

"את קשתי נתתי בענן"

The Chasam Sofer Would Emphasize Annually that קשתי"י Is an Acronym for: ק'דוּשְׁתִּי ש'מִי ת'וֹרַתִי י'מִינִי

In this week's parsha, parshas Noach, we learn of the "mabul" — the flood — that HKB"H employed to punish all of creation for their corrupt ways, as described by the passuk (Bereishis 6, 12): "כי השחית כל בשר את דרכו על הארץ" — **for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth.** All of creation was exterminated with the exception of Noach, his household and a set number of animals from every species, as prescribed by G-d; they survived within the confines of the "teivah" — the ark. After the "mabul," HKB"H chose to alter the natural order of the universe. He swore that He would never again bring a "mabul" to destroy all of creation. Additionally, HKB"H established a "bris" — a covenant — with Noach and his offspring via the sign of the rainbow, which He placed in the clouds.

Upon examining the text, it appears that this beneficial change came about as the result of the korbanos Noach offered to Hashem from all of the pure animals and fowl, as described by the Torah (Bereishis 8, 20):

"וַיִּבֶן נֹחַ מִזְבֵּיחַ לַה' וַיִּקַּח מִכָּל הַבְּהֵמָה הַטְּהוֹרָה וּמִכָּל הָעוֹף הַטְּהוֹר וַיַּעַל עֹלֹת בַּמִּזְבֵּחַ, וַיְרַח ה' אֶת רִיחַ הַנִּיחֹחַ, וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל לִבּוֹ לֹא אוֹסִיף לְקַלֵּל עוֹד אֶת הָאָדָמָה בַּעֲבוּר הָאָדָם, כִּי יֵצֵר לֵב הָאָדָם רָע מִנְּעוּרָיו, וְלֹא אוֹסִיף עוֹד לְהַכּוֹת אֶת כָּל חַי כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי"

— then Noach erected a mizbeiach to Hashem and took of every pure animal and of every pure bird, and offered burnt-offerings ("olos") on the mizbeiach. Hashem smelled the pleasing aroma, and Hashem said in His heart: "I will not continue to curse again the ground because of man, since the design of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again continue to smite every living being, as I have done."

Rashi comments on the repetition of the phrase "לא אוסיף" — "I will not continue": כפל הדבר לשבועה, הוא — "לא אוסיף, ולא אוסיף, כפל הדבר לשבועה, הוא — שכתוב (ישעיה נד-ט) אשר נשבעתי מעבור מי נח, ולא מצינו בה שבועה אלא זו — שכתוב דבריו והיא שבועה — He repeated the phrase to serve as an

oath. This is the reference in the passuk (Yeshayah 54, 9): "Which I swore not to make the waters of Noach pass." Yet, we find no such oath (in Scriptures) other than this -- that He repeated His words; and this constitutes an oath.

As stated, HKB"H did not suffice with this oath alone; in addition, He established a covenant with Noach and all of his future offspring in the form of the rainbow, as described in the following pesukim (ibid. 9, 12):

"וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים זֹאת אוֹת הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי נֹתֵן בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם וּבֵין כָּל נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה אֲשֶׁר אִתְּכֶם לְדוֹרוֹת עוֹלָם, אֶת קִשְׁתִּי נֹתַתִּי בַּעֲנָן וְהִיְתָה לְאוֹת בְּרִית בֵּינִי וּבֵין הָאָרֶץ, וְהָיָה בַּעֲנָנִי עָנָן עַל הָאָרֶץ [רש"י: כשתעלה במחשבה לפני להביא חשך ואבדון לעולם] וְנִרְאָתָה הַקֶּשֶׁת בַּעֲנָן, וְזָכַרְתִּי אֶת בְּרִיתִי אֲשֶׁר בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם וּבֵין כָּל נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה בְּכָל בָּשָׂר וְלֹא יִהְיֶה עוֹד הַמַּיִם לִמְבּוּל לְשַׁחַת כָּל בָּשָׂר" —

And G-d said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I give between Me and you, and every living being that is with you, to generations forever; I have set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. And it shall happen, when I cloud the earth with a cloud [Rashi: when I consider bringing darkness and destruction to the world], and the bow will be seen in the cloud, I will remember My covenant between Me and you and every living being among all flesh, and the water shall never again become a 'mabul' to destroy all flesh."

