



#140 • VAYISHLACH • 17 KISLEV, 5777 • 12/17/16

DAF KESHER

SHAPELL'S / YESHIVA DARCHE NOAM · MIDRESHET RACHEL V'CHAYA · JACK E. GINDI Z"L PATHWAYS ISRAEL & PATHWAYS PLUS

Dedicate the daf keshet in honor or in memory of a loved one.
Please contact Emuna Diamond at emuna@darchenoam.org for details.

DVAR TORAH SHECHEM'S IMPATIENCE

Two different verbs are used in conjunction with how Shechem related to Dinah. When Shechem's father Chamor speaks with Yaakov and his family he says, "Shechem my son, – **חשקה נפשו** – his soul desires Dinah your daughter" (Bereishit 34:8). But when the Torah speaks of the speed with which Shechem circumcised himself and the entire city, it says, "The youth did not tarry in doing this – **כי חפץ** – because he desired Yaakov's daughter" (Bereishit 34:19). What is the difference in meaning between the verbs **חשק** and **חפץ**?

The Dubno Maggid, (Rabbi Yaakov Krantz, **דצ"ל**, 1740-1804), suggests an answer; and he prefaces it with the following distinction. People have two types of desires: one is for the **ערב**, that which is pleasurable; and the other is for the **מועיל**, that which is truly useful and valuable. Not everything that is pleasant is useful – like unhealthy excess sugar; and not everything that is useful and valuable is pleasant – like bitter medicine. However, there are some things that are both pleasurable and useful – like **עונג שבת** – enjoying the Shabbat – **שמחת יום טוב** – being joyous on the holidays, and marriage and family life.

But how can one tell the difference between someone whose focus is on the pleasurable and one whose focus is on the valuable, between the **ערב** and the **מועיל**? For instance, if someone eats healthy but tasty food how can you tell if he is merely focused on the physical pleasure of eating or also on the valuable goal? The answer is – timing: One who is driven purely by pleasure or lust is annoyed by anything that delays him. But one who is interested in the inner purpose of the food – how it will nourish his body or give him energy to further his spiritual goals – will view the process of achieving his goals as part of the experience and not just an impediment. He will appreciate the time it takes to make sure the food is healthy or kosher.

Yaakov worked seven years before he was able to get married to Rachel, his beautiful beloved. Those years would have seemed like "forever" for the pleasure seeker or lust-driven person. But Yaakov was truly interested in Rachel as a person; through their marriage they would build the People of Israel and continue the legacy of Avraham and Sarah, Yitzchak and Rivkah. Therefore, the seven years that Yaakov worked for Rachel – part of the process leading to their marriage – did not annoy Yaakov, but instead were like "a few days out of his love for her" (Bereishit 29:20). His focus was on the **מועיל**.

Shechem stands in stark contrast to Yaakov Avinu. Based on the way the root **חשק** is used in Tanach (especially Devarim 7:7 and 10:15), the Dubno Maggid asserts that it refers to a desire for the inner essence, that which is useful and valuable. Shechem's father Chamor whitewashed Shechem's true intentions by saying "Shechem my son, – **חשקה נפשו** – his soul desires Dinah your daughter." But the Torah's narrative reveals the true Shechem: "The youth did not tarry in doing this – **כי חפץ** – because he desired Yaakov's daughter." He was lust-driven, and annoyed by any delays. Shechem rushed to remove any barriers to fulfilling his desire. (This distinction between **חפץ** and **חשק** enables the Dubno Maggid to resolve a similar difficulty in the Torah's law of the beautiful captive woman in the beginning of Parshat Ki Teitzei.)

SOURCE GUIDE: WHY DON'T WE EAT THE GID HANASHEH?

Yaakov limped as a result of his confrontation with the angel. Why was this reason enough for Hashem to prohibit all Jews in all generations from eating the גיד הנשה, the sciatic nerve (literally “the misplaced tendon”)? This source guide focuses on the Sefer Hachinuch’s explanation of this prohibition.

