

Pardes Yehuda

Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick
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פרשת יתרו תשע"ו

וישמע יתרו: (יה א)

And Yisro heard ... (11:1) Rashi informs us that Yisro was known by seven different and distinct names, each bearing a different connotation: רַעְוָאֵל יִתְרִי, יִתְרוֹ הַכּוֹבֵב הַכּוֹרֵךְ קִינִי פּוּמְיָאֵל. Yet Rav Elisha Mizrachi questions this tally, suggesting that *Yeser* and *Yisro* are merely variants of the same name, with only a *Vav* differentiating them. Recall that Avrohom Avinu's original name was Avram, which became Avrohom with the addition of a *Hay*, a letter from Hashem's Holy Name. No one would suppose that Avrohom had two distinct names, so why count *Yeser* and *Yisro* as two. -?- The name variations effecting *Yisro* and Avrohom are not comparable. The response to Mizrachi's challenge lies in Sefer Divrei HaYomim I, (2:32) where "*Yeser*" is used as a distinct name, to enumerate generations long after Moshe. This is proof that *Yeser* and *Yisro* are countable as two names. [Observing how a posuk from the very end of Tanach can shed light on a Rashi in a posuk in Chumash exemplifies the unity of Torah -- that it is כולו זה [DPR]] We find no mention of a name "*Avrom*" later in Tanach. In contradistinction to Avrohom Avinu, consider the posuk from Nechemia which we say in our daily davening, before the Song at the Red Sea: אֲשֶׁר בְּחַרְתָּ בְּאַבְרָם וְהוֹצַאתוֹ מֵאוּרִי כְּשֵׁרִים, and then וְשָׁמַתְּ שְׁמוֹ אַבְרָהָם (נחמיה ט ז) This teaches that Avrohom's permanent name was Avrohom, and nothing else. The case is made even stronger -- in fact definitive -- by the Gemara's edict (Brochos 13a) that "anyone calling Avrohom by the name Avrom violates a Positive Commandment", since וְהִיא וְהִיא Your name shall be Avraham, which proscribes any other putative names. So the name "*Avrom*" ceased to exist, unlike **both** *Yeser* and *Yisro*. (Yehuda Z. Klitnick and זרעו של יצחק - יצחק צדיקא)

ויאמר יתרו ברוך ה' אשר הוציל אתכם מיד מצרים ומיד פרעה אשר הוציל אתהקם מתחת יד מצרים: (יה י)
Jethro said, "Blessed is Hashem, Who has rescued you from the hands of the Egyptians and from the hand of Paro, Who has rescued the people from beneath the hand of the Egyptians. (18:10) This posuk presents a problem of apparent redundancy. What is *Yisro* praising Hashem for here? Isn't saving the *Yidden* from "the *Mitzrim*" and from "*Paro*" one and the same act of rescue? Furthermore, at the end of the posuk *Yisro* praises the rescue from the **hand** of the *Mitzrim*, but without a parallel mention of the **hand** of *Paro*. The key is that *Yisro* had a keen awareness of the Egyptians' occult powers. The Gemara (Sanhedrin 67b) states כשפים, למה נקרא שמן, that the sorcerers'

name implies that in certain cases, they can override Heavenly judgments, שמכחישין פמליא של מעלה. Victory over them was a distinct salvation from Hashem. The concluding mention of the **hand** of the *Mitzrim* serves to underscore *Yisro's* celebrating the annulment of the Egyptians' sorcery. The very next posuk, עתה ידעתי כי גדול ה' מכל האלילים כי בדרך אשר ורו עליהם: Now I know that Hashem is greater than all the deities, for with the thing that they plotted, [He came] upon them.] continues the idea: The black sorcery which the Egyptians hurled at Klal *Yisroel* was deflected and quashed by Hashem. *Yisro* highlighted this triumph by mentioning the Egyptians' "**hand**." (Yehuda Z. Klitnick, based on ספר משגב לך - כהן)

ואתה תחצה מכל העם אנשי חיל: (יה כא)
And you shall choose out of the entire nation men of substance, (18:21) Rashi's comment: ברוח הקודש שעליך, Moshe should choose the leaders on the basis of his prophetic vision, his Ruach Hakodesh. Rashi's basis? The very word ואתה. In the context of *Yisro's* advice to Moshe, the word seems extraneous; a simple text such as ותחצה מכל העם would have sufficed. Saying "And **you**" points to something that is unique to Moshe, a trait which only he possessed, namely Ruach Hakodesh. (חיי יצחק יאסטמאן)