Notwithstanding, it is worth noting that even before the "mabul," the Torah attests to the fact that (ibid. 6, 9): **"נח איש"** — Noach was a righteous man, perfect in his generations; Noach walked with G-d. Despite the fact that Noach is described as a tzaddik, HKB"H did not desist from visiting the "mabul" upon the world, because Noach was not sufficiently meritorious to spare the rest of creation. This being the case, what changed after the

"mabul" as a result of Noach's korbanos? As we have seen, it states in the passuk: **"Hashem smelled the pleasing aroma"** — this prompted Hashem to make an oath and to also establish a covenant with all of creation — not to ever again employ a "mabul" to punish sinners.

"I have set My rainbow in the cloud"

Let us begin our explanation by presenting a reliable testimonial found toward the end of the sefer Likutei Chaim ben Chaver, concerning a minhag of his Rav, the esteemed Chasam Sofer: **בכל שנה בפרשת נח אמר על פסוק את קשתי נתתי בענן, כי קשתי ראשי תיבות ק'דושת' — ש'מי ת'ורתי י'מיני — each year, during parshas Noach, he would reiterate regarding the passuk: "את קשתי נתתי בענן" ("I have set My rainbow in the cloud"), that the word קשתי is formed by the first letters of the words ש'מי ת'ורתי י'מיני.**

Clearly, he is referring to the words we utter at the conclusion of Shemoneh Esreh: **עשה למען שמך, עשה למען ימינך, עשה למען תורתך, עשה למען קדושתך — act for the sake of Your name; act for the sake of Your right hand; act for the sake of Your Torah; act for the sake of Your kedushah.** At first glance, the connection to the passuk: **"את קשתי נתתי בענן"** is not apparent. However, his devoted pupil (ibid.) explains the Chasam Sofer's meaning quite nicely based on a teaching in the Gemara (Berachot 32b): **"מיום שחרב בית המקדש ננעלו שערי תפלה — from the day the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed, the gates of tefilah have been locked.** The reason they are locked is revealed in the passuk (Eichah 3, 44): **"סכותה בענן לך מעבור תפלה" — You wrapped Yourself in a cloud that prayer cannot pierce.**

Regarding this subject, the Tur presents an aggadic Midrash (O.C. 122): **"אמר שמואל כל הזריז לומר ד' דברים הללו זוכה ומקבל פני שכינה, עשה למען שמך, עשה למען ימינך, עשה למען תורתך, עשה למען קדושתך — Shmuel said: Anyone who is quick to say these four things merits to receive the countenance of the Shechinah -- עשה למען שמך, עשה למען ימינך, עשה למען תורתך, עשה למען קדושתך. [The mechaber (ibid. 3) cites the same statement; however, instead of the words "כל הזריז" -- "anyone who is quick" -- writes "כל הרגיל" -- "anyone who is in the habit of."] Let us explain. While it is true that during galus, the gates of tefilah have been locked; nevertheless, anyone who prays for the honor of His name, for the honor of His right hand, for the honor of His Torah, and for the honor of His kedushah, is guaranteed that his tefilah will burst through and disperse all the barriers of clouds preventing our tefilos from ascending to the heavens.**

This then is the message conveyed by the Chasam Sofer regarding the passuk: **"את קשתי נתתי בענן"**. In the event that the heavens are covered by clouds, preventing our tefilos from ascending to the heavens, I have provided you with a solution; I have provided you with **"My rainbow"** -- **קשתי**. In other words, if you pray for the sake of: **ש'מי ת'ורתי י'מיני — My kedushah, My name, My Torah and My right hand** — you are assured that your tefilah will break through and penetrate all of the cloudy obstructions and barriers.

