

Parashat Behaalotekha

Kindling the Candelabrum

NUMBERS 8:1–4

Kindling the candelabrum has already been mentioned twice in the Torah.¹ However, this passage contains a practical command that was not previously stated, and which is relevant beginning from the very first day of service in the Tabernacle. Some explain that this passage appears here in order to complement the preceding description of the gifts of the tribal princes to the Tabernacle. Each tribe's prince gave a donation, with the exception of Aaron, prince of the tribe of Levi. Therefore, the verse mentions Aaron's role in kindling the candelabrum, which is parallel to the offerings brought by the other tribal princes in honor of the inauguration of the Tabernacle.²

- 8** **1** The Lord spoke to Moses, saying:
- 2** Speak to Aaron, and say to him: When you kindle the lamps, the seven lamps shall illuminate toward the front of the candelabrum, the middle branch, which forms the body of the candelabrum. The branches of the candelabrum culminated with lamps, which were vessels that held the oil and wicks with a spout that could be turned in any direction. Aaron was commanded to ensure that these spouts would face the middle branch of the candelabrum.³ Alternatively, some commentaries explain that this verse means that the spouts should face the area in front of the candelabrum,⁴ either the curtain separating the Sanctuary from the Holy of Holies or the table for the showbread.⁵
- 3** Aaron did so; toward the front of the candelabrum he kindled its lamps, as the Lord had commanded Moses.
- 4** This is the craftsmanship of the candelabrum: Hammered gold; from its base to its decorative flowers on its branches, it is hammered; the entire candelabrum was sculpted from one piece of gold, without welding or otherwise attaching other pieces. Like the vision that the Lord showed Moses, so he crafted the candelabrum. From the descriptions in the Torah, it is difficult to fully understand what the candelabrum was supposed to look like, including the shape and number of its decorative knobs and flowers. Consequently, God showed Moses an image of the candelabrum on Mount Sinai, and then Moses was able to instruct the artisans as to its construction.



Kindling the lamps of the candelabrum

Taking the Levites

NUMBERS 8:5–26

The work of the Levites in the Tabernacle was described in the opening chapters of Numbers. However, their role requires more than just the performance of certain actions; it requires a high level of sanctity. Consequently, their induction includes a purification ritual. After describing the role of the priests in kindling the candelabrum, the Torah issues a command with regard to the manner in which the Levites, who are subordinate to the priests, are to be inducted into their role.

- 5** The Lord spoke to Moses, saying:
- 6** Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and purify them.
- 7** So shall you do to them, to purify them: Sprinkle upon them purification water from a red heifer (see 19:1–13), and they shall pass a razor over all their flesh, shaving off all the

פרשת בהעלתך

ח וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: דַּבֵּר אֶל־אַהֲרֹן וְאֶמְרָתָ אֵלָיו בְּהֵעֲלֹתְךָ אֶת־ח הַנִּזְרֹת אֶל־מוֹלַת פְּנֵי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וַיֵּאִירוּ שִׁבְעַת הַנִּזְרוֹת: וַיַּעַשׂ בֶּן אַהֲרֹן אֶל־מוֹלַת פְּנֵי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ הָעֹלָה נִרְתְּיָה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: וְזֶה מַעֲשֵׂה הַמִּזְבֵּחַ מִקְשָׁה זָהָב עַד־יִרְכָּה עַד־פְּרָחָה מִקְשָׁה הוּא כַּמִּרְאֵה אֲשֶׁר הִרְאָה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה בֶּן עֶשְׂרֵה אֶת־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ:

וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: קַח אֶת־הַלֵּוִיִּם מִתּוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְטַהַרְתָּ אֹתָם: וְכַהֲתַעֲשֶׂה לָהֶם לְטַהֲרֵם הַיּוֹם עֲלֵיהֶם מִי חֲטָאתָ וְהַעֲבִירוּ תֵעָר עַל־כָּל־בְּשָׂרָם וְכִבְּסוּ בַגְדֵיהֶם וְהִטְהָרוּ: וְלָקְחוּ פֶרֶךְ בֶּן־בָּקָר וּמִנְחָתוֹ סֹלֶת בָּלוּלָה בַשֶּׁמֶן וּפְרֹ־שֵׁנִי בֶן־בָּקָר תִּקַּח לְחֲטָאתָ: וְהִקְרַבְתָּ אֶת־הַלֵּוִיִּם לִפְנֵי אֱהֱל מוֹעֵד וְהִקְהַלְתָּ

רש"י

1 | קח את הלוויים. קחם בקדושים: 'אשריכם שתוכו להיות שמים למקום:

2 | הַיּוֹם עֲלֵיהֶם מִי חֲטָאתָ. שֶׁל חֲסֵד הַפְּקָה, מִפְּנֵי טְמֵאֵי מִתְּנִים שֶׁבָּהֶם: וְהַעֲבִירוּ תֵעָר. מִנְחָתִי בְּדָבָרֵי רָבִי מִשָּׁה הַדְּרָשׁ, לְפִי שֶׁנִּתְּנָה כְּפָקָה עַל הַכְּבוֹדוֹת שֶׁעָבְדוּ עֲבוּדָה זָרָה, וְהֵיחָ קְרוּיָה 'זָבָחִי מִתְּנִים' (תהלים קו, כח) וְהִמְנִיעַ קְרוּי 'מֵת' (להלן יב, יג) הַזְּקִיָּקִים תִּגְלַחַת כְּמַעֲבָדֵים:

3 | וְלָקְחוּ פֶרֶךְ בֶּן־בָּקָר. וְהוּא עוֹלָה, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכְּתוּב: 'וַעֲשֶׂה אֶת הַחֲחֹד... עוֹלָה' (להלן פסוק יב), וְהוּא קָרְבַּן עֲבוֹדָה עֲבֹדָה זָרָה (להלן טו, כד): וּפֶרֶךְ שֵׁנִי. מֵהַ תְּלַמּוּד לומֵר "שֵׁנִי? לומֵר לָךְ, מֵהַ עוֹלָה לֹא נִחְכַּלְתָּ אִף חֲטָאתָ לֹא נִחְכַּלְתָּ, וְכוּן יֵשׁ סִמְךָ לְדַבְּרוֹ בְּתוֹרַת כְּהֵנִס (חוכה פ"ג, ד). וְחֹמֶר חֵנִי שֶׁהוֹלְחֵת שְׂעָה הֵיטָה, שֶׁשְּׂעִיר הָיָה לָהֶם לְהַבִּיא לְחֲטָאתָ עֲבוּדָה זָרָה עִם פֶּר הָעוֹלָה:

4 | וְהִקְהַלְתָּ אֶת כָּל־עֲדַת. לְפִי שֶׁהַלֵּוִיִּם נִתְּנִים קָרְבַּן

5 | וְזֶה מַעֲשֵׂה הַמִּזְבֵּחַ. שֶׁהִקְדִּישׁ הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בְּחֻצָּע לְפִי שֶׁנִּתְקַשָּׁה בָּהּ, לְכַךְ נִחְמַר: 'זֶה' מִקְשָׁה. כְּטוּרֵי פֶלַעַן, לְשׁוֹן: "דָּחַ לְדָח נִקְשָׁן" (תהלים ה, ו). עֲשֵׂת שֶׁל כְּפַר זֶהָב הֵיטָה, וּמִקִּישׁ בְּקִדְּוָה וְחֹמֶר כְּבִשְׂמֵל לְפִשֵׁט חִיבְרִיָּה כְּתוּבָה, וְלֹא נִעֲשִׂית חִיבְרִים חִיבְרִים עַל יְדֵי חֲבוּר: עַד יִרְכָּה עַד פְּרָחָה. יִרְכָּה הִיא הַשָּׂדֶה שֶׁעַל הַקְּבִלִים, חֲלוּל, כְּדָרְךְ מִנְּזוּת כְּסָף שֶׁלִּפְנֵי הַשָּׂרִים: עַד יִרְכָּה עַד פְּרָחָה. כְּלוּמַר גּוֹפֵה שֶׁל מִנְּזוּת כְּפָה וְכָל הַתְּלוּי בָּהּ: עַד יִרְכָּה. שֶׁהוּא חִיבְרֵי גְדוּל: עַד פְּרָחָה. שֶׁהוּא מַעֲשֶׂה דָק שֶׁבָּהּ, הַכָּל "מִקְשָׁה". וְדָרְךְ עַד' לְשֵׁמֶשׁ בְּלִשׁוֹן זֶה, כְּמוֹ: "מַעֲדִישׁ וְעַד קָמָה וְעַד כָּרַס זֵית" (שופטים טו, ה): כַּמִּרְאֵה אֲשֶׁר הִרְאָה וְגו': כְּתוּבָת חֲשֵׁר הִרְאָהוּ בָּהּ, כְּמוֹ שֶׁנִּחְמַר: "וְלִרְחָה וְעֵשֶׂה כְּתוּבָתָם" וְגו' (שמות כה, מ): בֶּן עֶשְׂרֵה אֶת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ. מִי שֶׁעֲשָׂאָה. וּמִדְּרַשׁ חֲזָנָה: עַל יְדֵי הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא נִעֲשִׂית מִחֲלִיקָה:

פרק ח
6 | בהעלתך. לְמַה נִּסְמְכָה פְּרָשַׁת הַמִּנְזוּחַ לְפָרֶשֶׁת הַנְּשִׂאִים? לְפִי שֶׁכְּרָחָה חֲהַרְן חֲנֻפֵת הַנְּשִׂאִים חֲלָשָׁה דְעֵתוֹ, שֶׁלֹּא הָיָה עִמָּהֶם כְּחֻפָּה לֹא הוּא וְלֹא שְׂכָנוֹ, חֲמֵר לוֹ הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: חֲיִיךְ, שֶׁלֶךְ גְּדוּלָה מִשְׁלָהֶם, שֶׁחֲתָה מְדַלִּיק וּמִיטִיב חֵת הַנְּזוּת: בְּהֵעֲלֹתְךָ. עַל שֶׁסְּהֵלֵב עוֹלָה כְּתוּב בְּהַדְּלָקְתָּ לְשׁוֹן עֲלִיָּה, שֶׁנִּרְיָךְ לְהַדְּלִיק עַד שֶׁתִּהְיֶה שְׁלֵהֶב עוֹלָה מֵחֲלִיקָה. וְעוֹד דְּרָשׁוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ מִפְּחוֹ שֶׁמַּעֲלָה הֵיטָה לְפִנֵּי הַמִּנְזוּחַ שֶׁעֲלִיָּה הַפְּחוֹ עוֹמֵד וּמִיטִיב: אֵל מוֹלַת פְּנֵי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ. חֵל מוֹלַת נֵר הַמְּנַעֵנֵי, שֶׁחֵנֵי כְּתוּבִים אֵלַף בְּגוֹן שֶׁל מִנְּזוּחַ: יֵאִירוּ שִׁבְעַת הַנִּזְרוֹת. שֶׁשֶׁה שֶׁעַל שֶׁשֶׁת הַקְּנִים, שֶׁלֶשָׁה הַמְּנַעֲרִים פּוֹנִים לְמוֹל הַמְּנַעֲנֵי הַפְּתִילוֹת שְׂבָהֵן, וְכֵן שֶׁלֶשָׁה הַמְּנַעֲרִים רָשִׁי הַפְּתִילוֹת לְמוֹל הַמְּנַעֲנֵי. וְלָמָּה? כְּדִי שֶׁלֹּא יִחְמְרוּ: לְחֻזְקָה הוּא זְרִיךְ:

7 | וַיַּעַשׂ בֶּן אַהֲרֹן. לְהַעֲד כַּחֲכוֹ שֶׁל חֲהַרְן שֶׁלֹּא שָׁה:

hair on their heads, beards and bodies, and they shall wash their clothes and become pure by immersing in a ritual bath.
8 They, the Levites, shall take a young bull as a burnt offering, and its meal offering, made from high-quality flour mixed

with oil; and a second young bull you, Moses, shall take as a sin offering as part of their purification process.
9 You shall bring the Levites before the Tent of Meeting and

you shall assemble the entire congregation of the children of Israel, as this matter pertains to them as well.

- 10** You shall bring the Levites before the Lord; and the representatives of the children of Israel shall lay their hands upon the Levites. The representatives may have been the Sanhedrin or the firstborn, who were replaced by the Levites.⁶ The laying of the hands in this ceremony was parallel to the rite of one who brings an offering, who must lay his hands upon the head of the offering he brings. By this act, the Levites were designated as a sort of offering, consecrated by the nation to work in the Tabernacle instead of the firstborn and to act as representatives of the entire nation.⁷
- 11** Aaron shall wave the Levites as a wave offering before the Lord from the children of Israel, and they shall be designated to perform the service of the Lord. Similar to an offering, the Levites were bestowed with a special status, for which they had to undergo preparatory rites parallel to those of an offering. Just as a priest waves parts of certain offerings, so Aaron was commanded to wave the Levites. This was a difficult procedure that required great physical strength.
- 12** The children of Israel shall lay their hands on the heads of the Levites, and the Levites shall lay their hands upon the heads of the two bulls, which are the offerings actually sacrificed on the altar; and you shall perform the one as a sin offering, and the one as a burnt offering, to the Lord, to atone for the Levites.
- 13** You shall have the Levites stand before Aaron and before his sons, and you, Moses, shall also wave them as a wave offering to the Lord as part of their rite of sanctification.
- 14** You shall separate the Levites from the midst of the children of Israel, and the Levites shall be Mine as My honor guard.
- 15** Thereafter the Levites shall come to serve the Tent of Meeting; you shall purify them, and wave them as a wave offering before they come to serve.
- 16** For they are given to Me^d from among the children of Israel. In place of the one that emerges first from each womb, the

firstborn, of all the children of Israel, I have taken them for Myself.

- 17** For all the firstborn among the children of Israel are Mine, man and animal; on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them for Myself, to serve Me.
- 18** I have then taken the Levites in place of all the firstborn among the children of Israel.
- 19** I have given the Levites, given to Aaron and to his sons from among the children of Israel, to perform the service of the children of Israel in the Tent of Meeting, and to atone for the children of Israel, and accordingly there shall not be a stroke against the children of Israel, when the children of Israel approach the Sanctuary. The regular watch of the Levites will ensure that the Israelites do not touch sanctified items improperly, and it will thereby protect the Israelites from harm. The Levites required training for their position to remain in the Tabernacle or Temple, to perform services there and to prevent those who were not fit from entering. It was difficult to demand this of the firstborn of every Israelite household, but possible to set aside one small tribe for this purpose.⁸
- 20** Moses, Aaron, and the entire congregation of the children of Israel did to the Levites in accordance with everything that the Lord commanded Moses with regard to the Levites, so the children of Israel did to them.
- 21** The Levites purified themselves, and they washed their clothes, and Aaron waved them as a wave offering before the Lord. Aaron atoned for them to purify them and thereby elevate them so that they would be worthy of their task.
- 22** Thereafter the Levites came to perform their service in the Tent of Meeting before Aaron, and before his sons; as the Lord had commanded Moses with regard to the Levites, so they did to them.
- 23** The Torah continues the previous topic and concludes the section: **The Lord spoke to Moses, saying:**
- 24** This is with regard to the Levites: From twenty-five years

DISCUSSION

8:16 | **For they are given [netunim netunim] to Me:** The word given [*netunim*] is repeated in this phrase in order to indicate that the Levites are entirely given to God, to the point that their status applies even to their children. Another interpretation is that they are given in two manners: Once by their own free will, and once in that they have been selected by God. Alternatively, they are given on their own

merit and as replacements for the firstborn (see Sforno).

8:24 | **From twenty-five years old and above:** This instruction is different than what was stated above, with regard to the Levites from the family of Kehat: "From thirty years old and above and until fifty years old, all those enlisted for duty, to perform labor in the Tent of Meeting" (4:3).

Apparently, the Levites began their service at the age of twenty-five, therefore for the first five years they trained and acted as replacements in the performance of the actual service. When they reached the age of thirty, they were considered mature and reliable enough to be appointed to their own positions of service (see *Bekhor Shor* here, and 4:3, 22).