A short story of Hakaras Hatov

Mrs. R. Klitnick, a scion of a distinguished Yerushalmi family, once performed an act of chesed/kindness which perfectly reflects a teaching of Shlomo Hamelech. A Boro Park lady had just given birth and was very weak after her discharge from hospital. Mrs. Klitnick supplied meals for several days running for the "kimpeturin" (the Yiddish term for a new mother). When the kimpeturin regained her strength, she resolved to show proper appreciation to Mrs. Klitnick for the meals which truly sustained her family in a time of need. Her first token of appreciation came twenty years later when she invited her to the wedding of that same child. But she felt that this gesture was inadequate to express her appreciation. Her true chance came twelve years later, by which time she was a principal of a Beis Yaakov high school for girls -- and had an opening for a teacher. Who should apply for the job but Mrs. Klitnick's daughter-in-law! When the principal learned of the connection between the young lady and her erstwhile benefactor Mrs. Klitnick, she exclaimed: "I've been waiting thirty two years to repay your mother-in-law for helping me cope with a difficult family time, tzu mazel." Her eyes sparkled and her heart warmed as she hired her for the job. Mrs. Klitnick could well review Shlomo Hamelech's dictum in Koheles (11:1) שלח לחמד על-פני המים, כי ברב המים המצאנו your bread upon the surface of the water, for after many days you will find it.

STORY OF THE WEEK (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick and translated by Duvid Pinchas Rose)

Rav Aharon of Belz יזע"א appears in a dream to a tormented Yid and restores him to stability

After his dramatic rescue from the fires of the Holocaust, Rav Aharon of Belz יזע"א established his Court and Home (ביתו נאודה) (קודש) in Tel Aviv. The "mashbak" (meshamesh bekodesh/ personal

assistant) of Rav Aharon of Belz, Reb Yitzchak Halevi Landau שליט"א relates an incident from those years. In his words: "One Friday afternoon, a "modern" middle-aged man let himself into

Rav Aaron's residence and proceeded to open all the interior doors, as if he were searching for someone. Even though each door was unlocked, no Belzer chosid would have dared commit such a brazen act. I accosted him, "Where do you think you're going, Mister? Whom are you looking for?" "The Rebbe, of course. This is his house, isn't it? I need to talk to the Belzer Rebbe immediately!" "Look, Reb Yid. You don't understand the procedure here. It's Erev Shabbos, and the Rebbe never admits any visitors then. It's out of the question. Come back Sunday and we'll talk then." He took me to one side and whispered in my ear. "I know you are very close to the Rebbe. You don't realize how high the stakes are here. I am within a hair of taking my own life! If you admit me to the Rebbe, all well and good. If not, *cholila*, I am ready to do the deed in this room, here and now." "After this shock, my thoughts flew into a tumult, along these lines: 'After all these years of service, I just don't know what to do. If I tell the Rebbe that there is a man outside prepared to commit such a cardinal sin, this will pain him to no end. When he hears very bad news, he moans in anguish, [with threefold repetition]"*Shoyn! Shoyn! Shoyn!*" ("Enough! Enough! Enough!"), which pierces my own heart. And I surely don't want to upset his Erev Shabbos preparations. But how can I refuse to do what this man is insisting, just because it makes me uncomfortable? It could be actual *pikuach nefesh!*" Just then, the man let fly this revelation: "You should know that my family name is Derbaremdiger, and I am a direct grandson through the male line of Rav Levi Yitzchak of Barditshev!" The realization that a "*Bnoy shel kedoshim, a Rebbish kind*" [someone with a rabbinical "yichus", a distinguished lineage] was striving to be admitted tipped the scales in the man's favour. I burst into the Rebbe's innermost room [a *mashbak* was allowed to take such liberties in an urgent situation, which in other circumstances might seem like a disrespectful breach of privacy [DPR]]. The Rebbe was absorbed in his reknowned "avodah bemishteh" [The Rebbe prepared his coffee and tea every day via a lengthy and meticulous procedure, whose hidden meaning remains concealed to this day]. I began stammering about some Barditchever grandson who was clamoring to talk to the Rebbe, but I was so agitated that I could only blurt out the information about the foul deed the man was threatening to carry out. The Rebbe pushed everything aside, jumped up, trembling head to toe, and said 'Send him in NOW. Don't waste a second!' I found this hard to swallow, since I knew full well that many Jews, far more distinguished than this man, often had to wait for several nights running just to have a few counted minutes with the Tzaddik, and here was this Johnny-come-lately outsider being admitted in a trice.

