TORAH OHR · PARSHAS LECH LECHA · MAAMAR 2

פי' מגן אברהם. דהנה נודע שאברהם הוא...

"I am a shield to you": the meaning of "Shield of Avraham"

◇

Avraham's kindness is boundless, and boundless kindness would give endless life even to evil; the "shield" G-d places over Avraham's kindness measures it, so that the world receives kindness for its good while evil receives only what it needs and can finally be removed.

DEDICATED IN HONOR OF

מוקדש לכבוד הגאון המקובל רבי לוי יצחק שניאורסאהן זצ"ל

Dedicated in honor of the Rebbe's father, Reb Levi Yitzchok

LikuteiTorah.com

THE CHASSIDISHE PARSHA

likuteitorah.com/torah-ohr/lech-lecha/2/

THE BIG IDEA

Avraham's kindness is boundless, and boundless kindness would give endless life even to evil; the "shield" G-d places over Avraham's kindness measures it, so that the world receives kindness for its good while evil receives only what it needs and can finally be removed.

Each section: the Hebrew, then the translation, then a short explanation under a gold rule. Small numbers in the Hebrew are the notes at the end.

THE MAAMAR IN BRIEF

The maamar explains G-d's promise "I am a shield to you" and the blessing "Shield of Avraham." Avraham embodies Chesed without restraint: he sees all as good, and even knowing what Yishmael was, he asked that Yishmael live forever, by limitless kindness. The Sifrei says that Yishmael came forth from Avraham; the maamar explains that he came from the overflow of Avraham's kindness. But such kindness cannot be the world's final order, since the days of Mashiach require that death be swallowed up and impurity removed from the land. So Yitzchak came with judgment; yet harsh judgment produced Eisav, and only Yaakov's balanced bed was complete. A shield is a covering, like the sheath of the sun in "a sun and a shield": it tempers the great light so that it can be borne, until the Time to Come when G-d takes the sun out of its sheath. Every morning Avraham's kindness is aroused, and G-d wishes to lead the world with kindness. Without a shield, that kindness would give the kelipos unlimited life-force, though they are meant to receive only what they need for darkness to be turned into light. So each morning we bless G-d as "Shield of Avraham," asking Him to shield Avraham's kindness for our good.

OUTLINE

1 **Avraham's boundless kindness** ¶1

Avraham is Chesed without restraint; he asked that Yishmael live forever, by kindness without limit, though he knew what Yishmael was.

2 **Why unlimited kindness is not enough** ¶2

Yishmael came from Avraham's excess kindness and Eisav from Yitzchak's harsh judgment; the days of Mashiach require evil to be removed, and only Yaakov's balance was complete.

3 **What a shield is** ¶3

A shield is a covering, like the sheath that makes the sun's light bearable until the Time to Come.

4 **The morning blessing "Shield of Avraham"** ¶4

Each morning Avraham's kindness is aroused; we ask that it be shielded and contracted so the kelipos receive only what they need and evil can be eradicated.

THE MAAMAR IN THE REBBE'S LIGHT

Found by AI reading every place in the Rebbe's works that cites this maamar, checked against each source; not yet reviewed by a person. Each explanation is under its paragraph.

The Rebbe's teachings on this short maamar gather around its opening picture: Avraham's „חסד גדול עד מאד בלי שום מונע" (kindness without limit), which asked that even Yishmael „יחיה לפניך" ("live before You"). In a sicha of Shabbos Toldos 5725 he reads that plea as the Chesed above (חסד שלמעלה) called Gedulah, boundless, and finds in it the source of Yishmael's spread into twelve princes. In two other sichos he tells the plea in two ways and does not reconcile them: on Shabbos Toldos 5728, as this paragraph says, Avraham knew what Yishmael was, and his way of drawing light from above to below was meant to reach even what is "below"; on Shabbos Chayei Sarah 5725, Avraham stood above the world and saw Yishmael from his own height, and it was Sarah who knew what had to be sent away. Perhaps (biur b'derech efshar) the boundless kindness of this paragraph is why the maamar goes on to need a "shield" (מגן): kindness this great reaches everyone, and something must measure it.

KEY CONCEPTS

Chesed (kindness) חסד

Expansive giving without limit, the quality of Avraham, which sees only good and gives even to the unworthy.

Shield (magen) מגן

A covering that screens and tempers; here, the measure placed on Avraham's kindness so that it can be received rightly.

Sheath (nartik) נרתק

The covering of the sun that makes its great light bearable; the Sages say it will be removed in the Time to Come.

Judgment (din) דין

The quality of Yitzchak: restraint and strict measure, the opposite of unlimited kindness.

tzimtzum (contraction) צמצום

Giving in a contracted, measured way, so that the kelipos receive only the life-force they need.

kelipos (the husks) קליפות

The forces of concealment that oppose holiness; they must be sustained for a purpose, the transformation of darkness into light, but not without limit.

SECTION 1 • ¶1

Avraham's boundless kindness

1 (אנכי מגן לך).[1,2] פי' מגן אברהם.[3,4] דהנה נודע שאברהם הוא בחי' חסד גדול עד מאד בלי שום מונע וכולם טובים בעיניו והוא רק טוב

("I am a shield to you.") This means "the Shield of Avraham." For it is known that Avraham is the level of an exceedingly great Chesed (kindness), without any restraint at all; all are good in his eyes, and he is only good.

