

Decoding Yaakov's Blessings to his Sons

Source 1: Bereishit Ch. 48

48: 13 Joseph then took the two boys. He placed Ephraim to his right (to Israel's left), and Manasseh to his left (to Israel's right). He then came close to [his father]. 48: 14 Israel

reached out with his right hand and placed it on Ephraim's head [even though] he was the younger son. He [placed] his left hand on Manasseh's head. He deliberately crossed his hands, even though Manasseh was the firstborn. 48: 15

[Jacob] gave Joseph a blessing. He said, 'The God before whom my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, walked, is the God who has been my Shepherd from as far back as I can remember until this day,

48: 16 [sending] an angel to deliver me from all evil. May He bless the lads, and let them carry my name, along with the names of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac. May they increase in the land like fish'. 48: 17 When Joseph saw that his father had placed his right hand on Ephraim's head, he was displeased. He tried to lift his father's hand from Ephraim's head and place it on Manasseh's. 48: 18 'That's not the way it should be done, Father,' said Joseph. 'The other one is the first-born. Place your right hand on his head'. 48: 19

His father refused and said, 'I know, my son, I know. [The older one] will also become a nation. He too will attain greatness. But his younger brother will become even greater, and his descendants will become full-fledged nations'. 48: 20 On that day [Jacob] blessed them. He said, '[In time to come] Israel will use you as a blessing. They will say, 'May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.' ' He [deliberately] put Ephraim before Manasseh.

(יג) וַיִּקַּח יוֹסֵף אֶת־שְׁנֵיהֶם אֶת־אֶפְרַיִם בְּיַמֵּינוּ מִשְּׂמָאל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת־מְנַשֶּׁה בְּשְׂמָאלוֹ מִיְמִין יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּגֶשׁ אֵלָיו:

(יד) וַיִּשְׁלַח יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־יָמֵינוּ וַיִּשֶׁת׀ עַל־רֹאשׁ אֶפְרַיִם וְהוּא הַצָּעִיר וְאֶת־שְׂמָאלוֹ עַל־רֹאשׁ מְנַשֶּׁה שְׂכַל אֶת־יָדָיו

כִּי מְנַשֶּׁה הַבְּכוֹר: (טו) וַיִּבְרָךְ אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר הִתְהַלְכִי אֲבֹתַי לְפָנָיו אַבְרָהָם וַיְצַחֵק הָאֱלֹהִים הָרַעָה אֶתִּי מֵעוֹדִי עַד־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: (טז)

הַמַּלְאָךְ הַגָּאֵל אֶתִּי מִכָּל־רָע וַיְבָרֵךְ אֶת־הַנְּעָרִים וַיִּקְרָא בָהֶם שְׁמֵי וְשֵׁם אֲבֹתַי אַבְרָהָם וַיְצַחֵק וַיִּדְגּוּ לָרֹב בְּקָרֶב הָאָרֶץ: (יז) וַיִּרְא יוֹסֵף כִּי־יָשִׁית אָבִיו יָדֵי־מֵינוּ עַל־רֹאשׁ אֶפְרַיִם וַיִּרַע בְּעֵינָיו וַיִּתְמַךְ יַד־אָבִיו לְהַסִּיר אֹתָהּ מֵעַל רֹאשׁ־אֶפְרַיִם עַל־רֹאשׁ מְנַשֶּׁה: (יח)

וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל־אָבִיו לֹא־כֵן אָבִי כִּי־זֶה הַבְּכוֹר שִׁים יְמִינְךָ עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ: (יט) וַיִּמָּאֵן אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר יָדְעָתִי בְנִי יָדְעָתִי גַם־הוּא יִהְיֶה־לָּעַם וְגַם־הוּא יִגְדֹּל וְאוּלָם אַחִיו הַקָּטָן יִגְדֹּל מִמֶּנּוּ וְזָרְעוֹ יִהְיֶה מְלֹא־הַגּוֹיִם: (כ) וַיִּבְרַכֶם בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר בָּךְ וַיְבָרֵךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר יִשְׁמַךְ אֱלֹהִים כָּאֶפְרַיִם וְכַמְנַשֶּׁה וַיִּשֶׁם אֶת־אֶפְרַיִם לְפָנֵי מְנַשֶּׁה:

