

# חומש דברים

# THE TORAH

*With an Interpolated English Translation  
and Commentary Based on the Works of*

***The Lubavitcher Rebbe***

***Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson***

וצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע

**Chumash Devarim**

*The Book of Deuteronomy*

***Parshat Devarim***



***Kehot Publication Society***

770 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn NY 11213

5771/2011

**THE TORAH - CHUMASH DEVARIM**

WITH AN INTERPOLATED ENGLISH TRANSLATION  
AND COMMENTARY BASED ON THE WORKS OF  
THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

Copyright © 2006-2012  
by  
Chabad of California

A project of  
**Chabad of California**  
741 Gayley Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024  
310-208-7511 / Fax 310-208-5811

Published by  
**Kehot Publication Society**  
770 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, New York 11213  
718-774-4000 / Fax 718-774-2718  
editor@kehot.com

**Order Department:**  
291 Kingston Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11213  
718-778-0226 / Fax 718-778-4148  
www.kehot.com

All rights reserved, including the right to reproduce this book  
or portions thereof, in any form, without permission,  
in writing, from Chabad of California, Inc.

The Kehot logo is a trademark  
of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, Inc.

ISBN: 978-0-8266-0193-3  
ISBN: 978-0-8266-0195-2 (set)

*Published in the United States of America*



## GENESIS

Bereishit  
Noach  
Lech Lecha  
Vayeira  
Chayei Sarah  
Toldot  
Vayeitzei  
Vayishlach  
Vayeishev  
Mikeitz  
Vayigash  
Vayechi

## EXODUS

Shemot  
Va'eira  
Bo  
Beshalach  
Yitro  
Mishpatim  
Terumah  
Tetzaveh  
Tisa  
Vayakheil  
Pekudei

## LEVITICUS

Vayikra  
Tzav  
Shemini  
Tazria  
Metzora  
Acharei Mot  
Kedoshim  
Emor  
Behar  
Bechukotai

## NUMBERS


Bemidbar  
Naso  
Beha'alotecha  
Shelach  
Korach  
Chukat  
Balak  
Pinchas  
Matot  
Masei

## DEUTERONOMY

# Devarim דברים

44

Va'etchanan  
Eikev  
Re'eh  
Shoftim  
Teitzei  
Tavo  
Nitzavim  
Vayeilech  
Ha'azinu  
Vezot Habrachah



# דְּבָרִים Devarim

## Overview

The Book of Deuteronomy is Moses' farewell address to the Jewish people. The historical necessity for the creation of the Jewish people was laid out in the Book of Genesis; the story of how this people came to be was told in the Book of Exodus; the nature of its unique relationship with God was detailed in the Book of Leviticus; and the issues that arose when this relationship was put to the test were resolved in the Book of Numbers. All that remains now, it would seem, is for Moses to sum things up and perhaps give some final instructions for the conquest and occupation of the Promised Land.

Yet, the Book of Deuteronomy is similar in length to the other books of the Torah. This in itself indicates that Deuteronomy will not be a mere summation but will contain significant content in its own right.

There are, in fact, two intertwined and overlapping strata of content in Moses' farewell address. The first comprises his exhortations to the Jewish people to remain loyal to God and to the teachings of His Torah; the second is a review of much of the legal subject matter contained in the preceding books. Although we might expect the first type of material to appear in a farewell address, why was it necessary to rephrase so much of the legal material that had apparently been clearly stated before?

Another striking feature of the Book of Deuteronomy is its literary form. Unlike the preceding four books, in Deuteronomy (with the exception of just a few passages at the beginning and end), Moses speaks in the first person. The phrase we have heard continuously in the preceding books—"And God spoke to Moses, saying..."—is almost entirely absent from Deuteronomy.

This naturally raises the question of the theological status of this book. The sages tell us that although Moses transmitted the first four books from God verbatim and Deuteronomy "in his own name,"<sup>1</sup> nevertheless, even in the latter case "the Divine Presence spoke from his mouth."<sup>2</sup> In other words, the Book of Deuteronomy is no less Divine than the first four books of the Torah, but whereas the first four books are God's words transmitted directly by Moses, Deuteronomy is God's words transmitted through Moses. But if this is the case,

1. *Megilah* 31b, referring specifically to the two curse-passages in the *parashiot* *Bechukotai* and *Tavo*, and the rest of the respective books by implication. In the *Zohar* (3:261a), however, this is stated explicitly.

2. *Zohar* 3:232a, etc. See Rashi, *Sanhedrin* 56b, s.v. *ka'asher tzi'ocha*. It is for this reason that a Torah scroll is considered invalid if even one letter is missing or damaged—even if that letter is in Deuteronomy. Also, someone is considered to have denied the Divine origin of the Torah even if he supposes that just one word—again, even from Deuteronomy—is Moses' own (*Mishneh Torah*, *Teshuvah* 13:6).

why the sudden change in literary form between the first four books and the final one?

The answer to both these questions hinges on the fact that this book is addressed to the generation that will enter the Land of Israel. The abrupt change in lifestyle—from a nation of nomads sustained by God’s supernatural protection into a nation of farmers who must work the land—called for a practical restatement of God’s hitherto abstract teachings. The generation of the desert had been nourished with miracles, beginning with the ten plagues and the Exodus from Egypt, through the splitting of the sea, to the revelation at Mount Sinai, the manna, the well of Miriam, and the protective Clouds of Glory. Their perspective on life had thus been elevated to a level quite above and beyond the ordinary; God’s normally invisible hand in nature had become a manifest reality for them. They were thus able to relate to the Torah in a concomitantly abstract, spiritual way, and that is how it was transmitted to them.

All of this was about to change. True, the supernatural presence of God would remain manifest in the Tabernacle, but God’s hand in the parameters of day-to-day life was about to become veiled in the garb of nature.

This transition was, of course, a natural and essential part of achieving God’s purpose on earth: to transform it into a holy place, in which not nature but God is understood to be the driving force. Nature is but God’s instrument, subject to His will, rather than an immutable, unchanging force that determines the course of events. In order for the façade of nature to be torn away, humanity, led by the Jewish people, had to invest itself into the natural order and, in that context, sustain and retain consciousness of God, revealing the infinite within the finite.

Still, such a descent in God-consciousness, even for the sake of achieving a higher level, is not without its risks. We saw how these risks frightened the spies, were misinterpreted by Korach, and were over-romanticized by the tribes of Reuben and Gad. The Jews about to cross the Jordan River were understandably apprehensive about their ability to face the challenge.

Moses was even more realistic: “I know that after my death you will act corruptly and stray from the path I have commanded you.”<sup>3</sup> There was no doubt that the transition into the real world would entail inevitable lapses in both the individual’s and the nation’s Divine consciousness and commitment.

Therefore, it was necessary to describe the mechanism for repairing, restoring, and renewing the relationship between God and His people. This device is *teshuvah* (literally, “return”), the process that God set in place allowing and providing for us to attain a second innocence. It is the eternal promise that sincere efforts backed by sincere intentions will always triumph over all obstacles in our relationship with Him.

Essential to the process of *teshuvah* is that the individual restore his appreciation of the Torah’s relevance in his life. The underlying rationale behind any lapse in Divine consciousness or commitment is that in some way or some context the Torah is not relevant.

This is why it was necessary for the Book of Deuteronomy to be transmitted in the first person. By communicating the message of Deuteronomy via the voice of Moses, God was telling us that even while remaining faithful to the Torah’s objective truth, we must see its subjective relevance to every individual and in every generation.<sup>4</sup>

Moses was the archetypal intermediary between God and man. His direct communica-

---

3. Deuteronomy 31:29.

4. An integral facet of this process is the historical promulgation of rabbinically instituted laws, holidays, customs, and other such “updates.” These serve to present the Torah in a form particularly suited to each successive generation.

tion with God had made him quite at home in the spiritual dimension, but even while he was on Mount Sinai he appreciated physicality enough to be able to refute the angels who sought to keep the Torah in heaven. An intermediary, however, can transmit the message he is given in either of two ways: he can either convey it verbatim, serving as a transparent conduit or funnel; or he can absorb it, and thus be able to “translate” it into terms more readily understood by the recipients.

In transmitting the first four books of the Torah, it was enough for Moses to act as the former type of intermediary; the exalted level of the generation of the desert allowed this. When he transmitted the Book of Deuteronomy, however, the audience had changed. Moses now had to become the latter type of intermediary in order to ensure that God’s message be fully communicated.

In order to do this, Moses in a certain sense had to attain a greater selflessness than was necessary when transmitting the first four books. In order that mediating God’s words through his voice not involve interposing his ego, it was crucial that his sense of self be absolutely dissolved in his awareness of God. Only by “existing” within God’s essence, so to speak, could Moses paradoxically be both there enough to serve as an intermediary yet not there enough to serve as a transparent conduit for God’s words.

In this sense, the first-person narrative of Deuteronomy indicates not a lesser Divinity than the other four books but a greater one, for the “I” of Deuteronomy is no less God’s than Moses’!

The same applies to us all when setting about uncovering the Torah’s relevance: our success is predicated on our eliminating our egotistic motives from the process.

The Book of Deuteronomy is thus a lesson in keeping the Torah alive and relevant, the means by which we can recommence the study of the Torah on a new level of understanding. By ensuring that the Torah remain eternally relevant, we can read it from an always deeper, fresher, newer perspective, and thereby continually deepen, freshen, and renew our relationship with God.<sup>5</sup>



*Teshuvah* is a three-stage process: first, we need to recognize what we have done wrong (and articulate this recognition); next, we need to feel remorse for having done what we did; finally, we need to resolve not to repeat our behavior.<sup>6</sup> It is only natural, therefore, that the first *parashah* of the book whose whole subject is *teshuvah* begin with rebuke designed to make us recognize the gravity of both our misdeeds and our missed opportunities. Therefore, Moses reviewed with the people the events that were crucial to their process of *teshuvah*, even those events that had occurred relatively recently and were most likely still fresh in their memories.<sup>7</sup>

Nevertheless, Moses’ rebuke is an object lesson in the proper approach to repentance. Although Moses did not omit any detail that could have driven home the need for *teshuvah*, he took care to mention each detail firstly as vaguely as possible, in order to preserve the people’s dignity and self-esteem; and secondly, always in the context of their great promise, emphasizing how far they fell short of their potential rather than how terribly they failed.

This perspective, coming as it does at the opening of the book, sets the tone for the “rebuke” that will continue throughout the entire Book of Deuteronomy, even including the

---

5. Based on *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 4, pp. 1087-1090, vol. 19, pp. 9-14.

6. *Mishneh Torah, Teshuvah* 1:1.

7. *Sichot Kodesh* 5736, vol. 2, pp. 545-547.

## OVERVIEW OF DEVARIM

---

dire threats we will hear in its course. Candid and brutal honesty couched in terms that nonetheless convey deep and sincere respect is the surest way to encourage both ourselves and others to repent, to experience true *teshuvah*, and thereby renew ourselves and our relationship with God in the deepest way possible.

## ONKELOS

1:1 אלן פתגמא די מליל משה עם כל ישראל בעברא דירדנא אוכח יתהון על דחבו במדברא ועל דארגזיו במישרא לקבל ים סוף בפארן דאתפלו על מנא ובחצרות דארגזיו על בשרא ועל דעבדו עגל דדהב:

1:1 אלה הדברים אשר דבר משה אל-כל-ישראל בעבר הירדן במדבר בערבה מול סוף בין-פארן ובין-תפל ולבן וחרצת ודי זהב:

## RASHI

אין קברים במצרים. וכן בנסעם מתוך הים, שנאמר: "וימרו על ים בים סוף", כדאיתא בערכין: בין פארן ובין תפל ולבן. אמר רבי יוחנן: חזרנו על כל המקרא ולא מצינו מקום ששמו תפל ולבן. אלא, הוכיחן על הדברים שתפלו על הים שהוא לבן, שאמרו: "ונפשונו קצה בלחם הקלקל", ועל מה שעשו במדבר פארן על ידי המרגלים: וחרצת. במחלקתו של קרח. דבר אחר: אמר להם: היה לכם ללמד ממה שעשיתי למרים בחצרות בשביל לשון הרע, ואתם נדברתם במקום: ודי זהב. הוכיחן על העגל שעשו בשביל רב זהב שהיה להם, שנאמר: "וכסף הרביתי להם וזהב עשו לבעל".

1 אלה הדברים. לפי שהן דברי תוכחות ומנה כאן כל המקומות שהכעיסו לפני המקום בהן, לפיכך סתם את הדברים והזכירם ברמז מפני כבודן של ישראל: אל כל ישראל. אלו הוכיח מקצתן היו אלו שבשוק אומרים: אתם הייתם שומעים מכן עמכם ולא השיבותם דבר מכן וכן, אלו היינו שם, היינו משיבין אותו. לך פנסם כלם ואמר להם: הרי בלכם כאן, כל מי שיש לו תשובה ישיב! במדבר. לא במדבר היו אלא בערבות מואב, ומהו "במדבר"? אלא בשביל מה שהכעיסוהו במדבר, שאמרו: "מי יתן מיתנו" וגו'. בערבה. בשביל הערבה שחטאו בבעל פעור בשטים בערבות מואב: מול סוף. על מה שהמרו בים סוף בבואם לים סוף שאמרו: "המבילי

1. שמות טו, ג. 2. שמות יד, יא. 3. תהלים קו, ו. 4. טו, א. 5. במדבר כא, ה. 6. הושע ב, י.

## CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

**1 He did not mention their sins explicitly:** In referring to the Jewish peoples' sins obliquely, Moses was also alluding to the mitigating circumstances that softened the severity of their sins:

*The Desert:* The desert through which they traveled was both harsh and dangerous.<sup>19</sup> It was therefore understandable for them to have panicked when faced with the possibility of running out of provisions.

*The Plain:* This was the plain of Moab, and the Moabites were notorious for their depravity.<sup>20</sup> In that licentious milieu, it was exceptionally difficult to resist the overtures of the Moabite temptresses.

*Opposite [the Sea of] Reeds:* Here, they were penned in on all sides—the impassable sea in front of them and the Egyptians closing in on them from behind. It was understandably difficult to remain level-headed in such circumstances.

*In Paran:* The scouts returned from their reconnaissance mission with a frightening report. The Jewish people in themselves would never have doubted God's ability to help them conquer the land; only after hearing the scouts' report did they lose heart.

*Maligning the white [manna]:* Even though the manna tasted like anything the person eating it wanted it to,<sup>21</sup> it nevertheless always had the same, non-descript, white color. Having to eat food that looks the

same all the time is ample cause for finding reason to complain about it.

*Chatzeirot:* Korach instigated this mutiny on his own; the people by themselves would never have thought to rebel against Moses.

*The Golden [Calf]:* It was only because God Himself lavished them with such an abundance of gold when they left Egypt that the Jewish people succumbed to the temptation to misuse it.<sup>22</sup>

Thus, even while rebuking the people, Moses was careful to vindicate them. This is because he understood that rebuke or punishment is not an end in itself; rather, its purpose is to improve the recipient. Similarly, we should realize that the purpose the Divine rebuke we are presently enduring—i.e., keeping us in exile for so long—is to elevate us to a higher level of Divine consciousness in preparation for the imminent Redemption.

Because God's presence is so hidden during exile, it is especially hard for us to behave consistently in line with our inner beliefs; we are therefore forced to occasionally rebuke ourselves or each other. Nonetheless, we should take care not to speak disparagingly when doing so; we must keep in mind that the purpose of rebuke is to help us improve, preparing us for our individual and collective redemption.<sup>23</sup>

19. Numbers 10:34; Deuteronomy 8:15. 20. Numbers 20:21. 21. Numbers 11:8. 22. Exodus 32:31. 23. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 14, pp. 1-7.



## Preparing to Enter the Promised Land

1:1 Sensing that he would soon die, Moses understood that the time had now come for him to admonish the Israelites for their misdeeds, in order that they repent and be ready to begin the next stage of their national life with renewed dedication to their Divine purpose under the leadership of his successor. By waiting to admonish the people until he was about to die, Moses was following the example set by Jacob. Joshua,<sup>1</sup> Samuel,<sup>2</sup> and King David<sup>3</sup> would, in turn, follow Moses' example.

Furthermore, now that the Israelites were about to enter the Land of Israel and begin their life there, Moses understood that it was time for him to review those aspects of the Torah's teachings that needed to be clarified and convey those aspects of the Torah's teachings that he not yet conveyed since they had not been relevant to their life in the desert.

**The following are the words of rebuke that Moses spoke to all Israel.** Out of his deep respect for the people, he did not mention their misdeeds explicitly but only alluded to them—either by mentioning where they had occurred or by referring to them obliquely. He assembled the people and spoke **to all Israel** at once, so that anyone who could excuse or justify their behavior would have the opportunity to do so. This rebuke was delivered **on the eastern side of the Jordan River**, as the people were poised to enter the Land of Israel, and it was intended to facilitate their transition into this new phase of their life as a people.<sup>4</sup>

Moses first rebuked them for having complained at Alush, **in the Sin Desert**, when they ran out of provisions.<sup>5</sup> He then rebuked them for all the other times they had provoked God's anger for causes attributable to their being in the desert<sup>6</sup>—leaving over manna for the morning,<sup>7</sup> going out on the Sabbath to gather manna,<sup>8</sup> complaining of not having any water<sup>9</sup> and complaining once again of not having any meat.<sup>10</sup> He then rebuked them for their other sins: First, he rebuked them for having worshipped the idol Ba'al Pe'or when they were **in the plain of Moab**.<sup>11</sup> He then rebuked them for having doubted that God would save them when they were encamped **opposite the Sea of Reeds** and the Egyptians were pursuing them,<sup>12</sup> and similarly, for having doubted that God had indeed saved them when they exited the Sea of Reeds.<sup>13</sup> **He then rebuked them for having doubted God's ability to overcome the inhabitants of the Land of Israel when they were encamped at Ritmah, in the Paran Desert**, after they heard the report of the spies they had sent from there.<sup>14</sup> He then rebuked them for having **maligned the white, delicious manna** God had given them to eat.<sup>15</sup> **He then rebuked them for having joined Korach's rebellion,**<sup>16</sup> **which took place after they had journeyed from Chatzeirot to Ritmah.**<sup>17</sup> He then rebuked them for having made the **Golden Calf**, thereby brazenly misusing the wealth God had showered upon them when they left Egypt.<sup>18</sup>

1. Joshua 24:1-29. 2. 1 Samuel 12:3. 3. 1 Kings 2:1-9. 4. *Sefer HaSichot* 5748, vol. 2, p. 566. 5. Exodus 16:1-3. 6. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 14, p. 4, note 21. 7. Exodus 16:29. 8. Exodus 16:27. 9. Exodus 17:2; Numbers 20:2. 10. Numbers 11:4. 11. Numbers 25:1-15. 12. Exodus 14:11-12. 13. Exodus 14:30. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 14, p. 5, note 34. 14. Numbers 12:16-14:45. 15. Numbers 21:5. 16. Numbers 16:1-18:7. 17. *Gur Aryeh* here; *Maskil LeDavid* on Numbers 16:4. 18. Exodus 32:1-32:29.