"זוכה ומקבל פני שכינה"

Is a Segulah for One's Tefilos Being Accepted

It is important to point out that neither the Tur nor the mechaber state explicitly that uttering these four things is a segulah for the acceptance of one's tefilos. What they do state, however, is that anyone who mentions these four things: **"זוכה ומקבל פני שכינה — finds merit and receives the countenance of the Shechinah.** Yet, in Sefer HaManhig (62) and the Orchos Chaim (Hilchos Tefilah 21), it is stated explicitly that anyone who mentions these four things: **"אין תפלתו חוזרת ריקם" — his tefilah will not return empty (unanswered).**

It appears that we can reconcile these two slightly divergent teachings based on what we have learned in the Gemara (Shabbas 12b). It is improper for a person to request the things he needs in Aramaic, since the malachim responsible for carrying the tefilos heavenwards do not understand Aramaic. Yet, when a person comes to visit a sick person, it is permissible to bless him in Aramaic. The reason for this distinction is because the Shechinah rests at the head of the sick person, as it is stated (Tehillim 41, 4): **"ה' יסעדנו על ערש דוי" — Hashem will fortify him on his bed of illness.** Rashi explains that such a person does not require the ministering angels to deliver his tefilos to the inner sanctum. Thus, we see clearly that in the merit of the Shechinah's presence, HKB"H receives one's tefilos without any barriers or intermediaries.

Now, we have learned that anyone who utters these four things: **עשה למען שמך, עשה למען ימינך, עשה למען תורתך, עשה למען קדושתך — finds merit and receives the countenance of the Shechinah.** This implies that HKB"H descends through the clouds and barriers to this person in order to rest His Shechinah upon him. Thus, HKB"H Himself receives his tefilah directly without any obstructing barrier. It turns out, therefore, that the segulah of: **"זוכה ומקבל פני שכינה"** and the segulah of: **"אין תפלתו חוזרת ריקם"** go hand in hand magnificently.

Now, however, it is incumbent upon us to explore the deeper significance of the sacred words of the Chasam Sofer. We have learned that the statement: **"את קשתי נתתי בענן"** — conveys the message that even when clouds and barriers exist, they can be penetrated and shattered by praying to Hashem for the sake of **"His kedushah, His name, His Torah and His right hand."** What is the connection between the fact that HKB"H established a covenant with all of creation never to bring another "mabul" to the world and the wonderful advice He mentioned within the body of the covenant: **"את קשתי נתתי בענן"**?

One Who Prays for the Sake of Heaven Is Assured that His Tefilah Will Be Accepted

I was struck by a wonderful idea to clarify the meaning of the Chasam Sofer. First, let us explain the importance of mentioning the four things symbolized by the term **"עשה למען שמך"** -- **"עשה למען ימינך, עשה למען תורתך, עשה למען קדושתך"** — at the conclusion of one's Shemoneh Esreh. As we have already mentioned, it is a segulah that one's tefilah will not go unanswered. Now, the Bnei Yissaschar provides us with a vital principle regarding the matter of having one's tefilah accepted (Kislev-Teves 2, 37):

"כתבנו כמה פעמים, כאשר האדם מתפלל מחמת שצר לו על איזה דבר הנוגע אליו, אינו בטוח בכל פעם שתקובל תפלתו, מה שאין כן כשמתפלל לצורך גבוה, כי בעת היצר לאיש ישראלי (סנהדרין מו.) שכינה מה אומרת קלני מראשי וכו' [רש"י: כמו שהאדם שיגע ועיף אומר ראשי כבוד עלי], ובפרט בעת היצר לו מחמת הצורך, הנה זה ח"ו העדר כבודו יתברך שמו באמרו (יחזקאל לו-כ) עם ה' אלה וכו', וכשמתפלל האדם באופן כזה, היינו שאינו חושש לצערו רק על צער השכינה כביכול, בטוח הוא שלא תוחזר תפלתו ריקם."

וטעמא רבא אית ביה גם על פי פשוטו, דהנה כשמתפלל האדם לצורך עצמו, הנה יש מיימינים ומשמאילים לזכות ולחובה, ויכול להיות שתוגבר ח"ו מדת הדין שמואל, מה שאין כן כשהאדם מתפלל כביכול על ישועתו יתברך שמו, שיתגלה מלכותו ותהיה יחודא שלים לחבר הדודים, מי הוא זה ואי זה הוא אשר יקטרגו על זה ח"ו, בודאי כל צבא מרום כולן כאחד יעידון ויגידון, מהראוי שתקובל תפלתו של המתפלל, ממילא אין שטן ואין פגע רע לעכב תפלתו."

