

לעילוי נשמת
מרת עקא עדנה
צפורה ע"ה וסרטל
בת משה מנחם הלוי ז"ל



על דשא

AL E DESHE

Weekly Torah Insights and inspiration on the Parsha from the Rosh Yeshiva Shlit"a of Gur

Generational Test

וְאִף אֶת בְּרִיתִי אֲבָרֶהֶם אָזְכֹּר.

And also My covenant with Avraham will I remember. (Vayikra 26:42)

The Mishnah in *Avos* (5:3) teaches: "With ten tests Avraham Avinu was tested." The Sfas Emes¹ notes two textual difficulties. First, in the Torah itself the term "*nisayon*" appears explicitly only once — by the *Akeidah* (*Bereishis* 22:1): וְהֶאֱלֹהִים נִסָּה אֶת אַבְרָהָם. None of the earlier *nisyonos* are described with

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this term. Second, the Mishnah says וְהֶאֱלֹהִים נִסָּה אֶת אַבְרָהָם — Avraham "was tested," whereas the *pasuk* says וְהֶאֱלֹהִים נִסָּה — Hashem "tested."

On a simple level, one might answer both questions. By the *Akeidah*, Rashi² cites the Gemara (*Sanhedrin* 89b): Hashem

said, קח נא — "Please stand for Me in this test, so that people should not say the earlier ones had no substance." The *Akeidah* served as the conclusive proof of Avraham's steadfastness; therefore, only here does the Torah use the explicit term *nisayon*. The Mishnah, which speaks from Avraham's perspective, naturally uses נִתְנָסָה — he was tested, rather than נִסָּה, which describes Hashem's action.

But the Sfas Emes offers a deeper explanation. There were two categories of *nisyonos* in Avraham's life. The first nine were events that would have occurred regardless, as part of the Divine governance of the world. For example, the famine that forced Avraham to descend to Mitzrayim was not created for the sake of testing him; it was a natural or providential event that would have happened in any case. The test lay in how Avraham responded to the circumstances. These are *nisyonos* in the sense of נִתְנָסָה — he found himself tested by events that unfolded as part of the world's order. The *Akeidah*, however, was categorically different. It had no purpose other than to test Avraham. Hashem never intended that Yitzchak be slaughtered; the command was solely to elevate

Relatively Redeemed

בְּמִסְפַּר שָׁנִים אַחֵר הַיּוֹבֵל תִּקְנֶה מֵאֵת עֲמִיתְךָ.

According to the number of years after the Yovel year shall you buy from your fellow.

(*Vayikra* 25:15)

Rashi, citing the *Toras Kohanim*, writes that from here we learn that one who sells his field may not redeem it for at least two full years; the field must remain in the hands of the buyer for two complete years. The Gemara (*Arachin* 29b) further states that even if the buyer is willing to return it earlier, the seller is forbidden to redeem it before that time.

Later in the *parashah* (*Vayikra* 25:25), the Torah introduces a second form of redemption: וּבֹא גֹאֲלוֹ הַקָּרֵב אֵלָיו וְגָאֵל אֶת מִמְכָּר אָחִיו — *His redeemer who is closest to him shall come and redeem his brother's sale.* This raises a fundamental question. Does the two-year restriction apply only to the seller himself, or does it also apply to the relative who comes to redeem the field?⁵

If we assume that the relative is bound by the same twoyear restriction, then seemingly, even if the buyer is fully agreeable, the relative may not redeem the field before two years have passed, just as the seller himself is restricted.

To clarify this, we must first understand the nature of *geulas kerovim*. The Avnei Nezer⁶ analyzes whether the relative's redemption

1 Ibid.

2 *Bereishis* 22:2, s.v. "kach na."

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5 See Rashi (25:24), Chizkuni (25:25), *Sefer Hachinuch* (mitzvah 351), and *Minchas Chinuch* (ibid.).

6 *Yoreh De'ah*, 459; 460.

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Avraham through the act of obedience.³ Therefore, only the *Akeidah* is called “*nisayon*” in the Torah, and only here does the Torah say נִסָּה אֶת אַבְרָהָם — that Hashem actively created this event for the sake of testing him.

This distinction raises a difficulty. Among the ten *nisyonos*, there are others that appear to have been created solely to test Avraham, such as the ordeal of Ur Kasdim. That episode seems to have had no purpose other than to challenge Avraham’s commitment to Hashem. Yet

The capacity to withstand trials, to overcome the yetzer hara, and to remain steadfast in emunah is inherited from Avraham’s victories.

according to the Sfas Emes, only the *Akeidah* was a test created exclusively for Avraham’s sake.