י אֶת־כָּל־עֵדוּת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: וְהִקְרַבְתָּ אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וְסָמְכוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל
 יא אֶת־יְדֵיהֶם עַל־הַלְוִיִּם: וְהִנִּיף אֹהֶרֶן אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם תְּנוּפָה לִפְנֵי יְהוָה מֵאֵת בְּנֵי
 יב יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהָיוּ לַעֲבֹד אֶת־עֲבֹדַת יְהוָה: וְהַלְוִיִּם יִסְמְכוּ אֶת־יְדֵיהֶם עַל רֹאשׁ
 הַפָּרִים וְעִשָּׂה אֶת־הָאֶחָד חֲטָאת וְאֶת־הָאֶחָד עֹלָה לַיהוָה לְכַפֵּר עַל־הַלְוִיִּם:
 יג וְהֵעֵמַדְתָּ אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם לִפְנֵי אֹהֶרֶן וּלְפָנָי בְּנֵי וְהִנַּפְתָּ אֹתָם תְּנוּפָה לַיהוָה: וְהִבְדַּלְתָּ
 טו אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם מִתּוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהָיוּ לִי הַלְוִיִּם: וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן יָבֹאוּ הַלְוִיִּם לַעֲבֹד
 טז אֶת־אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְטַהַרְתָּ אֹתָם וְהִנַּפְתָּ אֹתָם תְּנוּפָה: כִּי נִתְּנִים נִתְּנִים הִמָּה לִי
 ז אֶת־בְּכֹרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל תַּחַת פְּטָרַת כָּל־דָּחַס בְּכוֹר כָּל מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְקַחְתִּי אֹתָם
 יז לִי: כִּי לִי כָל־בְּכוֹר בְּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאִדָּם וּבִבְהֵמָה בְּיוֹם הַכֹּתִי כָל־בְּכוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ
 יח מִצְרַיִם הִקְדַּשְׁתִּי אֹתָם לִי: וְאָקַח אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם תַּחַת כָּל־בְּכוֹר בְּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
 יט וְאַתְּנָה אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם נִתְּנִים וְלֹא־הָרַן וּלְבָנָיו מִתּוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לַעֲבֹד אֶת־עֲבֹדַת
 כ בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וּלְכַפֵּר עַל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא יִהְיֶה בְּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל נֶגֶף
 כא בְּגִשְׁת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־הַקֹּדֶשׁ: וַיַּעַשׂ מֹשֶׁה וְאֹהֶרֶן וְכָל־עֵדוּת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל
 כב לַלְוִיִּם כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה לַלְוִיִּם בֶּן־עֶשְׂרֹן לָהֶם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
 כג וַיִּתְחַטְּאוּ הַלְוִיִּם וַיִּכְבְּסוּ בְּגִדֵיהֶם וַיִּנָּף אֹהֶרֶן אֹתָם תְּנוּפָה לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיִּכַּפֵּר
 כד עֲלֵיהֶם אֹהֶרֶן לְטַהַרְסָם: וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן בָּאוּ הַלְוִיִּם לַעֲבֹד אֶת־עֲבֹדַתְּם בְּאֹהֶל
 כה מוֹעֵד לִפְנֵי אֹהֶרֶן וּלְפָנָי בְּנֵי כָּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה עַל־הַלְוִיִּם בֶּן עֶשְׂרֹן
 כז לָהֶם: וַיִּדְבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: זֹאת אֲשֶׁר לַלְוִיִּם מִבֶּן חָמִשׁ וְעֶשְׂרִים

רש"י

כמקרא זה, להודיע חמתן שתוכן חזקתיהן במקרא
 אחד כמנען תמשה חמשי תורה, כך לחיתו גבראשית
 רפה (ה) ולא יהיה בבני ישראל נגף. שלא ינטקו
 לגשת אל הקדש, שאם יגשו יהיה נגף:
 כו ויעש משה ואהרן וכל עדת וגו'. משה העניקו, ואהרן
 העניקו, ושקחל סמכו את ידיהם:
 כז כאשר צוה ה' וגו' בן עשור. להצד שבח העושים
 והנעשה פקו, שאחד מהם לא עבד.

עבודת הקדש - ידעו ויקדשו הנלחים בגינת הקדש
 הקדשים; והשלישית לבני מקרי (להלן פסוק טו):
 טו נתנים נתנים. נתנים למשא, נתנים לשיר: פטרת.
 פתיחת:
 יז כי לי כל בכור. שלי היו הכבודות פקו הדיון, שהגנתו
 עליהם בין גבולי מנעים ולקחתו חותם לי, עד שטענו
 פעגל, ועקשיו: "ואקח את הלוים" וגו' (להלן פסוק יח):
 יט ואתנה וגו'. חמשה פעמים נאמר בני ישחל'

פסקה תחתיהם, יבואו ויעמדו על הקדשם ויסמכו את
 ידיהם עליהם:
 יא והניף אהרן את הלוים תנופה. כדכך שאם מלכע
 טענו תנופה חי (ויקרא יד, יב). שלש תנופות נאמרו
 בפסוקה זו: הראשונה לבני קהת, לכך נאמר גם: "והיו
 לעבד את עבדתי ה'", לפי שעבודת הקדש הקדשים עליהם.
 "החלו והשליחו" וגו' (לעיל ג, לח). השניה לבני גרשון, לכך
 נאמר גם: "תנופה לה" (להלן פסוק יג), שאף עליהם היתה

old and above^D he shall enlist to perform duty in the work of the Tent of Meeting.

- 25 From fifty years old, he shall return from the duty of the work, and he shall work no more in physically demanding labor such as carrying the vessels.

Second Pesah

NUMBERS 9:1–14

This passage, which precedes the opening section of the book of Numbers chronologically, begins with a reminder to the Israelites to sacrifice the paschal lamb in the year following the exodus from Egypt. Now that the Tabernacle has been constructed and the Divine Presence rests there, the nation is commanded to bring this offering, which in the previous year, in Egypt, had been mandated as a personal commandment to each individual. The nation as a whole observes this commandment, but there are individuals who are unable to do so due to being ritually impure. In response to their request, God introduces the laws of the second *Pesah*. This is one of the few instances in the Torah where a commandment is introduced as a divine solution to a human request.

- 9 **1 The Lord spoke to Moses in the Tent of Meeting in the wilderness of Sinai, during the second year, one full year since their exodus from the land of Egypt, in the first month, Nisan, saying:**
Third aliya
- 2 **The children of Israel shall offer the paschal lamb^D at its appointed time.**
- 3 **On the fourteenth day of that month, in the afternoon,** from when the sun begins its descent in the western portion of the sky until it completely sets,¹⁰ **you shall offer it at its appointed time; in accordance with all its statutes and in accordance with all its ordinances, you shall offer it.** There were commandments issued with regard to the paschal lamb offered in Egypt that applied only that year, such as the requirement to apply its blood to the lintel and side-posts instead of applying the blood to the altar. However, other commandments that were issued with regard to the paschal lamb in Egypt apply for all time.¹¹

- 26 **He shall serve with his brethren^D in the Tent of Meeting,** as an aid to the other Levites, **to stand a watch** over the Levites' other tasks, **but physical work he shall not perform. So shall you do with the Levites with regard to their watches.⁹**

- 4 **Moses spoke to the children of Israel, to offer the paschal lamb.**
- 5 **They offered the paschal lamb during the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, in the afternoon, in the wilderness of Sinai; in accordance with everything that the Lord commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did.**
- 6 **There were men in the camp who were impure by means of a corpse,^D and they were unable to offer the paschal lamb on that day,** as one who is ritually impure is prohibited from entering the sacred areas or partaking of sacrificial food; **and they approached Moses and Aaron on that day.**
- 7 **Those men said to him: We are impure by means of a corpse** through no fault of our own; generally, one who becomes impure from a corpse has acted properly by attending to the burial needs of his relative.¹² **Consequently, why shall we be deprived**

DISCUSSION

8:25–26 | **From fifty years old.... He shall serve with their brethren:** The Levites' term of service begins later and ends earlier than that of Israelites: Whereas Israelites would be counted as soldiers from the age of twenty until sixty, Levites served from age thirty to fifty. However, in practice the Levites would begin their training at age twenty-five, and even after they reached the age of fifty they would continue to serve as guards and perhaps to perform other tasks such as opening and closing the gates of the Temple, loading the wagons to transport the Tabernacle

through the wilderness, and supervising the performance of other tasks (see Rashi; Ramban; *Hullin* 24a; *Sifrei*; Ramban, *Sefer HaMitzvot*, *Shores* 3).

9:2 | **The children of Israel shall offer the paschal lamb:** Although the Israelites had already been commanded to observe all of the festivals, it is possible that Passover was the only one that was actually observed in the wilderness with the consumption of offerings (see Ramban, 28:2 and Leviticus 23:2). Another explanation for the fact that a reminder is issued only with regard

to Passover is that the initial commandment to sacrifice the paschal lamb was issued on the first day of the month of Nisan, before the exodus from Egypt (Exodus chap. 12), one year before the reminder mentioned in this passage. It would be possible to mistakenly think that the offering sacrificed in Egypt was a preparatory ritual for the exodus, whereas the permanent commandment to sacrifice the paschal lamb would apply only in the land of Israel, as the verse indicates: "It shall be when you come to the land... you shall observe this service" (Exodus 12:25; see

כה שָׁנָה וּמַעֲלָה יָבֹוא לְעֵבָא עֵבָא בְּעִבְדַת אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד: וּמִבְּנֵי חַמְשֵׁים שָׁנָה יָשׁוּב
 כו מֵעֵבָא הָעִבְדָּה וְלֹא יַעֲבֹד עוֹד: וְיִשְׂרַת אֶת־אֶחָיו בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לְשִׁמּוֹר מִשְׁמֶרֶת
 וְעִבְדָּה לֹא יַעֲבֹד כִּכָּה תַעֲשֶׂה לְלוֹיִם בְּמִשְׁמֶרֶתָם:
 ט א וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בְּמִדְבַר־סִינַי בְּשָׁנָה הַשְּׁנִיָּת לְיֵצֵאתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בַּחֹדֶשׁ
 ב הָרִאשׁוֹן לֵאמֹר: וַיַּעֲשׂוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַפֶּסַח בְּמוֹעֵדוֹ: בְּאַרְבַּעַה עָשָׂר־יוֹם
 ג בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה בֵּין הָעֲרָבִים תַּעֲשׂוּ אֹתוֹ בְּמַעֲדוֹ כְּכֹל־חֻקְתּוֹ וּכְכֹל־מִשְׁפָּטָיו תַּעֲשׂוּ
 ד אֹתוֹ: וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לַעֲשׂוֹת הַפֶּסַח: וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת־הַפֶּסַח בְּרִאשׁוֹן
 ה בְּאַרְבַּעַה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ בֵּין הָעֲרָבִים בְּמִדְבַר סִינַי כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־
 ו מֹשֶׁה בֶּן עֶשְׂרֵים בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: וַיְהִי אֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ טִמְאִים לְנַפְשׁ אָדָם וְלֹא־יָכְלוּ
 ז לַעֲשׂוֹת־הַפֶּסַח בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וַיִּקְרְבוּ לִפְנֵי מֹשֶׁה וּלְפָנֵי אֶהֱרֹן בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא: וַיֹּאמְרוּ
 ח הָאֲנָשִׁים הַהֵמָּה אֵלָיו אֲנַחְנוּ טִמְאִים לְנַפְשׁ אָדָם לָמָּה נִגְרָע לְבַלְתִּי הַקְרִיב

רשי

פרק ט מועדים מסיני חמשה להם, וזוהי הסיבה ששנת
 מעשה.
 ו לפני משה ולפני אהרן. כשענייהם יושבין בבית המדרש
 באו ושאכלום. ולא יתכן לומר זה חזר זה, שאם משה
 לא היה יודע, אהרן מעין לו?
 ז למה נגרע. אמר להם: חיו הקדים בטמאה.
 חמרו לו: יזרק הדם עלינו בלהנים טהורים ויאכל הפשע
 לטהורים, חמר להם: "עמדו ואשמעו" (להלן פסוק ח).
 בתלמוד המדקדק לשמנוע מפי רבו. חשתי ילוד חשה שכן
 מדקדק, שכל זמן שהיה רוצה היה מדבר עם השכינה.
 ודחיה היתה פקשה זו להחמיר על ידי משה בשיח
 כל התורה פלה, חלא שזכו חלו שחמיר על ידיהן,
 שנגלגלון זכות על ידי זכאי:

פרק ט
 א בחדש הראשון. פקשה שבלאש הספר לא נחמרה
 עד חיה למדת שחיו סדר מיקדם ומאחר בתורה. ולמה
 לא פתחו כזו? מפני שהיו גנותן של ישראל, שכל
 חרבעים שנה שהיו יסחלל במדבר לא הקריבו חלא
 פסח זה בלבד.
 ב במועדו. חך בשפת, חך בטמאה.
 ג ככל חקתו. חלו מעות שגופו: "שה תמים זכר בן
 שנה" (שמות יב, ה) וככל משפטיו. חלו מעות שעל גופו
 ממקום חרה: לשבעת ימים למנה ולבעור חמן.
 ד וידבר משה וגו'. מה תלמוד לומר? והלא כבר נחמר:
 "וידבר משה חת מועדי ה" (ויקרא כג, מד) חלא כששמע

כר ואת אשר ללוים. שנים פוסלים בהם, וחיו המומין
 פוסלים בהם: מבן חמש ועשרים. ובמקום חחר חומר:
 "מבן שלשים שנה" (לעיל ה, ג). חא כינד? מבן עשרים וחמש
 פא ללמד הלכות עבודה ולומד חמש שנים, ובן שלשים
 עובד. מפחו לתלמיד שלח חחה סימן ופה במועדתו בחמש
 שנים, שוב חינו רוחה.
 כה ו לא יעבד עוד. עבודת משה בפתח, חכל חוזר חיו
 לנגילת שעדים ולשיר ולתענו עגלות, וזה: "שרת חת
 חחיו" (להלן פסוק ט), "עם חחיה", בתרגומנו:
 כו לשמור משמרת. לחנות סביב לחלה ולהקים
 ולהקיד בשעת המסעות:

DISCUSSION

→ also Exodus 13:5–6). Consequently, it was necessary the following year to emphasize that this offering was to be brought each year (based upon the Zohar; Sifrei 67; Ibn Ezra; Ramban).

9:6| **There were men who were impure by means of a corpse:** Naturally, in a camp the size of the Israelite camp there were people who died, and therefore there were individuals who became impure due to contact with a

corpse. However, some identify these impure individuals as specifically those who carried the corpses of Nadav and Avihu, the sons of Aaron, from the Tabernacle following their death (see Sukka 25a–b).

and not present the offering of the Lord at its appointed time among the children of Israel?

- 8 Moses said to them: Stand, and I will hear what the Lord will command you.** This is one of the cases where Moses tells individuals who have consulted with him to wait until God instructs him about how to act in their case. Moses speaks with God “face to face as a man speaks to his neighbor.”¹³ He can therefore initiate dialogue with God in order to request instruction.
- 9 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying:**
- 10 Speak to the children of Israel, saying: When any man shall be impure by means of a corpse, or on a distant journey, far from the Tabernacle or Temple, for you or for your future generations, he shall offer the paschal lamb to the Lord.**
- 11 During the second month, Iyar, on the fourteenth day in the afternoon, exactly one month after the first *Pesah*, they shall offer it; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it, similar to the first *Pesah*.**
- 12 They shall not leave from it until the morning, and they shall not break a bone in it; in accordance with the entire statute of the paschal lamb they shall do it.**

The Travels of the Israelites and the Role of the Cloud

NUMBERS 9:15–23

The cloud above the Tabernacle is a sign that the Divine Presence rests upon the Jewish people, as the Divine Presence is often accompanied by lack of clarity and impaired visibility.¹⁵ The sign of the cloud is noticeable primarily during the day, and therefore at night it is replaced by the appearance of a fire. The movements of the cloud are like a form of sign language by which God directs the Israelites with regard to the pace of their travels through the wilderness, the direction in which they are to move, and the timing of their traveling and encampments.

- 15 On the day that the Tabernacle was erected, the cloud covered the Tabernacle, to the Tent of the Testimony;** the cloud covered only the tent itself, which housed the Tablets of the Testimony, but did not cover the courtyard.¹⁶ **And in the evening there would be upon the Tabernacle as the appearance of fire, until morning.**
- 16 So it would be always: The cloud would cover it by day, and the appearance of fire at night.**
- 17 In accordance with the timing and direction of the ascent of the cloud from upon the Tent,¹⁷ thereafter the children of**

- 13 But the man who is pure, and was not on a journey, and who yet refrains from offering the paschal lamb,^D that person shall be excised from his people; because he did not present the offering of the Lord at its appointed time, that man shall bear his sin.^D**
- 14 If a stranger from another nation shall reside among you, and will offer the paschal lamb to the Lord: In accordance with the statute of the paschal lamb, and in accordance with its ordinance, so shall he do; there shall be one statute for you, for the stranger, and for the native of the land.** The paschal lamb and the festival of Passover commemorate and celebrate the national experience of the exodus from Egypt. Since the convert is not a descendant of those who left Egypt, one might think that he is not included in these commandments. This verse teaches that converts are included, because these commandments do not pertain to an individual or familial experience or memory but to the national experience, and therefore all those who join the nation are included.¹⁴

Israel would travel, and in the place where the cloud would stop, there the children of Israel would encamp.