> G-d's promise to Avram, "I am a shield to you," is the source of the phrase "Shield of Avraham" that closes the first blessing of the Amidah. To understand what the "shield" is, the Alter Rebbe first describes Avraham himself: he embodies Chesed, kindness that flows out with nothing holding it back, seeing only good in everyone because he himself is only good.

ולכן אמר לו ישמעאל יחיה לפניך[5] שפי' שיחיה לעד לפניך שהוא בחי' א"ס בלי גבול ואעפ"י [ואף על פי]

Therefore he said, "O that Yishmael might live before You," which means that he should live forever before You, which is the level of the endless (ein sof), without limit. And even though

> When G-d promised Avraham a son from Sarah, Avraham answered, "O that Yishmael might live before You." In its plain sense he asks that Yishmael go on living before G-d; the Alter Rebbe reads "before You," before the Infinite One, as a request for life without end, an endless, limitless life: the natural wish of boundless kindness.

שהוא יודע מהו ישמעאל[6] אעפ"כ [אף על פי כן] מחמת חסד גדול וטובו הגדול[7] רוצה שיחיה ולא זו בלבד אלא שרצה שיחיה לחסד בלי גבול.[8]

he knows what Yishmael is, nevertheless, because of [his] great kindness and his great goodness, he wants him to live; and not only this, but he wanted him to live by a kindness without limit.

> Avraham was not blind to Yishmael's faults; he knew what Yishmael was. Yet his kindness was so great that he wanted Yishmael to live, and to live not by merit but by kindness that has no limit.

> **THE REBBE ON THIS PARAGRAPH** • AI research, checked against each source; not yet reviewed by a person
>
> **THE REBBE EXPLAINS**
>
> In a sicha of Shabbos Toldos 5728 the Rebbe asks why Yishmael, who did teshuvah in Avraham's lifetime, was still not Avraham's heir, while Eisav, who never did teshuvah, kept the status of "Israel" and inherited, and traces the difference to Avraham's and Yitzchak's ways of service.
>
> The Rebbe explains that Avraham's service is „המשכה מלמעלה למטה" (drawing down from above to below), so his influence reaches even an offspring who is "below," the son of the handmaid who went astray, and moves him to teshuvah. Even as Avraham saw Yishmael, as "below," his task was

to act on him too, until he asked „לו ישמעאל יחי' לפניך" ("O that Yishmael might live before You"); the Rebbe's note sends the reader to this paragraph's words, „ואעפ"י שהוא יודע מהו ישמעאל" ("even though he knows what Yishmael is").

The Alter Rebbe: ואעפ"י שהוא יודע מהו ישמעאל אעפ"כ מחמת חסד גדול וטובו הגדול רוצה שיחיה

The Rebbe: אויך ווי אברהם האָט „געזען" ישמעאל'ן איז ער בבחי' „מטה", און זיין עבודה איז צו פועל זיין אויך אויף אים, ביז ער האָט געבעטן

Likkutei Sichos, vol. טו, p. 196 (note 50) · ש"פ תולדות תשכ"ח

THE REBBE EXPLAINS

In a sicha of Shabbos Toldos 5725 (Likkutei Sichos vol. 5) the Rebbe asks why the verse says both „יצחק בן אברהם" ("Yitzchak son of Avraham") and „אברהם הוליד את יצחק" ("Avraham fathered Yitzchak"), when the earlier parshiyos already tell whose son he was.

The Rebbe answers from Yishmael: his great spread, „שנים עשר נשיאים" (twelve princes), came from Avraham's attribute of Chesed, which made room even for Yishmael and asked „'לו ישמעאל יחי" ("O that Yishmael might live"), and more, „יחי' לפניך" ("live before You"), the Chesed above (חסד שלמעלה), called Gedulah, which is without limit. Avraham's Chesed before his circumcision, he adds, "as explained in Chassidus," was „בדוגמת בחינת גדולה" (like Gedulah), and his note on that sends the reader to this paragraph, which reads "before You" as "forever ... without limit."

The Alter Rebbe: שפי' שיחיה לעד לפניך שהוא בחי' א"ס בלי גבול

The Rebbe: און נאָך מער, יחי' לפניך, חסד שלמעלה (הנקראת גדולה), וואָס זי איז בל"ג

Likkutei Sichos, vol. ה, p. 356-357 (note 23, p. 357) · ש"פ תולדות תשכ"ה

A QUESTION THE REBBE RAISES

In a sicha of Shabbos Chayei Sarah 5725 (Likkutei Sichos vol. 5), explaining why a parsha telling of events after Sarah's passing is named „חיי שרה" ("the life of Sarah"), the Rebbe shows that its three stories came about through Sarah's influence, among them Yishmael's not inheriting with Yitzchak.

Here the Rebbe explains Avraham's plea the other way: Avraham stood above the world, and as he looked at Yishmael from his own level, Yishmael too should „יחי' לפניך" ("live before You"); it was Sarah, the mainstay of the home (עקרת הבית), who knew what had to be sent away. In his note he quotes a maamar (ד"ה ר' בנאה, printed in Or HaTorah, Chayei Sarah): had Avraham known how far Yishmael would go astray he would not have wanted to keep him at all; rather, „הי' סבור שיהי' גם הוא הגון וחשוב, רק לא כיצחק" (he thought Yishmael too would be worthy, only not like Yitzchak). He adds "compare Torah Ohr 12a," this paragraph, which says Avraham knew.

