

מאוצרות  
לקוטי  
שיחות

במדבר BAMIDBAR

SELECTIONS FROM  
LIKKUTEI  
SICHOS

INSIGHTS INTO THE WEEKLY PARSHA  
BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



## BAMIDBAR III | במדבר ג

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### Introduction

One of the issues continually discussed by psychologists, educators, and others is the interplay between heredity and environment: Are our character traits inherent or acquired? To what extent do our neighbors and even the physical setting in which we are raised affect the way we conduct ourselves? And can that effect be even deeper and involve also our inner selves?

Obviously, these questions have no simple answer. In the *sichah* that follows, the Rebbe enables us to gain perspective on these issues by discussing different sources and viewpoints in our Torah heritage that touch on these concepts. He begins by citing *Rashi's* commentary<sup>1</sup> which notes that the camp of Reuven was located to the South, next to the descendants of Kehos; there *Rashi* comments,<sup>2</sup> “Woe to the wicked person and woe to his neighbor.” Similarly, noting that the tribes of Yehudah, Yissachar, and Zevulun camped in the East, neighboring Moshe, Aharon, and his sons, *Rashi* comments,<sup>3</sup> “It is good for the righteous and good for his neighbor.”

The Rebbe seeks to clarify the extent and nature of a neighbor's influence by contrasting *Rashi's* statements with the Midrashic passages in *Bamidbar Rabbah*<sup>4</sup> and *Midrash Tanchuma*,<sup>5</sup> on which they are based. By analyzing the textual differences between these sources, the Rebbe outlines three types of influence a neighbor can have:

- The first is primarily external, i.e., a righteous person or a sinner will draw his neighbor after him, but the influence will not permeate his inner being. For example, as mentioned in the above sources, many members of the tribe of Reuven were drawn after Korach. Since they camped near him, they took part in the dispute he fomented and, as a result, were also affected by the Divine retribution visited upon him.
- There is second conception that presents a more encompassing perspective regarding a neighbor's influence. According to this view, a person can affect the manner in which his neighbor conducts himself and can even motivate a change within the neighbor's internal being. Nevertheless, although the influence of the behaviors and traits that the neighbor imparts may be extensive, ultimately, they are merely acquired forms of conduct and/or characteristics. They are not inherent to the person being affected.
- A third conception assumes that the fact that two individuals or groups are neighbors indicates there is an intrinsic connection between them. They are neighbors because they live in a place associated with a given innate tendency. It's true; one of the neighbors may exhibit the tendency to a greater degree than another, but over time the fact that one lives

1. See the introduction to the previous *sichah*, p. 17, which focuses on the Rebbe's approach to *Rashi's* commentary on the Torah.

2. *Rashi, Bamidbar* 3:29.

3. *Ibid.* 3:38.

4. *Bamidbar Rabbah* 3:12.

5. *Midrash Tanchuma, Parshas Bamidbar*, sec. 12 (Buber edition, sec. 13).

near the other will bring the other's similar characteristics into the open, enabling that potential – whether positive or negative – to be actually expressed.

In his distinctive manner, the Rebbe also shows how the above concepts are reflected in *halachah*, citing three different approaches to dealing with a *tzaraas* blemish that appears on a common wall between two homes.

The Rebbe also connects the above concepts to the time of year when the present Torah portion is read, noting the inverse relationship between the two subjects mentioned above – the discord sparked by Korach and the Torah knowledge disseminated by Moshe, Aharon, and his sons.

The way to prevent discord is through involvement in Torah study. Conversely, to achieve greatness in Torah study and oneness with the Torah, we must separate ourselves from dispute to the furthest extreme.

Herein, lies a connection between *Parshas Bamidbar* and the festival of Shavuos, as reflected in our Sages' statement:<sup>6</sup> “*Parshas Bamidbar...* is always read before *Atzeres*.”

*Parshas Bamidbar* emphasizes both these concepts – greatness in Torah study and the need to rise above dispute – and both are fundamental to our receiving the Torah, which we celebrate on Shavuos.

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6. *Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chayim*  
428:4; see also *Tur*).

# When Closeness Is More Than Geographic

## Undesirable Neighbors

1. Our Sages note that the flag of the camp of Reuven was located to the South,<sup>1</sup> next to the descendants of Kehos who camped “on the southern flank of the Sanctuary,”<sup>2</sup> and comment – “Woe to the wicked person and woe to his neighbor,” as *Rashi* quotes in his commentary on the latter verse.

We find this concept interpreted differently in several sources. Among them:

*Midrash Tanchuma*<sup>3</sup> states:

“To the South – the descendants of Kehos.” Bordering on them were the tribes of Reuven, Shimon, and Gad. About them, it can be said, “Woe to the wicked person and woe to his neighbor.”

[The camp of] these three tribes bordered on [the camp of] Korach and his company on the South. [Some of the members of these tribes] perished together with [Korach] in his dispute [with Moshe and Aharon], as it is written,<sup>4</sup> “The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them, their households, all that they owned, and all the people together with Korach and all [their] property.”

*Bamidbar Rabbah*<sup>5</sup> employs slightly different wording:

[Some members of] the three [tribes who camped] in the South near the inciters of the dispute per-

א. אודות סמיכות “דגל מחנה ראובן” (שחנו “תימנה”) לבני קהת (שחנו “על ירך המשכן תימנה”) אמרו חז”ל, והובא בפרוש רש”י על התורה, “אוי לרשע ואוי לשכנו.”

בפרושו של מאמר זה (“אוי לרשע כו”) בנוגע לעניינינו מצינו כמה אופנים ומהם:

בתנחומא איתא: “ומן הדרום בני קהת וסמוכין להם ראובן ולשמעון וגד מכאן אמרו אוי לרשע ואוי לשכנו אלו שלשת השבטים שהיו שכנים לקרח ועדתו בדרום אבדו עמו במחלקותו שנאמר ונתפתח הארץ את פיה ותבלע אותם ואת בתיהם ואת כל אשר להם ואת כל האדם אשר לקרח ואת כל הרכוש.”

בבמדבר רבה: “ג’ של דרום,

1. *Bamidbar* 2:10. The term “flag” used here and throughout the *sichah* refers to an encampment of three tribes, captained by the tribe whose name is associated with that flag. The term “flag” is used because each tribe had its own flag. The flag of the tribe that captained the camp

was featured prominently.

2. *Ibid.* 3:29.

3. *Midrash Tanchuma, Parshas Bamidbar*, sec. 12 (Buber edition, sec. 13). A similar version is found in *Yalkut Shimoni, Parshas Bamid-*

*bar* sec. 686.

4. *Bamidbar* 16:32.

5. *Bamidbar Rabbah* 3:12.

6. *Bamidbar* 16:1.

ished with them, and concerning them, it can be said, “Woe to the wicked person and woe to his neighbor.”

Who were the inciters of the dispute? Korach, the son of Yitzhar, the son of Kehos. Because they [camped] next to them, [the tribes of] Reuven, Shimon, and Gad were all [also considered] inciters of the dispute. This is reflected in the verse,<sup>6</sup> “Korach, the son of Yitzhar... and... the descendants of Reuven.” Similarly, the descendants of Gad and Shimon were also inciters of dispute.

On the verse,<sup>2</sup> “the families of the descendants of Kehos will camp... on the southern flank...,” *Rashi* comments, “neighboring them was the flag of Reuven, who camped to the South. ‘Woe to the wicked and woe to his neighbor.’ Therefore, Dasan, Aviram,<sup>7</sup> and 250 men from this camp were punished together with Korach and his company, because they were drawn into the dispute together with them.”<sup>8</sup>

Among the differences between these interpretations: *Midrash Tanchuma* states merely that the members of the tribe of Reuven who engaged in the dispute were punished together with Korach: “They perished together with him in his dispute.”<sup>9</sup> (For this reason, as support, it cites the proof-text – “The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them, their households, all that they owned, and all the people together with Korach and all [their] property” – which speaks merely about their punishment.)

7. They and most of the 250 men were descendants of Reuven.

8. It is possible to say that *Rashi* felt compelled to interpret this verse (*Bamidbar* 3:29) in this manner – even though in general his practice is not to quote our Sages’ interpretations unless they are relevant to the straightforward meaning of the words of the Torah – because the Torah uses the wording, “the families of the descendants of Kehos,” instead of saying, “the families of the Kehosites,”

although it later says “the families of the Gershonites” (*Bamidbar* 3:23) and “the families of the Merarites” (*ibid.* 3:33). That wording implies that these families possessed negative qualities that caused the Torah not to associate the lineage of these families directly with Kehos himself.

(See a similar concept in *Rashi’s* commentary on *Bereishis* 49:6.) See *Be’er BeSedah* on *Rashi* here. See also the supercommentaries on *Rashi: Gur Aryeh, Baer Mayim*

שְׁהָיוּ לְבַעְלֵי מַחְלֶקֶת סְמוּכֵינוּ, אָבְדוּ עִמָּהֶם וְעַלֵּיהֶם נֹאמַר אוֹי לְרָשָׁע אוֹי לְשֹׂכְנוֹ וּמִי הָיוּ בְעַלֵּי מַחְלֶקֶת קָרַח בֶּן יִצְחָר בֶּן קֵהָת וּלְפִי שֶׁהָיוּ סְמוּכִים לָהֶם רְאוּבֵן וְשִׁמְעוֹן וְגַד הָיוּ כְּלֵם בְּעַלֵּי מַחְלֶקֶת שֶׁכֵּן הוּא אוֹמֵר וַיִּקַּח קָרַח בֶּן יִצְחָר וְגו’ וְכֵן בְּנֵי גַד וּבְנֵי שִׁמְעוֹן אַף הֵם הָיוּ בְעַלֵּי מְרִיבָה.”

וּבַפְּרוּשׁ רַש"י עַל הַתּוֹרָה (עַל הַפְּסוּקִי "מִשְׁפַּחֹת בְּנֵי קֵהָת יַחְנוּ גו' תִּימְנָה") כְּתוּב: "וּסְמוּכֵינוּ לָהֶם דָּגַל רְאוּבֵן הַחוּגִים תִּימְנָה, אוֹי לְרָשָׁע וְאוֹי לְשֹׂכְנוֹ, לְכָךְ לָקוּ מֵהֶם דָּתָן וְאַבִּירָם וּמֵאֲתֵימָם וְחַמְשֵׁים אִישׁ עִם קָרַח וְעַדְתּוֹ שֶׁנִּמְשְׁכוּ עִמָּהֶם בְּמַחְלֶקֶתָם.”

וּמֵהַחֲלוּקִים שֶׁבִּינֵיהֶם: בְּתַנְחוּמָא נֹאמַר רַק שְׁנַעֲנִשׁוּ יַחַד - "אָבְדוּ עִמּוֹ בְּמַחְלֶקוֹתוֹ" (וְעַל זֶה מְבִיא הַרְאִיָּה מֵהַפְּסוּק "וַתִּפְתַּח הָאָרֶץ אֶת פִּיהָ וַתַּבְלַע אוֹתָם וְאֵת בְּתֵיהֶם וְאֵת כָּל אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם וְאֵת כָּל הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר לְקָרַח וְאֵת כָּל הָרִכּוּשׁ, שֶׁמֹּדֵבָר רַק בְּהֶעֱנֵשׁ);

*Chayim* (authored by *Maharal’s* brother), *Maleches HaKodesh, et al.*, which suggest other explanations regarding what compelled *Rashi* to offer the above interpretation. It appears that they do not focus on the straightforward interpretation of Scripture. This is not the place for further discussion of the matter.

