

Likkutei Sichos

On the weekly Torah readings and holidays

From the Talks of

**The Lubavitcher Rebbe
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Anointed Abbreviations

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Considerable effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the translation while maintaining its clarity. However, as in all translations, inadvertent errors may occur.

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1.

YOU SHALL ANOINT WITH IT

In his commentary on the verse,¹ “You shall anoint with it the Tent of Meeting,” Rashi quotes the words, “You shall anoint with it,” and explains: “All anointings resemble the Greek letter *kaf*, כ”ף ך״ף, except for that of kings, which resembles a crown.”

The source for Rashi’s explanation regarding anointing is found in the Gemara, in *Horayos*² and *Kerisos*.³ The Gemara (in *Horayos*) states: “The anointing of kings resembles a crown, while that of the kohanim resemble a *ki*, כִּי. What does ‘resembling a *ki*’ mean? Rav Menashya bar Gadda said: It resembles the Greek letter *kaf*.”

However, in Rashi’s commentary, there are a few details where Rashi deviates from the Gemara’s wording: (a) Rashi says, “**all** anointings,” not just the anointing of kohanim, as the Gemara says. (b) Rashi prefaces and emphasizes “all anointings” before mentioning the anointing of kings. (c) Moreover, even afterwards, Rashi does not present the anointing of kings as a separate clause (law), as in the Gemara. Instead, Rashi notes it as an exception to the general rule concerning “all anointings” — “**except** for that of kings.”

The reason for Rashi’s variances is self-evident: Here, in his commentary on the Torah, Rashi explains the straightforward interpretation of **Scripture**. **These** verses discuss anointings of **many** sorts: the anointing of the *mishkan*, of the ark, of its vessels,⁴ and of Aharon and his sons.⁵ However, the Torah does not mention the anointing of kings in this passage. Therefore, Rashi explains: “**all** anointings” — that is, the ones mentioned in **these** passages — “resemble the Greek letter *kaf*, except for that of kings (which is **not** discussed in these verses), which resembles a crown.”

However, based on this explanation, a question arises: Rashi’s general principle in his commentary on the Torah is as follows: (His work is not halachic. Rather) “I have come only to explain the straightforward interpretation of Scripture.”⁶ As such, why does Rashi need to add **here** at all, “except for that of kings,” when in this passage — and in the preceding verses and passages as well — the Torah does not mention the anointing of kings *whatsoever*?⁷

¹ *Shemos* 30:26.

² *Horayos* 12a.

³ *Kerisos* 5b.

⁴ *Shemos* 30:26 ff.

⁵ *Shemos* 30:30.

⁶ Rashi on *Bereishis* 3:8; Rashi writes similarly in his commentary on *Bereishis* 3:24; et al.

⁷ It isn’t mentioned anywhere **later** in Chumash either.

2.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF ANOINTING

Regarding the method of anointing, Rashi already explained several times in the previous *parshah* (*parshas Tetzaveh*):

The verse says,⁸ “And matzah wafers anointed with oil.” Rashi says, “After baking them, he would anoint them in the shape the Greek letter *kaf*, which is shaped like our letter *nun*.” A few verses later,⁹ regarding the anointing of Aharon, Rashi says: “This anointing, too, resembled a ם {the Greek letter *kaf*}. (Oil was placed on his head, between his eyebrows, and joined with his finger).” And later, in the verse dealing with the anointing of the altar,¹⁰ Rashi says: “And all anointings resembled the Greek letter *kaf*.”

Understood simply, the reason (and source for) why Rashi says in the (second) verse, which deals with Aharon’s anointing, “This anointing, too, resembled a ם {the Greek letter *kaf*}” is because this appears as a **continuation** of the previous verse, which deals with the anointing of the matzah wafers, which was done this way. But on this basis, we need to clarify: Why does Rashi say something different in his commentary on the (third) verse, which deals with the anointing of the altar, where he presents a general **rule**, “And all anointings,” rather than explaining this verse: “**This** anointing, too (resembles the Greek letter *kaf*)” as he does regarding Aharon’s anointing in the previous verse?

Perhaps we can suggest that the difference is as follows: The anointing of the matzah wafers and Aharon were totally different. The matzah wafers were anointed with {ordinary} olive oil, and doing so was done as part of the offering of a sacrifice.¹¹ Aharon, on the other hand, was anointed with the anointing oil,¹² and was required to fulfill the command, “you shall sanctify him... to serve as a kohen.”¹³

Moreover, the meaning of the word “anointing” is different in the context of “anointing the *mishkan*, Kohanim, and kings” than in the anointing of wafers. As **Rashi** explains (in our *parshah*)¹⁴ regarding “anointing the *mishkan*, kohanim, and kings,” the term *anointing* “is translated as a term denoting prestige,” while regarding “anointed wafers” (and the like), “their Aramaic translation has the same semantic meaning as the original Hebrew terms.”¹⁵

In contrast, the third anointing mentioned in Scripture, the anointing of the altar, is not different from Aharon’s anointing that was discussed before it. **This** anointing, too (as Rashi

⁸ *Shemos* 29:2.

⁹ *Shemos* 29:7.

¹⁰ *Shemos* 29:36.

¹¹ As the simple reading of *Shemos* 29:2 indicates. See later in the *sichah* (and in fn. 15); see also Rashi on *Vayikra* 2:4 (quoted later in this *sichah*, Section 3).

¹² As the verse says explicitly *Shemos* 29:7.

¹³ *Shemos* 30:30.

¹⁴ *Shemos* 30:29.

¹⁵ And understood simply the purpose of the anointing was not to sanctify the wafers holy.

notes and prefaces)¹⁶ is done using the anointing oil and for the purpose recorded in the Torah: “to **consecrate** it {the altar}.”¹⁷

Accordingly, Rashi emphasizes specifically regarding Aharon’s anointing that “**this anointing, too...**”: The emphasis of the addition, “too,” is primarily (not because here the verse speaks about anointing a different object — anointing Aharon and not the wafers — but) because this is a different **sort** of anointing (a mark of prestige). Rashi clarifies that notwithstanding this fact (that it is a different type of anointing), “this anointing, too, resembled the Greek letter *kaf*.”

In contrast, regarding anointing the altar with anointing oil, which is of the same type as Aharon’s anointing, Rashi does not need to emphasize, “This anointing, **too.**”

3.

A CONTRADICTION IN RASHI’S COMMENTARY

But we still need to clarify why, seemingly, Rashi’s explanation regarding the anointing of matzah wafers in *parshas Tetzaveh* contradicts his explanation in *parshas Vayikra*:¹⁸

In *parshas Tetzaveh*, Rashi says **simply** that although the anointing of the matzah wafers was different, it was nevertheless applied in the same manner as the anointings with the anointing oil.

[In fact, Rashi¹⁹ even compares the manner of **Aharon’s** anointing to the anointing of the wafers (“This anointing, too”). Similarly, Rashi²⁰ concludes using inclusive wording: “**All** anointings resembled the Greek letter *kaf*.” The fact that Rashi does not differentiate²¹ indicates that by his words “all anointings,” he means (simply) **all** anointings, or at least all those that have been spoken about so far, *including* the anointing of the matzah wafers.]

In contrast, in *parshas Vayikra*, on the words, “matzah wafers anointed with oil,” regarding a *korban minchah*, Rashi cites two opinions regarding how these wafers were anointed:²² “Some say he would anoint them and then anoint them again until all the oil in the *log*²³ was consumed... and some say he would anoint them resembles the Greek letter *kaf*.” In other words, according to one opinion that Rashi cites (the first opinion),²⁴ the anointing of the

¹⁶ Rashi on *Shemos* 29:36.

¹⁷ *Shemos* 29:36.

¹⁸ Rashi on *Vayikra* 2:4.

¹⁹ Rashi on *Shemos* 29:7.

²⁰ Rashi on *Shemos* 29:36.

²¹ I.e., he does not state, “all anointings **with it**” (— with the anointing oil), or something similar.

²² In accordance with the two opinions mentioned in *Menachos* 75a (see *Re'em* on Rashi on *Vayikra* 2:4). In contrast, *Toras Kohanim* on *Vayikra* 2:4 only quotes the opinion of Rabbi Elazar ben Yaakov, “he would anoint them to resemble the Greek letter *kaf*,” and not the second opinion.

²³ {A measurement equaling approx. 10 fluid ounces in modern measurements.}

²⁴ However, we can simply posit that the two interpretations are of equal weight, since Rashi emphasizes (and further elaborates) “and our Rabbis differed regarding their anointing,” thus combining the two

wafers (being a different sort of anointing) was **not** performed like the other anointings (which were performed with the anointing oil).²⁵ This is at odds with his words in *parshas Tetzaveh*, where Rashi presents only one opinion **definitively**.

4.

LIKE THE GREEK *KAF*

We will clarify this by first answering the question posed earlier as it applies to **all** of Rashi's earlier comments: Rashi's Torah commentary is not a book of halachos. Thus, we must clarify: What difference does it make to the simple understanding of Scripture how the anointing was performed?

Even if we find a reason why Rashi needs to explain the manner of anointing to the novice Torah student²⁶, we still need to clarify why Rashi needs to elaborate and write that it “resembles the Greek letter **kaf**, which is made like our *nun*,” as opposed to just saying succinctly that the anointing is in the shape of “our *nun*!”

Moreover, in his subsequent comments, when Rashi reiterates what form the anointing resembled, he always uses the phrase “resembles the Greek letter *kaf*,” without mentioning that it is “like our *nun*.” This is perplexing: Let's assume that Rashi needs to inform us that it “resembles the Greek letter *kaf*,” but after he has informed us of this once, it would be more appropriate and logical that when describing the anointing in subsequent comments, he should use the conclusion — “resembling a *nun*.” This is especially true since this latter symbolic representation is more familiar and straightforward to the novice Torah student. In practice, however, Rashi explains that it is “like our *nun*” only the first time, and thereafter, each time, he says only “resembles the Greek letter *kaf*!”

interpretations together (see *Sefer Klalei Rashi* [Kehos 1980], ch. 4, par. 4 and the sources cited there). Note *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 17, p. 253, fn. 26.

²⁵ As Rambam rules (*Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Maaseh Hakarbanos*,” ch. 13, par. 9) that “he smears them and then smears them again until all of the oil in the *log* is finished.”

²⁶ {In the Hebrew original, “*ben chamesh lemikra*”; meaning, “a five-year-old beginning to learn Scripture.” }

VERSIONS OF RASHI'S TEXT

We will understand this by first clarifying and explaining the correct version of the wording (regarding “Greek *kaf*”) in Rashi's commentary:

In *Kerisos*, the Gemara says (regarding the anointing of kohanim): “resembling a *ki*... resembling the Greek *ki*, כִּי.” In *Horayos*, the version in our printed Gemaras (as mentioned in Section 1): “resembles the Greek letter **kaf**.” In manuscripts²⁷ (of *Horayos*), the version is “a Greek *ki*, כִּי,” like the version in *Kerisos*. In *Menachos* (regarding anointing the wafers), the Mishnah says:²⁸ “resembling a *ki*,” כִּי, and the *Gemara*²⁹ explains “it resembles a Greek *ki*.”

There are many different extant versions of Rashi's commentary on the Torah. The version printed in the standard Chumash — in the first and third explanations mentioned above in *parshas Tetzaveh*, and in the explanation in our *parshah* and *parshas Vayikra* — says, “resembling the Greek letter *kaf*.” By contrast, in the second explanation mentioned above (regarding Aharon's anointing), the wording is “resembling *k*”י, כִּי.”

However, in manuscripts of Rashi's commentary, and likewise, in his commentary's first and second printings, there are many **variations**. In most of those I have seen, the version in our *parshah* (and in the two explanations mentioned above in *parshas Tetzaveh* and *parshas Vayikra*) is “resembling a *ki*.” Additionally, in the first explanation mentioned above in *parshas Tetzaveh*, it says, “resembling a Greek **ki**.” (But in some of the manuscripts, Rashi is then presented as clarifying, “meaning, it resembles the Greek letter *kaf*.”)

Understood simply, Rashi's intention in writing “resembling a *ki*,” is the same as the Gemara's, that is, (as the Gemara itself explains) “it resembles the Greek letter *ki*” (like the letter “*ki*” in the Greek language).

But based on this, a significant difficulty emerges (according to most versions in the manuscripts mentioned above — “resembling a *ki*”): If the Gemara is not satisfied by just writing the words, “resembling a *ki*,” and feels the need to explain in each place what this means, how much more should Rashi, in his Torah commentary which was intended for a novice student of Torah, have not been content to only the words, “resembling a *ki*”!

Perhaps we can answer that in all the places (where he says “resembling a *ki*”), Rashi relies on the fact that he had already explained the first time (that this means, “resembles the Greek letter *ki* which is made like our *nun*,” or similar phrasings). But this answer does stand up

²⁷ See *Dikdukei Sofrim* there (it appears he possessed only one manuscript of tractate *Horayos*). However, Rashi's commentary on *Horayos* concludes with the phrase “until it reaches the neck like a Greek *kaf*.” Note that in *Dikdukei Sofrim* we find that none of the early printed editions of Rashi's commentary include the illustration of the Greek *kaf*.

²⁸ *Menachos* 74b.

²⁹ *Menachos* 75b.

to scrutiny because then, in each place, he should have added (one) word — “a Greek” (“Greek *ki*”) — to clarify that this is a **letter** in the Greek language.

Therefore, it seems to me that in the places where Rashi, in his Torah commentary, writes, “resembling a *ki*,” the word, “*ki*” is (**not** a quote of the Gemara’s words, where the intention is to a letter by the name of “*ki*”; instead, it is) an **acronym**. Thus, it should be recorded as it appears in our printed version of Rashi, “resembling *k”i*”³⁰ (with a symbol of “*gershayim*”³¹ to indicate an acronym). That is: *k”i*, כ”י, stands for “**kaf yevanis** {Greek *kaf*, כף יונית}” (as Rashi explains in his **first** explanation in *parshas Tetzaveh*).

[A reader simply assumes that the quotation marks in the word “*k”i*” indicate that this is the name of a letter. But based on the above, and knowing that Rashi’s aschews ambiguity and always aims for clarity, the quotation marks indicate an acronym, as mentioned above.]

According to this interpretation, we also benefit that there is no longer a need to **assume multiple** textual variants (and scribal errors) by copyists, etc. (where they supposedly either omitted or added the word “Greek,” or wrote a *yud* instead of a final *pei* — “*k”i*” instead of “*kaf*”).

6.

KAF STANDS FOR KOHEN

On this basis (that each time Rashi says “a Greek *kaf*”), we can suggest that Rashi’s intention with the words, “resembling *k”i* (כף יונית)” is not to describe the **shape** of the letter (since most people are unfamiliar with the Greek language). Instead, Rashi intends to clarify that the manner and form of the anointing are connected with our **letter kaf**.

The explanation is as follows: *Abarbanel* explains that the reason Aharon’s anointing “resembles the Greek letter *kaf*” is that it hints that “he is the one whom Hashem has chosen to serve as a **kohen**, for {the Hebrew letter} *kaf* is the first letter in the word **kohen**.”

Perhaps we can suggest that Rashi also believed (even before *Abarbanel*) that the anointing “resembles the Greek letter *kaf*” because *kaf* is the first letter in the word “kohen.”

But this raises some potential difficulties: How can we say (that according to the straightforward understanding of Scripture) (a) Rashi refers to an acronym? (b) and that this acronym involves (the first letter of the word in the **Holy Tongue** appearing in) the form resembling a letter in the **Greek** language? (c) Rashi never explains any of this explicitly but relies on the fact that we (and even novice students of Torah) will understand this on our own when learning this topic.

³⁰ {The quotation marks in the middle of a word indicate that the word is an acronym.}

³¹ {The Hebrew name for the “quotation mark symbol.”}

However, these questions pose no difficulty: Rashi, in his commentary (in *parshas Bereishis*),³² has **already** informed us that (even according to the simple understanding of Scripture) the Torah uses acronyms. There, Rashi explains the word “שָׁמַיִם {heavens},” with **several** different acronyms (“שָׂא מַיִם {carries water},” “שָׁם מַיִם {there is water},” “אֵשׁ וּמַיִם {fire and water}”). He offers these interpretations in the context of the **straightforward** meaning of Scripture (and does not introduce them by saying they are “midrashic expositions”). Consequently, we already know that letters can be used as abbreviations. Therefore, when Rashi notes a matter related to a letter, we already understand that the matter might be related to acronyms.

As for the fact that the Torah refers to a letter that is not in the Holy Tongue, this poses no difficulty either — as **Rashi** has already addressed this matter as well:³³ On the word “טוּטְפָה,” Rashi explains: “The word, ‘ט’ in the Katpi language means two, ‘פּה,’ in the Afriki language means two.” That is, the Torah calls tefillin by a name composed of words originating from two different languages.

7.

ALL CONNECTED TO PRIESTHOOD

But seemingly, this explanation is untenable. This is because Rashi says that the anointing “resembles the Greek letter *kaf*,” not only concerning Aharon — the **kohen** — but also in the context of the anointing of the *mishkan* and its vessels. Moreover, the **first** time Rashi mentions this is in the context of the anointing of the **wafers** (as discussed above). (Regarding anointing Aharon, Rashi writes (as mentioned above), “**this** anointing, **too**, resembled the Greek letter *kaf*.”) How, then, can we suggest that when Rashi says, “resembles the Greek letter *kaf*,” he intends to allude to the first letter of the word **kohen**? In all these places, the Torah does **not** speak about a kohen.

We can say, perhaps, as follows: By noting that all these cases, the anointing “resembles the Greek letter *kaf*” (and as Rashi emphasizes explicitly in his commentary in *parshas Tetzaveh* [and in our *parshah*], “**all** anointings resemble the Greek letter *kaf*”), Rashi intends to teach us that the nature of the anointing in **all** these cases is connected to priesthood {*kehunah*} (and not to a kohen, per se).

³² Rashi on *Bereishis* 1:8.

³³ Rashi on *Shemos* 13:16.

8.

THE WAFERS OF THE INAUGURATION

This can be explained as follows:

The matzah wafers (mentioned in *parshas Tetzaveh*) are part of the inauguration offerings, the purpose of which was (as the verse says there):³⁴ “This is what you shall do to them **to sanctify them to serve Me as kohanim**: Take... bread... and matzah wafers anointed with oil...” Through the inauguration offerings, Aharon and his sons were installed, and **they were sanctified for the *kehunah***.³⁵ Therefore, Rashi emphasizes that the anointing of the wafers “resembles the Greek letter *kaf*,” because the essential nature of this anointing is to serve as part of the inauguration process, “to **sanctify** them to serve Me as **kohanim**.”

In other words, anointing the matzah wafers of the inauguration offerings was not merely one of the actions that prepared the matzah wafers to be fit for an offering (as mentioned above in Section 2). Instead, the anointing itself was part of the inauguration process, which served “to sanctify them to serve Me as kohanim.”

This explains why Rashi in *parshas Tetzaveh* states unequivocally that the matzah wafers were anointed resembling a Greek *kaf*. In contrast, in *parshas Vayikra*, he brings two opinions:

According to the straightforward understanding of Scripture, these two *parshiyos* discuss two distinct matters:

In *parshas Tetzaveh*, where the verse speaks about the inauguration, the anointing of the wafers was also part of the inauguration process to consecrate Aharon as a kohen (as mentioned above). Consequently, the anointing resembled a Greek *kaf*.

In contrast, in *parshas Vayikra* — where the verse speaks about an oven-baked *korban minchah* — this is unrelated to the ***kehunah***. Instead, it is simply a detail of the offering process. Therefore, according to the straightforward meaning of Scripture, there is “room” for both opinions, and both are equally valid.³⁶

³⁴ *Shemos* 29:1.

³⁵ Rashi on *Shemos* 29:33.

³⁶ See fn. 24 above.

9.

KAF FOR KEHUNAH

However, we still need to clarify the anointing of the *mishkan* and its vessels. What special connection do **these** anointings (through the acronym, “Greek *kaf*,” as mentioned above) have to a “kohen”?

We can explain it as follows: According to Rashi, the Greek *kaf* does not (specifically) refer to the first letter of the word “kohen” (as a **title** referring only to Aharon and his sons, as implied by the straightforward understanding of *Abarbanel*’s language). Instead, as mentioned above, the Greek *kaf* is an abbreviation of the broader term “*kehunah* — the **service** of *kehunah*. This means that even the anointing of Aharon and his sons was not (merely) intended to install **them** as kohanim, but also (in the language of the verse), “you shall sanctify them to **serve Me** as *kohanim*.” In other words, the anointing effectuates the sanctity necessary for them to enter the **office** of the *kehunah* ³⁷ **and conduct its service** (and work).³⁸

On this basis, we can also appreciate the connection between the anointing of the *mishkan* and its furnishings and the “Greek *kaf*,” standing for (kohen) *kehunah*: Just as the anointing of Aharon and his sons sanctified them to become fit for the service and work, so, too, regarding the *mishkan* and its furnishings: Anointing the *mishkan* and its furnishings sanctified them making them fit for use in the priestly service and ministry.

10.

LIKE A CROWN

Based on all the above, we can also explain Rashi’s wording in our *parshah*: “All anointings resemble the Greek letter *kaf*, except for that of kings, which resembles a crown.”

The reason Rashi states the rule, “All anointings resemble the Greek letter *kaf*” — even though Rashi’s Torah commentary is not a halachic work — is because this rule underscores and clarifies how the anointing oil reflects fulfilment of the verse,³⁹ “it shall be a **holy** anointing oil,” that is, the anointing produces sanctity. Where do we see this as a defining parameter of the anointing oil? To address this, Rashi says, “**All** anointings (with the anointing oil) resemble the Greek letter *kaf*,” which shows, as mentioned above, that this anointing consecrates the person or object, rendering them fit for service (of *kehunah*).

And as proof and evidence of this idea — that the **manner** of anointing (resembling a Greek *kaf*) is connected with the intention and effect of the anointing — *kehunah* — Rashi supplies evidence: No such anointing is applied in any instances unrelated to the *kehunah*,

³⁷ See Rashi on *Shemos* 2:16 (and *Targum Unkelus* there), as well as Rashi on *Shemos* 19:6.

³⁸ Rashi on *Shemos* 28:3, and see the commentators on Rashi there.

³⁹ *Shemos* 30:25; and similarly in *Shemos* 30:31-32.

“**except** for that of kings, which resembles a crown”: The anointing of kings, where the anointing is **not** connected with *kehunah*, doe **not** resemble a Greek *kaf* (but as appropriate to kingship — “resembles a **crown**”).

More simply put, we can suggest: In Rashi’s commentaries on the verses in our *parshah*, he mentions the anointing of kings several times⁴⁰ (in addition to the above example), even though the verses make no mention of the anointing of a king. The reason for this: Since this Torah section speaks about manufacturing the anointing oil “**for your generations**”⁴¹ and “for generations,” the anointing oil was indeed also used for anointing kings — we must presume that these verses at least contain **allusions** to the anointing of kings. Therefore, Rashi mentions the anointing of kings several times throughout this topic.

Similarly in **this** comment of Rashi: When Rashi says, “All anointings resemble the Greek letter *kaf*,” to illustrate that the **manner** of anointing is aligned with its **effect**, he proceeds to clarify that the anointing of kings was also performed in a **manner** appropriate to **kingship**: “except for that {anointing} of kings, which resembles a crown,” as discussed above.

11.

OIL AGAINST GREEKS

From the “wine of Torah” in Rashi’s commentary we derive the following:

A question emerges: To be sure, the Torah can co-opt a letter from the Greek language to abbreviate a word in the Holy Tongue, as discussed above, but why use the Greek language specifically in this context?

This can be explained (according to the inner dimension of Torah) as follows: Our Sages said that “the Greeks... defiled all the oils in the Temple.”⁴² Chassidus⁴³ explains that the oils in the Temple symbolize the *chochmah*⁴⁴ of holiness (because oil signifies *chochmah*)⁴⁵, and the Greeks — who symbolize the *chochmah* of unholiness — oppose the *chochmah* of holiness and defiled the oil in the Temple.

⁴⁰ *Shemos* 30:29; *Shemos* 30:33.

⁴¹ *Shemos* 30:31.

⁴² *Shabbos* 21b.

⁴³ *Torah Or*, 41a, 41c (see also p. 34a); *Shaarei Orach*, s.v., “*kesiv ki atah neiri*,” ch. 16, ff.; and many other sources.

⁴⁴ {Lit., “wisdom,” the highest of the intellectual faculties.}

⁴⁵ *Meorei Or*, “*Shemen*”; *Torah Or*, 21b, 39a; and in several places. See *Menachos* 85b: “Because they regularly consume olive oil, *chochmah* {wisdom} is found in them.”

The Jewish people prevailed over the Greek *kelipah*⁴⁶ through the, “flask of oil,” sealed, “with the seal of the Kohen Gadol”:⁴⁷ The “flask of oil,” symbolizes the “holy anointing oil,” which is the level of “holy” **beyond** (*chochmah* and beyond) the world and beyond the entire framework of creation.⁴⁸ Therefore, not only can the Greek *klipah* not overpower this oil, but on the contrary, the “holy anointing oil” utterly defeats and neutralizes the Greek *klipah*.

This explains why the anointing oil “resembles the Greek letter *kaf*.” This alludes to the fact that the anointing oil gives the power to nullify the Greek *klipah*, to the extent that “Greece” will not oppose holiness, and moreover, the Greek language itself will be transformed and serve holiness. As mentioned above, the Greek *kaf* describes and determines the manner of anointing, which depicts the channeling of holiness. Moreover, here we see a preemptive remedy (the anointing) for the ailment (the decrees of the wicked Greek kingdom). Moreover, “May God extend Yefes... may he dwell in the tents of Shem” — the writing of the beautiful Greek language (and letters) must be in the holy books of the Jewish people.⁴⁹

12.

THE OIL OF THE FUTURE

According to this explanation, we can also appreciate the reason (according to the inner dimension of Torah) that the anointing precisely “resembles the Greek letter *kaf*.” The letter *kaf* alludes to the *sefirah* of *kesser*⁵⁰ (as known).⁵¹ The power to refine and purify the Greek language, transforming it into holiness, stems from (as mentioned above) the level of *kesser* above the framework of creation.

This matter, that the “holy anointing oil” refines and purifies the Greek language, will be revealed openly and entirely in the Future Era, when even the levels of “*kesser*, *chochmah*, and *binah*⁵² of *klipah*” will be refined and purified.⁵³

⁴⁶ {Lit., “a shell” or “a peel.” The term refers to anything that conceals, and thus opposes G-dliness, just as a shell or a peel conceals the fruit within.}

⁴⁷ *Shaarei Orach*, s.v., “*kesiv ki atah neiri*,” ch. 17. *Tanya*, “*Likkutei Amarim*,” ch. 53, 75a states: “with *chochmah* which is called ‘holy anointing oil.’”

⁴⁸ {In the original Hebrew, “*sefer hishtaleshelus*,” which refers to the chain-like descent of spiritual worlds until this world. Each spiritual world denotes a complete realm of existence, resulting from its general proximity to or distance from Divine revelation.}

⁴⁹ See *Megillah* 9b (and Rashi there). The *Jerusalem Talmud*, *Megillah*, ch. 1, halachah 9) states: They investigated and concluded that the Torah could be adequately translated only into Greek. Several commentators (see *Torah Shelema*, vol. 17, Appendix, sec. 23, par. 9, and references cited there), understand that the subsequent praise in the *Jerusalem Talmud* of Akilas the Convert specifically refers to his Greek translation.

⁵⁰ {Lit. “crown,” a reference to the level of G-dly emanation preceding *chochmah*, commonly associated with “will,”.}

⁵¹ *Likkutei Torah*, “*Shir Hashirim*,” 35c; and many other sources (see *Sefer Ha’arachim Chabad*, “*Osiyos*,” sub-entry, “*Osiyos HaTorah – Kaf*” (par. 2), **and the sources cited there**).

⁵² {Lit., “comprehension,” the second of the ten *sefiros*.}

⁵³ See *Maamarei Admor HaEmtza’i*, Kehos pub., 5736 (1976), *Devarim*, vol. 1, s.v., “*Al Tatzar es Moav*.”

This future revelation of its purifying powers is also alluded to by Scripture when it says that the anointing oil was made “for your generations”⁵⁴ — including “the Future Era,” “eternally.”⁵⁵ Moreover, it will be in a manner that “**all {the anointing oil} made by Moshe** will exist in the Future Era”⁵⁶ because the core function of the anointing oil will materialize and come to fruition “in the Future Era.”

Based on talks delivered on *Shabbos parshas Ki Sisa* 5741 (1981)

⁵⁴ Our *parshah*, *Shemos* 30:31.

⁵⁵ See *Shemos* 15:17-18, and Rashi there.

⁵⁶ Rashi on *Shemos* 30:31.