One may answer based on the principle cited in *sefarim*: When a person withstands a test of *kiddush Hashem*, the power of *tumah* is weakened in the world. In the era of Avraham, idolatry dominated the world, and a public act of self-sacrifice was necessary to break its influence. Thus, the ordeal of Ur Kasdim was not created solely for Avraham’s personal test; it was required for the world’s spiritual rectification. Avraham happened to be the one who faced it, but

the event itself was necessary for the world’s order.

Similarly, when Sarah was taken to Pharaoh and later to Avimelech, this was not an event created solely to test Avraham; it was the natural consequence of entering a foreign land where rulers seized beautiful women. The test arose from the world’s nature, not from a Divine decree designed exclusively for Avraham.

The *nisyonos* of Avraham were not isolated events. Chazal teach⁴ that the *gematria* of each letter of Yitzchak’s name (יצחק) alludes to the ten *nisyonos* of Avraham, the ninety years of Sarah, the eight days until his *bris*, and the hundred years of Avraham. Why should the ten *nisyonos* be embedded in Yitzchak’s name? Many of them occurred before he was even born.

The answer is that Avraham’s endurance in those *nisyonos* implanted spiritual strength into all his descendants. The capacity to withstand trials, to overcome the *yetzer hara*, and to remain steadfast in *emunah* is inherited from Avraham’s victories. Thus, the Mishnah’s phrase: לְהוֹדִיעַ כְּמַה חֲבָתוֹ שֶׁל אַבְרָהָם אֲבִינוּ עָלֵינוּ — *To make known the love of Avraham Avinu*, means that Hashem’s love for Avraham is expressed in the fact that his triumphs endowed all future generations with the ability to triumph as well.

This is also the meaning of the *pasuk* (Vayikra 26:42): וְזָכַרְתִּי אֶת בְּרִיתִי יַעֲקֹב וְאָף אֶת בְּרִיתִי אַבְרָהָם אֲזָכָר. *בְּרִיתִי יַחֲזֶק וְאָף אֶת בְּרִיתִי אַבְרָהָם אֲזָכָר*. This remembrance is not merely historical; it refers to the spiritual imprint engraved within every Yid. The strength of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov is embedded in their descendants. The

ten *nisyonos* are not only episodes of the past; they are sources of spiritual resilience for all generations.

The two categories of *nisyonos* identified by the Sfas Emes apply to every Yid. Some *nisyonos* arise from the natural order of the world — circumstances that confront many people. These include the pressures, distractions, and moral challenges inherent in the material world. The test lies in how one responds to the environment.

Other *nisyonos* are uniquely tailored to the individual. When a person accepts upon himself a new commitment — whether in learning, *davening*, or personal conduct — it is common, and perhaps inevitable, that he is immediately confronted with a test in that very area. This is not incidental. Just as a monetary *kinyan* expresses finality of intent, so too a test is sent from Hashem to determine whether the person’s *kabbalah* is genuine. This is a test created specifically for that individual, analogous to the *Akeidah* in its personal nature.

Both types of *nisyonos* require strength, and both types draw upon the spiritual inheritance from Avraham. The *nisyonos* that arise from the world’s nature correspond to the first nine *nisyonos* of Avraham, which emerged from the world’s order. The *nisyonos* that arise from personal commitments correspond to the *Akeidah*, which was created solely for Avraham’s elevation.

May we merit to always withstand all the *nisyonos* we are faced with, showing the *Ribbono shel Olam* that we remain steadfast in our *emunah*.

סעודה שלישית פרשת בהר-בחוקתי תשפ”ה מאמר ג

³ See *Bereishis Rabbah*, 56:8.

⁴ *Bereishis Rabbah*, 18:21; *Tanchuma, Korach*, 12.

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frees the land and returns it to the original owner (*geulah l'sichrur*), or whether it is a redemption that merely transfers the land into the hands of the relative, who then holds it until *Yovel* (*geulah l'shibud*). He notes that the *meforshim* appear divided. Rabbeinu Bachayei⁷ and the Abarbanel⁸ imply that the land returns to the original owner. The Maharit,⁹ however, writes that the land remains with the relative until *Yovel*.