9. See footnote 12 below.

10. In his commentary on the be-

In his commentary, *Rashi* states that some members of these tribes “were stricken together with Korach and his company,” teaching not only that they were punished together with Korach, but also that “they were drawn into the dispute together with them,”<sup>10</sup> i.e., the wicked ones also drew their neighbors into the actual transgression. (For this reason, *Rashi* omitted the proof-text cited by *Midrash Tanchuma*, “The earth opened its mouth...”) because Korach’s influence on these individuals involved far more than the mere fact that they were punished together.

*Bamidbar Rabbah* goes a step further:<sup>11</sup> There were members of the tribes of Reuven, Shimon, and Gad who were not merely drawn into the dispute by Korach, they “were all inciters of dispute.... they too were inciters of discord.”<sup>12</sup>

### Further Questions on *Rashi’s* Commentary

2. There are other points in *Rashi’s* commentary and questions regarding his divergence from his sources that require explanation. Among them:

a) *Rashi* states, “Neighboring them was the flag of Reuven, who camped to the South.” He – unlike *Midrash Tanchuma* and *Bamidbar Rabbah* – does not mention that this encampment also included the tribes of Shimon and Gad.

On the surface, it appears that *Rashi* was precise in the wording he chose, stating, “the flag of Reuven,” and not “the flag of the camp of Reuven,” as stated in the verse,<sup>1</sup> and as he states shortly thereafter in his commentary, “the flag of the camp of Yehudah.” This

בפרוש רש"י מוסיף "לקו מהם כו') שנמשכו עמהם במחלקתם", הינו שה"רשע" משך את "שכנו" גם למעשה העברה (ולכן השמיט הראיה שבתנחומא מן הכתוב "ותפתח הארץ את פיה גו'"); ובבמדבר רבה מוסיף עוד יותר, ש"היו כלם בעלי מחלקת... אף הם היו בעלי מריבה".

ב. גם יש להבין כמה דיוקים ולשוניים בלשון רש"י:

א) "וסמוכין להם דגל ראובן החונים תימנה", ולא פרט שבדגל זה פלולים גם השבטים שמעון וגד, כבתנחומא ובמדבר רבה.

[לכאורה, מה שדיקרש"י בלשונו "דגל ראובן" - ולא "דגל מחנה ראובן" (בלשון הכתוב), וכלשונו בפרושו שלא חרי זה המובא בסמוך - "דגל מחנה יהודה" -

gining of *Parshas Korach* (*Bamidbar* 16:1), s.v. *Dasan viAviram*, *Rashi* concludes that they “joined together with Korach in his dispute.” Note that he begins his commentary on the above verse, “This passage is interpreted nicely in the *Midrash* of Rabbi Tanchuma,” implying that his commentary is following the general understanding presented by that source.

11. *Bamidbar Rabbah* does not quote the proof-text cited in *Midrash Tanchuma* that speaks about the punishment Korach and his neighbors suffered.

12. The theme of this interpretation is also found in the *midrashim* on *Parshas Korach: Bamidbar Rabbah* 18:5, *Midrash Tanchuma*, sec. 4

(Buber edition, sec. 8), *Yalkut Shimoni*, sec. 750. All these sources merely conclude, “They were punished (together with him) and perished from the world.” It appears, however, that all these texts have one source and the theme was copied from it to the others.

13. *Bamidbar* 3:38.

indicates that his words refer only to the tribe of Reuven and not the tribes who camped together with him.

The point is even more puzzling: Shortly thereafter, on the phrase,<sup>13</sup> “Moshe, Aharon, and his sons,” *Rashi* comments, “Neighboring them was the flag of the camp of Yehudah and those who camped with them, Yissachar and Zevulun. [Concerning this encampment, it can be said,] ‘It is good for the righteous and good for his neighbor.’ Since [these tribes] were the neighbors of Moshe, who was occupied in Torah study, they [too] became great in Torah study.” *Rashi’s* source is in the passages from *Midrash Tanchuma* and *Bamidbar Rabbah, loc. cit.*<sup>14</sup>

When stating that “it is good for the righteous...,” *Rashi* mentions not only Yehudah, but also Yissachar and Zevulun. Why then when speaking about “woe to the wicked” does *Rashi* deviate from his source, mentioning only “the flag of Reuven”? On the surface, it can be said that according to a straightforward understanding of Scripture, the reason is that we do not find evidence that tribes of Gad and Shimon were drawn into the dispute initiated by Korach. However, it is necessary to understand the reason for this distinction. And it is also necessary to understand the difference between the approach of *Rashi* and the *Midrashic* sources: Was it only the tribe of Reuven who was drawn into the dispute or did being Korach’s neighbor also have an effect on the tribes of Shimon and Gad?

b) *Midrash Tanchuma* and *Bamidbar Rabbah* do not specify which of the members of the tribe of Reuven perished with Korach and his company. *Rashi*, however, specifies that this included “Dasan, Aviram, and the 250 men,” who by and large were from the tribe of Reuven.<sup>15</sup>

### How Far-Reaching Is a Neighbor’s Influence?

3. It is possible to clarify the above by first explain-

כי כוננתו רק לשבט ראובן לחודה, ולא לשבטים שהיו “חונים עליו”.

והתמיה גדולה יותר: בהמשך הענין, על הפסוק<sup>16</sup> “משה ואהרן ובניו”, פירש רש”י “וסמוכין להם דגל מחנה יהודה והחונים עליו יששכר וזבולון טוב לצדיק טוב לשכנו לפי שהיו שכניו של משה שהיה עוסק בתורה נעשו גדולים בתורה” (ומקורו בתנחומא ובמדבר רבה שם)<sup>17</sup> - הרי שכאן גבי “טוב לצדיק” הביא רש”י גם את יששכר וזבולון, ומה טעם שנה רש”י גבי “אוי לרשע כו” וכתב רק “דגל ראובן” ותו לא? ולכאורה יש לומר שזהו לפי שלא מצינו (בפשוטו של מקרא) שגד ושמעון נמשכו עמו במחלוקת, וצריך להבין הטעם דחלוק זה. וכן - מהי סברת החלוק בין המדרשים ורש”י דרק שבט ראובן נמשך במחלוקת, או שהשכנות זקרח פעלה גם על שבט שמעון ושבט גד?

ב) בתנחומא ובמדבר רבה לא פירשו מי הם משבט ראובן שנאבדו עם קרח ועדתו, ואלו רש”י מפרט “דתן ואבירם ומאתים וחמשים איש” (ש(רבם) הם משבט ראובן”).

ג. ויש לבאר זה בהקדם,

14. Similar statements are found in the *midrashim* on *Parshas Korach* cited in footnote 12.

15. *Rashi’s* commentary on the beginning of *Parshas Korach* (*Bamidbar* 16:1), s.v. *Dasan viAviram*.

16. See *Rashi, Bereishis* 13:5, 14, 14:12, which explains that Lot received blessings while he dwelled with Avraham,

ing the different ways in which a person influences and affects his neighbor:

a) A neighbor's influence can be entirely external; a righteous person receives reward for his Divine service and that reward is also extended to his neighbor. Similarly, the converse is true; punishment to be visited upon a wicked person also affects his neighbor.<sup>16</sup> This is reflected in the straightforward understanding of the Talmud's wording at the conclusion of Tractate *Sukkah*<sup>17</sup> that the entire priestly *mishmar*<sup>18</sup> of Bilgah was punished because Miriam, a descendant of one of the families of that *mishmar*, abandoned her faith. To resolve the question why "the entire *mishmar* was punished" because of her, our Sages explain that they were punished because, "Woe to the wicked and woe to his neighbor."<sup>19</sup>

b) There are times when the effect of a neighbor is internal. A person can affect the manner in which his neighbor conducts himself,<sup>20</sup> and, indeed, can affect the neighbor's internal being.<sup>21</sup>

c) The fact that two individuals or groups are neighbors is not the reason that "it is good for the righteous and good for his neighbor" or that "woe to the wicked and woe to his neighbor." Instead, it is a defining characteristic of the neighboring people or groups, i.e., the fact that they are neighbors shows that they share a connection that reflects their nature, characteristics, and the like. The fact that one lives near the other reveals and brings the other's similar characteristics into the open from a hidden state, enabling their potential – whether positive or negative – to be actually expressed.

but suffered difficulties upon settling in Sodom; *Shmos* 16:28, (based on *Bava Kama* 92a; see *Rashi* to that source, s.v. *behad*) who explains that Moshe was reproved for the complaints of the Jewish people as a whole. See, however, *Rashi*, *Bereishis* 19:17, 19; which speaks of Lot being saved from the destruction of Sodom, and *Rashi's* statements there do not correlate entirely with the above concept.

17. *Sukkah* 56b.

18. The Prophet Shmuel and King David

divided the families of the *kohanim* into 24 groupings referred to as *mishmaros*, literally, "watches." Each "watch" would serve in the *Beis HaMikdash* for a week in a rotating cycle (see *Rambam*, *Hilchos K'lei HaMikdash* 3:9, 4:3).

19. See *Zohar*, Vol. III, p. 122b. See also *Berachos* 58a, *Eruvin* 18b, and *Rashi's* commentary there, *et al*, which speak of collateral punishment visited upon the neighbors of a wicked nation. Similarly, in the instance cited, it does not appear that the character traits of Miriam were shared by the entire watch.

שְׁבַעֲנִין פְּעֻלַת הַשְּׂכֵנֹת -  
הַשְּׁפַעַת אָדָם עַל שְׂכֵנוֹ - מְצִינֵנו  
כַּמָּה אוֹפְנִים:

(א) פְּעֻלַת הַשְּׂכֵן הִיא בְּעִנְיֵן חִיצוֹנִי לְגַמְרֵי, כְּגוֹן שֶׁהַשְּׂכֵן שָׁל צְדִיק נִמְשָׁךְ גַּם לְשְׂכֵנוֹ, וְכֵן לְהַפְּךָ, שֶׁהַעֲנֻשׁ שֶׁעַל הַרְשָׁע נִמְשָׁךְ גַּם עַל שְׂכֵנוֹ.<sup>16</sup> וְכַפְשָׁטוֹת לְשׁוֹן הַגְּמָרָא (בְּסוּף מִסְכַּת סְפָה<sup>17</sup>) דְּקִיְסוֹ לְכָל הַמְשָׁמֵר כָּלוּ בְּגִלְל "מְרִים בַּת בְּלָגָה שֶׁהַמִּירָה דָּתָה" [אַף עַל פִּי שֶׁלְכַאוּרָה וְכִי בְּגִלְלָה "קִיְסִינֵן לְכָלָה מְשָׁמְרָה", אֱלָא] מִשׁוּם "אוֹי לְרָשָׁע אוֹי לְשְׂכֵנוֹ".<sup>18</sup>

(ב) פְּעֻלַת הַשְּׂכֵן הִיא פְּעֻלָּה פְּנִימִית, כְּלוּמָה, שֶׁהוּא מְשַׁנֵּה אֶת אַפְּן הַנְּהַגְתּוֹ שֶׁל שְׂכֵנוֹ,<sup>19</sup> וְעַד שֶׁמְשַׁנֵּה גַם אֶת מַהוּתוֹ.<sup>20</sup>

(ג) שְׂכֵנֹת אֵינָה הַסְּבֵיחָ לְזֶה שֶׁ(טוֹב לְצְדִיק) טוֹב לְשְׂכֵנוֹ" (אוֹ לְהַפְּךָ - "אוֹי לְרָשָׁע) אוֹי לְשְׂכֵנוֹ"), אֱלָא הוּא סִימָן עַל מַהוּתוֹ שֶׁל הַשְּׂכֵן (שְׁזֵה שֶׁהֵם שְׂכֵנִים מוֹרָה שֶׁשְׂנִיָּהֵם שִׂיכִים זֶה לְזֶה בְּמַהוּתָם וְגִדְרָם וְכִיּוֹצֵא בְּזֵה), וּפְעֻלַת הַשְּׂכֵנֹת הִיא שֶׁמְגַלֶּה וּמוֹצִיאָה תְּכוּנָה זוֹ (שֶׁל הַשְּׂכֵן) מִן הַהַעֲלָם וְהַכַּח אֶל הַגְּלוּי וְהַפְּעֵל.