A. The Prohibition Against Gid Hanasheh

Before his meeting with Esav, Yaakov was wounded during his struggle in the middle of the night:

<p>1. Bereishit 32:25-26 (25) Yaakov was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until dawn. (26) He saw that he would not overcome him; and he touched his hip socket. And Yaakov’s hip socket was dislocated in wrestling with him.</p>	<p>בראשית לב:כה-כו (כה) וַיִּנְתָּר יַעֲקֹב לְבָדּוֹ, וַיִּאָּבֶק אִישׁ עִמּוֹ עַד עֲלוֹת הַשָּׁחַר. (כו) וַיִּרְאָא פִּי לֹא יָכַל לוֹ, וַיִּנְעַב בְּכַף יָרְכוֹ. וַתִּקַּע כַּף יָרְךְ יַעֲקֹב בְּהִאָּבְקוֹ עִמּוֹ.</p>
--	--

The Torah closes that passage with the prohibition against eating the גיד הנשה, the sciatic nerve:

<p>2. Bereishit 32:32-33 (32) The sun rose for him when he crossed Penuel; and he was limping on his thigh. (33) Therefore, until this day the Children of Israel do not eat the displaced tendon (the sciatic nerve) that is on the hip socket; for he touched Yaakov’s hip socket at the sciatic nerve.</p>	<p>בראשית לב:לב-לג (לב) וַיִּזְרַח לוֹ הַשָּׁמֶשׁ פֶּאֶשֶׁר עָבַר אֶת פְּנוּאֵל וְהוּא צָלַע עַל יָרְכוֹ. (לג) עַל כֵּן לֹא יֵאָכְלוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת גִּיד הַנָּשָׂה אֲשֶׁר עַל כַּף הַיָּרֵךְ עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה כִּי נָגַע בְּכַף יָרְךְ יַעֲקֹב בְּגִיד הַנָּשָׂה.</p>
--	---

What is behind this verse’s “על כן – therefore”? Why, because Yaakov was wounded there, is the sciatic nerve prohibited? Why did that one episode of Yaakov’s life leave such a lasting impression?

B. 6 Reasons

Before seeing the Sefer Hachinuch’s explanation, notice how commentators on the Chumash offer a variety of answers. Here are six approaches to why the sciatic nerve is prohibited. All appear on the page of the standard Mikraot Gedolot:

1. The mitzvah reminds us of how Yaakov was miraculously saved (Rashbam, Daat Zekenim, Chizkuni).
2. It reminds us of Yaakov’s bravery (Rashbam).
3. It cautions us never to leave anyone alone and exposed to danger. For even though Yaakov helped all of his family to cross the stream, they left him alone, vulnerable, and he was attacked (Chizkuni and Daat Zekenim).
4. When the sciatic nerve was dislocated, it was exposed to the powers of impurity (the angel of Esav) and is therefore off limits (Or Hachaim).
5. By not eating the sciatic nerve, we show, retroactively, how it was not such a serious wound (Sforno).
6. Gid is a metaphor used by Chazal for especially difficult sections of Torah (parts that are as tough as sinews); and eating is a metaphor for learning. The prohibition against eating the גיד הנשה cautions us to avoid delving into mysticism before being adequately prepared (Kli Yakar).

C. Sefer Hachinuch

[The Sefer Hachinuch was published anonymously by one of the 13th Century Spanish Rishonim, and thought to be written either by a student of the Rashba or by the Re’ah – see Harav David Metzger’s introduction to the Machon Yerushalayim of the Minchat Chinuch.] According to the author of the Sefer Hachinuch, the mitzvah of gid hanasheh strengthens one of the pillars of Judaism, the belief in redemption:

<p>2. Sefer Hachinuch – Mitzvah 3 The roots of (reasons behind) this mitzvah are that it reminds Israel that even though they will suffer many misfortunes in the exiles from the nations and from Esav; they should trust that they will not be destroyed. Rather, their offspring and</p>	<p>ספר החינוך – מצוה ג' משרשי מצוה זו, כדי שתהיה רמוז לישׂראל שאף על פי שישׂבלו צרות רבות בגליות מיד העמים ומיד בני עשו, שיהיו בטוחים שלא יאבדו, אלא לעולם יעמוד זרעם ושמם,</p>
---	---

their name will forever stand; and a redeemer will come and redeem them from the oppressor. And when they always remember this, through the mitzvah that they have as a reminder, their trust and righteousness will last forever.