When a person prays because of a personal matter that is distressing him, there is no guarantee that his tefilah will always be answered — as opposed to when he prays for the sake of Heaven. For, when he is only concerned about his own troubles, he demonstrates a lack of "kavod" for the Almighty; however, when he disregards his own troubles and focuses on the distress of the Shechinah, so to speak, he is assured that his tefilah will not return unanswered.

There is a simple explanation for this phenomenon. When a person prays for his own personal needs, there are arguments in his favor and arguments against him. Quite possibly, those against him, representing the attribute of "din," may win out, chas v'shalom. On the other hand, when a person prays, as it were, for the salvation of the Almighty, that His sovereignty should be revealed and His unification should be complete, who could possibly protest?! Certainly, all of the heavenly forces would unite to support such a tefilah. Thus, it is only fitting that such a tefilah be accepted; and neither the Satan nor any other evil force can stand in the way of such a tefilah.

Now, we can appreciate why anyone who utters these four things: **"עשה למען שמך, עשה למען ימינך, עשה למען תורתך, עשה למען קדושתך"** — is guaranteed that his tefilah will not return unanswered. Seeing as he is praying for the sake of Hashem's "kavod" and His Torah, who would dare protest and prevent such a tefilah from ascending to the heavens?!

The Bnei Yissaschar's Wonderful Advice

Nevertheless, the Bnei Yissaschar presents us with a stern admonishment. We should not deceive ourselves by lying to HKB"H, chas v'shalom, that our intent is to pray for the distress of the Shechinah, when, in fact, we are not on that high of a spiritual level — in the words of David HaMelech a"h (Tehillim 101, 7): **"דובר שקרים לא יכון לנגד עיני"** — **one who tells lies shall not be established before my eyes.**

That being the case, we need to question the validity of the segulah for having our tefilos accepted by uttering the following four things at the conclusion of the Shemoneh Esreh: **"עשה למען שמך, עשה למען ימינך, עשה למען תורתך, עשה למען קדושתך"**. For, if a person is on a sufficiently high spiritual level to pray for the sake of the "kavod" of Heaven, his tefilah on behalf of the distress of the Shechinah will be accepted even without the mention of these four things. Conversely, if he is not on such a high spiritual level, because he is too self-immersed in his own troubles and sorrow, what good will it do him to utter: **"עשה למען שמך, עשה למען ימינך, עשה למען תורתך, עשה למען קדושתך"**. As we have just learned, one who tells lies will not be established in the eyes of Hashem.

A genuine solution concerning this dilemma is provided for us in the incredible teachings of the Bnei Yissaschar (in Hanhagos Adam [31] printed at the end of his seifer Devarim Nechmadim). Clearly, it is prohibited for a person to pretend as if he is praying on behalf of the "kavod" of Heaven, when, in

truth, he knows full well that he unfortunately is far from being on that level. Notwithstanding, seeing as he believes sincerely that HKB"H shares in Yisrael's sorrow, he can express this fact in thought in his tefilah:

"Master of the Universe, it is true that I am praying due to my own personal distress, because I am not on a high enough spiritual level to pray solely for Your sorrow. Nevertheless, seeing as I know and believe that You share in Yisrael's suffering, please fulfill my request, so that Your suffering will be diminished, as well. Would that I was on a sufficiently high level to pray solely on behalf of Your sorrow rather than for my own personal sorrow." Presenting one's sentiments and prayers sincerely in this manner — also praying on behalf of the sorrow of the Shechinah — is treated by HKB"H as if it was presented in the ideal manner. Therefore, it serves as a segulah that his tefilah should be accepted.

We can now better appreciate the segulah inherent in uttering at the conclusion of the Shemoneh Esreh: **"עשה למען שמוך, עשה למען"** **"עשה למען קדושתך"**. For, even if we are not on the level of one who can pray solely for the sake of the "kavod" of Heaven, nevertheless, since we believe that our tefilos concern the "kavod" of Heaven, we are permitted to pray for the sake of Hashem's "kavod" and His Torah, as well. We must do so, however, without the deception, chas v'shalom, of claiming that we are praying solely for the sake of Hashem's "kavod." Despite all of this, we mention that it is our desire that HKB"H fulfill our requests for the sake of His name, His right hand, His Torah and His kedushah. In this merit, we are privileged to receive the countenance of the Shechinah and our tefilos will not return unanswered.