Source 2 Commentary of the Netziv, Ha'amek Davar on Bereishit 48

He guided his hands for Menashe was the firstborn. It is extra for we known from the parsha that Menashe was the firstborn. But this has depth and intension for truthfully, Yaakov shouldn't have guided (crossed) his hands, rather switched the positions of the boys. But since Menashe was the firstborn, he intended that Menashe should stand by Yaakov's right leg and Efrayim by his left leg. Only his hands did he guide that they should be crossed. The reason is that even though Yaakov put Efrayim before Menashe and therefore in the wilderness he was the head of his flag group (which Menashe was also a part of) still, in the counting of Parshas Pinchas, it was the opposite. Not only that, but even in the counting of Parshas Bamidbar it is written by all the (other) flags "and those that camp upon him" as opposed to with Menashe it is written, "and upon him the tribe of Menashe." All this comes to teach us that Efrayim only came before Menashe in matters of spirituality, that which is higher than the natural happenings of the world. In matters of the world, however, Menashe came before Efrayim. Therefore in the first counting at Mt. Chorev, where the Divine presence was upon their heads and the conduct was beyond nature, Efrayim came first. But in the counting in the Plains of Moav, when they were entering the Land, which was basically in a natural way (as is explained later in Bamidbar and Devarim) therefore Menashe came first. (And check out what I write in Bamidbar regarding the change of "and upon him the tribe of Menashe." The occurred because with regards to natural occurrences, the advantage of the firstborn is very impactful as I wrote earlier (27:19). Now, the hand services the head and the mind and the foot services the goings of the body according to its nature. That's why the Sages said in their way: The son is the foot of the father. Meaning: the natural mannerisms of the father that goes on its own without thought and wisdom. Therefore, Jacob desired that Menashe stand by his right leg and guided his hands so that Efrayim would be on his right hand. See more in Verse 20. That is why the verse specified "because Menashe was the firstborn."

שכל את ידיו כי מנשה הבכור . הוא מיותר. שהרי ידענו מענין הפרשה כי מנשה הבכור. אבל יש בזה עומק וכונה. דבאמת לא הי' ליעקב לשכל את ידיו. אלא להפוך את מעמד הבנים. אבל באשר מנשה הבכור מש"ה הי' מכוין שיעמוד מנשה לרגל הימני של יעקב ואפרים לרגל השמאל ורק את ידיו שכל שיהי' להיפך. וטעמו ש"ד שאע"ג שהקדים יעקב את אפרים לפני מנשה ומש"ה הי' במדבר ראש הדגל מכ"מ בפקודי דפי' פינחס הי' להיפך. ולא עוד אלא אפי' בפקודי דפי' במדבר כתוב בכל הדגלים והחונים עליו משא"כ במנשה כתיב ועליו מטה מנשה. כ"ז בא ללמדנו שלא הי' אפרים קודם למנשה אלא בענינים רוחניים מה שלמעלה מהליכות עולם הטבע. אבל בהליכות עולם הי' מנשה קודם וגדול מאפרים. מש"ה במנין הראשון בהר חורב שהי' שכינת עולם על ראשם וכל ההנהגה הית' למעלה מה"ט הי' אפרים קודם. אבל בפקודי דערבות מואב בכניסתם לארץ שהי' כמעט בהליכות הטבע כמבואר להלן ובסי' במדבר ודברים. מש"ה הי' מנשה קודם ועי' מש"כ בסי' במדבר בשנוי ועליו מטה מנשה. וזה הגיע משום דבהליכות הטבע מעלת הבכורה מסוגלת הרבה כמש"כ לעיל כ"ז י"ט. והנה היד משמשת את הראש והדעת. והרגל משמשת הליכות הגוף לפי טבעו ומש"ה אמרו חז"ל במליצתם ברא כרעא דאבוה. פי' הרגל טבע אביו שמהלך מעצמו בלי מחשבה ושכל. מש"ה רצה יעקב אשר מנשה יעמוד לרגלו הימנית. ושכל את ידיו להיות אפרים אך לידו הימנית. וע"ע בסמוך מקרא כי. וזהו שפי' הכתוב הטעם כי מנשה הבכור :

Source 3a): Rav Mordechai Willig, *Priority and Innovation*

Indeed, the little we know about the lives of Efraim and Menashe supports the description of their respective strengths. Efraim was often in Yaakov's presence learning Torah (Rashi, 1), whereas Menashe served as the official interpreter in Yosef's palace (Rashi 42:43).

