חוּמָּשׁ עִם רַשִׁ"י · PARSHAS HASHAVUA

חוּמָּשׁ עִם רַשִׁ"י · האזינו · רִאשׁוֹן

Complete Word-for-Word Interlinear · Navy & Gold Edition

HA'AZINU · 1ST ALIYAH

📖 CHAPTER PREVIEW

We begin the holy shira of Ha'Azinu, where Moshe Rabbeinu calls upon the shamayim and the eretz to stand as eternal witnesses for Klal Yisrael. Moshe Rabbeinu begs that his words of Torah and mussar should drop like rain and dew, bringing life and growth to the neshamos of Klal Yisrael, as he prepares to proclaim the great Name of Hashem and demand that we give kavod to Elokim.

All introductions, summaries, and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

פָּסוּק א

Pasuk 1

הַאֲזִינוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וַאֲדַבֵּרָה וְתִשְׁמַע הָאָרֶץ אִמְרֵי פִּי:

give ear · O heavens · and I will speak · and let hear · the earth · the words of · my mouth

רַשִׁ"י

האזינו השמים. שֶׁאֲנִי מַתְרֶה בָהֶם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וְתִהְיוּ עֵדִים בַּדָּבָר, שֶׁכָּךְ אָמַרְתִּי

Give ear · O heavens · that I · warn · them · in Israel · and you shall be · witnesses · to the matter · for so · I said

לָהֶם שֶׁאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ עֵדִים, וְכֵן ותשמע הארץ. וְלָמָּה הֵעִיד בָּהֶם שָׁמַיִם

to them · that you · will be · witnesses · and likewise · and let hear · the earth · and why · did he call as witness · against them · heaven

וָאָרֶץ? אָמַר מֹשֶׁה: אֲנִי בָּשָׂר וָדָם, לְמָחָר אֲנִי מֵת, אִם יֹאמְרוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא קִבַּלְנוּ

and earth · said · Moshe · I am · flesh · and blood · tomorrow · I am · dead · if · will say · Israel · not · did we accept

עָלֵינוּ הַבְּרִית, מִי בָא וּמַכְחִישָׁם? לְפִיכָךְ הֵעִיד בָּהֶם שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ —

upon us · the covenant · who · comes · and refutes them · therefore · he called as witness · against them · heaven · and earth

עֵדִים שֶׁהֵן קַיָּמִים לְעוֹלָם. וְעוֹד, שֶׁאִם יִזְכּוּ יָבֹאוּ הָעֵדִים וְיִתְּנוּ שְׂכָרָם,

witnesses · that they · endure · forever · and furthermore · that if · they act worthily · will come · the witnesses · and give · their reward

הַגֶּפֶן תִּתֵּן פִּרְיָהּ וְהָאָרֶץ תִּתֵּן יְבוּלָהּ וְהַשָּׁמַיִם יִתְּנוּ טַלָּם, וְאִם יִתְחַיְּבוּ תִּהְיֶה

the vine · will give · its fruit · and the earth · will give · its yield · and the heavens · will give · their dew · and if · they act sinfully · will be

בָהֶם יַד הָעֵדִים תְּחִלָּה — "וְעָצַר אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלֹא יִהְיֶה מָטָר

against them · the hand of · the witnesses · first · and He will restrain · — · the heavens · and not · there will be · rain

וְהָאֲדָמָה לֹא תִתֵּן אֶת יְבוּלָהּ" דברים י"ז , וְאַחַר כָּךְ "וַאֲבַדְתֶּם מְהֵרָה" שם י"א

and the ground · not · will give · — · its yield · Devarim · 17 · and after · that · and you shall perish · quickly · there · 11

עַל יְדֵי הָאֻמּוֹת:

by · the hands of · the nations

פָּסוּק ב

יַעֲרֹף כַּמָּטָר לִקְחִי תִּזַּל כַּטַּל אִמְרָתִי כִּשְׂעִירִם עֲלֵי דֶשֶׁא
May it drip like the rain my teaching may it flow like the dew my speech like rainstorms upon vegetation

וְכִרְבִיבִים עֲלֵי עֵשֶׂב:
and like raindrops upon grass

רַשִׁ"י

יערף כמטר לקחי. זוֹ הִיא הָעֵדוּת שֶׁתָּעִידוּ — שֶׁאֲנִי אוֹמֵר בִּפְנֵיכֶם תּוֹרָה
droppeth as rain my doctrine is this the testimony that you shall testify that I say in your presence the Torah

שֶׁנָּתַתִּי לְיִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁהִיא חַיִּים לָעוֹלָם כְּמָטָר זֶה שֶׁהוּא חַיִּים לָעוֹלָם עי' ספרי ; כַּאֲשֶׁר
which I gave to Yisrael that it is life to the world as rain this which is life to the world see Sifrei just as

יַעַרְפוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם טַל וּמָטָר:
drop down the heavens dew and rain

רַשִׁ"י

יערף. לְשׁוֹן יַטִּיף, וְכֵן תהילים ס"ה "יִרְעֲפוּן דָּשֶׁן", דברים ל"ג "יַעַרְפוּ
it drops an expression of dripping and so Tehillim sixty five they drop fatness Devarim thirty three they shall drop

טָל":
dew

רַשִׁ"י

תזל כטל. שֶׁהַכֹּל שְׂמֵחִים בּוֹ, לְפִי שֶׁהַמָּטָר יֵשׁ בּוֹ עֲצָבִים לַבְּרִיּוֹת, כְּגוֹן הוֹלְכֵי
it flows as the dew which everyone rejoices in it because that the rain there is in it annoyance to people such as travelers of

דְרָכִים וּמִי שֶׁהָיָה בּוֹרוֹ מָלֵא יַיִן ספרי :
roads and one whose his pit was full of wine Sifrei

רַשִׁ"י

כשעירים. לְשׁוֹן רוּחַ סְעָרָה, כְּתַרְגּוּמוֹ "כִּרוּחֵי מִטְרָא", מָה הָרוּחוֹת הַלָּלוּ
like storm winds an expression of wind of tempest like its Targum like winds of rain just as the winds these

מַחֲזִיקִים אֶת הָעֲשָׂבִים וּמְגַדְּלִין אוֹתָם, אַף דִּבְרֵי תוֹרָה מְגַדְּלִין אֶת לוֹמְדֵיהֶן:
strengthen — the herbs and make grow them so too words of Torah make grow — their students

רַשִׁ"י

וכרביבים. טִפֵּי מָטָר. נִרְאֶה לִי עַל שֵׁם שֶׁיּוֹרֶה כְּחֵץ נִקְרָא רְבִיב, כְּמָה
and like showers drops of rain it appears to me on account of that it shoots like an arrow it is called reviv like that

דְּאַתְּ אוֹמֵר "רֹבֶה קַשֶׁת" בראשית כ"א :
which you say an archer with a bow Bereishis twenty-one

רַשִׁ"י

דשא. ארברי"ץ, עֲטִיפַת הָאָרֶץ מְכֻסָּה בְּיֶרֶק:
grass herbaries the clothing of the earth covered with greenery

רַשִׁ"י

עשב. קֶלַח אֶחָד קָרוּי עֵשֶׂב, וְכָל מִין וָמִין לְעַצְמוֹ קָרוּי עֵשֶׂב:
Herb a stalk single is called herb and each species and species by itself is called herb

פָּסוּק ג

Pasuk 3

כִּי שֵׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא הָבוּ גֹדֶל לֵאלֹהֵינוּ׃

When the name of Hashem I call give greatness to our God

רַשִׁ"י

כי שם ה' אקרא. הֲרֵי כִּי מְשַׁמֵּשׁ בִּלְשׁוֹן כַּאֲשֶׁר, כְּמוֹ ויקרא כ"ג "כִּי

When the Name of Hashem I will call behold כי serves in the meaning of when like Vayikra chapter 23 "When

תָּבֹאוּ אֶל הָאָרֶץ", כְּשֶׁאֶקְרָא וְאַזְכִּיר שֵׁם ה', אַתֶּם הבו גדל לאלהינו

you will come to the land" when I call and mention the Name of Hashem you ascribe greatness to our God

וּבָרְכוּ שְׁמוֹ, מִכָּאן אָמְרוּ שֶׁעוֹנִין בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ אַחַר בְּרָכָה

and bless His Name from here they said that they answer Blessed be the Name of the glory of His Kingdom after a blessing

שֶׁבַּמִּקְדָּשׁ עי' ספרי; מכילתא שמות י"ג; ברכות כ"א; תענית ט"ז :

that is in the Temple see Sifrei Mechilta Shemos 13 Berachos 21a Taanis 16b

פָּסוּק ד

Pasuk 4

הַצּוּר תָּמִים פָּעֳלוֹ כִּי כָל דְּרָכָיו מִשְׁפָּט אֵל אֱמוּנָה וְאֵין עָוֶל צַדִּיק

The Rock perfect is His work for all His ways are justice a God of faithfulness and without injustice righteous

וְיָשָׁר הוּא׃

and upright is He

רַשִׁ"י

הצור תמים פעלו. אַעַ"פּ שֶׁהוּא חָזָק, כְּשֶׁמֵּבִיא פֻּרְעָנוּת עַל עוֹבְרֵי רְצוֹנוֹ,

The Rock perfect is His work even though that He is strong when He brings punishment upon those who transgress His will

לֹא בְשֶׁטֶף הוּא מֵבִיא כִּי אִם בְּדִין, כִּי תמים פעלו :

not in a flood He brings it but rather with justice because perfect is His work

רַשִׁ"י

אל אמונה. לְשַׁלֵּם לַצַּדִּיקִים צִדְקָתָם לָעוֹלָם הַבָּא, וְאַעַ"פּ שֶׁמְּאַחֵר אֶת

A God of faithfulness to pay to the righteous their righteousness in the world to come and even though that He delays —

תַּגְמוּלָם, סוֹפוֹ לְאַמֵּן אֶת דְּבָרָיו׃

their reward His end is to verify — His words

רַשִׁ"י

ואין עול. אַף לָרְשָׁעִים מְשַׁלֵּם שְׂכַר צִדְקָתָם בָּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה עי' ספרי :

and without injustice even to the wicked He pays the reward of their righteousness in the world this see Sifrei

רַשִׁ"י

צדיק וישר הוא. הַכֹּל מַצְדִּיקִים עֲלֵיהֶם אֶת דִּינוֹ, וְכָךְ רָאוּי וְיָשָׁר לָהֶם,

Righteous and upright He is all justify upon themselves — His judgment and so it is fitting and right for them

צדיק מִפִּי הַבְּרִיּוֹת וישר הוא וְרָאוּי לְהַצְדִּיקוֹ׃

righteous from the mouth of the creations and upright He is and it is fitting to justify Him

פָּסוּק ה

Pasuk 5

שִׁחֵת לוֹ לֹא בָּנָיו מוּמָם דּוֹר עִקֵּשׁ וּפְתַלְתֹּל׃

It corrupted | to Him | not | His children | their blemish | a generation | crooked | and twisted

רַשִׁ"י

שחת לו וגו'. כְּתַרְגּוּמוֹ, "חַבִּילוּ לְהוֹן לָא לֵה":

They corrupted | to Him | etc. | according to its Targum, | "They corrupted | for themselves | not | for Him"

רַשִׁ"י

בניו מומם. בָּנָיו הָיוּ וְהַשְּׁחָתָה שֶׁהִשְׁחִיתוּ הִיא מוּמָם:

His children | their blemish | His children | they were | and the corruption | that they corrupted | it is | their blemish

רַשִׁ"י

בניו מומם. מוּמָם שֶׁל בָּנָיו הָיָה וְלֹא מוּמוֹ:

His children | their blemish | the blemish | of | His children | was | and not | His blemish

רַשִׁ"י

דור עקש. עָקֹם וּמְעֻקָּל, כְּמוֹ "וְאֵת כָּל הַיְשָׁרָה יְעַקֵּשׁוּ" מיכה ג' .

A generation | crooked | bent | and twisted | like | — and | all | the straightness | they pervert | Michah | chapter 3

וּבְלְשׁוֹן מִשְׁנָה "חֻלְדָּה שֶׁשִּׁנֶּיהָ עֲקֻמּוֹת וַעֲקוּשׁוֹת":

and in the language of | Mishnah | a weasel | whose teeth | are bent | and crooked

רַשִׁ"י

ופתלתל. אנטורט"יליי"ש, כַּפְּתִיל הַזֶּה שֶׁגּוֹדְלִין אוֹתוֹ וּמַקִּיפִין אוֹתוֹ סְבִיבוֹת הַגְּדִיל;

And twisted | entortille | like a thread | this | that they twine | it | and wrap | it | around | the strand

פְּתַלְתֹּל מִן הַתֵּבוֹת הַכְּפוּלוֹת כְּמוֹ "יְרַקְרַק" "אֲדַמְדָּם" ויקרא י"ג "סְחַרְחַר" תהילים ל"ח

Petaltol | is of | the words | that are doubled | like | greenish | reddish | Vayikra | 13 | fluttering | Tehillim | 38

, "סְגַלְגַּל" תרגום יונתן מלכים א ז' :

round | Targum | Yonasan | Melachim | I | 7

פָּסוּק ו

Pasuk 6

הֲ לַיהוָה תִּגְמְלוּ זֹאת עַם נָבָל וְלֹא חָכָם הֲלוֹא הוּא אָבִיךָ קָנֶךָ

Is it | to Hashem | you requite | this | O nation | vile | and not | wise | is not | He | your Father | Who acquired you

הוּא עָשְׂךָ וַיְכֹנְנֶךָ׃

He | made you | and established you

רַשִׁ"י

הלה' תגמלו זאת. לְשׁוֹן תֵּמָהּ, וְכִי לְפָנָיו אַתֶּם מַעֲצִיבִין שֶׁיֵּשׁ בְּיָדוֹ

Is it to Hashem | you requite | this | an expression of | wonder, | is it that | before Him | you | grieve | Who has | in His hand

לִפְרַע מִכֶּם וְשֶׁהֵיטִיב לָכֶם בְּכָל הַטּוֹבוֹת?

to punish | from you | and Who did good | to you | with all | the goodnesses

רַשִׁ"י

עם נבל. שֶׁשָּׁכְחוּ אֶת הָעֲשׂוּי לָהֶם:

A people foolish that forgot — that which was done to them

רַשִׁ"י

ולא חכם. לְהָבִין אֶת הַנּוֹלָדוֹת, שֶׁיֵּשׁ בְּיָדוֹ לְהֵיטִיב וּלְהָרַע:

and not wise to understand — the future consequences that it is in His power to do good and to do evil

רַשִׁ"י

הלוא הוא אביך קנך. שֶׁקְּנָאֲךָ, שֶׁקִּנְּנָךְ בְּקַן הַסְּלָעִים וּבְאֶרֶץ חֲזָקָה,

Is not He your father Who acquired you Who acquired you Who nested you in a nest of the rocks and in a land strong

שֶׁתִּקֶּנְךָ בְּכָל מִינֵי תַקָּנָה:

Who prepared you with all kinds of benefit

רַשִׁ"י

הוא עשך. אֻמָּה בָּאֻמּוֹת:

He made you a nation among the nations

רַשִׁ"י

ויכננך. אַחֲרֵי כֵּן בְּכָל מִינֵי בָסִיס וְכַן — מִכֶּם כֹּהֲנִים, מִכֶּם נְבִיאִים

and He established you after that with all kinds of foundation and base from you priests from you prophets

וּמִכֶּם מְלָכִים, כְּרַךְ שֶׁהַכֹּל בּוֹ ספרי; חולין נ"ו :

and from you kings a metropolis that everything is in it Sifrei Chullin fifty-six

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this opening aliyah, Moshe Rabbeinu praises the perfect ways of Hashem, the Rock whose actions are entirely just and faithful, without any wrongdoing. He then contrasts Hashem's perfection with the crookedness of a generation that acts corruptly toward Him, calling out Klal Yisrael for their foolish ingratitude to the Father who created, fashioned, and established them.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

The Torah is telling us in this parsha that the words of Torah are compared to rain and dew: "May my discourse come down as the rain, my speech distill as the dew." Lichoira, we have to understand the difference between these two. Rain can sometimes be heavy and storming, which is like those times in life when we are hit with a sudden, powerful inspiration or a major wake-up call. But dew is different. Dew falls quietly, almost invisibly, night after night, consistently nourishing the ground without any noise or drama.