Instead, the punishment given the entire watch was collateral in nature.

20. See *Zohar*, Vol. I, p. 84a ff.

21. See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 19, p. 62ff., which elaborates on these two types of effects that a neighbor can have.

22. The owner of the home on which the *tzaraas* blemish is manifest is referred to as "wicked" because the appearance of such a blemish is the sign of a flaw within the character of its owner, i.e., his pre-occupation with *lashon hara*, malicious gossip. See *Rambam*, the conclusion of

## A Mirror in Halachah

4. It is possible to say that the source for these three ways in which neighbors can affect each other is reflected in the source for the concept, “Woe to the wicked and woe to his neighbor,” in *halachah* – specifically, the laws involving *tzaraas* blemishes on homes.<sup>22</sup> Regarding a *tzaraas* blemish that appears on a common wall between two homes, the Torah states,<sup>23</sup> “The *kohen* shall order that they shall remove the stones upon which the blemish is found.” *Toras Kohanim* comments on that verse:

“They shall remove” – this teaches that they both must [participate in] the removal. Based on this [source, our Sages] said, “Woe to the wicked and woe to his neighbor.” Both must [participate in] the removal; both must [participate in] scraping out [the remnants of the mortar]; both must [participate in] bringing [new] stones.

Similar statements are found in the Mishnah, Tractate *Negayim*.<sup>24</sup>

There are three interpretations of this law:

a) “If there is a [common] wall intervening between two homes, should a *tzaraas* blemish appear on the wall of one home, the owner of the other home must work together with the owner of the home with the blemish [to rid it of the traces of *tzaraas*], as [implied by] the plural [form of the verb in] the phrase, “They shall remove...”<sup>25</sup>

According to this interpretation, the obligation does not apply to the object – i.e., the wall itself, which is referred to as the *cheftza*, belonging to the neighbor. Instead, the law applies to the actions of the *gavra*, the person himself – what he as a neighbor of the wicked person must do. He must work with the owner of

ד. ויש לומר המקור לשלשה אופנים אלה, במקור הענין ד'אוי לרשע אוי לשכנו' בהלכה - בדיני נגיעי בתים, וזה לשון התורת כהנים: "וחלצו מלמד ששניהם חולצים, מיכן אמרו אוי לרשע אוי לשכנו, שניהם חולצים שניהם קוצעין שניהם מביאים את האבנים" (ועל דרך זה הוא במשנה נגיעים<sup>26</sup>).

ובגדרו של דין זה ישנם ג' פרושים:

א) "אם כתל מפסיק בין שני בתים ונראה נגע בכתל לצד בית זה בעל הבית אחר צריך להטפל עמו דכתיב וחלצו את האבנים לשון רבים כו"<sup>27</sup>. שלפי פרוש זה, לא חל חיוב זה על החפצא (הכתל) של השכן, אלא זהו דין בטפול הגברא, דשכנו של הרשע צריך להטפל עמו" בחליצת

<sup>22</sup> Hilchos Tumaas Tzaraas.

<sup>23</sup> Vayikra 14:40.

<sup>24</sup> Negayim 12:6.

<sup>25</sup> Rav Ovadia of Bartenura

on Negayim, loc. cit. A similar interpretation is found in Rabbeinu Shimshon's commentary on that source and Korban Aharon on Toras Kohanim, loc. cit.

<sup>26</sup> Rashi, Chulin 128b.

<sup>27</sup> Negayim 13:2. A similar interpretation is found in Toras Kohanim on Vayikra 14:45.

<sup>28</sup> This wording is found in Chulin

the blemished wall to remove the stones, scrape out the mortar and bring new stones for that neighbor's wall.

b) Alternatively, the obligation for them both to remove the objects on which the *tzaraas* blemish appeared applies not only to the *gavra*, but also to the stones. Even though the blemish did not appear on a stone or a portion of a stone located in the neighbor's house, that stone or portion of a stone must also be removed.

c) Further, there are two interpretations of this obligation:

1) *Rashi's* approach in his commentary at the end of Tractate *Sukkah*<sup>17</sup> is that the law from *Toras Kohanim* – that both must remove the stone because, “Woe to the wicked and woe to his neighbor” – applies only to a stone in the corner. As *Rashi* explains in another source,<sup>26</sup> in the interpretation of a second mishnah in Tractate *Negayim*,<sup>27</sup> “[When there is] a blemished stone in a corner, when he<sup>28</sup> removes it, he should remove it in its entirety.”

*Rashi*<sup>26</sup> interprets that mishnah, “[When there is] a blemished stone in a corner and [the stone] is visible both in the first house and the second...,” and explains, “It is common to place large stones that strengthen the full width of the wall at the corner of a home; thus [such a stone] is visible from both sides.”<sup>29</sup> Even though no blemish is visible on the other side of the stone, the stone must be removed in its entirety.<sup>30</sup> See the illustration on the following page.

*loc. cit.*, and in the Mishnah with a slight variation in the wording.

29. See also *Aruch Lenar, Sukkah, loc. cit.*

It appears that *Rashi's* intent is that, by and large, it is common for the homeowners to use smaller stones that are seen on only one side of the wall over the entire span of the wall between homes; thus, the wall was made up of separate stones on either side. However, to strengthen the wall, a large stone wide enough to hold the entire breadth of the wall is placed at the corners.

That stone is visible on both sides of the wall. If a blemish appears even on one side of this stone, both neighbors must remove it.

The implication is that if a blemish appears on a stone in the middle of the wall, that stone is not visible on the neighbor's side of the wall. Therefore, according to this approach, the neighbor need not remove the stone on his side of the wall opposite the stone on which the blemish appeared. However, because the cornerstone extends to and is visible from both sides of the wall, if a blemish appears on it, the entire stone

הָאֲבָנִים וּמְקָצוּעַ וְהִבָּאת  
הָאֲבָנִים שֶׁל הָרֶשֶׁע.

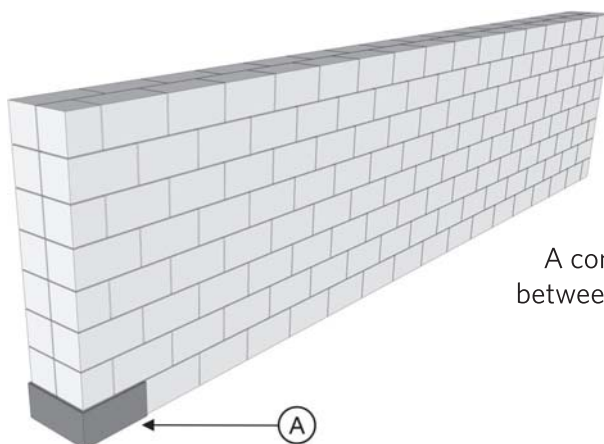
(ב) הָא ד"שְׁנֵיהֶם חוֹלְצִים"  
הֵינּוּ שֶׁהַחַיִּיב דְּחֻלְצַת הָאֶבֶן  
חַל גַּם עַל חֶלֶק הָאֶבֶן שֶׁל הַשְּׂכָן  
(שְׁלֵא נִרְאָה בּוֹ הַנֶּגַע).

וּבִזְהָ גּוֹפֵא - שְׁנֵי פְרוּשִׁים:

(א) שֵׁיטַת רִש"י (בְּסוּף מִסְכַּת  
סְכָה"ט) - שֶׁהֵדִין (שְׁבִתוֹרַת  
כְּהָנִים) ד"שְׁנֵיהֶן חוֹלְצִין" (מִפְּנֵי  
"אוֹי לְרֶשֶׁע וְאוֹי לְשָׂכְנוֹ")  
הוּא (רַק) "בְּאֶבֶן שֶׁבְּמִקְצוּטֵי",  
וְכִמּוֹ שֶׁפָּרַשׁ רִש"י בְּמִקּוּם  
אַחֲרָיִךְ בְּפִרוּשׁ דְּבָרֵי הַמִּשְׁנָה  
(דְּמִסְכַּת נְגָעִים)<sup>26</sup> "אֶבֶן שְׁבִזוּיֹת  
כְּשֶׁהוּא<sup>27</sup> חוֹלֵץ חוֹלֵץ אֶת כָּלֹ",  
"אֶבֶן הַמִּגְגַּעַת שְׁבִזוּיֹת שֶׁנִּרְאָה  
בְּבֵית זֶה וּבְבֵית זֶה שְׂכָן דָּרָךְ  
הַזְּוִיֹּת לְתַת שָׁם אֲבָנִים גְּדוֹלוֹת  
הַמְּחִזְקִים אֶת כָּל עֲבֵי הַכֶּתֶל  
וְנִרְאָה מִשְׁנֵי צְדָדִים"<sup>28</sup> - שֶׁאֶבֶן  
זוֹ יֵשׁ עָלֶיהָ חַיִּיב לְחַלּוֹץ אֶת כָּלָהּ  
(גַּם הַצֵּד שְׁלֵא נִרְאָה בּוֹ הַנֶּגַע)<sup>29</sup>.

must be removed.

30. According to this interpretation, it is necessary to say that the new concept taught by the Mishnah (*Negayim* 13:2) is reflected fundamentally by the statement, “When he destroys [the house...], he leaves the other person's [house intact]. Thus, there is a more severe aspect when he removes [the stone]....” See *Chasdei David on Tosefta, Negayim* 6:8 (10). See the commentary of Mishnah *Acharonah* cited in the following footnote.



A common wall  
between two homes

A - The cornerstone on which the blemish was found

2) There are other commentators<sup>31</sup> who maintain that the requirement to remove the [blemished] stone(s) applies not only to a stone in the corner visible from both sides of the wall, but to all the stones across the entire span of the wall separating the two homes that are opposite the blemished stone(s) on the other side of the wall. This is the intent of the mishnah's words,<sup>32</sup> "If a wall intervenes between two homes and a *tzaraas* blemish appears on the wall of one home... they must both remove..." The obligation arises because, "Woe to the wicked and woe to his neighbor."<sup>33</sup> The neighbor is obligated to remove the stones on his side of the wall that are opposite the blemish.<sup>34</sup>

It is possible to say that these three rulings and approaches parallel the three ways in which neighbors affect each other as reflected in the interpretations of "Woe to the wicked and woe to his neighbor."

(ב) יש מפרשים<sup>כ"ה</sup>, שהדין ד"חולץ את פלו" הוא לא רק באבן שבזוית הבית (שנראית משני הצדדים), אלא בכל חלקי הכתל (שכנגד הנגע בצד השני) המפסיק בין שני הבתים, וזוהי כונת המשנה ד"כתל"ט מפסיק בין שני בתים ונראה נגע בכתל לצד בית זה - "שניהם חולצין" (משום "אוי לרשע אוי לשכנו"), שגם חברו חייב לחלוץ האבנים שבחלק שלו (נגד הנגע) לא.

ויש לומר, שג' דינים (ושיטות) אלו הם בהתאם לג' האופנים הנ"ל בפעולת השכנות ("אוי לרשע אוי לשכנו"):

31. *Mishnah Achronah, Negayim* 12:6 and 13:2, based on the commentaries of Rav Ovadiah of Bartenura and Rabbeinu Shimson on *Negayim* 13:2.

32. Rav Ovadiah of Bartenura 12:6.

33. See *Avos DeRabbi Nassan* 9:1. Consult that source. Note that there are several versions there. This is not the place for further discussion of

the matter.

34. This interpretation appears to be reflected in a straightforward understanding of *Rambam's* words in his *Commentary on the Mishnah, Negayim* 12:6, and *Hilchos Tuma'as Tzaraas* 15:4. The commentary of Rabbeinu Hillel on *Toras Kohanim (Vayikra 14:40)* can also be interpreted in such a manner. See *Eliyahu Rabbah* on *Negayim* 13:2.

This is not the place for further discussion of the matter.

35. Note that in discussing *Parshas Korach*, initially *Midrash Tanchuma* states that members of the tribes of the flag of Reuven "joined together with them." However, when concluding discussion of the matter, it states merely, "They were punished with

According to the first approach, the effect of a neighbor is entirely external. Therefore, the blemish on one person's home does not affect the wall or home of the neighbor. It only obligates him to work together with the person whose home is affected and help him remove the stones.

According to the second approach to understanding “Woe to the wicked and woe to his neighbor,” the blemish on a person's home has a stronger and more internal effect on his neighbor's home. Therefore, it is necessary to remove the entire stone in the corner of the home, even the portion on the neighbor's side. It is as if the neighbor's portion of the stone is also blemished.

According to the third approach, however, the neighbor of the wicked person must also remove all the stones on his side of the wall opposite the blemished stone. The reason is that his being the wicked person's neighbor indicates that the two share a connection with each other. It is not only that the wicked person has an influence on him. Instead, it shows that they share a fundamental connection. Therefore, the appearance of a blemish on the side of the wall belonging to the wicked person shows that the stones on the other side of the wall belonging to the neighbor also are connected with the blemish – and, therefore, these stones must also be removed – even though the blemish is not visible on the stone(s) of the neighbor's wall or part of it.

### Inherent or Acquired Tendencies?

5. On this basis, it is possible to explain the reason for the difference between the three interpretations cited in sec. 1 – those of *Midrash Tanchuma, Bamidbar Rabbah*, and *Rashi* regarding, “Woe to the wicked and woe to his neighbor” and its connection to the location of the camp of Reuven next to the descendants of Kehos.

*Midrash Tanchumah* follows the first approach – that in this instance, the effect of a neighbor relates primarily to the concept of punishment: The punishment visited upon the wicked also extends to his

לאפן הא' פעלת השכן היא פעלה חיצונית בלבד, ולכן אינו פועל על הכתל (ביתו) של השכן, אלא רק מחיב את השכן שיטפל עמו בחליצת האבנים.

לאפן הב', "אוי לרשע אוי לשכנו" הוא השפעה חזקה (פנימית) יותר, ולכן צריך לחלוצ את כל האבן שבזוית הבית, גם החלק שלצד השכן, דהינו שזהו כאלו גם אבן של השכן היא מנגעת.

אבל לאפן הג', צריך שכנו של ה"רשע" לחלוצ האבנים שבחלק שלו, מפני שהשכנות לרשע מורה על שיכותו להרשע, לא מצד השפעת הרשע עליו, אלא זהו סימן שבעצם שיכים זה לזה. ולכן בכתל זה שבו נראה הנגע בצד אחר אצל חברו, הרי זה מורה שגם חלק הכתל שכנגדו השיך לחברו שיך להנגע (אף שלא נראה בו, ואינו אבן אחת עמו).

ה. ולפי זה יש לבאר גם טעם החלוק בין שלשת הדרשות הנ"ל בפרשתנו - התנחומא, במדבר רבה ופרוש רש"י - בפרוש הענין ד"אוי לרשע ואוי לשכנו" בענין הסמיכות דדגל מחנה ראובן לבני קהת:

התנחומא סבירא ליה כאפן הא', שפעלת השכנות (כאן) היא בעקר לענין העניש, שהעניש שבא על הרשע נמשך גם על

neighbor. Even when the wicked one causes his neighbor to participate<sup>35</sup> in his evil actions, the neighbor is merely drawn after him. His inner being has not changed as a result of his participation. Therefore, *Midrash Tanchuma* merely states that “they perished together with them [i.e., Korach and his company] in their dispute.”

*Rashi* views the effect of a neighbor as extending beyond causing collateral punishment and sees it as affecting and changing the neighbor’s character. Accordingly, *Rashi* not only states that the members of the tribe of Reuven “were punished together with Korach,” but also that, as a result of being the wicked person’s neighbor, “they were [themselves] drawn into the dispute together with them.”<sup>36</sup>

Moreover, it can be said that *Rashi’s* intent in saying, “Therefore, Dasan and Aviram... were punished together with Korach and his company, because they were drawn into the dispute together with them,”<sup>37</sup> was not to emphasize two separate points: a) that they were punished with them, and b) they were drawn into the dispute together with them. Were that the intent, the order of *Rashi’s* statements should have been reversed: “They were drawn into the dispute together with them,” therefore, “they were punished....”<sup>38</sup> Instead, the two points are in fact one; they were punished in that “they were drawn into the dispute together with them.”

them and perished from the world.”

36. In *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 19, p. 62ff. (cited in footnote 21 above), *Rashi’s* stance is explained in a different manner, which appears somewhat contradictory to the statements here. That source focuses on the difference of opinion between *Rambam* and *Rashi*, explaining that, in his commentary on Tractate *Sukkah*, *loc. cit.*, *Rashi* maintains that a neighbor’s effect is merely external; it does not change who the other person really is. *Rambam*, by contrast, maintains that a neighbor has a more internal effect on his fellow. Consult that source, where

the concept is explained at length.

Note, however, that – as the Alter Rebbe stated (cited in *Hayom Yom*, entry 29 Shvat) – *Rashi’s* commentary on the Torah contains “the wine of the Torah,” the Torah’s inner secrets. Therefore, it can be said that, in that source, there is a greater emphasis on the inner relationship between neighbors as opposed to *Rashi’s* commentary on *Sukkah*, which primarily deals with the legal dimension of Torah study.

37. I.e., *Rashi* deviates from the wording used by the *midrashim* on *Parshas Korach* cited in footnote

שְׁכֵנוֹ (וְאִפְלוּ כְּשׂוֹעֵל שְׁשֻׁכְנוֹ יִשְׁתַּתְּףָּ לָּב בְּמַעֲשָׂיו הָרָעִים, הָרִי זֶה רַק מֵה שְׁשֻׁכְנוֹ נִגְרָר אַחֲרָיו, אֲבָל לֹא שֶׁנַּעֲשָׂה עַל יְדֵי זֶה שְׁנוּי בְּמַהוּתוֹ שֶׁל הַשֻּׁכֵּן), וְלִכֵּן מֵבִיא רַק שׁ”אֲבָדוֹ עִמּוֹ בְּמַחְלָקוֹתָיו”;

לְפָרוֹשׁ רַשׁ”י פְּעֻלַּת הַשֻּׁכְנוֹת אֵינָה רַק בְּנוֹגַע לְעִנְשׁ אֶלֶּא הִיא גַם פְּעֻלָּה לְשֵׁנוּי בְּגוֹף הַשֻּׁכֵּן, וְזֶהוּ שֶׁמוֹסִיף רַשׁ”י (שְׁלֹא רַק “לְקוֹ מֵהֶם,” אֶלֶּא) “שֶׁנִּמְשָׁכוּ עִמָּהֶם בְּמַחְלָקָתָם”<sup>ל</sup>.

[וַיֵּשׁ לֹמֵה שְׂאִין כּוֹנֵת רַשׁ”י בְּמֵה שְׁכֵתָב “לְכֹךְ לְקוֹ מֵהֶם דָּתָן וְאַבִּירָם כּוֹ עִם קָרַח וְעֵדְתוֹ שֶׁנִּמְשָׁכוּ עִמָּהֶם בְּמַחְלָקָתָם” לִי שֶׁהֵם שְׁנֵי עֲנָנִים - (א) שֶׁנַּעֲנִשׁוּ עִמָּהֶם (לְקוֹ), (ב) וְנִמְשָׁכוּ עִמָּהֶם בְּמַחְלָקָתָם [שְׁלִפִי זֶה הָיָה לִיָּה לְמִיָּמָר בְּסֹדֵר הַפּוּךְ, “שֶׁנִּמְשָׁכוּ עִמָּהֶם בְּמַחְלָקָתָם . וְלִכֵּךְ לְקוֹ”<sup>ל</sup>] - אֶלֶּא הֵינּוּ הָךְ, שׁ”לְקוֹ” בְּכֹךְ “שֶׁנִּמְשָׁכוּ עִמָּהֶם בְּמַחְלָקָתָם”].

12, which state merely that Korach’s neighbors “were punished (together with him) and perished from the world.” The different wording used by *Rashi* appears to imply that Korach’s effect on his neighbors was not merely external.

38. Alternatively, it should have said, “because they were drawn into...,” or the like.

39. I.e., the emphasis is on the singular form of the pronoun; the controversy was primarily Korach’s.

40. True, in a straightforward sense, *Rashi’s* use of the plural refers to the members of Korach’s

On this basis, the difference between the wording employed by *Rashi* and *Midrash Tanchuma* is further clarified. *Midrash Tanchuma* uses the phrase, “perished together with him in his<sup>39</sup> dispute.” *Rashi*, however, uses different wording, stating, “they were drawn into their dispute together with them,” using a plural form. It can be said that according to *Midrash Tanchuma*, the emphasis is that the neighbors were merely drawn after Korach. Accordingly, the emphasis is that it was only his – Korach’s – dispute, i.e., the evil activity is ascribed only to the one wicked person and not to his neighbors. By contrast, according to *Rashi*, the closeness to Korach and his company affected his neighbors to the extent that they “were drawn into their dispute together with them.”<sup>40</sup> The wording implies that the dispute also became the neighbors’; it was not only Korach’s personal dispute, but that of all involved.

The approach of *Bamidbar Rabbah* follows the third interpretation mentioned previously – the fact that people are neighbors is a sign of a commonality shared by the neighbors, and that their inner natures are interrelated. This is reflected in the wording of *Bamidbar Rabbah*, “They were all inciters of dispute,” and “They were also inciters of discord.” Unlike *Rashi*, who states that “they were drawn into the dispute together with them” – i.e., initially, this was unnatural to them – *Bamidbar Rabbah* understands discord as being inherent to these tribes. Being Korach’s neighbors just revealed this tendency and brought it from its hidden state into expression.

Similar concepts apply regarding the positive tendency implied by the statements of *Bamidbar Rabbah* before that – the tribes in the camp of Yehudah who were the neighbors of Moshe and Aharon “were all

ועל פי זה מבאר עוד שנוי לשון בפרוש רש"י מלשון התנחומא, שבתנחומא הלשון "אבדו עמו במחלוקתו", ורש"י משנה וכותב "שנמשכו עמהם במחלוקתם" (לשון רבים) - דייש לומר, שבתנחומא ההדגשה שהשכנים רק נגררו אחרי קרח, ולכן מדגיש שזוהי רק "מחלוקתו" (של קרח), שמעשה הרע מתרחס רק להרשע ולא לשכנו; מה שאין כן לפרוש רש"י שמצד השכנות לקרח "נמשכו עמהם במחלוקתם", שמרמז שהשכנים נמשכו במחלוקת, עד שנעשית גם מחלוקת השכן, מחלוקת של רבים;

אבל שיטת הבמדבר רבה היא כאפן הג' הנ"ל, ששכנות הרי זו סימן על מהותם של השכנים, שבמהותם שיכים זה לזה. וזהו שמדייק בבמדבר רבה "היו כלם בעלי מחלוקת כו' אף הם היו בעלי מריבה" (ולא "שנמשכו עמהם במחלוקתם", כבפרוש רש"י), והינו שזוהי תכונתם בעצמם, והשכנות רק גלתה והוציאה תכונה זו מן ההעלם אל הפעל. ועל דרך זה לפני זה בצד הטוב אומר שם שה"שבטים (דדגל מחנה יהודה) שהיו סמוכים למשה ולאהרן . .

company, i.e., the members of the other tribes who joined Korach’s rebellion who “were drawn into their dispute with them,” i.e., with Korach and his company. However, *Rashi*’s change from the wording of *Midrash Tanchuma* (which states “his” – i.e., Korach’s – “dispute,” even though he already mentioned “Korach and

his company”\*) alludes also to the concept stated in the main text.

\* It can, however, be said that according to *Midrash Tanchuma*, the fundamental inciter of the dispute was Korach, while according to *Rashi*, Korach’s company were also inciters of the dispute.

41. Therefore, there is no contradiction between the statements in the main text and those at the end of the above passage in *Bamidbar Rabbah*: “Because they were neighbors of the Torah, they all became Torah scholars.” Being neighbors of the masters of the Torah revealed their own inner character and traits, it

great in Torah study.” The implication is that this was their natural trait; being the neighbors of Moshe and Aharon revealed<sup>41</sup> that, in essence, “they were all (fit to be) great in Torah study.” *Midrash Tanchuma* and *Rashi*, by contrast, state merely that “they became great in Torah study,” i.e., this was not a natural trait, but an acquired tendency.

It is possible to say that this is the emphasis in the passage in *Bamidbar Rabbah*, which – when speaking about the positive qualities – states, “Fortunate is the righteous man and fortunate is his neighbor.” *Midrash Tanchuma* and *Rashi* place a *lamed*, meaning “to,” before the terms *tzaddik*, “righteous man,” and *shecheino*, “his neighbor,” implying that good fortune or goodness will be granted “to a righteous man and his neighbor.” According to these sources, good fortune and goodness are granted to a neighbor by virtue of a righteous man and his influence, while according to *Bamidbar Rabbah*, the good fortune is an inherent quality shared by both equally. It is possible to say that this is the precise intent in the statement, “Concerning *them*,<sup>42</sup> it can be said, ‘Fortunate is the righteous man and fortunate is his neighbor.’”

Moreover, it could be said that this interpretation of the approach of *Bamidbar Rabbah* – that the fact that people or groups are neighbors indicates a fundamental and inherent connection – corresponds to the general approach of the interpretation of *Bamidbar Rabbah* here. That source begins with a description of the inherent qualities associated with the four directions, East, West, North, and South<sup>43</sup> in which the four camps of tribes were located:<sup>44</sup>

הָיוּ כָּלֵם גְּדוּלִים בְּתוֹרָה” (ולא (רק) “שֶׁנִּנְעֲשׂוּ גְּדוּלִים בְּתוֹרָה”, כְּבִתְנַחוּמָא וּבְפִרוּשׁ רִשׁ”י) - שֶׁהִשְׁכַּנּוּת גָּלְתָה לִּי שְׁבַעֲצָם” הָיוּ כָּלֵם (רְאוּיִים לְהִיּוֹת) גְּדוּלִים בְּתוֹרָה.”

וַיֵּשׁ לֹמֵר שְׁזָהוּ מָה שְׁמַדִּיק בְּבִמְדָבָר רַבָּה שֶׁם (בְּצַד הַטּוֹב) “אֲשֶׁרִי צְדִיק וְאֲשֶׁרִי שְׁכֵנוֹ”, לֹא “לְצְדִיק . . . לְשְׁכֵנוֹ” כְּבִתְנַחוּמָא (וּפִרוּשׁ רִשׁ”י), כִּי לְתַנְחוּמָא (וּפִרוּשׁ רִשׁ”י) הָאֲשֶׁר (וְהַטּוֹב) שְׁבָא לְשְׁכֵנוֹ הוּא בָּא עַל יְדֵי (מִצַּד) הַצְדִּיק וְהִשְׁפַּעְתּוֹ, מָה שְׁאִין כֵּן בְּבִמְדָבָר רַבָּה הִ”אֲשֶׁרִי” הוּא עַל שְׁנֵיהֶם בְּשׁוֹה, וַיֵּשׁ לֹמֵר שְׁזָהוּ מָה שְׁמַדִּיק “וַיְנַלִּיהֶם נְאֻמַּר לִ” אֲשֶׁרִי צְדִיק וְאֲשֶׁרִי שְׁכֵנוֹ”.

[וַיֵּשׁ לְהוֹסִיף, שְׁבִאוֹר זֶה בְּשִׁטַּת הַבְּמִדְבָּר רַבָּה, שְׁשִׁכְנוֹת הֵיא סִיחֹן עַל הַשִּׁיכּוֹת וְהַקָּשֶׁר שְׁבִינֵיהֶם בְּעֲצָם, מִתְנַאִים עִם כְּלָלוֹת תִּכְּן דְרִשְׁתָּ הַבְּמִדְבָּר רַבָּה כֹּאן, שְׁמַתְחִיל בְּהַסְגֵּלָה שֶׁל הַמְּקוֹמוֹת (ד’ הַרוֹחוֹת מִזְרַח מַעֲרֵב צָפוֹן וְדָרוֹם<sup>45</sup>) שֶׁשֶׁם חָנוּ

did not engender within them an entirely new quality.

42. The word “them” refers not only to Moshe, Aharon, and his sons, but also to the tribes under the flag of the camp of Yehudah. The positive virtues identified with Torah study were inherent to all of them.

43. The passage from *Bamidbar Rabbah* cited initially (3:12) follows the

approach previously established (*ibid.* 2:10) in that source when explaining the camps of the tribes and the directions in which they were camped. Consult the elaborate explanation in that source.

44. Although *Bamidbar Rabbah* 3:12 mentions the negative qualities that stemmed from camping to the South, next to the family of Kehos, in a general sense, both that source and *ibid.* 2:10,

speak of the positive qualities of the tribe of Reuven and the direction in which they were camped.

45. I.e., the sun rises in the east.

46. In particular, this is true since we do not find explicit statements in Scripture that these tribes were

The East – from there, light emerges for the world.<sup>45</sup> In that [direction was located the camp of the tribes captained by the tribe of] Yehudah who were masters of kingship, masters of Torah, and masters of *mitzvos*. Therefore, next to them were camped Moshe, Aharon, and his sons, the masters of Torah and masters of *mitzvos* who would bring atonement to the Jewish people through their prayers and sacrifices.

Regarding their encampment, that text continues, “Concerning them, it can be said, ‘Fortunate is the righteous man and fortunate is his neighbor.’ These are the tribes that were neighbors of Moshe and Aharon.... They were all great in Torah [study].” The implication is that because of the inherent positive qualities of the tribes of the camp of Yehudah and their connection to the East, they camped in that uniquely favorable direction and, “therefore, Moshe, Aharon, and his sons [also] camped there.”

### More than an External Effect

6. According to this interpretation of *Rashi's* approach, it is possible to understand the reason why *Rashi* speaks only about “the camp of Reuven” but does not mention the tribes of Shimon and Gad.

As noted earlier (sec. 5), *Rashi* maintains that “woe to the wicked and woe to his neighbor” results from the influence of the wicked person on the conduct and nature of his neighbor. Obviously, the effect of such a person on his neighbor is not the same universally. Instead, the effect varies from neighbor to neighbor. Consequently, in the case at hand, all that can be said is what is specifically mentioned in the Torah: that, as explicitly stated, the tribe of Reuven was drawn into the dispute. Since they were the primary tribe associated with the flag of that camp, it is understood that they were the closest and most connected to the descendants of Kehos – and, specifically, Korach. By contrast,

הַדְּגֵלִים<sup>ב</sup>, וְכִלְשׁוֹנוֹ “מִזְרַח מִשָּׁם הָאֹר יוֹצֵא לְעוֹלָם וְשָׁם הָיוּ חוֹנִים דְּגַל יְהוּדָה שֶׁהָיוּ בְּעֵלֵי מְלוּכָה בְּעֵלֵי תוֹרָה בְּעֵלֵי מִצְוֹת לְכָךְ הָיוּ חוֹנִים שָׁם מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן וּבְנָיו שֶׁהָיוּ בְּעֵלֵי תוֹרָה בְּעֵלֵי מִצְוֹת מְכַפְּרִים עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתַפְלָתָם וּמְקַרְבָּנָם, וְעַל זֶה מְמַשֵּׁיךְ “וְעֵלֵיהֶם נֹאמַר אֲשֶׁרִי צְדִיק וְאֲשֶׁרִי שָׂכֵנוּ אֵלָיו שְׁבֻטִים שֶׁהָיוּ סְמוּכִים לְמֹשֶׁה וְלְאַהֲרֹן כֹּ” הָיוּ כְּלָם גְּדוּלִים בְּתוֹרָה כֹּ” וְהָיוּ שֶׁמִּצַּד מַעֲלָתָם בְּעֵצָם שֶׁל דְּגַל יְהוּדָה וְשִׁיכוּתָם לְ”מִזְרַח”, חָנוּ דְּגַל יְהוּדָה בְּרוּחַ מְסֻגָּל דְּמִזְרַח, וְ”לְכָךְ (גַּם) הָיוּ חוֹנִים שָׁם מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן וּבְנָיו”].

ו. על פי הסברה זו בשיטת רש"י מובן הטעם שרש"י כותב רק "דגל ראובן" ולא הביא גם שמעון וגד:

בין שלשיטת רש"י "אוי לרשע ואוי לשכנו" הוא מצד השפעת הרשע על הנהגת השכן ומהותו, מובן, שאינו דבר השווה בכל, ובמילא (בגדון דידן) אין לה בו אלא חדושו, שבט ראובן שמפרש בו שנמשך במחלקתו. דכיון שהם היו עקר הדגל, במילא מובן שהם היו "סמוכים" ושייכים ביותר (בני קהת - קרח; מה שאין

associated with Korach's dispute,

as stated in the main text. See the

commentaries to *Bamidbar Rabbah*

the tribes of Shimon and Gad are not explicitly associated with this dispute in Scripture. Accordingly, there is no need to say<sup>46</sup> that the influence of being Korach's neighbor affected them to the extent that they were drawn into the dispute with him and his company.<sup>47</sup>

Moreover, with regard to the members of the tribe of Reuven themselves, *Rashi* specifies that, "Of them, Dasan, Aviram, and 250 men were punished," i.e., Korach did not influence the entire tribe of Reuven, only a small number of that tribe.

For this reason, *Rashi* specifies "Dasan, Aviram, and 250 men," instead of saying, "Therefore, some of [the tribe's members] were punished together with Korach and his company." By mentioning Dasan and Aviram together with the 250 men, he intended to emphasize the nature of the effect on one's nature that results from being the neighbor of a wicked person – that one's nature is changed. Clearly, Dasan and

כִּן עַל שְׁמֵעוֹן וְגַד שְׂאִינוּ מִפְּרֵשׁ בְּקִרְאָה, אֵין הִכְרַח לִזְמַר־יָם שְׁגָם בְּהֵם פְּעֵלָה וְהַשְׁפִּיעָה הַשְּׁכֵנֹת שִׁיחֵיו נִמְשָׁכִים עִמָּהֶם<sup>46</sup>; וּבְרֵאוּבֵן גּוֹפֵא מְדִיק רֶשֶׁ"י "לְקוֹ מַהֵם דְּתֵן וְאַבִּירָם וּמֵאֲתָיִם וְחִמְשִׁים אִישׁ", הֵינוּ שְׁלֵא הַשְׁפִּיעַ קָרַח עַל כָּל הַשֵּׁבֶט אֲלֵא עַל מִסְפָּר מוֹעֵט בְּשֵׁבֶט רֵאוּבֵן גּוֹפֵא.

