



The Community

Boruch Hashem

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Rabbi Avrohom Lipszyc

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Rabbi's Article

Choosing vs. Taking

This week's Torah-portion tells us (-Deuteronomy 30:19), "This day, I call upon the heaven and the earth as witnesses [that I have warned] you: I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. You shall choose life, so that you and your offspring will live." Upon this, Rashi (-[Link](#)) comments, "you shall choose life: [G-d says,] 'I instruct you to choose the portion of life.' It is like a man who says to his son, 'Choose for yourself a fine portion of my estate,' and then directs him to the best portion, saying to him, 'This [is the portion which] you should choose for yourself!' And regarding this, the verse says (Psalms 16:5), 'The L-rd is my allotted portion and my cup; You guide my destiny.'" [That is to say:] 'You laid my hand upon the good lot, saying, 'Take this for yourself!'"

On this Rashi, there are 5 questions: (i) Why does Rashi comment at all, when the verse seems simply clear? (ii) Why the need of a metaphor? (iii) Why after the metaphor is there yet a need for a proof from a verse? (iv) Why in the metaphor does the father, "directs him," while with the verse, G-d, "Laid my hand upon"? And (v) Why in the metaphor is the person being told, "Choose," while with the verse, he is being told, "Take"?

The foundation of this entire Rashi is the question: The Torah already previously told us (-30:15), "Behold, I have set before you today life and good, and death and evil," hence, why is there any need for our verse at all?! To explain this, Rashi focuses on the two words that this verse has, which the previous one does not: *Uvcharto BaChaim* - "You shall choose life." And upon this, Rashi addresses a simple question: *Mima Nafshuch* ("to what is your mind")?! If we are speaking of someone who *understands and knows* that the way of Torah and Mitzvot is the way of goodness and life, then on his own he will choose life, and the verse doesn't need to tell him to do so. And if we are speaking of someone who does *not* understand and know so, then of what help will it be to tell him to choose this path?

Therefore, Rashi is telling us that we are speaking of one who does *not* know on his own that the path of Torah and Mitzvot is the path of goodness and of life. Hence, the verse is telling him, "You shall choose life." However, in order for him to trust that this is the good path, and it is worthy for him to give up on the 'shortcuts' to success, he must be assured of two things, that the one advising him: (i) knows which portion is good, and (ii) that the person cares for him, and wants him to get the good portion. Hence the metaphor of the father and son, for (i) a fathers cares about his son, and (ii) we are speaking of the father's possessions, of which he is showing the son which is the best, and telling him to choose that one.

When it comes to a father pointing out which is the best of all his possessions, even though the son doesn't know on his own, needs to be shown, and then told to choose it, he does so only because he trusts his father, nevertheless, trusting his father is enough. However, when it comes to giving up all other paths, and instead to choose the path of Torah and Mitzvot, not only does he not see that the path of Torah and Mitzvot are the good path that gives life, but he sees quite the contrary! He sees (-Jeremiah 12:1), "the way of the wicked prospered!"

Hence, Rashi does not suffice with the metaphor, and continues with the verse. The verse says, *toimech* (guide), which literally means (-Rashi on the verse), "You placed my hand onto the portion," meaning that G-d is placing our hand upon the physical goodness of, "My lot," G-d's lot, showing us how it is the path to *physical* goodness and to *physical* life. (cont. on page two)

This Week...

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2022 ★ כז' אלול תשפ"ב

Shabbat Candle Lighting: North Miami: 6:58 PM · Mincha: 6:45 PM

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2022 ★ כח' אלול תשפ"ב

TORAH READING: [Netzavim](#) (Deuteronomy 29:9-30:20) · HAFTORAH: [Isaiah](#) 61:10-63:9

Shacharit: 9:30 AM · Mincha: 6:45 PM · Shabbat Ends: North Miami: 7:49 PM

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2022 ★ כט' אלול תשפ"ב

EVE OF ROSH HASHANAH: Holiday Candle Lighting: North Miami: 6:56 PM · Mincha: 6:45 PM

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2022 ★ א' תשרי תשפ"ג

1ST DAY ROSH HASHANA: Shacharit: 9:00 AM · Hear the Shofar: 11:20 AM · Mincha/Tashlich: 6:30 PM

Candle Lighting: North Miami: **after** 7:47 PM use a pre-existing flame · Night: Eat a new fruit.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2022 ★ ב' תשרי תשפ"ג

2ND DAY ROSH HASHANA: Shacharit: 9:00 AM · Hear the Shofar: 11:20 AM · Take upon yourself a new mitzvah

Mincha: 6:30 PM · *Farbrengen*: 7:00 PM · Holiday Ends: North Miami: 7:46 PM

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2022 ★ ג' תשרי תשפ"ג

FAST OF GEDALIA: [Link](#) · Fast Starts: 6:00 AM · Fast Ends: 7:34 PM

The Parsha

The Portion of Nitzavim

This portion continues the testimony of Moses as he declares, "Today you all stand before G-d; your leaders, your tribal chiefs, your elders, law enforcers, and all Israelites. So too your children, your wives, the proselytes, even your woodcutters and water-drawers." They entered a covenant that applied not only to those present, but to all future generations as well. He warns them not to contemplate rejecting G-d, which will result in harsh punishment. Conversely he prophesied that eventually every single Jew will repent and will return to the Promised Land. Moses continues; no person can be excused by saying the Torah is too difficult, "For indeed the Torah is not beyond you, nor is it far, it is not in the heaven, nor across the sea. Because the Torah is very close to your mouth (speech), your heart (thought), so that you may observe it (action)."

Rabbi's Article (continued)

And with this we can understand the different wordings of the metaphor with the father/son and of the verse concerning G-d and us.

By the metaphor, the father can only tell the son, "Choose this," and ultimately, it is the son who must choose. However, G-d's telling us to choose life is not just G-d telling us, but rather, G-d is placing our hand upon our lot, and being that G-d has made this our lot, with which we are intrinsically connected with, hence, there is no choosing that we need to do, but rather, all that remains is for us to take that which our hand is already on.

Halacha (Jewish law) Outcome:

There is a legal issue that Rashi is clarifying for us, as well. If two partners agree on splitting their partnerships according to a lottery, meaning that a lottery will decide who gets which half, we find opinions that the lottery only chooses who gets what. However, each's actual acquisition of their half is only through them then taking their portion. Not so, when it came to dividing the Land of Israel, which was through a lottery that G-d commanded to perform.

Appreciation

We gratefully acknowledge with thanks all donations received during the past weeks

Mr. Moises Cascante

Mr. Jonathan Heller

Kosher Kingdom

Mr. & Mrs. Paul Kruss

Miss Chaya M. Lipszyc

Ms. Diana Marin

Mr. & Mrs. Heshel Raska

Rabbi & Mrs. Asher Sassonko

Mr. & Mrs. Russel Smith

Ms. Shira Westreich

Occasions

Yahrtzeit

Elul 27

Shlomo Dovid Przedborski
Father of Chana Lipszyc, and
grandfather of Avrohom Lipszyc

Elul 27

Yitzchak Elezra
Father of Rachel Elkayam

Tishrei 3

Shaindel Spivak
Grandmother of Ilya Spivak

Inspiration



Everyone agrees that here the lottery itself makes the acquisition.

Hence, when the father is telling the son which is the best portion, the son must still choose it. However, when G-d says that this is, "My lot," this not only chooses it for us, but actually acquires it for us, and hence, the language is, "placed my hand upon the portion," and now all that is left is for us to, "take," what is already ours.

Mystical Lesson:

The *Wine (Mystical Lesson) of Torah* hidden in this Rashi is that these two concepts of, (i) (the Father/son metaphor speaks of) (a) good portion, and (b) choose, versus (the verse of G-d speaks of) (a) good lottery, and (b) take, represent two fashions in which we can effect upon ourselves to, "You will choose life."

Fashion 1: We use our reasoning and logic to understand that Torah and Mitzvot are the good portion, --as it is known that portion refers to when we serve G-d according to our logic and understanding,-- and here, because ultimately we see two portions, hence, we have to choose one, and we choose the one of Torah and Mitzvot.

Fashion 2: Our connection to (and hence, our choosing of) Torah and Mitzvot, is above and beyond any rational, just as a lottery ("My lottery") is not about a rational choice, but one of an, "essence connection," between the choice and the chooser. And on this level of connection, there are no two paths from which he must choose one, for he sees but one and only path for him. Hence, there is no, "choose," to do, but only to, "take."