"I let the Yid into the Rebbe's *Kodesh Pnimah* (inner sanctum) and he delivered his amazing, but warped, story: "Since I am a grandson of the Holy Barditchever Rav, I thought I was special. I undertook to learn sifrei Kabbalah and Toras Nistar, the Hidden Torah. I delved deeper and deeper -- or so I thought -- until I started toying with Holy Shemos of Hashem, and applying them to my world, and I now realize I was in no way worthy or qualified to do this. Only true tzaddikim can be privy to Shemos Kedoshim, and that excludes me. But I remembered

the Mishna in Avos (1:13), "ודאשתמש בהגא, קלה", "One who makes [secular] use of the Crown [a Holy Name] shall perish."

"I saw just how demented this man really was when I heard what followed". I want to carry out the Holy Mishna's prediction. I am determined to take my life" ! The Rebbe rose to his whole height, turned white as a sheet, and screamed :

חלילה והם חלילה והם עם איז די פאסקידנסטע עבירה אין די וועלט, מען טאר נישט, איר האט גארנישט געמאכט איר האט גארנישט געטאן, עם איז גארנישט. "Heaven forbid, heaven forbid, it is the most depraved sin in the world, you dare not think about doing it, you did nothing to deserve it, the whole thing amounts to absolute nothing!" "These fiery words from the Rebbe dragged the man back to his senses, and he begged for a way to repair the damage he had done to his soul by even contemplating suicide ר"ל. The Rebbe's remedy for him was to learn much Gemara with Rashi, and he terminated the interview with a brocho for success."

"The man reviewed the events in the Rebbe's room with me, which provided more proof to me of what a troubled *neshama* he was. 'Know that I had been contemplating suicide for weeks, but I always suppressed the thought, knowing full well what a grievous sin I would be committing. But I sank lower, and firmly decided to carry out the act, when I saw a Rebbe in a dream who warned me strictly not to lay hands on myself. I saw that my salvation lay in meeting with that Rav -- and only him. Frantically, tormented by my dark and twisted thoughts, I ran from Rav to Rebbe to Rav, searching for the Rav in my dream, but I only found him when I glimpsed the Rebbe's face here. I knew I could only be helped here, and as you see, the Rebbe, in a minute, banished and cleansed me of all the evil thoughts that had been swirling in my deluded mind."

"The Yid underwent a total transformation. He frequented the shtibel morning and night, and regained the Yiddish fervour which he had long ago lost, in favour of his twisted learning of Kabbalah, for which he was unqualified, and which harmed him psychologically. [I later became aware of a bit of his past: While still living in Barditshev, his loyalty to Torah weakened and his observance slackened off. To save face, he went to Eretz Yisroel and found a wife, but did not conduct a Torah household. He became ensnared in studying Kabbalah, which only succeeded in planting confused and twisted thoughts in his mind.]

After his time with the Rebbe, his learning increased until he became a genuine *masmid*. His wife, although not understanding all facets of his new avodah, was at least gratified that the Rebbe had banished the foreign thoughts which had tormented him. Livelihood was a problem, however, and the couple found themselves without bread to put on the table. The Rebbe became aware of this, and summoned the man. He reminded him that in Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deiah, the laws of business dealings follow directly after the laws of the synagogue. The message was clear that he was obliged to pursue *parnossah* in proper balance with his learning, which he did, relying on the Rebbe's brocho. He remained a *yorei shomayim*, a G-d fearing Jew all his days. The unseen but undisputable force helping him was surely the merit of his holy ancestor, Levi Yitzchok of Barditshev זי"ע

[ספר בקודש פנימה] [The story highlights the pitfalls inherent in improper "study" of Toras Nistar (Kabbalah). We see how it lead to a twisted and warped understanding of a simple Mishna, which could have had dire consequences if not for the Rebbe's interdiction. [DPR]]

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