- 18 According to the directive of the Lord the children of Israel would travel, and according to the directive of the Lord they encamped: As all the days that the cloud would rest upon the Tabernacle they would encamp.**
- 19 When the cloud lingered upon the Tabernacle many days, the children of Israel kept the commission of the Lord, and did not travel.**
- 20 At times, the cloud would be several days upon the**

DISCUSSION

9:13 | **And refrains from offering the paschal lamb:** This commandment and the commandment of circumcision, which represent one’s inclusion in the Israelite nation, are the only two positive commandments which carry a punishment of excision for one who fails to fulfill them.

That man shall bear his sin: Each individual is obligated to sacrifice the paschal lamb at the appointed time. The option of sacrificing the offering a month later is available *ab initio* only to those who could not sacrifice the offering on the fourteenth of Nisan because they were ritually impure, on a distant journey, or due to some other unavoidable circumstance. Nevertheless,

the liability to the punishment of excision mentioned in the verse here for intentionally refraining from offering the paschal lamb is limited by the Sages to where one did not offer the second *Pesah* as well. One who did offer the second *Pesah* is not liable to excision (see *Pesahim* 93a; Rambam, *Hilkhot Korban Pesah* 5:2).

ח אֶת־קָרְבַּן יְהוָה בְּמַעַדוֹ בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים מֹשֶׁה עַמְדוֹ וַאֲשַׁמְעָה
 ט מה־יְצִיגָה יְהוָה לָכֶם:
 י וַיִּדְבֹּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר אִישׁ אִישׁ כִּי־יְהִי
 יא טָמֵא וּלְנֶפֶשׁ אוֹ בְדַרְךְ רַחֲקָה לָכֶם אוֹ לְדַרְתֵיכֶם וְעָשָׂה פֶסַח לַיהוָה: בַּחֹדֶשׁ
 יב הַשְּׁנִי בְּאַרְבַּעַת עָשָׂר יוֹם בֵּין הָעֲרֵבִים יַעֲשׂוּ אֹתוֹ עַל־מִצּוֹת וּמִדְרִים וְאָכְלוּ־הוּ:
 יג לֹא־יִשְׁאֲרוּ מִמֶּנּוּ עַד־בֹּקֶר וְעַצֵּם לֹא יִשְׁבְּרוּ־בוּ כְּכַל־חֻקַּת הַפֶּסַח יַעֲשׂוּ אֹתוֹ:
 יד וְהָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־הוּא טָהוֹר וּבְדַרְךְ לֹא־הָיָה וְחָדַל לַעֲשׂוֹת הַפֶּסַח וּנְבַרְתָּה הַנֶּפֶשׁ
 טו הַהוּא מֵעַמִּיהָ כִּי וְקָרְבַּן יְהוָה לֹא הִקְרִיב בְּמַעַדוֹ חֹטְאוֹ יִשָּׂא הָאִישׁ הַהוּא:
 יז וְכִי־יָגוּר אֶתְכֶם גֵּר וְעָשָׂה פֶסַח לַיהוָה כְּחֻקַּת הַפֶּסַח וּכְמִשְׁפָּטוֹ כֵּן יַעֲשֶׂה חֻקָּה
 יח אַחַת יְהִיֶה לָכֶם וְלַגֵּר וְלַאֲזֵרַח הָאָרֶץ:
 יט וּבְיוֹם הַקֵּיִם אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן
 כ פֶּסַח הָעֲנָן אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן לְאַהֲלֵי הָעֵדוּת וּבְעָרְבֵי יְהִיֶה עַל־הַמִּשְׁכָּן כַּמִּרְאֵה־אֵשׁ
 כא עַד־בֹּקֶר: כֵּן יְהִיֶה תַמִּיד הָעֲנָן יִכְסֶּנּוּ וּמִרְאֵה־אֵשׁ לַיְלָה: וּלְפִי הָעֲלוֹת הָעֲנָן
 כב מֵעַל הָאֹהֶל וְאַחֲרָיִךְ כֵּן יִסְעוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבְמִקּוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכֹּן־שָׁם הָעֲנָן שָׁם
 כג יִחַנּוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: עַל־פִּי יְהוָה יִסְעוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל־פִּי יְהוָה יִחַנּוּ כָּל־יְמֵי אֲשֶׁר
 כד יִשְׁכֹּן הָעֲנָן עַל־הַמִּשְׁכָּן יִחַנּוּ: וּבַהֲאָרֶץ הָעֲנָן עַל־הַמִּשְׁכָּן יָמִים רַבִּים וְשָׁמְרוּ
 כה בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־מִשְׁמַרְתּוֹ יְהוָה וְלֹא יִסְעוּ: וַיִּשׂ אֲשֶׁר יְהִיֶה הָעֲנָן יָמִים מִסְפָּר

רביעי

רש"י

קוֹרְבָּה, תְּקַעוּ וְהִדְעוּ וְתִקְעוּ, וְלֹא הָיָה מְהֻלָּךְ עַד שְׁמִיעָה
 חוֹמֵר: "קוֹמָה ה'" (להלן י' לה) וְנִסְעָה דָגֵל מִנְּהַי יְהוּדָה.
 ז' בְּסִפְרֵי (פד): וְעַל פִּי ה' יִחַנּוּ. כִּינּוּן שֶׁהָיָה יִשְׂרָאֵל חוֹנֵם,
 עֲמוּד הָעֲנָן מִתְמַד וְעוֹלָה וְנִמְשָׁךְ עַל גְּבִי בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה
 כְּמִין סִפָּה, וְלֹא הָיָה נִכְשָׁע עַד שְׁמִיעָה חוֹמֵר: "שׂוֹבָה ה'
 רִבְבוֹת חֲלָפִי יִשְׂרָאֵל" (להלן י' לו) הוּא חוֹמֵר: עַל פִּי ה'
 וְיָבִיד מִשָּׁה (רַחֵם לַהֲלֹן פְּסוּק טז):

כ' וַיִּשׂ. כְּלוֹמַר, וְפָעַמִּים: יָמִים מִסְפָּר. יָמִים מוֹעֲדִים:

חֻקַּת לְלוֹחֲוֹת הָעֵדוּת: יְהִיֶה עַל הַמִּשְׁכָּן. כְּמוֹ הַזֶּה עַל
 הַמִּשְׁכָּן, וְכֵן לָשׁוֹן כָּל הַפְּקָשָׁה:

י' הָעֲלוֹת הָעֲנָן. כְּתוּבָה: "אִסְתַּלְקוּתִי", וְכֵן: "וְנִעְלָה
 הָעֲנָן" (להלן פסוק כז). וְלֹא יִתְכַּן לְכַתּוּב: "וְלִפִּי עֲלוֹת הָעֲנָן
 וְנִעְלָה הָעֲנָן", שְׂחִין זֶה לָשׁוֹן סְלוּחַ חֲלָף צְמִיחַ וְנִעְלָה, כְּמוֹ:
 "הַצִּיָּה עַבְדֵי קִטְנִיָּה כִּבְדֵי חֵישׁ עֲלֶיהָ מִנִּים" (מלכים א' י"ח, מד):

יח' עַל פִּי ה' יִסְעוּ. שְׂחִינֵנוּ בְּמִלְחַמַּת הַמִּשְׁכָּן (כְּדִיִּיתָ
 דְּמִלְחַמַּת הַמִּשְׁכָּן פ"א): כִּינּוּן שֶׁהָיָה יִשְׂרָאֵל נֹסְעִים, הָיָה
 עֲמוּד הָעֲנָן מִתְקַפֵּל וְנִמְשָׁךְ עַל גְּבִי בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה כְּמִין

י' אוֹ בְּדַרְךְ רַחֲקָה. נִקְוֶה עֲלוֹ, לֹמַר לֹא שְׂחִינֵנוּ וְדָחִי,
 חֲלָף שְׂחִינֵנוּ חוֹן לְחִסְקַת הָעֵדוּת כָּל זְמַן שְׂחִינֵנוּ. פֶּסַח
 שְׂעִי - מִצֵּה וְחִמּוֹן עֲמוֹ כְּבִית, וְחִין שֶׁסּוּב, וְחִין חֲסוּד
 כְּמִין חֲלָף עֲמוֹ בְּחִלְתֵנוּ:

יד' וְכִי־יָגוּר אֶתְכֶם גֵּר וְעָשָׂה פֶסַח. יָכוֹל כָּל הַמִּתְעַזֵּר יַעֲשֶׂה
 פֶּסַח מִגֵּד? תְּלַמּוּד לֹמַר: "חֻקָּה חֲחֵת" וְגו', חֲלָף כֵּן
 מִשְׁמַעוֹ: "וְכִי יָגוּר אֶתְכֶם גֵּר" וְכִי עַת לְעֹשֵׂת פֶּסַח עִם
 חֲבֵרָיו, כְּחֻקָּה וּכְמִשְׁפָּט יַעֲשֶׂה:

טו' הַמִּשְׁכָּן לְאַהֲלֵי הָעֵדוּת. הַמִּשְׁכָּן הָעֲשׂוּי לְהִיּוֹת

Tabernacle; according to the directive of the Lord they would encamp, and according to the directive of the Lord they would travel. God's instructions, referred to as the word of the Lord, were relayed by means of the cloud's movements rather than by actual speech.

- 21 **At times the cloud would be in place only from evening until morning; the cloud would ascend in the morning, and they would travel; or the cloud would remain in place for a day and a night, and the cloud would ascend and they would travel.** It is possible that at times the Israelites traveled at night.¹⁸
- 22 **Or two days, or one month, or one year, when the cloud lingered upon the Tabernacle, to rest upon it, the children of Israel would encamp, and would not travel; with its ascent, they would travel.**
- 23 **At the directive of the Lord they would camp, and at the directive of the Lord they would travel;^D the commission of the Lord they kept, according to the directive of the Lord as expressed through the movements of the cloud, at the hand of Moses, who explained to them the significance of the cloud's movements and resting.**

The Trumpets

NUMBERS 10:1–10

The previous passage stated that the departure of the cloud from atop the Tabernacle indicated that it was time for the children of Israel to travel. The manner in which the camp would travel has also been described in Numbers chap. 2. However, in addition to the heavenly sign that it was time to travel, which may not have been seen or correctly interpreted by the nation, an official proclamation by the nation's leadership was necessary, indicating when it was time to travel or to stop. This is alluded to in the concluding verse of the previous passage, which stated that the people traveled "according to the directive of the Lord at the hand of Moses." For this purpose, Moses was commanded to fashion trumpets. The upcoming passage describes a system of communication based upon two basic sounds: A long, straight trumpet blast and a series of short trumpet blasts.

Having mentioned the role of the trumpets in the wilderness, the Torah then goes on to mention a range of uses for the trumpets for future generations. In these functions as well the type of sound produced is significant: The sound of a long, straight blast corresponds to a state of physical stability and mental focus. Conversely, the series of short trumpet blasts is appropriate for situations of physical movement, mental awakening, or for sounding an alarm.



Israelite camp in the wilderness

- 10 **1 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying:**
- 2 Craft for you two silver trumpets; hammered** from one piece of silver, **you shall craft them,** rather than attaching together separate pieces of silver; **they shall be for you for summoning the congregation, and for causing the camps to travel** by notifying them that it is time to begin traveling.
- 3 They shall sound them, and the entire congregation shall assemble to you at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.**
- 4 If they shall sound one trumpet, the princes, the heads of the thousands of Israel, shall assemble to you.**
- 5 You shall sound an alarm, and this sound indicates that the camps that encamp to the east, the banner of the camp of Judah, shall travel.**
- 6 You shall sound an alarm again, and the camps that encamp to the south shall travel;** following that, the camps that encamp to the west shall travel; and finally, the camps that encamp to the north, which are the tribes of the banner of Dan, shall travel. **They shall sound an alarm^D for their travels,** with each series of blasts signaling to one of the sets of camps that it is time to travel.¹⁹ However, according to the Ibn Ezra only the two alarms mentioned explicitly in the verses were blown. These were sounded for the tribes encamped to the east and to the south because the Tabernacle and its vessels traveled with those tribes.

כא על-המשכן על-פי יהוה יחנו ועל-פי יהוה יסעו: ויש אשר יהיה הענן מערב
 כב עד-בִּקְרֹן ונעלה הענן בבִּקְרֹן ונסעו או יומם ולילה ונעלה הענן ונסעו: או-ימים
 כג או-חדש או-ימים בהאריך הענן על-המשכן לשכן עליו יחנו בני-ישראל ולא
 יסעו ובהעלתו יסעו: על-פי יהוה יחנו ועל-פי יהוה יסעו את-משמרת יהוה
 שָׁמְרוּ עַל-פִּי יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם בַּיּוֹם מִשָּׁה:

ד א וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: עשה לך שתי חצוצרות זָסֹף מקשה תעשה ט
 ב אתם והיו לך למקרא העדה ולמסע את-המחנות: ותקעו בהן ונועדו אליך
 ג כִּלְהַעֲדָה אֶל-פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד: וְאִם-בְּאַחַת יִתְקְעוּ וְנוֹעְדוּ אֵלַיךְ הַנְּשִׂאִים
 ד רֹאשֵׁי אֲלֵפֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: וְתִקְעֹתֶם תְּרוּעָה וְנִסְעוּ הַמַּחֲנֹת הַחֲנִים קִדְמָה: וְתִקְעֹתֶם
 ה תְּרוּעָה שְׁנִית וְנִסְעוּ הַמַּחֲנֹת הַחֲנִים תַּיִמְנָה תְּרוּעָה יִתְקְעוּ לְמַסְעֵיהֶם:

רש"י

מה מקרא העדה תוקע בשני פהנים ובשתיקה, שגאמר: "ותקעו בהן" וגו' (לעיל פסוק ג), חף משע המחנות בשתיקה. יכול מה משע המחנות תוקע ומריע ותוקע, חף מקרא העדה תוקע ומריע ותוקע, ומעשה חין חלוק בין מקרא העדה למסע את המחנות? תלמוד לומר: "ובהקהיל את הקהל" וגו', לומר שאין תרועה למקרא העדה, והוא הדיו לנשיאים הרי סימן לשלשום: מקרא העדה בשמים, ושל נשיאים ברחם, וזו חין בזהם תרועה, ומסע המחנות בשמים על ידי תרועה ויתקיעה:

ח ובני אהרן יתקעו. במקראות ובמשעות הללו:

ג ותקעו בהן. בשתיקה, והוא סימן למקרא העדה, שגאמר: "ונעודו חלוק כל העדה חל פתח חהל מועד":

ד ואם באחת יתקעו. הוא סימן למקרא הנשיאים, שגאמר: "ונעודו חלוק הנשיאים", ואף הן יעידתן חל פתח חהל מועד, ומגאמר שנה הוא בח בספרי (ע):

ה ותקעתם תרועה. סימן משע המחנות: תקיעה תרועה ותקיעה, כך הוא גזק בספרי מן המקראות היתרים (ס):

ז ובהקהיל את הקהל וגו'. לפי שהוא חומר: "והיו לך למקרא העדה ולמסע את המחנות" (לעיל פסוק ג),

כב או ימים. שנה, כמו: "ומים תהיה גזלתו" (ויקרא כה, כט):

פרקי

ב למקרא העדה. בשתיקה לדבר עם השנהדיון ושחר העם ותקראם לחסוף חלוק, תקראם על ידי חנוניות ולמסע את המחנות. בשעת סלוק משעות מתקעו בהם לסימן נמיצאת חמה חומר, על פי שלשה היו נסעים: על פי הקדוש ברוך הוא ועל פי משה ועל פי חנוניות: מקשה. מן העשת תעשה בהקשת הקדוש:

DISCUSSION

9:23 | **At the directive of the Lord they would travel:** The many repetitions of the fact that the Jewish people traveled according to the movements of the cloud are meant to express the absolute commitment that was required in order to travel in this manner. The people could never prepare for what was to come next, as they could never know in advance how long they would stay in place, when they would travel and how long they would travel for (see Ramban, 9:19; Sforno, 9:17, 33:2; Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch).

