

The Two Mountains that Merged to Crush Yisrael's Enemies in Preparation for the Future Geulah

“על כן: We read this week in parshas Chukas (Bamidbar 21, 14): יאמר בספר מלחמות ה' את והב בסופה ואת הנחלים ארנון, ואשד הנחלים אשר נטה לשבת ער ונשען לגבול מואב, ומשם בארה היא הבאר אשר אמר ה' למשה אסוף את about this it will be said in the sefer of the wars of Hashem: “That which was given at the Reeds and the valleys of Arnon; and the outpouring of the valleys when it veered to dwell at Ar, and leaned against the border of Moav. And from there to the well; it is the well of which Hashem said to Moshe, ‘Assemble the people and I shall give them water.’” Then Yisrael sang this song: “Come up O well, call out to it.”

According to Rashi, these pesukim refer to a great miracle that was performed on Yisrael's behalf. It transpired while the nation of Yisrael was preparing to pass through the valley of Arnon, which passes between two mountains—one mountain which is located in Eretz Yisrael and the other, opposite it, located in the land of Moav:

“על כן יאמר, על חניה זו ונסים שנעשו בה, יאמר בספר מלחמות ה', כשמספרים נסים שנעשו לאבותינו יספרו את והב וגו'... ואת הנחלים ארנון, כשם שמספרים בניסי ים סוף, כך יש לספר בניסי נחלי ארנון, שאף כאן נעשו נסים גדולים, ומה הם הניסים, ואשד הנחלים, תרגום של שפך אשד, שפך הנחלים, שנשפך שם דם אמוריים שהיו נחבאים שם.

לפי שהיו ההרים גבוהים והנחל עמוק וקצר, וההרים סמוכים זה לזה, אדם עומד על ההר מזה ומדבר עם חבירו בהר מזה, והדרך עובר בתוך הנחל. אמרו אמוריים, כשיכנסו ישראל לארץ ישראל לתוך הנחל לעבור, נצא מן המערות בהרים שלמעלה מהם ונהרגם בחצים ואבני בליסטראות.

והיו אותן הנקעים בהר של צד מואב, ובהר של צד אמוריים היו כנגד אותן הנקעים כמין קרנות ושדיים בולטין לחוץ, כיון שבאו ישראל לעבור, נזדעזעו ההר של ארץ ישראל כשפחה היוצאת להקביל פני גבירתה, ונתקרב לצד הר של מואב, ונכנסו אותן השדיים לתוך אותן נקעים והרגום. וזהו אשר נטה לשבת ער, שההר נטה ממקומו ונתקרב לצד מואב ונדבק בו, וזהו ונשען לגבול מואב.

ומשם בארה, משם בא האשד אל הבאר, כיצד, אמר הקב"ה מי מודיע לבני הניסים הללו. לאחר שעברו חזרו ההרים למקומם, והבאר ירדה לתוך הנחל, והעלתה משם דם ההרוגים וזרועות ואיברים, ומוליכתן סביב המחנה, וישראל ראו ואמרו שירה. עלי באר, מתוך הנחל והעלי מה שאת מעלה.”

When they tell of miracles performed on behalf of our forefathers, they will also relate this event. Just as they tell of the miracles that occurred at Yam Suf, so, too, they will tell of the miracles of the valleys of Arnon; for here, too, great miracles were performed. The blood of the Emorim—who lay in wait, hiding--was spilled there. The mountains there were high and the valley deep and narrow; so that the mountains were very near one another. Yisrael's path passed through this valley. The Emorim's plan was to hide in the caves above and to come out and kill the people of Yisrael with arrows and catapult stones, as they attempted to pass through the valley. The mountains on the side of Moav contained caves; the Emorim hid in these caves. The mountains on the opposite side of the valley contained hornlike projections protruding outwards, aligned opposite the caves. When Yisrael came to pass through the valley, the mountain on the Eretz Yisrael side drew closer to the mountain on the side of Moav; the projections entered the corresponding caves and crushed those hiding inside them. This miracle is only alluded to in the pesukim; at the time, the people of Yisrael were unaware of what had transpired. Yet, after they passed through the valley, the waters of the well flowed through the valley—bringing up the blood, the arms and the limbs of the enemy that was killed. When Yisrael saw the evidence of this miracle in their camp, they broke out in a song of praise: “Come up, O well”—bring forth from the valley the evidence of the miracle that took place.