The *Toras Kohanim*, cited by Rashi earlier in the *parashah*, understands the *pasuk* (*Vayikra* 25:13): **בְּשָׁנַת הַיּוֹבֵל** — *In this Yovel year you shall return each man to his ancestral heritage*, to include one who sold his field and his son redeemed it; it returns to the father at *Yovel*. This seems to support the Maharit's position that the field remains with the redeemer until *Yovel*.

Yet one might argue that this halachah applies specifically to a son, whose redemption is considered an extension of the father himself, as we find in the laws of redeeming property given to *hekdes* (*Arachin* 25a), where a son's redemption is treated like the redemption of his father. Thus, the *Toras Kohanim* may not prove the rule for all relatives.

Ultimately, the Avnei Nezer sides with Rabbeinu Bachayei and the Abarbanel, proving from Rashi in *Kiddushin* (21a)

that the field returns to the original owner.¹⁰

If we follow the Avnei Nezer's conclusion, one might suggest the following distinction. The two-year restriction applies only when the redemption is performed as a forced redemption. But if the buyer willingly sells the land to the relative, and the relative explicitly states that he is purchasing it for himself, then this is simply a new sale. In such a case, the relative is no different from any other purchaser, and the two-year restriction does not apply. Even if he does not explicitly state his intention, it may be assumed — according to the view that *geulas kerovim* is optional — that his act is interpreted as a personal purchase. Only according to the opinion that *geulas kerovim* is an obligation should it be assumed that he intends to redeem it for his relative.¹¹

But according to the Maharit's view — that *geulas kerovim* is a *geulah l'shibud*, and the land remains with the relative until *Yovel* — the relative's redemption should be considered identical to the seller's. Therefore, he too would be prohibited from redeeming within two years, even with the buyer's consent.

Rav Yerucham Perla¹² notes that the *issur* for the seller to redeem within two years is derived from the phrase **בְּמִכְרֵךָ שָׁנִים אֶחָד הַיּוֹבֵל תִּקְנֶה**, which

requires the buyer to retain the land for two years. If so, he asks, how can the buyer sell the land to another purchaser within those two years? He explains that the second buyer acquires the land as an extension of the first buyer's rights. Since his purchase is considered a continuation of the original buyer's tenure, it satisfies the requirement of "*shanim tikneh*."

The seller, however, has an independent right to the land. His redemption is not an extension of the buyer's rights; it is a restoration of his own. Therefore, his redemption does not fulfill "*shanim tikneh*," and is prohibited within two years.

Accordingly, even in the view of the Maharit, if the relative redeems the land for himself, and the land remains in his possession until *Yovel*, his acquisition is merely an extension of the buyer's rights — just like any other purchaser. In that case, the two-year restriction does not apply. Only when the relative redeems on behalf of the seller, returning the land to the original owner, does the restriction apply.

על פי מכתב יד"ו למטמוני"ם בהאי שעת"א לפ"ק

⁷ *Vayikra* 25:25.

⁸ *Ibid*.

⁹ *Kiddushin* 21a, s.v. "*b'chol geulah*."

¹⁰ See *Kovetz Beis Aharon V'Yisrael* (vol. 125, p. 19), that according to this view, it would seem that the owner may even prevent a relative from redeeming the field if he prefers that it remain with the buyer. This is further discussed in *Otzros Hameforshim on Megillas Rus*.

¹¹ This is similar to the principle in the Gemara (*Kesubos* 91a) regarding heirs who relinquish a lien.

¹² In his commentary to *Sefer Hamitzvos* of Rav Saadya Gaon (*Sma"g*), vol. 2, p. 273ff.



Brooklyn	7:41	8:50
Lakewood	7:41	8:50
Baltimore	7:48	8:53
Chicago	7:36	8:45
North Miami	7:37	8:34
Los Angeles	7:24	8:25

Parshah Medley

אם בקחתי תלכו.

If you will follow My decrees. (Vayikra 26:3)

Rashi cites the *Toras Kohanim*, which famously interprets this *pasuk* as referring to learning Torah with intensity (*ameilus*). It is noteworthy, however, that the wording *אם בקחתי תלכו* suggests *walking*, yet the Gemara (*Berachos* 28b) says: “*Anu ratzim v’hem ratzim* — we run and they run.” Why, then, does the Torah speak of *walking* rather than *running*?

The Chiddushei Harim explains the Gemara (*Berachos* 6b): “A person should always run to perform a mitzvah, even on Shabbos,” as derived from the *pasuk* (*Hoshea* 11:10): *אחריו ילכו כאריה ישאג* — *After Hashem they shall walk; like a lion He shall roar*. He asks: If the halachah is to run, why does the *pasuk* say *ילכו* — walk?

The Chiddushei Harim explains that when a lion roars and a person flees in fear, he does not perceive himself as running. The urgency and necessity of escape make the running feel like ordinary walking. The movement is swift, but the experience is natural and effortless. Thus, the *pasuk* uses “walk” to describe what is, in reality, running. From here Chazal derive that running for a mitzvah is considered halachically equivalent to walking, even on Shabbos. This is the meaning of *אם בקחתי תלכו* in reference to learning Torah. The Torah demands exertion, struggle against the *yetzer hara*, and endurance in the face of *nisyonos*. But the exertion should not be experienced as a burden or strain. When one’s desire is directed toward closeness to Hashem, the effort becomes natural, even pleasant. What is objectively “running” — pushing oneself, striving, overcoming — feels subjectively like “walking,” because the inner will is aligned with the goal.

Thus, the Torah speaks of *walking*, not *running*. The more a person’s heart is drawn toward Torah and *avodah*, the less he feels the weight of the struggle. In this way one fulfills Dovid Hamelech’s proclamation (*Tehillim* 119:59): *ואשיבה רגלי אל עדותיך* — *I returned my feet to Your testimonies*, by subduing my physical instincts and natural habits and directing them toward Torah with joy, eagerness, and steady movement.

מתוך סעודה שלישית פרשת בהר-בחוקתי תשפ”ה מאמר ב

לא מאסתיים ולא געלתיים לכלתם להפר בריתי אתם.

I have not been revolted by them nor will I have rejected them to obliterate

them, to annul My covenant with them. (Vayikra 26:44)

Earlier in the *parashah*, in the *berachos*, the *pasuk* states (26:11): *ולא יגאל נפשי אתכם* — *My spirit will not reject you*. Rashi explains that *ge’ilah* means expelling something absorbed within an object. The Ramban asks why the Torah speaks of rejection both when we fulfill the mitzvos and when we violate them.

The Gemara (*Pesachim* 30b; *Avodah Zarah* 34a) teaches: The Torah testifies about earthenware vessels (*klei cheres*) that they never expel what is absorbed within them. The phrase “the Torah testifies” is unusually strong, indicating that the statement carries broader meaning.

Perhaps the Gemara is hinting to the behavior of a person. A *kli cheres* has no intrinsic value; its entire significance lies in its capacity to receive. It becomes impure only from its interior, and whatever is absorbed within it cannot be expelled.

This serves as a model for us. When a person views himself as a *kli cheres*, humble and without self-importance, the *kedushah* absorbed within him remains permanently. This is the meaning of *לא מאסתיים* — *what is absorbed within such a vessel cannot be expelled*.

But when a person develops a sense of self-importance and independent significance, he becomes like a vessel that purportedly has value in and of itself, rather than from what it receives. In such a state, the inner absorption can be lost. The entire essence of a *kli cheres* is its emptiness, its readiness to receive.

Only when a Yid recognizes that his worth lies in being a receptacle for Torah and *kedushah*, will the *kedushah* absorbed within him remain intact and never be expelled.

סעודה שלישית פרשת בהר-בחוקתי תשפ”ה מאמר ד

From the Desk of the Rosh Yeshivah

Difficulty in Writing Summaries of Sugyos

A correspondent writes:

They began a program in yeshivah encouraging us to write summaries of the *sugyos*. This past Erev Shabbos I tried organizing and writing the difficult *sugya* we are currently learning, yet I could not make any progress. I went into Shabbos feeling sad and overwhelmed. How can I succeed in overcoming this difficulty without feeling discouraged?

The Rosh Yeshivah answered:

A person is obligated only in accordance with the abilities that were given to him by Hashem. Therefore, one should not become distressed if he was not granted the particular talent of organizing and arranging a *sugya* in writing. If it does not “go,” then it does not go.

It is possible that you were given other talents — as I have seen myself — and there is no need to force yourself specifically into the talent of written organization if that is not the ability you were granted.

Even if the yeshivah has a campaign, there is no obligation to insist on producing a written summary for every *sugya*, especially when the mind is occupied with other matters.

The most important thing is that your heart and mind remain immersed in Torah and *avodah*.

Shaul