This is the great chiddush of the shira of Ha'Azinu for our daily avodas Hashem. We often wait for the "rain", for that big, dramatic moment of inspiration, a powerful speech, or a major life event to shake us up and make us grow. But the Torah is teaching us that real, lasting growth, the kind that truly builds a Yid, comes from the "dew." It comes from the quiet, daily consistency of learning a little bit of Torah every single day, day in and day out, even when we do not feel any special excitement.

When you set a fixed time for learning and stick to it, even for just ten minutes a day, you are letting the dew of the Torah saturate your neshama. Over time, this quiet consistency completely transforms a person, making them into a vessel for yiras Shamayim and true growth.

Today, do not wait for a burst of inspiration to learn or to do a mitzvah. Commit to one small, quiet spiritual habit, like learning two halachos or one passuk of Chumash, and do it at a set time, completely undisturbed, letting the quiet dew of Torah build you step by step.

תַּלְמוּד בַּבְלִי · דַּף יוֹמִי

דַּף יוֹמִי · חֻלִּין · דַּף קכ״ט

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📖 **THE SUGYA**

We begin this daf by continuing our deep dive into the shakla v'tarya between Rabbi Asi, Rabbi Zeira, and Rabbi Abba bar Memel regarding the tumah of a dangling limb and flesh. The Gemara is bothered by how a concealed place (bais hasetarim) can transmit tumah, and whether we can establish this baraita according to Rabbi Meir. This leads us into a beautiful lomdishe discussion between Rava and Rabba bar Rav Chanan about whether a dangling piece of flesh needs hechsher (preparation by water) to become tamei, or if its connection to a severe tumah (tumah chamurah) of a limb from the living animal makes hechsher completely unnecessary.

From there, the Gemara brings a series of fascinating challenges from Abaye and Rav Pappa, who try to find cases where food might transmit a severe tumah mid'Oraisa. We look at sourdough designated as a seat, food offered to an idol, food connected to vessels, and the fat of a carcass in the villages. In each case, the Gemara establishes a major yeshivish yesod: when food is repurposed for a non-food function, it loses its status as food and is considered "like wood" (meshamesh k'etz), which allows it to carry severe tumah without violating the rule that food itself cannot become a primary source of tumah. We then turn to our Mishnah to analyze Rabbi Shimon's shitta that dangling limbs and flesh are tahor, exploring the source for his ruling.

All introductions, summaries, and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

עַמּוּד א׳ DAF 129A

QUESTION

טוּמְאַת בֵּית הַסְּתָרִים הִיא, וְטוּמְאַת בֵּית הַסְּתָרִים לָא מְטַמְּיָא.

The contact between the flesh and the limb is **impurity of a concealed place**, **and** the rule is that **impurity of a concealed place does not transmit impurity**.

ANSWER

אָמַר לֵיהּ: אַף לְדִידִי קַשְׁיָא לִי, וּשְׁאֵילְתֵּיהּ לְרַבִּי אַבָּא בַּר מֶמֶל, וְאָמַר לִי: הָא מַנִּי? רַבִּי מֵאִיר הִיא, דְּאָמַר: טוּמְאַת בֵּית הַסְּתָרִים מְטַמְּיָא.

Rabbi Zeira **said to him**, to Rabbi Asi: **Even to me** this was **difficult**, **and I asked Rabbi Abba bar Memel** about it, **and he said to me**: **Whose** opinion **is this** baraita? **It is Rabbi Meir**, **who says** that **impurity of a concealed place does transmit impurity**.

OBJECTION

אָמַר לֵיהּ: וְלָאו זִימְנִין סַגִּיאִין אַמְרַהּ קַמַּאי, וַאֲמַרִי לֵיהּ: שָׁנֵי לֵיהּ לְרַבִּי מֵאִיר בֵּין טוּמְאָה דְּבָעְיָא הֶכְשֵׁר וּבֵין טוּמְאָה דְּלָא בָּעְיָא הֶכְשֵׁר.

Rabbi Asi **said to him**: **But did he not say this** answer **before me many times**, **and I said to him** that this is no teretz, because **Rabbi Meir differentiates between impurity that requires preparation** by water to become susceptible **and impurity that does not require preparation**? Since this flesh was not yet prepared, even Rabbi Meir would agree it cannot become tamei through a concealed place.

RESOLUTION

אָמַר רָבָא: וּמַאי קוּשְׁיָא? דִּלְמָא בְּשֶׁהוּכְשַׁר.

Rava said: **But what is the difficulty**? **Perhaps** the baraita is speaking of a case **where** the flesh **had been prepared** while still attached, and so it was already susceptible to tumah!

QUESTION

אֲמַר לֵיהּ: רַבָּה בַּר רַב חָנָן לְרָבָא: לְמָה לִי הֶכְשֵׁר, הֲרֵי מְטַמֵּא טוּמְאָה חֲמוּרָה אַגַּב אָבִיו?

Rabba bar Rav Chanan said to Rava: **Why do I need preparation** at all? **Behold, it transmits a severe impurity along with its father**, meaning, as part of the limb from the living animal which has a severe tumah. And we have a rule that any food that will eventually transmit a severe tumah does not need hechsher!

ANSWER

אֲמַר לֵיהּ: כְּשֶׁשִּׁימֵּשׁ, מַעֲשֵׂה עֵץ שִׁימֵּשׁ.

Rava **said to him**: **When it served** as part of the limb, **it served** merely as **the function of wood**, meaning it was not considered food at all, but just a structural part of the limb. Therefore, it still needs hechsher to become tamei as food.

STATEMENT

אָמַר אַבָּיֵי: הֲרֵי אָמְרוּ כּוֹפֶת שְׁאוֹר שֶׁיִּחֲדָהּ לִישִׁיבָה – בָּטְלָה.

Abaye said: **Behold, they said** in a baraita: **A block of sourdough that one designated for sitting** upon **is nullified** from being food, and is now considered a vessel.

EXPLANATION

טוּמְאָתָהּ לָאו דְּאוֹרַיְיתָא, דְּאִי סָלְקָא דַּעְתָּךְ דְּאוֹרַיְיתָא, מָצִינוּ לָאֳכָלִין שֶׁמְּטַמְּאִין טוּמְאָה חֲמוּרָה,

Now, Abaye assumed: **Its impurity** as a seat **is not mid'Oraisa** but only mid'Rabbanan, **for if it should enter your mind** that it is **mid'Oraisa**, then **we would find food that transmits a severe impurity** of midras, which is impossible because food cannot become a primary source of tumah.

REFUTATION

כְּשֶׁשִּׁימֵּשׁ – מַעֲשֵׂה עֵץ שִׁימֵּשׁ.

But the Gemara rejects this: It is indeed mid'Oraisa, because **when it served** as a seat, **it served** merely as **the function of wood**, and was no longer considered food at all.

STATEMENT

אָמַר אַבָּיֵי: הֲרֵי אָמְרוּ תִּקְרוֹבֶת עֲבוֹדָה זָרָה שֶׁל אָכָלִין מְטַמְּאִין בְּאוֹהֶל,

Abaye said further: **Behold, they said**: **An offering of food to an idol transmits impurity in a tent** like a corpse.

EXPLANATION

טוּמְאָתָהּ לָאו דְּאוֹרַיְיתָא, דְּאִי סָלְקָא דַּעְתָּךְ דְּאוֹרַיְיתָא – מָצִינוּ לָאֲכָלִין שֶׁמְּטַמְּאִין טוּמְאָה חֲמוּרָה!

Its impurity is not mid'Oraisa, **for if it should enter your mind** that it is **mid'Oraisa**, **we would find food that transmits a severe impurity**!

REFUTATION

כְּשֶׁשִּׁימֵּשׁ – מַעֲשֵׂה עֵץ שִׁימֵּשׁ.

The Gemara rejects this: It is mid'Oraisa, because **when it served** as an idol offering, **it served** merely as **the function of wood**, losing its status as food.

STATEMENT

אָמַר אַבָּיֵי: הֲרֵי אָמְרוּ חִבּוּרֵי אֲכָלִין כְּכֵלִים דָּמוּ,

Abaye said: **Behold, they said**: **Foods that are connected** to vessels **are considered like the vessels** themselves, and can contract severe tumah.

EXPLANATION

טוּמְאָתָן לָאו דְּאוֹרַיְיתָא, דְּאִי סָלְקָא דַּעְתָּךְ דְּאוֹרַיְיתָא – מָצִינוּ לְאוֹכֶל שֶׁמְּטַמֵּא טוּמְאָה חֲמוּרָה!

Their impurity is not mid'Oraisa, **for if it should enter your mind** that it is **mid'Oraisa**, **we would find food that transmits a severe impurity**!

REFUTATION

כְּשֶׁשִּׁימֵּשׁ – מַעֲשֵׂה עֵץ שִׁימֵּשׁ.

The Gemara rejects this: It is mid'Oraisa, because **when it served** as a connector, **it served** merely as **the function of wood**.

STATEMENT

אֲמַר לֵיהּ: רַב פָּפָּא לְרָבָא: הָא דְּתַנְיָא, חֵלֶב נְבֵלָה בַּכְּפָרִים צָרִיךְ מַחְשָׁבָה וְהֶכְשֵׁר,

Rav Pappa said to Rava: **That which is taught in a baraita**, that **the fat of a carcass in the villages** (where people do not usually eat it) **requires designation and preparation** to become tamei as food,

EXPLANATION

טוּמְאָתוֹ אַגַּב כּוּלְיָא לָאו דְּאוֹרַיְיתָא, דְּאִי סָלְקָא דַּעְתָּךְ דְּאוֹרַיְיתָא, מָצִינוּ לְאוֹכֶל שֶׁמְּטַמֵּא טוּמְאָה חֲמוּרָה!

proves that **its impurity along with the kidney** (as a carcass) **is not mid'Oraisa**; **for if it should enter your mind** that it is **mid'Oraisa**, then **we would find food that transmits a severe impurity**, and it would not need hechsher!

REFUTATION

כְּשֶׁשִּׁימֵּשׁ – מַעֲשֵׂה עֵץ שִׁימֵּשׁ.

Rava answered him: It is mid'Oraisa, because **when it served** as a protective covering for the kidney, **it served** merely as **the function of wood**.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַב מַתְּנָה: הֲרֵי אָמְרוּ בַּיִת שֶׁסִּכְּכוֹ בִּזְרָעִים – טָהֵרוּ.

Rav Mattana said: **Behold, they said**: **A house that one roofed with seeds**, the seeds **become pure** from their previous tumah because they are now part of the building.

EXPLANATION

טוּמְאָתוֹ לָאו דְּאוֹרָיְיתָא, דְּאִי סָלְקָא דַּעְתָּךְ דְּאוֹרָיְיתָא – מָצִינוּ לִזְרָעִים שֶׁמְּטַמְּאִין טוּמְאָה חֲמוּרָה!

But if the house becomes afflicted with tzaraas, the seeds become tamei with the house. **Its impurity** as part of the house **is not mid'Oraisa**, **for if it should enter your mind** that it is **mid'Oraisa**, **we would find seeds that transmit a severe impurity** of tzaraas!

REFUTATION

כְּשֶׁשִּׁימֵּשׁ – מַעֲשֵׂה עֵץ שִׁימֵּשׁ.

The Gemara rejects this: It is mid'Oraisa, because **when it served** as roofing, **it served** merely as **the function of wood**.

מִשְׁנָה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן מְטַהֵר.

Our Mishnah stated: **Rabbi Shimon rules** them **pure**.

גְּמָרָא GEMARA

QUESTION

מָה נַפְשָׁךְ: אִי מִיתָה עוֹשָׂה נִיפּוּל – לִיטַמֵּא מִשּׁוּם אֵבֶר מִן הַחַי, אִי אֵין מִיתָה עוֹשָׂה נִיפּוּל – לִיטַמֵּא מִשּׁוּם אֵבֶר מִן הַנְּבֵלָה!

The Gemara asks: **Whichever way you look at it**, Rabbi Shimon's ruling is difficult: **If death causes detachment**, then **let it be tamei as a limb from the living**! And **if death does not cause detachment**, then **let it be tamei as a limb from a carcass**!

ANSWER

רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן אַרֵישָׁא קָאֵי: הָאֵבֶר וְהַבָּשָׂר הַמְּדוּלְדָּלִין בְּבְהֵמָה מְטַמֵּא טוּמְאַת אָכָלִין בִּמְקוֹמָן, וּצְרִיכִין הֶכְשֵׁר, וְרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן מְטַהֵר.

The Gemara answers: **Rabbi Shimon is referring to the first clause** of the Mishnah, which taught: **A limb or flesh that are dangling from an animal transmit the impurity of foods in their place** while the animal is alive, **and they require preparation**; **and Rabbi Shimon rules** them **pure** because he holds they are not considered food while still attached.

QUESTION

אָמַר רַבִּי אַסִּי, אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: מַאי טַעְמָא דְּרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן?

Rabbi Asi said that **Rabbi Yochanan said**: **What is the reason of Rabbi Shimon**?

ANSWER

אָמַר קְרָא "מִכָּל הָאֹכֶל אֲשֶׁר יֵאָכֵל", אוֹכֶל שֶׁאַתָּה יָכוֹל לְהַאֲכִילוֹ לַאֲחֵרִים – קָרוּי אוֹכֶל, אוֹכֶל שֶׁאִי אַתָּה יָכוֹל לְהַאֲכִילוֹ

The verse says regarding food tumah: **"Of all the food which may be eaten"**; this teaches that **food that you are able to feed to others** right now **is called food**, but **food that you cannot feed** to others (since eating dangling flesh from a living animal is a prohibition) is not called food.

עַמּוּד ב׳

DAF 129B

EXPLANATION

לַאֲחֵרִים – אֵין קָרוּי אוֹכֶל.

that you cannot feed **to others**, such as a non-Jew, **is not called food** with regard to receiving tumah.

OBJECTION

אָמַר לֵיהּ רַבִּי זֵירָא לְרַבִּי אַסִּי: דִּילְמָא טַעְמָא דְּרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן הָתָם, הוֹאִיל וּמְעוֹרֶה – מְעוֹרֶה.

Rabbi Zeira said to Rabbi Asi: Perhaps the reason of Rabbi Shimon there, in the first clause of our Mishnah, is not because of this drasha, but rather **since** the limb or flesh **is attached** to the living animal, it is considered fully **attached** and part of the animal itself, and therefore it cannot become tamei as food?

PROOF

דְּתַנְיָא: יִחוּר שֶׁל תְּאֵנָה שֶׁנִּפְּשַׁח וּמְעוֹרֶה בַּקְּלִיפָּה – רַבִּי יְהוּדָה מְטַהֵר, וַחֲכָמִים אוֹמְרִים: אִם יָכוֹל לִחְיוֹת – טָהוֹר, וְאִם לָאו – טָמֵא.

As it is taught in a Mishnah: Regarding **a branch of a fig tree that was broken off but** remains **attached by the bark, Rabbi Yehuda rules it pure**, meaning the figs on it are still considered attached to the tree and cannot become tamei; **and the Sages say: If** the branch **is able to live** and produce fruit, it is **pure**, **and if not**, it is considered detached and the figs are **tamei**.

PROOF

וְאָמְרִינַן לָךְ: מַאי טַעְמָא דְּרַבִּי יְהוּדָה? וְאָמְרַתְּ לַן: הוֹאִיל וּמְעוֹרֶה – מְעוֹרֶה.

And we said to you, Rabbi Asi, when we were learning this: **What is the reason of Rabbi Yehuda? And you said to us: Since** it is **attached** by the bark, it is considered fully **attached**. So lichoira, the same logic applies to Rabbi Shimon's ruling in our Mishnah!

RESOLUTION

אָמַר לֵיהּ, אַמְצִיעָתָא: נִשְׁחֲטָה הַבְּהֵמָה, הוּכְשְׁרָה בְּדָמֶיהָ – דִּבְרֵי רַבִּי מֵאִיר; רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן אוֹמֵר: לֹא הוּכְשְׁרוּ.

Rabbi Asi **said to him:** Rabbi Yochanan's explanation was said **on the middle clause** of the Mishnah, which teaches: If **the animal was slaughtered,** the hanging limb and flesh **were rendered susceptible** to tumah **by its blood; this is the statement of Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Shimon says: They were not rendered susceptible.**

STATEMENT

(אָמַר רַבִּי אַסִּי) אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: מַאי טַעְמָא דְּרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן?

And on this, **Rabbi Asi said** that **Rabbi Yochanan said: What is the reason of Rabbi Shimon?**

EXPLANATION

אָמַר קְרָא "מִכָּל הָאֹכֶל אֲשֶׁר יֵאָכֵל" – אוֹכֶל שֶׁאַתָּה יָכוֹל לְהַאֲכִילוֹ לַאֲחֵרִים – קָרוּי אוֹכֶל, אוֹכֶל שֶׁאֵין אַתָּה יָכוֹל לְהַאֲכִילוֹ לַאֲחֵרִים – אֵין קָרוּי אוֹכֶל.

The pasuk says, "From all the food which may be eaten." This teaches: **Food that you are able to feed to others**, meaning non-Jews, **is called food; food that you are not able to feed to others**, such as a limb from a living animal which is forbidden to Bnei Noach, **is not called food.**

QUESTION

וְדִילְמָא טַעְמָא דְּרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בְּהָהִיא אִי כִּדְרָבָא, אִי כִּדְרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן?

The Gemara asks: **But perhaps the reason of Rabbi Shimon in that** middle clause is **either like Rava's** explanation **or like Rabbi Yochanan's** other explanation, which both focus on whether the blood touched the limb itself or only the body, and have nothing to do with this drasha?

RESOLUTION

אֶלָּא, לְעוֹלָם אַסִּיפָא, וְלָאו אַאֵבֶר, אֶלָּא אַבָּשָׂר.

Rather, actually, Rabbi Yochanan's drasha refers **to the last clause** of the Mishnah, **and not to the limb, but rather to the** hanging **flesh.**

STATEMENT

מֵתָה הַבְּהֵמָה – הַבָּשָׂר צָרִיךְ הֶכְשֵׁר, וְרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן מְטַהֵר.

As the Mishnah taught: If **the animal died, the flesh needs hechsher** according to Rabbi Meir, **and Rabbi Shimon rules it pure**, meaning it cannot become tamei even with hechsher.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: מַאי טַעְמָא דְּרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן?

And on this, **Rabbi Yochanan said: What is the reason of Rabbi Shimon?**

EXPLANATION

אָמַר קְרָא "מִכָּל הָאֹכֶל אֲשֶׁר יֵאָכֵל", אוֹכֶל שֶׁאַתָּה יָכוֹל לְהַאֲכִילוֹ לַאֲחֵרִים – קָרוּי אוֹכֶל, אוֹכֶל שֶׁאִי אַתָּה יָכוֹל לְהַאֲכִילוֹ לַאֲחֵרִים – אֵין קָרוּי אוֹכֶל.

The pasuk says, "From all the food which may be eaten." Food that you are able to feed to others is called food; food that you are not able to feed to others, like ever min hachai which is forbidden to non-Jews, **is not called food.**

מִשְׁנָה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

מַתְנִי' הָאֵבֶר וְהַבָּשָׂר הַמְדוּלְדָּלִין בְּאָדָם – טְהוֹרִים.

MISHNAH: **A limb or flesh that are hanging from a person** but still attached **are pure** and do not convey tumah while the person is alive.

MISHNAH

מֵת הָאָדָם – הַבָּשָׂר טָהוֹר.

If **the person died, the** hanging **flesh is pure**, because it is treated as flesh that separated from a living person.

MISHNAH

הָאֵבֶר מְטַמֵּא מִשּׁוּם אֵבֶר מִן הַחַי, וְאֵינוֹ מְטַמֵּא מִשּׁוּם אֵבֶר מִן הַמֵּת, דִּבְרֵי רַבִּי מֵאִיר.

But **the limb conveys tumah as a limb from the living, and it does not convey tumah as a limb from the dead; this is the statement of Rabbi Meir.**

MISHNAH

וְרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן מְטַהֵר.

And Rabbi Shimon rules both the flesh and the limb **pure.**

גְּמָרָא GEMARA

QUESTION

גְּמָ׳ וְרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן מָה נַפְשָׁךְ?

GEMARA: The Gemara asks: **And** as for **Rabbi Shimon, whichever way you look at it**, his ruling is difficult!

QUESTION

אִי מִיתָה עוֹשָׂה נִיפּוּל – לִיטַמֵּא מִשּׁוּם אֵבֶר מִן הַחַי,

If death causes the hanging limb to be considered as if it **fell off** before death, then **let it convey tumah as a limb from the living!**

QUESTION

וְאִי אֵין מִיתָה עוֹשָׂה נִיפּוּל – לִיטַמֵּא מִשּׁוּם אֵבֶר מִן הַמֵּת!

And if death does not cause it to be considered as if it **fell off**, then it was attached at the moment of death, so **let it convey tumah as a limb from the dead!** Why does Rabbi Shimon rule it completely pure?

EXPLANATION

רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בְּעָלְמָא קָאֵי, דְּקָאָמַר תַּנָּא קַמָּא: הָאֵבֶר מְטַמֵּא מִשּׁוּם אֵבֶר מִן הַחַי וְאֵין מְטַמֵּא מִשּׁוּם אֵבֶר מִן הַמֵּת, אַלְמָא אֵבֶר הַמֵּת בְּעָלְמָא מְטַמֵּא,

The Gemara answers: **Rabbi Shimon is referring to** a different law **in general. Since the First Tanna**, Rabbi Meir, **said: "The limb conveys tumah as a limb from the living and does not convey tumah as a limb from the dead," we see** from his wording **that a limb from a dead person in general**, which has no bone or marrow, **conveys tumah.**

EXPLANATION

וַאֲמַר לֵיהּ רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן: אֵבֶר הַמֵּת בְּעָלְמָא לֹא מְטַמֵּא.

And Rabbi Shimon said to him: A limb from a dead person in general does not convey tumah unless it has a k'zayis of flesh or a barley-corn of bone.

PROOF

דְּתַנְיָא: אָמַר רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר: שָׁמַעְתִּי שֶׁאֵבֶר מִן הַחַי מְטַמֵּא.

As it is taught in a Baraisa: **Rabbi Eliezer said: I heard** from my teachers **that a limb from the living conveys tumah.**

PROOF

אָמַר לוֹ רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ: מִן הַחַי וְלֹא מִן הַמֵּת?

Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: Do you mean to say that a limb **from the living** conveys tumah, **but not** a limb **from the dead?**

PROOF

וְקַל וָחוֹמֶר – וּמָה חַי שֶׁהוּא טָהוֹר, אֵבֶר הַפּוֹרֵשׁ מִמֶּנּוּ טָמֵא; מֵת שֶׁהוּא טָמֵא, לֹא כָּל שֶׁכֵּן?

But is it not a kal vachomer? If a living person, who is pure, yet **a limb that separates from him is tamei; then a corpse, which is** already **tamei, is it not all the more so** that a limb separating from it should be tamei?

PROOF

כָּתוּב בִּמְגִילַת תַּעֲנִית: "פִּסְחָא זְעִירָא דְּלָא לְמִסְפַּד", הָא רַבָּה לְמִסְפַּד?! אֶלָּא כָּל דְּכֵן! הָכָא נָמֵי, כָּל דְּכֵן!

Rabbi Yehoshua brought a parable: **It is written in Megillas Taanis: "On the minor Pesach, one may not eulogize."** Does this mean that on **the major** Pesach **one may eulogize?! Rather,** it is **all the more so** forbidden! **Here too,** it is **all the more so** that a limb from a corpse is tamei!

PROOF

אָמַר לֵיהּ: כָּךְ שָׁמַעְתִּי.

Rabbi Eliezer **said to him: I only heard this** specific halacha from my teachers, and I cannot extend it by logical deduction.

QUESTION

וּמַאי אִיכָּא בֵּין אֵבֶר מִן הַחַי לְאֵבֶר מִן הַמֵּת?

The Gemara asks: **And what** practical difference **is there between a limb from the living and a limb from the dead** according to Rabbi Eliezer?

ANSWER

כְּזַיִת בָּשָׂר וְעֶצֶם כִּשְׂעוֹרָה הַפּוֹרֵשׁ מֵאֵבֶר מִן הַחַי אִיכָּא בֵּינַיְיהוּ.

The Gemara answers: The status of **a k'zayis of flesh or a barley-corn-sized bone that separates from a limb from the living is** the difference **between them.**

PROOF

דִּתְנַן: כְּזַיִת בָּשָׂר הַפּוֹרֵשׁ מֵאֵבֶר מִן הַחַי – רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר מְטַמֵּא, וְרַבִּי נְחוּנְיָא בֶּן הַקָּנָה וְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ מְטַהֲרִין.

As we learned in a Mishnah: A k'zayis of flesh that separates from a limb from the living – Rabbi Eliezer rules it tamei, and Rabbi Nechunya ben HaKanah and Rabbi Yehoshua rule it pure.

PROOF

עֶצֶם כִּשְׂעוֹרָה הַפּוֹרֵשׁ מֵאֵבֶר מִן הַחַי – רַבִּי נְחוּנְיָא מְטַמֵּא, רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר וְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ מְטַהֲרִין.

And regarding **a barley-corn-sized bone that separates from a limb from the living – Rabbi Nechunya rules it tamei, and Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua rule it pure.**

EXPLANATION

הַשְׁתָּא דְּאָתֵית לְהָכִי, בֵּין תַּנָּא קַמָּא לְרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן נָמֵי, כְּזַיִת בָּשָׂר וְעֶצֶם כִּשְׂעוֹרָה אִיכָּא בֵּינַיְיהוּ.

The Gemara concludes: **Now that you have arrived at this** explanation, we can say that **between the First Tanna and Rabbi Shimon as well,** the status of **a k'zayis of flesh and a barley-corn-sized bone** that separate from a limb **is** the difference **between them.**

STATEMENT

הֲדַרַן עֲלָךְ הָעוֹר וְהָרוֹטֶב.

May we return to you, "Ha'or Ve'harotev"!

SUMMARY

In this daf, the Gemara resolves the kasha on the baraita by explaining that even if the dangling flesh was not prepared after detachment, it had already received hechsher while still attached to the animal. We then analyze Abaye's series of proofs regarding food transmitting severe tumah, with the Gemara establishing that in all these cases—such as sourdough used as a seat or food offered to an idol—the food is treated mid'Oraisa "like wood" because it has been completely diverted from its normal eating purpose. Finally, the Gemara clarifies Rabbi Shimon's ruling in our Mishnah, explaining that he rules dangling flesh tahor because of a drasha on the pasuk "of all the food which may be eaten," which teaches that food which cannot currently be fed to others (due to the prohibition of eating a limb from a living animal) does not have the halachic status of food to receive tumah.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

The Gemara on our daf brings a fascinating yeshivish sevara to explain how food can sometimes lose its status entirely. Abaye and the other Amoraim discuss various cases, like sourdough designated for sitting, or seeds used as roofing for a house, where the food becomes tamei with a severe tumah. The Gemara is bothered: how can food contract such severe tumah? The teretz is a powerful concept: "when it served, it served merely as the function of wood" (ma'aseh etz shimesh). Once a person designates food for a physical, structural purpose, it completely loses its identity as food. It is no longer something to be consumed; it is now just "wood", a building block.

Think about the deep yeshivish chiddush here for our own avodas Hashem. A person can take something that is naturally meant for consumption, for physical pleasure and eating, and by dedicating it to a higher, structural purpose, they completely change its metzius. It is no longer "food" for the guf; it becomes "wood" for the Bais HaMikdash of one's life. When we take our physical needs, our eating, our sleeping, our business dealings, and we designate them b'davka to serve as the scaffolding for our Torah learning and mitzvos, we are mechadesh a whole new reality. We elevate the physical so that it is no longer just gashmius; it becomes the very structure of our avodah.

Today, before you sit down to eat a meal or go about your daily business, take a second to make a conscious designation. Say to Hashem, either out loud or in your heart, that you are doing this physical act solely to have the strength and means to learn His Torah and do His mitzvos. By doing this, you transform the physical "food" of your day into "wood", the holy building blocks of a life dedicated to Shamayim.

תְּהִלִּים · חֲמִשָּׁה קַאפִּיטְלֶעך

The Five Daily Kapitlach

📖 **CHAPTER PREVIEW**

These are the five kapitlach of Tehillim said every single day: 32, 43, 83, 121, and 130, each set word for word with its English meaning. They are gathered here as one section so the whole daily Tehillim can be said and downloaded together.

All introductions and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

פֶּרֶק ל״ב CHAPTER 32

לְדָוִד מַשְׂכִּיל אַשְׁרֵי נְשׂוּי פֶּשַׁע כְּסוּי חֲטָאָה:

אַשְׁרֵי אָדָם לֹא יַחְשֹׁב יְהוָה לוֹ עָוֹן וְאֵין בְּרוּחוֹ רְמִיָּה:

כִּי הֶחֱרַשְׁתִּי בָּלוּ עֲצָמַי בְּשַׁאֲגָתִי כָּל הַיּוֹם:

כִּי יוֹמָם וָלַיְלָה תִּכְבַּד עָלַי יָדֶךָ נֶהְפַּךְ לְשַׁדִּי בְּחַרְבֹנֵי קַיִץ סֶלָה:

חַטָּאתִי אוֹדִיעֲךָ וַעֲוֹנִי לֹא כִסִּיתִי אָמַרְתִּי אוֹדֶה עֲלֵי פְשָׁעַי לַיהוָה וְאַתָּה נָשָׂאתָ עֲוֹן חַטָּאתִי סֶלָה:

עַל זֹאת יִתְפַּלֵּל כָּל חָסִיד אֵלֶיךָ לְעֵת מְצֹא רַק לְשֵׁטֶף מַיִם רַבִּים אֵלָיו לֹא יַגִּיעוּ:

אַתָּה סֵתֶר לִי מִצַּר תִּצְּרֵנִי רָנֵי פַלֵּט תְּסוֹבְבֵנִי סֶלָה:

אַשְׂכִּילְךָ וְאוֹרְךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ זוּ תֵלֵךְ אִיעֲצָה עָלֶיךָ עֵינִי:

אַל תִּהְיוּ כְּסוּס כְּפֶרֶד אֵין הָבִין בְּמֶתֶג וָרֶסֶן עֶדְיוֹ לִבְלוֹם בַּל קְרֹב אֵלֶיךָ:

רַבִּים מַכְאוֹבִים לָרָשָׁע וְהַבּוֹטֵחַ בַּיהוָה חֶסֶד יְסוֹבְבֶנּוּ:

שִׂמְחוּ בַיהוָה וְגִילוּ צַדִּיקִים וְהַרְנִינוּ כָּל יִשְׁרֵי לֵב:

פֶּרֶק מ״ג CHAPTER 43

שָׁפְטֵנִי אֱלֹהִים וְרִיבָה רִיבִי מִגּוֹי לֹא חָסִיד מֵאִישׁ מִרְמָה וְעַוְלָה תְּפַלְּטֵנִי:

כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵי מָעוּזִּי לָמָּה זְנַחְתָּנִי לָמָּה קֹדֵר אֶתְהַלֵּךְ בְּלַחַץ אוֹיֵב:

שְׁלַח אוֹרְךָ וַאֲמִתְּךָ הֵמָּה יַנְחוּנִי יְבִיאוּנִי אֶל הַר קָדְשְׁךָ וְאֶל מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ:

וְאָבוֹאָה אֶל מִזְבַּח אֱלֹהִים אֶל אֵל שִׂמְחַת גִּילִי וְאוֹדְךָ בְכִנּוֹר אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהָי:

מַה תִּשְׁתּוֹחֲחִי נַפְשִׁי וּמַה תֶּהֱמִי עָלָי הוֹחִילִי לֵאלֹהִים כִּי עוֹד אוֹדֶנּוּ יְשׁוּעוֹת פָּנַי וֵאלֹהָי:

פֶּרֶק פ״ג CHAPTER 83

שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר לְאָסָף:

אֱלֹהִים אַל דֳּמִי לָךְ אַל תֶּחֱרַשׁ וְאַל תִּשְׁקֹט אֵל:

כִּי הִנֵּה אוֹיְבֶיךָ יֶהֱמָיוּן וּמְשַׂנְאֶיךָ נָשְׂאוּ רֹאשׁ:

עַל עַמְּךָ יַעֲרִימוּ סוֹד וְיִתְיָעֲצוּ עַל צְפוּנֶיךָ:

אָמְרוּ לְכוּ וְנַכְחִידֵם מִגּוֹי וְלֹא יִזָּכֵר שֵׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל עוֹד:

כִּי נוֹעֲצוּ לֵב יַחְדָּו עָלֶיךָ בְּרִית יִכְרֹתוּ:

אָהֳלֵי אֱדוֹם וְיִשְׁמְעֵאלִים מוֹאָב וְהַגְרִים:

גְּבָל וְעַמּוֹן וַעֲמָלֵק פְּלֶשֶׁת עִם יֹשְׁבֵי צוֹר:

גַּם אַשּׁוּר נִלְוָה עִמָּם הָיוּ זְרוֹעַ לִבְנֵי לוֹט סֶלָה:

עֲשֵׂה לָהֶם כְּמִדְיָן כְּסִיסְרָא כְיָבִין בְּנַחַל קִישׁוֹן:

נִשְׁמְדוּ בְעֵין דֹּאר הָיוּ דֹּמֶן לָאֲדָמָה:

שִׁיתֵמוֹ נְדִיבֵמוֹ כְּעֹרֵב וְכִזְאֵב וּכְזֶבַח וּכְצַלְמֻנָּע כָּל נְסִיכֵמוֹ:

אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ נִירֶשָׁה לָּנוּ אֵת נְאוֹת אֱלֹהִים:

אֱלֹהַי שִׁיתֵמוֹ כַּגַּלְגַּל כְּקַשׁ לִפְנֵי רוּחַ:

כְּאֵשׁ תִּבְעַר יָעַר וּכְלֶהָבָה תְּלַהֵט הָרִים:

כֵּן תִּרְדְּפֵם בְּסַעֲרֶךָ וּבְסוּפָתְךָ תְבַהֲלֵם:

מַלֵּא פְּנֵיהֶם קָלוֹן וִיבַקְשׁוּ שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה:

יֵבֹשׁוּ וְיִבָּהֲלוּ עֲדֵי עַד וַיַּחְפְּרוּ וְיֹאבֵדוּ:

וְיֵדְעוּ כִּי אַתָּה שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה לְבַדֶּךָ עֶלְיוֹן עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ:

פֶּרֶק קכ״א CHAPTER 121

שִׁיר לַמַּעֲלוֹת אֶשָּׂא עֵינַי אֶל הֶהָרִים מֵאַיִן יָבֹא עֶזְרִי:

עֶזְרִי מֵעִם יְהוָה עֹשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ:

אַל יִתֵּן לַמּוֹט רַגְלֶךָ אַל יָנוּם שֹׁמְרֶךָ:

הִנֵּה לֹא יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל:

יְהוָה שֹׁמְרֶךָ יְהוָה צִלְּךָ עַל יַד יְמִינֶךָ:

יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא יַכֶּכָּה וְיָרֵחַ בַּלָּיְלָה:

יְהוָה יִשְׁמָרְךָ מִכָּל רָע יִשְׁמֹר אֶת נַפְשֶׁךָ:

יְהוָה יִשְׁמָר צֵאתְךָ וּבוֹאֶךָ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם:

פֶּרֶק קְ״ל CHAPTER 130

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת מִמַּעֲמַקִּים קְרָאתִיךָ יְהוָה:

אֲדֹנָי שִׁמְעָה בְקוֹלִי תִּהְיֶינָה אָזְנֶיךָ קַשֻּׁבוֹת לְקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי:

אִם עֲוֹנוֹת תִּשְׁמָר יָהּ אֲדֹנָי מִי יַעֲמֹד:

כִּי עִמְּךָ הַסְּלִיחָה לְמַעַן תִּוָּרֵא:

קִוִּיתִי יְהוָה קִוְּתָה נַפְשִׁי וְלִדְבָרוֹ הוֹחָלְתִּי:

נַפְשִׁי לַאדֹנָי מִשֹּׁמְרִים לַבֹּקֶר שֹׁמְרִים לַבֹּקֶר:

יַחֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל יְהוָה כִּי עִם יְהוָה הַחֶסֶד וְהַרְבֵּה עִמּוֹ פְּדוּת:

וְהוּא יִפְדֶּה אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכֹּל עֲוֹנֹתָיו:

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

When you feel weighed down by your mistakes, do not keep silent or try to hide them. Open your heart to Hashem in honest confession, and then immediately shift your focus to absolute trust in His forgiveness and constant protection, knowing that He never slumbers and is always guarding your steps.

Today, the moment you feel a heavy heart or a sense of spiritual distance, stop what you are doing, speak to Hashem in your own words to acknowledge your mistake, and then say out loud: 'My help is from Hashem, who forgives and guards my soul.'

אור החיים הקדוש · האזינו · רִאשׁוֹן

Explanatory English · Line-by-Line Edition

HA'AZINU · 1ST ALIYAH

The Hebrew is the original Ohr HaChaim. Each passage is paired with its AI-assisted explanatory English, beside it on wide pages and beneath it on smaller screens. Brief clarifications are marked within the English. In plain words and Lemaaseh are separate AI-assisted study aids.

פָּסוּק א

Deuteronomy 32:1

הַאֲזִינוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וַאֲדַבֵּרָה וְתִשְׁמַע הָאָרֶץ אִמְרֵי־פִי׃

Give ear, ye heavens, and I will speak; And let the earth hear the words of my mouth.

אור החיים הקדוש

AI-assisted explanatory translation

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:1:1

הַאֲזִינוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְגוֹ'. יֵשׁ לְהָעִיר רִאשׁוֹנָה לָמָּה אָמַר "וַאֲדַבֵּרָה", וְלֹא אָמַר עַל זֶה הַדֶּרֶךְ "הַאֲזִינוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם דְּבָרַי".

Give ear, heavens, and I will speak, etc. First, we must examine why Moshe said, "and I will speak" (וַאֲדַבֵּרָה), rather than phrasing it as, "Give ear, heavens, to my words."

ב' לָמָּה לֹא כָּלַל אוֹתָם יַחַד וְיֹאמַר "הַאֲזִינוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ", אוֹ "שִׁמְעוּ שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ":

Second, why did he not group them together and say, "Give ear, heavens and earth," or, "Hear, heavens and earth"?

ג' לָמָּה לַשָּׁמַיִם אָמַר לְשׁוֹן הַאֲזָנָה וְלָאָרֶץ אָמַר לְשׁוֹן שְׁמִיעָה:

Third, why does Moshe use haazanah, "giving ear," when he addresses the heavens, but shemiah, "hearing," when he addresses the earth? What accounts for the change in wording?

ד' לָמָּה לַשָּׁמַיִם אָמַר לְשׁוֹן צִוּוּי "הַאֲזִינוּ" לְנוֹכֵחַ, וְלָאָרֶץ אָמַר "וְתִשְׁמַע" שֶׁהָיָה לוֹ לוֹמַר "וְשִׁמְעִי הָאָרֶץ":

Fourth, why did he address the heavens with a direct command, "Give ear" (הַאֲזִינוּ), while addressing the earth in the third person, "and let the earth hear" (וְתִשְׁמַע), when he should have said, "and hear, O earth" (וְשִׁמְעִי הָאָרֶץ)?

ה' לָמָּה לַשָּׁמַיִם אָמַר "וַאֲדַבֵּרָה" דִּבּוּר קָשֶׁה וְלָאָרֶץ אָמַר "אִמְרֵי פִי" אֲמִירָה רַכָּה:

Fifth, why did he use the term "and I will speak" (וַאֲדַבֵּרָה) for the heavens, which denotes harsh speech (דִּבּוּר קָשֶׁה), while using "the words of my mouth" (אִמְרֵי פִי) for the earth, which denotes soft, gentle expression (אֲמִירָה רַכָּה)?

ו׳ לָמָּה דִּקְדֵּק לוֹמַר "אִמְרֵי פִי" וְלֹא אָמַר "אֲמָרַי":

Sixth, why was he precise to say "the words of my mouth" (אִמְרֵי פִי) rather than simply saying "my words" (אֲמָרַי)?

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:1:2

וְרָאִיתִי לְרַבּוֹתֵינוּ זִכְרוֹנָם לִבְרָכָה (בספרי שֶׁאָמְרוּ: מֹשֶׁה שֶׁהָיָה קָרוֹב לַשָּׁמַיִם אָמַר "הַאֲזִינוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם" וְגוֹ׳, יְשַׁעְיָה שֶׁהָיָה רָחוֹק מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם אָמַר "שִׁמְעוּ שָׁמַיִם" (ישעיה א:ב), עַד כָּאן. וְלִדְבְרֵיהֶם נִתְיַשְּׁבוּ קְצָת מֵהַדִּקְדּוּקִים, לֹא כֻּלָּם.

I have seen that Chazal in the Sifrei said: Because Moshe was close to heaven, he said, "Give ear, heavens," whereas Yeshayahu, who was far from heaven, said, "Hear, O heavens" (Yeshayahu 1:2). According to their words, some of these questions about the wording are resolved, but not all of them.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:1:3

וְחוּץ מִדַּרְכָּם נִרְאֶה לוֹמַר, וְקוֹדֶם נַשְׂכִּיל עַל דְּבַר מַשְׁמָעוּת תֵּיבַת "הַאֲזִינוּ", וְהִנֵּה הִיא סוֹבֶלֶת שְׁנֵי דְּרָכִים: אֶחָד, הַטֵּה אֹזֶן, וְהַשֵּׁנִי, תַּאֲזִין אָזְנְךָ.

The Ohr HaChaim now offers another approach. First, we need to understand the word haazinu, "give ear." It can describe two different situations. It can mean "bend your ear toward me," or it can address an ear already close to the speaker.

לַדֶּרֶךְ הָרִאשׁוֹן יַגִּיד שֶׁהַשּׁוֹמֵעַ רָחוֹק וְצָרִיךְ לְהַטּוֹת אָזְנוֹ כְּדֵי שֶׁיּוּכַל לִשְׁמוֹעַ, שֶׁבְּלֹא הַטָּיַת אָזְנוֹ אֵינוֹ יָכוֹל לִשְׁמוֹעַ.

According to the first interpretation, it indicates that the listener is far away and must bend his ear in order to hear, for without bending his ear, he would be unable to hear.

וְלַדֶּרֶךְ הַשֵּׁנִי יַגִּיד שֶׁכָּל כָּךְ אֹזֶן הַשּׁוֹמֵעַ קְרוֹבָה לַמַּשְׁמִיעַ שֶׁלָּזֶה אָמַר הַאֲזִין. וְדֶרֶךְ זֶה בּוֹ בָּחֲרוּ חֲז"ל.

In the second reading, the listener is already so close to the speaker that he can be addressed directly with "give ear." This is the reading Chazal chose when they described Moshe as close to heaven.

וְכֵיוָן שֶׁהַמִּלָּה סוֹבֶלֶת גַּם כֵּן דֶּרֶךְ הָרִאשׁוֹן, וְאֵין הֶכְרֵעַ, אָנוּ נֵלֵךְ בּוֹ, וּבָזֶה יִתְיַשְּׁבוּ כָּל הַדִּקְדּוּקִים עַל נָכוֹן.

The word also allows the first reading, however, and the wording does not force us to choose between them. The Ohr HaChaim therefore develops the first reading, in which the listener must lean in from a distance. He will use it to answer all the questions raised at the beginning.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:1:4

Although the earlier Sages chose another interpretation, the Torah has seventy faces, as the Ohr HaChaim has already explained (Bamidbar Rabbah 13:16). In Aggadah, the Torah's non-halachic teachings, another interpretation may differ from theirs, provided the disagreement is not in a matter of halachah. Here there is an additional reason to offer another reading: as he will soon explain, both readings can fit the same pasuk.

וְהַגַּם שֶׁקַּדְמוֹנֵינוּ בָּחֲרוּ דֶּרֶךְ אַחֵר, כְּבָר אָמַרְנוּ שֶׁשִּׁבְעִים פָּנִים לַתּוֹרָה (במדבר רבה יג,טז), וּבְעִנְיַן הָאַגָּדָה יְכוֹלִים לְפָרֵשׁ הַגַּם שֶׁיִּהְיֶה הַפֵּרוּשׁ מְנַגֵּד לְדִבְרֵיהֶם כָּל שֶׁאֵין הַנִּגּוּד בִּדְבַר הֲלָכָה, וּמַה גַּם שֶׁיֵּשׁ לָנוּ לְהַסְבִּיל שְׁנֵי הַדְּרָכִים בַּפָּסוּק כַּאֲשֶׁר אֲבָאֵר בְּסָמוּךְ:

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:1:5

Now, the path by which we resolve all the questions about the wording is as follows: Since the heavens are physically high above, in accordance with the plain meaning of the matter, Moshe called upon them to bend their ear, saying to them, "Give ear" (הַאֲזִינוּ), meaning: bend your ear to hear my words.

הִנֵּה הַדֶּרֶךְ שֶׁאָנוּ מְיַשְּׁבִים בּוֹ כָּל הַדִּקְדּוּקִים הוּא עַל זֶה הַדֶּרֶךְ, לְפִי שֶׁהַשָּׁמַיִם הֵם עֶלְיוֹנִים כִּפְשַׁט הָעִנְיָן, לָזֶה קָרָא לָהֶם מֹשֶׁה שֶׁיַּטּוּ אָזְנָם, וְאָמַר לָהֶם "הַאֲזִינוּ", פֵּרוּשׁ הַטּוּ אָזְנְכֶם לִשְׁמֹעַ דְּבָרַי,

But to the earth, he said, "and let the earth hear" (וְתִשְׁמַע), meaning it will hear on its own without bending an ear. This is because the earth stands directly before him, and is close enough to hear the very articulation of the speech coming out of his mouth. This is why he said, "the words of my mouth" (אִמְרֵי פִי), because the earth is so close to him.

וְלָאָרֶץ אָמַר "וְתִשְׁמַע", פֵּרוּשׁ מֵעַצְמָהּ בְּלֹא הַטָּיַת אֹזֶן, כִּי לְפָנָיו הִיא עוֹמֶדֶת, וְיכוֹלָה לִשְׁמֹעַ חִתּוּךְ הַמַּאֲמָר הַיּוֹצֵא מִפִּיו, וְהוּא אָמְרוֹ "אִמְרֵי פִי", לִהְיוֹתָהּ כָּל כָּךְ קְרוֹבָה אֶצְלוֹ.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:1:6

Through this approach, we gain a resolution to all the questions about the wording. Since one listener is far and the other is near, Moshe divided his call to each one in the manner appropriate for them.

וּלְדֶרֶךְ זֶה הִרְוַחְנוּ יִשּׁוּב כָּל הַדִּקְדּוּקִים, כִּי לְפִי שֶׁאֶחָד רָחוֹק וְאֶחָד קָרוֹב, לָזֶה חִלֵּק הַהֶעָרָה לְכָל אֶחָד כְּפִי הָרָאוּי לוֹ.

לָרָחוֹק קָרָא שֶׁיַּטֶּה אָזְנוֹ, וְהִתְנָה עַל עַצְמוֹ לִקְרֹא בְּקוֹל גָּדוֹל, וְהוּא אָמְרוֹ "וַאֲדַבֵּרָה", וְלַקָּרוֹב כְּפִי הָרָאוּי לוֹ הֶעִירוֹ שֶׁגַּם אֵלָיו יְדַבֵּר, אֶלָּא שֶׁאֵינוֹ צָרִיךְ לִקְרִיאָה, כִּי מֵעַצְמוֹ יִשְׁמַע הַגַּם שֶׁלֹּא יִקְרָא בְּקוֹל גָּדוֹל, אֶלָּא בְּחִתּוּךְ אוֹתִיּוֹת מִפִּיו תִּשְׁמַע בּוֹ.

To the distant one (the heavens), he called to bend its ear, and undertook upon himself to call out in a loud voice, which is the meaning of "and I will speak" (וַאֲדַבֵּרָה, implying strong, loud speech). To the near one (the earth), he called out in the manner appropriate for it, indicating that he would speak to it as well, but it does not require a loud shout; rather, it will hear on its own, even without a loud voice, simply by hearing the articulation of the letters directly from his mouth.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:1:7

וּלְדֶרֶךְ זֶה יִתְיַשְּׁבוּ דִּבְרֵי יְשַׁעְיָה שֶׁאָמַר (ישעיה א:ב) "שִׁמְעוּ שָׁמַיִם וְהַאֲזִינִי אָרֶץ", שֶׁנָּתַן שְׁמִיעָה לַשָּׁמַיִם הַגַּם שֶׁהֵם רְחוֹקִים מִמֶּנּוּ, וְהַאֲזָנָה לָאָרֶץ הַגַּם שֶׁהִיא קְרוֹבָה.

Through this path, we can also resolve the words of Yeshayahu, who said, "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth" (Yeshayahu 1:2). He attributed "hearing" to the heavens, even though they were far from him, and "giving ear" (bending the ear) to the earth, even though it was close.

הַטַּעַם הוּא, כְּמוֹ שֶׁגָּמַר אוֹמֶר יְשַׁעְיָה עַצְמוֹ וְאָמַר "כִּי ה' דִּבֵּר", פֵּרוּשׁ טַעַם שֶׁאָמַר בְּסֵדֶר זֶה לָהֶם כִּי ה' דִּבֵּר, וּבְעֵרֶךְ הַמְדַבֵּר שֶׁהוּא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא יוֹתֵר הֵם קְרוֹבִים הַשָּׁמַיִם, דִּכְתִיב (תהלים קטו:טז) "הַשָּׁמַיִם שָׁמַיִם לַה'", וּכְתִיב (ישעיה סו:א) "הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּסְאִי וְהָאָרֶץ הֲדֹם רַגְלָי", וְלָזֶה אָמַר "שִׁמְעוּ שָׁמַיִם" מַה שֶּׁדִּבֵּר ה', כִּי אֵינָם צְרִיכִים הַטָּיַת אֹזֶן, וְ"הַאֲזִינִי אָרֶץ" לִהְיוֹתָהּ רְחוֹקָה, צְרִיכָה לְהַטָּיַת אָזְנָהּ לִשְׁמוֹעַ.

The reason for this is as Yeshayahu himself concluded: "for Hashem has spoken." This means the reason he ordered them in this way is because it is Hashem Who spoke. Relative to the Speaker, Who is Hashem, the heavens are closer, as it is written, "The heavens are heavens for Hashem" (Psalms 115:16), and it is written, "The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool" (Yeshayahu 66:1). Therefore, Yeshayahu said, "Hear, O heavens" to what Hashem spoke, because they do not need to bend their ear; but "give ear, O earth," because being far from Him, the earth must bend its ear to hear.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:1:8

וְאוּלַי שֶׁתֵּיבַת "הַאֲזִינוּ" יְצֻדְּקוּ בָּהּ שְׁנֵי הַדְּרָכִים, עַל זֶה הַדֶּרֶךְ: בְּעֵרֶךְ בְּחִינַת פֶּה מֹשֶׁה הַמְּחַתֵּךְ הָאוֹתִיּוֹת תִּהְיֶה הַכַּוָּנָה כִּדְבָרֵינוּ,

Perhaps both interpretations of the word "Give ear" (הַאֲזִינוּ) are correct, in the following manner: Relative to the physical mouth of Moshe that articulates the letters, the meaning is as we have explained (that the heavens are far and must bend their ear).

But relative to his soul, which is spiritual, the meaning is in accordance with the words of Chazal. The text itself supports this, for it was regarding Moshe's soul that Chazal said (Sifrei Ha'azinu 1) that he was close to heaven. His physical self, however, spoke on the earth, and one cannot deny physical reality.

וּבְעֵרֶךְ נִשְׁמָתוֹ שֶׁהִיא הָרוּחָנִיּוּת תִּהְיֶה הַכַּוָּנָה כְּדִבְרֵי רַבּוֹתֵינוּ זִכְרוֹנָם לִבְרָכָה, וְהַדְּבָרִים מוֹכִיחִים כֵּן, שֶׁעַל נִשְׁמָתוֹ שֶׁל מֹשֶׁה הוּא שֶׁאָמְרוּ חֲכָמֵינוּ זִכְרוֹנָם לִבְרָכָה (ספרי האזינו א) לְפִי שֶׁהָיָה קָרוֹב לַשָּׁמַיִם, כִּי עַצְמוּתוֹ בָּאָרֶץ יְדַבֵּר, וְאֵין לְהַכְחִישׁ הַמּוּחָשׁ.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:1:9

Furthermore, Moshe intended to speak to the two components from which man is constructed: one is the spiritual part, which is referred to by the name "heavens," and the other is the physical part, which is referred to by the name "earth." This is similar to what Chazal alluded to (Sanhedrin 91b) on the verse, "He calls to the heavens from above, etc." (Psalms 50:4).

עוֹד נִתְכַּוֵּן שֶׁדִּבֵּר עִם שְׁנֵי הַרְכָּבוֹת שֶׁמֵּהֶם בָּנוּי הָאָדָם, אֶחָד חֵלֶק הָרוּחָנִי שֶׁיִּתְיַחֵס בְּשֵׁם הַשָּׁמַיִם, וְאֶחָד חֵלֶק הַגּוּפָנִי שֶׁיִּתְיַחֵס בְּשֵׁם הָאָרֶץ, וּכְדֶרֶךְ שֶׁרָמְזוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ זִכְרוֹנָם לִבְרָכָה (סנהדרין צא:) בַּפָּסוּק "יִקְרָא אֶל הַשָּׁמַיִם מֵעָל" וְגוֹ' (תהלים נ:ד).

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:1:10

When he spoke to the spiritual aspect within man, he called to it and said, "Give ear, heavens." This means the heavenly parts of man, which are hidden in secret, are called upon to bend their ear. To this aspect, he spoke with strong words (דִּבּוּר קָשֶׁה), because the soul can bear the authority of the Creator's demands, as it recognizes its spiritual obligation.

וּכְשֶׁדִּבֵּר לָרוּחָנִיּוּת שֶׁבָּאָדָם קָרָא אֵלָיו וְאָמַר "הַאֲזִינוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם", פֵּרוּשׁ, חֶלְקֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם שֶׁלֶּהֱיוֹתָם טְמוּנִים בַּנִּסְתָּר, לָזֶה קְרָאָם לְהַאֲזִין, וְאָמַר כְּנֶגְדּוֹ דִּבּוּר קָשֶׁה, כִּי הַנֶּפֶשׁ תִּסְבּוֹל מָרוּת בְּעִנְיְנֵי הַבּוֹרֵא, כִּי תַּכִּיר חִיּוּבָהּ.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:1:11

But to the body, which is revealed, he said, "and let the earth hear," meaning the earthly parts of man. To this physical aspect, he spoke "the words of my mouth," because the body, by its physical nature, is far from intellectual and spiritual concepts, and therefore requires gentle words (אֲמִירָה רַכָּה) to be receptive to hearing.

וּכְנֶגֶד הַגּוּף שֶׁהוּא בְּנִגְלֶה, אָמַר "וְתִשְׁמַע הָאָרֶץ", פֵּרוּשׁ, חֶלְקֵי הָאָרֶץ, "אִמְרֵי פִי", כִּי הַגּוּף לֶהֱיוֹת טִבְעוֹ רָחוֹק מֵהַמַּשְׂכָּלוֹת צָרִיךְ אֲמִירָה רַכָּה לִשְׁמֹעַ.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:1:12

עוֹד נִתְכַּוֵּן לְדַבֵּר עִם הַדְּרָגוֹת הַנִּמְצָאִים בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל: אֶחָד הֵם גְּדוֹלֵיהֶם וְרָאשֵׁיהֶם, ב' הֵמָּה הֲמוֹן הָעָם שֶׁאֵין לָהֶם שֵׁם בָּעָם.

Moshe also intended to speak to the different groups within Yisrael: first, their leaders and great figures; second, the masses of the people who do not hold prominent titles.

וְכִנָּה לַגְּדוֹלִים בְּשֵׁם שָׁמַיִם שֶׁהֵם בְּמַדְרֵגָה גְּדוֹלָה, וְהִקְדִּימָם וְדִבֵּר לָהֶם בְּצִוּוּי "הַאֲזִינוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם", וְאַחַר כָּךְ אָמַר "וְתִשְׁמַע הָאָרֶץ", פֵּרוּשׁ מֵעַצְמָם יִשְׁמְעוּ הֶהָמוֹן הַנִּמְשָׁלִים לָאָרֶץ, כְּשֶׁיִּרְאוּ גְּדוֹלֵיהֶם הוֹלְכִים בְּדֶרֶךְ נָכוֹן, וּכְאָמְרָם זִכְרוֹנָם לִבְרָכָה (זוהר חלק ב לו.) וְזֶה לְשׁוֹנָם: אִי רֵישָׁא דְּעַמָּא אִתְתַּקַּן כּוּלָּא אִתְתַּקַּן.

He referred to the leaders by the name "heavens," because they are on a high spiritual level. He addressed them first with the command, "Give ear, heavens." After that, he said, "and let the earth hear," meaning that the masses, who are compared to the "earth," will hear on their own when they see their leaders walking on the proper path. This is as the Sages of blessed memory said in the Zohar (Part II, 36a): "If the head of the nation is corrected, the whole nation is corrected."

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:1:13

עוֹד יִרְמֹז: אִם יַאֲזִינוּ דִּבְרֵי תּוֹרָה אָז יִהְיוּ נִקְרָאִים שָׁמַיִם, וְהוּא אָמְרוֹ "הַאֲזִינוּ" – בָּזֶה אַתֶּם נֶחְשָׁבִים שָׁמַיִם,

There is another hint here. By giving ear to Torah, people themselves can become worthy of the name "heavens." On this reading, haazinu means: listen, and through that listening you become like the heavens.

עַל דֶּרֶךְ אָמְרוֹ (תהלים פב:ו) "אֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי אֱלֹהִים אַתֶּם", וּכְמוֹ שֶׁהֶאֱרַכְנוּ בְּפָרָשַׁת בְּרֵאשִׁית, שֶׁעַל יְדֵי מַעֲשֵׂה הַצַּדִּיקִים גַּם הַחֹמֶר מְהַפְּכִים אוֹתוֹ וְעוֹשִׂים אוֹתוֹ צוּרָה, וְעַל יְדֵי מַעֲשֵׂה הָרְשָׁעִים מְהַפְּכִים הַצּוּרָה לְחֹמֶר.

This follows the idea of "I said, you are elohim" (Tehillim 82:6), a description of human spiritual stature. The Ohr HaChaim refers to his longer explanation in Bereishis: through righteous deeds, even physical matter can be transformed into spiritual form; through wicked deeds, spiritual form can be reduced to mere matter. For clarity, "matter" and "form" here contrast the physical side of a person with the spiritual character that shapes it. His point is that our deeds can raise the physical toward the spiritual, or pull the spiritual downward.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:1:14

וּכְבָר אָמַרְנוּ כִּי הַצּוּרָה תִּתְיַחֵס בְּשֵׁם שָׁמַיִם, וְהַחוֹמֶר יִתְיַחֵס בְּשֵׁם אֶרֶץ. וְאָמְרוֹ "וַאֲדַבֵּרָה", פֵּרוּשׁ, לֹא בִּשְׁעַת הַטּוֹבָה לְבַד תַּאֲזִינוּ, אֶלָּא אֲפִלּוּ בְּשָׁעָה שֶׁיְּדַבֵּר קָשׁוֹת בְּתוֹכָחוֹת עַל עָוֹן צְרִיכִין לְהַאֲזִין.

We have already established that spiritual form is referred to by the name "heavens," and physical matter is referred to by the name "earth." When Moshe said, "and I will speak" (וַאֲדַבֵּרָה, implying harsh speech), he meant: do not only listen during times of goodness, but even when I speak harshly in rebuke for sin, you must still give ear.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:1:15

וְאָמְרוֹ וְתִשְׁמַע הָאָרֶץ וְגוֹ'. פֵּרוּשׁ, שֶׁאֲפִלּוּ אַחַר פְּרֵדַת הַנֶּפֶשׁ מֵהַגּוּף וְתִשָּׁאֵר בְּחִינַת הָאָרֶץ לְבַדָּהּ, אַף עַל פִּי כֵן תִּשְׁמַע הָאָרֶץ אִמְרֵי פִי.

And when he said, "and let the earth hear the words of my mouth," he meant that even after the soul departs from the body, leaving only the physical element of the "earth," even then, this earth will hear the words of my mouth.

פֵּרוּשׁ, עַל דֶּרֶךְ אָמְרָם בְּסֵפֶר הַזֹּהַר (זהר חדש בראשית בפסוק "ויאמר אלהים יהי מארת") וְזֶה לְשׁוֹנוֹ: "צְאֶינָה וּרְאֶינָה" וְגוֹ', עֲתִידָה בַּת קוֹל לְאִתְעָרָא בְּכָל צִיּוּנָא וְצִיּוּנָא בְּבָתֵּי קִבְרֵי וְאוֹמֶרֶת "צְאֶינָה וּרְאֶינָה", פּוּקוּ מִתְּחוֹת בְּלֵיאוּתָא דְּעַפְרָא וְאִתְעָרוּ מִשְׁנַתְכוֹן בְּנוֹת צִיּוֹן, כְּמָה דְאַתְּ אָמַר "מָה הַצִּיּוּן הַלָּז" (מלכים ב כג:יז), עַד כָּאן.

He explains this through a passage in the Zohar Chadash, Bereishis, on "Let there be lights." It describes a future heavenly voice calling at every grave marker: "Go out and see. Come out from beneath the worn covering of dust, and awaken from your sleep, daughters of Tzion." The passage connects Tzion with a tziyun, a grave marker, as in "What is this marker?" (II Melachim 23:17). For clarity, this wordplay identifies the sleepers being summoned as those lying in the graves. This concludes the cited passage.

הוּא הַמַּאֲמָר שֶׁמַּבְטִיחַ ה' לַצַּדִּיקִים שֶׁיִּשְׁמַע גּוּפָם אַחַר שֶׁיִּהְיֶה בָּאָרֶץ, וְהוּא אָמְרוֹ "וְתִשְׁמַע הָאָרֶץ אִמְרֵי פִי". וּמִמּוֹצָא דָבָר אַתָּה לָמֵד שֶׁמִּי שֶׁלֹּא יַאֲזִין דְּבַר ה' לֹא יִשְׁמַע גּוּפוֹ הַשּׁוֹכֵן בָּאָרֶץ אֶת קוֹל הַכָּרוֹז הַהוּא וְלֹא יִהְיֶה עֲפָרוֹ נִנְעָר.

This is the promise that Hashem makes to the righteous: that their physical bodies will hear His call even after they have returned to the earth, which is the meaning of "and let the earth hear the words of my mouth." From the inverse of this statement, you learn that one who does not give ear to the word of Hashem in life, his body resting in the earth will not hear that calling voice, and his dust will not be awakened at the resurrection.

Original Ohr HaChaim Hebrew on Sefaria

AI-assisted study aids · Deuteronomy 32:1

בְּפַשְׁטוּת · In plain words

The Ohr HaChaim begins with six questions about the different ways Moshe addresses heaven and earth. His first approach reads the contrast in terms of physical distance: heaven must lean in to hear Moshe, while the earth is close enough to hear his words directly. He then shows how this can coexist with Chazal's reading that Moshe's soul is close to heaven. Other readings address the soul and body, and then the leaders and the rest of the people. A final reading teaches that listening to Torah, including rebuke, can raise a person's physical life toward the spiritual. He connects that listening with the future call that awakens the righteous from the earth.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה · Lemaaseh

When a Torah teaching challenges something we are doing, pause before dismissing it. The Ohr HaChaim on this pasuk says that giving ear includes listening to rebuke, even when the words are hard to hear. One practical step is to identify what the teaching asks us to reconsider, and give that point our full attention.

פָּסוּק ב *Deuteronomy 32:2*

יַעֲרֹף כַּמָּטָר לִקְחִי תִּזַּל כַּטַּל אִמְרָתִי כִּשְׂעִירִם עָלֵי־דֶשֶׁא וְכִרְבִיבִים עָלֵי־עֵשֶׂב׃

My doctrine shall drop as the rain, My speech shall distil as the dew; As the small rain upon the tender grass, And as the showers upon the herb.

אור החיים הקדוש

AI-assisted explanatory translation

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:2:1

יַעֲרֹף כַּמָּטָר לִקְחִי. פֵּרוּשׁ, עַל דֶּרֶךְ אָמְרָם זִכְרוֹנָם לִבְרָכָה (אבות ג,יז) "אִם אֵין קֶמַח אֵין תּוֹרָה" וְכוּ',

> "May my teaching fall like rain." The Ohr HaChaim begins with the teaching in Pirkei Avos 3:17, "If there is no flour, there is no Torah." Flour stands for the livelihood that enables a person to learn.

