

“I will remember My covenant with Yaakov”

Yaakov Avinu Took the Letter “Vav” Representing Emes from Eliyahu to Hasten the Geulah with His Attribute of Emes

In this week’s parsha, parshas Bechukosai, we read (Vayikra 26, 42): **“וזכרתי את בריתי יעקוב ואף את בריתי יצחק ואף את בריתי אברהם: אזכור והארץ אזכור—I will remember My covenant with Yaakov, and also My covenant with Yitzchak, and also My covenant with Avraham will I remember, and I will remember the land.** With regards to this passuk, Rashi teaches us something incredible: **In five places, his name is written in full—i.e. “יעקוב” is spelled with a “vav”—and Eliyahu is written defectively—i.e. without a “vav”—in five places. Yaakov took a letter from Eliyahu’s name as security, so that he will come and herald the redemption of his (Yaakov’s) children.**

In the Maharal’s commentary, Gur Aryeh, he explains why Yaakov took the letter “vav” from Eliyahu’s name five times. Symbolically, he was sealing an agreement with Eliyahu via a handshake. A hand has five fingers; each finger resembles the letter “vav.” So, by taking five “vav”s, Yaakov was guaranteeing via a handshake that Eliyahu would come and herald the geulah.

Obviously, this deserves further explanation. Why was this symbolic handshake necessary? The navi states in no uncertain terms that HKB”H will send Eliyahu HaNavi at the end of days to herald the geulah (Malachi 3, 23): **“הנה אנכי שולח לכם את אליה הנביא לפני בוא יום ה’ הגדול והנורא, והשיב לב אבות על בנים “Behold, I send you Eliyahu HaNavi before the coming of the great and awesome day of Hashem. And he will turn back the hearts of fathers with their sons and the hearts of sons with their fathers.”** Did Yaakov doubt for a second that Eliyahu HaNavi would neglect to fulfill this task that HKB”H had given him?

The Letter “Vav” Represents Emes

We will begin to shed some light on the matter by introducing a valuable idea from the Shem MiShmuel (Bechukosai 5670). In his own hallowed way, he explains why Yaakov took the letter “vav” from Eliyahu’s name. He refers to Rachav’s request from the meraglim (Yehoshua 2, 12): **“ונתתם לי אות אמת”—and give me a trustworthy sign** (literally: “a letter of Emes”). The Zohar hakadosh (Vayechi 241b) teaches us that she requested the letter “vav,” which represents Emes: **“ומואי איהו אות אמת, דא אתו”**.

The Shem MiShmuel proves that Emes is tantamount to “din” from what we have learned in the Gemara (A.Z. 3b): **אמר רב יהודה אמר רב, שתיים עשרה שעות הוי היום, שלש הראשונות הקב”ה יושב ועוסק בתורה, שניות יושב ודן את כל העולם כולו, כיון שרואה שנתחייב עולם ועוסק בתורה, שניות יושב ודן את כל העולם כולו, כיון שרואה שנתחייב עולם—כלייה. Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: The day is comprised of twelve hours; during the first three hours, HKB”H sits and engages in Torah study. During the second (three hour) period, He sits and judges the entire world. When He sees that the world deserves annihilation, He rises from the throne of “din” and sits down on the throne of “rachamim.”**

Accordingly, the Gemara (A.Z. 4b) states that on Rosh HaShanah, one should not daven the Mussaf service privately—without a minyan—during the first three hours of the day, because that is when HKB”H engages in Torah-study. Consequently, “din” prevails during that period of time; so it is possible that his deeds will be scrutinized and his tefilah will be rejected. Instead, he should do so during the second three-hour period, when HKB”H sits in judgment. This in fact is what

the halachah dictates (O.C.591, 8). The Gemara provides the following clarification: תורה דכתיב בה אמת, דכתיב (משלי כג-כג) אמת קנה ואל תמכור, אין הקב"ה עושה לפניו משורת הדין, דין דלא כתיב ביה אמת, the Torah is associated with "Emes" (truth), for it is written: "Purchase Emes (Torah) and do not sell." Therefore, HKB"H does not go beyond the limits of strict "din" (justice), during that time period. During the period of "din" (i.e. the second three hours), which is not associated with "Emes," HKB"H may neglect the limits of strict "din." Thus, we learn that "Emes" is associated with strict "din."