ויבוא להם גואל ויגאלם מיד צר. ובזכרם תמיד ענין זה על יד המצוה שתהיה לזכרון, יעמדו באמונתם ובצדקתם לעולם.

He explains how his approach is rooted in the details of the narrative about Yaakov's struggle with the angel:

2. Sefer Hachinuch – Mitzvah 3

This hint is because the angel that fought against Yaakov our father – the angel who, according to our tradition, was the spiritual power connected with Esav – wanted to uproot Yaakov from the world, him and his descendants. But he was not able to succeed. Yet he caused him pain by touching the thigh. Similarly, Esav's descendants pained Yaakov's descendants. In the end they will have a salvation from them; as we find with the father (Yaakov), the sun shone for him to heal him and save him from pain. Thus, the sun of the Mashiach will shine for us and heal us from our pain and redeem us. Amen – speedily in our days.

ספר החינוך – מצוה ג'

ורמז זה הוא לפי שאותו מלאך שנלחם עם יעקב אבינו, שבא בקבלה שהיה שרו של עשו, רצה לעקרו ליעקב מן העולם הוא וזרעו ולא יכול לו, וציערו בנגיעת הירך, וכן זרע עשו מצער לזרע יעקב, ולבסוף תהיה להם ישועה מהם, כמו שמצינו באב שזרחה לו השמש לרפואתו ונושע מן הצער, כן יזרח לנו השמש של משיח וירפאנו מצערנו ויגאלנו, אמן במהרה בימינו.

D. Midrash Rabbah

The Midrash includes an additional component. The same sun that heals Yaakov also destroys Esav:

3. Bereishit Rabbah 78:5

“The sun shone for him ...” – Rabbi Berechiah said: “And to who did the sun not set for (the word לו, meaning for him, seems superfluous and misleading)? Rather, ‘for him,’ to heal him, and for others it was [merely] light. Rav Huna quoting Rav Acha, said: Thus the sun was a healing for Yaakov and burning up Esav and his chieftains (‘for him’ indicates to the exclusion of others). The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, “You are a model for your descendants. Just as for you the sun heals you and burns up Esav and his chieftains, so, for your descendants, it will heal them and burn up the idol worshippers. It will heal them – “It will shine for you, those who fear My Name, a sun of righteousness with healing in its wings” (Malachi 3:20). It will burn up the idolaters – “A day will come, burning like a furnace ...” (Malachi 3:19).

בראשית רבה עח:ה

“ויזרח לו השמש וגו’” – א”ר ברכיה: ולמי לא זרחה השמש? אלא “לו”, לרפואתו, אבל לאחרים אורה. ר”ה בשם ר’ אחא אמר: כך היתה השמש מרפא באבינו יעקב ומלהטת בעשו ובאלופיו. אמר לו הקב”ה, “את סימן לבניך. מה את השמש מרפא בך ומלהטת בעשו ובאלופיו, כך בניך תהא השמש מרפא בהן ומלהטת בעובדי כוכבים. מרפא בהן – “וזרחה לכם יראי שמי שמש צדקה ומרפא בכנפיה” (מלאכי ג). ומלהטת בעובדי כוכבים – “הנה היום בא בוער כתנור וגו’

The Midrash closes with an anecdote:

3. Bereishit Rabbah 78:5

“He was limping on his thigh” – Rabbi Yehoshua son of Levi came back to the Land of Israel from Rome. When he reached Akko Rabbi Chanina came to greet him. He found him (Rabbi Yehoshua son of Levi) limping on his thigh. He said to him, “You are similar to your grandfather (Yaakov), “He was limping on his thigh” (Bereishit 32:32).

בראשית רבה עח:ה

“והוא צולע על ירכו” – ריב”ל הוה סליק לרומי וכיון דאתא לעכו נפק ר’ חנינא לקדמותיה אשכחיה מטלע על ירכו א”ל את דמי לסבך והוא צולע על ירכו.