The Ramban adds though that it is possible that the actual journeys through the wilderness

took place only in the methods described in this passage: The cloud stayed in one location either from night to the next morning, for a day and a night, for two days, for a month, for a year, or as in Kadesh Barnea, for many years (see Deuteronomy 1:46).

10:6 | **You shall sound an alarm [tekatem terua]...they shall sound an alarm [terua yitke'u]:** The verb used to indicate sounding the trumpets is a form of the word *tekia*, which can also be used to indicate a long, straight blast. The verse first employs this verb before the word *terua*, which indicates short broken sounds, and

then reverses the order and mentions *terua* before the word *tekia*. The Talmud (*Rosh HaShana* 34a) derives from this that the short, broken sound [*terua*] is both preceded and followed by a long, straight blast [*tekia*], and that this is the procedure on *Rosh HaShana* as well. Perhaps this is hinted at in the next verse as well, which states that, as opposed to when traveling, "when assembling the assembly, you shall sound a blast, but you shall not sound an alarm," meaning that there are long blasts not separated by short blasts.

- 7** When assembling the assembly, you shall sound a blast, but you shall not sound an alarm.
- 8** The sons of Aaron, the priests, shall sound the trumpets; they shall be for you as an eternal statute for your generations. The trumpets referred to in verse 2 above were to be used exclusively by Moses and his generation, based on the repetitive use of the expression “for you” there.²⁰ In contrast, the trumpets referred to here were to be used by the priests in future generations as well. Clearly, these trumpets were not meant to signal that the camp was to start traveling, rather they served other functions, as described below.
- 9** When you go to war in your land against the enemy who oppresses you, you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets;^D

and you shall be remembered before the Lord your God, and you shall be delivered from your enemies. These trumpets were not military trumpets, but the trumpets used in the Temple. Consequently, the blasts are not part of a military procedure, but rather serve as a call to spiritual awakening, similar to a prayer to God.

- 10** The role of the trumpets in the Tabernacle and Temple is not limited to sounding an alarm in case of emergency. **On the day of your rejoicing, at your appointed times, and on your New Moons, you shall sound the trumpets over your communal burnt offerings, and over your communal peace offerings; they shall be a remembrance for you before your God, I am the Lord your God.**

The Camp Departs on a Journey

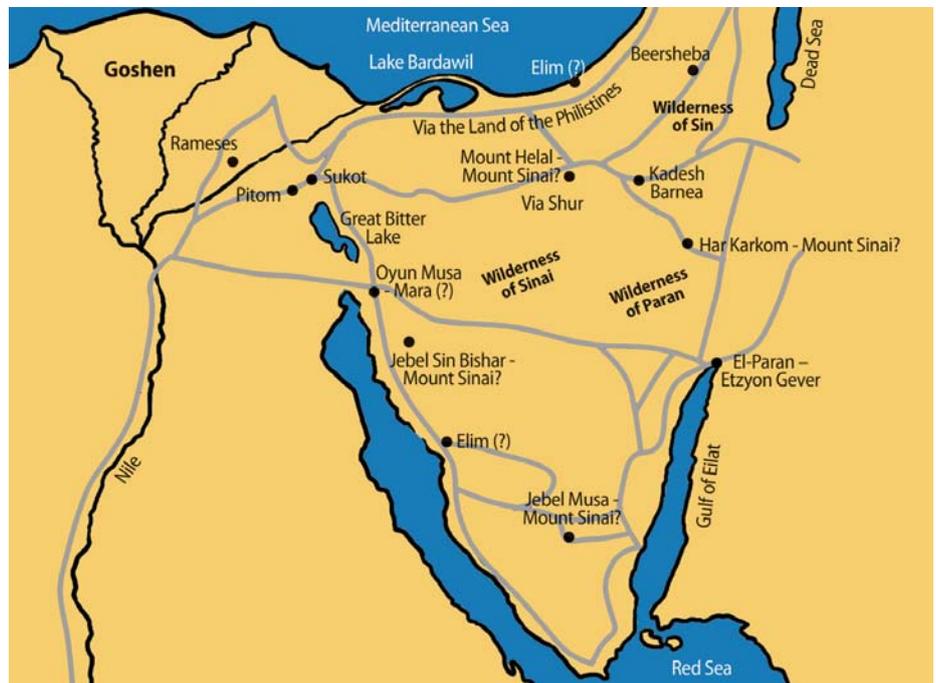
NUMBERS 10:11–34

who are ritually impure due to contact with a corpse sacrifice the paschal lamb on the fourteenth day of the second month, Iyar, and a few days later the cloud ascends from above the Tabernacle, and the Israelites depart on their journey.

The manner in which the camp travels matches the description of the camp stated at the beginning of the book of Numbers (chap. 2). However, that passage prescribed the proper organization of the camp, whereas the upcoming passage describes how that organization is manifested during the first subsequent journey undertaken by the Israelites, as they depart from the wilderness of Sinai. Additionally, this passage describes the role of the Levites during the travels.

The Israelites construct the Tabernacle in the wilderness of Sinai after the giving of the Torah. The Tabernacle is inaugurated on the first day of the first month, Nisan, almost a full year after the exodus from Egypt, at which time the regular service in the Tabernacle commences. Those

- 11** It was during the second year, in the second month, Iyar, on the twentieth of the month, the cloud ascended from upon the Tabernacle of the Testimony.
- Fifth aliya*
- 12** The children of Israel traveled on their journeys from the wilderness of Sinai; the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran. Since the cloud moved forward, the Israelites followed it in the direction of the wilderness of Paran, in the Sinai Peninsula.
- 13** They traveled from the beginning according to the directive of the Lord, as expressed by the movement of the cloud, and at the hand of Moses via the blowing of the trumpets.
- 14** The banner of the camp of the sons of Judah traveled first according to their hosts; and over its host was Nahshon son of Aminadav.
- 15** Over the host of the tribe of the children of Issachar was Netanel son of Tzuar.



Main travel routes in the Sinai Peninsula

וּבִהְקֵיל אֶת־הַקֹּהֵל תִּתְקַעוּ וְלֹא תִרְיעוּ: וּבְנֵי אֶהֱרֹן הַכֹּהֲנִים יִתְקַעוּ בַּחֲצֹצְרוֹת
וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לְחֻקַּת עֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם: וְכִי־תָבֹאוּ מִלְחָמָה בְּאֶרְצְכֶם עַל־הַיָּצֵר הַיָּצִיר
אֶתְכֶם וְהִרְעַתֶם בַּחֲצֹצְרוֹת וְנִזְפַרְתֶּם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְנוֹשַׁעְתֶּם מֵאִיְבֵיכֶם:
וּבַיּוֹם שֶׁמַּחַתְכֶם וּבְמוֹעֲדֵיכֶם וּבְרֵאשֵׁי חֲדָשֶׁכֶם וּתְקַעְתֶּם בַּחֲצֹצְרוֹת עַל עֲלִיתֵיכֶם
וְעַל זִבְחֵי שְׁלָמֵיכֶם וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לְזִפְרוֹן לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:
וַיְהִי בַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁנִית בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁנִי בְּעֶשְׂרִים בַּחֹדֶשׁ נִעְלָה הָעֲנָן מֵעַל מִשְׁכַּן
הָעֵדוּת: וַיִּסְעוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִסְעֵיהֶם מִמִּדְבַר סִינַי וַיִּשְׁכְּנוּ הָעֲנָן בְּמִדְבַר פָּאֲרֹן:
וַיִּסְעוּ בְּרֵאשִׁית שָׁנָה עַל־פִּי יְהוָה בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה: וַיִּסַּע דָּגַל מַחֲנֵה בְנֵי־יְהוּדָה בְּרֵאשִׁית
לְצַבְּאוֹתָם וְעַל־צֶבָאוֹ נַחֲשׁוֹן בֶּן־עַמִּינָדָב: וְעַל־צֶבָא מַטֵּה בְנֵי יִשָּׁשְׁכָר נְתַנְאֵל
בֶּן־צֹעֶר: וְעַל־צֶבָא מַטֵּה בְנֵי זְבוּלֹן אֶלְיָאָב בֶּן־חֵלֹן: וְהוֹרֵד הַמִּשְׁכָּן וְנִסְעוּ
בְנֵי־גֵרְשׁוֹן וּבְנֵי מְרָרִי נְשָׂאֵי הַמִּשְׁכָּן: וְנִסַּע דָּגַל מַחֲנֵה רְאוּבֵן לְצַבְּאוֹתָם וְעַל־
צֶבָאוֹ אֶלְיָצוּר בֶּן־שִׁדְיָאוּר: וְעַל־צֶבָא מַטֵּה בְנֵי שִׁמְעוֹן שְׁלֹמִיאֵל בֶּן־צוּרִישַׁדַּי:

חמישי

רש"י

יז | והוריד המשכן. פיון שנסע דגל יהודה, נכנסו חֲהֲרֹן וּבְנֵי וּפְרָקוֹ חֵט הַפְּרִקֵת וְכִסּוֹ בַּה חֵט הַחֲרוֹן, שְׁנֵי מַר: "וּבִיא חֲהֲרֹן וּבְנֵי בְּנִסְעֵה הַמַּחֲנֵה" (לעיל ד, ה), וּבְנֵי גֵרְשׁוֹן וּבְנֵי מְרָרִי שׁוֹרְקוֹן הַמַּשְׁכָּן וְטוֹעֲנֵן חוֹתוֹ פְּעֻלּוֹת, וְהַחֲרוֹן וְכָלִי הַקֹּדֶשׁ שֶׁל מִשְׁחָ פְּנֵי קֹהֵל עוֹמְדִים מְקֻסִּין וְנִתְנֵן עַל

חֲסֵר עֲשָׂה גְמִים עֲשֵׂי בְּחֹרֶב, שְׁהָרִי בְּרֹאשׁ חֲלֵשׁ סִינַי חֲנוּ שֶׁס (שְׁמוֹת יט, ח) וְלֹא נִסְעוּ עַד עֲשָׂרִים בְּחִיר לְשָׁנָה הַבְּחִיָּה: יב | לְמִסְעֵיהֶם. כְּמִשְׁפֵּט הַמַּפְלָשׁ לְמַסַּע דָּגְלֵיהֶם מִי לְחֲשׁוֹן וּמִי חֲחֲרוֹן. בְּמִדְבַר פָּאֲרֹן. קִבְלוֹת הַתַּחֲזִיחַ בְּמִדְבַר פִּיחֹן הָיָה, וְשֶׁס חֲנוּ מִמַּסַּע זֶה:

יז על עֲלִיתֵיכֶם. בְּקִרְבָּן עֲבוֹר הַקְּתוּב מִדְּבַר: אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם. מִכָּחַן לְמַדְנֵי מַלְכוּיּוֹת עִם זְכוּנוֹת וְשׁוֹפְרוֹת, שְׁנֵי מַר: "וַתִּקְעֹתֶם" - הָרִי שׁוֹפְרוֹת, "לְחֲרוֹן" - הָרִי זְכוּנוֹת, "חֲנוּ ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם" - זו מַלְכוּיּוֹת וְכוּ': יא | בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁנִי. נִמְצְאוּת חֲתָה חוֹמֵר, שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר חֲלֵשׁ

- 16 Over the host of the tribe of the children of Zebulun was Eliav son of Helon. These three tribes, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun, comprised the banner of the camp of Judah.
- 17 When the banner of the camp of Judah began traveling, the Tabernacle was dismantled, and the sons of Gershon and the sons of Merari, the bearers of the Tabernacle, traveled.

- The sons of Gershon carried primarily the textile portions of the Tabernacle, and the sons of Merari carried the beams and the other components of the structure of the Tabernacle.
- 18 The banner of the camp of Reuben traveled according to their hosts; and over its host was Elitzur son of Shede'ur.
- 19 Over the host of the tribe of the children of Simeon was Shelumiel son of Tzurishadai.

DISCUSSION

10:9 | **The trumpets:** The function of the trumpets was not to provide musical accompaniment to the Temple service, which was accomplished by other musical instruments used in the Temple. Rather, the trumpet blasts served as calls for attention or to action on the part of the Jewish people or God, similar to the *shofar*

blasts on Rosh HaShana or at the beginning of the Jubilee Year (see *Sefer HaHinnukh* 384). Both the trumpets and *shofar* were blown in the Temple, and the Sages addressed the differences between the manners of blowing each of these instruments (see *Rosh HaShana* 26b–27a). Clearly, the sound produced by the trumpets

was different than that produced by the *shofar*, both because of the different materials from which these instruments were made and because of their different shapes, as the trumpets were straight and the *shofar* was curved, at least according to the opinion in the Talmud accepted in Jewish law.

- 20 Over the host of the tribe of the children of Gad was Elyasaf son of De'uel.** These three tribes, Reuben, Simeon and Gad, comprised the banner of the camp of Reuben.
- 21** After the Tabernacle had been dismantled and the banner of Reuben traveled, **the Kehatites, bearers of the sacred vessels of the Sanctuary traveled; they, the sons of Gershon and Merari,²¹ erected the Tabernacle before their arrival.**
- 22 The banner of the camp of the children of Ephraim traveled according to their hosts; and over its host was Elishama son of Amihud.**
- 23 Over the host of the tribe of the children of Manasseh was Gamliel son of Pedatzur.**
- 24 Over the host of the tribe of the children of Benjamin was Avidan son of Gidoni.** These three tribes, Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin comprised the banner of the camp of Ephraim.
- 25 The banner of the camp of the children of Dan, the rear guard of all the camps, traveled following the banner of the camp of Ephraim according to their hosts; and over its host was Ahiezer son of Amishadai.**
- 26 Over the host of the tribe of the children of Asher was Pagiel son of Okhran.**
- 27 Over the host of the tribe of the children of Naphtali was Ahira son of Einan.**
- 28 These are the travels of the children of Israel according to their hosts; and they traveled.**
- 29 Moses said to Hovav son of Re'uel the Midyanite, father-in-law of Moses: We are traveling to the place that the Lord said: I will give it to you; you should also come with us, and we will be good to you^d by giving you a portion of the land;**

as the Lord has spoken good about Israel. It is not clear whether Hovav or Re'uel is the second name of Yitro, Moses' father-in-law. Hovav may have been Tzipora's brother, who was the head of the family at that time; alternatively, it is possible that Hovav was Yitro and Re'uel was Tzipora's grandfather.²²

- 30 He, Hovav, said to him: I will not go with you; rather, to my land, and to the land of my birth, I will go.** You have hosted me honorably in your camp, but I have my own home to which I will return.
- 31 He, Moses, said: Please do not leave us; for since you know our encampment in the wilderness, you shall be for us as eyes.** I am not inviting you just for your benefit but for ours as well. Hovav was a Midyanite, and although the Midyanites had permanent settlements, according to one assessment they were essentially nomads. Consequently, Hovav could assist the Jewish people in their journey through the wilderness.²³
- 32 It shall be, if you go with us, that good that the Lord shall grant us, we will be good to you.** The Torah does not relate the conclusion of this story. It is possible that some members of Hovav's family returned to their land, however, it is clear that some continued to journey with the Israelites.²⁴
- 33 They, the Israelites, traveled from the mountain of the Lord a journey of three days and the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord was traveling before them a journey of three days, to scout for them a resting place.** Additionally, the Israelites did not need to determine which path would be the easiest to travel on foot as the ark traveled before them and led them on the best path.

DISCUSSION

10:29| **Come with us, and we will be good to you:** In fact, at least a part of Yitro's family did travel with the Israelites to the Land of Israel.

These people were known as the Kenites and Rekhavites, and lived on their own parcels of land in Israel until the end of the First Temple era

(see Judges 1:16; Radak; Judges 4:11; Jeremiah 35:2; I Chronicles 2:55; *Sota* 11a; *Sanhedrin* 104a).

34 The cloud of the Lord was upon them by day, when they traveled from the camp. The cloud covered the Israelite camp

and shielded them during the daytime hours in the desert, and when they traveled it would move with them.