Now, Eliyahu HaNavi is called "Emes," as it is written (Tehillim 43, 3): "שלח אורך ואמתך"—**dispatch Your light and Your truth.** Rashi explains that this is a reference to the Melech HaMashiach-- who is compared to light (ibid. 132, 17)--and to Eliyahu HaNavi, who represents "Emes" and is a trustworthy prophet. The poet expresses this fact in the zemiros sung on Motzaei Shabbas (Ish Chassid): "ופרח לו איש האמת"—**and the man of "Emes" (Eliyahu) flew off.**

In light of these facts, the Shem MiShmuel explains the significance of Yaakov's taking the letter "vav" from Eliyahu's name. When Yaakov Avinu foresaw that in the future HKB"H would send Eliyahu to prepare Yisrael for the geulah, he feared that Eliyahu might choose not to go. Seeing as Eliyahu represented Emes, which is associated with strict "din," he might deem Yisrael unworthy and refuse to come and herald the geulah. Therefore, Yaakov cleverly took the letter of Emes—the letter "vav"—from Eliyahu's name: **"So that the his midah of Emes would not be complete (absolute) until after Yisrael's geulah; so that the geulah could transpire beyond the boundaries of absolute 'din.'"**

We can add an entertaining idea based on a teaching from the Zohar hakadosh in the the Raiya Mehemna (Pinchas 244b). It states that Yaakov corresponds to the letter "vav": "וַיִּמַּי אִיהוּ" "אות אמת, דא אתו". This agrees wonderfully with the statement in the the Zohar hakadosh that the letter "vav" is the letter of Emes. After all, Yaakov is the personification of Emes, as it is written (Michah 7, 20): **"grant 'Emes' to Yaakov."** This explains very nicely why Yaakov took the letter "vav"—the letter of "Emes"—from Eliyahu. He took the midah of Emes belonging to him as collateral to guarantee that he would redeem Yisrael even beyond the letter of the law.

Yaakov Avinu Shook Eliyahu's Hand to Ensure that He Would Hasten the Geulah with the Right Hand Representing Chesed

At this point, we have cause to rejoice; for we have shed some light on the Maharal's explanation. He taught us that Yaakov took the letter "vav" from Eliyahu's name five times to symbolize the five fingers of a human hand. Through this symbolic handshake, he compelled Eliyahu to agree to herald the geulah. As we know, it is customary to shake hands with the right hand, which represents chesed; as opposed to the left hand, which represents "din." It was precisely for this reason that Yaakov devised a way to take Eliyahu's right hand, so that Eliyahu would herald the geulah as an act of chesed rather than as an act of "din."

To reinforce this point, let us add a noble and sound idea. If we review the five places where Eliyahu's name appears with a "vav"—אליה—we find that four of them are in sefer Melachim II, chapter 1. Let us list them: (1) "וימלאך ה' דיבר אל אליה" (passuk 3), (2) "וילך אליה" (passuk 4), (3) "אליה התשבי" (passuk 8) and (4) "ויען אליה וידבר אליהם" (passuk 12). The fifth place Eliyahu's name appears without a "vav," however, is in sefer Malachi (3, 23): "הנה אנכי שולח לכם את אליה הנביא לפני בוא יום ה' הגדול והגורא, והשיב"—**"Behold, I send you Eliyahu HaNavi before the coming of the great and awesome day of Hashem. And he will turn back the hearts of fathers with their sons and the hearts of sons with their fathers."**

This coincides magnificently with what we have explained. For, this last passuk depicts HKB"H sending Eliyahu HaNavi to prepare Yisrael for the imminent geulah. Therefore, the virtual handshake created by Yaakov is completed specifically with this passuk—teaching us that HKB"H confirms Yaakov's symbolic act. Eliyahu will redeem Yisrael with the right hand, the hand representing chesed.

This then is the interpretation of the passuk: **"Behold, I send you אליה HaNavi"**—the fifth time Eliyahu's name appears in Scriptures without a "vav," completing Yaakov's handshake; this momentous event will occur **"before the coming of the great and awesome day of Hashem."** Then the passuk explains why Yaakov created this handshake by taking the five "vav"s from Eliyahu: **"And he will turn back the hearts of fathers with their sons and the hearts of sons with their fathers"**—even if they are not worthy from the aspect of "midas hadin," which is based on Emes, nevertheless he will redeem them with the

right hand, representing the midah of chesed. He will do so by inspiring them to perform teshuvah (alluded to by the term "והשיב"—"he will turn back")—swiftly, in our times. Amen.

HKB"H Took Emes and Cast It Down to Earth

In truth, however, the Shem MiShmuel's explanation is somewhat problematic. According to his explanation, Yaakov Avinu takes the letter "vav"—the letter of Emes—from Eliyahu as collateral. He wants to ensure that Eliyahu will redeem Yisrael with the midah of chesed and not "midas hadin," which is associated with Emes. This notion is supported by the Gemara's statement: "תורה דכתיב בה אמת... אין הקב"ה עושה לפנים משורת הדין"—because the Torah personifies Emes, HKB"H does not act outside the confines of "din."

Yet, we find an apparent contradiction. After all, Yaakov also personifies Emes, as we learn from the passuk: "תתן אמת ליעקב". Notwithstanding, we learn from the Zohar hakadosh and the writings of the Arizal that Yaakov represents the attribute of "tiferes"—"splendor"—which connotes "rachamim"—divine mercy. In the words of the divine kabbalist, the Ramak, in Pardes Rimonim (23, 1): "אמת. כל המפרשים הסכימו היות התיבה הזו: רומז אל התפארת, ופסוק מלא הוא תתן אמת ליעקב, ויעקב מורכב לתפארת"—all of the commentaries agree that the term "Emes" alludes to "tiferes," and that Yaakov is the personification of "tiferes."

Additionally, we should clarify the statement from the Gemara cited above. How is it possible that during the three hours that HKB"H engages in Torah-study He is confined, so to speak, by "midas hadin," whereas during the three hours He actually sits in judgment, He does act beyond the confines and restrictions of "din"?

To shed some light on this matter, let us introduce a fascinating passage from the Midrash. It portrays a dispute taking place between the ministering angels and HKB"H relating to the creation of man. Let us review the Midrash (B.R. 8, 5):

"אמר רבי סימון, בשעה שבא הקב"ה לבראות את אדם הראשון, נעשו מלאכי השרת כיתים כיתים וחבורות, מהם אומרים אל יברא ומהם אומרים יברא, הדא הוא דכתיב (תהלים פה- יא) חסד ואמת נפגשו צדק ושלוש נשקו. חסד אומר יברא שהוא גומל חסדים, ואמת אומר אל יברא שכולו שקרים, צדק אומר יברא שהוא עושה צדקות, שלום אומר אל יברא דכוליה קטטא [שכולו מריבות]. מה עשה הקב"ה, נטל אמת והשליכו לארץ, הדא הוא דכתיב (דניאל ח-יב) ותשלך אמת ארצה."

When HKB"H decided to create the first man, Adam HaRishon, the ministering angels were not all in agreement

with this decision. Conflicting groups felt that man should be created, while others felt that he should not be created. **Chesed** — Kindness--said that he should be created because of the acts of kindness he performs. **Emes** — Truth--said that he should not be created, arguing that he is full of lies. **Tzedek** — Righteousness--argued that he should be created, because of his righteous and charitable acts; while **Shalom** — Peace--felt that he should not be created, because he is extremely quarrelsome and confrontational. In response, HKB"H took Emes and threw him down to earth, as the passuk states (Daniel 8, 12): "ותשלך ותשלך אמת ארצה"— **and Emes was thrown down to earth.**

The commentaries are baffled by this Midrash. Regarding the creation of man, HKB"H says (Bereishit 1, 26): "נעשה אדם בצלמנו"—"Let us make man in our image, as our likeness." Rashi comments: "ענוותנותו של הקב"ה למדנו מכאן... שיהא הגדול נמלך"—this episode demonstrates HKB"H's degree of humility; we learn that the greater and more esteemed party should seek counsel and request permission from the lesser party. That being the case, why did HKB"H cast Emes down to earth? After all, she merely voiced her opinion regarding the question she was asked.

HKB"H's Trademark Is Emes—He Judges Each Person According to His Status

To solve this confounding riddle, I was struck by a wonderful idea. To begin with, the Gemara (Shabbas 55a) teaches us that HKB"H chose "**Emes**" as His trademark and seal: "חותמו של הקב"ה"—"אמצעית לאותיות וראשון". Rashi provides the following insight: "ואחרון, על שם ג' פסוקים בישיעה מא-ד, מד-ו, מו-ז, מו-ח, ז-יב] אני ראשון ואני אחרון". The Hebrew word "אמת" is composed of three letters. The first letter, "aleph," is the first letter of the aleph-beit and symbolizes that HKB"H is first and number one. The third letter, "tav," is the last letter of the aleph-beit and symbolizes that HKB"H is the last element of creation. The middle letter, "mem," is also the middle letter of the aleph-beit; it symbolizes that HKB"H rules the world in the present and He rules alone.

Regarding the claim that the letter "mem" is the middle letter of the aleph-beit, let us demonstrate. First, let us add the five final letters "מנצפך" in their appropriate places. Thus, there are thirteen letters preceding the "mem": "א, ב, ג, ד, ה, ו, ז, ח, ט, י, יא, יב, יג, יד, טו, טז, יז, יח, יט, כ, כא, כב, כג, כד, כה, כו, כז, כח, כט, ל". Hence, it is truly the middle letter of the aleph-beit.

In this manner, we can propose an explanation for the concept that HKB”H’s trademark is “Emes.” We have learned in the Mishnah (Avos 2, 4): “אל תדין את חברך עד שתגיע למקומו” —do not judge your fellow until you have been in his position. In his lessons on Pirkei Avos, the Sefat Emes says something amazing: “אל תדין את חברך עד שתגיע למקומו, כלומר ולמקום חברך אי אפשר להגיע—לעולם, כי לא כל דעות בני אדם שוות, ולכן אל תדין לחברך כלל” —in truth, you will never be in the position of your fellow man, because no two people’s thoughts and opinions are exactly alike; therefore, do not judge your fellow at all.

This is the reason HKB”H is the ultimate King and Judge of all mankind. Seeing as He created all human beings, He is familiar with their abilities and personality traits. Therefore, it is only appropriate for Him to judge them; for only He can relate to their actual position. This is the message conveyed by David HaMelech (Tehillim 33, 13): “משמים הביט ה' ראה את כל בני האדם, ממשמים—ממכון שבתו השגיח אל כל יושבי הארץ—from heaven Hashem looks down, He sees all mankind; from His place of dwelling He oversees all the inhabitants of earth. Then he explains: “היוצר—because He fashioned their hearts, He is able to comprehend their deeds. Similarly, he states elsewhere (ibid. 103, 14): “כי הוא ידע יצרנו זכור כי עפר אנחנו” —for He knew our nature; He is mindful that we are dust.

The Three Letters אמ”ת Correspond to Tzaddikim Intermediates and Reshaim

Following this line of reasoning, let us rise to the occasion and address the concept of: “חותמו של הקב”ה אמ”ת—HKB”H’s trademark is “Emes.” We know that Yisrael can be subdivided into three categories: Tzaddikim, Intermediates and Reshaim. For, we have learned in the Gemara (Berachot 61b): “צדיקים—יצר טוב שופטן... רשעים יצר רע שופטן... בינונים זה וזה שופטן—the tzaddikim are ruled by their yetzer tov . . . the reshaim are ruled by their yetzer ra . . . intermediates are ruled by both. In a similar vein, the Gemara teaches us (R.H. 16b): “אמר רבי יוחנן, שלשה ספרים נפתחים בראש השנה, אחד של רשעים גמורין, ואחד של צדיקים גמורין, ואחד של בינונים—Rabbi Yochanan said: Three books are opened on Rosh HaShanah—one for the total reshaim, one for the total reshaim, and one for the intermediate people.

Thus, we can suggest that this is the implication of the statement that HKB”H’s trademark is described by the three letters אמ”ת. For, HKB”H judges every individual Jew according to his merit and status. First of all, there are the tzaddikim

represented by the letter “aleph” of אמ”ת. Then there are the intermediates represented by the letter “mem” of אמ”ת. We conclude with the reshaim represented by the letter “tav” of אמ”ת. As for the remainder of Yisrael, they are represented by the other letters of the aleph-beit, spread out between the three letters of אמ”ת—each individual according to his spiritual level. Sometimes they are closer to the tzaddikim; sometimes they are closer to the intermediates; sometimes they are closer to the reshaim, chas v’shalom, G-d help us.

Based on this explanation, we can begin to comprehend the Gemara’s elucidation (Yevamot 121b) regarding the passuk (Tehillim 50, 3): “וסביבו נשערה מאד, מלמד שהקב”ה מודקדק—עם סביבו כחוט השערה” —and His surroundings are extremely turbulent” teaches us that HKB”H is exacting with those closest to Him, to the extent of a hairsbreadth. Due to their lofty, exemplary level, they resemble the letter “aleph” of אמ”ת; as such HKB”H demands that they serve Him commensurately. The intermediates are judged and treated like the letter “mem”—somewhere in between the Emes of the tzaddikim and the Emes of the reshaim.

The reshaim, on the other hand, are judged like the letter “tav” of אמ”ת. Even if their Emes is lacking, nevertheless, since HKB”H knows their yetzer—“כי הוא ידע יצרנו”—He relates to them accordingly; HKB”H is patient and tolerant with them, allowing them the opportunity to perform teshuvah, according to their individual capabilities. This is the implication of the Gemara’s statement (Kiddushin 49b): “המקדש את האשה... על מנת שאני צדיק, שמא הרהר תשובה בדעתו” —אפילו רשע גמור מקודשת, ומה הרהר תשובה בדעתו” —if a person betroths a woman . . . on the condition that “I am a tzaddik,” even if he is a total rasha, she is betrothed; for perhaps he contemplated thoughts of teshuvah. In the relative scheme of things, the rasha is on an extremely low spiritual level. Hence, the mere contemplation of teshuvah is a huge step for him and propels him to the status of a tzaddik.

The Midah of Emes Is the Middle Bar Connecting the Two Extremes

I went to great lengths studying a wonderful idea from the teachings of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai in the Zohar hakadosh (Bechukosai 187b): “אמר רבי שמעון, (שמות כו-כח) והבריה התיכון בתוך—הקרשים מבריה מן הקצה אל הקצה, דא הוא יעקב קדישא שלימא—Rabbi Shimon said: The passuk states: “The middle bar inside the planks shall extend from end to end”—this refers to the holy Yaakov. We find an amazing explanation of this teaching, with

practical significance for all of us, in the writings of the author of the Tanya in Likutei Amarim (Chapter 13). Yaakov's midah of Emes bridges from one extreme to the other; in other words, every Jew serves Hashem in keeping with his degree of Emes.

In this manner, he explains in his own unique way a proven fact regarding the religious service of intermediates: They are only inspired to love Hashem and fear Hashem when they are praying. Now, for tzaddikim, who serve Hashem with fear and love all of the time, this limited form of ahavah and yirah would not be considered service of "אמת"; because Emes (truth) implies that something endures forever, as it is written (Mishlei 12, 19): "שפת אמת תכון לעד"—**true speech will be established forever.** Yet, in the case of intermediates, whose fear and love—yirah and ahavah—only exist during tefilah this service is viewed as service of Emes; because they are viewed according to their spiritual level and status.

