

בס"ד

THE RASHI OF THE WEEK

Week of

Parshas Vayeiros

18 Cheshvan, 5777 – November 19, 2016

Compiled from the works of
Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson
The Lubavitcher Rebbe

by
Rabbi Shmuel Mendelsohn

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An Outline of the Rebbe's Explanation of Rashi Parshas Vayeiro

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Rashi in His Own Words

בראשית כ"ב, י"ב: ויאמר אל תשלח ידך אל הנער ואל תעש לו מאומה פי | עתה ידעתי פי ירא אלקים אתה ולא
חשכת את בנה את יחידך ממני:

רש"י ד"ה כי עתה ידעתי: אמר רבי אבא אמר לו אברהם, אפרש לפניך את שיחתי, אתמול אמרת לי (לעיל כ"א,
י"ב) כי ביצחק יקרא לך זרע, וחזרת ואמרת (שם כ"ב, ב') קח נא את בנך, עכשיו אתה אומר לי אל תשלח ידך אל
הנער. אמר לו הקב"ה (תהלים פ"ט, ל"ה) לא אחלל בריתי ומוצא שפתי לא אשנה, כשאמרתי לך קח מוצא שפתי לא
אשנה, לא אמרתי לך שחטוהו אלא העלהו, אסקתיה אחתיה:

Bereishis 22:12: And he said, "Do not stretch forth your hand to the lad, nor do the slightest thing to him. For now I know that you are a G-d fearing man, and you did not withhold your son, your only one, from Me."

Rashi Heading – for now I know: Said Rabbi Abba, Avrohom said to Him, "I will explain my discussion before You. Yesterday, You said to me¹ 'for in Yitzchok will be called your seed.' You retracted and said², 'Take now your son.' Now You say to me, 'Do not stretch forth your hand to the lad.'" The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him³, "I shall not profane My covenant, neither shall I change the utterance of My lips." When I said to you, "Take," I was not altering the utterance of My lips. I did not say to you, "Slaughter him," but, "Bring him up." You have brought him up; (now) take him down.

A Brief Synopsis

In this Torah portion, Vayeiro, we are told of the tenth and final test with which Hashem challenged Avrohom⁴. In fact, it was after this test that Hashem told him "now I know that you are a G-d fearing man." Rashi tells us of a conversation which Avrohom had, in which he said that Hashem told him that the continuation of his nation would come through his son Yitzchok. However, here Hashem commands Avrohom to offer this very son as a sacrifice. Rashi tells us

1. Bereishis 21:12.

2. Bereishis 22:2.

3. Tehillim 89:35.

4. See Pirkei Avos, Chapter 5, Mishnah 3.

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that G-d told him that He doesn't change His mind. "I shall not profane My covenant, neither shall I change the utterance of My lips." When I said to you, "Take," I was not altering the utterance of My lips. I did not say to you, "Slaughter him," but, "Bring him up." You have brought him up; (now) take him down.

According to Peshat, how does Rashi know all of the above from the words "now I know?" There doesn't seem to be any hint from these words that Avrohom wondered how Hashem previously told him "for in Yitzchok will be called your seed," and now told him to offer Yitzchok as a sacrifice. The words also do not allude to Hashem responding, that "'I shall not profane My covenant, neither shall I change the utterance of My lips.' When I said to you, 'Take,' I was not altering the utterance of My lips. I did not say to you, 'Slaughter him,' but, 'Bring him up.' You have brought him up; (now) take him down." According to the simple understanding of the verse, no part of this conversation is even hinted at!

According to Rashi's words, Avrohom is discussing with Hashem a conversation which he had earlier. Where do we find this conversation?

The explanation is that Avrohom had no doubt in Hashem's words. The conversation Rashi is referring to was one which Rashi described in his earlier comments. In this same verse, Avrohom was told not to stretch forth his hand to the lad. Avrohom was concerned that this may be because he did not pass this test with his full heart. He therefore suggested inflicting a wound on him, extracting a small amount of blood, which he would sprinkle on the altar. This would reconcile the two *seemingly* contradictory statements made by G-d. When he was told not to even cause a blemish in Yitzchok, it reinforced the idea that he had not properly passed the test. Therefore Hashem told him that now He knows that Avrohom is a G-d fearing man. He thoroughly passed the test.

Rashi's Explanation

In this Torah portion, Vayeiros, Avrohom is given his tenth and final test by Hashem. He is told by G-d⁵, "Please take your son, your only one, whom you love, Yitzchok, and go away to the land of Moriah and bring him up there for a burnt offering on one of the mountains, which I will tell you." He woke up early the next morning, and took his son in order to carry out

5. Bereishis 22:2.

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Hashem's command. At the last minute he is told, "Do not stretch forth your hand to the lad, nor do the slightest thing to him. For now I know that you are a G-d fearing man, and you did not withhold your son, your only one, from Me."

Rashi cites the words "for now I know," and says the following. "Said Rabbi Abba, Avrohom said to Him, 'I will explain my discussion before You. Yesterday, You said to me⁶ 'for in Yitzchok will be called your seed.' You retracted and said⁷, 'Take now your son.' Now You say to me, 'Do not stretch forth your hand to the lad.' The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, "I shall not profane My covenant, neither shall I change the utterance of My lips." When I said to you, 'Take,' I was not altering the utterance of My lips. I did not say to you, 'Slaughter him,' but, 'Bring him up.' You have brought him up; (now) take him down."

Difficulties in Understanding Rashi

According to Peshat, how does Rashi know the entire conversation between Hashem and Avrohom from the words "now I know?" There doesn't seem to be any hint from these words that Avrohom wondered how to reconcile the fact that Hashem previously told him "for in Yitzchok will be called your seed," and now told him to offer Yitzchok as a sacrifice. The words also do not allude to Hashem responding, that "I shall not profane My covenant, neither shall I change the utterance of My lips." When I said to you, 'Take,' I was not altering the utterance of My lips. I did not say to you, 'Slaughter him,' but, 'Bring him up.' You have brought him up; (now) take him down." According to the simple understanding of the verse, no part of this conversation appears to be alluded to! From where does Rashi deduce this entire conversation?

The Midrash Rabbah is the source for Rashi's words⁸. However, Rashi changes the wording of the Midrash. There it says that Avrohom wondered how Hashem could say two apparently contradictory things. However, according to Rashi, Avrohom does not ask Hashem how He could "*contradict*" Himself. He says that Avrohom said to Hashem "I will explain my discussion before You." He does not imply surprise at Hashem's words. According to Rashi, Avrohom is not even discussing Hashem's conversation. Rather he is talking about a

6. Bereishis 21:12.

7. Bereishis 22:2.

8. This would seem to answer the previous question. Rashi does have a source from where he derived the conversation. However, as explained in the body of the text, and discussed many times, Rashi only explains the simple meaning of the verse. He supplies a beginning student with what he needs in order to understand the Chumash. This does not (necessarily) have any connection to how the Midrash explains the Torah.

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conversation which he had earlier. Additionally, we need to know to which conversation he is referring.

The Explanation

Rashi is not implying that Avrohom questioned Hashem. He had complete faith in Hashem's words. According to Peshat, it is impossible to say otherwise. Earlier, the Torah told us that G-d commanded Avrohom to go to Israel. As soon as he arrived, there was a famine, which forced him to temporarily travel to Egypt. Rashi explained there⁹, that the famine was "in that land alone (Israel), to test him, whether he would think ill of the words of the Holy One, blessed be He, Who ordered him to go to the Land of Canaan, and now He was forcing him to leave it." Avrohom passed the test and had no ill thoughts whatsoever about Hashem's words.

Likewise, we find further on that Rashi tells us that Hashem *scolded* Moshe, telling him¹⁰ "You have questioned My ways, unlike Avrohom, to whom I said, 'For in Yitzchok will be called your seed,' and afterwards I said to him, 'Bring him up there for a burnt offering,' yet he did not question Me."

We see clearly from Rashi, the simple understanding of the Torah, that Avrohom never had any doubts regarding Hashem's words. Rather, he was trying to explain his previous words (conversation) to G-d.

In Rashi's previous comments on the same verse, he cites the words "do not stretch forth," and explains as follows. "To slaughter him. Avrohom said to Him, 'If so, I have come here in vain. I will inflict a wound on him and extract a little blood.' He said to him, 'Do not do the slightest thing to him.' Do not cause him any blemish."

In our Rashi, Avrohom is explaining his words to Hashem. Why did Avrohom want to wound his son in order to extract blood? In this manner both of G-d's words would be fulfilled. Hashem responded to this, that he is not to do anything to Yitzchok. He must not even cause him a blemish.

When Avrohom was told not to stretch forth his hand, he was concerned that perhaps he had not fulfilled Hashem's command with a full heart. Furthermore, when he was told not to even make a blemish on the youth, in order to carry out Hashem's words, he was worried for the same reason. That is why G-d told him "now I know that you are a G-d fearing man, and you did

9. Bereishis 12:10.

10. Shemos 6:1.

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not withhold your son, your only one, from Me." Despite his concerns, he had actually passed the test.

That is also how Rashi knows that there was a conversation between Hashem and Avrohom. Otherwise, there would have been no reason for Hashem to assure Avrohom that he passed the test.

(Adapted from a talk given on Shabbos Parshas Vayeiuro, 5748)

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**IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Mr. Sholom Dovid ben Reb Yitzchak Hacoheh ע"ה Mankes
Passed away on 11 Teves, 5776
May His Soul be bound in the Eternal Bond of Life**

*

**IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Mr. Yoel ben Reb Sholom Dovid Hacoheh ע"ה Mankes
Passed away on 28 Nissan, 5776
May His Soul be bound in the Eternal Bond of Life**

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**IN HONOR OF
Shimshon ben Chassibah שי'
Yosef Yitzchok ben Sarah שי'
and Shoshana Devorah Hodya bas Tovah Sarah שת'
For a complete and speedy recovery**

*

**DEDICATED BY
Mr. and Mrs. Yonatan Itsik Hacoheh and Shaindel Miriam שיחיו Mankes**

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**IN LOVING MEMORY OF
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Passed away on 25 Adar II, 5776
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MAY HE MERIT TO BE A CHOSSID, A YEREI SHOMAYIM AND A LAMDON

מוקדש לזכות

כ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו מליובאוויטש

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לזכות

חיילי "צבאות השם" חיים ועדן עודד שיחיו מאריס

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נדפס ע"י הוריהם

הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל וזוגתו מרת חי' מושקא שיחיו מאריס

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לעילוי נשמת

ר' שלום דוד בן ר' יצחק הכהן ע"ה מנקס

נפטר ביום י"א טבת ה'תשע"ו

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

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לעילוי נשמת

ר' יואל בן ר' שלום דוד הכהן ע"ה מנקס

נפטר ביום כ"ח ניסן ה'תשע"ו

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

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לזכות

ר' שמשון בן חסיבה שי'

ר' יוסף יצחק בן שרה שי'

ושושנה דבורה הודי' בת טובה שרה שתחי'

לרפואה שלימה וקרובה

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נדפס ע"י משפחתם

ר' יונתן איציק הכהן

וזוגתו מרת שיינדל מרים שיחיו מנקס

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לעילוי נשמת

ר' חיים יצחק בן ר' יחיאל משה ע"ה האנטווערקער

נפטר ביום כ"ה אדר שני, ה'תשע"ו

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

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נדפס ע"י בנו וכלתו

ר' יואב וזוגתו מרת דבורה לאה שיחיו האנטווערקער

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נתרם ע"י

הת' משה שלמה זהר שי' מארס

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יהי רצון שיזכה להיות חסיד, ירא שמים, ולמדן