



“Moshe called Hoshea bin Nun Yehoshua”

Moshe Rabeinu Added the Letter Yud—Chochmah—to Yehoshua’s Name from which the Ten Kedushos of Eretz Yisrael Emanate

This week we read parshas Shelach. Thus, it is fitting that we examine the episode of the meraglim. They were sent as spies to survey the new land (Bamidbar 13, 1): **“וידבר ה' אל משה—לאמר, שלח לך אנשים ויתורו את ארץ כנען אשר אני נותן לבני ישראל—Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying, “Send forth for yourself men, and let them spy out Eretz Canaan that I give to Bnei Yisrael.”** The Ba'al HaTurim points out that the final letters of the words **“שלח לך אנשים”** spell **הכ”ם**—implying that they should be wise and righteous. We will endeavor to achieve a better understanding of the fact that HKB”H intimated to Moshe that he should send meraglim who all qualified as **“chacham”—wise.**

Additionally, we will focus on the passuk (ibid. 16): **“ויקרא—Moshe called Hoshea bin Nun Yehoshua.** Rashi comments: **He prayed for him: May G-d save you from the plot of the “meraglim.”** The Targum YoNasan, on the other hand, comments: **When Moshe recognized the degree of his humility, he called (renamed) Hoshea bin Nun Yehoshua.** The commentaries, each in their own way, try to explain the connection between the attribute of humility and the letter “yud” that Moshe added to form the name Yehoshua.

The Enlightening Explanation of the Holy Sar Shalom of Belz

We will begin our discussion with the enlightening words of the holy Sar Shalom of Belz, zy”a, in Midbar Kadesh. To clarify the comment of the Targum YoNasan, he directs us to a passuk towards the end of the previous parsha (ibid. 12, 3): **“והאיש משה עניו מאד מכל האדם אשר על פני האדמה—now the man Moshe was exceedingly humble, more so than any person**

on the face of the earth! Although the word for humble is read as **“עניו”**, with a **“yud,”** it is written in the sefer Torah as **“עניו”**, without a **“yud.”**

The Rosh explains this anomaly as follows (ibid.): **It was difficult for Moshe to describe himself as humble; so, he omitted the “yud” to demonstrate to the world that he felt uncomfortable writing the language of humility.** Thus, it turns out that this letter **“yud”** that was not written in the Torah was left, so to speak, dangling in the air. Furthermore, Moshe Rabeinu felt that this stray **“yud,”** which belonged to the word **“עניו”**, should deservedly be given to someone who was truly humble.

This then is the message of the Targum YoNasan: **When Moshe recognized his (Yehoshua’s) degree of humility—**which was evident from the fact that he wanted Moshe to punish Eldad and Meidad for prophesying in the camp (ibid. 11, 28): **“אדוני משה כלאם”—my lord, Moshe, incarcerate (alternatively: terminate) them.** Rashi explains: **Because they were prophesying that Moshe would die and Yehoshua would bring Yisrael into the land.** In other words, even though their nevuah foretold of Yehoshua’s rise to greatness, he still wanted Moshe to punish them, due to his extreme humility. As such, he truly deserved the stray **“yud.”** Therefore, **Moshe renamed him Yehoshua,** adding the **“yud”** to his name.

Before proceeding, let us clarify an important point. Let us not think erroneously, chas v’shalom, that Moshe Rabeinu dared to omit even a single letter from the Torah on his own due to his own humility. In reality, HKB”H was aware

of Moshe's strong desire to write the word "עניו" in the Torah without a "yud," to indicate that his humility was somewhat lacking. Hence, HKB"H acquiesced and commanded him to do so from the very start; so that when the meraglim were sent on their mission, Moshe would be able to add the "yud" to the name "יהושע". Subsequently, when it was time for Moshe to dispatch the meraglim, he perceived via "ruach hakodesh" that the time had arrived to place the stranded "yud": "ויקרא" "משה להושע בן נון יהושע".

Moshe Rabeinu Imparted to Yehoshua Some of the Radiance from His Countenance

As a loyal servant in the presence of his master, I would like to latch onto the coattails of Sar Shalom, zy"a, and embellish his sacred words. In parshas Ki Sisa, when Moshe comes down from Har Sinai with the second set of luchos, it says (Shemos 34, 29): "ויהי ברדת משה מהר סיני ושני לוחות העדות ביד משה ברדתו" "And it was when Moshe descended from Har Sinai—with the two luchos of the Testimony in the hand of Moshe as he descended from the mountain—Moshe did not know that the skin of his face had become radiant when He had spoken to him."

We find the following elucidation from Chazal in the Midrash (S.R. 47, 6): "ומהיכן נטל משה קרני ההוד... ר' יהודה בר נחמן בשם רבי שמעון בן לקיש אומר, עד שהיה כותב בקולמוס נשתייר קימנא, והעבירו על ראשו, וממנו נעשו קרני ההוד." **From where did Moshe get the "rays of splendor"?** . . . **Rabbi Yehudah the son of Nachman says in the name of Rabbi Shimon the son of Lakish: When he was writing with the quill, a small amount remained. He passed it over his head, and from it the "rays of splendor" were produced.** In other words, when Moshe was inscribing the Torah as it was dictated to him by HKB"H, a small amount of ink remained in the quill. The quill was waved over Moshe's head, and his face became radiant. According to the Ohr HaChaim hakadosh, the remaining ink was from the letter "yud" that was omitted from the word "עניו". This was the origin of the "rays of splendor."

Let us now combine the incredible insights of the Ohr HaChaim hakadosh and the esteemed Sar Shalom, zy"a. The "rays of splendor"—"karnei hod"—that illuminated Moshe's countenance came from the letter "yud" that was omitted from the word "עניו". Moshe subsequently added that "yud" to rename his loyal disciple Yehoshua. Thus, by adding that

"yud" to the name Yehoshua, he imparted to his disciple a phenomenal illumination, which enabled him to resist the influence of the other meraglim.

Moshe Rabeinu Imparted the Chochmah of the Torah from the Letter "Yud" to Yehoshua

Continuing onward on this enchanting journey, we will endeavor to explain to the best of our limited abilities the nature of the "rays of splendor." To assist us, we will refer to the Orach L'Chaim (Ki Sisa) authored by the great Rabbi Avraham Chaim of Zlotchov, zy"a. We learned that Moshe's "karnei hod" came from the leftover ink that resulted from the omission of the letter "yud" from the word "עניו". But what difference does it make if "עניו" is written with or without a "yud"?

He explains that there are two distinct types and levels of humility—"anavah." The higher level is associated with someone who is genuinely wise and has acquired the chochmah of the Torah. Moshe was the paradigm of this type of "anavah," as attested to by the passuk (Devarim 34, 10): "ולא קם נביא עוד בישראל כמשה אשר ידעו ה' פנים אל פנים"—**never again has there arisen in Yisrael a navi like Moshe, whom Hashem had known face to face.** He ascended to the heavens to receive the Torah directly from HKB"H; nevertheless, he remained more humble than any other human being that has ever lived. On the other hand, there is a lower level of "anavah." It is associated with someone who is not an accomplished Torah scholar, and he humbly recognizes and accepts his own shortcomings and lack of accomplishments.

Additionally, our sacred sources teach us that the letter "yud" alludes to "**chochmah.**" In the words of the Zohar hakadosh (Pinchas 232b): "י' חכמה"—"yud" represents **chochmah.** Elsewhere, the Zohar hakadosh teaches us (Yisro 85a): "אורייתא מחכמה דלעילא נפקת"—**the Torah emanated from the supreme chochmah** symbolized by the letter "yud." With this in mind, we can propose that this explains why HKB"H pronounced specifically ten dibros to us on Har Sinai, which are the foundation of the entire Torah; because the letter "yud"—possessing a numerical value of ten—represents chochmah.

Accordingly, the Orach L'Chaim explains the difference between the word "עניו" with a "yud" and "עניו" without a "yud." The former depicts someone who is truly wise and has acquired the chochmah of the letter "yud." Despite his

accomplishments and wisdom, he maintains his humility. In contrast, the latter depicts someone who is humble but has failed to acquire the chochmah of the letter “yud.”

This explains very nicely why Moshe Rabeinu strove to omit the letter “yud,” because he did not feel that he should be depicted as an “עניו”; he felt that he was still far away from achieving chochmah. HKB”H acquiesced with his desire and permitted him to write the word “עניו” without a “yud.” Nevertheless, “midah k’neged midah,” HKB”H bestowed upon him the “rays of splendor” produced from the ink left over in the quill from the stranded “yud.” In essence, those rays reflect the illumination of the supreme chochmah, the source of the Torah.

Eretz Yisrael Was Conquered with the Chochmah of the Torah

Following this line of reasoning, we will now proceed to explain why Moshe Rabeinu felt that the appropriate time to add the letter “yud” to Yehoshua’s name was when dispatching the meraglim to survey Eretz Yisrael. In the Imrei Pinchas, authored by the great Rabbi Pinchas of Koritz, zy”a, he presents a wonderful idea in the name of the holy Maggid, Rabbi Ber of Mezritch. Concerning the capture of Kiryas Sefer in Eretz Yisrael, it says (Yehoshua 15, 16): “ויאמר כלב אשר יכה את קרית ספר ולכדה ונתתי לו את עכסה בתי לאשה, וילכדה עתניאל בן קנז.” **Caleiv said, “Whoever smites Kiryas Sefer and conquers it, I shall give him my daughter Achsah as his wife.” Otniel ben Kenaz, brother of Caleiv, conquered it.**

Our blessed sages expound in the Gemara (Temurah 16a) that during the period of mourning for Moshe Rabeinu, after he passed away, 1700 items of Torah exegesis were forgotten. This is the underlying meaning of the statement: **“Whoever smites Kiryas Sefer and conquers it.”** What he really meant was that he would give his daughter to whoever was able to restore the portions of the Torah that were forgotten. Otniel ben Kenaz, using the art of pilpul, was able to restore all of the forgotten Torah. The commentaries are perplexed by this exposition. After all, we have a fundamental principle (Shabbas 63a): **“איך—מקרא יוצא מידי פשוטו—a passuk never departs from its plain meaning** (even when a passuk is expounded, the plain, literal meaning is not discarded). So, how did Chazal depart so far from the plain meaning of these pesukim?

To explain the matter, he refers to the Midrash (B.R. 1, 1) on the opening passuk of the Torah (Bereishis 1, 1): **The Torah says: “I was HKB”H’s arSisan’s instrument (blueprint)” . . . HKB”H would look in the Torah and create the world.** In a similar vein, it says in the Zohar hakadosh (Terumah 161a): **אשרי כל אלו העוסקים בתורה, לפי שכשברא הקב”ה את העולם, הסתכל בתורה—praiseworthy are all those who engage in Torah-study** (because they are emulating the Almighty), **since when HKB”H created the world, He looked in the Torah and proceeded to create the world.**

This is teaching us that every single place on earth has its roots and sustenance in the Torah. This is the same message conveyed by the following elucidation (Shabbas 88a): **מאי דכתיב ויהי ערב ויהי בקר יום השישי, ה”א יתירה למה לי, מלמד שהתנה הקדוש ברוך הוא עם מעשה בראשית ואמר להם, אם ישראל מקבלים התורה אתם מתקיימין, ואם לאו אני מחזיר אתכם לתוהו ובוהו.”** **What is the meaning of that which is written (ibid. 31): “And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day”? Why do I need the extra letter “hei”? It teaches us that HKB”H stipulated with the works of creation, saying to them: “If Yisrael accept the Torah, you will endure; but if they do not, I will return you to a state of total void and chaos.”** The implication is that without the Torah, it is impossible to continue to renew and sustain the daily existence of the world, since it was created through the Torah.

Based on this premise, the Maggid of Mezritch, zy”a, asserts the following: During the conquest of Eretz Yisrael, Yisrael would study the particular halachah or Torah-portion associated with each and every city; that is how each city was conquered. Hence, when Bnei Yisrael fought to conquer the city of Ai, it is written (Yehoshua 8, 9 and 13): **“וילך יהושע בלילה ההוא בתוך העמק—that night, Yehoshua went into the midst of the valley.** They expound in the Gemara (Megillah 3a): **מלמד שלן בעומקה של הלכה—this teaches us that he (Yehoshua) immersed himself in the depths of halachah.** In other words, Yehoshua delved into the halachah with which HKB”H created the city of Ai; that enabled Yisrael to conquer it. (Translator’s note: The Gemara’s elucidation relates the word “עומק” to “עיומק”.)

For this reason, Yisrael were unable to conquer the place called Kiryas Sefer; because the relevant Torah-portions had been forgotten during the mourning period of Moshe. Its very name, Kiryas Sefer, alludes to the fact that they required intense study and perusal of the sefer to conquer it. This

prompted Caleiv's unusual pronouncement—that he would give his daughter Achсах in marriage to anyone who could restore the forgotten Torah-portions which would enable Yisrael to capture Kiryas Sefer: "אשר יכה את קרית ספר ולכדה".

The narrative concludes: **"Otniel ben Kenaz, brother of Caleiv, conquered it."** Otniel's wisdom was profound; applying the art of pilpul—dialectic and in-depth analysis—he was able to restore the lost portions which were the life-source of Kiryas Sefer. Thus, the simple reading of the text and the elucidation do go hand in hand beautifully. With the restored Torah-portions, they were able to conquer Kiryas Sefer.

Rabbi Pinchas of Koritz, zy"א, adds a fascinating idea. When Rabbis in earlier times were appointed to serve in a new city, they would give a speech steeped in pilpul, Gemara, and halachah. Presumably, the halachah chosen was germane to the roots and sustenance of the particular location. This enabled the local inhabitants to conquer and sustain the city by adhering to the pertinent precepts of the Torah. Undoubtedly, these earlier Rabbis acted solely l'shem shamayim, intending only to fulfill the will of Hashem.

Ten Kedushos in Eretz Yisrael Emanating from the Chochmah of the Letter "Yud"

With great delight, we can begin to appreciate to some small degree the profound chochmah of Moshe Rabeinu. He took the "yud" that he omitted from the word "עניו" and gave it to Yehoshua to protect him from the misguided influence of the other meraglim. Let us refer to the passuk (Tehillim 104, 24): "מה רבו מעשיך ה' כולם בחכמה עשית מלאה הארץ קנינך"—**how abundant are Your works, Hashem! You made them all with wisdom; the earth is full of Your possessions.** As we have learned, HKB"H created the world with the supreme chochmah, which is the source of the Torah. Hence, **"the earth is full of Your possessions"**—namely, the Torah, which belongs to HKB"H. For, we have learned in the Mishnah (Avos 6, 11): "חמשה קנינים קנה לו הקב"ה בעולמו, ואלו הן, תורה קנין אחד... דכתיב: '... Five possessions did HKB"H acquire for Himself in His world, and they are: Torah, one acquisition... as it is written (Mishlei 8, 22): "Hashem acquired me at the beginning of His way."

Now, the meraglim were faulted for speaking lashon hara regarding Eretz Yisrael, claiming that it could not be

conquered by natural means (Bamidbar 13, 28): **"אפס כי עז העם היושב בארץ והערים בצורות גדולות מאד וגם ילדי הענק ראינו שם—but the people that dwell in the land are powerful, the cities are very fortified and large, and we also saw there the offspring of the giant.** They were not entirely wrong. Yes, it would have been impossible to conquer the land with military weapons alone; however, with spiritual weapons, it could be conquered very easily. All that was required of Yisrael was to study Torah, which is the life-source of Eretz Yisrael's existence.

It was precisely for this reason that Moshe imparted the chochmah of the letter "yud" to Yehoshua. It provided him with illumination from the source of the Torah emanating from the supreme chochmah of HKB"H. Equipped in this manner, he was able to discern which part of the Torah was the life-source of each and every location in Eretz Yisrael. As a result, he was not swayed by the pessimistic opinion of the other meraglim, because he understood that Eretz Yisrael could be captured with the aid of the Torah.

This explains very nicely a teaching in the Mishnah concerning the kedushah of Eretz Yisrael (Keilim 1, 7): "עשר קדושות הן"—**there are ten degrees of kedushah** (sanctity, holiness). In keeping with our current discussion, the kedushah of Eretz Yisrael is rooted in the letter "yud," representing chochmah and the source of the Torah. Hence, it states in the Gemara (B.B. 158b): "אורא דארץ ישראל מחכים"—**the air of Eretz Yisrael imparts wisdom.** In a similar vein, the Midrash (B.R. 16, 4) expounds on the passuk (Bereishis 2, 12): "וזהב הארץ ההוא טוב, 'The gold of that land is good': **This teaches us that there is no Torah like the Torah of Eretz Yisrael, and no chochmah like the chochmah of Eretz Yisrael.** After all, the chochmah of the Torah in Eretz Yisrael is one of the ten types of kedushah the land is endowed with related to the letter "yud."

In this light, we can better appreciate the allusion presented by the Ba'al HaTurim: "של"ח ל'ך אנשים סופי תיבות חכ"ם, שיהיו חכמים וצדיקים" "של"ח ל'ך אנשים סופי תיבות חכ"ם, שיהיו חכמים וצדיקים". With the final letters of the words של"ח ל'ך אנשים, spelling the word "chacham," HKB"H hinted to Moshe that the meraglim should study Torah to connect with the supreme chochmah and source of the Torah. By doing so, they would understand that HKB"H created the entire world with the Torah—"כולם בחכמה עשית"—He made everything with

chochmah. Thus, they would conclude that it is possible to conquer the land by studying the chochamah of the Torah.

We can conjecture that this is conveyed by the passuk (Bamidbar 13, 30): "ויהס כלב את העם אל משה ויאמר עלה נעלה וירשנו" "Caleiv hushed the people toward Moshe and said, "We shall surely ascend and conquer it, for we can surely do it!" Tradition dictates that the "samech" of "ויהס" be inscribed in a sefer Torah as an enlarged letter. In keeping with this discussion, he was alluding to the "samech" (60) masechtos of Torah she'b'al peh. Caleiv was informing the people that Eretz Yisrael could be conquered by studying Torah she'b'al peh. Here is a pertinent elucidation in the Midrash Rabbah on the passuk (Shir Hashirim 6, 8): "ששים" "המה מלכות, אלו ששים מסכתות של הלכות, they are the sixty masechtos of halachos.

Moshe Leaned on Yehoshua with Both Hands to Instill in Him the Power of Warfare and the Power of Torah

It appears that we can substantiate this point by referring to a passuk in Parshas Pinchas (ibid. 27, 18): "ויאמר ה' אל משה קח לך את יהושע בן נון איש אשר רוח בו וסמכת את ידך עליו... ונתת מהודך Hashem said to Moshe, "Take to yourself Yehoshua bin Nun, a man in whom there is spirit, and lean your hand upon him . . . You shall place of your majesty upon him, so that the entire assembly of Bnei Yisrael will pay heed."

Further on, the text reads (ibid. 22): "ויעש משה כאשר צוה ה' אותו ויקח את יהושע ויעמידהו לפני אלעזר הכהן ולפני כל העדה, ויסמוך את Moshe did as Hashem ידיו עליו ויצוהו כאשר דיבר ה' ביד משה."

had commanded him. He took Yehoshua and stood him before Elazar HaKohen and before the entire assembly. He leaned his hands upon him and commanded him, as Hashem had spoken through Moshe. Rashi comments (ibid. 23): "He leaned his hands"—Generously, much more than he had been commanded. For, HKB"H had commanded him, "Lean your hand (singular)," but he did it with both hands. Thus, he made him (Yehoshua) like a vessel which is full and overflowing, and he filled him generously with chochmah.

In Chiddushei Aggados (B.K. 92b), the Maharsha addresses the matter of Moshe leaning upon Yehoshua with both of his hands. He explains that he was instilling in him two strengths. The first would enable him to be victorious on the battlefield in military skirmishes; the second would instill in him the chochmah of the Torah.

In keeping with this discussion, we can suggest that Moshe Rabeinu learned to do this from his previous experience. When he dispatched the meraglim on their mission, he had the foresight to bestow upon Yehoshua the chochmah of the Torah via the letter "yud." This enabled Yehoshua to disagree with the meraglim's majority opinion and to avow that Eretz Yisrael could be conquered with the power of the Torah. Therefore, when the time came to transfer the mantle of leadership to Yehoshua, entrusting him to take the people into Eretz Yisrael, Moshe did so generously. He leaned upon his disciple with both hands, imparting to him the power to win military battles and also the power of the Torah and its chochmah. In truth, the two complement each other. It was with the power of the chochmah of the Torah that they succeeded in capturing the villages and cities of Eretz Yisrael.

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