When Yaakov defended his actions, he told Yosef (48:19), "I know that the elder will be great, but the younger will be even greater". *Rashi explains that this referred to the respective descendants of Menashe and Efraim, namely Gidon and Yehoshua. The Netziv added that Gidon was a warrior, succeeding in worldly pursuits, whereas Yehoshua was primarily a Torah scholar and teacher, excelling in spiritual matters.*

A fundamental difference between the worldly and spiritual realms is reflected in these biblical personalities. **To succeed in worldly affairs - diplomatic, military, technological, and financial - one must always respond to changing realities.** Innovation is a prerequisite for overcoming new challenges in physical matters. New strategies, weapons, technologies, and careers are appropriate, and necessary, in order to succeed.

By contrast, spiritual accomplishment demands fealty to ancient tradition. Both in study and practice, the Torah Jew is guided by the law given by Hashem at Sinai thousands of years ago. Even novel interpretations are attempts to understand that revelation, and were initially given at Sinai.

Gidon overcame a more powerful army by devising a new strategy. In making a great noise by sounding *shofars* and breaking jugs, his small force fooled the enemy into flight and they were defeated (Shoftim 7:19-22). Wars must be fought with new weapons and strategies to confound the foe. This individual innovation was referred to as "this strength of yours" which Hashem gave Gidon to save *Am Yisroel*(6:14).

Yehoshua was the loyal disciple of Moshe, the one to whom Moshe transmitted the Torah he had received at Sinai. Moshe's face was like the sun, and Yehoshua's like the moon (Baba Basra, 75a). **Yehoshua's goal was to reflect the radiance of his master Moshe, as the moon reflects the light of the sun. He was chosen for spiritual leadership because of his dedication to his *rebbe* and tradition, and his aversion to innovation in the study and practice of Torah.**

Note to understand the remainder of Rav Willig's comments:

3b) Bereishit Ch. 41

(ג) וּלְיוֹסֵף יָלֵד שְׁנֵי בָנִים בְּטָרַם תָּבוֹא שְׁנַת הָרָעָב אֲשֶׁר יִלְדֶּה-לוֹ אֲסֵנַת בַּת-פּוֹטִי פְּרַע כְּהֵן אֹן: (נא) וַיִּקְרָא יוֹסֵף אֶת-שֵׁם הַבְּכוֹר מְנַשֶּׁה כִּי-נִשְׁכַּח אֱלֹהִים אֶת-כָּל-עֲמָלִי וְאֶת כָּל-בַּיִת אָבִי: (נב) וְאֶת שֵׁם הַשֵּׁנִי קָרָא אֶפְרָיִם כִּי-הִפְרִנִי אֱלֹהִים בְּאֶרֶץ עֲנִי:

- 41:50** Joseph had two sons before the famine years came, borne to him by Asenath, daughter of Poti Phera, priest of On.
- 41:51** Joseph named the first-born Manasseh (*Me-nasheh*) - 'because God has made me forget (*nasheh*) all my troubles - and even my father's house.'
- 41:52** He named his second son Ephraim - 'Because God has made me fruitful (*p'ri*) in the land of my suffering.'

These ideas resonate not only in the personalities of the great descendants of these shvatim, but in the very name of their forebears as well. **The name Menashe is based on "nashani" (41:51), the root of which means to forget (Rashi 32:33), or to move away. In the worldly area in which Menashe excelled, one must forget old ideas and move to deal with new realities.**

The name Efraim comes from "hifrani" (41:52), which means He has made me fruitful. Just as a fruit is a replica of the previous ones grown on that tree, so does spiritual greatness and leadership require preserving the immortal tradition of previous generations.