Moses' Prayers upon the Movement and Resting of the Ark

NUMBERS 10:35–36

When the children of Israel depart on their journey and arrive at a resting place, they will blow Moses' trumpets. Moses recites prayers to accompany the departure of the ark from its place in the Holy of Holies and its return to the Holy of Holies. According to tradition, these two verses are surrounded by unique symbols in the form of a backward *nun*, which serve like parentheses. Perhaps this is because the content of these two verses is not specific to the first journey but applies to all the journeys of the children of Israel through the wilderness, and therefore should have been mentioned earlier. Some saw these verses as a small book in their own right, which also divides the book of Numbers into two sections: The first part of Numbers deals primarily with the arrangement of the camp around the Tabernacle and the preparations for traveling through the wilderness, and the rest of Numbers describes the upcoming travels through the wilderness, with the good and bad times that accompanied them.

35 It was when the ark traveled at the beginning of a journey, *Sixth* **Moses said: Arise Lord, and may Your enemies,** the enemies of Israel, **be dispersed and may those who hate You flee from before You.** The Ark of the Covenant, which contained the tablets, represented God's Divine Presence in the world, *aliya*

and therefore its movement from its place of resting served as a threat to the enemies of the children of Israel.²⁵

36 When it rested, he said: D Rest O Lord,²⁶ among **the myriad thousands of Israel.** Moses would pray that God would rest His Presence in the midst of the people.²⁷

Tavera and Kivrot HaTaava

NUMBERS 11:1–35

This chapter begins to tell the story of the hardships encountered by the children of Israel in the wilderness. The longer their stay in the wilderness continues, the more difficult their lives become. The Israelites do not have any obvious activities with which to occupy themselves, and their futures are murky. In such a state, it is no surprise that various complaints continuously surface.

- 11 1 The people were** expressing their distress, as do **mourners;** the verse does not specify what they were complaining about, but **it was evil in the ears of the Lord. The Lord heard it, His wrath was enflamed** over their complaints, **and the fire of the Lord burned in their midst, and consumed the edge of the camp.**
- 2 The people cried out to Moses** about the supernatural fire consuming the camp; **Moses prayed to the Lord, and the fire subsided.**
- 3 He called the name of that place** at the edge of the camp²⁸ **Tavera, because the fire of the Lord burned [ba'ara] in their midst.**
- 4** In continuation of the nation's complaining, the verse relates: **The mob that was in their midst expressed a craving;** this mob was comprised of slaves from other nations who were unhappy in Egypt and joined the exodus of the children of Israel, but never became an organic part of the nation.²⁹ Their talk of food aroused a desire and even a feeling of need.³⁰ **And the children of Israel,** who did not initiate this complaint, were nonetheless influenced by the mob, and they **responded and wept as well and said: Who will feed us meat?** The primary sustenance for the children of Israel in the wilderness was the

manna. Although some had sheep, they refrained from slaughtering them for food due to the difficulty in raising sheep in the wilderness and replacing the ones that had been slaughtered.

- 5** The children of Israel did not suffice with desiring meat; they aroused nostalgic feelings about their lives in Egypt, ignoring the subjugation and suffering they experienced there. **We remember the fish that we would eat in Egypt for free;** presumably they did not receive fish from Pharaoh but caught them on their own in the Nile and its tributaries. We also remember fondly **the cucumbers,^b the watermelons, the leeks,^b the onions, and the garlic** that we ate in Egypt. All of these foods stimulate the appetite, and the manna did not have a taste similar to any of these.
- 6 But now our soul is parched; there is nothing at all; nothing**



Adzhur melon



Leek

DISCUSSION

10:36| **When it rested, he said:** Moses' prayers continue to be recited even nowadays in synagogues. The first verse is recited when the Torah scroll is removed from the ark and the second verse is recited when it is returned to the ark after it has been read.

וַעֲנֵן יְהוָה עֲלֵיהֶם יוֹמָם בְּנִסְעֵם מִן־הַמַּחֲנֶה: ָ וַיְהִי בְּנִסְעֵי הָאָרֶץ שִׁשִּׁי וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה קוֹמָה | יְהוָה וַיִּפְצוּ אִיבֵיךָ וַיִּנְסוּ מִשְׁנֵאֵיךָ מִפְּנֵיךָ: וּבְנַחֲהָ יֹאמַר שׁוּבָה יְהוָה רַבְבוֹת אֶלְפֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ַ

וַיְהִי הָעַם בְּמַתְאֲנָנִים רַע בְּאָזְנֵי יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה וַיַּיְחֵר אָפוֹ וַתִּבְעַר־רַבִּם אֵשׁ יְהוָה וַתֹּאכַל בְּקִצֵּה הַמַּחֲנֶה: וַיִּצְעַק הָעַם אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל מֹשֶׁה אֶל־יְהוָה וַתִּשְׁקַע הָאֵשׁ: וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם־הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא תִּבְעֵרָה כִּי־בְעֵרָה בָּם אֵשׁ יְהוָה: וְהָאִסְפָּסָף אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבּוֹ הִתְאוּוּ תֹאוּהוּ וַיִּשְׁבוּ וַיִּבְכּוּ גַם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִי יֹאכְלֵנוּ בַּשָּׂדֶה: זָכְרָנוּ אֶת־הַדָּגָה אֲשֶׁר־נֹאכַל בְּמִצְרַיִם חֲנַם אֶת הַקִּשְׁאִים וְאֶת הָאֵבֶטְחִים וְאֶת־הַחֲצִיר וְאֶת־הַבְּצָלִים וְאֶת־הַשּׁוּמִים: וְעַתָּה נַפְשָׁנוּ יִבְשֶׁה אֵין

רשי

ד | והאספסוף. חלו ערב רב שנאספו עליהם צמחים ממוצרים: וישבו. גם בני ישראל ויבנו עממה: מי יאכלנו בשד. וכי לא היה להם פשר? והלא פבר נאמר: וגם ערב רב עלה חתם ונאן וקבר" וגו' (שמות יב, לח) והם תאמר חבלום, והלא נכנסתם לארץ נאמר: "ומקנה רב היה לבני דחובך" וגו' (להלן לב, ח). חלף שמבקשים עלולה:

ה | אשר נאכל במצרים חנם. חם תאמר שמערים נותנים להם דגים חנם, והלא פבר נאמר: "ותבן לא יתן לכם" (שמות י, יח). חם תבן לא היו נותנים להם חנם, דגים היו נותנים להם חנם? ומהו חומר: "חנם?" חנם מן המצוות: את הקשאים. חמר רבי שמעון: מפני מה הפגן משתנה לכל דבר חוץ מאלו? מפני שהן קשים למניקות: חומרם לחשה: חל תחבלי שום וצגל, מפני התנוק. משל למלך כו' [בשר ודם שמסר בנו לפידגו, והיה יושב ומפקדו וחומר לו, הנראה שלא יחבל מאכל רע ולא ישתה משקה רע. ובכל כך היה הבן ההוא מתרעם על חבו לומר, לא מפני שאהבנו, חלף מפני שאי חפסר לו שאוכל]. פדחיתך בספרי (פ): הקשאים. הם קוקומבר"ש פלע: אבטחים. בודיק"ש: החציר. פרישון, טוריל"ש, ותרגמו: "ית בונינח" וכו':

פרק יא

א | ויהי העם במתאננים. חיון העם חלף קשים, וכן הוא חומר: "מה חעשה לעם הזה" (שמות יז, ד) וחומר: "העם הזה הרע" (ירמיה י, י). וכשהם פשרים קרואים עמיו, שנאמר: "שלח עמיו" (שמות ט, טז), עמיו מה עשית לך" (מכה ג, א). במתאננים. חיון מתאוננים חלף לשון עלולה. מבקשים עלולה היחך פלש מחברי המקום, וכן הוא חומר פמשון: "כי תחנה הוא מבקש" (ספטיס יד, ד): רע באזני ה'. תנחה שהיא רעה באזני ה', שמתפננים שפגח באזני ויקנט. חמר: חיו לנג, פמה לבטנו פדךך הנה, שלשה ימים שלח נחנו מעגו הדךך: ויחר אפו. חט הייתי מתפגן לטובתכם שתפנסו לארץ מנד: בקצה המחנה. במקצוץ שפיהם לשפלות, חלו ערב רב. רבי שמעון פן מנסיו חומר: פקענים שפיהם וצדולים:

ב | ויצעק העם אל משה. משל למלך פשר וקם שפעם על פגו, והלך הפן חצל חוקבו של חבו וחמר לו: יח ופקש עלי מחפח: ותשקע האש. שקעה במקומה פחךך, שאלו חזקה לחחת הרוחות היתה מתפלת והולכת כל חותן הריח:

לד | וענן ה' עליהם יומם. שקעה עננים פתונים פמסעיהם, חרפעה מחרפע רוחות, וחחד למעלה וחחד למטה, וחחד לפניהם, מנניך חת הגבוה ומגביה חת הנמוך והורג נחשים ועקרפים:

לה | ויהי בנסע הארץ. עשה לו סימנות מלפניו ומלאחריו לומר שאין זה מקומו; ולמה נכתב פחךך פדי להפסיק פון פקענות לפקענות וכו', פדחיתך פכל פתני הקדש' (שבת טו עב - טז ע"א): קומה ה'. לפי שהיה מקדים לפניהם מהלך שלשת ימים, היה משה חומר: עמד והמתן לנו ואל תתרחק יותר. פמדקש תנחומא פויקהל (י): ויצעו איבויך. ומנסו משנאויך. חלו הדוקים: משנאויך. חלו שונחי ישראל, שכל השונח חת ישראל שונח חת מי שאמר והיה העולם, שנאמר: "ומשנאויך נשאו ראש" (תהלים פג, א), ומי חס? על עמך יערימו סוד" (ס ד):

לו | שובה ה'. מנחם תרגמו לשון מרגוע, וכן: "בשונה ונחת תנעון" (ישעיה ל, טו): רבבות אלפי ישראל. מצד שאין השכינה שוכה פנשרחל פחיותים משני חלמים ושתני קבבות:

BACKGROUND

11:5 | Cucumbers [kishuim]: The Aramaic translations identify this as the Adzhur melon, otherwise known as the Armenian cucumber (Scientific name: Cucumis melo var. chate), a type of melon from the gourd family, which is

similar to a long, hairy cucumber. The Greek and Latin translations identify this as the cucumber (Scientific name: Cucumis sativus).

Leeks [hatzir]: This is not the same as the modern Hebrew term hatzir, which means hay. According to the commentaries, hatzir in this verse refers to the leek, Allium porrum, which is related to the onion.

but the manna before our eyes. The manna is our only source of sustenance. The children of Israel forgot about the decrees of Pharaoh, and their own subservience and suffering, while remembering only the aroma and taste of their old cuisine.

- 7 The Torah now provides background detail that is not part of the complaint of the children of Israel: **The manna that they complained about was like a round coriander seed^B in size and shape, and its appearance was like the appearance of bdellium;** it was white, like bdellium, rather than brown like coriander.³¹
- 8 **The people roamed about, and gathered and ground it in a mill, or crushed it in a mortar, or boiled it in a pot,^B and made it into cakes and its taste was like the taste of a cake moist with oil.** The manna was not dry; its taste was similar to that of a food saturated with oil.
- 9 **With the falling of the dew upon the camp at night, the manna fell upon it.**
- 10 **Moses heard the people weeping, according to their families, each man at the entrance of his tent.** This was not a mass demonstration; rather people saw each other weeping, which spread, along with the sense of lacking and longing, throughout the nation. **The wrath of the Lord was greatly enflamed and in the eyes of Moses it was bad** that the nation was weeping.
- 11 **Moses said to the Lord: Why have You mistreated Your servant and why have I not found favor in Your eyes, to place the burden of this entire people upon me?** Am I so unfavorable in Your eyes that you have given me such a difficult job?

- 12 **Did I conceive this entire people; did I give birth to it, that You should say to me: Carry it in your bosom, as a nurse carries the suckling babe to the land with regard to which You took an oath to its forefathers?** Moses compares the people to dependent children, and asks God why he has been tasked with the responsibility to care for them. He feels that this task is beyond his natural abilities.



Detail from a tablet found in Nineveh, depicting an Israelite woman carrying an infant, eighth century BCE

- 13 **From where do I have meat to give to this entire people that they cry to me, saying: Give us meat, and we shall eat.** Their request is unreasonable and I have no way to fulfill it.
- 14 **I cannot bear this entire people alone, because it is too heavy for me.**
- 15 **If this is what You do to me, please kill me,^D if I have found favor in Your eyes and let me not see my wretchedness.** I would prefer that you kill me so that I will not have to remain in this wretched state.³²



Coriander plant



Coriander seed



Pot



Mortar



Mill

BACKGROUND

11:7| **Coriander seed [zera gad]:** This is identified by commentaries and scholars as coriander (Scientific name: *Coriandrum sativum*), an annual herb in the family Apiaceae. It grows to a

height of 50 cm and has round seeds that have a diameter of 2–4 mm.

11:8| **Pot [parur]:** The word *parur* refers to a pot used for cooking (see Judges 6:19). Based upon Ben Sira (13:2), it appears that it is an earthenware pot rather than an iron pot.

כָּל בְּלֹתֵי אֶל־הַמֶּן עֵינֵינוּ: וְהַמֶּן כְּזֶרַע־גֶּד הוּא וְעֵינֵנו כְּעֵינֵי הַבְּדֹלָח: שְׁטוֹ הָעַם וְלִקְטוֹ וְטַחְנוּ בְּרַחִים אֹז דָּכוּ בַמִּדְבָּה וּבִשְׁלוֹ בַפְּרוֹר וְעָשׂוּ אֹתוֹ עֲגוֹת וְהָיָה טַעְמוֹ כְּטַעַם לֶשֶׁד הַשָּׁמֶן: וּבְרַדַּת הַטַּל עַל־הַמַּחְנֶה לִילָה יֵרֵד הַמֶּן עָלָיו: וַיִּשְׁמַע מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הָעַם בְּכֹה לְמִשְׁפַּחְתּוֹ אִישׁ לִפְתָּח אֹהֶלוֹ וַיַּחֲרֹאֲף יְהוָה מְאֹד וּבְעֵינָי מֹשֶׁה רָע: וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־יְהוָה לָמָּה הִרְעַתָּ לְעַבְדְּךָ וּלְמַה לְאַ־מְצַתִּי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ לְשׁוֹם אֶת־מִשְׁאֵל כָּל־הָעַם הִזָּה עָלַי: הֲאֵנֹכִי הָרִיתִי אֶת כָּל־הָעַם הִזָּה אִם־אֵנֹכִי יִלְדֵתִיהוּ כִּי־תֹאמַר אֵלַי שָׂאֵהוּ בְּחִיקְךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר יִשָּׂא הָאָמֶן אֶת־הַיֶּנֶק עַל הָאֹדְמָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לְאַבְתָּיו: מֵאִין לִי בִשָׂר לִתֵּת לְכָל־הָעַם הִזָּה כִּי־יִבְכּוּ עָלַי לֵאמֹר תִּנָּה־לָנוּ בִשָׂר וְנֹאכְלָהּ: לֹא־אוּכַל אֲנֹכִי לְבַדִּי לְשַׂאת אֶת־כָּל־הָעַם הִזָּה כִּי כִבֵּד מִמֶּנִּי: וְאִם־כִּבְּהָ אֶת־עֲשֵׂה לִי הֲרֹגֵנִי נָא הֲרֹג אִם־מִצַּאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ וְאֶל־אַרְאֶה בְּרַעְתִּי:

רש"י

יב | כי תאמר אלי... שחתה חומר חלי: שיהו בחיקך, והיכן חמר לו כן? לך נחה חית העם" (שמות לב, לד) ויאמר: "ויעם חל בני ישראל" (שם ו, יא), על מנת שיהיו סוקלים חתכם ומחזקין חתכם: על האדמה אשר נשבעת לאבותיו. חתה חומר לי לשחתם בחיקי.

טו | ואם כבה את עשה לי. תשש כחו של משה כנקבה כשהקלהו הקדוש ברוך הוא הפקענות שהיא עתיד להביא עליהם על זאת, חמר לפענו: חס פן, הקגע תחלה: ואל אראה ברעתי. 'ברעתי' היה לו לכתב, חלח שפנה הפתע, וזה אחד מתקוני סופרים בתורה לכני ולתקון לשון.

וכותננו פקעוהו לשון שדים, חך חין וענו שדים חצל שמן. וחי חפשי לומר "לשד השמן" לשון "וישמנו נהרון" (דברים לב, טו), שחס בן היה המ"ם נקוד קמן קטן (ערי) וטעמו למטה פחת המ"ם, עכשיו שהמ"ם נקוד פתח קטן (סגול) והטעם פחת הש"י, לשון שמן הוא, והש"י הנקודה בקמן גדול וחינה נקודה בפתח קטן מפני שהוא סוף פסוק. דבר חכה, "לשד" לשון נוטריקון ל"ש שמן ד'בש, פעשה הנלושה בשמן וקטופה בדבש. ותרגום של חונקלוס דמתרגום: "דל"ש במסחר" נוטה לפתרון של דוגש. שהעשה הנלושה בשמן לחלחית שמן יש בה.