Recall the Wonders that He Performed

Before delving into the deeper significance of this wondrous miracle, let us examine and luxuriate in the simple meaning and sheer magnificence of what transpired in the valley of Arnon. Thus, we may fulfill the directive of the passuk (Tehillim 105, 5): “זכרו” Recall the wonders that He performed—His marvels and the judgments of His mouth.

After Yisrael departed from Mitzrayim, they wandered about through the sands of the desert, from place to place. They experienced many adventures and hardships. Finally, they neared

the end of their journey and were ready to enter the promised land—**“a land flowing with milk and honey.”** But one obstacle remained; they still needed to pass through the valley of Arnon. It was a deep and narrow valley that divided between two tall mountains. One mountain stood in Eretz Yisrael; the mountain which stood opposite was in the land of Moav.

Six hundred thousand men plus women and children passed through the valley between these two mountains. They were totally unaware of the great miracle that HKB”H performed on their behalf prior to entering the valley—saving them from certain death. They had no way of knowing about the deadly ambush planned by the Emorim.

Yet, HKB”H’s wonders know no bounds. He prepared the cure prior to the actual injury—from the beginning of creation. Not only did He create these two mountains opposite each other, but He created the mountain in Moav with caves and the mountain in Eretz Yisrael with hornlike, rocky projections—precisely mirroring and aligned with the caves on the other side.

While the Emorim sat in eager anticipation in the caves in the mountain in Moav ready to attack, Yisrael approached the valley of Arnon through the wilderness in the plains of Moav. When the mountain located in Eretz Yisrael heard the footsteps of Yisrael and the sounds of their Torah and their tefilot filling the void of the wilderness, it stirred and trembled. It uprooted itself and went to greet the congregation of Yisrael—like a faithful maidservant going out lovingly to greet her mistress. Yet, on its way to greet Yisrael, the mountain had an epiphany. HKB”H created it with hornlike protrusions--corresponding to the caves and crevices of the mountain in Moav, standing on the opposite side of the valley—for a specific reason.

Is it even possible to describe the horrified voices of the hardened, Emorite warriors? There they are ready to attack Yisrael with their arrows and catapults and suddenly, they witness the mountain opposite them moving toward them—with its rocky, hornlike projections aimed directly at the caves and crevices they occupied. The mountain’s projections filled the empty spaces of the caves and crevices of the corresponding mountain, pulverizing Yisrael’s enemies into small pieces—leaving the bloody, human debris behind in the waters flowing through the valley of Arnon.

Subsequently, the mountain that abandoned its natural location to merge with the mountain in Moav, returned to its original location in Eretz Yisrael. Thus, Yisrael passed through the valley of Arnon completely unaware of the miracle that had occurred on their behalf. Yet, as Rashi reveals to us: **HKB”H said, “Who**

will inform My children of these miracles?” The mountains resumed their original positions, and the well descended into the valley; it brought up from there the blood of the deceased along with arms and limbs; it carried them around the camp; Yisrael saw and broke out in a song of praise: “Come up, O well,” and bring up whatever you bring up.

“Le’asid La’vo” Yisrael Will Pass through the Wilderness Once Again on Their Way to the Land

Now, we must endeavor to comprehend the wondrous, incredible acts of Hashem. Why did HKB”H set this plan in motion from the very beginning of creation? He created two mountains standing opposite one another in order to save Yisrael on their way into the promised land precisely in this manner. These two mountains joined together to crush the Emorim hiding in the caves on the side of Moav. Certainly, the Almighty could have vanquished our foes without causing the mountain in Eretz Yisrael to leave its natural setting. Without a doubt, there is a vital message and lesson here worth examining.