Source 4a: Bereishit Ch. 49 with commentary of Rav Hirsch

49:1 Jacob called for his sons. [When they came,] he said, 'Come together, and I will tell you what will happen in the course of time.
49:2 Come and listen, sons of Jacob; listen to your father Israel.

(א) וַיִּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב אֶל-בָּנָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הֲאִסְפוּ וְאִגִּידָה לָכֶם אֶת אֲשֶׁר-יִקְרָא אֶתְכֶם בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים:
(ב) הִקְבְּצוּ וּשְׁמְעוּ בְנֵי יַעֲקֹב וּשְׁמְעוּ אֶל-יִשְׂרָאֵל אָבִיכֶם:

הקבצו ושמעו! these two words of the dying father carry the whole of Jewish history up to אחרית הימים. Materially you are בני יעקב, a powerless minority. But because you are such a powerless minority, הקבצו, stick together, do not let yourselves fall apart, your strength lies in קבוץ, in unity; - **שמעו בני יעקב: only through one thing can the materially weakest minority win the victory from the strongest majority, it is the spirit, it is שמעו, it is the devotion to the spiritual, therefore: שמעו בני יעקב! have an ear, have a sense of the spiritual, "thirst" for the spiritual,** as the word is called in its depths (שמע is the spiritual (צמא), draws, likes to drink spirit! This is the will of our father Jacob. "Unity and spirit" in this he recognizes the strength and life of his children, and **"if the thirst for spirit awakens in you, have no other thirst than the traditions of your father Israel, ושמעו ואל ישראל אביכם** The drink from the Jewish fountain of the spirit and peaceful cohesion is the oldest legacy of our dying father and that calls to us the latest prophetic word: (Zechariah 8: 19) והאמת והשלום אהבו. Rav Hirsch on Genesis 49: 3. **הקבצו, האספו, were the first thoughts that filled Jacob when he saw his sons about his death bed.** The uniting with one another and the keen interest in everything spiritual was initially the legacy for everyone. But if such a totality, consisting of so different elements, is to form an inner and outer unity, it needs guidance; Jacob is looking for this leading point and examines his sons for this purpose. Most naturally this position would have been given to the firstborn. So he turns to Reuben first.

הקבצו ושמעו! על שתי מלים אלה של אבינו הנוטה למות, עומדת כל ההיסטוריה היהודית עד לאחרית הימים. מבחינה חומרית הרי אתם בני יעקב, מיעוט חסר אונים. אך דוקא מפני שאתם מיעוט חסר אונים, - "הקבצו", היו מאוחדים, התגבשו לעם אחד, אל תתפוררו, כוחכם באחדות, ב"קבוץ"; ועוד: **שמעו בני יעקב - רק כך יוכלו גם המעטים החלשים לנחול ניצחון על הרבים הגיבורים. רק בכוח הרוח וה"שמיעה", בכוח ההתמסרות לערכי הרוח, כעומק הוראת מלה זו - "שמע" הוא ה"צמא" הרוחני - שאבו, שתו ברצון ממעייני הרוח! הנה זו צוואת יעקב אבינו. "אחדות ורוח", באלה הוא רואה את כוח בניו וחייהם. ועוד: משיתעורר בכם הצמאון לערכי הרוח, אל תהיו צמאים אלא למסורת ישראל אביכם: "ושמעו אל ישראל אביכם!" השתיה ממעייני הרוח היהודית ורגש האחדות והליכוד, אלה הם דברי הצוואה של יעקב; וכך תזהירונו עוד הנבואה האחרונה: "והאמת והשלום אהבו" (זכריה ח, יט).**

(ג) **"האספו", "הקבצו", אלה היו המחשבות הראשונות, שמילאו את רוח יעקב למראה בניו סביב מיטתו.** אחדות וליכוד והתענינות ערה לכל ערך רוחני, אלה דברי הצוואה שהופנו בראשונה אל כולם. אולם ציבור המורכב מיסודות כה שונים זה מזה, לא יוכל להתאחד כלפי פנים וכלפי חוץ, אלא אם כן יש בראשו הנהגה. עתה מבקש יעקב את הראוי למנהיגות, ולשם כך הוא סוקר את בניו. מטבע הדברים יאה מעמד זה לבכור, ומשום כך הוא פונה אל ראובן תחלה:

4b) Rav S.R. Hirsch: The Father of Neo-Orthodoxy Hirsch's Philosophy of Judaism: *Torah im Derekh Eretz*

The statement in Ethics of the Fathers (2:2) of Rabbi Gamaliel III: "Torah is good together with *derekh eretz*" formed the basis of Hirsch's understanding of Judaism for modern Jews. In the context *derekh eretz* (literally, "the way of the earth") refers to a worldly occupation. But Hirsch developed the concept to embrace Western culture. This is the "way of the world" which has to be combined with the study and the practice of the Torah. Hirsch states that *derekh eretz* refers to not only ways of earning a living but also to the social order that prevails on earth, the mores and considerations of courtesy and propriety arising from social living and things pertinent to good breeding and general education.

Hence Hirsch speaks of the ideal Jew as the "Israel-man", that is, the Jew who is proudly Jewish, a believer in the eternal values and precepts of the Torah as divinely ordained, and is, at the same time, a cultured "man", a human being belonging to the modern world.

Cultured Jews Reading Jewish Sources

Hirsch certainly does not avoid the problem facing the modern Jew when he makes his imaginary protagonist remark in the first of the *Nineteen Letters*: "How can anyone who is able to enjoy the beauties of a Virgil, a Tasso, a Shakespeare, who can follow the logical conclusions of a Liebnitz and Kant-how can such a one find pleasure in the Old Testament, so deficient in form and taste, and in the senseless writings of the Talmud?" Before Hirsch, no Orthodox Jew had ever expressed such sentiments, even as a prelude to their rebuttal.

Hirsch seeks to demonstrate in all his writings that the combination of Torah and *derekh eretz* is not only possible but essential if Judaism is to come to grips with the challenge of modern life. Basically, his approach is to see the divinely revealed Torah as the means for the ennoblement of the human spirit by bringing it closer to the divine will for the Jews and, through them, to the whole of mankind. The Jewish people have a divinely ordained role to play in the world, one that can only be realized when the Jew belongs to the world and is, in the best sense, a man of the world.

Hirsch on "The Spirit of the Age"

This is not to say that Hirsch tolerates any watering down of the full Jewish tradition. He fought Reform in his belief that this movement pandered to the Zeitgeist, "the spirit of the age." Hirsch wrote in the *Nineteen Letters*:

"Was Judaism ever 'in accordance with the times?' Did Judaism ever correspond with the views of dominant contemporaries? Was it ever convenient to be a Jew or a Jewess?...Was that Judaism in accordance with the times, for which, during the centuries following the Dispersion, our fathers suffered in all lands, through all the various periods, the most degrading oppression, the most biting contempt, and a thousand-fold death and persecution? And yet we would make it the aim and scope of Judaism to be always 'in accordance with the times!'"

Source 5a): Ch. 49

<p>49: 5 'Simeon and Levi are a pair; instruments of crime are their wares.</p> <p>49: 6 Let my soul not enter their plot; let my spirit not unite with their meeting - for they have killed men with anger, maimed bulls with will.</p> <p>49: 7 Cursed be their rage, for it is fierce, and their fury, for it is cruel. I will disperse them in Jacob, scatter them in Israel.</p>	<p>(ה) שְׁמֵעוֹן וְלֵוִי אֲחִים כְּלֵי חַמָּס מְכַרְתֵּיהֶם :</p> <p>(ו) בְּסוֹדִם אֶל־תָּבֵא נַפְשִׁי בְּקִהְלָם אֶל־תִּתְחַד כְּבִדִּי כִּי בְּאַפָּם הָרְגוּ אִישׁ וּבְרָצֹנָם עָקְרוּ־שׁוֹר :</p> <p>(ז) אָרוּר אַפָּם כִּי עָז וְעִבְרָתָם כִּי קִשְׁתָּהּ אֶחְלִקֶם בְּיַעֲקֹב וְאַפְיָצִם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל :</p>
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5b) Rashi

Simeon and Levi are brothers: [They were] of one [accord in their] plot against Shechem and against Joseph: **“So they said one to the other, ‘...So now, let us kill him...’ ” (Gen. 37:19f).** Who were “they” ? If you say [that it was] Reuben or Judah, [that cannot be because] they did not agree to kill him. If you say [that it was] the sons of the maidservants, [that cannot be because] their hatred [toward him] was not [so] unmitigated [that they would want to kill him], for it is stated: “and he was a lad [and was] with the sons of Bilhah” (Gen. 37:2). [It could not have been] Issachar and Zebulun [because they] would not have spoken before their older brothers. [Thus,] **by necessity [we must say that] they were Simeon and Levi, whom their father called “brothers.” - [from Gen. Rabbah, Shitah Chadashah]**

stolen instruments: This craft of murder is in their hands wrongfully, [for] it is [part] of Esau’s blessing. It is his craft, and you (Simeon and Levi) have stolen it from him. — [from Tanchuma Vayechi 9]

their weapons: Heb , מְכַרְתֵּיהֶם . a term denoting weapons. In Greek, the word for sword is “machir” (Tanchuma Vayechi 9). Another explanation : מְכַרְתֵּיהֶם means: In the land of their dwelling (מְגוֹרָתָם) they conducted themselves with implements of violence, like “Your dwelling place (מְכַרְתֵּי) and

your birthplace” (וימוֹלְדֹתֶיךָ) (Ezek. 16:3). This is Onkelos’s translation. — [from Tanchuma Vayechi 9]

for in their wrath they killed a man: These are Hamor and the men of Shechem, and all of them are considered as no more than one man. And so [Scripture] says regarding Gideon, “And you shall smite Midian as one man” (Jud. 6:16), and similarly regarding the Egyptians, “a horse and its rider He cast into the sea” (Exod. 15:1). This is its midrashic interpretation (Gen. Rabbah 99:6), but its simple meaning is that many men are called “a man,” each one individually. **In their wrath they (Simeon and Levi) killed every man with whom they were angry.** Similarly, “and he learned to attack prey; he devoured men (אָדָם)” (Ezek. 19:3).

and with their will they hamstrung a bull: **They wanted to “uproot” Joseph, who was called “bull,” as it is said: “The firstborn of his bull-he has majesty”** (Deut. 33:17). עֲקָרוּ means esjareter in Old French, to hamstring, an expression similar to “You shall hamstring their horses” (Josh. 11:6). - [From Targum Yerushalmi]

I will separate them throughout Jacob: I will separate them from one another so that Levi will not be numbered among the tribes; hence they are separated. **Another explanation: There are no [itinerant] paupers, scribes, or teachers of children except from [the tribe of] Simeon, so that they should be scattered.** The tribe of Levi was made to go around to the threshing floors for heave offerings and tithes; thus he caused him to be dispersed in a respectable way. — [From Gen. Rabbah 98:5, 99:6, Shitah Chadashah]

Source 6: Rav Shmuel Wozner, Shevet HaLevi

אמנם י"ל כי גם מה שהוכיח יעקב אבינו
 צמוסרו לשמעון ואפי"ס צישראל' כסופרים
 ומלמדי תינוקות, לטובה היא, כי כבר אמרו חז"ל
 (סנהדרין י"ז:) שמתקנת עיר שיוכל תלמיד חכם לדור
 בתוכה היא רק אם יש בה מלמד תינוקות, אם
 כן זכות זו תעמוד לשמעון וצואת תקנתו, הרצלת
 והפלת תורה כסופרים ומלמדי תינוקות, וכבר
 נתפארו לדיקי ישראל בתפקידם זה.

Source 7: Netziv, Ha'amek Davar

ארור אפם. בשעה שהמה בחרון אף **כי עז** בלי מעצור כזרם מים כבירים שוטפים ועברתם השמורה בלב **כי קשתה**. קשין להתרצות :

Cursed be their anger: when they are at the height of their anger – it is intense – without bounds – like a rush of mighty water...and they are hard to appease

אחלקם ביעקב. נצרך לפרקים מעט אנשים כאלה אבל רובם במק"א קשה ע"כ אחלקם ביעקב שיהיו מעט מעט במקום אחד :

I will divide them amongst Ya'akov. Sometimes we need a few people like this, but many of them in one place makes for difficulty. Therefore, I will disperse them, so only a few of them will be in one place

ואפיצם בישראל. כן בקרב חסידי ישראל נדרש לפעמים איש כזה כמו שהי' פינחס במעשה זמרי. אבל רק מעט מעט יפה ע"כ יהיו נפוצים בישראל:

Sometimes in the midst of the righteous of Israel a person like this is sometimes needed as Pinchas was in the incident with Zimri. But only a few are good...therefore, they should be dispersed among Israel.

Source 8: Rav Nebenzhal, Sichot/Shiurim on Sefer Bamidbar

פיזור הקנאות - ברכה לכולם!

אכן הקנאות, היא מידה קשה ומסוכנת מאוד, ולכן "ארור אפם כי עז ועברתם כי קשתה..." ; מתוך צפייה למרחוק על חיי העם העומד לקום מבניו, מבקר יעקב קשות את "אפם", את המידה שאימצו לעצמם, משום שיש בה כדי להרוס עולם ומלואו. ומשום כך - ממשיך יעקב מיד - משום שבחרו במידה זו, "אחלקם ביעקב ואפיצם בישראל". יש עצה! אומר יעקב; אם רוצים ששמעון ולוי ישתמשו באופן חיובי בכוחות-הנפש שלהם, אם רוצים שיביאו ברכה לעצמם ולעולם כולו - אין מנוס מפיוזרם והפצתם בכל ישראל. הפיוזר של שמעון ולוי אינו רק עונש, אלא גם, ובעיקר, תיקון! לאפשר להם שימוש נכון, במידות הנפש הגנוזות בהם. לכן, נעשו בני שמעון סופרים ואנשי חינוך, הדרושים גם בישובים מרוחקים, ובני לוי נפוצים לחזר על הגרנות, כדי לקבל מישראל תרומות ומעשרות (בר"ר צט, ו).

ונבאר את התיקון שיש בכך, במשל: אדם שרוצה למלוח היטב סלט שחכין, הריהו מטיל לתוכו מלח - אך בכך אין די. הוא חייב גם לערבב אותו! לפזר את המלח בכל רחבי הקדירה, ובכך ישיג שתי מטרות:

א) המלח לא יהיה מרוכז במקום אחד, כי ריכוז מרובה של מלח - מקלקל את כל המאכל. ב) המלח מגיע לכל פינה, ונותן את הטעם הדרוש, הרצוי, בכל המאכל. כך רואה נביא-ה', את עתידם של שמעון ולוי: ראשית, יש להפריד אותם, כדי שהפיזור יחליש את חוס הקנאות ועזותה: הן בכך שבכל קנאי בודד קיימת קנאות נמוכה, והן בכך שהשבטים בהם יפוזרו, ימתנו אותם מעט. אך מנגד, חייבים לפזרם כדי לחזק את הקנאות בישראל. כדי שבכל שבט תהיה מעט קנאות, הנצרכת לקיומו של עם! כי עם החובה לרסן את הקנאות - יש גם להתסיס את המתינות היתרה, זו הגובלת באדישות.

Source 9: R. Yaakov Medan, Ya'akov's Blessings to His Sons

(ח) יְהוּדָה אֶתָּה יוֹדוּךָ אַחֶיךָ יָדְךָ בְּעַרְףְּ אִיְבֹיךָ יִשְׁתַּחֲוּ לְךָ בְּנֵי אָבִיךָ:
(י) לֹא יִסּוּר שֵׁבֶט מִיְהוּדָה וּמַחֲקֶק מִבֵּין רַגְלָיו עַד פְּיִיבֹא שִׁילָה שִׁילוֹ וְלוֹ יִקְהֶת עַמִּים:

49:8 'Judah, your brothers shall submit (yodu) to you. Your hand shall be on your enemies' necks; your father's sons shall bow to you.