The Alter Rebbe: ואעפ"י שהוא יודע מהו ישמעאל אעפ"כ מחמת חסד גדול וטובו הגדול רוצה שיחיה

The Rebbe: אברהם איז געווען העכער פון וועלט . . ווייל ווי אברהם האָט געקוקט אויף ישמעאל'ן, מצד זיין מדריגה, איז אויך ישמעאל יחי' לפניך

Likkutei Sichos, vol. ה, p. 339-340 (note 28, p. 340) · ש"פ חיי שרה תשכ"ה

SECTION 2 • ¶2

Why unlimited kindness is not enough

2 וזהו דאיתא לא כאברהם שיצא ממנו ישמעאל[9,10] ויצא מחמת רוב חסדו.[11] אבל באמת אין מהראוי כן.

And this is what is taught: "Not like Avraham, from whom Yishmael came forth"; and he came forth because of the abundance of his kindness. But in truth this is not fitting.

> The Sifrei contrasts the patriarchs: from Avraham came Yishmael, and from Yitzchak came Eisav, but all of Yaakov's children were righteous. The Alter Rebbe explains why Yishmael came from Avraham: it was the overflow of his abundant kindness. Yet such limitless kindness, extended even to what is unworthy, is not really how things should be.

דהנה בביאת משיח אי"ה [אם ירצה השם] כתיב בלע המות לנצח.[12] ואת רוח הטומאה אעביר מן הארץ.[13] וצריך לבער כל הרע מן הארץ

For of the coming of Mashiach, G-d willing, it is written, "He will swallow up death forever," and "I will remove the spirit of impurity from the land"; and all the evil must be eradicated from the land.

> The goal of history is the time of Mashiach, when, as the prophets say, death will be swallowed up forever and the spirit of impurity removed from the land. That requires that evil be entirely eradicated, not endlessly sustained.

ואם יתנהג העולם בחסדו הגדול כנ"ל לא היה העולם יכולים לבא למדרגה הנ"ל של משיח.[14]

And if the world were to be conducted by his great kindness, as said above, the world would not be able to come to the aforementioned level of Mashiach.

> If the world ran only on Avraham's unlimited kindness, evil would keep receiving life without end, and the world could never reach the perfection of the days of Mashiach.

ולכן בא יצחק בחי' דין ואף יצחק יצא ממנו עשו מחמת דינו הקשה על חרבך תחיה.[15] אך יעקב היתה מטתו שלימה:

Therefore Yitzchak came, the level of judgment; yet from Yitzchak, too, Eisav came forth, because of his harsh judgment: "By your sword shall you live." But Yaakov's bed was complete.

> So Yitzchak came, embodying din (judgment and restraint), the opposite quality. But judgment alone also produces an imbalance: from Yitzchak came Eisav, whose blessing was "By your sword shall you live," a life of harshness. Only Yaakov, who combines the two qualities, had a "complete bed": all his children were fit and holy.

SECTION 3 • ¶3

What a shield is

3 והנה נודע כי מגן נקי[16] דבר המכסה למשל במלחמה[17] נקי' מגן מה שמכסה בו שלא ישלוט עליו הקשת.[18]

Now, it is known that a shield (magen) is the name for something that covers; for example, in war, what one covers oneself with, so that the bow will not prevail over him, is called a shield.

> Now the Alter Rebbe defines "shield": something that covers. In battle a shield is what a soldier holds over himself so that the enemy's arrows cannot reach him.

והנה כתיב כי שמש ומגן[19] ה' אלקים שכמו שהשמש אם לא היה לו נרתק לא היו יכולים לסבול אורו הגדול והנרתק הוא המגין[20] שנוכל לסבול.

Now it is written, "For a sun and a shield is Havayah Elokim." That is: just as with the sun, if it had no sheath [people] could not bear its great light, and the sheath is what shields, so that we can bear [it].

> The verse pairs "sun" and "shield" with two Names of G-d. The sun's light is so strong that no one could bear it without a covering, a "sheath" that screens it. The sheath is the shield: it does not block the light completely but tempers it so that we can bear it.

וזהו לעתיד לבא הקב"ה[21] מוציא חמה מנרתקה[22] וצדיקים מתהנים בה ורשעים נדונים בה.

And this is [the meaning of the teaching that] in the Time to Come the Holy One, blessed be He, will take the sun out of its sheath, and the righteous will benefit from it and the wicked will be judged by it.

> The Sages teach that in the Time to Come G-d will take the sun out of its sheath: the unscreened light will benefit the righteous and be a judgment for the wicked. This shows what the sheath does now: it makes the great light bearable for everyone.

SECTION 4 • ¶4

The morning blessing "Shield of Avraham"

4 והנה נודע שבכל בוקר דאברהם בחי' חסד מתעורר בעולם[23] וישכם אברהם בבוקר[24] וכדאיתא בזוה"ק [בזוהר הקדוש][25] והקב"ה רוצה להנהיג את העולם בבחי' חסד.

Now, it is known that every morning [the quality] of Avraham, the level of Chesed (kindness), is aroused in the world, [as it is written,] "And Avraham rose early in the morning," and as is taught in the holy Zohar; and the Holy One, blessed be He, wishes to conduct the world with the level of kindness.

> Each morning Avraham's quality, Chesed, is awakened in the world, as the verse "And Avraham rose early in the morning" connects Avraham with the morning. G-d's wish is to run the world with kindness.

אם לא היה מגן לבחי' חסד הנ"ל לצמצם חסדו וטובו ולתת דרך צמצום[26] כמו שצריך רק להחיות הקליפות מפני שצריכין בשביל סטרא דקדושה שיהיה אתהפכא חשוכא לנהורא כידוע.