Noach Did Not Pray on Behalf of His Generation because He Saw the Barrier Created by Their Transgressions

In this manner, let us proceed to explain the connection between this segulah, which HKB"H alluded to Noach with the statement: **"את קשתי נתתי בענן"** -- **I have set My rainbow in the cloud** — and the covenant which HKB"H established with Noach and his offspring never to bring another "mabul" to the world. The Zohar hakadosh (Noach 67b) teaches us that although Noach is described as a tzaddik, he was flawed; he failed to pray on behalf of his generation, to save them from extermination, as Moshe prayed on behalf of Yisrael in the aftermath of the "cheit haeigel" (Shemos 32, 32): **"ועתה אם תשא חטאתם, ואם אין מחני נא מספרך אשר כתבת"** — **and now, if You would but bear their sin; but if not, erase**

me from Your book that You have written. Therefore, the "mabul" is named after Noach, as we find in the passuk (Yeshayah 54, 9): **"כי מי נח זאת לי אשר נשבעתי מעבור מי נח עוד על הארץ"** — **for like the waters of Noach shall this be to Me, as I swore that the waters of Noach would never again pass over the earth.**

In this light, we can appreciate the following comment by the Chasam Sofer (Noach 22b):

"לפי עניות דעתי הרבה ריווח והצללה לפני הקב"ה, ולא היה צורך להסגיר נח בתוך התיבה... על כן נראה לי כי נח ובניו וכל אשר אתו, היו בעונש מה שהיו אסורים בבית הכלא הזה בתיבה ונצטערו בה בלי ספק, והיה משפטם שנה תמימה לאחר כך הורשו לצאת לא קודם."

In my humble opinion, it is clear that the sojourn in the "teivah" represented a punishment for Noach and his family. It was certainly a form of incarceration and they undoubtedly suffered. The duration of the imposed decree was one complete year. Thereafter, they were allowed to exit the "teivah," but not before serving the entire sentence. According to what we have learned, we can suggest that Noach's punishment — the one year incarceration in the "teivah" — was meant to atone for the fact that he failed to pray on behalf of his generation.

Based on this teaching from the Zohar, the Arizal reveals to us in Likutei Torah (Ki Tisa) that Moshe Rabeinu was a gilgul and a tikun for Noach — who neglected to pray on behalf of his generation. Therefore, he prayed on behalf of Yisrael regarding the "cheit haeigel" and was willing to sacrifice his own life in order to save them, as it is written (Shemos 32, 32): **"ועתה אם תשא חטאתם, ואם אין מחני נא מספרך אשר כתבת"**. The Arizal points out that the word **"מחני" (erase me)**, which appears in this passuk, is composed of the letters **"מ"י נ"ח" — the waters of Noach**. He interprets this as an allusion to the fact that Moshe was willing to sacrifice his life in order to spare Yisrael — by saying **"מחני"** — in order to provide a tikun for Noach — after whom the "mabul" is referred to as **"מ"י נ"ח"**, due to his failure to pray on behalf of the people of his generation.

This, however, prompts us to question Noach's behavior. After all, the passuk attests to his righteous character: **"איש צדיק תמים"** — **he was a tzaddik, perfect in his generation, and walked with G-d**. That being the case, how is it possible that he didn't consider praying on behalf of the people of his generation, in order to save them from annihilation? Possibly, we can defend Noach's decision based on what he was told by HKB"H (ibid. 6, 13): **"קץ כל בשר בא לפני כי מלאה הארץ חמס מפניהם"** — **the**

end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with robbery through them. He understood from this statement that due to the abundant robbery and perversion that had pervaded the earth, an obstructive barrier had formed — preventing tefilos from ascending and reaching Hashem, in keeping with the words of the passuk: "סכותה בענן לך מעבור תפלה" -- **You wrapped Yourself in a cloud that prayer cannot pierce.**

Thus, he concluded that this was a clear-cut sign that HKB"H did not want him to pray for the salvation of the wicked people of his generation. On the contrary, he understood that it was the will of the Almighty to punish these "reshaim" and wipe them off the face of the earth. Had HKB"H wanted him to pray on their behalf, a barrier would not have been created, preventing tefilos from ascending. Therefore, he did not pray on their behalf; for, he believed that he was fulfilling the will of Hashem.

HKB"H Alluded to Noach that the Barrier Could Be Shattered Via קשת"י

We can now shed some light on the sacred comment of the Chasam Sofer. HKB"H established a "bris" with Noach and his offspring that He would never again bring a "mabul" to the earth. He did so via the rainbow He placed in the clouds with the declaration: "את קשתי נתתי בענן" -- **I have set My rainbow in the cloud.** In this manner, HKB"H conveyed to them that even when the clouds cover the skies, preventing the tefilos from ascending heavenward, there is still a solution available. One should pray for the sake of the "kavod" of Heaven by employing the formula **קשת"י — His kedushah, His name, His Torah, His right hand** -- קדושתו, שמו, תורתו, ימינו. Let us explain. The "mabul" was visited upon creation, because Noach failed to appreciate that it was indeed Hashem's will that he pray to save them from extermination. He arrived at this faulty conclusion, because he perceived that an obstructive barrier had been created as a result of his generation's extensive transgressions and corruption.

Therefore, HKB"H conveyed to Noach via the "bris" in the clouds: "את קשתי נתתי בענן" — that even in times of "hester panim" — when divine supervision is concealed — when the clouds of transgressions cover the skies, that HKB"H still wants the tzaddikim of each generation to pray on behalf of creation. He wants them to burst the cloudy barriers by praying for the sake of Hashem's "kavod" and His Torah — alluded to by the term **קשת"י**. In the merit, of the tzaddikim that would offer tefilos in the future, HKB"H established a "bris" that He would never again bring a "mabul."

This explains very nicely the insight we learned from the Arizal. Noach, who neglected to pray on behalf of his generation reincarnated into Moshe, who made amends for Noach's shortcoming by praying for Yisrael in the aftermath of the "cheit haeigel" — offering to sacrifice his life to save them. For, Moshe realized that HKB"H established a "bris" with Noach and his offspring after the "mabul" with the declaration: **את קשתי נתתי בענן** — in order to teach him that had he only prayed for the sake of the "kavod" of the name of Hashem, he would have shattered all of the clouds and barriers. Therefore, Moshe employed this amazing tactic to shatter the obstructive barrier created by the "cheit haeigel."

This fact is evident from the prayer Moshe uttered to Hashem (Bamidbar 14, 15): **והמתה את העם הזה כאיש אחד ואמרו הגוים אשר שמעו את שמעך לאמר, מבלתי יכולת ה' להביא את העם הזה אל הארץ אשר נשבע להם וישחטם במדבר — and if You were to put this people to death like a single man, then the nations that heard of Your fame would say, "Because Hashem lacked the ability to bring this people to the land that He had sworn to give them, He slaughtered them in the wilderness."** We see that he prayed to spare Yisrael in order to prevent a "chilul Hashem" — a desecration of the name of Hashem. We see that HKB"H accepted his tefilah as a result of this argument, as it is written (ibid. 20): **ויאמר ה' סלחתי כדברך — I have forgiven in accordance with your words.** Rashi comments: **כדברך, בשביל** "מה שאמרת פן יאמרו מבלתי יכולת ה'" — HKB"H was swayed by Moshe's argument that the goyim would claim that Hashem lacked the ability to carry out His promise.

The Bow Can Kill the Prosecutor from a Distance

Having given the subject much thought, I would like to propose my own explanation regarding the connection between the simple, straightforward interpretation of the passuk — the "pshat" — and the interpretation of the passuk based on allusion — "remez": **"את קשתי נתתי בענן"**. According to the "pshat," the passuk is simply discussing the rainbow, which HKB"H reveals in the clouds. According to the "remez," the passuk conveys a message regarding the power of tefilah for the sake of the "kavod" of Heaven employing the formula **קשת"י** — which stands for **קדושתו, שמו, תורתו, ימינו**. Let us refer to what Yaakov says to Yosef (Bereishis 48, 22): **ואני נתתי לך שכם אחד על — אחיך אשר לקחתי מיד האמורי בחרבי ובקשת"י — and I have given you one portion more than your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Emori with my sword and with my bow (קשת"י).**

Targum Onkelos interprets the words "בחרבי ובקשתי" (**with my sword and with my bow**) as "בצלתי ובבעותי" — **with my prayers and my supplications**.

The Binah L'Itim (Drush 62) explains why tefilah is specifically compared to these two types of weapons — the sword and the bow. The sword is useful to attack and wound an enemy from close range; whereas the bow shoots arrows which strike an enemy from a distance. Now, we have learned in the Gemara (B.B. 16a): "הוא שטן, הוא יצר הרע, הוא מלאך המות" — **it is the Satan; it is the yetzer hara; it is the Angel of Death**. The Gemara (ibid.) goes on to explain: "במתניתא תנא, יורד ומתעה, ועולה ומרגיז, נוטל רשות ונוטל נשמה" — **it was taught in a Baraisa: It (the Satan) descends and lures into sin; it then ascends and incites; it takes permission and takes the soul**. Rashi explains that at first it descends to this world to lead people astray; at this stage, it is known as the yetzer hara. Subsequently, it ascends back to the heavens to prosecute these people; at this stage, it is known as the Satan, because it accuses and prosecutes. Then it receives permission above to kill the sinner; it returns to earth and takes the neshamah; at this stage, it is recognized as the Malach HaMaves — the Angel of Death.

It is for this reason that Yaakov Avinu compared tefilah to the sword and the bow: "**Which I took from the hand of the Emori with my sword and with my bow (קשת).**" For, it possesses the capacity to act as a sword — striking the yetzer hara from close proximity, when it attempts to persuade a person to commit an aveirah. On the other hand, even if a person falls prey to it, chas v'shalom, his tefilah possesses the capacity to function as a bow and strike the Satan from a distance, when it ascends to accuse and prosecute.

This enlightens us as to why HKB"H established the rainbow as a sign of His "bris" with all the inhabitants of earth. Regarding the passuk (Bereishis 6, 13): "קץ כל בשר בא לפני" — **the end of all flesh has come before Me** — the Zohar hakadosh interprets this passuk as a reference to the Malach HaMavet, who brings death, "**the end,**" to all living creatures; it ascended to accuse and prosecute the generation of the "mabul" for all of its transgressions.

Now, since the tremendous power of tefilah was revealed after the "mabul" — its capacity to function like a bow ("keshes") and strike the prosecutor a lethal blow from afar; therefore, the rainbow ("keshes") symbolizes the covenant that HKB"H will never again bring a "mabul." For, the tzaddikim's power of tefilah will kill the prosecutor. Notwithstanding, this is conditional on one's praying in a manner consistent with: "את קשתי נתתי בענן" — for the sake and "kavod" of: שמו, תורתו, ימינו -- **His kedushah, His name, His Torah and His right hand**. Tefilah of this sort resembles a bow — "keshes" — which can strike a target far away; it can shatter all of the obstructing clouds and kill the prosecutor above.

At this point, we can appreciate why Noach offered korbanos to Hashem after exiting the "teivah." It states in the Gemara (Berachos 26b): "תפלות כנגד תמידין תקנום" — **the tefilos were instituted corresponding to the "Tamid" offerings**. In other words, the tefilos function in place of korbanos. Therefore, to atone for all of the tefilos that he neglected to pray on behalf of the people of his generation, he offered korbanos to Hashem.

Upon seeing that Noach learned this vital lesson — that it is a tzaddik's responsibility to pray on behalf of his generation: "וירח ה' את ריח הניחוח, ויאמר ה' אל לבו לא אוסיף לקלל עוד את האדמה בעבור" — **Hashem smelled the pleasing aroma, and Hashem said in His heart: "I will not continue to curse again the ground because of man, since the design of man's heart is evil from his youth."**

It goes without saying that the tzaddikim of every generation possess the ability to pray on behalf of the people of their generation and save them from all sorts of calamities; for, the Torah informs us that: "**The design of man's heart is evil from his youth.**" So, even if there is a barrier of sins obstructing the path of our tefilos, we can rely on the solution proposed by the Chasam Sofer, alluded to in the passuk: "את קשתי נתתי בענן". We should pray for the "kavod" of Heaven: עשה למען שמך, עשה למען "עשה למען שמיך, עשה למען תורתך, עשה למען קדושתך" -- **act for the sake of Your name; act for the sake of Your right hand; act for the sake of Your Torah; act for the sake of Your kedushah.**

Donated by Dr. Ralph and Limor Madeb
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