יְכַוֵּן הַכָּתוּב בְּמַאֲמָר זֶה כִּי כְּמוֹ שֶׁה' נוֹתֵן מָטָר לָזוּן וּלְפַרְנֵס, כְּמוֹ כֵן צְרִיכִין הֵם לִלְמוֹד תּוֹרָה, וְזֶה שִׁיעוּר הַכָּתוּב: יַטִּיף כְּמוֹ שֶׁאֲנִי מַטִּיף הַמָּטָר לִקְחִי, וּכְאִלּוּ אָמַר "יַעֲרֹף לִקְחִי כַּמָּטָר",

Just as Hashem sends rain to feed and sustain us, we are called upon to learn Torah. Moshe's comparison asks that Torah flow from our mouths in response to the rain Hashem provides. The pasuk can thus be read: let My teaching fall, just as I cause the rain to fall. The comparison is between the drops of rain Hashem sends and the words of Torah we speak.

שֶׁאֵין הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא שׁוֹאֵל מֵהָאָדָם לִלְמוֹד תּוֹרָה עַד שֶׁמֵּכִין לוֹ כְּדֵי פַּרְנָסָתוֹ,

The Ohr HaChaim explains that Hashem first prepares a person's livelihood and then asks him to learn Torah. Material support makes that learning possible.

וּמִמּוֹצָא דָבָר אַתָּה לָמֵד שֶׁאִם לֹא יַטִּיפוּ מִפִּיהֶם טִיפֵּי תּוֹרָה אֵין חֵפֶץ ה' לָתֵת מָטָר.

Consequently, you learn from this matter that if they do not drop words of Torah from their mouths, Hashem has no desire to give rain.

וְהוּא מַה שֶׁפֵּרַשְׁנוּ בְּמַאֲמַר הַתַּנָּא (אבות ג,יז) "אִם אֵין קֶמַח אֵין תּוֹרָה" פֵּרוּשׁ, אִם רָאִיתָ שֶׁאֵין קֶמַח דַּע שֶׁאֵין תּוֹרָה.

This also explains the Ohr HaChaim's reading of "If there is no flour, there is no Torah" (Pirkei Avos 3:17). He reads it as a conclusion one can draw: when the flour is missing, the Torah is missing. In this reading, a lack of sustenance points back to a lack of Torah learning.

וְטַעַם שֶׁכִּנָּה לִלְמוּד תּוֹרָה לָשׁוֹן זֶה "יַעֲרֹף", לְדַמּוֹת לְמַעֲשֵׂה הַמָּטָר שֶׁהוּא מַטִּיף.

The reason the verse refers to the study of Torah with the term "ya'arof" (shall drop) is to compare it to the action of rain, which drops down.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:2:2

עוֹד יִרְמֹז כִּי כְּדֶרֶךְ שֶׁהַמָּטָר מְנִיעָתוֹ תְּסוֹבֵב מִיתָה לְהָאָדָם, כְּמוֹ כֵן מְנִיעַת הַתּוֹרָה תַּעַרְפֶּנּוּ, עַל דֶּרֶךְ אָמְרוֹ (ישעיה א:יט-כ) "אִם תֹּאבוּ וְגוֹ' וְאִם תְּמָאֲנוּ וְגוֹ' חֶרֶב" וְגוֹ'.

Alternatively, the verse hints that just as the withholding of rain causes death to man, so too the withholding of Torah will break him (from the root "arof," to break the neck). He connects this warning to Yeshayahu 1:19 to 20, which contrasts willingness to obey with refusal, and warns that refusal leads to the sword.

וְכָפַל לוֹמַר בְּמִלּוֹת שׁוֹנוֹת "לִקְחִי אִמְרָתִי", כְּנֶגֶד שְׁנֵי תּוֹרוֹת – תּוֹרָה שֶׁבִּכְתָב וְתוֹרָה שֶׁבְּעַל פֶּה.

The verse repeats itself using different terms, "likchi" (My teaching) and "imrati" (My speech), corresponding to the two Torahs: the Written Torah and the Oral Torah.

כְּנֶגֶד תּוֹרָה שֶׁבִּכְתָב אָמַר "לִקְחִי" שֶׁה' נְתָנָהּ מִיָּדוֹ לְיַד מֹשֶׁה כְּתוּבָה בְּאֶצְבַּע אֱלֹהִים, וְהַגַּם שֶׁלֹּא נָתַן אֶלָּא עֲשֶׂרֶת הַדִּבְּרוֹת, בָּהֶם כְּלוּלִים כָּל מַה שֶׁכָּתוּב בְּסֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה כְּמַאֲמָרָם זִכְרוֹנָם לִבְרָכָה (זוהר חלק ב צג:).

Likchi, "My teaching," refers to the Written Torah, which Hashem handed to Moshe, written with the finger of Elokim. Although the direct gift was the Aseres HaDibros, the Ten Commandments, everything written in the Torah is included within them. The Ohr HaChaim cites the Zohar, volume 2, 93b, for this point.

וּכְנֶגֶד תּוֹרָה שֶׁבְּעַל פֶּה אָמַר "אִמְרָתִי" שֶׁהֵם דְּבָרִים שֶׁנִּמְסְרוּ בְּמַאֲמַר פֶּה אֶל פֶּה.

And corresponding to the Oral Torah, it says "imrati" (My speech), which refers to matters that were transmitted by word of mouth, from mouth to mouth.

וְכִנָּה לְתוֹרָה שֶׁבִּכְתָב מָטָר וּלְתוֹרָה שֶׁבְּעַל פֶּה טַל, לְפִי שֶׁהַתּוֹרָה שֶׁבִּכְתָב הִיא הָעִקָּר וְיסוֹד כָּל דָּבָר, וְתוֹרָה שֶׁבְּעַל פֶּה הֵם תִּקּוּנִים וְדִקְדּוּקִים שֶׁאֵינָם מְפֹרָשִׁים בָּהּ אֶלָּא נִרְמָזִים, וְהוּא עִנְיָן שֶׁלָּקַח הַכָּתוּב בְּדִמְיוֹנָהּ שֶׁדִּמָּה תּוֹרָה שֶׁבִּכְתָב לְמָטָר שֶׁהוּא יְסוֹד וְעִקַּר הַכֹּל, וְתוֹרָה שֶׁבְּעַל פֶּה לְטַל שֶׁהוּא תִּקּוּן וְהַעֲמָדָה מַה שֶׁעָשָׂה הַמָּטָר כְּמוֹ שֶׁהִיא תּוֹרָה שֶׁבְּעַל פֶּה לְתוֹרָה שֶׁבִּכְתָב.

The verse compares the Written Torah to rain and the Oral Torah to dew. This is because the Written Torah is the primary foundation and root of everything, whereas the Oral Torah consists of the applications and fine details that are not explicitly stated in the Written Torah but are only hinted at. This is the concept the verse employs in its metaphor, comparing the Written Torah to rain, which is the foundation and primary source of everything, and the Oral Torah to dew, which sustains and preserves what the rain has produced, just as the Oral Torah does for the Written Torah.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:2:3

עוֹד יִרְצֶה עַל דֶּרֶךְ אָמְרָם אַנְשֵׁי אֱמֶת (באר היטב או"ח סי' רל"ח בשם האריז"ל) כִּי מִצְוַת עֵסֶק תּוֹרָה שֶׁבִּכְתָב אֵינָהּ אֶלָּא בַּיּוֹם וְלֹא בַּלַּיְלָה,

He offers another reading based on the teaching of the masters of the Torah's inner wisdom, cited in Be'er Heitev, Orach Chaim 238, in the name of the Arizal. In this teaching, the time for learning the Written Torah is the day, rather than the night.

וְכֵן אָמְרוּ בַּבָּרַיְתָא (מדרש שוחר טוב יט, ז) שֶׁמֹּשֶׁה בְּאוֹתָן אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם שֶׁהָיָה אֵצֶל ה' הָיָה מַכִּיר בֵּין הַיּוֹם לַלַּיְלָה מֵהַלִּמּוּד שֶׁהָיָה ה' מְלַמְּדוֹ, כְּשֶׁהָיָה מְלַמְּדוֹ מִשְׁנָה הָיָה יוֹדֵעַ שֶׁהוּא לַיְלָה, וְיֵשׁ טַעַם בַּדָּבָר שֶׁאֵין לִמּוּד מִקְרָא בַּלַּיְלָה.

Similarly, Chazal taught in a Beraita (Midrash Shocher Tov 19:7) that during those forty days Moshe was with Hashem, he was able to distinguish between day and night by the subject matter Hashem was teaching him. When Hashem taught him the Written Torah, he knew it was day. When Hashem taught him Mishnah, Moshe knew it was night. The Ohr HaChaim adds that there is a deeper reason for this teaching about not learning Scripture at night, but does not develop that reason here.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:2:4

וְלָזֶה כִּנָּה תּוֹרָה שֶׁבִּכְתָב לְמָטָר, שֶׁאֵינוֹ תָּמִיד אֶלָּא בִּימוֹת הַגְּשָׁמִים אֲבָל לֹא בִּימוֹת הַחַמָּה, וְצֵא וּלְמַד מַה שֶּׁאֵרַע לְרָבָא (תענית כד:) עַל שֶׁהִטְרִיחַ לְהוֹרִיד גְּשָׁמִים שֶׁלֹּא בְּעִתָּם,

For this reason, the verse compares the Written Torah to rain, which does not fall constantly but only during the rainy season, and not during the summer. Go and learn from what happened to Rava (Taanis 24b) when he troubled Heaven to bring down rain out of its proper season.

כְּמוֹ כֵן הַמִּקְרָא הוּא דַּוְקָא בִּזְמַנּוֹ הַמֻּגְבָּל לוֹ יוֹם וְלֹא לַיְלָה.

In the same way, Scripture is meant specifically for its designated time, which is the day and not the night.

וְדִמָּה תּוֹרָה שֶׁבְּעַל פֶּה לְטַל, כְּמוֹ שֶׁהַטַּל לֹא מַפְסִיק קַיִץ וְחֹרֶף יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה, כְּמוֹ כֵן תּוֹרָה שֶׁבְּעַל פֶּה אֵין לְהּ זְמַן שֶׁאֵינוֹ זְמַנָּהּ,

And the verse compares the Oral Torah to dew. Just as dew never ceases, falling in summer and winter, day and night, so too the Oral Torah has no time that is not its proper time.

וְאַל תַּקְשֶׁה שֶׁהַטַּל יַפְרִיחֶנּוּ הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ כִּי אֵין הַמְּנִיעָה מִצַּד הַטַּל:

The sun's drying up the dew does not disprove the comparison. That disappearance comes from the sun acting upon it, not from the dew itself having an appointed time when it must stop.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:2:5

כִּשְׂעִירִם וְגוֹ'. יִתְבָּאֵר עַל דֶּרֶךְ אָמְרָם בַּבָּרַיְתָא (מדרש משלי י'): אָמַר רַבִּי יִשְׁמָעֵאל, כְּשֶׁמַּעֲמִידִין אֶת הָאָדָם בְּדִין, אִם יֵשׁ בְּיָדוֹ מִקְרָא שׁוֹאֲלִין מִמֶּנּוּ לָמָּה לֹא שָׁנָה, וְאִם יֵשׁ בְּיָדוֹ מִשְׁנָה שׁוֹאֲלִין מִמֶּנּוּ תַּלְמוּד, וְכֵן עַל זֶה הַדֶּרֶךְ.

As the small rain upon the tender grass, and so on. This can be explained in light of what Chazal taught in a Beraita (Midrash Mishlei, Chapter 10): Rabbi Yishmael said: When a person is brought to judgment, if he possesses knowledge of Scripture, they ask him, "Why did you not study Mishnah?" If he possesses knowledge of Mishnah, they ask him, "Why did you not study Talmud?" and so on in this manner.

הִנֵּה מֵעוֹמֶק דִּבְרֵי הַבָּרַיְתָא מוֹכִיחִים הַדְּבָרִים שֶׁמִּי שֶׁיֵּשׁ בְּיָדוֹ מִקְרָא אֵין שׁוֹאֲלִין מִמֶּנּוּ מַעֲשֵׂה מֶרְכָּבָה, אֶלָּא מַדְרֵגָה אַחַת כְּפִי יְכָלְתּוֹ יוֹתֵר מִמַּה שֶׁטָּרַח, שֶׁעָלָיו הָיָה לִטְרוֹחַ גָּדֵר לְמַעְלָה מִזּוֹ.

Notice what this teaching implies. Someone who has learned Scripture is not immediately asked why he has not learned Maaseh Merkavah, the deepest teachings about Hashem's heavenly chariot. He is asked about the next level he could have reached. The demand is to put in the effort for one stage beyond what he has already achieved, according to his ability.

וְהוּא אוֹמֵר "כִּשְׂעִירִם וְגוֹ' וְכִרְבִיבִים" וְגוֹ', פֵּרוּשׁ, כְּשִׁעוּר שֶׁמַּמְטִיר ה' טִפִּין קְטַנִּים עַל הַדֶּשֶׁא שֶׁהוּא קָטָן, וְכִרְבִיבִים שֶׁהֵם טִפִּין גְּדוֹלִים וְעָבִים עֲלֵי עֵשֶׂב שֶׁהוּא גָּדוֹל שֶׁיָּכוֹל לִסְבּוֹל, כְּדִמְיוֹן זֶה מִצְוֹות הַתּוֹרָה כָּל אֶחָד כְּפִי כֹּחַ שֶׁיָּכוֹל לְהַשִּׂיג.

This is what the verse means by "as the small rain upon the tender grass, and as the showers upon the herb." That is, just as Hashem sends small drops of rain upon the tender grass which is small, and heavy showers of rain upon the mature herb which is large and can withstand it, The same comparison applies to the demands of Torah: each person is addressed according to what he has the strength and ability to attain.

וְיֵשׁ בָּזֶה לְהָקֵל וּלְהַחְמִיר: לְהָקֵל עַל מִי שֶׁאֵינוֹ יָכוֹל לְהַשִּׂיג יוֹתֵר, וּלְהַחְמִיר עַל מִי שֶׁיָּכוֹל הַרְבֵּה, שֶׁשּׁוֹאֲלִין מִמֶּנּוּ הַכֹּל וַאֲפִלּוּ מַעֲשֵׂה מֶרְכָּבָה.

There is both a leniency and a stringency in this principle: a leniency for one who is unable to achieve more, as he is not held accountable for what is beyond him; and a stringency for one who is highly capable, as they demand everything from him, even the deepest secrets of the Divine Chariot.

Original Ohr HaChaim Hebrew on Sefaria

AI-assisted study aids · Deuteronomy 32:2

בְּפַשְׁטוּת · In plain words

The Ohr HaChaim first connects the rain that sustains us with the Torah we are expected to learn, and warns of the danger of withholding that learning. In one reading, rain and dew represent the Written and Oral Torah: the first is the foundation, and the second develops and preserves its meaning. Another reading, drawing on the Torah's inner teachings, connects the comparison to designated times for learning. Finally, gentle rain on small growth and heavier rain on larger growth teach that each person is expected to advance according to his own capacity. This both limits the demand on someone unable to attain more and increases the demand on someone capable of more.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה · Lemaaseh

Choose the next step in learning that is within your reach and requires real effort. The Ohr HaChaim's point is that a person is asked about the next level he could have attained. Neither someone else's accomplishments nor the difficulty of a much higher level should distract us from the step that is ours to take.

פָּסוּק ג *Deuteronomy 32:3*

כִּי שֵׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא הָבוּ גֹדֶל לֵאלֹהֵינוּ׃

For I will proclaim the name of the LORD; Ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

אור החיים הקדוש

AI-assisted explanatory translation

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:3:1

כִּי שֵׁם ה׳ אֶקְרָא. הַכַּוָּנָה כִּי הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר אֵלָיו יְכַוֵּן בְּמַאֲמָרָיו הוּא שֵׁם ה׳, עַל דֶּרֶךְ אָמְרָם זִכְרוֹנָם לִבְרָכָה (זוהר ח"ג צח:) כָּל הַתּוֹרָה כֻּלָּהּ שְׁמוֹתָיו שֶׁל הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא, וְעָלֶיהָ הוּא אוֹמֵר "יַעֲרֹף כַּמָּטָר לִקְחִי" שֶׁהִיא הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁהִיא שְׁמוֹ יִתְבָּרַךְ, וּפֵרוּשׁ "אֶקְרָא" מִלְּשׁוֹן יְקָר.

> For I will proclaim the name of Hashem. The meaning is that the ultimate focus and intent of Moshe's words in this song is the name of Hashem. This is in line with the teaching of Chazal in the Zohar (Volume 3, 98b) that the entire Torah is comprised of the holy names of Hashem. It is regarding this Torah, which is His blessed name, that Moshe says in the previous verse, "May my teaching drop as the rain." The word "ekra" (translated here as "I will proclaim") can also be understood as related to the word "yekar," meaning preciousness and glory, indicating that Moshe is declaring the preciousness of Hashem's name.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:3:2

עוֹד רָמַז, שֶׁהֲגַם שֶׁתְּלָה לָהֶם עֵסֶק הַתּוֹרָה בְּטַל וּמָטָר, לֹא תִהְיֶה הַכַּוָּנָה בַּלִּמּוּד עַל זֶה, אֶלָּא לִקְרוֹת בְּסֵפֶר תּוֹרַת ה׳, וְהוּא אָמְרוֹ "כִּי", פֵּרוּשׁ, יִהְיֶה טַעַם "שֵׁם ה׳ אֶקְרָא" פֵּרוּשׁ, לִקְרוֹת בְּתוֹרָתוֹ שֶׁהִיא שְׁמוֹ יִתְבָּרַךְ כְּדֵי שֶׁיִּתֵּן גוֹדֶל לֵאלֹהֵינוּ, וְזוֹ תִּקָּרֵא תּוֹרָה לִשְׁמָהּ לְגַדֵּל וּלְפָאֵר שֵׁם כְּבוֹדוֹ.

> Moshe also hinted that although he previously compared the study of Torah to rain and dew, which sustain physical life, a person's primary intention in learning should not be for physical benefits. Rather, the purpose must be to read the book of Hashem's Torah, which is His very name, in order to "ascribe greatness to our God." This is what is called learning Torah for its own sake (Torah lishmah), to magnify and glorify His honored name.

וְאָמְרוֹ "אֶקְרָא" הוּא מַה שֶּׁיַּעֲשֶׂה כָּל אֶחָד מֵהֶם, אוֹ עַל דֶּרֶךְ אָמְרָם זִכְרוֹנָם לִבְרָכָה (תיקוני זוהר תיקון סט דף קיב.) שֶׁנַּפְשׁוֹת כָּל עוֹסְקֵי תוֹרָה הֵם נִיצוֹצֵי מֹשֶׁה, וְלֹא דּוֹר הַמִּדְבָּר לְבַד אֶלָּא עַד סוֹף כָּל הַדּוֹרוֹת כָּל הָעוֹסֵק בַּתּוֹרָה כָּרוּךְ הוּא בְּמֹשֶׁה, וְלָזֶה כִּנָּה עֵסֶק הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵלָיו וְאָמַר "אֶקְרָא", וְהָבֵן:

When Moshe says "I will proclaim" (ekra) in the singular, he refers to what each and every individual of Israel does when they study. Alternatively, this can be understood in light of the teaching of Chazal in Tikkunei Zohar (Tikkun 69, page 112a) that the souls of all those who occupy themselves with Torah study are sparks of Moshe Rabbeinu. This is true not only for the generation of the wilderness, but in every generation until the end of time; anyone who studies Torah is bound up with Moshe. For this reason, Moshe attributes the Torah study of all Israel to himself, saying "I will proclaim."

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:3:3

עוֹד יִרְצֶה אָמְרוֹ "כִּי שֵׁם ה'" וְגוֹ' נְתִינַת טַעַם לְהַנְּאֶמַר אַחַר כָּךְ שֶׁהוּא "הָבוּ גֹדֶל לֵאלֹהֵינוּ", וְהוּא עַל דֶּרֶךְ מַה שֶּׁאָמְרוּ זִכְרוֹנָם לִבְרָכָה (שוחר טוב כט, יב) בְּפָסוּק (תהלים כב, ד) "יוֹשֵׁב תְּהִלּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל" שֶׁלֹּא יָשַׁב ה' עַל כִּסֵּא הַתְּהִלּוֹת עַד שֶׁאָמְרוּ צְבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם "בָּרוּךְ ה' אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל", וְלֹא הָיָה לוֹ נַחַת רוּחַ כְּשֶׁאָמְרוּ לוֹ אֱלֹהֵי שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ וֵאלֹהֵי הַמַּלְאָכִים.

Another explanation is that the phrase "For I will proclaim the name of Hashem" provides the reason for the instruction that follows: "Ascribe greatness to our God." This is based on what Chazal taught in Midrash Shocher Tov (29:12) regarding the verse, "Enthroned upon the praises of Israel" (Psalms 22:4). The Midrash explains that Hashem did not assume His throne of praise until the heavenly hosts declared, "Blessed is Hashem, the God of Israel." He did not find the same satisfaction when they called Him "the God of heaven and earth" or "the God of the angels."

וְלָזֶה בָּא דְּבָרוֹ הַטּוֹב כָּאן וְאָמַר הָבוּ גֹדֶל וּמַעֲלָה לְדָבָר זֶה שֶׁאֵינוֹ חָפֵץ לִקָּרֵא אֶלָּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ, וְהוּא אָמְרוֹ "לֵאלֹהֵינוּ", כִּי בְּאֶמְצָעוּת שֶׁקּוֹרְאִים בַּתּוֹרָה שֶׁהוּא שֵׁם ה', וְהוּא אָמְרוֹ "כִּי שֵׁם ה' אֶקְרָא", בָּזֶה כְּשֶׁמְּשַׁבְּחִין הָעֶלְיוֹנִים וְאוֹמְרִים "בָּרוּךְ ה' אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל" שֶׁבַח זֶה יֵשׁ בּוֹ גְּדֻלָּה וְשֶׁבַח,

Therefore, Moshe speaks his good words here and says: Ascribe greatness and supreme value to this unique relationship, for Hashem desires to be called specifically "our God." This is achieved through our proclamation, "For I will proclaim the name of Hashem," by reading the Torah which is His name. When Israel is actively engaged in Torah, the praise of the angels calling Him "the God of Israel" is a true praise and magnification.

מַה שֶּׁאֵין כֵּן כְּשֶׁאֵין יִשְׂרָאֵל עוֹסְקִים בַּתּוֹרָה וְאוֹמְרִים הַמַּלְאָכִים "בָּרוּךְ ה' אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל" שֶׁבַח זֶה גָּרוּעַ מְאֹד מַטָּה מַטָּה וְיִשְׁתַּקַּע הַדָּבָר, שֶׁהֲרֵי הֵם מַכְחִישִׁים חָס וְשָׁלוֹם כְּשֶׁאֵין עוֹסְקִין בְּתוֹרָתוֹ שֶׁבְּאֶמְצָעוּתָהּ יִחֵס אֱלֹהוּתוֹ עָלֵינוּ. וְרַבּוֹתֵינוּ זִכְרוֹנָם לִבְרָכָה דָּרְשׁוּ הַרְבֵּה דְּרָשׁוֹת (ספרי) וּכְפַטִּישׁ וְגוֹ'.

However, if Israel is not occupied with Torah, and yet the angels call Him "the God of Israel," this praise would be deeply deficient and inappropriate, for they would be associating His divinity with a people who are not connected to His Torah, through which He chose to associate His name with us. Our Rabbis in the Sifrei have offered many other interpretations of this verse, in the manner of a hammer that shatters a rock into many sparks.

Original Ohr HaChaim Hebrew on Sefaria

AI-assisted study aids · Deuteronomy 32:3

בְּפַשְׁטוּת · In plain words

The Ohr HaChaim reads Moshe's proclamation as an expression of the preciousness of Torah, which Chazal describe as Hashem's Names. Torah should be learned for its own sake, to honor Hashem, even though learning also brings material blessing. He offers two explanations for Moshe's singular "I": it can speak for each individual learner, or express the connection of all Torah learners' souls to Moshe. Another reading explains that our learning gives substance to the praise of Hashem as Elokei Yisrael, the One who has chosen to be known through His relationship with us.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה · Lemaaseh

Before beginning a seder, take a moment to direct your intention toward honoring Hashem through His Torah. The Ohr HaChaim distinguishes the benefits that learning brings from the purpose for which we learn. That intention can stay with us even when we are also hoping for help with our material needs.

הַצּוּר תָּמִים פָּעֳלוֹ כִּי כָל־דְּרָכָיו מִשְׁפָּט אֵל אֱמוּנָה וְאֵין עָוֶל צַדִּיק וְיָשָׁר הוּא׃

The Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice; A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, Just and right is He. .

אור החיים הקדוש

AI-assisted explanatory translation

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:4:1

הַצּוּר תָּמִים פָּעֳלוֹ. פֵּרוּשׁ, לְפִי שֶׁקָּדַם וְאָמַר שֶׁעֵסֶק הַתּוֹרָה יְסוֹבֵב טַל וּמָטָר, לָזֶה הֵעִיר שֶׁאִם הָאָדָם עָסַק בַּתּוֹרָה וּמְזוֹנוֹתָיו קָשִׁים וְלֶחֶם אַיִן, אוֹ שֶׁרוֹאֶה אָדָם שֶׁאֵין עָלָיו עֹל תּוֹרָה וּמוֹאֵס בְּלוֹמְדֶיהָ וּמוֹדִדִין לוֹ בְּמִדָּה גַסָּה אָכוֹל וְשָׂבוֹעַ וְהוֹתֵר כַּיְּעוּדִים שֶׁנֶּאֱמְרוּ לְלוֹמְדֵי תוֹרָה וְנַהֲפוּךְ הוּא,

"The Rock, His work is perfect." Moshe has just connected learning Torah with dew and rain. That raises a difficulty. A person may learn Torah yet struggle to earn a living and have no bread. He may also see someone who rejects Torah and despises its learners enjoy plenty of food, satisfaction and abundance, the very blessings promised to those who learn. What he sees appears to be the reverse of what he was told.

לֹא מִפְּנֵי זֶה יִבְעַט וְתִוָּלֵד בּוֹ חָס וְשָׁלוֹם מִינוּת, אֶלָּא יַצְדִּיק הַדִּין עָלָיו וְיֹאמַר ה' אֱמֶת וְדִינוֹ דִּין אֱמֶת. וְהוּא אָמְרוֹ "הַצּוּר" – פֵּרוּשׁ לְשׁוֹן תּוֹקֶף וְחוֹזֶק, וְזֶה יַגִּיד אֶל יַד ה' הָרוֹדָה בָּאָדָם.

The Ohr HaChaim warns that this must not lead a person to rebel or, Heaven forbid, fall into heresy. Instead, he should accept the justice of Hashem's judgment and say that Hashem is true and His judgment is true. HaTzur, "the Rock," expresses strength and firmness. Here it describes Hashem's powerful hand governing a person, even when that person experiences hardship.

אַף עַל פִּי כֵן תַּצְדִּיק וְתֹאמַר "תָּמִים פָּעֳלוֹ", זֶה כְּנֶגֶד מַה שֶׁרוֹאֶה אֶת שֶׁדַּרְכּוֹ לִמְדֹּד בְּגַסָּה שֶׁל טוֹבָה וּמָדְדוּ בְּדַקָּה.

Even then, a person must affirm, "His work is perfect." This answers the first difficulty: someone whose conduct seems to call for a generous measure of good has instead received very little. The person's limited view does not make Hashem's work defective.

וְגָמַר אוֹמֶר "כִּי כָל דְּרָכָיו מִשְׁפָּט" – כָּלַל בָּזֶה גַּם אֶת שֶׁדַּרְכּוֹ לִמְדֹּד טוֹבָה בְּדַקָּה וּמָדְדוּ לוֹ בְּגַסָּה, "כִּי כָל דְּרָכָיו מִשְׁפָּט", כִּי לֹא הֵבִיא יִסּוּרִין עַל הַצַּדִּיק עַד שֶׁנִּתְחַיֵּב בָּהֶם, וְלֹא הֵבִיא טוֹבָה עַל הָרְשָׁעִים אֶלָּא אִם זָכוּ לָהּ כְּפִי מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם.

"For all His ways are justice" includes the opposite case too: someone whose conduct seems to call for little good receives a great deal. Both cases fall under Hashem's justice. The Ohr HaChaim explains that suffering does not come upon a righteous person unless he has become liable for it, and good does not come to the wicked unless their deeds have earned it.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:4:2

וְגָמַר אוֹמֶר אֵל אֱמוּנָה וְגוֹ', וְאָמְרוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ זִכְרוֹנָם לִבְרָכָה (ספרי) "אֵל אֱמוּנָה" – לְשַׁלֵּם לַצַּדִּיקִים צִדְקָתָם לָעוֹלָם הַבָּא, "וְאֵין עָוֶל" – לְשַׁלֵּם לָרְשָׁעִים צִדְקָתָם בָּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה.

The verse continues, "A God of faithfulness and without iniquity" (El emunah v'ein avel). Our Sages in the Sifrei explained: "A God of faithfulness" means He pays the righteous the reward for their righteousness in the World to Come; "and without iniquity" means He pays the wicked the reward for their good deeds in this world.

וְהַכַּוָּנָה בְּמַאֲמָר זֶה עַל פִּי דִּבְרֵיהֶם שֶׁאָמְרוּ (שוחר טוב ד) בְּפָסוּק "נָתַתָּ שִׂמְחָה בְלִבִּי מֵעֵת דְּגָנָם וְתִירוֹשָׁם רָבּוּ" (תהלים ד:ח), שֶׁאָמַר דָּוִד כִּי מֵעֵת שֶׁרָאָה שַׁלְוַת הָרְשָׁעִים נָשָׂא קַל וָחוֹמֶר בְּעַצְמוֹ: וּמָה לְאֵלּוּ שֶׁהֵם עוֹבְרֵי רְצוֹנוֹ כָּךְ וְכוּ'. וְהוּא אָמְרוֹ "אֵל אֱמוּנָה", פֵּרוּשׁ, יַצְדִּיק הַצַּדִּיק אֱמוּנַת שְׂכָרוֹ בַּה' כְּשֶׁיִּרְאֶה מִדַּת "וְאֵין עָוֶל", שֶׁהוּא שְׂכַר הָרְשָׁעִים שֶׁבָּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה עַל מִעוּט זְכוּתָם.

The deeper meaning of this teaching is based on what the Sages said in Midrash Tehillim on the verse, "You have put gladness in my heart, from the time that their corn and their wine increased" (Psalms 4:8). Dovid said that from the moment he saw the tranquility of the wicked, he drew a logical conclusion from the lesser case to the stronger case: If those who transgress His will receive such goodness, how much more so will those who perform His will! This is the meaning of "A God of faithfulness." The righteous person will find his faith in his reward from Hashem confirmed when he witnesses the attribute of "and without iniquity", which is the reward paid to the wicked in this world for their few merits.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:4:3

צַדִּיק וְיָשָׁר הוּא. פֵּרוּשׁ, כִּי הָאָדוֹן ה' צְבָאוֹת בָּרָא הָעוֹלָם בְּמִשְׁפָּט, דִּכְתִיב (משלי כט:ד) "בְּמִשְׁפָּט יַעֲמִיד אָרֶץ", וְאָמְרוּ זִכְרוֹנָם לִבְרָכָה (תנחומא שופטים) שֶׁנִּשְׁבַּע ה' שֶׁיַּעֲמוֹד הָעוֹלָם עַל הַמִּשְׁפָּט, אֲבָל מָצִינוּ לוֹ שְׁלֹשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה מִדּוֹת שֶׁכּוּלָּם רַחֲמִים, וְאִם נִשְׁבַּע עַל הַמִּשְׁפָּט מַה מָּקוֹם לָרַחֲמִים?

The verse concludes, "Just and right is He" (tzaddik v'yashar hu). This means that the Master, Hashem of Hosts, created the world with strict justice, as it is written, "By justice a king establishes the land" (Proverbs 29:4). Our Sages of blessed memory also taught in Midrash Tanchuma that Hashem swore the world would stand on strict justice. However, we find that He possesses the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy, which are entirely mercy. If He swore to establish the world on strict justice, what room is there for mercy?

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:4:4

אָכֵן הַסֵּדֶר הוּא עַל זֶה הַדֶּרֶךְ, כִּי מִתְּחִלָּה כְּשֶׁיּוֹשֵׁב עַל הַמִּשְׁפָּט הוּא מַעֲמִיד הַמִּשְׁפָּט עַל תִּלּוֹ, וּכְשֶׁבָּא לְהִשְׁתַּלֵּם מִתְרַצֶּה בְּרַחֲמִים וּמִתְפַּיֵּס בְּתַחֲנוּנִים. וְהוּא עַל דֶּרֶךְ אָמְרוֹ (תהלים קמה:יז) "צַדִּיק ה' בְּכָל דְּרָכָיו וְחָסִיד בְּכָל מַעֲשָׂיו", פֵּרוּשׁ, כְּשֶׁהוּא בָּא לְהַדְרִיךְ דָּבָר הוּא מַדְרִיכוֹ עַל קַו הַדִּין, אֲבָל בְּמַעֲשָׂיו, פֵּרוּשׁ, בִּשְׁעַת מַעֲשֶׂה כְּשֶׁבָּא אָדָם וּמִתְחַנֵּן – אֵל רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן יְרַחֲמֵהוּ.

Indeed, the order of divine conduct is as follows: Initially, when Hashem sits in judgment, He establishes the strict law on its foundation. But when it comes to executing the sentence, He is appeased with mercy and reconciled through supplication. This is in line with the verse, "Hashem is righteous in all His ways, and pious in all His deeds" (Psalms 145:17). This means that when He comes to direct a matter, He directs it according to the line of strict justice; but in His actual deeds, meaning at the moment of execution, when a person comes and supplicates, He is a merciful and gracious God Who will show him mercy.

וְהוּא אָמְרוֹ צַדִּיק וְיָשָׁר הוּא, פֵּרוּשׁ צַדִּיק עַל קַו הַדִּין, וּכְפֵרוּשׁ רַשִׁ"י בְּמַה שֶׁאָמְרוּ בַּגְּמָרָא (עבודה זרה ו.) "וְדִילְמָא נֹחַ טְרֵפָה הֲוָה", וּמְתָרֵץ "תָּמִים כְּתִיב בֵּיהּ", וּמַקְשׁוּ "וְדִלְמָא צַדִּיק בִּדְרָכָיו תָּמִים בְּמַעֲשָׂיו", וּפֵרֵשׁ (רַשִׁ"י) "צַדִּיק בִּדְרָכָיו עַל פִּי הַדִּין" וְכוּ', וְזֶה בִּתְחִלָּה, אֲבָל אַחַר כָּךְ "וְיָשָׁר", פֵּרוּשׁ יָשָׁר לִפְנִים מִשּׁוּרַת הַדִּין, כְּאָמְרָם זִכְרוֹנָם לִבְרָכָה (בבא מציעא קח:) בְּפֵרוּשׁ פָּסוּק "וְעָשִׂיתָ הַיָּשָׁר וְהַטּוֹב" (דברים ו:יח וברש"י שם).

This explains the two descriptions, tzaddik and yashar. Tzaddik, "just," means acting according to the requirements of justice. The Ohr HaChaim supports this through Rashi's explanation of the discussion in Avodah Zarah 6a. The Gemara asks whether Noach might have been a treifah, a person with a fatal physical condition. The answer points to the word tamim, "whole" or "perfect." The Ohr HaChaim then cites the question whether Noach was "righteous in his ways and perfect in his deeds." Rashi explains "righteous in his ways" as acting according to the law. That is the meaning of tzaddik here. It describes the initial judgment. Afterward comes yashar, acting beyond the strict requirement of the law. The Ohr HaChaim connects this with Chazal's explanation in Bava Metzia 108b of "Do what is right and good" (Devarim 6:18, and Rashi there).

Original Ohr HaChaim Hebrew on Sefaria

AI-assisted study aids · Deuteronomy 32:4

בְּפַשְׁטוּת · In plain words

The Ohr HaChaim addresses the difficulty raised by a Torah learner who struggles for sustenance while someone who rejects Torah prospers. Both situations remain within Hashem's justice. Chazal's teaching that even the wicked receive payment for their good deeds strengthens the righteous person's trust in his future reward. He then explains how justice and mercy fit together: Hashem first establishes what justice requires, yet responds with mercy when a person turns to Him in prayer.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה · Lemaaseh

Bring a hardship into your tefillah without assuming that the outcome you can see is the whole account. The Ohr HaChaim makes room for prayer precisely while affirming Hashem's justice. Ask for His mercy and remember that what He gives another person does not tell us the full meaning of either person's situation.

שִׁחֵת לוֹ לֹא בָנָיו מוּמָם דּוֹר עִקֵּשׁ וּפִתַלְתֹּל׃

Is corruption His? No; His children's is the blemish; A generation crooked and perverse.

אור החיים הקדוש

AI-assisted explanatory translation

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:5:1

שִׁחֵת לוֹ לֹא בָנָיו. פֵּרוּשׁ, כְּשֶׁמַּשְׁחִיתִים דַּרְכָּם גּוֹרְמִים רָעָה לְעַצְמָם, וּמַה רָעָה גּוֹרְמִים – לֹא בָנָיו, פֵּרוּשׁ שֶׁאֵינָם נִקְרָאִים בְּנֵי אֵל חַי, כְּאָמְרָם זִכְרוֹנָם לִבְרָכָה (בבא בתרא י.) כְּשֶׁיִּשְׂרָאֵל הוֹלְכִים בְּדַרְכּוֹ שֶׁל מָקוֹם נִקְרָאִים בָּנִים וּכְשֶׁאֵין הוֹלְכִים וְכוּ' נִקְרָאִים עֲבָדִים, וְהוּא אָמְרוֹ "שִׁחֵת לוֹ" שֶׁלֹּא יִקָּרְאוּ בָּנָיו שֶׁל הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא.

The Ohr HaChaim reads "He has corrupted for himself; not His children" as describing the harm people do to themselves when they corrupt their conduct. What do they lose? The standing of being called Hashem's children. He cites Chazal in Bava Basra 10a: when Yisrael follows Hashem's way, they are called children; when they do not, they are called servants. On this reading, "not His children" names the loss caused by their own corruption.

וְאָמְרוֹ "מוּמָם", לְפִי שֶׁיֵּשׁ מָקוֹם לוֹמַר סוֹף סוֹף יַגִּיעַ הַדָּבָר לָאָב מוּם הַבָּנִים חָס וְשָׁלוֹם, לָזֶה אָמַר "מוּמָם", פֵּרוּשׁ הַמּוּם מֵהֶם בָּא לֹא מֵאָבִינוּ, כִּי הוּא בָּרָא אֶת הָאָדָם יָשָׁר, וּכְמַאֲמַר הַנָּבִיא (ישעיהו ה:א-ב) "כֶּרֶם הָיָה וְגוֹ' וַיְעַזְּקֵהוּ וַיְסַקְּלֵהוּ וַיִּטָּעֵהוּ שׂוֹרֵק וְגוֹ' וַיְקַו לַעֲשׂוֹת עֲנָבִים" וְגוֹ'. וְהוּא אָמְרוֹ "מוּמָם", פֵּרוּשׁ הַמּוּם מֵהֶם בָּא.

The word mumam means "their blemish." One might ask whether a blemish in the children also reflects a blemish in their Father, Heaven forbid. The pasuk answers that it is their own blemish. Hashem created a person upright; the corruption did not come from Him. The Ohr HaChaim cites Yeshayahu's vineyard image (5:1 to 2): the vineyard was carefully prepared, cleared of stones and planted with a choice vine, with the expectation that it would produce grapes. The image places the failure in what grew, rather than in the care given to it. That is the force of "their blemish."

וּפֵרוּשׁ מוּם עַל דֶּרֶךְ אָמְרָם זִכְרוֹנָם לִבְרָכָה (סוטה ג.) אֵין אָדָם עוֹבֵר עֲבֵירָה אֶלָּא אִם כֵּן נִכְנְסָה בּוֹ רוּחַ שְׁטוּת, שֶׁהוּא רוּחַ רָעָה וְהִיא תִּקָּרֵא מוּם, בְּסוֹד אָמְרוֹ (דברים טו:כא) "מוּם רָע", וְהַמְשָׁכַת חֵלֶק זֶה הָרַע אֵינוֹ אֶלָּא מִצַּד מַעֲשֵׂה הָאָדָם.

The concept of "blemish" can be understood in light of Chazal's teaching in Sotah 3a: "A person does not commit a transgression unless a spirit of folly enters him." This spirit of folly is a harmful spiritual force, and it is called a "blemish," based on the esoteric meaning of the phrase in Deuteronomy 15:21, "a bad blemish." The drawing of this harmful spiritual force upon oneself is entirely due to the person's own actions.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:5:2

דּוֹר עִקֵּשׁ וּפִתַּלְתֹּל וְגוֹ'. שֶׁאִם יִהְיֶה עִקֵּשׁ לְבַד, דִּבְרֵי הַתּוֹרָה תָּשִׂים הַמַּעֲקַשִּׁים לְמִישׁוֹר, וּמִי גָּרַם לָזֶה שֶׁנִּשְׁחַת – הֱיוֹתוֹ עִקֵּשׁ וּפִתַּלְתֹּל, פֵּרוּשׁ מִתְחַזֵּק בְּעִקְּשׁוּתוֹ, כַּאֲשֶׁר עֵינֵינוּ רוֹאוֹת בַּדּוֹרוֹת הַלָּלוּ מִינֵי אֶפִּיקוֹרְסוּת דֶּרֶךְ עִקֵּשׁ, וּכְשֶׁאָדָם מְיַשֵּׁר עִקְּשׁוּתֵיהֶם הֵם מִתְחַזְּקִים בְּאָרְחוֹת עִקְּשִׁים קָשִׁים, וְזֶה אָבְדָן מוֹלֶדֶת בַּיִת.

Regarding "A generation crooked and perverse": If they were merely crooked, the words of the Torah would make the crooked paths straight. What caused them to become corrupted? It was because they are "crooked and perverse", meaning they stubbornly reinforce their own crookedness. The Ohr HaChaim says he sees this in his own generation with various types of heretics who follow a crooked path; when someone tries to straighten their crookedness, they stubbornly strengthen themselves in their difficult, crooked ways. This stubbornness is what brings about the destruction of their spiritual heritage.

Original Ohr HaChaim Hebrew on Sefaria

AI-assisted study aids · Deuteronomy 32:5

בְּפַשְׁטוּת · In plain words

The Ohr HaChaim explains that when Israel corrupts their ways, they bring harm only upon themselves by losing the cherished status of being called Hashem's children. This spiritual blemish originates entirely from their own choices, not from their Creator, who made them upright. He further explains that while ordinary crookedness can be corrected by the Torah, this generation is perverse because they stubbornly reinforce their own crookedness and resist all correction.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה · Lemaaseh

When we make a mistake, we must be careful not to become stubborn or defensive. The Ohr HaChaim teaches that while a simple error can easily be corrected by the Torah's guidance, the real danger lies in becoming 'perverse', stubbornly reinforcing our crooked ways and resisting correction. We can practice accepting constructive feedback with an open heart to keep our paths straight.

הֲ־לַיהוָה תִּגְמְלוּ־זֹאת עַם נָבָל וְלֹא חָכָם הֲלוֹא־הוּא אָבִיךָ קָנֶךָ הוּא עֲשָׂךְ וַיְכֹנְנֶךָ׃

Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? Is not He thy father that hath gotten thee? Hath He not made thee, and established thee?

אור החיים הקדוש

AI-assisted explanatory translation

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:6:1

הַלְהִ' תִּגְמְלוּ זֹאת. אָמַר לְשׁוֹן גְּמוּל לְהָעִיר שֶׁבִּמְקוֹם שֶׁיִּגְמְלוּהוּ טוֹבוֹת כְּעַל כֹּל אֲשֶׁר גְּמָלָם, הִנֵּה הֵם מְשַׁלְּמִים רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה.

"Is this how you repay Hashem?" Moshe speaks of repayment to make the contrast clear. Hashem has done good for them, so their response should be good in return. Instead, they are returning evil for the good He has given them.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:6:2

עַם נָבָל וְלֹא חָכָם. וְאֵין חָכָם הַפְּכִיּוּת הַנָּבָל, לוֹמַר שֶׁהַגַּם שֶׁיִּהְיוּ עַם נָבָל מִטִּבְעָם, אִם הָיוּ חֲכָמִים לֹא הָיוּ נְבָלִים עִם ה', כִּי הַנָּבָל יַכִּיר שֶׁחוֹשֵׁךְ מִיּוֹשֶׁר אַךְ לְמַחְסוֹר וְלֹא יִהְיֶה נָבָל.

Moshe calls them "a base people, and unwise." The Ohr HaChaim points out that "wise" is not the opposite of "base." These are two different failings. Even someone with a naturally base or ungrateful character would avoid treating Hashem this way if he had wisdom. He would recognize that withholding what is right only brings him loss, and that recognition would stop him from acting so badly.

Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:6:3

וְהוּא מַה שֶּׁגָּמַר אוֹמֶר "הֲלוֹא הוּא אָבִיךָ" וְגוֹ', סִדֵּר אַרְבַּע חֲלוּקוֹת: א' שֶׁהוּא בָּרָא אֶת הָאָדָם, וּכְנֶגֶד זֶה אָמַר "הוּא אָבִיךָ". שֵׁנִית, שֶׁקָּנָה אוֹתָנוּ לַעֲבָדִים בְּמַה שֶׁהוֹצִיאָנוּ מִיַּד פַּרְעֹה וְהֶחֱיָה אוֹתָנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר וְהֵבִיא אוֹתָנוּ לְאֶרֶץ מְלֵאָה כָּל טוּב, וּכְנֶגֶד זֶה אָמַר "קָנֶךָ".

This is why the verse concludes by saying, "Is He not your Father Who acquired you?" and so on. Moshe lists four distinct aspects of Hashem's relationship with us. First, He created man, and corresponding to this, the verse says, "Is He not your Father?" Second, He acquired us as servants by taking us out of the hand of Pharaoh, sustaining us in the wilderness, and bringing us to a land full of all good things; corresponding to this, the verse says, "Who acquired you" (kanecha).

ג׳ שֶׁתִּקֵּן אוֹתָנוּ תִּקּוּן מְעֻלֶּה וְרָם בְּתֵת שְׁכִינָתוֹ בְּתוֹכֵנוּ וְנִבָּא אוֹתָנוּ, וְזֶה תִּקּוּן גָּדוֹל שֶׁעָשָׂה אוֹתָנוּ כְּלִי רָאוּי לְקַבֵּל הַנְּבוּאָה, וּכְנֶגֶד זֶה אָמַר "עָשְׂךָ", פֵּרוּשׁ מַעֲשֶׂה חָדָשׁ מִלְּבַד הַבְּרִיאָה הָרְמוּזָה בְּמַאֲמַר "אָבִיךָ".

Third, He refined us with an exalted and lofty refinement by placing His Divine Presence among us and granting us prophecy. This is a great refinement, making us a vessel fit to receive prophecy. Corresponding to this, the verse says, "He made you" (asecha), meaning a new making beyond the initial creation alluded to in the term "your Father."

ד׳ שֶׁתִּכֵּן אוֹתָנוּ הִתְכּוֹנְנוּת הַנִּצְחִי לִזְכּוֹת בּוֹ חַיֵּי עוֹלָם הַבָּא שֶׁהוּא הָעִקָּר. וְהַכַּוָּנָה בְּכָל זֶה הוּא שֶׁאֵין הַנָּבָל עוֹשֶׂה נְבָלָה עִם גֶּדֶר זֶה אִם לֹא לְצַד הֶיּוֹתוֹ סָכָל, וְהוּא אָמְרוֹ "נָבָל וְלֹא חָכָם".

Fourth, He established us with an eternal preparation to merit the life of the World to Come, which is the ultimate purpose. Corresponding to this, the verse says, "and established you" (vayechonenecha). The point of all this is that even an ungrateful person would not act ungratefully toward such a benefactor unless he were completely devoid of intellect. This is why the verse describes them as "foolish and unwise."

Original Ohr HaChaim Hebrew on Sefaria

AI-assisted study aids · Deuteronomy 32:6

בְּפַשְׁטוּת · In plain words

Moshe rebukes Israel for their ingratitude toward Hashem, calling them foolish and unwise. He explains that even a naturally ungrateful person would act properly out of self-interest if he had basic wisdom. Moshe then details four stages of Hashem's relationship with Israel: creating them as a father, acquiring them as servants from Egypt, refining them to receive prophecy, and establishing them for eternal life in the World to Come.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה · Lemaaseh

Reflect on the particular kindnesses the Ohr HaChaim identifies: Hashem created us, brought us out of Mitzrayim and sustained us, prepared us for His Presence and prophecy, and established us for Olam HaBa. Let that recognition shape one response of gratitude in our avodas Hashem. Moshe's question asks us to consider what we are giving back for the good we have received.

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