This anecdote adds one more point. The dynamics of the confrontation between Yaakov and Esav are not limited to Yaakov himself and to the very end of days. Rather, the struggle between them – with its war, persecutions, and periodic positive meetings – lasts throughout Jewish history. Jewish leaders, like Rabbi Yehoshua son of Levi travelling to Rome to plead the case of the Jewish People before the Roman authorities, are often put in the position of Yaakov Avinu. Rabbi Yehoshua son of Levi then took on Yaakov's identity, limping on his thigh.

ESAV MY BROTHER BY RABBI AVRAHAM NISSIM

In Yaakov's prayer he says to G-d, "Save me from the hand of my brother, the hand of Esav." Since Yaakov had only one brother, why did he mention Esav's name?

The author of the Beit Halevi on the Chumash (Harav Yosef Dov Ber Soloveitchik, זצ"ל, 1820-1892, Brisk, Lithuania), explains that Yaakov feared two things: **עשו** – the physical threat posed by Esav; and **my brother** – the evil influence of Esav as a brother.

Yaakov's first priority was to distance himself from his brother, even if Esav had forgiven him for taking the blessing. A bad influence can cause permanent damage, so Yaakov wanted to limit his connection to the bare minimum.

This is why, when Esav offered to accompany Yaakov, Yaakov very politely and diplomatically refused, saying, "The children are small and walk slowly, so you can go ahead"

Educating his children was of paramount importance to Yaakov. This he learned from his grandmother Sarah, who sent away Yishmael when she saw the bad influence he was having over Yitzchak. Asks the Chafetz Chaim (Harav Yisrael Meir Hakohen of Radin, זצ"ל, 1838-1933, in The Chafetz Chaim on the Torah – Bereishit 21:10): Surely if Yishmael had stayed in the house of Avraham and Sarah he would have turned out a better person? Why then did she banish him? He answers that until Yishmael would have improved, Yitzchak would have been damaged beyond repair. She was not willing to risk that. G-d agreed with her and told Avraham to listen to whatever Sarah says.

The Rosh Yeshivah of Slabodka, Harav Moshe Mordechai Epstein, זצ"ל (1866-1933), in a drashah given at the first convention of Agudat Yisrael in Elul 5683 (1923), strengthened this point. He pointed out that the word **כרובים** appears twice in the Torah: once as the angelic figures (cherubs) over the Aron in the Mishkan; and once as the angels guarding the entrance to the Garden of Eden. Rashi says that the Keruvim over the Aron each had a face like a baby; but he calls the angels guarding the entrance of the Garden "Angels of Terror." How, he asked, can Rashi give apparently contradictory explanations for the same word?

He answered that if we give our children a strong Torah education in a healthy Torah environment, they will retain the purity of a young baby – like the **כרובים** right near the **ארון קודש**, whose faces were like unblemished babies. But if our children are like the **כרובים** outside of the gate, if they are distanced from Torah, the Source of all good, they are left open to negative influences. Then they could, G-d forbid, end up resembling those Angels of Terror.

We pray that Hashem should help us and all of Israel educate our children properly.

שבת שלום ומבורך

Find out more about Shapell's Darche Noam
at www.darchenoam.org & +972-2-651-1178 - 5 Beit Hakerem Street, Jerusalem

To dedicate a Shapell's Daf Keshet contact Avrom Suslovitch at avrom@darchenoam.org.

The Daf Keshet, a project of Shapell's Darche Noam, is prepared by Rabbi Eliezer Kwass,
edited by Rabbi Shmuel Jablon, and distributed by Emuna Diamond. To join the Shapell's Daf
Keshet mailing list contact us at dafkeshet@darchenoam.org.



The following digital Torah resources have been extremely helpful in researching and preparing the Shapell's Daf Keshet:
DBS – Hataklitor Hatorani, Otzar Hachochmah, the Bar Ilan Responsa Project, and Hebrewbooks.org.

We pray for a refuah shleimah, a complete healing, for all those wounded in the attacks against our People.