י | בכה למשפחתיו. משפחות משפחות נחשבים ובוכים, לפקסם תרעמתן בגלוי. וכותננו חמר: "למשפחתנו", על עסקי משפחות, על עריות הנחשדות להם.

ו | אל המן עינינו. מן פשחה, מן בערב: ו | והמן כזרע גד. מי שאמר זה לח חמר זה. ישחל חומרים: "בלתי חל המן עינינו", והקדוש ברוך הוא הקטיב בתורה: "והמן כזרע גד" וגו', כלומר, לחו בחי עולם על מה מתלוננים בני, והמן כך וכן הוא חסוב: כזרע גד. עגל כגדח, זע קוליינדר: בדלח. שם חבן טובה, קרישט"ל.

ח | שטו. חין 'שטו' חלח לשון טיול, חיסכנייה, בלח עמל: וטחנו ברחים וגו'. לח ונד ברחים ולא בקדקה ולא במדוכה, חלח משתנה היה טעמו לנטחון ולגזוזין ולמקשלין: בפרור. קדקה: לשד השמן. לחלוח של שמן כך פקשו דוגש ודומה לו: "נהפך לשדי פחרכני חין" (תהלים לב, ד) והלמ"ד יסוד, נהפך לחלחוי פחרכני חין

DISCUSSION

11:15 | **If this is what You do to me, please kill me:** Moses responded harshly because he was unable to understand the people around him. He was already more than eighty years old and had lived in solitude, engaged in a spiritual

search, even before receiving his divine charge. In fact, the *Zohar* (Balak, section 3, 187b–188a) compares Moses in a society of men to a fish out of water. Moreover, Moses was able to live for forty days and nights without food or drink

(Exodus 34:28); he therefore had a difficult time comprehending people who were concerned that they did not have food for the next day, and whose whole complaint focused on nostalgia for the tastes of certain foods.

- 16** The Lord said to Moses: Gather to Me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people, and its officers; and you shall take them to the Tent of Meeting, and they will stand there with you. Take the men who are most prominent and respected, and who function as the leaders of the people.
- 17** I will descend and speak with you there, and I will draw from the spirit of prophecy that is upon you, as well as a portion of your spiritual character, and I will place it upon them; they shall bear with you^d the burden of the people, and you shall not bear it alone.
- 18** To the people you shall say: Prepare yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat; for you have wept in the ears of the Lord, saying: Who will feed us meat, as it is better for us in Egypt; and the Lord will give you meat, and you shall eat.
- 19** You shall have so much meat that you shall eat not one day, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days.
- 20** Until a month of days, until it comes out of your nose and you regurgitate it, and it shall be loathsome for you; the Lord is angry with you because you despised the Lord who is in your midst, and you wept before Him, saying: Why is it that we left Egypt?
- 21** Moses said: More than six hundred thousand men on foot is the people that I am in their midst, and You said: I will give them meat, and they will eat for a month of days.
- 22** Will it be possible to gather enough flocks and cattle to be slain for them and it suffice for them?^d If all the fish of the sea will be gathered for them, will it suffice for them?
- 23** The Lord said to Moses: Shall the hand of the Lord be inadequate? Now you will see whether My statement will transpire for you or not.
- 24** Moses emerged from the Tent of Meeting³³ and spoke the words of the Lord to the people, informing them that they would receive meat the following day; he gathered seventy men of the elders of the people, and he had them stand around the Tent.
- 25** The Lord descended in the cloud, and spoke to him, and simultaneously drew from the spirit that was upon him, and put it upon the seventy elders;^d it was, as the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, but did not continue. These elders prophesied at that time but did not become regular prophets.

DISCUSSION

11:17 | **They shall bear with you:** The elders were more embedded in the nation than Moses was, and therefore they would be able to speak to the people and to calm them (see Ramban). Here they were to undergo a type of partial spiritual cloning process in which they would receive some of the inner character of Moses so that they would be able to comprehend the will of God. In this manner the elders would become like an extension of Moses; they would not merely receive instructions from him, but would identify with him.

The institution of the High Court of seventy-one Sages, or Sanhedrin, that would function

during the Second Temple era, would be a continuation of this group of seventy elders that was presided over by Moses. It was they who would communicate the message of Moses to future generations (see Mishna *Sanhedrin* 1:6; see also Ezekiel 8:11).

11:22 | **Will flocks and cattle be slain for them and it suffice for them:** Despite the fact that God was providing manna for His people on a daily basis, Moses had difficulty believing that sufficient meat could be found for all. Unlike manna, which was food provided in a supernatural manner, the people wanted meat, which exists in the natural realm. Moses saw no way

to procure meat in the wilderness in a natural fashion.

11:25 | **And drew from the spirit that was upon him, and put it upon the seventy elders:** The seventy elders were exposed to prophecy by being included in the prophecy that was experienced by Moses at that time. In this manner they came to understand the nature of Moses' experience and to appreciate his greatness. From then on, they would respect him and his decisions, they would be loyal to him, and would fight his battles (see Ramban, 11:17).

י וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה אִסְפֹּה־לִי שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ מִזְקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יִדְעָתָּ כִּי־הֵם זְקֵנֵי הָעָם וְשִׁטְרֵיו וְלִקְחָתָּ אִתָּם אֶל־אַהֲל מוֹעֵד וְהִתְיַצְבוּ שָׁם עִמָּךְ: וַיְרַדְתִּי וּדְבַרְתִּי עִמָּךְ שָׁם וְאַצְלֹתִי מִן־הָרוּחַ אֲשֶׁר עָלֶיךָ וְשָׁמַתִּי עֲלֵיהֶם וְנִשְׂאוּ אִתָּךְ בְּמִשְׁאֵ הָעָם וְלֹא־תִשָּׂא אִתָּה לְבַדְּךָ: וְאֶל־הָעָם תֹּאמַר הִתְקַדְּשׁוּ לְמַחֲרָ וְאִכְלַתֶם בֶּשֶׂר כִּי בְכִיתֶם בְּאֶזְנֵי יְהוָה לֵאמֹר מִי יֵאכְלֵנוּ בֶּשֶׂר כִּי־טוֹב לָנוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם וְנָתַן יְהוָה לָכֶם בֶּשֶׂר וְאִכְלַתֶם: לֹא יוֹם אֶחָד תֹּאכְלוּן וְלֹא יוֹמִים וְלֹא חֲמִשָּׁה יוֹמִים וְלֹא עֶשְׂרֵה יוֹמִים וְלֹא עֶשְׂרִים יוֹם: עַד וְחָדָשׁ יוֹמִים עַד אֲשֶׁר־יֵצֵא מֵאִפְכֶם וְהָיָה לָכֶם לזֶרָא יַעַן כִּי־מֵאִסְתֶּם אֶת־יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבְּכֶם וְתַבְּנֹו לְפָנָיו לֵאמֹר לָמָּה זֶה יֵצְאוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם: וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה שִׁש־מֵאוֹת אֶלְפֵי רַגְלֵי הָעָם אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי בְּקִרְבּוֹ וְאַתָּה אָמַרְתָּ בֶּשֶׂר אֶתֶּן לָהֶם וְאָכְלוּ חֹדֶשׁ יוֹמִים: הֲצֵאָן וּבִקְרָא יִשְׁחַט לָהֶם וּמֵצֵא לָהֶם אִם אֶת־כָּל־דָּגֵי הַיָּם יֵאֱסֹף לָהֶם וּמֵצֵא לָהֶם: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה הִיךְ יְהוָה תִּקְצֹר עֲתָה תִרְאֶה הַיְקָרְךָ דְּבָרֵי אִסְלָא: וַיֵּצֵא מֹשֶׁה וַיְדַבֵּר אֶל־הָעָם אֵת דְּבָרֵי יְהוָה וַיֵּאֱסֹף שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ מִזְקְנֵי הָעָם וַיַּעֲמֵד אִתָּם סְבִיבַת הָאֹהֶל: וַיֵּרַד יְהוָה וַיַּעֲנֵן וַיְדַבֵּר אֵלָיו וַיֹּאצֵּל מִן־הָרוּחַ אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו וַיִּתֵּן עַל־שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ הַזְּקֵנִים וַיְהִי בְּנוּחַ עֲלֵיהֶם הָרוּחַ וַיִּתְנַבְּאוּ וְלֹא יָסְפוּ:

רש"י

אזכרין ומצטערין שלשים יום, והקשרים - הקשר עוקע בין שניהם: עד אשר יצא מאפכם. פתגמו: דתקושתן ביה, יהא דומה לכם כאלו חבלתם ממנו יותר מדאי עד שיצא ונגעל לחון דרך החף: והיה לכם לזרע. שתהיו מרחקין חיתו יותר ממה שקרבתם. ובדברי רבי משה הדקדק לחייתו, שיש לשון שקודין לחקב 'זרע': אתה 'אשר בקרבכם. חס לא שנטעתי שכינתי פיניכם, לא גבה לבכם לבכם לכל הדברים הללו:

כא ויש מאות אלף רגלי. לא חס למנות חית הפקט, שלשת חלפים היתרים (לעיל ח, טו). ורבי משה הדקדק פשט שלא פבו אלף חותן שיצאו ממצרים:

כב-כג ויצאן ובקרו ישחט. זה חסד מארבעה דברים שהיה רבי עקיבא דורש וזוהו רבי שמעון דורש כמותו: רבי עקיבא חומר: "שש מאות חלף חלף וחתה חמרת פשר חתן להם וחכלו חדש ימים, הוצאן ובקרו" וגו', הכל פמשמעו, מי מספיק להם? פגענו שפארמר: "ומצא

יז וירדהני. זו חסות מעגש ירידות הפתובות בתורה: ודברתי עמך. ולא עמהם: ואצלתני. פתגמו: "וחרבי", כמו: "וחל חנילי בני ישראל" (שמות כה, יא): ושמתני עליהם. למה משה דומה בחותה פעה? לנר שפנח על גבי מנורה, והכל מלחיון הימנו וזוין חורו חסר כלום: ונשאו אתך. התנה עמהם, על מנת שיקבלו עליהם טרחה פני, שהם טרחנים וסרבנים: ולא תשא אתה לבדך. הרי תשובה למה שפארמר "לא חובל חניכי לבדי" (לעיל פסוק יז):

יח והתקדשו. הזמינו עצמכם לכרענות, וכן הוא חומר: "והקלשם ליום הרצה" (ירמיה יב, א):

כז עד חדש ימים. זו בפשרים שמתמעין על מטותיהן וחסר כך נשמתן יוצאה; ובקשרים הוא חומר "הקשר עוקע בין שניהם" (לעיל פסוק כג), כך היא שניה בפסוקי (ג). חבל פמכילתך (ויסע פייד) שניה חלופי: הקשרים

טז ויחל חף במצרים ישוב עמהם, שפארמר: "כך וחספת חת זקני ישראל" (שמות ג, טו). חלף פאש פבערה מתו: ורחויים היו לכך מסיני. דכתוב: "ויחזו חית החלחים" (שמות כה, יא). שפאג קלית ראש פנשך פתו ומדפד בפני המלך, וזהו: "ויאכלו וישתו" (סס), ולא רצה הקדוש בריוח הוא לתן חבלית פמתן תורה, וכדע להם פאן: אשר ידעת פיהם וגו'. חותן שחתה מכיר שנתמנו עליהם שוטרים פמנרים פגעדות פך, והיו מרחמים עליהם ומפס על ידם, שפארמר: "ויפיו שטרי בני ישראל" (שמות ה, יד). עתה יתמנו פגללתו, פדךך שפנטערו פנתתן: ולקחת אתם. קחם פדקרים, חשירכם שנתמנות פקנסים על בניו של משה: והתיצבו שם עמך. פדי שירחו ישראל ויגהו פהם גדלה וכבוד, ויחמרו: חביבין חלו שפכנסו עם משה לשמוע דבור מפי הקדוש בריוח הוא:

26 Two men remained in the camp; the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the second was Meidad. According to the midrash, the elders of Israel were to be selected from a group of candidates comprised of six men from each tribe. Since there were a total of seventy-two candidates, two of them would not be selected. Eldad and Meidad decided not to go out to the Tent of Meeting so that the spirit of Moses would rest on the remaining seventy men.³⁴ Nonetheless, **the spirit rested upon them and they were among those written** on the list of potential candidates,³⁵ **but they did not go out to the Tent and they prophesied in the camp.**

27 The young man ran and told Moses, and he said: Eldad and Meidad are prophesying in the camp; they remained in the camp, and nonetheless they are prophesying.

28 Joshua son of Nun, servant of Moses who had been devoted to Moses **from his youth,**³⁶ **spoke up and said: My lord Moses, incarcerate them^D** for prophesying without authorization. Alternatively, some commentaries interpret the first part of the verse as stating that Joshua was one of Moses' finest attendants.³⁷

29 Moses said to him: Are you zealous on my behalf? Are you angry that prophecy has been granted to others? On the contrary, **would that all the people of the Lord be prophets,^D that the Lord would place His spirit upon them.** Ideally, the whole nation should be close to God to the point that they experience prophecy.

Seventh **30 Moses returned** from the Tent of Meeting **to the camp, he and the elders of Israel.**
aliya

31 A wind went from the Lord, and displaced a group of quails^B from their larger group that was flying over **the sea, and dispersed them over the camp.** This flock of birds was so enormous that it extended from the camp **approximately a day's journey here, in one direction, and approximately a day's journey there, around the camp,** and there were so many



Quail

birds that they were piled to a height of **approximately two cubits above the face of the earth.**

32 The people arose all that day, all the night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quail with gluttonous appetite, having become disgusted with eating the same food every day; **he who did the least, gathered ten piles,** while those who were more gluttonous or more efficient undoubtedly gathered more; **and they spread them around the camp.** There were too many quails to store them in vessels, so they left them to dry around the camp.

33 The meat was still between their teeth, it was not yet entirely finished, and the wrath of the Lord was enflamed against the people, and the Lord struck the people with a very great blow.^D

34 He called the name of that place Kivrot Hataava, because there they buried [kaveru] the people that lusted [hamitavim].

35 From Kivrot Hataava the people traveled to Hatzerot, where they presumably build enclosures [*hatzerot*] as temporary living quarters; **and they were in Hatzerot.**

DISCUSSION

11:28| **Incarcerate them:** The Sages explained that Eldad and Meidad prophesied that Moses would die and Joshua would take his place. This explains the severe reaction of Joshua (see Rashi; *Sanhedrin* 17a).

11:29| **Would that all the people of the Lord be prophets:** Moses expresses here a democratic view of the nature of prophecy: Prophecy is appropriate for anyone worthy of it, and not just the seventy elders who received their prophetic abilities from Moses and became almost like his clones. This perspective of Moses

is expressed in other instances as well when Moses relates to other people vis-à-vis his own status (see 12:3; 16:5–7; Deuteronomy 10:12; see also the introduction to Numbers).

11:33| **And the Lord struck the people with a very great blow:** God sent them meat so that there would be no room to doubt His omnipotence. Yet in His anger He struck those who had doubted His power, both due to their lack of faith, and due to the fact that they immediately rushed to gather quail rather than standing in amazement over God's greatness.

BACKGROUND

11:31| **Quails:** The quail (Scientific name: *Coturnix coturnix*) is a small bird from the pheasant family Phasianidae. Its body is small and plump, reaching a length of about 18 cm and a weight of about 100 g. At the end of the summer it migrates east from Central Europe to the shores in Northern Sinai and Eastern Egypt, a distance of approximately 750 km in one night. Due to the long journey, the quail arrive exhausted and it is easy to collect them. When quail are found nowadays, they are spread on the ground over a large area but they are not found piled on top of one another.