[But] were there no shield for the aforementioned level of kindness, to contract His kindness and goodness and to give by way of tzimtzum (contraction) just as much as is needed merely to give life to the kelipos (the husks), since they are needed for the sake of the side of holiness, so that there be a transformation of darkness into light, as is known;

> But kindness needs a shield that measures it out. Even the kelipos, the forces that conceal holiness, must receive some life, because holiness needs them: their darkness is meant to be turned into light. The shield ensures they receive only the bare minimum they need, through tzimtzum (contraction).

ואם לא היה דרך צמצום היה חיותם בלי גבול ולא היו יכולים לבער הרע מן הארץ.

and were it not by way of tzimtzum, their life-force would be without limit, and it would not be possible to eradicate the evil from the land.

> Without that contraction, the kelipos would receive unlimited life-force, just as Yishmael would have from Avraham's boundless kindness, and evil could never be eradicated from the world.

ולכן בכל בוקר כשמתעורר מדת אברהם מדת חסד כנ"ל אנו צריכין לברך ברכת מגן אברהם. מגין שיעשה מגין לבחי' אברהם הנ"ל לטובתינו:[27]

Therefore every morning, when the attribute of Avraham, the attribute of kindness, is aroused, as said above, we must recite the blessing "Shield of Avraham": a shield, meaning that He make a shield for the aforementioned level of Avraham, for our good.

> This is the meaning of the blessing "Shield of Avraham" in the morning prayer: as Avraham's kindness wakes each morning, we ask G-d to place a shield over it, measuring the kindness so that it benefits us and does not feed evil without limit.

IN ONE'S AVODAH

Every morning, as Avraham's kindness awakens in the world, the blessing "Shield of Avraham" in prayer asks G-d to shield that kindness, measuring it so that it is for our good and does not give evil unlimited life.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why does the Alter Rebbe read Avraham's plea "O that Yishmael might live before You" as a request for life without limit?
2. If Avraham knew what Yishmael was, why did he still want him to live, and what does that reveal about unlimited kindness?
3. Why does neither pure kindness (Avraham) nor pure judgment (Yitzchak) produce a "complete bed," while Yaakov does?
4. How does the sheath of the sun illustrate a shield that tempers light rather than blocking it?
5. Why must the kelipos receive some life-force at all, and why only as much as they need?

FOR CHILDREN · AGES 9–13

For the children at the table

Shield of Avraham

THE BIG IDEA

Kindness is very great, but it needs a measure, as the sun needs a covering, so that it brings only good.

G-d told Avraham, "I am a shield to you," and every day in the Amidah we call G-d "Shield of Avraham." What does this mean? Avraham's quality is Chesed, kindness. He saw good in everyone, and his kindness had no limits. But kindness with no limit at all is not enough. It would give endless strength even to what is not good, and the world is meant to reach the days of Mashiach, when all that is bad is gone and darkness is turned into light. Strictness alone is not complete either. Only Yaakov's way, a balance of kindness and strictness, was complete. A shield is a covering. The verse says that G-d is "a sun and a shield." Every morning Avraham's kindness wakes up in the world, and G-d wants to lead the world with kindness. So we ask Him to be "Shield of Avraham": to measure that kindness so that it goes to what is good, and so that what is not good receives only what it needs, until it can be removed completely.

THE MASHAL

If the sun had no covering, no one could bear its great light. The covering, like a shield, holds back some of the light so that we can enjoy it. In the Time to Come, G-d will take the sun out of its covering.

QUESTIONS FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE

1. Why does even kindness need a measure?
2. How is the covering of the sun like a shield?
3. When you are kind to someone this week, how can you make sure your kindness really does good?

Explanation © likuteitorah.com, CC BY-NC 4.0: retold for children from our translation and explanation, with AI assistance; not yet reviewed by a human editor.

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Notes

PARAGRAPH 1

1 **אנכי מגן לך**

The note records that the Tzemach Tzedek refers to this maamar by its theme, "the meaning of Shield of Avraham," and that a text of it is also printed in Or HaTorah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

הצ"צ קורא למאמר זה בענין "פי' מגן אברהם" — אוה"ת בשלח ע' תנב. נדפס גם באוה"ת כרך ד תרצג, א. [מלקו"ת לג"פ פז, ד]. וראה גם ד"ה והיה ברכה תרל"ט ע' א. ד"ה זה נזכר לקמן קטו, ב. בלקו"ת אמור טז, ב "בפי' וירא". שה"ש יט, ד. ראה בציונים לכ"ק אדמו"ר זי"ע.

2 **אנכי מגן לך**

After the war with the kings, G-d tells Avram in a vision, "Fear not, Avram, I am a shield to you; your reward is very great." This is the verse the maamar explains.

Genesis 15:1 בראשית ט"ו:א'

אַחַר הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה הָיָה דְבַר־ה' אֶל־אַבְרָם בַּמַּחֲזֶה לֵאמֹר אַל־תִּירָא אַבְרָם אָנֹכִי מָגֵן לָךְ שְׂכָרְךָ הַרְבֵּה מְאֹד׃

After these things the word of the L-RD came unto Abram in a vision, saying: 'Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield, thy reward shall be exceeding great.'

Miqra according to the Masorah (CC-BY-SA) • JPS 1917 (Public Domain)

KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית טו, א.

3 **פי' מגן אברהם**

According to the note, the Tzemach Tzedek there cites the Midrash Rabbah on Lech Lecha (chapter 44) for two interpretations of "shield." It adds midrashic background to the blessing "Shield of Avraham."