— ONKELOS —

2 מִהֶלֶךְ חַד עֶשֶׂר יוֹמִין מִחוּרֵב  
אֲרֻחַ טוֹרָא דְשַׁעִיר עַד רָקַם גִּיּאָה;  
3 וְהָיָה בְּאַרְבַּעִין שָׁנִין בְּחַד עֶשֶׂר  
יָרָחא בְּחַד לִירוּחָא מְלִיל מִשָּׁה עִם  
בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּכֹל דִּי פְקִיד יִי יְתֵה  
לְוִתְהוֹן;

2 אַחַד עֶשֶׂר יוֹם מִחוּרֵב דְּרָךְ הַר־שַׁעִיר עַד קָדֵשׁ בְּרִנֵּעַ;  
3 וַיְהִי בְּאַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה בְּעֶשְׂתֵּי־עֶשֶׂר חֹדֶשׁ בְּאַחַד לַחֹדֶשׁ  
דִּבֶּר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֹתוֹ  
אֱלֹהֵם;

— RASHI —

סביבות הר שעיר ארבעים שנה: 3 ויהי בארבעים שנה בעשתי עשר חודש באחד לחודש. מלמד שלא הוכיחו אלא סמוך למיתה. ממי למד? מיעקב, שלא הוכיח את בניו אלא סמוך למיתה. אמר: ראובן בני, אני אומר לך מפני מה לא הוכחתיך כל השנים הללו, כדי שלא תניחני ותלך ותדבק בעשו אחי. ומפני ארבעה דברים אין מוכיחין את האדם אלא סמוך למיתה: כדי שלא יהא מוכיחו וחוזר ומוכיחו, ושלל יהא חברו ומתביש ממנו כו', כדאייתא בספרי. וכן יהושע לא הוכיח את ישראל אלא סמוך למיתה. וכן שמואל, שנאמר: "הנני ענו בי". וכן דוד את שלמה בנו:

2 אַחַד עֶשֶׂר יוֹם מִחוּרֵב. אָמַר לָהֶם מֹשֶׁה: רְאוּ מַה גִּרְמַתְם, אֵין לָכֶם דְּרָךְ קֶצְרָה מִחוּרֵב לְקָדֵשׁ בְּרִנֵּעַ כְּדָרְךָ הַר שַׁעִיר, וְאַף הוּא מִהֶלֶךְ אַחַד עֶשֶׂר יוֹם, וְאַתֶּם הִלַּכְתֶּם אוֹתוֹ בְּשִׁלְשָׁה יָמִים; שְׁהָרִי בְּעֶשְׂרִים בְּאֵיר נִסְעוּ מִחוּרֵב, שְׁנֶאֱמַר: "וַיְהִי בְּשָׁנָה הַשְּׁנִית בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁנִי בְּעֶשְׂרִים בַּחֹדֶשׁ" וְגו', וּבִכ"ט בְּסִינּוֹן שָׁלְחוּ אֶת הַמְּרֹגְלִים מִקָּדֵשׁ בְּרִנֵּעַ, צָא מֵהֶם שְׁלֹשִׁים יוֹם שָׁעֲשׂוּ בְּקִבְרוֹת הַתְּאֵנָה שֶׁאֲכָלוּ הַבָּשָׂר חֹדֶשׁ יָמִים, וְשִׁבְעָה יָמִים שָׁעֲשׂוּ בַּחֲצֵרוֹת לְהַסְגֵּר שָׁם מְרִים, נִמְצָא בְּשִׁלְשָׁה יָמִים הִלְכוּ כָּל אוֹתוֹ הַדֶּרֶךְ. וְכָל כֵּךְ הָיְתָה שְׂכִינָה מְתַלַּבֶּטֶת בְּשִׁבְלֵיכֶם לְמַהֵר בִּיאַתְכֶם לְאָרֶץ, וּבִשְׁבִיל שֶׁקִּלְקַלְתֶּם הַסֵּב אַתֶּם

7. במדבר י, יא. 8. שמואל"א יב, ג.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

we are awaiting some form of redemption. The first prerequisite of redemption is the awareness that we belong in the redemptive state, and that the present, preceding state of exile is precisely that: exile, not home.<sup>33</sup>

On a deeper level, the Torah specifies the Jewish people's location as "the other side of the Jordan" rather than as "the plains of Moab" in order to describe the nature of redemptive consciousness.

The plains of Moab was the last of the forty-two stations in the journey from Egypt to the Promised Land. As has been explained previously,<sup>34</sup> the purpose of this journey was to neutralize the forces of evil embodied in the desert; therefore, the plains of Moab—the final stop—signifies the completion of this process. Before entering the Holy Land, it was necessary to subdue these forms of evil so that they would not be able to undermine the Divine consciousness associated with it. (Similarly, the purpose of the present exile is to transform the world's remaining evil into good; in this way, evil will be unable to trigger another exile after the Redemption.)

Subjugating and transforming evil leaves a person's (or nation's) Divine consciousness significantly

more powerful and intense than it was before. The person's awareness of God is now so profound that it leaves no room for the particular sort of evil (i.e., absence of or antagonism to God-consciousness) that has been vanquished. The light now experienced contrasts sharply with the darkness that formerly had to be contended with.

Nonetheless, the heightened consciousness we achieve by negating evil does not compare to the consciousness intrinsic to the redemptive state itself. The former, despite its advantage over the prior state of consciousness, is still only a preparation for the latter, redemptive state.

Therefore, the Torah now describes the location of the Jews as "on the other side of the Jordan," i.e., focused on the redemptive state of the Promised Land, rather than "in the plains of Moab," i.e., having completed the prerequisite conquest of evil.

(Nonetheless, in order to emphasize that there is at least a subordinate appreciation for the consciousness attained by contending with evil during the period of exile, "the land of Moab" is mentioned in adjunct to "the other side of the Jordan" the second time the Jewish people's location is given.)<sup>35</sup><sup>36</sup>

33. *Sefer HaSichot* 5748, vol. 2, pp. 572-574. 34. Overview to *parashat Bemidbar*. 35. Deuteronomy 1:5. 36. *Sefer HaSichot* 5748, vol. 2, p. 566-571.

2 Moses then continued, **“It is normally an eleven-day journey from Mount Horeb (also known as Mount Sinai) by way of Mount Seir to Kadesh Barnea.** But you miraculously traveled this distance in just three days: When you left the Sinai Desert on the 20<sup>th</sup> of Iyar, it took you one day to travel to Kivrot HaTa’avah,<sup>24</sup> an additional day to travel from there to Chatzeirot,<sup>25</sup> and one more day to travel to Ritmah, just opposite Kadesh Barnea.<sup>26</sup> So you see how much God exerted<sup>27</sup> Himself in order to bring you into the Land of Israel. But because of your misdeeds, He had to delay your entry until now, almost<sup>28</sup> forty years later!”

3 **It was on the first day of Shevat, the eleventh month of the year 2488, which was the fortieth year since the Exodus from Egypt, that Moses spoke to the Israelites regarding all that God had commanded him regarding them.**

---

❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧

---

**He did not mention their sins explicitly:** On other occasions, and even further on in this same address, Moses did mention the people’s sins explicitly. It follows, therefore, that there are two types of misconduct and two corresponding types of rebuke: open wrongdoings, which require open rebuke; and more subtle types of misbehavior, which require a veiled rebuke.

The epitome of the latter type of misconduct is the people’s lack of appreciation for the manna. They simply could not believe that the manna, which was miraculously absorbed into their bodies without producing any waste products, would not one day explode in their stomachs.<sup>29</sup> However, the fact that it was white (i.e., colorless) indicated that although it assumed physical form when it descended into the world, it remained essentially spiritual (which is why its taste could change according to the preference of the person eating it), and there was therefore no reason to fear that it would at some point explode in their stomachs. It was this characteristic of the manna that irked the people: they wanted real bread, which would behave as bread should behave.

This insensitivity to spirituality—and even disdain for it—is symptomatic of an unhealthy disconnect between the rational and supra-rational facets of the soul, in which reason, pragmatism, and empiricism are overemphasized at the expense of the aesthetic, transcendent, and intuitive sides of the personality. But since this depreciation of the spiritual is a hidden fault, it requires a hidden rebuke.

Bread, the nourishment of the body, is an allegory for the Torah, the nourishment of the soul: just as there is physical bread and spiritual bread (manna),

so does the Torah possess both a physical, external dimension (its laws and the study of their derivation) and a spiritual, inner dimension (its philosophical and mystical aspects). The Israelites’ disdain for the manna is thus nowadays synonymous with the reluctance to engage in the study of the Torah’s inner dimension. Moses’ implicit and explicit forms of rebuke remind us that in order to be well-rounded individuals, fully dedicated to our Divine mission on earth, we must study both dimensions of the Torah.<sup>30</sup>

**On the side of the Jordan:** The Torah, on more than one occasion, has already pinpointed the Israelites’ location for us in more precise terms: the plains of Moab.<sup>31</sup> The reason it here uses the vaguer, more general description of “the other side of the Jordan” is because the Book of Deuteronomy is addressed to the generation that will shortly enter the Land of Israel. Even before they enter the land, their orientation is to be so focused on it that they consider their present location to be the *other* side of the Jordan. Contrast this attitude with the words of the tribes of Reuben and Gad: “We will not inherit with them on the *other side* of the Jordan; our inheritance has come to us on the east side of the Jordan.”<sup>32</sup> Since their perspective was firmly anchored on the *east* bank, they referred to the *west* bank as “the other side.”

The message for us, as we stand on the threshold of our entry into the Promised Land with the advent of the Final Redemption, is that we should already be so focused on our final destination that it is as if we were already living in it. If circumstances force us to be presently outside of it, we should still consider ourselves not at home but somewhere “over there.”

The same applies to any stage in our lives in which

---

24. Numbers 10:11-12. 25. Numbers 11:35. 26. Numbers 12:16. 27. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 19, p. 1, note 3. 28. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 19, p. 1, note 7. 29. Numbers 21:5. 30. *Or HaTorah, Devarim*, p. 11 ff; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 9, pp. 14-23. 31. Numbers 22:1, 26:3, 26:63, 31:12, 33:48-50, 35:1, 36:13, the last verse being the verse immediately preceding Deuteronomy 1:1. 32. Numbers 32:19.

## ONKELOS

4 בְּתֵר דְּמַחָא יֵת סִיחֹן מִלְכָּא דְּאִמּוֹרָאָה דִּיתֵיב בְּחֻשְׁבוֹן וְיֵת עוֹג מִלְכָּא דְּמַתָּן דִּיתֵיב בְּעֻשְׁתָּרַת בְּאִדְרָעִי: 5 בְּעֵבֶר בְּאִרְזֵן מוֹאָב הוּאִיל מִשָּׁה בְּאִרְעָא דְּמוֹאָב שְׂרִי מִשָּׁה פִּרְשׁ יֵת אוּלְפֵן אוֹרִיתָא הָדָא לְמִימַר: 6 יְיָ אֱלֹהֵנָּא מְלִיל עֲמֵנָּא בְּחֻרֵב לְמִימַר סְגִי לְכוֹן דִּיתֵיבָתוֹן בְּטוֹרָא הָדִין:

4 אַחֲרֵי הִכְתּוּ אֶת סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר יוֹשֵׁב בְּחֻשְׁבוֹן וְאֵת עוֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן אֲשֶׁר־יוֹשֵׁב בְּעֻשְׁתָּרַת בְּאִדְרָעִי: 5 בְּעֵבֶר הִירְדֵן בְּאֶרֶץ מוֹאָב הוּאִיל מִשָּׁה בְּאֶרֶץ אֲתֵּי־הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת לֵאמֹר: 6 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ דָּבַר אֵלֵינוּ בְּחֻרֵב לֵאמֹר רַב־לָכֶם שָׁבֹת בְּהָר הַזֶּה:

## RASHI

צוּקִין וְקִשִּׁי כְּמוֹ: "עֻשְׁתָּרַת קֶרְנִים", וְעֻשְׁתָּרַת זֶה הוּא עֻשְׁתָּרַת קֶרְנִים שֶׁהָיוּ שָׁם רְפָאִים שֶׁהֵכָה אֲמֶרְפֶּל, שְׁנֶאֱמַר: "וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶת רְפָאִים בְּעֻשְׁתָּרַת קֶרְנִים". וְעוֹג נִמְלֹט מֵהֶם, וְהוּא שְׁנֶאֱמַר: "וַיָּבֹא הַפְּלִיט". וְאוֹמֵר: "כִּי רַק עוֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן נִשְׁאַר מִיַּתֵּר הַרְפָּאִים": בְּאִדְרָעִי. שֵׁם הַמְּלָכּוֹת: 5 הוּאִיל. הַתְּחִיל, כְּמוֹ: "הִנֵּה נָא הוּאִלְתִּי": בְּאֶרֶץ הַתּוֹרָה. בְּשִׁבְעִים לְשׁוֹן פִּרְשָׁה לָהֶם: 6 רַב לָכֶם שָׁבֹת. כְּפֹשְׁטוֹ. וַיֵּשׁ מִדְרֵשׁ אֲגָדָה: הִרְבָּה לָכֶם גְּדֻלָּה וְשִׁכָּר עַל יִשְׁבִּתְכֶם בְּהָר הַזֶּה, עֲשִׂיתֶם מִשְׁכָּן, מְנוּחָה וְכָלִים, קִבְּלֶתֶם תּוֹרָה, מִנִּיתֶם לָכֶם סִנְהֶדְרִין שְׂרִי אֲלֵפִים וְשְׂרִי מֵאוֹת:

4 אַחֲרֵי הִכְתּוּ. אָמַר מִשָּׁה: אִם אֲנִי מוֹכִיחִם קֹדֶם שְׂיִכְנְסוּ לַקְצֵה הָאֶרֶץ, יֹאמְרוּ: מַה לָּזֶה עָלֵינוּ, מַה הֵיטִיב לָנוּ? אֵינוּ בָּא אֱלֹא לַקְנֹתָר וּלְמַצָּא עֲלֵה, שְׁאִין בּוֹ כֹּחַ לְהַכְנִיסָנוּ לְאֶרֶץ. לְפִיכָּךְ הִמַּתִּין עַד שֶׁהִפִּיל סִיחֹן וְעוֹג לַפְּנִיָּהֶם וְהוֹרִישֵׁם אֶת אֶרֶצָם, וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן הוֹכִיחָם: סִיחֹן וְגו' אֲשֶׁר יוֹשֵׁב בְּחֻשְׁבוֹן. אֵלּוּ לֹא הָיָה סִיחֹן קָשָׁה וְהָיָה שְׂרִי בְּחֻשְׁבוֹן הָיָה קָשָׁה, שֶׁהִמְדִּינָה קָשָׁה, וְאֵלּוּ הָיְתָה עִיר אַחֲרֵת וְסִיחֹן שְׂרִי בְּתוֹכָהּ הָיְתָה קָשָׁה, שֶׁהִמְלִךְ קָשָׁה, עַל אַחַת כְּמַה וְכְמַה שֶׁהִמְלִךְ קָשָׁה וְהִמְדִּינָה קָשָׁה: אֲשֶׁר יוֹשֵׁב בְּעֻשְׁתָּרַת. הִמְלִיךְ קָשָׁה וְהִמְדִּינָה קָשָׁה: עֻשְׁתָּרַת. הוּא לְשׁוֹן

9. בראשית יד, ה. 10. בראשית יד, ה. 11. שם יד, יג. 12. דברים ג, יא. 13. בראשית יח, כז.

## CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

help in finding our own proper path in life, besides His assistance in providing for our own material needs and those of our loved ones.<sup>45</sup>

**5 In the seventy original languages:** As has been noted,<sup>46</sup> the Jews preserved their knowledge and use of Hebrew throughout their Egyptian exile. Although the non-Jewish mixed multitude certainly did not speak Hebrew when they joined the Jews at the Exodus, forty years in the company of the Israelites probably sufficed for them to become fluent enough to understand it. And even if there were some who still found Hebrew difficult, this still does not explain the need for Moses to expound the Torah in all seventy original languages of humanity! We must therefore conclude that this oral translation of the Torah—as well as the later inscription of the Torah's translation in those same seventy languages<sup>47</sup>—had a more profound, spiritual purpose.

Inasmuch as the Written Torah is the explicit word of God, logic would dictate that only studying the Torah in the original is considered bona fide study, through which we fulfill the commandment to study the Torah. After all, the subtle nuances of meaning and implication inherent in the text—not to mention its allusive and mystical subtexts—can only be noticed and appreciated in the original. Similarly, since the Oral Torah was originally communicated by Moses in Hebrew, it would seem that only studying it, too, in Hebrew should count as

bona fide Torah study. Therefore, by having Moses explain and inscribe the Torah in all seventy seminal languages, God set the precedent for all further Torah study in secular languages.

Although, for the reasons mentioned, it is preferable to study the Torah in the original, there is nevertheless an advantage in studying it in secular languages, namely, that using these languages to study the Torah elevates and sanctifies them, at least while they are being used for this purpose. Furthermore, expressing the Torah's concepts in secular idioms allows the sanctity and message of the Torah to permeate even those layers of existence that are a priori antithetical or antagonistic to Divine consciousness.

Studying the Torah in the vernacular can also be seen as a reversal and rectification of the fall suffered by reality in the generation of the Dispersion at the Tower of Babel. Prior to this fall, all humanity spoke Hebrew, which, being the language of creation, is uniquely suited to expressing the underlying Divine unity that permeates the universe. In contrast, the other, derivative languages convey this subliminal tenor to a much lesser degree. By using them to study the Torah, something of the original linguistic-religious unity of humanity is restored.<sup>48</sup>

**6 You have dwelt too long at this mountain:** God here is alluding to the lesson that we should never remain too long on the same level in our

45. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 1, pp. 133-134; *Sichot Kodesh* 5737, vol. 1, pp. 155-161, pp. 367-369. 46. Overview to *parashat Shemot*. 47. Below, 27:8. 48. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 36, pp. 38-44; vol. 3, pp. 862-864.

4 Besides his other reasons for not rebuking them earlier, Moses also waited until **after he had smitten Sichon** (the formidable **king of the Amorites, who dwelt in** the impregnable fortress of **Cheshbon**<sup>37</sup>) **and Og** (the formidable **king of the Bashan, who dwelt in** the impregnable fortress of **Ashterot-Karnaim**<sup>39</sup> and **in** his other royal city, **Edrei**<sup>40</sup>). Once Moses proved that he was capable of conquering their enemies, the Israelites could not accuse him of rebuking them in order to blame his inability to conquer the Land of Israel for them on their supposed unworthiness.

5 The Israelites were camped **on the east side of the Jordan River, in** what had formerly been part of **Moab**; this is where **Moses began** his farewell address. In the course of this address, he not only reviewed those parts of the Torah that were particularly pertinent now that they were about to enter the Promised Land,<sup>41</sup> **he explained this teaching** in the seventy original languages of humanity.<sup>42</sup> But before explaining the Torah, he continued rebuking the people for their misbehavior over the preceding forty years. First, he returned to the topic of the journey from Mount Sinai to Ritmah, **saying,**

6 **“God, our God, spoke to us at Mount Horeb, saying, ‘You have dwelt too long at this mountain;** I am anxious for you to enter the Promised Land. You are now fully prepared for your new life: **by dwelling at the foot of this mountain, you have acquired the greatness** that will distinguish you from other nations and that will enable you to remain holy even while engaged in mundane activities. First of all, you constructed the Tabernacle, which is a locus for the Divine Presence (as is most manifestly expressed by the second lamp of the Candelabrum, which miraculously burns longer than the other lamps even though they are all filled with equal amounts of oil before they are lit<sup>43</sup>). The permanence of the Divine Presence in your midst will virtually force you to remain holy. Second, you received the Torah, which instructs you how to sanctify mundane life on a daily basis. Third, you established a judiciary, who will teach you how to apply the Torah’s teachings in all situations. Furthermore, **by dwelling at this mountain you have earned the merit** of conquering the land miraculously.<sup>44</sup>

---

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

---

4 **Moses also waited:** A further reason Moses had for waiting to rebuke the Jews until after he had conquered the Amorite kings is the fact that people accept rebuke more readily after having received some material benefit from the person administering the rebuke.

The material favor in this case is not an act of hypocrisy. By rebuking someone, we are doing them a spiritual favor, so by preceding this spiritual favor with a material favor, we ensure that both parties relate to the rebuke in the proper light. Otherwise, one of the parties might consider the rebuke as an opportunity to fulfill some sadistic drive or other form of malevolence. The material favor creates an atmosphere of goodwill and neutralizes defense mechanisms. Even if the favor does not prove as

successful as intended, we still fulfill thereby the commandment to love our fellow Jews as ourselves.

By his example, Moses showed us that this principle applies even when the individual or group is in need of rebuke for a sin as grave as that of making the Golden Calf. From Moses’ example, we learn that we must reach out even to those whom we might consider an unwholesome influence. Once we take due precaution that our contact with such individuals or groups not prove detrimental to us, we can and should follow Moses’ example and extend them our fullest help—both material and spiritual, and even if doing so requires endangering our own wellbeing—in order to put them back on the proper path in life.

By helping others in this way, we in turn earn God’s

---

37. Numbers 21:21-25. 38. Numbers 21:33-35. 39. Genesis 14:15. 40. Numbers 21:33. 41. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 17, p. 282, note \* to note 33\*. 42. See Genesis 10:32. 43. Leviticus 24:3; Numbers 8:4. 44. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 24, pp. 12-18.



— ONKELOS —

7 אֲתַפְנוּ וְטוּלוּ לְכוֹן וְעוּלוּ  
לְטוּרָא דְאַמוֹרָאָה וְלִכְל מְגִירוֹהִי  
בְּמִישְׁרָא בְּטוּרָא וּבְשִׁילָתָא  
וּבְדוּרָאָא וּבְסַפֵּר יִמָּא אֲרַעָא  
דְּכַנְעָנָאָה וְלִכְנוֹן עַד נַהֲרָא רַבָּא  
נַהֲרָא פֶּרֶת: 8 חֲזִי דִּיהִבִּית קְדָמִיכוֹן  
יְת אֲרַעָא עוּלוּ וְאַחֲסִינוּ יְת אֲרַעָא  
דִּי קָיִים יְיָ לְאַבְהִתְכוֹן לְאַבְרָהָם  
לִיצְחָק וְלִיעֲקֹב לְמִתָּן לְהוֹן  
וְלִבְנֵיהוֹן בְּתֵרִיהוֹן: 9 וְאַמְרִית לְכוֹן  
בְּעֵדָנָא הֵיכָא לְמִימֵר לִית אֲנָא  
יְכִיל לְבַחוּדִי לְסוּבְרָא יְתִכּוֹן: 10 יְיָ  
אַלְהֵיכוֹן אֲסִגִּי יְתִכּוֹן וְהָא אִיתִיכוֹן  
יִמָּא דִּין בְּכוֹכְבֵי שְׁמַיָּא לְסָגִי:

7 פָּנוּ | וּסְעוּ לָכֶם וּבֹאוּ הָרָה הָאֲמֹרִי וְאֶל־כָּל־שְׁכֵנֵי  
בְּעֶרְבָה בְּהָר וּבְשִׁפְלָהּ וּבְנֶגֶב וּבְחוֹף הַיָּם אֶרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִי  
וְהַלְבִּנוֹן עַד־הַנָּהָר הַגָּדֹל נְהַר־פָּרָת: 8 רְאֵה נְתַתִּי  
לְפָנֵיכֶם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ בָּאוּ וּרְשׁוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע  
יְהוָה לְאַבְרָהָם לְאַבְרָהָם לִיצְחָק וְלִיעֲקֹב לְתַת לָהֶם  
וּלְיֹרְעָם אַחֲרֵיהֶם: 9 וְאָמַר אֲלֵכֶם בְּעַת הַהוּא לְאָמַר  
לֹא־אוּכַל לְבָדִי שְׂאֵת אֶתְכֶם: 10 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הִרְבָּה  
אֶתְכֶם וְהִנֵּכֶם הַיּוֹם בְּכוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם לָרֹב:

— RASHI —

הִיָּה מִשֶּׁה יָכוֹל לָדוֹן אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל, אֲדָם שְׁהוֹצִיָּאָם  
מִמִּצְרַיִם וְקָרַע לָהֶם אֶת הַיָּם וְהוֹרִיד אֶת הַמָּן וְהִגִּיד  
אֶת הַשְּׁלֹל לֹא הִיָּה יָכוֹל לָדוֹנָם? אֵלָּא כִּף אָמַר לָהֶם:  
ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הִרְבָּה אֶתְכֶם, הַגָּדִיל וְהָרִים אֶתְכֶם עַל  
דִּינֵיכֶם, נָטַל אֶת הָעֶנֶשׂ מִכֶּם וְנָתַן עַל הַדִּינִים. וְכֵן  
אָמַר שְׁלֹמֹה: "כִּי מִי יוּכַל לִשְׁפֹּט אֶת עַמּוֹךְ הַכֶּבֶד  
הַזֶּה". אֲפָשֶׁר, מִי שֶׁתּוֹכַח בּוֹ? וְיִיחָכֶם מִכָּל הָאָדָם,  
אוֹמֵר: מִי יוּכַל לִשְׁפֹּט? אֵלָּא כִּף אָמַר שְׁלֹמֹה: אֵין  
דִּינִי אֲמָהּ זֶה כְּדִינִי שֶׁאֵר הָאֲמוֹת שָׂאֵם דִּן וְהוֹרֵג  
וּמַכֵּה וְחוֹנֵק וּמַטָּה אֶת דִּינוֹ וְגוֹזֵל, אֵין בְּכֶף כָּלֹם,  
אֲנִי אִם חֵיבִיתִי מִמוֹן שֶׁלֹּא כְּדִין, נִפְשׁוֹת אֲנִי נִתְבַּע,  
שְׁנָאֲמֵר: "וְקִבַּע אֶת קִבְעֵיהֶם נִפְשׁוֹ": 10 וְהִנֵּכֶם הַיּוֹם  
בְּכוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם. וְכִי בְּכוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם הֵיוּ בְּאוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם,  
וְהָלֹא לֹא הֵיוּ אֵלָּא שְׁשִׁים רְבּוּא, מֵהוּ "וְהִנֵּכֶם הַיּוֹם"?  
הִנֵּכֶם מְשׁוּלִים כִּיּוֹם, קִיָּמִים לְעוֹלָם כְּחֻמָּה וְכַלְבָּנָה  
וְכַכּוֹכְבִּים:

7 פָּנוּ וּסְעוּ לָכֶם. זוֹ דֶּרֶךְ עֶרֶד וְחֻרְמָה: וּבֹאוּ הָרָה  
הָאֲמֹרִי. כְּמִשְׁמַעוֹ: וְאֶל כָּל שְׁכֵנֵי. עֲמוּן וּמוֹאָב וְהָר  
שְׁעִיר: בְּעֶרְבָה. זֶה מִישׁוֹר שֶׁל יַעֲר: בְּהָר. זֶה הָר  
הַמָּלָךְ: וּבְשִׁפְלָהּ. זוֹ שְׁפֶלֶת דְּרוֹם: וּבְנֶגֶב וּבְחוֹף הַיָּם.  
אֲשַׁקְלוֹן וְעֻזָּה וְקַסְרֵי וְכו', כְּדֵאִיתָא בְּסַפְרֵי: עַד הַנָּהָר  
הַגָּדֹל. מִפְּנֵי שְׁנוּכָר עִם אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל קוֹרְאוּ גְדוֹל,  
מִשֶּׁל הַדִּיּוֹט אוֹמֵר: עֶבֶד מֶלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ, הַדִּבֵּק לְשַׁחֲרוֹ  
וְיִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לָךְ, קָרִב לְגַבִּי דְּהִינָא וְאִידֵהוּן: 8 רְאֵה  
נְתַתִּי. בְּעֵינֵיכֶם אֶתְם רוֹאִים, אֵינִי אוֹמֵר לָכֶם מֵאֲמִד  
וּמִשְׁמוּעָה: בָּאוּ וּרְשׁוּ. אֵין מַעֲרָעַר בְּדָבָר וְאֵינְכֶם  
צָרִיכִים לְמַלְחָמָה, אֵלּוּ לֹא שָׁלְחוּ מְרַגְלִים לֹא  
הֵיוּ צָרִיכִין לְכָלִי זֶין: לְאַבְרָהָם. לָמָּה הַזְכִּיר שׁוֹב  
"לְאַבְרָהָם לִיצְחָק וְלִיעֲקֹב"? אֵלָּא: אֲבָרְהָם כְּדֵאִי  
לְעֶצְמוֹ, יִצְחָק כְּדֵאִי לְעֶצְמוֹ, יַעֲקֹב כְּדֵאִי לְעֶצְמוֹ:  
9 וְאָמַר אֲלֵכֶם בְּעַת הַהוּא לְאָמַר. מֵהוּ לְאָמַר? אָמַר  
לָהֶם מִשֶּׁה: לֹא מַעֲצָמִי אֲנִי אוֹמֵר לָכֶם אֵלָּא מִפִּי  
הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: לֹא אוּכַל לְבָדִי וְגו'. אֲפָשֶׁר שֶׁלֹּא

14. מלכים א' ג, ט. 15. שם ה', יא. 16. משלי כב, כג.

noble stature is compounded by your quantitative **magnitude**, which is already too great for one man to act as sole judge, and is moreover destined to increase greatly.<sup>59</sup>

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

relationship with Him, without advancing and ascending. This idea is also articulated in the Prophets, where the human potential to progress in Divine consciousness is contrasted with the angels' lack of this potential: "If you go in My ways...I will make you into those who walk [i.e., constantly move forward] among these [angels, who merely] stand here."<sup>60</sup> Angels, being personified emotional states of involvement with God, are static, whereas human beings can progress from one level of emo-

tional involvement with God to another. In fact, we should strive to reach the next level of spirituality as soon as we become aware of its existence.<sup>61</sup>

Furthermore, this verse teaches us not to cloister ourselves in the study hall, devoting ourselves exclusively to our own self-refinement. Rather, God challenges us to leave this pristine and holy environment, traveling to a place far from "His mountain," to illuminate even these distant places with the Divine light of the Torah.<sup>62</sup>

59. Likutei Sichot, vol. 39, pp. 1-6. 60. Zechariah 3:7. 61. Likutei Sichot, vol. 24, p. 18. 62. Likutei Sichot, vol. 2, p. 695.

**7 Turn northward and journey** into the land. **Come first to the central mountain**, occupied by **the Amorites**,<sup>49</sup> **and afterward to all its neighboring places**—Edom, Moab, and Ammon.’ (God made this statement when He intended to give us these three lands together with the seven lands of Canaan proper;<sup>50</sup> He later rescinded this intention.<sup>51</sup>) **‘Traverse the wooded plain of the Jordan valley; the mountainous area west of this plain; the lowland south of these mountains; the western lowlands—from their southern border northward along the seashore until the northern border of the land of the Canaanites—and finally, all of Lebanon, until the Euphrates River**, which is known as **“the great river”** due to its association with the Land of Israel.<sup>52</sup>

**8 See** now how miraculously fast you will travel from Mount Sinai to Ritmah. This will demonstrate to you that **I have** virtually **set the land before you**. You will not have to rely on the promise you heard from Me in Egypt<sup>53</sup> nor on the assumption that since I was able to perform miracles for you in Egypt and at the Sea of Reeds I can probably do so for you now, as well. Furthermore, once the neighboring nations hear how miraculously fast you traveled, they will acknowledge that the land belongs to you by Divine right and will no longer contest your claim to it. And do not worry that they will nonetheless try to defend their land; I guarantee you that they will vacate it of their own accord and that you will meet with no armed resistance. You do not even need to frighten them by brandishing your weapons. All you need to do is **come and take possession of the land**. For this is the land **that I, God, swore to your forefathers—to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob**, each of whose merit is independently sufficient to earn you this miraculous Divine intervention—to **give them and their descendants after them**.’ In fact, however, by sending out the scouts, you demonstrated that you did not trust in God’s promise of miraculous assistance. You therefore forfeited this degree of Divine intervention; you will thus have to contend with the nations that presently occupy the land and conduct your conquest by natural means.<sup>54</sup>

### Rebuke Regarding the Judiciary

**9 Meanwhile, I said to you at that time**, while we were still at Mount Sinai, **conveying** what God told me in accordance with my father-in-law Jethro’s suggestion,<sup>55</sup> **‘I cannot alone bear** the burden of adjudicating all the legal cases **you** bring before me, because

**10 God, your God, has made you great**—i.e., into the noblest nation on earth—by selecting you to carry out His mission. He has also ennobled you by promising to make you His eternal nation,<sup>56</sup> and thus, **behold**, by virtue of this promise, **you are** already **today** as everlasting as the sun, the moon, and **the stars of heaven**. True, you are only eternal collectively, as a people, but each one of you expresses and partakes individually of your collective immutability, just as each star is a unique and integral constituent of the celestial array.<sup>57</sup> Because you possess this lofty stature, God has made it a capital crime to inadvertently misjudging even a civil case of yours.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, the qualitative difficulty in judging you due to your

49. See Numbers 13:29; below, v. 19-20, 43-44; Joshua 10:6 ff. 50. See Genesis 15:18-21, Exodus 3:8, 23:31. 51. Numbers 20:13. 52. Genesis 15:18; *Sefer HaSichot* 5750, vol. 2, p. 626, notes 105-107. 53. Exodus 3:17, 4:31. 54. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 34, pp. 1-7. 55. Exodus 18:13-26. 56. Genesis 17:7. 57. See Overview to *parashat Shemot*; Rashi on Exodus 1:1. 58. *Sanhedrin* 7a; Proverbs 22:22-23.

ONKELOS

11 יי אלהא דאברהבון יוסף  
עליכון פותכון אלה זמנין ויברך  
יתכון כמא די מליל לכוני;  
12 אידין אסובר בלחודי טרחכון  
ועסקיכון ודינכון; 13 תבו לכוני  
גברין חבימין וסוכלתנין ומדען  
לשבטיכון ואמננון רישין עליכון;  
14 ואיתיבתון יתני ואמרתון  
תקין פתגמא די מללת למעבד;  
15 ודברית ית רישו שבטיכון גברין  
חבימין ומדען ומניתי יתהון רישין  
עליכון רבני אלפין ורבני מאותא  
ורבני חמשין ורבני עשוריתא  
וסרכין לשבטיכון;

11 יהוה אלהי אבותכם יסף עליכם ככם אלה פעמים  
ויברך אתכם כאשר דבר לכם:

◆ שני 12 איכה אשא לבדי מרחכם ומשאכם וריבכם:

13 תבו לכם אנשים חכמים ונבנים וידעים לשבטיכם  
ואשימם בראשיכם: 14 ותענו אתי ותאמרו טוב הדבר  
אשר דברת לעשות: 15 ואקח את ראשי שבטיכם  
אנשים חכמים וידעים ואתן אותם ראשים עליכם שרי  
אלפים ושרי מאות ושרי חמשים ושרי עשרות ושרים  
לשבטיכם:

RASHI

בטליתו איני יודע מי הוא ומאיזה שבט הוא ואם  
הגון הוא, אבל אתם מכירין בו, שאתם גדלתם  
אותו, לכה נאמר "וידעים לשבטיכם": **בראשיכם**.  
ראשים ומכבדים עליכם, שתהיו נוהגין בהם כבוד  
ויראה: **ואשימם**. חסר יו"ד, למד שאשמותיהם של  
ישאל תלויות בראשי דיניהם, שהיה להם למחות  
ולכוון אותם לדרך הישרה: 14 **ותענו אתי וגו'**.  
חלטתם את הדבר להנאתכם, היה לכם להשיב:  
רבנו משה, ממי נאה ללמוד, ממך או מתלמידך, לא  
ממך, שנצטערת עליה — אלא ידעתי מחשבותיכם,  
הייתם אומרים: עכשו יתמנו עלינו דינני הרבה, אם  
אין מכירנו אנו מביאין לו דורון והוא נושא לנו  
פנים: **לעשות**. אם הייתי מתעצל, אתם אומרים:  
עשה מהרה: 15 **ואקח את ראשי שבטיכם**. משכתים  
בדברים: אשריכם, על מי באתם להתמנות, על בני  
אברהם יצחק ויעקב, על בני אדם שנקראו אחים  
ורעים, חלק ונחלה וכל לשון חבה: **אנשים חכמים  
וידעים**. אבל נבונים לא מצאתי. זו אחת משובע  
מדות שאמר יתרו למשה, ולא מצא אלא שלש:  
אנשים צדיקים, חכמים וידעים: **ראשים עליכם**.  
שתנהגו בהם כבוד, ראשים במקח, ראשים בממכר,  
ראשים במשא ומתן, נכנס אחרון ויוצא ראשון: **שרי  
אלפים**. אחד ממנה על אלף: **שרי מאות**. אחד ממנה  
על מאה: **ושרים**. מניתי עליכם לשבטיכם, אלו  
הכופתין והמכין בצועה על פי הדיננין:

11 יסף עליכם ככם אלה פעמים. מהו שוב "ויברך  
אתכם כאשר דבר לכם"? אלא אמרו לו: משה, אתה  
נותן קצבה לברכתנו, כבר הבטיח הקדוש ברוך הוא  
את אברהם: "אשר אם יוכל איש למנות וגו' אמר  
להם: זו משלי היא, אבל הוא "ויברך אתכם כאשר  
דבר לכם": 12 **איכה אשא לבדי**. אם אמר לקבל  
שכר, לא אוכל, זו היא שאמרת לי: לא מעצמי  
אני אומר לכם אלא מפי הקדוש ברוך הוא: **טרחכם**.  
מלמד שהיו ישאל טרחנין, היה אחד מהם רואה  
את בעל דינו נוצח בדין, אומר: יש לי עדים להביא,  
יש לי ראיות להביא, מוסיף אני עליכם דינני:  
**ומשאכם**. מלמד שהיו אפיקורסין, הקדים משה  
לצאת, אמרו: מה ראה בן עמרם לצאת, שמא אינו  
שפוי בתוך ביתו! אחר לצאת, אמרו: מה ראה בן  
עמרם שלא לצאת, מה אתם סבורים, יושב ויועץ  
עליכם עצות, וחושב עליכם מחשבות: **ורבכם**.  
מלמד שהיו רוגנים: 13 **תבו לכם**. הזמינו עצמכם  
לדבר: **אנשים**. וכי תעלה על דעתך נשים, מה  
תלמוד לומר "אנשים"? צדיקים: **חכמים**. כסופים:  
**ונבנים**. מבינים דבר מתוך דבר, זו היא ששאל  
אריס את רבי יוסי: מה בין חכמים לנבונים? חכם  
דומה לשלחני עשיר, כשמביאין לו דיננין לראות  
רואה, וכשאין מביאין לו יושב ותוהא; נבון דומה  
לשלחני תגר, כשמביאין לו מעות לראות רואה,  
וכשאין מביאין לו הוא מחזר ומביא משלו: **וידעים  
לשבטיכם**. שהם נפדים לכם, שאם בא לפני מעטף

17. בראשית יג, טו. 18. עיני "מנחת שיי", מירוש רש"י על התורה, יוסף הלל, ובשאר מפרשי רש"י.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

**11 You complained:** Why did Moses express his blessing in a way that made the people feel obligated to challenge its scope? Could he not have made it clear that he was simply adding, so to speak, to the limitless blessing already promised by God?

Moses knew that God desires His people's prayers and that their prayers and fervent desire are what elicits Divine bounty. He therefore spoke this way in order to arouse the Jews to pray and request God's blessing themselves.<sup>70</sup>

68. See Numbers 25:5; below, 25:2. 69. Likutei Sichot, vol. 34, pp. 98-104. 70. Hitva'aduyot 5722, vol. 3, p. 209.



11 For I bless you that **God, God of your forefathers, add to you a thousand times as many** descendants **as you** presently number!’ When you heard me quantify my blessing to you—even though you understood that I meant ‘a thousandfold’ only figuratively—you complained that I was limiting your population growth, whereas God had promised Abraham that his offspring would increase without limit.<sup>63</sup> I therefore replied to you, ‘I, being human, can only express my blessing in finite idioms. As for God, however, **may He bless you as He spoke concerning you.**’<sup>64</sup>

- ◆ *Second Reading* 12 Returning to the subject of judging you, I said: ‘It could be argued that although judging you by myself entails awesome responsibility, it also earns great reward, so I should nonetheless want to judge you all by myself. But even if I wanted to, God has specifically instructed me not to do so. So **how, then, can I bear** this burden myself? Furthermore, you are constantly complicating the legal process with **your troublesome** penchant for always producing new evidence and witnesses; with **your burdensome** mistrust of me; **and** with **your constant strife**, because of which you are constantly going to court. How can I bear this **all by myself?**

13 Therefore, as God has instructed me to tell you, **ready yourselves** for the appointment of **men** who are God-fearing; who command respect for their integrity; who are unattached to their wealth; and who are righteous, **wise** (i.e., insightful), **understanding** (i.e., able to deduce new laws from legal precedent), **and** who are **known among your tribes** for their impeccable reputations.<sup>65</sup> **I will appoint them as your judges.** Treat them as your **heads**, i.e., with proper respect, for as your judges they will be responsible for inculcating you with moral integrity and will therefore bear responsibility for your sins.’