Let us begin to shed some light on the subject by recalling the following passuk in Shiras HaYam (Shemos 15, 1): **“אז ישיר משה—Then Moshe and Bnei Yisrael sang (will sing) this song to Hashem, and they said (will say) the following . . .** Apropos to this passuk, Rashi cites the elucidation in the Gemara (Sanhedrin 91b): **“אמר רבי מאיר, מניין לתחיית המתים מן התורה, שנאמר אז ישיר משה ובני ישראל את השירה הזאת—לה’—שר לא נאמר אלא ישיר, מכאן לתחיית המתים מן התורה—here we find a source and reference to the notion of “techiyas hameisim”—“resurrection of the dead”—in the Torah; for the passuk does not state that they sang, in the past tense, but rather that they will sing, in the future. In other words, in the future, at the time of “techiyas hameisim,” Yisrael will once again sing the words of Shiras HaYam.**

Rashi adds there that this also applies to what is written here regarding the “song of the well,” Shiras HaBe’er: **“אז ישיר ישראל—Yisrael will also sing this song of praise in the Future to Come—“le’asid la’vo.”** At first glance, this is quite baffling. Why should Yisrael, at the time of the future geulah, sing these two songs of praise again? Shiras HaYam and Shiras HaBe’er both commemorate miracles that happened in the past, at the time of the exodus from Mitzrayim.

It appears that we can explain the matter based on a tremendous chiddush found in Rabeinu Bachayei (beginning of Masei). In parshas Masei, the Torah enumerates forty-two journeys travelled by Yisrael in the wilderness. At the time of the

future geulah, as Yisrael emerge from galut, on their way to the promised land, they will repeat these same forty-two journeys. Here is what he writes:

“ועוד יכלול סיפור המסעות תועלת אחרת כי ירמוז לעתיד, שהרי דברי הנביאים כולם מוכיחים שהגאולה האחרונה כדמיון הראשונה, וכשם שיצאו ישראל בגאולה ראשונה ממצרים אל המדבר, כן בגאולה האחרונה עתידים שיצאו הרבה מישראל אל המדבר, ויעברו במקומות האלה והקב”ה יכלכלם וינהלם שם כמו שעשה לישראל במדבר, והוא שאמר הנביא (יחזקאל כ-לה) והוצאתים אל מדבר העמים, והכתוב הזה מדבר לעתיד בגאולה אחרונה.”

The final geulah will resemble the original geulah. Just as they left Mitzrayim and travelled through the “midbar,” so, too many of Yisrael are destined to travel through the “midbar” during the final geulah. They will pass through these places and HKB”H will sustain them and guide them, just as He did with Yisrael in the “midbar.” This notion is supported by the **and I**—“**והבאתי אתכם אל מדבר העמים**” (passuk in Yechezkel (20, 35 **will bring you to the “midbar” of the nations**—this passuk is discussing the future, final geulah.

Clearly, this deserves further explanation. For what purpose will HKB”H arrange for Yisrael, at the time of the final geulah, to go into the “midbar” and repeat the very same journeys that they already travelled during the exodus from Mitzrayim?

In our essay on parshas Masei (5765), we explained this matter based on the Midrash (Bamidbar Rabbah 19, 13). The reason Moshe passed away in the “midbar” was so that he would bring the generation of the “midbar” with him into the land “le’asid la’vo.” This is similarly expressed in the Midrash (D.R. 9, 9) concerning the passuk (Devarim 31, 14): “הן קרבו ימיך למות, כיון שקיבל עליו למות: התחיל הקב”ה מפיסו, אמר ליה, חייך בעולם הזה הנהגת את בני, אף לעתיד לבוא—to appease Moshe at the time of his passing, HKB”H informs him that he will lead G-d’s children “le’asid la’vo” just as he did in this world.

Moshe Rabeinu Will Be the Melech HaMashiach

The Zohar hakadosh explains (Mishpatim 120a) that Moshe Rabeinu—who redeemed our forefathers from Mitzrayim—will be the Melech HaMashiach—redeeming us “le’asid la’vo.” This is alluded to in the passuk (Koheles 1, 9): “מ’ה ש’היה ה’אז שיהיה:” **that which was will be once again**. The first letters of the first three words of this passuk spell the name **משה**. Thus, the passuk informs us that Moshe will be once again. Just as he redeemed us from Mitzrayim, so, too, he will redeem us in the final geulah.