49:10 The scepter shall not depart from Yehuda, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to Shilo; and unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be.

There are many interpretations of this (second) difficult verse. We will mention only our own proposal: Yehuda's leadership over his brothers will find expression only until the *Shekhina* arrives at Shilo. Once it becomes permanently attached to God's Chosen

House, the *Mishkan* in Shilo, God will rule as king over all of the tribes equally, showing no preference for Yehuda's leadership, as many prophets speak about that day in the future when God will rule as king, and there will be no need for a king of flesh and blood. It is Shilo that Yaakov sees as the end of days in his prophecy, and he assigns it to Efrayim, whom he selects among the sons of his chosen son Yosef. Yaakov does not see in his prophecy Jerusalem and the development of the monarchy of Israel in its wake. Perhaps this is the vision of the end that is concealed from him, alluded to at the beginning of this *shiur*. Therefore, he makes everything dependent upon Shilo.

As stated, history unfolds in a manner different from the partial end that is revealed to Yaakov. However, the order established by the Rambam for the monarchy in Israel is expressed in the words of Yaakov. First he says: "Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies," which, as we explained, refers to the war waged against Amalek; then he says: "The scepter shall not depart from Yehuda," referring to the appointment of a king; and last he talks of the Temple, which according to Yaakov will be in Shilo. This is the sequence described by the Rambam (*Hilkhos Melakhim* 1:1):

Israel is commanded to fulfill three *mitzvot* upon entering the Land of Israel:

- a. To choose a king, as it is stated ([Devarim 17:15](#)): "Appoint a king over yourselves."
- b. To wipe out the descendants of Amalek, as is it stated ([Devarim 25:19](#)): "Erase the memory of Amalek."

c. To build God's Chosen House, as it is stated ([Devarim 12:5](#)): "Seek out His Presence and go there."

.... God chooses Jerusalem, straddling the border of the territories of Yehuda to the south and Binyamin to the north. This reflects the covenant made between Yehuda and Binyamin when Yehuda fearlessly defends Binyamin against Yosef, agreeing to become a slave in his place. This is also a covenant between the tribes of Leia and the tribes of Rachel.

Source 10: Bereishit Ch. 49

(כח) כָּל־אֵלֶּה שְׁבֵטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר וְזֹאת אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר לָהֶם אָבִיהֶם וַיְבָרֶךְ אוֹתָם אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר כְּבִרְכָתוֹ בֵּרַךְ אֹתָם:

49:28 All these are the tribes of Israel, twelve in all, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them. **He gave each one his own special blessing.**

Source 11: Rav Chayim Ben Attar, Ohr Hachayim

“ A BLESSING APPROPRIATE TO HIM: A blessing which matched the inner traits of his soul and his actions. For every soul has a particular virtue. It may be the priestly service or the majesty of a monarch, the crown of Torah or physical strength, wealth or simple good fortune. Jacob wanted his blessings here to bring out the inner nature of every son.

HE BLESSED THEM ALL: He blesses them as a collective, for the particular blessing of every one of the brothers will help all the brothers. When one brother has a particular virtue ... a small amount of that virtue will reach each and every one of the brothers.”

אשר כברכתו. פ"י הראוי לו כפי בחינת נשמתו וכפי מעשיו, כי יש לך לדעת כי הנפשות כל אחת יש לה בחינת המעלה יש שמעלתה כהונה ויש מלכות ויש כתר תורה ויש גבורה ויש עושר ויש הצלחה, ונתכוין יעקב בנבואה לברך כל אחד כפי ברכתו הראוי לה המלך במלכות והכהן בכהונה וכן על זה הדרך ולא הפך המסילות:

ברך אותם וגו'. אמר אותם לשון רבים להיות כי ברכת כל אחד ואחד תועיל לעצמו ולכל אחיו ... וכן כשירבה מעלת אחד ושפעו והדרגתו לכל אחיו יגיעו גם כן מקצת דבר, לזה אמר איש אשר כברכתו ברך אותם: