



Bechukosai - The Connecting Column: A Tribute to the Ramchal

Wrong Place & Reverse Order

“And I will remember my covenant with Yaakov and **also** my covenant with Yitzchak and **also** my covenant with Avraham and the land (of Israel) I will remember” (26:42). Why not simply write:... and the covenant of Yitzchak and the Covenant of Avraham? Why the two extra **“also”**? Why are the Avos mentioned in the reverse order of chronology? This Pasuk is talking about being “remembered”, which is a message of consolation, is in the middle of the **“Tochacha”**- the series of curses as the next Pasuk says: “And the land will be empty from them and will make up all the shmitas that were missed as it is desolate from them and they will serve their sentence for their sins for they have spurned my laws...” why is “remembering of the covenant” mentioned while we're still in the middle of the curses? It should have been left for the end with the other Pesukim of consolation, hope, and promises of redemption.

Stolen “Vav”?!

Rashi points out that the name Yaakov in the Pasuk is spelled “full” with a letter **“Vav”**. Rashi explains based on Chazal that in five places in we will find Yaakov spelled “full” with a letter **“Vav”** and in five places we will find “Eliyahu” spelled missing the letter **“Vav”**. Chazal say that Yaakov confiscated these **“Vav”**s from Eliyahu and kept them as collateral and will only return them when Eliyahu comes to announce and

bring about the redemption. What is the connection between Yaakov and Eliyahu and what is special about the letter **“Vav”** that makes it the “collateral” to force Eliyahu to announce and bring about the redemption?

“Keri” & Sevens

A theme that comes up repeatedly is that we deepen our sinning and guilt by “going with Hashem **b’Keri**” which Rashi interprets as “happenstance” - We are not committed and consistent in our service of Hashem and Hashem responds in “a fury of **Keri**” which also is to be **punished in a seven-fold way** as is mentioned explicitly in the Pasuk and explained by Rashi. **Why is it such a severe crime that we get hit in a seven-fold way?** More basically, what does it mean from Hashem’s side of things that He will punish us in a “fury of **Keri**”? If **“Keri”** means inconsistent, how does that translate into being punished severely in a **“seven-fold”** way? Rashi at the very beginning of sefer Vayikra says that **“Keri” also means “Tuma”**- impurity and we have learned in course of sefer Vayikra that **impurity goes in “sevens”**: 7 days of “Niddah”, 7 days of when giving birth, 7 days of “Zav”, the 7 days we lock up the “Metzora”, the 7 days of someone who came in contact with the corpse, etc. Most forms of “Tuma” are in multiples of 7 which runs parallel to being “punished seven- fold” for serving Hashem **“b’Keri”**- inconsistently and by happenstance. What is

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the connection? Is there a connection to the Omer which is 7 weeks?

Blessings & Curses : Order & Chaos

As is well known, and we've discussed this many times in this forum, **we live in a world of sevens**. The prime example being the 7 days of the week. **The seven attributes that we praise Hashem with are the forces from which the physical realm is weaved: "For you Hashem is the 1) Gedula (Chesed) 2) the Gevura 3) the Tiferes 4) the Netzach 5) the Hod 6) for all that is in heaven and earth 7) For you Hashem is the Kingdom...".** As we know from the supplementary prayer at the end of Sefiras Ha'Omer the seven weeks of the Omer correspond to the seven forces **which are also represented by the six edges of our three-dimensional world and the center**. These components can be in a harmonious integration and that situation is called "blessing", "prosperity", "peace", "health" etc. When these forces work together in perfect harmony nothing is lacking because they supplement each other and enhance each other and that is "blessing" and all its many forms. What is to be "cursed"? What is the cause of famine, poverty, sickness, and all other negative situations that we would call "cursed"? **"Matter can neither be created nor destroyed"**. When there is a famine it's not that there is less water on the globe, but rather the water of the ocean that become the clouds are simply going to the wrong places and raining there instead of over the fields or replenishing water supplies. If the economy is not doing well it's not that there are less resources on Earth, it's that the resources are not being properly harnessed and traded. The difference between war and peace is simply whether the different nations are staying within their boundaries and cooperating with each other or breaking out of their boundaries and seeking to conquer each other. Sickness and all forms of decline of health is that the balance of the body has been disrupted. **Two sum it up: "blessing" is when all the pieces of reality are assembled and configured correctly. "Curse" is when the components of reality are in chaos and not working together.** During the times of **"Golus"** - our being **dispersed** there isn't world peace, there isn't prosperity, and we have all the other problems that are enumerated in this week's parsha, and **NOT by coincidence! "Golus" is the cause for all things to go wrong.** The dispersal of the Jewish people causes a cosmic dispersal and therefore

"nothing goes right". Since there are seven pieces of reality that need to be properly assembled and configured, **when things go wrong it is a 7-fold problem.**

"Tuma" & Sevens

With this we could understand the "measure for measure" that if we are disconnected from Hashem and only serve Him by happenstance, inconsistently, and without commitment which is **"Keri"**, that **disconnection is thrown right back to us in a "fury of Keri"** and the 7 forces of nature will also be disconnected and not committed to working together which brings a **sevenfold chaos because each one of the seven forces can be lethal if not properly harnessed**. With this we understand how **"Keri"** is also a synonym for **"Tuma"**. We have mentioned many times in the name of **my Rebbe Maran HaGaon HaRav Moshe Shapira ZT"L** that **"Tuma" means sealed off**. Free passage to go anywhere including the Temple mount and to have relations is only for the pure. The **"Tameh"** is isolated, and that's why **"Tuma" is in sevens because there is blockage and isolation I.E. disconnection between the 7 forces of nature.**

The Central Hubs of the Puzzle

The 7 forces fit together like the pieces of the of a puzzle, but not all the pieces are equal. There are some that are **Central hubs** that hold most of the pieces together. The attribute of "Tiferes", the attribute of Yaakov Avinu, is an inclusive attribute that holds together and reconciles "Chesed"-kindness with "Gevura"- might and because of its inclusiveness that is why Yaakov got the national name of Yisroel that retroactively is inclusive of Yitzchak and Avraham also (see "Even Shesiya" on parshas "Vayetze" 5779). Being in the center has many advantages among which is to be the most protected and inaccessible to invaders, as opposed to positions on the edge which vulnerable to outsiders and can easily be broken off from the main body. This is the secret that Yaakov's children were all perfect Jews, none of them left the fold, because he's in a wholesome Central position. As opposed to Yitzchak who had Eisov and Avraham who had Yishmael. With this the **Ramchal** explains the pasuk "and I'll remember my covenant with **Yaakov...**" The main connection is with Yaakov because he is wholesome and he is Central and does not deviate to the right or to the left "and **also...Yitzchak...**" despite

the fact that he had Eisov, nonetheless Yitzchak's merits go exclusively to the Jewish people by virtue of his connection to Yaakov who is inclusive of all the Jewish people, those who come after him **and even those who come before him** and for that reason "...and also.... Avraham..." despite the fact that he had Yishmael, the "**real Avraham**" is incorporated in "Yisroel" which reveals itself with Yaakov. Yaakov is the anchor upon which the merit of Yitzchak and Avraham could also add itself to, despite the fact that they had non-Jewish progeny as well.

"Vav"

This is the secret behind what we are taught that Yaakov represents the "**Vav**" in the Divine name. "**Vav**" grammatically is a connector (like the word "and") and it is a "**line**" that connects two points, and the word "**Vav**" actually means connector. **It has a numerical value of six because it is the central hub that holds six out of the seven components of natural reality together.** If you'd want to spell out the word "**Vav**" it would be spelled with two letters "**Vav**". This is the special relationship between Yaakov and Yosef. Rashi tells us in Parshas Vayeshev that Yosef resembled his father Yaakov and had a parallel life to him. Yosef's function was to be a unifier of the 12 tribes. Yaakov might be the center per se, or in the words of the Zohar the "**big Vav**". Yosef had the function of extending that unifying factor amongst the 12 tribes and all later generations that come from Yaakov, and hence is referred to as the "**small Vav**" meaning the hidden "**Vav**" that is present when we pronounce the word "**Vav**".

Yosef & "Vav"

Yosef's extends the unity of Yaakov to the later generations and to challenges that come further down the timeline. He also has to make the final connection to the 7th attribute of "**Malchus**" -the Kingdom of Hashem, represented by Dovid HaMelech. "**Malchus**" is the vessel that receives everything as Chazal say: "**all your deeds** should be for the sake of **the Name of Heaven**" which is for the sake of Hashem's Kingdom. That is the secret behind what we find in the pasuk that the sixth attribute is called: "**all that is in Heaven and Earth**" and that is **Yosef who's the final gatherer of all the resources before him.** Yosef has to give it all to the vessel that receives all, which is the focal point for all we do: **Hashem's Kingdom.** That's the secret

why "Kingdom" is mentioned in its own phrase: **it is the vessel that receives all. The first six are efforts and actions and achievements the 7th is the goal it's all directed at.** Yosef has to make that final connection and that is the secret of "**Bris Milah**" that Yosef worked so hard to maintain its sanctity and not defile it with the wife of Potiphar [*The "efforts" have to be focused at the "Name of Heaven" which is "Malchus" which is represented by the Jewish woman*]. Giving "efforts" to the gentiles or having them diffused or wasted is called "**Tumas Keri**" – **the opposite of the final CONNECTION that closes the circuit.** By no coincidence Yosef passed his test **because "he saw the face of Yaakov in the window"** meaning he drew strength from the big "**Vav**" and stayed connected.

Connection within Dispersion

The supreme test that Yosef faced while in the depth of Egypt, isolated from his family, yet he "**held it together**" - he kept the faith and stayed within the fold. This set the precedent that when the Jews went to Egypt a short while later and stayed there for centuries they did not assimilate, and they did not lose their faith. When Moshe announced the redemption they immediately believed. It was all in the Merit of the test that Yosef passed in his exile that gave us the strength to survive that exile. With this the **Ramchal** explains why this pasuk of "remembering the covenant of Yaakov....etc." is still in the middle of the "**Tochacha**": **it represents how we have a connection even within the dispersion.** The Jewish people will never totally lose their connection, in the depth of their being they'll always remain connected and **that is our insurance policy that we will survive the dispersion and make it out again.**

Eliyahu & "Vav"

Eliyahu HaNavi serves a parallel function to Yosef. **He is the the angel that comes to every "Bris Milah"** and **his function is to restore connections.** Whether he will identify who are the right for owners of objects that have to "rest until Eliyahu comes". He will resolve doubts in Halacha- "**Taiku**" and he will reveal to us which tribes we descend from. **Most importantly he will announce the redemption where we get reconnected with each other and reconnected with the land and the kingdom of the house of David.** That is the secret that he has "**Vav**" in his name - **that little "Vav" that Yosef represents.** With this the **Ramchal**

explains the Chazal that Yaakov who is the source of unity took back the little **"Vav"** that is shared by Yosef and Eliyahu and hold it as collateral. During the time of **"Golus"** that little **"Vav"** is not performing its function of holding everything together. At the time of the redemption it will be given back to Eliyahu to do the function of pulling all the pieces together and restoring all the connections that were lost and making the final connection between us and the kingdom of heaven represented by Moshiach ben Dovid.

Sefiras Ha'Omer & the Lag B'Omer threshold

During the 7 weeks of the Sefira we are counting and **adding up figures**. We don't say today is the 5th day of the Omer but rather "today are 5 days of the Omer". When we reach "weeks" we start adding up how many weeks there are. **During the omer we are assembling the details which are the individual days together adding them up to create the principles called "weeks" and then adding the weeks together to make a complete closed system. when you have all seven weeks in place it's called that all reality has been united to a perfect hermetically sealed vessel that is capable to receive Torah.** This is the secret of what Chazal say: **"Hashem did not find any vessel that holds blessing other than peace"** We need peace between all the components of reality and that makes the vessel that holds the ultimate blessing of the Torah. The Great threshold that we crossed at Lag B'Omer is that following Lag B'Omer every single day will either have **"Yesod"** (6th attribute -**"Vav"**) which is inclusive of all the active forces or **"Malchus"** which is the vessel that receives all. **Following Lag B'Omer we are no longer in distinct details, we are in these attributes that are all inclusive hubs.** We are tapping into that function of theirs because **that is the whole goal of the Omer - to pull the pieces together!** With this we could understand why after Lag B'Omer the Talmidim of Rebbe Akiva no longer fight but they are in the second phase of **"not moving from there until they become loving of each other"** and this is the secret that the contribution of the Talmidim of Rebbe Akiva that was to **compile books** that make up all the fundamental literature of Torah she'baal peh that Halacha is based on. This phase of the Omer is to tap into the inclusive power of the final two attributes of the seven which are the energies of the final two weeks.

The Ramchal

We are writing this on Erev Shabbos Parshas Bechukosai the 26th of Iyar which is the attribute of **"Yesod she'bYesod"**. This sixth attribute represented by the letter **"Vav"** is squared by itself and this day is the Yahrtzeit of the **Ramchal**. He had a fascinating life left an amazing legacy. One facet of the legacy that he left us was **his unique talent to make principles out of details and then to assemble those principles into an essential system.** This was his educational philosophy of how to make sense and unity out of details that are constantly subdividing, flying in all different directions out of control. He was able to 'zero in' on the central system in a manner of making principles and arranging them in an essential system, **providing a grasp on the infinite details. This is why his works are amazingly densely packed with information and yet so concise and so easy to retain.** This is so parallel to making weeks out of days and then assembling those principles together like the way we assemble the weeks to each other to create a complete vessel for the Torah. Apropos to his life's mission, he completed his short (40) but amazingly productive life on **"Yesod She'bYesod"**. Zechuso Yagen Aleinu.