In fact, this wonderful insight from the author of the Tanya, regarding the bridging aspect of the trademark of Emes, applies to each and every generation. The earlier generations, composed of complete tzaddikim, can be compared to the letter "aleph" of "אמת"; the middle generations can be compared to the letter "mem"; the later generations, living during the footsteps of the Mashiach, can be compared to the letter "tav." Rabbi Chaim Vital expresses this phenomenon in Sha'ar HaGilgulim in the name of his teacher, the great Arizal, as follows:

"דע לך, כי אין גדולת הנפש תלויה כפי מעשה האדם, רק כפי הזמן והדור ההוא, כי מעשה קטן מאד בדור הזה שקול ככמה מצוות גדולות שבדורות אחרים, כי בדורות אלו הקליפה גוברת מאד מאד לאין קץ, מה שאין כן בדורות ראשונים."

Know that the greatness of a soul (being) is not related to man's actions, but rather to the time and generation in which he lives. For instance, a minor deed in our generation is valued as much as several significant mitzvot in previous generations. Because in our generations, the klipah is extremely powerful; it was not so in earlier generations.

HKB"H Cast Emes Down to Earth to Judge Man Accordingly

It is with great joy that we can now shed some light on our sages' enigmatic words. When HKB"H sought the counsel of the malachim regarding the creation of man, Emes, HKB"H's trademark, said emphatically: "אל יברא שכולו שקרים." Emes opposed the creation of man due to the fact that he is a consummate liar. Let us suggest an explanation. The

divine trademark of Emes exists and applies to all creatures in the universe. So, in the heavenly realm, surrounded by the ministering angels, who lack a yetzer hara, Emes took the form of the letter "aleph." At that level of Emes, HKB"H is exacting to the degree of a hairsbreadth. From that perspective, Emes's opinion makes perfect sense. Held to those standards, man should not have been created; for he is all lies—the opposite of Emes.

Yet, we learned a fundamental principle in the Mishnah: "**Do not judge your fellow until you walk in his shoes.**" Therefore, HKB"H reacted cleverly—as the Midrash describes--by taking Emes and casting him down to earth. HKB"H wanted Emes to see things from man's perspective down on earth, as affected and colored by the yetzer hara. Thus, the aspect of the "tav" of "אמת" was revealed. For, this is the hidden meaning of HKB"H's trademark of "אמת", which extends from one extreme to the other, encompassing even the reshaim, who resemble the letter "tav." Seeing mankind in that light, with all of its difficult trials and tribulations, Emes would realize that in the final analysis man deserved to be created. For, it is his sacred task to wage a war to the bitter end against the relentless yetzer hara. Even if he fails, chas v'shalom, and falls prey to the yetzer, he can make amends through teshuvah.

We can now begin to make sense of what we learned in the Gemara above: "תורה דכתיב בה אמת... אין הקב"ה עושה לפנים משורת הדין, דין דלא כתיב ביה אמת, הקב"ה עושה לפנים משורת הדין"—from the perspective of Torah, the epitome of Emes, HKB"H does not exceed the boundaries of strict, absolute judgment; however, from the perspective of "din," which is not associated in Scriptures with Emes, HKB"H does exceed the boundaries of absolute justice and demonstrates leniency. Let us apply what we have just learned. When HKB"H studies Torah in the heavens, in His yeshivah, He learns with the malachim; the Gemara (B.M. 86a) refers to this as "כמתיתבא דרקייעא"—**in the heavenly yeshivah.** Seeing as the Torah is called "אמת"—and in the heavens Emes is associated with absolute "din," reflecting the "aleph" of "אמת"—therefore, when HKB"H studies Torah during the first three hours of the day, He does not act outside the dictates of "din."

On the other hand, during the second three-hour period, when HKB"H sits in judgment of all mankind, He takes into account the conditions and ordeals of Olam HaZeh and follows the dictum of: "אל תדין את חברך עד שתגיע למקומו"—"**Do not judge**

your fellow until you walk in his shoes.” Hence, He does precisely what He did when man was created. In a sense, He casts Emes down to earth and judges mankind accordingly—a reflection of the “tav” of “אמת”. As the Gemara describes: “כיון שרואה שנתחייב עולם כלייה, עומד מכסא הדין ויושב על כסא רחמים”—rather than exterminating all of creation, he abandons the dictates of “din” and exhibits “rachamim”—divine mercy; in a word, He shows leniency.

Thus, we can reconcile the contradiction we encountered regarding the nature of Emes: Is it “din” or is it “rachamim”? As explained, Emes is the midah of Yaakov; it is “tiferes”—a combination and blend of “chesed” and “din.” This is the deeper significance of the name “אמת”—HKB”H’s trademark. With this midah, HKB”H judges every individual according to his appropriate spiritual level and status. Someone worthy of “chesed,” HKB”H judges with the aspect of “chesed” contained within “tiferes”; in such a case, Emes reflects pure “chesed.” Conversely, someone worthy of punishment, chas v’shalom, HKB”H judges with the aspect of “din” contained within “tiferes”; in such a case, Emes reflects absolute “din.”

Yaakov Took the Letter “Vav” from Eliyahu so that He Would Hasten the Geulah with Rachamim

We have now been enlightened! We can better comprehend Yaakov Avinu’s exalted act. He took the letter “vav” from Eliyahu’s name as collateral that he would come and herald the complete geulah at the end of days. As the Shem MiShmuel explained, Yaakov took the letter of Emes from Eliyahu, so that he would not redeem Yisrael with the midah of Emes—which reflects “din”—but rather with the midah of “rachamim.”

Based on what we have discussed, let us add an intriguing point. Eliyahu HaNavi was given the title of “אמת”. Due to his elevated status, he was counted among the tzaddikim that are judged with the “aleph” of “אמת”. Due to his extreme righteousness, He zealously defended the glory of Hashem and denounced Yisrael, as it is written (Melachim I 19, 10): “וַיֹּאמֶר קָנָא קִנְיָתִי לֵה’ אֱלֹקֵי צְבָאוֹת כִּי עֲזָבוּ בְרִיתְךָ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל”—**he said, “I**

have acted with great zeal for Hashem, G-d of Legions, for Bnei Yisrael have forsaken Your covenant.” HKB”H took issue with Eliyahu for condemning Yisrael and decreed that he should attend every Brit Milah; this is explained in Pirkei D’Rabbi Eliezer (Chapter 29).

Therefore, Yaakov feared that Eliyahu might come and herald the geulah with his particular attribute of Emes—reflecting the aspect of “din” incorporated within the midah of “tiferes.” In other words, he would redeem them only if they served Hashem with his elevated level of Emes, characterized by the letter “aleph.”

Therefore, Yaakov cleverly took the letter “vav”—the letter of Emes—as collateral; he added it to his own name, producing Yaakov spelled fully with a “vav”—“יעקוב”—in keeping with the passuk: “תַּתֵּן אֶמֶת לַיַּעֲקֹב”—**grant “Emes” to Yaakov.** He wanted to ensure that Yisrael would be judged according to the Emes of Yaakov. When Yaakov blessed the shevatim, he blessed them individually, each according to his own merit and level of Emes. Thus, with regards to the berachot bestowed upon the twelve shevatim before Yaakov’s death, it states (Bereishit 49, 28): “כֹּל אֱלֹהֵי שְׁבֹטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר, וְזֹאת אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר לָהֶם אֲבֵיהֶם, וַיְבָרֶךְ אוֹתָם אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר כָּבְרַכְתּוּ בְּרַךְ אוֹתָם”—**all these are the shevatim of Yisrael, twelve, and this is what their father spoke to them and he blessed them; each according to his blessing, he blessed them.**

At this point, how nice it is to have gained a better understanding of the words of the Maharal. He explained that Yaakov took the letter “vav” from Eliyahu’s name five times in order to create a virtual handshake. We explained that he intended to do so as is customary with the right hand; so that Eliyahu would redeem Yisrael with the midah of “chesed” and not with the midah of “din”—which is associated with the left hand. We explained that Yaakov’s midah of chesed is part of the midah of “tiferes”—which encompasses both “chesed” and “din.” Accordingly, Yaakov shook Eliyahu’s right hand, so that he would come to herald the geulah from the perspective of chesed—the right hand contained within the midah of “tiferes”—swiftly, in our times. Amen.

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