14 Now, you should have protested this plan, insisting on being led and judged by me personally rather than by any disciple of mine. But **you answered me and said, ‘The plan you have spoken is good for us,’** because you believed that judges of lesser stature would be open to accepting bribes. Moreover, when you saw that I was reluctant to implement this plan, you urged me **to do** it quickly.

15 In setting out to implement it, however, I only found a sufficient number of men who possessed three out of the seven qualities God told me to seek out: righteousness, insight, and impeccable reputation. (I did indeed find men capable of basic deductive reasoning, just as I had when I was recruiting artisans to construct the Tabernacle and its furnishings,<sup>66</sup> but I did not find men possessing sufficient deductive powers to be able to derive new laws from legal precedent.<sup>67</sup>) **I convinced** these righteous, **wise, and notable men** to be **the heads of your tribes** by pointing out to them what an honor it would be to lead and judge the descendants of the patriarchs, the people whom God loves so dearly. **I made them dignitaries over you** by enjoining you to treat them with respect, giving them the first right to buy, sell, state their opinions, and enter or leave a room. I then appointed them as **leaders over thousands, leaders over hundreds, leaders over fifties, and leaders over tens.** I made these judges responsible for not only rendering judgment but for executing justice, as well,<sup>68</sup> but I also appointed **floggers over your tribes** to help the judges administer lashes if they were unable to do so themselves.<sup>69</sup>

63. Genesis 13:16. 64. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 19, pp. 15-21. 65. Exodus 18:21. 66. Exodus 36:1. 67. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 34, pp. 9-14.

ONKELOS

16 ופקדית ית דיניכון בעדנא  
ההיא למימר שמעו בין אחיכון  
ותדנון קושטא בין גברא ובין  
אחיהי ובין גיורה: 17 לא  
תשתמודעון אפין בדינא מלי  
ועירא כרבא תשמעון לא תדחלון  
מן קדם גברא ארי דינא דיי הוא  
ופתגמא די יקשי מנכון תקרבו  
לותי ואשמענה: 18 ופקדית יתכון  
בעדנא ההיא ית כל פתגמא די  
תעבדון:

16 וְאַצִּוָה אֶת־שְׁפִטֵיכֶם בַּעֲת הַהוּא לֵאמֹר שִׁמְעוּ בֵּין־  
אֲחֵיכֶם וּשְׁפִטָתֶם צֶדֶק בֵּין־אִישׁ וּבֵין־אָחִיו וּבֵין־גֵּרוֹ:  
17 לֹא־תִכְבְּרוּ פָנִים בַּמִּשְׁפָּט בִּקְטָן כַּגֹּדֶל תִּשְׁמָעוּן לֹא־  
תִּגְוְרוּ מִפְּנֵי־אִישׁ כִּי הַמִּשְׁפָּט לַאלֹהִים הוּא וְהַדָּבָר  
אֲשֶׁר יִקְשֶׁה מִפֶּם תִּקְרְבוּן אֵלַי וּשְׁמַעְתִּיו: 18 וְאַצִּוָה  
אֶתְכֶם בַּעֲת הַהוּא אֵת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשׂוּן:

RASHI

תאמר: זה עניי הוא ויחברו עשיר ומצוה לפרנסו,  
אזכה את העני ונמצא מתפרנס בנקיות. דבר אחר:  
שלא תאמר: היאך אני פוגם בבורו של עשיר זה  
בשביל דינר, אזכנו עכשו, וכשיצא לחוץ אמר  
לו: תן לו, שאתה חוב לו: לא תגורו מפני איש. לא  
תיראו. דבר אחר: "לא תגורו", לא תכניס דבריו  
מפני איש, לשון "אגר בקוץ"<sup>22</sup>: כי המשפט לאלהים  
הוא. מה שאתה נוטל מזה שלא כדיון אתה מוקיני  
להחזיר לו, נמצא שהטית עלי המשפט: תקרבו  
אלי. על דבר זה נסתלק ממנו משפט בנות צלפחד.  
וכן שמואל אמר לשאול<sup>23</sup>: "אנכי הראה", אמר לו  
הקדוש ברוך הוא: חייך, שאני מודיעך שאין אתה  
רוצה. ואימתי הודיעו? כשבא למשח את דוד:<sup>24</sup>  
"וירא את אליאב ויאמר אף נגד ה' משיחו", אמר  
לו הקדוש ברוך הוא: ולא אמרת אנכי הרוצה, "אל  
תבט אל מראהו"<sup>25</sup>: 18 את כל הדברים אשר תעשו.  
אלו עשרת הדברים שבין דיני ממונות לדיני נפשות:

16 וְאַצִּוָה אֶת שְׁפִטֵיכֶם. אֲמַרְתִּי לָהֶם: הֵיוּ מִתּוֹנִים  
בְּדִין, אִם בָּא דִין לְפָנַי פַּעַם אַחַת וּשְׁתִּים וְשָׁלֹשׁ, אֵל  
תֹּאמַר: כָּבֹד בָּא דִין זֶה לְפָנַי פַּעַמִּים הֶרְבֵּה, אֲלֹא הֵיוּ  
נוֹשָׁאִים וְנוֹתְנִים בּוֹ: בַּעֲת הַהוּא. מִשְׁמָנִיתִים אֲמַרְתִּי  
לָהֶם: אֵין עֲכָשׁוּ כְלָשְׁעֵכֶר, לְשַׁעֲבֵר הֵייתֶם בְּרִשּׁוֹת  
עֲצָמְכֶם, עֲכָשׁוּ הָרִי אֶתֶם מִשְׁעָבָדִים לְצַבּוֹר: שִׁמְעוּ.  
לְשׁוֹן הָזֶה, אוֹדֵנִי טַ בְּלַעֲזִי, כְּמוֹ: "זָכוֹר"<sup>26</sup> וְ"שְׁמוֹר"<sup>27</sup>:  
וּבֵין גֵּרוֹ. זֶה בַּעַל דִּינוֹ שְׁאוּגֵר עָלָיו דְּבָרִים. דְּבָר אַחֵר:  
"וּבֵין גֵּרוֹ", אֵף עַל עַסְקֵי דִירָה בֵּין חִלְקַת אַחִים,  
אֶפְלוּ בֵּין תִּנּוֹר לְכִירִים: 17 לֹא תִכְבְּרוּ פָנִים בַּמִּשְׁפָּט.  
זֶה הַמִּמְנָה לְהוֹשִׁיב הַדִּינִים, שְׁלֹא יֹאמַר: אִישׁ פְּלוֹנִי  
נָאָה אוֹ גִּבּוֹר, אוֹשִׁיבֵנוּ דִין, אִישׁ פְּלוֹנִי קְרוֹבִי,  
אוֹשִׁיבֵנוּ דִין בְּעִיר, וְהוּא אֵינוֹ בָּקִי בְּדִינִין. נִמְצָא  
מְחִיב אֶת הַזָּכָאִי וּמוֹכֵחַ אֶת הַחֵיב, מַעֲלָה אֵנִי עַל מִי  
שִׁמְנָהוּ בְּאֵלוֹ הַכִּיר פָּנִים בְּדִין: בִּקְטָן כַּגֹּדֶל תִּשְׁמָעוּן.  
שִׁיָּהָ חֵיבֵי עָלָיָה דִין שֶׁל פְּרוּטָה בְּדִין שֶׁל מָאָה  
מָנָה, שֶׁאֵם קִדָּם וְכֹא לְפָנָי לֹא תִסְלְקֵנוּ לְאַחֲרָיָה.  
דְּבָר אַחֵר: "בִּקְטָן כַּגֹּדֶל תִּשְׁמָעוּן" כְּתִרְגוּמוֹ, שְׁלֹא

19. בְּשִׁמְעָכֶם. 20. שְׁמוֹת כ, ז. 21. דְּבָרִים ה, יא. 22. מְשַׁלִּי י, ה. 23. שְׁמוּאֵל א, ט. יט. 24. שְׁם טז, ו. 25. שְׁם טז, ז.

## A CLOSER LOOK

[continued...] of the defendant. (5) In a civil case, apprentice judges may speak either in favor of or against the defendant; in capital cases, they may speak only in his favor. (6) In civil cases, a judge may retract his vote either in favor of or against a defendant; in capital cases, he may retract it only if it was against the defendant. (7) In civil cases, if the court's discussion of the case continues into the night, the judges may render their decision at night; in capital cases, they must postpone rendering their decision until the following day. (8) In a civil case, if the court decides against the

defendant, they may pronounce their verdict on the same day the case was discussed; in a capital case, they must wait until the next day to pronounce the verdict in order to allow time for additional evidence to be brought in his favor. (9) In civil cases, the eldest judge gives his opinion first, but in capital cases, the youngest gives his opinion first in order that no judge be influenced by the opinion of an elder judge. (10) A judge of illegitimate birth may serve in a civil case, but not in a capital case.<sup>72</sup>

**16 I commanded your judges at that time, saying,** ‘You are no longer private individuals; you are now public servants. Therefore, **hear disputes between your brothers** and deliberate over them repeatedly, even if you have adjudicated similar cases in the past and would thus be inclined to render a hasty decision. Furthermore, **judge justly between every man and his fellow, even in cases between people when one litigant makes accusations without producing evidence, and even in seemingly petty disputes over the division of inherited property.**

**17** When you appoint other judges, **you must not favor persons** with respect to criteria other than their ability to judge correctly; if you do, I will hold the one who made the appointment responsible for his appointee’s errors **in judgment.** **You must hear a dispute involving a small amount of money just as readily as a dispute involving a large amount;** do not postpone the former in deference to the latter. In addition, **you must hear** the claims of **a poor person** in the same impartiality with which you hear those of **a rich person:** do not rule in favor of a guilty poor person in order to force his rich litigant to support him, and do not rule publicly in favor of a guilty rich person in order to safeguard his reputation and then tell him privately that he is really guilty and should pay the innocent poor person his due. **You must neither fear any man nor withhold your words on account of any man,** for the ultimate responsibility for correct **judgment is God’s:** if you pervert justice, God will be forced to redress any injustice you have caused. **Bring to me any case that is too difficult for you and I will hear it myself.’**

**18 At that time, I commanded you to do all the things you should do** in order to differentiate between civil and capital cases.

---

❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧

---

**16 Hear between your brothers:** The Ba’al Shem Tov interpreted this phrase allegorically:

*Hear:* One who has a spiritual sense of hearing can “hear” (i.e., be sensitive to) God’s boundless love for every Jew.

*Between your brothers:* The root of the Hebrew word for “between” (*bein*) is the same as that of the word for “understanding” (*binah*). Thus, a person with a spiritual sense of hearing *understands* the innate

greatness of *your brothers*—i.e., of every Jew—and will therefore appreciate them and socialize with them. Therefore,

*Hear:* If someone desires to reach such a level of spiritual sensitivity—

*Between your brothers:* he should associate with the simple folk and be sensitive to the fact that each and every Jew, even the simplest among them, is “your brother.”<sup>71</sup>

❧ A CLOSER LOOK ❧

**[18] I commanded you:** The following are the procedural differences between civil and capital cases: (1) Civil cases may be adjudicated by a court of three judges; capital cases require a court of 23 judges. (2) In civil cases, the arguments presented first may be either in favor of or against the defendant; in capital cases, the arguments presented first must be in favor of

the defendant. (3) In civil cases, a ruling against the defendant may be decided by a majority of one; in capital cases, a ruling against the defendant requires a majority of two. (4) In civil cases, if further evidence is produced after the verdict has been pronounced, it may be used to reverse the verdict either in favor of or against the defendant; in capital cases, only in favor

<sup>71</sup> Igrot Kodesh Admor Mehorayatz, vol. 4, pp. 96 ff.

— ONKELOS —

19 ונטלנא מחרב ויהליכנא ית כל מדברא רבא ודחילא ההוא די חזיתון ארץ טורא דאמוראא כמא די פסיד יי אלהנא יתנא ואחניא עד רסם גיאה: 20 ואמרית לבון אתיתון עד טורא דאמוראא דיי אלהנא יתנא לנא: 21 חזי יתב יי אלהך דמור ית ארעא סק אחסין כמא די מליל יי אלהא דאבהתך לך לא תדחל ולא תתקרב: 22 וקריבתון לותי כלכון ואמרתון נשלח גברין דקמנא ויאללון לנא ית ארעא ויתיבון יתנא פתגמא ית ארעא די נסק בה וית קרויא די נעול להן: 23 ושפר בעיני פתגמא ודברית מנכון תרין עשר גברין גברא חד לשבטא: 24 ואתפניו וסליקו לטורא ואתו עד נחלא דאתכלא ואלילו יתה: 25 ונסיבו בידיהון מאבא דארעא ואחיתו לנא ואתיבו יתנא פתגמא ואמרו טבא ארעא דיי אלהנא יתב לנא: 26 ולא אביתון למסק וסריבתון על מימרא דיי אלהבון:

19 ונטע מחרב ונלך את כל-המדבר הגדול והנורא  
ההוא אשר ראיתם דרך הר האמרי כאשר צוה יהוה  
אלהינו אתנו ונבא עד קדש ברנע: 20 ואמר אלכם  
באתם עד-הר האמרי אשר-יהוה אלהינו נתן לנו:  
21 ראה נתן יהוה אלהיך לפניך את-הארץ עליה יוש  
כאשר דבר יהוה אלהי אבותיך לך אלי-תיקרא ואל-  
תחת:

◆ שלישי 22 ותקרבון אלי כלכם ותאמרו נשלחה אנשים  
לפנינו ויחפרו-לנו את-הארץ וישבו אתנו דבר את-  
הדרך אשר נעלה-בה ואת הערים אשר נבא אליהן:  
23 וייתב בעיני הדבר ואקח מכם שנים עשר אנשים  
איש אחד לשבט: 24 ויפנו ויעלו הדרך ויבאו עד-נחל  
אשכל וירגלו אתה: 25 ויקחו בידם מפרי הארץ ויורדו  
אלינו וישבו אתנו דבר ויאמרו טובה הארץ אשר-  
יהוה אלהינו נתן לנו: 26 ולא אביתם לעלות ותמרו  
את-פי יהוה אלהיכם:

— RASHI —

חמוך וזה, אמר לו: הן. נותנו אתה לי לנסיון? אמר  
לו: הן. בקרים וגבעות? אמר לו: הן. כיון שראוה  
שאינ מעבבו כלום, אמר הלוקח בלבבו: בטוח הוא זה  
שלא אמצא בו מום, מיד אמר לו: טל מעותיך ואיני  
מנסהו מעתה — אף אני הודיתי לדבריתכם, שמא  
תחזרו בכם כשתראו שאיני מעבב, ואתם לא חזרתם  
בכם: ואקח מכם. מן הברורים שבכם, מן המסלתיים  
שבכם: שנים עשר אנשים איש אחד לשבט. מגיד  
שלא היה שבט לוי עמהם: 24 עד נחל אשכל. מגיד  
שנקרא על שם סופו: וירגלו אתה. מלמד שהלכו  
בה ארבעה אומנין שתי וערב: 25 ויורדו אלינו.  
מגיד שארץ ישראל גבוהה מכל הארצות: ויאמרו  
טובה הארץ. מי הם שאמרו טובה, יהושע וכלב:  
26 ותמרו. לשון התרסה, התרסותם כנגד מאמרו:

19 המדבר הגדול והנורא. שהיו בו נחשים בקורות  
ועקרבים כפשתות: 22 ותקרבון אלי כלכם.  
בערבוביא, ולהלן הוא אומר: "ותקרבון אלי  
כל ראשי שבטיכם וזקניכם ותאמרו הן הרצנו"  
וגו'. אותה קריבה היתה הוגנת, ילדים מכבדים  
את הזקנים ושלחום לפנייהם, וזקנים מכבדים את  
הראשים ללכת לפנייהם, אבל כאן "ותקרבון אלי  
כלכם" בערבוביא, ילדים דוחפין את הזקנים וזקנים  
דוחפין את הראשים: וישבו אתנו דבר. באיזה לשון  
הם מדברים: את הדרך אשר נעלה בה. אין דרך שאין  
בה עקמימות: ואת הערים אשר נבא אליהן. תחלה  
לכבוש: 23 וייתב בעיני הדבר. בעיני ולא בעיני  
המקום. ואם בעיני משה היה טוב, למה אמרה  
בתוכחות? משל לאדם שאומר לחברו: מכר לי

26. ה, יטרכ.

giving you a land that you considered inferior to Egypt. So you joined the spies and rebelled against the commandment of God, your God.

## Rebuke Regarding the Scouts

19 After we established the judiciary as God had commanded us, **we journeyed from Horeb and traversed that entire great and frightening desert, which, as you saw, abounded with giant serpents and scorpions. We traveled toward the mountain of the Amorites, as God, our God, had commanded us, and we came as far as Ritmah, opposite Kadesh Barnea.**<sup>73</sup>

20 **I said to you there, ‘You have arrived at the mountain of the Amorites, the strategic high ground of the land that God, our God, is giving us.**

21 **Behold, God, your God, has set the land before you. Go up and take possession of it, as God, God of your fathers, has spoken to you. You should be neither afraid nor terrified, since God will lead you and do battle for you.**<sup>74</sup>

◆ *Third Reading* 22 But when you heard that the time had come to confront the nations living in the Promised Land, you panicked. **All of you** (except for the tribe of Levi) **approached me** as an unruly mob, disregarding any hierarchy of age, rank, or social status. Instead of trusting in God, **you said, ‘Let us send men ahead of us so that they will search out the land for us; tell us what language its inhabitants speak; seek out the easiest, most direct route by which we will go up; and determine which cities we should approach first to conquer.’**

23 God was displeased by your desire to employ these natural strategies of conducting a conquest, since this evinced a lack of faith in His promise that you would conquer the land miraculously. But **the plan** you proposed actually **pleased me**, since I thought that if I would agree to send scouts, my confidence in the positive outcome of their expedition would quiet your fears, and you would withdraw your request. But this tactic did not work: you did not withdraw your request. **So I acquiesced to it and took twelve of the best and finest men from among you, one man for every tribe**<sup>75</sup>—except for that of Levi, since they had not requested representation among the scouts.

24 The scouts **turned north and ascended the mountain** of the Amorites. **They came to** the valley that would be called **the valley of Eshkol** [‘cluster’ of grapes] on account of the grapes they took from it to show you, **and also spied out** the entire length and breadth of the land.

25 **They took some of the fruit of the land in their hands and brought it down to us**—‘down,’ since the Land of Israel is considered the ‘top’ of the world<sup>76</sup>—**and brought us back word.** They said that just as the fruit of the land is abnormally large, so are the people who live in it. They thus tried to convince you that it was impossible to conquer the land by natural means. They then tried to persuade you that God would not assist you supernaturally, either. But Joshua and Caleb **said, ‘The land that God, our God, is giving us is good, and God will surely help us conquer it.’**<sup>77</sup>

26 **But** although you did not fully accept the spies’ contention that the land was unconquerable, **you nonetheless did not want to go up, for you resented God for**

73. Numbers 12:16. 74. Exodus 23:20, 23, 27; 34:11, and below, vv. 30-33. 75. Numbers 13:2. 76. See also Exodus 33:1. 77. Numbers 14:7 ff.



ONKELOS

27 וְאִתְרַעְמַתוֹן בְּמִשְׁכְּנִיכּוֹן  
וְאִמְרַתוֹן בְּדַסְנִי יְיָ יִתְנָא אִפְקָא  
מֵאֲרַעָא דְּמִצְרִים לְמִמָּסַר יִתְנָא  
בִּידָא דְּאִמּוֹרָאָה לְשִׁיחִיוֹתְנָא:  
28 לֹאן אִנְחָא סִלְקִין אִנְחָא  
תְּבָרוּ יִת לְבָנָא לְמִימַר עִם רַב  
וְתִסְקִי מִנָּא קְרוֹיִן רַבְרָבּוֹן וְכִרְיָן  
עַד צִית שְׁמִיָּא וְאַף בְּנֵי גְבִרְיָא  
חֲזִינָא תַּמּוֹן: 29 וְאִמְרִית לְכוֹן לֹא  
תִתְבָּרוֹן וְלֹא תִדְחִלוֹן מִנְהוֹן: 30 יְיָ  
אֱלֹהֵכוֹן דְּמִדְבֵּר קְדָמִיכוֹן מִימְרָה  
יְגִיחַ לְכוֹן כָּכֵל דִּי עֵבֵד עֲמָכוֹן  
בְּמִצְרַיִם לְעִינִיכוֹן: 31 וּבְמִדְבָּרָא  
דִּי חֲזִינָא דִּי סוֹבֵרָא יְיָ אֱלֹהֵךָ  
כְּמָא דִּי מְסוֹבֵר גְּבֵר יִת בְּרָה כָּכֵל  
אֲרָחָא דִּי הִלִּיכְתוֹן עַד מִיתִיכוֹן  
עַד אֲתָרָא הָדִין: 32 וּבְכַתְּנָמָא  
הָדִין לִיתִיכוֹן מִהִימְנִין בְּמִימְרָא  
דִּי אֱלֹהֵכוֹן: 33 דְּמִדְבֵּר קְדָמִיכוֹן  
בְּאֲרָחָא לְאִתְקַנָּא לְכוֹן אַתְרָא בֵּית  
מִישְׁרֵי לְאִשְׁרֵי תִיכּוֹן בְּעֲמֻדָא  
דְּאִשָּׁא בְּלִילִיא לְאִחֻזִּי תִיכּוֹן  
בְּאֲרָחָא דִּי תִהְכּוֹן בַּהּ וּבְעֲמֻדָא  
דְּעֲנָנָא בִּיקְמָא: 34 וּשְׁמִיעַ קֳדָם  
יְיָ יִת קַל פִּתְגָמִיכוֹן וְרִגּוֹ וְקִנִּיִּים  
לְמִימְרָא: 35 אִם יִחְזִי גְבֵר בְּגִבְרִיָּא  
הָאֵלֶּיךָ דְּרָא בִּישָׁא הָדִין יִת אֲרַעָא  
טַבְחָא דִּי קִימִית לְמַתָּן לְאַבְהֵתְכוֹן:  
36 אֲלֵהִיךָ כָּלֵב בֵּר יִפְנֶה הוּא  
יִחְזוּהָ וְלֹא אֲתוֹן יִת אֲרַעָא דִּי דֶּרֶךְ  
בַּהּ וְלִבְנוֹהִי חֲלָף דִּי אֲשֻׁלִּים בְּתֵר  
דִּחְלָתָא דִּי:

27 וְתִרְגְּנוּ בְּאַהֲלֵיכֶם וְתִאמְרוּ יְהוָה אֱתָנוּ  
הוֹצִיאָנוּ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְתֵת אֶתָּנוּ בְּיַד הָאֱמֹרִי  
לְהַשְׁמִידָנוּ: 28 אָנֹכָה | אֲנַחְנוּ עַלִים אֲחִינוּ הַמָּסוּ אֶת־  
לִבְנֵנוּ לְאמֹר עִם גָּדוֹל וָרֶם מִמֶּנּוּ עָרִים גְּדֹלֹת וּבְצוּרוֹת  
בְּשָׁמַיִם וְגַם־בְּנֵי עֲנָקִים רָאִינוּ שָׁם: 29 וְאָמַר אֲלֵכֶם  
לֹא־תִעְרָצוּן וְלֹא־תִירָאוּן מֵהֶם: 30 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם  
הִחֲלֹף לְפָנֵיכֶם הוּא יִלָּחֶם לָכֶם כָּכֹל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֶתְכֶם  
בְּמִצְרַיִם לְעִינֵיכֶם: 31 וּבְמִדְבָּר אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתָ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁאָל  
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר יִשְׂאֵאֵי־שׁ אֶת־בְּנֵי בְּכַל־הַדֶּרֶךְ  
אֲשֶׁר הִלַּכְתֶּם עַד־בְּאֶחָם עַד־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה: 32 וּבְדִבְרֵי  
הַזֶּה אֵינְכֶם מֵאֲמִינִם בִּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: 33 הִחֲלֹף  
לְפָנֶיכֶם בְּדֶרֶךְ לְתוֹר לָכֶם מָקוֹם לְחִנּוּתְכֶם בְּאֵשׁ | לַיְלָה  
לְרִאתְכֶם בְּדֶרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר תִּלְכוּ־בָּהּ וּבַעֲנֵן יוֹמָם: 34 וַיִּשְׁמַע  
יְהוָה אֶת־קוֹל דְּבִרְיֵכֶם וַיִּקְצָף וַיִּשְׁבַּע לֵאמֹר: 35 אִם־  
יִרְאֶה אִישׁ בְּאֲנָשִׁים הָאֵלֹהִי הַדּוֹר הַרַע הַזֶּה אֶת הָאֶרֶץ  
הַטּוֹבָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁפָּעַתִּי לְתֵת לְאַבְתֵּיכֶם: 36 זֹולָתִי כָּלֵב  
בֶּן־יִפְנֶה הוּא יִרְאֶנָּה וְלֹא־אֲתָן אֶת־הָאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר דִּרְדַּבְּהָ  
וּלְבָנָיו יַעַן אֲשֶׁר מָלֵא אַחֲרָיִי יְהוָה:

RASHI

נְחִלִים לְשָׁפֵן" — לְשׁוֹבֵר נְחִלִים: 30 יִלָּחֶם לָכֶם.  
בְּשִׁבְלֵכֶם: 31 וּבְמִדְבָּר אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתָ. מוֹסֵב עַל מִקְרָא  
שְׁלֹמֹעַלָה הִימְנוֹ: 29 "כָּכֹל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֶתְכֶם בְּמִצְרַיִם",  
וְעָשָׂה אֵף בְּמִדְבָּר — "אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתָ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁאָף" וְגו':  
כַּאֲשֶׁר יִשָּׂא אִישׁ אִישׁ אֶת בְּנוֹ. כְּמוֹ שֶׁפָּרְשְׁתִּי אֶצְלָךָ<sup>30</sup> "וַיִּסַּע  
מִלֵּאָה הָאֱלֹהִים הִחֲלֹף לְפָנֵי מַחְנֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל" וְגו',  
מִשָּׁל לְמַהֲלֹף בְּדֶרֶךְ וּבְנוֹ לְפָנָיו וּבָאוּ לְסֻטִּים לְשִׁבוּתוֹ  
וְכו': 32 וּבְדִבְרֵי הַזֶּה. שְׁהוּא מְבִטִּיחְכֶם לְהִבְיָאֲכֶם  
אֶל הָאֶרֶץ, "אֵינְכֶם מֵאֲמִינִים" בּוֹ: 33 לְרִאתְכֶם. כְּמוֹ  
"לְהִרְאוֹתְכֶם". וְכו': "לְנַחֲתֶם הַדֶּרֶךְ", וְכו': "לְשִׁמְעַ  
בְּקוֹל תוֹדָה", וְכו': "לְלַכֵּת לְגִיד בִּיזְרָעָאֵל": 36 אֲשֶׁר  
דֶּרֶךְ בַּהּ. חֲבָרוֹן, שְׁנָאֲמַר<sup>34</sup>: "וַיָּבֹא עַד חֲבָרוֹן":

27 וְתִרְגְּנוּ. לְשׁוֹן הַרַע, וְכו': "דְּבִרֵי נִרְגָּן" — אָדָם  
הַמוֹצִיא דְּבַהּ: בְּשִׁנְאָת ה' אֶתְנָנוּ. וְהוּא הָיָה אוֹהֵב  
אֶתְכֶם, אָכֵל אֶתְּם שׁוֹנָאִים אוֹתוֹ, מִשָּׁל הַדִּיּוּט אוֹמֵר:  
מִה דְּבַלְבָּה עַל רַחֲמֶיךָ, מִה דְּבַלְבָּה עַלְךָ: בְּשִׁנְאָת ה'  
אֶתְנוּ הוֹצִיאָנוּ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם. הוֹצֵאתוֹ לְשִׁנְאָה הִיתָה,  
מִשָּׁל לְמִלָּף בְּשׁוֹר וְדָם שְׁהִיוּ לוֹ שְׁנֵי בָנִים, וַיֵּשׁ לוֹ  
שְׁתֵּי שְׂדוֹת אַחַת שֶׁל שְׁקִיָּא וְאַחַת שֶׁל בַּעַל, לְמִי  
שְׁהוּא אוֹהֵב נוֹתֵן שֶׁל שְׁקִיָּא וְלְמִי שְׁהוּא שׁוֹנָא נוֹתֵן  
לוֹ שֶׁל בַּעַל. אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם שֶׁל שְׁקִיָּא הִיא, שְׁנִילוֹס  
עוֹלָה וּמִשְׁקָה אוֹתָהּ, וְאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן שֶׁל בַּעַל, וְהוֹצִיאָנוּ  
מִמִּצְרַיִם לְתֵת לָנוּ אֶת אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: 28 עָרִים גְּדֹלֹת  
וּבְצוּרוֹת בְּשָׁמַיִם. דְּבָרוֹ הַכְּתוּבִים לְשׁוֹן הַבְּאִי: 29 לֹא  
תִעְרָצוּן. לְשׁוֹן שְׁבִירָה כְּתֵר גּוֹמֵר, וְדוּמָה לוֹ:<sup>28</sup> "בַּעֲרוֹץ

27. משלי יח, 28. איוב ל, 29. פסוק ל, 30. שמות יד, 31. שמות יג, כא. 32. תהלים כו, 33. מלכים ב, ט, 34. במדבר יג, כב.

**27 You slandered** God, saying that He is reciprocating your love with hatred: He was forced to give you your own land because He promised the patriarchs that He would, but He gave the choicer land to the Egyptians and reserved the inferior land for you. In fact, however, it was *you* who were reciprocating *His* love with hatred, because your complaint was demonstrably false: Although Egypt is indeed generously irrigated by the annual overflow of the Nile, great effort is required to distribute this water over the fields to irrigate them. In contrast, although you will have to earn the rain in the Land of Israel by your good behavior<sup>78</sup> and constantly pray for it, once the rain does fall it will water the fields by itself! Since your complaint was really an expression of your resentment of God for obligating you to obey His will, you articulated it only in private, **in your tents, and said, 'Out of God's hatred of us, He took us out of Egypt.'**

Publicly, however, you added your voices to the spies' and complained, 'God plans to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to exterminate us.'<sup>79</sup>

**28 Where can we go up? Our brothers have discouraged us, saying, "The land is occupied by a people greater and taller than we; it is filled with cities so great and so fortified that they reach up to the very heavens;<sup>80</sup> and we have even seen there the descendants of the supernatural giants** who were fathered by the fallen angels Shamchazai and Azael."<sup>81</sup>

**29 I said to you, 'Do not be broken-hearted or afraid of them.**

**30 God, your God, who goes before you, will fight for you, just as He did for you in Egypt, before your very eyes,**

**31 and just as He did for you in the desert, where you saw how God, your God, protected you as if He was carrying you the way that a man carries his son, all along the road that you traveled until you came to this place.**

**32 But despite God's open and miraculous protection you have witnessed so far, you stubbornly do not believe God, your God, regarding this matter** of His promise to bring you safely into the Land of Israel,

**33 even though He goes before you on your journey in a pillar of fire at night and in a pillar of cloud by day in order to search out a place for you to make camp and to show you which way you should go!**

**34 God heard the sound of your words and became angry. He swore, saying,<sup>82</sup>**

**35 'None of these men of this evil generation will see the good land that I swore to give your forefathers**

**36 except Caleb the son of Yefuneh. He will see it, and I will give Hebron, the land he trod upon,<sup>83</sup> to him and his children, because he was loyal to God.'<sup>84</sup>**

---

— 80 CHASIDIC INSIGHTS 83 —

---

**27 You slandered God:** Until the Final Redemption, when there will no longer be any obstacles impeding the full revelation of God's goodness, opportunities will unfortunately remain to mistake God's love for us for cruelty. Our challenge then, until that time, is to remain fully aware that God is at all times

manifesting His love for us, even if it occasionally appears exactly the opposite. Remaining conscious of this love will inspire us to reciprocate it by fulfilling His will to our utmost ability, which will in turn eliminate the last remaining impediments to the Final Redemption.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>78</sup> Leviticus 26:3-4. <sup>79</sup> *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 34, pp. 17-23. <sup>80</sup> Numbers 13:28. <sup>81</sup> Numbers 13:33. <sup>82</sup> Numbers 14:21-24. <sup>83</sup> Numbers 13:22. <sup>84</sup> Numbers 13:24. <sup>85</sup> *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 34, p. 23.

— ONKELOS —

37 אף עלי יהוה רגז מן קדם  
 ?? בדילכון למימר אף את לא  
 תעול לתמן: 38 יהושע בר נון  
 דקאם קדמך הוא יעול לתמן יתה  
 תשף ארי הוא יחסנה לישראל:  
 39 וטפלכון די אמרתון לבזא  
 יהון ובניכון די לא ידעו יומא דין  
 טב וביש אנון יעלון לתמן ולהון  
 אתננה ואנן ירתנה: 40 ואתון  
 אתפנו לבזא וטולו למדברא ארח  
 ימא דסוף: 41 ואתיבתון ואמרתון  
 לי חבנא קדם ?? אנחנא נסק ונגיח  
 קרב ככל די פקדנא ?? אלהנא  
 וזריזתון גבר ית מני קרבה ושריתון  
 למסק לטורא: 42 ואמר ?? לי אמר  
 להון לא תסקון ולא תגיחון קרב  
 ארי לית שכינתי שריא ביניכון  
 ולא תתברון קדם בעלי דבניכון:  
 43 ומללית עמכון ולא קבילתון  
 וסריבתון על גזרת מימרא די  
 וארשעתון וסליקתון לטורא:  
 44 ונפק אמרא דיתב בטורא  
 ההוא לקדמותכון ורדפו יתכון  
 כמא די נתון דבריתא וטרו יתכון  
 בשעיר עד חרמה: 45 ותבתון  
 ובכיתון קדם ?? ולא קבל ??  
 צלותכון ולא אצית למליכון:  
 46 ויתבתון ברקס יומין סגיאין  
 כיומנא די יתיבתון: 47 ואתפנינא  
 ונטלנא למדברא ארח ימא דסוף  
 כמא די מליל ?? עמי ואקפנא ית  
 טורא דשעיר יומין סגיאין:

37 גם־בלי התאנף יהוה בגללכם לאמר גם־אתה לא־  
 תבא שם: 38 יהושע בג־נון העמד לפניך הוא יבא  
 שמה אתו חזק כִּי־הוא ינחלנה את־ישראל:

◆ רביעי 39 וטפכם אשר אמרתם לבן יהוה ובניכם אשר  
 לא־ידעו היום טוב ורע המה יבאו שמה ולהם אתננה  
 והם יירשוה: 40 ואתם פנו לכם וסעו המדברה דרך  
 ים־סוף: 41 ותענו | ותאמרו אלי חטאנו ליהוה אנחנו  
 נעלה ונלחמנו בכל אשר־צונו יהוה אלהינו ותחגרו  
 איש את־בלי מלחמתו ותהינו לעלת ההרה: 42 ויאמר  
 יהוה אלי אמר להם לא תעלו ולא־תלחמו כִּי אינני  
 בקרבכם ולא תנגפּוּ לפני איביכם: 43 ואדבר אליכם  
 ולא שמעתם ותמרו את־פי יהוה ותזדו ותעלו ההרה:  
 44 ויצא האמרי הישב בהר ההוא לקראתכם וירדפו  
 אתכם כאשר תעשינה הדברים ויפתו אתכם בשעיר  
 עד־חרמה: 45 ותשבו ותבכו לפני יהוה ולא־שמע  
 יהוה בקלכם ולא האזין אליכם: 46 ותשבו בקדש ימים  
 רבים כימים אשר ישבתם: 2:1 ונפן ונסע המדברה  
 דרך ים־סוף כאשר דבר יהוה אלי ונסב את־הר־שעיר  
 ימים רבים: ס

— RASHI —

46 ותשבו בקדש ימים רבים. תשע עשרה שנה,  
 שנאמר: "כימים אשר ישבתם" בשאר המסעות,  
 והם היו שלשים ושמנה שנה, תשע עשרה מהם  
 עשו בקדש ותשע עשרה שנה הולכים ומטרפים  
 וחזרו לקדש, כמו שנאמר: "וינעם במדבר". כך  
 מצאתי בסדר עולם: 1 ונפן ונסע המדברה. אלו לא  
 חטאו היו עוברים דרך הר שעיר לכנס לארץ מן  
 דרומו לצפון, ובשביל שקלקלו הפכו לצד המדבר  
 שהוא בין ים סוף לדרומו של הר שעיר, והלכו אצל  
 דרומו מן המערב למזרח דרך ים סוף, דרך יציאתן  
 ממצרים, שהוא במקצוע דרומית מערבית, משם  
 היו הולכים לצד המזרח: ונסב את הר שעיר. כל  
 דרומו עד ארץ מואב:

37 התאנף. נתמלא רגז: 40 פנו לכם. אמרתי  
 להעביר אתכם דרך רחב ארץ אדום לצד צפון  
 לכנס לארץ, קלקלתם וגרמתם לכם עכוב: פנו  
 לכם. לאחוריהם ותלכו במדבר לצד ים סוף,  
 שהמדבר שהיו הולכים בו לדרומו של הר שעיר,  
 היה מפסיק בין ים סוף להר שעיר, עתה המשכו  
 לצד הים ותסבבו את הר שעיר כל דרומו מן  
 המערב למזרח: 41 ותהינו. לשון "הננו ועלינו אל  
 המקום"<sup>35</sup>. זה הלשון שאמרתם לשון "הן", כלומר  
 נודמנותם: 42 לא תעלו. לא עליה תהא לכם אלא  
 ירידה: 44 כאשר תעשינה הדברים. מה הדברה  
 הזאת כשהיא מכה את האדם מיד מתה, אף הם  
 כשהיו נוגעים בכם מיד מתים: 45 ולא שמע ה'  
 בקלכם. כביכול עשיתם מדת רחמיו כאלו אכזרי:

35. במדבר יד, מ. 36. במדבר לב, יג.



37 God also allowed Joshua to enter the Land of Israel in reward for not having joined the rest of the spies,<sup>86</sup> but beyond Caleb, Joshua was appointed to lead the people in its conquest. This is because, years later, **God also became angry with me—because of my improper response to you** when you complained against Him at Kadesh—**saying to me, ‘You will not go there, either.’**<sup>87</sup>

38 **Joshua the son of Nun, who stands before you to serve you, will go there in your stead. Strengthen him, for he—and not you—will cause Israel to inherit the Promised Land.**<sup>88</sup>

- ◆ *Fourth Reading* 39 Continuing with regard to you, God said:<sup>89</sup> **‘Your little ones, whom you said would be prey, and your children, who on that day did not know the difference between good and evil, will go there; I will give it to them, and they will possess it.**

40 **But as for you, turn around and journey southward into the desert, heading toward the Red Sea.’**

41 **Then you answered and said to me,<sup>90</sup> ‘We have sinned against God. We will go up and fight, in accordance with all that God, our God, has commanded us.’ So every one of you girded his weapons and you readied yourselves to ascend the mountain.**

42 **But God said to me, ‘Say to them, “You will not go up—in fact, you will fall before your enemies. Do not fight, for I am not among you. Do not allow yourselves to be struck down before your enemies!”’**

43 **So I spoke thusly to you, but you did not listen. You rebelled against God’s command and willfully ascended the mountain of the Amorites.**

44 **And just as God had told me they would, the Canaanites and Amalekites, followed by the Amorites, who were dwelling on that mountain, came out towards you and pursued you just as bees do.** Even though they miraculously died when they touched you, just as bees die when they sting, this was only after **they smote you at Mount Seir as far as Chormah.**

45 **So you returned to our camp and wept before God, begging His forgiveness, but your obstinacy made God withhold His mercy; He refused to heed your voice, nor would He listen to you.**

46 **So you perforce stayed<sup>91</sup> in Ritmah, opposite Kadesh Barnea for many days—nineteen years, in fact;<sup>92</sup> this was the same amount of time that you dwelt in all your subsequent encampments.**<sup>93</sup>

2:1 **Then we turned southward and journeyed into the desert, toward the Red Sea, as God had spoken to me,<sup>94</sup> and we circled the area southwest of Mount Seir for many days, i.e., for nineteen years, eventually camping at Etzion Gever.**

86. Numbers 14:30. 87. Numbers 20:1-13. 88. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 14, pp. 8-11. 89. Numbers 14:28-35. 90. Numbers 14:40-45.

91. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 7, p. 80. 92. Numbers 14:25. 93. See before Numbers 19:1. 94. Above, 1:40.

ONKELOS

2 ואמר יי לי למימר: 3 סגי לכון דאקפיתון ית טורא הדין אתפנו לכון לצפונא: 4 ית עמא פקד למימר אתון עברין בתחום אחיכון בני עשו דיתבין בשעיר וידחלו מנכון ותסתמרון לחדא: 5 לא תתגרון בהון ארי לא אתון לכון מארעהון עד מדרך פרסת רגלא ארי ירתא לעשו יהבית ית טורא דשעיר: 6 עבדא תובנן מנהון בכספא ותיכלון ואף מיא תובנן מנהון בכספא ותשתון: 7 ארי יי אלהך ברכך בכל עובד ידך ספק לך צרך במהך ית מדרךא רבא הדין דנו ארבעין שני מימרא דיי אלהך בסעך לא חסרתא מדעם: 8 ועברנא מלות אחינא בני עשו דיתבין בשעיר מארח מישא מאילת ומעצין גבר ואתפנינא ועברנא ארח מדרךא דמואב: 9 ואמר יי לי לא תצור על מואבאי ולא תתגרי למעבד עמהון קרב ארי לא אתון לך מארעה ירתא ארי לבני לוט יהבית ית לחית ירתא:

◆ חמישי 2 ויאמר יהוה אלי לאמר: 3 רב לכם סב אתה החר הזה פנו לכם צפנה: 4 ואת העם צו לאמר אתם עבדים בגבול אחיכם בני עשו הישבים בשעיר ויראו מכם ונשמרתם מאד: 5 אל תתגרו בהם כי לא אתן לכם מארצם עד מדרך פרגל כירישה לעשו נתתי אתהר שעיר: 6 אכל תשבירו מאתם בפסח ואכלתם וגם מים תכרו מאתם בפסח ושתייתם: 7 כי יהוה אלהיך ברכך בכל מעשה ידך ידע לכתך את המדבר הגדל הזה זה ארבעים שנה יהוה אלהיך עמך לא חסרת דבר: 8 ונעבר מאת אחינו בני עשו הישבים בשעיר מדרך הערבה מאילת ומעצין גבר ונפן ונעבר דרך מדבר מואב: 9 ויאמר יהוה אלי אל תצר את מואב ואל תתגר בהם מלחמה כי לא אתן לך מארצו ירשה כי לבני לוט נתתי את ער ירשה:

RASHI

6 תכרו. לשון מקח, וכן: "אשר כריתי לי". שכן בכרפי הים קורין למכירה כירה: 7 כי ה' אלהיך ברכך. לפיכך לא תכפו את טובתו להראות באלו אתם גננים, אלא הראו עצמכם עשירים: 8 ונפן ונעבר. לצד צפון, הפכנו פנים להלך רוח מורחית: 9 ואל תתגר בהם וגו'. לא אסר להם על מואב אלא מלחמה, אבל מיראים היו אותם ונראים להם כשהם מזינים, לפיכך כתיב: "ויגר מואב מפני העם", שהיו שוללים ובוזים אותם. אבל בבני עמון נאמר: "ואל תתגר בהם", שום גרוי, בשכר צניעות אמן, שלא פרסמו על אביה כמו שעשתה הבכירה שקראת שם בנה מואב: ער. שם המדינה:

3 פנו לכם צפנה. סבו לכם לרוח מורחית מן הדרום לצפון, פניכם לצפון, נמצאו דולכים את רוח מורחית. וזה שנאמר: "ויבא ממזרח שמש לארץ מואב": 4 ונשמרתם מאד. ומהי השמירה, "אל תתגרו בהם": 5 עד מדרך פרגל. אפלו מדרך כף רגל, כלומר אפלו דריסת הרגל איני מרשה לעשות לכם בארצם שלא ברשות. ומדרש אגדה: עד שיבא יום דריסת הרגל על הר היתים, שנאמר: "ועמדו רגליו וגו': ירשה לעשו. מאברהם. עשרה עממין נתתי לו, שבעה לכם, וקיני וקנזי וקדמוני, הן עמון ומואב ושעיר — אחת מהם לעשו, והשתים לבני לוט, בשכר שהלך אתו למצרים ושתק על מה שהיה אומר על אשתו: "אחותי היא", עשאו כבנו:

37. שופטים יא, יח. 38. תנחומא ישן, דברים הוספה ו. 39. זכריה יד, ד. 40. בראשית נ, ה. 41. במדבר כב, ג. 42. פסוק יט.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

intellectual and seven emotional attributes that constitute the unrectified human personality (the "animal soul"). The spiritual correlate of conquering Canaan and transforming it into the Land of Israel is conquering all of these attributes and transforming them into their holy counterparts.

Our present psychological makeup only allows us to rectify the seven emotional attributes, not the three facets of the intellect. This is because the way

to rectify any aspect of reality is by correcting its source. Our emotions can generally be governed by our intellectual understanding. If we understand, for example, the rewards for proper behavior and the consequences of improper behavior, we should develop the corresponding emotional responses to them. By using our intellect, forcing ourselves to think through the implications and ramifications of proper and improper behavior, we can trigger the

## God's Assistance in Conquering the Promised Land

◆ *Fifth Reading 2* At this point, God spoke to me, saying,

3 **'You have circled the area southwest of this mountain long enough; now turn northward and journey to Kadesh, on the border of Edom. Ask the Edomites for passage through their country.'**<sup>95</sup>

4 At the same time, **command the people, saying, "You are about to cross the boundary of the land of your kinsmen, the descendants of Esau, who dwell on Mount Seir, and they will be afraid of you. Nonetheless, take great care that**

**5 you not provoke them, for I will not now give you any of their land—not so much as a footstep—because I have already given Mount Seir to Esau and to his descendants for a temporary inheritance from Abraham. You will inherit their land only in the future.'**<sup>96</sup>

**6 You may buy food from them with money, that you may eat; and you may also buy water from them with money, that you may drink.**

7 In fact, you *should* purchase food from them, in order to show **that God, your God, has blessed you in whatever you do** and that you have thus become wealthy. As you know, **He was intimately aware of your needs during your trek through this great desert; you have lacked nothing throughout these forty years that God, your God, has been with you.'**<sup>97</sup>

8 But despite our peaceful overtures, the Edomites did not allow us to pass through their land, **so we departed from our kinsmen, the descendants of Esau, who dwelt on Mount Seir, and returned southward by way of the Aravah—the plain that extends northward toward Kadesh from Eilat and from Etzion Gever—and we turned eastward and passed by the southern borders of Edom and Moab toward the Moab desert.**

9 As we approached Moab, **God said to me, 'Do not distress the Moabites by provoking them to war, for I will not give you any of their land as an inheritance, because I have given Moab and its capital district, Ar,'<sup>97</sup> to the descendants of Lot as a temporary inheritance from Abraham.** This consideration is Lot's second reward for having gone along with Abraham's pretense to the Egyptians that Sarah was his sister rather than his wife<sup>98</sup> (the first being Lot's rescue from the destruction of the Cities of the Plain<sup>99</sup>). You may, however, frighten, raid, and plunder them, because they continue to imitate the immodesty and immorality of their ancestress, Lot's elder daughter.<sup>100</sup>

---

### ∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

---

4-5, 9, 19 **Take great care that you not provoke them:** In God's original pact with Abraham (the Covenant between the Halves), He promised to give his descendents the land occupied by ten nations: the Kenites, the Kenizites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.<sup>101</sup> But God did not allow the Jewish people

to conquer the first three lands (later occupied by Ammon, Moab, and Edom, respectively) the first time they entered the land, in the days of Moses and Joshua. Only in the messianic future will "Edom and Moab be subject to them and the children of Ammon obey them."<sup>102</sup>

As has been explained,<sup>103</sup> the reason for this is because these ten nations embodied the three

<sup>95</sup>. Numbers 20:14-21. <sup>96</sup>. Numbers 20:13. <sup>97</sup>. Numbers 21:15, 28. <sup>98</sup>. Genesis 12:16. <sup>99</sup>. Genesis 19:29. <sup>100</sup>. Numbers 20:21; Genesis 19:30-38; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 14, p. 5. <sup>101</sup>. Genesis 15:19-21. <sup>102</sup>. Isaiah 11:14. <sup>103</sup>. On Genesis 15:21.

## ONKELOS

10 אימתני מלךדמין יתיבו בה עם  
רב וסגי ותקוף בגבראי: 11 גבראי  
מתחשבין אף אנון בגבראי  
ומואבאי קרן להון אימתני:  
12 ובשעיר יתיבו חוראי מלךדמין  
ובני עשו תרכנון ושיציאנון  
מקדמיהון ויתיבו באתריהון כמא  
די עבד ישראל לארע ירתתה  
דיהב יי להון: 13 כען קומו ועברו  
לכון ית נחלא דורר ועברנא ית  
נחלא דורר: 14 ויומא די הליכנא  
מקם גיאה עד די עברנא ית  
נחלא דורר תלתין ותמני שנין עד  
דסוף כל דרא גברי מגיחי קרבא  
מגו משריתא כמא די קיים יי  
להון: 15 ואף מחא מן קדם יי הות  
בהון לשציותהון מגו משריתא  
עד דשלימו: 16 והנה כד שלימו  
כל גברי מגיחי קרבא לממת מגו  
עמא: 17 ומליל יי עמי למימר:  
18 את עבר יומא דין ית תחום  
מואב ית לחית:

10 האמים לפנים ישבו בה עם גדול ורב ורם בענקים:  
11 רפאים יחשבו אפהם בענקים והמאבים יקראו  
להם אמים: 12 ובשעיר ישבו החרים לפנים ובני עשו  
יירשום וישמידום מפניהם וישבו תחתם כאשר עשה  
ישראל לארץ ירשתו אשר נתן יהוה להם: 13 עתה  
קמו ועברו לכם את-נחל זרד ונעבר את-נחל זרד:  
14 והמים אשר-הלכנו מן-השנה עד אשר-עברנו  
את-נחל זרד שלשים ושמנה שנה עד-תם כל-הדור  
אנשי המלחמה מקרב המחנה כאשר נשבע יהוה  
להם: 15 וגם יד-יהוה היתה פם להם מקרב המחנה  
עד תמם: 16 ויהי כאשר-תמו כל-אנשי המלחמה  
למות מקרב העם: 17 וידבר יהוה אלי לאמר: 18 אתה עבר היום את-  
גבול מואב את-ער:

## RASHI

בם. למחר ולהקם בתוך ארבעים שנה, שלא יגרמו  
לבניהם עוד להתעבב במדבר: 16-17 ויהי כאשר  
תמו וגו'. וידבר ה' אלי וגו'. אבל משלוח המרגלים  
עד כאן לא נאמר בפירוש ו' וידבר', אלא 'ויאמר',  
ללמדך שכל שלשים ושמנה שנה שהיו ישראל  
נוזפים לא נתיחד עמו הדבור בלשון חבה, פנים  
אל פנים וישוב הדעת, ללמדך שאין השכינה שורה  
על הנביאים אלא בשביל ישראל: אנשי המלחמה.  
מפן עשרים שנה היוצאים בצבא: 18-19 אתה  
עבר היום את גבול מואב וגו' וקרבת מול בני עמון.  
מכאן שארץ עמון לצד צפון:

10 האמים לפנים וגו'. אתה סבור שזו ארץ רפאים  
שנתתי לו לאברהם, לפי שהאמים — שהם רפאים  
— ישבו בה לפנים, אבל לא זו היא, כי אותן רפאים  
הורשתי מפני בני לוט והושבתים תחתם: 11 רפאים  
יחשבו וגו'. רפאים היו נחשבים אותם אמים,  
"בענקים" הנקראים רפאים, על שם שכל הרוצה  
אותם ידיו מתרפות: אמים. על שם שאימתם מטלת  
על הבריות. וכן: "ובשעיר ישבו החרים", ונתתם  
לכני עשו: 12 יירשום. לשון הנה, כלומר נתתי  
בהם כח שהיו מורשים אותם והולכים: 15 היתה

43. פסוק יב.

## CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

Nonetheless, as we approach the advent of the mes-  
sianic era and the light of the future begins to shine,  
we can "taste" the future order through studying  
the teachings of Chasidism in depth. These teach-

ings tap the supra-conscious aspects of our souls;  
through studying them, we can indeed begin to rec-  
tify the intellect as well as the emotions.<sup>110</sup>

## A CLOSER LOOK

[16-17] **Detachedly...amicably:** The difference  
between these two is indicated by the exclusive  
use of the root אמר in all references to God ad-

ressing Moses from the beginning of the Book  
of Deuteronomy until this point,<sup>111</sup> and the  
abrupt switch to the root דבר in this verse.<sup>112</sup>

110. Ma'amarei Admor HaEmtza'i, Devarim, vol. 1, p. 1 ff; Sefer HaSichot 5750, vol. 2, pp. 547-548; Sefer HaMa'amarim 5741, pp. 86-90.

111. 1:42, 2:2, and 2:9. 112. Rashi.

**10 The Eimim<sup>104</sup> formerly dwelt there**—in the territory presently occupied by Moab. They were a **people as great, numerous, and tall** in stature **as the giants** who lived before the Flood.

**11** Even though the Eimim were not technically part of the Rephaim, **they were nonetheless termed Rephaim**, because whoever saw them became enfeebled [*rafeh*] out of fear, **just as the giants** who descended from those who had lived before the Flood were termed Rephaim because whoever saw them also became enfeebled out of fear. Similarly, **the Moabites called** these former inhabitants of their land **Eimim** [from *eimah*, “terror”] for that very reason. So you might think that this territory is that of the Rephaim, one of the seven nations you are intended to drive out as part of your conquest of the Land of Israel.<sup>105</sup> But since the Eimim were not really Rephaim, their territory is not considered that of the Rephaim; and in any case, I have given this territory to the Moabites.

**12** The status of the land of Moab is thus similar to that of Mount Seir. **The Horites formerly dwelt on Mount Seir**, and when they did, you could have conquered it. **But the descendants of Esau gradually dispossessed them. They eventually destroyed them and settled in their place, just as you, the Israelites, recently did to the land of your inheritance that God gave you**, when you conquered Sichon and Og.<sup>106</sup> **Since I gave this territory to the Edomites, you may no longer conquer it.**<sup>107</sup>

**13 Now arise and cross the Zered brook.’ So we crossed the Zered brook.**

**14 The time we spent traveling** once we departed from Ritmah, across the border from Kadesh Barnea, **until we crossed the Zered brook was 38 years.** We had to delay our approach to the Promised Land **until the entire generation of men** old enough to go to war<sup>108</sup> **finished** being removed from the camp by dying out, **just as God swore to them** that they would.

**15** Some of them died a natural death, but in addition, **God intervened directly with those of them** who did not **in order to wipe them out** prematurely **from the camp, until they all finished** dying in this relatively short period of time, allowing you to proceed toward the Promised Land.

**16** Although God continued to communicate with me during these 38 years, He did so detachedly. **It was only when all those men** old enough to go to war **finished dying** and were thus removed from the people

**17 that God** once again **spoke to me** amicably, **saying,**<sup>109</sup>

**18 ‘Today you are crossing** the Arnon River, which, further west, is **the northern boundary of Moab** and its capital district, **Ar.**

---

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

---

desired emotional response. If we do this consistently, we will eventually have trained ourselves to love and fear that which it is proper for us to love and fear. This is using the intellect to rectify the emotions.

The condition of exile, however, is that no such avenue exists for us to influence the functioning of our intellect. The intellect is governed by the supra-

intellect—the supra-conscious aspects of our personalities—and the tools to harness this aspect of ourselves have not yet become completely available to us. Therefore, we were only allowed to conquer the seven nations that embody the seven emotions; the three nations that embody the three facets of the intellect remain beyond our control until the messianic era.

---

<sup>104</sup>. Genesis 14:5. <sup>105</sup>. Genesis 15:20. <sup>106</sup>. Chizkuni. <sup>107</sup>. Above, v. 5. <sup>108</sup>. Rashi on v. 16, below. <sup>109</sup>. Numbers 21:12.



— ONKELOS —

19 וְתִקְרַב לְקַבֵּל בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן לֹא תִצּוּר  
עֲלֵיהֶן וְלֹא תִתְּנֶנּוּ לְמַעַבְד עַמּוֹן  
קָרֵב אֲרִי לֹא אֶתֶן מֵאֶרֶץ בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן  
לָךְ יִהְיֶה אֲרִי לְבְנֵי לוֹט יִהְיֶה  
יִרְתָּא: 20 אֶרֶץ גְּבֻרָא מִתְחַשְׁבָּא  
אִף הִיא גְבֻרָא יִתְּבוּ בֶה מְלָקְדָּמִין  
וְעַמּוֹנָא קָרוּ לְהוֹן חֲשֻבָּנִי: 21 עִם  
רַב וְסָגִי וְתִקְיָה כְּגֻבְרָא וְשִׁיבָנוּ  
יִי מְקַדְמִיהוֹן וְתִרְכָּנוּ וְיִתְּבוּ  
בְּאַתְרֵיהוֹן: 22 כְּמָא דִּי עֲבַד לְבְנֵי  
עֲשׂוֹ דִּיתְבִּין בְּשַׁעִיר דִּי שִׁיזִי יִתְּ  
חוּרָא מְקַדְמִיהוֹן וְתִרְכָּנוּ וְיִתְּבוּ  
בְּאַתְרֵיהוֹן עַד יוֹמָא הַדִּין: 23 וְנָאִי  
דִּיתְבִּין בְּדַפִּיחַ עַד עֲזָה קְפוּטָקָא  
דִּנְקָסוּ מִקְפוּטָקָא שִׁיזִיבָנוּ וְיִתְּבוּ  
בְּאַתְרֵיהוֹן: 24 קוּמוּ טוּלוּ וְעִבְרוּ  
יִתְּ נַחֲלָא דְאַרְנוֹן חַיִּי דְמִסְרִית בִּידָךְ  
יִתְּ סִיחֹן מְלָכָא דְחֻשְׁבוֹן אֲמוֹרָא  
וְיִתְּ אֶרֶץ שָׂרִי לְתִרְכּוּתָהּ וְאַתְּ  
לְמַעַבְד עִמָּה קָרְבָּא: 25 יוֹמָא הַדִּין  
אֲשֶׁרִי לְמַתָּן זַעְתָּךְ וְדַחֲלָתָךְ עַל  
אִפִּי עִמָּמָא דִּי תַחוּת כָּל שְׁמַיָּא דִּי  
יִשְׁמַעוּן שְׁמַעְךָ וְיִזְעוּן וְיִדְחִלוּן מִן  
קִדְמָךְ: 26 וְשַׁלְחִית אֲנִי מִמֶּדְבָּר  
קִדְמוֹת לֹת סִיחֹן מְלָכָא דְחֻשְׁבוֹן  
פְּתֻגְמֵי שְׁלָמָא לְמִימָר:

19 וְתִקְרַבְתָּ מִוֶּלַד בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן אֶל־תִּצְוֶרָם וְאֶל־תִּתְּנֶנּוּ בָּם  
כִּי לֹא־אֶתֶן מֵאֶרֶץ בְּנֵי־עַמּוֹן לָךְ יִרְשָׁה כִּי לְבְנֵי־לוֹט  
נִתְּתִיהָ יִרְשָׁה: 20 אֶרֶץ־רַפָּאִים תִּחְשַׁב אֶת־הָהּוּא רַפָּאִים  
יִשְׁבֹּרְבָהּ לְפָנִים וְהַעֲמִיזוּם יִקְרָאוּ לָהֶם וְזֻמָּיִם: 21 עִם  
גָּדוֹל וְרַב וְרַם כְּעִנְקָיִם וַיִּשְׁמִידֵם יְהוָה מִפְּנֵיהֶם וַיִּירָשֵׁם  
וַיִּשְׁבּוּ תַחְתָּם: 22 כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְבְנֵי עֲשׂוֹ הַיִּשְׁבִּים  
בְּשַׁעִיר אֲשֶׁר הִשְׁמִיד אֶת־הַחֹרִי מִפְּנֵיהֶם וַיִּירָשֵׁם וַיִּשְׁבּוּ  
תַחְתָּם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: 23 וְהָעַיִים הַיִּשְׁבִּים בְּחֻצֵּי־רֵם  
עַד־עֲזָה כְּפִתְרִים הַיִּצְאִים מִכְּפֹתֵי הַשְּׁמִידִם וַיִּשְׁבּוּ  
תַחְתָּם: 24 קוּמוּ סַעוּ וְעִבְרוּ אֶת־נַחֲלֵ אֲרָנוֹן רְאֵה נִתְּתִי  
בְּיָדְךָ אֶת־סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ־חֻשְׁבוֹן הָאֹמִרִי וְאֶת־אֶרְצוֹ הַחֹל  
רֶשֶׁת וְהַתְּנָה בּוֹ מִלְחָמָה: 25 הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אֶחָל־תֵּת פְּתִיחָךְ  
וַיִּרְאֶתְךָ עַל־פְּנֵי הָעַמִּים תַּחַת כָּל־הַשְּׁמַיִם אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁמַעוּן  
שְׁמֶעְךָ וְרָגְזוּ וַחֲלוּ מִפְּנֵיךָ: 26 וַאֲשַׁלַּח מִלְאָכִים מִמֶּדְבָּר  
קִדְמוֹת אֶל־סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ חֻשְׁבוֹן דְּבַרִי שְׁלוֹם לֵאמֹר:

— RASHI —

הַדְּבָר תַּחַת כָּל הַשְּׁמַיִם: 26 מִמֶּדְבָּר קִדְמוֹת. אִף עַל  
פִּי שְׁלֹא צוּנִי הַמָּקוֹם לִקְרֹא לְסִיחֹן לְשָׁלוֹם, לְמַדְתִּי  
מִמֶּדְבָּר סִינִי מִן הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁקִּדְמָה לְעוֹלָם, בְּשָׂפָא  
הַקְּדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְתַנּוּה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל חֹזֵר אוֹתָהּ עַל  
עֲשׂוֹ וַיִּשְׁמַעֲאֵל, וְגַלְוִי לְפָנָיו שְׁלֹא יִקְבְּלוּהָ, וְאִף עַל  
פִּי כֵן פִּתַּח לָהֶם בְּשָׁלוֹם, אִף אֲנִי קִדְמִיתִי אֶת סִיחֹן  
בְּדְבָרֵי שְׁלוֹם. דְּבָר אַחֵר: "מִמֶּדְבָּר קִדְמוֹת", מִמָּוֶה  
לְמַדְתִּי שֶׁקִּדְמָתָ לְעוֹלָם, יָכוֹל הָיִיתָ לְשַׁלַּח בְּרֶק אַחֲד  
וְלִשְׁרֹף אֶת הַמִּצְרִיִּים, אֲלֵא שֶׁלַּחְתִּנִּי מִן הַמֶּדְבָּר אֶל  
פְּרַעֲזָה לֵאמֹר: "שַׁלַּח אֶת עַמִּי", בְּמַתָּן:

20 אֶרֶץ רַפָּאִים תִּחְשַׁב. אֶרֶץ רַפָּאִים נִחְשַׁבְתָּ אִף  
הִיא, לְפִי שֶׁהַרַפָּאִים יִשְׁבּוּ בֶה לְפָנִים, אָבָל לֹא זֶה  
הִיא שְׁנִתְּתִי לְאַבְרָהָם: 23 וְהָעַיִים הַיִּשְׁבִּים בְּחֻצֵּי־רֵם  
וְגו'. עַיִים מִפְּלִשְׁתִּים הֵם, שֶׁעֲמָהֶם הֵם נִחְשָׁבִים  
בְּסִפְרֵי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "חֲמֶשֶׁת סָרְנֵי פְּלִשְׁתִּים  
הָעֻזִּי וְהָאִשְׁדּוּדִי הָאֲשַׁקְלוּנִי הִגִּיתִי וְהָעֻקְרוּנִי  
וְהָעַיִים", וּמִפְּנֵי הַשְּׁבוּעָה שֶׁנִּשְׁבַּע אֲבָרָהָם לְאַבְרָמָלָךְ  
לֹא יִכְלוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהוֹצִיא אֶרֶץ מִיָּדָם, וְהַבֹּאֲתִי  
עֲלֵיהֶם כְּפִתּוּרִים וְהַשְׁמִידוֹם וְיִשְׁבּוּ תַחְתָּם, וְעַכְשָׁיו  
אֲתָם מִתְּרִים לְקַחְתָּם מִיָּדָם: 25 תַּחַת כָּל הַשְּׁמַיִם.  
לְמַד שֶׁעֲמָדָה חֲמָה לְמוֹשֶׁה בְּיוֹם מִלְחָמַת עוֹג, וְנוֹדַע

44. יְהוֹשֻׁעַ יג, ג.

I also was following the example God set when He sent me **from the desert** to make peaceful overtures to Pharaoh, even though, as the omnipotent creator who existed **prior** to creation, God could have easily and instantaneously annihilated the Egyptians. Similarly, although I knew that with God's assistance we could easily overcome Sichon, I still made peaceful overtures to him.

So I sent messengers to Sichon, king of Cheshbon, with words of peace, saying,

**19 When you approach the area opposite the Ammonites, neither distress them, nor provoke them** in any fashion, **for I will not give you any part of the land of the Ammonites as an inheritance, because I have already given it to them—the descendants of Lot—as a temporary inheritance** from Abraham, for the same reason that I have given Moab to the Moabites.<sup>113</sup> Unlike the way I allowed you to vex the Moabites, however, you must not frighten, raid, or plunder the Ammonites, because their ancestress (Lot's younger daughter), was not as immodest and immoral as was the Moabites' ancestress (Lot's elder daughter), and thus, in imitating her, the Ammonites did not behave as immorally as the Moabites.<sup>114</sup>

**20 Ammon, too, is considered land of the Rephaim, because the Zuzim<sup>115</sup>—a people who were also termed Rephaim—formerly dwelt in it; the Ammonites call them Zamzumim.**

**21 The Zuzim were a people as great, numerous, and tall as the giants who lived before the Flood, but God destroyed them,** and thus the Ammonites **dispossessed them and settled there in their stead,**

**22 just as He did for the descendants of Esau, who dwell on Mount Seir, when He destroyed the Horites and they thus dispossessed them and settled there in their stead,** living there **to this day.** In both cases, that of the Horites and the Zuzim, the presence of the present inhabitants of the land render it off-limits to you.

**23 The opposite phenomenon occurred with the coastal area on the western border of the Promised Land: The Avim were the dwellers in open cities throughout this area from the southern border northward until Gaza.** They are part of the Philistines,<sup>116</sup> with whom Abraham made a pact<sup>117</sup> that should have prevented you from conquering their territory. **The Kaftorites, however, who hail from Kaftor, destroyed the Avim and dwelt there in their stead.** Since there is no pact with the Kaftorites, you are now permitted to conquer this territory.

**24 In any case, not all the land north of the Arnon River is off limits to you; Sichon the Amorite has conquered much of it from Ammon and Moab.<sup>118</sup> Therefore, arise, journey, and cross the Arnon River. Behold, I have delivered Sichon the Amorite, king of Cheshbon, and his land into your hand. Begin to take possession of it, and provoke him to war.<sup>119</sup>**

**25 Today I will begin to place the dread of you and the fear of you upon all the nations that dwell under the entire heaven—that is, upon all the nations of the earth<sup>120</sup>—who will hear reports of you and tremble and be in trepidation because of you.'**

**26 Although God did not explicitly command me to offer Sichon the option of peaceful coexistence, I nonetheless did so,<sup>121</sup> even though it was obvious that Sichon would reject my offer. I was in fact following the example God set in the Sinai desert, when He offered the Torah (which existed prior to the creation of the world and thus should logically have been the law for all people) to the descendants of Ishmael and Edom,<sup>122</sup> even though He knew in advance that they would reject His offer.**

113. Above, v. 9. 114. Numbers 21:12; Genesis 19:30-38; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 14, p. 5. 115. Rashi on Genesis 14:5. 116. Joshua 13:3. 117. Genesis 21:24. 118. Numbers 21:26. 119. Numbers 21:21-31. 120. *Hitva'aduyot* 5745, vol. 5, p. 3031. 121. See below, 20:18. 122. Exodus 19:1.

ONKELOS

27 אַעבר בארעך בארעך בארעך אַזל לא אַסטי לימנא ולשמאלא:  
28 עבדא בכספא תזבן לי ואיכול  
ומנא בכספא תתן לי ואשתי  
לחוד אעבר ברגלי: 29 כמא די  
עבדו לי בני עשו דיתבין בשעיר  
ומואבאי דיתבין בלחית עד  
דאעבר ית ירדנא לארעא דיי  
אלהנא יזב לנא: 30 ולא אבא  
סיחון מלכא דחשבון למשבקנא  
למעבר בתחומא ארי אקשי יי  
אלהך ית רוחה ותקף ית לבא  
בדיל לממסרה בידך בימנא  
הדין: 31 ואמר יי לי חזי שריתי  
לממסר קדמך ית סיחון וית ארעה  
שרי לתרבותה למירת ית ארעה:  
32 ונפק סיחון לקדמותנא הוא  
וכל עמא לאנחא קרבא ליהין:  
33 ומסרה יי אלהנא קדמנא  
ומחיא יתה וית בנודי וית כל  
עמא: 34 וכבשנא ית כל קרווהי  
בעדנא ההיא וגמנא ית כל קרוי  
גבריא ונשיא וטפלא לא אשאנא  
משיוב: 35 לחוד בעירא בנא לנא  
ועדי קרויא די כבשנא: 36 מערער  
די על ביה נחלא דארנן וקרמא די  
בנחלא ועד גלעד לא הות קרמא  
די תקיפת מנא ית כלא מסר יי  
אלהנא קדמנא: 37 לחוד לארע  
בני עמון לא קריבת כל ביה נחל  
יובקא וקרוי טורא וכל די פקיד יי  
אלהנא:

27 אַעבר בארעך בארעך בארעך אַזל לא אַסור ימין  
וישמאל: 28 אַכל בכסף תשברני ואכלתי ומים בכסף  
תתן לי ושתיתי רק אַעבר ברגלי: 29 כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשׂוֹ לִי  
בְּנֵי עֵשָׂו הַיֹּשְׁבִים בְּשֵׁעִיר וְהַמּוֹאָבִים הַיֹּשְׁבִים בְּעֵר עַד  
אֲשֶׁר־אָעֲבֹר אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ  
נָתַן לָנוּ: 30 וְלֹא אָבָה סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ חֲשַׁבּוֹן הָעֲבָרָנוּ בּוֹ כִּי־  
הִקְשָׁה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶת־רוּחוֹ וְאִמְצָן אֶת־לִבָּבוֹ לְמַעַן  
תִּתְּנוּ בְּיָדְךָ בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה: 8

ששי 31 ויאמר יהוה אלי ראה החלתי תת לפניהך  
את־סיחון ואת־ארצו החל רש לרשת את־ארצו:  
32 ויצא סיחון לקראתנו הוא וכל־עמו למלחמה יהצה:  
33 ויתנחו יהוה אלהינו לפנינו ונדה אותו ואת־בנו (בנינו)  
ואת־כל־עמו: 34 ונלכד את־כל־עריו בעת ההוא  
ונחרם את־כל־עיר מתם והנשים והטף לא השארנו  
שריד: 35 רק הבחמנו בזוננו לנו ושלל הערים אשר  
לכדנו: 36 מערער אשר על־שפת־נחל ארנן והעיר  
אשר בנחל ועד־הגלעד לא היתה קריה אשר שגבה  
ממנו את־הכל נתן יהוה אלהינו לפנינו: 37 רק אל־  
ארץ בני־עמון לא קרבת כל־יד נחל יבק וערי החר וכל  
אשר־צוה יהוה אלהינו:

RASHI

כמותו: 34 מתם. אגשים. בכות סיחון נאמר: "בזוננו  
לנו", לשון בזה, שהיתה חביבה עליהם ובזוננים איש  
לו, וכשבאו לבזות עוג כבר היו שבעים ומלאים,  
והיתה בזויה בעיניהם ומקרעין ומשליכין בהמה  
ובגדים, ולא נטלו כי אם כסף וזהב, לכה נאמר:  
"בזוננו לנו", לשון בזיון. כה נדרש בספרי בפרשת  
"וישב ישראל בשטים": 37 כל יד נחל יבק, כל אצל  
נחל יבק: וכל אשר צוה ה' אלהינו. שלא לכבש, הנחשו:

29 כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשׂוֹ לִי בְּנֵי עֵשָׂו. לא לענין לעבר את  
ארצם, אלא לענין מכר אכל ומים: עד אשר אעבר את  
הַיַּרְדֵּן. מוסב על "אעברה בארעך": 31 החלתי תת  
לפניהך. כפה שר של אמוריים של מעלה תחת רגליו  
של משה, והדריכו על צוארו: 32 ויצא סיחון. לא  
שלח בשביל עוג לעזור לו, ללמדך שלא היו צריכין  
זה לזה: 33 ואת בנו. "בנו" כתיב, שהיה לו בן גבור

45. פסוק לה. 46. דברים ג, ו. 47. במדבר כה, א.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

people could achieve could not compare to that of  
the Israelites. The Israelites were therefore able to  
overcome even these special, communal cities.

We see here the tremendous power inherent in Jew-

ish unity and the need to foster it to the greatest  
extent possible, especially since, as we know,<sup>125</sup> our  
present exile is a result of baseless hatred and dis-  
unity among the Jewish people.<sup>126</sup>

125. Yoma 9b. 126. Likutei Sichot, vol. 29, pp. 1-8.



**27** ‘Allow me to pass through your land. I will keep to the highway; I will turn neither to the right nor to the left.

**28** You will sell me food in exchange for money, that I may eat; and you will give me water in exchange for money, that I may drink—I will only pass through on foot.

**29** Sell me food and drink, just as the descendants of Esau (who dwell on Mount Seir) and the Moabites (who dwell in Ar) did for me, until I cross the Jordan River into the land that God, our God, is giving us.’

**30** But Sichon, king of Cheshbon, did not wish to let us pass by him, for God, your God, caused his spirit to be hardened and his heart to be obstinate, so that He could give him into your hand and you could thereby possess his land, as you do this day.

◆ *Sixth Reading* **31** God then subjugated the Amorites’ guardian angel to me, and God said to me, ‘Behold, in this way I have begun to deliver Sichon and his land before you. Begin to take possession of it, so that you may possess his land.’

**32** Then Sichon went forth towards us. He did not summon his northern confederate, Og, because he was confident of his ability to defeat us on his own; only he and all his people went to war against us at Yahatz.

**33** But God, our God, delivered him to us, and we smote him, his sons—including his one son who was as mighty as he was—and all his people. The sun miraculously stood still for us in this battle.<sup>123</sup>

**34** We conquered all his cities at that time and utterly destroyed every city: men, women, and young children; we left no survivor.

**35** We took only the cattle as pillage for ourselves, along with the spoils of the cities that we had taken. The spoils taken in this battle more than sufficed for whatever material wealth we could need.

**36** From the southern border of this territory, i.e., Aroer, which is on the edge of the Arnon gorge, and the city that is in the gorge, until its northern border, Gilead, there was not even one communal city that was too strong for us: God, our God, gave all of it to us.

**37** The only place you did not approach was the land of the Ammonites, namely: all the Ammonite area south of the Yabok River, the Ammonite cities of the hill country, and wherever else God, our God, commanded us not to conquer.

---

∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

---

**36 (& 3:4)** There was not even one communal city: The difference between a “regular city” (*ir*) and a “communal city” (*kiryah*) is that the inhabitants of the latter have united in some common bond, and thus act more as a more cohesive unit than do the inhabitants of a typical city.

As was seen in the episode of the Tower of Babel,<sup>124</sup> the merit of societal unity protects a society from danger—even from Divine retribution. Sichon and Og were aware of this protection afforded by so-

cietal unity and therefore took pains to galvanize the inhabitants of their cities against the threat of Israelite invasion.

Nonetheless, a society’s ability to achieve unity is limited to the extent to which its individual members can negate their egos and submit to a common goal. Inasmuch as the Jewish people are expected—and are therefore given the ability—to surrender themselves totally to their Divine mission, whereas non-Jews are not, the unity that Sichon and Og’s

<sup>123</sup> Rashi on v. 25, above. <sup>124</sup> Genesis 11:1-9; Inner Dimensions on Genesis 11:4 and A Closer Look on Genesis 11:9.

## ONKELOS

3:1 וַיִּנָּחֵם וַיַּעַל הָרֹדֶף הַבֶּשֶׁן וַיֵּצֵא עֹגֹ מִלֶּדֶת הַבֶּשֶׁן לְקִרְאָתָנוּ  
 הוּא וְכָל-עַמּוֹ לַמִּלְחָמָה אֲדָרְעִי: 2 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלֵי אֶל-  
 תִּירָא אֹתוֹ כִּי בִידֶךָ נִתַּתִּי אֹתוֹ וְאֶת-כָּל-עַמּוֹ וְאֶת-אֲרָצוֹ  
 וְעִשִׂיתָ לוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ לְסִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר יוֹשֵׁב  
 בְּחִשְׁבוֹן: 3 וַיִּתֵּן יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּיָדֵנוּ גַם אֶת-עֹג מֶלֶךְ-  
 הַבֶּשֶׁן וְאֶת-כָּל-עַמּוֹ וַנִּפְּחֵהוּ עַד-בִּלְתִּי הִשְׁאִיר-לוֹ שְׂרִיד:  
 4 וַנִּלְכֹּד אֶת-כָּל-עָרָיו בָּעֵת הַהוּא לֹא הָיְתָה קִרְיָה אֲשֶׁר  
 לֹא-לָקַחְנוּ מֵאֵתָם שְׂשִׁים עִיר כָּל-חֶבְל אֲרָגָב מִמַּלְכֹת  
 עֹג בְּבֶשֶׁן: 5 כָּל-אֱלֹהֵי עָרִים בְּצִרְתָּ חוֹמָה גְּבוּהָ דִלְתֵּים  
 וּבְרִיחַ לְבֹד מַעְרֵי הַפְּרֹזִי הִרְבֵּה מְאֹד: 6 וַנַּחֲרֵם אוֹתָם  
 כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂינוּ לְסִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ חִשְׁבוֹן הַחֵרֶם כָּל-עִיר מִתָּם  
 הַנִּשְׁשִׁים וְהַטָּרָה: 7 וְכָל-הַבְּהֵמָה וּשְׁלָל הָעָרִים בְּזוֹנוֹ לָנוּ:  
 8 וַנִּקָּח בָּעֵת הַהוּא אֶת-הָאָרֶץ מִיַּד שְׁנֵי מַלְכֵי הָאֱמֹרִי  
 אֲשֶׁר בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן מִנַּחֲל אֲרָנָן עַד-הַר הָרָמוֹן: 9 צִידֵינִים  
 יִקְרָאוּ לְחֵרְמוֹן שְׂרָן וְהָאֱמֹרִי יִקְרָאוּ-לוֹ שְׁנִיר:

## RASHI

רַמְלִיָּהוּ לְפַקְחִיהָ בֶּן מִנְחֵם, לְמִדְתִּי שֶׁכָּךְ נִקְרָא שֵׁם  
 הַהֶפְרָכִיָּא: 5 מַעְרֵי הַפְּרֹזִי. פְּרוּזוֹת וּפְתוּחוֹת בְּלֹא  
 חוֹמָה, וְכֵן: "פְּרוּזוֹת תִּשְׁבּוּ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם": 6 הַחֵרֶם. לְשׁוֹן  
 הוּא — הַלּוֹךְ וְכֵלֹאת: 8 מִיָּד. מִרְשׁוֹת: 9 צִידֵינִים  
 יִקְרָאוּ לְחֵרְמוֹן וְגו'. וּבִמְקוֹם אַחֵר<sup>51</sup> הוּא אוֹמֵר: "וְעַד  
 הַר שִׁיאֵן הוּא חֵרְמוֹן", הָרִי לוֹ אֲרָבָעָה שְׁמוֹת. לָמָּה  
 הֶעֱרַכּוּ לְכַתֵּב? לְהַגִּיד שֶׁבַח אֲרָץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, שֶׁהָיוּ  
 אֲרָבַע מַלְכִּיּוֹת מִתְּפָאֲרוֹת בָּכָךְ, זֶה אוֹמֶרֶת: עַל שְׁמִי  
 יִקְרָא, וְזֶה אוֹמֶרֶת: עַל שְׁמִי יִקְרָא: שְׁנִיר. הוּא שְׁלָל  
 בְּלִשׁוֹן אֲשֶׁכְּנוּ וּבְלִשׁוֹן כְּנַעֲנִי:

## CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

We cannot achieve absolute selflessness on our own, since any level of consciousness we can achieve on our own is our own accomplishment and therefore an expression of our selfhood. Only when graced by a revelatory experience that sweeps us up into transcendent awareness can we lose ourselves completely. All we can achieve on our own is *relative* selflessness, a lesser state of egocentricity than we evinced previously.

Thus, since the holiness of the Land of Israel is intrinsic while that of Transjordan is acquired, it fol-

1 וַיִּנָּחֵם וַיַּעַל. כָּל צֶדֶף פֶּנוֹן הוּא עֲלִיָּה: 2 אֵל תִּירָא אֹתוֹ. וּבִסְיוֹנוֹ לֹא הִצְרֵךְ לִזְמֹר "אֵל תִּירָא אֹתוֹ", אֶלָּא מִתִּירָא הָיָה מִשֶּׁהָ שְׁלָא תַעֲמֹד לוֹ זְכוּת שְׁשִׁמֵּשׁ לְאַבְרָהָם, שְׁנֵאֲמַר<sup>52</sup>: "וַיֵּבֵא הַפְּלִיט" וְהוּא עֹג: 4 חֶבֶל אֲרָגָב. מִתְּרַגְּמִינָן "בֵּית פֶּלֶךְ טְרוֹכֵנָא" וְרִיאִיתִי תְּרַגּוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַיִם בְּמַגְלַת אֶסְתֵּר קוֹרָא לְפִלְטִין "טְרוֹכֵנִין", לְמִדְתִּי "חֶבֶל אֲרָגָב" הַפְּרָכִיָּא, הֵיכַל מֶלֶךְ, כְּלוֹמֵר שֶׁהַמְּלָכוֹת נִקְרָאוֹת עַל שְׁמָהּ, וְכֵן "אֶת הָאֲרָגָב" דְּמַלְכִּים — אֶצֶל הֵיכַל מֶלֶךְ הָרִגּוֹ פֶּקַח בֶּן

48. בְּרַאשִׁית יד, יג. 49. מַלְכִּים ב טו, כח. 50. זְכוּרִיה ב, ח. 51. דְּבָרִים ד, מח.

**3:1** Then we turned and went northward toward Bashan, and Og, king of Bashan, came forth toward us, he and all his people, going to war against us at Edrei.<sup>127</sup>

**2** I was afraid to wage war against Og, for I thought he might be protected by the merit of having helped Abraham.<sup>128</sup> But God said to me, 'Do not fear him, for I have given him, all his people, and his land into your hand, and you will do to him as you did to Sichon, king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Cheshbon.'

**3** Thus God, our God, also delivered Og, king of Bashan, and all his people into our hands. We smote him until no remnant remained of him.

**4** We conquered all his cities at that time. There was not even one communal city that we did not seize from them—sixty cities, including all the territory of Og's royal palace, which all together constituted the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

**5** All these sixty cities were fortified with high walls, double doors, and bolts; nonetheless, we miraculously overcame them. Besides these, we captured a great many unwallled cities.

**6** We utterly destroyed them, as we did to the land of Sichon, king of Cheshbon, utterly destroying every city—the men, the women, and the young children.

**7** But we took all the cattle and the spoils of the cities as pillage for ourselves, even though we had more than enough from the spoils of the battle with Sichon and were thus nauseated by it all.<sup>129</sup>

**8** Thus we took at that time the land out of the hands of the two kings of the Amorites who were on that side of the Jordan, from the brook of Arnon in the south to Mount Hermon in the north.

**9** (The high regard with which the non-Jewish nations held the Land of Israel is exemplified by the fact that each insisted on using their own names for Mount Hermon: some called it 'Mount Sion,'<sup>130</sup> the Sidonians called Mount Hermon 'Mount Sirion,' and the Amorites called it 'Mount Senir [Snow].')

---

∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

---

**4 Including all the territory of Og's royal palace:** In the original account of the conquest of Bashan,<sup>131</sup> the royal palace is not mentioned. Only in the book of Deuteronomy, whose theme is the physical and spiritual transition into the Land of Israel, does this detail become significant. This is because the Land of Israel, relative to the rest of the world, is "the royal palace," i.e., God's home on earth. When the Jewish people conquered this area, they transformed it from the region of the non-Jewish king's palace into part of the palace of the true King, God.

Still, the Talmudic sages differ over whether olive oil from this region—which is considered second in quality only to oil produced in the Tekoa region of the Land of Israel—may be used for the Temple service.<sup>132</sup> According to one opinion, only oil produced in the Land of Israel proper possesses the requisite holiness for use in the Temple. According to the other opinion, the acquired holiness of the parts

of Transjordan that were conquered (and thereby sanctified) by the Jewish people suffices to qualify it for Temple use.

On a deeper level, this discussion concerns the degree to which a person can abnegate his selfhood in the face of God's reality when he is outside the Land of Israel.

Oil allegorically signifies the attribute of selflessness (*bitul*), since it is produced by crushing olives and is consumed in lamps that produce light. Light is necessary for vision, and the soul's inner vision (i.e., perception) is its ability to expand its conceptual horizons by receiving new insight. The prerequisite for new insight (*chochmah*) is selflessness (*bitul*), since a self-satisfied and self-assured individual will not admit that his present way of looking at the world is lacking anything. Thus, just as the consumption of oil antecedes sight, selflessness antecedes insight.

<sup>127</sup>. Numbers 21:33-35. <sup>128</sup>. Genesis 14:13. <sup>129</sup>. Rashi on 2:34, above. <sup>130</sup>. Below, 4:48. <sup>131</sup>. Numbers 21:33-35. <sup>132</sup>. *Menachot* 8:3; see *Torat Levi Yitzchak*, p. 288.

ONKELOS

10 כל קריו מישרא וכל גלעד וכל מתנן עד סלכה ואדרעי קריו מלכותה דעוג במתנן: 11 ארי לחוד עוג מלכא דמתנן אשתאר משאר גבריא הא ערסה ערסא דפרולא הלא היא ברבת בני עמון תשע אמין ארבה וארבע אמין פותיה באמת מלך: 12 וית ארעא הדא וריתנא בעדנא והיא מערער די על נחלא דארנן ופלגות טורא דגלעד וקריותיה יהבית לשבטא דראובן ולשבטא דגד: 13 ושאר גלעד וכל מתנן מלכותה דעוג יהבית לפלגות שבטא דמנשה כל בית פלך טרכונא לכל מתנן ההוא מתקרי ארע גבריא: 14 יאיר בר מנשה נסיב ית כל בית פלך טרכונא עד תחום גשורא ואפקירוס וקרא יתהון על שמה ית מתנן בפרני יאיר עד יומא הדין: 15 ולמכיר יהבית ית גלעד: 16 ולשבטא דראובן ולשבטא דגד יהבית מן גלעד ועד נחלא דארנן גו נחלא ותחומה ועד יובקא דנחלא תחום בני עמון: 17 ומישרא וירדנא ותחומה מגנוסר ועד ימא דמישרא ימא דמלחא תחות משפך מרמתא מדנחא: 18 ופקדית יתכון בעדנא והיא למימר יי אלהכון יהב לכון ית ארעא הדא למירתה מן דין תעברון קדם אחיכון בני ישראל כל מן דין חילא:

10 כל | ערי המישור וכל-הגלעד וכל-הבשן עד-סלכה ואדרעי ערי ממלכת עוג בבשן: 11 כי רקעו מלך הבשן נשאר מיתר הרפאים הנה ערשו ערש ברזל הלה הוא ברבת בני עמון תשע אמות ארפה וארבע אמות רחבה באמת-איש: 12 ואת-הארץ הזאת ירשנו בעת ההוא מערער אשר-על-נחל ארנן וחצי הר-הגלעד ועריו נתתי לראובני ולגדי: 13 ויתר הגלעד וכל-הבשן ממלכת עוג נתתי לחצי שבט המנשה כל חבל הארנב לכל-הבשן ההוא יקרא ארץ רפאים: 14 יאיר בן-מנשה לקח את-כל-חבל ארנב עד-גבול הגשורי והמעבתי ויקרא אתם על-שמו את-הבשן הנות יאיר עד היום הזה:

◆ שביעי 15 ולמכיר נתתי את-הגלעד: 16 ולראובני ולגדי נתתי מן-הגלעד ועד-נחל ארנן תוך הנחל וגבל ועד יבק הנחל גבול בני עמון: 17 והערבה והירדן וגבל מבגרת ועד ים הערבה ים הפלח תחת אשדות הפסגה מזרחה: 18 ואצו אתכם בעת ההוא לאמר יהוה אלהיכם נתן לכם את-הארץ הזאת לרשתה חלוצים תעברו לפני אחיכם בני-ישראל כל-בני-חיל:

RASHI

מפאן: 17 מבגרת. מעבר הירדן המערבי היה, ונחלת בני גד מעבר הירדן המזרחי, ונפל בגורלם רחב הירדן כנגדם ועוד מעבר שפתו עד כנרת, והוא שגאמר: "הירדן וגבול", הירדן ומעבר לו: 18 ואצו אתכם. לבני ראובן ובני גד היה מדבר: לפני אחיכם. הם היו הולכים לפני ישראל למלחמה, לפי שהיו גבורים ואויבים נופלים לפניהם, שגאמר: "וטרף ורוע אף קדקד":

חסלת פרשת דברים

11 מיתר הרפאים. שהרגו אמרפל וחבריו בעשרות קרנים, והוא פלט מן המלחמה, שגאמר: "ויבא הפליט", והו עוג: באמת איש. באמת עוג: 12 ואת הארץ הזאת. האמורה למעלה, "מנחל ארנן עד הר חרמון, ירשנו בעת ההוא": מערער אשר על נחל ארנן. אינו מחבר לראשו של מקרא אלא לסופו, על "נתתי לראובני ולגדי", אבל לענין ירשה עד הר חרמון היה: 13 ההוא יקרא ארץ רפאים. היא אותה שנתתי לאברהם: 16 תוך הנחל וגבל. כל הנחל ועוד מעבר לשפתו, כלומר עד ועד בכלל ויותר

52. בראשית יד, יג. 53. פסוק ח. 54. דברים לג, כ.

their land on the western side of the Jordan River.' At that time, I still hoped that I would lead the people in their conquest of the Land of Israel,<sup>140</sup> and I knew that if I would act as their general, God would come to our aid supernaturally. Of course,

10 The land of Sichon and Og comprised **all the cities of the plain** that Sichon had conquered from Moab, **all of Gilead, and all of Bashan** as far east as **Salchah**, and included **Edrei**, one of the two **royal cities of Og in Bashan**.<sup>134</sup>

11 Og's strength is attested to by the fact **that only Og, king of Bashan, was left from the remnant of the Rephaim**; all the other Rephaim were wiped out by the alliance of Kedorlaomer at Ashterot-Karnaim.<sup>135</sup> Og was so large and heavy that he could not sleep on a wooden bed; **his bed had to be a bed of iron. Is it not preserved in the city of Rabbah of the Ammonites**, so anyone can go see it? **It is nine cubits long and four cubits wide**—measured not according to the standard cubit, i.e., arm's length, in which case it would measure approximately 4.3 meters (14.2 feet) long and 1.9 meters (6.3 feet) wide, which is already quite large—but **according to the cubit of the man** Og himself, whose arm's length was much greater than the standard cubit.

12 I divided **this land, which we took possession of at that time**—having captured it from Sichon and Og—as follows: **I gave the land northward from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Arnon gorge, and half of Mount Gilead and its cities to the tribes of Reuben and Gad.**

13 **I gave the rest of Gilead and all of Bashan**—the latter being **the kingdom of Og**—**to the half-tribe of Manasseh: all the territory of Og's royal palace together with all of Bashan. This**—Bashan—is the land that is called **the land of Rephaim** that God had promised to Abraham.

14 **Yair, the great-grandson of Manasseh**, went and **took all the territory of Og's royal palace**, and conquered additional territory **as far as the boundaries of the Geshurites and the Ma'achatites**. This territory included cities and villages; since Yair was childless, **he called the villages of Bashan after his own name, "the villages of Yair,"** as they are called **to this day**.<sup>136</sup>

◆ *Seventh Reading* 15 **I gave** the part of northern **Gilead** that lies beyond the borders of Og's kingdom **to Machir**, the son of Manasseh, since he, too, conquered this territory on his own initiative.<sup>137</sup>

16 **To the tribes of Reuben and Gad I gave** the part of **Gilead** that lies southward **until the Arnon gorge**, down to **the midst of the gorge and the borderland** on its opposite, southern bank; and northward **until the Yabok River, which is also the northern boundary of the Ammonites,**

17 including **the plain** on the east bank of the Jordan River; **the Jordan River** itself; **the borderland** on its opposite, western bank **from Lake Kinneret** in the north southward **to the sea of the plain—the Sea of Salt**, i.e., the Dead Sea; and the land further southward along **the foot of the waterfalls**<sup>138</sup> descending from **the peak of Mount Nebo**<sup>139</sup> to the **eastern side of the Dead Sea, until the Arnon gorge.**"

18 Moses then addressed the tribes of Reuben and Gad: **"I commanded you at that time saying, 'God, your God, has given you this land to take possession of. But you are not permitted to settle it until you help the other tribes conquer**

134. Above, 1:4. 135. Genesis 14:5. 136. Numbers 32:41. 137. Numbers 32:39-40. 138. Rashi on Joshua 10:40. 139. Deuteronomy 3:27, 34:1; Rashi on Numbers 21:20, 23:14. 140. Numbers 27:12; below, 3:23.

— ONKELOS —

19 לחוד נשיכון וטפלוכו ובעירכו  
ידענא ארי בעיר סגי לבון ייתבון  
בקרויכו די יתבית לבון: 20 עד  
די יניח יי לאחיכו פותכו ויירתון  
אף אנון ית ארעא דיי אלהכו יתב  
להון בעברא דירדנא ותתובון גבר  
לירתתה די יתבית לבון: 21 וית  
יהושוע פקדית בעדנא ההיא  
למימר עיניך חזא ית כל די עבד  
יי אלהכו לתרין מלכיא האלין כן  
יעבד יי לכל מלכותא די את עבר  
לתמן: 22 לא תדחלון מנהון ארי  
יי אלהכו מימרה יגיד לבון:

19 רַק נְשִׁיכֶם וְטַפְכֶם וּמִקְנֵכֶם יִדְעֵתִי כִּי־מִקְנֶה רַב לָכֶם  
יֵשְׁבוּ בְּעָרֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לָכֶם:

◆ מפטיר 20 עַד אֲשֶׁר־יָנִיחַ יְהוָה לְאַחֵיכֶם כָּכֶם וַיִּרְשׁוּ  
גִּם־הֵם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם נָתַן לָהֶם  
בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן וּשְׁבָתָם אִישׁ לִירֻשָּׁתוֹ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לָכֶם:  
21 וְאֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ צִוִּיתִי בָּעֵת הַהִוא לֵאמֹר עֵינֶיךָ הִרְאֵת  
אֶת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם לְשְׁנֵי הַמְּלָכִים הָאֵלֶּה  
כִּן־עָשָׂה יְהוָה לְכָל־הַמְּלָכֹת אֲשֶׁר אִתָּה עִבְרַ שְׁמָה:  
22 לֹא תִירָאוּם כִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הוּא הַנִּלְחָם לָכֶם:

ק"ה פסוקים. מלכיה סימן.



we would still have to make some natural preparation in order to earn this supernatural assistance, but for that purpose it would suffice if you—the tribes gifted with military prowess—would form the front lines of each tribe's division. But now that I know that I will not be leading the people into battle, and that therefore God will be coming to their aid only through natural means, it is necessary for **all of you who are warriors to cross over, armed**, as a separate division **before your brothers, the other Israelites**. True, the tribe of Judah has also been blessed with military prowess, but their blessing is that their enemies will flee before them,<sup>141</sup> and we have been commanded to *kill* every member of the seven nations currently occupying the Land of Israel, not to merely displace them.<sup>142</sup> The tribe of Gad however, has been blessed both not to suffer any military casualties<sup>143</sup> as well as with the ability to kill the enemy with one blow.<sup>144</sup> It is therefore appropriate that they be the ones to lead the people in battle as the initial striking force.<sup>145</sup>

**19 But your wives, your young children, and your cattle—I know that you have a lot of cattle—must dwell in your cities that I have given you**

- ◆ ***Maftir* 20** until God has given rest to your brothers by conquering their enemies, just as He did for you, and until they also take possession of the land that God, your God, is giving them on the other side of the Jordan River, just as you have taken possession of your land on this side. Only then may every man return to his land inheritance, which I have given to you."

21 Once again addressing the entire people, Moses continued: "I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, 'Your have seen with your own eyes all that God, your God, has done to these two kings. So, too, will God do to all the kingdoms through which you will pass.

**22 Do not fear them, for it is God, your God, who is fighting for you.'**"

The *Haftarah* for *parashat Devarim* is on p. 233.



141. Genesis 49:8. 142. Below, 20:16. 143. Genesis 49:19. 144. Below, 33:20. 145. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 9, pp. 1-10.

*Dedicated in honor of our children*

**Nathan, Yitzchok,  
Moshe Lev,  
and Gilana**

*May you continue to grow in the ways  
of our holy Torah*

**Yuri and Deana Pikover**