וַיִּשְׁאָרוּ שְׁנֵי־אֲנָשִׁים | בַּמַּחֲנֶה שֵׁם הָאֶחָד | אֶלְדָּד וְשֵׁם הַשֵּׁנִי מִיָּדָד וַתִּנַּח עֲלֵיהֶם
הָרוּחַ וַהֲמָה בַּפֶּתַח בַּיּוֹם | וְלֹא יָצְאוּ הָאֲהֳלָה וַיִּתְנַבְּאוּ בַּמַּחֲנֶה: | וַיִּרְץ הַנְּעָר וַיַּגִּד
לְמֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר אֶלְדָּד וּמִיָּדָד מִתְנַבְּאִים בַּמַּחֲנֶה: | וַיַּעַן יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן־נּוּן מִשְׂרֵת מֹשֶׁה
מִבְּחָרָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲדֹנָי מֹשֶׁה כֹּלָּאִים: | וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מֹשֶׁה הַמִּקְנָא אַתָּה לִי וּמִי יִתֵּן
כָּל־עַם יְהוָה נְבִיאִים כִּי־יִתֵּן יְהוָה אֶת־רוּחוֹ עֲלֵיהֶם: | וַיֹּאסֹף מֹשֶׁה אֶל־הַמַּחֲנֶה
הוּא זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: | וְרוּחַ נֹסֵעַ | מֵאֵת יְהוָה וַיִּגְזוּ שְׁלוֹיִם מִן־הַיָּם וַיִּטְּשׁ עַל־הַמַּחֲנֶה
כַּדָּרְךְ יוֹם כֹּה וּכְדָרְךְ יוֹם כֹּה סְבִיבוֹת הַמַּחֲנֶה וּכְאֲמַתִּים עַל־פְּנֵי הָאָרֶץ: | וַיִּקַּם
הָעָם כָּל־הַיּוֹם הַהוּא וְכָל־הַלַּיְלָה וְכָל־ | יוֹם הַמַּחֲרֹת וַיֹּאסֹפוּ אֶת־הַשְּׁלֹו הַמִּמְעִיט
אֶסְפֵּי עֲשָׂרָה חֲמָרִים וַיִּשְׁטְחוּ לָהֶם שְׂטוֹחַ סְבִיבוֹת הַמַּחֲנֶה: | הַבָּשָׂר עוֹדְנָו בֵּין
שְׁנֵיהֶם טָרַם יַפְרָת וְאָף יְהוָה חָרָה בָּעָם וַיִּךְ יְהוָה בָּעָם מַכָּה רַבָּה מְאֹד: | וַיִּקְרָא
אֶת־שֵׁם־הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא קַבְרֹת הַתְּאוּהָ כִּי־שָׁם קָבְרוּ אֶת־הָעָם הַמֵּת־אֹיִם:
מַקְבְּרוֹת הַתְּאוּהָ נֹסְעוּ הָעָם חֲצֵרוֹת וַיְהִיו בַּחֲצֵרוֹת:

שביעי

רשי

דבר חכה, תגס חל בית הקלח, לפי שהיו מתנבאים: משה מת ויהושע מכנס חת ויכחל לחך:

כט | המקנא אתה לי. "הקנאני חת מקנא": לי כמו ששכילי. כל לשון הנחה, חס הנותן לב על הדבר או לנקם או לעזר, חכרנמט פלע, חויו פגעי המשא:

ל | ויאסף משה. מפתח חל מועד: אל המחנה נכנסו חס לחלו: ויאסף. לשון פנסה חל הבית. כמו: "חספתו חל תוך ביתך" (דברים כב, ג) וחס לכס: "יגדל ולא ידע מי חספס" (תהלים לג, ז). מלמד שלא הביא עליהם פקענות עד שנקנסו הנדקיקים חס לחלו:

לא | ויגזו ויפריחו. וכן: "כי גז חס" (תהלים ג, י) "וכן גזו ויעבר" (נחום ח, יב) וישש. ויששעו, כמו "והנה נטשים על פני כל החרן" (שמואל א' ל, טז) "וינטפתיך המדברה" (ייחזקאל כג, ה): וכאמתם. פורחות בגבה עד שהן כנע לבו של חס, כדי שלא יהא טבח בחסיתתן לא להגזיה ולא לשחית:

לב | הממעוט. מי שאוסף פחות מכלם, העצלים והחגרים, חספ עשקה חמרים: וישטחו. עשו חזקו משטחיו משטחיו:

לג | טרם יפרת. פתגמו: "עד לא פסק". דבר חכה, חינו מספיק לפסקו פשעו עד שגמטו יונחה:

(תהלים עח, כ). חמר: פשקה היא זו, חין בו פח למלחית שחלתנו, והו שחמר: "ויצא משה וידבר חל העם" (להלן פסוק ד) כיון שלא שמעו לו, ויחסף שבעים חס" וגי (סס):

כה | ולא יספו. לא נתבחו חל חותו היום לבדו, כך מכלש פספרי (יה), ויחנקלוס תקצם: "ולח פסקון", שלא פסקה נבחה מהם:

כו | וישארו שני אנשים. מאותו שגכרו, חמר: חין חנו פדחי לגדלה זו: והמה בפתבים. פמכררים שבהם לסנהדרין. ונתקבו כלם נחובים פשמות ועל ידי גזל, לפי שהשעו עולה לפנים עשר שבעים ששה ששה לכל שבע ושבע, חון משני שבעים חין מגיע חליהם חלח חמשה חמשה. חמר משה: חין שבע שומע לי לפחת משכנו וכן חחד. מה עשה? נטל שבעים ושנים פתרון וכתב על שבעים "זקן" ועל שנים חלק, ודבר מכל שבע ושבע ששה, והיו שבעים ושנים חמר להם: טלו פתקים מתוך קלפי. מי שעלה בידו "זקן" נתקדש, מי שעלה בידו חלק, חמר לו: המקום לא חפן כך:

כז | וירץ הנער. יש חמרים: גרשם בן משה היה:

כח | בלאם. הטל עליהם גרבי נגוד והם כלים מחליהם:

כדי גזלתו" (ויקרא כה, טו). חיוו קשה, זו חו "שמענו נח המרים" (להלן כ, י)? חלח לפי שלא חמר בדים, חסן לו הכתוב ולא נפרע ממנו, וזו של מריבה היתה בגלוי, למיך לא חסן לו הכתוב. רבי שמעון חומר: חס ושלום לא עלתה על דעתו של חותו גדיק כך! מי שכתוב בו: "ככל ביתי נחמן הוא" (להלן יב, ז) יחמר: חין המקום מספיה לנו? חלח כך חמר: "שש מאות חלח רגלי וגו", וחתה חמרת פשך חתן לחדש ימים, וחסר כך תהרז חמה גדולה כזו, "החלן וחקר ושחט להם" כדי שיהרגו ויתהח חכילה זו מספקתו עד עולם? וכי שכתב הוא זה? חמרים לו לחמור: טל פד שגורים ונחתך לחשך? השיבו הקדוש ברוך הוא: וחס לא חתן, חמר שכתבה ידי, הטוב פנינך שיד ה' תקצר פנינך? יחברו הם ומחה פיוח פהם וחס תהי ידי חנה לפנים חפלו שעה חסת, "עתה תחלה היקדך דברי". רבן גמליחל בגו של רבי יהודה הנשיא חומר: ח' חפסר לעגמל על הטפל, מחחר חינו מנהסים חלח עלילה לא תספיק להם, סוכן לדון חחיקה, חס חתה ונתן להם פשך בהמה גסה, חמר: דקה פקשנו, וחס חתה ונתן להם דקה, חמר: גשה פקשנו, חיה ועוף פקשנו, דגים ונחשים פקשנו: חמר לו: חס בן חמר שכתבה ידי. חמר לפינו: חריני הולך ומפוסן. חמר לו: "עתה תחלה היקדך דברי", שלא שמענו לך. חלך משה לפוסן, חמר להם: "היד ה' תקצר", "הן הפה עז ויזובו מים וגו' הגם לחס ויכל תת"

Moses and His Siblings' Criticism

NUMBERS 12:1–16

and mentions his uniqueness among humankind. Due to his great humility, Moses is not sensitive to critique, but God zealously defends Moses' honor. The Torah also relates the punishment meted out to Miriam, who began the slanderous discussion about Moses. Later, the nation would be commanded to remember this event for future generations in order to internalize how serious a sin slander is. Although slander is not punishable in court, its consequences can be extremely destructive.

Moses does not have to deal only with the burden of leadership of the entire nation. In the upcoming passage, he is confronted by negative personal comments about him that are uttered by his older siblings, Miriam and Aaron. It is specifically in light of this criticism by his own family members that God expresses His most direct and exalted praise of Moses,

- 12 1** **Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses**, at Miriam's initiative, **with regard to the Kushite woman whom he had married; for he had married a Kushite woman**,^D Tzipora the Midyanite.³⁸ It is possible that the Midyanites, who were nomads, mixed with other peoples.³⁹ It is also possible that Tzipora was called Kushite because the Kushites were known for their black skin and Tzipora's skin was darker than usual among the Israelites, whose skin color was a light brown.⁴⁰ Although she was Moses' wife, Moses had separated from her and refrained from marital relations in order to commune with God in the Tabernacle.⁴¹
- 2** **They said: Was it only with Moses that the Lord spoke; didn't he speak with us as well?** Since we are also prophets, we do not see what right Moses has to act in this way with regard to his wife. Moses married Tzipora, her father later brought her to the Israelite camp from Midyan, and yet Moses is ignoring her. This was a private conversation between Miriam and Aaron, but **the Lord heard**.⁴²
- 3** The fact that Miriam and Aaron spoke about Moses in third person indicates that they were not directly addressing Moses. However, it is possible that they would not have minded if he had heard about their conversation, and perhaps they even intended for him to hear about it, thereby sending him an indirect message. It is possible that Moses heard and did not respond.⁴³ However, the verse testifies that even if Moses had been present when this conversation was taking place he would not have responded or have been insulted due to his great humility: **And the man Moses was very humble**,^D **more than any person on**

the face of the earth. Moses did not demand special status or extra rights; he saw himself simply as a servant and messenger of God who was transmitting His word and His Torah.⁴⁴

- 4** **The Lord said suddenly to Moses, to Aaron, and to Miriam: Go out the three of you, together, to the Tent of Meeting. The three of them went out.**
- 5** **The Lord descended in a pillar of cloud, and stood at the entrance of the Tent. He called Aaron and Miriam and both of them came out** from the Tent and moved closer to the cloud.
- 6** **He said: Hear now My words: Even if your prophet is truly a prophet of the Lord, as you are, I will nonetheless reveal Myself to him** indirectly, **in a vision** that must be deciphered, or **in a dream I will speak to him.** Regular prophets do not hear My words while they are fully conscious, but rather while in a deep trance.
- 7** **Not so My servant Moses**,^D who is different from you and from all other prophets; **in all My house he is the most trusted**, so much so that I speak with him on a regular basis.
- 8** **Mouth to mouth I will speak with him**, in a direct manner, unlike the visions of other prophets from which they deduce the presence of God; **and a clear vision that is not in riddles** that require interpretation; **and the image of the Lord he will behold**.^D That being the case, **why did you not fear to speak against My servant, against Moses?** How do you dare to equate yourselves to Moses and to criticize his conduct?
- 9** **The wrath of the Lord was enflamed against them and He departed.**

DISCUSSION

12:1 | **He had married a Kushite woman:** Some have identified this woman as someone other than Tzipora. It is related in some *midrashim* that when Moses initially fled from Pharaoh, he spent time in Kush before arriving in Midyan, where he eventually married Tzipora. In Kush he had married a woman, perhaps the queen of Kush herself. According to these opinions, Miriam and Aaron spoke about the fact that this matter had not been closed (see *Targum Yerushalmi*; Ibn Ezra; Rashbam; *Yalkut Shimoni, Shemot* 168).

12:3 | **And the man Moses was very humble:** The fact that Moses was so humble does not mean that he did not value or appreciate his position, rather Moses felt that he was merely doing his job. Consequently, it would never have occurred to him that because of his status he was immune from critique or that he had extra rights. This is because humility consists of an awareness of one's status unaccompanied by feelings of superiority. The greater the individual is, the more he views himself as insignificant compared to that which is above him, rather than measuring himself by those beneath him.

12:7 | **My servant Moses:** There are several other instances when Moses is called the servant of the Lord, as in the next verse (see also Exodus 14:31; Joshua 11:15). This depiction expresses not only Moses' subservience to God, but also his closeness, much like the expression "the king's servant" (see II Samuel 18:29; II Kings 25:8; Jeremiah 38:7–12). Archeological excavations have uncovered beautiful signet rings containing the words "servant of the king," or "servant of King so-and-so," indicating a lofty social status. The term, "servant of the Lord" is

- 10 The cloud**, representing God’s revelation, **withdrew from upon the Tent, and behold, Miriam was leprous like snow**, which was an expression of God’s anger. **Aaron turned to Miriam; and behold**, he discovered that **she was leprous**. Moses was also present, or at least in close proximity, to this incident, but he was, at this point, uninvolved. God addressed Aaron and Miriam, and it was they who were chastised and punished. The Sages said that Aaron was also struck with leprosy but the verse does not mention this point in order to protect Aaron’s honor, as he was the High Priest and he was not the one who initiated the discussion about Moses.⁴⁵
- 11 Aaron said to Moses: Please my lord, do not place sin upon us, as we have been foolish, and we have sinned** by saying things that we should not have said. Aaron, Moses’ older brother, had already been following Moses’ directives before this incident, and had served as his assistant, but he had viewed himself as comparable to Moses. Now, after hearing God’s rebuke, Aaron can only speak to Moses with absolute subservience. Their brotherly relationship and working relationship are no longer relevant, and Aaron turns to his brother with his supplication.
- 12 Please, let her not be as a corpse, who when he emerges from his mother’s womb, half his flesh was consumed.** Some interpret the verse as follows: Please, do not be as a corpse. According to this interpretation, Aaron is not requesting that Miriam should not be like a corpse, but is rather asking

Moses not to be like a corpse. Since Miriam is his sister, and it is as though she is almost dead, it is as though part of Moses’ flesh is consumed as well. A similar example can be found in Genesis 37:27, where Judah states about Joseph: “as he is our brother, our flesh.” Consequently, Aaron says to Moses: Even if you do not want to act on our behalf, act for the benefit of your own flesh.⁴⁶

- 13 Moses cried out^D to the Lord, saying: God, please, heal her now.**
- 14 The Lord said to Moses: If her father spit in her face** and thereby humiliated her, **wouldn’t she be ashamed** to leave her house for **seven days** until the humiliation would subside? God afflicted Miriam with leprosy as a form of public disgrace, which is equivalent to spitting in her face. Consequently, **she shall be quarantined outside the camp seven days** as a leper, **and then she shall be readmitted** to the camp. Alternatively, the last phrase of this verse may be rendered: And then she shall be cured.⁴⁷
- 15 Miriam was quarantined outside the camp seven days**, in accordance with the law of a leper; **and the people did not travel until Miriam’s readmission**, because despite her sin she was an eminent individual and deserved the honor of the nation waiting for her.
- 16 Then**, when Miriam had recovered, **the people traveled from Hazerot, and encamped** in a different location **in the wilderness of Paran**.⁴⁸

DISCUSSION

extraneous images. This lack of clarity, though, was in the eyes of the beholder or the glass through which he was looking. One who clearly observes the prophetic vision as it is does not see extraneous images.

12:13 | **Moses cried out:** There were instances when Moses engaged in lengthy prayers, whether for himself or for the Israelites. Here, Moses prays succinctly and intensely for another individual standing nearby, with the brevity of

the prayer expressing Moses’ personal pain. This is not a prayer that was carefully formulated but rather a desperate plea for a cure for his sister (see *Sifrei; Berakhot* 34a).