וּמֵטַעַם זֶה מִפְּרֵשׁ רֶשֶׁ"י "דְּתֵן וְאַבִּירָם וּמֵאֲתָיִם וְחִמְשִׁים אִישׁ" וְלֵא כֵתַב סֵתֶם "לְכֹד לְקוֹ מָהֵם עִם קָרַח וְעֵדְתוֹ" - שִׁישׁ לִזְמַר, שְׁבֹנָה שְׁצָרָף "דְּתֵן וְאַבִּירָם" לְהַמְאֲתָיִם וְחִמְשִׁים אִישׁ" בְּחֵדָא מִחֲתָא, כְּוִנְתוּ לְהַדְגִישׁ תִּכְוֵן וְעִנְיָנָה שֶׁל שְׁכֵנֹת לְרֶשַׁע, שְׁפּוֹעֵלֶת וּמִשְׁפִּיעָה עַל מַהוּתָם שֶׁל הָאֲנָשִׁים הַשְּׁכֵנִים אֵלָיו,

3:12, which interpret the statement that the descendants of Shimon and Gad were "inciters of the dispute."

47. Similar concepts apply in a positive vein. True, "a positive quality is greater than one associated with retribution," and being the neighbors of Moshe and Aharon also affected the tribes who camped together with Yehudah\* (see sec. 7, below). Nevertheless, as the leading tribe whose flag led the camp, the tribe of Yehudah possessed an advantage over the other tribes in that camp. This is reflected in the precise choice of the verses and the difference between the references to the tribes that *Rashi* quotes. With regard to the tribe of Yehudah, *Rashi* cites the prooftext (*Tehillim* 60:9, 108:9), "Yehudah is My lawgiver," referring to the entire tribe (see sec. 7, below). Regarding Yissachar, *Rashi* cites the prooftext (*I Divrei HaYamim* 12:33) which states merely, "From the descendants of Yissachar were those who had understanding of the times... 200 heads," interpreted by *Midrash Tanchuma* as referring to 200 heads of *Sanhedrins*.\*\* Saying "from the descendants" implies

that there was a portion of the tribe" who had understanding of the times... and served as heads of *Sanhedrins*, but the entire tribe did not possess this quality.

Similarly, concerning the tribe of Zevulun regarding whom *Rashi* cites (*Shoftim* 5:14), "[From Zevulun,] there were those who wield the pen of a scribe," it is obvious that a) this was not a description of the entire tribe, but that merely there were Torah scholars from Zevulun (– in this, they resembled Yissachar, not Yehudah) – but also b) the manner in which they studied was merely that they "wielded the pen of a scribe." Unlike Yissachar, they were not "heads of *Sanhedrins*."

\* Perhaps it can be said that this resulted from the fact that "the righteous" referred to in *Rashi's* teaching were also three – Moshe, Aharon, and his sons. However, it is understood that the primary "neighbor" was Moshe, who was occupied in Torah study. This led to his neighbors "becoming great in Torah [study.]" Note that the Buber edition of *Midrash*

*Tanchuma* and *Yalkut Shimoni* here conclude, "Because they were neighbors to the Torah, they all became great..." Similar statements are found in the *Midrashim* on *Parshas Korach* cited in footnote 12, "Because they were close to the Torah..."

\*\* *Midrash Tanchuma* cites the phrase, "200 heads," and continues citing the remainder of the verse, "All their brethren [followed] their word," which the *Midrash* interprets to mean that "they would agree to the *halachah* they prescribed." See the Buber edition of *Midrash Tanchuma* and *Yalkut Shimoni*, *remez* 129, which makes similar statements, albeit with slight variations.

48. See *Shmos* 2:13-14 and *Rashi's* commentary there; *ibid.* 5:20, and *Rashi's* commentary there; *ibid.* 16:20, and *Rashi's* commentary there.

49. See *Rashi's* commentary on *Bamidbar* 17:3, which states that "they became transgressors within their souls."

Aviram were not merely drawn into Korach's dispute; they were inciters of discord by nature.<sup>48</sup> Similarly, being the neighbor of a wicked person had an effect on the nature of these 250 men, causing them as well to become inciters of discord.<sup>49</sup>

דְּכַשְׁם שֶׁפָּשׁוּט שֶׁ"דָּתָן וְאַבִּירָם" לֹא  
 רַק נִגְרְרוּ אַחֲרַי מִחֻלְקָתוֹ שֶׁל קָרַח,  
 אֲלֵא הֵם הָיוּ בְּעֵלֵי מִחֻלְקַת בְּטַבַּע<sup>51</sup>,  
 כִּדְ נִפְעַל בְּהִמָּאֲתִים וְחִמְלָשִׁים אִישׁ  
 עַל יְדֵי הַשְּׂכָנוֹת לְרָשָׁע, שֶׁנִּעְשׂוּ  
 בְּעֵלֵי מִחֻלְקָתוֹ<sup>52</sup>.

## Good Is More than Skin Deep

7. On the surface, a question can be raised regarding the concept that, according to *Midrash Tanchuma*, a neighbor merely brings about an external influence, leading to collateral punishment and the like. However, regarding the fact that the flag of the camp of Yehudah bordered on the place where Moshe and Aharon camped, that *Midrash* specifically states:

Concerning this, it was said, "Good fortune [will come] to the righteous and good fortune [will come] to his neighbor." These three tribes who were close to Moshe and Aharon became great in Torah [study]: Concerning Yehudah, it is said,<sup>50</sup> "The staff will not depart..."; regarding Yissachar, it is said,<sup>51</sup> "From the descendants of Yissachar were those who had understanding [of the times...]" and from Zevulun, "there were those who wield the pen of a scribe." Since they were [Moshe's] neighbors, they all became men of Torah."<sup>52</sup>

Thus, we see that, even according to the *Midrash Tanchuma*, the fact that they were neighbors affected them internally – they became "great in Torah" and "men of Torah."

It is possible to say that, according to *Midrash Tanchuma*, there is a difference between a good

ז. אֲלֵא שֶׁלְכַאוּרָה מָה שֶׁנִּתְבָּאָר  
 לְעֵיל, שֶׁלְפִי הַתְּנַחוּמָא עֵינִין  
 הַשְּׂכָנוֹת הוּא רַק פְּעֻלָּה חִיצוֹנִית  
 לְעֵינִין עֲנִשׁ לְחוּה, צָרִיךְ עֵינִין -  
 שֶׁהָרִי מְפָרֵשׁ בְּתַנְחוּמָא שֶׁם לְעֵינִין  
 סְמִיכּוֹת דְּגַל מַחְנֵה יְהוּדָה לְמָקוֹם  
 חֲנִית מִשֶּׁה וְאַהֲרֹן: "מִכָּאֵן אָמְרוּ  
 אֲשֶׁרֵי לְצַדִּיק וְאֲשֶׁרֵי לְשָׂכְנוֹ אֵלּוּ  
 שְׁלִישֵׁת הַשְּׂבֵטִים שֶׁהָיוּ סְמוּכִים  
 לְמֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן נִעְשׂוּ גְדוּלִים  
 בְּתוֹרָה, יְהוּדָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר<sup>50</sup> לֹא יִסּוּר  
 . . בְּיַשְׁשָׁכָר כְּתִיב<sup>51</sup> וּמִבְּנֵי יִשְׁשָׁכָר  
 יוֹדְעֵי בִינָה . . וּמִזְבוּלוֹן מוֹשֶׁה  
 בְּשֵׁבֶט סוּפְרִי<sup>52</sup> עַל שֶׁהָיוּ שְׂכָנָיו כְּלָם  
 נִעְשׂוּ בְּנֵי תוֹרָה", הָרִי שֶׁהַשְּׂכָנוֹת  
 פְּעֻלָּה בָּהֶם גּוֹפֵא, שֶׁ"נִּעְשׂוּ גְדוּלִים  
 בְּתוֹרָה . . בְּנֵי תוֹרָה"?

וְיֵשׁ לוֹמַר, שֶׁלְדַעַת הַתְּנַחוּמָא  
 יֵשׁ חֲלוּק בֵּין שָׂכְנֵי טוֹב לְשָׂכְנֵי רָע,  
 דְּשְׂכָנוֹת לְרָע פְּעֻלָּתָהּ רַק חִיצוֹנִית

The Rebbe appears to be implying that unlike Dasan and Aviram, who possessed an inherent tendency for discord, the 250 others did not have that trait innately. However, due to their connection with Korach, it became part of their natures.

50. *Bereishis* 49:10.

51. *I Divrei HaYamim* 12:33.

52. *Shoftim* 5:14.

53. *Sotah* 11a; see the sources cited there; *Rashi*, *Shmos* 34:7; *et al.*, also quoted by *Rashi*, at the conclusion of Tractate *Sukkah* concerning

the matter at hand in connection with the teaching, "It will be good for the righteous and good for his neighbor."

54. See the elaborate explanation in footnote 59 below.



how the tribe of Yehudah **actually** served as a “lawgiver”; it was not merely a promise and the blessing that “the staff would not depart.” Moreover, the verse from the Torah does not explicitly state that the promise involved the entire tribe of Yehudah. On the contrary, the meaning of the promise, “The staff will not depart from Yehudah, nor the lawgiver’s rod between his legs,” is that “the exilarchs from Babylon” and “the *nesi'im* from *Eretz Yisrael*”<sup>58</sup> will descend from that tribe, i.e., it refers only to select individuals. By contrast, the phrase, “Yehudah is My lawgiver” refers to the name of the entire tribe, indicating that all its members possessed this quality. Therefore, *Rashi* deviates from his *Midrashic* sources and cites this proof-text to emphasize that neighbors affect and change each other’s inner nature.<sup>59</sup>

It is possible to say that this is implied by *Rashi*’s precise choice of the phrase, “It will be good for the righteous and good for his neighbors,” rather than “Good fortune [will come] to the righteous and good fortune [will come] to his neighbor,” as stated in *Midrash Tanchuma*. The word *ashrei*, translated as “good fortune,” also has the connotation of “praiseworthy.”<sup>60</sup> These terms are appropriate<sup>61</sup> even when a person receives reward because of his righteous neighbor or because he was influenced by the conduct of his righ-

tative, regarding the nature of the change in the neighbors’ inner dimension. An evil neighbor – “Woe to the wicked and woe to his neighbor” – can also have an inner effect. Nevertheless, he primarily affects the neighbor’s conduct, but not his inner being. By contrast, in the positive realm, a good neighbor brings about a change in the essence and nature of his neighbor. Therefore, he impacts the entire tribe to the extent that it is established as the name of the entire tribe.

Based on the above, it can be said that *Rashi* sees a neighbor as having a more encompassing effect on those living near him than the conception *Midrash Tanchuma* has of that effect. This involves not only a bad neighbor – of whom it is said, “Woe to the wicked and woe to

his neighbor” – but also of the effect resulting from living close to a righteous person, of whom it is said, “it will be good for the righteous and good for his neighbor.” *Rashi* sees a bad neighbor as having the potential to affect a person’s inner dimension, while according to *Midrash Tanchuma*, the effect is only external, vis-à-vis punishment. With regard to a righteous neighbor, since the effect of a positive attribute surpasses that of an attribute associated with retribution, “Woe to the wicked...” the greater positive effect that *Rashi* conceives over that of *Midrash Tanchuma* is more encompassing. Accordingly, *Rashi* sees a righteous neighbor as having the potential to impact the very essence and nature of his neighbor.

רק הבטחה והברכה ש”לא יסור”,  
הרי בהפסוק בחומש לא מפרש  
שזהו בכל שבט יהודה, ד”לא  
יסור שבט מיהודה ומחוקק מביין  
רגליו” פרושו שהיו בהם “ראשי  
גליות שבבבל” ו”גשיאי ארץ  
ישראל”<sup>62</sup>, ואלו בפסוק “יהודה  
מחוקקי” הרי זה שמו של השבט  
כלו, ומזה מובן שזוהי תכונתו  
של כל שבט יהודה. ולכן שנה  
רש”י והביא כתוב זה, להדגיש,  
ששכנות פועלת ומשנה מהותו  
של השכן.

ויש לומר שזהו גם דיוק  
הלשון בפרוש רש”י “טוב לצדיק  
טוב לשכנו”, ולא “אשרי לצדיק  
ואשרי לשכנו” (כבתנחומא),  
כי לשון “אשרי” (מלשון אשר  
או מלשון שבה) יתכן גם  
כאשר מקבל השפעת שכן על  
ידי הצדיק או שגשפע מהנהגת  
הצדיק, מה שאין כן הלשון “טוב”

60. See Onkelos on *Bereishis* 30:13.

61. True, it can also be interpreted as referring to the good fortune and goodness of the person himself, as in the exclamation, “How fortunate is the man!” that begins the book of *Tehillim* (see the commentaries on that phrase). See also Onkelos who translates *Devarim* 33:29, “How fortunate are you, O Israel!” as “How good are you, O Israel!”

62. There is also a connection to *tzaraas* blemishes that are manifest on homes (see sec. 4, above) – the source in *halachah* which mentions “Woe to the wicked and woe to his neighbor” – because blemishes manifest themselves in homes because of *lashon hara* (“malicious gossip”) and envy, which reflect di-

teous neighbor. By contrast, the word *tov*, “good,” can also be understood as implying that he underwent an inner change so that not only will goodness befall him, but he himself will become good.

כולל גם שנוי במהותו וגדרו שנעשה “טוב”.

### When Torah and Unity are Joined

8. On this basis, it is possible to add further explanation using a homiletic approach. The connection between these two concepts – “It will be good for the righteous and good for his neighbors” and “Woe to the wicked and woe to his neighbor” – in our Torah reading does not only relate to the effect neighbors have on each other, but also to the subjects concerning which these concepts are taught. The way one can prevent involvement in dispute<sup>62</sup> (“woe to the wicked”) is through involvement in Torah study (“it will be good for the righteous...”). Conversely, for one’s Torah study to be desirable and enable him to become great in Torah, i.e., to become one with the Torah, he must separate himself from dispute to the furthest extreme.

ח. ויש להוסיף בזה על דרך הרמז והדרוש:

השיכות דב' ענינים אלו ד"טוב לצדיק טוב לשכנו" ו"אוי לרשע ואוי לשכנו" שבפרשתנו, הוא לא רק מצד גדר ענין השכנות, אלא (גם) מצד תכנם וענינם המדבר בהם: הדרך להנצל ולהפטר מלהמשיך במחלקתו ("אוי לרשע"), הוא על ידי העסק בתורה ("טוב לצדיק כו"). וכן לאידך, כדי שהעסק בתורה יהיה כדבעי, ועד שהעוסקים יהיו גדולים בתורה, והיגו שיתאחדו עם התורה, הוא דקא פאשר מתרחקים ממחלקת עד קצה האחרון.

It is possible to say that this is one of the explanations of the connection between *Parshas Bamidbar* and the festival of Shavuot, as reflected in our Rabbis' statement,<sup>63</sup> “*Parshas Bamidbar Sinai* is always read before *Atzeres*.” Just as in *Parshas Bamidbar*, both these concepts – greatness in Torah study and the need to rise above dispute – are emphasized, so too, they are both fundamental to the Giving of the Torah.

ויש לומר שזוהי גם כן מטעמי השיכות דפרשת במדבר לחג השבועות, ד"לעולם קורין פרשת במדבר סיני קודם עצרת", דכמו שבפרשה זו מבארים ב' ענינים הנ"ל, על דרך זה הוא בהענין דמתן תורה:

With regard to the Giving of the Torah, our Sages emphasize,<sup>64</sup> “The entire Torah was given solely to establish peace in the world,” i.e., to create peace and unity in a place where dispute and division could

מבאר בחז"ל בנוגע למתן תורה "כל התורה נתנה לעשות שלום בעולם"<sup>65</sup>, והיגו לפעול שלום ואחדות במקום שאפשר להיות מחלקת

vision and discord between people (see *Arachin* 16a; *Toras Kohanim* on *Vayikra* 14:35; *Tosefta, Negayim* 6:6; *Rambam*, the conclusion of *Hilchos Tumaas Tzaraas*; *Rashi*, the conclusion of *Sukkah*, *loc. cit.*; the commentaries on *Negayim* 12:5).

63. *Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chayim* 428:4; see also *Tur*). Similarly, *Ram-*

*bam (Hilchos Tefilah* 13:2) writes, “The common custom is to read *Bamidbar* before *Atzeres*.”

64. *Rambam*, the conclusion of *Hilchos Chanukah*.

65. *Shmos* 19:2.

66. *Mechilta* on the above verse; see also *Rashi* on that verse and

the sources cited in the following footnote. See also the elaborate explanation in *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 21, pp. 100ff., and 108ff.

67. *Derech Eretz Zuta, perek hashalom*. See also *Vayikra Rabbah* 9:9, the introduction to *Eichah Rabbah*, sec. 20, *Midrash Tanchuma* (Buber ed.), *Parshas Yisro*, sec. 9, *et al.*

have existed. Conversely, the reason G-d was motivated to give the Torah is indicated by the verse,<sup>65</sup> “Israel camped there opposite the mountain,” interpreted by our Sages<sup>66</sup> to mean that, on Rosh Chodesh Sivan, the Jews joined “in unity, with one heart.” This made them fit to receive the Torah, as our Sages explicitly stated:<sup>67</sup>

At the time they came to Sinai, they camped in unity, [as implied by the singular form of the verb] ויחן, “camped”... The Holy One, blessed be He, said, “Since Israel [has shown] hatred for dispute and love for peace, camping in unity, the time [has come] to give them My Torah.”

The combination of both these factors – the negation of dispute and greatness in Torah – results from being the neighbor of a righteous man: “It will be good for the righteous and good for his neighbor.” The Torah study of a righteous man is characterized by and leads to peace and unity.<sup>68</sup> This is particularly true when Torah is studied for the desired intent – realizing the connection between the Torah to the Giver of the Torah.<sup>69</sup> Therefore, being a neighbor of a righteous man and studying his Torah teachings brings about peace and unity among all those involved.

Ultimately, this will bring about the true and consummate peace that will accompany the coming of *Mashiach*.<sup>70</sup> He will “teach Torah to the entire nation”<sup>71</sup> in a manner characterized by unity. As a result, “In that era, there will be no... envy or com-

68. See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 21, p. 112ff.

69. This parallels the Torah study of David, who would “join the Torah as it is Above with the Holy One, blessed be He” (*Sefer HaBahir*, sec. 58 [sec. 196 in other editions]). That text continues, “Whenever a person studies the Torah with the desired intent, the Torah as it is Above becomes joined with the Holy One, blessed be He.”

This concept is cited in *Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar*, p. 51a; *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5705, p. 123, et al. It

is also found in *Zohar*, Vol. III, p. 222b, and other sources.

From the association of this concept specifically with David, it is understood that his mode of study was on a uniquely elevated level. See *Toras Menachem, Sefer HaMaamarim Melukat*, Vol. 3, p. 288, and the sources cited there.

70. See also *Derech Eretz Zuta*, loc. cit. which states that “when the King *Mashiach* will be revealed to Israel, he will begin with [a message of] peace.” See similar statements in *Vayikra Rabbah* 9:9, at the end.

ויפרוד; ולא ידנה, הטובה לנתינת התורה היא כמו שכתובים “ויחן שם ישראל נגד ההר” (שהיה בראש חדש סיון), ואמרו רז”ל<sup>65</sup> דכאן “השוו לב אחד”, ועל ידי זה נעשו ישראל ראויים לקבלת התורה, וכמפרש בחז”ל<sup>66</sup> “בזמן שבאו לסיני חנו חנייה אחת ויחן כו” אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא הואיל ושנאו ישראל את המחלקת ואהבו את השלום ונעשו חנייה אחת, הרי השעה שאאתן להם את תורתי.”

ושניהם ביחד, בטול המחלקת והגדלות בתורה, באים על ידי שכנות לצדיק, “טוב לצדיק טוב לשכנו”,

כי עסק התורה של צדיק הוא באפן של שלום ואחדות<sup>68</sup>, ובפרט למוד התורה לשמה, תורה כמו שהיא קשורה ומחברת עם נותן התורה<sup>69</sup>, ולכן על ידי השכנות לצדיק ולמוד תורתו, הרי זה פועל שלום ואחדות בכל אחד ואחד,

ועד שזוכים לשלום האמת שיהיה בביאת משיח<sup>70</sup>, שלמד תורה את כל העם פלו<sup>71</sup> באפן של אחדות, “ובאותו הזמן לא יהיה שם כו’ ולא

71. See *Rambam, Hilchos Teshuvah* 9:2; *Likkutei Torah, Vayikra*, p. 17a-b. See also *Shaar HaEmunah*, ch. 56.

72. *Rambam, Hilchos Melachim* 12:5.

73. See the *Hadrin* on *Rambam* published in *Sefer HaSichos*, 5749, Vol. 1, p. 154, and the footnotes there.

74. *Yeshayahu* 11:9; *Rambam, loc. cit.*

petition...<sup>72</sup> – not even envy or competition in the realm of holiness<sup>73</sup> – “for the world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d, as the waters cover the ocean bed.”<sup>74</sup>

קִנְיָה וְתַחְרוּת<sup>טו</sup>, גַּם לֹא קִנְיָה וְתַחְרוּת וְקִדְשָׁהּ<sup>סח</sup>, “כִּי מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ דַּעַה אֶת ה’ כְּמַיִם לַיָּם מְכֻסִּים”<sup>טט</sup>.

(משיחות ש"פ במדבר תשל"ה, תשמ"ג, תשד"מ;  
ו' תשרי תשכ"ח)

(וראה שם כמה נוסחאות. ואין כאן מקומו).	ממנו להשאיר. (יב) שם, לח.	א) פרשתנו ב, י. ב) שם ג, כט.
לא) ולכאורה כן משמע מפשטות לשון הרמב"ם בפירוש המשניות נגעים פ"ב שם ומדבריו בהלכות טומאת צרעת (פט"ו ה"ד). וכן יש לפרש בפירוש רבינו הלל לתורת כהנים מצורע שם, מ. וראה ביאורי הגר"א למשנה נגעים פ"ג שם. ואין כאן מקומו.	(יג) ועל דרך זה הוא במדרשים בפרשת קרח (הנ"ל הערה יא). (יד) פירוש רש"י ריש פרשת קרח ד"ה רדתו ואבירים. (טו) ראה רש"י לך יג, ה. שם, יד. שם יד, יב. בשלח טז, כח (מבבא קמא צב, א. וראה פירוש רש"י שם ד"ה בהדי). אבל ראה רש"י יירא יט, יז. שם, יט.	ג) פרשתנו יב (ותנחומא באבער יג). ועל דרך זה בילקוט כאן רמז תרפו. ד) קרח טז, לב. ה) פרשתנו - פ"ג, יב. ו) קרח טז, א.
לב) להעיר שבתנחומא קרח בענין דגל ראובן כתב בתחלת הענין "ונשתתפו עמהם", ומכל מקום בסיום הענין איתא (רק) "לקו עמו ואבדו מן העולם".	(טז) נו, ב. (יז) ראה זח"א קכב, ב. וראה ברכות נח, ריש ע"א ועיובוין יח, סע"ב ובפירוש רש"י. ועוד.	ז) הכרחו של רש"י לפרש זה בפסוק זה (ג, כט) - אף שאין דרכו להעתיק דרשות רז"ל - יש לומר, שהוא מפני הלשון "משפחות בני קהת", ולא "משפחות קהת" כמו שנאמר "משפחות הגרשוני" (ג, כג), ו"משפחות מררי . . יחנו" (ג, לג), דמשמע שישנו ענין (בלתי רצוי) בהם שבגללו אינו רוצה לייחסם לקהת עצמו (ועל דרך פירוש רש"י ויחי מט, ו) - ראה באר בשדה על פירוש רש"י כאן. וראה בעוד מפרשי רש"י (גור אריה, באר מים חיים (לאחי מהר"ל). מלאכת הקודש. ועוד) פירושים אחרים בהכרחו של רש"י, ולכאורה אינם על דרך הפשט. ואין כאן מקומו.
לג) בלקו"ש שבהערה יט נתבאר (באופן אחר) בפלוגתת רמב"ם ורש"י, דלרש"י (סוכה שם) השייכות דשכינות היא רק חיצונית ואינה במהות השכן (מה שאין כן להרמב"ם, עיין שם בארוכה). אבל להעיר דפירוש רש"י על התורה הוא (כולל) יינה של תורה, כמאמר ארמו"ר הזקן (היום יום כט שבט), ולכן יש לומר דברש"י על התורה מודגשת יותר השייכות הפנימית דשכינות.	(יח) ראה זח"א פד, סע"א ואילך. (יט) וראה בארוכה על-דבר ב' האופנים - לקו"ש חי"ט ע' 62 ואילך. כ) מצורע יד, מ. כא) פ"ב מ"ו. כב) רע"ב למשנה שם. ועל דרך זה הוא בר"ש שם. קרבן אהרן לתורת כהנים שם. כג) חולין קכה, ב. כד) פ"ג, ב. וכן הוא בתורת כהנים מצורע יד, מה.	ח) וראה הערה יא. ט) ובפירוש רש"י ריש פרשת קרח ד"ה דתן ואבירים מסיים "נשתתפו עם קרח במחלוקתו". ולהעיר דשם מתחיל פירושו על הפסוק "פרשה זו יפה נדרשת במדרש רבי תנחומא". י) ואינו מביא הפסוק שבתנחומא שבו נאמר העונש.
לד) ולא כבמדרשים דפרשת קרח (הנ"ל הערה יא) "לקו (עמו) ואבדו מן העולם".	כה) כן הובא בחולין שם. ובמשנה בשינוי לשון קצת. כו) ראה גם ערוך לנר סוכה שם. כז) ולפי זה צריך לומר שהחידוש במשנה זו דפ"ג הוא בעיקר במה שכתוב "ובזמן שהוא נותן כו' ומניח את של חבירו נמצא חומר כו'". ראה חסדי דוד לתוספתא נגעים פ"ו, ח (י). וראה משנה אחרונה שבהערה הבאה.	יא) תוכן הפירוש נמצא גם במדבר רבה קרח (פ"ח, ה). תנחומא שם ד (ותנחומא באבער שם ח). ילקוט שמעוני שם רמז תשנ - ובכולם מסיים רק "לקו (עמו) ואבדו מן העולם".
לה) או הוה ליה למימר "לפי שנמשכו כו'" וכיוצא בזה. לו) אף שלשון רבים שבפירוש רש"י קאי בפשטות על עדת קרח, "שנמשכו עמהם במחלוקתם", יש לומר, שבשינוי לשון רש"י מלשון התנחומא ("במחלוקתו"), אף שגם שם נזכר לפני זה קרח ועדתו*) מרומז גם ענין הנ"ל שבפנים. *) אבל יש לומר כי להתנחומא	כח) משנה אחרונה לנגעים פ"ב ופ"ג שם, על פי הרע"ב והר"ש למשנה נגעים פ"ג שם. כט) לשון הרע"ב בפ"ב שם. ל) וראה אבות דרבי נתן רפ"ט. עיין שם	אבל לכאורה נראה, שמקור הדרשה במקומות אלה הוא ממקום א' ונעתק

(לג, כט) "אשריך ישראל - טובך ישראל".

(נז) וזוהי גם השייכות לענין הנגעים - נגעי בתים (כנ"ל בפנים ס"ד) - המקור שבו נאמר "אוי לרשע אוי לשמנו" בהלכה - כי נגעי בתים באים על לשון הרע וצרות עין (ראה ערכין טז, א. תורת כהנים מצורע יד, לה. תוספתא נגעים פ"ו, ו. רמב"ם סוף הלכות טומאת צרעת. פירוש רש"י סוף סוכה הנ"ל. מפרשי המשנה נגעים פ"ב מ"ה) - הפירוד ומחלוקת שבין אדם לחבירו.

(נח) שולחן ערוך (וכן הוא בטור) או"ח סתכ"ח ס"ה. ועל דרך זה ברמב"ם הלכות תפלה פ"ג ה"ב: המנהג הפשוט שיהו קוראין כו'.

(נט) לשון הרמב"ם סוף הלכות חנוכה.

(ס) יתרו יט, ב.

(סא) מכילתא על הפסוק. וראה גם רש"י על הפסוק. מקומות שבהערה הבאה. וראה בארוכה לקו"ש חכ"א שיחה א' וב' לפ' יתרו.

(סב) דרך ארץ זוטא פרק השלום. וראה גם ויקרא רבה פ"ט, ט. פתיחתא דאיכה רבה כ. תנחומא (באבער) יתרו ט. ועוד.

(סג) וראה לקו"ש חכ"א שם (ע' 112 ואילך).

(סד) על דרך שנאמר בודד שהיה מחבר תורה שלמעלה בקודשא בריך הוא (ספר הבהיר סנ"ח (סקצ"ו) [ושם, "כי כל שעה שאדם לומד תורה לשמה התורה של מעלה מתחברת להקב"ה"], הובא בלקוטי תורה שלח נא, א. סה"מ תש"ה ע' 123. ובכמה מקומות. וכן הוא בוח"ג רכב, ב. ועוד), ומזה שאומרים זה על דוד במיוחד מובן שהוא ענין נעלה ביותר. וראה סה"מ מלוקט ח"ג ע' קנה"ו. ושם נסמן.

(סה) וראה גם דרך ארץ זוטא שם (ועל דרך זה בויקרא רבה שם ספ"ט) שבשעה שמלך המשיח נגלה לישראל אינו פותח אלא בשלום.

(סו) ראה רמב"ם הלכות תשובה פ"ט ה"ב. לקוטי תורה צו יז, א"ב. וראה שער האמונה פ"ו.

(סז) רמב"ם סוף הלכות מלכים.

(סח) ראה "הדרן" על הרמב"ם בסה"ש תשמ"ט ח"א ע' 154 ובהערות שם.

(סט) ישע"י יא, ט. רמב"ם שם.

ומוסיף (מהכתוב) "וכל אחיהם על פיהם" - "היו מסכימים הלכה על פיהם". וראה גם תנחומא באבער וילקוט שמעוני שם (בשינוי קצת).

(מג) ראה שמות ב, ג' יגיד ובפירוש רש"י. שם ה, כ ובפירוש רש"י. בשלח טז, כ ובפירוש רש"י.

(מד) ראה פירוש רש"י קרח יז, ג.

(מה) ויחי מט, יו"ד.

(מו) דברי הימים א' יב, לג.

(מז) שופטים ה, יד.

(מח) סוטה יא, א. ושם נסמן. רש"י תשא לד, ז. ועוד. וכפירוש רש"י סוף סוכה לענינו "טוב לצדיק טוב לשכנו".

(מט) ראה לקמן הערה נד.

(נ) תהלים ס, ט. שם קח, ט.

(נא) וכן הוא במדבר רבה פ"ח, תנחומא (ותנחומא באבער) וילקוט שמעוני קרח שם.

(נב) פסוק זה הובא גם במדבר רבה (פ"ג) ותנחומא באבער פרשתנו שם. ובילקוט שמעוני פרשתנו שם הובאו שני הפסוקים.

(נג) פירוש רש"י ויחי שם.

(נד) ויש לומר שלרש"י ההוספה היא לא רק בכמות, ששכנות לטוב פועלת על כל השבט (ולא כשכינות לרע, שפועלת רק על מספר מועט), אלא גם שינוי באיכות: בשכינות לרע ("אוי לרשע אוי לשכיניו") אף שהיא פעולה פנימית, עיקרה היא בנוגע להנהגת השכן, מה שאין כן בצד הטוב הרי זה נעשה מהותו וטבעו של השכן, ולכן פועל על כל השבט ונקבע כשמו של כל השבט.

ועל פי זה ההוספה ברש"י על התנחומא היא לא רק ב"אוי לרשע אוי לשכיניו" (ש"לרש"י היא פעולה פנימית, ולהתנחומא - רק פעולה חיצונית בשייכות לעונש כו'), אלא גם באופן פעולה הפנימית דשכינות לצדיק ("טוב לצדיק טוב לשכיניו"), שאינו דומה הא דמדה טובה מרובה כו' לפי פירוש רש"י (לגבי שייכות פנימית ד"אוי לרשע כו'") למרובה מדה טובה שבתנחומא (לגבי שייכות חיצונית ד"אוי לרשע כו').

(נה) ראה תרגום אונקלוס ויצא (ל, יג) "תושבתתא".

(נו) אף שאפשר שקאי גם על אושר וטוב של עצמו, על דרך "אשרי האיש" שבריש ספר תהלים (ראה מפרשים שם). וראה תרגום אונקלוס דברים

העיקר בהמחלוקת היה קרח, ולרש"י - קרח ועדתו.

(לז) ולכן אינו בסתירה למה שמסיים גם שם "על שהיו שכנים לתורה נעשו כולו בני תורה", כי השכינות גילתה ענינם ותכונתם שלהם.

(לח) שקאי לא רק על משה אהרן ובניו.

(לט) ולשיטתיה אויל (במדבר רבה פ"ב, יו"ד) בביאור הדגלים ובמקום חנייתם לרוחות. עיין שם באורך.

(מ) אלא שבכללות המדרש כאן (וכן במדבר רבה שם פ"ב) מדובר במעלת שבט ראובן ומקום חנייתו.

(מא) ובפרט שלא מצינו בפירוש בקרא שהיו שייכים למחלוקת, כנ"ל בפנים. וראה מפרשי המדבר רבה שם מה שפירשו בזה שבני שמעון וגד היו בעלי מריבה.

(מב) ועל דרך זה יש לומר גם בצד הטוב, דאף שמרובה מדה טובה כו' והשכינות פועלת גם באלו החונים עליו\* (ראה לקמן סעיף ז), מכל מקום יש מעלה ביהודה (ראש הדגל) לגבי החונים עליו, וזוהו הדיוק והשינוי בהפסוקים (שהובאו ברש"י), דבנוגע ליהודה הביא רש"י "יהודה מחוקקי" דקאי על כל השבט (כדלקמן שם); ביששכר מביא רק "ומבני יששכר יודעי בינה וגו' מאתיים ראשי סנהדראות\*\*", שהדיוק "ומבני", "מאתיים" - היינו שחלק מהשבט היו יודעי בינה, ראשי סנהדראות, ופשיטא בנוגע לזבולון שמביא "מושכים בשבט סופר", שנוסף על זה שאינו ענין של כל השבט, רק שיש בני תורה מזבולון (שבזה שווה ליששכר), הרי גם אופן לימודם הוא רק באופן ד"שבט סופר", סופרים, ולא ראשי סנהדראות כביששכר.

\* ואולי יש לומר שהוא לפי שגם בהצדיק מדובר בג' - משה אהרן ובניו, כבהד"ה דפירוש רש"י (אלא שהעיקר, כמובן, היא השכינות למשה שהיה עוסק בתורה, שמצד זה "נעשו גדולים בתורה"). ולהעיר שבתנחומא באבער וילקוט שמעוני כאן מסיים "על שהיו שכיני תורה נעשו כולם כו'". ועל דרך זה במדרשים בפרשת קרח (הנ"ל הערה יא) "על שהיו סמוכין לתורה כו'".

\*\* ובתנחומא מביא לפני זה מהכתוב "ראשיהם מאתיים",







SICHOS IN ENGLISH