Psalms 18:15 תהילים י"ח:ט"ו

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה ב"ר ר"פ מ"ח מגן ישעך (תהלים יח, טו) זה אברהם, וראה גם אוה"ת סידור ע' קכח בשם רבות פי' לך לך פי' מד ב' פי' במגן.

4 **מגן אברהם**

The Midrash reads "You have given me the shield of Your salvation" as referring to Avraham, linking the idea of G-d's shield with Avraham, as in the blessing "Shield of Avraham."

Bereshit Rabbah 48:1 בראשית רבה מ"ח:א'

"וירא אליו ה' באלוני ממרא והוא יושב פתח האהל" כתיב (תהלים יח, לו): "ותתן לי מגן ישעך" - זה אברהם, "וימינך תסעדני" - בכבשן האש ברעבון ובמלכים "וענותך תרבני" מה ענוה הרבה הקב"ה לאברהם שהיה יושב והשכינה עומדת הה"ד "וירא אליו ה'":

"The L-rd appeared to him in the plains of Mamre, and he was sitting at the entrance of the tent in the heat of the day" (Genesis 18:1). "The L-rd appeared to him in the plains of Mamre, and he was sitting at the entrance of the tent." It is written: "You have given me the shield of Your salvation, and Your right hand has supported me; Your humility has made me great" (Psalms 18:36). "You have given me the shield of Your salvation" - this refers to Abraham. Your ...

Wikisource Bereshit Rabbah (CC-BY-SA) • The Sefaria Midrash Rabbah, 2022 (CC-BY)

5 When told that Sarah would bear him a son, Avraham said to G-d, "O that Yishmael might live before You!" The Alter Rebbe takes this as the expression of Avraham's limitless kindness.

Genesis 17:18 בראשית י"ז:י"ח

וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל־הָאֱלֹקִים לוּ יִשְׁמָעֵאל יִחְיֶה לְפָנֶיךָ׃

And Abraham said unto G-d: 'Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee! '

Miqra according to the Masorah (CC-BY-SA) • JPS 1917 (Public Domain)

6 **ואעפ"י שהוא יודע מהו ישמעאל**

The note contrasts this line with the Tzemach Tzedek's statement there that had Avraham known Yishmael would go so badly astray, he would not have wanted to support him at all; he thought Yishmael would also be decent and worthy, only not like Yitzchak.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ולהעיר מאוה"ת ח"ש (קכא, א. תמה, רע"א) שאילולי הי' יודע שיצא לתרבות רעה כ"כ לא הי' רוצה כלל להחזיקו אלא הי' סבור שיהי' גם הוא הגון וחשוב רק לא כיצחק — לקו"ש חט"ו ע' 196.

7 **שו"ה ישמעאל — חסד גדול וטובו הגדול**

A variant reading: the manuscript has "his kindness and his great goodness" instead of "great kindness and his great goodness."

KEHOT'S NOTE

בבוך 2056: חסדו וטובו הגדול.

8 **שו"ה זו בלבד — שיחיה לחסד בלי גבול, וזהו דאיתא**

A variant reading: instead of "that he live by a kindness without limit.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בבוך 2056: שיחיה לעד וושארז"ל.

PARAGRAPH 2

9 **לא כאברהם שיצא ממנו ישמעאל**

Kehot's marei makom for these words (its note is below).

KEHOT'S NOTE

ספרי דברים לב, ט. ראה לקמן כח, ב.

10 **לא כאברהם שיצא ממנו ישמעאל**

On "For G-d's portion is His people; Yaakov is the lot of His inheritance," the Sifrei contrasts Avraham, from whom Yishmael came forth, and Yitzchak, from whom

Eisav came forth, with Yaakov, all of whose children were worthy. The Alter Rebbe explains the cause of each.

Sifrei Devarim 312:1–2 ספרי דברים שי"ב:א'-ב'

... צְאוּ מִתּוֹךְ שֶׁלִּי, אִי אֶפְשִׁי שֶׁתִּהְיוּ בְתוֹכָהּ, תְּנוּ לִי חֶלְקִי שֶׁאֵהֵא מַכִּירוֹ. כָּךְ כְּשֶׁבָּא אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ לָעוֹלָם יָצְאָה מִמֶּנּוּ פְּסוֹלֶת, יִשְׁמָעֵאל וְכָל בְּנֵי קְטוּרָה. בָּא יִצְחָק לָעוֹלָם יָצְאָה מִמֶּנּוּ פְּסוֹלֶת, עֵשָׂו וְכָל אַלּוּפֵי אֱדוֹם. חָזְרוּ לִהְיוֹת רָעִים יוֹתֵר מִן הָרִאשׁוֹנִים. וּכְשֶׁבָּא יַעֲקֹב לֹא יָצְאָה מִמֶּנּוּ פְּסוֹלֶת, אֶלָּא נוֹלְדוּ כָּל בָּנָיו כְּשֵׁרִים, כָּעְנָיָן שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (בראשית כה כז): "וַיַּעֲקֹב אִישׁ תָּם יוֹשֵׁב אֹהָלִים". מֵהֵיכָן הַמָּקוֹם מַכִּיר אֶת חֶלְקוֹ? מִיַּעֲקֹב, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: כִּי חֵלֶק ה' עַמּוֹ יַעֲקֹב חֶבֶל ...

(Devarim 32:9) "For the portion of the L-rd is His people": An analogy: A king had a field and gave it to tenant-farmers, who began to steal from it — upon which he gave it to their sons — who began to be worse than the first. When a son was born to him, he said to them: Get out of what is mine. You cannot remain there. Give me my portion so that I can recognize it. Similarly, when our father Abraham came to the world, there issued from ...

Vocalized Edition (CC-BY-NC) • Sifrei by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein (CC-BY)

11 **ויצא מחמת רוב חסדו**

There "came forth" is explained to mean that Yishmael came forth from Avraham as his dross and refuse, that is, the excess of the holy kindnesses that emerged from Avraham, the man of kindness.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בד"ה וראיתם אותו תרס"ו ע' רסד מפרש "פי' יצא שיצא ממנו בבחי' סיגים ופסולת שלו כו' דהיינו בחי' מותרי החסדי' דקדושה שיצא מאברהם איש החסד כו'", ע"ש.

12 **בלע המות לנצח**

Isaiah's prophecy of the future: "He will swallow up death forever." It shows that the redemption requires the end of all that opposes life and holiness.

Isaiah 25:8 ישעיהו כ"ה:ח'

בִּלַּע הַמָּוֶת לָנֶצַח וּמָחָה אֲדֹנָי ה' דִּמְעָה מֵעַל כָּל־פָּנִים וְחֶרְפַּת עַמּוֹ יָסִיר מֵעַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כִּי ה' דִּבֵּר:

He will swallow up death for ever; And the L-rd GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; And the reproach of His people will He take away from off all the earth; For the L-RD hath spoken it.

Miqra according to the Masorah (CC-BY-SA) • JPS 1917 (Public Domain)

KEHOT'S NOTE

ישע' כה, ח.

13 **ואת רוח הטומאה אעביר מן הארץ**

"I will remove the spirit of impurity from the land": in the days to come impurity will be removed from the world entirely, which is why evil cannot be sustained without limit.

Zechariah 13:2 זכריה י"ג:ב'

וְהָיָה בַיּוֹם הַהוּא נְאֻם ה' צְבָאוֹת אַכְרִית אֶת־שְׁמוֹת הָעֲצַבִּים מִן־הָאָרֶץ וְלֹא יִזָּכְרוּ עוֹד וְגַם אֶת־הַנְּבִיאִים וְאֶת־רוּחַ הַטֻּמְאָה אַעֲבִיר מִן־הָאָרֶץ:

And it shall come to pass in that day, Saith the L-RD of hosts, That I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, And they shall no more be remembered; And also I will cause the prophets And the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.

Miqra according to the Masorah (CC-BY-SA) • JPS 1917 (Public Domain)

14 **שו"ה הארץ — ואם יתנהג העולם . . הנ"ל של משיח**

A variant reading with the same meaning: "And if the world were conducted by his great kindness, the world could not come to the aforementioned levels of Mashiach."

KEHOT'S NOTE

בבוך 2056: ואם היה העולם מתנהג בחסדו הגדול לא הי' העולם יכולים לבוא למדריגות של המשיח הנ"ל.

15 **על חרבך תחי'**

Yitzchak's blessing to Eisav, "By your sword shall you live." The Alter Rebbe cites it as the sign of the harsh judgment from which Eisav came.

Genesis 27:40 בראשית כ"ז:מ'

וְעַל־חַרְבְּךָ תִחְיֶה וְאֶת־אָחִיךָ תַּעֲבֹד וְהָיָה כַּאֲשֶׁר תָּרִיד וּפָרַקְתָּ עֻלּוֹ מֵעַל צַוָּארֶךָ:

And by thy sword shalt thou live, And thou shalt serve thy brother; And it shall come to pass when thou shalt break loose, That thou shalt shake his yoke from off thy neck.

Miqra according to the Masorah (CC-BY-SA) • JPS 1917 (Public Domain)

KEHOT'S NOTE

בראשית כז, מ.

PARAGRAPH 3

16 **מגן נק'**

The Kehot note refers here to the Midrash on "I am a shield to you" in Bereshit Rabbah, chapter 44, which discusses G-d's promise to protect Avram.

Bereshit Rabbah 44:1–2 בראשית רבה מ"ד:א'-ב'

אחר הדברים האלה היה דבר ה' אל אברם במחזה לאמר וגו'. (תהלים יח) האל תמים דרכו אמרת ה' צרופה מגן הוא לכל החוסים בו. אם דרכיו תמימים, הוא על אחת כמה וכמה! רב אמר: לא נתנו המצות, אלא לצרף בהן את הבריות. וכי מה איכפת ליה להקב"ה למי ששוחט מן הצואר או מי ששוחט מן העורף?! הוי, לא נתנו המצות, אלא לצרף בהם את הבריות. דבר אחר: האל תמים דרכו, זה אברהם, שנאמר (נחמיה ט): ומצאת את לבבו נאמן לפניך. אמרת ה' צרופה, שצרפו הקדוש ברוך הוא ככבשן האש. מגן ...

"After these matters, the word of the L-rd came to Abram in a vision, saying: Fear not, Abram, I am a shield for you; your reward is very great" (Genesis 15:1). "After these matters, the word of the L-rd came to Abram in a vision, saying..." "The Almighty's way is faultless; the word of the L-rd is refined [tzerufa]. He is a shield for all who take refuge in Him" (Psalms 18:31) - if His ways are faultless, all the more so that He Himself is. Rav said: The mitzvot ...

Daat Bereshit Rabbah (Public Domain) • The Sefaria Midrash Rabbah, 2022 (CC-BY)

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה ב"ר פמ"ד.

wicked judged by it. The Alter Rebbe uses it to show that the sheath now tempers the light.

Nedarim 8b:6 נדרים ח' ב:ו'

וּפְלִיגָא דְּרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן לָקִישׁ, דְּאָמַר: אֵין גֵּיהִנָּם לָעוֹלָם הַבָּא, אֶלָּא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא מוֹצִיא חַמָּה מִנַּרְתִּיקָהּ, צַדִּיקִים מִתְרַפְּאִין בָּהּ וּרְשָׁעִים נִידּוֹנִין בָּהּ. שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "וְזָרְחָה לָכֶם יִרְאֵי שְׁמִי שֶׁמֶשׁ וּגוֹ'". וְלֹא עוֹד, אֶלָּא שֶׁמִּתְעַדְּנִין בָּהּ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "וִיצָאתֶם וּפִשְׁתֶּם כְּעֶגְלֵי מַרְבֵּק".

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC)

Avodah Zarah 3b:3 עבודה זרה ג' ב:ג'

אִיכָּא דְּמַתְנֵי לְהָא דְּרַבִּי יִצְחָק אַחָא, דְּתַנְיָא: רַבִּי יוֹסֵי אוֹמֵר: לְעָתִיד לָבֹא בָּאִין אוּמּוֹת הָעוֹלָם וּמִתְגַּיְּירִין. וּמִי מְקַבְּלִינַן מִינַּיְיהוּ? וְהָתַנְיָא: אֵין מְקַבְּלִין גֵּרִים לִימוֹת הַמָּשִׁיחַ, כֵּיוָצֵא בוֹ לֹא קִבְּלוּ גֵּרִים לֹא בִּימֵי דָּוִד וְלֹא בִּימֵי שְׁלֹמֹה!

William Davidson, Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC)

Zohar III, 17a זח"ג יז, א

KEHOT'S NOTE

נדרים ח, ב. ע"ז ג, ב. ב"ר ו, י. זח"ג יז, א. תניא ח"ב פ"ד. וראה הביאור באוה"ת ויקהל ע' ב'קעד.

22 **מוציא חמה מנרתקה**

The Kehot note lists this Zohar passage among the sources for the saying about the sun and its sheath in the Time to Come.

Zohar, Vayikra 40:278–41:285 ספר הזהר, ויקרא מ':ער"ח-מ"א:רפ"ה

PARAGRAPH 4

23 **שבכל בוקר דאברהם בחי' חסד מתעורר בעולם**

On Avraham as the kindness of the world: the Yitro passage explains that Avraham is the Chesed of Atzilus, whereas Moshe drew divine light further down, into the lower worlds of Beriah, Yetzirah and Asiyah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בענין אברהם הוא חסד עולם, ראה לקמן סט, א. פב, א ואילך. מאמרי אדה"ז תקס"ה ח"א ע' דש ואילך. מאמרי אדה"א שמות ח"ב ע' שלח ואילך. סה"מ תרכ"ז ע' קצט. תרל"ט ע' א.

24 **וישכם אברהם בבוקר**

"And Avraham rose early in the morning" (the same words also open Genesis 19:27 and 21:14). The verse links Avraham, the quality of Chesed, with the morning.

Genesis 22:3 בראשית כ"ב:ג'

וַיַּשְׁכֵּם אַבְרָהָם בַּבֹּקֶר וַיַּחֲבֹשׁ אֶת־חֲמֹרוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת־שְׁנֵי נְעָרָיו אִתּוֹ וְאֵת יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ וַיְבַקַּע עֲצֵי עֹלָה וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־אָמַר־לוֹ הָאֱלֹקִים:

And Abraham rose early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he cleaved the wood for the burnt-offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which G-d had told him.

Miqra according to the Masorah (CC-BY-SA) • JPS 1917 (Public Domain)

25 **וכדאיתא בזוה"ק**

The Kehot note gives this Zohar passage as the source for Avraham's quality of kindness being aroused in the world

17 **מגן נק' דבר המכסה למשל במלחמה**

That maamar quotes a section from here and remarks that most discourses explain the level of the "shield" as the parochos (curtain), the partition between Atzilus and Beriah.

KEHOT'S NOTE

קטע מכאן מובא בד"ה והי' ברכה — סה"מ תרל"ט ע' ג, והעיר ע"ז "אך ברוב הדרושים פי' דבחי' מגן ז"ע הפרוכת, שהוא הפרסא שבין אצי' לבריאה כמ"ש בכ"ד".

18 **נק' מגן — מה שמכסה בו שלא ישלוט עליו הקשת**

It quotes this maamar's reading of "a sun and a shield" (the sheath that lets us bear the sun, removed only in the Time to Come), then notes the more common explanation of the shield as the parochos between Atzilus and Beriah, referring to the maamar "VeAtah Tetzaveh" in Parshas Tetzaveh on the parochos.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בד"ה והי' ברכה תרל"ט ע' ג: ועפ"ז פי' הפסוק שמש ומגן כו' שהשמש אם לא הי' לו נרתק לא היו יכולים לסבול אורו הגדול, והנרתק הוא המגין שנוכל לסבול, רק לע"ל הקב"ה מוציא חמה מנרתקה כו', אך ברוב הדרושים פי' דבחי' מגן ז"ע הפרוכת, שהוא הפרסא שבין אצי' לבריאה כמ"ש בכ"ד וע' בפ' תצוה בד"ה ואתה תצוה גבי וענין הפרוכת הוא.

19 **כי שמש ומגן**

The psalmist, longing for G-d's courts, says: "For a sun and a shield is Havayah Elokim; Havayah gives grace and glory." The Alter Rebbe reads "shield" as the sheath that makes the sun's light bearable.

Psalms 84:12 תהילים פ"ד:י"ב

כִּי שֶׁמֶשׁ וּמָגֵן ה' אֱלֹקִים חֵן וְכָבוֹד יִתֵּן ה' לֹא יִמְנַע־טוֹב לַהֹלְכִים בְּתָמִים:

For the L-RD G-d is a sun and a shield; the L-RD giveth grace and glory; No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.

Miqra according to the Masorah (CC-BY-SA) • JPS 1917 (Public Domain)

Zohar II, 224b זח"ב רכד, ב

KEHOT'S NOTE

תהלים פד, יב. וכ"פ זח"ב רכד, ב אנכי מגן לך ע"ד שמש ומגן.

20 **והנרתק הוא המגין**

There (81d), explaining the parochos, the Alter Rebbe reads "For a sun and a shield is Havayah Elokim": Havayah is the higher unity, in which nothing exists besides Him, while Elokim conceals so that the world appears as a "something"; Elokim is a shield for Havayah, like a shield made for the sun, which no one can look at because of its brightness.

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה לקמן פא, ד. וביהל אור ע' שא.

21 **לעתיד לבא הקב"ה**

The Talmud teaches that in the future G-d will take the sun out of its sheath: the righteous will be healed by it and the

every morning.

Zohar I, 203a זח"א רג, א

KEHOT'S NOTE

ראה זח"א רג, א.

26 **שו"ה הנ"ל — דרך צמצום**

A variant reading: instead of giving life to the kelipos, the manuscript speaks of contraction "to give life to the nations as much as they are needed for the sake of Israel, or because of the subjugation to the kingdoms, as is known"; otherwise their life-force would be without limit.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בבוך 2056: דרך צמצם להחיות האומות כפי שצריכים בשביל ישראל או מפני שעבוד מלכיות כנודע הי' החיות בלי גבול: ולא היו יכולים.

27 **שו"ה ורשעים — נדונים בה . . וישכם**

The manuscript adds between the paragraphs: "So it is with these Names: Havayah is Chesed, and Elokim is a shield and the contraction of His kindness and light, so that the world can bear it.

KEHOT'S NOTE

בבוך 2056 נוסף: כך הוא בשמות אלו, הוי"ה הוא חסד, אלקים הוא מגן וצמצום חסדו ואורו בכדי שיהי' העולם יכול לסובלו: והנה נודע שבכל בוקר נתעורר מדת אברהם בחי' חסד כמ"ש: וישכם.

LikuteiTorah.com
THE CHASSIDISHE PARSHA

About this edition

This edition contains the Hebrew text, the English translation, our explanations, and the notes.

The Hebrew text of Torah Ohr: © Kehot Publication Society, via Sefaria, CC BY-NC 4.0; formatting adapted.

Our English translation, made from the Hebrew without Kehot's notes: CC BY-NC 4.0.

Our explanations, with the overview, the questions and the page for children: CC BY-NC 4.0.

"In the Rebbe's light": what the Rebbe says about a paragraph, found by AI in his sichos, letters and maamarim and checked against each source by further AI readers. Short quotes only, with the place of each. No person has reviewed it yet; check the place before relying on a detail. The Rebbe's works are published by Kehot and by Vaad Hanochos B'Lahak.

The notes: Kehot's marei mekomos ("Sources and References", including the Rebbe's notes) © Kehot Publication Society, via Sefaria, CC BY-NC 4.0; formatting adapted; our notes on them: CC BY-NC 4.0.

Quoted sources, via Sefaria: Miqra according to the Masorah (CC-BY-SA); The Holy Scriptures: A New Translation (JPS 1917) (Public Domain); Wikisource Bereshit Rabbah (CC-BY-SA); The Sefaria Midrash Rabbah, 2022 (CC-BY); Vocalized Edition (CC-BY-NC); Sifrei by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein (CC-BY); Daat Bereshit Rabbah (Public Domain); William Davidson Edition - Vocalized Aramaic (CC-BY-NC).

This edition as a whole: CC BY-NC 4.0. Shuls, schools and non-profit projects may copy, print and share it freely, and may ask for donations to cover the cost of printing; it may never be sold. Credit Kehot Publication Society and likuteitorah.com. https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

English translation and explanations: prepared for likuteitorah.com with AI assistance (claude-code/opus-5.5) and checked against the Hebrew and against Sefaria; not yet reviewed by a human editor. Please check anything important against the Hebrew.

The Rebbe asked that the maamarim of the week's parsha, the "Chassidishe Parsha," be learned during that week, spread over its seven days (Sichah of Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel 5725 · Toras Menachem vol. 42, pp. 306–309). Why learn it, and the Rebbe's brachos: likuteitorah.com/about/the-chassidishe-parsha/

A free, non-commercial project; nothing here is sold. Not affiliated with Kehot, Sefaria or the Lubavitch Library. © likuteitorah.com

From likuteitorah.com/torah-ohr/lech-lecha/2/

DEDICATED IN HONOR OF

מוקדש לכבוד הגאון המקובל רבי לוי יצחק שניאורסאהן זצ"ל

Dedicated in honor of the Rebbe's father, Reb Levi Yitzchok