Concerning the passuk (Bereishis 49, 10), the Zohar hakadosh (Bereishis 25b) teaches us: “לא יסור שבט מיהודה, דא משיח בן דוד, ומחוקק מבין רגליו, דא משיח בן יוסף, עד כי יבא שיל”ה דא משה, חושבן דא כדא”

The passuk states: **“The staff shall not depart from Yehudah”**—this alludes to Mashiach the son of David; **“nor a lawgiver from between his feet”**—alludes to Mashiach the son of Yosef; **“until Shiloh arrives”**—alludes to Moshe; for the numerical value of “שיל”ה is the same as the numerical value of “מש”ה; both equal exactly 345. The Ohr HaChaim explains in parshas Vayechi (Bereishis 49, 11) that Mashiach’s neshamah will contain elements from both David HaMelech and Moshe Rabeinu.

According to this, “le’asid la’vo,” at the time of “techiyas hameisim,” Moshe Rabeinu will once again lead the entire generation that died and was buried in the wilderness. They will repeat the same forty-two journeys travelled by Yisrael after the exodus from Mitzrayim. He will then enter Eretz Yisrael with them. Nevertheless, we have yet to explain why it will be necessary for HKB”H to have those being redeemed from the later galuyos join them “le’asid la’vo”—as described by the passuk: **“והבאתי אתכם אל מדבר העמים”**—**and I will bring you to the “midbar” of the nations**.

Let us complete this thought by referring to an elucidation in the Midrash (V.R. 13, 3) regarding the following prophesy, concerning the future geulah (Yeshayah 51, 4): **“כי תורה מאתי תצא”**—HKB”H informs us that a new aspect of the Torah will be revealed. For, “le’asid la’vo” HKB”H will appear to Yisrael without any intervening screen or separation. The passuk states (ibid. 30, 20): **“ולא יכנה עוד מוריך”**—**your Teacher will no longer be hidden behind His garment, and your eyes will behold your Teacher**. Rashi comments that He will no longer conceal His countenance from you; the Teacher is none other than HKB”H, who instructs you for your own benefit, to edify you. In a similar vein, it is written (ibid. 52, 8): **“כי עין בעין יראו בשוב ה’ ציון”**—**with their own eyes they will see that Hashem returns to Tziyon**.

Based on this understanding, it turns out that “le’asid la’vo” we will attain a new perspective concerning the miracles and feats that HKB”H performed on our behalf during the exodus from Mitzrayim and the splitting of Yam Suf. It is for this very reason that during the future geulah, HKB”H will arrange for Yisrael to revisit the same locations that they stopped at previously in the wilderness. By doing so, they will be able to see each location and appreciate the miracles and feats that HKB”H performed on their behalf from a novel perspective—a loftier perspective. It is for this reason that Yisrael will once again sing the praises of Shiras HaYam and Shiras HaBe’er; however, this time they will do so with added vigor and appreciation. For, they will have a deeper appreciation of what actually transpired at Yam Suf and the valley of Arnon.

In the Future Eretz Yisrael Will Expand

Continuing along this exalted path, let us attempt to gain some miniscule understanding of the workings and wisdom of HKB”H. From the very beginning of creation, He had already arranged for Yisrael to be saved—toward the conclusion of their forty year sojourn in the “midbar”—by the joining together of two mountains. One mountain was located in Eretz Yisrael and the other in the land of Moav; the Emorim hiding in the mountains on the side of Moav were crushed between the two mountains. It is well-known that in the future, the boundaries of Eretz Yisrael are destined to expand and encompass the entire world. The source for this fact is the Midrash (Yalkut Shimoni Yeshayah 60, 503): **“עתידה ירושלים—להיות כארץ ישראל וארץ ישראל ככל העולם”**—Yerushalayim is destined to resemble the entirety of Eretz Yisrael, while Eretz Yisrael will resemble the entire world.

We see from here that enough kedushah will have accumulated in Eretz Yisrael to adequately sanctify the entire world. Prior to the future geulah, however, HKB”H will concentrate all of the kedushah solely in Eretz Yisrael, in order to allow the continued survival of Yisrael in exile amongst the other nations of the world. For, if the kedushah of Eretz Yisrael were to spread throughout the world--to the extent that it will “le’asid la’vo”--the forces opposing Yisrael’s kedushah could not continue to exist.

At this point, with reverence and appreciation, let us propose a novel idea for all our friends devoted to the Torah, concerning the phenomenon involving these two mountains. HKB”H wished to teach us an essential fact about Eretz Yisrael. It contains so much kedushah that the kedushah bursts forth like horns and breasts beyond the boundaries and limits of Eretz Yisrael. In contrast, outside of Eretz Yisrael there is a significant lack and shortage of kedushah; consequently, there is a prevalence of crevices, caves and empty spaces. These empty spaces provided the Emorim and the other enemies of kedushah with ample places to hide.

Nevertheless, “le’asid la’vo” Eretz Yisrael is destined to expand and to encompass all of the other countries on earth. She will do so by nurturing and filling all of the empty spaces which are prevalent in “chutz la’aretz” with the kedushah of Eretz Yisrael. In this manner, the forces of tumah will be crushed and pulverized into small pieces—just as the Emorim were. This is the implication of the passuk (Bamidbar 24, 17): **“דרך כוכב מיעקב—אז ישר ישראֵל עלי באר ענו לה”**—**a star shot forth from Yaakov and a rod has risen from Yisrael, and it shall strike down the extremities of Moav and undermine all the children of Sheit.**

The Joining Together of the Two Mountains Constituted a Symbolic Gesture

We are all familiar with the Ramban’s concept of “poel dimyon,” which he presents in parshas Lech Lecha (Bereishis 12, 6). Prior to the performance of a miracle, it is necessary to perform a corresponding symbolic gesture down below on earth. This gesture triggers the miracle above. The Seforno expresses this notion as follows (Bamidbar 20, 8): **“הניסים יעשהו האל יתברך על ידי עבדיו עם הקדמת איזו תנועה מסודרת מאתו, כענין השליכהו ארצה, הרם את מטו, והכית הקדמת איזו תנועה מסודרת מאתו, כענין השליכהו ארצה, הרם את מטו, והכית”**—as examples of gestures mentioned in the Torah designed to elicit reactions from above, he cites the following: throwing an object to the ground, raising a staff and striking the rock.

For this reason, HKB”H arranged for the phenomenon involving the two mountains to occur as Yisrael were preparing to enter Eretz Yisrael for the first time by way of the “midbar.” As we learned from Rabeinu Bachayei, HKB”H will also bring Yisrael out of exile into Eretz Yisrael, during the future geulah, by way of the “midbar.” Therefore, He prepared a “poel dimyon”—a symbolic gesture—in anticipation of the future geulah. He made the mountain from Eretz Yisrael join physically and penetrate the mountain located within the boundaries of Moav, in “chutz la’aretz.” This will enable the excessive kedushah of Eretz Yisrael to spread to the rest of the world and transcend its boundaries, like hornlike projections. Thus, the forces of tumah and impurity will be crushed and eradicated.

I believe that Rashi intended to hint this noble idea to us with the following words: **“והיו אותן הנקעים בהר של צד מואב, ובהר של צד אמוריים היו כנגד אותן הנקעים כמין קרנות ושדיים בולטין לחוץ, כיון שבאו ישראל לעבור, נזדעזעו ההר של ארץ ישראל כשפחה היוצאת להקביל פני גבירתה, ונתקרב לצד הר של מואב, ונכנסו אותן השדיים לתוך אותן נקעים והרגום.”** Rashi compares the rocks projecting forth from the mountain in Eretz Yisrael to a mother nursing her child with milk to keep it alive and sustain it. In similar fashion, the mountain’s hornlike and breast-like projections penetrated the voids and empty spaces of the mountain in Moav. Thus, the influence of Eretz Yisrael’s kedushah spread, causing the elimination of the Emorim; for, there no longer remained any voids in which they could continue to exist. As explained, this entire scenario constituted a “poel dimyon” for the future geulah. In the future, Eretz Yisrael will unite with “chutz la’aretz,” as its kedushah spreads throughout the entire world.

We can now appreciate the significance of that which is written related to Shiras HaBe’er: **“אז ישר ישראֵל עלי באר ענו לה”**—the Torah specifically employs the future tense “ישרי”, indicating that Yisrael will also sing these words of praise at the time of the future geulah.

Based on what we have learned, we can understand the matter as follows. During the future geulah, Yisrael will complete the forty-two journeys through the “midbar,” once again. When they reach the boundary of Moav, the mountains will join together once again, for all eternity. From there, the kedushah of Eretz Yisrael will spread throughout the land. To celebrate this event, they will sing a song of praise once more. This song will include words of praise and gratitude for the performance of the initial miracle—the joining of the mountains the first time to save Yisrael—which constituted a symbolic gesture setting the stage for this final union of the two mountains.

— **“תשורי מראש אמנה”**

Refers to a Mountain Named Amanah

Come and see how what we have learned provides us with an insight into a statement of Chazal’s in the Midrash (S.R. 23, 5) regarding the passuk (Shir HaShirim 4, 8): **“אתי מלבנון כלה אתי מלבנון—תבואי תשורי מראש אמנה—With Me will you be exiled from the Temple, O bride, with Me from the Temple until you return; then to contemplate the fruits of your faith (amanah) from its earliest beginnings.** The Midrash interprets this passuk as being an allusion to the gathering-in of exiles (“kibbutz galuyos”):

“אתי מלבנון כלה אתי מלבנון תבואי, מן המלכויות שנקראו לבנון, שנאמר (יחזקאל לא-ג) הנה אשור ארז בלבנון... תשורי מראש אמנה, אמר רבי יוסטא הר הוא ושמך אמנה, עד אותו ההר ארץ ישראל, ממנו ולהלן חוץ לארץ. אמר רבי אלעזר בר רבי יוסי, כשיגיעו הגלויות לשם יהיו אומרים שירה, לכך נאמר תשורי מראש אמנה.”

According to the Midrash, the word “levanon” refers to the foreign regimes. [Translator’s note: In the simple translation of the passuk above, “levanon” is interpreted as a reference to the Beis HaMikdash—the Temple.] **תשורי מראש אמנה**—Rabbi Yusta interprets these words as a reference to a mountain named Amanah. That mountain represents the border between Eretz Yisrael and “chutz la’aretz.” Rabbi Elazar the son of Rabbi Yossi stated that when the returning exiles reach this landmark, they will sing words of praise. Accordingly, we can translate the passuk literally as: **“Sing from the peak of Amanah.”**

At first glance, the meaning of the Midrash is obscure. Why will they sing their song specifically when they arrive at this mountain? Furthermore, there is no mention anywhere in Tanach of a mountain located on the border of Eretz Yisrael named Amanah. Yet, we have learned from Rabeinu Bachaye that HKB”H will gather in all the exiles in the future and will take them to Eretz Yisrael by way of the “midbar.” Hence, they will ultimately arrive at the very same mountain located on the border of Eretz Yisrael that merged with the mountain located in Moav to crush the Emorim. Therefore, the mountain is referred to as **“אמנה”**—**“Amanah.”** For, this landmark inspires and reinforces Yisrael’s “emunah” in Hashem—for protecting them and saving them from every danger and calamity.

The reason they will break out in song at that location is now quite clear. For, “le’asid la’vo,” after the exiles pass through the wilderness and arrive at the boundary of Moav, ready to enter the promised land, these two mountains will merge once again forevermore. As a result, the kedushah of Eretz Yisrael will spread from there to the rest of the world. This will prompt them, once again, to sing Shiras HaBe’er, as alluded to by the passuk: **“אז ישיר ישראל”**—then, at that moment in the future, Yisrael will sing! We can see how beautifully this coincides with the Midrash’s interpretation of the words: **תשורי מראש אמנה**—they will sing when they arrive at the mountain named **“Amanah.”**

Let us conclude with a lovely little tidbit. Since that mountain is destined to merge with the mountain in Moav, next to the valley of Arnon, the name **אמנה** itself can be viewed as an allusion; it is an acronym for **ג'יחל א'רנון ה'ר מ'זאב**. Via this mountain, the kedushah of Eretz Yisrael will spread throughout the world, and we will realize the prophet’s promise (Yeshayah 11, 9): **כי מלאה—“הארץ דעה את ה”** **the earth will be filled with knowledge of Hashem**—swiftly, in our times! Amen.



**Sponsored by Reb Yitzchock and Mirel Forster, N'Y
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