



Likkutei Sichos

Volume 15 | Vayeshev | Sichah 1

Finding the Pearl in the Sand and Pebbles

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1.

A MISPLACED ALLEGORY

Our Sages¹ explain the juxtaposition of *parshas Vayeshev* — which begins with (as Rashi² words it) the account of “the settlements of Yaakov and (the settlements of)³ his offspring” — to the conclusion of *parshas Vayishlach* which recounts⁴ the account of “the settlements of Eisav and his offspring” (all the way until the kings of Edom and the chieftains of Eisav who followed them)⁵ using an allegory:

An allegory of a king who had a pearl thrown among the earth and pebbles. The king needed to search through the earth and pebbles in order to remove the pearl from them. When the king found the pearl, he left the earth and pebbles and busied himself with the pearl.

The same applies in our context: we cannot get to the {account of the} settlements of Yaakov, unless we first recount (at least, in short) the account of the settlements of Eisav and his offspring.

We find a similar concept — as the *Midrash*⁶ mentions, here — regarding the “ten generations from Adam to Noach,” and the “ten generations from Noach

¹ *Midrash Tanchuma, parshas Vayeshev*, sec. 1. Mentioned in Rashi at the beginning of our *parshah*, (with numerous differences, as will be discussed in sec. 4). The *Tanchuma* prefaces (the allegory) with the following: “Why did Hashem first involve Himself in recounting the genealogy of the nations of the world?” (This follows from what the *Tanchuma* writes before that, “Why does the verse involve itself in recounting the genealogy...,” see there.) But from the fact that the *Tanchuma* concludes, “Therefore, the *parshah* of the chieftains of Eisav was placed near to this *parshah*...,” this implies that the allegory serves to explain the juxtaposition of the two *parshiyos* (and the precedence of Eisav’s genealogy before Yaakov’s genealogy) as will be mentioned in the body of the *sicha*. [For this reason, the allegory is specifically brought down in this *parshah*. See also, Rashi’s wording at the beginning of our *parshah*.]

This allegory can be found, albeit in a different style in *Bereishis Rabbah*, ch. 39, sec. 10 (and *Midrash Rus Rabbah*, at the end) regarding Avraham (and Dovid). It is mentioned in Rashi’s commentary on *Divrei Hayamim* 1, at the beginning (quoting *Bereishis Rabbah*) but according to some opinions (*Shem Haggdolim*, s.v., “*Rashi*”) this commentary was not actually written by Rashi.

² *Bereishis* 37:1.

³ *Mizrachi* and other commentaries to Rashi here.”

⁴ *Bereishis* 36:1, ff.

⁵ Rashi on *Bereishis*, 36:40.

⁶ So, too, in Rashi’s commentary, here. (See also *Bereishis Rabbah*, loc. cit. and *Rus Rabbah loc. cit.*) — But the *Tanchuma* concludes, “When He reached the pearl, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov” (without mentioning Noach). But in Rashi — “But when it came to Noach, Scripture spoke about him at length... and when it reached Avraham, Scripture spoke about him at length.” See further in the main text of the *sichah*, sec. 11.

to Avraham.” The Torah enumerates them in a single passage (without going into great length), and “when He reached the pearls, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, He busied himself with them.”

We need to clarify. Ostensibly, the allegory does not fit.

In the aforementioned examples, since there was a gap of ten generations between Adam and Noach, and there were a similar number of generations between Noach and Avraham, the Torah had to recount (briefly, at least) all the intervening generations until arriving at the most important ones — the generations of Noach and of Avraham. (Just like in the allegory, since the pearl was hidden **in** the earth, a person must search in the earth {the intervening generations} until he finds the pearl {the generations of Noach and of Avraham}.)

In contrast, Yaakov was **Yitzchak’s son!** Why would we need to sift through Eisav and his descendants in order to get to Yaakov and his descendants?

2.

NO SATISFACTORY ANSWER

In **this** context, we could suggest that throughout the events in Eisav’s life that intersected with Yaakov’s affairs (as the account of Yitzchak’s blessings, and the like), Yaakov was hidden and mixed into the “earth” of Eisav, so to speak. Meaning, the Torah had to recount the events of Eisav’s life in order to know how the events in **Yaakov’s** life played out.

We can suggest (as the *Maharal*⁷ explains) that even the account (at the end of *parshas Vayishlach*)⁸ of Eisav’s permanent settlement in Mount Seir is relevant to the settlements of Yaakov. For specifically after Eisav conquered

⁷ *Gur Aryeh*, ad. loc.

⁸ *Bereishis* 36:8 ff.

Mount Seir and settled there, Yaakov became the (sole) inheritor of the land of Israel.⁹ (In fact, this is the purpose of the account of the settlements of Yaakov and his offspring — to teach us of “their settlements and their wanderings until they became settled.”)¹⁰

However, aside from the fact that this answer is not altogether smooth — because the allegory indicates that the pearl **is hidden in** the earth, and must be located — it only makes sense to say that Yaakov and Eisav were **connected**, or at the very most (as the *Maharal* writes), an “*iruv* (mixture)” of “Yaakov and Eisav regarding their settlements.” However, they were not mingled to the extent that Yaakov’s settlement was **hidden** among the settlements of Eisav (the earth), making it necessary for us to search for it and find him **among** the settlements of Eisav.

The question is even more puzzling: The verse enumerates the descendants (and chieftains) of Eisav and their settlements, all the way until the kings of Edom, “who reigned... before a king reigned over the children of Israel.”¹¹ This spans the time all the way until **King Shaul**,¹² and the chieftains of Eisav who lived, “**after** Hadar died and their kingdom had ceased.”¹³ **These** people were not “mixed” at all with the settlements of Yaakov and his offspring.

3.

LEAVING THE EARTH AND PEBBLES

Additionally, we need to clarify a number of details in the allegory, and understand their meaning in the analogue. To mention a few:

⁹ See Rashi on *Bereishis* 36:7.

¹⁰ Rashi, *Bereishis* 37:2. See *Mizrachi* and *Levush*, on *Bereishis* 37:1.

¹¹ *Bereishis* 36:31.

¹² See Rashi on *Bereishis* 36:31, “and in the days of Shaul...” See the commentators on Rashi, *ibid*; *Bereishis Rabbah*, ch. 83, sec. 2, and the *Maharzav*. [But see *Yefeh Toar*, and Rashi, on *Bereishis Rabbah* *ibid*. Note Rashi (and other commentators) to *Melachim* 1, 22:48. Here is not the place for further elaboration.] But see *Rashbam*, *Ibn Ezra*, et al, on *Bereishis* 36:31.

¹³ Rashi on *Bereishis* 36:40.

- a. What is the significance of these two items: “earth” and “pebbles”?
- b. Why does the allegory emphasize that “when the king found the pearl, **he left the earth and pebbles**, and busied himself with the pearl”? Seemingly, it is obvious that as soon as the king found the pearl, he would direct all of his attention toward it. The allegory should have been expressed more succinctly: “When the king found the pearl, he busied himself with it.”

The lengthy wording of the allegory clearly indicates that even **after** finding the pearl (“when the king **found** the pearl”) the king had to perform a separate, intentional act — “he **left** the earth” — in order to busy himself with the pearl.

4.

WHY THE DIFFERENT WORDING

Further in this regard: We have mentioned many times that Rashi’s comments on Torah contain, “wondrous ideas.”¹⁴ We find that here, in his commentary, Rashi¹⁵ cites the allegory from the *Midrash*, but with discrepancies. To mention a few:

- a. Instead of, “to search through the earth,” Rashi writes, “feels the sand, and **sifts it in a sieve.**”

[This detail “sifts it in a sieve” is mentioned by the *Midrash* in a different place¹⁶ where this allegory is brought down. However, there, the general allegory is taught in an entirely different style, and Rashi cites (from there?) only the detail “sifts it in a sieve.”]

¹⁴ *Shalah*, in his commentary on tractate *Shavuot* (181a).

¹⁵ {Rashi’s commentary on *Bereishis* 37:1.}

¹⁶ *Bereishis Rabbah*, *ibid.*

- b. Rashi also mentions both “sand” and “pebbles,” but with a discrepancy: In the beginning of the allegory, Rashi **only** mentions “sand” (“that fell into the sand... feels the sand”), but in the end of the allegory he says, “once he finds it, he throws away the **pebbles**” without mentioning “sand.”
- c. Rashi also quotes the final detail of the allegory using a variant wording (as mentioned): “And once he finds it, he **throws** away the pebbles” (“throws” instead of “leaves”).

5.

THE PEARL HIDES AMONG THE PEBBLES

*Maharal*¹⁷ explains why Rashi does not mention sand at the end of the allegory, but rather, “he throws away the **pebbles**”: These words serve to explain why the verse no longer talks about Eisav after it starts telling of the settlements of Yaakov — all of the other (later) settlements of Eisav that are irrelevant to the settlements of Yaakov are like pebbles that must be thrown out.

They are called “pebbles” because the later settlements of Eisav, from the outset, do not “mix” with the settlements of Yaakov, similar to pebbles, because “the pearl does not mix with the pebbles, only with the sand.”¹⁸

However, this explanation is difficult to understand, for the following reasons:

[Besides the fact that according to this interpretation the clause, “he throws away the pebbles” does not introduce a new insight, for the idea that “once the verse begins to discuss Yaakov it no longer talks about Eisav” has already been demonstrated clearly at the beginning of the allegory, in that the person only “feels the sand... **until** he finds the pearl.”

¹⁷ {*Gur Aryeh*, ad. loc.}

¹⁸ {*Ibid.*}

Additionally,] according to this interpretation, it emerges that even before the person finds the pearl he does not need to search for it among the pebbles (because the pearl does not mix at all with the pebbles). However, Rashi's wording (that specifically) "**once he finds it**, he throws away the pebbles," indicates that before he finds the pearl, it is also mixed in with the pebbles. As is explicit in the wording of the aforementioned *Midrash*, "thrown among the earth and pebbles... to search through the earth and pebbles."

6.

NOT ABOUT YAAKOV AND ESAV THEMSELVES

The explanation for all this:

The purpose of Yaakov's settling in this land was not only for Yaakov and his offspring to inhabit their land, the land of Israel. Rather (as Yaakov told Eisav),¹⁹ "until I come to my lord at Seir," meaning — as Rashi clarifies — the fulfilment of the prophecy, "in the days of the Moshiach... as it says,²⁰ 'saviors will arise upon Mount Zion to judge the Mountain of Eisav.'"

This, then, is the intent of our Rabbis in the allegory: Here, we are (primarily) not talking about the settlements of Yaakov in and of themselves (for it is not fitting to say that they are **hidden** among the settlements of Eisav and his offspring). Rather, here we are discussing the final and ultimate goal that Yaakov must achieve: "I come... **at Seir**." Since this goal can only be achieved through the *avodah* in (and with) the settlements of Eisav and his offspring (as we will explain), the ultimate and Yaakov's state of consummate perfection is hidden within Eisav.

On this basis we can appreciate why Torah details the settlements of Eisav and his offspring — the kings of Edom, all the way until King Hadar who lived in the times of King Shaul. For Shaul was called, "the Moshiach {anointed one} of

¹⁹ *Bereishis* 33:14.

²⁰ *Ovadiah* 1:21.

Hashem,”²¹ and if the Jewish nation had merited, the prophecy, “saviors will arise upon Mount Zion to judge the Mountain of Eisav,” would have been fulfilled through him.

7.

USE THE SAND AND DESTROY THE PEBBLES

This also explains the two elements of “earth” and “pebbles” in the allegory, for regarding the judgment of the Mountain of Eisav, there are two ways to seek to refine it and mete out justice.

- a. The manner in which Eisav will be **refined** in the Future Era — as will be the case for many of the nations — is that they will be transformed to goodness.²² (As the verse says,²³ “For then I will change the nations to speak a pure language, so that they will all proclaim... to worship Him...”) As is hinted at in the statement of our Sages,²⁴ “The pig is destined to become pure.” The pig is an allusion to the kingdom of Edom.²⁵
- b. The aspect of Eisav that is wholly evil must be **destroyed**, as the verse says,²⁶ “The house of Yaakov will be fire, the house of Yosef a flame, and the house of Eisav as straw... **and devour them, and there will be no survivor....**”

This is similar to the two elements of sand and pebbles. earth serves to cover and hide — as in our case, the earth covers over and hides the pearl. But it is not absolute evil; we can transform it to goodness to the extent that we benefit from it, like a peel that protects fruit²⁷ (similar to how things will be in the Future

²¹ *Shmuel I* 24:7,11; and other places.

²² See *Likkutei Torah, parshas Re'eh*, s.v. “*vechol banayich*,” ch. 3.

²³ *Tzefanyah* 3:9.

²⁴ Mentioned and sourced in *Likkutei Torah*, *ibid*; see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 12, p. 175.

²⁵ *Vayikra Rabbah* (and others) at the end of *parshas Shemini*; and in many other places; see Rashi, *Bereishis* 26:34.

²⁶ *Ovadiah* 1:18; mentioned in *Rashi Yoshon* at the beginning of our *parshah*; see Rashi, *Bereishis* 30:25.

²⁷ See *Shelah*, 19b; *Or Hatorah, parshas Naso*, p. 272; *Sefer Hamamaarim* 5659, p. 156; et al.

Era, “foreigners will arise and tend your flocks”).²⁸ However, pebbles represent not only something that conceals to the extent that it serves no beneficial purpose, but moreover, a **damaging** object (like the common expression in the *Talmud*²⁹ regarding damage caused by an animal) which we must destroy.

8.

TOHU AND TIKKUN

Yaakov achieves his purpose and ultimate goal when the promise that “the older one {Eisav} will serve the younger one {Yaakov}”³⁰ is fulfilled by judging the mountain of Eisav.

The reason (according to the deeper dimension of Torah) why Eisav is called the “older one” and why Yaakov’s fulfillment depends on the older one serving the younger one is similar to³¹ the way a person, a **medaber**,³² needs to utilize (to eat) animals, plant-life, and inanimate objects in order for him to live, and do what he needs to do.³³

The same holds true regarding the clause “the older one will serve the younger one.” Eisav’s supernal source is beyond Yaakov’s supernal source (and for this reason, Eisav was the firstborn). As explained in *Kabbalah* and

²⁸ *Yeshaya* 61:5.

²⁹ *Bava Kamma* 2:1, et. al. {The *Mishnah* describes a case in which pebbles inflict damage: “Pebbles were propelled from under its {an animal’s} feet and those pebbles hit and broke vessels.”}

³⁰ *Bereishis* 25:23.

³¹ See *Torah Or*, “*Beshalach*,” 65d ff.; *Likkutei Torah*, “*Tzav*,” 13b; and in many other places.

³² {The world is made up of four types of creations, *domem*, *tzomeiach*, *chai*, and *medaber*; inorganic objects, plant-life, animals, and humans (*medaber*, lit., “speakers”).}

³³ {A person needs to sustain himself from these lower elements because they have a higher spiritual source than the person, in some respects.}

Chassidus,³⁴ Eisav's source is from the world of *tohu*,³⁵ which is beyond the world of *tikkun* — Yaakov's level.

When Yaakov refines the sparks of holiness of *tohu* that are found in Eisav, elevating them to their source, Yaakov's level (*tikkun*) also receives an elevation, i.e., in this way he reaches his purpose and complete state.

This also serves as another reason (in addition to what was mentioned above in section 6) why the verse enumerates the Edomite kings who reigned in the land of Edom “before a king reigned over the children of Israel.” This hints at the elevation that Yaakov attains through transforming Eisav. As known,³⁶ the supernal source of the kings of Edom is in the original “kings” of *tohu*, who therefore, “reigned **before** a king reigned over the children of Israel,” for they (in their supernal source) are loftier (and thus, take precedence over) the kings of Israel (*tikkun*).

9.

EARTH AND PEBBLES AS A MEANS TO AN END

This is also a directive for Jewish people living throughout the era of our exile:

The descent into exile — and specifically, this final exile, the Edomite exile (“the settlements of Eisav and his offspring”) — is for the purpose of elevating the sparks of holiness that are now found in physical objects. By accomplishing

³⁴ See *Torah Ohr*, and *Toras Chaim*, at the beginning of *parshas Vayishlach*, as well as many other sources.

³⁵ {*Tohu* and *tikkun* — (Kabbalistic terms; lit. "chaos" and "rectification"); *Kabbalah* explains that the world was initially in a spiritual condition called *tohu* (chaos), an elevated realm of spiritual existence in which there was an over-abundance of Divine *light*, and a paucity of vessels to contain this *light*. This former spiritual world, therefore, lacked the balance that characterizes our current world of *tikkun* (rectified). *Tohu* collapsed in an event called *sheviras hakeilim* — the breaking of the vessels — when the *light* departed from them. This “break” was planned by Hashem in the first place, for it was a “destruction for the purpose of building,” since only then could there exist the orderly world we are familiar with, the world of *tikkun* (“rectification” or “order”). This world possesses lesser *lights*, but the vessels are plentiful. The sparks of holiness that “fell” when the vessels were broken are hidden within various parts of our world, and awaiting their “correction” through mankind’s divine service.}

³⁶ See also *Zohar*, vol. 3, 128a.

this, the soul is elevated beyond its own source, for the source of the sparks is in the world of *tohu* that is higher than the source of the soul which is in the world of *tikkun*.

Our Sages allude to the *avodah* of elevating the sparks in the allegory of the pearl thrown among the earth and pebbles.

The pearl is analogous to the spark of holiness that fell into the earth and pebbles, which allude to the two types of physical objects:

earth represents physical objects that only cover and conceal the sparks of holiness (the pearl). A Jewish person, through his *avodah*, can refine the sparks and elevate them to their source.

Pebbles represent objects that are completely negative, to the extent that it is impossible to extract (through regular *avodah*)³⁷ the spark of holiness (from some of them). (They also contain a pearl — a spark of holiness — for if not for it, they would not survive; but the spark is completely concealed.)³⁸ These objects must be totally **pushed away**.³⁹

However, even after “reaching the pearl,” before busying himself with the pearl, a person must first be warned: “he **left** the earth.” Meaning, he must clearly indicate that the physical objects, in and of themselves (if not for the pearl) are insignificant to him. The reason why he busies himself with physical objects is **only** to extract the sparks of goodness and holiness that are concealed in them.

Therefore, the idea that “he left the earth...” is relevant to obtaining the pearls itself: When a person values physical objects just for their material worth, not only will he be unable to properly extricate the sparks, but moreover it is possible that his involvement with materialism will bring a descent to his {G-dly} soul.

³⁷ The exception would be through the *avodah* of repentance and challenges (see *Derech Mitzvosecha*, 191a, ff.).

³⁸ See *Sefer Hamaamorim*, 5670 (1910), p. 103; *Hemshech* 5672, vol. 2, ch. 374.

³⁹ See *Likkutei Torah, Shir Hashirim*, 6d.

Specifically, when a person eats, drinks, and engages in all of his materialistic matters — “in all that you do,”⁴⁰ in accord with {the allegory}, “he left,” i.e., he leaves behind the earth and pebbles — he will refine the sparks properly, and this will bring a great elevation to his soul.

10.

THROW THE EARTH AND PEBBLE AWAY AS SOON AS YOU DON'T NEED THEM

On this basis we can also appreciate the discrepancies⁴¹ in Rashi's commentary. Through them, Rashi hints (according to the wine of Torah⁴² in Rashi's commentary) at the **details** of the process of the *avodah* of refining the sparks.

The primary *avodah* of refining the sparks is performed in the “sand” (not in the “pebbles,” from which we cannot usually extract the spark, as mentioned). Therefore, a person first needs to “feel {in} the sand,” i.e., he must feel, estimate, and search in the place where the pearls are found — in the sand. He should not search (among the pebbles) where the pearl is not found (in a state that allows its refinement).

Following this, i.e., when there is already a refinement of the sand, which earlier contained an admixture of good and bad, and **refined** the sparks — {he then further} “sifts it in a sieve.” Meaning, he engages in the *avodah* of **separating** the good and the bad completely — he finds and extracts from this mixture the pearl — the spark of holiness.

Following this, Rashi concludes (similar to the *Midrash*) by cautioning, “once he finds it, he throws away the pebbles from his hand.” This means that he

⁴⁰ {*Devarim* 15:18.}

⁴¹ {As compared to the *Midrash*; see sec. 4, above.}

⁴² {The deeper teachings of Torah.}

must **throw away** the separated bad and waste — here, the sieved **sand** is also called “**pebbles.**”

To explain: As long as a person has not yet **separated** the good from the bad, physical objects are only like sand — they only hide the spark of G-dliness. However, by sifting it in a sieve — by **separating** the good from the bad — the sand is transformed into pebbles, which we must dispose of entirely, because now it contains no goodness or holiness, and has become completely negative.

In a person’s *avodah*, this refers to the following: **Absolute** refinement of a physical object can occur only if a person approaches it with the mindset that the physical object independently, not only has have no discrete value — and therefore, as soon as he finds the pearl, he discards the sand, as mentioned — but moreover, physical objects in and of themselves (if not for the sparks of holiness within them) are equivalent to **pebbles**. Therefore, immediately after finding the pearl, “he **throws away** the pebbles,” and specifically in this way, “takes the pearl.” (As our Sages say,⁴³ “He ate the insides {of the fruit}, and threw away the shell” — throwing away the shell is part of eating the insides.)

11.

PREPARING FOR YAAKOV AND PREPARING FOR *MATAN TORAH*

The *avodah* of refining the sparks began primarily with *Yaakov’s avodah*.⁴⁴ For he began the (primary) preparation for *Matan Torah*⁴⁵ (as we can observe simply: the Egyptian exile, which served as a preparation for *Matan Torah*,⁴⁶ began with Yaakov (and his children) descending to Egypt).

The accomplishment of *Matan Torah* was the diffusion of G-dliness beyond the worlds. As a result of this, specifically, can we fully refine the sparks, as the allegory, “he throws away the pebbles.” For relative to the G-dliness that is

⁴³ *Chagigah* 15b.

⁴⁴ See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 10, p. 89, ff.

⁴⁵ See *Or Hatorah*, *parshas Chayei Sarah*, 126a.

⁴⁶ See *Torah Ohr*, 74a, and in many other places.

invested in the world, the world carries significance, so to speak, However, to successfully carry out the *avodah* of throwing “away the pebbles” requires that physical objects are not seen as possessing discrete value. Only from the vantage point of the G-dly *light* beyond the worlds, relative to which the world has no discrete value, are we empowered to engage in the aforementioned *avodah* in a perfect sense.

This explains why Rashi mentions the allegory of the pearl specifically in this *parshah*, in conjunction with Yaakov, and not Avraham and Noach. Even though they also performed the *avodah* of refining the sparks — Noach refined the ten generations before him, and Avraham did something similar (and even more so) — they did not do it in accord with {the allegory}, “he throws away the pebbles and takes the pearl.” Even after they refined the sparks, the world remained a discrete existence.

Nonetheless, Rashi mentions the concept of the ten generations from Noach to Avraham (in connection with, “the allegory of a pearl...”) in order to hint that only after Noach and Avraham’s *avodah* of refining the world could Yaakov perform his own *avodah* of refining the world.

Noach brought refinement to matters connected with the **world**: Before Noach’s *avodah*, “the world had become filled with robbery.”⁴⁷ Noach, through his *avodah*, brought the world to a fixed state, as reflected in our Sages’ statement regarding Noach: “He saw a new world.”⁴⁸ (Therefore, the covenant Hashem forged with Noach was regarding the existence of the world:⁴⁹ “Continuously, all the days of the earth... shall not cease.”)

Avraham’s accomplishment was: He revealed **G-dliness** in the world:⁵⁰ “and there he proclaimed in the name of Hashem, G-d of the universe.” (This suggests that the seven Noachide laws must be performed not predicated upon

⁴⁷ Bereishis 6:11.

⁴⁸ Bereishis Rabbah, ch. 30, sec. 8, and the sources referenced there.

⁴⁹ Bereishis 8:22; see at length Sefer Hamaamorim 5630 and 5654, s.v. *Hinei Anochi Kores Bris*; and others.

⁵⁰ Bereishis 21:33.

mortal intellect, but rather because their observance is what Hashem commanded.)⁵¹

Through these two methods, Yaakov could then come and perform his refinement — the preparation for *Matan Torah* that caused G-dliness **beyond** the world to be drawn down and revealed, and this gives the ability to bring the world to a complete state of refinement.

12.

THE MACROCOSM

Just as the above holds true regarding the *avodah* of every individual Jew in refining the sparks — he must do it in accord with {the allegory}, “once he finds it, he throws away the pebbles” — so too regarding the Jewish nation as a whole.

The general purpose of exile is for the Jewish people to refine the sparks at all times and in all locations in the {period of} exile (as mentioned above in section 9). As the verse says regarding the Egyptian exile,⁵² “and afterward, they will leave with great wealth.” This refers to the sparks of holiness that the Jewish people took from there.

Therefore {just as on the individual level, after the extraction of the sparks, the “sand” is thrown away, so, too, on the national level} as soon as the time of the Egyptian exile ended — when they found the pearl — they immediately departed Egypt, “in the blink of an eye.”⁵³ Seemingly, what was the rush? The servitude had already ended, and the Jewish people found themselves in Goshen, “the choicest of the land.”⁵⁴ So why was it so important that they not remain in *Goshen* for another short while? The answer is that this is how the

⁵¹ See *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Melachim*,” ch. 8, par. 11.

⁵² *Bereishis* 15:14.

⁵³ *Mechilta* and Rashi’s commentary on *Shemos* 12:41.

⁵⁴ {*Bereishis* 47:5,11.}

sparks are refined: as soon as one finds the pearl, the pebbles must be thrown away.

And the same also applies to completing the refinement of the sparks and redemption from this final exile, the Edomite exile — “As in the days when you left the land of Egypt, I will show you wonders.”⁵⁵ Meaning, as soon as the time comes, “**immediately**, they will be redeemed.”⁵⁶ All Jews will leave all their lands and come with Moshiach to “the land... that the eyes of Hashem, your G-d are always upon it,”⁵⁷ with the true and ultimate redemption. May it be very soon, in actuality.

— Based on talks delivered on *Shabbos parshas Vayeshev* 5725 (1964) and *Yud Tes Kislev* 5730 (1969)

⁵⁵ *Michah* 7:15.

⁵⁶ *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Teshuvah*,” ch. 7, par. 5.

⁵⁷ *Devarim* 11:12.