וְהֵעֵנָן סָר מֵעַל הָאֹהֶל וְהִנֵּה מְרִים מִצְרַעַת פִּשְׁלָג וַיִּפֹּן אֶהְרֹן אֶל־מְרִים וְהִנֵּה
 מִצְרַעַת: וַיֹּאמֶר אֶהְרֹן אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בִּי אֲדֹנָי אֶל־נָא תִשֶׁת עָלֵינוּ חַטָּאת אֲשֶׁר
 נֹאֲלַנּוּ וְאֲשֶׁר חֲטָאנוּ: אֶל־נָא תְהִי כַּמֶּת אֲשֶׁר בְּצִאתוֹ מִרְחֹם אֱמוֹ וַיֵּאכֹל חֲצִי
 בִּשְׂרוֹ: וַיִּצְעַק מֹשֶׁה אֶל־יְהוָה לֵאמֹר אֵל נָא רַפָּא נָא לָהּ:
 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאַבְיָה יָרֵק יָרֵק בְּפָנֶיהָ הֲלֹא תִכְלֹם שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תִּסְגָּר
 שִׁבְעַת יָמִים מְחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה וְאַחַר תֵּאֶסֶף: וְתִסְגָּר מְרִים מְחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה שִׁבְעַת
 יָמִים וְהָעַם לֹא נִסַּע עַד הָאֶסָף מְרִים: וְאַחַר נִסְעוּ הָעַם מִחֲצֹרוֹת וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּמִדְבַר
 פָּאָרָן:

מפסיד

רש"י

"וְהֵעֵנָן סָר מֵעַל הָאֹהֶל וְהִנֵּה מְרִים מִצְרַעַת פִּשְׁלָג" (דברים ג, כג), הַשִּׁיבוּ: "רַב לָךְ" (שם פסוק כו): רַפָּא נָא לָהּ. מִפְּנֵי מַה לֹּא הִחְדִּיר מֹשֶׁה בְּתַפְלָה? שֶׁלֹּא יְהִי וְשֶׁחָל אֲזַמְרִים, חֲחוּתוֹ עֹמֶמֶת בְּנֶגְהָ וְהוּא עֹמֵד וּמְדַבֵּר בְּתַפְלָה:

יד | וְאַבְיָה יָרֵק יָרֵק בְּפָנֶיהָ. וְחַס אֲבִיָּה הִדָּחָה לָהּ פְּנִים זֹעֵפֹת "הֲלֹא תִכְלֹם שִׁבְעַת יָמִים", קַל וְחִמְרָה לְשִׁבְיָה חֲרַבְיָה נֶעֱשֶׂה יוֹם, חֲלָל דִּי לְפָא מִן הַדִּין לְהִיּוֹת פְּגִדוֹן, לְפִיכָךְ חָף בְּגִיפְתֵי "תִּסְגָּר מְרִים יָמִים": וְאַחַר תֵּאֶסֶף. אֲזַמְרִים חָנִי, כֹּל הַחֲסִיפֹת הַחֲמוּדוֹת בְּמִלְעֵימָה, עַל שֶׁמֶס שְׁהוּא מְשַׁלֵּחַ מִחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה וְכִשְׁהוּא נִקְרָא נִחְסֵף חָל הַמַּחֲנֶה, לְכַךְ פְּתוּב עוֹ חֲסִיפָה, לְשׁוֹן הַכְּנֵסָה:

טו | וְהָעַם לֹא נִסַּע. זֶה הַכְּבוֹד חִלַּק לָהּ הַמְקוֹם בְּשִׁבְלֵי שְׂעָה חֲחִית שְׁנֵתְעַבְדָּה לְמֹשֶׁה בְּשֶׁהֲשִׁלְךְ לִחְזוֹ, שְׁנִימָר: "וְתִתְנֶבַח חֲחוּתוֹ מְרִיחָה" וְגו' (שְׁמִית ב, ד):

מי מסצקה חו מי מטצהקה? חני חי חפשה לרחותה, שחני קרוב וחי קרוב רוחה חת הנעעם, וכהן חחר חין פעולם וזהו חפשה בנחתו מרחם חמו:

יג | אֵל נָא רַפָּא נָא לָהּ. בִּחַ הַפְּתוּב לְלַמּוּד דְּדָךְ חֲרוֹן שְׁהַשׁוּחַל דְּבַר מְחַבְרוֹ גִּדְרָךְ לֹמֵר שְׁנִים חו שְׁלֶשָׁה דְּבָרֵי תַחֲנוּנִים, וְחֲחַר כֶּךָ יִבְקֹשׁ שְׁחֹלְתֵינוּ: לֵאמֹר. מַה תִּלְמוּד לֹמֵר? חֲמַר לוֹ: הַשִּׁיבֵנו חֵם חֲתָה מְרַפָּח חוֹתָה חֵם לָחוּ, עַד שְׁהִיבֵנו: "וְאַבְיָה יָרֵק יָרֵק" וְגו'. רַבִּי חֲלֵנָה בֵּן עֲזַרְיָה אֲזַמְרִים: בְּחַרְבְּעָה מְקוּמוֹת בְּקֹשׁ מֹשֶׁה מְלַבֵּעַ הַקְּדוּשָׁה בְּדוּךְ הוּא לְהִיבֵנו חֵם יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁחֹלְתֵינוּ חֵם לָחוּ. פִּינְצָל בוֹ: "וַיִּדְבַּר מֹשֶׁה לְפָנֵי ה' לֵאמֹר" וְגו' (שְׁמִית ג, יב), מַה תִּלְמוּד לֹמֵר: "לֵאמֹר" הַשִּׁיבֵנו חֵם גּוֹחֲלֵם חֲתָה חֵם לָחוּ, עַד שְׁהִיבֵנו: "עֲתָה תִרְחָח" וְגו' (שם פסוק ח). פִּינְצָל בוֹ: "וַיִּדְבַּר מֹשֶׁה חָל ה' לֵאמֹר יִתְקַד ה' חֲלֵהי רְחוּחַת לְכָל בְּשָׂר" (לְחָל כ, טו-טז), הַשִּׁיבוּ: "קַח לָךְ" (שם פסוק יח). פִּינְצָל בוֹ:

י' וְהֵעֵנָן סָר. וְחֲחַר כֶּךָ "וְהִנֵּה מְרִים מִצְרַעַת פִּשְׁלָג", מִשָּׁל לְמַלְכָּה שְׁחֲמַר לְפִגְמָה: דְּדָה חֲתָה בְּנֵי, חֲכַל לֹא תִרְדְּנוּ עַד שְׁחֲלָךְ מִחֲלָךְ, שְׁחֲמֵי עָלֵינוּ:

יא | נֹאֲלַנּוּ. פְּתַגְמוֹ, לְשׁוֹן חוּיל:
 יב | אֵל נָא תְהִי חֲחוּתֵנוּ זוֹ: כַּמֶּת. שְׁהַמְלִיעַ חֲשׁוֹב כַּמֶּת, מַה מִּתְּ מִטְמִיחַ בְּבִיחָה חָף מְנַדֵּעַ מִטְמִיחַ בְּבִיחָה: אֲשֶׁר בְּצִאתוֹ מִרְחֹם אֱמוֹ. 'חֲמוּנֵי' הִיָּה לוֹ לֹמֵר, חֲלָל שְׁבִיעַ הַפְּתוּב. וְכֵן 'חֲצִי בְּשָׂרֵנוּ' הִיָּה לוֹ לֹמֵר, חֲלָל שְׁבִיעַ הַפְּתוּב. מִחֲחַר שְׁיַצִּיחַת מְרִים חֲמוּנֵי, הִיָּה לָנוּ כְּחֵלֵנוּ נִיכָל חֲצִי בְּשָׂרֵנוּ, פְּעֻנָּה שְׁנִימָר: "כִּי חֲחוּתֵנוּ בְּשָׂרֵנוּ הוּא" (בְּרַחֲשִׁית לו, כו). וְלִפִּי מִשְׁמַעֵנוּ, חָף הוּא נִקְרָא כֶּךָ, חִין רְחִיץ לְחָל לְהַעֲיֵחַ חֲתָה חֲחוּתֵנוּ לְהִיּוֹת כַּמֶּת: אֲשֶׁר בְּצִאתוֹ. מִחֲחַר שְׁיַצִּיחַ זֶה מְרִים חֲמוֹ שֶׁל זֶה שִׁישׁ פֶּחַ בִּידוֹ לְעוֹד וְחִינוּ עֹזְרוֹ, הִיָּה נִיכָל חֲצִי בְּשָׂרֵנוּ, שְׁחֲחוּתֵנוּ בְּשָׂרֵנוּ הוּא. דְּבַר חֲחַר, "חָל נָח תְהִי כַּמֶּת" - חֵם חֲיִנְךָ דּוֹסְחָה בְּתַפְלָה,

Haftara for Behaalotekha

Visions of the Prophet Zechariah

ZECHARIAH 2:14–4:7

chosen ones, and the division and decentralization of the national leadership. The *haftara* recalls the traditional model of leadership in Israel, which was split between the priests, the descendants of Aaron, such as Yehoshua the High Priest, and the political rulers from the house of David, such as Zerubavel.

At the time of this prophecy, the city of Jerusalem is desolate, sparsely inhabited, and surrounded by hostile peoples. The prophet Zechariah, who is probably one of the few to immigrate from Babylonia to Israel with Zerubavel after the declaration of Cyrus, offers words of support to Yehoshua the High Priest and Zerubavel, and perhaps through them to the residents of Jerusalem in general. He encourages the building of the Temple and declares to the people of Jerusalem that in the future the city will be restored to its position of greatness.

- 2 14 Sing and rejoice, daughter of Zion, for here I come and I will
15 dwell in your midst – the utterance of the Lord. Many nations
will accompany the Lord on that day, and they will become My
people, and I will dwell in your midst, and you will know that
16 the Lord of hosts sent me to you. The Lord will bequeath his
portion to Judah on the sacred land, and He will again choose
17 Jerusalem. Hush, all flesh, before the Lord, for He is roused
3 1 from His abode of sanctity. He showed me Yehoshua the High
Priest, standing before the angel of the Lord and the accuser
2 standing on his right to accuse him. The Lord said to the ac-
cuser: May the Lord rebuke you, the accuser, and may the Lord
who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you. Is this not a firebrand
3 salvaged from the fire? Yehoshua was clothed in filthy garments
4 and standing before the angel. He responded and said to those
standing before him, saying: Remove the filthy garments from
upon him. He said to him: Behold, I have removed your iniq-
5 uity from upon you and have clothed you in clean garments. I
said: Let them place a pure turban on his head. They placed the
pure turban on his head and clothed him with garments and the
6 angel of the Lord was standing. The angel of the Lord warned
7 Yehoshua, saying: So said the Lord of hosts: If you follow My
ways, and if you keep My commission and judge My house as
well as guard My courtyards, I will set you walking among these
8 standing. Hear now, Yehoshua the High Priest, you and your
colleagues who sit before you, as they are men of distinction,
9 for behold, I bring My servant, Zemah. For behold, the stone
that I placed before Yehoshua has seven hues on one stone; be-
hold, I am engraving its etching – the utterance of the Lord of
hosts – and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.
10 On that day – the utterance of the Lord of hosts – each of you
will invite his neighbor beneath the vine and beneath the fig
4 1 tree. The angel that spoke with me returned and woke me like
2 a man that is awakened from his sleep. He said to me: What do
you see? I said: I saw, and behold, a candelabrum of gold in its
entirety, with a bowl on its top and its seven lamps on it. There
3 are seven pipes for each of the lamps that are on its top. Two
olive trees are over it, one on the right of the bowl, and one on
4 its left. I answered and said to the angel that spoke with me,
5 saying: What are these, my lord? The angel that spoke with me
responded and said to me: Don't you know what these are? And
6 I said: No, my lord. He responded and said to me, saying: This
is the word of the Lord to Zerubavel, saying: Not by might, and
7 not by power, but by My spirit, said the Lord of hosts. Who
are you, great mountain? Before Zerubavel you will become
a plain. He will take out the keystone, with shouts of: Grace,
grace, to it.

הפטרת
בהעלתך

ב רַנִּי וְשִׁמְחִי בַת־צִיּוֹן כִּי הִנְנִי־בָא וְשִׁכַנְתִּי בְתוֹכְךָ נְאֻם־יְהוָה: וְנִלְוּ גוֹיִם רַבִּים אֶל־יְהוָה
 טו בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וְהָיוּ לִי לְעַם וְשִׁכַנְתִּי בְתוֹכְךָ וַיְדַעַת כִּי־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁלַחְנִי אֵלֶיךָ: וְנָחַל יְהוָה
 טז אֶת־יְהוּדָה חֶלְקוֹ עַל אֲדַמַּת הַקֶּדֶשׁ וּבַחֲדָשׁ עוֹד בִּירוּשָׁלַם: הִס כָּל־בָּשָׂר מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה כִּי נֶעְוָר
 יז מִמְּעוֹן קִדְשׁוֹ: וַיִּדְאַנִּי אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל עִמָּד לִפְנֵי מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה וְהַשְׁטָן
 כ א עִמָּד עַל־יְמִינִי לְשִׁטְנוֹ: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־הַשְׁטָן יַגְעֵר יְהוָה בְּךָ הַשְׁטָן וַיַּגְעֵר יְהוָה בְּךָ הַבַּחֲדָר
 ב בִּירוּשָׁלַם הַלּוֹא זֶה אֹד מִצֵּל מַאֲשׁ: וַיְהוֹשֻׁעַ הָיָה לְבָשׁ בְּגָדִים צוּאִים וְעִמָּד לִפְנֵי הַמִּלְאָךְ:
 ג וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָעֹמְדִים לִפְנֵי לְאֹמֶר הַסִּירוּ הַבְּגָדִים הַצּוּאִים מֵעַלְיוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו רֵאֵה
 ד הַעֲבַרְתִּי מֵעַלְיֶךָ עוֹנֶךָ וְהַלְבַּשׁ אֶתְךָ מַחֲלָצוֹת: וַאֲמַר יִשְׁיִמוּ צַנִּיף טְהוֹר עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ וַיִּשְׁיִמוּ
 ה הַצַּנִּיף הַטְּהוֹר עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ וַיַּלְבִּשׁוּהוּ בְּגָדִים וּמִלְאָךְ יְהוָה עִמָּד: וַיַּעַד מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה בִּיהוֹשֻׁעַ
 ו ז לְאֹמֶר: כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אִם־בְּדַרְכֵי תֵלֵךְ וְאִם אֶת־מִשְׁמַרְתִּי תִשְׁמֹר וְגַם־אֶתָּה תִּדְרִין
 ח אֶת־בֵּיתִי וְגַם תִּשְׁמֹר אֶת־חֻצְרֵי וְנִתַּתִּי לְךָ מֵהַלְכִים בֵּין הָעֹמְדִים הָאֵלֶּה: שִׁמְע־נָא יְהוֹשֻׁעַ
 ט הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל אֶתָּה וְרַעְיֶיךָ הַיֹּשְׁבִים לִפְנֶיךָ כִּי־אֲנִשִּׁי מוֹפֵת הִמָּה כִּי־הִנֵּנִי מֵבִיא אֶת־עַבְדִּי
 י צַמַּח: כִּי וְהִנֵּה הָאֲבֵן אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לִפְנֵי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ עַל־אֲבֵן אַחַת שִׁבְעָה עֵינַיִם הִנֵּנִי מִפְתַּח פֶּתָחָהּ
 יא נְאֻם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וּמִשְׁתֵּי אֶת־עוֹן הָאָדָמָה הָיָה בַּיּוֹם אֶחָד: בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא נְאֻם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
 יב תִּקְרְאוּ אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ אֶל־תַּחַת גִּפְנוֹ וְאֶל־תַּחַת תְּאֵנָה: וַיֵּשֶׁב הַמִּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי
 יג וַיַּעֲדֵנִי כְּאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲזֹר מִשְׁנָתוֹ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי מָה אַתָּה רֵאֵה וַיֹּאמֶר רֵאֵתִי וְהִנֵּה מְנוֹרַת
 יד זָהָב כֶּלֶה וְגִלְהָה עַל־רֹאשָׁהּ וְשִׁבְעָה נֹרֹתֶיהָ עָלֶיהָ שִׁבְעָה וְשִׁבְעָה מוֹצְקוֹת לְנֹרוֹת אֲשֶׁר עַל־
 טו רֹאשָׁהּ: וּשְׁנַיִם זֵיתִים עָלֶיהָ אֶחָד מִיְמִין הַגִּלְהָה וְאֶחָד עַל־שְׂמֹאלָהּ: וַאֲעַן וַאֲמַר אֶל־הַמִּלְאָךְ
 טז הַדֹּבֵר בִּי לְאֹמֶר מַה־אֵלֶּה אֲדַנִּי: וַיַּעַן הַמִּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי הַלּוֹא יָדַעְתָּ מַה־הִמָּה
 טז אֵלֶּה וַאֲמַר לֹא אֲדַנִּי: וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי לְאֹמֶר זֶה דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־זָרְבָבֶל לְאֹמֶר לֹא בְחִיל וְלֹא
 יז בְּלֹחַ כִּי אִם־בְּרוּחִי אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת: מִי־אַתָּה הִרְגָּדוֹל לִפְנֵי זָרְבָבֶל לְמִישֹׁר וְהוֹצִיא
 יז אֶת־הָאֲבֵן הָרִאשֹׁה תְּשִׂאוֹת תָּן וְחָן לָהּ: