement "ואל ישנה אדם מפני המחלוקת" means. Did the משנה not state earlier that a person should place upon himself the חומרות of the place he came from?! Consequently, if a person goes from a place that does not do work to a place that does, he will end up being idle while others work. Does the last line of the משנה indicate that he would be obligated to work so as not to create מחלוקת?

The גמרא provides two answers to this question. אביי holds that the statement of "אל ישנה" applies only to the רישא of the משנה. In a case where one goes from a place where מלאכה is done on ערב פסח to a place where מלאכה is not done, the person should not work for two reasons. First, because it is the more מחמיר option, and second because it prevents מחלוקת. However, if one goes from a city that does not work to a city that does, the person should remain idle even in the new city. רבא, however, holds that "אל ישנה" applies to both the רישא and סיפא of the משנה. This means that a person should never act differently than the מנהג העיר if doing so would cause מחלוקת. According to רבא there may be cases in which the statements נותנין עליו חומרי מקום שיצא משם וחומרי ואל ישנה אדם מפני המחלוקת conflicts with מחמיר. If being מחמיר would cause מחלוקת then it seems that one should not be מחמיר because of "אל ישנה". However, in the סיפא of the משנה — one who goes from a place that does not do מלאכה to a place that does — the two statements do not contradict. For, in this case the people who see him not working will not think that he is violating local practice. Rather, they will assume that he is simply lazy.

טור (או"ח, תסח) writes something quite astonishing regarding one who moves from one locale to the other.

אם דעתו להשתקע במקום שבא שם יעשה כמנהג בין לחומרה בין לקולא. ואם דעתו לחזור למקומו ינהג כמנהג אנשי מקומו.

With regard to one who plans to return to his original place, טור holds that,

ינהג כמנהג אנשי מקומו והני מילי בעינעא שלא בפני אנשי המקום אשר בא שם אבל בפניהם אם יש לחוש למחלוקת אם ישנה ממנהגם יניח מנהג אנשי מקומו וינהוג כמנהגם אפילו נהגו להקל כ"ש אם נהגו להחמיר.

One who intends to return should follow the practice of his original community in private. In public, there is a fear that if he acts differently than the locals, it may cause מחלוקת. Therefore, he is allowed to follow local practice, certainly as a חומרה, but even as a קולא חדש. טור points out that, "גדול השלום". It is more important to maintain peace than to maintain one's מנהג. It seems that טור follows רבא, who holds that the rule "ואל ישנה אדם מפני המחלוקת" is the dominant principle.

Where does טור get the idea that one's מנהג changes if one settles permanently in a new place? The answer to this question comes from the גמרא in חולין (יח), which discusses a case of רבי זירא, who traveled from בבל to ארץ ישראל. In בבל he ate מרגמת (animals slaughtered in a questionable way). רב and רבי זירא hold that it is אסור, but in ארץ ישראל it was considered מותר. רבי זירא ate this meat while in ארץ ישראל, though he came from a place where the practice was to be מחמיר. The גמרא asks, does רבא not accept the משנה's principle "ניתנין עליו חומרי המקום שהוא משם"? One would think that רבא should continue to follow the חומרות of בבל even when in ארץ ישראל. The גמרא presents two answers: that of רבא and that of רבי אבי. רבא says that the משנה's dictate applies in every case except if one goes from בבל to ארץ ישראל. In that situation, those in בבל are subservient to those in ארץ ישראל. רבי אבי says that the משנה only applies if דעתו לחזור. But, רבי זירא was not planning on returning, and therefore he no longer maintained the practice of the place from which he came.

Still, from where does טור get the idea that one who is planning on returning is permitted in private to follow the practice of the place from which he came, rather than the מנהג of the place where he is at the moment? It seems that טור derives this from ר"ן's explanation of the משנה (ד"ן). ר"ן explains that the reason for following the חומרות of both places is in order to avoid מחלוקת. Hence, in private one may still follow the קולות that come from his home town.

נותרים עליו חומרי מקום שיצא משם וחומרי שלחן ערוך argues that the principle applies in public, both for those who intend to return and those who do not. In private, a person is permitted to follow his old קולות, provided that they will not cause מחלוקת.

ההולך ממקום שעושין למקום שאין עושין, לא יעשה בשוב מפני המחלוקת; אבל עושה הוא במדבר. וההולך ממקום שאין עושין למקום שעושין, לא יעשה. ונותנים עליו חומרי מקום שיצא משם וחומרי מקום שהלך לשם, ואעפ"כ לא יתראה בפניהם שהוא בטל, מפני איסור לעולם אל ישנה אדם מפני המחלוקת. וכן מי שדעתו לחזור למקומו, נוהג כאנשי מקומו בין להקל בין להחמיר, והוא שלא יתראה בפני אנשי המקום שהוא בו, מפני המחלוקת.

משנה The emphasizes greatly the necessity to avoid dispute. The picks up on this emphasis, concluding that if one is מקל in a place where others are מחמיר, it must be in private, or outside of the תחום. Furthermore, if one adopts a חומרה which is not accepted as the local practice, he should be sure not to publicize his חומרה. If he is unable to hide his חומרות, then he should be מקיל even though the place he is from is מחמיר, provided that the חומרה stems from מנהג. If however, he thinks that the חומרה is because of an איסור (even דרבנן), then he should follow his חומרה, even at the risk of creating מחלוקת. הלכה adds that one should only stop being מחמיר if he finds himself in a place where the מנהג is lenient.

It is also important to determine who has the authority to establish המקום. The (סעיף קטן ד) באור הלכה has an elaborate discussion of this issue. He maintains that מנהג המקום depends on the people living in the place, rather than the geographical location itself. He brings the example of a community that is מחמיר in a certain area of הלכה. If the entire community dies out, and a new community of people with a more lenient practice moves in, they maintain their lenient practice. However, if a few people are left from the old community, then they represent continuity from the old קהילה, and all the newcomers must follow the old חומרה, even if the newcomers represent the majority of residents. There is an exception to this rule, if the new and old קהילות are entirely separate. That is, if the newcomers have at least a מנין of people, a separate בית כנסת in which the ציבור prays every day, a מקוה and a reliable רב, then they can follow their own מנהגים. From this באור הלכה it seems that מנהג המקום is based on something more specific than the place in which one lives. It is based on the specific community a person is part of. Even if two communities live in one area, there can be two different מנהגים מקומיים.

Rav Moshe Feinstein, in his (סיק) אגרות משה, defines who establishes המקום. He writes that the local חכם defines the מנהג in that place. His פסק continues to be the מנהג of a place unless a greater חכם settles in the town. Thus, if one settles in a town, he must follow the פסק of the רב in that מקום. Combining Rav Moshe's תשובה with the הלכה, we would conclude that different communities living in one area may have different חכמים determining the מנהגים of the community. For the באור הלכה

states that if a new community has a "מורה צדק" (along with other requirements), the new community need not follow the מנהגים of the old community. It is possible for two communities with two different מנהגים to coexist.

Rav Moshe derives the idea that the רב determines the מנהג המקום from גמרא (קל, שבת, קל) גמרא. רבי אליעזר actually put into practice his position that it is permitted on שבת to do מלאכה for the sake of a מצוה. In the city of רבי אליעזר they would cut the wood to light the fire that would be used to prepare the metal for the knife used for a מילה. Similarly, in the city of ר' יוסי they would follow his practice, and eat the meat of birds together with milk. The גמרא concludes by saying that the cities of רבי אליעזר and ר' יוסי were not punished, and in fact were rewarded. The מנהג הרב has great authority, even if it is different than the מנהג in most places. The גמרא teaches that it is incumbent upon a person to follow the פסק of the רב in his community.

The Jewish world today constantly faces matters that relate to מנהג המקום. The growing integration of ספרדים and אשכנזים, and the constant mobility of people between one city and the other, or between חוץ לארץ and ארץ ישראל, raise constant questions of מנהג המקום. It is critical that we learn the laws and lessons from this area of הלכה. One of the most important lessons to learn from this סוגיה is the value of שלום. It is very important to remain sensitive to the emotions people feel when they see others act differently than themselves. People should be cautious of flaunting distinctive practice, being constantly aware of how their actions might affect the people around them.

כחה של תפלה

הרב אליעזר לרנר

לקראת תחילת פרשת מטות, בני ישראל נצטוו להנקם ממדין ולהלחם נגדם. אמנם אין צורך שכל שש מאות אלף ישתתפו בקרב. "אלף למטה אלף למטה לכל מטות ישראל תשלחו לצבא. וימסרו מאלפי ישראל אלף למטה" (במדבר, לא:ד-ה). לפי פשוטו של מקרא, נשלחו שנים עשר אלף למלחמה, אבל חז"ל במדרש רבה (במדבר, כב:ג) הבינו אחרת.

"ויש אומרים שלשת אלפים מכל שבט ושבט. שנים עשר אלף משמרים את כליהם... ושנים עשר אלף לתפלה. ומנין שכן שנאמר אלף למטה, אלף למטה הרי כ"ד אלפים. וימסרו מאלפי ישראל למטה הרי זה י"ב אחרים." כלומר, כל שבט שלח שלשת אלפי איש. אלף להלחם ואלף לשמור על הכלים ואלף להתפלל.

בא ושואל הרב יחזקאל לוינשטיין זצ"ל שאלה פשוטה. למה היה צורך לשלוח מתפללים למקום הקרב? למה לא מספיק לבקש מיתר בני ישראל, שלא הלכו למלחמה ולא עזבו את המחנה, להתפלל באותו יום כל אחד במקומו?

כנראה, יש הבדל בתפלת המונים הנערכת בתוך המחנה לבין תפלת המונים שמתקיימת בשדה הקרב. השנים עשר אלף שהלכו להלחם ונצחו נצחון גדול נגד אויביהם בלי לאבד אפילו חייל אחד עלולים לחשוב שבמידה מסויימת "כחי ועוצם ידי עשה לי את החיל הזה". נצחו בקרב כי היו יותר טובים מהמדיינים. גבורתם ואומץ לבם וכושר יכולתם להלחם הביאו להצלחתם.

ולכן צוה משה שישלחו שנים עשר אלף מתפללים (כמנין הלוחמים) לעמוד שם בשדה הקרב. במשך כל המלחמה והנצחון הגדול, כשידימו הלוחמים את עיניהם יראו את המתפללים ויבינו היטב שה' הוא איש המלחמה המנצח בקרב, ולא הם. אם המתפללים היו נשארים במחנה, רחוק משדה הקרב, קרוב מאוד שהחיילים לא היו שמים לב והיו שוכחים שרק "אלה ברכב ואלה בסוסים, אבל אנחנו בשם ה' אלקינו נזכיר" (תהילים, כ:ח).

מאותה סיבה, במלחמת עמלק המוזכרת בסוף פרשת בשלח, משה עולה לראש הגבעה כדי שכולם יראו את מה שקורה. רק בזמן שמשה מרים ידיו ומתפלל

ובני ישראל מסתכלים כלפי מעלה ומשעבדים את לבם לאביהם שבשמים היו מתגברים. אבל ברגע שחשבו שהכל תלוי בידם, מיד היו נופלים.

ונראה שיש להוסיף כאן עוד נקודה. הצורך להכיר בכוחה של תפלה חיוני לא רק לחייל, אלא גם כן למתפלל. לפעמים, אפילו אלו שמקפידים להתפלל על כל צרה וצוקה, עושים כן מפני שכך צריכים לעשות אבל מסופקים אם באמת תצא תועלת ממנה. יש חולה - צריכים לומר תהילים. יש חשש פיגועים - צריכים לבקש רחמים. אין גשמים - צריכים להתפלל. אבל האם אנו מאמינים באמונה שלמה שזה יעזור למצב? כי אם באמת היינו מאמינים, איך היינו יכולים לומר תהילים ולבקש רחמים ולהתפלל בלי כוונת הלב! אם יש בזה תועלת איך אפשר לפתח את שפתינו בלי לשפוך כמים לבנו נכח פני ה'?

ולכן צוה משה למתפללים שילכו למקום המלחמה, והם בעצמם יראו שכל זמן שמתפללים כראוי מנצחים, אבל ברגע שמתרשלים, וגבר יד האויב.

במיוחד בזמנים קשים לעם ישראל, צריכים להבין שאם ה' לא ישמור עיר שוא שקד שומר, וחייבים אנו לבקש משומר ישראל שישמור שארית ישראל. אבל נוסף על החיוב, עלינו להבין ולהרגיש שאם פונים אליו כראוי ומודעים אנו בלי שום שמץ של ספק שבורא העולם הוא השומע תפלה, שהוא ישמע קולנו ויחוס וירחם עלינו ויקבל ברחמים וברצון את תפלתנו.

רחב הזונה: דוגמה לתשובה?

טלי סילבר

נאמר בגמרא, במסכת מגילה (יד ע"ב) "שמונה נביאים והם כהנים באו מרחב הזונה," ביניהם ירמיהו הנביא וחלקיה הכהן הגדול. אפשר לשאול, מי היתה רחב? מדוע היא זכתה להיות האם הקדמונית של שמונה מנביאי ישראל? ואם היתה אשה חשובה, למה היא נקראה אשה זונה?

בספר יהושע (ב:א-כד) נאמר שכאשר יהושע שלח מרגלים ליריחו, הם התחבאו בבית רחב, והיא הצילה אותם ממלך יריחו. היא אמרה להם, "ידעתי כי נתן ה' לכם את הארץ... כי שמענו את אשר הוביש ה' את מי ים סוף מפניכם בצאתכם ממצרים... ונשמע וימס לבבנו... כי ה' אלקיכם הוא אלקים בשמים ממעל ועל הארץ מתחת". מכאן עולה שרחב היא יראת שמים ושהיא יודעת על כל הניסים שעשה ה' לבני ישראל. היא גם מבקשת שכר לפעולתה "כי עשיתי עמכם חסד ועשיתם גם אתם עם בית אבי חסד ונתתם לי אות אמת". בביאורו מסביר הגר"א את הפסוק- מה שתגמלו לי זו אמת, ומה שתעשו למשפחתי זה חסד, מפני שחסד עושים ללא תמורה, ואמת גומלים כדי להחזיר חוב. אנו לומדים מכאן על חכמתה של רחב, שידעה את ההבדל ביניהם.

אנו יודעים מכאן שרחב היתה יראת שמים, אבל כתוב במפורש שהיא היתה אשה זונה! כיצד ייתכן ששני הדברים יתקיימו בו-זמנית? אולי היא לא היתה אשה זונה ממש? תרגום יונתן (יהושע ב:א) מתרגם את "בית אשה זונה" ל"בית אתא פונדקיתא". רד"ק (שם) מסביר שיש כאן שני מובנים למילה זונה. הראשון, שהיתה זונה ממש. והשני, שהיתה מוכרת מזון. אחד המובנים ל"פונדקיתא" הוא עובדת בפונדק, שזה מעין מלון. אולם, גם אם היא רק היתה בעלת אכסניה, באותה עת לא נחשבה פרנסה זו כזנוהה.

אולי אפשר לומר שרחב היתה יראת שמים בה בעת שהיתה זונה! במסכת זבחים (קטז ע"ב) כתוב, "בת יי היתה כשיצאו ממצרים וזנתה מ' שנה שהיו ישראל במדבר אחר נ' שנה נתגיירה". היא אמרה למרגלים ששמעה על הניסים שעשה ה' לבני ישראל, והיא התגיירה רק כאשר הם רצו לכבוש את הארץ. אולי ייתכן, אם כן, שבשלב מסוים בסיפור שלנו היא שבה בתשובה והתגיירה.

במקומות רבים נוספים, דנים החכמים בזנות רחב, כמו למשל במסכת מגילה (טו ע"א): "ארבע נשים יפיפיות בעולם...רחב בשמה זנתה". יש גם מקומות המדברים בעדקתה. כפי שהזכרתי, נאמר במסכת זבחים (קטז ע"ב) שרחב היתה זונה כל מ' שנים שבני ישראל היו במדבר, ואחרי כן היא התגיירה, ואמרה שבשלושה דברים אלה נמחל לה: בחבל, בחלון ובפשתיים. ורש"י פירש שבשלושה דברים אלה, חטאה רחב בזנות (מפני שגרה בחומת העיר, אנשים הגיעו לביתה בעזרת חבל, חלון ופשתיים). באותם דברים היא פעלה בעדק כאשר הצילה את השליחים. וכתוב בגמרא בירושלמי (ברכות, ד:ד), שבשעה שבני ישראל עושים את רצון ה', הוא מביא צדיקי אומות העולם להיות עמם, כמו יתרו ורחב. מכאן אנו רואים את כח התשובה, שזונה נקראת צדקת. כתוב במדרש (במדבר רבה, ג:ב), "אשריהם אלו שקירבן אף על פי שלא בחרן". המדרש מתכוון לרחב שלא נולדה יהודיה, אבל התקרבה לה' והתגיירה. וכתוב בספרי (דברים, כב) שכאשר רחב שלחה את המרגלים להרים לשלשה ימים, היא ידעה ברוח הקודש מתי יהיה נכון שיחזרו.

עדיין קשה לי לומר שרחב היתה צדקת גמורה. אבל, כתוב בגמרא במגילה (יד ע"א), שלא רק שרחב התגיירה, אלא שהיא גם התחתנה עם יהושע. לדעתי, יהושע לא היה מתחתן עם מרשעת או אפילו עם בינונית. אפשר, לכן, להניח שתשובת רחב היתה תשובה גמורה. אכן, היא עשתה דברים בלתי ראויים ואולי אסורים, אבל ה' שמע את תשובתה והצילה, וממנה באו נביאים. זו דוגמא שבבילנו לכח התשובה. אפשר להשוות את רחב לעוד אשה בתנ"ך, לרות. שתי הנשים הללו התקרבו לה' דרך מסלול של תשובה והתגיירות. רות ידעה שביהדות הקשר לה' חזק יותר מאשר באומות העולם. "עמך עמי ואלקיך אלקי" (רות, א:טז). כאשר רחב עשתה חסד בהצלת המרגלים, היא עשתה זאת מתוך אמונה בה'. ואולי זו היתה הסיבה להצלחתם-גישתה היהודית. וכן גם ברות. היא עשתה חסד עם נעמי ועם ה' מפני שהיתה לה אותה גישה של קירבה להקב"ה. ישנו גורם נוסף המשותף לשתייהן: שתיהן נישאו לגדולי העם. רחב, לפי הגמרא, התחתנה עם יהושע, תלמיד משה ומנהיג ישראל אחריו. ורות התחתנה עם בעז, שגם היה מנהיג בזמנו, ואיש חשוב וחכם. איך אפשר להעלות על הדעת שהם יתחתנו עם נשים שלא עשו תשובה והתגיירו לשם שמים?!

ישנם הבדלים בין השתיים - רחב, היתה זונה ממש ונצטרכה לשוב, מפני שהזנות היא שלילית ומגונה אפילו לפי שבע מצוות בני נח. רחב עשתה תשובה מפני שראתה את ניסי ה'. מצד שני, רות היתה בת מלך, שחיה היו טובים. לפני שהתגיירה, היא נחשפה רק לעונשי ה' וכל מה שקורה למי שלא שומע לדבריו. ולמרות מה שראתה, היא התגיירה. ייתכן שההתגיירות של רות היתה יותר אידיאלית. אבל איך נוכל לשפוט את זה - ה' נתן לשתייהן שכר גדול: בנים שיהיו נביאים, כוהנים, ומלכים - אפילו את מלך המשיח (במהרה בימינו!). ואף לפני שידעו את שכרן, כל מעשיהן היו לשם שמיים. וזה טעמה וכוחה של התשובה - האפשרות לעשות מעשים חשובים (מעשים שיזכרו לדורות) ולהיות קרובים לה'.

רשימת שמות או רמז לתולדות העולם?

טליה שוויד

אחרי קריאה שטחית בפרק י שבספר בראשית, הפותח במילים "ואלה תולדות בני נח..." ומסתיים ב"אלה משפחת בני נח לתולדתם בגויהם וכו'", הגיוני להניח שמטרתו של פרק זה ורבים כמותו הוא לתעד את שושלת היוחסין שראשיתה בבני נח, כדי שנדע מי הם שורדי המבול. אולם, מפרטים רבים שהתורה מפזרת, נראה לנו שמסתתר כאן רעיון עמוק יותר.

לפני שנתייחס למשמעות הפרק, נדון קצת בהקשרו ובעיקר בפרק שלאחריו, דהיינו ספור מגדל בבל ודוד הפלגה. ספור בניין מגדל בבל בפרק יא נפתח במילים "ויהי כל הארץ שפה אחת ודברים אחדים". לכאורה, פירוש הפסוק הוא שכל בני האדם גרו באותו מקום ודברו אותה השפה, נועצו זה בזה, נסעו לארץ שנער, ובנו שם מגדל. מתעוררת, אם כן, קושייה לפרקנו. לאחר רשימת הצאצאים של כל אחד מבני נח, מופיעה הנוסחה "ללשונותם בארצותם בגויהם". אחרי רשימת בני יפת ובפסוק האחרון בפרק אפילו כתובות המילים "ומאלה נפרדו וכו'". משמעות הפסוקים היא שהמשפחות כבר היו נפרדות במקום מושבן (ע' גם פסוק ל) ובלשוניתיהן. אם כך, ישנה סתירה מפורשת בין פרק י והפסוק הראשון של פרק יא. מתי נפרדו? בפרק י או אחרי החטא בפרק הבא?

ניתן ליישב סתירה זו בעזרת שתי גישות. הראשונה טוענת ש"אין מוקדם ומאוחר בתורה". זו גישתם של רש"י, רד"ק ורמב"ן (אם כי ישנם הבדלים בפרטי פירושיהם). את המילים "מאלה נפרדו" בפסוקים ה ו-ל, הם מייחסים ל"אחר הפלגה".¹ יש הגיון בטענה שכדי לשמור על סדר מסוים בפרקים, התורה הזכירה כאן את כל העובדות הנוגעות לתולדות בני נח כולל הפירוד שיקרה בפרק הבא. מכיוון שהתורה הציגה את "שחקני" הספור הבא, היא כבר הוסיפה ותיארה את העולה בגורלם, למרות שזה רק יקרה אחרי מאורעות הפרק הבא, וזאת כדי שלא תצטרך להתייחס אליהם שוב לאחר הספור.

הקושי העיקרי בגישה זו הוא בלשון בה נוקטת התורה לתאר את הפירוד. בפרק י נאמר פעמיים "מאלה נפרדו" (פסוקים ה ו-ל), ובפרק יא בתיאור העונש נאמר "ויפץ" (יא:ח). לפי רב המקרים בתנ"ך ולפי מילון התנ"ך של בראון, דרייבר ובריגס, משמעות השרש פ.ר.ד. הוא 'הפרדה, חלוקה' (division, separation), וז"א,

היפרדות טבעית. לעומת זאת, השורש נ.פ.צ. משמעותו פיזור בכח. המילה "ויפץ" מתאימה כעונש לדור הפלגה. אבל המילה "נפרדו" איננה מתאימה לפיזור אקטיבי ותקיף של בני אדם לארבע כנפות הארץ. ועוד, אילו רצתה התורה להשתמש בשרש פ.ר.ד. לתאור העונש, היה מתאים יותר לכתוב "מאלה הופרדו" בבניין הופעל כדי להדגיש את הכפיה והכח שבפעולה.

כדי ליישב סתירה זו, הולך הרב שמשון רפאל הירש בכיוון אחר. במקום לשנות את סדר הפסוקים, הוא מפרש את המילים אחרת. בגלל הבדלי הלשון בין שני הפרקים, טוען הרב הירש שמתוארים כאן שני אירועים שונים. בפרק י, מדובר על הליך פירוד טבעי של משפחות הארץ על פני האדמה כתוצאה מהתפתחות החברה. אבל בפרק יא, במילים "ויפץ ה'" מתואר הפיזור שפיזר אלוקים את כל בני האדם בגלל חטאם. באופן דומה הוא מסביר את ההבדל בין "ללשוונתם", בפרק י, ו"שפה אחת" בפרק יא. ה"לשון" השונה בפרק י, מתייחסת לדיאלקטים של כל המשפחות. עם התפתחות החברה, מתפתחים דיאלקטים שונים בתהליך טבעי. אבל באשר לשפה 'language' — כש"בלל ה' שפת כל הארץ" (יא:ט), ה' נתן לכל אחד מהם שפה לגמרי שונה כעונש לחטא.

ברצוני להעיר שיש קושיות גם בהסבר זה. אם בוחנים את גבולות בני כנען המוזכרים בפרק י (עיין אטלס דעת מקרא, עמ' 45), מתברר שהם רחוקים מארץ שנער בה ישבו כל תושבי העולם בתחילת פרק יא. אם כן, סביר יותר לומר שהגבולות נוצרו אחרי ההפצה. שנית, כתוב אצל בני כנען "ואחר נפצו משפחות הכנעני". הרב הירש אינו מסביר את השימוש בשורש נ.פ.צ. בפרק הזה.

נמשך לנושא העיקרי — דהיינו מטרת הפרק. לפי שד"ל הפרק בא להכחיש את טענותיהם של המאמינים שבני אדם נולדו מאלילים. לפי הרמב"ם במורה נבוכים המצוטט כאן ברמב"ן (י:ה), הפרק בא להודיע על חידוש העולם (בריאת העולם יש מאין) ע"י עדות, זאת אומרת, שאפשר ליחס כל אדם לאדם הראשון שנברא ע"י הקב"ה. אולם, אילו היו אלה המטרות היחידות של הפרק, היינו מסתפקים ברשימת שמות מאב לבן. בגלל כל המידע הנוסף שמספקת לנו התורה, עלינו להניח שהתורה גם מבקשת לרמז לנו רעיונות בסיסיים על אומות העולם ויחסם לעם ישראל ולהסטוריה היהודית.

נפתח את הלימוד בעזרת השאלות העולות מקריאת הפרק. באופן כללי, נשאל מדוע התורה מרחיבה בפרטים על אנשים מסוימים ורק מזכירה את שמם של אחרים. מדוע יש שושלות יוחסין שנמשכות עד ששה דורות ויש כאלה שנפסקות אחרי שניים. רש"י בפרשת האזינו מסביר על הפסוק "יצב גבולות עמים למספר בני ישראל" (לב:ח) ש"בשביל מספר בני ישראל העתידין לצאת מבני שם ולמספר שבעים נפש של בני ישראל שירדו למצרים, הציב גבולות עמים שבעים לשון". אכן בפרקנו מוזכרים 70 אנשים שמהם תצאנה אומות. כל מי שנמנה בתחילת הפרק הוא אב של עם, ולכן יש שהתארכו מגילות היוחסין שלהם ויש שקצרו.² רש"י מלמד אותנו עוד

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יותר מכך. הוא מסביר בפירושו שכל בריאתם של אומות העולם על ידי ה' היא רק בגלל בני ישראל.³

בתחילת הפרק (י:א) כתובה רשימת בני נח לפי הסדר הידוע — שם, חם, ויפת. אבל בתיאור תולדותיהם משתנה הסדר והוא: בני יפת, בני חם, ובני שם. הרמב"ן (פס' ב, ד"ה "בני יפת גומר") מסביר שהתורה התחילה ביפת כי הוא הבכור, והיא סיימה בשם כי בסוף סיפור הפלגה שוב מסופר על משפחת שם, מה שמתקשר ישירות לתולדות אברהם שמוצאו משם. זו הסיבה שהתורה הציגה את תולדות שם בסוף פרק י — כדי לקרב שתי פרשיות שבהן הוא מוזכר. הרד"ק מציע פירוש דומה (פס' ו). יש ללמוד מכאן עיקרון חשוב בתורה. כפי שמוסבר ב"ספר הכוזרי" לריה"ל, ה"ענין האלקי" ניתן מאדם ועד נח, לשם ואחר כך לאבות ולכל בני ישראל. בסדר סיפור תולדות בני נח, מעידה התורה על מרכזיותו של עם ישראל בעולם וקדושתו כעובד ה', לעומת העמים האחרים דוגמת בני חם המקוללים. היא מלמדת אותנו שמיוחדות זאת היתה קיימת בראשית ימי האדם ולא רק מעת קבלת התורה או מכל מאורע אחר בהסטוריה.

באשר לעמים האחרים, ניתן ללמוד על תכונותיהם ממה שאבות אומות אלו הורישו לבניהם. אותן תכונות מופיעות בהמשך תולדות עם ישראל. היוצא מן הכלל הראשון בפרק הוא נמרוד. נאמר עליו שהוא "החל להיות גבור בארץ", וראשית ממלכתו בבל. לא מוזכרים מקצועותיהם או מיקום ממלכתם של אנשים אחרים. לפי חז"ל רובו המפרשים (חוץ מאבן עזרא שמסביר שהוא הקריב קרבנות לה' מהחיות שהוא צד), נמרוד היה רשע והיה צד דעתן של בריות למרוד בה', ובמיוחד כדי לבנות את מגדל בבל. לפי פרופ' נחמה ליבוביץ ז"ל, נמרוד הביא לעולם את רעיון המלכות על אחרים, ועשה את זה באופן אכזרי (Chap. 6 Studies in Genesis). הוא היה רודן ורמאי והיה הרשע הראשון. במדרש תופסים את נמרוד כניגוד לאברהם אבינו. הרע נגד הטוב. נמרוד משפיע על סביבתו בכח ובאכזריות ולעומתו אברהם מפיץ אמונת ה' וחסד. נמרוד מנסה להרוג את אברהם אבל לא מצליח. שנים הרבה לאחר מכן פוגשים באותה ההתנגדות. הבבלים הורסים את בית המקדש של עם ישראל. אבל הפעם הם מצליחים בכך משום שעם ישראל אימץ את דרכי הרשע של נמרוד ולא את דרכי הנועם של אברהם אבינו.

בסיפור נמרוד נאמר "מן הארץ ההוא יצא אשור ויבן את נינוה ואת רחבת עיר ואת כלח. ואת רסן בין נינוה ובין כלח הוא העיר הגדלה" (י:א-ב). מה פרוש המילים מן הארץ ההיא (שנער) יצא אשור, ולמה חשוב לנו לדעת זאת? למה התורה מספרת לנו אילו ערים בנה אשור? בבראשית רבה (פי' לח, ד"ה "מן הארץ ההוא יצא אשור") כתוב "מן העצה ההיא יצא אשור" כיון שראה אותן באים לחלוק על הקב"ה, פנה מארצו. אשור מתואר כאן כירא שמים המסרב להצטרף לשאר בני האדם בעולם במרדם נגד ה'. בגלל שיצא מן העצה הרעה ומארבעת ערי נמרוד, נתן לו ה' שכר — ארבע הערים המוזכרות בפסוקים יא-יב.

במדרש תהילים (קיה"א) כתוב שחמשה עמדו בעולם: נח, שם, עבר, אשור, ואברהם. נח לא הקפיד לעבוד את הקב"ה אלא עמד ונטע כרם, שם ועבר הטמינו עצמם, אשור אמר "היאך אני דר בין הרשעים הללו?" והלך לו שנאמר "מן הארץ ההיא יצא אשור" וכו'. במדרש אחר אשור נקרא צדיק, ברמתם של אברהם ונח. אם כן, מה קרה במשך ההסטוריה? אם אשור היה צדיק כמו אברהם, שם ועבר ונח, איך נהפך עמו להיות אויב מר לעם ישראל בתקופת ספר מלכים?

בבראשית רבה הנ"ל מובא, באמצעות משל, שאשור היה צדיק שהפך להיות רע. הכוונה היא כמובן לעם אשור ולא לאיש. נלמד מכאן עיקרון חשוב המצוי בפירוש הרמב"ן על התורה בכמה מקומות. בפירושו (בראשית, א:א) על המילה הראשונה בתורה, מתייחס הרמב"ן למאמרו של רבי יצחק במדרש ואומר שגרמו כאן "סוד עמוק אינו מובן מן המקראות, ולא יוודע על בודיו אלא מפי הקבלה עד משה רבינו מפי הגבורה". במהלך הסברו מלמד הרמב"ן שכמו שקרה לאדם הראשון שגר בגן עדן עד שחטא, דור המבול שנשמד מן העולם כשחטא ואנשי דור הפלגה שנפוצו כשמרדו בה', יש חוק בעולם. ה' ברא את כל העולם והוא יעניק לאשר ירצה את מבחר הארצות. "אם כן ראוי הוא, כאשר יוסיף הגוי לחטוא, שיאבד ממקומו ויבא גוי אחר לרשת את ארצו כי כן הוא משפט האלקים בארץ מעולם." חוק זה חל על עם ישראל ועל העמים האחרים. וכאן, בהקשר של אשור, כשנעניין בספר מלכים נראה הוכחה לתהליך זה.

החל מפרק טו בספר מלכים ב', מובאת רשימה ארוכה של מלכי ישראל. נאמר "ויעש הרע בעיני ה'" וכתוצאה מכך בא מלך אשור על ארץ ישראל (טו:יז-יח, טו:כז-כח, יז:א-ב). התהליך חוזר על עצמו פעמים רבות, ובכל פעם כתוב בפירוש שהדבר קורה בגלל שעשה הרע בעיני ה'. ניתן להניח שאשור היה ראוי לרשת את הארץ בגלל יראת השמים שבו. וצאצאיו ירשו תכונה זו ממנו.

אבל אין הכרח בהנחה זו. במלכים ב, יז:כד, נאמר "ויבא מלך אשור מבבל ומכותה ומעוא ומחמת ומספרים וישב בערי שמרון תחת בני ישראל וירשו את שמרון וישבו בעריה", הם זכו לשבת בארץ ובני ישראל לא זכו, כמו שאומר הרמב"ן. ובפסוק הבא כתוב (כה) "ויהי בתחלת שבתם שם לא יראו את ה' וישלח ה' בהם את האריות ויהיו הרגים בהם". הגויים שהושיב שם מלך אשור איבדו את זכותם והעונש בא מיד. ואז "ויאמרו למלך אשור לאמר הגויים אשר הגלית ותושב בערי שמרון לא ידעו את משפט אלקי הארץ וישלח בהם את האריות והנם ממיתים אותם כאשר אינם יודעים את משפט אלקי הארץ" — הם לא מכירים את החוק הזה הקובע שאם חוטאים, מאבדים את מקום מושבם, כי מאבדים את הזכות לגור בארץ הקדושה. ואכן הרמב"ן משתמש בדיוק במילים של ספר מלכים וקורא לתהליך הזה "משפט האלקים בארץ". בהמשך הסיפור שולח מלך אשור כהנים ללמדם איך לעבוד את ה'. והגויים שישבו בשומרון עבדו את ה' כפי שנדרש מנכרים. ובהמשך ההסטוריה רואים ביחסים שבין אשור ובני ישראל שאלה שהיו יראי ה' בעת ההיא זכו לממשלה בארץ.

בניגוד לאשור שבתחילה היה טוב וצדיק, כנען היה מקולל עוד בתחילת התהוותו בגלל מעשי חם בספור שכרות נח. אם כן נשאל, מדוע זכה כנען בארץ הקדושה? הרמב"ן אומר באותו מקום (בראשית, א:א) כי "כנען מקולל ונמכר לעבד עולם ואינו ראוי שיירש מבחר מקומות היישוב". לכן עלינו ללמוד עוד יסוד מפרקנו. מדוע התורה מציינת את גבולות הכנעני (פס' יט) ולא את גבולות שאר העמים? ברור שהסיבה לכך היא שגבולות הכנעני הם הם ארץ ישראל. רד"ק (פס' טו) מפרש בפסוק הנ"ל (בהאזינו (לב:ח) ש"יצב גבולות עמים למספר בני ישראל" נאמר בקשר לכנענים. יש אחד-עשר בני כנען, ועם כנען עצמו יש שנים-עשר עמים כנעניים. הם כנגד שנים-עשר שבטי בני ישראל שעתידיים היו לרשת את ארץ כנען. רמז זה מלמד אותנו שהסיבה היחידה שה' מציב את הכנענים בארץ היא אך ורק בשביל עם ישראל. ה' אומר לבני ישראל שהוא לא ישחית את כל העמים בפעם אחת כדי שלא תהינה חיות רעות בארץ. הכנענים רק שמרו על ארץ ישראל עד שבני ישראל יגיעו אליה. ולכן מוזכרים גבולותיהם.

אבל הכנענים גם היו לקוץ בצדי בני ישראל. הם מילאו תפקיד בנסיון שהועמד בפני בני ישראל כדי לבחון אם הם ילכו אחרי ה' או עבודה זרה. והתורה כאן גם מרמזת לנו על האתגר שיהיה לבני ישראל כשייכנסו לארץ ויפגשו בתרבות האלילית של הכנענים.

לפני כנען נמצא עוד מושג יוצא דופן ודורש הסבר. בפסוק יד ברשימת בני מצרים כתוב "ואת פתרים ואת כסלחים אשר יצאו משם פלשתים ואת כפתרים". מה משמעותו של הביטוי המוזר "אשר יצאו משם"? למה לא נאמר "אשר ילד את..." כמו בשאר התולדות? רש"י על פי בראשית רבה מפרש "משניהם יצאו שהיו פתרים וכסלחים מחליפין משכב נשותיהם אלו ואלו ויצאו מהם פלישתים". העם הפלישתי מקורו בגילוי עריות.

ידוע על מצרים שהיא היתה עם שטוף זימה ומלא עריות יותר מכל ארץ אחרת. כשבני ישראל יצאו ממצרים, "לא נחם אלקים דרך ארץ פלשתים כי קרוב הוא כי אמר אלקים פן ינחם העם בראתם מלחמה ושבנו מצרימה" (שמות, יג:יז). ייתכן והיתה סיבה נוספת להחלטת ה' שלא להנחות את בני ישראל דרך ארץ פלשתים כי לא רק ש"קרוב הוא" במפה אלא גם "קרוב" משפחה הוא למצרים. הפלישתים היו שטופי זימה כמו המצרים ומקורם באותו אב, בעל אותה התכונה. אולי אם בני ישראל היו יוצאים ממצרים ומיד היו הולכים דרך ארץ פלשתים, שגם הם היו שטופי זימה כמו מצרים, היו חוזרים למ"ט דרגות הטומאה שהיו שקועים בהן במצרים. איך יהיו בני ישראל לעם קדוש אם הם הולכים ממקום חסר קדושה אחד למקום חסר קדושה אחר? אמנם, זה לא פשט הכתוב. אבל אולי יכולה להיות לכך סיבה נוספת. כמו שהזכרנו לגבי הכנענים, התורה כאן מזהירה את בני ישראל לגבי ההשפעות השליליות שתהיינה בארץ כנען ושעליהם להילחם נגדן. פעמים רבות רואים שהפלישתים היו אויבים מרים לבני ישראל. הניגוד לא רק מופיע בכח הפיזי אלא

הוא גם מתגלה ברמה הלא שטחית, בניגוד הרוחני שבין קדושת עם ישראל ועם שמקורו בעריות.

על שלושה עמים אפשר לומר שהם מהווים ניגוד לעם ישראל, ארץ ישראל, ותורת ישראל. בכל מלך על ישראל ולקח מהם את העצמאות הלאומית כמו שנמרוד מלך על העולם ברשעותו. בכל הוא היריב של עם ישראל כאומה. כנען הוא הניגוד בתחומי ארץ ישראל. הכנענים גרו שם. בני ישראל היו צריכים לכבוש מהם את הארץ. באופן רוחני הכנענים תמיד גרמו לחטאי בני ישראל, שגרמו לאיבוד זכויותיהם לארץ. הפלישתים הם הניגוד המוחלט של התורה הקדושה. הם אפילו גנבו את ארון ברית ה' שבו היו שברי הלוחות עצמם.

לומדים מכל זה שהתורה מרמזת לנו אוצרות של ידע ואזהרות על עתידו של עם ישראל. עלינו להבין ולהעריך את עומק התורה, שהרי בפרק העשירי של ספר בראשית היא כבר מלמדת מה יהיה בסופם של עם ישראל אחרי אלפי שנים.

¹ כידוע, הרמב"ן בדרך כלל אינו מסכים עם הכלל ש"אין מוקדם ומאוחר בתורה". אבל פה מדובר במשהו אחר, שכאן הכלל הוא "אין מוקדם ומאוחר בפרשה". זאת אומרת, שבענין אחד, התורה משנה את סדר הופעת העובדות לשם יצירת סדר אחר. היא מסיימת עניין אחד לפני שמתחילה ספור אחר למרות שסוף העניין הראשון קרה במשך או אחרי הספור השני. ראה לדוגמה שמות, ב"א, ורמב"ן ד"ה "וילך איש מבית לוי". כותב שם הרמב"ן "אין מוקדם ומאוחר בפרשה". עיין רד"ק פס' ה, סוף פרושו על פס' ח. כדי להכיר את שיטת רש"י עי' רא"ם על רש"י פרק י"א:ב, ד"ה "בנסעם מקדם" במ"ה "ומה שכתב אחר זה אלה בני שם למשפחותם... פרושו אלה משפחות שם נפרדו אחרי הפלגה...". עיין רמב"ן י"א:ב. לעיין בהבדלים בפרושיהם ר' פס' יח, "ואחר נפצו משפחת הכנעני", ברד"ק שם שסובר אחר הפלגה, רא"ם ולבוש האורה על רש"י שם שמסבירים שכוונת רש"י שאין כוונת הפסוק נפצו באדמה אלא נולדו מהם משפחות רבות ונתמלאת כל הארץ מהם. עיין גם פס' ל "ויחי משבם ממשא באכה ספרה". עיין רש"י י"א:ב, שסובר שישבו שם לפני מגדל בבל, ורמב"ן י"א:ב שחולק עליו, ורד"ק שמסכים עם דעת רמב"ן.

² יש 71 שמות ללא בני נח. באטלס דעת מקרא עמ' 43, נמרוד אינו כלול ברשימה, אולי משום שהוא לא נכלל ברשימת בני כוש.

³ שתי השיטות עיקביות בפירושן את הפסוק בהאזינו שלכאורה מתאר את הפלגה. עי' דברים, לב:ח ורש"י ורב הירש שם.