

Insights from the Meshech Chochma

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פרשת וזאת הברכה תשפה

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עמים הר יקראו שם יזבחו זבחי צדק כי שפיע ימים יינקו ושפני טמוני חול. (פרק לג' יט)

The tribes will assemble at the mount, there they will slaughter offerings of righteousness, for by the riches of the sea they will be nourished, and by the treasures concealed in the sand.

Moshe Rabbeinu's cryptic blessing is directed at Zevulun and his relationship with Yissachar and certainly requires an elaboration. The Artscroll Stone Edition Chumash editors explain: "Yissachar and Zevulun had a unique and inspiring relationship. Zevulun engaged successfully in maritime commerce and supported Yissachar who devoted his time to Torah study as teacher, judge, and cultivator of the spiritual treasure of the people."

The translation of our pasuk is as per Rashi's first understanding of it: עמים הר יקראו i.e., as members of *Sanhedrin*-which regulates the calendar and hence the festivals-the scholars of Yissachar will determine when the tribes assemble at the הר הבית for the Pilgrimage Festivals, where they will offer thanksgiving to G-d by bringing זבחי צדק. Continues the pasuk: כי שפיע ימים יינקו i.e., Yissachar and Zevulun will be nourished by the sea, which will yield them abundant wealth, affording them the opportunity to engage in the study of Torah. ושפני טמוני חול-for concealed in the sands will be treasures such as the *tzarit* and *chilazon* fish, white-crystal ware which emerged from the sea and the sands."

Rashi, based on Sifrei, gives us an alternative explanation of our pasuk, which Rav Meir Simcha expands: "עמים הר יקראו means that through the commerce of Zevulun the merchants of the *nations of the world* come to (Zevulun's) land... The non-Jewish merchants say, 'Since we have gone to the trouble of traveling to this point, let us go to Yerushalayim and see what the Deity of this nation is and what are this nation's practices.' When they go to Yerushalayim, they see all of Israel serving the same G-d, partaking in the same offerings and eating the same food. They are astonished because with regards to the non-Jewish nations, the god of one is not like the god of another, and the food of one is not like the food of another. They therefore say, 'There is no nation as proper as this one', וימתגירין שם-and they convert to Judaism there, in Yerushalayim, as it says, יזבחו זבחי צדק i.e., the offerings of the righteous converts."

Rav Meir Simcha presents several salient points which add tremendous depth to this Sifrei. He notices that Sifrei refers to the מקום המקדש as הר-why so? He explains that since according to Sifrei, the עמים in our pasuk refer to the non-Jewish nations who will be so impressed by HKBH and *Klal Yisrael* that they will eventually convert, it would be most appropriate to refer

to the הַר הַבַּיִת as *Avraham Aveinu*, the father of all converts did, after the *Akeida*, when he declared, **יִאָמֶר הַיּוֹם בְּהַר ה' יִרְאֶה**!

He continues: In ח' מלכים א, we read that after *Shlomo HaMelech* completed the building of the Beis HaMikdash, he asks Hashem to heed the supplications of the non-Jews who come there to pray: **וְגַם אֶל הַנִּכְרִי אֲשֶׁר לֹא מֵעַמְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא וּבָא מֵאֶרֶץ רְחוֹקָה... וְעָשִׂיתָ כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָא אֵלַיךְ** " *Also, a gentile who is not of Your people Israel, but will come from a distant land... (please) act according to all that the gentile calls out to You.*" He continues and requests that with regards to *Klal Yisrael*, which unfortunately in the future will sin and be expelled from *Eretz Yisrael*, **וְשָׁבוּ אֵלַיךְ בְּכֹל לְבָבָם... בְּאֶרֶץ אֹיְבֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר שָׁבוּ אֹתָם וְהִתְפַּלְלוּ אֵלַיךְ דְּרֹךְ אֲרָצָם אֲשֶׁר נִתְּתָה לָאֲבוֹתָם** *and they return to You with all their heart...in the land of their enemies who had captured them, and pray to You by way of their land... may You hear their prayer and supplication...*" Everyone's prayers reach HKBH. But, Rav Meir Simcha points out, there is a major difference between the Jew's תְּפִלָּה versus the non-Jew's. For the non-Jew's תְּפִלָּה to be heard and answered, he must come to the מְקוֹם הַמִּקְדָּשׁ, as *Shlomo HaMelech* said, **וְגַם אֵלַי**, " *הַנִּכְרִי... וּבָא מֵאֶרֶץ רְחוֹקָה*." So that our pasuk's phrase, **הַר יִקְרָאוּ** עַמִּים is to be understood as "all the other nations of the world must come to the הַר to call You." Hashem's Chosen Nation though has His ear anywhere they are. Their sincere prayer directed at *Eretz Yisrael* will be heard and accepted. **וְשָׁבוּ אֵלַיךְ... בְּאֶרֶץ אֹיְבֵיהֶם... וְהִתְפַּלְלוּ אֵלַיךְ דְּרֹךְ אֲרָצָם** Even more: **הַר יִקְרָאוּ** is demarcating the boundary beyond which the non-Jew may not go on the הַר הַבַּיִת. As we read in ח' מסכת כלימ' א of the *Cheil*, a ten *amos* rampart inside from the הַר הַבַּיִת wall which was off-limits to a non-Jew. **הַר יִקְרָאוּ** עַמִּים is as far as the non-Jew can go!

He concludes this piece with a statement from Rav Ada bar Ahava in יומא מד: **מַעֲלוֹת** "the levels of sanctity of the various Temple areas, enumerated in the previously mentioned Mishna in מסכת כלימ', are דְּאוּרֵייתָא, of Biblical origin (and as Rashi adds, לְמִשְׁנֵי מִסִּינֵי). Although he does not say it outright, by referencing this Gemara, Rav Meir Simcha may feel that **הַר יִקְרָאוּ** עַמִּים is a possible source for Rav Ada bar Ahava's statement i.e., that the Torah *did* want different levels of sanctity for the various areas surrounding the Beis HaMikdash. And that is why the pasuk calls the מְקוֹם הַמִּקְדָּשׁ specifically הַר. Once again, our author intertwines תּוֹרָה שְׁבַעַל פֶּה with תּוֹרָה שֶׁבְכָתוּב to create a refreshingly new understanding of the words of the Sifrei.

לזכר נשמת אבי מורי ר' ישראל מנחם בן ר' שלום ז"ל
לזכר נשמת אמי מורתי רחל בת ר' אלחנן אביגדור ע"ה
לזכר נשמת חמי מורי ר' יעקב נתן בן ר' ישראל שלמה ז"ל
ולזכר נשמת הרב יהודה בן ר' אברהם שמחה (קופרמן) זצ"ל
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Hashem tells Adam that he and all the beasts are to share the same herbal diet. At this time, he was forbidden to kill animals for food-that permission was granted to Noach *after* the *Mabul*. Rav Meir Simcha questions why when the earth was originally told to produce vegetation, earlier in pasuk **וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה בּוֹ עֵל הָאָרֶץ**, the Torah writes **עֵץ פְּרִי עֵשֶׂה פְּרִי לְמִינֹו אֲשֶׁר זָרְעוּ בּוֹ** על הארץ but here, **וְאֵת כָּל הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר בּוֹ פְּרִי עֵץ**. Rashi earlier explains that **עֵץ פְּרִי עֵשֶׂה פְּרִי** means that the flavor of the tree's bark shall be like the flavor of its fruit. Our pasuk, where Adam is being told that he may eat from any tree that **עֵץ פְּרִי** אֲשֶׁר בּוֹ פְּרִי, is therefore telling him that he may eat only from a tree whose bark does *not* taste like its fruit. Rav Meir Simcha says that our pasukim's discrepancy is very **מְתָאִים** according to the opinion that the *Esrog* was the fruit of the **עֵץ הַדְּעִת**, a tree whose bark *did* taste like its fruit i.e., even though Adam was told in our pasuk that **וְאֵת כָּל הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר בּוֹ פְּרִי עֵץ... יְהִי לְאֹכְלָהּ**, that would continue to prohibit him from eating an **עֵץ פְּרִי עֵשֶׂה פְּרִי**, where the **טַעַם הָעֵץ כְּטַעַם הַפְּרִי**, the **עֵץ הַדְּעִת**!

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